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Δίκαιος and Cognates in Plato's *Crito*

Yosef Z. (Yossie) Liebersohn

Abstract: The term 'justice' and its cognates appear frequently enough in Plato's *Crito* to serve as a vehicle for all discussions of this dialogue. In this paper, I will examine the various usages of *dik-* in the *Crito* and show that, within the broad meaning of justice, each usage has a unique meaning. Only by deciphering these specific meanings can the conversation between Crito and Socrates be fully understood, and Plato's message in the *Crito* properly evaluated.

Keywords: Plato, *Crito*, Laws, Justice, Friendship.

INTRODUCTION

The *Crito*, one of Plato's most widely read dialogues, has been analyzed according to three main approaches.¹ The first focuses on Socrates' personality and behavior as the ideal man, citizen, and philosopher.² The second approach discusses issues *in* the dialogue, such as obedience and disobedience in a law-abiding state, friendship, modes of deliberation, moral expertise, and rhetoric.³ The common ground of these two approaches is the assumption that Socrates is the main subject of the dialogue and that he conveys Plato's ultimate message. Thus, the speech Socrates presents on behalf of the laws is nothing but Socrates' (and hence, Plato's) own perspective.⁴ In the mid-1980s, a stream of scholarship emerged which argued that the Laws' speech was aimed at Crito rather than at the reader.⁵ This reflects a third approach to Plato's dialogues wherein greater attention is paid to the dramatic aspect.⁶ According to this approach, Socrates speaks not to the reader but to his interlocutors, and his arguments are *ad hominem*.

¹ All English translations, unless otherwise mentioned, are taken from Vol. 1 of Plato's works in the Loeb series, translated by Chris Emlyn-Jones & William Preddy (2017) with some necessary modifications.

² See, for example, Adam (1888); Guthrie (1975).

³ See, for example, Vlastos (1974); Young (1974); Martin (1979); Woozley (1979); Allen (1980); Brickhouse & Smith (1984); Kraut (1984); Stephens (1985); Colson (1989); Kahn (1989); West (1989); Bostock (1990); DeFilippo (1991), Benitez (1996); Bentley (1996); Gallop (1997); Garver (2012).

⁴ A partial list of scholars who hold this view includes Woozley (1979), 29; Stephens (1985), 8; DeFilippo (1991), 259.

⁵ See, for example, Hyland (1968), 47; Young (1974), 2–4; Brown (1992), 73; White (1996), 114; Miller (1996), 133; Weiss (1998), 5; Harte (1999), 230; Garver (2012), 1.

⁶ For leading works using the dramatic aspect of Plato's dialogues, see Koyré (1945); Klein (1965); Stokes (1986); *idem* (2005); Miller (1991); Ludlam (1991); *idem* (2014); Weiss (1998); *eadem* (2001); Burger (1999).

Thus, Socrates is not Plato's mouthpiece, nor is any other of the characters appearing in the dialogue. Each character has his own personality and viewpoint—all of which are taken into account by the character Socrates.⁷ Accordingly, the Laws' speech does not necessarily reflect Socrates' own beliefs but rather Socrates' response to Crito.⁸ In this paper, I would like to take this approach a step further.

As the storyline of Plato's *Crito* is well-known, I will provide only a brief synopsis of the dialogue. Socrates' friend Crito⁹ arrives at the jail early on the day before Socrates' execution day, with a plan to help him escape. Socrates proceeds to discuss whether he should follow Crito's plan. In his view, he should escape only if escaping is found to be *dikaion*: τοῦτο σκεπτόν, πότερον δίκαιον ἐμὲ ἐνθένδε πειρᾶσθαι ἐξιέναι μὴ ἀφιέντων Ἀθηναίων ἢ οὐ δίκαιον· ('We must consider whether it is *dikaion* for me to get out of here, when the Athenians won't let me go, or not *dikaion*') (48b10–c11).

Notably, it is not only Socrates who focuses on justice as the criterion for his decision. Earlier, we find Crito using the same term in an effort to persuade Socrates to escape: ἡμεῖς γὰρ που δίκαιοί ἐσμεν σώσαντές σε ('We are *dikaioi* in rescuing you', 45a1–2) and a few lines later: Ἔτι δέ, ὦ Σώκράτες, οὐδὲ δίκαιόν μοι δοκεῖς ἐπιχειρεῖν πρᾶγμα, σαυτὸν προδοῦναι, ἐξὸν σωθῆναι ('And again Socrates, I think what you're proposing to do isn't even *dikaion*, giving yourself up when you could be rescued') (45c6–7).

As Socrates and Crito both use the term *dikaion*, each to achieve his own goals, the question arises: Who is the 'hero' of the dialogue? Which of the two characters should be concerned about the justness of his actions? The answer appears to be Socrates, as it is he who is being offered the chance to escape.¹⁰ In my view, however, there are good reasons to think that it is rather Crito who is being tested. While Socrates is subject to one type of misfortune (*sumphora*), namely his imminent execution, Crito is suffering from two—losing a good friend and losing his good reputation among the Many (44b7–c2). While Socrates is grappling with his misfortune and even succeeds in sleeping, Crito cannot sleep (43b3–b9). Crito's misfortunes are connected to those of Socrates, but

⁷ The longstanding question of Plato's viewpoint is not irrelevant to this sort of research, but answers should emerge from a multilayered analysis of each dialogue, including the characters and their personalities, their opinions, motives, as well as the philosophical and less philosophical discussions among them.

⁸ To give but one example: Weiss (1998) regards the Laws' speech as intended to make Crito obey the Laws – though not for the right reasons. Socrates is thereby regarded as a good friend who can step aside and offer Crito, under the guise of the Laws, arguments to persuade him that escaping is wrong, arguments which Socrates could not offer in his own persona.

⁹ Both Socrates and Crito as referred to in this article are the characters who appear in Plato's *Crito*. Any relationship between these characters and the historical Socrates and Crito (if it exists) is beyond the scope of this article. Taking the *Crito*, and any other Platonic dialogue, as a philosophical drama (see above), every character is fictional to the extent that Plato the dramatist can shape it according to his aims in this or that dialogue.

¹⁰ See 46e3–47a2: σὺ γάρ, ὅσα γε τάνθρώπεια, ἐκτὸς εἰ τοῦ μέλλειν ἀποθῆσκειν αὔριον, καὶ οὐκ ἂν σὲ παρακρούοι ἢ παροῦσα συμφορά· ('You see, in all human probability, you are excluded from the prospect of being put to death tomorrow and the present misfortune should not knock you sideways').

the connection is ancillary. Crito's dependence on what the Many think is an independent problem, only secondarily related to Socrates' misfortune, and the same may be said for his attitude toward friendship. It is, therefore, Crito and what he represents that Socrates is criticizing in the *Crito*. As I hope to show in what follows, Crito represents a man who considers himself good in every way, even if he seems to do wrong at least regarding the Laws and the polis. I argue that both the way Crito evaluates himself and Socrates' method of revealing to Crito who he really is are reflected by the term 'justice' with its various cognates as it appears throughout the conversation between the two figures.

Justice and its cognates (all sharing *dik-*) appear in the *Crito* forty-three times (details, below). An analysis of Socrates' and Crito's usages of *dik-* and cognates in the conversation shows surprising consistency. Each cognate, whether used by Socrates or Crito, has a unique meaning in this conversation. Revealing the exact meaning of each term is, therefore, a *sine qua non* for grasping Socrates' moves. Furthermore, Plato, I argue, was careful to shape his characters so that their language and especially their terminology reflect their way of thinking and acting, thus creating an ideal dramatic character. At the same time, it is exactly these various terminological usages which enable the reader to properly analyze the conversation.

My discussion will be divided into four parts. I will start with a brief overview of the main usages of *dik-* that appear in the *Crito*. Here I will focus on the adjective δίκαιος (*dikaios*), and three pairs of opposites: τὸ δίκαιον-τὸ ἄδικον (*to dikaion-to adikon*), δίκαια-ἄδικα (*dikaia-adika*), ἀδικέω-δίκαια πράττω (*adikeō-dikaia prattō*). Since I see the *Crito* as a conversation wherein Socrates treats Crito and his problematic behavior concerning justice (on which, later), in the second part I will briefly describe what I take to be Crito's problem. In the third part of the article, I will show how Crito's adoption of the above usages of justice influences and reflects his behavior. Finally, I will provide a number of examples that demonstrate how understanding the meaning of each of these terms elucidates the various moves that Socrates makes in his conversation with Crito.

I wish to emphasize that this article aims only to deal with the usage of the term 'justice' as it appears in the dialogue through *dik*-related words. This limited aim has two main methodological consequences. The first is that I confine my discussion to *dik*-related words alone, although other terms such as *nomos* can also be related to justice. The centrality of *dik*-related words in the *Crito* is so prominent that it calls for a comprehensive analysis. The second consequence is that the analysis presented here does not deal with the appearance of *dik*-related words elsewhere, whether in other Platonic dialogues or in texts outside the Platonic corpus. As part of the dramatic approach in analyzing Plato's dialogues described above, it is my assumption and working hypothesis that Plato the dramatist presents the characters of individual dialogues using certain terms with distinct meanings pertaining to activities, conditions, or social spheres, in the context of one or another dialogue. The meanings, although specific, belong to the legitimate range of meanings applicable to that term. How the term is used by each participant is determined by Plato, down to differences between singular and plural (e.g., *dikaion-dikaia*), or the definite and indefinite (e.g., *dikaion-to*

dikaion).¹¹ This being the case, the different usages may be understood only through an analysis of the specific dialogue in which they appear, since the same cognates in another dialogue may have different usages according to Plato's particular aims for that dialogue. The analysis requires identifying the interlocutors' worldview and Socrates' countermeasures. Socrates does not necessarily express his own view but rather works with the terminology of his interlocutors. Thus, identifying the consistent use of a specific meaning throughout the conversation and accounting for difficult-to-explain moves by Socrates are the best proof of any argument concerning any of the *dik*-related words functioning in the *Crito*.

1. MAIN USAGES OF JUSTICE IN THE *CRITO*

The four main usages of justice (sharing *dik*-) which I take to be central to the conversation in the *Crito* are those which have to do with what one should or should not do.¹²

1. The adjective *δίκαιος* (*dikaios*)¹³ without an article appears in contexts where someone is to be understood as right (or not right) in taking a certain action.¹⁴ The term has a very general connection to the concept of justice. Its meaning has to do with a deep sense that what I do is acceptable and valued by the society where I live, without necessarily knowing exactly what makes this act an act of justice.¹⁵ When *δίκαιος* is used, the speaker does not know exactly on what basis he has the right to behave as he does, but this should not be considered a disadvantage. Rather, it is an advantage as its justification stems from an inner conviction rooted in self-evident social conventions. This usage appears at 45a1–2, 45c6, 48b11–c1, 48c2, 49c5, 50e7, 51a4.

¹¹ This is counterintuitive, as differences between singular and plural do not indicate any further differences in meanings or differences related to the object of the term in the singular or the plural. But, as I state below, Plato sometimes chooses to put in his characters' mouths singular or plural forms of the same term referring to different objects within the wide range of legitimate meanings of the term. The only proof of such a phenomenon is in finding consistency in using these differences in a complete work. I may add that I have detected a similar case in the *Gorgias* with the terms *rhētor* and *rhētores*. See Liebersohn (2014), 49–56.

¹² Not all words starting with *dik*-, though connected to justice, will be discussed here. Examples of words omitted are those denoting an institution or clear institutional terms, e.g., *δικαστήριον* (45b7, 45e3, 51b9), *δικάσται* (53b8), *ἡ δίκη* referring to the trial as a constitutional procedure (45e3, 50b4, 50b8, 50c2, 50c6, 51e3, 52c4), *δικάζω* (50c7, 51e3); or ordinary general pairs or trios, e.g., *περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ ἀδίκων* (47c9–10, 48a5–7) or *περὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν* (48a9–10).

¹³ Whether used in a construction of *δίκαιος* + *εἰμί* + infinitive, introducing an action clause, or a construction of accusative with infinitive.

¹⁴ See also LSJ's entry on *dikaios* under heading C.

¹⁵ In his seminal work on the *Crito*, Adam (1888) translates the words *δίκαιοι ἔσμεν* at 45a1–2 as 'it is right that we', and on the words *Ἔτι δὲ οὐδὲ δίκαιόν* at 45c6 he notes: 'it is not correct to translate *δίκαιον* here as "just": it is "right", "moral"'. My only reservation regarding Adam's illuminating comment is that *δίκαιον*, although it should not be translated here as 'just', is nevertheless connected to justice.

2. τὸ δίκαιον (*to dikaion*) and τὸ ἄδικον (*to adikon*), formed by the definite article with an adjective in the neuter singular, are terms that clearly pertain to formal law or custom, and appear at 47d5, 47e8, 50e5, 50e8, 51b7, 51c1, 54b5.¹⁶

3. δίκαια-ἄδικα (*dikaia-adika*) are adjectives, which appear independently in the plural (without an article),¹⁷ and mean ‘things which are just’ in the sense of decent behavior expected from a fellow citizen, and the suggestion of an unwritten agreement as to the nature of right behavior. They appear four times, at 49e6, 50a3, 51c7, 52e5.

4. ἀδικέω¹⁸—δίκαια πράττω (*adikeō—dikaia prattō*) are the most important cognates of *dikaios* in our dialogue. The terms mean ‘commit injustice’ and ‘perform justice’ respectively.¹⁹ These terms are applicable in Crito’s consciousness only to human beings.²⁰ Socrates’ efforts in the *Crito* are concentrated on making Crito understand that by breaking the law (*to dikaion*), he is actually committing injustice (*adikeō*). The terms appear thirteen times, at 48c8–9, 48d2, 48d5–6, 49a4, 49a5, 49a6, 49b4, 49b7, 49b10, 49c7, 49d8, 50c1, 51a6–7.²¹

In order to see how these terms function in the conversation, we will now take a closer look at Crito and his behavior.

2. WHO IS CRITO?²²

What we learn about Crito in the *Crito* is gleaned from his three speeches delivered in the first part of the dialogue (up to 46a9).²³ Thereafter, Socrates leads the conversation,

¹⁶ Emlyn-Jones (1999), 1 writes: ‘In reply, Socrates refuses to contemplate such a move, explaining why escape would not be in accordance with justice (τὸ δίκαιον)’. It is true that τὸ δίκαιον usually refers to justice in the abstract, that is, the concept of justice. This being said, in our dialogue justice happens to be identified with accepted and formal law. Thus, when Socrates asks Crito if running away would be an act of τὸ δίκαιον, the term may be justifiably translated as justice, but as the answer to this question depends on whether this act is in compliance with the law, τὸ δίκαιον also becomes a lawful act. On the strong connection of justice with legality and law in our dialogue, see Stokes (2005), 171–173. Noteworthy in this context is 53c7–9: ὡς ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη πλείστον ἄξιον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ τὰ νόμιμα καὶ οἱ νόμοι; (‘that goodness and justice are of the highest value to mankind and in particular [*kai*, ‘and’] legality and laws’). See also Bostock (1990), 18, referring to the same sentence: ‘The implication must be that Socrates had supposed that the demands of the law and the demands of morality never would conflict with one another’.

¹⁷ Except for cases in which it appears with an action verb such as πράττειν (48c8–9, 51a6–7) or δρᾶν (51c7–8).

¹⁸ Sometimes the verb changes to ἄδικα ἐργάζομαι (48d3). The change has to do with the specific context of the passage where it appears, and, in principle, need not concern us here. But see p. 104 below.

¹⁹ I sometimes translate the negative ἀδικέω as ‘harm’.

²⁰ All appearances of these verbs—before the Laws’ speech, of course—refer to human beings alone (or do not refer to any object whatsoever: cf. 48c8–d6, 49c7, 49c10). As I will show later, Crito *does*, in fact, apply these terms to non-humans (e.g., the *polis*) as well.

²¹ I do not include here the verb ἀνταδικεῖν, which will be discussed later. See p. 101 below.

²² On Crito’s character, see Liebersohn (2015), which discusses his way of thinking and evaluating himself in terms of justice.

²³ 43b3–9, 44b6–c5, 44e1–46a9.

with Crito responding to his friend's statements, in most cases with just a few words. The speeches serve to expose Crito's problem in three stages.²⁴ The first speech (43b3–9) reveals that Crito, rather than Socrates, is in trouble.²⁵ The second speech (44b6–c5) reveals that Crito is motivated to smuggle Socrates out of jail not only because he fears the loss of a good friend (as implied by the first speech) but also because he fears the loss of his good reputation among the Many.²⁶ The third speech (44e1–46a9) reveals the basis for Crito's behavior—his concept of justice. Unsurprisingly, the first appearance of a cognate of justice is found in this third speech. What we learn about Crito may be summarized in two points:

1. Crito's reasoning concerning Socrates' escape is based on his view of justice and how justice is to be applied. Crito is the first to mention any cognate of justice in the conversation, and his third speech turns entirely on the issue of justice (45a1–2; 45c6–7). Furthermore, Crito's concept of justice reflects the popular code of 'helping friends and harming enemies'²⁷ but seems to be based on a somewhat sophistic view that might be right. We read, for example, Ἐτι δέ, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐδὲ δίκαιόν μοι δοκεῖς ἐπιχειρεῖν πρᾶγμα, σαρτὸν προδοῦναι, ἐξόν σωθῆναι ('And, again, Socrates, I think what you're proposing to do isn't even *dikaion*: giving yourself up when you **could** be rescued') (45c6–7; emphasis added). Crito's concept of justice is based on the right to use one's power to achieve one's personal goals, but concerning Crito's current situation, this concept of justice is expressed in 'helping friends and harming enemies', and eventually keeping his good reputation among the Many.

2. Crito seems to be active in at least two social circles: one with Socrates, his friend, and second with the Many, within which he is concerned about his reputation. The

²⁴ Scholars have tended to take this first part of the *Crito* as supplying character background. I argue that these speeches and the sections between and leading to them (43a1–b2, 43b10–44b5, 44c6–d10) form a sequence wherein each delves further into Crito's motivation and values with regard to the escape attempt. Moreover, it is Crito himself who, guided by Socrates, is exposed to what he is really doing, what really motivates him, and what the ethical basis for his behavior is.

²⁵ The first words of the speech where Crito focuses on himself alone makes it clear enough: Οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐδ' ἂν αὐτὸς ἤθελον ἐν τοσαύτῃ τε ἀγρυπνία καὶ λύπῃ εἶναι ('No, no, by Zeus, Socrates, I only wish I myself were not so sleepless and sorrowful.') (43b3–4). Crito seems to be in *agrupnia* and *lupē* because he is worried about his friend, but upon closer examination it is revealed that he is not worried about his friend *as a friend*. He is worried about *himself* as one who is about to lose his friend. The axis of the speech is the comparison between Crito's own situation and that of Socrates. This means that every description which Crito ascribes to Socrates implies the opposite description regarding himself. Thus, if Socrates usually sleeps well and especially amidst his present *sumphora*, Crito never sleeps well and especially now amidst his *own*.

²⁶ The reader should ask himself which reason truly motivates Crito, and if both do, which reason carries more weight, or at least what the exact place of each reason is in Crito's decision to smuggle Socrates out of jail. On these questions, see Weiss (1998), 40. For further references, see there n. 2. See also Moore (2011), 1023–1025.

²⁷ For this code, see *Republic* 332d7–8 and *Meno* 71e4. The dominance of this popular code of justice in our dialogue has long been recognized in scholarship (e.g., Weinrib (1982), 103; Weiss (1998), 4). The fullest available account of this code, as well as its origin and derivatives, is still that of Blundell (1989), 26–49. See also Dover (1974), 180–184.

existence of two distinct circles in Crito's world can be proven by a clause Crito adds to the second motive in his second speech—losing his reputation among the Many: ἔτι δὲ καὶ πολλοῖς δόξω, οἳ ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ μὴ σαφῶς ἴσασιν, ὡς οἷός τ' ὄν σε σφύζειν εἰ ἤθελον ἀναλίσκειν χρήματα, ἀμελήσει (‘In addition many people **who don't know me and you well** will think that, as I would be in a position to save you if I were willing to spend my money, I have deserted you’) (44b9–10; emphasis added). If the Many are those who ‘do not know you and me well’, we may infer another group who ‘do know you and me well’. Namely, Crito's close acquaintances. As the phrase ‘those who do not know you and me well’ (= the Many) points to Crito's second motive (saving his reputation among the Many), ‘those who know you and me well’ should refer to Crito's first motive—not losing a good friend.

Thus in helping his good friend, Crito seems to be active in what I call ‘Crito's internal circle’, namely, his close acquaintances. Here, as I have already noted, Crito applies the traditional and popular concept of justice: ‘helping friends and harming enemies’.²⁸ In preserving his good reputation among the Many, Crito seems to be active in what I call ‘Crito's external circle’, namely, Crito's fellow citizens. Towards them, justice is rendered differently. All we know at this stage about this circle is that, towards his fellow citizens, Crito adopts a kind of passive justice. He would probably not set off to help them if they happened to need help (as he would with his friends in his ‘internal circle’), but he is very careful to keep his good reputation among them. Justice in this circle has to do with decent behavior that harms no one, even if the perpetrator of bad behavior ultimately benefits. It is a kind of unofficial and unwritten agreement,²⁹ similar to ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you’.

Crito so far seems to be a good man in both circles, as a friend, who helps his friend, and as a decent citizen, who does not harm others. Indeed, when we look at the text about the means Crito might use in order to help his friend, we find such things as bribery and finding a place of refuge for Socrates after the escape but no hint of harming anyone else. No human being would be harmed by Crito helping Socrates. However, the polis—which is apparently not a human being—is harmed.

Herein lies Crito's great problem; he would break the law. Yet, I argue, this does not bother Crito at all. Not only does he not try to justify breaking the law, although one would expect a potential lawbreaker—especially in a democracy—to do so, he does not even mention it. It seems as though Crito considers breaking the law as merely another obstacle he has to overcome, like paying people to enable the escape. This, I claim, is because for Crito, concepts of committing injustice and justice (*adikeō* and *dikaia prattō*) are applicable only to human beings. The *polis* and its laws are not human beings, and they are not subject to the prescriptions and proscriptions of justice and injustice.³⁰

²⁸ Crito's ‘internal circle’ includes enemies as well (to be an enemy, one needs a close acquaintanceship, exactly as with friends). However, given the narrative in our dialogue, the focus within the popular code is on ‘helping friends’.

²⁹ Note that the Laws refer to an unwritten agreement with the *polis* at 51c6–53a8.

³⁰ In positing the polis as beyond committing injustice or justice (*adikeō* and *dikaia prattō*), Crito renders it a neutral object subject to the various interests of its citizens. Here a clarification is called for. The Greeks (and Crito, of course, is no exception) never

This last point is evident in the text. In his third speech (44e1–46a9), Crito marshals a miscellaneous mix of reasons for Socrates to escape from prison. He speaks of Socrates' children, his care for *aretē* and more. What he doesn't say, however, is more interesting than what he does, namely, that Socrates was wrongly harmed by the *polis* since he was unjustly tried, and accordingly he is justified in running away. If this involves breaking the law, it is nothing but retaliating with harm against harm. It does not occur to Crito that a *polis* can commit injustice or be harmed. Injustice and justice are strictly reserved for human beings. In his own opinion, Crito is good, both as a person and as a fellow citizen. Breaking the law will not change that.

3. DERIVATIVES OF JUSTICE IN CRITO'S SERVICE

Out of all *dik-* related usages concerning justice, Crito uses only one—the adjective *dikaios*, which appears twice in his third speech.³¹ Crito says that he is justified in paying any price to save Socrates, and that Socrates' refusal of his offer cannot be justified.

Crito understands other usages of justice (*dik-* related words), namely, those Socrates chooses to use when speaking to Crito. He appears to have no problem with those. When Crito does not understand something that Socrates says about justice, he stops the discussion and asks for clarification. While Crito understands and accepts Socrates' clarifications concerning justice, it appears that the only term he uses—and probably the only one he can use—is the adjective *dikaios*, in the sense of 'I have the right to do X'. It is Socrates who reveals Crito's worldview concerning justice.³²

conceptualised a *polis* as an abstract entity but rather as a community of citizens (see n. 37 below). By claiming that in Crito's view the *polis* is not a human being, I am referring only to issues of committing injustice and justice (*ἀδικέω* and *δίκαια πράττειν*). Moreover, this applies solely to Crito's mind, since, as I aim to demonstrate shortly, Crito does in fact apply to the *polis* concepts of committing injustice and justice, as he unconsciously sees himself being harmed (*adikoumenos*) by the *polis* and hence entitled to harm it in return (*antadikein*). Crito's intricate mental processes are what make him such an interesting character, and the dialogue that bears his name so relevant. I reemphasize that this Crito is a character molded by Plato for his own purposes in composing the *Crito*, and has nothing to do with the historical Crito who, during the Peloponnesian War, might well have heard the Mytilenian debate in which Cleon argued: 'In order to keep you from this, I proceed to show you that the one state of Mytilene has injured you the most' (*ὅν ἐγὼ πειρώμενος ἀποτρέπειν ὑμᾶς ἀποφαίνω Μυτιληναίους μάλιστα δὴ μίαν πόλιν ἡδικηκότας ὑμᾶς*, Thuc. 3.39.1). The verb *adikeō* is found predicated of states in other Platonic dialogues as well (e.g., *Rep.* 351b1–3).

³¹ It is noticeable that Plato, the author of this dialogue, made sure that Crito would mention both the positive (45a1–2 and the negative (45c6) aspects of this *dikaios*.

³² This distinction between what Crito mentions on his own initiative and what he 'only' accepts from Socrates is the result of a choice made by Plato. Crito is depicted in our dialogue as one who becomes aware of his real behavior due to Socrates' manoeuvres.

I. CRITO THE GOOD MAN AND DECENT FELLOW CITIZEN

In helping his friend, Crito δίκαια πράττει (*dikaia prattei*), does just things.³³ He does not ἀδικεῖ (*adikei*, commit injustice to) anyone. The only negative act Crito seems to perform—breaking the law—has nothing to do in his consciousness with *adikei*, but with *to adikon*, since the verbs *adikei* and *dikaia prattein* are exclusively applicable to human beings alone. Crito thus may consider himself a good man and a good fellow citizen. He is right to help his close friend and harms no one else.

Yet, Crito is not satisfied with being a good man and a decent fellow citizen alone. Crito, I argue, wishes to believe himself a law-abiding citizen as well. Moreover, he is convinced that he is a law-abiding citizen even while he breaks the law. This, of course, requires explanation. First, it should be clear that Crito cares about the laws. Socrates would not have introduced the Laws' speech if Crito did not support the *polis* and its laws. Moreover, Plato, the author of this dialogue, is not concerned with a single case of a law-breaking citizen, a phenomenon as common then as it is today. A citizen who despises the laws and does not consider himself compelled to abide by them is uninteresting. What is so fascinating about people like Crito is that although they consider the laws important, and we might assume that normally they would abide by the laws, they have no problem breaking the law when their private interests are at stake, and all this without shaking their self-identity as law-abiding citizens. Exposing the causes of such behaviour may well have been one of Plato's purposes in composing the *Crito*.

II. CRITO THE LAW-ABIDING CITIZEN

In Section Two, I discussed Crito's internal and external circles.³⁴ But Crito seems to have a third circle—the *polis* with its laws. This circle is unique in that Crito regards it as outside the realm of committing injustice and justice (*adikeō* and *dikaia prattein*). The *polis* cannot harm anyone, nor can anyone harm it. This is the reason why Crito does not offer Socrates the otherwise obvious justification for escape, that Socrates would be justified in returning harm against a *polis* which has already harmed him. We may now complete the picture, although it is a little more complex than it initially seemed. Socrates actually uses this justification—that he is entitled to harm the *polis* as retaliation, because the *polis* harmed him first—in the passage introducing the Laws (50a6–c3). At 50c1–2, Socrates asks Crito for advice concerning the *polis* and the Laws, who blame Socrates for destroying them by escaping from jail: ἢ ἐροῦμεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὅτι “Ἡδίκηει γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἡ πόλις καὶ οὐκ ὀρθῶς τὴν δίκην ἔκρινεν;” ταῦτα ἢ τί ἐροῦμεν; (‘Or shall we say in response to them that “yes, the *polis* has committed injustice (*ēdikei*) against us because it has not given the right verdict in this case.” Shall we say this, or what?’). This is quite puzzling, especially when we read Crito's response (50c4)—Ταῦτα νῆ Δία, ὦ Σώκρατες. (‘Emphatically that, Socrates’). Crito not only

³³ This is the verb used by both Socrates (48c8–9) and the Laws (51a6–7) to refer to the escape, which is how Crito helps his friend.

³⁴ See p. 97 above.

accepts this justification, but is enthusiastic about the answer.³⁵ The question here is simple. If Crito thinks that the *polis* harmed (*ἄδικέω*) Socrates, why did he not raise this point in his third speech? Yet, if he could not think of such a thing in his third speech, why now, when Socrates raises the issue, does he accept it enthusiastically? The answer, I argue, is that this justification has subconsciously motivated Crito all along, but it takes Socrates to reveal that fact to Crito.

The revelation begs a new question. Harming, in Crito's worldview, means harming somebody, namely, a human being. If Crito does harm, he must treat his object of harming as a human being. Since Crito harms the *polis* (for harming him³⁶ first), and the *polis* is composed of two different groups, we are entitled to ask to which human circle, then, would the *polis* belong?³⁷ After all, in Crito's worldview there are only two human circles, the internal and the external, and the *polis* must belong to one of them.

In order to answer our questions, I return to Crito's external circle. This circle, as we know, comprises Crito's fellow citizens who do not know him well. Here justice is basically passive, and consists mainly in what is considered just behavior. This, I argue, is what the term *dikaia* refers to in our dialogue. Its first appearance is at 49e6–7: *πότερον ἂν ἄν τις ὁμολογήσῃ τῷ δίκαια ὄντα ποιητέον ἢ ἐξαπατητέον;* ('Should one do whatever one agrees with another, if it's just (*dikaia*), or should one mislead him?'). The context is clearly concerned with keeping an agreement among fellow citizens regarding things which are accepted by all to be just.³⁸ The most basic component of such an agreement seems to be that no one should harm anyone else. But what if the agreement is broken? Is retaliation included in the *dikaia*? Clearly it is. This is part of the unwritten agreement. Thus, when Crito breaks the law, he is merely repaying the *polis* for being harmed by it. Crito is justified (*dikaios*) in his retaliation as much as against any fellow citizen who breaks the unwritten agreement. Such retaliation does not necessarily lead to life-long enmity,³⁹ and so Crito may feel able to break the law 'from time to time' in

³⁵ For Crito's response, I used Woozley's (1979) translation. Other translations such as Tredennick (1961) 'What you have just said, by all means, Socrates', or that of Fowler (1914) 'that is what we shall say, by Zeus, Socrates', do not emphasize Crito's enthusiasm enough. Emlyn-Jones (2017) almost overlooks it altogether ('We shall, by Zeus, Socrates').

³⁶ By condemning Socrates, his friend, to death, the *polis* harms Crito as well.

³⁷ This should not surprise us. The idea that the *polis* is nothing but its citizens is well-rooted in Classical Greek thought: see Thuc.7.77.7.5: *ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, καὶ οὐ τεῖχη οὐδὲ νῆες ἀνδρῶν κεναί.* ('for it is men that make a *polis*, not walls nor ships devoid of men'); Arist. *Pol.* 3.1, 1275b39–42: *ἡ γὰρ πόλις πολιτῶν τι πλῆθος ἐστίν* ('for the *polis* is a mass of citizens').

³⁸ While an understanding of the exact place of this sentence within the structure of Socrates' argument is important, it is nevertheless not my concern here. I am interested in the meaning of the term itself. For an alternative reading of this sentence, see Allen (1980), 75: 'It assumes that the existence of agreement is the sole ground for the justice of abiding by it, whereas in fact the justice of abiding by it is a condition for honoring the agreement'. For a different view, see Kraut (1984), 149–151.

³⁹ Strictly speaking, an enemy of the internal circle is to be harmed due to the fact that he is an enemy (exactly as a friend is to be aided due to the fact that he is a friend). One does not seek a reason to harm him. In the case of a fellow citizen, retaliation is a response to a specific breaking of the agreement.

retribution for a perceived breaking of the agreement by the *polis*, yet still remain a law-abiding citizen.

It would seem that Crito subconsciously considers the *polis* to belong to both his human circles, depending on the circumstances. When things go well and his personal interests coincide with the *polis* and its laws, Crito sees the *polis* as a member of his internal circle. As such, he may even appear (to others and to himself) as a patriot who initiates certain activities befitting one who helps his friend. When, however, things do not go well and his personal interests collide with those of the *polis*, so that he feels obliged to break the law, he then treats the *polis* as a member of his external circle where retaliation is justified. Does Crito have a special term for this act of retaliation? Indeed, he does—*antadikein* (ἀνταδικεῖν).

Socrates' use of the verb *antadikein* appears in a passage just before the Laws' speech (49a4–e3). If I have argued correctly that Socrates raises only what pertains to Crito's situation in his attempt to educate through dialectic, we may see that this discussion is aimed at Crito's rationale for retaliation. The aim of this passage is to make Crito understand that retaliation is totally forbidden, regardless of case and circumstance. All Socrates then must do is personify the laws and show Crito that, even if the laws harmed him, according to his own insistence at 49e4 that retaliation is utterly prohibited, he cannot retaliate (and hence cannot break the law). To proceed with his retaliation now would require Crito to see himself as a bad man, a bad fellow citizen, and a law-breaker.

The words pertaining to justice, all cognate and containing the *dik-* stem, demonstrate how Crito considers his behavior to be consistent. Crito is depicted in the *Crito* as active in three circles. All the circles are connected to justice, but are separate from each other. The differences between them are reflected by different formulations all using the *dik-* stem, thus allowing Crito to consider himself a good man, a decent fellow, and even a law-abiding citizen, no matter which circle he feels himself to be in. For the first group, Crito uses the pair δίκαια πράττειν-ἀδικέω (*dikaia pratein-adikeō*). For the second group, he makes use of the pair δίκαια-ἄδικα (*dikaia-adika*), and for the third circle, the pair τὸ δίκαιον-τὸ ἄδικον (*to dikaion-to adikon*).

Crito is justified (δίκαιος) in saving his friends; by helping Socrates escape from jail, he is doing right by Socrates (δίκαια πράττειν); in helping his friend he does not harm anyone (ἀδικεῖν). He breaks the law (τὸ ἄδικον) but is justified (δίκαιος) in doing so, since he is (subconsciously) retaliating (ἀνταδικεῖ), a just behaviour tacitly accepted among the citizens.

4. SOCRATES' STRATEGIES—A GLIMPSE

Socrates' treatment of Crito's problem regarding the scope of justice reveals to the reader, and ultimately to Crito himself, the latter's worldview, and it is worth looking at three of Socrates' strategies.

I. THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF *ADIKEŌ*

Socrates' main aim in treating Crito's problem is to make him understand that breaking the law is *to adikein*, namely, committing injustice against *someone*. This is a very

difficult task since Crito does not regard *to adikein* as referring to a *polis*, but only to a human being. Personifying the laws seems to be the solution, but Socrates leads up to this solution in stages.

Having gained Crito's assent at 48b7–9 that 'just', 'honorable', and 'good' are identical concepts, Socrates starts a *logos protreptikos*, encouraging Crito to leave aside concerns such as reputation and expenses and stick to the one question of whether, in escaping, Socrates will be committing injustice (48b10–d6). Such a prologue signals that Socrates is about to present his interlocutor with an idea that is hard to accept.⁴⁰ Yet this *logos protreptikos* is much more than simple encouragement. Socrates begins here his manipulation of various cognates of the *dik-* stem in preparation for what is coming. The aim is to make Crito understand he is committing injustice (*adikei*) by breaking the law. I will underline the *dik-*stem terms Socrates uses.

{ΣΩ.} Οὐκοῦν ἐκ τῶν ὁμολογουμένων τοῦτο σκεπτέον, πότερον δίκαιον ἐμὲ ἐνθένδε πειρᾶσθαι ἐξιέναι μὴ ἀφιέντων Ἀθηναίων ἢ οὐ δίκαιον. καὶ ἐὰν μὲν φαίνηται δίκαιον, πειρώμεθα, εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἐώμεν. ἄς δὲ σὺ λέγεις τὰς σκέψεις περὶ τε ἀναλώσεως χρημάτων καὶ δόξης καὶ παίδων τροφῆς, μὴ ὡς ἀληθῶς ταῦτα, ὧ Κρίτων, σκέμματα ἢ τῶν ῥαδίως ἀποκτείνοντων καὶ ἀναβιωσκομένων γ' ἄν, εἰ οἷοί τ' ἦσαν, οὐδενὶ ξὺν νῶ, τούτων τῶν πολλῶν. ἡμῖν δ', ἐπειδὴ ὁ λόγος οὕτως αἰρεῖ, μὴ οὐδὲν ἄλλο σκεπτέον ἢ ἢ ὅπερ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν, πότερον δίκαια πράξομεν καὶ χρήματα τελούντες τούτοις τοῖς ἐμὲ ἐνθένδε ἐξάξουσιν καὶ χάριτας, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐξάγοντές τε καὶ ἐξαγόμενοι, ἢ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἀδικήσομεν πάντα ταῦτα ποιοῦντες· κἂν φαίνώμεθα ἀδίκαια αὐτὰ ἐργαζόμενοι, μὴ οὐ δέη ὑπολογίζεσθαι οὐτ' εἰ ἀποθνήσκειν δεῖ παραμένοντας καὶ ἡσυχίαν ἄγοντας, οὔτε ἄλλο ὅτιοῦν πάσχειν πρὸ τοῦ ἀδικεῖν. (48b10–d6)

SOC: So from what we agree we must consider whether it's just (*diakion*) for me to try to get out of here, when the Athenians won't let me go, or not just (*ou dikaiion*); and if it seems just (*dikaion*), let's try, but if not, let's drop it. But as for the questions you speak of regarding spending money and reputation and bringing up children, I suspect that these are in truth the speculations of those, the Many, who'd put people to death without a second thought and bring them back to life again if they could, men without any sense. But as for us, since this is the way our argument is tending, let's not consider anything other than what we were talking about just now, whether we shall be committing justice (*dikaia praxomen*) in paying out money and doing favors to those who are going to take me out of here: both those who are themselves rescuers and we the rescued, or shall we in truth be committing injustice (*adikēsomen*) in doing all of these things. And if in doing them it appears that we are acting unjustly (*adika ergazomenoi*), the question whether in staying here and holding our peace we will have to die or endure anything else whatsoever, ought not to be considered sooner than committing injustice (*tou adikein*).

⁴⁰ *Logoi protreptikoi* in the *Crito* appear also at 46d2–9 and 49c11–d5. Each time, the reason is the introduction of a term or idea which otherwise would have been difficult for Socrates' interlocutor to accept. The aim of this *logos protreptikos* is to introduce the verb ἀδικέω into the conversation.

This section is highly manipulative. Socrates' main target, *adikein*, mentioned at the very end of the passage,⁴¹ is the term used in the *Crito* for committing injustice against someone (=wrongfully harming someone). Crito, at this stage, does not see how he harms anyone by helping Socrates to escape (which requires breaking the law) since harm results only to the *polis*, which is not a human being, and Socrates needs to plan his steps carefully. He adopts two interconnected strategies, one which makes use of various cognates of *dik-* and the other which makes use of different objects of *dik-*. Socrates begins with the very act of escape, but then turns to what seems to be a marginal issue, namely, paying out money and doing favors for those who will help him. In parallel, he moves from the adjective δίκαιος (*dikaios*) to δίκαια πράζομεν (*dikaia praxomen*), ἀδικήσομεν (*adikēsomen*), ἄδικα ἐργαζόμενοι (*adika ergazomenoi*), and finally τὸ ἀδικεῖν (*to adikein*). Here is the analysis:

a. *dikaios* (48b10–c1): For the very general act of escaping, without going into details, Socrates uses the structure of δίκαιον ἐμὲ ἐνθένδε περᾶσθαι ἐξιέναι ('It is right (*dikaion*) for me/I am justified in trying to get away'). Referring to this act as just is easily understood by Crito. He himself used this term at 45a1–2 and 45c6–7, as he believes that he is justified in doing whatever he can in order to save his friend (including breaking the law). Accordingly, Socrates is justified, too, in doing whatever he can to save himself.

b. Transitional passage (48c2–c6): Socrates is about to move from the adjective *dikaios* to a final verb using *dik-*. He therefore invents a transitional passage criticizing the considerations raised by Crito in favor of the escape, but in fact creates a space large enough between the two usages of *dik-* so that Crito will not notice the transition.

c. The insertion of *to adikein* (48c7–d3): This is the crucial step of this whole passage, with the first appearance in the dialogue of the verb *adikeō* (48d2). The phrase *dikaia praxomen* is opposed without comment to *adikēsomen*.⁴² The object of both formulations is *not* the escape itself but rather things subordinate to the escape—paying out money and doing favors for those who will help Socrates to escape. This apparently strange fact may be explained by Socrates' awareness that Crito cannot yet see the escape *itself* as an act of committing injustice (which in Crito's mind is wrongly harming *someone*).⁴³ Thus *adikeō* in its first appearance is applied to something 'real' such as paying a bribe,⁴⁴ with a human being as its object (paying *someone* money). Since the verb is used in our dialogue exclusively to denote wrongfully harming a human being,⁴⁵

⁴¹ ἀδικήσομεν appears already at 48d2 but its objects are actions such as paying out money and doing favors to people. ἀδικεῖν at the end of the section has no clear object and thus might hint at breaking the laws.

⁴² This deliberation between δίκαια πράζομεν and ἀδικήσομεν is described by Socrates as nothing but a repetition of the former deliberation between δίκαιον and οὐ δίκαιον mentioned at 48b11–c1: 'But as for us ... let's not consider anything other than what we were talking about just now' (48c7–8).

⁴³ Pace Weiss (1998), 66,72, who uses this passage to argue that this very paying out of money and doing of favors is the real problem of Crito and the escape.

⁴⁴ Illegally escaping has no parallel in reality. It is a forensic description of leaving jail.

⁴⁵ Cf. πεπεισμένος δὴ ἐγὼ μηδένα ἀδικεῖν πολλοῦ δέω ἐμμαντόν γε ἀδικήσειν ('Being convinced then that I do no wrong (*adikein*) to anybody, there's no way I'm going to wrong (*adikēsein*) myself') (*Apol.* 37b2–3).

it is no surprise that it has not appeared until now. Wrongfully harming anyone has not been germane to the discussion about getting Socrates out of jail. At this stage, Socrates will be satisfied if Crito accepts that *adikeō* has something to do with the escape—although not with the escape itself.

d. 48d3–d6: *to adikein* alone: This is the final stage, which ends with *to adikein* without any object, and the reason is clear. Socrates now wants to release Crito from thinking of *adikeō* with reference to human beings who are bribed and the like (as he was still doing at the previous stage), and yet he cannot mention the real object of committing justice—the *polis*—since it has not yet been personified.

Thus, the verb *adikeō* is introduced in three stages. First it has to be connected with the escape—not with the escape itself but with people who are to be paid in order for the escape to succeed. Once *adikeō* has been introduced, the verb's object must be moved from bribable humans to the *polis* with its laws. The third stage, in the Laws' speech, has the laws personified, since Crito can only conceive of committing injustice to humans.

Throughout 48b10–d6, three pairs of (positive and negative) terms with the *dik-* stem appear, the first pair in the same person and number, οὐ δίκαιον—δίκαιον (*ou dikaion—dikaion*) (48b11–c2), and so too the second pair, δίκαια πράξομεν—ἀδικήσομεν (*dikaia praxomen—adikēsomen*) (48c8–d2). The third pair, ἄδικα ἐργαζόμενοι—τοῦ ἀδικεῖν (*adika ergazomenoi-tou adikein*) (48d3–6), is unusual, as the first term of this pair is a synonym for the last term of the second pair. Moreover, *adika ergazomenoi* refers to exactly the same thing as *adikēsomen*. How can we account for this change of verbs? Socrates' aim, I argue, is to separate two uses of *adikeō* by positioning *adika ergazomenoi* in between.⁴⁶ While *adikēsomen* (d2) refers here to paying out money and doing favors, the object of *to adikein* (d6–7), I claim, is something else currently unspecified; it is not yet a human being, but shortly will be.

II. WHAT EXACTLY DOES CRITO NOT UNDERSTAND?

Throughout the second part of the dialogue (from 46a9 onwards), Socrates leads the conversation and Crito responds to his suggestions. In most cases, Crito agrees with Socrates,⁴⁷ but in one instance he neither agrees nor disagrees. Instead, he expresses confusion about the question:

Ἐκ τούτων δὴ ἄθρει. ἀπιόντες ἐνθένδε ἡμεῖς μὴ πείσαντες τὴν πόλιν πότερον κακῶς
τινας ποιοῦμεν,⁴⁸ καὶ ταῦτα οὕς ἤκιστα δεῖ, ἢ οὐ; καὶ ἐμμένομεν οἷς ὠμολογήσαμεν

⁴⁶ Note also the word αὐτὰ at 48d3. Thus ἄδικα ἐργαζόμενοι seems to be connected both to τοῦ ἀδικεῖν at d5–6 and to ἀδικήσομεν at d2.

⁴⁷ Of course, there are nuances here too. Consider, for example, Crito's two answers to Socrates' questions at 49b7–c1. To Socrates' question Οὐδαμῶς ἄρα δεῖ ἀδικεῖν, Crito answers decisively οὐ δῆτα. To Socrates' subsequent question οὐδὲ ἀδικούμενον ἄρα ἀνταδικεῖν, ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ οἴονται, ἐπειδὴ γε οὐδαμῶς δεῖ ἀδικεῖν, Crito answers more hesitantly οὐ φαίνεται, perhaps suggesting that Crito is not fully convinced of what he himself has just affirmed.

⁴⁸ For using κακῶς ποιεῖν instead of ἀδικεῖν, see my discussion below.

δικαίους οὐσιν ἢ οὐ; KP. Οὐκ ἔχω, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἀποκρίνασθαι πρὸς ὃ ἐρωτᾷς· οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ (49e9–50a5)

SOC: Then consider what follows: if we leave this place without first persuading the *polis*, are we harming (*kakōs poiein*) certain people and those whom we should do least harm to, or not? And do we stand by what we agreed to be just (*dikaia*), or not?

CR: I can't answer your question, Socrates, because I don't understand it.

This happens in the dialogue only here, so we may expect to discover something critical about the way Crito thinks.

I have underlined the words in the text which show that the question refers specifically to human beings. Crito simply cannot understand how he wrongly harms *anyone*⁴⁹ by helping Socrates to escape from jail.⁵⁰ Attempts to explain Crito's difficulty usually miss the point that Crito still cannot associate committing injustice with the polis. For example, Brown (1992), 70, argues that Crito's difficulty is surely not 'how it could be that Socrates' escape would harm *the state*' (emphasis mine), since 'Crito's comments from the outset of the dialogue indicate his willingness to defy and so to undermine civil norms if necessary in order to save his friend'. It is easy to see Brown's double mistake. First, Brown presupposes that Crito already understands that the state is the object of harm. Second, Crito does not associate breaking the law with harming someone. This identification is exactly what the Laws will try to establish later on, by personifying the laws.⁵¹

Socrates, however, will personify the laws and the *polis* only *after* Crito has done it himself, which happens at 50a6–c4. I consider this the most important passage of the *Crito*, and its final sentence is the key to understanding the dialogue.

III. CRITO'S FINAL STEP: COMBINING THE NOUN *POLIS* WITH THE VERB *ADIKEŌ*

In our previous discussion, we seem to have overlooked an important detail. The verb used in Socrates' question at 49e9–50a3 is not ἀδικέω (*adikeō*) but κακῶς ποιέω (*kakōs poieō*). Here we need to remind ourselves of Crito's difficulty with the combination of the noun *polis* and the verb ἀδικέω. Socrates, who understands this difficulty, is careful not to use the verb ἀδικέω too early. This is the first time that Socrates challenges Crito

⁴⁹ Pace Weiss (1998), 4, who thinks that Crito's inability to understand Socrates' question stems from the fact that Crito—in Weiss' view—is completely detached from Socrates' philosophy and way of life: 'Crito has known Socrates intimately for a very long time, for a whole lifetime. Yet he neither holds in esteem nor even comprehends Socrates' moral commitments. All he can finally say is "I have no answer to what you ask, Socrates. For I do not understand" (*Cr.* 50a4–5).'

⁵⁰ I am ignoring here the second part of Socrates' question. However, I will add that Crito also cannot understand what agreement, and especially with whom, Socrates is about to break by escaping.

⁵¹ Note the plural τινάς and οὐς. As the *polis* is mentioned in the same sentence, the candidates for whom Socrates is about to harm are the laws (or the laws together with the *polis*).

with the possibility that the jail break might cause harm to a human being. Crito also regards harming the *polis* as an act of retaliation, so Socrates cannot use the verb ἀδικεῖν before presenting the *polis* as harming Crito first. In the meantime, Socrates chooses instead the phrase κακῶς ποιέω, a synonym for ἀδικέω,⁵² identified with ἀδικέω at 49c7–9 by Socrates and affirmed by Crito.⁵³

It is worth considering the long preamble leading to the point where πόλις and ἀδικέω are explicitly combined (50a6–c4):

ΣΩ. Ἄλλ' ὧδε σκόπει. εἰ μέλλουσιν ἡμῖν ἐνθένδε εἴτε ἀποδιδράσκειν, εἴθ' ὅπως δεῖ ὀνομάσαι τοῦτο, ἐλθόντες οἱ νόμοι καὶ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως ἐπιστάντες ἔροιντο· Εἰπέ μοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τί ἐν νῶ ἔχεις ποιεῖν; ἄλλο τι ἢ τοῦτω τῶ ἔργῳ ὃ ἐπιχειρεῖς διανοῆ τούς τε νόμους ἡμᾶς ἀπολέσαι καὶ σύμψασαν τὴν πόλιν τὸ σὸν μέρος; ἢ δοκεῖ σοι οἷόν τε ἔτι ἐκείνην τὴν πόλιν εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἀνατετράφθαι, ἐν ἣ ἂν αἱ γενόμεναι δίκαι μηδὲν ἰσχύωσιν ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἰδιωτῶν ἄκυροί τε γίνωνται καὶ διαφθείρωνται; τί ἐροῦμεν, ὦ Κρίτων, πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλα τοιαῦτα; πολλὰ γὰρ ἂν τις ἔχοι, ἄλλως τε καὶ ῥήτωρ, εἰπεῖν ὑπὲρ τούτου τοῦ νόμου ἀπολλυμένου ὃς τὰς δίκας τὰς δικασθείσας προστάττει κυρίας εἶναι.⁵⁴ ἢ ἐροῦμεν πρὸς αὐτούς ὅτι Ἡδίκηι γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἡ πόλις καὶ οὐκ ὀρθῶς τὴν δίκην ἔκρινεν; ταῦτα ἢ τί ἐροῦμεν; ΚΡ. Ταῦτα νῆ Δία, ὦ Σώκρατες. (50a6–c4)

SOC.: Consider it in this way. If, as I was on the point of running away (or whatever it should be called), the laws and the commonwealth (*hoi nomoi kai to koinon tes poleos*) should come to me and ask, 'Tell me, Socrates, what have you in mind to do? Are you not intending by this thing you are trying to do, to destroy us, the laws, and the entire polis (*tous nomous kai sumpasan ten polin*), so far as in you lies?⁵⁵ Or do you think that state can exist and not be overturned, in which case the decisions reached by the courts have no force but are made invalid and annulled by private persons?' What shall we say, Crito, in reply to this question and others of the same kind? For one might say many things, especially if one were an orator, about the destruction of that law which provides that the decisions reached by the courts shall be valid. Or shall we say to them, 'The *polis* harmed me and did not judge the case rightly?' Shall we say that, or what?

CR.: That is what we shall say, by Zeus, Socrates.

It should be noted that at 50a8 the Laws begin to speak, but their formal speech starts only at 50c5. It is my view that this passage (50a6–c3) is an introduction to the speech

⁵² If there is a difference between the two, κακῶς ποιέω may denote doing harm without any legal or customary connotation.

⁵³ ΣΩ. Τὸ γὰρ που κακῶς ποιεῖν ἀνθρώπους τοῦ ἀδικεῖν οὐδὲν διαφέρει. ΚΡ. Ἀληθῆ λέγεις. ('Soc. Because, I suppose, there is no difference between injuring (κακῶς ποιεῖν) people and wronging (ἀδικεῖν) them. Cr. Exactly.' I have used here Tredennick's (1961) translation. Emlyn-Jones (2017) has 'harming' for κακῶς ποιεῖν, and 'to behave unjustly' for ἀδικεῖν.

⁵⁴ See Steadman (2006), who sees in the Laws' speech the *graphē paranomōn* procedure. See also Klonosky (2014), 17, based on Steadman, who argues that Socrates supports not only democracy but also its legal procedures.

⁵⁵ There has been much debate about how Socrates' exit from Athens could destroy the city. I adopt here Allen's view (1972) that the violation of a single law can destroy an entire system of laws. A somewhat similar view is held also by Farrell (1978).

itself, and its main aim is to introduce the πόλις-ἀδικέω combination so enthusiastically accepted by Crito. Moreover, the whole of the Laws' speech, starting at 50c5, is actually a response to Socrates' apparent argument in favor of breaking the law in retaliation for the *polis* harming him.

This entire passage has, therefore, one clear aim—to prepare Crito to accept the justification Socrates suggests: ἡδίκηει γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἡ πόλις ('the *polis* harmed me'). Only by accepting this justification does Crito consciously⁵⁶ personify the *polis*. Accordingly, only after Crito's implicit personification of the *polis* can Socrates explicitly personify the Laws and the *polis* as well.

Beginning with the terminology, we may ask why the Laws appear together with τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως (*to koinon tēs poleōs*). The strength of the question is enhanced by the fact that the latter term appears only once in the *Crito*. From 50c5 until the end of the speech, the Laws appear alone. I argue, therefore, that *to koinon tēs poleōs* has a specific aim which, once achieved, is no longer needed. That aim is to enable the verb *adikein* to join the noun *polis* in the justification Socrates suggests to Crito: ἡδίκηει γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἡ πόλις (*ēdikei gar hēmas hē polis*).⁵⁷

Socrates uses three steps to reach this end: (1) τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως (*to koinon tēs poleōs*) appears along with οἱ νόμοι (*hoi nomoi*); (2) οἱ νόμοι appears together with σύμπασαν τὴν πόλιν (*sumpasan tēn polin*); and (3) only then ἡ πόλις (*hē polis*) appears alone.

Now Socrates may hope that Crito can accept that a *polis* can harm (*ēdikei*) a human being. Only then does the option of retaliation become available. If a *polis* harms (*adikein*) a citizen, why should the citizen not harm it back (*antadikein*)?⁵⁸ Crito, as we know, not only agrees that such a counterargument could be used against the *polis*, he accepts it enthusiastically. This enables the Laws to start their speech.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Plato's *Crito* is concerned with a certain type of citizen represented by Crito. Throughout the dialogue, Socrates tries to address Crito's dilemma, which arises from the attempt to smuggle Socrates out of jail. In this scenario, Crito regards himself as

⁵⁶ In fact, Crito had unwittingly personified the *polis* long before by treating his law breaking as retaliation against his fellow citizens (his external circle where retaliation is justified), who harmed him first.

⁵⁷ Of course, the phrase *to koinon tēs poleōs* can be read as merely exegetic. If so, however, why does it appear just once? Taking into account the context of the whole passage 50a6–c3 might suggest a better explanation.

⁵⁸ However, even after presenting the *polis* as harming him (τὸ ἀδικεῖν) at 50c1–2, Socrates does not explicitly draw the conclusion that a citizen is entitled to harm the *polis* in return. Socrates leaves Crito to draw this conclusion on his own. It is apparently easier for Crito to hear that the *polis* may harm someone than the reverse. Tredennick (1961) seems to have fallen into this trap. In his translation, he adds the conclusion that Socrates refrained from making: 'Shall we say, Yes, I do intend to destroy the laws, because the state wronged me by passing a faulty judgment at my trial? Is this to be our answer, or what?' The statement 'I do intend to destroy the laws, because' is missing in the original Greek. Socrates is careful not to mention the retaliation itself but only the cause for the retaliation.

good in three ways. As a private man, it is just for him to help his friend. As a generally decent fellow, he abides by an unwritten agreement to behave justly by taking care not to commit injustice against a fellow citizen even during the escape attempt. He is also good as a law-abiding citizen since he regularly keeps the law, and in the few cases where he does not, he feels justified in retaliating against a *polis* which he feels has harmed him. Crito's worldview becomes apparent throughout the dialogue through various terminological usages of the root *dik-*.

Crito is justified (δικαίος, *dikaios*) in wanting to help his friend escape from jail (δίκαια πράττειν, *dikaia prattein*). He is careful not to break his unwritten agreement with his fellow citizens regarding just acts (δίκαια, *dikaia*), first and foremost in not committing injustice (ἀδικέω, *adikeō*) to anyone else. His only 'problem' seems to be in breaking the law (τὸ ἄδικον, *to adikon*), but here Crito uses two complementary strategies. First, breaking the law (τὸ δίκαιον, *to adikon*) has nothing to do with τὸ ἀδικεῖν (*to adikein*), which is applicable to human beings alone. Second, Crito feels justified in breaking the law when it is an act of retaliation (ἀνταδικεῖν, *antadikein*), an integral part of δίκαια (*dikaia*). In order to break the law justly, he treats the *polis* with its laws as part of his external circle, where retaliation is justified. Socrates' aim is to refute this worldview of Crito, along the way presenting him as a bad man, an indecent fellow, and a law-breaking citizen. This will be done through the Laws' speech, which merits a study of its own.

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