Plato had no chapter headings, and the form of a dialogue makes him appear to wander from topic to topic aimlessly, often with digressions and sub-digressions. These analyses, given in increasing detail, are intended to help the reader find his way round the text. Digressions and sub-digressions are indicated by indentations and indentations of indentations. The suggestion that there were many editions of the Republic is controversial. Many scholars think that the Republic was conceived as a whole, but we find it helpful to view the text as having been written in stages.

Short Schema of the Republic

1. Book I  Perhaps originally a separate Socratic Dialogue: Περὶ Δικαίου (Peri Dikaiou), On Honesty
2. Books II, III and IV  Perhaps originally a first edition of ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ (POLITEIA), Republic (or The Constitution of Society)
   Book I  Prologue
   357-367 Glaucen and Adeimantus restate the challenge of moral scepticism.
   368-369 Introduction of Πολίς (Polis) analogy
   369-434 Πολίς (Polis) analogy. Cardinal virtues of a society identified
   434-435 Discussion of Πολίς (Polis) analogy
   435-444b Tripartite psyche: virtues of an individual identified
   444c-445b The value of δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosune) (first climax of the Republic)
   445c-449b Introduction: four bad types of constitution
   543c-580 The decline of the constitution, social and individual
   580a-c The superiority of δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosune) again vindicated (second climax of the Republic, second edition)
5. IX 580d-592 Appendices I and II (? added in fourth edition ?)
6. X 595-608b Appendix III (? added in fifth edition ?)
7. X 608c-621 Epilogue (? added in fifth edition ?)
Further Analyses

Republic I

Perhaps originally a separate Socratic Dialogue Περὶ Δικαιοσύνην On Honesty

327-331b Introduction. Scene setting. The Good Life.

331c-336a Inconclusive Socratic Dialogue with Cephalus and Polemarchus on what δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosune), honesty, is.

336b-339e Thrasymachus’ intervention: δικαιοσύνη, morality, is simply the interest of the stronger;

Socrates probes ambiguities of ‘interest’ and ‘stronger’, and traps Thrasymachus in self-contradiction.

340 Cleitophon’s amendment—rejected by Thrasymachus

340d-341a Thrasymachus restates his proto-Marxist position.

341-348 Inconclusive Socratic Dialogue with Thrasymachus on whether honesty really is the best policy.

348c-e Is morality/honesty/humanity merely good-natured stupidity?

349-354 Three concluding arguments:

1. Lyre strings should not be tightened too much.
2. Even among thieves honour is needed.
3. Humane behaviour is the true function of human beings.

354b-c Conclusion: the argument has been inconclusive; more thought needed.

Republic II-IV

369-434 Πόλις (Polis) analogy

369-374 Origin and nature of society

369-371 mutual help essential

371-374 structure of complex communities

375-376 Guardians needed for government

376e-412b Education of Future Guardians

376e-400c The Curriculum

376e-392c Literature

392c-398b The Dangers of Dramatics

398c-400c Music

400c-403c aims of education

403c-412 physical education

412-427 the Guardians

427-434 excellencies of the Πόλις (Polis)

434-435 The application of the Πόλις (Polis) Analogy

435-441c Analysis of the individual personality

441c-445b Integrity is psychological health. QED
An Engagement with Plato’s Republic

Republic V, VI and VII

Digression added in third edition: ostensibly about the collective life of the guardians. In fact, chiefly concerned with metaphysical and epistemological issues:

451c4-471c The Unity of the Community
451c4-457c Community of wives and children
451c4-453b1 Equality of women
453b2-457c2 Inferiority of women
457c-461c Eugenics
462-466d5 Abolition of Self
462a-463e Reform of Language
464a-465b4 All interests shared
465b5-466d5 The bliss of the selfless
466e-471c Usages of War
466e-467e female and child soldiers
468a-469b4 penalties and rewards
469b5-471c Hellas

471c-540 The Intellectual Guardian
471-474 political power and intellectual commitment must be united
474b-480 the realm of the intellect
474b-475c definition of the intellectual
475c-480 nature of knowledge as contrasted with belief
475e-476 Forms
476-480 knowledge and belief

VI 484-502c government by intellectuals
484-487a need for knowledge
487b-489c academics unacceptable as governors
489c-497a the treason of the intellectuals
497a-502c the possibility of good government

502c-511 The Good
502c-506b goals of human life
506c-509c The Sun
509d-511 The Line

VII 514-521b The Cave
521c-540e academic education
521c-535a brochure for the Academy
521c-531c mathematics
524d-526c arithmetic
526c-527c geometry
527d-528c solid geometry
528e-530c particle dynamics
530c-531c theory of vibrations
531c-535a philosophy
535a-540 moral requirements of the intellectual life
540e5-541 replacement of the existing gang by the uncorrupted young
Republic VIII and IX(i)-580c

445c1-547c4 Prefaces:
445c1-449b1 (1) Need to discuss inferior constitutions as a foil to the best
543a-545c7 (2) Recapitulation after long digression
545c8-547c4 (3) Number of the Beast: transition from ἀριστοκρατία (aristokratia) to τιμοκρατία (timocratia)

547c5-550c3 Τιμοκρατία (Timocratia) (English ‘Aristocracy’) 547c5-548c5 aristocratic society
548e6-550c aristocratic individual
550d-555b Ὀλιγαρχία (Oligarchia) (English ‘Plutocracy’) 550d-551b7 transition from aristocracy to plutocracy.
551b8-553a plutocracy.
553a-553e transition from aristocrat to plutocrat
554a-555b plutocrat
555b-562a Δημοκρατία (Democratia) Permissive Society
555b-557a transition from plutocracy (cf. 572) to permissive society
555a-558c6 permissive society (‘democracy’) 598c8-561a transition from plutocrat to libertine cf. 572c1-d4
561a-562a libertine
562a-576b Τυραννίς (Turannis) Autistic Autocracy
562a-566b transition from permissiveness to totalitarian dictatorship
566d-569c totalitarian dictatorship
571a-573b5 transition from libertine to autisticocrat
573b-576b description of autistic autocracy
576b-580c Evaluation of Autistic Autocracy:

Republic IX(ii)

580d-588a Two Appendices on Pleasure and Recapitulation (added in fourth edition)
580d-583b Philosophy is fun.
583c-587b Pleasure not really pleasurable
587b-588a Life of the φιλόσοφος (philosophos) 729 times as pleasant as that of the autistic autocrat.
588a-592b Recapitulation of argument of second edition of the Republic

Republic X

Perhaps added in fifth edition
X 595-608b Appendix on Art. Refutation of Critics. Expulsion of Poets
X 608c-621 Epilogue. Myth of Er