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# **Unity and Complexity in Plato's Conception of the Soul**

**Xanthippi Bourlogianni**

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A thesis submitted to the  
**Department of Classics and Ancient History**  
**Durham University**

In accordance with the requirements for the  
*Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*

2008

1 8 DEC 2008



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## **Abstract**

In this thesis I examine Plato's conception of the soul in the *Republic*. I attempt to show that Plato in the *Republic* regards the human soul as something unitary and that the unity the human soul possesses is compatible with the complexity and plurality that the soul displays. I wish to argue that the nature and the unity of the soul, which is expressed by the fact that the soul desires the good as the whole, is not adequately revealed in the arguments of the division of the soul in Book 4 of the *Republic*. In Book 4 the reader is presented with a divided soul that is characterized by internal conflict. I suggest that one would achieve better understanding of the unity of the soul and its rational nature if one followed the 'longer road' that Socrates recommends in *Republic* Book 6. The 'longer road', which involves a better methodology, would also provide one with more adequate understanding of the relation between the parts of the soul and the relationship between the parts and the whole. I suggest that a proper understanding of the nature of the soul as a unity and a whole involves the assumption that one part is not in essential opposition to the other parts and the whole, as it appeared to be the case in Book 4. Consequently radically separate parts do not need to be accepted in the soul.



*For my parents*

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## Introduction

In this thesis I examine Plato's conception of the soul in the *Republic*. I attempt to show that Plato in the *Republic* regards the human soul as something unitary and that the unity the human soul possesses is compatible with the complexity and plurality that the soul displays. I wish to argue that the unity of the soul, which is expressed by the fact that the soul as a whole desires the good, is not adequately revealed in the arguments of the division of the soul in Book 4 of the *Republic*. In Book 4 the reader is presented with a divided soul, which is characterized by internal conflict. A different approach is needed so that one may grasp adequately the nature of the soul and its unity. I wish to suggest that one would reach better understanding of the nature of the soul and its unity if one followed the 'longer way' that Socrates recommends in *Republic* Book 6. The understanding of the nature of the soul and its unity would not exclude the presence of complexity in the soul. This would also provide one with adequate understanding of the relation between the parts of the soul and the relationship between the parts and the whole. A proper understanding of the nature of the soul as a whole would involve the assumption that one part is not in essential opposition to the other parts and the whole, as appeared to be the case in Book 4.

In attempting to show that Plato takes the human soul to be unitary, I also wish to indicate that there is continuity in Plato's conception of the soul throughout the dialogues or at least greater continuity than it is often recognized. I am not going to discuss general issues pertaining to the continuity and consistency in Plato's thought. Furthermore, I am not going to undertake an extensive comparison of the *Republic* with other dialogues. However, in attempting to trace Plato's conception of the parts of the soul in the *Republic* and how he understands the relation between the parts to each other and the relation between the whole and the parts, I shall attempt to provide an interpretation of the *Republic* which will allow the views expressed in this dialogue to appear continuous with views expressed in dialogues which are normally



understood to be either earlier, such as the *Gorgias*, or later, such as the *Theaetetus*, the *Sophist*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Timaeus*.

There are many questions that arise regarding the treatment of the soul in the *Republic* and the relation of such treatment with both earlier and later dialogues. One question is whether and how far Plato in the *Republic* rejects so-called Socratic intellectualism. The argument for the division of the soul in the *Republic* is often interpreted as signalling Plato's distancing himself from the psychology of the so-called earlier dialogues. On the other hand, there are issues of consistency and continuity that concern the relation between the *Republic* and later dialogues. For instance, while in dialogues such as the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedrus* Plato appears to be still committed to the tripartition of the soul, in the *Philebus* the theory of tripartition seems to be absent, while in the *Laws* a bipartite scheme seems to be in use. Moreover, there is apparent divergence in the later dialogues concerning the nature of the disembodied soul. Therefore, in the *Phaedrus* the disembodied soul is apparently tripartite while in the *Timaeus* it seems to be the case that only one part is considered to be immortal.

It seems to me that a fundamental question one has to deal with is whether Plato takes the soul to be a complex or a simple entity whether embodied or disembodied. Furthermore, one may ask whether Plato in the *Republic* and in the later dialogues conceives the soul to be something complex and whether he conceives such complexity to undermine the soul's unity; if not, how the parts are precisely related to each other so that the soul can appear to be something rational and unitary.

I am going to suggest that Plato in the *Republic* remains committed to the so-called basic Socratic tenets, such as the thesis that the soul desires the good, the corresponding involuntariness of wrongdoing and the thesis that wrongdoing is or involves ignorance. These 'paradoxes' are in my opinion related to Plato's conception of the soul as an entity that is unitary and essentially rational. Therefore, I attempt to provide an account of the parts of the soul in the *Republic* that will not undermine the soul's unity. I believe that such account can be also applied to later dialogues such as the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus* in relation to which I shall suggest that the soul, both embodied and disembodied, is considered to be complex.

Issues of consistency and interpretation emerge not only concerning the relation of the *Republic* to other dialogues but also inside the *Republic* itself. The main focus of my thesis will be on questions of interpretation that concern the *Republic*. The argument for the division of the soul in Book 4 is commonly interpreted as indicating the acceptance of good-independent desires in the soul, and more generally as signifying the rejection of the intellectualist position of the earlier dialogues. However, in Book 6 Socrates asserts that the good is the aim of human action and attributes human failure to ignorance of the good (505e). Furthermore, in asserting that all souls desire the good, Socrates appears to indicate the unity of the soul. Thus one may ask whether Socrates' claims in Book 6 can be reconciled with the division of the soul in Book 4.

Furthermore, in the course of his discussion of the immortality of the soul in Book 10 (611a-612a) Socrates indicates that the nature of the soul has not been adequately revealed in his discussion of the soul in the earlier Books of the *Republic*. Socrates' claims in Book 10 can be associated with the warning he has addressed against his approach to the soul in Book 4 (435c-d) and that he has been repeated in Book 6 (504b). The question arises whether Socrates' account of the soul in the earlier Books is inadequate or fails, and if it is inadequate, where precisely this inadequacy lies. Furthermore, if the arguments for the division of the soul are taken to be inadequate one may ask why Socrates has introduced these arguments in the first place.

In my thesis I suggest that the inadequacy of Socrates' arguments lies in the fact that Socrates has not tried to provide an account of the nature or essence of the soul. Furthermore, I assume that to accept that the soul has a nature is also to accept that the soul is something unitary. The argument for the division of the soul did not provide an account of the nature of the soul, but rather it attempted to provide an account of the nature of the parts of the soul. Furthermore, it did not indicate that the soul has unity. More specifically, the argument in Book 4 rested on the assumption that there can be straightforward opposition in the soul, and in order to accommodate such opposition Socrates separated the opposing factors. In separating the elements of the soul, Socrates indicated that the soul is not something self-contradictory. However, I

believe that the account of the soul as something unitary is a stronger assumption than the assumption that it is not self-contradictory.

I shall attempt to show that the acceptance of the soul's unity, which is indicated in Books 6-7 and also in Book 10, is not compatible with the radical separation of the parts that has been established in Book 4. It is not compatible with the conception of the parts as opposites, and also with the presence of direct and straightforward opposition in the soul. Reciprocal separation of parts has been introduced as a consequence of the presence of opposition in the soul. I think that the unity of the soul entails both that the elements themselves are not in essential opposition to each other and also particular instances of conflict or opposition tend to be resolved. I shall suggest that to accept that the soul has a unity and a whole is to accept that the parts depend on the whole and are also interrelated and interconnected.

Nevertheless, separation of parts can be seen as a first step towards achieving and establishing the unity of the soul. I am going to suggest that in separating the parts of the soul Plato's primary aim is to establish the potential for reason's autonomy in the soul. Furthermore, I believe that reason's separation from the lower parts is necessary for the unity of the soul. The unity of the soul is due to the presence of reason in it. Reason can integrate the different elements in the soul by imposing order and harmony to them. More precisely, I believe that the unity of the soul presupposes that the lower parts of the soul are dependent on reason and not separate or independent from reason. Therefore, I believe that there are no desires in the soul independent from reason. The lower elements' sharing in reason is not uniform in the human soul and thus there is room for irrationality or conflict. But ultimately, there is no 'part' of the soul which is completely outside reason's sphere of influence. Finally, the assumption that the lower parts of the soul are not separate from reason, while reason can be separate from them, indicates, on the one hand, the possibility of the autonomy of human soul while embodied and, at the same time, the possibility of harmony in the soul's relationship with the body and the sensible world.

In the first part of the thesis I discuss the argument for the division of the soul and the account of the virtues in Book 4 of the *Republic*. I examine the relationship

between the parts of the soul and the relationship between the parts and the whole that the argument for the division of the soul seeks to establish. Then, I discuss the account of the virtues of justice and *sōphrosunē* in Book 4 in order to trace the relation between the parts of the soul that these virtues involve. I associate justice with separation and *sōphrosunē* with unity. I eventually suggest that both justice as separation of elements and also *sōphrosunē* as unity of elements depend on reason's activity.

In the second part of the thesis I discuss Socrates' warning that a longer road is needed in order to acquire better understanding of the soul. I attempt to speculate on what a longer way would involve and to trace the inadequacy of the arguments for the division of the soul. Furthermore, I attempt to provide an account of the relationship between the parts of the soul and the soul as a whole. Then, I discuss the account of the soul that Plato provides in Book 10 in the context of the discussion of the soul's immortality. I suggest that Plato conceives the nature of the soul as something unitary which desires the good as a whole and as something simultaneously complex. Finally I attempt to discuss the question of how justice would be conceived in relation to a soul that is not characterized by conflict.

In the third part of the thesis I discuss more extensively the conflict between reason and appetite that Socrates discovers in the soul in Book 4. I attempt to indicate that Plato in the context of the argument in Book 4 is not aiming at rejecting the position that the soul essentially desires the good. Then I discuss Socrates' assertion in Book 6 that the good is the aim of human action. I attempt to provide an account of human desire and action that does justice to this assertion. Finally, I conclude my thesis with a discussion of the arguments concerning the nature of pleasure in Book 9. I suggest that Plato's account of the nature of pleasure indicates the unity of the soul as a unity between reason and desire.



## Part I

### Parts of the Soul and the Virtues in Book 4 of the *Republic*

#### Chapter 1

#### The principle of opposites and the division of the soul

##### Some preliminary questions

The argument for the division of the soul is introduced in order to settle a question that Socrates carefully formulates at 436a8-b4. Socrates has already distinguished between three kinds or characters (*eidē te kai ēthē*, 435e1) and has attributed these characters to the soul. His grounds have been that these kinds or forms of behaviour characterize cities or nations and their origin cannot be something other than the individual (435d9-436a6). The difficult question is whether we do each of these three things<sup>1</sup> with the soul as a whole, or with different elements in the soul:

Τόδε δὲ ἤδη χαλεπόν, εἰ τῷ αὐτῷ τούτῳ ἕκαστα πράττομεν ἢ τρισὶν οὖσιν ἄλλο ἄλλῳ· μανθάνομεν μὲν ἑτέρῳ, θυμούμεθα δὲ ἄλλῳ τῶν ἐν

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<sup>1</sup> Socrates at 435e1 mentions kinds and characters (*εἶδη τε καὶ ἤθη*). At 436a9-b1, he seems to refer to mental activities or functions such as desiring, learning, being angry, which are treated as forms of action (*πράττομεν* 436a8-9, b2-3). There is implicit association between character (e.g. the *φιλομαθές*, *θυμοειδές φιλοχρήματον* 435e-436a) and mental activities such as desiring or learning. The association also indicates a connection between internal activity and external behaviour. The parts of the soul are (*ἤθη*) are associated with characters also in Book 10, (604e2, 605a5). Parts of the soul are most commonly called *εἶδη*, but also *γέννη* (e.g. 441c6). The term *μέρος* occurs at 442b10, c4, 444b3, and 581a6.

ἡμῖν, ἐπιθυμοῦμεν δ' αὖ τρίτῳ τινὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν τροφήν τε καὶ γέννησιν ἡδονῶν καὶ ὅσα τούτων ἀδελφά, ἢ ὅλη τῇ ψυχῇ καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν πράττομεν, ὅταν ὀρμήσωμεν. Ταῦτ' ἔσται τὰ χαλεπὰ διορίσασθαι ἀξίως λόγου.

*'But the matter begins to be difficult when you ask whether we do all these things with the same thing or whether there are three things and we do one thing with one and one with another-learn with one part of ourselves, feel anger with another, and with yet a third desire the pleasures of nutrition and generation and their kind, or whether it is with the entire soul that we function in each case when we once begin. That is what is really hard to determine properly.... Let us then attempt to define the boundary and decide whether they are identical to with one another in this way'* (trans. by Shorey).

On the basis of the argument for the division of the soul Socrates is going to suggest that we do not do each of these things with the soul as a whole, but rather with different elements in us (439d4-8, 441c4-6). Many commentators have observed that since Socrates has already distinguished different kinds of behaviour or mental activity the parts of the soul must be something more than these different functions or forms of mental activity.<sup>2</sup> The question that arises is what these parts are precisely and how Socrates conceives their relationship with the soul.

There are a variety of opinions concerning the character of the parts of the soul and the question of whether the parts of the soul should be considered to be different subjects. Woods (1987) argues that we need something more than three types of mental function, and that the division of the soul does not consist in a three-fold classification of mental phenomena (pp. 24-5, p. 47).<sup>3</sup> Woods understands the argument for the division of the soul as establishing different sources of psychic activity or action (p. 25). However, he argues that the parts are not subjects and maintains that the soul as a whole constitutes the subject of desires (pp. 34-5).

<sup>2</sup> See Crombie (1962), p. 345, Woods (1987) p. 30 ff., Irwin (1995) p. 203, Bobonich (2002) pp. 224-5.

<sup>3</sup> Woods more specifically objects to Cooper's interpretation (Cooper (1984) pp. 3-21).

Crombie (1962) much earlier than Woods has argued that the argument for the division of the soul is aiming at establishing different sources or origins for psychic activity: 'We conclude that when Plato talks about parts of the soul he is talking about acts which we perform, desires that we have, things in which we take delight. These are divided into three kinds because we acquire the propensity to perform these acts and the susceptibility to these feelings from three different sources' (p. 355). However, Crombie seems to understand the principle of opposites as establishing different subjects in the soul (p. 345), even though he believes that such a conception of the parts of the soul is absurd.<sup>4</sup> Price (1995) also declines to call the parts of the soul subjects or agents even though he recognizes that Plato may talk about them as if they are subjects (p. 54). He suggests that 'a subject of an activity cannot also be the aspect of another subject in respect of which this subject performs it' (p. 54). Price argues that the parts 'should rather be conceived on the analogy of physical spaces or fields that contain things' (p. 54). He defines a psychic part as a 'home of a family of desires and beliefs that have a tendency to stand in relations both of strong contrariety and confrontation with members of any other family but not of their own' (p. 53).

Bobonich (2002) p. 217 characterizes the parts of the soul as subjects: 'the person is a compound of distinct agent-like parts that are themselves the proper or ultimate subjects of beliefs, desires and other psychological states and activities.' He views the parts of the soul as having characteristics of a person (p. 219 and p. 220) and he believes that each part can move the agent to act without the cooperation of other parts (p. 220). Unlike Woods and Price, Bobonich does not recognize the soul as a whole as the subject of mental activities (p. 219). Finally Lorenz (2006), who adopts an interpretation of the overall strategy of the argument quite similar to the

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<sup>4</sup> Crombie (1962) p. 354 maintains that while the argument in Book 4, as well as what Plato says later in Book 9 (580-1) give the impression that Plato conceives the three parts are distinct subjects or souls, 'this impression must be misleading' since 'a conception of a committee of three souls animating a body, and struggling for the control of its members is intrinsically absurd'. Nevertheless Crombie believes that Book 4 suggests distinct subjects (see p. 354 and pp. 365-68) and he eventually argues that the principle of opposites and the argument in Book 4 should not be taken seriously (p. 354-355). According to Crombie, different origins of action could be established by a weaker principle (p. 354-355).

interpretation propounded by Bobonich, views the parts of the soul as responsible for motivating conditions (pp. 19-20) He also characterizes the parts as subjects of motivating conditions (p. 20). However, he argues that it does not follow that a particular desire cannot be attributed to the soul (as a whole) at all (p. 21). He clarifies that ‘we and our souls are (derivative) subjects or bearers of such motivating conditions in virtue of the fact that parts of our soul are the (proper) subjects of such conditions’ (p. 28).

Now I wish first to argue that city-soul analogy indeed suggests that Socrates seeks to establish something like different subjects or agents in the soul. Socrates needs to establish that the definition of justice, which has already been reached in the case of the city, can apply to the soul. The verb πράττειν (436a8-b3) that Socrates uses to refer to different forms of psychic activity, alludes to the definition of justice in the city as τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν (καὶ μὴ πολυπραγμονεῖν) for each part or class of the city (433a8-9).<sup>5</sup> For the definition of justice to apply to the soul we need to view the soul as analogous to the city that has been constructed by Socrates. It may be argued that three functions or forms of behaviour and activity are present in any city, as Socrates suggested that they are present in every soul. What is characteristic of Kallipolis, is that different activities or roles have been separated from each other by being assigned to different groups of people. While, for example, in democratic Athens all citizens are involved in ruling and deliberation concerning the common interest, in Kallipolis, as a result of ‘justice’, this role is assigned to a particular group of people. In the case of the soul we need to see whether something analogous is or can be the case, in other words whether different functions or activities can be separated and be assigned to different ‘parts’ of

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<sup>5</sup> I wish to clarify that the activity in question is mental activity and not external action. While ‘doing one’s own’ applies to agents in the city in terms of external action, in the case of the soul it applies to mental activity. Internal action is clearly distinguished from external action at 443c9-d2. Psychic activity is modelled on external action but the two kinds of action are not confused and certainly internal action is not reduced to external behaviour. Justice in the soul is primarily a form of internal action and only secondarily external action (443c9 ff.). One should not assume that if the inferior parts of the soul are considered as explanations of certain forms of internal activity, they are also considered to be sufficient explanations of external action or behaviour. I am going later to suggest that they are not sufficient explanations of any kind of action, whether internal or external.

the soul. Thus it appears that for the definition of justice to hold in the case of the soul, Socrates has to establish not merely different functions or activities, rather different subjects or parts to which these activities can be attributed.

However, in order to draw more specific conclusions I firstly wish to discuss the argument for the division of the soul in detail. I am going to follow the main lines of Woods' interpretation of the argument and argue against the interpretation of the argument in Book 4 that has been propounded by Bobonich because such an interpretation does not allow the soul to appear as something unitary, and the subject of motivation in any way. I am going to argue that the soul is presented as the qualified subject of certain activities. The parts themselves are these activities or functions, and what Socrates primarily establishes is that these activities are actually or potentially independent from each other. As I understand the argument, it does not exactly establish different parts as subjects or loci or sources of such activities. Rather it shows that these activities may constitute separate 'parts' in the soul. This separation, whilst it can be expressed in spatial terms, ultimately indicates the potential at least independence of certain activities from each other. Such independence perhaps may lead one to assume that they do have different sources.<sup>6</sup>

Eventually in a different section I will return to the argument for the division of the soul and argue that more generally Plato does not believe that the parts of the soul are autonomous from each other in the way at least that the argument for the division of the soul seeks to present them. Furthermore, if one understands Plato as trying to establish different sources of motivations, what the argument at best achieves is to indicate that there are partially different sources of motivation.

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<sup>6</sup> Eventually Socrates seems to imply that there are different sources or origins of the opposite attitudes at 439c10-d2.

## The principle of opposites and its application

The principle of opposites, which when applied to the soul yields different ‘parts’, is introduced at 436b9-c2<sup>7</sup>: Δῆλον ὅτι ταὐτὸν τάναντία ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν κατὰ ταὐτόν γε καὶ πρὸς ταὐτόν οὐκ ἐθελήσει ἅμα, ὥστε ἂν που εὐρίσκωμεν ἐν αὐτοῖς ταῦτα γιγνόμενα, εἰσόμεθα ὅτι οὐ ταὐτόν ἦν ἀλλὰ πλείω.

*‘It is obvious that the same thing will never do or suffer<sup>8</sup> opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing and at the same time. So if ever we find these contradictions in the functions of the mind we shall know that it was not the same thing functioning but a plurality’* (trans. by Shorey).

According to R. Stalley and C. Bobonich, the statement of the principle opens two possibilities for a solution in the case of the soul.<sup>9</sup> One possibility that the principle seems to allow is that the soul is not one thing, rather it is or it comprises a plurality of entities or parts, as long as the opposition is in the same respect in relation to the same thing and at the same time. The other possibility is not to deny that we

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<sup>7</sup> I call the principle that is introduced here ‘principle of opposites’ following Robinson (1971a) p. 380, Irwin (1977a) p. 327 Woods (1987) p. 3. Robinson (1971a), p. 39 distinguishes the principle from the law of contradiction. Woods (1987) p. 33 disagrees with Robinson (1971a) and denies that the principle is a formal one rather he argues that it is a ‘substantial one’. I am more inclined to see the principle of opposites in a way similar to Robinson (1971a) p. 48. In anachronistic terms perhaps it can be characterized as an *a priori* principle, since I think that it is not taken by Plato to be derived from or confirmed on the basis of observation. Woods (1987) p. 32 argues that if the principle is a purely formal principle there will be no question of disputing its validity; the question will simply be whether it is correctly applied in this case to yield the conclusion that Plato wants to establish. Since the principle is accepted as a hypothesis (437a5-6), it is possible to dispute its validity, but I think not on grounds (or at least merely on the grounds) of observation. The validity of the principle should be ultimately defended or rejected by dialectic and by reference to other hypotheses.

<sup>8</sup> In a later formulation of the principle ‘do or suffer opposites’ is supplemented with ‘be opposites’ (437a1).

<sup>9</sup> See Stalley (1975) p. 115-8 and Bobonich (2002) p. 223. According to Stalley (1975) p. 115, ‘Plato wishes to draw a distinction between saying that something is not affected with regard to the same and saying that two or more different entities are involved in it’.

have one thing, rather to qualify the opposition by showing that it is not κατὰ ταὐτὸν (in the same part or respect). Stalley and Bobonich have objected to the more ‘traditional’<sup>10</sup> interpretation, according to which it is shown that the opposition is not κατὰ ταὐτὸν in respect of the same thing (or part). They maintain that Socrates shows that the soul is divided into different subjects or entities, or into different parts.<sup>11</sup> In my discussion of the argument I shall follow the more ‘traditional’ path, and recognize no real distinction between respects and parts and thus that the soul does not suffer opposites κατὰ ταὐτὸν. Thus, in my opinion, the soul as a whole remains the qualified subject of the opposition.

Disagreement to a great extent has arisen because of the two apparent counterexamples of co-presence of opposites that Socrates is immediately going to discuss in order to defend and clarify his principle. Socrates applies the principle of opposites to a man who stands still and moves his hands and his head (436c9-d2), and also to a spinning top which can be said to revolve while staying on the same spot (436d4-e5). It has been maintained that the two examples receive different treatment. According to Stalley (1975) and Bobonich (2002), in the case of the man the application of the principle yields different parts or subjects, whereas in the case of the spinning top it yields different respects. On the basis of these examples they argue that the principle of opposites is applied to the soul in a way analogous to the way that it is applied to the man and not to the spinning top.

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<sup>10</sup> This interpretation seems to be adopted by Robinson (1971a), and is also propounded by Woods (1987) in particular pp. 33-5, Price (1995) p.40-1, Irwin (1977a) p. 191 and pp. 326-8 and Irwin (1995) p. 204.

<sup>11</sup> Stalley (1975) p. 113 argues that the expression *kata tauton* should not be translated as ‘in the same part’ (or in respect of the same part), rather should be translated ‘in the same respect’. Thus he distinguishes between parts and respects and argues that the soul is divided in different parts and not in different respects. There is a difference between the interpretation of the principle propounded by Bobonich on the one hand and Lorenz (2006) on the other hand, even though Lorenz follows Stalley and Bobonich. Lorenz also draws a distinction between ‘parts’ and ‘respects’. According to Lorenz the soul somehow remains one thing even though it has different parts and not respects, while Bobonich assumes that the soul does not remain one thing, rather we have separate subjects. Thus Lorenz seems to believe that the ‘ontology’ that the argument yields involves three different kinds of entities: A simple entity, an entity which is complex but has different respects, like the spinning top (p. 24, n. 14) and an entity that is complex in that it has ‘parts’.

Two main arguments can be adduced in support of their interpretation. First of all the redescription of the two examples is different. In the first example different parts feature as grammatical subjects of the verbs denoting motion and stability (436d1-2), while in the case of the spinning top the object as a whole remains the subject and it is qualified by showing that the opposition is not *κατὰ ταὐτὸν* (436e1-2). The second argument concerns the thesis that the spinning top is divided into parts. Both commentators argue that motion and rest in the case of the spinning top cannot be associated with different parts. It is the whole circle, which moves and stays still. We cannot in other words attribute motion to one part of the spinning top and rest to another<sup>12</sup>. On these grounds and on the basis of the fact that later Socrates treats the parts of the soul as grammatical subject it has been argued that the soul, unlike the spinning top is not divided into different respects, rather into distinct 'parts' or 'entities' which are also the subjects of different forms of psychic activity.

I wish now to deal with the first argument. The spinning top does have 'parts' and the circumference and the straight line/axis are indeed presented as parts of it. Stalley and Bobonich are right in arguing that there is no part of the spinning top that is at rest or in motion, provided that we understand 'part' in one sense of the term. I think that the importance of the second example lies in the fact that Plato wants to convey a more abstract notion of 'parts' and a corresponding notion of complexity, a notion that in my opinion is more applicable to the soul. The circumference and the straight line of the spinning-top are geometrical parts that cannot be reached by some sort of physical division.<sup>13</sup> Physical division could proceed ad infinitum and would

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<sup>12</sup> More precisely Bobonich (2002) p. 230 argues that it is not the case that only the circumference is standing still and he maintains that the whole top stands still since the whole top continues to occupy the same space. Bobonich, like Stalley ((1975) p.112) maintains that the problem is resolved by recognizing different kinds of motion (p. 231). Stalley (1975) p. 112 also argues that the spinning top moves while staying in one spot: 'Any part of it, however small its extension, must therefore be moving'. See also Cross and Woosley (1964) p. 116, who have made a similar point.

<sup>13</sup> Shields (2001) resting on this passage argues that we have 'conceptual parts' which he also suggests the soul involves. Shields distinguishes between 'conceptual', 'aggregative' and 'organic' parts (146-7). He believes that the soul according to Plato is essentially simple and he argues that the parts that the argument in Book 4 establishes are compatible with simplicity, because they are solely conceptual parts



not yield a part that stands still. Thus, I think that separate parts in this case are reached by reason through some process of abstraction, which aims at making opposition specific. Furthermore, it seems to me that the fact that we have different kinds of parts in the case of the human body and in the case of the spinning top does not undermine Plato's principle or his argument since this principle involves no restriction on what counts as part and what not. Any given entity, or anything that we independently accept to be one entity, in which opposition is present in relation to the same thing and at the same time has to be considered to be complex and to have parts of a certain kind. Opposition may not constitute the sole criterion of complexity, but this is the criterion that Socrates provides in this context.

Perhaps at this stage I should also discuss the question of whether spatial language needs to be applied in the case of the parts of the soul. In the case of the spinning top the 'parts' or 'respects' are not specified as rest and motion themselves, rather as the circumference and the axis. These seem to be treated as spatial parts, which the opposites, which in this case are rest and motion, can be associated with. In the case of the soul however, in the course of the argument it will turn out that the parts are the psychic activities themselves.<sup>14</sup> If the parts of the soul are considered to be kinds of motion, or if they are considered to be analogous to physical motion,<sup>15</sup> then it seems to be the case that the parts are not something which contain the opposites, or something other than the opposites in which the opposites can be

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and conceptual parts in his opinion are compatible with simplicity. I am not sure that the argument in Book 4 really establishes one conception of the parts at the expense of the other. The parts of the soul certainly appear to be 'organic', since according to Shields' definition organic parts are 'functionally defined entities' (p.146) and the parts of the soul are certainly functionally defined. Furthermore, as I am going to suggest later, it may also look as though we have 'aggregative parts' since no principle of unity is established which would show how functions are unified. But more generally, as I am going to suggest in the following chapters Shields is right in maintaining (p. 149) that the argument for the division of the soul, since it rests on experience, cannot establish anything essential about the soul at all and thus also whether it is essentially simple or complex and precisely in what way it is complex.

<sup>14</sup> This becomes clear at 439a9 where thirst is specified as one of the two respects to which the soul is divided. I should note here that both Bobonich (2002) p. 233 and Stalley (1975) p. 116 are in my opinion mistaken in assuming that there is no mention of different respects after some point in the argument.

<sup>15</sup> See 437b1-5.

located, or by reference to which they can be distinguished like the 'circumference' and the 'axis'. The text indicates that the parts are the opposite movements themselves. Socrates does not mention something further in the soul which contains the opposites and which is a part of the soul. If there is something that is presented as having or containing the opposites this is the soul, in which the opposites are said to be (439c6-7). Now as I am going to argue more extensively, Plato's primary aim is to encourage us to consider these mental activities as separate. Spatial language is certainly helpful because it is easier to think of them as separate if we allocate them to different spatial 'parts' of the soul or if we imagine them as occupying different places in a container, which is the soul.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, in my opinion, what is the primary aim is this form of separation or distinction of activities in the mind, and possibly spatial language of this kind may be considered to be dispensable in the end.<sup>17</sup>

Now I would like to discuss more extensively the two apparent counterexamples. The two apparent counterexamples are treated in the same way and the application of the principle yields descriptions that are logically equivalent. In both cases Socrates objects to a mistaken description of the case and he supplies an alternative formulation that protects the speaker from contradiction. While the two

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<sup>16</sup> This opens the more general question whether the soul is to be considered as a spatial entity. The later dialogues in presenting the soul as self-motion point to this direction. I think that again the parts of the soul would not be somehow places in the soul rather they would be different kinds of movements.

<sup>17</sup> For this reason I am not sure whether Price's (1995) characterization of the parts of the soul as homes of different affections (pp. 53-55) is correct. Now it is true encouraged to see the parts as somehow containing many desires and they can be seen as 'homes' of a number of desires. However what the argument strictly speaking establishes is that thirst constitutes one part of the soul. One question is whether the desires for example that are attributed to the appetitive part have something that unifies them, apart from the fact that they are all irrational or potentially in opposition with reason. Can we indeed say that such desires all have a common origin or source? The argument in Book 4 does not really establish such a common origin, and at best it could be said that their common origin is the body and certain bodily affections. More generally I think that Plato is not assuming that the appetitive part has any kind of internal unity. To present it as a kind of subject of a number of desires or a homunculus is to attribute to it a unity that it does not have. I am going to argue later that if there is something that can unify different desires this is reason and their common relationship to reason. But such relationship is not revealed in the context of the argument for the division of the soul.

alternative formulations differ in grammatical terms, I believe that they are logically equivalent and interchangeable.<sup>18</sup>

In the case of the first counterexample, namely the man who stands still and moves his hands and his head (436c10-d2), Socrates indicates that the principle of opposites forbids (οὐκ ἄν, οἶμαι, ἀξιοῖμεν οὕτω λέγειν δεῖν) saying that the same man is in motion and at rest simultaneously (ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς ἔστηκε τε καὶ κινεῖται ἅμα). Rather, what we have to say is that one part of him (τὸ μὲν τι αὐτοῦ) stands, another (τὸ δὲ) stays still. Here the parts of the man feature as the grammatical subjects of the two opposites. Nevertheless reference to the man, to whom these parts belong, is not omitted. I think that reference to the man by using partitive genitive (τὸ μὲν τι αὐτοῦ) is necessary to indicate that the man can be seen as the qualified subject of (or to) the two opposites, rest and stability, and as the whole of which the parts are parts.

The second counterexample (436d4-e5) is more sophisticated (χαριεντίζοιτο ὁ ταῦτα λέγων...κομψευόμενος). The objector claims that spinning tops move and stay still as wholes (οἳ γε στρόβιλοι ὅλοι ἐστᾶσί τε ἅμα καὶ κινεῶνται). Socrates objects to this way of putting the case and does not recognize the spinning top as a counterexample of the principle.<sup>19</sup> What the objector here has failed to predict is that the spinning top can be considered as a complex entity. A spinning top constitutes a more sophisticated example because

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<sup>18</sup> See also Price (1995) pp. 40-41.

<sup>19</sup> Bobonich (2002) seems to assume that we can say in the case of the spinning top that it moves and stays still as a whole and that Socrates agrees with the objector: 'The qualification at *Rep* 436d5 that it is as a whole that a rotating top fixed on a point both moves and is at rest is significant' (p. 229). See also Lorenz (2006) p. 24, n. 14 for a similar point. Nevertheless, Socrates clearly rejects the imaginary objector's description of the case. The fact that later Socrates uses the spinning top as the grammatical subject of motion does not mean that he accepts that one can say that 'the spinning top moves and stays still' *simpliciter* or as a whole. The latter formulation indicates unqualified ascription of opposites to the same subject. Socrates rejects unqualified ascription of opposites to the same thing because it generates contradiction. Rather we have to delete the initial expression 'as a whole' by providing different parts or respects which qualify the opposition. See also Woods (1987) p. 35, n. 30.

parts in the spinning top are not easily detectable. Socrates maintains that there are indeed parts in the spinning top, the circumference and the straight line or axis (φαῖμεν ἂν ἔχειν αὐτὰ εὐθύ τε καὶ περιφερὲς ἐν αὐτοῖς<sup>20</sup>). The spinning top stays still in respect of the straight line and moves in respect of the circumference (κατὰ μὲν τὸ εὐθὺ ἐστάναι..κατὰ δὲ τὸ περιφερὲς κύκλῳ κινεῖσθαι). The grammatical subject in this case remains the spinning top, but a qualification is provided so that it becomes clear that the spinning top is not in motion and at rest *simpliciter*. Socrates could have said that the circumference of the top revolves while the axis is immobile.

A new formulation of the principle of opposites and a final example are provided at the end of the argument for the separation of thirst from reason (437b1-439b6). Socrates first argues that the soul of the thirsty man in so far as it thirsts (καθ' ὅσον διψῇ) desires nothing else but to drink (439a9-b1). The phrase 'καθ' ὅσον διψῇ' corresponds to the expression κατὰ ταὐτὸν in the initial formulation of the principle of opposites (436b9-10). It specifies the part or respect, which is thirst itself, and which constitutes one of the opposites. More specifically, the phrase indicates a respect by reference to which the soul is examined in abstraction from whatever other characteristics the soul has or may have.<sup>21</sup> Socrates says that it

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<sup>20</sup> The expression ἔχειν αὐτὰ εὐθύ τε καὶ περιφερὲς ἐν αὐτοῖς is I think equivalent to the expression τὸ μὲν τι αὐτοῦ (436d1). Later in the case of the soul, the soul will be presented as what contains the parts (ἕτερον ἂν τι ἐν αὐτῇ εἴη (439b4), ἐνεῖναι μὲν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτῶν τὸ κελεῦον, ἐνεῖναι δὲ τὸ κωλύον πιεῖν, ἄλλο ὄν) (439c6-8).

<sup>21</sup> The expression thirst in so far as it is thirst is introduced first at 437d7 καθ' ὅσον δίψα ἐστί and corresponds to the expression thirst itself (αὐτὸ τὸ διψῆν) where Socrates indicates that he is looking at the definition of thirst. This language is introduced by Thrasymachus in Book 1, 340d3 ff. Actual rulers in so far as they are rulers do not err (341a1). Actual rulers may not be perfect rulers and thus actual rulers do err, but they do not err in so far as they are rulers or in so far as they deserve being called rulers. By introducing this language Socrates is able to talk about rulers qua rulers, to abstract from actual rulers any features which may interfere with the ruling art and thus also to talk about how a ruler should be. In a similar fashion thirst in the soul as something that solely desires to drink is or can be reached by some sort of abstraction. The problem with such a language is that it encourages the assumption that there is somehow a little perfect thirst in the soul as if there is a little perfect ruler somehow in actual rulers.

follows that if something is holding the soul back while it is thirsty it is something other (οὐκοῦν...ἕτερον ἂν τι ἐν αὐτῇ εἴη) than the factor or the element that desires to drink (τοῦ διψῶντος), i.e. thirst as such, (αὐτὸ τὸ διψεῖν 437e4, 439a4-5). In other words he indicates that the respect in which something is thirsty is different from the respect in which it does not want to drink (since, as it has been demonstrated thirst as such aims solely at drinking).<sup>22</sup> Socrates goes on to reformulate the principle of opposites: οὐ γὰρ δὴ, φαμέν, τό γε αὐτὸ τῷ αὐτῷ ἑαυτοῦ περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἅμα τὰναντία πράττει (439b5-6). In this new formulation the dative together with the (partitive) genitive (τῷ αὐτῷ ἑαυτοῦ) corresponds to the expression κατὰ ταὐτὸν of the earlier formulation<sup>23</sup>. The genitive indicates the relation of the part with the subject that is divided, which is also the whole that comprises or contains the parts, viz. thirst as such and the aversion to drinking. The dative (439b5) here perhaps corresponds also to datives in the initial question whether the soul should be divided or not (436a9-b1). The parts of the soul, what is thirsty (439b2: τοῦ διψῶντος, 439c7: τὸ κελεῖον) and what objects to drinking (439c7: τὸ κωλύον), can take the place of the dative. I previously suggested that the part which desires solely to drink is thirst as such.<sup>24</sup> So as the following example also makes clear, opposition in the soul is not κατὰ ταὐτὸν.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> I am going to discuss in greater detail how he shows that thirst is distinct from what forbids drinking. This distinction depends on the clarification of the object of thirst. If thirst were not simply for drink, but for something else as well (e.g. for the good), perhaps it could be argued that thirst were somehow responsible for our not drinking, and thus what would forbid us from drinking as well.

<sup>23</sup> See also Woods (1987) p. 40 n. 7.

<sup>24</sup> This also becomes clear at 439b10-d2, where Socrates says that what inhibits arises from reasoning while what drags and draws from affections and diseases. The 'subject' of dragging is the desire.

<sup>25</sup> Bobonich (2002) p. 530 n. 22 argues as follows: 'The position of γε in 439b5 stresses τὸ αὐτὸ and emphasizes that Plato's conclusion is that the same thing is not acting. Γε rarely intrudes in unified phrases such as τὸ αὐτὸ and its position here makes it clear that the important words are τὸ αὐτὸ and not τῷ αὐτῷ. In my opinion Bobonich is not right in arguing that the subject is being divided. The emphatic use of γε perhaps underlines the fact that the subject should not be divided. The crucial word thus is τῷ αὐτῷ. That the soul is τὸ αὐτὸ (the same thing) is not denied.'

Socrates proceeds to offer a final example (439b8-c1), an archer whose hands simultaneously push the bow away and draw it towards him. This example is more relevant to the case of conflict of desires than the previous ones, since previously we had cases of compresence of motion and rest, whereas now there are simultaneous opposite movements. Also it has to be noted that here opposite movements are related to an external object, namely the bow. The bow corresponds to the 'drink', which constitutes an external object and in relation to which opposition in the soul becomes manifest. There is a further difference as well in the treatment of this example. What Socrates objects to in the case of the archer is not saying that the one and the same archer does two opposite things. Rather what he objects to is speaking as if the same part of the archer (viz. his hands) moves in opposite directions (439b8-9: οὐκ καλῶς ἔχει λέγειν ὅτι αὐτοῦ ἅμα αἱ χεῖρες ...). In other words he objects to a way of speaking that suggests that opposition is 'located' in one part of the agent. Socrates makes this clarification because he wants to object to somebody who would maintain that someone both desires to drink and not to drink in respect of his desire. He has already argued that thirst as such is solely for drink and nothing else and thus thirst as such is not capable of stopping us from drinking.

In relation to the previous formulation of the principle, we can see here that the hands of the archer correspond to the dative together with possessive/partitive genitive: αὐτοῦ αἱ χεῖρες = τῷ αὐτῷ ἑαυτοῦ). Reference to the archer as in the previous cases is not eliminated and in my opinion it cannot be omitted. We do not have free-floating parts. The parts are always parts of something.

The way is open for Socrates to recommend how one can speak correctly about the soul. As indeed we can see that it happens in many cases (439c5), we can say that some people are thirsty but they are not willing to drink (Πότερον δὴ φῶμέν τινας ἔστιν ὅτε διψῶντας οὐκ ἐθέλιν πιεῖν;) (439c3-4). The more accurate way of putting the case (Τί οὖν, ἔφην ἐγώ, φαίη τις ἂν τούτων πέρι) would be to say that there is in their soul (contained in the soul as part of it) what commands drinking and what forbids drinking which is something distinct (ἐνεῖναι μὲν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτῶν τὸ κελεῦον, ἐνεῖναι δὲ τὸ κωλύον πιεῖν, ἄλλο ὃν καὶ

κρατοῦν τοῦ κελεύοντος) (439c6-8). Whereas Socrates does not directly object to saying that the same person is thirsty and unwilling<sup>26</sup> to drink, by providing the further specification that the elements are distinct, it becomes clear that the person as a whole does not have a pro-attitude and an anti-attitude towards the same thing, and also that the parts which are responsible for the two attitudes are distinct.

I shall discuss in detail the division of the soul into thirst and reason at a later stage. Suffice it to say that three conditions need to be met so that Socrates can divide in the soul into distinct parts and in order to show that the opposition is not in respect of the same. First of all we have to show that the soul undergoes or has opposites, second that the opposites are in relation to the same external thing (πρὸς/περὶ ταὐτόν), and third that the opposition is simultaneous. The argument from 437b1 and on aims at meeting these conditions. Thus first of all Socrates argues desire and aversion towards something can be classified as opposites (437b1-c9). Then he develops an argument in which he specifies the object of thirst in order to show that opposites can occur in relation to the same thing (437d1-439b1). As to the final condition, namely the simultaneous presence of opposites, it seems to be satisfied at 439c2-5, where Glaucon agrees that in many cases many people are thirsty and are unwilling to drink. There is no point in the whole argument where Socrates tries to argue that opposition is in respect to the same thing, as he would need to do if he wanted to show that we have many souls and not one. Thus to conclude, the soul is divided into different parts or respects, which are the opposite attitudes themselves.

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<sup>26</sup> There is also something else that one can notice in this formulation. Socrates here in the first formulation attributes unwillingness (οὐκ ἐθέλειν) to the subject as a whole in relation to one of the two opposites while not in relation to the other. It seems to me that unwillingness here is related to the fact that eventually reason prevails (κρατοῦν τοῦ κελεύοντος). Thus it seems that willingness here, as attributed to the subject as a whole indicates what course of action one will follow in the end. Thus also for example in the *Protagoras* the Many who try to describe a case of weakness argue that they know the best but they are not willing to do it (*Protagoras* 353d: οὐκ ἐθέλειν πράττειν). Nevertheless it seems to be the case that Socrates wants to avoid this language in this context, which suggest a unified agent and to substitute it with language that indicates one part prevailing over another.

## Conclusions concerning the parts of the soul in Book 4

Having discussed the argument I wish to draw certain conclusions concerning the relationship that the parts have with the whole to which they belong and also the relationship between the parts themselves.

Throughout the argument for the division of the soul Socrates lays emphasis on describing correctly things that possess opposites. His emphasis on correct description or use of language can be taken as indicating that Socrates is objecting to a certain 'Heracleitean' use of language and the paradoxes and contradictions that such way of speaking generates. More specifically unqualified ascription of two opposites to something may suggest the unity of opposites and also more generally that unity can lie in opposition. Socrates proposes a use of language that indicates the disunity of opposites. We are invited to separate the opposites by placing them in different regions in a thing, or by considering as constituting different respects of something. Thus the argument may be taken as discouraging us from unifying the opposites and in so far as the parts of the soul are behaving as opposites, there is a sense that we are discouraged from unifying them or considering them as forming a unity.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore the argument forbids assigning or predicating (unqualifiedly) opposites to a thing as a whole. In the case of the spinning top for example, we cannot say simply that it moves and stays still without providing any further specification. It seems that by disallowing the reader to assign opposites to something without any qualification, Socrates also separates or distinguishes the thing that possesses the opposites from the opposites. The opposites do not belong essentially or intrinsically

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<sup>27</sup> In Book 7 separation of opposites seems to be considered as the first step in the development of intelligence (*noēsis*) and thought (*dianoia*) (524d1-4). *Noēsis* investigates whether the opposites which appear thus fused by the senses are really two or one (524b3-5) and manages to think of them as separate (κεχωρισμένα νοήσει: 524c1) by thinking of them as (solely) two together and not as one, and each one as one (524b10-c1).



to the thing in question.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, since the opposites are considered as separate in this way it becomes I think clear the unity and identity of the thing under question, if one assumes that the thing has unity and identity in its own right, is not due to the opposites and to opposition. In fact it could be argued that the argument by distinguishing the thing from the opposites safeguards the possibility of the unity of the thing, since if the opposites would be attributed to it in an unqualified way it would be something self-contradictory. However, I have argued that the separation of the opposites from the thing that can be characterized by opposites is not complete, since the opposites are still presented as belonging to the same thing or being in the same thing, as different respects or parts of the thing under question. So whereas the thing that possesses the opposites can be said to be to some extent independent from the opposites in the sense that its essential identity is not defined, but it is not said to consist in the opposites either, the opposites, even though they are presented as separate from each other, in so far as they are conceived as parts of certain things are not independent or separate from the particular things to which they belong. I will discuss the question of the unity of the soul in a different section and argue that the soul has unity. Here I wish to note that Socrates neither asserts nor denies that the soul has unity and that we are justified in saying that the soul is one or the same thing.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>2828</sup> One may compare with what is said concerning the opposites in the *Phaedo*. In the *Phaedo* Socrates distinguishes between 'essential' and 'accidental' predication. See O' Brien (1967) pp. 199-200, Gallop (1975) p. 192, Rowe (1993) p. 250 (note to 102c1-4). Socrates suggests first that it is wrong or misleading to say that Simmias is larger than Socrates and smaller than *Phaedo* (102b3-c1). See also Gallop's comments (Gallop (1975) pp. 192-3). This kind of talk, which involves unqualified predication of an opposite to a subject, would suggest that Simmias is larger or smaller in virtue of his nature, or of being Simmias, which is wrong: οὐ γάρ που πεφυκέναι Σιμμίαν ὑπερέχειν τούτῳ, τῷ Σιμμίαν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τῷ μεγέθει ὃ τυγχάνει ἔχων· οὐδ' αὖ Σωκράτους ὑπερέχειν ὅτι Σωκράτης ὁ Σωκράτης ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὅτι σμικρότητα ἔχει ὁ Σωκράτης πρὸς τὸ ἐκείνου μέγεθος; (*Phaedo* 102c1-5). Apart from things such as 'Simmias' which can have both opposites there are things which despite not being identical to the opposites themselves (103d2-3), are always one of the opposites and can never have the other and deserve the name of the opposites (103 e2-3) as long as they exist. It is clarified for example that fire is always hot and when cold comes fire retreats or perishes (103e2 -104c3). It seems thus that fire is essentially or intrinsically hot (104a2-3) and also it seems to be implied that saying that fire is hot is not problematic (104b2).

<sup>29</sup> If one follows Bobonich's interpretation it would rather appear that Socrates firmly would exclude that the soul is one thing. The argument here indeed undermines the unity of the soul in the sense that

What he shows is that certainly the opposites do not constitute a unity. Thus if the soul possesses unity this unity does not consist in opposition or in the opposites themselves.

I wish also to note that what is said in Book 4 is not inconsistent with what Socrates says in Book 5.<sup>30</sup> There it is implied that sensible things suffer from compresence of opposites (479b8-9). Socrates refutes the claim that certain things are beautiful on the grounds that they appear to be ugly (478e7-479b6). If 'appears' to be ugly entails that something is also ugly, it could be said that one and the same thing is both ugly and beautiful. However, Socrates does not say there that since things are beautiful and ugly there is no problem in calling these things with either or both opposites. He does not say that sensible things are beautiful and ugly. What he wants to show is exactly that since sensible things appear to be ugly they cannot be said to be beautiful, and more generally, that attribution of 'being' to these things is problematic. Appearing to be ugly is taken to imply 'not being beautiful'. Socrates aims at refuting the claim that these sensible things are beautiful on the grounds that they also appear to be ugly, and he wants to present sensible things as problematic in general. Thus things appear to be somehow simultaneously beautiful and not beautiful, they look self contradictory and incoherent, and lack proper unity. It is not proper to say that they are beautiful but it is not fully correct to say that they are not beautiful either. Furthermore, saying that they are and are not beautiful is also problematic as well as saying that they are neither beautiful nor non beautiful (479c3-5). They 'waver between being and non-being' (479d2-4). Predication of beauty to these sensible things turns out to be impossible and we are at a loss as to how to describe or to think about these things, which look like riddles (479c1-3). In Book 4 the argument disallows (unqualified) predication of an opposite to something that involves the other opposite, hence it is consistent with what Plato says in Book 5. In

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we see that opposition is possible in the soul, but Plato's purpose is not to exclude the possibility for such unity.

<sup>30</sup> See Robinson (1971a) p. 39. Robinson argues that 'the addition of *being* opposites.... Introduces an apparent contradiction with another part of the *Republic*' referring to 479b9, "each of the many", whatever they are has the remarkable characteristic that "it no more is than isn't what anyone says it is". That is probably consistent with the Principle that nothing will *do* or *suffer* opposites; but it seems inconsistent with the Principle that nothing will *be* opposites'.

Book 5 he indicates that (unqualified) predication of beauty to something that also involves ugliness is problematic and leads to contradiction.

However, there is a difference between the two arguments. Whereas the argument in Book 5 does not provide us with a solution as to how we can talk about the many 'sensible' things without contradiction, and seems to be intended to leave the sight lovers at loss, Book 4 provides some kind of solution, which rests on the separation of opposites. Even though we are not allowed to say that something which also involves or may involve the opposite 'ugliness' is beautiful *simpliciter*, we can say that something is beautiful in a certain respect of it, or at a given time or in relation to something else. In other words predication of one opposite to a thing is unproblematic if we provide some qualification that indicates that something is not inherently or unqualifiedly or always beautiful/just/good and which at the same time indicates that this thing is not confused with (the form of) beauty/justice/goodness. More generally it seems that the argument in Book 4 helps both to maintain the coherence of our language concerning the sensible world and also the coherence of particular things (sensible, or non sensible like the soul) which we talk about, since it shows that they are not self contradictory.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, the argument in Book 4 allows making true statements concerning particular things, while in Book 4 it looks as though nothing we can say about something is true, even though it is not quite false either. It seems to me that the principle in Book 4 establishes both the possibility of truth and also as a consequence the possibility of falsehood in relation to particular objects or actions, which can feature as a subjects of predicative judgements and which are liable to change or may involve the opposite of the characteristic we want to predicate to the thing. The statement that Aspasia is beautiful is not true and correct according to Plato, as both the argument in Book 4 and the one in Book 5 indicate, even though it is not completely false either, since Aspasia indeed participates in beauty. In an analogous way it is not true to say simply that the soul is thirsty when there are factors in the

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<sup>31</sup> For the thesis that the sensible world is not self-contradictory see also Vlastos (1973) pp. 58-75 and also Nehamas (1975) pp. 105-17. As I previously argued, the argument in Book 4 does not provide us with grounds on which unity of sensible things can rest or how it can be achieved, but it allows us to develop such grounds.

soul that stand in a relation of opposition to thirst. If somehow we were solely able to say or to believe that Aspasia is beautiful or Aspasia is ugly, strictly speaking we would not be able to say or think something true about Aspasia. However, it seems to me that Plato would allow that we truly say (if we have access to an adequate, reliable non sensible measure or standard of beauty) that Aspasia is beautiful now, in this respect, or in relation to another woman's ugliness.<sup>32</sup>

As Woods and Irwin have observed, what is said concerning the parts of the soul also concerns causation or explanation.<sup>33</sup> In so far as the parts are regarded as opposites, then one has to observe the requirement introduced in the *Phaedo* that one and the same thing cannot be the cause of two opposites and also one opposite cannot be the cause of the other (*Phaedo* 96e-97b, 101a-c). Thus it turns out that there are distinct causal factors in the soul, the two opposites are not caused by each other and also the soul as a whole is not strictly speaking the cause of the two opposites.

I wish to deal with the question of the attribution of the opposites as subjects. I agree with Lorenz (2006, p. 28) in so far as he argues that the soul as a whole can be said to be a qualified subject of the opposites. However, I am not so sure whether the parts of the soul themselves should be considered to be the proper or non-derivative or unqualified subjects of the opposites. One reason I think this might not be correct is because it would commit Plato to self-predication, and I am not sure whether this is necessary. I previously argued that the parts of the soul in the context of the argument are nothing more than the opposite activities themselves. Thus if something is the proper subject of thirst as a desire, something in other words to which a desire for drink could be attributed in an unqualified or non derivative way, this would be thirst as such. However, even though Socrates does treat thirst as the immediate subject of desire, and calls it what desires in us, perhaps such language should not be taken

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<sup>32</sup> I think that ultimately true statements concerning sensible things are possible, if sensible objects are first of all not confused with the forms, and second if one is able to consider them in their relationship with forms. While sensible things 'are' not beautiful as such, they 'become' beautiful due to their participation to forms, and insofar as they participate to forms. Because of this participation they also acquire a share in being and truth.

<sup>33</sup> See Woods (1987) p. 40, and Irwin (1995) p. 204.

literally.<sup>34</sup> <sup>35</sup> But even if we can see the parts as subjects of a certain kind, since they also constitute agencies or causes, I think the argument for the division of the soul seems to suggest that one cannot avoid reference to the person or to the soul as a whole. Socrates in other words does not allow one to simply say that thirst desires drink, rather one has to say that someone's desire desires drink. The fact that reference to the whole cannot be eliminated suggests that the parts of the soul cannot be properly seen or fully considered as subjects in the sense self-subsistent entities, existing in their own right, even though the soul as a whole again is not presented as a proper subject or agent or cause either.

I suggested previously that Socrates wants to establish something more than different activities or functions of the soul and if the parts of the soul may appear to be the psychic activities themselves and not something for example which is a subject of this activities or a container which these activities are to be attributed, it may appear that the argument does not eventually establish something more than different activities in the soul. What Socrates I think is trying to establish is not exactly

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<sup>34</sup> Gallop (1975) p. 194 and Rowe (1993) pp. 250-2 note that in *Phaedo* 102c11-d2 we may have a case of self-predication. In this case for example largeness in Simmias is larger than smallness in Socrates. Commentators though seem to be reluctant to commit Plato to such a thesis. It seems to me that what basically Plato tries to express is that Socrates can be said to be comparatively small in relation not exactly to Simmias himself (as if Simmias himself somehow were the standard of comparison and largeness) rather in relation to the comparative largeness in Simmias.

<sup>35</sup> One question that I have not discussed is whether certain predicates or characters which belong to a part of an entity can also characterize the whole entity in an unqualified way. For example in the case of Kallipolis, justice, which is not a property of parts, rather it belongs to the whole, can be seen as a condition which allows the virtues of the parts to characterize the city as a whole. Thus the city is said to be wise as a whole in virtue of a small part that rules (428e7-9). It seems that the wisdom of the part and the relation of this part to the others allow wisdom to be predicated to the city as a whole without any qualification. Other cities, which are not established according to justice, would not be wise as wholes rather only partly. This is because justice establishes a certain relationship between the parts so that one does not undermine the activity of the other, and it allows more generally such an activity to characterize the whole. Thus in a similar way, in a just soul, we will be able to say that a soul is wise as a whole, or in an unqualified way, in virtue of the fact that there is justice in it and the wise part rules. As I am going to argue later justice does not fully exclude the presence of opposition in the soul. However, somehow it makes such opposition ineffective so that the nature of one opposite is allowed to determine the nature of the whole.

different activities, rather some sort of stronger notion of difference or distinctness. We have activities that stand in relation of opposition to each other, and the argument encourages us to see the parts or elements in the soul as opposites. This indicates that they can be seen as two separate things, which are independent from each other. In other words the argument purports to establish the autonomy or the potential autonomy of certain psychic activities from each other.<sup>36</sup> One may accept that reasoning and desiring are in some sense two activities but one may not treat them as two completely separate things. One may regard the one as dependent on the other or both of them as interdependent and thus as forming a certain sort of unity. For example, even though one might accept that reasoning and being hungry are not exactly one and the same activity and thus in some sense they are two, one might argue that reasoning depends on the desire, on the grounds that we always calculate in order to satisfy particular desires. Alternatively or simultaneously, one may argue that desire depends on reasoning since for example reason is needed to specify the object of desire and to guide desire towards particular objects. By presenting the activities as opposites and by advocating the separation of opposites, Socrates invites us to consider the two activities as solely two things, independent from each other, and as I previously said not as forming a unity. At least in so far as the activities are working as opposites we are discouraged from considering them as related or associated and as interdependent or one as depending on the other. Thus what the argument achieves is not merely a list of mental activities or motives, which can be established independently on the basis of observation, but rather a fact concerning how these activities can be related, in other words as opposites and thus as separate things. But

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<sup>36</sup> In a similar way in the *Phaedo* Socrates tries to refute the thesis that the soul is a harmony of the elements of the body by maintaining that the soul opposes the body (94b4-95a2). I think that Simmias who suggests that the soul is a harmony of the body does not initially at least appear to be saying that the soul is somehow identical to the body or its elements (91c9-d2), rather that the soul depends on the body or its elements and it is not something separable from it. For a discussion of the thesis that the soul is a harmony in the *Phaedo* see Taylor (1983) pp. 217-31 and Gottschalk (1971) pp. 179-98. The problem with both the argument for the separation of the soul from the body in the *Phaedo* and the division of the soul in *Republic* Book 4 is that they appear to establish reciprocal independence, which as I am going to suggest is not the case. Furthermore, both proofs really do not establish or fully establish the separateness of the opposing factors. The soul does not appear to be something completely separate from the body if basically it spends its time opposing bodily desires. Rather somehow it becomes separate only when it deals with the forms.

as I suggested earlier, these activities are not completely separated from the soul or the whole of which they are parts. This is important, because later in Book 4 Socrates is going to suggest that the activities can indeed at least in principle be unified through harmony (443e1-2). If he had presented such activities as not somehow belonging to the same thing, this unification would appear to be impossible. What we learn here is that they cannot be unified in virtue of themselves, or in virtue of their opposition.

Furthermore, it seems to me that Plato does not believe that things which behave as opposites cannot be unified. We can have combinations of opposites in which the opposites are somehow functioning as a unity and they do not behave as opposites. What unifies them, however, is not their very nature in so far as they are opposites, or their opposition. Rather, some 'third' thing, which, I think, is reason and art, needs to impose order, proportion and harmony upon them and make a proper blend out of them. More generally, not any random combination or mixture of 'opposites' can produce real unity.<sup>37</sup> In so far as sensible things have unity, they do not have unity in virtue of themselves, or in virtue of the opposites that are present in them, rather it is in virtue of reason, which makes them unitary by structuring them and imposing order upon the opposites, or whatever elements things happen to have, and generating internal agreement and harmony.<sup>38</sup> The unity that things that are

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<sup>37</sup> For instance, in Eryximachus' speech in the *Symposium* (185e6-188e4) one can find an attack on the Heracleitean thesis that unity involves opposition and that harmony is due to or coexists with conflict (187a3-b7). Eryximachus argues that opposites are at war 'before' their harmonization and not simultaneously with their harmonization (187a8-b4). In so far as the opposites are connected in the proper way, they are no longer in opposition, since harmony, lying in agreement, is not compatible with conflict. Eryximachus makes it clear that unity of opposites is due to harmony and art (musical art or medicine: e.g. 187b2, 187c3), which generate 'love' between the opposites. The opposites do not love each other in themselves (186d6-7). Rather the right love is the product of music (187c4-5) and art in general. (There is also 'bad' love, which does not cease conflict, when art is not involved or not applied in the proper way, since art is needed at many levels (187c7-d4).) A successful unification of opposites in the *Republic* is the harmonization of the spirit and the philosophic element, which are introduced as opposites. Their harmonization is due to 'art', music and gymnastics (441e7-8). I will discuss their association more extensively in the following section.

<sup>38</sup> For the artful creation of a unitary thing that constitutes a whole in virtue of the order imposed to its elements compare also *Gorgias* 503d6-504a5.

products of art and reason possess, which can also be apprehended by reason, should be distinguished from the mock unity that opposites display by being fused together in the senses.<sup>39</sup>

One question that one has to deal with if one has to maintain that Plato believes that there are separate parts in the soul is the question whether the parts in the soul have to be understood necessarily as opposites. Radical, reciprocal separation of the parts is something that follows from accepting opposition. If the parts more generally are not taken to be in essential opposition to each other and if opposition in the soul in reality is not direct or straightforward, as it appears to be presented in Book 4, one does not need to accept radically separate elements in the soul. I will argue more extensively in the following chapters that the different elements in the soul are not in essential opposition to each other, and thus the lower parts can associate with and participate in reason. Such participation or sharing in reason involves the generation of mixtures or combinations of the elements.<sup>40</sup> However, in so far as reason does not ‘rule’ in the soul, such mixtures or combinations are problematic and incoherent. Real unity presupposes the reason’s autonomy, which is necessary for reason to impose order and harmony in the soul.

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<sup>39</sup> For the ‘fusion’ of opposites in the senses see again *Republic* Book 7 (523a10 ff): Μέγα μὴν καὶ ὄψις καὶ σμικρὸν ἑώρα, φαμέν, ἀλλ’ οὐ κεχωρισμένον ἀλλὰ συγκεχυμένον τι (524c3-4). It seems to me that the passage suggests that the opposites in the senses look both two and at the same time one. They form a problematic and incoherent unity. Separation of opposites seems to be considered as the first step in the development of intelligence (*noēsis*) and (abstract) thought (*dianoia*) (524d1-4). *Noēsis* investigates whether the opposites which appear thus fused by the senses are really two or one (524b3-5) and manages to think of them as separate (κεχωρισμένα νοήσῃ: 524c1) by thinking of them as (solely) two together and not as one, and each one as one (524b10-c1).

<sup>40</sup> That there are mixtures of psychic elements has been maintained by Santas (2001) pp. 124-31.



## Chapter 2

### The notion of justice and *sōphrosunē* and reason's role in the soul in Book 4

#### Justice and the division of the soul

Now I wish to discuss the notion of justice in the soul in relation to the separation of the parts. Justice as it is presented in Book 4, whether in the case of the city or in the case of the soul, involves separation of certain functions. In the case of the city, Socrates separates different functions or tasks by assigning them to different groups of people. As a result of justice what is generated is a city that has separate 'parts' or classes, clearly demarcated functional entities. I suggest that, in a similar manner, justice in the soul involves separation of functions, which by consequence become separate parts in the soul. Justice as separation can be expressed by the requirement that the lower parts of the soul do not interfere with the activity of reason and ruling (433a8-9, 443d2, 444b1-3). Reason functions in other words independently from the other parts, without the lowest appetitive part in particular being involved in its activity.

Regarded as the condition for 'justice', separation turns out to be a positive notion. As I argued previously, separation of the elements becomes logically necessary from the moment the activities are conceived as opposites. Such separation can also be considered as desirable and good since opposites are conceived as fighting with and destroying each other. Imagine for instance two people who fight with each other; by 'separating' them we no longer allow them to harm each other and to commit offence. In different terms separation of functions, in such a way that they come to constitute clearly demarcated 'parts', can be said to allow autonomous and unimpeded performance of these functions. If separation of activities can be considered as something different from the proper performance of these activities, separation can be seen as at least necessary for their good operation as long as one

activity can be taken to undermine or impede another activity, if the two activities are performed together. Moreover, if what is responsible for a function not being performed well is its being undermined or impeded from outside, then it may look as though justice is sufficient for the good performance of mental activities or functions. More generally it looks as though autonomous separate operation is, or leads to, good functioning. Hence, it may be provisionally said that justice as separation of functions allows the good performance of different functions in the soul and the development of virtue in general. As I am going to argue more extensively, what is primarily needed is the good performance of reason's function and in particular what is presented as undermining reason's function, but also the function of spirit, is the appetitive part of the soul. By being separated from appetite both spirit and reason are no longer infected or contaminated by certain desires; thus separation from the lower parts, or not being interfered in its activity by the lower parts is conducive to reason's performing its function well.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, the lowest part's separation from reason does not appear to improve its own operation.

One may object that justice in the soul does not involve separation of functions, since it might be argued that the argument for the division of the soul establishes separate parts in the soul or separate sources of motivation. Thus the parts operate separately anyway. This would mean that each part does its own work in any case. I think that the argument for the division of the soul can be seen as establishing the need and also simultaneously the potential for the separation of activities, in particular reason's separation from desire. In other words, the fact that we see reason fighting with appetite, and thus behaving as if it is autonomous from it does not mean that it functions always, or in most cases, or in a sufficient degree independently from appetitive and other desires. For instance, in the case of the three lower deviant characters in Book 8, reason functions primarily as the slave of desire. In that case it does not work independently from desire. Its concerns are dictated by the desires of the lowest parts (553d1-7). There is still a relative autonomy of reason in that it may

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<sup>41</sup> Thus it may be argued that justice as separation is a condition for the good functioning of the reason, as Socrates has already suggested in Book 1 (353e4-5), where the function of the soul has been defined as management, rule, and deliberation (353d5). The virtuous, just soul performs its function well (353e4-11). Justice, as separation of elements, and as self-control, allows and involves 'good' deliberation or ruling on reason's part.

oppose particular desires (554b11-d3), but overall it cannot be said that it functions autonomously enough.<sup>42</sup> Autonomous operation for reason presupposes that reason looks at the interest of the whole soul and not solely at the interest of a part. Furthermore, even though the argument for the division of the soul presents the parts operating in an autonomous way, the reader might not know that he has in his soul two parts, or that reason can really operate autonomously in relation to desire. The argument helps the reader conceive reason as something that can oppose appetite, and as at least potentially autonomous from desire, and thus also encourages him to try to establish justice and reason's autonomy; to try, in other words, to reason in separation from appetite, and more generally, to oppose appetite as much as possible. In fact justice as the rule of reason turns out in Book 4 to be more or less equivalent to holding bodily desires in check, and it looks as though the purpose of the whole is exactly this restraint of appetite (442a4-b3).

The notion of justice is more complicated because it involves reason's ruling. One may ask what precisely 'ruling' lies in, and whether it should be seen as an activity or function other than the three functions that have already been distinguished in the soul, namely learning or deliberating, being angry, and desiring certain things or pleasures. I attempted in the previous chapter to provide an account of the parts of the soul, according to which they constitute different psychic activities and not really subjects of activities. Thus, unlike the 'parts' of the city, it is not the case that the parts of the soul can somehow swap functions or activities, or have more than one function or activity.<sup>43</sup> Basically the parts of the soul are certain activities or functions, and if they are to be seen as subjects, or causes they are first and foremost subjects and causes of their own activities. Rather, the point of partition is that certain activities can be conceived as separate and also in principle performed in separation from each other. Therefore, it is not the case that appetite somehow can think or

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<sup>42</sup> The three inferior types of deviant characters in Books 8-9 reflect a gradual diminishing of reason's involvement in the soul. In the oligarchic character, one desire, the desire for money has been given priority over the others, and the nature of such desire allows reason to function to some extent as an organizer in the soul, and establish priorities. On the other hand the democratic character establishes no priorities and treats all desires as equal. There is no proper order in the soul even though there is some sort of balance. Finally in the case of the tyrannical personality, there is no balance and order at all.

<sup>43</sup> See Santas (2001) p. 123.

deliberate, and adopt reason's function; reasoning and desiring are two activities that can be performed together or separately. When reason becomes so much entangled with appetite that it does not really retain any independence, it looks as though appetite does the thinking for us. One can still ask whether ruling is somehow an extra function that the parts can exchange. I think that 'ruling' can be seen as a more or less identical to the function of reason, and in the context of Book 4 corresponds to the good performance of such function. For example, reason rules in that it deliberates for the good of the soul as a whole, and basically it rules when it deliberates well, even though in some sense reason always 'rules', if ruling basically signifies deliberation for what is good for the person. Alternatively, justice as the rule of reason can be seen as involving a relation of hierarchical ordering of certain functions. Thus, in this second sense, a given part rules when the activity of this part acquires priority or preponderance in relation to the activities of the other parts. Justice as reason's 'rule' signifies a hierarchical ordering, and the prominence of a certain function in the soul, in such a way that this function comes to determine the character of the whole. More generally, the character of the 'ruling' element, in both a city and in a soul allows the city or the soul as a whole to be attributed this character.<sup>44</sup>

It might be argued that separation and prioritisation are different things, on the grounds that three things can be separated but this does not entail that they are classified according to a certain hierarchical order or an order of domination. Therefore, if I am right that justice involves separation of activities, justice may appear to involve two things, both separation of reason at least from other functions and also hierarchical ordering and reason's predominance. Now I think separation of activities in justice is somehow simultaneously a kind of hierarchical ordering in the sense that the elements are somehow 'located' not only in different places but also simultaneously in superior and inferior positions. If, however, separation of reason's activity from the others, or the other activities being separated from reason is sufficient for it to rule and to predominate, then perhaps there is direct continuity between the two notions. If separation entails or guarantees reason's autonomous

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<sup>44</sup> See for instance Book 9 where it is said that there are three kinds of the soul and analogously three kinds of rule (580d2-d7) and also that depending on which part rules we have three basic kinds of people (581c1-5). Thus it appears that the ruling character determines what kind of person one is, in other words the character of the person as a whole.

unimpeded functioning and if this functioning is good functioning, separation is somehow the same thing as the rule of reason or it is sufficient for reason to rule. One may object that autonomous functioning on reason's part and thus reason's separation is not sufficient to rule because in cases of weakness reason does operate autonomously and yet it fails to prevail against appetite. Thus also ruling for reason means two things, one is looking to the interest of the whole, and the other is basically managing to impose its dictates on the other parts and the soul as a whole. One might argue that ruling may appear to be a further requirement of justice apart from separation. I believe that basically when reason operates autonomously it also rules, and in cases of weakness we do not have autonomous unimpeded activity on reason's part. Either prior to action reason has not been separated in a proper way or at the moment of action its activity is impeded. More generally the separation of appetite from reason is basically the same thing as self control or suppression of appetite and such separation indeed implies that reason is in control. In general it looks in Book 4 that reason basically works well and separately when together with spirit it opposes and suppresses appetite.<sup>45</sup>

A further condition for reason to rule is that spirit also works well. In other words spirit good operation is presented as somehow necessary for reason to rule in the soul and also to control appetite. But it is not exactly the case that spirit's and reason's separation from appetite are two things. Rather it looks as if spirit helps reason somehow also remain separate or autonomous from appetite. Spirit, more specifically, helps maintaining certain beliefs (429b8-d1, 442b10-c1), in particular at the moment of action, when opposite impulses may arise that may undermine the person's and thus also helps maintain reason's commitment to these beliefs (412e4-413c4, 430a5-b5). Spirit makes these beliefs effective for action since it provides adequate emotional and motivational backing to these beliefs.

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<sup>45</sup> I should also note that reason's separation in Book 4 is not complete and more generally the notion of separation that we get in Book 4 is restricted. Ultimately separation is complete with reason's the achievement of knowledge of the form of the good. In the *Phaedo* *chōrismos* is the same as philosophy and the soul's purification from the body (67c5-d10). In the argument for the division of the soul, and also more generally in Book 4, we see only a kind of partial separation of reason from the lower parts.

The argument for the division of the soul seems to establish reciprocal separation of the two parts, reason and appetite. Thus we do not have only separation of reason from desire but also separation of the lowest part from reason. One question that arises is whether we should see separation as being necessarily reciprocal, and thus that reason's separation from appetite also entails appetite's separation from reason. Furthermore, another related question is whether one should regard justice as involving mutual separation not only of reason from appetite, but also somehow appetite's separation from reason. One may argue that if separation of reason from the lowest part is something positive the opposite is not a positive notion. The appetite's separation from reason indicates its autonomy from reason, and its irrationality, and perhaps its potential to undermine reason. However, a positive notion can still be found it seems to me that as in the case of the city and in the case of the soul, separation of appetite from reason can be seen as a form of restriction or suppression of appetite. Justice as it is presented in Book 4 is closely connected with self-control, as long as one is self-controlled one can be said to keep somehow one's desire down, far away from reason. Thus, separation of appetite from reason can be seen as a restriction of appetite in its proper position or 'place' in the soul. It may be argued that the appetite still works autonomously from reason when it is restricted. More generally it may look as though, unlike reason, appetite always operates autonomously. But still there is a sense that to 'separate' appetite from reason is to deprive it of all elements of reasoning, whether we see this as always being case or something one does. However, it no longer disturbs reason, which by consequence can rule in the soul. I should also note that as far as the suppression or control of appetite is concerned, this is presented as happening due to the joint activity of reason and spirit since appetite does not appear to want to stay in its place, rather as naturally tending to interfere (442a4-b3).

The significance and purpose of the separation of the parts/mental activities, becomes clearer in the *Timaeus*. In the *Timaeus* the separation of the lowest part of the soul from reason is presented as the work of the inferior gods, and thus can be seen as an expression of divine providence and done for the good. The purpose of such separation is clearly and emphatically stated. Gods on purpose place the lower 'parts' in different places so that they are separate from reason (χωρίς: 69d7, 69e3) to

prevent, as far as it is possible and desirable, the contamination of the superior immortal element, from the lowest elements (*Timaeus* 69d6-e3). Suffice it to say here that ‘parts’ in the soul are generated by the separation of the affections that are provided to the gods by Necessity (69c8, 69d5). Thus ‘parts’ in the soul are ‘created’ by the lowest gods in the sense that these ‘necessary and violent’ affections (69c8-d1) are ‘separated’ by being placed in different ‘locations’ in the body. It is not exactly the case that gods ‘make’ these affections (παθήματα). Rather they compose or combine them in a certain way (69d5-6: συγκερασάμενοι ...ἀναγκάως....συνέθεσαν) following the dictates of necessity and they ‘locate’ them in different places in the body.

Separation again, as in the *Republic*, is made both logically necessary and also desirable due to conflict and opposition and aims at diminishing such opposition and conflict. The conflict is basically one between ‘reason’ and ‘necessity’, or between the circular motions of reason and the vertical motions of necessity. We saw the conflict between reason and the affections or necessity in cognitive terms, at an early passage, where the motions associated with necessity were presented as directly affecting and disturbing reason’s motions and functioning (43b5-44b1), making it form false beliefs.<sup>46</sup> It is precisely this disturbance and conflict that the lower gods aim at diminishing. The appetitive element is located as ‘far away’, in other words as separately, from reason as possible so that it does not disturb reason with its noise, allowing our best element to deliberate about the collective and individual interest of the parts undisturbed (70d7e-71a3).<sup>47</sup> *Timaeus* emphasizes that this is the reason why they gave this lower part this position or rank (*taxis*) (71a3). Such allocation of positions can be seen as an expression of divine ‘justice’ and at the same time ‘legitimises’ the order of parts that Socrates has already defended in the *Republic*. Spatial language does not need to be taken literally as also in the case of the *Republic*.

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<sup>46</sup> More specifically the motions associated with Necessity are presented as deflecting the motions of the circles of the different whereas they completely impede the functioning of the circle of the same (*Tim.* 43d).

<sup>47</sup> Johansen (2004) p. 146 maintains that the affections that cause the circles of the different to undergo irrational motions form the basis for the tripartition of the soul.

It indicates as in the *Republic* the actual or potential independence of certain mental functions and more generally the need to do certain things ‘separately’.

The lowest element’s distance from reason also indicates its irrationality. Unlike *thumos* that is placed in proximity to reason and is able to listen to reason (70a2-7), and thus is not completely separate from it the lowest part is not initially in any contact with reason whatever. After the creation of the liver contact and interaction will be established, but I am not discussing the liver’s role for the moment since I am focusing on the notion of separation.<sup>48</sup> Separation of the lowest element from reason does not solely indicate its irrationality; it also or simultaneously indicates the half conscious or unconscious status of its operations. As I am going to

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<sup>48</sup> It seems to me that teleology at this stage does not lie in the ‘creation’ of the ‘necessary’ affections- which in any case are not in any literal way created by the gods. Rather ‘granted’ that we have such affections (or that it is necessary for us to have such affections for survival) the gods looks at the end, which is human reason’s good functioning, and make sure that reason can achieve this end by ‘separating’ such affections from reason. Such affections do not positively contribute to reason’s good functioning. Rather their separation from reason contributes to this good functioning, which is the end, and they are not presented as responsible for this separation. The lowest part of the soul and necessity in general can be said to aim at the good if they are considered as operating in conjunction with, and not in separation from reason. The ‘lower parts’ in so far as they are conceived as being separate from reason, they cannot be said to aim at the good positively (only negatively in that reason is protected). Direction of the irrational towards the good is in my opinion is achieved through the creation of the liver and with imagination which allows interaction and ‘communication’ between reason and the irrational and ‘persuasion’ of the irrational by reason. This persuasion corresponds to the persuasion of necessity by reason in the cosmos. Otherwise, on their own more generally, or rather if the lower parts functioned in isolation from reason, the outcome they would produce would be completely disorderly. Compare with: *Tim.* 46e5: ὅσαι μονωθεῖσαι φρονήσεως τὸ τυχὸν ἄτακτον ἐκάστοτε ἐξεργάζονται. (The term *μονωθεῖσαι* does not signify that material causes are separate from reason: rather if they are separated from reason or in so far as they behave separately from reason they produce disorder and random results. When or ‘in so far as’ they are ‘persuaded’ by reason and function as auxiliary causes, they do not produce disorder and they are governed by purpose.) In the end, one may ask precisely what the separation of the irrational affections from reason represents. It represents I think reason’s potential for autonomy. Such autonomy and ‘separation’ from necessity is ultimately for us to achieve and is not given to us by the gods. But the gods make sure that the human soul has such a potential despite the fact that it is embodied and hence amenable to external influences.



argue more extensively, reason is conceived as the centre of consciousness, and thus by being ‘far away’ from reason the functioning of the lowest part can remain unconscious or half conscious. Reason is not disturbed and can reflect exactly because it does not ‘listen’ to them. In other words, for most of the time we are not aware or not fully aware of certain activities or motions, which waver between the mental and the bodily. Presumably, if such affections and desires become intense and come to occupy a prominent place in consciousness, reason will no longer be able to operate undisturbed and autonomously. Instead of reflecting on the good of the person as a whole, or about the motions of the planets, it will focus on what to cook for dinner. Apart from this, if we think of the lowest element as representing not just basic and necessary biological functions or urges but also as somehow involving the unnecessary ‘criminal’ desires of the *Republic*, the distance from reason indicates the restriction of such desires to a half conscious level. In the *Republic* Socrates seems to suggest that for most of us such desires arise only in dreams (*Republic* 571b2-d5), presumably because of continuous suppression. The connection of the lowest part with dreams is discussed immediately afterwards in the *Timaeus* (71a ff.)

### ***Sōphrosunē* and harmony**

Now having dealt with justice I wish to discuss the notion of *sōphrosunē*.<sup>49</sup> *Sōphrosunē* is defined as ὁμόνοια and συμφωνία (oneness of mind, agreement/concord) in the case of the city (432a7-8), and friendship and concord or agreement in the case of the soul (442c9-d1: Σώφρονα οὐ τῇ φιλίᾳ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ τῇ αὐτῶν τούτων). *Sōphrosunē* basically lies in harmony in the soul.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> The translation of the term *sōphrosunē* is particularly difficult. A term that more fully captures the meaning of *sōphrosunē* is sound- mindedness.

<sup>50</sup> For Plato’s conception of *sōphrosunē* in the *Republic* and the connection between *sōphrosunē* and harmony see also North (1966) pp. 169-176. North argues as follows: ‘As the omission of every other element in the final definition show, Plato regards concord or harmony as the essential *sophrosyne*-for the purposes of the *Republic*’ (p. 173).

There is a passage, however, in which justice itself appears to be defined as harmony, and thus it may look as though the two virtues merge into one: <sup>51</sup>

...Μη ἐάσαντα τὰλλότρια πράττειν ἕκαστον ἐν αὐτῷ μηδὲ πολυπραγμονεῖν πρὸς ἄλληλα τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γένη, ἀλλὰ τῷ ὄντι τὰ οἰκεῖα εὖ θέμενον καὶ ἄρξαντα αὐτὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ κοσμήσαντα καὶ φίλον γενόμενον ἑαυτῷ καὶ συναρμόσαντα τρία ὄντα, ὥσπερ ὄρους τρεῖς ἀρμονίας ἀτεχνῶς, νεάτης τε καὶ ὑπάτης καὶ μέσης, καὶ εἰ ἄλλα ἄττα μεταξὺ τυγχάνει ὄντα, πάντα ταῦτα συνδῆσαντα καὶ παντάπασιν ἓνα γενόμενον ἐκ πολλῶν, σῶφρονα καὶ ἡρμοσμένον (443d2-e2)...

*‘A man must not suffer the principles in his soul to do each the work of some other and interfere and meddle with one another, but he should dispose well of what in the true sense of the word is properly his own, and having first attained to self-mastery and beautiful order within himself, and having harmonized these three principles, the notes or intervals of three terms quite literally the lowest, the highest, and the mean, and all others there may be between them, and having linked and bound all three together and made of himself a unit, one man instead of many, self-controlled and in unison...’* (trans. by Shorey)

I shall discuss this passage more extensively in a while. I wish to note here that until ‘ἄρξαντα αὐτὸν αὐτοῦ’ we have reference to justice, where from ‘κοσμήσαντα’ including this term Socrates starts talking about *sōphrosunē*.<sup>52</sup> Both justice and *sōphrosunē* are forms of ordering or arrangement in the soul. Unlike justice that consists in separation and ranking of elements, *sōphrosunē* involves binding and unison (συναρμόσαντα, συνδῆσαντα). Accordingly one becomes one out of many (ἓνα γενόμενον ἐκ πολλῶν). In *sōphrosunē* the different elements

<sup>51</sup> I am not in full agreement with Irwin’s understanding of the relation between justice and *sōphrosunē*. Irwin (1995) pp. 228-9 tends to see *sōphrosunē* as continence and justice as harmony, where the elements are in agreement. It seems to me that the notion of self-control corresponds to justice, whereas strictly speaking harmony corresponds to *sōphrosunē*.

<sup>52</sup> *Sōphrosunē* is associated with κόσμος at 430e4.

are no longer treated as separate, rather they can be considered as forming a unity and a whole. In musical harmony, to which the state of the soul is compared, we have different sounds or voices that are blended according to certain rules to produce one sound. In a similar way the many ‘voices’ or activities in the soul acquire such a kind of uniformity or agreement that they cannot be distinguished from each other. Thus it seems to me that that in harmony communion of elements and in such communion we have a combination or mixture of elements (*krasis*),<sup>53</sup> while justice involved or presupposed separation.

*Sōphrosunē* involves friendship of the elements and friendship can be associated with communion (κοινωνία).<sup>54</sup> The elements work together for a common

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<sup>53</sup> Harmony is associated with κρᾶσις of opposites in Eryximachus’ speech in the *Symposium* (188a4). Burnyeat (2000) p. 47 cites a passage from the Euclidean *Sectio Canonis* (149.17-24 Jan), where the relationship between harmony/concordance and blend or mixture (*krasis*) is clear. As Burnyeat explains (p. 48), in this passage the concordant sounds are given a single name: ‘Euclid’s idea, then is that Greek gives apt recognition to the unity of sound in a concord by assigning a single expression to the corresponding mathematical ratio’. *Krasis* is also associated with harmony in the *Phaedo* (86b8-c3, 86d2). Simmias’ suggestion is that the soul is a harmony and proper *krasis* of the physical opposites. It seems to me that this position makes the soul dependent on the body and its elements. I think that in the *Laws* one can find the reversal of this position. It is the soul, which accounts for the combination of the physical opposites (*Laws* 896e-897b). More generally, I think that Plato would not accept that proper combinations of the elements are somehow due to the elements themselves. Rather harmony is something that is imposed on the elements, in so far as they are conceived as opposites, from ‘outside’. In a similar fashion, the parts of the soul are not exactly responsible for their proper combination or harmony and *sōphrosunē*. It is either education or reason, as something above the elements or as separate from the elements, which imposes order and harmony relying on its own principles and generating proper mixtures, which involve itself as a component.

<sup>54</sup> In the *Gorgias* justice seems to be primarily associated with τάξις, and, νόμιμον while *sōphrosunē* with κόσμος and κόσμιον (504d1-3). See Dodd’s (1959) comments ad loc. pp. 329-30. Κοινωνία (communion, community or sense of community) seems later to be associated with both, even though I think that it is closer to *sōphrosunē*: ‘φασὶ δ’ οἱ σοφοί, ὦ Καλλίκλεις, καὶ οὐρανὸν καὶ γῆν καὶ θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπους τὴν κοινωνίαν συνέχειν καὶ φιλίαν καὶ κοσμιότητα καὶ σωφροσύνην καὶ δικαιοσύνην, καὶ τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο διὰ ταῦτα κόσμον καλοῦσιν, ὦ ἑταῖρε, οὐκ ἀκοσμίαν οὐδὲ ἀκολασίαν’ (507e-d). Restraint of desire is presented as necessary for κοινωνία and κοινωνία is presented as necessary for friendship (507e). Κοινωνία is associated with unity in the *Republic* at 462b4-6 in the case of the city and at 462c9-d5 in the case of the soul, a

purpose,<sup>55</sup> and such working together presupposes interaction between the activities. Having discussed the internal action, which can more strictly be identified with virtue, Socrates goes on to talk about external action and show how external action can be associated with virtue as well (443e2-444a2). It becomes clear thus that the virtuous person acts as one. I wish to note here that in proper virtuous action the different kinds of agency that have been distinguished operate in common for a common end, so that the soul does not consist in separate agencies, rather it becomes one agency. Furthermore while justice itself as separation or self-control does not imply that enmity has ceased, only that offences are not committed among the opposite parties, *sōphrosunē* implies that the opposite parties are no longer in opposition, or that the parts no longer constitute opposites rather they are in a relationship of agreement and mutual friendship, which, I think, presuppose affinity with each other.<sup>56</sup>

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passage that I am going to discuss more extensively. Also it is associated with affinity at 531c10-d2: καὶ ἡ τούτων πάντων ὧν διεληλύθαμεν μέθοδος, ἐὰν μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλλήλων κοινωνίαν ἀφίκεται καὶ συγγένειαν, καὶ συλλογισθῇ ταῦτα ἡ ἐστὶν ἀλλήλοις οἰκεῖα, φέρειν τι αὐτῶν εἰς ἃ βουλόμεθα τὴν πραγματείαν καὶ οὐκ ἀνόνητα πονεῖσθαι, εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἀνόνητα (531c9-d3, see also 537c1-3).

<sup>55</sup> Annas (1981) p. 119 understands justice as I incline to view *sōphrosunē*. She argues that ‘justice is a virtue of the city as a ‘unity’, for it requires of each citizen a recognition of his own role as contributing in some characteristic way to the common good’. She accepts that such recognition is also implicit in *sōphrosunē* but she argues that ‘that was a recognition only of superiority and inferiority and superiority, not of the full scope of one’s position in a particular class in a state which requires cooperation from all classes.’ As far as what is said in Book 4 is concerned, I am inclined to attribute to *sōphrosunē* the characteristics that Annas attributes to justice. Nevertheless I will later argue that justice also should involve recognition of a common good. However, in Book 4 justice in the city may involve recognition of one’s particular function and also one’s particular position, but this is just recognition of a position of inferiority or superiority in relation to the other elements, while it is *sōphrosunē* which, involving the notion of friendship, suggests recognition of a common good and the fact that the good of the city and the other classes also corresponds to the good of the individual in the city. *Sōphrosunē*, in other words, suggests active endorsement of the common life on the part of the lower classes as best for them, while justice does not imply such endorsement. As unity, *sōphrosunē*, I am going to argue, neither in the city nor in the soul is presented as something that has been achieved. In the case of the city, unity, friendship and *sōphrosunē* is established only in the context of the two superior classes and this happens in Book 5.

<sup>56</sup> A passage which deserves citation is one from the *Sophist* where Socrates defines *stasis* and *nosos* as a form of badness in the soul. In the *Sophist* Socrates does not start from a conception of elements as

Cornford (1912) pp. 248-9 has provided an account of the nature of the virtues and the relation between justice and *sōphrosunē* to which I am greatly indebted:

*‘Considered as virtues of a whole consisting of distinct parts, Justice and Sophrosyne are complementary. Justice is a principle of differentiation and specialization of the parts: Sophrosyne is a principle of agreement, harmony and unity. A state with three classes, which had only Justice, would not be united: it would be a mere aggregate of three separate classes, each doing its own work and not interfering with the rest. Justice thus keeps the parts distinct. Sophrosyne is needed also to hold them together. It is, or involves, the sense of solidarity which links the three parts to one another and makes them form one whole. The two principles are analogous to the Neikos and Philia (Harmonia) of Empedocles. Justice is like Neikos, which draws like to like and divides the elements into distinct, internally homogeneous groups. Sophrosyne is like Philia, which is an attraction between unlikes, tending to fuse them all in the unity of the ‘sphere’. As Heracleitus says, ‘Combinations are wholes and not wholes; drawn together and drawn asunder’. Plato’s state is a ‘combination’: it is a whole drawn asunder into parts by Justice, which maintains the differentiation of specialized, departmental activities; it is not a ‘whole’ in so far as it consists of these distinct parts, and would fall asunder if it were not ‘drawn together’ by Sophrosyne.’*

There are a few further remarks I would like to make concerning the relation between the two virtues. Justice is taken to help maintain and support the other virtues. It is ‘a quality which made it possible for them all to grow up in the body

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opposites. Rather opposition is dissolution of natural affinity: Πότερον ἄλλο τι στάσιν ἡγούμενος ἢ τὴν τοῦ φύσει συγγενούς ἐκ τινος διαφθορᾶς διαφορὰν ; (228a7-8). Τί δέ; ἐν ψυχῇ δόξας ἐπιθυμίας καὶ θυμὸν ἡδοναῖς καὶ λόγον λύπαις καὶ πάντα ἀλλήλοις ταῦτα τῶν φλαύρως ἐχόντων οὐκ ἡσθήμεθα διαφερόμενα; ...Συγγενῇ γε μὴν ἐξ ἀνάγκης σύμπαντα γέγονεν. (228b2-6) It makes a difference if the elements are conceived as having affinity. If they have affinity and in so far as they have affinity they do not need to be conceived as radically separate and also *sōphrosunē* and harmony, which suggest affinity can develop. In *Republic* Book 4 we start from the conception of elements as opposites and thus it is not clear how they have affinity with each other and also how unity can develop.

politic and which when they have sprung up preserves them as long as it is present' (433b7-10, trans. by Shorey). I think it is clear in the case of courage and wisdom that justice can help their development if justice supports the development of different activities or functions without interference from the lower parts.

It is not clear to me whether we should consider justice to be sufficient for *sōphrosunē*. Yet, I believe, justice can be seen as conducive to *sōphrosunē* and at least necessary for it to develop. Metaphorically speaking, it may be said that by separating the opposing parties and not allow them to harm each other we leave room for friendship and a sense of community to develop. Such a sense of community and friendship presupposes justice in the sense that justice makes sure that there is no encroachment and offence. But it could be argued also that the reverse is the case; if in other words there is friendship there is no offence in any case. Thus while it seems that *sōphrosunē* as friendship entails justice in so far at least as it signifies absence of offence, justice does not entail friendship. In Book 4 in general Plato tends to emphasize the priority of justice, and such priority is also presented as a temporal one. Thus, for example, when Socrates presents justice as the proper internal activity of the soul, justice as establishing the rule of reason comes first and unity afterwards (443d2-e2). Perhaps if justice is to be associated with separation and *sōphrosunē* with unison they can be seen as two complementary and perhaps successive stages in development of virtue where justice is to be performed first and unity can be established after the performance of justice. However, at least as far as action is concerned, *sōphrosunē* and unity seems to be the desirable outcome since it implies a unified agency without any internal disagreement or conflict, and in which elements in some sense, do not do just their 'own' rather contribute to a common purpose.

It seems to me that Plato's emphasis on justice and separation can be explained in a number of related ways. First of all, as I shall suggest later, all human souls possess unity, and more generally the elements do not work separately. Furthermore, I am going to suggest that the lower elements should not work separately. Nevertheless, the unity that ordinary souls display is problematic, incoherent and self-contradictory, whether one experiences conflict or not, even though Plato presents all the deviant characters as experiencing conflict. For instance, one can assume that the fact that the oligarchic character's soul is wholly directed to

the pursuit of money, his soul possesses *sōphrosunē* and unity. Such a soul would not constitute a unity even if he did not have to suppress certain desires. Justice somehow establishes the proper conditions for a real unity, and the precise hierarchical order between the elements which unity needs to involve. More generally the preponderance of justice, as reason's rule, indicates that unity does not lie in unanimous pursuit of any ends, rather in the ordered pursuit of right ends, which are dictated by reason. The other related reason why justice comes first is that as I am going to argue, what can properly unify the soul is reason. Reason though needs to be 'separated' first, and operate autonomously in order to unify the soul. Ideally the unity of the soul can be achieved by reason, when it comes to grasp the principle or principles on which such unity is grounded, and this means that it has to obtain knowledge of the good. In order to produce a unity and proper combination between the elements, reason somehow needs to see the elements first as separate, including itself, examine their individual natures in distinction from its other, and also reach a conception of the principles which allow them to combine and associate in a proper way without producing contradictions or conflict.<sup>57</sup>

Now in the context of the Book 4 the emphasis is on justice and self-control and we are encouraged to consider the elements more as separate rather than as forming a unity both in the city and in the soul, in particular the lowest element from reason. In fact the lowest element has been so radically separated from reason both in the city and in the soul that its integration does not appear to be feasible. More generally *sōphrosunē* and harmony, as agreement and integration of the elements both in the case of the city and also in the case of the soul and also as suggesting some degree of rationality and consent on the part of the lowest elements, and thus their own positive share in virtue, does not appear to be obtainable.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, if *sōphrosunē* turns out to be problematic, then also perhaps justice as conducive to

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<sup>57</sup> In some sense we could say that we have also two complementary logical processes, analysis and synthesis, and analysis may be said perhaps to come first.

<sup>58</sup> See also Gill (1985) p. 15 who argues that the *epithumētikon* has not been presented as educable, and that 'Plato's claim to have produced tripartite agreement in the *psuchē* (442c-d) or complete harmony and unity in the *psuchē* (443d-e) exceeds what we have so far been shown in the educational programme' (p. 15).

*sōphrosunē* is problematic or defective and perfect virtue does not appear to be obtainable.

Plato nevertheless did not find problematic the unification of the two superior elements, despite the fact that they were initially introduced as opposites (375c6-8, 375d7-8). Later, Socrates is going to characterize spirit as reason's natural ally (441a2-3) suggesting their connection or affinity, even though the two elements can be in conflict (441b3-c2). The education that has been developed in Books 2-3 aimed at the harmonization of spirit and reason (410d6-411a1, 441e7-442a2). In so far as spirit is harmonized with reason it is, I think, 'blended' with reason and does not behave as if it is separate from reason. The joint function that reason and spirit perform, in so far as they are thus blended, is appetite's control (442a4-b3). When they suppress appetite the two elements operate together, one supporting the activity of the other. Such co-operation of the two elements is expressed in the definition of courage as preservation of the lawful beliefs one has through one's education, or more generally of reason's commands concerning what is to be 'feared' and what not (429b8-d1 and 442b10-c1).

The city-soul analogy may appear to suggest that spirit has beliefs of its own, which it preserves in right action, and more generally that such preservation is a necessary and sufficient condition for right action. Strictly speaking spirit does not have beliefs of its own. In other words, separating spirit from reason and considering it in itself as constituting a separate part in the soul of its own is the same thing as 'abstracting reason from it' and saying that it has no element of reason. Rather I believe that spirit can be assigned beliefs exactly because it is not as a matter of fact independent from and separable from reason and belief.<sup>59</sup> At worst it maintains a

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<sup>59</sup> It may be objected that spirit is indeed separable from belief because according to Glaucon one can find spirit in children or in animals while one cannot find *logismos* in children. He goes on to say with a dose of irony that some people may never acquire *logismos* (441a7-b1) and Socrates adds that spirit can be found in animals. I wish to note that *logismos* is not the same thing as belief and thus the fact that we can find spirit without reasoning does not mean that it can exist without belief. Furthermore, I believe that reason is not exhausted by *logismos*, which represents its higher functioning but also involves belief. According to Plato a great number of people are irrational and unreflective, but this does not mean that they do not have beliefs. Finally in the *Timaeus* it is suggested that children do form



partial independence at best it becomes completely uniform with reason. Such independence can be expressed either by the fact that it may not sufficiently respond to certain beliefs or alternatively overreact. At the same time, the 'beliefs' that are associated with spirit, and whose preservation spirit supports, are not themselves separable from spirit, at least in so far as spirit contributes to the preservation of such beliefs. Perhaps it can be said that reason can form certain beliefs or give certain commands first, in which the spirit responds and thus these beliefs 'later' come to be 'part' of spirit, in other words are mixed or combined with an affective element. But simultaneously such an affective component supports or preserves such beliefs, both at the moment of action and also in the long term.

The harmony between reason and spirit that the program of education in music and gymnastics aimed at involved exactly such blending of beliefs concerning what is good, bad, just or unjust, shameful or fine with an affective or emotional element, which supports them and allows them to remain stable and firm in the soul, as an indelible paint (429e7-430b5), since the ruling classes have not been provided yet with much rational grounds or arguments that these beliefs are true. Rather to a great extent one comes to endorse the truth of such beliefs through 'acquaintance' or familiarization with them, and also with the association of certain beliefs and values with feelings of shame, or pride or anger. In some sense it can be said more that education's overall purpose was the training of emotion, if emotion is not considered to be something irrational and more generally as a kind of combination of reason with an affective element.<sup>60</sup> In other words, education did not treat reason as something separate or completely separate from emotion. It was treated as something combined with emotion, and more generally as something rather passive, and aimed at making such combination as good and stable as possible.

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beliefs even though they are not attributed *logismos* (43a6-44b) and it is also implied that animals possess beliefs as well (77b-c).

<sup>60</sup> Gill (1985) pp. 15-6 is in my opinion right in suggesting that the education in Books 2-4 treats the soul as passive and does not aim at developing one's critical capacities. However, I do not fully agree with his suggestion that the education is addressed to spirit. In my opinion, the education addresses reason together with spirit and treats reason as something passive, (reason has defined initially by reference to dogs), and aims primary at creating a uniformity or agreement between reason and emotive elements.

## Reason and the person

Socrates at 443c9-d1 says that justice does not have to do with external action, but rather with internal action, which concerns oneself and what is really one's own, in other words the parts of the soul: τὸ δὲ γε ἀληθές, τοιοῦτον μὲν τι ἦν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἢ δικαιοσύνη, ἀλλ' οὐ τι περὶ τὴν ἔξω πράξιν τῶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ περὶ τὴν ἐντός, ὡς ἀληθῶς περὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ, μὴ ἔασαντα τὰλλότρια πράττειν ἕκαστον ἐν αὐτῷ. In this passage the internal action, which justice consists in, and can be said thus to be genuinely 'doing one's own', since one is concerned with one's soul and the parts of oneself, is attributed to the person. Furthermore, such activity or action is not presented as exactly the same thing as the parts doing their own, as justice was previously defined (443b1-2). Previously justice consisted in a proper relation between separate agencies in the soul. Thus here justice in the soul does not consist solely in a certain state of order of the soul but also in an activity, which produces such order. Furthermore, justice in the second sense and *sōphrosunē* do indeed overlap. In other words, 'doing one's own' consists in an activity or action on the part of the person which produces both justice and *sōphrosunē*, and thus if justice is 'doing one's own' so is *sōphrosunē*.<sup>61</sup> Justice encompasses *sōphrosunē*, and also *sōphrosunē* is the final outcome of justice (443e2). The two virtues become one activity or internal action, or two aspects perhaps of one activity, which eventually aims at unifying the soul.

The question that arises is whether we should take such language, which attributes internal action to the person as a whole, as literal. Furthermore one may ask whether the person is to be identified with one of the parts of the soul, all the parts, or whether it constitutes something over and above the parts.<sup>62</sup> I believe that the person

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Timaeus* 72a4-6.

<sup>62</sup> Bobonich (2002) admits that Plato often uses language that indicates that the person is something over and above the parts, but he argues that we can explain the claims Plato makes without invoking

in this passage corresponds to reason<sup>63</sup> and the activity which constitutes doing' one's own corresponds to reason's activity, in so far as it cares for the soul and produces virtue as a state of the soul. However, in so far as reason plays such an ordering and unifying role it does not function as one part among the others, rather it functions as something over and above the other parts, being what causes and constitutes the whole. Furthermore, I think that 'doing one's own' as an activity of reason, that should be performed prior to 'external' action and is necessary for virtuous external action (4443e2), lies in reflection concerning oneself and self-knowledge, as an examination of one's desires and beliefs, and at the same time as a shaping of desires and beliefs in accordance with a conception of how one should be. It becomes clear that virtue does not solely lie in a proper state of the soul. Rather it also involves one's activity of reflection, and more generally in one's active engagement with one's soul that produces and supports such a state.

This passage (443c9-444a2) may appear to undermine the conclusions of the argument for the division of the soul in two respects. First of all we have here a form of action or activity that is attributed to the whole or to the person in an unqualified way. Justice and *sōphrosunē* have already been presented as characterizing the whole and not the parts of the soul or the city. At the end of Book 4 they are also presented as forms of action that can be attributed to the whole or to the person. By implication also reason, when it operates well can be associated with and be attributed to the

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them (n. 27, p. 531). Indeed on Bobonich's interpretation of the argument for the division of the soul, there is no room for the soul as a whole to be something in its own right. On my interpretation of the argument for the division of the soul, the whole indeed is not ascribed an agency of its own right, but the argument leaves room for such an agency since it does not specify the nature of the whole. Kahn (1987) p. 82 n. 8 has also suggested that there is no room for a person as something over and above the parts on the level of the explanans. Irwin (1995) discusses Book 8 where the person is presented as handing over control to the lower parts of the soul (e.g. 553b-d, 561a-c). Irwin suggests that Plato's reference to the person is to be taken seriously (p. 285), and he seems to think that such cases of handing over control involve reason (p. 286). Thus he seems to associate the person with reason, even though he does not make such association explicit. Irwin rightly notes that 'Plato seems to intend' the person to remain the permanent source of authority; every change of domination in the soul is accepted by the soul itself (p. 287).

<sup>63</sup> Lovibond (1991) p. 50 has also suggested that Plato has a notion of central agency which 'is representative of the self as a whole' and should be in control.

whole.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, if both separation and unification of the elements in the soul can be attributed to reason's activity, the conception of the lower parts of the soul as autonomous agencies that the argument for the division of the soul suggested is undermined. Rather, if my interpretation is correct, we see here that since virtue as the proper order or relation of the parts of the soul depends on reason, the agencies or activities that the lower parts constitute are also dependent on reason and thus they cannot be characterized as (sufficient) causes of action whether internal or external.<sup>65</sup> Both their separation from reason, and also their unification with reason is ultimately due to reason that can be characterized as the cause of justice and *sōphrosunē* as states of the person. In my next chapter I will argue more extensively in support of the thesis that the lower parts cannot be conceived as separate from reason.

The relationship between these virtues and reason has been to some extent reversed. It is not exactly justice, as involving the proper state of the parts, in particular the lower parts which allows the good functioning of reason and its rule, rather somehow justice is due to reason, and self-knowledge. Reason appears to be responsible for its own autonomy or separation from the other parts. Furthermore, it can be said that the lower parts can have a share in virtue if their functions develop in a proper relationship with reason. In so far as the lowest part of the soul does not appear to have a share in reason, and it remains in opposition to reason, it cannot have a positive share in virtue. Thus more generally, I think that what we need is not a reciprocal separation between the elements of the soul. Reason indeed needs to function independently from the lower parts but the lower parts should not operate independently from reason. However to accept the possibility of such dependence is also to accept that the lower parts are not in essential opposition to reason.

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<sup>64</sup> Cross and Woosley (1964) p. 129 have asked 'if a man's soul or self is composed of (these) three elements, how can he be anything over and above them? And if he is not, how can he be held responsible, let alone morally responsible, for his actions?' I think that the notion of justice as a structure of the soul which is not externally produced rather lies in one's own activity conveys such a notion of responsibility, even though I am not sure whether one can speak of moral responsibility.

<sup>65</sup> It seems to me that the lower parts can be characterized using the terminology that Plato adopts in the *Timaeus* (46c7-d4) as *sunaitia* (auxiliary causes). To characterize them in this way implies that they function as causes of action together with reason and not in separation from reason and the desire for the good, and also that they ultimately aim at the good. I will develop this suggestion more extensively in the next chapter.

I should also note that Socrates in this context emphasizes the importance of 'external' action and thus also I think the importance of habituation for virtue (443e2-444a2). However, he indicates that 'external' action has to be undertaken only if prior to action one has established harmony in one's soul (443e2-3). Reflection thus has to precede action. External action itself, which involves pursuit of different ends both counts as virtuous and can be called just (443e5) and also contributes to and maintains this state of the soul (443e6-7), under the condition that it is done in the right frame of mind. Such a frame of mind lies in one aiming at maintaining the proper disposition in one's soul and it is this state of mind that makes particular actions virtuous (443e4-6). This is a reflective state of mind, and thus habituation is not a passive process. It is, I believe, in this sense that one acts as one and not as many. Whatever one's particular motives for action are, which may involve for example money making, caring for the body (443e3-4),<sup>66</sup> they need to be informed by and subordinated to the primary aim of reason which is justice and virtue in the soul and done in some sense for the sake of this aim.<sup>67</sup> In this way perhaps the lower parts also contribute to virtue in the sense that they provide areas of action or motivations in relation to which virtue can be exercised. Thus one does not merely happen to act correctly, and for example pursue money in the right way rather one consciously tries to establish the proper state in one's soul, and this is the only way that one can pursue money in the right way.

It may be argued that the argument in the Book 4 is not conclusive in that the ends of action and more generally the overall aims of the person and reason are not specified. In the passage that I discussed extensively the overall aim of action, whether external or internal and also reason's aim is virtue and justice, as the proper condition in one's soul. Socrates also argues that the knowledge which governs just action, namely the action which both conduces to the virtuous condition and also is done so that the virtuous condition is preserved, is the only kind of knowledge which deserves to be named wisdom (443e7-444a1). One may ask what this knowledge

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<sup>66</sup> Among the particular aims listed here (e2-4) the only one that is going to be forbidden later is politics (592a5-8).

<sup>67</sup> Compare with 591c1-592a6 on how the virtuous person should act.

precisely involves. I suggest that at this stage at least of the *Republic*, this knowledge, which governs right action, involves the assumption that justice and virtue as the proper condition of the soul, involving the proper order and arrangement of the parts of the soul, is good as such and should be given priority over all other aims. Also more generally it lies in the knowledge of how to pursue particular things so that either they contribute to or more generally they are in conformity with virtue.<sup>68</sup>

Furthermore, if this knowledge has to be made more specific it may be said to involve a reflective endorsement of the lawful beliefs that one has acquired through one's education in the city one lives in and ideally in Socrates' city.<sup>69</sup> These are beliefs that people who have been brought up in a civilized state already have to a great or lesser extent and that well-educated people, such as Glaucon and Adeimantus, are committed to. Self-knowledge and the rule of reason lies in the 'person' coming to accept the value of such beliefs reflectively by endorsing the conclusions of an argument concerning the nature of the soul and its parts. I believe that what people like Glaucon and Adeimantus lack is self-knowledge, knowledge of the nature and character of their souls. It is this knowledge more specifically that the argument in Books 2-4 aims at providing to some extent, which can simultaneously be seen as providing them with grounds which may reinforce their commitment to the value of justice and law.<sup>70</sup>

However, in my opinion, the self-knowledge that the argument in Book 4 provides is deficient. Reason, the best part in us, throughout Books 2-4 has not been presented as something more than the passive recipient of such beliefs or as being capable of further training that the one that has been sketched in books 2-3 (441e7-442a5). In being invited to identify with reason one is also invited to identify with these beliefs, which most people possess to some extent.<sup>71</sup> The nature more generally

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<sup>68</sup> Compare again with 591c-592a and 618b7-619b1.

<sup>69</sup> Compare with 589c8: τὰ καλὰ καὶ αἰσχρὰ νόμιμα. These very *nomima* are put under attack in Book 5 479d2-4. But later Socrates warns against a premature effort to undermine them (538c-539d).

<sup>70</sup> Right belief is not sufficient for virtuous action in two respects. On the one hand right belief may fail to govern action. On the other hand, self-knowledge and understanding of one's soul is also necessary for right action and perhaps also sufficient for right action.

<sup>71</sup> See for example 538c6-8, 574d5-6.

of reason, as the part with which we learn, has been revealed only in so far as it has been said to be an element which is loving what it becomes familiar with.<sup>72</sup> But the nature and object of this love is not adequately revealed. Furthermore it is presented as an element in the soul both distinct from and in opposition to bodily desires and pleasures, and the fact that we should identify with it has been supported by Socrates' claim that it looks at the interests of the soul as a whole (442c4-7). By implication, since appetite has been presented as being solely one part of the soul and not the whole, and furthermore since it is presented as a part which tends to oppose reason, which is the element that represents one's interests, one understands that one has to restrain appetite and more generally not to identify with appetite in so far as it is in opposition with reason, rather to follow the beliefs that have been implicitly associated with reason.

Now if one comes to consider this argument as circular or defective, and one needs still further or better reasons to pursue justice other than the division of the soul, one is encouraged in the following Books of the *Republic* to pursue philosophy further. Glaucon and Adeimantus on the other hand seem to be satisfied and convinced (445a5-b4). In my next chapter I will discuss more extensively Socrates' warning that one has to take a longer way (435c4-5) in the examination of the issues under question. A different method would allow one to acquire better knowledge of the soul and its virtues.

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<sup>72</sup> See 375e-376b.

## Part II

### The Unity of the Soul

#### Chapter 3

#### The longer road and the unity of the soul

I concluded the previous chapter by suggesting that the understanding of the soul and its parts that the argument for the division of the soul in Book 4 provides is inadequate. That such understanding is inadequate is revealed in relation to the virtue of *sōphrosunē*, which suggests the unity of the soul and the unity and affinity of the parts of the soul. As a form of self-knowledge *sōphrosunē* appears to imply a conception of the soul as unity, and such conception was not available to the reader in Book 4. The argument for the division of the soul did not provide adequate insight into the unity of the soul and it appeared to preclude the unity of its parts, in particular the unity between reason and desire. More generally, the overall emphasis in Book 4 was on opposition and the need to separate different mental functions. In this chapter I am going to suggest that a different approach to the soul is needed so that the soul's unity can be apprehended and the soul can emerge as a harmonious whole.

#### The longer road

Before expounding the principle of opposites and his conception of the divided soul Socrates pauses to provide a warning against the adequacy of his method for dealing with the question whether the soul contains these three kinds in itself or not (435c4-5). He suggests that the methods that he is using at present cannot provide exactitude/accuracy (ἀκρίβως) concerning the issues under question, and there is 'another longer and harder way that conducts to this' (435e9-d4) (trans. by Shorey). Later in Book 6 Socrates refers back to his remarks in Book 4. Socrates focuses now



on the account of the virtues. He reminds Glaucon of his earlier account or definition of the virtues (ὁ ἕκαστον εἶη) which rested on the division or separation (διαστησάμενοι) of three kinds in the soul (504a4-6). He also tells Glaucon that ‘we were saying that, I believe that for the most perfect discernment of these things another longer way (ἄλλη μακροτέρα περίοδος) was requisite which would make them plain to one who took it, but that it was possible to add proofs on a par with the preceding discussion. And you said that it was sufficient, and it was on this understanding that what we then said was said, falling short of ultimate precision (ἀκριβείας) as it appeared to me, but if it contented you it is for you to say’ (504b1-7) (trans. by Shorey).

Whereas in Book 4 Socrates’ warning refers directly to the question of the tripartite division of the soul, in Book 6 it concerns more generally the question of the nature and definition of the virtues. On the grounds that the longer way in Book 6 appears to deal with the question of virtues and that ‘it is nowhere in the *Republic* expressly used either to confirm or to overthrow the triple division of the soul’ Adam has suggested that τοῦτο at 435d does not refer to the psychological question, rather to the ethical question (Adam, (1965) note ad loc.). It seems to me that Socrates makes it clear that the methodology he has used in relation to both questions is problematic, and that a different method should be applied both to the ethical and the psychological question. The difficult question that arises is whether a different methodology is expected to yield different results concerning the soul, and to supplement or to reject the results reached in Book 4.<sup>1</sup> In my opinion both the conception of the soul that is provided in Book 4, and the methodology that leads to such a conception are defective. I shall attempt to make suggestions as to why the

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<sup>1</sup> Bobonich (2002) p. 528 n. 11 recognizes that the methodology adopted in relation to the soul may be problematic but he has suggested that a different methodology would not yield different results. He argues that there is no evidence that Plato would dismiss the conclusions of the argument for the division of the soul in Book 4. In his opinion it is one of the strongest arguments of the *Republic*, together with the argument in Book 5, for the division between belief and knowledge. On the other hand, Burnyeat (2006) p. 3-4 has suggested that the argument for tripartition and the principle of opposites on which it relies is dubious. He thinks that different and better arguments could be provided in order to distinguish three elements or parts in the soul.

methodology is defective which may shed some light on the question why the results that the methodology produces are defective as well. It may be argued that Socrates does not take the longer way in the *Republic*. Nevertheless he provides indications as to where the longer way leads, and also indications concerning its expected results in both the middle books of the *Republic* and also in the context of the discussion of the soul's immortality in Book 10 (611a10-612a6).

Let me first state in brief what the longer way appears to involve according to Socrates' remarks in Book 6 and 7. It becomes clear that the longer way leads to the form of the good (504c9-d3), which is characterized as the greatest lesson (504d2-3). Furthermore, it is suggested that the conception of the virtues is inadequate and lacks exactitude because one does not have a grasp of the good (504d6-8). Without knowledge of the good knowledge of other things is not beneficial (505a2-b3). More precisely it turns out that the virtues cannot be known adequately without knowledge of the good (506a6-7). Thus it is clear enough that an adequate account of the virtues presupposes knowledge of the good and their definition needs to involve reference to the good and specify their relationship with the good.<sup>2</sup> The specification of their relationship with the good would render precision and exactitude to the account of the virtues. Knowledge of good is not necessary solely in order to provide an adequate account of the virtues. Rather it turns out that the good and reference to the good is necessary for the adequate examination and knowledge of any particular subject. Later in the context of the simile Socrates is going to say that the good is the cause of truth and knowledge in general (508e2-3). Thus the longer way as a method concerned with a particular topic, for example the soul or the virtues passes through the good.<sup>3</sup>

We are provided with further information concerning the adequate method in the context of the simile of the line. I will mostly paraphrase in brief and without entering into the discussion of controversial details. In the context of the simile of the line Socrates provides an outline of dialectic, comparing and contrasting dialectic with

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<sup>2</sup> See Irwin (1977a) p. 226: 'a complete account of the virtues must relate them to the good'.

<sup>3</sup> Shorey's comments (ad loc. p. 83) are pertinent: 'For metaphysics and cosmogony the vision of the idea of good may mean a teleological interpretation of the universe and the interpretation of all things in terms of benevolent design'

the method employed by the mathematicians. Philosophers and mathematicians employ hypotheses in a different way. Mathematicians rely on hypotheses that they do not question and of which they do not provide an account (510c5-d2) to proceed downwards to an ending or conclusion. Furthermore they make use of images or diagrams<sup>4</sup> (510d5-511a2, 511a8-11), and thus they talk about sensible things even though their investigation concerns intelligible things (510d5-511a1). Philosophers do not employ hypotheses as starting points (and thus as if they are known) to move downwards (511b4). Rather, they employ them genuinely as hypotheses, in other words as underpinnings and footings to move upwards towards a single non-hypothetical principle which 'is the starting point of all' (511b5-6). It is not clear to me what the upward path involves. However, it seems to be clear enough that the non hypothetical principle is the form of the good, and by means of hypotheses possibly philosophers try to reach a definition of the form of the good. Having reached the form of the good, the philosopher now proceeds downwards 'making no use whatever of any object of sense but only of pure ideas moving on through ideas to ideas and ending with ideas' (511b7-c2) (trans. by Shorey).

Later in Book 7 Socrates says that there is no other method that attempts (systematically) to determine what each thing is (533b1-2), and he refers to what in the earlier passage he has called *noēsis* (511d8) while later he is going to call *epistēmē* (533e4).<sup>5</sup> I think this method can be identified with the dialectical method at 533c8-d1 that advances by doing away with hypotheses 'up to the first principle in order to find confirmation there' (trans. by Shorey). A dialectician is defined as the person who is able 'to exact an account of the essence of each thing' (534b2-3). And likewise concerning the good we need a man who is able 'to define in his discourse and distinguish and abstract from all other things the aspect or idea of the good'. If one is not able to do this one does not know the good itself or any particular good (534b8-

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<sup>4</sup> Presumably they make use of diagrams in order to illustrate and defend their hypotheses. Robinson (1971b) pp. 97-131 argues that mathematicians' use of the senses is connected with the fact that they treat their starting-points as certainties while they should treat them as hypotheses, in other words as not known to be true (p. 107). Robinson seems to think that the mathematicians are dogmatic and convinced of their 'hypotheses' because they rely on sensible experience. Irwin (1977a) p. 335, n. 44 also suggests that in *dianoia* hypotheses are defended by use of sensible diagrams.

<sup>5</sup> See also 532a1-b2.

c5). Here Socrates seems to envisage a process of reaching a definition of the good by abstraction or distinction (διορίσασθαι τῷ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων πάντων ἀφελῶν τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέαν). I think that such process of division can be illustrated to some extent in his earlier rejection of the theses (or hypotheses) that the good is identical to pleasure or *phronēsis* (505b5-c11). Such rejection of the thesis that pleasure is the good involves a distinction of the good from pleasure. I am inclined to believe that such a procedure can be associated with dialectic's ascent. However, the dialectician should not solely distinguish the good from everything, and more generally particular ideas from each other but also associate the good with all other things (including knowledge, the other virtues and pleasure). More generally the philosopher has to reach a conception of the connection of all things, all reality, their community, kinship and affinity (531c9-d2, see also 537c1-3) and such conception of community or affinity is I think fully achieved by showing that they are all associated with the good and with providing a teleological account of reality. Even though a conception of the affinity of all things is something that education aims at encouraging prior to the ascent to the good perhaps such association of things with each other and the good can be fully achieved in dialectic's descent.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> It seems to me that Irwin (1977a) pp. 222-3 is right in suggesting that the method pursued by Socrates in the definition of virtues in Books 2-4 is analogous to the method of the mathematicians. Irwin makes the following observations: a) The definitions of the virtues are hypotheses which do not rest on a full account of the good rather on certain beliefs concerning the good. b) They are defended through showing that their consequences are consistent with ordinary beliefs. c) Socrates more specifically defends them by use of images. Justice in the soul it is shown to be useful through a comparison with justice in the city, and also health in the body. He shows its goodness by comparing it with previously accepted 'goods'. It can also be noted that the principle of opposites which is accepted as a *hypothesis* is not defended by reference to further hypotheses, rather its clarified and also defended by reference to observable examples. Furthermore, I think that in general throughout Books 2-4 Socrates relies or presupposes certain assumptions concerning the nature of the good and also what is good for the soul and the city, that he avoids making explicit. Rather he somehow wants to draw the reader or the interlocutor towards such assumptions, by relying to a great extent on observable 'facts' or common beliefs concerning human behaviour and nature and by making use of examples and images. For example Socrates argues that if the city has been rightly founded then it is good in the full sense of the word (427e6-7) and thus it must have all the virtues (427e9-10). But one may ask what justifies one's assumption that the city is good. It seems to me that Socrates has not really provided an explicit account of what the city is and what a city is for, and thus what would make it good. Rather to a great extent he has rested on securing the agreement of his interlocutors in the successive steps of his

One conclusion that one can draw on the basis of Socrates' remarks in Book 6 concerning the role of the good is that the argument in Book 4 concerning both the soul and justice was incomplete and lacked exactitude because the good was missing. Cooper and Penner have proposed solutions in this direction. Cooper (1977) pp. 152-3 has suggested that the argument concerning justice in Book 4 is incomplete in that we are not provided an adequate grasp of the nature of knowledge which is necessary for justice and for reason to rule in the soul. Penner (2006) has suggested that there is no error in the argument in Book 4 (n. 14, p. 259) and its inadequacy lies in the fact that the argument lacks an account of the knowledge of the good, which it is the function of the rational part of the just soul to acquire in order to rule in the soul (p. 240). While the two commentators conceive the good in a different way, both of them seem to trace the inadequacy of the argument in the fact that we do not have a complete account of reason's function and purpose, which is also the purpose of the person. Furthermore they seem to trace no errors in the argument for the division of the soul.

I am in agreement with Cooper's and Penner's suggestion that the good is in some sense missing from the specification of the function of the argument in Book 4. Indeed an account of good is needed so that one can fully understand the nature and function of reason and more generally the nature of the desire for the good. I think that their suggestion does not pay full justice to what Socrates says in Books 6 and 7. Socrates in Book 4 suggests that the longer way is needed to examine any topic and thus in my opinion reference to the good and knowledge of the good is not solely needed in order to specify the function of reason but rather the function of the lower parts as well. We are in need of a teleological account both of reason's role and also of the role of the lower parts as well. I will develop this suggestion in greater detail in what follows.

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building the city. Such agreement was secured by appealing to observable facts concerning human nature without fully exposing the principles on which the foundation of the city rests. However, in coming to apprehend the goodness of the city the reader also is coming closer to apprehending these principles.

First of all, I wish to suggest that apart from the good there is something else that is missing in Book 4. Socrates tries to provide an account or a definition of the parts of the soul but he does not provide an account or definition of the soul. It might be argued that an account of the parts of the soul constitutes an account of the soul, but in my opinion this is not the case. An account or definition of the soul would involve an account of the whole, or what the whole is, and what makes the whole a soul. Unless one assumes that a whole is reducible to the parts and the parts make a whole, an enumeration of the parts of the soul and their characteristics does not constitute an account of the soul. In Book 4 both in the case of the city and in the case of the soul it is assumed that the whole is not reducible to the parts. But we do not have a proper and explicit account of the whole or what the whole or the soul precisely is and its function, as we also are not provided with a definition of the city and what the city's function and purpose is.

Crombie trying to trace the inadequacy of the method employed in Book 4 has made a similar suggestion. Crombie (1962) p. 96 has interpreted Socrates' warning against the inadequacy of the method concerning the division of the soul as follows: 'Socrates means perhaps that one cannot establish conclusions by speculating about a subject without first answering the question what the thing under question is; they should have asked what the soul is before proceeding to ask whether it contains three distinct elements'. Later Crombie is going to suggest that the soul is essentially a pure intelligence (p. 100) and he seems to imply that it follows from such a definition of the soul that the soul does not have parts. I shall have to disagree with Crombie both in that the soul is basically solely a pure intellect and more generally that the soul is not complex. The reason why I think Crombie's remarks are important is that they reveal to a great extent that there is a real problem concerning methodology in the examination of the soul in Book 4, and that Socrates' concerns should be taken seriously. A dialectician is one who aims at reaching an account of the essence of something and we are not really provided with and we do not adequately grasp the essence of the soul in Book 4. To grasp the essence of the soul one of course would need to go up to the good and examine the way the soul is related to the good.

Furthermore, as Crombie suggests, such an account is prior to the question of whether the soul has parts and what these parts are. One has to try to reach a

definition of the soul first before dealing with the question of the soul's complexity or partition. Therefore, if my interpretation is correct, the problem concerning methodology has to do with the fact that the question of the soul's partition has not been raised in the proper way. I would like to add that if such a question of what parts the soul has can be seen as a question concerning the soul's nature or what the soul is, the soul's nature is not adequately revealed by a list of its parts, whether it has these parts or not, unless we assume that the soul indeed does not have a nature or essence.

Now I think that the conception of the soul as having a nature or essence involves a conception of the soul as having unity and as being something over and above the parts. It does not necessarily involve a rejection of complexity or partition. It seems to me that Plato believes that an aggregate of parts does not have unity and furthermore does not have a nature and is not properly speaking a whole. I think it is implied, even though not explicitly stated in Books 2-4 that order and harmony is essential to a whole and also what makes something one (443e1-2).<sup>7</sup> Thus the city really becomes a whole and city thanks to justice and *sōphrosunē*. These two complementary forms of arrangement are essential to the city. Without justice we cannot have properly speaking a city. Justice and harmony does not solely make a city a good city rather it makes somehow a city as an aggregate of people into one city and a real city. Somehow the less justice there is in a city the less there is a city. We learn that other cities apart from Kallipolis do not constitute one city and as consequence a whole.<sup>8</sup> In a similar way I think justice and *sōphrosunē* as forms of ordering unify the

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<sup>7</sup> As I suggested earlier, the elements in the soul, as parts, do not account for order and harmony. Rather it is in some sense the whole and reason that imposes order and harmony upon the parts, and thus such order and harmony primarily belongs to the whole, and in virtue of the whole to the parts. However, perhaps this relation between part and whole does not apply in the same way in the city and in the soul, since perhaps in the city the parts have a greater autonomy and can be seen as having a greater role to play in its unity and order.

<sup>8</sup> Socrates starts developing a notion of the 'whole' in Book 4 420b2-c5, explaining that his aim has been the whole and not the part (420d1-5, see 421b8). We learn later that his aim is to make the city 'one' 423 e3-c3 and also each citizen 'one' 423d2-7, so that the city as a whole is one. Finally unity is associated with education and nurture (423e2-3). While previously Socrates argued that the city has to be τις ἱκανὴ καὶ μία (423c4) education and nurture is said now to be one and sufficient: ἐὰν τὸ λεγόμενον ἔν μέγα φυλάττωσι, μᾶλλον δ' ἀντὶ μεγάλου ἱκανόν (423e2-3) The discussion of

soul. This indicates that justice and *sōphrosunē* are essential to the soul, and without them we cannot properly have a soul.<sup>9</sup> Thus indeed we have a kind of grasp of the essence of the soul in Book 4 but this is indirect and it is not made fully clear that justice and *sōphrosunē* are essential to the soul.

As far as the argument for the division of the soul in Book 4 is concerned we do not learn that the soul has a nature or essence and is something in itself. If the soul had an essence or nature, its nature could be predicated to the whole in an unqualified way. If reason is essential to the soul, as I think it is the case, we could say that the soul (as a whole) is reason for example or that it is a rational entity. However, the activities that the soul is said to contain in Book 4 cannot be predicated to the whole in an unqualified because they are presented as opposites. Hence, according to Book 4 reason is no more essential to the soul than appetite. In fact exactly because we do not learn whether there is something that can be predicated to the whole, we do not learn that the soul has essence or nature or is something in itself. Even though the argument for the division of the soul does not exclude that the soul is something in itself, it looks as though the list of mental activities Socrates provides is exhaustive and thus it looks as though nothing is left so that it may be attributed to the whole.<sup>10</sup>

The way the soul is portrayed in the argument for the division of the soul in Book 4 reminds one of the Trojan Horse in the *Theaetetus* that Socrates refers to illustrate an account of the soul and the role of the senses in it that he wants to reject

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the unity of the city is continued in Book 5 (having being left incomplete at 423e8-424a3) where unity and what binds the city and makes it a unity is said to be the greatest good for the city (462a2-b2).

<sup>9</sup> Harte (2002) argues that in the later dialogues Plato believes that wholes have unity or are ones and also that structure is essential to wholes (see Harte (2002) pp. 122-35 and also p. 159). See also *Parmenides* 157d-e, on which she bases her account. Harte also argues that 'a very striking feature of Plato's characterization of wholes is their normative character. Wholes are either good things or fail to be wholes at all' (p. 274).

<sup>10</sup> I previously argued that it turns out towards the end of the argument that reason and its activity can in fact be predicated to the whole, in other words the person, and it turns out indeed that the person is (essentially) reason. This activity can be identified with justice and *sōphrosunē*, and thus justice and *sōphrosunē* constitute both a mental activity which I think is to be identified with a certain way that reason functions, and also with the state, order, or structure that such activity produces. If the state of order is essential to the soul no less essential is reason, which is the cause of this order and harmony.



in this dialogue (184d1-5): Δεινὸν γάρ που, ὦ παῖ, εἰ πολλαί τινες ἐν ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἐν δουρείοις ἵπποις αἰσθήσεις ἐγκάθηνται, ἀλλὰ μὴ εἰς μίαν τινὰ ἰδέαν, εἴτε ψυχὴν εἴτε ὅτι δεῖ καλεῖν, πάντα ταῦτα συντείνει, ἥ διὰ τούτων οἷον ὀργάνων αἰσθανόμεθα ὅσα αἰσθητά. I find Burnyeat's overall discussion of the passage illuminating. Burnyeat (1976) p. 31 argues that the view Socrates rejects is that 'there are a number of senses in us...only in the same sort of way there are a number of ... warriors... in the Trojan horse'. In that case, as Burnyeat stresses we would have a mere collocation of distinct, autonomous items 'whose togetherness is an arbitrary imposition of ordinary language, not the constituting of a unified entity' (p. 32). 'The only role left to Socrates...is that of a mere container, like the hollow horse...' (p. 33). 'The perceiving subject is deprived of all unity, synchronic or diachronic' (p. 31). Burnyeat concludes that the view that Plato is rejecting is that the senses have the kind of autonomy that the parts of the divided soul have in the *Republic*' (p. 34). Socrates in the *Theaetetus* does not deny that there are many senses or sensations in the soul. The position he wants to reject is that what the senses are in the soul as if the soul is somehow a characterless container failing to unify them. Socrates puts forward the view that the many sensations are dependent upon and tend towards or converge a single form or idea,<sup>11</sup> which can be identified with the soul, and which is presumably unitary and at the same time unifies the many senses.

The argument for the division of the soul in Book 4 may be reasonably interpreted as providing a portrait of the soul analogous to the Trojan horse of the *Theaetetus*. We are told that the parts are parts of the soul and these are explicitly said to be in the soul, contained by the soul; but we are not told whether the soul is something in itself, which would involve its being a single idea or form, and thus also being able to unify its contents. Furthermore in Book 4 Plato makes use of the 'with'

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<sup>11</sup> For the formulation compare with *Parmenides* 157d8, where a part is said to be a part of a whole which is presented as single form or idea: οὐκ ἄρα τῶν πολλῶν οὐδὲ πάντων τὸ μόνιον μόνιον, ἀλλὰ μιᾶς τινὸς ἰδέας καὶ ἑνός τινος, ὃ καλοῦμεν ὅλον, ἐξ ἀπάντων ἐν τέλειον γεγονός, τούτου μόνιον ἂν τὸ μόνιον εἴη. See Harte's (2002) p. 131 comments on this passage. It seems to me that there is a difference here because the passage from the *Theaetetus* does not convey a static picture. Rather, the senses are presented as being directed towards the whole, as if somehow they strive to become a whole.

idiom to express the relation between an activity of the part and the whole (436a8-b4) that he rejects in the *Theaetetus*, adopting the 'through' idiom.<sup>12</sup> In the *Republic* he provides an answer to the question of whether we do something with a part of us or with a whole that he rejects in the *Theaetetus*. Thus the soul looks like a characterless container or in itself 'empty' locus of the parts like the Trojan horse, which without the warriors in it is not something in particular. But this is not Plato's view of the soul in the *Republic*. Hence, in my opinion the conclusions of the argument in Book 4 are not just incomplete. They are misleading, in that one may take them to suggest that the soul has no essence and not unity in itself. This is because Socrates has raised the question of partition in the wrong way. He should have asked first for a definition of the soul, in order to discover what precisely this 'single idea' that the whole is. Furthermore, in order to reach such a definition of the soul, one has more generally to get rid of the senses and what the soul appears to be through the senses and observation of human behaviour. Rather somehow one has to rely on pure dialectic and the hypothetical method.

That the soul has essence or nature and is something in its own right, independently from the body and the senses, and thus also by implication independently from the lower parts, eventually becomes clear in Book 10. This will be discussed in greater detail in a different section. I think we also learn a great deal concerning the nature of the soul in Books 6 and 7. It may be argued that in the middle Books of the *Republic* Socrates does not undertake to question the conclusions of the argument for the division of the soul, by using his dialectical method and entering into the longer way. However, it is characteristic of these middle Books that the soul is treated consistently as a unity or a whole and an essentially rational entity. Cooper (1977) p. 152-3 is right in suggesting that we have a more complete account of the function of reason in these Books.<sup>13</sup> However, it should be noted that there is no

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<sup>12</sup> See *Theaetetus* 184c1-7, 184d7-e6 and Burnyeat (1976) p. 29-30.

<sup>13</sup> Also Irwin (1977a) p. 237-8 suggests that one understands better the rational part and its difference from the other parts only when one understands rational desire. Indeed to understand the desire for the good, and its difference from other desires, a division in the soul, which also involves a partial distinction of the desire for the good and its object from other desires and their objects, does not suffice. Rather to understand reason's desire one has basically to distinguish the good from everything (534b-c) and thus also grasp the desire for the good in its pure form.

mention of the three parts of the soul in these Books. This can be interpreted as suggesting that Plato in these Books is concerned with only one part of the soul, namely reason. This in my opinion is partly true and partly false. I think that Plato does not make reference to partition in Books 6-7 because he is concerned with the whole and the essential nature of the soul. And indeed it looks as though this essential nature appears to correspond to what he calls in the other Books *logistikon*.

Three passages from Books 6-7 are particularly relevant in that they reveal Plato's conception of the nature of the soul. One is the discussion of the philosophic nature in Book 6 (485a4 ff.). In this context Socrates attributes all the virtues to philosophers resting on *a priori* grounds and in particular on the philosopher's love of wisdom, without trying to specify these virtues by reference to any parts of the soul. The account of philosophic nature that Socrates provides is basically an account of the nature of the soul, which is assumed to be essentially erotic and more specifically philosophical. Thus all the virtues are derived from a conception of the nature of the soul as *erōs*. If one assumes that the soul has separate parts it is not clear how philosopher's *erōs* and more generally the development of the erotic nature of the soul can produce and entail all virtue. *Sōphrosunē* is more precisely presented as lying in desire being directed towards intellectual pleasure (485d3-e5). Here we see that such *erōs* seizes the soul as a whole altering the structure of the personality.<sup>14</sup> We are offered at last a conception of *sōphrosunē* where desire and pleasure are presented in agreement with reason and which involves no reference to suppression of desire or separation of desire from reason.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> I think that *erōs* in general applies to the whole. It represents an overwhelming passion that seizes the person as a whole and deeply affects the structure of the personality or the soul whether negatively or positively. One can compare with the *Phaedrus* where the erotic reaction is presented as seizing the soul as a whole and leading it upwards as a whole. *Erōs* is the wings of the soul which are attributed the whole and not with a part of it (251b-d). I think that *erōs* can represent both a force in the soul, which causes its unity, and also the structure or state of personality that unity has been achieved. Thus eros more generally when guided in the proper way by reason can unify the soul.

<sup>15</sup> Kahn (1976) p. 32 argues that the formal principle of unity of virtues in the context of Book 4 is justice. However, he notes that in Book 6 wisdom as indistinguishable from *erōs* entails the other virtues and is their cause. He notes that 'in terms of psychological causation, it is wisdom and not justice that produces the unity of virtue' (p. 32). And he rightly in my opinion suggests that in Book 6 we have a different notion of wisdom from book 4 (p. 33). Kahn also stresses that it is misleading to

The second passage occurs in the context of the discussion of the longer way. Socrates asserts that the good is the purpose of all human action and what each soul pursues in general, without qualifying his claim in any way (505e1-2). The unity of the soul is indicated by the fact that there is unity of purpose. Socrates does not say in this context that the good is the aim of reason. Rather he says that the good is the ultimate aim or purpose of the soul and human action in general. In my opinion, if what this passage suggests appears to contradict the conclusions of the argument for the division of the soul, in particular with a conception of the lower parts as being somehow capable of generating action on their own, one has to be concerned about the adequacy of the conclusions that the division of the soul has yielded and not with what Socrates says in the context of Book 6. The thesis or hypothesis that all souls desire the good is a hypothesis concerning the nature of the soul by reference to which the conclusions or hypotheses in Book 4 have to be tested and accordingly rejected or endorsed and not vice versa.

Finally, a third passage explains the purposes of the programme of higher education. Education proper is said to aim at turning the whole soul towards the intelligible realm and the good (518c4-d). No other method of turning the whole soul towards light is presented apart from the intense programme of intellectual training that is outlined in Book 7. The previous form of 'education' treated the soul as something rather passive and uncritical, willing to adopt for itself whatever it is said to it to accept, while here the soul is somehow encouraged to draw from its own resources to find the truth and accordingly shape itself and its own character. We have apparently education, which consists in intellectual training and at the same time deals with the soul as a whole and not with a part of it. It is not exactly the case that the training of character is ignored or is somehow left out or is assumed to have been

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characterize wisdom as a part of virtue since 'it is the part which makes the whole what it is: namely excellence' (p. 36). I suggested in the earlier section that the unity of virtues in wisdom can also be found in Book 4 because justice which is presented as the cause of the other virtues can have a double meaning, as a state or order and as an activity which produces this state. As an activity justice can be identified with exercise of wisdom and self-knowledge and can also be connected with *erōs* as self-love and self-care. The relationship between the virtues also I think corresponds to the relationship between the parts of the soul.

fully accomplished by the education described in the earlier books of the *Republic*. The previous educational stage was not expected to fully achieve the harmonization of desire with reason and left the soul still divided to some extent.<sup>16</sup> The harmonization of reason with desire is due to this intellectual training, which leads the soul to the good by simultaneously directing desire towards intellectual pleasures. In the context of this education formation of character is not taken to be a separate problem from the formation of reason and thus by implication character, pleasure and desire are not taken as somehow separate from reason. The soul thus is not treated as an aggregate of desire and reason. Rather desire and pleasure are treated as dependent on reason but also as able to support reason. More generally, the account of the soul given in Books 6-7 does not entail or imply that the soul is simple, let alone that it is a pure intellect or *nous*, which is presented here as the eye of the soul and not as exhausting its nature (518c4-d1). Pleasure for example is assumed to be 'part' of the soul. Nevertheless it implies that the soul is a rational, dynamic, autonomous and flexible principle, capable of drawing upon itself to realize its nature, which is to be directed towards the good.

### **The longer road and the lower 'irrational' parts of the soul**

A conception of the human soul as being essentially rational and unitary does not entail that the soul is not complex. Furthermore it does not entail that it does not possess the lower parts that are identified in Book 4.<sup>17</sup> Plato is, I think, not dogmatic

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<sup>16</sup> See also Gill (1985) p. 19-21 who suggests that the account of philosophers in Book 6 (485d) seems to presuppose a rather different notion of desire from that employed elsewhere in the *Republic*. And he also suggests that we have a theory here that 'stops short of maintaining that the sensual desires associated with the *epithumetikon* can themselves be reeducated, so as to participate in the overall goals of the psyche' (p. 21). But he argues that Plato provides now much better grounds that he has harmonized the soul (p. 21). It can be said indeed that strictly speaking even in the context of Book 6 desire is not presented as something educable. It can be educated in the sense that it can be directed or channelled by reason.

<sup>17</sup> It may entail of course that these parts are not essential to the soul, as the argument in Book 10 (611a10-612a6) may appear to suggest, and thus they do not belong to the soul as such. While the lower parts may not be essential to the soul as such, they may be perhaps essential to the human embodied soul or to the human soul qua embodied and thus the embodied soul cannot be adequately understood without reference to these parts.

as to whether the human soul has precisely these three parts or more or less<sup>18</sup> and I shall not discuss this question. However, it seems to me that if the soul has to be conceived as essentially rational and unitary and what it is called the *logistikon*, the picture of the lower parts that Book 4 conveyed needs to be modified. Such a conception of the soul is not compatible with a conception of the lower parts as autonomous and independent, as they were presented in the argument for the division of the soul. A conception of the soul as unitary and essentially rational suggests that complexity or plurality is subordinate to unity, and more specifically that the lower parts are dependent on reason. Reason on the other hand, in so far as it represents the whole, and is not a mere part, is in principle at least autonomous from the inferior parts.<sup>19</sup>

More specifically I think that Plato believes that the whole is prior to the part, and a part depends on the whole of which it is a part. Thus if the whole has essence the lower parts are dependent on this essence and their own nature and identity is bound to this essence. In Book 4, for example, it is said that the parts are parts of the soul and they are in the soul, and this may be taken to indicate that they are dependent on the soul somehow and what the soul is in order to exist. But in Book 4 we were not told whether the soul is something in itself, and thus it looked as though the fact that the parts were somehow parts of the soul did not affect their nature in any way. As long as the whole is essential to the parts and the soul is essentially reason, the nature of the lower parts cannot be fully conceived and understood independently from reason.<sup>20</sup> To conceive the lower parts as separate or independent from reason is not

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<sup>18</sup> Compare also with 443d7-8, where it is allowed that there are further parts in between the ones that have been distinguished.

<sup>19</sup> Perhaps reason can be conceived as both one part among the others and as something above the other parts.

<sup>20</sup> Harte (2002) p. 174 has argued that according to Plato the parts are essentially parts of a whole and are dependent on the whole. She argues that Plato believes that structure is essential to the whole and there are two ways that the relationship between the whole and the part can be conceived. According to the first way of thinking the parts of the whole may be identified independently of the structure of the whole they compose. According to the second way of thinking, (...) 'structure is no less essential to the parts of a whole than to the whole itself'. See also Harte (2002) pp.158-167. She suggests in her book that Plato endorses the second approach and that he believes that the parts are dependent on the whole and structure and get their identity in the context of the whole (p. 273). Thus structure is no more

really to conceive them as parts of a whole and parts of the soul. The parts 'become' parts of the soul if they are associated with reason and the desire for the good, thus in some sense they 'become' parts of reason and the desire for the good.

In Book 4, the appetitive part, in being presented in essential opposition to reason and separate from reason did not appear genuinely as part of a whole and part of the soul. It can be said that in some sense the parts of the soul become parts of the whole only when they are in conformity with normative reason, and thus when reason can actually endorse them. But to present them or to describe them as participating in reason is to account for the fact that they are indeed psychic elements and also simultaneously for the fact that they are not in essential opposition to reason, rather they are essentially parts of their whole and their natural tendency or potential is to come to be in conformity with reason.

Furthermore, as the whole is both epistemologically and ontologically prior to the part, in an analogous fashion a definition of the part, as a part of a whole needs to come after a definition of the whole and to involve reference to the whole. As Crombie (1962) p. 96 has suggested, a definition of the soul needs to be reached first. But such definition, I think, would not necessarily exclude the presence of parts in the embodied soul. Rather it would be needed in order to define the parts in the proper way. Thus, more generally, the lower parts were not defined as parts of a whole in Book 4 and thus their definition was incomplete and lacked exactitude. To define them in a proper way we need to connect them with the form of the good, and the whole. In defining thirst as a desire for drink (437d1-e6) Socrates did not present thirst as a part of the soul. Rather he depicted thirst as something preexisting the whole or as something outside the whole. His definition corresponds to what thirst would be 'before' coming to belong to the soul, and thus in some sense in Book 4 we have the constituents out of which a soul can be 'made', without the whole or what they may be said to come to constitute. I think that in order to show that the desire for

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essential to the parts than to the whole. Harte notes that this conception 'creates the need for an account of the relation between that which comes to be part of structure and the part which it becomes' (p. 165). However she does not provide such an account. Furthermore she suggests that there is another associated problem regarding the nature of metaphysical dependence (p. 278-9) of the part from the whole, but again she does not provide an account of the relationship of dependence.

drink is a part of the soul Socrates would need to define thirst as a desire for good drink. This kind of definition would show the fact that the lower part, in so far as it is a part of a whole, is connected with reason and aims at the whole and also at the form of the good. Defining thirst as simply a desire for drink does not show why thirst is a desire and a psychic state or activity. More generally the account of the lower parts in Book 4 indicated and underlined the difference of one part from the others and it did not show what the parts have in common since they are parts of the same thing, the soul. Exactly because the soul did not appear to be something in itself it appeared as though they do not have something in common, which also connects them and unifies them.

I wish to suggest that this conception of the parts as parts of a whole corresponds to dialectic's descent, and more specifically perhaps, since the lower parts are to some extent necessarily sensible manifestations of the soul, to the descent into the cave. What characterizes dialectic's descent is a descent from the higher order of existence or reality to the lower and an elucidation of the lower by associating the lower to the higher.<sup>21</sup> Such elucidation lends also intelligibility to a lower level of reality, which conceived in isolation or in separation or independently from the higher level of reality it does not possess. For example the forms, which are somehow lower than the good, acquire greater intelligibility when they are conceived together with the good, which is more generally conceived as the cause of intelligibility, truth and essence (508d10-509b9, 517c1-3). Dominic Scott (2000a) p. 1 argues that 'an essential aspect of descending' is what he terms 'revisitation'. He suggests that philosophers' descent to the cave is paradigmatic of such revisitation and rightly argues that the descent to the cave 'has an epistemological dimension in so far as it continues the process of philosophical education'. Scott defines 'revisitation' as follows: 'making a departure from one level of reality to another and then comparing the two, so as to see one as derivative of another' (p. 1). I believe that this definition captures the significance of philosophers' descent to the cave and shows, in my opinion, that it constitutes an extension of dialectic's descent as it is described in

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<sup>21</sup> See Rowe (2007) p. 45 who argues that in all three of the similes that Socrates introduces in *Republic* Books 6-7 '...It is entirely essential that the lower levels of objects relate to, and are informed by, the highest'.



the context of the simile of the line. I wish to add to Scott's account that the descent to the cave suggests an examination of the sensible world from a teleological point of view and allows a conception of the sensible world as sharing in truth and reality and being a product of reason.<sup>22</sup> The contents of the cave now examined under the light of the forms and the good acquire greater intelligibility, and the philosophers are able to 'see infinitely better' than other people since they know the truth (520c4-6). Furthermore, in my opinion, it suggests that philosophers' beliefs concerning the sensible world are (in)formed by their knowledge of the good and the forms (or whatever they have managed to achieve in their ascent to the forms and the good). Philosophers have truer beliefs than other people because they are able to see the physical world in its relationship to the forms and in conjunction with the forms, the good, and reason, and not in separation from them, without simultaneously confusing sensible things with forms. It is more generally this relationship to the forms that allows the sensible world to have a share in truth, reality and intelligibility. In a similar way they are able to perceive how the lower parts of the soul can operate together with reason and understand in a much better way their function and purpose.

The project of the descent is not undertaken in the *Republic*. I wish to suggest that it is undertaken both concerning the lower parts of the soul and the sensible world in general in the *Timaeus*, which are examined from a teleological point of view and shown to be products of reason. In the *Timaeus* more specifically the lower parts are presented as formed by the lower gods together with Necessity. Thus, unlike the immortal soul, which is the work of reason alone, the lower parts belong to the class of things<sup>23</sup> that are joint products of Reason and Necessity, or alternatively reason and the senses. As joint products of reason and necessity they operate for the good.<sup>24</sup> But I

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<sup>22</sup> Scott (2000a) pp. 1-20 argues that Socrates does not attempt to revisit his assumptions concerning the soul. Furthermore, he does not try to speculate what this revisitation would involve). He argues that the only example of revisitation, where metaphysics are used to deal with psychological theory is the examination of pleasure in Book 9.

<sup>23</sup> For this distinction see Strange (1999) pp. 402-4.

<sup>24</sup> Johansen (2004) pp. 150-3 has emphasized that the lower parts of the soul in the *Timaeus* work for the good as a result of the activity of the lesser gods. He also argues that 'the result of the lesser gods' work is then, to create man as a teleologically ordered system in which motions that arise by simple necessity and rational motions are combined. Motions that were initially disruptive and chaotic are

think that Timaeus' claim that the lower parts of the soul are created by the lower gods indicates, not really that somehow the lower gods make something new, rather that these parts are in reality joint products of our reason or the immortal soul and a body. In my opinion these parts are not really independent or separate entities added to the soul after embodiment. Rather the 'gods' shape the body in such a manner that the sensations that originate in the body already have some shape and structure, and furthermore such sensations are 'taken over' and further shaped by our own reason, so that we have the lower parts of the soul. In shaping these affections reason is also affected by them and shaped to some extent.

The view concerning the nature of the soul and the status of the lower parts of the soul that I am trying to defend is, I believe, almost in complete agreement with the account of Plato's psychology that has been suggested in a short article by Archer Hind long ago.<sup>25</sup> Archer Hind argues that Plato has a consistent conception of the soul throughout the dialogues and that he is committed to the soul's unity. He argues that conceiving the lower parts of the soul as somehow two independent substances annexed to the soul after embodiment is not compatible with the view of the soul as unity: 'but surely Plato did not mean that the soul, being apart from the body a uniform essence, on entrance into a material abode all at once annexes two inferior substances, being parts of itself yet essentially different' (p. 128). He argues that the 'mortal kinds of the soul' constitute terminable modes of the soul's existence (p. 128) or 'temporary modes of its operation' (p. 129).<sup>26</sup> I think the definition of the lower

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harnessed to serve a rational end. The result is the creation of a tripartite psychology' (p. 152). 'The tripartite soul is the lesser gods' way of furthering our rationality given that we have to be embodied' (p. 154). Johansen (2004) pp. 153-159 draws a contrast between the lower parts of the soul in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus* that I tried to diminish. However, he is right in contrasting the account of the lower parts of the soul in Book 4 with the account of these parts in the *Timaeus* and he argues that 'the change in emphasis between the *Republic* and the *Timaeus* reflects the fact that the *Timaeus* explicitly sets out to integrate the entire living being, body and soul, into a teleological account' (p. 158).

<sup>25</sup> See Archer Hind (1882) pp. 120-31.

<sup>26</sup> An account of the soul similar to the one by Archer-Hind has been suggested by Cornford (1971) pp. 119-131. Cornford argues that the three kinds of impulse or desire are not 'ultimately distinct and irreducible factors, residing in three separate parts of composite soul, or some in the soul and some in the body'. 'They are manifestations of a single force or fund of energy, called Eros, directed through divergent channels towards various ends' (p. 21). An account of Plato's conception of the soul in the

parts as modes of the operation of the soul captures the fact that these parts are not separate from reason rather, in some sense, they are parts or lower manifestations of what Plato calls the *logistikon* in the *Republic*, which can also be identified with the immortal soul in the *Timaeus*. They look like qualities that the immortal soul takes on when it is embodied, and not as separate autonomous entities. More particularly, I wish to characterize the lower parts as modifications or qualifications of the *logistikon* and the desire for the good. Such modifications or qualifications are produced, as Archer Hind argues, from ‘a ‘combined action of soul and matter’ (p. 127). In the next section I am going to discuss in some greater detail how I envisage the character of the lower parts of the soul.

### **The lower parts of the soul as joint products of the soul and the body, reason and the senses**

More specifically one way to conceive the lower parts of the soul is as being mixtures or combination of the soul with the body, which result from the association or communion of the soul with the body. For instance ‘thirst’, as a desire for good drink and as a part of a whole, can be considered a mixture or combination which results from the association of two things, thirst as such and the desire for the good. It seems to me that conceived in this way the lower part constitutes a modified or qualified desire for the good, and it can be considered as a part or species of the desire for the good. I think that ‘thirst as such’ as something independent from the mixture can be identified with a bodily activity or motion, which plays a role in modifying reason or the desire for the good. Furthermore, I wish to suggest that thirst as a kind of ingredient inside the mixture or combination and not as prior to such combination can be identified with some kind of sensation, perhaps a kind of pain. However, if this

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*Republic* that has particularly influenced me is by Moreau (1953) pp. 249-57. According to Moreau, with whom I am in full agreement, Plato in the *Republic* intends to deny the fundamental Socratic theses concerning the nature of the soul, including both the thesis that the soul desires the good, and also the so-called Socratic intellectualism. Moreau rightly stresses that the distinction between different parts in the soul is not incompatible with the unity of the soul and the soul as essentially desiring the good (pp. 249-50). More generally he emphasizes that the argument in Book 4 does not provide one with insight into the true nature of the soul (p. 253).

ingredient is considered as somehow pre-existing the combination, being independent or separate from such combination, it does not constitute a mental item, and thus it is not a form of pain or even less a desire. I think that it should be conceived as a bodily motion of which one is not conscious. Therefore, in my opinion, there are not really thought or reason or good-independent desires, since there are no desires in the soul whose source or cause is the body exclusively.<sup>27</sup> In so far as the soul is the source of certain desires, then reason is necessarily involved in their formation, since reason is an essential characteristic of the soul. Reason and the desire for the good may be perhaps involved in desire in different degrees or ways.

Thus more generally the lower parts of the soul can be said to involve two ingredients. One is somehow provided by reason and the desire for the good and there is also an affective component. Perhaps there is an ambiguity when I am referring to the lower parts of the soul that I cannot fully avoid. To use the desire for good drink as an example, it may be said that such a desire constitutes a part of the soul, and as such it is I think a modification or perhaps alternatively a species of the desire for the good. Furthermore, this desire is not independent from the desire for good, since, I think, it is produced by this desire or it is a manifestation of the desire, but it has an amount of autonomy in the soul since it is a particular desire we have or actually experience in the soul. When talking about the lower parts of the soul one can also refer to an ingredient in this desire, which could be called thirst as such. This ingredient I think is not something that exists in its own right in the soul rather in so far as it is a mental item it is always 'mixed' with a cognitive element and the desire for the good. In other words, if thirst always exists as an ingredient it is not separate in any case. An ingredient is always affected and never pure since it coexists in the soul with reason and the desire for the good.

If my interpretation is correct, the lower parts of the soul, conceived as modifications or modes of reason's activity, have a status analogous to appearance (*phantasia*), which is defined in the *Sophist* as a mixture (σύμμελις) of belief and

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<sup>27</sup> Rowe (2007) p. 117-8 has argued that Plato in the *Phaedo* does not believe that there are desires of the body. Similarly Boys-Stones (2004) pp. 1-23 has argued that Plato in the *Phaedo* does not believe that the body determines the character of the soul and its desires.

perception (264b2).<sup>28</sup> *Phantasia* results from belief and sensation but since *phantasia* constitutes a mixture, the two elements in so far as they constitute a mixture are not separate rather they are interdependent. In *phantasia* we do not have a mere juxtaposition of two independent things. Rather the two ingredients become inextricably connected, shaping or affecting each other. The ‘initial’ entities come to constitute a third kind of entity, different both from pure belief and from pure perception or sensation. Appearance, therefore, is in some sense is a different part of the soul from belief. Appearance can be characterized as a kind of belief, and it can be true or false, as the *Sophist* shows but it does not constitute a pure belief which the soul reaches on its own (264a1-4), rather it is somehow a belief in which the soul makes use of the senses and in which it is entangled with the body and the senses. Belief according to the *Sophist* is not necessarily or in principle dependent on perception. It is an originally different and independent thing.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, belief can be seen as the cause of appearance and be conceived as something that is prior to appearance together with *aisthēsis*. In a mixture however, or in so far as it constitutes an integral part of appearance, belief is dependent on and affected by perception, and equally *aisthēsis* is dependent on and structured by belief.<sup>30</sup>

I wish to argue that even though belief is at least in principle independent from perception and appearance, perception itself is not independent from belief and

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<sup>28</sup> See 264 a4 ff: Τί δ' ὅταν μὴ καθ' αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ δι' αἰσθήσεως παρῇ τινι, τὸ τοιοῦτον αὐτὸ πάθος ἄρ' οἷόν τε ὀρθῶς εἰπεῖν ἕτερόν τι πλὴν φαντασίαν; Οὐδέν. Οὐκοῦν ἐπεὶ περ λόγος ἀληθείης ἦν καὶ ψευδῆς, τούτων δ' ἐφάνη διάνοια μὲν αὐτῆς πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ψυχῆς διάλογος, δόξα δὲ διανοίας ἀποτελεύτησις, 'φαίνεται' δὲ ὁ λέγομεν σύμμιξις αἰσθήσεως καὶ δόξης, ἀνάγκη δὴ καὶ τούτων τῷ λόγῳ συγγενῶν ὄντων ψευδῆ γε αὐτῶν ἓν καὶ ἐνίοτε εἶναι.

<sup>29</sup> This is also clear in the *Timaeus* where belief is attributed to the world soul (*Timaeus* 37b), which also does not have perception. Reydam-Shils (1997) pp. 261-5 has argued convincingly that the world soul does not have perception. Even though the world soul has a body it does not perceive and have more generally, since it inhabits a body without sense organs and without environment, which can disturb it externally (33a-d). More generally if the circles of the different are to be associated with belief, we see that belief somehow preexists in the soul prior to its association with the body, and thus it is not dependent on the body.

<sup>30</sup> For an account of *phantasia* that I am mostly in agreement with see Delcomminette (2003) p. 223. On *phantasia* in Plato see also Watson (1988) pp. 1-13.

reason, and does not exist in the soul on its own. Rather as I also suggested in the case of thirst, it exists as an ingredient in a more complex entity, which can be identified with appearance.<sup>31</sup> It seems to me that if perception is conceived as something pre-existing the combination that constitutes appearance, again it should be attributed to the body and it would not constitute a mental phenomenon or state or activity. A motion of bodily origin is necessary for perception but apart from such a motion I think a psychic motion or activity is necessary and such activity is provided by reason or the immortal soul more generally. Thus if perception is a kind of affection of the soul, what ultimately is affected is reason and its activity. We can perhaps abstract in our mind this affective component from *phantasia*, and think of it in its pure form, and refer to it, but I think in such a case we have a genuine abstraction, in that while reason somehow can indeed (in principle) at least exist or be independent from sensation, sensation itself—at least in human and animal souls—cannot occur without some element of reason or belief. If this is the case we cannot have sensation or more generally we cannot perceive without reason and actual human perception must be the same thing as appearance. It seems to me that this follows from the *Theaetetus* if this dialogue is interpreted as stating that there is a single subject of consciousness that can be identified with reason.

Burnyeat (1976) p. 36 argues convincingly that Socrates rejects the view that sensation is cognitive and involves judgement. He argues that Socrates shows that the senses are not autonomous and they do not constitute subjects by depriving them of all judgement: 'Autonomy in a perceiving subject presupposes judgement (conceptualisation, consciousness) brought to bear by the subject on the objects of sense'. Moreover, Burnyeat (1976) p. 49 emphasizes that there is a single subject of consciousness, which is subject of both judgement and perception. Burnyeat implicitly associates 'subjecthood' with consciousness and consciousness with judgement and conceptualisation. I think that the association of consciousness with judgement is not self-evident but that Burnyeat is right in assuming that according to Plato the two are connected: to be aware or conscious of something is to be aware of something as something. If this is the case, and even though this is not clearly stated

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<sup>31</sup> See also Watson (1988) pp. 3-4 who distinguishes sensation from 'human sense perception' and identifies the latter with *phantasia*.

by Burnyeat, I think that one can identify the conscious subject with reason. If in other words judgement is necessary for consciousness, reason can be seen as identical to this subject and reason more specifically is the subject of perception.

Furthermore, I think that if consciousness is associated with reason, and if one assumes that consciousness or awareness is necessary for perception, and more generally that it is necessary for something to be part of the soul, we have a further reason why the senses are not autonomous from reason. It is not just the case that the senses are not autonomous from reason and they do not constitute subjects in their own right because they are not in themselves judgemental. If it were possible to have some sort of unconceptualized awareness in the soul, the senses also I think could still be considered as independent parts of the soul and subjects in their own right, even though their sphere of influence would have been minimized.<sup>32</sup> They would not need reason or belief or appearance to exist in the soul. Their autonomy would be diminished but not fully denied. Burnyeat does not say explicitly that sensations cannot exist in the soul on their own. He argues that 'to perceive something is not as such to be aware or conscious of something as anything in particular' (p. 50). He suggests further that Plato's account has difficulties in that it is difficult to characterize perception in a positive way if all element of judgement, awareness or conceptualisation is abstracted from it (p. 50). I think that indeed Plato has some difficulties in explaining perception. However I do not think that he would accept that if all element of awareness would be abstracted it would be possible (unless really we talked about an abstraction that thought reaches) to talk about perception as something that actually occurs in human beings and is also informative. Perception as a psychic

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<sup>32</sup> For this point see Bobonich (2002) p. 329. Bobonich argues that even if 'we think that perception has no conceptual or prepositional content, we might think that the senses (or the lower parts of the soul) serve as subjects of unconceptualized awareness'. He argues nevertheless that even though such a subject is a logical possibility, 'it does no useful work' (p. 329, see also p. 320). I want to deny that the senses can be conceived as subjects even in this minimized way because I think that Plato is in general committed to the unity of the soul, and I think allowing somehow a 'separate' subject of unconceptualized awareness in the soul would undermine the unity of the soul.

activity does presuppose consciousness and awareness.<sup>33</sup> I think that this entails that it presupposes reason and it is not autonomous from reason.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> M. Frede (1999) pp. 377-83 stresses that in the *Theaetetus* Plato restricts perception to a passive affection of the mind and that he emphasizes the activity of the mind in forming beliefs. Indeed also in the *Timaeus* perception as such does not constitute self-motion, rather it emerges as a psychic passivity (77b). Perhaps in so far as judgement is involved in perception, and we have appearance, perception can be presented as something the soul does.

<sup>34</sup> In the *Philebus* for example sensation is defined as a joint affection of the soul and the body and it is clear that bodily affections or motions have to reach the soul so that it can be proper perception (33d-34a). I think that more specifically it has to reach reason. I think that this is quite clear in the *Timaeus* (see 43a-e, 64b-c). The *Timaeus* may be interpreted as suggesting that perception or bodily motions have to reach the lower parts of the soul first, which are limited subjects of perception in their own right. For this view see Silverman (1990), pp. 148-75 who suggests that *aisthēsis* in the *Timaeus* is a capacity of the non-rational soul, which is the locus and subject of *aisthēsis*. *Aisthēsis* in his opinion involves no recognition, awareness or conceptualisation (pp. 149-153). On the other hand Brisson (1997) pp. 159-63 argues that in the *Timaeus* reason is the final recipient of perception, but he seems to allow that the lower parts having some kind of awareness prior to reason. I think this is not strictly speaking the case. If this were the case perception indeed would be autonomous from reason. It could thus be seen as a part or capacity of the soul that did not exist before embodiment and is added to the soul by the lesser gods. However, it seems to me that the capacity for perception preexists embodiment. The lower parts of the soul are 'generated' by the fact that certain bodily motions reach reason. The lower gods generate sensation by placing the immortal soul in a body, which is endowed with sense organs and which belongs to a certain environment. In my opinion, the lower parts of the soul do not constitute peripheral recipients or subjects of sensations. Rather as I understand the *Timaeus* sensation can be seen as identical to a lower part of the soul, or a component in the lower part of the soul, whose subject is the immortal soul. Sensation is generated by the interaction of the immortal soul with the body and the interaction of psychic motions with motions that have a bodily origin. (*Tim.* 43b-c, 44a) Such motions become sensations after they have reached and affected the immortal soul. Nevertheless it can still be said that there are different levels of conceptualisation or awareness in the soul and this would not contradict my account. Furthermore, it seems to me that the 'separation' of the affections from reason, which the inferior gods achieve, shows no more than the fact, that even though the soul embodied soul as self-motion is indeed affected and moved externally it can still retain or rather it has the power to regain its autonomy to a great extent. This potential is a divine gift and is due both to the soul itself but also to the way the world and the human body is rationally organized. It is expressed at 44b-c without reference to partition of the soul. However, there is the passage on plants in the *Timaeus* (77a-c) which may appear to partly at least contradict my account. Plants have pleasant and painful sensation even though they are deprived from belief and reasoning, self-consciousness and self-motion. This passage appears to reveal a tension in Plato's conception of the soul. Plato believes that the soul is essentially life and self motion and is something



Burnyeat (1976) also suggests that Plato has changed his mind concerning the relation between judgement and perception in the *Theaetetus*. He argues that in the *Republic* Plato assumes that *aisthēsis* involves judgement while in the *Theaetetus* he deprives it of all judgement. According to my view perception is in any case always judgemental in the sense that as a matter of fact some element of judgement or conceptualisation is involved in perception and perception is not separate from reason and judgement rather it is always structured to some extent by reason and judgement. We do not have pure sensation rather we have perception as a component in appearance.<sup>35</sup> Plato would have changed his mind in the *Theaetetus* not if he came to believe that when one perceives things also appear to one in one way or another, and thus human perception is somehow informative, but rather if he *believed* in the *Republic* that belief is somehow reducible to sensation and sensation more generally is a sufficient source for belief. There are two different ways to attribute 'judgement' to perception. One is to say that human perception is always accompanied with awareness and an element of conceptualization and thought; an alternative view would be to say that this element of conceptualization is somehow due to sensation or perception itself, and thus that more generally perception can fully account for conceptualization or beliefs.<sup>36</sup> And it is the second position more generally that one might argue that Plato adopts in the *Republic*, a view that one can further defend by

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immortal and rational. Still he attributes soul and life to plants, without attributing reason, self-motion, and immortality to them. The tension cannot be fully resolved but a partial solution is perhaps one that has been suggested by Karfīc (2005) pp. 197-217 who argues that the soul of the plants depends on the rational soul that animates Earth (p. 215). Karfīc argues that it is the world soul but earth is also said to be a goddess (*Tim* 40b-c).

<sup>35</sup> Compare with Delcomminette (2003) p. 223. It may be argued that Plato has changed his mind in the *Theaetetus* on the grounds that *aisthēsis* in *Republic* 523a-524d is said to convey information to the soul. Thus Socrates uses expressions such as ὑπὸ τῆς αἰσθήσεως κρινομένα (523b2), αἰσθησις... δηλοῖ (c2-3), ἡ ὄψις ἐστήμηνεν (523d5), παραγγέλλει τῇ ψυχῇ (524a2-3), λέγει (524a8), when he refers to *aisthēsis*. Nevertheless it should also be noted that similar language is used in the *Timaeus*, which, most commentators agree, is written after the *Theaetetus*, in relation to bodily affections: μέχριπερ ἂν ἐπὶ το φρόνιμον ἐλθόντα ἐξαγγείλῃ τοῦ ποιήσαντος τὴν δύναμιν (64b5-6).

<sup>36</sup> Cooper (1999) pp. 355-76 argues that in the *Theaetetus* perception as such involves some minimal capacities for judgement and certain concepts.

appealing perhaps to the thesis that Plato holds a radical dualism between the sensible and intelligible realm, according to which ordinary beliefs, for example, have a completely different source from philosopher's knowledge or at least philosopher's beliefs and thus sensation, or more generally the (according to this view) 'lower parts of the soul' for example must be their sole source and cause.<sup>37</sup> This, I believe, would almost amount to the view that beliefs somehow are reducible to the body and the body can have in some sense beliefs or fully account for beliefs. In other words, we would have beliefs whose exclusive source or origin is either sensation or more generally the lower parts of the soul and ultimately the body.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, in my opinion, saying that belief belongs to the soul also amounts to saying that the soul is needed to account for belief as something different from the body and as something, at least in principle, disembodied. In a different way perhaps the soul can account for sensation. It can be argued that the soul cannot account for the content of sensation whose origin is indeed exclusively the body or bodily motions, and thus strictly speaking reason is not responsible for what we perceive, even though I think reason as a component in *phantasia/appearance* can affect whether positively or negatively the way things appear to us, since appearance, unlike pure sensation or perception is not something totally passive. Perhaps it can be argued that sensation can trigger beliefs or reason somehow to operate in a certain way, but I think that without this operation we would not have any kind of awareness in the soul. Thus, in this sense, reason is somehow responsible for sensation being a 'part' of the soul.

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<sup>37</sup>Bobonich (2002) pp. 329-30 endorses the view in relation to the *Republic* that perception can account for belief, and in this way he can also maintain that the lower parts of the soul have beliefs of their own. On the other hand in relation to the later dialogues he is inclined to the view that the lower parts have not beliefs and involve no conceptualisation (pp. 314-331), and more generally he is inclined to believe that Plato gradually abandons the theory of partition of the soul. I do not believe that Plato needs to abandon anything concerning the soul in the later dialogues.

<sup>38</sup> Indeed if one is prepared to take what Socrates says in the *Phaedo* literally the body has apart from desires also beliefs (83d). Furthermore, in the *Phaedo* one can find an empiricist or materialist account of belief as coming about from perception (96b5-6: ὁ δ' ἐγκέφαλός ἐστιν ὁ τὰς αἰσθήσεις παρέχων τοῦ ἀκούειν καὶ ὁρᾶν καὶ ὁσφραίνεσθαι, ἐκ τούτων δὲ γίγνεται μνήμη καὶ δόξα, ἐκ δὲ μνήμης καὶ δόξης λαβούσης τὸ ἡρεμεῖν, κατὰ ταῦτα γίγνεσθαι ἐπιστήμην;). I believe that Socrates does not endorse this account not only in relation to knowledge but also in relation to belief. For the view that Socrates or Plato in the *Phaedo* endorses such an account see Scott (1987) pp. 346-66.

Furthermore, one might argue that the argument for the division of the soul in Book 10 (602c1-603b6) shows that sensation is autonomous from reason in that it has somehow judgment or belief of its own. We see there that a 'rational' belief is in conflict with an appearance or 'irrational' belief (602e4-603a2). It may be argued that their conflict indicates that the two beliefs have independent sources. In the same way it may be argued that when desire is in conflict with reason it has an independent origin. Thus one could argue that the conflict between the two opinions, and the persistence of appearance in the face of a more rational judgement, suggests that the two beliefs have completely independent origin, otherwise for example if the two beliefs had the same origin one would cause the other to disappear. Thus one could conclude that sensation can somehow fully account for certain beliefs or appearances. Now I think that in general Plato does not believe that 'appearances' cannot be affected or informed by reason and also by one's considered judgement. Exactly because in my opinion the soul possesses unity, appearances can be rejected or transformed or qualified by reason. More generally since the soul has unity one cannot really hold two contradictory judgements for long in the soul. One would rather somehow reject or qualify one of them or rather one would be led to a state of doubt and *aporia*.<sup>39</sup> The soul cannot be or cannot stay for long in direct contradiction with itself, because such contradiction would not be compatible with its unity. Rather its tendency is always to resolve contradictions, whether in good or in a bad way. However, certain things may indeed appear to us in a way that reason things to be false. This suggests that in some sense appearance has a certain amount of independence from reason and belief, and it is not exactly the same thing as belief, as indeed the account of appearance in the *Sophist* as well suggests. But if one needs to explain such conflict, assuming that somehow even in the most rational and consistent of souls sticks under water may indeed appear in the wrong way, one can infer that appearances have a partly independent origin since the senses indeed play a crucial role in their formation. But Plato's tendency and strategy in the *Republic* is to

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<sup>39</sup> Compare with the *Sophist* 230b5-c3. It is suggested there that when one comes to realize that one has contradictory opinions one becomes angry with oneself and one realizes that one does not know. This does not indicate that there cannot be simultaneous conflicting judgements. It indicates nevertheless that when one becomes aware of the contradiction, one is inclined to withdraw judgement. I think that the fact that contradictions are not acceptable in the soul shows that the soul possesses unity.

distinguish between parts of the soul and speak as if there is no connection whatever between them.<sup>40</sup>

What I am suggesting is not that the lower parts of the soul have to be conceived as independent subjects of their own, somehow constituting autonomous sources of judgement. The position I am propounding is that these parts can be said to have beliefs because as psychic items they are not separate from a cognitive component that is provided by reason. If *per impossibile* they could exist in themselves they would constitute something like pure indeterminate sensation, but such pure sensation in my opinion does not exist in the human or animal soul. Furthermore I wish to suggest that since they are not separate from reason their direction is not determined by themselves or by the body, unless minimally, and thus the lower parts can be described as directions that reason or the immortal soul takes when conjoined with a human body. Exactly because reason is involved and reason's essential or general direction is for the good and truth, lower activities or elements can also be seen in practical terms as aiming at the good, and also in cognitive terms at truth. Aiming at the good can be seen, as I am later going to argue, as involving two stages. The affections and desires that are formed in the soul rather mechanically aim in some sense at the good since they involve a cognitive element which itself somehow aims at the good and the truth. But reason can somehow 'separate' itself from these affections and reflect on them and either direct them or control them or even reject them at a second stage.

It may be argued that reason's impact in the human soul is not uniform. But I think that there is no 'part' of the soul that is completely outside reason's sphere of influence. We can see the soul as being ordered hierarchically so that different elements can be classified by the 'amount' of reason that is involved in them. Lower capacities are dependent on superior capacities or activities both in the sense that they are derived from superior ones and presuppose them, and also in that superior

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<sup>40</sup> Similarly the part that is said to rely on 'measures' in Book 10 also presumably relies on the senses since literal measuring involves the senses. It should also be noted that Socrates in Book 10 does not identify appearance with the senses. He clearly says that something appears to us as equal through the senses (602c8).

faculties or capacities can affect, direct and inform lower capacities. Something analogous can be applied to the relationship between reason and emotions and desires. Thus ultimately reason can control the soul as a whole. As we go down towards basic biological functions or desires such as thirst or hunger the cognitive element is less prominent and furthermore these desires are less easily controllable. Some conflict and divergence at this level possibly can occur even in the best and most rational of souls. But I believe that we cannot reach a point where we come fully outside the sphere of reason's influence and control and thus I think that reason does not have limits in the soul.

To reinforce my suggestions I wish to draw attention to a passage from Book 5 in the *Republic*. I believe that this passage reveals that Plato has the same conception of the soul and its relationship with the body in the two dialogues. In Book 5 Socrates argues that unity is the greatest good for a city and tries to make Kallipolis a unity (462a2-b2) and a genuine communion or community, a notion that can be associated with *sōphrosunē*. The communion of wives and children leads to unity in the city since it will allow communion of pleasure and pain which implies bonds of sympathy and friendship among the citizens (462b4-c8).<sup>41</sup> Socrates aims at creating *sōphrosunē* in the superior classes of citizens as a harmony between reason and pleasure and pain, and thus conflict both inside the citizens and between them will be avoided. Socrates in this context uses the soul and the whole organism as a model that the city has to imitate in order to achieve unity and not the city as a model for the soul as he did in the previous Books of the *Republic*. It becomes clear in this context that the soul and the organism as a whole possess a kind of unity that the city can only approximate (462c9):<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> See 462b4-6: Οὐκοῦν ἡ μὲν ἡδονῆς τε καὶ λύπης κοινωνία συνδεῖ, ὅταν ὅτι μάλιστα πάντες οἱ πολῖται τῶν αὐτῶν γιγνομένων τε καὶ ἀπολλυμένων παραπλησίως χαίρωσι καὶ λυπῶνται.

<sup>42</sup> More generally from the moment that the whole soul emerges as an agent in its own right and also it becomes clear that the lower parts of the soul do not possess autonomy from reason, the city-soul analogy cannot be fully maintained. We see here more generally that the soul, and the organism as a whole even a bad soul is something that a city strives to imitate. The parts of the city indeed constitute autonomous entities or agencies while the parts of the soul do not. And the soul as a whole has autonomy from its parts that the city as a whole, cannot possess in relation to the people in it.

Καὶ ἥτις δὴ ἐγγύτατα ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἔχει· οἷον ὅταν πού ἡμῶν δάκτυλός τοι πληγῇ, πᾶσα ἡ κοινωνία ἢ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν τεταμένη εἰς μίαν σύνταξιν τὴν τοῦ ἄρχοντος ἐν αὐτῇ ἡσθετό τε καὶ πᾶσα ἅμα συνήλγησεν μέρους πονήσαντος ὅλη, καὶ οὕτω δὴ λέγομεν ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος τὸν δάκτυλον ἀλγεῖ· καὶ περὶ ἄλλου ὅτουοῦν τῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος, περὶ τε λύπης πονοῦντος μέρους καὶ περὶ ἡδονῆς ῥαϊζοντος; (462c9-d5)

*And the city whose condition (constitution) is closest to that of a single human being (?). I mean, when perhaps the finger of one of us is injured the whole community that exists in the body in relation to the soul, stretched as it is so as to constitute the single ordering that belongs to the ruling element in it observes the injury to the finger and all of it feels the pain, the whole feeling it when one part suffers and it is in this way that we say that the person is feeling pain in his finger? And for any other member of the man the same statement holds, alike for a part that labours in pain or is eased by pleasure.<sup>43</sup>*

A comparison between this passage and the one I previously discussed in the *Theaetetus* (184d1-5) reveals great similarities. In particular the phrase ‘ἀλλὰ μὴ εἰς μίαν τινὰ ἰδέαν, εἴτε ψυχὴν εἴτε ὅτι δεῖ καλεῖν, πάντα ταῦτα συντείνει’ (184d3-4) corresponds to the phrase ‘πᾶσα ἡ κοινωνία ἢ κατὰ τὸ σῶμα πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν τεταμένη εἰς μίαν σύνταξιν τὴν τοῦ ἄρχοντος ἐν αὐτῇ in the *Republic*. There is the same emphasis on unity. In the passage in the *Republic* it is particularly emphasized that unity, which the term κοινωνία indicates, presupposes order (σύνταξιν) and not random association. The passage suggests that there is a community inside the body, and between the body and the soul. It becomes clear that it is the soul that unifies the body, and everything in the body is directed towards and

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<sup>43</sup> I am indebted to Christopher Rowe for helping me with the translation of this passage. Nevertheless the responsibility for the translation is my own. The translation of the last sentence is by P. Shorey.

is unified through reaching the soul.<sup>44</sup> More specifically it can be said that we have sensations of pain and pleasure that are directed towards the soul. These affections bind the bodily parts together through binding them to the soul. A unitary subject of consciousness is necessary so that what happens to a part of us concerns the whole, and we can say that the person (as a whole) is the subject of pain (in his finger). If for example the parts of the soul were really or completely separated, the pleasures of the lower part would not concern, or be experienced by reason. Here it is emphasized that pleasure and pain concerns the whole, including all the parts. The unity of the soul and the relationship between unity and order is indicated by the expression ‘a single ordering’ (εἰς μίαν σύνταξιν), which recalls the expression ‘a single form/idea’ (εἰς μίαν τινὰ ἰδέαν) in the *Theaetetus*. If there is a correspondence of the two passages, σύνταξιν here refers primary to the order that constitutes the soul and only derivatively perhaps to the body: it is an ordering or structure that the soul more specifically possesses or constitutes, and which unifies the bodily sensations and organs. Furthermore the ordering and the unity of the whole system is ultimately due to the ‘ruling element’ in it, which can be presented as a part or member of the whole community and at the same time as something outside this order like a general who watches over his army.<sup>45</sup> The ruling element can be associated with the person who is the ruler of his soul and his body.<sup>46</sup> More strictly it should be identified with reason, which in any case is the ruler in the city. Thus it can be said that the unity and order of the soul and the whole organism is ultimately due to reason.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> There is here a teleological dimension, in the sense that the soul I think can be presented as the end of the motions or sensations of the body.

<sup>45</sup> The term *suntaxis* has military connotations.

<sup>46</sup> Thus Adam (1965) ad loc. identifies the ruling element with the man and the whole. In my opinion it is reason in the sense that reason is or represents or constitutes the whole.

<sup>47</sup> The idea here that the body and the soul constitute a unity and there is agreement between them has a negative and positive aspect. This unity between the bodily and the soul can lead to the corruption of the soul. The very opposite of genuine *sōphrosunē* as agreement between pleasure, pain and reason lies in the body ‘dictating’ reason what to believe. In the *Phaedo* it is said that pleasure and pain bind the soul to the body, because they make it agree with the body in what is true (83d). In the *Republic* Socrates seeks the reverse agreement, which constitutes genuine unity. The body itself has to be in a good state so that it supports the activity of the soul. In the *Phaedo* the rational soul is bound to the body exactly because it is impossible when one experiences pain or pleasure or desire, not to form a belief concerning the value, or truth of the objects of these affections. Socrates says in the *Phaedo* that

## Conclusions

As I suggested earlier, and also as the passage I have just cited indicates, order, justice, and reason are essential both to the soul as a whole and the lower parts of the soul. This notion of the whole and the parts indicates that both the whole conceived as without the parts, and also the whole as including the parts tends towards the good and unity. In the argument for the division of the soul, order and reason are not presented as essential to the lowest part of the soul in particular, which is simultaneously taken to be the greatest part of 'us' (439d4-8). Rather this part was presented as being in opposition to reason, order, and justice and the whole, and it looks as though it does not deserve its place in the soul. Furthermore, the emphasis was on the suppression and separation of this part from the other parts and not on its incorporation. This part can somehow be allowed to belong to the whole solely in a negative way, by not interfering with the function of the other parts. Justice in some sense separates this part from the other parts and almost places it outside the whole so that it does not undermine the whole.

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philosophers avoid intense pleasures, pains or desires because these cause the greatest evil for the soul. The greatest evil is the fact that when one suffers intense pleasure or pain it is impossible not to think that the objects of these affections are truest and clearest (*Phaedo* 83c). In evaluative terms I think this indicates that pleasure makes one think that what is happening to one is absolutely good and also when one feels pain one also necessarily thinks that it is bad. Thus reason comes to fully identify with the body and becomes entangled or mixed with it and cannot separate itself from it. As it is clear in the *Republic* when one's finger hurts it is impossible not to think that the finger is one's own finger, in other words not to identify with one's finger and correspondingly not to care about it and not to think that what happened to it is bad for the person as a whole. Plato I think in the *Republic* does not expect people not to identify with the body and its sensations. Rather what he expects is one not to think that the body and bodily pleasures are absolutely good or bad and represent the whole of one's interests, rather to see the body as a part in a whole, and as being subordinated to and informed by more general aims. Thus one has to identify with the body and its pleasures only in so far as they are in conformity with reason's demands. One's immediate reaction when one's finger is in pain is somehow to forget anything else and to fully identify with one's finger. But since we are rational creatures and we are not solely fingers, and more generally our finger is not the centre of our personality, we can also partly at least distance ourselves from our finger and reflect on our broader interests.



Now I think that to a great extent the way that the parts of the soul are presented serves the general purpose of the argument in Book 4. By presenting the lower parts of the soul as opposites, Socrates shows that they do not constitute a unity in themselves. This does not mean that they cannot be unified. Rather it shows that order, structure and harmony needs to be imposed on them so that conflict may diminish. Also the person needs to intervene and to engage reflectively in the ordering and unification of the soul. In some sense thus we are provided with the materials out of which the soul is composed. We are invited to disentangle them from each other and consider them as separate, without the composition of the soul, as if these materials somehow preexist the composition. And we are also provided with certain rules as to how to make a soul and to combine them for ourselves. In presenting the materials as themselves in opposition the need and value for justice and also the need for our engaging with our souls is exalted. However, to a great extent we are not invited to unify the lower part with reason, rather to conceive the lower part in separation from reason and also as something, which tends to oppose reason. This I think happens because recommending such integration and unity between the 'bodily' desires and reason would be dangerous for a soul which does not know the good, and more generally does not know how to achieve it.

In so far as particular desires one may experience are directed towards objects which are not compatible with what is objectively good, such desires should not indeed be part of the soul, and one should try to suppress them and ideally completely eliminate them. But there is a difference in saying that the soul may happen to have desires whose objects are not compatible with the good, and saying that a part of human nature is in opposition with the good. Furthermore, there is a difference between saying that it can be said that if desire is conceived on its own, or without any element of reason is something that lacks order and saying that desire as such is something opposed to order and not amenable to order. It is true that Plato is inclined to present certain desires not merely as lacking order in themselves and thus as something to be ordered by reason but also to a great extent as recalcitrant and resistant to order and reason.<sup>48</sup> However, I think that desires, even the desires that are

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<sup>48</sup> Annas (1999) p. 123 ff. suggests an account of the virtues and the relationship of the parts of the soul in the *Republic* based on Alcinous's understanding of virtues (*Handbook* 183.37-184.10). She

associated with the appetitive part, are always to some extent shaped and directed by reason, and their opposition to reason is not necessarily their own fault, but also reveals reason's deficiency and incomplete development. More generally, I believe that the opposition between reason and desire in Book 4 and also in Book 9, where the lowest element is presented as something monstrous, a many-headed beast (588c7-10) is exaggerated perhaps in order to prompt the reader to be involved with his soul and to pursue justice as a psychic condition.

What more generally underlies Socrates' strategy is an understanding of the soul as a self-making something, an entity that is responsible for its own order and structure and as something that can shape and unify itself.<sup>49</sup> Thus the unity of the person is something for the person to achieve. Such a conception of the soul corresponds to the notion of self-motion as the soul it is defined in the later dialogues which suggests the soul's autonomy.<sup>50</sup> I think that this notion of the soul presupposes its unity. If the soul were a collection of independent factors autonomy perhaps would characterize these factors but not the soul as a whole. But there is a sense perhaps that the soul's autonomy itself is something that can be achieved as an integration and coordination and direction of the different factors or desires that can appear to operate

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stresses that according to this account 'desire lacks the capacity to develop on its own'. 'To the extent that desire can be trained to function according to principles and not at random, this is the work of reason supplying the necessary goal and structure to the desiring part, which on its own supplies merely the capacity to be habituated and trained to work in some ways rather than others' (p. 123). She shows that according to this interpretation of the *Republic* the 'lower parts are receptive to reason in that reason has an internal hold on them, and can control them from the inside, by changing and restructuring them' (pp. 124-5). However, Annas hesitates to accept that this is the correct interpretation of the *Republic* (p. 126). Annas later argues that there is an ambiguity in Plato's conception of desire (pp. 134-5) and she suggests that Plato may be tempted by two quite distinct models of the composite soul (pp. 135-6).

<sup>49</sup> See also Broadie (2001) p. 307 who argues that self-determinability is essential to the soul according to Plato.

<sup>50</sup> For the notion of the soul as self-motion in the later dialogues see in particular Mason (1998) pp. 18-28 who associates self-motion with the soul's autonomy and the ability to control one's motions. Broadie (2003) pp. 28-9 has argued that self-motion in Plato implies possession of reason.

in the soul.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, I think that the soul's autonomy and also its unity is primarily due to the presence of reason in it. Reason causes order and unity and more generally accounts for the fact that the soul has autonomy and is a self-shaping thing. The soul fully becomes autonomous and simultaneously exercises its autonomy when it adequately deploys reason to produce order and unity in itself, and thus it is able to direct itself wholly to the ends that it sets out to achieve. Nevertheless, reason always works to some extent towards the integration and coordination of the different functions in the soul and thus the human soul, even the worst one, possesses some amount of order and unity. It never functions as if it is a collection of independent unconnected factors.

The danger with Socrates' strategy in Book 4 is that order and justice may not appear to be eventually either essential to the parts or to the whole. For example, if the soul can persist and survive without justice, order and unity, then these features are no more essential to the soul than their opposites. More generally, in dividing the soul into a 'good' and a 'bad' element, it may still look as though the soul is partly driven towards justice and partly towards injustice and both are equally natural to it. Furthermore, as I am going to argue in the next section presenting justice as something that needs to be 'imposed' upon parts or elements of human nature that are somehow unwilling to accept it, undermines its depiction as something good and desirable.

I believe that a different approach to the soul would not involve moving from the parts towards the whole, as Socrates did in Book 4, where he tried to provide a glimpse into the nature of the whole by providing us first, an account of the parts and then, by showing how the soul can function as a whole because of justice. A different and better approach would first attempt to get a glimpse of the whole, in 'separation' from the parts and thus define the nature of the soul, its purpose and function as a whole, and then move on to show how the parts operate in the context of the whole and how their functions are both subordinate to and also informed by the function and

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<sup>51</sup> In the *Phaedrus* immortality follows from the conception of the soul as self-motion since it never abandons itself (*Phaedrus* 245c). Perhaps it could be said that the soul is immortal because reason always somehow keeps the parts or elements together and never allows them to acquire complete independence and autonomy from each other, which would coincide with a destruction of the soul.

purpose of the whole. I believe that the examination of the soul in Book 4 was inadequate because it did not provide the reader with adequate insight into its unity. A complete understanding of the unity of the soul would also involve understanding of the unity of the parts, their connection and affinity and the fact that they work for a common purpose, and not merely their differences from each other that the argument in Book 4 emphasized.

## Chapter 4

### The soul in Book 10

#### Immortality, the desire for the good, and the soul's complexity

I suggested in the previous section that the question of the nature of the soul is not directly raised or addressed in the first nine Books of the *Republic*. Socrates raises this issue finally in Book 10 in the context of the discussion of the immortality of the soul. Initially he provides a proof of the immortality of the soul without relying on an account of the soul's nature (608d2- a9), but at 611a10 he changes course indicating that a proper proof of the immortality of the soul requires such an account. In raising the question of the soul's nature, he argues that the picture of the soul that has been provided until now, which involves much 'diversity, unlikeness and contradiction in and with itself' (611a10-b3) is not compatible with the soul's immortality. Socrates makes it clear that the acceptance of the soul's immortality requires adopting a different approach to the soul from the one he has adopted until 'now'.<sup>52</sup> Socrates here is referring not solely to the preceding argument (608d2-a9) but also to the account of the soul that has been provided in the earlier Books of the *Republic*,

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<sup>52</sup> See also Adam (1902) (note ad loc.), who argues that Socrates refers back to Book 4 and that he suggests a revision of the psychology of Book 4. One can also notice how temporal language is used, and in particular how the 'now' comes to gradually acquire a more extended dimension. Initially the term 'now' appears to refer to the immediately previous argument in the *Republic*, in which injustice in the soul were said not to kill it. Then it becomes clear that it encompasses the whole conversation in the *Republic*, and finally it looks as though it encompasses human life in general. From saying that we 'now' have seen the soul in a certain way (611b6, 611c1, 611c4) Socrates moves to saying that we have 'now' seen the soul as it is 'now' or at present, and more generally to how the soul is or appears to us 'now' (first at 611c5 and then at 611e4-612a1). It looks as though this 'now' refers to human life in general (612a5). And he suggests then that we have to see the soul in the past, as it originally used to be (611c7 and d4-5) and also in the future (612e2). Eventually the discussion itself of the truest nature of the soul and the question of its complexity is itself postponed to the future (612a3). It may look as though one will be able to apprehend fully the nature of the soul only in the afterlife. Socrates wants to emphasize not only the provisional and inadequate character of his own account but also, more generally the narrowness of people's point of view in general.

including Book 4. His remarks can be seen as being concerned with and criticizing both his overall approach to the soul and the portrait of the soul that such approach has conveyed.

What one learns here is that we have not really reached the truest nature of the soul, what it is in reality (611b1, 611b10). Also it is expected that in its truest nature the soul would appear to be something far more beautiful than the soul appeared to be (611c3). Socrates tries to justify his earlier account and to protect himself from a possible accusation of being insincere by saying that he has told the truth about the way the soul appears 'now' (c4-5). Towards the end of the section he says that he has dealt with the affections and forms in human life in a decent way (612a4-6). Nevertheless it is suggested that the approach has been inadequate because Socrates has relied on the senses and he did consider the soul adequately in the light of reason (611c2) and also on how the soul appears to be 'now' (611c5). This suggests that the account that has been given rested on common observation or experience and simultaneously on a provisional or narrow point of view that can be identified with what Socrates calls 'human life'.

One can guess that an adequate account of the soul would involve abandonment of the senses and observation of human life and behaviour, on which the account of the soul in Book 4 has rested, and it would rely on the hypothetical method that has been outlined in Books 6 and 7.<sup>53</sup> I wish to suggest further that such approach would aim at

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<sup>53</sup> Thus according to Moreau (1953) p. 250 the account of the soul in Book 4 had as its starting point observable conflict. Moreau understands this conflict as being accessible through introspection. But 'introspection' is not the only form of experience that Socrates had relied to. We have more generally a 'naturalistic' approach to the soul throughout Books 2-4, and also Books 8-9, where different human characters are distinguished. The basis for such distinctions is both some sort of 'introspection' and also observation of external behaviour. Different characters can be distinguished by reference to external behaviour and the objects, which their desires appear to be directed to. In my opinion, Moreau is right in interpreting the argument for the division of the soul as aiming at 'saving the appearances' ('sauver les phénomènes de la vie psychologique') (p. 251). In other words, one accepts conflict through observation and one accommodates such conflict in the soul in such a way that the principle of contradiction is not violated (p. 251). But an account of the soul that makes appearances a starting point can never reach the truth, nor can it provide access to the nature of the soul and its essence (see Moreau (1953) pp. 250-1). Showing that the soul is not something self-contradictory is not the same thing as

associating different hypotheses concerning the soul, in order to reach a definition of the soul, which would also specify its relationship with the good. The assumption that the soul is immortal, which according to Socrates here reason and arguments compel us to accept (611b9-10), would be one of the hypotheses that Socrates would seek to defend by reference to an account of the soul's nature.<sup>54</sup>

It emerges here that relying on observation, or how the soul appears to be, is not only insufficient in revealing the nature of the soul, but can also be misleading.<sup>55</sup> It can lead for example to the assumption that the soul is not something beautiful, rather something that contains much variety, conflict etc. Observation more generally and the senses interfere with our apprehension of the nature of the soul and hide its real nature. In a similar way the divine nature of Glaucus is hidden behind the barnacles that have covered it and one would have difficulties in guessing it (611c6-d6). Socrates seems to detect not only a difference but also to a great extent a conflict between how the soul appears to be and how it is in reality.

Now Socrates gives some more precise directions as to how the question of the nature of the soul can be approached. He argues that one has to look at the soul's love of wisdom (φιλοσοφία), and he suggests that by looking at it the soul's kinship with the divine would be revealed (611d8-e2). Presumably the soul's affinity with the divine also accounts for the soul's immortality.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, he argues that we have to imagine that the soul follows the divine as a whole (611e2-612a3). That Socrates

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showing that it possesses unity, and in any case one can never reach the notion of the soul's unity through experience. Furthermore, as Moreau suggests, the division of the soul in Book 4 and the fact that experience becomes the starting point, does not constitute a theoretical stance ('une prise de position théorique') (p. 250). More generally, I believe that the basic fundamental 'Socratic' tenets, such as the thesis (or hypothesis) that we all desire the good, that badness is involuntary, and that badness involves ignorance, which all have to do with the nature of the soul, are not theses (or hypotheses) to be confirmed or rejected on the grounds of experience of human life or introspection and observable conflict. That Plato is still committed to these tenets is clear at 505d5-e5.

<sup>54</sup> Thus in the final argument of the *Phaedo* (105c8-107a1) immortality is derived from a conception of the soul as being essentially a life-principle, while a similar strategy is adopted in the *Phaedrus* where immortality is derived from a definition of the essence of the soul as lying in self-motion (245c5 ff.).

<sup>55</sup> See also Rowe (2007) pp. 170-1.

<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless I am going to suggest later that this affinity does not entail simplicity.

conceives philosophy and more generally a desire for the good as essential to the soul can be inferred by the fact that such desire or love can be applied to the whole (πᾶσα ἐπισπομένη 611e2).<sup>57</sup> Also when the soul comes to follow the divine ‘unreservedly’ (as Shorey translates), it manages to make itself clean of all the dirtiness and pollution that it has collected because of its association with the body.<sup>58</sup> Socrates further argues that such a transformation of the soul would allow one to see the true nature of the soul and also to deal with the question of whether the soul in its truest nature is complex/manifold or simple, or precisely what it is and how it is made (εἴτε πολυειδὴς εἴτε μονοειδής, εἴτε ὅπῃ ἔχει καὶ ὅπως) (612a3-4). Thus he makes it clear that the question of the soul’s complexity has to be discussed in relation to a pure, beautiful and unitary soul. He also seems to imply that the soul that would adequately examine this question of the nature of the soul would be itself purified and unitary. This is because the understanding of the nature soul is basically self-understanding, or self-knowledge. For one cannot be said to comprehend the nature of the soul if the account one would provide would not be compatible with one’s conception of oneself and also one’s experience of oneself. Nevertheless, Socrates does not make it very clear, whether the purified soul has to be literally disembodied or not.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Compare with 518c8 (οὕτω σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ ἐκ τοῦ γιγνομένου περιεκτέον εἶναι), and contrast with 436b2-3 (...ἢ ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ καθ’ ἑκαστον αὐτῶν πράττομεν, ὅταν ὁρμήσωμεν). In the latter passage where learning for example is something that the soul does not engage with (ὁρμήσωμεν) as a whole, while here the ὁρμή is attributed to the whole. I believe that πᾶσα at 611e2 and ὅλη at 518c8 are equivalent. Compare also with the relevant passage from Aristotle’s *De Anima* where the two terms are treated as equivalent (πότερον ὅλη τῇ ψυχῇ τούτων ἑκαστον ὑπάρχει, καὶ πάσῃ νοοῦμέν τε καὶ αἰσθανόμεθα καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἑκαστον ποιούμεν τε καὶ πάσχομεν, ἢ μορίοις ἑτέροις ἑτερά; ) (411a6-411b3). The desire for the good is also implicitly associated with the whole soul at 577d13-e2: καὶ ἡ τυραννουμένη ἄρα ψυχὴ ἥκιστα ποιήσει ἃ ἂν βουληθῇ, ὥς περὶ ὅλης εἰπεῖν ψυχῆς.

<sup>58</sup> Compare also with 519a7-b5.

<sup>59</sup> One cannot I think argue that here Socrates is referring to a disembodied soul solely on the grounds that Socrates talks about a soul which is wholly directed to the divine and comparing this passage with the argument for the division of the soul where love of learning has been attributed solely to a part of us. The turning around of the soul as a whole from becoming towards being and the good has been presented as the goal of the higher programme of education. See also Rowe (2007) p. 141-2. One rather



I believe that Socrates is implying that the desire for the good and the divine is essential to the soul since it can apply to the whole. However, it looks as though Socrates is arguing that in the soul as it is now the desire or love of the divine is only a part of it. This would appear to contradict the suggestion I made previously that the desire for the good characterizes the whole. In my opinion Socrates wants primarily to deny in the context of Book 10 that the soul has a dual nature and is something intrinsically divided, of which badness and the tendency towards injustice is an essential part. It is the latter conception of the soul that ordinary experience supports and that reason when it operates without the senses cannot endorse. If one assumes that this passage implies that somehow in the embodied soul a desire for the good represents a part of the soul's nature, while in the disembodied soul the desire for the good represents the whole, two problems would arise. One would be that the embodied soul does indeed have such a dual nature and it is not really a beautiful thing, and the other would be that the nature of the soul changes between embodiment and disembodiment; hence we do not have the same soul.

It seems to me that what Socrates wants here to suggest in saying that we need to examine the soul's nature in a soul which has assimilated to the love of the divine, is that only in such a soul will one be able to discern the beauty of the soul's nature. In ordinary, every day souls, such beauty exists but is hidden from us and cannot be easily detected. Furthermore, in suggesting that the soul as it is 'now' may desire the good only 'partly', I think Plato is indicating not that the desire of the good is only a part of our present nature rather that it is only partly or inadequately manifested in ordinary human souls, or perhaps in embodied human souls in general, so that it looks as though it characterizes solely a part of us. There is here an underlying conception of the soul's nature as something that one already has, something with which one is endowed because of one's own constitution, (or had originally) but one simultaneously has to achieve and to realize 'in the future' and that one only imperfectly realizes 'now'. This conception also applies to the desire for the good.

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has to argue that Socrates believes that such turning around is not fully attainable in human embodied life. But if he believes that it is not obtainable in the embodied life he has no much better grounds to maintain that it can necessarily be achieved in a disembodied soul, since in any case death does not guarantee purification of the soul and justice.

The good for example is what every soul desires (as a whole), and still only perfect philosophers' souls manage to reach an adequate conception of the good and simultaneously are wholly directed towards the good. In a sense philosophers desire the good no more than ordinary people, since the nature of the soul in both is the same, and still in another sense such desire is fully expressed only in philosophers.

Now it may be argued that even though Socrates here is denying one kind of dualism, a dualism and conflict inherent in the soul, he imports a different kind of dualism, one between the body and the soul. While, for example, in the preceding argument for the immortality of the soul it was the soul and not the body that appeared to be somehow responsible for badness and injustice, and the body's own badness was not presented as somehow responsible for the badness and injustice in the soul (610a5-8),<sup>60</sup> here it looks as though it is the body's fault or that the soul somehow involves injustice and badness (611b10-c1). Furthermore a dualism and conflict between experience and reason is maintained, which corresponds to what the soul should be or what it is essentially, and what it appears to be. This dualism becomes even stronger if Socrates actually believes and wants to suggest that it is impossible for the embodied human soul or for the human soul more generally to realize its nature precisely because the body is always undermining its function.<sup>61</sup> This would also indicate that experience of human life can never conform with reason's assumption that the soul desires the good, and may appear eventually to undermine this assumption. The passage may be taken indeed to confirm such a conception, by associating badness with the body. I am not inclined to accept this dualism and it seems to me that to a great extent Socrates adopts it so that he may avoid the other kind of dualism, and show that the soul is something essentially beautiful, but I am not sure I can provide fully convincing arguments to reject it.

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<sup>60</sup> Socrates in fact did not exclude that the body can play a role in the soul's badness. Rather what he seemed to exclude is that the body necessitates such badness (610a1-3) and thus that psychic badness can be reducible to bodily badness or disease. The problem of evil is more generally indirectly raised here in the context of Book 10, and I think that Plato provides no clear answer to such a problem.

<sup>61</sup> For this suggestion see T. Robinson (1970) p. 52 and also Gerson (2003) pp. 124-131 who suggests that embodied soul is always, or always remains, an image of the disembodied soul

I wish to make some observations concerning the question of whether the soul is conceived by Plato to be simple or complex. First of all I think that the passage makes it clear that according to Plato a conception of the soul as following wholly the divine, does not entail that this soul be simple. If Socrates believed that a soul which is basically love of wisdom and which follows the divine as a whole is necessarily simple he would not go on to say that one has to discuss the question of the soul's constitution and complexity in relation to such a perfect soul (612a3-4). Unless we have to accuse Socrates of dishonesty, here Plato really believes that such a purified perfect soul might be complex. Earlier Socrates indicated that it is possible for something composite that has the most beautiful composition to be immortal (611b5-7: οὐ ῥάδιον...αἰδίων εἶναι σύνθετόν τε ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μὴ τῇ καλλίστῃ κεχρημένον συνθέσει, ὥς νῦν ἡμῖν ἐφάνη ἡ ψυχή.) What is not compatible with the thesis of the soul's immortality is not complexity, but rather conflict and opposition. Thus more generally Socrates seems to believe that immortality requires some sort of perfection and harmony, or the potential for such perfection but he does not appear to endorse the opinion that perfection or the soul's perfection requires simplicity.<sup>62</sup>

What is important to notice is that Socrates here implies that the question of the soul's complexity should be addressed and can also be dealt with only in relation to a pure and perfect soul. In such a soul, which displays perfect unity and uniformity of purpose, one could not easily detect any complexity or variety. I think that this strategy indicates not that there are no reasons to acknowledge complexity in the soul, but if there are grounds that complexity has to be admitted these grounds would not be observable conflict and opposition, for in such a soul one could not observe any opposition. Thus one's starting point would be indeed different from Book 4, where Socrates' grounds have been conflict and opposition. Accordingly, complexity has to

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<sup>62</sup> See also T. Robinson (1970) p. 53 who argues that Plato accepts the possibility that something complex be immortal. Furthermore Robinson argues that Plato here is not committed to the immortality of the intellect alone (p. 53). However, Robinson eventually does not firmly argue in favour of a complex immortal soul (p. 54). For a strong defence of the thesis that the immortal soul is taken here to be simple and identical to the superior part of the soul see Szlezák, (1976) pp. 1-58. For the view that the immortal soul in this passage simple see also Guthrie (1971) pp. 232-3, who, more generally, argues that Plato believes in all dialogues that the soul in its essence is simple and perfect.

be discussed by reference to a soul which simultaneously displays perfect unity and this indicates that if, for whatever reasons, there is complexity, complexity has to be able to be fully subordinated to the soul's unity and it has to be admitted only in so far as it does not undermine or is in conflict with the soul's unity and its desire for the good. On the other hand if one makes complexity and plurality as it is manifested in the senses one's starting point one may fail to discern unity, and the potential for harmony, and one more generally may not conclude that the soul is not such an intrinsically beautiful immortal thing.

I suggested in an earlier section that the question of the soul's partition has to be dealt with after a definition of the soul has been reached, a definition that would apply to the whole and would also indicate the soul's unity. It seems to me that the same thing is indicated here in the context of Book 10. I am not sure whether complexity and plurality can be derived or deduced from a definition of the soul; for example from a definition of the soul as *erōs*, or as self-motion as it is defined in the *Phaedrus*.<sup>63</sup> What is clear to me is that complexity has to appear to be compatible with such a definition, so that the soul's unity is not undermined.

Despite the fact that in Book 10 Socrates does not explicitly commit himself to the soul's complexity I believe that there are strong reasons to accept that Plato is

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<sup>63</sup> C. Rowe (1997) p. 436 has suggested that the conception of the soul as self-motion entails that the soul cannot be 'pure rationality' rather it requires passion and desire: 'thinking about things, even including doing them, by itself moves nothing'. Thus perhaps complexity can be derived from a definition of the soul as self-motion. More generally it seems to me that a conception of the soul as self-motion, minimally requires both reason and desire, and it also suggests the soul's unity. It requires desire, if desire is seen a motive force or power or as energy, and reason necessarily because 'self-motion' implies directed or purposive motion, motion or change which is directed or has direction and purpose and is structured by purpose and thus by reason. That Plato considers self-motion as directed and as necessitating reason can I think be minimally be seen in the *Phaedrus* by the fact that self-motion is associated with self-preservation (*Phaedrus* 245c): the self-moving thing never abandons itself, it aims at its perpetuation or preservation. Self-motion is associated with reason and self-care in the *Timaeus* at 77b-c. Furthermore, by suggesting that self-motion is purposive and directed, if complexity is admitted, the unity that this notion suggests implies that there is coordination or that in principle coordination can be achieved. Thus even if the soul is analyzed in different motivating factors these factors can in principle be coordinated and all directed to and be conduce to a single purpose.

thinking of the soul in its 'truest' nature as something complex involving some plurality or variety. Ignoring for the moment the differences or apparent differences between the account of the soul in the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedrus*, what both dialogues have in common is that in both dialogues the immortal or 'disembodied' soul, whether human or divine is portrayed as complex, being unitary and still involving internal differentiation.<sup>64</sup> Thus, to put the case rather briefly, in the *Timaeus* there are the circles of the different and the circle of the same (36c4-d1), while in the *Phaedrus* there is the charioteer and the horses. In the *Timaeus* more specifically, we have an effort on Plato's part to show that the soul, in particular the world soul, despite the fact that it involves 'some variety and difference' (but not 'much') involves the most beautiful composition, and is divided and composed in accordance with mathematical principles of harmonics (*Tim.* 35a1-37a5). The soul emerges as participating in reason and harmony (*Tim.* 37a1). Thus I think in allowing for the immortality of something composite, the *Republic* clearly points to the direction of these two later dialogues.

Socrates in Book 10 of the *Republic* is implying that the soul has to be examined by reason alone. This approach corresponds to an apprehension of the soul's nature in separation from the body and the senses. In other words both the cognitive subject has not to make use of the senses, and also the soul, the object, has to be fully stripped from the body and the senses. Socrates furthermore, indicates that the forms that one may discover in a soul in separation from the body may not correspond to the kinds that one can observe in human life (612a4-5). His remarks constitute an indication that the immortal soul or the soul that will be apprehended by reason alone will not correspond to the appetitive and the spirited part that have been 'discovered' in Books 2-4. I cannot imagine how it would be possible to discover spirit and appetite as forms or kinds in the soul without making any use of observation. Furthermore, such parts or

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<sup>64</sup> I am in agreement with Hall who has suggested that the immortal soul has to be considered as a 'differentiated unity'. Hall (1963) p. 64 has stressed that the more fundamental question is not whether the soul has the three particular aspects, or more or less, rather is whether the soul is a simple or differentiated unity. He argues that a theory of individual immortal soul as a complex or differentiated unity is discernible in all relevant dialogues (*Phaedo*, *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, *Timaeus* and *Laws*). He also points out that in Book 10 'what is denied about the nature of the soul is not that it may be a complex unity but rather that its parts are necessarily in conflict with one another' (p. 73).

affections indeed presuppose the body and could not exist in a soul, which is stripped from anything that presupposes the soul's association with the body.

In saying that one would not find the appetitive and spirited element in a soul that is examined by reason alone, I do not mean to say that literally a part of the soul would be missing.<sup>65</sup> What I wish to suggest is that if one examined the soul in the abstract one would not find the specific kinds or forms of behaviour and life that can be detected by observing human and animal life. The soul remains the same 'stuff' and the potential and the capacity for such forms of life is already there.<sup>66</sup> Rather it seems to me that if complexity and plurality or difference were discovered in such a soul they would be somehow conceived in more abstract terms, as happens in the *Timaeus*.

As I suggested in the previous section, a proper understanding of such observable forms of human life strictly speaking requires understanding of the soul by reason alone. Ideally reason has to deal adequately with the nature of the soul in complete abstraction from the body and experience of human life before undertaking to examine and classify the kinds of human character and behaviour. I wish to add here that complexity and multiplicity have to be introduced in the soul and examined in the soul before reintroducing the senses and the complexity and multiplicity that the senses provide.<sup>67</sup> One reason for this is that one has to discuss the more general question of how and how much plurality, variety and difference can come to fit in with unity, and more generally the rules and recipes for a harmonious composition in the abstract, without being disturbed or influenced by what the senses would appear to recommend. It seems to me that another reason that complexity has to be introduced in the soul and discussed prior to the senses and observation is that reason has to be able to account for the fact that soul is a principle of life, and also for the fact that life

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<sup>65</sup> For this point see also T. Robinson (1970) p. 54.

<sup>66</sup> For these points I am particularly indebted to Christopher Rowe. See also Rowe (2007) p. 141-2, and pp. 169-170.

<sup>67</sup> For a discussion of the importance of harmonics in Plato's scheme of education in the *Republic* and also a discussion of the composition of the world soul in the *Timaeus* in relation to such harmonics see Burnyeat (2000) pp. 47-63.

manifests itself in a variety of ways, before coming to face such variety and multiplicity through the senses.

Hence, it is possible that one main reason why the immortal soul has to be conceived as complex or as involving complexity is exactly because a simple soul, being identical to *nous* or a pure intellect, could not account for the variety and multiplicity of forms of life.<sup>68</sup> A related reason is that perhaps Plato believes or comes to believe that plurality and variety in the soul is not solely due to the 'body' or the senses. If the soul were conceived as something completely simple, the body or the senses could not fully account for the 'apparent' transformation of something so simple to something so variable and complex as human life and mental or observable behaviour.

It might be argued that such variety in a plurality in the soul is a mark of imperfection and the fact that Socrates suggests here that the immortal soul might be complex indicates that the soul is never fully purified from badness.<sup>69</sup> Then the ideal would be somehow to become something simple like *nous*, if *nous* is taken to be something simple. However, I am not sure whether this interpretation is correct. I previously suggested that Socrates leaves it open that complexity can be discovered in a soul that has been assimilated to the divine. In such a soul complexity would not look like imperfection or impurity. I believe that Socrates wants to discover complexity in a pure soul precisely because in such a soul complexity would not look like imperfection. If one assumes that complexity has to be admitted in the soul so

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<sup>68</sup> This seems to me to be quite clear in the case of the *Timaeus*. The circles of the different for example together with the motions that are due to 'necessity' account for the various 'directions' that human motion in space can take (43a6-b5), and thus I think it is implied that it accounts more generally for the variety of human action.

<sup>69</sup> For this view see Gerson (2003) pp. 129-130, who argues that in the *Republic* the disembodied soul can be complex because it carries still the marks of embodiment. See also Gerson (1987) pp. 81-96. A similar view had been suggested by Guthrie (1971), who understands complexity more generally as a mark of imperfection and pollution from the body that persists after death (pp. 236-7). This is how Guthrie explains the fact that human disembodied souls in the *Phaedrus* are presented as composite, and he implies that divine souls are simple. However, this account cannot explain the fact that the world soul in the *Timaeus* is explicitly presented as something composite and in principle at least dissoluble into its constituents (*Tim.* 41a6-b6), and still as much perfect as a created thing can be.

that one can be able to account for the soul's association with the body, perhaps it may be more generally argued that the soul's general aim is not exactly to get rid of the body. It can be argued maybe that its association with the body helps the soul fulfil its function, which does not solely lie in associating with the 'realm' of forms but also in governing the body and producing order in the physical world.<sup>70</sup>

I think that both in the *Symposium* and also in the *Timaeus* one can find a conception of the nature of the soul and its function as being one of an intermediary. In the *Symposium* (202d11-203a8) the function of *erōs*, which I think can be identified with the soul or its essential character, is presented as being one of an intermediary that allows the communion between the 'human and the divine', which in themselves do not mix together. In the *Timaeus* the being of the world soul, which is made in accordance with reason or mind, is an intermediate kind of being due to a mixture of two kinds of *ousia*, being or essence, one divisible which pertains to the body and the other one indivisible (*Timaeus* 35a1-4: τῆς ἀμερίστου καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἐχούσης οὐσίας καὶ τῆς αὖ περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένης μεριστῆς τρίτον ἐξ αμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ συνεκεράσατο οὐσίας εἶδος).<sup>71</sup> The

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<sup>70</sup> Gerson (1987) p. 93 has argued that the *Republic* can be reconciled with the *Phaedrus*. He suggests that 'the discarnate human soul is a permanently divided self because it is never wholly absorbed into intellectual activity. Gerson believes that the person is not identical to the soul rather it is identical to *nous*, and the ideal would be such a perfect absorption into *nous* (p. 94). Nevertheless Gerson's position is not consistent in my opinion because, as he himself admits, the world soul in the *Timaeus* and also the divine souls in the *Phaedrus* are presented as not being solely *nous*, and also as not being solely absorbed into intellectual activity (at least in relation to forms) and still there is no conflict in them (p. 92). Furthermore Gerson identifies the immortal world soul in the *Timaeus* with *nous* (p. 94). However, perhaps *nous* should be primarily associated with the circle of the same, which is presented as being undivided and governing the soul (*Tim.* 36c8-d2) and also as what brings the soul in contact with indivisible being (37c1-3) generating *nous* and *epistēmē*.

<sup>71</sup> For a discussion of the ontological and epistemological implications of this difficult passage see D. Frede (1996). Frede (1996) p. 38 suggests that the underlining principle is that like is comprehended by like and that the mixture reflects the fact that the soul needs to be in contact with both worlds. Eventually Frede suggests that this passage undermines a 'two world theory' that the *Timaeus* appears to involve. She argues that the passage shows that the physical world has two aspects in itself. Frede also emphasizes the unity of the world soul and the world as a whole: 'there are not two souls living in





mixed constitution of the world soul indicates its intermediate character and its placement in between the physical world and the world of forms. The world soul indeed is presented as having a complex nature, prior to its association with the body. This dual nature, which expresses an affinity with both the body and the forms, enables it to be in touch with both the physical and the intelligible 'realm'. The different ingredients out of which the world soul is made are perfectly integrated and thus it is also capable of uniting the two orders of reality or at least filling somehow the gap between the two orders of reality and also or simultaneously unifying and producing order the world as a whole, by allowing it to be in contact with the forms and be directed by *nous*.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, the world soul in the *Timaeus* is presented as discharging both aspects of its function, without any internal conflict or imbalance and without one activity or aspect of activity undermining the other. Rather the circle of the same is presented as controlling and informing the circles of the different. This indicates that knowledge informs belief. I believe that this description of the soul, and the emphasis that Plato lays on the cosmic role of the soul in the later dialogues indicates that the soul's purpose then is not exactly to go up, and to retreat in one place together with the forms, rather to be in constant motion and to associate both with the forms and also with the physical world, and overall to stay in between. If my interpretation is correct, and in spite of what Book 10 of the *Republic* may appear to indicate, the soul's association with the body, or at least certain forms of such association, is not necessarily bad. Rather it can be seen as the fulfilment of the soul's function, even though it may be said that the human soul's association with the human body opens up the possibility for corruption and badness and the soul's 'fall'.

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its breast, an eternal one that longs for reunion with its transcended brethren, the Forms, and a temporal one that ties it to the world of change. No such split exists within the world soul' (p. 38).

<sup>72</sup> The demiurge reasoned that in order for the world to be most beautiful it needs to have *nous*. And nothing can have intelligence without having soul, and thus he put intelligence in the soul and the soul in the body (30b1-5). In this line of reasoning one can perhaps detect the thought that *nous* cannot be in direct contact with the body, rather the soul allows somehow the body to have a share in *nous*, and thus the soul can be said to be an intermediary both between the forms and the body and between *nous* and the body.

My suggestion is not immune to the objection that the later dialogues present us with a development in Plato's thought, which involves for example a denial of many elements of the metaphysics and epistemology of the *Republic* and more generally a more positive approach towards the sensible world. It may be argued furthermore that a rejection of a certain conception of the forms or epistemology has more general implications on Plato's understanding of the soul. Thus it may be argued that we can see Plato moving away from a kind of radical body-soul dualism that corresponds to and complements a radical dualism between the forms and the sensible world. According to many interpreters Plato endorses this radical dualism in the *Republic* and in the *Phaedo*. I have attempted to emphasize elements of continuity in Plato's thought and to suggest that the *Republic* can be interpreted in ways that allow it to appear compatible with later dialogues such as the *Theaetetus*, the *Phaedrus*, the *Sophist* and the *Timaeus*.

In conclusion, the argument in Book 10 leads us towards a conception of the soul as being something essentially rational and desiring the good, but as something complex. I furthermore suggested that in the immortal soul we cannot find precisely the appetitive 'part' of the soul, or the spirited one, because the affections these 'parts' involve presuppose an actual body. At best 'in a disembodied soul' which is not fully purified we can find memory of such affections and not the affections themselves. However, I believe that the lower parts can be conceived as modifications of the immortal rational soul, which is also necessary, and by implication reason, for their formation. In the abstract, without the help of the senses or the experience of human life, one may not be able to detect such formations but one will be able to detect complexity that can account for such formations together with the body. Thus the soul, considered as pre-existing the body, and as something potentially at least independent from the body, is fully equipped with the capacities that will allow it to connect with a body and bring life into a body. The principle that one will examine will be unitary and one will be able to apprehend it in its unity or as a whole and provide a definition of it that applies to it as a whole. One may also detect complexity and internal differentiation prior to dealing with the soul in association with the body and more generally before 'introducing' the senses or observation, as happens in the *Timaeus*. Furthermore I suggested that a conception of both the unity and also the complexity in a purified or 'disembodied' soul, can help one reach better

understanding of the specific kinds of human life, and also achieve harmony and order among these kinds.

### **Appendix: the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus***

I believe there is much greater agreement in the position that these two later dialogues represent regarding the nature of the soul than it is often recognized. In both dialogues the soul, both human and divine, is presented as complex. In the *Timaeus* the immortal soul has many levels of complexity and at a deepest level it is presented as being a mixture of ingredients, which are fully integrated (35a-b). Perhaps this indicates its unity and the common origin of all its parts or aspects. At a second level, we are presented with differentiation, which is also a functional differentiation. The mixture is divided in accordance with mathematical principles, which constitute harmonious proportions. This indicates that the parts that are divided are at the same time united because of their harmonious relationship (35b-36b). Eventually there is a basic dichotomy (36b5-d7) between the different and the same. The circle of the same, which remains undivided, is the governing circle to which the circles of the different are subordinated (36c4-5). This I believe suggests that even though difference and plurality are not eliminated, unity and simplicity govern and regulate plurality and complexity and the whole is bound together and integrated. Furthermore, all the circles are interconnected. Thus when for example the circles of the different are in contact with something, the *logos* that is generated is transmitted throughout the whole soul (37b). This suggests that despite its functional differentiation the soul remains a unitary cognitive subject and cognitive operations inform one another.

Furthermore, it seems to be the case that both in the world soul and in the human soul the circles of the different are in direct or immediate contact with the body and affected by bodily motions. In the case of the human soul the circles of the different are affected by *aisthēseis* (43d-44a). Furthermore, the circles of the different appear to account for the variety of human action, since they account for motion in different directions (43a7-b5). Thus I think that the lower parts of the soul constitute

modifications of the circles of the different and not of the circle of the same. Owing to its simplicity the circle of the same accounts for consistency and order in action. The circle of the same, perhaps because of its simplicity is disturbed because of embodiment only in the sense that it does not function at all (43d). Unlike the circles of the same, its operation is not presented as being altered and thus when it works it works well. Furthermore, it is implied that when the circle of the same works, everything in human life works well.

It seems to me that one can follow Robin's<sup>73</sup> suggestion and with some amount of speculation associate the circle of the same with the charioteer in the myth of the *Phaedrus* and the circles of the different with the horses. The circle of the same in the *Timaeus* appears to be associated with the governing function in the soul, and it is also associated with *nous* and in a similar way the charioteer in the *Phaedrus* is associated with *nous* (*Phaedrus* 247c). The circles of the different represent a potential of irrationality in the soul, due exactly to their complexity and they are said to move in an irrational, disorderly and uncoordinated (*Tim.* 43e3: *alogōs*) manner in the human soul. This is because they need to be regulated by the circle of the same.<sup>74</sup> Thus the rationality of the circles of the different may be said to depend on their relationship to the circle of the same. Perhaps the same applies to the horses in the *Phaedrus*. In a similar way the potential for irrationality in the *Phaedrus* in the human soul is associated with the 'bad horse'. It has also to be noted that both in the *Timaeus* and in the *Phaedrus* the human disembodied soul is said to differ from the divine, and thus there is a greater potential for irrationality. In the *Timaeus* the mixture of ingredients out of which the human soul is made is said to be inferior (*Tim.* 41d). In the *Phaedrus* such inferiority is associated with the 'bad' horse (*Phaedrus* 246a-b).

The main difference between the two dialogues is that *Timaeus* may appear to suggest that the immortal part of the soul is identical to the *logistikon* of the *Republic*, while in the *Phaedrus* it looks as though the immortal soul comprises the *logistikon* and the two inferior parts, with which one is familiar from the *Republic*. But as I suggested, in both dialogues the immortal soul displays structural complexity and also

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<sup>73</sup> See Robin (1944) p. CXXIII.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Johansen (2004) p. 144.

such complexity has to do with the fact that the soul has to associate with the phsycical realm<sup>75</sup> and the forms. If one does not insist on the details of the myth it can be argued that that in both dialogues we can see the immortal soul as the *logistikon* of the *Republic* if it is assumed that the *logistikon* is not something simple. Furthermore a difference is that while in the *Timaeus* the two lower parts of the soul seem to be added after embodiment in the *Phaedrus* the disembodied soul comprises the same 'parts' as the embodied. I think that the two dialogues can be fully reconciled if one assumes that the lesser gods in the *Timaeus* do not literally add something 'new' to the soul. In so far as the lower parts of the soul are associated with certain affections the lesser gods do not literally make these affections, nor do they provide the immortal soul with the capacity for experiencing such affections. They generate such affections in the sense perhaps that they place a soul in a body of a particular character, and they structure the body in such a way that such affections or the motions that are associated with such affections display some order and consistency prior to reaching the soul. Ultimately I believe that the ordering function of the lesser gods corresponds to our reason's shaping of certain bodily motions and affections, and more specifically to the shaping of these affections by the circles of the different, which have already been shaped or structured by *nous*. The ultimate aim is the regulation by and subordination of such affections to the circle of the same (*Tim* 42 c-d). Furthermore I think that the horses in the disembodied souls in the *Phaedrus* myth are not exactly identical to the parts of the soul that one is familiar with from the *Republic*, rather they represent the potential for such parts. The 'bad' horse in the *Phaedrus* represents a potential for irrationality and conflict, but I think in a disembodied soul cannot be identified with sexual desire, in so far as sexual desire is something for which the body plays a role and which requires embodiment.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Taking care of what is soulless is presented as an essential function of the soul in the myth of the *Phaedrus* (*Phaedrus* 246b).

<sup>76</sup> There are different stages in the examination of the soul both in the *Timaeus* and in the *Phaedrus*. *Timaeus* deals with the works of reason alone, which involve the immortal 'part' of the soul and having dealt with necessity then he deals with the works of reason together with necessity, which correspond to the mortal parts of the soul. Perhaps this distinction corresponds to a distinction of the soul as it is discovered and apprehended by reason alone and the nature of the human soul as it is discovered by reason together with the senses. In relation to the *Phaedrus* it may be argued that the examination of the soul starts in the wrong way, as in the *Republic*. In Socrates' first speech we have an

### Final remarks regarding the notion of justice in the *Republic*

Before finishing this section devoted to the discussion of the soul's immortality in Book 10 of the *Republic* I wish to make some final remarks concerning justice.

Socrates here says that justice and injustice can be appreciated in relation to a soul in its pure state (611c3-4: καὶ πολὺ κάλλιον αὐτὸ εὐρήσει καὶ ἐναργέστερον δικαιοσύνας τε καὶ ἀδικίας διόψεται καὶ πάντα ἃ νῦν διήλθομεν). Socrates does not mean to say that in such a pure soul one could detect injustice;<sup>77</sup> rather he wants to indicate that understanding of the soul in its pure form would also help one understand the nature and value of justice, and also the badness of injustice. One may argue that Plato wants to suggest that apprehending the beauty and harmony of the 'original' nature of the soul in its pure form almost simultaneously involves apprehending the value of justice to which it can be said that this harmony is due or is identical. More generally, we can see here that understanding of the nature and value of justice is inextricably associated with one's conception of oneself. In so far as one's conception of oneself or one's soul is inadequate, so is one's understanding of justice, and vice versa. To understand the nature and value of justice one needs to reach understanding of the soul that is compatible with the view of justice as something inherently good. Fully understanding justice as something inherently good involves or leads to a different understanding of oneself. It can also be said that in the 'longer way', for example an

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account of division and complexity in the soul, which presents the person as divided between opposite factors and passively dragged by these factors (237d ff.). Then Socrates provides a definition of the nature of the soul, as self-motion, which, I think, indicates its unity and its autonomy (245c-246a). In the myth (246a ff.) complexity is introduced but now we can see complex divine and quasi-divine self-moving souls operating in a coordinated way or quasi-perfect way in the case of human souls. Then Socrates moves down to the human soul and human life again (249d ff.) and re-examines complexity and love in the context of human life.

<sup>77</sup> See also Adam (1902) ad loc.

understanding of the soul and understanding of the nature and goodness of justice go hand in hand.

I think here one can detect a change of strategy in relation to Book 4. In Book 4 the value and nature of justice was approached in relation to a soul that exactly was not what Socrates here says that the soul should be or is in its true nature, in other words it was a soul divided by conflict, and not particularly beautiful, and a soul which appeared to be partly at least inclined towards injustice or *πλεονεξία*. Socrates did not try to show the value of justice by inviting us to appreciate and enjoy a soul in its perfection rather mainly by invoking the soul's imperfection and disorder and defending the need for justice and order by reference to this conflict and disorder that justice in the soul at least may diminish even though not perhaps completely eliminate. To a great extent this soul indeed corresponds to the average human soul. Socrates' arguments did not aim at appealing to perfect individuals or ideal philosophers but people who do indeed have such inclinations and these people were invited to oppose the tendency towards injustice, which was presented as solely a part in them, for the sake of goodness and order in their souls as wholes. I think that here in *Republic* Book 10 it is also indicated that this approach has its limitations. These limitations, I believe, concern the assumption that justice is something essentially good, good in virtue of what it is. I feel that Socrates has not adequately shown that justice is something good in itself, or alternatively he does not expect the reader to have reached adequate understanding of the fact that justice is good.

First of all, it may be argued that in so far as justice is defended by reference to its opposite, conflict and disorder, it may appear that its value to a great extent depends on its opposite and the presence of its opposite. So for example justice would be of no use in a soul that does not experience any conflict, or more generally which does not have parts in opposition to each other. Furthermore, since justice appeared to oppose an element in human nature, from the point of view of this element justice still appeared to be something undesirable and unwelcome. In so far as justice appears to involve constraint and compulsion in relation to a part of human nature, it cannot appear to be something completely good, both in relation to the part and also the whole soul that performs it. Finally, I think that the comparison between justice and

health, injustice and disease tends to collapse in Socrates' proof for the immortality of the soul. Socrates argued that injustice for the soul is like a disease, which nevertheless does not kill it (608d2-610d4). Socrates wanted to show that the soul is capable of suffering from its disease in eternity and there is no death and relief for the bad man (610d5-7). But, one may object, since injustice does not kill the soul, it is not after all like a disease for the soul, or at least no more like a disease than justice is also health. What Socrates characterizes as disorder, might not be eventually such a problem for the soul, rather the soul fares no better with justice than injustice and both of them are equally natural or essential to it. Furthermore, in comparing injustice with disease, justice as health appears still to have primarily a remedial value, as something that is needed and desired only as long as its opposite exists.

In relation to a soul which may not be perfect in the way that the divine is perfect, but rather involves no badness and conflict whatever and nothing that undermines or disfigures its tendency towards the good, justice would not be justified by reference to conflict and through negative terms, since such a soul would not involve conflict, rather perhaps its value would only be appreciated by reference to its necessary or essential connection with the good and also the soul's relationship with the good, as the primary object of the soul's desire. Furthermore, in a simple soul, or a soul which appears to be a perfect harmony, and which follows the divine as a whole, justice would not appear as a constraint upon the parts or the whole, rather it would solely constitute its natural tendency or the aim of this tendency. Nevertheless, to emphasize that justice is somehow natural to the soul Plato resorts again to some extent to badness and negative terms, now as something external to the soul and alien to its true nature that pollutes it, and as something the soul seeks to get rid of. In relation to such a soul then the 'badness' and undesirability of injustice would also become manifest, as something to be avoided by all means.

Now if justice is defined by reference to a purified soul, perhaps justice could first and foremost apply to the whole soul, and would be a virtue of the soul without reference to the parts. In an analogous fashion, I suggested, the soul has to be examined initially without reference to parts, and thus also justice has to be considered in relation to a soul considered as a unity. Then justice in a soul would



consist in 'doing' one's own' for the soul as a whole<sup>78</sup> and this would involve caring for itself. One may also think of what Socrates says in the *Symposium*<sup>79</sup> where he suggests that what is one's own is the good. It can be said that doing one's own is doing the good and/or aiming at the good. Saying that the good is one's own would suggest that the performance or fulfilment of its function for a given entity contributes to the general good, and is objectively good, but it is also one's own, and thus I think what is good in general, or contributing to what is general is also benefiting the particular entity and is good for this entity. Thus perhaps doing one's own for the soul is doing what is good for the soul, but simultaneously involves contributing to the general good, or what is objectively good and not solely good for the self but also good for the others and the world as a whole. More generally, in so far as the nature of the good is understood there is no conflict or disparity between doing one's own as doing what is good for the self and also functioning well in such a way that others can be benefited.

However, if Socrates leaves open the possibility that the soul might be complex and involve functional differentiation, I think that one need not exclude the possibility that justice could also be seen as simultaneously corresponding to a relationship between elements in the soul. I do not think that one conception of justice precludes the other. In one case justice could be associated perhaps as an activity of a whole or a given entity, and in the other case as a relationship between different activities or functions inside a whole. I attempted previously to reconcile the two notions by suggesting that the soul is a self-making thing and the function or purpose of the whole soul is self-care, which can be identified with justice. If the soul is viewed as something complex, self-care involves and aims at establishing the proper order and unity in itself and justice in the sense of internal order. A proper order

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<sup>78</sup> N. D. Smith (2001) pp. 128-30 has suggested that the soul is simple and that more generally the notion of justice does not depend on the question whether the soul has three parts or more, or no parts at all. He has suggested that in a simple soul justice would lie in 'doing one's own'. He argues convincingly that justice is the proper functioning of something and 'doing one's own for the soul' lies in the proper functioning of the soul in regard to the management of one's life and thus the conception of justice is in conformity with Socrates account of the soul and its function at the end of Book 1 (353d-e) (pp. 131-2).

<sup>79</sup> *Symposium* 205e6-7.

inside the soul can be seen as both the result of the soul's proper activity, but also as supporting and maintaining such activity by allowing particular functions or operations to work in such a way as to support the unity, purpose and good functioning of the whole.

Now, it can also be said that justice as doing one's own could also apply to the parts of this entity, not solely as a relationship between the parts of the entity, the proper order in other words of the parts, rather perhaps as a virtue of these parts. If justice is seen as a relationship between the parts of an entity, the parts cannot be said to be just in virtue of the fact that they are doing their own. Justice as virtue would constitute a characteristic of a whole, whose parts do their own. Nevertheless, in so far as justice can be simply identified with 'doing one's own', then the parts can be also said to be just in virtue of the fact that they do their own. Again, I think that justice can be seen as somehow both a relationship between certain things, which belong to a whole, and thus a virtue of the whole and also a virtue of these things, which in been virtuous contribute both to their own well being, but also to the whole.

Furthermore, if something is taken to be just in virtue of the fact that it 'does its own' a proper definition of justice for the part or the whole involves reference to the good, which in general terms is 'one's own'. This, as I suggested, means that even though there is a particular function or purpose in relation to a given agent, the agent's function contributes to the good and also one's own good. If doing one's own is the same thing as justice then one should perhaps say that 'doing one's own' regarding the parts of the soul should not merely involve reference to their particular functions and exclusion from other functions but also reference to the good, which can be seen as part of what it is one's own. This I think would indicate that the parts also share a common purpose and aim together at the good. Furthermore, it would indicate that in participating in this common purpose or function the parts benefit as well. Now the lowest part in doing its own, both in the case of the city and in the case of the soul, did not exactly participate in a common purpose, or even appear to share a common purpose, even though in some sense it contributed to the good of the whole. Nevertheless its contribution was primarily negative, and consisted in it not disturbing the operation of other parts. Furthermore, as I am going to argue more extensively, the lowest part was not said to be just or virtuous in virtue of the fact that it did its own,

even though in this way it certainly did not inflict injustice, and also it was not said to benefit itself. I think that in order to see 'doing one's own' as involving virtue and a positive contribution to the good both of the others and of oneself, one needs to consider 'doing one's own' as involving functioning in accordance with reason and together with reason and one's functioning being informed by reason. In this way I think more generally justice would not solely involve differentiation between the parts of an entity but also it would connect them. Thus it would not involve the radical separation of parts that justice appeared to involve in Book 4. Perhaps then it would be indistinguishable from *sōphrosunē* or would presuppose it.

In a disembodied soul, which is complex, one would not find separate parts, or at least parts so radically separated from each other as in Book 4. As I argued earlier reciprocal separation of parts or functions was necessary and advisable for the moment the soul appeared to involve opposition and thus functions appeared to undermine each other. But one can imagine a complex soul where different activities or functions are performed in certain order and some are given priority over others and yet do not need to be radically separated from each other since one does not undermine the other. Rather they can be seen perhaps as mutually enhancing or supporting each other, one contributing to the good operation of the other and the purposes of the whole.

If one considers the soul as something essentially complex justice as an internal state may involve the proper order and arrangement of functions, which thus come to be subordinated to the function of the whole, but it would not involve the radical separation of parts that was recommended in Book 4. Such separation was presented as necessary and was legitimised because of conflict, and because the elements were presented as being opposites, but I think that if in the disembodied soul there is no conflict, there is no need to see the parts or elements as separate. As a relationship for example or order of different functions or activities, which applies in an internally differentiated whole it need not involve the radical separation that appeared to involve in Book 4. Such separation was presented as necessary not because of complexity of function as such, but in particular because one function appeared to oppose and undermine the other. We could perhaps see different functions performed in a certain order but one function could appear to complement,

inform and reinforce the other and not undermine it. Then perhaps in a unified soul justice could appear to be indistinguishable from harmony and *sōphrosunē*.

I wish also to note that in the argument in Book 4 justice is not attributed to the parts of the soul, and more generally justice is not presented as exactly the same thing as ‘doing one’s own’. Socrates does not say that the parts are just in virtue of the fact that they do they do their own, rather in the case of the city the city is said to be just in virtue of the fact that they do their own and not the parts of the city and the same applies to the soul. Thus justice emerges primarily as a relation or order between parts of a complex whole, and is not strictly speaking identical to ‘doing one’s own’.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, as I suggested earlier, justice emerges as identical to ‘doing one’s own’ at 443b9-d1 (and also at 441d11-e1) where at last Socrates was able to give the expression the meaning he wanted. This definition of justice was applied to the whole and not to the parts. Socrates there presented justice as an activity of the whole, and showed that just activity is responsible for the parts doing their own, and certainly it was not the parts themselves, which made the whole just by being just.<sup>81</sup> We could also say that the soul as a whole is able to make its parts just, or reason in a soul can make the parts just.

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<sup>80</sup> McCabe (1994) p. 269 has argued that ‘that Plato has difficulty, at this stage in his thought, in seeing relations as supervening on (or contextualizing) the relata and sees them as real properties of the relata is witnessed by his reluctance to treat the relations of the parts as the definientia of justice and self-control. Instead he suggests that that each part will have those virtues, just as the whole does, and just as the state of which the whole is a citizen, will’. However, I think that Plato has no such difficulty and more generally that Plato treats justice and *sōphrosunē* in a different way from courage and wisdom. In fact nowhere in Book 4 Socrates says that the city is just because the citizens are just. Thus justice and also *sōphrosunē* are conceived as relations and not ‘properties of the relata’. Unlike justice and *sōphrosunē*, which characterize the whole, wisdom and courage are primarily virtues of parts. Justice is a characteristic of the whole (implying separation or domination of one part in relation to the other), which allows the virtues of the two superior parts to characterize the whole. Thus more generally, it is not sufficient for a complex entity to have a characteristic (such as wisdom) in a part of it so that it may be called ‘wise’ as a whole. Rather the part has to have a certain relation to other parts, and this relation is guaranteed by justice. Different cities may have wise people, but these cities cannot be called wise because they ‘lack’ justice, in other words, the proper relationship and position of wise people in relation to the other people.

<sup>81</sup> This sense of ‘doing one’s own’ cannot be perhaps applied to the city in any case, since the city cannot be presented as an agent in the way that the soul or the person can be presented.

Furthermore, Socrates in Book 4 does not try to prove, whether in the case of the city or in the case of the soul, that justice as the proper order of the parts, and 'doing one's own', is beneficial to the parts and makes the parts happy. Rather justice as doing one's own for the parts was said to benefit the whole and be good for the whole. Also, he did not try to argue that the good of the part, and happiness for the part is due to happiness of the whole, and that greatest happiness for the part is compatible with greatest happiness for the whole. For example, when, in the case of the city Adeimantus says that one could object that Socrates is not making the superior classes in the city happy (419a1-420a2), Socrates agrees that the rulers are not happy in terms of what is commonly believed to be happiness (420a3-8). Socrates states that it may indeed prove to be the case that these people are most happy (420b3-5) but he built the city looking at the happiness of the whole city and not at the happiness of a particular class in it (420b2-c4). He also argues later that 'as the entire city develops and is ordered well, each class is to be left to the share of happiness that its nature comports' (421c3-5) (trans. by Shorey). Therefore he shows that the happiness of the classes does not correspond to what is commonly believed to be happiness, and doing as one likes, but he does not try to argue yet that the citizens are happy even though he indicates that he believes that they may turn out to be happy as much as it is possible for them. The same I think applies to the parts of the soul; his goal is to make the soul good and happy and not the parts. Thus Socrates did not try to argue either that doing one's own for the part is justice and parts of a whole are just, or that it made the part happy, rather justice was something that belonged to the whole and made the whole happy. In the case of the soul this means that the person is happy even though a part of him may not be quite happy, since justice involves suppression of a part, which would rather pursue injustice.

There is, however, a passage later in Book 9, in the context of the discussion of pleasure in which the relationship between part and whole becomes clearer. There justice is attributed to the part, in virtue of the fact that it does its own and also the lower parts are presented as happy in being just. It is also made clear in this context that one's own is the good:

Θαυροῦντες λέγωμεν ὅτι καὶ περὶ τὸ φιλοκερδὲς καὶ τὸ φιλόνικον ὅσαι ἐπιθυμίαι εἰσὶν, αἱ μὲν, ἂν τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ λόγῳ ἐπομέναι καὶ μετὰ τούτων τὰς ἡδονὰς διώκουσαι, ἅς ἂν τὸ φρόνιμον ἐξηγῇται, λαμβάνωσι, τὰς ἀληθεστάτας τε λήφονται, ὡς οἶόν τε αὐταῖς ἀληθεῖς λαβεῖν, ἅτε ἀληθείᾳ ἐπομένων, καὶ τὰς ἑαυτῶν οἰκείας, εἴπερ τὸ βέλτιστον ἐκάστω, τοῦτο καὶ οἰκειότατον; Ἀλλὰ μήν, ἔφη, οἰκειότατόν γε. Τῷ φιλοσόφῳ ἄρα ἐπομένης ἀπάσης τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ μὴ στασιαζούσης ἐκάστω τῷ μέρει ὑπάρχει εἰς τε τᾶλλα τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν καὶ δικαίῳ εἶναι, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς τὰς ἑαυτοῦ ἕκαστον καὶ τὰς βελτίστας καὶ εἰς τὸ δυνατόν τὰς ἀληθεστάτας καρποῦσθαι. (586d4 -587a2)

*'May we not confidently declare that in both the gain-loving and the contentious part of our nature all the desires that wait upon knowledge and reason, and, pursuing their pleasures in conjunction with them, take only those pleasures which reason approves, will, since they follow truth, enjoy the truest pleasures, so far as that is possible for them, and also the pleasures that are proper to them and their own, if for everything that which is best may be said to be most its 'own'? But indeed, he said, it is most truly its very own. Then when the entire soul accepts the guidance of the wisdom-loving part and is not filled with inner dissension, the result for each part is that it in all other respects keeps to its own task and is just, and likewise that each enjoys its own proper pleasures and the best pleasures and, so far as such a thing is possible, the truest.'* (trans. by Shorey)

In this passage we can see that goodness and truth are more or less equated and shown to be dependent on what reason recommends. It is reason that finds what is best for the part, which is the part's own. Also what is best for the part corresponds to the truest or more genuine pleasure for the part, thus what is best corresponds to genuine or real satisfaction of the desires of the part and the greatest happiness for the part. We can see furthermore that what is good for the part is dependent on the good of the whole, and also compatible with what is good for the whole, since what is good for the part is dependent on reason. Satisfaction for the part is also compatible with justice as 'doing one's own'. However, it should be noted here that the lower parts are

presented as potentially following objective reason and therefore positively endorsing reason. At the same time it is indicated that the pleasures of the lower parts can be themselves endorsed by reason since they can have a share in truth. Finally, it is implied that the lower parts in reality desire true pleasure, which corresponds to their true or real satisfaction. To imply that the lower parts desire true pleasure shows that the lower parts have a share in reason and cannot be fully conceived as separate from reason. The lower parts cannot be said to have a sense of truth in themselves or as such. In suggesting that they will be happy with this arrangement Socrates is implying that the desires of the lower parts are dependent on reason and are not separable from reason. By consequence, pleasure in general, including bodily pleasure, is also not something fully separable from reason. I believe that the assumption that the lower parts can have positive relationship with reason, and the fact that they follow reason, and thus in some sense act together with reason which allows Socrates here to say that these parts can be just, in virtue of the fact that they do their own, and thus to have a share in goodness, virtue and truth. 'Doing one's own' thus itself can be said to include or comprise 'following reason', and 'aiming at the good'.

This passage occurs in the context of the discussion of the nature of pleasure, which is crucial in that it fully establishes the connection between justice and happiness. I am going to discuss Plato's treatment of pleasure more extensively in a different section. Suffice it to say that the common conception of happiness involves pleasure and more generally satisfaction of desire, and Socrates in Book 4 has not shown that justice involves satisfaction of desire, rather the emphasis has been on suppression of desire. To show that justice involves satisfaction of desire, Socrates needed to reexamine the nature of pleasure, and thus what consists real satisfaction and also to imply a different notion of desire as well, in which desire is not something essentially opposed and independent from reason.

One may ask why Socrates in the context of Book 4 did not directly say that 'doing one's own' is benefiting both the agent, and also the whole of which the agent is a part, and it is also just. Why more generally did he avoid saying that one's own is the good? I think that one answer is that to attribute virtue to a part, but also to allow a conception of the part as both aiming at the good and as simultaneously benefiting itself, we need to see it as operating together with reason and thus we need to allow

that the part has a share in reason, and in Book 4 this was not the case in relation to the lowest part of the soul and the city. In the case of the city Plato would need to attribute some kind of virtue to the lower class that has not really been educated and in any case did not show how it can be involved with reason. But in the case of the soul I think that it can be said that all the parts have even a minimal share in reason, and thus they can be involved in virtue and goodness, and this I think becomes clear in connection with pleasure, where even bodily pleasure can be said to approach truth if its pursued with reason and together with reason's pleasures.

Perhaps there is a more general problem here in that Socrates seeks to avoid saying directly that something is just in virtue of doing one's own and also that doing one's own and justice is good for the thing that does its own, but also contributes to general goodness. One could object that if justice is doing one's own, either justice basically lies in doing whatever one likes and thus one would be led to a Thrasymachean or Calliclean notion of justice, or alternatively justice is not something good for the person rather it is something that benefits others. This objection would display a confusion or lack of understanding of the good, and more generally lack of understanding that the good of the individual is compatible with and connected with the good of the others.

I believe that Socrates in Books 2-4 of the *Republic* attempted to achieve a kind of middle ground so that he does not appear to fully contradict common assumptions concerning justice. At the same time he is able to lead his interlocutors to a better understanding of the notion of justice and more generally of where the good lies, and what the good involves or at least what the good does not involve. Socrates did not try to say that doing one's own for example involves doing as one pleases, and makes one happy. Rather doing one's own was not acting as one's pleases. For example in the case of the lower part of the soul it involves restraint of this part, and Socrates did not try to show that the lower part is happy. Instead he tried to argue, and here he did not deviate much from common opinion, that doing one's own benefits the whole of which one is a part. In saying that the whole is just in virtue of its parts doing their own, he also showed that what is just is also good and happy. From the moment the person was presented as a complex whole, justice appeared to benefit the person, though not necessarily her parts. Yet it was quite clear that one should not act



as one pleases, at least as the lower part of the soul desires, and in accordance with the ordinary conception of what it means to do as one likes.<sup>82</sup> Thus the whole's goodness and happiness does not lie in what people would commonly understand to be happiness. Eventually Socrates managed to show that doing one's own for the agent as a whole is justice and is good for the agent, even though not quite identical to what people commonly conceive to be good and also not quite the same thing as ordinary justice, since it involves caring for oneself not in the way perhaps that most people would take caring for oneself to involve rather as working towards the proper state in one's soul.

With a proper understanding of the good, and also with a proper understanding of the relationship between a part and the whole it can be said that doing one's own involves being virtuous and contributing to one's own good and benefits oneself, also to the good of the whole, and also even doing as one pleases, and as one desires if one understands the nature of pleasure and where genuine pleasure is to be found. But for such a notion of 'doing one's own' I think to be possible, it is necessary to present someone as involving reason, and as working together with reason. A proper understanding more generally of the good involves there being no clash between the part of the whole, and the goodness and order of the whole is conducive to the goodness of the part which itself realizes its nature as part of a whole.

In conclusion I have attempted to argue that an understanding of the nature of the soul and more generally the relationship between the part and the whole, is inextricably connected with the conception of justice and how one considers justice to be good.

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<sup>82</sup> Compare with 420e5 and 445b1-2.

## **Part III**

### **Desire, Reason, and Pleasure**

#### **Chapter 5**

#### **The conflict between reason and appetite in Book 4 (437d1-439b5)**

##### **Glaucón's account of desire and self-control**

In this section I shall examine the account of the conflict between reason and appetite in Book 4. I attempt to argue that Plato's primary aim in this argument is not to deny the thesis that the soul desires the good, rather to establish reason's independence from desire and simultaneously to help the reader reach a more adequate conception of the good.

Having clarified the principle of opposites and its application (436b9-437a9) Socrates moves on to demonstrate that there can be opposite attitudes in the soul in relation to the same object (437b1 ff.). In order to divide the soul into parts, Socrates needs to demonstrate the autonomy of reason from desire and simultaneously the possibility and intelligibility of reason's restraint of desire. In order to achieve this he needs to show that reason can be in direct opposition to desire.

I believe that a possible objector to Socrates' argument could be Glaucon or someone like Callicles. Glaucon in his speech in Book 2 argues that justice, for most people at least, is involuntary (359c2-4, 359b7-9, 360c6-8). It is practised as something necessary and not as something good, because of fear and inability to avoid the consequences of injustice, which is considered to be good (358e4-5, 359a7-b2). Glaucon explains that justice is involuntary, practised due to inability to commit injustice, because the natural tendency of people's desire is towards injustice (359b8-

c6). Self-advantage (πλεονεξία) is something that ‘every creature by its nature pursues as a good, while by the convention of law it is forcibly diverted to paying honour to equality’ (trans. by Shorey) (359c4-6). Glaucon indicates that justice involves restraining desire (ἐπιθυμία: 359c3) and inability to do what one wishes (359c1: ποιεῖν ὅτι ἂν βούληται). Glaucon finds no conflict between βούλησις and ἐπιθυμία and draws no sharp distinction between them. As everybody wishes to do what one desires, no one wishes to practise justice, since justice opposes desire.

Thus in this passage the general thesis that justice is involuntary is associated with the thesis that justice is not good in itself. More specifically, the involuntariness of justice is related to a conception of human desire as naturally leading towards injustice. Hence justice emerges as something that opposes and restrains human desire. A further more general assumption seems to be that restraint of desire is something involuntary. Such a conception therefore does not allow reason to be presented as something that directly opposes desire and more generally as something autonomous in the soul.

The notion of what is involuntary here is associated with a choice of the lesser evil that one feels compelled to make.<sup>1</sup> One in some sense chooses justice, as one chooses to restrain one’s desires and not to act as he wishes, but one feels compelled to choose something one does not really want. Restraint of desire emerges as a form of weakness (359b2: ἀρρωστία, 359b8: ἀδυναμία). In an analogous fashion Callicles in the *Gorgias* repudiates self-control, which Socrates may appear to put forward as something good (*Gorgias* 491d10-13). Again Callicles associates the good with the object of desire (492b6) and suggests that the majority of men restrain their desires because of weakness (492a5).

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<sup>1</sup> Involuntary ‘choice’ can be found in the *Gorgias*, where the notion of what is voluntary is associated with βούλησις (*Gorgias* 509 e5-7). Socrates says that he would choose to suffer injustice if he had to, but he would not want to (*Gorgias* 469c1-2: Βουλοίμην μὲν ἂν ἔγωγε οὐδέτερά· εἰ δ’ ἀναγκαῖον εἶη ἀδικεῖν ἢ ἀδικεῖσθαι, ἐλοίμην ἂν μᾶλλον ἀδικεῖσθαι ἢ ἀδικεῖν).

Socrates' challenge is to demonstrate that justice in the soul is good in itself and not merely good in its consequences.<sup>2</sup> He needs to show that justice can be or is voluntary, and can be chosen as something good, and not merely as a form of painful remedy. However, Socrates is not going to directly reject the Glauconian conception of desire as naturally tending towards *pleonexia*, and by implication he does not fully reject the conception of justice as involving restraint of desire. Instead of directly rejecting such a conception he wants to indicate that human nature is more complex than one might assume. What he needs to do is distinguish between parts of the soul and more specifically to show that reason can directly oppose desire and its object as something bad. The opposition of reason to desire indicates and presupposes that the object of desire is something that can be believed to be bad and thus, by implication, that it is not absolutely good. More generally in demonstrating the opposition of reason to desire Socrates indicates that certain objects that are commonly conceived to be good are not necessarily good, and thus, as I am going to argue more extensively, he basically directs the reader and the audience to a more adequate conception of the good; also at the same time, he indicates that the arbitrator concerning what is good should be reason, whose potential autonomy from desire suggests that it can conceive the nature of the good resting on its own resources. Thus room is more generally made for justice - and by implication self-control as an ordering of the soul - to be conceived as something that comes from inside, something good and voluntary.<sup>3 4</sup>

In Book 4 it emerges that self-control is voluntary from the point of view of the two superior parts of the soul (and by implication on the part of the person and the whole), but not from the point of view of appetite. Rather restraint and justice are

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<sup>2</sup> See *Republic* 358a1-3, 367c6-e4.

<sup>3</sup> Then one can also argue that yielding to desire or appetite is the real form of weakness, and not, as Callicles would maintain, restraint of desire.

<sup>4</sup> What is voluntary in Plato ultimately is what is really good, which is what one wishes. But in Glaucon's speech there is no distinction drawn between what is voluntary in the sense that it is something that one believes to be good and also what is really good. In order to show that justice is something voluntary Socrates needs to show nevertheless that it can be believed to be good in itself. Since it is not clear that he can manage to demonstrate that justice can be believed to be good in itself, he at least manages to leave room for this possibility.

imposed to the lower part from outside and do not appear to be natural to it.<sup>5</sup> However, apart from acquisitiveness, another two natural tendencies have been discovered since Book 2, the spirited and philosophic characters. Socrates has made use of empirical observation, focusing in particular on the nature of dogs,<sup>6</sup> to discover a mild and an aggressive character that can be combined and harmonized (375c6ff.) One character is presented as being aggressive, but it has a natural aversion for (suffering) injustice (whether internal or external) and is obedient to what is considered to be just (440c9-d6). The other is presented as mild and sociable, loving what is familiar to it, and being attached to what has become familiar to it through its education (376a-b). The ‘compresence’ of these two characters, mild and aggressive, in dogs indicates more generally that they can be combined and harmonized. Spirit later is characterized as the natural ally of reason (441a2-3). These two elements are ‘naturally’ attached to justice and law and thus human nature does not tend wholly toward injustice. Rather there is also a natural tendency for society, moderation, and restraint. Socrates in Book 4 builds upon this account showing that the two superior elements are independent from appetite and can oppose it as something external to them. Thus justice and self-restraint can be voluntary, coming from inside and not imposed externally.<sup>7</sup>

I argued in my previous chapter that Plato believes that the soul is essentially unitary. Thus the conflict between reason and desire is not essential, and also the conflict between wish and one’s *epithumia* is not something unbridgeable.

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<sup>5</sup> See 442a4ff: Καὶ τούτῳ δὴ οὕτῳ τραφέντε καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς τὰ αὐτῶν μαθόντε καὶ παιδευθέντε προσ<ατ>τήσετον τοῦ ἐπιθυμητικοῦ, ὃ δὴ πλεῖστον τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν ἐκάστῳ ἐστὶ καὶ χρημάτων φύσει ἀπληστότατον, ὃ τηρήσετον μὴ τῷ πίμπλασθαι τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλουμένων ἡδονῶν πολὺ καὶ ἰσχυρὸν γενόμενον οὐκ αὖ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττει, ἀλλὰ καταδουλώσασθαι καὶ ἄρχειν ἐπιχειρήσει ὧν οὐ προσήκον αὐτῷ γένει, καὶ σύμπαντα τὸν βίον πάντων ἀνατρέψει.

<sup>6</sup> In relying on observation of animal nature in order to examine human nature Socrates may be said to be undermining Calliclean naturalism with its own weapons. (Cf. *Gorgias* 482d-484c.) One can find loyalty and sociability in nature and not solely aggressiveness.

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless in the context of Books 2-4 justice and law can still appear to be an external constraint imposed upon the soul since the method of ingraining beliefs by indoctrination (see e.g. 429c7-430b5) has not allowed the soul to find the truth on its own and adopt it for itself.

Furthermore, in my opinion, Plato would not accept that one's reason fully opposes one's desires as something bad and alien or could do this. In so far as one desires something, one will be inclined to regard both the object of desire and the desire itself as good to some extent. Since a desire is still one's desire, one and one's reason might identify to some extent with the desire and also conceive the object as good.<sup>8</sup> This is more generally one reason why restriction of desire cannot be fully voluntary, and justice, in so far as it involves suppression of desire, cannot emerge as something good. However, if desire is conceived as not being separate from reason, then reason can in principle affect desire, 'persuade'<sup>9</sup> it, and direct it towards proper objects. Nevertheless it is ultimately reason that has to reach a conception of the good that is not 'dictated' by desire, and thus reason has to govern human life. The involuntariness of wrongdoing can be associated with the notion that one's desires can come to be in conformity with the good.

However, since Plato seems to believe that desire can be affected by the body and other factors, and not solely by reason, then the soul's virtue and autonomy depends on the possibility that reason resists particular desires. Also that, in certain cases, we can act against the stronger urges. Reason's supremacy in the soul is related to its power, at times, to lead us in a direction different from the stronger desires, and in the long term to bring desires into agreement with it.

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<sup>8</sup> Gerson (2003) p. 107 has correctly maintained that as long as one's desires are one's desires one cannot avoid identifying with them to some extent. He argues that the self which is the subject of desires is the same as the self which is reason (p. 107). However Gerson seems to regard this identification as necessarily problematic. The embodied person according to Gerson is one and at the same time divided (p. 109). While Gerson maintains that the self is unitary he seems to regard the lower parts of the soul as completely separate from reason. He maintains that the parts of the soul are different principles of action, ultimate and sufficient explanations of action (pp. 100-1). While I agree with many points it seems to me that a unitary self is not compatible with fully separate parts of the soul. Gerson more generally seems to conceive the embodied soul as a self-contradictory entity. Opposition, in my opinion, always tends to be qualified, and the tendency of the whole is to resolve opposition and contradictions. Furthermore I believe that it is not problematic for the self to identify with desires or appetite, in so far as this identification is approved of and mediated by reason. One thus can identify with desire if one primarily identifies with reason.

<sup>9</sup> Inability to persuade themselves is a mark of the less virtuous characters. See 548b6-8 and 554c12-d3.

Still, it is not clear to me to what extent Plato believes reason is able to resist a persistent desire, without already being supported by passion and desire, or without being able to generate support from passion and desire.<sup>10</sup> In general if reason can oppose desire then this opposition presupposes that desire to some extent supports reason.<sup>11</sup> In Book 4 for example it is suggested that reason's success in confronting desire depends on spirit listening to reason, which itself is a form of passion.<sup>12</sup> Philosophers in Book 6 are said to be 'self restrained' because their desires in general are directed to intellectual pleasures (485d-e).<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, I am committed to the

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<sup>10</sup> One example that can, perhaps, be interpreted as a case where reason leads to action against desire is the philosopher's return to the cave. Such return is presented as a form of compulsion, but I think that the necessity (520 e1-3, 540b3: οὐχ ὡς καλόν τι ἀλλ' ὡς ἀναγκαῖον πράττοντας) that compels philosophers to descend into the cave is different from the necessity or compulsion of ordinary people, according to Glaucon's experience, when they have to suppress their desires and do what the law demands. In this case the philosopher's experience has to do with their commitment to justice (and ultimately their commitment to the good) and their knowledge of justice, which involves knowledge that justice is intrinsically (or necessarily) good (540d3-e2: ὅταν οἱ ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφοι...τῶν μὲν νῦν τιμῶν καταφρονήσωσιν...τὸ δὲ ὀρθὸν περὶ πλείστου ποιησάμενοι καὶ τὰς ἀπὸ τούτου τιμὰς, μέγιστον δὲ καὶ ἀναγκαιότατον τὸ δίκαιον, καὶ τούτῳ δὴ ὑπηρετοῦντές τε καὶ αὐξοντες αὐτὸ διασκευώρῃσωνται τὴν ἑαυτῶν πόλιν;)). Doing what is just in relation to their co-citizens, and fashioning the city in accordance to justice, can be seen as an expression of this commitment and a form of servitude to justice itself. However, in so far as this commitment is presented as being in opposition to desire and pleasure, it may still appear to be a form of constraint in relation to desire, whether it springs from philosopher's own reason or from external law.

<sup>11</sup> I am not referring here to the desire for the good.

<sup>12</sup> See also 431b-d, where it is argued that the many and manifold desires of the lower classes are restrained by the simpler desires of the ruling class, which are led by reason and true belief. Reason together with desire restrains the many desires.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph (1935) pp. 53-4, argues that we do not always act on the stronger desire, and that real contrariety exists between reason and desire, not between desires. Gerson (2003) p. 103 follows Joseph's earlier analysis and maintains that the conflict that Plato wants to establish in Book 4 is not a conflict between desires, rather a conflict between reason and desire. Also that the akratic and the self-controlled person is not someone who acts on the stronger desire. I am in agreement with the suggestion that Plato in Book 4 wants to distinguish between reason and desire, however, in many places (see 431b-d) the conflict in the soul is presented as a conflict between desires. Perhaps, in so far as a conflict can be presented as a conflict between desires we do not have direct and straightforward opposition in the soul. See also Nettleship's useful notes (Nettleship (1901) pp. 158-159): 'When Plato

thesis that Plato takes reason to be supreme in the soul, and prior to desire. Reason's priority perhaps makes it necessary to accept that reason, in certain cases at least, can be presented not solely as directing desire but also as, at least momentarily, blocking desire.

### Discussion of the remainder of the argument

In the remainder of the argument for the division of reason from thirst we do not see reason being in opposition to desire for the sake of justice, since this would make Socrates appear to be begging the question of whether justice can be voluntary and chosen as something good in itself. Reason's grounds for objecting to the satisfaction of desire for drink are not provided. However, I think that one is encouraged to assume that reason, on reflection, thinks that drinking is not conducive to health.<sup>14</sup> Such a simple example allows one to see that there are cases where one opposes one's desires not because one feels externally compelled to do so, but for the sake of one's well being. More generally justice in the soul is compared to health (444c6-445b4) and we are invited to restrain our desires for the sake of psychic health and not solely for the sake of bodily health.

The conflict that Socrates  
tries to establish is the conflict between a desire for and an aversion to, the same thing

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suggests that a difficulty might be raised on the grounds (apparently) that appetite or desire is for something good and therefore is never unqualified attraction to the particular object desired, he is on the point of passing from *epithumia* in this narrower sense, which is best conveyed by our word 'appetite' to *epithumia* in the wider sense of any desire, any consciousness of a want. Taking the word in this latter sense it is difficult to apply the opposition between reason and desire on which he bases his conclusions. In every desire there is an element of rational activity, and in the most reasonable direction of our activities there is an element of desire. So we may say that the real conflict is not between reason as such and desire as such, but between different kinds of desires, and accordingly in Book IX we find that each of the three forms of the soul has its own special *epithumia*'.

<sup>14</sup> Socrates allows for the possibility that thirst may be due to disease at 439d1.



(436b10: πρὸς ταῦτόν, 437a1: πρὸς τὸ αὐτό, 439b5-6: περὶ τὸ αὐτό) ‘drink’.<sup>15</sup>

The conflict does not concern any particular kind of drink or any particular drink. Rather, as I understand the passage, the fight concerns the kind ‘drink’.<sup>16</sup> Thirst is defined as a generic desire for drink (437d5, e4-6, 439a4-7), while in a similar fashion reason objects to drinking in general (439b3). An objector could perhaps try to interpret all cases of apparent opposition in relation to a particular object as not being strictly speaking in relation to the same thing. We may have a ‘pro attitude’ and an ‘anti attitude’ towards the same lemonade, but an objector might dismiss the case as irrelevant, for example, on the grounds that desire is for lemonade while one is averse to the fact that this particular lemonade is sweet. Furthermore, an aversion to lemonade would be in direct opposition to a desire for lemonade and not thirst as such. In this case opposition to thirst would be incidental, if only lemonade is available.<sup>17</sup> I think that we need to imagine a case, where the problem does not concern the availability of an object that can satisfy a desire in the proper way.<sup>18</sup> Rather we need a case where the doctor for example forbids drinking for a certain period of time and thus one should not drink anything. The example shows that one can be in opposition to one’s desires at their very basic character or their core.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See also Murphy (1951) p. 28, Lorenz (2006) pp. 30-31, and Anagnostopoulos (2006) p. 175. I believe that desires here are taken as referentially transparent. See Reeve (1988) p. 123.

<sup>16</sup> Compare with *Rep.* 475b4-6.

<sup>17</sup> It may be argued that since reason opposes drink as bad or unhealthy, both ‘unhealthy’ and ‘bad’ are different features of an object from ‘drink’. However, ‘bad/unhealthy’ and ‘drink’ are not connected incidentally: what makes something bad is exactly what makes it a drink and not a further feature in this case.

<sup>18</sup> See Bosanquet’s (1925) useful comments ad loc.: ‘The main argument would have been equally well supported if Plato had simply alleged as a fact that that desire can be restrained when its precise and full satisfaction is attainable’. ‘To use the kind of instance which he suggests, we cannot fairly say (so he contends), ‘I restrained my thirst’ if I was only offered dirty water which I do not like to drink. In such a case I did not squarely meet and baffle the thirst as such, i.e. the sheer craving for drink. I desired clean drink and that I could not get’. Bosanquet (1925) goes on to argue that ‘every counter-desire may be regarded as a modifying desire, and therefore Plato is ultimately taking a side in the psychological dispute, whether desire can be restrained by anything but desire. His point at present is that restraint of desire by desire is not genuine restraint at all, but restraint by ‘reason’ alone deserves the name. This is hardly consistent with the implication of 431d.’

<sup>19</sup> See Anagnostopoulos (2006) p. 175.

Socrates introduces an objection that threatens his argument. The objection concerns the specification of the object of thirst, which Socrates has defined as being for drink. The objector argues that the object of thirst should be specified as ‘good drink’. The objector’s grounds are that everybody desires good things: Πάντες γὰρ ἄρα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐπιθυμοῦσιν. Εἰ οὖν ἡ δίψα ἐπιθυμία ἐστί, χρηστοῦ ἂν εἴη εἴτε πώματος εἴτε ἄλλου ὅτου ἐστὶν ἐπιθυμία, καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι οὕτω (438a3-5). The objector’s reasoning is taken to be fallacious. The premise that everybody desires good things does not entail that thirst, having being defined as a desire for drink (437d5) is a desire for good drink. Socrates thus does not object to the premise that the objector uses, rather to the conclusion, namely that thirst as such should be defined as being for good drink.<sup>20</sup>

Why is the objection a threat to Socrates’ argument? It seems to me that the problem is that if the object of desire is defined as ‘good drink’ it would make no sense, according to the objector, to develop an aversion to it, since it makes no sense to develop an aversion towards something that is good. The good is by definition something that one cannot reject. Furthermore, I think that the objector tries to make it impossible for reason to think of good drink as bad. Even though Socrates does not say here that reason thinks of drink as bad, if an aversion toward something entails or

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<sup>20</sup> Many commentators, relying on this passage, have maintained that Socrates’ rejection of the objector’s reasoning involves or presupposes a partial rejection of the psychology of the earlier dialogues on Plato’s behalf. See Murphy (1951) pp. 29, Penner (1971) pp. 106-7, Irwin (1977) pp. 191-2, Irwin (1999) pp. 206-11, Lorenz (2006) p. 28. Anagnostopoulos (2006) p.172-3 argues that Socrates in this context is not rejecting the thesis that one desires what appears to one good, rather the thesis that all of one’s desires are for the real good, which in her opinion is the position of the earlier dialogues. Hoffman (2003) pp. 171-4 points out that Socrates does not argue against the premise that everybody desires good things. Also Carone (2001) pp. 107-48 does not understand the passage as involving a rejection of the thesis that we all desire the good. Moreau (1953) pp. 234-50, and more recently Pondopiddan Thyssen (1998) pp. 59-79 have maintained that Plato is not rejecting the psychology of the earlier dialogues. I am inclined to believe that Plato’s ultimate aim is not so much to reject the Socratic position, the substantial premises of which he accepts in the *Republic*, but rather to prevent a misinterpretation of this position.

involves thinking of something as bad, how could reason think of good drink as bad, without absurdity?<sup>21</sup>

It is I think important to clarify the potential objector's reasoning, in order to understand his identity. In my opinion, the potential objector is not assuming that thirst, as desire, is for the good and desires drink only in so far as it is good, as Socrates maintains in the earlier dialogues.<sup>22</sup> This would mean that the desire is subservient to reason and if reason indicates that drinking is good, desire is no longer for drink. Desire, in other words, desires drink conditionally, as long as reason permits it and desire does not confuse (in principle at least) goodness with drink. Drink is not the primary or essential object of desire rather its object is the good or things that are essentially good. It should also be noted that, according to my understanding of what Socrates says in the *Gorgias* (in particular 467c5-468e5), a particular desire for good drink strictly speaking is not what makes us not drink.<sup>23</sup> If reason decides that drinking is bad, the desire itself changes or disappears, and it no longer is a desire for drink. Therefore reason is ultimately responsible for our not drinking and not desiring, insofar as it is for drink.

The objector here assumes, as I think Callicles would do, that if one desires something then this something is (essentially or unqualifiedly) good.<sup>24</sup> Desire here

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<sup>21</sup> I am in agreement with Murphy (1951) p. 46: 'Plato is therefore using the phrase 'a good drink' as if it meant a drink such that both it itself and its total outcome are good or belong to what is good. In other words, Plato holds that if a desire were for a good drink, *to logistikon* would never oppose it'.

<sup>22</sup> I endorse in its basic lines the interpretation of 'Socratic psychology' in the *Gorgias*, the *Meno* and the *Lysis* propounded by Penner and Rowe in Penner (1991) and especially in Penner and Rowe (1994) and Penner and Rowe (2005).

<sup>23</sup> For an explanation of wrong action despite the fact that everybody desires the (real) good, see Penner and Rowe (1994) pp. 8-9.

<sup>24</sup> I am to a great extent in agreement here with Adam's (1965) comments *ad loc*, who detects a confusion between the apparent good and the real good on the objector's part. I quote Adam's remarks: 'Why should thirst be restrained? An objector might ask. You yourself Socrates hold, (1) that desire is always of the good; consequently (2) thirst is always the desire for good drink and (3) is therefore always good. The fallacy lurks in (2), for 'good' drink is ambiguous. If 'good' drink means drink which desire thinks good, then (2) is true; if it means drink which is in reality good (2) is not true desire cannot

does not desire its specific object in a conditional or qualified way. Desire does not need to change its object, because desire and pleasure is basically the criterion of what is good and not reason. Something is good insofar as it is desired. Desire would be for the good both according to Callicles and according to Socrates, but according to the former the good would be something dictated by desire, whereas according to the latter it would be dictated by reason. The difference between the role of reason and desire in specifying the nature of the good ultimately suggests a difference concerning the nature of the good. The objector makes no distinction, or no clear distinction, between what appears to be good and what is really good, between the good and pleasure. However, I should note that even Callicles would not argue that desire in general is for the apparent good, he would maintain that desire is in accordance to nature and indeed its object, pleasure, is objectively and really good since it is dictated by nature.

The imaginary objector in Book 4 perhaps assumes the identity of the good with the particular objects of the desire. If for example he assumes that all desire is for the good, and also at the same time that each desire is for a particular object (or for what it is: see 438a4-5) such as drink, food, etc, then identity of desires would entail identity of the good with drink, food, etc. Alternatively, all desire is taken to be for (really) good things, things that are essentially or intrinsically good. According to the objector, if one desires drink, drink is essentially good.

The reasoning perhaps can be presented as follows: one premise is that all desire is for good things (that is not provided, rather perhaps the objector derives from the thesis that everybody desires good things), another premise is that thirst is a desire and is for drink (that Socrates provides), from which it follows that since thirst is (identical to) a desire, and it is for drink, thirst is identical to a desire for good drink, and also correspondingly 'drink' is identical to 'good drink'. As I understand the argument, the objector does not deny that thirst is for drink, rather he assumes that drink is identical to good drink. Thus thirst can be defined as being both for drink and for good drink, since drink and good drink are the same.

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know what is good. We must therefore amend (2) by omitting 'good' for in reality it is sometimes good and sometimes bad to drink'.

The objector's reasoning becomes clearer if one looks at the way Socrates tries to deal with the objection. Socrates rejects the identity of the desire for good drink with the desire for drink, and also the identity of good drink with drink (438a7-b2). He assumes that since a desire is defined by reference to its object, identity of desires entails identity of objects, and identity of objects entails identity of desires. He suggests that 'good drink' is a complex object and a complex object requires a complex desire, not a simple one (439a4-7). In claiming that good drink is a complex object and not a simple one, he assumes that drinking is not essentially good. Good drink, drink that is good, is drink qualified or modified. Thus it turns out that goodness is not an essential property of drink in general, rather it is a *poiotēs*<sup>25</sup> (of drink) and when drinking becomes good it becomes *poion* (438e5-7, 439a4-7). In a similar way direction towards what is good is not something essential to thirst as a desire, rather it is something that happens to it. If drink were essentially or unconditionally good then indeed, it seems to me, 'drink' and 'good drink' would be the same thing. Also, the desire for drink would essentially be desire for the good and the same as the desire for good drink. Thus, if the two desires are not the same, and also drinking is not essentially good, then reason can be averse to drinking and be in opposition to the desire to drink.

Socrates' reasoning may be said to be correct, since 'desiring to drink' is not identical to 'desiring good drink' and also drink is not essentially good. However, the problem lies in Socrates' apparent recognition of thirst as a desire.<sup>26</sup> In other words,

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<sup>25</sup> The term is used for the first time in the *Theaetetus* (182a8-10) but we can see how its use develops in Book 4 in the *Republic*.

<sup>26</sup> Bosanquet (1925) p. 154 seems to be perplexed: 'Plato probably means that a desire can exist in the mind as a general desire, though it would be enough for his argument to say that in referring to it in the abstract we disregard its modifications'. Santas (2001) p. 124 and Anagnostopoulos (2006) p. 168, have argued convincingly that 'thirst as such' is reached through a process of abstraction. More specifically Santas (p. 124) rightly stresses that most of our desires are mixed with reason, while Anagnostopoulos, who follows Santas, suggests that thirst, constitutes the origin or basis and the core of a more complex attitude which is a genuinely executive desire (p. 175). However, they do not clearly state that thirst becomes combined with the desire for the good. For the latter view see Adam (1965) ad loc. It should also be noted that Socrates in the context of Book 4 does not make it clear that desire is mixed with reason.

while we can now come to realize that a desire for drink is logically distinct from a desire for good drink, a mere desire for drink may not exist in the soul, or rather it may not exist by itself.<sup>27</sup> Socrates does not exclude the possibility that thirst becomes qualified (437d7-e6). However, he does not clearly argue that thirst may pre-exist its modifications as a desire, or be in some sense simultaneous with them.

Perhaps room can be made for denying that thirst is a desire that can exist on its own in the soul. In other words, the objector here accepts the presence of thirst, and also its definition for drink, and more generally the definition of desire as being for whatever we might think we desire. On the grounds that everybody desires good things, the objector could have argued not that thirst is for good drink, but rather that thirst is not a desire. The objector furthermore could have asked what the object of desire is in its generic nature. He could have argued that desire is not (essentially) for drink, since desire in general tends towards what is really or essentially good and drink is not essentially good. Thus desire should be defined by reference to the good, which is the proper object of desire.<sup>28</sup> Desire can 'become' for drink, only derivatively and in a conditional way, when it becomes qualified by something that one may call 'thirst', and by a belief that drinking is good in the circumstances.

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<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, we may ask why Plato needs to postulate thirst in the soul. One reason of course is that without something like thirst as such he cannot discover straightforward opposition in the soul. On my understanding of Plato's psychology thirst is dependent on the desire for the good, and thus there is, properly speaking, only a desire for good drink. However, it may be argued that appeal to thirst may be necessary in order to explain a desire for good drink. In other words, insofar as a desire for good drink is taken to be 'partly' for (real) drink, and since drink is not essentially good, then perhaps it is somehow logically necessary to conceive of it as a combination of two components, which may or may not be desires.

<sup>28</sup> One can compare this with the discussion of knowledge. Socrates suggests that there is knowledge that can be defined as being perhaps of *mathēma* (438c6-8) but particular kinds of knowledge are for particular kinds of *mathēmata* (438c7-e9). It may be argued that knowledge itself is for the good itself (the *megiston mathēma*: 505a2), while particular kinds of knowledge are for particular kinds of goods (e.g. medicine is for health, etc). In an analogous way, particular desires are for particular goods and not exactly for the good itself, and still their origin is a desire for the good itself. I think particular kinds of knowledge also somehow depend in some way on knowledge itself. Shorey notes (ad loc.) that Plato does not want to complicate his logic with metaphysics. He also argues that the objective correlative of knowledge is a difficult problem. However, it seems to me that it becomes quite clear later that the objective correlative of knowledge is the good.

However, someone like Callicles wants 'desire' both to be essentially what he thinks it is, e.g. drink, pleasure, and also to be for the good. Thus the best available option is to distinguish two kinds of desires and their objects.

Socrates may agree with the objector, on the grounds that everybody desires good things apart from thirst there is also a desire for good drink in the soul.<sup>29</sup> He does not exclude the presence of such a desire, when one is thirsty. What he excludes is the identification of this desire with thirst. However, it is significant that Socrates does not suggest in this context that there is a desire for the good itself, despite the fact that he suggests that there is a desire for thirst itself. The existence of a desire for the good would imply that the good is an object that exists in its own right.<sup>30</sup> We do not know yet that there is something like the good itself apart from particular good things or kinds of good things. Therefore, one may think at this stage that the desire for the good is a desire that exists solely as a modification of other desires, presupposing them, and being dependent on them.

Furthermore, both the desire for the good and its object are not presented in opposition to particular desires such as thirst etc. Also the good is not clearly presented to be an object, which might stand in opposition to particular objects of desire. What is said to be in opposition to thirst is an aversion to drinking. Socrates does not argue explicitly that there is, in this case, an opposition between the desire for the good and thirst. Indeed there is opposition between the two desires if one assumes that drinking is objectively bad. However, I believe that the good is not yet taken to be something 'objective' and existing in its own right or having its own nature. Rather, it may be said to be relative to particular things and to one's desire for particular things.

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<sup>29</sup> I disagree with Murphy (1951) p. 49 who argues that the man who desires to drink desires just that and nothing further. Socrates does not say that there cannot be a desire for good drink and a belief that drinking is good. Rather he says that *in so far as* one is thirsty (καθ' ὅσον διψῇ) one solely desires to drink. Thirst itself here is one aspect in the soul and does not exhaust the soul qua desiring.

<sup>30</sup> I think that if Socrates wanted to distinguish not only drink from 'good' but also 'good' from drink, he would have argued that drink and good might be opposed.

Hence, while drink itself may not be (absolutely) good, drink can be or appear to be good in relation to appetite, as it may be bad to reason. In this case neither desire nor reason are true from the point of view of the other. Each part of the soul constitutes a different measure of the good. For instance, if thirst desires drink, it may also (even though Socrates does not directly say so) appear that drinking is good for the soul, and this appearance is true in relation to thirst. However, reason's aversion may also involve a judgement that drinking is bad, which is true from its point of view. Socrates does not exclude the presence of an appearance in the soul that drinking is good, as he does not exclude the presence of a desire for good drink. I should make it clear that both the appearance, and the desire for good drink do not belong to thirst as such. Rather, they are attached to thirst and depend partly on thirst.<sup>31</sup> In the course of the argument in Book 4 Socrates demonstrates that we may have an aversion to drinking and also that drinking can appear to be bad to reason when one desires to drink. He does not argue that it cannot or should not appear to be good from a different point of view. Similarly, the desire for the good can appear to depend both on reason's aversion and on thirst as well.<sup>32</sup> So I believe that the desire for the good is not associated with any part of the soul at this stage.<sup>33</sup>

However, the reader may infer that when reason is in opposition to appetite reason is right and drinking is bad. From the moment separate parts are distinguished in the soul the question arises, for whom reason is right. Since reason is defined as the part of the soul that looks at the interest of the whole soul (442c4-7), reason's point of view is the point of view of the whole; hence what reason says emerges as true for

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<sup>31</sup> See again Anagnostopoulos (2006) pp. 72-3. Nevertheless I am not in agreement with Anagnostopoulos insofar as she maintains that in desiring drink one desires the apparent good and not the real good (pp. 180-2).

<sup>32</sup> Thus Bosanquet (1925) p. 154 notes that 'Plato seems to urge that, as relatively speaking every object of desire is a good a desire for good is not *prima facie* an influence in conflict with desire as such, and (I suggest to complete his thought) any desire for good which could so conflict with or remould ordinary desire must have its source outside the region of desire proper'. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the desire of the good is basically one, even though it may acquire different qualifications.

<sup>33</sup> At any rate, the desire for the good is a characteristic of the whole. Unlike particular desires that are for particular things and cannot be attributed to the whole in an unqualified way, the desire for the good is something that in principle belongs to the whole in an unqualified way.



us.<sup>34</sup> If reason thinks that drinking is bad, then drinking may not be bad for appetite, but it is bad for the soul as a whole. Thus I think that in separating reason from desire, and in associating what reason approves or rejects with the good of the whole, Plato encourages the reader to reach a more objective conception of the good. The good may still be regarded as relative to the parts, and here we come to see that since the soul has different parts, it also may have different and conflicting points of view, as it has conflicting desires. But a point of view in the soul emerges as privileged and at the same time encompasses different points of view and rises beyond them. Thus, if by 'good' one means what is good for the person, or good for the soul as a whole, the desire for the good can be associated with reason, even though its nature is not really clarified.

Since it turns out that drinking is really bad for the whole or the person, a desire for good drink is false involving a false evaluation. If such a desire is false then perhaps reason can oppose it as false, in so far as such a desire persists in the soul. If, in other words, the good (of the whole) and drink are not merely different but also 'opposed' then there is no such thing as good drink in these circumstances. While both 'drink' and 'good' are each legitimate objects of desire, when drinking is bad for us, then a desire for 'good drink' is incoherent and problematic. A desire for good drink, however false, is not I think in direct opposition either to the desire for good or to an aversion to drinking. Such a desire can be opposed by reason, perhaps not completely or straightforwardly since it is still a desire for the good, but at least in so far as it involves 'drink' in the specification of its object.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> One may ask whether Plato's association of reason with the whole has been adequately defended. I think that Plato relies partly on the city-soul analogy and also he expects that as soon as reason is distinguished from appetite the reader will identify with reason.

<sup>35</sup> Penner and Rowe (2005) pp. 255-7 have maintained that Plato would recognize false or incoherent desires which are involved in wrongdoing. See also Penner and Rowe (1994) pp. 8-10. As far as I understand, while thirst itself is not false, and also the desire for the good itself is not false, their combination or mixture is illegitimate and involves contradiction since in these particular circumstances 'good' and 'drink' are incompatible and should not be combined. I also believe that it is this false desire in particular which accounts for our drinking and not thirst itself.

I wish to suggest that Plato in the context of Book 4 avoids defining the desires associated with the lowest parts of the soul as being for the good. Here then there is a case where one could argue that one would confuse the good with the particular objects of desire. More generally, in my opinion his aim is to help the audience reach a more adequate conception of the good, by showing that the lower parts of the soul may be in conflict with the good of the whole, or what is good from the point of view of the whole. We reach a more objective conception of the good by coming to see that the good of the whole is different from what the parts desire. It is not only different in the sense that it contains other 'goods' in addition, but also in the sense that it is not reducible to the objects of particular desires taken collectively or independently.<sup>36</sup> At the same time the need for restraining the part becomes clear. The non-reducibility of the good of the whole, which is more generally connected to the non-reducibility of the whole to the part, emerges through presenting the part in conflict with other parts.

If, however, we were able to fully conceive the good of the whole as not reducible to the parts, and if we could reach a more adequate conception of the good, then Socrates could have argued that while the whole is not reducible to the parts, the parts are dependent on the whole. Hence what is good for the part is not in conflict with the whole rather it presupposes what is good for the whole. A more adequate conception of the good perhaps would involve the assumption that the good of the whole depends on the form of the good and the good of the part depends on the good of the whole. More generally, both the whole and the part could be said to aim toward the good, and what is good for the part is essentially in accordance with the good of the whole and the form of the good. Thus if what is good for the part may appear to diverge from what appears to be good for the whole, then a desire for good drink, when drinking is bad for the whole, is false both in relation to the whole and also in relation to the part.

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<sup>36</sup> The fact that it is not reducible has to do with the fact that such *epithumiai* may be for conflicting 'goods' in general. However, I believe that particular desires are dependent on the desire for the good. Their dependence on the desire for the good entails that their objects can at least in principle form an ordered whole.

In conclusion, I wish to argue that Socrates does not clearly present thirst as being solely a component of a complex desire. Therefore it may look as though thirst itself is an independent desire that exists on its own and on a par with the desire for the good. According to my understanding of the argument, Socrates needs to postulate something like thirst itself, in order to specify the opposition in relation to the same thing. If the desire for good drink is a complex desire, and is what exists in the soul, strictly speaking there is not the direct and straightforward opposition that Socrates tries to discover in the soul in order to separate the parts. Rather we have to admit that the desire for drink always becomes qualified to some extent by the desire for the good.

More generally, the co-presence of the desire for the good with other desires in the soul necessitates that the desire for the good qualifies other desires, which in turn qualify the desire for the good. However, the combination of the desire and the good with other desires is problematic, insofar as the objects of particular desires are bad and lead to an incoherent mixture that needs, in some sense, to be dissolved and its components 'separated'. Such 'separation' of the desires is needed, whether one experiences conflict in one's soul or not, since their unity is problematic. It may be said that is better for one to conceive the lower element of the soul as separate from reason in so far as problematic combinations tend to be formed.

The achievement of the argument for the division primarily lies in the establishment of autonomy of reason in the soul, which paves the way for understanding its priority, and is supported by the notion of justice as the rule of reason. Moreover, the independence and priority of reason in the soul indicates that the human good is not to be identified with the objects of desires, as they are commonly or empirically understood, and that the nature of the good is to be established by reason. Thus more generally I think that the problem of the relation between reason and desire is intimately connected with the problem of the nature of the good.

## Chapter 6

### The desire for the good and action

In this section I shall discuss more extensively and attempt to make sense of Socrates' assertion in Book 6 that all souls desire the real good. Furthermore, I shall discuss the relation between knowledge, ignorance and right action and I shall make some remarks regarding weakness of will.

Socrates in Book 6 states that every soul pursues the real good, which is identified in this context with the form of the good:

Τί δέ; τόδε οὐ φανερόν, ὥς δίκαια μὲν καὶ καλὰ πολλοὶ ἂν ἔλοιντο τὰ δοκοῦντα, κἂν εἰ μὴ εἴη, ὅμως ταῦτα πράττειν καὶ κεκτῆσθαι καὶ δοκεῖν, ἀγαθὰ δὲ οὐδενὶ ἔτι ἀρκεῖ τὰ δοκοῦντα κτᾶσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὰ ὄντα ζητοῦσιν, τὴν δὲ δόξαν ἐνταῦθα ἤδη πᾶς ἀτιμάζει; Καὶ μάλα, ἔφη.

Ὁ δὲ διώκει μὲν ἅπασα ψυχὴ καὶ τούτου ἕνεκα πάντα πράττει, ἀπομαντευομένη τι εἶναι, ἀποροῦσα δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἔχουσα λαβεῖν ἱκανῶς τί ποτ' ἐστὶν οὐδὲ πίσκει χρῆσασθαι μονίμῳ οἷα καὶ περὶ τὰ ἄλλα, διὰ τοῦτο δὲ ἀποτυγχάνει καὶ τῶν ἄλλων εἴ τι ὄφελος ἦν, περὶ δὲ τὸ τοιοῦτον καὶ τοσοῦτον οὕτω φῶμεν δεῖν ἐσκοτῶσθαι καὶ ἐκείνους τοὺς βελτίστους ἐν τῇ πόλει, οἷς πάντα ἐγχειριοῦμεν; (505d5-506a2)

Socrates suggests in this passage that the good constitutes the aim of all action.<sup>37</sup> Failure to obtain the good and to be benefited from other things is attributed to ignorance of the good. As I suggested in an earlier section, Socrates in claiming that the soul desires the good, indicates the unity of the soul, which is expressed here in terms of unity of purpose. The passage here is strikingly similar to *Gorgias* 468a-b: Πότερον οὖν τὰ μεταξὺ ταῦτα ἕνεκεν τῶν ἀγαθῶν πράττουσιν ὅταν

<sup>37</sup> In my opinion the good is the aim of both 'internal' and 'external' action.

πράττωσιν, ἢ τὰγαθὰ τῶν μεταξύ; (...) Τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἄρα διώκοντες καὶ βαδίζομεν ὅταν βαδίζομεν, οἴομενοι βέλτιον εἶναι, καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον ἔσταμεν ὅταν ἐστῶμεν, τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔνεκα, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (...) Ἐνεκ' ἄρα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἅπαντα ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν οἱ ποιοῦντες.

The difficult question that this passage gives rise to is whether and how far it can be reconciled with Socrates' characterization of the lowest element of the soul as desiring merely drink and not good drink<sup>38</sup> and thus more generally with the apparent acceptance of good-independent desires in the soul in Book 4 (437d1-e5).<sup>39</sup> The passage contradicts the assumption that the lower parts of the soul, when they rule in the soul, dictate the end of action, whether weak action is concerned or not. It may be

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps any desire could be defined as being for a particular object and not for the good as long as its object can be in conflict with the good and normative reason.

<sup>39</sup> Commentators have tried to reconcile Book 6 with the division of the soul in Book 4 in different ways. According to Irwin (1977) p. 224 Socrates at 505e1 is not arguing that people pursue the good in all their actions (p. 224), rather that one would 'go to all lengths' for the sake of the good (p. 336). In my opinion this interpretation does not pay full justice to the similarity of the passage with *Gorgias* 468a-b. I am in greater agreement with the interpretation propounded by Kahn (1996). Kahn argues that one desires the real good and that the desire has to be understood as referentially transparent (Kahn (1996) p. 139 n. 14, p. 140, p. 244). However, Kahn accepts the existence of good-independent desires and more generally understands Socrates' claims in Book 6 as referring solely to the rational part of the soul (pp. 243-7). Kahn furthermore suggests that weak action does not count as action at all (p. 244, p. 254): 'behaviour against one's judgement as to what is best will (it seems) scarcely count as an action at all'. He further suggests that 'such behaviour may either be ignored or assimilated to ignorance. For if one's grip on the good, or the apparent good, is so weak as not to prevail in action, it cannot count as knowledge and is scarcely better than ignorance' (p. 254). On the other hand, Murphy (1951) p. 48 has suggested that when Plato says that we do everything for the sake of the good 'it cannot be intended as historical description but as a regulative principle which we all acknowledge and act upon in our saner moments'. On the other hand Anagnostopoulos (2006) p. 182-3 argues that while people do what they believe to be good, only philosophers' action is directed to the real good. Lesses (1987) pp. 147-61 has tried to reconcile Socrates' claim that we do everything for the sake of the good with the division of the soul and has argued that the lower parts of the soul possess beliefs concerning the good (p. 150-1), and that weakness involves a judgement that what one does is good but it is against reason 'all things considered' judgement (p.155). Carone (2001) (pp. 108-48) has maintained that we desire particular things qua good. She argues more generally that the lower parts of the soul have beliefs concerning the good and also that '*akrasia* does not occur since the soul has been made to believe at that time that what the lower part believes to be best is actually best 'all things considered'' (p. 123).

argued that the oligarchic man in Book 8 does what he does for the sake of money and not for the sake of the good (553d1-7). It may be said that he acts with the belief that money is good. Yet it appears that he aims at what appears to him good, i.e. money and not the real good, as Socrates seems to be suggesting here. And it is even more difficult to accept that the tyrannical man acts for the sake of the good.<sup>40</sup>

I suggested in the previous section that Socrates appears to claim in Book 4 that a desire for a drink is an autonomous desire in the soul. Furthermore, such desire appears to be on a par with reason and also with the desire for the good. It could be said thus that consistency with Book 4, and also perhaps with Book 8 cannot be fully obtained. Rather one has to recognize that to some extent in Book 6 Socrates adopts a different point of view. I think that this point of view is the point of view of the whole soul or of the person as a whole.

Furthermore, in this context Socrates has prepared his interlocutors for this point of view and more generally he has prepared them to accept that the form of the good is the ultimate end of action, and at the same time to recognize their ignorance of the good. The division of the soul in Book 4 has helped one to distinguish the good from the particular objects of appetite, and it indicated the irreducibility of the good of the whole to the good of the parts, even though it did not directly reveal its nature. However, in Book 4 the good did not emerge as something fully objective or non-relative yet and correspondingly reason's ignorance of the good was not revealed. At the same time we did not reach an adequate conception of the whole, and the soul as a whole.<sup>41</sup> However, the distinction between forms and particulars that has been drawn in the argument against the sight-lovers in Book 5 (476a1-480a13) has prepared Socrates' interlocutors to conceive the form of the good as something independent from and non-relative to particular good things or actions. Also it further undermined people's assumption that they know the good. Thus I think the reader has been prepared to accept that the good is something which exists itself by itself and also that he is ignorant of it.

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<sup>40</sup> Yet Plato indicates that the tyrannical character does not do what he wishes to do (577d10-e2).

<sup>41</sup> I am not able to determine the precise relationship between the form of the good and the good of the whole soul. I think that the good of the whole if it is not to be identified with the form of the good has to be regarded as dependent on the form of the good.

In stressing his own and our ignorance of the good, and in associating failure to derive benefit from things with this ignorance Socrates can be said to be stressing the inadequacy of his arguments and at the same time to be inviting the reader to further philosophical investigation both in order to comprehend the nature and function of the soul and the nature of its objectives. More specifically he invites his interlocutors and the reader to a life of philosophy. Indeed from the moment one genuinely realizes one's ignorance of the good, philosophy is the sole option. Only philosophy and the 'longer road' constitutes a path that genuinely leads to the (form of the) good, since shortcuts have turned out to be inadequate. If one does not accept the need of philosophical investigation for oneself one at least has to accept that in the ideal *polis* philosophers should rule and also that one has to make room for others to pursue such philosophical investigation in one's city. Thus in some sense, by stressing people's ignorance of the good, Socrates indicates that the philosophical life is the one which best fulfils human nature and helps it reach its objectives.

On the basis of Socrates' claims in Book 6 one has to accept that a desire for drink is not capable of generating action on its own. A belief that drink is good should not be regarded merely as something that coincides with action or with the desire that leads to action rather it has to be considered to be constitutive of the desire that leads to action. So the desire that leads to action is always a desire for good drink. Furthermore, resting on Socrates' claims that the good is the ultimate aim of human action one has to accept that the desire for the good is a desire that accounts for such a belief and is not exactly on a par with particular desires for particular things rather it is somehow prior to other desires. If the desire for the good were subordinate to other desires, their objects would constitute the ends of action and it should be said perhaps that we desire the good for the sake of other things and not vice versa. Thus particular desires that lead to action are dependent on the desire for the good and can be regarded as a species or parts of the desire for the good.

The priority of the desire for the good (as a desire for the form of the good) and also the position of the good as the ultimate aim of action can be interpreted as expressing the fact that if we did not desire the good in the first place we would not have other particular desires. Thus somehow the desire for the good is the cause of

other desires. Perhaps its priority can be interpreted as a normative claim. A desire for the good can be seen as something prior to other desires in the sense that it is what makes, or should make or in principle can make desires for particular things and their objects to form an integrated whole that can be rationally apprehended as such. Thus the desire for the good can be viewed as representing a desire or tendency for order and unity, or a potential for unity, that exist in all souls and characterizes them as wholes. This potential or tendency is inadequately or partially realized and manifested in most human souls. The priority of the desire for the good can also be interpreted as representing the fact that particular pursuits or desires are conditional on the overall desires and pursuits of the whole. What can be characterized as being desired and pursued unqualifiedly from the point of view of a part (if the part is conceived in abstraction or separation from the whole) is only wished or desired qualifiedly conditionally from the point of view of the whole, and a condition of its being wished or desired is somehow both that one takes it to be good and also perhaps that it is as a matter of fact good for the whole.

Hence, if my interpretation is correct, when one drinks 'bad drink', one as a whole does not do what one desires, since one never desires merely drink, rather one desires beneficial drink, drink that benefits or is going to benefit one. Assuming that one desires beneficial drink or good drink, it can be argued that one also (even if one does not know it) desires drink together with the form of the good, and not separately, and also one desires knowledge of the good. This is the case because Socrates seems to suggest that nothing can be beneficial without (knowledge of) the form of the good (505a6-b3, 505e5). Knowledge of the good is necessary not only in order to 'obtain' the form of the good but also to reap benefit from particular things or actions since participation in the good makes these things beneficial. Thus it can be said that in so far as one does not merely desire particular things, rather one more specifically desires to be benefited from the things that one desires, one somehow desires the form of the good and also knowledge of the form of the good together with these things.<sup>42</sup> Eventually, even though this sounds paradoxical, it may be said, if one also rests on

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<sup>42</sup> It may be argued that things become good or come to participate in the good due to their coexistence with knowledge (of the good) in the soul or if such knowledge is not obtainable, with philosophic virtue.



the *Gorgias* (468c),<sup>43</sup> that one as a whole desires the particular things one does or gets, both in so far as one takes them to be good and also in so far as they are really good. Perhaps for particular things to be really good it is necessary either that one has already knowledge of the good, or alternatively that they are conducive to knowledge and virtue, or at least that one desires them with the understanding that one's priority in one's life is acquisition of knowledge and virtue.

Now in arguing that a desire for good drink is the desire that leads to action, I do not mean to say that the lower parts of the soul have beliefs or appearances concerning the good as such. Rather, as I suggested earlier, for the belief or appearance that drinking is good and also for the desire for good drink reason's involvement is necessary. In other words, it is not the case that thirst itself can fully account for a belief that drinking is good, nor can it fully account for the desire for good drink. It would be perhaps the case that desire or even the body could account both for the desire for the good drink and also the belief that drink is good if somehow the desire for the good, or reason could be conceived as fully dependent on the desire to drink and thus it would be somehow 'caused' by thirst, and thirst more generally could be seen as somehow the exclusive source or cause of such beliefs and the desire for good drink.

Nevertheless I think that a belief or appearance that drink is good (or alternatively pleasant) and by consequence the desire for good drink may be said to constitute a rather mechanical and immediate response that one has when one is thirsty, and more generally such a belief or appearance tends to always accompany the feeling of thirst. Reason in this case does not really operate as a fully autonomous factor in the soul, and is mixed with appetite, or the pain appetite involves. Moreover,

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<sup>43</sup> Socrates in the *Gorgias* (468b-d) seems to move from indicating that a condition of our doing certain things is a belief that they are best (468b: οἰόμενοι βέλτιον εἶναι,) to the position that particular actions are wished when they are actually good and not merely believed to be good: Οὐκ ἄρα σφάττειν βουλόμεθα οὐδ' ἐκβάλλειν ἐκ τῶν πόλεων οὐδὲ χρήματα ἀφαιρεῖσθαι ἀπλῶς οὕτως, ἀλλ' ἐὰν μὲν ὠφέλιμα ἢ ταῦτα, βουλόμεθα πράττειν αὐτά, βλαβερά δὲ ὄντα οὐ βουλόμεθα. Τὰ γὰρ ἀγαθὰ βουλόμεθα, ὥς φης σύ, τὰ μήτε ἀγαθὰ μήτε κακὰ οὐ βουλόμεθα, οὐδὲ τὰ κακὰ (*Gorgias* 468c).

it looks as though appearances belong somehow to appetite since indeed they are inseparable from appetite in so far as they are mixed with it. In such cases indeed the soul is 'ruled' by appetite. Furthermore I think that resting on this case one may say that people desire the good for the sake of drink, and also that one desires the apparent good and not the real good, since either it can be said that something appears good to one because one desires it in the first place or alternatively one desires it solely because it appears good.

Reason in principle can separate itself from desire or appearances and be critical of them or oppose them and this perhaps happens to some extent in all souls. Socrates more generally indicates that one desires the real good and not the apparent good. He contrasts people's attitude towards justice with their attitude towards the good (505d5-9): 'And again, is it not apparent that while in the case of the just and the honourable many would prefer the semblance without the reality in action, possession and opinion, yet when it comes to the good nobody is content with the possession of the appearance but all men seek the reality, and the semblance (δόξαν) satisfies nobody here?' (trans. by Shorey). In the case of justice he indicates that many people are happy with appearances or convention. This passage suggests that one is satisfied with what is commonly believed to be just and appears to be just, even if one believes that justice is not just a matter of convention and one knows or is able somehow to think that what appears to be just may not be just.<sup>44</sup> People are interested solely in convention and they do not want to find out what justice (really) is because they are primarily interested not in being just but appearing just to others. In the case of the good, appearances and convention do not satisfy anybody rather one is looking for the reality of the good (505d7-9). One wants to have and to do and to believe what is really good and not just what appears to be good to one or to others. People are ready to reject appearances if they have reasons to think that they do not correspond to reality and also they try to reason concerning the good and try to find out what is

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<sup>44</sup> Shorey notes ad. loc: 'men may deny the reality of the conventional virtues but not of the ultimate sanction, whatever it is'. However it seems to me that καὶ <εἰ> μὴ εἶη suggests that people may come to think that there is reality in justice, and what is really just is different from what merely is agreed to be just, but they are not interested in this reality since they think that benefit is to be derived from appearing just and not being really just since they do not clearly recognize that justice has intrinsic value.

really good. However, Socrates suggests that people do not possess firm conviction (πίστει μόνιμῳ) concerning the good (505e3-5) and he associates failure to derive benefit from things or the knowledge with this lack of stable conviction (505e4-5). This I think indicates that one is eventually at the mercy of appearances. One may want to judge appearances but being deprived of grounds concerning what is good or not, one has necessarily to follow fleeting appearances.<sup>45</sup>

Right action presupposes that the belief that guides action be true. For instance, when one drinks the belief that drinking is good needs to be true. I think that there is a strong sense of 'true belief', according to which one can only have true belief only if one possesses knowledge of the good. If knowledge and virtue are what make other things good, it is the case that drink can be good only if one has knowledge.<sup>46</sup> This knowledge also 'makes' one's belief that drinking is good true. Hence I think that 'good drink' is not just drink that just happens to be beneficial overall. Rather it is drink that one also knows to be beneficial, possessing understanding of one's wider interests and that one chooses in the light of this understanding. More generally it can be said that one's beliefs are true when they rest on proper grounds. Thus the belief that drink is good is not true just because one happens to be thirsty and one cannot think of any reason not to drink. Rather the belief somehow 'becomes' true when it is informed by reflection and by correct considerations. In that case we should not longer talk about a mere appearance, rather about a rational belief.

Being ruled by reason as opposed to being ruled by appetite involves acting reflectively. Both when one is ruled by reason and when one is not, a desire for good drink and a belief that drinking is good are involved. What is different is the input that reason provides to action, since, when reason rules, the desire and belief that drives to action is informed by an understanding of one's identity and of what is in general good for one. More generally, I believe that the unity of the soul, and the fact that the soul desires the real good can be expressed by the fact that reason can not only

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. 519c2-3, where not properly educated people, unlike philosophers, are said not to have a single aim in their life to which all their actions must be directed.

<sup>46</sup> Knowledge is what makes things good in the *Euthydemus* (281b-e) and also in the *Meno* (87d-89a).

distance itself or separate itself from what appears to be good and reject appearances but also inform and modify appearances and the desires that are connected with them. Thus eventually the particular belief that drives a particular action will not be a mere appearance rather it will be qualified and justified by rational considerations.

As I previously suggested it may be argued that in reality one desires drink only conditionally, in so far as it is good, and what one desires unconditionally is the (real) good. However the immediate response to drink or the appearance that drink is good can be said to involve the assumption that drink is something unqualifiedly or unconditionally good or alternatively unqualifiedly pleasant. In this way it looks as though one desires drink unconditionally and drink exhausts the good or one's interests. It seems to me that this intellectual error corresponds to what Plato regards as the greatest or more fundamental ignorance, which can be characterized as a state of 'dreaming',<sup>47</sup> and involves confusion or failure to distinguish between the forms and their likenesses, sensible particular things (476c7-d2). It can be associated with the mistake of the sight-lovers, who think that certain particular things or kinds of things 'are' beautiful, in other words that they are unqualifiedly or essentially beautiful (479a5-8).<sup>48</sup> In an analogous fashion it can be said that the immediate or unreflective response to the object of desire or to the pleasure derived from this object involves the assumption that what one desires is unqualifiedly good<sup>49</sup> and this ignorance to a great extent accounts for one's commitment to the object of desire that one pursues as if it is one's end.

This fundamental mistake causes two associated problems. One problem is that in so far as one confuses the good with the wrong kinds of things, and one more generally fully identifies oneself with certain objects or desires, one will never manage to direct oneself towards the real good, since one does not realize one's ignorance of the good and also one will never manage to acquire knowledge of what one truly or ultimately desires. Furthermore, one cannot derive benefit from particular things. One's beliefs concerning particular things can never be true in so far as they

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<sup>47</sup> For Plato's use of the contrast between dreaming and waking see Gallop (1971) pp. 187-201.

<sup>48</sup> Here perhaps it could be said that the confusion Socrates seems to talk about involves a false identification of a form with its instances.

<sup>49</sup> Compare with Aristotle's *De Anima*, 433b 8-10.

involve the assumption that certain particular things or kinds of particular things are intrinsically good, or beautiful or just. Philosophers on the other hand avoid these fundamental mistakes. On the one hand they do not believe that particular actions are essentially or intrinsically good or just, on the other hand they avoid relativism by recognizing that there are objective non-sensible standards of beauty, justice and goodness. They try to reach objective and non-sensible standards of goodness beauty and justice and measure particular actions or things or appearances by reference to these standards.

I think that here one can talk of an intellectual error and also ignorance because possession of knowledge or at least the kind of knowledge that characterizes philosophers is able to protect one from this mistake.<sup>50</sup> Yet, it can be said that this kind of 'ignorance' or confusion is encouraged by bodily pleasure and pain and desire. One's in other words immediate response to bodily pleasure and also pain in particular is to see these things in the wrong way. Philosophers or reflective individuals are not immune to this mistake.<sup>51</sup> This inclination or tendency towards falsehood cannot be fully avoided. However, I think that it can really be called 'ignorance' because the body is not fully responsible for this problem, rather the soul as well, and more generally because knowledge and understanding can modify one's response and more generally affect one's desires. However, I believe that such an immediate response can in principle at least modified by one's knowledge. More generally since I believe that Plato is committed to the unity of the soul I think that the fact that one acquires knowledge does not mean that one part of the soul keeps thinking in a different way still 'believing' somehow that its objects are unconditionally good or pleasant, and still being unconditionally committed to these

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<sup>50</sup> Rowe (2007) p. 209 suggests that the knowledge that characterizes philosophers, or lovers of beauty in the context of the argument in Book 5 (476a1-480a13) basically lies in the distinction between forms and particulars.

<sup>51</sup> See also *Phaedo* 83c5-9 where it is argued that when one experiences strong pleasure or pain one will attribute truth to these feelings and their objects: "Ὅτι ψυχὴ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου ἀναγκάζεται ἅμα τε ἡσθῆναι σφόδρα ἢ λυπηθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ καὶ ἡγήσθαι περὶ ὃ ἂν μάλιστα τοῦτο πάσχει, τοῦτο ἐναργέστατον τε εἶναι καὶ ἀληθέστατον. However, philosophers are said to avoid intense pleasures, pains and desires exactly for this reason since they fear the greatest evil which is exactly the formation of false beliefs in the soul.

objects, as if one really has two minds. Rather somehow the belief and the desire are placed in a given context and become qualified or modified because one possesses knowledge.

Moreover I wish to suggest that saying that particular actions are not (essentially) good or just or beautiful means that these actions are not just or good themselves. However, this does not mean that there is absolute relativism and flux in the sensible world or that particular actions or things, such as 'drinking' cannot be good or just in any way. This would mean that Plato would accept a rather radical dualism both in the world in general and also inside the soul, and certain things should not be desired at all. More generally human action and practical thinking would be of no value. I believe that ultimately what can make particular things 'truly' just or good is the relationship they may have with the forms and (normative or objective) reason. The goodness or justice or pleasantness of certain things depends on particular circumstances, and is not something absolute, and in a similar way the truth of our beliefs depends on correct perception of circumstances. However, the characters of things also depends on the forms, which allows things to have a share in being, and truth, and in a similar manner knowledge of the forms allows particular beliefs to have a share in truth. In so far as people's beliefs involve confusion between particulars things and forms they correspond to the state of 'dreaming' and they cannot be said to be true, even though they may not be exactly false. Belief concerning particular things can be true only if it is accompanied with knowledge of forms, or less ideally with recognition of the independent existence of forms. Particular things in general can acquire truth and intelligibility if they are examined in association with forms.

The issue of weakness of will is one I shall not deal adequately with. I have attempted to defend an interpretation of Plato's psychology in the *Republic* according to which the soul is taken to be essentially unitary and a rational entity that desires the good as whole. I am not sure how far weakness of the will can be accommodated to such an account. My account does not preclude both the possibility and also the experience of conflict in the soul. However since the soul does not involve separate

or autonomous parts, I believe that the tendency and desire of the soul is to resolve conflict and contradiction even though it may fail to do so.

The weak person is commonly conceived as one who acts against his judgement concerning what is best to do in the circumstances. The account of desire I have provided excludes the possibility of viewing the weak person as acting without a belief that what he does is good. I have furthermore tried to suggest that such a belief is necessary for action and also it presupposes reason's involvement. Perhaps the weak person can be understood as someone who holds contradictory or conflicting beliefs concerning what is good. Knowledge of the good in principle precludes conflict and is able to resolve contradictions. Thus more generally weakness reveals not solely a deficiency of character but also a cognitive deficiency and ignorance, ignorance of the good, which characterizes the soul as a whole and by implication reason and not solely a lower part of the soul. One may further ask whether a cognitive error should be considered to be something that occurs at the moment of action, so that still reason and knowledge can be regarded as overcome by passion or whether it generally indicates a person whose reason is inadequately developed. Plato's description of philosophers in Book 6 suggests that he is more willing to accept that at least in principle reason can develop in such a way that it cannot be overcome by passion.<sup>52</sup> It may be further argued that such development of reason both presupposes and also involves a development of character, which excludes weakness.

I wish also to suggest that the kind of conflict Plato is primarily interested in is a conflict between on the one hand certain 'good' beliefs one has concerning what is just, fine and good, which one has acquired through custom and education, and on the other hand inclination that is due to desire, pleasure and pain. Thus more generally one can view the conflict in the soul as a conflict between 'nature' and 'law' or custom.<sup>53</sup> Resting on observation, one can find two attitudes or tendencies in the majority of people, one being to endorse law and society and the other to follow inclination, for the sake of pleasure. One tendency may prevail in some circumstances

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<sup>52</sup> See 485d-e.

<sup>53</sup> The contrast between *phusis* and *nomos* is suggested in Socrates' first speech in the *Phaedrus* (237d). Similarly it is suggested in Book 10 of the *Republic* where the superior element in the soul is said to be prepared to follow law (604b4-5).

and the other in others. Plato in Book 4 tends to present desire as irrational and brutish, and also naturally opposed to law, but I tried to suggest that this is not strictly speaking the case. Desire and inclination in general are not in essential opposition to reason and law. Ideally in the soul of the philosopher inclination or desire is not going against what is objectively good or just. On the other hand, the beliefs that one has, which reflect one's endorsement of law and society and objective reason may not be sufficiently ingrained or supported by reasoning. These beliefs thus can be easily subverted by desire whether it can be said that one acts still believing that one's action is bad or not. However, the more one's beliefs constitute firm convictions and also the more one is able to justify them and endorse them reflectively the less prone one is to act against them. Simultaneously one is less inclined to regard the object of desire as something good or pleasant. But I think that in so far as one is able to see the desire and its object as something 'bad' the desire itself cannot persist in the soul, unless one is talking of certain basic biological urges which indeed one cannot avoid.

Plato wants to encourage a conception of virtue and justice according to which justice is not merely something good, or good in some respects of it and not good in other respects, but rather something intrinsically and necessarily good, and vital to the self. Simultaneously injustice has to appear to one as something unacceptable in every respect. Ideally justice and virtue is tied up with one's conception of the good and the self in such a way that one is not willing to sacrifice against any other thing ordinarily taken to be 'good'.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore I think that to conceive justice in this way involves also to be committed to justice and also to do what is just and to avoid by all means what is unjust. Thus possessing such a conception of justice as something intrinsically good entails that one is good and virtuous. Perhaps understanding the value of virtue ideally excludes that other things or actions, in so far as they are not compatible with justice, appear to be good or

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<sup>54</sup> I think that this conception of justice and virtue, as well as knowledge involves a conception of it as something that possesses incommensurable value. In other words, the value of virtue, justice and goodness cannot be placed under a common standard with other things and compared to the value of other things. Rather justice and virtue and knowledge constitute the measure or standard by reference to which other things can be compared to each other and accordingly chosen or rejected. More generally the value of other things are relative to justice, virtue, and knowledge while the value of virtue is not relative.



attractive in any way. Alternatively, if it is impossible for a human being to avoid false appearances or opposite inclinations completely, false appearances have no impact on the person.

To believe that certain just or honourable actions are good does not necessarily entail that one believes that justice is necessarily good. In fact Plato seems to believe that the majority of people, even people who are normally considered to be good and virtuous, are committed to the appearance of justice, and not its reality because they do not see justice as something intrinsically good rather they regard it as something relatively good.<sup>55</sup> What most people pursue as good is not justice itself, but rather being approved by other people. Also they seek to avoid condemnation or reproach. Thus they have to do what is agreed to be just, even if it is not really just, and also more generally in so far as others are not watching they may fail to do what is good and just. It is not clear to me whether one needs to be necessarily a philosopher in order to be able to view justice as something intrinsically good. However, it is philosophers that Plato primarily expects to reach or approach such a conception of justice, being able to apprehend the relationship between the form of justice and the form of the good. I think that this relationship must be conceived as necessary. There is no aspect or point of view from which (the form) of justice can appear not to be good. If one comes to perceive this relationship, one will also conceive doing particular just actions as somehow necessarily good.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> See 505d5-7.

<sup>56</sup> One may compare with *Phaedrus* 254b-c: 'and now they are close to the beloved, and they see the beloved's face, flashing like lightning. As the charioteer sees it, his memory is carried back to the nature of beauty and again sees it standing together with self-control on a holy pedestal; at the sight it becomes frightened, and in sudden reverence falls on its back, and is forced at the same time to pull back the reins so violently as to bring both horses down on their haunches, the one willingly, because of its of resistance to him, but the horse of excess much against its will' (trans. by Rowe (2005)). The charioteer seems to come to perceive the relationship between beauty and self-control in a way that makes it impossible for him to allow the bad horse to offend his beloved.

## Appendix: The division of the soul in Book 10

I wish to discuss in brief Plato's examination of the soul in the context of his discussion of poetry in Book 10. The division of the soul in Book 10 may appear to undermine my account of Plato's conception of the soul. Socrates speaks of an inferior element in us which poetry addresses and appeals to and which disregards or opposes 'measures', reason and 'law'. According to my understanding of Plato's conception of the soul there is no 'part' of human nature that is in essential opposition to reason and thus there is no part that is not amenable, at least to some extent, to reason, and 'measures'. Furthermore, it might be argued that in Book 10 Socrates appears to deny that knowledge can protect the soul from the negative influence of poetry, since there is an element which operates independently from one's reason and knowledge and which poetry and appearances have their effect upon. I shall attempt to argue that in Book 10 Plato is not denying the supremacy and power of knowledge and 'measures' in the soul. Furthermore, I shall suggest that the division and conflict in the soul that Socrates detects in Book 10 to a great extent is a symptom of a character whose reason has not been properly developed.

In Book 10 there are two divisions of the soul. The first argument examines the soul in relation to cognition (602c4-603b6), while the second argument examines the soul in relation to action (*praxis*) (603b7-605c3). As far as the first division is concerned, Socrates detects opposition and conflict in relation to sight. The opposition is expressed in terms of opposite beliefs (603d1-2). As far as action is concerned opposition may be said to concern pleasure and pain. Socrates clarifies that action apart from belief concerning whether one fares well or not also involves pleasure and pain (603b5-9 and 606d1-3). More specifically, the argument examines the soul in relation to grief (603e5 ff). Grief in its objective dimension can be perhaps identified with the *pathos* at 604a10.<sup>57</sup> In the first division Socrates discovered an element in us

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<sup>57</sup> The *pathos* here is presented as something external having an objective dimension, and thus it may involve perhaps the death of one's son. Adam (1902) p. 410 notes that *pathos* here represents the

that puts its trust in measurement and another one that opposes it and forms beliefs that contradict measurement (603a1-7). In the second division Socrates discovers a lower irrational, or unreasoned element that draws one toward recollection of one's suffering (604d7-9) while the best element is said to be willing to follow the precepts of reason and law (604d4-5). Socrates regards the two lower elements that the two divisions yield as being analogous to each other (605a7-c3). Socrates in the context of the second division does not describe explicitly the opposition in terms of opposite beliefs or desires, but the terms he uses suggest that the opposition may be said to involve both (605b7-8, 604d7-9, 606d1-3).<sup>58</sup>

As the first division of the soul has not been exactly a division between sight and reason, even though reason can be said to be to some extent in opposition to sight, also the second division does not appear to be at least solely a division between sorrow or pain as such and reason, even though the decent character is said to oppose his grief (604a1-2).<sup>59</sup> Rather the lower element represents an attitude towards one's grief or what happened to one, an attitude of immoderate grief or sorrow.<sup>60</sup> The depiction of the lower part as being lazy, indignant and a coward allows Socrates to associate it with a type of immoderate character, which the poets imitate because they

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'affliction' objectively understood. Halliwell (1988) p.138 notes that 'πάθος covers both the objective suffering and the corresponding emotion'.

<sup>58</sup> The two lower parts of the soul in the two divisions are not identified rather they are presented as analogous or similar (605a9-10). A further question that arises is whether the parts in Book 10 are to be identified with the three elements that the reader is familiar with from the earlier Books of the *Republic*. The superior element in both cases is the same and identified with the *logistikon* (605b3). However, it should be noted that the superior element here is associated with shame (604a5-6). Hence it may appear to involve the spirited part. I think that the lower element in the context of the discussion of poetry represents pleasure and pain and in general whatever tendency one may have that goes against law and virtue, while the superior element represents one's endorsement of law.

<sup>59</sup> Initially we are presented with reason together with law on the one hand and grief or the *pathos* on the other hand as two external 'objective' factors that drag the person in opposite directions (604a9-10). In this passage the opposition does not appear to be something due to the soul, having its origin in the soul itself. However, later Socrates presents the opposition as internal, stating that there is a part in us which draws us towards the pathos while another one which follows reasoning (604d3-9).

<sup>60</sup> See also Murphy (1951) p. 241. Murphy argues that 'it would seem then that in this case, ... that to which poetry appeals is not our emotions in general but only what Plato considers detrimental emotions, such as superfluous pity or fear, and our tendency to indulge emotions excessively'.

can be easily imitated and easily understood by their audience (604e-605a). Alternatively the lower element can be seen as a tendency or inclination towards an immoderate emotional response, while the superior one represents a tendency or propensity towards moderation and restraint and one's willingness or readiness to follow the precepts of society. The lower part is not exactly a blind attitude towards one's suffering. Rather it involves an exaggerated and unreflective evaluation of what happened to one.

It seems to me that the lower part represents one's unreflective response to the loss of one's son, or alternatively a desire one has to indulge in an uncritical unreflective response. Such response to what happened to one indeed represents to a great extent one's immediate unreflective attitude towards one's affliction. As Murphy notes: 'Plato seems to be writing of this φαῦλόν τι as of something that we ought to try to get rid of; it does not then consist in sense and emotion, but in undesirable attitudes to them, or in the states which τὸ λογιστικόν assumes through lack of intelligent control by constant attention to ideals and standards'.<sup>61</sup> I agree with Murphy and I believe that the lower element here, in the context of the discussion of poetry, and in so far as it is not to be identified with pain and pleasure or emotion as such, is not an irreducible and unavoidable factor in human nature, rather it represents a tendency for excess or an excessive emotional reaction that is present in the average non well-educated person. More specifically to a great extent the presence of conflicting attitudes in the soul indicates a person whose character is not adequately developed and is unstable.<sup>62</sup>

Socrates makes it quite clear that the 'decent' person (603e4: ἀνὴρ ἐπιεικής) he is talking about is not exactly perfect. His imperfection does not lie in the fact that

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<sup>61</sup> See Murphy (1951) p. 241.

<sup>62</sup> I should also note that Socrates does not say that both attitudes are strictly speaking simultaneous. Rather the person is characterized as having the two attitudes at different times (604a1-7). More generally excessive emotion is not compatible with reasoning, as if it would be the case if one had two minds. Rather when emotion becomes excessive the λογιστικόν or in other words our reasoning capacity is 'destroyed' (605b3). What may be simultaneous with reason and resist reason to some extent is the tendency to indulge emotion.

the loss of his son saddens him. It is impossible for one to fully avoid this sorrow (603e8-9).<sup>63</sup> Rather I think that this imperfection involves inadequate internalisation and understanding of virtue and the standards or norms of society that can be associated with virtue. The defect does not solely concern a separate 'irrational' part of the soul rather it concerns one's superior element as well. The fact that the 'gentleman' tends to fight his grief when he is watched by his peers and not when he is alone indicates the decent person's insufficient internalisation of the law and reason (604a1-8) and more generally his passivity. I think that Plato describes law and reason as external forces exhorting the person to restraint (604a9-10) exactly because the person has not fully internalised the values of society. Also perhaps in order to suggest the passivity of the person in relation to the struggle in his soul, a struggle that he is unable to fully resolve due to lack of adequate intellectual training and understanding of the true nature and value of virtue.

The decent character does not oppose his excessive sorrow or his desire to cry itself, as something bad itself. He tends to think that it is bad only when he is among his peers (604a1-4), a fact that indicates that he is primarily interested not in virtue as such and the condition of his soul, but rather in the way he is viewed by others.<sup>64</sup> Simultaneously it indicates that the person is not in possession of adequate reasons or grounds to address his grief and the assessment of his circumstances that underlies his grief. I believe that the fact that the superior element in the soul is associated with shame (e.g. 604a6) points to the same direction, since it may be said that what primarily restrains this person is another emotion, in particular an emotion that is operative and effective primarily when one is watched by others. Socrates provides a reasoning that justifies custom or law and which encourages one to restrain one's grief and indignation not solely when one is in front of others but also when one is by oneself (604b5-d1). This reasoning involves the assumption that that it is best to keep quiet in misfortunes, both because ultimately one cannot not know what is good or

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<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless as Plato has argued in Book 2 (381a4-5) a virtuous soul will be least disturbed and altered by any external affection (ψυχὴν δὲ οὐ τὴν ἀνδρειοτάτην καὶ φρονιμωτάτην ἥκιστ' ἂν τι ἔξωθεν πάθος ταραξείεν τε καὶ ἀλλοιώσειεν;).

<sup>64</sup> Compare also with 606c5-7: one restrains the comic or clown in oneself because one is afraid of the reputation of buffoonery.

bad in such things, in other words whether they are really misfortunes, and also because grief and exaggeration contributes to nothing, rather it impedes one from deliberating about what happened to one, and from getting used to healing oneself. However, this reasoning is not clearly introduced as something that the person is able to make for himself. The superior element of the person is presented as being responsive to it and willing to endorse it (604d4-5).

I think that Socrates allows that the best element in the decent man is not in possession of adequate reasons so that it may oppose false assumptions and restrain grief. It may be argued that the fact that a lower part of the soul is presented as irresponsible to reason and reasoning does not show that people's emotions in general are irresponsible to reasoning and persuasion cannot affect and moderate them. The emotions encapsulate an evaluation of the situation and can be altered to a great extent if such evaluation is modified. Perhaps it may be argued that the fact that the person is only partly amenable to reasoning indicates an inadequately developed character and inability to consider one's misfortune from a wider point of view.

Socrates goes on to suggest that poetry has the power to harm even 'decent people' apart from the very few (606c5-8). That the best among us are not so virtuous after all is suggested by Socrates' remarks concerning the best characters' attitude towards poetry. At 606a7-b8 Socrates argues that 'the best element in our nature, since it has not been properly educated by reason, or even by habit, then relaxes its guard over the plaintive part, inasmuch as this is contemplating the woes of others and it is no shame to it to praise and pity another who, claiming to be a good man, abandons himself to excess in his grief; but it thinks this vicarious pleasure is so much clear gain, and would not consent to forfeit it by disdaining the poem altogether' (trans. by Shorey). Socrates continues that 'few are capable of reflecting that what we enjoy in others will inevitably react upon ourselves'. What we see here is that the 'best' part in us, due to inadequate training engages in a wrong reasoning concerning both the benefit and also the harm of poetry and because of this reasoning it abandons control of the 'lower' element. In other words, the person abandons rational control on the one hand because he thinks that poetry poses no harm to him and his reputation, and on the other hand because he thinks that he is going to gain innocent pleasure from doing so. Both assumptions are false.

This passage makes it clear that tragic performance is dangerous because its pleasure presupposes abandonment of rational control or reflection and it habituates us to abandon ourselves to emotive unreflective reactions. Pleasure in poetic performance is considered to be spurious because it is taken to require abandonment of critical thinking and is not compatible with the presence of critical thinking, since critical thinking would find most of what is said or acted as false and inappropriate. I think Plato is not arguing that one can enjoy poetry thinking that what the poets say are falsehoods. One cannot enjoy appearances knowing or believing that appearances are somehow false. Rather one enjoys appearances only insofar as one believes them and regards them as constituting realities or alternatively, as long as one thinks that they are true, adequate depictions of reality. If people thus enjoy poetry 'knowing' somehow that what the poets say might be false, this 'knowledge' is suppressed. This suppression of disbelief and more generally of one's critical thinking may be said to involve a form of self-deception. However, it does not amount to the presence of a straightforward contradiction in the soul, or more specifically to the presence of contradictory beliefs that one knows that they are contradictory. The presence of one's belief that what is said is false would destroy one's pleasure. Plato assumes that what we are primarily committed to is the good, and in cognitive terms it is truth or reality.

I think that Socrates here is not contradicting his earlier claims that ignorance and falsehood are involuntary.<sup>65</sup> One cannot accept falsehoods in the soul knowing that what one accepts is false and also knowing that one is forming false beliefs. The good character may have a notion that what the poets say is false, but he does not believe that in abandoning reflection he allows false beliefs to intrude in his soul or more generally that he does any harm to his soul whatever. His suppression of disbelief and also his abandonment to emotion is due to the fact that he thinks that there is no harm to the soul and also that he is going to derive some sort of benefit in the form of pleasure. But it may be argued that at a deeper level the person does not really believe that the poets say falsehoods. His readiness to sympathize with the

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<sup>65</sup> Falsehood and ignorance are presented as involuntary at 382a1-b5, 412e8-413a8, and 589c6-7.

tragic hero indicates that he is inclined to think that the hero's reaction is appropriate. Nevertheless he is not able to detect that he possesses in his soul contradictory beliefs. Socrates tries to unmask the contradiction by arguing that the praise that the decent character reserves for the poet is problematic (605d7-e5).

Poets according to Plato are the mouthpieces of society. Poets are said to imitate things as they appear (598b1-4). But they do not imitate things as they appear to them or to wise people. Rather Socrates argues they imitate things as they appear to the multitude or the masses (602b1-3). The poem's appeal and the fact that its audience is persuaded is due to a great extent to the fact that the audience already believes that what the poets say is true for the most part. Socrates distinguishes the decent man who restrains his sorrow in front of others from the multitude (604e-605a), or from women (605d7-e1), but it turns out that the 'decent' man's values are not so different from the values of the masses after all. More generally Plato seems to believe this person's attitude towards his emotions reflects conflicting values in society in general, which characterize even its superior members. Society forbids mourning in public but it praises poets who depict people mourning in public and it also allows its members to indulge in excessive emotional reactions in the context of poetic performance. I think that Plato in the *Republic* would interpret this as indicating the presence of incoherent values and not as a policy that ultimately aims at making restraint of emotions easier in the long term by allowing emotional energy to be released in a safe context.

Janaway (1995) has argued that poetry poses a danger for the soul since 'however reflective we are, however governed by reason, however desirous of the good, we still cannot resist feeling a pleasure in tragic drama, which arises out of an identification with the character's emotional situation' (p. 150). He further suggests that 'aesthetic distance, then feels like a safe distance, but it is not. Indeed it is not even a true distance, because, while on the rational level we know the fiction for what it is and deliberately reckon on benefiting from harmless pleasure taken in it, on a less discriminating level we feel in an involved way emotions concerning the fictional situation'. Because the psyche is split we can be 'in' the drama, even while we claim to be appreciating it from 'outside' (p. 152). I am not in complete agreement with Janaway's interpretation because it does not pay full justice to the text. Socrates is not



arguing that critical distance and reflection in general cannot protect someone from poetry. He reproaches people's attitude to a great extent exactly because they do not keep critical, reflective distance, for the sake of pleasure. The ultimate reason for this behaviour is that people do not understand the corruptive influence of poetry. Socrates suggests at the beginning of Book 10 that poetry does not corrupt those who possess knowledge of its real nature as an antidote (595b5-7).<sup>66</sup> Ultimately people are vulnerable to the corruptive effects of poetry because they do not possess adequate knowledge of 'measures' or standards, by reference to which they can evaluate and reject what the poets say. A person who is in possession of understanding is able to reject appearances as false. More generally he is able to protect his soul from appearances or excessive and false emotions. I think that such a person would also find no pleasure in poetry in so far as it involves falsehoods.

In the first division of the soul in Book 10 (602c3-603b4) it may appear that Socrates is arguing that knowledge of 'measures' or standards is unable to protect the soul from appearances, since there is a φαῦλον element in us which forms beliefs independently from measures, and rational standards. I think that Socrates wants to warn against appearances, and to show that they are not so innocent as one may think, in particular one who thinks that one possesses knowledge, even though one does not really possess such knowledge. But he does not want to deny the 'power' of measures and reason to assist the soul in relation to appearances so that appearances do not 'rule' in it.<sup>67</sup>

One may argue that appearances pose no threat to the soul because they do not involve belief. Socrates assumes that appearance entails belief. On these grounds he divides the soul into two parts (602e4-603a2). Socrates' argument is compressed. He argues that since the opposite appearance can coexist in the soul when reason has measured and indicated what is the case (602e4-6), and since we cannot believe

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<sup>66</sup> Compare with 605c6-7.

<sup>67</sup> See 602d6-e2: Ἄρ' οὖν οὐ τὸ μετρεῖν καὶ ἀριθμεῖν καὶ ἰστᾶναι βοήθειαι χαριέσταται πρὸς αὐτὰ ἐφάνησαν, ὥστε μὴ ἄρχειν ἐν ἡμῖν τὸ φαινόμενον μείζον ἢ ἔλαττον ἢ πλεον ἢ βαρύτερον, ἀλλὰ τὸ λογισάμενον καὶ μετρήσαν ἢ καὶ στήσαν; Πῶς γὰρ οὐ; Ἀλλὰ μὴν τοῦτό γε τοῦ λογιστικοῦ ἂν εἴη τοῦ ἐν ψυχῇ ἔργον.

opposite things about the same things with the same element (6028-9), the part that forms beliefs in accordance with measures is different from the one that disregards measures (603a1-2). What we can see here is that even though an appearance entails belief, it does not entail belief for the 'whole' soul. Rather solely a part in us believes 'appearances' and illusions, when reasoning is present. A much-debated question regarding this passage is whether the lower element is introduced as a subdivision of the *logistikon* or not.<sup>68</sup> It can be argued that the subdivision is inside the *logistikon* since at 602e4-6 Socrates seems to present the *logistikon* as the subject of appearance. However, I believe that if one rests on what Socrates says in the division of the soul in relation to poetry where again appearances are associated with an inferior element (605c1-3) one will be inclined to regard the lower element here as different from the *logistikon*. What is clear however is that we have a subdivision in our cognitive faculties.<sup>69</sup>

I am inclined to believe that Plato in this context does not want to present the *logistikon* as subject of beliefs that rest on appearances since this would undermine his claim that it is something that can assist the soul in relation to appearances (602a6-e2). The fact that the *logistikon* is presented as the subject of appearances does not show that the *logistikon* believes what it sees. I think that what appears to be the case appears to the soul as a whole, (or at least to all its cognitive faculties, that exhaust the soul in this case) in so far as the soul sees, but only a 'part' of it believes that this is actually the case. In my opinion, even if one accepts that the division concerns the *logistikon*, one part of the *logistikon* would believe what appears to be the case, while another part would not believe it, but still in so far as one for example views the sticks under water, the sticks would appear bent to the other part as well. In other words as I understand the passage, it indicates that, when reasoning is operative, appearances do not necessarily entail a full blown belief rather a partial belief, or a half belief or perhaps a tendency for belief.

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<sup>68</sup> For the view that the *logistikon* is subdivided see Nehamas (1982) p 64-66, Murphy (1951). For the opposite view see Halliwell (1988) p.134, Adam (1902) ad loc.

<sup>69</sup> In the *Timaeus* appearances, dreams and images are associated with a φαῦλον element that inhabits the area around the liver (71d2-e2). Unlike the *Republic* in the *Timaeus* the emphasis is on reason's control of the imagination.

However, when reasoning is not operative to protect the soul, it could be said that that this belief poses a real threat in the soul and may not be just a half-belief. Furthermore in that case it would be difficult to say that one part of the mind believes what it sees while another part of the mind somehow remains unaffected and does not believe anything. Rather, the whole soul would believe what it sees. More generally by showing that beliefs or a propensity to believe may be present even when one employs critical thinking, Plato primarily wants to warn against abandoning such critical thinking. Such appearances cannot affect the soul as a whole, or 'rule' in it when reasoning is present and opposes them. Furthermore, as long as reason 'knows' that appearances may be responsible for false beliefs, it will not allow, in so far as it is possible the formation of false and contradictory beliefs in the soul and also it will be watchful and avoid relying on the senses.

The tendency to form false beliefs on the basis of appearances as also the tendency to experience emotions of sorrow or pity is not something that can be fully avoided. What appears to be the case indeed appears to be the case. However, exactly because the philosopher knows that appearances may involve falsehood and the potential for belief or belief, he is critical and reflective and continuously questions what appears to be the case. However, it has also to be said that if one assumes that the world is to a great extent a creation of reason, what appears to be the case will, in most cases, be in conformity with reason.

## Chapter 7

### Pleasure in the *Republic*

#### Preliminary remarks

In this section I shall discuss in some greater detail the argument on pleasure in *Republic* Book 9. I believe that the significance of the argument lies in the fact that it establishes the possibility of harmony in the soul as a harmony between reason and desire, reason and pleasure, which has already been hinted at 485d-e. It also emerges in the context of this argument that people's attachment to pleasure involves a cognitive error and indicates ignorance. Therefore, I think that the argument on pleasure indicates the unity of the soul, as a unity of its parts, and simultaneously as a unity between reason and experience, and more generally the subjective aspects of human life.

The discussion of pleasure in Book 9 is intended to provide support to the thesis that the just life is the happiest life, by showing that the pleasure of this life is superior to the pleasures of other lives. The two arguments on pleasure that Socrates provides, constitute the second (580c10-583b2) and the third 'proof' (583b1-588a5) (*apodeixeis*) that the just life is the happiest life. More specifically, the third proof is regarded as the decisive overthrow (583b8) of the person who believes that the unjust life is the happiest life. The conclusion of the first 'proof' has been provided immediately before, at 580b9c-8. It is difficult to establish what precisely the first proof involved. It seems that it involved the comparison of the deviant characters with the virtuous character (580b). Perhaps the first 'proof' on happiness primarily rested on showing that the tyrant does not do what he wishes (577d10-578a2) and what he desires (579e1-3).<sup>70</sup> The description of the state of the tyrannical soul emphasized the

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<sup>70</sup> In order to argue that the tyrant does not do what he desires Socrates did not state explicitly that one wishes the real good and also that one may not do as one wishes because what one may do or what one may think one desires may be bad. Thus his strategy in the *Republic* Book 9 is different from the *Gorgias* (467c-469c), where Socrates stated that one wishes the real good, and maintained that the

pain and frustration that characterizes the unjust life. The two arguments on pleasure can be viewed as complementing the portrait of the tyrannical life, showing that the just life involves pleasure and real satisfaction of desires, by distinguishing real pleasure from the fake one<sup>71</sup> and thus it complements the first proof indicating what one really desires is true pleasure.

Socrates is resting in this context on a common conception of happiness as something that lies in or involves satisfaction of desire.<sup>72</sup> One may consider pleasure as either the object of desire, as it is commonly conceived, or what arises out of satisfaction of desire. As I suggested in the earlier sections the argument in Book 4 for justice could be said to be incomplete and not satisfying the common conception of happiness in the sense that it was left open whether justice as an order in the soul is something that involves satisfaction of desire and pleasure. In Book 9 Socrates begins his arguments on pleasure by assigning desire and pleasure to the superior part of the soul, that part that according to Book 4 has to rule (580d), and continues to argue that the pleasures associated with this part are superior. However, it will emerge in the course of the argument that all the parts of the soul are best satisfied in a just soul.

One problem that may arise in relation to Socrates' two arguments is that it seems as though the goodness and value of the just life depends on satisfaction of

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tyrant does not do what he wishes because injustice is bad. The underlying position is nevertheless the same. In the *Republic* Book 9 Socrates makes use of the common conception of desire and tries to show the badness of injustice without fully or directly rejecting such a conception, rather to a great extent relying on such a conception. Partition of the soul is a crucial part in his argumentative strategy, since it allows him to suggest that the desire the tyrant follows (assuming that the tyrant really satisfies such a desire) is only one part among the others (and the smallest part in him according to Book 9) and it does not represent the other parts and the whole (577d), without specifying the object of the whole's desire. Eventually, both the description of the tyrannical soul and the argument on pleasure indicate that one does not merely do what one 'wishes' (*bouletai*) (577d) as a whole but one also does not satisfy (at least the majority of) one's desires (*epithumiai*) (579e), something that was not argued in the *Gorgias*.

<sup>71</sup> Perhaps a 'Calliclean' opponent could still try to argue that the life of the tyrant is happy, conceding that the life of the tyrant involves pain but insisting that it is happy since it involves great pleasure and the greatest pleasures are compatible with great pains.

<sup>72</sup> For further discussion see Gosling and Taylor (1982) pp. 103-5, p. 188, p. 322.

desire (according to a common conception of desire) and pleasure. Pleasure, however, is not presented as the criterion of the goodness of a good life (581e 5-7). Furthermore, it is implied that the good is ultimately the criterion of (the truth of) pleasure (586e1-2), even though it is not clearly stated. However, it may seem that pleasure is introduced at least as one criterion of happiness. I believe that Socrates here is relying on a common conception of happiness. While the goodness of the just life does not depend on its pleasantness, the pleasantness of such a life is necessary so that people may apprehend its happiness and also its goodness. But if people are to see such goodness, their conception of the nature of desire and pleasure needs to be first attacked and modified, so that it can be brought closer to Socrates' conception of pleasure, desire and happiness. Even though pleasure does not constitute a criterion of a happy and good life it can, I believe, serve as an indication of such a life. Pleasure is an inseparable feature and necessary concomitant of a good life, since it is something that follows from the fulfilment of one's nature.

I am not going here to discuss in detail Socrates first argument or 'proof' on pleasure. In the first 'proof' (580c10-583b2), after distinguishing three kinds of pleasure on the basis of the tripartite division of the soul Socrates argues that the pleasure associated with the superior 'part' of the soul and the philosophic life is the pleasantest, on the grounds that philosophers who are governed by this part and whose life by consequence is dominated by the pleasures of this part, consider their life to be the pleasantest. Even though each character considers their life as being the pleasantest (581c9-e2), philosophers' assessment of the pleasantness of their life is true (582a1) since only philosophers are in (full) possession of the three 'criteria' necessary for judging anything, namely experience (ἐμπειρία), wisdom (φρόνησις) and arguments/reason-ing (λόγος: 582a3-5, λόγοι: 582d7-11), which are said to be the instruments (ὄργανον) with which we judge things (582a3-5).

The third proof, which I will discuss in greater detail, can be viewed as the use of *logoi* in the judgement of pleasure. The two proofs cannot be fully separated. While in the first proof it is argued that philosophic pleasure is the pleasantest because

philosophers say so<sup>73</sup> by using *logoi*, and more generally the superiority of reason in relation to every matter is established, the second part justifies the first by showing the reasons why philosophers think so and applies *logos* to pleasure. Socrates sets out to demonstrate that pleasures of other lives, except for the pleasures of the *phronimos*, are not altogether true (παναληθής), nor pure (καθαρά), but shadow painted (ἐσκιαγραφημένη) (583b1-7).

### The argument

Commentators agree that Plato takes questions of pleasure in the *Republic* to be objective and able to be settled by reason. This implies that one can be mistaken about pleasure; what appears to be pleasant to one is not necessarily truly or really pleasant to one. One question that arises is what Plato conceives statements or beliefs concerning pleasure, in order to argue that one can have a mistaken conception of pleasure and mistaken beliefs concerning pleasure. Belief more generally according to Plato aims at truth and reality, since he takes falsehood to be involuntary. Therefore, it seems that statements or beliefs about pleasure are not, solely, concerned with how one feels or how things appear to one. Rather they concern 'reality', in other words a condition of the soul or the organism, or alternatively perhaps a power that an object or an activity has to produce a condition in the body or the soul. To maintain that beliefs concerning pleasure can be true or false presupposes that there is reality, objectivity and truth in pleasure. In fact, according to the argument, pleasure has a nature and reality because it rests upon certain 'objective' processes or states in the body and the soul. Ultimately the question of whether one is pleased relates to the question whether one is replenished, in other words, the satisfaction of certain psychic and bodily needs. Thus falsehood concerning pleasure ultimately is falsehood about the body's and the soul's objective needs and how far one has progressed in satisfying them.

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<sup>73</sup> One reason perhaps why Socrates attributes the arguments he is going to provide to some *sophoi* (583b5-6) is because he does not want to identify himself fully with a *sophos* or perhaps a philosopher.

As I understand the argument on pleasure, its overall purposes are partly destructive and partly constructive. Socrates wants to show that the virtuous life is the pleasantest life, and in order to show this he needs first to undermine people's conception of pleasure and their attachment to certain bodily pleasures that are commonly conceived to be paradigmatically pleasant. In trying to show that certain pleasures are not true Socrates tries to show that certain 'pleasures' do not constitute proper grounds or basis for pleasure and, I will argue, enjoyment. He intends to undermine people's reasons for taking something to be pleasant. However, the argument does not have solely destructive purposes. Socrates wants to provide grounds or criteria of pleasure and more generally to indicate where genuine pleasure is to be found.

In talking about grounds or basis for taking something to be pleasant or enjoyable perhaps I should distinguish between 'objective' and 'subjective' grounds. An objective ground for enjoyment is something that is taking place in the body or the soul. This perhaps would justify one's enjoyment from an external point of view. By speaking of 'subjective' ground I am thinking of a reason one has to regard something as pleasant. Plato wants to show both that there is no real basis in people's assumption that they are pleased, and also simultaneously to show that the reasons or grounds people have to think that they are pleased are not adequate. It seems that his denial that certain pleasures are true covers both aspects. He wants to undermine the 'reality' of such pleasures, and thus show that people's thinking of them as pleasant has no real foundation. He wants to show that these pleasures, as sensations, cannot serve as a basis upon which one can rely to assess something as pleasant. Ultimately in providing 'objective grounds' of pleasure, Socrates also wants to indicate what can serve as a reason for one to take oneself to be pleased.

Even though Socrates thinks that people's beliefs that certain things are pleasant are quite unfounded, he does not want to argue that people take things to be pleasant for no reason at all. Rather he is arguing that there are cases of saying that people taking things to be pleasant for inadequate or wrong reasons. He assumes that people base pleasure on bodily sensations. Socrates wants to show that bodily sensations and feelings cannot serve as a sufficient and adequate basis for one to think



that one is pleased and that one fares well. It is not solely because they do not constitute adequate reasons. Rather, they can also be misleading and deceptive. Simultaneously, I think it can be said that these pleasures do not have enough 'reality' or backing in reality to support one's considering them to be pleasant and also one's enjoying them from an objective point of view. Socrates is going to provide certain criteria of pleasure, which also I think can form a basis or reason for someone to think that something is pleasant. I will discuss Socrates' argument in brief in order to make more specific the nature of the mistake that Socrates detects in the case of pleasure.

Socrates first of all secures Glaucon's agreement that pleasure and pain are opposites (583c3), and that there is an intermediate state of quiescence where one is neither in pleasure, nor in pain (583c5-9). The intermediate state of quiescence constitutes a convenient starting point so Socrates can show that people can be mistaken about pleasure. In showing that people who are in pain take the middle state to be pleasant (583c10-d9), and also possibly painful (583e1-2), Socrates indicates that something is taken to be pleasant which involves no pleasure at all. Thus he can distinguish between appearance and reality. There is no real basis here in enjoyment rather the pleasure assumed to be involved (and experienced in relation to such a state) is an illusion (*phantasma*) having nothing healthy in it (584a7-10). Simultaneously Socrates shows how perspective influences our beliefs concerning pleasure since it becomes clear that the middle state appears to be pleasant because one looks at it from the point of view of pain. Pain in this case seems to function as the primary criterion or ground that one relies upon to take something as pleasant.

In logical terms the mistake of the sick people can be described as a confusion of an opposite with the absence or negation of its opposite. In arguing that the middle state is not pleasant and pleasure is an illusion Socrates assumes that one opposite is not the negation of the other opposite and that pleasure, being the opposite of pain as Glaucon has accepted, does not consist in the negation or absence of pain. However, to reinforce his claim that the middle state does not involve any real pleasure, Socrates also indicates that (bodily) pleasure constitutes a becoming or motion (583a9-10), while the state of quiescence (in which no bodily motion reaches the soul) is by definition a state where motion is absent (584a1-2). In confusing thus the middle state with pleasure one takes rest to be some kind of change or motion.

Socrates wants to generalize his attack on bodily pleasure and so he argues that the majority and the greatest pleasures of bodily origin constitute releases or liberations from pain and do not properly deserve the name 'pleasure' (584c3-5). His attack at this stage, as I understand it, rests precisely in assuming that (real) pleasure is the genuine opposite of pain, and that releases from pain are not as opposed to pain as one may consider them to be. In characterizing them as releases from pain, Socrates is not confusing the absence of pain, which has been defined as an intermediate state, with bodily pleasure. Bodily pleasures constitute motions in which one is being released from pain. It seems also to be assumed that pain still exists to some extent while one is being released from it. Thus the confusion is analogous to the one that characterizes sick people but not exactly the same since one here does not confuse rest with motion, rather one motion or becoming with another, as it is becomes clear in the simile that Socrates provides (584d6-9). One confuses a motion away from pain with a motion away from the intermediate state that is taken to be absence of pain. The presence of pain again can be said to play a fundamental role in people's mistaken conception of bodily pleasures.

Socrates is keen to argue in this stage that pure pleasure (καθαρόν) is not the release from pain (584c12-b2). Thus he indicates that there are bodily pure pleasures, such as the pleasures of smell, which involve no pain whatsoever (584b3-7). He has not yet introduced pure psychic pleasure, and he wants to prepare for the introduction of such pleasures. The pleasantness of such bodily pleasures cannot be said to constitute an illusion since there is no pain involved which would affect our conception and assessment of them. Socrates wants to indicate that pleasure is not a relieving or relief from pain because then it would emerge that there is no reality or objectivity whatever in pleasure. If one assumed that there is no reality or objectivity in pleasure at all, then either people's beliefs concerning pleasure in general would all be false, in that they assumed that there is reality in something that has no reality or objectivity, or alternatively what appeared pleasant to one would be really pleasant to one.

I think that conceiving one opposite as being the privation of the other, or a motion away from the other involves the following assumptions. First of all, they are not genuine opposites, since genuine opposites are not taken to be the negation or absence of each other, rather it seems to be assumed that one opposite presupposes the absence of the other. Second, I think to conceive opposites in this way is to conceive them as interdependent and therefore as not having (independent) existence or reality of their own. Finally, in epistemological terms, it is to see them as relative to each other. One can be known or assessed by reference to the other (as the absence or distance from the other), by comparing it to the other. Ultimately there is no stable and independent point of view by reference to which pleasure and pain can be assessed. Something is pleasant if it is less painful in comparison with something that is more painful, and something is painful if it is less pleasant in comparison to something that is pleasanter. The same thing can be said to be pleasant or painful depending on where we stand and what we compare it with.

'Mixed opposites', or opposites in so far as they are conceived to be mixed, are not genuine opposites, rather one qualifies the other since they form a kind of unity, whether good or problematic. I think that in so far as they can be said to be mixed they can appear to be interdependent. However, Plato seems to assume that exactly because (bodily) pleasure is mixed with pain, or more generally taken together with pain it looks more opposed to pain than it is. Its juxtaposition with pain (whether in the body or in the mind) creates an illusion of contrast, or a contrast that is much more extreme than it really is, and thus it looks more 'opposed' to pain than it really is (586b7-c5).<sup>74</sup> Therefore, according to the first part of the argument, mixed pleasures are problematic both because they are not real pleasures and also, and primarily I think, because they look like real pleasures.

Thus the mistake concerning pleasure can be presented as involving taking what is not (essentially or unqualifiedly) pleasant as (essentially or unqualifiedly)

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<sup>74</sup> Socrates later draws a comparison with colours: if one looks at something grey, having looked at black, grey would appear white to someone who has no experience or knowledge of white (585a3-5). The comparison is extended to painting (586b7-c2). Certain pleasures 'are painted' in such a way that the illusion of contrast and extremity is created, as perhaps in the case of shadow- painting the illusion of depth is created.

pleasant, which can be expressed as taking something which is not a genuine opposite as being a genuine opposite. Simultaneously, and since there is (real) pleasure, the mistake involves a confusion between one 'pleasure' and 'another'. In assuming that certain 'so called pleasures' are pleasant one ultimately confuses genuine psychic pleasure with bodily pleasure.

I wish to note that the distinction Plato draws between certain bodily states, and the way they appear, corresponds to a distinction between pleasure as a sensation and pleasure as an appearance. I think this distinction, which is not drawn explicitly, is necessary in order to make sense of what Socrates says in his argument on pleasure. Furthermore, I believe that this distinction can perhaps explain why there are levels of untruth and unreality in pleasure. For instance, in the case of the state of quiescence there is no sensation of bodily origin involved but it looks as though it is involved. The pleasure one experiences in relation to this state is characterized as an illusion (584a9:φαντασμάτων). Here absence of sensation can be distinguished from the appearance, which can I think be considered as a pleasure since one finds pleasure in the middle state.<sup>75</sup> Later we have again a distinction between the mixed pleasures themselves and the way they appear (586c1-2). They are not intense rather they appear to be intense and one can assume that one also experiences them as intense, however this 'intensity' as part of our experience is an illusion.<sup>76</sup> Here I think the distinction between sensation and appearance is clearer, since in this case a pleasant sensation is involved. The sensation itself, unlike the appearance, corresponds to something that is (as a matter of fact) happening in the body. Perhaps the sensation can be seen as something that can be 'abstracted' from the experience, which has some dose of reality. The remainder is mere illusion. The pleasures themselves (I think as sensations) are said to be deceitful images of real pleasure, which look like the original (586b8-c1) εἰδώλοις τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἡδονῆς καὶ ἐσκιαγραφημέναις, ὑπὸ τῆς παρ' ἀλλήλας θέσεως ἀποχραιομέναις). I think that the appearance

<sup>75</sup> Such appearances can be associated with the pleasures of anticipation that Socrates mentions at 584c7-9.

<sup>76</sup> I think that in this passage (586d7-c5) Plato is referring primarily to sexual pleasure, which is taken to be paradigmatically intense and are associated with madness, thoughtlessness and disease in both the *Timaeus* (86c-d) and the *Philebus* (46d-47b).

itself can be conceived as an image, more precisely as an image of an image.<sup>77</sup> However, in so far as this image can be seen as appearance or part of an appearance, it presupposes belief and 'interpretation' of the sensation (or its absence, and by extension what is happening in the body). We can thus distinguish between different degrees of reality (or unreality).<sup>78</sup> Mixed pleasures (in so far as they are sensations) are particularly problematic, and also bad images because they convey the impression of reality and thus encourage false belief. Falsehood here concerns both what is happening in the body and also what is happening in the soul. Not all bodily pleasures as sensations are necessarily deceptive in this way, and may not appear different from what they are and thus may not involve false belief.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> See also 587c8-9 (τρίτῳ εἰδῶλῳ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν) and 605c2 (εἰδῶλα εἰδωλοποιούντα).

<sup>78</sup> One may compare with Book 10 where Socrates distinguishes three degrees of reality, the form of a couch, a particular couch and the image of a particular couch, which corresponds to the appearance of a couch that the painter imitates and reproduces (596a-598b). In terms of Book 9 an image or painting that is painted with a certain illusionist technique can be distinguished from the illusion or appearance it produces (cf. Book 10, 602c-d).

<sup>79</sup> I have a difficulty as to whether one should regard pleasure as a *phantasma* as involving a belief or not. What is clear to me is that belief is presupposed so that such 'images' can be generated in the soul. *Phantasia* as it is defined in the *Sophist* as a mixture of belief and sensation (*Sophist* 244a-b). However, in both the *Philebus* and also in the *Timaeus* it may look as though Plato talks of images or appearances in the soul as something that occurs in parallel with belief. Hence it may look as if belief is not a part of them in the *Sophist*'s sense. In the *Timaeus* such 'images' are said to be due to thought and reason, are 'reflections' of thoughts and are located in the liver which functions as their receptacle (71a-b). In the *Philebus* Socrates mentions a 'painter' in the soul who works in parallel with a 'scribe', and illustrates what the 'scribe' says (39b-c). These 'images' should be identified with the compound or mixture of belief and sensation (actual or supplied by memory) or alternatively they should be identified with something further that arises because of this combination. I think that they can be 'isolated' and distinguished from sensation (or perception) as such, when perceptual circumstances are problematic and the sensible object is spatially or temporally 'distant'. According to Delcomminette (2003) in such cases the function of the painter in the soul is to compensate for the absence of actual perception (p. 226). Furthermore, they can be 'isolated' in cases of illusion. When there is no falsehood or illusion in actual perception I think that there is no need to postulate such an image in the soul. In the *Philebus* it is clearer I think that in cases of illusion the images constitute a 'component' or part of our experience that ideally should be 'cut off' or separated (*apotemomenos*) from what one perceives (*Philebus* 42b-c). Also in the *Philebus* (42a-b) it is I think clear that even if such false images or illusions, always presuppose false belief, they can be primarily due either to the pleasures themselves (or their memory), which also thus cause false belief, or to false belief.

Socrates proceeds to provide a simile in order to illustrate and explain the confusion that people undergo in relation to pleasure and pain (585d1-585a7). Socrates first maintains that in nature there is 'Up', 'Down' and the 'Middle'. Someone who has not seen the real Up, when moved to the middle would think that he is going up. When standing in the middle, looking to where he came from he would think he were up. The mistake is due to inexperience of the true up.<sup>80</sup> However, when moving down he would rightly think that he is moving down. Similarly people who have not experienced truth, and who have mistaken and unhealthy beliefs in general, also have unhealthy opinions concerning pleasure: when they are moving down, they are right and they are really in pain, but when they move to the middle, they intensely<sup>81</sup> believe that they are moving towards pleasure and fulfilment (585a2-3: σφόδρα μὲν οἶονται πρὸς πληρώσει τε καὶ ἡδονῇ γίγνεσθαι),<sup>82</sup> which is not the case. The middle state here corresponds to the satisfaction of the body and what is necessary whereas the upward path corresponds to the satisfaction of the soul. The 'up' as a point where motion ends, which is confused with the intermediate state,

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<sup>80</sup> It seems to me that the fact that Socrates presents 'up' and the 'middle' as points which are termini of motions suggests that there are objective standards, or stable points of reference in the assessment of pleasure, both bodily and psychic. Pleasure can be evaluated positively by reference to the terminus as an approximation to the terminus, and not solely negatively by reference to pain or distance from pain.

<sup>81</sup> The 'intensity' of people's believing at 585a2 corresponds to the intensity of the pleasure that they think they are experiencing. Compare with 586c1-2.

<sup>82</sup> Gosling and Taylor (1982) argue that Plato's argument on pleasure suffers from a 'fatal ambiguity', which Plato shows no signs of detecting (p. 122-3). The ambiguity concerns the question whether pleasure is considered to lie in acquiring what one needs, or in possessing what one needs. The ambiguity also concerns the term *plērōsis*, which may signify both. I believe that the term at 585a2-3 signifies possession of what one needs. More generally, even though the question whether pleasure lies in a process or a state would require long discussion, I think that in the *Republic* the ambiguity is not 'fatal' if one distinguishes between the body and the soul. In the body pleasure ceases when one is filled, while in the soul pleasure 'lasts', and this is a reason for the superiority of psychic pleasure. It perhaps may not be possible for the human soul ever to reach the real 'up', and thus in some sense the soul is in perpetual motion upwards. But in relative terms it may be said that Plato does not want to exclude the possibility that possession of something good, as long as one possesses it, cannot provide pleasure. And certainly, as Gosling and Taylor note (1982), what would be really fatal to Plato's argument would be to say that the more advanced a philosopher, or a virtuous person, the less pleasure she experiences (p. 123).

can be identified with the good. As it seems to be suggested at 585a2-3 the up identified with *plērōsis* is itself being presented as pleasant.<sup>83</sup>

The first part of the argument, in having primarily a destructive effect, undermining the grounds for finding pleasure in the body, and in showing more generally how people can be victims of illusions, paves the way for the second part (585a8-585e5) where Plato tries to provide an account of the nature of pleasure.<sup>84</sup> Thus also showing how reason can provide criteria or reasons for taking something to be pleasant.

Plato assumes that pleasure can be examined and assessed by reference to its sources or the conditions of its generation. Socrates argues that the nature of pleasure is to be filled by what befits nature (585d11: τὸ πληροῦσθαι τῶν φύσει προσηκόντων ἡδὺ ἐστι). Thus it emerges that pleasure lies in the satisfaction of one's real needs. Socrates distinguishes between bodily needs or lacks, such as thirst and hunger, from psychic needs or lacks, which lie in ignorance and folly (585a8-b4), and also the things that fill these lacks. Bodily needs are satisfied by nourishment and drink whereas psychic needs are satisfied by acquisition of intelligence (585b6-7), true belief, knowledge and virtue in general (585c1-2). Satisfaction of bodily needs is less true and 'real' than the satisfaction of psychic needs, because the body is a less real and stable container, and the objects with which it is filled are themselves less real and true; while the soul is a more real and stable container, able in other words to keep what is filled with, and the objects which satisfy it, are themselves more real (585b9-c9). Thus psychic pleasure is truer and more real than bodily pleasure, since it lies in a truer and more real filling (585d11-e5).

The contrast that Socrates draws between the body and the soul indicates that while the body is constantly changing the soul enjoys stability, thus we can achieve

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<sup>83</sup> The fact that Socrates presents 'up' and the 'middle' as points which are termini of motions suggests that there are objective standards, or stable points of reference in the assessment of pleasure both bodily and psychic.

<sup>84</sup> Compare with *Gorgias* 501a. Socrates indicates in this context that pleasure has to be examined scientifically: one has to examine the 'nature' of pleasure (*phusis*) and its cause (*aitia*) and be able to give an account in relation to it and not merely rely on experience and memory.

lasting satisfaction and pleasure only in the case of the soul. The body cannot be properly filled because the objects of bodily needs lack truth, and are changing and unsubstantial, and it is itself in constant change. Change in the case of the soul should not be excluded, since acquisition of knowledge is a form of change. What Socrates seems to want to emphasize is that unlike the body, the soul is a stable (or fairly stable) container and thus it can find lasting satisfaction since it can retain what it acquires (which is itself true real and stable, and thus can be kept).

What Socrates I think wants to undermine is not only bodily sensations as such, or more generally the value of satisfying bodily needs, but also bodily processes, or sensations as proper objects of the soul's attention and enjoyment. It is not only that the body cannot find lasting satisfaction rather one cannot find lasting satisfaction in satisfying the body, since one is primarily a soul. Bodily replenishments in other words are not real because they are not really replenishments of the soul. In satisfying the body one mistakenly thinks that one satisfies oneself, and that is to a great extent why one enjoys these processes. Socrates wants to show that what is happening in the body does not particularly deserve enjoyment, and does not fully comply with what is needed to give rise to proper enjoyment, such as stability, reality, and truth.

In the course of this passage it emerges that ultimately the criterion or ground of pleasure is not so much its 'purity', but rather human nature and its needs. Ultimately the criterion or basis of pleasure, and of what is truly or really pleasant is the good.<sup>85</sup> Reason should discover human needs, and what satisfies them, relying on its own understanding of human nature and the good, and what satisfies them; this is how it discovers what is truly or genuinely pleasant, both in the case of the soul but also, and in so far as it is possible, in the case of the body.<sup>86</sup> As experience of pleasure may confirm, reason discovers that what one primarily needs is reason itself, and more generally virtue, true belief and knowledge, which are desirable in themselves and also can help us determine and satisfy other needs we have.

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. *Gorgias* 499c-500a.

<sup>86</sup> Reason has to rely on the senses to some extent to determine bodily needs.



On the grounds that Socrates has argued that the majority of bodily pleasures are in reality releases from pain, one may argue that Socrates believes that there is no truth, objectivity or reality in bodily pleasure whatsoever. Thus it could be argued that people's beliefs concerning bodily pleasure are necessarily mistaken and can never be true. However, in arguing that pleasure lies in replenishment Socrates indicates that there is an amount of truth and reality in the satisfaction of the body, and thus by extension in pleasure due to this satisfaction. Furthermore, it turns out that bodily pleasure is not something solely dependent on or relative to pain, rather it is something which depends on a certain bodily process (even certain so called 'mixed' pleasures, I believe). The first part of Socrates' argument is primarily destructive since he wants to undermine people's attachment to bodily pleasures. However, later he goes on to say that reason will provide the 'truest' pleasures to the appetitive part in so far as it is possible (586d7-e2). This suggests that bodily pleasures can participate in truth and reality, and also that our beliefs concerning bodily pleasure can be true to some extent, in particular when they do not rest solely on sensation. However, both bodily pleasures and beliefs concerning bodily pleasure can never be true if one does not possess understanding of the nature of pleasure, and also experience of genuine pleasure in virtue, and understanding of the value of virtue itself. Ultimately, I believe that bodily pleasures are not 'true' in themselves rather they can become true and also good, in so far as they part of a good life a life which is characterized by genuine psychic pleasure, knowledge and understanding. Thus their reality and truth depends on reason.

### **Some general comments**

As I suggested earlier, people when they form beliefs aim at truth and reality. Socrates' argumentative strategy presupposes that people are taking something to be pleasant for a reason and they think that there is real basis in their assumption that they are pleased. In thinking that one is pleased, one thinks that one is really pleased and that there is a real or objective basis in one's beliefs concerning both the nature of pleasure in general and also particular pleasures. Plato is assuming that people are not indifferent to considerations of reality and objectivity, even in the case of pleasure.

However, it may be argued that the majority of people in taking something to be pleasant rely upon certain bodily sensations. More generally it seems that, according to Plato, the majority of people do not question the truth and reality of their feelings and it is also fairly difficult to prompt them to question them. Socrates tries to encourage his interlocutors to question their feelings by showing that one's assessment of pleasure can be affected by perspective. In prompting his interlocutors to question the 'reality' of bodily pleasure, Socrates is assuming that people's conception and beliefs concerning pleasure can be affected and modified by arguments, and that these arguments can also modify their more general attitude towards pleasure and their enjoyment of it.<sup>87</sup>

I wish suggest that what applies to people's beliefs concerning pleasure, can also apply to people's enjoyment of pleasure. As beliefs concerning pleasure and people's conception of pleasure are in general not indifferent to considerations of reality, in a similar manner pleasure as function of the soul, and as something distinct from pleasure as a sensation, can be affected by considerations of reality and objectivity. Arguing that certain bodily pleasures are not, or may not, be true or real can be said ultimately to mean that these pleasures do not constitute proper or adequate objects of enjoyment, and they do not quite deserve the soul's attention and desire. Such attention and enjoyment Socrates associates with cognitive error.

I am in agreement with Russell (2005) who argues that Plato's mention of pleasures of anticipation (584c7-9) indicates that Plato in the *Republic* is interested in pleasure as an intentional state and not merely as a purely qualitative state (p. 129).<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, Plato's argumentative strategy indicates that it is not sufficient to encourage people to doubt the reality of their sensations or feelings. A merely destructive argument would encourage one to adopt a relativist position concerning pleasure and such relativist position would not particularly help to diminish people's attachment to certain pleasures. Relativism is taken to be as unwelcome as people's uncritical trust in the reality of sensations. One has to be provided with certain standards or 'measures' of pleasure, that one can lay one's trust upon.

<sup>88</sup> However, it should be noted that Plato does not make the distinction explicit. Psychic pleasure and satisfaction is solely associated with true belief, knowledge, and virtue (585c1-2). However, true belief (as well as false belief) can be about the body and its sensations, and thus pleasure from true belief can be associated with bodily sensations.

According to Russell, pleasure as an intentional state is 'to enjoy something under a description'. Russell argues that 'Plato's view is that the pleased agent construes the object of her pleasure in terms of a need or lack that she takes the object to satisfy' (p. 130). Thus, as I understand Russell's account, enjoyment as an intentional state involves the exercise of reason, minimally in the form of a belief that what one experiences is (really) pleasant and the object of such experience is pleasant, and can be said to rest upon this belief. Ultimately in being pleased, and in taking oneself to be pleased, one forms evaluative judgements concerning what are one's needs and what is good for one. One's pleasure about something can be said to be derived from a belief that one is in a good condition, but the pleasant feeling itself can be said to encourage such a belief.

I think that this description of pleasure is applicable to bodily pleasure as well. One's response and attitude to these pleasures can be distinguished from the pleasures themselves in their 'objective' dimension as sensations, and such response can be always said to be mediated by a belief which involves an 'interpretation' of one's sensation. It may be said that the sensation of 'pleasure' is always accompanied with such a response and cannot be easily distinguished from it. However, arguing that reason and belief is involved in pleasure is saying that to a great extent one's attitude towards bodily pleasure can be in principle affected by rational considerations. The sensation itself cannot change in so far as it originates in the body. What can change is one's interpretation of the sensation and one's attitude in relation to this sensation.

It can be argued that as believing aims at truth and reality, similarly pleasure, as an intentional state and desire for pleasure, aims at truth and reality, and more precisely at real or true pleasure. People's enjoyment and passionate desire of certain pleasures can be said to be ultimately due to deception and ignorance, as Socrates suggests at 586b7-c5. In other words, one confuses bodily pleasure with genuine psychic pleasure and satisfaction, but also one desires them because of this confusion. One is attached to and desires bodily pleasure to a great extent because one takes it for something that it is not. Ultimately the proper object of desire is psychic pleasure.

I wish to note that there are two aspects or two factors that play a role in the error. Socrates argues that people are attracted by Helen's phantom because of their

ignorance of the real Helen (586c4-5). To a great extent the confusion between true pleasures, and non-true pleasures, is due to the fact that one has not knowledge and experience of true pleasure. However, the mistake is due to a great extent to certain mixed pleasures themselves, which are taken to be particularly deceptive. Due to their deceptive nature these pleasures encourage people to confuse them with true or real pleasure. Somehow these pleasures look like genuine pleasure. As I suggested earlier, this is due to the appearance or illusion of extremity or intensity they produce (586c1-2). Such illusion can be ultimately due to the fact that they are 'mixed' or juxtaposed with pain and perhaps other pleasures. They appear to be opposed to pain while they are not. Eventually it may be said that people's ignorance and inexperience of genuine pleasure encourages them to attach to these deceptive pleasures, and try to reproduce them, while these pleasures themselves direct the soul away from knowledge, reality and the good and thus encourage ignorance of genuine pleasure and the good.<sup>89 90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> The confusion is attributed not solely to ignorance of the nature of pleasure but also to inexperience of genuine pleasure (584e2, 586a1). It looks as though Socrates is implying that the taste of genuine pleasure would make one realize that it is genuine pleasure and see its difference from other pleasures. The more one tastes such pleasure the more one will be able to realize that it is superior from other pleasures and one will desire other pleasures less.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. the *Lysis* where Socrates rejects the claim that the good is the absence of the bad and also what removes the bad. Cf. Shorey (1980), p. 206. In the *Lysis* Socrates' initial suggestion is that what is (essentially) neither good nor bad desires the good because of the presence of the bad (217b-218c) as would happen if the good were taken to be what removes the bad having merely remedial value and also as if badness would be what made us desire the good. Socrates eventually rejects this suggestion (220b-221c). Even if badness were not involved in human life, we would still need and desire the good. Rather, it may be said that we desire to remove the bad and what removes the bad exactly because we desire the good in the first place (219a-220b). However, the presence of 'badness' makes us focus on what removes the bad and confuse it with the good (see *Lysis* 219d). By taking it for the 'good' we miss the 'real' good. Thus the mistake one commits lies roughly speaking in attributing intrinsic value to something that has merely relative value and seeking it in this way. (Nevertheless, Socrates in the *Lysis* does not seem to assume that all the things that are not good as such are needed solely because of badness. For example at 220e-221b he argues that we would desire food and drink even if badness did not exist, and these things are not good in themselves.) To desire what merely removes the bad, as the good, involves also, in some sense, trying to reproduce the bad, because what is at least merely necessary (necessary in order to remove the bad) is needed only in so far as badness exists, and its appeal depend on badness. Thus people enter a vicious circle, without making any progress towards the real good. They end up moving from the 'down' to the 'middle' and downwards again, since they have not really experienced the genuine up (*Republic* 586a1-b70). Pain and 'badness' more generally cannot

Now it is perhaps impossible in human nature not to desire and enjoy bodily pleasure at all. Socrates' claim here is not that it should not be desired or should not be desired at all, as he is not really suggesting that these pleasures cannot be pleasant at all. They are not intrinsically pleasant, and their pleasantness ultimately depends on reason. Their desiring should be conditioned and qualified by reason and be in accordance with reason's standards or measures (586d3-587a2). In some sense bodily pleasure can become both desirable and also pleasant when its enjoyment is informed by reason, true belief and knowledge. In this way it can also be said that it becomes impregnated with, and thus it comes to 'participate' in, 'genuine' psychic pleasure.<sup>91</sup>

I wish also to suggest that desire in its subjective dimension as *epithumia* can be defined as being for pleasure, which should be distinguished from the desire for the good since the good and pleasure are not the same thing. I think that as particular desires can be defined as being for particular objects and not for the good as such, *epithumia* in its generic character can be defined as being for pleasure, since particular things are primarily desired as pleasant.<sup>92</sup> Desire in this sense is associated with all the parts of the soul in Book 9 since all the parts of the soul are attributed *epithumiai* and pleasure (580d6-7) and thus its source cannot be seen as being the body.<sup>93</sup> Saying that desire is for psychic pleasure, as Socrates I think indicates in the argument on

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function as an adequate criterion or basis of what we really need, what is pleasant or what is good. Thus in the *Republic* at 586b1 we can also find an explanation of *pleonexia*. Its origin is not so much in the body rather in the soul, (and in the very desire for good and genuine, pleasure) which desires 'more' and 'more' of certain things because these things cannot really 'fill' it and it does not know where it can find true satisfaction. In reality bodily needs and desires are limited and can be satisfied. What cannot be satisfied (by certain objects) is the soul and its desire for the good.

<sup>91</sup> Thus absolute priority more generally is to be given to psychic pleasure. Bodily pleasure and psychic pleasure are not comparable or commensurable, in the sense that the latter constitutes the standard or measure for the former. Equally I think is not intelligible to say that one can choose or prefer bodily pleasure to genuine psychic pleasure. (If one experiences psychic pleasure one will always prefer it.) Rather bodily pleasures are chosen in so far as they are in accordance with psychic pleasure.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. *Charmides* 167e1-8, where *epithumia* is defined as being for pleasure and is distinguished from *boulēsis* which is for the good and from *erōs* which is for beauty. It seems to me that if *epithumiai* can be said to be for pleasure and the desire for the good is for the good, *erōs* as being for beauty covers both the subjective and the objective dimension of desire, and represents their unison.

<sup>93</sup> The same notion of desire as being for pleasure is employed at 485d6-e1 and again it is not associated with any part of the soul in particular.

pleasure, is showing that more generally desire in its subjective dimension, as a feeling or inclination, can be aligned with the desire for the good, one's objective wish, and reason, and when and if it finds its proper object it will be so aligned. Furthermore, I believe that saying that desire is for true pleasure, as Socrates seems to suggest in relation to the appetitive part, is to suggest that desire in its subjective dimension is commingled with and inseparable from reason and the desire for the good is dependent on reason, as also (true or real) pleasure is dependent on the good. To desire true or real pleasure is to desire good pleasure, in other words pleasure together with the good, and pleasure together with understanding. True or real pleasure can be said to be pleasure which is both in conformity with and accompanied by true belief and knowledge, whether the body is involved or not. If desire in the form of *epithumia*, as I previously defined it, has a notion of truth and reality, this is due to reason's involvement in it. Reason's involvement is perhaps greater in the case of the desires which are associated with the rational part, and lesser in the case of the desires which are associated with other parts, which can also come to be in conformity with (objective) reason with a greater difficulty, but reason, in the form at least of false belief or appearance is always involved.

One reason why one cannot be said to merely desire pleasure, rather one desires true or real pleasure, is that more generally one does not simply desire a given object or a pleasant sensation in relation to a given object. Rather one desires to understand that there is a real basis in one's enjoyment, and more generally to understand that a particular thing or action or sensation one enjoys is in conformity with, and can be incorporated into, a life that constitutes a well ordered whole. Such a conception of oneself as being ordered and being part of order is itself inherently pleasant. In so far as one's action or the particular object of one's desire is not in conformity with such a conception, and more generally in so far as one is incapable of such a conception, one cannot find stable satisfaction and pleasure in what one is doing.

I also wish to suggest that Plato would counter a hedonistic argument, according to which knowledge of reality is irrelevant to pleasure, by maintaining that since rationality is an essential part and need of human nature, the exercise of reason (as obtaining or possessing true belief and knowledge) is by itself a source of

pleasure. The 'better or greater' the exercise of reason the pleasanter one's life is. Here it may look as if Plato would advocate reason for the sake of the pleasure that one derives as a matter of fact from reason reasoning and learning. The pleasure derived from reasoning and understanding in reality, and more generally in one's conception of oneself as being in touch with reality, can function as an indication that reason is an essential human need. However, this is not exactly a hedonistic argument, in the sense that reason and its exercise is pleasant because we really need it and we do not primarily need it because it is pleasant, even though it may be argued that pleasure may encourage our attachment to it. One is not attributing to rationality in the form of either true belief or knowledge any instrumental value in maintaining that they contribute to pleasure. And it could also be said that even practical use of reason, where for instance one forms correct beliefs concerning the body, its needs and 'pleasures', is a form of 'learning' and it is as such a source or cause of pleasure. More generally, the more or better one exercises one's reason, the more pleased one is, as one understands oneself as connected with truth and reality. This is another way of saying that people essentially aim at, or have, an inherent desire for truth and reality itself which is manifested in every sphere of human existence. This tendency or desire (which is involved to a greater or lesser extent in everything we do or enjoy) perhaps cannot be fully or directly proved by reference to any experience (even though the pleasure one derives from learning can work as an indication) but I think it is to this tendency or desire that Plato primarily appeals when he attempts to undermine people's grounds for pleasure.

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