Plato’s Two Forms of Second-Best Morality

“Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of Noble mind)” (Milton, Lycidas ll. 70-1)

“[W]e may notice the love of Fame as an important and widely operative motive, which would be ranked very differently by different persons: for some would place the former ‘spur that the clear spirit doth raise’ among the most elevated impulses after the moral sentiments; while others think it degrading to depend for one’s happiness on the breath of popular favour.”
(Sidgwick, The Methods of Ethics p. 368)

At the end of Republic Book 4 shortly after the basic structure of Kallipolis and the corresponding soul has been established, Socrates announces that although Kallipolis is the singular example of a truly virtuous city there are many different examples of vicious cities, four of which warrant discussion. Socrates returns to this list in Books 8-9 where he discusses each of these four cities along with the corresponding souls. One of the things we learn in this discussion is that these forms of vice are not all on a par. Rather, we are told that the five cities form a hierarchy of virtue and vice with the aristocratic Kallipolis being the most just, followed by timocracy, oligarchy and democracy, and finally tyranny which is the most unjust. Hence, although Plato is in some sense reserving the term “virtuous” for the Kallipolis alone, he is also assigning virtue in a scalar manner such that each of these cities and souls can partake in more or less of it. The argument, however, for the

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1 This paper has benefited from comments and questions from audiences at Trinity College Dublin, Kings College London, and Newcastle University. I would also like to thank Rachel Singpurwalla and two anonymous commentators for their excellent critical comments, from which this final version has benefitted, even though I have not been able to address all of them here.


3 Hence, Socrates describes the task of Books 8-9 as determining not which man is the good one and which ones are the bad ones, but “which man is best and which is worst.” Glaucon likewise describes all five in terms of a scale running from complete virtue to complete vice (580b6-8). That virtue is not exactly an all or nothing affair is also witnessed by certain remarks throughout the account of the degeneration, e.g., the timocracy is called “a mixture of good and bad” (548c3-4); at 549b3 the
respective places in the hierarchy that each of these cities receives is spotty at best. Glaucon simply announces his verdict after hearing the descriptions of all five cities, and it is left for the reader to decide which features of the descriptions were responsible for that verdict. This has led many scholars to question some of the details of this ranking, with most attention being directed at accounting for the relatively low position of the democratic city and soul. By contrast there has been little to no concern displayed over the timocrat’s relatively high position in the ranking, yet precisely this requires and deserves careful consideration.

The timocrat, after all, seems to embody precisely the attitude towards morality that we find Plato vigorously attacking both in the Republic and in other dialogues. For the timocrat, we are told, is ruled by his spirited part of soul, which is characterized by its desire for honor and respect and its aversion to shame. This means that the timocratic man captures the spirit of the Homeric hero, and the world seen through timocratic eyes is very much like the Homeric “shame-culture.” But it is precisely such shame-based morality that Plato often singles out for criticism.

timocrat is said “not to be pure with respect to virtue”; and at 554e4-6 the oligarch is said to be “more graceful” (cf. 400c8-10) even though he does not achieve “the true virtue of the one-minded and harmonious soul.”


5 Perhaps the most well-known such discussion is Leo Strauss, The City and Man (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 130ff. A well-balanced examination of the order of the degenerate constitutions is Dorthea Frede, “Die ungerechten Verfassungen und die ihnen entsprechenden Menschen”, in Platon Politeia, ed. Otfried Höffe (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997), 251-70. Frede does a good job in particular of dispelling historical misunderstandings of Plato’s thesis.


8 “He detested this bogus morality, which seemed to him both intellectually contemptible and socially dangerous, leading men as it did to observe one standard in their public behaviour while secretly adopting another” (E.R. Dodds, Plato Gorgias (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 12). Cf. Theo Kobusch, “Wie Man Leben Soll: Gorgias”, in Platon. Seine Dialoge in Der Sicht Neuer Forschungen,
There seem to be three related reasons for his contempt for such an approach to morality. First, since an agent’s own values will be determined by what will win (or cost) him the respect of his fellow citizens, one’s moral views are effectively derived from the fortuitous opinions of others. If they think it is shameful not to return what one owes, this will be reflected in one’s own set of values; if they don’t, it won’t. Moreover, these values are often taken up in a rather unreflective manner, and to this extent we may see shame-culture morality as one of the major targets of the early dialogues, where Socrates is looking to get his interlocutors to examine their inherited beliefs. Finally, shame-based morality tends to produce a moral attitude that limits one’s concerns to appearing moral rather than actually being moral. If one’s motivation is to gain respect and to avoid shame, and if one’s fellow citizens believe stealing to be shameful, then one will refrain from stealing only when one believes others might witness the theft.\(^9\) Let us refer to these as the problems of fortuity, intellectual passivity, and duplicity respectively.

Some explanation, therefore, is needed for placing this seemingly dubious moral character next in line after the philosopher-king. Surely, it is not enough to say that the timocrat’s position is simply due to his soul being ruled by the second-best part, namely thumos. The question goes deeper than that. Throughout the Republic the second-best status of the spirited part has been consistently defended by pointing to its utility as an ally to reason, but with the introduction of the timocrat the question is raised whether the spirited part possesses any moral worth of its own, even when it is not serving reason. After all, one might think that, just as honor itself loses all value when divorced from the good and wisdom,\(^10\) so too does the honor-loving part

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9 B. Williams insists that even in Homeric culture shame is not only triggered by possible reactions by others, but also has been internalized to some extent (in Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 74-102). In other words, he sees the Greek *aidôs* as covering both shame and guilt (90), in contrast to, e.g., Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 17. For now we may pass over the question of whether we are doing Homeric shame-culture justice by describing its conception of shame as being exclusively externally directed, since our focus right now is on the timocrat of Books 8-9, whom Plato very clearly characterizes as being rather duplicitous indeed (*Rep*. 548b4-c2). I shall return to the question of internalization below.

10 *Apol*. 30b2-4; *Euthydemus* 279a-281c; cf. *Meno* 87e-88d; *Phaedo* 82c2-8.
of soul become worthless without the supervision of the good-loving and knowledge-loving part. An adequate response will, then, require nothing less than an account of the nature and value of the *thumos* itself along with its characteristic desire for esteem, and I believe we would do well by starting our examination of the *thumos* by comparing the two very different figures of the auxiliary and the timocrat. As I shall aim to show, these figures represent radically different conceptions of second-best morality.

*The Timocrat and the Auxiliary*

The timocrat and the auxiliary have sometimes been identified by scholars on account of their connection to the spirited part of soul. Nevertheless, there is an important difference between the two. The timocratic human being, like all human beings, is a mixture of all three appetitive, spirited and rational elements, but in such a way that the spirited part dominates. This is why the timocrat is above all *philotimos* and his characteristic motivation is the desire for honor and victory. Herein lies the chief difference between the timocrat and the auxiliary of the Kallipolis, and this deserves emphasis since nearly all scholars assume that the auxiliary is himself also ruled by spirit and thus an honor-lover, though he clearly is not. The idea behind this assumption seems to be this: Each class of citizens is said

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12 548c4-7; 546d8-7a2.

13 547e1-4; 548a3; 550b6.

14 545a2; 545b5; 548c7; 549a3; 550b7.

15 545a1; 548c6; 550b6.

16 E.g., Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics*, 232-5; Bernard Williams, “The Analogy of City and Soul in Plato’s Republic”, in *Exegesis and Argument*, ed. E.N. Lee, A.P.D. Mourelatos, and R.M. Rorty (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1973) at 263; John M. Cooper, “Plato’s Theory of Human Motivation,” *History of Philosophical Quarterly* 1 (1984): 3-21 at 202 (in Fine ed. reprint); and Christopher Bobonich, *Plato’s Utopia Recast. His Later Ethics and Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2002) at 501n96. Even Kamtekar (“Imperfect Virtue”) who stresses some important differences between the timocrat and the auxiliary thinks that the latter is also an “honor-lover” (e.g., 316). In my opinion this causes some problems for her main thesis that the auxiliaries choose virtue for its own sake, since she ends up having to say that they “value virtue as honorable” but that they nevertheless “value justice for its own sake” (338).
to correspond to a part of the soul, with the guardians corresponding to reason, the auxiliaries to spirit and the craftsmen and farmers to the appetitive part, and the auxiliaries’ correspondence to spirit must be understood to mean that they are ruled by spirit.

The details of the early education, however, make plain that the auxiliaries cannot be described as being ruled by spirit. For both the guardians and the auxiliaries complete the education in mousikê and gymnastikê described in Books 2 and 3, and the whole point of this education is to create a harmony among the parts of the educated person’s soul such that reason rules, obediently supported by the spirited part, over the appetites. Those who think that the auxiliaries are ruled by spirit presumably try to rewrite this description of the education in such a way that the auxiliaries’ spirit is educated to obey not its own reason but that of the guardians. For this understanding of the education allows one simultaneously to maintain that the education makes spirit obedient to reason and yet that nothing internal to the auxiliary’s own soul rules over its spirited part. For support defenders of this view might point to Rep. IX 590c-d:

Therefore, to insure that someone like that is ruled by something similar to what rules the best person, we say that he ought to be the slave of that best person who has a divine ruler within himself. It isn’t to harm the slave that we say he must be ruled, which is what Thrasymachus thought to be true of all subjects, but because it is better for everyone to be ruled by divine reason, preferably within himself and his own, otherwise imposed from without, so that as far as possible we all will be alike and friends governed by the same thing.

But this passage is far from saying that the only rational part ruling over the auxiliary’s spirit is that of the guardians. The explicit subject of this passage is not the auxiliary but the farmers and craftsmen. The “someone like this” (ho toioutos) at

17 Rep. 441c4-6.

18 Throughout this paper ‘education’ refers exclusively to the education in mousikê and gymnastikê as described in Books 2 and 3 of the Rep. There is no need to consider the mathematical and dialectical education of Book 7 here, since it does not concern the auxiliaries.

19 It is made clear that the auxiliaries also receive the education at Rep. 416a-b.

20 Rep. 410c5-412a2 and 441e3-442b3.

21 590c7-d7, Grube/Reeve translation, slightly revised.
590c7 picks up on banausia and kheirotekhnia at 590c1. This is also clear from the Socrates’ demand that they be “slaves” to the rulers – even in the qualified sense articulated here – since it is only the class of iron and bronze souled workers that is routinely associated with slaves. Moreover, the sequel to this passage also undermines this view, since there Socrates again emphasizes that education – which the farmers and craftsmen most likely do not receive – establishes a ruler within one’s own soul.

Thus, the auxiliary is not ruled by the spirited part, and consequently he cannot strictly speaking be characterized as an honor-lover (philotimos). For a soul is philotimos if and only if the spirited part rules over the other two. This is, in fact, a

22 See 463a-b and 547b-c.


24 Rep. 590d-591a: “And this rule for children of not letting them be free until we establish a constitution in them (en autois), just as in the city, and once we have cultivated his best part (to belististon) we establish this as a similar guardian and ruler in him (phulaka homoion kai arkhonta en autô(i)) as a replacement for our guardianship, and then we set him free.”

25 Rep. 581c1-5: “Further, I said, doesn’t this part rule in the souls of some, while the other part rules in the souls of others? […] And this is why (dia tauta dê) we say that the primary three kinds are wisdom-loving, victory-loving and profit-loving?” I believe the dia tauta is strong enough to warrant the bi-conditional: this is why we call people “philosophical”, etc. But lest someone think that this allows only the weak claim that if spirit rules, then one is philotimos (i.e., philonikos), consider the following. 581c1-2 give us: For all human beings x, R(reason, x) or R(spirit, x) or R(appetite, x), where R(x,y) means x rules in y’s soul. 581c4-5 gives us (at least) R(reason, x) → x is philosophos, R(spirit, x) → x is philotimos, and R(appetite, x) → x is philekerdes. But then if x is philotimos without it being the case that R(spirit, x), then either R(reason, x) or R(appetite, x), in which case x is both philotimos and, e.g., philekerdes, which would be bizarre. And compare the Ps.-Platonic definition of
great relief. If an auxiliary were *philotimos*, he would lead a rather frustrated life, since the guardian rulers receive more honors than he.\(^{26}\) More importantly, according to Plato’s definition, a *philo-* is a lover of all varieties of *x*. To this extent Plato’s understanding of *philo-* compounds differs considerably from our own use. Hence, Plato’s *oinophilos* is better translated as a glutton for wine than as an oenophile who discriminates and enjoys only the best wines.\(^{27}\) The *philotimos*, then, is a lover of *all kinds* of honor.\(^{28}\) We are told that if the *philotimoi* “can’t be generals, [they’ll] be captains, and, if they can’t be honored by people of importance and dignity, they put up with being honored by insignificant and inferior ones, for they desire the whole of honor”.\(^{29}\) The *philotimos* is indeed someone who desires all kinds of honor from all kinds of people, and to this extent this disposition is properly contrasted with that of loving only the honor bestowed by good and praiseworthy human beings. This hardly looks like a description of the auxiliary.\(^{30}\)

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*philotimia*: *Philotimia hexis psychês proetikê pasês dapanês aneu logismou* (Def. 416a). Although this is not Plato himself speaking, this looks Platonic in spirit, and *aneu logismou* surely cannot be said of the auxiliaries since they are guided both by both their own internal rational soul and by the external rational souls of the guardians.

\(^{26}\) 537b-d.

\(^{27}\) 475a4-6.

\(^{28}\) 475b4-7, 475a9-b3.

\(^{29}\) 475a8-b2.

\(^{30}\) One might urge in response that the *philotimos* is not *entirely* indiscriminate, and this would surely be right. He happily accepts the praise of inferior people only when the praise of superior people is out of reach, and of course this makes good intuitive sense. Just because the glutton won’t refuse any kind of food doesn’t mean that he never prefers one food to another, and we should expect these preferences to be similar to anyone else’s. If offered the choice between a chef salad and a bowl of flour, he will probably choose the former, but he would surely eat the latter if that were the best thing on the menu. The *philotimos* must make similar choices since it is hardly always possible to win the praise of both the better and the worse members of society. And so the auxiliary, although strictly speaking desiring all kinds of honor, would in practice only pursue honor from the guardians. This, however, is not only a less charitable interpretation of the auxiliaries, it also flies in the face of the previous argument: They cannot be *philotimos* because their spirited part is not in control.
And so it is reasonable that Plato never calls the auxiliaries *philotimos*, nor does he really emphasize honor with respect to them at all.\(^1\) That is to say, Socrates does at times described honors coming to the auxiliaries, but he does the same for the philosopher-guardians who are said to receive even greater honors.\(^2\) It is of course clear that the auxiliaries have a robust spirited part, since the whole point of the education is to train people with strong spirited and proto-rational parts of soul,\(^3\) but this is true of the guardians, too.

We may now conclude from this brief examination that the auxiliaries and the guardians have the same hierarchical structure to their souls: thanks to the education in *mousikê* and *gymnastikê* reason is in charge, supported by spirit, ruling over appetite. What, then, distinguishes the auxiliaries from the guardians? The difference is rooted in their natural constitutions. The gold-souled guardians are born with a different set of natural abilities, which can be seen primarily in their superior intelligence. This concerns, then, not a stronger or weaker spirited part but a more or less capable rational part. The auxiliaries do not possess a rational part that is adequate to engage properly in higher academic pursuits, as the philosopher-rulers are the only ones who successfully advance through the mathematical and dialectical education.\(^4\)

Guardians and auxiliaries, however, are not distinguished solely by means of their intelligence. The second distinguishing feature has to do with the integrity of the harmony and agreement in their souls, though the details here are difficult to pin down. In *Rep.* 412e4-414b6 we are told that in addition to having their memories assessed, the potential guardians are subjected to a serious of tests involving exposure to intense pleasures, pains and fears in order to see whether in such extreme

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\(^1\) Pace Myles F. Burnyeat, “The Truth of Tripartition,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 106/1 (2006): 1-22 at 11. Although Plato does occasionally describe how honors will be apportioned in the city, these honors are not directed at the auxiliaries more than at the guardians. On the contrary, the guardians are the ones who are said to receive the greatest honors. This is because both guardians and auxiliaries share robust spirited parts of soul.

\(^2\) *Rep.* 537b8-9, d3-4

\(^3\) *Rep.* 375e8-10, 535b1-3.

\(^4\) Just as not all who complete the education in *mousikê* and *gymnastikê* will go on to do mathematics (537b-c), so too not all who complete mathematics will be selected to do dialectic (537c-d).
circumstances they will abandon the beliefs acquired during the education. We are then told that the auxiliaries are the ones who do not pass all of these tests. This is striking because it is precisely the auxiliaries’ ability to preserve their beliefs “under all conditions” about what is to be feared or not that is repeatedly stressed as their characteristic virtue of courage. The only way I can see to reconcile these two statements is to take the domain of the beliefs in the latter statement seriously: pleasures, pains, fears and desires might influence the auxiliaries’ beliefs on other matters, but not about the proper objects of fear. This amounts to saying that while both the guardians and the auxiliaries have been educated in mousikē and gymnastikē, this education has been more effective in the guardians’ case. Nevertheless, the shortfalls of the auxiliaries’ education should not be exaggerated. A harmony is created in their souls too, which means that reason is ruling over appetites, but under certain conditions this harmony is disrupted, allowing lower impulses to alter their beliefs (though not those beliefs concerned with the objects of fear). In short, the auxiliaries’ souls share the same hierarchical structure that the guardians’ souls have, since this is the whole point of the education in mousikē and gymnastikē, and from this it follows that both classes are lovers of truth and wisdom. The critical differences

35 dia pantos 429b9, c8, 430b9. In 429c8-d1 Socrates explains that by “under all conditions” he has pains, pleasures, desires and fears in mind.

36 429a-c; 433c; cf. 442c.

37 Presumably this means that they preserve the beliefs described in Rep. 386a-388e, where Socrates describes how the education ought to shape their views on fear, while they would not necessarily under all circumstances preserve the other beliefs inculcated in the education, e.g., those beliefs concerned with the proper attitude towards money, food, drink and sex (389dff.) nor perhaps the beliefs about the gods (379aff.). But there are still some difficulties here that I think have not been sufficiently appreciated. For one thing, it is not clear to me that these domains are really all that distinct, mostly because anything can be described as a possible object of fear (or excluded from this class), e.g., ignorance, lawlessness, poverty. We are told, for example, that “losing money or something else of this sort” (sterēthēnai khrēmatōn e alloù tou tōn toioutōn) is something they would fear least of all (387e4-5), which seems to cross over into the other domain. Further, obedience to the rulers seems to be something that is characteristic of the auxiliaries (440d, 458b-c), but while promoting obedience to the rulers is indeed part of the education, it is not described in terms of fear, nor does its description occur in the section of the education outlining the objects of fear (386a-388e); rather it falls under the section on moderation and controlling appetites (389d).

38 Plato describes a similar scenario at Phaedo 81b1-c2.
are that the harmony of the auxiliaries’ souls contains certain fault-lines, and that although both are lovers of wisdom, they differ in how they express this love. Whereas the guardian rulers have the ability to satisfy this desire for truth fully by going out and discovering the truth themselves, the auxiliaries’ limited rational abilities allow them to express this desire only to a limited degree, by adopting certain true beliefs from the guardians and preserving them.39

It is worth emphasizing that by acknowledging that the auxiliary has the same structure of soul as the guardian, Plato is giving the term “virtue” a wider and more generous scope than has previously been thought. He is allowing for individuals who do not possess first-rate intellectual abilities to train and harmonize their souls in such a way that reason is in charge. Moreover, it follows from his psychological definitions of the four virtues that while the auxiliary is not wise, he may fairly be called courageous, moderate and just. He is just since each part of his soul is performing its proper task, and he is also moderate since the education has created homodoxia in his soul regarding which part should rule and which part should be

39 This theme of testing for fault-lines continues throughout Book 7. Final tests are applied even after the mathematical and dialectic training (539e). Likewise, not all of those who begin the mathematical and dialectical education are intellectually in a position to complete it. Certainly all of those whose progression halts due to either a lack of intellectual power or such psychological fault-lines become auxiliaries. Thus, Book 7 is in general agreement with 412-14 regarding the critical differences, though it also makes clear that the auxiliaries are not equally intellectually deficient, with some progressing further than others, though none making it all the way to the Good.

I would like to place particular emphasis on the fact that these auxiliaries, precisely because they do not know the Good, will still be dependent on the guardians as a source of their true opinions. But this should not mislead us into thinking that their own reason is not in control. The issue of whether one’s reason is in fact ruling is distinct from the question of whether one’s reason is a self-sufficient ruler. Moreover, one whose reason is in control while receiving expert advice is miles away from one whose reason is not in control but who is rather subject to the control of an external rational agent. This can be seen from the reasons for action that the external agent would supply in each case. A physician, for example, has to rule over a child’s appetites for him by telling him that the medicine tastes good, since the child’s life is oriented towards pleasure, whereas it suffices to tell the rational patient that taking medicine is the right thing to do. Thus, while the guardians simply rule over the bronze and iron souled individuals, they merely assist the auxiliaries rule themselves.
ruled. He is also courageous since the education ensures that his spirited part preserves reason’s declarations on the proper objects of fear.

The auxiliary, therefore, is someone whose reason is in control without being quite up to philosophical standards in terms of its ability to engage in intellectual activity, and he represents the model of imperfect virtue to which those not blessed with first-rate rational faculties should aspire. By contrast, the four degenerate cities and souls aim to represent four other kinds of moral agent that one who is naturally fitted to become a philosopher might become instead. Hence, the democrat occasionally does philosophy, and we can surely infer from the account of how the tyrant maneuvers into and remains in power that the tyrant is extremely clever. Socrates’ discussion of justice in the Republic is, after all, aimed at the immediate audience gathered in Polemarchus’ house, namely Adeimantus, Glaucon, Thrasymachus, Polemarchus, and the rest, and it is doubtful that any of these men

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40 Rep. 442c9-d7 (cf. 433a8-b4). In fact, there is some tension here between their possession of homodoxia and their performance on the tests for guardianship. As we saw above, some (perhaps all) auxiliaries are said to fail certain tests relating to intense (cf. 413e1 basanizontas polu mallon ê khuson en puri) pleasures, pains and fears, and this surely amounts to a deficiency in moderation. Here again I am inclined to say that by exaggerating the auxiliaries’ shortfalls we risk overlooking an important moral category, namely that of those individuals who generally – apart from extreme circumstances – retain rational control over themselves. See following note.

41 Rep. 442b10-c2. Plato is often understood to be advancing a theory of the unity of the virtues here such that none of the other three virtues can exist without wisdom. On this understanding, the auxiliary is not just because his reason is not performing its proper task, which is to be wise and know the good, nor is he even courageous because courage is taken to be the “preservation in the face of pleasures and pains of the wise Reasoning part about what is to be feared” (Bobonich, Plato’s Utopia Recast, 43, my emphasis; see also John M. Cooper, Reason and Emotion. Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 139-41). Yet the psychological account that Plato gives of the virtues does not require this excessively intellectualist interpretation. The definition of courage, for example, simply requires that reason’s dictates on the objects of fear be preserved, with no indication that the dictating reason must be wise. Such latitude is indeed desirable, since it would be unreasonable to suppose that intellectual brilliance is a necessary condition for this harmonious relationship of the parts, and those non-philosophers who do manage to achieve this harmonious relation seem deserving of terms of moral approval, especially since most moral agents will fall into this class of non-philosophers. One might argue that one of the benefits of the tripartite soul along with this psychological account of the virtues is that Plato is now in the welcome position of being able to account for the virtuous behavior of non-philosophers.
while listening to the discussion of the Kallipolis and its citizens, were imagining that his position would be merely that of an auxiliary.\textsuperscript{42} The timocrat, therefore, is presented as the second-best type of moral agent that such a sufficiently rational person can become. By contrast, the auxiliary represents the best kind of moral agent that the second-best kind of person, i.e., one whose intellect is only second-rate, can become.

\textit{The Education of the Spirited Part}

The question remains how the auxiliary can be said to correspond to the spirited part if he is not ruled by it. This might just be a point on which the analogy between the city and the individual breaks down. After all, if the analogy is to be taken strictly, the auxiliaries wouldn’t have rational and appetitive parts at all. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasizing that the auxiliary is not likened to the spirited part \textit{per se} but to a spirited part that has been educated by \textit{mousikê} and \textit{gymnastikê}. We must then take a closer look at what education is supposed to achieve in the spirited part of soul. As we have seen, what Plato repeatedly emphasizes is that the education makes the spirited part obedient to reason while simultaneously strengthening it so that it might effectively oppose the appetitive part,\textsuperscript{43} but this harmonization of the soul does not account for what many scholars take to be the spirited part’s most important acquisition, namely an ideal image of oneself. There appear to be three principal reasons for this view, which I shall refer to as the internalization view. First, Plato’s willingness to attribute beliefs not only to reason but also to the spirited and appetitive parts\textsuperscript{44} loosely supports the conclusion that the spirit has its own ideals. More importantly, the \textit{thumos} must be in possession of such an ideal image, it is argued, if it is to be capable of responding to certain situations with righteous indignation, which is an angry or wrathful response to a perceived

\textsuperscript{42} It is doubtful, of course, that Socrates himself thought that, e.g., Polemarchus instantiated a gold-souled individual, but that is beside the point. The argument of the \textit{Republic} proceeds by offering a selection of lives, and since Polemarchus surely identifies himself with this nature, he would not see the three classes in the Kallipolis as presenting any real choice \textit{for him}. This is provided only by the five kinds of city and soul.

\textsuperscript{43} E.g., \textit{Rep.} 410b5ff., 441e-442b.

\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Rep.} 442c9-d2, 571d2, 603a1-2, 605c1-2.
affront to one’s sense of self-worth. This ideal self-conception is supposed to be forged in one’s spirited part by the habituation described in the education. Finally, perhaps the main textual support for the internalization view is drawn from one of the examples that Socrates gives in his argument for the division of the soul, namely Odysseus’ witnessing Penelope’s maids cavorting with her suitors. For the reference to this Homeric episode, brief though it is, is clearly intended to show an opposition between reason and the spirited part, and this opposition, it is argued, suggests that the spirited part, which is calling Odysseus to immediate action, must have its own sense of self which can be offended and get angry even when reason is urging it to stay calm.

Much, however, would seem to speak against the internalization view. The question of where on the literal-metaphorical spectrum this language of beliefs existing in the non-rational parts of soul is to be situated is a notorious matter of debate which would take us too far afield to pursue rigorously here; it suffices to point out that the education does not seem intended to provide the spirited part with

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46 Homer Od. XX.1ff.

47 441b4-c2.

48 The example of Leontius is then understood in similar terms. See below.

such a self-conception. To be sure, habituation is an important part of the education, but it is not clear to what extent the belief-content of this education is going into the spirited part. The education has two parts, each of which contains two sub-parts. Mousikê has one part concerned with content (logoi) and another concerned with rhythm and melody, while gymnastikê has both athletics and what we might call lifestyle-training. Of these four components, it is reasonable to assume that the entire discussion of content (logoi) is directed at forming not the spirited part but the proto-rational part, which is the other explicitly mentioned aspect of the soul that profits from the education, while lifestyle-training is aimed at training the appetitive part of soul. This leaves the middle two as the techniques aimed at training the spirited part, and this conclusion is born out by the account given of them. Athletics is supposed to “arouse” it, while the explicit goals of rhythm and melody are

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50 Cf. the concession in Annas’ description: “Spirit is perhaps best characterized by means of two notions which Plato does not himself stress (and has no very appropriate terminology for): it involves some reference to the self, and some reference to ideals” (128).

51 Described in Rep. 376e-398b.

52 Described in Rep. 398b-400e.

53 This distinction of gymnastikê is also noted by James Adam (The Republic of Plato, 2 vols. (2 edn.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963)), who refers to the latter as “the hygienic aspect of gymnastic” (1.171). Socrates devotes most of the description to life-style training (403c-405c), turning only briefly to athletics (410b).

54 The education is clearly said to promote to philomathes kai philosophon (376bff.). The summary of the education in Rep. 441e7-442b3 seems to identify this and to logistikon, but there are problems here, as others have noted (e.g., Adam, The Republic of Plato, at 1.108 and 254; cf. Irwin, Plato’s Moral Theory, at 330n28). For example, we are told that the latter power is absent in children (441a7-b1) while the former must be present in children since it is one of the targets of the education. An identification with qualifications is necessary, therefore, and I suggest we understand the to philomathes to be the proto-rational part or power of soul – the part that becomes rational with maturity. One interesting corollary of this suggestion is that when reason ultimately enters the scene, it is not a tabula rasa; rather, it already has a number of opinions that it acquired during its proto-rational gestation.

55 I have argued this elsewhere, see James Wilberding, “Curbing One’s Appetites”, in Plato and the Divided Self, ed. Rachel Barney, Tad Brennan, and Charles Brittain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

56 410b5-8.
courage and co-operation, which are characteristic of the spirited part. But these two components do not really seem capable of forging an ideal self-image. If this is indeed how the education is supposed to work, then it would seem that it is the proto-rational soul, if anything, that is acquiring a conception of its ideal self.

Moreover, the internalization view would seem to cause serious psychological problems. Say a guardian’s spirited part does internalize some ideal that dictates how it should act in a certain situation, e.g., when asked a question his spirited part dictates that he ought to tell the truth because doing so accords with its internalized ideals. There will inevitably be situations where this spirited dictate is opposed by reason, since telling the truth is not invariably the right thing to do. But such opposition would become problematic because even in the guardians, the thumos appears the stronger part of soul, so that any such genuine opposition between reason and spirit would risk ending in mutiny.

Finally, the internalization view leads to a very implausible understanding of the Odysseus example and simply contradicts the details of the Leontius case-study.

57 399a-c; cf. 400a1.

58 In other words, the three parts of soul are unified by two intermediates. Reason and spirit are unified by mousikê whose one part (content) is directed at reason and whose other part (melody and rhythm) is directed at spirit, while spirit and appetite are united by gymnastikê, whose athletic part is directed at spirit and whose life-style part is directed at appetite.

59 One might still question whether the proto-rational part is really receiving an ideal concept of self as opposed to acquiring beliefs about what is right and wrong. Socrates’ concern for how and when first person narratives are employed in the education (392cff.) does suggest some sense of self is in the making.

60 Rep. 331c8.

61 Ruling in the Republic is emphatically not a function of strength. This is obvious in the case of the city, where the auxiliaries are clearly the strongest class, but it is also made rather clear for the soul, as well. There is no mention of weakening the spirit in the education, for example. Rather, it must be strengthened, since it is reason’s ally. Moreover, if strength and rule were to go hand in hand, then the guardian’s reason should never need spirit’s help, since this would indicate that reason is weaker than appetite and hence not in control.

62 One might object that reason will prevail as long as the spirited part has been made obedient to reason, but once this powerful part obsessed with honor is granted its own conception of what is honorable and shameful, it is not clear to me that it can be made obedient to anything else.
For according to this view, the opposition between reason and spirit is supposed to be generated in the following way. Odysseus, while trying to get comfortable sleeping on the floor of the portico of his own home, witnesses the prelude to some licentious games to be played out by Penelope’s maids and the suitors to his wife and gets upset because the spirited part’s own sense of propriety has been offended. But surely Odysseus is understandably upset, which is to say that he is rationally justified in regarding these circumstances as deplorable. In other words the view under consideration explains the opposition between reason and spirit by attributing to each opposed opinions and ideals, but I fail to see how Odysseus could not rationally believe that these goings-on are shameful. The case of Leontius drives this point home. The internalization view would have it that Leontius’s spirited part houses a conception of his ideal self which is opposed to ogling corpses so that when he does give in to the temptation to do so, it gets upset and angry. But this is not how Plato explains the example:

“Therefore, his anger thus represents a traditional view of things to which his continued self-esteem is tied: he will feel bad about himself unless he acts at once to vindicate his honour. Yet his reason does not support this traditional view.”

It is rather reason’s ideals that are being transgressed and not the spirited part’s. In light of all of these problems, it might be better to look for an alternative understanding of the spirited part and its education.

Consider, therefore, this alternative. The spirited part is essentially social and other-directed; it is wholly dependent on the views of others. The education of the spirited part is not a matter of internalizing certain ideals, but of directing its reverent gaze, as it were. This doesn’t mean that no internalization is going on, nor does it

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63 Cf. Cooper, “Plato’s Theory of Human Motivation,” at 203: “His anger thus represents a traditional view of things to which his continued self-esteem is tied: he will feel bad about himself unless he acts at once to vindicate his honour. Yet his reason does not support this traditional view.”

64 Rep. 439e5-440b7.

65 See again Renaut’s gloss on Leontius cited above.


67 And cf. Plato’s psychological definition of courage as preserving reason’s declarations about what is to be feared and what is not (Rep. 442c1-2).
mean that the spirited part can only fulfill its function when other people are present. For, thanks to the personification of the tripartition of the soul, the *thumos* can view reason itself as a kind of individual whose opinions matter, and reason is certainly capable of internalizing certain ideals. Thus, if the spirited part cares about what reason believes, and reason believes that lying in a particular situation would be wrong, then lying would upset the spirited part.

This understanding of the education of the *thumos* not only effectively deals with the three problems associated with the spirited part’s love of honor and aversion to shame outlined above, but it also seems to capture a larger Platonic trend. One of Socrates’ aims in the *Gorgias*, for example, is to criticize his interlocutor’s attachment to public opinions on moral matters and in particular their disposition to feel shame at contradicting these opinions. This is the problem of fortuity introduced above. Yet his aim in this dialogue is not to scorn the all too human pre-occupation with esteem and shame. Rather, he rejects only its externally directed focus, and he wishes to preserve the concept of shame itself by means of an intellectual rehabilitation. Near the close of the dialogue we see Socrates closing in on this new conception:

“Yes, Callicles, as long as he has that one thing that you’ve often agreed he should have: as long as he has protected himself against having spoken or done anything unjust relating to either men or gods. For this is the self-protection that you and I often have agreed avails the most. Now if someone were to refute me and prove that I am unable to provide this protection for myself or anyone else, I would feel shame at being refuted, whether this happened in the presence of many or of a few, or even one on one.”

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68 See the discussion of personification in Rachana Kamtekar, “Speaking with the Same Voice as Reason: Personification in Plato’s Psychology,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 31 (2006), 167-202. As she suggests, “assigning motivations to distinct and evaluatively loaded personae facilitates disowning some of one’s motivations and identifying with others” (185) and in this way is meant to influence our behavior. To this I would merely want to add that this is directed primarily at the spirited part. By describing the collection of the soul’s parts as a kind of social community containing “evaluatively loaded personae” Plato helps the spirited part see the soul itself as a self-sufficient arena for the achievement of esteem.

69 *Gorg.* 522c7-d7 (Zeyl trans. slightly revised). It has been suggested to me by a sympathetic audience member that the sense of this last line (*kai monos hupo monou*) might be much stronger: “and even alone [refuted] by myself.” This is clearly a welcome suggestion, but it does not seem to be the most obvious way of understanding such phrases involving the repetition of forms of *monos* (cf. Plato *Symp.*
What Socrates seems to be suggesting here is a radical reprogramming of our aversion to shame. It should be triggered not by the fortuitous opinions of one’s fellow citizens but by the reliable verdict of reason. We might see this redirection of shame as a likely consequence of Plato’s views on moral expertise. For one should care only about the opinions of the relevant experts, but there do not seem to be any experts in morality. This gap in public knowledge, however, is filled in a way by reason and the processes of *elenchus* and dialectic, which aim to establish right opinion and knowledge and which therefore should be the new focus of our concern for esteem. This intellectual reprogramming of our concern for esteem also solves the problems of intellectual passivity and duplicity. If one’s own reason is the esteemed observer, then one is never in a position to be duplicitous, nor is this necessarily intellectually passive, since one’s reason might well have acquired its beliefs through rigorous reflection and examination.

Such an understanding of the spirited part could also accommodate the examples discussed above. Odysseus’ inclination to anger can be explained without assuming that the *thumos* has internalized a conception of its ideal self. Odysseus is in a difficult position because he believes both that that the behavior he is witnessing is insulting and that rectifying this situation requires waiting for the right moment. These are both rational beliefs, which is to say they are present in the rational part of

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217b3-4, Lysis 214c5-6, Laws 835c8; Sophocles Ajax 1283; Isocrate In Euth. 7.5-6 and Trapez. 50.5-6; Euripides Andromacha 1083; Demosthenes De corona 137.4, Contra Onetorem I 20.5-6 and Contra Phormionen 32.6). Cairns (Aidôs) puts forward the view that “the ‘one man alone’ [his translation of *monou*] of the hypothesis would merely be the catalyst – Socrates would be ashamed of his failure regardless of its public or private status. Nevertheless, the normal association of *aischunê* with an audience is presupposed, and Plato does not actually go so far as explicitly to acknowledge the possibility of self-directed shame in the absence of any external catalyst” (380). I think Cairns is right to emphasize both the need for an external observer and the possibility of Socrates’ feeling shame in isolation, but he seems to be fudging by categorizing this observer as a mere catalyst. The personified psychology of the Republic, which allows one’s own reason to serve as the external observer, is what allows Plato to steer past this apparent impasse.

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his soul. His spirited part of soul, being essentially other-directed, is looking to and, as it were, pursuing the honor and praise of his rational part. The conflict between reason and spirit comes about because the latter has a difficult time dealing with the former’s beliefs. The spirited part only has ears for reason’s beliefs concerning honor and shame, and so the belief that the current situation is insulting is going to evoke a spirited response in a way that the belief that the time to set things right is later will not. This leads to a conflict between reason and spirit. Recall that it was difficult to see how on the internalization view a forceful spirited part in possession of its own internalized ideals could ever be subdued by reason in those cases where their two ideals conflict. Yet that is exactly what Odysseus accomplishes in Socrates’ example, and this externally directed conception of the *thumos* provides an easy explanation of how this is possible. He simply has to call to mind that it would be more shameful not to behave rationally. Moreover, this reading of the Odysseus example would seem to be confirmed by the Leontius example, which as we saw above does not make use of any evaluative content housed in the spirited part of the soul.72

The education of the spirited part of soul might be summed up as follows. The spirited part is essentially social and other-directed, and for this reason its education is focused on directing its gaze rather than getting it to internalize certain ideals. An uneducated spirited part naturally directs its focus to all external onlookers, including its own reason,73 with the aim of winning their respect. Plato does not offer any psychological details as to how the spirited part manages to discern either reason’s views or those of other people; he is more interested in outlining how we must deal with the spirited part given that it does do this. What we must do is train it to direct all of its attention to reason so that feelings of shame and pride are

72 *Rep.* 440a9-b4 and cf. 442b10-c2. Leontius’ case has been offered as support for the claim that the *thumos* is not only interested in the esteem bestowed by others, but also has the internal capacity for *self-esteem* (e.g., Cairns, *Aidôs*, 383; Cooper, “Plato’s Theory of Human Motivation,” 19-21), since Leontius’ drama appears to be played out in the absence of any audience. Burnyeat (“The Truth of Tripartition”) has resisted this, insisting that the *thumos* is essentially social and other-directed, so that “we have to suppose one or more onlookers who also heard him denounce his base desires” (11). I would suggest that Burnyeat is right about the *thumos* being “essentially social”, but it is enough to admit that reason is an onlooker.

73 It seems to follow from *Rep.* 440b4-8 that the spirited part sees reason, but not appetite, as a kind of *natural* superior. The education is meant to reinforce and develop this natural relationship.
triggered by reason’s judgments rather than the fortuitous opinions of others, and the education aims to accomplish precisely this. For the successfully educated individual, therefore, anger and indignation are not entirely unconscious and automatic processes that flow from internalized ideals housed outside of reason, rather these emotional responses depend on prior rational judgments.\textsuperscript{74}

Timocratic Virtue

Whereas the auxiliary is someone whose spirited part is for the most part responsive to the judgments of his reason, with the timocrat spirit rules over reason and seeks the esteem primarily of the rulers, whoever they might be, and to a lesser extent that of the general public.\textsuperscript{75} This psychological constitution makes the timocrat a problematic figure. As we have seen in the introduction, he has a duplicitous character and his moral views, if we might call them that, are a product of the whims of society. Why, then, does this figure occupy the second position in the hierarchy of virtue and vice? The answer surely has something to do with the structure of his soul – that spirit is in charge rather than appetite – but why should the timocratic psychological structure be ethically superior to the oligarch’s, for whom appetite is in charge?

It cannot be because the timocrat possesses more of the four cardinal virtues than the oligarch, since as the four virtues are defined psychologically in Book 4 the timocrat, unlike the auxiliary, cannot possibly possess any of them. He clearly does not have wisdom, since this is defined as the “knowledge of what is advantageous for each part and for the whole soul.”\textsuperscript{76} Nor does he fit the definitions of moderation or justice. He is not just, since justice is each part performing its own proper task, and this would involve reason ruling over the other two parts, since this is reason’s natural

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{74} This goes in the direction of Stoicism by making emotions depend on rational judgments, but while the Stoics explain emotions universally in this way, Plato insists that the rationality of emotions is a goal only to be achieved via proper education.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Rep. 549a3. These rulers are explicitly said not to be wise (Rep. 547e1). This external focus can also be witnessed even in the timocrat’s Werdegang in which he is formed by the constant confrontation of others’ opinions concerning the admirableness of his own father’s life (Rep. 549c-550b).
\item \textsuperscript{76} Rep. 442c
\end{itemize}
task.\textsuperscript{77} And moderation, defined as the ruled parts agreeing to be ruled by the ruler, can hardly be found in the timocrat, since his appetitive part, longing as it does for wealth, surely does not agree that spirit should frustrate its attempts to achieve it. Perhaps the most likely candidate for a virtue in the Homeric timocrat is courage, since this virtue is located in the \textit{thumos}, but not even this seems to be found in him. For psychological courage is defined as the preservation through pleasures and pains of reason’s declaration on what is and is not to be feared.\textsuperscript{78}

But even if the timocrat’s soul does not strictly instantiate any of the four virtues as defined in Book 4, he nevertheless seems to have some moral advantage in Plato’s eyes over the other figures on account of his spirited part’s dominance. Once again, then, we are confronted with the question of whether the spirit’s domination over the appetites has any meaning when the rational part is not in control. Plato seems to think it does, but why? It’s not because timocratic motivation is necessarily a better guide to action.\textsuperscript{79} Plato’s view, I would suggest, seems rather to be that the desire for public esteem is an intrinsically more admirable motivation than the desire for wealth.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Rep.} 442d

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Rep.} 442b10-c2: \textit{kai andreion dê oimai toutō(i) tō(i) merei kaloumen hena ekaston, hotan autou to thumoeides diasō(i)zê dia te lupôn kai édonôn to hupo tôn logon paraggelthen deinon te kai µê}. This passage also makes clear that it is not the spirited part’s beliefs that are preserved but reason’s. Of course, the timocrat certainly follows reason’s declarations in some sense. For in all four of the degenerate souls reason is still operating and making declarations, but it functions as an instrument in the soul and is as it were employed by whichever part of the soul is dominant in order to achieve that part’s end (cf. 553c-d). Thus, the timocrat is surely following reason’s stratagems for achieve its own goals, but in this loose sense all four degenerate souls are obedient to reason, since this simply amounts to using reason effectively as an instrument of one’s own conception of the good. It would seem, then, that if courage is to be counted as a virtue at all, reason’s declarations have to serve more than an instrumental role.

\textsuperscript{79} A case in point: Consider a youth who looks up to one or more individuals who would hold him in higher esteem if he were to buy a gun and shoot someone. If this youth is motivated by the desire for their esteem, he might do it, whereas a motivation for wealth might actually prevent him from making this mistake.

\textsuperscript{80} If this suggestion is right, Plato would agree with James Martineau, \textit{Types of Ethical Theory}, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889) and Michael Slote, \textit{Morals from Motives} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), about the possibility of ranking our moral motivations, but unlike Martineau and Slote
This claim is not toothless, as the following example shows. Consider two men who are passionate connoisseurs and collectors of art and who have a particularly strong admiration for Marcel Duchamp’s *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* (1912), so strong in fact that they are both contemplating commissioning its theft from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Let us say that in the end neither of them goes through with the idea, but for different reasons. While one of them was too concerned that people would find out and think badly of him, the other is simply too cheap to part with the princely sum that such a commissioned theft would command. What grounds could Plato possibly have for claiming that the former is a more admirable agent than the latter? Why shouldn’t rather the desire for wealth have a slight moral edge over the desire for honor insofar as it, at least, is not duplicitous? After all, if the only thing holding one back from action is its price-tag, one can be honest about it and say so.

Plato seems to want to ground the admirableness of this motivation in the level of order and unity that it creates in the agent’s soul. As the Kallipolitical soul’s virtuous state was a function of the harmony of its parts, so too are the levels of depravity of the degenerate souls to be explained in terms of the increasing amounts of strife and tension between their parts. The timocrat harbors a shameful love of money, but this hardly compares to the internal civil war taking place in the oligarch’s soul, in which the necessary appetites are repeatedly described as using force to suppress all unnecessary appetites. This focus on unity and harmony of the soul, however, bears no obvious connection to what we usually recognize as important features of a moral life. In other words, the well-known problem of the gap stretching between Plato’s psychological definition of virtue and the common

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Plato would of course deny that the right motivation wholly determines the goodness of an act. As Slote puts it, Plato’s theory is not completely agent-based (7-8), and see below.

81 As has been pointed out before, e.g., by Frede (“Die ungerechten Verfassungen”), who points to the “das zunehmende moralische Chaos” as what is responsible for the assessment of the four degenerate souls: “Während bestimmte Ziele wie Tapferkeit oder Reichtum noch disziplinierende Wirkungen ausüben, wenn sie auch die inneren Spannungen nicht beseitigen, läßt eine Gleichberechtigung aller Lüste [as is the case in the democratic soul] keine feste Lebensordnung mehr zu” (268).

82 *Rep.* 548a5-c2.

83 See especially *Rep.* 554d9-e2.
conception of virtue manifests itself again here. In the Kallipolitical soul wisdom helps bridge this gap, since knowledge – or in the case of the auxiliaries, true opinions – of what is good will presumably lead one whose rational part is amicably in control of his soul to recognizably virtuous actions. But with the degenerate souls, for which an appeal to knowledge or even true opinions of what is good can no longer be made, the moral relevance of psychic unity once again seems questionable.

If we put Platonic unity aside, however, we might well find other reasons for agreeing with Plato’s ranking of the timocrat that are more in tune with our own moral sensibilities. Indeed, there does seem to be a moral core to timocratic motivation. For it requires that one take the evaluative judgments of others seriously. To be sure, caring about what others think is not the same as caring about others, but by granting honor a central role in your practical decisions you are in effect attaching importance to other people’s views and allowing this to be a determining factor in your behavior. Some qualification, however, is called for. For one could easily object that the timocrat is not really taking his fellow citizens’ views seriously since he pays no attention to them when they are not around. But even if this objection reveals a deficiency in his concern for the entire class of their evaluative judgments, it can still be urged that the timocrat does genuinely care about their evaluative judgments of him. This motive often incurs blame because it is confused with other motives where good public reputation is only a means to an end. Presumably most people who worry about their reputations do so because they are in fact concerned about the consequences that follow from a bad reputation. For example, someone might refrain from commissioning an art theft on account of a (proximate) motivation to avoid having the members of his society categorize him as a criminal, but this motivation concerned with public opinion might well be itself due to an ultimate motivation to avoid the punishment that can only be dealt out when the society has grounds for


believing him to be a criminal. The agent who is concerned about possible future punishment and the agent who is concerned about what the public thinks of him for its own sake seem to be worlds apart.86

**Conclusion**

Plato’s psychological definitions of virtue in *Republic* Book 4 encourage us to think of virtue in terms of various kinds of motivations. In some sense Plato is giving us a motivation-based account of virtue. To be sure, Plato also thinks that there is a moral reality that transcends our psychological lives. Even with the best of intentions one can end up doing something that is objectively wrong. In other words, motivations all by themselves are not reliable guides to action. Even the best motivational structure, where appetites and the desire for esteem have been made subservient to reason’s desire for knowledge and the good, is not enough; wisdom—or at least true opinions concerning what is good—must also be present. Thus, we might say that there is both a subjective and an objective component to Plato’s ethics, and in a genuinely moral life these two must be brought together in a reliable manner. Only one motivational structure allows for this—the one in which the dominant desire for knowledge and good is ultimately coupled with the knowledge (or opinion in the case of the auxiliaries) of what is good.87 None of the degenerate souls, therefore, can lay claim to this objective side, and this is surely one of the reasons why Plato

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86 One also might be tempted to object that the oligarch is equally concerned with others’ evaluative judgments insofar as, e.g., market forces are a function of people’s desires. Without giving a full analysis of this matter, the following observations should serve to cast serious doubt on this suggestion. First, the oligarch is not looking to acquire expensive objects; he wants money itself. While the former obsession might reflect via market forces the values and desires of a larger community, the latter does not. On the contrary, if he happens to own something valued, he might sell it. Second, someone whose overwhelming motivation is money would be willing to pursue it by shameful or even illegal means. Finally, even if market prices did reliably reflect evaluative judgments as opposed to base desires (which I doubt), the oligarch is never consciously considering their evaluative judgments as such.

87 There are familiar difficulties surrounding the issue of why the philosopher-kings pursue the good practically rather than just theoretically, which are related to the question of why they go back down in the cave. Such questions are beyond the scope of this paper, but see Richard Kraut, “Return to the Cave: *Republic* 519-521,” in *Plato 2. Ethics, Politics, Religion and the Soul*, ed. Gail Fine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 235-54.
underlines that all four of these cities and souls illustrate forms of vice. But things look slightly better on the subjective side. The timocrat’s soul bears some important structural similarities to the Kallipolitical soul, and we have now seen that these similarities seem ethically relevant – both on Plato’s terms and our own.

The timocrat, therefore, and the shame-culture that he is supposed to represent, justifiably occupy the second position. To speak Platonically, we might describe him as being a mere image or reflection of the truly virtuous man. Just as the prisoners in the cave, politicians bereft of their own views on what is good and bad, devote themselves to figuring out what appears good and bad to others, so too does the timocrat, instead of trying to be good, focus his efforts on trying to appear good to others. Plato would have us pity the timocrat for his vain concern with appearances, but we should also appreciate that it is how things appear to others that he is so concerned about. And surely being concerned with what others think is better than having no concern for what others think.

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88 Rep. 445c1-d2, 449a1-5.