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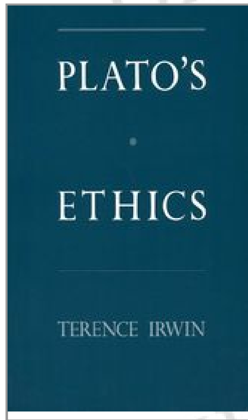

Plato's Ethics
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Republic IV: The Division of the Soul

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[–] Abstract and Keywords

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the moral relevance of the theory of the division of soul. Firstly, it is examined why it is impossible to reconcile this doctrine with instrumentalism. Secondly, how the desires of the three different parts of the soul may be harmonised is investigated. Thirdly, after an elaborate study of the different parts of the soul, the reasons for this tripartition of the soul are introduced. Finally, it is examined whether or not the partition of the soul results in different kinds of happiness.

Keywords: Appetitive part, Division of the soul, Plato, Soul, Happiness, Instrumentalism, Rational part, Republic, Spirited part

143. The Argument of Book IV

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 143. The Argument of Book IV

At the end of Book IV Plato claims to have presented a first sketch of his answer to

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Thrasymachus.[1] The argument supporting his answer proceeds in three main stages: First, Plato argues for a division of the soul into three 'parts' or 'kinds'.[2] Next, he argues from this division for an account of the four major virtues. Finally, he appeals to this account of the virtues for his answer to Thrasymachus.

It is reasonable to begin by trying to understand the division of the soul, since this is used in the account of the virtues. First, we must examine Plato's principle of division so that we can tell when, by his criteria, we must recognize one part or two parts of the soul. Then we must ask whether the right application of these criteria leads us to the sorts of parts that Plato recognizes.

We cannot fully understand this division of the soul, however, without also examining the account of the virtues. In describing the virtues, Plato takes for granted some description of the parts of the soul; but his description of the virtues also says more about the character of the different parts and so completes the description of the parts. For this reason, our description of the parts of the soul has to proceed in stages, showing how different stages of Plato's argument require some addition or change.

144. Plato's Argument for the Division of the Soul

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 144. Plato's Argument for the Division of the Soul
Plato takes it to be obvious that there are different mental states and activities (learning, being angry, having appetites), but he does not take it to be obvious that these states and activities belong to different parts or aspects of the soul (436a8–b3). His argument for different parts must, therefore, be intended to show something more than that there are different types of mental activities.[3] We need to know what Plato means by speaking of different parts and how successfully he argues for their existence.

The main points in Plato's argument for a division between the appetitive and the rational parts of the soul are these: **(p.204)**

1. The same thing cannot do or undergo contraries in respect of the same aspect of itself (436b8).
2. Acceptance and pursuit of x are contrary to rejection and avoidance of x (437b1–5).
3. Appetite (for instance, hunger or thirst), willing, and wishing for x are acceptance and pursuit of x (437b7–c7).
4. Refusal, unwillingness, and non-appetite are rejection and avoidance of x (437d8–10).
5. Sometimes we both have an appetite for drink and refuse to drink (439c).
6. Since these states are contraries—by (2) through (4)—and so cannot belong to the same aspect of the soul—by (1)—they must belong to different aspects of the soul (439d–e).

Plato defends this *Principle of Contraries*, stated in step 1, by arguing that if an archer both moves and keeps still, or if a top both spins and does not move, that must be because they are moving one part and keeping another part still (436c7–e7, 439b8–c1).[4]

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The Principle of Contraries assumes that contrary motions must be traced to distinct states of the subject. If we reject the Principle of Contraries, we will have to say that the archer is both moving and still, without any further explanation.

These examples suggest that the Principle of Contraries rests on a demand about explanation. When we trace contraries back to different parts, we find the property 'by which' or 'in respect of which' the subject has its contrary properties. Plato discusses these sorts of explanations in the *Phaedo*.[5] He insists that x's being taller than y should be explained by appeal to the tallness in x rather than by some answer such as 'by a head', which explains being taller no better than it explains being shorter (*Phd* 96e–97b, 100c–101c). If this constraint on explanation is applied to the argument about contraries, it implies that if we seek to explain x's being F and being G (where G is contrary to F), but all we can offer is some one property H that explains being F no more than it explains being G, then we have explained neither being F nor being G. We do not, for instance, explain Socrates' being taller (than Phaedo) and shorter (than Simmias) by saying he is taller and shorter 'by a head'; 'by a head' explains neither of these properties, since it explains neither in contrast to the other.[6] We must say instead that Socrates is taller by being tall in relation to Phaedo and shorter by being short in relation to Simmias. In giving the right sort of explanation, we find two different properties 'by which' or 'in respect of which' the subject has the contraries that were to be explained. In the terminology of *Republic* IV, these two different properties 'by which' or 'in respect of which' mark out two 'parts' or 'kinds' in the subject.

Once the Principle of Contraries is accepted, Plato applies it to desires. He assumes that accepting and aiming at something is contrary to rejecting and avoiding the same thing (437b1–6), and then argues that desiring counts as accepting and aiming at its object, whereas aversion counts as rejecting and avoiding its object (437b7–d1); hence desire and aversion count as contraries falling within the scope of the Principle of Contraries. If we want to understand **(p.205)** why S has a desire for x as opposed to an aversion to x, we cannot appeal to some property of S that would equally explain an aversion to x. The same is true (mutatis mutandis) if we want to explain why S has an aversion to x as opposed to a desire for x; and so if S has both a desire for x and an aversion to x, we must appeal to different properties, parts, or aspects of S. Since properties of S's soul are the ones that are relevant to explaining S's desires and aversions, this appeal to the Principle of Contraries seems to show that we must recognize different parts of the soul.

These general points about explanation, however, do not tell us what different parts of the soul we must recognize, for we still do not know what we are trying to explain. Plato says we are trying to explain contrary motions, but what is the relevant sort of contrariety?

145. Conflicts Between Desires

Plato tries to describe the type of contrariety between desires that he has in mind (437b–439a). He describes acceptance and rejection, and pursuit and avoidance, as contrary tendencies in relation to a given object, and among acceptances and pursuits he

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mentions 'thirst and hunger and, in general, the appetites, and again willing and wishing' (437b7–8); among rejections and avoidances he mentions 'not wishing and not being willing and not having an appetite' (437c–10).[7] Plato goes on to describe 'the kind consisting of appetites', of which hunger and thirst are the clearest examples (437d2–4).[8]

These passages are not completely clear, but they suggest that Plato wants to distinguish appetite (*epithumein*) from the conative states that he calls 'wishing' (*boulesthai*) and 'willing' (*ethelein*).[9] For he proceeds to make some remarks about appetites in general, but he does not seem to intend these remarks to apply to wishing and willing.[10]

How does the contrast between wish and appetite clarify Plato's claims about contrariety? To begin with, three cases need to be considered and set aside: (1) I am hungry and sleepy, and I cannot both eat and sleep at once. (2) I am hungry, and so I am inclined to eat this cabbage; but I hate cabbage, and so I am also disinclined to eat it. (3) I am a long-time fan of a football team, the Wanderers, but my newfound enthusiasm for another team, the Strollers, makes me averse to my persisting enthusiasm for the Wanderers, who are their bitter rivals. In the first case, neither desire implies an aversion to the other desire or to its object; it simply happens that we cannot satisfy both desires on this occasion. In the second case, one desire implies an aversion to the object of the other desire. In the third case, one desire implies an aversion to the other desire itself, not merely to its object.

Each of these might be treated as a case of 'contrary' desires, but none of them, not even the third case, makes it plausible to claim that the desires belong to different kinds or parts. If desires are contrary just in case they cause us to pursue objects that cannot both be achieved on this occasion (as in the first case), we will have to recognize many parts of the soul. If Glaucon is sleepy and hungry, **(p.206)** so that he both wants to eat instead of sleeping and wants to sleep instead of eating, we must certainly refer to different desires to explain his different tendencies, but this is not enough to introduce different parts. Even if one desire is an aversion for the object of the other desire (as in the second case) or a second-order desire directed to a desire (as in the third case), we still seem to be forced to recognize too many parts of the soul; why should aversions or second-order desires not conflict, just as first-order desires do? If conflicts arise among aversions and among second-order desires, then (for all we have seen so far) it seems that both aversions and second-order desires will also belong to several different parts.[11]

Plato may have an answer to these questions, if he relies on a tenable distinction between 'wish' and 'appetite', and if he can show that this distinction defines the appropriate sort of contrariety. Aristotle suggests how Plato might try to show this, for he connects contrariety with the division between rational and non-rational desires. As he puts it, 'appetite is contrary to decision, but appetite is not contrary to appetite' (*EN* 1111b15). In speaking of 'decision' (*prohairesis*), Aristotle refers to a desire resulting from rational wish (*boulēsis*) and deliberation about the good, as opposed to appetitive desires that do not aim at the good. Does Plato intend the same sort of distinction between wish and appetite?[12]

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146. Rational Desires Versus Appetites

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 146. Rational Desires Versus Appetites

This question requires closer attention to Plato's account of appetite. Taking thirst as his example, he argues that since thirst is properly defined as the appetite for drink, it must be desire for drink qua drink, not for drink qua F (qua good, interesting, healthy, etc.); if it were desire for drink qua F, it would be desire for F, not desire for drink.[13] It follows that thirst is not desire for drink qua good and, more generally, that appetites for food, drink, and so on are not the same as desires for good. If, then, we attribute thirst to an agent, we attribute an appetite distinct from desire for the good (437d8–439b2).[14]

This passage confronts an apparently Socratic thesis. For Plato tells us that we should not be put off if someone tells us that our appetite is not just for drink, but for good drink, on the ground that all of us have appetites for goods (438a1–5), since appetites are desires and all desires are for the good.[15] This thesis that we should not be 'put off' by seems to be the thesis of Socrates in the early dialogues. Whether it really is the Socratic thesis and whether Plato really rejects it must be considered after we have seen how Plato treats it.

The argument about 'thirst insofar as it is thirst' relies on a point about definitions that Thrasymachus noticed in Book I when he spoke of 'the ruler by the exact account' (340d–e).[16] Thrasymachus pointed out that the ruler qua ruler does not make mistakes, and Socrates pointed out that a craftsman qua craftsman does not make money; the features in question are not part of the definition of a ruler or craftsman. In Book IV Plato argues that if *thirst* is defined as **(p.207)** desire for drink, and not for drink qua satisfying some further description, then it is not, qua thirst, also a desire for the good.

This parallel with Book I exposes the weakness of the argument in Book IV. Facts about rulers qua rulers and doctors qua doctors do not show that there are any actual rulers who do not make mistakes or doctors who do not make money. Similarly, facts about thirst as such do not show that any of our actual desires is a desire for drink as opposed to drink qua good. For if the Socratic dialogues are right, appetites (desires for the satisfaction of specific bodily needs and urges) do not constitute a kind of desires distinct from desire for the good. In the Socratic view, no desire conforms to the description of 'thirst qua thirst'; what we call fear, for instance, is the expectation of evils (*Pr*. 358d5–e; *La*. 198b8–9). If fear qua fear must be simply directed to something frightening, and being evil is different from being frightening, then Socrates in the *Protagoras* is wrong to apply 'fear' without qualification to the state he is describing, but he may still be right about human motivation. He can say that the desire that we loosely call 'the appetite for F' is strictly speaking not a desire for F alone, but a desire for F qua good (cf. *G*. 468c2–7).[17] That is why our desire for F depends on the belief that F is good, and so disappears as soon as we abandon our belief that F is good.

Plato needs to show, then, that there are actual desires that satisfy his description of appetites such as 'thirst qua thirst', in being simply desires for drink (and so on) rather than desires for drink as something good. To show that there are such desires, he considers someone who is thirsty and so seeks to drink. He argues: 'If there is something that pulls the soul in the contrary direction when it is thirsty, would it not be

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something else in the soul besides what is thirsty and is leading it like a beast towards drinking?' (439b3–5). In his support he cites the Principle of Contraries.

What does Plato mean when he speaks of 'pulling in the contrary direction' (*anthelkein*) and connects this with the Principle of Contraries? He ought not to mean that whenever the soul has a desire contrary to appetite, the contrary desire comes from the rational part. If he said this, his appeal to contrariety would leave him no room to recognize a third part of the soul distinct from the appetitive and the rational parts. And so the explanation of contrariety must be broad enough to allow more than desires of the rational part to be contrary to appetites. What notion of contrariety will mark out distinct parts of the soul?

147. Desire and Contrariety

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 147. Desire and Contrariety
To answer this question, we must distinguish different kinds of opposition. Opposition 'to an appetite' may be simply an aversion to this appetite for this object; alternatively, it may be opposition to acting on appetite as such. In the second case, the opposition presupposes some grounds for objection to following appetite. Since no appetite can itself be opposed to acting on appetite, the sort of desire that opposes acting on appetite must be some non-appetitive type **(p.208)** of desire. Plato's position is reasonable if he takes the desires that are contrary to appetite to be those that are opposed to acting on appetite as such.

Plato's account of appetite suggests what is involved in being opposed to acting on appetite as such. In claiming that appetites are independent of desire for the good, he suggests that opposition to acting on appetite is opposition to acting without regard for the good; that, in other words, is what is wrong with acting on appetite. If this is what he means, then he has some reason to claim that this specific sort of contrariety between desires requires different parts of the soul; if some desires are indifferent to the good and others are not indifferent to it, this is a strong reason for recognizing two classes of desires whose members have enough in common to constitute two distinct explanatory parts.

To see whether this is what Plato means, we must understand his question, 'Are we to say that . . . sometimes some people are thirsty but are unwilling (*ouk ethelein*) to drink?' (439c2–3). He assumes that if we answer Yes to this question, we must recognize two different parts of the soul, because anything opposing (*anthelkein*) pure appetite must belong to a different part of the soul (439a9–c1). Does 'unwilling' refer to aversion in general, or does it refer to a desire resulting from a specifically rational desire for the good? If Plato refers to aversion in general, two unwelcome results follow: (1) Since he goes on to assume that the unwillingness results from reasoning, he seems to assume without warrant that all contrariety involves the rational part. (2) Not only is this assumption unwarranted, but it conflicts with Plato's next argument, which is meant to show how the spirited part may have desires contrary to those of both the other two parts. These unwelcome results of the broader understanding of 'unwilling' favour the narrower understanding, taking 'unwilling' to refer to a rational desire for the good.

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We noticed earlier that in this discussion Plato has generally used 'wish' and 'will' for desires that are not pure appetites. The following remarks suggest that this is what he intends here too. First, he takes it to be obvious that unwillingness is the result of reasoning (439c9–d2); then he says that in a conflict between reason and appetite, reason 'determines that one ought not to resist (*antiprattein*)' what it says (440b5); later still, he specifies 'ought not' by saying that the rational part reasons about the better and the worse (441c1–2). By contrast, when he comes to the conflict between the appetitive and the spirited part, he does not say that the agent is 'unwilling' to follow appetite, but that 'he is annoyed and turns himself away' (439e9–10). His argument becomes more reasonable than it otherwise would be, if we assume that he intends a restricted sense for 'wish' and 'will'.[18]

Plato's claims about contrariety can now be understood by reference to his demand for explanation. He agrees with the Socrates of the early dialogues in recognizing a desire for the good that is based on the rational belief that, for instance, abstaining from drinking is, all things considered, better than drinking the polluted water; but he argues that our capacity for these rational desires cannot explain our desire to drink rather than abstain, since reasoning about what is better inclines us to abstain rather than drink. It follows that our capacity **(p.209)** to desire things as good cannot explain all our actual desires and choices, since we sometimes desire what our capacity for rational desire causes us to reject, and the same capacity cannot explain our rejecting and our desiring.

Plato, therefore, denies the Socratic claim that all our intentional action rests on our desire for the good and our belief that the action we choose is better than our other options. If not all our desires are responsive to our beliefs about the good, then Plato has a reason for assigning them to different parts of the soul; for desires that depend on beliefs about the good seem to have enough in common to play a distinct explanatory role. But Plato needs to say more in order to say how precisely the reference to beliefs about the good is supposed to justify a division into parts.

148. The Appetitive Part

Does Plato really argue against the Socratic position, or does he take the most controversial points for granted without proper argument? We might object that he is not entitled to assert without further argument that there really are cases where we persist in our desire to drink despite recognizing that it would be better to abstain; for does Socrates not argue that we are mistaken in believing that there are such cases?

Perhaps, however, this is not the most controversial move in Plato's argument. For Socrates agrees that there appear to be cases of the sort Plato describes; in the *Protagoras* he acknowledges that the many believe there are such cases. He argues, however, that since the explanation offered by the many is incoherent, we must conclude that the appearance of such cases is misleading. If our inability to give a coherent explanation of these cases is all that justifies us in denying their existence, someone who believes in their existence need only provide a coherent explanation of them. This is what Plato tries to do.

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To see whether he succeeds, we must see whether he takes account of Socrates' reasons for believing that we cannot choose contrary to our belief about the good. Socrates believes this because of his psychological eudaemonism. He believes we explain and understand an agent's action only if we refer to some end, and ultimately to some self-explanatory end; since happiness is the only self-explanatory end, actions are explicable and intelligible only if they are referred to the agent's happiness. If Socrates is right about this, common-sense views about non-rational desires make action on these desires seem unintelligible. If we say someone knew that it would be better for him to stand firm, but he ran away because he was afraid, Socrates asks why he acted on his fear. He cannot have acted as he did for the sake of his happiness, since he is supposed to see clearly that it would be better for him to do something else. He must, apparently, have acted as he did for no reason at all—as though he were simply compelled by some external force independently of his own beliefs and aims.[19]

This suggestion about compulsion raises further questions about Socrates' argument against incontinence. The recognition of compulsive non-rational **(p.210)** desires does not conflict with the Socratic denial of incontinence, as Socrates seems to understand it; for Socrates claims only that when it is open to us to do x or y (*Pr.* 355a8), we cannot both believe that x is better and choose y. Indeed, we might even say that recognition of compulsive desires would make it easier to defend Socrates' position. Perhaps he need not say that there are no cases of believing x is better and choosing y; he might say that there are such cases, but they are cases of psychological compulsion, not of incontinence.

Socrates would be unwise, however, to rely on this line of defence. For he wants to emphasize the role of reason and knowledge in explaining human action and in forming moral character, and this role will be significantly reduced if allegedly incontinent desires turn out to be psychologically irresistible. In the *Protagoras* Socrates mentions some apparent phenomena that 'the many' take to show the possibility of incontinence: being 'overcome' by anger, fear, love, pleasure, and pain (*Pr.* 352b3–c2). Since Socrates supposes that belief in this sort of 'overcoming' would be inconsistent with his belief in the power of knowledge, he presumably does not think that the many regard these desires as being irresistibly compulsive.

We might be tempted to argue that the weakness of knowledge in these cases is no objection to Socrates' claim about the power of knowledge; for these, we might say, are cases of compulsion, but Socrates' claim applies only to cases of non-compelled action. This defence, however, protects Socrates' position by embracing a still more implausible position. He ought not to defend his position by dismissing as cases of compulsion all cases of acting against our judgment of what is better. Such a defence expands the class of compelled, rationally unintelligible action for no better reason than that the expansion helps to protect the Socratic position.

Plato's description of appetites is meant to avoid this unattractive defence of the Socratic position while answering the reasonable Socratic demand to be shown how action on appetite is intelligible if it is independent of beliefs about the good. Hunger and thirst are offered as the most evident examples of a 'sort' or 'kind' (*eidos*) called 'appetite' (437d2–

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5).[20] Plato does not suggest that action on non-rational desires is intelligible without further explanation; he suggests that it is intelligible insofar as these desires belong to an appropriate 'sort' or 'kind'. If acting on desires of this kind is intelligible, then acting on the different specific desires is intelligible.[21]

The relevant kind, however, is not described very clearly. Plato refers especially to basic biological urges and drives that we share with other animals. He says that thirst leads a person as though he were a beast (439b4), and that when appetites conflict with desire for what is better they are the result of 'affections and diseases' (439d1–2); the aspect of the soul in respect of which we have sexual passion, hunger, and thirst and are 'stimulated about the other appetites' is 'non-reasoning and appetitive, a companion of certain fillings and replenishments' (439d7–8).

Plato means that these desires explain and make intelligible the actions of non-rational animals and that desires of the same sort explain some of our actions in a similar way. If, then, they explain animal action without any reference to **(p.211)** the animal's conception of its good, they should also be capable of explaining our action in the same way. The 'bestial' model of non-rational desires constitutes an appropriate reply to Socrates' implied assumption that intentional action is unintelligible without reference to the agent's desire for his good.

These remarks should not be taken to imply that all appetites are the result of diseases, that they are all bestial, or that they rest simply on basic biological urges and drives. These urges are, as Plato says (437d2–4), the 'most obvious' examples of appetites. They make it clear that we can satisfy some of the requirements that lead Socrates to his conclusion, while still resisting his conclusion. Socrates assumes that the desire for the agent's happiness explains action because happiness is a self-explanatory end, needing no further end to explain our pursuit of it. Plato may be taken to suggest that happiness is not the only self-explanatory end; the objects of appetites are also self-explanatory, since they explain some of our actions in the same way as they explain the actions of non-rational agents. If we have such desires, it is not surprising that they create conflicts with the desire for our overall good; for since they explain our actions without reference to our good, they do not automatically yield to beliefs about our good.

Plato does not point out a further feature of appetites that helps him to answer Socrates. Socrates seems to assume that an agent's actions would be unintelligible unless they were focussed on some ultimate good. A sympathetic critic might take this assumption to be an exaggeration of the plausible claim that completely pointless and uncoordinated action could not be interpreted as intentional action at all.[22] Animal action suggests how intentional action can be coordinated without being coordinated by the agent's conception of an overall good. Action on appetite displays some degree of system and coordination in its general connexion to the agent's nature and needs, without depending on the agent's conception of an overall good. If Plato had developed this point further, he would have strengthened his claim that appetites constitute a genuine part, not a mere collection of impulses.

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149. The Spirited Part

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 149. The Spirited Part

So far Plato has distinguished the part of the soul that is purely appetitive from the part that is responsive to reasoning about the good (439d1–2, 439d5). This distinction, however, is still not clear, since Plato has not said what role he has in mind for reasoning. To see more precisely what distinction he intends, we must also consider the third part, the *thumoeides* or 'spirited' part.[23]

Plato begins the treatment of the third part with the example of Leontius gazing at corpses (439e). Leontius' unfortunate recreation looks even less like the product of his views about the good than physical appetites might look. Leontius is angry because of his urge to gaze at corpses;[24] this case is meant to support the division between the angry part and the appetitive part.

Since this conflict is supposed to display contrary tendencies needing to be explained by reference to different parts of the soul, we need to see whether Plato identifies the sort of contrariety that we took to be necessary for division **(p.212)** into parts. He makes it clear that the impulses of the spirited part, like those of the rational part, are opposed not just to an appetite but to acting on appetite, as such, on this occasion. The spirited impulse is not merely an aversion to the particular appetite; it opposes the agent's tendency to be guided by appetite to this degree.

To show that the spirited part has this attitude to appetite, Plato describes its attitude to a conflict between the appetitive and the rational parts. He focusses on cases in which 'appetites force (*biazontai*) someone against his reasoning' (440b1); and he clearly means us to take Leontius as a victim of this sort of forcing. The spirited part supports the rational part against appetite, since the spirited part relies on the agent's conception of what is good and right; it does not support appetite, as such, against reasoning (440b4–7). Plato means that when we are aware of x's being better than y, and y's being more pleasant than x, our spirited part is not attracted to y because of the belief that y is more pleasant, despite being worse.

This claim does not imply that the spirited part never conflicts with the rational part, or even that it never endorses an action that is endorsed by the appetitive part and rejected by the rational part. Plato implies only that if the spirited part endorses such an action, it does so for some reason other than that the appetitive part prefers it.[25] In this example, and in the next one, about the connexion between anger and the sense of justice (440cd), Plato shows that he does not intend simply to introduce a further appetitive aversion that conflicts with appetitive desires. The spirited part has evaluative attitudes, resting on some belief about the goodness or badness of its object, apart from the fact that it is simply an object of desire.

If we accept all this, however, we may want to challenge Plato from the opposite direction. For if the spirited part supports the rational part, can it really be distinguished from the rational part? We might argue that mere aversions to appetites belong to the appetitive part, and evaluative attitudes belong to the rational part, leaving nothing to belong to the

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spirited part.

To counter this objection, Plato offers the example of Odysseus (441b). Odysseus' anger (at his servant girls sleeping with the suitors) moves him to want to take revenge at once. Although he realizes that this would not be the most sensible thing to do, his anger and his desire to take revenge persist against his better judgment. If his anger had been too much for him, he would have been overcome by anger (just as Leontius was overcome by appetite) against his rational desires.

Nonetheless, the attitude of the spirited part is not a mere appetite or aversion. Odysseus' spirited part has learned that the kind of treatment he suffers is an unjust harm and that he ought to punish the offender; the awareness of the harm prompts the desire to punish. The attitude is evaluative, not a mere appetite or aversion, and to this extent it is similar to the attitudes of the rational part. The desires of the spirited part, however, persist even when rational judgment shows that they ought not to be executed this time.[26]

In these cases the spirited part does not oppose the desires of the rational part **(p.213)** in the way in which the rational part opposes the desires of the spirited part, or in the way in which the spirited part opposes the desires of the appetitive part. The spirited part is not moved by the belief that it is bad to do what seems best on the whole. It is moved by the quite different belief that it is bad to be humiliated or to let an offence go unpunished.

Plato illustrates the attitudes of the spirited part by mentioning anger, but in suggesting that it also includes a sense of shame and justice he attributes to it a wider range of attitudes. The well-trained spirited part is marked by willingness to accept punishment for its own faults (441c1–5); the spirited part endorses the just punishment and restrains the appetitive part from revolting against the painful but just treatment we receive. In this case the spirited part expresses itself primarily in pride, shame, and a sense of justice; the connexion with anger is secondary, insofar as anger is characteristically and vividly connected with these other attitudes.

In claiming that the outlook of the spirited part is evaluative, not merely appetitive, and yet different from the outlook of rational desire, Plato clarifies the nature of some emotions. If you are angry at me for taking your sandwich off your plate and eating it, you are not simply expressing your pain at being deprived of something you wanted. You might feel pain at deprivation if there just happened to be no sandwiches left, or if a dog ate your sandwich instead. If you are angry at me, you believe I caused some harm to you that I ought not to have caused you; ‘harm’ and ‘ought’ indicate the good-dependent character of your attitude. If your desire to harm me in return is based on anger, it shows itself to be a good-dependent desire, distinct from a desire to inflict pain on me for its own sake (sadism) or to prevent me from taking your food (instrumental reasoning about the satisfaction of appetite). Still, anger may not rest on a rational desire; even if I realize that this particular action of type F is nothing to be angry or feel guilty about, the anger or guilt may nonetheless remain. While reason shows us that some actions of type F are good and others are bad, emotion tends to focus on F-type actions in general,

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without the discrimination that results from reasoning.

This non-discriminating aspect of emotions is one of their advantages for us. For some action descriptions (such as ‘he's taking what belongs to me’, or ‘he's hitting a defenceless victim’) elicit emotions, and the emotions form a powerful desire to act in some specific way (to prevent him from taking what belongs to me, to defend the victim) that does not require elaborate reflexion on the situation, yet does not simply register my feelings of pleasure or pain. If these spirited reactions are more or less right in a fair number of cases, then their immediacy gives them an advantage over rational reflexion in cases where explicit reflexion would be inappropriate.[27] The desirable condition is not the one in which my reactions always wait on complete rational reflexion, but the condition in which my tendencies to immediate reactions have been formed by the right sort of rational reflexion, causing them to focus on the right features of situations. In this case the rational part has a regulative role, but it ought not to be giving specific advice about what to do in this situation.

(p.214) 150. The Rational Part

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 150. The Rational Part

We learn about the nature and capacities of the rational part of the soul partly by seeing how it differs from the other two parts. Plato's description of the other two parts has already ruled out some initially plausible ways of describing the desires of the rational part; once we set these aside, we must see whether any plausible description can still be found.

We might suppose that a rational desire differs from an appetite insofar as one does, and one does not, involve the operation of reason in fixing the object of the desire. This division might explain the conflict between thirst and a refusal to drink. On this view, the desire not to drink the water results from, say, realizing that it is mixed with petrol and that the mixture will be poisonous, whereas the desire to drink it results from the mere appearance—without any further reasoning—that it is water.

This division implies that any desire that results from any sort of reasoning or inference thereby belongs to the rational part; if I am hungry, wonder where to find a meal, and notice that there is a restaurant across the road, my resulting desire to go into the restaurant must, on this view, belong to the rational part. If this is all it takes for a desire to belong to the rational part, very few desires will be mere appetites.[28]

This cannot be Plato's constant view, however. In Book VIII he argues that the oligarchic person is dominated by the appetitive part of his soul because he is dominated by the desire for wealth (553c4–7). Wealth is connected with the satisfaction of appetites, but to see this connexion we must be able to reason about the instrumental relation between wealth and the objects of appetite. If the desires resulting from this instrumental reasoning still belong to the appetitive part, Plato cannot believe that every sort of practical reasoning makes the resulting desire belong to the rational part. While this remark comes from Book VIII, nothing in Book IV conflicts with it.

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The remarks in Book IV about the spirited part also imply that some desires of the non-rational parts of the soul depend on practical reasoning. If someone's spirited part is angry and ashamed at his running away from a battle, he must have thought that the brave thing to do would have been to stand firm, that he has failed to face the danger he ought to have faced, and that someone who does that ought to be ashamed of himself. Even though the resulting anger and shame is the product of all this reasoning, Plato thinks it belongs to the spirited part.

If dependence on reasoning is not enough, what more is needed for a rational desire? Plato says that the rational part not only reasons but also 'has reasoned about the better and the worse', in contrast to the spirited part that is 'angry without reasoning' (441c1–2); presumably the spirited part has failed to reason about the better and the worse (since, for the reasons given here, it clearly relies on reasoning about something). This seems to be a plausible ground for dividing the rational from the appetitive part; we might say that the appetitive part includes only desires that result from reasoning about how to satisfy appetites **(p.215)** and does not include any view about whether it is good or bad to satisfy a particular appetite. If the desires of the appetitive part are indifferent to the goodness or badness of their objects, then we can see why they are liable to conflict with the desires of the rational part; the discovery that it would be bad to satisfy an appetite does not cause the appetitive desire to go away, since appetitive desires are not based on any assumption about the goodness of their objects.

This argument faces difficulties, however, if we try to distinguish the desires of the rational part from those of the spirited part. For anger, resentment, and shame seem to rest on assumptions about the goodness and badness of what was done. When Odysseus is angry at his slave girls, he does not simply register his displeasure at what they have done; he is partly moved by the thought that they have failed to show the loyalty that could reasonably have been expected of them and that they deserve to suffer for what they have done. Apparently, then, he must have concluded that it would (from some point of view) be better to punish them than to leave them alone. If this is so, the spirited part cannot be unresponsive to reasoning about what is better and worse.[29]

To grasp Plato's conception of the rational part, we must attend to a further remark. He says not only that it reasons about better and worse but also that it is capable of knowledge about what is beneficial for each part of the soul and for the whole soul in common (442c6–8). If the rational part is guided by reasoning about what is best, all things considered, for the whole soul and for each of its parts, it is different from the spirited part. For the spirited part conceives its objects as good for the agent without conceiving them as best, all things considered, for the agent. To apply the concept of 'good for me', an agent needs a conception of different things adding up to something; to think that it would be good for me to satisfy this desire, I need some conception of myself and of the sort of thing that would be good for the self that I conceive. But I may have these views without having any conception of myself as a whole or of the combination of things that would, everything considered, be best for myself as a whole.[30]

The desires of the rational part, in contrast to those of the spirited part, rest on

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deliberation about what would be best, all things considered, for myself as a whole. Let us say that such desires are *optimizing* desires. In claiming that the rational part is the source of optimizing desires, Plato implies that it is guided by a conception of the agent's overall happiness or welfare (*eudaimonia*) and that the other parts are not guided by it. To this extent, the desires of the rational part satisfy Socrates' description of desire in general; Plato disagrees with Socrates in recognizing desires of the other two parts, which do not satisfy Socrates' psychological eudaemonist conditions.

If practical reason contributes to the desires of all three parts, is Plato right to claim that one of the three parts has some special connexion with reason? His claim implies that optimizing desires, those that rest on reasoning about what is best for me as a whole, are especially rational. Plato shares this view with Butler, who argues that rational self-love, in contrast to the particular passions, appeals to principles and aims relying on authority rather than mere strength of desire; in choosing the ends it will follow, it is guided by reflexion **(p.216)** on what I have better reason to do, irrespective of what I may have a stronger desire to do.[31] Butler believes that rational self-love is especially connected with practical reason because it displays no partiality to some desires or affections, but takes account of them all on their merits. If this is what Plato has in mind, he has a reason for claiming that the optimizing attitudes of the rational part are distinctively rational; they are not determined simply by the strength of some antecedent desire that provides the end for practical reason to achieve.[32] They result from consideration of what is better, all things considered, for the whole soul, not from one's strongest occurrent desires.[33]

We must examine this claim more closely to see how it distinguishes rational desires from spirited as well as appetitive desires. The spirited part is not inclined towards a particular object simply because the object is desired—that is the outlook of the appetitive part—but values it in the belief that it has some further property that deserves to be valued. But this belief about the further valuable property itself reflects the spirited part's desires and preferences; I am angry about this injustice not because I understand that injustice is bad, all things considered, but because this is how I have been trained to react to apparent injustice. Only the rational part has desires that rest on a conviction about what is best, not on the strength of other desires.

151. Reasons for the Tripartition of the Soul

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 151. Reasons for the Tripartition of the Soul

If this is the right way to distinguish the rational part from the other two parts, we can now try to decide whether Plato's tripartition of the soul is reasonable. Ought he to recognize three parts, and ought they to be the three that he recognizes?

Many critics have agreed that Plato is justified in recognizing something besides the rational and appetitive parts and have seen that the attitudes of the spirited part—connected with anger, self-esteem, honour, and shame—are significantly different from appetites. It is more difficult, however, to see how these attitudes could wholly constitute a part of the soul that, together with the rational and appetitive parts, exhausts the different types of possible motives.[34]

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This difficulty may be resolved if we suppose that the attitudes Plato ascribes to the spirited part are meant to illustrate, not to exhaust, the desires that are based on evaluation and are therefore not purely appetitive, but not optimizing desires either. In recognizing that some desires are neither optimizing nor purely appetitive, but involve evaluations based on desires and aversions, Plato recognizes an important class of desires that would be missed if we insisted on a bipartition.

Once we see the desires that are characteristic of each part of the soul, we can also decide how far Plato's initial appeal to contraries adequately captures his reasons for recognizing three parts. We can see that a simple reference to contraries fails to capture some important asymmetries between the parts.

If we think of moving forwards and backwards, or being pale and dark, as examples of contraries, the relation of contrariety seems to be symmetrical insofar as forwards is no more contrary to backwards than backwards is to forwards. **(p.217)** Plato, however, describes an asymmetrical relation that includes a symmetrical relation.[35] In a parliamentary system of government, we may say that the government and the opposition are political opponents, and to that extent are symmetrically related; nonetheless, the task of the opposition is to oppose government policy, whereas the government's task is not to oppose the opposition, and to that extent their relation is asymmetrical. Similarly, if p and q are contradictory statements, their relation is symmetrical, but if speaker A asserts p without reference to the views of speaker B, and B replies by contradicting A's assertion and asserting q, there is an asymmetrical relation between the two speakers and the two assertions.

These analogies are relevant to Plato's claims about the three parts of the soul. Both the rational part and the spirited part are opposed to the appetitive part insofar as they reject action on appetite, as such, on particular occasions; the rational part is opposed to the spirited part in the same way. The appetitive part, however, is not opposed, in the same sense, to either of the other two parts, although its desires may certainly conflict with their desires. To this extent, the relations between the three parts are asymmetrical.

If this is right, then Plato's initial examples of contrariety, intended to support the Principle of Contraries, are too simple to display the special type of contrariety (including the asymmetrical element of opposition) that he has in mind. We have seen that in dividing the soul he does not appeal simply to conflicting desires, those that in fact tend to move the agent in incompatible directions; he appeals to desires that oppose other desires by explicitly rejecting them (in the sense described). Once we keep in mind the fact that Plato has this particular kind of contrariety in mind, we can object to his failure to explain how it includes more than ordinary contrariety, but we can see why he has a good reason for claiming that contrariety of this kind needs to be explained by different parts of the soul.

152. Parts of the Soul as Agents

So far we have examined Plato's account of the desires that are characteristic of different parts of the soul. We cannot, however, understand the nature of a part of the soul simply

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by understanding the character of its component desires. For Plato also conceives the parts of the soul as analogous to agents; he compares the rational part to a human being, the spirited part to a lion, and the appetitive part to a many-headed and multifarious beast (588c7–d5).[36] The analogy suggests that each part can be treated as a single agent, although the desires of the appetitive part show most variety (as the different aspects, good and bad, of the beast reveal themselves).

The same conception of the parts as agents underlies Plato's remarks about how they can agree with each other. Temperance requires agreement between the parts of the soul about which part should rule. In the well-governed city, ‘the same belief is present in the rulers and the ruled about who ought (*dei*) to be the rulers’ (431d9–e1); in the temperate soul, then, the appetitive part is expected to believe that the rational part ought to rule. In his account of elementary **(p.218)** education, Plato argues that before we are capable of reasoning we should be habituated to enjoy what is fine (*kalon*) and hate what is shameful, so that when reason comes we will welcome it, ‘recognizing it because of its kinship’ (*di' oikeiotēta*, 402a3–4). If the appetitive part recognizes some kinship in the rational part, it cannot simply notice that the rational part chooses to act in ways that the appetitive part also chooses; it must also notice that the two parts are moved by some of the same considerations. Can the non-rational and the rational parts have this sort of kinship?

The rational part, as Plato describes it, reasons about what is best for each part and for all the parts in common (442c6–8). It therefore appeals to the aims of each of the non-rational parts and assures them of some reasonable degree of satisfaction. This assurance recommends the rule of the rational part to the two non-rational parts.

If we are to attribute these attitudes of acceptance and rejection to the appetitive part, we must suppose that it has some structure that makes it more than simply a collection of appetites. Agents have some attitude to their desires as a whole, and in the light of this attitude they give priority to some desires over others. The appetitive part must be able to do this, if it is to recognize that the rational part satisfies it and shares its aims, not just that the rational part shares this particular aim here and now.

Has Plato made a mistake, however, in attributing these aspects of agency to a non-rational part of the soul? If the non-rational parts agree with the rational part, they seem to have the outlook of reasonable people, but since Plato has denied that they have optimizing desires, has he not denied that they have the outlook of reasonable people? If they lack this outlook, how can they have the attitudes that they must have to do what he expects them to do?

This difficulty might suggest that Plato has made a mistake in attributing to each part the structure that makes it capable of recognizing kinship and agreeing with other parts. He seems to have pressed his political analogy too far and to have introduced a self-defeating anthropomorphic element into his description of the parts of the soul. If he treats the two non-rational parts of the soul as though they were capable of behaving like reasonable people, he seems to be treating each part as though it were an agent with its own rational

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part. To understand how this 'agent' makes its choices, we must presumably divide its soul into three; if we must also make each of these three parts an agent, we seem to be forced into a vicious regress.

To avoid this objection, Plato must show that a non-rational part has enough structure and unity to agree with the rational part, but still has no rational part of its own. Can he show this?[37]

153. The Unity of a Part of the Soul

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 153. The Unity of a Part of the Soul
If a part of the soul is to be capable of recognizing kinship in another part, it must recognize kinship to itself, and so it must apparently have a conception of itself. What might such a conception be like?

(p.219) It would be very difficult to suppose that, say, the appetitive part actually includes a conception of itself as a part of a whole (in the way that someone's conception of herself might include a conception of herself as, say, a part of a community); for it would also presumably need some conception of the whole of which it is a part, and once we attribute such a conception to the appetitive part, we run the risk of reduplicating the soul whose structure we are supposed to be analysing. We will avoid this difficulty if we suppose that our appetitive part's conception of itself is a restricted version of our own conception of ourselves. What can be ascribed to the appetitive part within the appropriate restrictions?

If we have a conception of ourselves, we refer to the past and future; we are capable of regret (in the minimal sense of displeasure at something we have done in the past, if, for instance, we have foolishly forgone some pleasure we could have had) and of fear and hope. In these attitudes we connect our present appetite with a range of other past and future appetites. To this extent we have a conception of ourselves and of what satisfies us, apart from any particular desire. It is even easier to see how attitudes of the spirited part—anger, shame, pride—characteristically involve some conception of oneself as the person whose achievement is being considered, who has done something shameful, or whose interests have been harmed. From the point of view of the rational part, each non-rational part's conception of itself is also a partial conception of the self to whom the part belongs; but the part itself does not recognize this relation to a larger self.

To be aware of oneself in these ways—and so to be liable to these various feelings—is not necessarily to be capable of criticizing or modifying a present desire in the light of some conception of one's interest as a whole. A child could lack this sort of critical faculty, while still being aware of his desires as belonging to something temporally extended and containing more than one kind of appetite. The relevant conception of oneself requires some rational capacities, but it does not require the rational optimizing desires that belong to the rational part of the soul.

If the appetitive part has desires that rest on this conception of itself, then it is capable of being moved by the awareness that x is a more efficient instrumental means than y. If my

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appetitive part is concerned exclusively with this occurrent appetite, it will be unmoved by considerations of efficiency. These considerations tell me that one means fits better than another with my various appetitive aims, but such information will leave my appetitive part unmoved unless it has some concern for its other aims.[38]

Can we tell whether Plato takes any desires mediated by considerations of efficiency to belong to the appetitive part? We have already seen that, in his view, the desire for x is an appetite if it results from the desire for some object of appetite y and the belief that x is a means to y. Plato shows that he believes this, since he takes the desire for wealth to be an appetitive desire. If this is his view, however, he can hardly deny that reasoning about the most efficient means may also result in an appetite. It is difficult to see how we could form the steady desire for wealth as a means to satisfaction of appetites if we were unconcerned with efficiency; only if we compare wealth with the other means of satisfying appetites over time will we prefer it as a matter of policy (since, for instance, **(p.220)** accumulation and preservation of wealth normally requires some restraint on the satisfaction of appetites in the shorter term). Plato's recognition of an appetite for wealth suggests that he regards some desires mediated by considerations of efficiency as appetites.

The appetitive part, therefore, shares two features with the rational part: (1) It is concerned for its desires over time; considerations of efficiency involve some reference to desires that I expect to have, even though there is no immediate occasion for satisfying them. (2) Its concern for the future gives it some weighted concerns; if I am concerned with efficiency, I must sometimes care more about satisfying some of my future desires than about satisfying this desire here and now. If I did not sometimes care about these future desires, I would always be indifferent, from the point of view of the appetitive part, between more and less efficient means to the same goal.

Still, even though the appetitive part has its own hierarchical preferences, it sometimes violates them. We may sometimes realize that our future appetites or appetites we care more about will be satisfied if we do not satisfy this particular appetite now, but we may choose to satisfy it nonetheless. If this is incontinence within the appetitive part, and if incontinence involves a conflict between the rational and the appetitive parts, must we admit that a rational part in the appetitive part conflicts with an appetitive part in the appetitive part? If so, Plato faces a vicious regress.

This conflict of preferences, however, does not imply incontinence, if incontinence involves a conflict between what we desire most strongly and what we recognize the best reasons for valuing. This recognition of the best reasons requires recognition of Butler's distinction between authority and strength; we must recognize the merits of a particular course of action apart from the strength of our desires. If this is necessary for incontinence, a conflict between desires for short-term and longer-term satisfaction is neither necessary nor sufficient for incontinence. While the appetitive part is capable of recognizing conflicts between short-term and longer-term satisfactions, it lacks a system of values that takes account of something more than the comparative strength of different desires.

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The appetitive part, then, recognizes considerations of efficiency, but it sees no reason, distinct from an occurrent desire for long-term satisfaction, to be moved by efficiency. If a desire for some particular satisfaction becomes stronger than my desire for longer-term satisfaction, then the appetitive part no longer recognizes any reason for preferring the longer-term satisfaction. In the appetitive part, the behaviour that looks most like incontinence is really a change of mind and preference; no persisting rational evaluation opposes my current preference, and so there is no room for incontinence.

154. Relations Between Parts of the Soul

Republic IV: The Division of the Soul 154. Relations Between Parts of the Soul
This description makes it easier to see how the appetitive part can see something akin to it in the rational part, and how it can accept rule by the rational part **(p.221)** without itself having to turn into another rational part. Since the appetitive part has some concern—not always its dominant concern—for a temporally extended self, it is capable of seeing that this sort of concern is satisfied by the rational part. Sometimes, indeed, the appetitive part will recognize that the rational part does better than the appetitive part could do by itself; for the appetitive part's overriding desire for its long-term satisfaction lapses under the pressure of intense desires for short-term satisfaction, whereas the rational part retains its overriding desire for what is best.

Most of the time, then, the appetitive part wants to secure longer-term freedom from severe pain more than it wants a particular immediate gratification; in these moods it may recognize that its aim will be better achieved if it is guided by the rational part's steady plan of pursuing longer-term freedom from pain rather than immediate gratification. Admittedly, the appetitive part will lose this preference when it forms an especially strong desire for some immediate gratification; still, it may take steps, at times when it has the far-sighted preference, to make it more difficult to violate this preference.

When the appetitive part recognizes these points of agreement with the rational part, it may also form a second-order desire to do what the rational part tells it to do; although it initially forms this desire on the basis of purely appetitive desires and their objects, the result of forming the desire may be the formation of further desires that the agent could not have had without having a rational part. This capacity of the appetitive part gives it a place in moral education. Although I do not initially care about temperate or just action, I learn to listen to the rational part (my own or someone else's) because it satisfies my longer-term appetites. Once I begin to listen to it, I come to acquire its preference for temperate and just action. Once I form this preference, it will also increase my tendency to follow my more far-sighted preferences even when I form a strong desire for an immediate satisfaction.

In this way the appetitive part is capable of adopting some of the goals of the rational part; it adopts them not for the reasons that move the rational part, but because it sees their connexion with its own goals. Although it cannot be a completely enlightened or equal partner (since it does not recognize all the reasons that move the rational part), it can cooperate with the rational part, and the more its preferences are shaped by those of the rational part, the more reliable a partner it is.

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If this is a reasonable account of the structure of the appetitive part, a similar account can be given for the spirited part, which Plato takes to be less multi-farious and more unified than the appetitive part. In both cases we can explain why Plato is entitled to treat the non-rational parts as though they had some of the properties of agents. Since he does not treat them as rational agents, he avoids any vicious regress in the composition of the parts.

In attributing structure to a part of the soul, Plato agrees with Socrates on a point that did not emerge clearly from the particular examples of conflict between the parts.[39] Socrates sees that a single desire by itself does not explain an action; a particular desire makes an action intelligible because the desire itself is intelligible, fitting into some longer-term pattern of choices and actions. **(p.222)** Socrates, however, infers that desires make action intelligible because they ultimately aim at the agent's happiness, whereas Plato sees that happiness need not be the only long-term aim that allows us to explain particular actions. In Plato's view, the non-rational parts of the soul have some of the structure that Socrates attributes to the desires of the rational agent, but only the rational part has the structure that focusses on the agent's happiness.

Since the structure of each part of the soul is essential to its explanatory role, we must suppose that Plato takes it seriously. We have found that he is right to take it seriously. His remarks about agreement and harmony between the parts are no mere metaphor or unfortunate anthropomorphism; they rest on a defensible view of the nature of the three parts. This result is important for our estimate of his account of the virtues; for this account of the virtues relies on further claims about agreement and kinship between the parts of the soul. We must see whether these further claims are defensible.

Notes:

(1.) Some relevant issues in Books II and III are discussed in Irwin [1977a], 330f.

(2.) Plato speaks of different kinds (*eidē* or *genē*, 435c1, 444a1) or parts (*merē*, 442b11) or things (neuter adjectives and pronouns, 436b9). See Joseph [1935], 47. On the correspondence between the structure of the soul and the structure of the city, see §159.

(3.) See Woods [1987], 26–30.

(4.) This example shows that the Principle of Contraries is not the same as the Principle of Non-Contradiction. See Robinson [1971], 29. From (a) x has tendency F, and (b) x has a tendency G that is contrary to F, we cannot infer that (c) x has tendency F and not (x has tendency F). If Plato thinks he is entitled to (c), he is seriously confused. There is no need to suppose, however, that he is influenced by this confusion.

(5.) On the *Phd*. see §§109, 133; Houston [1986], chap. 4; Woods [1987], 40.

(6.) On the relevance of contrasts, see §109.

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(7.) If Plato is speaking of genuine contraries, we must understand these negative expressions as indicating positive unwillingness as opposed to mere lack of willingness; they are similar to the English 'I don't want to', which normally means 'I want not to' rather than simply 'It is not the case that I want to'.

(8.) Following Adam [1902], I take the genitive in *epithumiōn . . . genos*, 437d2–3 to be a defining genitive.

(9.) See Adam [1902], ad loc.; Krohn [1876], 56f.

(10.) This point is not completely certain, because of Plato's use of *boulesthai* at 439b1, commented on by Joseph [1935], 49 and note 1. On *boulesthai* and *epithumein* in *M*. 77–78, see chap. 9, note 29.

(11.) The issues about types of conflict and grounds for recognizing distinct parts are discussed by Joseph [1935], 53–55; Williams [1965], 167–69 (who seems, like Joseph, 53 and note, to assume that Plato does not allow conflicts of the second and third type within the appetitive part); Woods [1987], 38f.; Penner [1990], 53f. (who explicitly makes the assumption I attributed to Williams).

(12.) This passage in Aristotle is used to clarify Plato by Joseph [1935], 54 and note; Murphy [1951], 28 and note; Penner [1971], 96, 118, but they all take it to imply that Plato rejects the second and third types of conflict mentioned here.

(13.) Although the thesis that is rejected speaks of a desire for drink as opposed to desire for good drink, Murphy [1951], 45–47, points out that Plato probably means to refer to desire for drink qua something good. The two are not the same, since a drink that is a good drink (i.e., good as drinks go) may not in all circumstances (e.g., when I have already had too much to drink) be a good (i.e., a good thing).

(14.) In this argument about thirst qua thirst it is difficult to decide whether *epithumiai* are restricted to appetites or are meant to include all desires; unfortunately, Plato uses the term both as a generic term for all desires (cf. 431b9–d6) and as a specific term for one type of desire (Plato explains this specific use at 580d10–581a1, appealing to the intensity of the desires that characterize the appetitive part). In paraphrasing Plato's position, I have used 'desire' to indicate the generic notion (corresponding to Aristotle's use of '*orexis*') and 'appetite' for the specific use of '*epithumia*'. See Joseph [1935], 51 and note; contrast Kahn [1987], 79.

(15.) On *ara* in 438a3 see Jowett and Campbell [1894], II 207f; Des Places [1929], 268f., 281. See also 358c5 (and Adam [1902]), 362a4, 364b3, 364e6; Joseph [1935], 56 and note; Murphy [1951], 45 and note.

(16.) The expression used to specify Thrasymachus' thesis, *kath'hoson* ('insofar as', 340d7), is repeated in 437c4.

(17.) On Socrates on desire, cf. §80.

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(18.) This suggestion is challenged by Plato's remark that in some cases spirit ‘is unwilling to be aroused’, 440c5; even here, though, he does not actually say that the person himself is unwilling insofar as his spirited part is unwilling, whereas he does say this in the case of the rational part. Once again (see chap. 13, note 10) we have to admit that Plato's terminology for desire is rather loose.

(19.) Psychological compulsion is discussed with reference to Socrates and Plato by Santas [1979], 214–17; Penner [1990], 51f.

(20.) Cooper [1984], 9f.; and Woods [1987], 41f., 45f., give different accounts of Plato's reasons for picking the specific examples of appetites that he picks in this argument.

(21.) On the role of parts, see §154.

(22.) This claim about interpretation has been developed by Davidson [1970], 221–23; [1982], 294–96, and exploited by Penner [1990], 43f.

(23.) The third part of the soul is rejected by Cornford [1912], 262–64; Hardie [1936], 142f.; Penner [1971], 111–13; [1990], 44. Hardie, however, rightly rejects the view, accepted by Penner, that Plato introduces the *thumos* here simply to make the structure of the soul parallel to that of the city. Plato's argument is defended by Joseph [1935], 63–69; Cooper [1984], 12–17.

(24.) Perhaps Plato takes Leontius' impulse to be sexual. Adam cites Kock [1880], I 739, where, however, the reference to Leontius depends on an emendation.

(25.) On 440b4–7 see Krohn [1876], 52; Adam [1902], ad loc. and 271f.; Murphy [1951], 34; White [1979], 126; Cooper [1984], 21 and note 19. Since this passage does not deny the existence of any conflict between the rational and the spirited part in which the spirited part prefers the action preferred by the appetitive part, it is not inconsistent with 441a or 553c.

(26.) The example of children who are full of ‘spirit’ (or ‘anger’, 441a8) as soon as they are born and acquire reasoning much later (if they acquire it at all) seems unsuitable for Plato's purposes. He cannot reasonably claim that a young child or a non- human animal reacts as Leontius reacts to his appetites; and so it is not clear that the reactions of these agents belong to anything other than an appetitive part.

(27.) When sudden dangers are liable to arise, brave people are better off if they are not always reflecting about the best thing to do; cf. Ar. *EN* 1117a17–22.

(28.) On this restricted conception see Penner [1971; 1990]; Annas [1981], 129f., 139–41; Cooper [1984], 9.

(29.) The fact that beliefs about good and bad are present in the non-rational parts is emphasized by Lesses [1987].

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(30.) On the rational part's concern for the whole self, see Joseph [1935], 58–63, esp. 59: ‘[Reason] makes him conceive a good that is to satisfy *him*, and not merely quench this or that particular desire; and it makes him also desire this good.’ Murphy [1951], 32–34, takes a more qualified view.

(31.) See Butler, *Sermons*, II 13–17.

(32.) The attitudes of the rational part may be guided by non-rational aims. See §197.

(33.) If this account of Plato's division is right, he does not believe that the division between rational and non-rational parts is a division between reason and desire. As Aristotle supposes, he attributes a different kind of desire to each part (*DA* 432b4–7).

(34.) Murphy [1951], 29f., suggests, relying on 443d7, that the tripartite division is not meant to be exhaustive.

(35.) This is not the only case where Plato lacks clear terminology for the different relations. When he describes sensibles as ‘likenesses’, *homoiōmata*, of Forms (*Parm.* 132d3), we might take him to mean simply that they are similar, *homoia*, to Forms. In fact, however, he assumes that if x is a *homoiōma* of y, then x is a copy of y; ‘being a copy of’ is an asymmetrical relation that includes the symmetrical relation of similarity.

(36.) On this analogy, see §202.

(37.) The anthropomorphic aspects of Plato's division are discussed by Murphy [1951], 69; White [1979], 129; Annas [1981], 142–46; Moline [1978], 10–14, 22–26; Reeve [1988], 139.

(38.) On efficiency see §198.

(39.) On incontinence and intelligibility, see §148.

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