

Imperfect Virtue

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1. Introduction

In the course of showing why we have reason to be just, Socrates in the *Republic* constructs an account of the perfectly rational standpoint, that of the philosopher. Since the philosopher is wise, her commitment to virtue for its own sake is evidence of virtue's intrinsic choiceworthiness. We might conclude from this that the philosopher's choices are normative for others, for non-philosophers who occupy a less than perfectly rational standpoint. However, before reaching this conclusion, we need answers to three related questions. First, in what way are non-philosophers virtuous? Virtue requires the rule of reason in the soul (441c-42d), but Socrates divides people up into three classes, philosophical, victory-loving, and gain-loving, depending on whether they are ruled by reason, spirit or appetite (580d-81c); if this is the principle responsible for dividing the ideal city's citizens into three classes, then we need to ask in what way the two lower classes in the ideal city are ruled by reason--if they are. Second, in what way is the virtue of non-philosophers beneficial for them? Granting that it is good for the philosopher's soul to be ruled by reason in the way it is, being wise and knowing what is good for each part of the soul and for the soul as a whole, what is the value, for the vast majority of people who are incapable of wisdom, of being ruled by reason in other ways, or of aiming at or approximating the philosopher's condition? Socrates ranks non-philosophers in virtue and happiness on the basis of their likeness to the philosopher, but he does not explain how imperfect virtue, virtue without wisdom, is good for its possessor. Third, what (if any) difference do philosophers' reasons for valuing virtue make to the reasons well-educated non-philosophers have for seeing virtue as choiceworthy? If non-philosophers can have reasons for valuing virtue modelled on philosophers' reasons, this might also constitute the sort of moral and intellectual improvement in non-philosophers that would answer our first two questions, about how imperfect virtue is related to rational rule and how it is beneficial for its possessor. Now the philosopher's motivation for valuing virtue is her knowledge of how virtue is good for her; and

the goodness of virtue is the reason one should value virtue. But since non-philosophers lack knowledge, they can never value virtue for exactly the same reasons as philosophers. But can non-philosophers' motivations approximate philosophers'? To answer this question, we need to ask how, why, and in what terms non-philosophers can value virtue: merely as a means to honor or wealth, or for its own sake? Under what conception of virtue--as states of affairs, actions, character-traits, or something known only to philosophers? And under what conception of value or the good?

In this paper I argue that one class of non-philosophers, honor-lovers, can have reasons for valuing virtue that approximate the philosopher's reasons for seeing justice as intrinsically choiceworthy.¹ I offer an account of how honor-lovers in the ideal city--the musically-educated auxiliaries--value virtue, and how their way of valuing virtue is connected to the philosopher's valuation of virtue for its own sake. I show that the musically-educated auxiliary's attitude towards virtue is, although imperfect, genuine, stable, and good for its possessor. I begin in section 2 by setting out the problems for attributing genuine virtue to non-philosophers and stating some requirements on genuine and stable virtue. In section 3, I describe the psychology of honor-lovers in terms of the cognitive, evaluative, and motivational limits and capabilities of the spirited part of the soul which dominates them. In section 4, I argue that musical education aims at the spirited part of the soul, and produces citizens who see virtue as noble and thus desire to do what is virtuous. By setting young guardians standards in the form of virtuous characters to admire, imitate, and judge themselves by, the musical education creates citizens with an internalized ideal of virtue, non-philosophers who will be genuinely and reliably virtuous.

2. The Problem of Imperfect Virtue

Let us begin with the difficulties facing imperfect virtue's claim to be genuine.

¹Because my account depends crucially on the psychology of honor, it does not generalize beyond the auxiliaries to the third class of the ideal city, the producers.

In an influential paper, Vlastos argues that an individual is psychically just--in the good condition of psychic harmony--"iff [he] has a firm and stable disposition to act justly towards others."² Since to act justly, for any individual, is for him to do his own work (73-74, cf. *Republic* 433ab, 434a) and since "a moral attribute is predicable of a given polis only when, and exactly because, it is predicable of the persons who compose that polis" (79, cf. *Republic* 435e, 544de), Vlastos concludes that each individual in the just city is psychically just, because each does his own work (80). On this interpretation, it benefits anyone and everyone to act justly, for acting justly brings about the beneficial condition of psychic harmony. This is possible, Vlastos argues, because psychic harmony does not require philosophical knowledge. Indeed, it does not take philosophical knowledge to value virtue for its own sake:

. . . the special love for justice, temperance, etc., kindled in the philosopher by his unique intellectual experience, is anticipated at the level of sense, emotion, imagination, and right belief by the effect of a massive psychological conditioning which begins in earliest infancy (93).

While Vlastos's conclusion can be endorsed, at least in the case of the musically-educated auxiliaries, his arguments cannot. For Vlastos takes as Plato's account of individual just action what is, strictly, Plato's account of the *city's* justice. Justice may obtain in the city when, and even because, each does his own, without it following that by doing his own, each acts justly, or is or comes to be just. Socrates' statement that a character is predicable of a city only when it is predicable of the persons who compose it need not imply that a city is just because all or even most of its citizens are just, for a city is wise and courageous in virtue of the wisdom and courage of only a few of its citizens (*Republic* 428e-29c).³ The city may also be just

²Vlastos 1978, 68.

³As Williams 1973, 200-201 points out, Plato probably intends that the city gets its character from the character of those citizens who *predominate*, for in the case of degenerate cities as well, there

in virtue of the justice of its rulers. When Socrates says that an individual is just in the same way in which a city is just--namely, when each part of *him* (or his soul) does its own work--he invokes the account of what it is for each part of the soul to do its own work, and this involves the rational part ruling with knowledge of what is good for the whole (441d-42c). But such knowledge is explicitly restricted to the wise few. So it does not follow simply from the fact that an individual does his own work that his soul is in order: he may be doing his own work out of a desire for reward or fear of punishment; he may be ruled, as is a slave, by a person whose reason is stronger than his (590cd). For an individual to be just, his soul must be in order, for his soul to be in order, his rational part must rule, and for his rational part to rule, he must be wise--that is, he must have knowledge of what is good. Perhaps this is why Socrates never says that all the individuals in the city are just.⁴

However, we should not conclude from this that non-philosophers can only value virtue instrumentally.⁵ If this were true, even philosophical rule in an ideal community would fail to

are citizens whose character is different from the city's: there are good people who hate and flee the tyrant in the tyrannical city; there are all kinds of people in the democratic city, and so on.

⁴The case of temperance (σωφροσύνη), which Vlastos says is a virtue of all three classes, provides an illustrative parallel: Socrates says that a city is temperate when the better part rules the worse, dominating the worse part's desires by its own desires and wisdom (φρόνησις). He also says that temperance is more like a concord or harmony than the other virtues, but provides no explanation for why the lower classes should agree with the rulers as to who should rule and be ruled--and stops short of saying that all three classes *are* temperate (430e-31d). But it is difficult to see why the condition of having one's desires dominated by the rulers should count as an instance of genuine virtue. So far, we lack sufficient grounds to say that the virtue of non-philosophers is genuine.

⁵ Archer-Hind 1883 argues that Plato distinguishes two kinds of ordinary or political virtue: the multitude's "utilitarian" instrumentalist virtue, and the kind imposed by philosophers on the

improve non-philosophers, since even well-educated non-philosophers in the ideal city would value virtue for the same sorts of reasons as they would in non-ideal cities, and without education--for its consequences rather than its own sake. And in this case, the ideal city would fail in its aim to make not just one class, but the whole of the city, as happy as possible (420b-21c, 519e-20a). The text of the *Republic* also militates against a purely instrumentalist interpretation of non-philosophers' attitude towards virtue. In challenging Socrates to show that justice is intrinsically valuable, Adeimantus argues that given a purely instrumental valuation of justice, it will often be rational to adopt a policy of injustice along with the appearance of virtue (σκιαγραφίαν ἀρετῆς [365c3-4]). And Socrates does not oppose this argument but gives an account, as requested by Adeimantus and Glaucon, of the intrinsic value of justice. So it would seem that if Plato thinks that non-philosophers can only value justice instrumentally, even in the ideal city, then he must think that Glaucon's and Adeimantus' arguments ought to persuade most people that a life of seeming rather than being just may well be the best for them.

In *Plato's Ethics*, Irwin argues that there is a real moral distinction between people who value justice only for its consequences, and those who derive pleasure from acting justly and want to be honored, but for being just. Although the latter are not genuinely virtuous, according to Irwin, their virtue is nonetheless better than that of slaves (384, n. 16). For Irwin, slavish virtue belongs to those who value virtue only for its consequences; in support of this, Irwin refers to *Phaedo* 68c-69c and *Republic* 430b, which distinguish slavish virtue from other types of virtue (194-95, 234). But in the *Republic* Socrates does not characterize slavish virtue as instrumental: the passage that distinguishes slavish and bestial courage from "political" courage

model of philosophical virtue, but accepted by the multitude for utilitarian reasons. See his "δημοτική καὶ πολιτική ἀρετή" (Appendix I). Reeve 1988 argues that this instrumentalist attitude is not so bad, because the things non-philosophers value, honor and wealth, are in fact approximations of the good. But the consequence for the cognitive and motivational state of non-philosophers is the same as on Archer-Hind's interpretation: education does not improve it.

says only that the former is obtained without education (ἄνευ παιδείας) and has nothing to do with law (νόμιμον) (*Republic* 430b6-8). The contrast seems to be between behavior that accords with virtue but is motivated solely by the threat of punishment,⁶ and behavior that is brought about by education and regulated by law. A citizen who is educated to obey the law and who sees himself as governed by a law which also governs others in his community, for the common good, can internalize the law because he identifies with the community whose law it is. This internalization is not possible for a slave, for his good is not part of the common good at which the law aims; he is not ruled by law but by dictate; and others are not subject to the same constraints as he.⁷ So for him, the law is merely a source of constraint, and his reason for obeying the law is avoidance of its sanctions. This contrast may be one reason for dubbing virtue based on educated true belief "citizen's" or "political" virtue (πολιτικῆ, *Republic* 430c3).⁸

But why are the politically virtuous, who derive pleasure from acting justly and want to be honored for being just, not genuinely virtuous? Irwin's answer is puzzling. On the one hand, he says that well-educated auxiliaries in the *Republic* do not "maintain a facade of virtue," because they do not choose virtue merely for its causal consequences.⁹ Thus, ". . . the belief that an action is just will be sufficient for them to want to do it, given the rest of their outlook[.]" for,

⁶I am grateful to Chris Bobonich for this reading.

⁷I owe this point about the slave-citizen contrast to discussion with Stephen Menn .

⁸Adams 1902 *ad. loc.* identifies two senses in which Plato speaks of πολιτικὴ ἀνδρεία: the sense in which a πόλις, as opposed to an individual, is called courageous (in this sense, the city as a whole is courageous in virtue of one class's courage), and the sense in which courage may be based not on knowledge but on true opinion, that is, opinion in conformity with the law of the πόλις. My account of the contrast between slavish and political virtue above complements Adams'.

⁹Irwin 1995, 235. But note that this is a change from Irwin 1977, 202-3, 220, where the claim is that the musically-educated do choose justice only for its consequences.

. . . the well-trained person who lacks knowledge does not care about doing virtuous action simply because it is a source of honour. If that were all he cared about, he would not care what he is honoured for, whereas a well-educated person cares about being honoured for being virtuous (235).

On the other hand, Irwin says that when faced with situations like Gyges' opportunity to become invisible at will, or the unearned reputation for injustice accompanied by the punishment of the rack (*Republic* 359c-61d), the auxiliaries are likely to lose their true beliefs about virtue or to hold on to beliefs which although true in the ideal city are not true in these situations. This is because the stability of the auxiliaries' true beliefs about virtue depends on their being honored by their society for performing virtuous actions. In support of this claim, Irwin points out, first, that auxiliaries in the ideal city, although trained to hold on to their beliefs through various pains, pleasures, and fears, are not said to be able to retain them in the face of dishonor--unlike the timocrat's aristocratic father (233-34). Second, he argues that well-educated auxiliaries would not be able to stand firm in the face of tests involving dishonor because they are at bottom honor-lovers and depend for their virtue on being honored. As evidence, he cites the case of the individual in a timocracy, who does not stick to true virtue, but succumbs to the timocracy's standards of honor, because he lacks the "reason mixed with musical training" which alone preserves virtue (232, cf. *Republic* 548b-50b).

However, the analogy between the auxiliary and the timocrat is inexact, since the auxiliary has been educated properly, but the timocrat's education has been neglected (*Republic* 546d). Timocrats, Socrates says, secretly amass the wealth they are not allowed to possess openly, because they have been educated by force rather than persuasion (οὐχ ὑπὸ πειθοῦς ἀλλ' ὑπὸ βίας πεπαιδευμένοι [548ab]). There is no doubt that bad education can corrupt an honor-lover raised in a degenerate society, but this does not show that an auxiliary, educated to value virtue, would be similarly corrupted should he find himself in an unjust society. If one assumes auxiliaries' beliefs are unstable enough to be lost in an unjust society, then it is difficult to see why they should be stable in the ideal city. For being a free rider in the perfect city--pretending

to be just without being so--could win an honor-lover all the rewards of justice without any of the trials. The reliability of the auxiliaries' beliefs in the ideal city by itself suggests some commitment to them that does not depend on honor. (As Irwin puts it, they care about being honored for being virtuous). In addition, Plato's silence about the auxiliary's preservation of true beliefs in the face of dishonor may not be significant. The lawgiver hands down to him true opinions about what should and should not be feared under *all* conditions (διὰ πάντος [429c8]) and there is no restriction on the pains, pleasures, desires and fears through which he will preserve these opinions (429bd). Indeed, given that each class has its characteristic pleasures and pains (580d-81b), one might expect that it is these, rather than the pleasures and pains that do not much matter to them, that are to be withstood. Finally, Plato speaks of dyeing the auxiliary's character with true opinions that cannot be washed out. (We still need, of course, a non-metaphorical psychological account of how these true beliefs might be held in the face of dishonor.)

Ultimately, Irwin's denial of genuine virtue to non-philosophers stems from his view that their beliefs lack what he calls "counterfactual reliability," which is necessary for virtue to be genuine and which only knowledge can provide. To explain this phrase, Irwin refers to a passage in the *Meno* in which Socrates says that true belief is as good a guide for action as knowledge (97ac)--so long as the belief remains true.¹⁰ But true beliefs have a tendency to "wander" if they are not "tethered by an account" (97d-98b). If one lacks an account as to why one's beliefs are true two sorts of things can happen to them: one may become puzzled and lose

¹⁰While Socrates says that true belief is as useful as knowledge for producing good results (*Meno* 98b), he does not say that these results are good for the agent, but instead that people are made good and useful to the community by both knowledge and true belief (98cd).

them, or one may hold on to them tenaciously in circumstances in which they are false (143).¹¹ Now the auxiliaries' true beliefs in the ideal city may be "empirically reliable," in the sense that societal arrangements in the ideal city guarantee their truth and the steadfastness with which they are maintained. But they will not be "counterfactually reliable": in unfamiliar situations, those they have not been or cannot be trained to respond to, they will stray from true belief. The only thing that provides the kind of "counterfactual reliability" for belief Plato wants, Irwin says, is a rational understanding of why virtue is good, in any situation, and that requires knowledge of what virtue is essentially. The consequence is that auxiliaries, since they lack knowledge, do not have genuine virtue and do not choose virtue for its own sake, for without knowledge, one cannot choose justice for itself:

To choose it for itself, we must choose it under the description that makes it what it is-- for the property that makes it justice. When Plato speaks in Book II of choosing justice 'for itself', he does not mean simply that we must choose it for non-instrumental reasons; we must also choose it for what it really is. In his view, virtuous people must choose justice as a certain kind of non-instrumental good because they know that it is essentially that kind of non-instrumental good (235).

Genuine virtue is restricted to philosophers, who alone can know what kind of good it is essentially and so choose virtue for its own sake.

Counterfactual reliability seems to me to be the wrong criterion for gauging whether virtue is genuine or not, and the reason for this is that it runs together two different sorts of cases. On the one hand there are cases in which one loses one's true beliefs about virtue (or what one has been taught virtue is), or one's beliefs about virtue, true in one's earlier circumstances, are false given one's changed situation--although one continues to value virtue, one simply cannot

¹¹On this second interpretation of the "wandering" of true beliefs, a true belief "wanders" if the truth-value of the belief changes (e.g. because of changed circumstances) while the belief remains stable.

tell what is the virtuous thing to do in these new circumstances. On the other hand there are cases in which one loses one's true beliefs (e.g. "I should act virtuously") because what one valued was the honor brought by virtue and there is no honor in virtue in these new circumstances, or one's beliefs ("it is good to seek honor from the rulers") have become false because in these new circumstances it really is not good to seek to be honored by those in power.

Now it may be that an auxiliary would lose his true beliefs about virtue (thereby proving them counterfactually unreliable) if these beliefs were subjected to dialectical examination. Socrates restricts education in dialectic to philosophers (535a-37d), who are characterized by their ability to give an account of the essence of each thing (534b). In describing the corrupting effects of dialectic on the young, Socrates says that when they confront a dialectical examination of the question "what is the noble?" (τί ἐστὶ τὸ καλόν:) they lose their faith in what they have learned from childhood about the just and the noble (τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὸ καλόν) and become lawless, delighting only in refuting others (537e-39c, esp. 538cd); perhaps the same would happen to auxiliaries exposed to dialectic. Or it may be that auxiliaries could hold on to their beliefs even through dialectical examination--they may be too unphilosophical to give up their inconsistent beliefs for the pleasures of refutation--and the reason they are not given a dialectical education is that it would be wasted on them.

But does the failure of auxiliaries' beliefs to pass intellectual muster indicate an inability to withstand other sorts of tests of their beliefs, such as torture on the rack, an undeserved reputation for injustice, and the opportunities for secret injustice afforded by Gyges' ring? If the former kind of counterfactual unreliability is a sign that one does not value virtue for its own sake, valuing virtue for its own sake seems to require omniscience, rather than commitment. If one concludes from an auxiliary's mistake about what is virtuous that she does not value virtue for its own sake, then it would seem that one should also conclude that the philosopher who makes a mistake in her geometrical proof does not value truth for its own sake.

To deny that a well-educated auxiliary's true beliefs about virtue are reliable in the face of dishonor based on the standards of a community other than the one ruled by philosophers is to

deny that character and commitment can be reliable in these circumstances. But if this is Plato's view, then the argument of the *Republic* is a failure. When Adeimantus challenges Socrates to show that justice may be valued for its own sake, he suggests that what is at issue is not whether those who have god-like wisdom would value justice for its own sake, but whether others would. As he puts it, "except for the person who by virtue of his divine nature disdains injustice, or having acquired knowledge, refrains from it, *no one else* is willingly just" (πλὴν εἴ τις θεία φύσει δυσχεραίνων τὸ ἀδικεῖν ἢ ἐπιστήμην λαβὼν ἀπέχεται αὐτοῦ. τῶν γε ἄλλων οὐδεὶς ἐκῶν δίκαιος [366cd], my emphasis). The challenge, then, is to show that non-philosophers, those who lack knowledge, like Adeimantus and Glaucon and Plato's readers, *should* value justice for its own sake (not that they could be trained to have the right opinions). Socrates answers the challenge by sketching a picture of the perspective from which justice could be known to be just, but the way in which this persuades his audience is by suggesting that in order to see how justice is good in itself one must learn what justice really is, and what the good really is--for as long as we lack a clear understanding of justice and the good, we will not be able to see how justice is good in itself. The equation is not between paying back debts and honor or gain, but between what is really just in each situation and what is really good. To avail oneself of the perspective from which one can understand the real equation, one has to transform oneself and make oneself just. But one must be motivated to be welcome such a self-transformation in advance of actually doing it: one must believe that what one thinks of as just is intrinsically valuable and be open to revising one's conceptions of justice and goodness in light of what one might learn about them. Something like this must be true of the motivational state of the well-educated auxiliaries.

I want to argue that once inculcated, the auxiliaries' true beliefs can survive even dishonor--that is, that they do not need to believe that they will be honored in order for them to want to live up to a standard. This is because, on my view, the auxiliaries love what is honorable--τὸ καλόν--although they must take the social fact that something is honored

(receives τιμή) as their evidence for its being καλόν.¹² However, the fact that they rely on what is honored in the ideal city to tell what is honorable does not mean that they would take honor accorded by any another society as evidence of something's being honorable--that would depend on the likeness of this other society's standards to their own. (Nor does it show that all they have ever cared about is what society thinks.) To see the plausibility of this point of view, however, we will have to look more closely at the psychology of honor-lovers, which I turn to in section 3.

But before that, I want to sketch how one might genuinely value virtue for its own sake without knowledge of what it is essentially, so that knowledge may be the result, rather than a precondition, of valuing virtue for its own sake (cf. *Symposium* 210a-11c). On this less stringent account of what it is to value something for its own sake, I value X intrinsically if I aim at X over other things, value some other things because they enable me to get X, and am willing to revise my conception of X and the means by which I seek it in light of what I come to learn about X. That I have some kind of grasp of X seems necessary: it is difficult to claim that a person values virtue if she has no inkling of what virtue is. The requisite understanding cannot be knowledge, strictly speaking, because knowledge is of the Forms, and many people, from Plato and Socrates to the philosophers-in-training in the ideal city of the *Republic*, seem to value virtue for its own sake before they know it in this sense (cf. 402bc).

One passage in the *Republic* that seems to support such a laxer cognitive requirement for valuing than knowledge asserts that we all value the good, although we lack any adequate understanding of it. For the good is

[t]hat which every soul pursues and for the sake of which it does everything, guessing (ἀπομαντευομένη) what it is, but confused and unable to grasp adequately what it is, or

¹²τὸ καλόν can be translated by 'fine,' 'honorable,' 'admirable' or 'noble', but the linguistic connection that exists in English between 'honor' and the 'honorable' is missing between the Greek τιμή and τὸ καλόν.

to have any reliable belief (πίστει χρῆσασθαι μονίμῳ οἴᾳ) about it as about other things . . . (505e).

To pursue the good, and to do everything for its sake is to value the good for its own sake, and it seems, at least from this passage, that valuing the good for its own sake does not require already having a correct conception of it; "guessing what it is" suffices.¹³

But we have not yet seen how a non-philosopher might understand justice, and what his reasons for valuing it might be. In the following two sections, I will describe the sort of grasp of justice and of why it is valuable apart from its consequences that a musically-educated auxiliary can give, and I will argue that this is sufficient for him to value justice intrinsically and reliably--in short, for his "political" virtue to be genuine. To do this, I begin by examining honor-lovers' capacities for cognition and desire.

3. The Psychology of Honor-Lovers

On the *Republic* classification of people according to the part of the soul that rules them or sets their ends, honor-lovers are dominated by the spirited part of the soul, and this fact explains their character, their behavior, and the kind of virtue and understanding they are capable of obtaining. To understand honor-lovers, then, we must investigate the spirited part of the soul, asking: what are the cognitive, evaluative and motivational capacities of spirit, and what are the

¹³However, this may be to say no more than that we all pursue (and thus value) what appears to us to be good; in this case, the passage tells us nothing about the cognitive preconditions for valuing what genuinely is good, i.e., virtue. On the other hand, if the claim is that we all value the real good, then valuing the good will have no cognitive prerequisites, and differences in virtue cannot be specified in terms of what we value intrinsically. (I owe this last point to Martha Nussbaum). A third possibility is that Socrates is saying that whatever we value, we value on the condition that it really is good--if we can be shown otherwise we will no longer value it. But being shown this might require that we revise our conception of the good in accordance with its true nature--and that might not be possible for everyone.

activities and functions characteristic of it? why is the spirit separate from reason and the appetites? what unifies the particular capacities attributed to the spirited part of the soul? can the spirited part be educated, and if so, what is the psychology of its education?

In *Republic IV*, Socrates divides the soul into three parts, the rational (τὸ λογιστικόν), the spirited (τὸ θυμοειδές) and the appetitive (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν). Each part possesses some cognitive, evaluative and motivational functions, but as we shall see, there are also functions unique to the higher parts of the soul. Each part of the soul can assent to or dissent from a thing, strive after or reject it, be drawn to or repelled by it, consent or not consent to it, and so on (437b). All the parts can have beliefs, including the important shared belief that reason ought to rule (τό τε ἄρχον καὶ τὸ ἀρχομένω τὸ λογιστικὸν ὁμοδοξῶσι δεῖν ἄρχειν, 442c11-d1). They can each want or desire, as well as set ends (437c, 580d-81b). The parts of the soul can give orders (appetite is characterized as τὸ κελεῦον, and reason as τὸ κωλύον at 439c6) as well as obey or disobey these orders (442bd). There is a suggestion that the lower parts can be either be persuaded by arguments or be reined in by force (554d2). The lower parts can also "enslave and rule over" the higher (442a, cf. 588e-89b). When they have been educated properly, the higher parts preside over and watch upon the appetitive part of the soul (442a). Reason alone can know what is good for each part of the soul and for the soul as a whole (442c).

Socrates' argument for the partitioning of the soul does not appeal to the functions of the different parts of the soul, but rather to conflicting desires or judgments. Invoking the Principle of Opposites--that the same thing cannot do or suffer opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing at the same time (436b)--Socrates argues that ordinary experiences of psychic conflict call for explanation in terms of his partitioning of the soul. A thirsty man desires drink, but is sometimes held back from drinking. According to the Principle of Opposites it cannot be the same thing that moves him towards the drink and holds him back, so there must be two parts--one pressing forward and the other pulling back--in the soul of the thirsty man who does not

drink.¹⁴ Suppose that the drink is bad: in this case, the part of the soul that desires to satisfy the man's thirst is opposed by something in the soul which desires his health. This establishes the distinction between the rational part, which desires the good of the whole soul, and the appetitive part, which desires only the satisfaction of appetites.¹⁵ Socrates goes on to distinguish between reason and appetite on the one hand, and the spirited part of the soul on the other, by adducing further instances of psychic conflict (discussed below).

But not every case of psychic conflict results in a partitioning of the soul. Conflicts in the appetitive part of the soul (I desire to eat as well as to sleep, but am unable to do both at the same time) may not pose much of a problem, since Socrates does not insist on the unity of the appetitive part of the soul, describing it as a many-headed monster (588c) and remarking that its manifold nature prevents it from being given a distinctive name except "appetitive" and "money-loving" in virtue of its strongest features (581a). However, Plato could easily have imagined conflicts within the spirited part of the soul--to take Richard Kraut's example, between disgust at oneself and anger at oneself for being so disgusted.¹⁶ But Socrates does not suggest that there

¹⁴ Bobonich 1994 discusses the differences between Plato's two models of the relations between the parts of the soul: the "force" model, according to which the parts exert physical forces on each other, as in the example of the thirsty man restrained from drinking, and the "command" model, according to which the parts relate to one another by command and consent, persuasion, obedience, and so on.

¹⁵The characteristic desires of the different parts of the soul are specified at *Republic* 580d-581b, where it turns out that what the rational part desires is wisdom and truth, the spirited part honor, and the appetitive a motley crew of things including food, sex, and drink, but also money.

¹⁶Kraut 1973, 210. Kraut's example shows why the kind of resolution suggested by Price 1995, 67 will not suffice to maintain the unity of the spirited part. Price suggests that conflicts within the spirited part may always be parasitic on conflicts between reason and appetite, where spirit is torn between both.

might be separate parts of the soul that feel anger and self-disgust; the spirited part of the soul, at any rate, is not manifold. The mere fact of conflict between desires seems insufficient to warrant a partitioning of the soul, for that would result in their being as many parts of the soul as there are potential conflicts between doing two things simultaneously. We should, then, examine the *kind* of conflict between desires or objects of desire that warrants a partitioning of the soul.

Now the three parts of the soul are not only distinguished, but also hierarchically ranked, and the ranking seems to be in terms of the kinds of judgment each is capable of making: the rational part alone can judge what is good for the soul overall (441e); the spirited part cannot do this, but it can make judgments of right and wrong (440cd); the appetitive part, however, can do neither. We may characterize the appetitive part's judgments as judgments of preference. My appetite can evaluate objects in terms of their fulfilling (or failing to fulfill) a want or need I feel: for sweets, or chess, or company. My appetite may choose company over the others because my desire for company is stronger than my desire for sweets or chess, or because the company will offer me sweets and play chess with me, or because too many sweets and too much chess will make me fat and dull, with no chance of socializing with others. But all these judgments will be made in terms of my preferences--weighted and calculated preferences to be sure, but only preferences all the same.

However, I can evaluate not only sweets, chess and company, but also my having a desire for these things, and acting on my desire for them. Taking the having of or acting on certain preferences as the object of my judgments, I can see that to have or act on these preferences is to be a certain type of person or to live a certain type of life--base, noble, shameful, admirable, and so on. Following Charles Taylor, I call these "judgments of worth."¹⁷ By the logic of these judgments, Taylor argues, certain objects of desire are strongly incompatible with living a life or being a person that is 'noble' or 'courageous' or 'beautiful;' indeed, part of living a noble life or being a courageous person consists precisely in rejecting certain objects and renouncing

¹⁷Taylor 1976, 282-83.

particular desires.¹⁸ I suggest that the spirited part of the soul in the *Republic* is distinguished for its ability to make judgments of worth. For the spirited part, what is at stake in approving or disapproving the appetitive part's desires is a sense of the honorable or the noble which one ought to live up to. Because judgments of worth are dependent on social conceptions of value, they can be made to follow the judgments in terms of overall goodness which reason makes. Let us test this proposed rationale for Plato's partitioning of the soul against his examples.

To distinguish the spirit from the appetites, Socrates tells the story of Leontius, who, passing some corpses near the city wall, both desired to see them and was repelled by the sight (439e7ff). The desire to see them prevailed, but as he looked, he rebuked his desires, saying, "Look, ill-fated ones, fill yourselves with the beautiful spectacle!" (Ἴδου ὑμῖν. ὦ κακοδαίμονες, ἐμπλήσθετε τοῦ καλοῦ θεάματος) (440a2-3). Socrates identifies the part that opposes the impulse to see and rebukes this desire in Leontius first as anger (ἡ ὀργή) (440a5), then as spirit (ὁ θυμός) (440b4) and the spirited part (θυμοειδής) (440e2). This part of the soul rebukes the appetites at reason's command (440a5-6), but the emotional content of its response--its anger--seems to be all its own.¹⁹

The Leontius story identifies three things in the response of the spirit: first, in conflicts between reason and appetite, spirit acts on reason's commands, restraining and rebuking the appetites. Socrates at first maintains that spirit never (οὐκ ἄν ποτέ) opposes reason in oneself or in others (ἐν σαυτῷ . . . δ' οὔδ' ἐν ἄλλῳ) (440b4-7) but later qualifies this claim by admitting that this is the case except when the spirited part has been corrupted by a bad upbringing (τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ θυμοειδές, ἐπίκουρον ὄν τῷ λογιστικῷ φύσει, ἐὰν μὴ ὑπὸ κακῆς τροφῆς διαφθαρῆ [441a2-3]). Second, spirit desires and approves of the beautiful (τὸ

¹⁸Frankfurt 1987 describes this phenomenon as an "outlawing" of certain desires so that one sees them as not one's own, and sees acting on them as unfree.

¹⁹When reason opposes the spirit, it does not do so in anger. For example, see the discussion of the case of Odysseus below.

καλόν). Third, when appetite forces a person to act against reason, the spirited part's response involves making a person angry with *himself* (αὐτόν, 440b2) as well as with the appetites in him.²⁰ This third feature of spirit's responses supports our hypothesis: while reason alone judges what is good for the whole soul, spirit judges the self by a standard of what the self should be.

Socrates' second scenario (440c) describes a man who believes himself to be justly punished. To the extent that he is noble, such a man will not become angry on behalf of the appetites even though they are being thwarted in the course of his punishment. The man is hungry and cold; his appetites for food and warmth are frustrated; nonetheless, his spirit refuses (οὐκ ἐθέλει) to be roused against his just punisher. The example is intended to emphasize spirit's partisanship with reason and its judgments (440e3-6). Since in cases of conflict between reason and appetite, siding with the rational part entails siding against, or opposing, the desires of the appetitive part, the example also confirms spirit's separateness from appetite.

Again, as in the story of Leontius, spirit opposes the appetites. But in this case it does not oppose the appetites as inherently debasing but as unimportant relative to the justice of the punishment--the belief that he is not being wronged because his punisher is behaving justly even prevents this justly punished noble man from feeling anger at being caused pain. This suggests that the spirit, which we saw to be capable of having beliefs, can have beliefs about the justice of actions. Perhaps in this case the spirit needs only some view of merit or desert or what is fitting, whether generally or only in the man's own case, and this belief may be given to it by convention or reason, within the soul or from outside it.²¹ Socrates emphasizes that the extent to which

²⁰Although no explanation for why the spirit sides with reason against the appetites is to be found in these passages--except for the claim that it does so by nature--a psychologically plausible account may be available to us in terms of the desire for self-respect that in later books comes to be characteristic of the spirit (see below).

²¹Cf. 574d. It is also capable of having true beliefs pertaining to courage (430b). This characterization of the spirit's relation to the other parts of the soul raises the question of whether

someone responds in this manner depends on the degree to which he is noble. The fact that a noble person regards himself as noble, and so identifies with and tries to live up to the best in him, explains why he is able and inclined to make reason's judgments his own.

By contrast, a person who believes himself wronged (ἀδικεῖσθαι τις ἡγήται), is excited to anger by both the suffering and the belief that he is suffering unjustly (440c7-d3). In this case, the spirit seethes and grows fierce (ζεῖ τε καὶ χαλεπαίνει), allies with what seems to it just (τῷ δοκοῦντι δικάϊω) and struggles against the injustice until the person succeeds or dies, or it is recalled and calmed by reason (ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ παρ'αὐτῷ ἀνακληθεὶς πραυνθῆ) (440cd). Socrates seems to be describing the spirit in a state of moral indignation--at, among other things, the indignity of the man's appetitive suffering. He believes he is not being treated as he should be: there is a right way he ought to be treated, in virtue of who he is, or what he has or has not done; knowing this, he feels slighted and angry at being treated otherwise.

Socrates' first scenario for the independence of spirit from the rational part, a line from Homer, depicts Odysseus' reason rebuking the excessive anger of his heart.²² The story in the

it can originate beliefs or only preserve those given it by other parts. Its emotion, however, seems to be all its own, and if we can redescribe the emotion as a type of judgment that it is shameful for Leontius to look at these corpses, or cowardly for Odysseus not to kill off all the suitors at once, that might include beliefs that are unique to the spirit. So the picture might be that when reason tells the spirit that it is bad to look at corpses, spirit understands this in terms of shame and dishonor.

²²Ian Mueller has pointed out to me that in the *Phaedo*, Socrates uses this same line from Homer to illustrate the opposition between the desires of the soul and those of the body. Anger is there a desire of the body--as are all emotions involving honor (68c, 82c). Arguing against the Pythagorean view of soul as a kind of harmony, Socrates proposes that the soul is what controls the various desires, angry emotions, fears, and physical feelings ἐπιθυμῖαι, ὄργαι, φόβοι, σώματος παθήματα by disciplining, scolding, encouraging, or conversing with them, "as if it

Odyssey recounts how Odysseus, lying in the hallway of his house planning evils for the suitors in his spirit (ἐνὶ θυμῷ), hears the maidservants who have been sleeping with the suitors pass by, whereupon his spirit is stirred in his breast (θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι), and he debates in mind and spirit (κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν) whether to kill them at once or later. His heart grows in anger, like a dog standing over its pups when it sees a stranger.²³ Now the maidservants have not harmed Odysseus by making him suffer hunger and cold, nor have they harmed his reason in any obvious sense. Here, most clearly, we see a direct injury to the spirit, a hurt--however unintentional--to Odysseus' sense of honor. The maidservants' behavior shames Odysseus, demeaning him in his own eyes and presumably in the eyes of others. Odysseus perhaps feels his maids should have remained loyal to him, because of the man he is, because they are *his* maids. Perhaps he also worries that others will think less of his authority as a result of his maids' disregard for it. But he strikes his breast and rebukes his heart (κροαδίῃ) telling it to endure, since it has endured worse.²⁴

These examples of the spirit's activity attribute a striking degree of complexity to its judgments: that reason is authoritative, that the appetites are to be overridden, that it would be base to do such-and-such an action, that it is not fitting for a person like myself to be so treated, that it is right to be punished for injustice.²⁵ These judgments of worth are made in terms not

were a separate and distinct thing" (94cd). Here, as in the *Republic*, a division in the self accounts for the phenomenon of our disciplining ourselves. But in the *Republic*, angry emotion can be both discipliner and disciplined.

²³*Odyssey* 20.5-20

²⁴Socrates says that this scenario clearly shows something which has reflected about better and worse rebuking something which feels unreasoning ἀλογίστως anger. But although itself unreasoning, presumably it is amenable to reasoning.

²⁵ One might object here that if I attribute all this to the spirited part of the soul I leave the rational part with no work to do (this objection was put to me by Nicholas Smith). One might

available to the appetitive part--whereas judgments of preference would seem to be available to the spirited part, since it can choose greater honors over lesser.²⁶

The distinctive features of judgments of worth may be clarified by noting some differences between timocrats, honor lovers who control a city without the guidance of reason, and the degenerate types just below them in Socrates' ranking, the oligarch and democrat. The timocrat, according to Socrates, thinks the pleasures of profit are "base" and those of learning are "smoke and foolishness" (581d). But the oligarch, who is ruled by appetite, uses his spirited part only for self-surveillance and self-control--so that by exercising compulsion and fear on himself, his appetites are guaranteed long-term satisfaction (554cd).²⁷ His attitude towards the timocratic life, as he skulks away from its risks, is one of fear rather than contempt (553bc, 554b). The democratic man, further down on the scale of degeneracy, is characterized by an inability to make judgments of worth: he satisfies all of his desires equally, be they necessary or

respond that the spirited part of the soul does not initiate judgments of worth--reason does that--but it understands and obeys them in terms unavailable to the appetitive part. But in the case of someone like the timocrat, especially when he starts to honor wealth, are his (false) judgments of worth handed down by reason? Another possibility is that in a philosopher, spirit "translates" reason's judgments of goodness into judgments of worth while in an honor-lover, reason is not able to go beyond the judgments of worth that spirit makes--and the "translation" from truths about goodness to truths about what is honorable must be made and broadcasted by philosophers. But on this account, spirit is motivationally redundant in the philosopher as reason was alleged to be in the honor-lover.

²⁶Presumably, judgments of overall goodness are similarly unavailable to both lower parts of the soul; I will not go into this here, as my interest is in the nature of the spirited part.

²⁷The appetitive part makes some evaluative judgments, for example, the judgment that reason ought δειν to rule (442d). But this may simply be a judgment that reason's rule is the best means for the long-term satisfaction of appetite's desires.

unnecessary. He evaluates his desires or their objects so as to make them maximally compossible (561bc). New shameless opinions have entirely replaced the beliefs which the higher types held about what was honorable and base (574d). Certainly, the oligarch and even the democrat evaluate their desires in some way when they try to satisfy them over the long run, or in as large a number as possible, and this would suggest that the appetitive part, which dominates them, is also able to pick out from several desires the one it considers best.²⁸ But the appetite, and so the oligarch and democrat, seem to operate on simple preferences, for one object or another; the appetite can calculate, maximize, and judge or choose in terms of what satisfies it; it can forgo certain desires in the short run in order to have them in greater quantities over the long run. But it cannot judge or choose on the basis of how a judgment or choice reflects on the judge or chooser. It cannot make judgments of worth.

One advantage of seeing the principle of partitioning in terms of distinctive types of evaluative judgment is that it makes sense not only of the variety and hierarchy of agents' ends but also of the unity--immunity to akrasia--of each part of the soul. For apparent conflicts of desire within one part of the soul can be resolved in terms of the common evaluation all judgments of that part of the soul use.²⁹ To return to Kraut's example of the conflict between disgust at oneself and anger at one's self-disgust, since both the anger and the disgust are

²⁸Bobonich 1994 argues that the appetitive part of the soul can make all-things-considered judgments of what is best for it; this would involve weakly evaluating its own desires.

²⁹This is how Nussbaum 1986 explains Plato's argument for the impossibility of akrasia in the *Protagoras*: if one has a single homogeneous end, such as pleasure, then one simply cannot know what's best (i.e. most pleasant) and pursue something else (i.e. something less pleasant) because one is overwhelmed or tempted (by its being less pleasant?). The only explanation is that one made a mistake in reasoning (so one didn't know what was most pleasant and what less so after all), for how could anyone pursue less pleasure instead of more pleasure when what she wanted was pleasure? (113-17).

judgments made in the same terms of value--the way what one does or undergoes reflects on the type of person one is--they will count as the same type of judgment and so as coming from the same part of the soul.³⁰ The kind of conflict that warrants partitioning is one that cannot be resolved by a common evaluative term, so that in the final analysis, the agent experiences only conflicting imperatives. Appetite may be many-headed for just this reason: the appetites do not have any single goal (for example, pleasure) which would be maximized by any given ranking. Thirst is just for drink; hunger for food, and so on (437d-438b). Thus, not every apparent conflict is an irresolvable conflict, and only irresolvable conflicts warrant partitioning. It is not the raw, theory-neutral fact of conflicting desires that Plato seeks to explain (these might be due to particular features of one's circumstances--for example, one person cannot sing at work, another can), but rather, the theory-laden phenomenon that we, who aim at the good, fail to agree with each other and even within ourselves in our judgments of what is good. How can the soul, while it aims at the good, fail to agree with itself? Because it has "parts" which have different conceptions of the good, and "lower parts" which cannot grasp the "higher parts'" conceptions.

Judgments of worth provide a unifying rubric for the diverse traits Plato attributes to spirit--the anger of guard dogs (375a11-b7), wild animals and pre-rational children (441b), Odysseus' rage at the suitors and maidservants, Leontius' self-disgust, and the auxiliaries' and timocrats' love of honor--the most divergent of these being the characterizations of the spirit in terms of anger early in the *Republic* and in terms of honor-love later on. What is involved in a judgment of worth is a sense of how one's action or condition reflects on oneself; this presupposes having a conception of oneself both in terms of how one is and how one ought to be. These factors would seem to be involved even in fairly simple cases of anger: imagine a child

³⁰It might be thought that if the judgments of each part are made in entirely different terms of evaluation, there may not be any possibility of conflict between them. But the point of conflict is the point at which the deliberation of a part of the soul issues in a command to do something--where another part's deliberation issues in a contradictory command.

yelling gustily because she is wet, or hungry, or feeling insecure. What turns her displeasure or fear into anger would seem to be a sense that things with her are not as they should be--with "as they should be" referring to a condition she has come to expect her caretakers owe it to her to bring about (and this would be why anger requires not only something to be angry about but someone to be angry at³¹). As a child progresses, her conception of how things should be for her can undergo revolutions, from "how I like things," to "whatever is appropriate," to "whatever is right--even if that isn't how I like things." But it would seem that she has some such conception as soon as she can make judgments at all.³² It may be that this sort of conception, of how things ought to be with one, is too complex to attribute to infants and some animals; however, the objections to discomfort expressed by an infant at the very least arise out of a capacity that can be trained so that it is roused and quelled in accordance with social norms of rightness.³³

³¹Cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.ii: Anger is a longing, accompanied by pain, for a real or apparent revenge in return for a real or apparent slight against oneself or one's friends, when the slight is undeserved; anger must be at a particular individual and because this individual has done or is about to do, something against oneself or one's friends; anger is accompanied too by pleasure at the prospect of revenge (1378a30-b5).

³² The exchange between Socrates and Alcibiades beginning at *Alcibiades I* 110a makes a similar point.

³³My account of the spirited part of the soul resembles Cooper's 1984 account, which integrates the various emotions attributed to the spirited part by taking competitiveness and the desire for self-esteem as the central conception. On this view, all the anger in adult human cases come out of perceived failures to acquire self-esteem or esteem by others. The other two examples, although "less easy to accommodate" because "screaming two-week old babies and ferocious dogs presumably have no self-conception," are to be seen as "the central primitive phenomena which get transformed, as we mature, into the full-fledged competitive desire for self-esteem" (15-16). The difference is that I emphasize spirit's capacity to make a particular type of judgment--a self-

Realizing that anger involves self-evaluation helps us see one way in which anger might be related to the honor-love that characterizes the spirited part of the soul in the *Republic's* later discussions: anger is a response of the honor-loving part to circumstances that threaten one's honor, one's sense of self-worth. Another feature that helps link the two comes to light when we examine the kinship between Homer's and the *Republic's* conception of the spirit.³⁴ Spirit or θυμός in Homer has animating, cognitive, emotional, deliberative and motivational capacities. 'θυμός' can be used as a reflexive pronoun; it names that part of oneself which one addresses or which addresses one when one is deliberating or being roused to action. It is at once the immediate source of vigorous and bold action and the seat of the emotion that motivates such action. Plato, in the *Cratylus*, derives 'θυμός' from 'θύσις,' meaning "boiling" or "seething" (419e, cf. *Timaeus* 70c). Homeric spirit too can be physically affected by the emotions: they may displace, devour, or enlarge it--and respect (αἰδώς) restrains it. It functions inside the chest

evaluative judgment--whereas Cooper emphasizes spirit's characteristic desire--self-esteem. Cf. also Gosling 1973 41-51, who argues that the spirit, a force of aggression in Books II-IV, can be attracted to ideals of manliness (Gosling's translation for 'ἀνδρεῖα', the virtue of this part of the soul), and that the guardians' education somehow moulds their primitive aggression into the honor-loving spirit of Books VIII-IX. These accounts seem to me basically right, except that they assume a conception of anger which is too much like a blind drive. Note also that although Gosling is right that in the *Republic*, the guardians' education moulds their spirited parts into taking "manliness" for an ideal, this is not necessary--another education might as easily lead them towards another ideal.

³⁴Cooper 1984, 12 also remarks on the debt of Plato's conception of the spirit to Homer.

(or lungs), the φρόν, when the person is calm, outside it when he is impassioned. A Homeric spirit may be trained (as is Hector's) or untrained (like Achilles').³⁵

As our examples have already suggested, Homer and Plato treat the spirit as a site of activity for emotions closely connected to the sense of self. In addition, the two characterizations of the spirited part in the *Republic*, in terms of anger and the love of honor, bear a striking resemblance to the Homeric emotions of righteous anger (νέμεσις) and shame or respect (αἰδώς). In Homer, αἰδώς is a vulnerability to the ideal norm of society--in feeling αἰδώς one internalizes the anticipated judgments of others on oneself and shrinks from behavior that might arouse judgments of disapproval. And νέμεσις is the righteous anger felt at behavior which is, according to this internalized ideal norm, out of place. In feeling νέμεσις, one feels one's anger to be justified; in feeling αἰδώς one feels that anger at oneself would be justified.³⁶ In Plato too, αἰδώς is an internalized norm, associated with the θυμοειδές³⁷ Socrates explicitly distinguishes the fear of external sanction (δέος) from an internal sanction--αἰδώς--when he says that with the abolition of the traditional family, people will refrain from violating or dishonoring

³⁵I am indebted for these observations to Caswell 1990. Jahn 1987 has argued that there are six other psychological terms in Homer denoting the same function as θυμός, but used differently for metrical purposes--in much the way that epithets are in well-known formulae.

³⁶Redfield 1975, 115-117 characterizes these two emotions as a "reflexive pair," "inner and outer aspects of the same thing." Socrates' adult cases of thumotic anger in Book IV all conform to this account of socially justified anger: Leontius' appetites certainly would be disapproved of by others, and his anger at himself is fueled by his sharing that disapproval; the injustice suffered by a noble man similarly provokes justified anger because it is morally as well as socially inappropriate for him to be suffering at the hands of someone whom αἰδώς should have restrained; Odysseus' maids and the suitors have not acted according to the social norms governing their relationship to him with respect to their and his place in society.

³⁷On αἰδώς in Plato, I have learned a great deal from the discussion in Cairns 1993, 370-392.

their elders, both out of the fear that someone will rush to help their victim, and out of the respect that comes from the possibility that their victim might be a kinsman (465ab).

When an honor-lover internalizes a norm, he does something more than learn that behaving in accordance with this norm will earn him a good reputation, praise, and so on. If this is all that he does, he will make no moral progress even by learning and acting upon the norms of the philosophically-governed city. The strongest evidence for internalization is found in Plato's account of early education, which I turn to in section 4. But one piece of evidence that honor-lovers do internalize the norms of their societies, making judgments of worth that presuppose their having made judgments of self-assessment in the normative terms of their societies, is to be found in the deterioration of the honor-lover as his society degenerates from a timocracy to an oligarchy. The timocrat is an honor-lover who lives in a degenerate city, ruled by honor-lovers; consequently, his spirited part is not at its best, since it is not ruled by reason (within or from without) as it would be in the citizens of the ideal city. The timocrat is the product of νέμεσις operating without reason's guidance: born to a good father in an unjust city, he grows up seeing his father suffer repeated injustices, hearing his mother complain that his father is not a man (ἄνανδρος) and taking in the household slaves' goad that when he takes vengeance (τιμωρήσεται. 549e7) upon his father's wrongdoers, *he* will be a man, indeed more of a man than his father. Outside the home, he hears unjust men honored (τιμωμένους) and praised (ἐπαινουμένους). Lacking education, he judges that the life that his society--his friends, mother, slaves--deem honorable must *be* honorable.³⁸ Thus, as the timocracy degenerates into an

³⁸We should not confuse Plato's account of the form of the honor-lover in a particular timocratic society with the account of his nature: the timocrat is self-willed (ἀυθαδέστερον, 548e) and haughty of spirit (ὑψηλόφρων. 550b), insufficiently cultured (ὑποαμουσότερον), a fan of music and speeches (548e), harsh to slaves but gentle to free men and office-holders, devoted to gymnastics and hunting; he values exploits in war and considers his own wartime performance to

oligarchy, its honor-lovers, "each looking at the other in rivalry" (ἄλλος ἄλλον ὀρῶν καὶ εἰς ζῆλον), begin to compete in the pursuit of wealth. And the more they honor this, the less they honor virtue (550e).

This is not a story about a person whose desire is simply to be honored, and who pursues whatever means to honor there are for whichever society he finds himself in, all the while being indifferent to the content of the honorable in these societies. Of course, it is the case that honor lovers go for different things in different societies, and do so because different things are honored in different societies. But unless we understand their attitude in these different societies as valuing the honorable under different (socially-given) conceptions of what is honorable, their behavior will be unintelligible. It is possible for a money-lover to care about honor only in the sense of caring about her reputation with others, without being attached to the content of their evaluations--such an attitude might make for profitable business partnerships. But this is intelligible because money is a distinct end to which being honored is a means. To return to our example, what makes possible the decline from timocrat to oligarch is the timocrat's attachment to wealth for its own sake. Socrates says that although the timocrat disdains wealth when young, he grows attached to it when older because of his participation in the money-loving nature (540b). Presumably, it is his pursuit of wealth that has strengthened his money-loving nature; as that nature becomes dominant, the spirited part comes to admire and honor only wealth (553d).³⁹ But as long as his attitude to wealth is one of admiration and honor, our deteriorating honor-lover is not yet an oligarch (who wants his necessary appetites to be fulfilled and subordinates reason

justify his claim to office (549a). These are indications of his sense of what is honorable, on his society's terms, not of what he "naturally" pursues.

³⁹We find parallel usages of this notion of φιλοτιμία for something as simply honor for that thing without the assumption that this means for that thing as a source of honor for oneself at *Protagoras* 343c1, *Symposium* 178de and *Phaedrus* 257c7. In the last of these cases, the suggestion is that I might φιλοτιμῶ someone else's accomplishment.

and spirit's functions to appetite's). For even though he pursues wealth, the honor-lover's desire is still spirited: he pursues the wealthy life as the honorable life.

One might think that if any honor-lover--auxiliary or timocrat--values the honorable rather than the mere fact of being honored, then the moral difference between them disappears: surely if the auxiliary is to be better than the timocrat, then it must be because the auxiliary values the honorable (τὸ καλόν) whereas the honor-lover only seeks to be honored (τιμή). But such a distinction cannot be supported by the text--which is presumably why it has been thought that even the auxiliary cannot improve beyond the honor-lover's defining desire for being honored. However, although both auxiliary and timocrat value the honorable, the auxiliary is better off than the timocrat because his pursuit of the genuinely honorable--of what philosophers deem honorable--makes his beliefs consistent and harmonious so that he can approve of who he has become, and of the life he leads. By contrast, the conflicts of belief and value engendered in a timocrat by a society that doesn't have its standards set by knowledge of the honorable make his commitments to its values less stable, make it harder for him to form a positive self-conception, and make it easier for him to deteriorate. Thus the capacity to internalize different social norms is crucial for the educability of the honor-lover. In the final stage of my argument, below, I will show how the early educational programme in Books II and III of the *Republic* aims to educate the spirit so that the norm internalized by the honor-lover is the right one. We will then be in a position to see how this internalization might be sufficient for valuing virtue for its own sake, for a genuine and stable commitment to virtue.

4. The Education of the Auxiliaries.

Republic II and III describe the musical and gymnastic education of young guardians--future auxiliaries and philosophers--which will impart to the spirited part of their souls such true beliefs (δόξαι) as are relevant to "political" virtue: true beliefs about what things are to be feared, and what things are noble or honorable (καλόν). Musical education establishes these true beliefs in the guardians' souls by presenting them with images in which only virtuous figures can be seen as admirable: the gods and heroes they hear about are always virtuous. These images,

paradigm cases of the admirable, constitute a standard for the guardians. When this standard has been established, it becomes possible for the guardians to judge themselves by it, to see their shortfalls, to try to live up to the standard. Thus, they internalize the standard set by philosophers, and this internalization results in their having a genuine and stable commitment to virtue.

The guardians' early education aims primarily to train the spirited part of the soul.⁴⁰ It takes place before the advent of reason:⁴¹ although a musically-educated person will respond correctly to beauty, praising it, delighting in it and trying to incorporate it into her own life, she will not be able to give a reason for her responses; when she comes across the reason, however, she will welcome it, recognizing it by its kinship with what she already values (401e-402a). The education is likened to imprinting or moulding (377ab), and the dyeing of wool (429c-430b), and its chief method, the presentation of concrete images, seems to require only as much cognition as is granted the spirit in later discussions.⁴² Finally, Socrates says *even* physical exercises and

⁴⁰Cf. Gill 1985. I say "primarily" because Socrates often speaks as if reason, τὸ λογιστικόν, has also been trained by the early education, cf. *Republic* 410e-412a, 441e-442c. Gill also points to passages where it seems that Plato believes τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν has also been educated, e.g., 442cd, 548b, 549b.

⁴¹ This should not suggest that there is a time before which one does not have a reasoning part of the soul, only that there is a time before which the reasoning part of the soul does not perform its characteristic functions, of giving an account, or understanding what is good for the whole soul (or at least trying to do these things).

⁴²Gill 1985 gives additional reasons for supposing that the education is aimed at the spirit: that the class of guardians to be educated has been characterized as spirited, that the kinds of qualities the education tries to implant in the guardians--bravery, moral toughness, and self-discipline--are those later attributed to the spirit, and that the education is compared to the training of guard dogs, who have no reason (8-11). A propos of this last point, it seems worth mentioning that

labours (αὐτὰ γε μὴν τὰ γυμνάσια καὶ τοὺς πόνους) are undertaken by the musicians with a view to the spirit rather than only for the sake of the body's strength (410b5-7). The emphatic αὐτὰ γε μὴν suggests that the earlier "musical" education was aimed at the spirit--and the surprise is that the "gymnastic" was as well.⁴³

Although pre-rational, the education would seem to have given the guardians sophisticated moral and aesthetic capabilities. The stories they are exposed to give them true beliefs about virtue--e.g. courage (386a-388e, 429c-430c) and moderation (389a-391e). Properly-educated guardians are keenly perceptive about what is left out of things, and what is not well-made or well-grown (παραλειπομένων καὶ μὴ καλῶς δημιουργηθέντων ἢ μὴ καλῶς φύντων ὀξύτατ' ἂν αἰσθάνοιτο. 401e1-4); they rightly feel a distaste for these (ὀρθῶς δὴ δυσχεραίνων). The well-trained person has taste and discrimination: he can pick out beauty and

Socrates says nothing about *training* guard dogs at all. He compares the *nature* of a noble pup or dog (γενναῖος σκύλαξ. 375a2-3) or (γενναῖος κύων. 375e2)--which are "well-bred" in the sense of being of good stock--to that desired in the guardians: keenness, quickness, strength and bravery (375a) and friendliness to the familiar combined with hostility to the alien (375e).

⁴³It may seem, on the basis of other passages, that the early education also has an effect on the rational part, since Socrates describes it as harmonizing the philosophical and high-spirited natures to produce the best guardians (410e4-11a2). Because music nurtures the gentle philosophical nature, and gymnastics the aggressive high-spirited nature in the soul, a purely musical education would make the soul too soft: in the naturally high-spirited, this would result in irritability, while in those with less spirit to start off with, it would result in cowardice, producing "feeble warriors." A purely gymnastic education, at the other extreme, would make the soul harsh, cruel, overweeningly proud, and reason-hating. The goal of the combined education is to harmonize both natures and cultivate the mean of each, thereby producing citizens who are sober and brave (410c-12a). On this interpretation, education would consist in tensing and relaxing both the rational and spirited parts of the soul.

failures of beauty, and he responds to them with feelings of approval or distaste. He disapproves of and hates things which are base (αἰσχρόα), and praises and delights in beautiful things (τὰ καλὰ); he takes beauty into his soul, to foster its growth and to become beautiful and good himself (καλὸς καὶ γαθός [401e4-402a2]).⁴⁴ But we do not yet have any precise sense of *how* a musically-educated auxiliary values what he values. Given that he cannot grasp the reasoning that justifies his judgments (401a2), are his judgments unstable? To understand how he values virtue, we need to "get inside the head" of the musically-educated auxiliary. One way to do this is to look at the motivations used in the early educational process.

Education's heavy reliance on censorship points us in the direction of an important motivational factor. With censorship, representations of gods and heroes behaving in ways undesirable in adult guardians, such as being overwhelmed by anger, grief or laughter, and fighting with friends or parents, are banished from the guardians' environment. This is because such representations are false to the true character of the gods and their offspring, the heroes (377de), and because such representations would allow people to relax their moral standards (388d, 391e). Now the mere absence of stories depicting gods and heroes behaving immorally would not teach the guardians that they ought to behave morally unless they already looked to these figures for guidance as to how to behave, and they would only do this if they considered them models to emulate. The young guardians must already admire the gods and heroes (who are, after all, immortal, and supremely grand), and, as Socrates says later, it is impossible not to

⁴⁴Reeve 1988, 195-97 argues that some auxiliaries are educated "scientifically" as well, and that these along with auxiliaries who are educated dialectically but not practically constitute a distinct type of honor-lover, "officers," who are ruled by only necessary spirited desires. But at 537c Socrates says that the scientifically-educated auxiliaries are dialectical, and the dialectical guardians are headed for a philosophical understanding of things--there is just no evidence for the existence of this second class of auxiliaries. And, if my argument is correct, no need for it either, since early education is sufficient for inculcating genuine virtue.

imitate the things to which one attaches oneself with admiration (500c).⁴⁵ This is why Socrates urges that the first stories the guardians hear be the fairest (κάλλιστα) with respect to virtue (πρὸς ἀρετήν): the guardians look to these stories for guidance in living well, and stories that represent admired characters as virtuous will guide the guardians towards virtue. Again, this is why artists are forbidden to represent evil: the citizens may feed on it and accumulate its poison instead of beauty, grace, friendship, harmony, and likeness with reason (401bd). Another motivational factor relied upon by the early education is the guardians' desire for praise. The young guardians naturally seek the praise of others, and education is parasitic on this natural desire: by praising certain sorts of mythic characters it teaches the young what is praiseworthy, thereby setting standards or creating models for them to live up to--if they want the praise or esteem of others. Thus, Socrates says, in order to make the citizens brave one must not only expunge all fear-terms, but also praise death and men who die rather than allowing themselves to be enslaved (386a-87b).⁴⁶

Now one explicit aim of the education is to prevent citizens from becoming shameless. Hence the banning of the verse "Gifts persuade gods, gifts [persuade] revered kings" (390e): it will not do for citizens to think bribery acceptable, on the grounds that a bribable king can still

⁴⁵Socrates also concerns himself with the reverse process, in which imitation leads to admiration. Thus, the educational programme stipulates that those parts of poetry which are written or recited in the voice of a base or cowardly character are to be replaced by simple narration (393c-398b), lest people, adopting these voices when reading or reciting, "from the imitation enjoy the reality" (395c7-d1). The young guardians must not be allowed to imitate any but the best, not even in make-believe. They may only imitate people "who are brave, sober, pious, free, and all things of that kind" (395c).

⁴⁶In certain cases, Plato seems not to think that the gentle training by example or the absence of bad examples will suffice to set citizens on the right path to virtue. So for example, lying must be expressly prohibited and threats of punishment be set up against it (389bc).

be revered. Hence also the banning of representations of heroes indulging in excessive lamentation: taking these seriously instead of scorning them as he should, a guardian would be unlikely to consider himself, a mere human being, above them, or to rebuke himself for feeling or behaving similarly should misfortune befall him (388d).⁴⁷ Instead, to cultivate the guardian's disdain at such behavior, it is to be attributed to inferior types (387e-388a). People exposed only to Socrates' curriculum will think it most shameful (αἴσχιστον) to fight easily with each other; they may even believe that no citizen ever quarrels with another (378c). They will honor the gods and their parents and not count their friendship of little value (386a); they will keep the customs with regard to their elders out of respect as well as fear (463d, 465ab). Notice that the auxiliary is being trained so that he can judge and rebuke *himself* for lamenting, that he restrains his behavior towards his elders out of respect, and not just fear of external sanctions, that he judges it shameful--and not merely displeasing to his peers and superiors--to fight with other citizens. Concrete images of gods and heroes behaving admirably, as well as the living example of virtuous co-citizens, set the auxiliaries standards and comprise their models.⁴⁸ This suggests that the musically-educated auxiliary identifies with the perspective that judges virtuous actions

⁴⁷Price 1995, 68-69 notes that grief does not easily fit into the scheme of the spirited part of the soul, except by way of cowardice. But education can include one's response to grief within the ideal it establishes.

⁴⁸Other passages in Plato suggest that there is a strong connection between emotions of self-assessment and an agent's place in the community. For example, in the *Protagoras*, Protagoras' myth describes how Zeus, afraid that the human race would perish for want of political skill, sent them αἰδώς and justice so that they could live together, orderly and bound by friendship, in cities (322c). In the *Symposium*, Phaedrus' speech exults in the possibility of an army of lovers, who would be most brave because the gaze of one's beloved makes one want to hide one's disgraceful deeds and inclines one towards noble deeds (178c-79a). In the *Laws*, αἰδώς before one's φίλοι promotes bravery in battle (699c-701c).

admirable and vicious ones shameful, and adopts this perspective to judge and shape his own life. Even Leontius rebukes himself in private.

But does such internalized self-assessment constitute genuine virtue? We return here to our question of whether and how justice might be valued for its own sake by non-philosophers, who do not know what *justice* is because they do not *know* anything. "For its own sake" brackets, among the other consequences of justice which might make non-philosophers desire it, the honor a person might receive from others for behaving justly. But having internalized certain standards, an educated auxiliary can value justice--of characters, actions, and outcomes--because he wants to be able to see himself as just, because he wants to live up to his standards, or to have honor in his own eyes. In other words, he can come to care not for reputation ("what will the others think?") but for a true standard ("what would the person whose life I am trying to approximate do? what would she think of what I'm proposing to do?")⁴⁹ Without a consciousness of himself as living up to the standard he has internalized, an honor-lover cannot have honor from himself--and without that, even honor from others will not give him what he wants.

In separating out the consequences of justice for which it might be valued from justice itself, Glaucon tells Socrates, "I desire to hear what each [i.e., justice and injustice] is, and what power it has by itself by being in the soul, but to leave aside its rewards and consequences"

⁴⁹ The Myth of Er may seem to give us one last reason for skepticism about this optimistic account of auxiliary virtue, because there the person who has lived a life of habitual virtue without philosophy, under an orderly constitution, chooses the life of a tyrant (619d)--suggesting that his education did not teach him to value virtue for its own sake. I agree that this passage shows that whatever education may have taught this person about the value of virtue in his lifetime, that does not survive death and a thousand years in heaven. One way to explain his loss of true beliefs about virtue, however, is that only the rational part of his soul survives death, and without the educated spirited part of his soul, such a person has lost the anchor for his beliefs.

(358b, cf. 366e, 367bc).⁵⁰ Justice's intrinsic choiceworthiness depends both on what it is and on its effects in a person's soul. The effects of justice in the soul would include psychic harmony or health, the production of a certain type of character (a just one rather than an unjust one), and knowledge or true beliefs about what is and is not to be done. It is fair to characterize the educated guardians' positive self-assessment as an effect of justice in the soul, rather than an external consequence of justice. An auxiliary would not choose to have only the external consequences of justice if he could have them without really being just, or being able to see himself as just.

This suggests one set of reasons for choosing justice available to the auxiliary and modelled on the philosopher's reasons: he can characterize justice as noble, beautiful, and honorable, by reference to his honor-group or those pre-eminent members who set its standards.⁵¹ His ability and need to refer to this honor-group makes it seem unlikely that he would be unreliably virtuous, if his society were to be taken over by unjust rulers. For once educated, he is not simply obedient to any authority; his norms have been fixed by reference to a particular honor-group, and that group is the source of his standards, values, and self-esteem. Such a person will not have the counterfactually reliability that requires knowledge or omniscience; he may not know what to do in situations where typically just actions will result in bad outcomes--where, for example, returning a weapon will result in injury. Presumably, however, it is because

⁵⁰Mabbott 1978, 58 points out that states of soul are not among the consequences of justice, but what justice is. Irwin 1995, 182-88 says that the consequences of justice include both the results that come from one's seeming just to other people and the results of not being a victim of others' injustice. He agrees that the effect of justice in the soul does not count as a consequence. But given this, it seems open to him to hold that the auxiliaries' virtue is genuine, even though it is not based on knowledge.

⁵¹ Like the sight-lovers (476b, 480a), auxiliaries will both recognize that they are cognitively deficient and defer to the authority of those who are not.

role-models are better guides to living than action-types that it is role-models that he has been taught to internalize through his musical education. But an auxiliary so educated will be far from valuing only the appearance of justice and its rewards; he will be able to endure trials and temptations without losing his convictions. It cannot be said to be rational for him to prefer the appearance of virtue along with a policy of vice--for he values virtue for what it makes him. We can now see that the auxiliaries, who lack the knowledge of the good which could motivate them to act virtuously on the grounds that it is good for them to do so, can nevertheless believe that they should act virtuously because their norms, determined by the philosophers, have taught them to value virtue as honorable, and to see it as a condition of their self-esteem and so as intrinsically choiceworthy. If auxiliaries in the ideal city can value justice for its effects in their souls, and if their beliefs about these effects are true and reasonably reliable, we should be able to say that, after the philosophers, they value justice for its own sake.⁵²

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