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The Art of Morals: A Study of the Influence of Musicopoetic Arts on Moral Development in Plato's Laws

Daniele Manni
Loyola University Chicago

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THE ART OF MORALS:

A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF MUSICOPOETIC ARTS ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN

PLATO'S *LAWS*

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

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BY

DANIELE MANNI

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To Cosmo and Ever.
May you pull your own strings.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The portions of text of the *Laws* I translated are from John Burnet's *Platonis Opera* (1903). All other ancient texts follow the editions of the translations listed at the beginning of the bibliography. Citations of ancient works use the following abbreviations:

Plato, *Laws*   *Leg.*

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*   *NE*

Plato*, Phaedrus*   *Phaed.*

Plato, *Philebus*   *Phil.*

Aristotle, *Politics*   *Pol.*

Plato, *Republic*   *Resp.*

Plato, *Sophist*   *Soph.*

Plato, *Timaeus*   *Tim.*

References in the notes and in citations make use of the following Latin abbreviations:

and following pages   ff.

on the same page, in the same text   *ibid.*

in the same text   *ivi*

appears in this fashion in the original text   *sic*

ABSTRACT

This dissertation's primary goal is to give a detailed account of the employment of musicopoetic arts in the process of moral development in Plato's *Laws*. Its secondary objective is to propose an explanation for the different evaluations of musicopoetic arts at the end of the *Republic* and in the *Laws*.

To achieve the first goal I analyze the elements of the soul involved in the moral psychology of the *Laws*, as sketched in the famous image of the marionette; I maintain that the process of habit formation is the pivotal aspect of this moral psychology; I indicate that Plato restricts the musicopoetic arts to the representation of virtue; and I propose ways in which these arts can influence the process of habit formation. I conclude that the moral psychology of the *Laws* is highly dependent on non-rational and semi-rational motives for action. Additionally, I maintain that these motives can promote the pursuit of virtue when they undergo habits of repression (i.e. habits that lead the agent to resist some non-rational or semi-rational motives) or habits of cultivation (i.e. habits that promote certain non-rational motives) and I propose ways in which the musicopoetic arts intercept the process of habit formation, thereby reinforcing in the agent those motives that promote virtue.

With regards to the secondary goal, I make the case that Plato does not change his opinion with regards to the musicopoetic arts between *Republic* and *Laws*. But I claim that significant changes in the moral psychology lead to very different conclusions in the two dialogues about the ethical effectiveness of these arts.

INTRODUCTION

THE SUBJECT OF THIS STUDY AND ITS PLACE IN THE SECONDARY LITERATURE ON

PLATO'S *LAWS*

> The more I reflected upon what was happening, upon what kind of men were active in politics, and upon the state of our laws and customs (*ethe*), and the older I grew, the more I realized how difficult it is to manage a city's affairs rightly. For I saw it was impossible to do anything without friends and loyal followers; and to find such men ready to hand would be a piece of sheer good luck … while to train up new ones was anything but easy (Plato *Seventh Letter* 325c-d).

Even though we cannot rest assured that Plato is the author of the *Seventh Letter*,[1]

these few lines express the type of dissatisfaction with the political status quo and a vision

for the reformation of state government that are certainly Platonic. This dissatisfaction and

vision are expressed in a variety of Plato's dialogues, but most especially in those whose

subject is exquisitely political, such as *Republic*, *Statesman* and *Laws*. This dissertation

focuses on one of those dialogues, the *Laws*, Plato's last and unedited work, in an effort to

clarify the philosopher's plan, at the end of his life, to undertake the difficult task of

"training up" political allies in the pursuit of a utopian state.

Specifically this work focuses on the employment of the musicopoetic arts (poetry,

music, choral dances, tragedy, comedy, epics, myths, encomia, hymns, summarized in the

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[1] For the citation from the *Letter* I followed Bury's translation. For arguments regarding the authenticity of the letter, or at least the possibility of it being written by someone among Plato's associates see Bury (*Plato vol. IX* 389-91), who argues that the nature of the *Seventh Letter* as an "open letter" increases its authenticity. Additionally the authenticity of the letter is affirmed by those authors that subscribe to the interpretation of Plato's work known as the school of Tubingen; see for instance Reale's *Autotestimonianze e rimandi dei dialoghi di Platone alle "dottrine non scritte."*

Greek word *mousike*) to form the moral characters of the citizens in the utopian state of the *Laws*, Magnesia. My contention is that the *Laws* present these arts as affecting directly the psyche of the citizens and that the Athenian Stranger, Plato's main character in the dialogue, thinks of them as a useful tool to lead the citizenry towards virtue, thereby supporting the city's legal framework and laws.

As I analyze the effects that *mousike* has on the citizens' souls I stress the central role of those psychic forces that – generally speaking – stand aside from rationality. Desires, drives, and emotive states are the true interlocutors of *mousike* and the true focus of Plato's attention to achieve his political vision. From this perspective my work stresses the importance of revisiting the figure of Plato as a sworn enemy of all things corporeal. Changing this basic hermeneutical approach may present a philosopher who is a keen observer of those aspects of the human experience that are obscure and inexplicable, someone who searches for the cosmos of virtue in the chaos of the soul.

The Innovation of this Study and Its Place in the Secondary Literature on the *Laws*.

In the past twenty years there has been a renewed interest in the *Laws* among Plato scholars. This interest spans across disciplines and philosophical traditions,[2] and adds to the seminal scholarly works on the *Laws* from the latter part of the twentieth century.[3]

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[2] Four collections of articles on the *Laws* give the scope of the recent interest in this dialogue among scholars. In chronological order let us consider *Plato's Laws: from Theory to Practice* (2003) edited by Brisson, a record of the proceedings of the 6th meeting of the International Plato Society and in 2010 *Plato's Laws: A Critical Guide*, edited by Bobonich; these publications feature for the most part essays in the history of philosophy. In 2013 two collections of articles were published, one by Peponi, *Performance and Culture in Plato's Laws*, featuring scholars in classics and another by Recco and Sanday, *Plato's Laws: Force and Truth in Politics* collecting works in the tradition of continental philosophy, broadly understood.

[3] See especially Morrow's *Plato's Cretan City* published in 1960, and Saunders' *Plato's Penal Code* published in 1991. These works are still essential for reconstructing the historical bedrock on which Plato grounds the

Among the recent publications that have inspired my research four works stand out.[4]

First, Laks' *Médiation et Coercition*, which has persuaded me that Plato's ethical and

political projects in the *Laws* are grounded in the analysis of the psychology of the citizenry.

Second, Bobonich's *Plato's Utopia Recast*, which has sparked an interesting debate in the

secondary literature about the possibility of tracing a development in Plato's psychology

from the *Phaedo*, through *Republic* and ending with the *Laws.* As it will become clear in the

third chapter of this dissertation I ultimately disagree with Bobonich's interpretation of the

psychological analysis that the Athenian Stranger offers in the *Laws.* However, Bobonich's

work stresses two important features of the psychological economy of the *Laws* that must

be kept in mind if one is to offer a sensible reading of the soul in this dialogue. In the first

place I think Bobonich is correct when he remarks that the psychology of the *Laws* reveals

a unitary soul, that is a soul where rational, semi-rational and non-rational forces can

interact.[5] Furthermore, I am persuaded by his argument that – in a unitary soul – rational

and non-rational forces not only coexist, but they may also cooperate; this cooperation may

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Laws. Other works from this period that should be mentioned are Stalley's *An Introduction to Plato's* Laws, 1983, and Strauss' *The Argument and the Action of Plato's* Laws published in 1975. This last work, however, takes a marked hermeneutical position on Plato's dialogue, which will be echoed, at the dawn of the twenty first century by Benardete's *Plato's* Laws (2000).

[4] These texts were sources of inspirations given their marked interpretative approaches. However I have benefitted greatly from the scholarship of Mayhew's *Plato Laws 10* and especially Meyer's *Plato's Laws 1 & 2*.

[5] I further agree with him, as it will become clear shortly, that this psychological model is nowhere to be found in *Republic*; there the soul is presented as having three distinct parts that cannot mix, though they can exert power over one another. I withhold my judgment on Bobonich's proposal to read a continued development from the soul of the *Republic* to that of the *Laws* through the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedrus*. This is an intriguing proposal, but it presupposes (i) an established sequence of Platonic dialogues and (ii) that Plato offered in each of his dialogues the latest developments of his psychological theory. While the first point can be proved by stylometric analysis, I am not certain we will ever be able to prove the latter.

give rise to interesting psychological dynamics such as rational pleasures or virtuous

emotions.

The other two books that inspired my work focus primarily on the analysis of

mousike and secondarily on its employment for political and ethical ends. The first of the

two works in chronological order is Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis*. In my opinion this

study offers the most systematic account of the psychological influences of *mousike* in

Plato's dialogues with special reference to the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Halliwell identifies

three degrees of influence that a work of musicopoetic art can have on its audience,

"complete assimilation" to the characters represented, affective assimilation, and finally

rational judgment with no assimilation.[6] The second and most recent work is a monograph

on the *Laws* by Folch entitled *The City and the Stage.* The central thesis of my work is the

same as Folch's, namely that in the *Laws* Plato's understanding of moral psychology

informs his renewed assessment of the value of *mousike*. Folch's great insight in these

matters is the recognition that for Plato the first step towards a city governed by laws is a

moral psychology imposed by means of cultural products; this is the "training up"

mentioned in the *Seventh Letter*.[7]

As these four texts show, in the recent scholarship on the *Laws* we find a great

degree of attention paid to psychology on the one hand and on the musicopoetic arts on the

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[6] See *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 80-82.

[7] "For Plato, political history is the narration of a people's moral psychology, and cultural institutions—again, especially those of music, poetry, song, and dance—are the contexts in which sentiments and ethical dispositions are formed and impressed upon the psyche" (*City and Stage* 51). Folch remarks correctly that the way to form these dispositions is through habit, and that, according to the moral psychology of the *Laws,* aesthetics habits are immediately ethical habits (*ivi* 81-82); I will discuss habit formation in chapter three and the influence of *mousike* on habits in chapters four and five.

other. A work that explains in detail how *mousike* functions as a tool for moral

development and identifies precisely the modalities in which psychological elements are

affected is still missing; my work aims at filling this gap.[8] From this perspective my

dissertation is an attempt to reconstruct Plato's ethos theory of music in the *Laws*. In this

reconstruction I propose some interpretative innovations, which can be summarized as

follows. In my analysis of the moral psychology of the *Laws* I suggest that psychological

elements that are usually considered irrelevant, if not a hindrance, for virtue (such as the

achievement of physical gratification and emotional states) play a pivotal role in granting

the agent enough motivational force to achieve *arete.* With regards to specific virtues, I

claim that courage and what Plato calls "vulgar" moderation (that is an instance of

sophrosyne in simple matters, requiring no reflective powers) can be achieved by the mere

training of those emotive and desiring forces in the psyche. In order to explain how these

forces can be trained I refer to the notion of habituation; I rely on an analogy Plato makes in

book 7 with the assimilation of food in the body to sketch a method of habit formation for

the soul organized in four steps. As I move on to analyze *mousike*, I explain that its power of

psychological influence resides in its seizing the process of habit formation and reinforcing

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[8] Folch finds that the connection between the aesthetic of *mousike* and the ethical influence it exerts on the soul is what he calls the "performative"(*ivi* 62-63). Specifically Folch claims that "whether one is exposed as a spectator or performer, performance is invariably performative. The new fact created in performance is an aesthetic and ethical responsiveness, a habituated sense of pleasure, pain, and attendant beliefs regarding the fine or base properties of song and dance, and a predisposition to welcome (or resist) calculation in the soul and city. To be more precise, performativity in the *Laws* is aesthetic (derived from the perception of order in song and dance), extra-linguistic (producing social states that obtain beyond and exceed language as a semiotic system), and perlocutionary or "perhedonic" (since Plato's model is neither logocentric nor principally linguistic, but effectuated through *hêdonê*), constituting ethical dispositions through pleasurable perception and performance of mimetic representations of character in rhythm and harmony" (*ivi* 97). Folch seems to reduce correctly all instance of performativity to the leveraging of non-rational psychological forces by means habituation, but does not explain the details of the mechanics of habituation in *mousike* or in the moral psychology of the *Laws.* In my work I supply exactly these details.

the training of some psychological forces against others. Finally, I describe specifically

how the process of reinforcement of psychological forces affects performers and audience

respectively.

The Use of Musicopoetic arts in the *Laws* and in the *Republic*.

One of the most essential decisions that must be made when working on Plato's

dialogues concerns one's own hermeneutical stance; should the interpreter consider

Plato's dialogues as monads, each independent from the other? Should she think of the

dialogues as facets of a unitary philosophical system? Answers to these questions yield

different types of studies; one could find divergent claims on the same issue moving from

one dialogue to the next, another could decide to investigate the same issue in different

dialogues regardless of the dramatic context. On average the hermeneutical stand I take is

that dialogues should be studied individually and we should find solutions to the problems

they posit "internally." However, I also recognize that often Plato's dialogues raise issues of

continuity from within, as it were. Thus, when the dialogues warrant it,[9] the interpreter

should be allowed to solve issues in one dialogue while looking at another.

In this dissertation I will focus exclusively on the *Laws* to study the employment of

mousike as a means for moral education, and I will seek to resolve the problems connected

to it "internally." However, I must also acknowledge that some of the problems found in

Laws are common to other dialogues, especially the *Republic*. A comparative analysis of

these two dialogues with regards to the use of *mousike* for moral development is warranted

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[9] For instance I think it is legitimate to interpret dialogues as a group when they are presented in thematic continuity, such as the Eleatic dialogues or *Timaeus* and *Critias.*

on two counts. In the first place there seem to be an explicit thematic continuity between *Republic* and *Laws* at the dramatic level; both dialogues deal with the systematic organization of a perfect city-state and the *Laws* explicitly nods to the *Republic* as its theoretical background.[10] Secondly – and most relevantly for this work – it seems that the *Laws* answer affirmatively a question to which *Republic*[11] ultimately replies negatively, namely is there any use for musicopoetic arts in the perfect political system? Due to the scope and focus of this dissertation, I will be able to sketch only a brief explanation for the two dialogues' differing opinions on these matters in my last chapter.[12] In preparation to the discussion in that chapter and as instrument for the reader to keep in mind the differences between *Republic* and *Laws* in the progress of this dissertation, I will outline here the conclusions Socrates draws in the *Politeia* about *mousike* and its place in Kallipolis. This outline will be necessarily incomplete and will present Socrates' position without reference to the complex debates in the secondary literature. While I acknowledge these shortcomings, I hope that these few pages will function as a useful term of comparison for the rest of this work.

There is a tension within *Republic* concerning the moral value of *mousike*. In books 2 and 3 Socrates seems to accept that there is some value to choral dances, myths and songs,

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[10] See for instance the famous claim at *Leg*.5.739a-e, identifying the colony of Magnesia as the second best city in order of perfection; the first place will be reserved to the city where women, children and possessions are in common, according to the Pythagorean maxim claiming *koina ta philon*, friends have things in common. This maxim is repeated several times in the *Republic* 4.424a and 5.449c and the famous "three weaves" in book V argue precisely for the commonality of family relations and possessions in the class of the guardians. On the most plausible interpretations of the relation between the two dialogues see Laks' *Médiation et coercition* 33-43.

[11] See *Resp.* 10.607c-8b.

[12] I will complete at a later time a comparative study of *mousike* in *Republic* and *mousike* in *Laws*.

as they can train some aspects of the psyche of his hypothetical citizen. Then in book 10

he famously denounces epic poetry and all other forms of musical imitation because they

lead the soul astray from knowledge and thus from virtue. Let us begin by taking a look at

the early discussion of *mousike* in this dialogue and clarify on what grounds Socrates finds

it useful for the development of the guardians.

In books 2-3 of *Republic* we find an early sketch of human psychology that is largely

dominated by psychic elements that have little to do with rationality and rational thinking.

Following the analogy between the city and the soul at *Resp.*2.368c-69a, we find that

individuals act as a result of necessary desires, such as satisfying one's hunger (as

exemplified in the "city of pigs" at 2.372c-d) and non-necessary desires, such as the desire

for fine garments and make up (as exemplified in the "feverish city" at 2.372e-73b); while

these desires' ultimate goal is gratification, we also find that the feverish city demands the

introduction of a new class of citizens, thus – in keeping with the soul-city analogy – a new

psychological trait. These new citizens are the guardians and the new psychological trait is

thymos or the desire to prevail. Let us take a closer look at these guardians.

Guardians must be aggressive, *thymoeides*, as they need to conquer new territory,

but at the same time they must also be restrained, as *Resp.*2.375c informs us, lest they

become a danger for the city's own population. The training of the guardians is in large

portion psychological and carried out by means of musicopoetic arts.[13] One wonders why

literature should have any effect on a fierce warrior type; after all, any preliminary

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[13] However Socrates establishes for the guardians also a curriculum for physical education in the second half
of book 3 of the *Republic* (3.403c-ff.) and later on will also lay down some principles of military education
(5.4666d-471c).

intuition of a psychological character that is prone to battle and pursues victory suggests

that terror and action would fit this personality type more so than beauty and leisure. Plato

offers a clue to answer this question as he compares the psychology of the guardian type

with that of a dog at *Resp.*2.375e. If we are to understand how musicopoetic arts can

influence a fierce psychological type such as the guardians, we must study what drives dogs

in their training.[14]

     Before we move on into the exploration of the psychology of the guardian-dog, I

should clarify that in studying the psychological influence of *mousike* in these early books

of *Republic* one preliminary point seems to be beyond dispute: one cannot appeal to

rationality in order to explain the guardians' receptiveness to music, poetry and literature.

In other words, for Plato human beings are enchanted by these arts not because there is

any truth to be found there. As clarified in the seventh book of *Republic*, reason in its search

for truth pursues the study of arithmetic, geometry, stereometry, astronomy, harmonics

and finally dialectic. There is no mention of literature. We must conclude that the

psychological motives that draw us to *mousike* must be non-rational in kind. Consequently

if the musicopoetic arts can exert any psychological influence it will be as a result of their

affective power, not their rational stimulation.

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[14] I am aware that later on Socrates will introduce also another social class and thus – apparently – another psychological distinction, with the inclusion of the rulers as an elite class of guardians. However, all he really claims in these early books is that few among these *thymoeides* individuals will also display good memory and a stronger attachment to the principles of their education; these are the rulers (see *Resp.*3.412d-14a).

As I just mentioned, guardians and dogs[15] are equally defined by *thymos*, spirit or fierceness. The characters of guardians and dogs share also a certain malleability, which makes it possible to train them.[16] In this case *Republic*2 -3 conform to Plato's cultural landscape, which dictates that good dogs are the result of good breeding and good rearing. In his *Kynegetikos*, Xenophon[17] states that a dog's natural defects may be redressed with eugenics[18] but training must always be good. Good training consists in habituating the dogs to chasing their prey, to be comfortable around the hunting equipment and to recognize their master as someone to love.[19] Plato seems to agree with Xenophon on these points.[20] However, what is most interesting for the purpose of this discussion is the modality of this rearing in *Republic*. In Book 5 Plato's Socrates claims that "as [the guardians] remain in the city and go out to war, they must guard and hunt together like dogs" (5.466d); this suggestions is meant to create a good learning environment where the guardians' children follow the adult guardians very much like puppies do with hounds, thus becoming

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[15] A major source for the following discussion is D. H. Mills' 1971 Ph.D. Dissertation at the University of Iowa titled *Image and Symbol in Plato's Republic*. Guardians must be quick in *aisthesis,* that is in pursuing their object of perception, strong and ready to fight what they conquer and they must be *andreioi*. 2.375a-b. See also 4.422d, where the guardians are compared to solid and lean dogs. As a result, these souls have a propensity for courage (2.375a-b; 4.442b-c) and tenacity (3.410b), but also for anger (3.411b-c, 4.440a, 9.572a) and stubbornness (8.448e).

[16] See 2.376c-e. The same education applies to both men and women, as it does for male and female dogs (5.451c).

[17] On a humorous side note, Xenophon will recommend *phylax* as a fitting name for a hound (*Kynegetikos* 7.5), which is incidentally also the name of Plato's guardians.

[18] See *ivi* 3.1-3; 7. 1-2.

[19] See *ivi* 7.3-11.

[20] Plato also maintains that the education of his guardians is based on the formation of certain habits (*Resp.*3.395d; 7.522a), and on the promotion of affection for the rulers of the city (4.440c-d).

"spectators of war" (5.467c),[21] and learning by observing the behavior of the adults. The theme of learning by seeing comes back at the end of book 7, with an explicit reference to guardian-children being like puppies and being educated as – again – "spectators of war" (7.537a). This is an essential remark, characterizing the basic modality of the warrior class' education as an instance of emulation.[22] If we ask why guardians are sensitive to emulation, we should find the answer in their being *thymoeides.* Emulation is the reproduction in one's own person of a behavior that has been observed in another, in the case of the guardian this other is a leader, such as an older guardian. The psychological motive to reproduce the leader's behavior is the guardians' natural inclination to prevail. If the leader is the chief actor of the social context, then she invites the other guardians to a social contest since each spirited soul admires her, but at the same time wants to take her place.[23] Achievement and admiration of honor, the objectives of the guardian's natural inclination to *thymos*, are the chief psychological motivations at the basis of this soul's emulation and, of its love for *mousike*. This inclination to emulate makes the guardian class a perfect audience, as they demand a spectacle to observe in order to learn and as they have a psychological motivation to reproduce what they observe. Under these

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[21] Plato uses here the technical term for someone who watches a tragedy at the theater; *theoros*. For a note on the word *theoros* as employed in the theatrical context see Nightingale's *The Philosopher at the Festival*.

[22] See *Resp.*7.539b. It is true that the kind of education that Plato is discussing in this passage is the education of the philosophers and the rulers of his city in speech, however it must be considered that the rearing at a young age of guardians and kings is the same. This passage clarifies that the process of emulation by which the young rulers have been educated is no longer fitting when one is to learn dialectic, though it is perfectly useful for the early education of guardians and dogs alike.

[23] Socrates describes fierce characters as inclined to find pleasure in honor and victory at *Resp.*9.586b-c. Brennan clarifies that these pleasures of the spirited soul have a social dimension. Honor, the chief good for a spirited soul, is in the first place a matter of social recognition and as such is concerned immediately with other human beings; see *Nature of the Spirited Part of the Soul* 110-111.

circumstances works of mythology, music and poetry become an invaluable tool for

educating the audience of guardians-dogs, the fierce types.

One of the most noted features of *Republic* 2-3 is Socrates' censorship of literary

works to which his guardians will be exposed. His censoring involves a variety of aspects,

including the formal aspects of narration, but his main concern is with the content of

musicopoetic works.[24] Plato's Socrates is particularly attentive to the way in which gods

and heroes are portrayed.[25] The reason for these strict measures should be sought in the

psychology of Socrates' audience, the guardians. Socrates is aware that psychological types

who are constitutively fierce are also unable to resist fiction because of their desire to

emulate and prevail over socially relevant types. Emulation makes the attraction of the

fictional context as strong as that of lived life. So long as someone is presented as a model,

she can be emulated. Protagonists of fictional stories appear under the guise of models of

behavior almost by definition, because the entire fictional plot revolves around them. Thus,

as it pertains to presenting archetypal characters, fiction is for the audience of guardians as

good as reality, that is, it is not fictitious. Additionally we must consider the spirited soul's

desire for honor, and its drive to prevail and to be recognized in a social context. The

fictional context here works as the social context. The audience observes many characters

dealing with one another or against one another, and one or few of those prevailing. This

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[24] See *Resp.*2.377b-c.

[25] See *Resp.* 2.377e-383a; 3.387d-88e; 390e-91e. It should be noted that Plato does allow for the depiction of bad human characters provided that they are only supporting characters, but he maintains that "serious women" and "famous man" should never be represented as behaving ignobly (3.387e). Furthermore poets must represent at all times just men as happy and enjoying prosperous lives, while unjust men must end up in ruin (3.392b).

perception of prevailing is partly due to the plot, but mostly is due again to the forced

perspective of fiction, which represents the entire economy of the story as revolving

around one or some main characters. Thus, these fictional characters look to the fierce type

as most honored in their fictional social contest. As such they are worthy of admiration, and

the spirited type is driven to emulate them. For the spirited soul, this is love for *mousike.*[26]

Thus, in the early books of the *Republic* we find that the psychological model that

Socrates sketches for the guardians makes them perfect candidates for the influence of

musicopoetic arts, since *mousike*'s focus on a central character combined with the agent's

tendency to identify with these fictional characters make the agent susceptible to moral

content conveyed in the musicopoetic arts. This situation changes greatly after the

psychological investigations of the central books of the *Republic*.

In book 4 the psychology of the *Republic* undergoes a great revision; Socrates argues

that the soul has three distinct parts and that each of these parts has a distinct function.

The desires that sought gratification in the previous books are all included in the desiring

part of the soul; the desire to prevail is granted its own portion of the soul; and finally a

new part of the soul is discovered, one that oversees the rational functions of the psyche.[27]

This tripartition of the soul is now the consistent psychological model guiding the dialogue

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[26] In addition to the fierce individual's psychological inclination to emulate fictional characters, there are some general and – to Plato – obvious reasons why any human psyche is sensitive to works of literature. The constitutive formal elements of *mousike*, namely rhythm and harmony, naturally "insinuate themselves into the inmost part of the soul" (3.401d). As Damon suggests, human beings are subject to the authority of rhythms (3.400b-c), with the results that changes in music determine changes in the characters of the audience (4.424c). To these formal influences must be added, in the case of fierce types, the attractiveness of some content-related elements.

[27] See *Resp.*4.439a-41a.

and it will remain stable through its final sections.[28] Not only do these parts of the soul

each have their discrete function, but – as stated in book 9 at 580e-81b – each has its own

pursuit. The desiring part of the soul has the general function of gratifying the soul and the

goal of pursuing gain; the spirited part has the function of making the soul tenacious and

holds as its objective the achievement of victory and honor; the rational part of the soul has

the function of guiding the soul and it pursues wisdom. As a result of the tripartition of the

soul, the moral psychology also changes. The desiring parts of the psyche should still be

habituated, but the chief goal now is that the rational part, though the weakest portion of

the soul, that is the one with the least psychic force, should lead the soul; this is what it

means to achieve virtue.[29] In addition to the acquisition of virtue, a soul led by the rational

part is also one to achieve happiness.[30] In other words, the agent should pursue only the

goals of the rational portion of the soul and the functions of the remaining parts of the soul

should be either silenced or put to service to achieve the goals of rationality.[31]

This new psychological analysis guides the discussion of *mousike* in book 10[32] and

here the musicopoetic arts meet their limit. The influence they exerted over the desiring

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[28] See *Resp.*9. 588b-89a.

[29] *Resp.*4.441e-44e.

[30] *Resp.*9.585c-86e.

[31] For a thorough discussion of the partitioning of the soul in *Republic* see Bobonich's *Plato's Utopia Recast* 216-57.

[32] Sörbom recognizes the difference made by the development of the psychological theory on the evaluation of poetry in *Republic* 10 when he reminds the reader that the impossibility to admit mimetic poetry in the ideal city is "even more evident … after having "distinguished the several parts of the soul" (595a-b)" (*Mimesis and Art* 129). However two pages later Sörbom denies that there is any significance in the psychological

parts of the soul, especially the spirited, was a good fit for a psychological model that did

not articulate the necessity of rationality for virtue. After book 4 rationality is a necessary

condition of virtue and *mousike*'s arousal of non-rational forces stands in contrast with the

moral requirement of pursuing the intellectual goals of the psyche.[33] In other words,

mousike may be a useful tool for early (not in a temporal, but in a psychological sense)

moral education, but eventually it should be abandoned in pursuit of the intellectual

formation detailed in book 7. At this point in the *Republic*, *mousike* becomes too dangerous

a tool for moral development. It still retains its ability "to penetrate in the soul"

(*Resp.*3.401d), but in doing so it fosters "sex, and spiritedness, too, and for all the desires,

pains, and pleasures in the soul that we say follow all our action, poetic imitation produces

similar results in us. For it fosters and waters them when they ought to be dried up, and

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consideration made here (*Mimesis and Art* 131). I disagree. Partee maintains that with regards to the apparent contradiction between the early books of the *Republic* and book 10 on the topic of poetry, "[r]ather than term his aesthetics inconsistent, one should call into question Plato's assumptions concerning the soul. His psychology creates conditions unfavorable to any actual poetry, in his analysis of the tripartite soul, Plato largely denies the importance of the lower elements" (*Plato's Poetics* 205).

[33] For a summary of the different positions on and an assessment of the relation between the account of *mimesis* in books 2-3 and 10 of the *Republic* see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 56. It should be especially noted, as Halliwell remarks, that one of the chief differences between the earlier and the later account is made on the background of the psychological and metaphysical investigations of books 4-6. Even though Halliwell seems to change his mind about the relevance of the metaphysics of the central books for the discussion of mimesis in book 10 just tow pages later; see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 58. Elsewhere (*Plato* Republic *X* 134-35) Halliwell comments with regards to *Resp.*10.602e that there is a tension between this scheme of the soul, which seems to be bipartite (rational and non-rational part) and the tripartite soul in book IV. He concludes that we should not see a contradiction between the account of the soul in book 10 and that from book 4 on the ground that essentially there are two dominant parts to a soul (rational and desiring), with the *thymos* being the allied faction of each one at different times. However in *Aesthetics of Mimesis* (60), Halliwell sides with the interpretation of a bipartition of rational and non-rational elements in book X. In contrast, for and original interpretation of the tripartition and the role of *thymos* in book 10 see Rubidge's *Tragedy and the Emotions of Warriors*. I can agree that this is an oversimplified version of the psychological theory of previous books, but I think that the important point that Socrates is making here is that once we have established the priority of the rational part of the soul (4 and 9) we must prevent anything that endangers it. This account of the soul is in continuity with what has been said in the middle books because of the priority of the rational portion of the soul. It is in contrast with the account in books 2-3 because of the lack of rational concern there.

sets them up as rulers in us when they ought to be ruled so that we may become better

and happier instead of worse and wretched" (*Resp.*10.606d Bloom's translation). For this

reason *mousike* is banished from Kallipolis and from the virtuous soul.

Looking ahead, however, what is seen as a limit of musicopoetic arts in *Republic* will

become a useful tool for the emotive training of the soul in the *Laws.* As we shall see, this

tool can prepare non-rational psychic forces to follow the leadership of rationality and it

can even reinforce some non-rational psychic responses that constitute basic forms of

virtues. But the re-evaluation of the role of *mousike* in moral education will come only after

the *Laws*' substantial revision of moral psychology. Before I set out to discuss these matters

in detail, let me offer a brief summary of the chapters of this dissertation.

Overview of Chapters.

The first three chapters of this dissertation are dedicated to the analysis of

the moral psychology of the *Laws*. Chapters four and five analyze *mousike* as a technology

for moral education and identify the ways in which it can influence the soul of the

performer and the spectator. The final chapter makes more general claims on the relation

between *Republic* and *Laws* on the topic of *mousike* and on the preferred interpretative

perspective to analyze this issue.

In the first chapter I examine the image of the marionette and conclude that - as an

analogy for the soul – the marionette is meant to point out that human beings are

motivated to act by a system of psychic forces and that rationality alone is not a sufficient

motive for virtuous action in human beings. Human beings often must ascribe their actions

to non-rational or semi-rational motives for action. These motives may find in items or

events that exist in the empirical world their objective, that is their final end, but the

marionette suggests that the sources of action are the internal (psychologically speaking)

motives of action. Finally I claim that the Athenian realizes that influencing these non-

rational motives of action can bring about a sort of behavioral control. In light of this

conclusion, the image of the marionette should not be understood as a completely

deterministic view of human action, as the study of our psychological processes means also

our ability to reinforce some of our own motivations against others, thereby regulating our

own behavior.

In the second chapter I take a closer look at the basic elements at work in the moral

psychology of the *Laws*. I argue that the first two non-rational motivations mentioned by

the Athenian, pleasure and pain, should be understood as drives. They may have an

influence on our psyche and may motivate us to act, but they are at the same time distinct

from our cognitive abilities, even the most basic, and cannot be reduced to the sensation of

pleasurable or painful objects of perception. When we consider pleasure and pain as drives

we should think of them as ineluctable forces that demand to be discharged. I proceed with

the analysis of expectations, our emotive psychological states. Though the Athenian divides

the expectations in instances of confidence or fear, they do not need to be limited to these

two cases. On the one hand they are different from pleasure and pain, as they are endowed

with some basic cognitive abilities, such as a narrow imagination and memory. Even

though they arise from our drives, they constitute their own independent set of non-

rational motives for action and they can work against the motivational force of the drives.

On the other hand expectations are also different from the rational elements in the soul,

where rationality is defined as the ability to compare motives and give arguments as to what motive of action to pursue; emotive states cannot perform these functions, which are reserved to *logismos*. *Logismos* should be understood as an argumentative ability selecting the non-rational motives for action (for instance expectations) best suited for achieving its own goals, including virtuous behavior. After I conclude the analysis of the elements of the moral psychology of the *Laws* I move on to study their interaction. In this regard I make two major claims. First, I argue that in the pursuit of virtue the rational portion of the soul must rely on expectations and drives; in this fashion virtuous action is hardly ever the result of rationality alone. Second, I argue that new expectations can be introduced in the psyche, thereby creating non-rational motivation that can support the soul's rational lead.

The third chapter, the final chapter concerned with the moral psychology of the *Laws*, deals mainly with the process of formation of expectations by means of habit. I offer a detailed – and in this regard novel – interpretation of psychological habit formation modeled on an analogy the Athenian proposes with the assimilation of foods in the body. I argue that there are two patterns of formation of expectations in the soul by means of habits, which I call habits of repression and habits of cultivation. Habits of repression can introduce enough expectations in the psyche which have enough motivational force to achieve at least two basic virtues on their own, courage and the simplest form of moderation. Habits of cultivation exploit the natural human inclination towards the order of rhythm and melody and create the conditions for the soul's acquisition of *phronesis*.

In the fourth chapter I approach *mousike* as a technology for guiding the moral development of the psyche. The Athenian re-conceptualizes the musicopoetic arts of his

time in order to meet the conditions of the moral development he has in mind for the

citizens of Magnesia. I indicated that the main reason why this technology can successfully

affect the psyche is that it influences the process of habituation discussed in the previous

chapter. Though it is hard to say whether *mousike* can on its own introduce new non-

rational motives for action in the soul, for instance a new expectation, it seems plausible

that this technology reinforces some non-rational forces that are already present in the

psyche. Targeting some specific expectations can increase their motivational force and thus

their motivational relevance in the soul; if these forces are coordinated with rationality's

goal, virtue, then *mousike* is an effective device to foster moral development.

In the fifth chapter I take a closer look at how the Athenian's re-conceptualized

mousike influences the non-rational motivations of the performer and of the audience.

Performers are caught in a process of confirmation and reinforcement of their motivations

for acting virtuously, as they are integral parts of a representation of *arete*. Audiences are

caught in the virtual world of the representation of virtue, which stimulates their

expectations. In this process the audience's expectations sustaining *arete* are reinforced.

The sixth chapter comes back to the comparative analysis of the role of *mousike* for

moral education in *Republic* and *Laws*. On the basis of the research on the *Laws* carried out

in the dissertation and with the help of the analysis of the *Republic* sketched here in the

introduction, I argue that the structure of *mousike* and its ability to influence the psyche

remain essentially unaltered in the two dialogues; however the differences in the moral

psychology are such that in *Republic mousike* is detrimental for moral education, while in

Laws it is useful. In this final chapter I also take the opportunity to advocate in favor of

interpreting *mousike* from the perspective of moral psychology, and in general for a

hermeneutical stance that allows us to appreciate the level of detail and interests in Plato's

investigations of the irrational.

CHAPTER 1

THE MARIONETTE AS MODEL FOR THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF THE *LAWS*

> The marionette is the most human of all puppets.
> George Speaight, *The History of the English Puppet Theater*.

Chapter Summary.

This is the first of three chapters dedicated to the analysis of the *Laws*' moral psychology. In this chapter I analyze the famous characterization of the human soul as a marionette on strings in the first book of the *Laws* and I establish some general guidelines for a correct interpretation. In the following chapter I will analyze in close reading the psychological elements the marionette represents, with a special emphasis on semi-rational and non-rational motivations for action. In chapter three I will put these elements to work, as it were, and look at their interaction to describe the system of psychic motivations at the basis of the *Laws*' moral psychology.

The present chapter is divided in three sections. In the first section I discuss the relation between two psychological accounts in the *Laws*, one that refers to moral psychology and one that refers to general psychology and grounds it in metaphysics. The first account takes in consideration only those psychological elements that are needed to explain how human beings act in their practical life, with a particular emphasis on non-rational and semi-rational forces. The latter account offers an extended view of human psychology, it distinguishes degrees of human intellectual abilities and grounds them in a

cosmological account of the psyche. Though different, these two accounts show that the distinctive mark of a human soul is its status as self-mover. In this dissertation I will focus on the account concerning the moral psychology.

In the second section I assess the marionette as a term of comparison for the human soul. Specifically I establishing what kind of toy Plato has in mind in *Laws* 1, when he uses this image to give an account of the human soul. Clarifying the term of comparison in this analogy will guide our understanding of moral psychology in the *Laws*. I conclude that the toy we must refer to is a marionette.

In the third and final section of this chapter I offer a first and general interpretation of the moral psychology represented by the marionette. I conclude that the main intent in speaking of the soul as a marionette is to address the basic sources of psychological motivation leading to action, and that a philosophical anthropology based on the image of the soul-marionette would conclude that human beings are such beings who can uncover their own motives of action and exploit them in a process of self-determination.

This initial interpretation of the image of the marionette will function as the background of the discussion in chapter 2, when I will analyze the motives of action in the moral psychology of the *Laws.*

Moral and Cosmological Psychology in the Laws: their Relation and Difference.

The *Laws* famously opens with the word god, *theos*, setting the tone for the enterprise of the entire dialogue: the search for the conditions that allows some laws to be qualified as divine, the promulgation of legislation from that aspect of the human soul and for human goals that are most divine, and the cosmic claim that the entire universe abides

by divine decree.[1] But it would be a mistake to consider the entire dialogue as a legislative theodicy. The three characters of the dialogue are chiefly concerned with legislation as it pertains to human beings, and their perspective remains focused on human affairs, despite the contempt they sometimes express for the human condition.[2] In light of their concern and their perspective it would be more accurate to consider the *entire* opening sentence of the *Laws* as setting the tone for the dialogue. The Athenian visitor engages Kleinias the Cretan and Megillus the Spartan in conversation by asking, "Is it a god or a human being who is responsible (*eilephe ten aitian*) for the ordaining of your legislations?" (1.634a). Read in its entirety this initial sentence opens a space between divine and human affairs to investigate legislation. Though this space may at times generate tension between what is divine and what is human, one should not endeavor to reduce legislation – and the rest of the *Laws* – to either pole. Rather, in the *Laws* we find an exploration of matters concerning legislation spanning from human to divine aspects. There are, however, pages in which Plato focuses more on human matters and other moments when he concentrates on what is divine. The central topic of this current chapter, the soul, is caught in this tension between the human and the divine, Plato addresses the human soul in the famous image of the marionette from *Laws* 1, and discusses the divine or cosmic soul in *Laws* 10. In this dissertation I focus on the psyche as described in the image

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[1] In the course of the first book the three interlocutors of the *Laws*, the Athenian visitor, Kleinias the Cretan and Megillus the Spartan, will investigate the origin of legislation and will establish that since laws where originally a divine gift to humans (*Leg*. 1.624a-25a, 645b), they must aim at human virtue (1.631b-d); the Athenian will persuade his companions that law is directly derived from the human ability to reason (1.645a; 4.713e-14a) and regulates their aspiration to be god-like (as in the case of the human pursuit of immortality 4.721b-c); finally, The Athenian will alone shoulder the burden of demonstrating that the entire universe is regulated by a divine intelligence (10.897a-b).

[2] See for instance *Leg*. 7.804a.

of the marionette, but before I do so I must say few words about the relation and the differences between the two accounts of the soul.

To begin let us focus on their relation. In *Laws* 10 the Athenian stranger lays down the legislation and the punishments for acts of impiety, and in order to address the theological concerns of a hypothetical young atheist, he sets out to give a metaphysical proof of the primacy of everything spiritual, exemplified in the soul, over matter;[3] in this case the soul should be understood as the metaphysical principle of existence and life. In the words of Robert Mayhew, "[t]he being of the soul [of book 10] does not refer (primarily) to *my* soul or *your* soul or the soul responsible for the self-generated movement of the sun, but to the capacity of self-movement itself – such capacity being embodied in you and in me and in (that which moves) the sun" (*Plato Laws 10* 126). This cosmic soul, which is not a human soul, not only shares the capacity of self-movement with the soul of human beings,[4] it also relates to intelligence, *nous*, as human souls do. "[E]very time it [the cosmic soul] joins with reason (*nous*) – 'god' correctly for the gods – it guides all things towards what is correct and happy" (*Leg.*10.897b).[5] The human soul may relate to intelligence as well, and if a human being were ever born with such intellectual capacity, also her *nous* would be "the commander of everything" (*Leg.* 9.875d), very much like the cosmic soul in association with *nous*. Thus, in its relation with *nous*, as Bury puts it, "Soul is

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[3] See *Leg.* 10.888c-899a. As Robert Mayhew puts it "Book 10 is, in essence, a lengthy prelude to the laws on impiety, followed by the laws themselves. This prelude is the most philosophical part of the entire dialogue" (*Plato Laws 10* 4).

[4] In this regard see Bury *Theory of Education in Plato's* Laws 316-317.

[5] Mayhew's translation. For the textual difficulty in translating this passage see Mayhew's *Plato Laws 10* 136 and 216. See also Ferrari's *Platone Le Leggi* 882 n. 28. Regarding the debate around the interpretation of this passage see *Plato Laws 10* 137-38.

the connecting *link between Man and God*, the invisible Power which bridges the gulf

between Earth and Heaven" (*Theory of Education in Plato's* Laws 317).[6]

While we must keep in mind the relation between the human and the cosmic soul as

principles of self-movement and via *nous*,[7] we should never lose sight of these two souls as

distinctly different. As Mayhew maintains, the cosmic *nous* cannot be reduced to human

intelligence and with that no human soul is ever going to be comparable to the cosmic soul

endowed with *nous*. "*Nous* is what makes the gods gods. If reason is 'god' when it is applied

to (what is traditionally thought to be) gods, when should reason *not* be called or

considered 'god'? When it refers to the reason of an individual human. A human soul with

nous is not a god, though at its best may be called godlike or said to be acting like a god"

(*Plato Laws 10* 137). Human beings are endowed with souls and as such are self-movers,

i.e. they find in themselves the motivation to act. However, in the specific case of human

beings, intelligence is impoverished as compared to cosmic *nous* and it is not the sole

motive for action; rather its lead in human undertakings is contended by a variety of other,

semi-rational and non-rational motives of action. The lack of noetic primacy in motivating

human beings to action does not entail that human beings act only irrationally or

unintelligibly; it does mean however that rationality alone is not a sufficient motive for

action in human beings and that though we may understand why human beings act, we find

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[6] In this regard see also Jouët-Pastré when she claims that the image of the marionette in book I defines a human being as ¨un être d'affects qui doit se laisser tirer par le fil de la raison, un être lié au divin vers laquel il ale devoir de se tourner" (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 38).

[7] We should also consider with Kurke that this similarity between the human and the cosmic soul ennobles the characterization of human beings as marionette. "We could say that in Platonic theology, the figuration of the human as mechanical (a puppet) is in no way a demeaning or negative image, because for Plato the entire cosmos is itself a magnificent and perfectly ordered machine"(*Imagining Chorality* 160).

that often we must ascribe their motives to non-rational or semi-rational motives for action. Additionally, as we shall see briefly, as we study human moral psychology we should divert our attention from intelligence, *nous*, to evaluative and practical reasoning, *logismos*; even though these two aspects of rationality are connected *nous* has only an indirect role to play in moral psychology through legislation. The only rationality that is needed for moral psychology is *logismos.*

Even with its specific differences the human soul is still a principle of motion and, in the language of moral psychology, a principle of action. Let us now investigate the motivational structure that moves human beings to act. We shall begin with an analysis of the image of the marionette from book I of the *Laws*; this image is the representation of human motivation.

The *Laws'* Moral Psychology in an Image: the Human Soul as a Marionette.

Towards the end of the first book of the *Laws* the Athenian visitor proposes to his two companions an interpretation of the mechanics of the human soul as those of a marionette. The human soul has been a central theme of the *Laws* since the first few Stephanos' pages. Within the first two pages the discussion immediately turns from war between two states, to civil war, to psychological strife[8] and a plan is laid out to reconcile the parts of the state, as well as the parts of a soul[9]. A few pages later, the basic function of legislation is discussed in terms of the psychological effects of the legal code; laws are "correct [when] they grant happiness (*eudaimonia*) to those who respect them" (*Leg.*

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[8] See 626d, see also 631e.

[9] *Ivi* 627e-28a.

1.631b), where happiness is defined as a combination of material goods and virtues.[10]

Laws may provide the happy life, by focusing on pleasure and pain as they affect cities and "the character of people" (*ivi* 1.636d). Legislation is characterized as an instance of psychological training, educating the citizens to pursue pleasure and pain at the correct moment and in the correct amount.[11] As the Athenian tries to make the case for educating the soul in the virtue of temperance with regards to the pursuit of pleasure, and in the employment of symposia to this end, he describes the human soul as a puppet.

> Let us hold each of us, as we are alive, as a divine puppet (*thauma theion*), regardless of whether we are put together as toy (*paignion*) of the gods or for some serious reason; which one we do not know. But this we do know, that these events we suffer (*pathe*) in us are like strings (*neura*) or some kind of line that pulls (*spōsin*) us and that since these strings are opposed to one another they draw us towards opposite actions (*praxeis*), on the place where the distinction of virtue and vice is drawn (*Leg.*1.644e).

This surprising analogy, or rather image, as the Athenian calls it,[12] prompts us to ask several of questions. (1) In the first place, is Plato to be taken seriously here? Is this comparison with a puppet in jest or is it philosophically meaningful to address issues of moral psychology? (2) If the latter, what does Plato mean by characterizing each one of us as a *thauma*? The word is ambiguous as it indicates both a marvel and also a puppet; which of the two is in Plato's mind? (3) If Plato is thinking of puppets, then what kind of puppet does he have in mind? This is a legitimate question since different puppets (automata, string puppets, shadow puppets, hand puppets) modify one of the terms in the analogy

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[10] *Ivi* 1.631b-c.

[11] *Ivi* 1.636e.

[12] See *Leg.*1.644c.

with the psyche and thus the meaning of the analogy. (4) Finally, granted we are able to

establish what kind of puppet Plato has in mind, what is the significance of this image? In

other words, what is the specific characterization that the image conveys about human

beings, and that would be lost if the human soul was not compared to a puppet?

It would seem that the first question can be answered by granting that the image of

the puppet is philosophically significant and should be taken seriously when we try to

clarify the *Laws*' moral psychology. In order to support this claim we can rely on three

arguments. (i) Plato refers to the image of the puppet again in *Laws* 1 at 645d in order to

introduce the topic of the therapeutic use of wine,[13] and recalls it in book 7, as the Athenian

is positing the laws regulating musical education. In the latter case the language remains

consistent, as Plato refers first to human beings one time as a "plaything" (*paignion*) that a

god devised (7.803c) and then again as "puppets" (*thaumata*) (7.804b). The consistency in

the language and the reliance on the image to discuss a variety of topics at different points

the text, testifies to the significance that the image of the puppet must have had for our

author.

(ii) *ex autorictate* we can claim that the image of the puppet is in all seriousness

conceived as an analogy for the human soul, as more or less consistently in the history of

philosophy – as we shall see below – and among contemporary commentators it is

considered a genuine account.

(iii) Finally the philosophical importance of the puppet is justified intuitively, since

the image addresses observable and common psychological occurrences; the

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[13] On the use of wine see chapters three and four below.

characterization of human motivation for action as pulling the agent in opposing

directions when deciding about matters pertaining to virtue and vice seems very

appropriate to address questions pertaining to *akrasia*, or weakness of the will.[14]

The second question concerns the use of *thauma* to characterize human beings; this

word is ambiguous as it may mean that human beings are a marvel, but it can also

characterize them as puppets, and – as we shall see below – in the history of philosophy it

has been interpreted in both ways.[15] For the moment being let us be satisfied by stating (i)

that the ambiguity of the terms is most likely a stylistic choice on the part of Plato, who is a

skillful author and devises ways to convene multiple layers of meaning in his works. We

can find other ambiguous uses of key terms in the *Laws* illustrating this kind of stylistic

strategy on the part of Plato. For instance let us consider the employment of the word

pharmakon to describe the use of wine, the use of the word *nomos*, law, which stands also

for tune, and the use of the term *proömion*, which means both preamble to the law and also

prelude to a tune.[16]

Additionally, (ii) it would be prudent to maintain a sober hermeneutical position

and state that uses of the word *thauma* and its cognates in other Platonic dialogues should

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[14] In this regard see especially Bobonich *Plato's Utopia Recast* 260-67.

[15] For instance André Laks translates the work *thauma* with "prodigy" in an attempt to mediate between the two meanings of the word. His views on the image of the puppet will be discussed in detail below.

[16] Wine is called a *pharmakon* at 2.666b and indirectly at 1.646c; this word is ambiguous as it denotes both venom and medicine. The use of wine in unregulated symposia has intoxicating (venomous) effects (see 1.639d-40a and 1.645d-46a), whereas in a regulated context it may be beneficial (or medicinal) (649a-50a). For the ambiguity of *nomos* and *proömion* consider that in books 1, 2 and 7 the Athenian and his companions engage in lengthy discussions about the role of *mousike* (broadly understood as humanistic education) in safeguarding of the city's laws. These words are used in a willfully ambiguous sense especially in 3.700b, 4.722e, 5.734e and 7.799e.

not influence our reading of the image of the puppet in *Laws* 1. For instance it would be

imprudent to interpret this passage from the vantage point of *Theaetetus* 155d,

"[wonderment] (*thaumazein*) is the only beginning of philosophy"[17] and conclude that

human beings are marvelous beings and the source of inspiration for philosophizing; the

only thing the *Laws* has to say about philosophy as a discipline concerned with knowledge

is that it can be assimilated to education.[18] Nor would we be justified in interpreting

thauma as sham after the "marvel of the sophistical power" discussed in *Sophist* 233a. In

other words, we would be forcing the text of the *Laws* if we were to resolve the image of the

puppet with the claim that human beings are marvelous because they *appear* as though

they are endowed with a soul and they are self-movers, but in fact their psychological

processes are determined like the mechanics of a puppet.[19]

Finally (iii) we get an indication that Plato may actually use the word *thauma* to

refer properly to a puppet if we look elsewhere in the *Laws*. In a passage from book 2, when

the three elderly men are discussing the possibility to judge performances on the basis of

pleasure, the Athenian refers twice to a puppet spectacle and in both cases he uses the term

"*thaumata*" (2.658c). From this reference we may infer that since Plato uses the term

thauma to indicate puppets in the *Laws* within a context that leaves no ambiguity about the

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[17] North Flower translation.

[18] See for instance *Leg.* 9.857d-e where Plato's single use of a cognate of *philosophia* in the *Laws*. In this context Plato's characters are arguing that "one [should] consider that someone who goes through the laws in detail, very much like we are doing now, educates the citizens rather than writing down laws" (9.857e).

[19] This point will become clearer in the course of this chapter as I will make a case for refuting the image of the puppet as referring to an automaton. I should also clarify that the *Laws*' comparison of the human soul with a puppet and a toy should not be read in comparison with other Platonic characterizations of souls as artifacts. I am thinking here of Alcibiades' description of Socrates in *Symposium* 215a-c and 216e-17a; in *Symposium* the image of a toy is employed to exemplify the dual nature of Socrates' character, while in the *Laws* the image of the puppet is used to characterize human nature in general.

meaning of this word, it is likely that – though he is fond of the semantic ambiguity of

thauma – he is employing the term in the sense of "puppet" in book 1 as well.

Now that we have established that Plato uses the image of the puppet as a

philosophically relevant term of comparison for the human soul, and that he has in mind an

actual puppet, let us try to establish just what kind of puppet should be compared to the

soul. This work is not trivial insofar as it helps construct a hermeneutic of the analogy soul-

puppet that does justice to the text and to Plato's thought. The interpretation of the soul

could vary significantly depending on the type of puppet we imagine Plato uses as

reference. To exemplify this point consider this stark contrast between two possible

readings; if *thauma* denotes a hand puppet, then we could legitimately interpret the soul as

being utterly under the spell of the invisible hand of the god who directs it; but if *thauma*

points at a marionette with multiple strings, then we should consider the multiple forces at

work in the soul. As I try to remain faithful to Plato's text in *Laws* 1 and to the technological

and artistic achievements of the fourth century BCE, I will evaluate four possible candidates

for the role of *thauma*: (i) the hand puppet, (ii) the shadow puppet, (iii) the automaton, (iv)

the marionette.[20]

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[20] I leave out of this count dolls, even though Plato is aware of their existence when at *Leg*.11.933a-b, he alludes to "wax imitations." These were statuettes used very much like Voodoo dolls; an individual used to cast spells – or "bondages" as they are called in the text – against another individual. Shershow seems to suggest that this is one possible way of understanding the image of the puppet in book I of the *Laws* when he claims that "Plato reverses what seems to have been his culture's intuitive belief in the possible efficacy of the magical image. The vulgar magician claims to control the embodied self through its mere figure; but Plato suggests that we are always already mere figures, puppets of the gods" (*Puppets and "Popular" Culture* 21). This reading of the puppet as an image of the soul seems to be a hasty generalization and does not take into account the element of piousness in the account of the divine in the *Laws*. If human beings are playthings of gods it is not because the gods pull our strings with the intention of determining our demise, which is the intention of the sorcerer who uses a wax doll. In fact we will see below that the gods do not seems to hold our strings in their hands at all. If we are toys in the hands of gods it is because our lives are amusing to them, since we are pulled, for reasons that transcend rationality, in all possible directions.

Let us begin with the hand puppet. To my knowledge George Speaight is the only author that defends the remote possibility that such a puppet was on Plato's mind. It is to be noted that Speaight does not claim that this is the type of puppet Plato has in mind in *Laws* 1, but rather he makes an argument with reference to the *Phaedrus* to claim that hand puppets were known in classical times; for the sake of completion we should consider this argument. Speaight claims that "[t]here is an indication … that glove puppets were also known in ancient Greece, probably before 500 B.C. There is a word *koree* (*sic*) used to describe an exceptionally long sleeve that completely covers the hand, and – for no apparent reason – this identical word is also used for a small statue or figurine. … [I]t is reasonable to suppose that the glove puppet, which is a small figure on the end of a long sleeve covering a man's hand, provides the missing link to connect these two completely dissimilar uses of the same word" (*History English Puppet Theater* 27). Liddell and Scott seem to support Speaight's claim as they include "hand puppet" as one of the meanings of *kore* in their Greek lexicon.[21] Speaight further supports his arguments with references to Xenophon *Hellenica* II.1.8 where the terms is used to indicate a long sleeve glove and Plato *Phaedrus* 230b, where the term is used to indicate a votive statuette.[22]

Though these may be possible references to hand puppets in the cultural context of the 5th and 4th century, this interpretation of the puppet does not seem to apply to Plato and to the context of *Laws* 1 for textual as well as conceptual reasons. At the textual level the word *kore* does not appear in the image of the puppet from *Laws* 1. Furthermore it is

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[21] They also add a reference to Dio Chrysostom *Orationes* 31.153, where the term is used to indicate dolls that parents give to children as presents.

[22] See *History English Puppet Theater* 27 n. 12.

not even clear that Plato uses the term in *Phaedrus* with any intention of referring to a puppet. In the passage from the *Phaedrus* cited by Speaight the term *kore* is paired with *amalgamaton*, which indicates only an image – in this case a sacred representation. Given this context, it is reasonable to think that *kore* here is a synonym of *amalgamaton*, which raises reservations against the interpretation of *kore* in *Phaedrus* as connected to the hand puppet. At the conceptual level interpreting the puppet image from the *Laws* as a hand puppet runs into several issues. In the first place an interpretation in this sense would completely disregard the presence of *neura*, strings, attached to the puppet pulling it in different directions, while Plato in his description of the puppet seems to consider these strings rather relevant. Secondly we have already seen that the pull of our emotions (*pathe*) in opposing directions is a central component of the description of the puppet in *Laws* 1, because it appeals to some basic intuition of psychological problems that are common and recurrent, such as in the case of *akrasia*. The type of puppet Plato has in mind must depict such common psychological occurrences and in the case of a hand puppet the very possibility of *akrasia* would be erased. The hand puppet is obviously not one of the possible qualifications of *thauma*.

A more plausible alternative is to consider the puppet of the *Laws* a shadow puppet. Shadow puppet theater is a kind of representation that casts light against puppets so that their silhouettes are projected onto a screen. The spectators focus on the screen and enjoy the puppets' movements through the medium of their shadow. The possibility that Plato had this type of puppet in mind when he wrote the passage from *Laws* 1 must be considered on the basis of the reference to puppetry in the *Republic*. As Socrates describes the famous allegory of the cave at the beginning of *Republic* 7 he claims "[the prisoners']

light is from a fire burning far above and behind them. Between the fire and the

prisoners there is a road above, along which see a wall, built like the partitions puppet-

handlers (*thaumapoiois*) set in front of the audience, and over which they show puppets

(*thauma*)" (*Resp.* 7.514 b). A few lines below Socrates explains that the prisoners in the

cave see only "the shadow cast by the fire on the side of the cave facing them" (*ivi* 7.515a).
[23] Gocer raises the possibility that Plato here is thinking of some form of shadow puppet

theater[24] as she compares this passage from the allegory of the cave with the contemporary

Greek-Turkish *Karagoz* theater. Though she acknowledges we are unable to make a final

assessment of the direct relation between the allegory of the cave from *Republic* and

Karagoz, she maintains that "Plato's comparison makes it clear that at least something like

it [*Karagoz*] did exist in Ancient Athens" (*Puppet Theater in Parable of Cave* 123). Some may

argue that Plato had in mind this kind of puppet theater in the *Laws* for three reasons. (i) In

the first place if Plato had already taken this kind of puppet as his model in the *Republic* it is

plausible to think that he had it still in mind when he was writing the *Laws*; (ii) the lexical

consistency in the use of *thauma* would have one guess that if that term was used once in

Republic with explicit reference to shadow puppet theater, it is plausible that it was used in

the same fashion in the *Laws*; (iii) shadow puppets avoid the hermeneutical issue of fitting

the *neura* in the interpretation which was raised with the hand puppet; as Jurkowski

maintains it is possible that the puppets in the allegory of the cave are moved by means of

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[23] Bloom's translation.

[24] Gross agrees with this identification of the allegory of the cave with shadow puppet theater (*Puppet* 126-27). Laurent hits at this identification when he sees an analogy between the marionette held on its stage and the figure carried by men above the cave's wall in *Republic* (*Mesure de l'Humain* 85-86).

strings[25] pulled from below by puppeteers who stand behind the wall above which puppets are raised. However, a closer look reveals that this interpretation is not viable.

Let us begin with reason (iii), though it is plausible that Plato had in mind shadow puppet theater as a model for the kind of cognitive constriction the prisoners in the cave experience, and though the use of strings in shadow puppet is accredited, it seems to me unreasonable to conclude that the objects that carousel before the fire in the allegory of the cave are moved by strings. In the words of Plato these objects are "all sorts of artifacts … statues of men and other animals wrought from stone, wood, and every kind of material" (*Resp.* 7.514c-15a).[26] The evidence available to determine whether these artifacts are in fact puppets, and if so, what kind of puppets, is at best inconclusive and in the worst dismisses this hypothesis. Plato does not mention puppets as one of the objects carried along the wall in the cave, and most curiously, even if we were to consider those objects as puppets, it would be hard to see how stone or wood puppets would be moved by strings.[27] Let us then consider reason (ii); do we have any solid basis to think that when Plato speaks of *thauma* in the *Laws* 1 he is thinking of the *thauma* he discusses in *Republic* 7? With reference to the *thauma* in *Republic* Gocer claims that shadow puppet theater is a theater form rather close to Aristophanic theater, one which relies on "puns, dialect, slapstick, taboo subjects, and fantastic grotesquerie" (*Puppet Theater in Parable of Cave* 124).

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[25] See *History of European Puppetry* 48.

[26] Bloom's translation.

[27] Further proof of this inconclusiveness can be found in the variety of interpretations that the supposed "puppets" are opened to in the *Republic.* For instance Byrom suggests that the allegory of the cave represents an example of hand puppetry (*Puppet Theater in Antiquity* 6). I disagree with this proposal, for the same reason as I reject Jurkowski's interpretation. Simply there are no sufficient evidences to make this claim.

Though, as we have seen above, in the *Laws* the Athenian visitor expresses contempt for human matters, it is unclear whether he has in mind this form of comedy when he thinks of human beings as puppets. I would go further and argue that in *Laws* there is a distinction between comedy and puppetry, with the latter being a work suited for little children, but different from comedy. [28] This distinction might have the unintended consequence of supporting the claim that, if in the *Laws* puppetry is a matter for little children, considering human beings as puppets is a simple, perhaps infantile, way of looking at human psychology. Certainly though it does not mean that it is a comedic way of representing human psyche. On the basis of these considerations it would seem that the puppet of the allegory of the cave is different from that of the *Laws*, and so we should reject (ii). Finally let us consider reason (i); does Plato's use of *thauma* in the *Republic* clarify the employment of the puppet image in *Laws* 1? It seems to me that we should resolve this question in the negative. Let us focus on the symbolic use of the image of the puppet. In *Laws* 1 the function of the puppet image is to exemplify human psychology, but in the allegory of the cave from *Republic* 7 human beings are not to be identified with the puppets casting shadows on the walls of the cave, rather they are explicitly compared with the prisoners in the cave.[29] In this specific regard it does not seem that Plato uses puppetry to represent the same concepts in *Laws* and *Republic*. However some could argue that in a general view of the allegory of the cave exemplifying the scope of education, the shadow puppet theater

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[28] See for instance *Leg.* 2.658c. Gocer mentions this distinction between puppetry and comedy in the *Laws*, but does use it to specify a distinction between *Republic* and *Laws* with regards to their respective use of *thauma*. See *Puppet Theater in Parable of the Cave* 125. Kurke also recognizes this distinction between the *thauma* of the *Republic* and that of the *Laws* (*Imagining Chorality* 161 n.1).

[29] "They are like us!" (*Resp.* 7.515a) says Socrates.

represents that part of human nature which must be "trimmed in earliest childhood and

its ties of kinship with becoming [must be] cut off – *like leaden weights*, which eating and

such pleasures as well as their refreshments naturally attach to the soul and turn its vision

downward" (*Resp.*7.519a-b).[30] As such the shadow puppet theater in *Republic* would refer

to those aspects of human upbringing that pull us down, like the strings on a puppet, and

that we should free ourselves from those strings, like so many Pinocchios *ante litteram*.

Jouët-Pastré recognizes that one might mistake the "weights" of *Republic* 7 for the cords of

the puppet image in *Laws*, which Plato claims are made of iron,[31] but she also points out

that in the case of the *Laws* "ces fils [the iron cords] son *constitutifs* de l'homme, la

marionette doit faire en sorte qu'ils aillent dans la même direction que celle de la traction …

de la raison" (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 41). Thus, we see that even at a general level the

references to puppetry in *Republic* and in *Laws* are unrelated, since while we are

encouraged to sever our strings, in the sense of attachment, to the empirical world in

Republic, we are required to cope with our worldly ties, in the sense of psychological pulls,

in the *Laws*. At this point it would seem we should reject the proposal of understanding the

image of the puppet from *Laws* 1 as an instance of shadow puppet theater, comparable to

the reference to such spectacle in *Republic* 7.

A third possibility would identify the puppet of the *Laws* with a wind-up toy, pulled

by internal strings, which is set off by an initial, external movement; this we will call an

automaton. These kind of mechanisms were known in antiquity and reached a high degree

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[30] Bloom's translation, my italics.

[31] See *Leg.* 1.645a. I will discuss the metaphorical significance of the material constituting the strings in the next chapter.

of sophistication, as it is described for instance by Hero of Alexandria in his *Pneumatica*

and *Automata*. Since Hero lived about 450 years after Plato's death he cannot be a reliable

source to decide about the puppet of the *Laws*, but he can at least point us in the right

direction. The technological advancements that Hero was describing in the Hellenistic

period were considered in the classical period the work of gods and heroes. This means

that even though we might not be able to prove that at the time of Plato sophisticated

automata existed, we can be sure that such machinery was not beyond our author's

imagination. Consider for instance that in the *Euthyphro*[32] and the *Meno* Socrates refers to

Daedalus as the inventor of self-moving statues. The account in the *Meno* is particularly

interesting for our purposes. Here Socrates uses the story of Daedalus to explain to Meno

why he feels astonished (*thaumazein*) about the apparent lack of distinction between right

opinion and knowledge. Socrates then describes the statues (*agalmata*) of Daedalus, as

being able of self-movement. If let alone these statues will run away, but if one of these

statues is fastened (*dedemenon*) it makes many beautiful things. In the same fashion we

should fasten our opinions by means of argument.[33] At first this description of Daedalus'

automata seems to have little in common with the puppet pulled by strings in the *Laws*, as

neither the language nor the mechanics of the fastening are similar to the account of the

Laws' *thauma*. But at a second glance there are several reasons why it is plausible that

automata are what Plato has in mind in our dialogue.[34]

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[32] See *Euth.*11d and 15b.

[33] See *Meno* 97c-98a.

[34] We should notice that the myth of Daedalus is closely related to Crete, the dramatic setting of the dialogue. See Graves *The Greek Myths* 311-318.

In support of this interpretation we have an argument from the history of puppet theater; Jurkowski informs us that

> Hans Richard Purschke, German researcher, came to the most radical conclusion. Analyzing all the available texts from Plato to Synesius of Cyrenaica, he affirmed that the Greek neurospasta (puppets moved by strings) … were mechanical or partly mechanical figures. … According to Purschke's way of thinking, puppets in Antiquity underwent two kinds of transformations at the same time: from ritual into spectacle, and from mechanical movement to manual movement given directly by a player (*History of European Puppetry* 46).[35]

If Purschke is right, then it is likely that not only Plato had a conceptual understanding of automata, but that puppets moved by strings were at his time closer to automata, than to what we call today marionettes. This conjecture is reinforced by the possibility of relating this understanding of *thauma* as automaton to Plato's text in the *Laws.* As we mentioned above, the image of the puppet comes back briefly in *Laws* 7. In book 1 the Athenian called the puppet a *paignion*, a toy, and when he mentions again this image in book 7 he refers to it as "some sort of toy (*paignion*) built (*memechanemenon*) by god" (7.803c). Here the verb *mechanomai*, to contrive or devise, could convey the idea that this toy should be considered a device with different parts that allow it to function. Thus on this relation between the description of the *thauma* in book 1 and its resumption in book 7, it would seem that the *automaton* is a good candidate to qualify what puppet Plato has in mind.

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[35] To be sure Jurkowski disagrees with Purschke (*ibid.* 46-47) citing as evidence the differences in types of puppet he claims that "a neurospastos (*sic*) could have been a mechanical figure at one stage and directly animated in another" (*ibid.* 47). As it will become clear below, I agree with this interpretation on the basis of Berryman's research.

Additionally some authors think that interpreting the *thauma* of *Laws* 1 as an automaton rather than as a marionette allows for a better parallel between the soul and the puppet; in this sense Frede claims that "[a]lthough *thauma* is commonly translated as "puppet," this translation is misleading if it suggests that humans are mere marionettes whose strings are pulled by the gods. For, as the further descriptions show [*Leg.* 1.644e-ff], the "puppet's" behavior is not determined by the higher powers; it depends, rather, on the workings of its own strings. Hence, Plato seems to have in mind wind-up toys that move by themselves, rather than marionettes" (*Puppets on Strings* 116). It must be conceded that Frede's interpretation does have the advantage of aligning the workings of the *thauma* with the psychic space; when we think of the human *psyche* on average we refer to a number of processes that are internal to the agent and that determine her outward behavior. If we qualify the image of the *thauma* as an automaton this intuition of the human soul is accounted for in a way that would not be possible if we were to think of the *thauma* as a marionette pulled by external strings.

Let us take a moment to evaluate the interpretation of the *thauma* as an automaton. Purschke is certainly not the only author to give a historical account of *neurospasta*, puppets moved by strings. Sylvia Berryman[36] relatively recently reconstructs the textual

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[36] I find it surprising that Annas tries to defend the thesis that Plato has in mind an automaton when he speaks of *thauma* in *Laws* 1 on the basis of Berryman's *The Puppet and the Sage*. Annas claims that "the change in significance of the puppet model in later antiquity, from an image of self-movement to one of merely mechanical, automatic movement" reflects back on Plato's image (*Changing from Within* 8). To begin, as Annas acknowledges, this interpretation runs contrary to her own earlier interpretation of the *thauma* in *Laws* 1 (see *Virtue and Law in Plato*), which is perfectly fine, so long as she can motivate her change of mind; but as far as I can tell she does not explain her reasons. Secondly, even if Annas does not seem to consider the following an issue, we must still entertain the possibility that Plato had a different puppet in mind then the automaton, regardless of the perspective of later authors. After all Berryman only discusses the development of the puppet in late antiquity and she claims "Plato's point is that we should obey the gentle tugging of the cord that represents reason…. Marcus Aurelius, by contrast, uses the image of the string-pulled puppet,

evidences from late antiquity to make the exact opposite claim, namely that the *neurospaston* changed meaning, from marionette to automaton. She stresses that the *neurospasta* changed significantly from the time of Plato to the Hellenistic period, so that what Marcus Aurelius has in mind when he refers to *neurospaston* in his *Meditations* is much closer to an automaton, while Plato is more likely to have thought of a marionette.[37] She specifies that this semantic change is possible because "[s]tring-pulling is essential to its [the automaton's] operation, which is perhaps why the term *neurospaston* still seemed appropriate; however, the strings are pulled by falling weights released by triggers, and not directly by the agent" (*Puppet and Sage* 191). So who is right? Purschke or Berryman? If we are to consider this point from the technical standpoint Purschke's case seems harder to make, since outward pull of strings seems to require a level of technology inferior to the internal clockwork of an automaton; then it becomes curious that puppeteers would take a technological step back from automata to marionettes. From the historical point of view Purschke's point is once again hard to defend and for two reasons. In the first place there are many more extant textual evidences of production of automata in late antiquity than in classical time.[38] Secondly, textual evidence seems to contradict Purschke's thesis;[39] namely puppets seem to have originated as ritualistic tools handled by external strings, moving towards entertainment and automatism.

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neurospaston, to describe the life we should turn away from" (*Puppet and Sage* 187, see also 189); read in this fashion Berryman seems to be drawing a distinction, not a comparison between Plato and later authors.

[37] *Puppet and Sage* 190.

[38] For instance, as we mentioned above, the works by Hero of Alexandria.

[39] For instance see Herodotus *Historiae* 2.48.

Frede's interpretation is more persuasive, though ultimately it does not seem satisfactory. While we should take in all seriousness the importance of Frede's comment about depiction of a psychic space for the human soul, we should push back on this interpretation's deterministic perspective on the puppet. Let us begin with this second point. Frede is worried that understanding the *thauma* as marionette may take away agency from human beings and place it in the hands of the gods; thus portraying human beings in a deterministic fashion. However I am afraid that understanding the *thauma* as *automaton* leads us once again towards determinism. Let us consider first that human beings suffer from the strings' pulls, since they are *pathe*, and that this suffering is an experience for the human soul. This experiential element is lost in the automaton. As they carry out their programmed directives automata demonstrate no awareness; they are determined by their mechanism, they do not live through an experience. Second, an automaton is not only a toy enabled with self-movement, but also one that expresses no volition in the movement it performs; once its mechanism is wound up, it proceeds automatically. This is not what Plato has in mind when he speaks of the *thauma* in book 1 of the *Laws.* As we have seen, the Athenian cites the image of the puppet in order to clarify which actions are inclined towards virtue and which lead to vice; thus our *thauma* must have some ability to discern and decide towards one type of action and not the other. If this *thauma* is not to be determined by gods, it neither can be completely at the mercy of its own strings. Thus, it seems then that considering the *thauma* as an automaton suffers from an excess of determinism and consequently it is not a viable interpretation, though we must admit that Frede's argument about the space of psychic events is an important contribution towards a correct interpretation. In other words, if the strings of the *thauma*

represent forces that influence us, these forces belong to our psyche; no external

spiritual or material force is represented by the *thauma*. [40]

Finally let us consider the possibility of conceiving the *thauma* as a marionette. An

often-cited passage, Herodotus' *Historiae* is the first documented Greek source reporting

the use of puppets. Herodotus describes the procession of Egyptian women during the

religious celebrations of the god Osiris, the god introduced in Greece by Melampus with the

name Dionysus.[41] During this procession the women carried "a two feet high statues

honoring the god moved by strings (*agalmata neurospasta*), with the phallus nodding and

nearly as big as the rest of the body" (*ivi* 2.48).[42] Is it plausible to think that Plato has in

mind something similar to this marionette when he speaks of *thauma* in *Laws* 1? In the first

place we should consider a lexical issue; it would seems strange that Plato does not use the

technical term *neurospaston* in the *Laws* while this terms was certainly known to him from

Herodotus and was used by his contemporaries.[43] However, as we read again the passage

of the *thauma* from *Laws* 1 we must notice the reference to "strings (*neura*) or some kind of

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[40] We are discussing here the case of a puppet, but we are dismissing the figure of a puppeteer. Considering the puppeteer would make the image of the marionette completely deterministic. It is clear in the text of the *Laws* that Plato considers the puppet without an agent pulling its strings; it is true that he hints at the possibility of the gods making us puppets, but Frede has a point in remarking that the gods do not direct our lives. In opening the possibility that a puppet is determined by its own strings Plato is anticipating Collodi's Pinocchio and is wondering how we can reconcile our autonomy with our subjection to psychic events.

[41] *Ivi* 2.49.

[42] Godley's translation modified. The same reference to these ithyphallic marionettes associated with the cult of Dionysus can be found in the second century C.E. in Syria as reported by Lucian of Samosata *The Syrian Goddess* 16.

[43] The same term *neurospasta* is used by Xenophon in his *Symposium* IV.55 to describe the puppet act of a Syracusan entertainer hired by Callias for the dinner. Speaight notes that "[i]n this Sicilian entertainer ... we see the first recorded puppet showman in history" (*History English Puppet Theater* p. 25). The first puppeteer named in history is Portheinos named by Athenaeus in *Deinosophists* 1.

line that pulls (*spōsin*) us" (*Leg.* 1.644e). A marionette is called *neurospaston* precisely

because there are strings, *neura*, that move, *spōsin*, it; thus, though Plato does not use the

compound name for marionette, it is plausible that he has this very puppet in mind.[44]

Secondly, in reference to Herodotus' description, Magnin speaks of ""the puppet on

the altar steps" or hieratic puppet, that is the view that the puppet is originally a prop for

sacred rituals" (Jurkowski *History of European Puppetry* 36-37).[45] When the marionette

stepped off the altar – Jurkowski adds – "[t]he sacred figure gradually became a profane

puppet, representing the mortal human instead of the immortal divinity" (*ivi* 38). This

connection of the marionette (representing the human) to the divine sphere is rather

important to understand our passage from the *Laws.* I would suggest that it is safe to

assume that an echo of this connection can still be heard in Plato's definition of the *thauma*

as "divine puppet."

Though there seem to be good reasons for interpreting the *thauma* as a marionette,

one difficulty still remains, namely that Plato's image does not seem to portray puppets

that are pulled from external forces, but puppets that abide by "internal" or psychic

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[44] Ken Moore is supportive of this line of argument, as he claims that "[f]or the analogy of the *Laws* to work, especially given that there are various "strings" or "cords" involved, pulling sometimes in different directions, a marionette would seem to be the more appropriate image rather than a wind-up toy" (*Plato's Puppets of the Gods* 40). Jouët-Pastré offers an additional argument as to why Plato does not use the term neurospaston, but prefers the word thauma, while still conceiving of the soul as a marionette. "La possibilité de nous élever … explique d'ailleurs peut-être pourquoi Platon a préféré employer le terme *ta thaumata* plutôt que *ta neurospasta*, alor qu'il use deux fois du terme *ta neura* pour désigner les fils de la marionette" (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 48).

[45] In this regard Speaight also claims that as we seek the origin of puppets "on the analogy of the human theater we must expect to trace a more probable descent from the religious derivations" referring directly to Herodotus (*History English Puppet Theater* p. 24).

strings.[46] As we have seen, Frede made this important point with regards to the interpretation of the *thauma* as an automaton. Though there are reasons for considering the connections between the psychic space and the experiential world,[47] the question here is whether understanding the *thauma* as a marionette forces us to think of the *psyche* at the mercy of forces that are independent of it. Jurkowski, who thinks that Plato has a marionette in mind as he writes the *Laws*, may help us resolve this issue. He claims that a marionette moved by interior pulls, not by exterior cords could exist.[48] This puppet would not necessarily be an automaton, determined to accomplish only a set of movements by its internal mechanism, but at the same time it would look as though all the movements were its own, because all the pulls are internal. Thus, we could conceive of a marionette as portraying the internal workings of the psyche.

We can find some support for this reading in Pseudo-Aristotle's *On the Universe*. "Just as a puppet-showman by pulling a single string makes the neck and hand and shoulder and eye and sometimes all the parts of the figure move with a certain harmony; so too the divine nature, by simple movement of that which is nearest to it, imparts its power to that which next succeeds" (398b).[49] In his excellent *Puppet Theater in Antiquity* Byrom

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[46] See Shershow *Puppets and "Popular" Culture* 21-22.

[47] There are plenty of occasions in which our soul is pulled by "external" forces in the *Laws*, for instance in childhood education as stated in book 7, but also for what concerns legislation and cultural products, as we shall see in chapters 4 and 5. Shershow (*ibid.*) makes the further point that in this image of Plato we see an early representation of authority as internalization of power, which proves that external forces do have an influence on the psyche. However, as we shall see, these external forces work on internal psychological mechanism, they are not a case of heteronomous determination of the soul.

[48] *History of European Puppetry* 44.

[49] Forster's translation. Berryman takes this description to be one of an automaton (*Puppet and the Sage* 189), but it is hard for me to follow her as the author clearly speaks of a puppeteer.

comments on this passage by Pseudo-Aristotle stating that "there are indications that the

neurospaston was a contrivance of greater mechanical complexity; that it was wired

internally like the puppets seen by Stendhal on his travels to Italy in the 19th century. He

[Stendhal] describes the Roman marionettes ... in some details, and the strings of these

were almost wholly invisible as they emerged from the crown of the puppet's head to be

gathered on a black tube on their way to the hand of the operator" (12).[50] This complex

marionette seems to be an excellent example of the workings of the human soul as Plato

intends it in *Laws* 1, as it allows us to read the pull of different (sometimes contrasting)

emotive strings as psychological occurrences that are confined within the soul.

If we employ this kind of marionette to explain Plato's *thauma* in *Laws* 1, we find

ourselves in the position of connecting several elements we have highlighted about the soul

thus far. In the first place we claimed that the soul of book 1 (similarly to the cosmic soul) is

a self-mover. The marionette moved by internal mechanisms would portray this status of

the soul; its strings should be understood as principles of movement, as motives of action.

Secondly we recognized the importance of experiencing psychic forces and on this basis we

rejected the reading of *thauma* as an automaton, since automata do not experience, they

simply carry out their directives. Reading the *thauma* as a marionette whose strings are

internal has several hermeneutical advantages. It accommodates the experiential

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[50] In support of this theory Byrom cites Claudius Galenus's *De Usum Partium* where the Roman doctor draws analogies between the use of tendons to articulate muscle movement and the mechanics of marionettes. This reference is corroborated by Bernardino Baldi in his *Discourse by the Translator of About the Self-moving Machines* a renaissance translation of Heron of Alexandria's *Automata*. Baldi in his renaissance claims that those marionettes "were called *neurospasti*, as much as to say they were machines worked by sinews (*nervi*) in the form of those cords which pass through their limbs, having in themselves exactly the same function as sinews in animals" (quoted in Byrom *ivi* 17).

dimension of the *pathe*, thus moving away from a purely deterministic view of human existence, while it allows for a multiplicity of motives for action, which might be contradictory at times. Finally the internal space of the psyche is preserved in the marionette discussed by Byrom, as its inner strings symbolize a degree of independence from external forces. These are the reasons why the marionette seems a suitable possibility for interpreting *thauma* in *Laws* 1.[51]

The Human Soul as a Marionette: how should we interpret this Image?

Now that we established what kind of puppet Plato has in mind, we must ponder the question about the significance of considering the soul as a marionette. This general question can be divided into two specific lines of inquiry. First we must consider what the image of the soul as a marionette tells us about the moral psychology in the *Laws*; specifically we should consider what kind of intent a moral psychologist might have in considering the soul as a marionette. As a second point we must consider what kind of philosophical anthropology is represented by the marionette. We approach both questions from the standpoint of the history of philosophy, that is with reference to some interpretations of the soul-marionette that have been offered in the comments to the *Laws*. However, before we set out to review these comments, let us cite the entire passage about the soul-marionette from book 1.

> Let us hold each of us, as we are alive, as a divine marionette (*thauma theion*), regardless of whether we are put together as plaything (*paignion*) of the gods or for some serious reason; which one we do not know. But this we do know, that these events we suffer (*pathe*) in us are like strings (*neura*) or some kind of line that pulls (*spōsin*) us and that since these strings are

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[51] England, somewhat pessimistically, agrees with this interpretation of the *thauma* stating that "we answer to the tug of passion or other motives just in the way that the marionettes answer to the pull of the wires" (*The Laws of Plato* vol.I 256).

opposed to one another they draw us towards opposite actions (*praxeis*), on the place where the distinction of virtue and vice is drawn. Rational argument (*logos*) tells that one must be always compliant with only one of the drags and never let go of it, and to pull against the other strings (*neurois*). This [one pull we must comply with] is the sacred and golden lead (*agoge*) of reasoning (*logismos*) (*Leg*.1.644e-45a).

We must add that the other strings that pull the soul have been identified previously with pleasure, pain, confidence (expectation of future pleasures) and fear (expectation of future pains).[52]

Once again, we should envision the strings' pulling as an internal psychic process, with no or little reference to empirical external objects; just like the *neura* of the marionette pull the puppet from within. At the same time we should consider that some of these pulls find a referent in the "external" sphere. For instance it is likely that objects of pleasure that we find attractive in the empirical world arouse our psyche's string of pleasure in such a way that eventually we are physically moved towards them. Or it is possible that "the golden and sacred lead of reasoning" is attracted to one of the city's good laws[53] and we are psychologically moved to comply with external legal requirements. These referents may be understood as the objectives of our actions, which are caused by our motives. However we should not think that these objectives are the source of motives. The Athenian here is not advocating for a teleological view of the motivational forces in the psyche; he is thinking of the psyche as the seat of the principles that move it.

Let us now turn to our first question, the one concerning the attitude of the moral psychologist in considering the human soul as a marionette. What we are trying to

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[52] *Leg.* 1.644c-d.

[53] *Leg.* 1-645a-b.

understand here is what the image may reveal about the philosophical attitude of the Athenian visitor in studying the human psyche. What does our character hope to find in the comparison of the human soul to a marionette? What is he searching for? Though the marionette is *prima facie* a simpleton's object of interest,[54] as Kurke points out, what is central in the use of the word *thauma* in our passage from the *Laws* is the awareness of the paradoxical nature of a puppet; this awareness amounts to a sort of child-like belief. "The designation *thauma* points us to something essential about puppets, focalized (as it were) through the credulous gaze of very small children: though we know them to be mechanical and inanimate, we simultaneously believe that puppets are alive, for they are infused with motion and voice. And this doubleness … is a kind of magic or wonder that itself arouses wonder" (*Imagining Chorality* 126). In other words the Athenian's interest in the marionette as an intellectually valuable analog for the soul may be embedded precisely in the immediate naïve attitude we hold with regards to puppets; namely, that we are attracted to them because their movement fools us into thinking that they are strangely alive and autonomous, though we know that their movement is the result of strings being pulled. When we employ the puppet as a metaphor for the soul, we are projecting that immediate attitude of wonderment on ourselves and we are asking, what is it that makes us move and that make us think that we are alive and autonomous? This point should not be utterly surprising. After all we opened this chapter clarifying that moral and the cosmic account of the psychology of the *Laws* (book 1 and 10 respectively) are connected precisely by the basic understanding of the psyche as self-mover. However, the image of marionette

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[54] We have seen above that there are textual and cultural reasons for thinking that such is the case; consider the low esteem that Plato in the *Laws* 2.658d and Xenophon in the *Symposium* 4.55.

complicates that initial account of the soul as the source of movement, since it brings together the idea of autonomy and that of determination; in this sense our soul and our behavior can be represented by a *thauma* and are sources of marvel. Let us explore this line of interpretation.

Aristotle has an interesting metaphorical use of "*thauma*" in *Metaphysics*, which might help us set in the right direction our investigation of the Athenian's attitude in employing the marionette image. Aristotle claims that "everyone begins by being amazed … that things are in a certain way, as one does before self-moving puppets … it seems that it is amazing for those who have not known the cause [of the puppet's self-movement]" (I.2.983a12-17).[55] What Aristotle is suggesting is that the source of amazement when we look at puppets is related to our ignorance of what causes them to look like they are alive; a line below Aristotle finally claims that amazement is not a recommendable state to dwell in, and that we should reach the opposite emotive state by arriving at the knowledge of causes. If we transpose Aristotle's reasoning on the Athenian's employment of the image of the marionette as metaphor for the human soul, we must conclude that the initial sense of amazement that we find before the human soul's self-movement – comparable to the feeling we have when we are entertained by a puppet show – must be abandoned in favor of a search for the causes of self-determination in the soul – just as our amazement for the

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[55] I am not claiming that here Aristotle is referring to the image of the marionette in *Laws* 1, nor I am claiming that this is the only place where Aristotle uses a puppet as explanatory metaphor. If we look at *On the Motion of Animals* 7.701b1:ff. and *On the Generation of Animals* 2.1.734b10-13 and 2.5.741b9 and compare them with this passage we must acknowledge that mostly Aristotle has in mind *automata* when he speaks of *thauma*, that he is "not only transposing the metaphorical sense of the puppet from the psychology to the physiology of movement, but also drawing an analogy between machine and nature" (*The Puppet's Paradox* 326 - overall I disagree with Cappelletto's interpretation of the image of the puppet in Plato, I will explain my disagreement below). For these reasons Aristotle cannot help us understand directly Plato's reference to *thauma* in *Laws* 1. However this passage is useful to address initially the combination of autonomy and determination in the image of the marionette.

puppet show ceases when we understand how the strings move the characters. In this sense we can read the Athenian's interest in the pull of the strings in the marionette image as a reference to all those psychological causes that lead us to act. In other words, the Athenian's attitude in employing the marionette image to address human moral psychology is not one of skepticism (e.g. human psychology is amazing but indeterminable, in the same fashion as the workings of a marionette leaves us amazed and ignorant), nor one of determinism (e.g. ineluctable forces move our psyche, like strings jerk a puppet), but one of inquisitiveness. We should attempt to find the root of our autonomy and self-movement – paradoxically – in the mechanics of our psychological forces, which deterministically affect our psyche, like strings on a marionette. This line of interpretation of the marionette image in the *Laws* is certainly not new, it finds precedents in interpretations by Apuleius, and Al-Farabi. Let us take a look at these interpretations and see what we can learn about the Athenians' search for causes of action in the human psyche.

Apuleius' main claims about Platonic psychology come from *De Dogmate Platonis*, especially books 2 and 3. As it is the case with all middle Platonists, Apuleius holds the *Laws* as one of the most significant works by Plato;[56] however in discussing Plato's psychology Apuleius refers mostly to *Republic* and *Timaeus*. In order to learn something from his interpretation we shall separate Apuleius' account of the *Laws* from his comments on these other works. Apuleius seems inclined to consider the account of the soul in *Republic* as Plato's exclusive psychology and in fact he refers only to that account and to the

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[56] On the relevance of the *Laws* and especially the *Epinomis* for middle Platonists see Stover *A New Work by Apuleius* 24-26. The *Epinomis* in particular were considered a text were one could hear the true voice of Plato and functioned as the textual basis for middle Platonists' demonology, see *De Dogmate Platonis* 3.14.

psychology from *Timaeus* in the first book of *De Dogmate Platonis.* Even in the third

book, when Apuleius summarizes some of Plato's major dialogues, he does mention in

reference to *Republic* 4 and 9 the tripartition of the soul, but makes no reference of the

image of the marionette, when he summarizes *Laws* 1 or 7.[57] However we find something in

this work's second book. The second book of *De Dogmate Platonis* is, as Taylor indicates, a

collection of doctrines "for the most part taken from the *Republic* and the *Laws* of Plato"

(*Metamorphosis and Philosophical Works* 343 n. a). In this book, though Apuleius

paraphrases the tripartite theory of the soul in the *Republic*, he also seems to include

elements from the image of the puppet in the *Laws*. Specifically we read that the spirited

part of the soul is the one which holds the strings (*nervi*)[58] and moves the soul according to

the law established by the rational part; these references justify us in considering this

passage for interpreting the Athenian's psychological intentions in the *Laws*. Apuleius

states that "in that part of the soul which is of a more irascible nature, the seat of fortitude,

the strength of the soul and the nerves (*nervi*) are contained, by which we accomplish those

things, which the command of the laws we are more severely enjoined to perform" (*De

Dogmate Platonis* 2.6).[59] While we must recognize in "the seat of fortitude" a reference to

the *Republic*'s *thymos*, we must also acknowledge that the references to "nerves" and "the

laws" point in the direction of the moral psychology of the *Laws*. In regards to these latter

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[57] See *De Dogmate Platonis* 3.2,7,15, 21.

[58] Latin term for *neura*.

[59] Taylor translation; Apuleius was also the Latin translator of Pseudo-Aristotle's *On the Universe*, though it is unlikely that that description – see above –has informed his understanding of the soul moved by strings more than Plato's passage from *Laws* 1.

elements, it would seem that what is at stake in the description of the soul as a

marionette is the search for the means by which legislation can be internalized and ends up

determining the soul's movements. Just like a marionette's movements are determined by

external pull, which reverberate in its internal system of strings, so legislation should hinge

on those elements that motivate the soul to act in compliance with enacted decrees. Thus,

from Apuleius' perspective, the Athenian's intention in comparing the soul to a marionette

seem to amount to determining the causes that lead the citizen's psychology to align with

the city's legislation. Al-Farabi's reading of the image of the marionette in his *Summary of*

Plato's Laws, though not the same as Apuleius', reinforces this reading, while adding other

elements of interpretation.[60]

To begin, differently from Apuleius, Al-Farabi's legitimizes the image of the puppet

and discusses it on its own merit, avoiding suggesting that in the *Laws* Plato is dependent

on the moral psychology of the *Republic*. Al-Farabi reads Plato as an esoteric writer who

uses "symbols, riddles, obscurity, and difficulty lest knowledge fall into the hands of those

not deserving of it" (*Summary* Introduction 2), at the same time he claims that Plato

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[60] For all Al-Farabi's translation I refer to Butterworth's edition of the *Summary*, I cite his translation and pagination. On the connection between Al-Farabi and Apuleius as resulting from their respective texts' similarities to the *Compendiosa Expositio* see Stover *A New Work by Apuleius* pp.21-23. Finally on the reliability of Al-Farabi's interpretation of Plato see Strauss's *Farabi's Plato*, Harvey's *Can a Tenth Century Islamic Aristotelian Help Us Understand Plato's* Laws*?* And Butterworth's introduction to Al-Farabi's *Summary of Plato's* Laws*. Strauss promotes an interpretation of Al-Farabi underscoring how the Islamic philosopher recognizes the presence and the importance of esoteric teachings in Plato's *Laws* (see *Farabi's Plato* 376 and *Summary Introduction*.2); he also adds that some inconsistencies in Al-Farabi's work should be read in light of a similar esoterism (*Farabi's Plato* 369, 375-76). Butterworth seems to side with Strauss (Introduction to *Summary* 100). Both scholars argue for the possibility that Al-Farabi had access to the text of Plato's *Laws* (Strauss *Farabi's Plato* 359 and Butterworth Introduction to the *Summary* 102-103) and thus the omissions in the *Summary* become fruitful ways of discerning Al-Farabi's own interpretation of Plato. Harvey's suggestion on how to use Al-Farabi's work seems to me soberer and preferable. Harvey argues that Al-Farabi did not have access to the text of the *Laws*, and that he probably grounded his *Summary* on previous synopses (*Tenth Century Aristotelian* 325); however, he does not dismiss the relevance of Al-Farabi's *Summary* for interpreting Plato, as he points out that reading the *Laws* from Al-Farabi's perspective may invite us to consider new interpretations of Plato's work (*ivi* 326).

exploits his skillful deceitfulness when he sometimes speaks in his own voice within his dialogues, so that "the one who reads or hears his discussion presumes it is symbolic and that he intends a meaning different from what he has openly declared" (*ibid.*). Al-Farabi's objective in the summary is to provide a guide to Plato's own doctrines (or at least what he discerns to be such), that is to say to make explicit all those passages in the *Laws* where Plato speaks in his own voice, which the unskilled reader mistakes for figurative, symbolic speech. As he claims "[i]n this book, we have resolved on extracting the notions to which he [Plato] alludes and grouping them together" (*ibid.*). Since Al-Farabi discusses the image of the puppet in the first treatise of the *Summary*,[61] it must be the case that he considers this image one of the places in which Plato speaks in his own voice, thus in his view the image of the puppet is a legitimate account of Platonic moral psychology.

Secondly, Al-Farabi's *Summary* may confirm that the right direction for understanding the Athenian's intention in sketching the image of the marionette is the consideration of causes of human behavior.[62] In reading the image of the marionette Al-Farabi refers to the intention of the legislator quite explicitly. To understand this point we should consider several passages of his *Summary*, especially Introduction.1, 1.1, 1.21, 2.1, but most especially 1.8. Here Al-Farabi explains that in laying down legislation rulers should pay specific attention to "whatever … serves as causes of the virtues". In other

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[61] *Summary* 1.20.

[62] We should note that the search for causes (of legislation and of human motivation) has been the theme of the conversation among the three old men of the *Laws*, since the very first line of the dialogue. As we noted at the beginning the dialogue opens with the sentence, "Is it a god or a human being who is responsible (*eilephe ten aitian*) for the ordaining of your legislations?" (1.634a).

words, legislation must become the efficient cause of virtue,[63] but in order to achieve this

objective legislation must be enacted with an eye to the causes of human behavior, that is

to say with an eye to human motives for action. As Al-Farabi claims "[h]e [Plato] explained

in this treatise that in a human being there are natural things that are causes of his moral

habits and his actions. Therefore the lawgiver ought to be intent on those things" (*ivi* 2.1).

Legislation must arouse certain motives for action, which will lead to virtuous behavior; in

this fashion legislation will be the cause of virtue. The image of the marionette fits in this

context because it is an assessment of the "natural things" which motivate us to act; in this

sense, as the Athenian describes the way strings pull our souls in different directions, he is

drawing the psychological blueprint he and his companions must consider when proposing

legislation. And this is, according to Al-Farabi, the mark of his investigative intentions.

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[63] As exemplified in *Summary* 1.21, "Then he explained that it is true and extremely true that one should bear the toil and discomfort commanded by the legislator because of the ensuing comfort and virtue." In this context Al-Farabi reveals his empirical approach in reading the *Laws*, as Butterworth explains (see his introduction to the *Summary* 107-109). When approaching the general issue of philosophical anthropology Al-Farabi's claims that inductive reasoning is human beings' specific cognitive difference with regards to other animals; in other words human beings have the ability to proceed from particular instances to the general laws, and that is what qualifies them as human. This empirical approach may apply to the image of the marionette as it clarifies that the image may be addressing instances in which from particular motives of action our rational faculty derives general rules by which it determines guidelines for behavior. This reading becomes clearer when one looks at *Summary* 1.20, which comments on the image of the marionette, in the context of 1.18-19. Al-Farabi presents the image of the marionette as following the topic of early education (1.18-19), specifically the process for which early training in particular situations yields general behavior. In 1.19 he discusses specifically the case of children who show a disposition towards legislation and claims that they should be trained in using their power of reflection; this training we assume will take the form of instruction in particular instances. The results of this training though will be general, "because of his [the child] early training and exercise… , it will be possible for him to restrain himself and face what confronts him with perseverance" (*Summary* 1.19). In the following paragraph, when discussing the image of the marionette, Al-Farabi clarifies that this is a dualist psychology, one in which our "bestial" pull confronts our "discerning" pull. Because the pull of discernment is so much weaker than the bestial we must assume that the only chance we have to "restrain" ourselves and resist the bestial pull is by means of our childhood training; from particular instances of exercising our discerning or reflective power we have developed a general rule of conduct which prescribes to side with our reflective pulls each time we experience a conflict with our "bestial" pulls (In this context see also 3.7, 8,10).

In summation, as suggested in Apuleius' reading of the *Laws*' psychology and confirmed by Al-Farabi's reading, the intention of the Athenian in discussing the human soul as a marionette is to individuate those motives for action that like strings move our soul. These motives exert enough influence on our soul so that they may be used to induce behavioral compliance in the citizens, but must also be pliable enough to conform to the moral and legal framework the Athenian visitor has in mind.

Let us now move to our second question, what kind of human being does the image of the marionette in *Laws* 1 describe? There are in general four plausible interpretations of the anthropology of the marionette.[64] One possible interpretation is to see human beings as ground of contention between the pull of rationality and that of their desires (pleasure, pain, confidence and fear, which we have named above). This line of interpretation is then subdivided in two strands, one which we could call "pessimistic" and one which we could call "optimistic;" the former claims that in the tug of war between the desires and rationality, the desires have a better chance to win, the latter claims that human beings are defined precisely by the fact that reason stands a chance to prevail. A second line of interpretation emphasizes the coordination among the pull of the marionette's strings, and claims that what defines human beings is precisely this relation of psychological drives. Finally the last line of interpretation sees the marionette's fundamental characteristic in terms of its ability to move its own stings, as though in a process of self-determination.

Let us begin with the first line of interpretation, the soul as contended territory between desires and reason; we will begin by analyzing the pessimistic variation. Dodds

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[64] By no means I pretend to exhaust the entire scope of interpretations of the image of the marionette here; all I am claiming is that generally speaking interpretations fall within these four large trends.

ascribes Plato's view of human beings as puppets to "the bitter recognition of human

worthlessness which was forced upon [Plato] by his experience of contemporary Athens

and Syracuse" (*Greeks and the Irrational* 216). This type of reading is characteristic of many

of the twentieth century interpreters of the *Laws*[65] and we must admit that it finds some

textual basis in the seventh book of the *Laws*[66] and in the image of the marionette itself,

when the Athenian claims that "since reasoning (*logismos*) is so beautiful, gentle and non

violent, its lead (*agoge*) needs servants" (*Leg*. 1.645a), implying that on its own the pull of

reason is not strong enough to direct human life.

A second related possible interpretation for the anthropology of the *Laws* is defined

again by this contrast between rational and desiring pulls, but with an emphasis on reason.

Annas seems to endorse this view when she finds inspiration in Philo of Alexandria's use of

the figure of the puppet to indicate that the optimal psychic state is one in which "the

invisible mind, like the exhibition of a puppet show, does from within prompt its powers,

which at one time losing and allowing to roam, and at another time holding back and

restraining by force … gives sometimes a harmonious motion and sometimes perfect quiet

to his puppets" (*On Abraham* XVI.73). In other words, according to Philo the optimal state

of human psychology is one in which we find ourselves under the complete guidance of

reason.[67] Annas quotes this passage and claims that, though Philo has a different aim than

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[65] See for instance England's *The Laws of Plato* I 256, Rankin's *Plato and Man the Puppet* 131, and Sprague's *Plato and Children's Games* 284.

[66] 7.803c-4b, as cited above. For dating the *Laws* after Plato's travel to Syracuse see *Leg.*2.674a and Ferrari's comment in *Platone Le Leggi* 232 n. 56.

[67] Translated in Byrom. Byrom quotes also another passage from Philo, indicating his use of cognates of *thauma* and *neurospaston* when describing the human soul as guided like a marionette by the pull of

Plato's in employing the metaphor of the puppet, he can be helpful in understanding the

role that rationality and legislation should play in our lives. Specifically Annas claims that

> Philo … can point us in the right direction when we are thinking about the
> role of the preambles in the *Laws* [namely] as a presentation of ethical aims –
> aims to be pursued not as an alternative but rather in living in a way
> structured by these laws and rules. Such a presentation gets across the ideals
> of character to be achieved by the person who follows the rules, and such a
> person comes to see their education, and, when adult, their whole lives, as a
> constant exercise of self-improvement (*Virtue and Law in Plato* 84).

The important notation for our concern here is that there is in human life a

possibility for constant self-improvement. Thus, this reading would seem to maintain that

though we are the battleground of reason and desires, we can lead a life in which we follow

the lead of reason (and of law) ever more consistently. Also this interpretation finds some

textual grounding in the *Laws*[68] and it can be referred back to the image of the marionette,

when the Athenian claims that "the story of virtue stating that we are like marionettes [is]

defendable, and being stronger and weaker than oneself would be somewhat clear"

(*Leg*.1.645b).[69] Clearly Plato would be maintaining that when we are stronger than

ourselves, reason wins the battle with our desires.

Though possible, these two interpretations suffer of a common hermeneutical

limitation, which makes them implausible; namely they assume that the state of conflict

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understanding in *De Opificio Mundi* 117 (see *Puppet Theater in Antiquity* 9). This reference might bring Philo's puppet closer to Plato's, though Byrom thinks that this passage from *On Abraham* most appropriately refers to the jiggling puppet, that is a puppet pulled by only one string, rather than to a marionette (*Puppet Theater in Antiquity* 15), precisely for its exclusive emphasis on the pull of reason.

[68] See for instance 2.653a-c.

[69] England in translating 1.645b1 maintains that the puppet is a metaphor for virtue "I[i] this help is given, and the golden element prevails, virtue's persuasive representation, which likened us to puppets, will not fail of its effect" (*The Laws of Plato* vol. I 258).

exemplified by the different strings of the marionette-soul is a defining feature of human beings. While each position then moves on to make additional claims, adding respectively a negative or positive turn, the fact remains that on these views there is hardly any possibility that the soul of the *Laws* could ever find harmony; human beings are only territory for victory of defeat. However, when we look at the trajectory of the argument in *Laws* I, we notice that there is a concerned effort on the part of the Athenian to dismiss claims of victory and defeat at the political level and to promote the cause of *philia*, friendship.[70] Furthermore the Athenian opens the second book of the *Laws* with a reference to virtue has "harmony" (*symphonia*) (653b) of the soul. We could not possibly dismiss this emphasis on reconciliation in our considerations about the moral psychology of the *Laws*.

Ficino approaches the anthropology of the *Laws* from the perspective of harmony,[71] and his reading of the soul in the *Laws* introduces us to the third approach to the anthropology of the *Laws*, one that looks at the different pulls in the human soul in their coordination. Ficino interprets the marionette image precisely for its complexity of strings in a very positive fashion "since he [Plato] said that one living being was composed from such diverse elements, he pertinently adds that of all living beings man is a divine miracle,[72] and he follows Hermes [Trismegistus][73] in saying that man is a mighty miracle."

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[70] See for instance *Leg*. 1.627e-28b, where the discussion about *philia* could be applied to the soul as well as to the family and the city.

[71] It should be remembered that Ficino works within the intellectual framework of a new humanism ushered in by the Medici court; in this context rediscovered pagan elements and church doctrine merge to celebrate human beings as the link uniting the material and the divine world, the physical and the intellectual sphere. Perhaps the most exemplar author in this sense is Pico della Mirandola, see especially his *On the Dignity of Man* and *Heptaplus*.

[72] This is Ficino's rendition of the word *thauma*.

Specifically Ficino explains (1) that a human being "is a miracle because, although he is divine, the wonder is that he is infected with mortality; and on the other hand, although he is mortal, the wonder is that he has affinity with the divine" (*When Philosophers Rule* 80). Ficino also adds (2) that the human beings is called a *divine* miracle "[b]ecause he is so ordained by divine providence" (*ivi* 81) that is ordained as a mortal-immortal paradox, as evidence Ficino follows the explanation of the creation of human beings in *Timaeus*. Finally Ficino clarifies that (3) the human being is declared the plaything of god because of its "perpetual movement from things heavenly to things earthy and from things earthy back to things heavenly, as if in play" (*ibid.*). In this sense what others might read as the conflicted nature of human beings, in their analogy to a marionette (*thauma*), Ficino reads as the miraculous element (*thauma*) in humanity; we are not such beings that are contended between two disparaging natures, rather we are such beings who can bridge such disparaging realms.

Laks gives a fair account of Ficino's interpretation of the marionette image from *Laws* 1, claiming that while Ficino's view is excessively conditioned by his cultural milieu, he is still stressing an essential element in Platonic anthropology. Laks claims that Ficino's interpretation of the soul as a miracle, rather than a marionette, is a hermeneutical misstep

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[73] André Laks comments on Ficino's interpretation of Plato's marionette noting the dependency of the reliance of the interpreter on Hermes Trismegistus (*Marionnette our Miracle* 259). Laks claims we can know what passage by Hermes Ficino has in mind, namely "*Corpus Hermeticum* sur le fond duquel Ficin lit le passage des *Lois*. Il s'agit de l'anthropogonie de la section 16 du *Poimandrès*, que Ficin avait traduit, et qui décrit la création des sept premiers hommes bisexués à partir du mélange de la Nature et de l'Homme essentiel ou Homme de lumière, que l'Intellect a formé à son image" (*Marionnette our Miracle* 260), and again "L'idée que Platon est disciple d'Hermès est un lieu commun du syncrétisme néoplatonicien ancien, attesté notammament chez Jamblique, qui soutenait par exemple que c'est d'Hermès que Platon tenait sa conception de la matière[73]. Nous savons bien évidemment (mais Brucker, que j'ai cité en exergue, devait encore batailler pour le faire admettre) qu'il s'agit là d'une construction, dans le cadre d'une représentation qui, pour des raisons différentes chez Jamblique et Ficin, mais convergentes , prétendaient faire dépendre Platon d'une sagesse originaire, et antérieure à celle des Grecs" (*ibid*).

insofar as it explains the metaphor of the marionette in light of a pre-conceived notion of human nature. "Cette dé-métaphorisation, qui ne doit pas être confondue avec la réactivation « étymologique » que Platon fait de l'image de la marionnette, s'appuie sur l'insertion du passage des *Lois* dans un réseau textuel précis, celui d'une cosmo-théologie néoplatonicienne qui ne laisse plus qu'une place tout au plus implicite à la problématique des tractions opposées" (*Marionnette ou Miracle* 258). In other words, the problem with Ficino's interpretation of the marionette is that it barters the harmony of the human soul for the letter of Plato's text and it evades explaining how human nature could be harmonious while dealing with opposing forces within it. However, Ficino's interpretation should not be dismissed completely, as his stress of the nature of human beings as the joint of disparaging natures could be valuable.

Laks' own interpretation of the marionette image seems to treasure this lesson from Ficino. In several of his writings Laks suggest to understand the relationship between *Republic* and *Laws* as that between the paradigm and its implementation.[74] His reading of the anthropology in the *Laws* should be understood in this scheme as well;[75] with reference to passages in books 4 and 5 of the *Laws* Laks points out that not the rational, but the non-rational psychological elements are those that characterize most essentially the anthropology of the *Laws*. "Le plaisir et le douleur sont, d'une certaine manière, ce que l'homme a de plus *proper*, ou en tout cas, ce qu'il ne peut pas ne pas considérer comme lui appurtenant en proper" (*Médiation et Coercition* 46). At the same time he is not dismissive

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[74] See for instance *Legislation and Demiurgy*, *Médiation et Coertion* and *The Laws*.

[75] See *The Laws* 275-76; *Médiation et Coercition* 45.

of the presence of a divine element in human beings, thus "l'homme n'est qui l'est que

parce qu'il y a du dieu en lui ... [human beings are] la forme divine de l'animal" (*Médiation*

et coercition 46).[76] The surprising element in the *Laws'* anthropology, what makes a human

being a "prodigy," to use Laks' translation for *thauma* is "its capacity for harmony in spite of

its being controlled by disparate elements" (*The Laws* 277). In this sense we see how Laks

re-elaborates the lesson of Ficino in reading the *thauma* of the *Laws*; he maintains the

emphasis on the synthetic nature of human beings, while freeing himself of the Neo-

Platonic and Humanistic interpretative apparatus.

But Laks goes one step further in his evaluation of the co-operation of the rational

and non-rational elements in us.[77] He finds that the essential human trait expressed in the

metaphor of the marionette is its being "*soumis à la traction conjointe* de la corde d'or de la

raison ... et des cordes enflexibles des pulsion irrationnelles" (*Médiation et Coercition* 46,

my italics). This notation is extremely important because it highlights that the condition for

any harmony (as in Ficino's interpretation) or any conflict – regardless of its resolution –

(as in Dodd's or Annas' interpretations) is a certain human passivity, or rather

receptiveness to the affections (*pathe*) of pleasure, pain, confidence, fear *and* reason. Read

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[76] The same concept is expressed in *The Laws* 276.

[77] Laks is certainly not the only scholar to recognize the coexistence of rational and irrational elements in the anthropology of the *Laws*. For instance Bury points out that "we must not press the comparison of men to marionettes, or draw the conclusion that God countenances evil passions or tempts to sin. The Divine hand is to be found only in the pull of the golden cord of Reason, though the other cords, the passions and desires, as being attached (like Reason) to that source of all motion, the Soul, belong to the same machine" (*Theory of Education in Plato's* Laws 319). See also Sassi claiming that "[t]here is no reason, then, not to consider the controversial image of the man-puppet as representing precisely this complexity—that is, as insisting on an internal tension, constitutive of human nature, between the superior impulse of reason and the confused multiplicity of emotional drives" (*Self, Soul and Individual in* Laws 130). What is innovating about Laks interpretation is that – as we shall see briefly – he considers the conditions for the possibility of conflict and harmony as an essential anthropological trait.

this way, even if the marionette lacks harmony, it remains a prodigy, since the condition

of its disarticulation (the pull of psychic forces in different directions) is at the same time

the condition of its harmony.[78] What is *thaumaston* in the marionette it its receptivity to

these varied pulls.

The last line of interpretation raises the possibility of self-determination in the

anthropology of the *Laws* as exemplified in the image of the marionette. Jouët-Pastré seems

to endorse this interpretation. In her reading of the marionette she stresses the connection

between *thauma* and *paignion*, and explains the marionette in light of the "toy of the god"

(*Leg.*7.803c) remarks made by the Athenian.[79] According to Jouët-Pastré the essential

character of human beings and their connection with the divine is revealed in the

ambiguous status of the marionette-plaything. She claims that *"l'homme a le devoir de se*

réaliser lui-même, c'est-à-dire de réaliser son être de jouet du dieu. En jouant, il deviant à

son tour joueur; il est à la fois jouet et joueur" (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 38). This few lines are

quite dense, but I think we can break them down into three claims: (i) the marionette is a

plaything of gods, but though the gods might make us, they don't pull our strings;[80] (ii)

human beings have an obligation to be virtuous, that is to realize their being in compliance

with their divine design, which can be summarized by the pull of reason;[81] (iii) this

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[78] See *Médiation et Coercition* 47.

[79] See *Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 53-54.

[80] *Ivi* 48, 50.

[81] As it is made explicit by the image of the marionette in *Laws* 1, "Rational argument (*logos*) tells that one must be always compliant with only one of the drags and never let go of it, and to pull against the other strings (*neurois*)" (645a).

obligation comes to realization when we play with our cords so as to bring them all in harmony with the golden pull; as the Athenian puts it "the best thing about being human, is to be a toy contrived by the god; and one must comply with this fact and all men and women must go through life in this way, playing the most beautiful games." What is most interesting in this reading is the possibility that the marionette may pull its own strings and thus may not just be a victim of its pulls, but may be able to control them. To explain a *mythos* with another *mythos*, on this reading human beings would qualify as many Pinocchios, exhibiting the paradoxical nature of a marionette that can move on its own.[82]

Now, are Laks' and Jouët-Pastré's readings at odds? I must answer this question in the negative and claim that it would seem to me as though they are complementary. From the point of view of the marionette's receptivity to its pulls (*pathe*) we are only highlighting that the fundamental human experience is one of receptivity, in which we are affected by our sensations, our expectations for the future and even – we must admit – our rational thinking, occurring in us unexpectedly and on their own accord. All these psychic events we experience as foreign at first. At the same time the image that Plato is painting is one in which human beings have a certain degree of obligation and thus must be able to *react* to this initial passive experience. We can make sense of expressions such as the marionette's "resisting" (*antelko*) or "complying" (*synepomai*) to the pull of strings only in this way; these are verbs that indicate a reaction to a situation, rather than an action. But if we are to remain consistent with the depiction of human beings as marionettes, these reactions can

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[82] It should be noted here that this self-determining marionette is different from an automaton. An automaton is programmed to perform a certain number of tasks (see for instance Descartes' description in the fifth part of his *Discourse on Method*), a self-determining marionette may move its own strings in no predetermined sequence.

take place only if we get a hold of our own cords and we play our own marionette spectacle, as it were.

Though this sort of "double bind" between passivity and reactivity seems paradoxical, it is confirmed by our excursus on the intention of the Athenian in undertaking the example of the marionette as model for the *Laws*' psychology. As we have seen, his intention is to determine what causes the marionette to move, or – outside of metaphor – to determine the motives for action which human beings are bound to. The gain here is to create moral exercises and legal codes that use these motives as lever to induce behavior. This work is precisely the mirror image of the anthropological significance of the marionette. According to this image, human beings are such beings who explore their psychological processes in order to exploit them and determine their own behavior.[83]

Chapter Conclusion.

In this chapter we gained a preliminary understanding of the psychology of the *Laws* and we found that its most significant aspect is the agent's possibility to determine her own actions. In the first section I drew a distinction between the human and the cosmic psychology in the *Laws* concluding that, while the soul of the cosmos is driven by intelligence, rationality alone is not a sufficient motive for action in human beings. As we set out to understand why human beings act, we find that often we must ascribe their motives to non-rational or semi-rational motives for action.

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[83] This reading can be sustained by the proverbial claim that elderly behave like children, see 1.646a. This notation has the meta-dialogical function of reflecting back on the characters of the dialogue. Since they are old, they too must be behaving like children; and like children (see *Leg.* 7.819b) they play with dolls, in order to learn something. The doll these three elderly men are playing with though represents the human psyche. And in observing how its strings work, they learn how to tug on their own souls.

In the second section we analyzed the metaphorical use of the marionette to speak about the human soul and concluded that this image is not meant in jest, but it is philosophically relevant for an account of the soul in the *Laws*. In the first place the image of the marionette points out that we should understand the soul in an "internal space." In other words, this is the description of psychic activities, of motives for actions. Secondly we concluded that of the many kinds of puppets available in Plato's time it is likely that he had in mind a marionette moved by a system of pulls hidden within it. Clarifying the term of comparison in this metaphor of the soul was important to understand what the Athenian thinks about the human soul. With this metaphor the Athenian seems to be reflecting on the soul's passivity, there is a certain ineluctability in the effect that these motives have on the psyche, but the confinement of the image to the marionette and the disregard of the figure of the puppeteer suggest that the marionette may have some degree of autonomy.

In the third section we gave a preliminary account of the philosophical importance of this image on two essential points. (1) The objective of the Athenian in discussing the human soul as a marionette is to individuate those motives for action that – like strings – move our soul. The Athenian visitor plans to use these motives of action to arouse compliance with virtuous and legal behavior. (2) The system of motives that the Athenian addresses should not be understood as one where human beings are at the mercy of their psychological life; rather the image of the marionette suggests that we may find way to determine our how psychic life and thus our actions. In other words, according to the image of the marionette, human beings are such beings who investigate their psychological processes in order to exploit them and determine their own behavior.

This chapter is the first of three intended to analyze the *Laws*' psychology. By the end of chapter 3 it should be clear how the human psyche is dependent upon non-rational and semi-rational motives of action and how we may exploit those non-rational forces to bring ourselves to virtue. Our next task is to move beyond the metaphorical account of the soul and analyze the details of the elements of the moral psychology of the *Laws*. We will proceed with an attentive analysis of pleasure and pain, expectations and *logismos*.

CHAPTER 2

THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF THE *LAWS.* DRIVES, EXPECTATIONS AND *LOGISMOS*

> And if sometimes one goes astray, it is possible to rectify
> oneself, each one must always try, throughout one's life, to
> the extent of one's abilities.
>
> Plato, *Laws.*

Chapter Summary.

The previous chapter ended on the possibility of interpreting the image of the

marionette as a metaphor describing the human psyche almost at the mercy of its strings

and simultaneously endowed with the ability to pull its own strings. In this chapter I will

analyze the psychology of the *Laws* out of its metaphorical context, in an attempt to make

explicit the insights discussed in chapter 2. Thus, this chapter will be for the most part

analytical, describing in detail the role that pleasure and pain, expectations and *logismos*

play in the *Laws'* moral psychology.

However, we shall find that this analysis yields also some speculative results. In the

first place I will propose to read pleasure and pain not as sensations that the soul has

access to, but as drives that motivate the soul to action. Secondly, I will make the case for an

understanding of expectations as semi-rational emotive states that are for the most part

independent of pleasure and pain and can be fabricated and introduced in the soul. Finally,

I will propose a reading of *logismos* as that psychological force that promotes virtue, but

must exploit non-rational motives for action in order to achieve its goals.

I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of self-reflection and self-determination in the psychology of the *Laws*. This discussion will give me the opportunity to address the differences between my reading of the image of the marionette and that of other authors, especially Christopher Bobonich.

This chapter lays the groundwork for the discussion in chapter 3 of the application of drives, expectations and *logismos* in the moral psychology of the *Laws*. There we shall look closely at the ways in which non-rational motivation may lead the soul to virtue.

The Primary Elements of the Laws' Moral Psychology

As we have seen from the previous chapter, the image of the marionette must be taken as a serious account of the moral psychology of the *Laws*. In this chapter I analyze the psychological elements discussed in the image and their contribution to the agent's motivation for action. To begin, let us review all the relevant passages that introduce, describe, comment and refer back to the image of the marionette.

Let us begin with the introduction to the image of the marionette.

> Ath.: We have agreed a while ago that the morally good (*agathos*) are those that are able to be in command of themselves, while the morally reprehensible (*kakos*) are those who are not [able to do so]. .... Let us take up this point again and state what it means more clearly.
> Kl.: speak.
> Ath.: So, should we posit that each one of us is one (*eis*)?
> Kl.: yes.
> Ath.: At the same time [doesn't each one] possess in himself two foolish (*aphron*) and opposite advisors, which we call pleasure and pain?
> Kl.: That's the case.
> Ath.: Besides these two [there are in us] opinions about the future (*doxas mellonton*), whose common name is expectation, while specifically is "fear" (*phobos*) for an expectation of pain, or confidence (*tharros*) [for an

expectation] of the opposite. Above[1] all of these there is the argument (*logismos*) about which of these is better and worse, which is called law, when it becomes the common creed of a city (*Leg*. 1.644b-d).

Since the meaning of the Athenian's words is not quite clear to Kleinias and Megillus, the visitor states, "Let us think about these matters in this fashion" (1.644d). This sentence introduces the image of the marionette proper, but it is important to note that the image is meant to explain[2] what was already stated in the introductory passage.

Let us hold each of us, as we are alive, as a divine marionette (*thauma theion*), regardless of whether we are put together as plaything (*paignion*) of the gods or for some serious reason; which one we do not know. But this we do know, that these events we suffer (*pathe*) in us are like strings (*neura*) or some kind of line that pulls (*spōsin*) us and that since these strings are opposed to one another they draw us towards opposite actions (*praxeis*), on the place where the distinction of virtue and vice is drawn. This account (*logos*)[3] tells that one must be always compliant with only one of the drags and never let go of it, and to pull against the other strings (*neurois*). This [one pull we must comply with] is the sacred and golden lead (*agoge*) of argumentation (*logismos*), which is called the common law (*koinon nomon*) of the city. While the other [strings] are stiff like iron (*skleras kai sideras*), that one is soft like gold

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[1] Pangle translates this passage "Over all these" (*Laws of Plato* 24); Bury says "in addition to all these" (*Laws* 67); Ferrari translates "al di sopra di tutti questi" (*Le Leggi* 143); however, Meyer translates *epi de pasi toutois* with "against all of these" (*Laws 1 & 2* 40 and 176). I disagree with this translation for two reasons (1) if *logismos'* task is to decide which among pleasure, pain and expectations is better and which is worse, there is no reason to render *epi* with "against," thus conveying an idea of opposition. A simpler "besides" or "above" should suffice to convey that *logismos* is separate from those other psychological elements and can judge them. (2) Meyer's translation seem to be motivated by her interpretation of the image of the marionette as exemplifying a tug-of-war between *logismos* on the one hand and all the other cords on the other (*Laws 1 & 2* 181). It should be also noted that in previous translations Meyer does not convey this sense of opposition in the introductory passage to the image of the puppet, see *Pleasure, Pain and Anticipation in* Laws 349, where she renders this passage as "on top of all these." As we shall see below, the translation of this preposition is not secondary to understand the role that *logismos* plays in the *Laws* moral psychology.

[2] See England, *The Laws of Plato* vol. I 255.

[3] Ferrari translates *logos* with "la ragione", Annas uses "reason" (*Platonic Ethics Old and New* 142); these translations imply that *logos* plays an independent role in the following account of the mechanics between *logismos* and the other strings; thus suggesting a doubling of the rational forces in the soul, *logos* and *logismos*, or an unclear overlapping of the two. I follow Pangle (*Laws of Plato* 25), Bury (*Laws* 67) and Meyer (*Laws 1 & 2* 40) in translating *logos* with "account." As Meyer explains "the discussion between the three interlocutors has consistently been referred to as a *logos*" (*ivi* 180).

(*malaken ate chrysen*), the other strings also conform to whatever shape. One must always support the beautiful lead (*kalliste agoge*) of the law (*nomos*); since argumentation (*logismos*) is beautiful, gentle (*praos*) and not violent one must serve its lead (*agoge*), so that in us the golden kind may win the other kinds (*Leg* 1.644d-45a).

Once the Athenian has clarified his original point with the image of the marionette, he moves on to explain how to interpret his metaphor.

> In this fashion the story of virtue (*mythos aretes*) that makes us similar to marionettes will be preserved, and thinking what it is to be stronger or weaker than oneself will become somewhat clearer, and for what concerns the city and the individual, when one has seized in himself the truthful account (*logos*) of these pulls, must follow it for life, while the city which grasps this account (*logos*) from some god or from someone who knows these things, will posit it as law (*nomos*), as it attends to internal affairs or [deals] with other cities (*Leg*. 1.645a-b).

Later on in the text the Athenian hints back at this image. Sometimes he does so explicitly, as in the case of book 7.803c, when we are told that the "best thing" about human beings is that they are "toys devised by god" and that in compliance with this feature men and women must play "the most beautiful games." At other times the reference is subtler, as in book 5 when the Athenian claims that human beings on average "hang from" (732e) pleasures, pains and desires.

Though the Athenian means to use the image of the marionette for clarifying his point about moral psychology, the metaphor of the marionette leaves us with many questions. There are, in the first place, psychological questions concerning the function of the psychological element the Athenian mentions and their interaction. Once these questions are clarified other sets of questions arise, dealing with these psychological forces as motivations that prompt or refrain from virtuous action. Answers to these questions paint a picture of the mechanics of the *Laws*' moral psychology.

Before we move on in search of these answers, let us clear the way of a broad

objection to studying the image of the marionette. In the words of Wilburn, this objection

states that in the image of the marionette Plato "is not attempting to illustrate a general

theory of human psychology. Rather, his express purpose is to shed some light on a specific

notion within moral psychology – namely, the notion of being 'stronger' or 'weaker' than

oneself" (*Moral Education in Plato's Laws* 67). While I must agree with Wilburn that the

image of the marionette does not represent a general account of human psychology,[4] I

think it should be acknowledge that – though in a reductive fashion – the Athenian offers all

necessary elements to guide a complete account of moral psychology. In other words, while

we may consider the image of the marionette as offering a partial account of the psyche,

there is no reason to restrict this image to "a specific notion within moral psychology."

With regards to the application of psychological element to explain the pursuit or the

failure of achieving virtue, the marionette is not deficient, it is only reductive; it sketches

the basic elements of the *Laws*' moral psychology, but does not trace their interplay. As I

will argue in detail below and in the following chapter, *arete,* being stronger and weaker

than oneself and other aspects of the *Laws'* moral psychology can be explained by the

interactions of the psychological elements listed in the image of the marionette.[5]

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[4] The general psychology of the *Laws* appears only in reference to other parts of the dialogue, for instance book 10, as we discussed in the previous chapter. And even with the addition of that book, we would only obtain an incomplete sketch of the psyche as compared for instance with the psychology of the *Timaeus.* Even if we consider the image of the marionette only an account of moral psychology, we must notice its incompleteness, as for instance no mention is made of the virtues, which nonetheless must have been on the Athenian's mind since they were mentioned at *Leg*.1.631c.

[5] Wilburn himself makes this very point in a different article published just a year earlier; see *Akrasia and Self-Rule in Plato's Laws* 27.

Pleasure and Pain.

Let us submit each element listed in the image of the marionette to analysis,

beginning by taking a closer look at pleasure and pain. The Athenian introduces them as

the first elements of the psyche, stating that, while each one of us is a psychological whole,

we all have in us "two foolish and opposite advisors" (*Leg.* 1.644c). Immediately we should

note that Plato uses the numeral "one" (*eis*) to define each individual in contrast with the

numeral "two" indicating the opposing forces of pleasure and pain within each individual.

The use of these numeral adjectives stresses the paradox in the image of the marionette:

we are one, but within us abide a number of forces, or pulls, as the Athenian calls them. It

should be borne in mind that neither term of the paradox expressed in the image of the

marionette is false; we are indeed one, while we are also a bundle of psychological forces at

work.[6]

In book 1 of the *Laws* pleasure and pain are defined as the raw material with which

legislation must be concerned. To describe their rawness, strength and primacy the

Athenian compares them to natural sources of water. Pleasure and pain are "two springs

that nature lets flow, those who draw water from them in the place, time and way

necessary are happy (*eudaimonei*), whether they are cities, individuals or any living being,

but he who does so without knowledge (*anepistemon*) and not at the right moment will

experience the opposite condition" (1.636d-e). Later on in book 2 the Athenian will stress

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[6] The paradoxical nature of human psychology remains in the background of my discussion in this chapter and the next. As we consider the human soul, an agent is a unity and has an identity, but as we look at each psychological elements at work in the soul the agent can be identified with each element in a qualified sense. This notation will become important as I address the issue of self-awareness at the end of the chapter.

again the primary psychological role of pleasure and pain as he states that "pleasure and pain are the first sensations (*aisthesis*) of children" (*Leg*. 2.653a). From these descriptions of pleasure and pain we can gather some initial indications for our analysis of the image of the marionette. In the first place we should note that pleasure and pain are ineluctable occurrences that have a stake in determining the achievement of biological, ethical, political and legislative[7] final goods. We can read this assumption in the Athenian's claim that the happiness of living beings, individuals and cities results from dealing with pleasure and pain. Secondly, the primacy and ineluctability of pleasure and pain in human psychological life leads to the conclusion that one must take a regulatory stance with regards to these forces. In others words, while there is no possibility of eliminating the influence of pleasure and pain on our psyche, we should devise ways to contain them.[8]

Now that we have an initial characterization of pleasure and pain, let us refer back to the image of the marionette. The one explicit reference to pleasure and pain in the passages cited above comes from the introduction to the image of the marionette, when the Athenian claims that "they are two foolish and opposite advisors" (*Leg*. 1.644c). All other references, including their characterization as strings in the soul, either group together pleasure and pain with expectations or describe the relationships between the different pulls of the psyche. In order to analyze this minimal description of pleasure and pain, I will focus on three points: (1) the meaning of defining pleasure and pain as opposite to one

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[7] For additional references to the relevance of pleasure and pain in matters concerning legislation see also *Leg*. 1.631e-32a, 636d-e and 9.975b.

[8] Possible remedies to regulate our innate inclination towards pleasure and away from pain are fear, law, true arguments and the arts. See *Leg*. 6.782d-83d.

another, (2) the significance of describing them as unintelligent counselors and (3) the benefit of thinking of pleasure and pain in current psychological terms. Let us begin with point (1).

The opposition of pleasure and pain can be read in three ways. (i) They are opposite with regards of the type of force they exercise on human psyche. Intuitively pleasure exerts attraction while pain induces repulsion, as what one finds pleasurable is an object that one wants to obtain and thus pleasure pulls us towards its object, while pain finds its object repulsive and thus pushes us away from its object.[9] (ii) If pleasure and pain have the same object, they will be in disagreement and create psychological conflict, as we would find ourselves at once attracted and repulsed by an object (e.g. while eating a deliciously spicy bowl of ramen, pleasure will pull towards the next spoonful, but pain will push us away from our meal towards a refreshing beverage); in this case it is likely that the stronger of the two forces will prevail over the other.[10] (iii) One can envision cases in which the objects of pleasure and pain are different but correlated and, though their respective forces will concentrate on opposing tasks (i.e. pulling towards and pushing away from), the final result will be psychological agreement (e.g. it is cold outdoors and the living room is warm and cozy, thus pain will push us away from the cold and pleasures will pull us towards the

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[9] See for instance *Leg.* 11.919b-c, where poverty is described as pushing someone towards injustice in the course of escaping pain. For the attractiveness of pleasures consider that the Athenian is willing to make a legislative exceptions for sexual conduct that does not conform to reproductive needs, as he acknowledges that the attraction of these pleasures cannot be escaped (*Leg.*8.841b). More on this point below.

[10] This is the case of shame (*Leg.* 1.645d-ff), which will be discussed in detail below.

source of heat).[11] Emphasizing one aspect of the opposition between pleasure and pain does not mean that we should discount the other two. However, I should note that in the course of book 1 the Athenian focuses mostly on the first and second kind of opposition, which sees pleasure and pain as two opposing psychic forces in conflict with regards to the same object.

Let us move on to point (2) and analyze what it means to describe pleasure and pain as "foolish advisors" (*aphrone symboulo*). It seems uncontroversial to claim that pain and pleasure are called "counselors" (*symboulo*) because it is often on the basis of their pull that we deliberate (*boulesthai*). However when interpreting their counseling role we are left to consider whether they require some degree of intelligence in order to contribute to the decision making process. Sassi seems to concede as much when she claims that "the sensations of pleasure and pain thus act *internally* to the soul, and although they admittedly act without *phronesis*, they none the less (*sic*) always *advise*. They must, then, have some, albeit minimal, cognitive content, which, accompanied by a series of emotional correlates, motivates the soul to pursue objectives that are presented as pleasant and avoid those that are presented as unpleasant" (*Soul, Self and Individual in* Laws 131).[12] Though Sassi characterizes correctly pleasure and pain as instances of psychological motivation for action in their role as counselors, it seems to me that there are problems with her interpretation. Specifically, I see three issues. (i) Sassi's argument seems to be a hasty generalization, as she seems to claim that since pleasure and pain advise, they must also

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[11] The Athenian thinks that some criminal motives can be the result of the collaboration of pain (resulting in violence) and pleasure (resulting in deceitfulness); see *Leg* 9.864c.

[12] Laks makes a similar claim in *Médiation et Coercition* (90).

have cognitive abilities. However not all "advisors" are endowed with cognitive abilities. What if I take my cues for action from the patterns of tea leaves at the bottom of my cup? In such cases I might be adding cognitive content to what I perceive as counseling forces, but I would not say that these counseling forces themselves are endowed with cognitive abilities. Does the fact that pleasure and pain act "internally" automatically endow them with cognitive abilities? Can a third psychological element elaborate on pleasure and pain once they have pulled the soul in some direction? (ii) We must consider the possibility that the Athenian employs the title "advisors" figuratively. In the first place, pleasure and pain are described elsewhere[13] as springs, needs and desires. Under these guises they would "counsel" insofar as they contribute in a non-rational fashion to the formation of motives for action, but it would seem improper to state that they offer advice. Secondly, if we take the description of pleasure and pain as advisors literally, there is no reason why we should not assume the literal meaning of pleasure and pain in the rest of the image of the marionette; however, it seems absurd to claim that the Athenian maintains *de facto* that we have metal stings pulling us in opposing directions. Finally, the Athenian makes clear that the image of the marionette as well as its introductory passages must be interpreted and must not be taken literally when he claims at the very outset that he is offering only an *ikon*, an image of the psyche.[14] Thus we find ourselves in the position of having to interpret the term "advisors." (iii) Though the "foolish advisors" are taken into account in the psychological process forming human motives for action, the process of deliberating

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[13] See again *Leg.* 1.636d and 6.782d-83b.

[14] See *Leg*. 1.644c.

properly speaking belongs elsewhere; in other words, pleasure and pain are the

elements we consider in our deliberation, but they do not carry out the deliberation. To

prove my point, consider that there are other passages when cognitive elements seem to be

added to pleasure (e.g. 9.863b) but that does not mean that pleasure is capable of thinking

on its own right, it means simply that pleasure stimulates the soul to a more reflective

approach, than – say – pain.[15] This is the reason why homicides motivated by anger[16] are

considered involuntary, while those fueled by pleasure are considered voluntary.[17] It

would be absurd to conclude from this distinction that pleasure has some degree of volition

or cognitive ability while pain does not. Both pleasure and anger (or for that matter

pleasure and pain) are non-rational motivational forces, and at times they can prevail in the

process of deliberation of our motivation for acting, but they still won't qualify as endowed

with cognitive abilities.[18]

Though pleasure and pain may not have cognitive abilities, some might argue that

they at least satisfy the minimal cognitive requirement of taking in consideration time. For

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[15] As Roberts puts it "there is surely more than one way for the soul's lower parts to go wrong and play the tyrant. They could go wrong in the way just suggested, by fighting with reason, and if they are strong enough this will lead to wrong action. They might also go wrong, as Plato' s earlier description of moral development envisioned, by perverting reason. (This may in fact be what he has in mind here at 863b8-9 when he describes pleasure as persuasive and deceitful)" (*Causes of Wrongdoing* 28). The fact that pleasure may pervert reason does not make pleasure rational.

[16] Which is driven by pain see 9.864b.

[17] *Ivi* 869e.

[18] Stalley argues that in this passage from book 9 the meaningful distinction is between crimes committed as a result of being overcome by anger or pleasure one the one hand and crimes committed as a result of ignorance. Only the latter concern someone's cognitive capacities (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 46-47). Roberts makes a similar point (*Causes of Wrongdoing* 26-29). These readings support the argument that pleasure and pain are motivations that are not endowed with cognitive abilities.

instance, pleasure may be the non-rational motivation for the immediate pursuit of gratification, but also for the remembrance of past pleasures or the pleasure expected from a possible outcome. As Meyer puts it, "the category [of pleasure and pain and their emotional correlatives such as love, hate, fear, passion, etc.] includes both positive and negative feelings about things that have happened … as well as impulses that direct us towards or away from as yet unrealized possibilities" (173). While I agree that in the passages quoted above pleasure and pain are not to be considered sensations (i.e. pleasurable or painful sense perceptions), I favor a much narrower reading of pleasure and pain, arguing that they should not be considered as accounting for time. In the first place, we should acknowledge that the Athenian foresees the effects of pleasure and pain on time, but those effects consist of a specific set of psychological elements that are distinguished from pleasure and pain, namely the expectations. And it would seem implausible that the Athenian goes though the trouble of distinguishing pleasure and pain from expectations only to conflate one into the other again. Secondly, in book 1 of the *Laws* we find references to pleasure and pain confined to the experience of pleasure or pain, not to past or expected occurrences.[19]

So far I have defined pleasure and pain "negatively," so to speak, with regards to their opposition, lack of cognitive abilities, and absence of projection in time. Additionally, I

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[19] Consider the case of the list of tasks that the Spartan legislator prescribes for the acquisition of courage. Though the Athenian refers to those as pain as well as fear, where the latter indicates an awareness of past painful experienced or possible future occurrences of pain (see *Leg*.1.633b-35b), it must be acknowledged that Megillus lists only occurrences in which one experiences actual pain, not the suffering that comes from the possibility of pain (fear). Specifically, Megillus mentions "hunting … [and] many endurances of pain [such as] boxing … robberies [and] the secret service (*krypteia*) (1.633b).

have mentioned that they are not to be considered mere sensations. Some might see

problems with this negative definition, as I run the risk of denying pleasure and pain all

psychological roles. In order to dissipate this type of worry, let us discuss point (3) above.

This discussion will describe pleasure and pain "positively." My suggestion is to think of

pleasure and pain as drives, which may have an influence on our psyche and may motivate

us to act, but that are at the same time distinct from our cognitive abilities, even the most

basic, and cannot be reduced to the sensation of pleasurable or painful objects of

perception. As we consider pleasure and pain as drives, we should think of them as forces

that demand to be discharged. Let us examine a few arguments that support this

interpretation.

In the first place, it should be noted that while commentators do not explicitly refer

to pleasure and pain as drives, this interpretation is not unorthodox.[20] Secondly, let us

consider some textual passages, which may justify interpreting pleasure and pain as drives.

I have mentioned above *Laws* 6.782d-83b, where the Athenian claims that "everything for

human beings is tied to three needs and desires [eating, drinking and sex], from which

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[20] Benardete seems to agree with this characterization when he writes "Pleasure ad pain ... are not simple experiences but experiences with arrows; they tell us what to pursue and what to avoid and are closer to desires than anything limited to the present" (*Plato's* Laws 45). The last sentence should not indicate the extension of pleasure and pain to future plans, but rather the impossibility to extinguish pleasure and pain in virtue of their being desires. Annas also seem to read the role of pleasure and pain similarly when she writes that the "desire to get pleasure and to avoid pain – is simply given; we cannot choose to be without it" (*Platonic Ethics, Old and New* 144). The same holds for Lodge who quotes *Laws* to claim "For Plato these [hunger, thirst and sex] are the most universal functions of the living organism, and are uniformly regarded as reactions of an instinctive nature. ... As forces which impel to action, they are without equal in terms of intensity." (*Plato's Theory of Ethics* 177). Lodge goes on to explain that for Plato these instincts are psychological, they are not merely bodily reactions (*ivi* 179-180). Finally Lodge makes clear "the recognition in the *Laws* of the absolute universality of our pleasure-sense and of its legitimate claims upon us all" (*ivi* 344). For a brief list of similarities between pleasure and pain as Plato understands them in the *Laws* and twentieth century psychology see Nummenmaa *Divine Motions and Human Emotions* 108-109. For the semantics of pleasure extending to the notion of desire in Greek though see Tenkku *Evaluation of Pleasure in Plato's Ethics* 19.

virtue (*arête*) turns out if they are led correctly, and its opposite if they are burdened

badly." This passage seems to be a conceptual parallel of another passage from book 1 -

636d-e quoted above – which equates pleasure and pain with two natural springs. In both

cases we can notice that conceptually speaking these "necessities and desires" and

"springs" share some kind of ineluctability, and that the only two possible responses to

them are to channel them or be driven by them. [21] But there are even stronger indications

that pleasure and pain are, like necessities and desires, psychological drives.

It is easier to characterize pleasure as a desire rather than pain, for the mere fact

that the *Laws* offer many more passages discussing the use of pleasure than of pain. But in

some instances we find claims that describe pain as a non-rational drive. Let us consider

for instance book 11, when the Athenian famously claims that no citizen of Magnesia

should be engaged in commercial activities. One of the major reasons for avoiding these

activities is that they may lead to poverty and in poverty one may experience pain, which in

turn may motivate one to act impudently.[22] Thus we notice that in this case measures are

taken to avoid the arousal of pain, which is neither qualified as a sensation nor as a fear, but

as a drive to avoid – at times audaciously – the discomfort that comes with poverty.

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[21] In the image of the marionette we find that the good course of pleasure and pain is marked, broadly speaking, by their agreement with reason, when the entire soul is moved by the lead of *logismos.* Though we will discuss this point further in the remainder of this chapter, it is worth noticing that this conception remains consistent throughout the text, see for instance 3.689a-b. In a similar fashion at 6.783a, when the Athenian claims that necessities and desires should be cultivated towards what is best not what is most pleasurable.

[22] See *Leg.*11.919b-c.

With regards to pleasure we should notice that in book 1 it is identified as the single cause of a number of behaviors characterized by lack of *phronesis*.[23] A drive is a good way of characterizing this common cause, which then develops in behaviors that are disparaging and varied. Additionally, this textual reference sheds lights on the description of pleasure and pain as foolish advisers, *aphrone*. Because they are drives, they require no practical wisdom, but at the same time they might exert motivational force on the psyche, thus they must be taken into account in the process of deliberation.[24]

The greatest assimilation of pleasure to a drive, however, comes in the discussion of sexual behavior. While the Athenian characterizes all sexual drives as instances of pleasure, some he finds permissible insofar as they are "according to nature," i.e. they are conducive for procreation, while he claims that other sexual pleasures must be resisted because they are not means of procreation, thus they go against nature.[25] In either case pleasure is a sexual drive, which one does not choose, but one either complies with or resists.[26]

At 8.840d-e the Athenian lays down the law regarding sexual pleasures. As I just stated, one can find gratification only in those pleasures leading to procreation. Following immediately, the Athenian establishes a second law for all those cases in which sexual

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[23] See *ivi* 1.649d.

[24] For instance pleasure is often identified with gratification, which is a relevant psychological motivation. This identification moves the notion of pleasure away from pleasing sensations and towards the satisfaction that may come from extinguishing an urge, something much more similar to a drive; see 2.659d, 663b, 5.739d, 10.897a.

[25] See *Leg*.1.636c.

[26] In book 7.836d-37a sexual pleasures are called desires (*epithymiai*), which allows the reader to identify pleasures with drives even at the lexical level.

drives cannot be confined to procreation. In order to avoid these "unnatural" drives, the Athenian recommends redirecting the "strength of pleasures" to other parts of the body that can take on its "outpour and nourishment" (8.841a). Ultimately, however, the Athenian recognizes that sometimes these sexual drives are incontrollable and allows for sexual behavior noncompliant with procreation, provided it is experienced in secrecy (*ivi* 841b). These notes on the legislation regulating sexual behavior are interesting for our discussion because they qualify sexual pleasures as drives. Sexual pleasures seem to be so strong that they are invincible and the only solution is to redirect the psychological energy of our sexual drive and discharge it in physical exercise. When even this channeling and discharging is not enough to quiet the drive to pleasure, the Athenian allows for an exception to the law (the only one permitted in the *Laws* to my knowledge) precisely because he recognizes that sexual pleasures are quanta of energy, which demand to be expressed, regardless of regulations. This is perhaps the most explicit acknowledgement that, at the bottom of the Athenian considerations on pleasure and pain, there is a notion of psychological drives.

Our analysis of the first psychological elements in the image of the marionette has led us to the conclusion that pleasure and pain can be opposite in more than one way, though we might find that the case of psychological conflict in which the object of pleasure and pain coincide is the most interesting to explain the mechanics of the marionette. Second, we found that pleasure and pain are not reducible to the sensation of pleasure and pain; that they have no cognitive content, and that their influence on the soul does not extend to considerations concerning time. Finally we discussed textual evidence indicating

that pleasure and pain should be considered psychological drives. Conceiving of them in

this fashion has some hermeneutical advantages, as it accounts for their characterization as

"foolish advisors." As pleasure and pain carry a large quantum of psychological force, they

require to be taken in consideration when deliberating about our motivations for action. In

doing so, we are not required to grant them any minimum of cognitive ability. Additionally,

the persistence of drives make all consideration about time irrelevant, since drives demand

satisfaction at all times. As we shall see temporal considerations belong to other

psychological forces.

Logismos.

As I stated above the "foolish advisors" are psychological motives for action, but the

process of deliberation properly speaking belongs elsewhere; deliberation is the task of

logismos. Though the text of the *Laws* cited above lists expectations immediately after

pleasure and pain, it is necessary for my interpretation of this work's moral psychology to

defer the discussion about expectations. As I will clarify later in greater detail, I argue that

in the process of deliberation *logismos* may exploit expectations in the pursuit of its own

end; for this reason I must discuss the details of *logismos* before I discuss expectations.

Let us begin with a few preliminary notes about *logismos*. In the first place we

should consider an issue with the standard English translation for this term, calculation. As

Meyer maintains, "calculation" "may be a misleading rendering insofar as it may seem to

imply that only quantitative considerations are involved … [*logismos'*] natural referent in

English is the process of arriving at a verdict, rather than the verdict itself…[in other

words] the Athenian here is talking about an activity of the psyche" (*Laws 1& 2* 177).[27] I

will translate *logismos* with "argumentation" in an attempt to render the idea of a rational

process together with a reference to its dialogical dimension, as suggested by the reference

to *logos*, discourse, embedded in *logismos*.[28] Secondly, in the context of the image of the

marionette, we should understand argumentation as an instance of practical deliberation.

As Bobonich suggests, *logismos* consists of a somewhat practical use of reason, which "is

concerned with judgments about what is good and bad for the person in the long run"

(*Utopia Recast* 263) and which has its own independent goals to pursue, regardless of the

other psychic forces.[29] Finally, we should not assume that *logismos*' only function is this

case of practical deliberation. As Meyer reminds us, in the context of the image of the

marionette "we need not suppose that this is intended as an exhaustive characterization of

logismos" (*Laws 1 & 2* 177). As I clarified in the previous and at the beginning of this

chapter, the image of the marionette is a reductive account of the necessary elements of a

moral psychology. With it the Athenian does not address all uses of reason, many of which

will be discussed in book 10. In the image of the marionette rationality, in the guise of

logismos, is only a matter of practical deliberation on the preferred motives of action.

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[27] Along this lines we could read Laks' translation of *logismos* with *raisonnement* (*Médiation et Coercition* 13.

[28] An example of how *logismos* is much closer to argumentation than calculation comes at *Leg.*7.813d, when the Athenian describes the duties of the magistrate of education who "adheres to the argument (*logismos*) that if the youth has been and is raised well, everything runs correctly for us."

[29] *Ivi* 264. Bobonich's qualification of *logismos* as establishing what is good for the person "in the long run," is a little confusing to me. As it will be clarified in this discussion about *logismos* I think that this element of our psyche is concerned with *arete*, excellence, rather than with long term goals. It is true however that in the *Laws* virtue is connected with happiness and perhaps material goods, as it will be discussed below.

From the text of the image of the marionette, it seems that we can gather the following information about *logismos*: (1) argumentation stands above pleasure and pain, and expectations, (2) *logismos* argues which of those is better and which is worse,[30] (3) once this line of argumentation has become common opinion of the city it is called law,[31] (4) nonetheless at the level of the individual psyche, argumentation is still experienced as an event that happens to the subject, a *pathos*.[32]

Point (3) is a remarkably interesting facet of *logismos*, as it ties together the psychology and the legislation of the *Laws*, but it is well beyond the strictly psychological considerations of this chapter and I will make few remarks about it below. Point (4) is apparently contradictory, but usually undisputed in the secondary literature and I will leave it as the last point of discussion in this section. Point (1) is the most contentious and I will spend on it the largest portion of this section; additionally it serves as the premise to discuss point (2). Let us begin by tackling point (1) and let us ask specifically what is the relation between argumentation and pleasure, pain and expectations.

One initial clue to sort out this issue is to consider the portion of the text that speaks of the quality of the psychological strings. The Athenian states that "while the other [strings] are stiff like iron, [argumentation] is soft like gold, the other strings also conform to whatever shape" (*Leg.* 1.645a). It seems that Plato's concern in this metaphor is to

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[30] *Leg*. 1.644d.

[31] *Ivi* 1.644d and 645c.

[32] *Ivi* 1.644e. In this regard see Folch's characterization of the relation of forces in the soul as "horizontal" (*The City and the Stage* 77-79). This characterization of *logismos* is surprising and seems to stand in contradiction with its characterization as an activity of deliberation. I will try to resolve this issue below.

describe not only a qualitative difference but also one of rigidity among the psychic forces. The difference in quality among the strings signifies that the iron strings (pleasure, pain and the expectations) are very common in the soul, there are many of them and each has a different shape. On the other hand, the pull of argumentation is unique in the soul and its malleability does not force it into a given shape. Some commentators tend to focus on the quality of the metals more so than on their malleability,[33] but in my view this is the truly important remark. It signifies that the iron pulls are determined once and for all, that each qualifies as a motive to pursue specific goals; instead the lead of *logismos* can change and adapt, thereby leading the soul in the pursuit of different actions, because virtuous *praxis* changes according to the circumstances. Additionally, as I will discuss below, this adaptability allows *logismos* to join forces with some of the iron strings in the pursuit of virtue. In order to explore this last point, let us reflect on the relation between the golden pull and the iron strings.

The metallic metaphor can be an introduction to an account of the relation between *logismos* and the other psychological forces. Two lines of interpretation explain this relation, one promoted – among others – by England and the other suggested by Bury. England claims that the reference to the metallic quality of the pulls in *Laws* 1 should be understood in reference to *Iliad* 8.18-ff, [34] when Zeus calls all gods and goddesses to an

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[33] Commentators refer to Hesiod's *Works and Days* and *Republic* III to explain this metaphor; see for instance Ferrari (*Le Leggi* 144-45 n. 45). But as Meyer suggests this reference is not warranted, as it seems that the materials of the cords is more concerned with their flexibility than with their symbolic value (see *Laws 1 & 2* 182).

[34] See *The Laws of Plato* vol. I 256. As England remarks we can safely claim that Plato had committed this passage to memory, as he quotes it directly in *Theaet.* 153c. It is likely then that he could have been thinking of this same Homeric passage when he was drafting the first book of the *Laws*.

assembly and commands them to interfere no longer in the war between the Danaans

and the Trojans. As warning to those who may be meditating of disobeying his orders, he

claims that if he faced all the other gods and goddesses in a tug of war with a golden rope

(*seira chruse*), they would not be able to move him, but with the smallest effort he would

pull them up to heaven together with the earth and the sea. I will refer to this reading of the

relationship between the psychological pulls as the "tug-of-war" interpretation. According

to this interpretation, the pull of *logismos* is engaged in a direct contest with all other non-

rational psychological forces; if argumentation wins, then the motive for action will be

rational and will lead to moral excellence. One problem with interpreting the metaphor in

this fashion is that this reading does not seem to address the rigidity of the metals in the

image of the marionette. How can we explain that the more malleable golden pull

overcomes by itself the traction of all other stiffer strings?

Bury[35] offers a second interpretation of this passage. His strategy is to relate this

pull among psychological forces to Heraclitus' fragments. On this reading what is really at

stake is not so much the prevalence of one cord over the others, but their relation. In

Heraclitus fragment 49[36] we read that the principle of everything including human beings

is war, and then in 69 we find that opposites that are meant to be at war are in fact one and

the same. Bury suggests that the reconciliation of the opposites is a case of *harmonia* in

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[35] See *Theory of Education in Plato's* Laws 319 n.1. Bury acknowledges that there might be a direct reference to the passage from *Iliad* 8, but suggests that the image of the marionette could relate also to Heraclitus fragments 91 and 92, especially on the theme of elevating *logismos* to the level of *nomos*. Another reference to Heraclitus may be hidden in the theme of the human being as plaything, especially with regards to fragment 97 and the famous fragment 79.

[36] Bury refers to the fragments in the Bywater edition.

Heraclitus. Now, though Bury does claim that there might be Heraclitean references in the image of the marionette, he does not go as far as to claim explicitly that we should interpret the psychological conflict between the golden and the iron pulls in Heraclitean terms. Nonetheless, it seems that Bury's interpretation underscores that the importance of the relation among the different pulls in the soul resides in their tension – which may lead to harmony – not in the final victory of the golden string over the others. I will refer to this reading of the image of the marionette as the "relation" interpretation. If one works on this interpretation, one ought to seek the motivational force of *logismos* in its relation to the other strings, not in the possibility of prevailing over them. The problem opened by this interpretation is to decipher precisely how the pull of argumentation, with its malleability, can be a source of motivation as it deals with those stiffer and differently shaped strings. As I suggested above, a figurative explanation could point to the malleability of *logismos* as that quality allowing it to join forces with one or some of the iron cords and against the pull of all the remaining others. Let us look at each line of interpretation more closely.

The tug-of-war interpretation hinges on a passage from the image of the marionette, when the Athenian claims that his "account tells that one must be always compliant with only one (*mia*) of the drags and never let go of it, and to pull against the other strings. This (*tauten*) [one pull we must comply with] is the sacred and golden lead (*agoge*) of argumentation (*logismos*)" (*Leg.*1.644e). There's textual evidence to sustain this interpretation, as "*tauten*" most naturally seems to refer to "the one" (*mia* at 644e4) pull which the account tells us to follow against all other strings. However, there are also some broader problems with this interpretation, for instance on this reading *logismos* is

interpreted as a string (*neuron*) among the others, even though the text refers

consistently to it with the more general term *agoge*, lead.[37] Additionally, as I suggested

above, on this reading the text of the marionette would seem somewhat inconsistent, since

it would first set *logismos* against all other strings maintaining that the golden pull has a

chance to win the tug of war, but then would claim that *logismos* is more malleable and in

need of help to prevail over the other kind of strings.

The relation interpretation relies more heavily on the introductory passage of the

image of the marionette, when the Athenian claims that "above all of them [pain, pleasure

and expectations] is the reasoning [*logismos*] establishing which of those is better and

which is worse" (*leg.*1.644d).[38] On this view the image of the marionette is meant to explain

this introductory passage and should be understood in its light. If the introductory passage

claims that reason establishes which is the best among the iron pulls, then "the one" cord

that the account tells us to follow at 644e is just the one string among pain, pleasure and

expectations, which *logismos* has established as the best. In other words, on this

interpretation *logismos* evaluates the other pulls independently, but then decides to

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[37] Several authors endorse this interpretation of the passage, among those Meyer (*Laws 1 & 2* 180-181), and Laks (*Médiation et Coercion* 86). Bobonich (*Utopia Recast* 263) as we shall see below offers a hybrid interpretation, and finally resolves to enlist self-awareness as the psychic force that can add torque to the pull of the golden string (*ivi* 277).

[38] England seems to endorse this interpretation, especially with regards to 1.644d2, when he clarifies that argumentation is "about the advisability of encouraging hopes and fears" (*Laws of Plato* vol. I 255). Meyer (*Laws 1 & 2* 181) criticizes England's understanding of the role of *logismos* in the image of the marionette, as he will eventually equate it to education (see *Laws of Plato* vol. I 256). Though I agree with Meyer that *logismos* and education are not the same, it seems to me that England is making a different point; when he talks about "the golden and blessed drawing of reason" (*Laws of Plato* vol. I 255), England claims that with this sentence Plato moves us from the individual ethical level to the political level, so that this pull represented by *logismos* in the soul is that of the laws in the context of the city. As England puts it *logismos* would represent "the educational influence of law" (*ibid.*).

conform to one of those, the one that is likely to achieve *logismos'* own end. In this sense,

the image of the marionette would stress the relation the golden pull has with one of the

iron pulls and its antagonism to all the others.[39]

There are several reasons to prefer the relation to the tug-of-war interpretation. In

the first place, it offers a more consistent reading of the text. For instance, the introductory

passage at 1.644c-d claiming that *logismos* should select the best among the non-rational

motivational forces would find an echo at the end of the image, when the Athenian claims

that "when one has seized in himself the truthful account (*logos*) of these pulls, must follow

it for life" (*ivi* 1.645b4-5). If the true message of the image of the marionette were that

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[39] Within this line of interpretation authors give varied account of the dynamics between *logismos* and the other stings. Some like Annas claims that "Reasoning is not only independent of the outcome of the pleasure-pain struggles within the person, and capable of judging the results; it is also capable of leading and manipulating the feelings, even though they are strong and stubborn and it is comparatively weak it can do this because it is adaptable and flexible where they are not, and thus can lead and direct them in ways that change them, whereas they are incapable of changing themselves" (*Platonic Ethics, Old and New* 144). As we shall see my claims do not go that far. I do agree with Annas that *logismos* selects those non-rational motivations that may lead to the achievement of its own goal; further I will claim that some cognitive and discursive faculty such as memory and imagination must be attributed to expectations; but I do not share with Annas the conviction that reasoning may *shape* those non-rational motivations. A more plausible suggestions on this "shaping" is offered by Jouët-Pastré, who maintains that the non-rational motivations in the soul can be domesticated by the golden pull, in the guise of the work that the legislator may do on the non-rational motivations by means of legislation (*Jeu et Serieux* 42). I have a hard time understanding the possibility of this domestication, as the strings of non-rational motivation are presented precisely as sclerotic. My view is that Plato allows for the possibility that some expectation conforming to legislation may be formed in the soul. Even on this interpretation, new non-rational motivations are hardly domesticated. They do not respond to commands, they urge to act in a certain way at all times. It may just be that *logismos* can find these types of motivations useful to its own end, virtue, at some given times. Additionally, I find Frede's reading persuasive, as she claims that the relation between *logismos* and the other cords can be reduced to a matter of selection. "The crucial opposition … consists in the calculative faculty's verdict on the expectations' worth, because it determines whether the corresponding actions are to be pursued or avoided" (*Puppets on Strings* 117). Benardete seems to endorse such selective reading of *logismos* as well (*Plato's* Laws 48) and to an extent also Bobonich holds this view; see *Utopia Recast* 263. Meyer opposes all these readings on the ground that "[s]uch interpretations are at odds with the most natural reading of 644e1-45b1, and appear to be motivated by the assumption that the 'victory' of the golden over the iron chords at 645a-b is the same condition as that of the educated person at 653a-c, whose pleasures and pains agree … rather than conflict with *logos*" (*Laws 1 and 2* 181). However, as we noted above (n.1) her own reading may be informed by her interpretation of the image of the marionette as depicting a conception of virtue in terms of strife and victory.

logismos ought to prevail on its own against all other pulls, the Athenian would say so

specifically. If the truth of the image of the marionette is to choose with *logismos* which of

the non-rational motives of action ought to be followed, the Athenian has to resort to make

a claim that lacks specificity. Additionally, the relation interpretation is also consistent with

other parts of the text. For instance at *Laws* 8.835e, reason (*logos*) orders to keep away

from some pleasures, thus implying that it must be able to distinguish between those

pleasures that must be avoided and those that must be pursued; if reason was a

motivational force acting independently of pleasure (which is an iron string), it would

simply order to dismiss all pleasures.

Secondly, this interpretation makes sense of *logismos*' metaphorical malleability.

Logismos may have on its own less motivational strength than the other non-rational

motives of action in our psyche, since they are more rigid; but, at the same time, its added

flexibility allows it to find support in the relation with some iron strings and prevail over

the rest of the soul.[40] I will say more about possible aids to *logismos* below. Finally, this

interpretation explains why *logismos* is consistently called *agoge,* lead, and not *neuron*,

string. Since its motivational force resides in arguing which of the other strings should be

followed, one cannot properly call it one of the cords caught in the tug of war; rather, it

represents a lead which some of these cords should follow.

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[40] Meyer would explain the difference in rigidity between the pulls as a figurative rendition of the two means
that the legislator has to induce citizens compliance with the laws, namely persuasion, which is soft, and
force, which is hard; see *Laws 1 & 2* 183. While I do agree with her on the means the legislator may use to
insure compliance with the law, it seems to me that on her reading the problem of how the soft cord may
prevail over the hard ones remains open.

At this point we have an answer for the question raised on point (1) above, namely what is the relationship between *logismos* and the other stings in the soul? We answer that this relationship is a selective one. *Logismos* acts after and upon pleasure, pain and expectations. Though it does not have sufficient strength to overcome them, it may select the best among those non-rational motivations in order to achieve its goal.[41] As Pangle puts it, the image of the marionette shows that "true reasoning about the passions [the iron cords] gives one both the guidance as to the goal of life and the capacity to follow that goal – perhaps by somehow manipulating the opposing passions within oneself" (Laws *of Plato* 401). This guidance, which the image of the puppet offers to an individual, consists of the awareness that one's passions can be selected. To use the language employed at the end of the previous chapter, the image of the marionette suggests that may pull their own strings.

Now that we have established that the relation of argumentation with the other non-rational motivations is one of selection we should tackle point (2) above and ask on what criteria *logismos* ranks pleasure, pain or expectation as better or worse. In absolute terms, argumentation should abide by the standards of virtue to determine to which of the non-rational motivations it should relate. In the image of the marionette this readings is confirmed at *Laws* 1.644e, where it becomes clear that the golden lead should motivate us

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[41] Some might wonder if *logismos* plays a part in shaping non-rational motivations for action. While I'll address this issue more directly in the next section, at this point I can claim that argumentation cannot contribute to the formation of non-rational motivations such as the drive to pursue pleasure and the drive to avoid pain. As those drives can subsist on their own and before any kind of argumentative ability has mature in the soul; see *Leg*. 2.653a-b. Stalley seems to endorse this view of the role of argumentation; see *Introduction to Plato's* Laws 60.

to act so as to fall on the side of *arete* and not *kakia*. Some additional evidence that *arete*

is the standard for argumentation in selecting non-rational motivations can be gathered

from other places in the *Laws*. Consider for instance the argument that the Athenian offers

to the future citizens of Magnesia about preferring (after accurate argumentation I add) the

virtuous life of mild and recurrent pleasures, rather than the vicious life of intense

pleasures and pains.[42] Or consider the argument stating that in moral education one should

work on the pleasures and pains experienced by children, so that in the future those

children may be able to reason in agreement with those pleasures and pains.[43]

In relative terms, however, we should remember that psychological processes do

not take place in a historical vacuum, but in a city with posited laws reflecting some general

account of publicly shared opinion. In this case, it would seem that the image of the

marionette suggests that argumentation should conform to general opinion and to

legislation when deciding which of the non-rational motives is worth following.[44]

Let us finally consider point (4) above, namely the significance of including

argumentation in the count of *pathe*, psychological experiences or affections of the soul. In

the first place, it should be noted that intuitively *logismos* should not be one of the

affections. It is a different psychological element than pleasure and pain, the drives of the

soul, which are also listed as *pathe*; secondly, how can it be an affection and still have

deliberative abilities? If *logismos* is to be understood as *pathos*, the meaning of affection in

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[42] See *Leg.* 5.732e-34e.

[43] See *Leg.* 2.653a-c; this is also a central theme in book 7.

[44] This approach is echoed in the myth of the age of Chronos; see *Leg.*4.713e-14a.

this case must be special, not technical.[45] I can find in the text three reasons to define *logismos* an affection in this sense.

(i) *Logismos'* relationship with *nomos*, law, may cause it to be perceived as an affection. As I just mentioned our non-rational motivations for action are often selected on their compliance with law. In this case then *logismos'* selection would be felt like an affection, because it is imposed on the agent by law, rather than being the agent's own doing. It should also be noted that though the influence of the law affects the agent, it is not a drive. For example let us think of all those cases in which one complies with the law in order to avoid suffering the pains of breaking the law (e.g. I drive at speed limit so I won't get a speeding ticket). The selection of a non-rational motive for action (not paying a speeding ticket, which would be an experience of pain one has a drive to avoid) is imposed on *logismos* by an extra-psychological element.

(ii) *Logismos'* relationship with *nous*, intelligence, may cause it to be perceived as affection. To my knowledge the text of the *Laws* never explicitly connects *logismos* in the image of the marionette to the notion of *nous*; however, there are indirect evidences of this relation. In the first place there is a connection between *logismos* and *nous* via *nomos*. We have noted in several instances the connection between the psychological and the legislative element in the image of the marionette. But it should also be highlighted that in

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[45] Let me point out that in the picture of the moral psychology of the *Laws* I am painting, *logismos* is technically speaking a psychological process – as I stated above – not an affection. All I am trying to do here is to attempt an explanation as to why Plato would include *logismos* among the *pathe* of the soul. Certainly he did not mean for it to be a *pathos* in a technical sense.

the mind of the Athenian legislation should be the expression of intelligence.[46] In the

Athenian's mind *logismos* should comply with the intelligence expressed in legislation, not

simply with the letter of the law. Additionally in book 10 the soul of the world, which keeps

the planets in an orderly rotation, is characterized as having arguments (*logismoi*).[47] This

connection between the psychological level (*logismos*) and the metaphysical level (*nous*)

has inspired commentators to see a connection between the psychology of book 1 and the

metaphysics of book 10 of the *Laws*. For instance Kurke suggests reading *logismos* in the

light of *Timaeus* 90a-b, where Timaeus describes the intellectual part of our soul as a plant

whose roots are in heaven. Says Kurke "I cannot resists the suggestion that this image may

also be fleetingly overlaid with that of a divine puppet drawn heavenward by a golden

chord" (*Imagining Chorality* 145).[48] In this sense then *logismos* would be an affection in the

form of a direct influence of the divine on our psyche. *Logismos* would affect the agent since

it exceeds her psyche, as it is in fact a metaphysical force. Though, even in this case,

logismos would not be affecting the soul in the same fashion as a drive.

(iii) Finally *logismos* could be a *pathos* because it expresses some basic aesthetic

value to which we are attracted. This aesthetic standard matches *logismos*' expression of

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[46] Perhaps the most evident example of this assumption is the untested etymology connecting *nous* and *nomos*. See *Leg.* 4.713e-14a.

[47] See *Leg.* 10.897c; for a similar use of the *logismos* in a different context see *Leg*. 12.967b.

[48] Miller supports this connection between *logismos* and *nous* in the *Laws* and suggests that the implication that all human beings experience rationality (rather than philosophers alone) is what separates the *Republic* from the *Laws* (*Plato on the Rule of Reason* 72).

moral value, but it is nonetheless separate from it.[49] The beauty of argumentation is due

to its being mild and not violent, it resides in its art of persuading. This mildness should be

understood as an instance of sobriety or serenity; it is opposed elsewhere to behaviors that

otherwise would demonstrate rage and lack of temperament.[50] What the Athenian would

be suggesting here is that we find this placidity psychologically attractive or beautiful. In

this sense when we select a non-rational motivation for action in the process of

argumentation, we abide by this standard of sober beauty carried by *logismos*.

Argumentation then would be an affection because we find our ability to give arguments

and to select among our non-rational motives attractive and beautiful. At the same time it

would not be a drive, because it does not have the same vigor as pleasure and pain, it is

placid.

These three options for considering *logismos* a *pathos* are not mutually exclusive

and we are not required to select one over the other at this point. We should consider,

however, that whatever the meaning of *logismos* as a *pathos* its effect on our psyche is

inescapable. As Irwin puts it, "[w]e all have the golden cord in the soul that expresses

practical reason; to this extent the provisions of the internal law are accessible to us all.

[With this] Plato ... implies that people who do not listen to the internal law are none the

less aware of what it says" (*Morality as Law and Morality in the Laws* 105). For the

purposes of this chapter and the next, it is irrelevant to understand precisely why the

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[49] See *Leg.* 1.645a5-6.

[50] See for instance *Leg.*10.888a when the Athenian decides to stay calm and give a sober account of the divine to the young atheist and 11.930a on the laws pertaining to divorce, indicating that husband and wife who should separate do not display sobriety of character.

Athenian would include *logismos* among the *pathe*. What is important is to clarify that

the deliberative process of selection of iron strings is an inescapable feature of our moral

psychology.

At this point we have clarified that there is an unavoidable argumentative force at

work in the psychology of the *Laws*; that though the iron strings motivating our action are

very powerful, *logismos* exerts its psychological influence by arguing which of the non-

rational forces can be exploited to achieve its own goal. This goal is virtue. In the next

section we will discuss the possibility of fabricating some non-rational motivations to

which *logismos* may appeal in its pursuit of excellence.

Expectations.

Finally let us discuss the third element listed in the image of the marionette,

expectations. This discussion will lead us through the most philosophically relevant claim

in this chapter, which is also one of the pivotal arguments of this dissertation. Simply stated

I claim that in the psychology of the *Laws* there is room for the creation of non-rational

motivations that may agree with the objective of *logismos*; once these expectations are

introduced in the psyche they become likely selections in the process of argumentation.

Said in the terms of the image of the marionette, there seem to be the possibility of creating

additional iron strings, which – granted their stiffness – might be used by the golden lead as

additional motivational force to err on the side of virtue.

Let us begin by recalling how the Athenian defines expectations in the introductory

passage to the image of the marionette. He states that there are in the human psyche

"opinions about the future (*doxas mellonton*), whose common name is expectation (*eplis*),[51] specifically "fear" (*phobos*) is an expectation of pain, confidence (*tharros*) [an expectation] of the opposite [pleasure]" (*Leg.* 1.644c-d). Let us immediately notice that the marked distinction between the drives (pleasure and pain) and the expectations is that the latter carry a degree of cognitive ability and awareness of time, as they are called "opinions about the future." In other words, while drives are non-rational, expectations may be defined as semi-rational, though they do not have *logismos*' deliberative power. Thus, there seem to be a gradation of psychological elements in the *Laws*, with some unintelligent elements (pleasure and pain), some elements with minimal cognitive abilities (expectations) and one deliberative and argumentative element (*logismos*).[52]

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[51] Meyer claims this is "a well-attested ... general use for anticipation or expectation, where the expected results may be either positive or negative; thus it encompasses both hopes and fears" (174). She also warns the reader that "[r]ather than supposing that fear and daring are generic impulses for pursuit and avoidance in a general theory of non-rational motivation, it makes more sense to suppose that the Athenian invokes these specific impulses here because each has a role to play in the account of courage and moderation that occupies the final pages of Book 1 and for which the present passage lays the groundwork. At 646e-649c he will explain that training in courage involves cultivating daring and eliminating fear, while training in moderation involves cultivating a kinds of fear (shame), and eliminating inappropriate daring" (*Laws 1 & 2* 175). Though I do agree that fear and confidence do not exhaust the entire range of non-rational motivations, it seems to me that we can still consider them as exemplary instances of non-rational motivations in this reductive account of moral psychology.

[52] I am not suggesting here that the *Laws* follow the same tripartite structure as the *Republic*'s soul. In this chapter I will not have the chance to discuss in detail the distinction between the psyche in the *Laws* and the tripartite soul of the *Republic*, but I wish to offer at least a brief summary of the contemporary debate on this issue. We can organize this debate in three main interpretative trends. Some authors interpret the psychology of the *Laws* as a continuation of the tripartite account found in *Republic*; others find a general bipartition to be a more suitable way to highlight the similarities of *Laws* and *Republic* in their respective accounts of the soul. Finally, a third line of interpretation emphasizes the unity of the soul in the account of Laws; some authors in this third camp read unity as a decisive break with the psychology of the *Republic*, while others see it as a sign of continuation with Plato's middle dialogue. Though my analysis of the marionette stressed the roles of the drives, expectations and argumentation in motivating the soul, I do not endorse a reading of the soul in the *Laws* as tripartite; rather I find that the soul should be considered a unitary psychic space where different pulls interact. My worry is that if we lose sight of this unity, we run into the thorny issue of the relation among the parts of the soul. Since Diogenes (*Lives* 3.1.67 and 90) authors have extend the tripartion of the soul from *Republic* to *Laws*. In this group we can list Nummenmaa (*Divine Motions and Human Emotions* 39-41), Stalley (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 46-47) Saunders (*Structure of the soul and state in Plato's* Laws), Brisson (*Ethics*

Though expectations are derived from drives, there is a clear difference between these two kinds of motivations. For instance fear originates from the combination of the drive of escaping pain with some minimal cognition of time. In this regard drives and expectations are in a relation of continuity and are opposed to *logismos*, because neither of them has the ability to deliberate. In other words, when we experience the drive of pain, we are motivated to avoid hurting with no need to deliberate about it. In the same fashion if we

and Politics in Plato's Laws 97, 110-113 and *Soul and State in Plato's Laws* 281-ff.), Wilburn (*Moral Education in Plato's* Laws 64). Among those scholars who argue for a bipartite understanding of the soul in the *Laws* we can list Rees (*Bipartition of the Soul in the Early Academy*), Sassi (*Self, Soul and Individual in* Laws 132-33), Annas (*Platonic Ethics, Old and new* 151), Laks *Legislation and Demiurgy* claims that the image of the puppet expresses "this fundamental duality" (221) in the human being who is pulled by the iron and the golden cords. Though as we shall see below, his final position is an attempt to reconcile the division and the unity view of the soul. Among those who claim that the soul in the *Laws* should be understood as a unity in a decisive break with the *Republic* the most relevant is certainly Christopher Bobonich (*Utopia Recast* chapter 3). Finally among those who give a unity-in-difference account of the soul in both the *Republic* and the *Laws* we should count Lodge (*Plato's Theory of Ethics* 297), Laks (*Médiation et Coercition* 45, 86), Jouët-Pastré (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 40-44). Bobonich's *Plato's Utopia Recast* has sparked a vivid debate among historian of philosophy (for a brief summary see Meyer *Laws 1 and 2* pp. 172-73). While my reading of the soul of the *Laws* is inspired by Bobonich's, I anticipate here some differences which I will take up again at the end of the chapter. In the first place much of the debate around Bobonich's work revolves around his conception of a progressive evolution of psychological account from a tripartite scheme to a unitary scheme. I find Kahn's assessment of Bobonich's position in this regard quite sensible, Kahn claims "We must distinguish two claims here: (1) that in place of tripartition the *Laws* make use of a unitary conception of the psyche; and (2) that this is the result of a development in Plato's psychological theory after the *Republic*. The first claim is not controversial; tripartition is certainly absent from the *Laws*. But the absence of tripartition need not be explained by a developmental account" (*From Republic to Laws* 356-57)*. I do find that the *Laws* emphasizes the collaboration of the rational and the non-rational aspects of our psyche, while the *Republic* depicts this relation in terms of subjection of one side to the other; but I can't say that this difference is enough to speak of a development of Plato's psychological theory. Furthermore, the central issue with the development thesis is that it is too heavily reliant on undisclosed hermeneutical preferences (such as the assumption that all dialogues are coherent, or that they should be read separately, or that in some Plato exposes his own doctrines while in others he discusses Socrates' doctrines, or that dialogues had only an exoteric function in the Academy); one must commit to a specific hermeneutical approach before one can endorse, modify or deny the possibility of development. Secondly, Bobonich reads the unity of the soul in the *Laws* through the lenses of *akrasia*, moral weakness. I do find this reading too restrictive and I agree with Wilburn that the image of the marionette does not represent specifically cases of *akrasia*, but rather it portrays "the psychological situation in which all human beings find themselves throughout their lives" (Akrasia *and Self-Rule in Plato's* Laws 37, for arguments supporting this view see pp. 40-43). If the marionette focused only on issues of *akrasia* my reading of the psychology of the *Laws* would end up arguing that human beings are always in a state of *akrasia*. Since on my view the pull of *logismos* enlists the cords of our desires and emotions, even cases of *enkrateia* (cases in which argumentation selects non rational motivations and appeals to those in order to obtain the necessary psychological motivation to pursue its objective) would *sensu stricto* still qualify as cases of *akrasia*, since without appeal to non-rational motivations *logismos* could not pursue its end.

experienced the sensation of pain in the past and we find ourselves in a similar

situation, we might fear suffering again and we need no deliberative ability to do so. At the

same time, there is a difference in kind between these two non-deliberative motivations.

Pain is a drive, while fear is an emotional state with regards to the future. Drives

continually exercise their force; for instance pain constantly motivates the psyche to avoid

being hurt. Emotional states instead are tied to past events. They might have nothing to

contribute when we face a new situation or they might play a substantial role in motivating

the psyche, when we face a situation we experienced in the past. In this fashion

expectations are independent from drives, we strive to avoid pain in general, but in some

specific cases we have a fearful emotional disposition. The same holds *mutatis mutandis*

with regards to confidence and its relation to pleasure.

Before we move on to explore the implications of this continuity and difference

between drives and expectations, I must clarify something about *tharros*, confidence.

Tharros is rather close to *thymos*, spiritedness from the *Republic*, and due diligence

demands that I discuss whether we should reduce all instances of confidence to

expressions of *thymos* in the psychology of the *Laws*.[53] We can roughly divide the scholars

who comment on the relationship between *tharros* and *thymos* in two groups. On the one

hand, we have those who defend a moderate position, claiming that in some cases

confidence and spiritedness overlap. On the other hand, we have those who defend the

more extreme view that spiritedness has a definite and special psychological role to play in

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[53] Commentators use this similarity between *tharros* and *thymos* to introduce the idea of psychological tripartition in the *Laws.*

the *Laws*, similar to its function in the *Republic*. In the former camp we find Meyer who

translates *tharros* (the anticipation of pleasure) with "daring" and defines it "an aggressive

impulse for self-assertion in the face of opposition or adversity" (*Laws 1 & 2* 174)[54] and

adds "[t]*harros* thus performs some of the functions attributed to the spirited part of the

soul (*thymos*) in *Republic*" (*ibid.*). On this reading confidence at times goes in support to the

outcomes of argumentation. This seems a sensible conclusion and does not infringe upon

what I have said so far about the relationship between the different motivations in the soul.

Additionally, this view does not exclude that other times fear supports the goals of

logismos.

Sassi adds to Meyer's point, when she addresses cases in which spiritedness, *thymos*,

is listed as taking on the role of *tharros.* She refers to *thymos* in the context of book 5, when

the Athenian addresses the future citizens of Magnesia on the topic of the soul. At

*Leg.*5.731b-d, the Athenian refers to being *thymoeides* as an instance of rightful indignation,

which is close to *tharros*, but, as Sassi warns, this kind of indignation at times can motivate

towards non-virtuous goals. "In these passages, then, it would seem that Plato, while

recognizing the motivations of 'just' anger, is none the less more concerned with the

disturbing effects which this emotion may have if it is not controlled" (*Self, Soul and

Individual in* Laws *134*). Sassi finally concludes that *thymos* in *Laws* is just "one of the many

emotional states. … In other words, in the *Laws thymos* is a passion on the same level as

others, and like them can be considered one of the iron strings that pull the man-puppet in

different directions" (*ivi* 135). Sassi's reading seems accurate. There might be times when

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[54] References to *Leg.*1.647a-d and 649c.

the specific emotion of *thymos* is a good alternative for *tharros* as one of the emotions

that *logismos* can enlist in tis favor; in other words, there might be times when we need to

find in indignation, rather than in confidence, the motivation to act virtuously. However, by

the same token, there are cases in which *thymos* clashes with the goals of *logismos*.

The Athenian himself addresses the overlapping of confidence and spiritedness at

times and their common origin as emotional states that satisfy the drive of pleasure, when

he claims that "when we feel most naturally inclined to be confident (*tharraleoi*) ... in these

cases aren't all those things that make us feel as such [referring to being confident],

spiritedness (*thymos*), eros, arrogance, ignorance, greed, cowardice ... the same things that

make us mad and drunk on pleasure" (*Leg.* 1.649c-d)? In this quote we see that the

Athenian takes *thymos* to be one of the many emotional states that could be generally

categorized as instances of *tharros*, as they are derived from the expectation of future

gratification.

Among those scholars who take a more extreme view of the role of *thymos* in the

Laws we find Saunders, Brisson and Wilburn.[55] Saunders'[56] argument centers on 9.863a-

64b and 869e. The former passage is certainly Saunders' stronger piece of evidence. There

the Athenian claims that *thymos* is either a *pathos* or a *meros* (part) of the soul. And he

states that *thymos* seems to be set against what we would consider *epithymiai* in the soul.

Additionally he claims that *thymos* has an essential role to play in virtuous life by referring

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[55] For a summary of debate see Meyer *Laws 1nd 2* 173.

[56] For this discussion see *Structure of the soul and state in Plato's* Laws 38-41. Saunders' argument is a premise of a larger claim, namely that Plato still endorses a tripartite soul in the *Laws*. Against Saunder's view see Folch's *The City and the Stage* 75-77.

to 5.731b, a passage Sassi mentioned as well. Brisson makes a similar argument in *Soul and State in Plato's Laws*, quoting again 9.863a-b, and adding a mention to 11.935a. Additionally, while he acknowledges that there are very few references to *thymos* in the *Laws*, he blames Plato's little regard to courage in this dialogue for it.[57]

I do not find any of these arguments persuasive. In the first place I find it curious that if *thymos* has such a central role to play in the psychology of the *Laws* it is not mentioned in the image of the marionette. Secondly, even if one takes the hermeneutical position of appealing to book 9 in order to explain that *thymos* is a part of the soul, there are still problems to resolve. (i) The Athenian's phrase is "*thymos* is either a *pathos* or a *meros* (part) of [the soul's] nature" (9.863b); the language of the passage seems to suggest that the Athenian is unconcerned with the status or *thymos*, not that he is making an effort to claim it as a distinct part of the soul. Additionally, the language of *pathos* seems much more consistent with the image of the marionette,[58] and it justifies the claim that *thymos* is one among many iron strings. (ii) The image of the marionette seems to suggest that cases of confidence are derived from the drive of pleasure; though *thymos* is not the same as *tharros* one would expect a similar account. However when we look at *thymos* we find that Plato is very inconsistent, as sometimes it seems that spiritedness derives from pleasure and other times it seems to be connected to pain.[59] Finally, Brisson's argument with

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[57] "It is perhaps this critique of constitutions of Lacedemonia and Crete, inducing Plato to place courage in the last place in the list of virtues, that explains why we hear so little of *thymos* in the *Laws*" (*ivi* 289).

[58] See *Leg.* 1.644e.

[59] See *ivi* 1.649d quoted above and compared with 9.863b and 864b when *thymos* seems to be an expectation of pain.

regards to the limited discussion of *thymos* in the *Laws* sounds more like an admission

of *thymos*' lack of relevance than a defense of its central role in this dialogue.

Wilburn addresses some of these concerns when he sets out to make his case for a

tripartition in the *Laws* by finding instances of being *thymoeides*, having spirit, in the

account of the marionette in book 1. However, when it comes to indicating the location of

spiritedness in the soul, Wilburn limits himself to claiming that there is "an intermediate

class of superior [to pain and pleasure] non-rational motivations, and they are precisely the

kinds of motivations that were previously attributed to the spirited part of the soul" (*Moral*

Education in Plato's laws 76). While I agree with Wilburn that there are several sources of

motivation in the psychological account of *Laws*, namely, the expectations, I do not think

that this is sufficient ground to claim that something like *thymos* is a distinct part of the

Laws' soul. On the one hand, it does not seem correct to imply that expectations continue

the role attributed to the spirited part in previous dialogues. For instance it does not seem

as though *thymos*, spiritedness, would encompass cases of fear, which the image of the

marionette accounts for. On the other hand, it seems more plausible to think that *thymos* is

one among many expectations, with its specific emotional disposition towards certain

circumstance. Finally, the fact that expectations may have the function of supporting

logismos (more on this topic below) does not mean that they can be reduced to *thymos*. If

one is seeking a possible connection between the tripartite soul of *Republic* and the

psychological account of the *Laws*, it would seem more accurate to claim that Plato has

expanded the range of psychological events that could possibly side with *logismos*; now

thymos is just one of the many possible emotional non-deliberative motives for action

that may be enlisted as allies to reason.[60]

Now that we have cleared the way of any specific reference to the *Republic*'s *thymos*

in the *Laws'* mention of *tharros*, let us go back to our analysis of expectations in terms of

fear and confidence. In order to understand what expectations are and how the operate in

the soul I will address three questions: (1) are expectations different psychological

elements from pain and pleasure? (2) Do expectation provide a different type of non-

deliberative motivation than the one pain and pleasure offer? (3) Can we create new

expectations in the soul? Let us begin by addressing the question (1). As I stated above I

maintain that expectations are derived from drives, but – once created – they are a

different source of psychological motivation. Some commentators disagree with my claim

maintaining that there is no substantial difference between drives and expectations. Their

claim hinges on *Timaeus* 69c-d. At that point in the dialogue Timaeus is describing the

formation of the human psyche. He claims that the psyche is the result of a union between

an immortal soul with a mortal soul, which carries with itself "terrible and unavoidable

passions, first off pleasure … then pains and beside these confidence and fear, foolish

advisors (*aphrone symboulo*)." Because *Timaeus* qualifies confidence and fear as "*aphrone

symboulo*" and because *Laws* – as we have seen – uses the same term to qualify pleasure

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[60] Just a year earlier, in a different article, Wilburn claimed that in order to endorse a reading of the tripartite soul in *Laws*, one should provide "an explanation of why, if Plato retained the earlier theory, he did not make that commitment explicit in the *Laws*" (Akrasia *and Self0Rule in Plato's* Laws 51). To this question I find no answer in his later article. In fact in his later work Wilburn changes his mind and claims that the burden of proof lies with those who think that Plato abandons the tripartite soul in *Laws* (*Moral Education in Plato's* Laws 71).

and pain in the image of the marionette, some may claim that there is no significant

difference between drives and expectations.[61] My methodological objection here is that we

should be cautious in interpreting *Laws* with reference to other texts, as we may find

contradictory evidence.[62] Additionally, the image of the marionette seems to move against

the description of the formation of the soul in *Timaeus*. The introductory passage of the

marionette makes the point clearly, with its sharp distinction between drives and

expectations. Furthermore, if we read also *Leg*.1.645d-e (the passage following the image of

the marionette) we find that the Athenian assumes consistently a distinction between

drives and expectations (understood as opinions about the future). In this passage the

discussion turns to wine and its ability to embolden pleasure and pains, while it erases

opinions[63] from our soul. But if a drive and its expectation are essentially the same, why

should wine exert different effects on each? The use of wine indicates the possibility to

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[61] See for instance Meyer *Laws 1 and 2* 173.

[62] For instance an interpretation separating pleasure and pain from expectations finds a referent in *Philebus* 32b-d. In this passage Socrates and Protarchus distinguish between pleasure and pain, which are sensations that belong immediately to the body, and confidence and fear, which are expectations (*prosdokiai*, thus with a definite inclination towards opining – *dokeo*) elaborating pleasure and pain in the soul. Granted that we should not interpret pleasure and pain as sensations in the *Laws*, the noteworthy point is the separation in *Philebus* between pleasure and pain on the one hand and expectations on the other, while maintaining a certain correspondence between them. In this fashion *Philebus* runs against the interpretation we find in *Timaeus*. A preferable methodological stance is to interpret each dialogue on its own.

[63] Meyer claims that from the text it is not clear "whether *doxa* (belief or opinion) is distinctive of the anticipations" (*Laws 1 & 2* 174). I disagree with her. It seems to me that from the text of the image of the marionette there is no room to indicate that all opinions are anticipations. In fact we can also find examples for opinions that are not expectations at 3.689a-b, when the Athenian describes "the greatest ignorance," namely a lack of agreement between pleasure and pain on the one hand and rational judgment on the other. Opinions are clustered together with rational judgments, but the context clarifies that the Athenian is not intending expectations. At the same time we can certainly assume that all anticipations are opinions, that is beliefs about the future. In fact Meyer herself offers and argument based on the *Philebus* to understand in which sense anticipations are opinions, as she claims "the "anticipations" are pleasures and pains that themselves have intentional objects" (*Pleasure, Pain and Anticipation in* Laws 364-65). She then clarifies "Quite distinct from this, and involving our capacity for opinion (*doxa*), we have pleasures and pains that are directed at intentional objects" (*ivi* 365).

separate sensation from expectations and confirms that while the two are related, they

are not the same.

Another strategy to assimilate expectations and drives consists in considering the

former just an extension of the latter. For instance Meyer notes that "[s]ometimes pain … is

expanded to include fears (635b-d, 647a), or pain is replaced with fear (647c, 648b-e); at

other times pleasure's side is expanded to include appetite (*epithymia*), passion (*erôs*)

(643c-d, 647d), daring (*tharros*) (644c-d), or yearning (*pothous*) … (633c-d)" (*Laws 1 and 2*

127).[64] However there seem to be some problems with this interpretation. In the first

place, relying on the use of synonyms in the text to claim that pleasure and pain are simply

extended into their respective expectations rests on the assumption that the text of the

Laws is coherent and consistent throughout. However we cannot demand consistency in

language for a text like the *Laws* since it is likely just a draft, not the edited product Plato

had in mind,[65] and since the dramatic setting suggests that this is an informal conversation

among elderly who are not required to be consistent. In fact we find that several times the

protagonists of the dialogue stress that they are more concerned with the substance of

their argument than with the use of words.[66] It would seem that the substance of the

argument in the image of the marionette is to draw a distinction between drives and

expectations and maintain a meaningful difference between the two. This point is sustained

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[64] Stalley seems to endorse this reading when he reduces the strings of the marionette to three: pleasure, pain and *logismos*; see *Introduction to Plato's* Laws 60.

[65] See Diogenes Laërtius *Life of Eminent Philosophers* 3.37.

[66] See *Leg.* 1.644a6 "let us not debate about these names, but rather stay with the argument that makes us all agree." See also 9.864b.

by other instances in book 1 when drives and expectations are distinct, that is when we find drives without their correlative expectation or vice versa expectations without the originating drive.[67] Finally, when Meyer speaks of "expanding" pain and pleasure to include expectations we should consider the conceptual magnitude of this expansion. Consider for instance one of the passages that she cites *Leg.*1.635b-d. What Plato is conveying here is that the recurrent gratification of the drive of pleasure (or pain for that matter) yields an emotional disposition, which we call *tharros* (in the case of exposure to pain we would develop fear). This is perhaps what Meyer calls "expanding." However, this expansion has qualitative results, as we move from the level of satisfaction of a drive, to the level of emotional disposition towards the satisfaction of the drive.[68] In other words, the confident person is not just satisfying the drive to being gratified, she has also developed an emotional attitude towards pleasure which may function as an independent source of motivation from its originative drive. For instance, it is one thing to have a craving for ice cream, it is another to be confident that after dinner I will eat ice cream.

At this point we have clarified that though drives are related to expectations the two are distinct. This distinction is drawn on the grounds that drives have no cognitive content, while expectations are beliefs; that drives are urges, while expectations are emotive dispositions. Then, let us move on to question (2), do expectation provide a different type

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[67] See for instance 1.639b, 1.646e.

[68] This passage addresses also the development of virtue beginning from the cultivation of a response to drives. As we will see in greater detail in the next chapter one can cultivate virtues by frustrating drives, in a process similar yet divergent from the development of expectations. In simpler words satisfying the drive of pain may lead to fear, but frustrating the drive of pain may lead to acquiring courage.

of non-rational motivation than the one pain and pleasure offer? As we have seen, the

remarks about the metallic quality of the pulls of the marionette clarify that drives and

expectations are both significantly different from *logismos.* In that sense we should assume

that whenever we speak of drives or expectations we are dealing with non-deliberative

motivations for action, where "non-deliberative" means that they are different from

logismos, they are not argumentative sources of motivation. Nonetheless there might be

room to claim that drives and expectations are different types of non-deliberative

motivations.[69] In this distinction between sources of non-deliberative motivations I follow

Meyer when, in *Pleasure, Pain and Anticipation in* Laws, she shows successfully that fear

and daring, though are said to derive from the drives of pain and pleasure respectively, end

up functioning against their sources as it were; daring will be employed to resist sensations

of pain (*ivi* 356), while fear will be employed to resist pleasures (*ivi* 358).[70] Meyer calls fear

and confidence "oppositional impulses" (*ibid.*) in the sense that they are motivations to face

adversities. Meyer concludes "[i]t is now abundantly clear not only that these anticipations

are not appetitive impulses, but that the roles they play in the internal dynamics of

motivation and action recapitulate very closely the functions attributed to the "spirited"

part of the soul in the *Republic*" (*ivi* 360). I am ready to side with Meyer on the comparison

between expectations and *thymos* within the limits of the discussion above. However,

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[69] This seems to be what Laks has implies as he claims that pleasure-pain, expectations, rationality are three separate sources of motivation (*Médiation et Coercition* 86).

[70] As I mentioned above I will discuss similar cases in the next chapter, when I will analyze virtue. But I will also say more about "oppositional impulses" with regards to *aidos*, shame, below.

psychologically speaking, what is that makes expectations different from drives? My answer, anticipated above, is that expectations are semi-rational.

Some commentators would answer this question saying that there is very little difference between the two. For instance Kamtekar offers an argument for the direct formation of expectations from sensations of pleasure and pain. She criticizes the possibility to distinguish expectations from drives on the basis of their being semi-rational by denying two claims, (i) that a small degree of *phantasia* is needed in order to consider the motivational force of these non-deliberative elements in the soul[71] and (ii) that mnemonic ability is needed in order to have expectations. In this latter case Kamtekar refers to a passage in *Laws* 7.790d-91b in which external motion is used to calm fear in newborns. Her conclusion is that the fear of the newborn is not dependent on rationality, thus "[f]ear may, but need not, involve the rational part, when it does, it involves the expectation of evil, but when it does not, its history (or perhaps more ponderously but precisely its ontogeny) is the reason still to consider it fear. The characteristic phenomenological and physical correlates of the expectation of evil (a vague agitation, a racing heart) are counted as fear not only because of the usualness of their correlation with the expectation of evil, but also because of this history" (*Psychology and the Inculcation of Virtue in Plato's* Laws 141). Since, presumably, this reading of fear may apply also to the image of the marionette, I take Kamtekar to mean, with regard to point (ii), that fears may

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[71] See *Psychology and the Inculcation of Virtue in Plato's* Laws 136-38. Here Kamtekar is working on *Timaeus* and criticizes – for opposing reasons – Bobonich's (*Utopia Recast*) and Lorenz's (*The Brute Within*) respective interpretations of these passages. She claims that Bobonich impoverishes too much the cognitive role of non-deliberative psychological elements and Lorenz grants too much cognition to them. What is interesting for our purposes is Kamtekar's denial of Lorenz's suggestion to read some non-deliberative portions of the soul as having access to imagination.

use, but do not need the contribution of memories in terms of cognitive abilities, since they rely on their own history or ontogeny, which I take it to mean the drive of pain. From this perspective Kamtekar also addresses (i), stating that fear has no need of *phantasia*, as for instance a newborn cannot even imagine what she fears.

In reply to these concerns I would like to show that in the *Laws* the Athenian does seem to rely on some notion of *phantasia* and memory in order to form expectations. Let us begin with the need for some type of imagination in order to form expectations. In the first place I should clarify that though imagination may broadly qualify as a cognitive capacity, it should be seen as markedly different from *logismos*, since it does not imply the ability to compare and argue that *logismos* displays. In fact we only need a very narrow notion of imagination in order to understand the formation of expectations in the soul, one that allows fear and confidence to connect past events in which the drives of pain or pleasure were discharged with future and not-yet-experienced similar occurrences.[72] Let us take as

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[72] Some authors conclude that there must be some such rational participation in the formation of expectations. For instance Sassi points out "[s]uch opinions are obviously 'instinctive' in a certain sense, since they can lead to action immediately, without being filtered by rational evaluation. Yet in this passage the term doxa none the less (*sic*) also refers to a basic level of interior representation of sensible reality. As a *vox media*, the term also assumes a positive value in contexts in which Plato emphasizes the need for rational reflection on the data of opinion—for instance in situations in which the disagreement (διαφωνία) between, on the one hand, feelings of pain and pleasure and, on the other, 'opinion agreeing with reason' produces 'the greatest ignorance', he groups *doxa* with *episteme* and logos as faculties which by nature are to have command of the soul (689 a –b)" (*Self, Soul and Individual in* Laws 132). Lodge, who reads Plato's ethics in a systematic fashion, a methodological decision that does not persuade me, claims that an "association of memories with sensations gives rise to a new sub-conscious synthesis to which Plato gives the name of "opinion," which as representing the elements common to many memories and sensations, is more permanent and less fluctuating than the individual memories and sensations which are thus fused together" (*Plato's Theory of Ethics* 185). In other words, opinions for Lodge are essentially dependent on the formation of memories and their relative stability in the soul allows for the formation of expectations about the future. We will see that I come to a similar conclusion.

an instance of this ability what is said in *Laws* 11,[73] when the Athenian describes the

punishment for acts that damaged others (robberies or minor acts of violence). When those

acts are caused by non-rational motives, that is to say for cases of "weakness before

pleasures or pains" (11.934a), there will be an additional punishment, one that is not

assigned for retribution, but "for the time to come [so that] who [committed the crime] and

those who witness the punishment will absolutely hate injustice" (*ivi* 934b). In this case the

Athenian is suggesting that some forms of punishment may be formative in terms of

deterrence. What is interesting for our argument is the condition for this deterrence. First,

it seems that deterrence applies to injustices motivated by drives; in other words,

deterrence is a way to remind the agent not to give in to her drives. Second, it seems that

the criminal and also the citizens who witness this punishment must have some type of

cognitive ability to transpose the present occurrence onto future similar circumstances.

Finally, this ability to transpose past events onto future and possible cases is not meant to

stimulate the agent's ability to argument (*logismos*) in favor of a certain behavior; rather, it

aims at creating hate, that is an emotive and non-deliberative aversion towards future

indulgences in drives. In this example it seems that the Athenian is thinking of deterrence

as operating on the basis of a non-deliberative motive for action which is distinct from

pleasure and pain, and which requires the minimum cognitive ability to transpose past

events onto future occurrences.[74]

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[73] See 11.933e-34b.

[74] For those who lack this basic ability to be sensitive to deterrence the Athenian proposes the death penalty, see *Leg*. 9.862d-63a. My understanding of this minimal faculty of imagination here is much narrower than Bobonich's attribution of conceptualization to non-rational elements of the soul. In *Images of irrationality*

Let us move on to discuss the role of memory in expectations. If expectations are

supported by a minimal degree of imagination, they also require some mnemonic ability;

any projection of future outcomes must rely on the awareness of past occurrences. Let us

begin by noticing that, generally speaking, memory plays a central role in the *Laws*. It is one

of the psychological qualities that the ideal ruler must possess;[75] the preludes to the laws,

Plato's innovation in legislation, require memory;[76] at the metaphysical level memory is

one of the attributes of the cosmic soul and thus is primary with regards to bodies;[77] finally

memory plays also a role in ethical prescriptions.[78]

Additionally there are specific instances in which mnemonic ability is discussed in

psychological terms and associated with expectations. For instance in the discussion about

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Bobonich claims that the rational part of the soul supplies conceptual content to the non-rational part of the soul. Specifically he says that "[c]onfidence and fear have conceptual content for Plato (*Laws* 644c9-d1; cf. *Laches* 198b and *Prot.* 358de), as does hope" (167). "Just as irrational beliefs are not unconceptualized beliefs, but wrongly conceptualized ones, so non-rational motivations are not unconceptualized, for example desires, but are wrongly or incompletely conceptualize" (167). Much of Bobonich's argument in this case is derived from *Timaeus* 42e-ff. Differently from Bobonich here I am not arguing for a direct contribution of *logismos* to the formation of fear and confidence. All I am trying to show that is these non-rational elements do possess a minimal requirement of imagination. Folch seems to argue something similar to Bobonich's reading of the cognitive abilities of beliefs in the soul of the *Laws* on the basis of *Leg.*2.653a-c, where the Athenian states that the passions of the soul recognize that their agreement with rationality is due to their own correct habituation (*The City and the Stage* 81-83). Once again, my understanding of the role of imagination for expectations is much more limited.

[75] See *Leg.*4.710c.

[76] See 4.723c.

[77] See *Leg.* 10.896c-d. 10.896c-d and 897a-b includes opinions as the functions of the metaphysical soul and claims that they precede the body. Regardless the validity of this argument (Mayhew thinks that Plato commits a fallacy of division *Plato Laws 10* 129-130), the clear implication here is that at the metaphysical level opinions share something in common with reason, while pleasure and pain (which are left out from this passage in book 10) are separate from it.

[78] With regards to funeral duties towards one parents the Athenian claims that maintaining the memory of one's parents after their passing grants beautiful hopes that one will be rewarded by the gods (*Leg.* 4.717e-18a).

drunkenness at *Leg.*1.645d-46a, which relates to the image of the marionette, the

Athenian lists memory alongside other cognitive abilities, including opinions.[79] When

giving an account of the Athens' resolution to partake in the Persian war, he claims that the

Athenians "relied on hope (*elpis*)" that is "they had seen from past events, that from

impossible situation came out victory for those who battle" (*Leg.* 3.699b). We see then that

elpis, here used in its non-technical sense of hope rather than expectation, may be

dependent on memories of past events.[80] Another connection between memory and

expectations, this time addressing individual virtues, comes in book 5, when the Athenian

claims, with regards to one's one virtuous behavior, that one has to remember and remind

others of what is the right way to live and play, so they may preserve the hope that the gods

may grant them good fortune.[81] Furthermore, there are two cases in which memory is

referred to explicitly as assisting the expectation of fear. The first case concerns the victim

of a homicide, whose soul survives disembodied and preserves its memory; this memory

may induce the spirit to torment his killer, as stated in the legislation regarding homicide.

The reason why the spirit torments his killer is the expectation of fear for its own death,

preserved in memory.[82] The second case refers to legislation demanding that all sacred

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[79] As I mentioned above (note 63) here opinions seem to refer to cases other than expectations; nonetheless it is noteworthy that the Athenian includes memory in the list of psychological elements that wine weakens.

[80] Nummenmaa understands this passage in a similar fashion including a note on the social and cultural analysis of past events (what I am calling here memory, with Plato) that contributes to the formation of emotions, which then "worked as 'counselors' in the situation described [the resolution to take part in the Persian War]" (*Divine Motion and Human Emotion* 60).

[81] See *Leg.*5.732d.

[82] See *Leg.*9.865e.

places be public. The Athenian describes the motivation of those who offer private

sacrifices as "being awoken by fear in the midst of phantom appearances and dreams, and

at the same time remembering many visions" (10.910a) and seeking by means of private

sacrifices to calm their fears. This is another case when fears are undeniably connected to

memories.[83] These references make it clear that the Athenian holds the human psyche as

capable of retaining past events in memory and connecting these memories with

expectations.

At this point I have shown that expectations in the *Laws* are connected with a

narrow case of imagination and with memory. It seems only natural then that when the

Athenian defines expectations "opinions about the future" in the image of the marionette,

he is thinking of opinions supported by memory and imagination. In other words, though

expectations are originated in our drives, we cannot exclude the collaboration of some

minimal cognitive ability in their formation. My claim still finds a limit in Kamtekar's

example of fear in newborns from book 7. In this regard I can only make a few

observations, but I cannot come to a conclusion. (i) If we assume – as I have – that the

image of the marionette gives a reductive account of the elements at play in moral

psychology, we can also assume that the Athenian uses terms such as pleasure, pain, fear

and confidence consistently within that context. It is only probable, not necessary, that

these definitions are still operative in other parts of the text. Specifically with regard to the

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[83] A third instance of the implication of memory in psychology comes in the form of a metaphor. In book XII
the human psyche is used as a metaphor to describe the interaction between the nocturnal council and the
rest of the city; in this case we see that the youth plays the role of memory mediating between sensations and
thoughts; see *Leg.*12.964e-65a.

portion of book 7 Kamtekar quotes we notice that it is rather unlikely that the Athenian

uses the term *phobos* in the same sense as in the image of the marionette, since the term is

used interchangeably with its synonym *deima*. (ii) The case of book 7 discusses specifically

the fear of newborns, while the image of the marionette addresses the fully developed soul

of an adult.[84] There might be significant differences between the fear experienced by a

newborn child and the fear experienced by an adult.

Now, some of these expectations may be available for selection by *logismos*. As we

have seen above, argumentation does not have enough motivational strength to counter all

non-rational motives in the soul, thus it needs some allies among the iron cords. But what if

there are no allies for *logismos* in the soul? In order to address this question let us move to

our point (3), can we create new expectations in the soul? In answering this question one

interesting case to consider is fear of the afterlife.[85] While fear of legislative punishment

seems to be grounded in some empirical evidence that punishment will occur, fear of the

afterlife is introduced in the psyche by verbal accounts that find no empirical referent. This

case is interesting because it speaks of two features of this expectation (i) it shows the

psychological weight of expectations, which can work independently from experiences, (ii)

it shows that storytelling seems to be enough to introduce a non-rational motive for action

in the soul, which argumentation can use as leverage when it comes to make moral

decisions. For instance a rational argument against taking someone's life might not be

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[84] Belfiore Claims that the image is representing adults and not children (*Wine and Catharsis* 425). I agree
with this reading, though we should remember that adult souls do not reach a final stage of formation, and
thus the image of the puppet does not portray a static image of the psyche.

[85] See 9.870d-e and 10.887a.

sufficient for some, but if this rational argument adds as additional evidence fear of retribution in the afterlife, the agent might be psychologically motivated to avoid a homicide.

Additionally it seems that while one has to deal with the ineluctability of pleasure and pain in the psyche, the legislator might have an opportunity to inculcate specific expectations in the citizen's souls. The implication is that these expectations will comply with the law, which, as we have seen above, is an expression of *logismos*. Thus, even in this case it would seem that expectations may function as non-deliberative motives for action that argumentation can select to pursue its own ends. At *Leg.*1.631e-32a the Athenian claims that the legislator must praise and blame the citizens' pleasure, pain and desires through legislation. Then he adds that for a different set of cases, such as rage and fear and other psychological dispositions towards good and bad fortune, the legislator must "in each case define and teach what is beautiful and what is not" (*ibid.*). What must be noted immediately is that the distinction between the first and the second set of tools that the legislator may use to regulate the psychological life of the citizens corresponds clearly to the drives on the one hand and expectations on the other. Additionally we see that while pleasure and pain must be promoted or suppressed in the soul, since – as we said above- they are ineluctable, the situation is different with expectations. Expectations can be "defined and taught" because they are not in the soul since its very beginning. Thus, expectations lend themselves to psychological engineering. They are non-deliberative motives for action, which the agent unreflectively follows and at the same time can be introduced in the soul. Later in book 1, in order to clarify his point to the Cretan and the

Spartan, the Athenian offers an example they can relate to, namely the use of expectation in motivating soldiers for war. He claims that "there are two elements that bring about victory: confidence towards enemies and fear of shame for misdeeds towards friends" (*Leg*.1.647b). Introducing these expectations in the soul means to motivate soldiers to victory.

Finally let us take up the discussion of *aidos*,[86] shame, in book 1, as an instance of the engendering of expectations as non-deliberative motivations in the soul which argumentation may use in order to pursue its own goals. What is most relevant with this example is that it is predicated upon the image of the marionette, thus referring explicitly to our reductive psychological model I have been discussing. Immediately after endowing it with drives, expectations and *logismos*, the Athenian proposes the mental experiment of imagining the marionette drunk.[87] Drunkenness can introduce in the psyche a kind of fear that the Athenian calls shame.[88] It should be noted that shame is opposed to a kind of confidence (*tharros*), and that when this confidence prevails we obtain its contrary shamelessness.[89] Additionally, as in every other case of fear, even *aidos* is dependent upon the drive of pain.[90] The use of wine weakens the influence of expectations[91] and *logismos* on

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[86] Diogenes Laërtius claims "he [Plato] advised those who got drunk to view themselves in a mirror; for they would then abandon the habit which so disfigured them. To drink to excess was nowhere becoming, he used to say, save at the feasts of the god who was the giver of wine" (*Lives* 3.1.39).

[87] See *Leg.* 1.643d.

[88] *Aiskyne* at 1.647a and *aidos* in the same paragraph.

[89] See *Leg*. 1.647a and 2.671b-d.

[90] See *ivi* 2.671d, 3.698b-c.

the soul. As the Athenian puts it, the great power in wine is that it can make the drunk

person a child again,[92] with the drives being the only two pulls that determine one's

actions. The legislator exploits this weakening of some psychological motivations as he

regulates the use of wine and its social context. In the symposium the suspension of

expectations may be used to mold (*plattein*) the souls of those who are under the influence

of wine.[93] Those who are sober should guide symposia,[94] and they should shame[95] those

who are drunk and, motivated by their drives, give in to excesses. The experience of public

shaming will be preserved in memory and applied to future situations by means of

imagination. From that point on the person who has been shamed will have an additional

non-deliberative motivation to refrain from using wine excessively. Shame is just one

instance of how non-deliberative motives, in the form of expectations, can be introduced in

the soul and support *logismos* in its pursuits.[96]

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[91] See *ivi* 1.649b.

[92] See *ivi* 1.646a.

[93] See *ivi* 2.671c.

[94] See *ivi* 2.671d-72a.

[95] See *ivi* 2.672d.

[96] *Des Places* endorses my reading when he claims, with regards to the non-rational education of children, that the innovation that takes place from the musical education of *Republic* 3 to the early musical training of *Laws* 2 amounts to the fact that "dès avant la venue de la raison il faut fair contracter des habitudes que la raison à son éveil ne puisse désavouer" (*Éducation des Tendances* 413). If habits are to be formed in the soul before the coming of reason, these habits are to be based on non-deliberative motivations such as the drives or the expectations. These then will become tools that reason can use, once it has matured in the soul, as motivational forces to pursue its own goals.

Self-Awareness.

Some authors see in the image of the marionette a significant innovation in Platonic psychology, the realization that human beings are endowed with a degree of self-awareness and that they contribute to the development of their own soul. For instance Al-Farabi nods to the aspect of self-reflection in the image of the puppet and states "[i]t is obligatory on the individual man to reflect on the conditions of his soul with respect to these attractions and to follow the discerning one" (*Summary* 1.20). More recently England suggested that the image of the marionette offers more than self-awareness, as it depicts the possibility of self-determination. England refers specifically to the line that states "this account [the image of the marionette] tells that one must be always compliant with only one of the drags and never let go of it, and to pull against the other strings" (*Leg.* 1.644e4). In his view at this point the text moves us away from the image of the marionette and gives a more accurate description of human life, "still less of the original metaphor is left here – nothing but the wires: we are no longer a *spectacle: we can pull our own wires*" (*The Laws of Plato* vol. I 256).[97]

In my view it is possible to see in the text of the marionette a reminder that the person who is virtuous is self-aware, but I think it is hard to speak of elements of the psyche that are self-aware and I think it is problematic to think that from self-awareness a new psychic force arises, one that is able to determine on its own the motivation of the

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[97] Laurent proposes another possible perspective on the image of the marionette. In relating this image with the claim in book 4 that "god is the measure of all things "(716c), Laurent suggests that the image of the marionette is depicted from the point of view of the divine. How else, Laurent asks, could we understand ourselves, if not from the point of view of the "other" of the human being? Thus, "[l]'homme n'est peut-être qu'une marionnette … mais il ne l'est qu'en rapport à la perfection du divin" (*Mesure de l'Humain* 72).

soul. Concerning the degree of self-awareness that is required to the person who is to

be virtuous let us consider two points. First, as we have seen above most psychic elements

are *pathe* and in a qualified sense even *logismos* could be considered an affection. The

implication in using this term to describe the system of motivations in the psyche is that

there must be a subject who is suffering, someone who is aware of her psychological

events. Second, as we have seen, the image of the marionette gives a reductive account of

the basic elements of a moral psychology. And in this moral psychology *logismos* must take

into account all other motivational forces and decide which can help in its quest for virtue.

From the perspective of the agent who seeks motivation to be virtuous this is another

instance of self-awareness. Note that I am not stating that *logismos* is aware of its own

processes, but that the agent displays awareness of her own non-deliberative motives by

means of *logismos*. In order to discuss the limits of self-awareness in the *Laws*, let us

consider Bobonich's interpretation.

Bobonich in his *Plato's Utopia Recast* moves from England's suggestion and claims

that self-awareness can be translated in self-determination; this would be a pivotal factor

in causing action, one that is added to the psychic elements we discussed thus far. "[T]he

person is no longer passive with respect to his affections, but can somehow intervene in

their interactions. This active power or capacity of the agent frees him from having his

actions determined solely by the forces of the interacting affections" (*Utopia Recast* 266).

Additionally Bobonich proposes to understand this instance of self-determination in virtue

of the general proposition of the soul as a self-mover in book 10.[98] Specifically

Bobonich understands an agent acting of her own volition as someone who moves to action

on the basis of reason and despite the pull of non-deliberative motives. Quoting *Timaeus*

77b-c as an example, Bobonich maintains that self-reflection "is not a passive state, but

rather an activity that expresses the self-motion of the soul: it is an example of unreduced

agency. … the sort of intervention that a person is capable of according to the *Laws*' [puppet

image] would be such a case of psychic activity that is caused by or expresses the self-

motion of the soul" (*ivi* 281).

While I am sympathetic to a reading of the image of the marionette that includes

self-awareness, I think that Bobonich's reading is excessive when it portrays self-

determination as an additional element operating in the soul together with the iron and the

gold cords. As I stated above self-awareness is the correlative of argumentation in the

process of selection of motives. In a standard fashion we can imagine that the psychological

process of motivation for action in which argumentation prevails follows these basic steps:

(1) we become aware of our non-deliberative motivations, (2) *logismos* determines which

one (if any) will lead to virtuous action and (3) we cling to that non-rational motivation to

lead us to virtue. Self-awareness plays a role in (1) and (3), but it is an implication of the

interaction between *logismos* and the other forces of the soul, it is not a separate element at

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[98] Nummenmaa develops a similar argument by comparing Plato's remarks about self-motion in *Laws* X with present day definitions of self. "There is the word 'self' in the definition [of the soul as self-mover in *Leg.* 10.895e-96a], and indeed in present-day definitions of the concept of the self the idea of an inner force is generally involved" (*Divine Motions and Human Emotions* 37). See also *ivi* chapter VIII. Kamtekar offers a passing criticism of Bobonich's emphasis of self-awareness as an innovating feature of the *Laws* when she claims it can also be found in *Republic* (see *Psychology and the Inculcation of Virtue in Plato's* Laws 141 with reference to *Resp.* 8.553c-d; frankly I see no trace of self-awareness in this passage). Stalley also acknowledges that the image of the marionette requires a degree of self-reflection (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 61).

play. In this fashion my model of the psyche in the *Laws* is different from Bobonich's

under two aspects. In the first place Bobonich seems to operate on a tug-of-war

interpretation of the *Laws*' moral psychology, where self-awareness adds strength to

logismos against expectations and drives. He claims

> [i]f we accept that I shall try to do whatever I am most strongly motivated to do, it then seems inevitable that I shall act on the non-rational desire [pain, pleasure] or emotion [expectations]. Part of what Plato tries to show by means of the puppet image is that such an outcome is not inevitable. And that even if there is the proper alignment between the strength of my desires and my evaluation of their objects, this alignment is not up to me. What does the work for Plato in showing that such an outcome is not inevitable is the notion that I can intervene in the competition of desires (*Utopia Recast* 277).

On my reading, *logismos* does not need to rely on the agent's intervention, but rather on

non-deliberative motives that align with its goal and contrast with the rest of the pulls in

the soul. To clarify this point with an example, I know that it is my duty as a citizen to file

my taxes on time, but this duty moves against my drives of pain (because filing taxes is

perceived as painfully tedious) and my drives of pleasure (because I would rather do

something else); but I also know that filing taxes would mean spending some time alone

with my wife, whom I love. As *logismos* selects the expectation of spending time with my

wife, I find a non-deliberative motive to file taxes.

Secondly Bobonich foresees and rejects an interpretation like mine on three

grounds (i) "the puppet image presents us with a case in which the person must intervene

while all the non-rational motivations are, so to speak, already on the scene" and operate

against reason, (ii) "spirited emotions might support reason in many cases, but it is

implausible to think that they are always active in cases of conflicted choices," (iii) if non-

deliberative motivations come to aid reason in all occurrences, "[r]eason does not directly

determine what the person does" (*Utopia Recast* 278). I think, however, that I can reply

to Bobonich's worries successfully. To (i) I would say that Bobonich is not considering that

some non-rational motivations may be created, as we have seen above, with the

employment of some of our cognitive abilities; thus we may "fabricate," as it were, *logismos*'

own non-rational allies. With regards to (ii) while it is reasonable to assume that spirited

emotions could not support *logismos* at all times, it is unreasonable to assume that those

are the only emotions that may support argumentation. Fear can work just as well, as

shown in the case of *aidos* discussed above. Finally concerning (iii) I do not see why reason

should directly, rather than indirectly, determine what a person does. I am afraid that if we

accept this third criticism we might fall into a binary conception of the soul in *Laws* which

sets reason against all other non-rational forces,[99] rather than following the text in

identifying the soul as a unity in which a variety of forces interact.[100] Said otherwise, if we

endorse Bobonich's third criticism, I think we would have a hard time finding instances in

which reason acts in its purity as a motive for action, without sectioning the soul in two

parts one which has to win and one that has to yield at all times.

      Wilburn seems to offer an account of self-awareness in the *Laws* that is similar to

mine *prima facie,* while in fact it bears some significant differences. Wilburn maintains that

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[99] Think of this in terms of the "tug-of-war" interpretation I discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

[100] Think of this in terms of the "relation" interpretation we discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Stalley maintains that Plato, when it comes to assigning moral responsibility is like "anyone who wishes to maintain a belief in individual responsibility while acknowledging the importance of environmental causes: one has to argue that, while such causes may always influence action, only in unusual circumstances is this influence so powerful as to determine what they agent does" (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 50). The importance of maintaining both the individual and the environmental factors, as Stalley calls them, is what I am stressing in the activity of *logismos* over the non-rational forces of the soul.

the golden cord of *logismos* moves us towards the pursuit of our own good, our happiness which "involves reasoning about what sorts of lifestyles, action, and behaviour are good and why. …. These conclusions take the form of more or less general principles" (Akrasia *and Self-Rule in Plato's* Laws 33). His main point is that the general principles towards which *logismos* guides us are all too general to motivate us towards specific actions. "The golden cord needs our assistance, then, and our assistance or intervention consists in deliberating about the value of specific actions and arriving at conclusions about those actions that are entailed by the correct laws that we accept" (*ivi* 35). Thus, differently from Bobonich, Wilburn argues that self-awareness "is a process of deliberation that culminates in an individual's rational desire to perform (or abstain from) a specific action" (*ibid.*). For Wilburn self-awareness is this rational desire and the translation of general principles into specific instances.[101] The chief difference between Wilburn's model and mine resides in the fact that on my account there is no need of translation of general principles into specific actions. On my account *logismos* is an instance of practical reasoning and deals directly with specific actions. It does not seem plausible to attribute to *logismos* as described in the image of the marionette the functions of an intellectual faculty that must individuate general principles. As we said above, general principles are offered to *logismos* by legislation, by intelligence or some aesthetic standards. Additionally, it does not seem plausible to double the deliberative ability of *logismos*. Argumentation *is* the deliberative faculty of the psyche, it does not need the intervention of the agent to deliberate. The agent is the result of the interactions among the pulls of the psyche, not one of the elements

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[101] *Ivi* 36.

playing a role in the psyche. As we shall see in the next chapter, if the agent really wants to have an immediate effect on her psyche she should undergo a process of habituation of her non-deliberative motivations.

Chapter Conclusion.

In this chapter we gained a detailed understanding of the psychology of the *Laws*. In the first place I analyzed in details the psychological elements listed in the image of the marionette, secondly I gave some indications pertaining to the moral psychology in the *Laws,* and finally I clarified what self-awareness looks like in this psychological context.

I suggested that pleasure and pain should be understood as drives, which may have an influence on our psyche and may motivate us to act, but that are at the same time distinct from our cognitive abilities, even the most basic and cannot be reduced to pleasurable or painful sensation. When we consider pleasure and pain as drives we should think of them as ineluctable forces that demand to be discharged.

I described expectations as emotive psychological states. They are different from pleasure and pain, as they are endowed with some basic cognitive abilities, such as a narrow imagination and memory. They also constitute their own independent set of non-deliberative motives for action. Though the Athenian speaks chiefly of confidence and fear in this regards, expectations do not need to be limited to these two cases.

Finally, *logismos* should be understood as an argumentative ability selecting among drives and expectations those motives that are best suited for achieving its own goal, virtue.

We also gained some understanding of the workings of a moral psychology based on drives, emotive states and argumentation. One would be performing a moral action when one's motive of action is selected by *logismos*. Most interestingly, argumentation can be provided with some non-deliberative motives for action that are best suited to achieve its goal, as it is the case with expectations which can be "defined and taught."

This ability to exploit non-deliberative motives for action explains the notion of self-awareness that seems to permeate the image of the marionette. We can imagine that the psychological process of motivation for action in which argumentation prevails follows these basic steps: (1) we become aware of our non-rational motivations, (2) *logismos* determines which one (if any) will lead to virtuous action and (3) we can cling to that non-rational motivation to lead us there. (4) If we find no non-rational motivational appeal for our virtuous goals we can create some. This last step, properly speaking, seems to be self-determination and will be discussed in the next chapter under the guise of habituation.

This chapter is the second of three intended to analyze the *Laws*' psychology. In the general economy of this dissertation it is paramount that I clarify the psychological basis for the Athenian's claim that *mousike* may contribute to the moral development of human beings. By the end of the next chapter it should be clear how the human psyche is dependent upon non-rational motives of action and how we may exploit those non-rational forces within our soul to bring ourselves to virtue.

CHAPTER 3

THE MORAL PSYCHOLOGY OF THE *LAWS*. HABIT, PLEASURE AND VIRTUE

> A story is told that Plato once saw some one playing at dice
> and rebuked him. And, upon his protesting that he played
> for a trifle only, "But the habit," rejoined Plato, "is not a
> trifle."
> Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent*
> *Philosophers.*

Chapter Summary.

The previous two chapters have introduced the possibility of a moral psychology in

the *Laws* that allows for self-determination. Specifically we have seen in the first chapter

that the image of the marionette can be read as a metaphor describing the human psyche at

the mercy of psychic forces, while knowledge of these psychic mechanisms might allow

human beings to pull their own strings, as it were. In the second chapter I have discussed

the possibility of introducing expectations in the soul as motives that can help *logismos* in

its pursuit of virtue; this introduction of non-deliberative semi-rational motives is an

example in psychological terms of the interplay of passivity and activity represented in the

image of the marionette. In this chapter I analyze some of these virtue-conducive non-

deliberative motives and their introduction in the soul. This analysis will conclude our

investigation of the moral psychology of the *Laws* and will constitute the basis to

understand the effectiveness of literature and performance in establishing virtue, which

will be the topic of the following chapters. The first section in this chapter discusses the

central role of habituation in the moral psychology of the *Laws*. My claim is that habit

formation is such a pivotal concept in this text that it may explain some apparent

contradictions between different parts of the dialogue. The second section of this chapter

discusses in detail how habit exerts its influence on the non-deliberative motives of the

soul and lays the foundation for the third section of the chapter, which explains how habit

can introduce virtue in the soul, beginning from its influence on non-deliberative motives

of action. We shall see how, on the one hand, habit represses non-rational motivations that

would hinder the lead of *logismos,* and creates non-rational motivations (for virtue), which

will sustain *logismos*. On the other hand, we shall observe how habit fuels the desire for

aesthetic or axiological pleasures, which prepare the soul to acquire practical wisdom.

The chapter concludes with two due diligence sections. Section four anticipates

some difficulties with this reading of the moral psychology of the *Laws* and attempts to

resolve them or at least explain them. Section five clarifies what kind of psychological

character results from habituation according to virtue.

Virtue: Self-Mastery, Harmony or Habit?

In the previous chapter I explained how non-deliberative psychological elements

might support the goals of argumentation, thus contributing to moral excellence. I have

also touched on the problem of competing non-rational and semi-rational motivational

forces in the soul, and the necessity for *logismos* to select some of these forces against

others in the pursuit of *arete.* These dynamics among psychological forces might seem at

first glance contradictory. On the one hand if non-deliberative motives for action (drives

and expectations) contribute to the goals of *logismos*, then the agent who acts morally

would be in a state of psychic harmony; on the other hand, if there is strife in the soul when

logismos selects some non-deliberative motives for action against others (e.g.

expectations vs. drives), then the agent would find herself in a state of psychological

conflict, as she harnesses psychological motivation to counteract the soul's non-virtuous

tendencies.

This very tension between two psychological models for virtue can also be detected

in the text of the *Laws*, especially as the reader moves from book 1 to book 2. In book 1 the

Athenian engages Megillus and Kleinias in a definition of virtue as *mache* starting at

1.632e,[1] which culminates in the claim that the image of the marionette clarifies "what it is

to be stronger or weaker than oneself" (*ivi* 645b). For brevity I will refer to this view as

"virtue as self-mastery." This view implies that (1) the soul is prone to conflict and (2) that

virtue amounts to the victory of some forces over others in the soul.

At the beginning of book 2 the Athenian seems to change his position on virtue

sharply as he claims that

> when pleasure, and love (*philia*) and pain and hate are engendered in the
> soul correctly, when [the children] are not yet able to grasp arguments
> (*logo*), then, when they grasp the argument, they agree (*symphonesosi*) with
> the argument that they have been habituated correctly (*orthos eithisthai*) by
> means of fitting habits (*ethon*); this very harmony (*symphonia*) is complete
> virtue (*Leg.* 2.653b).

For brevity, I will refer to this second view as "virtue as harmony." This view implies

that (1) the soul is not necessarily inclined to conflict as its forces can be molded into

agreement and (2) that virtue amounts to, psychologically speaking, the harmony of non-

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[1] The introduction of the theme of conflict in political matters comes at 626a, but the discussion tackles specifically the issue of the cardinal virtues in terms of conflict starting at 632e.

deliberative motives for action (drives and expectations) with rational argument (a function of *logismos*).

Can these two differing views on virtue be reconciled? Should we assume that the Athenian in book 2 is contradicting his former claims or that he has changed his mind? Though a complete argument in support of my position will be delivered only by the end of this section, I think it is useful to anticipate my conclusion at this point. While I do think that it is possible to reconcile the view of virtue as self-mastery with virtue as harmony, I also maintain that such reconciliation cannot be understood by looking at excellence alone. In order to grasp how these two accounts of virtue coordinate we must look at the means of acquisition of excellence, habit. As we shall see, habit cuts across the notion of virtue as harmony and self-mastery, by determining the formation and the use of non-rational motives for moral action. In other words, habit is the condition for each view of virtue. There is harmony when habits of virtuous behavior have been acquired in compliance with argumentation; there is self-mastery in the process of acquisition of habits that foster the creation of non-rational motivations.[2] But let us proceed with order.

The debate in the secondary literature regarding virtue as harmony vs. virtue as self-mastery is large.[3] In order to clarify my own position I will select only some voices in this discussion, Meyer and Jouët-Pastré. Initially, in her *Laws 1 & 2*, Meyer does not seem to

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[2] My view is shared by Stalley, *Introduction* 52-54. For the central role of habit formation in the scheme of moral education of the *laws* see also Morrow's *Plato's Cretan City* 300-301.

[3] For a list of authors engaged in this debates see Meyer *Laws 1 & 2* p. 163.

take a stand on the matter,[4] but points out the different places in the *Laws* where the

account of virtue changes from self-mastery to harmony. She suggests that these differing

accounts may be justified dramatically by a tactic that the Athenian employs to persuade

his interlocutors.[5] Ultimately, however, Meyer maintains that "the Athenian does not in the

end accept his interlocutors' identification of virtue with self-mastery" and that "the

Athenian clearly takes … internal agreement to be a feature of virtue (653a-c)" (*Laws 1 & 2*

182). Thus, Meyer offers a dramatic explanation for the Athenian's change of perspective,

and maintains that substantially the *Laws* endorse a view of virtue as harmony.

In order to appreciate Meyer's reading we should consider whether the dramatic

setting of the dialogue is a sufficient explanation for the discrepancy in the accounts of

virtue. With this I am not excluding the merits of the dramatic setting (Plato is an author

capable of encasing substantive claims in the appropriate dramatic contexts), but I

question whether the change from a perspective of self-mastery to one of harmony can be

confined within the limits of the dramatic setting. In my view, if we were to find

philosophical and psychological explanations for such change, those would be preferable.

Let us consider two points. First, at the textual level we must recognize that the two

paradigms of virtue (self-mastery and harmony) are employed with reference to different

psychological contexts. For instance, when discussing virtue in terms of self-mastery at *Leg.*

1.633d-636c, the context is the training the soul as it pertains specifically to the virtues of

courage and moderation. It should be noted that if the focus is only on some virtues, it is

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[4] See *Laws 1 & 2* p. 168.

[5] See *ivi* 162, 171. See pp. 169-171 for a detailed reconstruction of the different expressions used in *Laws* and other dialogues to indicate rule over oneself and their different meanings.

possible that what is required for some virtues (self-mastery) does not apply to the totality of virtue (harmony). Additionally, the notion of psychological training would make it difficult to describe instances of virtue as harmony, as training conveys ideas of incompletion, strife and amelioration. Though psychological training does not exclude the possibility of its resolution in harmony, from the perspective of book 1, virtue appears to be the conditioning of some of those psychological forces resistant to the lead of argumentation.

On the other hand, in the case of *Leg.* 2.653b-c, where the model of virtue as harmony is made explicit, we must notice that a new psychological context is under consideration, one that looks at the end (*telos*) of the educational process,[6] after the soul has been conditioned. Additionally, since *Laws* no longer imposes the strict intellectual requirement for virtue that one may find for instance in *Republic*,[7] we are at liberty to speak of a spectrum of virtue, rather than two separate states, one of virtue and one of non-virtue. At the one end of the spectrum we should think of those actions that are virtuous though the agent struggles to carry them out; this is for instance the situation of those who undergo ethical training. Somewhere in the middle of the spectrum we could think of an agent whose character is inclined towards one part of virtue. This is for instance the situation of the Spartans and the Cretans at the beginning of book 1 of *Laws*; since they only

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[6] It should be noticed that the Athenian introduces the view of virtue as harmony by claiming that this is a stage reached by a human being in its ultimate manifestation (*teleos d'oun est'anthropos Leg.* 2.653a).

[7] As I summarized in the Introduction, at the end of Book 4, Socrates clarifies that virtue is only the totality of the soul's functions including its intellectual abilities (see *Resp.* 4.443d-45e). Additionally, in book 6 he makes the point that virtuous agents are those who have ontological knowledge (*ivi* 6.484d-85a) and that by means of this knowledge are able to bring virtue upon their own and others' souls (*ivi* 500d-e).

cultivate courage, they are inclined towards this virtue, while they lack acquaintance

with the other cardinal virtues.[8] Finally on the higher, so to speak, end of the spectrum we

can think of the greatest degree of virtue. The agent who has intellectual knowledge of

virtue and has weak or no non-deliberative motives for action in conflict with such

knowledge. Such an agent embodies virtue as harmony to the point of needing no law to

guide her behavior.[9] This kind of psychological explanation seem to address the

discrepancy in the accounts of virtue as self-mastery and harmony better than Meyer's

reference to the dramatic setting.

   Let us now consider a second reading of the difference in the accounts of virtue.

Jouët-Pastré seems to make an attempt at reconciling the two views of virtue when she

claims "[l]a victoire sur soi est l'établissement d'une harmonie et d'un accord entre ses

affects et le *logismos*" (*Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 42). This identification of self-mastery and

harmony is made possible by the subjection of all pulls of the soul to the law, be this the

posited law of the city that educates us or the psychological equivalent of the law,

logismos.[10] But can the psychology of the *Laws* achieve such conclusion? Can *logismos*

subjugate the non-rational forces of the soul into harmony? Let us consider some problems

with this view. First, in general terms, as discussed in the previous chapter with regards to

the tug-of-war interpretation, it seems unlikely that argumentation can contrast the pull of

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[8] See *Leg.* 1.630e-31d.

[9] See *Leg.*9.865d

[10] See *Le Jeu et le Sérieux* 43. Her reading finds textual support in the image of the marionette when the Athenian claims that we should follow the pull of calculation and we should "pull against [or resist] those cords opposed to it" (1.644e). However, as I have anticipated in the previous chapter with the example of shame, this resistance is the psychological act of forming non-rational motivations for actions that are compliant with virtue and pull against those which drag away from virtue.

non-rational motives. If such were the case one would eliminate all worries about

akrasia, that is the lack of moral force to contrast the pull of drives and expectations.

Second, argumentation relies on non-deliberative motivations, such as expectations, to side

with its pull. As I discussed in the previous chapter, when shame (*aidos*) is formed in

symposia, one builds an expectation of fear towards misbehaving under the influence of

wine. *Aidos* is precisely the expectation to which argumentation may appeal to prevent

future instances of excessive drinking. Finally, cases of virtue are cases in which

argumentation's lead is supported by expectation complying with its demands (e.g. *aidos*)

against the pull of the vicious non-deliberative forces (e.g. the drive to gratify our desire for

inebriation). Thus, even in virtue not all non-deliberative forces in the soul are reconciled

by argumentation. As a reply to Jouët-Pastré's argument, this means that if we are to find a

way to reconcile the views of virtue as self-mastery and virtue as harmony, we should not

resolve to subsume all irrational forces in the soul to the golden string.

To summarize, if we were to attempt a unifying account of virtue as self-mastery

and as harmony, (1) we should not explain those differing accounts as dramatic devices;

(2) we should consider that these two views can be reconciled as different stages of

development in virtue, self-mastery being a training in virtue and harmony representing a

more complete stage of virtue; (3) we should maintain that this reconciliation of the two

views cannot be understood as the hegemony of the *logismos* in the soul. At this point let us

ask, what is the element in the *Laws*' moral psychology that unites virtue as self-mastery

with virtue as harmony?

In order to address this question let us read again the portion of text that opens

book 2 and claims that virtue is to be identified with harmony.

> When pleasure, and love (*philia*) and pain and hate are engendered in the soul correctly, when [the children] are not yet able to grasp arguments (*logo*), then, when they grasp the argument, they agree (*symphonesosi*) with the argument that they have been habituated correctly (*orthos eithisthai*) by means of fitting habits (*ethon*), this very harmony (*symphonia*) is complete virtue and the part of it that is rightly trained in respect of pleasures and pains, so as to hate what ought to be hated, right from the beginning up to the very end, and to love what ought to be loved - if you were to mark this part off in your definition and call it "education," you would be giving it, in my opinion, its right name (2.653b-c).[11]

This passage points clearly at habituation (*ethizein*) as the process that drives the

initial conditioning of non-deliberative motivations, such as it is conceived in the model of

virtue as self-mastery, as well as the condition that allows for non-deliberative motives to

come in harmony with the directives of argumentation. Additionally, looking at habit as the

element in the moral psychology of the *Laws* that can reconcile the two conceptions

addresses the conclusions I just drew. For instance, employing habit as an explanation

carries my argument on the agreement of virtue as self-mastery and as harmony to a

conclusion without resorting to the force of *logismos* as an explanation. The connection

between the two aspects of *arete* is not to be sought in the subjection of the entire soul to

argument, but in the process of training one's non-deliberative motives to comply with

logismos; that process is carried out by habit, and while harmony of rational and non-

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[11] Bury's translation modified. We must notice, with Des Places and Ferrari, that a similar idea is expressed in *Rep.* 2.366c, 3.401c-402. There too children should naturally hate what is morally reprehensible and love what is morally worthy, see Ferrari, *Platone Le Leggi* p. 164-5 note 3. The necessary distinction to be made with *Republic* however is that those children will love and hate with one part of their soul and will understand what is morally excellent with another. For a summary of interpretations of this passage see Bravo, *Le Platon des* Lois *est-il hédoniste?* 104, n.17. See also Gauthier-Muzellec, *Musique et Plaisir chez Platon et Aristote* 197 for a lively explanation of the habituation of pleasure as instantiating virtue in the soul.

rational motives is its conclusion, its initial effort focuses on the mastery of non-

deliberative forces.

We should be careful and note that habits are not the same as virtues, rather habits

prepare virtues in the soul and motivate virtuous action. As Berges puts it, "virtues are the

result of a process of conscious and systematic habituation" (*Plato on Virtue and the Law*

15).[12] This process of systematic habituation yields permanent character traits, as we shall

see below, and some of these can be virtuous. Additionally the process of habituation for

the agreement of non-deliberative motives with argumentation seems to comply with the

claims we made about the *Laws'* psychology in the previous chapter. The passage from *Leg.*

2.653b-c clearly states that habit results in the formation of additional non-deliberative

motives, such as hate and love. In the previous chapter we discussed this point in terms of

formation of expectations.[13] Finally, we should notice that the final goal of habituation,

harmony, does not equal a soul that is quieted. As the text says this soul is still one that

hates and loves. In other words this is still a soul that fights some of its non-deliberative

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[12] At this stage the consciousness of the process of habituation is yet to be discussed. The system of education devised in Magnesia is certainly a conscious effort on the part of the legislator to influence non-rational motivations in the citizenry, as we shall see in the next chapter. It is uncertain that there is a possibility for self-consciousness in the process of habituation. Some habits vaguely implicate a tendency to self-awareness. The first example comes from the division of choruses in book 2. Here the Athenian describes the joy of the elderly in seeing the youth dance as an example of self-awareness. Such joy indicates self-awareness in two ways. First, the elderly are self-aware that they are young no longer; second, they are aware of their own past, when youth gave them the vigor to dance (see *Leg.* 2.657d.) A second, more persuasive, example of self-awareness in habit comes from book 5, when the Athenian claims that we must repeat to ourselves good precepts, because they may work as reminders (*anamnesis*) and help the soul's influx of *phronesis* which would otherwise escape (see *Leg.* 5.732b). Even in this case there seems to be the possibility to develop a habit, which could lead to some degree of self-awareness in the recognition of our lack of *phronesis* and in the understanding of what is needed to acquire *phronesis*.

[13] Stalley seems to assume this point when he claims that in the *Laws* "[i]n general the aim of education is not merely to encourage us to control our wayward passions, but to make us feel pleasure in virtue and find vice painful" (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 53).

motives. Thus, to some degree even the soul that experiences a state of harmony

between expectations and *logismos* is one that exercises self-mastery in terms of active

suppression of some non-harmonious non-deliberative motivations.

The Psychological Mechanics of Habituation.

In order to understand the moral psychology of the *Laws* we should understand the

mechanics of habituation and qualify the ways in which habits introduce virtues in the soul.

Let us begin by grasping the workings of habituation. The Athenian proposes to understand

the psychological process of habituation[14] by means of an analogy with the assimilation of

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[14] Habituation is a central feature of the *Laws* beyond the sphere of psychology, as it defines a variety of aspects of legislation. For instance, habit is a force that shapes the organization of states (at least in the fictional account that Plato gives of the origin of the states at *Leg.* 3.681a-b), and solidifies customs that are defining of the Magnesian state (see *ivi* .6.781c, where the Athenian recognizes that in introducing women to common meals they will have to face the resistance of habit built on generation of women unable to participate in the *syssitia*). Habit also informs military life; the successful army is defined by the habit of following the commander, and a habit of deciding for oneself could be detrimental for the city's armed forces (see *ivi* 12.942a-c). Generally speaking, habit is what sustains posited law. The Athenian sees habit as a device to invite citizens to comply with legislation, in his view the legislator should use "habit, praise and arguments" (*ivi* 2.663c) to prove that the life of the law abiding, just and good person is also the life with the greatest pleasures. With regards to the education of the children, the Athenian warns against regulating by law every private custom of the citizens. It is very likely that these laws would be broken because "in a private setting many and small instances … easily happen differently from the recommendations of the legislator as a result of the pain and pleasure and desire of each individual" (*Leg.*7.788a-b). These micro infractions would result in "human beings growing into the habit of breaking the law" (*ivi* 788b). By the same token the Athenian recognizes that habit can also sustain laws. This point is made in a very interesting section regarding the *agrapha nomima* (unwritten laws) or laws of the fathers, essentially habitual customs (see *ivi* 3.680a and 3.681b) that are in compliance with legislation "are bonds of the constitutions" (*ivi* 7.793b) as they hold written laws together. The Athenian represents them metaphorically as the load bearing beams of a building, which represents the legal edifice of the state (*ivi* 7.793c). These beams are regulations that "have been beautifully posited and are in the habit (*ethisthenta*) [of being respected]" (7.793b). Finally we should consider that a citizenry well-habituated is an ideal audience for the most significant legal innovation of the *Laws*, the preludes. There is a debate in the secondary literature regarding the quality of the arguments presented in the preludes in support of the pieces of legislation the Athenian proposes. Some authors think that these preludes to do not appeal to rationality in order to be persuasive (Morrow, Stalley) while others claim that they do offer rational arguments (Bobonich). Berges offers a novel solution to this problem, one that does not conceives of the preludes in a jurisprudential vacuum. She claims that "[t]he citizens of the new colony, if they have been habituated into virtue, will find it a lot easier to understand certain claims being made in the preambles, claims which appeal to a well-balanced character … It would be futile to claim that any appeal to reason, however, 'universal' (*sic*) is ever free of assumptions as to the educational background of the audience." On this view the arguments in the preambles to the laws are effective only on the basis of the moral habits of the citizen audience.

food in the body, though he specifies that "in the same way one must consider that it

[habituation] happens with regards to human intelligence and the natures of the souls"

(*Leg.* 7.798a). In the process of habituation (*synethe*) to foods[15] the first step bodies

undergo is one of "irritation" by the things one eats and drinks; the second step consists of

the passage of time and of the "production of flesh from [the things drunk and eaten] that is

similar (*oikeias*) to those things" (7.797e.); the final step proclaims that once the body has

gone through this process "it lives in the best way with pleasure and health" (7.798a). In

other words, once a dietary habit has been acquired, it generates pleasure for the body.

Such is the case regardless of the quality of the habit (good or bad) so that any kind of

change, even change in the sense of improvement, will be lived by the body in a regime of

habit as "the most dangerous thing" (7.797d). This is the case for instance with changing

from an omnivorous to a vegetarian diet, when one craves animal proteins. This sense of

danger is likely to occur as a consequence of the acquisition of a new dietary habit, which

brings with it new instances of irritation, assimilation to the food one consumes and finally

pleasure and health.

     As the discussion in book 7 progresses, the Athenian introduces habit as a device for

the education of the soul. As he puts it at *Leg.* 7.807d, the body will be cultivated by means

of "toil and nourishment," while for the soul there are teachings (*mathemata*) and habits

(*ethe*). With reference to the psychology drawn in the previous chapter, it seems

uncontroversial to assume that teachings will be reserved for that pull of the soul that is

capable of argumentation, while drives and expectations will have to be cultivated by

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[15] For this entire analogy see L*eg.*7.797d-98a.

means of habit.[16] Now, if we apply the process of habituation described in the dietetics

to the *Laws*' moral psychology we should expect the same fourfold structure. (1) At the

beginning of the process of psychic habituation the soul experiences psychological

"irritation" in acquiring a habit; (2) there is a change in the soul's non-rational motives that

are affected by habit, so that non-rational motives become similar to the habit being

acquired; (3) once the habit is acquired the soul will gain pleasure from that habit; (4) a

soul can gain new habits, but once the habit A is set, it is hard to extricate. The introduction

of the new habit B affecting similar non-rational motivations (e.g. habits A and B affect the

same expectation of confidence in my ability to finish a project) may result in apprehension

and in a new cycle of irritation, assimilation and pleasure. This general framework may be

used to understand the generalities of the process of habituation of non-rational motives,

but we must still clarify the specifics of this process. Let us move on to do that.

In order to look at the psychological mechanics of habituation in detail I will chart

briefly the connection between pleasure, habit and character.[17] As anticipated in the

previous chapter, the *Laws* is particularly concerned with the effects of pleasure on the

soul, and habituation is often deployed to regulate the drive of pleasure. Let us look at two

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[16] We have an indication that such is the assumption on which the Athenian operates if we look at the type of punishment he reserves to the atheist in book 10. The Athenian maintains that there are two types of atheist one who has "just character" (10.908b) and one who gives in to pleasure and pain. Since these two are different types of atheists, they are deserving of different punishments. The difference in punishment is not dictated by the two atheists' intellectual abilities, as they both hold mistaken opinions about the existence of the gods and thus they are both equally at fault, intellectually speaking. Their difference rests on the ability to dominate their drives, which is dependent on habit, not *mathemata*.

[17] We have already seen a glimpse of this connection in the passages citing the beginning of book 7. There the Athenian makes clear that the many and small instances of the pursuit of pleasure may cause a habit of breaking the law and many different types of character that do not comply with the recommendations of the legislator (7.788a-c). See above note 14.

examples. In book 7 the Athenian claims that children should develop a tendency

towards cheerfulness. Specifically he is concerned with children's tendency to cry in the

first three years of their lives, as a habit of crying in a child may develop into a man's

excessive tendency to complain.[18] This concern does not imply that the Athenian

recommends the cultivation of pleasure *tout court*. He thinks that his "argument states that

the correct life must not pursue pleasures nor must completely escape pains, but must

welcome (*aspazesthai*) the middle, what I just discussed, calling it cheerfulness" (7.792c-

d).[19] Looking at this example in the framework of habituation we could say that (1)

children feel pleasure and pain, and though it might be discomforting, they must observe a

regime of habituation that gives in to neither drive, but that aims at cheerfulness, a middle

state between these two; (2) after some time (perhaps after the first three years of life) in

the soul of these children a new non-rational motive for action will be formed, one that

welcomes the cheerfulness brought in the soul by the regime of habituation;[20] (3) children

with a cheerful disposition experience some degree of mild pleasure as result of their habit.

Other examples show that in some cases habituation is not deployed as a device

against drives, but for the cultivation of some drives, working along with the non-rational

tendencies present in the soul. Consider for instance book 1, when the Athenian claims that

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[18] See *Leg.* 7.792a-b.

[19] Guthrie suggested that this life consists in a neutral state between pleasure and pain, one similar to the gods (cited in Carone *Place of Hedonism in Plato's* Laws 289), but, as I shall discuss in a moment, I side with Carone in seeing this remarks as standing on a basic hedonistic assumption that there is a net of pleasure in the life of cheerfulness (*ibid.*).

[20] We should note the affective meaning of "welcoming;" it implies that the reaction to the middle life is one of non-rational origin (it is a non-rational motive). Carone seems to agree with this understanding of cheerfulness when she calls it a "disposition" (*Place of Hedonism in Plato's* Laws 290).

children must be directed by means of pleasures and desires to grow into the habit[21] of

wanting to perform their future occupation (e.g. carpentry or farming). This desire (*eros*)

will then become the *arete* of their practice.[22] Once again, if we were to look at this example

within the framework of habituation sketched above we would see that (1) children feel

pleasure in carrying out an activity and habituation is meant to foster that drive, with

hardly any psychological "irritation;" (2) children grow into the desire for the activity that

habituation fosters;[23] (3) this form of habituation clearly generates a gratification for those

who cultivate it since childhood, as their desire for a certain activity is satisfied.

In these two examples we see how habituation relates to pleasure and we obtain

confirmation of habituation as the connection between the notion of virtue as self-mastery

and that of virtue as harmony. Habituation is connected to pleasure in two senses. On the

one hand habituation may hinder the drive of pleasure (as in the example of cheerfulness),

while on the other, it may promote it (as in the example of being inclined towards a certain

occupation). Hereinafter we will refer to the first case as "habits of repression"[24] and to the

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[21] Again, the Athenian does not address this situation explicitly in terms of habit, but he stresses that one "must care [for their occupation] directly since childhood" (1.643b).

[22] See *Leg.* 1.643c-d.

[23] Bobonich offers an account for semi-rational desires that is similar to the role of habit in this context. He quotes *Philebus* 35b-d to show that desire is a faculty of the soul hinging on memory to determine the appropriateness of its object of desire (e.g. my desire to drink is the result of my being empty of liquid plus my memory of being full of liquid). Bobonich discusses how memories of early emotive states can be harvested to produce ethical behavior; "[ethical pleasures acquired in youth] provide a persistent source of motivation: adults will tend to continue to find these old pleasures pleasant...adults' fixed tastes in pleasures ... help protect them not only against innovations in pleasures, but also against ethical change more generally" (*Plato's Utopia Recast* 287).

[24] Cheerfulness is not the only case in which the Athenian recommends to repress the demands of the drive of pleasure. Other cases include aesthetic pleasures, which are not to be pursued when they are disjointed from virtue. The problem with these pleasures is that they place the body higher than the soul (see *Leg.* 5.727e)

latter as "habits of cultivation" of pleasure. The distinction between habits of repression and habits of cultivation sheds light on habituation as the *trait d'union* between virtue as self-mastery and harmony. Habits of repression of pleasure are those attempts at wrestling excellence out of the non-deliberative forces of our psyche; they befit a model of virtue in terms of self-mastery. Successfully repressing a drive pulling against argumentation, by contrasting it with a habit that introduces in the soul a non-deliberative motive supporting *logismos*, is the explication of the motto "being stronger than oneself." On the other hand, habits of cultivation of pleasure are those attempts to exploit drives that are present in our psyche and which are compliant with the goals of argumentation. In other words, this is an attempt at strengthening an existing harmonious relation between non-rational and rational forces in our psyche. Additionally, the Athenian assumes that habituation generates on its own a quantum of pleasure. As we have seen in the two examples, the establishment of habits for the soul and the creation of non-deliberative motives of action sustained by those habits yield some form of satisfaction; this is true in the case of habits of cultivation as well as that of habits of repression. This added quantum of pleasure helps habits in settling in the soul.

Before concluding this section, let us reflect on the significance of introducing habits in the soul. In the framework of habituation sketched above, I remarked on point (4) that though new habits can be introduced in the soul, old habits die hard, as they say. The Athenian offers a psychological explanation for this tenacity of habit in the form of

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and excesses in care for the body are detrimental for the soul (*ivi* 728e). Examples of this excess are the desire to possess wealth, which is not to be pursued when it comes at the cost of the beauty and virtue of the soul (*ivi* 728a, 729a) or the desire of fame, which should be satisfied in the service of the laws not for individual reward (*ivi* 729d, 730d).

assonance, when he claims that "moral character (*êthos*) is engendered in everyone in

the most powerful way by means of habit (*ethos*)" (*Leg.* 7.792e). In other words, old habits

die hard because they self-perpetrate as they help establish a character for the person. Let

us try to clarify what the Athenian might have in mind when he speaks of character.

Though the relation between habit and character is made explicit in book 7, it seems

that this connection is operative in the Athenian's mind since the first book of the *Laws*.

Consider *Leg.* 1.636d (a passage which I have cited in the previous chapter) explaining that

habit, especially in its relation and regulation of pleasure and pain, is a central feature of

the activity of the legislator since "when investigating the human laws, the research is

almost entirely on the pleasures and pains in the cities and in the individual characters

(*êthos*)."[25] From the many instances of the Athenian addressing the issue of character we

can derive the following four general claims. (1) Though character is always dependent

upon habituation, it can also be passed down inter-generationally. One's character need not

be the result of one's own habit, but can be acquired from the habits of one's parents.[26]

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[25] In book 1 the Athenian also proposes to use symposia as most "accurate, safe and fast" (*Leg.*1.650b) way to test character. In order to persuade his interlocutors he advances rhetorical questions that are meant to emphasize the convenience of symposia. In one of those questions the Athenian reveals a connection between cultivation of sexual pleasures and formation of character. He claims "when a soul is overcome by sexual pleasure [isn't it preferable] to test it, to look at the character of the soul, than to entrust to him our daughters and sons and wives, thus risking what's dearest [to us]?" (*Leg.*1.650a). The results of the testing that symposia can offer is the revelation of dominant forces in the soul. These forces can be made stronger by the cultivation by means of habit. The connection between habit and character surfaces in other books of the *Laws*, especially around the theme of accumulation of wealth (to which we will return in the last section of this chapter). The habit of dealing with money and commerce may cause "unstable and untrustworthy characters" (*Leg.* 4.705a). The same concept is repeated at 4.705b, 5.741e and anticipated at 3.679b-c. See also 8.831e-32b, when finally Kleinias makes the Athenian notice that he displays a specific aversion for this type of character. The problem of the Athenian with this soul is that it is always hungry, that is to say that it has a marked prevalence of some psychic forces that define its character.

[26] See *Leg.*6.775c-d, 7.792e.

However, the Athenians notes that one can escape one's parental character,[27] and one

should do so in case of vicious parents, which may also prove one's virtue. (2) Character is

determined politically, especially by means of praise and blame. Praise can build character,

i.e. it can reinforce those habits that sustain it, and blame can weaken it.[28] (3) Character

should be distinguished from the soul. Character is a certain configuration of the soul's

non-deliberative forces, not the soul itself. It is one's selfhood, not one's self. That such is

the Athenian's assumption on character is made clear by the numerous cases in which he

refers to *êthos* accompanied by the ("subjective") genitive of *psyche*. Character belongs to

the soul, while shaping its forces.[29] Finally, (4) character constitutes the inclination of

individuals towards certain actions. As Scolnicov claims "[t]he character of the agent is not

simply his accustomed way of acting. It is the character that accounts for the modes of

causation" (*Pleasure and Responsibility in Plato's* Laws 126).[30] This final point is hardly

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[27] See *Leg.*9.855a.

[28] See *Leg.* 7.798d. The political use of praise and blame in cases of inclinations that go against virtue is reiterated at 8.847a. Another political dimension of character is signaled in the way fathers are expected to choose husbands for their daughters; their main concern must be the man's character (11.925d-e.).

[29] See *Leg.*1.650a, 2.666c, 7.793e, 8.837c; additionally consider 4.705a, where characters are "produced in the souls," a similar turn of phrase is used at 8.836d, and 6.770d, where character is described as one of the sources whence the soul derives its virtue. This does not mean that character belongs to the body; character is distinguished from the body, as a possession of the soul, but it is not the same as the soul (see *Leg.*9.859d-e; 10.896c-d).

[30] With regards to character as causation, that is as the sum of the psychological motivations in the soul, see also *Leg.* 11.929d-e where the contention between fathers and sons is caused by their respective evil characters and 11.930a, where in case of divorce and new marriage one should combine passionate and calm characters, so as to cause a long lasting union.

surprising; if habituation carries with it the possibility of self-perpetration, characters

established on certain habits will reinforce those very habits.[31]

Now that the mechanics of habituation in the *Laws'* moral psychology have been

clarified, let us see how habits may lead to virtue.

Habits, Pleasures and the Formation of Virtue in the Soul.

Generally speaking we can detect a tension within the conception of pleasure in

Plato's dialogues, as some dialogues present pleasure as a goal to pursue in ethical life,

while others portray it as a danger to be shunned. But we must agree with Bravo that "cette

tension devient encore plus profonde et problématique dans les Lois, parce qu'elle … se

manifeste … à l'intérieur d'un seul et même dialogue" (*Le Platon des* Lois *est-il hédoniste?*

103). We have anticipated this tension when we discussed the relation between pleasure

and habit with the examples of cheerfulness and *eros*, but at this time let us notice that the

tension is maintained in the relation between pleasure and virtue. The Athenian's stand

seems to be that some pleasures are simply unconcerned with virtue and habit must be

applied to these pleasures so as to bring them in relationship with virtue. Other pleasures,

though non-rational, can claim a divine origin and seem to establish a direct connection

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[31] If this sounds very much like Aristotle's second book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* it should not be surprising. John Burnet, in his introduction to the second book of Aristotle's *Ethics*, suggests (66-68) to read in the progression of Platonic dialogues as gradual abandonment of the Socratic maxim according to which virtue is *only* rational and can be taught, and the development of a psychological conception which allows to ground the experience of (and the possibility to impart) virtue *also* in the realm of affections. Just as Plato claims that "the whole of *êthos* is to be derived from *ethos*" so Aristotle opens book 2 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* "ethics is derived from *ethos*" (1103a 16) and it is explained in the *Eudemian Ethics* in the following way: "[*êthos*], as even its name implies, has its growth from habit (*ethos*), and by our often moving in a certain way a habit not innate in us is finally trained to be operative in that way—let moral character (*êthos*) then be defined as a quality of the spirit in accordance with governing reason that is capable of following the reason (*logos*)" (1220b). On the coincidence of themes related to habit and character in *Laws* and *Nicomachean Ethics* see also Berges' *Plato on Virtue and the Law* 15-16.

with virtue. The first type of pleasure I mentioned in the previous chapter, and it is addressed in book 6 when the Athenian claims that "everything for human beings is tied to three needs and desires [eating, drinking and sex], from which virtue (*arete*) turns out if they are led correctly, and its opposite if they are steered badly" (*Leg.*6.782d-e). The second type of pleasures is addressed in book 2, when the Athenian claims that "those gods that were given to us as dance partners (*sugchoreutas*), gave us the perception of good rhythm and good harmony accompanied with pleasure" (*ivi* 2.654a). Thus, in the pursuit of virtue by means of habits, the Athenian's plan seems to focus on the one hand on directing, curtailing or even repressing the most common occurrences of the drive of pleasure. However, in other cases we should simply cultivate pleasures, as they are divine gifts that lead us towards virtue. In order to achieve virtue with regards to the first kind of pleasures we should apply what I called above habits of repression; in the second case we should apply habits of cultivation. We will begin by looking at the pleasures that should be repressed and see how habit may yield virtue in this regard, then we shall turn to habits of cultivation to see what advantage towards virtue can be gained in that fashion.

Before we begin let me make clear a premise. Here I am not claiming that the Athenian's position on the ethical use of pleasures should be understood as an instance of ethical hedonism. I am claiming, however, that the Athenian exploits human psychological hedonism in order to achieve ethical goals. In this regard we should pay heed to the warning of Apuleius, when he claims that "Plato … thought that pleasure is neither absolutely good, nor simply evil; but that the pleasure which is worthy, and which does not accede from things of a shameful nature, but from glorious deeds, is not to be avoided" (*De*

Dogmate Platonis 2.12).[32] In other words, pleasure is a *de facto* psychological force,

which must have a function in the *Laws*' moral psychology with regards to the

establishment of virtue. This position does not qualify as ethical hedonism since the latter

is concerned with the attainment of pleasure as a moral rule, not as a psychological force.

In the Athenian's view, pleasure is only a psychological means to a moral end, virtue.[33]

The Athenian introduces the four cardinal virtues in book 1. As a rebuke to Kleinias'

and Megillus' assumption that courage is the only virtue worthy of pursuit in ethics and the

sole concern of the legislator, the Athenian states that Cretan legislation is held in high

esteem because it makes citizens happy, that is to say, it provides human and divine goods

to those who abide by it. Human goods are material or bodily goods such as health, beauty,

strength and wealth; the divine goods amount to the four cardinal virtues. *Phronesis* "is the

leader of the divine goods and the first among them, second is the moderate (*sophron*) state

of the soul accompanied by intelligence, from these mixed with courage comes in third

place justice, the fourth is courage" (*Leg.* 1.631c). In the *Laws* justice is not portrayed as

attainable by means of habit, rather it seems to be a condition of the soul attained when all

other virtues are acquired and for this reason it falls outside the scope of the present

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[32] Taylor's translation 355.

[33] I will come back to the distinction between ethical hedonism and psychological hedonism in the *Laws* below. At the same time, as we discuss habits of repression of pleasure and their achievement of virtue, we should bear in mind that we are not implying that there is no pleasure to be gained from these habits; as discussed above eventually habits produce some pleasure on their own accord (step (3) of the process of habituation). However in the case of habits of repression the emphasis is on step (1) of the process of habituation, "irritation" of drives that spring from our soul.

chapter.[34] Concerning the other three virtues we will see that courage and moderation

can be attained via the frustration of certain pleasures, while *phronesis* is welcomed, not

achieved, by means of the cultivation of harmony and rhythm. But let us proceed in order

and begin with courage.

As I just mentioned, in the *Laws* the Athenian usually recommends the repression of

the drive of pleasure in order to achieve virtue, but when discussing courage we are

dealing mostly with the drive of pain. The difference between pleasure and pain should not

mislead us to think that the different objects of frustration (drive of pleasure vs. drive of

pain) mean different kinds of habits of repression. There are three good reasons for making

this claim. First, as was discussed in the previous chapter, the drive of pain is a motivation

to avoid discomfort, thus it is not alien from the goals of the drive of pleasure. Second,

while the Athenian opens book 5 with a general warning against the immediate

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[34] The Athenian will recall the four cardinal virtues at *Leg.*2.667a. Meyer claims that this is a recurrent theme from *Republic* 2 and *Statesman* 306a-308a, qualifying justice as the balancing and organization of courage and moderation and wisdom. Just as in *Republic* the balance was struck by means of harmony, so in the *Laws* choral performance will play a major role in moral education (*Laws 1 & 2* 113). Though the identification of justice as the conjunction of all virtues is similar to *Republic*'s account, the psychological foundation for the achievement of justice is different. In *Republic* justice is explained psychologically with reference to the relations of psychic parts to one another, in *Laws* we must give an explanation with regards to the different motives that abide in the unitary soul; let us try to sketch such an explanation. In the *Laws*, the presence in the soul of all virtues is called "all of virtue" (*Leg.*1.630a-b), but also "complete justice" (*ivi* 1.630c). As Meyer points out this distinction is negligible (*Plato. Laws 1 & 2* 102), since Plato explains that the presence in the soul of courage, moderation and wisdom generates justice; these virtues together constitute "all of virtue." What is interesting though is that complete justice (the combination of virtues) is equated with "trustworthiness" (*Leg.* 1.630c). Possibly this reference could be there because the Athenian was addressing Theognis' account of virtue in the fight of faction during civil strife; in this context he claims that "a trustworthy man is worth the gold and silver he weighs" (*Leg.* 1.630a). But there are reasons not to brush aside this comment as a mere literary reference. Trustworthiness is a quality acquired when an individual can stand her moral ground also in very difficult situations; in order to do that, an individual must have formed her non-deliberative motivations in such a way as to comply with virtue, which – again – demonstrates the dependency of virtue on non-rational motivations. For a reference to trustworthiness see *Leg.* 5.730b.

gratification of pleasures,[35] he is quick to include in his recommendation the need to create habits of repression for the other basic drive, pain,[36] which can be extended for instance to the fear of dying.[37] Third, in book 1 the Athenian is willing to assimilate courage to moderation,[38] which, as we shall see, is a virtue obtained from the frustration of the drive of pleasure, thus equating the effects of frustration of pain with those of frustration of pleasure.

Courage "is concerned with fear" (*Leg.* 12.963e) and fear, as we learned from the image of the marionette, is an expectation of pain.[39] But courage is concerned with fear not in the sense that it derives from this expectation, but in the sense that it may work against this iron string of the soul. Exercising courage is precisely the "victory over the terrors and fears that attack us" (*Leg.* 7.791c). How does this virtue capable of winning over fear come about?[40] After an initial moment of questioning whether courage is the ability to face both pain and pleasures,[41] the three old men agree that training in the suffering of pains will

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[35] There are a total of seven recommendations the Athenian makes with regards to the soul, which in general seem to fall under the category of warning against the immediate gratification of the drive of pleasure; see *Leg.* 5.727a-28a. In the words of the Athenian one should be careful "When one gratifies (*charizetai*) [the soul] with pleasures beyond reason (*para logon*) and opinion of the legislator" (*ivi* 727c).

[36] See *Leg.* 5.727c.

[37] See *ivi* 727d.

[38] See *Leg.* 1.632e, 635e.

[39] See *Leg.* 1.644c.

[40] Concerning courage as an antidote for fear see *Leg.* 1.639b, 1.640a, 7.91b-c. See Saunders *Soul and State in Plato's Laws* 51-52.

[41] See *Leg.* 1.633c-d.

constitute courage, while training in the suffering of pleasure will constitute moderation.[42] Thus, courage is the soul's excellence in facing fears because, as fears do, it somehow originates from the drive of pain. But while fear grows as an independent non-deliberative motivation from some minimal cognitive abilities applied to the drive of pain,[43] courage stems from growing into the habit of frustrating the drive of pain.[44] As for any habit, the initial exposure to pain is "irritating" for the soul. Examples of this discomfort for the soul are listed at *Leg.* 1.633a-c, when Megillus mentions the exercises of the Spartan youth as "the many ways to patiently endure pain" (*ivi* 633b). Additionally, the use of habit for the achievement of courage surfaces in the text when the Athenian is discussing the advantages of training ground troops rather than the navy. The Athenian maintains that military and ethical training overlap in this context; it is better to have an army able to bear the pain of facing the enemy, than a navy inclined to flee to the safety of seafaring before the dangers of battle.[45]

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[42] *Leg.* 1.635b-e.

[43] As discussed in the previous chapter.

[44] In this regard Laurent speaks of the education in courage as an exercise in "endurcissement" (*Mesure de l'Humain* 14).

[45] See *Leg.* 4.706a-e. References to habituation can be found at 706 c-d. Habit formation is discussed with regards to the navy's cowardly attitude, but the passage makes it clear that joining the army constitutes habits of courage. Additionally, though the term *andreia*, courage, is not stated explicitly, the fact that the Athenian is thinking about this virtue in this section is made clear by a simile with lions. He claims that if ground troops where to escape the battlefield and flee on ships they would behave like "lions growing into the habit (*ethistheien*) to flee deer" (*Leg.*4.707a). Plato uses the lion as symbol of courage most famously in *Republic* 9.

One important aspect of the formation of courage by means of habit is that no rational ability is involved in the process.[46] This is a process that concerns the non-rational pulls of the soul; specifically, courage will amount to being in the habit of opposing other non-rational motivations, like fear, thereby supporting the lead of argumentation, whose end is precisely virtue. The Athenian underscores the irrationality of courage when he claims that it is present in animals and very young children, thus "the soul may become courageous without any reasoning ability (*logos*)" (12.963e).[47]

Moderation deals directly with the drive of pleasure, but more specifically it is an antidote to the expectation formed by applying minimal cognitive abilities on the drive of pleasure, namely confidence.[48] As in the case of courage, moderation faces an expectation deriving from a drive, pleasure, but it does not develop from said expectation. In other words moderation has little in common with confidence, as it springs from the frustration of the drive of pleasure. The most evident example of this habituation to frustrating

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[46] Stressing that courage is unconcerned with the soul's rational pull, the Athenian argues also for a hypothetical magical potion one could use to train others to become courageous (*Leg.* 1.648a-e).

[47] Stalley suggests to read in this context also the courage attributed to mercenaries (*Introduction* 56, with reference to *Leg.* 1.630b). Ferrari notes that this "irrational" definition of courage is in contradiction to the definition of *Laches* 197a and *Protagoras* 349c-ff (*Le Leggi* 1076-77). Another reference to the non-rationality of courage can be found at *Leg.* 3.696b, where the Athenian problematizes the existence of courage separate from *phronesis*. Finally, we should notice that courage, though a virtue, is not immune from failure if it is not accompanied by rationality. If courage is not cultivated and directed by *logismos* it can change into bestiality and show its lack of rationality. One way in which this is manifested is the habit of resorting to arguments *ad hominem*, see *Leg.* 11.934b-c.

[48] See *Leg.* 1.644c and 1.649c-d. According to Stalley "we possess *sophrosyne* if reason governs our passions and keeps us in the way of moderation" (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 56), in general the term embraces "not only self-control, but also order, harmony, moderation and self-knowledge" (*ivi* 55). We shall see however, that the portion of moderation that is concerned with habit formation is a simpler virtue.

pleasures is *aidos*, the sense of shame discussed in the previous chapter.[49] Moderation's

reach extends beyond the use of wine in symposia, as clarified at *Leg.* 2.673e when the

Athenian claims that "temperance [means] not that one keeps away from all other

pleasures …., but it amounts to devising ways to exert strength over pleasures."

I must clarify that in dealing with a drive like pleasure and against non-deliberative

motivations such as confidence, habituation yields a side of *sophrosyne*, which has little to

do with rationality. Even though moderation may accompany *nous*, as in the passage cited

above,[50] it can also count as a non-rational excellence, which *logismos* can appeal to,

according to the psychological model sketched in the previous chapter. The Athenian

describes this non-rational feature of moderation as the "vulgar" *sophrosyne* at *Leg.* 4.710a,

which, as it was the case for courage, may arise spontaneously in children and wild

animals.[51]

As it is the case for any kind of habituation, growing into the habit of holding back

on one's pleasure is at first "irritating" for the soul, but eventually we may even gain some

degree of satisfaction precisely from the frustration of pleasure. The gratifications that can

derive from moderation are "mild pains, mild pleasures, soft desires (*epithymiai*) and loves

(*erotes*) with no frenzy" (*Leg.* 5.734a). Once again we should not confuse this gratification

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[49] See above and *Leg.* 1.646e-49c. Belfiore maintains that "[d]runkenness confers three benefits in the Laws. In Book 1 (649d7-e2) it is said to provide (1) training in resisting pleasure and desire and (2) a test of dispositions, while in Book 2 (652b3-653a3) it is said to (3) safeguard correct education" (*Wine and Catharsis* 424). When we refer to moderation as habituation to pleasures, we are thinking of Belfiore's points (1) and (2).

[50] See again *Leg.* 1.631c where *sophron hexis*, a moderate disposition, is associated with *nous*, on this association see Meyer *Laws 1 & 2* 112-13.

[51] In this sense Bravo together with Friedländer equates moderation to courage; *sophrosyne* is a kind of courage dealing with pleasures (*Le Platon des* Lois *est-il hédoniste?* 105).

with some form of ethical hedonism. In other words, we should not be mistaken and

think that the Athenian equates the frustration of the drive of pleasure with a virtue

because the former eventually yields greater pleasures. Though it may seem that the appeal

the Athenian is making is moral (and thus proto-utilitarian) I agree with Bravo that the

appeal to hedonism here is on the psychological, not the ethical level.[52] In other words, the

claims about the greater pleasures to be achieved in the life of virtue are meant to persuade

the hypothetical Magnesian citizenry by appealing to their basic drives; they imply no

moral duty. The only moral duty is connected to character; one has an obligation to be

excellent and is offered a psychological incentive to enjoy the greater share of pleasure life

can offer.[53]

    This concludes our discussion of how habits of repression frustrate basic drives and

introduce in the soul the virtues of courage and moderation (at least the latter's non-

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[52] See *Le Platon des* Lois *est-il hédoniste?* 108. Though the Athenian's argument states that a life of moderation is in the long run more pleasurable, this argument appeals to human psychological hedonism (see *Leg.*5.733a-e), it is not an ethical obligation. A life of moderation can provide overall a net worth of pleasure, though mild. Additionally the life that is immoderate is described as arousing the intensity of pleasures, pains and desires and loves with an overall prevalence of pain (see *ivi* 5.734a). Thus, we see that in this case we have (a net worth of) pleasure as a result of habits of repression of our drives.

[53] Lefebvre seems to read a conjunction of psychological hedonism and ethical virtue here as well (see *Platon Philosophe du Plaisir* 252-53). Stalley warns the reader against the "hasty conclusion" that Plato was a Benthamite ante *litteram*, as "Plato is concerned with a choice of lives rather than a choice of acts" (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 68)*.* Irwin maintains a similar position (*Plato's Ethics* 343-45). In this regard see also *Leg.* 662b-63d. For the logical consistency of combining the life of pleasure and the life of virtue in the pursuit of happiness see Carone *Place of Hedonism in Plato's* Laws 294-95. Stalley also makes a similar point with reference to divine vs. human perspective on virtue. He argues that from a divine standpoint the life of rationality and virtue is attractive with no reservations, but from a human standpoint it requires the added incentive of being pleasant (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 66-67). Also, in this case virtue stands on its own as a value and hedonism is added on a second thought. Gosling and Taylor offer a different argument to prove the primacy of virtue over pleasure. In reference to 2.658e-ff they claim that the Athenian posits that different lives procure different pleasures and the criterion to judge lives is the good man; only when one knows one is doing well (as the good man does) and finds pleasure in doing well, one experiences moral pleasure. They add that "[a]ll other men are, in their pleasure, involved in a greater or less degree of delusion" (*The Greeks on Pleasure* 171), because their pleasures are separate from the certainty of doing well. We should note that the same hedonistic psychological incentive in virtue is held for courage and for the life of health (5.734c-d).

rational version). Let us now consider how habits of cultivation of pleasure can bring us closer to virtue.[54] As mentioned above, the pleasures to be cultivated have to do with harmony and rhythm. These are peculiar pleasures, which display four interesting features. (1) These pleasures are non-rational; as it was the case with courage and moderation, the Athenian introduces these pleasures by means of an assimilation of human and non-human animal inclinations, stating that "all young beings cannot carry themselves quietly with their bodies and the voices" (*Leg.* 2.653d).[55] On the basis of this assimilation we can argue that if the urge to move one's body and voice belongs to non-human animals, then it must not be dependent on rationality, since the Athenian assumes that non-human animals are irrational. (2) However, human beings show a specific difference with regards to movements and sounds, when compared to other animals. Humans are the only living creatures that find pleasure in the orderly systems of rhythm and harmony,[56] that is in the order of their movements and the harmony of the sounds they emit. This pleasure, generated by order and harmony in human beings, is still a non-rational reaction of joy,[57] but it is an experience exclusive to human beings. (3) Though non-rational, the pleasure

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[54] Folch seems to reduce ethical habits, ethical efficacy of *mousike* (which I shall discuss in the next two chapters) and political benefit of virtue to the kind of habits I am about to discuss. As an example, see his conclusion that "pleasure is a fundamental, constitutive element in the soul and a precondition for virtue in its entirety. We may now observe why *mousikê* is of such central concern to the *Laws'* political project – that is, its design of an ideal city. Because *hêdonê* is an instinctual response to ordered sound and motion, the pleasures fostered in performance become manifest in political institutions" (*The City and the Stage* 98). I agree with Folch only in part. We will see in the next chapter that *mousike* exerts its influence also on habits of repression.

[55] This concept is repeated at *Leg.* 2.673d.

[56] See *Leg.* 2.653e.

[57] See *ivi* 654a.

experienced in rhythm and harmony has divine origin (it is a gift from the gods related

to religious drama and *mousike*, the Muses, Apollo and Dionysus)[58] and in this pleasure

human beings find themselves in the proximity of the gods.[59] The proximity of these

pleasures to the sphere of things divine indicates to the reader of the *Laws* a connection

with virtue, since all things divine are morally good.[60] (4) Again though non-rational, these

pleasures have a special affinity with rationality. Harmony is the pleasure sought in the

relations of proportionality between sound frequencies; rhythm is the pleasure of regular

cadence, along the vector of time, in any harmony that is played.[61] Additionally, the

Athenian sees a relation between rational sciences such as arithmetic, geometry,

astronomy and music.[62] From this perspective, we find a connection to what we termed in

the previous chapter our psychological attraction to placidity. This term was used to clarify

in what sense *logismos* could be called *pathos* of the soul in the first book of the *Laws*. As we

stated there, one of the reasons concerns the attractiveness of the argumentative

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[58] See *ivi* .653d.

[59] See *ivi* 654a.

[60] See *ivi* 3.713b-14a and 10.887c.

[61] See *ivi* 2.673d for the connection between harmony and rhythm. See also Gauthier-Muzellec's *Musique et Plaisir chez Platon et Aristote* 199-202 for an extension of this pleasure of the internal relations of music to all the other sciences and philosophy. As she puts it few pages later "[i]l reste et il demeure que la *taxis* et le *kosmos* son des forms instanciées de l'intelligibilité" (*ivi* 204). See also Gilbert's *The Relation of the Moral to the Aesthetic Standard in Plato* especially p.293-94, where she makes an argument for considering measure as the element that unites aesthetic and moral value. Additionally the argument could also be made that the pleasures experienced in music and rhythm are not only special on the grounds of their rationality, but on metaphysical grounds as well. If, as stated in book 10 and repeated at the end of book 12 the soul is older than the body and the products of the soul are older than those of the body, then it is safe to assume that the ancestral pleasure human beings experience in rhythm and harmony have metaphysical primacy over bodily pleasures (eating, drinking and sex, as stated above).

[62] This connection is revealed at the end of the dialogue 12.967e.

structures of *logismos*; in other words, we are attracted by rational arguments. Non-rational pleasures such as those experienced in rhythm and harmony point back at our weakness for rational structures. The desire that leads us towards the *pathos* of *logismos* is the same we experience in rhythm and harmony.[63] It is a taste for systems of proportions that we find pleasurable and desire.

Before proceeding let us stay a little longer on point (4) and clarify that, though our desire for rhythm and harmony attracts us to the rational elements within rhythm and harmony, the desire itself is non-rational. In making this point I want to distance my reading from possible connections between the desire of rhythm and harmony with conceptual content. In order to clarify my point here, let us analyze two scholars' positions concerned with the attractiveness of rhythm and harmony. Let us begin by considering Bobonich's analysis of the *Philebus* to clarify the relation between virtue and dependent goods (i.e. divine and human goods, cited above). In this discussion Bobonich is concerned with the person's awareness of externals as goods.[64] In other words, one of the conditions for an object to be pleasing is that the agent considers it good for herself. In turn, this consideration requires that the agent has some awareness of what is a good. What makes the agent aware is her rationality, which recognizes the rational order inherent in the

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[63] As I noted above, in the present context the Athenian is concerned with the pre-reflective pleasure experienced in rhythm and harmony, not with rational understanding. Evidence of that comes in book 2, when he claims that it "someone who is unable to achieve or conceive of beauty by means of their voice or body, but who succeeds by means of pleasure and pain in loving what is beautiful and is annoyed at what is ugly" (*Leg.* 2.654d) is to be preferred to those who are able to perform, but are unable to have the correct affective reaction to the beauty of rhythm and harmony.

[64] See *Plato's Utopia Recast* 154-57.

external, which she determines to be good.[65] When reading the *Philebus*, Bobonich

emphasize this point with specific regard to pleasure. In the *Philebus* some "pleasures,

broadly construed, have conceptual content" (*Plato's Utopia Recast* 355). The pleasures

that Bobonich considers in this case are the "pure pleasures" discussed in *Philebus* 51b-e.

Bobonich maintains that pure pleasures are sensory pleasures, not pleasures deriving from

the forms,[66] and that they are distinguished from other kinds of sensory pleasures because

they are not instances of replenishment.[67] Bobonich's innovative claim is that these pure

pleasures are assisted by conceptualization. "These sensory pleasures involve recognizing

or appreciating the fineness or good order of a sensory object and this involves not only

conceptualizing the perception in terms of non-sensible properties such as straight of

spherical, but also in terms of the non-sensible property of fineness" (*ivi* 356). Bobonich

thinks that this understanding of pleasure in the *Philebus* can be transposed to the *Laws*. He

maintains that in the *Laws* pleasure plays an instrumental role in focusing our attention on

what is virtuous, thereby giving us a chance to explore our experience intellectually. "On

this view pleasure fixes the learners' attention on what they are experiencing and

encourages them to further exploration of the [intellectual] activity in question" (*ivi* 362).

On this view, pleasure sets us on the way to virtue, without being the focus of virtue. In the

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[65] See *ivi* 173.

[66] See *ivi* 356.

[67] Instances of replenishment are what in the *Philebus* is termed "impure pleasures" or "false pleasures" because they are mixed with pain. In this regard Tenkku notices correctly that "a small pleasure or a small amount of pleasure, if pure and unalloyed with pain, is always pleasanter and truer and fairer than a great pleasure or a great amount of pleasure of another kind" (*Evaluation of Pleasure in Plato's Ethics* 213). Lefebvre thinks that in the *Laws* only impure pleasures are available to the virtuous person and that the lesson on pure pleasures learnt in the *Philebus* is absent here; see *Platon philosophe du Plaisir* 264-65.

case of pleasures found in harmony and dance, Bobonich maintains that even these pleasures may "trigger a dim awareness of fineness and goodness... [or at least] they can provide an important locus for the child's further development of these notions" (*ivi* 364).

It seems that in this transposition from the *Philebus* to *Laws* something important has changed. With regards to *Philebus* Bobonich seems ready to admit the necessity of conceptualization for the enjoyment of pure pleasures, but with regards to the *Laws* he seems to relax this requirement and be content with the view that some pleasure may (or may not) cause reflection. I can agree with this latter characterization, but I do not think that these pleasures necessarily result in conceptualization. There are some significant differences between the *Laws'* pleasures of harmony and rhythm and the "pure pleasures" addressed in *Philebus*. First, the *Laws* focuses on the way agents are empirically attracted towards certain pleasures, while in the *Philebus* the conversation revolves around the quality of the object of pleasure. Second, pure pleasures in *Philebus* seem to indicate unadulterated static experiences, while in the *Laws* pleasures of rhythm and harmony are necessarily dynamic, extended through time and relational (one beat must lead to another in order to create rhythm, and one note to another in order to have harmony). Thus, understanding the *Laws'* pleasure for rhythm and harmony in light of the *Philebus* does not seem a viable option.

Let us consider another option for interpreting these pleasures from the *Laws*, this time following Morrow's suggestion.[68] Morrow maintains that we should look at the *Phaedrus'* myth of the cicadas in order to find a clue for understanding the type of pleasure

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[68] See *Plato's Cretan City* 305 n. 28.

represented by rhythm and harmony in the *Laws*. "The story goes that the cicadas used

to be human beings who lived before the birth of the Muses. When the Muses were born

and song was created for the first time, some of the people of that time were so

overwhelmed with the pleasure of singing that they forgot to eat or drink; so they died

without even realizing it" (*Phaed.* 259b-c).[69] This myth addresses, in the first place, the

pleasures found in music in terms of their psychological superiority to other pleasures; in

other words, according to the myth human beings are psychologically predisposed to find

music more attractive than food or drink. In the language of moral psychology of the *Laws*

we would say that pleasure of music is a stronger non-rational motivation than pleasure of

nourishment. The *Phaedrus'* perspective on pleasure from the point of view of the agent is

similar to the *Laws'* and a better term of comparison than the *Philebus'* objective

considerations on the nature of pleasure. Second, the *Phaedrus'* myth suggests a

persistence of the pleasure for music through time and beyond the limits of human

biological life. This persistence suggests that musical pleasure is inexhaustible. While the

desire for nourishment finds its (momentary) conclusion in replenishment, musical

pleasure satisfies *and* arouses the psyche at the same time. In the *Laws*, the Athenian often

conflates pleasure as desire and pleasure as satisfaction, but in the case of rhythm and

harmony we find that the object of satisfaction (a song) arouses the desire for that

satisfaction (the desire to listen to that song through its end, to listen to the song again, to

listen to another song, to play or sing the song ourselves). This satisfaction-desire structure

of the pleasure experienced in music suggested in *Phaedrus* and echoed in the *Laws*

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[69] Translated by A. Nehamas and P. Woodruff.

clarifies how the pleasure of rhythm and harmony are different from the pleasures of sex, food and drink, without having to claim that there is a necessary rational component to them. In this fashion the interpretation through the lens of *Phaedrus* is once again superior than the suggestions found in *Philebus*. Now that we have clarified how the desire for rhythm and harmony is non-rational and yet related to rational order, let us return to the discussion of the habitual formation of this kind of pleasure.

In sketching the Magnesian constitution the Athenian plans on cultivating the pleasure found in rhythm and music habitually, with a variety of religious celebrations.[70] As Morrow puts it "frequent participation in these formal dances … cannot fail to have its influence on the gestures, postures and movements of ordinary life" (*Plato's Cretan City* 306). Pleasures for harmony and rhythm cultivated by habit prepare the non-rational motivations for acquiring *phronesis*, rational virtue. Let us clarify this point.

Though *phronesis* is concerned with intellection, we should also recognize that the Athenian thinks of it as grounded in some kind of non-rational motive.[71] The intellectual dimension of *phronesis* is revealed for instance in its dependency on *logos*, and in its superiority to mere quantitative calculations and correct opinions.[72] However, the

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[70] The free person in Magnesia is expected to cultivate herself to the point of not having time to sleep (see *Leg.* 7.807c-808a). Even though one is still in charge of the administration of one's household, the majority of the workforce will be constituted by slaves and metics, who will take care of commerce and any other necessary activity that involves money (see *ivi* 9.918c-20c). The free citizen will have therefore much free time (see *ivi* 8. 828d), which will be spent in the musical celebration of divinities and in the ritual games that accompany it. There will be a celebration every day (see *ivi* 8.828a-b) and twelve major celebrations every year (see *ivi* 828b-c).

[71] For this rational and non-rational dimension of *phronesis* see Irwin's *Morality as Law* 99.

[72] With regards to the former see *Leg.* 12.963e describing how *phronesis* requires *logos*. *Logos* seems to be the condition for the soul to have *phronesis* and *nous*. With regards to the latter see the initial description of

Athenian hints also at the possibility that *phronesis* may be sustained in the soul by non-rational means. For instance children are described as being a special kind of mischievous wild beasts, as their "spring of *phronesis* has not been disciplined" (*Leg.* 7.808d). The use of the term *pege*, spring, is interesting here, as the Athenian defined pleasure and pain as springs that naturally flow within us in book 1.636d.[73] The use of the term *pege* in these two contexts certainly does not mean we should equate pleasure and pain with *phronesis*. However, this lexical choice seems to implicate that in children there is a non-rational source, somehow similar in its innate presence in the human soul to the drives of pleasure and pain, from which *phronesis* could be developed. Certainly this interpretation poses questions with regards to the status of *phronesis.* One issue is to reconcile this claim with other passages from the *Laws* in which children are described as non-partaking of *phronesis*.[74] However, my point here is not to claim that the expression "spring of *phronesis*" implies the possession of wisdom, rather I suggest that this expression indicates a source, in the *aphrone* soul of the young, of an element that can help develop that soul into someone who is *phronimos*. In this regard Laurent suggests – correctly, I believe – a connection between the undisciplined *phronesis* in the soul of the child and a

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phronesis in book 1 of the *Laws*. At this stage *phronesis* is associated with wealth (see *Leg.* 1.631c), which implies that it has practical function, but one page later (see *Leg.* 1.632c) *phronesis* is contrasted with correct opinion because of its higher epistemological status. Meyer (*Laws 1 & 2* 112) notes that in some cases it is interchangeable with *nous* (e.g. *Leg.* 1.635d). Stalley notes that *sophia* in the *Republic* is replaced in the *Laws* with *phronesis* (see *Introduction to Plato's* Laws 48), but lowers the bar for the intellectual implications of virtue, which "does not require knowledge, as such, but it does presuppose true belief which is acquired through right education" (*ivi* 57). Opposed to this view, Planinc associates *phronesis* exclusively with *nous* in the *Laws*, so that the connection between the intellectual and the non-rational forces in the soul is almost lost (see for instance *Plato's Political Philosophy* 177-178, 181, 190).

[73] In this regard see the discussion of pleasure and pain in chapter 2.

[74] See for instance *Leg.* 2.653a where the possibility of wisdom is so remote that might come only in old age.

child's natural inclination for rhythm and harmony. The child's inclination for music

will help her bring order to her soul and, consequently, her use of *phronesis* no longer will

imply mischief, because it will rest on an orderly musical sense.[75] In the last portion of this

section I would like to show that such is the case.

Let us ask the question, does the habitual cultivation of pleasures found in harmony

and rhythm coincide with a propaedeutic, non-rational inclination towards *phronesis*? In

some passages the Athenian seems to indicate that such is the case. Consider for instance

the curricular description of book 7. Once the Athenian has defined the course of study for

the children of Magnesia, he ties their education back to the topic of sacred festivities that

opened the book, thus connecting the training that one receives as one dances and sings in

the choral festivities with the formal training of the intellect. In this light the study of

astronomy must be joined with seasonal sacred festivities to make "the city lively and

aware, to honor the gods and the human beings wiser (*emphronas*) on such matter [I

assume matters pertaining to astronomy]" (*Leg.* 7.809d). Employing Gauthier-Muzellec's

paradoxical definition, music in this regard is "la voie sensuelle de l'ascétisme platonicien

en vue de la philosophie, de l'éthique et de l'honnêteté citoyenne" (*Musique et Plaisir chez

Platon et Aristote* 181). On this definition music is the sensorial preparation of the soul for

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[75] See *Mesure de l'Humain* 17. Irwin seems to hint at this conclusion when he claims that "wisdom is to be identified not with any specific cognitive condition, but with psychic harmony" (*Plato's Ethics* 349) in terms of continuity between pleasures and pains with intellection. In this fashion "the wise person differs from the foolish person insofar as he recognizes that what is fine and good is also good for him" (*ivi* 350). Some of this recognition is due to the wise person non-rational motives (likely pleasure) to pursue what *phronesis* indicates as good. For other ways in which non-rational pleasures can be introduced in the soul so as to pursue rational ends see *Leg.* 8.819b with the example of simple arithmetic.

rational content. This preparation is an *askesis*, a habit,[76] of the non-rational

motivations that sustain our intelligence. This habit will provide the soul with a sensual

desire for rationality, which sustains the golden lead of *logismos*. The Athenian makes this

psychological necessity explicit when he reminds his interlocutors that the legislator must

have in sight the entirety of virtue, and especially "the leading virtue, *phronesis* and *nous*

and opinion together with the passion and desire that accompany them" (*Leg.* 3.688b). In

this sense, I agree with Gauthier-Muzellec when she claims that in the *Laws* of Plato "il faut

réinscrire la musique comme conception retrouvée de la sensorialité et des plaisirs

susceptibles de l'accompagner" (*Musique et Plaisir chez Platon et Aristote* 184).[77] In other

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[76] For the connection between habit and *askesis* see *Leg.* 7.791b. This is a particularly revelatory passage. The Athenian says that "a soul living with fears since youth, will grow in the habit (*ethizein*) to be shaped by fears; everyone would admit that this is an exercise (*askesis*) for the development of cowardice not of courage."

[77] However, I disagree with her when she reduces the entirety of *paideia* to the correct habituation of some primary pleasure (*Musique et Plaisir chez Platon et Aristote* 198). I do think that such can be the case with the exploitation of musical pleasure for the promotion of *phronesis*, but I do not think that this scheme applies to those cases of habits of repression of pleasures that we have discussed above. *Paideia* in my view is the process of selection and promotion or repression of pleasures in the molding of the soul's non-deliberative motivation by means of habit. On this same topic Daniel Russell explains the necessity of pleasure for virtue in the introduction to his *Plato on Pleasure and the Good Life*, stating that "to practice a virtue is not simply to do certain things, but to do them with certain attitudes and placing certain values upon doing them" (3). What is most interesting in this account is that Russell seems to make room for a variety of attitudes in the pursuit of virtue. However when it comes to deciphering the role of pleasure in the moral psychology of the *Laws*, Russell thinks he ought to decide between what he calls "the agreement model" and the "control model" (*ivi* 206). This is roughly the same distinction we made at the beginning of this chapter between harmony and self-mastery, though Russell focuses exclusively on the relation between pleasure and reason. The question that Russell asks about the *Laws* is "whether habituation prepares emotions only to be kept in check and under control by reason, or whether habituation can prepare emotions for agreement with reason and for being shaped in their inner structure – that is, whether such habituation prepares our emotions to be 'smarter' as the sorts of emotions that the are, rather than merely under tighter control" (*ivi* 221). Russell thinks that these two approaches to the relations between non-rational and rational psychological elements find no reconciliation due to the incompleteness of Plato's moral psychology (see *ivi* 228-29). The reason why one should aim at an integrated model of moral psychology is that one would get "an account of virtue as the transformation of the agent as a whole, and thus an account of happiness … consisting … in one's flourishing as a harmoniously integrated whole" (*ivi* 238). Though I think that Russell's analysis of the relation between non-deliberative motives for action and reason in the *Laws* is accurate, I do not understand his urgency to unify the self-mastery and the harmony account. In fact this urgency seems to me to rest on philosophical assumptions (such as the unity of virtue in the *Laws*, which we shall discuss below) that ultimately are not

words, music is a habit for non-rational (as we have seen here) and semi-rational (as

we shall see in the next two chapters) psychological forces, not one for *logismos*.

In the next chapter we shall see in detail how Magnesian choral and literary

education become technologies to mold the non-deliberative motives of soul by means of

habits of repression and habits of cultivation. However, before we move to that topic there

are few more items to discuss. Now that we have clarified the mechanics of habit with

regards to the non-rational motives of the soul and its role in forming non-deliberative

virtues (courage and moderation) and the non-rational desires that welcome rational

virtues (as in the case of *phronesis*), it is appropriate to discuss some issues that could be

raised with my approach to the moral psychology of the *Laws*. Also, before bringing this

chapter to a conclusion, I would like to sketch what a moral character that takes on

virtuous habits of repression and cultivation may look like.

My Reading of the Moral Psychology of the Laws and the Debates in the Secondary

Literature.

In this section I will anticipate some questions that might be raised regarding my

reading of the moral psychology of the *Laws*. Before we begin let me restate that in my view

the moral psychology of the *Laws* demands the cooperation between some non-

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verified. In my account of the moral psychology of the *Laws* and the role that habit plays in training non-moral motives for action, I aim at no final resolution of the conflicting forces of the psyche, nor at a theory that resolves the tension between the self-mastery and the harmony accounts. As I discussed above, some conflict is necessary to achieve virtue, as in the case of the use of habits of repression to achieve courage and moderation. In other cases there is harmony in the soul, especially when some pleasures are addressed by means of habits of cultivation. Ultimately is this negotiation between habits of repression and habits of cultivation of pleasure that shapes what we could call a character of virtue in the *Laws*. On this point my approach to the *Laws* is closer to Lefebvre when he claims that the *Laws* "reconnaissant dans le plaisir et dans la peine ... de puissantes sources de motivation don il n'est pas envisage qu'on puisse ou doive être sevré" (*Platon philosophe du plaisir* 27). Since we cannot rid ourselves of pleasure and pain some degree of conflict will remain even in a virtuous soul, which has been habituated according to the virtues.

deliberative motives of actions and *logismos* in order to achieve virtue, as practical

reasoning alone does not possess enough psychic force to move the soul to action.

Additionally, some non-deliberative motives for action that support *logismos* can be

introduced in the soul by means of habit. Habits of repression of drives (pain and pleasure)

can give enough motivational strength to the soul so as to make it courageous and virtuous

in the most basic sense. Finally, habits of cultivation can develop some pleasures in the soul

that are supportive of *phronesis*, excellence in practical reasoning, though these motives do

not lead immediately to *phronesis*.

The first debate in the secondary literature I would like to address was discussed to

some degree in terms of the difference between psychological and ethical hedonism. As I

stated, the reading of the moral psychology of the *Laws* I propose maintains that the

Athenian is concerned with psychological hedonism, and that he recognizes the benefits of

pleasure when it accompanies virtue. To some it might appear as though I am proposing

that the prominence of pleasure in the development of virtues equals the claim that

pleasure is sufficient for virtue. To my knowledge, scholars usually do not defend this

thesis, but rather they try to reconcile claims the Athenian makes about virtuous life being

the most pleasurable[78] with the ethics of virtue presented in the rest of the text. In this

fashion Tenkku refers to *Laws* 2.667a-668a and claims "that pleasure is merely an

accompanying charm and that its goodness is graded by the goodness of its source"

(*Evaluation of Pleasures in Plato's Ethics* 139).[79] Lodge seems to think that pleasures may be

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[78] See *Leg.* 5.732e-34c.

[79] Tenkku thinks this to be the case for *Republic* as well as *Laws*; *see ivi* 143-44.

exploited by society to set social norms and standards of behavior. In this context

pleasure would be instrumental, but not sufficient, for virtue. As he states, "[e]ach form of

social organization, out of all pleasure-pursuits, standardizes a certain selection and, by

means of social pressure, sets these before its citizens as the most desirable, i.e. as

constituting the highest good for these citizens. No community sets before its citizens as an

ideal, i.e. as their highest good, the seeking after pleasure as such" (*Plato's Theory of Ethics*

348). Annas offers a similar interpretation when she reads the Middle Platonists as

claiming that

> [p]leasure, it appears, is an elemental response to good; we cannot but be
> affected pleasurably by what we perceive as good and painfully by what we
> perceive as bad. But Plato does not go on to conclude from this that pleasure
> must be our final good …. . For we see in the brief extract where pleasure and
> pain are called two springs from which we drink, that it is not just taking
> them that leads to happiness, but doing so as and when one should. And
> clearly it is the function of reason to lead us to do this (*Platonic Ethics Old and
> New* 141).

Annas concludes by saying that "Pleasure thus comes, we may say, only when not directly

sought, and it comes as a result of what *is* sought, namely virtue" (*ivi* 146). Annas explains

"that pleasure "supervenes." The idea here is (*sic*) no relation to modern complex and

technical conceptions of supervention in the philosophy of science; it seems simply the idea

that A supervenes on B if A could be directly aimed at, but is not, but instead accompanies B

when B is aimed at, and aimed at successfully" (*ibid*.). Similarly to Annas, Scolnicov argues

that the agreement between pleasure and virtue "is merely external, conducive to the right

δόξα about the better and the worse, reinforced by a pleasure that is only associated with

it, not intrinsic to it" (*Pleasure and Responsibility in Plato's* Laws). In this sense, virtue is the

first aim of the Magnesians, but one finds satisfaction in being virtuous. Stalley seems to

take a similar view when he claims that "someone who is fully committed to justice …

would presumably find his greatest pleasure in justice. So for those with just souls the just

life will be pleasantest, but one cannot conclude from this that the life of the just will

necessarily be pleasanter than that of the unjust" (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 63). On this

view then the pleasure experienced by the virtuous person is – again – the result of her

being virtuous.

     In general I agree with these views of pleasure as supervening[80] or instrumental for

the pursuit of virtue, but I also think I should add some specifics. According to our

discussion of pleasure above, habits of repression are concerned with pleasure, but work

mostly against pleasure than along pleasure. Thus, even if there is some pleasure to be

gained in the acquisition of a habit of repression, for the most part pleasure plays a

negative role, though one of instrumentality, in the moral psychology of the *Laws*. In the

case of the desire for rhythm and harmony pleasure certainly plays a positive role, but

again it functions as an instrument. Since the Athenian is so pessimistic about the

possibility of unadulterated rationality in human existence,[81] it seems that these pleasures

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[80] While I am sympathetic to this reading, it seems that it only offers a partial explanation of the relation between pleasure and virtue. It is true that the supervention of pleasure ensues as a result of producing courage and moderation in the soul. Habits of repression, which constitute these virtues, carry with them a degree of pleasure, so that the net sum of pleasure over pain is greater in a virtuous life, than in one that is vicious. Additionally however we have indicated that some pleasures ought to be pursued on their own right, because they lead to the virtue of *phronesis* and in this case we must acknowledge that it is virtue that supervenes to pleasure, that is to say, it is virtue that accompanies the satisfaction of a desire. But, as we have indicated above, the pleasure experienced in the habits of cultivation of rhythm and harmony is one with a special status; it is the desire and the satisfaction of that desire at the same time. Thus, if we were to interpret happiness in terms of desire, in the case of habits of cultivation we could say that virtue (or at least the propaedeutic of virtue) is the same as happiness.

[81] See *Leg.* 9.875c-d.

play an instrumental role in the acquisition of *phronesis* and that it would be hard for a human being to acquire rationality without a non-rational incentive. We can even go as far as to say that pleasure is necessary for the pursuit of *phronesis*.[82]

The second point concerns the sufficiency of non-deliberative motivations in general for the attainment of virtue. Some authors are opposed to this reading. For instance Annas quotes *Leg.* 12.951a-b when Plato claims that habit alone is not sufficient to preserve laws, but understanding is needed;[83] and Kraut claims that those who are intuitively just, like the young atheist of good character in book 10 of the *Laws*, are only in general equipped for virtue, but meet their limits when facing extraordinary situations. In such cases, "the defects of their understanding of justice and the limits of their emotional attachment to it are likely to become manifest" (*Ordinary Virtue* 60). On the other hand, Mouracade approximates the claim of sufficiency of non-rational motivations as he maintains that the role pleasure plays in the moral education of the youth is indicative of its integral role in the acquisition of virtue.[84] And Lefebvre claims that at least at *Leg.* 1.636d Plato maintains that the correct access to pleasure and pain is "une condition apparemment nécessaire et suffisante du bonheur" (*Plato Philosophe du Plaisir* 224), but then he adjusts his position in the image of the marionette, where it seems that "l'habitude prise aux bons plaisirs adjoindra à l'autorité du λογισμός un surcroît de motivation propice

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[82] Stalley makes a very similar point, see *Introduction to Plato's* Laws 69.

[83] See *Virtue and Law in Plato* 78.

[84] See *Virtue and Pleasure in Plato's* Laws especially p. 81-83.

à la conduite vertueuse" (*ivi* 227).[85] My position is that non-deliberative motivations are sufficient to satisfy the requirements of moral training for at least two virtues, courage and moderation[86] (in its "vulgar" aspect, that is as the result of habituation alone and not guided by *nous*, *phronesis* or true opinion) and that in some cases these are also sufficient for moral action. Non-rational motivations are necessary but not sufficient for moral actions concerned with justice and wisdom. They are not sufficient because in cases involving *phronesis* and justice some form of deliberation and intellection is involved and, thus, *logismos* must lead non-rational virtuous motivations. At the same time, when we perform moral actions of any kind we exploit the force of non-deliberative motivations, as in my view argumentation alone is insufficient for acting in general and specifically for acting virtuously.[87]

The problem of the sufficiency of non-deliberative motivation for virtuous action is influenced by another issue, the conception of virtue in the *Laws* as unitary. Those who hold that *arete* amounts to the combination of the four cardinal virtues usually side with the view that drives and expectations may be necessary but not sufficient for virtue. Their view is justified on the grounds that non-rational motivations will always fall short of

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[85] In this regard see also *ivi* 231-32. Lefebvre maintains that on the one hand the legislator must consider pleasure for psychological reasons, since it is a motivational force in the human psyche, on the other hand we must also consider that it has ethical value since the good is also pleasurable. On a similar theme see also *ivi* 240-41.

[86] Meyer seems to share this view, see *Laws 1 & 2* 183.

[87] As mentioned above Stalley (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 56-57) and Bobonich (*Plato's Utopia Recast* 152) maintain that in the *Laws phronesis* does not rise to the level of knowledge that was required, for instance, of the philosopher kings in the *Republic*. I do agree with this analysis, but even if *phronesis* is to be equated with *alethe doxa* in the *Laws* it still requires a higher degree of intellectual abilities than the vulgar forms of courage and moderation.

satisfying those aspects of virtue tied to cognition. On the other hand, those who hold a

non-unitary conception of virtues in the *Laws*[88] have some conceptual room to claim that

non-deliberative motivations may be sufficient for non-rational virtues (courage or

"vulgar" moderation) and only necessary with regards to virtues encompassing cognitive

abilities (*phronesis* and justice).[89] In order to address the issue of the unity of virtue in the

Laws, the chief passage of reference is 12.963a-ff. On the basis of this passage, it seems to

me that *arete* in the *Laws* should not be considered a unity. Let us take a closer look at this

portion of the text.

In this passage the Athenian shows how the nocturnal council, the chief political

body of the city of Magnesia, is integrated in the legislative project outlined since the

beginning of the dialogue. In order to make his case, he returns to the topic that opened

book 1 of the *Laws*, the centrality of virtue for legislation,[90] and claims that the nocturnal

council should be tasked with guiding legislation towards virtue,[91] but if they are to do so,

they must know what is virtue in general.[92] In this context the Athenian spends a couple of

pages discussing the problem of the unity of virtue. In these pages the Athenian makes the

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[88] E.g. one may be courageous without being wise, etc.

[89] For instance Stalley points out how some find the doctrine of virtue from *Laws* inconsistent with the unity of virtue found in previous Platonic dialogues (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 45). However he does remind the reader that in *Laws* virtue is both a matter of intellectual understanding and of non-rational habituation of psychological elements (*ivi* 54-65). Thus, we conclude, some virtues (e.g. courage) are not dependent upon rational understanding, but rather on emotive habituation.

[90] See *Leg.* 1.631b-ff.

[91] See *ivi* 12.964b-65a.

[92] See *ivi* 12.965d-e.

following claims. First, virtue has four parts, namely the cardinal virtues discussed

above;[93] each of these parts is an *eidos* of virtue[94] and *nous* is the leader of them all. The

Athenian also adds that three of these four virtues we must keep in sight.[95] Second, the

Athenian maintains that it is easy to describe the specificity of each of the four virtues,

while it is hard to indicate what makes them "only one thing, *arete*" (*ivi* 12.963d). For

instance *phronesis* and *andreia* are different because the former implies *logos* while the

latter does not.[96] Third, the Athenian comes hastily to a conclusion claiming that virtue is

one and four at the same time.[97] This conclusion is reiterated one page later, at 965c, when

the Athenian states that there is "one only idea" of virtue.

In my view this passage from book 12 addresses the issue of the unity of virtue from

an epistemological viewpoint, not with concern to ethics. This interpretation is justified

with regards to the dramatic context. If we read the passage in the larger context of

discussing the intellectual skills of the members of the nocturnal council, it seems natural

that the Athenian underscores that the leaders of the city of Magnesia, ought to have

knowledge of the idea of virtue. However, as the Athenian remarks, if one does not qualify

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[93] See *ivi* 12.963a.

[94] See *ivi* 12.963c.

[95] See *ivi* 12.963a.It is difficult to say which of the three virtues should not be left out of sight, perhaps justice, because it is the summation of all other virtues or perhaps courage, because it is the least intellectual.

[96] *Ivi* 12.963e.

[97] See *ivi* 12.964a.

for being a magistrate,[98] then one is only expected to meet the standard of the "vulgar"

virtues, that is those that one can acquire without intelligence.[99] From the point of view of

moral psychology, which is the perspective I take in this work, no convincing claim about

the unity of virtue can be advanced in the *Laws*. There are many virtues, applying to

different motives of the soul. Some of these (courage and moderation) can be acquired

through habit alone, with no need of intellectual effort. Others, like *phronesis* may be

initially cultivated in habit but eventually require intellection. In either case, these virtues

are independent and an agent may be excellent in some respect and not in others.[100]

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[98] This is a re-elaboration of a theme that opened the *Laws*. In book 1 the Athenian persuaded his interlocutors that the legislator should posit laws that aim at the totality of virtue (see *Leg.* 1.630c); the implication is that the legislator must have knowledge of the idea of virtue.

[99] See *ivi* 12.968a.

[100] I am sympathetic with Bravo's reading of the unity of virtue in the *Laws*, though I do not think that the text offers a solid basis to prove his point. As he reduces moral training to "mastery of pleasure" which is a claim I can partly agree with, he comes to the following point. "La conclusion qui suit semble s'imposer: aussi bien dans sa pluralité (vertus particulières) que dans son unite (vertu totale), l'ἀρετή apparaît comme le résultat d'une expérience correcte du plaisir et de la douleur" (*Le Platon des* Lois *est-il hédoniste?* 105). But is the unity of virtue also the result of experiencing our drives correctly? Stalley, it should be noted, maintained a similar position (see *introduction to Plato's* Laws *57*). While I do agree with Bravo that mastery of pleasure and pain are necessary for the achievement of virtues and thus for an epistemology of the idea of virtue, I do not consider this mastery sufficient for all virtues, thus I do not think that the idea of virtue can be reduced to mastery of pleasure. Berges comes to the conclusion that there must be unity in virtues, after she proves that "the unity thesis cannot be watered down" (*Plato on Virtue and the Law* 19). However it seems to me that in this case we are once again reducing virtue to an epistemological possibility (one can understand virtue as a unity) or we are relegating it to a closed number of exceptional human beings (the kings of the *Republic* or the Nocturnal Council of the *Laws*). I do not see any theoretical problem in looking at the unity of virtue in this fashion, but from the point of view of moral psychology these rare occurrences would be negligible. Though he recognizes that there are cases in which moderation and courage can be taken apart from the other virtues, especially wisdom (see *Plato's Utopia Recast* 289), Bobonich maintains that virtues must constitute a unity or, to put it in his terms, that Plato maintains the "reciprocity of virtues" even in the *Laws*. Bobonich claims that the unity of the psychology of the *Laws*, where rationality and non-rational motivations involve one another, requires that non-rational forces that may determine virtues such as courage and moderation are in conjunction with rational virtues such as *phronesis* (see *Plato's Utopia Recast* 291 and 334-347). Kahn suggests correctly that the *Laws* addresses the problem of the unity of virtues in the same sense in which the *Phaedo* does, by distinguishing popular and philosophic virtue and claiming that the latter involve the former, but the former may stand on their own (see *Plato on the Unity of Virtue* 26). Irwin takes a similar position, problematizing the difference between, say, 'vulgar' courage and the virtue of courage, but finds that it is

At this point it seems rather clear that my reading of the moral psychology of the

Laws refutes what is often referred to as Platonic intellectualism, though there might be

textual clues in the *Laws* demanding we take this option into consideration. In the second

half of the Athenian's speech to the Magnesians, the Athenian claims that "those who are

unjust are so unwillingly" (*Leg.* 5.731c).[101] On this view, intellection is sufficient and

necessary for moral action, since the implication is that if one only knew that one is

behaving badly one would correct one's behavior. As Rorty acknowledges, this is

traditionally the understanding of Plato's moral psychology, especially in terms of *akrasia*.

"Solutions to the problem of *akrasia* fall, very roughly, into two categories, those which

focus primarily on the analysis of the effects of belief on action and those which

concentrate primarily on the connection between desire and action. Traditionally, the

Platonic solution has been interpreted as falling within the first category, the Aristotelian

within the second." (*Plato and Aristotle on Belief, Habit and* Akrasia 50). The reading of the

Laws' moral psychology that I offered is clearly in contrast with Rorty's qualification of

Platonic moral psychology as dealing with belief and actions alone – which in my opinion

references the intellectualist reading of Platonic ethics. However, addressing the context of

the Athenian's claim might help us reconcile the centrality of non-deliberative motives for

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impossible to make a final decision about this distinction in the *Laws*. He ultimately rejects the theory of the unity of virtue in the *Laws* with an argument similar to mine, "[t]he members of the Nocturnal Council are supposed to learn what the virtues have in common, so that they understand the 'one' as well as the 'many' …, but Plato's statement of this point does not compromise the plurality of the virtues. … [R]ecognition of this common feature [i.e. the 'one'] does not imply that they are not distinct virtues" (*Plato's Ethics* 348).

[101] This idea is reinstated at 9.860d and it is common in the Platonic corpus, see for instance *Resp.* 2.382a, 3.413a, 9.589c. For a list of additional passages see Ferrari *Le Leggi* 402 n. 15.

action with this claim for ethical intellectualism.[102] First, the Athenian does not

consider ignorance and deficiency in non-deliberative motives for action as mutually

exclusive explanations for moral vice. In the same book 5, the Athenian admits of three

causes of non-virtuous behavior: (1) ignorance, in compliance with the intellectualism of

other dialogues; (2) *akrasia*, which in my view would amount to the lack of non-

deliberative motivation for action supportive of argumentation; (3) a combination of

ignorance and *akrasia*.[103] Thus, ethical intellectualism is not the only pillar of moral

consideration in the *Laws.* Second, in book 3.688e-89b, the Athenian defines ignorance as

the lack of coordination between one's non-deliberative motivation and rationality (*logos*).

Thus, the ignorant person is he who knows what is beautiful and good, but loves what is

ugly and unjust. Since there is no reason to think that the Athenian has changed his mind

about the meaning of ignorance from book 3 to book 5, we can argue that when he claims

that those who act immorally do so unwillingly, he is not considering an intellectualist view

of morality, but one predicated on the harmony of non-deliberative and rational motives

for action. If such is the case, my reading of the moral psychology of the *Laws* can address

this case of ignorance without recourse to intellection. Finally, the context of the quote

from book 5 excludes the possibility of ethical intellectualism, as the Athenian is concerned

with the reaction moral citizens should have with regards to the ignorant person, not with

the moral status of the ignorant person. In other words, starting at 5.731b the Athenian is

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[102] Some consider these contrasting opinions in the *Laws* the result of late editing by Phillip of Opus see Lefebvre's *Platon Philosophe du Plaisir* 222-23 n. 26. However, Lefebvre seems to agree with my reading when he claims that the context of the *Laws* leads us to read the deficiency of knowledge in those who are morally blameworthy in terms of "l'absence de maîtrise de soi" (*ivi* 245).

[103] See *Leg.* 5.734b.

concerned with the citizens' ability to retain both emotive states related to courage and those related to moderation, and if he speaks about the ignorant individual he does so only to specify what kind of reactions are expected from citizens that are courageous and moderate at once. Thus, what is really on the Athenian's mind is the moral status of the virtuous citizens, not the role of intellection in the ignorant person. These three arguments clarify that we should understand "those who are unjust are so unwillingly" at *Leg.* 5.731c, without recurring to intellectualism as an explanation.

Finally, on my reading is it possible to relate virtue with happiness? The chief issue with this question is that the definition of happiness varies in the secondary literature. In a very general sense the Athenian seems to claim in a variety of contexts that virtue is sufficient for happiness, or even that virtue is the same as happiness.[104] Some authors uphold the sufficiency thesis. For instance Annas maintains that "[t]o the Ancient Platonists, Plato holds that virtue is sufficient for happiness. … The Ancient Platonists find [this to be the case] in the *Republic* and the *Laws,* and this is, to modern scholarship, definitely controversial. Nevertheless, when we look in detail at these works, the ancient claim holds up better than we might have expected" (*Platonic Ethics Old and New* 5).[105] Others maintain that virtue is necessary but not sufficient for happiness. So, Bobonich in *Plato's Utopia Recast* maintains that virtue and happiness are distinct, and that virtue is not

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[104] That the virtuous is also the happy life is implied at *Leg.* 1.631b and stated explicitly at 5.734d-e. It is repeated in terms of *agathia kai eudaimonia* at 5.742e. Form the perspective of legal theory, legislation should aim at virtue and virtue is happiness as stated at 5.742e.

[105] Aristotle should not be counted among these ancient Platonists. In *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.13 1153bl9-21, as cited by Carone (*Pleasure and Virtue in Plato's* Laws 340), he ridicules the sufficiency thesis.

sufficient for happiness but it is necessary for it.[106] Stalley maintains a similar position,

when he states "[Plato] believes, it seems, that virtue is good in itself because it is the

ordering of the soul in accordance with reasons. In so far as we are rational, we will

therefore require no further argument for virtue, but, since we are embodied beings, we

shall be able to pursue the life of virtue only if it is pleasurable. Thus, although pleasure is

not itself the good, it is a necessary condition of the good life for mankind" (*Introduction to

Plato's* Laws 69). A partly similar position is held by Irwin *Plato's Ethics*,[107] as he claims that

in *Laws* Plato seems to imply the necessity of some external goods together with virtues in

order to be happy. In other words, virtue is necessary for externals to be considered good,

but because externals play a role (though minimal) in the life of happiness, virtue is not

sufficient for happiness.

Operative in the last position is a shift in the conception of happiness. At this stage

we are no longer considering happiness a psychological condition of the agent, but one that

implies the use of some material goods. Usually the passage of reference for this line of

argument is *Leg.* 1.631b-c, where the Athenian claims that human goods (beauty, vigor,

etc.) are dependent upon divine goods (the four cardinal virtues). Annas, in line with her

understanding of the sufficiency between virtue and happiness interprets the Athenian as a

proto-stoic,[108] and maintains that what is conventionally understood as good (health,

wealth, etc.) has no role in establishing happiness. Carone offers a reading of this same

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[106] See 209-15.

[107] See 346-47.

[108] See *Platonic Ethics Old and New* 43-47.

passage that corroborates Annas' claim of sufficiency while at the same time is most

distant from Annas' general understating of the importance of externals for happiness.

Essentially Carone argues that virtue is necessary and sufficient for happiness in a qualified

sense. With reference to book 1, she maintains that virtue does not imply logically the

existence of externals (beauty, health, wealth), but that it implies logically that these

externals are goods (that beauty, health and wealth improve the virtuous person's life).[109]

In addition she maintains that the morally perfect person is also immune to being done

wrong by others. In this fashion, once someone is virtuous they have goods at their disposal

and no one can take away their satisfaction; their happiness is assured.[110] I am sympathetic

to Carone's view and I do think that her interpretation of the relation between virtue and

external goods grasps an insight in Plato's text that is often undetected.[111] The one problem

I see is the implication, on this reading, of virtue as the totality of virtue. In other words, as

we have discussed above, the *Laws* seems to allow for the acquisition of individual virtues

and considers the unity of virtue an epistemological issue. Following this line of reasoning,

it seems that someone who is courageous, but not moderate, may find a good in health, but

not one in wealth. Thus, it would seem that while Carone's view addresses in general terms

the relation between virtue and external goods,[112] in a specific sense we should discover

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[109] See *Pleasure, Virtue, Externals and Happiness in Plato's* Laws 329.

[110] See *ivi* 335.

[111] Often but not always. Carone's thesis seems to me very close to Bobonich's explanation of the dependency thesis in the *Laws*, see *Plato's Utopia Recast* 148-49.

[112] Which are minimally instrumentally necessary for happiness; see *Pleasure, Virtue, Externals and Happiness in Plato's* Laws 332.

each time which virtues are sufficient and necessary for some externals in the qualified sense of seeing them as goods. Additionally, perhaps only the totality of virtue would imply logically complete happiness.[113]

Virtuous Habits and the Character of Freedom.

In this last section I would like to address the question of why in the *Laws* Plato decides to discriminate between pleasures, and repress some by habit while cultivating others. A preliminary answer to this question was given above, when we discussed the distinction between the two sets of pleasures and explained that the most propaedeutic to rationality was selected as the pleasure to be cultivated, while the others must be repressed if we want to produce virtue. However, there is a second, subtler and perhaps more interesting way to reply to the question. In this reply we should consider the significance of Plato's primary concern with pleasures and their regulation (whether in a repressive or hortatory fashion) by means of habits. In other words, what is Plato trying to achieve with his moral psychology? The answer here is that in the *Laws* (perhaps more than in other dialogues) Plato seems to have come to the conclusion that the human psyche must rely on its most bodily attributes in order to achieve its ethical (and in some cases intellectual) goals. The philosophical implication of this view is that when ethics merges with psychology, the system of ethical obligations is re-described in terms of cultivation of the self. To act ethically means to be a certain way and not another; it means to have a certain character. We can describe ethical character in the *Laws* as a character of freedom.

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[113] See *ivi* 336-37.

Let us take a closer look at the moral psychology of the *Laws* in terms of cultivation of the self.[114] At the beginning of book 5 the Athenian claims that the soul is what is "most properly ours" (*Leg*.5.726a), that is to say that the soul is what defines our existence. Any modification of the soul is a modification of the nature of a human being. From this perspective, to be morally bad is not simply to perform a morally wrong action, but it is to constitute oneself in a certain fashion, to change one's nature into a bad person's nature and "to say and to do what those people by nature say and do to each other" (*Leg*.5.728b). It would seem that in general the *Laws* conceive of two ways of constituting oneself (1) as a slave, or a bad person, or (2) as a free person with a virtuous character. Constituting oneself as free means to gain habits of repression of pleasure and cultivation of pleasure in such a way that they will sustain *logismos*; being a slave means to be on the leash of our non-deliberative motivations. In the *Laws* the latter character is identified with self-love.

In general we can say that self-love implies slavery to oneself because there is no cultivation or "making" of the self, i.e. no choice in the constitution of one's non-deliberative motives by means of habit, but only the repetitious satisfaction of drives and expectations. Love of oneself (*philos auto*; *philia heautou; stergein heauton*) is discussed in the *Laws* at 5.731d-32a.[115] It is opposed to the mixed nature of virtuous human beings, who need to be

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[114] In this context I use the terms self and soul interchangeably.

[115] All quotes refer to this portion of the text. The variety of expressions pointing to self-love indicates that this is not a fixed concept, meaning that many phenomena may be subsumed under this category. Additionally, on the basis of what we said in the previous chapter, instances of self-love are instances of indiscriminate satisfactions of the drive of pleasure. To employ the vocabulary of moral psychology, these are instances in which the motivation for action is determined by the drive of pleasure. Finally, self-love as the satisfaction of one's motivation for action is different from cultivating oneself by means of habits.

spirited and tame the same time, it is the "greatest of evil things," (*ivi* 731d) and it is

innate in the human soul. It indicates a state in which the lover is blind about the object of

love, and makes one unable to distinguish things that are just, good and beautiful.[116]It

causes one to value always and exclusively what is one's own rather than what is true.[117]

This character stands in opposition to someone who does not love himself or his own

things, but focuses on what is just, whether these are his actions or someone else's.[118]

The opposite of self-love is the character of freedom, which for the most part is

defined negatively in the text against its slavish term of comparison.[119] I think we can find

three cases in the text indicating what constitutes this character of freedom, a favorable

attitude towards collective reasoning, a preference for public over private affairs and the

possibility to revise one's own ethical habits.

The first case I would like to consider is from book 7, specifically 790a-b. Here the

Athenian describes the opposition between the character of those who are masters and

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Psychologically speaking, the former is concerned only with the satisfaction of the stronger motive for action. The latter focuses on the repression of certain motives by means of creating opposing non-deliberative motives of action and on the cultivation of other motives, which are propaedeutic for rational deliberation, not necessarily the strongest non-rational motives.

[116] The paradoxical element to consider here is that the lover and the object of love are one and the same, that is to say that one is blind to one's own motivations for action.

[117] See *ivi* 5.732a.

[118] See *ivi* 5.731a.

[119] Slavery and freedom is the motif dominating the famous analogy of the free and the slave doctor and their respective free and slave patient. The free doctor makes it a practice to listen to his patient and the patient makes it a practice to listen to his doctor. Only when the doctor has understood the ailment of the patient and the patient has been persuaded by the doctor, the curative process may begin (see *Leg.* 4.720a-e). Bobonich, against Popper and revising Morrow's and Stalley's analyses, considers the doctor's persuasion a matter of rational understanding. With regard to the present discussion I will not comment on this point. I will however argue that the character's predisposition marking the freedom of the doctor and the patient is likely to be ascribed to non-deliberative results of their education. I do think that Bobonich would be willing to accept my last remark, as he seems to state in *Persuasion, Compulsion and Freedom in Plato's* Laws 376-77.

free and the slavish feminine character of the handmaid. The difference between the

two characters is drawn on one's attitude towards public life. Specifically the Athenian

argues that freedom entails the ability to "listen and come to an agreement" (*Leg.*7.790b).

In order to explore this point, let us consider the following. The Athenian notes that what

makes children non-free is brutal slave-like treatment.[120] This type of treatment is

predicated on the exclusion of children from the sphere of decision-making and assumes

they are incapable of intellection. Free is she who can listen and come to an agreement, but

in order to do so, she must gain preliminary admission to the circle of the free, where one

shares one's insights, true and false opinions and seeks agreement as to what is to be done.

Slaves (including the handmaids in the passage from book 7) are automatically excluded

from this circle because they are by definition unable to listen and to understand. In other

words, a slave listens to obey, not to agree. One question to ask is whether one behaves like

a slave because one is excluded from the sphere of freedom, or whether one behaves like a

slave and consequently is excluded from the sphere of freedom.[121] In order to answer this

question, let us employ some points made in this chapter. If our previous analysis of the

psychology of the *Laws* is correct, then the very possibility of listening and being able to

agree is predicated on two premises: (i) in one's soul there are enough non-deliberative

forces to support the lead of argumentation (*logismos*) and, as we have seen, these are the

results of psychological training based on habit. (ii) Some non-deliberative motivations

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[120] See *Leg.* 7.791d.

[121] I bring up this issue as it pertains to moral psychology and different characters. Politically speaking in the *Laws* the issue is quickly resolved. All citizens are free and all slave and metics are not free. See below on this point.

must sustain *logismos* in other person's psyche as well. As we should recall from the

image of the marionette, *logismos* is to be translated in the common laws of the city; this

translation requires that each individual's non-deliberative motives sustain the same

argumentation, thus we agree to settle our *logismoi* as laws. The non-deliberative motives

that sustain *logismos* in my psyche must not necessarily correspond to the non-deliberative

motives that sustain the other person's *logismos.* Nonetheless, each of us must have

undergone training in habituation that allows for the prevalence of *logismos* in our souls.

From this perspective, the condition of freedom and citizenry is one of cultivation of non-

deliberative psychological forces. If these are repressed and enhanced so as to yield

attitudes of listening and rational agreement, then one is both free and included in the

circle of those who are free, but if these are not cultivated, then one is a slave and is

excluded. Thus, some preparatory psychological training is needed in order to enter to the

sphere of freedom.

The second point the Athenian makes is that a character of freedom recognizes that

the private is public and that the public depends on the private. [122] The combination of

private and public sounds very much like the opposite of liberty in terms of negative

freedom, lack of impediment or the sphere of individual rights. But I think we should leave

this consideration aside, as it would be anachronistic to impose on Plato our metrics of

political freedom. Most importantly however, I think that the only good basis for

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[122] We should take seriously Plato's vision of a perfect integration of individual citizens into the political body. Let us remember that the ideal of the *Laws* is still the same as *Republic*, namely the principle that "the things of friends are in common" including private possessions and family relations; see *Leg.*5.739c.

understanding the combination of private and public life is, once again, the moral

psychology of the *Laws*. Let us consider this second aspect of freedom.

In the *Laws* the public becomes private in a variety of ways. At 5.731a the

acquisition of virtue means to be always ready to share one's virtue with others.[123] An even

greater political consequence of the overlapping of private and public is mentioned with

regards to the education of the youth, when the Athenian claims that "[children] belong

more to the city than to their parents" (7.804d).[124] The reference to freedom as the

cancellation of the distinction between private and public interest is further addressed by

Morrow. Morrow reads the opposition between free and slave in terms of free and laborer

and hints at the possibility that this very character of freedom from manual labor is what

qualifies an individual as a citizen in Plato's *Laws*.[125] Following Morrow we should define

the free character as one that is free of manual labor and can dedicate her private life to

public undertakings. On the contrary, the slave character is bound to manual labor and

private interest.

Even though the political points made above are all correct, my inclination is to read

the issue of private and public in the *Laws* in psychological, rather than socio-economic

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[123] When discussing gymnastics (dance and wrestling) in book 7.796d the Athenian selects only certain dances (those that are noble, choral dances with weapons, only certain kinds of wrestling which are conducive to training for battle) claiming that these are the only kinds of gymnastics that are fit for citizens who are free; incidentally, these are also the kind of activities that are beneficial for the entire community. Here again we see the integration of private and public on the definition of freedom. Free is the citizen who can cultivate himself in view of the private victory in an *agon* and the public benefit of war.

[124] While it must be acknowledged that the Athenian is mostly concerned with the welfare of the state, it is worth also remembering that in the *Laws* the Athenian promotes a critical attitude towards state power. The cultivation of virtues such as courage and moderation is meant on the one hand to oppose injustices by means of a noble heart and on the other to refrain from punishing unjustly; see *Leg.*5.731b-d.

[125] *Eleutheros in Plato's Laws* 221.

terms. From my perspective, the slave character's interest in the accumulation of

wealth should be read as a declination of the more general case of self-love. The Athenian

makes this point explicitly in book 8, when he expresses concern for the general lack of

participation in public festivities. The worry here is that people will care for private

matters in a way that forces them to cultivate their private interest at all times; so long as

they find the satisfaction of eating, drinking and having sexual intercourse, individuals

might reconsider their public engagements.[126] As we have seen above, these are precisely

the three non-rational motives which one should frustrate in order to achieve virtue.[127]

This very point is developed in the sense of cultivation of oneself in book 7. The concern

with private property is the chief psychological hindrance to Magnesia, a society in which

citizens are unconcerned with providing what is necessary for their lives and have time to

dedicate to the collective interest.[128] The Athenian believes that if citizens were ever to be

put in the situation of having free time, they would not be fattened like farm animals,[129] but

rather would dedicate themselves to "a life of care (e*pimeleia*) for the excellence (*arete*) of

the body and the soul" (*Leg.* 7.807c).[130] In comparison to this kind of life, the concern with

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[126] See *Leg.* 8.831b-e.

[127] Car maintains that justice is related in the *Laws* to fighting our natural inclination towards self-interest; in this sense it is the pre-eminent social virtue, because it connects us with others. See *Cardinal Virtues and Plato's Moral Psychology* 197.

[128] See *Leg.* 7.807b.

[129] See *ivi* 7.807a.

[130] For the frequency of the occurrence of the term *epimeleia* and its cognates in the *Laws* see Larivee's *Du Souci à l'Honner de l'Âme* 112-13. In this beautiful article Larivée points out that in the *Laws* we find a revival and a revision of the concept of *epimeleia* as expressed in early "Socratic" dialogues such as the *Apology*. Specifically she claims that the concept of *epimeleia* is replaced with the concept of honor which (1) it is

private possessions is "secondary" (*ivi* 7.807d). In this sense a character of freedom is

one that has the possibility of cultivating itself; such possibility is predicated, materially

speaking, on one's needs being securely satisfied (no need to work in order to eat or drink),

but psychologically this possibility amounts to the freedom from private concerns and the

cultivation of one's psyche and body in social settings. This connection between cultivating

oneself and being concerned for public life is not intuitive, but it runs in the background of

the moral psychology of the *Laws*. And if we pay attention, we do notice that,

psychologically speaking, it is only when one frees oneself from the concern of one's

private advantage that one can question the meaning of citizenry in general (not oneself,

not anyone in particular) in the public sphere. And it is only from this viewpoint that one

can find the resolve to modify one's non-deliberative motivations to match that public idea

of citizenry.

   A character of freedom encompasses one last feature. This feature is very much

unlike what we have said thus far, since it is unconcerned with a contrast of the slavish

character and its self-love. Additionally it is not made explicit in the text, but demands to be

gathered from the context. I am referring to freedom from habit. Habits of repression can,

as we indicated above, cause an *endurcissement*[131] of our psychic forces. The ability to undo

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distinguished from the care of the self in the fact that it entails a social dimension (*ivi* 118-19), (2) it clarifies a distinction between caring for oneself and self-love or being after one's own advantage, which the early notion of *epimeleia* blurred (*ivi* 123) and (3) that in the *Laws* the Athenian begins with the notion that everyone is after one's own care and must specify what is the correct way to care for oneself (*ivi* 114). I find myself in agreement with Larivée and I touch on point (1) and (2) in this last section when discussing the character of freedom.

[131] In this sense Laurent speaks contrast correctly "'endurcissement physique et moral" which the habituation in courage and moderation bring about with the "retour à un état de molle fraîcheur" (*Mesure de l'Humain* 14) which the consumption of wine helps achieve.

these habits is a matter of freedom. Now, let us clarify that this is a very rare event in

the *Laws*, one that is confined to few people who have mastered virtue, but have become

disciplined to a fault in the habituation of their non-deliberative forces. Additionally this

freedom is not achieved by means of habit, but rather by means of medication. Wine is

indicated as the medicine that can relax the sclerosis of our soul's character,[132] so that we

may find again the freedom to pursue our desires.

To summarize, treating one's non-deliberative motives by means of habit of

repression and cultivation has the goal to yield a character of virtue; this is a general

systematization of the forces that determine the soul, Plato identifies this psychic

arrangement with the free citizen. Free citizens are characterized in three ways. First, free

citizens tend to listen and exercise their argumentative faculty to come to an agreement

with others; second, they are unconcerned with private advantage, to which they prefer

free time to cultivate their souls; finally at times, though rarely, they find that they should

also free themselves from their own virtuous habits in order to keep their non-rational

motivations lively.

Chapter Conclusion.

I opened this chapter explaining that one current debate around virtue in the *Laws*

can be resolved in an innovating fashion, if one recognizes the prominent role of habit in

this dialogue's moral psychology. Appealing to different parts of the text, scholars usually

debate whether virtue is the result of mastery exercised over one's non-rational motives or

a harmonious psychological condition that reconciles rational and non-rational

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[132] See *Leg.*2.666c and 671b-c.

psychological forces. I propose to focus on the habituation of non-rational motives as the process for the achievement of virtue. In this light, habituation resolves the debate around virtue as self-mastery or harmony, since it is both the training in mastery we exercise over non-rational psychological motives as well as the resulting harmonious relation between these forces and *logismos* in the soul.

Though some authors acknowledge the prominence of habit formation in the moral psychology of the *Laws*, hardly anyone ventures in a detailed explanation of Plato's understanding of the mechanics of habit formation and its relation to virtue. A highly innovative aspect of my work is the patterning of the process of psychological habituation on the model of assimilation of foods. This process results in two models for the achievement of virtue, habits of repression and habits of cultivation of pleasure. Habits of repression can be applied to general cases of the drive to pleasure and yield the introduction in the psyche of two virtues, courage and moderation. Habits of cultivation of pleasure find application with regards to a special set of pleasures, those derived from rhythm and harmony. Though the habitual cultivation of these pleasures does not constitute virtue on its own, it creates the conditions for the soul's acquisition of *phronesis*.

Taking stock of the last three chapters, we should recount that we began with an iconographic interpretation of the image of the marionette as the paradox of a soul that is at the mercy of its own strings, but can also determine them, once it knows what they are. Then we moved onto a description of these strings, the psychological forces that determine human psychological life, and we found that while non-rational forces play a prominent role in the soul, some new semi-rational forces could be introduced in the soul and could

come to the aid of rational argumentation; these forces open the possibility for the soul-marionette to influence its strings. In this final chapter we have seen that pulling our own string is a possibility attained by means of habit. These habits quite literally pull and release our non-rational motives for action by repressing or cultivating them, and introduce in the soul non-deliberative motives for virtues such as courage and moderation or prepare the soul's non-rational inclination towards harmony and rhythm for sustaining rational argumentation. In the following chapter we will examine a technology for the habituation of non-rational motives, the choral festivities of the city of Magnesia and its literary and musical canons.

CHAPTER 4

THE *LAWS' MOUSIKE* AS A TECHNOLOGY

> Although it might belong to Socrates and other minds of
> the like craft to acquire virtue by reason, the human race
> would long since have ceased to be, had its preservation
> depended only on the reasoning of the individuals
> composing it.
> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*.

Chapter Summary.

The previous three chapters offered a reading of the moral psychology of the *Laws*

centered on habit formation. In this chapter and the next we will focus on the *Laws'*

literature and music as devices that can intercept and influence the process of habituation.

In the first chapter we analyzed the image of the marionette and determined that

the psyche is a place where multiple non-deliberative forces are at play; awareness of these

forces may allow the agent to select or even create psychological motives that can help in

the pursuit of virtue. In the second chapter we described the psychological elements at play

in this moral psychology and I argued for the possibility of introducing non-deliberative

motives, such as expectations, in the soul; these motives may help the soul's deliberative

element in achieving virtue. In chapter three we focused on habit formation as method for

introducing non-deliberative forces in the soul, which may be conducive to virtue. On the

one hand, we found that habits of repression can be applied to general cases of the drive to

pleasure and yield the introduction in the psyche of non-deliberative motivations to sustain

two virtues: courage and "vulgar" moderation. On the other hand, habits of cultivation

of pleasure find application with regards to a special set of pleasures, those derived from

rhythm and harmony, and prepare the soul to accept rational virtue. In the next chapter we

shall see how *mousike* affects the psyche of performers and audience by appealing to those

non-deliberative forces introduced by habits. Before we can move on to that discussion,

however, we must clarify how the Athenian re-frames the general conception of music and

literature of his time, so as to transform it into a technology that can promote virtue.

In the first section of this chapter I make the case that the effects of the *Laws'* music

and poetry on the human experience should be explained on the basis of a psychological

analysis rather than resorting to mystical or religious accounts. Additionally, I will explain

that *mousike* is concerned only with non-deliberative psychological forces and has little

effect on *logismos*. We shall see however that this psychological influence is limited to

reinforcing non-deliberative motives that are already present in the soul and cannot be

used to introduce new motives. Finally I will give an account of music as a technology

affecting moral development.

The second section of this chapter details the way in which the Athenian

conceptually re-frames *mousike* in order to develop it into a technology that can aid the

psyche in the pursuit of virtue. Simply put, the Athenian will stress that music is a

representational art form and as such it has the power to translate eidetic content into

products that have psychological effect. This translation does not entail that eidetic content

can be encased in representation, but rather it marks the transformation of epistemological

truth into aesthetic beauty.

In the final section of this chapter I will discuss two ways in which the Athenian's re-framed music is useful for a moral education oriented towards virtue. First, I will discuss the contribution of music to habits of cultivation in early childhood moral education. Then I will describe how music intercepts and reinforces habits of repression and the expectations they create in the adult's psyche.

Finally before we begin, I should clarify the scope of this chapter's investigation. First, the reader should keep in mind that while we will reference works of art and primarily works of literature, in this chapter we are not discussing Plato's aesthetic theory; this inquiry focuses on the use of some art forms as technology to create habits in the citizens' soul. From this perspective our task will not be to clarify the conception of beauty in the *Laws*; rather, we will consider the value of art as a means to political ends and as confined to its effects on human psychology. After all, this is Plato's interest in art for what concerns the *Laws*. He makes this point clearly when he claims that "the use of the flute and the cithara on their own should be recognized as non-artistic (*amousia*) and as a mere matter of amusement" (*Leg.* 2.670a). In other words, creative endeavors without an explicit political or ethical message have no psychological utility and do not belong in the category of art.[1] Second, in this chapter we will use interchangeably the terms music, literature, musicopoetic arts and *mousike*, unless expressly noted. *Mousike* indicates any art over which the Muses preside, especially recited poetry and poetry sung to music; in our case this category includes epic poetry, myths, choral dances, tragedies, comedies, encomia and

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[1] In this regard see Gilbert's *The Relation of the Moral to the Aesthetic Standard in Plato*, where she argues that it is a mistake to try and find a theory of art in the *Republic* or the *Laws*, as in these two dialogues art has an instrumental value confined to moral and civic education.

hymns. The reflections upon art in the *Laws* are generally limited to these instances of *mousike*.

Mousike as Technology.

The *Laws* contains a long, detailed and innovative discussion on *mousike*. It takes up part of book 1, the entirety of book 2 and a large portion of book 7. It touches upon a variety of themes, from the usefulness of *mousike* for moral development, to the social distinctions sanctioned in the choral festivities, to what could be called a framework for cultural criticism. Given its association with religious festivities and its relevance in the construction of the social edifice envisioned in the *Laws*, all too often the *Laws*' focus on *mousike* is discussed in mystical or magical terms. So for instance Lodge wonders

> why is it that dancing, in such community festivals, has an especially educative effect upon the non-rational part of our nature? Plato's answer is contained in his theory of the nature and function of art, and is partly expressed to Hellenic ears by his reference to the companionship of god and man in the consecrated festival-dance … This companionship is indeed a mystical thing, to be understood by initiates, but not capable of being reduced to strictly rational elements. The artistic use of dance-rhythms takes us altogether out of the every-day habit of understanding, and initiates us into some of the deeper mysteries of life (*Plato's Theory of Education* 68-69).

Furthermore Lodge adds with reference to *Leg.* 2.659b, 2.668 and 12.967 that

> the idea is that the standardized earthly music will be a reproduction, following the guidance of inspiration, of this large-scale cosmic music, and will thus prepare the young to be citizens, not merely of the earthly community, but of a community which is based upon the cosmic and more-than-cosmic patterns of the ideal realm itself (*ivi* 83).[2]

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[2] In this regard see also Al-Farabi's interpretation of the festivals as means to glorify the divinity (see Harvey's *Can a Tenth century Islamic Aristotelian philosopher help us understand Plato's* laws? 327-29). Bury makes a similar point as well when he claims that "[i]n short, Art (as a σπουδαία και μιμητικὴ παιδιά) must at all costs be *reformed*. It is essentially μιμητική: it should be restricted to a μίμησις των θείων, and thus partake like all earthly images of its celestial archetype, its «paradeigmatic Idea »" (*Theory of Education in Plato's* Laws 313). It would be inaccurate to claim that all critics overlook the psychological implication of *mousike*. For instance Kurke, referring to the discussion around 7.803c-04c and the quotations from Homer

Certainly we can find in the *Laws* textual reasons that explain why interpreters would see in *mousike* a super-rational oceanic feeling uniting all choral dancers[3] or an expression of the divine reason guiding the world.[4] Additionally, we should notice that the Athenian promotes such readings when discussing the laws regulating sacred songs,[5] with the imposition of standards of composition and a censoring body for all sacred songs, in order to save the city from incurring evil.

However, there seem to be a greater number of textual references that lead the reader to consider *mousike* as a technology of moral development. This technology should be understood preliminarily as a tool able to modify the psychological conditions of the performer and the audience. Let us consider how extensive is this conception of *mousike* in the *Laws* and thus why it should be preferred to the mystical-religious reading. In the first place music is used as a cure for frenzied states and these states are typical of mystic rites of initiation and religious ceremonies. Thus, in book 7 of the *Laws*, at 790d-e, we find that music and song are remedies for calming choribantism.[6] The explanation as to why music

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that come with it, suggest that "a lifetime of habituation in choral song and dance at festivals ... helps develop the human *nous* and simultaneously opens each of us up to the surreptitious promptings of the divine" (*Imagining Chorality* 137). While the reference to habituation opens the door to possible psychological considerations, a precise analysis of the effects of *mousike* on the psyche is still missing.

[3] See for instance *Leg.* 2.653d-54a.

[4] See for instance *ivi* 10.891d-92d.

[5] See *ivi* 7.801a-e.

[6] Here choribantism is associated with the frenzy of newborns. It is interesting to note that though *mousike* has a role to play in religious festivities, the Athenian stays away from the notion of godly possession. Consequently, though he admits that the Muses, Apollo and Dionysus are the gods bearing the gift of chorality, only Apollo and the Muses oversee the education of children (see *Leg.* 2.654a), as Dionysus might lead to the condition of the choribant possessed by the divine.

and movement can function as remedies for a distressed soul is that "when a certain motion is brought upon those feelings (*pathe*) from the exterior, the movement (*kinesis*) brought upon the soul from the exterior overpowers the internal movement (*kinesis*) of fear and madness" (*Leg.* 7.791a). The Athenian maintains a very pragmatic attitude in evaluating this function of music;[7] additionally in this case he makes use of the somewhat technical terminology, employed in the discussion of the psyche. We should remember from chapter 1 that the soul is defined as principle and cause of movement and the strings that move the marionette are called *pathe*. Here the idea is that the soul is also a recipient for movement, which influences the soul accordingly. What is interesting for our discussion is that music seems to have properties that produce this psychological *kinesis*; in other words, the Athenian approaches music as a psychological tool.

Music can be used to produce excellence in the city, precisely because it is this psychological tool. For instance music is employed to preserve with praises good character, while inducing fear with regards to bad character. In this regards, we should read the note about gymnastics at 7.795e. The Athenian clarified that one part of gymnastics is dance (the other is fight) and one part of dance "imitates the speech of the Muse, protecting what is magnificent and free." This protection of psychological characteristics,[8] in this case by means of the most physical aspect of *mousike*, is precisely the psychological effect of music, as we shall see below. Furthermore, as we have seen in chapter 3, the Athenian thinks that praise is one of the most effective tools for psychological conditioning. In these cases music is deployed in the form of encomia and hymns to gods, heroes and citizens who performed

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[7] He claims that women have learned these techniques "from experience" (*Leg.* 7.790d).

[8] For a clarification of freedom as a trait of character see the last section in chapter 3.

"beautiful and laborious actions with their body or soul and have obeyed the laws" (*Leg.*7.801e). The purpose of these songs is certainly celebratory, as they can be composed only for those citizens who have died in a state of excellence. But they may also function as encouragement for current citizens of the colony who would want to be immortalized in song. Finally, let us consider the use of literature to promote public fear and induce the respect of certain laws, such as forbiddance of incest and extramarital affairs. In the *Laws*, at 8.838c, the Athenian introduces the idea that comedies and tragedies can sway public opinion in such a way that they may even overcome sexual drives. His example concerns incest. He claims that citizens are so used to hearing about the tragedy of incest in music, that they would refrain from it even if they were attracted to their relatives.

Since music has such far-reaching influence on the human psyche it would seem that its first function is psychological rather than mystical or religious. In the rest of this chapter I will follow this lead and explain in detail how *mousike* may affect the soul and how the Athenian reforms it in order to function as a tool for moral development.

Let us begin by picking up a thread from the beginning of this section, namely the notion of *mousike* as a technology. In this discussion we will define technology following Agamben's elaboration of Foucault's notion of the *dispositif* or apparatus. Agamben defines an apparatus as "anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings" (*What is an Apparatus?* 14). *Mousike* falls within this definition. In Agamben's analysis an apparatus has three characteristics: (1) it "is a heterogeneous set that includes virtually anything, linguistic and nonlinguistic" (*ivi* 2); (2) it is a strategy for "a rational and concrete intervention in the relations of forces, either so as to develop them in a particular

direction, or to block them, to stabilize them, to utilize them" (*Ibid.* quoting Foucault's *Power/Knowledge* 194-96); (3) "it appears at the intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge" (*ivi* 3). *Mousike* as a technology seems to fit well with this analysis. *Mousike* meets requirement (1) insofar as its heterogeneity involves (as we shall see in greater detail below) rhythms, harmonies, melodies, words, body movements, psychological pleasure, non-rational expectations, eidetic referents, and compliance to the spirit of the law. Additionally *mousike* meets requirement (2) on two levels; first, *mousike* regulates social relations of power between the audience, the performer and the composer. Second, *mousike* regulates psychological relations of power among the non-deliberative forces in the soul. Finally *mousike* meets requirement (3), as we shall see below, when the Athenian re-tools this technology for moral development. *Mousike* will become a means to transform the epistemological grasp of virtue into a psychological tool for the development of non-deliberative motivations; it will transform knowledge of virtue into the power of making citizens virtuous. Additionally, what joins together the technology of *mousike* to the Foucauldian notion of *dispositif* is their trajectory: "apparatuses must always imply a process of subjectification, that is to say, they must produce their subject" (*ivi* 11). As we shall see this is the case with *mousike*, the reinforcement of certain non-rational forces contributes to the creation of a certain character, a subject, in its audience and performer. Finally, as Agamben notices "[a]t the root of each apparatus lies an all-too-human desire for happiness. The capture and subjectification of this desire in a separate sphere constitutes the specific power of the apparatus" (*ivi* 17). If we refer back to the discussion about the connection between happiness and virtue in the previous chapter and we consider that, as

we shall see below, *mousike* becomes a moment of virtual presentation of *arete*, we see

how *mousike* completes the trajectory of an apparatus.[9]

In the context of moral education the Athenian recognizes that *mousike* is already a

technology working to affirm a certain subject, a certain type of citizen. And he realizes that

this technology can be re-tooled, as it were, to provide support for this own political

enterprise. Let us begin with an analysis of "theatrocracy" meant to clarify the Athenian's

diagnosis of the status of *mousike* as a technology. We will then move on to describe how he

transforms this technology.

"Theatrocracy" is the term that the Athenian uses in book 3 of the *Laws* at 701a, to

indicate the cause of the decay of Athenian political power beginning from the disruption of

its ethical norms. Though the term is applied specifically with reference to ethics and

politics in the third book, the theme of theatrocracy is not new to the *Laws*. Rather the

point the Athenian makes here is the resumption of a discussion from book 2,[10] concerning

the way in which *mousike* was conceived at the time in which the three old men of the *Laws*

carry out their conversation. In short, theatrocracy can be defined as the power of the

audience to approve or disapprove of the work of the performers and the poets, on the

basis of the gratification (in terms of entertainment) they receive from *mousike*.[11]

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[9] It might seem that with the notion of technology I am at fault of anachronism in interpreting Plato. In speaking of technology, my intention is not to force contemporary categories on our author, but to persuade the contemporary reader that the *Laws*' philosophical investigations are still relevant. We shall see that the Athenian of the *Laws* devices *mousike* in such a way that it becomes a totalizing force in the life of the Magnesians. Everyone is constantly involved in *mousike* regardless of age or social group and conceptual categories such as education, culture or entertainment do not grasp the extent of *mousike*.

[10] See *ivi* 657d-59c.

[11] In this context see also Aristotle's *Pol*.8.1341b10-ff.

Let us consider some features of theatrocracy. First, it is an adaptive technology, in other words it is not a blunt tool, rather it operates with precision, varying in genres to satisfy its diverse audience. The Athenian claims that such an unregulated tool will cause each section of the audience population to prefer a different performance. "The smallest children would judge [the best] the puppet show ... older children would choose comedies, educated women, the youth and the majority of everyone else would favor tragedy" (*Leg.* 2.658d), while the elderly would prefer listening to the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, or the works of Hesiod. Second, theatrocracy is a technology for the psyche. Theatrocracy acts upon the non-rational drive of pleasure,[12] and in this fashion it charms the audience with its characters. Thus, the Athenian conjectures, if the audience "always listened to characters better than their own, even their pleasure would be better" (*ivi* 2.659c). Third, theatrocracy has an aim, namely to satisfy the expectations for entertainment of its audience, to make the box office as it were.[13] Finally, theatrocracy is not inconsequential. It has psychological as well as political repercussions. Psychologically, its appeal to the entertainment is a form of gratification that qualifies as a process of habituation of non-deliberative motives, in a fashion similar (though not identical as we shall see) to what we have described in the previous chapter. The political results of this habituation define social dynamics and relations of power.

Let us begin by considering the psychological effects of theatrocracy. The passage I am about to quote precedes the discussion of theatrocracy in book 2, but relates to it as an

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[12] This is not really something new for Plato, as it is reminiscent of the discussions about *mousike* in *Republic* 2, 3 and 10.

[13] See *Leg.* 2.659c.

explanation of a common mistake made when one gives a generic account of *mousike*.

At 2.655c-d the Athenian comes to the conclusion that the popular conception of music is

incorrect and sets out to explain why. This popular conception is operative in theatrocracy.

> Many people state that the most defining trait (*orthoteta*) of *mousike* is its power to give pleasure to the soul. But this claim is untenable and impious, and it's probably what is leading us astray. ... The movements of choral dance are imitations of behaviors in actions and in all kinds of circumstances; since each performer displays [these behaviors] by means of their own character and ability to imitate, when they are predisposed towards the behavior's words, melodies or some other element of performance, because of their nature (*physis*) or habit (*ethos*) or both, they find these [words, melodies or performances] gratifying and they inevitably praise them and call them beautiful. On the other hand, for those whose nature (*physis*) or behavior or training (*tina synetheian*) is opposed [to the representation], there is no possibility of gratification, they don't praise them and they call them bad. Those who combine a correct nature with bad training, or those who have been habituated correctly, but have bad natures, are the ones that, because of pleasure, define [the representations] in contrast with their praises. For instance, they say that [a representation] is pleasant, but morally bad ... they are ashamed to dance or sing these [representations] ... but they enjoy them intimately. ... It is the same situation with someone who deals with the vicious characters (*êthesin*) of evil people and does not hate them, but rather accepts them because he enjoys them. His blaming [these people] would be a joke, as if he were dreaming of their depravity. Those who experience this enjoyment, inevitably become the same (*homoiousthai*) as their enjoyment, even if they are ashamed to praise it. (*Leg.*2.655d-56b).

From this passage we learn the following about *mousike*'s in general and

theatrocracy's specific psychological effects on the psyche: (1) This technology works in

different ways when applied to performers and to audiences. Performers may experience

pleasure or displeasure in their performance, but they perform it nonetheless. Audiences

may experience pleasure or pain intimately while not being bound to performances.

Additionally, audiences may pass judgment on performers so that they may make them

ashamed to perform a certain dance. When this dynamic of subjection to the audience is

brought to its extreme limit we have theatrocracy.[14] (2) This technology operates upon the character (here the word used is *physis*, but we have shown in the previous chapter that with regards to psychological dispositions these two notions are equivalent) and habits of performers and audience. However, it does not work in such a way as to introduce new habits. Rather, *mousike* is a technology that reinforces habits and characters that are already present in the performer or audience. Wicked performers will not turn morally good as a result of starring as a virtuous character in a tragedy, nor will good performers turn evil. Additionally, akratic characters will remain in their state of conflict. The Athenian suggests this notion of reinforcement when he states that praise or blame of a performance comes as a result of the gratification (or lack thereof) it provides. In other words, a performance can only appeal to non-deliberative forces that are already present in the psyche. This appeal sustains the very structure of theatrocracy, since poets will try to gratify their audience in order to receive their approval. Additionally, as audiences are gratified, theatrocracy reaches the secondary effect of strengthening the role of those non-deliberative forces in the soul it targets. (3) This reinforcement is done for the most part by means of enjoyment (*chairein*). If one finds *mousike* to match one's character or habit or both, then one will enjoy it. We should remember in this case that, in the second and third chapter, we found that continued gratification of a drive gives rise to expectations. Thus, as *mousike* gratifies the drive of pleasure in the psyche, it also promotes an expectation of

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[14] But we shall see below that the critical role of the chorus of the elderly in the Athenian's reformed *mousike* is another instance of audience-dominated performance. The relevant changes are the quality and expertise of the judges (general audience on the other hand, the virtuous elderly on the other), and the criteria of judgment (entertainment vs. compliance with virtue).

pleasure; this is the full range of its reinforcement of non-deliberative motives.[15] (4)

Finally the Athenian's comparison between the experience of *mousike* and human

interactions reveals that *mousike* reinforces non-rational psychological forces alone and is

unconcerned with *logismos*.[16] If we recall the four-step analysis of habituation discussed in

the previous chapter, we should remember that steps 2 and 3 corresponded with becoming

similar to one's habit and enjoying it respectively. In the final section of the quote the

Athenian describes the effects of *mousike* as targeting these two aspects of the process of

habituation, but in reverse order. "Those who experience this enjoyment (*chairein*),

inevitably become the same (*homoiousthai*) as their enjoyment (*chaironta*), even if they are

ashamed (*aischynetai*) to praise it" (*Leg.* 2.656b). The Athenian is suggesting that the

affective reinforcement we experience in performance stimulates some non-rational

motives against others, and leaves rational calculation aside.[17] In other words, calculation

knows that spending time with reproachable individuals is shameful, but it does not find

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[15] More on this point below. For the moment being let us just notice that the Athenian is rather consistent with this view that musical habits are hard to reform and that *mousike* works more as confirmation, than reformation of non-rational psychological forces. The connection of *mousike* and habit comes back at *Leg.*2.666d, with the implication that what one grows used to singing, will be what one will sing for the rest of one's life. Folch takes a view different than mine in this case, one that allows for the introduction of non-rational motives in the soul by means of performances; see *The City and the Stage* 94-95.

[16] An analogous example, this time in the positive, can be found in *Republic* 6.500c-e.

[17] Gould sees this psychological conflict in terms of one's judgment and one's enjoyment. "The fundamental point at issue here is ... that appreciation of art demands a process of habituation and, moreover, that the same is the case with morality: we cannot attain to *arete* without the process of developing tastes and character by habit.... Above all the fact is stressed that serious damage to character can be caused by the secret cleavage between judgment and enjoyment. It is the function of education to prevent such a cleavage, and it is with this in mind that Plato goes on to examine the effect of 'representational' art on the development of character" (*The Development of Plato's Ethics* 83). I agree with Gould's reading so long as we clarify what the Athenian has in mind when he talks about 'judgments." For instance, the verbs the Athenian uses in this passage (*prosagoreuo, epainein*) suggest more an affective reaction than a rational assessment. If the judgment that Gould has in mind is an opinion or an affective disposition, then I see the conflict in the same fashion he does.

sufficient psychic strength to contrast, say, the drive of pleasure, which is being

gratified and reinforced by the presence of the bad company. As we have seen in the

previous chapter, shame[18] is the kind of non-rational expectation that is meant to induce

moderation and is acquired by frustrating the drive of pleasure. By opposing this

enjoyment with shame the Athenian is suggesting that certain events reinforce one of our

non-rational motivations and undo what habits of repressions have provided.

Now let us take a look at the political consequences of theatrocracy. In the

Athenian's mind it is inevitable that changes affecting the psyche of the citizens will have

political reverberations. Additionally *mousike* is at once a moral and a political device, since

it binds together the sensitivity of all citizens, some of whom perform and some of whom

attend the performances. Usually this is the focus of political analyses of *mousike*, either

stressing the cohesive power of performance or the proto-totalitarian use of performance

as propaganda.[19] One often-ignored aspect is that this political dimension involves power

dynamics; two different *mousikai*, in other words the different application of this same

technology, can give birth to a different power structure in society and thus can contribute

to the creation of different societies. Brisson intercepts this insight when he claims that

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[18] *Aidos* in this case seems to me a conceptual equivalent of *aischynetai*.

[19] Note that the examples I have in mind refer to the reformed *mousike* the Athenian proposes, and which we will discuss briefly, but they apply as much to any deployment of *mousike*, even theatrocracy. "Thus we see how education in music and gymnastics is a preparation for good citizenship. It starts in the home, receives a slightly technical direction the schools, and is continued in the life of the community, which consists precisely in community singing, community dancing, and community gymnastics and military exercises. In so living, the citizens keep their community spirit fresh and strong, and their sense of followership unimpaired" (Lodge *Plato's Theory of Education* 83). Or with reference to *Leg.*2.653c-54a and 7.803c-04c, "the image of the dancing puppets suggests at once a direct vertical connection between each puppet and the divine and a horizontal linkage of a group of bodies in perfectly synchronized, coordinated motion" (Kurke *Imagining Chorality* 134). As the taste of the virtuous person becomes the criterion for judging of *mousike* we should recognize that this is also an attempt to tie together the different generations of the civic body. As Meyer puts it in reference to 2.659e, "the *sumphônia* (agreement) to be cultivated … is interpersonal agreement across generations, obedience to the law, and to the elders of the community" (*Laws 1 & 2* 248).

"[e]ducation in all its forms (not only schooling, but also preambles, choruses and competitions) exist not in order to substitute persuasion for law in its dimensions of prescription and punishment, but to mold the citizen's behavior and morals in advance, so that he conforms to the law automatically, as it were. All means of achieving this goal are permitted, including lies" (*Ethics and Politics in Plato's Laws* 118). While it is true that the political value of *mousike* resides in its ability to sustain political regimes, the risk in this assessment is to understand *mousike* as an illiberal art and – in the fashion of Popper – think of Plato as a willful proponent of some sort of proto-fascism.

Though this reading is possible, it is also problematic on two accounts. First, it is dismissive of the import of non-rational psychological motivations in our decision-making process. As we have discussed in the previous chapters, the psychological assessment of the *Laws* reveals that human action is dependent on non-rational motivations, even when it is led by rationality. Readings that contrast Plato's approach with that of a liberal society, where autonomous human beings make their individual decisions, cast on our author a view of the world that is foreign to him in psychological and political terms. For Plato, especially in the *Laws*, if citizens are left to choose on their own they will experience only a relative psychological autonomy, since all decisions are highly dependent on non-deliberative motives. As we have seen in the previous chapter, even a character of freedom is dependent - in a seemingly un-free fashion - on non-deliberative motivations. Accordingly, this relative autonomy is reflected in the political condition of an individual. Education and cultural practices affect citizens' non-deliberative motivations so that no one is ever properly autonomous. This first point leads us to problem (ii), namely that this reading misunderstands the value of *mousike* as a technology and thinks of *mousike* as a

tool. *Mousike* is not a dedicated tool; it is not a propaganda machine meant for indoctrination. A tool can be used to achieve a certain objective; it is a means to an end. Thus, on the standard understanding of propaganda, one assumes that this tool clouds the population's judgment by appealing to their non-rational pulls (e.g. rather than having an informed discussion about the state of the economy, one offers solutions to economically depressed times that leverage desires of belonging, such as economic nationalism or identity politics). On the other hand a technology, such as *mousike*, is a device that is always operative. Every human society has *mousike* (be this propaganda, Hollywood or the system of choral performances the Athenian has in mind) because every human being is dependent on non-rational motivations of actions. *Mousike* is a technology for non-rational motivations and in this sense it is socially ubiquitous, it belongs in closed as much as in open societies. However (and this is the political aspect we should really care about), different deployments of this technology deliver different social groups, as they contribute to the stimulation of the same non-rational motivation in large groups of human beings. In his discussion of theatrocracy as a specific delivery of the technology of *mousike*, the Athenian recognizes that the gratification of the drive to be entertained translates in a specific power structure, which we could call tyranny of the masses. Letting poets compose any choral song, leaving its effects on virtue and politics to chance, means being willing to accept this power structure.[20] Since the Athenian is not willing to do so, he must re-tool, as it were, the technology of *mousike*.

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[20] See *Leg.* 2.656c-d.

The Athenian's Re-Framing of the Technology of *Mousike*.

To understand how the Athenian re-tools the technology of *mousike*, we should keep in mind our analysis of theatrocracy in the previous section, and use it as a meter of contrast. We have seen that theatrocracy is a modality of *mousike* resulting in meeting the audience's request for entertainment. As any other modality of *mousike*, theatrocracy appeals to non-deliberative motivations (drives and expectations) already present in the audience and strengthens some against others. This process of reinforcement intersects the process of habituation of non-deliberative motives discussed in the previous chapter. From this perspective, it is easy to see why the Athenian regards *mousike* an essential technology to create the virtuous state he has held as an objective since the beginning of the conversation in book 1. As we have seen in the case of theatrocracy, *mousike* is unlikely to engender non-deliberative motivations in the citizens' soul, since its main effect is the reinforcement of those motivations. Nonetheless, when combined with a rigorous curriculum of moral education it can be an indispensable tool to promote the prevalence of those non-deliberative motives of action that can support *logismos* in the pursuit of wisdom. In order to deploy *mousike* to attain non-rational motives in support of virtue, the Athenian must re-tool this technology. Theatrocracy works well in its appeal to the audience's non-rational drive of pleasure, but it works poorly in the strengthening of expectations supporting virtues like courage or "vulgar" moderation. If the Athenian is to deploy this technology as a way to strengthen these non-deliberative expectations, *mousike* must be revised. There are two passages in book 2 that describe this revision of *mousike*. The first passage refers to a re-framing of *mousike* from theatrocracy to a virtue-reinforcing modality; the second passage concerns the deployment of this re-framed technology in

performance. We shall consider the first passage in this section, while we will come

back to the second point later in the next chapter.

The first quote finds the Athenian in an effort to re-think what *mousike* is like, after

his analysis of theatrocracy in book 2.

> Now, shouldn't we say that anything that is accompanied with a certain enjoyment (*charis*) is that way either because this enjoyment is its most serious trait, or because it is characterized by the greatest correctness (*orthotheta*), or thirdly because it has a certain usefulness (*ophelia*)? For instance I say that with regards to eating, drinking and in general nutrition, there is enjoyment (*charis*), which we could call pleasure (*hedone*), but correctness and usefulness are what each time we consider healthy in what's served to us; this is what is most correct in it. ... In learning (*mathein*) there is also some measure of enjoyment (*to tes charitos*), pleasure, correctness, usefulness what is good (*heu*) and noble (*kalos*) are brought to fruition by its truth (*aletheia*). ... And what about the making of similes (*ton homoion*) such as the representative arts? Were they to have similar results, isn't the pleasure (*hedone*) that is produced in them and that comes from them, if in fact it's produced, most rightly defined as enjoyment (*charis*)? ... But what is most correct (*orthoteta*) in these [representational] arts is their equivalence (*isotes*), generally speaking, which would be brought to fruition in the first place by means of quality and quantity; it's not pleasure. ... What can be judged correctly by means of pleasure is only what gives no usefulness, nor truth, nor similarity (*homoioteta*), not even harm; rather this is something that exists because of this sole element that [usually] accompanies all others, enjoyment (*charitos*), which we can most aptly define as pleasure (*hedone*), when none of the other elements follow it. ... On the basis of what we just said, we should affirm that no imitation (*mimesis*) should be judged on its relation to pleasure or false opinion – least of all equivalences (*isoteta*). What is equal (*ison*) or proportionate (*symmetron*) is not such if it seems so to someone or if it is enjoyable (*chairei*) for someone, but it is so on the basis of truth, and on no other measure. ... and don't we say that *mousike* is representative (*eikastike*) and imitative? When someone affirms that *mousike* should be judged on the basis of pleasure, this argument of ours should be accepted instead (*Leg.*2.667b-68a).

Let us analyze this excerpt. The Athenian opens his argument maintaining that

anything that procures a certain *charis* (enjoyment) is either because (1) the pleasure it

grants is its most important aspect; (2) the *charis* concerns the most accurate (*orthotetos*)

element; (3) or the *charis* depends on its usefulness (*ophelia*). Point (1) clarifies that it

is possible to value an item only on the basis of the gratification we find in it; however, the

number of these objects is limited and these objects are somewhat irrelevant, as they

convey "no usefulness, nor truth, nor similarity (*homoioteta*), not even harm" (*ibid.*). It is

possible however that some pleasure follows as a result of something being correct or

useful, as in cases (2) and (3). When we transpose this distinction onto our analysis of

mousike we should recognize that if *mousike* is representational (and the Athenian holds

this view), then any pleasure or usefulness that follow from it must be a consequence of its

correctness in representing its model. As things stand with the modality of *mousike* called

theatrocracy, enjoyment is the most prevalent feature of *mousike*, though these

representations may be inaccurate with regards to their subjects or harmful in the ethical

or political realm. The measure of the Athenian's re-framing of *mousike* is given by the shift

from theatrocracy's aim at procuring pleasure in the audience regardless of all other

concerns, to a technology that may gratify its audience as a result of its accuracy in

representing its subject. In order to appreciate the full extent of the Athenian's re-framing,

let us analyze the examples he offers in an attempt to clarify the relationship between

pleasure, correctness and usefulness.

The first example concerns food. In the case of consumption of food our criteria for

choosing food may depend on the pleasure we feel on our taste buds (*charis*) or on what is

healthy in the food (*orthotes* and *ophelia*). In this case enjoyment and accuracy are

independent criteria of judgment, while usefulness depends on accuracy. Thus, one may

enjoy chewing gum, though it has no nutritional value or one may suffer when ingesting

multivitamins, though they accurately nourish our bodies and are useful for our survival. In

the Athenian's view this example is clearly not a good model for conceiving of *mousike* as a tool for moral development. However, this is the model that seems to correspond to theatrocracy. In theatrocracy the *mousike* is set up in such a way that representations are enjoyable but inaccurate. As a result of their lack of accuracy they have no usefulness. An enjoyable piece of *mousike* achieves only the result of winning competitions on the basis of the audience's satisfaction.[21]

The second example concerns learning. Even in learning there is a certain pleasure, but the primacy of truth in learning makes it so that the criterion of correctness prevails always. In this example enjoyment and accuracy are once again independent and accuracy and usefulness are dependent on one another. There might be a certain enjoyment of learning, but what is really at stake is that what is taught is accurate in its depiction of truth. In this sense it may be painful to learn human anatomy, as it requires a great effort in memorization. However what really matters, and what proves to be useful, is that the student of anatomy learns accurately before she becomes a physician. Once again this model is not one the Athenian can follow for his re-tooling of *mousike*. The audience would certainly reject as tedious and non-artistic a choral dance that is not enjoyable, but that speaks of virtue very accurately. In fact, the Athenian seems to think that *mousike* should be a technology more similar to food consumption than learning. *Mousike* should work as a spoonful of sugar to make the medicine go down. Those who are sick should be served "food that is good for them in sweet meals and drinks, and what is bad for them in unappetizing plates, so that they grow used to love the first and correctly hate the second" (*Leg.* 2.660a). The reference to the theme of eating reminds us of the analogy between food

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[21] See *Leg.*3.700e-701a.

assimilation and moral habituation we discussed in the previous chapter. As was the case then, the Athenian is looking for a pragmatic solution in the development of psyche. His re-tooling of *mousike* should be read in this fashion; it is not a vehicle to transmit truths about virtue, but a technology that translates virtue in affective processes of habituation that strum the non-rational cords of our psyche.

The final example concerns the representative arts. The representative arts (*technai eikastikai*) produce similarities and for this reason they are immediately concerned with correctness. However, unlike the case of learning, enjoyment is not divorced from correctness. Rather in some cases it is dependent upon it. The example of the representative arts shows what the Athenian might have in mind for this re-framing of *mousike*, a technology where enjoyment is dependent on accuracy, so that what is pleasant and gratifies the audience is also a representation of truth. This dependence of pleasure and accuracy should be taken quite literally, as we shall see in greater detail below. Only accurate representations will be made enjoyable; inaccurate representations will be performed in such a way that the audience will not like them. Though this example might give us a hint on the relation between correctness and pleasure in representation, what should we make of usefulness? What is this re-fashioned technology useful for?

The Usefulness of the Athenian's re-Framed *Mousike*.

In order to understand the usefulness of this revisited version of *mousike*, it is helpful to retrace the mechanics of this technology from its accuracy in depicting truth, to its appearance in beauty, and the arousal of pleasure. As we have stated above at the center of this re-framing of *mousike* is accuracy, and accuracy depends on truth. If in the model of *mousike* proposed by theatrocracy the value of a work of literature was to be measured on

the basis of the audience's enjoyment, in the reformed *mousike* the Athenian makes

enjoyment dependent on literature's "equality and proportion" to truth. In the view of the

Athenian these are objective criteria and they belong to *mousike* insofar as it is a

representational art. They are not subjective criteria, that is they do not depend on the

audience's preference for a certain style of representation unconcerned with its referent.[22]

Even though the parameters to measure the accuracy of representation are objective, we

should not understand the re-framing of *mousike* as an attempt on the part of the Athenian

to confine the aesthetic experience within epistemological standards. What is really at

stake here is an understanding of truth as an aesthetic standard. In other words, the

Athenian is claiming on the one hand that what makes a good representation is the

adherence to its referent, and thus its relation of proportionality with truth, but on the

other hand he is aware that the expression of this adherence in representation is a matter

of beauty, not one of eidetic content. "The wise judge of representations (*eikona*) – whether

pictorial or musical and all the others – will need three characteristics: first knowledge of

what is [represented], second how correctly (*orthos*) [it is being represented], and third

how well the representation has been executed by means of words, melodies and rhythms"

(leg. 2.669a-b). We will come back to this important paragraph from book 2 in the next

chapter, but for the moment we should read this passage as a description of how truth

moves from being an epistemological criterion to the realm of aesthetics. This is not to say

that truth is offered in representation, as what is experienced in representation are only

the "words, melodies and rhythms" of music. However, these aesthetic elements are

determined by accuracy of representation, which in turn finds its referent in truth. From

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[22] This point will be discussed further in chapter 6.

this perspective insofar as these elements convey beauty, this beauty is the

representation of truth.

To clarify this point let us compare an aesthetic representation of truth to other

expressions of truth, for instance truth as expressed in arguments. The Athenian addresses

truth in this fashion in book 5 of the *Laws*, at 733a-34a, when he is concerned with

demonstrating that the just person is also happy and experiences pleasure. The truth to be

demonstrated is that there is an equivalence of happiness, virtue and pleasure, and the

argument is meant to leave no room for other considerations. But in the case of *mousike*

(and representational art in general) the identification of pleasurable, happy and virtuous

life – which the Athenian considers true – is not apodictic, but rather must be rendered in a

form that can be sensed. This sensing (*aisthesis*) is not the realm of epistemology, but most

properly of aesthetic. Thus, in the re-framed technology of *mousike* beauty is the

experience of a representation rendering its referent accurately, that is according to

orthotes. In other words, truth is not given, but in its place appears beauty.[23]

Beauty is the criterion guiding aesthetic enjoyment in the Athenian's re-framed

mousike. In other words, one should find pleasurable what is beautiful, because what is

beautiful represents truth. In this sense beauty is certainly not in the eyes of the beholder.

Rather for the Athenian our taste should conform to beauty. From this perspective, beauty

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[23] For the connection between beauty and accuracy and correspondence see *Leg.* 2.668a. See also Meyer *Laws 1&2* 298. In discussing the ontological status of aesthetic objects in *Republic* 10, Collingwood unpacks the meaning of mimesis as entailing representation as well as movement from one ontological realm to another, "A copy [mimesis] ... means not a facsimile or replica, that is, an object of the same order and possessing as far as possible the same characteristics as the original, but an object of a wholly different order, having the characteristics proper to that order, but related by way of resemblance to an object of another order, and having in that resemblance the ground of its peculiar value" (*Plato's Philosophy of Art* 157). I think that this insight should be applied also to the passage from the epistemological to the aesthetic level in the reformed *mousike* of *Laws.*

is the guiding criterion of pleasure and can be taught by habituating non-rational

psychological forces.[24] What is most interesting is that in this movement from beauty to

pleasure we find the connection between epistemology and psychology, and insofar as the

epistemological criterion for the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* is virtue, we have found the

connection between the eidetic dimension of *arete* and its effect on moral psychology. As

we discuss beauty in this context, we should keep in mind its dependence on truth as its

limiting criterion.

In this new configuration of *mousike* not everything is beautiful and no discipline is

beautiful on its own terms. In other words, what is beautiful in the composition of a piece of

music is the same as what is beautiful in the movements of a dance and in the choice of

words of a poem or the depiction of a scene in painting. This view of art is almost

completely antithetical to contemporary aesthetic judgments, as we not only judge the

beauty of a work on the basis of personal taste, but we – on average – also consider beauty

to be specific to each artistic discipline. Once again, in order to grasp why the Athenian

would defend this conception of beauty it is useful to remember that here we are not

concerned with aesthetic standards alone, rather we are discussing the terms of a

technology for moral development that happens to be grounded in art, but that maintains

as its aim truth.[25]

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[24] See *Leg.* 2.654b-c. I agree with Folch that "[w]hen we declare a work of choral performance beautiful, we are in fact saying that that performance gives us pleasure; we are, in other words, making a subjective statement of taste; and the reason that choral performance gives us pleasure is that it mimetically represents characters and habits that accord with our own moral characters and habits" (*The City and the Stage* 94).

[25] This limit of beauty is most apparent when the Athenian rejects chromatic considerations from the enjoyment of music and limits considerations of beauty only as they pertain the quality of someone's virtuous soul (see *Leg.* 2.655a-c). Later on the Athenian finds that he might admit to chromatism, only if this comes as a consequence of finding the right melody and rhythm to depict ideals of virtue (see *Leg.*2.669c).

Since we discussed beauty in terms of enjoyment, we should quickly review the role of pleasure in this reformed *mousike.* Enjoyment is not the pivotal element of *mousike*, as it was the case with theatrocracy. Here pleasure becomes a device in a technology for moral development and thus pleasure should be experienced only in the representation of truth.[26] This conception is summarized in a sort of riddle at 2.657c when the Athenian praises the Egyptians for the longevity of their musical customs and claims that "we feel enjoyment (*chairomen*) when we think we are doing well (*eu prattein*), and whenever we feel enjoyment, we think we are doing well." What the Athenian means here is that we should reduce all instances of enjoyment to instances of moral behavior. If we transpose this intent onto the re-framed *mousike* we should observe that this technology allows for the experience of pleasure only when the performance one is attending is a beautiful and accurate reproduction of an epistemic truth, such as the identity of a pleasant, happy and virtuous life. Where theatrocracy admits a certain dissonance between what was enjoyable (e.g. a great performance by Heath Ledger) and what was depicted (the vicious deeds of the Joker in *The Dark Knight*), thereby forcing the performer or the audience into the position of enjoying and disapproving the same thing at the same time, the re-framed version of *mousike* no longer allows for this dissonance, since we "establish that simply what concerns

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[26] My reading of what counts as beautiful in the re-framed *mousike* is very narrow. As I will state explicitly below in the *Laws* the Athenian devises ways to be sure that what is beautiful and thus pleasing aligns only with virtue. In all other cases the Athenian will find ways to assure that the performance is not beautiful, nor pleasing. As a result my reading runs against those that see in *Laws* a theory of aesthetics (see for instance Schipper's *Mimesis in the Arts in Plato's* Laws). All I see here is a technology for moral development that leverages our natural inclination to ordered rhythm and sound, our habits of cultivation as we called them above. Halliwell makes a similar remark when stressing that the connection between the aesthetics and the ethics of musical representation according to Plato "gives us a vital sense of why beauty in the figurative arts is regularly taken in Plato to entail something other, or more, than optically definable or apprehensible accuracy. Mimetic beauty, for Plato, is an expressive form of ethical value" (*Aesthetics of Mimesis* 133).

the virtue of the soul or the body, or what stands in for it [virtue] as an image, are movements and melodies completely beautiful, while those on the side of vice are completely the opposite" (*Leg.* 2.655b). This remark should be taken in all seriousness. What the Athenian is suggesting is that only what is virtuous should be enjoyable and what is vicious should be detestable. Thus, one will feel pleasure for what is beautiful, but what is morally bad will be represented only in such a way as to be ugly and not enjoyable (think of the *The Room* by Tommy Wiseau).[27]

Finally, let us ask what is useful in this connection of pleasure and truth by means of beauty. Though not always a reliable source, Diogenes claims that for Plato

> [b]eauty has three divisions. The first is the object of praise, such as what has beautiful form to behold. Another is profitable (*chrestikon*); thus an instrument, a house and the like are beautiful for use (*chresin*). A third division relates to laws (*nomoi*) and customs and the like, which are beautiful with regards to usefulness (*ophelia*). Of beauty, then, one kind is matter for praise, another is for use, and another for the benefit it procures (*Lives* 3.1.89).[28]

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[27] Comedy works as a clear example of the lack of connection between enjoyment and vice that the Athenian wants to create with *mousike*. Comedy has its moral function but it is not concerned with non-rational motivations of the soul, rather it pertains to our reasoning ability. In order to learn (*mathein*) one should be exposed to goodness as well as baseness so as to distinguish them (see *Leg.*7.816d-e) and thus one should be a spectator of comedy. However, citizens will not be allowed to partake in comedic representations and these representations should be always new and never repeated so as to prevent the audience from growing into the habit of enjoying them. The use of non-citizens (slaves and foreigners who are busy carrying out the necessary functions of the state such as the procurement of food and trade) and the infrequent staging of these works make it unlikely that any of these performances will be well crafted and thus enjoyable. Here we find the connection between poor performances and vicious behavior (on the historical background of having non-citizens perform comedies see Morrow's *Plato's Cretan City* 373). Furthermore in book 11 at 935 e- 936b the Athenian adds that the comedian cannot make fun of the citizens. We should read this limitation against the background assumption that all citizens of Magnesia are virtuous. In this fashion though comedy is a representational art, in Magnesia it will never be allowed to have as its referent a virtuous character, it can only represent vice.

[28] Hicks' translation modified.

Here I am not concerned with assessing the value of Diogenes' schematization of

to kalon in Plato's philosophy, but this distinction seems useful to determine the role of

ophelia in the *Laws' mousike*. Certainly a choral song is not useful in the sense of assuring a

certain return upon investment (*chresticon*).[29] Additionally, we have accounted for the first

meaning of beauty according to Diogenes in the correspondence between truth and beauty.

But what about what Diogenes calls the third division of beauty? Let us keep in mind that

when re-framing *mousike* the Athenian is not aiming at reconstructing a technology that

will reform aesthetic standards; rather, he is producing a technology which will grant that

truth has a psychological influence by means of beauty. In this sense what is beautiful is

also useful because it promotes non-rational motivations in agreement with truth.

Specifically it reinforces those non-rational motives of action that orient the agent towards

the correspondence of virtue, happiness and pleasure.[30]

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[29] Aristotle confirms the exclusion of profitability from artistic pursuits; see *Pol.*8.1338a14-16.

[30] One question to answer is what is the relation between accuracy and usefulness. For Hatzistavrou (368-71) they coincide. For Meyer (*Laws 1&2* 294) they coincide in the example of food and learning mentioned above, but she suggests that such is not the case with representation. Meyer seems correct here, as the useful is the moral education that comes with representation, not the accurate representation of truth, though the useful is dependent on the accuracy of the representation. Additionally, the benefit of a correct representation is mediated by the enjoyment that such representation arouses. Thus, in the case of representation, enjoyment sets apart accuracy and usefulness. The view that usefulness is directly connected to representing truth accurately belongs to the *Republic*, not to the *Laws*. Socrates sees a connection between truth and usefulness in representation in books 2 (379b-c) and 3 (386b), but ultimately posits that truth cannot be conveyed in representation and thus, representation has no usefulness since it only delivers enjoyment (*Resp.*10.607c-ff; early symptoms of the disconnect between truth and usefulness in representation can be found at 3.389b-c; for the need of renouncing enjoyment to achieve usefulness see 3.398a-b). Thus, in *Republic* the lack of usefulness in representation is predicated upon the assumption that usefulness and accurate representation of truth ought to come together. In the *Laws* this requirement is no longer in place and the Athenian is willing to admit that representation is useful even though it does not hand truth to the audience. Not even an accurate representation will do so, since all representations of truth appear in the shape of something beautiful, which stimulates the audience's non-deliberative motives. As we shall see below, most spectators do not need to grasp the truthful referent of the representation. If benefit were to come only with knowledge of its referent (as postulated in *Republic*), *mousike* would not be a useful technology. Though some among the spectators (the well-educated elderly) will be able to distinguish

Let us take a closer look at two ways in which this re-framed *mousike* can be useful in influencing non-rational motives that may lead to virtue. As stated above, the chief point of connection between *mousike* and moral psychology is that the former intercepts habit formation while the latter depends on habit formation. One useful aspect of *mousike* for the ethical-political goals of Magnesia is to employ literature and music for early childhood education. The textual evidence that this is one use of *mousike* the Athenian has in mind comes in book 2 at 659d. Here the Athenian states that in choral dances the preferences of the virtuous person should be the standard, "so that the soul of the child won't grow into the habit (*ethizetai*) of experiencing enjoyment and pain in contrast with the law and to those who trust in the law" (*Leg.* 2.659d). In other words, this technology is meant to leverage in early education the children's drive of pleasure. Children will find gratification in representations that hold as their referent the same principles that animate the Magnesian laws, namely the coincidence of virtuous, happy and pleasurable life. This leveraging takes place by means of the formal aspects of *mousike*, melody, rhythm and meters. As we have seen above, so long as they represent what is virtuous these elements will appear beautiful and pleasurable. Additionally, as we have seen in the previous chapter, these elements appeal to the innate taste human beings have for the order of rhythm and melody. In this fashion *mousike* intercepts habits of cultivation, thereby reinforcing in children the gratification of the desire for well-arranged and rhythmic

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referents in representations, the usefulness of *mousike* is tied to its capacity to cultivate certain non-deliberative motivations in the psyche.

compositions. In doing so, it creates an association between gratification and the ideal

of virtue it represented.[31] This association is the mark of its usefulness.

Mousike is useful also in intercepting habits of repression that create expectations in

the psyche. As we have just seen, *mousike* is a good technology for moral education because

it appeals to non-rational motives in the soul such as pleasure; this appeal is formal, so to

speak. It belongs to the form of *mousike* (harmony, rhythm and meter) to entice human

nature, as we have discussed in the previous chapter, with regards to habits of cultivation

of pleasure.[32] However *mousike* conveys also cognitive content, for instance via plots or the

words of choral songs. The Athenian's revision of *mousike* at the level of content entails that

in all its manifestations *mousike* conveys that the virtuous person is the happiest and also

one who leads the most pleasant life. Just as it was the case with its formal aspects, the

content of *mousike* is also appealing to non-deliberative motives, but this time it targets

specifically the semi-rational expectations. We should be reminded that expectations carry

a minimum of cognitive abilities, as discussed in the previous chapter, and thus are suitable

targets for a persuasive content.[33]

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[31] As Folch puts it "The linchpin in the *Laws*' theory of performance—and the point at which choral representations become ethically normative—is the claim that the pleasure that a person takes when choosing morally appropriate or inappropriate actions is identical to the pleasure he or she experiences when gazing upon or participating in fine or base choral performances" (*The City and the Stage* 93). In my view this is only one way in which *mousike* can influence the strings that pull the soul; perhaps its most interesting function, as I will discuss below and in the next chapter, is to influence expectations.

[32] The idea of a connection between religious festivals where *mousike* is dominant and the moral psychology based on non-rational motives which we have discussed in the previous chapters is expressed at the beginning of book 2, when the Athenian claims that pleasure and pain correctly produced have a tendency to "slacken in human beings and go to ruin in many ways over the course of a life" (*Leg.* 2.653c). References such as these should not lead us to believe that *mousike*'s representations are all focused on affecting pleasure and pain. As we shall see in greater detail below *mousike*'s main effects are on expectations.

[33] More on this point in the next chapter.

Finally we should note that in the context of the moral psychology presented in book 1, the usefulness of a re-framed technology of *mousike* is that it can be counted among those external "helpers" (1.645a) that support the *logismos* in its struggle to shape the human psyche.[34] This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that *mousike* in book 2 is presented in conjunction with metaphors that are reminiscent of the image of the marionette. Thus, *mousike* is implicitly considered to have an external pull on the soul to persuade citizens to obey laws.[35] As the Athenian puts it, among the few remedies to wrangle the pulls of human desire are "the Muses and the gods that oversee [the festivities'] contests" (*Leg.*6.783b).

Chapter Conclusion.

I opened this chapter explaining that *mousike* should be considered a technology for moral development, where "technology" is defined as a set of social practices able to modify the psychological conditions of the performer and the audience. Then I showed how the Athenian recognizes this technological power in musicopoetic arts, specifically in what

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[34] For a list of all interpretations of helpers see Meyer *Law 1 & 2* 184. Brisson has a pessimistic outlook on the issue when he explains the image of the marionette with a famous passage from book 6 claiming that all citizens should first and foremost be slaves of the laws, and claims that "[t]he citizens must obey the laws like a puppet that reacts to the way the puppeteer pulls its strings" (*Ethics and Politics in Plato's Laws* 119). Brisson certainly has a point here; eventually the Athenian aims at a city that is under the control of the laws. But the question of how citizens can become slaves to the laws cannot be answered directly. The process of civic subjection to the laws is mediated by explanations, such as the prologues to the laws, and cultural products, like *mousike*. It is only as a result of the persuasive force of these social elements that the non-deliberative forces in the psyche will support the rule of law. Without their support the laws can only subjugate the citizens by means of punishment, and punishment brings no amelioration for the person who is being punished, it makes them only an example for others (see *Leg.* 5.728c). Belfiore seems to agree with me when she mentions the symposia among the "helpers" of *logismos*. "It is likely, then, that when he mentions the 'help' needed by the golden pull of the puppet (645a4-bl) Plato has in mind the symposia, which are the safeguard of correct education for older people in Laws 2 (653b3-a3)" (*Wine and Catharsis* 425).

[35] Kurke (*Imagining Chorality* 130-132) helps make this argument as she compares the image of the puppet with the discussion about choral education in *Leg.* 2.653c-54a. Kurke notices that the lexical choices Plato makes refer to the lexicon of puppeteering (e.g. "slackening" the correct training in pain and pleasure).

he calls theatrocracy. Subsequently the Athenian re-frames this technology

conceptually in order to create a device that can influence the psyche while maintaining as

a referent the idea of virtue. The power of this re-framed technology resides in its ability to

transform eidetic content into an aesthetic experience which can influence the psyche.

Finally I explained how the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* affects the drives and the

expectations of the human psyche by intercepting the process of habituation. I addressed

the way in which the Athenian's *mousike* can exploit habits of cultivation of pleasure in

order to associate the gratification we find in music with the ethical content of *mousike*. I

have only touched the surface of how *mousike* can influence semi-rational motives for

action such as expectations. A detailed discussion of this issue is the topic of the next

chapter.

CHAPTER 5

THE USE OF *MOUSIKE* FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT

> Through dramatization, the Idea is incarnated.
> Gilles Deleuze *The Method of Dramatization*.

Chapter Summary.

In the previous chapter I have explained that in the *Laws* the Athenian re-frames

mousike to transform it in a technology that can influence the non-deliberative motives of

the citizens of Magnesia in such a way that makes them conducive to virtue. The re-framed

mousike, I argued, offers a representation of the truth of virtue. In this fashion *mousike*

transforms knowledge of virtue into the sensible beauty of representation. This beauty

influences the citizenry of Magnesia first of all by means of rhythm and harmony, affecting

what we called in chapter 3 habits of cultivation. But it also acts upon the semi-rational

expectations that are formed in habits of repression. In the present chapter I will analyze

this latter influence, describing in detail the results it has on the performers and the

audience of the Magnesian *mousike*. This chapter represents the most original contribution

of this dissertation to the scholarship on Plato's *Laws*, as it describes in details the relation

of reciprocity between *mousike* and moral psychology and explains in detail the ethical

value of aesthetics in Plato's later thought.

The first section analyzes the way in which performers are influenced by *mousike*. I

claim that performers are one of the musical elements of *mousike* and consequently they

must bear a connection with the representation of virtue. A performer contributes to a

good representation not only with her technical skills, but also – and mostly – with her ethical dispositions. It might even turn out that the performer's own virtue is necessary for a good representation of the idea of virtue. The pivotal role of the performer in this representation marks also the effectiveness of *mousike* as a technology for moral development. As she performs moral characters, the virtuous performer's semi-rational motives for virtue are reinforced.

The second section of this chapter sets up the argument to explain how *mousike* may affect the non-rational motivations of audiences. The Athenian speaks often of the need to enchant the population by means of virtuous performances and in this section I explain the possibility of this enchantment by means of the notion of virtuality. Virtuality is the synthesis of several conceptual points related to *mousike*, its continued reference to the eidetic dimension of virtue, its dependence on good artistic elements and its intangible and yet real character in the representation of a perfect state of virtue. The virtuality of representation will work as the background to explain how the audience's non-rational motivations can be influenced in performance.

The final section of this chapter focuses on *mousike*' power to influence the psyche of the audience. Simply put my claim is that virtuality acts on the expectations' dependence on memory and imagination, which we discussed in chapter 3. In order to justify this claim I will appeal to authors that are historically and conceptually close to Plato, and I will reconstruct how the festivities envisioned by the Athenian in the *Laws* are a two-phased program of moral education. First, they create semi-rational expectations by means of exercise, second they reinforce those expectations by means of *mousike*.

Performance of the Athenian's re-Framed Mousike.

In the previous section we have seen how the Athenian reforms the technology of *mousike* so as to adapt it to the goal of Magnesia; in this fashion *mousike* becomes a technology to promote the coincidence of happiness and virtue for the citizens. This amounts to say that *mousike* is chiefly concerned with representing virtue accurately, deploys the enjoyment produced by this representation to motivate the citizens towards virtue and is useful in promoting the political ideal of the city. In this section we shall see how this reformed technology is to be deployed.

The guiding passage for this section is *Leg.*2.668b-671a; a section of this text I have cited preliminarily in the previous chapter. This is a rich passage, which refers explicitly to the tasks of the chorus of the elderly, the chorus of Dionysos, in their responsibility to be "wise judge[s]" (2.669a) of the literary production in the city, as well as optimal performer of their own *mousike*.[1] However, I think this is also a central passage to understand the practical use of *mousike* the Athenian has in mind. If there is a social group who can embody the re-framed technology of *mousike* in the city of Magnesia, is the one composed of the wiser, older, law-loving and virtuous citizens who "partake of a more beautiful music" (2.667b).[2]

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[1] See *Leg.* 2.670a.

[2] Barker agrees with this characterization of the "song" of the chorus of the elderly when he states that the Athenian's prescriptions for the choral performance of the elderly "can therefore be treated as laying down criteria by which music of any kind whatever can be properly judged" (*Laws and Aristoxenus* 393). For a thorough discussion of the critical role of the chorus of the elderly see Folch' *The Polis and the Stage*; here I summarize his argument in a necessarily brief and incomplete fashion. According to Folch the chorus of Dionysus' main concern is assessing other choruses' performances. "[S]inging is the Chorus of Dionysos's least significant sympotic activity. Its chief function is the regulation of the city's musical institutions by analyzing and assigning to each citizen class proper types of song and dance, and by introducing rationality

Let us begin again with the passage we cited in the previous chapter, *Leg.*2.669a-b. "The wise judge of representations (*eikona*) – whether pictorial or musical and all the others – will need three characteristics: first knowledge of what is [represented], second how correctly (*orthos*) [it is being represented], and third how well the representation has been executed by means of words, melodies and rhythms." In the previous chapter we indicated that this passage marks a conceptual transformation of epistemological truth into aesthetic beauty, which finally influences psychological motivation. Here we are going to inquire how this passage can work also as a blueprint for the practical use of the re-framed technology of *mousike*. There are three steps in this application of *mousike* (i) knowledge of the referent of *mousike*; in the specific case of the re-framed *mousike* this means knowledge of virtue. (ii) The second step involves the recognition of the correctness (*orthotes*) of this

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into the context of performance (2.670a–b; 7.812b–c). … In the *Laws'* revisionist appropriation of cultic mythology, the Dionysiac represents a kind of instinctual, sensual delight in sonic and somatic manifestations of rational order" (*ivi* 140). Thus, according to Folch the chorus of Dionysos is the place where philosophical knowledge, in Plato's newly elaborated form of literary criticism, is concerned with musical performance. Plato's great invention here is "literary criticism as a form of knowledge and as a social and civic institution, a wedding of archaic and classical critical practices to philosophical criteria of evaluation that are independent of contexts or genres of performance. … Plato in the *Laws* fashions a philosophically informed model of criticism, at once performative and theoretical, to extend the city's political and ethical principles into diverse contexts of performance and literary consumption" (*ivi* 114). Literary criticism is an art of the muses but at the same time plays a meta-artistic role and works on the arts of the Muses. "[T]he performance of literary criticism is conceptualized in the *Laws* as the authoritative form of performative discourse in and on mousikê" (*ibid.*). The chorus of Dionysus in this fashion plays the role of introducing a philosophically ordered and virtuous society. "Platonic virtues are thus the principles performed on two, illocutionary levels: internally in the moral psychology of judgment and socially as the qualities that characterize the relationship between audience and critic. To the degree that the critic assumes the role of educator assigned to the *thorubos* in the democratic theater, his pronouncements also have the perlocutionary force of training the masses in Magnesia's model of citizenship and civic virtue" (*ivi* 135). This literary criticism is not philosophy, but it is an effort to realize a "project of investing extant cultural practices with novel philosophical meaning" (*ivi* 136). In this fashion "the chorus of Dionysos represents the institutionalized subordination of choral, theatrical performance to sympotic discourse, an arrangement wherein the symposium is conceptualized as the space of distinctly rational, philosophical models of musical and poetic evaluation" (*ivi* 140). Additionally, in order to explain why judges must also be performers see Aristotle *Pol.*8.1340b35–39.

technology's representation of its referent. (iii) The final step concerns the deployment of accurate means of representation (words, melodies, rhythms).

Step (i) is discussed in some details few pages earlier. When evaluating a work of *mousike* one must recognize its "*ousia*, what it wants and of what truly is the representation, or else it is difficult to diagnose the correctness (*orthotes*) of what it wants or its missing the mark (*amartia*)" (*Leg.* 2.668c). This first aspect of the deployment of *mousike* targets the criterion of truth. We should note that for the Athenian the representation of truth is not neutral, as he says it "wants" something. Namely it wants to communicate at a non-rational level a rational content, an *ousia*, it is attempting to represent. The *ousia* of a representation, the truth it wants to communicate is a central feature of the Athenian's re-framed *mousike*, as we have determined in the previous chapter. From the practical perspective, this centrality is only amplified, since the audience and the performers of *mousike* will not be presented the *ousia* critically.[3] Representation delivers the *ousia* affectively to the non-deliberative forces in the soul, which react either by accepting it, if it complies with them, or rejecting it, if it does not. Thus, it is required that the good judge of musical performances (but also the good performer, as we shall see below) know, in the sense of having an epistemic understanding, the *ousia* of a representation in order to foresee its influence through *mousike*. In the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* this *ousia* will be the idea of virtue.[4]

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[3] In the moral psychology we discussed in the first part of this dissertation, I clarified that only *logismos* has evaluative abilities. But, as we have seen in the previous chapter, *mousike* affects the psyche by intercepting the process of habituation, which acts upon non-deliberative motivations.

[4] For the epistemic knowledge of virtue in the *Laws* see above chapter 3.

Step (ii) concerns the recognition of *mousike*'s *orthotes* in the representation of
its referent. The Athenian uses analogical language to address this point, speaking of the
pictorial representation of an animal, but intending also a representation in music. This
oblique reference makes our work of understanding the meaning of correct representation
harder. As we noted above, correct representation is a matter of *isotes*. In other words, the
Athenian seems to be worried about the representation's reproduction of its referent (the
ousia) in a proportionate fashion. Let us try to clarify what this means. In the analogy the
Athenian asks if in a pictorial representation of a "living animal ... the relations (*arithmos*)
of the body" correspond to its referent; if "each part of the body is set" according to the
original model; if one used the right "colors and shapes" (*Leg*. 2.668d-e) to represent it.
Here we recognize the criterion of beauty mentioned in the previous chapter. By means of
proportionality epistemic truth is translated in aesthetic beauty. While it is relatively easy
to grasp what the Athenian means when he is referring to the beautiful representation of
the shapes of animal or human bodies,[5] it is much harder to understand the meaning of this
beautiful proportion when the referent is virtue.[6] Perhaps the Athenian means to say that
each represented virtue must be accompanied by the other three so that each part of virtue

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[5] See *Leg.* 2.668e.

[6] Barker notes that if *isotes* referred only to the shape of bodies "pretty well everyone would be able to judge which pictures are καλά; and [the Athenian] assumes that this is patently false" (*Laws and Aristoxenus* 397). Barker has a good point here and he reminds us that if *mousike* were be just a technology of denotation (e.g. these lines represent a horse), then most people would be good musicians. The point though is that *mousike* is a technology that requires also musical connotation, as it were; the expressiveness of music must be a good representation for its eidetic referent; in this case judging musical representations requires competence.

is set in its right place, as it would be the case with the body parts of animals.[7] Or

perhaps he is claiming that there must be consistency in the representation of a virtuous

fictional character (e.g. during the course of a choral representation one cannot be

moderate at one time and not at another). In order to shed some light on this point let us

take a look at the third criterion for the deployment of *mousike*.

Step (iii) concerns the deployment of the correct representation though words,

melody, rhythm and other materials of musical representation. Understanding that these

are musical materials, rather than the representation itself, is essential to gain perspective

on this third step in the deployment of *mousike*.[8] This is the most challenging facet of the

Athenian's *mousike*, as it is unclear in which way words, melodies and rhythms could help

the correct representation of virtue. I will proceed first by analyzing Plato's text and then I

will attempt an interpretation.

First, as we have claimed in the case of step (i), the material of *mousike* deserves

special considerations *vis-à-vis* other forms of representative arts because "missing the

mark in this regards would be especially detrimental, as one would become like-minded

toward bad characters" (*Leg*. 2.669b-c). In other words, using the right scheme of

representation, while employing the wrong musical materials would amount to "missing

the mark" in the reinforcement of non-rational motivations. Second, though "these matters

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[7] Incidentally this is precisely what the Athenian's criticism of Spartan or Cretan musical representations of virtue; they only represent part of the whole; see *Leg*. 2. 666e-67a.

[8] It might be profitable to use the Aristotelian distinction of causes in order to clear the confusion between step (ii) and (iii), though this conceptual framework might not fit the Athenian's understanding of *mousike* precisely. While step (iii) can be understood as the material cause of *mousike*, step (ii) would be its formal cause.

are most difficult to perceive" (*Leg.*2.669c), there are words, rhythms, melodies, chromatics, and choreographies (*schemata*)[9] apt for men or women, free citizens or slaves. The difficulty of choosing the correct musical material for the presentation here is twofold. On the one hand there is the problem with establishing the coherence of all these elements for representation (e.g. in the representation of a free citizen words, rhythm, melody, chromatics and choreography should all befit the free person);[10] on the other hand, since the Athenian seems to work on the assumption that certain musical elements are meant to be employed in the representation of specific referents, there is the risk of mixing elements incorrectly and disrupting the representational force of *mousike*, as disparaging musical elements "cannot be taken together, as though they imitate one and the same thing" (*ivi* 2.669d).

Thus, in order to maintain the coherence of the musical elements and the integrity of the representation with regards to its referent, the Athenian puts forward three prescriptions. The first and the second prescription are complementary and we will discuss them together; the third criterion stands on its own. Prescription (1) establishes that there shall be no words performed separately from melody and rhythm;[11] prescription (2) states that there shall be no melodies and rhythms performed separately from texts. The rationale for these two prescriptions is that when words are separate from melodies and rhythms "it is difficult ... to understand what [the representation] wants and to which model worthy of

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[9] For these musical criteria see *Leg.* 2.669c-d.

[10] In this regard see also *ivi* 2.670c.

[11] See *ivi* 2.669d.

representation is similar" (699e). The Athenian's remark of the necessity of combining

words and other musical elements is central to his understanding of *mousike* as a

technology for moral development. The function of *mousike* here is to be on the one hand a

representational art and on the other to leverage the force of habituation of its musical

elements. Rhythm and melody apart from words leave the audience and the performer in

the dark about the referent of *mousike*; words unaccompanied by music lack the persuasive

force preserved in habits of cultivation. It is only in the correct combination of these

elements that the beauty of a representation may bind the non-deliberative motives of the

soul to its referent.

Prescription (3) is that the performer must be a good fit for the representation.[12]

The performer in a work of *mousike* is as important as the other musical materials. In other

words the ability of the musical material to convey the beauty of the representation, and

thus of the referent in ways that can reinforce non-rational motivations, is as dependent on

all other musical elements as on the ability of the performer. What is most surprising in this

third prescription is that the ability of the performer is not measured so much on the basis

of her musical skills, but it is a function of her moral character. In other words, in a

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[12] In this regard Panno sees a connection between the theater of the *Laws* and Aristotle's *Poetics*; see *Dionisiaco e Alterit*à 82. More importantly see Morrow's *Plato's Cretan City* 308 for the recognition that "[t]he specifically Platonic contribution here is the emphasis on the pleasure of the performer as a measure of his real cultivation." I will discuss the issue of the moral cultivation of the performer in *mousike* shortly. However, I should point out that I do not agree with Morrow when he thinks that all step (iii) amounts to is a moral judgment of musical elements (see *ivi* 314-15). I maintain that the musical elements of step (iii) are only to be assessed on the basis of their artistic employment. In other words they should answer positively the question, are they good material for representation? The actor is to be counted among those musical elements. Meyer gives a good argument for considering the representational elements without reference to morality (see *Plato's* Laws *1&2* 308-311). Folch holds her same view when he states that "[i]n determining whether a work has been well fashioned (eu) and is therefore beautiful (kalon), the critic must evaluate properties of harmonic and rhythmic composition—properties that are independent of one's hedonic disposition but are perceived through advanced practice and theoretical study of music" (*The City and the Stage* 145).

technology in which the referent of representation is virtue, the qualifying feature of a good performer is that she is virtuous, since that is the only way she will be able to truly represent virtue on stage by means of words, rhythms, melodies and movements.

Two passages indicate this requirement of virtue for performers in the re-framed technology of *mousike*. The first passage states that the performers of the chorus of the elderly must certainly have enough musical knowledge to "follow the steps of the rhythms and the chords of melody" (*leg.*2.670d). This first part of the quote indicates that the elderly must have technical knowledge of musical elements, recognizing specific movements connected with specific rhythms and specific tunes. However, this technical knowledge is in service of ethical ends. Among all the melodies and rhythms, the elderly must select those "befitting (*prosekonta*) of people like them and of their age" (*ibid.*). What kind of musical elements befit them? Let us consider that the Athenian is working on the assumption that the elderly are virtuous persons,[13] thus, when he states that in their performance they must select appropriate musical elements, he also intimates that they select musical material fitting for virtuous persons. In turn the appropriateness of musical elements for virtuous performers means that the representation of virtue could not be successful without the embodiment of virtue by the performer. The performer, one among many elements of representational material, must be a good fit in musical and in moral terms.

A second passage takes the importance of this embodiment of virtue on the part of the performers a step further. When the Athenian looks at the performer, he is concerned more with their emotive reaction to the piece of music they are performing, than with the

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[13] See *Leg.* 2.671a and 658e-59a.

display of technical skills in their performance. A performer "who is unable to achieve

or conceive of beauty by means of their voice or body, but who succeeds by means of

pleasure and pain in loving what is beautiful and is annoyed at what is ugly" (2.654d) is to

be preferred to those who are able to perform, but are unable to have the correct affective

reaction to the beauty of representation. It is true that the Athenian at this stage in book 2

is not yet concerned with the specific function of the chorus of the elderly, however, this

passage seems highly applicable to the performance of that chorus for at least three

reasons. First, let us reflect on the use of wine among the elderly. As the Athenian puts it,

the elderly is "more moderate" (665e) than the average citizen, perhaps to a fault. Thus,

wine's main purpose here is to free "the character of the soul from [excessive moderation]"

(*ivi* 666c). In other words, wine is employed to infuse in the elderly the will to sing. The

personal restraint of the elderly is detrimental for the social moral welfare, as their stiff

non-deliberative motivation to be moderate would prevent their performance of *mousike*,

and *mousike* has a social function. Wine allows the elderly to express their enjoyment for

what they find beautiful and pleasurable, namely virtue. In this guise wine is a way to allow

the performance not of those who are most skilled, as the elderly cannot perform at their

best due to age,[14] but those who have most love of virtue.[15] Second, let us consider again

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[14] See *Leg.*2.657d.

[15] Wine here is used to persuade the elderly to sing, it is not a way to inspire them, as poets would be inspired by the god. Some interpreters disagree with this claim and maintain that the elderly find a sort of inspiration in their drinking parties. For instance Ken Moore gives an argument connecting Dionysian inspiration with *mania* from the *Phaedrus* (see *Plato's Puppets of the Gods* 48). But we must consider that the use of wine has little to do with divine inspiration. In the first place for Plato the elderly don't need to be inspired like the poets in the *Ion*; they *know* how to sing what is most beautiful because of their "age and *phronesis*" (*Leg.*2.665d). Dodds captures the analogy and yet the distance between inspiration and rationality in the late works of Plato when the claims that "Plato perceived what he took to be a real and significant analogy

the general meaning of choral performance. Choral performance is a matter of *mimesis*.

Mimesis in this case is defined as the impersonation of "the actions and whatever event"

(*Leg.*2.655d) of a character's life. This imitation involves the performers' "moral character

(*êthos*) as well as their ability to mimic" (*ibid.*). The point that the Athenian is making here

is that someone's character has as much bearing on a successful performance as that

person's mimetic skills. Thus, the emotive attachment to virtue applies also in the case of

the chorus of the elderly, when they represent a virtuous character. Finally, the moral

requirement for optimal performance finds explicit confirmation in *Leg.* 8.829c-d. In this

portion of the text the Athenian is discussing the laws regulating religious ceremonies; in

each of those ceremonies there shall be *agones* and songs composed to praise the best or

blame the worst. "[I]n regards to the *agones* as well as for life, [there should be songs]

honoring those who seem the best and blaming those who do not" (*Leg*. 8.829c). What is

interesting here is that the one requirement to become a composer of songs of praise or

blame is age. Composers must be over 50, this age limit qualifies them as members of the

chorus of Dionysus. Additionally the composers must be "themselves good and honored in

the city, and artists (*demiurgoi*) of beautiful deeds … even if they don't have a musical

nature" (8.829d). This description of the elderly composer brings together what was said in

book 2 about the chorus of Dionysus' standards for judging of a work of *mousike* and the

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between mediumship, poetic creation and certain pathological manifestations of the religious consciousness "
(*Greeks and Irrational* 217); however Plato is willing to use religious references only "because no other
language was available to express that mysterious "givenness"… he nevertheless rated their [of prophets,
poets and choribants] activities far below those of the rational self, and held that they must be subject to the
control and criticism of reason since reason was for him … an active manifestation of deity in man, a daemon
in its own right" (*ivi* 218). I agree with Dodd's ranking of rational knowledge over divine inspiration in poetry.
Finally, with regards to the use of wine in performance, I find that Ranciere's hits the mark when he states
that in *Laws* "no one remains a static spectator … even if that requires getting old people reluctant to take part
in the community dance drunk" (*Emancipated Spectator* 5).

other passage from the beginning of book 2, which demands that performers find affective attunement to their representations. The performers of the chorus of the elderly are virtuous and love virtue; that is why they are good representational material.

At this stage we can address a point left unanswered above, with regards to step (ii) of the practical deployment of *mousike*. There we wondered about the meaning of a representation addressing all the parts of the *ousia* of virtue. The Athenian offered an analogy with the depiction of animal bodies; their parts, their relationship and their colors should all be referenced in representation. But relating that analogy to virtue was problematic. However, I think I can make a viable hypothesis. The *ousia* of virtue may encompass a variety of aspects. It concerns the epistemology of virtue – as we stated – but also specific actions, a specific psychological state in which non-deliberative forces support *logismos* and a specific emotive state, one in which virtue is seen as an object of desire as well as the goal of *logismos*. An accurate representation of virtue ought to include all these parts. Musical materials such as melody, rhythm and choreography can aid with the representation of virtuous actions, words and plots can provide the representation with the intentions of the virtuous character, but only a virtuous actor can portray the affective elements at play in virtue. A representation of virtue that is *isotes* requires this wide and disparaging range of expressive materials in order to portray virtue. At the same time these materials are not the representation, since discretely they cannot reproduce virtue in all its parts.

Now that we have described the practical deployment of the re-framed *mousike* in performance, let us interpret the significance of this deployment and thereby the

effectiveness of *mousike* as a technology. As I have shown, performers are an essential

component of the material cause of representation, and their virtuous character is essential

in assuring the beauty of the representation of virtue. On the one hand, the ability of the

performer is a technical requirement of representation, but on the other it gives the

measure of the technological power of *mousike*. Performers and performances in general

are a means to an end in the framework of representation; they are accurate tools to

represent a referent. However, from the perspective of *mousike* as a technology, a

performance is an end in itself, as what really matters is the embodiment of virtue on the

part of the performers, rather than the accuracy of representation. In other words,

performance is an exercise in being a certain character, using their words, their movements

and their rhythms. In the case of the re-framed *mousike* these characters are virtuous and

their actions are expression of a certain set of non-rational motivations. When one selects a

virtuous and musically skilled performer to interpret these characters, one is in fact

subjecting the performer to moral training. If this performance requires rehearsals and is

replicated several times, it forces the performer to grow into the habit of uttering words

and moving in a way in which a virtuous character would. As we have seen in the chapter 3,

someone's character is determined by habits, and repetition of habits involves pleasure. In

choral performance the virtuous actor will find that mimicking a fictional character is

pleasurable as it aligns with one's non-rational disposition to virtue.[16] In this fashion choral

performance in the re-framed *mousike* reinforces habits that the virtuous actor has already

acquired.

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[16] See *leg.* 2.655d-56a.

At this point the *ophelia*, the usefulness, of this technology in performance comes into perspective. As we consider the *ophelia* of *mousike*, however, it is important to be reminded that (i) this technology cannot create non-rational motives, can only strengthen psychological forces that are already at work, as I stated in the previous chapter, and (ii) that the strengthening of these non-rational motivations is different from the performance of virtuous actions. Let us reflect especially on the second point[17] by means of example, though one which is not virtuous. Let us say that I am a married man who is dissatisfied by his marriage, that I covet money above all and that I am misogynistic; let's further assume that I am in a production of *Medea* by Euripides and that I have been selected to play Jason. I make a good part and I am convincing when I voice to my fictional partner, Medea, the woman who saved my life and the mother of my children, that I am marrying the daughter of Creon just for money, and that I will have sex with her. As Medea disagrees with me I tell her that she should get over her insane jealousy and that I wish women did not exist.[18] The fact that my non-deliberative motivations sustain the role I am playing, and are reinforced by the fictional actions and words of Jason, does not mean that I learn how to marry for money, how to leave my wife and how to wish that women did not exist. It is unreasonable to think that performances train for actions in actual life, since

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[17] It is important to state this difference between actions and motivations because it separates Plato's reasoning strategy from such simplistic considerations as playing a certain role will automatically cause you to perform certain actions (e.g. playing *Dungeons & Dragons* caused three young men to plot the murder of Lieth Peter Von Stein). Plato does not blame actions on fictional performance, but he does recognize that *mousike*, being a technology for moral development, may influence non-rational motivations in someone's psyche. Furthermore, Plato is not suggesting that the performer is completely at the mercy of the non-rational motivations stimulated when playing a character. Rather it will depend on the performer's moral character whether the motivations of her fictional character seep into her psyche.

[18] See *Medea* vv. 521-74.

fictional situation would hardly ever be adaptable to actual existential conditions. However, it is admissible that the non-deliberative motives that this performance reinforces in my psyche may lead me one day to perform some or all of these actions.

As we transpose these considerations onto a *mousike* oriented towards virtue, we understand that performances do not train performers for specific moral actions. If *mousike* operated in that fashion, it would be a very inefficient technology, since it would cause someone to act virtuously only in some cases. Instead, the Athenian is suggesting that playing virtuous characters reinforces the non-deliberative motivations that are at the basis of my virtuous actions. Then these reinforced motivations may be displayed in my own life in a variety of actions and words.

Enchantment and Virtuality in the Athenian's re-Framed *Mousike*.

The previous section discussed the performance of the chorus of the elderly as an example of the application of the Athenian's reformed *mousike*. The text cited above, describing the elderly's musical criticism and performance, concludes with the claim that members of this chorus should "become enchanters of the youth [with the goal of leading them] towards virtue" (*Leg*. 2.671a). The assumption here is that the youth will attend the performance of the elderly and will be persuaded that virtuous life is the happiest kind of life. In this section I will analyze this enchantment and give a detailed account of its effects on the psyche of the audience.

The Athenian gives us an initial lead to understand the effects of the elderly's performance when he claims that this performance should "lead the youth towards the

appropriate embrace (*aspasmos*) of worthy characters" (*Leg.*2.670e).[19] This idea of

embracing suggests that the enchantment of the youth might have to do with creating a

bond between audience and staged virtuous characters. But how is this bond possible?

Later on, in book 7, the Athenian comes back to this point and states that the members of

the chorus of Dionysus must have a "good sense for rhythms and the combination of

harmonies, so that the representation (*mimesis*) of the tunes can reproduce

(*memimemenen*) something good as well as bad, and when the soul finds itself steeped in

emotions (*pathemata*), one should be able to choose between what is a reproduction

(*homoiomata*) of goodness and what's its contrary, rejecting the latter and bringing the

former to the forefront, [in this fashion] he shall sing and enchant the soul of the youth"

(*Leg.*7.812c). From this excerpt it would seem that the bond between audience and

character is to be fashioned on the basis of emotions. The imitation of something good, at

the moment when the soul is sensitive to emotive states, might constitute the enchantment

that is required of the chorus of Dionysus. Do we find in the re-framed technology of

mousike the creation of such a state in which the soul of the audience can experience an

emotive bond and be enchanted?

    I propose to answer this question in the positive, by claiming that the technology of

mousike opens a space for representation that we could call virtuality. In virtuality the

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[19] Meyer's translation modified. Meyer suggests that "youth" here might indicate the "members of the choruses of the Muses and Apollo (664b-d). They might also be the younger members if the chorus of Dionysus, whose age range begins just after 30" (*Laws 1&2* 320). The Athenian also says that the elderly will produce charms, the general name for songs, before the entire population at *Leg.* 2.665c-666b, but then he seems to change his mind and claims that the elderly will sing only for those who attend drinking parties (see *ivi* 2.666c). In any case it is likely that the performance of the elderly will make its way to the other choruses either directly (as in Meyer's conjecture) or indirectly, since the elderly are tasked with judging and amending all performances.

emotive bond between audience and character can be established, as virtuality targets

specifically those expectations of the psyche, which we have discussed in previous

chapters. Let us proceed with order; in this section we will discuss this space or state that

mousike opens up, virtuality. In the next section we will describe how the audience's

emotions are tied up in the virtuality of representation.

As we have discussed in previous chapters, in the *Laws* the Athenian seems to take a

rather pessimistic view about the possibility of encountering genuine virtue among human

beings.[20] Nonetheless if the canons of the technology of *mousike* are respected, it would

seem that the audience would be presented with a perfect picture of virtue. In other words,

if a work of *mousike* has virtue as a referent, if it represents this referent correctly in all its

parts and employs the technical aspects of *mousike* well (rhythm, harmony, choreography,

etc.) and if the performer has a virtuous disposition consonant with the referent being

represented, then something happens in representation that can hardly happen in reality; a

perfectly virtuous character is born. This character is certainly not real in the empirical

sense in which objects and people in the world are real, but the audience still has an

experience of it in the world of representation. Thus, we should say that the audience's

experience of virtue is not actual, but rather virtual.

My choice of qualifying this dimension of *mousike* as virtual is the result of the

convergence of three aspects. First, *mousike* is a representation of virtue (*arete*) and the

word "virtual" is appropriate to signify *mousike*'s connection to its referent. It is true that

virtue and virtuality share their etymological root in the Latin *vir* rather than in the Greek

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[20] See *Leg.* 9.875b-c.

arete. However, it is also useful to consider that the notion of *arete* is systematically translated in English with virtue and that the assonance between *virtus* and *virtualis* is as clear in Latin as it is in English. Thus, connoting the dimension of *mousike* as one of virtuality allows for a continued reference of representation to the eidetic dimension of virtue.[21] Second, the representational space of *mousike* is inserted in everyday reality in brackets, as it were. As we have just discussed, in *mousike* the audience experiences an undiluted representation of *arete*, since each musical element is coordinated to grant emotive reality to their eidetic referent. At the same time this representation is sealed off from empirical reality on two accounts. First, it is not part of reality's everyday fabric as the audience experiences it; rather it is introduced in reality by means of religious rituals and festivities. Second, *mousike* is such an archetypical introduction of virtue in reality that it cannot correspond to anything concretely real. We must agree with Aristotle that virtue is praiseworthy and beautiful precisely because it is so rare in our everyday life.[22] Because of this rarity, the representative space of *mousike* appears in the tapestry of reality more as an insertion than in continuity. The goal of *mousike* in producing its virtual representation is to drag us away from the actual, into a realm in which we obtain a vision of virtue, which in actuality we would hardly ever come by.[23] Finally, connoting *mousike*'s representation as

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[21] Rob Shields notes, "Examples of this usage [of virtual to indicate the person of virtue] trace back to 1398. As an adjective, a 'virtual person' was what we might today call a morally virtuous or good person; a person whose *actual* existence reflected or testified to a moral and ethical *ideal*" (*The Virtual* 3).

[22] See *NE* 2.9.1109a-20-30.

[23] In this regard Rob Shields states that "virtual worlds become important when they diverge from the actual, or when the actual is ignored in favour of the virtual – at which point they are 'more real than real'" (Shields *Virtual 4*, see also pp. 7-11 on *trompe-l'oeil* and panoramas). Shields uses this example to trace the

virtual helps us define its intangible yet real character. A virtual reality, in our everyday

exposure to it on social media or in video games, is the result of electrical impulses,

computer boards, light impulses from a screen, sounds from speakers, written words, etc.

But it is none of these elements discretely or in ensemble. In other words, all these

elements evoke, as it were, a reality, but while each of them is tangible and has concrete

reality, the reality they evoke is virtual rather than concrete. In the same fashion all the

elements of representation in *mousike* are concrete (rhythm, melody, words, voice, etc.)

and none of them on their own represents *arete*, however in their collective presence a

reality is evoked, namely *mousike* as the representation of *arete*. This last point may also

help us understand why the Athenian thinks that a distinction between representation and

the musical elements of representation in *mousike* is in order. The representation is more

than the sum of all the musical elements. It is their coordination and their blending into one

another. It is an additional element above and around all of them, it is their dimension.[24]

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relationship of divergence between a map (virtual reality) and an actual territory, or a graph (virtual reality) and the actual economy of a country. With regards to the *Laws* I think that the qualification of the virtual as inserting itself in the continuum of empirical reality is more appropriate than considering it an abstraction from reality.

[24] Shields sees a connection between the virtual and dramatic representation in what he calls "techniques of the virtual." These techniques "create the illusion of presence through props, simulations, partial presences (such as a voice conveyed by telephone or thoughts written in a book) and rituals which invoke the past and make absent others present. They aid metaxis from the virtual to the actual by giving concrete presence to intangible ideas" (*ivi* 41). Sörbom hints at something like my notion of virtuality when he speaks of the triad subject matter – model – artistic representation in terms of the structure of artistic production in the works of Plato. In few words, this triad creates a model for representation in which neither eidetic realities, nor individual phenomena are represented, but rather a certain subject matter is the model for artistic representation (e.g. the goodness of the god), this subject matter is concretized into a model (e.g. Zeus) which is then represented (e.g. a poem about Zeus); see *Mimesis and Art* 117-121 and in the next chapter see note 20.

In order to clarify these points it would be useful to refer to the philosophical

analysis of virtuality proposed by Gilles Deleuze. With the following I am not implying that

Deleuze's analysis of virtuality is the same as Plato's re-framing of *mousike*, or that Plato in

any significant way anticipates Deleuze's ontology. Rather I am appealing to Deleuze's

account of virtuality as a functional model to grasp the virtuality of *mousike* in the *Laws*.

Deleuze's analysis of virtuality comes from his study of Bergson. In turn Bergson's notion of

virtuality is derived from Proust's intuition that some memories are "real without being

actual, ideal without being abstract" (*Bergsonism* 96).[25] To begin, let me offer a summary of

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[25] Quoted also in *Difference and Repetition* 208. For a reconstruction of the conceptualization of the virtual from Proust to Bergson to Deleuze, See also Shields' *The Virtual* 2 and 26-33. Deleuze emphasizes the virtual in Bergson's concept of duration, or subjective, in opposition to the objective. The key distinction between the two concepts is that the subjective divides itself and in doing so it changes in kind, while the objective is divided in a system of reproduction of the same kind (see *Bergsonism* chapter II, especially pp. 38, 41-43 and *Bergson's Conception of Difference* 39). Deleuze is quick to transpose virtuality from Bergson's existential or phenomenological account to an ontological framework. "We must understand that the virtual is not something actual but is for that no less a mode of being, and is, moreover, in a way, being itself; neither duration, nor life, nor movement is actual, but that in which all actuality, all reality is distinguished and comprehended and takes root" (*Bergson* 28). Additionally Deleuze finds in this analysis of virtuality an inspiration for his ontology of difference, since the virtual is never stable; "it is the essence of the virtual to be actualized" (*ibid*). And this notion of actualization relates virtuality to another aspect of Bergson's thought, differentiation. "Virtuality exists in such a way that it actualizes itself as it dissociates itself; it must dissociate itself to actualize itself. Differentiation is the movement of a virtuality actualizing itself. … The notion of differentiation posits at once the *simplicity* of a virtual, the *divergence* of the series in which this virtual actualizes itself, and the *resemblance* of certain fundamental results produced in these series" (*Bergson's Conception of Difference* 40). A second reference to the virtual comes with the notion of memory in Bergson. Deleuze clarifies that he understands memory as the same of duration and subjectivity (see *Bergsonism* 51-54) and thus stands apart from the objective. Memory undergoes a division in terms of memory as recollection and memory as "contraction-memory," which is the basis for Bergson's famous phrase that the past survives itself. Contraction-memory is the focus of Deleuze to find another Bergsonian locus in which the virtual is at work. "The past is … the in-itself, the subconscious or more precisely, as Bergson says, the *virtual.* But in what sense is it virtual? It is here that we encounter the second figure of memory [contraction-memory]. The past is not constituted *after* it has been present; it *coexists with itself as present*. If we reflect upon it, we see that indeed the philosophical difficulty of the very notion of the past comes from the fact that it is in some way stuck between two presents: the present that it was and the current present in relation to which it is now past" (*Bergson* 29). From this perspective "We see therefore finally *what* is the virtual: the coexistent degrees themselves and as such" (*Ibid*.). In other words, the virtual is the coexistence of all the pasts relating to the present (in this regard see also *Bergsonism* 60). At this point we see that the virtual of memory-contraction folds back onto the virtual of subjectivity and duration; "[i]t is right to define duration as succession, but wrong to insist on it; it is, in effect, a real succession only because it is *virtual coexistence*" (*Bergson* 29-30). Finally what Deleuze grasps in the analysis of the virtual from Bergson is the distinction

Deleuze's virtuality. This summary is necessarily incomplete, but it is still sufficient to grasp a model of virtuality, which can be compared to the technology of *mousike* in the *Laws*. Let us first follow Deleuze on a schematic assessment of virtuality. (1) "the virtual is not opposed to the real; it is the real that is opposed to the possible ... (2) virtual is opposed to actual, and therefore, possesses a full reality ... (3) this reality of the virtual is constituted by the differential relations and the distributions of singularities" (*Method of Dramatization* 101). Point (1) indicates that what is virtual is real, while what is possible is not real. To simplify we should understand "real" as that which presently exists. What is virtual presently exists, what is possible presently does not exist. This opposition of the possible to what presently exists should not be understood very differently from Aristotle's distinction between potency and actuality. Though potency is a modality of being, it is not the same ontological category as actuality since actuality exists presently.

Point (2) indicates that the virtual is the counterpart of the actual. Though the virtual and the actual both exist presently, the actual exists presently and concretely, while the virtual exists presently and eidetically for Deleuze. At the same time the virtual and the actual implicate one another since the virtual actualizes itself, giving rise to the actual; conversely, the actual is understood eidetically on the basis of the virtual. However, this mutual implication is not explicated in a relation of identity, but rather in one of difference.

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between virtual and possible. "What Bergson critiques in the idea of the *possible* is that it presents us a simple copy of the product, projected or rather retrojected onto the movement of production, onto invention. But the virtual is not the same thing as the possible: the reality of time is finally the affirmation of a virtuality that is actualized, for which to be actualized is to invent. Because if everything is not given, it remains that the virtual is the whole" (*ivi* 30). The distinction between the possible and the virtual is one of temporality and one of scope at the same time. The possible is tied to the future, while virtuality is tied to the past. Additionally the possible imposes one individual repetition of the same on the present, while virtuality carries variety and difference and it actualizes the present in unexpected ways.

Deleuze draws out this relation in difference by contrasting it with the relation of

identity (or repetition) between the actual and the possible.

> [T]he possible is just the concepts as principle of the representation of the thing, under the following categories: the identity of *what is representing*, and the resemblance of *what is being represented*. On the other hand, the virtual belongs to the Idea and does not resemble the actual, no more than the actual resembles the virtual. The idea is an image without resemblance; the virtual actualizes itself not through resemblance, but through divergence and differentiation (*Method of Dramatization* 101).

Let us try to explain this quote by means of an example, though we may run the risk

of oversimplifying Deleuze's point. Let us take an apple tree. This tree exists presently and

concretely; it is actual. One possible future development of this tree is that in the spring it

will bloom and, if it is pollinated, it will bear fruits. Those fruits contain seeds, which, in the

right environmental conditions, will produce other apple trees. Apple blooms, fruits, seeds

and trees are not presently existing, thus are not real, and stand in a relation of identity

with the actual apple tree; they are possible. Finally, let us consider the complicated web of

relations that allows us to recognize this actual apple tree as a tree. This web captures all

trees, the tree of knowledge, genealogical trees, trunks, truncating, uprooting, rooting,

growing, orchards, blooms, birthing, falling, shouting "timber!" dying, seeding, etc. All that

is captured by this web is connected to the actual tree, it is presently existing as the tree,

but it is not actual. In its relation to the tree, it is not limited by the actuality of the tree, but

it exceeds it; this is the virtual.

Point (3) states that virtuality is not simple, metaphysically speaking. It involves

multiplicity and difference. Deleuze makes this point when he states that virtuality is

differential. Ideas are "differential relations among elements stripped of all sensible forms"

(*Method of Dramatization* 99). On the other hand these differential relations find their

correspondents in certain singularities, "[s]ingularities are *ideal events*" (*ivi* 100). Thus, an

idea is the composite of differential relations and singularities. One of the consequences of

defining the idea in this fashion is that "the Idea defined in this way has no actuality. It is

virtual, it is pure virtuality" (*ibid*). What is underscored about virtuality here is that it is the

ideation, stripped of all physical characteristics, of a system of relations and singularities.

In a certain sense, and at the risk of trivializing this notion, the virtuality of an idea is

similar to a constellation. The system of relations (differential relations) among points of

light in the night sky (singularities), the lines or curves that are drawn among those sources

of light, appear as a bear. But the bear is only a virtual ideation, drawn from the stars and

the relations among stars.[26] This system of differential relations and singularities is not yet

actualized. It is itself virtual. In this fashion the virtual is unified (since relations,

singularities and their being grasped in an idea are all virtuality), but it is also

differentiated (since each of these elements is different from the others). At the same time

the virtual relations that compose the idea are not the same as the relations that compose

the actualization of the idea. A good explanation of how relations and singularities are

expressions of, but do not capture the virtual is the following. "Such a coexistence [in the

idea] does not imply any confusion, nor any indetermination for the relationships and

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[26] Shields uses similar images to describe the virtual, though he uses constellations to represent the passage from the actual to the possible (see *The Virtual* 35-36). I disagree with his characterization since a constellation is not a repetition of the actual scheme of stars, but a representation of the virtual background with which the beholder looks at the night sky. In any case I must acknowledge that there is a general risk in interpreting the virtual in Deleuze by means of these common examples; the risk is that we might condense the virtual into a single referent (the constellation), while for Deleuze the virtual is the seat of non-actualized plurality and differentiation. Deleuze's finds examples of virtuality in the relation between light and colors or sound with the general variety of all sounds (see *Difference and Repetition* 206).

differential elements coexist in a completely and perfectly determined whole. Except

that this whole is not actualized as such. What is actualized, here and now, are particular

relations, relational values, and distributions of singularities; others are actualized

elsewhere or at other times" (*How do we Recognize Structuralism?* 179). On this basis

Deleuze draws out two terms of differentiation, one that is internal to the virtual and the

other marks the difference between virtual relations and their actualization. He proposes

this complicated structure first with regards to Structuralism. "Of the structure as

virtuality, we must say that it is still undifferentiated (c), even though it is totally and

completely differential (t)" (*How do we Recognize Structuralism?* 179). This combination of

undifferentiated (because it is not yet actual) and differential (because it is the composite

of relations and singularities) of the virtual is discussed explicitly in *Difference & Repetition*.

Here Deleuze explains how the virtual actualizes itself in what currently exits by means of a

spelling distinction between the differential value of an idea and its difference from its

actualization. This distinction is represented lexically in the opposition of differen*t*iation

and differen*c*iation. "We call the determination of the virtual content of an Idea

differen*t*iation; we call the actualization of that virtuality into species and distinguished

parts differen*c*iation" (207). However, Deleuze is quick to point out that each object

participates of both facets, its virtuality and its actualization. In this sense each object is in a

state of "differen*t/c*iation" (*ivi* 209).[27]

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[27] What is interesting to point out here is that when we enter in a relation with a thing, anything, we recognize also its virtual background, as it were. We can trace back the process of actualization (differen*c*iation) that relates that one thing to its idea, that is virtuality (differen*t*iation). Deleuze terms this virtual background "dramatization" (*Method of Dramatization* 98-99). "The actual and the virtual coexist and enter into a tight circuit which we are continually retracting from one to the other" (*Actual and Virtual* 150).

How can Deleuze's analysis of virtuality work as a model for understanding the virtuality of Plato's *mousike*? Before we answer this question, let us acknowledge some significant differences between Deleuze's ontology and Plato's *mousike*. The first point that should be recognized is that Deleuze is discussing ontology, while Plato is giving an account of a technology for influencing the non-rational forces in the psyche; the scopes of these investigation stand completely apart. On the one hand virtuality helps explain an ontological dimension, on the other virtuality is a facet of representation that can influence the mind of the audience. Second, since Deleuze refers to the idea as virtual, we should clarify that even if we were to compare Deleuzian and Platonic ontology, there is a difference in the "location" of the idea. For Plato, ideas are intellectual objects available to the mind, for Deleuze ideas are inherent in the unconscious and thus in the bodily. "[W]hat is dramatized is the unconscious" says Deleuze (*Method of Dramatization* 114).[28] Deleuze clarifies that the notion of unconscious should be understood more in light of Bergson than of Freud. In Freud the unconscious is connected with affective forces, in Bergson it denotes what is properly ontological, because it is outside the scope of consciousness.[29] Finally, there is a second striking difference between the virtual idea in Deleuze and Plato's idea, which has to do with the notion of orientation or finality. Deleuze acknowledges his proximity to Plato's ontology, especially with regards to the Eleatic dialogues, as he claims

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Deleuze calls this built up of actual and virtual, crystallization; here "the two are indistinguishable" (*ivi* 151). In this crystallization however "the virtual is 'ephemeral,' but the virtual also preserves the past, since the ephemerality is continually making minute adjustments in response to changes of direction" (*Ibid*.).of the actual.

[28] See also *How do we Recognize Structuralism?* 181.

[29] See *Bergsonism* 56-57.

"If we think of the Plato from the later dialectic, where the Ideas are something like

multiplicities that must be traversed by questions such as *how? how much? in which case?*,

then yes, everything I've said has something Platonic about it. If you're thinking of the Plato

who favors a simplicity of the essence or an ipseity of the Idea, then no." (*Method of*

Dramatization 116). However, no matter the possibility of detecting some sort of

"differentiation" in Plato's later dialectic, the function of the idea for actual reality in Plato

is different from the function of the virtual for the actual in Deleuze. Speaking about

Bergson, Deleuze states that

> [t]he major similarity between Plato and Bergson is that they each created a
> philosophy of difference in which difference is thought as such; it is not
> reduced to contradiction and *does not go* as far as contradiction. But the point
> where they part company … seems to be the necessary presence of a
> principle of finality in Plato: only the Good explains the difference of the thing
> and allows us to understand the thing in itself, as in the celebrated example
> of Socrates sitting in his prison cell" (*Bergson's Conception of Difference* 41).

"Thus, Bergson's conception of difference of nature allows him, unlike Plato, to avert any

genuine recourse to finality" (*ivi* 42). In these quotes we should also hear an echo of Plato's

difference with Deleuze. Though Deleuze has something to share with Plato, there is an

orientation of difference in Plato that is absent from Deleuze. In other words, even if we

assume that Plato's idea and Deleuze's virtuality are differential in the same fashion, Plato's

idea orients its corresponding actual in a way that Deleuze's virtual does not. For Plato the

actual should be eidetic, but it cannot. It can only participate of the idea. For Deleuze the

actual comes from the virtual, as it were, but cannot go back to it.

Now, granted that there is no ontological correspondence between Deleuze's

analysis of virtuality and Platonic ideas, let us consider whether the Deleuzian virtuality

can function as a model to understand the dimension of virtuality opened by *mousike* of the *Laws*. Let us begin by summarizing schematically the traits of Deleuze's virtuality. (i) It is related to the actual, because it is real, but it is not the actual; (ii) it is the background of the actual and appears together with the actual; (iii) it is differential, in the sense that it is the whole of a multiplicity and at the same time is more of all the elements constituting that multiplicity.

What is actual in *mousike* are the elements of representations, the voice, the rhythm, the words, the singer, etc. However, on the background of these actuals stands the representation in its virtuality. The representation is none of the musical elements discretely and it is more than their sum. The entirety of the relations of certain systemic elements (e.g. rhythm and melody are different systems relating to one another, the choreography of actors is another system in relation, the metric of words is yet another relating to each of the above, then the meaning of those words is yet another) and the play of singularities (the specific character in the story, the specific actor impersonating that character) on those relations give rise to the representation. This representation is virtual because it is real and can be beholden in the play of each relation and singularity with one another, while at the same time encompasses all relations and singularities and unifies them. In this connection with the elements of representation we recognize characteristics (i), (ii) and (iii) of Deleuze's virtuality and, in this light, it may serve as a model to understand what happens in *mousike*.[30]

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[30] Deleuze acknowledges that virtuality can be a tool for explaining art. "When it is claimed that works of art are immersed in a virtuality, what is being invoked is not some confused determination but the completely determined structure formed by its genetic differential elements, its 'virtual' or 'embryonic' elements. The

At the same time we should be careful to notice that in the virtuality of *mousike*
the idea of the virtue is not represented. In other words, a choral composition about
courage, deployed according to the requirements of *mousike*, is a representation, not a
presentation of the idea of courage. The representation is the dimension of the virtual in
the *Laws'* music, but its referent, virtue, is beyond the virtual, it remains in the realm of the
eidetic. As we have seen the eidetic (idea of courage) cannot enter the material (rhythm,
melody, words, choreography, performer, etc.), without undergoing an aesthetic
transformation. The actual elements of representation (words, rhythm, melody, etc.) evoke
in the virtual determination of courage this aesthetic dimension, not the idea of courage.
Nonetheless the representation of courage is real and beautiful.[31]

Finally, we can understand how there can be only representation of virtue, not vice,
in *mousike* and how these representations are always new, even though they are always
about *arete*.[32] Unlike Deleuze's virtuality, Plato's representation is always oriented. The
virtual representation of *mousike* is always representation of a stable eidetic reality, *arete.*
From this perspective, *mousike* cannot represent the virtuality of cowardice, because
cowardice is not grasped in the idea of *arete* and thus there is no orientation for *mousike* to

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elements, varieties of relations and singular points coexist in the work of the object, in the virtual part of the
work or object, without it being possible to designate a point of view privileged over others, a centre [*sic*]
which would unify the other centres [*sic*]" (*Difference and Repetition* 209). In this sense the notion of
virtuality as applied to art captures representation. The actual musical elements relate and evoke an entire
virtual system; that is the virtuality of representation in *mousike*.

[31] Let us recall what Deleuze says about dramatization. I think that the use of this word is particularly
interesting in relation to the *mousike* in Plato's *Laws*. For Deleuze the drama is the dynamism of the concept;
we see virtuality in the drama of the different elements of the actual. In the *Laws* drama is precisely this
avocation, from actual musical elements, of a virtual representation of the idea of *arete*.

[32] See *Leg*. 2.665c.

open the space of the virtual. Representations of what is comedic or ugly or vicious do

not open a virtual space, because there's no cohesiveness of eidetic referent. Without that

referent the Athenian's *mousike* cannot offer a virtual representation, as the actual

elements of representation would lack coordination. Additionally, as we have seen in the

previous chapter, an epistemology of *arete* is possible and it would represent *arete* in its

unity and simplicity. However, this does not mean that the virtual representations of *arete*

can only be a repetition of the idea of *arete.* Because the representation of this singular idea

is virtual, it allows for differen*t*iation and gives rise to multiple divergences and thus

multiple uses of the elements of representation (rhythm, words, melody, etc.). To state the

same concept without using Deleuze's vocabulary, we can say that in *mousike* the use of

multiple musical elements is cohesive and collectively these elements bear some

resemblance to the idea of *arete*; however*,* it would be wrong to assume that we can only

obtain one representation of the idea of virtue. The virtuality of representation is a web of

relation of musical elements and different elements can give rise to different

representations of the same idea.

The Psychological Effects of *Mousike*'s Virtuality on its Audience.

In the previous section I argued that the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* opens up a

space of representation, which can be defined as virtual. The actual musical elements

(words, rhythms, melodies, etc.) evoke as their background the virtuality of representation,

which coordinates them and exceeds them. In this fashion, the words of Oedipus, the

choreography of the chorus and the rhythms and meters of the composition give rise to a

real depiction of the life of the tragic hero, which is none of those actual elements, and yet is

there before the audience's eyes. Thus, the question that we should ask is how

virtuality works in the context of *mousike* as a technology. In other words, what is the effect

that virtuality will have on the *psychai* of the audience? To use the Athenian's vocabulary,

how will virtuality enchant them? In this section I will attempt to answer this question by

tying together the virtuality of *mousike* and the psychological research of the first three

chapters of this dissertation. Before we begin let me make clear again that in the text Plato

does not speak of the influence of *mousike* on non-deliberative motivations of the psyche in

the same explicit terms as I do. Often his remarks are confined to the effects that the

pleasure caused by *mousike* might have on the soul. Thus, our first order of business will be

to qualify precisely which non-deliberative psychological forces are affected in *mousike*.

Once that point is established I will try to clarify why this interpretation is viable and what

is *mousike's* psychological power on the audience.

My argument here is that the virtual dimension of *mousike* opens the possibility for

the audience's enchantment. But this enchantment should not be explained as a quasi-

magical sense of loss of oneself in the work of music, rather this enchantment is the

product of virtuality's direct appeal to some non-rational motivations in the audience.

Specifically, it seems to me that this enchantment has effects on the psyche's expectations.

The first argument that we can offer to prove that virtuality targets expectations is

one of deduction. The Athenian has made clear to us by means of the image of the

marionette that three psychological elements determine our moral psychology, *logismos*,

expectations and drives. We also know that *mousike* is meant to enchant the youth for

purposes having to do with moral psychology, namely the promotion of the identification of

happiness, pleasure and virtue; thus, we must conclude that one of those psychological

elements will be the target of *mousike's* virtuality. However, we already know that *logismos*

is to be excluded from the number of possible targets, since, as we have seen, *logismos'* role

in the moral psychology of the *Laws* is evaluative. *Logismos* operates in the selection of

non-rational forces that can aid the pursuit of its own virtuous ends. In this case the

audience of *mousike* is not required to make a moral decision, thus *logismos* cannot be the

target of virtuality's effect. The drives would be a good candidate for capturing the effects

of virtuality, but their stimulation does not require such complex technology. Drives are

satisfied with the actual elements of representation, not with the virtuality of

representation. In other words, melodies, words, good rhythms are enough to stimulate

those drives, and it seems unnecessary for the Athenian to develop such a complicated

performing edifice to achieve such small task. We have seen examples of this simplicity in

chapters 3 and 4, with regard to the habits of cultivation, where rhythms and sounds were

enough to stimulate the drive of pleasure. Additionally, we should consider that drives may

not be adequate to grasp a representation. We see evidence of this inadequacy in the

Athenian's decision to exclude from *mousike* musical performances without words, on the

grounds that though musical performances may be pleasing, the absence of words obscures

the referent of their representation. While drives may be gratified by a good melody, with

virtuality we are dealing with representation. Thus, the only psychological elements that

remain available for the influence of virtual representation are the expectations.

Expectations are in the position of being stimulated by the virtuality of *mousike* since on

the one hand they have no evaluative psychological function, while on the other they

require more complex stimulation than immediate gratification. Virtuality can be a

good candidate to stimulate these non-deliberative semi-rational motives.

So far I offered only a negative argument to prove that virtuality targets

expectations, that is an argument that excludes all other psychological elements while

preserving expectations. However, there is also a positive side to this argument, which

shows expectations as the only qualified psychological elements to grasp the virtuality of

representation. Above I claimed that in the *Laws' mousike* virtual representation is not the

same as its eidetic referent. In other words, the idea of *arete* is a different ontological object

from the representation of *arete*. The idea of *arete* is an ontological object independent of

all actual displays of virtue; simply put, in a world of cowards the idea of courage would

still exist. Representation instead is tied to actual elements, but cannot be reduced to actual

elements. Representation is virtual because it is the cumulative and collective effect of all

the actual musical elements while not being any of those elements. Thus, to grasp virtuality

we are required to employ some psychological capacity that begins from the actual state of

affairs, but can detach itself from it. Deleuze speaks about this in terms of time when he

qualifies virtuality as the past or the memory of the actual; within the ontological

framework of Deleuze's account, characterizing virtuality as memory means that when I

experience the actual in the present, I can simultaneously live in a past that relates to this

present; this past is the virtual. Let us think of virtuality in the context of *mousike* in similar

terms. When the audience grasps the representation of courage (virtual) from all the

elements of representation (actual words, rhythm, melody, etc.), one must conjecture that

they audience has some psychological ability to surpass the actual towards another

temporal directions. In other terms, as we listen to words that are defiant in the face of

danger, as we see a martial dance, as we hear a pressing rhythm and a melody in the scale

of G, the perception of the virtual that is evoked by these elements requires that we are

able to move from the present and actual perception of musical elements to a psychological

elsewhere, where these elements form a cohesive and virtual representation. Additionally,

if we are to be enchanted, that is if we are to feel a personal connection with the virtuality

of representation, we must also move back into our memory and find similar words spoken

in similar circumstances, or the pressing incitement of the charge, or a similar melody

played in some martial context. Psychologically we must be able to connect all these actual

musical elements with the memory of our past experiences of courage. From this

perspective virtuality is a perfect fit for expectations, as it targets their reliance on memory

and imagination. Imagination connects the spectator to the virtual spectacle in the same

way as it connects the moral agent to possible future scenarios. Memory relates the

spectacle to the audience past personal experiences in the same way in which it connects

the moral agent to past sensations of pain or pleasure. In this fashion we not only achieve a

psychological recognition of – say – courage, but we also find ourselves personally

implicated in the virtuality of representation. We are enchanted.

     Now that we have established that virtuality targets the non-rational expectations of

the audience and in that fashion enchants those who attend its performances, let us try to

explain why this interpretation is viable in the context of the *Laws*' *mousike*. My first

strategy is to show that this interpretation of the *mousike* of the *Laws* fits in the history of

classical philosophy. My second line of argument will show that this system of

reinforcement of non-rational expectations is systematized in the festivities of Magnesia.

We may find some support for this interpretation of virtuality and its work on

expectations from philosophers who were close to Plato or were connected to him by a

commonality of themes or scholarship. Generally speaking this problem could be construed

as a problem in the history of philosophy regarding the "ethos theory" of music. Simply

stated the ethos theory maintains that musical elements have moral values and affect the

character of the spectator. Can we find support in other philosophers engaged in this

debate confirming the interpretation of the *Laws*' ethos theory as one in which mousike's

virtuality affects expectations? Looking at Aristotle and Aristoxenos[33] it would seem that

some support can be found. I think I could at least make the point that these notions must

have been considered by Plato, as they were part of his cultural milieu, or perhaps that

these ideas were partly developed by Plato and then were passed along in the history of

philosophy through the Academy and the Peripatetic school. In order to preserve the

cohesiveness of the current project, I will not be able to offer a rigorous analysis of the

connections between Plato's *mousike* in the *Laws* and the works of Aristotle and

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[33] The first author we should consider in chronological order is Damon of the deme of OA. In the *Republic* (see 3.339e-400b, 4.424c) Socrates relies on his musical theory to make a case for education which is reminiscent of the *mousike* of the *Laws*, but it reads like a much simpler and embryonic proposal compared to the reading I am proposing here. On the basis of Damon, Socrates claims that certain rhythms and harmonies may exert psychological influences. As Robert Wallace puts it, "[i]f extant texts are representative, Damon's main research interests lay in music and metre's psychological effects and hence behavioural consequences" (*Damon of Oa* 249). Even though we don't have sources to reconstruct the musical theory of Damon, Wallace remarks correctly that his theory must have fallen into the confines of the ancient Greek sensibility for music, one in which as "[t]he people sang, they *became* the poet and said his words as their own" (*ivi* 261). In this regard see also Folch's *The City and the Stage* 146, where he seems open to the possibility that some elements of Damon's musical theory permeate also the *Laws*.

Aristoxenos. I will limit myself to highlighting some points for this line of investigation, while I hope to give a complete account in the future.

There are at least two good reasons why Aristotle should be considered a reliable source to obtain insights into Plato's *mousike*. In the first place Aristotle lived in the Academy and was a student of Plato for the last 20 years of the latter's life; he is likely to have been among his closest collaborators and some of the conjectures Plato makes with regards to *mousike* in the *Republic* and the *Laws* must have affected Aristotle. Second, the commonality of themes between *Laws* 2 and 7 and *Politics* 8 suggests that Aristotle perhaps included some of Plato's conjectures in his own investigations on the nature of social living. This seems to be particularly true with regards to his analysis of the role of music in moral development. For instance, while we can ascribe claims like the distaste for banuistic activities to Aristotle's and Plato's political conservatism,[34] we must recognize that specific references to the limits of Spartan moral education,[35] to the contribution of music to achieve the end of the state (virtue in the case of the *Laws* as we have seen, and leisure in the case of the *Politics*)[36] and to the necessity of investigating music as a plausible tool of moral education[37] – just to mention few – paint Plato's *Laws* and Aristotle's *Politics* in a relation of continuity.

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[34] See above chapter 3 on Plato's character of freedom and *Pol.* 8.1337b3-21.

[35] See above chapter 3 and *Pol.* 8.1338b10-20.

[36] See *ivi* 8.1338a10-38 and 7.1334a2-10.

[37] See *ivi* 8.1339a20-25.

Now, while Aristotle wonders if the value of music is to be found only in the performance of music or also in attending the music performed by others,[38] he claims that music affects character and generally that "everybody who listens to imitations becomes affected by those very feelings (*sympatheis*), even apart from rhythm and melody themselves" (*ivi* 8.1340a11), that certain types of music correspond to virtues and other states of character (*ivi* 18-21) and that "habituation in feeling pain and delight at representations of reality (*tois homoiois*) is close to feeling them towards actual reality (*pros ten aletheian*)" (*ivi* 24-25). At this point in the *Politics*, it is unclear whether the effects of music on character are to be limited to what we called drives in the psychology of the *Laws*, namely pleasure and pain, or may be extended to expectations. But in the *Poetics* Aristotle takes a more definitive stand and the insight from the *Poetics* can cast some light on the point made in the *Politics.*

In the *Poetics* Aristotle makes the case that enjoyment of imitations comes as consequence of the ability to reason (*syllogein*) and to have some memory of objects similar to the referent of imitation. In this passage Aristotle discusses this perception of imitation using as an example graphic depictions. He states that human beings "delight in seeing images for this reason: because of their understanding and reasoning out what each things is when they contemplate them, for instance "that's who this is," since if one happens not to have seen him before, the image will not produce pleasure in an imitation, but only on

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[38] See *ivi* 8.1339a10-b10, see also 1340b20-40 where Aristotle admits that children should be taught to play music and judge it. Plato does something similar when he claims that the chorus of the elderly judges the performance of the chorus of the youth.

account of its workmanship or coloring of for some other reason" (1448b 15-20).[39] In

other words Aristotle states that our ability to appreciate imitations (and thus the products

of *mousike*) is dependent on our ability to reason and find referents in our memory of an

experience we have had, which is relatable to the current representation. For instance I

may enjoy the representation of a horse running because it reminds me of an experience I

had riding a horse. If one is unable to relate that representation to a memory, the image of

the horse running affects one's psyche less lively, so to speak, and one may appreciate only

the artist's skill, while having no personal connection with the representation.

In the *Poetics* Aristotle discusses the effects of music on character in terms of

purification,[40] in the *Politics* he is open to the idea that music can have purifying as well as

educational uses.[41] However, one can argue that if the music that purifies and the one that

educates are both imitations, and if imitation requires some minimal mnemonic ability to

be appreciated, as stated in the *Poetics*, then the music that educates, discussed in *Politics* 8,

must require of the audience some kind of mnemonic effort as well. From this perspective

it seems that, very much like Plato in the *Laws*, Aristotle thinks that representations, be

those visual as in the case of the *Poetics* or musical as in the case of the *Politics*, appeal to

some mnemonic function of our psyche. If we accept that Plato and Aristotle have similar

conceptions of the political use of music, then it would seem that the educational music of

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[39] Sachs' translation.

[40] "The poet needs to provide the pleasure that comes from pity and fear by means of an imitation" *Poetics* 1453b12-13.

[41] See *Pol.* 1341b36-42a6.

the *Politics*, with its reliance on memory, supports the interpretation of the *mousike* of

the *Laws* as stimulating the soul's expectations.[42]

Another author we should consider is Aristoxenos. Destrée suggests that when

Aristotle refers to people who work philosophically on music to discern the connection

between harmony, rhythm and character, he is thinking of Aristoxenos.[43] Indeed Barker

maintains that if we want to understand the ethos theory in the *Laws,* Aristoxenos'

discussion on the criteria to judge music is better than Aristotle's discussion in *Politics* or

Poetics, since "[t]he striking similarities between the structures and the central themes of

the two discussions [Plato's *Laws* and Aristoxenos' *Peri Mousikes*[44]) make it very likely

indeed that Aristoxenus not only knew the relevant passage in the *Laws* [667b-671a] but

was consciously using the agenda that Plato sets up as a framework for his own

investigation" (*Laws and Aristoxenus* 392-93). Barker makes the point that while some

passages from *Republic* 3 and *Laws* 2[45] indicate that some *harmoniai* express a definitive

character (courage, moderation, etc.), Aristoxenos refers to the craft of the artist as the

element that unifies all musical materials (rhythm, harmony, meter, etc.) and can grant a

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[42] Pangle claims against my interpretation that "Aristotle is not altogether serious about musical education as conducing either to moral or to intellectual virtue for the citizenry, … [f]or he argues that the youths need to partake in learning some musical performance only partly because without it they will be incapable of judging music as adults" (*Teaching in the* Politics 264-65). Destrée might be more favorable to my interpretation when seeing a distinction in *Pol.*8 between music as moral tool and music as vehicle of leisure (see *Education, Leisure and Politics* 317), while also maintaining that the music that educates and that for leisure in some cases are one and the same (see *ivi* 118).

[43] See *Education, Leisure and Politics* 317 and *Pol.*8.1340b1-10.

[44] Barker is referring to a summary of Aristoxenos' musical theory in the Pseudo-Plutarch's *De Musica* (1st or 2nd century CE).

[45] For instance *Leg.* 2.655a, Barker cites 670b, but I disagree with his reading of this passage, as I do not think that in the latter citation the Athenian is considering a correspondence between harmonies and virtues.

unified character to a composition.[46] While Barker draws a distinction between Plato

and Aristoxenos on these grounds, another possibility is to interpret this unifying and

representational force of the craft in *Peri Mousikes* as comparable to the technology of

mousike in the *Laws*. In *mousike* only the good artist will be able to evoke the appropriate

virtual dimension for the referent of the work of art; in a similar fashion for Aristoxenos

only the good artist can employ artistic means to refer to a certain character. As Barker

puts it "[t]he upshot is that ἦθος does not arise directly from formal structures as such, nor

can we predict it immediately from knowledge about specified combinations or mixtures of

rhythmic and melodic structures. Everything hangs on the way in which the composer has

put them to use" (*ivi* 405). I should point out that Barker maintains that one of the most

important differences between Plato's musical theory in the *Laws* and Aritoxenos' is that

the former considers *mousike* a mimetic art, oriented by a referent, while the latter rejects

this assumption.[47] Granted this distinction, it seems to me that further investigations of

Aristoxenos' musicology may justify the conditions for virtuality in the *Laws' mousike*, as

Aristoxenos seems to indicate the presence of an additional level of representation beyond

the actual musical elements.[48]

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[46] See *Laws and Aristoxenus* 404-5.

[47] See *ivi* 414.

[48] Barker maintains that overall "Aristoxenus seems to have been no more than lukewarm in his convictions about the influence that music can exert upon character" (*Science of Harmonics* 252). Aristoxenos is chiefly concerned with the intrinsic aesthetic value of a certain musical piece. While a musical piece may be arranged so as to present a character that resembles moral excellence, it does not mean that it may have direct moral effects on its listeners (*ivi* 257). On the other hand Gibson in her analysis of the *Peri Mousikes* maintains that there is affinity between the ethos theory of music which we find in Plato and Aristoxenos' attribution of character to musical works (see *The Birth of Musicology* 112-113).

Now that we have seen that the history of philosophy does not discourage an interpretation of virtuality and its effects on the psyche in the *Laws*, let us move on to assess whether the influence of virtuality on expectations can be verified also in the festivities of Magnesia. Before we address this issue specifically, let us be reminded that *mousike*'s virtuality can only reinforce habits, which are acquired in circumstances which stand beyond virtuality itself. With specific regards to expectations and insofar as some virtues (courage and vulgar moderation)[49] find their psychological motivation by means of habits of repression, *mousike*'s virtuality could be employed to reinforce those habits. In order to discuss these points let us look at the structures of the festivities within which the technology of *mousike* will be deployed.

Habits of repression produce in the soul semi-rational motivations in the form of expectations, by frustrating the gratification of our drives. In chapter 3, I suggested as an example of this frustration the military training of the Spartans, which would eventually lead to expectations in support of courage. Magnesian festivities may provide opportunities for the acquisition of motivations that result in courage by means of practicing war games. Armed training is an essential component of the festivities.[50] This training will function as military exercises as well as physical training and athletic competitions. In each of these activities the citizenry will face a variety of painful challenges. As a result of the continued

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[49] See above chapter 3.

[50] The other essential part of these festivities are choral performances; see *Leg.*8.828a-29c. On the importance of *mousike* for armed training and battle see Wallace's *Damon of Oa* 261-62. Morrow estimates the frequency of religious festivities (not all of them involving military games) to "at least a sixth of the days of the year" (*Plato's Cretan City* 354). For a discussion of genres of choral compositions allowed in Magnesia see Morrow's *Plato's Cretan City* 358-371 and Folch's *The City and the Stage* chapter 3.

celebration of festivities will have to develop a degree of resistance to pain, which will

turn into a habit and will have effects on the psyche of the citizens similar to the ones we

described in the chapter 3. The citizens' habitual frustration of the drive of pain creates

memories of past frustrations and gives rise to a minimum of imagination of future

frustrations. In this fashion an emotive state will be added to the psyche, an expectation of

one's ability to face painful challenges, which will support each citizen in approaching

future challenging events with courage.

Let us posit that after the armed training the youth of the city were to behold a

performance by the chorus of the elderly, deploying *mousike* and its virtual representation.

Let us further posit that this performance is a representation of courage. In this case we

would see how the performance could work to reinforce the habits of repression acquired

in the participation in the armed games. The performance, in the virtuality of its

representation, will appeal to the memory of expectations that were just created in the

soul. Additionally, the audience will find in virtuality a possible outlet for the quantum of

imagination that is connected to the expectation of being able to face painful challenges.

We can find in the text of the *Laws* a fitting example for one such performance. Let

us consider the law regarding the loss of one's weapons in battle in order to save one's life.

This law is discussed in detail in book 12. Though the law is punitive, it is intended to

promote the psychological motivation for "one who is ambushed by enemies … to turn

around … and defend himself … [choosing] a beautiful death accompanied with courage"

(*Leg.*12.944c). In order to draw a distinction between those who fight valiantly and yet lose

their weapons and those who abandon their weapons in order to escape the enemy's

ambush, the Athenian cites books 16 and 17 of the *Iliad*, narrating the death of

Patroclus and the loss of Achilles' weapons. The case of Patroclus is clearly a representation

of courage and one could "sing (*epaidein*) of infinite similar cases, so to give beauty to

events so terrible and easy to misrepresent" (*Leg.*12.944b). In other words the Athenian

claims that one should be able to give a virtuous representation of cases in which arms may

be lost, though the warrior's honor is preserved. Let us now imagine that the adult

population of the Magnesian citizenry, who are also soldiers and might face the situation of

being outnumbered by enemies while having to fight courageously, hears the story of

Patroclus, sung according to the dictates of the Athenian's reformed *mousike*. Let us further

assume that, since they are trained in war, they have acquired some non-deliberative

motivation sustaining courage in the frustration of their drive of pain. The imagination

inherent in those non-deliberative motivations would allow them to find in the connection

between Homer's verses, the accompanying instruments' sounds, the song and the voice of

the bard the virtual scenario of the story of Patroclus. Memory would tie back that scenario

to past frustrations of pain they underwent, and they would be able to relate to Patroclus'

choice to face battle and likely death. In this representation of courage and in the play of

the imagination and memory of those expectations sustaining courage, the non-

deliberative motivation to act courageously is reinforced.

A similar case can be made for the formation of habits to motivate "vulgar"

moderation. In the festivities these habits would result from the practice of symposia, but

would be reinforced by *mousike.* As we have seen in chapters 2 and 3 drinking parties are

places in which vulgar moderation can be formed in the experience of shame. Some

commentators holds that the drinking parties discussed in book 1 are not the same as those hosted by the elderly in book 2,[51] but I do not think this view is correct. Textual reference from *Leg.* 2.671d, and 672d show that the Athenian is still considering the role that shame plays in symposia. Thus, in the same symposium we would have the creation of a non-rational motivation to sustain vulgar moderation and its reinforcement through the songs of the elderly.

For the last time, it should be noted that in being exposed to the virtuality of *mousike* these virtue-motivating expectations are reinforced, they are not introduced in the soul. Introduction of these expectation is done through habits of repression, as we have seen, and it is unreasonable to think that *mousike* would be a good means to frustrate basic psychological drives, as it does not require us to endure any pain and (at least in the reformed version of the Athenian) or to resist any pleasure. *Mousike* exposes the spectator who holds these expectations in her psyche to a continued exercise of the imagination and memory that accompany these expectations and as such it counts as habitual reinforcement of these non-deliberative semi-rational motivations. If we reflect further on the structure of the festivals that the Athenian envisions for these performances we get a glimpse of the technological sophistication of *mousike*. Armed games and symposia are the

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[51] Annas argues that "we have no clear way of relating the 'chorus of Dionysus' to the properly regulated *symposium*, and the latter disappears from view after the initial discussion. We are left with a loose end" (*Changing from Within* 19). Annas' main argument is that if there is a chorus that needs testing, that is the chorus of Apollo, but that nonetheless those under 18 are not allowed to drink wine (*ivi* 19). However, the chorus of Apollo is composed of people up to thirty and Plato allows for the consumption of wine between the age of 18 and 30, though in moderation (see *Leg.*2.666a-b). This makes it possible to relate this chorus from book 2 with what has been said in book 1 about the training in shame for the use of wine. Authors that share a view similar to mine include Stalley (*Introduction to Plato's* Laws 124-125), and Meyer (*Laws 1&2* 286) who sees the connection between wine consumption and shame as proceeding in different directions, while being connected in the two accounts of the drinking parties.

moments when habits of repression introduce semi-rational motivations in the soul; choral representations are the moments when these habits are reinforced. Since citizens are to partake of these events at least once a week, they'll be caught in a continuum of creation and reinforcements of non-rational motivations for virtue. Thus, in the festivities and with the application of the technology of *mousike*, the Athenian has achieved his objective, namely that "the entire city enchants itself" (*Leg.* 2.665c).

Chapter Conclusion.

In this chapter I have explained how *mousike* may influence the psyche of performers and audiences in the polity of the *Laws.* I began by clarifying the importance, among other musical materials, of the performer, stating that performers in the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* should be chosen not only on the basis of their musical skills, but mostly on the basis of their moral character. With this requirement the Athenian's *mousike* acts as a technology catching the performer in a process of confirmation and reinforcement of her non-deliberative motivations for acting virtuously.

A further analysis of *mousike* revealed that the significant difference between actual musical elements (the voice, the rhythm, the words, the singer, etc.) and the representation they display is to be found in the virtual status of the latter. Representation is virtual because it is the cumulative and collective effect of all the actual musical elements, while not being any of these elements. This distinction is useful because it helps qualifying the psychological requirements for grasping representation. Virtuality puts on the audience the demand of employing their psychological capacity to depart from actual state of affairs and use their imagination and memory to grasp the representation.

Finally, I noted that the demands of virtuality are met by the non-rational expectations in the audience's psyche. In this fashion representation can reinforce certain semi-rational expectations that motivate virtuous action. When we place *mousike* in the larger context of the festivities prescribed in the *Laws*, we notice that this reinforcement is aligned with the creation of those very semi-rational expectations, thereby giving birth to an effective machine for moral development.

This chapter concludes our analysis of the *Laws*' *mousike*. In the next chapter, the final in this dissertation, I will take stock of what I said so far about the connection between the moral psychology and the music of the *Laws* and I will defend the thesis that examining Plato's claims about literature and music from a psychological perspective yields better results than approaching this issue from other standpoints.

CHAPTER 6

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF *MOUSIKE*

> Never yet did a *profounder* world of insight reveal itself to
> daring travelers and adventurers, and the psychologist
> who thus "makes a sacrifice" – it is *not* the *sacrifizio
> dell'intelletto*, on the contrary! – will at least be entitled to
> demand in return that psychology shall be recognized
> again as the queen of the sciences.
> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

Chapter Summary.

The previous chapter brought the study of this dissertation to a conclusion, showing

how the Athenian's technology of *mousike* influences the non-deliberative motivations of

performers and audience. In the *Laws mousike* is the leading technology to affect the

citizenry, in accordance with the moral psychology we outlined in the first three chapters.[1]

The present chapter should be considered a coda to the entire study. Here I propose to

foster a hermeneutics of Platonic dialogues that credits the most practical, corporeal and

often neglected aspects of these works.

The first section of this chapter formulates an explanation of the apparent

divergence in the evaluation of *mousike* between the last book of *Republic* and the first two

books of the *Laws*. One way to address this divergence is to study the metaphysical status

of *mousike* as a representational art in each dialogue; on this view Plato in the *Laws*

attempts to do something that he could not do in *Republic*, namely grant that eidetic truth

seeps through representation. Another possibility is to assess the differences in aesthetic

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[1] Prologues to the laws and education are others ways to influence the citizenry.

theory in *Republic* as well as in *Laws*. I distance myself from these approaches, as I do not think there is enough evidence to warrant change in either the metaphysical status of *mousike* or Plato's aesthetic conception of representational art. My explanation of the different assessment of *mousike* from *Republic* to *Laws* rests on the different moral psychologies in which *mousike* is grounded.

The second section of this chapter proposes to read the different accounts of the story of Cadmus, recounted in the *Republic* as well as in the *Laws*, as an example of how consistent metaphysical and aesthetic views in the two dialogues can yield different results, when applied to different moral psychologies.

The final section summarizes the trajectory of this entire study and makes the case for taking a closer look at those psychological aspects in Plato's dialogues that have to do with the non-rational facets of the human soul, on which music exerts its power.

The Problem: Divergent Evaluations of *Mousike* in *Republic* and *Laws*.

There is a tension within *Republic* concerning the moral value of *mousike*. In books 2 and 3 Socrates seems to accept that there is some value to choral dances, myths and songs, as they can train some aspects of the psyche of his hypothetical citizen. Then in book 10 he famously denounces epic poetry and all other forms of musical imitation, because they lead the soul astray from knowledge and thus from virtue.[2] This tension is reproduced in the relationship between the end of *Republic* and the beginning of *Laws*; much of the poetry

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[2] For a summary of the different positions on and an assessment of the relation between the account of *mimesis* in books 2-3 and 10 of the *Republic* see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 56. See also my introduction.

that was ultimately banished from Kallipolis is reintroduced in Magnesia.[3] Thus, the question we should ask is, does Plato in the *Laws* change his mind with regards to the effects of *mousike* on the virtuous development of the psyche?

It should be noted immediately that there is no room to answer this question in the negative. Something has changed in the assessment of *mousike* within *Republic* and between the two dialogues, as marked most clearly by the different assessments of *mousike*'s usefulness for political life. The question "should we allow poets in our city?" is first posited at *Resp.* 3.394d. This question is answered at 398a-b with a qualified "yes." The only poet admitted to Socrates' city in speech would be the "austere poet" who, in upholding the city's principle of justice (to each individual one task) will only imitate characters that have some type of "usefulness" (*ophelia*) for the city. When the problem of allowing poets in the city is raised again in *Republic* 10, Socrates changes his answer, while he nods to what he stated in book 3. He states "it was fitting for us to send [poetry] away from the city" (10.606b),[4] arguing that poetry is only pleasant and not "useful" (*ophelime*) for the city's constitution.[5] Finally, as we have seen in chapter 4, the reformed *mousike* of

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[3] At the end of *Republic* Socrates states that "only so much poetry as hymns to gods or celebration of good men should be admitted into a city" (10.607a Bloom's translation). This prescription is echoed in *Laws* 7.802b. However in *Laws* we find that some forms of poetry banished from *Republic*, such as tragedy, comedy and epic poetry, are admitted in Magnesia with some limitations (see respectively *Leg.* 7.817a-e; 816d-e; 2.658d). For a complete list of poetic genres admitted in Magnesia see Folch' *The City and the Stage* 17. Halliwell finds that comedy has a positive role to play in Plato's evaluation of mimetic art, but tragedy does not (see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 82 and the entire chapter 3). Morrow (*Plato's Cretan City* pp. 373-6) holds that something has changed between the accounts of mimetic art in *Republic* and the *Laws*, especially with regards to Plato's views on comedy and tragedy. However he does not focus on a comparative analysis of the two works on this point.

[4] Bloom's translation.

[5] See *Resp.* 10.607d.

the *Laws* is allowed in the city precisely because of its *ophelia*.[6] Thus, to reinstate the

question, why this continued change of mind on the usefulness of *mousike*?

In order to answer the above question, let us first summarize briefly the views of

mousike at the end of *Republic* and in the *Laws*. Let us begin by recalling in three points

Socrates' exile of literature in the tenth book of the *Republic*. (1) Imitative poetry (and

literature) must be banned from the city on the charge that it cuts off the ability to think

(*dianoia*) from one's soul.[7] (2) This "cutting off" is explained in terms of a metaphysical

deficiency in the object of poetry; by "metaphysical deficiency" I mean that the object of

imitative poetry is very low on the scale assessing ontological status and truth. Socrates

explains this metaphysical deficiency with the famous example of the couches.[8] We should

distinguish between the idea of couch (which stands in for the metaphysical standard of

truth), the many physical instances of couches (which are ontologically dependent on the

idea of couch and thus metaphysically deficient as compared to the idea) and the imitative

representations of physical couches in painting (which are unrelated to the idea of the

couch and seek to represent only one aspect of a physical couch; these objects are very

metaphysically deficient). Imitative poetry is comparable to those imitative

representations of couches, being as far removed from truth (or "that which is" as the

Socrates puts it at *Resp.* 10.597a)[9] as ontologically possible and thus standing only in a

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[6] In this regard see Folch's *The City and the Stage* 18-19.

[7] See *Resp.* 10.595a-b.

[8] See *ivi* 10.596b-98c.

[9] For references when this formula is used to signify the eidetic realm in *Republic* see Halliwell's *Plato Republic X* 112-13. Here I am not concerned with assessing the consistency of Plato's theory of ideas between

mediated relation to ideas, the highest ontological degree.[10] Consequently, since eidetic

truth is the proper object of intelligence, and since imitative poetry has no business with

this type of object, imitative poetry is unrelated to intelligence.[11] (3) Though imitations

hold this very low ontological and epistemological place, paradoxically "the best among

men" (*Resp.* 10.606a) enjoy them, because they manage to stimulate the appetitive parts of

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book 10 and previous books. In fact *prima facie* the description of the eidetic level in this analogy with couches does no justice to the discussion in books 6 and 7. However, as we shall see briefly, what I think is really at stake here are the psychological effects of mimesis.

[10] For the context of this tripartition see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 57 and the entire section III of chapter 4. In the latter Halliwell offers a couple of possible interpretations of the metaphysical status of imitation and quickly moves on to focusing on the relation between the material original and its artistic imitation. I agree with his first proposed interpretation, namely that "Socrates' tripartite schema in book 10 can function as a stimulus of further scrutiny of the status of mimetic art (both visual and poetic) provided we can give some sense to the notion of a domain of truth and reality that goes beyond that of material or sensible particulars. If we call this domain the domain of philosophical truth, then one aspect of Socrates' analysis will be the double suggestion that such truth cannot be captured by an account of the material world alone, and that representational art, because embedded in experience of the world as empirical phenomenon, inevitably distances us from the search for philosophical truth" (*ivi* 137). It should be noted that ultimately Halliwell considers the distance from philosophical truth irrelevant to the argument about imitation in *Republic.* 10 and states that Plato's Socrates takes a provocative stance when assessing painting and poetry.

[11] See *Resp.* 10.602c-605a. Annas hints at the possibility that the comparison with painting in book 10 marks the difference between this view of *mousike* and the one presented in books 2-3. "In Book 3 only *some* poetry was imitative, here *all* poetry is, but we soon see that something different is meant by 'imitation', for Plato's model of imitative art is now painting" (*Introduction to Plato's* Republic 336). However, we should note that the analogy with painting is already present in the early books of the *Republic* and that, in substance, not much changes in the views of *mimesis.* Let us recall book 2 of the *Republic*, when Socrates speaks of false stories that "as a whole, [are] false, but there are true things in them too" (377a Bloom's translation) and uses the image of a painter to describe stories which are false, like all myths, but they also state what is untrue. "When a man in speech makes a bad representation of what gods and heroes are like, just as a painter who paints something that doesn't resemble the things whose likeness he wished to paint" (*ivi* 377e Bloom's translation; Annas cites other passages about painting in the early books of the *Republic*, but not the one I mention). The analogy with painting reveals that Socrates is already considering in book 2 the limitations of *mousike*; just like a painter can represent a phenomenal object badly, so *mousike* can represent its referent badly. Additionally, we should recognize that the judgment about the inaccurate representation of gods and heroes rests on the recognition that in *mimesis* they are represented as human beings with human limitations (not as truly divine beings see *Resp.*2.379a-d), they portray all that Socrates wants to exclude from his hypothetical city, anger towards their relatives, war with their peers, etc. Thus, already in book 2 we have a basic, though implicit, recognition that *mousike* represents what is phenomenal, not what is eidetic and this recognition is embedded in the analogy with painting; very much like the case with book 10. Finally, Annas thinks that there is a significant inconsistence in Plato's arguments against poetry in book 10 as summarized in my point (2) and (3) here (see *Introduction to Plato's* Republic 341). For a more charitable reading of the analogy between poetry and painting see Halliwell *Aesthetics of Mimesis* Part I chapter 4.

human souls.[12] Thus, in the *Republic*'s final analysis not only is *mousike* disconnected from eidetic content, but its appeal to the appetitive components of the soul causes the moral agent to become uninterested in the use of intelligence, which is necessary for virtue.[13] As result *mousike* should be banned from Kallipolis.[14]

The *Laws*' conception of *mousike* as a representative art is summarized in a passage we have analyzed in chapters 4 and 5, detailing the requirements that make the members of the chorus of Dionysus good critics of performances. "The wise judge of representations–whether pictorial or musical and all the others – will need three characteristics: first knowledge of what is [represented], second how correctly [it is being represented], and third how well the representation has been executed by means of words, melodies and rhythms" (*Leg*. 2.669a-b). Representation should be judged against the metric of its referent; though it is possible to have an accurate representation of the eidetic reference, the problem of the employment of the musical material arises, since musical elements give expression to the representation, *not* the idea. Additionally, as we have seen, the Athenian recognizes that all instances of *mousike* produce pleasure in connection with the beauty of representation. However, this pleasure is never an instantiation of the eidetic truths that are the referent to representation. In moving from the referent to its representation, that is

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[12] It is unclear whether this stimulation affects the irrational desiring part of the soul or causes a relaxation of the spirited part of the soul; the former is the most common interpretation of this passage, however Rubidge in *Tragedy and the Emotions of Warriors*, argues that the psychological problem discussed in book 10 is not so much the arousal of appetites, but rather the weakening of the spirited part of the soul, which should keep those appetites at bay. In either case Socrates point here is that the effects of *mousike* come at the expense of the rational part of the soul.

[13] See *Resp.* 4.444d-e, 445c-d; books 8 and 9 describe the vicious soul and state as cases when the intellectual element is not in command.

[14] See *ivi* 10.607c-e.

in the passage from the eidetic to the aesthetic level, all traces of epistemological

content are lost; beauty is a stand-in for truth, but truth is never seen on the scene of

mousike. As result even in the *Laws*, as it was the case for *Republic*, the intellectual

stimulation is "cut off" from *mousike*; the only psychological elements that can be aroused

are non-deliberative.

In both dialogues *mousike* is at the crossroad of three spheres of investigation. The

first sphere concerns the metaphysics of musicopoetic art; in other words, it pertains to the

relation between this form of art and eidetic reality. The second sphere concerns problems

of aesthetics, specifically an evaluation of the status of art as representation of a referent.

Finally the third sphere concerns the psychological effects of musical arts. If there is any

change in the conception of *mousike* between the end of *Republic* and the beginning of the

Laws, it must be detected in at least one of these spheres. I will analyze each and explain

why *mousike* is exiled from Kallipolis, but it is welcome in Magnesia.

Let us begin by taking a look at possible metaphysical changes in the assessment of

mousike between the two works. Specifically I should consider if Plato should be

understood as revising the metaphysical status of *mimesis* in book 10 of the *Republic*, when

in the *Laws* he addresses representational art as he is discussing the chorus of the elderly.[15]

Panno admits that there is continuity for some themes between *Republic* and *Laws* with

regards to the content of poetic accounts,[16] but he also sees a divergence, specifically on the

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[15] See for example *Leg*. 2.667c-d.

[16] Panno makes a good point when he states that "resta valida per Magnesia l'esposizione contenuta fra secondo a terzo libro di *Repubblica*, nel senso che la dimostrazione dell'esistenza degli dei, della loro incorruttibilità e del loro prendersi cura degli uomini nel decimo libro può figurare come una sorta di complemento della critica di *Repubblica* a Omero e Esiodo" (*Dionisiaco e Alterità* 79).

metaphysical evaluation of *mimesis* in *Republic* 10 and *Laws.* [17] In the former *mimesis* is

imitation of appearances and has a low ontological status, in the latter it amounts to an

"eikastic mimesis" (*Dionisiaco e Alteritá* 85); that is an imitation that maintains the

proportions of its eidetic model. After tracing the distinction between eikastic mimesis and

mimesis of appearances from *Republic*, though the *Sophist* and in the *Laws*, and

acknowledging that this is an ontological problem,[18] Panno claims that the chief criterion

for judging the beauty of a piece of literature in the *Laws* is correctness. *Republic*'s

assessment of literature relies essentially on a metaphysical account that considers

literature imitative and not representational. From this perspective, any tragedy, comedy

or story is ultimately incorrect because of its inherently deficient imitation of its model.

Laws, conversely, understands tragedy, comedy and stories on the basis of a metaphysical

account which allows for the correct representation of a model. "[L]a ... partecipazione fra

la città e la sua idea dipende dal fatto che le imitazioni proposte siano corrette ed i cittadini

le seguano ponendosi in relazione al modello. Questo è il valore di verità dell'imitazione a

Megnesia, che va oltre l'ambito schematicamente designato come il politico, là dove

comunicano ontologia e vita del cittadino" (*Dionisiaco e Alterità* 84-85). In other words, the

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[17] Panno mentions briefly that the main reason for Plato's change of perspective in the *Laws* is psychagogy, but the root of the new possibility for leading the soul in the *mousike* of the *Laws* is a renewed relationship between artistic production and eidetic level. Thus, this psychagogy is resolved in a new conception of the metaphysical possibilities of *mousike.* "[I]l motivo per cui la poesia viene bandita dalla prima [*Republic*] per poi venire reintrodotta nella seconda [*Laws*] riposa proprio sul suo valore psicagogico. Si tratterà da un lato di proporre modelli nuovi, che non esauriscano nell' *hedone* il loro messaggio, e dall'altro di sfruttare il meccanismo mimetico, facendo in modo che sia la città intera a partecipare alla mimesi dell'idea, libera da passioni fonti di disordine e troppo umane" (*Dionisiaco e Alterità* 77-78). Later on Panno adds that the critique of mimesis in the last book of *Republic* and the new representation of *Laws* oriented towards an eidetic model are complementary (see *ivi* 172). For the centrality of psychagogy in the conception of *mousike* of the *Laws*, see below the last section of this chapter.

[18] See *ivi* 85-86.

mousike of the *Laws* succeeds where the poetry of the *Republic* failed. In the *Laws* there

is a "dialogue between ontology and a citizen's life." In the *Laws* the model of literature is

not the phenomenal world or the inspiration of the poet, but the legislator's drafting of

laws and since the laws are imitations of the truth of *nous*,[19] *mousike* is consistent with the

eidetic order of the world. In turn, legislation in the *Laws* exploits poetry but only with the

goal of promoting the order of *nous*.[20] Thus, in the *Laws* Plato no longer exiles the poet, but

only his *mania.*[21] Poetry finds a place in Magnesia so long as it can represent the rationality

at the basis of *nomos*.

At first glance this argument seems to find support in the previous analysis of the

reframed *mousike* of the *Laws* and in a possible development of the notion of *mimesis* one

can trace from the end of *Republic*, through the *Sophist* to the *Laws*. The value granted to

orthotes in the representation[22] of the *Laws* is nowhere to be found in the final book of the

Republic. In that dialogue, the representational possibilities of art are limited to the

phenomenal world, and even within this limitation *mimesis* runs into the restriction of

representing only one facet of a phenomenon. Additionally the *Laws* seem to benefit from a

more accurate analysis of mimesis as carried out in the *Sophist*. There the Eleatic stranger

distinguishes between eikastic mimesis and phantastic mimesis.[23] The former produces "an

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[19] See *ivi* 88.

[20] See *ivi* 94-100.

[21] See *ivi* 92.

[22] See above chapter 4.

[23] See *Soph*. 235d-6c. All translations from this dialogue are Brann's. The second kind of mimesis is called phantastic because it produces *phantasmata*, appearances, and is concerned with how these appearances are

imitation according to the proportions of the model in length and breadth and depth

and, in addition to this, gives it colors that suit each of its parts" (*Soph.* 235d-e); the latter

makes "within their images not the genuine proportions but only those that seem

beautiful" (*ivi* 236a). It would seem that this distinction, missing from the *Republic*, is at

work in the background of the *Laws*, so that when the Athenian stranger speaks of his

reframed *mousike*, he has in mind a kind of music that represents, in the sense of *eikasia* or

eikastic mimesis, its referent.[24]

However, a closer look at the two accounts of *mousike* as an art of representation at

the end of *Republic* and in *Laws* reveals that hardly anything has changed in the

metaphysical understanding of mimesis between the two dialogues. I will defend this claim

with three arguments. The first argument states that we cannot treat the distinction

between mimesis and *eikasia* as a technical distinction, since in the second book of

the *Laws* Plato consistently combines and conflates *mimesis* (in the sense of a reproduction

that is aware of its effect on the audience, one that wants to "seem beautiful" as the *Sophist*

puts it) and *eikasia* (in terms of fidelity to its referent), as it is the case for instance at

*Leg.*2.668a, b-c.[25] Now, it is true that the distinction drawn in the *Sophist* between *eikasia*

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perceived. This view contrasts with the first kind which is concerned with an accurate representation of the model.

[24] For an assessment of the similarity between *Sophist* and *Laws* on *eikasia* see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 66. Sörbom maintains that Plato is making no claim about art when he distinguishes between eikastic and phantastic representation in the *Sophist*, he is merely distinguishing modes of representation to finally identify the sophist's; see *Mimesis and Art* 162.

[25] Halliwell maintains that the lack of distinction between the notion of imitation and representation in the ancient concept of *mimesis* is replicated in the interpretations of this concept from the renaissance through the enlightenment (*Aesthetics of Mimesis* 13-14 and 16). With regards to the account of representation in *Laws* he states that "eicastic mimesis is here to be understood less strictly than in the earlier work [such as the *Sophist*], yet nonetheless in a way that attaches importance to representational fidelity" (*ivi* 67).

and *phantasmata*-making is a subset of the general category of *mimesis*, thus one could

argue that after the *Sophist* Plato may legitimately speak of accurate imitation both in terms

of *eikon* and *mimesis* or using a combination of the two terms. It is also true that when the

Athenian speaks of *orthotes* in regards to the representations of the *Laws* he uses language

concerning proportional measures and colors that is reminiscent the *mimetike eikastike*

from *Sophist*. [26] However, very much unlike the sharp distinction drawn in the *Sophist*, in

the *Laws* Plato is concerned with the accuracy of representation *as well as* with the

perception of representation by its audience; the latter counts as an instance of phantastic

mimesis, according to the distinction in *Sophist*. The most evident example of this double

concern is the Athenian's continued interest in the role pleasure plays in *mousike*, as

discussed in chapter 4 above. This concern is evident in the second book of the *Laws*, when

Athenian points out that, with regards to the choral performers, one must "secure variety

in every way possible, so as to inspire the singers with an insatiable appetite for hymns and

with pleasure therein" (665c 5-7). The principle that accurate representations should also

be pleasurable, thus proportional to human sensibility, applies also with regards to the

audience.[27] Thus, if one must recognize that there is a distinction between two kinds of

mimeseis in the *Sophist*, one should also acknowledge that this distinction does not play a

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[26] See *Leg.* 2.667d, 68d-e and compare to *Soph*. 235d-e.

[27] On the recognized need for variation in musical production, while maintaining the same standards of accuracy see Morrow *Plato's Cretan City* 355-56. As Morrow points out "The change in music to which the decline of the Athenian constitution is elsewhere attributed (700f) was the violation of canons, not merely the introduction of new songs" (*ibid.*). In this consideration we find again the idea that making concessions to human taste in music does not have to come at the cost of sacrificing accuracy in representation. On the need for innovation see also Folch's *The City and the Stage* 106-107.

significant role in the *Laws*, since *mousike* here strives to be accurate as well as to seem

beautiful.

The second argument against considering significant changes in the metaphysics of

mousike between *Republic* and *Laws* is that in the former dialogue one already finds

remarks about *eikasia*. The distinction between representational and imitative literature is

already present in *Republic*, perhaps not explicitly in book 10,[28] but it certainly plays a role

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[28] As Halliwell recognizes in more than one occasion, there is no use of *eikon* and its cognates in Republic 10 (*Plato: Republic 10* 118 commenting on *Resp*.10.598b; and *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 64-65); however in his commentary to *Republic* X he adds that "[t]he present passage [*Resp*.10.598b3] effectively implies the distinction between 'eikastic' (accurate) and 'phantastic' (inaccurate) mimesis later found at *Soph.* 235d-6c." (*Plato: Republic 10* 118), while in the *Aesthetics of Mimesis* he limits himself to commenting that "despite the fact that the eikastic-phantastic distinction in the Sophist is deployed for pejorative effect against sophistry itself, it would be wrong to draw from it a decisively negative inference regarding mimetic art as such. Most important, it is not an implication of this passage that representational art is intrinsically defective whenever it fails, or is unable, to achieve exact correspondence between depictions and relevant (kinds of) objects in the world" (64). In fact we could also make the argument that a distinction between imitation of phenomena and representation of eidetic objects is already present in *Cratylus* 423b-424a, though without any bearing on *mousike* (on this point see also Halliwell *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 44-45), and as Halliwell argues a concern with accurate reproduction of a *paradeigma* is already a matter of analysis of *Republic* (see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 129-30).

Tate makes a related point when distinguishing two kinds of imitation in *Republic* and *Laws*. Tate maintains that already in *Republic* we can find a definition of imitation which allows art to imitate eidetic truth (see *Imitation in Plato's* Republic). This same kind of artistic imitation is proposed again in *Laws* (*On Plato: Laws X 889CD* 51) and in fact we should read the polemic against poetry from *Republic* 10 in light of a similar argument made against materialistic philosophy in *Laws* 888-ff (*ivi* 49-50). In the tenth book of the *Republic* "Plato is turning the tables on his opponents by an adroit use of their own argument" (*ivi* 50); it is not that art, including poetry, is removed from the unintelligent movements of nature and thus has little ontological value, as the opponents of Plato would have it (perhaps Anaxagoras or Achelaus, see *ivi* 53), what is actually at stake is that art, including poetry, is often removed from the eidetic realm, and thus has little ontological value. Tate concludes that in *Laws*, as it was the case for *Republic* (see *Imitation in Plato's* Republic 21-23) "[t]rue art is the but once (not twice) removed imitation nature. Like the genuine philosopher, the true poet must strive to make himself 'as like God as is possible for a man.' Or to put the matter in slightly more modern language, the true work of art is 'informed' by an 'idea' suggested by the objects which it represents; and this idea it expresses in such sort as to express the meaning of phenomenal things in a way as good and valid as these latter express their own 'idea'" (*On Plato: Laws X 889CD* 51). Tough Tate's interpretation is interesting, it still does not resolve the problem of explaining Plato's change of mind from *Republic* to *Laws*. Tate maintains that there is no difference between the conception of *mousike* in *Republic* and *Laws;* in fact some kinds of poetry, hymns and encomia, are still allowed in Kallipolis, even after the exclusion of all imitative poetry in "a bad sense" (*Imitation in Plato's* Republic 19), presumably because they imitate directly some eidetic truths, without the mediation of phenomena. However this solution still does not explain why some genres of poetry explicitly excluded from *Republic* 10, such as tragedy, comedy and epic poetry, would be then re-admitted in *Laws*. Additionally there is still the problem of understanding in which way musicopoetic arts access objects of intellectual knowledge. Tate recognizes some limits in the relation between art and intellectual knowledge stating that "[t]ough it does not impart scientific knowledge, [good imitation] is produced in the light of such

in books 2-3. For instance at *Resp.* 2.377e *eikasia* as correct representation is associated

with painting, and at *Resp.* 3.402c Socrates associates the representations (*eikona*) of

virtues with their eidetic realities.[29] Finally, let us also remember that the famous allegory

of the cave is called an *eikon*, which should produce some approximation of truth. Though it

should be conceded that the metaphysical status of imitation and representation is fully

developed only in the *Sophist*, it seems hard to make the case that in *Republic* Plato did not

knowledge (402bc). Thus, poetry will be true as well as beautiful, so as to make the young familiar with right opinions" (*Imitation in Plato's* Republic 22). Then we have the problem of understanding what "in light" means. We should remember, as discussed in the previous two chapters, that it is unlikely that the *mousike* proposed in the *Laws* has any genuine access to eidetic truth. Musical elements are not imitations of ideas, they are just productions of sounds and words that find unity in the virtuality of representation. Even if inspired by an eidetic referent, the "good poet" is still at the mercy of artistic material that is three times removed from the realm of truth. Finally, while it is fascinating to think that some art is directly inspired by truth, we should wonder how differently this truth-inspired art would look to the audience, when compared to art that is not inspired by truth. If, as Tate states, truth-oriented poetry still expresses "the meaning of phenomenal things" (*On Plato: Laws X 889CD* 51), then it will look just like "bad poetry" which represents phenomenal realities. From this perspective it is hard to see how "good poetry" could be possibly spared from exile in *Republic* 10.

For an apparent agreement with Tate's argument see Partee's *Plato's Poetics* 106-7; Partee claims that the similarities between *Republic* and *Laws* in the evaluation of musicopoetic arts rest on the fact that "[t]he art Plato seems to accept is not actually poetry ... but philosophical and didactic discourse" (*ivi* 19, though on the topic of assessing the *Laws*' examination of poetry he calls it "pedestrian" *ivi* 17) and for a criticism see Sörbom's *Mimesis and Art* 133-138 and Nehamas' *Imitation and Poetry in* Republic X. Nehamas understands the psychological effects of *mimesis* especially in *Republic* 10 as comparable to the influence of mass media in contemporary society "the proper comparison [to understand why Plato criticizes Homer] would involve contemporary children, mass education, and mass entertainment. Instead of learning from Homer, children today learn from primers that are often, for example, sexist; we find nothing wrong or narrow-minded in protesting against them. ... On the reverse side of the coin, the positive effort that goes into making children's literature appropriate to them, correctly or incorrectly, is a Platonic legacy" (*ivi* 254 see also his *Plato and Mass Media*), and concludes that Plato absolutely refutes all kinds of imitations in *Republic* as well as *Laws*, so that we may live an authentic life. Commenting on *Leg.* 7.817b-c, which states that the citizens of Magnesia are true tragedians, he maintains "far from supporting the claim that true poetry imitates the Forms, this passage makes the same point as *Republic* 500e-501b: the best kind of poetry is not poetry at all, but a good life; hence, unless by virtue of a pun, there is no good poetry" (*ivi* 261). While I agree with Nehamas that there are some similarities between Plato's conception of *mimesis* in *Republic* 3 and our current reaction to mass media, I think that we would be missing the point if we were to consider Plato's criticism of poetry as directed only to largely held opinions in the city. Plato here seems concerned with art and its representational force (on this point with regards to Nehamas' position see also Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 90-91). With regards to Nehamas' second claim, while I do agree that ultimately Plato's chief concern in the *Laws* is that Magnesians lead virtuous lives, I also think that we should recognize the instrumental role that *mousike* plays in achieving this goal. For this reason there cannot be "no good poetry," some poetry is good even if only instrumentally (on the instrumentality of poetry see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 140-141).

[29] Though I do not think that the terms *eidos* here should be understood in the technical sense it assumes in book 6.

have the metaphysical tool to distinguish different kinds of literature on the basis of their representational accuracy. It rather seems that Plato in the final book of *Republic* sees no use for this distinction. The question (which I hope to answer below) to be answered is not one of innovation between the metaphysical status of art in *Republic* and *Sophist*, but one concerning another aspect of Plato's analysis.

The final argument against a metaphysical account to explain the change in the evaluation of *mousike* from *Republic* to *Laws* hints at a new perspective. In the description of the performance of the elderly that I gave in the previous chapters, I emphasized that truth is a referent of the beauty of representation, it is not conveyed in representation. The reason being that representation's only affects non-rational motivations, not *logismos*. This view remains the same from the *Republic* to the *Laws*. It is the very reason why imitative poetry is finally excluded from the *Republic*. *Mousike*'s metaphysical deficiency is only emphasized when one recognizes that even an accurate representation fails to offer intellectual meaning. All *mousike*'s powers are confined within the realm of aesthetics and this inherent metaphysical limit is acknowledged (though with different emphases) in *Republic* and *Laws*. If the realm of *mousike* is aesthetics, then an explanation of the change from *Republic* to *Laws* should be sought there.

Of the many approaches[30] to the relation between the aesthetic theory (understood as a theory of mimetic art) of *Republic* and that of *Laws* let me cite Collingwood's. He

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[30] Belfiore maintains that Plato did not substantially change his theory of mimetic art between *Republic* and *Laws*, but rather that a new psychological view is at the basis of the differences in the evaluation of mimetic art between the two works. I agree with her general view, though I would not describe this new psychology as one of catharsis as she does (see *Wine and Catharsis* 422). Among other views concerning the aesthetic continuity between the two dialogues see Sörbom, who finds that the same aesthetics run through *Republic* and *Laws*. In each dialogue aesthetic considerations focus on the ability of representations to portray a general model of behavior, which is different than the mere reproduction of phenomenal actions; see *Mimesis*

maintains that in *Republic* "though Plato no doubt regarded his own myths as works of art, μῦθοι as opposed to λόγοι, there is ... no condemnation of the use of such myths, in so far as the mythologising philosopher understands the nature of the weapon he is using" (*Plato's Philosophy of Art* 155). We must acknowledge that this is true especially with regards to the early books of *Republic*. Similar opinions are held in the *Laws* with regards to the "weapon" of storytelling and music. For instance *Resp.* 2.379c-d, *Leg.* 7.817c-e, and 10.886b-c are moments in the two dialogues concerned with the confinement of poetry within boundaries set by philosophy about the nature of what is divine and the rationality of legislation. There is also a commonality of themes in the understanding of the efficacy of poetic art as a device that influences habit formation. I mentioned an example of these claims from *Laws* in the previous chapters; in *Republic* this view is suggested at 3.395c-d and 400d-402a.

Collingwood then moves on to resolve the discrepancies between *Republic* 2-3 and 10 by stating

> [i]n the life of art the immature mind enjoys a simulacrum of the life of explicit reason, a life which it is not yet able to enjoy except through such a mirror. It is not truth or morality or utility, but it prepares the mind for a direct acquaintance with these things; and therefore beauty is the mother of truth and goodness, and art is the corner-stone of all sound education. This is the doctrine of the early books of the Republic. Secondly, because art is not truth and morality but only symbolic of them, it is not an activity which ought to distract the attention of mature and educated men from direct contact with the realities which it symbolises. This is the burden of the polemic

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and Art 117-124, concerning books 2 and 3 from *Republic*, pp. 142- with regards to *Republic* 10, and p. 168-172 concerning the *Laws*. Sörbom bases his argument partially on the history of plastic and visual arts; after denying that Plato conceives of art as representing eidetic reality, he also argues that Plato conceives of art as mere reproduction of particular phenomena, since "[t]his line of interpretation knocks up against the fact that if this was Plato's aesthetic it very badly suited the works of art it was intended to describe. Very few works from the classical period can be described as "portraits" in a stricter sense. They have a more general character" (*ivi* 129, see also pp. 50-52).

against the life of art in the tenth book. These two doctrines, so far from being contradictory, are complementary (*Plato's Philosophy of Art* 163-64).

In other words Collingwood sees the treatment of mimesis in books 2-3 and in book 10 as two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, mimesis is said to be a good training tool for moral development; on the other, one should be reminded that the enjoyment of this training tool is not equivalent to the virtuous action itself. Once again, Collingwood seems to have an argument here; certainly in books 2-3 the musicopoetic arts are used to invite the guardians to emulate virtuous characters,[31] with the objective of the guardians' identification with the characters emulated.[32] Later, in the last book of the *Republic*, these arts are portrayed as prone to ruin the virtuous habits one has received in one's early education, precisely by alluring the audience into emulating and identifying with the suffering of the characters displayed.[33]

Finally Collingwood can conclude that the theory of mimetic art expressed in the *Laws* is similar to that of the *Republic.* He traces the development of the theory of art present in *Republic* from its germinal appearance in *Apology*, through the dialogues of the middle period, all the way to *Laws*. With regards to the *Laws* Collingwood states that "[t]he discussion of art in the Laws expresses or presupposes a theory of its nature in complete

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[31] See *Resp.*2.377e-78a and 3.392c, 394e, 395d. With regards to 394e see Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 52 for a description of the implicit performance of the audience in this discussion from *Republic.*

[32] See *ivi* 396d-e.

[33] See *ivi* 10.606b. On this point Halliwell suggest that another similarity between the account of mimesis in *Republic* III and *Laws* is that they both draw a distinction in degree of psychological influence between impersonating and understanding; see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 79-80.

agreement with that whose growth we have traced in the earlier works" (*ivi* 167),[34] and

adds that in Plato's last dialogue "the doctrine of two removes [from *Republic*] is not

explicitly stated, but appears to be presupposed rather than abandoned" (*ivi* 168). This last

point can be granted, as the kind of *mousike* that the Athenian stranger has in mind is still

separate from the eidetic realm. As mentioned above, in the *Laws* all epistemological

content is lost in the artistic representation of an eidetic referent. In *mousike* one

experiences only the means expressing beauty (rhythms, melodies, etc.) in the

cohesiveness of virtuality, which is different from its eidetic referent.

While Collingwood admits that there are differences between *Republic* and *Laws*, he

reads these differences in terms of differing hermeneutics of the same aesthetic analysis.

> True, the *Laws* permit drama, whereas the *Republic* permits no kind of
> literary art except hymns to the gods and praises of good men (Rep., 607 A);
> but this is a difference not of principles but of their interpretation. Granted
> that the best and most rational life will admit into itself only an art controlled
> by reason, it still remains an open question what this art will include; and the
> dramatic censorship of the Laws is perhaps a better means of achieving the
> end aimed at than the restrictions as to subject and form which are
> prescribed in the *Republic*" (*ivi* 168).

This conclusion is surprising. Even if we grant that the principles are the same – and here

by "principles" I understand the aesthetic principles of a theory of mimetic art[35] – in the

Republic and in the *Laws*, we are still left wondering why the results should change. In

other words, we can admit that Collingwood is correct; the aesthetic theory at the basis of

Republic and *Laws* is substantially the same. However, one is still left to wonder why there

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[34] I cannot speak about a cohesive and developing theory of mimetic art through all Plato's dialogues, as that question exceeds the limits of this work.

[35] E.g. possibility to represent philosophical content, engagement of the emotive side of the psyche, reliance on the psyche susceptibility to habit-formation, appeal to the audience in terms of empathy and identification with characters.

are differences in its application between the two dialogues. For instance, why are

there differences in the number of philosophically legitimate genres? Why are there

differences in usefulness? Since the aesthetic analysis does not address these questions, we

should seek an explanation for the differing attitudes towards *mousike* in *Republic* 10 and

Laws 1-2 in a different sphere.

To being the exploration of the third sphere on which *mousike* exerts its influence,

psychology, I will consider Halliwell's analysis of mimesis in Plato's dialogues. Halliwell

gives a comparative reading of the assessments of *mousike* in *Republic* and *Laws* that is not

based exclusively on metaphysical or aesthetic considerations. He underscores that the

conformity of a work of music to its eidetic model – in terms of metaphysical proximity or

aesthetic ability to represent its referent – is only one of the criteria to determine the

beauty of a work of art, and that ethical standards determined by usefulness (*ophelia*)

contribute a great deal to the inclusion of a piece of *mousike* in the city's canon. When

evaluating a work of art from Plato's point of view, one should take in consideration

simultaneously the pleasure it generates, its correctness in representation and its benefit

towards the achievement of virtue.[36] Halliwell highlights this last criterion as the most

relevant similarity between the early books of the *Republic* and the early books of the *Laws*.

"The underlying position [of *Laws* 2] is essentially the same as in *Republic* 3, where

Socrates, as the climax to an argument that repeatedly equated "beauty" with the ethical

shaping of a work's narrative material, contemplated requiring poets and other mimetic

artists "to embody the image of the good character" in their works" (*Aesthetics of Mimesis*

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[36] See *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 68.

69-70).[37] The requirement of representing good character in works of mimetic art finds

its final goal in the sphere of ethics above all. It is true that representation is metaphysically

tied to a referent, and thus that referent should be chosen carefully when portraying good

characters. It is also true that representation should meet certain aesthetic standards so as

to engage its audience and performers emotionally. However, Plato's recurrent concern in

Republic and *Laws* is with *mousike*'s possibility to effectively influence the moral

psychology of the citizenry and consequently be a beneficial technology for his political

projects. The ethos theory of art is really what is at stake in Plato's considerations of

mousike. In turn, as Halliwell suggest, the effects of art on the psyche and thus on the moral

psychology of the agent explain the positive and negative assessments of *mousike* within

Republic and a new inclusion of mimesis at the beginning of the *Laws*.[38] In other words,

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[37] In a different context Halliwell maintains that "[t]he mimeticist tradition stands as a cumulative repudiation of anxieties over the so-called affective fallacy: if representational artworks are communicative acts, as mimetic theories consistently hold, then it cannot be fallacious to understand and evaluate them partly on the basis of the emotional effects that they produce on their audiences" (*Aesthetics of Mimesis* 16). Here he is highlighting this repudiation of the affective fallacy as he remarks that the principal similarity between the *mousike* of *Republic* and that of the *Laws* hinges precisely on the ways they affect their audience. For a discussion on mimesis' emotional effects on the audience in *Republic* see *ivi* 53-54 and 113-114.

[38] "In books 2–3 and book 10, despite differences that receive fuller attention in this chapter, Plato's arguments are directed against the power of poetry to enter the mind, to take hold of its beliefs and emotions, and to mold the personalities of those exposed to it" (Halliwell *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 73). Halliwell will go on to distinguish the two accounts of the psychological influence of *mimesis* in *Republic* as narrow (book 3) and broad (book 10). The basic point here is that in the earlier account Socrates theorizes a quasi-total identification of the *performer* with the fictional character, whereas in the later account the *audience* can relate to the feelings of the fictional character but maintains a certain distance; see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 79-80, 87. Later on Halliwell will see another divergence between the two accounts of mimesis in *Republic*, the opposition between a philosophical and a tragic *Weltanschauung*; see *ivi* 108-110. Finally Halliwell will justify the continuity between the two accounts of mimesis in *Republic*, by arguing that the account of mimesis as mirror of phenomenal reality in book 10 is a provocative argument pointing out that there must be more to representation than accuracy in the reproduction of the phenomenal world; see *ivi* 138-39. My reading, as it will become clear below, is similar, but not identical to Halliwell's. I think that the two account of *mimesis* in *Republic* bear no difference in terms of aesthetic or metaphysical status of representation. However, I think we should consider that the psychological research carried out between the two accounts marks their distinction. The same can be said for the differences in the accounts of *mousike* between *Republic* 10 and *Laws*.

there is some usefulness (in terms of moral education for audience and performers) to

mousike in the *Laws*, and as a result poetry is allowed to re-enter the city; however, at the

end of *Republic* poetry was banished from Kallipolis exactly on its lack of usefulness.

In order to understand this change in usefulness we must consider not only the

elements that constitute literature, but the psychological bearing of literature. In other

words, we must look at the moral psychology of the *Republic* and *Laws* respectively in

order to understand the differences in *mousike*.[39] Refocusing on the moral psychological

use of literature, one finds that in *Republic* musicopoetic arts attempt to prepare the soul

for the ultimate goal of ethical life, which is rational thinking, but ultimately run against an

inherent failure; if one attempts to become virtuous by means of *mousike* one will

eventually fail, because of *mousike* has no psychological effect on the rational part of the

soul; it can only distract the agent from rational contemplation. In the *Laws*, as this work

has endeavored to prove, *mousike* may be conducive to the employment of rationality

because the psychological efficacy of non-rational and semi-rational forces in the pursuit of

virtue has been reassessed. *Mousike* can reinforce these motives. Which in turn can be used

to pursue the ends of *logismos*. Thus, the difference in the assessment of *mousike* within

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[39] Folch is among those recognizing most lucidly the centrality of psychology for *mousike* in the *Laws*. "For Plato, political history is the narration of a people's moral psychology, and cultural institutions—again, especially those of music, poetry, song, and dance—are the contexts in which sentiments and ethical dispositions are formed and impressed upon the psyche. The soul provides the key to interpreting erratic political movements and the cosmos of sentiments that are a society's culture. It is the starting point in the *Laws*' critique of fourth-century democratic Athens, as well as for the project at the center of this study— namely, Plato's vision of Athenian performance remade as an instrument for the cultivation of philosophical virtue" (*The City and the Stage* 52). The point I make here is that not only psychology is central to a correct understanding of the Athenian's re-framed *mousike* in the *Laws*, but also to a correct understanding of Socrates' hopes and disillusionment with *mousike* in the *Republic* and it is also the key to understanding the change of perspective from the end of *Republic* to the beginning of the *Laws*.

Republic and between *Republic* and *Laws* concerns the employment of *mousike* for

moral psychology.[40]

I have anticipated the basic features of the *Republic*'s moral psychology in the

introduction, and in the first three chapters of this dissertation I analyzed the moral

psychology of the *Laws*. The reader should refer to those portions of my work for a full

analysis. Here I will limit myself to summarizing and presenting synoptically the changes in

the moral psychology of the two dialogues and the related effectiveness of *mousike*. After

this summary I will analyze a recurrent theme in the two dialogues to exemplify the

changes in the *ophelia* of *mousike*.

In books 2-3 of *Republic* the moral psychology is still largely dominated by the non-

rational parts of the soul. Individuals act as result of necessary desires (as exemplified by

the city of pigs) and non-necessary desires (as exemplified by the feverish city); while these

desires' ultimate goal is gratification, some individuals (the guardians) display another

non-rational urge, the drive to prevail; these individuals are *thymoeides*. A few among these

thymoeides individuals will also display good memory and a stronger attachment to the

principles of their education; these are the rulers. Transposing the analogy with the city

back into the main concerns of these books, the soul, we find that a moral agent is guided

principally by desires that seek gratification, but then can resist some of these desires by

virtue of her spiritedness, which is ultimately aided by her mnemonic ability. This agent's

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[40] I should stress the point here, as I have done multiple times in the course of this work, that my concern is not with the psychology of the *Laws* and the *Republic*. Reconstructing the psychology of the *Laws* is a laborious task beyond the scope of this dissertation. I focus on the elements that determine the moral psychology in the *Laws*, as sketched in the image of the marionette. Concentrating on moral psychology (as opposed to a general psychology) means to narrow our discourse to the psychological elements that allow for the cultivation of the soul towards *arete*.

moral psychology makes her a perfect candidate for a moral education imparted by means of *mousike*, since – as we have seen – the emotional influence exerted by *mousike* and its reliance on habit formation, combined with the agent's tendency to identify with fictional characters, makes the agent susceptible to moral formation by means of musicopoetic arts.

In book 4 the psychology of the *Republic* undergoes a great revision. Socrates argues that the soul has three distinct parts and that each of these parts has a distinct function. The desires that sought gratification in the previous books are all included in the desiring part of the soul; the desire to prevail is granted its own portion of the soul; and finally a new part of the soul is discovered, one that oversees the rational functions of the psyche. Not only do these parts of the soul have each their discrete function but – as reinforced in book 9 – each has its own objective. As a result of this re-structuring of the soul, the moral psychology also changes. The desiring parts of the psyche should still be habituated, but the chief moral purpose is that the rational part leads the soul. From this perspective, the agent should pursue only rational goals; the remaining demands the soul should be either silenced or modified to serve the goals of rationality. In this new psychological context *mousike* meets its limit, as discussed in *Republic* 10. Its emotional influence and its reliance on habit-formation may help in shaping the non-rational parts of the soul. However, the flip side of its focus on these portions of the soul is its arousal of non-rational forces, which stands in contrast with the moral requirement of pursuing intellectual goals.[41] In other

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[41] Folch highlights this contrast (for different reasons than mine) in comparison with the psychology of the *Laws*; see *The City and the Stage* 83-85. Sörbom reminds us (with reference to *Resp.*476b-c) that Plato defines art's appeal to the senses "a dream state of mind which consists, whether the person is awake or asleep, of "the mistaking of resemblance for identity" ... The persons who are apt to this kind of apprehension are the

words, *mousike* may be a useful tool for the early stages of moral psychology, but eventually it should be abandoned in pursuit of the intellectual formation detailed in book 7.

The *Laws*' moral psychology does away with the partitioning of the soul and enlists the help of non-rational forces in the pursuit of the goals of the rational lead, the golden *logismos*. Gratification still plays a role in the *Laws*' version of moral psychology; the role of *thymos* is absorbed in what the Athenian calls expectations, which are many; and the rational force in the soul is weak compared to other forces, thus it requires ways to coopt their help. Plato still maintains that each force in the soul has a distinct goal and that virtue is achieved by following the lead of the intellectual element in the psyche. However, the bar for being considered virtuous has been lowered to some extent as compared to *Republic*. First, some basic virtues such as courage and the simplest form of moderation can be achieved by exerting the force of habit on the non-deliberative motives that lead the soul. Second, the non-deliberative elements can function as added motivation in the pursuit of the goals of reason. In each case the moral psychology of the *Laws* requires to thus grant non-deliberative psychic force to the pursuit of virtue. In this context *mousike* is a much more proficient technology of moral education as its effectiveness in strengthening the moral habits formed in the soul is no longer in contrast with the pursuit of rational goals, as it was the case in *Republic* X.

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lovers of sounds and sights" (*Mimesis and Art* 141). In other words, the apprehension of artistic material makes us believe that artistic products are equivalent with phenomenal or eidetic realities, whereas they are only representations. On this point see also Halliwell *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 92-93; on page 94 he extends Plato's criticism of psychological integrity to the characters represented in poetry. Halliwell seems to reduce Plato's worries about the psychological effects of mimesis to a concern with the power of imagination. From my perspective Plato is more concerned with motives for ethical action. Mimesis, as the moral psychology of *Republic* goes, fosters non-rational motives for action, and thus a non-virtuous arrangement of the psyche.

The Story of Cadmus as Example of *Mousike*'s Psychological Usefulness in *Republic* and *Laws*.

In this section I would like to use the story of Cadmus as recounted in the *Republic* and the *Laws* as an example to show how *mousike'*s influence on the moral psychology of these works marks the general attitude towards *mousike* in the two dialogues. The story of Cadmus may be considered an illustration of the claim that what is really at stake in the different attitude towards *mousike* between *Republic* and *Laws* is not *mousik*e's metaphysical status, nor a different conception of the aesthetic function of *mousike,* but its bearing upon the psyche.

Let us begin by summarizing the story.[42] Cadmus, son of Agenor, king of the land of Canaan, is sent by his father in search of his sister Europa. During the search he visits the oracle at Delphi who commands him to desist from finding his sister and establish a city. Following the indication of the oracle Cadmus founds Thebes, but when he sends his men to collect water for sacrificing to Athena, a serpent slays them. Camus kills the serpent and sows its teeth, from which armed soldiers spring up and start killing one another. Only a few hoplites will survive and they will serve Cadmus in establishing the Theban kingdom. To my knowledge this myth is recounted one time in the *Republic* and two times in the *Laws*. I propose to read the sequence of these references as an assessment of the potential, the shortcoming and the re-evaluation of *mousike* for educating the soul in *Republic* 2-3, 10 and *Laws* respectively. Before I begin I will clarify that with each textual reference the story

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[42] See Graves, *The Greek Myths* 194-200. Here I am not interested in speculating about the many literary and musical references (the Theban cycle, the introduction of the Phoenician alphabet, the marriage to Harmonia, etc.) connected with Cadmus. I am only interested in highlighting the way in which Cadmus' story is assessed in *Republic* and *Laws*.

of Cadmus is presented minimally as fictional, if not utterly as a story completely

disconnected from truth and reality.[43] Thus, the story's relevance is not to be found in its

content – its message as it were – but rather in its aptness to modify, in a small regard, the

psychological condition of its audience.

To begin, let us consider the story of Cadmus as recounted in the third book of the

Republic. In this case it will be useful to recall the psychology of the *Republic* for books 2-3

sketched in the introduction, and to be reminded that, even though Socrates has just drawn

a distinction between the rulers and the auxiliaries,[44] all souls here are sensitive to stories

as consequence of being *thymoeides*. At this point in the *Republic* – that is before the

discussion on psychology, metaphysics and higher education of books 4, 6 and 7 – what

distinguishes the rulers from the auxiliaries is that the former are the best guardians of

their conviction (*dogmata*), because they have good memory and cling to their convictions

even under the spell of fear and pleasure.[45] In other words, at this point in the *Republic* the

real psychological difference between the rulers and the auxiliaries is one of quantity (in

terms of intensity or steadfastness) in non-rational responses, not one of psychological

quality. In this context Socrates tells the following story.

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[43] In *Republic* Cadmus' story is famously defined "a noble (*gennaion*) lie" (3.414b-c). Socrates is concerned with a story that is not only *pseudos* (a lie), but it is genuinely so (*gennaion*). In this case I think it appropriate to follow Halliwell's recommendation with the translation of *pseudos* and its cognates in this portion of the *Republic* (see *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 49-50) and understand the term more in its connotation of a fictional account, than in the sense of an intentional act of deceitfulness. Sörbom makes a similar point, see *Mimesis and Art* 117-118. The same translation should be followed in *Laws* 2.663d when the Athenian states that a capable lawgiver should not use force, but a "more useful lie (*pseudos*)" to persuade the youth to comply with legislation. The story of Cadmus is one of those useful devices. Morrow makes a similar point with regards to the use of the story in *Laws*, see *Plato's Cretan City* 557 n.30, and England, though less explicitly, seems to agree as well, see *Laws of Plato* 306.

[44] See *Resp.* 3.413d-14b.

[45] See *ivi*. 2.413c-e.

> I will attempt to persuade first the rulers and the soldiers, then the rest of the city, that the rearing and education we gave them were like dreams; they only thought they were undergoing all that was happening to them, while, in truth, at that time they were under the earth within, being fashioned and reared themselves, and their arms and other tools being crafted. When the job had been completely finished then the earth, which is their mother, sent them up. And now, as though the land they are in were a mother and nurse, they must plan for and defend it, if anyone attacks, and they must think of the other citizens as brothers and born of the earth. … All of you in the city are certainly brothers … but the god in fashioning those of you who are competent to rule, mixed gold in at their birth; this is why they are most honored; in auxiliaries, silver; and iron and bronze in the farmers. … Hence the god commands the rulers first and foremost to be of nothing such good guardians and to keep over nothing such careful a watch as the children, seeing which of these metals is mixed in their souls. … [the citizens] will believe that there is an oracle that the city will be destroyed when an iron or bronze man is its guardian (*Resp*. 3.414d-15c)[46]

The chief goal of the noble lie is to introduce character traits to its audience. Apparently the main character trait that Socrates is attempting to show in this case is friendship towards other citizens, which at this point in *Republic* is a modulation of moderation. Additionally, the point of the story is not only to exemplify friendship, but also to impress it in the psyche of the audience. This process is undertaken with complete disregard for the truth of the story being told. Socrates even asks his hypothetical citizens to forget all they have experienced in the education he has been imparting them over the second and third book of the dialogue and pretend it was all a dream. The reason behind this request is that, in order for the noble lie to achieve its goal, its audience must assume certain claims (the idea that there is a natural difference among human beings and that the function of each human being in a political setting is established on the basis of this natural difference) to be unquestionably true. The acritical reception of the noble lie is possible

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[46] The Cadmean myth is here mixed with a reference to the ages of humanity as told in Hesiod's *Works and Days.*

only because it aims at – and is met with – *pistis* or belief as befitting epistemological

attitude. This reliance on *pistis* signals two important general conditions of the account of

mousike in the early books of *Republic*. The first is that the truth of the story is irrelevant to

its psychological efficacy;[47] in other words, psychology and metaphysics are independent in

the context of literature. To use the language of the *Laws*, the noble lie is incorrect, but may

still be beneficial. The second condition is that the psychological benefits of the noble lie

rely precisely on the audience's non-argumentative inclination;[48] in other words, the

audience trust, they do not understand the myth. One can believe a blatant lie, such as the

noble lie only by trusting that there is something true to it. Socrates makes this point

clearly as he stresses the theme of persuasion in this passage; in ten lines he uses the word

"persuasion" and its cognates five times.[49] Such emphasis is explained in the fact that

peitho, persuasion, is the other side of *pistis*. In other words, the story's power to persuade

is granted by the audience's willingness to trust it. In this fashion, the story of the races of

citizens leverages and cultivates the rulers and guardians' trust, not their understanding,

thereby obtaining the goal of peace-making in the city.

As discussed in the previous section, the tenth book of the *Republic* will reject myths

such as the noble lie, because they imperil the soul by nourishing those parts that are

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[47] This is not to say that Socrates in this early account is unconcerned with the truth of the stories told. For instance he is concerned with Homeric and Hesiodic accounts of divine characters and thinks that a truthful account of the gods can be devised and told in myths (see *Resp.*2.379a-c). However he is also willing to admit that if Homer's and Hesiod's accounts corresponded to fact, no story should be told about them (see *ivi* 377e-78a).

[48] For my use of argumentation (*logismos*) see chapter 2 above. Later on Socrates will refer to the intellectual part of the soul as the *logistikon* (see for instance 4.439d, where this portion of the soul has once again the function of giving arguments).

[49] See ivi 414c-d. See also 2.377a-e and 3.389b-c for claims about the disconnection between benefit and truth (or correctness) in representation.

emotive and "destroy the argumentative part (*logistikon*)"(10.605b). The second

reference to the story of Cadmus, which comes in the *Laws* at 1.641c, speaks obliquely of

this reaction from the perspective of *Republic* 10 to the conclusions reached in *Republic* 2-3.

At this point in the first book of the *Laws* the Athenian is making a case for reforming the

institution of the symposia after having contested to his interlocutors that military victory

is not all with which a city should be concerned.[50] Currently, he maintains, symposia are

unruly and thus useless, but if led by someone who is sober and *sophos* they can be

beneficial.[51] The positive effect of the well-regulated symposia is the generation of good

men (*andres agathoi*) who will contribute to the general benefit of the city, including its

military campaigns. Thus, the Athenian concludes "there has never been a Cadmean

education, but there have been and there will be Cadmean victories among human beings"

(*Leg.* 1.641c). A Cadmean victory, like a Pyrrhic victory, is a victory achieved while

suffering great losses, as it happened with Cadmus' hoplites. The Athenian's point is that a

general education is guaranteed to serve the city, but an education that serves only military

purposes eventually means great losses for the city. Here one should pause and ask, is it

true that there cannot be a Cadmean education? From the perspective of *Republic* 10, the

use of mimesis for education in *Republic* 2-3 is the definition of a Cadmean education. After

the psychological investigation of book 4,[52] establishing the tripartite soul, and the claim

that a well-ordered and just soul is one led by the reasoning part, the education of books 2-

3 with its emphasis on belief, persuasion and non-rational parts of the soul such as *thymos*,

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[50] See *Leg.* 1.638a-b.

[51] See *ivi* 639e-40d.

[52] Echoed again in book 9 as though to set the stage for the discussion of *mousike* in *Republic* 10.

seems to sacrifice too much for too small of a gain. Certainly the rulers and the

guardians who receive that type of education and who comply with the required beliefs

will be faithful to the state. But they will be automata, they will not know how to make

appropriate ethical judgments in each case and they will become victims of their own

reliance on irrational psychological parts. In the best case they will be arrogant pursuers of

honor, in the worst case they will become unjust tyrants.

Let us return to *Laws* 1.641c and hear the phrase "there has never been a Cadmean

education, but there have been and there will be Cadmean victories among human beings"

from the perspective of this dialogue. In the disagreement between the Athenian and

Megillus, the Spartan, on the use and abuse of symposia we find the same argument that

was moved from *Republic* 10 to the previous account of education in *Republic* 2-3; namely,

the partial education of the soul (irrational psychological parts for the early books of the

Republic and pursuit of military victory for Megillus in the *Laws*) leads eventually to greater

losses than gains. But then one wonders why, if the argument is the same, the Athenian is

not also refashioning Socrates' critique of mimesis as a tool that generates psychic

deficiency. On the contrary, one finds that the Athenian introduces the symposia (a most

obvious institution of *mousike*) precisely as a means for psychological education. In order

to clarify this point let us move to the final reference to the story of Cadmus.

The final account of the story of Cadmus comes in the second book of the *Laws*, in

many ways the story of the king and the dragon teeth in the *Laws* is similar to its rendition

in the *Republic*. The epistemological context is the same in the two dialogues, as made clear

at *Leg*.2.663d; in each case the tale deals in persuasion, not argumentation. Let us take a

closer look at the account from *Laws* for a more accurate analysis.

Truth is a beautiful thing, Stranger, and an enduring one; yet to persuade people of it seems no easy matter." Athenian "That is true. Yet it proved easy to persuade people of the Sidonian story, though it seems incredible, and many of them too." Clinias" what story?" Athenian "The story of the teeth that were sown, and how armed men sprang out of them. Here, indeed, the lawgiver has a notable example of how one can, if he tries, persuade the souls of the young of anything, so that the only question he has to consider in his inventing is what would do most good to the State, if [his story] were believed….Our next subject I must handle myself. I maintain that all the three choruses must enchant the souls of the children, while still young and tender, by rehearsing all the noble things which we have already recounted….and let this be the sum of them: in asserting that one and the same life is declared by the gods to be both most pleasant and most just, we shall not only be saying what is most true, but we shall also convince those who need convincing more forcibly than we could by any other assertion (*Leg*. 2.664a-c).[53]

The two central themes from the account of *Republic* can be found, *mutatis mutandis* also in the *Laws.* In the first place the Athenian stranger states explicitly that, when it comes to the persuasive power of a story, like that of Cadmus, the psychological effects and the correspondence to truth are unrelated. In his words "you can persuade the souls of the young of anything." This is hardly surprising, and follows from our previous analysis of theatrocracy. Secondly, the finality of the story is comparable to that of *Republic*'s, since the goal is in each case "the greatest good for the city," though the specific institutions to make this goal concrete (adherence to "natural" social classes for Kallipolis, and the web of social and musical institutions for Magnesia) may differ.[54] But the condition to achieve this goal

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[53] Bury's translation modified.

[54] Benardete thinks that the practical division of land that will be made in Magnesia runs against the persuasion of stories like that of Cadmus or its modified version in the noble lie of the *Republic.* "The law, in making divisions in deed that it wants to wipe out in thought, cannot but induce experientially a denial of everything it wants to be believed unlike the situation in the best city, there is going to be nothing in the second best that confirms its stories, the noble lie get debased" (*Plato's* Laws 167). It seems to me true that different political institutions in Magnesia and Kallipolis will have different relations with the psychic forces aroused by stories told. However my aim here is much more limited, I am just concerned with the psychological reactions to the same story in the two Platonic dialogues.

remains the same, the exploitation of the non-rational forces in the soul of the audience and the performer alike, as adumbrated in the quote above and confirmed by our analysis in the previous chapters. Thus, one must conclude that the epistemological status or the psychological appeal of the Cadmean story per se do not change much from *Republic* to *Laws*. Consequently, in order to understand why stories such as that of the hoplites being born of dragon teeth are rejected at the end of *Republic*, but re-introduced at the beginning of *Laws*, one should look not at the story itself, but elsewhere, towards the underpinnings of the respective moral psychologies.[55]

As we have seen, in the *Republic* the tripartition of the soul is really the watershed between the two evaluations of *mimesis*. The requirement that virtue comes with the control and the prevalence of the rational part of the soul over the entire psychic environment forces Socrates to refute any influence of *mousike* over the soul, because even beneficial attempts to persuade the non-rational part of the soul towards a virtuous goal would result in a Cadmean education. However, between the tenth book of the *Republic* and the second book of the *Laws,* where the story of Cadmus reappears, a new account of the psyche is given. This account compares the psyche to a marionette, and depicts it as reliant on non-rational forces in the pursuit of virtue. In turn, in the *Laws* the non-deliberative motivations that *mousike* appeals to (pleasure and pain) or reinforces in the soul (expectations) may be conducive to rational goals, rather than being a hindrance to them.

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[55] While he recognizes the similarities between the two accounts of the story of Cadmus, Benardete thinks that the innovation in the *Laws* is the instrumental role of storytelling for legislation. "These stories seem to have one thing in common, that the law as the bond of the city must override differences in kind without cancelling them, and that to reconcile the city's horizontal equality with its vertical hierarchy necessarily involves the art of phantastic. The Stranger is recommending that art be diverted away from both philosophy and poetry, which have previously made use of it, to serve the law" (*Plato's* Laws 75).

In this fashion stories like Cadmus' can do something they could not in the *Republic*; they can open the stage to virtue.

Concluding Remarks, Plato the Psychologist.

In these final pages I will take the opportunity to trace the trajectory of this entire project and highlight its contribution to the current scholarship on Plato's philosophy and on the *Laws* in particular.

The first three chapters were dedicated to the analysis of the moral psychology of the *Laws*. In the first chapter I examined the image of the marionette and concluded that - as an analogy for the soul – the marionette is meant to point out that rationality alone is not a sufficient motive for action in human beings. As we set out to understand why human beings act, we find that often we must ascribe our motives to non-rational or semi-rational motives for action. These motives, I said, move the agent like internal strings. I concluded that the Athenian realizes that influencing these non-rational and semi-rational motives of action can bring about a sort of behavioral control. In light of this conclusion, the Athenian's approach to moral psychology should not be understood as a completely deterministic view of human action, as the study of our psychological processes means also our ability to reinforce some of our own motivations against others, thereby regulating our own behavior.

In the second chapter I took a closer look at the basic elements at work in the moral psychology of the *Laws*. I argued that the first two non-rational motivations mentioned by the Athenian, pleasure and pain, should be understood as drives. They may have an influence on our psyche and may motivate us to act, but they are at the same time distinct from our cognitive abilities, even the most basic, and cannot be reduced to pleasurable or

painful perceptions. When one considers pleasure and pain as drives, one should think of them as ineluctable forces that demand to be discharged. Then I moved on to analyze expectations, the emotive psychological states. They are different from pleasure and pain, as they are endowed with some basic cognitive abilities, such as a narrow imagination and memory. They also constitute their own independent set of semi-rational motives for action. Though the Athenian speaks chiefly of confidence and fear in this regards, expectations do not need to be limited to these two cases. I argued that these expectations are still non-deliberative motives of action, as I ascribe the ability to compare motives and give arguments about what motive to pursue to *logismos* alone. *Logismos* should be understood as an argumentative ability selecting the non-deliberative motives for action (for instance expectations) best suited for achieving its own goal, including virtuous behavior. The most relevant points in this chapter were connected with the use of non-deliberative motivations. First, I argued that in the pursuit of virtue the rational element of the soul must rely on non-deliberative motivational forces; in this fashion virtuous action is hardly ever the result of rationality alone. Second, I argued that some non-deliberative forces, in the shape of expectations, can be created in the psyche, thereby creating semi-rational motivation in accordance with the soul's rational lead.

The third chapter, the final chapter concerned with the moral psychology of the *Laws*, dealt mainly with the process of formation of semi-rational motivations through habits. I offered a novel interpretation of psychological habit formation modeled on the analogy the Athenian proposes with the assimilation of foods in the body. I argued that there are two patterns of formation of semi-rational motives in the soul by means of habits, those resulting from habits of repression and those resulting from habits of cultivation. I

showed how habits of repression can introduce enough semi-rational motivation in the psyche so as to achieve at least two basic virtues, courage and the simplest form of moderation. Habits of cultivation exploit the natural human inclination towards the order of rhythm and melody and create the conditions for the soul's acquisition of *phronesis*.

In the fourth chapter I approached *mousike* as a technology for guiding the moral development of the psyche. The Athenian reframed this technology in order to meet the conditions of the moral development he has in mind for the citizens of Magnesia. I highlighted that the main reason why this technology can successfully influence the psyche is that it influences the process of habituation discussed in the previous chapter. Though it is hard to say whether *mousike* can on its own introduce new semi-rational motives for action in the soul, it seems plausible that this technology reinforces some expectations that are already present in the psyche. Targeting some specific semi-rational forces can increase their motivational force and thus their motivational relevance in the soul. If these forces are coordinated with rationality's goal, virtue, then *mousike* will be proved a good device to foster moral development.

Finally, in the fifth chapter I took a closer look at how the Athenian's reframed *mousike* influences the expectations of the performer and the audience. Performers are caught in a process of confirmation and reinforcement of their semi-rational motivations for acting virtuously, as they are integral parts of a representation that is meant to reproduce *arete*. Audiences are caught in the virtual world of the representation of virtue, which requires the stimulation of their expectations. In this process their semi-rational motives sustaining *arete* are reinforced.

My entire work stresses the importance of revising our understanding of Plato as a "transcendentalist," an enemy of all things corporeal and of the arts. I think that Platonic scholarship would benefit from appreciating the subtleties of Plato's psychological analysis, especially with regards to those non-rational and semi-rational psychological elements that have no direct access to the eidetic realm. We would gain a more profound understanding of Plato's conception of the musicopoetic arts if we were not too quick to dismiss the possibility of their employment for virtuous ends. Reforming our hermeneutical approach may offer the vision of a philosopher who is deeply engaged with those aspects of the human experience that are obscure and inexplicable. In addition one might find some of Plato's insights into human behavior compelling even from this end of history. In order to clarify these claims, let me contrast my hermeneutical stance with different interpretations.

The average textbook of the history of western philosophy paints Plato as the first (sometimes second only after Parmenides) metaphysician of the classical world. On this reading, Plato would be a man annoyed – perhaps disgusted – with sensual and emotive life. He would be someone whose only desire is to escape the human dimension in favor of an incorporeal, spiritual or divine life. On this reading, anything that keeps us on the level of phenomenal reality is to be surpassed, including *mousike.* This reading is not just promoted by editors who force the history of philosophy into convenient 20-pages chapters; it is also the result of some hermeneutical tendencies in the history of philosophy. One of these tendencies results from – what seems to me – a neo-platonic reading[56] of the

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[56] See Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 31-32 and chapter 11.

conception of art in Plato's works, one that sees art as a metaphysically impoverished field of the human experience when it imitates phenomenal reality, but as an essential rung in the ladder of being when it represents eidetic reality.[57] Laurent offers one example of this tendency among the contemporary readers of Plato. In reference to the Athenian's praise of Egyptian art in *Laws* 2.657 Laurent states that "[c]e qui prend la mesure du Beau ne sera donc pas tel ou tel homme, à tel ou tel moment de l'Histoire, mais le respect de modèles atemporels" (*Mesure de L'Humain* 84). Though it is true, as indicated in the previous two chapters, that in the *Laws* Plato aspires to build a theory of art that allows for the representation of eidetic models, one should not be tempted to restrict our views to exclusively metaphysical considerations of art. For instance, this way of reading art seems to dismiss all concerns that do not immediately relate to the eidetic or the divine and may lead us to overlook all that is not eidetic, nor divine. As Laurent puts it, "il est rationel de tenir compte de l'irrationnel, avoire d'essayer de prévoir l'imprévedible" (*ibid.*).[58] In other words, the irrational is there in Plato only to be neutralized; it should be foreseen and dismissed. While I am not suggesting that Plato is offering (in the *Laws* or elsewhere) a recipe to liberate the irrational from the bondage of habit formation or rational limitations, it seems to me that Plato, in this late dialogue, wants at least to leverage the non-rational

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[57] "But if anyone despises the arts we must tell him, first, that natural things are imitations too, then he must know that the arts do not simply imitate what they see, but they run back up to the forming principles from which nature derives; then also that they do a great deal by themselves, and, since they possess beauty, they make up what is defective in things" (Plotinus *Enneads* 5.8.1 Armstrong's translation).

[58] See also *ivi* 85.

aspects of the soul in his use of *mousike*,[59] and to do so, he must have some genuine

interest in the irrational.

Through a reversal of attitudes, one finds the same assumption – namely that all of

Plato's investigations of *mousike* and the arts pertain to metaphysics – in his critics, most

prominently perhaps Derrida. In commenting on a passage from the *Philebus*,[60] Derrida

finds again two contrasting attitudes in Plato towards mimeticism. "A certain movement

effectively takes place in the Platonic text, a movement one should not be too quick to call

contradictory. On the one hand, as we have just verified, it is hard to separate *mneme* from

mimesis. But on the other hand, while Plato often discredits *mimesis* and almost always

disqualifies the mimetic arts, he never separates the unveiling of truth, *aletheia*, from the

movement of *anamnesia*" (*Disseminations* 190-91).[61] In this criticism we see again the

assumption that when Plato discusses mimetic art, Plato wants us to measure his claims

against their metaphysical ground.

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[59] I see a similar neo-platonizing tendency in Peperzak, when he contrasts the readings of mimesis in book 10 and books 2-3 of *Republic* by stating that in the later book "[s]ince art belongs to the temporal, mutable, and manifold field of stories, imagination, and emotions, art must be subordinated to thinking; it cannot have a truth of its own" (*Platonic Transformations* 181). Peperzak maintains that in earlier books of the *Republic* (as he simultaneously looks ahead at book 6) "true philosophers do not pay attention to the affairs of men and women; they direct their minds to what truly is. Without getting entangled in human divisions and jealousy, they look at the peaceful order of the essences that are always the same, in order to imitate them and to become similar" (*ivi* 178). See also his general take on Plato's dialogues as works of art. "By stressing their own mimetic relativity, artworks point beyond themselves and pay homage to the truth. Plato's dialogues point beyond the factuality of philosophical discussion and history" (*ivi* 165). Another author that could be counted in this number is Chrétien. Beginning with the *Cratylus'* epistemology of beauty (*kalon*) from calling (*kalein*) (416b-d), Chrétien proceeds with a neoplatonic interpretation of beauty as a call to which we feel compelled to respond, see *The Call and the Response* 6-11.

[60] See *Phil.* 38e-39e.

[61] In this regard see Halliwell *Aesthetics of Mimesis* 375-76. Derrida makes a similar point in *Plato's Pharmacy* 136-38 where Derrida "resolves" the relation between truth and its imitation (which he finds determined and oriented in Plato) into the figure of the *pharmakon*; an undecidable since it is both cure (truth) and venom (imitation).

In my view these approaches suffer from what Halliwell identifies as a temptation to unify Plato's views on art. There is "a dangerous temptation to which many writers on this subject have succumbed, namely the assumption that it is feasible to identify a unitary, monolithic conception of mimesis at work in the dialogues" (*Aesthetics of Mimesis* 38).[62] Halliwell has a point here and it seems that the critics as well as the supporters of the "monolithic" metaphysical reading of Plato's approach to *mousike* will end up discarding significant facets of Plato's reflections on *mousike*. Particularly there is a tendency to overlook Plato's attention to human psychology and his study of the non-rational and semi-rational forces that drag along at least part of the human experience. However, claiming that Plato is more interested in the psychological effects of mimesis than in its metaphysical status does not mean we should dismiss metaphysical considerations. Certainly in the dialogues we find that *mousike* is relegated, as all mimetic arts are, to a certain "low" metaphysical position; certainly we find a conceptual use of *mimesis* which might describe what Plato calls *methexis*, participation with the eidetic realm, and – as we have seen – in his reframed *mousike* the Athenian of the *Laws* attempts to construct representations of eidetic ideals, such as the correspondence of virtue with happiness. However, we would be offering a misleading analysis of Plato's work, if we were to consider Plato's pages on *mousike* as a continued refrain on the metaphysical shortcomings of music. If Plato is so interested in the topic and if he returns to it multiple times in his longest and exquisitely political dialogues (*Republic* and *Laws*), he must *also* (perhaps especially) be concerned with the practical application of *mousike.* Practical here means

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[62] Halliwell here is referring to the entire semantic spectrum of mimesis in Plato's dialogues, but I think his remarks apply well also to mimesis as confined to musicopoetic productions, where we see that the dominating line of interpretation is one that investigates only the arts' metaphysical status.

spiritual, since the ground for the seeds planted by *mousike* is the soul. In other words,

mousike for Plato is very much a technology for the soul.

When focusing on the psyche, one should not dismiss the existential import of

Plato's analysis. Much of the literature on the *Laws*, and in general on Plato's dialogues,

reduces the discussion of the psychology and the moral psychology to exercises in probing

Plato's theory and testing it for consistency,[63] or to a debate for a correct historical

reconstruction of the accounts of the psyche in Plato's dialogues. One example of this

attitude is offered in Brisson's critique of Bobonich's analysis of the psychology of the *Laws.*

Brisson refutes all of Bobonich's arguments for a variety of textual and historical reasons

and finally concludes that "[t]he historical context of Plato's work being what it is, it seems

to me dubious to wish to find in it similarities to our own time. On the contrary, it is by

measuring the profound differences that separate us from it that we can appreciate the

specificity of our own situation" (*Ethics and Politics in Plato's* Laws 119).[64] To be sure, I do

think that there are profound differences between Plato's time and our own, for instance

the "discovery" of the unconscious and the emphasis on the irrational in the XIX and XX

century have done much to mark off differences between the contemporary psyche and the

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[63] As an example see Annas' *Introduction to Plato's* Republic 336-344. Here Annas criticizes the entirety of book 10's reflections on poetry and its psychological effects for a variety of reasons, but especially with regards to this book's psychology she states "[n]one of the roles of reason and the lowest part of the soul have any perspicuous connection to their roles as seen so far in the theory of the soul's parts that Plato has used to establish conclusions about justice. Further, it is hard to see how the third part, spirit, is to fit in" (*ivi* 339). Though Annas might have a point in highlighting the differences between the psychology of book 10 and the previous accounts of the psyche, defining Plato's arguments in the first part of book 10 as "outrageous" (*ivi* 336) because they are inconsistent with previous arguments means to discount the entire enterprise of book 10 and it implies that, as a result of its inconsistency, there is nothing to learn from this book.

[64] To be precise here Brisson does not have in mind Plato's psychology or Bobonich's evaluation of Plato's psychology, but the evaluation of Plato's political systems in the *Republic* and the *Laws* in the face of western liberal democracies. However, I think that Brisson's general attitude informs also his specific critique of Bobonich's reading of the soul in the *Laws* (see *Ethics and Politics in Plato's* Laws 116-118).

soul as Plato envisions it. However, the attitude of drawing a line or marking the

distance between Plato's views and our own runs the risk of making of Plato's dialogues

exclusive objects for the study of the history of ideas (or perhaps cultural anthropology).

Instead these should be texts that have existential import for us. Let me be clear, the

existential value of Plato's considerations on the soul can come from the study of history, in

the sense of marking the path of the developments, complications and excoriations of the

reflections on the psyche. But this path signifies continuity between Plato's time and ours.

Thus, if we are to consider the psychological effects of a philosophical account of

mousike (thereby avoiding a monolithic metaphysical interpretation) and to recognize the

existential import of such effects (thereby avoiding relegating our findings to a distant,

ineffective past), what should we make of Plato's reflections on *mousike*? It seems to me

that one valid answer could be the following; that philosophy demands to play a role in the

practical life of human beings, in "spirituality" as Foucault would call it.[65] In being

concerned with *mousike* Plato's philosophy asserts itself not only as a psychology (in the

sense of the study of the psyche) but also as a psychagogy, in the sense of a determination

of the psyche.[66] As philosophy tries to get into the business of the psyche it employs a

number of tools[67] and in doing so, it elevates them to the level of what is important in

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[65] Spirituality "postulates that the truth is not given to the subject by a simple act of knowledge (*connaissance*) … it postulates that for the subject to have a right of access to the truth he must be changed, transformed, shifted, and become, to some extent and up to a certain point, other than himself. The truth is only given to the subject at a price that brings the subject's being into play" (Foucault *Hermeneutics of the Subject* 15).

[66] In the second chapter of *The City and the Stage* Folch holds essentially this very position; *mousike* is the philosophical attempt to influence life.

[67] Panno notes that this is an essential moment of the political development of Plato's philosophy stating that "[q]uesto è uno dei punti di forza dell'utopia platonica: la costruzione dei mezzi attraverso i quali essa va compiuta" (*Dionisiaco e Alterità* 172).

philosophy. Laks recognizes this much when he claims that human beings are prodigious in virtue of being the place of connection between rational and irrational urges. Philosophy "donne lieu à des procedures de *légitimation* [such as] ... [the] légitimation des forms de discours non argumentatives, non soulement la louange et du blâme ..., mais encore de toutes les forms de récit mythique" (*Médiation et Coercition* 48).

If we were to ask the question of legitimacy, the question of the right of philosophy to study and probe and mold the psyche by means of (musical) tools, from the point of view of Plato we would be asking the wrong question. Psychagogy stands apart from the sphere of legitimacy (*de iure*), because as a matter of fact (*de facto*) it can never be escaped. This much the Athenian stranger has in mind in the *Laws* when he states "enjoyment belongs to all [forms of *mousike*]. For instance, if someone lived from childhood and up to the age of stability and reason in music that is mindful and orderly, as he hears music that is contrary to it, he hates it and claims that it is has no freedom. On the other hand, if you raised [someone] in common and sweet music, he would say that music that is opposed [to his] is cold and unpleasant" (*Leg.*7.802c-d). Plato's reply to this fact of human existence is that if we must (in the sense of a factual obligation) be made by means of the *mousike* that surrounds us, we may as well be made in the image of philosophy. "As we have just said, no music can lay claim of being more pleasant or unpleasant, but every time it will make those that were raised in one [kind of music] better and [those that were raised in the other] worse" (*Leg.*7.802d).

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VITA

Daniele Manni graduated with distinction from the University of Rome 'La Sapienza' in 2005, with a thesis on Epicurus' philosophy of language and its applications in the social institutions of Epicureanism. He has earned a Master of Arts from Loyola University Chicago in 2010, with a thesis on the primacy of ethics for politics and legislation in Plato's *Laws*. His current research focuses on the moral psychology of Plato's *Laws.* Daniele Manni's chief interests are in ancient philosophy, with a focus on ancient ethical and political doctrines, and in contemporary continental philosophy. Daniele Manni is a tenured faculty member of Triton College.