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THE "RULE" OF REASON IN PLATO'S PSYCHOLOGY

George Klosko

THIS paper will discuss Plato's view of reason in the *Republic* and how it "rules" in the soul. It will examine the main textual evidence for Plato's view, in Books IV and VIII-IX, and attempt to render these accounts consistent. My main contention is that in order to cover the evidence, we must distinguish two different senses in which reason "rules" in different souls. One of these forms of "rule" is found only in the soul of the philosopher, while the other, in which reason functions along Humean lines,¹ exists in almost all human souls.

Various scholars have described aspects of the overall workings of the soul in the *Republic*, and presented findings with which I have little quarrel.² However, they have not pursued these matters far enough. As a result problems, both small and large, crop up in the literature. A typical small problem is Julia Annas' inability to say how Cephalus is and is not dominated by appetite. She holds that he has no "inner harmony."³ But one can ask exactly how Cephalus' lack of inner harmony differs from the complete lack of harmony found in the tyrannic soul. Obviously, the respects in which Cephalus is dominated by appetite are different from and less severe than these, but the details must be worked out. A more complex difficulty crops up in Richard Kraut's attempt to explain the *dēmotikē aretē* of the lowest class in the *Republic*, while similar difficulties are seen in the account of Terence Irwin.⁴ I believe that the approach developed in this paper readily clears up all these difficulties and those of other scholars I could name. A final example is the recent paper of John Cooper, which also appears to be flawed in various ways.⁵ Accordingly, after discussing how different parts, especially reason, "rule" in different souls, in Sections I-IV, I attempt to demonstrate the overall soundness of—and the need for—my approach, in Section V, by criticizing Cooper's view.

I. "RULE" IN THE SOUL

To explain how a given part "rules" in the soul, we must make a few distinctions that Plato himself does not clearly set out. First, we must distinguish (a) the *element* of a given structure that rules, and (b) the *manner* in which it rules. By (a) I mean the constituent of the system that performs various functions that we would identify as "ruling," the constituent that

makes important decisions, sets policy for the body as a whole, etc. Because a major concern in Plato's discussion of different kinds of "rule" in the *Republic* is the production of harmony or disharmony between the parts of cities and souls, (b) refers to whether the ruling element works to produce such harmony. In this regard we can say that a part rules "holistically" if it works to promote harmony between the constituents of the whole by catering to the legitimate interests of all elements. Or it rules "factiously" if it does not promote harmony, but favors its own interests at the expense of those of other elements or of the whole.

Plato's psychological discussion in the *Republic* is dominated by his account of the just city, which is intended to illustrate the working of the just soul "writ large" (368c-69a). In the just city, (a) the ruling element is readily identified; it is of course the class of rulers, who have been carefully groomed for this task. (b) The manner in which they will rule is also straightforward. They have been carefully trained to rule holistically, in the interest of all classes (esp. 420c-21c, 428c-d). Accordingly, Plato takes it for granted that the substitution of other rulers will bring about "the greatest injury" to the state (434a-c), though it is not until the cycle of unjust cities and corresponding souls in Books VIII-IX that it becomes clear that unworthy rulers harm their cities by ruling factiously, pursuing what they perceive to be their own interests at the expense of the values of other parts.

When we move from city to soul, things become less clear. On an intuitive level, it is not evident how one element "rules" in a given soul, while Plato complicates the task of elucidation by concentrating almost exclusively on the just soul, without clearly explaining how it differs from other souls. Similarly, Plato does not clearly explicate the details of the different virtues, which are presented simply as analogues of the virtues writ large found in the just city (441c-d). But the main features of Plato's view can be sorted out, especially if we pay careful attention to the unjust souls, which are described in some detail.

It is of course central to Plato's argument in the *Republic* that the just soul possesses an order similar to that of the just city. All elements stay in their proper places and do their jobs. Thus *to logistikon*, supported by *to thumoeides*, rules and keeps the appetites in check. This psychic order benefits the just individual in two ways:

- (1.a) The ordered, harmonious condition of his soul is analogous to health in the body and is even more important for happiness (esp. 444c-45b).
- (1.b) His soul is ruled by reason, which (as Plato argues in Book IX) is a superior psychic element with superior objects and pleasures. The goals he seeks afford greater benefits than those sought by individuals ruled by other parts.

The just individual's psychic condition is made possible by the rule of reason, in alliance with spirit, and by the suppression of appetite. Reason

rules in two ways:

- (2.a) Reason rules by looking out for the good of the soul as a whole. The satisfaction of particular desires is subordinated to the aims of the entire soul. (The result is the harmonious condition noted in (1.a).)
- (2.b) Reason rules and directs the soul towards its preferred objects, which are the goods of reason rather than of appetite. (The result is concentration on the superior goods and pleasures noted in (1.b).)

In the soul of the philosopher (1.a) and (1.b) fit together naturally, and also mesh well with (2.a) and (2.b). The harmonious condition indicated in (1.a) results from the holistic rule of reason, indicated in (2.a). As I have argued elsewhere, it is basic to Plato's view that reason will rule holistically because of its superior value orientation, indicated in (1.b).⁶ It is important to note, however, that while (1.b) and (2.b) are distinctive of philosophers, semblances of (1.a) and (2.a) are encountered in a wider class of people. As I have also argued elsewhere, they comprise the essence of the lesser virtue, referred to as *dēmōtikē* or *politikē aretē*, of the non-philosophers in the just city.⁷ Though the majority of people are not philosophers, and so are not naturally oriented towards the objects of reason, it is still possible for them to enjoy conditions closely related to (1.a) if their reason is able to rule in their souls along lines suggested in (2.a). For our purposes the crucial point is that in most souls reason rules according to some semblance of (2.a) though not of (2.b).

Exactly how one part of the soul "rules" over others is complex. Plato has in mind two distinguishable psychic operations, which are manifested in (2.a) and (2.b) respectively. The sense exhibited in (2.a) can be referred to as "direct rule."⁸ Plato's concern here is psychological conflict, different psychic elements with incompatible urges and how such conflicts are resolved. The concept of "rule" comes into play by analogy with the way such conflicts are resolved in a city. When the desire of part *A* is chosen over the desire of part *B*, according to Plato's politicized account, that part "dominates" or "rules over" the other. Stated more formally, in a case of direct rule:

With element *X* wishing to do *A*, and element *Y* wishing to do not-*A*, if the soul chooses to do *A*, *X* rules over *Y*.⁹

In cases of direct rule Plato does not always explicate the larger purposes that different psychic elements serve.¹⁰ For instance, in the initial delineation of the parts of the soul, he discusses conflict between appetite and reason, the former nodding assent to and striving towards some object, the latter dissenting and repelling it (437c). Such conflicts are settled through struggles; the stronger part overpowers the weaker and can be said to "rule" directly over it.¹¹ But aside from the fact that the part that exercises direct rule is (tautologically) stronger than the other, we need not be told why reason overpowers appetite and the individual refuses to drink. Perhaps he does so for considerations of health, or perhaps the

drink is expensive and he decides not to spend the money. But again, in such cases wider motives are not required for the immediate descriptive purposes at hand.

The larger purposes that relationships of direct rule serve are filled in by the second conception of rule. "Rule" here refers to an individual's overall goal orientation rather than to the resolution of specific psychological conflicts. In Book IX Plato describes the parts of the soul as possessing appetites. He says that the three psychic elements have three kinds of pleasure, one peculiar to each, and also three appetites (*epithumiai*) and kinds of rule (*archai*) (580d). *To thumoeides* is a lover of victory and honor. The appetitive part (*to epithumētikon*) which resists a simple name because of its multifaceted nature, merits this designation because of the intensity of its appetite for such things as food, drink and sex (580d-81a). Reason is a lover of learning and of wisdom, and is the part least concerned with wealth and reputation (581b). Plato's attribution of *epithumiai* to all three parts indicates that reason desires knowledge and truth—and spirit desires honor and victory—in a sense closely related to that in which *to epithumētikon* desires food, drink and sex.¹²

In cases of normative rule the ruling element is able to direct the soul as a whole towards that element's preferred objects. Different elements rule in the souls of different individuals, causing the existence of three kinds of men: lovers of wisdom, victory, and gain respectively (581b12-c4). Because the element that "rules" in this sense determines the value orientation of the psyche, we can refer to it as "normative rule." This can be described as follows:

If a soul (regularly) gives precedence to values associated with element X, rather than those associated with element Y, then X rules over Y.¹³

The relationship between direct and normative rule is complex but can be sorted out. The relationship is clearly close, as both kinds of rule involve the resolution of conflict between parts of the soul, with the most obvious difference the fact that normative rule must and direct rule need not have implications for the long term value orientation of the individual's psyche. But there are two other specific differences—the second of which is discussed in the next section. First, Plato sometimes describes cases of the two kinds of rule somewhat differently. Instances of normative rule are not always bound up with specific conflicts between psychic elements. Accordingly, Plato's accounts of such instances do not emphasize the fact that values associated with part A are chosen *over* values associated with B as much as the fact that they are chosen *regularly*. In cases of direct rule, Plato discusses psychological conflicts without always connecting them up with the soul's larger purposes. Thus his descriptions of direct rule emphasize the fact that values associated with A are chosen *over* values of B—or that element A masters or rules over B.¹⁴ Because the emphasis in cases of normative rule is on what the soul tends to choose, the rejected alternatives need not be mentioned in each

particular case. Thus we find accounts of different parts ruling in the soul without reference to the parts that are ruled.¹⁵

II. THE DIRECT RULE OF REASON

A second difference between the kinds of rule is that, though we find individuals normatively ruled by each of the three parts—or parts of the parts—all individuals are ruled directly by reason.¹⁶ The overall relationship between direct and normative rule can be explicated in reference to the concept of plans of life. The main idea is that people dedicate their lives to the pursuit of certain goods. The three kinds of people pursue the goods of wisdom, honor, and appetite respectively, and attempt to attain as much of their chosen goods as possible. The normatively ruling passion (“ruling passion,” for short) is thus the soul’s determining force. It selects the values to be given precedence in the plan of life, and so the different kinds of men are normatively ruled by desires for their respective goods. In each case the ruling passion pursues its ends through control of surrogates. The individual’s *logistikos* will calculate the most efficient means to attain his ends and work out a schedule according to which the different urges of his soul are (and are not) to be satisfied. The plan will be supported by the emotive force of spirit, which is naturally allied with reason (440a-41a). Thus the pursuit of a plan of life requires something like the psychological structure described in reference to the just soul in Book IV. A given psychic urge that comes into conflict with reason (representing the plan of life and so the purposes of the soul as a whole), will generally be suppressed by reason and its ally, spirit. And so reason can be said to rule directly over the other parts.

The relationship between the two kinds of rule can be seen in Plato’s account of the oligarchic man. This individual marshals his energies towards the attainment of wealth and works out a plan of life according to which he can accumulate as much as possible. Accordingly, his reason and spirit are enslaved to his necessary appetites’ pursuit of wealth (553c-d). For the sake of wealth he also suppresses those spendthrift appetites that are inconsistent with his plan and would distract him from it (554a-e). Because he pursues the goods of money, he should be described as normatively ruled by his appetitive part¹⁷—or because he is ruled by his necessary appetites (558d-59d), by part of his appetitive part. The concept of direct rule is needed to account for the fact that he indulges certain appetites, while keeping others in check. Thus he is directly ruled by a reasoning element that has charted a course towards the maximization of wealth. Should he succumb to the urge to spend money on some whim or extravagance, this would represent a temporary, successful rebellion of the unnecessary desires, which, for however long, would rule directly. Presumably, his calculative reason would eventually regain control and restore adherence to his plan. Thus the direct rule of reason is necessary for the discipline and stability required to attain one’s long term goals.¹⁸

It may sound paradoxical to say that the oligarchic man is ruled in

any sense by his reason. As we have just seen, he is described as ruled by his necessary appetites, to which his reason is explicitly said to be enslaved (553d2-4). However, though reason is enslaved in one sense, in another it rules in his soul. Without this distinction it is difficult to make sense of various aspects of his soul. For instance, it is difficult to explain how someone ruled by appetites suppresses certain other appetites and how he can be overcome by appetites when they break free. More important, without the distinction it is difficult to cover the textual evidence, especially to reconcile the discussions in Books IV and VIII-IX.

Book IV presents powerful evidence that reason rules directly in (almost) all souls. The basic psychological structure described there (to which I will refer as the “basic structure”) of course centers upon reason ruling, supported by spirit, with the appetites suppressed. Some facsimile of this structure exists in all souls. The points Plato makes in the argument distinguishing the parts of the soul are explicitly said to pertain to everyone (435e2, 441c6). In distinguishing reason from appetite, he discusses the person who, though thirsty, refuses to drink. In this soul reason is said to master (*kratoun*) appetite (439c5-d1). Thus there can be no doubt that in *all* souls reason rules over the appetites at least part of the time. Now, is it possible to identify the sense in which reason so “rules”? Though the wider context in which the conflict between reason and appetite occurs is not filled in, we are told that reason performs the function of reflecting about the better and the worse (441c1-2), judging what is just (440c8).¹⁹ Even with these additions we do not know the larger purposes reason serves—i.e., what is manifested in its conception of the good (see below, Section III). However, we can be sure that the individual under discussion is not necessarily normatively ruled by reason and so that the values he pursues are not necessarily good in an objective sense. Because the example is so sketchy, we cannot rule out the possibility that the conflict presents an instance of normative rule. However, the implication would be that all individuals are normatively ruled by reason at least part of the time, and the nature of Plato’s example—reason suppressing appetite rather than choosing the values of knowledge or truth—tells against this construal. Because the goals in the interest of which reason suppresses appetite are left out, it is natural to view this as a case of direct rule.

More explicit evidence is found in the example of Leontius. When Leontius is overcome by his desire, it is his reason that is mastered by his appetites—as is clear from 440a8-b4, where spirit’s rebuke of the appetites is described as representing an alliance with reason (*summachon tō logō*). If this is a case of *akrasia* (i.e., an abnormal case), then, clearly, in the soul of Leontius, the *normal* state of affairs has reason, allied with spirit, ruling over the appetites. In addition to the fact that, in this context, Plato is explicitly clarifying the workings of *all* souls, the use of Leontius as an example—as also the nature of the desire to which he gives way—confirms that we are dealing here with an ordinary man, rather than a

philosopher.²⁰ Therefore, because the sense in which Leontius' reason rules over his appetites cannot be normative rule, I conclude that the normal state of affairs in his soul, as in all souls, is some semblance of the basic structure. The sense in which reason rules is directly.

Additional evidence is found at 571b-c. In discussing the "lawless" (*paranomoi*) pleasures and desires, Plato notes that these are present in all of us (571b5-6), but are controlled (*kolazomenai*) in varying degrees "by the laws and the better desires in alliance with reason" (571b6-7). The nature of this controlling mechanism is indicated within a few lines. The lawless desires are said to awaken in sleep, "when the rest of the soul, the rational, gentle and ruling part (*logistikon kai hēmeron kai archon*) slumbers." (571c3-4). According to this passage, too, in all (or almost all) souls *to logistikon* rules (directly) in waking life.

Thus I conclude that we find the basic psychic structure in (almost) all souls, whether they are normatively ruled by reason, spirit, or appetite, and all souls are ruled directly by reason.²¹ I believe that a satisfactory account of Plato's moral psychology must be able to accommodate the passages I have reviewed, to render them consistent with his discussion of the just soul and the unjust souls in Books VIII-IX. One advantage of the view presented in this paper is its ability to do this.

The fact that the direct rule of calculative reason is exercised on behalf of the passion that rules normatively suggests a different construal. Because calculative reason is subordinate to the normatively ruling passion, it might seem that the ruling passion, which rules indirectly, should also be said to rule directly. (We can refer to this as the "indirect" view.) Thus in the case of the oligarchic man, on this account we would say that his necessary appetites, which rule normatively, also rule directly by suppressing urges that conflict with their goals. The great advantage of this view is that it does not force us to attribute "ruling" functions to different elements in the same soul.²² But I believe that the view I have presented is preferable for both textual and philosophical reasons.

To begin with the latter, even under the indirect view, it must be admitted, the normatively ruling passion exercises direct rule by formulating a plan of life and then imposing it upon the other parts. However, the formulation of such a plan is patently a task of reason, and so it is natural to make sense of Plato's view by attributing this task to *to logistikon*. This construal is supported by Plato's description of the workings of the oligarchic soul, where the ruling passion enslaves reason (along with spirit), forcing it to think of nothing but ways of making money (553d).

The situation here is complicated by Plato's attribution of reasoning faculties to all parts of the soul (on which, see below, Section III). Perhaps some version of the indirect view could be salvaged according to which direct rule is not exercised by *to logistikon* (in its calculative capacity) but by the faculty of calculative reason present in one of the other parts.

Now it may well be true that formulations along these lines are not impossible; the metaphorical nature of Plato's discussion could permit them. But any plausible construal of the "reasoning faculties" of the individual parts must associate them with *to logistikon*—perhaps aspects of *to logistikon* that are "on loan" to other parts. The difficulties of working out a reasonable construal of such a view are obviously formidable. Perhaps it is these difficulties that have discouraged scholars from even attempting fully to explicate the indirect view. While the view I defend has the undesirable consequence of forcing us to introduce distinctions that Plato does not explicitly make, it has the significant advantage of avoiding the impenetrable thickets into which the indirect view threatens to lead—and so allowing us still to unravel the basic workings of the soul.

There is also the textual evidence reviewed above. It seems unclear how the indirect view can accommodate the evidence from Book IV. As we have seen, in the examples of the thirsty man and Leontius, Plato strongly indicates that in all souls reason rules (in some sense), supported by spirit, over appetite. This evidence is squarely at odds with the indirect view, according to which reason does not have a ruling function in all souls.

III. THE RULING PASSION'S CONTROL OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In addition to, and as a necessary facet of, its task of formulating the soul's plan of life, reason holds opinions about the soul's objects of desire. We have noted that "rational" operations are attributed to all parts of the soul, while all are also said to hold "opinions," though Plato is vague about the specific bearers of different thoughts.²³ It is not easy to move back and forth between Plato's discussion of the conduct of the parts of the soul and more conventional language of personal agency. Plato never specifies the relationship between various parts and the soul as a whole. It is natural to identify the thoughts of all parts—especially of reason, but of the other elements as well—with the agent's consciousness in a more conventional sense.²⁴ The connections between different ways in which a given soul is ruled and the soul's thoughts and opinions—regardless of the specific bearers of these thoughts—lie in the fact that the opinions of all parts are determined by the normatively ruling passion.²⁵

In order to clarify the workings of the subject's consciousness, we can introduce a distinction. We will refer to the normatively ruling passion's preference for certain objects as its "inclination" towards them, or simply its "inclination." We can refer to the process through which opinions about the good held by the different parts (esp. reason and spirit) take shape as the parts' or the subject's "articulation" of the good, or simply "articulation." Thus substituting these terms, we can say that in the majority of cases the inclination of the ruling passion will dictate all the parts' articulation of the good (and the subject's consciousness).

The normatively ruling passion's control over consciousness is apparent

in Book IX, where Plato says that each of the three kinds of men believes that his preferred objects provide the greatest pleasures (581c-e). The process through which the ruling passion takes over the soul is seen in the accounts of the unjust souls in Books VIII and IX.²⁶ The oligarchic man expels the love of honor from his psychic throne (*ek tou thronou tou en tē heautou psuchē*). He then sets up appetite or avarice as king, enslaving *logistikōn* and *thumoeides*, allowing the former to think only about making money and the latter to admire nothing but wealth and wealthy individuals and to take pride in nothing but possessions (553b-d). The account of the democratic man is more elaborate. The citadel (*akropolis*) of his soul is seized by a brood of unnecessary appetites, and then occupied by "false and braggart words and opinions (*logoi te kai doxai*)" (560b-c). The ascendant appetites support their inclinations by revising moral terms. Similarly, they call what was formerly known as reverence and awe "folly," temperance "cowardice," license "liberty," prodigality "magnificence," etc. (560d). They also refuse to listen to ideas that conflict with their new opinions (560c-d). The democratic man turns over his governance (*tēn heautou archēn*) to different pleasures in turn, as if each had drawn the office by lot (561b).²⁷ He indulges the pleasures of the day, drinking wine one day but dieting the next, intermittently exercising, pursuing philosophy and politics. He rationalizes his lack of discrimination by regarding all pleasures as equal, and refuses to consider contrary opinions (561b-d). It should be noted that the ruling appetites here not only indulge themselves, but also tolerate desires of reason and spirit.²⁸

These different descriptions of the alteration of opinions are metaphorically charged and so imprecise, and there is variation in Plato's account of the relationship between the individual's opinions and ruling passion. While reason is the slave of the oligarchic man's passion for wealth, in his account of the democratic man, Plato switches between rule by the passion and rule by opinions with apparent indifference (560b7-c3, 561b3-c4). In the tyrannic soul the opinions appear to be subordinate to the ruling passion (573b, 574d). They serve as its bodyguards, but then they also rule along with it (574d7-8). Though details remain obscure, it is clear that in all these souls the ruling passion controls the articulation of the good by reason and spirit, and so the moral consciousness of the subject.²⁹

IV. SUMMARY

Let us pause to collect our results. We have seen that all souls are ruled in two ways. The normatively ruling passion determines the soul's overall value preferences and goals in life. Depending on the identity of the ruling passion, we have the three great groups of people, lovers of wisdom, honor, and gain, respectively. In all souls the plan of life is drawn up and presided over by reason, which rules directly in this calculative capacity. Thus the basic structure discussed in Book IV is found in all (or almost all) souls, regardless of the normatively ruling passion. Finally,

an individual's ideas concerning the good are shaped by his normatively ruling passion. His reason will hold values in accordance with the ruling passion's inclinations, while his spirit will hold up corresponding qualities as worthy of emulation.

V. THE HUMEAN VIEW OF REASON

The overall view presented in Sections I-III can be defended by comparing it with the discussion of Plato's view of reason in a recent paper by John Cooper. As the title of his paper indicates, Cooper's subject is Plato's views on human motivation. His main target is the Humean view of reason. According to Hume, reason performs a purely instrumental function. It has no conative force of its own, but works out means to satisfy impulses that arise outside of itself.³⁰ Cooper's discussion is most original in his account of certain aspects of reason's motivational force, especially the contention that it possess an urge to rule in the soul according to its own distinctive standards.

Cooper's position depends upon a distinction between weaker and stronger senses in which reason can rule in a soul. In the weaker sense reason's role is along Humean lines. Ruling in this sense, it works out a scheme intended to maximize the satisfaction of desires external to itself. On the stronger view, in working out its plan, reason is guided by more than the imperative to satisfy external desires; it constructs its plan according to criteria that it itself supplies. Reason decides "on its own theoretical grounds which ends are worth pursuing, and does not merely . . . provide the means to, or work out some balance among, appetitively or otherwise given ends."³¹ We have seen that, in Book IX, reason is described as possessing desires of its own, inherent cognitive desires—to learn, to know the truth, etc. (see above). According to the stronger view, reason also supplies an inherent desire to achieve its goals. Because reason must rule in the soul in order to attain its ends, on this view reason also contains an inherent desire to rule in the soul.³²

Cooper believes that Platonic reason rules in the stronger sense. His view can be illustrated by considering the desire for health. According to the weaker view, reason would plan a course of life that took health into account because health represents a condition in which other desires, external to reason, are satisfied. On this weaker interpretation, Platonic reason functions much like Hume's. The main difference from Hume here is that reason also furnishes desires of its own—especially desires for knowledge and truth—to be taken into consideration, along with other particular desires, by *to logistikon* in planning a course of life. According to Cooper's stronger view, health is desired, not because it satisfies other desires, but because it is perceived by reason to be good. Health is a condition in which the body fulfills its natural function, and Plato believes that such conditions are good. Thus the desire for health, as a particular manifestation of the desire for the good, is an inherent desire of reason

(like the cognitive desires). Accordingly, in Book IV when appetite desires to drink and reason resists, Cooper holds that reason's resistance does not stem from its instrumental capacity—representing the interests of the soul as a whole—but from its inherent desire for health because health is good.³³

Though I believe that Cooper presents important suggestions concerning reason's inherent desire for the good,³⁴ I disagree with much of his account of the role reason plays. In particular, I believe that Platonic reason rules in both Cooper's weaker and stronger senses, though its functions differ in different souls. In most souls, it rules only in the weaker sense; only in the completely just soul (or the soul of the philosopher), ruled normatively as well as directly by reason, does it rule in the stronger sense.

The problems with Cooper's view can be seen if we make an additional distinction. Throughout the previous sections we have repeatedly had occasion to note the calculative function of reason, performed by *to logistikon*, which draws up the soul's plan of life. It is necessary clearly to distinguish this aspect of reason from its other components, especially its inherent desires. Because of the overall fuzziness of Plato's presentation, it is not clear exactly where we should draw the line. But in the light of our previous discussion, this side of reason should be said to include the soul's opinions about the objects of its desires—perhaps including opinions held by *to thumoeides* and *to epithumētikon*—and so major components of the individual's consciousness. Especially if we include the “opinions” of parts other than reason, the resulting conception of calculative reason is somewhat cloudy. But this is a significant factor in all human souls and should be isolated.³⁵

It seems to me that Cooper does not adequately distinguish between the conative and calculative sides of reason. In introducing reason's additional inherent desires, Cooper writes: “For in the fourth book [Plato] assigns to reason a double job: to know the truth and to rule (*archein*, 441e4, 442c5) in the light of it.”³⁶ The truths reason pursues in the passages Cooper cites concern the good of the entire soul. But he does not note that the soul under discussion in these passages is the just soul; Plato's points in these passages do not necessarily hold for all human souls.

The only discussion of reason in Book IV that is not in reference to the just soul is Plato's argument for the three parts. (See above.) Reason here is simply *to logistikon*, “that which calculates” (*logizetai*) (439d5). The only indications as to what it calculates about are found in the introduction of *to thumoeides* and its distinctness from other elements. Plato indicates that reason thinks about “the better and the worse” (441c1-2), and about justice (440c8). But in the light of what we have seen in Section III, it is natural to construe reason's cogitations concerning the good and the just as decisively influenced by the inclinations of the normatively ruling passion, rather than as concerned with the good or the just in an

absolute sense. The remainder of the discussion of reason in Book IV pertains to reason as it functions in the just soul. (The transition occurs at 441c4-d7.) Thus the deliberating faculty in the passages cited by Cooper—which exercises forethought for the entire soul (441e5), or rules according to what is beneficial for the soul as a whole (442c7-8)—is reason as it exists in the soul of the philosopher, which, under the normative rule of reason, rules holistically. But as we have seen, in unjust souls reason is swayed by the normatively ruling passion to rule factiously, feeding the ruling desire but ignoring the demands of the other parts.³⁷

Cooper makes an important contribution in arguing that reason has an inherent desire for the good, in addition to its cognitive desires. In Plato's eyes, considerations of goodness and knowledge are inextricably connected,³⁸ and so we should expand the list of inherent desires of reason noted above. However, this desire should be kept distinct from the additional desires of reason Cooper suggests. In particular, Cooper's contentions concerning reason's desire to rule according to its own distinctive criteria are subject to criticism. By stressing the uniqueness of reason in this respect, Cooper implies that the desire to implement its own criteria is a desire peculiar to reason, like the cognitive desires.³⁹ However, reason is not alone in wishing to construct a plan of life according to its own criteria. Any of the three parts that rules normatively will set guidelines for calculative reason to follow in constructing the plan of life. These guidelines will differ according to the part that rules: the oligarchic man will construct a plan that emphasizes wealth rather than goodness and order, the timarchic man one that emphasizes honor, etc.

Along similar lines, I do not believe that a desire to rule (normatively) is peculiar to reason. Insofar as it possesses desires for certain objects, reason "wishes" to exercise normative rule in the soul, and so to insure that its objects are considered. But all parts wish to rule normatively in order to feed their particular cravings.

Thus much of Cooper's account of the distinctiveness of reason evaporates in the light of the distinction between calculative and conative reason and the roles that these elements play in different souls, ruled normatively by different elements. It is difficult to say if reason *desires* to rule in its calculative capacity.⁴⁰ In this role reason, working in an unspecified but close relationship with the cognitive capacities of the other parts, plots a course of life that satisfies as much as possible of the soul's desires—whether factiously or holistically. In combination with its ally, spirit, it defends this course and resists urges that conflict with it. However, it does not seem that reason's support of the plan of life is on a par with the inherent desires of the three elements, the desirability of the objects of which is not derived from other desires. But regardless of where we come down on this question, it seems clear that *to logistikon* plays an important instrumental role in all human souls that does not

differ significantly from Hume's.⁴¹ As we have seen throughout this paper, both in the way it rules (directly) in the soul and in the opinions that it holds, calculative reason is "only the slave" of the normatively ruling passion.^{42, 43}

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NOTES

1. See Section V below.

2. See especially J. Moline, "Plato on the Complexity of the Psyche," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 60 (1978); H.W.B. Joseph, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (Oxford, 1935), Chs. 3-5; N. R. Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 1951), Chs. 1-5; J. C. B. Gosling, *Plato* (London, 1973), Chs. 2-6; also the scholars cited in notes 3-5 and no. 41.

3. Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 1981), p. 163; see also the series of problems she discusses on pp. 149-51.

4. Richard Kraut, "Reason and Justice in Plato's *Republic*," in E. N. Lee (*et al.*), *Exegesis and Argument* (Assen, 1975); Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford, 1977), Ch. 7, esp. pp. 191-204, pp. 226-33. Both are criticized below, n. 21. Kraut is also criticized in G. Klosko, "Dēmōtikē Aretē in the *Republic*," *History of Political Thought*, vol. 3 (1982), along lines that are discussed here. Cf. Annas, who discusses *dēmōtikē aretē* only briefly (*Introduction*, pp. 136-37).

5. John Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Human Motivation," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, vol. 1 (1984).

6. G. Klosko, *The Development of Plato's Political Theory* (New York, 1986), Ch. 7; see also John Cooper, "The Psychology of Justice in Plato," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 14 (1977).

7. Klosko, "Dēmōtikē Aretē" (also see below, n. 21). The present paper provides a detailed defense of the psychological views employed in this earlier paper and in Klosko, *Development*, Chs. 5-7.

8. This is referred to as "predominant rule" in the two works cited in the previous note. For the distinction between different senses of rule, I am indebted to Kraut, "Reason and Justice."

9. Klosko, "Dēmōtikē Aretē," p. 369.

10. Kraut, "Reason and Justice," pp. 209-10.

11. In discussing "rule" in the soul, Plato employs a range of political verbs, frequently stemming from *kratein*, to have power over. But he also uses the word *archō*, "rule," at least once (571c4). As is frequently the case with Plato, too much should not be made of relatively minor terminological variations. *Krateō* and *archō* language should be regarded as interchangeable; see esp. 431b5-7, 444d3-11; note also the language employed by Thrasymachus at 338d-39a.

12. Esp. 611b-12a, 485a-d, 490a-b; see also Joseph, *Essays*, p. 51 n. 1.

13. Klosko, "*Dēmotikē Aretē*," p. 369.
14. E.g., 439c7; 440a1 is less clear, but the subject of *kratoumenos* is undoubtedly Leontius' reason (see below).
15. E.g., 581b12-c1, 559c8-d2, 441e4-5. In other passages normative rule is exercised directly over another part: e.g., 431b6-7, 442b1.
16. I avoid difficult questions concerning the psychological condition of such individuals as non-Greeks and slaves, and various qualifications that would be needed to take account of the rationality of young children, deranged individuals, etc. In addition, though Plato's account of the workings of the tyrannic soul is often unclear, it is possible that the tyrant is so deranged that his soul differs from others in important ways.
17. *Archomenon* in 559d1-2 should be construed in this sense.
18. Plans of life are discussed more fully in Klosko, "*Dēmotikē Aretē*," sec. ii; and *Development*, Ch. 5. See also Joseph, *Essays*, pp. 49-63.
19. 441c1-2 and 440c8 pertain to all souls, in contrast to the discussion after 441c4-d7, which pertains only to the just soul; see below.
20. See J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1902), on 430e.
21. To reconcile Plato's definition of justice with the account of the soul given here, we must distinguish the part that rules (normatively) in a given soul and the manner in which it rules (see above). If all souls possess the basic structure, there is a sense in which each of their parts does its own job, and so it can be asked how these souls differ from the just soul. The answer lies in the manner in which reason rules directly. Only in the soul ruled normatively by reason will reason exercise its direct rule holistically. Similarly, in Book IX (590e-91a), when Plato says that education in the just city is intended to impose a proper order upon souls, he does not mean that if not educated properly these souls would have radically different structures, but that the task of education is to get their reasoning element to rule holistically. Irwin is unclear on the distinction between the element that rules normatively and the *manner* in which it will insure that rule will be exercised, i.e., holistically or factiously (cf. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory*, pp. 232-33, esp. #3 on 232). The distinction between factious and holistic rule is overlooked by Kraut, who apparently takes the normative rule of reason to be a necessary condition for justice ("Reason and Justice," 213-14). Kraut fails to note that, because of the power of education, the direct rule of reason can be "holistic" in souls ruled normatively by any of the three elements. On this, see Klosko, *Dēmotikē Aretē* pp. 373 ff.; *Development*, Ch. 7.
22. Daniel Devereux has pointed out the attractiveness of this interpretation.
23. These aspects of Plato's account are complicated by his personifications of the parts of the soul. The issue of personification is well discussed by Annas (*Introduction*, pp. 142-46) and Moline ("Complexity," pp. 22-26).
24. This identification is supported by the discussion of Leontius (439e-40a), assuming that reason here is overcome by appetite (see above) and by the "inner man" in the simile at end of Book IX (588c ff.); also worth noting is the charioteer in the *Phaedrus* myth (246a ff.).
25. Moline, "Complexity," is very good on the ideational components of the three parts; see also T. Penner, "Thought and Desire in Plato," in *Plato I*, G. Vlastos (ed.), (Garden City, N.Y., 1971).
26. This process is omitted from the brief account of the timarchic man. He is said to turn

over the governance of his soul (*tēn en heautō archēn*, 550b5-6) to *to thumoeides*, and become haughty and a lover of honor. The effects this has upon his consciousness are not discussed.

27. This is a flaw in Plato's account, as it implies that the individual is ruled not by one part of the soul (or part of one part—the unnecessary appetites) but by different particular appetites in sequence. In the subsequent discussion, however, the democratic man is described as believing that all pleasures are equal, rather than that the preferred pleasure of the moment is the best (561b7-c4).

28. I disagree with Cooper ("Plato's Theory of Motivation," pp. 11-14), who holds that the democratic man's pleasure in philosophizing stems from his *epithumētikon*. (Cooper himself notes the oddity of his view: p. 20 n. 13). Rather, in dictating a course of life, the normative rule of unnecessary appetite is not restrictive in regard to the desires that it indulges, and so it allows demands arising from all three parts. Nicholas White, (*A Companion to Plato's Republic* [Indianapolis, 1979], p. 216), for one, sees the democratic man's different appetites as arising from different parts.

29. On spirit's control by the normatively ruling passion, see 553d, 560d-61a, 574d-75a, 573b. Another passage in the *Republic* where passions' control of the articulation of reason is clear is 505d-e; on this see Gosling, *Plato*, p. 29.

30. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, II, iii, 3; Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 5.

31. Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 7.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

33. "Here, instead of taking desire as the criterion of value in its object, reason presumes to be able to decide by appeal to its own principles what things are good and how good they are; . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 19 n. 9).

34. As he also does in "Psychology of Justice."

35. A distinction along these lines is commonly made by scholars, though I have not seen it developed or applied systematically; see, e.g., Annas, *Introduction*, pp. 135-36; Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 10.

36. Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 6.

37. Cooper notes that reason's desire to care for all parts of the soul does not seem to operate in the unjust souls ("Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 20 n. 18), but does not pursue the implications.

38. See esp. Gosling, *Plato*, Ch. 4.

39. "[I]ntellectual curiosity is not the only desire Socrates attributes to reason . . . [J]ust as Socrates makes the desire for knowledge—that is, the desire which leads reason to perform one part of its natural job—the direct consequence of our rational nature, so, I believe it can be shown, he also assigns to reason an inherent desire to perform the other part of its natural job, that of ruling." ("Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 6). Also: "human reason has, so to speak, an innate taste for ruling, just as it has an innate taste for knowing." (loc. cit.) ("Ruling" in these passages involves ruling according to reason's own standards.) Note the implications that Cooper hopes to draw from his construal of reason (p. 19 n. 10).

40. See Murphy, *Interpretation*, pp. 32-33; I find Cooper's argument ("Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 7) unconvincing.

41. R. Cross and A. D. Woozley present an argument similar to Cooper's, and also cite *Rep* 441e to support their view (*Plato's Republic: A Philosophical Commentary* [London, 1964], pp. 118-19). I believe that they too can be criticized along lines presented here. Cooper notes that they anticipate his interpretation ("Plato's Theory of Motivation," p. 18 n. 6).

42. *To logistikon* is explicitly enslaved at 553d. Plato is quoted from the edition of John Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1900-07); for translations of the *Republic*, I generally follow Paul Shorey, *The Republic of Plato*, 2 vols. (London, 1930, 1935).

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