

Rachel Barney, Tad Brennan, and Charles Brittain, eds.
Plato and the Divided Self.
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Plato and the Divided Self contains fifteen essays that track the development of Plato's tripartite theory of the soul throughout the course of his career, as well as the use of that theory among some later Platonists. This excellent volume, which was edited by Rachel Barney, Tad Brennan, and Charles Brittain (who contribute a brief introduction), usefully includes an index locorum, footnotes (rather than the less convenient endnotes), and an extensive bibliography. It is divided into four parts that correspond roughly to 'stages' in the development and use of Plato's theory of tripartition.

The essays in Part I of the volume, 'Transitions to Tripartition,' explore the moral psychological views expressed in dialogues that are considered prior to, or roughly contemporaneous with, the *Republic* (where the tripartite theory is first introduced), and they address ways in which those views anticipate, motivate, or relate to tripartite psychology. Iakonos Vasilou, taking up some of the themes of his book (*Aiming at Virtue in Plato*, Cambridge University Press, 2008), compares the treatments of virtue that are offered in *Phaedo* and the *Republic*. He argues that the *Republic* is more optimistic than the *Phaedo* in attributing to non-philosophers not the merely slavish virtue of the ordinary people of the *Phaedo*, but rather a superior, 'political' virtue. What makes this improvement possible, Vasilou suggests, is precisely the introduction of the tripartite soul, which allows for a process of non-rational habituation through musical education that was not possible given the rationalistic, unitary psychology of the *Phaedo*.

Louis-André Dorion's contribution, which echoes some of his own earlier article ('Plato and *Enkrateia*,' in Bobonich and Destrée, eds., *Akrasia in Greek Philosophy: From Socrates to Plotinus*, Brill, 2007, 119–38), sets out to analyze Plato's notion of *enkrateia*, and to explain why *enkrateia* does not feature in Plato's early dialogues but becomes prominent in *Gorgias* and the *Republic*. His suggestion is that this shift coincides with Plato's introduction of a divided soul—a bipartite one in the *Gorgias* and the tripartite soul of the *Republic*. Just as Plato cannot recognize the possibility of *akrasia* (the case in which knowledge and appetite contend and appetite wins out) without a divided soul, so also he cannot recognize the possibility of *enkrateia* (the case in which knowledge and appetite come into conflict and *knowledge* wins) without a divided soul.

Finally, Part I contains an essay by Eric Brown (the inclusion of which in this section of the volume is somewhat curious, given that its focus is the *Republic*) that addresses the contentious issue of how, and indeed whether, Plato's tripartite theory of the soul can account for psychic unity. Brown usefully distinguishes between 'unearned' unity, which is the minimum unity required for biological functioning (and which is therefore possessed by all living agents), and 'earned' unity, which requires the higher degree of organization and harmony among the three soul-parts that is essential to virtue.

The second part of the volume, ‘Moral Psychology in the *Republic*,’ turns to the dialogue in which the tripartite theory is introduced, and in which it is developed in the greatest depth. Rachana Kamtekar’s essay (an abridged version of a previous publication, ‘Speaking with the Same Voice as Reason: Personification in Plato’s Psychology,’ *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 31 [2006], 167–202) explores Plato’s use of personification in his characterizations of the soul in the *Republic*, *Phaedo*, and *Phaedrus*. According to Kamtekar, the primary purpose of personification for Plato is protreptic: hence, for example, the image in the *Republic*, book 9 of the soul as a multiform creature is intended to encourage us identify with, and develop, the best part of ourselves—the rational, ‘human’ part—while also drawing our attention to the necessity of ‘taming’ the ‘lion-like’ and ‘beast-like’ parts of ourselves. Tad Brennan provides what is quite simply the best, as well as the most thorough and focused, examination of the spirited part of the soul that has yet been offered in the secondary literature. Brennan analyzes the psychic function of spirit and the characteristic object of spirited desire, and he persuasively develops the view that—from the perspective of the creator gods of the *Timaeus*, who created the human soul with a view to making it best—the inclusion of the spirited part in the soul was a necessary response to the inclusion of the appetitive part (which was itself necessary for the purpose of biological maintenance).

James Wilberding’s contribution focuses on the question whether, and how, the appetitive part of the soul can be ‘educated’ in the *Republic*. Drawing on Book 8’s distinction between necessary appetites and unnecessary ones, Wilberding argues that whereas appetitive education will aim to *eliminate* (not merely control) unnecessary appetites, it will seek to ‘domesticate’ the necessary ones through early education. Raphael Woolf provides an analysis of *Republic* 10’s likening of the soul to the sea-monster Glaucus and argues that the primary purpose of the image is to provide a commentary on proper philosophical *method*: discovering the true nature of the soul, the image is supposed to suggest, will require something *more* than mere images—namely, dialectical inquiry. Part II of the volume concludes with Jennifer Whiting’s defense of the view that the *Republic* allows for what she calls ‘radical psychic contingency’: it is contingent, she claims, both what sort of internal structure (at least some of) the soul’s ‘parts’ have in a given individual, and also how many genuine parts a given individual soul has at all. Whether or not one agrees with her conclusions, this dense and incisive piece confronts a number of deeply-entrenched assumptions about Plato’s tripartite theory, and it poses a powerful challenge to which many commentators will no doubt feel compelled to respond in the coming years.

Part III of the volume, ‘After the *Republic*,’ tracks the development of Platonic moral psychology in works following the *Republic*. One of the uniting features of the essays in this section is that they avoid attributing any sort of radical developmentalism to Plato. (The introduction to the volume characterizes their perspective as ‘continuitarian,’ as an alternative to the more common anti-developmental term ‘unitarian’ [2].) Rather, they understand Plato’s later works as compatible with, and often as supplementing and developing, the tripartite psychology of the *Republic*. Frisbee Sheffield focuses on the impact that tripartition has on Plato’s conception of *erôs* by comparing the treatment of *erôs* in the *Symposium* with that in the *Phaedrus*. She concludes that, contrary to the findings of many commentators, tripartition does not result in substantive revisions in Plato’s account of love.

Hendrik Lorenz provides an ingenious account of appetitive cognition in the *Timaeus*, and in particular of how appetite's cognitive resources allow for communication between it and the reasoning part of the soul, despite *Timaeus*' evident denial of cognitive resources such as belief to the appetitive part. (The essay represents an updated treatment of some of the issues dealt with in Chapter 7 of Lorenz' book, *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle*, Clarendon Press, 2006.) In her contribution, Jessica Moss argues that Plato develops a theory of the passions in his late works that anticipates the one offered by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*. She draws on *Philebus* and *Timaeus* to suggest that, for Plato, passions characteristically involve 'illustrated beliefs'—beliefs, that is, that derive from perception and are accompanied by mental images. Part III closes with an essay by Luc Brisson, who examines the moral psychology of Plato's *Laws* and argues, first of all, that the three parts of the *Republic*'s tripartite soul can be found in the *Laws*, and, second, that those three parts are (as they were in city-soul analogy of the *Republic*) to be understood in relation to three classes or groups of people that have distinct functions in the city.

Finally, Part IV, 'Parts of the Soul in the Platonic Tradition,' contains essays dealing with the treatment of Plato's divided-soul psychology by later Platonists. Jan Opsomer examines Plutarch's interpretation of the moral psychology of the *Timaeus*, and she discusses the role of divided psychology in Plutarch's account of virtue, which holds (against the Stoics) that irrational passions are an ineliminable feature of our psychology, one which must accordingly be controlled rather than eradicated. In an especially engaging piece, Mark Schiefsky deals with Galen's use of tripartite psychology in his medical philosophy (or, rather, in his philosophical medicine), and he analyzes (and defends) Galen's anatomical arguments for the existence of three distinct parts or sources of motivation within the soul. Eyólfur Kjalar Emilsson, finally, provides an in-depth examination of a passage from Plotinus' sixth *Ennead* (8.6 19–22). Emilsson interprets the passage in light of Socrates' remarks on justice at *Republic* 43c-d, and he comments on the connections between Plotinus' doctrine of 'double activity,' on the one hand, and Plato's own understanding of the relationship between the soul and action, on the other.

This volume represents an invaluable contribution to the field of Platonic moral psychology. The essays it contains are filled with fresh ideas, insights, and challenges, and they are sure to stimulate new debates in the ongoing scholarly discussion of Plato's views on the soul. There are just two small observations that I would like to make at this point. The first is that, as the introduction itself points out, most of the papers in this volume incline toward the view that the parts of the soul are best understood as 'robustly agent-like individuals' (3). This 'literalist' bent may make some of its arguments non-starters for those scholars who prefer a more 'deflationist' interpretation of Plato's talk about the parts of the soul. While this is not a mark against the volume, which will be worthwhile for anyone with an interest in Platonic psychology, it is nonetheless worth noting. Second, while it would be asking too much of the volume to provide a complete overview of the development of Plato's views on the tripartite soul, there is one conspicuous lacuna in the volume's otherwise admirably broad coverage: none of the essays in this volume offers an examination of the *Protagoras*. (As the index locorum indicates, the text receives just seven mentions in the entire volume, and they are all more or less passing references.) Given the prominence of moral psychology in that dialogue, and the fact that the tripartite psychology of the *Republic* has traditionally (though perhaps wrongly) been

understood as a response to the perceived Socratic ‘intellectualism’ of the *Protagoras*, a comprehensive look at the development of Plato’s views on the divided soul would surely pay more attention to that dialogue. This is, of course, a trifling point given the volume’s many merits. This collection is, as already indicated, outstanding, and it will undoubtedly become necessary reading for anyone considering Platonic moral psychology for years to come.

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