

Moral Psychology in Plato's *Gorgias*

Daniel R. N. Lopes

This essay intends to argue for the affinity between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* concerning issues of moral psychology. To this end I will divide my argument into two halves. The first half will show how the Calliclean moral psychology outlined at 491e-492a implies the possibility of conflict within the soul, especially regarding the relationship between *epithumiai* and shame. It will then argue that Socrates recognizes the appetitive element of the soul in his reply to Callicles but does not explore its consequences in any depth. The second half will contend that *thumos* – in the form of shame – is represented *dramatically*, and to some extent *theoretically* by Plato as one source of human motivation independent from reason, and recognized as such by the Calliclean position. My ultimate goal is to show how Plato raises questions in the *Gorgias* that hint at the theory of the tripartite soul expounded in book IV of the *Republic*, even though the answers here remain insufficient. The *Gorgias* therefore invites its readers to reflect critically on so-called Socratic intellectualism pointing to a more complex conception of human motivation that will be developed in the *Republic*.

1- Introduction¹

The place of the *Gorgias* in the *corpus Platonicum* – whether it belongs to the group of “early or Socratic dialogues” or points to the Platonic theories developed in the *Republic*, especially regarding issues of moral psychology – has been subject to almost endless discussion. Scholars disagree not only on matters of chronology, however, but on the nature of the philosophical content presented in the dialogue. One idiosyncratic

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¹ For the purposes of this paper, I have used Tom Griffith's translation of the *Gorgias* (Cambridge, 2010) and G.M.A Grube's translation, subsequently revised by C.D.C Reeve, of the *Republic* (Indianapolis, 1997). I have made some slight modifications to their translations in order to better cohere with my text, but this is not to question the original translation (e.g. “temperance” instead of “moderation” for *sōphrosunē*, “appetite” instead of “desire” for *epithumia*, and so on).

reading of the *Gorgias* is advanced by Charles Kahn in his book *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue* (Cambridge 1996) in which he argues against a developmental approach to Platonic philosophy and argues instead for an ingressive interpretation – which is to say, “to identify the meaning of a particular argument or an entire work by locating it within the larger thought-world articulated in the middle dialogues” (1996: 59).² On this reading, Plato is supposed to have written some “Socratic” dialogues (namely, *Crito*, *Ion*, *Lesser Hippias*, and *Apology*) before conceiving the complete philosophical doctrines on metaphysics, morality, and politics expounded in the *Republic*. To prepare readers for this new philosophical insight Plato is supposed to have written the so-called “threshold dialogues”, which are *aporetic* and are devoted largely to defining the virtues (namely, *Laches*, *Charmides*, *Euthyphro*, *Protagoras*, *Meno*, *Lysis*, and *Euthydemus*). The *Gorgias* would therefore occupy an intermediate position between these two groups, since it is not *aporetic* but advances certain moral and political arguments that Plato will develop (often in quite different terms) in the *Republic* (1996: 40-41).³ Referring to Plato’s testimony in *Seven Letter* (*Ep.* VII 324a), Kahn also indulges in chronological speculation, suggesting that the *Gorgias* was composed before the “threshold” dialogues, when Plato broke with Athenian politics culminating later in his relocation to Sicily (1996: 127).

Regarding the philosophical meaning of the *Gorgias*, Kahn remarks that the most cogent arguments Socrates employs to undermine Calicles’ position are those that take the form of analogy or comparison: between virtues and the products of art or nature, between politics and the building trade, between politics and medicine and so on. Under the ingressive interpretation advanced by Kahn, Plato may have felt after writing the *Gorgias* that this analogical approach was not satisfactory and that a more complex explanation should be pursued. This realization may have been expressed in the *Charmides*, in which Critias criticises the argument from analogy employed by

² C. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue* (Cambridge, 1996), 63: “I have shown elsewhere how the thematic structure of the *Republic* is characterized by techniques of proleptic composition that rise to a crescendo in Books VI-VII. I suggest that an analogous plan of ingressive exposition, using similar techniques, leads from dialogue to dialogue to the very same climax in the central books of the *Republic*. At this point the developmental and the ingressive interpretations are strictly incompatible, since on my view there is no more reason to speak of Plato’s intellectual development between the *Laches* and the *Republic* than there is to speak of his development between Book I and Book X of the *Republic*.”

³ On criticism of Kahn’s interpretation, see J. Cooper, “Socrates and Plato in Plato’s *Gorgias*” (Princeton, 1999), 30.

Socrates (*Chrm.* 165e, 166b). Kahn asserts that the *Republic* is in some sense a re-elaboration of the arguments employed in the *Gorgias*, but in a more satisfactory way, grounded in psychological, epistemological, and metaphysical theories that support the assumptions Socrates weakly attempted to defend in the *Gorgias* (1996: 144). Kahn sums up the philosophical contribution made by the *Gorgias* to the later dialogues as follows: “The *Gorgias* implies that this harmony between life and belief holds because Socrates’ doctrines are, and his adversaries’ claims are not, in agreement with their own *boulesthai*, their rational desire for the good. This connection between the personal dimension of the elenchus and Plato’s theory of desire is perhaps the most fundamental insight of the dialogue” (1996: 145).

Nevertheless, this separation proposed by Kahn between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* both in philosophical and in chronological matters has been challenged by other scholars, such as Terence Irwin and John Cooper. Irwin identifies a tension in the *Gorgias* regarding issues of moral psychology. The so-called Socratic intellectualism advanced by Socrates in the first half of the dialogue during the discussion with Gorgias and Polus is apparently contradicted by the examination of temperance and intemperance during the discussion with Callicles in the second half, which to some extent anticipates the arguments made in the *Republic*. According to Irwin, the recognition of the *epithumiai* as good-independent desires in the soul – and consequently the possibility of inner conflict between different motivational sources, even though not made explicit by Plato – is not consistent with his earlier assumptions on moral psychology in the *Gorgias* (e.g. 467c ff.).⁴ Irwin admits that “Socrates’ previous argument against the value of rhetoric assumes the truth of the Socratic Paradox. The defence of temperance and continence assumes the falsity of the Paradox. *The conclusions of these two main lines of argument in the dialogue are never satisfactorily reconciled*” (1979: 218; my italics). Irwin seems to reiterate this argument in his commentary on the *Gorgias* in his book *Plato’s Ethics* (Oxford, 1995), in which he affirms that “[Socrates’] claims about self-control and the non-rational part of the soul give us some reason for supposing that he has doubts about the eudaemonist rejection of incontinence”, such that “the *Gorgias* sometimes rejects psychological eudaemonism” and seems “internally inconsistent on this major issue” (1995: 116). This

⁴ T. Irwin, *Plato. Gorgias* (Oxford, 1979), at 191; *Plato’s Ethics* (Oxford, 1995), at 116.

is basically the same position restated in his monumental *The Development of Ethics – Volume I* published some years ago (Oxford 2007: 75).

In contrast to Kahn, Irwin considers that the treatment of the *epithumiai* by Socrates in his discussion of temperance and intemperance with Callicles provides the reader with arguments which cast at least some doubt on the value of “Socratic intellectualism” and highlights various issues of moral psychology that Plato will develop more completely in the *Republic*. While Kahn views the *Gorgias* as far removed from the *Republic* (although recognizing some notable similarities), Irwin argues for a closer relationship between the two dialogues on issues of moral psychology. Irwin, however, considers the tension between Socratic intellectualism and the Platonic advancements in this field of philosophical inquiry to be irreconcilable, and admits the inconsistency of Plato’s own position in the *Gorgias* which will only be resolved in the *Republic*. In sum, Irwin seems to regard the *Gorgias* as a kind of transitional dialogue in which Plato presents some criticism to Socratic intellectualism and begins to develop a more complex moral psychology according to which nonrational elements within the soul are considered motivational sources alongside reasoned deliberation.

John Cooper, in turn, would broadly agree with Irwin against Kahn’s reading but disagrees with him in several ways, especially regarding the apparent inconsistency of Socrates’ position in the *Gorgias*. In his essay “Socrates and Plato in Plato’s *Gorgias*” (Princeton 1999), Cooper adopts a methodological principle that is alien to readings such as Irwin’s: Plato conveys the philosophical content of the dialogues not only by means of his protagonist Socrates, but through other interlocutors (1999: 31). This enables him to reinterpret the apparent inconsistency of the *Gorgias* discussed by Irwin, by distinguishing between the real position of Socrates’ character throughout the dialogue and that of Callicles (indeed, Cooper emphasizes this third section of the dialogue in his analysis). According to Cooper, the *Gorgias* points out the weakness of the Socratic view of human psychology not through Socrates’ contradictory assumptions in the dialogue – as argued by Irwin – but through an alternative moral psychology outlined by Callicles at 491e-492c. Cooper argues that “Callicles conspicuously employs ideas about the virtues (for example, bravery) and about the psychology of human action which depart from those Socrates himself relies on in other Socratic dialogues and indeed earlier in this one. Furthermore, these ideas line up very closely with the quite different ideas of these matters espoused by the Socrates of the

Republic. [...] We have every reason to believe that in writing the *Republic*, Plato believed the new moral psychology presented there, and the new theory of the moral virtues based upon it, to be philosophically more defensible than the ‘Socratic’ one” (1999: 32). Cooper therefore argues that Socrates notices these innovations advanced by Callicles throughout the discussion of temperance and intemperance, despite apparently disregarding them in his response. Arguing against Irwin’s interpretation, he seeks to demonstrate that Socrates is aware of the implications of Callicles’ moral psychology, but by choosing not to address them directly he avoids adopting a position that would contradict his intellectualist stance in his previous discussions with Polus and Gorgias (1999: 59). In other words, Cooper tries to recover the integrity of Socrates’ position in the *Gorgias* by ascribing the innovations in issues of moral psychology highlighted by Irwin not to Socrates, but to Callicles.

On the other hand, in her essay “Calculating Machines or Leaky Jars? The Moral Psychology of Plato’s *Gorgias*” (*Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 26, 2004) Gabriela Carone challenges the general view shared both by Irwin and Cooper – namely, that the *Gorgias* constitutes a sort of transitional dialogue that points towards the moral psychology of the *Republic*. She considers that the problem identified by both scholars concerning the tension between the intellectualist approach advanced by Socrates in the first half of the dialogue and the “irrationalist” one encountered in the second half of the *Gorgias* is to misconstrue both “Socratic intellectualism” and the “irrationalist” strand. Carone therefore attempts to argue that “the Socratic intellectualism expounded in the dialogue does not preclude, but rather presupposes, a strong emotional component as a decisive factor in the explanation of human motivation. Likewise, the apparent soul division proposed in the discussion with Callicles later on in the dialogue need not – *pace* Cooper, Irwin, and others – treat desire or *epithumia* as a distinct source of motivation that could have a strength independent of the strength of reason” (2004: 59). The crucial point advanced by Carone lies in her interpretation of the recognition that appetites constitute but one element of the soul. According to her, there is nothing in the *Gorgias* that allows us to infer that the *epithumiai* are an independent source of human motivation that might conflict with

reason; the recognition of the appetites as being but one factor of human personality does not in itself imply the rejection of Socratic intellectualism (2004: 59).⁵

Carone's approach to the *Gorgias*, especially concerning the way she understands the Socratic "intellectualism", is akin to some extent to the insightful reading of Socrates' philosophy advanced by Brickhouse and Smith since their *Plato's Socrates* (Oxford 1994) – nonetheless, I will focus here for the sake of objectivity on their last comprehensive book on this topic (*Socratic Moral Psychology*, Cambridge 2010). In their alternative way of understanding the Socratic "intellectualism", Brickhouse & Smith contend that Socrates acknowledges the existence of nonrational desires within the soul – such as pleasures, pains, appetites, anger, love and fears⁶ – but they do not constitute a source of motivation *independently* of the desire of the good (2010: 143-144). Nonetheless, instead of providing only information to reason as defended by the standard view of the Socratic intellectualism according to them, appetites and passions are deemed as affecting cognition and influencing judgement "by the way in which they represent their aims to the soul" (2010: 52). In this sense, appetites and passions still have a *explanatory* or *causal* role in the Socratic moral psychology (2010: 132), even though ultimately it is always the rational desire – i.e. the desire aroused by what we believe best for us to do at the time of action – that motivates us and leads us to act. In other words, "actions always follows belief" (2010: 107), but this belief about what is best for us to do can be brought about by strong influence of nonrational affections, specially in the cases of people whose appetites and passions became unrestrained due to a bad education. Thus, concerning the *Gorgias*, and specifically the discussion about temperance and intemperance in Callicles' section (2010: 51), Brickhouse and Smith contend that there is nothing "new" or "un-Socratic" there, insofar as the acknowledgement of the *epithumiai* as one element within the soul

⁵ It is worth noting that Carone understands Socratic intellectualism in a different way from that generally understood. According to her, it presupposes not only rational belief but recognises affections and emotions as a decisive factor in the explanation of human motivation (2004: 56). However, the relationship between the rational and the nonrational is regarded by her as co-instantiated, such that removing the affect implies effectively removing the belief, and vice-versa (2004: 92). Consequently altering their set of beliefs would be sufficient to persuade an interlocutor of the truth of Socratic moral opinions, provided this is done with appropriate *logoi*. In this sense, her interpretation remains essentially "intellectualist".

⁶ Some texts used by Brickhouse and Smith to support their reading: pleasures, pains, appetites, and fears (*Lach.* 191e4-7); the distinction between *boulesis*, *epithumia* and *erōs* (*Chrm.* 167e1-5); different kinds of desire (*Lys.* 220e6-221b8); anger, fear, and shame (*Ap.* 21b1-23e3; 29e3-30a3; 32b1-d4).

is absolutely compatible with their alternative approach to the Socratic moral psychology in the early Platonic dialogues (*pace* Irwin and others). Although Carone in the essay referred above agrees with them on this revaluation of the Socratic intellectualism against the standard view that seeks to deny, broadly speaking, any role to nonrational affections in the Socratic theory of action⁷, she does not accept, as we will see later on, the *causal* or *explanatory* role ascribed by them to appetites and passions; for her, it is rather *logoi* that act upon them, and not the other way round (2004: 89-90).

These conflicting approaches to the *Gorgias* reveal how the issues of moral psychology therein remain controversial and liable to different interpretations, especially concerning its relationship with the *Republic* in this field of philosophical inquiry. In this essay, I will attempt to further this debate by analysing not only the treatment of the *epithumiai* in the *Gorgias*, and its meaning, but also the role of *shame* in the dialogue in order to understand to what extent we can understand such moral feeling as a manifestation of the *thumos*. I shall state here, then, my broad sympathy for Cooper's reading of the *Gorgias* – particularly regarding his interpretation of the alternative moral psychology supported by Callicles (491e-492c) – and my scepticism of Carone's criticism of his interpretation (I will resume this defence of Cooper's reading later on). Consequently, I will attempt to show that even though Brickhouse and Smith's alternative approach is very insightful and consistent when applied to the early dialogues, in the case of the *Gorgias*, however, their arguments advanced in the book *Socratic Moral Psychology* do not outweigh the evidence that points towards further developments in the Platonic moral psychology we find in books IV, VIII and IX of the *Republic* – particularly concerning the notion of temperance as a kind of *orderliness* (503d-505c; 506d-507a), and the reflexions on happiness and virtue expressed by Callicles at 491e-492c, which Brickhouse and Smith does not explore appropriately⁸.

⁷ The standard view is accordingly represented, for Brickhouse and Smith, by Terry Penner's interpretation ("Socrates and the early dialogues". In R. Kraut (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, at 128-129), whose main tenets would be the following: (i) there are no desires other than rational desires; (ii) a rational desire is one that always adjusts to the agent's beliefs about what is best for him or her; and (iii) the only way to alter intentional action is to alter the agent's belief about what is best for him or her (2010: 50-51).

⁸ My disagreement with them regarding the *Gorgias* is above all *methodological*: since they focus on the Socratic moral psychology, they disregard relevant philosophical content conveyed by characters other than Socrates, such as Callicles. Thus, if there is important advancement in the discussion on moral psychology issues expressed by Callicles, as Cooper contends, to deem

Ultimately, I think that the traditional view of the *Gorgias* as a transitional dialogue continues to be the most plausible reading.

Thus, to make clear what is meant by “Socratic intellectualism”, let us first summarize the assumptions that underpin this moral view of human motivation that we find scattered throughout the Platonic dialogues (cf. e.g. *Prt.* 358b-d; *Meno* 77b-78b; *Euthd.* 281b; *R.* I 351a; *Grg.* 460b, 467c-468c, 509e):

- (a) knowledge of the good is sufficient for a virtuous action (*Grg.* 460b); and/or, in a broader scope, no one acts against what she thinks for her to be the best course of action, if it is in her power to do so (*the prudential paradox*) (*Prt.* 358b-d);
- (b) no one does wrong willingly (*the moral paradox*) (*Prt.* 345d-e; *Grg.* 509e);
- (c) everybody wishes the good, and it is for the sake of the good that one does everything he does (*Grg.* 468b-c);
- (d) ergo, when one does wrong she does so unwillingly because she mistakenly supposes that her action will somehow benefit her, though it in fact harms her. If she understood the reasons why a given course of action is harmful, she would act accordingly;
- (e) ergo, the moral phenomenon known as “weakness of will” (*akrasia*), as the majority understand it (*Prt.* 352d) – that is to say, whenever one does something motivated by nonrational forces within his soul (such as anger, pleasure, pain, sexual desire, and fear), even though understanding that she should not do so and it being possible for her to pursue the opposite course of action – is the result of nothing but ignorance.

After that, we can proceed to the analysis of relevant passages of the *Gorgias* on moral psychology issues in order to evaluate the *pros* and *cons* of the different interpretations mentioned above.

2 – *Epithumiai* and *Thumos* in the *Gorgias*

One of the most prominent features of the Socratic elenchus in dialogues like the *Gorgias* is its *ad hominem* aspect:⁹ scrutiny of the opinions advanced by the interlocutor

to what extent the *Gorgias* is related to the *Republic* in this field of philosophical inquiry requires rather a comprehensive approach to the dialogue that deals with both Socrates' and Callicles' views. Nonetheless, I would like to state that Brickhouse and Smith's interpretation of the Socratic intellectualism in the early dialogues is quite convincing in several points; what I will criticize here is specifically how they use the *Gorgias* as evidence for their alternative approach. Besides disregarding the so-called Calliclean moral psychology (491e-492c) that presents common features to the Platonic theory developed in the *Republic*, I think that they do not tackle the physiology of the appetites in the *orderliness* argument (503d-505c; 506d-507a) in a sufficient manner, as we shall see.

⁹ On the *ad hominem* feature of the Socratic elenchus, see Kahn 1996, 133-137; F. Gonzalez, “Introduction: A Short History of Platonic Interpretation and the ‘Third Way’” (Lanham, 1995),

implies the examination of the condition of his soul through consideration of his life and mode of living.¹⁰ In Callicles' case, this is accomplished through the vivid way Plato depicts his character – maybe the most emblematic of Socrates' interlocutors in the *corpus Platonium* – and by the methods Socrates employs to refute him. When taking the role of Socrates' main interlocutor, Callicles makes a long speech that can be divided in three parts (482c-486d): (i) a reflection on the refutation of Polus and Gorgias, rebuking them, on one hand, for being overcome by shame and giving themselves to contradiction, and accusing Socrates, on the other hand, of eristic play throughout the discussion (482c4-483a7); (ii) an exposition of his conception of human political nature designated by the notion of “the law of nature” or “the just by nature” (483a7-484c3); and (iii) an invective against philosophy and the philosopher (484c4-486d1). Callicles is portrayed by Plato as an interlocutor who is confident of his own opinions, supporting them arduously and resisting Socrates' attempts to persuade him of the superiority of the philosophical life over the political. Socrates tells him – ironically, as later becomes clear – that he has three essential qualities that enable him to verify his own moral convictions – namely, knowledge, benevolence, and frankness (ἐπιστήμην τε καὶ εὐνοίαν καὶ παρρησίαν, 487a2-3). The presence of these three qualities will be verified by Socrates through elenchus and the concurrent examination of Callicles' soul.

In Callicles' case the Socratic elenchus has a threefold role corresponding to each of these three personal qualities: (i) to reveal the interlocutor's ignorance by leading him to contradict himself on issues of paramount importance, such as virtue and happiness; (ii) to reveal the absence of *eunoia* and *philia* between them;¹¹ and (iii) to test Callicles' frankness in order to verify to what extent he is immune to shame, in contrast to Gorgias and Polus. One may assume that this examination is the ultimate goal of the arguments employed by Socrates when confronting Callicles, given the *ad*

at 11; C. Kahn, “Drama and Dialectic in Plato's *Gorgias*”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 1 (1983), at 75; E. Rutherford, *The Art of Plato* (London, 1995), at 146-7.

¹⁰ Cf. *Prt.* 333b7-9.

¹¹ The several ironic references to *philia* by Socrates (482a5, 487e5, 499c3-4, 491d4, 497d5, 500b6, 507a3, 508a3, 519d5, 519e3) demonstrate precisely this feature of the discussion between them. In this regard the absence of friendship indicates in advance the failure of the discussion, since *philia* is one of the conditions for philosophical dialogue. As Malcolm Schofield notes: “If rhetoric and philosophy present incommensurable modes of thought and discourse, how can the common search for truth which Socratic conversation undertakes have any hope of success with interlocutors not committed to its methods and objects?” (“Approaching the *Republic*”, in C. Rowe and M. Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2000), at 194).

hominem nature of the elenchus. In his examination of Callicles' political convictions, the tension between their respective moral opinions becomes more salient. While for Socrates the virtuous person is "temperate, his own master, ruling the pleasures and appetites within himself" (σώφρονα ὄντα καὶ ἐγκρατῇ αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ, τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, 491d11-e1), for Callicles virtue and happiness consist in "luxury, intemperance and freedom" (τρυφὴ καὶ ἀκολασία καὶ ἐλευθερία, 492c4-5). In this context of the dialogue, Callicles articulates a moral psychology on which is grounded his political ideal, as espoused in his main speech. Accordingly, the person who intends to be happy must allow his own appetites to be as great as possible and must be able to satisfy them whenever they arise, having sufficiently bravery and intelligence to restrain whatever *pathos* might disturb this process, such as fear or shame (491e-492b). In Callicles' view, the praise of temperance (*sōphrosunē*) and justice (*dikaia sunē*) – that is to say, the *conventional* justice established by laws and customs shared by the majority – is ascribed only to those who are unable to satisfy their appetites and who would otherwise be slaves of the better and superior people by nature.

The hedonistic conception of happiness defended by Callicles implies, therefore, the capacity to fulfil one's appetites and, consequently, to provide pleasure for oneself. Socrates, on the other hand, refers to a Sicilian or Italian myth (492e-494a) in order to show Callicles that the intemperate person – likened to a leaky jar concerning the "part" of the soul where the appetites are – is unable to satisfy them completely. Inasmuch as he is unable to satisfy them, he suffers great pains instead of experiencing pleasure continuously. As such, the intemperate person is the most unhappy. The temperate and ordered one, conversely, is able to fulfil his appetites moderately and by succeeding in doing so remains calm and comfortable. Socrates thus responds that it is not the intemperate but the temperate person who lives well and is happier, insofar as he is able to satisfy his appetites *moderately* as discussed later on (503c-d). The disagreement between Callicles and Socrates concerns not only the moral value assigned to temperance and intemperance in view of human happiness, but also the physiology of pleasure. While Socrates seems to assume that the process of fulfilling the appetites consists in a blend of pleasure and pain, such that there is no experience of pure pleasure at all in repletive appetites such as hunger and thirst (496b-497a), Callicles regards pleasure as an experience concurrent with the process of satisfying them, such

that the more one maximizes her appetites, the more pleasure she will have in fulfilling them; when one is satiated, in turn, she no longer feels pain or pleasure (494a-b).

2.1 – *Epithumiai*

My intention, however, is not to judge which physiology of pleasure is better reasoned in the dialogue, or whether the argument subsequently advanced by Socrates in order to demonstrate the distinction between goodness and pleasure is logically valid.¹² Instead, my intention is to show that the discussion of temperance and intemperance between Socrates and Callicles contains features that evoke the treatment of the “part” of the soul in books IV, VIII and IX of the *Republic*, especially regarding *to epithumētikon*. These features may be classified as follows: (a) lexical similarity; (b) methodological similarities in the examination of the *epithumiai*; (c) paradigmatic examples of *epithumiai*; and (d) the function of punishment for the intemperate person in accordance with the analogy between soul and body. Let us analyse each in turn.

(a) The most straightforward similarity between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* regarding the treatment of the *epithumiai* is linguistic. In the myth which Socrates employs to persuade Callicles of the superiority of temperance over intemperance, there are three verbal formulations (τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦτο ἐν ᾧ ἐπιθυμῖαι εἰσὶ, 493a3; τοῦτο τῆς ψυχῆς οὗ αἱ ἐπιθυμῖαι εἰσὶ, 493b1; τὸν αὐτὸν τόπον ... ψυχῆς, 496e7) that are quite similar to those ones employed by Plato in book IV of the *Republic* to designate the ‘parts’ of soul (τι ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν, IV 431a4; οὐκ ἐνεῖναι μὲν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτῶν τὸ κελεῦον, ἐνεῖναι δὲ τὸ κωλύον πιεῖν, ἄλλο ὄν καὶ κρατοῦν τοῦ κελεύοντος; IV 439c5-7). As G. R. F. Ferrari points out, when Plato does not use technical terminology for the “parts” of the soul – namely *to logistikon*, *to thumoeides*, *to epithumētikon* – the most common term he employs is *eidē* or its semantic equivalent *genē*. The precise term that designates “part” in Greek – *meros* – appears only seven times in book IV.¹³ While the linguistic argument alone is not enough to demonstrate a conceptual affinity between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* concerning issues of moral

¹² Especially when he makes the interlocutor concede that pleasure and pain coexist in the process of fulfilling one’s appetites, while goodness and badness are never concurrent (495c3-497a5). On criticism of Socrates’ arguments, see J. Beversluis, *Cross-Examining Socrates* (Cambridge 2000), 355-356; Irwin 1979: 201-202.

¹³ G. R. F. Ferrari, “The Three-Part Soul”, in G. R. F. Ferrari (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic* (Cambridge 2007), at 165 n. 1.

psychology,¹⁴ it seems undeniable that in this earlier dialogue we can at least find the acknowledgement of the *epithumiai* as an important aspect of the psychological domain, whose corresponding virtue is temperance. The task immediately faced by the reader is to evaluate to what extent Plato considers the appetites in the *Gorgias* as one source of human motivation either in accordance with or in contrast with the rational deliberations. In other words, the problem consists in verifying whether reason alone is sufficient and necessary condition for determining what we desire or the appetites constitute another source of human motivation independent from reason such that their different strengths might conflict.

(b) Within the context of Platonic moral psychology, the *Gorgias* presents as intrinsic the ideas of “order” and “temperance” (493c-d; 494a; 503e-504d; 506e-507a; 507e-508a). The notion of “order” ascribed to the temperate soul implies a hierarchical relationship between its elements. This is especially evident in the analogy drawn by Socrates between art and virtue, in which he compares the order and arrangement instilled in the objects produced by craftsmen with the orderliness of the virtuous soul:

SOC: [...] Take painters, if you like, or builders, or shipwrights, or any of the other skilled practitioners – whichever of them you like. Each one positions each thing he positions in some structure, and compels one thing to be appropriate and *harmonise* [ἁρμόττειν] with another, until he has composed the whole *into a thing of order and system* [τεταγμένον τε καὶ κεκοσμημένον πρᾶγμα]. (503e4-504a1; my italics)

The analogy implies that just as craftsmen instil a certain orderliness in their products by which they are useful, so there is a similar condition concerning the soul – namely, justice and temperance (δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ σωφροσύνη, 504d3).¹⁵ At the

¹⁴ According to Irwin, it is not possible to determine from these formulations whether in the *Gorgias* Plato means 'parts' or, more broadly, 'aspects' of the soul (1979, 195). But he does not explain in which would consist the distinction between 'parts' and 'aspects' and what consequences each would have for our understanding of the *Gorgias*. Louis-André Dorion, conversely, argues that the expression employed by Plato has a markedly 'local' character, such that it suggests more a part of the soul than an aspect of it ('*Enkrateia* and the Partition of the Soul in the *Gorgias*', in R. Barney et alii (eds.), *Plato and Divided Soul* (Cambridge, 2012), at 41).

¹⁵ Carone sums up the question thus: “Interpretations of this *Gorgias* passage have ranged from attributing to it a partite view of the psyche (so that the thing to be structured appropriately is, at least partly, one's desire or *epithumia*) to viewing it as no more than consistency among one's beliefs. The former view seems supported by the fact that the description is inserted in the context of a discussion of what desires should or should not be given satisfaction (503c-d, 504e-505b); the latter, by Socrates' apparent introduction of the issue of order as way of illustrating how the good man will not speak (*legein*) at random but with some good aim (503d-e), which was said to be make the citizen better through speeches (502e)” (2004: 80-81).

beginning of the discussion on temperance and intemperance, when Socrates leads the argument from the political domain to the psychological, the question he poses to Callicles is whether the better and more powerful person “rules himself” (αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν, 491d8) or whether it is enough to rule everyone else. Even though Socrates does not explore completely the notion of “self-mastery” in the *Gorgias*, it seems implicit that if something rules, another must be ruled.¹⁶ The most plausible inference is that what rules is the rational element of the soul – although this is not made explicit by Socrates – while what is to be ruled are the appetites and pleasures.¹⁷

When we turn to the analysis of temperance in book IV of the *Republic*, the allusions to the arguments presented in the *Gorgias* in the examination of the *epithumiai* seem to be straightforward. In accordance with the methodological principle of the *Republic* – the analogy between city and individual – if the city is composed of three classes (χρηματιστικόν, ἐπικουρητικόν, βουλευτικόν, IV 441a1), then the soul has three “parts” as well: that by which we learn, that by which we anger and that by which we have appetites (μανθάνομεν μὲν ἑτέρῳ, θυμούμεθα δὲ ἄλλῳ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν, ἐπιθυμοῦμεν δ’ αὖ τρίτῳ τινὶ, IV 436a9-b1). The notion of temperance is discussed from two different standpoints, the political and the psychological (430d-432b and 441c-444a respectively). When dealing with temperance in the city, Socrates compares it to a kind of “harmony and symphony” between the three classes that compose the whole (συμφωνία τινὶ καὶ ἁρμονία προσέοικεν μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ πρότερον, IV 430e1-2; cf. IV 431e7-432b1), and defines it as “a kind of order, the mastery of certain kinds of pleasures and appetites” (Κόσμος πού τις, ἣν δ’ ἐγώ, ἡ σωφροσύνη ἐστὶν καὶ ἡδονῶν τινῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐγκράτεια, IV 430e4-5), which the majority call “self-control” (ὥς φασὶ κρείττω δὴ αὐτοῦ, IV 430e5-6).

If we compare the passage of the *Gorgias* in which the notion of “ruling himself” is presented (αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν, 491d8) with that of the *Republic* in which

¹⁶ Cooper 1999: 65-66.

¹⁷ Dorion 2012, 42-3: “Ultimately, the reflexive form of expressions ‘to govern oneself’ and ‘to master oneself’ entail that such control is exercised within the self – that is, the soul. responsibility for such control lies necessarily with another part of the soul, which can only be the *logos* or reason. Although in the *Gorgias* Plato never explicitly asserts a bipartition of the soul into reason and desire, one can conclude nonetheless (in the light of 491d and 493a-b) that Plato envisages a bipartition of this sort. But if reason must assume responsibility for self-government and mastery of the pleasures, it seems impossible to attribute this responsibility to *enkrateia*. Here too the *Gorgias* is in agreement with the *Republic*: to the extent that reason affects self-mastery, *enkrateia*, conceived as an ability to master the desires and the appeal of the pleasures, appears functionless.”

the notion of “self-control” (ὥς φασι κρείττω δὴ αὐτοῦ, IV 430e5-6) is explored by Socrates, the lexical and conceptual similarity is clear:¹⁸

(i) *Grg.* 491d10-e1:

SOC: Nothing complicated. I mean what most people mean, being temperate, his own master, ruling the pleasures and appetites within himself.

{ΣΩ.} Οὐδὲν ποικίλον ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ οἱ πολλοί, σώφρονα ὄντα καὶ ἐγκρατῆ αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ, τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

(ii) *R.* IV 430e4-7:

— Temperance is surely a kind of order, the mastery of certain kinds of pleasures and appetites. People indicate as much when they use the phrase “self-control” and other similar phrases. I don’t know just what they mean by them, but they are, so to speak, like tracks or clues that temperance has left behind in language. Isn’t that so?

Κόσμος πού τις, ἣν δ’ ἐγώ, ἡ σωφροσύνη ἐστὶν καὶ ἡδονῶν τινῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐγκράτεια, ὥς φασι κρείττω δὴ αὐτοῦ ἀποφαίνοντες οὐκ οἶδ’ ὄντινα τρόπον, καὶ ἄλλα ἅττα τοιαῦτα ὥσπερ ἵχνη αὐτῆς λέγεται. ἦ γάρ;

How can we interpret this sort of *inter-textuality*? Is it merely a coincidence inasmuch as Plato refers to a popular topic on ethics, as he points out (*Grg.* 491d10: ὥσπερ οἱ πολλοί; *R.* IV 430e5: ὥς φασι)? Or is Plato consciously stating in the *Republic* that he is returning to issues that have not been satisfactorily treated in earlier dialogues? If so, is it reasonable to suggest that this kind of literary device represents a *reminiscent allusion* to the previous discussion of the same topic in the *Gorgias*, if we assume that the *Gorgias* precedes the *Republic* as generally agreed?¹⁹ I believe that the explanation offered by Socrates in book IV – namely, that the notion of “self-mastery” only makes sense if there are by nature better and worse elements *within the soul* of a single person (ὥς τι ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τὸ μὲν βέλτιον ἔνι, τὸ δὲ χεῖρον, IV 431a4-5) – responds explicitly to what the *Gorgias* did not provide a straightforward answer to. In other words, what we could previously only infer from the *Gorgias* regarding temperance and intemperance is made explicit by Socrates in the *Republic* – that what must rule is *reason* and what must be ruled are the appetites in order to be a temperate person (IV 431a-e).²⁰ Consequently, “self-mastery” denotes an

¹⁸ I am relying on the same point highlighted by Dorion (2012: 42).

¹⁹ I will be considering as a *reminiscent allusion* any instance in which there is some straightforward reference in the *Republic* that points to the *Gorgias*, and as a *proleptic reference* the reverse case in which the *Gorgias* points to a specific passage of the *Republic*. I am therefore assuming, as the majority of scholars agree, the precedence of the *Gorgias* with respect to the *Republic*. On the notion of *proleptic reference*, see Kahn 1996: 48.

²⁰ More precisely, “[...] the appetites that are simple, measured, and directed by *calculation in accordance with understanding and correct belief* [...]” (Τὰς δὲ γε ἀπλᾶς τε καὶ μετρίας, αἱ δὲ μετὰ νοῦ τε καὶ δόξης ὀρθῆς λογισμῷ ἄγονται, *R.* IV 431c5-6; my italics).

arrangement in which reason prevail over the appetites, with “self-defeated” denoting the opposite.²¹

Furthermore, when Plato examines temperance and justice in the psychological domain in book IV, one can identify the same association presented in the *Gorgias* between the ideas of *temperance*, *harmony* and *orderliness*. In the *Gorgias* this is suggested by the analogy between the products made by craftsmen and the condition of the temperate and just soul. In other words, the healthy soul attainable through virtue is comparable to the realisation of the healthy body (503d-505c). Nevertheless, although Socrates says that the craftsman “compels one thing to be appropriate and harmonise with another, until he has composed the whole into a thing of order and system” (καὶ προσαναγκάζει τὸ ἕτερον τῷ ἑτέρῳ πρέπον τε εἶναι καὶ ἀρμόττειν, ἕως ἂν τὸν ἅπαν συστήσῃται τεταγμένον τε καὶ κεκοσμημένον πρᾶγμα, 503e7-504a1), he does not explain in any depth what occurs within the soul regarding the “parts” that compose the whole.²² The analogy is therefore not fully explored by Socrates in the *Gorgias*. He instead chooses to emphasize the comparison between the healthy state of the body and the virtuous condition of the soul – in the form of temperance and justice (504d3) – in order to show Callicles that only the temperate soul is able to satisfy its appetites in a moderate manner.²³

However, what appears as underdeveloped in the *Gorgias* is developed more conspicuously through the new insights on moral psychology that Plato presents in book IV of the *Republic*. When examining the role of justice as *dunamis* (IV 443b) in providing unity between the three parts of soul such that each of its elements performs its own function, the same association between the notions of *temperance*, *harmony* and

²¹ Dorion, 2012: 42.

²² Raphael Woolf contends that Callicles' psychic disharmony in the *Gorgias* manifests only in the inconsistency of his ethical and political opinions, as unveiled by Socratic elenchus (“Callicles and Socrates: Psychic (Dis)harmony in the *Gorgias*”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 18 (2000), at 1 and 30-32). However, insofar as the idea of orderliness and harmony is intrinsically associated with the temperate soul (506e-507a), it seems rather that Plato is conceiving them here in terms of moderation in the appetites which are deemed as a inner element of the soul (493a-b). The intemperate soul, conversely, would be disordered and disharmonic precisely because of their unrestrained appetites.

²³ This point is especially clear from the following passage: “Well, if true excellence is what you said it was earlier, Callicles – namely satisfying desires, both one's own and other people's – then yes, they were good men. If it's not that, if it's what we were compelled to agree on later in the argument – *that we should satisfy those desires whose fulfilment makes a person better, and not satisfy those which make him worse, and this, we thought, was a science* – are you able to say that any of them was a man of that kind?” (503c4-d3; my italics)

orderliness found in the *Gorgias* reappears from the standpoint of the tripartite soul. The following passage makes the point clear:

[...] One who is just does not allow any part of himself to do the work of another part or allow the various classes within him to meddle with each other. He regulates well what is really his own and rules himself. *He puts himself in order* [κοσμήσαντα], is his own friend, and *harmonizes* [συναρμόσαντα] the three parts of himself like three limiting notes in a musical scale – high, low, and middle. He binds together those parts and any others there may be in between, and from having been many things he becomes entirely one, *moderate and harmonious* [σώφρονα καὶ ἡρμουςμένον]. [...] (IV 443d2-e2; my italics)

(c) Although less cogent than the previous evidence we have discussed, a further similarity between the examinations of the *epithumiai* undertaken in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* are the paradigmatic examples selected by Plato to analyse its physiology – namely, hunger and thirst. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates refers to these appetites in order to show Callicles that pleasure and goodness are different things: while goodness and badness never coexist, pain and pleasure are concurrent during the process of fulfilling these appetites (495c-497a). In the *Republic*, hunger and thirst are used to delimitate the proper domain of the *epithumiai* (R. IV 437b6, 437d1-3, 439d6-8; IX 580e2-5).

(d) In the *Republic*, after examining the concept of justice in the psychological domain, Socrates turns to analyse the consequences of his argument for injustice (R. IV 444c-445b). To this end he refers again to the analogy between soul and body, according to which virtue for the soul corresponds to health for the body, and vice to disease (Ἀρετὴ μὲν ἄρα, ὥς ἔοικεν, ὑγίειά τέ τις ἂν εἴη καὶ κάλλος καὶ εὐεξία ψυχῆς, κακία δὲ νόσος τε καὶ αἴσχος καὶ ἀσθένεια, IV 444d12-e1). Later on Socrates suggests that they should investigate whether it is more advantageous to act justly and be just or to act unjustly and be unjust, “provided that one doesn’t pay the penalty and become better as a result of punishment” (ἐάνπερ μὴ διδῶ δίκην μηδὲ βελτίων γίγνηται κολαζόμενος, IV 445a3-4). Glaucon replies to Socrates that such an investigation would be ridiculous in view of the conclusions reached in the discussion about justice. But in what sense and to what extent would punishment rehabilitate the individual who has done wrong? At least in this specific passage of the *Republic* one cannot find a straightforward answer to this question.

The analogy between soul and body applied to the examination of virtue and vice is also prominent in the *Gorgias* (e.g. 476a-480b, 503d-505c, 512a-b), especially when Socrates attempts to show Polus that the greatest evil for the soul is acting unjustly and escaping punishment, and the second worst evil, acting unjustly (479c-d).

Here Socrates contends that punishing one who has done wrong has the power to benefit and improve his soul (βελτίων τὴν ψυχὴν γίγνεται, εἴπερ δικαίως κολάζεται, 477a5-6). Drawing another analogy between justice and medicine, he argues that just as medical treatment, though painful, is capable of curing the body's diseases, punishment, though painful, can heal the soul's disease – namely injustice (and intemperance and vice as a whole):²⁴

SOC: Next question: of two people who have an evil either in their body or their soul, which is more wretched – the one who receives treatment and gets rid of the evil, or the one who does not receive treatment, and still has the evil?

POL: The one who does not receive treatment, as it seems to me.

SOC: Well, did paying for one's crimes turn out to be a release from the greatest evil – badness?

POL: Yes, it did.

SOC: Yes, because just punishment teaches people self-control, and makes them more just. It is medicine for badness.

POL: Yes. (478d1-7)

Therefore, the corrective function of punishment relies on the analogy between soul and body, between justice and medicine, between virtue and health, in accordance with the division of those arts related to the body and those related to the soul presented by Socrates in the discussion about rhetoric with Polus (464b-466a). It is by means of inflicting pain to the wrongdoer that her appetites which strive for pleasure can be contrasted and subsequently restrained.²⁵ Therefore this abrupt dismissal of Glaucon (Ἄλλ', ἔφη, ὃ Σώκρατες, γελοῖον ἔμοιγε φαίνεται τὸ σκέμμα γίγνεσθαι ἤδη [...], IV 445a5-6) can be interpreted as another *reminiscent allusion* to the *Gorgias*, insofar as the question of the psychological function of punishment is not discussed in the *Republic*. It can be deemed as a literary device employed by Plato to lead attentive readers toward other dialogues in which a certain issue is more comprehensively discussed or approached from a different angle. Furthermore, the concerns expressed by Glaucon here seem to recall those ascribed by Socrates to the fictitious character of the helmsman in the *Gorgias* (511c-513c). In this passage, he seeks to persuade Callicles

²⁴ Socrates makes clear that the healing power of punishment is dependent on the degree of injustice in the soul, insofar as there are chronic cases in which the soul can no longer be healed, as the following passage explains: "And if he acts unjustly – either himself or one of the people he cares for – he should go in person, of his own accord, to some place where he can pay for his crimes as quickly as possible, going before the judge as he would to a doctor, in his determination not to allow the disease of injustice become chronic, *leaving his soul festering and incurable* [...]" (*Grg.* 480a6-b2; my italics).

²⁵ On how the alternative approach to the Socratic intellectualism advanced by Brickhouse and Smith deals with function of punishment through pain in the *Gorgias*, see 2010: 112-124.

that rhetoric has no more value than helmsmanship or military engineering if it consists only in an “art” of life-saving. Let us compare these two branches:

(a) *Grg.* 512a2-b2:

SOC: [...] And so his reasoning [of the helmsman] is as follows: if someone whose body is in the grip of serious and incurable diseases was not drowned, then it is this person’s misfortune not to have died, and he has received no help from him. By the same token, if somebody has a host of incurable diseases in that which is of greater value than his body, namely his soul, it cannot be that this person should go on living, or that he will be doing him any favours if he saves him from the sea, or from prison, or from anywhere else. No, he knows that for a bad human being it is not better to go on living, since the life he leads will inevitably be a bad one.

(b) *R.* IV 445a5-b4:

But, Socrates, this inquiry looks ridiculous to me now that justice and injustice have been shown to be as we have described. Even if one has every kind of food and drink, lots of money, and every sort of power to rule, life is thought to be not worth living when the body’s nature is ruined. So even if someone can do whatever he wishes, except what will free him from vice and injustice and make him acquire justice and virtue, how can it be worth living when his soul – the very thing by which he lives – is ruined and in turmoil?

In both quotations the foundations of the argument are, first, the analogy between the healthy condition of body and the virtuous state of soul, and, second, the belief that life is worth living only if it is led by virtue. This similarity reinforces the view that this section of the *Republic* can be read as a *reminiscent allusion* to the discussion of punishment in the *Gorgias*.²⁶

In sum, the four arguments advanced above suggest the conceptual affinity of the *Gorgias* with the *Republic* concerning issues of moral psychology, and, especially, concerning the *epithumiai*. However, to what extent can the treatment of the appetites in the *Gorgias* be compared to the theory of the tripartite soul espoused in book IV of the *Republic*? Firstly, as Charles Kahn points out, although Plato refers in the *Gorgias* to the “part of soul in which the appetites are” (τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦτο ἐν ᾧ ἐπιθυμῖαι εἰσὶ, 493a3; τοῦτο τῆς ψυχῆς οὗ αἱ ἐπιθυμῖαι εἰσὶ, 493b1) there is non-analogous attempt to define the rational “part” that contrasts with them.²⁷ Nevertheless, Plato seems to acknowledge the distinction between the rational desire that aims at goodness – denoted by the verb *boulesthai* and its related forms – and the appetite that aims at pleasure –

²⁶ Compare also *R.* IX 591b with *Grg.* 504a-b.

²⁷ Christopher Rowe refers to this “part” that contrasts with the appetites as “reason or the better parts of ourselves”, insofar as there is no clear explanation of what ought to command them (*Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing* (Cambridge 2007), at 195).

denoted by the term *epithumia* and its related forms.²⁸ Consequently, Kahn contends that the possibility of conflict between these two elements of the soul that might motivate it in opposite directions is not explored thoroughly by Socrates in the *Gorgias*, even though it can be reasonably inferred.

This reading is similar to that developed by Terence Irwin who considers that the idea of “self-control” intrinsic to the notion of temperance (αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν, 491d8; ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, 491d11-e1) indicates the presence within the soul of desires of different strengths that the temperate and ordered person succeeds in controlling. In this view, the recognition of the *epithumiai* as an independent source of human motivation suggests the possibility of conflict within the soul in a different way from the kind of conflict acknowledged by so-called Socratic intellectualism – namely, the conflict between opinions about what is the best course of action, that can cause indecision but not impulsive and contrasting desires.²⁹ The challenge therefore posed by Irwin, if we consider that Socrates recognizes in the *Gorgias* good-independent desires within the soul, is to understand how this can be reconciled with the “Socratic” position evident at 460b and 467c-ff.

In a similar approach, Louis-André Dorion has recently addressed the same question, exploring the consequences of Socrates’ idea of “self-mastery” at 491d³⁰. He contends that the Platonic notion of *enkrateia* necessitates some partition within the soul, such that we find it already present in the *Gorgias* (2012: 33, 38). According to him, the reference to *enkrateia* at 491d must be interpreted in connection with 493a-b, in which Socrates talks about the “part of the soul in which the appetites are” (τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦτο ἐν ᾧ ἐπιθυμίαι εἰσὶ, 493a3-4). To be the master of oneself signifies control over the pleasures and appetites that each individual contains (ἐν ἑαυτῷ, 491e1) – namely in the part of the soul where the appetites reside. Dorion concludes that “the *Gorgias* parallels the *Republic* exactly: the reflexive usage of the expression ‘master of

²⁸ C. Kahn, “Plato’s Theory of Desire”, *The Review of Metaphysics*, 41 (1987), 91-92. On the concept of *boulēsis* in the *Gorgias*, cf. 466b-470b. Although I agree with Kahn on the absence of a notion of inner conflict of the soul according to the moral psychology advanced by Socrates in the *Gorgias*, I disagree with him when he asserts that there is no trace of the *thumoeides* in the dialogue and that the *epithumiai* correspond not only to *to epithumētikon* but also to *to thumoeides*. I will attempt to show in the following topic how *shame* can be regarded as a manifestation of the *thumos*, such that in the *Gorgias* Plato presents *dramatically*, and to some extent *theoretically*, the third element of the soul.

²⁹ Irwin 1979: 190.

³⁰ Dorion 2012.

oneself" (*enkratēs heautou*) is justified, if one understands it as the mastery one part of the soul exercises over another (inferior) part of the same soul" (2012: 40). He concedes, however, that Plato never asserts explicitly the bipartition of soul into reason and appetites in the *Gorgias*, even though he recognises the desiring part within the soul. Yet following Irwin's and Kahn's considerations, the only reasonable inference here is to ascribe to reason the role of controlling pleasure and appetites (2012: 43). If so, the problem of the inconsistency of Socrates' position in the *Gorgias* remains unresolved, as highlighted by Irwin.

As mentioned briefly in the *Introduction*, John Cooper attempts to solve this apparent contradiction in Socrates' position by showing that Socrates is in fact committed to the intellectualist approach to moral psychology throughout the *Gorgias*. He argues that the innovations advanced by Plato in this dialogue that point towards the theory of the tripartite soul in book IV of the *Republic* are presented not through Socrates' speeches but through Callicles'. The key point in Cooper's analysis of the *Gorgias* concerns Callicles' psychology of intemperance that grounds his political views of human nature as expressed in his main speech. I quote the passage here since it is central to my argument:

CAL: [...] the person who is going to live in the right way should allow his own appetites to be as great as possible, without restraining them. And when they are as great as can be, he should be capable of using his bravery and intelligence in their service, and giving them full measure of whatever it is, on any particular occasion, his appetite is for. This is impossible for most people, in my view, which is why they are ashamed of themselves, and condemn people like this as a cloak for their own powerlessness. They even go so far as to claim that lack of restraint is something disgraceful, as I was saying earlier, enslaving those people who are by nature better, and being themselves incapable of providing for the fulfilment of their pleasures, they praise temperance and justice because of their own lack of manliness. (491e8-492b1)

According to Callicles' moral psychology, feelings like shame and fear can obstruct the process of fulfilling the appetites, if the person does not have sufficiently bravery to overcome them. Cooper remarks upon the fact that Callicles' position recognizes different sources of motivation – namely, the appetites themselves, feelings like shame or fear, and the strength provided by bravery whose function is to overcome those impulses that hinder the fulfilment of the appetites (1999: 61).³¹ According to such a view, the conflict between these different forces within the soul is perfectly

³¹ Cooper considers unclear the role of *intelligence* (*phronēsis*) in this psychological process – specifically whether it constitutes an alternative source of motivation or serves only to provide information (1999: 61).

reasonable, and evident when, for example, an agent experiences an appetite and allows it to grow, but does not have sufficient bravery to fulfil it because she is strongly affected by shame or fear. This would be the case of a coward agent, according to Callicles' moral view.

Thus Cooper argues that the depiction of the orderly and the undisciplined lives in the foreign myth told by Socrates (492e-494a) is insufficient to refute every aspect of Callicles' praise of the intemperate life. First, there is non-analogous element that plays the role assigned to bravery in the undisciplined life as considered by Callicles; the temperate person, conversely, has her appetites always full such that they no longer constitute a source of motivation, or, if do still they motivate action, this would occur only when agent's wisdom judges appropriate. Second, Socrates distinguishes between the orderly and the undisciplined life by means of restrained or unrestrained appetites – that is to say, there is no idea advanced by Socrates that the temperate person must have some additional force within the soul that could help wisdom to overcome some unwise appetite whenever it arises. It seems implied that in the orderly soul this kind of unruly appetite cannot arise, since all appetites are restrained in advance (1999: 61). Third, even if the myth recognizes one “part” of the soul where the appetites reside – anticipating to some extent the psychological theorizing of book IV of the *Republic*³² – Plato is careful to assign the myth to a third anonymous individual. This device is regarded by Cooper as the means by which Plato makes Socrates realize the implications of Callicles' moral psychology without confronting it directly, either to accept or reject it (1999: 63).³³ And the implications here consist, above all, in understanding the impulse from the appetites as distinct motivational forces within the soul which contrast with reason – and, according to Callicles, which contrast with bravery. In any case, what matters is the assumption that underpins the subsequent development of the Platonic moral psychology paradigmatically espoused in the *Republic*: the recognition of different motivational sources within the soul that might occasionally be in conflict. For Cooper, it is Callicles who introduces these innovations, which Socrates chooses not to address in the depiction of the orderly and unrestrained lives. In sum, Cooper proposes an interpretation of the *Gorgias* that addresses the criticism made by Irwin, that Socrates' position is inconsistent throughout the dialogue;

³² I will discuss this point more thoroughly in the following section.

³³ For the opposite interpretation according to which Socrates is committed to the myth he reports, see Dorion 2012: 40-41.

according to Cooper, the problematic innovations should be rather ascribed to Callicles, whereas Socrates' position remains essentially intellectualist. On the other hand, Irwin and Cooper would broadly agree that on issues of moral psychology the *Gorgias* should be situated closer to the *Republic* than Kahn suggests in his book *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*.

Although the philosophical insights advanced by Cooper suggest a new approach to the *Gorgias* by ascribing certain innovations in moral psychology to Callicles rather than Socrates, his interpretation has recently been challenged by Gabriela Carone, as mentioned above. Carone agrees *to some extent* with Cooper's assertion that the Socratic position is consistently intellectualist throughout the *Gorgias*, but disagrees with him regarding the so-called Calliclean moral psychology (2004: 73). She advances two arguments against the notion that it is through Callicles that Plato presents the innovations on moral psychology that will be fully developed in the *Republic*. According to Carone, there is no acute distinction between Socrates' and Callicles' positions, since "Callicles' main disagreement with Socrates is not about the unity or disunity of virtues, but about a different conception of what virtue is" (2004: 75). I will analyse the two arguments proposed by Carone and thereby demonstrate that they are insufficient to undermine the interpretation proposed by Cooper.

(i) Cooper contends that according to Calliclean moral psychology (491e-492a) "weakness of will" (or *akrasia*) of the kind that Socrates refuses to recognize in other Platonic dialogues of the "Socratic" type – especially in the *Protagoras* (351b ff.) – is entirely possible. Cooper is referring to "the sort [of weakness] where a person has an occurrent strong appetite for something but refuses to gratify it, because of fear or shame or low spirits generally" (1999: 57). This implies the *possibility* – as Cooper emphasizes it – of inner conflict within the soul that will be central to the theory of the tripartite soul in book IV of the *Republic*. Carone, in turn, argues that this reading is unsupportable because "the 'weak' – who would fall under Cooper's description – are described as establishing the laws and abiding by self-restraint 'with regard to themselves and their own interest' (*sumpheron*, 483b6), which suggests that it would not be weakness of will, but rather rational, to restrain oneself, as they notice that they will not be able to give unlimited satisfaction to the appetites without damage to themselves" (2004: 73). This counterargument, however, is in fact to misconstrue Cooper's position, since Carone relies on one branch of Callicles' main speech (483b-e) while Cooper is actually analysing the Calliclean moral psychology outlined at 491e-

492c. If we read Cooper's argument with respect to the passage of the *Gorgias* he is in fact analysing, the interpretation he advances appears consistent. First, the weak people, *since they are incapable of maximizing and fulfilling their appetites*, condemn the superior ones because they are ashamed of their condition, such that they proclaim intemperance to be shameful (ἀλλὰ τοῦτ' οἶμαι τοῖς πολλοῖς οὐ δυνατόν· ὅθεν ψέγουσιν τοὺς τοιούτους δι' αἰσχύνην, ἀποκρυπτόμενοι τὴν αὐτῶν ἀδυναμίαν, καὶ αἰσχρὸν δὴ φασιν εἶναι τὴν ἀκολασίαν, 492a3-6). Therefore, to restrain oneself is not a rational choice made by the weak people, as Carone argues, but a necessary consequence of their incapacity to maximise and fulfil their appetites. It is therefore not a matter of *choice*, but of *incapacity*; even if the inferior chose to maximize and fulfil their appetites without restraint, they would be unable to do so. There is no choice involved, and this is why they feel ashamed of their condition. They are incapable precisely because they lack bravery (*andreia*) or intelligence (*phronēsis*), or both (Callicles is not clear on this point) to overcome feelings like shame or fear that can prevent them from enlarging and satisfying their appetites. I therefore believe that Cooper is correct when he argues that "Callicles recognizes the *possibility* of this sort of weakness of will" (1999: 57; my italics), insofar as the idea of conflict within the soul is entirely plausible – and even suggested – according to the moral psychology Callicles outlines.

(ii) The second argument against Cooper advanced by Carone concerns the supposed disunity of virtue that can be inferred from Callicles' statement that knowledge, bravery and pleasure are different things (495c-d).³⁴ According to Cooper, this means that "like Protagoras, Callicles assumes that a person could have one of these virtues without the other. This is already clear from the way he describes the superior person as not only intelligent but also brave, 'without slackening off from softness of spirit' [καὶ μὴ ἀποκάμνωσι διὰ μαλακίαν τῆς ψυχῆς, 491b3-4]: evidently, he considers that some people who have the requisite intelligence are disqualified from superiority by being soft-hearted and unmanly – by succumbing to the inducements of mass culture that can lead the naturally better type of person to be ashamed to make the demands that his intelligence would entitled him to, if only he throw off such inhibitions (483e-484a)". The counterargument advanced by Carone is as follows: "Now, it is true that at 491a-b Callicles explicates what he meant by wise (*phronimos*) as referring to the people who are 'wise in the affairs of the state *and also* brave, capable of fulfilling their

³⁴ Cooper 1999: 53-54; Carone 2004: 74-75.

conceptions'; thus, Cooper has interpreted this to mean that it is *courage* (only) that is needed to fulfil thoughts that one would have independently through wisdom. But it is not necessary to read the text this way; rather, the evidence analysed above seems instead to support the reading that one needs *both* wisdom *and* bravery to be able to carry out one's conception to the full". However, Carone's counterargument does not invalidate at all the reading proposed by Cooper. What Carone remarks upon here is precisely the condition of the virtuous person according to Callicles – that is to say, the agent must have *both wisdom and bravery* in order to fulfil the appetites whenever they arise (ταύταις δὲ ὡς μεγίσταις οὔσαις ἱκανὸν εἶναι ὑπηρετεῖν δι' ἀνδρείαν καὶ φρόνησιν, καὶ ἀποπιμπλάναι ὧν ἂν ἀεὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία γίγνηται, 492a1-3). It therefore seems undeniable that in Callicles' view intelligence (*phronēsis*) and bravery (*andreia*) are necessary conditions for virtue, and that intelligence alone is not sufficient condition for it (491b). And especially at 491b, nothing prevents from Callicles' standpoint that a person who is not sufficient brave due to softness of spirit might have correct reasonings concerning what is best to the city he governs. In any case, what Cooper is considering is the case of a non-virtuous person, who is unable to satisfy their appetites since he lacks sufficient bravery to overcome feelings like shame or fear. If the reading advanced by Cooper is not *necessary*, as Carone suggests, it is at least *reasonable*, since it does not contradict the Platonic text.

I believe that the two *possible* scenarios for conflict within the soul which follow are perfectly plausible according to Callicles' moral psychology, even though they are not explicitly explored by Plato in the *Gorgias*: (a) when an appetite arises, the person resolves to maximise it without restraint, but cannot identify through intelligence (*phronēsis*) the means and the right moment to fulfil it, despite having bravery enough to overcome feelings like shame or fear; (b) when an appetite arises, the person resolves to maximise it without restraint, but does not have bravery enough to overcome feelings like shame or fear, despite being able to identify through intelligence (*phronēsis*) the means and the right moment to fulfil it. The reason, I suggest, that Cooper has focused on bravery in his analysis is the central role that shame plays in Calliclean moral psychology – since shame and fear are traditionally associated with lack of bravery. To Callicles, this sentiment is the psychological sign of those inferior people who, unable to provide satisfaction for their own appetites, prescribe that intemperance is shameful (492a). Since shame is a moral feeling instilled from childhood in the soul of the superior people by means of laws and customs established by the inferior majority

(483e-484a), the virtuous Calliclean man must be able to transcend these restrictions to allow his natural superiority to prevail. The psychological strength provided by bravery is especially necessary, in Callicles' view, to transcend these moral boundaries.

Carone proposes, for her part, a new approach to so-called "Socratic intellectualism". According to her, Socratic intellectualism invokes not only rational beliefs but also affections and emotions as decisive factors in the explanation of human motivation (2004: 56). Accordingly, the acknowledgement of the *epithumiai* as one "part" of the soul in the foreign myth told by Socrates – even though not fully developed by Plato – does not necessarily imply the rejection of Socratic intellectualism. On the contrary, the question is to understand how rational belief is related to nonrational desire and vice-versa from the intellectualist standpoint. According to Carone, there is no suggestion in the *Gorgias* that *epithumia* is independent from reason (2004: 56). Instead, Carone contends that the relationship between rational and nonrational is regarded as one of co-instantiation, such that removing the affect implies effectively removing the belief, and vice-versa (2004: 92)³⁵. She attempts to resolve the supposed inconsistency of the *Gorgias*, as pointed out by Irwin, by advancing a more comprehensive understanding of Socratic intellectualism that includes (to some extent at least) nonrational factors in the theory of action, but that excludes the possibility of conflict within the soul. Yet one argument advanced by Carone to support the idea of co-instantiation between reason and desires seems to

³⁵ In so doing, Carone rejects also the *causal power* of nonrational desires in producing beliefs regarding what is best for us to pursue (e.g. sensual desires *making us believe* that the pleasurable object before us is good, and therefore worth being pursued, such that we go towards this object in order to fulfil them), admitted by the alternative account of "Socratic intellectualism" advanced by Brickhouse and Smith (2010: 53). She relies rather on the view that Plato's Socrates recognizes nonrational features of the soul, but that these are directed or channeled by *logoi* (and not the other way round, as considered by Brickhouse and Smith), as exemplified by the case of the *erōs* of both Socrates and Callicles (481c-482c): the difference between them is not the source of the motivation (it is the same *erōs*, τὸ αὐτό: 481c6), but the object towards which that *erōs* is directed (2004: 70). Carone relies heavily upon the so-called "channel argument" from book VI of the *Republic* (485d6-8) that challenges to some extent the tripartite theory of soul developed in book IV. For the channel picture suggests that there is only a single current of energy in the soul (*erōs*, *epithumiai*) that can be directed towards different ends: in the case of the philosopher, towards learning, whereas in the case of the non philosopher, towards pleasurable objects concerning the body. Applying it to the case of Callicles' *erōs* in the *Gorgias*, according to Carone, the problem concerning his recalcitrance would be sorting out the appropriate *logoi* which could be able to redirect his *erōs* from politics towards philosophy: this would ultimately explain the optimism of Socrates at 513c-d in persuading Callicles, provided that he submits himself continuously to Socratic scrutiny (2004: 90-94).

misconstrue the Platonic text. It concerns the role of punishment in restraining the soul from intemperance (503d-505c). I include the relevant passage of the *Gorgias* below (as quoted by Carone):³⁶

And is it not the same, excellent man, concerning the soul? As long as it is in a bad state – unintelligent, unrestrained [ἀκόλαστος], unjust, and impious – we must hold it back from [εἴργειν] its desires [τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν] and not allow it to do anything other than what will make it better... For this, I suppose, is better for the soul itself... And holding a person back from [εἴργειν] what he desires [ἐπιθυμεῖ] is restraining him [κολάζειν] ... So restraint [τὸ κολάζεσθαι] is better for the soul than unrestraint [ἀκολασία]. (505b, with some abbreviations)

Carone interprets this passage as follows: “The fact that ‘holding the soul back from its desires’ at 505b is immediately rephrased as ‘holding the person back from what he desires’ (that is, from the object of his desires) need not, as Irwin seems to imply, be taken to suggest that the undesirable desire persists, much as it is denied satisfaction. Rather, it seems more natural to take this expression as suggesting that, *if the object of the desire is removed, the desire for that object is itself eliminated*” (2004: 77; my italics). There is nothing in the text, however, that suggests the *elimination* of the appetite when the soul is kept away from the object of desire; Socrates is instead referring to the *restraint* of the appetites as a form of *punishment* for the intemperate soul. Plato is in fact exploiting with the ambivalence of the Greek verb *kolazein* which means both “to restrain” and “to punish”; so an intemperate person (*akolastos*) is precisely one who does not *restrain* (*kolazein*) his appetites such that *punishing* (*kolazein*) him means *restraining* (*kolazein*) him from the intemperance (*akolasia*). Plato uses here the Greek verb *eirgein* to mean “holding back from”, “keeping away from”, and not *apallattesthai* meaning “to eliminate”, as employed by Socrates in his discussion of punishment with Polus (478a-b, d-e).³⁷ The most straightforward reading of this passage, therefore, is that in order to remedy the intemperance of the soul the intemperate individual must restrain his uncontrolled appetites and keep away from the objects of these appetites – that is to say, refrain from indulging them. The *restraint* of the appetites does not imply their *suppression*, such that the point made by Irwin and

³⁶ Carone 2004: 76-77.

³⁷ Even though Socrates considers the punishment meted out by the tribunals as capable of *eliminating* the evil of the soul when discussing with Polus (cf. 478 a-b, d-e), he seems more cautious when ascribing to the punishment provided by the elenchus the role of *restraining* the appetites – and not *eliminating* them – of an intemperate person such as Callicles. These two contexts where the value of punishment is discussed, therefore, are not perfectly compatible (*pace* Carone 2004: 77).

subsequently criticized by Carone is perfectly reasonable and not contradicted by the Platonic text – namely, that the appetites continue to exist even when restrained.³⁸

That this is acknowledged by Plato is clear if we read the passage recalled by Carone in the context of the overall argument (503d-505c). As discussed above, Socrates' argument relies on the analogy between the ill condition of the body and the vicious state of the soul. When addressing the case of the body (505a), Socrates says that the sick person is not allowed by the doctors *to fulfil* his appetites for food and drink, but he never suggests that this medical treatment entails the suppression of these appetites. On the contrary, it seems reasonable to suppose that the sick person continues to desire food and drink, although he cannot fulfil his appetites properly due to the ill condition of the body. This is why it is a painful state, as painful is the condition of the intemperate person in the foreign myth reported by Socrates (493e-494a). Therefore, if Carone's intention is to use this passage of the *Gorgias* (505b) to support the idea that "one would simply drop a desire (or its associated belief) when the mind comes to learn that it is not good to have such a desire" (2004: 76), her attempt fails because the Platonic text – or at least the passage analysed by her – does not provide evidence enough to support it.³⁹ In our view, the opposite interpretation which Carone argues against seems in fact to be the most reasonable – "'restraining' seems to suggest a picture whereby a desire (however bad and strong) exists but is opposed by an independent strength of the mind" (2004: 76). According to Carone, this interpretation represents a departure from the intellectualist approach to moral psychology, and I think that it is more suitable to the overall discussion about these issues in the *Gorgias*.⁴⁰

³⁸ Irwin 1979: 218.

³⁹ Carone seems to view this passage of the *Gorgias* (505b) in the context of what Socrates says in the *Meno* regarding the co-instantiation of desires and beliefs. In 77b-78b, Socrates asserts that we desire only what we think is good, such that the opinion determines the appetite. If, on the other hand, we judge that something is bad, this is sufficient to not desire it. Accepting this, it becomes impossible to have appetites for things we believe are bad, rendering impossible too the moral phenomenon of *akrasia*, as discussed in the *Protagoras* (352c-353a). But I think that the *Gorgias* – specifically at 505b – contradicts this reading since Socrates speaks of *restraining* the appetites, and not *eliminating* them as Carone attempts to argue. On the possible distinction between nonrational desires (designated by *epithumein*) and rational desires (designated by *boulesthai*) in this passage of the *Meno* (77b-78b), see Brickhouse & Smith 2010: 68-69.

⁴⁰ It is worth pointing out that Carone offers further arguments in support of her reading of the *Gorgias*, and her essay is in many respects very insightful. I lament that I cannot address all the arguments she advances for reasons of space. I have only examined what I consider the weaker aspects of her interpretation to justify my interpretation of the dialogue.

Besides, if we consider that this passage of the *Gorgias* (503d-505c) has somehow a Hippocratic influence in the treatment of health and disease of the body in the analogy with virtue and vice of the soul, so there is an additional support for the idea that the Greek verb *eirgen* (“holding back from”, “keeping away from”) here means precisely to restrain from the objects of appetites, without implying, however, the *suppression* of these same appetites. In *De Mulierum Affectibus* treatise, for example, *eirgein* is conspicuously employed in relation to the same sort of appetites considered in the *Gorgias* – namely, those of food and drink; its author is prescribing which kind of food or drink must be pursued in such or such circumstances, but this never implies that the appetites cease to affect the person when their objects are kept away from her. Therefore, from the semantic point of view regarding the verb *ergein* in Hippocratic treatises, it does not entail at all the suppression of the *epithumiai*, as contended by Carone⁴¹.

By the same token the interpretation of the *Gorgias* pursued by Brickhouse and Smith in their book *Socratic Moral Psychology* seems to be problematic, if the physiology of the *epithumai* as described above is correct. As suggested by the case of the sick person – and by analogy, of the intemperate – her appetites continue to affect her even when she is kept away from the objects of desire, the reason why the medical treatment is painful – and by analogy, the punishment inflicted on the intemperate. So, even if the patient recognises that the painful treatment is beneficial to her and necessary to recover her healthy condition, this does not entail the suppression of these appetites; they constitute another source of motivation that is good-independent, as considered by Irwin, and might be in conflict with what we think best for us to do, even though Plato does not develop this idea fully in the *Gorgias*. Unfortunately Brickhouse and Smith does not discuss thoroughly this passage (505a6-b12); their main interest in it is to show how the role of punishment by means of inflicting pain alluded here and the deleterious effect of appetites and passions within the soul are entirely compatible with their alternative way of understanding the Socratic intellectualism, as I have summed up in the *Introduction*.

⁴¹ Hippocrates et *Corpus Hippocraticum*, *De Mulierum Affectibus* i-iii: food in general (11.57); bitter herbs/vegetables (11.68); bitter and salted food (12.23); sweet and oily food (37.39); bitter, salted, acid and raw herbs/vegetables (44.12); bitter food (57.10); seafood, beef, pork and lamb meat (121.17); drink in general (153.10); sweet and greasy food (169.25). In the treatise *De Morbis Popularibus*: garlic, beef, pork and lamb meat (6.4.4.8).

The most promising comment they make on this passage from our interpretative standpoint is the following: “here (505b1-10), the idea seems to be that appetites become stronger the more they are indulged and the only way to make them weaker is to subject them to various forms of correction or punishment. To the extent that an appetite or passion is disciplined, the agent is capable of considering other factors in making a final judgment about whether to pursue the object of the appetite or passion – including factors that may weigh against pursuing the object” (2010: 80-81). Thus their main concern is to argue that nonrational affections have a *causal* role in influencing and shaping our beliefs concerning what is best for us to do in each circumstance, such that appetites and passions must be disciplined since childhood in order to avoid the confusion between what is really good for us and what appears only to be good (i.e. what is pleasant) that is ultimately the cause of our wrongdoings; otherwise, people who became increasingly vicious must be submitted to correction and punishment in order to weakening the influence of nonrational affections on moral reasonings. Brickhouse and Smith admit only the *influence* of appetites and passions on the formation of our beliefs, but do not concede that appetites constitute another source of motivation that is good-independent, as suggested by the physiological explanation I have offered above⁴². So they continue to contend that for the alternative view “it remains true in every case that action always follows belief” (2010: 107), such that a case in which an appetite is strong enough so to lead one to act against what she thinks best for her to do (i.e. a case of *akrasia*) is unconceivable. And it seems unconceivable also, in turn, a case in which an appetite is not strong enough so to lead one to act against what she thinks best for her to do, but remains affecting her in the physiological level and opposing her rational decision (i.e. a case of *enkrateia*), since this would imply that appetites are to some extent good-independent⁴³.

⁴² Brickhouse and Smith do not concede the good-independence of appetites and passions even in the Platonic moral psychology developed paradigmatically in the *Republic* (2010: 199-210). As this topic transcends the scope of this essay, I will not examine here their arguments in support of this view.

⁴³ It is worth noting that Brickhouse and Smith do not discuss Cooper's interpretation of so-called Calliclean moral psychology because, I guess, their focus is on what Socrates says about moral psychology issues. They limit to acknowledge in a brief footnote Cooper's contention that the innovations on this field of philosophical inquiry is conveyed not by Socrates but rather by Callicles at 491e-492c (2010: 51). However, as I have noted at footnote 8, this is a methodological problem of their interpretation of the *Gorgias*, if we assume that Plato is the author of the dialogue and the different characters are the means by which he exposes its philosophical content. For to judge to what extent the *Gorgias* is related to the *Republic* and/or

Having examined some different readings of the *Gorgias*, I would like to conclude with a consideration regarding the treatment of the *epithumiai*. Plato does not provide in the *Gorgias* a thorough examination of the possibility of conflict between the different elements of the soul as he does in book IV of the *Republic*, or discuss in detail the “weakness of will” (*akrasia*) envisaged by the Calliclean psychology, as he does to some extent in the *Protagoras*. Yet the philosophical content of the Platonic dialogues lies not only in the arguments made by the characters, but in the implications of these arguments; sometimes they are insufficiently explored by them and demand therefore further advancement. The *possibility* of conflict between the different motivational sources within the soul, as we can infer from the physiology of appetites as described above and the Calliclean moral psychology, presents a considerable challenge to the reader, and requires a more complex approach to human motivation and a new theory of the soul. In this sense I broadly agree with Cooper’s reading of the *Gorgias*, insofar as Plato deliberately introduces new insights concerning issues of moral psychology, particularly at 491e-492c, that point to a more elaborate theory of the soul and of human motivation, which will only be developed paradigmatically in book IV of the *Republic*.

2. – *Thumos*

If the *Gorgias* acknowledges the *epithumiai* as one element of the soul in some extent independent from reason, what might we say about the *thumoeides*? Would be possible to suggest that even in the *Gorgias* Plato introduces – albeit in an incipient

to the early dialogues requires us to consider the dialogue as a whole, and in so doing it seems likely that the former is very akin to the latter in several points differently from other early dialogues, especially when we consider Callicles’ speculations on moral psychology issues. In fact, Brickhouse and Smith acknowledge that “Plato does have Socrates refer to ‘that in the soul in which we have appetites’ at *Gorgias* 493a2–3 and b1, and his later characterization of keeping the soul in an orderly condition (see 504b4–505b12, 506d5–507a3, 507e6–508a4) may also suggest that he regards the soul to be composed of parts, but he nowhere in the early or Socratic dialogues explains what the various parts may be, nor does he in any way argue or attempt to explain precisely why the soul must have whatever parts it may have” (2010: 143). This is enough to show that even when considered from the alternative of the Socratic intellectualism defended by Brickhouse and Smith the *Gorgias* presents features that are peculiar once compared with other early dialogues. And I reply to them that they are right in this evaluation precisely because the explanation required to clarify what the *Gorgias* conveys in an incipient manner we will find especially in the *Republic* and other associated dialogues such as the *Phaedrus*, and not in the early dialogues. In sum, whereas they read the *Gorgias* looking backwards to the early dialogues, I contend that the more promising reading of it is looking towards the *Republic*, as I am attempting to show.

form – a third element of the soul? To argue for this it is necessary to show, firstly, that the *thumoeidetic* element appears in the *Gorgias* in the form of *shame* and that it plays a supplementary role along with reason in the dialogue, when the arguments themselves are insufficient to persuade the interlocutor.⁴⁴ To this end I will rely mainly on the essay written by Jessica Moss who attempts to demonstrate that in the *Gorgias*, through the use of shame, Plato introduces the view that “without the *thumos* there is no systematic way to ensure that we overcome the desires and act in accord with reason instead.” Accordingly, “shame would serve as a tool for undermining the attraction of ethically harmful pleasures.”⁴⁵ In the second part of her article, Moss attempts to show that in the *Republic* Plato develops this opposition between pleasure and shame through the characterization of the *thumos* as an ally of reason against the appetitive part of soul.⁴⁶ This is of particular relevance to my argument for the conceptual affinity between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* regarding issues of moral psychology.

Let us start by examining some key passages from the *Gorgias* in which shame appears as a topic of discussion (for methodological reasons I will not examine all references to shame but only those ones concerning Callicles)⁴⁷. At the beginning of his main speech Callicles rebukes Gorgias and Polus for not having said what they really thought because they were constrained by shame (αἰσχυνθῆναι, 482d2; αἰσχυνθείς, e2). Consequently, they were easily refuted by Socrates: Gorgias, by conceding that he would teach his future disciples the just things, if they did not know them previously; and Polus, by agreeing with Socrates that acting unjustly, even though better for the agent, is more shameful than being treated unjustly (482c-e). According to Callicles’ political view, shame is a sign of the natural inferiority of the majority who establish

⁴⁴ In his recent essay Dorion argues for the bipartition of the soul in the *Gorgias*, but makes no reference to the role performed by *shame* throughout the dialogue. He assumes that the major innovation in moral psychology in the *Gorgias* is the recognition of two “parts” within the soul, namely, reason and desires (2012: 43 and 46-7).

⁴⁵ J. Moss, “Shame, Pleasure and Divided Soul”, in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, Vol. XVIII Summer 2005, at 138. D. Solinas suggests that shame can be attributed to the *thumoeides* when under the control of reason (“Desideri: Fenomenologia Degenerativa e Strategie di Controllo”, in M. Vegetti (ed.) *La Repubblica Libro VIII-IX* (Bibliopolis 2005), at 479).

⁴⁶ Moss 2005: 138.

⁴⁷ We can assume for the purpose of this essay the general account of *shame* (*aiskhunē*) proposed by Paul Woodruff: “Shame is a painful emotion one feels at the thought of being exposed in weakness, foolishness, nakedness, or perhaps even wickedness, to the view of a community whose laughter would scald. Shame is closely related to fear of exclusion from one’s group, since derision generally marks the exposed person as an outsider” (2000: 13).

laws and prescribe that having more than others is shameful and unjust. From this standpoint, shame assumes the role of keeping the superior people by nature obedient to the laws established by the majority, preventing them from achieving dominance.

On the other hand, Callicles asserts a new conception of justice distinct from that shared by the civil community, designating it the “law of nature”, “nature of the just” or “the just of nature” (κατὰ φύσιν τὴν τοῦ δικαίου ... κατὰ νόμον γε τὸν τῆς φύσεως, 483e1-4; τὸ τῆς φύσεως δίκαιον, 484b1). According to Callicles, justice by nature results in the better and superior dominating the worse and inferior and possessing more than them. In reality, however, the better and superior individual by nature is numbed and bewitched by proscriptions, spells, charms and laws opposed to nature that prevent his natural superiority from prevailing. In this view, shame works as a kind of political tool used by the inferior to control and subdue the superior. This shame consists not of an innate sentiment but rather of a moral feeling instilled in the soul of the individuals from childhood (483e-484a). Nevertheless, the superior individual by nature with sufficient strength of will to trample all mechanisms of moral control must be able to overcome them if natural justice is to prevail (484a-b).

The Calliclean conception of shame finds a psychological grounding when Socrates turns to investigating what his interlocutor means by “the better and superior people” (491d ff.). As mentioned above, Callicles contends that “luxury, intemperance, and freedom are virtue and happiness” (τρυφή καὶ ἀκολασία καὶ ἐλευθερία ... τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν ἀρετὴ τε καὶ εὐδαιμονία, 492c4-6). Accordingly, the person who intends to be happy must allow her own appetites to be as great as possible and be capable of satisfying them whenever they arise, possessing sufficiently *bravery* (*andreia*) and *intelligence* (*phronēsis*) to suppress whatever *pathos* might disturb the process of fulfilment, such as fear or shame (491e-492b). Bravery would therefore allow the individual to overcome these feelings instilled in the soul during childhood such that she might satisfy her appetites without restraint, while intelligence would allow the individual to select the optimal means and moment to do so.

But in what condition is Callicles’ soul in respect of his own morality? It is precisely this *ad hominem* aspect of the elenchus that enables Socrates to determine to what extent Callicles is immune to shame and, consequently, whether he is a virtuous person under his own moral view or is still bound to the conventions of morality imposed and shared by the majority. Socrates seems to conceive of shame differently from Callicles’ – not as a moral feeling instilled in the soul by education and customs

but rather as a sort of “innate moral sense” that in some way intuitively goodness, as Kahn points out, especially concerning fundamental values of ethics.⁴⁸ This would explain Socrates’ optimism even when faced with a recalcitrant interlocutor such as Callicles, whom he still believes can be persuaded, provided he submits his opinions to continuous scrutiny (513c-d). In Socrates’ view, Callicles’ susceptibility to shame, revealed by the reference to the catamites (*kinaidoi*) in order to refute the idea of *categorical* hedonism (494c-d), is evidence that even he recognizes that goodness and pleasure are different things, even if he does not recognise it clearly⁴⁹. The same confidence in the power of shame through the elenctic process is evident in Socrates’ discussions with Gorgias and Polus (508b-c; 508e-509a).⁵⁰ Indeed, R. McKim argues that in the *Gorgias* Socrates employs shame, and not logic, as the principal weapon to persuade his interlocutors that they fundamentally hold the same moral opinions he does, although they have not found the correct arguments to justify them.⁵¹ We must remind that even the Greek term *elenkhos* – used explicitly by Socrates in the *Gorgias* (471e-472d) to refer to the sort of cross-examination he regularly employs to investigate

⁴⁸ Kahn 1996: 138. Woodruff argues for a similar account of Socratic shame by considering it a means to reach true beliefs through self-examination (as employed by Socrates through elenchus) (2000: 145). Tarnopolsky, in turn, distinguishes three uses of shame by Socrates: (i) to reveal certain universal ethical truths (such as the distinction between better and worse appetites by Callicles at 499b); (ii) to reveal conventional norms of Athenian polity; and (iii) to use these conventional norms in order to get the interlocutor's assent to premises they do not fully believe (2010: 40). An alternative view is held by Shaw, according to whom shame and fear of punishment are means by which Socrates' interlocutors (in general members of the elite) have internalized popular views (2015: 140). In this sense, “Plato does not consider shame a moral sense that conduces infallibly to truth” (2015: 124).

⁴⁹ According to Tarnopolsky's description, “the catamite was the passive partner in a male-to-male sexual relationship who, by virtue of his passive sexuality, was denied citizenship rights because he was deemed incapable of taking in the role of the active citizen, future soldier, and defender of Athens. He was also seen as a figure of shamelessness because he failed to put up the kinds of restraints or boundaries necessary to participate fully as a rational and active citizen, and instead passively gave in his shameful and excessive sexual desires” (2010: 22).

⁵⁰ Socrates' confidence in the truth of his moral opinions is based on the fact that they have never been proved false by those who have attempted to refute them, as noted at 508e-509a. While Callicles considers that Gorgias and Polus have not expressed their real opinions because they have surrendered to shame, Socrates seems to regard their embarrassment as confirmation that, fundamentally, everyone agrees with him on such moral issues – for instance, that committing an injustice is worse and more shameful than suffering one – provided one submits his own opinions to Socratic scrutiny (508b-c). For Socrates, shame therefore seems to constitute a kind of intuitive recognition of the truth of his own opinions even by those interlocutors who ostensibly hold different opinions.

⁵¹ R. McKim, “Shame and Truth in Plato's *Gorgias*”, in C. L. Griswold (ed.), *Platonic Writings – Platonic Readings* (London, 1988), at 36-37.

his interlocutors and their beliefs – suggests an intrinsic relationship between refutation and shame, since the verb *elenkhein* means to disgrace, put to shame (as attested in Homer), on the one hand, and to cross-examine, question, prove, refute, confute, and get the better of, on the other (cf. Liddell & Scott).

Jessica Moss considers that his susceptibility to shame forces Callicles to recognize rationally that some pleasures are shameful and, *a fortiori*, that goodness and pleasure are different things. This is clear from a careful reading on the passage in which Callicles is moved to shame by the example of the catamites employed by Socrates to refute *categorical* hedonism:

SOC: Bravo, Sir! Now, continue as you have begun, don't hold back out of *embarrassment* [ἀπαισχυνῆ]. And I mustn't be *embarrassed* either [ἀπαισχυνοῦμαι], by the looks of it. So tell me this for a start: if you feel an itch and want to scratch, and are able to scratch to your heart's content, and spend your life scratching, is that living a happy life?

CALL: That's absurd, Socrates. You're just scoring points.

SOC: Yes, Callicles, that's how I unnerved Gorgias and Polus, and made them *embarrassed* [αἰσχύνεσθαι]. But you're a brave chap, you won't be unnerved or get *embarrassed* [αἰσχυνθῆς]. Just keep answering.

CALL: Very well. In that case I maintain that even the person scratching would be living pleasantly.

SOC: And if pleasantly, then also happy?

CALL: Absolutely.

SOC: And do you mean if he just scratches his head, or – well, how much further do I have to go with my questions? I mean, what will your answer be, Callicles, if someone asks you, step by step, about all the sort of thing, what about the life of a catamite. Isn't it horrible, *shameful* [αἰσχρός], wretched? Or will you bring yourself to say that these people are happy if they can get an unlimited amount of what they need?

CALL: Aren't you *ashamed* [αἰσχύνῃ] to drag the discussion down to such depths, Socrates? (494c4-e8; my italics)

I quote this long passage of the dialogue in order to demonstrate the persistent use of shame in the elenctic process and, more specifically, in Callicles' case. Ultimately shame forces Callicles to recognize the distinction between goodness and pleasure, as he seems to acknowledge just after the catamite's example (495a6-7) and eventually accomplishes at 499b, when he admits that in fact there are better and worse pleasures.⁵² This implies at least the rejection of *categorical* hedonism as formulated by him at 494c2-3 (καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἐπιθυμίας ἀπάσας ἔχοντα καὶ δυνάμενον πληροῦντα

⁵² Moss reads this passage as follows: "Callicles responds violently: 'Aren't you ashamed to lead the discussion to such things, Socrates?' (494e7-8). Why does he think that Socrates should be ashamed to refer to the pleasures of the catamite? Clearly because, as Socrates intends him to, *he* finds such things shameful: the thought of taking pleasure in something so unmanly makes him recoil in disgust, so much so that he thinks that even mentioning such pleasures should fill a man with shame. Callicles now ceases to defend hedonism with his former conviction" (2005: 150).

χαίροντα εὐδαιμόνως ζῆν), even though it does not undermine a more broadly hedonistic conception of happiness as outlined at 491e-492c.⁵³ From a *dramatic* standpoint, therefore, shame makes the interlocutors either recognize the truth of Socrates' opinions – as Callicles does here regarding the distinction between pleasure and goodness – or prevent them from expressing publicly their real opinions on moral issues – for which Callicles rebukes Polus and Gorgias following their discussion with Socrates (482c-e). I will return to this point later on.

In sum, the main argument made by Moss with respect to the *Gorgias* is that “shame can sometimes neutralize the appetites' destructive force where reason on its own has failed: it can make the agent recoil from the pleasures of the vice and aspire even to pains of virtue” (2005: 152). This could be reduced to the general conclusion that in Socrates' view shame works as an ally of reason (at least in some circumstances). If so, we must verify to what extent shame can be regarded as a manifestation of the *thumos*, in order then to argue that the *Gorgias* presents *dramatically*, and to some extent *theoretically*, the *thumoeidetic* element of the soul as motivating actions, besides the acknowledgement of the *epithumiai* as discussed previously. In book IV of the *Republic*, for example, the peculiar feature of the *thumos* is anger, not shame, as

⁵³ As J. Cooper points out (1999: 72-73), in the first formulation of hedonism (491e-492c), Callicles does not affirm categorically that the man who intends to live well must be able to satisfy *all* appetites: he says that, when the appetites arise, he must allow them to be as great as possible and fulfil them, having sufficient courage and intelligence to do so. This does not imply that the courageous and intelligent person ought to satisfy *any* appetite. It could reasonably be the case that, pondering on the nature of some appetite, he prefers not to fulfil it, considering it unworthy or shameful, such as the appetite for scratching employed by Socrates to refute *categorical* hedonism (494c). According to the first formulation of hedonism, it would not be incoherent if Callicles distinguished between the good and the bad appetites and, consequently, between the good and the bad pleasures. For the virtuous person would be he who is able to enlarge and fulfil without restraint those appetites worthy of being fulfilled, whatever they are, and to avoid the unworthy ones, whatever they are. In the second formulation, however, Callicles supports hedonism without restriction. Socrates defines it as “gratifying absolutely” (τὸ πάντως χαίρειν, 495b4). Accordingly, one who intends to live well must be able to fulfil *all* appetites, including those picked out by Socrates (494c-495a). By arguing that pleasure and goodness are the same thing, the undesired consequences chosen by Socrates are unavoidable. It is for this reason that Callicles accepts the conclusions reached by Socrates – in order to remain consistent (since he has asserted that pleasure and goodness are the same), and not because they reflect his real opinions on the matter (495a5-6). Facing the awful conclusions drawn from the elenchus, Callicles could admit – as he does at 499b – that there are better and worse pleasures. This acquiescence does not undermine the first formulation of hedonism (491e-492c): the virtuous man must allow the good appetites, whatever they are, to be as great as possible and satisfy them, having sufficient courage and intelligence to do so. The end of all actions would still be the satisfaction of the appetites and the pursuit of pleasure – but not *all* appetites, maybe just the majority of them.

Leontius' anecdote makes clear (IV 439e-440a). Let us therefore examine whether it is reasonable to assert that shame constitutes a manifestation of the *thumoeides* in accordance with the moral psychology developed in the *Republic*.

The bridge from the *Gorgias* to the *Republic* concerning the *thumos* seems to be indicated surreptitiously by Plato through a sort of *proleptic reference* in the following passage:

SOC: So the greatest evil will be his, maimed in soul and in a bad way as he is through his imitation of the despot and the power it gives him.

CAL: I don't know how you keep twisting the argument, Socrates – turning it upside down. Don't you realise that this person who does imitate the tyrant will, if he feels like it, put the person who doesn't imitate him to death, and confiscate his possessions?

SOC: Yes, I do realise that, my worthy Callicles. I'm not deaf. I've heard it enough times today from you and Polus – and from pretty well everybody else in the city. Now it's time for you to listen to me. Yes, he will put him to death, if he feels like it, but it will be someone bad putting a fine, upstanding individual to death.

CAL: *Isn't that what's so infuriating*⁵⁴ [τὸ ἀγανακτητόν] *about it?*

SOC: *Not for an intelligent person* [οὐ νοῦν γε ἔχοντι], as the argument shows [...]. (511a1-b6; my italics)

In the discussion of which “art and capacity” (δύναμιν τινα καὶ τέχνην, 509e1) is able to prevent the agent from acting unjustly and harming himself,⁵⁵ Socrates resumes the discussion of tyranny – begun by Polus who advances the example of Archelaus of Macedonia (471a-d) to support his moral opinions – and restates his opinion that acting unjustly is worse than being treated unjustly. When Callicles asks Socrates in the quotation above whether it is not *infuriating* (τὸ ἀγανακτητόν, 511b6) to see a fine man put to death unjustly by a bad one, Socrates' reply only makes sense (οὐ νοῦν γε ἔχοντι, ὥς ὁ λόγος σημαίνει, 511b6) if we consider the previous discussion with Polus. There, Socrates forces him to agree that acting unjustly is not only more shameful but also worse than being treated unjustly (474c-481b). Accordingly, for a person who possesses *nous*, whose reason is guided by right and consistent opinions, the only situation worthy

⁵⁴ T. Griffith's translation (Cambridge, 2010) of *to aganaktēton* into ‘upsetting’ lacks the ‘anger’ aspect implied in the meaning of the verb *aganakteō* (according to L&S, in physical sense it means ‘to feel a violent irritation’, then ‘to be displeased, vexed, angry’). Thus ‘infuriating’ seems to be more akin to what Plato means here. I emphasize this point precisely because this passage is especially important for my argument. On *aganaktēō* as suggesting *thumos*, the source of anger, see J. Moss, “Plato's Division of the Soul”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 34 (2008), at 43.

⁵⁵ Referring to this passage, D. Scott affirms that Socrates' reply to the question is that mere wish is enough to do not injustice (“Platonic Pessimism and Moral Education”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 27 (1999), at 20). Although Scott comments briefly it, that is not what Socrates says; he asserts clearly that to do not injustice is necessary a kind of capacity and art (510a3-5).

of infuriation would be if he himself acted unjustly, insofar as injustice is the great evil for the soul. On the other hand, if he is treated unjustly, there is no motive for indignation because the party which is harmed is the wrongdoer, and not the victim. Therefore, in this branch of the *Gorgias* Plato seems to suggest *en passant* an alliance – or at least a close association – between *thumos* and *logos*, insofar as it seems to suggest that infuriation is commanded by *nous* in such circumstances.

This point becomes clearer, I would suggest, if it is read as a kind of *proleptic reference* to book IV of the *Republic* in which Plato explains that *to thumoeides* is the natural ally of *to logistikon*, provided the soul has been well educated (οὕτως καὶ ἐν ψυχῇ τρίτον τοῦτο ἐστὶ τὸ θυμοειδές, ἐπικουρον ὃν τῷ λογιστικῷ φύσει, ἐὰν μὴ ὑπὸ κακῆς τροφῆς διαφθαρή; IV 441a2-3)⁵⁶. Leontius' anecdote can be regarded as a complementary example to that advanced by Socrates in the *Gorgias*, in which a person possessing *nous* does not become infuriated when an injustice is inflicted on him by a wrongdoer (511a-b). In Leontius' case, in turn, once he is dominated by the appetites to see the corpses (κρατούμενος ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, IV 440a2), he becomes infuriated precisely because he has failed to act in a rational manner and avert his eyes from the corpses. Socrates uses the anecdote to demonstrate that the *thumos* struggles against the sensual pleasure of the appetites (IV 440a) and concludes that it is an ally of reason by nature (IV 441a). Therefore, while the scenario discussed in the *Gorgias* represents the virtuous action of an agent who does not become infuriated despite an injustice having been inflicted on him, Leontius' anecdote in the *Republic* represents an *akratic* action – outlined by κρατούμενος ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, IV 440a2 – in which the appetites prevail over *thumos* that comes to support reason⁵⁷.

But in what sense could shame be regarded as a manifestation of *thumos* once its distinctive feature is anger, as illustrated in Leontius' case? Let us look carefully how Socrates describes the episode:

Leontius, the son of Aglaion, was going up from the Piraeus along outside of the North Wall when he saw some corpses lying at the executioner's feet. He had an appetite (ἐπιθυμοῖ) to look at them but at the same time he was disgusted (δυσχεραίνου) and turned away. For a time he struggled with himself (μάχοιτο) and covered his face (παρακαλύπτειτο), but finally, overpowered by the appetite (κρατούμενος ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας), he pushes his eyes wide open and rushed towards the corpses, saying, "Look for yourselves, you evil wretches, take your fill of the beautiful sight (τοῦ καλοῦ θεάματος)!" (IV 439e6-440a4)

⁵⁶ Consequently, within a corrupted soul the *thumoeides* might conflict with reason.

⁵⁷ On the discussion about whether Leontius' action consists or not in an akratic one, see Brickhouse and Smith (2010: 206-210) and Carone (2001).

There are two strong evidences that shame is involved somehow in this action. (i) First, after reacting with disgust towards the sort of *epithumia* was affecting him (probably an erotic one) Leontius tries to avoid it but does not succeed.⁵⁸ Embedded in this inner conflict he “covered his face” (παρακαλύπτειτο, 440a1) that indicates clearly he is feeling ashamed before the nature of the appetite he has and doesn’t succeed in getting rid of. (ii) Second, when Leontius is finally overpowered by the appetite to see the corpses, he expresses his anger as follows: “Look for yourselves, you evil wretches, take your fill of the *beautiful* sight!” (ὦ κακοδαίμονες, ἐμπλήσθητε τοῦ καλοῦ θεάματος, IV 440a4). This is clearly an ironic assertion because the decaying corpses are in fact something *shameful* to see, such that the *thumos* induces him to rebuke himself against the overwhelming strength of the *epithumia*.⁵⁹ Had he been able to refrain from looking and to restrain this dreadful appetite, there would have been no reason for him to become angry. Therefore, we can infer that the *thumos* is closely associated to the *kalon/aiskhron* domain, such that shame, as a natural reaction to an action unworthy of having being pursued, constitutes one of its manifestations.⁶⁰

A similar situation experienced by Leontius is recalled by Plato in the *Gorgias* at the end of the dialogue between Socrates and Callicles:

CAL: Do you think it is good thing, Socrates, for a person in the city to be in that position, and have no power to protect himself?

SOC: Yes, provided he has the one thing which you has often agreed he should have – provided he has already protected himself by not saying or doing anything unjust in his dealings either with men or with gods. This we have several times agreed to be the most powerful form of protection he can have. Now, if someone were to prove me wrong, and show that I do not have this form of protection available to protect myself or anyone else, then *I would be ashamed* (αἰσχυνοίμην ἄν) to be proved wrong, whether before a large group of people or a small group, or face-to-face with one person. And if I were put to death because this inability, *I would be very infuriated* (ἄγανακτοίην ἄν). (522c4-d7; my italics)

⁵⁸ H. Lorenz, “The Analysis of the Soul in Plato's *Republic*”, in G. Santas (ed.), *Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic* (Oxford, 2006), at 152.

⁵⁹ S. Büttner, “The Tripartition of the Soul in Plato's *Republic*”, in F. G. Herrmann (ed.), *New Essays on Plato* (Ceredigion, 2006), at 87: “Shame in turn is the fear of losing ones' honour (that is the respect that one deserves). If shame is focused only on one's own soul, self-disgust can arise, as seen with Leontius. His *thumoeides* – which knows very well that it is improper to look at corpses for the sheer sensation of it – feels ashamed before his *logos* that it is unable to hold down the *epithumia* which ought not be allowed to take the reins”.

⁶⁰ On shame as a manifestation of *thumoeides*, see Büttner 2006: 75 and 86-87; H. Lorenz 2006: 152; M. A. Johnstone, “Changing Rulers in the Soul: Psychological Transitions in *Republic* 8-9”, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 41 (2011), at 157-158.

This is Socrates' final response to Callicles' criticism of the philosophical life. According to Callicles, it would be shameful if the philosopher was unable to save himself from a dangerous situation, such as having his head unjustly cracked by someone who escapes from being punished for it. Eventually, the philosopher's inexperience in rhetoric would lead him to fail, insofar as he is devoted to useless things and subtleties (486a-d). Socrates, on the other hand, attempts to rebuke Callicles by demonstrating that it is injustice that is the greatest evil for the soul and that it is worse and more shameful to act unjustly than to be treated unjustly. From the Socratic standpoint, *it would be shameful* only if it was proved he acted unjustly and was unable to protect himself against the real danger – namely, committing injustice. Only in this situation does Socrates regard it as reasonable *to become infuriated*, insofar as he would have inflicted the greatest evil on his soul. Thus, as the quotation above makes clear, the emotions of *shame* and *infuriation* are closely associated since they are merely different and correlated reactions to an action deemed unjust.

Furthermore, Plato's examination of the *thumoeides* in the *Republic* is not confined to book IV. In book IX, when resuming the discussion of the tripartition of the soul (IX 580c-582a) in order to evaluate the condition of each type of individual with regard of happiness (βασιλικόν, τιμοκρατικόν, ὀλιγαρχικόν, δημοκρατικόν, τυραννικόν, 580b4-5), Plato presents a wider conception of the *thumoeides*. This provides us with new arguments that help us to understand that shame is in fact one of its manifestations. This new approach to the tripartition of the soul introduces a new criterion for distinguishing between its three parts – namely, the type of pleasure and appetite proper to each one (τριῶν ὄντων τριτταὶ καὶ ἡδοναὶ μοι φαίνονται, ἐνὸς ἐκάστου μία ἰδία· ἐπιθυμίαι τε ὡσαύτως καὶ ἀρχαί, IX 580d6-7). The implications for the *thumoeides* are detailed below:

- What about the spirited part? Don't we say that it is wholly dedicated to the pursuit of control, victory, and high repute?
- Certainly.
- Then wouldn't it be appropriate for us to call it victory-loving and honour-loving?
- It would be most appropriate. (IX 581a9-b5)

Besides the angry reaction against an injustice (its reactive aspect), as evident from Leontius' anecdote, the *thumoeides* also has its own inclinations (its active aspect) which differ from those of the *epithumētikon* (φιλοχρήματον καὶ φιλοκερδές, IX 581a6-7) and those of the *logistikon* (φιλομαθές δὴ καὶ φιλόσοφον, IX 581b10). To the *thumos*

Plato assigns the desire for power, victory, honour and high reputation that in Greek literature typically fall within the domain of *kalon*, since they are objects of admiration and praise. Failing in reaching these goals, conversely, implies the shameful condition of the agent both in the eyes of others and her own.⁶¹ Indeed, as Moss points out, “Plato never explicitly tells us in the *Republic* that spirit is motivated to pursue the *kalon* and avoid the shameful”;⁶² however, from the evidence in books IV and IX considered above, it seems safe to infer that according to the Platonic moral psychology of the *Republic* shame indeed constitutes a manifestation of the *thumeides*.

If so, we can contend that in the *Gorgias* Plato acknowledges the domain not only of the *epithumiai* within the soul, but of the *thumos* in the form of shame. This would explain why Plato emphasizes the role of shame in the actions and discourses of the characters throughout the dialogue. What conclusions, therefore, may we reasonably infer from the presence of the *thumos* in the form of shame in the *Gorgias*? As mentioned earlier, Socrates and Callicles seem to conceive the function and nature of shame in opposite ways. If Socrates’ position is essentially intellectualist throughout the dialogue, as argued (albeit in different ways) by Cooper and Carone, so his conception of shame must be similarly intellectualist. Kahn suggests that Socrates understands it as a kind of “innate moral sense” through which it is possible to intuit goodness.⁶³ Accordingly, shame serves as a supplementary tool along with reason in forcing the interlocutors recognize the truth of Socrates’ moral opinions (at least some of them). To some extent, Socrates’ optimism concerning the possibility of convincing Callicles of the merit of his moral opinion, provided he submits himself and his opinions to continuous scrutiny (513c-d), relies on the susceptibility of all three interlocutors to shame. If shame constitutes this intuitive recognition of goodness, so Socrates’ task would simply be to correct, with the support of shame, the inconsistency of the opinions held by his interlocutors in order to make them understand rationally the truth of Socrates’ moral opinions. The intellectualist view of shame therefore does not allow for conflict between reason and shame, since the latter always operates in support of the former.

⁶¹ On the close connection between shame and honour, see D. Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (Toronto, 2006), at 102.

⁶² Moss 2005: 155.

⁶³ See above footnote 48.

If we consider only Socrates' conception of shame in the *Gorgias*, the explanation above would fit also Brickhouse and Smith's alternative view of the Socratic intellectualism, insofar as we can see shame actually helping to modify some incorrect beliefs of Socrates' interlocutors – such as the identity between goodness and pleasure as supported initially by Callicles (495a). According to them, “Socrates makes no secret of the fact that he often seeks to create this experience [i.e. shame] in others, and to use shame in such a way as to lead them to change their ways. But the process, again, seems to work in the opposite direction from the one required by the standard interpretation [of the Socratic intellectualism]: instead of shame adjusting to reason, one's reasoning seems to be influenced by shame” (2010: 59). And again: “the unpleasant experience of shame influences the way people at by inducing them to change their beliefs about what is best for them” (2010: 137).

Nonetheless, if we follow Cooper's interpretation of the *Gorgias* regarding Callicles' moral psychology outlined at 491e-492c, we may re-evaluate the role of shame according to a more complex conception of the human soul. Once shame is deemed to be a moral feeling instilled in the soul that prevents those superior individuals from having more than others and fulfilling their appetites whenever they arise, the attainment of virtue – that is to say, “luxury, intemperance, and freedom” – necessitates overcoming this kind of moral impediment. That is why bravery is one of the virtues praised by Callicles, which assumes the role of overthrowing whatever *pathos* might obstruct the process of enlarging and fulfilling the appetites, such as shame or fear. If Calliclean moral psychology admits the existence of different motivational forces within the soul, and, consequently, the *possibility* of conflict between them, as discussed above, so it seems reasonable that one might be not capable of satisfying an appetite when it arises because she is overwhelmingly affected by shame, even though she recognizes rationally that its fulfilment is required for a happy life.⁶⁴ This would be exactly the condition of Callicles revealed by his susceptibility to shame when facing the consequences of the *categorical* hedonism supported by him (494c2-3): his embarrassment before the example of the catamites (*kinaidoi*) shows that he is still bound to the conventional morality imposed on him by the majority of worse

⁶⁴ As pointed out by Cooper, the different strengths within the soul would be the appetites themselves, feelings like shame and fear, and that one provided by bravery. He considers undetermined the role of reason and intelligence, whether they are “the source of a further sort of independent force toward action or serve only to provide information” (1999: 61).

and inferior people, since the shameful condition ascribed to the *kinaidoi* is a cultural value shared by the Athenian society⁶⁵. So, the strength of shame within Callicles' soul might conflict with the strength of the appetite when it strives for satisfaction, even if he finds the appropriate means and the right moment to do so.

Therefore, if shame ultimately constitutes a manifestation of the *thumos*, as the Platonic moral psychology developed in the *Republic* seems to require, so it is possible to identify the third element of the soul in the *Gorgias*, albeit in a incipient form, if we consider seriously the implications of Callicles' moral psychology. From the *dramatic* standpoint, we can observe how shame is represented by Plato as affecting the actions and discourses of the characters throughout the dialogue; from the theoretical one, we can find two opposing views conveyed by Socrates and Callicles: according to the former, shame can help his interlocutors to recognise the truth of his moral beliefs by changing their incorrect views; according to the latter, shame functions to some extent as one source of human motivation independent from appetite and/or reason in a such way that it might oppose to them, especially in the case of the worse and inferior people.

Having said this, however, I would like to emphasise that such conclusions are only possible if we interpret the issues of moral psychology presented in the *Gorgias* in view of their further development in the *Republic*. My intention is not to suggest that the *Gorgias* presents a neat introduction to the theory of the tripartite soul, but rather to explore how Plato deals with certain problems in this field of philosophical inquiry – especially through Callicles – in a manner that point us toward the *Republic*, and how the *Republic* in turn can help us to rethink what in the *Gorgias* is not fully explored. The dramatic feature of the *Gorgias* – the literary richness of Platonic composition – contributes to stimulate our eagerness in answering the questions addressed by the characters but not thoroughly resolved by them.

3 – Conclusion

In this essay I have sought to further the debate on moral psychology in the *Gorgias* by drawing on the advances and amendments made by Plato in the *Republic*. To this end I divided my argument into two halves: the first one, concerning the

⁶⁵ See above footnote 49.

epithumiai, and the second one, regarding the role of shame in the dialogue deemed as a likely manifestation of *thumos*. My ultimate intention was to argue for the treatment of *epithumiai* and the *thumos* as two different sources of human motivation in the *Gorgias*, the implications of which are explored more fully in the theory of the tripartite soul in book IV of the *Republic*. With regard to the *epithumiai*, I began by addressing the apparent inconsistency of Socrates' position in the *Gorgias*, as he seems to recognize the "part of the soul where the appetites are" in the discussion of temperance and intemperance. As pointed out by Terence Irwin, this acknowledgement by Socrates would imply a new conception of the human soul in which its nonrational element might motivate action independently of and against reason. This new position apparently taken by Socrates would contradict his "intellectualist" approach to moral psychology expressed in the previous debate with Gorgias and Polus (460b, 467c-ff.). John Cooper meanwhile suggests a different interpretation of the problem identified by Irwin, asserting that Socrates' commitment to the intellectualist view is consistent throughout the *Gorgias*, despite the challenge posed by the alternative moral psychology outlined by Callicles. According to Cooper, the innovations in moral psychology in the *Gorgias* are presented by Plato not through Socrates but through Callicles. Cooper contends that Callicles conceives the *possibility* of conflict between the different forces within the soul – namely the appetites, feelings like shame or fear, and the strength provided by bravery – and consequently the possibility of "weakness of will" or *akrasia*. This peculiar feature of the *Gorgias*, especially regarding Callicles' moral views, points towards the moral psychology expounded in the *Republic*.

Cooper's reading is criticized by Gabriela Carone, who asserts that there is nothing in the *Gorgias* that suggests conflict within the soul. She contends that Socrates' intellectualist approach to moral psychology is entirely consistent throughout the dialogue, even though it somehow includes nonrational factors in its explanation of human motivation. According to her, affects and evaluative attitudes would necessarily be co-instantiated such that if one belief is removed the corresponding affect is removed as well, and vice-versa. This re-evaluation of Socratic intellectualism seeks to address the apparent inconsistencies in the *Gorgias* concerning the recognition of the *epithumiai* as one element of the soul, as pointed out by Irwin. In a similar vein Brickhouse and Smith object the supposed inconsistency of Socrates' position in the *Gorgias* by showing that nonrational affections – appetites and passions – play a *causal* or *explanatory* role in Socratic intellectualism often disregarded by the standard view,

insofar as they might influence and shape our current beliefs about what is best for us to do in each circumstance, even though it is belief and the desire aroused from it that ultimately lead us to act. I have attempted to show, however, that the objections advanced by Carone are insufficient to undermine particularly Cooper's interpretation of the *Gorgias*, and that Brickhouse and Smith's alternative reading does not tackle in a sufficient manner the implications of the physiology of the *epithumiai* in the orderliness argument (505a-b), besides having disregarded the philosophical content conveyed by Callicles on moral psychology issues. I therefore have broadly subscribed to Cooper's reading of Calliclean psychology and have sought to argue further for the conceptual affinity between the *Gorgias* and the *Republic* regarding the treatment of the *epithumiai*.

In the second half of this essay, I argued for the presence of the *thumos* in the *Gorgias* in the form of *shame*, to which Plato gives prominence throughout the dialogue. To this end I relied mainly on Jessica Moss' reading, according to which shame – intrinsically associated with the *thumos* – acts in support of reason when the arguments themselves are insufficient to persuade the interlocutor. I subsequently contended that Plato presents the shame *dramatically* affecting the actions and discourses of the characters throughout the dialogue. I pointed out, however, that shame is understood in different ways by Socrates and Callicles, such that only according to Calliclean moral psychology is it reasonable to infer that shame – and *a fortiori*, *thumos* – constitutes one source of human motivation independent from reason. In so doing, I have sought to extend Cooper's analysis of the *epithumiai* in the *Gorgias* to encompass the *thumos* in the form of shame.

In sum, I wish to conclude that the treatment of the *epithumiai* and the *thumos* in the *Gorgias* suggests the introduction of issues that will be further developed specially in books IV, VIII and IX of the *Republic*. It seems undeniable that the *Gorgias* provides a new perspective on the theory of action and human motivation that departs from the Socratic intellectualism we often find in the so-called "Socratic dialogues", provided we assume that the philosophical content is conveyed by the dialogue as whole, and not only through Socrates. By means of his literary genius Plato seems to leave some issues raised by the characters in the *Gorgias* open to debate and to further development, rather than offering to his readers complete answers theoretically justified.

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Universidade de São Paulo

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