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# Dualism and tripartition in Platon

## Unlawful desires, sleep, and shame in Book 9 of the *Politeia* (571b–572a)

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**Abstract:** Der Aufsatz analysiert das Verhältnis zwischen dem platonischen Dualismus (Schein vs. Sein, sinnlich vs. denkbar, sichtbar vs. unsichtbar, Körper vs. Seele, Meinung vs. Erkenntnis, Einzelding vs. Idee) und der Seelendreiteilung der *Politeia* (Denken, Kampfgeist, Begehren). Im Mittelpunkt steht die Stelle *Politeia* 571b–572a, wo Platon die Seele zuerst als zwei- und dann als dreigeteilt darstellt und ihr Verhalten im Wachen und im Schlaf erörtert. Gegen die gängige Interpretation wird argumentiert, dass die Seelenzweiteilung das obere Seelendrittel (τὸ λογιστικόν) den unteren zwei Seelendritteln (τὸ θυμοειδές und τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) entgegensetzt.

**Keywords:** Seelendreiteilung, Dualismus, Scham, Schlaf, Traum, *Der Staat*, Begierden, psychischer Konflikt.

### 1. Introduction

Platon's metaphysics is a dualist metaphysics based on contrary terms like appearance vs. reality, sensible vs. intelligible, visible vs. invisible, body vs. soul, opinion vs. knowledge, individual thing vs. general idea. The influence of this dualist approach on subsequent philosophical tradition can hardly be underestimated; it is in fact one of the main reasons why modern thinkers like F. Nietzsche and M. Heidegger have considered European metaphysics to be in essence Platonic metaphysics.

On the other hand, in matters of political philosophy and psychology Platon (most famously in the *Politeia* but also in other dialogues) prefers tripartition, suggesting that city and soul are composed of three parts: (1) a thinking, (2) a violent-ambitious, and (3) a desiring one.

Despite the enormous amount of scholarship devoted to each of these two topics, the relationship between dualism and tripartition has never been a priority for Platonic studies.<sup>1</sup> This stance may, to some extent, trace back to Platon himself, who operates with the dualist and the tripartite principles as though they were

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1 To give just one example, Thesleff 1999, a book size study on Platon's dualism, has no more than one sentence to say about the tripartition (p. 30). On the division of the soul in two or three parts see Rees 1957; Graeser 1969; Fortenbaugh 1970a, 241–250; Fortenbaugh 1970b, 65–70; Dorion 2012.

independent of one another. However, a closer look reveals points of contact between them, even though Platon does not explicitly address them.

In this paper I will discuss a passage in the *Politeia* where the two principles are used side by side in the analysis of the soul. As I will show presently, the interpretation of this passage raises some difficulties, particularly in the distribution of the three components of the tripartition within a dualist model. In section 2 I will present the soul bipartition at 571c3–d4 and indicate its connections with Platon's onto-epistemological dualism. In section 3 I will explain the necessity of an interpretation that combines the dualist and the tripartite approaches. Contrary to the common reading, I will argue that the soul bipartition opposes the upper soul third (τὸ λογιστικόν) to the lower two thirds (τὸ θυμοειδές and τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν taken together). In section 4 I will challenge the widespread assumption that shame, in the *Politeia*, is a manifestation of the middle soul part (τὸ θυμοειδές). Finally, in section 5 I will present my own interpretation of the passage, which is based on the suggestion that the unlawful pleasures and desires play distinct roles in the dualist and the tripartite explanations.

## 2. Dualism

At the beginning of Book 9, Sokrates introduces the notion of unlawful pleasures and desires. He says (571b4–5) that these exist within every one of us (with a few exceptions), even though we do not usually pursue them. Therefore, the question he must deal with is: if these are indeed our genuine pleasures and desires, why do we not pursue them? Sokrates answers by positing the presence of stronger forces that prevent us from pursuing the unlawful pleasures and desires. Thus, the concept of unlawful pleasures and desires presupposes a psychic conflict between two opposing forces or drives.<sup>2</sup>

As the counterforce against the fulfilment of unlawful pleasures and desires Sokrates mentions (571b5–6) laws (νόμοι) and better desires accompanied by reason (βελτίους ἐπιθυμίαι μετὰ λόγου). In other words, both societal (laws) and psychological inhibitors (reason, desires) work together to deter the pursuit of unlawful desires. As a result, Sokrates regards all these forces as a unity.<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that some desires, namely those aligned with reason, oppose rather than encourage unlawful pleasures and desires. Hence, we can infer that the desires in harmony with reason are lawful (as they are not prohibited by νόμοι 'laws') and, moreover, they prevent us from pursuing unlawful desires by directing our attention to, and keeping us busy with, themselves.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See also 439b–d, 604b.

<sup>3</sup> Reason and the law are also mentioned together at *Politeia* 587a,c; 604a and *Laws* 835e.

<sup>4</sup> See also 485d.

In the next step, Sokrates divides the soul into two parts corresponding to the two conflicting forces. This soul bipartition is based on the contrast between waking and sleep, that is to say between day and night, light and darkness, or consciousness and unconsciousness:

τάς περί τὸν ὕπνον ... ἐγειρομένας, ὅταν τὸ μὲν ἄλλο τῆς ψυχῆς εὖδη, ὅσον λογιστικὸν καὶ ἡμερον καὶ ἄρχον ἐκείνου, τὸ δὲ θηριῶδες τε καὶ ἄγριον, ἢ σίτων ἢ μέθης πλησθέν, σκιρτᾷ τε καὶ ἀπώσάμενον τὸν ὕπνον ζητῇ ἵεναι καὶ ἀποπιμπλάναι τὰ αὐτοῦ ἡθη, οἷσθ' ὅτι πάντα ἐν τῷ τοιοῦτῳ τολμᾷ ποιεῖν, ὥς ἀπὸ πάσης λελυμένον τε καὶ ἀπηλλαγμένον αἰσχύνῃς καὶ φρονήσεως. (*Politeia* 571c3–d1)

[Unlawful are the desires] which wake up in sleep, when the rest of the soul – the thinking and gentle and ruling [part] – reposes and the animalic and wild [part], full with food or drink, becomes active, shakes off sleep and tries to follow its own instincts. As you know, it dares do anything in this time when it is released and liberated from any shame (αἰσχύνῃ) and judgement (φρόνησις).

According to this bipartite model of the soul, waking and sleep represent psychological states in which the two soul halves are awake and asleep alternatively: in waking, the controlling instance is awake while the source of unlawful pleasures sleeps; conversely, in sleep the controlling instance sleeps while the source of unlawful pleasures is awake.<sup>5</sup> In this model, the soul is never entirely awake or entirely asleep. To be awake is to be asleep, and to be asleep is to be awake, as Herakleitos had put it.<sup>6</sup> What we commonly call waking and sleep are in reality the wakefulness and sleep of the supervising (or conscious, or visible) part of the soul, to which we (unconsciously!) tend to reduce the soul. Accordingly, the point of this explanation is to cast light on the ‘dark side of the Moon’, namely the soul part that we never get to know in waking (because it is asleep when ‘we’ are awake) and to

<sup>5</sup> Note the oxymoron περί τὸν ὕπνον ἐγειρομένας (571c3).

<sup>6</sup> Fr. DK 22 B 88: ταῦτό τ' ἐνὶ ζῶν καὶ τεθνηκός καὶ τὸ ἐγρηγορός καὶ τὸ καθεῦδον καὶ νέον καὶ γηραιόν “it is just one and the same to be living and to be dead, to be awake and to be sleeping, to be young and to be old”. See also fr. 26, 77. The author of the Hippocratic treatise *On regimen*, who seems to have been active around 400 BC and has been clearly influenced by Herakleitos’ philosophy, writes in ch. 86 (CMG I, 2, 4, 218, 2–11): ἡ ψυχὴ ἐγρηγοροῦσι μὲν τῷ σώματι ὑπερετέουσα, ἐπὶ πολλὰ μεριζομένη, οὐ γίνεται αὐτῇ ἑωυτῆς ... ὅταν δὲ τὸ σῶμα ἡσυχάσῃ, ἡ ψυχὴ κινεομένη καὶ ἐγρηγορούσα διοικεῖ τὸν ἑωυτῆς οἶκον καὶ τὰς τοῦ σώματος πρῆξις ἀπάσας αὐτῇ διαπρήσσεται. τὸ μὲν γὰρ σῶμα καθεῦδον οὐκ αἰσθάνεται, ἡ δὲ ἐγρηγορούσα γινώσκει πάντα, καὶ ὁρᾷ τε τὰ ὀρητὰ καὶ ἀκούει τὰ ἀκουστά, βαδίζει, ψαύει, λυπεῖται, ἐνθυμεῖται, ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐοῦσα “When the soul serves the waking body it distributes itself among many things and does not get to be itself with itself ... But when the body rests the soul begins to stir and to wake up, administering its own home and performing all actions of the body. For a sleeping body cannot perceive, while the soul, being awake, apprehends everything: it sees what is visible, hears what is hearable, walks, touches, feels pain, thinks – albeit it occupies a rather small place”. On sleep in the Presocratics see Laks 2015.

which we only have limited access in sleep (when our conscious and knowing soul part is in slumber).<sup>7</sup>

Despite the functional symmetry of waking and sleep and of the two sides of the soul, it is evident that this bipolar model is hierarchical. In Sokrates' view, the waking soul is preferable to the sleeping soul to the same extent that law is preferable to unlawfulness and light to darkness. Therefore, the restraining part is inherently superior to the part that, in the absence of any regulation, "dares do anything". It is a good thing that, most of the time (i.e. in waking), the light of reason effectively keeps the dark instincts in check. It is a good thing that we interact with each other in daylight when we show to the others our bright side and cannot see their dark sides.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, it is a good thing that reason and community life involve interdictions, restrictions, and limitations.

This is hardly the place for an extensive discussion of what is usually called, in German, *Lichtmetaphysik* ('metaphysics of light'), a topic in its own right whose paramount importance in Greek and Platonic ontology is well known.<sup>9</sup> Suffice it to say that the contrast between light and darkness lies at the very core of the allegory of the cave (*Politeia* 514–518), a passage where the Platonic dualism of truth vs. opinion, certainty vs. unreliability, reality vs. appearance, intellectual knowledge vs. sense perception is famously expressed in terms of visibility.<sup>10</sup> In this connection, Platon suggests (518c) that the purpose of education is to guide the soul from the realm of becoming to the realm of being, that is to say from darkness to light.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, at 520c he compares the condition of someone who has seen the light outside the cave with waking, and the life inside the cave with a dream. This com-

7 572b2–5. Aristoteles, *Nikomachean ethics* 1102a32–b11 also believes that a part of the soul, namely that which is responsible for nutrition and growth and can be found in all living beings including plants, is active especially in sleep.

8 Herakleitos fr. DK 22 B 89: ὁ Ἡράκλειτός φησι τοῖς ἐγρηγορόσιν ἓνα καὶ κοινὸν κόσμον εἶναι, τῶν δὲ κοιμωμένων ἕκαστον εἰς ἴδιον ἀποστρέφεσθαι "Herakleitos says that in waking people have one and the same world in common, while in sleep everyone turns to his own world". Freud [1916] 2000, 105–106: "Der Schlaf ist ein Zustand, in welchem ich nichts von der äußeren Welt wissen will, mein Interesse von ihr abgezogen habe. Ich versetze mich in den Schlaf, indem ich mich von ihr zurückziehe und ihre Reize von mir abhalte. Ich schlafe auch ein, wenn ich von ihr ermüdet bin. Beim Einschlafen sage ich also zur Außenwelt: Laß mich in Ruhe, denn ich will schlafen". On sleep in Herakleitos, Platon, and Aristoteles see Wohl 2020.

9 Baeumker 1908, 358–421; Bultmann 1948; Beierwaltes 1957; Bremer 1973; Bremer 1976. On sight and vision in Ancient Greece see also Mugler 1960; Malten 1961; Deonna 1965; Luther 1966; Nightingale 2004; Squire 2016; Kampakoglu & Novokhatko 2018. On Platon's *Lichtmetaphysik* see Ferguson 1921/22; Murphy 1932; Ferguson 1934; Notopoulos 1944; Paquet 1973; Merker 2003, 7–124. The philosophical interest in light is rooted in religion.

10 Let us also recall that modern languages fail to convey Platon's intention with ultimate precision because the Greek terms ἰδέα 'idea, visible form' and εἶδος 'form, visible aspect', which Platon uses most frequently to designate ultimate reality, are etymologically related to the verb ἰδεῖν 'to see'. Moreover, the term ἀλήθεια 'truth' has in Greek a visual meaning as well ('unconcealment'). See e.g. 508d.

11 This, among other things, is also the origin of the idea of enlightenment.

parison echoes the passage 476cd, where people who cannot see the general idea behind particular things (an idea which is invisible to the sensible eye!) live as if in a dream, while truly awake are only those who are able to see what is more-than-visible. In such contexts<sup>12</sup> ‘dream’ is a metaphysical and epistemological category rather than a physiological or psychological one because it designates the incapacity, manifested in both waking and sleep, to recognize the ontological difference between appearance and reality.<sup>13</sup> Although Platon, in the discussion of unlawful pleasures and desires, speaks of sleep rather than dreams,<sup>14</sup> this metaphysical approach to the distinction between waking and sleep/dream should be kept in mind, as will become clear before long.

Let us now come back to how Sokrates, in the quoted lines 571c3–d1, describes the two soul parts besides their contribution to sleep and waking. Concerning the superior part, he notes that it engages in thinking (λογιστικόν), is gentle (ἡμερον), and rules over the other part (ἄρχον ἐκείνου). Moreover, he maintains that the lower part is, in sleep, liberated from shame (αἰσχύνῃ) and judgement (φρόνησις). This suggests that the better part, beyond being the thinking ‘organ’, may induce, with its wakeful presence, a sense of shame in the lower part. This point holds a certain ambiguity, which I will address in the next section. On the other hand, Sokrates characterizes the lower part as animalic (θηριῶδες) and wild (ἄγριον), and seeking satisfaction (πλησθέν, ἀποπιμπλάναι) in food and drink. Moreover, the broad assertion that “it dares do anything” is subsequently (571d1–5) illustrated by the fact that the oniric self (1) has sex with one’s own mother or with any other human, animal, or god, (2) murders anybody, and (3) eats anything.<sup>15</sup>

It is noteworthy that in Book 10, in connection with the critique of poetry, Sokrates introduces (603–606) a very similar bipartition of the soul, even though his treatment of the lower soul part is somewhat different there. Let us consider the following points. First, the superior soul part (τὸ βέλτιστον, 605a10, 606a7) is called λογιστικόν at 605b3 (cf. 571c4), being associated with φρόνησις ‘thinking’ (603b1, 604e2; cf. 571d1), λόγος ‘reason’, νόμος ‘law’ (604a9; cf. 571b5–6), and

<sup>12</sup> One may also add 533c.

<sup>13</sup> 476c1–6: ὁ οὖν καλὰ μὲν πράγματα νομίζων, αὐτὸ δὲ κάλλος μήτε νομίζων μήτε, ἂν τις ἡγῆται ἐπὶ τὴν γνῶσιν αὐτοῦ, δυνάμενος ἔπεσθαι, ὄναρ ἢ ὕπαρ δοκεῖ σοι ζῆν; σκόπει δέ. τὸ ὄνειρώττειν ἄρα οὐ τόδε ἐστίν, ἐάντε ἐν ὕπνῳ τις ἐάντ’ ἐγρηγορώς τὸ ὅμοιον τῷ μὴ ὅμοιον ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ ἡγῆται εἶναι ὃ ἔοικεν; – ἐγὼ γοῦν ἂν, ἢ δ’ ὅς, φαίην ὄνειρώττειν τὸν τοιοῦτον “Do you think that someone who acknowledges beautiful things but does not acknowledge beauty (in) itself, nor is able to follow when is guided by someone else to make its acquaintance, is dreaming or is awake? Look: Isn’t this what we call dreaming, be it in sleep or in waking, to mistake one thing for another and instead of saying that they are similar to one another to believe that they are one and the same thing? – I would surely say that someone like this is dreaming, he said.” See Gallop 1971, 190–194, 197; Halliwell 1993, 211–212. On dream in Platon see also LévyStone 2018; Thein 2019.

<sup>14</sup> See, however, 572a8–9.

<sup>15</sup> Against the common interpretation that “eating anything” is an allusion to cannibalism see Enache 2023.

ἡσυχία ‘calmness’ (604b7, 604e2; cf. ἡμερον 571c4). Second, the inferior soul part (τὸ φαῦλον, 603a7, 603b5) is called πάθος ‘emotion, passion’ at 604a10, ἀλόγιστον ‘irrational’ at 604d8, and ἀνόητον ‘unintelligent’ at 605b7, being naturally associated with greediness (ἀπλήστως, 604d8; ἀποπλησθῆναι, 606a5; πιμπλάμενον, 606a6; cf. πλησθέν, 571c6; ἀποπιμπλάναι, 571c7; cf., moreover, ἀπληστότατον, πίμπλασθαι, 442a7), idleness, cowardice (604d9), sex, anger, desire, pain, and pleasure (606d1–2; cf. 571d1–3). Third, this bipartition of the soul holds ontological and epistemological significance because it reflects the distinction between truth and being on the one hand, and imitation and appearance on the other (603a10–b3). Consequently, the upper soul half is said to be always identical with itself, while the lower half is diverse, variegated, and highly esteemed by the crowd (604e–605a). Fourth, the relationship between the two soul parts is described in terms of guard, control, and restraint (τὸ βίᾳ κατεχόμενον, 606a3; φυλακὴν, 606a8; ὃ τῷ λόγῳ κατεῖχες, 606c5; cf. κολαζόμεναι, 571c5). Fifth and last, the soul bipartition justifies in both cases the distinction between public and private. In the discussion of unlawful pleasures and desires, reason and the law, with all the restrictions they imply, govern our waking (= public) life (571b5–6), while sleep is synonymous with absolute privacy and freedom. Similarly, in the critique of poetry, reason and the law prevent people from doing, in the presence of others, what they allow themselves to do when they are all alone, e.g. giving free rein to their deepest feelings and emotions (604a). Thus, the boundary between waking and sleep resembles the boundary between public and private life. This does not mean that everybody does in private what (Sokrates says that) they do in sleep but, rather, that the equation of freedom with privacy and the (psychological and juridical) barrier<sup>16</sup> that restricts our freedom to do whatever we want are very similar in both cases.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, in both cases one is free when one is not being seen by others, while restrictions follow from the fact (or the conscience) of being observed.

### 3. Tripartition

It may seem that all this has little to do with the soul tripartition promoted in the *Politeia*. However, having explained what unlawful pleasures and desires are and where they can be found Sokrates proceeds to reveal how they can (and should) be repressed even in sleep. In these lines (571d7–572a9), there is no mention of a

<sup>16</sup> At 548b6 the law is compared with a father, while people who secretly indulge in pleasures that are prohibited by the law are compared with children who run away from their father. A very similar idea at 590e–591a. See also 538c. On similarities and dissimilarities with Freud see Solinas 2012, 171–173.

<sup>17</sup> Nagel 1998, 17: “the public-private boundary faces in two directions – keeping disruptive material out of the public arena and protecting private life from the crippling effects of the external gaze”.

soul bipartition anymore, the directions being given in unmistakably tripartite terms: the thinking part (τὸ λογιστικόν) should be kept awake even in sleep, while the desiring and the violent parts (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν and τὸ θυμοειδές) should be gently taken care of in a special preparation for sleep so that they may not wake up when the body rests.<sup>18</sup> These suggestions (1) cast new light on the term λογιστικόν used in the description of the upper half of the bipartition (571c4) and (2) invite the assumption that the food and drink mentioned in the description of the lower half (571c5) are nothing but the objects of the desires of the ἐπιθυμητικόν (437b–438a; 585b–586c). This seems to indicate that the bipartition primarily expresses a conflict between reason and desire, an idea which is not in disagreement with Book 4, where the first step towards the tripartition of the soul is the distinction between the upper third and the lower third (437bc, 439b–d).<sup>19</sup> All things considered, we may safely conclude that the bipartite and the tripartite explanations pertain to one and the same subject matter and that it is legitimate to attempt to compare them.

This insight raises some difficulties regarding the activity of the three soul parts in waking and in sleep, especially their roles in generating and repressing unlawful pleasures and desires.

Sokrates' advice to appease the lower two soul parts and activate (or keep active) the upper part before going to sleep implies (at least) two things. First, that there exists an antagonism between the upper and the lower two soul parts.<sup>20</sup> Second, that unlawful dream visions (παράνομοι ὄψεις ἐνυπνίων, 572a8–9) can originate both in the desiring and the violent-ambitious soul parts. It is worth noting that the first suggestion seems to be at odds with the description of the soul tripartition in Book 4, where the middle soul part is said (440b) to take sides with reason in a psychic conflict between reason (= the upper third) and desire (= the lower third). This alliance reflects the social distribution of the ideal state in Books 2 and 3, where the upper two classes (called together 'guardians') are set against the workers of the lower class. Yet, in the preparation for sleep in Book 9 the middle

<sup>18</sup> 572a5–7: ἡσυχάσας μὲν τῶ δύο εἶδη, τὸ τρίτον δὲ κινήσας ἐν ᾧ τὸ φρονεῖν ἐγγίγνεται, οὕτω ἀναπαύεται “go to sleep having appeased those two parts and activated the third in which thinking takes place”.

<sup>19</sup> Cornford 1912, 260–261, 263; Hackforth 1913, 269. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude, as Penner 1971, 111–113 has done, that the middle element of the tripartition is not a soul part in its own right.

<sup>20</sup> On this soul bipartition in Platon and in the doxographical tradition see Dorion 2012 and Rees 1957, 114, respectively. Fortenbaugh 1970a, 241–250 and 1970b, 65–70 deals with Platon's division of the soul without taking into consideration its metaphysical background as discussed above. Therefore, he claims that the soul bipartition must be a simplification of the tripartition. However, the fact that the soul bipartition is inseparably connected with the ontological and epistemological dualism shows that we have no reason to regard the soul bipartition as having evolved from the tripartition.

soul part (τὸ θυμοειδές) is not required to help reason appease desire but is itself appeased along with desire solely through the efforts of reason.<sup>21</sup>

If we now compare the forces present in the soul in the bipartite and the tripartite models we get the following picture:

bipartition	tripartition
τὸ λογιστικὸν καὶ ἡμερον καὶ ἄρχον ἐκείνου νόμοι καὶ βελτίους ἐπιθυμίας μετὰ λόγου	τὸ λογιστικόν
τὸ θηριῶδες καὶ ἄγριον is the source of παράνομοι ἐπιθυμίας σίτων ἢ μέθης πλησθέν is the opposite of αἰσχύνη and φρόνησις, i.e. loves ἄνοια and ἀναισχυντία	τὸ θυμοειδές  τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν

This means that the phrase “the thinking and gentle and ruling part” designates the upper third, while the phrase “the animalic and wild part” must designate the lower two thirds of the tripartite soul combined. Hence it follows that foolishness (ἄνοια) and shamelessness (ἀναισχυντία) characterize both the thymoeidetic and the epithymetic parts. In other words, since the shamelessness and foolishness of the unlawful pleasures and desires manifest themselves in sleep, we may conclude that the wakeful presence of the upper soul third is somehow the cause of both judgement (φρόνησις) and shame (αἰσχύνη).

Yet, this is not how this passage is usually read. Due to a widespread misconception that shame is, both in the *Politeia* and other Platonic dialogues, a manifestation of the middle soul part, Sokrates’ suggestion that the lower part of the bipartition is free from both judgement and shame is often taken to mean that “the animalic and wild part” has nothing to do with either the λογιστικόν or the θυμοειδές. The natural consequence of this interpretation is that the lower part of the bipartition includes only the ἐπιθυμητικόν, which is tantamount to saying that the unlawful pleasures and desires originate exclusively in the lowest third of the soul. This interpretation, as I will demonstrate below, primarily focuses on the soul bipartition (571b3–d5) and tends to overlook the subsequent explanation given by Sokrates in tripartite terms (571d7–572a9).

It should be quite evident by now that this widespread interpretation of the passage 571bd is incompatible with the reading I have presented above. Obvious-

<sup>21</sup> Rees 1957, 114: “if once it were conceded that reason could be effective of itself in ruling the appetites, this function of the spirited element [sc. as an instrument of reason] would disappear, while θυμός as spirit or anger would fall without difficulty into the ranks of the appetites and desires”. Rees discusses this kind of bipartition in Platon’s later dialogues but does not consider *Politeia*.

ly, the bipartition opposes either the λογιστικόν to the lower two soul thirds (as I claim) or the ἐπιθυμητικόν to the upper two soul thirds (as the prevailing interpretation claims). Both readings cannot be true at the same time. Therefore, to support my above approach I will now endeavour to demonstrate that the widespread interpretation of the passage 571bd is incorrect, and I will do this by challenging the foundation on which it is based, namely the notion that shame is a manifestation of the θυμοειδές.

#### 4. Shame

In an influential study, Cairns 1993, 382 has argued against Fortenbaugh <sup>1975</sup>, 32<sup>22</sup> that, in the *Politeia*, shame is situated not in the upper but the middle soul third.<sup>23</sup> While Fortenbaugh pointed out that at 571cd and 606c Platon associates shame with the λογιστικόν, Cairns has dismissed this evidence as inconclusive, adducing a number of other passages where, in his view, the feeling of shame, or the fear of disgrace, is due to a strong attachment to honour. Despite devoting eleven pages to this issue in his study, Cairns deals with the passage 571cd in no more than one sentence in which he confines himself to rejecting Fortenbaugh's reading thereof. In this connection, Cairns 1993, 383 points to the passage *Politeia* 441a where, as mentioned above, the middle soul part is said to side with the upper third in a conflict between the upper and the lower thirds. Consequently, Cairns suggests that the bipartitions at 571cd and 606c, on which Fortenbaugh had based his view, *could mean* that the upper two thirds were opposed to the lower third as in Book 4. In his argument, Cairns never mentions the tripartite explanation at 571d7–572a9, which is why he does not realize that his proposed reading of the bipartition at 571b3–d5 is contradicted by Sokrates in the very subsequent lines.

A similar position regarding the localization of shame in the middle soul third is entertained by Moss 2005, 153–169<sup>24</sup> and Lin 2022, 132–133. More often than not, however, scholars simply take it for granted that shame, in the *Politeia*, is rooted in the θυμοειδές and do not provide arguments to support their view, as

<sup>22</sup> See also Fortenbaugh 1970a, 249.

<sup>23</sup> Militello 2020 provides an introductory discussion of this topic but hardly brings new insights.

<sup>24</sup> Moss 2005 mentions neither the passage *Politeia* 571b–572a nor Cairns' study. In a later paper, Moss 2008 explains the soul bipartition in Book 10 – rightly, as I believe – as a division that opposes the upper third to the lower two thirds. However, in this paper she is no longer concerned with shame and does not discuss the passage 606c from which Cairns, who champions the same view on the connection between shame and θυμοειδές as her, draws precisely the opposite conclusion regarding the soul division, namely that the bipartition in Book 10 opposes the upper two thirds to the lower third. Generally speaking, the emphasis on the kinship of the lower two soul thirds in Moss 2008 is difficult to reconcile with the emphasis on the kinship of the upper two soul thirds in Moss 2005. For instance, Moss 2008, 54 suggests – rightly, as I believe – that *Politeia* 603e involves a conflict between the upper third and the lower two thirds of the soul, which is rather impossible if shame (604a, not discussed by Moss 2005) is a manifestation of the middle soul part.

though this were a well-known truth.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, it is commonly believed that the unlawful pleasures and desires originate exclusively in the lowest soul third, as though the upper part of the bipartition at 571b3–d5 would include both the λογιστικόν and the θυμοειδές.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the problems created by the unquestioned belief that shame is a manifestation of the middle soul part are sometimes regarded as difficulties inherent in Platon's text.<sup>27</sup>

As I see it, there is nothing in Sokrates' account of the unlawful pleasures and desires (571b3–572a9) to suggest a link between shame and the middle soul part, unless of course this is the reader's preconceived view. Therefore, I think it is no accident that Cairns attempted to invalidate Fortenbaugh's suggestion about linking shame with the upper soul third not by discussing this passage but by adducing other Platonic passages. For it is well possible that Cairns may be right in pointing out that honour and the fear of disgrace are, in the *Politeia*, sometimes (or even often) the reasons why someone feels shame but wrong in assuming that such considerations, which he rightly associates with the middle soul part,<sup>28</sup> are *always* the cause of shame, and in concluding that this emotion should be therefore unequivocally located in the θυμοειδές. In my view, we have no reason to suppose that Platon situated shame in any specific part of the soul tripartition, especially since there is clear evidence that he sometimes links it (not with the upper third, as Fortenbaugh suggests, or the middle third, as Cairns suggests, but) with the lower third!

Let us take a closer look at the passage 560de. Here, Sokrates describes the changes taking place in the democratic man, a character governed by desires and

25 Reeve 1988, 138; Price 1995, 65; Lorenz 2006, 62–63; Holowchak 2007, 10; Destrée 2011, 272; Solinas 2012, 80–81; Arruzza 2019, 216. However, there are also scholars who endorse Fortenbaugh's view: Knuuttila 2004, 12; Militello 2020, 241.

26 Reeve 1988, 45–47; Hook 2005, 22; Boeri 2010, 299; Barney 2016, 55; Wilburn 2021, 224. Liebert 2017, 155 and Arruzza 2019, 214 make a strong case for attributing unlawful pleasures and desires to the θυμοειδές but do not engage with the *communis opinio* in more detail.

27 Solinas 2012, 96 has apparently been the first to notice the contradiction between the prevailing reading of the bipartition and Sokrates' tripartite explanation at 571d7–572a9. However, instead of giving up the association of shame with the middle soul part, he prefers to believe that Platon's account of the θυμοειδές is inconsistent ("eine merkwürdige Assymetrie"). Moreover, in agreement with his presupposition that the upper half of the bipartition includes both the λογιστικόν and the θυμοειδές, Solinas 2012, 79–80; 96–97 claims that in the threefold expression τὸ λογιστικόν καὶ ἡμερον καὶ ἄρχον ἐκείνου (571c4) the latter two terms designate the middle soul part. This is rather unlikely, because ἡμερος 'mild, gentle' is an adjective that can adequately describe the λογιστικόν (410e3), while the θυμοειδές is never the naturally ἄρχον 'ruling' part (441e4–6, 442c11). A similar view on the ambivalence of the θυμοειδές can be found in Arruzza 2019, 216, who, without speaking of inconsistency, claims that the middle soul part both represses and produces unlawful pleasures and desires.

28 It should be noted, however, that some of the passages adduced by Cairns 1993, 383 in support of his view, such as 439e–440a (the Leontios episode) and 548c, do not feature the terms αἰδώς or αἰσχύνη at all. Surprisingly, Moss 2005, 153 commits the same *petitio principii* in her reading of the Leontios episode.

the lower soul third, in the following terms: shame (αἰδώς), temperance (σωφροσύνη), moderation (μετρίότης), and decent expense (κοσμία δαπάνη) are thrown away (being called foolishness, unmanliness, boorishness, and stinginess, respectively) and replaced with insolence (ὑβρις), refusal to obey (ἀναρχία), prodigality (ἀσωτία), and shamelessness (ἀναίδεια). There are several points worth noting here. First, the items in this list clearly designate features of the lower part of the soul, as we might expect in a characterization of the democratic man.<sup>29</sup> Hence, it would be awkward to seek a link between shame and the middle soul part in this context. Second, shame and shamelessness (αἰδώς, ἀναίδεια) are mentioned together here, just as they are at 571d (αἰσχύνη, ἀναισχυντία). However, shamelessness in Platon mainly refers to the wanton pursuit of desires, having little to do with the middle soul part. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that *this* shame that Platon regards as the counterpart of shamelessness should pertain to the desiring soul third as well. Third, the lower part of the soul can be obviously described both in positive and negative terms, which suggests that it does possess some ‘virtues’ of its own. This observation aligns with the principle of οἰκαιοπραγία (= every soul part should do its own job), which posits that even the lowest soul part has a job of its own that can contribute to the welfare of the whole (τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττει, 442b1). Fourth and last, these positive features of the lower part of the soul are essentially ‘virtues’ of obedience and restraint that presuppose the presence of a superior instance to be obeyed (τηρήσεται, 442a7). The role of the superior instance is played in the tripartite model of course by the upper two soul thirds;<sup>30</sup> however, the acknowledgement of their superiority is something that the lower third can (and must) decide for itself (ἐπιχειρήσει, 442b2). This, I think, is what makes Platon’s position regarding the ἐπιθυμητικόν so ambiguous: the principle of obedience is extrinsic (which explains to some extent the approach by Fortenbaugh and Cairns), yet the virtue of obedience is in fact intrinsic.

In this respect, the juxtaposition of shame and temperance in the above list is quite significant because the virtue of temperance is ambiguous in a similar sense. Having explained that wisdom and courage are the virtues of the upper and middle soul parts respectively, Sokrates, in Book 4 of the *Politeia*, introduces the third cardinal virtue which he, against all expectations, does not ascribe to the lower soul part alone. Instead, he defines it (431d–432b) as a form of agreement, within the state and the soul, about who (or what) should rule and who (or what) should be ruled. In a famous paper, Cornford 1912, 249–258 has demonstrated that this apparently vague concept of temperance, which seems to pervade throughout the entire state (or soul) without distinction of class, is in reality not very different from the traditional concept of temperance as obedience because it addresses the

<sup>29</sup> Cairns 1993, 375 n. 95 does not consider this point.

<sup>30</sup> Platon, however, is not very strict about this. A few lines later (442d1–2) it is only the upper soul part that rules, while the lower parts should obey and not revolt (τῷ ἀρχομένῳ ... μὴ στασιάζουσιν). This shows how easily Platon can change the perspective.

ruled rather than the rulers. Clearly, despite Platon's claim that it is one and the same thing, the readiness to be ruled carries a different meaning than the readiness to rule, which is why the principle of hierarchy and the question of its acceptance primarily concern the lower class (or soul part).<sup>31</sup>

To my view, this approach to temperance<sup>32</sup> provides an attractive way of understanding the meaning of shame not just in the above passage but also at 571d, where temperance is also mentioned (σωφρόνως, 571d8).<sup>33</sup> As a matter of fact, Cairns in his study repeatedly points out the connection between shame and temperance in contexts where both concepts signify self-restraint or self-control. Moreover, he shows that this connection was not unknown to Platon.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, even from Cairns' perspective, it is not unreasonable to entertain the view that shame is linked by Platon with the lower soul third as well, as long as there is evidence from the *Politeia* that shame, at least sometimes, has a similar meaning as temperance.<sup>35</sup> Another passage that supports this view is 573b, where temper-

31 Note that in the sentence 442c9–d2 σώφρονα οὐ τῇ φιλίᾳ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ τῇ αὐτῶν τούτων, ὅταν τὸ τε ἄρχον καὶ τὼ ἀρχομένω τὸ λογιστικὸν ὁμοδοξῶσι δεῖν ἄρχειν καὶ μὴ στασιάζωσιν αὐτῷ; “a temperate man is temperate in virtue of the friendship and harmony of these soul parts, when the ruling part and the two ruled parts agree that it is the λογιστικὸν that should rule and do not revolt against it” the subject of ὁμοδοξῶσι is τὸ τε ἄρχον καὶ τὼ ἀρχομένω while the subject of στασιάζωσιν is, despite the syntax, only τὼ ἀρχομένω because τὸ ἄρχον = τὸ λογιστικὸν (which must indeed agree to rule: 347bc) cannot revolt against itself.

32 At *Politeia* 430e4–5 temperance is defined as “control (ἐγκράτεια) over pleasures and desires”; at 431ab human soul is divided in a better and a worse part, and temperance is defined as the state in which the better part rules over the worse; at 485e the philosopher is said to be σώφρων καὶ οὐδαμῇ φιλοχρήματος “temperate and no money-lover”.

33 See also *Statesman* 310d, where in a clearly tripartite context the middle soul part is characterized by courage (ἀνδρεία, d6) while the lower part is characterized by temperance (σώφρονι φύσει, d7) and shame (αἰδοῦς, d10).

34 Cairns 1993, 104 (with n. 169); 168–169; 306 (with n. 147, 148); 314–315 (n. 180 points out this connection in Platon's *Charmides* and approvingly refers to Cornford 1912); 373 (Platon's *Charmides*); 375–376 (Platon's *Laws*); 380 (other dialogues). According to Cairns (376), αἰδώς is, in the *Laws*, “the fear of disgrace or inhibition before more powerful or august forces”; if we bracket ‘(the fear of) disgrace’ this is a good description of temperance as obedience. Several pages later (380), Cairns points out “Plato's awareness that *aidos/aischune* are not entirely dependent on the opinions of others”.

35 As mentioned above (note 28), when claiming that shame is linked in the *Politeia* with the middle soul part, Cairns (383) also bases himself on passages where the terms αἰδώς or αἰσχύνη do not even occur. However, when he discusses “self-directed *aidos*” as “a prospective form of conscience which inhibits wrongdoing” (a notion that is very close to that of temperance as obedience), Cairns (380) notes that Platon does not use these terms “in the context of an argument which would demonstrate the falsity of the claim that human beings will necessarily do wrong in secret when external sanctions are inapplicable”. This may be true. But, wording aside, the issue of not doing wrong in secret when external sanctions are inapplicable is a central one in the *Politeia*, if we only consider that the whole dialogue is, in a way, a response to Glaukon's tale of Gyges. Passages like 560de, 571d, and 573b might be seen to suggest that a just soul is (not only a soul that does not do wrong in secret but also) a soul that feels αἰδώς (see, e.g., 443a, a passage where the term αἰδώς does not occur).

ance (σωφροσύνη) is implicitly equated with opinions and desires that are useful (χρηστικός) and show a sense of shame (ἐπαισχυνομένος).

To sum up, if we agree that shame is not always linked with the middle soul part in the *Politeia*, we have no reason anymore to expect or assume such a link at 571d, a passage that deals with desires and self-control rather than honour and fear of disgrace.

How, then, should we read Sokrates' suggestion that the lower part of the bipartition is, in sleep, released and liberated from any shame and judgement (αἰσχύνῃ καὶ φρόνησις, 571c8–d1), and leaves no foolishness or shamelessness unattempted (ἄνοια καὶ ἀναισχυντία, 571d4–5)? Could it be that Fortenbaugh's interpretation of this passage (shame is located in the λογιστικόν) is the correct one? I do not think so. I think that his interpretation ignores the distinction I made above between the principle of obedience and the virtue of obedience. If the ἐπιθυμητικόν (together with the θυμοειδές) feels shame especially, or even exclusively, in the presence of a superior instance (= the λογιστικόν), and does *not* feel shame when the superior instance is absent or asleep, this does not entail that it is the superior instance that feels shame. In my view, it is entirely possible that the superior instance only *induces* shame in the inferior one.<sup>36</sup> Considering that it is the lower part of the bipartition (= the ἐπιθυμητικόν together with the θυμοειδές) which Sokrates calls shameless, we should conclude that the opposite of shamelessness is located in the same soul part as well, especially since the ἐπιθυμητικόν, as the discussion of the passage 560de has shown, has not just negative but also positive characteristics.<sup>37</sup> This means that Sokrates' suggestion that the lower part of the bipartition is, in sleep, free from shame and judgement refers to the main 'virtues' of the ἐπιθυμητικόν and the λογιστικόν respectively.<sup>38</sup> I see nothing in Sokrates' account of the unlawful pleasures and desires to speak against this reading.

This brings us back to the point discussed in section 3. If Sokrates advises us to appease the θυμοειδές and the ἐπιθυμητικόν and to activate the λογιστικόν before going to sleep (571d7–572a9), it is because unlawful pleasures and desires arise both in the middle and the lower thirds of the soul. This implies that the lower part of the soul bipartition includes the lower two thirds of the soul tripartition.

<sup>36</sup> Compare also Aristoteles, *Nikomachean ethics* 1102b30–34.

<sup>37</sup> It should be noted that both passages adduced by Fortenbaugh <sup>2002</sup>, 32 in support of his view that shame is located in the upper soul part, namely 571cd and 606c, presuppose a division of the soul in two rather than three parts. This means that Fortenbaugh should have first addressed the question of the relationship between bipartition and tripartition – in order to make sure that, e.g., the upper half of the bipartition is indeed the upper third of the tripartition (and not the upper two thirds thereof, as others have suggested). As long as this relationship is not clear, it is not safe to draw conclusions about the tripartition (e.g. as to where a feeling like shame is located) from an analysis of the bipartition.

<sup>38</sup> For a similar juncture see 559b11: the unnecessary pleasures and desires harm judgement and temperance (πρός τε φρόνησιν καὶ τὸ σωφρονεῖν).

## 5. The tripartite soul in waking and in sleep

Let us now consider the following statements.

(I) Human soul has three parts. This holds true for both the waking and the sleeping soul (441c–442c; 571d–572a).

(II) Some people are guided by their upper soul third, others by their middle third, while others (most of them) by their lower third (444b, 544, 543–576, 581c). This statement primarily pertains to the waking soul because the various characters depicted in Books 8 and 9 are differentiated by the acts they deliberately perform in waking.

(III) In waking, the part(s) of the soul that produce(s) unlawful pleasures and desires (i.e. the θυμοειδές and the ἐπιθυμητικόν) is kept under control by the better soul part (i.e. the λογιστικόν). This statement does *not* refer to people who have completely eradicated their unlawful pleasures and desires (since such people do not have to worry about them anymore, 571b7)<sup>39</sup> but, rather, to most of the people, including those who act moderately in everyday life (572b5). On the other hand, this statement also allows for an exception, since the tyrant does pursue his unlawful pleasures and desires in waking (574e3).

As can be seen, statements (II) and (III) do not quite square. Statement (II) suggests that only a small number of people are guided, in waking, by their upper soul third, while statement (III) suggests that practically all people are guided, in waking, by their upper soul third. Another way to put it is this: statement (III) suggests that the lower two soul thirds are sleeping in waking, while statement (II) suggests that the lower two thirds are active in waking. Take, for instance, a member of the working class of the ideal state: according to (II), (s)he is guided *per definitionem* by the lower soul third, while according to (III) (s)he is guided, at least in waking, by the upper soul third. Can we make any sense of this?<sup>40</sup>

I think we can. Let us take a closer look at the typology of pleasures and desires in the *Politeia*. At 559 Sokrates divides pleasures and desires into two cate-

<sup>39</sup> Recco 2007, 135 sees a contradiction between the universality of the statement that *everyone* has unlawful pleasures and desires (ἐκάστω ἐνεστι, 572b5) and the exception that *some people* actually do not have them (ἐνίων ἀνθρώπων παντάσῃσιν ἀπαλλάττεσθαι, 571b7–8). However, the meaning of the lines 571b5–8 (where ἐγγίγνεσθαι παντί first occurs!) is clear enough: while everybody has them by nature, some people succeed in eradicating them. Moreover, Recco also introduces a meaning of the notion ‘necessary pleasures and desires’ that is by no means supported by Platon’s text: something that is present in everyone must be necessary, he claims; therefore, he concludes, the unlawful pleasures and desires are actually necessary, although Platon defines them as being unnecessary. However, there is no contradiction in Platon’s text if we stick to the Platonic meaning of the words.

<sup>40</sup> Note that this apparent contradiction does not arise from the reading I have proposed in section 3 (since someone claiming that the θυμοειδές belongs to the upper half of the bipartition has to deal with it just as well) but only from the premiss that the bipartition at 571b3–d5 pertains to the same subject matter as the tripartition at 571d7–572a9, namely the human soul in waking and in sleep.

gories: necessary and unnecessary. Furthermore, at 571b he divides unnecessary pleasures and desires into two categories, one of which he calls unlawful. In section 2 above I introduced the label ‘lawful’ for all pleasures and desires that are not unlawful; this category includes, therefore, not only those unnecessary pleasures and desires which are not unlawful but also all necessary pleasures and desires. Finally, at 580d–581e, Sokrates says that each of the three soul parts harbours its own pleasures and desires. If we put these three passages together, the following picture emerges:

	necessary pleasures and desires	unnecessary pleasures and desires	
	(lawful pleasures and desires)		unlawful pleasures and desires
λογιστικόν	×	×	
θυμοειδές	×	×	×
ἐπιθυμητικόν	×	×	×

On this showing,<sup>41</sup> the unlawful pleasures and desires (which originate in the lower two soul parts) can be discerned through a twofold contrast. Firstly (horizontally), they stand in opposition to lawful pleasures and desires (especially, but not exclusively, of the lower two soul parts). Secondly (vertically), they are opposed to the pleasures and desires of the upper soul part (which, significantly, are never unlawful).

At 571b–572a these two aspects are intricately interwoven. Initially, the soul bipartition (571b3–d5) pinpoints the unlawful pleasures and desires (which are active in sleep) through a (horizontal) contrast with the lawful pleasures and desires (which are active in waking). Thus, the distinction between sleep and waking, or night and day, becomes crucial in the bipartition. Subsequently, however, the soul tripartition (571d7–572a9) pinpoints the pleasures and desires of the lower two parts of the sleeping soul (which are unlawful) through a (vertical) contrast with (the pleasures and desires of) the upper soul part. Here, Sokrates’ main concern is to unveil a novel concept of wakefulness based on the activity of the upper soul part: when the λογιστικόν is not disturbed by the two inferior parts, it is able to reach the truth inaccessible to sense perception. This concept of wakefulness echoes passages like 476cd, 520c, or 533c, where the distinction between dream and waking holds metaphysical and epistemological significance, as discussed in section 2 above.

<sup>41</sup> This typology differs considerably from the one suggested by Reeve 1988, 46–47 but I cannot address this point here.

It is worth noting that in the tripartite explanation (571d7–572a9) the unlawful pleasures and desires are only mentioned in the last couple of words (572a8). This might invite the impression that for Sokrates they are no more than an occasion for making the point that really matters about the pure activity of the λογιστικόν. Sokrates' elaborate and effervescent explanation (given in one single sentence spanning no less than 14 lines) may easily detract from the fact that the focus has inconspicuously switched from the unlawful pleasures and desires that manifest themselves in sleep (meaning: when the body rests and the soul is unconscious) to the blessedness of the soul that manages (not just to keep unlawful pleasures and desires under control but) to completely eradicate sleep and stay awake and conscious uninterruptedly (meaning: to approach objects of knowledge that are not accessible to the senses). It is no coincidence that in this preparation for sleep Sokrates depicts not just any soul but a soul in which the upper third is in command. This is the very reason why the primary contrast here is between the upper third and the lower two thirds, and why the notion of wakefulness receives a metaphysical and epistemological meaning. Meanwhile, the biological and psychological distinction between sleep and waking on which the bipartition was based takes a back seat because the tripartite explanation is supposed to pertain to the sleeping soul. Also, the important premiss that sleep is not possible without unlawful pleasures and desires, which is why whoever wants to get rid of the unlawful pleasures and desires must eradicate sleep, remains implicit.

That an ever-waking soul cannot be a popular answer to the rather popular problem of unlawful pleasures and desires is quite clear, even (or especially) from Platon's point of view. Obviously, someone who is not guided by the upper soul part even in waking will hardly be successful in attempting to follow his advice before going to sleep. However, I do not think that Platon has simply missed this point. Rather, I think his intention was to show that what really matters is not the negative goal of thwarting unlawful pleasures and desires – after all, this is something anyone can do while awake – but the positive use of all psychic resources in the service of knowledge. Thus, the main yet implicit message conveyed by the account of unlawful pleasures and desires is that a full commitment to the cause of knowledge implies the use of the intellectual resources even in sleep.

If we examine how Sokrates refers to the counterpart of unlawful pleasures and desires from 571b3 to 572a9 we come to a similar conclusion. First, at 571b5–6 he mentions laws and better desires accompanied by reason (νόμοι καὶ βελτίους ἐπιθυμίας μετὰ λόγου). A few lines later, at 571c4, it is the thinking and gentle and ruling part of the soul (τὸ λογιστικὸν καὶ ἡμερον καὶ ἄρχον ἐκείνου). Finally, at 571d8, it is simply the upper third of the tripartition (τὸ λογιστικόν). These phrases, which are obviously not synonymous, are used in three different moments to designate the force opposing the unlawful pleasures and desires. Put together, they reveal the focus switch from lawful desires to pure knowledge. From this perspective, the seemingly casual mention of the λογιστικόν at 571c4, where nothing

suggests any connection with the soul tripartition yet, is meant to link together the bipartite and the tripartite approaches to the unlawful pleasures and desires. All things considered, it seems reasonable to assume that the so-called better desires that collaborate with reason to prevent unlawful desires from manifesting themselves in waking (571b6) are the lawful desires (regardless of the soul part they arise from).<sup>42</sup>

This focus switch involved in the transition from the bipartition to the tripartition is also responsible for the apparent contradiction I have pointed out at the beginning of this section. The fact that the tripartite explanation (571d7–572a9) describes a soul guided by the upper third does not mean that in *every* soul the upper third is in command but, rather, that such a soul has the most effective answer to the problem of unlawful pleasures and desires. But what about the bipartite explanation (571b3–d5)? Does it not suggest that, in waking, the upper soul half always controls the source of unlawful pleasures and desires? Have we not come in section 3 above to the conclusion that the upper soul half must designate the λογιστικόν? Of course this is all true. Still, this does not necessarily entail that in waking all people are guided by their λογιστικόν. At 571b5–6 the force opposing the unlawful pleasures and desires is called “laws and better desires accompanied by reason”. This has very little to do with the λογιστικόν on the one hand, and may apply to all people without any difficulty on the other, especially if we take the “better desires” to mean lawful desires. It is only the focus switch at 571c4 and notably the description of a philosophical soul in the tripartite explanation that invite the impression that a ruling λογιστικόν is a prerequisite for the control or eradication of the unlawful pleasures and desires. This might be true in sleep but is obviously not true in waking.

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<sup>42</sup> At 586d Sokrates explains what it means to pursue a thymoeidetic or epithymetic pleasure or desire under the guidance of the λογιστικόν. Arruzza 2019, 215 believes that (epithymetic) desires cannot directly restrain other desires. But this is not necessary: an effective deflection of the craving will do it, see also 485d as well as 431c10–d2.

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