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ROADS TO EXCELLENCE

**THE METAPHYSICS OF EDUCATION IN PLATO
AND CONTEMPORARY REALITY.
IS OPTIMAL SELF-REALIZATION METAPHYSICALLY NEUTRAL?**

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PLATO'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION
AND ITS RELEVANCE TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY
AND
EDUCATION IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

PRETORIA

Human activity is governed by some fundamental *life-experience*, energized by a basic *drive*, and focused in its exercise by a particular sense of overarching *purpose*. It draws from a *source* of potential, it has a *motivation*, and it serves an *end*, the three parameters operating in consonance simultaneously, when the body-politic is healthy and effective. Thus Man's existence assumes a coherent character, it manifests a certain definite collective profile of material and spiritual culture, it exhibits a specific form of ordinary and higher life.

The "Classical" modality of human beingness, both as a historical category and a universal phenomenon, is accordingly defined by its constitutive corresponding triad of formal, efficient and teleological causal factors.

1) The form is one of resplendent *Beauty*: the underlying experience is one of paramount *Harmony*, revealed or hidden. Not that there are no shades in the ancient Greek World permeated as it is, and infused, by light. On the contrary; here is *not* Elysium: κλαῦσά τε καὶ κώκυσα ἰδὼν ἀσυνηθέα χῶρον ("I wept and waled when I saw the unfamiliar place", Empedocles, 31B118 DK). The chthonian specters are many: in fact they spring from an eternal, primeval Darkness, fertile cosmic Womb of all existence, the *Night* of the World. The metaphysical position of the dark source varies: it starts at the awesome absolute beginning of things, then moves to the conjugal place as Infinity by the side of lightning Limitation, and ends up as nursing receptacle and material vehicle at the bottom of reality. But whatever its construal, Darkness is always there, constituting the Tragedy of Existence. *The Greek Age of Reason is also the Age of Tragedy*. However, not only is darkness necessarily part of the World; it is moreover *necessary* part of the cosmic *perfection*. Harmony exists because there is Light and Darkness in the World: ἐπεὶ δὲ ταὶ ἀρχαὶ ὑπάρχον οὐχ ὁμοῖαι οὐδ' ὁμόφυλοι ἔσσαι, ἤδη ἀδύνατον ἦς καὶ αὐταῖς κοσμηθῆναι, εἰ μὴ ἀρμονία ἐπεγένετο. ("But since the first principles

were not by nature alike or akin, it would be impossible for them ever to have been arranged beautifully, had not harmony supervened”, Philolaus, 44B6 DK). In fact every real, powerful opposition (unless it causes a breakdown on its inadequate material) enhances the harmony which it feeds; or, the other way round, underneath all harmony yawns the chasm of disorder, the primal omni-generative Chaos. Contrast increases the tension, and thus the power of the cohesive harmony is heightened: οὐ ξυνιαῖσιν ὅκως διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῶ ξυμφέρεται· παλίντονος ἀρμονίη ὅκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης. (“They do not apprehend how being brought at variance it is being brought together with itself; a back-stretched harmony, such as in the bow and the lyre”, Heracleitus Fr. 27 Marcovich = 22B51 DK) [1]. *Harmony is an eminently dynamic reality.* “Static harmony” is a contradiction in terms.

Absorbing darkness and *empowered* by it, the total outcome of being is beautiful. We promptly thus understand how the sense of tragic flourished par excellence precisely in the era of perfection. Ugliness is rather partiality than genuine negativity; taking more depth and perspective into account, apparent disorder is sublated to more pervasive order, and reveals it. Or it is impotence, when the necessary tension of a harmony destroys itself, or rather its bearer. A whole, to be a whole, must be beautiful. And beauty is wholeness.

The constitutive experience is one of dominant *καλόν*. Poetry and Art bear ample testimony; Philosophy elaborates it.

2) The dominant drive inside the ancient man is towards *excellence* [2]. To excel is what he aspires to, and the motive which really pushes incessantly him on. The principle is enshrined in that monument of superlative value in the classical culture, the Homeric corpus. It is also explicitly formulated there: αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων. *Virtue itself is excellence, superlative ability.* One possesses ἀρετή if one is eminently “good at something” (ἀγαθὸς ἐν ὑσμίνῃ, πυγμαῖ ἀριστος, σκυτοτόμων ὄχ’ ἀριστος, κίθαριν ἀριστος, ἀριστος βουλῆ) [3].

Such preeminence presupposes and involves sharp antagonism, the Hesiodic noble strife (ἀγαθὴ ἔρις). [4] It also demands *single-minded devotion* to the pursuit of a particular excellence, that to which by nature one is best adapted (*Republic* 370a-c) [5].

What holds good of every expertise, art and science, is a fortiori valid for the supreme human perfection of those free from any other care and profession (*Laws*, Z, 806d-808c). Complete and sufficient acquisition of such perfection is hardly to be attained even by an unceasing application to it without any distraction: πάρεργον γὰρ οὐδὲν δεῖ τῶν ἄλλων ἔργων διακώλυμα γίγνεσθαι τῶν τῷ σώματι προσηκόντων εἰς ἀπόδοσιν πόνων καὶ τροφῆς, οὐδ' αὖ ψυχῆ μαθημάτων τε καὶ ἐθῶν, πᾶσα δὲ νύξ τε καὶ ἡμέρα σχεδὸν οὐκ ἔστιν ἰκανὴ τοῦτ' αὐτὸ πράττοντι τὸ τέλειον τε καὶ ἰκανὸν αὐτῶν ἐκλαμβάνειν (807d). (In Jowett's translating words: "For there ought to be no byework interfering with the greater work of providing the necessary exercise and nourishment for the body, and instruction and education for the soul. Night and day are not long enough for the accomplishment of their perfection and consummation".) [6]

The principle of excellence should reign supreme in society. A life devoted to the search of highest wisdom may illumine the ripe soul with the light of exact knowledge (*Laws* 968d-e; cf. *Epist.* VII 341c-d. And cf. the age span of the philosophic education in the *Republic*). All should aspire at attaining some excellence, however subordinate. For as Socrates put it, the good at nothing is useless (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, III, 9, 15 – above quoted). *No natural potential should be left uncultivated*, for this would reduce what can be achieved below the level set by nature. Thus the left hand ought to be exercised as much as the right one, nature having almost balanced the potential of the one against the other (*Laws*, 794d-795d) [7]. And similarly women should undergo the same training as men, since they are capable of it, even though with a normally less successful

outcome; otherwise we would almost halve the attainable level of effective results, which is a folly (*Laws*, 804d-805c [8]; cf. *Republic* E, 451c-457b; 466c-467e).

The principle of excellence is the spirit of ancient Education [9]. We have to do with that training of body (gymnastics) and mind (music) which raises their respective endowments to the peak of their capacity. In cases of superlative merit, the result is the divine likeness glowingly celebrated in the immortal words of Pindar. Cf. *Nemean Odes* VI, 17:

Ἐν ἀνδρῶν, ἐν θεῶν γένος· ἐκ μιᾶς δὲ πνέομεν
 ματρὸς ἀμφοτέροισι διείργει δὲ πᾶσα κεκρυμμένα
 δύναμις, ὡς τὸ μὲν οὐδέν, ὁ δὲ χάλκεος ἀσφαλὲς
 αἰὲν ἔδος
 μένει οὐρανός. ἀλλὰ τι προσφέρομεν ἔμπαν ἢ μέγαν
 νόον ἤτοι φύσιν ἀθανάτοισι,
 καίπερ ἐφ' ἀμερίαν οὐκ εἰδότες οὐδὲ μετὰ νύκτας
 ἄμμε πότμος
 οἷαν τιν' ἔγραψε δραμεῖν ποτὶ στάθμαν.

("One is the race of men, one is the race of gods, and from one Mother do we both derive our breath; yet a power that is wholly sundered parteth us, in that the one is naught, while for the other the brazen heaven endureth as an abode unshaken for evermore. Albeit, we mortals have some likeness, either in might of mind or in our bodily constitution, to the immortals, although we know not by what course, whether by day, no nor yet in the night watches, fate hath ordained that we should run") [10].

Notice here too the highly positive life-attitude of excellence despite the otherwise pessimistic nothingness of mortality vis-à-vis divine eternity; and compare with *Laws* Z, 803b-804b and A, 644d sqq., the classic disparagement of humanity as a plaything of gods.

3) The drive towards excellence *pushes* on; the end of *well-being* *pulls* mightily all human endeavour.

Well-being is the promised goal of being: it is inscribed within being as its natural conclusion, just as the full development of an organism evolves necessarily and spontaneously out of its embryonic seed. (The lexical root of the ameliorative prefix εῖ and its cognates, as well as of significant positive valuatives εὖ-ε-στῶ, ἐσ-θλός, ἐ-ῦ-ς, seems to have its origin in the root of εἰμί, *es) [11]. The world is *not* constituted so that being must suffer *unfulfilled*. Radiant joy is the tonality of feeling, most clearly manifest in Archaic mentality, in the glorious Lyric Poetry, sacred and profane, in the marvel of (especially early) sculpture. Such overflowing delight at being is so tremendously powerful, that not even a pessimistic eschatology of emaculate infernal ghosts can initially shake it. One is ravished by the sheer fact of existence: the rapturous gladness must have its roots deep down indeed not to be perturbed by the touch of the engulfing Night.

The foundation is provided by the hard rock of being's *success*. The metaphysical construal, in one way or another, of the dark principle as complicated, not only necessarily but also profitably, in the marvel of existence; its harnessing under the spell of harmony in the conjugal bond of being together with the principle of luminous determination; the consequent overcoming of the pessimistic note in human life; all this *worked in practice*. Greek mind required tangible proofs. *Joy* presupposes *satisfaction*, and this springs from *fulfillment*, which again requires *achievement*. The life of things is, on the whole, a success story: the normal state of existence is one of κατόρθωμα, not of failure.

The Aristotelian εὐδαιμονία aims exactly at capturing this tonality of feeling, amidst the classical upheaval. Later responses to the same desideratum form the guiding lines of the Hellenistic Philosophies of human life. But Plato was the first to face squarely the doubts cast on that world-view by the turmoil that accompanied the transition to the classical era.

There is then the experience of beauty; there is the drive towards excellence; and there is the aim at well-being. The fundamental, classical question of life, valid for all time, is simply this: *Do beauty, excellence and well-being go together or not?* There is nothing peculiarly “moral” (in the modern, sentimental sense of the word) about it; on the contrary, the issue is one of *ontological adaptation* or otherwise. This explains the obvious objectivism and specific a-morality of ancient Ethical Theory [12].

The metaphysical seriousness that ushered the classical era is well reflected in the then prevailing austere sculptural style. Tragedy and Comedy faithfully express the darkening picture [13]. They both stem from the Great Schism which late Archaism saw emerging, and gained momentum from its acute awareness. Tidings of sadness afflict the heart of Classicism: *excellence and achievement may diverge*; the working of an unseemly wedge, incomprehensible, sinister yet forceful, tends to separate perfection from success; fulfillment and accomplishment assume curious hues of variation. *The ἐσθλός can be unsuccessful, and hence useless*. This is the ultimate anathema to the ancient Greek mind. Virtue must be profitable – or it is valueless [14]. The robust Greek sense of realism was shocked at the perspective of an inoperative *vir-tus*, ἀρ-ετή [15]. Virtue is naturally fertile goodness; it involves the power of attaining good [16].

Should the rupture between excellence of being and well-being, between perfection of existence and success in existence, go unchallenged and unrevoked, the classical reality and experience are at an end; one mighty implication is the shattering of the ancient educational values. Education was geared to excellence; if the latter is a futile narcissism, then the former should be re-oriented towards success, and accordingly reshaped. That was precisely in essence the challenge of the *sophistical* movement. Special sciences had to be introduced, linguistic, historical, rhetorical, mathematical – and a way taught of achieving results,

through their dexterous employment, under any given circumstances [17]. There are obvious analogies to contemporary issues and agonies.

Plato's greatness is not least glaring in his titanic task of re-establishing the coherence of the fractured spiritual edifice [18], [19].

Five factors helped decisively as solid bases for the undertaking [20].

a) The disruption in the spontaneous collaboration between drastic drive and overall purpose little affected the Greek feel of, and passionate attachment to, κάλλος. It is not accidental, nor is it a mere artistic device, that Plato lays such stress on ἔρως καλοῦ and beauty both in the content of his doctrine and in the form of expressing it. The otherwise peculiar emphasis on καλόν in Moral Philosophy generally, also betrays the significant role it played in providing the clue how to *reconcile diverging momenta*. For the general pattern was well put by Philolaus 44B10DK: ἔστι γὰρ ἀρμονία πολυμιγέων ἔνωσις καὶ δίχα φρονεόντων συμφρόνησις ("For harmony is the unification of the manifoldly commixed and the conspiring of the divergingly minded"). Beauty as harmonious blend of limiting and indeterminate parameters, as optimal determination of variational possibilities, was a striking sensible illustration of the general Pythagorean structure of reality, to which Plato basically adhered. Hence beauty's immense "anagogic" value [21].

b) *Power is the mark of true being*. For something to be, it must make a difference in the World beyond the sheer fact of its existence. Influence is a proof of existence. To exercise influence, or, at least, to suffer it, shows the reality of the entity in question, its entering into real relationships with the rest of the existence. Isolated existence is non-existence. Relative impotence implies inferior grade of being, and absolute impotence is, again, non-existence. So, power is the essential characteristic of being (*Sophist*, 247e) [22]. The ancient Greek acute sense of reality could not escape from the fascination of power. Thus Divinity was easily ascribed to the absolute rulers and mighty lords of realms, to those whose power was

manifest, to the ἐπιφανεῖς Gods. Powers being insensible realities, they are distinguished by their observable effects on the field on which they operate and which their exercise is referred to (*Republic*, 477c sqq.) [23].

c) Being is bounded and circumscribed: it is (in each case) of a *definite identity* [24]. This determinateness of being is its nature, and the nature of the things constituted by it. There is no existence without nature, no free-floating existence, so to speak, in search of a being-determination. To exist is to be (leaving aside the ontological status of the First Principles of reality). In this sense existence is being, considered in abstraction from its limiting content of being-determination. *Definiteness* in the identity of being implies *otherness* from different determinations, and *particularity* (partial being).

d) Existence is intrinsically teleological [25]. Being has meaning. *To be is to serve a purpose*. To be in perfect condition *both* fulfills the inner teleology of the being in question *and* best suits the external purpose for which it exists. This subservience to the external teleology is the reason for its existence. In artificial products such inherent combination of perfection and functionality, of perfect condition and perfect use, is evident. Ancient mind saw the same teleology operating *a fortiori* in nature [26]. Parts of natural things also completely obey this teleological lawfulness (Cf. Galen, *De Usu Partium*).

e) Goodness is intrinsically beneficial. There can be no harmful goodness qua goodness. The evil is injurious; no profit can come out of it. *Goodness is advantageous*; it is highly *useful* [27]. *Evil* as such *is useless*: it cannot be put to a profitable application; it creates havoc; it is damaging; it hurts. It injures itself more than, and before, it harms another [28]. Just as goodness is advantageous first of all to itself.

The appropriate *weaving* [29] of these five threads together forms the way out of the impasse which Classicism found itself in.

Starting with the unshaken *datum*, the first moment (a). *Beauty as ontological harmony* (and no mere mode of subjective apperception) *is a dynamic reality. Harmony is the tension of being*: it conjugates the primal antithesis between determinateness and indefiniteness and thus binds together opposing indeterminacies. By imposing, e.g., the proper measure on the variational field of temperature, it effects that proper mixture of heat and coldness which constitutes (depending on the measure realized) the healthy temperature for the human body or the temperance of the seasons [30]. *The optimal determination of a variational field represents a privileged point of acute natural resonance: it enhances the tension of being to its maximal intensity. Beauty is therefore the power of being.* The way to strengthen a thing, and the way to beautify it, is one and the same (as fitting gymnastic training shows most clearly) [31]. *First transition.*

Turning now to the second moment (b). Power is that which makes a thing enter into actual relationship (acting and undergoing action) with other things; through this interaction the thing is being established as a factor in the nexus of reality: its existence is thereby affirmed. But the *optimal* determination of being is that which *maximizes* its power; beauty therefore, and the harmonious resonance that it expresses, constitutes the real existence of a thing as a dynamic focus of action and passion [32]. *Harmony being exquisitely determinate* [33], *the being defined by its specificity is of a characteristically definite identity* [34]. *Second transition.*

Moving on to the third moment (c). The definite identity of (each) being has been grounded on the optimal determinateness of its defining dynamic harmony. A thing and its identity is not something that can exist without its characteristic power and the latter's exercise. To affirm its identity, to activate its power and to vibrate, so to speak, in its harmony, is one and the same thing for a being. *Excellence* is indeed inscribed within the nucleus of being, at the very root of its existence: it is the *optimal* determination which defines its identity; it is its *constitutive harmony* [35]. What education aims to do is to help this harmony

manifest itself most clearly; just as medicine should endeavour to prepare the way for the healing action of nature herself. *Perfection and being at bottom coincide*; existence in space and time makes their congruence a converging process constituting the thing's development.

Optimal determination, harmony, beauty, power, identity and excellence of being, all have been brought under a single compass [36]. Fundamental life-experience and basic drive have been thus shown to cohere. The *crux* of the matter has been reached, at the point of the *third transition*. Is also blessed well-being (as well as beautiful perfection) "*promised*" to being (exactly as the ancient Greek mentality instinctively expected)? *Does being's excellence secure by right (so to speak) success?*

For this we need the *functionality of excellence*: that the activity (and corresponding passivity) of the power of being *serves a purpose*. Success means that the perfection of being is *useful*. Then there is achievement, and the true fulfillment of existence which does not only consist in the inner perfection of its being, but on the *effective* working of its operation as well. For the activity to be effective, *to bear fruits*, according to the nature of the power which it manifests, it should be exercised unimpeded [37]. Hindrance implies frustration and dissatisfaction. Well-being (beyond the perfection of the excellence in itself) is inconsistent with obstruction and regular external restraint. *Well-being requires maximal freedom of action as precondition of success*. Natural Systems are intrinsically *deregulated*, or rather *unregulated*, without of course being *disorderly*. Natural order is unintervened; hence free and stable.

A thing brought to the perfection of its nature acts *spontaneously* to the highest intensity of its power in accordance with the optimal determination which its identity consists in. To enjoy well-being, such action, in an environment of absence of constraints, must be successful. Then the perfection of being (τέλειον) and its end (τέλος) coincide absolutely. *That functionality of being, beauty and*

excellence, or, in other words, the usefulness of perfection, means, given moment (e), that *excellence is inherently good*. Further, this functionality of perfection obtains in general *automatically* when there is a *natural adjustment* among the variety of things. If things are intrinsically co-ordinated, their activities are *not*, in the normal state of things, mutually inhibitive, thwarting and frustrating [38]. *Thus excellence is necessarily good if being is coherent*. And being is coherent if it is derived from a supreme First Principle.

To bridge the apparent gap between perfection and well-being, we therefore need the postulate of the goodness of excellence, i.e. *of the full-blown goodness of beauty and harmony*. (There is no harmful excellence). And we also require the postulate of the *coherence of being*.

The former postulate is derived from the second: if being is objectively coherent, then single-minded pursuit of excellence on the part of every being, and maximalised activity in accordance with each individual entity's proper perfection, both fulfil the particular being in question and raise the total level of fulfillment for the entire co-ordinated system as well; if being is objectively coherent, then the excellence of each individual being and its exercise are thoroughly good, that is, both constitutive of the well-being of the particular being in question, and instrumental to the general well-being of the system.

Furthermore, the second postulate presupposes the ultimate principle (the ἀνυπόθετον) of *Goodness as Oneness* [39]. For if the ultimate Principle of reality is the One, then being necessarily and "automatically" *coheres*, i.e. it is bound together in an ordered system of co-ordinated beings. And if being coheres, then excellences (perfections of being) secure the well-being of being, individually and collectively.

Since harmony is the optimal determination in a field of opposition which binds together in proper mixture contrasting tendencies, *harmony is necessarily good if Goodness is Oneness*. On the other hand, *if Oneness is the principle of being, then*

being is coherent. Now Oneness is indeed the principle of being, if being is essentially mathematical in character [40]. But being as harmonious determination in diverse variational fields, is mathematical in nature. So everything converges and conspires together, and the Platonic resolution of the perennial moral, educational and political tangles appears in all its grandeur [41].

For optimal self-realization to be successful, and thus for being to be fulfilled and dynamically contented, an appropriate *metaphysical* structure is presupposed.

Ethical, Educational and Political Theory are based on Metaphysics.

Crucial of this foundational work is the treatment of moral virtues [42] as general, pervading excellencies.

Moral virtues are, first, being given their natural, ontological turn [43]. For wisdom or phronesis and valour or right spiritedness, manliness (valour), this simply brings us back to the archaic archetypes [44], [45]. Temperance is also in effect the result of the archaic, Delphic virtue of knowing one's own exact position in the overall scheme of reality and responding accordingly [46]. Justice finally and most importantly is in essence οἰκαιοπραγία [47]. Ethical virtues are really excellences and perfections in faculties, powers and operations; in this respect they are just like other skills and expertises; there is nothing specifically "moral" in them [48].

They differ from the special expertises in that they are consummate *basic* skills, related to *fundamental* faculties of the human soul, with the *broadest* field of operation; and in that the principal among them can be fully enlightened by supreme knowledge of reality and of its absolute, first Principle (Goodness – Oneness), which alone renders all science unerring, all skill and opinion stable and unfaltering, hence virtue successful, i.e. really beneficial, that is thoroughly good.

Ἀρεταί being perfections of the fundamental constituents of human soul, they are necessary for, indeed constitute, the *perfection of human nature* in the individual.

They are thus (more or less) *universally useful*, as against the special profitability of any other particular skill.

Furthermore, σοφία at its culmination involving the certain intellection of the ultimate cause of reality, it turns everything (including the other virtues) securely into good, i.e. to the benefit of man; virtue is thus necessary for the *well being of human nature* as well [49]. *The beauty, perfection and well-being of man depend on highest skills and highest knowledge.* Human nature has its excellence of being and fruition of excellence grounded on supreme cognition.

NOTES

[I wish to thank in particular Heather Reid, Philip Beely, Andrew Nash and Christos Evangeliou for their comments in the discussion. My response to them will be found elaborated in several notes; explicitly in nn. 2, 14, 19, 27, 32, 38, 44, 46, 48, 49. The development in n. 47 regarding vocational flexibility grew out of my reply to a challenging remark by Yvonne Seng in the midst of a conversation on (near and middle Eastern) Mysticism.

A recurring them in the Conference was the nature of the Platonic ἀρετή: has it to do with *morality* and *character* in the modern sense or does it essentially refer to *skill* and *knowledge*? My argument in favour of the second position is sketched chiefly in n. 48. The implications for the correct understanding of education are far-reaching. Cf. also n. 42].

- [1] The variant *ὁμολογέει* for *ξυμφέρεται* is equally possible. Παλίντονος is better than the also attested *παλίντροπος*.
- [2] For the legitimacy and explanatory power of this notion (“*drive towards excellence*”), a question appositely raised by Andrew Nash in the discussion, v. *infra* n. 19. But one preliminary objection should be cleared up. Nash wondered whether ‘drive’ is not necessarily pre-conceptual while ‘excellence’ necessarily conceptualized, in the sense that it cannot exist without its concept, unlike animal drives. Now excellence is *not* conceptualized in the classical context, except in cases where it involves true knowledge, *stricto sensu*. For there are bodily excellences (e.g. foot-excellence, *ποδῶν ἀρετή*, Homer Y, 411), side by side with others involving some sort of expertise (fighting) and indeed with the purely intellectual ones (O, 642-3: *παντοίας ἀρετάς, ἤμὲν πόδας ἠδὲ μάχεσθαι, καὶ νόον ἐν πρῶτοισι Μυκηναίων ἐτέτυκτο*). Thus in Plato we find *ἀρετὴ σώματος* (*Republic* Γ, 403d3; *Gorgias* 479b4; 499d7; 504c9). In fact, excellences pertain to animals, even to inanimate things. There is an *ἀρετὴ κυνῶν*, another *ἵππων*, just as there is human perfection (*Republic*, A, 335b. Cf. *ἀρετὴ ἵππου*, Herodotus III, 88, 3). There is also excellence of (farm) land (*ἀρετὴ χώρας*, *Laws*, E, 745d3; *πεδῖον ἀρετῆ ἱκανόν*, *Critias* 113c6); and so we have *ἀρετὴ γῆς* (*Thucydides* I, 2, 4); excellences of diverse lands are compared in Herodotus, IV, 198. In *Republic*, I, 601d an appropriate excellence and beauty and correctness is associated to each and every thing (implement), animal and action: *ἀρετὴ καὶ κάλλος καὶ ὀρθότης ἐκάστου σκεύους καὶ ζώου καὶ πράξεως*. (Cf. *ἀρετὴ βίου* in 618c and *ἀρετὴ πολιτείας* in *Laws*, 886b). There is a virtue-excellence in every thing having a proper function and work, as in eye, ear, horse, soul, etc.; *Republic* 353b: *οὐκοῦν καὶ ἀρετὴ δοκεῖ σοι εἶναι ἐκάστῳ ὧπερ καὶ ἔργον τι προστέτακται* etc. (Cf. n. 49). A Hellenistic Pythagorean text aptly generalizes the point: *ἀρετὰ ἐντι ἀνθρώπῳ τελειότας φύσιος ἀνθρώπῳ ἕκαστον γὰρ τῶν ἐόντων τέλειον καὶ ἄκρον γίνεται κατὰν οἰκείαν τᾶς ἀρετᾶς φύσιν. Ἴππῳ τε γὰρ ἀρετὰ ἐντι ἅ ἐς τὸ ἄκρον ἄγοισα τὰν τῷ ἵππῳ φύσιν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μερέων δὲ τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστον ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος* (Metopus *Περὶ ἀρετῆς* apud Stob. *Eclogae* III, 1, 115 p. 66 Hense = p. 87 Centone = p. 116 Thesleff).
- Excellence is an objective perfection of a particular nature. The movement of a being to its own peculiar perfection is also the work of an objective, inherent, natural tendency. When the nature of the being in question is mental, then the impetus is also conscious and “conceptualized”. For as Heraclitus puts it: *τὸ φρονεῖν* (with Diels) *ἀρετὴ μεγίστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαΐοντας* (DK 22B 112).
- [3] For an analysis of Homeric aristocracy, a truly functional meritocracy, as the fundamental factor of ancient Greek social experience v. my study «*Αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων*. Ἡ προστακτικὴ τῆς Ἀριστείας εἰς τὴν Ἀρχαίαν Ἑλληνικὴ Κοινωνία», in A.Λ. Πιεροῦ, *Περὶ τέλους*, 1996, pp. 1-68. For the usefulness and profitability of goodness in Homer v. esp. *ibid*, pp. 4-7. For the specific excellences covering the entire field of human activity and production, Cf. *ibid*. pp. 23-4.
- [4] The classical passage, Hesiod, *Opera et Dies*, vv. 11-26:
- οὐκ ἄρα μούνον ἔην Ἐρίδων γένος, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν
εἰσὶ δὴ τὴν μὲν κεν ἐπαινῆσαι νοήσας,
ἢ δ’ ἐπιμωμητῆ· διὰ δ’ ἀνδιχα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν.*
- ...
- 17 τὴν δ’ ἐτέρην (sc. the praiseworthy type of strife) προτέρον
μὲν ἐγένετο Νύξ ἐρεβεννή,
θῆκε δὲ μιν Κρονίδης ὑψίζυγος αἰθέρι ναίων

γαίης τ' ἐν ρίζησι καὶ ἀνδράσι πολλὰν ἀμείνω·
 ἢ τε καὶ ἀπάλαμόν περ ὄμως ἐπὶ ἔργον ἔγειρεν.
 εἰς ἕτερον γὰρ τις τε ἰδὼν ἔργοιο χατίζων
 πλούσιον, ὃς σπεύδει μὲν ἀρώμεναι ἠδὲ φυτεύειν
 οἶκον τ' εὐθέσθαι ζηλοῖ δέ τε γείτονα γείτων
 εἰς ἄφενος σπεύδοντ'· ἀγαθὴ δ' ἔρις ἦδε βροτοῖσιν.
 καὶ κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ κοτέει καὶ τέκτονι τέκτων,
 καὶ πτωχὸς πτωχῷ φθονέει καὶ ἀοιδὸς ἀοιδῷ.

The honourable strife is good, *useful*. Alien achievement creates in the spirited professional emulation to perform equally successfully, indeed the craving to surpass the co-practitioner's feat: fierce competition conduces to perfection individually and corporately.

The acute rivalry of potters is well illustrated by the inscription in an amphora by Euthymides (Munich 2307 = Beazley, ARV p. 26): ὡς οὐδέποτε Εὐφρόνιος. The very transcendent perfection of ancient Greek pottery testifies to the existence of both the mighty drive towards excellence which resulted in it and the conditions of unrestricted competition which made that possible.

- [5] Ἐννοῶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς εἰπόντος σοῦ, ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν φύεται ἕκαστος οὐ πάνυ ὅμοιος ἐκάστω, ἀλλὰ διαφέρων τὴν φύσιν, ἄλλος ἐπ' ἄλλου ἔργου πρᾶξι... Πότερον κάλλιον πράττοι ἂν τις εἷς ὦν πολλὰς τέχνας ἐργαζόμενος, ἢ ὅταν μίαν εἷς; Ὅταν, ἦ δ' ὅς, εἷς μίαν... Ἐκ δὴ τούτων πλείω τε ἕκαστα γίνονται καὶ κάλλιον καὶ ῥᾶον, ὅταν εἷς ἐν κατὰ φύσιν καὶ ἐν καιρῷ, σχολὴν τῶν ἄλλων ἄγων, πράττη. Cf. 374a: ὠμολογοῦμεν δέ που, εἰ μέμνησαι, ἀδύνατον ἕνα πολλὰς καλῶς ἐργάζεσθαι τέχνας. Cf. also Γ, 394e-395b. In Γ, 397e the principle of exclusive occupation is exemplified: ...ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν διπλοῦς ἀνήρ παρ' ἡμῖν (i.e. in the best polity) οὐδὲ πολλαπλοῦς, ἐπειδὴ ἕκαστος ἐν πράττει. – Οὐκοῦν διὰ ταῦτα ἐν μόνῃ τῇ τοιαύτῃ πόλει τὸν τε σκυτοτόμον σκυτοτόμον εὐρήσομεν καὶ οὐ κυβερνήτην πρὸς τῇ σκυτοτομίᾳ, καὶ τὸν γεωργὸν γεωργὸν καὶ οὐ δικαστὴν πρὸς τῇ γεωργίᾳ, καὶ τὸν πολεμικὸν πολεμικὸν καὶ οὐ χρηματιστὴν πρὸς τῇ πολεμικῇ, καὶ πάντας οὕτω; And so in the recapitulation of the main features of the first part of the *Republic* in *Timaeus* the principle is enjoined, 17c10 sqq.: καὶ κατὰ φύσιν διδόντες τὸ καθ' αὐτὸν ἐκάστω πρόσφορον ἐν μόνον ἐπιτηδεύμα, μίαν ἐκάστω τέχνην etc. The use of highly articular Medicine to sustain unfunctional life (*and indeed even non-maximally functional life*) is condemned, Γ, 406c: Asclepius does not patronize such medicine, εἰδὼς ὅτι πᾶσι τοῖς εὐνομουμένοις ἔργον τι ἐκάστω ἐν τῇ πόλει προστέτακται, ὃ ἀναγκαῖον ἐργάζεσθαι, καὶ οὐδενὶ σχολὴ διὰ βίου κάμνειν ἰατρονομένῳ. This practice of simplicity in human avocations enhances individual and, hence, social unity; Δ, 423d ...πρὸς ὃ τις πέφυκεν, πρὸς τοῦτο ἕνα πρὸς ἐν ἕκαστον ἔργον δεῖ κομίζειν, ὅπως ἂν ἐν τὸ αὐτοῦ ἐπιτηδεύων ἕκαστος μὴ πολλοὶ ἀλλ' εἷς γίγνηται, καὶ οὕτω δὴ σύμπασα ἢ πόλις μία φύηται ἀλλὰ μὴ πολλαί. The general principle (each one should occupy himself with that function and work in society, which his particular nature has been generated to be best adapted to serve and promote) is enunciated succinctly in Δ, 433a: ... ὅτι ἕνα ἕκαστον ἐν δέοι ἐπιτηδεύειν τῶν περὶ τὴν πόλιν, εἰς δ' αὐτοῦ ἢ φύσις ἐπιτηδειοτάτη πεφυκνῖα εἴη. The same principle in the same sense is strictly enunciated also in the *Laws*, H, 846d-847b. V. esp. 846d7: δύο δὲ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἢ δύο τέχνας ἀκριβῶς διαπνεῖσθαι σχεδὸν οὐδεμία φύσις ἰκανὴ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, οὐδ' αὖ τὴν μὲν αὐτὸς ἰκανὸς ἀσκεῖν, τὴν δὲ ἄλλον ἀσκούντα ἐπιτροπεύειν. The aim of each one in any occupation is to excel in it, to become an excellent professional (ἄριστος δημιουργός); cf. *Republic*, 421b-c. (Cf. further n. 47, also for monovocationalism versus occupational flexibility). This principle of specialization must have been Socratic; v. Xenophon *Memorabilia* III, 9, 3 and 15. He who is good at nothing is neither useful nor dear to the gods (*ibid.* §15: τὸν δὲ μηδὲν εὖ πράττοντα οὔτε χρήσιμον

οὐδὲν ἔφη εἶναι οὔτε θεοφιλή). Cf. also the Persian specialization, *Cyropaedia* VIII, 2, 5-6. – Aristotle expands the scope of the principle to the entire nature (at least the organic realm), *Politica* A, 1252b1-5: οὐδὲν γὰρ ἢ φύσις ποιεῖ τοιοῦτον οἷον χαλκότυποι τὴν Δελφικὴν μαχαίραν (a many-purpose knife produced at Delphi) πενιχρῶς, ἀλλ' ἐν πρὸς ἐν' οὕτω γὰρ ἂν ἀποτελοῖτο κάλλιστα τῶν ὀργάνων ἕκαστον, μὴ πολλοῖς ἔργοις ἀλλ' ἐνὶ δουλεῦον. Cf. *De Part. Anim.* 683a22. For some *partial* exceptions see the passages in Newman's *The Politics of Aristotle*, vol. II p. 109, n. *ad loc.* The πενιχρῶς in the *Politics* passage is revealing: multipurpose objects are works of *penury*, of which Nature's lavish exuberance knows normally nothing.

- [6] Therefore there must be formed a full programme, *ordering completely life* for the entire day and night to that purpose; 807d-e: οὕτω δὴ τούτων πεφυκότων, τάξιν δεῖ γίνεσθαι πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐλευθέροις τῆς διατριβῆς περὶ τὸν χρόνον ἅπαντα, σχεδὸν ἀρξάμενον ἐξ ἕω μέχρι τῆς ἑτέρας ἀεὶ συνεχῶς ἕω τε καὶ ἡλίου ἀνατολῆς.
- [7] 795c: ...χρῆ προσδοκᾶν ὀρθόν, ὅτι τὸν διττὰ δεῖ κεκτημένον, οἷς ἀμύνοιτό τ' ἂν καὶ ἐπιτιθεῖτο ἄλλοις, μηδὲν ἀργὸν τούτων μηδὲ ἀνεπιστήμον ἔαν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν Γηρύνου δέ γε εἴ τις φύσιν ἔχων ἢ καὶ τὴν Βριάρεω φύοιτο, ταῖς ἑκατὸν χερσὶν ἑκατὸν δεῖ βέλη ρίπτειν δυνατὸν εἶναι.
- [8] The general principle is this: (805a) λογισμὸν δὲ... περὶ τούτων τοιόνδε τινὰ ἔχω φημί, εἴπερ ταῦτα οὕτω συμβαίνειν ἐστὶν δυνατὰ, πάντων ἀνοητότατα τὰ νῦν ἐν τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν τόποις γίνεσθαι τὸ μὴ πάση ρώμῃ πάντας ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἐπιτηδεύειν ἄνδρας γυναιξὶν ταυτά. σχεδὸν γὰρ ὀλίγου πᾶσα ἡμίσεια πόλις ἀντὶ διπλασίας οὕτως ἔστιν τε καὶ γίγνεται ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν τελῶν καὶ πόνων. Cf. 806c5-7; *Republic* 466c.
- [9] Excellence (being functional) went hand in hand (almost indistinguishable from) achievement: hence that quintessentially ancient Greek craving for “being first in one's category” (ἀριστεύειν, ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι). The feeling was of life as a multifaceted *contest*, where the hard rock meaning of life lies in *winning*. The so-called “*agonistic ideal of life*” was the common reality, as well as the common experience, of life. Cf. J. Burckhard's analyses in *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*, *passim* (e.g. II pp. 365 sqq.; IV pp. 89 sqq.). Cf. n. 14.
- [10] The eloquent translation is Sandys' (from his *Loeb* edition of Pindar) but for one point; he renders ἢ μέγα νόον ἢτοι φύσιν as: “either in might of mind or at least in our nature”. The “at least” is out of place here; in fact it is easier to resemble divine excellences in respect to bodily endowments than with regard to mental faculties and intellectual greatness. More importantly, φύσις in such contexts signifies *bodily constitution and development*, as it is correctly captured by the ancient scholia to the Pindaric passage (7a, III p. 102.22-4 Drachmann): ἐμφερές τι ἔχομεν τοῖς θεοῖς, ἢ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν... ἢ κατὰ τὰς εὐφυΐας τῶν σωμάτων καὶ τὰ κάλλη. Cf. A.Λ. Πιεργῆς, *Περὶ τέλους* 1996 pp. 30-32 and esp. n. 6 pp. 54-5.
- [11] V. e.g. G. Curtius, *Grundzuege*, §564 pp. 378-9. Cf. Fr. Bader, *Études de composition nominale en Mycénien, I. Les prefixes melioratifs du Grec*, 1969, pp. 9-21; 103.
- [12] V. esp. n. 49.
- [13] For the nature of this dark side of quintessential classicism, the general setting within which it becomes meaningful and its consequences in the development of Hellenistic philosophical attitudes and world-views, v. A.L. Pierris, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Continuity and Reaction in an*

Oecumenical Age, in K. Boudouris (ed.) *Hellenistic Philosophy* Vol. I, Athens, 1993, pp. 135-7, esp. *Excursus I: on the Hybris of Limitation and Order*, *ibid.*, pp. 144-52. – It is to be emphasized that my diagnosis of the spiritual malaise of Classicism moves in the opposite direction from that of Dodds': the problem is not the existence and acknowledgement of the dark side of things (Dodds' "irrational"), but on the contrary too much condescension (I hate to say naïve "enlightenment") regarding potent Darkness and an irreverent attitude towards it; namely exactly what Aeschylus warned the Athenians against in his *Eumenides*: that was the Hybris of Order, with its unavoidable consequence – artificiality and fragility.

- [14] Foot-excellence (ἀρετή ποδῶν) is necessarily manifested in running fastest, like winning foot-races; so *Homer*, *Y*, 410-2:

καὶ οἱ φίλτατος ἔσκε, πόδεσσι δὲ πάντα ἐνίκα·
 δὴ τότε νηπιέησι, ποδῶν ἀρετὴν ἀναφαίνων,
 θῦνε διὰ προμάχων etc.

The manifestation (ἀναφαίνων) of excellence (ἀρετή) is to win (ἐνίκα) in relevant competition-situations, to excel, prevail and outdo in the operational field of the virtue in question. Cf. Herodotus I, 176, 1: καὶ μαχόμενοι ὀλίγοι πρὸς πολλοὺς ἀρετὰς ἀπεδείκνυντο, displayed excellencies in brave deeds. Cf. IX, 40. Cf. n. 9.

The organic connection between excellence and its rewards (a point questioned by Heather Reid in the discussion) is clearly revealed in the use of the word ἀρετή to signify precisely such rewards as (social) distinction and glory. Thus in Hesiod, *Opera et Dies* 313: πλούτῳ δ' ἀρετὴ καὶ κῦδος ὀπηδεῖ, the word refers to the prestige, distinction and glory which (together with κῦδος, renown, fame) accompany the wealthy man. This use of ἀρετή was observed by Plutarch, *de aud. poetas*, 24 with reference to the Hesiodic passage and *Homer Y* 242 (Ζεὺς δ' ἀρετὴν ἄνδρεσσιν ὀφέλλει τε μινύθει τε): ἀντι δόξης ἢ δυνάμεως ἢ εὐτυχίας ἢ τινος ὁμοίου τῇ ἀρετῇ κεχρησθαι τὸν ποιητὴν ἠγείσθω. (Cf. Eustathius in *Odys.* λ 359, p. 1690.44).

Theognis often employs the word in such significations; cf. 30; 129 sq.; 402 sq. The Plutarchean point is taken up by Harpocration s.v. ἀρετή: ἀντι τοῦ εὐδοξία Ἀνδοκίδης καὶ Θουκυδίδης ἐν α'. (The same, without mention of the first book of Thucydides, Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca*, 443.33 and *Suda*, s.v.). The Thucydidean reference is probably to I, 33, 2: (The Corcyreans argue in favour of Athens taking side with them against Corinth) τίς εὐπραξία σπανιωτέρα, ἢ τίς τοῖς πολεμίοις λυπηροτέρα, εἰ ἦν ὑμεῖς ἂν πρὸ πολλῶν χρημάτων καὶ χάριτος ἐτιμήσασθε δύναμιν ὑμῖν προσγενέσθαι, αὕτη πάρεστιν αὐτεπάγγελτος, ἄνευ κινδύνων καὶ δαπάνης διδοῦσα ἑαυτήν, καὶ προσέτι φέρουσα ἐς μὲν τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀρετὴν, οἷς δ' ἐπαμυνεῖτε χάριν, ὑμῖν δ' αὐτοῖς ἰσχύν. Virtus for *virtutis gloria* is also employed by Virgil, *Aen.* VI, 807: et dubitamus adhuc virtutem extendere factis? It was a Graecism.

Clearly the point is being made in Lycurgus, *Or. Contra Leocratem* §§48-9; those that heroically fell in battle partake of the prizes of war, freedom (ἐλευθερία) and glory (ἀρετή): τὰ γὰρ ἄθλα τοῦ πολέμου τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐστιν ἐλευθερία καὶ ἀρετή· ταῦτα δὲ ἀμφοτέρω τοῖς τελευτήσασιν ὑπάρχει. This sense of ἀρετή is explained a few lines before: τῆς γὰρ ἀρετῆς οὐ ζῶντες ἀπολαύουσιν, ἀλλὰ τελευτήσαντες τὴν δόξαν καταλελοίπασι etc. Cf. the parallel passage in Lysias, 2 (*Epitaphios*), 26.

The smooth transition from *excellence*, to the *immortal memory of excellence* and thence to *immortal excellence* coupled with renowned glory, is well illustrated in Plato, *Symposium*, 208d: would anyone perform deeds of unparalleled excellence, even to self-sacrifice, μὴ οἰομένους ἀθάνατον μνήμην ἀρετῆς περὶ ἑαυτῶν ἔσεσθαι, ἦν νῦν ἡμεῖς ἔχομεν; πολλοῦ γε δεῖ, ἔφη, ἀλλ' οἶμαι ὑπὲρ ἀρετῆς ἀθανάτου καὶ τοιαύτης δόξης εὐκλεοῦς πάντες πάντα ποιούσιν, ὅσῳ ἂν ἀμείνους ᾧσι, τοσοῦτῳ μᾶλλον· τοῦ γὰρ ἀθανάτου ἐρῶσιν. And

so Sophocles, *Philoctetes*, 1419-20: ὄσους πονήσας (Hercules is speaking) καὶ διεξελεθῶν πόνους / ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἔσχον, ὡς πάρεσθ' ὄραν. The praemium virtutis is here meant at least as much as *virtus* itself. Cf. the ambivalence, or rather that bridge, operating in the προγόνων ἀρεταί, *Republic*, I, 618b1. Cf. Euripides, *Herc.* 356: γενναίων δ' ἀρεταί πόνων τοῖς θανοῦσιν ἄγαλμα.

Ἀρετή as victory appears in Pindar, *Nem.* V 52-3: ἐλεῖν Ἐπιδαύρω διπλόαν νικῶντ' ἀρετάν. And as praise, renown and glory from victory in *Olymp.* VIII, 5-7: μαιομένων μεγάλην ἀρετάν θυμῷ λαβεῖν (in the contests), τῶν δὲ μόχθων ἀμπνοάν. Similarly *Nem.* X, 2-3: φλέγεται (sc. Argos) δ' ἀρεταῖς μυρίαῖς ἔργων θρασέων ἔνεκεν, it is burning with countless glories by reason of deeds of prowess.

In the LXX and the N.T. ἀρετή applied to God seems to cover the meaning-field from power to marvels to praise. Isa. XLII, 8: ἐγὼ Κύριος ὁ Θεός, τοῦτό μου ἔστιν τὸ ὄνομα, τὴν δόξαν μου ἐτέρῳ οὐ δώσω, οὐδὲ τὰς ἀρετάς μου τοῖς γλυπτοῖς. And 12: δώσουσι τῷ Θεῷ δόξαν, τὰς ἀρετάς αὐτοῦ ἐν ταῖς νήσοις ἀναγγελοῦσιν. XLIII, 21: λαόν μου ὃν περιεποιήσαμην τὰς ἀρετάς μου διηγεῖσθαι. Hab. III, 3: ἐκάλυψεν οὐρανοὺς ἡ ἀρετὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἰνέσεως αὐτοῦ πλήρης ἡ γῆ. Similarly 1 *Pet.* ii, 9: ὅπως τὰς ἀρετάς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος etc., 2 *Pet.* i, 3: τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ. (In i, 5, ἀρετῇ, lying between πίστις and γνώσις, seems to signify power). Such use is identical with the ancient core sense: ἀρετή is what something is *worth* of, its power, efficiency and praise.

Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the intrinsic connection in ἀρετή between excellence, power to effect good, usefulness and efficacy, as well as resulting glory, between in other words distinction in perfection, capacity and renown, is the formula «ἀρετῆς ἔνεκεν» (often with the addition τῆς ἐς τὸν δῆμον or τὴν πόλιν) inscribed in innumerable dedications offered by the city-communities to their eminent citizens. Ἀρετή is now *active merit*, it is an excellence which involves the power, and the disposition to exercise it, as well as its actual exercise, to the *benefit* of some recipient of the grace: it is ἀρετῇ ἕς τινας (Thucydides III, 58: ἀρετῆς τῆς ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας), or περὶ τινας (Xenophon, *Anabasis*, I, 4, 8: τῆς πρόσθεν ἔνεκα περὶ ἐμὲ ἀρετῆς) or ὑπὲρ τινῶν (Demosthenes, XIX, 312: τὰς ἀρετάς ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν). Such *noble service* and *beneficence* is expected to be paid back, although such repayment is more obtuse and unclear than the sharpness and fidelity of the active graceful bestowal in the first place; Thucydides II, 40, 4: καὶ τὰ ἐς ἀρετὴν ἠναντιώμεθα τοῖς πολλοῖς: οὐ γὰρ πάσχοντες εὖ, ἀλλὰ δρῶντες κτώμεθα τοὺς φίλους. βεβαίωτερος δὲ ὁ δράσας τὴν χάριν, ὥστε ὀφειλομένην δι' εὐνοίας ᾧ δέδωκε σώζειν· ὁ δ' ἀντοφείλων ἀμβλύτερος, εἰδὼς οὐκ ἐς χάριν, ἀλλ' ἐς ὀφείλημα τὴν ἀρετὴν ἀποδώσων.

In Homer's *Odyssey* (v, 45) ἀρετή is even used for the *well-being* of the persons involved, with clear the connotation of *prosperity*: θεοὶ δ' ἀρετὴν ὀπάσειαν / παντοίην. Appositely the ancient scholia observe on ἀρετῆν: νῦν τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν· ὡς τὸ «ἀρετῶσι δὲ λαοὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ» (τ, 114): people are fulfilled (are happy and prosperous).

- [15] Ἀρ-ε-τή from *ar (cf. ἀραρίσκω, ἀρμονία, ἀρ-ι-, ἀρείων, ἄριστος, ἀρτύω, ἄρθρον, ἀριθμός, ἄρτιος etc.): *fitness*. And fitness is always highly functional. The Latin *virtus* (connected to *vis*, *vir-es* and to the Greek *ῖς* – cf. Ἴνες, ἰνίον, Ἴφι) bears more evidently the mark of the meaning *strength, power, might*. The emphasis is shifting from the *best condition* to the *strength* deposited in the best condition.
- [16] The criticism of this view in *Meno*, 78b-e is purgative. If we fix the notion of goodness according to its ordinary acceptation (involving health, wealth, honours etc.), then the statement breaks down as a definition. We have a dexterous indication that the solution to the basic problem would require the correct understanding of goodness.

[17] V. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1337a34 sqq., esp. 1337a39-b1: ἐκ τε τῆς ἐμποδῶν παιδείας (sc. the actual educational practices) ταραχῶδης ἢ σκέψις, καὶ δῆλον οὐδὲν πότερον ἀσκεῖν δεῖ τὰ χρήσιμα πρὸς τὸν βίον ἢ τὰ τείνοντα πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἢ τὰ περιττά (πάντα γὰρ εἴληφε ταῦτα κριτάς τινάς) etc. *Arts useful in life* (χρήσιμα), *training aiming at excellence* (ἀρετή) and *arcane studies* on exquisite or abstruse matters (περιττά) are neatly distinguished as alternative educational orientations.

[18] Aristotle reputedly singled out to celebrate in his *Elegy* on Plato this Platonic contribution towards rehabilitating the archetypal wholeness of life; E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, vol. I, p. 115 (Fr. 1.4-7) = M. L. West, *Iambi et Elegi Graeci*, vol. II, pp. 44-5 (Fr. 673):

ὅς (sc. Πλάτων) μόνος ἢ πρῶτος θνητῶν κατέδειξεν ἑναργῶς
οἰκείω τε βίω καὶ μεθόδοισι λόγων,
ὡς ἀγαθός τε καὶ εὐδαίμων ἅμα γίνεται ἀνήρ.
οὐ νῦν δ' ἔστι λαβεῖν οὐδενὶ ταῦτά ποτε.

The grand design of the *Republic* is to prove just as much: that the virtuous and the “well-to-be” man is one and the same. So, after the colossal and crucially important, necessary digression consisting of the middle books (E, ΣΤ, Ζ) of the *Republic* (cf. H, 543c: ἀναμνησθῶμεν πόθεν δεῦρο ἐξετραπόμεθα, ἵνα πάλιν τὴν αὐτὴν ἴωμεν), Plato retraces the thread of the argument interrupted at the beginning of book E, and states the overall purpose of his endeavour; 544a: The defective forms of polity were going to be analysed, together with their respective determinative faults, and then the corresponding basic types of man defined, ἵνα πάντας αὐτοὺς ἰδόντες καὶ ὁμολογησάμενοι τὸν ἄριστον καὶ τὸν κάκιστον ἄνδρα ἐπισκεψάμεθα, εἰ ὁ ἄριστος εὐδαιμονέστατος καὶ ὁ κάκιστος ἀθλιώτατος ἢ ἄλλως ἔχοι. (Cf. 545a). This answers exactly to the position of the problem at the beginning of Book B; cf. in particular 361d: the just and the unjust man must be presented in their respective purity of character, as extreme examples of thorough justice and injustice correspondingly ἵνα ἀμφοτέρω εἰς τὸ ἔσχατον ἐληλυθότες, ὁ μὲν δικαιοσύνης, ὁ δὲ ἀδικίας, κρίνονται ὁπότερος αὐτῶν εὐδαιμονέστερος. In the final book Θ of the *Republic* (Book I being of the nature of an Appendix) this question is treated conclusively (cf. 576c; e; 577b; 580b: ὅτι ὁ Ἀρίστωνος ὑὸς τὸν ἄριστόν τε καὶ δικαιοτάτον εὐδαιμονέστατον ἔκρινε..., τὸν δὲ κάκιστόν τε καὶ ἀδικώτατον ἀθλιώτατον etc.). The same basic point is inculcated also in the *Laws*. Thus B, 660e1: ὡς ὁ μὲν ἀγαθὸς ἀνήρ σῶφρων ὢν καὶ δίκαιος εὐδαίμων ἐστὶ καὶ μακάριος. (Cf. E, 742e4: σχεδὸν μὲν γὰρ εὐδαίμονας ἅμα καὶ ἀγαθοὺς ἀνάγκη γίγνεσθαι)... ἐὰν δὲ ἄρα πλουτῆ..., ἢ δὲ ἀδικος, ἀθλιος τ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἀνιαρῶς ζῆ. V. *Gorgias*, 470e9: τὸν μὲν γὰρ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἄνδρα καὶ γυναῖκα εὐδαίμονα εἶναί φημι, τὸν δὲ ἀδικὸν καὶ πονηρὸν ἄθλιον.

In the argument of *Laws*, B, 660e-664d, pleasure is also brought under the same umbrella with virtue and well-being. V. esp. 662d1 sqq. Thus the good for the virtuous man is pleasurable: τί γὰρ δὴ δικαίῳ χωριζόμενον ἡδονῆς ἀγαθὸν ἂν γίγνοιτο; (663a1-2). *Firstly*, to separate the pleasurable from the just, the good and the noble is destructive of the sociopolitical order: οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἂν ἐκῶν ἐθέλοι πείθεσθαι πράττειν τοῦτο ὅτω μὴ τὸ χαίρειν τοῦ λυπεῖσθαι πλέον ἔπεται (663b4-6; cf. the reasoning in 662d-e). Thus ὁ μὲν μὴ χωρίζων λόγος ἡδύ τε καὶ δίκαιον καὶ ἀγαθόν τε καὶ καλὸν πιθανός γ', εἰ μὴδὲν ἕτερον, πρὸς τό τινα ἐθέλειν ζῆν τὸν ὄσιον καὶ δίκαιον βίον etc. But, *secondly*, what appears pleasurable and painful depends on the condition of the feeling subject: a virtuous constitution experiences pleasure at the virtuous things and feels pain at the wicked ones; while the reverse is the case with the defective constitution. 663c2 sqq.: τὰ μὲν ἀδίκῃ τῶ τοῦ δικαίου ἐναντίως φαινόμενα, ἐκ μὲν ἀδίκου καὶ κακοῦ ἑαυτοῦ θεωρούμενα ἡδέα, τὰ δὲ δίκαια ἀηδέστατα, ἐκ δὲ δικαίου πάντα τὰναντία παντὶ πρὸς ἀμφοτέρω. (This is a

particular application of the general principle regarding the affinity and attraction of the similar by the similar). Yet in such varied appearances there exists also the truth of the matter, and it is the criterion of the perfectly constituted soul (i.e. the soul possessing the excellence of its nature = the virtuous soul) which corresponds to the objective state of affairs: τὴν δὲ ἀλήθειαν τῆς κρίσεως ποτέραν κυριωτέραν εἶναι φῶμεν; πότερα τὴν τῆς χειρόνος ψυχῆς ἢ τὴν τῆς βελτίονος; – Ἀναγκαῖον που τὴν τῆς ἀμείνονος (663c7-d1). And hence (663d2-4): ἀναγκαῖον ἄρα τὸν ἄδικον βίον οὐ μόνον αἰσχίω καὶ μοχθηρότερον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀηδέστερον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦ δικαίου τε εἶναι καὶ ὀσίου βίου. The best life is then the same with the most pleasurable life: τὸν αὐτὸν ἡδιστόν τε καὶ ἄριστον ὑπὸ θεῶν βίον λέγεσθαι φάσκοντες, ἀληθέστατα ἐροῦμεν ἅμα, καὶ μᾶλλον πείσομεν οὐδὲ δεῖ πείθειν (664b7-c2). With this, we have overcome the last resistance in accepting the insight that a life in possession of all things commonly called goods (like health, beauty, wealth, sensitivity, power to do as one desires, physical prowess and manly valour, even immortality; cf. 661a5-b4; 661d6-e1) and furthermore in want of all things commonly called bad, if it betrays injustice and hybris, is not an exemplar of well-being, but on the contrary of wretchedness (661d6-e4).

The results here in the *Laws*, tally exactly with the positions established in the *Republic* Θ and its calculus of pleasure (Θ, 580d-588a). Notice in particular Θ, 588a7-10: οὐκοῦν εἰ τοσοῦτον ἡδονῇ νικᾷ ὁ ἀγαθός τε καὶ δίκαιος τὸν κακόν τε καὶ ἄδικον, ἀμηχάνῳ δὴ ὅσῳ πλείονι νικήσει εὐσχημοσύνη τε βίου καὶ κάλλει καὶ ἀρετῇ;

- [19] The fault-line between excellence (of the soul) and well-being is expressed in Plato by the question of the relationship between ἀρετή and εὐδαιμονία, the problem which constitutes the core of his moral and political theory. The two notions are often coupled, contrasted and associated; cf., besides the above quoted passages (n. 18), e.g. *Symposium* 180b7 (εἰς ἀρετῆς καὶ εὐδαιμονίας κτήσιν ἀνθρώποις καὶ ζῶσι καὶ τελευτήσασιν); *Laws*, I, 899d8-e3; B, 661d6-e4; *Republic*, I, 606d6; Θ, 576c10; *Alcib. A*’, 134a sqq.; *Theaetetus* 175b9-c8 and 176e3-4.

Now the moral ἀρετή is defined as the excellence of the soul according to its main divisions and faculties. While εὐδαιμονία signifies the fulfillment, contentment and satisfaction when all is well (εὖ) with the being in question. (The inclusion of pure, harmless pleasure – the fundamental analysis of the *Philebus* gives depth and perspective to the arguments in the *Republic*, Θ and *Laws*, B – in eudaemonia highlights the point). The opposite of the former is some deformity and depravity of the soul (κακία); while that of the latter is misery (ἀθλιότης).

Well-being consists in the possession of the (really) good (things). Thus with εὐδαιμονία we have reached the end of the teleological explanation. To the question what one desires, the answer is good (things). To the question what one desires good (things) for, the answer is to possess them (to be attributed to him) and thus be εὐδαίμων. To the question what one desires to possess good (things) for or, in other words, what one desires to be εὐδαίμων for – there is no further reply other than tautological repetition. *Symposium*, 204d-205a; esp. 204e2 sqq.: φέρε, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἐρᾷ ὁ ἐρῶν τῶν ἀγαθῶν· τί ἐρᾷ; Γενέσθαι, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, αὐτῷ. Καὶ τί ἔσται ἐκείνῳ ὃ ἂν γένηται τὰγαθὰ; Τοῦτ’ εὐπορώτερον, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, ἔχω ἀποκρίνασθαι, ὅτι εὐδαίμων ἔσται. Κτήσει γάρ, ἔφη, ἀγαθῶν οἱ εὐδαίμονες εὐδαίμονες, καὶ οὐκέτι προσδεῖ ἐρέσθαι ἵνα τί δὲ βούλεται εὐδαίμων εἶναι ὁ βουλόμενος, ἀλλὰ τέλος δοκεῖ ἔχειν ἢ ἀπόκρισις. (Cf. *Clitophon* 410e: ἐμπόδιον τοῦ πρὸς τέλος ἀρετῆς ἐλθόντα εὐδαίμονα γενέσθαι).

The idea which defines well-being as possession or attribution of goods (κτήσις, γενέσθαι τὰ ἀγαθὰ τινι) is criticized in *Euhedemus*, 278e-282d. But the bearing of this criticism is different. The starting point for the argument is that precisely idea; only εὖ πράττειν is substituted for εὐδαιμονεῖν. Thus πάντες ἄνθρωποι βουλόμεθα εὖ πράττειν (278e3); and

ἐπειδὴ βουλόμεθα εὖ πράττειν, πῶς ἂν εὖ πράττοιμεν; ἄρ' ἂν εἰ ἡμῖν πολλὰ κάγαθὰ εἶη; But then equivalently: ὡμολογήσαμεν γὰρ, ἔφην, εἰ ἡμῖν ἀγαθὰ πολλὰ παρείη, εὐδαιμονεῖν ἂν καὶ εὖ πράττειν (280b5; cf. b7); and finally: ἐπειδὴ εὐδαιμονες μὲν εἶναι προθυμούμεθα πάντες etc. (282a2). The substance of the argument consists in showing that with the commonly held good (things) it is not their possession (κεκτηῖσθαι, κτήσις, or presence, παρουσία) but their *correct use* (ὀρθῶς χρῆσθαι), that constitutes well-being (εὐδαιμονία) and well-acting (εὐπραξία). The upshot of the argument is, therefore, to establish that what is ordinarily considered good (wealth, health, beauty, other bodily excellences, nobility, powers, honours, (moral) virtues, wisdom, good luck; cf. 279a-c) is mostly not *necessarily useful* by itself, and therefore not really and absolutely good – with the sole exception of knowledge and wisdom. 280b7 sqq.: ἄρ' οὖν εὐδαιμονοῦμεν ἂν διὰ τὰ παρόντα ἀγαθὰ, εἰ μηδὲν ἡμᾶς ὠφελοῖ ἢ εἰ ὠφελεῖ; - εἰ ὠφελεῖ, ἔφην. - Ἄρ' οὖν ἂν τι ὠφελοῖ, εἰ εἶη μόνον ἡμῖν, χρώμεθα δ' αὐτοῖς μή; ... (280d) Τί δέ, εἰ τις κεκτημένος εἶη πλοῦτόν τε καὶ ἅ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ, χρώτο δὲ αὐτοῖς μή, ἄρ' ἂν εὐδαιμονοῖ διὰ τὴν τούτων κτήσιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν; - Οὐ δῆτα, ὦ Σώκρατες - Δεῖ ἄρα, ἔφην, ὡς ἔοικεν, μὴ μόνον κεκτηῖσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀγαθὰ τὸν μέλλοντα εὐδαίμονα ἔσεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς· ἢ οὐδὲν ὄφελος τῆς κτήσεως γίγνεται. Still more, it is not the mere *use* of the common goods that constitutes well-being, but the *correct use*; and this depends on knowledge (ἐπιστήμη), phronesis and wisdom (σοφία). There follows that, strictly speaking, the common goods are really neutrals, and only wisdom is good and ignorance (or stupidity) is bad; 281e: τῶν μὲν ἄλλων οὐδὲν ὄν οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὔτε κακόν, τούτοις δὲ δυοῖν ὄντοις ἢ μὲν σοφία ἀγαθόν, ἢ δὲ ἀμαθία κακόν. We have thus reached the essence of Stoicism.

The Euthydemean passage therefore aims at clarifying the notion of goodness – something crucial for the treatment of all moral questions and rightly focused upon by Aristotle in his presentation and critique of the Platonic theory. Real goodness is *perfect* (τέλειον), also *sufficing and sufficiently potent* (ἰκανόν) as explained in *Philebus* (20d; 22b): the thing that “possesses” it *stands in no need of anything else*; *ibid.* 60b10-c4: τὴν τὰγαθοῦ φύσιν διαφέρειν τῶδε τῶν ἄλλων. – Τίνι; - Ὡς παρείη τοῦτ' ἀεὶ τῶν ζώων διὰ τέλους πάντων καὶ πάντη μηδενὸς ἑτέρου ποτὲ ἔτι προσδεῖσθαι, τὸ δὲ ἰκανὸν τελεώτατον ἔχειν. The distinction between possession and (correct) functional use is cancelled: true goodness cannot be inactive or dependent on something else for its activation. This is in fact why every being aims at the good and minds nothing else except also what follows upon the acquisition of goodness; 207d sqq.: τόδε γε μὴν (sc. its sufficing character), ὡς οἶμαι, περὶ αὐτοῦ (sc. τὰγαθοῦ) ἀναγκαιότατον εἶναι λέγειν, ὡς πᾶν τὸ γινώσκον αὐτὸ θηρεῦει καὶ ἐφίεται βουλόμενον ἐλεῖν καὶ περὶ αὐτὸ κτήσασθαι, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οὐδὲν φροντίζει πλὴν τῶν ἀποτελουμένων ἅμα ἀγαθοῖς. (Cf. 61a: οὐκοῦν τό γε τέλειον καὶ πᾶσιν αἰρετόν καὶ τὸ παντάπασιν ἀγαθόν etc.).

Τὰ ἀποτελούμενα ἅμα ἀγαθοῖς are the consequences of the possession of true goods. For Plato it is a proof of the superlative potency of good that it is not only desirable in itself (something which each and every being, being in itself, universally aims at), but also useful and beneficial, i.e. desirable for its effects. Such goods are *fertile* (γόνιμα) in the poignant formulation of *Republic*, B, 367d2. Thus the classification of goods in *Republic*, B, 357b-358a, divides them into three kinds: a) goods that we want to have for their own sake alone, and not by virtue of their results (like rejoicing, χαίρειν, and harmless pleasures), b) goods that we aim at both for their own sake and also for their consequences (like understanding and seeing and being healthy, τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ ὄραν καὶ τὸ ὑγιαίνειν); and finally c) goods in themselves laborious and onerous (never to be desired for themselves) but advantageous and profitable because of their accruing recompense and other beneficial consequences, τῶν μισθῶν τε χάριν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα γίγνεται ἀπ' αὐτῶν (like physical exercise and

undergoing medical treatment for the restoration of health). Justice is explicitly put into the second class, which is proclaimed nobler and beautifullest, 357d-358a: ἐν ποίῳ (sc. εἶδει), ἔφη, τούτων τὴν δικαιοσύνην τίθης; ἐγὼ μὲν οἶμαι, ἦν δ' ἐγὼ, ἐν τῷ καλλίστῳ, ὃ καὶ δι' αὐτὸ καὶ διὰ τὰ γιγνόμενα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαπητέον τῷ μέλλοντι μακαρίζω ἔσεσθαι (cf. B, 367c). To the first kind belongs pure pleasure, unaccompanied by any consequence beneficial or harmful (*Laws*, B, 667d-e).

There is thus present in Plato, under full capacity and sway, the reality of final causality but for the Aristotelian term *τέλος*. In fact the above analysis is recapitulated in *Nicomachean Ethics*, A, 7, 1097a15-b21. The two main characters of true Platonic goodness (τέλειον, ἰκανόν) are repeated as τέλειον (a28) and αὐταρκές (b8): τέλειον δὴ τι φαίνεται καὶ αὐταρκές ἢ εὐδαιμονία, τῶν πρακτῶν οὕσα τέλος (b20-1). Such ultimate end is that which does not stand in need of further explanation, i.e. that for which the question “why do we aim at it” has no real sense (the ἀνυπόθετον has been reached); cf. A2, 1094a18-22. This is Platonic; v. *supra* the *Symposium* passages. A difference appears to emerge in the relative valuation between the kinds of goods or (as Aristotle says) ends. In N.E. 1097a25-b6, Aristotle gives absolute precedence to that end which is aimed at for itself and never for the sake of something else, καὶ μηδέποτε δι' ἄλλο, 1097a33; such is εὐδαιμονία, as against honour and pleasure and intelligence and all virtue (1097b2). But the difference need not be sharply construed: Plato, as has been observed, means to assert the power, fertility, functionality and profitability of the supreme good in effecting a whole series of beneficial consequences ranging through the entire field of existence and action for the being possessing it. It is goodness itself which in fact renders all other excellences (*including moral virtues*) advantageous (cf. n. 48).

However this may stand, *teleology* and final causality is already there in Plato, but for the Aristotelian names, explicitly developed. Worries about the general legitimacy of their employment (a question which was significantly raised by Andrew Nash in the discussion) may thus be composed. On the other hand, we need not be committed to the Aristotelian concept of process or movement in analyzing the theory of Goodness teleologically (V. n. 25). Still further, I endeavour in this paper to locate the Platonic theory within the context of parameters that pervade the entire development of ancient Moral Philosophy. In such analysis, terminology with superior explanatory power may be more freely employed, even if it belongs properly to one particular phase of the development.

Thus I employed the Aristotelian theory of causality to distinguish between beauty, excellence and well-being as, respectively, the formal, efficient and final cause of human endeavour and activity; but also I had recourse to the Stoic notion of spermatic evolution when speaking of the “*drive towards excellence*”. These applications are called forth in particular by, and articulate the possibility of, separatedness between what in a different context is seamless and divisionless. On a certain level of experience and analysis beauty (harmony), excellence (perfection) and well-being (fulfillment and satisfaction) are necessarily coimplicated: *harmony* constitutes the *excellence* which ensures *well-being*; then, their unified power is easily subsumed under *finality*: beauty is the object of love (ἔρως) and acts by attraction; the end and purpose (τέλος) of a being is precisely the perfection (τέλος) of its nature, which again consists in its own peculiar harmony; and every natural excellence is a beauty and an end to which all beings susceptible of it inherently desire to achieve as completion of their nature. In such perspective there is no apparent reason to differentiate between the three things which I distinguished in the way I did. In particular one cannot then *properly* speak of a “*drive towards excellence*”: ends act as *final* causalities in the processes of their attainment, as “*motives*” not as “*motors*”. This was brought home by Andrew Nash, when he questioned the effective *explanatory power* of my idea, as against its mere metaphorical value (cf. also n. 2).

Now when we extend the analysis of human activity to a level beyond the unperturbed one signified above; when we have to conceptually account for the possibility of ruptures occurring in the unified field of the triad beauty – excellence – well being, as well as for the possibility of overcoming them and restoring unity again; when, in short, the unity has become a triad with fault-lines in the field; then it is less correct to distinguish essentially between the three moments as different (and possibly competing) kinds of finality or, worse, as alternatives for the true understanding of finality. For the process towards perfection of a being is normally the result of an inherent tendency in it to optimize its nature; it is like an inborn movement towards the fullest realization of its nature; like the development from a seed, the effect of a spermatic power (in the Stoic sense) unfolding itself to its completest manifestation. This is why I spoke of a *drive* towards excellence. Being itself being a sort of perfection as existence, in the Pythagorean and Platonic sense (i.e. as a privileged determination of an underlying indefiniteness), it contains “inwritten” the potent *drive towards the heightening* of its constitutive harmony, i.e. *towards its own excellence*. The nature and seriousness of the fault-line between excellence and well-being consists precisely in the fact that what is the natural development of being *may not lead* to its fulfillment and satisfaction, which εὐδαιμονία on the other hand is the natural *end* of its activity. Efficient and final causalities can thus appear to act divergingly. We might then speak of two irreconcilable *ends* of human life, but this is less accurate. Nature has made the drive towards excellence rather the effective *means* of achieving εὐδαιμονία for a particular being under normal circumstances. (Although she more probably utilizes on the cosmic scale the aiming at well-being in order to allure living, and esp. conscious, things to their perfections, which are partially constitutive of her over-all grand perfection). *A being is internally driven towards its perfection; but it would not aim at perfection apart from the fulfillment and satisfaction of well-being; and for well-being to be realized other additional conditions have to be met relating to the external cosmic structure, as we shall see.* Conversely, a being aims at well-being; but it is not internally driven to well-being if this loses its automatic correlation with excellence; then it would have to become inured by habituation to cultivate a condition (different from its proper excellence) which secures well-being with the highest degree possible of probability, but which runs against its own natural inclination. To signify the automatic, intrinsic, necessary urge and goading of every being towards its own perfection, I have spoken of the *drive towards excellence*: the idea is meant to carry great explanatory significance, and is not a metaphor.

The Stoic idea of spermatic cause synthesizes the Aristotelian material and efficient causal concepts. The completeness of being unfolds itself *out* of its seed-condition, but the spermatic power within the seed also *effects* the development with no need of an external moving potency. The material principle involves internally the efficient cause of the evolution *towards the state of excellence* which is not only *potentially* (according to the Aristotelian acceptance of the term) present in the initial condition, but also *potently* and *efficiently* there, and thus, in a sense, *actually*, although not fully developed. Thus the final end (τέλος) of perfection (τέλος) does not merely attract and pull, but its effective prefiguration moves and pushes, too. A point which is highlighted by the underlying fact that being in itself consists in that very characteristic harmony which is intensified in the corresponding completion and perfection. (The Pythagorean-Platonic construal of reality compared with the Stoic *tension*, τόνος). This complex situation is captured by the idea of a “*drive towards excellence*”.

Of course, although this analysis is occasioned by the necessity to account for the disruption of the initially unified field of beauty, excellence and satisfaction, the insight once clarified is valid also in the case of their unperturbed coimplication.

One other point: there is occasionally “systematic ambiguity” in Plato between *good* and *possession of good*, between e.g. ἡδονή and χαίρειν, σοφία and φρονεῖν, υἰγεία and υἰγιαίνειν etc. Thus we may say, in particular, either that well-being (εὐδαιμονία) consists in the *possession of the good*, or that *it is the good*. This does not pose a serious difficulty. Strictly speaking, one loves a good; one aims at possessing or having it; the desire is of the latter (cf. *Philebus*, 34e-35d).

For Platonic teleology v. also n. 25. For love of beauty v. n. 21.

[20] As has been observed in the previous note, these factors are constant parameters permeating the entire field of ancient Greek experience, thought and spirituality, even though they are more or less expressed in terms of formulations characteristic of particular phases and periods in their development – those actually in which the factors have been raised to maximal intellectual transparency.

[21] Beauty is the proper object of love (ἔρωσ καλοῦ). Its attraction would be thus in this respect a case of final causality. The argument however of n. 19 regarding the distinction between *excellence* and *well-being* in terms of their respective derivative or genuine finality, can be repeated correspondingly for the pair *beauty* and *well-being*. The results thus achieved can then be applied to the serene case where beauty automatically constitutes excellence and secures well-being.

The possibility of a rupture between beauty and excellence rests on the fact that the second, but not directly the first, is result-oriented, as it implies maximal preparedness to act or perform appropriately. (Cf. nn. 14, 19, 27, 48, 49). For something to be in excellent condition involves *fitness* and ability to do its work best. Thus there emerges an analogy between *beauty* and excellence on the one hand, *form* and power to act on the other. Hence I called beauty the formal cause of human life and activity. For beauty is involved in the very fact of existence: being is constituted by the *harmony* of a definite determination (limit, *πέρας*) of a field of indefiniteness (infinity, *ἄπειρον*). Beauty is, so to speak, very near the existential core of being, and therefore most immediately felt; it is like what is the form of a thing to the thing.

[22] Λέγω δὴ τὸ καὶ ὁποιαοῦν τινα κεκτημένον δύναμιν εἴτ' εἰς τὸ ποιεῖν ἕτερον ὁτιοῦν πεφυκὸς εἴτ' εἰς τὸ παθεῖν καὶ σμικρότατον ὑπὸ τοῦ φαυλοτάτου, κἂν εἰ μόνον εἰς ἅπαξ, πᾶν τοῦτο ὄντως εἶναι τίθεμαι γὰρ ὅρον ὀρίζειν τὰ ὄντα ὡς ἔστιν οὐκ ἄλλο τι πλὴν δύναμις. Stoicism elaborated this idea into a fundamental part of its (meta)physical system. Cf. A.L. Pierris, *First Principles and the Beginning of World-Formation in Stoicism* in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Hellenistic Philosophy*, vol. II pp. 149-176, esp. p. 153 sq. and Excursus I: *Matter, Body, Incorporeals and Concepts*, pp. 159 sqq. Also Excursus II: *On Spirit and Tension*, *ibid.* pp. 170-5.

[23] V. esp. 477c-d: δυνάμεως γὰρ ἐγὼ οὔτε τινὰ χροῶν ὀρῶ οὔτε σχῆμα οὔτε τι τῶν τοιούτων, οἷον καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν, πρὸς ἃ ἀποβλέπων ἕνια διορίζομαι παρ' ἐμαυτῶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα εἶναι, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα· δυνάμεως δ' εἰς ἐκεῖνο μόνον βλέπω, ἐφ' ᾧ τε ἔστι καὶ ὁ ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ ταύτην ἐκάστην αὐτῶν δύναμιν ἐκάλεσα, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτῷ τεταγμένην καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀπεργαζομένην τὴν αὐτὴν καλῶ, τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ ἑτέρῳ καὶ ἕτερον ἀπεργαζομένην ἄλλην.

[24] The Pythagorean-Platonic idea of being as definite limitation of a field of indeterminacy.

- [25] On Platonic Teleology v. n. 19. There is *absolute goodness*, common for every being, whose possession or presence renders all other relative goods really good, i.e. *useful and profitable*, v. n. 48. Here lies a Platonic foundation for the distinction between excellence and well-being which I established. Possession of a good commonly so thought, a particular excellence, may be disadvantageous for the possessor; such a good is not good in itself: it can easily turn to be bad, so much in fact worse than its opposite, i.e. than a bad thing commonly so thought, as it is far more potent than this latter, the former being a (partial) excellence. E.g. *Euthedemus*, 281d2 sqq.: κινδυνεύει σύμπαντα ἃ τὸ πρῶτον ἔφαμεν ἀγαθὰ εἶναι, οὐ περὶ τούτου ὁ λόγος αὐτοῖς εἶναι, ὅπως αὐτὰ γε καθ'αὐτὰ πέφυκεν ἀγαθὰ εἶναι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἔουκεν ᾧδ' ἔχει· ἐὰν μὲν αὐτῶν ἡγῆται ἀμαθία, μείζω κακὰ εἶναι τῶν ἐναντίων, ὅσα δυνατώτερα ὑπηρετεῖν τῷ ἡγουμένῳ κακῶ ὄντι, ἐὰν δὲ φρόνησις τε καὶ σοφία, μείζω ἀγαθὰ, αὐτὰ δὲ καθ' αὐτὰ οὐδέτερα αὐτῶν οὐδενὸς ἄξια εἶναι. And similarly in the *Laws*, B, 661b-c, where the point is concluded by the general statement, 661d: τὰ μὲν κακὰ λεγόμενα ἀγαθὰ τοῖς ἀδίκοις εἶναι, τοῖς δὲ δίκαιοις κακὰ, τὰ δ' ἀγαθὰ τοῖς μὲν ἀγαθοῖς ὄντως ἀγαθὰ, τοῖς δὲ κακοῖς κακὰ. In the *Laws* passage from the common goods are excluded δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀρετὴ ἅπασα (on whose possession the goodness of the rest depends), whereas in *Euthydemus*, included is τὸ σῶφρονά τε εἶναι καὶ δίκαιον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον (279b5). This inconsistency regarding the “moral” virtues is only apparent. Ἄπασα ἢ ἀρετὴ in the *Laws* involves phronesis and wisdom, on whose presense the profitability and, hence, the real goodness of the common goods depends according to the *Euthydemus*. Supreme wisdom is the knowledge of absolute Goodness; and it is on the Idea of Good that the moral virtues depend for their goodness, as is definitively stated in *Republic*, ΣΤ, 505a-d, a passage that will be quoted and treated in n. 48.

The true *end* for Plato is therefore absolute Goodness or rather (in systematic ambiguity, cf. at the end of n. 19) its legitimate presence or acquisition. *Excellences are not such ends, and therefore they do not exercise final causality on human life and action.* For if we combine (a) the general point that the object of will is the purpose of action (οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦτο βούλεσθαι ὃ ἂν πράττωσι ἐκάστοτε ἢ ἐκεῖνο οὐ ἔνεκα πράττουσιν τοῦθ' ὃ πράττουσιν; *Gorgias*, 467c sqq.) and therefore the good intended (ἔνεκα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἅπαντα ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν οἱ ποιοῦντες, 468b7), and (b) the Platonic view concerning the unique absolute Goodness; it follows that the real *end* of human action is absolute Goodness (and its proper possession) alone, and not common, relative goods like particular excellences.

- [26] Aristotle's thorough system of natural teleology employed explicitly the distinction between internal and external final causality. V. A.L. Pierris, *Ἄριστος Πολιτείας and Τέλος Πόλεως: Political Constitution, Social Structure and End of Life in Aristotle's Politics* in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Aristotelian Political Philosophy*, vol. I, pp. 127-142, esp. the Appendix, *Immanent and Transcendent Teleology*, pp. 136-142.
- [27] It is hardly possible to overestimate the solid realism of Platonic Idealism and of ancient Greek ideality in general. The *profitability, functionality and efficiency* of virtue-excellence, its *instrumentality to success*, is a capital relevant case. Heather Reid expressed in the discussion conceptual worries about such pragmatic “realism”. Her point gets its full weight in the context of the “morality” (ethical tone or otherwise) of the Platonic moral virtues, and as such it will be treated in n. 48. (Cf. also nn. 14 and 19).

The functionality of excellence is embedded in the ancient Greek experience of the world and of life in it. Virtue entails fitness to perform adequately, capacity to achieve results, ability to do the right thing in the appropriate field of variation. An excellent knife, is a knife that cuts well. When things are in their proper state of normality, the beauty of a knife consists in such a form as enables it to excel in its proper work, i.e. in

cutting. And further, also, cutting is in such a way integrated within the operational field of activities that cutting *well* is significant as an achievement which means that there is necessarily a *reward*, of one sort or another, for the achievement. Here is displayed in the simplest form the archetype of the fundamental moral question: the congruity (or alternatively, maladaptation) between beauty, excellence and well-being.

In the quintessentially Hellenic, Homeric life-experience, as well as in the common feeling, ἀρετή is *both* the virtue or excellence, *and* its reward (V. n. 14). At the beginning of the more sustained and serious treatment of the archquestion of Morality in the *Republic* (the relationship between excellence and well-being) the point is emphasized: Justice (the central moral virtue) belongs to the *best* kind of goodness, the one which is pursued *both* for its own sake in itself *and* because of its consequences (ἐν τῷ καλλίστῳ - sc. εἶδει - ὁ καὶ δι' αὐτὸ καὶ διὰ τὰ γιγνόμενα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαπητέον τῷ μέλλοντι μακαρίῳ ἔσεσθαι, *Republic*, B, 358a1-3; cf. the context in n. 19). The basic question has to be faced with the credentials of virtue being established on its own nature in itself and not in connection with whatever wage or recompense exists for virtue (μισθὸς ἀρετῆς, B, 363d; μισθοὺς καὶ δόξας πάρεξ, B, 367d): this is Glauco's setting of the problem; cf. 362e sqq. (justice is usually recommended not on its own merit, but for the sake of its results and credits, εὐδοκιμήσεις). At the conclusion of the following gigantic enterprise, in Θ, the virtuous life of excellences is proven to be even the most pleasurable in itself (v. n. 18). And then in I, 612b sqq. the overarching argument is closed by an examination of the *rewards of virtue* both in this life and after death: Οὐκοῦν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, τά τε ἄλλα ἀπελυσάμεθα ἐν τῷ λόγῳ, καὶ οὐ τοὺς μισθοὺς οὐδὲ τὰς δόξας δικαιοσύνης ἐπηνέκαμεν,..., ἀλλ' αὐτὸ δικαιοσύνην αὐτῇ ψυχῇ ἄριστον ἠΐρομεν, καὶ ποιητέον εἶναι αὐτῷ τὰ δίκαια... νῦν ἤδη ἀνεπίφθονόν ἐστιν πρὸς ἐκείνοις καὶ τοὺς μισθοὺς τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ ἀρετῇ ἀποδοῦναι, ὅσους τε καὶ οἴους τῇ ψυχῇ παρέχει παρ' ἀνθρώπων τε καὶ θεῶν, ζῶντός τε ἔτι τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἐπειδὴν τελευτήσῃ. And indeed the divine work ends with the Myth of Er.

Genuine religiosity is indeed very pragmatic in the same way: e.g. χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὅτι ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς (Ev. Math., V, 12). Cf. XIX, 29; Ev. Luk. X, 7; 1 Cor. III, 8; 14; 2 John 8; Apocal. XXII, 12).

- [28] It turns out that to prove this is not the most difficult task of Moral Philosophy.
- [29] This is again no mere metaphor. I generalize the *Politicus* methodology and pattern of problem-solving. The methodological pattern depends in turn on the metaphysical structure of reality: optimal determination of variational fields of indeterminacy, or, in another words, harmonious mixture of variant factors (the *Philebus* theory of reality). For an argumentation in favour of *Pythagorean Platonism*, v. A.L. Pierris, *The Metaphysics of Politics in the Politeia, Politikos and Nomoi Dialogue Groups*, enlarged version of a paper presented in the Prague *Symposium Platonicum*, 4-5 April 1997, and going to appear in the *Acts of the Symposium* to be published in autumn 1997. [It has been published].
- [30] V. *Philebus*, 25d-26d. The conjugation of the limiting and the indeterminate factors (those that determine and those that are inherently susceptible of more and less) gives birth to the (relatively) stable "becoming to being", that is, existence in this world: τὸ τούτων ἐκγονοῦν ἅπαν, γένεσιν εἰς οὐσίαν ἐκ τῶν μετὰ τοῦ πέρατος ἀπειρασμένων μέτρων (26d). Thus ἡ τούτων ὀρθὴ κοινωνία τὴν ὑγείας φύσιν ἐγέννησεν (25d7-8); ἐκ τούτων ὦραί τε καὶ ὅσα καλὰ πάντα (26b1)... μεθ' ὑγείας κάλλος καὶ ἰσχύον (b6) etc.
- [31] A point of higher strength than that corresponding to the optimal determination appears to be possible in cases. But on closer scrutiny it can be shown that either that same point really

constitutes the achievable optimum *for the particular case*; or the non-optimal condition of maximal tension is unstable, like all determinations of the variational field save the privileged one. *The optimal resonance is the really stronger one stably and on the whole.*

- [32] What follows is in elaboration of my response to an important issue raised in the discussion by Philip Beeley. It concerns the relationship between the dynamic and the absolute reality of being.

Being is thus intrinsically dynamic. Power inheres constitutionally in being. Drawing on a persistent religious and logicomythical world-experience which sees reality as the offspring from the conjugation of a formative – celestial – male and a fertile – chthonic – female principle archaic Pythagoreanism construed concrete existence as the outcome of a synthesis between limitation (πέρας) and indefiniteness (ἄπειρον). Cf. A.L. Pierris, *The Origin and Nature of Early Pythagorean Cosmogony*, in K. Boudouris (ed.), *Pythagorean Philosophy*, Athens, 1992, pp. 126-162. [Enlarged version in A. L. Pierris, *The Emergence of Reason from the Spirit of Mystery*, Vol. II, *Mystery and Philosophy*, 2007, pp. 171-320]. Classical Pythagoreanism further mathematized the conception; v. A.L. Pierris, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Continuity and Reaction in an Oecumenical Age*, Excursus IA, *Symbolic and Mathematical Pythagoreanism: Early History*, in K. Boudouris (ed.): *Hellenistic Philosophy*, vol. I, Athens, 1993, the Excursus in pp. 145-7. Plato and the Old Academy took over the developed Pythagorean cosmological structure in various transformations.

Equally dynamic, under a different construal, is the Heracleitean existence, as harmonic tension between opposites. In fact, there is systematic “interface” regarding the dynamism of being between Heracleitean and Pythagorean metaphysics. A harmonious (and thus correspondingly stable) synthesis of opposites is the same reality with the optimal determination of that field of variation which is defined by those opposites. The Pythagorean insight consisted in substituting as fundamental polarity in place of the opposition between indefinites (e.g. hot and cold) that between limit and indeterminacy (normative, optimal determination of temperature versus the temperature field of variation). The common polarity of opposites then was re-introduced into the second pole by Plato, as *more and less*, *great and small* or *indefinite Dyad*. Cf. *Philebus*, 24a-25a; Aristotle brings this forth as one of the peculiarities of Plato vis-à-vis the Pythagorean system, e.g. *Metaphysics*, A, 987b22 sqq.; τὸ μέντοι γε ἐν οὐσίᾳ εἶναι, καὶ μὴ ἕτερόν τι ὄν λέγεσθαι ἔν, παραπλησίως τοῖς Πυθαγορείοις ἔλεγε (sc. Plato), καὶ τὸ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς αἰτίους εἶναι τοῖς ἄλλοις τῆς οὐσίας ὡσαύτως ἐκείνοις. τὸ δὲ ἀντι τοῦ ἀπείρου ὡς ἑνὸς δυνάδα ποιῆσαι, τὸ δ’ ἀπειρον ἐκ μεγάλου καὶ μικροῦ, τοῦτ’ ἴδιον.

Dynamism pertains intrinsically to being no less for Aristotle, only again its analysis is conducted differently. Form involves the power to act (move and actualize), matter the capability to undergo action and the definite propensity to be in-formed actually according to the potentiality that it ontologically involves. (Distinct from privation, matter is ὁ πέφυκεν ἐφίεσθαι καὶ ὀρέγεσθαι αὐτοῦ - sc. τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῦ, form and entelechy - κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν. *Physics*, A, 192a18-9; matter aims at, reaches after and yearns for formative actuality).

For the Stoic eminently dynamic conception of being, v. my treatment in the paper referred to in n. 22.

To this common dynamic conception of being there is sharply contrasted the Parmenidean absolute being. For the former, the higher in the scale of independence a being is, the more powerful it is; the more perfect it is, the mightier it is, the more extensive the exercise of its power is. Where there is an absolute, self-subsisting being (the Heracleitean Fire-Logos; the Aristotelian separate, divine Intellect; the Stoic Universal God), it is maximally dynamic. A major problem indeed arises within the Pythagorean-Platonic current: originally, the

dynamism of existence comes characteristically from the second principle of fertile infinity (ἀπειρία), as against the stabilizing, delimiting, ‘crystalizing’, fixing, ordering function of the first principle (πέρας). But this possesses also a variant dynamism, that of the formative power; and in any case, all reality, consisting in the mixture of the two principles, involves necessarily the dynamism of both.

In the Eleatic tradition, on the other hand, the dynamic and the absolute reality of being are contrasted. The same holds good basically for the Atomism as well (Classical and Hellenistic), this peculiar progeny of Eleatism. Further, the contrast was also implicit in the “logical Atomism” of the εἰδῶν φίλοι (248a) against whom Plato elaborately proceeds in the *Sophist*. They are the “idealists” of the spiritual Gigantomachy (246a) that goes on; their substantial forms (cf. 246b-c) are beyond the power to act or be acted upon (δύναμις τοῦ πάσχειν καὶ ποιεῖν, 248c). Plato argues on the contrary that complete and perfect being (τὸ παντελῶς ὄν, 248e) involves *intellection, life, soul, movement*; 248d-249b. Those who construe the forms as *static* realities are in the wrong (249c). The fundamental point is analysed in 251d sqq.: true beings can enter into communion (κοινωνία), or be mixed up (συμμίγνυσθαι), with other true beings (although it is shown that not every real being communes with every other). The essential relationship and communication entails mutual influence and the power to exercise it (δύναμις ἐπικοινωνίας, 251e; 252d); which influence again involves the idea of *movement*. Movement (in this broader acceptance as energy and actuality of power and dynamic effect) is part of the world of perfect being; and so is even non-being (256e). These and similar consequences follow from the interrelationship of true being. The alternative is to postulate a rigid logical *atomism* of uncommunicable entities (like the Parmenidean One-Being multiplied into many one-beings, as Melissus explained), which doctrine cancels the possibility of articulating statements and reasonings (259d-e).

Thus the notion of true being as motionless and immovable, as solemn and sacred but also idle, was disposed of by Plato. Notice particularly the form and force of the denouncement in *Sophist*, 248e6 sqq.: Τί δὲ πρὸς Διός; ὡς ἀληθῶς κίνησιν καὶ ζωὴν καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ φρόνησιν ἢ ῥαδίως πεισθησόμεθα τῷ παντελῶς ὄντι μὴ παρεῖναι, μηδὲ ζῆν αὐτὸ μηδὲ φρονεῖν, ἀλλὰ σεμνὸν καὶ ἄγιον, νοῦν οὐκ ἔχον, ἀκίνητον ἐστὸς εἶναι;

Henceforth in the ancient philosophical tradition the dynamism of real being was again crucial in all positive doctrines – with the virtual exception of Epicureanism. Classical atomic theory was inconsistent or unclear about the origin of movement, as was pointedly criticized by Aristotle (*Metaphysics* A, 985b19; *De Caelo*, Γ, 300b8 sqq.; *Physics*, Θ, 252a32 sqq.; B, 186a24 sqq.). The Democritean whirling (δῖνος) and impact (πληγή) are external to the atomic fullness of being, the former also unaccountable. Some admission to a more, but minimally, dynamic conception of full being may be represented by the weight (*pondus*) of the Epicurean atoms, if interpreted as a potential of energy within themselves; but this is doubtful, as it is also the mysterious *declination* (*clinamen*) from the rectilinear free “falling” of the atoms in the vacuum.

Apart from the atomistic turbulences, a *solid consensus understood power as inherent in beingness*. The intrinsic dynamism of reality was further fundamental for the Neoplatonic ontological derivations and hierarchical structures. In philosophical theology, the divine *Logos* was the *Power* of the first hypostatical principle, through which power the invisible and visible worlds were created.

The ancient opposition between a dynamic and a static concept of being is reflected, as was aptly observed by Philip Beeley in the discussion, in the contrast of Leibniz’ *Monadology* to Gassendi’s *Atomism*.

Beeley correctly pointed out that my concept of dynamic harmony is meant to reconcile the dynamic with the absolute reality of being. He wondered whether such reconciliation should be understood in the sense of the Aristotelian concept of movement, esp. as there would

appear to be a distinction in Plato between excellence and striving for excellence. The goal of the motion, its *terminus motus*, is in that concept considered to lie outside the movement itself, which, on the other hand, constitutes the process of realization of the goal. In this perspective, the end (τέλος) strived for is the absolute reality of being, whereas the process of its attainment exhibits the dynamism of being. This would however effectively destroy the chances of a meaningful synthesis between the absolute and the dynamic. So Beeley.

Now, *first of all*, the *original* experience was that of a thoroughly *dynamic beingness*. An impotent being is nothing. To be is to ontologically affirm an identity, and such power as is required to raise something out of nothing. *Dynamism lies at the existential core of being*. The Pythagorean-Platonic construal articulates precisely this dominant experience: *what constitutes the power and the perfection of being constitutes being itself*.

We do not start from the sense of the division between the absolute and the dynamic, working up towards their mutual integration afterwards. On the contrary, their division is the result of the Parmenidean rule-making, an artificial game if left unchecked (Eristics, Megaric philosophy, other “Socratic” remnants), useful if controlled (Plato).

Secondly, being is thoroughly dynamic in all respects for Aristotle as well. Form is what makes out of (the appropriate) matter a thing of such and such a kind; matter has the capacity and the tendency to be formed accordingly. Existence is either potential or actual: every potentiality yearns for its actualization; every actuality is, and is manifested as, activity. An efficient cause is an actuality; a final cause is an actuality; a formal cause is an actuality; a material cause is a potentiality. Being is *vibrant* in all its aspects. In fact, Aristotle represents an alternative model of being fully permeated with dynamism to that of the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition. Real existence is determined by activity (ἐνέργεια) (Cf. *Metaphysics*, Θ, 1050b2: ὥστε φανερόν ὅτι ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ εἶδος ἐνέργειά ἐστιν); in the case of absolute being, God is *pure activity* (*ibid.*, Λ, 1071b19 sqq.: δεῖ ἄρα εἶναι ἀρχὴν τοιαύτην ἧς ἡ οὐσία ἐνέργεια. ἔτι τοίνυν ταύτας δεῖ τὰς οὐσίας εἶναι ἄνευ ὕλης· ἀϊδίους γὰρ δεῖ, εἴπερ γε καὶ ἄλλο τι ἀϊδιον ἐνέργεια ἄρα).

In an Aristotelian perspective, the key concept synthesizing dynamism and beingness is not that of movement (κίνησις), but eminently its correlative, *activity*, perfect actuality (ἐνέργεια). The difference between ἐνέργεια and κίνησις (in strict, technical senses) is that the end is included within the former, but not in the latter: thus κίνησις is essentially, ἀτελής (e.g. *Metaphysics*, Θ, 1048b29). To be in movement is *not* to have achieved the purpose of the movement: thus, if one is walking, one *has not* already *walked* (= reached his destination). On the contrary, ἐνέργεια is an action which by its very actualization has realized its end: for example, to see means to have already seen; the end is involved in the action itself and does not follow as a result of it, as something effected by it. For this very reason, a movement must of internal necessity stop, once its end is achieved; whereas on its own merit, ἐνέργεια can be eternal, once in existence. Thus in the dense and difficult passage, *Metaphysics*, Θ, 1048b18-36; v. esp. 1048b18-23: ἐπεὶ δὲ τῶν πράξεων ὧν ἔστι πέρας (i.e. a limit, a final point, an end in the sense of finish) οὐδεμία τέλος ἀλλὰ τῶν περὶ τὸ τέλος, οἷον τοῦ ἰσχναίνειν ἢ ἰσχνασία αὐτὸ (i.e. of the process of thinning the end to be achieved is thinness, leanness; ἰσχνασις rather than ἰσχνασία is the process itself, and it should be read in b29 in the latter’s place), αὐτὰ (sc. the parts of the thing in the process of emaciation) δὲ ὅταν ἰσχναίνῃ οὕτως ἐστὶν ἐν κινήσει, μὴ ὑπαρχόντων (the reading needed to make sense) ὧν ἕνεκα ἢ κίνησις (i.e. things in movement do not already possess that for the sake of which the movement is taking place), οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα προᾶξις ἢ οὐ τελεία γε· οὐ γὰρ τέλος· ἀλλ’ ἐκείνη <ἦ> ἐνυπάρχει τὸ τέλος καὶ [ἦ] προᾶξις. (Perfect) action is the one which involves intrinsically its own end. (Then follow the examples). Κίνησις may thus be described as an imperfect activity, ἀτελής ἐνέργεια (*Physics*, Γ, 201b27; *de anima*, B, 417a16; Γ, 431a6; *Metaphysics*, K, 1066a17-22; etc.). While ἐνέργεια is a whole, complete and perfect at

each moment of its duration; cf. in particular the treatment of ἐνέργεια in connection with pleasure in *Nicom. Ethics* X, 1174a13-b14; v. esp. 1174a14-21: δοκεῖ γὰρ ἡ μὲν ὄρασις (an example of ἐνέργεια) καθ' ὄντιν οὖν χρόνον τελεία εἶναι· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐνδεής οὐδενός ὃ εἰς ὕστερον γινόμενον τελειώσει αὐτῆς τὸ εἶδος· τοιοῦτ' ὁμοίως δ' ἔοικε καὶ ἡ ἡδονή. ὅλον γὰρ τι ἐστὶ, καὶ κατ' οὐδένα χρόνον λάβοι τις ἂν ἡδονὴν ἧς, ἐπὶ πλείω χρόνον γινομένης, τελειωθήσεται τὸ εἶδος. διόπερ οὐδὲ κίνησις ἐστὶν. ἐν χρόνῳ γὰρ πᾶσα κίνησις καὶ τέλους τινός, οἷον ἡ οἰκοδομική, καὶ τελεία ὅταν ποιήσῃ οὐ ἐφίεται· ἡ ἐν ἅπαντι δὴ τῶ χρόνῳ ἢ τούτῳ (sc. τελεία ἐστὶ). Ἐνέργεια is perfect in the present, at any moment of its duration: τὸ γὰρ ἐν τῶ νῦν ὅλον τι (1174b9); τῆς ἡδονῆς δ' ἐν ὅτῳ χρόνῳ τέλειον τὸ εἶδος (1174b5-6).

Movement then is *the actuality of the potential qua potential*: τὴν τοῦ δυνάμει ἢ τοιοῦτόν ἐστὶν ἐνέργειαν λέγω κίνησιν (*Metaph.* K, 1065b16; v. the entire passage, 1065b14-1066a34; and, basically, *Physics*, Γ, 1-3). It is not the actuality of the potential when this has been cancelled, because then there exists full actuality; it is the actuality of the potential as such, when it is still preserved as potential, and therefore its full actuality has not yet been achieved, but is in the process of realisation. Κίνησις is such “in between” state, neither of mere potentiality nor of full actuality; *Physics*, Γ, 201b27: τοῦ δὲ δοκεῖν ἀόριστον εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν αἴτιον ὅτι οὔτε εἰς δυνάμει τῶν ὄντων οὔτε εἰς ἐνέργειαν ἔστι θεῖναι αὐτὴν ἀπλῶς· etc.

Ἐνέργεια is for Aristotle the clear manifestation of the dynamism of being: the *dynamic* and *absolute reality* of being coincide there perfectly. Even in movements which are productions, there is complete ἐνέργεια realized – the activity of the art or science which results in the production and the work produced. The house as actuality involved in the actuality of the building-art (i.e. in the actuality of the corresponding knowledge) is the real factor in the efficient causality which constructs the actual house out of the building materials in a process of movement. Thus in any case, every movement presupposes generally the actuality of the efficient cause which effects it: ὅσα φύσει γίνονται ἢ τέχνη, ὑπ' ἐνεργείᾳ ὄντος γίνεται ἐκ τοῦ δυνάμει τοιοῦτου (*De Gener. Anim.* B, 734b21).

The Pythagorean-Platonic model is different. Yet it is as thoroughly *teleological* (v. n. 19). It is moreover more *pragmatic*.

- [33] I said that harmony, as optimal determination, represents an *acute* natural *resonance*. Minimal variation on the one axis around the point of acute resonance results in maximal change on the other axis. This is precisely what happens with the beauty of things and its constitutive factors.
- [34] This identify is of course normally *complex*. But it is never a paratactic list of parameters; it is always a whole with a unifying principle and a specific structural order. So we can speak of *one* determination and *one* harmony, naturally involving many subordinate ones, all standing in definite relationships to each other and to the integrating one. - The integration of a multitude into a complex whole with a particular definite identity is ultimately the work of the Principle of Oneness; this confers unity on the multitude by harmonizing its differing elements and diverging momenta.
- [35] Harmony of opposites as constitutive of the definiteness and power of being is also a Heracleitean insight. V. principally, the above quoted Fr. 27 Markovich = 51DK. Cf. Fr. 32M = 59DK; 33M = 60DK; 34M = 103DK; 35M = 61DK; 39M = 48DK; 40M = 12DK; 41M = 88DK; 42M = 126DK; 43M = 57DK; 44M = 111DK; 45M = 23DK; 46M = 58DK; 47M = 62DK; 48M = 26DK; 49M = 21DK; and very significantly 50M = 15DK.

The superiority of the Pythagorean model resides in that it *defines* the general nature of the opposition, and provides for the possibility of determinate and pragmatic understanding of Heraclitus' *secret harmony*. On the other hand, Heraclitus also reduced all opposition to the kindling and extinguishing of fire according to measure; Fr. 51M = 30DK (cf. 54M = 90DK; 55M = 65DK; 56abM = 84abDK).

- [36] This results from the Pythagorean-Platonic model of the dynamism of being. V. n. 32.
- [37] We may legitimately expand thus the Aristotelian insight that pleasure essentially accompanies the unimpeded activity of a power. V. *Eth. Nicom.* 1153a14-15; b9-12. Cf. in particular b16-19: οὐδεμία γὰρ ἐνέργεια τέλειος ἐμποδιζομένη, ἢ δ' εὐδαιμονία τῶν τελείων· διὸ προσδεῖται ὁ εὐδαίμων τῶν ἐν σώματι ἀγαθῶν καὶ τῶν ἐκτὸς καὶ τῆς τύχης, ὅπως μὴ ἐμποδίζηται ταῦτα.
- [38] This provides the ulterior answer to Christos Evangeliou's question in the discussion, whether optimal self-realization is (politically) correct and desirable. By striving after sharpest determination of their identity, for maximal power, utmost perfection and strongest action of their being, individual entities do not illegitimately hinder or obstruct each other's actually (as against imagined) optimal self-realization, nor do they degrade the corporate level of achievement for the entire system – provided they form a co-ordinated structure of objectively ensured coherence. *This is why a specific metaphysical foundation is needed to sustain the pragmatism of only minimally and naturally regulated self-interest and self-attainment with its accompanying acute competition* (the Hesiodic ἀγαθὴ ἔρις, v. n. 4).
- Such climactic self-realization, if left to itself, establishes spontaneously a *stable equilibrium*, given the metaphysical presupposition. Every individual achieves its own optimal self-realization, while the system attains the highest *possible* degree of collective perfection as well. It is only the disastrous notion that optimal self-realization should be normatively the same for all individuals concerned which can cast doubt on the justice of the natural equilibrium resulting from the multifarious balancing antagonisms of independent self-affirmations. *Justice is Conflict* declared Heraclitus; Fr. 28M = 80DK: εἰδέναι χροὴ τὸν πόλεμον ἐόντα ξυνὸν καὶ δίκην ἔριν καὶ γινόμενα πάντα κατ' ἔριν καὶ χροῶν.
- The naturally ordered system does not safeguard the same, common maximal attainment for all its members, but the maximum that each is capable of; this is the optimum for the whole as well.
- The Platonic metaphysical foundation for antagonistic optimal self-realization (different for each individual, yet corporately maximal) has been analysed in an as yet unpublished paper of mine entitled "*Justice and Goodness in Plato's Republic: Philosophical Essentialism and the Metaphysical Foundations of Political Realism*" (8th International Conference on Greek Philosophy, Athens-Samos, 4-12 July 1996).
- The same metaphysical foundation which grounds the *desirability* of optimal self-realisation, also establishes its *possibility*. Perfection of being is an enhancement of (so to speak, the tonality of) harmony which constitutes the being itself: the optimal determination of appropriate underlying variational fields. This answers to the basic ancient Greek experience: *being exists in beauty*. Being is ontologically entitled to its perfection. And a World in which this requirement would remain even doubtful (let alone negated) is a meaningless phantasm indeed.
- [39] From a *formal* point of view, if Goodness were not the ultimate principle of reality, perfections would be generally noxious to each other and self-detrimental. Just as without fixing the noetic eye of the soul on the supreme principle through fundamental *περιαγωγή*

from the processes of becoming to the world of true being, abilities and capacities can turn to be shrewd engines of mischievous machinations (*Republic Z*, 518e-519a). But behind the formal aspect of things there is their real structure and constitution which explain it. Just as behind the Theory of Forms there is the Platonic Pythagoreanism of, say, *Timaeus* and the *Unwritten Doctrines*. (Cf. for a sustained argument in support of this unificatory view of Platonic Philosophy my study referred to in n. 29). So we need the real “mechanism” at work behind the formal description, the *reality of ideality*. And this is provided in the present connection by the insight that Goodness consists in *oneness*.

- [40] And if we apply Dialectics to Mathematics in the way indicated methodologically in the *Republic*, *Politicus*, *Philebus*, *Laws* and carried on doctrinally in the *Περὶ τὰ γὰθοῦ* and the *Unwritten Doctrines* (v. my study mentioned in n. 29), Dialectics is set over all special sciences (those culminating in the various branches of Mathematics) and over the Sophistical, segregated acceptance of sciences and (political) wisdom of life.
- [41] Aristotle objected strongly to the Old Academic mathematical Pythagoreanism. He averted the threatened breach between being and well-being by invoking instead moment (d) of the Greek experience, and effecting a different teleologization of the World, as thorough as its teleological mathematization by Plato.
- [42] There is much talk of morality being the foundation of the ancient theory (and practice) of education and politics. This is no doubt *formally* correct: moral issues and concepts play a crucial role in the formulation, discussion, appreciation and resolution of educational and political, even economical (Aristotle), problems. *But values in ancient thought are normally ontological eminences. Evaluative statements are factual statements about the essential structure and order of reality.* The *Republic* presents a breathtaking example of precisely grounding Ethics, Education and Politics on Metaphysics (or, should this *term* exhale objectionable connotations, on general Theory of Reality).

The structural correlation between these disciplines can be put quite simply. *There is a common object of Moral, Educational and Political Theory: namely, the perfection and well-being of human nature.* Despite what is usually maintained regarding the supposed “socialism” of Ancient Political thought, the precedence of society as a whole upon the particular human being is *instrumental* and not *final*: societal correct order and corporate well-being provide the best environment for individual perfection and achievement. But the excellence and fulfillment of human nature can only be realized if individuals excel and are thoroughly satisfied. *There is stark individualism underlying the apparent but formal preoccupation with social integration.* (Thus in the *Republic* one uses the macrocosm of society in order to better discern what is happening within the microcosm of the human soul with regard to passions and virtues (πάθη and ἀρεταί); but virtues primarily pertain to the individual, and it is from there that they can mark the character of the whole society and its political structure; v. *Republic*, Δ, 435e).

The common object of the Human Sciences, and its fundamentally individualistic interpretation, explain also the *moral accent* in educational and political analyses. For moral virtues are just the pervading, universal excellences of human nature in its objective articulation (theory of the parts of soul etc.). For this grand ancient idea, and its concomitant intellectualism, in a modern dress, cf. e.g. the Leibnizean dictum: “*moral perfection is physical perfection in minds themselves*” (*On the Ultimate Origination of Things*, Engl. Tr. in *The Monadology and other Philosophical Writings* by R. Latta, p. 345).

[43] Moral virtues are defined in relation to the parts of faculties of the soul, their respective excellences and optimized functioning (*Republic*, Δ, 434d-444a). Similarly, the (ultimately derivative) application of moral virtues to the city at large is also conducted with reference to the essential, constitutive, functional parts of society, their best condition and perfect working (*ibid.*, Δ, 427e-434c). The completely ontological foundation of ethical character is emphatically asserted when virtue is described as the health, beauty and fitness of soul, 444d13-e2: ἀρετὴ μὲν ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὑγίειά τε τις ἂν εἴη καὶ κάλλος καὶ εὐεξία ψυχῆς, κακία δὲ νόσος τε καὶ αἴσχος καὶ ἀσθένεια.

[44] Political wisdom (it is called σοφία, *passim*, but also φρόνησις, *Republic*, Δ, 433b8; d1) is knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) having as object the best constitution and functioning of the State internally and in its external relationships to other States; 428c11 sqq.: ἔστι τις ἐπιστήμη in the state ἢ οὐχ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει τινὸς βουλευέται, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ὅλης, ὄντινα τρόπον αὐτὴ τε πρὸς αὐτὴν καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ἄριστα ὀμιλοῖ. (In fact such knowledge is preeminently to be called wisdom, 429a1-3). It belongs to the small, alone legitimate, rightfully governing body – defined precisely by its possession of this wisdom.

Correspondingly, (moral) wisdom belongs to the strictly rational part of the soul (τὸ λογιστικόν), the naturally ruling faculty, and consists in the knowledge of what is beneficial to itself, as well as to the other parts and the entire soul (442c5-8).

Moral (and political) wisdom is the practical aspect or application of that holistic wisdom which is the proper excellence of the thinking (reasoning and calculating) faculty or part of the soul, and is eminently functional: it consists in the knowledge of what is best, i.e. advantageous (τὸ συμφέρον), to it, and to the whole to which it belongs, under any given circumstances (442c5-8).

The underlying, non-technical, general sense of σοφία was *consummate skill*, and this either in handicraft and art or in matters of life esp. societal and political. The word is a *hapax legomenon* in Homer; it occurs in O, 412 in connection with the exquisite expertness in carpentry of a craftsman divinely guided and whose hands know his craft:

O 411 τέκτονος ἐν παλάμῃσι δαήμονος, ὃς ρά τε πάσης
εὖ εἰδῆ σοφίης ὑποθημοσύνησιν Ἀθήνης, etc.

(The ancient Scholia *ad loc.* notice the singularity of the occurrence; some held the fact so important as to consider the nonexistence of the word in the *Odyssey* as an argument in favour of its different authorship; v. 412b¹, *Scholia graeca in Homeri Iliadem (Scholia Vetera)*, H. Erbse, vol. IV, p. 97). Σοφία is matched with τέχνη in *Hymn. Hom. in Merc.* 483 and 511. Later the employment of the word in this signification is characteristic (examples in L. and S. *sub. voc.*). In the great Protagorean myth (Plato, *Protagoras*, 321d1), all expertise in artisanship is called ἐντεχνος σοφία σὺν πυρὶ Ἡφαίστου καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς (a saving gift to man from Prometheus), and is contrasted as ἡ περὶ τὸν βίον (concerning the material needs and interests of life) σοφία to the πολιτικὴ σοφία. (Cf. *ibid.* 319a-d). This former sense of σοφία is well epitomized by Aristotle *Eth. Nicom.*, VI, 1141a11: οὐθὲν ἄλλο σημαίνοντες τὴν σοφίαν ἢ ὅτι ἀρετὴ τέχνης ἐστίν. It is an excellence in a given art.

Similarly, accomplished skill in matters of common life, sound judgement and intelligent choice in practical concerns, constitute (moral and political) wisdom, like prudence - φρόνησις. This life-wisdom (in individual or collective regard) seems to have been the natural meaning of σοφία taken absolutely, without reference (explicit or implicit) to any particular skill or artistry. So Plutarch, *Themistocles*, 2, 6 (112d): τὴν τότε (in Themistocles' times) καλουμένην σοφίαν οὖσαν δὲ δεινότητα πολιτικὴν καὶ δραστήριον σύνεσιν, political shrewdness and active, efficacious sagacity. Plutarch significantly refers this practical wisdom back to Solo, the wordly-wise legislator. (Cf. Herodotus I, 29-30 for the Solonian wisdom. Dicaearchus considers the group of early wise-men (οἱ ἑπτὰ σοφοί) as

eminent in sound practical understanding and political architecture or statesmanship (“legislation”). But he would not call them wise or philosophic. *Diogenes Laertius*, I, 40 (= Dicaearchus, Wehrli fr. 30): ὁ δὲ Δικαίαρχος οὔτε σοφούς οὔτε φιλοσόφους φησὶν αὐτοὺς γεγονέναι, συνετοὺς δὲ τινὰς καὶ νομοθετικούς. The descriptive words may well be the source of the Plutarchean formulation. The wisdom abnegated by Dicaearchus from the Wise Men of old is meant, of course, in the classical, philosophical sense). Herodotus reports as a general view that the Athenians are collectively as citizens first among the Greeks in wisdom, in that life-prudence of intelligent dexterity in practical matters (I, 60, 3). This sense of wisdom involves naturally a negative hue as well, that of dexterous machination in achieving a desired result, of cunning and craft (cf. e.g. Herodotus VII, 23; I, 68; al.).

Equally objective and a-moral (in the modern sense) is the primary signification of φρονεῖν, φρόνησις. In fact, the meaning-field of this word is articulated analogously to that of σοφία, σοφός. From a more general sense of understanding, comprehending, grasping, the expression is particularly appropriated to signify such intelligence in practical matters and affairs of life. *To understand correctly the real nature of any situation in all its dimensions secures of itself the right attitude and the correct response to it.* Thus such discerning excellence is the greatest virtue, Heracleitus 22B112 DK: τὸ φρονεῖν (with Diels, against Kranz, Marcovich et al.) ἀρετὴ μέγιστη, καὶ σοφίη ἀληθέα λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν κατὰ φύσιν ἐπαῖοντας. It is the highest possession of man, Sophocles *Antigone*, 683: πάτερ, θεοὶ φύουσιν ἀνθρώποις φρένας, / πάντων ὅσ’ ἐστὶ κτημάτων ὑπέρτατον. Cf. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 927; Isocrates, *Ad Demonium*, (I), §40. It occupies naturally the first place in the ordering of the four general virtues effected in *Laws*, A, 631c; in fact here the three other virtues, *as goods*, involve phronesis. And so Epicurus, *Ep. Ad Menoecium*, 132: τούτων δὲ πάντων ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν φρόνησις. διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφίας τιμιώτερον ὑπάρχει φρόνησις, ἐξ’ ἧς αἱ λοιπαὶ πᾶσαι πεφύκασιν ἀρεταί etc. The idea is methodically applied by Plutarch, in such a way that virtue other than phronesis is just phronesis in a specified field of situations and corresponding responses (passions and actions): *De Fortuna*, 2, 97E: ...μᾶλλον δὲ τὴν εὐβουλίαν γέ τοι καὶ φρόνησιν ἐν μὲν ἡδοναῖς ἀγαθοὺς παρεχομένην ἐγκράτειαν καὶ σωφροσύνην καλοῦμεν, ἐν δὲ κινδύνοις καὶ πόνοις καρτερίαν καὶ ἀνδραγαθίαν, ἐν δὲ κοινωνήμασι καὶ πολιτείαις εὐνομίαν καὶ δικαιοσύνην. Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, 209a, where wisdom in the ordering of affairs of state is said *to be called* σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη: τῆς φρονήσεως ἢ περὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων τε καὶ οἰκίσεων διακόσμησις, ἣ δὴ ὄνομά ἐστι σωφροσύνη τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη.

It was part of the common ancient Greek experience of life that the excellence of the thinking part of the human soul is the key to the right life. And naturally so, since the twin summit of divine perfection for man consists in corporeal and mental excellence. Cf. A.Λ. Πιερρῆς, *Περὶ Τέλους*, 1996, pp. 28-32. For a Platonic instance of the idea, cf. *Republic*, E, 461a, ἀκμὴ σώματος καὶ φρονήσεως.

It was equally constitutive of the common world-view that excellence IS functional. Virtues are profitable. (Here the point raised by Heather Reid in the discussion may yet again be approached from a complementary angle; cf. n. 14; cf. also nn. 19, 27 and 48). *Tὸ συμφέρον* is contained in the definition of moral wisdom in the above referred to passage, *Republic*, 442c5-8; given the essential usefulness and advantageousness of goodness, the same point is involved in the definition of political wisdom, *ibid.* 428c11 sqq. (ὄντινα τρόπον... ἄριστα ὁμιλοῖ). It was a Socratic tenet that to exercise phronesis entails teaching τὰ συμφέροντα; Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I, 20, 10: ἐγὼ δ’ οἶμαι τοὺς φρόνησιν ἀσκοῦντας καὶ νομίζοντας ἰκανοὺς εἶναι τὰ συμφέροντα διδάσκειν τοὺς πολίτας etc. Lack of (practical) wisdom is bad, i.e. it *harms*. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1050-1: ὄσω κράτιστον κτημάτων εὐβουλία. / ὄσωπερ, οἶμαι, μὴ φρονεῖν πλείστη βλάβη. And v. the gnomic *finale*, 1353: πολλῶ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας πρῶτον ὑπάρχει. Wisdom is crucial for well-being.

The pragmatic nature of ancient Greek aretology is conspicuous in poetic texts. Pindar, *Nemea*, III, 70-5, speaks of three virtues corresponding to the three age-periods: youth – manhood – old age; but there are four excellences for our life-span, and the root of them (and fourth) is wisdom in apprehending what lies in front, at present and in immediate presence:

ἐν δὲ πείρα τέλος
 διαφαίνεται ὧν τις ἐξοχώτερος γένηται,
 ἐν παισὶ νέοισι παῖς, ἐν ἀνδράσιν ἀνήρ, τρίτον
 ἐν παλαιότεροισι, μέρος ἕκαστον οἶον ἔχομεν
 βρότεον ἔθνος· ἐλᾶ δὲ καὶ τέσσαρας ἀρετὰς
 <ὁ> θνατὸς αἰῶν, φρονεῖν δ' ἐνέπει τὸ παρκεείμενον.

It may be that the three virtues of the three ages are temperance – manly valour – justice, to which prudence is added, not particularly characteristic of, or confined to, any given age; this seems to have been Aristarchus' interpretation (v. *Scholia Vetera in Pindari Carmina*, 129a, vol. III, p. 60.7 sqq. Drachmann). Cf. Christ *ad loc.*, who makes the correspondence; Bury, *The Nemean Odes of Pindar*, p. 42; Bowra, *Pindar*, pp. 179-181. In any case, as Boura following Woodbury well observes, the four classical moral virtues appear in *Isthmia*, 8, 23-25a (Snell) in relation to the excellences of Aeacus and his offspring; he δαυμόνεσσι δίκας ἐπέριαινε (which is δικαιοσύνη), while his sons ἀρίστευον... ἀνορέα (i.e. ἀνδρεία), and σώφρονες τ' ἐγένοντο πινυτοὶ τε θυμόν (σωφροσύνη and σοφία). However this may be, φρονεῖν τὸ παρκεείμενον is revealing. Intellectual wisdom is tested and proven by its penetrating apprehension and sound judgement regarding the particular, present situation. The right attitude, disposition and response are then evident.

The same pragmatic spirit is also manifested in Theognis. Σοφία is coupled with ἀρετή in 790 as the supreme object of human care. But the properly adapted, prudent response to a particular situation, guided by an accurate understanding of its specific character, is mightier than the (other) virtues; 1071-4:

Κύρνε, φίλους πρὸς πάντας ἐπίστρεφε ποικίλον ἦθος
 συμμίσγων ὀργὴν οἶος ἕκαστος ἔφυ.
 νῦν μὲν τῶιδ' ἐφέπου, τοτὲ δ' ἄλλοῖος πέλευ ὀργήν·
 κρεῖσσόν τοι σοφίη καὶ μεγάλης ἀρετῆς.

(We are close to an aristocratic, divine *occasionalism* – which the uninitiated will condemn as opportunism. Cf. St. Paul 1 *Cor.* 9.19-22).

The point is emphasized by Aeschylus, Fr. 390: ὁ χρήσιμ' εἰδῶς, οὐχ ὁ πόλλ' εἰδῶς σοφός.

- [45] (Political) Valour is a sort of salvation (*Republic*, Δ, 429c5: σωτηρίαν ἔγωγ', εἶπον, λέγω τινὰ εἶναι τὴν ἀνδρείαν); namely salvation of the *right belief* (ὀρθὴ δόξα), concerning things terrible (δεινῶν), in all circumstances and vicissitudes when the individual is found and tested among pains and pleasures and desires and fears (429c7-d2). And so generally (430b2-4): τὴν δὴ τοιαύτην δύναμιν καὶ σωτηρίαν διὰ παντὸς δόξης ὀρθῆς τε καὶ νομίμου δεινῶν τε πέρι καὶ μὴ ἀνδρείαν ἔγωγε καλῶ καὶ τίθεμαι.

Correspondingly for the valour in each individual, it is the power of keeping unswervingly to, i.e. saving, whatever course fearful or not the reason judges and commands in the midst of any pains and pleasures. It represents the perfect state of the natural function of the θυμοειδὲς (the spirited faculty in the soul).

Valour is therefore the proper excellence of the relevant class in society or of the relevant part of soul. When the class or the part is in such condition, *they are fit to perform their proper work*. This involves right apprehension and right attitude regarding things fearful; and the fitness also consists in the power to persevere in that judgement and response whatever the rest of the society or the rest of the soul feels. This *justified* (reasonable) *obstinacy* and

unyieldiness is for the best of the entire state and the entire soul as well as for the benefit of the principal parts of them: they are *saved* through it. Such is the required furtherance of the analysis, as intimated by Plato (430c4-6).

The saving function of valour as manly spiritedness is thoroughly Homeric. Questions of *honour* relate exactly to the touchiness and unyieldiness of such spiritedness and to the acute awareness of merit involved in carrying out the plans of wisdom in the midst of the adversion which they generate.

- [46] The philosophically adequate definition of σωφροσύνη vis-à-vis δικαιοσύνη in Plato is notoriously a thorny subject. Cf. e.g. Adam's notes in *Republic* 430d sqq. and 433b9. The crux of the matter consists in that, as soon as we ascend from the popular views on temperance and justice to a more precise understanding of their essential character, the two appear to coalesce. For they both seem to ultimately signify the natural *harmony* of the parts in a given whole, whereby these parts function in accordance to their own respective natures and, *in so doing*, uphold the existence and excellence of the whole. Such a harmony renders the self-interested (so to speak) operation of the several parts into an orderly collaboration sustaining and promoting the being, power and activity of the whole. In such harmony and order reside both temperance (cf. *Republic*, Δ, 430e6 sqq.; 431e8; 432a) and justice (cf. *ibid.* A, 351d5 sqq.; justice is like a blending of the other three virtues, *Laws*, A, 631c7-8; v. esp. *Republic*, Δ, 443d-e). No great wonder that the definition of justice in the *Republic*, Δ, as οἰκειοπραγία (doing one's own, or minding one's one business) is (as Heather Reid was quick to observe in the discussion) applied to temperance in *Charmides*, 161b sqq. (where there follows a Socratic-critical examination of the thesis). The view is ascribed proximately to Critias, who, in defence of it, interprets its real meaning as identifying temperance with *self-knowledge* (γινώσκειν ἑαυτόν) in accordance with the old gnomic statement of the wise men and the Delphic injunction γνῶθι σαυτόν (164d-165b). The interpretation is adhered to in *Timaeus*, 72a: ἀλλ' εὖ καὶ πάλαι λέγεται τὸ πράττειν καὶ γνῶναι τὰ τε αὐτοῦ καὶ ἑαυτὸν σώφρονι μόνῳ προσήκειν. It is an idea of old (πάλαι), cultivated in sophisticated (Κριτίου ἢ ἄλλου του τῶν σοφῶν, *Charmides*, 161b8) and philosophical circles. Adam's suggestion to resolve this conundrum is plausible, that in *Republic* 433a9 we should read σωφροσύνη in place of δικαιοσύνη: the view that δικαιοσύνη is οἰκειοπραγία is novel, and will be argued in the sequel, whereas the one associating self-functioning with σωφροσύνη is old and has been actually examined by Plato before: καὶ μὴν ὅτι γε τὸ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν καὶ μὴ πολυπραγμονεῖν σωφροσύνη ἐστὶ, καὶ τοῦτο ἄλλως τε πολλῶν ἀκηκόαμεν καὶ αὐτοὶ πολλάκις εἰρήκαμεν. Then follows the reasoning in favour of justice consisting in such οἰκειοπραγία. On the other hand the essential connection of justice with οἰκειοπραγία is present in *Alcibiades A*, 127c5-6.

The harmonious order in a whole which makes every part exercising so much authority as its being, power, function and merit deserve and as its contribution to the well-being of the whole entitles it to, is the foundation of σωφροσύνη. Σωφροσύνη is such a *concord* distributing authority according to the substantial roles. *Republic*, Δ, 432a6 sqq.: ὥστε ὀρθότατ' ἂν φαίμεν ταύτην τὴν ὁμόνοιαν σωφροσύνην εἶναι, χείρονός τε καὶ ἀμείνονος κατὰ φύσιν συμφωνίαν ὁπότερον δεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἐν πόλει καὶ ἐν ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ. And, 442c10 sqq.: σώφρονα οὐ τῆ φιλίας καὶ συμφωνίας τῆ αὐτῶν τούτων (sc. of the parts of the soul), ὅταν τὸ τε ἄρχον καὶ τῷ ἀρχομένῳ τὸ λογιστικὸν ὁμοδοξῶσι δεῖν ἄρχειν καὶ μὴ στασιάζωσιν αὐτῶ;

The active cause of such concord and congruence is οἰκειοπραγία. When each part of a whole performs the function for which it is by nature adapted to, there is harmonious order in the whole; the thinking part will understand things and direct actions; the spirited part will subserve sound judgement and thoughtful command. In other words, if there is justice,

there will be temperance and phronesis and valour. Justice is that which enables the other virtues to take hold of their proper subjects and work their proper effects, in the state as in the soul (433b-d). V. esp. 433b9-c1: τοῦτο εἶναι (sc. the remaining fourth virtue, justice), ὁ πᾶσιν ἐκείνοις (the three other virtues) τὴν δύναμιν παρέσχευεν ὥστε ἐγγενέσθαι, καὶ ἐγγενομένοις γε σωτηρίαν παρέχειν, ἕωσπερ ἂν ἐνῆ. And, clearly, 453b4-7: πόλις γε ἔδοξεν εἶναι δικάια ὅτε ἐν αὐτῇ τριτὰ γένη φύσεων (the three fundamental classes) ἐνόντα τὸ αὐτῶν ἕκαστον ἔπραττεν, σώφρων δὲ αὖ καὶ ἀνδρεία καὶ σοφὴ διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων γενῶν ἄλλ' ἅττα πάθη καὶ ἕξεις. So σώφρων is the state when all classes mutually agree on their respective roles in the power-structure; ἀνδρεία when the military class upholds the ruling of the rulers; σοφὴ if the rulers possess real knowledge of things and situations. How this crucial role of justice in establishing the harmony of parts (σωφροσύνη) and their respective perfect functioning (φρόνησις, ἀνδρεία) can be envisaged, is described in 443c9-444a2. *The unity of the virtues has been vindicated in a legitimate way, as necessary co-existence and co-implication.*

The theory in the Δ of the *Republic* explains the difficulty (and provides its resolution) in extricating the closely related philosophical concepts of temperance and justice one from the other (Strabo, VII, 3, 4, observed this philosophical near coincidence of the two, but for a particular and derivative reason). Their close interrelationship is explicated in 442c10-444a2. Justice consists in every part of the human whole doing properly its own according to its nature, in connection with ruling and being ruled (443b1-2); the analogy to the health of the body makes this evident (444c5-d11). Temperance expresses the state of harmonious friendship and orderly agreement which obtains when that mutual οἰκαιοπραγία is established (442c10-11). Cf. 443c9-444a2: making the parts do their own proper and natural work, *ipso facto* establishes their harmony, their fitting together and adaptation, which is precisely their temperance (tempered blending).

The old wise dictum, sanctioned by the authority of the Delphic Oracle, the *Γνωθι σαυτόν*, was thought to convey essentially the perennial maxim: *know your position in the World-order and act in accordance with it. To know one's own place in the general scheme of things as well as in the conjuncture present at any moment of life, and therefore to act consonantly to the pattern of relationships really holding in any given situation, provided for the archaic mind the unified foundation of virtue in man and of the goodness of his action.* No officious deontological imperative, whether empirical, divine or transcendental, as normative regulation of will, plays any role in this naturalistic and essentialistic ethics.

- [47] The discussion on justice in *Republic*, Δ, opens with an explicit invocation of the general *Principle of the Division of Function and Work* (433a; v. *in extenso* n. 5). The validity of this ontological principle provides the foundation of the moral virtue. *What is a fact of reality is also an ethical value.* Justice is somehow τὸ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν (433b4). More elaborately in 433e12-434a1: ἡ τοῦ οἰκείου τε καὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἕξις τε καὶ προᾶξις δικαιοσύνη ἂν ὁμολογοῖτο. This holds good in all applications. Specifically, with reference to the three basic social classes, 434c; 441d8-10. With reference to professional classes, 443c4-7. (In fact this οἰκαιοπραγία in the *division of labour* is a derivative result from the basic οἰκαιοπραγία in relation to appropriateness in ruling and being ruled, 443b-c). With reference to the parts of human soul, 441d12-e2; 443b; 443c9 sqq. Conversely the πολυπραγμοσύνη and ἀλλοτριπραγμοσύνη (the meddling in several types of activity and the involvement in another's business) of the parts of the soul constitute all four main vices and badness in general (444b). similarly in unnatural meddling between different classes, professional and political, the result is disaster (434a3-c2).

The crux of the matter is that, for Plato, by doing one's own, in self-interested perfection and achievement, each part of a whole helps best the whole achieve the highest level of perfection, and

therefore helps best the other parts as well. I have expounded the thesis in the paper of mine mentioned in n. 38. Cf. also n. 49.

It may appear that such rigid, monovocational professionalism underestimates the significance and usefulness of flexibility in one's attachment to his occupation. In fact, high adaptivity to the market differential demand for different kinds of work seems to be considered a very strong asset on the supply side of labour, services and products. Individuals should be prepared, ready and able to change careers in case of failure or dissatisfaction; and corporate entities ought to reorientate their conceptions, tasks and plans according to market requirements and open-field profit maximization. The factors of economy are asked to be volatile.

The contrast is only apparent. Platonic unioccupationism is based on the factual principle that any entity is by nature best suited to perform *not successfully* one *singular task* (Cf. n. 5 *supra*). *What* the task is in any given case and *how* the existing natural suitability is discovered, tested and confirmed, is a different matter. For Plato this would be settled relatively quickly under a demanding and varied educational unsystematic "system" of apprenticeship and learning, with full emphasis on individual choice; or at most under the severe pressure of an almost totally unregulated antagonistic practice in the very early phases of whatever career. In both cases, achievement and success would *normally* be the decisive criterion – as is the case at present. The diachronic experience is that one needs all the power and energy he can command to really be perfected and excel in any work (esp. significant work, but even basic labour falls under this description, although such devotion in this case is not economically significant). After all no one wants to exchange a *success story* for a *novel experiment*, unless (a) one is effectively challenged in his primacy and cannot uphold it; or (b) wants to prove a point: that his qualifications and accomplishments raise him above the particular performance and his proven success in it. Vocational change implies either (relative) failure or excessive success; to be forced in, or consider and embark on such, a course one is either underqualified and underperforming or overqualified and overperforming.

Such conditions and that change used to be rare. The determination regarding the proper adaptation of any individual to an occupation was taking place pretty early in his life, and it was mostly correct.

The principle of occupational volatility signals the increasing frequency of such phenomena of vocational change. This means two things: 1) The growing multiplicity of required tasks and the heightening intricacy of the work-structure renders impracticable the one-to-one correspondence between appropriate training and specific employment. More and more, the particular training for the job and the checking as to the ability of the trainee to absorb it efficiently, must be done while he is *in actual work* (and indeed sufficiently progressed in it). Hence the possibility of change must be left wide open. And 2) less than optimal performance is not sufficient any more, and has to be discarded, in a society geared to excellency and supremacy; the limits of variation around the acute resonance in perfection and success, are contracting; simultaneously, the variety and complexity of the work-pattern required, makes feasible the idea of allocating the human resources so that most will perform optimally (i.e. within the narrow band) in their respective, appropriate jobs, - thereby maximizing the total effect. *This optimal distribution-pattern of men versus tasks requires for its realization rapidity of re-allocations.*

All this is thoroughly Platonic. Plato explicitly endorsed the principle of maximal total effect (cf. in the main text, *supra*). The principle of flexibility and volatility, on the other hand, *presupposes* the principle of one-to-one correspondence between entities and optimal individual performances. The idea of *optimal allocation of tasks to people* (securing thus maximal total effect) is close to his heart. In fact, the notion of overqualification (in the sense

defined above), is a direct Platonic progeny: there exists higher-order competence which enables man to overperform in various lower-order pursuits. Ultimately such competence is based on Philosophy – as (general) Theory of Reality, and not, in particular, as (analytical) conceptualism, existentialism or (Marxian) dialecticism. There is, on the other hand, unclarity in the contemporary context as to what constitutes the foundation of a “*general skillfulness*”, i.e. of an adroitness in handling skillfully various differing, even divergent, specific kinds of task. In significant particular, one leaves the question of leadership (and of the corresponding expertness) in virtually a theoretical vacuum, with only little more than a purely experiential status (rules of thumb etc.). But this renders e.g. statesmanship even less of an art than Art, merely tantamount to a mere knack. *For Plato, on the contrary, leadership is a science, in fact the supreme science of Philosophy.* (Such Philosophy is a very definite type, apt to represent adequately the structure of reality. Since this latter is Pythagorean, the former is (Platonic) *Dialectics of Mathematics*). *There is thus a science of general competences, as well as an education for them.* They rest on teachable knowledge.

- [48] Plato goes to the extent of assimilating them to bodily excellences cultivated by habit and exercise (cf. *Phaedo*, 82a10-b3). The *locus classicus* in the *de-moralisation of virtues*, and their concomitant *intellectualization*, is *Republic*, Z, 518d9 sqq.: αἱ μὲν τοίνυν ἄλλαι ἀρεταὶ καλούμεναι ψυχῆς κινδυνεύουσιν ἐγγύς τι εἶναι τῶν τοῦ σώματος – τῶ ὄντι γὰρ οὐκ ἐνοῦσαι πρότερον ὕστερον ἐμποιεῖσθαι ἔθεσι καὶ ἀσκήσεσιν -. ἡ δὲ τοῦ φρονῆσαι παντὸς μᾶλλον θειοτέρου τινὸς τυγχάνει, ὡς ἔουκεν, οὔσα, ὃ τὴν μὲν δύναμιν οὐδέποτε ἀπόλλυσιν, ὑπὸ δὲ τῆς περιαγωγῆς χρησιμὸν τε καὶ ὠφέλιμον καὶ ἄχρηστον αὖ καὶ βλαβερὸν γίγνεται. ἢ οὐπω ἐννεόηκας τῶν λεγομένων πονηρῶν μὲν, σοφῶν δέ, ὡς δορυμὸν μὲν βλέπει τὸ ψυχάριον καὶ ὀξέως διορᾷ ταῦτα ἐφ’ ἃ τέτραπται, ὡς οὐ φαύλην ἔχον τὴν ὄψιν, κακία δ’ ἠναγκασμένον ὑπηρετεῖν, ὥστε ὅσῳ ἂν ὀξύτερον βλέπῃ, τοσοῦτω πλείω κακὰ ἐργαζόμενον;

The moral (or political, cf. *Phaedo loc.cit.*) virtues fall under the formal description of virtue in *Meno*, 72a: καθ’ ἐκάστην γὰρ τῶν πράξεων καὶ τῶν ἡλικιῶν πρὸς ἕκαστον ἔργον ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἡ ἀρετὴ ἐστίν. It needs to be added that there is a consummate skill or excellence which constitutes an ἀρετὴ in a given field of action and work. Heather Reid appropriately questioned in the discussion, whether by the side of expertises in particular technai there does not exist for Plato a kind of arete (moral virtue) that everyone should strive for.

Such view on the universality of moral virtue is indeed ascribed by Plato to *Protagoras* in the dialogue under his name. The ἐντεχνος σοφία is there distinguished and contrasted to the πολιτικὴ, περὶ βίου (321d sqq.). Zeus ordained that practical wisdom be allotted to all men, and this is the rationale for the Athenian democratical practice: moral ἀρετὴ pertains to all, and so all may participate in discussions involving political issues, whereas only the specialists are heard in technical problems requiring specialized knowledge (322c-323c).

This however is the Sophistical position on liberal or political arts and knowledge on the one hand, and special sciences and artisanship to the other – *and definitively not the Platonic*. The universality of moral virtue is severely qualified in Plato, for two main reasons, so that there is little more than a trivial tautology that remains in it.

First, real eminence in handling e.g. dangerous situations belongs to the professional military; or to those whose spirited part of the soul (θυμός) has the power to ensure the inflexible following of the dictates of reason. All spiritedness has the tendency to withstand the onslaught on what is thought to be inviolable (e.g. honour); but this does not mean that *every spiritedness is valour*.

Second, true moral excellence presupposes not merely the ordinary excellence of the λογιστικόν, but the turning around (περιαγωγή), the fundamental *conversion* of the mind

from the world of becoming to the world of true being *and* its ultimate principle (Idea of Goodness, the μέγιστον μάθημα, 505a2). In fact complete virtue presupposes possession of the supreme science of Dialectical Mathematics. To establish this is the object of the required μακροτέρα περίοδος in the accurate analysis of virtues (*Republic*, ΣΤ, 504a sqq.). The ἀκριβεστέρα παιδεία (*Laws*, ΙΒ, 965b1) indispensable in the possession of virtue (965d5-e2), is the knowledge reserved for the members of the Nocturnal Council, which is densely indicated in 967d3-968a4. (Cf. my analysis in the paper referred to in n. 29).

The universality of ἀρετή is thoroughly un-Platonic. In the very same dialogue where the Sophistical position is developed (Protagoras' myth and λόγος), Socrates replies denying it, through an elaborate interpretation of a Simonidean poem (Simonides 37 = 542 Page = 5 Bergk = 4 Diehl). The upshot of the long analysis (the final, decisive, part in *Protagoras*, 342a-347a) is that, according to Simonides, for a man to *become* good is difficult (ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἀλαθέως γενέσθαι χαλεπόν), but to *be* good stably and permanently, is *impossible* (344b-c).

What is (and *cannot* be otherwise) far from universal as actual possession, should be, on the other hand, universal as an object of striving after, of cultivation and education. The reason for this universality of endeavour is the "universality" of (moral) virtue in another sense. The difference between the excellence in which (moral) virtue consists and other excellencies lies in that the former is pervasive, i.e. relevant more or less and directly or indirectly to all relations, concerns and junctures of life; whereas the excellencies of other skills regard special interests and applications. *This "universality" of (moral) virtues is an objective universality of usefulness.* Thus, for example, political wisdom differs from the wisdom of any other craft in that it has as object not some particular part, function or activity and work in the state, but the entire state itself, in all its internal and external dispositions and relationships, *with a view to their optimization*; *Republic*, Δ, 428b-d, esp. 428c11-d2: ἔστι τις ἐπιστήμη (in the best state) ἢ οὐ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει τινὸς βουλευέται, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς ὅλης, ὅντινα τρόπον αὐτὴ τε πρὸς αὐτήν καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ἄριστα ὀμιλεῖ. But the pervasiveness precisely of operation of these virtue-excellences, as it is founded on the perfection of basic soul-parts and faculties (and their co-implication), minimizes the number of those fit to reach them. *So the universality of usefulness entails minimality of participation.* And this is expressly noticed by Plato, 428d11-429a3, esp. e7 sqq.: τῷ μικροτάτῳ ἄρα ἔθνη καὶ μέρει ἑαυτῆς καὶ τῇ ἐν τούτῳ ἐπιστήμῃ, τῷ προεστώτι καὶ ἄρχοντι, ὅλη σοφὴ ἂν εἴη κατὰ φύσιν οἰκισθεῖσα πόλις· καὶ τοῦτο, ὡς ἔουκε, φύσει ὀλίγιστον γίγνεται γένος, ᾧ προσήκει ταύτης τῆς ἐπιστήμης μεταλαγχάνειν, ἦν μόνων δεῖ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν σοφίαν καλεῖσθαι.

On the other hand the very fundamentality and pervasiveness of (moral) excellences makes them more powerful factors of human well-being. As it was well brought out by Heather Reid in the discussion, achievement in a particular techne is not enough for fulfillment. However, not even (moral) virtues as such (unilluminated by the direct vision of Goodness and the supreme knowledge of the Principles of Being) are enough for complete well-being; thus a moral character is not sufficient either. *A moral character is one skilled to perform appropriately in all situations of life, esp. in situations a) calling for strong insight (φρόνησις), b) of danger (ἀνδρεία), c) of rendering everyone's own to him (δικαιοσύνη), and d) of correct placement and disposition regarding ruling and being ruled (σωφροσύνη).*

Plato, in the above quoted crucial passage, exempts *phronesis* from his description of the other virtues called ones of soul (αἱ ἄλλαι ἀρεταὶ καλούμεναι ψυχῆς) which makes them akin to *bodily dexterities* cultivated by drill and exercises. *Phronesis* belongs to the divinest part of soul, the thinking faculty (λογιστικόν). The crux of the problem lies in the fact that, *the perfection of the mental part of the soul cannot be separated from its possession of the supreme science of reality.* The excellence of thought consists precisely in the perfect knowledge of

being, of the causal concatenation of reality and, in the end, of the ultimate grounds and principles of existence. Without such perfect knowledge there cannot be perfection of mind. Without such perfection, phronesis can at best be a skill by the side of the others. Just as there is no real, deep, understanding of this world without knowledge of the World of Ideas and of their Principles, but only (at most true) belief. Virtues as high-skill conditions of the parts of soul correspond to such a system of (nonstably) true beliefs.

Plato's further point in the initial passage is that thought being essentially divine, mind (τὸ λογιστικόν), even bereft of the ultimate knowledge of reality, can display a certain proper "perfection" of its own: then there is a sort of crooked wisdom (τῶν λεγομένων πονηρῶν μὲν, σοφῶν δέ), with an acute (ὀξεῶς διορᾶ) and penetrating (δριμύ βλέπει) vision of reality, since vision itself is not impaired: it cannot, as mind is in *essence* divine.

What is missing in such a state is not any "moral character", but supreme knowledge, or at least the fundamental turning round (περιαγωγή) which sets effectively the soul into and along the road towards supreme knowledge. Habitual skills (moral virtues) cannot prevent a powerful mind from working havoc for lack of direction. The power of νοῦς thrives as useful and beneficial if its vision is fixed on the first Principle of Being. The realization of the crucial περιαγωγή is the real business of higher education. The way is through the supreme science, Dialectical Mathematics, for Plato. When the ἀνυπόθετον has been reached and perfect knowledge of reality established, the complete excellence of the mind has been achieved, and full-blown wisdom is operating. Since Goodness is the ultimate, first Principle of Reality, understanding it entails the power of rendering the function of all psychic excellences (thinking well, being spirited well, feeling well, being well disposed, acting well) useful and beneficial. Republic, ΣΤ, 505a: ἐπεὶ ὅτι γε ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα μέγιστον μάθημα, πολλάκις ἀκήκοας, ἢ δὴ καὶ δίκαια καὶ τᾶλλα προσχρησάμενα χρήσιμα καὶ ἀφέλιμα γίνονται. There is no profit in knowing or possessing anything without the good, which for man is *knowing the Idea of Goodness, first Principle of Reality; 505a5 sqq. εἰ δὲ μὴ ἴσμεν* (sc. the idea of Goodness), *ἄνευ δὲ ταύτης εἰ ὅτι μάλιστα τᾶλλα ἐπισταίμεθα, οἷσθ' ὅτι οὐδὲν ἡμῖν ὄφελος, ὥσπερ οὐδ' εἰ κεκτήμεθα τι ἄνευ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ.* As is made clear from what follows, *the reason for this power of goodness is not moral, but purely metaphysical.* It is the fact that the Idea of Goodness is cause of the existence and being of all reality and of the knowledge in the knowing mind as well as of the knowledgeability of, and in, the object known. 508e1 sqq.: τοῦτο τοίνυν τὸ τὴν ἀλήθειαν παρέχον τοῖς γιγνωσκομένοις καὶ τῷ γινώσκοντι τὴν δύναμιν ἀποδιδὼν τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέαν φάθι εἶναι: etc. 509b6-10: καὶ τοῖς γιγνωσκομένοις τοίνυν μὴ μόνον τὸ γινώσκεσθαι φάναι ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ παρεῖναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν ὑπ' ἐκείνου αὐτοῖς προσεῖναι, οὐκ οὐσίας ὄντος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔτι ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας πρεσβεία καὶ δυνάμει ὑπερέχοντος. In fact there is a deeper analysis than this (suggested in the central section of the *Republic*), which depends on the doctrine that Goodness is really Oneness, which doctrine also the dynamism of being is grounded on.

In the *absolute knowledge* established by the Theory of Reality and of its ultimate Principles finds its justification the constant Socratic preoccupation (shared and finally illumined and secured by Plato), *that virtue is fundamentally knowledge.*

E.g. in *Euthydemus*, the goodness of all goods is argued to reside in phronesis and wisdom (278e-282d). Thus 281b4-6: ἄρ' οὖν ᾧ πρὸς Διός, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὄφελός τι τῶν ἄλλων κτημάτων ἄνευ φρονήσεως καὶ σοφίας; (Negative answer). In fact only wisdom is good in itself, the other common goods are really neutral (d6-e5). *The purpose in life is to become as wiser as possible* (282a5-6). It was part of the classical experience, shared by the Sophistical movement as well as by Plato, *that knowledge is the most powerful human attainment, wisdom or science being unconquerable and sufficient by itself to direct and help man in all vicissitudes of life. Protagoras, 352b-c, esp. d1: αἰσχρόν ἐστι καὶ ἐμοί* (Protagoras is speaking)

σοφίαν καὶ ἐπιστήμην μὴ οὐχὶ πάντων κράτιστον φάναι εἶναι τῶν ἀνθρωπείων πραγμάτων. The difference lied in the understanding of knowledge.

But the outlook was common as well as strong. Herodotus makes Demaratus, the defector Spartan king, explain to the Great King that an indigenous indigence of means in Greece has been overcome with cultivated virtue effected by wisdom and strong customs. VII, 102: τῇ Ἑλλάδι πενή μὲν αἰεὶ κοτε σύντροφός ἐστι, ἀρετὴ δὲ ἔπακτος ἐστι, ἀπὸ τε σοφίης κατεργασμένη καὶ νόμου ἰσχυροῦ, τῇ διαχρεομένη ἢ Ἑλλάς τὴν τε πενήνην ἀπαμύνεται καὶ τὴν δεσποσύνην.

The roots of ancient Greek Intellectualism were deep: they were reaching the rich earth of ancient Greek objectivism. Everything depends on how things are. Things human are part of this nexus of reality. To understand reality is to somehow identify with it.

The de-moralization and intellectualization of ethical virtues proceeded in two stages for Plato. We may observe the process in the case of valour. There is an animal and servile observance of what is the right course in situations of danger (regarding things fearsome and not), observance inculcated without education and culture, without regard to customs and traditions; this is not worthy of the name of ἀνδρεία, even if it involves the correct opinion as to the nature of the occasion and the right course of action to be adopted. The power to stably uphold and sustain the correct and *lawful* (i.e. consonant to the general norm of society in this respect given the cultural and civilizational milieu) opinion in such matters is *valour*. *Republic*, Δ, 430b2 sqq.: τὴν δὲ τοιαύτην δύναμιν καὶ σωτηρίαν διὰ παντός δόξης ὀρθῆς τε καὶ νομίμου δεινῶν τε περὶ καὶ μὴ ἀνδρείαν ἔγωγε καλῶ καὶ τίθεμαι, ... - ... δοκεῖς γάρ μοι τὴν ὀρθὴν δόξαν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων ἄνευ παιδείας γεγονυῖαν, τὴν τε θηριώδη καὶ ἀνδραποδώδη, οὔτε πάνυ μόνιμον (so with Stobaeus, instead of mss. νόμιμον, as Adam adopted *ad loc.*) ἡγεῖσθαι, ἄλλο τέ τι ἢ ἀνδρείαν καλεῖν.

This is the first stage. And it already consists in the power to uphold the relevant right and “educated” belief.

In the same passage there Plato announces a second level (430c4 sqq.). The first state corresponds to a skill. Apprehension of the Idea of Goodness and all the science that this involves (or at least the *περιαγωγή* which sets the mind on the right trek for their attainment), – as indicated in the *locus classicus* quoted at the beginning of this note – raises the skill to a different order, since now perfect wisdom has been established in the λογιστικόν and this *absolutizes* everything. *Now the intellectualization is complete.*

- [49] The indissoluble association between virtue and goodness on the one hand and utility and profitability on the other (cf. *supra*, nn. 14, 19, 27) is nowhere perhaps more strikingly felt than in the Thrasymachean position that, in so far as perfectly thorough injustice is advantageous, it must be virtuous, wise and good; *Republic* A, 348b8-349a2; cf. 348c5 sqq.: Οὐκοῦν τὴν μὲν δικαιοσύνην ἀρετὴν, τὴν δὲ ἀδικίαν κακίαν; - Εἰκός γ', ἔφη, ὧ ἥδιστε, ἐπειδὴ γε καὶ λέγω ἀδικίαν μὲν λυσιτελεῖν, δικαιοσύνην δ' οὔ. - Ἀλλὰ τί μήν; - Τουναντίον, ἢ δ' ὅς. - Ἡ τὴν δικαιοσύνην κακίαν; - Οὐκ, ἀλλὰ πάνυ γενναίαν εὐήθειαν. - Τὴν ἀδικίαν ἄρα κακοήθειαν καλεῖς; Οὐκ, ἀλλ' ἐβουλίαν, ἔφη. And e2: ἐν ἀρετῆς καὶ σοφίας τιθεῖς μέρος τὴν ἀδικίαν, τὴν δὲ δικαιοσύνην ἐν τοῖς ἐναντίοις.

Plato accepts the validity of the Thrasymachean inferential presupposition: he has to show that justice is more powerful and effective than injustice. This is the grand project of the *Republic*, prefigured in the argumentation that follows the above mentioned passage. The conceptual articulation of the underlying association is given at the end of Book A, 352d7 sqq. For every thing (horse, eye, ear, tools, i.e. animals, organic parts, artifacts) there is a work which can be done either by this thing *alone*, or done *best* by it. 353a10: τοῦτο ἐκάστου εἶη ἔργον ὃ ἂν ἢ μόνον τι ἢ κάλλιστα τῶν ἄλλων ἀπεργάζεται (cf. 352e2-3). For every work done by a thing, there is an excellence (ἀρετή) also belonging to the thing. 353b2: οὐκοῦν καὶ

ἀρετὴ δοκεῖ σοι εἶναι ἐκάστῳ ᾧπερ καὶ ἔργον τι προτέτακται; The thing performs well its proper work when it possesses its proper excellence. 353c6: τῇ οἰκείᾳ μὲν ἀρετῇ τὸ αὐτῶν ἔργον εὖ ἐργάζεται τὰ ἐργαζόμενα, κακίᾳ δὲ κακῶς. There is a thing, soul, and a work proper to it (like taking care, ruling, pondering judgments and decisions etc.) 353d3-7. All these functions and operations constitute the life of the soul; d9: τί δ' αὖ τὸ ζῆν; οὐ ψυχῆς φήσομεν ἔργον εἶναι; There is also an ἀρετὴ of the soul (d11). Without its proper excellence, soul cannot perform well its proper functions (e1-2). But well-living is the well being of the soul, its blessedness and happiness; 354a1-2: ἀλλὰ μὴν ὅ γε εὖ ζῶν μακάριός τε καὶ εὐδαίμων, ὁ δὲ μὴ τὰναντία. Hence the virtuous is the happy; a4: ὁ μὲν δίκαιος ἄρα εὐδαίμων, ὁ δ' ἄδικος ἄθλιος. But it does not profit to be wretched (a6). Therefore in no way is injustice more advantageous than justice; a8: οὐδέποτ' ἄρα, ὦ μακάριε Θρασύμαχε, λυσιτελέστερον ἀδικία δικαιοσύνης. Q.E.D. The main body of the *Republic* puts real substance to this bare pattern of the master argument.

Excellence is always relative to use (functionality of excellence). Thus the best judge of the beauty of a thing is the thing's user, not even the thing's maker. *Republic*, I, 601d sqq.; esp. e7-602a1: τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἄρα σκεύους ὁ μὲν ποιητὴς πίστιν ὀρθὴν ἔξει περὶ κάλλους τε καὶ πονηρίας, συνῶν τῷ εἰδότι καὶ ἀναγκαζόμενος ἀκούειν παρὰ τοῦ εἰδότος, ὁ δὲ χρώμενος ἐπιστήμην.

