Proportion and Equilibrium in Greek Thought

COSMIC PROPORTION: THE SHARED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF GREEK MEDICINE, ETHICS, AND POLITICS

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LAY ABSTRACT

Greek medical authors are obviously interested in the nature of health and disease, but the repeated mention of health and disease in epic poetry, philosophy, and political thought is more surprising. Hesiod writes that Zeus punishes the entire city of an unjust man with plague because he harms Justice. Plato refers to injustice as a disease of the soul, and justice as a soul in good health. Euripides, in his *Herakles*, writes that Thebes itself was sick with *stasis*. These authors indicate that the Greek conception of health was conceived of in broad terms which were applied to other spheres, such as ethics and politics. But what are these terms? What is the basic conceptual framework that underlies Greek medical, ethical, and political thought that allowed authors to apply similar metaphors of health and disease to these different spheres? In this thesis, I suggest that underlying Greek medical, ethical, and political thought is the same conceptual framework of proportion, balance, and equilibrium.

ABSTRACT

In my first chapter, I investigate how, according to Hesiod in his *Works and Days*, one achieves prosperity and well-being, namely by not provoking Zeus who “punishes those whose actions harm justice.” I suggest that the moral and practical elements of Hesiod’s teachings may be conceived of in similar terms of maintaining a disposition whereby one is content to possess resources proportionate to one’s level of activity and needs. In the second chapter, I examine how the conceptions of limit and proportion elucidated in my first chapter feature in medical texts. I investigate Alcmaeon’s description of health and disease in terms of a political distribution of power. A body, according to Alcmaeon, is healthy when its qualities are equally proportioned (*isonomia*) and one does not dominate (*monarchia*) the whole mixture (*krasis*). Alcmaeon describes health as the proportionate blending of qualities which formulates the definition of health as the equality of shares of powers and anticipates Hippocratic humorism. Hippocratic humorism, like the traditional, magicoreligious model of health, conceives of health similarly to Alcmaeon, in terms of a proper proportion and balance. In my third chapter, I investigate Plato’s conception of the soul and of justice. I explicate Plato’s conception of the soul as discussed in his *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, and *Laws*, and suggest that a similar view of the soul and of justice, as a proper proportion of internal constituents, persists. I then apply this view of justice as the proper proportion of parts to the *polis* and argue that disproportion within a *polis* leads to *stasis* – a disease of a political body. In conclusion, I argue that Greek medical, ethical, and political thought share a conceptual framework and are predicated on notions of balance, proportion, and equilibrium. Prosperity, bodily health, justice of the soul, and justice of the city are conceived of in similar terms of a proper proportion.

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DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The authors declares that the content of this research has been completed by Mackenzie Hilton under the supervision of Dr. Sean Corner and with the assistance of Dr. Mark Johnstone and Dr. Mariapia Pietropaolo.

Introduction

Health has a wide scope in the modern world. We speak of bodily health, mental health, environmental health, and healthy appetites. I was struck when I learned the ancient Greek conception of health and disease has similarly far-reaching applications. Medical authors are obviously interested in the nature of health and disease, but the repeated mention of health and disease in epic poetry, philosophy, and political thought is more surprising. Hesiod writes that Zeus punishes the entire city of an unjust man with plague because he harms Justice. Plato refers to injustice as a disease of the soul, and justice as a soul in good health. Paralleling this language of health is Euripides, who, in his *Herakles*, writes that Thebes itself was sick with *stasis*. These authors indicate that the Greek conception of health was conceived of in broad terms which were applied to other spheres, such as ethics and politics. But what are these terms? That is to say, what are the basic assumptions that underlie Greek medical, ethical and political thought that allowed authors to apply similar metaphors of health and disease to these different spheres? In this thesis, I suggest that underlying Greek medical, ethical, and political thought are the same basic ideas of proportion, balance, and equilibrium.

In my first chapter, I investigate how, according to Hesiod in his *Works and Days*, one achieves prosperity and well-being, namely by not provoking Zeus who “punishes those whose actions harm justice.”[[1]](#footnote-1) There is much debate surrounding whether Hesiod’s advice is moral or practical. Some scholars, such as Anthony Edwards and Michael Gagarin emphasize the practicality of Hesiod’s precepts, especially how one manages one’s *oikos*, and argue that Hesiodic justice is conceived of as when the members of a community live in proportion to their needs, and are not subjugated to one another, but exist as equals.[[2]](#footnote-2) Other scholars, such as Douglas Cairns focus on the moral-psychological aspects of Hesiod’s precepts.[[3]](#footnote-3)

In chapter one, I suggest that the moral and practical elements of Hesiod’s teachings may be conceived of in similar terms of maintaining a disposition whereby one is content to possess resources proportionate to their level of activity and needs. To support my claim, I examine how Hesiod’s instruction to convert excess resources into future sustenance assurance functions as a mechanism of risk mitigation and preserves the autonomy of individual households (*oikoi*). In the second section, I examine how excess promotes a hubristic disposition that entails insult or injury to another. In the final section, I detail how the Greek conceptions of *ison* and *koros* carry the sense of proportion and limit, and how failure to adhere to one’s limits constitutes disproportionately taking a share that rightfully belongs to another. I then connect these conceptions of *ison* and *koros* *qua* proportion and limit with the previous sections to demonstrate how they predicate Hesiod’s understanding of *hubris*. Prioritizing excess – greed, or *pleonexia* –entails injury or offence to another and is conducive of unjust actions. With this in mind, Hesiodic justice may be conceived of as a moral disposition whereby one does not strive for excess, nor seek to subordinate others, but is satisfied living with resources proportionate to one’s needs.

In the second chapter, I examine how the conceptions of limit and proportion elucidated in my first chapter feature in medical texts. First, I investigate Alcmaeon’s political language to describe health and disease. Alcmaeon is the first extant author to describe health in terms of a political distribution of power. Alcmaeon introduces political terminology into medical writing as a response to his changing political landscape which provided him with a way to describe health as manifesting the same norms and relationships at work in the social sphere. A body, according to Alcmaeon, is healthy when its bodily qualities are equally proportioned (*isonomia*) and one does not dominate (*monarchia*) the whole mixture (*krasis*). Alcmaeon describes health as the proportionate blending of qualities which formulates the definition of health as the equality of shares of powers.

Paralleling Alcmaeon’s theory of health is that of the Hippocratics. In *On the Nature of Man*, we learn that one’s body is comprised of four basic substances or humors, which determine one’s health. Health is defined as a balance between these constituents, and, when one constituent is abundant or lacking, the body is thrown into a state of imbalance and insalubriousness. *On Airs, Waters, and Places* details how a physician restores the balance between one’s bodily constituents, namely by investigating one’s environment, especially the *polis*. Where a *polis* is located determines its elevation, exposure to hot and cold winds, and the quality of its water, which have varying effects on the body. It is up to the physician to determine the cause of humoral imbalance and to restore balance by prescribing an equal but opposite change in diet, regiment, or environment. A physician thus examines what the proper state of a body is and aims to explain the harmony of nature to its environment. The physician Eryximachus echoes this view in Plato’s *Symposium*. In this dialogue, Eryximachus emphasizes the human role in identifying and striving to restore and maintain the dynamic equilibrium of nature. For Eryximachus, harmony is established in things previously disconcordant by medical *praxis*. Such a task involves transforming discord into harmony not by eliminating one of two opposites, but by finding the right balance whereby two opposites form a relationship. Moderation or temperance is not the complete domination of one opposite over another, but consists of a proper proportion. When one’s nature becomes disproportioned, disease ensues.

In the final section for chapter 2, I detail the magicoreligious conception of health seen in epic poetry, tragedy, and historiography. The concern for disease is not bound to the environment, diet, or humors like we see in the Hippocratic corpus, rather, efforts to stop plague are wholly aimed at restoring sanctity and placating the gods. The hallmark case occurs in the *Iliad* where Agamemnon insults Chryses and incurs plague for his troops. This description of plague as resulting from a moral transgression is echoed in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, where Thebans suffer plague because of the murder of their king Laius at the hands of his son. These authors reveal a magicoreligious understanding of health that may at first seem in tension with the Hippocratic model; however, just as the Hippocratic model understands disease as an imbalance of internal humors, the magicoreligious view understands disease as a disruption of a cosmic proportion prompted by moral transgression; and, just as the Hippocratics treat disease by identifying the cause of imbalance and prescribing equal but opposite changes in diet and regimen to restore balance, plague in the *Iliad* is lifted by identifying the moral transgression that disrupted the comic order and rectifying it to restore balance.

In my third chapter, I investigate Plato’s conception of the soul and of justice. First, I explicate Plato’s conception of justice as discussed in his *Republic*. In this dialogue, a soul is conceived of as consisting of three parts which must work together, harmoniously, under the rule of reason for a soul to be just. If a part of the soul less fit to rule is disproportionally stronger than the other parts of the soul, then injustice – a disease of the soul – ensues, not only for the individual, but for the *polis* as a whole. Building upon this discussion, I turn to Plato’s *Phaedrus* which contains another allegory of the soul. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato slightly adapts his conception of the soul and of what the soul’s proper state consists of. In this dialogue, the soul’s constituents are not simple, but are each capable of reasoning and desiring. It is not the case that desires are to be eradicated from the soul entirely, rather, one must learn from one’s desires and strive to integrate them into the whole of the soul by allowing these desires to find their proper place within it.

Plato’s *Laws*, on the other hand, presents a strikingly different view of the soul from the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*. In the *Laws*, Plato depicts the soul as a unified body – a puppet – pulled by iron and golden strings. Some scholars such as Dorothea Frede and Christopher Bobonich suggest that Plato adopts a unitary view of human psychology whereby the soul is a single entity that experiences various psychic states.[[4]](#footnote-4) Others, such as Joshua Wilburn, suggest that the soul’s complexity is not absent from the analogy, but that there is a shift from the tripartition of the *Republic* and *Phaedrus* to a bipartite psychology whereby the golden and iron strings symbolize rational and irrational desires respectively.[[5]](#footnote-5) I suggest that, instead of radically shifting his understanding of justice and of the soul in the *Laws*, Plato remains committed to a tripartite psychology and to a conception of justice rooted in the proper proportioning of parts.

Finally, I explore the connection between individual justice and that of the *polis*. Building on my previous discussion, I apply the conception of health and justice as a proper proportioning of internal constituents to the *polis*. In the *Republic*, the constituents of Plato’s theoretical city are the three occupational classes: artisans, auxiliaries, and guardians. Plato compares the soul to a city to show how individual justice and city-wide justice reflect one another insofar as both are predicated by a proper proportion of internal constituents whereby the one that is most fit to rule governs the whole. Thucydides shares the view that a *polis’* constituents are its classes in his description of *stasis* at Corcyra, which puts the tension between classes on centre-stage. Having grasped the conception of bodily disease and disease of the soul *qua* injustice as an imbalance and disproportion of internal constituents, it becomes possible to appreciate that the figuring of *stasis* as a disease of the *polis* was not merely a metaphor, but that the Greeks viewed *stasis* as a pathological disease, brought on by the imbalance and disproportion of a *polis’* constituents.

In conclusion, I argue that Greek medical, ethical, and political thought share a conceptual framework and are predicated on notions of balance, proportion, and equilibrium. Prosperity, bodily health, justice of the soul, and justice of the city are conceived of in similar terms of a proper proportion.

*Hubris*, Justice, and Moderate Living in Hesiod

οἷς δ᾽ ὕβρις τε μέμηλε κακὴ καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα,

τοῖς δὲ δίκην Κρονίδης τεκμαίρεται εὐρύοπα Ζεύς.

πολλάκι καὶ ξύμπασα πόλις κακοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀπηύρα,

ὅς κεν ἀλιτραίνῃ καὶ ἀτάσθαλα μηχανάαται.

τοῖσιν δ᾽ οὐρανόθεν μέγ᾽ ἐπήγαγε πῆμα Κρονίων

λιμὸν ὁμοῦ καὶ λοιμόν: ἀποφθινύθουσι δὲ λαοί.

οὐδὲ γυναῖκες τίκτουσιν, μινύθουσι δὲ οἶκοι

Ζηνὸς φραδμοσύνῃσιν Ὀλυμπίου:

(Hesiod, *Works and Days* 238-245)

To those who practice *hubris* and engage in wicked deeds,

Zeus, the all-seeing son of Kronos, assigns justice.

Often the entire city of a wicked man suffers,

Who transgresses and devises injury.

For such men the son of Kronos induces great calamities:

Famine and plague together: people perish,

Women miscarry, households fall,

All by the cunning of Olympian Zeus.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In his Works and Days, henceforth referred to as *WD*, Hesiod attributes to Zeus supreme power in mortal affairs. Hesiod writes that Zeus gives those who speak justice prosperity, and those who lie incurable harm because they injure Justice.[[7]](#footnote-7) Zeus’ decision is not without justification; rather, Zeus’ judgements (*themistas*) are determined on the basis of one’s adherence to justice (*dike*).[[8]](#footnote-8) Zeus punishes those whose actions “harm justice,” yet what exactly constitutes a transgression of this order is a matter of debate. Anthony Edwards suggests that, in light of Hesiod’s precepts constituting practical advice, the answer to what constitutes a transgression lies in one’s external, concrete actions. Others, such as Douglas Cairns and Panayiotis Mavrommatis maintain that Hesiod is concerned with promoting a proper mental state, and that a punishable transgression entails an immoral disposition conducive of unjust actions.[[9]](#footnote-9)

In this chapter, I suggest that the moral and practical elements of Hesiod’s teachings may be conceived of in terms of maintaining a disposition whereby one is content to possess resources proportionate to one’s level of activity and needs. To support my claim, I examine how Hesiod’s instruction to convert excess resources into future sustenance assurance functions as a mechanism of risk mitigation and preserves the autonomy of individual households (*oikoi*). In the second section, I examine how excess promotes a hubristic disposition that entails insult or injury to another. In the final section, I detail how the Greek conceptions of *ison* and *koros* carry the sense of proportion and limit, and how failure to adhere to one’s limits constitutes disproportionately taking a share that rightfully belongs to another. I then connect these conceptions of *ison* and *koros* *qua* proportion and limit with the previous sections to demonstrate how they predicate Hesiod’s understanding of *hubris*. With this in mind, Hesiodic justice may be conceived of as a moral disposition whereby one does not strive for excess, nor seek to subordinate others, but is satisfied living with resources proportionate to one’s needs, living an independent life but sharing one’s excess with a community of equal members. Prioritizing excess – greed, or *pleonexia* –entails injury or offence to another and is conducive of unjust actions.

*Section 1: The Mitigation of Excess and Deficiency*

The central issue of Hesiod’s *WD*, that is, the dispute between Hesiod and his brother Perses, is prompted by Perses’ appeal to redraw lots in an attempt to seize a greater portion of his and Hesiod’s inheritance.[[10]](#footnote-10) Perses contravenes the fundamental norms of Ascran society by seeking to obtain more than what is necessary and what he is due, not by working hard, but by swindling others. The *WD* functions as Hesiod’s plea to his brother to avoid the vengeance of Zeus by acquiring wealth, resources, and influence, which come together in the term *kerdos*, though legitimate means such as persistent work and the careful management of his *oikos*.

Despite his advocacy of social cohesion and cooperation among villagers, Hesiod anticipates lively competition. In fact, Hesiod’s description of “two kinds of strife (eris)” implies that there was frequent competition, and that competition could be either good or bad.[[11]](#footnote-11) One *eris* is wicked (*schetlie*) in light of it “foster[ing] war, battle, and plunder.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Another *eris* is much better for mortals (*andrasi pollon ameino*) because it “stirs even the shiftless who pay no heed to work.”[[13]](#footnote-13) Both good and bad *eris* compel one to emulate one’s well-to-do neighbours, but through different means; good *eris* compels one to engage in persistent labour, whereas bad *eris* compels one to acquire prosperity through illegitimate means such as stealing or redrawing lots. There is an emphasis on action in this passage insofar as the results of bad *eris*, namely war, battle, and theft, are presented as concrete, external actions. Similarly, *eris* is denoted as good (*agathe*) when it compels one to imitate the actions (*ergon*) of those who are prosperous.[[14]](#footnote-14)

Simultaneous to this concern for actionable consequences, however, Hesiod implies that a certain understanding or intellectual disposition determines which *eris* one will pursue, and, consequently, whether one behaves justly or unjustly. Hesiod writes that by understanding (*noesas*) one comes to appreciate good *eris* more than bad *eris*, thereby implying a mental role in proper action.[[15]](#footnote-15) Hesiod consistently refers to understanding in relation to actions: “he is happy and blessed who, *understanding* (*eidos*) these things, *works* tirelessly before the gods, reading omens and avoiding transgressions.”[[16]](#footnote-16) Understanding Hesiod’s instructions, in this didactic poem, is conducive of persistent labour and moral behaviour. These mental conditions for right actions are further shown by Hesiod’s description of a *thumos* split in twain.[[17]](#footnote-17) Mortals are confused about which *eris* yields better results because of differences in opinion. The distinction between good and bad *eris*, then, must be understood so as to motivate right action. That is to say, good *eris* entails a mental component insofar as one possesses a “*thumos* that longs for prosperity” and a practical component insofar as one “works unceasingly.”

Hesiod also combines moral and practical consideration in the first of his riddles. At lines 40-41, Hesiod refers to “gift-eating kings” (*basileas dorophagous*) as fools (*napioi*) because “they do not know how much more the half is than the whole, nor how great the boon is in mallow and asphodel.”[[18]](#footnote-18) Canevaro interprets line 40 as praising the zero-sum nature of the Iron Age, and 41 as referring to food requiring little cultivation, easing the farmer’s burden.[[19]](#footnote-19) Hesiod, however, adheres to oxymoronic formulations for these lines, and never tells us what the advantages of these plants are.[[20]](#footnote-20) Calling the kings fools for not knowing functions as a provocation for Hesiod’s audience. Hesiod does not do the legwork for us, but challenges us to work though his riddle in order to fully grasp its message.[[21]](#footnote-21) That the message is not immediately clear is indicative of Hesiod’s interest in hiding his meaning so that his audience must work to understand it, much as they must work for life itself.[[22]](#footnote-22)

*Eris* compels one to act out of “envy of one’s neighbour, who hastens towards plenty (*aphenos*).”[[23]](#footnote-23) Plenty or abundance is desirable because of the benefits it brings, namely increased sustenance assurance which entails less dependency on others. More resources allow a farmer to support a larger homestead, including a wife and multiple children.[[24]](#footnote-24) An *oikos* that is able to provide for all its dependents thus achieves a state of *aphenos*. Dependents, however, require a proportionate increase in resources to ensure than an *oikos* does not fall below sustenance and is not required to depend on others for assistance.[[25]](#footnote-25) An *oikos* that maintains a quantity of resources proportionate to the needs of its dependants renders itself independent, insofar as it is free of debt, and free to work, and exchange resources as it sees fit.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Although *aphenos* maximizes the autonomy of an *oikos* by allowing it not to become indebted to another, this is not to say that an oikos aimed at acquiring an excess of resources. As Gallant argues, food storage was an issue in the Archaic period, and risked high losses of food to insects, animals, and mould.[[27]](#footnote-27) Hoarding an excessive amount of food, for example, would not serve as a true sustenance guarantee, since it was unlikely that food would remain edible over extended periods of time. Hesiod advocates that one only stores enough to fill one’s grain bin, which would have supplied a farmer with approximately enough food to sustain himself for one year.[[28]](#footnote-28) Hesiod’s instruction to measure grain into jars supports the notion that the limitless hoarding of resources is not preferable to storing a measured amount.[[29]](#footnote-29) Once grain is measured, Hesiod advocates for it to be stored into jars and brought into one’s house.[[30]](#footnote-30) This protects against the aforementioned loss of produce due to pests and theft.[[31]](#footnote-31) Thus, we see in *WD* a preoccupation with the storage and accumulation of resources which aims at providing an *oikos* the sustenance it requires without entailing excess and debt.[[32]](#footnote-32)

Certain circumstances, however, could prevent a farmer from harvesting the necessary produce to sustain his *oikos*. Sick oxen, broken equipment, or unfavourable weather all affected the rate at which farmers could harvest produce.[[33]](#footnote-33) Consequently, an *oikos* prosperous one year could be lacking the next. In this case, a farmer unable to provide for himself had to turn to others to acquire his sustenance on the basis of hospitality (*xenia*). As Edwards argues, travellers and local villagers could regularly expect assistance and welcome on the basis of *xenia*.[[34]](#footnote-34)

At line 183, strangers (*xenoi*) are listed alongside kinsmen (*kasignetoi*) and companions (*hetairoi*) as people who ought to be dear (*philos*), emphasizing the importance of these relationships.[[35]](#footnote-35) One who harms a *xenos* commits an injustice akin to one who harms a supplicant, cuckolds brothers, injures orphans, or berates their aged parents.[[36]](#footnote-36) Hesiod does not equate *xenoi*, *kasignetoi*, and *hetairoi*, but, as Edwards argues, assumes a hierarchy that ranks *xenoi* and *hetairoi* under *kasignetoi*.[[37]](#footnote-37) Despite this hierarchy of relations, however, Hesiod praises those who give just judgements to foreigners (*xenoi*) and locals (*endemoi*) alike.[[38]](#footnote-38)

An *oikos* in need was furnished with an immediate solution, but it was expected fully to reciprocate this assistance.[[39]](#footnote-39) Sometimes reciprocity would have been immediate, and no debt would be accrued. For example, an *oikos* rich in grain could immediately offer grain in exchange for a good it lacks such as olive oil; in this case, equal trades could have been made, whereby two goods commensurate to one another are exchanged.[[40]](#footnote-40) Although one household might initiate the exchange out of necessity, by immediately exchanging goods of equal or greater value, it does not accrue any debt, and remains autonomous and unsubordinated to the other *oikos*.

In many cases, however, an *oikos* in need would have nothing to immediately offer in exchange for food.[[41]](#footnote-41) In this case, the receiving *oikos* would become indebted as it would be required to “repay” the loan in full at a later time or when called upon.[[42]](#footnote-42) As a result of this social obligation, the loaner also receives sustenance assurance insofar as they are able to call upon the borrower in times of need and reasonably expect assistance on the basis of *xenia*.[[43]](#footnote-43) Reciprocity between *oikoi* had to be kept in balance so as not to risk one *oikos* becoming subjugated to another. If a loan became too great, or went unreciprocated too long, the receiving oikos could become irreversibly indebted to the loaning *oikos*. As Edwards estimates, obligations of hospitality could tolerate two or three one-way exchanges before the bonds of *xenia* deteriorated.[[44]](#footnote-44) It is when this reciprocity ends, or “the relation of comrade to comrade fails, and of host to guest” that social bonds are broken, and injustice pervades the community.[[45]](#footnote-45) When an exchange becomes too one-sided, or when one *oikos* becomes too indebted to another, it is no longer able to request assistance on the basis of *xenia*, and, more importantly, is not free to work as it sees fit, for its own sustenance, but must work to pay off its debt. In this sense, an *oikos* that abuses the goodwill of others sacrifices its autonomy and becomes subordinated to the prosperous, loaning *oikos*.

During times of widespread catastrophe such as drought, plague, or flood, regional shortages could occur. At such times, villagers had to form external relationships with the villagers of neighbouring regions and depended upon the goodwill of foreigners (*xenoi*) for sustenance.[[46]](#footnote-46) As Edwards suggests, a regional shortage of grain would not necessarily imply a shortage of other goods such as olive oil or iron.[[47]](#footnote-47) Thus, although internal relations failed to serve as sustenance guarantee in times of regional shortages, villagers could turn to trade abroad as a means of acquiring sustenance.[[48]](#footnote-48) In doing so, villagers could effectively resort to the same mechanism of exchange and balanced reciprocity that they used at home – that is, converting immediate excess goods into future sustenance guarantee.[[49]](#footnote-49)

This conversion of goods from immediate to future use is further exemplified in Hesiod’s precepts for rearing a family. In the case of a good harvest, with no regional shortages, an *oikos* could find itself with an excess of produce that is essentially worthless in light of its abundance. Abundance, in this case, amounts to a loss for the possessor since, as previous discussed, without an effective means of storage, much loss would be had from pests and mould, and the possessor would not be able to profit by exchanging the surplus.[[50]](#footnote-50) In this case, Hesiod writes that it behooves one to search for a bride whom one may support with one’s abundant resources.[[51]](#footnote-51) Women, according to Hesiod, ought to be married only when one has adequate resources to produce enough sustenance for her and oneself.[[52]](#footnote-52) More children, especially sons, served as a further form of sustenance assurance. When the children come of age, the farmer puts them to work on his farm to extend his furrow and produce crops.[[53]](#footnote-53) Consequently, by investing in his *oikos* and increasing his number of dependents, the farmer yields more produce, allowing him to fill his granary more easily – that is, allowing a farmer to acquire the necessary sustenance for his *oikos*, and to maintain his autonomy by depending on his own labour and resources instead of borrowing from others.

An *oikos*’ internal balance of labourers to resources may, nevertheless, become skewed in favour of excess or deficiency. In the case of a bountiful harvest that exceeds an *oikos*’ level of sustenance, and when this sustenance cannot be traded internally nor externally due to regional surplus, Hesiod advocates hosting a feast for one’s associates; “invite your friend to dinner; and leave your enemy alone.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Hesiod later lists the types of items found on the menu of a household feast including “wine from Biblos and bread made from milk and goat’s milk, and meat from newborn kids, and leaf-fed kine that have not given birth.”[[55]](#footnote-55) The more extravagant the feast, the more the recipient would be indebted and obliged to repay on the basis of balanced reciprocity. Hesiod’s insistence to “receive fair measure from your neighbour; give it back again in like measure, and even more amply, if you can” makes it clear that such a feast still operates on the principles of balanced reciprocity, and has the result of converting present excess into later sustenance by creating and reinforcing social obligations.[[56]](#footnote-56)

In circumstances of regional excess, however, it is unlikely that one *oikos* would attend another’s feast if doing so needlessly indebted them. If all of Ascra and its neighbours experienced a crop surplus one season, there would be no need for villagers to interact at all. To combat this, Hesiod advocates for all mortals, even when they all experience surplus, to host a communal feast by pooling their resources into a sort of pot-luck (*ek koinou*): “do not be a boor when many guests have gathered for a feast; /or when the expense is shared the pleasure is most, the cost is least.”[[57]](#footnote-57) Again, we see how communal feasting and sharing contribute to the mitigation of excess and deficiency, but the introduction of a pot-luck is significant for introducing the concept of common property or “shares.” *Ek koinou* implies a sort of common space or property, the right to a portion of which arises out of a custom of division of common property among members of a collective.[[58]](#footnote-58) Here the right to a portion arises naturally out of membership of some relationship to a collective, which is maintained by upholding the bonds of mutual reciprocity, namely, by taking in proportion to what one contributes.[[59]](#footnote-59) One who gorges oneself at a communal feast without contributing anything is akin to one who borrows from one’s neighbours without repaying them; both subordinate themselves to others who were once their equals, subsequently diminishing their autonomy, and losing the right to a share.

Hoarding excess is impractical, but sharing one’s excess allows a community to grow while simultaneously maintaining the autonomy of individual *oikoi*. However, the injunction to avoid excess is not only practical, but also moral. Hesiod presents in clear, practical terms how excess can result in misfortune: “For coming to grief is terrible and dreadful in the swelling sea, if by loading your cart excessively you break the axle, ruining the wares you wished to trade.”[[60]](#footnote-60) However, Hesiod attributes disasters not to mortals themselves, but to Zeus, thereby situating practical misfortune in terms of religion and morality: “For if someone is willing to speak things he knows to be just, Farseeing Zeus grants him prosperity, but one who lies, swearing falsely in a testimony, is uncurable harmed, having defiled Justice.”[[61]](#footnote-61) How exactly the practical and moral spheres overlap so that possessing or striving for excess results in misfortune via divine retribution will be explored in the following section.

*Section 2:* Hubris *qua Psychological Excess*

Although Hesiod’s advice is stated in practical terms, it is situated in the context of morality and religion. Zeus “rewards men for speaking things he knows to be just; but punishes men who injure Justice by willingly telling lies.”[[62]](#footnote-62) One who adheres to *dike* not only experiences prosperity themselves, but also “allows their city to flourish and their people to thrive.”[[63]](#footnote-63) Thus, there exists a connection between *dike* and divine intervention, whereby one who is just prospers and one who is unjust suffers.

When describing acts of injustice and their subsequent punishments, Hesiod often refers pre-eminently to a particular motivation: *hubris*. Hesiod refers to *hubris* when describing particularly serious transgressions. For example, the first transgression committed by mortals, according to Hesiod, was when the silver race of men refused to serve the immortals as a result of their inability to restrain their reckless *hubris*.[[64]](#footnote-64) This is paralleled in Hesiod’s account of the bronze race of men which “in their arrogance gave in to the groaning deeds of Ares and *hubris*.”[[65]](#footnote-65) Thus, although punishment follows excessive arrogance, pride, and domination, these undesirable traits are predicated by a predisposition for *hubris*.

That such a predisposition leads to the commission of punishable offences is supported by Hesiod’s other references to *hubris*. When relating the myth of the ages, Hesiod writes that his own age, that of the race of iron men, will be eradicated at such a time when men esteem those who are wicked and committed to *hubris*.[[66]](#footnote-66) That Hesiod contrasts this with a description of a man who “receives no gratitude despite righteously serving justice in keeping his word,” indicates that *hubris* is counterpoised to justice.[[67]](#footnote-67) Later, when Hesiod implores Perses to “heed justice and not to foster his *hubris*,” he adds that “justice is restrained by *hubris*,” and that “with justice wounded, gift-eating men abuse it, and penalties ensue.”[[68]](#footnote-68) When even a single man practices *hubris*, Zeus punishes entire cities with famine and plague.[[69]](#footnote-69) Thus, for Hesiod, adherence to justice is necessary to ensure prosperity, and a propensity for *hubris* renders one unjust and deserving of punishment via “the just retribution of Zeus.”[[70]](#footnote-70) Justice, then, plays an important role for one’s wellbeing, and, consequently, it is not enough that humans persistently work and maintain resources proportionate to their means; rather, in addition to this, one must also avoid acting unjustly in order to be rendered renown, and be strong and prosperous.

Justice is described by Hesiod as “a maiden and daughter of Zeus who reports to Zeus the unjust minds and ruthless intents of men.”[[71]](#footnote-71) Interestingly, this passage connects justice with mental activity insofar as justice does not report offences *qua* concrete, external actions to Zeus, but rather the inclination to commit acts of injustice. Justice entails a certain outlook or way of thinking. For example, when describing the transgressions of the silver race of men, Hesiod writes that “the customs decreed to men went against their pride.”[[72]](#footnote-72) Similarly, Zeus is said to “humble those who have excessive pride” and to “blast the arrogant man with a bolt from the sky.”[[73]](#footnote-73) That Hesiod tends to describe not the transgression committed, but the traits of pride and arrogance that orientate one towards injustice is striking and implies that one’s character, including especially one’s self-regard, is as important as one’s actions.

In his article “*Hubris*, Dishonor, and Thinking Big” Douglas Cairns picks up on this connection between self-image and *dike*. Cairns responds to the view espoused by Fisher, that the essence of *hubris* is “the commission of acts of intentional insult which deliberately inflict shame and dishonor another.”[[74]](#footnote-74) Fisher consistently defines *hubris* with reference to the commission of concrete acts of insult shame and dishonor.[[75]](#footnote-75) Thus, for Fisher, *hubris* is a kind of action intended to dishonour another.[[76]](#footnote-76) Where Cairns, MacDowell, and Dickey differ from Fisher’s definition is in respect of the importance of one’s disposition, and whether *hubris* also describes a predisposition rather than only an action motivated by a particular kind of intention.[[77]](#footnote-77) MacDowell argues that the essence of *hubris* lies in self-indulgent enjoyment of excess.[[78]](#footnote-78) Dickey similarly argues that *hubris* is a disposition whereby one fails to recognize the limitations and precariousness of one’s actions.[[79]](#footnote-79) Cairns builds on MacDowell and Dickey's arguments, and rectifies Fisher’s, to argue that, in addition to describing a particular kind of action, *hubris* also denotes a moral disposition — arrogance and excessiveness — that is conducive of such behaviour.[[80]](#footnote-80)

Fisher derives his argument from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, where Aristotle defines *hubris* as “doing and saying things at which the victim incurs shame, not in order that the agent should obtain anything other than the performance of the act, but in order to please himself.”[[81]](#footnote-81) Thus, *hubris*, on Aristotle’s account, requires the infliction of harm, but the pleasure of *hubris* lies in the thought of one’s superiority.[[82]](#footnote-82) Thus, Aristotle supports Fisher’s argument insofar as he refers to *hubris* as an action deliberately meant to dishonor another; however, as Cairns notes, Aristotle gives more prominence to one’s disposition, attitude, and motivation than Fisher allows.[[83]](#footnote-83) Aristotle conceives of dishonour against another as going hand in hand with self-gratification. He differs from Fisher insofar as an action that dishonors someone, for example striking someone, does not constitute an act of *hubris* unless motivated by gratification in the dishonoring of another person.[[84]](#footnote-84)

Since for Aristotle the description of an action in external terms is insufficient to connote *hubris*, and any ascription of injustice to an agent depends on an assessment of his motivation, what it is to be unjust or just lies in the *prohairesis*.[[85]](#footnote-85) Fisher translates *prohairesis* as intention.[[86]](#footnote-86) Aristotle, however, implies that all actions which stem from *prohairesis* are voluntary, but that not all voluntary actions stem from *prohairesis*, thereby distinguishing *prohairesis* from mere intention.[[87]](#footnote-87) Aristotle defines *prohairesis* as one’s deliberate intention to perform acts which contribute to the ends ascertained by one’s rational desire for the good.[[88]](#footnote-88) Notably, however, one’s desire for the good is determined by one’s developed and settled state of character (*hexis*).[[89]](#footnote-89) Thus, for *prohairesis* to be good and an action just, the agent must possess a good or virtuous *hexis*; on the other hand, a vice-laden *hexis* connotes a vicious *prohairesis* and unjust acts. Acts of injustice, however, can also be committed by agents who do not possess such a character. For example, if one were to strike someone by accident, one would commit an act of injustice but without a vicious *prohairesis*, and would, therefore, not be a *hubristes*. For one to be a *hubristes*, one must engage in an unjust action for no reason other than to obtain pleasure by demonstrating one’s superiority in dishonouring another.[[90]](#footnote-90) Thus, *hubris* is an action performed for its own sake motivated by a *prohairesis* which stems from a vicious *hexis*. *Prohairesis*, then, connotes much more than mere intention, and *hubris* has to do with committing an act of injustice, in humiliating another, while simultaneously deriving pleasure by committing such an act.[[91]](#footnote-91)

In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle argues that fear and pity require the acknowledgement of one’s own vulnerability to misfortune.[[92]](#footnote-92) Consequently, those who believe that their good fortune renders them immune to reversal do not experience pity or fear, but *hubris*.[[93]](#footnote-93) Thus, according to Aristotle, the overvaluing of oneself and discounting of contingency blunts pity and leads to disregarding others, which manifests in hubristic acts. This overvaluation, however, is a result of the illusion of excessive prosperity. When one indulges in excess, one develops a false idea of one’s worth and a misplaced confidence in one’s own good fortune.[[94]](#footnote-94) Thus, an excess of wealth entails that one places too much stock in one’s possessions. *Hubris*, in this sense, is associated with desiring excess and wishing to possess many things.

The ideas of insatiability and desiring to possess more at others’ expense come together in the term *pleonexia*. Injustice can be manifested in the distribution of goods, and in the context of voluntary transactions in which one agent takes advantage of another. *Pleonexia* functions as an engine of injustice by subordinating one to one’s desires and simultaneously compelling one to subordinate others. *Pleonexia* compels one’s treatment of others and leads to disproportion and inequality amongst peers, whereby one treats one’s equals as inferior to assert one’s superiority. *Hubris*, then, as it relates to *pleonexia* involves exalting oneself indiscriminately at the expense of others to take excessive pleasure in the offence itself.[[95]](#footnote-95) The *prohairesis* and vice that motivate *hubris* are rooted in a settled state of character, which leads one to unfairly impose one’s will on others.[[96]](#footnote-96) Thus, one who engages in *hubris* commits two wrongs simultaneously: dishonoring others and overvaluing oneself. Although injustice occurs in a number of concrete actions, such actions arise from a disposition that entails a blind overevaluation of oneself and an inclination to excess.

Thus, merely thinking big entails a hubristic disposition that leads to insult and injury against others, specifically by disregarding one’s equals in order to make oneself superior. That is to say, *hubris* can effectively be defined in terms of one’s attitude towards increasing one’s honour by diminishing others of equal status. When one possesses excess, *pleonexia* and a desire to possess more follows, and one becomes insatiable. This results in the abandonment of a proper self-control in favor of selfish desires and self-aggrandizement which discount the honour of the other party. Thus, *hubris* constitutes the disposition of excessive self-assertion, which arises from having too much of a good thing, and entails the feeling that one’s claims and desires are superior to another’s.

*Section 3: The Centrality of* ison

The conception of *hubris* as the feeling that one is superior to another, and that in light of one’s superiority one is entitled to a greater share than others, is connected the Greek conception of equality (*ison*). In “The Primitive Origin of the Greek Conception of Equality,” Borivoj Borecky argues that *ison* has its origin in the Greek tribal life seen in the Homeric poems.[[97]](#footnote-97) Borecky identifies several idioms used to express the Greek conception of equality, and attempts to ascertain what idea lays at the basis of these interrelated idioms. *Ison* appears in different contexts in the expressions *ison echein*, *ison didonai*, and *ison nemein* and these idioms are not interpreted the same way despite all including the word *ison*.[[98]](#footnote-98) Often these idioms are seen in legal, political, or social contexts and refer to being equal, having equal rights, or granting equal access.[[99]](#footnote-99) Elsewhere, however, similar idioms replace *ison* with *platton* or *elatton* to denote having more or less than another. The flexibility of these idioms shows that the adjective *ison* was not always understood in terms of equal right, but that it was often linked to the idea of portion or share.[[100]](#footnote-100) The position of a citizen is expressed as his equal or unequal share in the administration of the state’s laws, civil privileges, or sacrifices allowed to or owned by every citizen.[[101]](#footnote-101)

As we have seen in Hesiod, a division of shares was not only limited to political life but included the division of food, land, and inheritance, as well as shares in social life. Homeric society, however, was not a tribe of equal members; there was a social hierarchy that knew the difference between nobles and commoners, and free men and slaves. Distribution of food, resources, and honour was no longer based on absolute equality since certain members of a community such as a *basileus* had the right to *geras* and *temenos*.[[102]](#footnote-102) The remaining booty and food was divided among the other members of the community, but this too is not done according to principles of equality but rather according to social standing and nobility;[[103]](#footnote-103) for example in *Odyssey* 14, when Castor’s inheritance is divided amongst his sons, the illegitimate son receives a smaller inheritance than the legitimate sons.[[104]](#footnote-104) Equality is similarly tied to the division of inheritance in the *Iliad* where Poseidon rebukes Zeus’ request for him to abstain from battle. Poseidon refuses to obey Zeus at first on the basis that they are equals. Poseidon points to the fact that when the cosmos was divided among the sons of Kronos he was allotted an equal portion to Zeus.[[105]](#footnote-105) Poseidon uses the phrase *homotimos* to indicate that he received an equal share to Zeus and consequently possesses equal authority to Zeus.[[106]](#footnote-106) Thus, in Homer, the position of gods and men alike is determined by the size of their share – that is to say, equal rights are expressed by equal shares.[[107]](#footnote-107)

In Homer, division is often denoted by *lanchano*, which originally meant ‘receive by lot’. A “lot” played an important role for tribal society insofar as it was the guarantee of equality in the distribution of property. This usage of *lanchano* is also seen in Homer in the division of booty and inheritance. Here the right to a portion arises naturally out of membership in a collective. As is the case in Homer, however, one’s claim to the lot is not based solely on membership but also on one’s social standing and moral status. Agamemnon, for example, as the greatest king of men is entitled to the largest share of *geras* – none of the Achaeans disputes this – but even in light of being entitled to a greater share, there is a limit to what Agamemnon can possess and how he can act, which if exceeded renders him a *hubristes* and incurs divine retribution. Thus, there was a limit that even kings had to function within so as not to invoke divine wrath.

The idea of maintaining a level of resources in proportion to one’s status and needs comes together in the term *koros*. *Koros* pertains to an *oikos*’ natural limit based on its number of dependants, and the social commitments it was expected to uphold. As James Helm identifies, *koros* took on a range of semantic meaning and carries different emphasis for different authors.[[108]](#footnote-108) *Koros* and its derivatives appear most frequently in Homer, where *koros* is often applied to the consumption of food.[[109]](#footnote-109) In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, donkeys are described as “satisfied with fodder,” caves with forage, and cows with grass.[[110]](#footnote-110) Elsewhere we see *koros* denote satisfaction for humans as well, insofar as people “satisfy themselves with food and wine.”[[111]](#footnote-111) Humans are also capable of getting their fill of non-food items, such as the lyre.[[112]](#footnote-112) The idea of *koros* as a limit denoted by satisfaction is thus extended beyond the consumption of food, and can be applied to all things which one engages with.[[113]](#footnote-113) Menelaus says that “there is a *koros* of everything, both of sleep and lovemaking, of sweet singing, and blameless dancing, the desire for which one longs to satisfy even more than that for war. But the Trojans are insatiable (*akoretos*) of battle.”[[114]](#footnote-114) The limit denoted by *koros*, then, is an absolute concept where one’s subjective evaluation must align with objective fact.[[115]](#footnote-115) That is to say, one’s desires must align with a natural limit. Thus, *koros* refers to the satisfaction received when adhering to a natural limit, and *akoretos* implies that one is incapable of being satisfied.

*Koros* words appear infrequently in Hesiod compared to Homer, appearing only three times in *WD*.[[116]](#footnote-116) As with Homer, Hesiod uses *koros* to denote when humans and animals are satisfied with food.[[117]](#footnote-117) For Homer as well as Hesiod, *koros* denotes the sense of satisfaction received by adhering to one’s natural limits. We see, however, a shift in the meaning of *koros* as times goes by. As Helm notes, the lyric poet Alkman deploys *koros* in a novel way when he speaks of the *koros* of purple, where purple is symbolic of wealth.[[118]](#footnote-118) Sappho deploys *koros* in a similar way where she refers to a group of people as having had enough (*koros*) of Gorgo.[[119]](#footnote-119) There are few uses of *koros* by other Greek lyric poets, but these scant passages indicate a shift in meaning of *koros* from limit and satisfaction towards excess. There are similarly few uses of *koros* in Solon; however, Solon pushes the sense of *koros* further until it means not only excess of a material thing, but also the desire for too much.[[120]](#footnote-120) In his “Hymn to the Muses,” Solon implies that wealth itself is not a problem, so much as the excessive desire for it which leads to arrogance, violence, and injustice.[[121]](#footnote-121) Solon stresses that wealth must not be acquired unjustly or through *hubris*, or else Zeus will assure justice by sending ruin as punishment.[[122]](#footnote-122) Desiring wealth is natural – Solon states his own desire for it – as “the immortals gave desire for gain to mortals.”[[123]](#footnote-123) The issue is that, although one’s desires may be clear, “no limit to wealth lies manifest to men.”[[124]](#footnote-124) Since mortals desire wealth without limit, wealth entails a desire for excess whereby “those who possess the most strive for twice as much.”[[125]](#footnote-125) Thus, it is not merely possessing excess wealth that poses an issue according to Solon, but also excessive desires which do not adhere to the natural limit implied by *koros* in Homer and Hesiod.

With this understanding of *koros*, *ison*, and *hubris*, we can now make sense of the moral and religious understanding of practical misfortune that we find in Hesiod. Punishable transgression occurs when one is inclined towards excess. Excessive wealth and resources orientate one towards injustice by impelling one to acquire more than what one is due – that is to say, excessive wealth leads to *pleonexia*. This is particularly dangerous because it promotes the sense that one is entitled to more than another, not by working hard, but by swindling others. In a community like Hesiod’s Ascra, where all members are equals in light of being autonomous and unsubordinated, it is a great offence to desire excess, since excess constitutes putting down and otherwise subjecting others to advance one’s superiority and value. *Pleonexia*, then, promotes *hubris* which compels one to wrongfully lay claim to the share of another who is rightfully one’s equal. The injustice is compounded by the fact that this is done without any limit or natural stopping point. Since there is no limit to wealth, someone seeking excessive wealth is insatiable and is constantly driven to impose himself on others, which manifests in hubristic and unjust actions, punishable by divine retribution. Thus, the proper management of resources which aims at achieving a state of *aphenos* in proportion to the needs of an *oikos*, and the moral disposition which leads to satisfaction in frugality and persistent labour are conducive of just behaviour and prosperity.

Health *qua* Harmonic Techne: Equilibrating Opposites

Plague was a major concern in antiquity and features heavily in Greek and Latin literature. In the *Iliad*, Apollo shoots arrows of plague upon the Achaeans in response to Agamemnon’s unjust treatment of his priest Chryses. Similarly, in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Thebes suffers a plague because of the religious pollution associated with its king. When plague struck Athens, Thucydides writes that a disregard for traditional religion, morality, and law rose amongst the *demos*. These authors indicate that health was a public concern with ramifications for an entire community and was linked to aspects of morality, and religion. Simultaneously to this magicoreligious conception of health, however, we also see the rise of rationalistic medicine. Alcmaeon defines health not in terms of morality or religion, but in terms of physiological equilibrium. This defines health as the equality of shares of powers and is echoed by the Hippocratics. Hippocratic physicians define health along the same lines as Alcmaeon as an equilibrium of the body’s four constituents known as humors. It is the role of the physician to identify the cause of bodily imbalance and to restore balance by prescribing an equal but opposite change to one’s diet, regimen, or location. This understanding of health as a balance of internal powers affected by one’s environment, diet, and regimen, I refer to as the rationalistic conception of health in contradistinction to the magicoreligious conception of health seen in Homer and Sophocles. These two models of health, I argue, while in some ways at variance are nevertheless not antithetical but both partake in an understanding of health as a balance between excess and deficiency and proper proportion.

*Section 1: Alcmaeon and the Hippocratics*

In the fifth century BC, medicine emerged as a professional occupation or *techne*. This was driven, in part, by physicians’ attempts to understand health in terms of one’s relationship to one’s environment, diet, and regimen. Although we see physicians such as the sons of Asclepius, Machaeon and Podilarius, in literature as early as Homer, the most famous Greek doctor is the figure most associated with the rise of rational medicine, namely Hippocrates.

There is, however, one physician to whom Hippocrates and the Hippocratic tradition are indebted. The philosopher-physician Alcmaeon attributed disease and health not to Zeus or other divinities, but to physiological equilibrium which he describes in terms of *isonomia* and *monarchia*.[[126]](#footnote-126) In fragment 4, Alcmaeon writes that the equality (*isonomia*) of the powers (*dynamis*) maintains health and that monarchy (*monarchia*) among them produces disease.[[127]](#footnote-127) Notable here is that Alcmaeon describes health as the proportionate blending of physiological qualities which reformulates the definition of health as the equality of shares of powers.[[128]](#footnote-128) The conceptions of proportion and limit are fundamental to early Greek social and moral thought. This is the first attested instance of their being employed in relation to health, notably by the metaphorical use of political language.[[129]](#footnote-129)

Alcmaeon introduces political terminology into medical writing as a response to his changing political landscape. Geoffrey Lloyd suggests that various aspects of the *polis*, an organized whole composed of interdependent individuals, provided early Greek thinkers with a way to conceptualize natural phenomena, such as health, as manifesting the same norms and relationships displayed in the social sphere: enmity or friendship, greed or moderation, and inequity or fairness.[[130]](#footnote-130) Archaic cities would sometimes fall under autocratic domination, representing the collapse of civic rule into tyranny. Beginning in the 6th century, however, egalitarianism gained support and *poleis* is such as Akragas, Syracuse, and Athens set up democratic constitutions;[[131]](#footnote-131) but at the same time, other *poleis* tried to maintain the rule of the few, such as aristocracy or oligarchy, which were based on the unequal distribution of power.[[132]](#footnote-132) *Isonomia* is first found at the end of the sixth century, as a slogan of democrats, who treat democracy as the only true, legitimate form of a *polis* and reject aristocracy and oligarchy as forms of tyranny. Thus, Alcmaeon’s language reflects the great controversies of the *polis* in his day.

What makes Alcmaeon so distinctive is the opposition between *isonomia* and *monarchia*. The term *monarchia* derives from *monos* (one or alone) and *archein* (to rule).[[133]](#footnote-133) Thus, *monarchia* refers to an empowered or ruling body which is a single individual such as a king or a tyrant. On the other hand, the etymology of *isonomia* is difficult to deduce. The first component of *isonomia* is *isos* which, as stated in chapter one, pertains to equality. The second component, however, can be either the noun *nomos* (law or custom), or the verb *nemein* (to distribute).[[134]](#footnote-134) Thus, *isonomia* can mean equality before the law, namely the written and unwritten codes applied equally to a specific group; but it could also refer to an equality of shares, namely the distribution of power among equal peers.[[135]](#footnote-135) Alcmaeon seems to use *isonomia* in the latter, broader sense, as meaning a fair compromise or proper allocation of constituents which comprise a whole, heralding the advent of humoral theory. Extant sources after Alcmaeon such as Polybus, for example, write that a human is healthy when the two hot (blood and bile) and the two cold (breath and phlegm) elements of a body are not striving against each other, but are moderately (*metrios*) mixed.[[136]](#footnote-136) Similarly, in *On Airs, Waters, and Places*, the author describes a temperate climate as the enforcement of egalitarian (*isomoiria*) norms in the seasonal cycle.[[137]](#footnote-137) Although medical authors do not use such politically charged terms as Alcmaeon, they deploy similar phrases such as *isomoiria*, *symmetria* *krasis*, and *metrio* *echein* which express the proportionate blending of properties and are also used to describe various normative social forms and practices characteristic of the *polis*.[[138]](#footnote-138)

*Isonomia* highlights the role of equality qua balanced proportion, but two other terms need to be unpacked to make complete sense of Alcmaeon’s conception of health: *dynamis* and *krasis*.[[139]](#footnote-139) Gregory Vlastos suggests that the original meaning of *dynamis* was not “a substance that has power” but rather “a substance that is a power” which can assert itself and cause trouble in light of being stronger than others.[[140]](#footnote-140) Its strength must be moderated to preserve the well-being of the whole. This balancing is not done by repressing a superior, but by counterpoising an equal.[[141]](#footnote-141) Alcmaeon’s *isonomia* of *krasis*, or balance of the mixture, is centred in concern for equilibrium itself rather than in the specific nature of the equal liberated powers (*dynamis*).[[142]](#footnote-142) It is not until the Hippocratics that the specific nature of physiological constituents is expanded upon, but the general notion of bodily health consisting of a properly proportioned mixture is first seen in Alcmaeon.

Hippocratic physicians, like Alcmaeon, conceive of health in terms of a balance and proper proportion of bodily constituents. The physician must identify the cause of disease *qua* bodily imbalance and restore balance by prescribing a change to the patient’s diet, regimen, and location. Two treatises are of particular importance for explicating this theory: *On Airs, Waters, and Places* and *On the Nature of Man*.

The first of these texts, *On Airs, Waters, and Places*, henceforth referred to as *AWP*, exemplifies the shift from a mythopoetic to a naturalistic model of health by placing health in direct relation with one’s environment, diet, and regimen. The author begins by stating that anyone wishing to learn a medical *techne* must begin by studying a patient’s physical environment.[[143]](#footnote-143) This is not a mere recommendation; rather ἰητρικὴ (medicine) is necessarily predicated on an understanding of one’s environment.[[144]](#footnote-144) The author proceeds by specifying that the environment which physicians should devote their time to studying is the *polis*.[[145]](#footnote-145) Where a *polis* is located determines its elevation, exposure to hot and cold winds, and the quality of its water. As we are about to see, these forces affect the diets and regimens of a *polis’* inhabitants and should be monitored by physicians to promote bodily health.

According to the author of *AWP*, a *polis’* physical properties have two effects on its inhabitants. The first is pathological: excessive or inadequate exposure to warm and cold and wet and dry result in disease. Certain environmental factors are inherently preferable to others; for example, the author writes that an elevated water supply is best for a *polis* because it is closer to the sun and more readily purified.[[146]](#footnote-146) Other factors, however, are not always beneficial. The winds, for example, are four-fold and entail mixed results for the inhabitants of a *polis* that depend on the wind’s origin.

Exposure to the south wind, the author claims, makes a *polis’* water briny.[[147]](#footnote-147) A consequence of this is that the inhabitants of this city are exposed to an excess of salt and “have heads that are moist and full of phlegm, and bellies often agitated from the phlegm that drips down.”[[148]](#footnote-148) Miscarriages and sterility mar the city, convulsions and asthma beset the children, and men experience “diarrhea, dysentery, chills, chronic winter fever, and many pustules and hemorrhoids in their rump.”[[149]](#footnote-149) Exposure to the south wind has profound negative effects for health in light of it changing the saltiness of a *polis’* water. This subsequently exposes the *polis’* inhabitants to an abundance of salt, which disrupts one’s internal balance balance and leads to the outbreak of disease.

One might suppose that the north wind, in contradistinction to the south, might have more favourable results; however, the author’s description of eyes quickly hardening and rupturing from the onset of inflammation is at least as bad as the effects of the south wind.[[150]](#footnote-150) The north wind, similarly to the south, has this effect by changing the quality of a *polis’* water. Exposure to the north wind renders water hard and cold.[[151]](#footnote-151) The resulting hardness of the water makes many women barren or unable to breastfeed, resulting in a decline in population. Thus, we see that, for the Hippocratics, if a body is affected by some environmental forces more than others, it is thrown into a state of imbalance and insalubriousness.

The author of *AWP* also describes how the environment shapes one’s regimen, which is another contributor to health. In typical Greek fashion, the author of *AWP* boasts that Europeans maintain the strongest constitutions as a result of their harsh environment compared to Asians whose abundant resources result in inactivity.[[152]](#footnote-152) Since Asia is located in a temperate climate with abundant resources, the author of *AWP* suggests that Asians do not need to fight or struggle to survive like the Greeks, whose land is hostile and prone to rapid seasonal change.[[153]](#footnote-153) This results in Asians being fainthearted, lacking manliness, and being more unfit for war than the Greeks.[[154]](#footnote-154)

The abundance of food afforded to Asians by their environment renders them lazy and passive, thereby upsetting the balance between activity and diet causing them to grow fat and weak. They ride horses and wear trousers all day, which causes them to grab at their genitals incessantly, reducing their sexual desire and rendering them impotent.[[155]](#footnote-155) Their horse riding and pants cause sores for them and render their hips lame from lack of use.[[156]](#footnote-156) Regarding regimen, then, a balance must also be maintained to promote health; the horse riding and leisure available to the Asians upsets this balance by allowing them to engage in physical activity less, thereby rendering them weak and impotent.

Furthermore, as a result of their aversion to conflict “most of Asia is not free but ruled by kings.”[[157]](#footnote-157) Consequently, even those born with naturally strong constitutions are made by worse by their laws and customs.[[158]](#footnote-158) The men there perform womanly tasks and “live and talk like women.”[[159]](#footnote-159) This reference to law and kingship recalls Alcmaeon’s political terminology; but where in Alcmaeon the disequilibrium of bodily powers is likened to a city under autocratic domination, here the physical and social regimen is conducive of a physical and psychological constitution that in turn conduces to an autocratic regime.

The importance of maintaining this equilibrium for health is clarified in a second Hippocratic treatise: *On the Nature of Man*. Unlike other Hippocratic texts, the author of *On the Nature of Man* is explicitly named as Polybus, Hippocrates’ student and son-in-law. In *On the Nature of Man*, Polybus explicates Hippocratic humorism which predicates the importance of environment, diet, and regimen. Humorism stipulates that man is comprised of four basic substances of black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm: “And the body of man holds in itself blood and phlegm and yellow bile and black bile, and this is the nature of his body, and on account of these things he suffers and prospers.”[[160]](#footnote-160) What is meant by basic here is that these four substances cannot be reduced further; man is a complex organism, comprised of four humours, but these humours themselves are irreducible to simpler constituent parts. Health is defined as a balance between these constituents, and, when one is abundant or lacking, the body is thrown into a state of imbalance and disease ensues: “Therefore, indeed he prospers most of all whenever he has these substances in proportion to one another … and when [these substances] have been mixed together entirely; and he suffers whenever one of these is lesser or more or isolated in the body and is not bound to all the others.”[[161]](#footnote-161) The amount of each substance one has is determined by one’s environment, diet and regimen, making them essential for maintaining humoral balance and promoting health: “but when diseases of all sorts occur at the same time it is clear that diets are responsible for each disease.”[[162]](#footnote-162)

Similarly, Polybus describes a disease’s cure as an equal but opposite change in the patient’s diet and regimen. Just as disease is the result of a change from humoral balance to imbalance, the remedy is to rebalance one’s humors by prescribing proper diet and exercise: “the treatment carried out should be that opposed to the cause of the disease, and should be by change of diet.”[[163]](#footnote-163) When blood is in excess, Polybus advocates for bloodletting by cutting veins on the arm to remove the excess blood and restore a proper humoral balance.[[164]](#footnote-164) Similarly, when phlegm or bile is in excess, a change in location or diet is prescribed to the patient. In either case, whether it is a prescription for diet and exercise or more physical interventions, the goal of the physician is to promote health by restoring the balance of one’s internal humours.

Several Hippocratic authors define health, similarly to Polybus, as a physiological state consisting of a proportionate blending of bodily constituents.[[165]](#footnote-165) Hippocratic authors tend to agree that health depends on the nature of the individual, who requires a different proportioning of bodily constituents depending on their age, location, and season, and in accordance with their diet, regiment, and sex.[[166]](#footnote-166) A physician should consider the needs and situation of each individual patient. The proper method of curing a disease is to identify the imbalance and its cause and to induce an opposite effect on the body to restore an equilibrium of internal powers.[[167]](#footnote-167) We can see from cases of disease catalogued by Hippocratic physicians in *On Epidemics* that a patient’s symptoms are described in terms of excessive quantities of hot or cold or wet or dry:

A woman who lodged near the Liars' Market, having then brought forth a son in a first and difficult labor, was seized with *fever*. Immediately on the commencement had *thirst*, nausea, and cardialgia; tongue *dry*; bowels disordered, with *thin and scanty dejections*; had no sleep. On the second, had slight rigor, *acute fever*; a faint *cold sweat* about the head. On the third, painfully affected; *evacuations from the bowels undigested, thin, and copious*. On the fourth, had a rigor; all the symptoms exacerbated; insomnolency. On the fifth, in a painful state. On the sixth, in the same state; discharges from the bowels *liquid and copious*. On the seventh, had a rigor, *fever* acute; *much thirst*; much tossing about; towards evening *a cold sweat over all*; *extremities cold, could no longer be kept warm*; and again at night had a rigor; *extremities could not be warmed*; she did not sleep; was slightly delirious, and again speedily collected. On the eighth, about mid-day, *she became warm*, was thirsty, comatose, had nausea; *vomited small quantities of yellowish bile*; restless at night, did not sleep; *passed frequently large quantities of urine* without consciousness. On the ninth, all the symptoms gave way; comatose, towards evening slight rigors; *small vomitings of bile.* On the tenth, rigor; *exacerbation of the fever*, did not sleep at all; in the morning passed much urine having a sediment; *extremities recovered their heat*. On the eleventh, *vomited bile* of a verdigris-green color; not long after had a rigor, *and again the extremities cold*; towards evening a rigor, *a cold sweat*, *much vomiting*; passed a painful night. On the twelfth, *had copious black and fetid vomitings*; much hiccup, painful thirst. On the thirteenth, *vomitings black, fetid, and copious*; rigor about mid-day, loss of speech. On the fourteenth, some *blood ran from her nose,* she died. In this case the bowels were loose throughout; with rigors: her age about seventeen. *An ardent fever*.[[168]](#footnote-168)

If one is healthy, one’s constituent powers, which manifest the properties of hot or cold, and wet or dry, are in equilibrium and equal to one another. Powers *qua* bodily constituents are equal if they are able to hold each other in check so that none can gain supremacy over the others, reminiscent of Alcmaeon’s *monarchia*.[[169]](#footnote-169)

There is, however, no consistency as to how many and what kinds of bodily constituents exist. Most Hippocratic authors maintain that bodily effects are reducible to the main pairs of opposites, namely hot and cold, and dry and wet. Each constituent, however, it may be imagined, has its own power, which if increased, entails the diminishment of another power, namely its opposite.[[170]](#footnote-170) One is healthy when effective blending prevents one constituent from dominating another; and one experiences disease and pain when this equilibrium is disrupted, namely when one part becomes excessively hot or cold, or wet or dry, and one power dominates another.[[171]](#footnote-171)

To return to a previous point, in *AWP*, when the author states that some seasons are better for some constitutions than others, we move into the area of cosmic justice.[[172]](#footnote-172) It is not enough for a physician to observe which climates and seasons are better; he must also explain why.[[173]](#footnote-173) That is to say, a physician also demonstrates an interest in *phusis* (nature) insofar as a physician aims to explain the harmony between human nature and the natural environment. This is done through an investigation of how environmental factors such as water, location, and orientation to the winds harmonize and affect bodily constituents. An *isomoiria* of days and of seasons, for example, may be observed to be an equilibrium of opposites.[[174]](#footnote-174) There is an *isomoiria* of light and dark, referred to as an equinox (*isameria*), when day is equal to night and when the sun rises at a midway point between the northernmost and southernmost risings of the year.[[175]](#footnote-175) Similarly, the seasons rotate on the basis of *isomoiria* allowing each to rule in turn, just as a democratic *polis* rotates which citizens hold office.[[176]](#footnote-176) The idea that one’s health is affected by environmental forces and cosmic fact such as the progression of day and night and of the seasons is expanded upon by the physician, Eryximachus, in Plato’s *Symposium*.

Eryximachus’s speech emphasizes the role of temperance in establishing an equilibrium between the opposite forces of Love and Strife. His discourse picks up Pausanius’ previous discussion of a double *eros* which bears strong resemblance to Empedocles’s Love and Strife.[[177]](#footnote-177) For Empedocles Love and Strife are the forces that compose nature into ordered and disordered forms.[[178]](#footnote-178) Where Empedocles and Eryximachus differ, however, is that the former assumes a cosmic cycle whereby Love and Strife dominate one another to the point that each cancel out the other entirely.[[179]](#footnote-179) Eryximachus, on the other hand, argues that such equilibrium is dynamic and that the two species of love – Polyhymnian and Uranian *Eros* – do not cancel each other, but shape one another into the proper proportion.[[180]](#footnote-180)

Following the theme of love in the *Symposium*, Eryximachus states that opposite properties form a harmonious relationship when governed by the correct species of Love.”[[181]](#footnote-181) Eryximachus maintains that there are two types of *Eros –* Polyhymnian and Uranian *Eros* – which are honorable and vulgar respectively.[[182]](#footnote-182) Eryximachus argues that extreme caution is necessary when indulging in Polyhymnian eros to avoid slipping into debauchery.[[183]](#footnote-183) The distinction between two types of *eros* has similarities to Hesiod’s description of two kinds of *eris*. Just as understanding, for Hesiod, is conducive of proper action, the main distinction between noble *eros* and base *eros* lies in education based on *sophrosune* (moderation) in opposition to *pleonexia* (greed) which constitutes base *eros*.[[184]](#footnote-184)

For Eryximachus, harmony is established in things previously discordant by medical *praxis*.[[185]](#footnote-185) Eryximachus emphasizes the human role in identifying and striving to restore and maintain the dynamic equilibrium of nature. Such a task involves transforming discord into harmony without eliminating one of the two opposites but by finding the right balance whereby two opposites form a relationship. When something discordant is made concordant, its elements undergo a quantitative change which in turn changes their oppositional qualities.[[186]](#footnote-186) Moderation or temperance is not the complete dominance of one opposite over another but consists of a proper proportion between constituents. When one’s nature becomes disproportioned, disease ensues.

Rhythm or musical harmony illustrates Eryximachus’ claim well. Rhythm renders the fast and the slow, which are naturally discordant, concordant, and is established by numeric harmony.[[187]](#footnote-187) Thus, for Eryximachus, harmony produces sensible qualities, such as rhythm, but is predicated by an invisible numeric harmony.[[188]](#footnote-188) As the Pythagoreans noted, and as Eryximachus picks up on, number creates harmony *qua* proportionate relation.[[189]](#footnote-189) With this in mind, Eryximachus refers to a celestial harmony that pervades all of nature: the duality of opposites, or, in Empedoclean terms, Love and Strife, provide one, such as a physician a model of discord which may then manifest harmony through the ordering of opposite powers.[[190]](#footnote-190)

In the *Timaeus*, it is explained that the harmony of the microcosm should be related to that of the macrocosm.[[191]](#footnote-191) Accordingly, health of the body, in this dialogue, is defined as the right equilibrium among its elements, and health of the soul is described in similar terms as the absence of excess in its constitution.[[192]](#footnote-192) The right proportioning of its constituent parts is defined in the *Timaeus* as conformity to nature; that is to say, for a body or soul to be properly proportioned is for a body or soul to be in a prosperous, healthy and natural state.[[193]](#footnote-193) Conversely, an improper proportion or imbalance among the opposite forces present in the *phusis* create a disease of body and soul. The disorder of elements creates natural imbalances which must be reordered by a magistrate demiurge who legislates *phusis*, a physician who heals the body, and, as we will see in the following chapter, a philosopher who heals the soul. A physician, similarly to the demiurge, creates sensible harmony by properly proportioning the double *eros*. Hidden or numeric harmony, or in Platonic terms, the one, which is not subject to duality and must be perceived by the intellect, serves as a model for the physician’s harmonizing actions, which imply the restoration of a hidden proportion.[[194]](#footnote-194)

Eryximachus further reflects Hippocratic doctrine at 188 when he refers to the seasons as influencing the qualities of hot, cold, wet, and dry.[[195]](#footnote-195) Eryximachus uses the example of seasonal progression to demonstrate how his conception of harmony and the two species of love pertains to all of nature; that is to say, they constitute a cosmic principle. When the powers of hot, cold, wet, and dry are governed by the proper species of love their mixture (*krasis*) is temperate and so is the climate.[[196]](#footnote-196) Subsequently, when seasonal properties are properly proportioned, harvests are plentiful, man and all other living things are in good health, and no harm can come to them.[[197]](#footnote-197) But when *eros* resides over the seasons with *hubris* “it [eros] brings death and destruction and spreads plague and many other diseases among the plants and animals.”[[198]](#footnote-198)

Eryximachus’ phrasing, *ho meta tes hubreos eros*, in relation to the seasons is striking for its parallels to Hesiod’s exhortation to avoid hubris, and to the Hippocratic *AWP* where healthy cities are characterized by balanced seasons.[[199]](#footnote-199) Following suit with these authors Eryximachus defines such an equilibrium as equivalent to moderation. Applied to the seasons, moderation ensures that seasonal changes do not occur suddenly via a violent upheaval of elemental powers. Such changes are the ecological equivalent of *hubris* – excess in its moral dimension.[[200]](#footnote-200) Disease, suffering, disorder at an environmental level, and *hubris* are the results of a violation of the harmonic law that pervades the universe rendering it an orderly cosmos.[[201]](#footnote-201) Thus, in Plato, medicine *qua* harmonic *techne* takes on a cosmic and philosophical meaning which pervades all fields of human activity, including, as we will see in the next chapter, ethics and politics.[[202]](#footnote-202)

*Section 2: Plague in Epic, Tragedy, and Historiography*

One of the first descriptions of plague is not found in medical texts, but rather in Homeric epic poetry. Book one of the *Iliad* details the destruction of a plague as it ravages the Greek soldiers at Troy. The plague is physically spread by Apollo, who punishes the Greeks because of Agamemnon’s unjust treatment of his priest Chryses.[[203]](#footnote-203) Chryses visits Agamemnon and begs him to release his daughter Chryseis, who has been taken as a consort for Agamemnon. Agamemnon, however, rebukes Chryses and dismisses him with a threat to his life.[[204]](#footnote-204) By threatening Chryses, Agamemnon violates the Greek mores of *xenia*, which stipulate that a host must be hospitable towards their guests. Recognizing the severity of Agamemnon’s transgression, Chryses prays to Apollo and asks him to punish the Greeks in return for his devotion to the god.[[205]](#footnote-205) Apollo is angered by the injustice committed against his priest and complies with Chryses’ request by firing arrows of plague upon the Greeks for nine days.[[206]](#footnote-206)

The response to the plague is at first political: Achilles calls the other leaders to an assembly to deliberate on a solution.[[207]](#footnote-207) The solution proposed is to consult a seer who can read omens and inform the Greeks which god is angry with them and what can be done to placate them.[[208]](#footnote-208) The seer Calchas is summoned and informs the Greeks that Apollo has sent the plague because “Agamemnon has dishonoured his priest.”[[209]](#footnote-209) By violating xenia, Agamemnon violates a custom sacred to Zeus and disrupts the cosmic balance. Just as when Zeus was disobeyed by Epimetheus in *Works and Days* and man was punished with sickness, so too is a violation of the moral truths Zeus upholds followed by plague in the *Iliad*.[[210]](#footnote-210) The remedy of the plague is thus to restore the comic order by returning Chryseis to her father and placating Apollo.[[211]](#footnote-211) When Chryses receives his daughter, he once again prays to Apollo asking him to lift the pestilence.[[212]](#footnote-212) At the same time, the Greeks sacrifice oxen to Apollo, sprinkle barley, pour libations, and hold a feast in his honour.[[213]](#footnote-213) With the injustice corrected, and the god appeased, the cosmic order is restored and Apollo lifts the plague from the Greek camps.[[214]](#footnote-214)

The concern for disease is not bound to the environment, diet, or humors like we see in the Hippocratic corpus, but rather, efforts to stop the plague are wholly aimed at restoring sanctity and placating the gods. This reveals a magicoreligious understanding of health that may at first seem in tension with the Hippocratic model; however, just as the Hippocratic model understands disease as an imbalance of internal humors, the magicoreligious view seen in the *Iliad* understands disease as a disruption of the cosmic order; and, just as the Hippocratics treat disease by identifying the cause of imbalance and prescribing equal but opposite changes in diet and regimen to restore balance, plague in the *Iliad* is lifted by identifying the moral transgression that disrupted the comic order and rectifying it to restore balance.

The onset, effects, and remedy of plague are also discussed in Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*. The play opens with Oedipus describing the city as filled with incense, chants, and cries of pain.[[215]](#footnote-215) Although no information is provided about the message or addressee of the chants, their presence indicates that sufferers had recourse to healing through prayers and incantations. The priest’s description of citizens crouching around the altars likewise shows the Thebans seeking the aid and sanctuary of the gods to protect them against the plague.[[216]](#footnote-216) Oedipus sends Creon to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi to learn what he might do to end the plague.[[217]](#footnote-217) The solution, Creon reports, is to “drive away the polluting stain Thebes has harboured,” which is to say, the murderer of Laius.[[218]](#footnote-218) Thus we see among the Thebans the same view of health as seen in the *Iliad*: that disease is sent from a divinity as a result of a moral transgression and is cured by removing the source of pollution, the disruptor of the cosmic order, and placating the gods.

The irony, of course, is that the audience knows all along that the source of the pollution, the one who killed Laius, is Oedipus himself. Upon learning the truth, Oedipus, obeying Apollo’s instructions of punishing the wrongdoer to remove the plague, blinds and exiles himself.[[219]](#footnote-219) As in the *Iliad*, plague is directly associated with the morality and actions of a leader. Just as Agamemnon’s moral transgression results in plague for the Achaeans, Oedipus killing his father and wedding his mother results in plague for the Thebans; and, just as Agamemnon resolves the plague by atoning for his actions, so too are the remedies for the Theban plague removing the source of religious pollution by punishing acts of injustice.

Differing from the *Iliad*, however, is that the Theban plague occurs in the context of the polis. As the king of Thebes, Oedipus is responsible for the well-being of his citizens, in contradistinction to Agamemnon who is chief of an allied military host. Agamemnon expresses no remorse that the troops supporting him die of a plague brought on by his actions. Oedipus, however, feels the collective grief of the city.[[220]](#footnote-220) A special type of pain is reserved for Oedipus, not because he is the source of the pollution (for this fact is not yet known to him), but because he is a responsible king who tries to take care of his citizens. Agamemnon acts as a military commander and his goal is to win a war, which ending the plague happens to align with. Both rulers are concerned with the health of the collective, but the polis embodies a different way about thinking about health. Homer and Sophocles model disease on human-divine relations determined by the morality and actions of the leader of a community; but unlike the *Iliad* that describes the plague as afflicting individual soldiers, Sophocles describes the Theban plague as afflicting the polis itself. One effect of the plague is that “the city herself is badly shaken and is unable to raise her head above the depths of so much surging death;” and later the chorus laments that “our city dies for having lost count of the dead.”[[221]](#footnote-221) The surge of death refers to the high number of individual deaths, but the conglomerate of these deaths amasses into a plague that afflicts the city itself.

As the afflictions of the plague applied to the polis itself, so too are the remedies. Although the remedies remain consistent with the ones seen in the *Iliad* – placating gods and removing religious pollution – they are described as the remedies to cure the polis, not soldiers or citizens: “so now you, best of men, restore and raise up our state; restore our city so it stands secure.”[[222]](#footnote-222) This indicates that the goal of religious cleansing is not only to heal individual citizens, nor even the citizen body as a collective, but also to restore the polis itself. When Tiresias tries to save Oedipus by not revealing the truth to him, Oedipus objects: “do you intend to betray me and destroy the city?”[[223]](#footnote-223) Refused aid by Tiresias, Oedipus does not express concern for his citizens, but for the polis itself. It is the polis that stands to be saved by cleansing the disease from the body politic. Plague originates from within a polis when the unjust actions of its leaders violate custom, law, and morality; and the remedy is similarly directed towards the polis by cauterizing the source of injustice and restoring the polis to a just and healthy state.

Sophocles, however, is writing a mythological narrative, just as Homer is; their works are indicative of general truths and attitudes towards certain phenomena like health, but do not provide a direct picture of contemporary reality. Historiographical sources describe how Greeks conceptualized health and responded to disease in historical practice rather than as reflected and refracted in and through mythological narrative. In 420 BC, a plague broke out in Athens. Thucydides reports that the Athenians responded very much as the Thebans of Sophocles’ play, supplicating at temples and consulting oracles. Indeed, it appears that the plague heightened traditional religious sensitivities.[[224]](#footnote-224) For example, after the Athenian plague, during the peace of Nicias, Asclepius was first inducted into Athens.[[225]](#footnote-225) Asclepius was beginning to replace Apollo as a god of medicine and healing at this time. His induction into Athens indicates an effort to appease him in hope that no future plague would strike Athens. Another example of Athenian religious cleansing is the purification of Delos in 426 “by removing the dead and forbidding future births and deaths there.”[[226]](#footnote-226) Thucydides also relates that the Athenians revived the Delian games in honour of Apollo and Artemis. Apollo was also given the epithet averter of evil (*alexikakos*) for “warding off the pestilence that plagued Athens.”[[227]](#footnote-227) Plutarch further describes measures taken against religious pollution in the form of legal enactment “since impious behaviour was viewed to alienate the gods from a city, impiety, especially in times of war was tantamount to treason and assisting the enemy.”[[228]](#footnote-228) Thus, at Athens, we see health understood in terms of morality and religion and all responses to disease directed at restoring a good standing with the gods.

While the plague was ravaging Athens, the Athenians “began to find fault with Pericles as the author of the war and the cause of all their misfortunes,” reports Thucydides.[[229]](#footnote-229) The Athenians turned on Pericles and blamed him for the plague because he advocated going to war and bringing the Athenians behind their walls according to his city-island strategy.[[230]](#footnote-230) Thus, the Athenians had committed to the same model of health expressed in the *Iliad* and *Oedipus the King*: that plague is the result of a wrongdoing. In the case of Pericles, his wrongdoing, according to the mob of angry Athenians, was supporting war with Sparta.[[231]](#footnote-231) Thus, the Athenians sent embassies to Sparta in hope of reversing Pericles’ acts that caused the plague by ending the war.[[232]](#footnote-232) Thucydides, then, presents the *demos* as committed to a similar understanding of health as seen in epic poetry and tragedy: even where a moral-religious transgression is not seen as being at work, we still see the general habit of looking to the blame of a leader as the source of common misfortune.

As we have seen, the response to the plague at Athens was a combination of magicoreligious and rationalistic remedies. As physicians attempted treatments unsuccessfully, Athenians turned to the gods and traditional magicoreligious conceptions of health and disease. Although the Hippocratic model is rooted in rationalism and naturalism, in contrast to the magicoreligious conception, these views of health are not incompatible. Both views understand health as a balance and disease as an imbalance, and the remedy of disease as a restoration of balance. The two models of health coexisted and shared common conceptual ground insofar as both conceived of health as a balance and proper proportion which if exceeded or transgressed entails disease.

*Health of the Soul and Disease of the* Polis

In Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates argues that a human soul is tripartite, and that a just or proper state of a soul is predicated on a proper proportioning of its parts. If the wrong part of the soul dominates the whole, then injustice ensues, first on an individual level, and then on the level of the *polis*. Indeed, Socrates and his interlocutors discuss individual justice so as to learn what justice is on a political scale. Individual justice is conducive of widespread justice because when an individual is governed by reason, the part of the soul most fit to rule, then they agree that the best among them, the philosophers, ought to rule, and that they should stick to the occupations which they are best suited for. This creates the image of Plato’s just soul and city: a proportionate mixture of internal constituents whereby competing forces are harmonized under the rule of the most fit. How Plato conceives of justice as a proportioning of internal constituents bears strong resemblance to Hippocratic humoral theory, and Plato’s comparison between the soul and the polis parallels how Alcmaeon deploys political terminology in formulating his theory of health. Both Plato and the Hippocratics also conceive of internal constituents as agent-like forces which must be balanced and counterpoised. However, in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, we are presented with a different picture. The analogy of the soul in the *Phaedrus* bears similarities and differences to the analogy in the *Republic*. In the *Phaedrus*, three parts of the soul may be identified, but are now each capable of rational and irrational thought – that is to say, not only is the soul itself complex and composed of multiple parts, but the soul’s constituents are also afflicted by competing rational and irrational desires, which must be balanced to allow the charioteer to remain in control of his chariot. In Plato’s *Laws*, we see a third analogy for the soul when the Athenian compares humans to puppets pulled by golden and iron strings.[[233]](#footnote-233) This analogy, however, appears to be in tension with the tripartite psychology of the *Republic* and the complexity of the soul’s constituents seen in the *Phaedrus*. This raises the question whether Plato abandons a tripartite psychology in the *Laws*, and whether justice and a proper state of being are still conceived of by Plato in terms of a proper proportioning of parts.

There are two camps of thought on this question. First, scholars such as Dorothea Frede and Christopher Bobonich argue the psychology of the *Laws* represents a major shift from the *Republic* towards a unitary psychology. Second, Susan Meyer and Joshua Wilburn argue the bipartition of the puppet analogy is reconciled with the *Republic*’stripartition in consideration of the complexities of the iron strings, and the effects of law. If, in the *Laws*, Plato is committed to a unitary psychology, then his conception of a proper, healthy state deviates from the views of his predecessors, Hesiod, Alcmaeon, and the Hippocratics, and if Plato commits to a bipartite psychology, then his later view differs starkly from his earlier view. In this section, I argue that Plato, instead of radically shifting his understanding of justice and of the soul, remains committed to a tripartite psychology and to a conception of justice rooted in the proper proportioning of parts.

In the second part of this chapter, I detail what happens when law, or “reason enacted by a polis as a whole” is violated according to Plato in the *Laws*.[[234]](#footnote-234) A *polis*, just like bodies and souls, is comprised of internal constituents which must be balanced and counterpoised in order for the polis to rendered healthy and just. The constituents of a polis are its citizens, and the proper proportion conducive of justice is the equilibrium between mass and elite citizens. When this equilibrium is upset, and there is an upheaval of power between mass and elite citizens, *stasis* – a disease of the body politic – ensues. In this section, I argue that the polis, like the body and soul, is understood as an organism susceptible to disease *qua* internal imbalance and disproportion.

In the *Republic*, Socrates divides the soul into three parts. He argues that one thing cannot perform an action and its opposite at the same time.[[235]](#footnote-235) For example, an object cannot be in motion and at rest simultaneously, at least not in the same part of itself and in the same respect. If an object exhibits these properties simultaneously, it is because the object is complex, that is, comprised of at least two parts.[[236]](#footnote-236) This is known as the principle of opposites. Applied to the soul, Socrates argues that the principle of opposites reveals its tripartite nature.[[237]](#footnote-237) Occasional internal conflicts in the form of competing desires reveal three distinct sources of motivation within the soul: appetite, spirit, and reason.[[238]](#footnote-238) Each motivational force detracts from the others and competes against the others for dominance over the whole. For example, when presented with a slice of cake, appetitive desires compel us to eat the cake, whereas reason may remind us we are dieting and deters us from eating. These forces, Socrates identifies as desires, and since three opposing desires compel the soul simultaneously, the soul must be tripartite.[[239]](#footnote-239)

The tripartition of the *Republic* is made especially clear in book IX where Socrates introduces an analogy depicting the soul. Socrates ascribes to each part of the soul an entity meant to represent it.[[240]](#footnote-240) Since reason is a human quality that distinguishes us from beasts, the rational part of the soul is depicted by a human being.[[241]](#footnote-241) The spirited part of the soul is represented by a lion.[[242]](#footnote-242) The most surprising representation is of appetite, which Socrates depicts with a colourful multi-headed hydra.[[243]](#footnote-243) The analogy shows that the force of appetite is overpowering and requires reason and spirit to work together to overcome it. It is notable that in overcoming the hydra, the lion and man do not vanquish it, but keep it under control.[[244]](#footnote-244) The lion and man do not do this by force, but rather, tame and domesticate the hydra. [[245]](#footnote-245)This creates the image of a just soul: spirit and appetite operating in accord with reason.[[246]](#footnote-246)

This depiction of a just soul in terms of a proper proportioning and harmony of its parts is echoed in Plato’s *Phaedrus*. The *Phaedrus* contains another allegory of the soul which Socrates uses to show the soul’s immortality. Socrates’ argument for the immortality of the soul rests on Socrates’s claim that the soul is always in motion, and is the cause of its own motion.[[247]](#footnote-247) To demonstrate the motion of the soul Socrates introduces the allegory of the charioteer and his two horses. The charioteer and the two horses represent the three parts of the soul introduced in the *Republic*: spirit, reason, and appetite.[[248]](#footnote-248) The charioteer restrains and guides his good and bad horse which draws some similarities with how the human tames the lion and domesticates the hydra in the *Republic*.

There are, however, notable differences between the two allegories. Julia Annas has noted that the agents in the allegory do not necessarily stand for single faculties such as reason, spirit, and appetite and do not entail the simplicity of the soul’s parts.[[249]](#footnote-249) Giovanni Ferrari, agreeing with Annas, posits that, in the *Phaedrus*, Plato embraces the complexity of the soul’s parts.[[250]](#footnote-250) Annas and Ferrari suggest reason and desires *qua* motivational forces of the soul need not be categorically opposed; rather reason has desires of its own, and desires can exercise enough reasoning to attain their goals.[[251]](#footnote-251) The good horse can be led by word of command from the charioteer, but the bad horse barely yields to the whip and goad.[[252]](#footnote-252) Both the word of command and the whip and goad are wielded by the charioteer. Yet the charioteer does not act and guide his horses with unaltered reason. When the charioteer experiences attraction to a beautiful boy, he is described as sensible not to reason or command (like the good horse) but to the goad of itching desire (like the bad horse).[[253]](#footnote-253) The goad that urges the charioteer is not the same literal goad used by him on the bad horse. Instead, the goad metaphorically describes the growing pains in a lover’s soul when they gaze upon the beautiful.[[254]](#footnote-254) Thus, the charioteer does not only serve as the voice of reason for the soul but also has desires of his own, which must be checked and balanced.

Moreover, the charioteer guides his horses according to his own inclinations. The metaphorical goading of pleasures guides the charioteer’s use of the literal goad on his horses. When the bad horse sees the beautiful boy, it forcefully ignores the whip and compels his partner’s approach to the youth, frisking at the reins, and bolting in an abundance of natural forcefulness (*bia*).[[255]](#footnote-255) However, when the charioteer remembers the Forms, and the good horse experiences shame at its actions, the two may work together to pull against the bad horse and set the chariot on the right course.[[256]](#footnote-256) When this occurs, however, the bad horse exercises its reasoning insofar as it recognizes how it is hindered from acquiring its desire and seeks to overcome this not by force but by persuasion.[[257]](#footnote-257) The bad horse reminds the charioteer and good horse of the favors of Aphrodite and “upbraids the charioteer and his yokemate for their cowardliness and unmanliness,” which compels the charioteer and the good horse to do the bad horse’s bidding.[[258]](#footnote-258) But when the charioteer and the good horses resist or go back on their promise to ignore the bad horse in light of remembering the Forms the bad horse then drops all attempts at persuasion and returns to forcefully dragging the chariot towards its goal.[[259]](#footnote-259) The bad horse is now the incarnation of *hubris*:[[260]](#footnote-260) it violently thrusts, jumps, bites, and drags the chariot along.[[261]](#footnote-261) This *hubris* is not merely an irrational outburst, but is, as Ferrari notes, prompted by a failure to achieve its ends through rational means, namely persuasion.[[262]](#footnote-262) Thus, reason and the irrational or lower parts of the soul are both capable of reasoning and impulse, and discord and violent struggle of the soul – *hubris* in its psychological dimension – ensue when there is an asymmetry of understanding between the charioteer and horses, namely when irrational or erotic desire surges to dominate the whole.

This asymmetry, however, can be rectified. A soul can be made more divine when it possesses two good horses that act in accordance with the charioteer's command, just like the soul of a god.[[263]](#footnote-263) Socrates describes the soul of the divine as consisting of a charioteer with two good horses in contradistinction to a human soul which contains a mixture of the good and bad.[[264]](#footnote-264) The charioteer does not strive to eradicate or suppress the desires of the bad horse but to learn from them and to integrate them into the whole of the soul by allowing these desires to find their proper place within it.[[265]](#footnote-265)

Differing from the depiction of a tripartite soul found in the *Republic* and *Phaedrus* is Plato’s *Laws*. As its name implies, the topic of the *Laws* is law, which the Athenian defines as “calculation enacted by the city as a whole.”[[266]](#footnote-266) The spirited and appetitive parts of the soul, however, seem to be missing from the dialogue entirely. This issue compounds in book I when the Athenian presents an analogy depicting the soul as a puppet. The Athenian argues that every human is a plaything for the gods – a puppet – with two types of strings: iron and gold.[[267]](#footnote-267) There are many iron strings, which are described as hard and resistant.[[268]](#footnote-268) Comparatively, the golden string is soft and is insufficient to overcome the pull of the iron strings on its own.[[269]](#footnote-269)

The puppet passage raises concerns about the consistency of Plato’s psychology and may suggest a reformation of the philosopher’s views on psychology. It seems in the puppet passage that spirit and appetite are absent and replaced by irrational desires.[[270]](#footnote-270) Does this represent a shift for Plato from a tripartite to a bipartite psychology? Or, can the workings of reason, spirit, and appetite still be identified in the *Laws*, and if so, how can we make sense of the puppet passage?

In her article “Puppets on Strings,” Dorothea Frede argues that the inseparability of irrational desires and weakened role of reason in the *Laws* demonstrate a shift towards a unified psychology.[[271]](#footnote-271) First, Frede argues that the puppet’s strings do not represent parts of the soul.[[272]](#footnote-272) Instead, Frede argues the strings depict forces of the soul.[[273]](#footnote-273) First, Frede argues the iron cords represent pleasure and pain, which promote anticipation.[[274]](#footnote-274) When we anticipate pain, we become fearful and an iron cord of fear pulls us away from whatever frightens us.[[275]](#footnote-275) Comparatively, when we anticipate pleasure we become confident and a desire forms which compels us to pursue the pleasure.[[276]](#footnote-276) However, fear and confidence are not distinct parts of a soul. Instead, Frede argues they constitute positive and negative afflictions that motivate a unified soul.[[277]](#footnote-277)

On this view, a just soul is not conceived in terms of a proper proportion of its parts whereby spirit and appetite act in accordance with reason. Instead, on this unitary view, Plato, in his later dialogues, does not view desires and reason as being divided into separate parts of the soul, as they are in the *Republic*, and instead views the soul as the subject of various psychic states. If this is the case, then Plato’s later understanding of human psychology in the *Laws* not only contrasts starkly to his earlier views, but in doing so also departs from the basic Greek modes of thinking, as I argue in this study, that his earlier views participate in.

Although Frede does well by highlighting the main points of difference between the puppet passage and the *Republic*, she overlooks important similarities between the two. For example, Frede argues that irrational forces cannot be separated.[[278]](#footnote-278) However, the irrational forces she identifies can be separated in the *Laws* in the same way they are in the *Republic*. As previously mentioned, the principle of opposites states that one thing cannot perform an action and its opposite at the same time.[[279]](#footnote-279) Fear and confidence exhibit this opposition. However, an individual can be fearful and confident at the same time. For example, an experienced singer gets nervous before a show. But the same singer also anticipates praise after her performance. This demonstrates two opposing forces, fear and confidence, affecting an individual simultaneously. But for this to be true, fear and confidence must be separate motivational forces, originating from separate parts of the soul. For fear implies the anticipation of pain, and confidence the anticipation of pleasure, and pleasure and pain are opposites; thus, for a unified soul to be fearful and confident entails one thing to undergo two opposite acts simultaneously, which is absurd. Therefore, Frede’s argument that fear and confidence are forces of the soul entails the soul’s complexity, thus contradicting her argument for a unified reading.

Additionally, the depiction of reason as weaker in the *Laws* can be explained by the Athenian’s claim that Magnesia is the second-best city.[[280]](#footnote-280) For the purpose of this paper, we can interpret this as a comparison to the *Kallipolis* of the *Republic*.[[281]](#footnote-281) When interpreted this way, the *Kallipolis* is the best city, and Magnesia, inferior to it in some way, ranks second.[[282]](#footnote-282) I argue reason is depicted as weaker in the *Laws* because Magnesians do not possess truly just souls, which is also why Magnesia ranks second best. The curriculum of the *Kallipolis* begins at an early age and is regulated to cultivate the virtues necessary to rule.[[283]](#footnote-283) Of these virtues, justice reigns chief among them. The emphasis on justice entails an emphasis on reason since justice entails a proper proportion whereby reason rules over spirit and appetite.[[284]](#footnote-284)

Comparatively, in Magnesia, unity is promoted and maintained not by just individuals but by law. Since Magnesians possess personal goods, they develop personal interests, unlike citizens of the *Kallipolis* who prioritize the interests of the city. Moreover, since Magnesians are permitted to pursue personal interests, such as acquiring goods – to the extent law allows – they are permitted to appeal to their irrational desires, which strengthens the irrational, lower parts of the soul, thereby limiting reason’s influencing over the soul and preventing them from being truly just.[[285]](#footnote-285) The weakened role of reason can be explained by Magnesia’s curriculum not cultivating justice as well as the *Kallipolis’*. Reason plays a less active role because Magnesia prioritizes law over individual justice, not because it plays a lesser role in Plato’s psychology. Instead, Plato explores a new concept in the *Laws*, namely law, which does not entail the same emphasis on reason as justice does in the *Republic*. Therefore, the lesser role of reason in the *Laws* does not reveal a shift in Plato’s psychology, but can be explained by his pursuit of new topics.

This also maintains the connection between one’s community (whether it be a village, or a *polis*) and one’s wellbeing. Just as in the *Republic*, individual justice is tied to a just *polis*, and just as Alcmaeon and the Hippocratics describe health in political terms and with political analogies, that a Magnesian does not exercise their reasoning capabilities as strongly as a Kallipolitan reflects the fact that Magnesia’s political constitution is “second best” to the *Kallipolis*.

On the other side of the debate is Susan Meyer, who argues that the *Laws* remans faithful to a tripartite psychology.[[286]](#footnote-286) The *Republic* is difficult to reconcile with the *Laws* because spirit and spirited desire seem to be absent in the latter.[[287]](#footnote-287) Meyer argues against this view.[[288]](#footnote-288) Given that the puppet passage treats pleasure and pain as a unified force, Meyer argues that it is not the force itself, but rather its effects which determine psychology.[[289]](#footnote-289) She claims *spirited* desires do not vanish in the *Laws*, but are divided into fear and shame.[[290]](#footnote-290) When properly understood, Meyer argues, such forces originate from the spirited part of the soul.[[291]](#footnote-291) For example, in book IV of the *Republic*, Socrates posits an example demonstrating the conflict between parts of the soul.[[292]](#footnote-292) Leontius notices some corpses lying on the ground, and desires to take a closer look.[[293]](#footnote-293) However, the disgust he feels deters him from doing so.[[294]](#footnote-294) The example demonstrates that the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul oppose one another; Leontius is compelled by his appetitive desires to look at the bodies, but is deterred simultaneously by his desire to avoid disgust. However, it is notable that Socrates identifies the spirited part of the soul with disgust.[[295]](#footnote-295) Meyer argues that, since disgust is associated with spirt in the *Republic,* shame, in the *Laws*, similarly originates from the spirited part of the soul.[[296]](#footnote-296)Therefore, since *reasoned* desire is depicted by the golden cord, and *appetitive* desires by the iron cords, by distinguishing *spirited* desires as a third source of motivation in the *Laws*, Meyer identifies the three parts of the soul depicted in the *Republic*.

Although I agree with Meyer that the three parts of the soul are identifiable in the *Laws*, I disagree with her interpretation of the puppet passage. Meyer claims that spirited and appetitive desires are present in the *Laws*, but if that’s the case, then why does the puppet analogy only depict two types of strings? Any attempt to reconcile the *Laws* and the *Republic* must answer this question, since the puppet passage presents the *Laws*’psychology as bipartite, in stark contrast to the *Republic*.[[297]](#footnote-297) It seems that the issue scholars have with reconciling these dialogues is accurately interpreting the puppet passage. If we can determine exactly what the puppet passage depicts, we might be able to reconcile it with the *Republic*.[[298]](#footnote-298)

Similar to Frede, Christopher Bobonich argues that the puppet passage depicts a unitary psychology.[[299]](#footnote-299) According to Bobonich, the soul in the *Laws* is not divided into agent-like parts, rather the soul is unitary and treated as the single subject of psychological states.[[300]](#footnote-300) Bobonich identifies two aspects of the puppet analogy: the person themselves, represented by the puppet, and the person’s afflictions, represented by the strings.[[301]](#footnote-301) The strings pull the puppet into two opposite directions, thus causing the individual to experience akratic conflict.[[302]](#footnote-302) Akratic conflict occurs when opposing motivational forces simultaneously afflict an individual.[[303]](#footnote-303) For example, a student desires to receive good grades, and knows studying is necessary to achieve this. However, he also desires to procrastinate studying and play video games. While he decides what to do, the student is in akratic conflict: a state of psychic contention. Applied to the puppet analogy, the golden string represents the student’s rational desire to study, and the iron strings the desire to have fun, and the discordant strings pull the puppet in opposite directions.

Similarly to Frede, Bobonich argues that irrational forces do not have their own will or motivation.[[304]](#footnote-304) Unlike Frede, however, Bobonich acknowledges that irrational forces are not inseparable.[[305]](#footnote-305) Instead, Bobonich argues that irrational forces are divided into emotion, desire, and belief.[[306]](#footnote-306) These forces act as afflictions of a unitary soul, not independent agents.[[307]](#footnote-307) Bobonich describes these afflictions as promoting psychic states. For example, when scared, one enters a fearful psychic state. It is not that fear and confidence constitute parts of the soul; rather, they afflict the soul by producing and maintaining psychic states.[[308]](#footnote-308)

An important aspect of Bobonich’s interpretation is how he accounts for the puppet’s movement. Since emotion and desire do not constitute parts of the soul, Bobonich argues that the only active participant in the puppet passage is the puppet itself.[[309]](#footnote-309) The puppet represents an individual human for Bobonich, thus he argues that the individual affects the pull of the strings.[[310]](#footnote-310) Bobonich interprets the puppet analogy to mean that an individual may intervene and pull along with the golden cord to overpower irrational desire.[[311]](#footnote-311) Bobonich concedes that this view requires a slight reworking of the puppet passage, but argues that “psychic intervention” is necessary to prevent a “disturbingly passive” interpretation of the *Laws*’ psychology.[[312]](#footnote-312) If the individual is unable to intervene in order to overpower their irrational desires, then the puppet passage leaves little room for reflection on what is good or bad about the objects of choice.[[313]](#footnote-313) The idea that practical reasoning about the good can affect what one does is absent on this view.[[314]](#footnote-314) Deliberation is overly simplified to the point that it constitutes merely submitting oneself to their strongest desire.[[315]](#footnote-315)

Although Bobonich does well by distinguishing reason, desire, and emotion, his treatment of them as afflictions is mistaken. Bobonich identifies these things as forces affecting the soul, not parts of the soul. But if these forces affect the soul so that it desires contradictory things simultaneously, then, as per the principle of opposites, the soul must be complex.[[316]](#footnote-316) On this view, akrasia may be conceived as disproportion of the soul’s constituents, whereby the soul’s parts do not act harmoniously under the rule of reason, but rather, inharmoniously, with the soul’s constituents striving against one another for dominance over the whole. This means that avoiding akrasia and an internal struggle of the soul amounts to a proper proportioning of rational and irrational desires.

Additionally, psychic intervention is inconsistent with the puppet passage. The puppet passage does not discuss the puppet as an agent. In fact, the very semblance of a puppet implies passivity – puppets do not pull their own strings. For argument’s sake, however, we can grant Bobonich that the puppet pulls its own strings. However, even if this is the case, how does the puppet decide which string to pull? At this point, the puppet can be argued to have a complex psychology of its own. The puppet depicts human psychology as laden with opposing forces.[[317]](#footnote-317) If desire, emotion, and reason are psychological forces, then the puppet’s decision to intervene must occur under the influence of these forces. This introduces a regress problem, since the forces that compel the puppet to pull its own strings must be accounted for. Moreover, if each puppet can pull its own strings, each puppet has its own psychology, which may be represented by another puppet. Therefore, psychic intervention faces absurdity since it introduces infinite regress.

Joshua Wilburn, in his article “Akrasia and Self Rule in Plato’s *Laws*,” challenges the akratic reading of the puppet passage. Wilburn argues that the puppet passage does not demonstrate akratic action, and indeed that Plato makes no reference to akrasia anywhere in the *Laws*.[[318]](#footnote-318) Moreover, psychic intervention cannot be the deciding force in akratic conflict, since it yields a *good conscience reading*.[[319]](#footnote-319) That is to say, the individual simply does what they think is best in akratic conflict. Wilburn argues that this equates psychic intervention to the golden cord, which makes any action virtuous simply by choosing to do it.[[320]](#footnote-320) Therefore, psychic intervention ascribes too low of a standard to virtue.

Wilburn addresses how we might avoid a good conscious reading. He argues that the golden cord in the puppet passage represents the pull of law, specifically law that aligns with rational desires. Since law promotes the common good – which is inherently desirable for everyone – law creates a *reasoned* desire to obey law.[[321]](#footnote-321) Wilburn argues that the golden cord represents only *correct* rational desire, and only its pull constitutes virtuous behaviour, thereby avoiding a good conscious reading.[[322]](#footnote-322)

Additionally, Wilburn argues that psychic intervention is missing from the *Laws* entirely.[[323]](#footnote-323) Instead, the golden cord represents deliberation about the value of specific actions and arriving at *correct* conclusions about these actions.[[324]](#footnote-324) On this view, the pull of the golden cord is assisted by new desires which law directs towards the common good.[[325]](#footnote-325) There is no mysterious psychic intervention, rather law and its effects remain consistent with Plato’s desire-based psychology.[[326]](#footnote-326) Wilburn’s interpretation is more appealing than the standard view, since it remains faithful to exact elements depicted in the puppet passage. However, Wilburn similarly struggles to account for the lack of a silver string. However, with a satisfactory account of the assistance the golden cord requires, it may now be possible to account for the lack of a third string.

I contend that the puppet passage depicts the function of law. That is to say, the puppet analogy is not metaphysical, but legal. Law affects the soul, which is exactly what the puppet passage depicts: law’s effects on the soul – not the soul itself. When read as a metaphysical analogy, the puppet passage depicts a bipartite psychology since there are only two kinds of strings. However, in the legal reading the two types of strings represent law’s two-fold function: to orient reason towards the common good and align irrational desires with reason – that is to say, law, like the charioteer in the *Phaedrus*, does not seek to eradicate irrational desires, but rather seeks to incorporate them into the soul in a proper proportion.

First, law directs reason towards the common good. In the *Laws*, Cleinias posits that atheists’ impiety is due to their lack of self-control.[[327]](#footnote-327) The Athenian responds, however, that impiety is the result of ignorance, specifically ignorance that passes for wisdom.[[328]](#footnote-328) This means that atheists possess defective reasoning abilities – but they reason, nevertheless. Although they reason, atheists erroneously form false conclusions about the gods.[[329]](#footnote-329) This shows that in the *Laws*, reason is fallible, and does not entail proper behaviour. This means, contra Wilburn, that reason and the golden cord can be mistaken; rational desires can compel one to commit acts of injustice. The first function of law accounts for this by providing proper guidelines on how to act. Law accomplishes this with the preludes. Each law is prefaced with a prelude which explains it.[[330]](#footnote-330) The preludes explain why the law is necessary, and how it contributes to the common good. It ensures Magnesians are not merely commanded by law, rather they are taught why such a law is desirable.[[331]](#footnote-331)

For example, when discussing property allocation, the Athenian prefaces property law with a prelude explaining how excessive wealth causes unhappiness, and a loss of friends.[[332]](#footnote-332) Preludes such as these promote an understanding of how unjust actions negatively affect the doer themselves, as well as the city as a whole. Moreover, the preludes inform individuals that law acts as a safeguard against injustice by providing guidelines for how to act properly.[[333]](#footnote-333) Without the preludes, law would be purely coercive; citizens would obey law only to avoid sanction. However, the inclusion of preludes ensures citizens are not merely told what to do but understand how to conduct themselves best. Not only do citizens understand this to be according to law, but they desire to act as such, since it is desirable to share in the common good. Therefore, the first function of law, which is accomplished with the preludes, is to create a reasoned desire to contribute to the common good by adhering to law.

Second, law aligns irrational desires with the pull of reason. The golden cord requires assistance, which as Wilburn argues, comes in the form of new desires.[[334]](#footnote-334) Law is what creates these desires. For example, one might have an irrational desire to physically assault someone. However, law imposes a penalty on a person who commits assault. This penalty is undesirable; therefore, we form a desire to avoid the penalty. This new desire pulls in opposition to the original desire to assault someone. Moreover, it also pulls towards the golden cord. Together, the combined force of the rational desire to obey law, and the desire to avoid sanction are enough to overpower the irrational desire to assault someone. Therefore, instead of committing injustice, an understanding of law and the desire to avoid sanction compel us to adhere to just standards.

Before I identify evidence for tripartition in the *Laws*, I need to explain exactly what I understand a “part” of the soul to be. I understand tripartition to pertain to sources of motivation in the soul.[[335]](#footnote-335) Each part of the soul has its own desires which appeal to it.[[336]](#footnote-336) This appeal compels the individual to acquire whatever it is they desire. Law utilizes this appeal by creating *reasoned*, *spirited*, and *appetitive* desires with preludes, punishment, and reward respectively. The combined force of these desires compels one to adhere to the rule of law. A unitary interpretation does not account for the varying types of desire law creates, since it is impossible to be in two psychic states at once. For example, criminal law utilizes punishment and reward, by punishing those who commit injustice and rewarding those who report it.[[337]](#footnote-337) Thus, law makes one fearful of pain and anticipate pleasure simultaneously. Since fear and confidence are antithetical, it is impossible for a single thing, i.e., a unified soul, to experience both states simultaneously, thereby rendering a unitary interpretation absurd.[[338]](#footnote-338)

Moreover, a bipartite reading does not account for how reward and punishment differ. A bipartite reading argues that pain and pleasure are inseparable, which is why they are combined into the iron cords.[[339]](#footnote-339) However, law treats them as separate forces via reward and punishment. Law simultaneously promotes the fear of punishment and anticipation of reward. They are not the same thing, rather they are opposites, i.e. pleasure and pain, but under the rule of law, each compels one towards the common good. That law utilizes pleasure and pain to align irrational desires with the common good does not prove they are inseparable. Instead, since law treats them as separate forces of compulsion, they must be interpreted independently of one another. Since a bipartite reading does not allow this, it falls short of accounting for the complexities of law.

Comparatively, a tripartite reading faces no contradiction, and accounts for the complexities of law. Since there are three distinct sources of motivation discussed in the *Laws*, namely *reasoned* desire, *spirited* desire, and *appetitive* desire, each source must constitute an independent part of the soul. The fact that there are three motivational forces, and that these forces oppose one another, I argue, is sufficient to reveal the tripartite psychology of the *Laws*. Moreover, the only way to make sense of how law utilizes these forces is with a tripartite interpretation. For, two important aspects of law require committing the *Laws* to a tripartite psychology to understand: punishment and reward.

First, law aligns irrational desire with reason by creating new *spirited* desires. Law accomplishes this by creating the desire to avoid pain. This means law provides a deterrent to act by imposing a punishment. An example of law as a deterrent comes from the discussion preceding the puppet passage. Here the Athenian discusses fear and shame. Shame is monitored closely by the guardians of the law, not to eradicate it, but to prevent shamelessness.[[340]](#footnote-340) Shame is a type of fear, namely fear of what others think.[[341]](#footnote-341) Shame makes us not want to disappoint others with our actions. For example, law shames Magnesians by locking them in prisons in the middle of the city so everyone is aware of their crimes.[[342]](#footnote-342) By breaking the law, one does not contribute to the common good, which disappoints others who do. This disappointment causes one to feel shame. Since shame is unpleasant, we desire not to be shamed; thus, forming the desire to avoid unpleasantness by adhering to law. Since, as previously discussed, shame is associated with spirit, by compelling individuals to obey law with shame as a deterrent, law creates a *spirited* desire.[[343]](#footnote-343)

Second, law aligns *appetitive* desire with reason by incentivizing proper action. Law in Magnesia rewards citizens for proper behaviour. For example, citizens who report injustice to authorities receive front-row seats at festivals.[[344]](#footnote-344) Front-row seats are desirable, thus law creates a desire to be rewarded. Since the desire for reward is essentially a desire for luxury, it constitutes an *appetitive* desire. Moreover, the individual knows that the only way to be rewarded is by obeying the law. Since people desire to be rewarded, which is only achieved by obeying the law, by incentivizing proper action with reward, law creates an appetitive desire that compels one to adhere to law.

In summary, my interpretation of the puppet passage is as follows. First, the passage makes a bipartite distinction by specifying two kinds of strings. However, this bipartition pertains to law, not the soul. The puppet passage reveals law’s two-fold function: to direct reason towards the common good, and to direct irrational desires towards reason. Law accomplishes the former through the inclusion of preludes, which promote an understanding of law. The second function is accomplished with punishment and reward. When faced with punishment, we anticipate pain and become fearful. Law, by enforcing punishment if disobeyed, creates a desire to avoid pain, and an incentive to be obeyed. Similarly, by rewarding individuals for just actions, law creates a desire for reward, thus compelling individuals to obtain it by adhering to just standards. Since opposing forces are sufficient to warrant “parts” of the soul, law creates *reasoned*, *spirited*,and *appetitive* desires which oppose one another. Law, as discussed in the *Laws,* is best understood as applying to a tripartite psychology. Consequently, even in his later dialogues, Plato is committed to a similar view of the soul and of justice to that expressed in the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*: justice is a proper proportion and harmonization of the soul’s parts under the rule of reason.

So far, this paper has argued that Plato, throughout his early, middle, and late dialogues conceives of the proper state of the soul as a proper proportion of its parts; namely, when rational and irrational desires coexist harmoniously under the rule of reason. In the *Republic*, Plato compares the soul to a city to show how individual justice and city-wide justice reflect one another insofar as both are predicated on a proper proportion of internal constituents whereby the one that is most fit to rule governs the whole – that is to say, justice in the soul occurs when reason rules, and justice in the city when philosophers rule. In contradistinction to justice qua harmony between classes is *stasis*, or civil war. As we shall see, *stasis* is frequently figured by Greek authors to be a disease of the body politic. Having grasped the conception of bodily disease and disease of the soul *qua* injustice as an imbalance and disproportion of internal constituents, it becomes possible to appreciate that this was not merely a metaphor, but that the Greeks viewed *stasis* as a pathological disease, brought on by the imbalance and disproportion of its constituents.

Our earliest extant sources where the polis is described as suffering from a disease, as identified by Jennifer Kusak, are Herodotus, Aristophanes, and Euripides.[[345]](#footnote-345) Herodotus describes Miletus as *nosesasa…stasi* (‘having suffered from *stasis*).[[346]](#footnote-346) In Aristophanes’ *Wasps,* Bdelcylon complains about the difficulty of “healing an ancient disease imbued in the city.”[[347]](#footnote-347) Euripides in his *Herakles*, describes Thebes as “sick with *stasis*” three times. In the first two cases the polis is described as sick. The third quotation, however, refers to the *chthon* itself being sick, thereby carrying a sense of physicality, and implying that it is the physical location itself that is sick.

Since health is understood in terms of balance, a polis must maintain an equilibrium that *stasis* disrupts for *stasis* to be understood as pathological. In his *Politics*, Aristotle identifies the parts of a polis as its inhabitants, and the balance between them as justice. “A state,” Aristotle argues, “essentially consists of a multitude of persons.”[[348]](#footnote-348) Every state is a community where individuals who could not survive without one another come together. The most basic form of this union is the relationship between husband and wife. This union creates a household – a sort of micropolis with its own ruler, inhabitants, and set of rules.[[349]](#footnote-349) As the number of homes grows, the rules governing households expand to encompass not only the interactions between members of a household, but between households themselves.[[350]](#footnote-350) A collection of households, then, amasses into a village, which grows into a polis.[[351]](#footnote-351) Since the polis is an association of individual citizens with differing constitutions, Aristotle argues a formal cause or *politeia* is needed to restrain citizens and direct them towards the good.[[352]](#footnote-352) A *politeia* states the criteria for political office and the administration of justice which, as Aristotle argues, is the principle of order in a political society: ἡ δὲ δικαιοσύνη πολιτικόν· ἡ γὰρ δίκη πολιτικῆς κοινωνίας τάξις ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ δίκη τοῦ δικαίου κρίσις (“Justice, on the other hand, is political: for judicial procedure is the arrangement of political companionship and the decision of what is just.”).[[353]](#footnote-353) Justice is the denotation of order and harmony between citizens that a polis requires to function.

The importance of justice for a polis to function properly is further explicated by Plato in his *Republic*. A just citizen is one who maintains a just a soul, where reason, spirit, and appetite are in agreement that the best of them, namely reason, ought to rule the whole.[[354]](#footnote-354) When governed by reason, one has a greater capacity to comprehend the good. This leads one to conclude that citizens should engage in the occupation they are best at so as to produce the best possible results for the polis.[[355]](#footnote-355) Consequently, just citizens know that, in matters of politics, those who possess political expertise ought to rule. Since the aim of politics is to cultivate virtuous citizens, political expertise requires knowledge of virtue thereby making those who are best fit to rule those who exercise their reason and comprehend virtue the most: philosophers.[[356]](#footnote-356) Consequently, since philosophers are the best equipped to rule, just citizens agree that philosophers should rule with no interference from the other occupational classes.[[357]](#footnote-357) This constitutes a just state: the parts of a polis, understood as the different classes of its citizens, coexist harmoniously, and, in their determination to maximize the good for the collective, agree to engage only in the occupation they are best at and to allow others to do the same unimpeded. Thus, for the individual, justice is defined as a harmony of constituents, albeit, of the soul and not of the body; and, for a polis, justice is similarly a proper ordering and interaction of its constituents.

Plato criticizes democracy for the demos’ inability to resist unnecessary pleasures that cannot coexist with the self-discipline necessary to rule.[[358]](#footnote-358) The democratic man, who Plato uses to represent the democratic constitution of the soul, is “devoid of sound knowledge and practice and true principles.”[[359]](#footnote-359) Since the democratic man is unable to distinguish necessary from unnecessary pleasures, he often confuses what is pleasant for what is good, and, consequently, opinion for knowledge. Pretentious fallacies and opinions fill his mind and he “goes back to live with the Lotus eaters.”[[360]](#footnote-360) Even if someone tells him that some pleasures and opinions are dangerous and should be avoided, he does not listen “but shakes his head and says all leisure is equal and should have equal rights.”[[361]](#footnote-361) Indeed, it is this objective of equality, Plato argues, that leads a democratic man, and the democratic polis he symbolizes to their downfall. The belief that all pleasures are equal encourages citizens to pursue pleasures without discrimination or moderation so that the least bit of restraint is intolerable to them until, in their determination to have no master, they disregard all laws, written or unwritten.[[362]](#footnote-362) This disregard for law is described by Plato as the disease whence tyranny springs.[[363]](#footnote-363) Excessive liberty, then, upsets the balance between liberty and restraint which leads to tyranny – an imbalance and disease of the soul and political constitutions.[[364]](#footnote-364)

In his Funeral Oration, Pericles parallels Plato’s view that a disregard for the public good in preference for personal desires is disastrous for a *polis*. In the oration, Pericles honours those who have died in the war by praising Athens and the Athenian values that they died defending.[[365]](#footnote-365) Pericles urges the Athenians to identify their own interests with the common interests of the city.[[366]](#footnote-366) Pericles boasts that Athenian democracy promotes a sense of equality and ensures that all citizens have an equal share of the polis regardless of individual wealth and status.[[367]](#footnote-367) Thus, the Athenians fight more strongly than citizens of other cities because they fight freely, on their own behalf, defending their city as if it were their own possession. This equality and cooperation among citizens entails the harmony that defines the well-being of the city. If social classes cooperate with one another based on principles of equality, they function harmoniously with one another and a polis flourishes.

It is interesting in light of this speech praising the Athenians as masters of themselves and working towards the good of the whole, that the plague causes the *demos* to forgo their duties to the *polis*, turn on Pericles and falter in their resolution to prosecute the war on account of their personal suffering and in their private interest. In the Athenians’ eyes, the plague is a result of Pericles’ poor war-time strategy. But by juxtaposing Pericles’ praise of the democratic civic spirit with the *demos’* neglect of it, Thucydides suggests that the true injustice was that the *demos* forwent their duty to the polis and turned on their first-citizen. The Athenians began acting antithetically to the public interests by allowing fear, emotion, and personal desire to influence their decision making. Consequently, speakers after Pericles do not focus on persuading the demos by appealing to democratic values and the good of the whole, but by flattering and pandering to citizens. Thus, the democracy previously praised by Pericles was bastardized by the possibility of a panderer with no political expertise directing the demos by rousing and capitalizing on desires that oppose democratic virtue. This facilitates the rise of demagoguery and the possibility for the destruction of the equality and balance between the social classes of a *polis*.

In Thucydides’ description of *stasis* at Corcyra, such disorder and tension between social classes is put on center stage. Thucydides writes that the Athenian *proxenos*, Peithias, served as a member of the Corcyraeansenate and enacted heavy financial penalties on the five richest men of the city.[[368]](#footnote-368) These oligarchs, seeing that Peithias was turning Corcyra away from its Peloponnesian allies towards a defensive alliance with Athens rushed into the assembly and slew Peithias and sixty others, including senators and private citizens.[[369]](#footnote-369) This upset the balance between mass and elite: no longer did mass and elite exist in a symbiotic relationship, but the power of the elite suddenly surged to dominate the *demos*. What ensued was the collapse of the polis into murderous conflict between oligarchs and democrats. Since *stasis* disrupts the balance between mass and elite, *stasis* can be understood as an imbalance of a *polis’* constituent parts that leads to the disintegration of the civic body. This resembles a medical diagnosis insofar as Hippocratic physicians and the mythopoetic model of health also understand disease as an imbalance. Just as a body is comprised of humours and disease is a result of their imbalance, so too is the *polis* comprised of classes of citizens and *stasis* is a result of inequality between them.

Moreover, the morality and piety of a leader, just as with the previously discussed cases of plague, is causally linked to *stasis*. Thucydides states that the origin of *stasis* at Corcyra was “the love of power originating from avarice and ambition and the party spirit that engendered them.”[[370]](#footnote-370) Such love of power and ambition runs in stark contrast to the civic ideals praised by Pericles in his funeral oration. There Pericles praises the Athenians for prioritizing the common good and power of the *demos* as a collective over personal ambition. Thucydides’ mention of avarice also runs counter to the Greek mores of *sophrosune*. *Stasis* is attributed to the lack of *sophrosune* and adherence to custom by Thucydides. That the lack of moderation and civic virtue was thought to be a cause of *stasis* is further supported by the description of citizens motivated to kill by personal enmity and greed. This disregard for custom and law, and description of brother killing brother epitomizes social classes in tension and moral transgression of the highest degree. Thus, *stasis* was understood along the same lines as disease to the body or plague to a community, as an imbalance of the parts that comprise the whole.

Therefore, the three features of health previously identified apply to the polis as a city-state. The polis consists of a delicate balance between the classes of its citizens. What black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm are to the body, and reason, spirit, and appetite are to the soul, mass and elite are to the body politic; and just as an imbalance of these bodily and psychological constituents promotes disease, injustice, and hubris, an upheaval of the relationship between mass and elite causes *stasis*. Moreover, just as the effects and causes of disease are associated with an imbalance caused by injustice, *stasis* occurs when personal ambition surges to dominate the collective will of the *demos* and the public good. In sum, since *stasis* can be understood as an imbalance between the constituent parts of a polis, it fits the same criteria as a disease of the body. Therefore, since *stasis* is to the polis what disease is to the body, and what injustice is to the soul, *stasis* was understood as pathologically afflicting a polis on a level that transcends metaphor. *Stasis* is often described in medical terms not because it is a metaphor, but because it was understood as a pathological disease affecting the health of the polis.

In conclusion, the conception of justice as a proper proportioning of the soul’s constituents, as seen in Plato’s *Republic*, persists throughout the *Phaedrus* and *Laws*. Plato’s understanding of psychology undergoes changes in the *Phaedrus*, where rational and irrational parts of the soul both reason and desire; however, Plato’s conception of a soul’s proper state is still conceived of in terms of a proper proportion and harmony between the soul’s constituents. Although this view is clouded in Plato’s *Laws* by the puppet analogy, the fact that law orients one towards the good by creating reasoned, spirited, and appetitive desires requires a similar conception of the soul and of justice *qua* proper proportion as the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*. Like his predecessors, Hesiod, Alcmaeon, and the Hippocratics, Plato understands the proper state of the soul as a balance and proportion of the soul’s constituents, and consistently compares the soul to the polis to demonstrate how individual justice and city-wide justice are conducive of one another. Just as an unjust soul is compared to a disease and is indicative of a soul whose reason is suppressed, a city whose citizens disregard law entails an imbalance between mass and elite citizens constitutes *stasis*, a disease of the body politic.

*Conclusion*

The question of how the Greeks conceived of wellbeing must be investigated by looking the various spheres in which one experiences prosperity or insalubriousness. In Hesiod, wellbeing in general is attributed to Zeus, who punishes the unjust and rewards the just. One who maintains an unjust disposition, that is, a disposition motivated by bad *eris*, is compelled to commit acts of injustice to achieve their ends. The ends these people aim at are also mistaken, insofar as these people place too much stock in their possessions, leading to an overevaluation of physical wealth, and an insatiable desire for more. This greed, or *pleonexia*, is conducive of *hubris* – excess in its psychological dimension. Comparatively, one who is just and motivated by good *eris* does not seek to outdo, take advantage of, or swindle one’s neighbours and kin. Instead, one who maintains a just disposition is content living with resources in proportionate to their means. That is to say, one who is just is happy living frugally with resources cultivated with one’s own persistent labour. This mindset also prompts one who obtains excess to share their abundance with those in need.

We see a similar conception of health as proportion and moderation in the writings of Alcmaeon and the Hippocratics. Alcmaeon deploys political terminology to formulate the definition of health as the blending of shares of powers (*isonomia*). One’s body consists of a mixture (krasis) of powers (*dynamis*) which must be equilibrated for one to be healthy. If one power dominates the whole (*monarchia*), then the properties associated with that power (cold, or hot, for example) dominate the body and disease ensures. The powers of the body, in this sense, are similar to the villagers in Hesiod’s Ascra, insofar as an equilibrium (isos) must be maintained between each to ensure one does not dominate. Just as a village experiences injustice and divine retribution, often in the form of plague, if one amasses abundant wealth and disproportionately imposes their will on others, a body is diseased if one of its constituents is disproportionately stronger than the others.

The Hippocratics remain committed to this understanding of health as a proper proportioning of bodily constituents, or humors. This specific nature of the body’s constituents is a matter of debate among Hippocratic authors, but despite this, Hippocratic authors conceive of bodily health as a proportionate mixture of the body’s internal constituents. It is the physician’s role to diagnose the cause of one’s bodily imbalance and to prescribe an equal but opposite change to the patient’s diet, regimen, or location. Excessive dryness is combated by exposure to moist environments, which equilibrates the internal humors responsible for these effects.

Simultaneous to Alcmaeon and the Hippocratics, the traditional magicoreligious conception of health persists, whereby health is not conceived in terms of bodily constituents. In the Iliad and Sophocles’ Oedipus the King, plague is the direct result of the moral transgression of the leader of a community. Instead, what we see are responses in terms of eradicating religious pollution and placating the gods aimed at restoring some sort of balance. Although the Hippocratic model is rooted in rationalism and naturalism, in contrast to the magicoreligious conception, these views of health are not incompatible. Both views understand health as a balance and disease as an imbalance, and the remedy of disease as a restoration of balance.

This conception of wellbeing in Hesiod, and of bodily health finds further parallels in Plato’s conception of a just soul and polis. Plato adapts his view of human psychology throughout his dialogues but remains committed throughout to the idea that the soul is comprised of three parts which must function harmoniously under the rule of reason to be just. It is not the case that justice, for Plato, is conceived of as the complete domination of reason over spirit and appetite. Instead, as we see in the *Phaedrus*, each part of the soul is capable of both reasoning and desiring, and the goal is not to eradicate one or the other, but to learn from each, and to integrate both reason and desires into the whole of the soul by allowing these desires to find their proper place within it.

Plato’s *Laws* complicates this view somewhat with its puppet analogy, which depicts the soul as a unitary body – a puppet – compelled by bipartite forces – golden and iron strings. To make sense of the puppet as a legal analogy, however, it is necessary to commit to a threefold conception of desires, which implies tripartition of the soul. Since opposing forces are sufficient to warrant “parts” of the soul, and law creates *reasoned*, *spirited*,and *appetitive* desires which oppose one another, law, as discussed in the *Laws,* is best understood as applying to a tripartite psychology. Consequently, even in his later dialogues Plato is committed to a similar view of the soul and of justice expressed in the *Republic* and *Phaedrus* as a proper proportion and harmonization of the soul’s parts under the rule of reason.

This conception of bodily health is also paralleled in how Greeks conceived of the polis as a body politic. Just as disease afflicts the body, and injustice afflicts the soul, *stasis* is figured as a disease of the *polis*. Having grasped the conception of bodily disease and disease of the soul *qua* injustice as an imbalance and disproportion of internal constituents, it becomes possible to appreciate that the figuring of *stasis* as a disease was not merely a metaphor, but that the Greeks viewed *stasis* as a pathological disease, brought on by the imbalance and disproportion of the city’s constituent parts.

Concludingly, we have seen that ideas of proportion, balance, portion, and apportionment are of utmost importance for understanding Greek conceptions about the world. These ideas have far-reaching uses, and are seen in both rationalistic and mythopoetic thought, poetry and prose, and medical and philosophical texts. Although not in the scope of this thesis, it is, I think, also the case that ideas of proportion and balance shape Greek musical and astronomical theories. Relatedly, an investigation into the relationship between Greek disciplines or *technai* or their origins would similarly benefit from beginning with the basic ideas which underlie them, and which show the strongest aspects of continuity and change – proportion, balance, and the harmonization of one’s nature.

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1. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 280-283. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Anthony Edwards, *Hesiod’s Ascra* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Douglas Cairns, “Hybris, Dishonour and Thinking Big”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Christopher Bobonich, “Plato’s Utopia Recast: His Later Ethics and Politics,” *Cambridge University Press* (2002), 259; Dorothea Frede, “Puppets on Strings: Moral Psychology in *Laws* book 1 and 2,” In *Plato’s Laws: A Critical Guide* by Christopher Bobonich. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press (2010), 116-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Joshua Wilburn, “Akrasia and Self-Rule in Plato’s *Laws*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 43 (2012), 26-34. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 238-245. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 280-283. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Douglas Cairns, “Hybris, Dishonour and Thinking Big”: “Fisher should accept that the essential relationship between *hybris* and dishonour can accommodate purely dispositional forms of self-assertion.” [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Anthony Edwards, *Hesiod’s Ascra* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 13-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 20-23. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 20-22: ἥτε καὶ ἀπάλαμόν περ ὁμῶς ἐπὶ ἔργον ἔγειρεν. / εἰς ἕτερον γάρ τίς τε ἰδὼν ἔργοιο χατίζει / πλούσιον … “and it (good strife) similarly urges the shiftless who pay no heed to work. For one seeing another who is rich imitates (craves) his action.” [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 11-13: οὐκ ἄρα μοῦνον ἔην Ἐρίδων γένος, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ γαῖαν / εἰσὶ δύω: τὴν μέν κεν ἐπαινέσσειε νοήσας, / ἣ δ᾽ ἐπιμωμητή: … “there is not one kind of strife, but two upon the Earth: one men would praise if they understood, the other is blameworthy:” [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Hesiod, Works and Days, 826-828. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 13: διὰ δ᾽ ἄνδιχα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν. “and they (mortals) have their *thumos* in twain.” [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Hesiod, Works and Days, 40-41: νήπιοι, οὐδὲ ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντὸς / οὐδ᾽ ὅσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μέγ᾽ ὄνειαρ. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Lilah Grace Canevaro, “Hesiod’s Works and Days: How to Teach Self-Sufficiency,” 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Canevaro, “How to Teach Self Sufficiency,” 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Hesiod, Works and Days, 23: … ζηλοῖ δέ τε γείτονα γείτων / εἰς ἄφενος σπεύδοντ᾽… : those envious of their neighbours possessions hasten towards plenty. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Edwards, *Hesiod’s Ascra*, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 12-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Edwards, *Hesiod’s Ascra*, 57; 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Hesiod, Works and Days, 600. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Hesiod, Works and Days, 600: μέτρῳ δ᾽ εὖ κομίσασθαι ἐν ἄγγεσιν: αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ / πάντα βίον κατάθηαι ἐπάρμενον ἔνδοθι οἴκου, “place it (grain) measured well into jars so that you may store all your livelihood nearby inside your home. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Hesiod, Works and Days, 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Hesiod, Works and Days, 225. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 53. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 98. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Hesiod, Works and Days, 182-183. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 83-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Edwards, Hesiod’s Ascra, 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Hesiod, Works and Days, 342. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Hesiod, Works and Days, 590-592. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Hesiod, Works and Days, 349-350. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Hesiod, Works and Days, 722-723. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Borivoj Borecky, The Primitive Origin of the Greek Conception of Equality, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Borecky, Origin of Greek Equality, 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Hesiod, Works and Days, 691-693. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Hesiod, Works and Days, 280-283. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Hesiod, Works and Days, 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Hesiod, Works and Days, 226-227. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Hesiod, Works and Days, 134-135. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Hesiod, Works and Days, 145-146. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Hesiod, Works and Days, 191-193. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Hesiod, Works and Days, 490-491. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Hesiod, Works and Days, 220-224; [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Hesiod, Works and Days, 248-247. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Hesiod, Works and Days, 249. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Hesiod, Works and Days, 256; 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Hesiod, Works and Days, 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Hesiod, Works and Days, 6-7: ῥεῖα δέ τ᾽ ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει / Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, ὃς ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Douglas Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, *Journal of Hellenic Studies,* (1996): 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Ibid., 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Aristotle, Rhetoric 1378b23-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Aristotle, Rhetoric 1378b25-30. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Fisher, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Cairns, Hybris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Ibid., 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1385b21. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Aristotle, Rhetoric 1391a1-14; Cairns, *Hubris, Dishonour, and Thinking Big*, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ibid., 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Ibid., 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Borivoj Borecky, “The Primitive Origin of the Greek Conception of Equality,” (1963): 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Borecky, “The Primitive Origin of the Greek Conception of Equality,” 41-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Ibid., 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ibid., 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Ibid., 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Homer, *Odyssey* 14.208. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Homer, *Iliad* 15.186-209. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Homer, *Iliad* 15.186 [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Borecky, “The Primitive Origin of the Greek Conception of Equality,” 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. James Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Homer, *Iliad* 11.562; Homer, *Odyssey*, 10.411; 18.372. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Homer, *Iliad* 19.167. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Homer, *Odyssey* 8.98. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Homer, Iliad 13.636-639. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 7; Hesiod, *Works and Days* 33, 368, 593. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 7-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Alkman, fragment 1.64: “for neither is the abundance of purple enough.” [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Sappho, fragment 144: “mala de kekoremenois Gorgos.” [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Helm, “Koros: From Satisfaction to Greed,” 8-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Solon, *Hymn to the Muses* fr. 13.71-76: “but no limit to wealth lies manifest to men, / for those of us who now have the greatest resources / strive for twice as much. Who could satisfy everyone? / The immortals gave desire for gain to mortals, / but from it ruin appears, which now one has, now another, / whenever Zeus sends it to punish them.” [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Aet. V. 30. 1: “Alcmaeon says that what maintains health is the equality of shares of the powers (*tēs men hygeias einai synektikēn tēn isonomian tōn dynameōn*), wet, dry, cold, hot, bitter, sweet, and the rest, while the predominance among them produces disease (*tēn d’ en aytois monarchian nosou poiētikēn*); for the predominance of either power is destructive (*phthoropoion gar hekaterou monarchian*). Disease, as regards what brings it about, occurs by excess of heat or coldness, while, as regards its source, it occurs from surfeit or lack of nourishment, and, as regards its location, it occurs in the blood or the marrow or the brain. It sometimes arises from external causes, such as water of a certain quality, local environment, exertions, hardship, or something similar to these. Health, by contrast, is the proportionate blending of the qualities (*tēn symmetron tōn poiōn krasin*).” Translated by Stavros Kouloumentas. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Stavros Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis: Alcmaeon on Health and Disease,” *The British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 22, 5 (2014): 870-871. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 871. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Geoffrey Lloyd, “Polarity and Analogy,” 210-303; Stavros, “The Body and the Polis,” 868. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 873. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 871. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 871-872. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Alternatively, the two meanings may not be exclusive, not if we understand equality before the law as equal shares in the law (in legislation and legal standing), in the context of participatory, collective self-government, in which citizenship is conceived in terms of political shares rather than individual rights. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. Polybus, *On the Nature of Man*, section 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places*, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 872. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. Gregory Vlastos, “Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies,” 156-157. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Vlastos, “Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies,” 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places* 1: πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθυμεῖσθαι τὰς ὥρας τοῦ ἔτεος, ὅ τι δύναται ἀπεργάζεσθαι ἑκάστη ... ἔπειτα δὲ τὰ πνεύματα τὰ θερμά τε καὶ τὰ ψυχρά ... δεῖ δὲ καὶ τῶν ὑδάτων ἐνθυμεῖσθαι τὰς δυνάμιας· (“and it is necessary to consider how the region flourishes in each season, what things it is able to produce … and the warm and cold winds … and the properties of the waters:”). All Hippocrates translations are my own. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Ibid: ἰητρικὴν ὅστις βούλεται ὀρθῶς ζητεῖν, τάδε χρὴ ποιεῖν· (“whoever wishes to seek the medical art correctly must do these things:”). [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Ibid: ὥστε ἐς πόλιν ἐπειδὰν ἀφίκηταί τις, ἧς ἄπειρός ἐστι, διαφροντίσαι χρὴ τὴν θέσιν αὐτῆς, ὅκως κεῖται καὶ πρὸς τὰ πνεύματα καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀνατολὰς τοῦ ἡλίου (“whenever someone arrives at a city which he is unfamiliar with, it is necessary to consider its placement, how it is positioned towards the winds and the rising sun.”) [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Hippocrates, *AWP* 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Hippocrates, *AWP* 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. Hippocrates, *AWP* 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Hippocrates, *AWP* 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Hippocrates, *AWP* 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
160. Polybus, *On the Nature of Man* section 4. All translations of Polybus are my own. [↑](#footnote-ref-160)
161. Polybus, *Nature of Man* section 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-161)
162. Polybus, *Nature of Man* section 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-162)
163. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Polybus, *Nature of Man* section 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 873. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)
166. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 874. [↑](#footnote-ref-166)
167. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-167)
168. Hippocrates, On Epidemics 2.2.10, translated by Francis Adams. [↑](#footnote-ref-168)
169. Kouloumentas, “The Body and the Polis,” 874. [↑](#footnote-ref-169)
170. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-170)
171. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-171)
172. Gregory Vlastos, “Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies, *Classica Philology* XLII (1947): 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-172)
173. Vlastos, “Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies,” 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-173)
174. Vlastos, “Equality and Justice in Early Greek Cosmologies,” 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-174)
175. Hippocrates, On Airs, Waters, and Places, 11.1. [↑](#footnote-ref-175)
176. Hippocrates, On Airs, Waters, and Places, 12.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-176)
177. Laura Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine in the Discourse of Eryximachus in the *Symposium*,” 83. [↑](#footnote-ref-177)
178. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-178)
179. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-179)
180. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-180)
181. Plato, *Symposium* 187c4-e7. [↑](#footnote-ref-181)
182. Plato, *Symposium* 187c4-e7. [↑](#footnote-ref-182)
183. Plato, Symposium 187e2-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-183)
184. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-184)
185. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-185)
186. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-186)
187. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 84; Plato, Symposium 187b1-3; 187c1. [↑](#footnote-ref-187)
188. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-188)
189. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 84-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-189)
190. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-190)
191. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 85; Plato, *Timaeus* 81e6-86a8. [↑](#footnote-ref-191)
192. Plato, *Timaeus* 81e6-86a8. [↑](#footnote-ref-192)
193. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-193)
194. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-194)
195. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 87; Plato, *Symposium* 188a7. [↑](#footnote-ref-195)
196. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 89; Plato, *Symposium* 188a4. [↑](#footnote-ref-196)
197. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 87-89. Plato, Symposium 188a1. [↑](#footnote-ref-197)
198. Plato, *Symposium* 188a7. [↑](#footnote-ref-198)
199. Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places* 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-199)
200. Candiotto, “Plato’s Cosmological Medicine,” 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-200)
201. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-201)
202. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-202)
203. Homer, *Iliad* 1.53-64. All Homer Translations are by William Cowper. [↑](#footnote-ref-203)
204. Homer, *Iliad* 1.32-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-204)
205. Homer, *Iliad* 1.45-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-205)
206. Homer, *Iliad* 1.53-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-206)
207. Homer, *Iliad* 1.65-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-207)
208. Homer, *Iliad* 1.74-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-208)
209. Homer, *Iliad* 1.111-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-209)
210. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 102 “now disease comes day and night on its own accord.” [↑](#footnote-ref-210)
211. Homer, *Iliad* 1.227-231. [↑](#footnote-ref-211)
212. Homer, *Iliad* 1.555-561. [↑](#footnote-ref-212)
213. Homer, *Iliad* 1.562-585. [↑](#footnote-ref-213)
214. Homer, *Iliad* 1.585. [↑](#footnote-ref-214)
215. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 3-4. All Sophocles translations are by Ian Johnston. [↑](#footnote-ref-215)
216. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 17-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-216)
217. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 81-85. [↑](#footnote-ref-217)
218. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 112-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-218)
219. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 1513-1521; 1590-1593. [↑](#footnote-ref-219)
220. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-220)
221. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 213. [↑](#footnote-ref-221)
222. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 59-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-222)
223. Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 394-395. [↑](#footnote-ref-223)
224. Longrigg 61-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-224)
225. Thucydides, *History* 1.8; 3.104. [↑](#footnote-ref-225)
226. Longrigg, “Death and Epidemic Disease in Classical Athens,” 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-226)
227. Pausanias, 1.3.4. [↑](#footnote-ref-227)
228. Longrigg, “Death and Epidemic Disease in Classical Athens,” 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-228)
229. Thucydides, *History* 2.59. [↑](#footnote-ref-229)
230. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-230)
231. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-231)
232. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-232)
233. The *Laws* is notably the only Platonic dialogue not to feature Socrates. Instead, the *Laws* features The Athenian, whose true identity is a matter of speculation. [↑](#footnote-ref-233)
234. Plato, *Laws* I, 644d. [↑](#footnote-ref-234)
235. *Republic* IV, 436b. [↑](#footnote-ref-235)
236. *Republic* IV, 436c-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-236)
237. *Republic* IV, 437b-441a. [↑](#footnote-ref-237)
238. *Republic* IV, 441a-b. [↑](#footnote-ref-238)
239. *Republic* IV, 441a-b. [↑](#footnote-ref-239)
240. *Republic* IX, 588d. [↑](#footnote-ref-240)
241. *Republic* IX, 588d. [↑](#footnote-ref-241)
242. *Republic* IX, 588d. [↑](#footnote-ref-242)
243. *Republic* IX, 590a. [↑](#footnote-ref-243)
244. *Republic* IX, 589b. [↑](#footnote-ref-244)
245. *Republic IX, 589b.* [↑](#footnote-ref-245)
246. *Republic* IX, 589b. [↑](#footnote-ref-246)
247. *Phaedrus*, 245c7. [↑](#footnote-ref-247)
248. *Phaedrus*, 253c7. [↑](#footnote-ref-248)
249. Julia Annas, “An Introduction to Plato’s Republic,” Claredon, Oxford 1981: 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-249)
250. Giovanni Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul: Plato,* Phaedrus *253c7-255a1*, Ancient Philosophy 5, 1985: 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-250)
251. Annas, “An Introduction to Plato’s Republic,” 131; Ferrari, *The Struggle in the Soul*, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-251)
252. *Phaedrus*, 253d7-e1; 253e4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-252)
253. *Phaedrus*, 253e6-254a1; Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-253)
254. Phaedrus, 251d5; 251e4; Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-254)
255. *Phaedrus*, 254a4; Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-255)
256. *Phaedrus*, 248a1-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-256)
257. Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-257)
258. *Phaedrus*, 254c8-d1. [↑](#footnote-ref-258)
259. *Phaedrus*, 254d4-e5. [↑](#footnote-ref-259)
260. Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-260)
261. *Phaedrus*, 254d4-e5. [↑](#footnote-ref-261)
262. Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-262)
263. *Phaedrus*, 246d4. [↑](#footnote-ref-263)
264. *Phaedrus*, 246a6. [↑](#footnote-ref-264)
265. Ferrari, *The Struggle of the Soul*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-265)
266. *Laws* I, 644d. [↑](#footnote-ref-266)
267. *Laws* I, 644d-645a. [↑](#footnote-ref-267)
268. *Laws* I, 645a. [↑](#footnote-ref-268)
269. *Laws* I, 645a. [↑](#footnote-ref-269)
270. *Laws* I, 645d. [↑](#footnote-ref-270)
271. Dorothea Frede, “Puppets on Strings: Moral Psychology in *Laws* book 1 and 2,” In *Plato’s Laws: A Critical Guide* by Christopher Bobonich. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press (2010), 116-117. [↑](#footnote-ref-271)
272. Ibid., 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-272)
273. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-273)
274. Ibid., 117-119. [↑](#footnote-ref-274)
275. Ibid., 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-275)
276. Ibid., 119-120. [↑](#footnote-ref-276)
277. Ibid., 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-277)
278. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-278)
279. *Republic* IV, 436c-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-279)
280. *Laws* V, 739a. [↑](#footnote-ref-280)
281. *Kalipolis*:The city of the *Republic*. Derivative of the Greek word *kalon* meaning beauty/proportion and *polis* meaning city. [↑](#footnote-ref-281)
282. *Magnesia*: The city of the *Laws*. [↑](#footnote-ref-282)
283. *Republic* III, 402d. [↑](#footnote-ref-283)
284. *Republic* IX, 589b. [↑](#footnote-ref-284)
285. *Laws* V, 740a. [↑](#footnote-ref-285)
286. Susan Meyer, “Pleasure, Pain, and ‘Anticipation’ in Plato’s *Laws*, book I,” *Parmenides Publishing* (2012), 366. [↑](#footnote-ref-286)
287. Ibid., 351-352. [↑](#footnote-ref-287)
288. Ibid., 353. [↑](#footnote-ref-288)
289. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-289)
290. Ibid., 354-355. [↑](#footnote-ref-290)
291. Ibid., 358-359. [↑](#footnote-ref-291)
292. *Republic* IV, 439e-440a. [↑](#footnote-ref-292)
293. *Republic* IV, 439e-440a. [↑](#footnote-ref-293)
294. *Republic* IV, 440a. [↑](#footnote-ref-294)
295. *Republic* IV, 440a-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-295)
296. Meyer, “Pleasure, Pain, and ‘Anticipation’ in Plato’s *Laws*, book I,” 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-296)
297. *Laws* I, 645d. [↑](#footnote-ref-297)
298. Laws I, 644d: “Let us imagine that each of us living beings is a puppet of the gods: … we have these emotions within us, which act as cords or strings and tug us about … one cord demands constant obedience, the others we must resist. This cord, which is golden and holy transmits the power of calculation, a power which in the state is called the public law; being golden it is pliant, while the others whose composition resemble other elements are tough and inflexible. Translated by Trevor J. Saunders. [↑](#footnote-ref-298)
299. Christopher Bobonich, “Plato’s Utopia Recast: His Later Ethics and Politics,” *Cambridge University Press* (2002), 259. [↑](#footnote-ref-299)
300. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-300)
301. Ibid., 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-301)
302. Ibid., 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-302)
303. Ibid., 260-261. [↑](#footnote-ref-303)
304. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-304)
305. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-305)
306. Ibid., 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-306)
307. Ibid., 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-307)
308. Ibid., 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-308)
309. Ibid., 273-274. [↑](#footnote-ref-309)
310. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-310)
311. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-311)
312. Ibid., 276. [↑](#footnote-ref-312)
313. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-313)
314. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-314)
315. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-315)
316. *Republic* IV, 436b-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-316)
317. *Laws* I, 645d. [↑](#footnote-ref-317)
318. Joshua Wilburn, “Akrasia and Self-Rule in Plato’s *Laws*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 43 (2012), 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-318)
319. Ibid., 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-319)
320. Ibid., 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-320)
321. Ibid., 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-321)
322. Ibid., 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-322)
323. Ibid., 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-323)
324. Ibid., 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-324)
325. Ibid., 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-325)
326. Ibid., 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-326)
327. *Laws* X, 886b. [↑](#footnote-ref-327)
328. *Laws* X, 886b. [↑](#footnote-ref-328)
329. *Laws* X, 885b. [↑](#footnote-ref-329)
330. *Laws* IV, 722c-723b. [↑](#footnote-ref-330)
331. *Laws* IV, 723b. [↑](#footnote-ref-331)
332. *Laws* V, 743a-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-332)
333. *Laws* IV, 722c-723b. [↑](#footnote-ref-333)
334. Wilburn, “Akrasia and Self-Rule in Plato’s *Laws*,” 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-334)
335. Joshua Wilburn, “Moral Education and Spirit in the *Laws*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 45 (2013), 68-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-335)
336. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-336)
337. *Laws* V, 730d. [↑](#footnote-ref-337)
338. *Republic* IV, 436b. [↑](#footnote-ref-338)
339. Frede, “Puppets on Strings,” 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-339)
340. *Laws* I, 649a-d. [↑](#footnote-ref-340)
341. *Laws* I, 646e. [↑](#footnote-ref-341)
342. *Laws* X, 908a. [↑](#footnote-ref-342)
343. Meyer, “Pleasure, Pain and ‘Anticipation’ in Plato’s *Laws*, book I,” 359. [↑](#footnote-ref-343)
344. *Laws* IX, 881b. [↑](#footnote-ref-344)
345. Jennifer Clarke Kusak, “Polis Nosousa: Greek Ideas about the City in the Fifth Century BC,” in *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*, ed. Valerie Hope and Eireann Marshall (London: Routledge, 2000), 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-345)
346. Herodotus, *History* 5.28, translated by Jennifer Kusak. [↑](#footnote-ref-346)
347. Aristophanes, *Wasps* 650-651, translated by Jennifer Kusak. [↑](#footnote-ref-347)
348. Aristotle, *Politics* III.1.1275a1. [↑](#footnote-ref-348)
349. Aristotle, *Politics* I.13.1260a13. [↑](#footnote-ref-349)
350. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-350)
351. Importantly, the relations of rule in a polis are not the same as in the oikos, since in the city, heads of households share in rule as free and equal citizens, taking turns in ruling and being ruled, which is political rule – as opposed to a man’s rule over his wife, children, and slaves, which corresponds to asymmetrical, kingly or despotic rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-351)
352. Aristotle, *Politics* III.1.1274b32-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-352)
353. Aristotle, *Politics* I.2.1253a39-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-353)
354. Plato, *Republic* 441e-442d. [↑](#footnote-ref-354)
355. Plato, *Republic* 433a-b. [↑](#footnote-ref-355)
356. Plato, *Republic* 473d-e. [↑](#footnote-ref-356)
357. Plato, *Republic* 434a-c. [↑](#footnote-ref-357)
358. Plato, *Republic* 559. [↑](#footnote-ref-358)
359. Plato, *Republic* 560b. [↑](#footnote-ref-359)
360. Plato, *Republic* 560b. [↑](#footnote-ref-360)
361. Plato, *Republic* 561b-c. [↑](#footnote-ref-361)
362. Plato, *Republic* 563d. [↑](#footnote-ref-362)
363. Plato, *Republic* 563e. [↑](#footnote-ref-363)
364. Plato, *Republic* 564a-d. [↑](#footnote-ref-364)
365. Thucydides, *History* 2.35-41. [↑](#footnote-ref-365)
366. Thucydides, *History* 2.42. [↑](#footnote-ref-366)
367. Thucydides, *History* 2.42-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-367)
368. Thucydides, *History* 3.70.3-3.70.5. [↑](#footnote-ref-368)
369. Thucydides, *History* 3.70.6. [↑](#footnote-ref-369)
370. Thucydides, *History* 3.82.7. [↑](#footnote-ref-370)