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The Political and Paideutic Function of Pleasure in Plato's Philosophy*

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, I explore the educational and political dimensions of pleasure in Plato's philosophy. The main texts analysed are the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Plato shows clearly the significant role that pleasure plays both in individual human lives (from birth to death) and in society. Importantly, this makes it possible to judge the moral condition of both the individual and the state, and to philosophically justify this judgement.

KEYWORDS: degeneration; education; music; Plato; pleasure; politics; power – degenerazione; educazione; musica; piacere; Platone; politica; potere.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is well known that in his works Plato shows two philosophical projects of the political system. One of them is in the *Republic* (*Politeia*), and it is constructed, so to speak, from 'top to bottom'. He presents there a specific conception of the human being as composed from the spiritual and the corporeal. The first of these is a combination of three elements, and assigned to it is the ruling of the body. Thanks to the principle of *homoiosis*, Plato shows that a polis reflects the structure of the soul above all through social division. The second project is in the *Laws* (*Nomoi*), and it is depicted as it were from 'the bottom'. As the title of the work shows, it is formed as a legal model, which has to guarantee that people in the polis will live a happy life.

One of the most important factors in the political field is education (*paideia*), which is necessary to form an appropriate relationship with pleasure in the process of learning. At the beginning of the *Laws* it is already said that:

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When men investigate legislation, they investigate almost exclusively pleasures and pains as they affect society and the character of the individual. Pleasure and pain, you see, flow like two springs released by nature. If a man draws the right amount from the right one at the right time, he lives a happy life; but if he draws unintelligently at the wrong time, his life will be rather different. State and individual and every living being are on the same footing here.¹

As can be seen, Plato puts emphasis on knowledge of two subjects – pleasure and pain, and this knowledge concerns their sources, their appropriateness in time and their quantity². It is undoubtedly connected with Plato's view of human nature, and he recognises it as something profoundly human (*anthrōpeion malista*), since it comprises not only the two above-mentioned sensations but also desire (*Leg.* 732e 4-5). In this paper, I (re)construct the role of pleasure in the field of the education (I) and politics (II), and I argue that Plato's remarks about pleasure in various dialogues should be treated as a whole.

2. PAIDEIA

Possession of the above-mentioned knowledge means that the philosopher-politician can prepare the individual for a particular profession or function through play³ when the person is still a child and through profound interest in the given subject. The task is accomplished by making the desires and pleasures aim at something through which the individual finds their fulfilment (*telos*)⁴. Plato is fully aware of how essential to human life childhood is (and even the time before the birth of the child, when he or she is still *in utero*). He accepts the general rule that a right

¹ Plat. *Leg.* 636d 5-7 (Saunders 1997); see also Plat. *Leg.* 631e; *Phlb.* 61c 5, 62d 4-7; Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1105a 10-12.

² These three criteria are also used by Plato in the sexual sphere of the citizen's life to limit the precocious blow of the erotic among them; see Plat. *Leg.* 841a-b; Schöpsdau 1994, 205.

³ For a discussion of the role of play in education, see e.g. Stalley 1983, 130-132; on education in antiquity, see e.g. Marrou 1969 (basic education is discussed on pages 116-120) and Jaeger 2001 (the education of the children based on the *Laws* is covered on pages 1186-1194).

⁴ Plat. *Leg.* 643c 6-8; see also 793a 2-5; *Resp.* 441a-b. Plato speaks about the mixing of pleasure and pain, and that the right action should be based on the middle to which he alludes in the *Philebus*; see Krämer 1959, 191-194. It should be remembered that neither in the *Republic* nor in the *Laws* is there any praise of the individual; see Pappas 1993, 62. For a discussion of professional education, see e.g. Lodge 2000, 41-59.

life (*orthos bios*) cannot rely solely on seeking bodily pleasures and completely avoiding all pain, but it should be based on preserving the measure (*meson*) in both of them so that a condition called cheerfulness (*hileōs*) can appear in the end. And this is exactly what is proper for a pregnant woman and the child (*Leg.* 792c 9 - e 7). This cheerfulness is characterised as «divine» in the *Laws*, but it does not indicate – as is aptly noticed by Lisi⁵ – that it is impossible to achieve the ideal but only the condition of cheerfulness is available to a human being. Pleasure combined with love (*philia*), pain and disgust (*misos*) are the first things experienced by a person after birth, and they become, so to speak, a point of departure for the individual's *aretē*. In the very period when the imperfect human being does not yet use the *logos*, a correct and right reaction to pleasure and pain in the form of harmony (*sumphōnia*) is evident in the primordial model of *sōphrosunē* or *aretē*⁶. As it is well known, from Plato's remarks concerning the anamnestic procedure (*Phd.* 72e-76a), the person's nature is initially shaped on an intellectual level. It turns out, however, that predispositions also manifest themselves in the scope of morality. While the source of the first is a transcendent reality, the second is presumably a consequence of the previous life (if we choose a more religious interpretation of Plato's thought) or a natural outcome of the mortal part of the soul (if a more naturalistic interpretation is chosen). Both aspects need to be developed by appropriate education. The intellect needs to learn to recover its forgotten knowledge, and the moral teaching aims at bettering the person (if someone has earlier lived the best life or he or she has served a sentence for their moral crimes) and at improving their soul. If the lower aspects of the soul are not so dissonant as to make impossible not only their mutual harmonisation but also their euphony with reason,

⁵ Lisi 1985, 128, n. 8.

⁶ Plat. *Leg.* 653a-b; 710a; see also Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1104b 8-13: «For virtue of character is concerned with pleasures and pains. Indeed, it is because of pleasure that we do base actions and because of pain that we abstain from doing noble ones. That is why we must be brought up in a certain way straight from childhood, as Plato says, so as to enjoy and be pained by the things we should, since this is what the correct education is» (Reeve 2014); Arist. *Pol.* 1340a 15-18: «And since music happens to be one of the pleasures, and virtue is a matter of enjoying, loving, and hating in the right way, it is clear that nothing is more important than that one should learn to judge correctly and get into the habit of enjoying decent characters and noble actions» (Reeve 1998). One should also mention here Democritus' view with reference to children's predispositions. He thought that it was better to adopt a child than to beget it because adoption enables one to recognise the child's natural abilities and to make a good choice. There is no such choice when parents give birth to the child because they have to count on and to settle for a child as it is born (Diels - Kranz 68 B 277 = fr. 724 Luria = D 141 Taylor = fr. 182.1 Leszl = D 394 Laks - Most).

improvement and construction of the soul's proper state seem to be still feasible.

Childhood is essential, above all, because it is at that time that it is possible to form the habits on which unwritten customs depend. The customs – if they are right – become the basis for the written laws. According to Plato, the former is more important than the latter because their removal threatens a breakdown of the whole system⁷. It is crucial to exploit the connection between play and pleasure in the earliest education of children. This kinship, for example, makes learning mathematics easier and more efficient (it is not naturally about an advanced level of this science but only the basic one) as well as various other arts (*Leg.* 643c; 819b-c). There are, however, certain human characters which further on in the educational process become smart and knavish (*ponēroi*). It is necessary to prevent them from accessing certain pleasures, especially the bodily ones, and to direct them to the truth so that they can become good citizens (*Resp.* 518d 9 - 519b 5).

2.1. *Paideia: pleasure and music*

The first stage of the educational process is linked above all with music, which pertains both to the body and the soul. The corporeal aspect manifests itself most clearly in babyhood through its eager moving, cavorting about and issuing different sounds. But it is an expression of something far more profound:

Now, whereas all other creatures are devoid of any perception of the various kinds of order and disorder of movement [...] to us men the very gods, who were given [...] to be our fellows in the dance, have granted the pleasurable perception of rhythm and harmony (*hē enrbuthmon te kai enarmonion aisthēsis meth' hēdonēs*).⁸

Pleasure, as can be seen, accompanies various mental states because animals are not endowed with this *aisthēsis*. This peculiar perception, for example, makes it possible for a child, who is rocked in the nanny's arms and listens to her songs, to fall asleep⁹. It is so because the human soul itself goes from non-order to order and is adjusted by being put into a regular movement on the one hand from one side, and it is also

⁷ Jaeger 2001, 1188.

⁸ Plat. *Leg.* 653e 5 - 654a 3; Bury 1961.

⁹ Plat. *Leg.* 790d. Plato notes also that the states connected with the Bacchic and Corybant rituals can be cured in this way; see Dodds 2002, 78-82.

harmonised with the body and the soul on the other¹⁰. Music can form character even if the intellect has not yet been developed. It has the ability to make someone sensitive to beauty, and as a source of joy, the beauty makes one focus on proper pleasure and pain (*Resp.* 401e-402a; *Leg.* 654c-d). It should be remembered, however, that it happens so at the primary level of education since advanced knowledge of music (both practical and theoretical) requires a fully developed reason and understanding of *logos* (*Resp.* 376e).

The significance of music in education is stressed not only in the *Laws* but also in the *Republic*¹¹. Pleasure accompanies music both on the bodily and on the spiritual level. The psychophysical aspect manifests itself in a dance that, again, enables one to commune with the beauty of movement (even if someone does not dance themselves but only watches it), though only when the movement expresses the *aretē* of body or soul¹². One should not then present in a dance figures that show immorality, for this would prevent such immoral figures becoming the images in the souls. If a human being is in the right situation similar to that of a dance, he or she does not then have a negative moral model of action. Music drives human beings to beauty, as mentioned already. Plato, however, believes that in playing and singing beauty should not be perceived (even if someone is not a professional musician) in melody but in rhythm and harmony (*Leg.* 655a). It is clear from Plato's arguments in the *Laws* that he searches for an objective aesthetic criterion, which would make it possible to assess a music work appropriately, opposing at the same time the touchstone accepted by the many that can be pleasure alone¹³. If pleasure is accepted as the only standard for evaluating music,

¹⁰ That is why – as Pelosi 2010, 22 rightly observes – the political control of the poets and musicians is so important. Moutsopoulos 2002a stresses the principle of musical motion, which makes it possible to explain, for example, the relationship between the body and soul.

¹¹ Schofield 2010.

¹² Plat. *Leg.* 655b; for more on the role of the dance in Plato, see Moutsopoulos 2002b, 121-181.

¹³ Plat. *Leg.* 655c; cf. Diels - Kranz 68 B 194 (= 788 Luria = D 58 Taylor = 142.2 Leszl); Diels - Kranz 82 B 11, 9-10; Diels - Kranz 82 B 23 (= D 35 Laks - Most): «Tragedy flourished and was acclaimed – it was a marvelous spectacle for the ears and eyes of the men who lived in those times, which produced by means of stories and sufferings 'a deception', as Gorgias says, 'in which the one who deceives is more just than the one who does not deceive, and the one who is deceived is more intelligent than the one who is not deceived'. For the one who deceives is more just because he has done what he has promised, and the one who is deceived is more intelligent, for whoever is not insensible is easily captured by the pleasure of words (*hēdonē logōn*)» (Laks - Most 2016). Cf. Diels - Kranz 90 (*Dissoi logoi*), 3, 45-46; *Grg.* 501d-502c.

then there is neither objective beauty nor objective ugliness (e.g. every type of music is beautiful/pleasant but the forms of beauty are different, incommensurable and do not form the opposition beauty-ugliness); or beauty is simply subjective¹⁴. In both cases, we are left with undesirable effects in education because there is no single and homogeneous system of values that can be instilled in young people. It also means that there is no such system within a polis (among citizens). Plato illustrates this with the hypothetical image of a pleasure contest, where the competitors are magicians, playwrights or rhapsodists. The results depend on the level of psychophysical development on the part of the judges. Magic would be most beautiful/pleasant to the children, comedy to older children, tragedy to young men and educated women and poetry to old men. Each group would hail the representative of *their* favourite profession as the winner, and there would be no consensus among them as to which would pose a threat to the unanimity of the polis (*Leg.* 658a-e).

Accepting pleasure as the only criterion for estimating music is a source of another danger. It leads to a constant search for new means of expression in music. Plato was fully aware that changes occur in the historical development of music. According to him, the first innovators were the poets who, under the influence of Bacchic madness, overpowered by pleasure and without knowledge, as is in accordance with the law and custom of the Muses, have started to mix the various genres of music and to use instruments that are not respectable¹⁵. One should bear in mind that the poets have an important position in the polis and that their authority legitimises randomness in the composing of music. But in that way, *paranomia* is also allowed – a conduct that manifests itself in the actions of the greatest criminals. In the socio-political context, the worst brigand is a tyrant whose soul Plato condemns to eternal suffering in Tartar (*Phd.* 113e). He also holds the poets responsible for convincing people that the most proper (*orthotata*) criterion for evaluating a musical work is pleasure. For the many are devoid of any deeper reflection on

¹⁴ Cf. Schöpsdau 1994, 270.

¹⁵ For more on the development of musical instruments in Plato, see Moutsopoulos 2002b, 104-119. In his *Politics*, Aristotle also discerns the connection between the development of instruments and pleasure (*Pol.* 1341a 31 - b 1): «Later, when they were better able to distinguish what does promote virtue from what does not, they rejected flute playing because of their experience with it. And the same thing happened to many other ancient instruments (for example, the pektis and the barbitos), those that enhance the pleasure (*ta pros hēdonēn sunteinonta*) of people who listen for embellishments (the heptagon, the trigona, and the sambukai), and all those requiring professional knowledge» (Reeve 1998).

the nature of pleasure, since they think that pleasure is something purely subjective and their aesthetic judgement gains such character as well (*Leg.* 700d-e). Because the poets and people accept only this subjective measure, progress in music is not marked by an objective schema but it is subordinated to the disorderly pleasures (*hupo tinōn ataktōn hēdonōn*)¹⁶. The outcome is rather dramatic. As is well known, the aesthetic sphere of life is strictly connected with the ethical one, as illustrated by the ideal of *kalokagathia*. Consequently, the randomness¹⁷ of aesthetic taste can be transferred to ethics. Freedom of judgement breeds belief in one's own infallibility (i.e. «wisdom»), freedom from fear (*adeia*) and shamelessness (*anaischuntia*). A person ceases to be obedient to those who are better and deserve respect (i.e., the parents, the elders and the rulers above all). They start to break the written and the unwritten laws and they even pay no heed to possible repercussions through the gods' punishment¹⁸. Does this mean, however, that pleasure should be eliminated as a part of the aesthetic-moral evaluation of a work of art? Certainly not, because it accompanies reception of every such work or (to use Plato's categories) it is present in the work (*Resp.* 403c). It is essential that this criterion is applied correctly.

The criterion of music should be pleasure (*hēdonē*); not, however, the pleasure of any chance person; rather I should regard that music which pleases the best men and the highly educated as about the best, and as quite the best if it pleases (*terpein*) the one man who excels all others in virtue (*aretē*) and education. And we say that the judges of these matters need virtue for the reason that they need to possess not only wisdom (*phronēsis*) in general, but especially courage.¹⁹

¹⁶ Plat. *Leg.* 660b. See Jaeger 2001, 1165. We may recall Popper's 1993, 59 claim that a change is something evil and stillness is something divine. It seems, however, that this thesis is a little too extreme. A change can be positive, but only if it happens regularly, i.e., when it follows an objective pattern that can be grasped philosophically.

¹⁷ Plato uses the word *eleutheria*, which is customarily translated as «freedom», but it seems to have both a positive and a negative connotation. The former occurs in case of the inner or political freedom (e.g. *Phd.* 114e; *Resp.* 329c; *Leg.* 693c), the latter concerns the vices *truphē* and *akolasia* (*Grg.* 492c), the state of *anarchia* (*Resp.* 560e; *Leg.* 698b) and democracy (*Resp.* 562c).

¹⁸ *Leg.* 701a-c. Lack of obedience in relation to one's parents and rulers is typical of democracy in the *Republic* (562d-563d). See also Xenophon's assessment of the Athenians (*Mem.* III 5, 15-16). It is worth stressing here that according to Socrates, one of the fundamental laws which constitute human knowledge is the principle of obedience to someone better – see Plat. *Ap.* 28d.

¹⁹ Plat. *Leg.* 658e 7 - 659a 4; Bury 1961. The word *phronēsis* can be understood here both in a philosophical and a more popular sense; see Hentschke 1971, 216, 222 ff.; Schäffer 1981, 173, 360. Courage in this passage of the *Laws* seems to mean

This quotation shows that a person who is fully developed intellectually can make a correct assessment of musical work and is morally upright, i.e., they have to complete the whole *paideia*. It is assumed that such a person is adequately endowed with physiological properties. They cannot be tone-deaf, but they have to be characterised by a vigorous capacity of sensation (*euaisthēsia*). It is an exceptional sensitivity, which allows one not only to recognise and estimate the composition of a work and the correspondence between the means of expression and the musical kind but also the right quality of influence on the human soul²⁰. It should also be remembered that this keenness of senses is a gift from the gods, but it is only a potency, which must be developed in the process of theoretical and practical education to be a full and long-lasting disposition (in Aristotle's terminology).

What is interesting is that Plato describes the musician in a similar manner. Naturally, the artist has to be able to play an instrument, but he also must have musical knowledge. They have to know not only how to compose musical work but also how the particular type of work of art impacts on the audience's souls (especially the young ones). Having such knowledge enables them to provide the public with harmless pleasures (*asineis hēdonai*) and joy²¹. Is there any difference between the expert who assesses the work of art and a professional musician? According to Plato, the former also has a gymnastic education, and can relate both aspects (musical and gymnastic) to the soul in the most appropriate way (*metriōtata*) (*Resp.* 412a). The latter can be dominated by pleasure from a particular musical type and his individual attitude to compose and to play this form of music. That is why it cannot rely on his or her epistemic

the ability to confront the crowd, on the one hand, and the ability to keep one's own beliefs, on the other (see also *Resp.* 429c-d). The connection between *phronēsis* and *andreia* can be viewed similarly to that found in the *Phaedo* (69a-b). The former is the basis for the latter, as it establishes the reality and truth of courage.

²⁰ Plat. *Leg.* 670b; 812b. In the *Republic* (527d 2-4) competent sensitiveness is useful also for agriculture, navigation and the army. On the relation between the physiological and intellectual reception of music, see Barker 2000, 85-99 and Pelosi 2010, 89-113.

²¹ Plat. *Leg.* 670d; cf. *Resp.* 357b: «Tell me, do you think there is a kind of good we welcome, not because we desire what comes from it, but because we welcome it for its own sake – joy, for example, and all the harmless pleasures that have no results beyond the joy of having them?» (Grube - Reeve 1997). A different perspective on sensual pleasure can be found in the *Greater Hippias* where Socrates acknowledges the pleasures of hearing and seeing as the least harmful (*asimestatai*) and Hippias as the best (*Hp. Mai.* 303e). The difference can be put down to the doubtful authenticity of the *Greater Hippias*.

perspective and aesthetic judgement²². Such narrowing of the epistemological horizon can also be connected with the problem of how music impacts the human soul – he or she sees that music *has* such influence, but they do not know *why* and they cannot be aware of music's role in the life of society as a whole²³.

What are, however, the afore-mentioned harmless pleasures? The answer to this question is connected not only with music and its reception but also with the status of an object (and the art's object in particular) and the pleasure involved in perceiving it. In the *Laws* (667b-668a), it is accepted that the object-sphere contains the things that are somehow attractive (they possess a *charis* which sometimes seems to be the same as pleasure in fact). The being of those things depends only on their attractiveness but there are two other features to be taken into consideration: correctness (*orthotēs*) and benefit (*ōpheleia*). These can belong both to the sensual (e.g. the food or the works of the imitative arts [*technai eikastikai*]) and the spiritual sphere (e.g. science [*mathēsis*]). In the last case, the object's whole positive value consists of the correctness, the benefit, the excellence (*to eu*) and the beauty that are based on the highest values, i.e., the truth. On the other hand, the positive value of the art's work can be restricted to pleasure only or it can be expanded to include another feature called accuracy (*isotēs*), i.e. the adequate, proportional, qualitative and quantitative (*hoson kai poion*) copying of the object in the work of art (*Leg.* 668b 6-7). *Isotēs* seems to belittle using pleasure as the criterion, but it does not mean that the latter is useless. Pleasure that is founded on a (non-individualistic, of course) positive aesthetic judgement can be made on the object which is not joined with the truth, benefit or similarity and its pleasant reception brings no harm, i.e. the reception lies only in a pure play²⁴.

A simple play rules out the intellectual reception of an artistic work (especially music), and lack of intellect is typical of a child. That is why a correct introduction of a child to the world of sounds is so essential.

²² Plat. *Leg.* 802c. In the *Republic* (462b-d), the demand is made that all citizens together should derive pleasure from the same object, since otherwise the polis is in danger of disintegration due to the individualisation (*idiōsis*) of pleasure.

²³ An example of this can be seen in the demand that music and the accompanying words should be in harmony with the festivals so as to bring to the polis the benefit and produce fortunate pleasure (*eutuchēs hēdonē*) (*Leg.* 813a).

²⁴ See Plat. *Plt.* 288c 1-9: «Would we want to put down as a fifth class things to do with decoration, painting, and those representations that are completed by the use of painting, and of music, which have been executed solely to give us pleasures, and which would appropriately be embraced by a single name? [...] for not one of them is for the sake of a serious purpose, but all are done for amusement» (Rowe 1997).

It is worth stressing that from the very beginning, music enables one to develop an order (*taksis*) called *sōphrosunē* and the effect is an improvement of human nature (*Leg.* 802c-d). Music, apart from sounds and words, also influences a Greek man through dance, which is likewise a type of imitative art that is closely connected with education and pleasure. Dance is a form of movement of the body that is related to the internal motions of the soul²⁵. Movement, as already mentioned, is something very significant for a child still *in utero* and it has a relaxing effect on a baby. A lack of active intellect is the reason why the child whose body and soul are not mutually balanced is highly susceptible to various external stimuli, which impact on the unreasonable part of the soul. Singing and telling proper myths (by mother or nanny) as well as various physical exercises are the first therapeutic actions, which moderate the unbalanced structure of a man (*Resp.* 377a-b). The words stimulate the development of the reason, while putting the body in a regular movement produces a fundamental sense of order. On the sensible level, human nature as a whole, which is influenced to such a great extent by external factors in the early stages of development, is slowly shaped by both processes. When the conscious and wise person acquires his *paidēia*, pleasure can be involved in the educational procedures – as in case of teaching mathematics (*Resp.* 536d-537a; *Leg.* 819b) – or it can also be necessary to cut off the sensible pleasures, if they hamper intellectual development in any way (*Resp.* 519a-b).

Education is achieved through hearing and seeing. It should, however, be remembered that one should first of all listen to the words which accompany music. It is well known that Plato demanded control over the content of artistic works because they have an essential influence on the formation of individuals' character. Hearing about customs (especially the ones that are better than the individual or community cultivates) provides a proper standard of behaviour and pleasure at the same time²⁶. The value of the performance and pleasure does not arise from the technical or artistic, i.e. purely aesthetic, quality, but are founded on the benefit which the soul gains when someone experiences the show.

²⁵ Cf. Moutsopoulos 2002b, 124-137.

²⁶ Plat. *Leg.* 659c 3-4; Plato expresses thus in the imperative form: «they ought to come to experience more elevated pleasures from listening to the portrayal of characters invariably better than their own» (Saunders 1997). This argument can probably be taken as directed against comedy, if Aristotle's assessment is accepted (*Pol.* 1448a 15-18): «This very distinction separates tragedy from comedy: the latter tends to represent people inferior, the former superior, to existing humans» (Halliwell 1995). On music cf. Plat. *Leg.* 798d 8-9.

The positive effect on education can also be achieved by watching or performing a dance, which together with music and words is the third component of the dramatic play.

While Plato divides dance into two forms, *spoudaion* and *phaulon*, each of these includes two sub-types. The first contains the combative or fire (*purrichē*) dance and the peaceful or harmonious (*emmeleia*²⁷) dance. The peaceful dance is connected with pleasure because its movements reflect the soul of a man in favourable circumstances (*en eupragiais*) whose cause is good (*Resp.* 379b) and the soul of the level-headed person experiencing well-measured (*emmetroi*) pleasures (*Leg.* 814e). Such a person can be called well-ordered (*eunomos*), and if the analogy between the soul and the state is taken into consideration, his or her soul is highly regular, i.e. it is adequately educated, pious, rational and he or she knows their place in the social structure and their assignments, i.e. he or she is happy²⁸. When someone like that dances, they express in their movement worship of the gods, their progeny and propitiousness (*eu prattein*) (*Leg.* 815d). Dividing dance into two forms, Plato points out two possible ways to achieve this auspicious state. The first consists in overcoming difficulties and dangers in order to achieve greater pleasures. To be a greater pleasure means being more dynamic and intense. It also increases the dynamic of the soul that is reflected in a more vigorous dance and has a more energetic influence on the spectator's soul. The second type of the peace-dance is connected with the sense of security when a man can retain and accumulate the goods he or she has. The pleasures are more softened (*praioterai*) in this case, and the internal and external movements are more well ordered, more practised and more placid (and they affect the observer similarly). It should not be forgotten that *emmeleia* is the dance of tragedy, so a good dance represents perfectly the inner state of the right person and there is an appropriate mimetic relation between movements and words (*Leg.* 815e-816b). It is well known that it is the only activity based on mimesis which is right for the guards to practise (*Resp.* 395a-396d). Such performance has not only an ethical and a political but also an aesthetic dimension because it mirrors the physical and ethereal beauty of the person who is closest to the divine.

²⁷ For more on this, see Moutsopoulos 2002b, 170; Schöpsdau 2003, 593-594.

²⁸ *Plat. Cri.* 53c; *Resp.* 380b, 406c, 605b; *Leg.* 927b; *Ti.* 24d. The meaning and significance of the analogy between the soul and the state has been extensively discussed; see e.g. Anderson 1971; Williams 1973; Ferrari 2003 (especially ch. 3).

2.2. *Paideia*: sexuality

While pleasures come from desires, three desires seem most pleasurable to every young man: the desire for food, the desire for drink and the desire for sex²⁹. There is a great need to use numerous means to change this attitude, these being fear and *orthoï logoi* on the social level, and music as well as physical exercises on the educational level (*Leg.* 782e). The educational measures should be concurrently implemented because the nature of a person who specialises only in music would otherwise be too soft (*Resp.* 387c), whereas a person who solely practises sport would be too violent (*Resp.* 410d). Physical activity plays a very important part as a regulating measure of sexual tension (it is able to relieve it), which has the greatest inclination to *hubris* (*Leg.* 841a). Yet Plato is aware that the question of sexual behaviour needs a broader view and further limitations. For instance, space where the young exercise – the gymnasium – *can* be a place where their sexuality is warped and their sexual orientation is changed from a heterosexual one to attraction to the same gender³⁰. According to Plato, two forms of sexual intercourse and the resulting pleasures should be forbidden as being against nature: homosexual and incestuous³¹. The lawgiver has the task of taking care of the relations between the sexes. Moreover, one has to take into consideration the essence of *philia*, i.e., the desires and all issues connected with *eros* (*ta legomena erōta*)³². In its proper form, *philia* is a relation between the

²⁹ Plato says in the *Phaedo* that a philosopher should not concern himself with these things because a soul is in danger of being tarnished (*Phd.* 64d; 81d). It is so, I believe, only when someone confines their life solely to these pleasures or when they put these on the top of the hierarchy of values. In the *Protagoras* (353c), these three types of pleasures are linked with a view of pleasure which ordinary people share. Plato mentions drinking, food and sex as the pleasures of the young ones in the *Republic* (329a). Their importance should be diminished along with age in favour of the desires and pleasures of *logos* (*Resp.* 328d). These three aspects of life are the lowest part of the soul domain (*Resp.* 580e). While Plato also warns that they foster *hubris*, the same statement can be found in Democritus (Diels - Kranz 68 B 235 = 750 Luria = D 99 Taylor = 141.2 Leszl = D 248 Laks - Most). See also Plat. *Phdr.* 238a-c and Fisher's 1992, 467-470 commentary. Cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1118a-b; *Pr.* 880a 6-10.

³⁰ Plat. *Leg.* 636b; cf. *Chrm.* 154a-c; 155d; *Symp.* 217b-c. This does not mean that one should steer clear of the gymnasium and common meals so as to restrict one's activity exclusively to one's home. Isolation and seclusion make pleasures, pains and desires transform into habits which lead to *paranoia* and neglect of the spiritual development (*Leg.* 727c; 788b).

³¹ Plat. *Leg.* 838a-e; cf. *Phdr.* 250e. See Dover 2004, 202-203; Schöpsdau 2011, 199-200.

³² Plat. *Leg.* 836e; cf. *Phdr.* 237d-238a. Hyland 1968, 32-46 thinks that *erōs*, *epithumia* and *philia* can be arranged in a hierarchy and the criterion for the arrangement

equal or similar elements with regard to virtue (*aretē*) and it is marked by gentleness and permanence – the community is forever. In this relationship, the body should only be an object of observation and admiration (*timē*) because sexual satisfaction is a sign of *hubris* (that is why this kinship is called ‘being pure’ [*hagneuein*]). The real association is formed by the souls and virtues (*sōphrosunē*, fortitude, magnanimity and prudence) – things which are highly respected and held in almost divine veneration³³. Another form of *philia* is the relation between the elements which are the generic opposites. It is dangerous and savage, and the aim of this desire is a bodily fulfilment accompanied by a disregard for the soul. Plato uses a metaphor of the fruit’s consumption, which shows that it is a relationship between something active and passive, older and younger. This relationship is purely egoistic. These are the features of the classic homosexual relationship³⁴. The alliance between the elements is dynamic and only when it gains proper strength does it become suitably fierce (*sphodron*) – this state is called *erōs*. Only the former of the two forms of the relationship should be encouraged in a *polis* and if its participants are both males, then it is the only acceptable kind of (homo) erotics³⁵.

The most important thing in the entire education (*paideia*) is to channel the desires and activities to *erōs* so as to make someone not only a good worker but also a perfect citizen³⁶. The proper and improper *erōs* can also display itself in the heterosexual bond. A sexual act should serve to produce progeny (*paidogonia*) first of all and it ought to occur between the persons acknowledged as compatible and at the befitting time and circumstances. There is another dimension as well that allows the relief of sexual madness (*lussa, mania*) and prevent *hubris* in the

is the degree of rationality which they exhibit. He does not take into consideration this fragment of the *Laws*. A convincing polemic with Hyland’s standpoint is presented by Cummings 1981, 10-18. The concept of *epithumia* in Plato’s middle dialogues is analysed by Kahn 1987, 77-103.

³³ Naturally, it needs to be remembered how vital is to discern the beauty in this case and to intellectualise this experience; see Plat. *Phdr.* 250b-c; *Symp.* 210a-212a; *Tim.* 45a-b; *Leg.* 837c; 961d.

³⁴ There is a third form of *philia* which has a mixed character. According to Plato, it is hard to ascertain what such a person desires. They crave the body, on the one hand, but there is something that stops them, which this leads to the state of *aporia*.

³⁵ Plat. *Leg.* 836e-837d. There is also a right (*orthos*) *erōs* in the *Republic*. It is a long way from madness (*mania*), intemperance (*akolasia*) and sexual intercourse (*aphrodisia*), as it is bound up with decency (*kosmion*), beauty of reason and cultured (*mousikōs*) love; cf. *Phdr.* 255a-256d.

³⁶ Plat. *Leg.* 643c; 644e: a perfect citizen knows how to rule and be ruled according to the dictates of justice.

scope of bodily pleasures³⁷. When a husband and wife with the right *erōs* are connected, this relationship is called a «proper friendship»³⁸. Plato says in the *Republic* that the right *erōs* should not include pleasure, which means that this pleasure is connected with intemperance, madness and bodily pleasure in homosexual intercourse. But it seems that it can relate to marriage as well. If the relationship between a married couple is solely grounded on *hēdonē*, it will not be actualised in a friendly community³⁹.

3. POLITICS

All the above-mentioned regulations aim to specify the rule of proper life in a *polis*. There is also a canon in the case of individuals worthy of being guards (*phulakes*). Having presented the activities of the lowest class (the producers), Plato indicates in the *Republic* that if a *polis* happens to be at war there must exist a special social group whose primary task would be the defence of the state. They have to meet the unique criteria with respect to body and soul. The candidates for the position of guard should have good eyesight and be quick and strong, for example. They ought to have fully formed the aspect of the soul called a *thumoeides* in order to be infallibly described as brave people⁴⁰. Those who possess the virtue called courage (*andreia*) are able to resist not only external but also internal threats. The inner risks could be both the people who break the laws,

³⁷ Plat. *Leg.* 838e-839b; 840d-e. Plato says also (*Leg.* 888a) that a tremendous appetite for pleasure (*laimargia tēs hēdonēs*) is the cause of madness, and we know also from the *Republic* (619b 7 - c 2) that a tyrant possesses such lust. It is worth remembering that according to the *Symposium* (208d-e) to produce progeny is a human expression (though a lower one) of the desire for immortality. There are naturally various differences between the ancient and contemporary views on marriage. The contrast is described by Morrow 1960, 439 as follows: «For Plato, as for the Greeks generally, marriage was not the satisfaction of personal inclination, but the performance of a duty; and in choice of a mate a man should not be guided by romantic considerations – this the Greeks would have considered selfish and irresponsible – but by the interests of his family and the state». Dover 1974, 211 presents a more optimistic outlook on marriage.

³⁸ Plat. *Leg.* 839b 1. On friendship between husband and wife, see also Xenophon (*Hier.* 4, 3-4). Aristotle (*Eth. Nic.* 1162a 16-27) notes that *philia* is naturally present in a marriage and that it is based on pleasure or benefit but can be accomplished by virtue (*aretē*) as well.

³⁹ Plat. *Resp.* 403a; cf. Ludwig 2007, 208.

⁴⁰ Naturally, it should be remembered that according to Plato, the soul is not the place for the mental or emotional states, as the soul itself thinks, desires and feels; see Lorenz 2006, 146; Ferrari 2007, 165-207.

but the danger can also be found in the soul itself. Courageous persons are capable of overcoming fear, enduring pain, restricting their desires, resisting various temptations and keeping the balance between pleasures, thus, living a happy life in the end (*Leg.* 633d-e, 840c). They have to deal differently with their fellow citizens and with their enemies. They should be gentle and magnanimous (*praion kai megalothumon*) in the first case and dangerous or ruthless (*chalepos*) and courageous (*thumoeides*) in the second (*Resp.* 375a 11 - c 8). To have such character, a human being needs to be well educated and this education, as already mentioned, is accomplished by music and athletic exercises. Their primary aim is to harmonise two aspects of human nature – to *thumoeides* and to *philosophon* («a love of the wisdom»), and when this is perfectly (*teleōs*) achieved, it is possible to find someone who is most musical and most harmonious (*mousikotaton kai euarmototaton*), i.e., highly educated and remarkably well-tempered (*Resp.* 411e 4 - 412a 7). Their secondary goal is to shape the right relationship between an excellent soul and a well-developed body⁴¹. In realisation of the first purpose, the most important thing is to instill the right beliefs by which human beings are to be governed.

3.1. *Politics: pleasure and beliefs*

It is well known that human beings can have true or right beliefs (*altheis [orthai] doksa*). They are, generally speaking, a subset of the set called «beliefs» (*Cra.* 387b). Belief is something between knowledge and ignorance⁴², and it can be extracted from the soul through dialogic and dialectic examination. When beliefs achieve a higher level of accuracy, they become knowledge (*Men.* 85c-d). It is the basis for an action which is proper, i.e., useful for the individual and society, and demonstrates competent thinking which is able to justify the action⁴³. True beliefs do not seem to be an absolutely durable element of human thought because there are three things which can contribute to their rejection: (1) deception (*kleptein*), (2) delusion (*goeteuein*⁴⁴) or (3) violence (*biazein*). The

⁴¹ Plat. *Resp.* 376e, 521d-e; *Leg.* 795d-796d. For more on military training, see Jaeger 2001, 827-834.

⁴² Plat. *Symp.* 202a. Plato says in the *Laws* (632c) that some of the guardians are on duty pursuant to *phronēsis* and some of them according to *alēthēs doksa*. The mutual connection of prudence and true beliefs is not possible until relatively old age (*Leg.* 653a).

⁴³ Klein 1965, 243-245.

⁴⁴ This word is connected with magic, but Plato uses it metaphorically, since – as Dickie 2003, 44 explains – there is no theoretical reflection on magic in Plato's dialogues.

causes of refusal in the case of (1) are persuasion (*peithō*) and *logos*. Since they have a more prolonged effect on someone, they erase and cause the person to forget the right beliefs. Pain and suffering (*odunē kai algēdōn*) change the belief (*metadokszadzein*) in the case of (3). For this research, the most important is the factor which triggers (2). Delusion or bewitchment (*kēleîn*) can be caused by pleasure or fear (*Resp.* 413b 1 - c 3). Let us briefly see how.

It seems that pleasure brings about a certain 'shutdown' of the rational. In the *Phaedrus*, for example, it is said that a human being can easily become indolent in this region (Athens), especially at noon, in the bosom of nature and hearing the sounds of the cicadas. The best use of this time can be made when it is devoted to philosophical discussion (*Phdr.* 259a). Admittedly, the pleasure of hearing is itself a pure one according to Plato (*Phlb.* 51b-d), but it would not be a harmless pleasure in this case. It is probably so because someone hears only music without the intellectual content in the form of words (*logos*)⁴⁵. Even if music accompanies the words, as in the poetic or dramatic work, there is still the danger that the work of art is created through a formally and materially (morally) improper *mimesis* so that its reception is dominated by pleasure. Plato, however, seems to allow for the possibility that if there is a rational basis for the proper connection between words and music (and probably dance as well – *Leg.* 814e-816e), then they can be produced and played within a polis⁴⁶, because when an appropriate aesthetic form of the work is received by the body-soul structure in which the rational and irrational are correctly harmonised, it is able to sustain or even to improve the form of the human being (*Leg.* 840b-c).

Well-arranged and well-expressed disquisition can also produce delusions and an enslavement of the soul. Socrates clarifies that the listeners of the sophist Protagoras are in this state (*Prt.* 315b) and that he

⁴⁵ It is necessary to bear in mind that composing purely instrumental pieces is criticised by Plato in the *Laws* because such music is devoid of its mimetic function and it cannot perform any moral role in society (*Leg.* 669d-670a) – Moutsopoulos 2002b, 272. That some types of music are harmful to the soul is stated clearly in the *Republic* (411b-c). In the above-mentioned section of the *Laws*, making poetry without music is also met with disapproval; cf. Plat. *Phdr.* 278c.

⁴⁶ Plat. *Resp.* 607c 4-6: «Nonetheless, if the poetry that aims at pleasure and imitation has any argument to bring forward that proves it ought to have a place in a well-governed city, we at least would be glad to admit it, for we are well aware of the charm it exercises» (Grube - Reeve 1997). In the Greek original, the optative is used twice, which suggests that the author of the utterance does not want to or cannot settle the relationship between reality and the condition expressed in the utterance; see Kühner - Gerth 1904, 477 f.; Auerbach - Golias 1985, 209.

also falls into it after having heard the famous myth about the origins of humankind and the ensuing explanation. What is more, he had recovered from this with difficulty, because his desire for hearing was so intensely stimulated⁴⁷. Plato stresses again the secure connection between human's emotionality and words, as the sophist Gorgias has already done in his *Defence of Helen*:

For incantations divinely inspired by means of speeches (*logoî*) are bringers of pleasure and removers of pain. For the power of an incantation, when it is conjoined with the opinion of the soul, beguiles it, persuades it, and transforms it by sorcery. For two arts have been discovered, those of sorcery and of magic, which are errors (*hamartemata*) of the soul and deceptions (*apatemata*) of opinion. [...] The power of speech (*logos*) has the same relation (*logos*) with the arrangement (*taxis*) of the soul as the arrangement (*taxis*) of drugs has with the nature of bodies. For just as some drugs draw some fluids out of the body, and others other ones, and some stop an illness and others stop life, in the same way some speeches (*logoî*) cause pain, others pleasure, others fear, others dispose listeners to courage, others drug and bewitch the soul by some evil persuasion.⁴⁸

Thus, Gorgias finds emotional influence to be the primary goal of rhetoric. Plato shows by contrast that the bewitchment (as predominant effect) must mislead (*apatē*) (*Resp.* 413c) if it is not accompanied by intellectual discipline, and it is so because a rhetor-sophist «calls up phantoms and makes people believe in things that do not exist»⁴⁹. It should be remem-

⁴⁷ Plat. *Prt.* 328d; cf. *Menex.* 235a-c; *Euthyd.* 289e-290a. Manuwald 1999, 236 reads this passage of the *Protagoras* ironically.

⁴⁸ Diels - Kranz 82 B 11, 59-64, 87-93 (= D 24 Laks - Most). Plato also emphasises the strength of Gorgias' rhetoric in the *Symposium* (198b-c). The sophist Thrasymachus was regarded as a master of emotional rhetoric – Plat. *Pbdr.* 267c-d (= Diels - Kranz 85 B 6 = D 13a Laks - Most): «The might of the Chalcedonian seems to me to have prevailed by his art of plaintive speeches drawn to the subjects of old age and poverty. At the same time, this man has become expert at 'making the crowd angry', and conversely 'beguiling them with incantations when they have become angry', as he says; and he is the best at slandering and at quashing slanders in one way or another» (Laks - Most 2016). Herm. in *Pbdr.* 239, 18-20 (= Diels - Kranz 85 B 6 = D 13b Laks - Most): «The Chalcedonian, i.e. Thrasymachus, taught how one must arouse the judge's compassion and secure his pity: age, poverty, plaintive children, and things like that [...]» (Laks - Most 2016).

⁴⁹ Romilly 1975, 27. See also Plat. *Resp.* 598c 7 - d 5: «Hence, whenever someone tells us that he has met a person who knows all the crafts as well as all the other things that anyone else knows and that his knowledge of any subject is more exact than any of theirs is, we must assume that we're talking to a simple-minded fellow who has apparently encountered some sort of magician or imitator and been deceived into thinking him omniscient and that the reason he has been deceived is that he himself can't distinguish between knowledge, ignorance, and imitation» (Grube - Reeve 1997). Cf. Plat.

bered, however, that apart from the negative aspect, this enchantment could probably have a positive one too, and this is in Eros' power: the god who was «a genius with enchantments, potions and clever pleadings (*deinos goēs kai pharmakeus kai sophistēs*)» (*Symp.* 203d 8); and according to Alcibiades at least, it is due to Socrates (*Symp.* 215b-216a). The reader is thereby enthralled both by the sophists and by the main character of Plato's works so that examination of the dialogues becomes an educational task. It is possible to combat sophistic apparitions by means of the logical and rhetorical tools of Socrates, on the one hand, but one should not forget that Socrates could also bewitch everyone. One should spare no effort to stand up to his illusions, even if they can be useful or noble lies⁵⁰.

Change of beliefs is in itself not bad, but it cannot be constant, and it should take place solely in the specific age. If it is only possible, the switch ought to proceed entirely intentionally and its culmination must be the true beliefs. Example of this process can be found in the *Sophist* (265d-e), where the young Theaetetus talks to the Visitor. The former is entirely aware of the fact that his beliefs are changed, and the latter that has diagnosed the nature of the young man sees that Theaetetus will probably modify his views in the future, but the change will aim in the proper direction. At the same time, the Visitor tries to stabilise the permutation temporarily at least by framing a position which would satisfy them both⁵¹. Unquestionably, however, the best guard (*aristos phulaks*) cannot change his beliefs, because the thinking and acting of members of the ruling elite should always aim at what is best (*beltiston*) for the polis. And that is precisely why one ought to put the candidate for the guard to the «test of spell» (*goēteias hamilla*), consisting in changing his environment from a pleasant to a dreadful one and vice versa. If he or she is well educated, they will behave appropriately in accord with the established rules in every situation⁵². What more can we say about such a trial?

Soph. 234c, 235a-c, 241b; *Plt.* 291c. It should be remembered that the ability to beguile by words is also attributed to Socrates. He mentions it himself in the *Apology* (17a 6 - b 1: *mē hup' emou eksapatēthē hōs deinou ontos legein*), and Glaukon (*Resp.* 358b) as well as Meno (*Men.* 80a) accuse him of it.

⁵⁰ On noble lies, see e.g. Page 1991; Calabi 1998; Ghibellini 2004; Schofield 2007.

⁵¹ If this interpretation is correct, it could undermine again Popper's famous thesis that for Plato change is evil, whilst stability is divine.

⁵² *Plat. Resp.* 413bc 5 - 414a 7; see also *Resp.* 502e-503a: «We said, if you remember, that they must show themselves to be lovers of their city when tested by pleasure and pain and that they must hold on to their resolve through labors, fears, and all other adversities» (Grube - Reeve 1997); *Resp.* 503e-504a: «Therefore they must be tested in the labors, fears, and pleasures we mentioned previously. But they must also be exercised

Wine, as is well known, has played such a significant role in Hellenic culture that its way of drinking has served to distinguish Greeks from barbarians. The former, if only they considered themselves well educated, drank wine proportionally mixed with water because they thought consuming undiluted wine could cause madness and crime. There is a famous example of this in Homer: during Peirithous' wedding, the Centaur Eurytion went berserk after he had become inebriated on undiluted wine and perpetrated terrible deeds. Heracles, Theseus and Nestor got him under control (causing him to lose his nose and ears), and the result of this was a war between the Centaurs and Lapiths⁵³. Plato stresses that pleasures, sufferings, inclinations (*thumoi*) and loves (*erotes*) can be intensified by drinking wine and excessive drinking can deprive a human being of the senses, memories, beliefs and consciousness (*phroneseis*)⁵⁴. That is why one should not generally consume wine before one turns 18 years old. It is reasonable to drink wine moderately until one is 30 years old, and after 40 one can consume wine in a more 'loose' manner (*Leg.* 666a-b). A total ban on drinking wine by young people can be scientifically (physically) justified. Youth is the period when fire dominates in human nature⁵⁵, and as Plato says in the *Timaeus* (60a), wine is one of those liquids which contain fire and, therefore, its basic function is to warm the soul along with the body. Hence, drinking wine in youth brings a reinforcement of fire in human nature and, thus, not only a physical but also a psychic disturbance. Consumption of wine

in many other subjects – which we didn't mention but are adding now – to see whether they can tolerate the most important subjects or will shrink from them like the cowards who shrink from other tests» (Grube - Reeve 1997).

⁵³ Hom. *Od.* XXI 295-304. It is worth noting that there appear the verbal forms of *aaō* (*aadzō*) and the noun *atē* in this passage. According to Frenández-Galiano, it «emphasizes the destructive moral blindness caused by *atē*»; Russo - Frenández-Galiano - Heubeck 1992, 180. Antinous addresses reproachfully Odysseus two verses earlier and he expresses a measure-maxim that is very characteristic of Greek culture: «Sweet wine hurts thee, which harms others also, whoever take it too abundantly, nor drinks properly» (Buckley 1851).

⁵⁴ Plat. *Leg.* 645d 4 - e 3. Similar opinions can also be found in early Greek poetry – Schöpsdau 1994, 249-250.

⁵⁵ Cf. Hippoc. *Nat. Hom.* 12: «For you must know that a man is a warmest on the first day of his existence and coldest on the last. For it must be that the body is hot which grows and progresses with force; but when the body begins to decay with an easy decline it grows cooler. It is on account of this that a man, growing most on his first day, is proportionally hotter then; on his last day, decaying most, he is proportionally cooler» (Jones 1959); *Aph.* 1, 14: «Growing creatures have most innate hot, and it is for this reason that they need most food [...]» (Jones 1959).

can, however, be a chance to confront shame (*aischunē*, *aidos*⁵⁶), which should appear when someone, yielding the many and different pleasures, does something nasty⁵⁷. Because a young mind is not fully developed, an essential aetiological factor becomes the possibility to imagine and to realise that the authorities can condemn an evil deed and its perpetrator. Thus, it bears testimony both to the self-awareness (someone's imperfection) and to the ability to accept the authority of the sages. To undergo the wine test makes it possible to see how man copes with pleasures, i.e. to test their character and to call them moderate (*sophrōn*) after they had prevailed⁵⁸. This and other tasks (*erga*)⁵⁹ given to the candidates by the guards cause them to gain *experience*, which is a necessary factor for overcoming oneself. The wine test is a preparation for symposia in which the individual will participate in the future and during which «the political, moral, public and personal values» will be tested⁶⁰. The other factors are *logos*, and skill (*technē*), which allow either to leave the symposium when someone feels insecure and is afraid to succumb to alcohol or to keep temperance as an assembly is finished⁶¹. Plato, as already mentioned, notes that wine can intensify emotions and he also describes the process: it appears as cheerfulness at first, but along with drinking it turns into a growing optimism and a deep conviction of intellectual capabilities (*doksa*). The next step is to believe that one is a wise man and is able to speak and to present them freely. The last phase is to be intrepid and to converse and act on the spur of the moment (*aoknōs*) (*Leg.* 649a-b).

⁵⁶ The open question is whether the example of an alcohol drinking allows thinking that there is an instinctive disposition to self-control in human nature; cf. Cairns 1993, 375.

⁵⁷ When shame does not appear, the character is morally defective, i.e. there is a vice in it called impertinence (*tharros*) or shamelessness (*anaideia*), which is the greatest evil both for the individual and the society (*Leg.* 647a 10 - b 1). This vice can also manifest itself on the epistemological level – *Tht.* 196d-e; *Phdr.* 243c; *Resp.* 560e-561a. More see Schöpsdau 1994, 242-245.

⁵⁸ Even if someone does not belong to the two higher classes of Plato's state, *sōphrosunē* is a desirable virtue, because a restrained worker is obedient to the rulers and they can dominate the excessive pleasures of drinking, eating and sex (*Resp.* 389e-390a).

⁵⁹ Some tasks need to distract the young person's attention from the accompanying pleasures. An example is hunting, whose aim is to get to know homeland, and not to spend time pleasantly (*Leg.* 763b; 823c).

⁶⁰ Bowie 1997, 1-2.

⁶¹ *Plat. Leg.* 646e-648e. This passage of the *Laws* speaks about an imaginary beverage – a gift from the gods which makes it possible to put the character to the test. Although the argument seems to have a broader meaning, it is constructed on the analogy of wine and it is possible to relate it to the particular event of the symposium.

The effect of alcohol abuse is not virtue, i.e. the fearless (the bravery) in a battle (in such a contest [*agōn*] as in the *Symposium*, for example), but vice. That is why it is so important to drink in moderation and in a controlled way or, as in the case of the guardians in active service, to steer clear of alcohol completely⁶².

The candidates for the guards (and the guards themselves) are constantly under surveillance to be selected from among the most unique individuals. They have to be the best, i.e. entirely rational, sagacious (*phronimoi*) and capable of taking care of the polis because the state is the first and most important object of their *philia* and they always take its benefit into consideration (*Resp.* 412c-d). A few of the guards show peculiar involvement in learning and examining the truth (*Resp.* 475c-e). Only they are apt to discern the existence of the eternal and perfect beings, thus obtaining full knowledge (*Resp.* 477a-b). But it is not only intellectual endowment which determines the possibility of having the highest power. Human desires and pleasures should be trained to focus on proper objects (*Leg.* 643c). The desires of the best guards are at one point aimed at the objects of science, and the guards gain access to spiritual pleasures, while bodily pleasures lose value for them. Such an attitude marks a person who possesses the virtue called *sophrosunē* (*Resp.* 485d-e). This personality trait is, as already said, innate to some degree, but it has to undergo the educational treatment to become a long-lasting element of human nature. This means that it is necessary to fight against the desires and pleasures which stimulate various improper actions (*Leg.* 647c-d). These are behaviours which include addiction (i.e. voluntary deprivation of freedom) and lack of self-control (*akrateia*), activities in which the man perpetrates an act of *hubris* (over-drinking, over-eating and every kind of over-possessing, for example) and, in addition, telling untruths (*Ap.* 17b, 31a), flattering (*Ap.* 38d), dishonesty, brutal competition, rape and murder (*Resp.* 391c, 586a-b). All these actions arise due to a lack of knowledge and because the reason has no ruling power (*Tht.* 196d-e; *Resp.* 586c). To realise what *sophrosunē* is and how it is connected with pleasures it is necessary to show Plato's understanding of human nature.

⁶² Plat. *Resp.* 398e; 403e. Interestingly, an impairment of cognitive abilities could also be significant in the case of senior citizens, because their souls are 'rejuvenated' and prone to influence. It occurs by reviving a *paideia* obtained in youth; Belfiore 1986, 425-426.

Plato says that *sophrosunē* «is surely a kind of order, the mastery of certain kinds of pleasures and desires»⁶³. An order presupposes a plurality of objects (in the range of human beings in this case) and mastery presupposes the axiological hierarchy between the elements (*Resp.* 431a). A human being is a plurality because he or she is a spiritual and corporeal compound. The metaphysical constituent rules the physical one, but it can also be analysed as two- or three-element structure. Some of Plato's expressions suggest that the soul is composed of the rational and the non-rational factor, of which the former is better and should, therefore, govern the latter. However, one can set apart two features in the non-rational factor, because the factor responsible for commitment and enthusiasm should be distinguished from the one responsible for desires. The former can lean towards the higher (reason) or towards the lower. The lowest part of the soul desires or craves to be filled with pleasures, and it is most prone to *hubris*. It can only take place when the things which bring pleasure become objects and actions connected with the body, e.g., drinking, eating or sex (*Resp.* 442a-c). An excessive role on the part of these lower interests leads to disturbance in the soul and the consequence of it is opposition to the proper content of knowledge, beliefs or *logos* (*Leg.* 689a-b). If the soul is moderate (*sophrōn*), the middle element would be in favour of the reason and it would accept that *hubris* is something evil and that actions according to *hubris* are not beautiful but rather shameless⁶⁴. The higher and the middle constituents can defy the lowest one, since humans are able to refrain from various improper activities. Thus it is hardly strange that moderation is the basis for wise and just action (*Leg.* 696c). If moderation consists in the appropriate relationship between the parts of the soul in the vertical dependence pattern (superiority-inferiority), it means that every part of the soul takes action suitable for it, and to do what is appropriate is something essential for Plato's view of justice (it may be called a spiritual justice)⁶⁵.

It is well known that there is a close connection between the ethical and the political in Plato's philosophy. That is why *sophrosunē* as one of the virtues characterises not only the soul of a man who achieves the maximum of his capabilities (i.e. the state of happiness), but it is also present in the good, just and happy state. Plato was perfectly aware of how difficult it is to attain the condition in both dimensions, and he therefore paid quite a lot of attention in his writings to the various effects of degen-

⁶³ Plat. *Resp.* 430e 6-7 (Grube - Reeve 1997); cf. *Grg.* 491d; *Pbdr.* 256b.

⁶⁴ Cf. Moss 2005, 153-155.

⁶⁵ Cf. Irwin 1995, 227, 238, 250, 253, 256, 282, 295 ff.; Santas 2010, 187 ff.

eration⁶⁶ on the structure of the soul and the polis. Some of these issues are connected with pleasure.

3.2. *Politics: pleasure and degeneration*

«Everything that has become perishes» (*Resp.* 546a 2) is an ontological principle that justifies the collapse of the perfect political system. The human factor is the guards who cease to recognise the so-called geometrical number⁶⁷. This number served to regulate the procedures of conception in the state to produce the proper human characters. The source of degeneration is an enfeeblement of the rational and the increase of the irrational part of the soul (i.e. the proper, beautiful and good structure of the soul is disturbed), but one can point to a deeper cause of it. On the epistemological level, the ignorance of the number triggers the inability to hit the right time (*kairos*) and it probably also means that there is a problem with the connection between the noetic view and human action. Moreover, it is even possible that it can block the access to the noetic world⁶⁸. On the ontological level, the divergence between cosmic and human time is begun (in *Politicus* 270a Plato says that Demiurgos leaves the cosmos at that time). It discontinues, in effect, not only the practice of reviving the generations accurately, but also the process of proper education. There are people born with souls dominated by the middle part (*thumoeides*), but there are also the needs of the lowest part. These needs are still suppressed by shame, and that is why indulgence in bodily pleasures takes place only secretly (*latbarai*) (*Resp.* 548)⁶⁹.

The situation changes radically when love of money comes into the picture. It replaces love of virtue and the richest individuals begin to

⁶⁶ One can speak about psychopathology in this case; cf. Frede 2005, 359; Solinas 2005, 493-495.

⁶⁷ This passage is very difficult, since it is possible to construe it as a serious exposition (e.g. Gaca 2003), a figurative one (e.g. Adam 1907, 208) and an ironical one (e.g. Gow 1883; Rosen 2005, 307). It is worth stressing that the first interpretation can already be found in Aristotle's criticism of Plato philosophy (*Pol.* 1316a). Various interpretations developed until the Renaissance are presented by Allen 1994, 5-11.

⁶⁸ Campese 2005, 192-193; Dorter 2006, 233-235.

⁶⁹ The political system constituted by this type of people is called timocracy, and it is found in Sparta; cf. Calabi 2005; Morrow 1960, 40-63. De Brasi 2013 distinguishes between three forms that Plato takes with respect to the Spartan state: (1) *discours critique* (the dialogues until the *Republic*), (2) *discours justificatif* (the *Republic*, the *Sopbist*, the *Politicus*, the *Parmenides*) and (3) *discours descriptif* (the *Timaeus*, the *Critias*, the *Laws*).

rule the state. They are able to find joy in the works of the Muses, but these works are not connected with *aretē*. These products can only flatter the human soul, but they are no temptation for a virtuous man (*Resp.* 538d). The state undergoes a fundamental transformation: the citizens are deeply divided and antagonised (which is the greatest evil according to Plato) because the poor class (*ptōchoi*) comes into being and among them are «the thieves, the cutpurses, the perpetrators of sacrilege and the originators of all-evil»⁷⁰. As far as pleasure is concerned, a person who is tremendously attached to their fortune has one little constraint. They will restrict only those pleasures which expose them to expenses, but even such limitation is difficult for them, which proves how far the lowest part of the soul has already been influenced. Indeed, they divide pleasures into the necessary and unnecessary so as to arrange them in a hierarchy, but the hierarchy is built on an inaccurate axiological basis because its sole criterion is financial profit and loss.

According to Plato, the above-mentioned social and economic division generates a conflict (*stasis*) among citizens: some of them want to get rid of the rich ones, to gain access to power and to provide equal access to offices (the posts start to be appointed by drawing – *Resp.* 557a). The new political system which arises is called democracy and it is characterised as pleasant, government-less and changeable (*bedeia, anarchos*⁷¹, *poikilē*) (*Resp.* 558c). A democratic man comes into existence in a similar way. There is a fight between the middle and lowest parts of the soul, resulting in that the latter prevails over the former. In effect, the distinction between the necessary and unnecessary pleasures disappears. For equality (*isotēs*), which is the fundamental value in democracy, is also used with regard to desires and pleasures. There is no hierarchy among them; they are all corporeal (*Resp.* 439d).

A democrat regards, then, the words ‘pleasant’, ‘free’, ‘happy’ (*makarios*) as synonymous. They describe his or her way of life best, because all desires and all pleasures are allowed to be fulfilled (there are, of course, many different pleasures, but they all have the same value). However, democracy, according to Plato, is a political system without any real power that could stabilise the activities of the society on the basis of some hierarchical system of values and true knowledge. The major weakness of democracy is not only how the officials are elected, but also how the majority of political decisions are made – by a one-time consensus among

⁷⁰ Plat. *Resp.* 552d; Fuks 1984, 120-121.

⁷¹ Plato regards *anarchia*, *hubris*, dissipation (*asōtia*), shamelessness and lawlessness as equal (*Resp.* 560e; 575a).

the active political citizens. The officials guarantee the relative stability of the government, but it is still quite weak because their power is restricted temporarily and once their job is done, they are judged by people. However, the opinion of democratic citizens is unstable because the democratic man is changeable:

And so he lives on, yielding day by day to the desire at hand. Sometimes he drinks heavily while listening to the flute; at other times, he drinks only water and is on a diet; sometimes he goes in for physical training; at other times, he's idle and neglects everything; and sometimes he even occupies himself with what he takes to be philosophy. He often engages in politics, leaping up from his seat and saying and doing whatever comes into his mind. If he happens to admire soldiers, he's carried in that direction, if money-makers, in that one. There's neither order nor necessity in his life.⁷²

Plato's model of political changes assumes that this kind of instability and the desire for all kinds of pleasure carry with themselves the consequence in the form of a further destruction of the political and social community (*Leg.* 714a). Freedom and equality break down all barriers. One aspires to eliminate all superior power (even that of the laws and customs) so that all social distinctions between people are obliterated. One seeks even to annihilate the difference between man and animal (*Resp.* 562e-563e). It becomes, however, only a surface equality because there are still various economic inequalities and the strife caused by them. When the conflicts accumulate and there is no possibility to solve them lawfully, people give power to one person in these hard times. This is how a tyrant and tyranny come into being. While this position entails privilege and popularity, it also results in a life imbued with praise and luxury that ultimately leads to a complete destruction of the human soul. The lowest part of it tyrannises the other parts; the middle part (*thumos*) is orientated only towards self-interest and the reason is employed solely to calculate how to fulfil all desires and avoid any distress. Interestingly, however, a tyrant wants to satisfy the strongest desires above all, i.e. he craves indulgence in unnecessary and bodily pleasures⁷³. The rationality of such a person is severely limited and he can, in fact, be described as a madman and a perfect example of extreme injustice⁷⁴.

⁷² *Resp.* 561c 7 - d 6; Grube - Reeve 1997.

⁷³ Cf. Xen. *Hier.* 1, 1-32; Strauss 2009, 87-96.

⁷⁴ Plat. *Resp.* 344a; 571a-575; *Leg.* 863d. There is Eros in the tyrant and his actions can be called *mania*, but this is not the sense which Plato presents in the *Phaedrus*. The destroyed structure of the soul means that Eros cease to be the power that elevates the soul to the transcendence – the desire does not undergo the sublimation process – but it brings the soul down. *Mania* is not a passion for seeking answers to the most important

The degeneration of human nature is caused by a lack of proper education and by the fact that the natural, physical and egoistic elements become prevalent. Schooling and nurture (*paideia*) guarantee that the reason can develop, *thumos* can be in favour of reason, and both can get the lowest part of the soul under control. Studying enables one to follow Apollo's appeal: *Know thyself* (*gnothi sauton; nosce te ipsum*) not to be an egoist (egoism is 'easy', quite 'natural' and it can be deepened or sublimed), but to be aware that most important thing is a community. As Plato says in the *Laws*, it is difficult to acknowledge that the common good should be more important than the individual one. The common good «is what knits a state together, whereas private interests make it disintegrate. If the public interest is well served, rather than private, then the individual and the community alike are benefited»⁷⁵. Plato is, however, quite pessimistic here because if there were such a unique person⁷⁶ who could understand this, there would also be the great danger that his or her irrational and mortal part of the soul would result in craving for things in excess (*pleoneksia*) and pursuing solely one's private interests (*idiopragia*⁷⁷). If this is connected with the irrational avoidance of distress and pursuit of pleasures, then the soul of this person and the state is cast into the abyss of evil (Plat. *Leg.* 875b 1 - c 2).

It can be seen, then, that a possible change in the human soul and in politics is extended from what is philosophical, selfless, correct and healthy to what is tyrannical, egoistic, spoiled and diseased. There are, of course, various middle states between the extremes, but they are to a greater or lesser extent absent from the happiest, most just and truly pleasant way of life. According to Plato, only the philosopher is in a position to show the appropriate hierarchy of values and the most

questions, but merely a mental illness. Cf. Voegelin 2009, 202. Plato says in the *Laws* (888a) that madness can result either from an enormous appetite (*laimargia*) for pleasure or from an immoderation of the middle part of the soul (*thumos*). For more on the role of Eros in the *Republic*, see e.g. Rosen 1965.

⁷⁵ *Leg.* 875a 6 - b 1; Saunders 1997.

⁷⁶ While Plato uses the noun *autokratōr* in this passage of the *Laws* (875b 3), the term literally means «autocrat», i.e. someone who is free of the external circumstances (like the world abandoned by Demiurgos in the *Politicus* 274a) and someone who exercises their full power (*Ep.* 309b), including tyranny (*Ep.* 324c-d).

⁷⁷ *Idiopragia* means literally «to act in own, appropriate way» and it seems that it conveys the idea of the rule of justice that everyone does what one ought to do. This has already been noted in Antiquity – Gal. *Inst. Log.* 18, 4. Cf. Herm. in *Phdr.* 177, 6; Olymp. in *Phd.* 2, 14; Origen. *Contra Celsum.* V 47; Anon. in *Eth. Nic.* 254, 23-24; Mich. in *Eth. Nic.* 72, 5-6; Wieland 1982, 161-162; Höffe 2005, 77. However, it should be emphasised that *idiopragia* is here connected with *pleoneksia* and that the prefix *idio-* concerns something private.

pleasant life. Only he or she has the experience (*empeiria*)⁷⁸, prudence (*phronēsis*) and reason (*logos*) (*Resp.* 583e) which enable him or her to gain insight into the eternal world of values, to realise the values in our world, to transmit the hierarchy and to justify it for the co-citizens. This can also be applied to pleasures. The philosopher's judgement is the most reliable one and he or she can show that philosophical life is most pleasant and far more so than that of a tyrant (*Resp.* 587a ff.)⁷⁹.

4. CONCLUSION

It follows that Plato was fully aware of the significance of pleasure for both the individual and society. His considerations are conducted from two perspectives: a descriptive and a regulative one. On the one hand, he describes concrete situations from human life (e.g. pregnancy or exercise) and stresses the function of the pleasure involved in them. On the other hand, he also designs various recommendations which make it possible to regulate the way of life to make it fully ordered. The second viewpoint is much more distinct in his deliberations on political reality. It is perfectly understandable from a historical point of view because the essence of the human being was at that time not only to be a rational being but

⁷⁸ The experience of the philosopher does not need to mean his or her practice because examples play an essential role in the process of education. The god or a sage is the positive model (the famous doctrine of *assimilation to God* [*homoiosis theoi*]), but there are many situations where various non-positive examples occur, and they can also be useful for education. Let us take the example of drugs. The philosopher does not need to try them to have some experience of this kind of pleasure. He or she can estimate the level of pleasure by the example of someone who uses drugs. Indeed, he or she has no insight into the subjective aspect of this event, but words and reactions can perhaps signify that it might be very pleasant. This preliminary judgement should, however, be validated. The philosopher can take into consideration additional circumstances: how long this pleasure lasts and what is the state of the body and mind during the activity of taking drugs and the resulting condition. He or she can perceive that when someone is in a state of narcosis, they lose their mind, and there appear adverse health effects and even addiction. These observations enable him or her to reject this kind of pleasure as the false one. In this respect, the philosopher is experienced and unpractised at the same time; his or her soul has not participated in such an event, but the appropriate belief is acquired on the basis of an environmental observation (cf. *Resp.* 409a-c).

⁷⁹ Plato's mathematical argument alludes probably to the philosophy of the Pythagorean Philolaus; Diels - Kranz 44 A 22; cf. Adam 1907, 361; Huffman 1993, 276-279; Dorter 2006, 298. An interesting geometrical interpretation has been presented by Brumbaugh 1949 and 1954, 151-160.

also to be a political one. It can be agreed that the main problem of Plato's perspective is a lack of *precise* psychological underpinnings⁸⁰, but his programme can also be read on a more general level. I believe that the founder of the Academy left a comprehensive set of questions connected with the presence of pleasure in human existence which should be considered and solved by the educator and the politician: does the pleasure flowing from music (and other artistic works) have any educational meaning, and if so, what type of music (art), what influence does it have? Thus, should the educator and politician regulate the access to art by stipulating *important* criteria for its evaluation? If so, should the regulation be a prohibition or a development of understanding of works of art (or maybe both)? How should one educate young people so that they are able to control their emotions and resist the wrong pleasures? Plato presents his answers, tries to justify them and indicates what can happen if the question of pleasure is resolved incorrectly. In this way, he gives the criteria for assessing both the individual and society. According to him, a person unable to control their pursuit of pleasure (and so intellectually and morally uneducated) should never become a person of public confidence. A society that does not differentiate between pleasures and opts for complete freedom in this matter cannot be considered to be in good governance. Even the absence of public consent to the enjoyment of various sources of pleasures does not mean that the society is 'healthy', because a lack of control and rationality can be present in the private sphere. The problems of pleasure posed by Plato also seem to be valid today, and their solutions and justifications, though often controversial, stimulate discussion.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Diels - Kranz H. Diels - W. Kranz (hrsgg.), *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, I-III, Berlin 1960.
- Laks - Most A. Laks - G.W. Most (eds.), *Early Greek Philosophy*, I-IX, Cambridge - London 2016.
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⁸⁰ Russell 2005, 238.

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