



About Christopher Stratman

HOMETOWN

Olathe, Kan.

MAJOR

Philosophy

ACADEMIC LEVEL

Senior

RESEARCH MENTOR

Thomas Tuozzo

Professor of Philosophy

Q&A

How did you become involved in doing research?

In spring 2012 I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in Professor Tuozzo's Philosophy 805 Plato Seminar; the result was twofold. I was able to do extensive research on the subject of Plato's *Republic* while applying my work toward the honors departmental requirements. After completing the initial paper at the end of the semester, I continued to further analyze my research and rework the arguments that I had developed; I finished the final version during the spring semester of 2013.

How is the research process different from what you expected?

The most obvious difference from what I originally expected is simply the sheer amount of time that is needed to rework and in some cases completely rethink what needs to be done. This is, however, one of the most important parts, or so I have found, in making sure that the quality of research done is the best it can be. Another interesting aspect that I had not originally expected was how so many important issues and topic interrelate; this has caused me to take seriously the importance of interdisciplinary work in multiple fields of study.

What is your favorite part of doing research?

My favorite part of doing research is imagining a formidable hypothetical or imaginary opponent, who is essentially my intellectual equal but argues against each point that is raised and each proposition suggested. This part of the process of doing research, I have found, is very fruitful in strengthening, or when necessary changing, the argument presented and the research that is associated with that argument. By imagining and taking seriously the possible objections raised against my thesis, the final results of the research are much stronger; this is my favorite part of doing research.

Plato's Psychological Manifestations of Madness: A Case for a Parallel between Philosophical and Tyrannical Souls in *The Republic*

Christopher Stratman

In this paper, I will argue that there is a philosophically interesting comparison to be made between the philosophical and tyrannical souls in Plato's *Republic*. I will argue for this point with the intent of building a case for a valuable insight into Socrates' and thus Plato's conception of the philosophical soul. Both the philosophical and tyrannical souls are dominated by a kind of obsession, or what I call Platonic *madness*; a kind of *judicious madness* in the case of the former and a kind of *injurious*

madness with regard to the latter. From this key insight we can then proceed in taking an essential step in establishing and agreeing with Plato that, indeed, philosophy and political-rule ought to be fundamentally united.

We can imagine a situation where Plato made the decision to write the *Republic* in the form of a systematic philosophy instead of a dialogue. I can imagine the opening line (the first and perhaps most important proposition) stating, "Until philosophers rule as kings in cities

or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is until political power and philosophy entirely coincide...cities will have no rest from evils...nor, I think, will the human race" (*Republic*, V 473cd). This paradoxical claim concerning the unity of philosophy and political rule presents for us one of the greatest dilemmas born from a careful and critical reading of the *Republic*. Nevertheless, the *Republic* is not in systematic form, yet Plato did choose

to begin the dialogue with these words “I went down” (327a). This suggests that perhaps he has in mind from the very beginning the problem of how philosophic and political unification is even possible.

It would certainly be helpful, concerning the dilemma of the philosopher-king, if we had a more straightforward account of the philosophical soul before we attempted to answer the question concerning why the philosopher should be compelled to rule. We do not, however, have direct insight into the philosophic soul, at least not in such a way as to provide the kind of compelling argument we might hope for. Of course, this is the very heart of the debate, being one of the reasons this paradox of the philosopher-king—as it is often understood—is among the most debated issues concerning Plato’s *Republic*. That is why it is the current task of this paper to provide a compelling, though indirect, insight into the soul of the philosopher-king; such a task, however, is surely much easier said than done.

On one hand, Plato never gives an explicit account of the philosophical soul, or at least not an account which is as thoroughly developed as the timocratic, oligarchic, democratic and especially the tyrannical souls found in books VIII and IX of the dialogue. Interestingly, Socrates does give us a very brief look at what such a soul might look like at the conclusion of book IV. Once his argument for the division of the soul into three parts, corresponding to the division of the city into three parts, is first completed and that the rational part ought to rule (435c-441e), Socrates then proceeds to reintroduce the primary question he and his interlocutors have been thus far asking: ‘which is more profitable, to be just or unjust?’ “Virtue”, Socrates states, “seems, then, to be a kind of health, fine condition, and well-being of the soul, while vice is disease, shameful condition, and

weakness” (444d-e). Glaucon seems to be entirely satisfied with giving an answer to the question given Socrates’ tripartite city and soul; yet, Socrates clearly has much more to say (445a-c). We might wonder why Socrates still feels they must go on in their inquiry and to what extent the soul of the philosopher-king might be central in answering these questions (this point will need to be clarified and supported but it is extremely important for the purpose of this essay). On the other hand, it could be argued that this is a perfect example of Platonic aporia; if so, we might be inclined to think of the paradox of the philosopher-king, as well as Socrates’ insistence at the close of book IV that “we mustn’t give up” (445b), as something akin to a provocation.

According to Mitchell Miller in his essay entitled, “Platonic Provocations: Reflections on the Soul and the Good in the *Republic*”, at its most fundamental level, this dialogue is meant “to provoke us, to move us beneath and beyond its own explicit content into philosophical insight of our own” (Miller 166). I will generously appeal to Miller’s insight and argument, as I take him to suggest, that Plato’s real genius was in pushing the notion of philosophical discourse beyond the mere surface of any given argument, including those offered by Socrates in the *Republic*, so as to move us to enter into a kind of dialectical investigation of the richer elements available in Platonic studies. I will appeal to Miller in order to make the stronger claim that we actually do have a practical, though indirect, understanding of the philosophical soul by the merits of closely analyzing the tyrannical soul and drawing from this analysis an important parallel.

As I stated previously, both the philosophical and tyrannical souls are dominated by a kind of obsession, or Platonic *madness*. Again, what I mean here is a kind of *judicious madness* in the case of the philosophic soul and

a kind of *injudicious madness* with regard to the tyrannical soul. But what I mean by madness needs to be made clear. Madness is essentially a manifestation, or so I wish to argue, of the development of Eros, which is expressed by either a kind of clear-sighted and *judicious madness* or a blinded and *injudicious madness*. It will be shown that the kind of madness manifested by the Eros of either soul is determined by its relation to the Forms. The philosophical soul, which has a very explicit relation to the Forms, has a kind of madness which is essentially expressed as a kind of clear-sightedness; whereas the tyrannical soul, which cannot be said to have a relationship with the Forms, has a kind of madness which is expressed as blindness. Thus, by establishing the parallel between philosophical and tyrannical souls, we will have a possible explanation or resolution to the philosopher-king paradox—why the philosopher-king should go back down into the cave-city in order to rule.

The structure of how I will make this comparison work in explaining why the philosopher-king should be compelled to rule is as follows: I will first attempt to illustrate how the very structure of the *Republic* often provides interesting interwoven themes or significant parallels which are not accidental. They provide both a deeper understanding of the many complex issues as they appear in the dialogue as well as significant points of aporia. From this general acknowledgement of Plato’s use of parallels, I will then build the parallel between philosophical and tyrannical souls using the notion of *judicious madness* and *injudicious madness* as essentially a manifestation of Eros. By doing so I will then elaborate on the nature of the philosophical soul as it can be discovered drawn from the parallel mentioned above and Eros as it functions both in the *Republic* as well as its relation to other Platonic

dialogues, specifically the *Phaedrus*. Finally, after these crucial points have been established, I hope to show that the basic reason why the philosopher-king should return to the cave/city in order to rule as king is not because there is a desire to do so, but because the philosopher, due to *judicious madness*, is able to *clearly see* and understands that, given the circumstances, going back down into the cave/city in order to rule is what is best for everyone.

When Socrates demands at the end of Book III that the guardian class, whom he had just established as being the rightful overseers of the just city, should live austere, abstaining from touching or being at all associated with gold or silver and that they should have no private property at all beyond what is absolutely necessary (416cd), he is generally setting the stage for an important objection. Yet, if the task which Socrates is charged with is to prove that justice is always best for either an individual or a city (that is to say that it is always to your advantage to be just and the just person or city is always the happiest or better off), then why would Socrates here argue that the guardian class must not have anything which might generally be considered, both by Socrates' interlocutors as well as perhaps ourselves, as material wealth?

Interestingly, the point Socrates seems to be making is that such an austere life for the guardians would actually "save both themselves and the city" (417a). Indeed, the description he gives of a guardian class that is allowed such adornments sounds very much like an early description of the tyrant, which he does not directly mention until much later in Book VIII and IX. Socrates states that if they do acquire wealth for themselves, "[T]hey'll spend their whole lives hating and being hated, plotting and being plotted against, more afraid of internal than external enemies, and they'll hasten both themselves and

the whole city to almost immediate ruin" (417b). The point which I want to make in considering this foreshadowed description of the dangers of attaining private material wealth by the ruling guardian class is that one of the key aspects of the *Republic* is the way in which Plato weaves the many themes of the dialogue together in such a way that it is possible to find descriptions, of the tyrant for example, woven into some of the other vital moments such as this. By using elements of interwoven themes, vital foreshadowing and parallels, we can lay the foundation for a parallel between the philosophical and tyrannical souls. First, however, let us examine further some of the important ways in which Plato utilizes these elements generally throughout the *Republic*.

Kenneth Dorter, in the very opening lines of the introduction of his book titled *The Transformations of Plato's Republic*, states that:

The *Republic* is a book of contrasts, built on oppositions between the just and the unjust life, rationality and appetites, necessary and unnecessary appetites, being and becoming, knowledge and opinion, originals and images, blindness to dark and blindness to light, and the evolution and devolution of political and psychological constitutions, among others (Dorter 1).

What strikes me as an obvious point of emphasis here is his immediate observation that not only is the dialogue one of oppositions, but his descriptions of blindness both to the darkness as well as blindness to the light as being in opposition. We might wonder if these sight related oppositions could be construed as I have suggested already: *judicious* and *injudicious madness*?

Blindness to dark = *Judicious Madness* (the soul in relation to the forms). The Philosopher-king can see clearly due to a kind of *judicious madness* that is like a blindness to

the dark or blindness to the inability to see clearly.

Blindness to light = *Injudicious Madness* (the soul without relation to the forms). The Tyrant cannot see clearly due to a kind of *injudicious madness* that is like a blindness to the light or blindness to the ability to see clearly.

This dual nature of blindness will be further developed as the cornerstone of my argument. It therefore seems fitting to begin with Dorter's essential description of oppositions and parallels. There are a number of ways in which Dorter spells out these oppositions; as the title of his book implies, his focus is primarily concerned with the different forms of transformations the *Republic* takes. Therefore, I will briefly examine some of these oppositions and transformations in light of our larger task at hand.

Dorter describes the *Republic* as having a kind of arch structure to it, which helps define the many transformations within it. He states, "[N]ot only are the themes of Book 1 also adumbrations of the themes of the dialogue as a whole, but Book 1 also functions as a symmetrical counterpart to Book 10, together with it framing the *Republic's* arch structure" (Dorter 6). He goes on to argue that the symmetry found throughout the entire dialogue has structure which both, metaphorically speaking, ascends and descends; again he claims that it "extends in both directions the ascending and descending trajectory *noesis* (511b-c) generally, rising to and returning from *noesis* as *noesis* rises and returns within itself, even as in other respects the dialogue continually moves forward in its inquiry" (7). Dorter seems to be indicating that as the inquiry into justice, as well as the many other modes and themes which are developed within the discussions held between Socrates and his

interlocutors, evolves, the symmetry between the many interwoven topics, such as justice and the good, evolve as well. This symmetry, I suggest, should be kept in mind as a part of the background of our analysis as we continue to build a case for the parallel between philosophic and tyrannical souls.

After describing what is perhaps the most well known of Plato's similes, the cave, as "not only a general allusion, but a precise reflection on the dialogue's beginning at the heart of the cave" and then suggesting how we might interpret Plato as using this famous simile as an image of what the entire dialogue is doing, "the progress of the prisoners who ascend through stages to a vision of the ultimate principle and, transformation by that vision, return to the cave to benefit their successors," Dorter leads into the dialectical nature of these oppositions and transformative elements within the text. He argues that:

Within this larger structure local structural principles permeate the argument at every level. The apparent casualness of the conversations is constantly underpinned by ordering patterns so that the narrative becomes an image of the world itself, in which the apparently random flow of becoming implicitly exhibits the ordered rationality of being (9616b-617c) (Dorter 8).

The key point here is that Plato seems to be working on a much more philosophically interesting level, far more complex and challenging than what might simply be noticed on the mere surface reading of the text. Within these complexities of oppositions and transformations which Dorter has illustrated is an implicit argument, or so I wish to suggest, that will provide us the ability to make clear the parallel between philosopher and tyrant. This argument, which was alluded by way of an early description of the tyrant, is that depth of the dialogue allows us to see important points (such as

an important glimpse of the nature of the tyrant's soul) prior to actually describing it; this same quality, I submit, can be said concerning the philosophical soul as well. Dorter's understanding of these transitions within the *Republic* helps justify this claim; it opens to us the possibility of going beyond the text in order to see where the parallel can be found. With these basic examples in mind, let us now turn to what I feel is a much more explicit early example of a parallel between philosophical and tyrannical souls.

The example I wish to elaborate on can be thought of as either the friend-enemy parallel or the dog-wolf parallel. In a discussion with Glaucon in Book II concerning the need for the guardian class to be both spirited as well as gentle, Socrates suggests that a well-trained dog is a good model for a "well-born youth" and that, because a well-trained dog seems to have both intelligence and courage, the guardians of the city should share these same qualities (375a-c). If a dog were not by nature courageous without the correct intellect, there would be a serious problem. That is to say, if the guardian class is by nature like a dog then its spirited nature could potentially turn on the citizens; but as a well-trained dog that has both knowledge and courage it presumably would not (375c). Yet, this then implies a further problem (which is here only addressed as a micro version of what will later become the problem of the possibility of the just city coming into existence at all). The question which is asked at this point is how one could unite within a guardian both the necessary spirited quality of a well-trained dog and a gentle quality which will ensure that the guardian never turns on the citizens (376c).

The solution which Socrates puts forward at this point is simply to look closer at what a well-trained dog is like; he claims such an animal is "gentle as can be to those he's used

to and knows, but the opposite to those he doesn't know" and again he states, "[W]hen a dog sees someone it doesn't know, it gets angry before anything bad happens to it. But when it knows someone, it welcomes him, even if it has never received anything good from him" (375e-376a). It is at this point that Socrates finally begins to draw out the needed details concerning a philosopher's soul; it seems rather striking, I would suggest, that he then uses the comparison of a well-trained dog.

He suggests to Glaucon that this odd quality concerning dogs is "truly philosophical" and claims that the reason this is so is due to the fact that a dog "judges anything it sees to be either an enemy, on no other basis than that it knows the one and doesn't know the other" and further implies a dog then is "a lover of learning, if it defines what is its own and what is alien to it in terms of knowledge and ignorance" (376b). So then it would seem that the need to know one's friends from one's enemies is an essential part of what it takes to be a philosopher, as Socrates suggests. But perhaps the real point of emphasis here is that "knowledge produces gentleness and ignorance produces harshness" (Rosen 85). As it relates to the two kinds of Platonic madness that I have thus far discussed, judicious and injudicious, clearly we could think of the well-trained dog as having a kind of *judicious madness*. Moreover, it seems to me that when Socrates describes these characteristics as "truly philosophical" (376b) he is setting the stage for *judicious madness*.

Aside from the overall topic which Socrates and his partners are working through at this point (which is another example of Plato's use of foreshadowing, in this case of the solution to the third wave of laughter which is not addressed until later in Book V), we can see from this discussion "a link between philosophy and the definition of justice as doing

good to one's friend and harm to one's enemies" (85, 86). We can now use this idea of well-trained dog as a lover of wisdom—a philosopher who possesses a kind of *judicious madness* that allows it to know his enemy and friend—to see how this, in a pendulum fashion, can be compared to the much later description of the tyrant as a wolf.

It seems completely reasonable to suggest that if a philosopher is like a well-trained dog because of its knowledge concerning friends and enemies, then the exact opposite—the very antithesis—should hold, we might expect, for a non-domesticated wild version of a dog; that is to say a *wolf*. As such, we could then conceive of the *wolf*, regarding it as the antithesis of the well-trained dog, as a perfect representation of the tyrant; that is if there is indeed a parallel between the two.

In Book VII, after Socrates has proceeded through the devolution of each city and the corresponding constitutions of each soul and finally gets to the tyrannical city, he makes a very insightful claim about this particular city and soul. He compares the “beginning of the transformation from leader of the people to tyrant” to “the man in the story told about the temple of the Lycaean Zeus (Zeus the wolf-god)” (565d). The imagery which Socrates uses here is quite explicit and it seems to parallel the description of the philosopher as a well-trained dog, especially when you consider that one of the most basic differences between a dog and a wolf is simply the fact that one is domesticated or educated properly to have knowledge of friend and enemy whereas the wolf is a wild animal with no formal education. Socrates' description is quite powerful so I have chosen to quote him at length here:

...anyone who tastes the one piece of human innards that's chopped up with those of other sacrificial victims must inevitably become a wolf...doesn't

the same happen with a leader of the people who dominates a docile mob and doesn't restrain himself from spilling kindred blood? He brings someone to trial on false charges and murders him (as tyrants so often do), and, by thus blotting out a human life, his impious tongue and lips taste kindred citizens blood...isn't a man like that inevitably fated either to be killed by his enemies or to be transformed from a man into a wolf by becoming a tyrant? (565d-e).

This is the first explicit parallel which I wish to emphasize, but it is only a partial description of the much fuller account I will develop; it should be clear at this point that the key element in this example is tied to the fact that a dog is domesticated or well trained whereas the wolf is not. The connection to be made between philosopher and tyrant is that the former has a very specific kind of education, in the Forms, which produces *judicious madness*, whereas the later lacks this relation to the Forms, which produces *injudicious madness*.

We can now move on to another aspect which will help build a case for a parallel between philosophical and tyrannical souls derived from the consideration that a tyrant lives life as if in a dream whereas the philosopher is truly awake. Put another way, the philosopher has authentic knowledge, which leads to knowing what to do in any given situation. The tyrant, on the other hand, has not only mere opinion, but the kind which is inherently self-destructive. Furthermore, examining how Socrates describes the difference between living life as if in a dream vs. living life fully awake will help identify who the philosopher is; this will then be applied to our analysis of philosopher and tyrant.

It is in Book V that Socrates fully introduces one of the central paradoxes of the *Republic* which I have already described as the paradox of the philosopher-king; so that

it is vividly clear this paradox can be thought of as the *unification of philosophy and political activity* or *why the philosopher who has communion with the Forms should go back down into the cave to rule as king*. In his book, simply titled *Philosopher-kings the Argument of Plato's Republic*, C.D.C. Reeve describes the identification of the philosopher, here in Book V as being identical to his name; he states that, “[T]he key to his identity lies in his name—wisdom-lover (475b8-9). Because he is a lover, he loves all of what he loves...Because it is wisdom he loves, he must love everything that one can learn or come to know” (Reeve 191). Now Glaucon seems unsatisfied with this relatively broad description of a philosopher who is a lover of wisdom; he responds to Socrates by saying that:

Then many strange people will be philosophers, for the lovers of sights seem to be included, since they take pleasure in learning things, and the lovers of sounds are very strange people to include as philosophers, for they would never willingly attend a serious discussion or spend their time that way, yet they run around to all the Dionysiac festivals, omitting none, whether in cities or villages, as if their ears were under contract to listen to every chorus. Are we to say that these people—and those who learn similar things or petty crafts—are philosophers? (475d).

Intuitively it would appear as though Glaucon is perfectly justified in objecting to Socrates' initial description of a philosopher. Socrates seems to recognize this apparent counter intuitiveness and clarifies his original position; he says that these people who chase after sights and sounds are not true philosophers “but they are *like* philosophers” (475e). The point which Socrates is making is that the main difference between the strange people Glaucon describes and the true philosophers or lovers of wisdom is concerned

with the difference between the kind of knowledge they have—opinion or true knowledge of the Forms themselves.

Socrates then describes the lovers of sights and sounds or someone who “believes in beautiful things, but doesn’t believe in the beautiful itself and isn’t able to follow anyone who could lead him to the knowledge of it.” He says that such a person “is living in a dream rather than a wakened state” (476c). Glaucon begins to agree without further objections. Socrates points out that “someone who, to take the opposite case, believes in the beautiful itself, can see both it and the things that participate in it and doesn’t believe that the participants are it or that it itself is the participants” and asks “is he living in a dream or is he awake?” (476c-d). Glaucon again agrees with Socrates that such a person is “very much awake” (476d). It should be noted that here the discussion concerning a lover of sights and sounds, who is *like* a philosopher but who is also different in that they are living a dream and do not have true knowledge, rather only opinion, such a person is not identified directly as a tyrant—we should consider such a person as being anyone who does not have knowledge of the Forms. Nevertheless, the interesting point, which I will attempt to examine next, is the idea of a person who is living life as if in a dream and how that does in fact relate to the tyrant.

Turning to Book IX, when Socrates begins to directly describe the tyrannical soul, he examines the desires of the tyrant (571a). He claims that we all seem to have unnecessary desires which are lawless, “but they are held in check by the laws and by the better desires in alliance with reason” (571b). The desires he is referring to here are:

Those that are awakened in sleep, when the rest of the soul—the rational, gentle, and ruling part—slumber. Then the beastly and savage part, full of food and drink, cast off sleep and seeks to find a

way to gratify itself. You know that there is nothing it won’t dare to do at such a time, free of all control by shame or reason. It doesn’t shrink from trying to have sex with a mother, as it supposes, or with anyone else at all, whether man, god, or beast. It will commit any foul murder, and there is no food it refuses to eat. In a word, it omits no act of folly or shamelessness (571c).

Once Socrates has introduced the idea that there are such lawless desires in perhaps even the most just person while they are asleep, he then goes on to describe what happens when someone such as a tyrant lives life chasing after such lawless desires which are normally in check but have now become freed and able to be expressed.

He describes the tyrant as having implanted within him “a powerful erotic love, like a great winged drone, to be the leader of those idle desires that spend whatever is at hand” (572e). With this description of erotic love as motivating force within the tyrant, he then claims that those “other desires...buzz around the drone” and make it increase in size and intensity; “making it grow as large as possible, they plant the sting of longing in it” (573a). So we have unnecessary and lawless desires which have become freed from a dreaming psyche and an erotic love which has been planted within the soul of the tyrant and, when it becomes enlarged, creates what Socrates describes as a “sting of longing,” presumably referring to the intensity of the lawless desires within the tyrant’s soul. He then adds to this what is perhaps the most significant description for the argument I wish to put forth; he describes the tyrant’s soul as having madness as its leader and bodyguard. “[T]his leader of the soul,” he claims, “adopts madness as its bodyguard and becomes frenzied. If it finds any beliefs or desires in the man that are thought to be good or that still have some shame, it destroys

them and throws them out, until it’s purged him of moderation and filled him with imported madness” (573a-b). He states that this too is why “erotic love has long been called a tyrant” (See Book I: 329c) (573b). Socrates summarizes what has just been confirmed by Glaucon that, “a man becomes tyrannical in the precise sense of the term when either his nature or his way of life or both of them together make him drunk, filled with erotic desire, and mad” (573c).

The task now has turned to describing the tyrannical life; the issue to be made clear is not only that the tyrannical life is unpleasant (this is Socrates’ main argument). I submit that the tyrannical life, driven by the erotic passion and desires which have become manifested as a kind of madness, has become blinded to what is best and good. Socrates suggests that the tyrannical life, driven by erotic love, spends all his money, thus “when everything is gone” all the lawless desires that are now within him demand even more; “driven by the stings of the other desires and especially by erotic love itself (which leads all of them as its bodyguard)” he will “become frenzied and look to see who possesses anything that he could take, by either deceit or force” (573e). The tyrannical life is one of a kind of madness which is expressed as something akin to an obsession which leads this person to do all kinds of evil actions; as Socrates elegantly claims:

Now, however, under the tyranny of erotic love, he has permanently become while awake what he used to become occasionally while asleep, and he won’t hold back from any terrible murder or from any kind of food or act. But, rather, erotic love lives like a tyrant within him in complete anarchy and lawlessness as his sole ruler, and drives him, as if he were a city, to dare anything that will provide sustenance for itself and the unruly mob around it...Isn’t this the life that a tyrannical man leads? (574e-575a).

Again, Socrates declares that “someone with a tyrannical nature lives his whole life without being friends with anyone” (576a). This can be viewed in relation to the parallel mentioned previously concerning the philosopher as a well-trained dog who is able to recognize and has knowledge of the difference between friend and enemy, whereas the wolf, who is really a tyrant, cannot. The tyrannical person, says Socrates, is “the worst type of man: His waking life is like the nightmare we described earlier...the longer he remains tyrant, the more like the nightmare he becomes” (576b).

Previously, I stated that the madness, which is expressed as an uncontrollable obsession for the lawless desires and will stop at nothing to satisfy them, is also a kind of blindness; it was for this reason that I described the madness of the tyrannical soul as *injudicious madness*. The relevant question that now applies is whether or not Socrates actually makes the same connection? Perhaps it would be a better reason if the blindness which is connected to the madness of a tyrannical soul, *injudicious madness*, results not only in potentially being unable to know what is best, but, more specifically, in the least pleasant life. In this way it could be argued that the tyrannical life is by far the most unjust and what Socrates does describe as “totally opposite” from the philosophical soul or city ruled by a king (576d). With that said, it seems important to have a better understanding of how the tyrannical soul becomes maddened in such a way as to become blinded to what is actually good. For it would seem unrealistic to suggest that once the erotic desires have become freed within his soul they automatically or magically are expressed as a kind of blindness. Rather, I suggest that the process of becoming blind to what is good is a process which can be discovered and described by

looking closely at the devolution of constitutions in Book VIII.

In a very insightful essay titled “Degenerate regimes in Plato’s *Republic*,” Zena Hitz recognizes that as the process of degeneration occurs there is a struggle between reason and the appetites. She states that “[R]eason is not dispensed with in the degenerate regimes; rather, it pursues inadequate objects. Rather than seeking what is genuinely good, degenerate reason pursues certain shadowy appearances of the good; honor, constraint, and lawfulness” (Hitz 113). Her description of “shadowy appearances of the good” is then employed in each constitution which results in, according to my interpretation of her argument, a further development of falsehood, deception and, ultimately, blindness; she claims that, “love of wealth in the timocracy is the engine of its decline” and that the “love of wealth is secret” (114). This secretiveness should be considered, according to my interpretation, the beginning of the coming of blindness which will be maximized by the tyrant.

What about the other constitutions, one might wonder? How are they involved? Consider the Oligarchy and how they “impoverish their subjects” as Hitz claims; “under the guise of restraining petty injustice such as thievery and temple-robbing (552d), the oligarchic rulers maintain a legal structure which enriches them” (Hitz 116). Going on, she argues that these rulers must have an appearance of being just, or at least trustworthy, in order to make loans which will increase their wealth (116). Thus, there remains a kind of false impression which could be taken simply as a secretive reversal of virtue, i.e. honesty particularly between friends and fellow citizens. This mere façade of virtue of honesty is, as it were, a furthering of blindness, or so I wish to claim.

The democratic constitution is

a bit different, for there remains “a certain kind of restraint and with the projection of a certain kind of appearance” which according to Hitz, “can be seen in part by looking backward from the tyrant” (Hitz 116). It seems as though the democratic constitution also has something akin to secretiveness. If we consider that in the tyrannical soul the lawless desires are fully realized and expressed as a kind of blinding manifestation of madness, “[T]he democratic character settles a compromise between his necessary and unnecessary appetites, under something like a law of equality (572b10-d3). In doing so, the democratic character imagines he is being moderate”; and it is here that we can see how “the democrat has no real grounds to oppose the pursuit of lawless desires” (117). Indeed, one could view the democrat as being quite similar to the other constitutions in that, “like the oligarch and the timocrat” the democrat inevitably “nurtures appetites hostile to his own values while pretending to himself—and perhaps to others—that he is in fact safe from them” (117). This is clearly a case of both self-deception and secretiveness; but it is not yet maximal. Hitz’s insight here, however, shows that these shadow virtues, in relation to the devolution of constitutions, can be considered as proof of a sort of self-blinding quality; ultimately this blindness, I submit, will be completed in the tyrannical soul as a kind of psychological manifestation of madness actively expressed in the soul of the tyrant.

It is interesting to notice, prior to moving on, that Plato seems to have had a great appreciation for this notion of blindness, which should be understood in terms of the inevitable consequences of hubris or selfishness. In the *Ion*, for example, Socrates attempts to describe a passage from Homer, in this case from the *Odyssey*, which is a worthy example of good poetry which has been inspired by

the gods. He chooses to describe the scene where Theoclymenus warns the suitors of their self-deception:

Ah, wretched men, what bane is this ye suffer? Shrouded in night.
Are your heads and your faces and your limbs below,
And kindled is the voice of wailing, and cheeks are wet with tears.
And the porch is full of ghosts, the hall is full of them,
Hastening hellwards beneath the gloom; and the sun
Has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist enfolds the world (*Ion* 539).

How brilliantly this passage suggests that blindness in the form of a gloomy evil mist has completely encompassed the minds of the suitors; might we extrapolate from this just a bit and consider a very similar mist of blindness is what has been planted in the soul of the tyrant and become manifested in the form of *injudicious madness*? I suggest such a connection is quite reasonable, especially given the appreciation Plato seemed to have both for Homer (to some extent) and for Homer's hero Odysseus (See *Republic* X: 595b and 620c).

Until this point, one might object, all I have merely been building is a case for a parallel between the tyrannical soul as it exists at different times and for different reasons throughout the *Republic*, but not a parallel between the philosophical soul and the tyrannical soul. My response would simply be to grant this difficulty; that is, as long as it is also granted that there is indeed a philosophically interesting parallel to be made between the different modes of presentation the tyrannical soul comes to us throughout the course of the dialogue. Therefore, I will now turn my attention to what is required to make this parallel explicit.

Nevertheless, there is indeed a very important aspect of the tyrannical soul which can be

considered as a psychological manifestation of madness. And this madness is essentially born from within an *energizing force of the tyrant's erotic love and desires*—ultimately making the soul blinded to what is best and good and thus a kind of *injudicious madness*. We can now ask the very important question *what does the madness of the tyrant have to do with the madness of philosopher*? To answer this question we need to first see what, if anything, the *Republic* has to say about the philosopher with regard to madness.

In Book VI, after Socrates has shown that only philosophers have adequate knowledge to rule the just city, we find an objection which does indicate something about how philosophers are perceived by most people; "the greatest number" of them we are told "become cranks" and even "vicious, while those who seem completely decent are rendered useless to the city because of the studies you recommend" (487d). Interestingly, Socrates does not seem to disagree with such a claim, which only adds to the problem of the philosopher-king paradox; "How, then, can it be true to say that there will be no end to evils in our cities until philosophers—people we agree are to be useless—rule in them?" (487e). Socrates, in his usual fashion, gives a simile to help describe the situation to his audience; the basic force of the image he uses, the *ship of state*, is that those who dismiss the true ruler of a ship do not recognize or understand the purpose of ruling. Socrates states that they:

...don't understand that a true captain must pay attention to the seasons of the year, the sky, the stars, the winds, and all that pertains to his craft, if he's really to be the ruler of the ship. And they [those who dismiss him] don't believe there is any craft that would enable him to determine how he should steer the ship, whether the others want him to

or not, or any possibility of mastering this alleged craft or of practicing it at the same time as the craft of navigation. Don't you think that the true captain will be called a real stargazer, a babbler, and a good-for-nothing by those who sail in ships governed in that way in which such things happen? (488d-e).

Here we have a slight indication into how we might consider a philosopher as also having a kind of madness, one which is here described as stargazing, etc. (I will come back to this point in a moment). First, however, there is another important point which Socrates makes following this passage which needs to be addressed in order to see the full force of my argument at its conclusion.

After agreeing that the philosopher or true captain of a ship is considered by most people as completely useless, he then states something rather remarkable. He claims that it is not right for one who is a ruler to beg to rule; that is to say "[I]t isn't for the ruler, if he's truly any use, to beg the others to accept his rule" (489c). This remark, it seems to me, is strikingly similar to what he states much earlier in the dialogue concerning who the best ruler is:

...good people won't be willing to rule for the sake of either money or honor. They don't want to be paid wages openly for ruling and get called hired hands, nor to take them in secret from their rule and be called thieves. And they won't rule for the sake of honor, because they aren't ambitious honor-lovers. So, if they're to be willing to rule, some compulsion or punishment must be brought to bear on them—perhaps that is why it is thought shameful to seek to rule before one is compelled to. Now the greatest punishment, if one isn't willing to rule, is to be ruled by someone worse than oneself. And I think that it's fear of this that makes decent people rule when they do (347b-c).

This claim, of course, was stated

way back in Book I, but it has a great deal of importance here as our argument proceeds to its end. We shall see how it impacts the paradox of the philosopher-king once we have further examined the relevance of madness with regard to the philosophical soul.

As I have mentioned previously, there is no good description of the philosophical soul in the *Republic*, but Plato does provide a basic understanding of the philosopher as a lover of wisdom. I will turn now to a very brief summation of the relation between Eros and madness as Socrates describes it in the *Phaedrus*; there Socrates gives two speeches describing the nature of love (Eros) in connection to madness. In the first speech we see Eros as an energizing force which is manifested as a kind of madness and can be conceived of as the kind of madness we saw related to the tyrannical soul, a kind of *injudicious madness*.

The speeches Socrates gives are meant to describe the role Eros plays between the older lover and a beloved younger boy. In the first speech, Socrates claims that “the older, stays with the younger, and will not leave him, day nor night, if he can help it; constraint and mad desire drive him onwards; the sting of love allures him with the gift of constant joy in seeing, hearing, touching the beloved...” (*Phaedrus*: 240). Here it seems that the older lover, driven by a sensual, lustful, erotic and bodily Eros, has become utterly obsessed with the beloved and this obsession turns out to be very harmful to the beloved. Socrates says to the young boy, “you must know the fondness of the lover, what it is. Its nature is not that of kindness. No, it comes to satisfy its appetite, to devour you as a sort of food: Like as wolves adore a lamb, thus do lovers love a boy” (241). Yet, this speech turns out to be an inadequate description of

Eros and Socrates is compelled by his conscience, or perhaps fear of offending the gods, to recant and give a second more adequate speech.

In his second speech, Socrates now declares that instead of madness always leading to unsound and harmful judgment he instead says that “in reality the greatest blessings come to us through madness, for there is a madness that is given from on high” (244). Again Socrates praises this divine kind of madness saying:

Where the direst maladies and woes have fallen upon certain houses through ancestral guilt, there madness has intervened, and with oracular power has found a way of deliverance for those who are in need, taking refuge in supplications to the gods and worship of them; and thus, through cleansing and mystic rites, he who has part in this madness finds safety now and for the future; to him who is rightly mad, rightly possessed, the madness brings release from his present ills (244).

We can begin to see at this point, even with this very brief reference to the *Phaedrus* that there is another kind of madness—a *judicious madness* and it is precisely this divine and judicious version which I wish to associate with the philosophical soul.

Simply put, the soul of the philosopher is paralleled by the soul of the tyrant exactly at this point. The philosophical soul is maddened and obsessed with what its nature corresponds to, namely the Forms; this enables it to have sound judgment and understanding. Moreover this judicious quality of the philosophical soul is essentially one of clear-sightedness, being able to know what is best and good in any given situation and thus moved by the energizing force of Eros, this *judicious madness* is able to “bring release from...present ills” (244). On the other hand, the tyrannical soul, as

it has been previously demonstrated, is maddened and obsessed with what its nature corresponds to, namely its own lawless erotic desires; this then prevents it from having sound judgment and understanding. Now that this parallel is complete and we can see, to some degree, what the philosophical soul is like, we are in a far better position to give a reasonable solution to the paradox of the philosopher-king. Why should the philosopher go back down into the cave-city and rule?

After Socrates has finished describing the unforgettable simile of the cave in Book VII, and states that the philosophers must not remain with the Forms forever but must be compelled “through persuasion or compulsion” (519e) to rule the city, he makes what is perhaps the most difficult yet important point; he suggests that true philosophers “despise political rule” more than anyone else (521b). This is the main point my argument has come to.

In sum, the philosophers will not want to rule. They, of all people, will want to rule the least. However, because the philosophical soul is characterized by a *judicious madness* which enables clear-sightedness, the true philosopher will know and understand best that, given the situation, what is best for themselves as well as the happiness of the city as a whole is for them to rule the city as philosopher-kings. Moreover, it would be wrong to consider Socrates’ remarks here as being mistaken or inauthentic. When Socrates argues that the philosophers will not want to rule the city we must take him seriously.

If my interpretation of Plato here is correct, then it would be a mistake to argue, as some tend to do, that the philosophers actually do want to go back down into the cave in order to rule, despite their desire to be with the Forms forever. No, in comparison

to the madness which they possess, and in conjunction with their obsession of the Forms (which is the only thing the philosophers are really concerned with) they will *not* want to rule. They will want to stay in the light of the Forms, forever learning; for they are by nature lovers of wisdom and are maddened by their desire of the Forms. However, and this is the central point, this same madness is

what allows them to see clearly or judge rightly that the situation calls for them to rule, though they really do not want to. This is why Socrates says very early on in Book I that the best kind of rulers (the philosopher-kings) are those who do not want to rule but are compelled by a kind of judicious awareness of what is best, both for themselves as well as the city at large (347b-c). Thus, we have come

to our conclusion: there is a parallel between philosophical and tyrannical souls and the philosopher's soul is distinguished by a kind of *judicious-madness* whereas the tyrant's soul is clearly seen to be marked by a kind of *injudicious-madness*.

References

Cooper, Lane. "Ion." *Plato: Phaedrus, Ion, Gorgias, and Symposium, with Passages from the Republic and Laws*. New York: Cornell UP, 1938. Print.

Cooper, Lane. "Phaedrus." *Plato: Phaedrus, Ion, Gorgias, and Symposium, with Passages from the Republic and Laws*. New York: Cornell UP, 1938. Print.

Dorter, Kenneth. Introduction. *The Transformation of Plato's Republic*. Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2006. 1-8. Print.

Hitz, Zena. "Degenerate Regimes in Plato's Republic." Web.

Miller, Mitchell. "Platonic Provocations: Reflections on the Soul and the Good in the Republic." *Platonic Investigations* (1985): 166. Print.

Plato, C. D. C. Reeve, and G. M. A. Grube. *The Republic*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1992. Print.

Reeve, C. D. *Philosopher-kings the Argument of Plato's Republic*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1992. Print.

Rosen, Stanley. *Plato's Republic: A Study*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005. Print.