Individual Soul, World Soul and the Form of the Good in Plato’s *Republic* and *Timaeus*

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If you were to ask a modern reader what is the most important characteristic of Plato's thought, I presume he would undoubtedly say the theory of Ideas or Forms. As a matter of fact, we have read Plato as the philosopher of Forms, i.e. we have taken Plato as the founder of Western ontology. However, Plato never used the word ‘ontology’ and this practically exclusive accent on the doctrine of Ideas that has been predominant in the abundant English-American research over the last fifty years has led to neglect other very important aspects of Plato's philosophy. His psychology, for instance, has practically always held a secondary place. Perhaps it could be argued that there are some important works in this field, but in the sense that I mean here, i.e. as an interpretation that gives to Plato's theory of the soul the relevance it had for him, I know only the pages that Hegel has devoted to the Platonic thought in his lectures on the history of philosophy. Moreover, also from a mere quantitative point of view, the relevance of the subject has been clearly dismissed. If we compare the number of studies devoted to Plato, we will see that research about his psychology is relatively modest. Let me take an example that I consider to be paradigmatic. The so-called ‘Plato's new image’, source of the most tempestuous disputes in the last half of the century, in spite of all its change of paradigm, was no exception, since besides generalisations which repeat the usual interpretations, it does not offer a coherent exegesis of the Platonic psychology; furthermore the soul plays no part in its reconstruction of the Platonic metaphysics. Rather than a change of paradigm, it offers a radical version of the traditional view, where the

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1. The interpretation of Plato's philosophy has not been always so exclusively focused on the theory of Forms. For Neo-Platonism, for instance, psychology in a broader sense was much more important than the theory of Forms, which represented only one stage in the structure of reality. The centrality of the theory of Forms is the consequence, probably, of Aristotle's vision of Platonism, especially in the first book of the *Metaphysics.*


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theory of Forms and the so-called Ideal Numbers, as a kind of objective idealism - please grant me this unfortunate use of Marxist terminology - is the main subject that displaces the consideration of Plato’s theory of mind.

In a paper published more than 25 years ago, Thomas A. Szlezák, one of the most important representatives of this interpretative stream, complained that ‘there still does not exist any interpretation which can unify in a systematic way all testimonies of Plato’s soul theory without doing violence to some text’. I wonder whether it is necessary to reach a systematic view of Plato. Nevertheless, I believe that every scholar longs for an interpretation with a certain internal coherence, but in the case of Plato’s psychology it seems that the apparent inconsistencies are the most insuperable obstacle and at the same time the most contradictory fact, given the attention Plato devoted to the subject. It is enough, for instance, to remember that some texts, especially the Phaedo, insist on the simplicity of the soul, while others, like the Republic or the Timaeus, regard the soul as a composite. Accordingly, the most widely held view on Plato’s psychology takes the philosopher to defend a theory of the tri-partition of the soul. Yet, to the contrary, many passages do not speak of parts of the soul, but of species or classes (ειδή) of it. And, to conclude my samples of the most evident difficulties, in some dialogues the soul is considered immortal, without beginning and without end, while in others you can read the explicit assertion of the soul’s creation and generation (Timaeus, Laws). What, then, is the function of the soul in Plato’s thought? Is there any kind of consistency in his psychology? What is the relationship between the theory of metempsychosis and the dualist ontology, which is outlined in the dialogues? Does the soul in its entirety partake of the cycle of reincarnations? These and similar questions should receive an answer in a study on Plato’s concept of soul. Among the different solutions that have been proposed, the most popular are those which maintain that Plato changed his mind and that at the end of his life he defended a tripartite conception of the soul. You can find this approach in a book that can be considered one of the most important on the subject, T. M. Robinson’s study. Fortunately over the most recent years some contributions have been published or are about to be published, which not only have questioned the traditional view, but also, I believe, have given important reasons for considering that there was no change in Plato’s mind and that there can be no question of a tripartite conception of the soul. For that reason I will not consider this aspect here and instead focus on a more marginal question: the problem of the relationship between the Form of the Good and the human soul. I will start with the central books of the Republic, then I will analyse the relationship between the demiurge and mind, and finally I will examine the individual soul according to the Timaeus.

The Form of the Good in the Republic

The three allegories of the central books of the Republic (sun, line, and cave) have recently been alleged to contain concepts foreign to Plato’s thought, especially a notion of transcendence alien to his philosophy. Since in the context of this paper I cannot engage in a detailed refutation of the various interpretations of this passage, I will simply present my own exegesis.

The three allegories are introduced by a passage (504a2-506e7) that has not yet received the attention it deserves. It marks the thematic continuity with another dialogue, the Philebus, and also shows the perspective from which the three allegories should be read. Socrates/Plato offers valuable hints about his conception of the Good through his criticism of the other notions of the highest Good for human life. I will point to only three of them:

- The Good is the most exact measure (cf. 504c1-4, e2-3)
- This measure is also the principle of knowledge and utility (505a2-b3).
- In particular beings Being and Good are a unity (505d5-506b1).

Socrates’ decision to conceal his opinion about the specific nature of the Good, i.e. precisely what he criticised in the case of those who defended the identification of the Good with science and intelligence (cf. 505c1-4), should not distract attention from the fact that he has already characterised its essence as the most accurate measure, the measure par excellence. Socrates’ refusal to proceed in the clarification of the nature of the Form of the Good (506d7-e5; cf. 509c1-10) turns the conversation in another direction. In this new perspective, what is significant are the effects of the Good as cause, and not as specifically final or formal cause (using the Aristotelian terminology, cf. esp. Resp. 508b9-10, 508e3). Its action as efficient cause is what the following three allegories will focus on. This, in fact, is the meaning that the word ἄιτιτια has in the Philebus (26e1-27b2, especially 26e6-8). For an exegesis that relies on literality, it is evident that the focus of the three allegories lies not on the description of the essence of the Form of the Good, but in its function as creator of sun and reality, as causal in the fullest sense, as the fundament of all Being.

The Good appears as different from the Forms and above them, but not transcendent to Being. Nevertheless, it is not ὀνόσσια, it is beyond essence (509b8-10). It is also causa causarum and mensura mensurarum. The language used by Socrates also points out that neither the sun nor the Good are considered the sole principles of reality. In the case of the sun, it is cause only of some aspects of becoming: generation, growing up, nourishment. It is not a principle of dissolution, degeneration or disease. Similarly, the Good attaches, adds (cf. παρεἴναι 509b6; προσεἴναι, 8) truth, essence and being to the noetic entities. Socrates speaks as though the Good were not the only present cause in the ideal world, as though there were...

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another element or elements that partake in the constitution of it. According to the pattern of the *Philebus*, the Good acts by imposing its measure, the limit that it represents. If we follow the allegory to its logical conclusion, the Good acts as a permanent efficient cause, which produces measure and limit.

The allegory of the sun, introduced for the sake of clarifying in which sense the Good is neither pleasure nor intelligence, but something different from both, complements, therefore, the implicit idea of the introductory passage. The Good is measure, but also efficient cause of the ideal world and even of the world of becoming itself through the sun, its offspring.\(^9\)

The other two allegories confirm this interpretation of the Form of the Good:

1. Dialectics, which occupies the highest section of the line, ends with the intellection of the Good, which is defined as the principle of reality on which all other Ideas depend (ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ἀρχὴν ἰῶν, ἀφάμενος αὐτῆς, πάλιν ἀν ἕχομενος τῶν ἐκείνης ἔχομένων; 511b6-8).

2. The education curriculum in the allegory of the cave also suggests the special position of the Good beyond the Ideal world: it is, on the one hand, very difficult to grasp (515e6-516b7, 517b7-c5) and, on the other, the sun is placed in a different region, apart from the other celestial bodies (cf. 516b6, 526e1).

3. The Idea of the Good appears as the efficient cause of all reality (516b9-c2), it is also the origin of mind, which is a constitutive element not only of the soul but also of the noetic world (517b7-c5).

In the allegory of the cave, the Idea of the Good is at the summit of the structure of reality (518c9-10; cf. 532c5-d1) and its function is to serve as a direct cause of the Ideas and an indirect cause of the sensible world. The mind (*nous*) is the element of which sensible and intelligible world partake and it is produced permanently by the Good (cf. 517c4). If the ideal world has mind, because of the action of the Form of the Good, the latter cannot be in the former. Indeed, *nous* is what is most similar to the Form of the Good, but it is not the Good. We should not forget that the reason for introducing the three allegories is to differentiate the Socratic position from the conception of those who identify the Form of the Good with *phronēsis* and then with the mind. The Form of the Good should therefore be something superior to and different from it.

**II Demiurge and mind**

The three allegories in the *Republic* reveal the existence of different aspects of the Form of the Good. It seems to have a movement towards the entities that are inferior

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to it. It provides the Ideal world with Being, Truth and Mind (Resp. VII 517c2-5) and produces the sun and light for the sensible world. At the same time, some passages indicate that there also exists a movement of human beings towards what actually is (ὅντως ὄν; b5)\(^{10}\), and that this movement creates in them their nous (VI 490a8-b7). In any case, mind appears as a kind of emanation of the Supreme Being, which is maintained by it in a continuous and persistent way and which does not exist independently from its source, something that is further supported by the image of light.

These considerations make evident that the three allegories of the Republic articulate the foundation of the physics presented in the Timaeus. A clarification of the relationship between the demiurge and the Form of the Good would require a systematic and thorough research, a task that is too comprehensive for my purpose here. However, it is remarkable that in the Timaeus the question of the real nature of the demiurge is not considered, and that only his activity as efficient cause is treated (cf. 28c3-5), as happened in the allegory of the sun in the Republic. Nevertheless, Timaeus states in his narrative of the creation of the soul that it has been created « the best of the generated beings by the best of the intelligible and eternal beings » (τῶν νοοτυμόν ἀεὶ τε ὄντων ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀριστού ἁρίστη γενομένη τῶν γενεηθεντών; 37a1-2). How should we understand this description? As an indication of the identity between demiurge and the Form of the Good or as a reference to his nature as subordinate to the Good, because he is νοοτυμόν? If the Form of the Good belongs to the realm of Being and has a noetic nature, the identification is practically unavoidable. In any case, the demiurge is an efficient and noetic cause, who also has will.

If we turn to another important text about the demiurge, the myth of the Statesman (269c4-274e1), which represents the figure of a creator who alternatively governs the universe and abandons it to its own fate\(^{11}\), we see that the demiurge’s activity does not confine itself to creation, but that, as has become manifest in the analysis of the Republic, it exists as a permanent transmission of order and intelligence (cf. 270a2-5). However, it also shows that, as in the case of man, in the cosmic realm there is a movement that goes in the opposite direction, from the sensible world to the supreme principle. When the creator leaves the world and the inferior gods desert mankind, the world remembers God’s teachings and keeps an order, which gradually degenerates. The nous has a direct relationship to this double movement, as was clear in the Republic.

### III The psychology of the Timaeus

(a) World Soul

If we turn now to the account of the creation of the world soul in the Timaeus (34b10-35b1), we can distinguish the following five steps\(^{12}\):

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10. Socrates here is referring not only to the Forms, but to the whole realm of true Being, i.e. also to the Form of the Good.
11. Politic. 269c4-d2, d7-9, 270a2-5, 272c3-6, 273b1-2.
12. For the textual problems and for a detailed exegesis of the passage, cf. F. L. Lisi, ‘La construcción del alma del mundo en el Timae (35 a-b) y la tradición indirecta’, T. Calvo-

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Union of Indivisible Existence with the Divisible one and creation of an intermediate Existence

Union of the nature of the Indivisible Sameness and the nature of Divisible Sameness and creation of an intermediate nature of Sameness

Union of the nature of the Indivisible Difference with the nature of the Divisible Difference and creation of an intermediate Difference.

Union of the intermediate nature of the Difference with the nature of the intermediate Sameness, and

Union of this last nature with the intermediate Existence.

If we attentively consider the process of creation, we will see that there are two kinds of elements related to the characteristics of divisibility and indivisibility. This fact has led scholars to identify the first pair (Indivisible Existence and Divisible Existence) with the Forms and the sensible beings respectively. However, this interpretation cannot be based on the letter of the text. While the elements characterised as “indivisible” are “always in an unchangeable way”, the divisible ones are divisible in the bodies, a formulation that recalls the division of reality made at the beginnings of the *Timaeus* (28a). The mythic language seems to indicate that the elements that take part in the mixture are the “substances” that are used to construct the model and the copy, but not the model and the copy themselves. It is not possible, therefore, to relate in a simple way what is here typified as Existence, the Sameness and the Difference to the three supreme genera of the *Sophist* (254e-255e), Being, Identity and Difference, since that text refers only to Forms and the description in the *Timaeus* seems to include elements which take part in the constitution of all reality. The construction of the World Soul in the *Timaeus*, is based on two elements whose principal characteristics are indivisibility and permanence in one case and divisibility, becoming and dispersion in space in the other.

Another aspect that is worth stressing is that the text points to two kinds of mixture. One of them has as stuff οὐσίαι and the other φύσεις. The text also implies that both kinds of mixture are of different quality. Furthermore, it has also often been overlooked that these elements give origin to the stuff, which will form the whole of the world soul and that the revolution of the nature of the same and of the other that will be mentioned later (36c4-5) are themselves a mixture which includes all the elements that are recalled here. In other words, it is too often forgotten that the circle of the fixed stars and that of the planets are composed of the same elements. It is also noteworthy that in the description of the *chora* *Timaeus* uses words that recall the description of the οὐσία περὶ τὰ σώματα γενομένης μεριστή (35a1-2). The *chora* has a vague relationship with the οὐσία on which it depends in some way (ἀμοιβατικὸς ἀντικειμένην, 52c4). Its main characteristic is to be an extended and divisible entity (οὐσίαν σκεδασμοκτήν, 37a5). Οὐσία here seems to designate an element previous to particular and concrete things, in one

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13. Cf. the paper quoted in the previous note.
case prior to the Forms, in the other to sensible bodies. As the passage of 36c4-5 shows, the idioms « nature of the Sameness » and « nature of the Otherness » are actually the qualities of identity and difference that contain the two kinds of entities, which make up the main mixture. The World Soul therefore appears as the combination of one indivisible and stable principle with another, which changes and is divisible. Both are incorporeal. The fundamental characteristic of the product of the mixture of both elements is magnitude. As it is described, the World Soul is a line, which is curved in order to form seven unequal circles (36d1-6). If my analysis is correct, the substance which forms the World Soul is made from elements that are ontologically prior not only to body, but also to Forms. If we now turn to the results of the analysis of the central books of the Republic, I believe it is clear that one of the components of the World Soul is essentially related to the Form of the Good and also to the Forms in general with which it shares at least one element. However, the World Soul is itself a mixture of this element with what is called οὐσία περὶ τῶν σωμάτων; Yet the composition of the World Soul is only one aspect, since it also has an ordered movement, which has been caused by the demiurge and which, according to the Statesman's myth, is preserved by his continuous intervention, since it falls into disorder when the demiurge deserts it. This movement, depicted as ΚΕόΑ΍Ζ (269d1f.), is what constitutes the virtue of the World Soul.

(b) Human soul

Up until this point I have outlined the programme sketched in the Republic at the cosmic plane. Timaeus' cosmologic account is the description of the union of mind with its opposed principle: chora or necessity. In it, order is proportion and measure, which are the warranty for the immanence of mind and the transcendence of the demiurge. Usually nous is identified with the demiurge, but Timaeus speaks also of the mind present in the world in the form of soul. However, the aim of the dialogue is not cosmology, but the description of the creation and incarnation of the human soul. It is clear that the central point of the myth is the birth of the soul in all areas, with the emphasis placed on the human soul, yet the theory of the human soul twice presented by the Pythagorean philosopher is, perhaps, one of the clearest examples of the difficulties the dialogue still presents.

(i) The creation of the human soul in the first account (41d4-44d2)

According to the letter of the Timaeus, there are six kinds of soul in the universe, four of which are immortal and two mortal: the World Soul, the star souls, the souls of the inferior gods and human mind on one side and the thymos and the epithymêtikon on the other. It is indeed a system of surprising complexity. The creation of the World Soul is described in detail (34b10-36d7), while the creation of the star and god souls are only mentioned (38e3-6). The first account of the creation of the human soul focuses, as is natural, on the creation of the noetic element, the divine origin of which is clearly stated, since it is composed with the rest of the same substance that served for the making of the World Soul (41d4-7; cf. 41c6-d1). The narrative makes very clear that the soul created by the demiurge has an inde-
dependent identity and that it is the only one that is under the laws of destiny (τοῖς ἐξαρματέοις; e3-4). It further shows that the other gods have to create the mortal parts of human beings. Even if it is not explicit at this point of the account, it is clear that Timaeus uses the word psyche to designate the superior kind of soul in particular (41c6-d1, and especially 42d7-e2, where there is an allusion to the mortal kinds of soul that will appear in the third account of the creation of the world, but that also points to the fact that the word can be used to designate as much the mind exclusively as the other kinds of soul; cp. 43a4-5, d1-2).

For the construction of the mind, the demiurge casts « the remainders of the former substances » (τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπόλοιπα; d5-6) in the same mixing-bowl that he used to mix the substance of the world soul, which are thus no longer pure, but in a « second or third degree » (ἀκήρατα δὲ οὐκέτι κατὰ ταῦτα ὀστᾶτος, ἀλλὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα; 41d6-7), and he mixes them « in some sense in the same way » (τρόπον μὲν τίνα τὸν αὐτὸν; d6). Timaeus’ formulation has, I think, three aspects that require explanation and that I have tried to stress in my paraphrase:

(a) What is the meaning of « the remainders of the former substances »?
(b) It is clear that the phrase « they do not already have the same degree of purity, but are of second or even worse » refers to the inferior quality of human mind, but should we be satisfied with this exegesis or should we try to go on and determine with more accuracy the actual meaning of these words?
(c) Finally, how should we interpret the idiom « in some sense in the same way »?

Concerning the first question, Taylor has correctly stressed that with τὰ τῶν πρόσθεν ὑπόλοιπα Timaeus does not want to say « remains of the former mixture », because the mixture which has served for the construction of the World-Soul has been completely used (cf. 36b6-7)\(^{15}\). Taylor and Cornford interpret these words as a reference to the ‘original ingredients used to compound the World-Soul, namely the intermediate kinds of Existence, Sameness, and Difference’\(^{16}\). Here they apparently follow Proclus’ explanation in his Commentary on the Timaeus (III 254, 13-14). However, Proclus’ interpretation, even if it is very suggestive can hardly be true. Indeed, a literal interpretation of the creation of the World-Soul shows that the intermediate kinds of Existence, Sameness and Otherness are also a mixture and have also been used completely in order to build the World-Soul (cf. 35b2 : ὄλον τοῦτο). Besides, τῶν πρόσθεν cannot refer to elements already mixed, since the demiurge is going to make a new mixture. We have, accordingly, only two possibilities: (a) these words refer to the ἐμψυχωτειν of the heavenly gods mentioned at 38e5, i. e., to the same constitutive elements of their souls which are not specified or (b) they refer to the original elements taken for creating the World-Soul: indivisible Being or Existence, divisible Being or Existence, the nature of the indivisible Sameness, the nature of the divisible Sameness, the nature of the indivisible Otherness and the nature of the Divisible Otherness. The fact

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\(^{15}\) A. E. Taylor, A commentary on Plato’s Timaeus. Oxford 1928, 255, commentary to the passage.

\(^{16}\) F. M. Cornford, Plato’s cosmology. The Timaeus of Plato translated with a running commentary. London 1937, 142.
that they are “remainders” speak in favour of the first hypothesis, and it is unclear why the rests of the six original elements can all be involved and exhausted in the creation of human soul. In support of the second hypothesis argues that the demiurge again (πᾶν; 41d4) throws the elements into the mixing-bowl in which he had mixed the stuff of the World-Soul. The question can be resolved if we remember that these are the six elements which were also components of the World-Soul, and that they are the remainders of the construction of the souls of the gods. Since Timaeus does not mention the components of the souls of the gods, we could conclude that they are elements similar to the six components of the World-Soul, but of inferior quality. If we take the καὶ of δὲ τερα καὶ τρίτα in a copulative sense we could obtain an indirect confirmation of this interpretation: human mind has a purity of second degree in relation to gods and daemons, but of third degree with relation to the World Soul.

The idiom « in some sense in the same way » indicates that mind has a structural similarity to the World-Soul, and that the differences reside not only in the elements, but also in the way and the proportion in which they have been integrated. The structural similarity is expressed in the linear character of the immortal soul, in the occurrence of two revolutions: the revolution of the Same and of the Different (43d1-6, 44d2) and in the existence of intervals of the double and the triple, as well as in the presence of connecting means of the ratios, three halves and four thirds and nine octaves (43d4-6).

The human mind functions in a way similar to the World Soul and the human body is described as a kind of chora into which the soul is inserted. According to T. K. Johansen, the movements of the soul are spatial movements, which correspond to the same dynamic as the movement of the body, i.e. to the general mechanics of bi- or tri-dimensional figures. However, the nous has only one dimension and it does not move through space. From the point of view of Plato’s conception of reality, the movement of the soul is substantially different from the movement of the bodies and occupies an intermediate position between the immobility and stability of the Forms and the translation movement of tri-dimensional objects. However, it is only the union of the soul with the body that produces the ordered translation movement.

The demiurge describes the entrance of mind into the body as a process that causes the following affections (42a5-b1):

- A unique sense perception for everyone brought about by the violent events, which affect it.

17. F. M. Cornford (op. cit., 143) affirms: ‘if it does not mean ‘second or even worse’, may refer to the superiority of man’s soul over woman’s’. I cannot see any connection to man’s superiority over woman, because the mind of a woman, and of every animal indeed, is the mind of a man reincarnated.


- Love mixed with pleasure, pain, fear, rage and the phenomena that result from them as well as those which are their natural contraries.

The words which Timaeus places in the mouth of the demiurge allude to the apparition of what later in the account will be called the ‘kinds of mortal soul’. The definition of justice as the control of the phenomena related to the irascible and to the appetitive souls underlines the difference between mind and the other kinds of soul. The demiurge gives further details that are central for understanding the substantial difference between them. He states that the reincarnation of the intellects should not cease ‘until letting the revolution of the Same and uniform within himself draw into its train all that turmoil of fire and water and air and earth that had later grown about it, he should control its irrational turbulence by discourse of reason and return once more to the form of his first and best condition’ (πρὶν τῇ ταύτῃ καὶ ὁμοίῳ περιόδῳ τῇ ἐν αὐτῷ συνεπιστῶμενος τὸν πολύν ὄχλον καὶ ὑστερον προσφέντα ἐκ πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἀέρος καὶ γῆς, θορυβώδη καὶ ἀλογον ὄντα, λόγῳ κρατήσας εἰς τὸ τῆς πρώτης καὶ ἀριστῆς ἀφίκουστο εἶδος ἔξεσας: 42c4-d2; translation F. M. Cornford).

This passage has still not been considered attentively enough by commentators, perhaps because of the importance given to the laws of destiny which were proclaimed immediately prior to it. The reference is here not only to the relationship between soul and body in general, as the mention of the four elements seems to point to, but especially to the relation between mind, more precisely the revolution of the Same and uniform, and the kinds of mortal soul. I think that this supposition can be based on the following textual evidences:

- The idiom τον πολυν ὄχλον at c5-6 and its qualification as θορυβώδη. Plato often uses the word ὄχλος or similar for designating the appetitive soul (e.g. Resp. IX 590b7) and the populace, which from the political point of view are associated with the concupiscient soul. 20

- The demiurge says that this multitude is without proportion and without rule (ἀλογον) 21, and that it must be subjected to rule and proportion (λόγῳ) 22. Even if these definitions can be applied to the body in a metaphorical sense, they belong more properly to the inferior kinds of soul 23. The use of the verb συνεπιστῆμα is also a hint in this direction.

20. Gorg. 459a4; Symp. 174a7; Pol. 291a3, 304d1; Phil. 62c5; Laws II 670b8; III 700c7; IV 722b7; V 734b6; VII 817c5, etc. In Tim. 75e8. Plato uses the word to designate a large amount of flesh. This is the only passage in the whole Platonic corpus, where ὄχλος has this signification.

21. Taylor (op. cit., 263, note to 42d1) rightly rejects the interpretation of λόγος as ‘reason’ and proposes to translate it as ‘rule’ and to render ἀλογον as ‘without ratio’, ‘without measure’.

22. Even though I have translated these words as ‘proportion’ and ‘rule’, it should not be forgotten that λόγος also means ‘word’, ‘discourse’ and ‘definition’. According to Plato’s psychology the mind orders the lower souls, especially the thumos (cf., e.g., Tim. 70a2-7, b2-c1) and in the Laws the νόμος is defined as λόγιμος and δόγμα τῆς πόλεως (I 644c9-d3; cf. II 653a5-c2 and F. L. Lisi, Platón, Diálogos. VIII-IX Leyes. (Biblioteca Clásica Gredos 265-266), Madrid 1999, I, 243).

23. Cf. 42a4-b2, especially b2, where the verb κρατέω reappears and the reference clearly is to the lowest kinds of soul, and also infra.

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- The fact that the subjection to rule and proportion must lead to the re-establishment of the ‘form of the first and best condition’ of mind\(^{24}\) must allude first and foremost to the dominion of the immortal soul over the mortal ones. This difference will be made explicit in the third account, but is already present here.

- The strongest argument, however, is, I think, of a strictly linguistic nature. The demiurge maintains that this multitude has subsequently grown around the soul (προσφύντα) and a literal interpretation can be only that the multitude grows around the mind of which the demiurge spoke all the time. The ὑστέρον, which marks posteriority can only be related to that which produces the affections mentioned at 42a5-b1, which will actually appear after mind is. Later Timaeus explains that the demiurge ordered the young gods to make ‘all that part of the human soul that still needed to be added’ (προσγενεσθαι; d6-e1). While mind is implanted (ἐμφυτεύειεν; 42a3) in the body, the mortal kinds of soul are added, grow around the mind, after its coming into the body.

However, the fact that the mortal kinds of soul are already implicitly present in the first account does not imply that the mention of the four elements cannot also be understood as a loose allusion to the body in general, as can be deduced from the subsequent description of the entering of the mind in the body (42e6-44c4). Nevertheless, this account is of an utterly different nature, since it focuses on the effects of incarnation on the mind and has no reference to an opposition between body and mind, like the one that is the nucleus of the passage we have just analysed. Besides, Timaeus says that it is a question of the revolutions of the immortal soul (τὰς τῆς ᾧνάτου ψυχῆς; 43a4-5), and thereby implicitly alludes to the treatment of the mortal kinds of soul in the second account of the soul’s creation.

Can we perhaps go further in determining that which remains for the creation of the human soul to be brought about by the younger gods? First, it is evident that its nature cannot be the same as that of the mind because (a) the addition must have an inferior nature than the kind of soul created by the demiurge and (b) the demiurge himself had used the whole of the stuff in his creation, so that the substance from which the addition is made must be of another nature than the stuff of mind. Furthermore, there are some positive hints about the nature of the addition. The young gods take from the universe only the four elements for the completion of the creation of man (42e8-9). The four elements should return to the cosmos after death (e9-43a1) and mortality consists precisely in the dissolution of the living structure into its elementary components and in their return to the physical world. Since it is mortal, the addition to the soul that the younger gods have made can only be composed of elements which are themselves corporeal or, at least, must have a stronger relationship with the sensible world of becoming, in other words with the chora. The first account of the creation of the soul offers another hint which further allows us to proceed in this direction: the demiurge’s insistence on assigning to the inferior gods the task of making the addition to the soul, in order to put the origin of evil outside of demiurgic creation (42e3-4). It

\(^{24}\) A. E. Taylor (op. cit., 263) follows Proclus and seems to consider the idiom as a periphrastic description of man (ἄνθρωπος), but Timaeus is referring clearly here to the virtuous state of souls before incarnation.
should, in that case, be essentially different from the immortal soul and nearer to the body with which it partakes of origin.\(^{25}\)

(ii) The creation of the soul in the third account (68e1-73e1)

The second description of the creation of the human soul, which is found in the last or third account of the creation, does not talk about the birth of the immortal soul, that Timaeus had focused on in the first report, but of another kind of soul, called ‘mortal’ and which I have identified with the ‘addition’ of the first account. However, for a real understanding of all the implications of the creation of the human soul, it is necessary to start from the end of the second account of creation, where Timaeus makes some very important assertions (68e1-69c5).

- There are two kinds of causes: the necessary and the divine (68e6-7).
- The necessary allow us to participate in the divine, which is the source of our happiness (68e7-69a5).
- The order introduced by the demiurge consists in proportion and measure (69b2-8).
- The demiurge creates all that is divine as well as the immortal living creatures (the gods), i.e. that which is immortal in the universe, while the inferior gods make that which is mortal (69b7-c5).

The difference between the activity of the demiurge and the task of the inferior gods lies not in the material or immaterial nature of their creatures, but in their mortal or immortal life form. The World-Body, for instance, is made by the demiurge, but not the mortal souls of men. The difference between the two kinds of work is therefore substantial and essential, and in the case of the soul, this fact is clearly stressed by Timaeus:

- The mind, which is a creation of the demiurge, is immortal; the activity of minor gods is restricted to that of building the specific body where the soul will dwell, that is, the sphere of the skull (cf. σώμα, and περίτερονευσαίων; 69c6; 90a2-7).
- In the account the trunk is conceived of as an independent second body linked to the head by the throat. The description makes clear that head and trunk are two units with some autonomy.
- The mortal kind of soul is built ἀναγκαίως (69d6), i.e. with the characteristics that pertain to the mortal part of the universe. It is, therefore, completely different from the immortal part.
- The gods make the throat in order to prevent the contamination of the immortal kind of soul and to separate it from the mortal kind (69d6-e3). This, I believe, is a clear sign of the essentially different nature of the two kinds of soul.

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\(^{25}\) For Johansen (op. cit., 150f.) the distinction between immortal and mortal soul is related to the difference between circular and rectilinear motions: ‘The brain is spherical because it carries the circular motions of the intellect. The rest of the marrow is both circular and rectilinear because it carries the parts of the soul that are produced by the influence of rectilinear motions on the soul’s natural circular motions’ (151). This interpretation does not account for the difference that the demiurge had explicitly remarked upon.
- The relationship of both kinds with the marrow is highly dissimilar. The mind dwells in it, in the brain, whereas the mortal kind is connected to the marrow by means of links, which hold it (καθέξελυ; 73d3).

- The form of the marrow also points to the difference between both kinds, since it corresponds to the different kinds of soul (73c3-6).²⁶

- The most important clue is that every kind of soul has its own movements that are different from the movements of the other kinds.²⁷

There exists such an essential difference between the immortal and the mortal kinds of the soul that it is difficult to speak of 'parts', except in a metaphorical sense, as when we speak of the parts of virtue or of the parts of a class referring to its members. Timaeus once uses the plural ψυχαί when he speaks of the different kinds of soul. The difference between the two kinds of soul is also stressed by the fact that the head is presented as an independent entity, the body in which the mind dwells. In this way, the head appears as a middle term between the universe, which is completely constructed by the demiurge and the rest of the body, which is made by the inferior gods.

The mortal genus is also divided into two species, the irascible, situated in the superior part of the trunk, and the concupiscent, dwelling in the belly (69e3-70d6). Both species of mortal souls are related to specific organs: the heart to the irascible soul (70a7-bc1) and the liver to the concupiscent one (71a7-b1). However all kinds of soul belong to a single genus and all should therefore have something in common: they are all principles of movement, as well as all being a mixture. When the inferior gods mix the different elements, which compound the mortal souls, they imitate the procedure of the demiurge for the mind.

Amongst the mortal species of soul there is also an axiological relationship in which the irascible soul has an intermediate position between mind and concupiscent soul (69e5-71a2). Timaeus’ description shows that he considers the concupiscent soul to be the real opposition to the mind. It is characterised as a savage (e4) and tumultuous beast (θρύμβον καὶ βοην παρέχον; e7), which does not understand the logos nor takes nor cares for it. The mind communicates with it through images and apparitions (71a3-7). The dynamis of mind acts on the liver through chemical effects in order to influence the condition of the concupiscent soul. The description reveals the relationship between this soul and corporeality through images, which recall the ones used for depicting the chora: it neither partakes of proportion/rule (λόγου) nor of intelligence (φρονήσεως; 71d4)²⁸.

²⁶. This passage has been a source of substantial difficulties beginning with the πανοπερεμάν at 73c1, which has been interpreted as an indication of soul’s transmigration (F. M. Cornford, op. cit., 294, following Rivaud). Nevertheless, it is unnecessary to abandon the traditional exegesis maintained among others by R. D. Archer-Hind (The Timaeus of Plato edited with introduction and notes. London 1888, 272) and A. E. Taylor (op. cit., 522).

²⁷. Cf. 86e5-87a7, 88b2-5, 89c3-6, 90c6-d1.

²⁸. The liver gets images (εἴδωλα) and imprints (τύποις) like a mirror (71b4-5; cf. 72c4), and even the metaphor of the milk as a sponge (ἐκμαγείον; e5), seems to be a pun for the sake of pointing to the second cosmological principle (cf. 50c2).
IV Conclusions

Finally I would like to summarize very briefly what I consider to be the most important results concerning the relationship between the Good, the World-Soul and the individual soul in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*. I believe it to be evident that cosmic and human mind appear as a kind of emanation of the principle that constitutes the source of cosmic order and that this order has its expression not only in the substance of which mind is made but also, and especially, in the ordered movement that this first principle starts and preserves. This principle furthermore acts as a principle of determination as well as being the measure *par excellence*, yet it is not *nous*, but beyond *nous*, as is stated in the *Republic*. The dialogues do not speak of the relationship of this principle to numbers, but if it is measure and the most exact measure, it should be related to them, above all to the first number, the one. However, more important than this relationship to unity is, for me, the fact that this transcendent principle is – so to say – a superior form of intellect, which due to its nature can also be a principle of movement. This interpretation of Plato's thought as substantially a philosophy of mind, or better, as the philosophy of the deployment of a principle which has in the human mind one of its manifestations, brings his thought closer to the later developments in Neo-Platonism and permits us to understand the continuity of the tradition begun by the founder of the Academy. Further research should delimit the existing differences, but also confirm the continuity of the Platonic tradition.