

Justice in the City and the Soul

1 Parts of the soul

Soul part	Features of the soul
Rational	Overrides feelings (439c), calculates about better and worse (441b), exercises foresight for the whole (441e), learns, loves truth and knowledge (580e), philosophical (581b)
Spirited	Anger, resentment. Aligned with rational part vs. the appetitive, e.g. look at corpses (439d). “Wholly dedicated” to “control, victory, and high repute” (honor) (581a)
Appetitive	Irrational, feeling, desires, lusts, hungers, thirsts. Drives or drags the soul (439c-d). Appetites for food, drink, and sex (580e). Insatiable desire for money (442a, 581a).

Table 1 Parts of the soul

City part	Soul part
Guardians	Rational
Auxiliaries	Spirited
Productive	Appetitive

Table 2 Parts of the city and parts of the soul

2 Parts of the soul and class membership

Class	Kind of person	Ruling part of the soul
Guardians	Learning-loving, philosophic	Rational
Auxiliaries	Victory-loving	Spirited
Productive	Money-loving	Appetitive

Table 3 Features of the classes (442c, 581c)

“And it is because of the spirited part, I suppose, that we call a single individual courageous, namely when it preserves through pains and pleasures the declarations of reason about what is to be feared and what isn’t. ... And we’ll call him wise because of that small part of himself that rules in him and ... has within it the knowledge of what is advantageous for each part and for the whole soul (441c).

“And doesn’t this [rational] part rule in some people’s souls, while one of the other parts ... rules in other people’s? That’s right. And isn’t that the reason we say that there are three primary kinds of people: philosophic, victory-loving, and profit-loving?” (581c)

3 Civic and individual virtues

Virtue	City	Soul
Wisdom	Wise members (guardians) rule the city	Rational part rules the soul
Courage	Spirited members (auxiliaries) defend the city and support the guardians	Spirited part aligns with the rational part against the appetitive
Moderation	All classes recognize and defer to the ruling part	Harmonious relations among parts of the soul
Justice	Each class plays its role	Each part plays its role

Table 4 Explanation of the virtues (from 442b-d)

4 Justice in the soul

I suppose we'll say that a man is just in the same way as a city. ... And surely we haven't forgotten that the city was just because each of the three classes in it was doing its own work. ... Then we must also remember that each one of us in whom each part is doing its own work will himself be just and do his own. ... Therefore, isn't it appropriate for the rational part to rule, since it is really wise and exercises foresight on behalf of the whole soul...? (441d-e)

in truth justice ... isn't concerned with someone's doing his own externally, but with what is inside him, with what is truly himself and his own. One who is just does not allow any part of himself to do the work of another part or allow the various classes within him to meddle with each other. He regulates well what is really his own and rules himself. He puts himself in order, is his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts of himself like three limiting notes in a musical scale — high, low, and middle. He binds together those parts ... and from having been many things he comes entirely one, moderate and harmonious. (443d)

to insure that someone like that [a manual worker] is ruled by something similar to what rules the best person, we say that he ought to be the slave of that best person who has a divine ruler within himself. It isn't to harm the slave that we say he must be ruled, which is what Thrasymachus thought to be true of all subjects, but because it is better for everyone to be ruled by divine reason, preferably within himself and his own, otherwise imposed from without, so that as far as possible all will be alike and friends, governed by the same thing. (590d)