ORDERING THE PSYCHE POLYTIC:

CHOICES OF INNER REGIME FOR PLATO AND NIETZSCHE

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Faust complained that he had two souls in his breast. I have a whole squabbling crowd. It goes on as in a republic.

Bismarck

Nothing seems to penetrate Nietzsche's 'Odysseus-ears' better -- however much he may try to seal them with the wax of the new -- than the siren-song of Plato's psychological imagery. When Socrates says, as he so often does when about to speak of the soul, 'Listen to this image', or 'Come, let me tell you another image', Nietzsche's 'Oedipus-eyes' open wide, glancing sidelong around the blinding mask; and when the Marsyas of philosophical discourse proposes 'moulding an image of the soul in speech', the arch-enemy of Platonism turns to putty in his eloquent hands.

More remarkable than the vivid imagery Plato employs in speaking of the soul is the number of those images Nietzsche adopts -- and adapts, since he generally reverses or inverts them as he borrows. It is true that whereas the figural language Nietzsche uses to present his psychology is germane to his philosophical enterprise as a whole, Plato considers the way of images to be merely preparatory to the real work of the dialectic. Nevertheless Plato's psychological imagery is of philosophical interest in itself, with an intriguing 'logic' of its own which a comparison with Nietzsche brings into relief. A comparison of their psychological imagery also shows Nietzsche to have borrowed

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far more from this father figure -- whom he declines to acknowledge as a precursor in the field -- than he cares to admit.

The imagery common to Plato and his later antagonist is embedded in three distinct but related realms of metaphorical discourse. First there is talk about elements and events in the psyche by analogy with natural phenomena -- such as weather, rivers, land, seas, and vegetation. Here the primary metaphor for cultivation of the soul is that of horticulture or agriculture. The psyche as imagined to harbour earth or soil, in which various kinds of seeds are sown, cultivated, and harvested -- the 'fruits' of one's labours being ideas, works of art, and so forth. The next kind of discourse imagines the 'contents' of the psyche in terms of the animal world, and ranges from wild beasts of prey to domestic animals. Here the disposition of instinctual drives (Triebe), emotions, passions, and so on is imagined through the metaphor of animal husbandry. The appropriate psychological forces are fed, watered, bred, subdued, harnessed, tamed, and trained as if they were sheep, dogs, horses, camels, snakes, or lions. The third level of discourse -- the topic of the present essay -- imagines the individual psyche as a human community, the most encompassing metaphor in this realm being the extended image, first elaborated by Plato in the Republic, of the psyche as polis. Here the soul is seen as a kind of 'inner' society, and the question is what kind of political organization, or regime, best promotes the health and welfare of the individual as a whole?
The topic of the multiplicity of the self is as interesting as it is vast, and one with implications for a number of fields of philosophical inquiry. Many problems in philosophy and their putative solutions rest upon an unquestioned conception of the unity of the self. Whether we understand ourselves as some kind of simple unity or as a complex multiplicity of persons or agents is less a theoretical question than an existential issue with extensive psychological and ethical implications. If there are multiple knowers and agents in each person, the complexities of epistemological problems and questions of moral responsibility are intriguingly compounded. Some of these questions have been addressed by Richard Rorty, and a remark he makes might help to give a sense of my own orientation in what follows. ‘He let us see’, writes Rorty about Freud, ‘alternative narratives and alternative vocabularies as instruments for change, rather than as candidates for a correct depiction of how things are in themselves’ (p.9). One is reminded of Socrates’s saying in the Phaedrus that to say what soul ‘really is’ is a task ‘of which only a god would be capable’, while it is within human power to ‘say what it is like’ (Phdr. 246a). At any rate, rather than explore the farther implications of the idea of the multiple self, the present task will be to examine the details and some immediate implications of both Plato’s and Nietzsche’s saying that the soul is like a polis.

To read the Republic for its psychology means taking its principal image seriously, its picture of the individual psyche as a city populated by a multitude of persons.” Socrates
introduces the analogy between the city and the individual in Book II (369a-c) and extends it through to the last two books of the dialogue, by which time his frequent talk of 'the regime inside the man' and 'the regime within' have become perfectly natural. If we take the simile seriously, we realize that the tripartite division into classes of citizens is only a first step: the image Socrates elaborates is susceptible of finer differentiation into a much larger plurality of practitioners -- and, in principle, into a population of thousands.

Nietzsche entertained the idea of the psyche as a polycentric field of persons at various stages in his thinking and as his ideas developed he became more engaged by the question framed by Plato concerning the ways in which this inner population might be ordered politically, as well as the optimal disposition of the forces that hold sway in the intrapersonal community. Although Nietzsche never mentions Plato in his remarks concerning the political organization of the psyche, it is appropriate and illuminating to look at his ideas in the light of the analogy elaborated in the Republic. In view of the many changes Nietzsche's ideas undergo, it is advisable to follow their development in chronological sequence, a procedure that will also allow us to discern more clearly just where and how his psychological ideas diverge from Plato's. They both agree on the value of likening the multiplicity of the soul to the community of the polis. Once we determine which kinds of intrapsychical political organization Plato and Nietzsche think are possible, the interesting question is: Which does each regard as the...
optimal regime, and for what reasons?

I

In the community to which Plato likens the soul in the Republic, psychological disorder is imagined as a state in which ‘factions’ vie with each other for power amid the ever-present danger that despots driven by base desires will rise up to tyrannize the populace. Injustice in the soul is characterised as ‘a certain faction among [its] three parts’ or as ‘a rebellion of a part of the soul against the whole’. This imagery is echoed in one of Nietzsche’s earliest psychological writings, a piece written when he was twenty and entitled Über Stimmungen (On Moods, see my translation in this issue of JNS). In this short essay he imagines the moods of the title as resulting from conflicts among the ‘inhabitants’ of the inner world:

Here a civil war between two enemy camps, there an oppression of the populace by a particular class, a small minority.

Plato distinguishes five inner regimes, characteristic of the monarchical, timocratic, oligarchic, democratic, and tyrannical types of personality. A significant feature of the account of the progressive degeneration of the inner regime from a monarchy of the intellect, with an aristocracy of philosophers at the head, to the type dominated ‘from below’ by the tyrant eros (Books VIII and IX) is that Socrates speaks as if there exists an overseeing agent somehow external to the tripartite psyche — at least until the degeneration reaches its nadir in the
tyrannical personality type. The just human being ‘harmonizes
the three parts...and becomes entirely one from many’; the
timocratic type ‘turns over the rule in himself to the spirited
part’; the oligarchic character ‘thrusts spiritedness out of the
throne and makes the desiring part the great king within
himself’; while the democratic personality ‘hands over the rule
in himself to whichever pleasure happens along’.* But who --
Nietzsche would want to ask -- harmonizes, turns over the rule,
ejicts and installs, suppresses and fosters, awakens and soothes?
It is incomprehensible that the ‘calculating part’ of the soul
should choose to hand over the rule to any of the other parts;
nor can this apparently independent director consist in the unity
of all the parts, since in the cases in question the parts, being
unharmonized, fail to constitute a unity.

Nietzsche’s position on this question of identity begins to take
shape in an aphorism from Daybreak (1881) which bears the
patently Socratic title ‘Self-mastery and Moderation’, and which
confronts the danger that one of the drives that constitutes our
psychical life will seize power and tyrannize all the others.10
This is a danger to which the worst type of soul envisaged by
Socrates is especially subject: in the soul dominated by the
basest desires, eros

lives like a tyrant within [the man] in all anarchy
and lawlessness...[as] leader of the idle desires that
insist on all available resources being distributed to
them (Rep. 575a, 572e).

Nietzsche’s aphorism offers ‘six essentially different methods
of combating the violence of a drive’, and echoes Plato’s concern
that a base drive may become tyrannical through monopolizing all
the available psychical energy. And just as Socrates recommends ‘starving the savage heads [of the many-headed beast]’ as a way of keeping the lower desires in check (Rep. 588e), so several of the methods discussed by Nietzsche involve depriving an importunate drive of nourishment.

But Nietzsche goes on to effect a radical transformation in the Platonic picture of psycho-politics. He suggests that, although in cases where a drive is successfully checked we like to think it is our reason that has contained its force, in fact

Our intellect is only the blind instrument of another drive that is a rival of the one that is tormenting us by its violence... So while ‘we’ believe ourselves to be complaining about the violence of a drive, it is fundamentally one drive that is complaining about another...there is going to be a struggle, in which our intellect has to take sides. (Daybreak 109)

This is a strange equivocation at the end here: if the intellect is only a ‘blind instrument’, and ‘we’ are not separate and autonomous agents capable of controlling the drives, then it is difficult to see how the intellect can ‘take sides’ in the struggle among the drives.11 The equivocation aside, it is a radical move to dispense in this way with the positing of an independent director, with the idea of the intellect as something separate and of a different nature from -- and thus capable of ruling over -- the various drives. If this seems counter-intuitive phenomenologically, insofar as one generally has the impression that ‘I’ am able to struggle with the various drives because I enjoy the status of an autonomous overseer, we must bear in mind that, according to Nietzsche, every drive has its own perspective and is able to say ‘I’.

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By the time of *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) and the notes written the previous year, the idea of the self as a socio-political community has assumed a central place in Nietzsche's psychology. In an especially seminal passage he proposes replacing the idea of the unitary, 'atomic' soul by notions such as 'soul as subject-multiplicity' and 'soul as social structure of the drives and affects' (*BGE* 12). He goes on to speak of the body as 'a social structure of many souls', and of the will as 'above all something complicated' which we imagine as a unity only with the help of 'the synthetic concept "I"' (*BGE* 19).

A person who wills commands something in him which obeys, or which he believes obeys...the most marvellous thing about willing...[is that] we are at the same time the commanding and obeying parties... As in every well-structured and happy community, the ruling class identifies itself with the successes of the community as a whole.13

Willing is thus a certain disposition of the soul's drives, a redistribution of power within the psycho-social structure. The changing identity of the ruler apparent is concealed by the mask of the first person singular: the trick is to realize that a variety of inner parties may, according to the situation, be voicing the word 'I'.

Two unpublished notes from the same period develop the idea of psychical multiplicity in more explicitly political terms. Nietzsche recommends taking the body and physiology as a model, since by so doing

we gain the right idea of the nature of our subject-unity (*Subjekt-Einheit*), namely as regents at the head of a community...also of the dependence of these regents on those who are ruled... The most important
thing, however, is that we understand the ruler and his subjects (Untertanen) as being of the same nature -- all feeling, willing, thinking.\textsuperscript{14}

It is significant that the rulers are described as regents--figures merely standing in for others -- rather than as monarchs. And if a regent, however dependent on and connatural with his subjects, should sound too much like a unity, the second note dispels this impression:

The assumption of the unitary subject is perhaps unnecessary; perhaps it is just as permissible to assume a plurality of subjects whose interplay and struggle are the ground of our thinking and our consciousness in general? A kind of aristocracy of 'cells' in which the power to rule resides? Certainly of equals who are accustomed to ruling and know how to command? (WP 490)

The notion of a ruling aristocracy is familiar from the Republic; but the question is whether these rulers are here to be understood solely as representatives of reason, constituents of the 'calculating part' of the psyche, as enduring self-identical agents -- or else as offices or positions capable of being held by a succession of different figures.

After Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche's reflections on the topic of internal political organization are to be found mainly in the treatment of the theme of mastery, or domination (Herrschaft), in Twilight of the Idols (1888), though there are also several pertinent passages in the Nachlass from that time. But before looking at these texts, let us pause to consider which internal regimes Plato and Nietzsche agree on rejecting.
Both thinkers proceed from the assumption that the various drives each possess an inherent tendency to become tyrannical, and that the initial state is one of anarchy. The prospects of an inner timocracy or oligarchy, with the entire psyche under the domination of the factions that love honour, fame, and military might, or else of those driven by the sensual desires, would be no more appealing to Nietzsche than to Plato: the timocratic arrangement would be too sterile, and the oligarchic insufficiently disciplined through hard training (Zuchtung).

Nietzsche would probably find inner democracy, in which each impulse is given its turn, as charming as does Socrates -- who is in fact remarkably charitable towards the democratic arrangement, calling it (with a lighter touch of irony than usual) 'probably the fairest of regimes' and 'a sweet regime, without rulers and many-coloured'. While Nietzsche shares Socrates's disdain for the way an external democracy dispenses 'a certain equality to equals and unequals like', he might find the idea of an intrapsychical democracy slightly more appealing -- at least insofar as it involves a rotation through a multiplicity of desires dominating. The great number and variety of characters and regimes embodied by the democratic type could, with proper organization, conduce to a fluidity of leadership of which Nietzsche would surely approve. Nevertheless, he is as concerned as Socrates that an order of rank (Rangordnung) be acknowledged, within as well as among individuals. Even if the rulers change from time to time, as least there are rulers who
exercise power; for Nietzsche the democratic type of soul is too undiscriminating and anarchic to be productive."

The great danger of the democratic regime, for Plato, is its tendency to degenerate into tyranny, which he regards as the worst possible regime, internally as well as externally. It is here that we see Nietzsche’s path begin to diverge, insofar as he sees psychical tyranny as a sometimes necessary evil — and, for certain creative types, as a welcome evil to be cultivated for the enhancement of humanity as a whole. Precisely by virtue of its arrogating all the available energies, a tyrannical drive accumulates tremendous power, which can be directed toward effecting great things." And so, for Nietzsche, a form of tyranny in which one’s task (Aufgabe) in life, as constituted by a particular complex of drives, holds ruthless sway over the other members of the psychical community may be a most productive arrangement — though by no means a comfortable one (for either the person tyrannized or those around him). Nietzsche characterizes the Aufgabe, ‘that hidden and imperious something’ as

the tyrant in us [that] wreaks terrible retribution for every attempt we make to avoid or elude it."

It is clear in Plato that the best psychical regime is one in which the intellect is in charge and thereby harmonizes the needs and drives of all parts of the soul. The ideal psychical state of the Republic, in which ‘the calculating part rules since it is wise and has forethought about all of the soul’ (441e) and the various parts of the soul ‘mind their own business’, is called
by Socrates a 'monarchy' or an 'aristocracy' (445d). Under the monarchical rule of reason each party in the soul may perform the role for which it is best suited, and no one is able to take an unfair share of psychical nourishment or energy. The general Socratic prescription for dealing with the drives calls for

[a feeding of] the desiring part [of the soul] in such a way that it is neither in want nor surfeited.

allowing it (as long as it 'minds its own business') to 'enjoy its own pleasures [as] the best pleasures' (Rep. 571e, 586e) -- where the qualification 'the best' is presumably intended to rule out the lower part's pleasure in tyrannical domination.

Given Nietzsche's almost fanatical concern with self-mastery in many phases of his life, which translated into frequent commendations of that virtue in his philosophical writings, there are good grounds for supposing that this kind of regime would not be entirely inimical to him. And yet when we look at the discussion of Socrates in Twilight of the Idols we encounter something less than enthusiasm. In 'The Problem of Socrates' Nietzsche writes concerning the situation in fifth-century Athens that 'everywhere the instincts were in anarchy', and that Socrates's response was to say:

The drives want to play the tyrant; one must devise a counter-tyrant who is stronger.

Socrates attained 'self-mastery' by setting up reason as such a 'counter-tyrant'. This position -- of 'rationality at any cost' and having to fight the instincts' -- Nietzsche brands as decadence (TI 2/9-11). Two questions arise at this point: first, whether this is a fair characterization of what the figure of
Socrates stands for, and second, how Nietzsche's own position is different.

The optimal arrangement of the psyche for Plato is most vividly pictured in the chimerical figure of Republic IX. The regime to which the lowest part of the soul is to be subjected here is not especially cruel or tyrannical, especially by comparison with the radical Christian prescriptions for treating the unruly passions which Nietzsche inveighs against later in Twilight of the Idols. Socrates recommends that we let the 'inner human' of the chimerical figure

\[ \text{take charge of the many-headed beast -- like a farmer, nourishing and cultivating the tame heads, while hindering the growth of the savage ones -- making the lion's nature an ally and, caring for all in common, making them friends with each other and himself, and so rear them.} \]

The most striking aspect of this arrangement is the atmosphere of friendship to be cultivated, the suggestion that one should attempt to 'befriend' the beast of powerful instinct rather than dominate it defensively and repressively.

At the risk of too long a detour into the realm of animal husbandry imagery, which borders here closely upon the political metaphors, one might mention that Plato's position by the time of the Phaedrus, exemplified in the triadic figure of the two horses and the charioteer (264a-256d), has become even less repressive. There the relations among the charioteer and horses are remarkably open, insofar as they are depicted as communicating with each other through speech. If the final subdual of the dark horse appears somewhat bloody (Phdr. 254e),
a careful reading of the image reveals that this domination is not a deliberate act of cruelty on the part of the charioteer (the rational intellect), but rather an almost incidental effect of a greater force acting on him.22

Not only does Nietzsche appear to exaggerate the element of tyranny involved in Plato’s optimal regime, he also advocates a fair amount of intrapsychical tyranny himself. In Daybreak 109 he speaks of the benefits that may accrue from ‘the habit and desire to tyrannize [a] drive and make it gnash its teeth.’ A note from 1886 elaborates this idea, in slightly different terms, under the title ‘Overcoming the Affects?’

-- No, not if that means their weakening and annihilation. But to take them into service: which involves tyrannizing them for a long time (not even as an individual, but as a community, a race, etc.). Eventually one gives them back their freedom with confidence: they love us like good servants and ultimately go where our best inclines.23

What happens ‘eventually’ is evidence of a most interesting move on Nietzsche’s part, especially in view of the crucial question of Who, or which agency, tyrannizes the affects and takes them into service? If the tyrannized affects are to be given back their freedom, to whom are they then to act as ‘good servants’?

III

Given that under the optimal Platonic regime the ruling reason attempts to ‘befriend’ the lower drives and direct the necessary nourishment to all but the most anti-social of them, we need to ask more keenly just what it is that Nietzsche finds so
unsatisfactory about such an arrangement. His dissatisfaction appears to have two grounds. The first concerns the drawbacks of what might be called -- to paraphrase one of his own wittier coinages -- a 'monotonocracy' of single-minded reason. It may indeed sound sometimes as if Nietzsche is proposing a modified version of the Platonic ideal when, for instance, he commends 'the coordination of the impulses [Antriebe] under the predominance of a single one of them' (WF 46; emphasis added). But in Plato the coordination of the impulses takes place under the direction of a reason that is always self-identical, that remains the same over the course of the individual's development. In view of Nietzsche's contrasting emphasis on 'becoming' over 'being' -- whether in the inner or the outer realms -- one would hardly expect that a single impulse or drive would remain in charge indefinitely.

It is appropriate at this point to recall the passage from the Nachlass cited earlier which spoke of the 'regents at the head of the [psychical] community', and the 'aristocracy...of equals who are accustomed to ruling'. These now suggest a model in which a succession of drives, each of which would in principle be capable of 'philosophising'," cycle through the highest office in accordance with the experiential context and the individual's stage of development. It would be a question of an aristocracy rather than a monarchy, of dissolving the philosopher-king into a governing body of several thinkers, splintering the hegemony of the intellect into a matrix of relationships among the various affects, drives, and passions.
Such an arrangement would be dictated by the recurrent Nietzschean theme that the intellect is nothing other than a ‘certain relationship of the drives to each other’, which is recapitulated in a late note (1888) in which reason is said to consist in ‘a condition of relationships among various passions and desires’. On this view reason would not be seen as a permanent ruler, nor as an independent director at the head; there would be no leader separate from the led.

The second source of Nietzsche’s dissatisfaction with the Platonic ideal is a concern with the amount and distribution of energy within the psyche, with what since Freud has been called ‘libidinal economics’. Nietzsche is reluctant to endorse the Platonic prescription for hindering the growth of ‘negative’ drives because of the loss of energy this would entail, and the resultant sapping of the creative urge. His desire to retain as many powerful energies as possible within what he calls the ‘great economy’ of the soul is expressed in a note from 1887:

**Summa**: mastery over the passions, not their weakening or extirpation. The greater the will’s power of mastery, the more freedom may be given to the passions.

The ‘great human being’ is great by virtue of the range of free play of his desires and of the still greater power that is able to take these magnificent monsters into service.

It appears from this note that what exercises mastery over the ‘magnificent monsters’ of the passions is the will. If this seems an uncharacteristically conventional opposition for Nietzsche -- will versus the passions -- we must recall that he understands the will as being above all ‘a complex of feelings’
and 'an affect of command' (BGE 19). The will that 'masters' the passions turns out, somewhat paradoxically, to be constituted by them. This is made clear in a note from the following year, where Nietzsche speaks of consciousness in its relation to the unconscious interplay of somatic operations as

a higher authority (Instanz) ...a kind of directing committee in which the various dominant desires make their voices and power effective."

We can find a summing up of these themes and gain an overall view of the ways in which Nietzsche wants to go beyond Plato if we return to Twilight of the Idols one last time. In 'The Problem of Socrates', Nietzsche characterizes the Platonic identification of reason with virtue and happiness as follows:

one must imitate Socrates and institute a perpetual daylight in opposition to the dark desires -- the daylight of reason. One must be clever, clear, bright at any cost: every giving in to the instincts, to the unconscious, leads downward..."

The problem with such a regime, for Nietzsche, is that the balance of power in the psyche is too one-sided, overly top-heavy, for one to be creative. It depends, of course, on just what we want to become. For a life that is calm and serene, Nietzsche would surely endorse the soul well harmonized under the rule of single-minded reason, a paradigm of Apollinian order. But for a more creative existence he would hold it necessary to acknowledge a greater pressure of population in the psyche, to allow a more Dionysiac disposition of forces, one capable of sustaining changing rulers and the tensions of tyranny, as well as chronic polemos among parties in the polis within. In this case the vicious and violent drives whose growth Socrates wants...
to hinder would be retained as indispensable sources of energy."

In the course of the next several chapters of *Twilight* (a most apt title, in the context of this talk of night as opposed to daylight) there emerges the picture of a two-phase relationship with the drives. The initial state is characterized by 'the inability to resist a stimulus'; the response which constitutes the first phase is a 'preschooling in spirituality'. This preparatory education involves

not reacting immediately to a stimulus, but gaining control over the restraining, repressing instincts (TI 8/6).

This first phase is the same as the Platonic-Socratic programme, but is for Nietzsche simply a preliminary. Self-control turns out to be merely a means to a greater freedom. Nietzsche explains that he understands *Geist* as, among other things, 'the great self-mastery'; but he goes on to conclude -- and this is the crux

One must have need of spirit in order to attain spirit; one loses it when one no longer needs it (9/4).

The will's 'power of mastery' becomes such that it is now safe to 'give back to the drives their freedom', in the confidence that they will now 'go where our best inclines'. By the end of this second phase, in which 'the entire affective system is stimulated and intensified', one is able to act with total spontaneity -- strangely but knowingly 'unable not to react' -- moved now by the mysterious power of Dionysus (9/10).
One can tap the rich energies of the 'negative' drives only when one has the courage to relax the harsh discipline to which they have long been subjected, and allow their massive energies to flow again through the 'great economy' of the psyche. This is a dangerous undertaking which conduces to a kind of freedom which only the greater human beings are capable of:

One would have to look for the highest type of free human being there where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome: five steps away from tyranny, right at the threshold of the danger of servitude. This is psychologically true, if one understands the 'tyrants' here as terrible and relentless instincts, which demand a maximum of authority and discipline to counter them... (TI 9/38)

A paradigm of this kind of human being is presented a few aphorisms later, in the person of Goethe, of whom Nietzsche says, 'he disciplined himself into a totality, he created himself' (9/49). Goethe's greatness lies in his ability to 'dare to grant himself the full range and richness of naturalness'.

It is difficult, ultimately, to express the organization of this kind of great soul in political terms. In the initial stages a monarch of reason is established, who severely disciplines the unruly elements in the psyche. In a soul disposed to creative activity, it might be that a particular combination of drives (one's 'task') will take over for a period and tyrannize the rest of the soul. The ideal state would then seem to be one in which an aristocracy of 'regents' takes over, who would then return as much of the power as possible to the most energetic drives, affects, and passions, in the expectation that all parties would spontaneously organize themselves to the optimal benefit of the polis of the psyche as a whole.30 The 'will' that would then
hold gentle sway over the monstrously powerful drives no longer emanates from the ego, but is rather ‘will to power’ -- a configuration of the interpretive energies which Nietzsche understands to constitute life in the widest possible sense.

NOTES

1. The Odysseus and Oedipus imagery is Nietzsche’s own, from Beyond Good and Evil 230 (hereafter BEG followed by the aphorism number). The Socrates quotations are from Republic 488a, Gorgias 493d, and Rep. 588b.

2. Beneath this level of discourse is a realm that is only minimally metaphorical, and in which unities are dissolved altogether. Here Nietzsche talks in terms of fields of forces, interplays of interpretive perspectives, scintillating differentials and quanta of will to power. All these themes are discussed in detail in my forthcoming study Moving Images: Reaches of Nietzsche’s Psychology, University of Chicago Press.

3. The other major metaphorical field at this level is that of the theatre: human action as acting, playing of roles, life as drama. For a discussion of some aspects of this field, see Graham Parkes, ‘Facing the Masks: Persona and Self in Nietzsche, Rilke and Mishima’, MOSAIC: a Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature, 20/3 (1987), and ‘A Cast of Many: Nietzsche and Depth-Pluralism’, Man and World, 22 (1989).

4. In recent studies in philosophy of mind and philosophical psychology the question of the multiplicity of the self tends to be raised only to be dropped without adequate examination. In a discussion of the plausibility of considering various parts of the mind as independent agents, an eminent contemporary philosopher has said that ‘there does not seem to be anything that demands a metaphor’ (Donald Davidson, ‘Paradoxes of Irrationality’, in Richard Wolheim and James Hopkins, eds., Philosophical Essays on Freud, Cambridge, 1982, p.304. At an earlier point in his discussion, Davidson broaches the issue of a personal multiplicity:

In attempting to explain such phenomena (as wishful thinking, acting contrary to one’s own best judgement, self-deception, etc.) Freudians have made the following claims:

First, the mind contains a number of semi-independent structures...characterized by mental attributes like thoughts, desires, and memories.
Second, parts of the mind are in important
respects like people...in having beliefs, wants and other psychological traits...(p.290).

However, Davidson does not appear to find this idea philosophically interesting or helpful, since he declines to pursue it further.

Richard Rorty elaborates the idea more radically:

Freud populated inner space...with analogues of persons -- internally coherent clusters of belief and desire... To take Freud’s suggestion seriously is to wish to become acquainted with these unfamiliar persons...[and] initiates a task that can plausibly be described as a moral obligation... By turning the Platonic parts of the soul into conversational partners for one another, Freud...let us see alternative narratives and vocabularies as instruments for change, rather than as candidates for a correct depiction of how thing are in themselves. ('Freud and Moral Reflection', in Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan, eds., Pragmatism’s Freud, Baltimore, 1986, pp.5-9).

Finally, Alexander Nehamas brings the most illustrious precursors of the notion together, if only briefly:

[Nietzsche’s] shocking and obscure breakdown of what we have assumed to be the essential unity of the human individual may be...one of [his] great contributions to our understanding of the self as well as to our own self-understanding... The political metaphor for the self, which, despite Nietzsche’s reputation, is at least more egalitarian than Plato’s, can now set us...in the right direction for understanding the phrase [how one becomes what one is]. (Nietzsche: Life as Literature, Cambridge MA, 1985, p.177.

Chapter Six of this book, entitled ‘How One Becomes What One Is’, contains a good treatment of the issue of the multiple psyche and its organization, though with little elaboration in political terms (pp.182-3).

While it is Freud’s notion of the multiple psyche that has caught the attention of some contemporary philosophers, the idea that we consist of many ‘persons’ has been developed in more radical depth by C.G. Jung (especially in his theory of the ‘feeling-toned complexes’). Some more recent writers in the tradition of depth psychology have developed


6. Apart from the classes of the philosopher-guardians, the auxiliaries, and the ‘money-makers’, the following kinds of practitioners are mentioned in the text: rhapsodes, actors, dancers, teachers, barbers, relish-makers, carpenters, potters, smiths, dyers, sailors, farmers, showmakers, housebuilders, harpists, equestrians, judges, doctors, chefs, grammarians, wet-nurses, shepherds, cowherds, swineherds, and weavers. It is an undertaking to which we rarely rise, to imagine our selves as keenly and precisely as to discern such a variety of types working away within.


8. From ‘Autobiographisches aus den Jahren 1856 bis 1869’ in Karl Schlechta, ed., *Friedrich Nietzsche. Werke in Drei Banden*, Munich, 1956, vol.III, p.114. A decade later Nietzsche was to emphasize the historical dimension to his phenomenon:

> Historical knowledge streams in unceasingly from inexhaustible sources...memory opens all its gates and yet is still not open wide enough, nature strives to its utmost to receive these foreign guests, to arrange and honour them, but they are themselves in conflict... (Untimely Meditations, ‘On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life’, sec.4).

The archaic dimension to the issue of psycho-political power is an important one for Nietzsche — though too vast to be treated here.


10. *Daybreak* 109. Freud follows Nietzsche in adopting the term *Trieb* to refer to the basic forces in the psyche. But in addition to the drives for food, drink, and sex, Nietzsche mentions in this text alone the drives to excel and to know, as well as drives for revenge, envy, hope, anger, pity, and quiet, shame, tenderness, humor, annoyance, combativeenss, reflection, benevolence, pity,
praise and blame, curiosity, and vanity.

11. There is an echo here of a psychological situation described by Socrates in the Phaedo, although the solution proposed to the problem there is, naturally, different. In his discussion of the strange phenomenon of a self-restraint that comes from 'self-indulgence' rather than from wisdom, Socrates notes that in such a situation people fear that they may be deprived of certain pleasures which they desire, and so they refrain from some because they are under the sway of others...they conquer pleasures because they are conquered by other pleasures (68e-69a).

Compare this proposition of Spinoza's (which may well have influenced Nietzsche):

An emotion can only be controlled or destroyed by another emotion contrary thereto, and with more power for controlling emotion. (Ethics, Part IV, Prop. VII).

12. See, for example, The Will to Power (hereafter WP), secs.259 and 481.

13. BGE 19. This talk of intrapsychical commanding and obeying echoes Socrates' asking -- at a crucial juncture in his argument for the multiplicity of the psyche -- of people who are thirsty but are unwilling to drink: Isn't there something in their soul bidding them to drink and something forbidding them to do so, something different that masters that which bids? (Rep. 439a).

14. WP 492. Socrates extends the political metaphor to the body at Republic 556e in characterizing 'the sickly body' as 'divided by factions within itself'. Richard Rorty (Freud and Moral Reflection, pp.7-8) praises Freud for undermining the Platonic opposition between reason and the passions as different 'species' (human and animal), but Nietzsche has already done this in a variety of different ways.

15. Republic 557c, 558c. Nietzsche's attitude toward democracy is expressed in much of the imagery concerning events in the town called 'The Colourful Cow' -- the name surely an allusion to poikilia in the Republic -- in Thus Spoke Zarathustra.

16. Republic 561e. What pulls Nietzsche and Socrates apart on this issue is, as usual, the ancient tension between the one and the many. Whereas in the Republic things should be so arranged that 'each man, practising his own, which is one, will become not many but one' (423d), for Nietzsche one can 'become what one is' precisely through acknowledging and engaging one's multiplicity. 'Love of one is a barbarism' reads one of his briefer aphorisms,
'for it is practised at the expense of all others' (BGE, 67). And one would find a person’s greatness’, if one were a philosopher, ‘precisely in his embracing comprehensiveness and multiplicity’ (BGE, 212).

17. In another late fragment Nietzsche points out (surely with Wagner in mind) how close the ‘modern artist’ is to the hysterical:
   he is no longer a person, at most a rendezvous of persons, among whom now this one and now that one comes to the fore with shameless confidence (WF, 813).

18. See the aphorism in Human, All Too Human entitled ‘Genius of Tyranny’, which reads:
   When there is alive in the soul an invincible desire for tyrannical self-assertion...even a minor talent will gradually become an almost irresistible force of nature (HA I, 530).
   See also HA I, 137 and II/2, 230.

19. Human, All Too Human II, Preface 4 (this Preface added in 1886). Nietzsche chose to reproduce this passage at the very end of his writing career, in Nietzsche contra Wagner.

20. The Church combats passion with excision in every sense: its practice, its ‘cure’ is castration.
   It never asks: ‘How does one spiritualize, beautify, divinize a desire?’ — it has at all times laid the emphasis of its discipline on extirpation... (TI, 5/1)

21. Republic 589b. The ‘tame heads’ are presumably what Socrates has been calling the ‘necessary’ desires (558d-559d), and these are to be nourished; the treatment of the savage heads (‘unnecessary’ desires) is not overly harsh: their growth is simply to be discouraged.

22. The first time the dark horse persuades the others to approach the loved one, the sight dazzles the driver ‘as if by lightning’ and awakens the memory of absolute beauty — in the face of which he falls back in fear and awe, thereby jerking the reins back with such violence as to bring the horses to their knees. The second time, the driver is taken unawares by the surge of power with which the dark horse pulls when inspired by the vision of the beautiful: the sudden acceleration makes him ‘fall back like a racer from the starting rope’. Since the dark horse has taken the bit between his teeth and is straining forward, the sudden restraint has effects that are cruel and bloody. It is this strangely instinctual ‘reflex’ reaction — rather than deliberation or reflection — on the part of reason guiding the lower powers that is the force behind self-restraint in this case.

23. WP 384. This note exemplifies Nietzsche’s penchant for speaking phylogenetically at the same time as of the individual. In the race, or culture, the kind of tyranny
he is talking about has been best perfected by followers of the ascetic ideal.

24. All [the basic drives] have at some time practised philosophy...every drive strives for domination: and as such it tries to philosophize (BE 6).

25. The Gay Science 333, BE 36, WP 387. This idea illuminates Zarathustra’s characterization of the body as ‘a great reason, a plurality with one sense’ (Zarathustra I, ‘On the Despisers of the Body’). Compare also: ‘The will to overcome an affect is ultimately just the will of another or several other affects’ (BE 117).

26. WP 933. It is interesting that in a note from the following year (1888, WP 963) Nietzsche speaks of the ‘enlightened despotism’ exercised by every ‘great passion’, which is able to ‘take the intellect into its service’.

27. Eine Art leitendes Comité, wo die verschiedenen Hauptbegierden ihre Stimme und Mache geltend machen (WP 524).
   In translating this passage ‘a kind of directing committee on which the various chief desires make their votes and power felt’ (my emphasis), Kaufmann and Hollingdale make it sound as if the various dominant desires are different from the committee, whereas the point is surely that the desires themselves constitute it. Nietzsche’s use of Instanz anticipates a similar usage of the term by Freud (in the Standard Edition translated as ‘agency’).

28. Twilight of the Idols 2/10 (Nietzsche’s ellipsis). One is reminded of the refrain in Thus Spoke Zarathustra: ‘The world is deep, and deeper than the day has thought’.

29. Later in the book he speaks of the value of the ‘enemy within’: ‘One is fruitful only at the cost of being rich in contradictions’ (TI 5/3).

30. The political analogy that most readily comes to find here is from ancient Chinese political thought. For Confucius, the power (de) of the sage-ruler is such that all he has to do is simply ascend to the throne, and the populace will spontaneously respond to the ‘emanations’ of his power by doing what is best for the society as a whole. This idea was developed by the Taoists into a more ‘anarchic’ ideal in which the ruler rules by virtue of wu-wei, by ‘inaction’, or spontaneous activity that does not interfere with the natural flow of things. For a superb account of the relevant strains in classical Chinese philosophy, see A.C. Graham, Disputers of the Tao (La Salle IL, 1989), especially section III. Students of Nietzsche will find fascinating an earlier book by the same author dealing primarily with Western philosophy and literature: Reason and Spontaneity, London, 1985, which offers especially interesting readings of the Marquis de Sade, Andre Breton, and Georges Bataille.