

ARTIGOS ORIGINAIS

The psychosomatics attributes in Plato's *Timaeus* and *Charmides*: disease and health of man¹

Os atributos psicossomáticos do
Timeu e do *Cármides* de Platão: doença e saúde do homem

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes in Plato the integration/*συναμφότερον* between the human soul and body in *Charmides* and *Timaeus* exploring the ideas of health/*ὑγίεια* and disease/*νόσος* and how they originate in man. The thesis is that in Plato's thought there is a strong presence of an integrated view of man, the relationship between the constitutive instances (soul and body) being psychosomatic, since both suffer (*πάσχω*) influence from each other. The nuances of the soul-body relationship are also considered with regard to the psychophysical aspects of this compound. As a consequence, it goes beyond the dualistic interpretation erroneously propagated by philosophy manuals, which insist that in Plato the soul must despise the body. In other words, what "seems" in Plato's texts to be a reference to a strong tension between soul and body is in fact a warning by the philosopher of the need for a balanced integration between both.

Keywords: Plato. *Timaeus*. Galen. Soul/Body. Disease/Health.

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RESUMO

O artigo analisa em Platão a integração/συναμφότερον entre a alma e o corpo humanos nos diálogos *Cármides* e *Timeu* a partir das noções de saúde/ὑγίεια e doença/νόσος e de como se originam no homem. A tese é de que no pensamento de Platão há a forte presença de uma visão integrada do homem, sendo psicossomática a relação entre as instâncias constitutivas (alma e corpo), pois ambas sofrem (πάσχω) influência uma da outra. São consideradas também as nuances da relação alma/corpo no tocante aos aspectos psicofísicos da composição. Como consequência, essa defesa vai além da leitura dualista propagada erroneamente pelos manuais de filosofia, que insistem em afirmar que em Platão o corpo deve ser desprezado pela alma. Ou seja, o que “parece” nos textos de Platão ser um discurso que remete uma forte tensão entre alma/corpo é um alerta feito pelo filósofo de como é necessária a equilibrada integração entre ambos.

Palavras-chave: Platão. *Timeu*. Galeno. Alma/Corpo. Doença/Saúde.

Introduction

To base their treatises on ancient medicine, thinkers have relied on the views of the soul-body relationship found in Plato's dialogues. These arguments were essential for the development of ancient medicine, both in the field of physiology and the methods for obtaining a cure.

According to Bazou, Medicine and Philosophy in antiquity were intimately intertwined and borrowed concepts from each other, as they addressed the same issues relating to the human body and soul². Among ancient physicians we highlight Galen, who is considered the most important physician in the ancient times after Hippocrates. Galen's treatises *That the Capacities of the Soul Follow the Mixtures of the Body*, or the *soul's dependence on the body*, and *The opinions of Hippocrates and Plato*, according to the author himself, are responses to Plato. In the first text he mentions passages of the *Timaeus* (43a; 43b; 44a-b; 86e-87a; 86a; 86d-86e) to substantiate/reinforce his thesis that soul and body mutually depend on each other, to the point that the benefits produced to the body by pedagogical and dietary practices also result in the good of the soul³. Galen develops, based on platonic texts, a theory that regards the union of soul and body, which goes beyond the dualistic view that tradition has mistakenly attributed to Plato.

From Galen's interpretation⁴ of Plato's *Timaeus*, we realised that the thesis of an integrated view of the soul-body relationship in Platonic philosophy is defensible. This integration/

² In 1997 the International Association for Greek Philosophy, which annually promotes congresses in Greece that bring together researchers of Greek Philosophy from all over the world, dedicated a congress to the subject of the relationship between Philosophy and Medicine. In 1998, a two-volume collection of texts from the event was published. In this collection Boudoris says: "Ces traités présentent un intérêt particulier non seulement du point de vue technique (médical), ou de l'histoire de la médecine (afin d'examiner le niveau des connaissances médicales des grecs anciens ou d'identifier les sources de nos connaissances et trouver des affinités) mais aussi du point de vue littéraire et philosophique. Médecine et philosophie étaient entrelées étroitement à l'antiquité et s'alimentaient réciproquement; elles traitaient les mêmes problèmes, comme le rapport entre l'âme et le corps et prêtaient du vocabulaire l'une à l'autre. En plus, les textes médicaux de l'ère impériale, et plus particulièrement ceux de la période de la Seconde Sophistique, présentent aussi un intérêt spécial pour la rhétorique puisque toutes les deux, rhétorique et médecine (liée toujours aux théories philosophiques), florissaient en parallèle" (BAZOU, 2012, p. 1).

³ *The soul's dependence on the body* 815s.

⁴ *Timaeus* 43a; 43b; 44a-b; 86e-87a; 86a; 86d-86e. Galen, in his interpretation of Plato, states that the mixture of the heart is the irascible part of the soul and the mixture of the liver is what Plato called the desiderative part of the soul. Aristotle calls them nutritive and vegetative.

συναμφοτέρον (87e)⁵ is seen by the mutual relationship manifested by the diverse influences that both suffer (πάσχω⁶) from each other, which we chose to call a psychosomatic⁷ relationship. In *Timaeus* 87e, Plato engages in understanding which is the origin of diseases (τὰ νοσήματα), the body or the soul, and how to produce health (ὑγίεια) in man. In *Charmides* 156s, we find a similar discourse; in this dialogue Plato states that the cure must be sought in man as a whole (πᾶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος). Following the logic of these dialogues, healing the body comes from healing the soul and vice versa. These passages show that Plato understood *psykhé* and *sôma* as intrinsically linked, like parts of a whole, which is man.

If in both dialogues, namely *Charmides* 156s and *Timaeus* 87e, Plato suggests that the *psykhé* might be the source of both diseases and health of the body, we can imply that, in the philosopher's understanding, the disorders of a psychic nature generate somatic consequences. This proposition overcomes the repeated interpretation that in Platonic philosophy there is only a dualistic view⁸ which distinguishes these two instances, as they live in constant tension. Instead, *Timaeus* and *Charmides* rely on a monistic discourse⁹, which expresses the understanding that the union of the two compose what the human being is¹⁰.

This view, i.e. that both the body and the soul may be the origin of the diseases and/or the means for the cure, demonstrates that in Plato *sôma* cannot, by itself, be the origin of evil, since without the *psykhé* it does or suffers nothing. On the other hand, neither the soul could be the origin of evil, considering that it excels the body, moreover, there is in it something given to us for protection (*Timaeus* 90a). Hence, the origin of evil is neither found in the body nor in the soul alone, but in the kind of relationship that they establish. Having said that, when wholesome and balanced, man will know how to correctly harmonize the two. He will learn to defend himself from uncontrolled excesses, thereby preserving his health (*Timaeus* 87e-88c). Body and soul have an influence on each other.

Among the interpretations of Plato's text, we usually find some commentators say that the philosopher suggests that the body should be disregarded by man and that he must dedicate to his soul. Our research, while presenting an integrated view of the soul-body relationship, also overcomes the interpretation that tends to blame the body for all evil that afflicts the soul¹¹. Even in texts such as *Republic* and *Phaedo*, where the distinction of the soul

⁵ The word meaning "together", "compound" (PLACES, 2003, p. 479) and is correlated with ὅλον, whole.

⁶ According to Chantraïne, πάσχω means "to receive an impression or a sensation, to undergo treatment (good or bad), to endure, to be punished". It can also indicate the fact of being subject to certain changes, of being sick, of suffering from a certain state of mind. From the aorist παθεῖν derives πάθος, which designates what happens to someone or something, suffering experience, unhappiness, emotion of the soul, incident, accident in the sense encompassed by the term, properties, and even quality of things.

⁷ Despite being a contemporary term dating from the 18th century, commentators and scholars of ancient medicine in its relationship with philosophy have used this term, applying it to the theory that the soul-body relationship is imbued with intrinsic reciprocity. We will make use of this term, bearing in mind that there is no occurrence of it in Plato's texts.

⁸ In Plato there is a duality, a distinction between two instances, i.e. soul and body, but not a radical dualism, which defends the opposition and divergence between both.

⁹ Interpreters of Plato Gerson (1986), Vegetti (1992), Reale (1994), and Robinson (1998) see the almost predominant presence of the dualistic view in Plato. We understand that the duality in Plato is circumstantial, especially the need for some texts to dedicate arguments that require the distinction of the faculties of the soul, differentiating them from those of the body. However, it is clear that if the soul, when in the compound, develops some faculty, it does so through the body, or jointly with it, just as without the soul the body is not even *sôma*.

¹⁰ Man is understood in Plato as the union of soul-body. When separated it refers to the immortal human soul and the dead body – cadaver – νεκρός (*Phaedo* 115e5).

¹¹ Several commentators – Vegetti (1992), Reale (1994), Gerson (1986) – as well as the majority of compendia, undoubtedly inspired by *Phaedo* and the central Books of the *Republic*, insist on the contempt that Plato manifests for the body, seeing it as a source of instability and illusion (SANTOS, 2004, p. 1) This interpretation is old, as it dates back to Augustine who got to know Platonic philosophy from Plotinus' Neoplatonism. More recent philosophers such as Nietzsche also perceive this attribution to Platonic thought of an exacerbation of the value attributed to the soul to the detriment of the body (Beyond Good and Evil, 7), even when

and body instances is stronger, this interpretation is mitigated. The dualistic sense in these dialogues, namely *Phaedo* (66bss)¹² and *Republic* (335a; 436a; 442cd; 487a; 610e), only point to the vicissitudes in human life, caused by the ephemeral passage of the soul in a given body or bodies. The Platonic discourse in said works intends to alert man to moderate desires and rationally integrate his appetites. This discourse does not suggest the radical tension preached by the manuals and propagated by the Neoplatonic/Christian discourse. What “seems” to be an argument that condemns the body, accusing it of being the source of evils for the soul, is a warning that it is by taking care of it that the soul benefits from harmony. Likewise, Plato suggests in the *Republic* (376de) that gymnastics¹³ is beneficial to the body just like music is for the soul.

In this manner, our proposal is to demonstrate, based on the analysis of *Timaeus* and *Charmides*, that the integrated view of man as the union of the soul and body instances, which form the “one”, is totally defensible. The whole discourse of an ethical and physiological nature is a warning from Plato for man to dedicate himself to caring for the body and the soul, together.

The integration/συναμφότερον between soul and body in the human being

If in some dialogue of Plato we were to look for the *elenkhós*, i.e. “What is the human being?” we would get no other answer than “it is the composition between soul and body”. However, not so constant and clear is the explanation about the kind of relationship that these instances establish, as a compound.

Some dialogues, such as the *Republic* and *Phaedo*, were so emphatic in propagating the care for the soul as the centre of human rationality, a judicial and moral instance and even its immortal part, that, for some interpreters, it was identified with the very “self” of the human being. This approach contrasts the idea in Homeric poetry: the identification of the “self” of man with the body¹⁴. Another approach that can be identified in these texts is a “certain” responsibility that is given to the body for the evils that humans suffer¹⁵.

In *Charmides* and *Timaeus* Plato insists on a unity of the *sôma/psykhé* compound, which, together, form a whole – “the [living] human being”. The view in these texts tend, especially with regard to a reflection on the origin of diseases (τὰ νοσήματα), not to blame only the body for this event, but also the soul.

The *Charmides* (156a-e) focuses on stating that from the soul comes all evil and good of the body and man in general. Plato suggests in this dialogue that in the same way that it is impossible to heal (θεραπεύω) the eyes without the head, or to heal the head without the body,

he turns to Christianity, indirectly attacking Platonism, for he considers it to be non-original, because, according to him, it is Platonism for the people. Nonetheless, it is in philosophy manuals that this interpretation is more explicit.

¹² In *Phaedo* we see a discourse that blames the body for the vicissitudes that the soul suffers when incarnated. In *Charmides* the perspective changes, the soul also being responsible for these evils. The *Timaeus* is more sophisticated in showing the mutual possibility of these instances being the source of illness for each other.

¹³ The gymnast is seen by Plato as someone who submits himself to bodily deprivation with a view to competition. Thus must the philosopher mirror himself in this fashion, also submitting himself to deprivation, since his cause is more noble. Plato is an ardent believer that whoever dedicates himself to an intellectual discipline must also be a gymnast. The formation of the Greek man (*paidéia*) guaranteed an integral education, encompassing the corporeal and psychological dimensions. It is not surprising that the main sanctuaries dedicated to the Greek gods were composed of *temples* for celebrations and votive offerings, *amphitheaters* for theater festivals, and *stadiums* for Olympic competitions. Examples of these are the *Parthenon* in Athens and the *Temple of Apollo* in Delphi.

¹⁴ See (SANTOS, 1998, p. 116).

¹⁵ See *Republic* 329a-d and *Phaedo* 66bs.

it is also not possible to heal the body without taking care of the soul. He concludes that it is not enough to give a remedy (φάρμακον), for instance, to heal the limb of an ill body; prior to it, an incantation (ἐπωδός) must be spoken by the physician to persuade the sick person's soul, these spells being the "beautiful arguments" (οἱ καλοὶ λόγοι), that generate in man the temperance and consequently leads to health (ὑγίεια) of the soul, this limb, and the whole body. In this dialogue, Plato develops an entire discourse concerning what temperance (σωφροσύνη) is – moderation and the search for the right measure of desires and passions. A remedy will only be effective if accompanied by a magical formula.

Plato says the physicians of his time err when they attempt to be healers of a single part, especially if it is not understood that temperance is quite correlated with health. This suggests that the anthropological view of the philosopher in this dialogue is of "man as a whole", a soul/body unity, and is inseparable when it comes to seeking a cure for some illness. According to Daigle¹⁶, Galen understood, from the reading of Plato's texts, that soul and body are inseparable until the moment of death, and he brought this view to his thesis.

More than just speaking of parts of the body, members, Plato discourses about parts of *sōma* and *psykhé*. The understanding of a totally integrated unity, i.e. soul and body, appears in the *Charmides* when the philosopher emphatically states the need for the whole (ὅλος) man to be treated and not just the body without the soul (οὐδὲ σῶμα ἄνευ ψυχῆς).

In the *Timaeus* we are presented with the disease-health and soul-body relation through a very sophisticated discourse of what we found in the texts we just mentioned above, including the *Charmides*. If, in the previous dialogues, Plato focuses on blaming one of the instances of the human being for the diseases, in the *Timaeus* he considers that there are diseases of both corporeal and psychic nature, and that one can influence the other. The conclusion, which we will demonstrate later, is that such diseases arise from the way in which the soul and body relate to each other.

'Psychosomatic' diseases in Plato?

In the *Timaeus*, the soul-body relationship argued by Plato takes on new connotations, not presented yet in other dialogues. It seems that in this text the philosopher redeems the two instances from any "sole" responsibility for the vicissitudes suffered by human beings, having a better understanding of the unity composed by both.

The word that appears only once in the dialogue and which leads us to this interpretation is "συναμφότερον", translated as "both", "together", "compound". Places associates it with ὅλος (whole), which appears in the passage of the *Charmides* analysed above. In ancient Greek the term is formed from the connexion of the prefix συν – which as an adverb can be translated by "altogether", "at the same time", "together"; and as a preposition it means "with", "at the same time as", with the term -αμφότερον – which means "one and the other", "both", "both at the same time". As we can see, the expression is totally emphatic as the parts that form them have practically the same semantics.

¹⁶ "Galen honestly admits that the soul is a mystery to him because it seems to depend on material states, and he cannot reconcile any theory of the soul's immortality with that relationship. He understands that the rational soul is man's reason and what Plato called the intelligence of the cosmos, something that separates man from all other living things. He also realizes that this doctrine guarantees that the soul and the body are inseparable until death, and that the soul, by classical definition, somehow coexisted with material substrate" (p. 31).

The word appears in the passage “ταῦτόν δὴ διανοητέον καὶ περὶ τοῦ συναμφοτέρου, ζῶον ὃ καλοῦμεν” in the genitive plural, when referring to the soul-body pair, called the “living being”. The character Timaeus was talking about how difficult it is for a man who has one leg disproportionate to the other to walk, besides being ugly, and often falling, due to his unsteady walking. The same happens with the “pair” of soul-body, which we call the “living being”. If the soul or the body is in any way disproportionate in the compound, it generates disease in man. We will now demonstrate how Plato manages to introduce this integrated view.

Prior to *Timaeus* 82a, Plato presented bodily diseases and how they originate from the imbalance between the constitutive elements of the body, i.e. earth, fire, water and air. Diseases arise either because of excess/lack of one or the other element, or whenever they change places, or even when some one takes for himself what suits him not. The philosopher relates all these irregularities as being against nature. From this disorder of proportion, lack, mixture, and displacement, the most diverse and varied diseases arise (e.g. fever and inflammations, tetanus, *ophistónos* and symptoms such as secretions, diarrhoea, and dysentery, etc.) that affect the constituents of the body (lung, marrow, sinews, blood, bile, flesh, bones, etc.).

Later on, from section 86b onwards he presents the diseases that affect the soul. According to the *Timaeus*, the disease of the soul is dementia (ἄνοια), which has two types: madness (μανία) and ignorance (ἄμαθία). The source of these diseases is the excess of pleasures and pains, for when affected by them, man stops hearing and seeing anything, which makes him incapable of minimally participating in reasoning. As the source of disease in the body is either excess or lack concerning the *stoikheía*, in like manner the soul's excess/lack of sensations (*aísthesis*) attracts dementia. However, insofar as Plato establishes the difference between somatic and psychic illnesses, he does not discard the way in which one kind affects the other, since the person who becomes ill is the compound, that is, the living being. At the same time, the disharmony of one of the instances leads to the imbalance of the other, one being the reason why the other suffers from imbalance¹⁷. It is quite clear in the *Timaeus* that soul and body do not fall ill alone, but fall ill together, as they are part of an inseparable whole and that, at the same time, both, together, are what we refer to as the “living being” (ζῶον ὃ καλοῦμεν).

Still following the reasoning that “together, both” can make each other suffer from sickness, Plato identifies that the pursuit of pleasures and pains in an immoderate way cannot simply be taken as having a psychological cause, some sort of dependence that is caused by a vice; he suggests the participation of the body element in this process, when he locates the “seed” of this excess in the marrow. He follows his argument by relating sexual disorder to the same reason as bodily illnesses, namely, the imbalance of the *stoikheía*, which generates a lack of density in the bones, resulting in the soul's disease. Finally, Plato criticizes the maxim that the immoderate surrender to pleasures is a wilfully bad act; he considers that the inability to master pleasures is due to a perverse disposition of the body and a poor diet.

Regarding the latter argument, it is important to bring to our discussion the physician Galen, who developed a treatment based on a dietary and pedagogical proposal, having based his thesis on Plato's texts, especially the *Timaeus*. According to the Greek physician, certain foods can influence mood and the human character (*krasis*). Indeed, he believed that the soul depends on the body, on its health, and all this is based on the statement that “the faculties of the soul depend on the mixtures of the body” and that we have direct control of these mixtures.

¹⁷ We developed a research that showed, in the field of epistemology, arguments that proved the soul-body integration based on the activities of sense-perception and reasoning, as a philosophical activity. We base this on two main arguments: 1. The body without the soul is nothing more, the soul is the animating instance of the body; 2. The soul performs activities from the bodily senses.

According to Daigle (2009, p. 189) Galen followed Plato's opinion that there is a way to teach man to follow a good life, thus a virtuous life was possible for all men. If in the *Timaeus* Plato concludes that some human behaviours have a physiological explanation, Galen took this into his thesis and related ethics to pedagogical and dietary therapy.

As we can see, the argument used at first to separately analyse both the diseases of each instance, i.e. body/soul, as well as their emergence, in the end affirms an integrated unity, wherefore it is difficult to speak of a disease in the soul without considering that it is one with the body, and vice versa. The question about "where" diseases originate from was replaced by "how" they originate and the answer is: from the imbalance between the parts that constitute the whole, which is the living being. That is to say, if the living being is not, as a soul-body compound, a *συναμφότερον* – a whole, composed of two, which are at the same time, together – the disease will affect him. Just as having two unequal legs is asymmetrical and harmful to the human being, which is why he is limp and several falls and spasms can happen, if one of the two (soul and/or body) is more powerful than the other, the living being falls ill.

Had Plato the insight, he would have called the compound psychosomatic instead of *συναμφότερον*. We say this because the understanding he had regarding how soul and body affect each other, concerning the emergence of diseases, is exactly what modern medicine calls psychosomatic diseases (see note 7). This expression, as we said before, is not used by Plato at any time, though it represents well what he wants to express in the *Timaeus*. Let us understand this 'psychosomatic' relationship in the living being as a reciprocity of exchange, of communication, to the point that there is the possibility of an affection (in this specific case, disease) suffered by one instance (whether the soul or body) affecting the other, or even some diseases that have a psychic nature, and thereby somatise. And if psychosomatics is the origin of diseases, Plato will also argue that the search for a cure and the prevention of diseases must also take this reciprocal relationship into account.

Health and harmony: gymnastics, music, and philosophy

When the *Timaeus* states how diseases arise, what follows (87e-88a) is what can be done to avoid them. If they arise from the imbalance between soul and body, it is evident that restoring this balance will provide the cure. The only *phármakon* pointed for the disease – be it psychic, which somatises, or somatic, which influence the living being psychologically – is: not to exercise the soul without the body, nor the body without the soul, so that they maintain balance and health (88c). But what would "exercise the body without soul" mean, and vice versa? Plato, before suggesting the remedy, had already given an example of what this imbalance is and what it means to exercise one instance and not both.

It is following the analogy of the disproportionate legs of a body that Plato simulates what it would be like if one of these members (soul or body) were stronger than the other. In section 88a he states that if the soul is very ardent, more powerful than the body, it agitates the whole from within, filling it with disease. He even reports that there are certain matters and investigations that require a great psychological effort; added to this are those who put their soul into teaching and the controversy of discourses, public or private, which inflames the soul from quarrels and the desire to win. The conclusion of the argument is that all this psychological effort has a somatic consequence, which is to fill the body with secretions. And when the opposite happens, according to Plato, when the body is stronger than the soul, it develops a small and weak mental activity, since by satisfying the appetite for food too much, the appetite for thought can be suffocated by the body, which is more powerful and dominant, making the

soul deaf and unable to hear itself, in its want to know. This generates in the soul slowness in learning, forgetfulness, that is, ignorance.

From what we have seen, in the *Timaeus* Plato lists not a degree of priority in relation to care, whether for the soul or the body. The exercise must be of the whole man, of both instances, to ensure balance. It seems to us that, at this moment of the dialogue, we have a reflection and conclusion similar to what we see in *Philebus*, a dialogue in which Plato focuses on the theme of pleasure from the question "Between a life of pleasures and a life of wisdom, who has the happiest life?". The conclusion is that living only through pleasure does not satisfy man, just as living only on thought is boring, and it is not possible to live without either: pleasure or knowledge (21d). Interestingly, the dialogue insists on presenting a hierarchy of pleasures, listing which ones relate to the soul and to the body. If in other texts by Plato pleasure was more akin to the body (*Republic* and *Phaedo*), in *Philebus* this sensation (*aísthesis*) is lived by the whole man, but in a balanced way.

We brought this reflection on *Philebus* to show that the search for harmony, balance, is a constant matter in Socratic-Platonic thought. Plato, more than creating dichotomies, intends to demonstrate that instances of different natures can and should communicate, in search of harmony. The *Timaeus* insists on this advice, whether in the search for balance between the parts of the body, between the parts of the soul, but above all between the parts of the living being – SOUL and BODY. The theme of harmony appears in *Timaeus* from the cosmological argument about the origin of the world, woven by the Demiurge. It is with the balance of the macrocosm (World) as a paradigm that the Demiurge weaves the microcosm (living being), with the same methods and proportions.

In *Timaeus* 28b-30a, Plato explains the cause of the descent of the souls into bodies, which is due to the argument of *necessity* (*ananké*) and *order* (*arkhía*). The philosopher makes it clear that the Demiurge, when planning the creation of the world by taking as a model the paradigm of that which always is, realised that, because he was a copy of the immutable, he was devoid of rest, that he was good and everything he would create also had to be good, he could not allow his work to have a disordered (*anarkhía*) motion (*kínesis*)¹⁸. Wherefore, he would have to provide it with thought, to be able for it to govern itself; but since thought does not generate itself in something outside the soul, he had to introduce thought into the soul and then the soul into the body. However, as what is governed cannot come into being before that which governs, he first generated the soul, and then created the body of the world; thus the god provided the universe. Later on, specifically from 41d onwards, *Timaeus* proposes that the Demiurge used the same logic applied in the constitution of the cosmic soul and body to weave the soul and body of humans. Order and balance are attributes of the microcosm-living being, as well as that which served as its paradigm when it was generated, the Macrocosm-Ordered World.

Seeking harmony between soul and body is the same as health. And in the *Timaeus* Plato goes beyond a simple therapy, addressing the prevention of imbalance. It is interesting to note that Plato introduces the theme of *paideía*, directly related to the control of the passions and the consequent prevention of diseases, whether psychic or somatic, or rather, psychosomatic. We say this because they are practices such as gymnastics for the body and music for the soul that Plato proposes as a remedy that can free man from these diseases. It is known that the formation of the Greek youth (*paideía*) was based on two essential pillars: poetry (*musykhé*) – epic, lyrical, or tragic-comic – and gymnastics. With the Socratic-Platonic philosophy, the poetry

¹⁸ In this passage, Plato uses the term ἀταξία and τάξις, as well as ἀναρχία and αρχία to signify the passage from disorder to order with the origin of *kósmos*. They mean, respectively: lack of tune and tune, disorder and order.

presented by the poets of that time was seen as suspicious, especially with regard to the teaching of virtue (*areté*), the path to self-knowledge. There was no renunciation of poetry by Plato in his reformulation of the *paideia* proposal, because we see the character Socrates in the texts making myths, but without citing heroes imbued with *hybris*, as role models to be followed, which was his punctual criticism of poets Homer and Hesiod. The great innovation proposed in the education model for the Greek youth, suggested by Socratic-Platonic philosophy, is the inclusion of philosophy and music, as proposals for education for the soul, and gymnastics, as education for the body¹⁹.

In the *Gorgias* dialogue, Plato points out some different activities for the exercise of the body – medicine and gymnastics – and the art that is related to the soul, politics (464b), seeming to establish a discontinuity between them which suggests that the care of the body is not related to the care of the soul and vice versa. In *Charmides* 156e-157a he points out that the healing of the body is obtained not only with a remedy, but an incantation must be performed for the soul. In *Phaedo* Plato presents arguments that show the need to take care of the soul and how far it should be as much as possible from the body when it starts to reason. In the *Republic* Plato had already proposed gymnastics for the body and music for the soul. The *Timaeus* gathers all these understandings and adds Philosophy to the process²⁰. Following the psychosomatic logic of the compound, it is a fact that if the human being dedicates himself to gymnastics, even though it is an activity classified as a body activity, the soul will have good results. Just as philosophy for the soul can help man to restrain his desires and passions. Nevertheless, the music which is the middle ground between both, as suggested by Pelosi (2010, p. 18) is the activity that manages to involve soul and body at the same time. It seems to us at first that when Plato suggests music and philosophy for the soul and gymnastics for the body, he is relating them to the three *génos* of the soul, considering the effects that each has in the compound.

Psychophysiological aspects of the soul-body relationship in the *Timaeus*

This psychosomatic relationship can also be seen in the discourse of the character *Timaeus*, when he attributes parts of the soul to specific places and organs of the body. If in the *Republic* Plato had divided the soul into three parts, in the *Timaeus* he locates each of them in the body. In the *Timaeus* Plato presents the physiological basis of the relationship among the three types of soul, which seems to suggest that it is possible to sustain the existence of a physiology of the soul in the body (70a-d; 71a-e).

Prior to this distinction of the *génos* of the soul, in *Timaeus* 45ab we also find a narrative that the Demiurge placed in the body all the instruments of the soul's providence. Labruno (1992, p. 34) claims that it is the soul that determines the "geography of the body". From this perspective, we can consider that man is understood from a psychophysiological perspective²¹, that takes into account his relations and his exchanges with his physical environment, in which he acts and suffers the consequences of the actions that he himself and the environment

¹⁹ See *Republic* 376de; *Timaeus* 88c.

²⁰ Because the search for health is so clear in the *Timaeus* as a pedagogical subject, Galen used this dialogue to base his therapeutic proposal. The objective of this Greek doctor is above all pedagogical. He wants to demonstrate the importance of regimen of life and diet for good moral conduct.

²¹ From this physiological view of the soul-body relationship, Galen proposed the thesis that it is from the temperament or mixture (*krásin*) of the elements of the body that the soul is constituted.

produce²². Indeed, this idea may lead to the understanding that in *Timaeus* the soul is seen as material, just as Aristotle defends. In this regard, Santos (2003, p. 41) states that there is only one occurrence of the word *hylé* in the *Timaeus* (69a6) and that this is used in a metaphorical sense, thus different from the way Aristotle addresses this concept. On the other hand, it could be argued, by those who defend the existence of a doctrine of the soul in Plato, that there is an apparent incongruity of the *Timaeus'* psychophysical view when confronted with the refuted Orphic-Pythagorean soul-harmony argument of *Phaedo* 84c-88b. This argument is easily refuted by Socrates, as he understands that if the soul were conditioned to the constituent elements of the body, as harmony is in relation to the lyre, when the episode of death affects the body, the soul would also be extinguished. The argument concludes that the soul does not suffer death, but rather persists, because it is immortal, while the body perishes.

We believe that only by considering the dramatic context of both dialogues one may authentically analyse what Plato intends to reflect in these different moments, and thus overcome the impasse presented above. We agree with Robinson (2008, p. 99), refuting Taylor (1928), when he argues that in the *Timaeus* we have expressed views of a Pythagorean, interested in Empedoclean biology. It is not by attributing a Pythagorean ideology to the *Timaeus* that the question can be resolved. For, as mentioned a moment ago, the dramatic context of the *Timaeus* differs from the *Phaedo*, as well as the idea of the soul used in the two dialogues is different: while in the first the soul is considered in the soul-body compound, from the perspective of a cosmological macrocosmic, and then microcosmic, genesis, in the latter we have the analysis of the vicissitudes of the soul in its reality *per se*, which after the interval of incarnated life, detaches itself from the body, returning to its natural state; all of this in the context of the imminent death of Socrates. Furthermore, in *Timaeus* 69c, Plato still distinguishes between an immortal soul and a mortal soul, the latter being a vicissitude of its union with the body which, while united to it, is subject to bodily influences, sometimes becoming itself the agent of these influences.

Locating the soul's *génos* in parts of the body aims not to declare a materiality of the soul, but to demonstrate the composition that they build together, as a whole. We agree with Frère when he says that the novelty of the *Timaeus* resides in the fact that Plato presents an original perspective of the soul in it, showing its direct connexion with the body from the physiological point of view. This approach is unprecedented, in other texts Plato considered the soul in its total independence from the body. Here the soul even acquires an attribute that other texts never give to it, namely, of being mortal. This psychophysiological approach is not supposed to be an anatomical-biological treatise, but a way of explaining the interaction between the scopes of the compound, as stated by Cornford (1937, p. 282)²³. The following indications from the *Timaeus* will help us to understand this:

1. Plato considers the irascible part to dwell in the chest, setting the neck as an isthmus and boundary in relation to the immortal part of the soul, and the midriff (70a2-3).
2. The appetitive dimension was identified "between the midriff and the navel as its boundary" (70d).

²² Fedorova (1998) in his article entitled "*Health and disease in Plato's Timaeus*" states that the first part of Plato's theory of diseases derives from Locri's theory of Filistion, which had been inspired by Empedocles' thesis on the four elements. According to the author, the second part on the theory of diseases corresponds, in other lines, to the humoral theory of Hippocrates, contained in his treatise *The Nature of Man*, written probably 50 years before the *Timaeus*.

²³ Johansen (2000, p. 105-107) and Steel (2001, p. 114) also follow Cornford's thought.

3. The different kinds of soul were implanted and fastened in the marrow (73c). Also to the marrow the bonds of life were fastened, and through it the soul was linked to the body (73b).
4. Bones enclosed in a smaller amount of flesh have more soul, while those which are least animated have more flesh (74e).

His examination demonstrates that the irascible and appetitive elements are situated in the region of the body, which comprises the heart and the stomach, respectively. Plato uses the prepositions εἰς to locate the irascible element and μεταξύ, for the appetitive element. The use of the prepositions seems to indicate the region of the body where those kinds of the soul are found: the preposition εἰς means 'into', 'in the direction of', it is used to indicate the direction, to approximate the space in which the irascible element would be located, as well as the proposition μεταξύ, which means 'between'. The three types of soul are described in terms of the anatomical region they occupy, not to be confused with that region.

Moreover, between the neck and the midriff there are other organs besides the heart (e.g. the lungs), and between the midriff and the navel there is much more than the stomach (the liver, the spleen, etc.). Why, then, should we assume that those prepositions that, in addition to not having a locative meaning in those phrases, would be linking the irascible element of the soul and the appetite with the heart and the stomach? In Plato's text there is no tacit reference to this. This connexion seems to derive more from the reading of the *Timaeus* by some interpreters than from Plato's own text²⁴. In fact, Plato makes it clear in 73c that the different types of soul were fastened in the marrow.

Galen (1995, p. 81), who is closer to Plato, also attributed the *génos* of the soul (the rational, the irascible, and the desiderative), to places in the body, with some punctual differences in relation to Plato's thought²⁵. In his thesis, the differences between the parts of the soul ultimately depend on the relationship that each of them has with the parts of the body to which they correspond. Since the rational soul desires truth, knowledge, and understanding; the irascible soul desires freedom, victory, power, and honour; and the desiderative soul desires the pleasures of the body, the table and the wine, such desires are understood as a *capacity* of the soul that is produced and located respectively in the head, heart, and liver, therefore, it shares its material-qualitative character with these organs (i.e. hot/cold and dry/wet). The mortal parts of the soul, the irascible and the desiderative, would be this very mixture.

Galen stated that the soul results from what we eat and the way we live, which "implies" affirming the materiality of the soul. This statement goes against the immateriality of the soul proposed by Plato, located in the brain. In the *Timaeus*, Plato presented a complete theory of the soul and its faculties, hierarchy, and functions: the human soul is the microscopic counterpart of the Soul of the World (the macroscopic counterpart), conceived as an immortal life principle that exists before and after the death of the body. Plato conceived three souls: an immortal, rational soul housed in the head (face and brain), responsible for the faculties of knowledge, the divine principle in us; a mortal soul with low instincts, appetitive or concupiscent (since it seeks carnal pleasures), housed in the abdomen (stomach, liver, spleen and intestine), responsible for vegetative functions, that is, nutrition and generation; and an intermediary mortal soul, irascible

²⁴ Among the scholars who affirmed that the different kinds of soul – irascible and appetitive – are located in corporeal members – heart and stomach – respectively, we identified Stalley (1996, p.365), Reale and Frère (2004, p. 170). The attribution of the location of the types of soul to corporeal members was not restricted to contemporary exegesis: Galen might also have attributed the seat of the appetitive, irascible, and reasoning elements to the liver, heart, and brain, respectively.

²⁵ "The three Platonic souls of man recurred in Galen's doctrine as three types of *pneuma* or spirit". (1963 p. 15).

or choleric, located between the liver and the head, housed in the heart and lungs, responsible for the high instincts of protection of the body.

The rational soul, based in the head, and the mortal or appetitive soul, based in the liver, would send orders to the heart, considered the centre that commands the body, as well as the seat of innate heat and also responsible for its cooling. The vascular system, a veritable irrigation network, would allow the blood to irrigate the body in the manner of the ebb and flow of the sea and in this way the living being would be nourished, warmed, and animated. Blood would come from food, and health was conceived as a double balance: firstly, between the four elements that make up the body and, secondly, between body and soul²⁶.

There is a punctual difference that we can consider in the way in which Plato and Galen treat the study of the soul and the body. For the physician, locating the soul in the body has the intention of treating the *psykhé* and its mental disorders, whereas for the philosopher, the main concern is to inculcate virtue in the soul, as much as possible (DONINI, 2008, p. 185). Adopting the theory of the tripartite soul was a great challenge for Galen, especially with regard to the theory of passions, located in the irrational *géno*. Despite determining a more specific location in relation to the parts of the soul in the body, Galen could not explain through medicine the great question that, in Plato, philosophy also could not, and which for the philosopher only the mythological language and the help of belief in the mysteries helps to explain: whether the soul is immortal and governs bodies while it animates them, or whether it has no subsistence by itself.

Conclusion

With the foregoing, we aimed to make it clear that in the *Timaeus* and the *Charmides* Plato mitigated the view that seemingly can be interpreted in other dialogues, which deals with the soul-body relationship. We defend that the soul-body relationship is psychosomatic, as we understand the living being as a unified and integrated compound.

Our intention was not to make a comparison between Plato and Galen, which a single paper would not suffice, nor to show how he received Platonic thought, but rather to demonstrate that if the view in the *Timaeus* was not of the body-soul relationship as a psychosomatic unity, there would be no reason for the Greek physician to take this text as a reference to develop his therapeutic proposal. Galen saw this integration in Plato's *Timaeus*, and reading this dialogue was so essential for his thesis that in one of his texts (*That the Capacities of the Soul Follow the Mixtures of the Body, or the soul's dependence on the body*) he considered it to be exactly an interpretation of the Platonic text.

Timaeus and *Charmides* speak of cure, balance, and harmony that human beings must achieve. Both for Platonic philosophy and for Galenic medicine, the way to achieve this is

²⁶ Aristotle conceived the soul as having three distinct faculties or functions: a soul present in plants: the *nutritive soul*, proper to animals and vegetables, responsible for vegetative life (nutrition and animal generation); another present in animals: the *sensitive soul*, characteristic of animals, responsible for the life of relationships, sensitivity, motricity, and desires; and finally, a soul present only in man: the *rational soul*, proper to man, responsible for thought or intellectual life and the will. Aristotle elaborates a theory of virtue understood as the disposition to act according to the *just middle* principle. Each virtue is thought of as the middle ground between two extremes. For example, courage stands between temerity and cowardice, the excess or lack of which are considered vices. The application of the just middle principle takes place with the support of prudence or *practical reason*, different from scientific reason, since the latter is knowledge and the former wisdom. It is this reason that allows men to make right choices. But virtue is a way of acting that depends on continuous and constant moral insight. Like Aristotle, Galen maintained that virtue is acquired by being virtuous, in the very action of being virtuous and which has not previously established rules of conduct, as Plato had judged.

through education, taking care of the soul and body, which involves moderating desires and passions, educating and guiding them, without letting themselves be dragged down by their appetites. Therefore, we dare to say, as Plato presented in the *Charmides*, that a physician alone cannot heal a man if he does not have the help of the beautiful arguments that philosophy can offer, just as the philosopher also needs the remedy, whose *tekhné* is part of medicine. Plato not only demonstrated that body and soul, as a compound, are a *συναμφότερον*. With regard to healing and well-being of man, medicine and philosophy must also form a *συναμφότερον*.

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