Education, Epiphanies and Human Flourishing

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Introduction

Human flourishing is closely connected to what a person seeks as the ultimate goal or aim in life. If the ultimate goal is of a certain kind, the person's "flourishing" will take on a particular character; and if the ultimate goal is of another kind, his or her "flourishing" will take on a different character. What a person pursues as their ultimate aim will therefore have a profound impact on the ethical trajectory of their lives. Because of this, Aristotle argues that we ought to carefully consider the *value* of the *telos* we pursue. Having the best *telos* will lead to the best kind of flourishing; whereas having an inferior *telos* will lead to an inferior kind of flourishing. This, Aristotle further argues, is why education is so important—it can encourage people to pursue the best goal for their lives and by extension achieve the best life, which is one of *eudaimonia*.

Aristotle claims that in order to lead people to pursue the best goal, they must be habituated from their youth. People who pursue the best *telos* do so not because they were taught through rational argument that the goal is the best, but because they were expected to act in ways that are consistent with that goal from their earliest youth. Being forced to act in one particular direction creates a desire to act consistently in that direction even after the external compulsion is removed. People, so habituated, develop characters that can be counted on to pursue the best *telos* without exception.

The problem is that most people in Aristotle's time and ours are not given the correct upbringing, and instead of pursuing the best *teloi* pursue inferior ones. Aristotle claims that there is little hope for individuals who were not given the right upbringing[1] because they will have developed characters that consistently pursue inferior *teloi*, and no arguments will work to persuade them otherwise. The question is whether Aristotle is right to believe there is little hope.

As I have argued elsewhere (Jonas 2016a, 2016c, 2017), Plato believes that there is more hope than Aristotle would admit. He believes certain kinds of dialogues can produce a temporary reorientation of individuals' desires such that even if their characters are formed in the wrong direction, their soul's eyes, as it were, can be temporarily opened to such a degree that they can see the inferiority of their current *telos,* and simultaneously see that a better *telos* is possible for them. They can have *epiphanies* regarding the good life and can actively seek to be rehabituated in light of those epiphanies.

An example of such an epiphany[2] is found in the *Republic*, where Glaucon's conception of justice and its relationship to his *telos* is transformed in the space of the dialogue. Epiphanies are

[1] Although recent commentators like Kristjánsson (2014) and Sanderse (2018) have argued that Aristotle provides more hope than first meets the eye.

[2] I use the word "epiphany" here to mean an awakening or a spontaneous realization that occurs in Socrates' interlocutors that is not necessarily entailed by the logical argumentation Socrates employs. Glaucon experiences an epiphany that occurs after Socrates has led him down a long path that is strewn with dubious claims, logical inconsistencies, and far-fetched conclusions.

characterized by a "sudden, discontinuous change, leading to a profound positive, and enduring transformation through the reconfiguration of an individual's most deeply held beliefs about the self and world….[and are] preceded by a period of internal conflict."[3] At the beginning of the dialogue, Glaucon shows himself to be a person philosophically interested in justice but one who is ultimately committed to a lifestyle of luxury and convenience, even if it means forsaking justice. Yet, by the end of the dialogue, Glaucon is transformed into a person who desires justice and moderation and is willing to spend the rest of his life in pursuit of it. What is noteworthy is that at the end of the dialogue he recognizes that justice requires the strict moderation of his desires, and he gladly accepts that he will have to spend his whole life working to moderate them, even though at the beginning of the dialogue he is totally opposed to the notion that he or anybody should have to moderate any except their most vicious desires.

This impressive turn-around in Glaucon's soul is no accident; Socrates brings this transformation about through the dialogue. Interestingly, the transformation of Glaucon is rarely discussed in the philosophical literature on the *Republic*,[4] yet it gives us a paradigm to which educators can look if they are interested in the moral transformation of their students. Socrates creates an epiphany in Glaucon and by examining the way he does this we can draw general educational principles that could help contemporary educators create moral epiphanies in their students. As we shall see, Socrates uses philosophical, psychological and pedagogical modes of engagement with Glaucon, and teachers could use the same with their own students. First, Socrates has *philosophical* knowledge about the virtue he wants to impart to Glaucon. Second, through the dialogue Socrates gains *psychological* knowledge of the conscious and subconscious barriers that serve to obstruct Glaucon's epiphany. Third, Socrates has a clear and nuanced sense of which *pedagogical* principles will best overcome the psychological barriers that exist in Glaucon. In this paper, I examine Glaucon's epiphanic experience in the *Republic* and outline Socrates' use of the philosophical, psychological and pedagogical dimensions of education to induce an epiphany in Glaucon. I then conclude with some implications for contemporary educators.

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[3] Arianna Nicole Jarvis, "Taking a Break: Preliminary Investigations into the Psychology of Epiphanies as Discontinuous Change Experiences" (PhD Diss., University of Massachusetts, 1996), vi. The one aspect of Jarvis's definition that I take issue with is that she claims that epiphanies necessarily lead to an "enduring" transformation. If by "enduring" she means that it last longer than a moment, then there is no problem with her definition. But if by "enduring" she means "permanent," then certainly that aspect of her definition must be inaccurate, because there are countless epiphanies that I and others have had that lead to a significant change, but that over time, one can fall back into bad habits that undermine the endurance of the transformation. Indeed, I would suggest that the majority of epiphanies that humans have do not produce permanently enduring transformations, but the transformations go through temporary periods of endurance—at times the transformation seems complete, at other times, we fall back into old habits. But to say that it is only an epiphany if it is permanent seems far too rigorous of a requirement.

[4] One noteworthy exception to this is Howland (2004, 2014). Howland is a very careful reader of the *Republic* and understands that the transformation of Glaucon is the most significant aspect of the *Republic*. Interesting, Howland's exegetical perspective shifts over time. In his early work he was more optimistic that an enduring change had occurred in Glaucon, but in his later work he argues that Plato intentionally uses the figure of Glaucon—who famously became a tyrant and failed to live a just life—to show that the apparent transformation of Glaucon was *not* permanent. I think that Howland is right on both accounts. Glaucon does receive a profound epiphany that temporarily reorients his conception of justice and the role it plays in his life. But, because of Plato's belief that only rehabituation can make the epiphanies permanent, he uses the figure of Glaucon as an example of what happens if we only induce epiphanies in our students without helping them to find a community in which they can undergo a rehabituation process.

The Philosophical Dimension of Inducing Epiphanies

I begin my examination of the transformation of Glaucon by outlining the philosophical dimension of Socrates engagement with him. As I discussed, the philosophical dimension of inducing an epiphany is based on the teacher's knowledge of the virtue he or she wants to impart and a recognition that his or her student lacks the virtue. Epiphanies can happen randomly, but if a teacher wants to impart a specific virtue, it is best to have knowledge of what the virtue is and what it would look like for his or her students to embody it.

We see such knowledge in Socrates in the *Republic*. In Book II and following Socrates indicates that he knows what the virtue of justice is and believes he can lead Glaucon to knowledge of it. Importantly, not only is Socrates going to help Glaucon discover what justice is at the cognitive level, but Plato tells us through the mouth of Glaucon himself, that Socrates is going to help Glaucon see what "power" it has "when it's by itself in the soul" (358b). Glaucon further says: "Don't, then, give us only a theoretical argument that justice is stronger than injustice, but show what effect each has because of itself on the person who has it—the one for good and the other for bad—whether it remains hidden from gods and human beings or not" (367e). This is exactly what Socrates does. But his "showing" ends up being much more than merely making a rational argument that leads to cognitive assent—rather it is a showing that *reveals* the effects on the soul. It is an epiphany that Glaucon experiences that leads to a transformative understanding of justice and its power. Only then will he get a genuine taste of the effects that remain "hidden" from most human beings.

It might be argued that I am too quick to claim that Socrates has knowledge of justice in the *Republic*, since he disavows such knowledge in Book I in his discussion with Thrasymachus (337e). The difference between his claim of ignorance in Book I and the knowledge he has in Book II and following should not be overlooked. It is assumed by many that in the early dialogues Socrates is in complete doubt about the virtues he discusses in them, just like he says he is in Book I of the *Republic*. Because of this, many interpreters include Book I in the set of early dialogues. These commentators assume that perhaps Plato wrote Book I as a stand-alone dialogue early in Plato's career and only later appended it to the rest of the *Republic*. While there is no way to know for sure, it is more plausible that Socrates has a clear sense of the virtues in all of the dialogues, but for pedagogical reasons (which I have discussed elsewhere (Jonas 2018)) he chose to allow the early dialogues to end in doubt.

Naturally, how we interpret the doubt expressed in the early dialogues and in Book I of the *Republic*, impacts, and is impacted by, how we perceive the apparent differences between the dialogues. "Literalist"[5] interpreters who argue that the changes in the dialogues reflect changes in Plato's philosophical outlook have to break the *Republic* into the early (Book I) and late (Book II-

[5] Literalist interpreters are people who argue that when Socrates (or another primary interlocutor) makes a claim in a dialogue, the claim reflects what Plato actually believes at the moment he makes the claim. Because Socrates' claims differ widely between dialogues, literalist interpreters usually posit a developmental hermeneutic as a way of explaining the differences. They claim that in an "early" dialogue, for example, when Socrates claims "*X*", it is because Plato believes "*X*" at the time of the writing of the dialogue; but when, in another dialogue, Socrates claims "~*X*", it is because Plato's ideas *developed*, and he no longer believes "*X*." It is different for pedagogical interpreters. They do not need to posit the *development* of Plato's ideas to explain the inconsistencies in Socrates' claims because they do not believe that the primary purpose of Socrates arguments is to lay out Plato's philosophical views. Rather, they think Socrates' arguments must be seen in the context of the relationship between interlocutors and what Socrates is trying to help his interlocutors learn.

X) periods, in order to maintain the literalism they favor. "Pedagogical" interpreters who argue that argumentative changes in the dialogues reflect Plato's pedagogical goals do not need to break the *Republic* into early and middle periods, because they can simply posit that Socrates was employing different pedagogical strategies based on his audience.

The intuitive plausibility of the pedagogical interpretation in the case of the *Republic* is based on the fact that dialogue partners change substantially between Books I and II. In Book I, Socrates' claim to ignorance concerning justice is directed at Thrasymachus, who is a well-known sophist, and, in the *Republic* at least, a famously belligerent one. In all of the dialogues with sophists (*Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Euthydemus*), Socrates similarly claims ignorance and seems merely interested in undermining the credibility of the sophists' beliefs, rather than imparting knowledge of virtue to them. It stands to reason that he takes this tack because he knows that, being sophists, they are not open to persuasion; on the contrary, they have made up their mind about virtue and have made a career out of persuading people that their views are correct. Therefore, Socrates, knowing that he has little hope of persuading the sophists, merely attempts to show that their views of virtue are untenable. It is different, however, with Glaucon. Unlike the sophists, Socrates claims that he trusts Glaucon's soul and believes that Glaucon genuinely desires virtue, even though Glaucon does not know what it is (367e-368b). The earnestness of Glaucon's search for justice, unlike the sophists, gives Socrates hope that he can induce an epiphany in Glaucon, and so he uses a different pedagogical strategy, one that includes attempting to lead him to an epiphany.

This leads to the question of whether Socrates has *complete* knowledge of virtue, and by extension, whether any teacher wishing to create epiphanies also needs to have complete knowledge. The answer is that neither does Socrates have full knowledge of virtue, nor do teachers need to if they are going to create epiphanies. It is clear from within the *Republic* and across the dialogues, that Socrates does not have complete knowledge of virtue. Within the *Republic* itself, Socrates explicitly claims that he does not have complete knowledge, which would be knowledge of the source of all virtue (506b, 533a). But, at the same time, he acknowledges that he knows something about the virtues, insofar as they are the offspring of the source of all virtue.[6] And he also believes

[6] It is the same with all of the so-called "early dialogues." In those dialogues Socrates makes many knowledge claims regarding virtue, and attempts to persuade many of his interlocutors to follow his example. See for example *Crito* (47b-d), *Gorgias* (526d-527e), *Apology* (30b), *Laches* (200c-201a). These are only a few of the countless virtue claims he makes. The inconsistency in Socrates' claims about being completely ignorant of virtue and also that he has knowledge of virtue has bothered commentators, and as a consequence many have tried reconcile Socrates claims by appealing to different kinds of knowledge. Vlastos (1985, 11-18), for example, makes the distinction between 'elenctic knowledge' and 'certain knowledge;' Reeve (1989, 37-53) and Woodruff (1992, 90-91) make the distinction between 'non-expert knowledge' and 'expert knowledge;' McPherran (1992, 230-231) makes the distinction between 'fallible human knowledge' and 'infallible divine knowledge;' and Brickhouse and Smith (1994, 38-45; 2000, 108-109) make the distinction between 'knowing that' and 'knowing why'—a distinction that they rightly claim is elaborated in Aristotle. Brickhouse and Smith argue that Socrates believes that it is possible to know *that* something is true, without knowing *why* or *how* it is true.

> We have already explained why we do not believe that Socrates' profession of ignorance disclaims merely knowing that some statement about right and wrong is true. In this case, Socrates is saying that he does not know *how it is* that the claim for which he has such good arguments is true; he does not have the sort of knowledge by which he could *explain* the proposition's truth and by which he would qualify as an expert concerning such issues. He only has good reason to think *that* his conviction is true. (Brickhouse and Smith 1994, 39)

And

> Without a suitable understanding of the nature of justice, then, Socrates is not in a position to explain *why* it is that it is better, for example, to suffer than to do injustice. But *that* it is better may be demonstrated by repeated

that, though limited, he knows enough to lead Glaucon to desire justice for himself, which is achieved by the end of the dialogue.

In the same way that Socrates does not have full knowledge of virtue, neither must teachers. I am not sure what it would mean to have full knowledge of virtue, but no person that I have ever met who seemed wise, claimed to have such full knowledge. They all claim to be on a path towards increasing virtue, and in that sense know some of the differences between virtue and vice, which is what Socrates claims to know throughout all of the dialogues. Teachers who want to create epiphanies regarding virtue in the classroom need to know enough to identify virtue in some forms and vice in some forms, but they do not have to have perfect knowledge of virtue.

The Psychological Dimension of Inducing Epiphanies

Now that Socrates has decided on what virtue, he wants to encourage in Glaucon, he now has to assess the barriers to inducing an epiphany. This is an important next step. Socrates also assessed the psychological barriers that might have impeded his attempt to create an epiphany in Thrasymachus, and decided, like he had with Protagoras, Gorgias and countless others, that the barriers were so substantial that he ought not to make the attempt. As I mentioned above, in these cases, he seems content to merely show these interlocutors that their current way of thinking about the virtues was bankrupt of reason (even though most of them, are unwilling to admit this). But Socrates has more hope for Glaucon.

Of course, his hope is tempered by the fact that Glaucon, along with the help of Adeimantus, uses an augmented myth of the ring of Gyges to make a compelling case for the benefits of injustice and the problems with justice. Glaucon's and Adeimantus' use of the myth and the augmentation of it suggests that they are more interested in pursuing their own pleasures and passions even if the rights of others are sacrificed for them to secure their pleasures and passions. However, they are quick to admit that they are not necessarily convinced by these stories and want Socrates to help prove the stories wrong. Glaucon says:

It isn't, Socrates, that I believe any of that myself. I am perplexed, indeed, and my ears are deafened listening to Thrasymachus and countless others. But I've yet to hear anyone defend justice in the way I want, proving that it is better than injustice. I want to hear justice praised *by itself*, and I think that I am most likely to hear this from you. Therefore, I am going to speak at length praising the unjust life, and in doing so I'll show you the way I want to hear you praising justice and denouncing injustice. (358c-d)

(and adamantine) elenctic arguments. So Socrates may know that suffering is better than doing evil without knowing *how it is* that this is true. (Brickhouse and Smith 1994, 40)

On their view, the knowledge that Socrates has is a genuine form of knowledge—a kind that he can confidently assert—but it is not the *full* knowledge that would be required to offer a robust explanation of the knowledge. Brickhouse and Smith (1994, 38) further argue that the distinction that Socrates employs was one that was likely present in Ancient Greek culture, which is why none of Socrates' interlocutors called him to task for his seeming inconsistency; because they all understood the distinction, they did not find it odd that Socrates used it.

However we construe Socrates inconsistencies, what is clear is that he does not have either complete knowledge of virtue, nor does he lack knowledge of virtue altogether. Thus, the pedagogical strategy he uses with Thrasymachus of claiming he lacks knowledge of justice is true, while the pedagogical strategy he uses with Glaucon of claiming that he has knowledge of justice is also true.

The fact that Glaucon admits he is not convinced of these arguments suggests that there is an openness in Glaucon, but there is still the question about the subconscious desires operating on him about which even he might not be aware. Howland (2005) draws attention to the doubt that is still at the core of Socrates' thoughts about Glaucon and the state of his soul.

Socrates observes that the arguments of Glaucon and Adeimantus, taken by themselves, would suggest that they are partisans of injustice. But he infers otherwise, because he is already familiar with the *tropos*, the "way" of the brothers or the turn of their souls….Yet while Socrates has imaginatively "entered into" their characters and claims to "see through" them, he has no direct acquaintance with their inner natures. (p. 217)

Therefore, if Socrates is to get a better glimpse into Glaucon's natures, he must find a way to assess the deeper state of Glaucon's soul. He claims that he convinced that at the theoretical and philosophical level, Glaucon is a truth seeker, who wants to know and do the right thing, but there is still the question of the degree to which subconscious forces are operating on Glaucon—forces which might undermine his ability to see the truth. The question is: once confronted with the need to sacrifice some of his pleasures for justice, would Glaucon be willing to follow his philosophical convictions, once understood? Socrates gathers this information by drawing Glaucon's attention away from the kind of discussions regarding justice that the myth of the Ring of Gyges presents—which is about dramatic harms and benefits that come by way of personal choices of individuals—and instead switches gears to focus not on the soul (which is the original question) but on justice in a city.

Famously, Socrates claims that he is shifting his focus because "a city is bigger than a soul" and therefore it will be easier to see justice. It has always been head-scratching why Socrates makes this specious argument about size, because the actual size of the object under consideration does not have any bearing on the question, any more than saying that the injustice of an imaginary, full-sized adult stealing an S.U.V is easier to see than a small person stealing a Mini-Cooper. The question of injustice is not the size of the subject or object, but the action in question and its relationship to the virtue of justice. Because of the weakness of the analogy, it has been assumed by some that he was merely using it as an excuse to get to what he was ultimately interested in—articulating a political theory—but it is at least as likely (and even more likely as I will show shortly) that he was doing it for pedagogical reasons. I argue that what is really going on is that the metaphor of the city will help Socrates establish the condition of Glaucon's soul. When claiming that the city is easier to see than the soul, he is speaking more about his own seeing of Glaucon's soul than the view that he actually thinks the size of a city makes it easier to see than the soul. Under the literalist view, when Socrates claims that justice in a city will be easier to see because of its size, he actually thinks that the size of the object matters. While there is no way to prove that Socrates does not hold this untenable view, it seems far more consistent with his intelligence and argumentative sophistication to think that there may be a pedagogical reason for making the claim. Glaucon's vision is on the city—and whether he would want to live in this city—which means that he can talk honestly about the city without realizing (until it is too late) that what is actually being talked about is his soul.

What comes of this psychological inquiring into Glaucon's soul? Socrates learns that while Glaucon is interested in living a just life at the philosophical level, he is not genuinely interested

in living a just life at the psychological level; Glaucon is, in fact, so caught up with the luxuries and bodily pleasures that he has come to enjoy in Athenian culture that he is instinctively unwilling to forgo those, even if doing so leads to a more just life.

How does Socrates come to this knowledge? He does so through the invention of a simple city in which inhabitants each perform their own job and share trade their resources with others. Early in Book II of the *Republic* (370c-372d), Socrates briefly depicts a city where each inhabitant contributes to the welfare of all by carrying out the role for which each is naturally suited. Citizens of the city are happy and contented, having all their basic needs met and enjoying simple pleasures in peace and safety. Socrates calls this city the "true city" and the "healthy one"; but Glaucon objects, calling it a "City for Pigs" because it lacks luxuries and conveniences to which he has grown accustomed. Socrates responds by claiming that it is not a "healthy" city that Glaucon desires, but instead a "feverish" and "luxurious" one. The reason Glaucon rejects the first city is because

It seems that you make your people feast without any delicacies, Glaucon interrupted…. If you were founding a city for pigs, Socrates, he replied, wouldn't you fatten them on the same diet?" "Then how should I feed these people, Glaucon?" I asked. "In the conventional way. If they aren't to suffer hardship, they should recline on proper couches, dine at a table, and have the delicacies and desserts that people have nowadays." (372d)

The city that Glaucon and Socrates settle on is one that includes prostitutes, acquisitive war, lawsuits between citizens, gluttonous eating habits, the endless acquisition of money, and so on; all of these things Socrates claims are characteristic of a city with a "fever." Moreover, he clearly indicates that having them will create immoderation in citizens, the deterioration of their physical health, and the increase of war with neighboring cities. Socrates summarizes the effects of all these injustices by claiming that together they stem "from those same desires that are most of all responsible for the bad things that happen to cities and the individuals in them" (372e-373e). Rather than flinch at these ill results, or even express hesitation, Glaucon unreservedly accepts them. Socrates, registers surprise at first (372d), but seeing that Glaucon believes that these pleasures are essential to human life, Socrates proceeds to describe the feverish city, which eventually becomes the *kallipolis*.

Importantly for my thesis, in acquiescing to Glaucon's desires for the luxurious city, Socrates claims that creating such a city "may not be a bad idea, for by examining it, we might very well see how justice and injustice grow up in cities" (372e). Socrates' hope is that by juxtaposing justice and injustice, Glaucon will be able to better see justice in the soul. On the pedagogical interpretation, Socrates realizes that in spite of Glaucon's *philosophical* openness to justice, he is *psychologically* unable to give up a desire for luxury and bodily pleasure even when faced with the injustices that will issue from it. Socrates therefore recognizes that a new tack must be taken if he is to help Glaucon see the desirability of justice. And this leads us to the pedagogical dimension of inducing epiphanies in students. Socrates has, through questioning, ascertained the psychological barriers that will impede Glaucon's epiphany, and now it is up to him to find a pedagogical way to overcome these barriers. The way he comes up with is to create the *kallipolis*,

the city at the center of the *Republic* that has been so often misinterpreted as the ultimate statement of Plato's political theory. [7]

The Pedagogical Dimension of Inducing Epiphanies

In order for Socrates' strategy to work with Glaucon, he must find a way to persuade Glaucon without going directly at Glaucon's immoderate desires. Socrates claims that when people have obstinate opinions that are not based in truth, they sometimes get angry and need to be soothed to learn the truth. "What if the person who has opinion but not knowledge is angry with us and disputes the truth of what we are saying? Is there some way to console him and persuade him gently, while hiding from him that he isn't in his right mind?" (476d-e). Ironically, when Socrates asks this question, Glaucon does not realize that this is precisely what is happening to him; having been angry about the lack of luxuries in the city of pigs, Socrates is consoling him and gently persuading him. And, further, Socrates describes what happens when someone tries to teach virtue to an otherwise noble young man (which is what Glaucon is) who has no understanding of virtue. Even if this hypothetical young man is "drawn to philosophy because of his noble nature," Socrates claims he will initially be unconvinced. "And if someone approaches a young man in that condition and gently tells the truth, namely, that there's no understanding in him, that he needs it, and that it can't be acquired unless he works like a slave to attain it, do you think it will be easy for him to listen when he's in the midst of so many evils?" (494d). Again, Glaucon agrees, not realizing that this fact about human beings is a fact about him.

Taking his own advice, Socrates is willing to try to help Glaucon see his lack of understanding by "persuading" Glaucon "gently" by using the image and metaphor of justice in a city, which begins with the shape of injustice in a luxurious city, and the effects of that injustice on the citizens of that city.

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[7] That is not to say that Plato does not offer some politically relevant views in the *Republic*. In fact, it could be argued that he does articulate his preferred political arrangement in the *Republic*, but that preferred arrangement is not the *kallipolis*—the city that dominates much of the dialogue—but the first, simple city outlined in Book II, which Socrates calls the "true" and "healthy" city. Socrates never offers such praise for the *kallipolis*. He never praises the *kallipolis* because it contains injustices that the first city does not. The *kallipolis* is founded on the principles of acquisitive war, the giving in to appetitive desires, the need for potential lawsuits, and the promotion of unhealthy eating habits (373b-374a), all of these are the hallmarks of a city whose citizens lack moderation and justice.

Of course, it might be claimed that though the city was founded on these principles, Plato eventually purges the city of injustice and it becomes a fully just city. This is true insofar as the city eventually meets the formal requirement of justice—that each part does its own job—but the injustice that is done away with is not the injustice found in acquisitive war, appetitive desires, potential lawsuits, and poor eating habits. Although there are limits that protect them from going to extremes, the auxiliaries still go to war to protect and acquire wealth (537a), the class of producers are still encouraged to give in to their appetitive desires (465b-466c), are given provisions to sue one another in court (464d-e; 405a-b), and still eat unhealthy meals (404e-405b), to name just a few behaviors that Plato believes are vicious and conducive of unhappiness. Moreover, these individuals are never given an education that would help them develop the virtues to overcome these vices. They are given laws that prevent them from indulging in these vices to extreme degrees (465b), but they are given opportunities and even encouraged to live lives rooted in the satisfaction of unnecessary desires.

It is different in the first city, in which citizens eat healthy, live peacefully and moderately, and have no need to sue one another or increase their material wealth or acquire more land. This is why Socrates calls it the true and healthy city, and why it makes sense to think that it is Plato's preferred political arrangement.

To begin, Socrates describes the need for prostitutes, jewelry, beauticians, and chefs to cook and bake delicacies. All of this does not sound immoral (except, perhaps, for the prostitutes) but Socrates immediately notes that while not immoral in themselves, these desires have an impact on the health of the citizens. He says "And if we live like that, we'll have a far greater need for doctors than we did before," to which Glaucon agrees. Then Socrates claims that they will need more land, because their small city will not be large enough to create these luxuries. "Then we'll have to seize some of our neighbors' land if we're to have enough pasture and ploughland. And won't our neighbors want to seize part of ours as well, if they too have surrendered themselves to the endless acquisition of money and have overstepped the limits of their necessities." Glaucon replies that "That's completely inevitable, Socrates." (373b-e).

Here we see confirmation of Glaucon's own immoderate desires. The fact that he can easily and enthusiastically justify an "endless acquisition of money" even if it means killing people for it through war, suggests that Socrates is right that Glaucon will need time to come to see that there is something wrong with his soul. This becomes even more obvious when a few lines later Socrates says that the desires which lead to war are also "responsible for the bad things that happen to cities and the individuals in them." From here Socrates creates a warrior-class who will eventually become the guardians, both the auxiliaries and the philosopher-kings.

At this point, at the beginning of the city, Glaucon's psychological unwillingness to moderate his desires is clear. But as Socrates starts to fill out the details of the city, he begins the process of overcoming the psychological barriers in Glaucon. At a critical moment in Book IV Socrates introduces the political danger of immoderation with respect to luxury and bodily desires. Socrates claims that the city they are creating must not be either rich or poor, for both will lead to corruption. This should afront Glaucon's desires because, as we saw, he insisted and a rich and luxurious city. Adeimantus immediately protests by reminding Socrates that a rich city was what he and Glaucon desire. Socrates responds by appealing to a passion in both Glaucon and Adeimantus that he thinks is stronger than their desire for pleasure: the desire for honor through strength and courage. He claims that in the *kallipolis* that those bred for war "will easily be able to fight twice or three times their own numbers in a war" (322d). As many commentators have pointed out, Glaucon and Adeimantus are known for their love of manly honor, and by appealing to honor, Socrates is able to subtly undermine their insistence on luxuries and bodily pleasures being the ultimate necessity in a city. The reason the *kallipolis* must not be rich is because wealth makes citizens hedonistic and idle; money and luxury make them soft. This is anathema to Glaucon and Adeimantus. It is different in the city that Socrates and Glaucon are creating. Here, precisely because the citizens are not rich, they become strong and resilient. Socrates claims that if the city is not rich but has enough of what it needs, it will be the strongest and most powerful city. "And as long as your own city is moderately governed in the way that we have just arranged, it will, even if it has only a thousand men to fight for it, be the greatest. Not in reputation; I don't mean that, but the greatest in fact. Indeed, you won't find a city as great as this one among either the Greeks or the barbarians, although many that are many times its size may seem to be as great" (423a). In his willingness to accept this point, Glaucon has gone from the view that luxury and bodily pleasure are the highest good; instead strength and manly courage becomes the highest pleasure which the *kallipolis* has in abundance.

The next move that Socrates makes is to take the lesson Glaucon learned through the *kallipolis* and expand it to other city-states. This is an important next move because it, again, allows Glaucon to come to see the desirability of justice in a city without directly contradicting his own personal desires for those pleasures that make justice in a city impossible. In Socrates' description of the *kallipolis*, he makes it clear that the central virtue of the city is that "moderation spreads throughout the whole" (431e). True, the moderation of the producers is much less moderate than the guardians—they are allowed to indulge their appetitive desires—but as a whole the city avoids the wealth or poverty that would lead to the internal and external destruction of the city. Socrates emphasizes this moderation over and over again, and Glaucon continually agrees with him. This mantra-like refrain works like a kind of habituation principle in the dialogue and begins to impact Glaucon's outlook. This verbal habituation pays dividends then in Book VIII when Socrates turns Glaucon's attention to cities that do not have moderation at their core. Socrates outlines these cities and shows their devolution, with the first climax coming with democracy, in which the city becomes a multicolored and seemingly beautiful paradise were every person gets to choose their own way of life (560d-562a). But unfortunately, what ends up happening is chaos with every person being absorbed in pleasure and caprice. But democracy gives way to something even worse: tyranny—a person who has given themselves and the city over to extreme desire for luxury and bodily pleasures, and makes citizens of the city suffer.

What is the beginning of the transformation from leader of the people to tyrant? Isn't it clear that it happens when the leader begins to behave like the man in the story told about the temple of the Lycean Zeus in Arcadia?.... Then doesn't the same happen with a leader of the people who dominates a docile mob and doesn't restrain himself from spilling kindred blood: He brings someone to trial on false charges and murders him (as tyrants so often do), and, by thus blotting out a human life, his impious tongue and lips taste kindred citizen blood. He banishes some, kills others….And because of these things, isn't a man like that inevitably fated either to be killed by his enemies or to be transformed from a man to a wolf by becoming a tyrant? (565e-566a)

Socrates description is vivid, and it has a significant impact on Glaucon: his disgust at the tyrannical figure is strong, even though the figure is a magnification of Glaucon's own tyrannical desire for luxury and pleasure at the beginning of the dialogue. The mythical image has brought Glaucon to an epiphany that cannot be ignored. Glaucon's repulsion has become visual and visceral. He has discovered, just like he prophetically hoped he would discover, the "power" injustice has "when it's by itself in the soul" (358b). With the power of injustice revealed, and Glaucon's repulsion to it, Socrates now only has to show that this is what happens to a soul that lacks moderation. At first the person is just a democratic soul who seeks to satisfy seemingly innocuous desires for delicacies, prostitutes, couches and the like, but he will slowly become a tyrannical man.

It remains, I said, to consider the tyrannical man himself, how he evolves from a democrat, what he is like when he comes into being, and whether he is wretched or blessedly happy….Some of our unnecessary pleasures and desires seem to me to be lawless. They are probably present in everyone, but they are held in check by the laws and the better desires in alliance with reason….[But when the desires are no longer restrained by reason] then the beastly and savage part, full of food and drink, casts off sleep and seeks to find a way to gratify itself….And when the other desires—filled with incense, myrrh, wreaths, wine and the other pleasures found in their

company—buzz around the drone, nurturing it and making it grow as large as possible, they plant the sting of longing in it. Then this leader of the soul adopts madness as its bodyguard and becomes frenzied. If it finds any beliefs or desires in the man that are thought to be good or that still have some shame, it destroys them and throws them out, until it's purged him of moderation and filled him with imported madness. (571a-573b)

The madness to which Socrates is referring directly harkens back to the first city and its emphasis on moderation. In the first "healthy" city, Socrates uses the exact same pleasures—myrrh, wreaths and wine—to claim that they are appropriate and good. And indeed they are. But in the image of the tyrannical man even these pleasures become corrupted and will lead him into even further madness. The only way that simple pleasures can be good is if they are found in a soul that values and promotes moderation as an indispensable virtue. Socrates' reference back to the first city is the closest he has come in a couple hundred pages to directly confront Glaucon's earlier immoderation. But he takes the risk because he senses that an epiphany is happening in Glaucon and it is time for Glaucon to want moderation for himself.

The climax of the epiphany is all that is left, and that will come about as Socrates finally produces his positive vision of justice in the soul and is able to speak directly to Glaucon about the necessity for him to adopt the vision. He wants to create a desire in Glaucon to "internalize the ideal of virtue as a 'city of himself (592a7—that is he should internalize in his soul the structure pictured in the ideal city" (Annas, 1999, p. 81). To do this he starts by having Glaucon expressly admit that the tyrannical city and the tyrannical man are unfree and unhappy. Socrates ask the question: "First, speaking of the city, would you say that a tyrannical city is free or enslaved." To which Glaucon does not just give a "yes or no" answer, but articulates his own epiphany by saying "It is enslaved as could possibly be." This answer is strong and definitive and provides evidence that the epiphany is his own and not that he is merely agreeing with Socrates. This leads to a question of comparison of the city and soul: "Then, if a man and a city are alike, mustn't the same structure be in him too? And mustn't his soul be full of slavery and unfreedom, with the most decent parts enslaved and with a small part, the maddest and most vicious, as their master?" Glaucon replies that "It must." And then Socrates says: "What will you say about such a soul then? Is it free or slave?" Glaucon responds by saying "Slave, of course." (577d-c).

The fact that Socrates does not merely ask "yes or no" questions, here, but rather demands that Glaucon take a stand is important as it gives Socrates information about how deeply Glaucon understands the epiphany. Later on, Glaucon uses definite language when asked similar questions. He responds with statements like: "That's exactly what he's like, Socrates, and what you say is absolutely true" (579d); and, "That's easy. I rank them in virtue and vice, in happiness and its opposite in the order of their appearance, as I must judge courses" (580b).

Glaucon's complete turn-around in his views about the importance of luxury and bodily pleasures for himself and other citizens is seen in the following:

Therefore those who have no experience of reason or virtue, but are always occupied with feasts and the like, are brought down and then back up to the middle, as it seems, and wander in this way throughout their lives, never reaching beyond this to what is truly higher up at it or being brought up to it, and so they aren't filled with that which really is and never taste any stable or pure pleasure. Instead, they always look down at the ground like cattle, and, with their heads bent

over the dinner table, the feed, fatten, and fornicate….[Glaucon replies] Socrates, you've exactly describe the life of the majority of people, just like an oracle. (586a-b)

Glaucon's final statement is poetically ironic in two ways: the first is that Socrates' description of people without moderation and virtue is virtually identical to Glaucon's reasons for why the city of pigs should be rejected, because the people in that city, Glaucon claims, shouldn't have to "suffer hardship…[and] should recline on proper couches, dine at a table, and have the delicacies and desserts that people have nowadays" (372d). Socrates likens these people to cattle which is reminiscent of Glaucon's reference to pigs. What is ironic is that Glaucon had earlier objected to the first city because he believed it depicted a way of life that only animals would be satisfied with, but now he believes that that way of life is the only one fit for humans, whereas a way of life that includes luxuries and an absorption of bodily pleasures is a life fit only for animals. The second poetic irony is that in calling Socrates an oracle, Glaucon has aptly described Socrates divine ability to bring about an epiphany without Glaucon being aware that it is happening. Glaucon's turnaround is now complete.

Through the construction of the Kallipolis, Glaucon comes to understand justice, and affirms it as authoritative in his life. He is purged of his fever, at least temporarily. This is seen towards the end of the dialogue, when Socrates summarizes what he and his interlocutors have learned from the *kallipolis* (618c-619a). Instead of an encomium on the beauty, virtue, and justice found in the *kallipolis* (which is what we might expect after constructing a just city), Socrates backs away from any talk of the *kallipolis* whatsoever. Instead he ends with an exhortation to take what they have learned from the dialogue and apply it to their lives. Socrates claims that they must learn those [subjects] that will enable him to distinguish the good life from the bad and always to make the best choice possible in every situation. He should think over all the things we have mentioned and how they jointly and severally determine what the virtuous life is like. That way he will know what the good and bad effects of beauty are when it is mixed with wealth, poverty, and a particular state of the soul….And from all this he will be able, by considering the nature of the soul, to reason out which life is better and which life is worse and to choose accordingly. (618c-619a)

This has not been significantly appreciated in the secondary literature. The *Republic* begins with Socrates insisting that pleasure does not lead to ultimate happiness and that living a life of justice does, and then he ends the dialogue with the same discussion—the only difference being that at the beginning of the dialogue, Glaucon is opposed to this view, but by the end of the dialogue he is in complete agreement. What has happened in between? The *kallipolis* has been constructed, and in the construction Glaucon's perspective changes. Ironically, this is exactly what we *should* expect considering that Socrates explicitly claims that the fundamental point of creating the *kallipolis* was to reveal justice in the soul. The fact that Glaucon now understands (at the cognitive and affective level) that justice in the soul as a function of moderation, we should not be surprised that Socrates drops all discussion of the *kallipolis* from the later chapters. The *kallipolis* has fulfilled its purpose and since it was never meant to fulfill any other purpose, there is no reason to continue to discuss it. The fact that this later silence regarding the *kallipolis* is almost universally ignored in the philosophical literature speaks to the intractability of the standard view that the *Republic* is primarily a political document in which Plato seeks to express his totalitarian views about the need for the absolute political authority of philosophers and for the deferential obedience of the average human being. In light of the transformation of Glaucon's understanding, and in light

of the fact that he explicitly asked Socrates to help him come to that understanding, and the fact that Socrates explicitly claims that they ought to create a city so that Glaucon can come to that understanding, it seems bizarre, at the very least, that these facts are so often ignored and the raison d'etre of the *Republic* is still so often assumed to be Plato's intention to construct an ideal political philosophy.

The question now becomes whether Glaucon is permanently transformed by the epiphany he has received. The answer is a decisive "no." As Howland (2014) has argued, Plato picked the character of Glaucon specifically to communicate that Glaucon's transformation is *not* permanent. Glaucon has without doubt had a dramatic epiphany and it has led to a transformation of his desires, but, sadly, Glaucon famously went on to commit unjust acts against Athens. Just like the epiphany and seeming transformation of Alcibiades in *Alcibiades I*, Glaucon is only temporarily transformed. This is exactly what we should expect since Plato believes the only way individuals can become truly virtuous is for them to undergo a long habituation process whereby virtue becomes part of the fabric of individuals' souls (Jonas, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2017). For Glaucon (or Alcibiades) to be permanently transformed, he would need to undergo a rehabituation process. Both Glaucon and Alcibiades claim that they are willing to be rehabituated when they are having an epiphany, but in real life, neither of these individuals remained committed to the rehabituation process and therefore the epiphany grew dimmer and dimmer until they fell headlong into a vicious lifestyle.

Conclusion

As I indicated at the beginning of this paper, Plato believes a person's conception of their *telos* can be dramatically altered through a pedagogical encounter. While Aristotle and Plato are correct that a permanent change in *teloi* can only occur through a habituation process, Plato has shown us that people can experience epiphanies that can, at the very least, temporarily change their conception of human flourishing and can inspire them to seek out rehabituation in the right direction. Glaucon's epiphany in the *Republic* serves as an example to contemporary educators if they want to produce these potentially life-altering epiphanies. First, it seems important that the teacher have a clear sense of which virtue they want to inculcate in their students. This means that, ideally, the teacher would already be virtue seeking and already have meaningful (although incomplete) knowledge of virtue. It also seems like it would be helpful for the teacher to have a passion, like Socrates does, to see his or her students become virtuous themselves. Second, a teacher's ability to uncover the psychological obstacles that stand in the way of his or her students' epiphany, will greatly assist the teacher in generating epiphanies. This is especially difficult in contemporary teaching contexts where the teacher may instruct up to 150 students a day. Nevertheless, it seems possible (although difficult) that a teacher could, through probing questions, informal discussion, formal Socratic dialogues, and so on, begin to sense what those barriers are. Third, once a teacher understands the barriers, it seems important to be able to devise indirect means of overcoming those barriers to produce an epiphany. This is, of course, easier said than done; but it can be done, as Socrates has shown us. I have also seen it done by teachers on numerous occasions. Watching other teachers who excel in this is a great way to learn. Even imaginary depictions of teachers who produce epiphanies can be helpful. In any event it seems clear that the more the philosophically, psychologically, and pedagogically astute the teacher is, the more likely he or she is to produce epiphanies in his or her students. He or she will likely need to be able to make split second decisions on how to adjust tactics and move discussions in the right way. Finally, once an epiphany

is achieved, Plato reminds us, that the student's transformation has only begun, and for it to continue, he or she will need to find a community in which he or she can start a rehabituation process. While difficult, teachers can help in this process by getting to know their students, and ascertaining the significance of the epiphany, and, in dialogue with the students, teachers can help students decide for themselves how to find or develop such a community. Students want to flourish; they just do not know what it looks like, because many aspects of popular culture are intent on leading them toward inferior kinds of flourishing. The use of epiphanies can help students start on a different path of flourishing, the kind that ends in *eudaimonia*.

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