

D. O'Meara, "The Reinterpretation of Plato's Cardinal Virtues in Plotinus", May 15th, 2024

Handout

T 1 Wisdom (*phronesis*) has to do with the reasoning part, courage with the spirited part, moderation with an agreement and consonance of desire with reasoning, justice with each part performing its proper function with respect to ruling and being ruled (I, 2, 1, 17-21).

φρόνησιν μὲν περὶ τὸ λογιζόμενον, ἀνδρίαν
δὲ περὶ τὸ θυμούμενον, σωφροσύνην δὲ ἐν ὁμολογίᾳ τινὶ καὶ
συμφωνίᾳ ἐπιθυμητικοῦ πρὸς λογισμόν, δικαιοσύνην δὲ τὴν
ἐκάστου τούτων ὁμοῦ οἰκκειοπραγίαν ἀρχῆς πέρι καὶ τοῦ ἄρχεσθαι.

T 2 The political virtues [...] genuinely set us in order and make us better by giving limit and measure to our desires, and putting measure into all our affects (*pathe*) and they abolish false opinions by what is altogether better and by the fact of limitation and by the exclusion of the unlimited and indefinite (I, 2, 2, 13-18).

Αἱ μὲν τοίνυν πολιτικαὶ ἀρεταὶ [...] κατακοσμοῦσι μὲν ὄντως
καὶ ἀμείνους ποιοῦσιν ὀρίζουσαι καὶ μετροῦσαι τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ ὅλως τὰ πάθη μετροῦσαι καὶ
ψευδεῖς δόξας ἀφαιροῦσαι τῷ ὅλως ἀμείνوني καὶ τῷ ὀρίσθαι καὶ τῶν ἀμέτρων καὶ
ἀορίστων ἔξω εἶναι.

T 3 Wisdom (*sophia* and *phronesis*), consists in the contemplation of that which Intellect contains; [...] the higher justice in the soul is its activity towards Intellect; its moderation is its inward turning to Intellect; its courage is its freedom from affects [...] not sharing in the affects of its inferior companion [i.e., the living body] (I, 2, 6, 12-27).

Ἡ σοφία μὲν καὶ φρόνησις ἐν θεωρίᾳ ὧν νοῦς ἔχει [...] ὥστε καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ
δικαιοσύνη ἢ μείζων τὸ πρὸς νοῦν ἐνεργεῖν, τὸ δὲ
σωφρονεῖν ἢ εἴσω πρὸς νοῦν στροφή, ἢ δὲ ἀνδρία ἀπάθεια
[...] ἵνα μὴ συμπαθῇ τῷ χείρονι συνοίκῳ.

T 4 The possessor of the [political] virtues will know them, and how much he can get from them. And he will sometimes act according to some of them as circumstances require. But coming to higher principles and different measures he will act according to these (I, 2, 7, 19-22).

Ἡ εἰδήσει γὰρ αὐτὰς καὶ ὅσον παρ' αὐτῶν ἔξει; τάχα δὲ ποτε
περιστατικῶς ἐνεργήσει κατὰ τινὰς ὧν. Ἐπὶ μείζους
δὲ ἀρχὰς ἤκων καὶ ἄλλα μέτρα κατ' ἐκεῖνα πράξει.