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SUMMARY

EDITORIAL

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Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg
Angela Ulacco
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

The present volume contains six articles, two of which are dedicated to Plato's *Symposium* and represent revised versions of papers presented at the X Symposium Platonicum in Pisa in July 2013. The volume also contains articles on Socrates in Plato's dialogues, on the preface of the *Crito,* on the preface of the *Timaeus,* and on the *Phaedrus,* along with two reviews of recent publications.
We start with an article by Thomas C. Brickhouse (Lynchburg College, Virginia) and Nicholas D. Smith (Lewis & Clark College, Portland, Oregorn) on 'Socrates on the Emotions'. The article begins with the analysis of a passage in Plato's *Protagoras,* which indicates, according some scholars, that Socrates believes that the only way to change how others feel about things is to engage them in rational discourse. Brickhouse and Smith show, on the contrary, that Socrates can consistently be a cognitivist about emotion, while also recognizing different etiologies of belief and appealing to non-rational strategies for dealing with emotions. In the article 'Socrates, wake up! An analysis and exegesis of the "preface" in Plato's *Crito*' (43a1-b9) Yosef Z. Liebersohn (Bar-Ilan University, Israel) offers a close analysis of the first scene of Plato's *Crito.* Liebersohn argues that the two apparently innocent questions Socrates asks at the beginning of the *Crito* are an essential part of the philosophical discussion, by showing that they anticipate Crito's main problems in the dialogue. In the third article Nathalie Nercam (Independent Scholar, Île-de-France) deals with 'L'introduction problématique du *Timée* (17a-27a)'. The aim of the article is to reconsider the prologue of the *Timaeus* in order to show that with this preface Plato invites the reader to demystify the discourses of the Greek political elite of the fifth century B.C. According to Nercam, the chôra of Critias' story, compared with *Republic,* is in fact the phobic projection of the aristocracy's desires. Christopher Moore (The Pennsylvania State University) is the author of the fourth article in the present volume: 'Philosophy in Plato's *Phaedrus*'. Moore identifies in the *Phaedrus* fourteen remarks about philosophy and argues, in opposition to other scholars, that none of them are parodies of Isocrates' competing definition of philosophy. He then reassesses the *Republic*-inspired view that philosophy refers essentially to contemplation of the Forms, arguing that the term mainly refers to conversations that aim at mutual self-improvement.
Laura Candiotto (University of Edinburgh) opens the section on the *Symposium* with an article on 'Plato's cosmological medicine in the Eryximachus' discourse of the *Symposium.* The responsibility of a harmonic technê'. By comparing the role of harmony in Eryximachus' discourse with other Platonic passages, Candiotto aims to provide textual evidence concerning Plato's conception of cosmological medicine as "harmonic technê". According to Candiotto, Eryximachus' thesis is consistent with Plato's cosmology, as it is an expression of a dialectical and erotic cosmos. In other words, Eryximachus' speech can be approached as an essentially Platonic passage for establishing

the need for a medicine to cure disorder. In the last article 'Why the Final Step of the Lover's Ascent is a Generalizing Step' Anthony Hooper (The University of Sydney) deals with the Scala Amoris (210a-212b) in the *Symposium.* Hooper agrees with the recent scholarship in presenting an 'inclusive' reading of the lover's ascent. However, he wants to make a step forward by giving a theoretical grounding of this reading.
We close the volume with two book reviews: William H. F. Altman (Independent Scholar, Brazil) on Christopher P. Long ' Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy: Practicing a Politics of Reading' (2014) and Franco Ferrari (Università degli Studi di Salerno) on M. Tabak, 'Plato's *Parmenides* Reconsidered' (2015).
As this survey shows, the volume is a collection of substantial papers and book reviews. They have been submitted to a double-blind peer-review process and display a diversity of languages and approaches, in conformity with the international tradition of the Plato Journal.
We would like to thank the contributors for choosing the Plato Journal as the venue for their work. This volume could not have been published without the dedicated and expert work of the anonymous referees. We would like to sincerely thank them for their help in reviewing the submission to the journal.

PAPERS

Socrates on the Emotions

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ABSTRACT

In Plato's *Protagoras,* Socrates clearly indicates that he is a cognitivist about the emotions—in other words, he believes that emotions are in some way constituted by cognitive states. It is perhaps because of this that some scholars have claimed that Socrates believes that the only way to change how others feel about things is to engage them in rational discourse, since that is the only way, such scholars claim, to change another's beliefs. But in this paper we show that Socrates is also responsive to, and has various non-rational strategies for dealing with, the many ways in which emotions can cloud our judgment and lead us into poor decision-making. We provide an account of how Socrates can consistently be a cognitivist about emotion and also have more than purely rational strategies for dealing with emotions.

Keywords : Socrates, Emotions, Protagoras, Cognitivism, Intellectualism

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I. INTRODUCTION: COGNITIVISM AND INTELLECTUALISM

Though usually reticent about expressing his own opinions, we find Socrates[1] quite assertive about his own view of fear in the *Protagoras*:

> [Socrates speaking] I say that whether you call it fear (*phobos*) or dread (*deos*), it is an expectation (*prosdokian*) of something bad. (*Protagoras* 358d5-6[2])

Just a bit later, Socrates concludes that the vices we associate with the emotion of fear — cowardice, but also shameful boldness and madness — are all explicable in terms of ignorance of what is and is not to be feared (*Protagoras* 360b4-c7).

Socrates' argument here seems to be an explicit endorsement of what has come to be known as "cognitivism" about the emotions — the view that emotions *just are* cognitions.[3] But as cognitions, we might wonder whether or not they are generated or sustained in the same ways that other cognitions are, and if not, what other processes might be involved. According to several recent works by various scholars, Socrates recognized that some emotions — or at any rate some particular examples of specific emotions that Socrates encounters in his interlocutors in the dialogues — are not as responsive to reason as other kinds of belief are. In her recent study of Plato's characterization of Callicles in the *Gorgias*, for example, Emily Austin has argued that Callicles' fear of death is non-rational in the sense that it "cannot be altered simply in light of rational argument."[4] But why are some beliefs more susceptible — and some less susceptible, or not susceptible at all — to rational argument? And how else can one who wishes to challenge such beliefs do so effectively, and how could some process *other than reasoning* be able to influence what someone *believes*? It is these questions we seek to answer herein.

II. ETIOLOGIES OF BELIEF

Some processes by which human beings generate beliefs are veridically reliable, but it is also a feature of the human condition that some others are not. Those that are veridically reliable include inductions that are based upon adequate observations, deductions from premises that we have carefully considered and whose inferences we have inspected for validity, as well as those derived from ordinary perception in normal conditions. There continues to be debate among both psychologists and epistemologists just what kinds of belief-forming processes really can be counted as reliable, and what the limitations on these might be, but few doubt that human beings have access to at least some reliable cognitive processes. Other belief-forming processes are commonly regarded with a bit more suspicion, including memories of the distant past, and especially beliefs associated with issues of emotional significance for the epistemic agent. Wishful thinking, for example, may well be a source of some beliefs for human beings, but we do not generally regard wishful thinking as a process that grounds *rational* beliefs. For our purposes in this discussion, then, we will count a belief as rationally caused or sustained if it was caused or sustained by a process we would reasonably regard as veridically reliable. A belief would be non-rationally caused or sustained if it were caused or sustained by a process we would reasonably regard as veridically *unreliable*. For a belief to be rational in this sense, then, does

not necessarily require that it be the product of ratiocination or some other form critical thinking; rather, it must be the kind of belief that originates or is preserved among one's beliefs in a way that we would regard as reasonable for the epistemic agent. Again, such beliefs might include, for example, beliefs based on ordinary experience.

Now some understandings of Socrates' motivational intellectualism have held that the only way motivationally significant belief change can occur are through processes that we might generally regard as rational in the above sense. So, famously, Terry Penner once claimed:

> There is in Plato's early dialogues [...] a certain "intellectualism" that is quite foreign to the middle and later dialogues [...]. Indeed, that intellectualism, with its implication that *only philosophical dialogue* can improve one's fellow citizens, is decisively rejected by Plato in the parts of the soul doctrine in the *Republic* [...]. For Socrates, when people act badly or viciously or even just out of moral weakness, that will be merely a result of intellectual mistake.[5] (164-5, emphasis in original)

Penner's claim about the unique role for "philosophical dialogue" would only be supported if Socrates also thought that no beliefs are non-rational in terms of what causes or sustains them. More recently, Penner and others who have followed his line of interpretation[6] have indicated that non-rational desires can play a role in belief-formation. So, for example, we more recently find Naomi Reshotko explaining the view in this way:

> [Socratic] intellectualism need only claim that [...] non-intellectualized factors never cause behavior in an unmediated fashion: they cause it by affecting our beliefs.[7]

But even those scholars who have agreed with this much have gone on to differ about how the influence of non-rational desires can influence beliefs. In the view first given by Daniel T. Devereux, which we then took up in our own earlier works, non-rational desires influenced what we believe by representing their targets as goods or benefits to the agent, so that the agent would come to believe that pursuing or obtaining those targets would serve the universally shared desire for benefit, unless some other process interfered with this natural way in which people can come to believe something.[8] In the view defended by Penner and Reshotko, however, the influence of non-rational elements is not as a direct cause of belief in quite this way. Instead, they play a purely *informational* role:

> In my view, an appetite never plays a role that is more instrumental than any other piece of information that the intellect has used in order to determine what is best to do as motivated by the desire for the good. I hold that appetites are like sense impressions: they are phenomena that help us form judgments, but they do not interact with judgments that have already been formed.[9]

In this account, then, non-rational factors can play a role in how we come to believe something, but the role is not one of direct causation, as it is in the view we have defended. We now believe, however, that Socrates' cognitivism about the emotions provides important insights into how he thinks the non-rational aspects of our moral psychology influence our beliefs. To see how this works, we begin with a passage in

the *Ion* that seems to indicate clearly that Socrates recognized that at least some emotions can be caused and sustained through non-rational means of the relevant sort:

> Ion: Listen, when I tell a sad story, my eyes are full of tears; and when I tell a story that's frightening or awful, my hair stands on end with fear and my heart leaps.
> Socrates: Well, Ion, should we say that this man is in his right mind at times like these: when he's at festivals or celebrations, all dressed up in fancy clothes, with golden crowns, and he weeps, though he's lost none of his finery — or when he's standing among some twenty thousand friendly people and he's frightened, though no one is undressing him or doing him any harm? Is he in his right mind then?
> Ion: Lord no, Socrates. Not at all, to tell the truth.
> Socrates: And you know that you have the same effects on most of your spectators too, don't you?
> Ion: I know very well that we do. (*Ion* 535c5-e1; translation slightly modified)[10]

Socrates famously goes on to explain the phenomenon in terms of a kind of "magnetism" with its source in the Muse. But whatever the explanation, it is clear that Socrates thinks the way in which the rhapsode responds to his own tale — a response he also arouses among his listeners in the audience, as well (*Ion* 535d--e) — is not a *rational* process in the sense we have identified. Socrates and Ion are clear in their view that such responses are not apt for the specific circumstances (since neither rhapsode nor audience is in any danger of suffering at the moment, yet both react with tears and fears), but the error they make cannot simply be, as Penner put it, "merely a result of intellectual mistake." Moreover, given the way in which the audience's and rhapsode's responses actually come into being, it seems unlikely that the process is one we can understand entirely in terms of the *information* contained in the performance itself — it is a reaction of a sort whose peculiarities do not seem likely to be fully explicable in terms of their informational content.

Taking Socrates' cognitivism about the emotions into account, moreover, it must follow that what occurs within the rhapsode and also the affected members of his audience is that they, at least temporarily, come to believe that they are witnessing or experiencing something bad. But in what sense do they really *believe* this? Do they not know that they are, as Socrates puts it, "among some twenty thousand friendly people" and not actually at any risk *at all* of being done any of the harm described in the narrative? Their reaction is so puzzling that Socrates insists the rhapsode and audience must go (at least a little) out of their right minds in order to have such a thing occur.

Two options seem to present themselves here: one is that those involved with the rhapsode's performance somehow undergo a *change* in what they believe, temporarily (at least) losing contact with the real world and coming to believe that, instead, they are actually inhabiting the world described in the rhapsode's tales. The other is that the rhapsode opens up an alternative cognitive world that somehow comes into being alongside or along with the person's ordinary cognitions, and the person somehow manages, all the while still being aware that he or she is at a performance, to believe that he or she is *at the same time* (and obviously impossibly) also inhabiting the world described in the rhapsode's exciting narrative.

Socrates never reveals in the *Ion* exactly which of these options he thinks is occurring to the rhapsode or his audience, but Ion's own self-description seems to indicate some version of the latter option. Immediately following the last quotation, we find Ion explaining how he pays attention to his audience's reactions:

> Ion: I look down at them every time from up on the rostrum, and they're crying and looking terrified, and as the stories are told they are filled with amazement. You see I must keep my wits and pay close attention to them: if I start crying, I will laugh as I take their money, but if *they* laugh, I shall cry at having lost money. (*Ion* 535e1-6)

Socrates immediately goes on to explain what is happening to the audience in terms of his magnetic ring analogy, but he never expresses any doubt about Ion's claim to be able to achieve the strange form of cognitive strabismus by which he both feels the same emotions as he induces in his audience but also attends carefully to the fact that he is doing so from "up on the rostrum" (and thus plainly *not* on some ancient battlefield, for example). If this "two cognitive worlds" understanding of what is happening is correct, then the rhapsode both experiences and shares the cognitive world of his tale with his audience and somehow manages to get them to focus on this cognitive world rather than the ordinary cognitive world to which they might return at any moment (and to which, in order to make his money, the rhapsode wants them *not* to return, for as long as he relates his stories). The rhapsode himself, however, somehow manages to experience *both* of these worlds at once: he cries himself and feels the emotions appropriate to the story, but also *at the same time* attends in real time, as it were, to the way his audience is reacting.

When Socrates describes both the rhapsode and the audience as being out of their minds, then, he must mean that both are in some way experiencing *both* cognitive worlds, even if there is some difference of *focus* between the rhapsode and his audience in terms of which world is getting (most of?) the person's immediate attention. With a successful performance, the audience clearly reacts in a way that is appropriate to the cognitive world depicted in the story. Does that mean, however, that they *lose all contact* with the real world? This seems too implausible to attribute to Socrates — after all, if a member of the audience, terrified as they are told of Achilles' deadly advance upon Hector, were asked, "What, is Achilles stalking *you*?" one can easily imagine the affected audience member's impatient reply: "Of course not, but shut up and listen to the story, for heaven's sake!" We see no reason to think that the phenomenon of going out of one's mind at a theatrical performance needs to involve a complete break with ordinary cognition. Instead, then, it is that one simply experiences an alternative to the ordinary world and shifts focus to that other, imagined world. As Ion's case amply shows, one can actually form both beliefs and emotions based on what is presented to the imagination. Of course, what one who has heard Ion "really" believes, that is, believes about the actual world remains, in some sense, readily available to her.

But if all of this is right, it is worth emphasizing that the specific *way* that the rhapsode and his story-telling create these emotions in the audience is not anything like *rational persuasion* — and also not simply a matter of providing the audience with new information. Instead, the rhapsode uses a non-rational method (exceptionally vivid story-telling) to

create what Plato would later demean as a mere *image* or *mimicry* of reality, and induces his audience to shift their focus away from the ordinary world and to attend instead to this other alternative. Given cognitivism about emotions, moreover, the audience develops the "expectation of something bad" that has as its intentional object only aspects of the fictive world that belongs to the rhapsode's story.

What Ion relates about his power to affect audiences obviously provides one putative source for the kind of process we have identified as non-rational belief formation. The beliefs Ion can produce are plainly not the result of reliable cognitive processes. Of course, the *Ion*'s example of non-rational belief formation is not the one in the "Socratic dialogues" that has received the most scholarly attention. That distinction goes to the *Protagoras*. There we find Socrates discussing the sources that "the many" think cause even people with knowledge of what they should do to act badly. These include *thumos*, *hedonē*, *lupē*, *erōs*, and *phobos* (352b). Now, some of these seem to designate emotional conditions (*thumos*, *phobos*), which, again, we know Socrates regards as cognitive states. The effect of this would be that putative cases of *akrasia* involving *thumos* or *phobos* would have to be cases of the agent suffering from conflicting cognitive states, one of which would proscribe some action, and the other of which would prescribe that action. Insofar as one of these beliefs (presumably the one that qualifies as *thumos* or *phobos*, by which the agent's putative "knowledge" is overwhelmed) is non-rational, it is not surprising that it is epistemically inapt — false, and the result of an unreliable cognitive process. The action one takes on the basis of false and unreasonable beliefs is not likely to go well, and if it does happen to go well, it will be merely by luck.

A putatively "akratic" agent, acting under *thumos* or *phobos*, would presumably believe that he should not act in some way φ, but would also believe (thumotically or phobically) that he should. But, since Socrates holds that knowledge cannot be "pushed around like a slave," such a person could not possibly *know* that he should not do φ. Moreover, Socratic intellectualism requires that one always does what one believes is best for one, from among present options of which one is aware at the time of action, and so it must be that the "akratic" person's thumotic or phobic belief is dominant at the time of action. So, this picture leads to the Socratic denial of synchronic belief *akrasia*. It does allow, however, for diachronic belief *akrasia*. The question we need to ask, however, is this: Since the emotions *just are* beliefs, according to Socratic cognitivism about the emotions, we might reasonably wonder how such beliefs come to exist in the first place. Granting that at least some emotions can have non-rational sources, what are these sources?

A passage in the *Charmides* (167e1-5) seems to indicate that human beings experience different kinds of desire, which target different sorts of goals. These include appetite (*epithumia*), which aims at pleasure, wish (*boulēsis*), which aims at what is good, and love (*erōs*), which aims at what is beautiful. Each of these seems to have an aversive alternative, as well: we avoid pains, what is bad, and what is ugly. Our natural attractions and aversions, we contend, are the grounds for a variety of non-rational beliefs: Insofar as something seems or promises to be pleasurable, beneficial, or beautiful, the agent will be naturally inclined to believe it to be something good; and insofar as something seems to be painful, detrimental, or ugly, the agent will be naturally inclined to believe it to be something bad. Unless the natural inclination to believe in such cases is

mitigated or defeated by some other (for example, rational) belief-forming process, one will form beliefs about goods and evils accordingly. The beliefs created by these natural attractions and aversions, because they derive from non-rational processes, are veridically unreliable, but are also to some degree (by their nature as non-rational) resistant to rational persuasion and other belief-forming processes. In this respect, beliefs about goods and evils formed by natural attractions and aversions without the benefit of deliberation and reflection are like beliefs formed by the vividness of Ion's story-telling. Moreover, once such a belief has been acquired, the one who has such a belief is likely to make further judgments, based on the non-rational belief, thereby compounding the problem. But Socrates (in the *Gorgias*, particularly) shows that he thinks that the non-rational processes by which such beliefs are formed can be strengthened or weakened by certain practices. Disciplining the appetites, for example, is likely not only to keep in check one's ability to lead one to end up believing falsely that some anticipated pleasure is really a good thing, but also makes one better able to attend to other belief-forming processes, including especially reasoning. It is important to emphasize that although an emotion, such as fear, that results from an aversion to pain, is a cognitive state, what produces the emotion is not *merely* some "inner" neutral event without any causal connection to cognition and about which it is always within an agent's power to decide whether the "inner event" is good or bad. Again, if such an event is an attraction, the agent will believe the object of the attraction is a good unless the attraction is counter-acted by other belief-forming process; and if such an event is an aversion, the agent will believe the object of the aversion is an evil, unless the aversion is counter-acted by other belief-forming process. Accordingly, in relation to the emotions, keeping these particular non-rational belief forming processes, such as appetite and *erōs*, in a disciplined condition will make one less likely to experience inapt emotions.

So when Socrates disagrees with "the many" in the *Protagoras* when they claim that *thumos*, *hedonē*, *lupē*, *erōs*, and *phobos* all create the possibility for synchronic belief *akrasia*, it is because he thinks that some of these (*thumos*, *phobos*) are themselves already cognitive and cannot thus be instances in which an agent acts in a way that is contrary to what the agent believes. In the other cases (*hedonē*, *lupē*, *erōs*), the phenomena said to defeat the agent's belief actually do their work by creating beliefs non-rationally — beliefs which, at least for the moment of action, replace the belief held by the agent and which "the many" see as being overcome in putatively akratic actions. But Socrates seems to think that the original belief is actually replaced as a result of the way the agent determines what is really in the agent's best interest at the time of action. The result is that the agent always acts in the way the agent thinks is best for the agent at the time of action — but in cases "the many" think are akratic, the belief held by the agent at the time of acting is the product of a non-rational belief-forming process, one grounded in natural attractions or aversions, and not defeated by other belief-forming processes *including especially the ones that may have led the agent to think otherwise earlier.*

But as we noted in our discussion of the *Ion*, it does not need to follow from all of this that the agent, in changing beliefs in this way, continues to have, as it were, access to only one single cognitive world at a given time. It may be that agents can experience two (or more?) cognitive worlds that are inconsistent with one another, and how one reacts or behaves at a giv-

en time is to be explained, not by an appeal to one single coherent cognitive system somehow losing contrary beliefs from the system altogether, but by something like the way in which the agent comes to *focus* on the different views he or she could hold. Putative akratics are not *really* akratic in the way "the many" supposed, in this picture, *even if* the agents still have, within their cognitive systems all told, access to all of the reasons why they thought it best not to act as they end up acting, and even if they *also* continue to have some cognitive access to the very belief as to how they should act that would rationally follow from such reasons. In suggesting that one who has a belief that is part of one system still "has access to" to another which he accepts, we are not suggesting that he or she could not temporarily find the one so compelling that he or she utterly loses track of the other. Indeed, this is what commonly happens in diachronic belief akrasia. "The many" are not wrong to think that the shift is to be explained by such things as *thumos*, *hedonē*, *lupē*, *erōs*, and *phobos*. But what "the many" have missed is that putatively akratic agents continue in every case to act in the ways they believe is best for them, given the options of which they are aware under the circumstances. So-called akratics behave *as if* they have suddenly forgotten everything they believed before their allegedly akratic actions. But, in the view we are proposing, it need not be that they have lost all cognitive access to their former beliefs. For one thing, we are not surprised when all of their former beliefs come back to haunt them, as they feel remorse for what they have done and think that what they have done is wrong. But something has certainly disturbed the way in which they create and sustain beliefs about what they should do. Our account has it that non-rational belief-forming and belief--supporting processes, based in our natural attractions and aversions, have intervened in ways that can make someone lose their focus on what they had come to believe more rationally, and come to focus instead on the beliefs to which these attractions and aversions naturally incline us. Socratic motivational intellectualism (always acting in the way we believe is best for us) is preserved, and "the many" are thus mistaken about akrasia. But the moral psychology thus revealed is obviously a good deal more complicated than what is imagined in Penner's purely informational version.

III. IRRATIONALISM AND RESISTANCE TO REASON

If there are beliefs whose causal origin or continued ground is *other* than the more familiar rational epistemic origins and grounds, then that would help to explain why, in so many of our dialogues, we find recalcitrant interlocutors who appear to continue to believe things they are not able to justify to Socrates, or refrain from accepting things that Socrates shows them they have better evidence for accepting than what they have claimed to accept. Examples of such episodes in our texts are so familiar we need here only to look briefly at two texts to get some sense of their variety. The following examples are, accordingly, not in any way intended to be exhaustive, but only illustrative of some different ways in which this sort of interlocutory recalcitrance can appear.

(1) *Apology*. In the *Apology*, we find Socrates straining to explain to his jurors why he has become such an object of hatred. It was all because of his questioning of others, he explains, who claimed to be wise when they actually were not. "This very investigation, Athenians, has generated for me a great deal of hatred, which is most difficult to handle and hard to bear, and

the result has been a lot of slandering, and the claim made that I'm "'wise'". (*Apology* 22e6--23a3)[11]

We might wonder why such hatred would be "most difficult to handle and hard to bear" by someone as gifted in reasoning as Socrates is. If changes of ethical belief were always simply to be achieved by "philosophical dialogue," as Penner has it, we see no reason why Socrates would struggle to deal with the hatred he has encountered. He might simply speak sensibly to those who react badly, and we would expect happy results to the same degree as Socrates' arguments present good justification. But that, it seems, is not at all how things have gone for Socrates, neither with his detractors, nor with his jurors, with whom Socrates finds himself pleading not to judge him *in anger* (36b6-d1, see also 34c7-d1).

The *Apology* also gives some examples of Socrates' awareness of unreason based on the effects of fear. An important theme in what Socrates says to his jurors is that he will not, in spite of what they may expect from him, do anything as a result of a fear of death. Socrates' repeatedly making this point (see, e.g., 28b3-29c1, 32a4-e1) makes plain that he is well aware of how common it is for *others* to act in ways that are the result of their fear of death. But Socrates insists that those who act from the fear of death thus expose their ignorance, "for no one knows whether death happens to be the greatest of all goods for humanity, but people fear it because they're completely convinced that it's the greatest of evils" (29a9-b1). On the contrary, as far as Socrates himself is concerned,

> But in this respect, too, men, I'm probably different from most people. While I don't really know about the things in Hades, I don't think I know. But I do know that it's evil and disgraceful to do what's wrong and to disobey one's superior, whether god or man. Rather than those things that I know are bad, I'll never run from nor fear those things that may turn out to be good. (29b5-c1)

Here, again, Socrates emphasizes that he is "different from most people," because he realizes that most people often act in the ways they do because of what he plainly regards as an *irrational* fear of death. It is important to underscore that Socrates is not suggesting that most people have a mere false belief about what happens after death, as if they have simply accepted the wrong information about what happens after death, perhaps from the poets or some other source. Nor is Socrates only accusing them of being unreflective about what happens at death, though they are surely that. That he compares his own readiness to face death at the hands of the court rather than disobey the god to his readiness to face death on the battlefield rather than disobey his commanders (28d6-29a1) shows us that he thinks someone who is able to overcome or abandon a fear in favor of a desire to do what he thinks is right must have a certain psychic strength that enables the soul to form and hold onto the right belief. Thus, contrary to the informational view of Socratic motivational intellectualism the lesson of the *Apology* on the fear of death cannot very well be that those who fear death as if it were "the greatest evil" merely need to acquire the right information. But given that their fear maintains an irrational hold over them, it is obvious that Socrates does not think he can simply explain, as he does, how and why such a fear is irrational, and expect that those susceptible to having and acting on such fears will so simply be relieved of their irrationality. If only it were so easy!

(2) *Gorgias*. As we noted at the outset, there has already been a careful recent study of Callicles' behavior in the *Gorgias* that contends his behavior must be understood as being the result of fear — specifically, Callicles' "crippling fear of death," as Emily Austin puts it.[12] It is this irrational fear, according to Austin, that makes Callicles unable to accept Socrates' arguments, *even though Callicles can actually see the rational force of Socrates' arguments*. The critical passage for seeing this, as Austin notes, is at 513c4-d1, where Callicles seems simply to concede everything that Socrates has argued. Nonetheless, he complains that he is still "not quite persuaded". Socrates playfully suggests that Callicles' lack of rational response is due to yet another non-rational source of beliefs: love:

> Callicles: I don't know how it is that I think you're right, Socrates, but the thing that happens to most people has happened to me: I'm not really persuaded by you.
> Socrates: It's your love (*erōs*) for the people, Callicles, existing in your soul, that stands against me. But if we closely examine these matters often and in a better way, you'll be persuaded. (513c4-d1)

Austin contends that it is really Callicles' fear of death that puts him beyond rational persuasion at this moment. But as we said in the last section, we do not doubt that *erōs*, too, has the potential to generate and sustain beliefs in ways that are veridically unreliable. Either explanation, accordingly, would equally serve to explain why, in spite of his ability to follow reasoning, Callicles would continue to believe in a way that was contrary to the reasons of which he becomes aware in his discussion with Socrates.

Our very brief citations of episodes in these two dialogues are enough, we think, to give samples of at least three of the sources of irrationality in people Socrates tries to persuade: anger, fear, and *erōs*. If we recall the list provided by "the many" for why, in their view, people behave akratically, we will find these three items familiar, but they leave the full list incomplete. But resistance to reason may be found elsewhere in our texts, as well, and we might find that proper explanations of such irrationalism would give us reason to increase our list of explanations. Callicles says that what has happened with him also "happens to most people". Callicles also complains that in the discussions with Gorgias and Polus immediately preceding his own interaction with Socrates, the others had simply made the concessions they did out of shame, rather than genuine conviction (482c5-483a2).

Did "the thing that happens to most people" also happen to Euthyphro, who makes a hasty retreat from his conversation with Socrates, but does not give any clear indication that he has been *persuaded* by anything in his conversation with Socrates? If he remains unpersuaded, why is that? And how about Crito, in the dialogue that bears his name? He is certainly shown to accede to Socrates' arguments, but he seems to do so mostly in silence, which might leave us somewhat uneasy about his level of real commitment to those arguments. In many of the dialogues, one is left wondering at just how much difference the discussion has made to the interlocutors. At best, Socrates is able to bring them to the very good result (in his view) that they recognize in themselves a state of *aporia*. We think, for example, this result may be found in the *Laches*, *Lysis*, and especially *Hippias Minor* where the *aporia* achieved seems even to infect Socrates himself (see 372a6-e6, 376b8--c6). Perhaps in *Republic* I, Socrates manages even to begin to win over the most recalcitrant of any of the interlocutors we meet in Plato's dialogues, but it is, at best, only a beginning[13]

— Thrasymachus can hardly be supposed to have been convinced by anything Socrates has said. Perhaps different diagnoses will be needed to explicate well the lack of rational responses we find in the different dialogues. But that we find such irrational responses can hardly be doubted.

IV. VARIABILITY OF RATIONALITY

We first noted that Socrates is a cognitivist about the emotions, and have now offered an account of how he can maintain this position and also understand that the emotions can create impediments to reasoning, on the ground that the beliefs in which the emotions consist can be the result of non-rational belief--forming processes, and are thus veridically unreliable.[14] These processes, we claim, are the ways in which our very natural attractions and aversions function psychologically: They present to the soul representations of what is best for us, inclining the agent to come to believe that doing whatever the attraction or aversion indicates actually is the best thing for the agent to do under the circumstances, given the options of which the agent is presently aware. The inclination to come to such a belief is, however, defeasible; the agent might be able to consider some contrary evidence that convinces him or her that the inclination in question would be a mistake. An example of this kind of process would be familiar enough to most of us: Imagine the dieter naturally attracted to some obviously well-crafted piece of pastry, and finding himself inclined to eat it. But then, the agent reminds himself that he is supposed to be on a diet and thus to avoid eating such things as the pastry he has just now been offered. Perhaps with some reluctance, the dieter thus decides to decline the pastry, believing that not eating it would be the best thing for him in this instance. Our natural attractions to food and drink may be conceived as examples of what Socrates calls appetites in the *Charmides* passage where he distinguishes different kinds of desire. We can conceive of a different sort of example that might involve each of our other natural forms of attraction or aversion, such as those that derive from *erōs*,[15] or those involving our aversion to the approach of something bad, which would incline us to form the belief that is fear.

But if, as we have claimed, such attractions and aversions are themselves entirely natural for us, and if, as we have also claimed, the way these work is to incline us to generate and accept certain beliefs, why is it that some people seem better and some worse, in terms of the rational fallibilities associated with these non--rational processes? The fearful person, as we all know, is *much more likely* to form false beliefs about threats in his or her environment; the courageous person is much less likely to make such mistakes. As Socrates puts it in the *Protagoras*,

> [Socrates speaking] Now then; that through which cowardly people are cowardly, do you call it cowardice or courage?
> [Protagoras] Cowardice.
> And aren't cowards shown to be so through their ignorance of what is to be feared?
> Absolutely.
> So they are cowards because of that ignorance.
> He agreed.
> So, can we conclude that cowardice is ignorance of what is and is not to be feared?
> He nodded. (360c1-7)

Those who operate in ignorance, we know, will mostly fail to do well, except in rare instances when dumb luck might favor them. Now we are asking a different question, however: Socrates claims that cowards are the way they are because of ignorance. But how and why is it that some people become *much more* ignorant than others? How, that is, do cowardly people become cowardly and courageous people become the opposite?

The obvious answer to this question is to go back to Socrates' discussion, also in the *Protagoras*, about the wondrous advantages that would accrue to us if only we could come to achieve what he calls the "craft of measurement" (*metrētikē technē* — 356d4 and following). It is this craft, he says, that would allow its possessor to defeat the "power of appearances".

> [Socrates speaking] While the power of appearance often makes us wander all over the place in confusion, *often changing our minds about the same things* and regretting our actions and choices with respect to things large and small the craft of measurement in contrast, would make the appearances lose their power by showing us the truth, would give us peace of mind firmly rooted in the truth and would save our life. (356d4-e2; translation slightly modified and our emphasis)

In our *Socratic Moral Psychology*, we explained that our natural attractions and aversions create what Socrates here calls the "power of appearance," making things to which we are attracted or averse seem greater in value (positive or negative, respectively) when the attraction or aversion is particularly active (e.g. when we are hungry and see the pastry) and when the objects of such attractions or aversions are more proximate, spatially or temporally. The difference between the coward and the courageous person, then, can be drawn in terms of the former lacking and the latter having the craft of measurement.

But this cannot be the whole story, nor is it enough to answer the question we just asked. After all, it seems the craft of measurement that would be our savior in life is nothing other than the knowledge that would be constitutive of wisdom (see 360c7-d5). But as we know from the case of Socrates himself, such wisdom is, at best, in very short supply among human beings. Socrates, after all, is the one who always claims to lack such wisdom. Indeed, he has been identified by the Delphic oracle as the wisest of men *only* because of his awareness of his own ignorance (see *Apology* 23a5-b4). It would appear, accordingly, that Socrates himself lacks the craft of measurement; and if no one is wiser than Socrates, then no one else, it seems, has been so fortunate as to come to have that craft. But even in the *Apology*, Socrates claims that he is wiser than those he interrogates who think they are wise when they are not. And, as we have seen, he is also not as likely to do anything shameful out of a fear of death. How is it that some people, then, become very cowardly and fearful, but others — *even though they lack the craft of measurement* — can somehow overcome or minimize the distorting effects of the power of appearance that comes to us through our very natural attractions and aversions? How can some people manage at least for the most part to *avoid* the errors of the fearful coward?

The answer to *this* question, it seems, cannot be simply to encourage those who wish to do better than cowards simply to go and acquire the craft of measurement. Such an acquisition, after all, turns out to be no easy task,

and may well not prove even to be possible for ordinary human beings.[16] But the examples of Socrates and many others who are steadfast in battle or self-controlled in other admirable ways seem to indicate that the ignorance that so deeply infects the coward may be avoidable without the actual possession of the craft of measurement, at least to a degree.

Now it is a commonplace to note that Socrates does not at all think we should give up on the quest to become virtuous. On the contrary, as he characterizes his ordinary activities in Athens to his jurors, he claims that he is exhorting his fellow citizens always to pursue virtue, and to value it more highly than anything else (see *Apology* 29d7-30b2). So he obviously believes there is real value to be achieved through the pursuit of virtue — even if its final acquisition may not be in the offing for us. This, we may assume, is why he thinks "the unexamined life is not worth living for men" (*Apology* 38a5-6).

But this "intellectualism", as it has been called, is not the only advice Socrates has for others, and it is not the only advice that he makes with an eye to avoiding the errors that our natural attractions and aversions can lead us into. As we have now noted several times, the main problem with the ways in which these things work in us is that the processes involved are non-rational. Socrates advocates a much greater commitment to the rational life than most of his fellow citizens actually followed, because he realized that the life of reason is one very important way in which a person can defeat "the power of appearance" even without the fully achieved "craft of measurement". In essence, one can achieve some balance even in the face of some powerful appearance simply by allowing oneself to consider contrary evidence one may have for what one is naturally inclined to do — evidence provided by more rational and epistemically (and ethically) reliable cognitive processes.

As we have seen, however, the more reliable cognitive processes are not always sufficient by themselves to address and correct the errors created by non-rational and veridically unreliable processes within us. But with specific reference to these processes, Socrates also has additional advice, which we find him offering to Callicles, who as we have seen is clearly characterized as someone with very serious problems deriving from non-rational processes. To Callicles, Socrates advises a strategy that is not as obviously "intellectualist", though one that we claim is completely consonant with Socratic intellectualism:

> Socrates: And isn't it just the same way with the soul, my excellent friend? As long as it is corrupt, in that it's foolish, undisciplined, unjust and impious, it should be kept away from its appetites and not be permitted to do anything other than what will make it better. Do you agree or not?
> Callicles: I agree.
> Socrates: For this is no doubt better for the soul itself?
> Callicles: Yes, it is.
> Socrates: Now, isn't keeping it away from what it has an appetite for, disciplining it?
> Callicles: Yes.
> Socrates: So to be disciplined is better for the soul than lack of discipline, which is what you yourself were thinking just now.
> Callicles: I don't know what in the world you mean, Socrates. Ask someone else.
> Socrates: This fellow won't put up with being benefited and with his undergoing the very thing the discussion's about, with being disciplined! (505b1-c4)

It appears that Socrates' "diagnosis" of what is wrong with Callicles is that the younger sophist has allowed his appetites to get out of control, with the result that his soul now lacks discipline. It could hardly be clearer that Socrates regards this as the source of Callicles' irrationality, which he noted as soon as Callicles entered the discussion. It is this lack of discipline in Callicles' soul, we may now see, that causes his soul to be so out of harmony with himself, shifting back and forth (481d5-482c3), and needing Socrates to encourage him to remain calm while they converse (see esp. 503d5). We may conclude that even though there is an important place for rational persuasion in his conversations, Socrates also is quite aware of the processes by which non-rational beliefs come into being and make the person who has them less likely to remain calm and open to the more reliable cognitive processes, including especially those involved in rational deliberation and dialogue.

Earlier in this section, we asked why some people who lack the craft of measurement are so much more likely than others to be susceptible to the processes that generate and sustain non-rational beliefs. We are now in a position to answer that question: the more we keep our appetites — those natural attractions and aversions we have been discussing — in a *disciplined* condition, the more able we will be to engage in and appreciate the epistemic value of reasoning. But the more one indulges those natural attractions and aversions, the stronger their role in belief-production becomes, with the effect that one becomes increasingly less responsive to reason in one's cognitive processes. It is this condition, we claim, that Socrates has in mind when he says that certain kinds of wrongdoing damage the soul. And at the most bitter end of such damage, Socrates seems to think, one's soul can be damaged beyond any hope of repair — ruined.[17]

V. REMEDIATION OF IRRATIONALITY

At the very end of the last passage we quoted, Socrates indicates that at least part of what he is trying to do with Callicles is to help the younger man become more disciplined in his soul. Given that the procedure he seems to be using is conversational, it is not surprising that scholars have understood Socrates' "therapy" here in purely rational terms: His "punishment" of Callicles is to be understood entirely in terms of philosophical dialectic.[18] But our response to this line of interpretation should at this point be obvious: the kind of dialectic Socrates is using here does not seem to be well understood if we think of it in *purely* rationalistic terms. Instead, we think we should take more seriously, as other scholars have more recently done,[19] the idea that an important part of what Socrates attempts to do in his conversations is to *shame* people whose pretense of wisdom has put them at risk of even further damage to their souls. Callicles himself is hardly unaware of this aspect of what Socrates is up to: after all, Callicles' initial complaint against Socrates' discussions with Gorgias and then Polus is that Socrates had managed to *shame* the others into making the concessions that they made to his arguments (see 482c5-483a2). Socrates himself never denies the charge that he uses shame in his conversations; indeed, elsewhere, we find him explicitly claiming to do precisely this:

> If [someone to whom I am speaking] doesn't appear to me to have acquired virtue but says he has, I'll shame him becau-

> se he attaches greater value to what's of less value and takes what's inferior to be more important. (*Apology* 29e5-30a2)

Socrates' description of those who earn such shaming from him is curiously reminiscent of a brief description in Homer's *Iliad*:

> But Zeus the son of Kronos stole away the wits of Glaukos
> who exchanged with Diomedes the son of Tydeus armour
> of gold for bronze, for nine oxen's worth the worth of a hundred. (*Iliad* VI. 234-6; trans. Lattimore)

Like Homer, Socrates, too, regards those who would trade "gold for bronze" as being out of their wits, not in their right minds, and we have been exploring herein the ways in which such irrationality can get hold of agents and lead them into making decisions they should not make, and which will be damaging to them. As in some of the cases we have been talking about, Glaukos makes his witless decision in the context of an emotional moment — when he takes himself to be renewing vows of guest--friendship with the grandson of a man who had sworn friendship with Glaukos's grandfather.

So Socrates thinks that the pretense of wisdom deserves shaming, and in the *Apology*, too —, just as we see in the *Gorgias* when he talks with Callicles, Socrates connects the shaming with questioning, examining, and refutation (*Apology* 29e5). Those who are questioned, examined, and refuted by Socrates, as we often see, find themselves ashamed, and our texts provide several vivid examples of how Socrates' interlocutors react. Perhaps the most famous example of this appears in Book I of the *Republic*:

> Thrasymachus agreed to all this, not easily as I'm telling it, but reluctantly with toil, trouble, and — since it was summer — a quantity of sweat that was a wonder to behold. And then I saw something I'd never seen before — Thrasymachus blushing. (*Republic* I. 350c12-d3)

Plato's Socrates, then, is well aware of this effect on his interlocutors, and as we can see from his own description of what he does, it is not simply a foreseeable, but is, at least in some cases, an *intentional* outcome of his engagements with others. Those who become ashamed, plainly, do not find the experience at all pleasant. In fact, some of those whom Socrates shames respond, too, with anger and hatred, as we have already seen. These other responses, we may reasonably expect, are not at all ones that Socrates intends, and when they do occur, as he says (see *Apology* 22e6-23a3, quoted above in section III), he finds it "most difficult to handle and hard to bear."

But even if Socrates does not always manage to get the reactions he seeks from others, it should now be clear that when he intends to shame one of his interlocutors, we should understand this as operating at a different level, or working on a different element of the interlocutor's psychology, than the purely rational content of his discussions. Persuasion would be much easier, obviously, if one in possession of a strong argument were using that argument on another whose rationality were optimal and unimpeded. As Socrates was well aware, however, such unimpeded rationality is not always what one can expect from an interlocutor, and when that interlocutor becomes recalcitrant because of some non-rational factor, Socrates understands that an application of the unpleasant experience of shame may make the other person more ready to listen to reason. The ap-

plication of shame adds an important social dimension to persuasion.[20]

Imagine, accordingly, two soldiers waiting on the city walls. Both had volunteered for this duty, believing that it was the best thing they could do, given their great debt to the city. As the enemy approaches, however, one of them cries out and seems on the verge of abandoning his post. The other, remaining steadfast, protests:

> Did you not only yesterday say that "wherever someone stations himself, believing it to be best or where someone has been stationed by his commander [...] he must remain there to face danger, not weighing death or anything else more than disgrace"? Do you now plan to run back to your beloved wife and children, marked for life as a pathetic coward? Do you think they will want to be held in the arms of such a worthless specimen? Or perhaps you suppose your parents will have you, and not feel only disgust and shame at their own failure to raise you well enough to be a man instead of a cowering child? Run away, if you like, but do not suppose that when you are done running that you will still have family, or friends, or fellow citizens with whom to consort — for neither will you be allowed even so much as to be a citizen here, if you cannot at least be a man first! (Material in quotations is *Apology* 28d5-9)

The argument the braver man offers to his tremulous colleague obviously has significant evidential content, but we contend that it is equally obvious that the persuasion intended here operates just as much by attempting to induce a sense of shame in the fearful man. If the frightened man can become aware of the shameful elements in what he is about to do, he will also become more able to appreciate other reasons why it is not actually in his best interest to run away, in spite of the approach of the enemy. Here the fact that he *will feel shame if he runs away* serves a consideration that should help persuade him to do the right thing. But shame may also serve as a mild chastisement that, for one who has a sense of shame, actually serves to weaken the inclination to see fleeing as a great good. When it functions in this second way, as a form of chastisement, shame can help us to control our non-rational capacities and bring our soul into a more disciplined condition.

But both usages of shame have their limits as a tools for encouraging right conduct, for there are some whose sense of shame seems not to be especially responsive, or which may not exist at all. Earlier, we gestured at Socrates' belief that souls can be damaged by allowing the appetites to go out of control and become undisciplined. The more this lack of discipline takes hold in a soul, the less even shame may have an effect. For more extreme cases of wrongdoing and for wrongdoers whose damaged souls have become increasingly intractable to ordinary rational and social methods of persuasion, Socrates also shows that he recognizes even stronger non-rational methods of remediating the problem. Socrates plainly understands that there is a difference between responding to wrongdoing with the use of rational persuasion, which he characterizes as instruction in the *Apology*, and contrasts to the kinds of punishments that are mandated in legal contexts (*Apology* 26a1-8). As for such legal mandates, Socrates is well aware that these may include such things as "blows or bonds", but insists that they are nonetheless to be endured when the state commands them (*Crito* 51b6). He is willing to give Hippias the impression

that some things he (Socrates) might say would merit a beating (*Hippias Major* 292b5-6). But several passages in the *Gorgias* — which, again, seems to be the dialogue in which Socrates' recognition of and responses to non-rational sources of belief is the most prominent — make his approval of physical punishments explicit. Two of these are worth attention here. In the first, Socrates explains to Polus what he takes the real value of rhetoric to be:

> If he or whomever else he may care about commits wrongdoing, he should voluntarily go to wherever he will pay the penalty as soon as possible, to the judge as if to the doctor, eager to take care that the disease of wrongdoing not become chronic and make his soul fester and become incurable. [...] He ought not hide his injustice but bring it out in the open, so that he may pay his due and become well, and it is necessary for him not to act cowardly but to shut his eyes and be courageous, as if he were going to a doctor for surgery or cautery, pursuing the good and noble and taking no account of the pain, and if his injustice is worthy of a beating, he should put himself forward to be beaten, and if to be imprisoned, he should do it, and if to pay a fine, to pay it, and if to go into exile, to go, and if to be killed, he should be killed. (*Gorgias* 480a6-d2; see also 478c3-e4)

Later in the dialogue, Socrates explains why he thinks such punishments can be useful:

> It is fitting for everyone who deserves punishment from another either to become better and to profit from it or to serve as an example to others in order that others, when they see the suffering that they undergo will become better out of fear. Those who become better and pay the penalty inflicted on them by gods and men are those who have committed wrongs that are curable. Nonetheless, the benefit comes to them there in Hades through pain and suffering. For it is not possible to be rid of injustice in any other way. (*Gorgias* 525b1-c1)

These passages obviously endorse forms of punishment the approval of which some scholars have found impossible to attribute to Socrates. So, for example, quite recently Rowe 2007, 34 has claimed that "punishment", or *kolazein*, for Socrates, is not a matter for the courts but for *philosophical dialectic*". Rowe 2007, 32 earlier noticed that Socrates contrasts *nouthetein* (admonishment) with *kolazein* (punishment) at *Apology* 26a1-8, but seems to think that Socrates in the *Gorgias* simply assimilates the two. Thus, Rowe 2007, 36 finds himself able to reach his goal: "My conclusion is that the Socrates of the *Gorgias* does not endorse flogging, imprisonment, or any other vulgar kind of punishment". Socrates talked as if he endorsed such things only as a rhetorical strategy against Polus and Callicles: "Socrates mounts his argument in the terms he does […] because they are the terms his opponents, or interlocutors, can readily understand" (Rowe 2007, 34). That such a tactic renders Socrates dishonest or misleading in the way he undertakes his dialectical discussions seems not to concern Rowe.

We are now in a position, however, to avoid attributing to Socrates such a disingenuous way of explaining his views. Instead, aware that there are non-rational processes to which some people can become especially prone by allowing their appetites to become undisciplined, Socrates also recognizes that there can be non-rational ways to check these processes, by a

kind of opposing application of similar processes: our natural attraction to pleasure will not be so likely to get the best of us if the way it leads us to behave (via, again, the ways in which it inclines us to believe about which of our present options is in our best self-interest) is perceived as being likely to bring us significant pain, instead. Our natural attraction to beauty, to use another example, will not as likely lead us into wrongdoing with someone else's spouse, for example, if we come to associate such wrongdoing with the pains and shames of the punishments to which adulterers are subjected. And our natural aversion to injury and physical suffering will not be as likely to lead us to desert our military post if we become more aware of the shame that would cause us, or even more significant punishments, to which we are even more intensely averse. It would be a nicer world, perhaps, if the only effective remediation for wrongdoing was a calm conversation with someone whose ethics were more reliable than the wrongdoer's own. But Socrates, we claim, is well aware that calm conversation is not always possible, and would not be effective even if it were, and in some cases may therefore not be the best way to change a wrongdoer's choices. This is because such choices can in some cases be traced back to non-rational processes. To bring these under better control, one disciplines the soul through denying it the pleasures to which it is so attracted, and in some cases by bringing to it instead the very things the out-of-control soul would prefer most of all to avoid. This, then, is the ground for Socrates' approval of various painful forms of physical punishment, and also for the non-physical, but nonetheless still quite unpleasant examples of social pressure to which he sometimes quite intentionally subjects his interlocutors.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We began this paper with a passage that clearly indicates that Socrates is a cognitivist about emotion. But we have also argued that this cannot very well be all there is to emotion for Socrates. He also seems to think that they can make someone experiencing them resistant to reason. We have proposed that this is because Socrates recognized different etiologies of belief, where some of these included non-rational — veridically unreliable — processes. With this recognition in place, we found that we were better able to explain the differences between people's responses to rational persuasion, where some were more responsive to such persuasion than others. While noting the salvation the craft of measurement would be to any of us, we also wondered why those who lacked this craft were not all equal in their susceptibility to non-rational processes, and the (mostly) faulty beliefs to which these processes give rise and by which these beliefs might persist, even in the face of good reasoning that provided reasons why the beliefs should be abandoned or reversed. We then also reviewed the significant evidence we find in several of our texts in which Socrates seems not only to recognize, but also to endorse the uses of various forms of punishment and behavior modification that seem founded in the use of non-rational processes, such as applications of pain or public humiliation. The upshot, we contend, is at least a coherent whole view about the emotions: That he is a cognitivist about emotion, we have no doubt. But by showing how Socrates thinks the emotions arise and how they can be reckoned with when they interfere with the ability to respond to reason, we believe we have not only done full justice to the relevant texts, but we also shown that Socrates has a richer and more plausible

account of emotion than alternative, "purely" cognitive accounts would have us believe.

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NOTES

1 By "Socrates" in this paper, we mean only to refer to the character of that name who appears in Plato's "early" or "Socratic" dialogues. For a fuller discussion and defense of this practice, see Brickhouse & Smith 2010, chapter 1.

2 Unless otherwise noted, all translations used herein are those found in Cooper 1997. Plato reports that there was some discussion over whether this was properly called "fear" or "dread", with the verdict initially appearing to be that it is more properly called "dread", but the distinction seems to be dropped or ignored in the discussion that follows, with Socrates freely focusing on fear and what is to be feared in the remaining arguments about courage. In the remainder of this paper, accordingly, we will make no attempt to distinguish fear from dread, and intend to make no claims about how or why or even whether they might be different from one another.

3 There has recently been a considerable literature on the topic of Socratic motivational intellectualism. The version represented here is what we have in our earlier work identified as what at least used to be the "standard view" of the Socratic position. In the past 20 years or so, however, there have been an increasing number of challenges to this position, perhaps most importantly starting with Devereux 1995. Devereux argues that the texts also

indicate that Socrates believed that non-rational desires (in which group he included the emotions) could also explain why people act in some cases. Those opposing Devereux's interpretation have included Terry Penner, Naomi Reshotko, and Christopher Rowe (sometimes in collaborations with one another), who offer a more sophisticated explanation of how cognitions can come into being and also be changed — one that nonetheless maintains that belief creation and change are all responses to new information of some sort. (See notes 5, 6, 7, 9, and 18, below, for specific citations.) For this reason, we have elsewhere called their view the "informational view" of Socratic motivational intellectualism (in Brickhouse & Smith 2012). Our own understanding of Socratic motivational intellectualism more closely follows Devereux's, though departs from his view on several points. For more complete discussions of all these views, see Brickhouse & Smith 2010, and Brickhouse & Smith 2013. We make some important revisions and clarifications in Brickhouse & Smith 2012. In all of our recent work, however, we have treated the emotions as similar in kind to the appetites (as did Devereux — see above), which we plainly now think is a mistake. A recent clarification of the Penner, Reshotko, and Rowe position is provided by Reshotko 2013. We will be considering some details of the above views in application to the emotions in this paper, but at least one aspect of our argument herein is a significant departure from our own former interpretation, and also that given by Devereux, whose work we followed in this regard: we now no longer accept that Socrates' view of the emotions is appropriately regarded as essentially the same as his view of the appetites. We now recognize Socrates' cognitivism about the emotions (but continue to dispute those who would count him as a cognitivist about the appetites).

4 Austin 2013, 33. Another version of this same insight can be found recently argued in this journal, in Levy 2013. Levy notes, "The overwhelming sense one gets [...] is that Socrates is trying to effect some change in Callicles not merely by getting him to see that he holds yet another inconsistent set of beliefs, but by doing so in a way designed to shame him" (33). See also Moss 2005.

5 Penner 1990.

6 We include Christopher Rowe and Naomi Reshotko in this group, as having explicitly endorsed Penner's understanding of Socratic intellectualism (see note 3, above). See also Hardy 2009.

7 Reshotko 2006, 84.

8 See note 3, above, for citations.

9 Reshotko 2006, 86.

10 By citing the *Ion* as we do here, we assume only that it belongs — as it is usually held to belong — to the group of dialogues included in the "early" or "Socratic" group. In the remainder of this paper, we provide evidence from various other dialogues that confirms our use of the *Ion* to get a sense of Socrates' conception of the emotions and what their sources might include.

11 All translations from the *Apology* are from Brickhouse & Smith 2002.

12 Austin 2013, 33.

13 For an argument to this effect, see Hoesly & Smith 2013.

14 Our interest in this paper is in the non-rational (veridically unreliable) aspects of the emotions. But we do not mean to claim that Socrates thinks that emotions are *always* or *inevitably* unreliable or mistaken. Given the definition of "fear" in the *Protagoras* with which we began, for example, it is plain enough that an expectation of something bad *could* be reliable — in cases, for example, where there really was excellent evidence that something bad was likely. The same (at least implicit) acknowledgement that some emotions are apt is indicated in the *Apology*, where Socrates distinguishes between fearing things that one does not know to be bad, as opposed to those one does know to be bad (*Apology* b8-c1): Socrates claims there that he will never fear the former, but he makes no claim not to fear the latter. Indeed, given cognitivism about fear, he *should not* claim not to fear what he knows to be bad, since that would amount to a cognitive mistake—not to fear in such a case would amount to failing to expect something bad even when one knew perfectly well that something bad was in the offing. But as we might expect, and as the same passage from the *Apology* indicates, at least some emotions are not reliable: people can and do sometimes fear things they have no good reason to fear.

15 Our texts might even provide an example of this sort of phenomenon that is experienced by Socrates himself, when he reacts erotically to the exposed thigh of the young Charmides, but then forces himself to regain self-control (*Charmides* 155c5-e3).

16 The question raised implicitly here is the very one Socrates discusses with Protagoras and also elsewhere with Meno: Can virtue be taught, and if not, how else might it be acquired? Nothing in our texts makes such an achievement seem likely.

17 For discussion of how we are to understand this process, see Brickhouse & Smith 2010, chapter 4.

18 So see, esp. Rowe 2007. More of our differences with Rowe's view follow below.

19 So see, for particularly good examples, Woodruff 2000, Sanderman 2004, Moss 2007, and most recently, Levy 2013.

20 Woodruff 2000 is especially good in bringing this social dimension out, and also at identifying its non-rational aspect.

Socrates, wake up! An analysis and exegesis of the "preface" in Plato's *Crito* (43a1-b9)

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I offer a close analysis of the first scene in Plato's *Crito* (43a1-b9). Understanding a Platonic dialogue as a philosophical drama turns apparent scene-setting into an integral and essential part of the philosophical discussion. The two apparently innocent questions Socrates asks at the beginning of the *Crito* anticipate Crito's two problems, namely how he regards his friendship with Socrates as opposed to his complicated relations with the polis and its sovereignty. These two questions are an integral part of the philosophical discussion presented throughout the dialogue.

Keywords : Plato, Crito, Drama

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1. INTRODUCTION

Prefaces in general are no more than introductions. The very terms 'preface', 'prologue', 'foreword' and the like indicate that the treatise itself has not yet been reached. The apparently unimportant passages at the beginnings of Platonic dialogues are often treated as prefaces. Plato chose to present his philosophy in the form of dramatic conversations, and it is becoming widely accepted that the dramatic form is so important that it should be taken seriously in any attempt to uncover Plato's views. Even so, many sentences and passages assumed to be merely a part of the dramatic background are still often passed over as philosophically irrelevant. If the dialogue is a philosophical drama from beginning to end, then it follows that every part of the dialogue should be considered pertinent to an understanding of the philosophical import of the work as a whole. This paper presents an example of this premise by examining a section that tends to suffer the most from being overlooked, the opening scene, in this case, of Plato's *Crito*, 43a1--b2. With few exceptions[1], Plato's dialogues usually open with what might be taken as a preface aimed at presenting the characters and the general scene. This impression is far from the actual case, as I shall demonstrate here. An analysis of these twelve lines will show how this 'preface' is actually an integral part of the philosophical argument of the dialogue as a whole, and not only a kind of a dramatic setting, an anticipation of the main themes of the dialogue and the like. Since the preface itself *is* a philosophical discussion - it contains philosophical arguments and statements - the very distinction between 'preface' and 'philosophical part' should be called into question.

2. PLATO, SOCRATES, AND PLATONIC DIALOGUES: A WORD ON METHODOLOGY

My analysis in this paper assumes the Platonic dialogue to be a philosophical drama, but focuses only on its prologue, and both points need to be explained at the outset.

When we read a Platonic dialogue we listen to the words not of the dramatist (Plato) but of his characters, among whom is to be included Socrates. The characters are usually based on historical figures, but are adapted to the needs of the fictional conversation in which they are placed. Thus, all but the most general information concerning the characters is to be sought within the specific dialogue being analyzed, rather than lifted in from other dialogues which are dramas in their own right with their own emphases.

Plato's dialogues so analyzed turn out to be well organized; the whole work is organic and its various levels interrelated. Apparently insignificant or redundant details appearing in an early stage of the dialogue are often found to be significant only at a later stage of the dialogue or of the analysis. The dramatist does not make the dialogues follow one single pattern. He may, for example, present his characters either as knowing many things in advance about their interlocutors or at first knowing only one or two things about them, but learning more as the conversation proceeds. It is usually a good idea for the reader to observe the moves made by Socrates in those dialogues where Socrates is a main speaker. When his moves are explicable only were he to know how his interlocutor would react indicates that he is presented by Plato as actually knowing in advance how his interlocutor would react.

Hence in the analysis of the text I shall jump to sections which appear later in the text in

order to detect Crito's world-view in terms of purposes and intentions. These findings will then be used in my interpretation of an earlier place in the text. It might seem reasonable to suppose that Socrates knows his interlocutor's world, at least to some extent, even before the conversation with him begins, yet this is not necessarily the case, and only a meticulous analysis of the text may decide the issue. So far as the Socrates-Crito conversation is concerned, I contend that a close reading of the text reveals that some of Socrates' moves may be explained only if he had prior knowledge. In other words, that which the reader discovers only at a later stage of the dialogue is already known to Socrates in advance. This is not arbitrariness, nor is it a pre-textual claim. It is nothing more than a meticulous dramatic analysis of the text.

Discussions concerning the introductory part of Plato's dialogues are not new.[2] The first to pay special attention to the sentences opening a Platonic dialogue seem to be some of the middle Platonists, but none of them has survived except for a few reminiscences in later writers. One of those writers is Proclus,[3] the Neoplatonic philosopher of the 5th century AD in his commentaries on Plato. At the end of the introduction to his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* he discusses the place and significance of Plato's προοίμια in general.[4] Proclus enumerates three basic attitudes which he relates to οἱ παλαίοι. There were those who did not pay any attention to the προοίμιον, while others took it to be concerned with a presentation of moral attitude and tried to connect it to the central problems discussed in the dialogue. The third group demand that the interpreter bring the matter of the prologue into relation with the nature of the dialogue's subject, and it is this last option that Proclus himself adopts, without ignoring the moral aspect raised in the second option.[5] He thus goes on to assert that he will begin by showing how the subject of the dialogue relates to the matter in the introduction. The nature of the relationship is explained one line later when he says that in studying any Platonic dialogue we must look especially at the matters that are its subject and see how the details of the prologue prefigure them. For Proclus each Platonic dialogue is a miniature cosmos (including analogies to the Good, Nous, the Soul and Nature) and this is symbolized in the prologue. In other words the content of the relationship between the subject matter and the prologue for Proclus is mainly of symbolic and allegorical significance.

As far as I can see, every scholar since Proclus and down to the present day who takes Plato's prologues as an inseparable part of the dialogue endorses Proclus' third option but gives the 'relation' between the prologue and the subject matter of the dialogue a different content. Here are a few examples.

Myles Burnyeat in a famous paper entitled "First Words"[6] basically follows Proclus and takes the opening scenes of Plato's dialogues to be of great significance for the main philosophical topic. Yet this significance amounts to viewing these scenes "as images or emblems of the substantive philosophical content to follow" (p. 14). By singling out isolated words occurring in those 'preludes' (in some cases the very first word of the dialogue) and finding later in the dialogue another word reflecting that word, Burnyeat attempts to supply the function and purpose of the 'preludes'. Thus the verb κατέβην which opens the *Republic* as Socrates begins to tell how he went down to Piraeus is, according to Burnyeat, the image of the gerundive καταβατέον which appears in book 7 (520c) during a description of the duty of the philosopher to go back down into the cave to rule those who are still there.[7] Similarly, the

word θεός which opens the *Laws* hints at Plato's main message there, that "the second-best state described in the *Laws* is a theocracy from beginning to end" (p. 9). The word αὐτός which opens the *Phaedo* "is crucial to the formulation of two of the *Phaedo*'s most substantive philosophical themes - on the one hand, the Theory of Forms; on the other, the identification of oneself with the immortal soul in opposition to the body" (ibid) and the like.[8]

A different content for the 'relation' between the prologue and the subject matter of the dialogue is to be found with Trivigno 2011. By taking Plato's *Lysis* as a case study Trivigno claims "that the significance is pedagogical and metaphilosophical, and that this significance is tied to human *self-knowledge*" (pp. 62-63). For Trivigno the prologue is indeed different from the philosophical discussion *qua* philosophical discussion but still connected to it in terms of pedagogical and metaphilosophical significance. On p. 76 he writes: "In my view, by giving his dialogues an ordinary setting (=prologue) and showing philosophical conversation emerge from it, Plato attempts to achieve two aims. First, he aims to get his audience to see the relevance of the philosophical conversation to their own ordinary lives and to provide the motivation for them to turn toward philosophical inquiry and the philosophical life". Indeed, Trivigno's interesting analysis of Plato's *Lysis*'s prologue (what he calls an 'ordinary') reveals it to be part of Plato's *protreptic* pedagogical strategy.[9]

I turn finally in this survey to Gonzalez 2003. In his brilliant analysis of the prologue in Plato's *Lysis,* Gonzalez more than any other scholar presents the very close relationship between the prologue and the philosophical discussion. As he writes: "the Platonic prologue provides the foundation for the subsequent investigation by drawing our attention to specific *problems* without a reference to which this investigation can be neither fully understood nor made fruitful. The prologue does this by introducing different themes or motifs that have a bearing on the main subject of the dialogue" (p. 16). For Gonzalez, so it seems, the prologue is much more tied to the philosophical discussion than just pointing to a setting or even images, not to mention allegorical and symbolic emblements. But we must conclude that even Gonzalez treats the openings of Plato's dialogues as merely prologues, that is, not an integral part of the philosophical discussion: the prologue itself does *not* present any argument. It must be understood that the "foundation for the subsequent investigation" is other than the investigation itself.[10]

The various views concerning the relationship between the prologue and the philosophical discussion in the dialogue seem to me reducible to five views. The relationship is either moral (Porphyry and to some extant Proclus himself), symbolic-allegorical (Proclus) pedagogical and metaphilosophical (Trivigno), imagery reflecting what will appear later (Burnyeat), or different motifs which have a bearing on the main subject to be discussed later (Gonzalez). What is common to all the views mentioned in this survey is the notion that while the prologue is indeed inseparable from the dialogue, it is still separable from the philosophical discussion *qua* philosophical discussion. I claim on the contrary, without denying symbolic, moral, pedagogical or metaphilosophical connections between the prologue and the philosophical discussion, that the prologue, at least in the *Crito*,[11] *is* actually an integral part of the philosophical discussion itself. Socrates begins his attempts to educate his interlocutors concerning the specific issue discussed in the conversation from the very beginning of the dialogue. Some of Plato's

dialogues may start with an apparently mundane unphilosophically colloquial conversation,[12] but the various characters are already beginning to reveal their motives and ways of thinking, and hence what they represent in their particular dialogue; while Socrates, in addition, is already fully active in his attempt to educate his interlocutors.[13] Plato, who composed the dialogues, might well allow a word or phrase to foreshadow the philosophical content to come, but even when this is the case, it would not be the word's or phrase's only function. Let us now exemplify these general methodological issues through an analysis of the opening of the *Crito*.

3. A GENERAL SYNOPSIS[14]

Crito is portrayed in our dialogue as facing a serious problem[15] and the only thing which can make him overcome it is success in making Socrates escape from jail. Crito's problem is an amalgam of three problems, or rather is a problem with three layers of increasing significance. Crito reveals two of the layers almost immediately (44b6-c5):[16]

> ὡς ἐμοί, ἐὰν σὺ ἀποθάνῃς, οὐ μία συμφορά ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ χωρὶς μὲν τοῦ ἐστερῆσθαι τοιούτου ἐπιτηδείου οἷον ἐγὼ οὐδένα μή ποτε εὑρήσω, ἔτι δὲ καὶ πολλοῖς δόξω, οἳ ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ μὴ σαφῶς ἴσασιν, ὡς οἷός τ' ὢν σε σῴζειν εἰ ἤθελον ἀναλίσκειν χρήματα, ἀμελῆσαι. καίτοι τίς ἂν αἰσχίων εἴη ταύτης δόξα ἢ δοκεῖν χρήματα περὶ πλείονος ποιεῖσθαι ἢ φίλους; (44b7-c3).
>
> Since, if you die, it will be no mere single misfortune to me, but I shall lose a friend such as I can never find again, and besides, many persons who do not know you and me well will think I could have saved you if I had been willing to spend money, but that I would not take the trouble. And yet what reputation could be more disgraceful than that of considering one's money of more importance than one's friends?

In terms of the dialogue, there is no reason to doubt what the character Crito says. The first layer is his friendship with Socrates contrasted with the concern he has for his reputation among the Many.[17] Which of these two considerations - his friendship and his reputation - primarily motivates Crito is a question leading to the second layer.

Socrates guesses which consideration motivates Crito, but wanting to be sure, his response is subtle: he refers only to the second reason, while simply ignoring the first one entirely: Ἀλλὰ τί ἡμῖν, ὦ μακάριε Κρίτων, οὕτω τῆς τῶν πολλῶν δόξης μέλει; ("But, my dear Crito, why do we care so much for what the Many think?") (44c6-7). Were Crito's friendship with Socrates one of the prime motives, Crito would have protested at the omission.[18] Since Crito does nothing of the sort, Socrates now knows for sure that what motivates Crito is his fear of gaining a bad reputation among the Many.[19] Nevertheless, we should also consider the relation between Crito's statements about the care for one's reputation among the Many and about helping one's friends, since Crito does not lie. There is no reason, indeed no hint throughout the whole dialogue, that Crito lies or even that he is being manipulative.

This brings us to the third layer, which, unlike the first two, is not only unconscious to Crito: it is something Crito has no chance of detecting without Socrates' help, since uncovering it would necessitate a serious philosophical analysis, without which he would unk-

nowingly continue to live a self-contradictory life. The two criteria of friendship and the opinion of the Many are mutually exclusive; trying to hold on to both will necessarily lead to self-contradiction and the result that neither will be held. A true friendship requires understanding, evaluating and judging one's friend from the friend's point of view. This does not mean accepting or agree with the friend's ideas, but it does mean taking into account the friend's world-view. While it is very difficult for anyone to penetrate a friend's mind, it is impossible for anyone enslaved[20] to the opinion of the Many to achieve this. Crito repeatedly turns to the opinion of the Many. It does not even matter to him that the Many do not necessarily know him or Socrates well, as he even states explicitly (44b10); despite this, he feels that their opinion should be taken seriously. Thus, in his second speech (44e1--46a9),[21] the reasons Crito thinks might deter Socrates from escaping from jail are actually what would appear to be reasonable deterrents to the Many. We find him dwelling on the fear of the *sykophantai*, the concern for one's friends, the fear that there would be no other place to live in, and the like. Someone enslaved to good repute among the Many assumes this criterion will work on others as well. Even 'friendship' itself, understood as it commonly is as doing good to one's friends, serves this criterion by enhancing one's reputation among the Many.[22] Crito at the beginning of this discussion appeared to have two criteria, but it is now clear that his friendship is a function of his one and only criterion, a good reputation among the Many - whether Crito is aware of this or not. Socrates who knows all these problems of Crito right at the beginning of the dialogue[23] addresses them with a series of 'moves'. I shall now demonstrate this with the opening sections of the Crito.

4. FIRST MOVE (43A1-4)

The dialogue starts with a question:[24] Τί τηνικάδε ἀφῖξαι, ὦ Κρίτων; ἢ οὐ πρῲ ἔτι ἐστίν; ("Why have you come at this hour, Crito? Isn't it still early?"(43a1).[25] On a simple reading, there seems to be nothing strange here: Socrates is responding as one naturally would when waking up and finding one's friend sitting nearby.[26] Yet if we assume that Socrates already knows something about Crito, and aims to deal with Crito's problem (of which he knows something, even if perhaps not everything), this question begins to appear not so innocent.

The first point to notice is the double question. The first is Τί τηνικάδε ἀφῖξαι, ὦ Κρίτων; ("Why have you come at this hour, Crito?"), and the second is ἢ οὐ πρῲ ἔτι ἐστίν; ("Isn't it still early?"). Socrates could have waited for an answer to his first question before moving on to the second, but he does not. I suggest that the double question is a Socratic stratagem aimed at finding out how his interlocutor is thinking. The answer Crito would have given to the first question had Socrates waited for it would have been that the ship from Delos was about to arrive that day, providing Crito with an immediate opportunity to attempt to persuade Socrates to accept his offer to escape. Socrates, however, does not wait for an answer, but adds a second question which seems to be of little significance: ἢ οὐ πρῲ ἔτι ἐστίν; ("Isn't it still early?"). Socrates wants to find out which of the two questions Crito will answer. In fact Crito responds to the second question, agreeing that it is indeed very early.[27] While this might not be strange in normal circumstances, during an attempt to rescue his friend from what he considered a terrible fate,[28] namely certain death, Crito might have been expected to react to the first question while ignoring the second, or at the very least, respond to both,

by agreeing that it was indeed early, but that he was at the prison because of the imminent arrival of the ship, after which he could immediately have launched into his attempt to persuade Socrates to escape.[29] With little time in which to act, Crito nevertheless answers the second question, entirely ignoring the first. This is Socrates' first test. Crito's agreement that it is indeed very early hints at the reason for his sudden lack of urgency.[30] He is allowing Socrates to appreciate his ability to get into jail before the official opening.[31] Being quite a bit earlier than the official opening will emphasize Crito's influence with the authorities, and his first answer - Πάνυ μὲν οὖν ("It certainly is") - seems intended to cause Socrates to ask what time it is exactly. Socrates, indeed, cooperates with Πηνίκα μάλιστα; ("About what time?"), allowing Crito to reply proudly Ὄρθρος βαθύς ("Just before dawn").

Thus the first stage ends with Crito's first failure. Crito arrived at the jail very early apparently to help Socrates escape, but when asked why he had come so early chooses to answer the accompanying question about the actual time since this draws attention to himself. The fact that Socrates puts Crito to the test with his double question confirms that Socrates already knows about, or suspects, Crito's two motives for coming to the prison: his friendship with Socrates; and his concern for a good reputation among the Many. Crito may not be so aware as Socrates now is, following the double question, of his preference for reputation over his friendship with Socrates. It is now time for Socrates' first veiled criticism.

5. SECOND MOVE (43A5-8)

Θαυμάζω ὅπως ἠθέλησέ σοι ὁ τοῦ δεσμωτηρίου φύλαξ ὑπακοῦσαι ("I am surprised that the watchman of the prison was willing to let you in")(43a5-6). This first criticism concerns Crito the citizen of a democratic polis.[32] Socrates, aware that Crito has succeeded in getting into jail only by an illegal act, attacks exactly this point. His apparent surprise might have made Crito consider the point that his act is illegal, but it would be too much to suppose that Crito would have immediately considered the point that the law he was breaking was, in one way or another, the decision of the Many, the body whose opinion he esteems above all others. Another criticism, implied, but not yet expressed, concerns Crito's opposition to a more significant decision of the Many, their sentencing of Socrates to death.[33] Crito, of course, does not understand Socrates' thrust, seeing merely another opportunity for self-congratulation: Συνήθης ἤδη μοί ἐστιν, ὦ Σώκρατης, διὰ τὸ πολλάκις δεῦρο φοιτᾶν, καί τι καὶ εὐεργέτηται ὑπ' ἐμοῦ. ("I come here so often, and besides I have done something for him")(43a7-8). Thus Socrates' second move also ends in failure.

6. THIRD MOVE (43A9-B9):

Ἄρτι δὲ ἥκεις ἢ πάλαι; ("Have you just come, or some time ago?")(43a9). This question, as opposed to the first two (43a1, 43a3), focuses not on *when* Crito arrived but on *how long* he has been there. The earlier Crito managed to get into jail, the more he offended against the law;[34] but now, the longer he has been sitting near Socrates without waking him up, the more he proves himself to be a bad friend.[35] Crito, of course, only sees here yet another opportunity for showing his power and connections: Ἐπιεικῶς πάλαι. ("For quite some time")(43a10). Crito does not see here anything strange, and Socrates tries again: Εἶτα πῶς οὐκ

εὐθὺς ἐπήγειράς με, ἀλλὰ σιγῇ παρακάθησαι; ("Then why did you not wake me up at once, instead of sitting by me in silence?")(43b1-2). The criticism should be obvious:[36] if Crito were a true friend and this were to be shown by helping Socrates escape from jail, why did he sit near his bed rather than wake him up immediately upon arrival? There was no reason for not waking Socrates up, such as a fear of being overheard (the guard has been bribed). Nor one can claim that Crito thought he has still time for a converstaion or a discussion. The urgency and lack of time is well attested by Crito's own words at the end of his second speech at 46a4-7: ἀλλὰ βουλεύου – μᾶλλον δὲ οὐδὲ βουλεύεσθαι ἔτι ὥρα ἀλλὰ βεβουλεῦσθαι – μία δὲ βουλή· τῆς γὰρ ἐπιούσης νυκτὸς πάντα ταῦτα δεῖ πεπρᾶχθαι, εἰ δ' ἔτι περιμενοῦμεν, ἀδύνατον καὶ οὐκέτι οἷόν τε. ("Just consider, or rather it is time not to consider any longer, but to have finished considering. And there is just one possible plan; for all this must be done in the coming night. And if we delay it can no longer be done."). One cannot escape the conclusion that Crito seems simply to have forgotten the reason for arriving so early, and sits quietly[37] near Socrates' bed because, as he says explicitly at 43b5-6, he wished to let Socrates go on sleeping. This is hardly the way to help a friend escape death, and Crito's second motive — that of helping his friend — therefore seems not to have been uppermost when he came to the prison.

The connection between the two criticisms is obvious. They expose Crito's confusion of motives existing ever since Socrates' trial: is he motivated by the opinion of the Many or by helping friends, in a case where his friend has been sentenced to death by the Many?[38]

It is precisely because of his concern for his reputation that Crito does not understand Socrates' hints, but attempts to explain his own situation to his audience of one. His reply is a passionate outbreak about himself and his great trouble: Οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐδ' ἄν αὐτὸς ἤθελον ἐν τοσαύτῃ τε ἀγρυπνίᾳ καὶ λύπῃ εἶναι ("No, no, by Zeus, Socrates, I only wish I myself were not so sleepless and sorrowful".) (43b3-4). We do not know yet, and Crito has not yet told Socrates, what his trouble is. We can, however, guess that his trouble has to do with his possible disrepute among the Many, rather than with losing his best friend.[39] This is not to say that he is not troubled by the prospect of losing a friend. He says that he is (44b8-9), and we should believe him. Yet Socrates realizes that this is subordinate to his concern for his good name among the Many. What - one may ask - is so bad about using the opinion of the Many as a criterion? The answer is to be found in Crito's words, and with them I shall end this paper.

The content of Crito's outbreak at 43b3-9 focuses on a double comparison. (1) Crito's ἀγρυπνία καὶ λύπη ("sleeplessness and sorrow") as against Socrates' τὸ ἡδέως καθεύδειν ("sleeping sweetly"). (2) Socrates' life before the trial as against his behavior during the trial and its consequences. These, of course, are interrelated. What is common to both comparisons is consistency. Let us check carefully what is explicitly mentioned by Crito and what can be inferred. First we are told that Crito cannot sleep well because of the present situation, while Socrates often sleeps well.[40] Does this means that Crito, apart from this particular case, sleeps well? This is not explicitly mentioned, but I think that the inference is clear. Crito very often does not sleep well.[41] Secondly, Crito is amazed not only at the nature but also at the consistency of Socrates' behavior throughout his life. Such behavior is not influenced by changing circumstances. He contrasts πρότερον ἐν παντί τῷ βίῳ ("throughout

your life hitherto") with ἐν τῇ νῦν παρεστώσῃ συμφορᾷ ("in this present misfortune").[42] The reason why one life is consistent and the other inconsistent, why one allows good sleep and the other sleeplessness, will become clear as the dialogue proceeds; it is the different criteria by which each of them lives — justice as opposed to the opinion of the Many. Socrates is always at peace, and especially in this situation, while Crito is hardly at peace, and especially in this situation. The opinion of the Many leads to sleeplessness since it is an amalgam of many different, often contradictory, opinions, leading to inconsistency and a failure to satisfy all opinions all of the time.[43] Thus Crito is doomed to live his life in fear and disquiet.[44]

Crito had so far succeeded in keeping a respectable façade, coming very early after arranging everything for the escape; but now he breaks down. He can no longer endure the pressure under which he finds himself. His two contradictory acts of friendship — arranging an escape on the one hand, but allowing Socrates to sleep as long as possible on the other — allow us to learn an important point about Crito. While appearing to be a good friend he turns out to be quite untrustworthy. The reason for his contradictory behavior is his concern for the opinion of the Many. This criterion will be Socrates' target from now on in the dialogue.

7. CONCLUSION

The title of chapter 5 in Stokes' book 2005 is "Socrates' attack: first move". For Stokes — and this is only one example out of many — Socrates starts to attack Crito's position only after Crito's second speech at 46b1. According to what has been argued here, Socrates starts his "attack"[45] at the very beginning of the conversation. His aim is not to come to know Crito, but rather to help Crito know himself. One failed move leads to the next. At each step, Crito remains uncritical and fully focused on his own reputation. Socrates moves from a veiled criticism of Crito the loyal citizen in a democratic city to Crito the loyal friend who came to save Socrates. From this, the very beginning of the dialogue, Socrates will proceed to other ways and strategies in an attempt to make Crito understand his confusion of motives.

Can the analysis of the *Crito*'s prologue presented here be generalized to all of Plato's dialogues? The answer is neither negative nor positive. What I have shown here should not be taken as a proof or an argument concerning other Platonic dialogues. It is rather an invitation to return and pay closer attention to other prologues of Plato's dialogues.

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NOTES

1 One of these exceptions, perhaps the best known, is the *Meno* which starts immediately with a 'philosophical' question. Yet see Gonzalez 2003, 44: "Not all have prologues as rich and complex as that of the *Lysis*, and some seem to have no prologue whatsoever: the *Meno* is the notorious example (though its abrupt beginning is itself a kind of prologue that needs to be explained)." On Gonzalez' approach to Plato's prologues see p. 32 below.

2 The survey I shall present here concerning Plato's prologues in scholarly literature will enable me to locate my own attitude within the rich and various opinions prevailed in scholarly literature. It will also emphasize the difference between my method and that of others and make my argument clearer. On the debate concerning the significance of the prologue in Plato's dialogues in antiquity see also Tarrant 2000, 38-41 ("Which parts of a dialogue should I be concerned with?").

3 "It is Proclus who provides us with the clearest insights into ancient debates about Plato's prologues." (Tarrant 2000, 39)

4 Procl. *In Prm*. 658-659.

5 See Morrow & Dillon 1987, 47 n. 40, who try to assign a certain source for each view. The third view they assign to Iamblichus.

6 Burnyeat 1997. Its origin is his valedictory lecture in the Faculty of Classics at Cambridge University on Friday, 31 May 1996.

7 Burnyeat goes into this topic more deeply and compares the verb θεάσασθαι which appears both in the 'prelude' and in book 7 and even compares the κατάβασις to the cave with the sensible world and Hades.

8 For examples from the *Gorgias*, *Meno* and *Timaeus* see pp. 11, 12-13, 14-16 respectively.

9 Another example of the 'relationship' is found in Planeaux 2001. In showing the setting of Plato's *Lysis* with all its anomalies and inconsistencies he wants to show that Socrates planned his encounter with *Lysis*, and by placing the meeting at the *Hermaia* "the setting of the *Lysis* is a most colorful and compelling stage" (p. 65).

10 The first theme Gonzalez uses to prove his argument is that from competition. By showing the theme of competition as emphasized in the prologue, Gonzalez argues that friendship, which is the subject of discussion in the philosophical part of the conversation, is actually a result of a competition for wisdom. Yet, one can reach this idea (whether it is true or false) by analyzing the discussion itself. The same goes for his second theme – *eros*. Again the relation between *philia* and *eros* in terms of reciprocal as against unilateral relations may be inferred by analyzing the philosophical discussion itself, and the fact that the prologue shows us two relationships (one between Hippothales and Lysis and the other between Lysis and Menexenus) is indeed helpful and supplies us with "the foundation for the subsequent investigation" but this foundation and the investigation which follows are still regarded as different.

11 Restricting my claim to the *Crito* is appropriate. Gonzalez' conclusion on p. 44 wants to give the reader a kind of guidelines of how to treat a Platonic dialogue ("It is important, first of all, to look for general themes introduced by the prologue ... Secondly, we must determine what *problems* the prologue introduces ... Thirdly, we need to read the main discussion from the perspective of these problems ..."). Although he later qualifies it by noting that "Plato's dialogues are too diverse to conform to any interpretative template" I think that each dialogue needs to be analyzed individually before general claims can be made.

12 But see n. 1 above.

13 Socrates is obliged to use devious methods in his attempts to educate.

14 In this article I am concerned with Crito as he is presented in the *Crito*. For a focus on Socrates in this dialogue, see Adam 8, vi; Woozley 1979, 4.

15 This is emphasized at 43b3-9. Crito speaks of Socrates' συμφορά ("misfortune")(43b8-9), and is jealous of the way Socrates bears it; Crito himself is also facing a great συμφορά, but unlike Socrates, is in a state

of ἀγρυπνία and λύπη ("sleeplessness and sorrow"). His misfortune lies in his soul, while the misfortune of Socrates is merely external. At 46e3-47a2, Socrates suggests that Crito, free from the necessity of dying the next day, would be able to think more clearly and without distraction, but my analysis will show that this is far from the case. Crito's misfortune is one of the main subjects of the dialogue.

16 It is important to take into account the way one speaks. In our case Plato the dramatist took care in giving Crito's speech a great sense of credibility by presenting Crito as someone who is emotionally distracted and therefore unable to be manipulative (*pace* Stokes 2005, 27-29). On jumping to a later stage in the text in order to understand an earlier one see pp. 30-31 above.

17 Crito has only spoken of πολλοί. It is Socrates who turns them into οἱ πολλοί (44c6, 44d6 *passim*). But since even when they are introduced by Crito they are people who do not know either Socrates or Crito, this transition makes sense.

18 *Pace* Woozley 1979, 7: "It is natural to ask why Plato, in composing the dialogue, had Crito raise the point {sc. loss of a friend} and Socrates ignore it; the most natural answer seems to be that it is his way of expressing to the reader the kind of muddleheadedness in argument which he wishes Crito to represent."

19 In the secondary literature the debate concerning which of these reasons dominates Crito is conducted by means of examining Crito's words alone (see for example Weiss 1998, 40 and n. 2). No one, so far as I can see, has noticed that it is Socrates himself who finds out – as an integral part of the drama – which of these two reasons is the dominant one, and that he does it by putting Crito to the test.

20 I use this word deliberately. It is exactly because of this relationship between Crito and the Many (=the polis and its laws in a democratic polis) that the Laws use the term for their relationship with Socrates (e.g. 50e2-4).

21 In the *Crito* there are two speeches by Crito which reveal to us – and to Socrates – his character, opinions and general world-view. The first is at 44b6-c5 and the second at 44e1-46a9. Most of our information concerning Crito as a character in this dialogue is to be taken from these speeches.

22 The Many will despise Crito for not helping his friend (44c2-5).

23 This can be proved by explicit hints in the dialogue to previous conversations Socrates and Crito had (e.g. 44b6-7; 44c3-5). Furthermore, otherwise inexplicable or redundant sentences or passages in the text become explicable and necessary only if Socrates is understood to have been aware already before the present dialogue of Crito's condition. See my discussion on pp. 30-31 above.

24 I divide our section into three parts: A. 43a1-4; B. 43a5-8; C. 43a9-b9. The analysis will account for my reasons for this division.

25 Here I follow Stokes' 2005 translation.

26 Cf. "The dramatic urgency of the problem is highlighted by the opening lines ..." (Woozley 1979, 6). See also Stokes 2005, 24: "This seemingly simple, but in truth artful introduction reveals the general situation in which the ensuing conversation takes place". In a way the present paper challenges Stokes' view stated at the end of the above paragraph, referring to the opening lines of the dialogue: "But attempts to read more into the text seem to fail." (ibid).

27 Stokes translates simply 'Yes'. Stokes, who does not see any real importance in this section, is at least coherent. Yet the emphasis which is captured in Fowler's translation, an emphasis which appears in the Greek, teaches Socrates a very essential thing. See immediately below.

28 As we shall see, in Socrates' eyes this might not appear to be the case, but for Crito Socrates' death is the most terrible thing one could think of.

29 We see just a little later that Crito, even when under pressure, can keep his mind on what is most urgent and not be diverted for very long by something Socrates says. At 44b6, after Socrates' dream and his comment that what he has just dreamed is ἐναργές ("a clear one"), Crito remarks λίαν γε, ὡς ἔοικεν ("too clear, apparently"), and immediately produces a long speech trying to persuade Socrates to escape.

30 At 43b6 Crito will assert that he deliberately did not awaken Socrates for some time, but we should bear in mind that he says this only *after* Socrates asks him why he did not wake him up immediately.

31 One could give an alternative explanation, namely that Crito, who knows and guesses Socrates' refusal to escape, thinks – mistakenly of course – that Socrates is afraid for his reputation would the escape fail (good reputation is what motivates Crito and as such he ascribes it also to Socrates). Yet Crito, as he is represented in our dialogue, is far from being sophisticated and manipulative.

32 Many scholars have noticed the dilemma presented in the *Crito* between one's moral codes and the duty to obey the laws, but totally overlook the significance of the democratic context: see e.g. Adam 8, v: "because in both {sc. the *Crito* and the *Phaedo*} we are introduced to problems of more universal interest, in the *Crito* to the relation between the individual and the state..." And a few lines later: "... but what really stands arraigned before him is the principle that alone renders possible the existence of any kind of State, aristocracy, no less than democracy, the *nomos* ... (xi); Woozley 1979, 5: "The issues which it raises about what it is to live in society subject to law are immense." It is only in a democratic regime that every law and custom is to be referred to the Many. It is also the democratic context that helps to explain the dominant place of the speeches in our dialogue. On this issue see Liebersohn 2015a.

33 There is also a third criticism only indirectly to do with Crito: the Many *themselves* actually expect Crito to break the law they *themselves* have enacted. Perhaps the Many (of whom Crito is a representative member) are also one of the *Crito*'s object. By extension, since the

Many hold their power only in a democratic regime, it may be seen that democracy itself is the ultimate target of Plato’s *Crito*.

34 I do not break the speed limit ‘more’ in driving at 80 rather that at 70 miles per hour. I break the law in both cases. But I will be punished ‘more’ in driving at 80 than at 70.

35 In other words, 43a1-8 criticize Crito with regard to his being a loyal citizen, whereas 43a9 starts a new criticism concerning Crito as a good friend. A loyal citizen and a good friend, however, are closely connected. See immediately below.

36 See also Dyer 1885, 115: “εἶτα refers to ἐπιεικῶς πάλαι in a vein of slight wonder or perhaps of gentle reproof” (emphasis mine).

37 Note the emphasis on σιγῇ (“in silence”).

38 The confusion is exacerbated by one motive being subordinated to the other: helping one’s friends is expected by the Many, and they will appreciate Crito’s helping his friend at the expense of breaking the law they themselves have enacted. The Many contradict themselves. See also n. 33 above.

39 *Pace* Weiss 1998, 39 who sees in Crito’s wakening of Socrates a reflection of his friendship and care for his friend.

40 This is emphasized by the words πολλάκις and especially πρότερον (“often” and “hitherto” respectively).

41 This by itself could devalue Crito’s arrival at jail so early. He was not asleep at all and thus did not have to get out of bed.

42 In another article I emphasized and developed this theme which I have called “Crito’s ‘then and now’ character”. See Liebersohn 2015.

43 In a deeper sense, justice is a consistent object of knowledge while apparent justice may be an inconsistent object of opinion.

44 This, of course, does not mean that he walks around all day shivering with fear, but the apprehensive uneasiness is always lurking in the background.

45 I use the term ‘attack’ because of Stokes, but we may consider Socrates’ moves here more as criticisms.

L'introduction problématique du *Timée* (17a-27a)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to reconsider the Timaeus' introduction (17a-27a) in order to show that Plato invites the reader to demystify the discourses of the Greek political elite of the fifth century. Dreamy land, in the autochtony myth, or ocean of nightmare, in Atlantis, khôra is the aporia of the story of Critias. Compared with Republic, this khôra is in fact the phobic projection of the aristocracy's annoyed desires.

Keywords : Khôra, *Timaeus*'Introduction, Autochthony, Maieutics, Atlantis.

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L'interprétation des dialogues du *Timée* et du *Critias* divise actuellement l'exégèse contemporaine en deux grandes tendances opposées. Certains commentateurs considèrent qu'à travers ces deux récits, Platon développe, notamment sur le plan politique, des propositions positives et constructives, soit en complément de la *République*[1], soit en amendement au grand dialogue[2]. Pour d'autres interprètes, les deux ouvrages doivent au contraire être relativisés, l'histoire de Critias en particulier ne valant que de façon négative et critique.[3] L'introduction longue et complexe du *Timée* cristallise ce débat exégétique. Socrate y décrit d'abord une cité idéale figée en théorie et demande à ses trois interlocuteurs de la mettre en mouvement (17a1-20c3). En réplique, Critias, qui est le porte parole de Timée et d'Hermocrate, résume le récit de l'Atlantide qu'il propose de développer un peu plus tard (20c3-26e2). Finalement, Socrate commente rapidement ce résumé (26e2-27a1). Le partage de la critique tiendrait pour l'essentiel à la complexité de ces étranges prolégomènes qui livreraient le dernier mot du dialogue dès son commencement.

Tenter de reconsidérer le problème inaugural du *Timée* est précisément le but de cet article. Pour ce faire, les trois temps de l'introduction seront réexaminés, en suivant l'ordre d'exposition, pour mettre en évidence la façon dont Platon a construit chacune de ces étapes. On montrera que premièrement, la question de Socrate est le résultat d'une maïeutique, que deuxièmement, la réponse de Critias a été établie en opposition aux propositions de la *République* et que troisièmement, le commentaire final est en fait un guide exégétique, permettant au lecteur de tenir une distance critique vis-à-vis des futurs discours de Timée et de Critias.

1. LA QUESTION POSÉE PAR SOCRATE

Socrate déclare avoir fait la veille un exposé au sujet des affaires de l'Etat qu'il aurait prémédité en fonction de ce qu'il sait de ses répondants et en vue de leur redonner finalement la parole (20b1-4). Or en les présentant (19c9-20b1), le philosophe met par trois fois le lecteur en garde. D'abord il déclare qu'il ne saurait lui-même mettre en mouvement la cité théorique dont il a pourtant fait le portrait (19c9-d2). Puis il disqualifie les poètes et les sophistes incapables de répondre à son attente, mais en usant de critères qui sont ouvertement de convention: l'influence du milieu pour les premiers (19d6-e1) et le défaut de domicile propre pour les seconds (19e5). Enfin, s'il choisit Timée, Critias et Hermocrate, c'est surtout en fonction des jugements de la *doxa:* l'expérience (20a6-7), la réputation (20a7-b1), la naissance et la fortune (20a2-5). De ces indications, il ressort que les trois interlocuteurs du philosophe ont un même profil: ce sont des représentants de la classe dirigeante, éduqués et accomplis, qui ne contestent pas la validité du titre de propriétaire au fondement de leur statut, ni l'autorité qu'il leur confère. Comme l'a noté Peter Kalkavage, ils ne correspondent qu'à ceux '*who think of truth in terms of doing and making*' ce qui situe et par là même relativise dès le départ la portée de leurs propos.[4] L'exposé politique du philosophe ayant été établi en fonction de cet auditoire singulier, reste maintenant à déterminer comment et pourquoi.

1.1. En résumant le discours qu'il a tenu la veille, Socrate a listé une série de prescriptions, sans présenter aucune dynamique d'évolution, figeant ainsi une cité duelle, composée de producteurs et de gardiens (17a1-19b2). Toutes les

mesures mentionnées dans ce récapitulatif ont été développées dans les premiers livres de la *République*.[5] De la comparaison entre les deux dialogues, il apparaît que la cité présentée en introduction du *Timée* ne correspond qu'à l'image figée d'un état politique temporaire et inachevé. Le développement proposé dans la *République* a en effet été arrêté avant que n'émerge le troisième groupe des gouvernants.[6]

Pour expliquer cette incomplétude, il faut prendre en considération les trois protagonistes tels qu'ils furent présentés par Socrate. Car Timée, Critias et Hermocrate peuvent aisément s'identifier aux gardiens du second groupe fonctionnel. Comme ces derniers, ils ont reçu une éducation classique (musique et gymnastique) et protègent des cités constituées essentiellement de producteurs, gens de métier, artisans et cultivateurs. Comme les gardiens qui jouissent d'un naturel à la fois 'ardent' et 'philosophe' (18a6), les trois hommes d'état sont doublement qualifiés, à la fois 'philosophes et politiques' (19e6-9). Mais en tant qu'héritiers, membres de la classe possédante, ils se distinguent radicalement des guerriers sans bien propre de la cité théorique. Or c'est là un critère rédhibitoire pour Socrate.[7] La double qualité de 'philosophe et politique', qu'il prête aux trois hommes, est ainsi frappée d'ambiguïté. Elle témoigne seulement de la bivalence des désirs de ces savants érudits qui sont aussi des hommes de bien et des stratèges.[8] Il est assez clair qu'à tous ces titres, Timée, Critias et Hermocrate, représentent en eux-mêmes, d'une part la dualité problématique de la cité militaro-économique, et d'autre part sa potentialité philosophique.

La suspension de l'exposé théorique trouve alors à s'expliquer. La société binaire proposée par Socrate est à l'image de ses répondants, taillée à leur mesure. Le philosophe attend désormais que les trois hommes décrivent la façon dont ils la gouverneront, en conduisant guerre et négociation (19b3-c3), manière de les mettre courtoisement à l'épreuve. Ils n'envisageront en effet l'avenir de la cité qu'en fonction de leurs désirs, orientés vers la philosophie ou au contraire tyrannisés par leur volonté de pouvoir économique et militaire. Comme le constatait Jacob Howland c'est bien à un combat que le philosophe espère assister.[9] Il désire voir Timée, Critias et Hermocrate lutter contre eux-mêmes dans les conflits d'intérêts qui sont à la fois les leurs et ceux de la cité militaro-économique.

1.2. Cet objectif général peut être confirmé et précisé en examinant l'ultime prescription du résumé politique introduisant le *Timée* (19a1-5).[10] Socrate déclare qu'il faudrait éduquer les enfants 'des bons':

> et conduire secrètement les enfants des méchants vers le reste de la cité, puis, sans cesser de les observer à mesure qu'ils grandissent, ramener ceux qui en sont dignes et mettre à leur place (χώραν) ceux qui en sont indignes.

La recommandation de reclassement correspond schématiquement à la mesure de mobilité sociale décrite dans la *République*. Celle-ci est instituée à la fin du livre III, par le moyen d'un 'mensonge' d'état, un mythe à deux volets que tous les citoyens doivent tenir pour vrai.[11] Premièrement, il leur faut admettre qu'ils sont nés de la terre, ont été formés par elle et qu'ils doivent en conséquence 'considérer et défendre leur pays (χώρας) comme leur mère et leur nourrice'.[12] Deuxièmement, il leur faut aussi accepter d'éventuels et secrets reclassements permettant d'élever au rang supérieur les enfants de qualité appartenant au groupe des producteurs et inversement de déclasser les rejetons les plus faibles des gardiens.[13] La

première partie de ce 'mensonge' disparaît dans le *Timée*. Seul subsiste le second principe, celui de reclassement. En conséquence, le mot *khôra* perd tout le lustre qui était le sien dans la *République*, au titre d'unité originelle, terreau physique, politique et culturel. En laissant entendre, dans le *Timée*, qu'il y a en quelque sorte deux cités en une, en raison de la distinction des deux fonctions (producteur et gardien), Socrate donne au mot *khôra* une signification ambivalente et relative, proche du sens de 'situation sociale'.

D'un dialogue à l'autre, le problème politique est ainsi mis à nu. D'un côté, le mythe fait croire à l'unité de *khôra* en tant que terre/mère de tous les citoyens, mais d'un autre côté la multiplicité sociale a lieu dans et par *khôra*, en tant qu'elle donne place/classe aux producteurs et aux gardiens. Or ce double aspect impose nécessairement de disposer d'une dialectique permettant d'articuler l'unité et la multiplicité de l'ordre social, pour lutter contre les dissensions internes et contre les dissolutions externes. Sur ce dernier point, *khôra* est l'objet d'une nouvelle prescription dans la *République*. Afin de préserver l'unité de la cité en lui évitant une croissance infinie et funeste, l'extension du territoire est limitée.[14] Cette règle est omise dans l'introduction du *Timée*, à charge pour les trois hommes d'état de gérer les débordements de la société duelle.

Socrate a donc figé l'image d'une cité militaire et économique, encore incomplète, en éludant toutes les mesures permettant dans la *République* de résoudre les problèmes émergents à ce stade du développement politique. Il ne parle ni des gouvernants dialecticiens (qui cherchent à réaliser l'unité de la multiplicité de *polis)* ni du mythe patriotique (qui fait croire par mesure de précaution à une fraternité d'ores et déjà acquise) ni de la limitation du territoire (qui permet de bloquer la tendance à l'expansion). Dans le même ordre d'idée, Socrate a donné au mot *khôra*, sur lequel il achève son résumé, le sens de 'situation sociale'. Par ce moyen, il renvoie ses trois répondants à leur 'place' et à leur 'classe', à la façon dont ils la considèrent et dont ils s'en jugent dignes ou indignes. Quelle *khôra* défendront-ils? 'Politiques', ils protégeront leur titre d'aristocrate possédant, pour conserver tout à la fois leur 'rang social' et leur 'terre natale', mêlant ainsi intérêts privés et publics. 'Philosophes', ils chercheront à éclaircir les confusions précédentes, au risque de perdre dans la désillusion leur problématique et originelle *khôra*.

Ainsi dans la première partie de l'introduction du *Timée*, Platon présente la maïeutique socratique à l'œuvre. La théorie de la *République* a été adaptée en étant réduite, en fonction des trois représentants de la classe dirigeante que sont Timée, Critias et Hermocrate, pour placer précisément ces derniers devant le conflit d'intérêt qui les fait osciller entre philosophie et politique. *Khôra*, une et multiple, rêve de solidarité et cauchemar de division et de guerre, est l'enjeu de ce combat, ce sur quoi la qualité de 'philosophe' des trois hommes d'état sera en particulier éprouvée.

2. LA RÉPONSE DE CRITIAS À LA LUMIÈRE DE LA *RÉPUBLIQUE*

Dans le second temps de l'introduction, Critias prend la parole. C'est l'aristocrate type par le bien[15] selon Solon et par la naissance selon la tradition (20d-e).[16] Il résume la réponse que les trois hommes d'état ont décidé de donner à Socrate (20c-26e). Pour eux, la cité du philosophe est apparentée à une ancestrale Athènes qui aurait conduit victorieusement une guerre contre l'Atlantide, puissance maritime et impérialiste. La dynamique politique décrite dans ce récit

est en fait double, à la fois intérieure (transformation de la théorie de Socrate) et extérieure (guerre contre l'étranger). L'évolution politique interne, le plus souvent négligée par les critiques,[17] mérite pourtant un examen attentif. Il fera l'objet de cette seconde partie de l'étude. Comme l'a fait observer Christopher Gill, les propositions de Critias sont assez semblables en leur principe à celles envisagées par Socrate en *République III,* 414c-415d.[18] En effet, dans le résumé de l'Atlantide, une troisième classe dirigeante est instituée à travers une sorte de grand récit fondateur, un mythe patriotique qui naturalise les trois groupes sociaux, unis dans et par une certaine *khôra*, sol natal et sacré. C'est là précisément le schéma du 'mensonge' d'état de la *République*.[19] Mais cette adéquation entre le récit de Critias et la théorie de Socrate ne résiste pas à une analyse comparative plus serrée comme on veut maintenant le montrer.[20]

2.1. Quelle troisième classe? Dans la *République*, la tri-fonctionnalité proposée par Socrate présente trois caractères notables. Premièrement, elle est laïque car ce sont les philosophes dialecticiens qui remplissent la fonction de direction.[21] Deuxièmement, elle est l'aboutissement d'un processus dynamique puisque la cité, d'abord une, devient double puis triple avec l'apparition des gouvernants. Troisièmement, ces derniers déterminent pour les deux classes précédentes un nouvel objectif: l'accomplissement du genre humain, véritable raison d'être du couple initial production/protection.[22] Ainsi le principe trifonctionnel (économie, défense, science) n'appartiendrait selon Socrate à aucun peuple[23] et permettrait d'assurer l'équilibre et l'unité de la cité en évitant deux écueils, d'une part la division entre classes économiques riches et pauvres, par le recours à des critères strictement fonctionnels,[24] et d'autre part la division entre castes héréditaires, grâce à la mobilité sociale.

La tri-fonctionnalité de Critias est radicalement différente. Premièrement, la troisième classe est sacerdotale à Saïs comme à Athènes.[25] Les prêtres y détiennent le pouvoir et jouent un rôle clef dans la formation des citoyens (24b7--c3).[26] Deuxièmement, la tri-fonctionnalité est posée dès l'origine de la cité comme une donnée de nature, un caractère politique inné (24c3--5). Elle n'est ni le résultat d'une dynamique interne, ni le point de départ d'une évolution future. Troisièmement et conséquemment, l'horizon politique est refermé sur un état d'essence divine, acquis et figé. La cité de Critias ne conserve donc son unité et son intégrité que par l'emprise religieuse, le pouvoir sacerdotal consacrant l'unité mythique de la 'race' (le gène originel d'Héphaïstos) du territoire (la terre de vie, matrice sacrée) et de la nation (la culture politique délivrée par Athéna). La classe sacerdotale non-dialecticienne gouverne par le moyen de l'endoctrinement afin de préserver un pouvoir local, régulant au jugé l'équilibre instable de la cité binaire. Le système trifonctionnel laïcisé et universalisé par Socrate régresse donc avec Critias en idéologie religieuse et nationaliste.

2.2. Quel mythe patriotique? La fable autochtone de la *République* présente quatre traits singuliers. Premièrement, elle est dès le départ tout à la fois posée et dénoncée comme 'mensonge' (III, 414b). Deuxièmement, elle serait d'origine phénicienne (III, 414c1-4) mais son application est universelle car tous les humains sont nés de *khôra*, ce qui généralise le principe autochtone.[27] Troisièmement, cette terre de vie est à la fois la matrice et l'éducatrice des citoyens (III, 414d-e) ce qui naturalise et universalise le système trifonctionnel. Quatrièmement, ce 'noble mensonge' comprend

un volet concernant la mobilité intergroupe dont il fut déjà question précédemment (III, 415a-c). Dans le contexte de la *République*, la fonction de ce mythe est explicite. C'est un '*pharmakon*', remède nécessaire aux multiples sociétés historiques qui, en étant inachevées, restent désunies. Chacune d'elles doit pouvoir se mobiliser et ne faire qu'une pour combattre ses propres tensions ou pour lutter contre les déséquilibres de ses voisins. La fable patriotique pallie le défaut de dialectique qui caractérise la cité en son premier développement.[28]

Critias dans le *Timée* reprend quant à lui littéralement les données du vieux mythe national athénien. Premièrement, ce dernier n'est pas dénoncé comme un mensonge mais au contraire tenu pour vrai (20d9). Deuxièmement, l'exotisme égyptien dont il est paré, loin de relativiser la logique de l'identité, cache mal la suprématie d'Athènes dont la culture serait explicitement consacrée à Saïs (23d-24e). Troisièmement, si la terre donne naissance aux hommes, ce sont les dieux qui les éduquent en citoyens. La constitution trifonctionnelle n'appartient ainsi qu'aux nations élevées par Athéna, résultat d'une double sélection, par l'excellence du sol et par l'élection divine. Critias naturalise et sacralise ainsi une distinction hiérarchisée entre les régions, les 'races' et les cultures politiques. Quatrièmement, la règle de mobilité intergroupe imposée pourtant explicitement par Socrate au début du *Timée* est omise dans le résumé comme dans le développement ultérieur du *Critias*. Les trois fonctions sont en conséquence héréditaires. La reproduction de l'excellence se réaliserait 'naturellement' dans celle de la 'race' et dans celle des 'classes fonctionnelles'. En apparence, le mythe autochtone de l'aristocrate semble remplir le même rôle fédérateur que le 'mensonge' de la *République*. Mais Critias a en fait transformé le 'remède' socratique en 'poison', en empêchant toute distance critique, en posant un fondement raciste à la solidarité nationale, en particularisant le système trifonctionnel et en dénaturant les trois fonctions devenues trois castes fermées.

2.3. Quelle *khôra*? Les occurrences du mot *khôra* dans la *République* marquent de façon significative le cheminement du *logos* de Socrate que l'on peut, par ce moyen, diviser en deux temps.[29] Premièrement, d'abord présentée comme l'espace économique et stratégique de la cité (III, 373d4, 377d7 et 388a3), *khôra* est ensuite placée au cœur du 'mensonge' d'état (III, 414e3). Elle n'a alors qu'une réalité de fable et dissimule les dynamiques politiques, en représentant une unité supposée acquise entre les trois groupes fonctionnels (*khôra* comme place dans la cité) sur un seul territoire (*khôra* comme sol natal) grâce à une identité nationale (*khôra* comme terreau culturel). Afin de réaliser vraiment cette unité, la troisième classe contrôle et corrige les effets de la croissance en limitant notamment l'extension du territoire (*khôra*, IV, 423b6) modelant ainsi sciemment l'espace culturel militaro-économique. Deuxièmement, Socrate prolonge la dynamique politique qui s'accomplirait au delà des singularités locales et du seul objectif de croissance impliquant par nécessité des découpages territoriaux. La cité est alors placée ouvertement sous le signe de la quête du savoir. Les gardiens gouvernants reçoivent une éducation supérieure et découvrent finalement le bien au 'principe du tout' (VI, 511b4-7). Dans une révolution littéralement copernicienne, le philosophe passe alors du rapport nécessaire et sacré du politique à la terre, au rapport dialectique et moral du politique au soleil, image du bien. Dans ce contexte, *khôra* n'est plus un obscur mensonge ennoblissant une terrestre nécessité mais tout au contraire le ciel de lumière et de vérité projeté par le bien

(VII, 516b6). Le mensonge patriotique trouverait rétroactivement une explication: l'homme projette lui aussi sa réalité et fabrique une *khôra* à la fois naturelle et artificielle à la mesure de ses désirs contradictoires. De ce point de vue, la fable autochtone renvoie tout à la fois à l'image d'une humanité accomplie en *polis*, mais aussi à un désir d'appropriation du réel transformé en terre de vie et de mort, dissimulant la réalité de l'action. Ce 'mensonge' est une donnée incontournable qui n'est pas corrigée par Socrate mais plutôt dépassée dans le mouvement d'émancipation proposé finalement par le philosophe. Il ne s'agit plus alors de projeter des images vraisemblables sur le réel mais de procéder au mouvement inverse, en remontant à la cause, pour aboutir à l'élucidation du processus projectif lui-même.

Le parcours est tout autre avec Critias qui emploie deux fois le mot *khôra* (22e1 et 23b8). A son sujet et eu égard à l'exposé socratique de la *République*, le discours de l'aristocrate reste foncièrement mystificateur. Premièrement, *khôra* ne possède pour lui qu'une dimension géographique et sacrée. C'est la terre divine qui donne naissance selon les lieux à des peuples caractérisés (23b8) et qui peut les préserver ou les détruire (22e1).[30] Elle relie dans le mystère les hommes et les dieux. Aucune prescription n'est prise à son encontre (ni limitation du territoire, ni mobilité sociale), la classe sacerdotale ayant pour fonction de préserver l'état des choses entre deux déluges ou à l'abri des cataclysmes. Critias va ainsi jusqu'au bout du 'mensonge' patriotique. La *khôra* qu'il impose fait plus que masquer les dynamiques politiques, elle les réduit toutes, passées, présentes ou futures, à néant. Deuxièmement et en conséquence, l'être humain est désormais prisonnier de son destin géographique. Ce dernier est en fait calamiteux car la guerre, second volet de la dynamique politique proposée par Critias en réponse à Socrate, est la conséquence directe de l'instauration de cette étrange *khôra*. Le conflit mondial est en effet inévitable puisque les différences entre peuples (les uns vertueux, les autres pervers) sont naturelles donc incontournables. Mais même le combat remporté par la terrienne Athènes contre la maritime Atlantide est finalement infructueux puisque l'armée victorieuse est enterrée par un cataclysme et que des déluges successifs réduisent à presque rien ce qui restait de l'ancienne cité athénienne (23a5-c6). Ce résultat ravageur est lui aussi conséquent, car la seule possibilité d'évolution politique ne réside que dans la terre mythique qui conditionne divinement toute l'histoire. Au final, la *khôra* du mythe triomphe donc de tout.

2.4. On ne peut donc considérer, à l'instar de Christopher Gill, de Christopher Rowe ou de Nicole Loraux, que la réponse de Critias, porte parole de Timée et d'Hermocrate, est conforme à la théorie de Socrate. Au regard de la *République*, il s'agit au contraire d'une contre-proposition qui n'a pas de valeur positive mais vaut de façon critique comme le défend Peter Kalkavage.[31] Elle serait le résultat d'une projection abusive à partir de laquelle Platon aurait sciemment construit le récit atlante. Considérons de quelle façon. Comme l'admettent tous les commentateurs, l'histoire de l'Atlantide est tirée d'une expérience douloureuse, celle des dérives des impérialismes notamment perse et athénien.[32] Critias réagit à ces politiques de développement dangereusement expansionnistes. Il voit bien quel est l'ennemi de la cité duelle: la *pleonexia*, volonté d'avoir toujours plus qui est tendance à vouloir dominer autrui.[33] Il voit aussi que cette *hubris* transgresse la *khôra* patriotique qu'il met pertinemment au cœur de son récit et qu'il tente de rationaliser.[34] La dynamique de croissance tend en effet à distendre

les liens de la cité à son 'sol natal' et à rendre confuses les différentiations impliquées dans cette *khôra* primitive (entre dedans et dehors, entre bien et mal). Ce développement implique notamment un décollement historique par lequel est admise l'autonomie des actions humaines au-delà des processus géographiques. Critias conteste cette évolution et aspire à retrouver les liens qui nouent dans la tradition le politique et la terre. En sa critique, il vise juste. Mais son élan philosophique s'arrête là. Car loin d'éclairer le mal expansionniste qui ronge la cité duelle elle-même et qui tend à la déraciner, Critias a extériorisé tous les dangers et intériorisé toutes les perfections. L'Atlantide est la *pleonexia* personnifiée et Athènes/Saïs l'excellence incarnée.

Il est vrai que dans le 'noble mensonge' de la *République*, *khôra* remplissait une fonction défensive impliquant une différentiation entre l'intérieur plutôt bénéfique (garder le bien en soi) et l'extérieur plutôt maléfique (repousser le danger hors soi). Mais cette représentation dénoncée comme fallacieuse par Socrate est tenue telle quelle pour vraie par Critias, sans aucune distance critique apparente. Certes on ne pouvait attendre de l'aristocrate qu'il réponde au philosophe en discriminant dans *khôra* la double différentiation d'une part axiologique (entre le bien et le mal) et d'autre part spatiale (entre le dedans et le dehors). Mais Platon lui a prêté sciemment une position diamétralement antithétique à celle de Socrate. Car loin de s'engager vers un quelconque examen dialectique, Critias réaffirme la *khôra* du mythe aggravant tous ses caractères problématiques. Elle régresse alors en projection littéralement paranoïaque, manifestant dans les lieux une axiologie binaire opposant radicalement le bien et le mal.[35] Critias propose ainsi une géographie phobique qui accomplit symboliquement son rêve de puissance désormais replié sur lui-même. Tous les régimes s'effondrent dans les cataclysmes sauf à Saïs, point singulier où la théocratie trifonctionnelle autochtone prend réellement et naturellement corps terrestre, où l'excellence athénienne est perpétuée. Au bilan, la défense du 'sol natal' ne correspond alors prosaïquement qu'à la protection permanente de la 'terre mère' et des biens par elle acquis, doublée par la peur constante de la menace que représentent ceux qui, 'sans terre', n'auraient pas de 'place' légitime.[36]

Platon a donc construit sciemment l'histoire atlante comme la projection paranoïaque des désirs motivant l'aristocratie déçue par l'expérience des impérialismes. La volonté de puissance de Critias, contrariée par la conscience des débordements qu'elle provoque, est ainsi projetée, transformant le réel en un espace temps fictif qui sanctionne toute dynamique politique pour cause d'*hubris* et réduit la 'terre patriotique' à n'être plus qu'un camp dont le pouvoir seul détiendrait les clefs.[37] Avec Critias, la cité est désormais prisonnière de la *khôra* du mythe c'est-à-dire prisonnière de projections que rien ne permet de distancier et encore moins de comprendre.

3. LE COMMENTAIRE SATIRIQUE DE SOCRATE ET L'INTENTION CRITIQUE DE PLATON

Socrate commente très brièvement le résumé de l'aristocrate (26e2-27a1). Cette appréciation est décisive car c'est la seule réaction du philosophe au sujet du récit atlante. Elle est considérée comme un clair assentiment par beaucoup d'interprètes[38] et comme une discrète fin de non-recevoir par leurs plus rares détracteurs.[39] Elle constitue en fait, comme on va maintenant le montrer, un désaveu massif sous couvert d'ironie. L'examen de ce commen-

taire, objet de cette troisième et dernière partie de l'étude, permettra de compléter l'analyse du résumé proposé par Critias, en confirmant nos précédentes conclusions.

3.1. Socrate fait d'abord remarquer qu'il existe une 'parenté' (οἰκειότης, 26e5) entre l'histoire résumée et le sacrifice des Panathénées.[40] Rappelons que la fête nationale athénienne commémore avec le souvenir d'Érichthonios, premier autochtone, la naissance d'Athéna, déesse tutélaire, et la gigantomachie dont elle est l'héroïne. Mais Socrate évoque précisément le 'sacrifice' (θυσίᾳ, 26e5), dernier acte des festivités. Constitué de trois hécatombes,[41] il met un point final à la célébration de la victoire d'Athéna contre les Géants.[42] Or la défaite de l'Atlantide est immédiatement suivie par une série de catastrophes dont *khôra* est la cause (engloutissement de l'île, ensevelissement de toute l'armée athénienne suivi plus tard par la dissolution de l'ancienne Athènes). La 'parenté' entre l'Atlantide et les Panathénées résiderait donc très précisément pour Socrate en la multiplicité des hécatombes consacrées à Athéna, d'une part par l'actuelle cité à la fin des fêtes et d'autre part par Critias à la fin de son récit. Ce parallèle est non dénué d'une ironie de circonstance assez grinçante, particulièrement ambiguë et macabre.[43]

Socrate précise aussitôt que le récit proposé 'n'est pas un mythe fabriqué (μῦθον πλασθέντα) mais un discours vrai (λόγον ἀληθινὸν)' (26e5--6). Cette assertion correspond effectivement aux dires de Critias qui affirme très solennellement dès le départ que son *logos* est 'complètement vrai' (20d7-8) et qui admet aussi l'opposition entre affabulation et vérité (22b1--23b5). Le 'mythe' n'est pour l'homme d'état qu'une approximation assez enfantine de ce que le 'logos véridique' établit par des moyens plus rationnels. Mais Critias va plus loin dans ces distinctions. Il déclare vouloir transformer en réalité 'vraie' (ἐπὶ τἀληθὲς, 26d1) la cité que Socrate a présentée selon lui 'comme en mythe' (ὡς ἐν μύθῳ, 26c9). La théorie du philosophe ne serait donc au fond qu'une affabulation approchant vaguement une réalité autrement plus ancienne et authentique, celle de l'histoire de l'Atlantide. C'est réduire la portée de l'exposé socratique (qui ne serait que mythologie) en le ramenant à son réel et véritable modèle historique (qui n'aurait d'autre garant que le seul Critias). Voilà qui est 'énorme' ironise Socrate (πάμμεγά, 26e6).

Il poursuit dans la même veine, en *gorgianisant* ouvertement et déclare (26e6-7):

> Car comment et d'où en trouverions--nous d'autres <discours>, si nous abandonnions ceux là <qui sont vrais >? C'est impossible.[44]

Le philosophe reformule ainsi l'axiome sophistique bien connu qui affirme qu'il n'existe point de mensonge.[45] Ce commentaire rejaillit sur le résumé de l'Atlantide qui ne serait lui--même que vaine rhétorique reposant sur des prémisses incohérentes, entretenant la confusion entre le vrai et le faux. Platon enveloppe donc une satire dévastatrice dans le triste fumet d'un multiple holocauste et ne laisse ainsi que peu de place au doute. Le désaccord entre Socrate qui a questionné et Critias qui a répondu est plus que probable.

3.2. Pour confirmer cette conclusion, on suivra les indications du philosophe en cherchant 'd'où' l'homme d'état tient son 'logos vrai' et 'comment' il l'a établi, ce qui permettra d'examiner les méthodes employées par l'aristocrate. 'D'où'? L'histoire racontée serait 'absolument vraie comme l'a dit le plus sage des sept sages, Solon' déclare dès le départ Critias (20d9-e1).

Ainsi son discours proviendrait d'abord d'une prestigieuse source politique qui à ce titre garantirait la vérité, en fait décrétée d'autorité. L'histoire de l'Atlantide est ensuite certifiée par les prêtres de Saïs (21d8-9). Le même principe autoritaire est donc à nouveau à l'œuvre. Enfin ce fameux récit a été raconté à Critias au temps de sa jeunesse par un de ses aïeuls. Son *logos* n'a donc pas été établi à partir d'un examen des prescriptions politiques proposées la veille mais à l'issue d'un travail de mémoire personnelle. Au bilan, ce que l'aristocrate tient pour 'véridique' est simplement ce que la *doxa* affirme tel: un fait vécu et passé, garanti par l'autorité d'un ou de plusieurs 'sages'.

'Comment' Critias a-t-il raisonné? Il ne discute pas ouvertement la théorie du philosophe dont il met pourtant la réalité en doute. En la tenant tout à la fois comme un modèle et comme un mythe, il l'admet tout en la déniant, l'accepte en la condamnant. On a vu précédemment qu'il l'avait en fait transformée. La cité binaire proposée par Socrate au début du dialogue est devenue la théocratie trifonctionnelle caractérisant l'Athènes des temps anciens présentée par les prêtres de Saïs. Or sur cette métamorphose, Critias s'explique de façon assez trouble. Il affirme d'abord que le discours du philosophe et l'histoire égyptienne se rencontrent sur 'plusieurs points' (τὰ πολλὰ, 25e5) reconnaissant implicitement que la correspondance est en fait incomplète.[46] Mais après une mystérieuse opération de transposition, il conclut que l'accord sera réalisé sur 'tous les points' (πάντως, 26d3). Ce qui n'était au départ que similitude partielle va donc devenir parfaite et complète harmonie. Dans la mesure où Critias n'en parle qu'au futur, cette harmonisation resterait encore à venir et en effet, après l'exposé de Timée, certains des thèmes socratiques, omis dans le résumé, seront à nouveau développés.[47] Mais sur ce point, l'aristocrate entretient savamment le doute puisque tout en proposant d' 'harmoniser' au futur, il affirme aussi que le résumé égyptien correspond dès maintenant à ce qu'il propose de développer point par point plus tard (26c6-8). Le balancement de la pensée de Critias est porté à son comble avec la méthode de transposition elle-même. 'Harmoniser' (αρμόσουσι, 26d4) consisterait à combler les écarts existant entre la théorie du philosophe et le récit des prêtres de Saïs. Mais voilà qui est bien mal aisé entre 'un mythe fabriqué' et un 'logos vrai' qui correspondent respectivement à une société duelle et à une constitution trifonctionnelle. Critias procède finalement à une étrange opération: les citoyens de Saïs deviennent ceux de Socrate 'transférés' dans la cité d'Athènes de l'époque archaïque (26d1-5). Le logos des prêtres égyptiens, pourtant déclaré véridique par Solon, a donc été rectifié donnant naissance à un logos désormais 'accordé' avec le soit disant mythe socratique ... et malgré toutes ces modifications, l'histoire ainsi 'harmonisée' resterait vraie. L'ironie du philosophe face à une vérité cuisinée de la sorte s'explique donc aisément et se justifie sans grande difficulté.

3.3. Cette brève satire remplit une fonction décisive à la fin de l'introduction du dialogue, en montrant que Socrate met fondamentalement en question la réponse proposée par ses répondants. Critias oppose en effet à la théorie du philosophe une critique radicale mais soigneusement masquée à travers deux arguments habilement entremêlés: la cité proposée par le philosophe serait en fait irréalisable, d'une part parce qu'il ne s'agirait que d'un mythe, une simple vue de l'esprit, et d'autre part parce qu'elle aurait déjà été accomplie et détruite dans le passé et ne vaudrait donc plus pour les temps futurs.[48] L'ironie s'impose face à une critique à la fois dévastatrice et occulte, en permettant, par le même procédé indirect, de souligner tous

les travers de l'aristocrate réactionnaire. Trois points de litige émergent en effet du commentaire socratique. Premièrement, l'histoire racontée serait politiquement opportune. Critias aurait saisi l'occasion des Panathénées pour combattre en paroles, mais de façon déguisée, une démocratie confusément impérialiste et cosmopolite (représentée par l'île atlante) au nom d'un régime autochtone confusément patriotique et raciste (représenté par l'ancestrale Athènes).[49] Deuxièmement, l'argumentation ne serait au fond que rhétorique.[50] L'orateur n'a effectivement pas pensé en termes dynamiques l'évolution propre de la cité duelle proposée par Socrate et la fable chauvine qu'il défend n'a pour réel effet que de gonfler les citoyens d'une orgueilleuse autosatisfaction, sans assurer une réelle excellence des groupes fonctionnels et sans freiner l'expansion économique et territoriale.[51] Troisièmement, la vérité serait truquée. Critias affirme que ce qu'il va dire est plus vrai que ce dont a parlé Socrate. La vérité en ce cas n'est pas une plateforme de concorde (ce qui est visé par tous dans un effort commun à travers le *logos* ou le *muthos*) mais une pomme de discorde (ce qui est revendiqué par certains dans un intérêt particulier), résultat de la volonté de puissance qui anime l'homme de pouvoir en dépit de son désir de savoir.[52] Le discours dominant dont l'aristocrate est le porte-voix opère cette scission fondamentale entre philosophie et politique dont une certaine vérité est justement le scalpel.

Opportuniste, rhétoricien, falsificateur, Critias serait sous les feux de l'ironie socratique, un politique machiavélique[53] engageant le dialogue dans un esprit de compétition qui va jusqu'à la rivalité, à l'égard du philosophe athénien dont il dévalorise discrètement la théorie, comme vis-à-vis de Timée dont il minimisera plus tard le mérite.[54] Ce portrait est en cohérence avec les résultats de la seconde partie de notre étude. Critias a extériorisé un désir de puissance sans borne et intériorisé un désir d'excellence sans faille. A contrarier l'excès sans jamais l'examiner, il a sombré dans une *hubris* plus grande encore. Cette conclusion confirme les hypothèses de Warman Welliver et de Jacob Howland et corrobore l'analyse historique de Marcel Meulder.[55]

3.4. Mais si la critique de Socrate est réelle, il faut admettre qu'elle est néanmoins contournée. Ironique, il exagère, pour dire le vrai à travers le faux, en procédant par antiphrase. Ce moyen adopté par Platon, qui implique complexité et réserve, doit être aussi celui de l'exégète. Certes Critias dit faux parce qu'il projette à l'extérieur ce qui est à l'intérieur, comme on l'a montré. Mais s'il est un grand machiavel consacrant sciemment l'art du mensonge,[56] il est aussi celui qui pâtit des désirs contrariés qui l'animent et dont il réussit d'une façon paradoxale à exprimer toute la force et tout l'excès. Pour discerner ainsi le vrai dans le résumé atlante, il nous faut renverser complètement l'exposé de l'aristocrate et ne pas croire à la morale triomphaliste et raciste de sa fable. Ramené à sa juste mesure, le discours de Critias ne concerne que Critias, oscillant entre deux feux, le désir de puissance sans frein et la peur panique de ce dernier. La morale politique est alors tout autre. Car à travers le miroir déformant de la paranoïa, il apparaît que le récit atlante désigne au fond les deux pôles opposés marqués tous deux par l'illusion, entre lesquels balance la cité militaro-économique sans gouverne dialectique, dont l'aristocrate est pour Socrate le représentant.

D'un côté, dans une dynamique de volonté de puissance sans borne, recouvrant une obscure quête de liberté (l'Atlantide), la cité se disperse à travers *khôra* qui perdrait son caractère national ou culturel sans être pour autant

démythifiée. C'est la terre offerte comme espace temps neutre et homogène, support matriciel sur lequel sont susceptibles de se projeter tous les fantasmes politiques de domination. Paradoxalement, la conclusion du résumé atlante vaut: la catastrophe 'naturelle' est effectivement la sanction finale de ces projections qui sans être désillusionnées échouent lorsque le réel réapparaît.

D'un autre côté, lorsque le désir de puissance est contrarié, masquant un obscur besoin de sécurité (Saïs), la cité se replie dans *khôra* qui serait caractérisée sans être pour autant démystifiée. C'est la terre ségrégative, espace temps hétérogène et discriminatoire sur lequel tous les désirs d'émancipation projetés sont violemment sanctionnés. Or le politique qui n'a construit cette *khôra* ultra-patriotique qu'en dépit de la dialectique, se trouve précisément en défaut dans ces lieux qu'il croit connaître et qui ne sont que le fruit de sa phobie. Paradoxalement, la conclusion du résumé atlante vaut à nouveau. Il existe effectivement des points clefs, lieux où la projection politique est la plus lisible, où elle apparaît presque sans fard comme pure et simple invention géographique. Saïs serait justement une de ces singularités.

A la différence de Socrate, Critias n'est pas ironique: il prend le faux pour le vrai. Mais la vérité apparaît malgré lui, pathétiquement: l'aristocrate dit vraiment la folie du politique qui fait parler la 'terre' qu'il fabrique à sa guise, décidant d'abord et avant tout d'une géographie à la mesure de sa puissance. Arrêtons-nous pour finir sur ce dernier point. Au su de la *République*, la terre est un 'mensonge' qui disparaît quand *khôra* est enfin tenue pour ce qu'elle est, la projection d'un désir légitime, celui d'une réalité faite pour l'accomplissement complet de l'être humain. Mais cette représentation prend une forme pathologique avec Critias qui verrouille dans le dogme le résultat du processus de projection à défaut de le comprendre. L'aristocrate ensevelit alors l'horizon politique dans une terre faite à la mesure de ses rêves. Son triomphe est aussi sa défaite puisqu'aveugle à lui-même, il reste justement prisonnier de ses passions irrationnelles. Critias est donc l'archétype de l'homme d'état non-dialecticien, consacrant toujours *khôra*, la projection de son désir qui est aussi l'obstacle à sa réalisation. En faisant de la terre, natale et patriotique ou promise et cosmopolite, une fatale condition que tous les hommes subiraient dans le mystère, le politique enferme alors dans sa propre aporie toute l'humanité.

On peut désormais affirmer que l'étrange introduction du *Timée* qui semble clore le débat avant même de l'avoir commencé n'a qu'une seule fin: montrer dès le départ l'impasse politique dans laquelle se trouvent les trois répondants de Socrate qui représentent l'élite dirigeante. Cette aporie a pour nom *khôra*. Le monde politique se referme sur ce verrou qui fait obstacle à l'émergence du gouvernement philosophique et scientifique, pourtant nécessaire à l'accomplissement de l'humanité. Comment sortir de cette *khôra*, terre fatale dans laquelle la projection politique a littéralement enseveli la cité? Telle serait le problème que Platon inviterait ses lecteurs à méditer au début du *Timée*.

Reprenons pour finir toutes les données du problème. Platon a bâti une étrange introduction à trois volets.

Premièrement, il pose une question, résultat d'une maïeutique par laquelle la *République* a été adaptée en fonction de l'auditoire particulier du *Timée*, composé de trois membres de l'élite gouvernante grecque du Vème siècle. Pour l'occasion, Platon a fait de Socrate un rusé politique qui ne s'efface modestement devant les trois hommes d'état que pour les mettre immédiatement au pied du mur afin d'apprendre

comment ces dirigeants, qui ne sont pas des dialecticiens mais sont animés par le conflit d'intérêts, peuvent défendre la *khôra* de la cité militaro-économique qui est la leur.

Deuxièmement, l'histoire de l'Atlantide est la réponse résumée par Critias, porte-parole des trois hommes. Platon l'a construite en antithèse aux propositions de Socrate dans la *République*, comme une projection paranoïaque d'un désir de puissance contrarié. L'aristocrate déçu qui ne peut envisager de résolution dialectique au problème de la *pleonexia* accablant la cité binaire (tendance sans limite à la possession économique et à la domination militaire) réinstaure de façon problématique une *khôra* ultra-patriotique, figeant toute dynamique.

Troisièmement, Platon prête à Socrate une appréciation satirique. Ce bref commentaire permet de fixer les bornes extrêmes de l'interprétation. D'un côté, Critias peut dire faux sciemment. C'est un sophiste opportuniste qui anéantit toute action politique pour défendre ses anciens intérêts, emprisonnant l'humanité dans une fatale *khôra*, une terre définie à sa guise. Mais d'un autre côté, Critias peut aussi dire vrai sans le savoir, et désigner malgré lui l'aporie politique majeure qu'est justement *khôra*, espace indéterminé de l'Atlantide ou lieu sacré de Saïs. L'extrémisme de l'aristocrate fait ainsi paraître que tout politique non-dialecticien désire et projette une terre à sa façon, masquant toujours éros, ses dynamiques et entre toutes, celle des philosophes dont il usurpe la place.

On ne peut donc admettre que le récit proposé par Critias, Timée et Hermocrate ait reçu l'agrément de Platon sur le plan politique. Notre étude confirme au contraire, premièrement le bien fondé des conclusions de Warman Welliver et de Jacob Howland au sujet de Critias (qui représente effectivement l'homme d'état marqué par l'*hubris*), deuxièmement, la pertinence de l'analyse de Peter Kalkavage à propos de la proposition des trois interlocuteurs de Socrate (qui vont effectivement à contre-sens de la *République*) et troisièmement la justesse de l'approche historique de Marcel Meulder quant à la portée critique de l'introduction (qui situe en effet le discours réactionnaire de type généalogique). Nos analyses permettent aussi de préciser la finalité générale du dialogue. En introduisant le *Timée*, Platon a en fait monté un *élenchos* à l'envers, en faisant dès le départ le constat de l'échec. En photographiant ainsi la pensée aporétique des élites de son temps, il a préparé le lecteur à découvrir les discours de la classe dirigeante et savante du Vème siècle non pour les croire mais au contraire pour les démystifier. C'est le seuil remarquable du *Timée*. Pour le franchir, il ne convient pas de projeter à l'extérieur l'*hubris* qui est en soi et dans la cité. Platon nous invite au contraire à être sciemment excessif, en renversant le Critias qui est en nous et qui tiendrait la pensée en échec par la grâce d'une sacro-sainte terre, une khôra qui n'est au fond qu'un fantasme politique primordial, expression confuse de désirs mêlés.

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NOTES

1 Voir par exemple, Casertano 1996, 19 ; Brisson 2001, 10; Johansen 2004, 16; Slaveva-Griffin 2005, 312.

2 Voir notamment taylor 1928, 32-34; Rivaud 1985, 8; Morgan, 2010, 271.

3 Pour Warman Welliver et Jacob Howland, la fable de l'Atlantide ne reflète que l'*hubris* alors que l'exposé de Timée est plus inspiré par la philosophie (Welliver 1977; Howland 2007). Pour Peter Kalkavage, le *Timée* est une descente vers le domaine de l'opinion, de la convention et du devenir, mouvement discutable car à contre-sens de celui engagé dans la *République* (Kalkavage 2001). Marcel Meulder, en s'appuyant notamment sur les travaux de François Hartog, considère quant à lui que loin d'authentifier l'Atlantide, Platon rejetterait dans le Timée/Critias, deux pratiques d'instrumentalisation de l'histoire, fréquentes au IVème siècle: la généalogie et la 'constitution des ancêtres' (MEULDER 2010; HARTOG 2005).

4 Kalkavage 2001, 10.

5 *Timée* 17c-19a en référence à *République* II, 373b-377a, III; 395b-d, 401b-d, 412c-414b, 416a-b, 416d-417b, V; 451c-455e, 459a-460e.

6 Point remarqué notamment par Rowe 1997 et par Morgan 2010, 270. Rappelons que le troisième groupe des gouvernants est constitué des meilleurs gardiens, d'abord sélectionnés à travers une série d'épreuves permettant de vérifier leur constance, puis formés à la dialectique (*République* III, 412b-414b et VI –VII).

7 Il considère qu'un gardien possédant des biens est le pire des maux accablant la cité (*République* III, 417a-b).

8 Le mot φιλόσοφος employé à plusieurs reprises dans l'introduction du *Timée* ne doit pas faire illusion. Dans l'occurrence 18a6, il n'en réfère qu'à la définition très limitée de la *République* II, 376ac (voir Howland 2007, 13). Dans l'occurrence 20a5, 'les sommets de la philosophie' qu'auraient atteints Timée ne renvoient contextuellement qu'au lieu commun de la notabilité. L'expression est, pour une grande part, ironique (voir Kalkavage 2001, 6) car Timée méconnaît en particulier la science du bien qui fait l'acmé de l'enseignement de la *République* et dont il n'a justement jamais été question devant les trois hommes d'état.

9 Howland 2007 qui suit sur ce point Welliver 1977, et pour qui la lutte se traduirait aussi dans les faits par un combat de paroles entre Critias, représentant la tendance tyrannique, et Timée, représentant l'effort vers la connaissance.

10 Chambry a fait observer que cette dernière prescription ne correspond littéralement à aucune recommandation de la *République* (Chambry 1969, 503 n. 91).

11 *République* III, 414c-415c.

12 *République* III, 414e3-4.

13 *République* III, 415b-c; IV, 423c-d.

14 *République* IV, 423b6.

15 Avec Solon, l'accès aux magistratures est désormais fondé sur la fortune. Les biens possédés (au pluriel) font alors le Bien (au singulier) à savoir toute la 'valeur' d'un homme, appréciée essentiellement par sa richesse.

16 Ce personnage ne renvoie à aucune figure historique précise comme l'a fait observer Luc Brisson (Brisson 2001, 328-332).

17 La plupart considèrent que le récit de l'Atlantide répond à ce qui fait défaut dans la *République*, à savoir la dynamique extérieure de guerre, et négligent les transformations politiques internes proposées par Critias.

18 Gill 1993.

19 Le registre mythique du récit de l'Atlantide a été confirmé par les analyses du vocabulaire des deux dialogues le *Timée* et le *Critias*. Voir Tarrant-Benitez--Roberts 2011.

20 Parallèlement, William Altman considère que le lecteur, interpellé par Platon dès les premières lignes du *Timée* est conduit à engager une lecture critique et active pour défendre les leçons socratiques de la *République* (Altman 2014, 17).

21 *République* III, 414b puis livre VII. Les indications concernant la religion sont par ailleurs très rares dans la *République* (IV, 427c2-4). Socrate déclare explicitement: 'les choses de ce genre, nous ne les connaissons pas nous-mêmes quand nous fondons une cité' (*République*, IV, 427b9-c1). Luc Brisson a fait observer que Platon critique de façon récurrente le système théologico--politique égyptien. 'Le refus de toute ingérence sacerdotale dans les affaires politiques, Platon le maintient dans les *Lois*' écrit l'exégète qui précise qu'à la différence des institutions de la plupart des peuples indo-européens pour lesquels le savoir est aux mains des prêtres, le savoir chez Platon appartient aux 'philosophes' (Brisson 2005, 140).

22 *République* VI, 501b.

23 La cité parfaite peut être réalisée n'importe où, par n'importe quel peuple même barbare (*République* VII, 499c-d).

24 La cité est en guerre avec elle-même quand elle est divisée entre riches et pauvres (*République*, IV, 422e-23a).

25 *Timée*, 23d5-7 et 24b6-7 et 24c4-6, 24d1-2.

26 C'est aussi ce que fait remarquer Luc Brisson (Brisson 2005, 140) et Federico Zuolo (Zuolo 2012). Il est vrai que dans le 'noble mensonge', c'est un dieu qui institue les trois groupes fonctionnels (*République* III, 415). Mais ce point, dans la mythologie patriotique, n'a en aucune façon conduit Socrate à promouvoir une théocratie.

27 Socrate déclare que ce mythe/mensonge aurait existé 'en maints endroits' (*République* III, 414c3).

28 Dans la *République*, le mensonge est pour Socrate un remède utile pour sauvegarder la cité de ses ennemis (II 382c9, III 389b-c) ou vis-à-vis d'amis frappés par la démence (II 382c7-8). Sous la forme du mythe, le mensonge s'applique pertinemment à la première éducation des enfants (II, 376e-377e). La fable patriotique pourrait correspondre à un certain stade du développement politique, l'enfance de la cité.

29 7 occurrences de *khôra* au total dans la *République*: III, 373d4, 377d7, 388a3, 414e3; IV, 423b6; VI, 495c9; VII, 516b6. Le mot toujours au singulier désigne successivement: premièrement, le pays qui nourrit ses habitants (II, 373d4, d7); deuxièmement, le pays en son unité à la fois économique/stratégique et sociale/culturelle (III, 388a3, 414e3 ; IV, 423b6) ; troisièmement, le domaine de la philosophie assailli par de faux prétendants (VI, 495c9); quatrièmement, la place du soleil vers lequel se tourne finalement le prisonnier libéré de la caverne (VII, 516b6). La cité juste et bonne est précisément celle qui connaît cette dernière et qui est une, parfaite harmonie de la multiplicité.

30 Les occurrences de *topos* (24c6 et 24d2) confirment le caractère géographique et sacré du lieu.

31 Kalkavage 2001. Christopher Gill considère que Critias propose un mythe patriotique acceptable (GILL, 1993). Or s'il s'agit effectivement d'un roman national, il se présente comme l'antithèse du mythe de la *République*. Christopher Rowe, quant à lui, admet que la cité proposée par Critias n'est pas gouvernée par des philosophes mais estime que Socrate pourrait s'en satisfaire au titre de cité non-parfaite mais approchant la perfection (ROWE, 1997). Or comme on vient de le montrer la proposition de Critias diffère sur des points trop fondamentaux pour être tenue pour une approximation acceptable. Ce même argument vaut pour contester la position de Nicole Loraux qui voit dans le récit de l'Atlantide un éloge de la *Politeia* de Socrate (LORAUX 1981, chapitre VI, 292-307).

32 Voir sur ce point Vidal-Naquet 1991, 335-360 et Pradeau 2000.

33 Cet appétit est en effet selon Socrate à l'origine de l'injustice dans les cités (*République* III, 373d4-e3 et IX, 588b-590c).

34 La précision des observations géomorphologiques de Critias a forcé l'admiration des spécialistes contemporains. Le constat de déforestation et d'érosion des sols à Athènes serait pertinent (Bousquet/Pechoux 2003, 475 n. 41) et la géologie du détroit de Gibraltar témoignerait de l'existence d'une île engloutie 9 000 ans avant notre ère (Collina-Girard 2003). Plus généralement, pour l'utilisation des savoirs mésologiques, climatiques, géographiques et historiques dans le récit atlante, voir Pradeau 1997.

35 La paranoïa est patente: le changement 'interne', l'évolution propre, ne peut plus exister, c'est un danger projeté sur un autre, à l'extérieur (voir notamment Freud 1911).

36 Notons que tout le discours de Critias l'apparente aux prêtres égyptiens, dépositaires et enseignants de la parole divine, ce qui le fait passer *de facto* du groupe des gardiens à la catégorie sacerdotale supérieure qu'il a lui-même instituée. Parallèlement, l'aristocrate déclasse Socrate (qui mythologiserait, 26c-d) et son armée (rapidement éliminée) qui ne sont plus que des 'auxiliaires' utilisés opportunément pour sauver le mythe national revivifié par l'orateur.

37 La cité égyptienne serait le parc nourricier où paît le troupeau des producteurs, défendu par les guerriers, et sur lequel le pouvoir des prêtres peut, légitimement et sans autre visée, exercer son rôle de surveillance.

38 Notamment: Casertano 1996; Johansen 2004; Slaveva-Griffin 2005.

39 Welliver 1977; Kalkavage 2001; Howland 2007; Osborne 1996, 185.

40 Le philosophe rebondit ici sur une déclaration de Critias (20e7-21a4).

41 Sur cette triplicité voir Sergent 1998, 327.

42 Voir sur les Géants, Sergent 2006; Vian 1952, 259.

43 L'ironie se développe peu après. Socrate cède en effet la parole à Timée, en se réjouissant du 'festin de paroles' qui l'attend (27b8-11). Or lors des festivités des Panathénées, le banquet est ce qui suit l'hécatombe après les hymnes. Le 'festin' dont parle finalement Socrate est en rapport direct avec le 'sacrifice' qu'il évoque précédemment et n'est pas sans rappeler, humour noir obligeant, celui qu'Atrée servit à son frère Thyeste, convié sous prétexte de réconciliation à manger ses propres fils.

44 Rivaud use de quatre termes français différents pour traduire le mot grec 'logos': 'thème', 'histoire', 'sujet', 'discours', révélant ainsi la fluctuation du sens qui caractérise les propos de Critias ironiquement commentés par Socrate (Rivaud 1985).

45 La possibilité du discours faux a été précisément démontrée dans le *Sophiste,* dialogue dans lequel l'Etranger dénonce explicitement comme sophistique l'argument présenté ici (*Sophiste* 240e10-241a7).

46 Ce que Critias avait admis de façon explicite peu avant en déclarant que l'ancienne cité d'Athènes était 'mieux policée' que celle de Saïs (24d4).

47 La classe sacerdotale s'évanouit et sont réaffirmées l'égalité des compétences entre les hommes et les femmes, notamment dans la fonction guerrière (*Critias* 110b5-c3), et la communauté des biens instituée pour les gardiens (*Critias* 110c6-d5).

48 Notons que ces deux critiques sont avancées par la *doxa* contre toute proposition de type révolutionnaire.

49 Critias répond à la politique et à la rhétorique démocratiques athéniennes dont le *Ménéxène* est un exemple et qui tendent à transformer radicalement l'autochtonie locale, en substituant l'éducation civique à l'éducation religieuse.

50 Voir sur ce point, Cannarsa 2007, 21; 42 n. 137.

51 Sur l'enflure dans le discours voir Loraux 1974, 193.

52 L'attachement à la vérité caractérise, selon Socrate, les vrais philosophes. Avec le tyran le lien à la vérité est au contraire rompu (*République* VI, 489-490).

53 Notons que le fameux tyran athénien, Critias, est aussi l'auteur présumé d'une tragédie dont il nous reste des fragments. Une thèse athéiste y est développée (D.K. 88B25, Sextus Empiricus: *Contre les Mathématiciens*, 9.54). Si l'on identifie le Critias de l'introduction du *Timée* à cet auteur, le machiavélisme est alors radical: athée, le tyran ferait sans scrupule la promotion d'un système religieux auquel il ne croit pas, donc à des seules fins politiques. Rappelons que Platon a brouillé les cartes empêchant l'identification historique de Critias. Ce flou ne permet pas d'affirmer l'hypothèse qui vient d'être exposée mais oblige à la présenter. C'est justement ce nuage d'ambiguïtés et de présomptions qui caractérise le personnage, lui-même flou et présomptueux.

54 *Critias*, 107a8-b4.

55 Welliver 1977; Howland 2007; Meulder 2010.

56 Sous son aspect le plus sombre, la projection paranoïaque permet de confisquer le réel et de récupérer les fruits de toutes les dynamiques désormais masquées.

‘Philosophy’ in Plato’s *Phaedrus*

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ABSTRACT

The *Phaedrus* depicts the Platonic Socrates’ most explicit exhortation to ‘philosophy’. The dialogue thereby reveals something of his idea of its nature. Unfortunately, what it reveals has been obscured by two habits in the scholarship: (i) to ignore the remarks Socrates makes about ‘philosophy’ that do not arise in the ‘Palinode’; and (ii) to treat many of those remarks as parodies of Isocrates’ competing definition of the term. I remove these obscurities by addressing all fourteen remarks about ‘philosophy’ and by showing that for none do we have reason to attribute to them Isocratean meaning. We thereby learn that ‘philosophy’ does not refer essentially to contemplation of the forms but to conversation concerned with self-improvement and the pursuit of truth.

Keywords : Socrates, *philosophia*, conversation, self-improvement, *Charmides*, *Protagoras*.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper concerns the way Plato presents what he terms 'philosophy' (*philosophia*). I argue that we have reason to reassess the *Republic*-inspired view that Plato believes philosophy simply to be contemplation of the forms. In many dialogues, he treats philosophy instead as a self- and other-improving mode of conversation and social engagement. Platonic forms may of course give a possible metaphysical or epistemological explanation for the benefit of such conversations. But this is consistent with the term 'philosophy' pertaining directly to an interpersonal practice concerned with mutual self-improvement. In this paper I can go only a short ways in reconsidering Plato's attitudes toward 'philosophy'. Yet Plato's importance to the early definition of philosophy is so profound that I hope even this small contribution is valuable.[1]

Plato's *Phaedrus* ends in a reflection on the meaning and application of the term 'philosopher'. Socrates tells Phaedrus to report to his dear Lysias the findings of the conversation depicted over the previous fifty Stephanus pages. Whoever can compose speeches knowing the truth, and then defend those speeches and show their minimal worth, Socrates says, we should call '"philosopher", or something like that' (278b8–5; cf. καλεῖν, 278d3, προσερεῖς, 278e2).[2] Socrates suggests that Lysias the speechwriter does not yet deserve to be called by that name (ἐπωνυμία) but that Phaedrus should himself strive to deserve it. In response to Socrates' judgment about his favorite, Phaedrus asks Socrates what kind of person they might call *his* favorite, Isocrates (φήσομεν εἶναι). In answer, Socrates praises Isocrates as by nature better than Lysias in speeches (λόγους), as more nobly blended in character, and as more promising than anyone now alive (279a3–7). Socrates adds that there is by nature within Isocrates' mind (διανοίᾳ) some philosophy (τις φιλοσοφία), and because of this, a more-divine impulse could lead him to better things, if he should want so to be led.

In the course of the conversation with Phaedrus that leads up to these closing remarks, Socrates has already said much about the meaning of the name 'philosopher' that is to be relayed to Lysias. His mythical Palinode speech linked philosophers with truth-discovery, and he later outlined an argument that assumed that philosophizing involves knowing how things really are, not just how they seem to be (261a3–262c4). Socrates' discussion of reading, and his continued request for answers and revised answers, shows the importance of defending one's views (275d4–276a7). His doubt that he could ever give a proper account of the soul, or of himself, suggests that human existence calls for deep modesty and reserve (246a4–6, 266b3–c1).

We might wonder, however, about the *philosophia* mentioned in the dialogue's closing lines as being by nature within Isocrates' mind. Does it refer to the same philosophy that Socrates wants Phaedrus to recommend to Lysias, which includes investigating reality, giving reasoned arguments in support of one's positions, and recognizing the meagerness of any written account? From one perspective, it seems it must. Socrates never posits a multiplicity of types of philosophy. Further, the proximity between the two remarks about philosophy suggest continuity in meaning between them. And even if it simply seems too ludicrous to identify Isocrates with philosophy, Socrates does not say that Isocrates exemplifies philosophy; he says only that Isocrates has *tina philosophian*, 'some' or 'a kind of' philosophy.[3]

From another perspective, however, it might seem that Isocrates' *philosophia* must

differ from the kind that Socrates encourages Phaedrus to acquire. We might expect Isocrates' profession of rhetoric to appear anathema to Socrates and Plato. After all, Socrates distinguishes sharply between popular rhetorical training and the training he recommends for Phaedrus. Isocrates' extant speeches show that he often used the term *philosophia*, in particular in contexts where Isocrates deliberately contrasted his practice with the overwrought and captious arguments of the Socratics and Aristotelians.[4] It seems likely that Isocrates and Plato, perhaps among others, competed for students, in part by showing those students the ideal and realistic targets of their respective forms of *philosophia*.[5] Indeed, most readers now simply assume without argument that Isocrates' τις φιλοσοφία must differ from Socrates' or Plato's. G.J. De Vries says that Socrates refers to Isocrates with 'mordant sarcasm' and that 'Plato leaves it to his readers to decide whether they will take ... φιλοσοφία in the Platonic or the Isocratic sense'.[6] Harvey Yunis says that the τις 'suggests that Isocrates occupies an ambiguous position between the (conventional) *philosophia* that he promotes (239b4n.) and the (true Platonic) *philosophia* that remains for him an as yet unrealized possibility'. Yunis expresses the difference between these two types of *philosophia* by appeal to the difference between rhetoric and philosophy mentioned at the end of the Palinode (257b4).[7] Daniel Werner claims that 'it is likely that Plato is using the term φιλοσοφία here as a way of taunting Isocrates, and is deliberately leaving it ambiguous as to which sense of the term is meant'.[8] All agree that Isocrates' philosophy is a conventional form of philosophy aligned with rhetorical culture; Plato's philosophy is an innovation, concerned with the contemplation of the really real.[9]

There are therefore reasons both for accepting and for rejecting the idea that Plato uses a single idea of 'philosophy' on the final page of the *Phaedrus*, and by extension, in the dialogue as a whole. Whether we should accept or reject the idea matters a lot, though, and for more than unearthing Plato's attitude toward Isocrates.[10] In this dialogue more than almost any other, Socrates expresses his hopes that his interlocutor might turn to 'philosophy'.[11] As the Palinode ends, Socrates tells Phaedrus to settle on one way of life and to give himself 'wholly over to love accompanied by philosophical talk' (257b6). Two pages later, Socrates warns Phaedrus that the cicadas singing overhead tell the muses which humans spend time in philosophy and which in sheep-like sleep (259b3). Again two pages later, Socrates tells some *logoi* to persuade Phaedrus that lest he practice philosophy well, he will never be able to speak well (261a4). To what then does Socrates encourage *Phaedrus*? Unfortunately, Socrates never explicitly and completely defines *philosophia*, the *philosophos*, or the activity of *philosophein*. The circumstantial evidence appears to vary broadly in the images of philosophy he gives. 'Philosophy' is presented as a kind of association, a trait of character, a way of life, a cognitive activity, a direction of research, and an attitude of valuation. Given this variety and the importance of the question, it is remarkable that readers have simply divided the references to philosophy into two groups, Platonic and non Platonic, indeed without any clear criterion of division. More troublingly, dismissing as merely 'conventional' the purportedly non Platonic uses — the ones that do not focus on contemplating an unchanging reality — limits our understanding Socrates' actions in urging Phaedrus to adopt a 'philosophical' life.

This paper reconsiders the nature of *philosophia* in the *Phaedrus*. As a preliminary,

I study the uses of 'philosophy' group words in two other Platonic dialogues: the *Charmides* and the *Protagoras*. Against this background, I assess in turn each appearance of the word group in the *Phaedrus*. Proceeding in order of appearance lessens the chance of selective defense of one view of philosophy or another. It also reveals the inadequacy of apportioning those appearances between two starkly contrasting senses.

II. 'PHILOSOPHY' IN THE WORLD OF PLATO'S SOCRATES

THE *CHARMIDES*

The *Charmides* depicts Socrates narrating to his unnamed friend his return from Potidaea, in 429. He went immediately, he says, to his discussion-circle of friends and recent additions, comprising Chaerephon, Critias, and a large group of others (πάνυ πολλούς, 153a5). He answered questions about his military campaign, he says, and then asked his own questions. He wondered about the contemporary state of 'philosophy' (περὶ φιλοσφίας ὅπως ἔχοι τὰ νῦν) and whether any young men had distinguished themselves in wisdom, beauty, or both (153d2–4).[12] As soon as he poses his questions, however, Charmides' followers enter the room. The conversation turns to Charmides, pushing Socrates' question about philosophy aside. 'Philosophy' arises explicitly only once again, a short while later in a scene Socrates reports in direct speech.

Critias and Chaerephon describe Charmides to Socrates. With Charmides before them, they agree that he has a beautiful face. Socrates is told that, beneath his robes, he has a completely beautiful body. Socrates thinks that such physical beauty would be worth noting only if Charmides' soul also happens to be well developed (εὖ πεφυκώς). He could evaluate this by having Charmides bare his soul and letting them look at it. 'For', Socrates says, 'I suppose he is quite of the age to be willing to converse' (ἐθέλει διαλέγεσθαι). Critias heartily agrees (καὶ πάνυ γε), 'since he is, you know, a philosopher and also, so it seems to others as well as to me, quite a poet'. Critias' affirmation means that he thinks, and thinks that Socrates agrees, that being a philosopher means being able to converse in a way that would reveal the nature of one's soul. As the conversation proceeds, we find that Charmides really does have some important conversational abilities. Most notably, Charmides knows to answer definitional questions 'in a word' (159b5, 160e4–5), in the Socratic fashion featured in the *Meno*, *Euthyphro*, and *Laches*.

If we survey together the dialogue's two uses of 'philosophy' group words, we can see that 'philosophy', at least in the *Charmides*, means having certain kinds of conversations among those practiced, accustomed, and intentionally engaged in doing so, conversations that come to reveal the quality of one's soul — including, presumably, its wisdom and beauty. On the likely assumption that the conversation depicted in the dialogue follows the pattern of conversations Socrates, Critias, Chaerephon, and the rest had in the years before Socrates' departure to Potidaea, this conversation exemplifies philosophical conversation. Since the conversation with Charmides and Critias works to assess these men's attitudes toward, understanding, and personal manifestation of *sôphrosunê*, such assessment would be central to philosophy.

THE *PROTAGORAS*

In the *Protagoras*, the conversation between Protagoras and Socrates falters when Socrates charges the sophist with talking at too great a length (here, about the relativity of goodness, 334a1–335a7); such speeches, he claims, exceed his comprehension. So Socrates states that he will simply have to leave the party. His companions, aghast, broker a peace treaty: Protagoras will take a turn asking Socrates whatever he wishes. Protagoras chooses to ask about a song by Simonides. Socrates starts his interpretation with some abortive appeals to Prodicean synonyms. For his new approach, he will explain the song's rhetorical situation. This approach requires that he give background information about the competitive use of gnomic phrases, relevant in this case to Simonides' takedown of Pittacus' maxim, 'Hard it is to be good'. Socrates introduces his background digression with a remark about philosophy: 'Philosophy is most ancient and most plentiful among the Greeks in Crete and in Sparta, and the most sophists on earth are there' (342b8). This is a baffling remark. Fortunately, there are a few things to go on. Socrates had mentioned 'philosophy' not long before. After Socrates made to leave Callias' house, his host begged Socrates not to abandon the conversation. Socrates, in response, claimed that he always admired (ἄγαμαι) Callias' 'philosophy' (335d10). Socrates also ends up mentioning 'philosophy' some lines after his first claim about Crete and Sparta. He says that the Spartans 'have been educated best in philosophy and speeches' (342d7–8). So, in the remark about Callias, 'philosophy' must refer to a commitment to the kind of ordered talking about significant matters — for instance, about virtue and goodness — exemplified by the conversation between Socrates and Protagoras, and presumably arranged on more than this occasion by Callias.[13] Since the conversation between Socrates and Protagoras has oscillated between cooperative and competitive engagement, we cannot tell whether either form typifies 'philosophy' as Socrates' contemporaries, or Socrates himself, understands the word. In the latter remark, 'philosophy' is related to speeches in the context of excellent education. The best education, it might seem, would get people to talk best about the best topics. From these sandwiching uses of 'philosophy', Socrates seems to be opening his explanation of Simonides' song by saying that the Cretans and Spartans have had the longest and largest commitment to talking about significant matters, virtue and goodness included.[14] We cannot tell, however, whether an 'education in philosophy and speeches' has at its focus constructive or agonistic engagement; probably the ambiguity is deliberate.[15]

As both the *Protagoras* and the *Charmides* show, Socrates uses the term 'philosophy' to refer to conversations that follow certain norms of productive engagement and that concern virtues and the possession or transmission of them. These conversations appear to include sequential and hard-pressing questions about definitions and about identities between similar concepts. They may also include explanations of one's views, interpretations of sayings and texts, and presentations of various forms with subsequent discussion of those presentations.

III. FOURTEEN OCCURRENCES OF 'PHILOSOPHY'-GROUP WORDS IN THE *PHAEDRUS*

AN ASSOCIATION FOR BECOMING MOST THOUGHTFUL

The first occurrence of 'philosophy' in the *Phaedrus* is found in Socrates' first speech. In this speech, Socrates argues from the perspective of a putative non-lover, as Lysias did, that a young man should spend time with him, not with someone actually in love with him. Socrates' speech differs from Lysias', which feigned extemporaneity and argued from *endoxa*, in its appeal to a materialist psychology, one that places the inevitability of love's corruption in the necessary causal forces of a person's body or mind. Among the reasons Socrates gives in this speech against spending time with a lover is the following:

> **[1]** Divine philosophy (ἡ θεία φιλοσοφία, 239b4) is a kind of association (συνουσιῶν) aimed at making one most thoughtful (φρονιμώτατος); the jealous lover keeps his beloved away from such beneficial (ὠφελίμων) associations, just as he does from those that could make someone most a man (μάλιστ' ἀνήρ): stronger, wiser (σοφοῦ), braver, more eloquent (ῥητορικοῦ), and shrewder (ἀγχίνου). (239a2-b8, paraphrased)

As a goal-directed social arrangement, this *philosophia* parallels the *philosophia* in the *Charmides* and *Protagoras*. Whereas other associations help people come into their maturity through work on strength, skill and experience, courage, the ability to speak well publicly, and cleverness, this association helps people become more thoughtful, reasonable, and insightful. It is a beneficial and distinctive sort of group. A person participating in it may seem to leave his other putative relationships and obligations behind, as the jealous lover fears (cf. 252a1–b1). This must be because it nurtures a sense of useful and enjoyable community. It seems to be the sort of community we see formed around Socrates in other Platonic dialogues.

Despite the close similarity between Socrates' use of the word *philosophia* here and his uses in other dialogues, commentators have been skeptical about his intentions. Some skepticism about the content of Socrates' speech may be warranted; Socrates disclaims true authorship of it (235b7–d3, 238c5–d5, 241e1–5, 242b4), and even later disowns it (242d4–e1, 243c1–2, d3–5), on the grounds that it did not venerate love adequately. All the same, disclaiming or disowning a speech does not mean that every claim in it opposes the speaker's beliefs, every word used in a way other than the way the speaker would. Surely jealous lovers really would prevent their beloveds from spending time among such groups of friends engaged in philosophy. And even if jealous lovers did allow their beloveds time away from them, Socrates says nothing to discount the plausibility of his description of philosophy.

Recent skepticism about this remark about *philosophia* focuses on Isocrates.[16] Yunis, for example, says that Socrates uses the term here 'without content and in support of conventional values'.[17] In doing so, Yunis says, Socrates' remark has 'an Isocratean resonance'. Yet Yunis seems mistaken. Socrates' use does not lack content. Socrates speaks of *philosophia* as a 'beneficial' 'being-together' that makes one 'most thoughtful' on the way to becoming 'most a man'. It is true that Socrates does not adumbrate here the sorts of conversations or activities a philosophical association engages in, but he did not do so in the other dialogues

we have looked at either, and yet the content of philosophy there was perfectly clear. More importantly, it is possible that no specific methodological procedures — such as analysis, deduction, or concept-definition — are necessary features of philosophical practice. It is also not evident that Socrates appeals only to 'conventional values' in lauding 'divine philosophy'. He does, admittedly, put *philosophia* in line with — though possibly also in contrast with — gymnastics, studies, martial training, rhetorical training, and cleverness, presumably conventional values. But if becoming 'most thoughtful' is itself conventional, then it is hard to assess the critical purchase of Yunis' derogatory remark.

Even Yunis recognizes, however, that his bifurcation between Isocratean and Socratic--Platonic philosophy is problematic. 'Plato also undercuts that [Isocratean] sense [... with his] emphasis on the extraordinary value of *philosophia* — its absence constitutes the greatest harm to the *erômenos* — and the epithet "divine"'. Of course Isocrates also thought philosophy had extraordinary value. In any event, this speech treats *philosophia* as important in the ways Socrates often suggests it is important. Perhaps Socrates could mean *philosophia* in two ways simultaneously. But it is simpler and contextually consistent to believe that he means it in only one.

THE ALLIES OF THE PHILOSOPHER

Instances of the 'philosophy' word-group arise again three pages into the Palinode. Socrates has represented the life of the gods as souls in chariots endlessly circling the world. Mortals, by contrast, circle the world only until they lose sight of reality (τῆς τοῦ ὄντος θέας, 248b4). This means, as the Palinode reiterates, that every human soul has in fact seen the realities (τὰ ὄντα), difficult as keeping an eye on them may be (249e4-250a3), but that each eventually loses track of the truth, suffering from distraction and badness (λήθης... κακίας, 248c7), and falls to the ground. Fortunately, not all is lost; souls are replanted in human lives, each into a person in one of nine ordered classes. Into the premier class go the philosophers:

> **[2]** The [soul] that sees the most [is put] into a seed of a man who will become a philosopher or a *philokalos* or a dedicatee of culture or of love (φιλοσόφου ἤ φιλοκάλου ἤ μουσικοῦ τινος καὶ ἐρωτικοῦ). (248d2-4)

Passage [2] does not emphasize what the instances of 'philosophy' found in *Charmides*, *Protagoras*, and passage [1] emphasize, and that [3], below, may allude to, namely, that philosophy is a group conversational and mutually--improving or benefitting practice. It focuses instead on philosophy as a distinct way of life, as something that could define a person's entire course of existence. Along with its focus on philosophy as a way of life is the Palinodes' linking of philosophy with three other types of life: the *philokalos*, the person of *mousikê*, and the person of *erôtikê*.[18] Frustratingly, it does not explain the relationship between these four (or three) types of life. It does not say whether they are identical, or are instead varieties of the philosophical life, or are, in yet another possibility, distinct species of a common genus of which philosopher is just one species. So to understand the relationship, we must look to the eight lower classes, many of which also have multiple entries.

The second level includes the law-bound king (βασιλέως ἐννόμου) and the military and

ruling person (ἢ πολεμικοῦ καὶ ἀρχικοῦ). The connective structure of the first level suggests that the Palinode is identifying three different kinds of life here. The third level includes the political person (πολιτικοῦ) and the people involved in estate-management and business (τινος οἰκονομικοῦ ἢ χρηματιστικοῦ); the fourth, the hardworking man of the gymnasium[19] and the person who knows healing for bodies; the fifth, the mantic and the person concerned with certain rituals; the sixth, the poet and the person concerned with *mimêsis*; the seventh, the city- and earth-workers; the eighth, the person engaged in sophistry or crowd-rallying; and the ninth, the tyrant (248d4–e3). Socrates explains neither his choice of members for each of the nine levels nor his judgment about the levels' relative position.[20] All the same, some patterns reveal themselves. Members at the same level obviously differ; the city- and earth-workers (craftsmen and farmers) provide the clearest case. Yet the members at each level also share a general concern: management of a city; management of smaller groups of people; the well-being of the body; religious observance; creation of art; skilled mechanical production of goods and services; and persuasion of people. Tyranny stands alone. The entries in a level mentioned later are not defective, derivative, or secondary forms of the first entry.

This pattern suggests that the four names for lives listed at the first level are not mere synonyms, but different ways of life connected by a general concern. There are no *prima facie* reasons for thinking the life of the *philosophos* is being treated as better than or logically prior to the lives of *kala*, *mousikê*, or *erôtikê*. What general concern they share may help us understand the meaning of *philosophos* here.

Thucydides 2.40.1 most famously links the first two types of life. Written as late as 394 (and thus in the decade or two before the *Phaedrus*), but set in 431 (in the decade or two before the dramatic date of the *Phaedrus*), Thucydides' Pericles defends his people, the Athenians, from slander.[21] 'We *philokaloumen* with economy, and we *philosophoumen* without weakness' (φιλοκαλοῦμέν τε γὰρ μετ' εὐτελείας καὶ φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας). Critics of Athenian hegemony have presumably insulted the Athenians with these names. Pericles suggests that the names are appropriate only if qualified. What exactly Pericles understands the names to mean is difficult to establish, particularly because Thucydides provides the first extant use of the first verb, and among the earliest of the second verb. But Pericles' subsequent sentences gloss his jingly defense:

> We use our wealth for timeliness of action more than for boastfulness in speech: it is not shameful for someone to admit to poverty; it is rather more shameful not to flee from it with effort. Some of us apply ourselves both to household and to political matters, while others, having been turned toward work, know political matters perfectly well. We alone consider the man sharing in none of these to be not idle, but useless, and we judge, or even correctly devise affairs, not considering speeches a harm to actions, but rather [considering the real harm to be] not having already learned, through speech, before coming upon what is necessary in terms of action. For indeed we so excel in this as, extraordinarily, both to exercise courage and to reason out whatever we may attempt. And they are rightly judged strongest in soul who know most clearly what is terrible and what is pleasurable and who, on account of this, do not turn away from risks. (2.40.1-3)

The speech makes quick work of *philokaloumen*. Obviously linked to wealth already in its qualification with *euteleias* ('easily concluded', 'easy to pay for', 'frugal'), the immediately following sentence links it literally to wealth (πλούτῳ). It seems that 'loving beauty' is actually a sardonic euphemism for 'being extravagant'. Pericles' building programs come immediately to mind. Pericles justifies having and using money on the grounds that it prepares the city for contingencies; it does not simply manifest conspicuous consumption. Indeed, Pericles continues, it is undignified to care neither for money nor for the benefits it conveys. So the name *philokalos* and action *philokaleô* refer ostensibly to a person inspired by ornament, grandiosity, and the image of robust health; and yet behind those appearances, Pericles says, is an actual concern for living well in a world where timely action is needed.

Pericles' speech gives more time to the charge that Athenians 'philosophize'.[22] All Athenian citizens either deal with, or at least know about, political matters; and this commitment to political matters is more a political obligation than a choice. Philosophizing must have something to do with being concerned with or cognizant about politics. In fact, it means using speech to think through and then to decide how to act before the necessity of decision arises. It is not, that is, simply talking about important matters, but talking in preparation for action, in hypothetical terms. These preparatory matters include assessing and getting clear about what is bad and what is good. This preliminary work contributes both to heading into conflict with understanding, and thus courage, and to having the chance to deliberate precisely and rapidly about particular plans.

Pericles presumably pairs the charges of *philokalein* and *philosophein* because they result from similar appearances — indulging in building and talking, wasting money and time — and have similar functions, the preparation for all eventualities. Both names may have originally been used bemusedly or even angrily, but Pericles explains the appearances that lead to those names. The Athenians have accumulated adequate resources, both in buildings and in thought.

From this perspective, the Palinode's pairing of the *philosophos* and the *philokalos* is unsurprising. Both sorts of people have good practical reasons for acting in ways that seem, to outsiders, to be idle talk or the decadent expansion of one's affairs. It is also unsurprising that the Palinode would mention those dedicated to *mousikê* and *erôtikê* in this context. The *Phaedo* presents Socrates saying that he had repeated dreams telling him to make *mousikê* (60e3, 7). He thought that his *philosophia* was a kind of *mousikê*, indeed the greatest kind (61a4). Socrates admits that the standard understanding (δημώδη) of practicing *mousikê* is the making of poems (ποιήσαντα ποιήματα, 61b1). He thinks, nevertheless, that doing philosophy could easily belong to that category. This might seem paradoxical; the Palinode separates the philosophical life from the poetical life by four intermediate lives. In the *Phaedo*, however, Socrates does not restrict making *mousikê* to making poems. *Mousikê* involves some special attitude toward the Muses, that is, toward high culture. Socrates says that he composed a hymn to Apollo, and then versified the stories of Aesop.[23] The *Phaedrus* shows that the Muses may be propitiated in still further ways. At the Palinode's beginning, the list of modes of *mania* includes the *mania* of the Muses. This mania leads to enrapturing songs and poetry that teach each generation the splendid works of the ancients (245a1-8). After the Palinode, Socrates draws attention

to the cicadas singing above them. He says that they report to the Muses the people who have properly honored them in dance (ἐν τοῖς χοροῖς), love (ἐν τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς), and the other practices (259c5–d3).

As we see, throughout the dialogue, and elsewhere too, Socrates draws complex overlaps between *philosophia*, *philokalia*, and the interest in *mousikê* and *erôtikê*. The lover of beauty (ὁ ἐρῶν τῶν καλῶν) is called the lover (ἐραστὴς καλεῖται) when he partakes in *mania* (μετέχων τῆς μανίας, 249e3–4). Socrates often attributes to himself the knowledge of *ta erôtikê*.[24] Somehow doing philosophy is similar to doing these other practices, which are themselves similar to each other.

The similarity among the ways of life in the first echelon can be stated in the following way: all four share a certain civic piety, a seriousness of deliberate preparation, concern for conveying cultural norms to later generations, an orientation toward wisdom and its best guise, beauty (250a5–e1), and attention to living well.

For many readers this reading may seem tendentious. After all, the crucial point in [2] is that philosophers have seen the most of 'what is'. Philosophy is to be defined in connection to the really real. In the Palinode, the really real is the set of universals, that which is ascertainable only by mind, for example justice, *sôphrosunê*, and knowledge themselves (247c5–e2). 'We' followers of Zeus — presumably the philosophers — gaze at the whole, simple, unchanging, blissful revelations, in a pure light (250b7-8). Yet the details of this passage in the Palinode require that we qualify the connection between philosophy and the universals. The philosopher is the person whose soul, in a previous life, saw more than others of 'what is', but who, all the same, failed to keep seeing it. The Palinode does not here set out the nature of the philosopher himself; it speaks only about the relative success of the life of the person *before* he is reincarnated as a philosopher. That it is a matter of relative success informs our understanding of the philosopher. After all, the other lives in the nine-level scale also saw some measure of the really real. Indeed, the *philokaloi* and dedicatees of culture and love apparently saw the same amount of the really real. So the philosopher cannot be defined solely by his connection to the really real; a positive connection to it exists for everybody else too.

Indeed, as we see from the next passage, the followers of Zeus may not actually be the philosophers alone:

> **[3]** Followers of Zeus look for beloveds who are philosophers and leaders (*hêgimonikos*) by nature. (252e3)

The 'leaders' — who are perhaps members of the second and third ranks of people — travel with the first rank; and apparently all of these people 'gaze at the whole, simple, unchanging, blissful revelations, in a pure light'. Again, philosophers are not uniquely distinguished by their orientation to the really real.

Thus the Palinode places the philosophers among many others related variably to the reality. But its imagery does not indicate the actions constitutive of those relations. How does one 'philosophize'? The soul, it says, observes the really real; it struggles to stay high in the shared orbit; then it falls to earth. What is the earthly correlate of this observing, and what is the correlate of this contention? I see no way to decide. This interpretative gap means, however, that we cannot simply assume that the human way to seek to know reality is different from any other purportedly non-Platonic method of accessing reality, as long as that method aims to reveal the nature of justice, sound-mindedness,

and knowledge. Conversation, modeling, apprenticeship, speech-training, and mathematics seem plausible candidates. All that the Palinode suggests, it seems, is that the method of observation and contention practiced by philosophers must share something with the practice of the *philokaloi* and the dedicatees of culture and love.

PHILOSOPHIZING WITHOUT DECEPTION, AND PEDERASTY WITH PHILOSOPHY

The Palinode turns now to the career of embodied souls. After their bodies have died, they must wait a long time before returning to the celestial orbit.

> **[4]** The more justly one lives, the better one's lot. For the soul returns to its orbit after ten thousand years, except for the [soul] of the person having philosophized without deception (ἡ τοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντες ἀδόλως, 249a1-2), in which case it may be a shorter delay.

This remark introduces a longer eschatological discussion, with complexities of judgment and metempsychosis. Relevant for our study is an implication that, if one may philosophize without deception, one may also philosophize *with* deception. This means that philosophizing has public components. Such public components that could be authentic or deceptive may include being interested in other people, acting with self-discipline, and debating others on important topics. This suggests that private contemplation does not constitute the principal philosophical activity, except insofar as it has an external form for which that contemplation provides justification (as, e.g., Socrates' lateness to a party justified by his solitary reflections [*Symp.* 174d4–175c7] or his oddness while on campaign [*Symp.* 220b1–d7]). Otherwise it is hard to see how one could philosophize (internally) with or without deception.

The Palinode goes on immediately to describe another life on the fast-track to re--orbit:

> **[5]** ... or to the one having lived the life of love toward a young man accompanied by philosophy (ἢ παιδεραστήσαντος μετὰ φιλοσοφίας). (249a2)

We see a similar formulation at 257b6, [9], below; we will compare them in our discussion there. The disjunction 'ἤ' seems to distinguish the person philosophizing without deception from the person 'pederasting' with philosophy, but the rest of the dialogue suggests that these two lives coincide. After all, the first two speeches of the dialogue present pederasts who use guile. So if philosophizing without deception is the same as pederasting with philosophy, then philosophy is intrinsically connected to guileless pederasty. This suggests that philosophy is a way of spending time with a young person in order to make him good. This includes making him like his favored god, through persuading and accustoming (πείθοντες καὶ ῥυθμίζοντες, 252e4–253c2). Deceptive pederasty is a way of seeming to make the young person good but really caring only for getting favors from him (cf. 227c7).

THE *MANIA* FOR UNIFYING THE THINGS WE SAY

The Palinode goes on to describe the conditions for reincarnation as a human. It thereby

provides what is so far the longest and most complex discussion of the philosopher.

> **[6]** For the [soul] having never seen the truth will never arrive into this shape [of a human]. For a human must comprehend a thing said in accord with a form (συνιέναι κατ' εἶδος λεγόμενον), it coming from many perceptions into one, being brought together by reasoning (ἐκ πολλῶν ἰὸν αἰσθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῷ συναιρούμενον): and this is recollection of those things that the soul of us once saw, having accompanied god and looked askance at what we now claim is real, and coming up to what is really real. It is for this reason that the mind (διάνοια) of the philosopher alone becomes winged: for it is always next to these things, by memory, as far as it's able, next to which things god, being divine, is. And indeed, a man using such reminders correctly, being continually initiated into completed mystery rites, alone becomes really completed [i.e., initiated]. And standing outside the realm of things that it is human to take seriously, and becoming next to the divine, he is censured by the many as being deranged, but in fact he is possessed, as escapes the notice of the many. (249b5-d3)

To put it simply, humans collate and abstract, thereby reaching the truth more readily; philosophers distinguish themselves by doing this most consistently. The core idea comes early in the passage. A person must 'comprehend a thing said in accord with a form, it coming from many perceptions into one, being brought together by reasoning' (συνιέναι κατ' εἶδος λεγόμενον, ἐκ πολλῶν ἰὸν αἰσθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῷ συναιρούμενον). The basic idea seems straightforward enough: one unifies one's experience through reasoned selection or condensation.[25] The details are more challenging. To understand (συνιέναι) a thing said (λεγόμενον) in accord with a form (κατ' εἶδος) is generally interpreted as meaning something like 'to understand a statement in terms of its reference to a general category of experience, rather than in terms of its reference to concrete particularities'.[26] But this overinterprets. If the Palinode means to convey any subtle or significant information in the idea *kat' eidos*, its compressed formulation would be an ineffective way to do so. In particular, it is not clear how a thing said could be *understood* in accord with anything else *other* than an *eidos* (form); after all, understanding *kath' idia* (particulars), or *kata phenomena* (appearances), or *kata doxa* (conventions) seem unpromising routes to understanding. A further difficulty to determinate interpretation comes from the participial phrase following *legomenon*. It either describes a 'thing said' *before* it is understood in accord with a form, or glosses a 'thing said' as something *once* it is so understood. I do not see how to decide on one or the other. All we can say is that the passage describes the process by which individual experiences become something linguistic, and do so only in their unification. The resonance of the Palinode's word-choice suggests this: this 'reasoning' (λογισμῷ) is like a 'bringing into speech' (λεγόμενον).

As the Palinode continues in this passage, it describes the philosopher as best fulfilling the human requirement. Like all other humans, the philosopher is engaged with the universals, the things said in accord with form, but unlike non-philosophers he is 'always' engaged with them, to such an extent that he seems bizarre to many people. Of course, as the run-up to passage [2] made clear, the philosopher fails to maintain complete focus on the really real, even if he does not fail as soon as others do. So too

here, the 'always' is qualified as *kata dunamin*, 'as far as it [the soul] is able'. The difference is quantitative. Since absolute attendance on the really real is divine — it makes any divine thing (such as gods) divine — all humans share in, or ought to share in, something divine. The philosopher, in seeking to select or bring together perceptions into unifying speeches, shares most in what is most human — being divine.

We should pause to note similarities between [6] and earlier passages. The 'divine philosophy' mentioned at [1] has extra meaning now: philosophy is not just of the deepest importance; it is, as least in this most recent expression, the practice that contributes most directly to being divine. Also in [1], philosophy was said to make one most thoughtful (φρονιμώτατος). Here too philosophy involves recollecting the most; amplifying understanding, reason, and selective choice; and having a mind (*dianoia*) most cognizant with the sort of unities typical of divine rationality. Thus Socrates uses the word 'philosophy' in his second speech much the same way he uses it in his first speech. It is worth adding that it may not be so surprising that the philosopher, though really manifesting what is best in humans, seems strange to most humans; as we saw in the discussion of [2], philosophers are grouped with others avid about what is most significant in culture — beauty, art, love — and these people look strange.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE INTEGRATED LIFE

The Palinode's last two uses of 'philosophy' group words suggest that philosophy is a way of life devoted to proper self-integration. It first addresses the ideal case. Good lovers

> **[7]** strain against [the embraces of the beloved] through shame and speech (μετ' αἰδοῦς καὶ λόγου ἀντιτείνει); if in leading to a well-ordered life (τεταγμένην τε δίαιταν) and philosophy the best part of their mind should prevail, they lead (διάγουσιν) a blessed and mentally-integrated (ὁμονοητικόν) life, being masters of themselves and well-ordered (ἐγκρατεῖς αὑτῶν καὶ κόσμιοι), enslaving that by which badness enters the soul, and liberating that by which virtue enters. (256a6-b3)

The Palinode then proceeds to the non ideal but not totally unsatisfactory case:

> **[8]** If to a coarser and unphilosophical life (διαίτῃ φορτικωτέρᾳ τε καὶ ἀφιλοσόφῳ) [they turn], and are dedicated to honor (φιλοτίμῳ δὲ χρήσωνται)… [these people may choose what people *call* blessed (sc. sex) and] do things not approved by the whole mind (ἅτε οὐ πάσῃ δεδογμένα τῇ διανοίᾳ πράττοντες). (256b7-c7)

Philosophy is identified in [7] with being well-ordered, directed by reason, self controlled, integrated, and protective of the prerogatives of virtue. There is no reduction of philosophy to a concern for the really real, even if such a concern is, in some way, a condition of philosophy — as it is of any human life. There is repeated emphasis on the virtues organized around *sôphrosunê*, as we see in the *Charmides*, the very virtue on which the *Phaedrus* closes (ὁ σώρφων, 279c3). Passage [8] coordinates philosophy with the absence of coarseness, contrasts it with the concerns for honor and bodily pleasure, reiterates its oddness in the public eye, and treats it as the result of wholehearted attention alone. Just as at the end of the *Phae-*

drus, where Socrates prays that his outside and inside coordinate,[27] in [8] the Palinode states that philosophy means *acting* (publicly) as the mind *decides* (privately).

A PROTREPTIC TO PHILOSOPHY

At the close of the Palinode, Socrates wishes that Phaedrus would turn to philosophy. He prays to *Erôs*, using 'philosophy'-group words twice in close succession:

> **[9]** Blaming Lysias as father of the [first] speech, stop him from [making] such speeches, and turn him to philosophy, just as Polemarchus, his brother, has been turned. (257b2-4)

> **[10]** [Do this] so that this lover of him no longer wavers as he does now, but wholly toward love accompanied by philosophical speeches he may make his life. (257b4--6)

We may not know exactly why Lysias' speech-making does not count as philosophical; Socrates obscures his critique of Lysias' speech to the unloved (234e5–235a8). But Socrates says that Polemarchus has turned toward philosophy. The *Phaedrus* tells us nothing else about Polemarchus; but in the *Republic*, we see that Polemarchus engages Socrates well in conversation.[28] Polemarchus opens the *Republic* by having his slave restrain Socrates; Socrates learns that he wishes to force him into joining him and others in a discussion at his house followed by the observation of some new races (327a1–328a10). He interrupts Socrates to defend his father once Cephalus fails to give a consistent answer to Socrates' questions about justice, on the grounds that Simonides supports Cephalus' contention. For several pages he supports Simonides' view, graciously modifying it when Socrates shows his earlier interpretations to be untenable. As he fails to support even these modifications, he says that he would gladly join Socrates in battle against those who believe justice means harming one's enemies (331d3–336a8). Some books later, Polemarchus and Adeimantus whisper to each other. We learn that they were complaining that Socrates did not explain how the community of wives and children, the idea for which follows from the view that friends hold possessions in common, should be manifest in the city he describes (449a7–450a1). This evidence does not support anything about Polemarchus' concern for the really real, or an acceptance of universal forms, or a use of certain conversational methods. It shows only that Polemarchus loves conversation with Socrates, cares about the most plausible views of justice, graciously accepts Socrates' questions and refutations, and is curious about the practical details of this theoretical model. Philosophy is something concerned with valuable conversations.

Passage [10] echoes, as we noted before, [5]. Phaedrus sees value in both the life Lysias models and the life Socrates describes. As Socrates describes it here, the life he describes is the life not of 'philosophy' but of 'love accompanied by philosophical speeches'. This suggests that philosophy describes a kind of conversation with a beloved. The Palinode depicts just one beloved, the one to whom the lover is madly attuned. From the examples of Socrates with Polemarchus and with Phaedrus, though, we get the sense that a beloved can be any close friend in whom a 'lover' — an avid friend — takes great interest. From the conversations with Polemarchus depicted in the *Republic*, we see that such conversations will be those

that press a person to express what he finds most valuable and true, and then to undergo testing of those views he expresses.

Socrates' exhortation to philosophy continues even after the Palinode. He turns from his explicit concern with speech competition and the nature of love to the nature of good speaking and writing. Perhaps because he intends to speak with less rhetorical brilliance, he tells Phaedrus that their continued conversations remain beloved by the divine and in particular by the Muses.

> **[11]** The cicadas report to the most senior Muses, Calliope and Ourania, who among humans spends time in philosophy (ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διάγοντάς) and honoring (τιμῶντας) their music (μουσικήν), a music that is a talk (λόγους) both human and divine and that has the most beautiful sound (καλλίστην φωνήν). (259d3–8)

Philosophy honors the Muses' sonorous talk. This talk is both human and divine; as we have learned before, at the level of the concern for virtue, these coincide. Socrates treats what he has said as reasons that they continue to talk (λεκτέον). This suggests that philosophy honors the gods by mirroring their speech, on the human — though still aspirationally divine — plane.

PHILOSOPHIZING AND SPEAKING ADEQUATELY

The presumably philosophical conversation to which Socrates encourages Phaedrus' commitment proceeds, for the remainder of the dialogue, as a meandering inquiry into the nature of speaking well. A good speaker needs only to know what an audience finds persuasive, Phaedrus tells Socrates (260a1–4). Socrates shows in return that Phaedrus does not really believe this (260b1–d1). But in showing him this, Socrates worries that he has spoken too harshly against the partisan of rhetoric (260d3--9). So he brings forth some arguments (λόγοι) to represent a more nuanced position. He addresses those *logoi*:

> **[12]** Come to us, noble creatures, and persuade our beautiful-child Phaedrus that unless he philosophizes adequately (ἱκανῶς φιλοσοφήσῃ), he will never be adequate at speaking (ἱκανός ποτε λέγειν) about anything.

Philosophizing makes one a good orator. It is at first hard to know how this is so. The *logoi* go on to claim that perfect deception requires perfect knowledge about everything (261d10–262c3). So it would seem that philosophy is knowledge of the details of everything in the world, so that, as the *logoi* say, one may know how exactly everything differs. It turns out that this argument is itself deceptive, because it is invalid, and deliberately so.[29] Furthermore, nothing in the previous eleven uses of 'philosophy'-group words has suggested that philosophizing involves becoming omniscient. Indeed, the few instances relating philosophy to contact with the really real suggest distancing oneself from the bulk of things one could possibly know to focus on the most fundamental aspects of the world. Even more tellingly, the conversation between Socrates and Phaedrus that follows, which seems to epitomize good discussion — Socrates, after all, persuades Phaedrus — does not, as far as I can tell, require Socrates to know everything. So the *logoi*, not surprisingly given their name, '[mere] arguments', do not satisfactorily link philosophy and omniscience.

Yet the *logoi*'s invalid, unprecedented, and incongruous discussion of philosophy here may have a positive lesson. It seems likely that both Phaedrus and we are to remember that philosophizing is something quite different than knowing the details of everything in the world (a similar lesson is given by the Platonic *Rival Lovers*). It seems perhaps a response to the fact that we do *not* know all those details. As philosophers we are instead to maintain a critical consciousness in conversation, to make sure to say what we really believe, and to ask questions when our interlocutor's remarks become unclear or too abstract.

BEING WISE *VS*. BEING A PHILOSOPHER

In the opening of this paper, I quoted one of Socrates' closing remarks of the dialogue. It is the passage that appears to make an etymological play on the word *philosophos*.

> **[13]** Regarding whoever composes speeches knowing how the truth is (εἰδὼς ᾗ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἔχει), can defend those speeches (ἔχων βοηθεῖν), and can show that they are of little worth (λέγων αὐτὸς δυνατὸς τὰ γεγραμμένα φαῦλα αποδεῖξαι): to call this person 'wise' (τὸ σοφόν) seems to me to be grand and appropriate for god alone; but either 'philosopher' or something like that would be more fitting for him and be more in tune. (278d)

The second and third criteria for philosopher-hood are simple enough. Defending a view is a central part of any productive conversation, especially those about one's possession of virtues. The Platonic dialogues show little else besides conversations containing defenses of such morally-relevant positions. And showing that one's composed words are of little value requires only the awareness and self-awareness described in the *Apology*, that the world is much more complicated than mere mortals can apprehend. This awareness comes especially through conversation, the reciprocal testing of one's and another's views.

It is the first criterion on which controversy rests. What truth must a philosophical speaker know? It cannot be the truth of the really real, since only gods have this state of wisdom, and philosophers differ from the gods. Nor was there ever a satisfactory argument in favor of the philosopher being omniscient, knowledgeable about absolutely anything a person might talk about. It is not obvious what remains. In fact I take it as a deliberate *aporia* in the dialogue, what the good speaker should know. This *aporia* follows Socrates everywhere; it is never obvious what he knows — besides his own ignorance, perhaps, and *ta erôtika* — such that his conversations and life go the way they do. What seems more obvious is that a philosophical speaker would know, besides the ways both to defend a speech and to abandon a speech, *about what* to make a speech. One should talk about what really matters, what would really honor the gods (277d10–278b4). For the philosopher, knowing the truth may amount to knowing truly what to talk about.

Socrates does not make much of the fact that this is the 'philosopher's' activity. Some other name would work just as well.[30] The etymological connection implied between *sophon* and *philosophon* is playful, but provides little information. The philosopher may have some relationship to the wise person (*sophon*) or to wisdom (*sophia*), but the prefix *phil-* does not establish the tenor of that relationship with any determinacy.

ISOCRATES' *PHILOSOPHIA*

We find the final use of the dialogue's freighted term, *philosophia*, in Socrates' closing remarks about Isocrates, cited at the beginning of this paper. Here I quote the entire passage. Socrates has just told Phaedrus to relate the above results concerning philosophy to Lysias.

> **[14]** Phaedrus: And you — what? How will you proceed? For we must not at all leave aside your companion.
> Socrates: Who is this?
> P.: Isocrates the beautiful; what will you report to him, Socrates? What will we call him?
> S.: Isocrates is still young, Phaedrus; but what I prophecy for him, I am willing to say.
> P.: What is it?
> S.: He seems to me better in terms of speeches when compared to Lysias, as far as his nature is concerned; and still more, to be more nobly blended in his character, so that it would be worth no amazement were, as he grows older, the difference, in the speeches which he attempts now, between him and those who have so far undertaken speech-writing, to become greater than that between man and boys; and yet more again, if he were to be unsatisfied with that, and some diviner impulse led him to greater things; for there is by nature some philosophy in the mind of that man. (tr. after Rowe)

This is Plato's sole explicit reference to Isocrates in his dialogues.[31] What explains Plato's silence everywhere else is hard to say. But this paper is not really about Isocrates; it is about the nature of the philosophy Socrates exhorts Phaedrus to take up, and whether we are to take Socrates to mean strongly opposed things by 'philosophy'.

What seems clear is that up to this point, Socrates has not distinguished between multiple distinct types of philosophy or philosophers. He has done quite the opposite, observing that many types of people not explicitly named 'philosophers' share in the essential features of philosophy. There are no grounds for the reader to assume, then, that Socrates here in [14] refers to a special, heretofore unmentioned 'philosophy'. It is in fact easy to understand Socrates' point about Isocrates while assuming that 'philosophy' means here what it has meant throughout the dialogue. Socrates could be saying that Isocrates knows what he should be talking about, the education and wellbeing of people; knows how to defend his positions, giving arguments of a varied nature; and knows the relative poverty of his wisdom, presuming a modesty of pedagogical power.[32] It might even be possible that young Isocrates seeks, to some degree, to know about the nature of justice and self-control and knowledge. Saying all this is completely compatible with Plato's putative belief that Isocrates, in his mature age, has lost some of these traits, despite holding onto the word 'philosophy' in his practice.[33] Perhaps Plato's disappointment with Isocrates has even more pathos given his belief that Socrates would have approved of the young Isocrates. The similarity in the names of Socrates and Isocrates is probably not lost on Plato (cf. *Statesman* 258a1), and so too similarities, and dissimilarities, in their intellectual practices.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study of 'philosophy'-group words in the *Phaedrus*, we have found that there is no obvious bifurcations in the term's use, where some instances would have a 'conventional' or 'rhetorical' meaning and others would have a 'technical' or 'Platonic' meaning. All uses are connected to conversations concerned to diagnose and improve a person's level of virtue. On some occasions, Socrates or his Palinode emphasizes the connection between virtue and knowledge. On other occasions, the emphasis is on the connection between virtue and self control. In either cases, philosophy is the critical attitude and set of practices dedicated to developing and helping others develop the good life. There is no reason to think that Socrates could not see young Isocrates as characterized by such an attitude and set of practices, nor even to think that Isocrates himself did not believe that his own teaching wholly embodied these attitudes and practices. What Socrates encourages Phaedrus to pursue is a life of engaged and reflective conversation typified by the conversation depicted in the *Phaedrus*.[34]

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NOTES

1 Recent studies revisiting “philosophy” in so-called “later” dialogues are found in Gill 2012 and Labriola 2014; see also Peterson 2011.

2 All translations by the author unless noted.

3 Goggin and Long 1993 give the neat if overly--interpretative translation ‘tincture’ for τις.

4 For Isocrates’ view of *philosophia* see Wersdörfer 1940; Wilcox 1943; Cahn 1989, 124–137; Nightingale 1995, 26–41; Timmerman 1998; Poulakos 2001; Livingstone 2007; McCoy 2009, 53–58; Wareh 2012, 30-54; Murphy 2013; Collins 2015, 171-181.

5 To the references in the above note add Nehamas 1990; Nightingale 2004, 14–35; Cooper 2004.

6 De Vries 1969 ad 279a9; see also his 1953, 40–41, and 1971, 388.

7 Yunis 2011 ad 279a8–b2; similar views about two opposed senses of *philosophia* are held by Brown and Coulter 1971, 411–414, and Griswold 1986, 286n18. McAdon 2004, 32–35 supports his view that Isocrates’ view of philosophy is different from Plato’s in the *Phaedrus* by appeal only to Plato’s uses of the term ‘philosophy’ found outside the *Phaedrus*.

8 Werner 2012, 230n162; see also 120n40 and 228–229.

9 For the *Phaedrus* as Plato’s contest with Isocrates, see also Howland 1937; Coulter 1967; McAdon 2004; and more mildly in Burger 1980, 115–126; Goggin and Long 1993; McCoy 2009.

10 Still, knowing this attitude may advance our understanding of fourth-century philosophy; see Wareh 2012, 55–75.

11 The *Euthydemus* includes many protreptic speeches to philosophy; see 275a2, 282d2, 288d. The *Alcibiades* and *Clitophon*, dialogues deeply concerned with protreptic speeches to justice, do not use the ‘philosophy’--word group.

12 I note that ‘philosophy’ is the word Socrates as narrator of the historical conversation uses; he does not say what word he in fact used in 429. It is unimportant to my argument.

13 On Callias’ profligate commitment to sophists, ideas, and Protagoras’ ideas, see *Apol.* 20a3–c3, *Tht.* 165a1–2, Xen. *Symp.* 1.4–6, and Freeman 1938; Wolfsdorf 1998, 127–129.

14 That the Spartans have the most *sophistai* suggests, further, they have the most people characterized by knowledge of wisdom (312c8), nourishing souls on *mathemata* (313c), or teaching people to become better (316d-317c).

15 The two other uses of ‘philosophy’ group words in the dialogue are in this passage, glossing the uses already mentioned: 342e6, 343b4. See Most 1994 and Moore 2016 for further discussion.

16 Brown and Coulter 1971 argue that this speech imitates ones Isocrates, or at least his ilk, would write.

17 Yunis 2011 ad 239b4. De Vries ad 239b4 says that the term is used here ‘not in its Platonic meaning, but used as the term was generally used in the IV century BC’; Rowe 1986 ad 239b3–4 tempers De Vries’ position but still suggests that Socrates has in mind ‘philosophy in the narrow sense’ (although it is unclear how this is ‘narrower’ than any other sense).

18 The lives companion to philosophers are frequently ignored, as most recently in Werner 2012, 119.

19 Burnet’s OCT prints φιλοπόνου <ἢ> γυμναστικῶν (conjectured by Badham). This would make three people: the belabored man, the gymnastic man, and the man of healing.

20 Yunis 2011, 114–115 conjectures an interesting account of the groupings.

21 On the date of Thucydides’ authorship, Munn 2000, 12; on the dramatic date of the *Phaedrus*, Yunis 2011, 7–8.

22 Gomme 1945 ad loc does not take the discussion of political preparation to gloss the meaning of ‘philosophize’, but instead as a parallel — ‘the comparison is with other Greeks, Boeotians and Peloponnesians, who would think a love of learning to be as inconsistent with courage as political discussion with decisiveness of action’ — but this seems a misreading of Thucydides’ logic. Hadot 2004, 16 claims that Pericles treated his audience as ‘proud of [their] intellectual activity and the interest in science and culture which flourished in their city’; Laks 2002, 30, takes philosophizing to be equivalent to being attracted by the fine arts and literature. Rusten 1985 is only half-right when he says that ‘it is no longer necessary to dilute the force of φιλοσοφοῦμεν to “general culture”, since it need not apply equally to every Athenian’, and he loses specificity when he holds that ‘on an individual level... φιλοκαλεῖν is virtually a synonym for φιλοσοφεῖν’.

23 Betegh 2009 argues for the philosophical importance of Socrates’ understanding of Aesop.

24 Cf. Belfiore 2012.

25 See de Vries 1969 ad 249b7–c1; Hoffmann and Rashed 2008; and Yunis 2011 ad 249b6–c1, on the conjectural emendations to this text.

26 De Vries 1969 ad loc reads *kata eidos* as ‘in generic terms’. Yunis 2011 ad loc translates it as ‘with respect to form’ and says that ‘“what is said with respect to form” is a discourse conducted on a higher, more abstract level than concrete instances or individual perceptions, as is evident in the use of “form” (εἶδος, ἰδέα) in the account of dialectical reasoning later in the dialogue (265d1--266b2)’. Ryan ad 249b6-c1 gives ‘according to class (or type)’, and implies, I think, that understanding a thing said according to class means putting all instances of that thing under a single concept and giving it a single name. Rowe 1986 ad 249b7 combines the suggestions I have already quoted: ‘literally, “something which is said in accordance with/in relation to *eidos*” — *eidos* in the sense of “class”..., perhaps, rather than “Form”; or else both.’

27 On this closing prayer see Clay 1979; Griswold 1986, 226–229; Yunis 2011, 246–249; Werner 2012, 230–235.

28 On Polemarchus' character, see Page 1990; see Gifford 2001 and Howland 2004 on the historical events involving Polemarchus alluded to in *Republic* Book 1.
29 Moore 2013 and Moore 2014.
30 Yunis 2011 ad loc gives a list of alternative names culled from the dialogue.
31 Many scholars also read an allusion to Isocrates in *Euthydemus* 304d4–306d1; see Dusanic 1999.
32 Johnson 1959 attempts a reconstruction of Isocrates' thoughtful pedagogical method.
33 Werner 2012, 227–230 and n158, by contrast, thinks, for reasons I cannot intuit, that 'Plato was *angered* by Isocrates' use of the term φιλοσοφία' (my italics).
34 I presented a short version of this paper at Lehigh University (October 2013).

Plato's cosmological medicine in the discourse of Eryximachus in the *Symposium*. The responsibility of a harmonic *technê*

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ABSTRACT

By comparing the role of harmony in Eryximachus' discourse (specifically in *Symposium* 187 a 1-188 a 1) with other Platonic passages, especially from the *Timaeus*, this article aims to provide textual evidence concerning Plato's conception of cosmological medicine as "harmonic *technê*". The comparison with other dialogues will enable us to demonstrate how Eryximachus' thesis is consistent with Plato's cosmology — a cosmology which cannot be reduced to a physical conception of reality but represents the expression of a dialectical and erotic cosmos, characterized by the agreement of parts. Arguably, Eryximachus' discourse is expression of the Platonic tendency to translate onto the philosophical plane the implications of a model *peri physeôs*. Harmonic *technê* is thus always linked to the theme of moral responsibility: the philosopher is also doctor, musician and demiurges in his harmonizing activity. The speech of Eryximachus can be approached as a Platonic step which is fundamental for establishing the need for a "medicine" to cure disorder, with a view to obtaining a cosmos ordered according to the harmonic principle.

Keywords : Plato's *Symposium*; Eryximachus; harmony; cosmological medicine; *technê*; education.

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1. ERYXIMACHUS

Eryximachus is a *physikos* belonging to a family of doctors (his father is Acumenus) whose members trace their origin back to Asclepius. As a Platonic character, we find him in — in addition to the *Symposium* — *Protagoras* 315 c 2, where he questions Hippias about nature, astronomy and meteorology. Moreover, he is cited in *Phaedrus* 268 a9 as Phaedrus's friend.[1] An Eryximachus is cited among those who had desecrated the Herms in 415, but it is not clear whether or not he is the Eryximachus that we are concerned with here.

In opposition to those who consider Eryximachus a pedant,[2] whose discourse is refuted by Diotima's discourse,[3] this paper proposes an interpretation emphasizing literary and philosophical aspects which enable us to grasp the positive significance carried by Eryximachus' discourse within the *Symposium*.[4]

Eryximachus represents temperance or — we could say on the basis of what will be demonstrated below — the concept of harmony: as a symposiarch he decides the correct balance with respect to the proportions of water and wine (176 b 5-e 3), as a doctor he proposes a therapy for Aristophanes' hiccups (185 c 7-8), as a good musician he establishes the order of discourses and restores it after the disorder generated by Alcibiades' arrival (214 a 6-b 8). Arguably, by grasping these aspects, and connecting them to what we will say on the notion of cosmological medicine that emerges from his (Eryximachus') speech, it will be possible to question, at least partially, the assumption that Eryximachus' discourse is pedantic and sophistic.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF ERYXIMACHUS' DISCOURSE

Eryximachus's discourse can be subdivided into six sections:[5]

Prologue: Eryximachus refers to the discourse of Pausanias, saying that it is right to retain a double nature for Eros but that such double nature needs to be extended to the whole cosmos.

Section 1: Eros and medicine. The body manifests Eros' double nature in the coexistence of healthy desires and unhealthy desires. Medicine is the science of the erotic tendencies of the body to fill and empty itself. It enables the distinction between healthy and unhealthy desires. The task of the doctor is to transform the fight between the two Erotes in friendship by operating on opposites: cold/hot, bitter/sweet, dry/humid.

Section 2: Eros and music. Eryximachus comments on Heraclitus' fragment DK 22 b51, interpreting it from a temporal perspective: the doctor musician is able to create harmony from an initial discord. He operates thus through a technique which is able to transform the discordant into concordant. Music is then the science of love of harmony and rhythm. It is important to take care of both forms of Eros, using cautiously that of the muse Polyhymnia, enjoying its pleasure without falling sick.

Section 3: Eros and meteorology and astronomy. Prosperity and Health happen when the opposites find themselves reciprocally united in an ordered love and support each other in harmony and temperate mixture. When excessive Eros prevails (*ho meta tês hybreôs Eros*), which

leads to imbalance, we witness epidemics, disease and destruction.
Section 4: Eros and religion. Friendship between men and Gods happens by seconding ordered Eros.
Epilogue: Eryximachus concludes by saying that Eros possesses a universal power and that happiness comes from that Eros which aims at the good with justness and moderation. He then passes the baton to Aristophanes, inviting him to fill the gaps in his speech.

3. THE CONCEPT OF HARMONY IN ERIXYMACHUS' PHYSICS

By focusing on the relationship between philosophy and physics — particularly Heraclitus and Empedocles' physics — it is possible to individuate more clearly the Platonic position present in Eryximachus' discourse. This position differs from the pre-Socratic approach, and can be considered as Plato's particular interpretation of Greek medicine. In fact, medicine and philosophy emerge from the same cultural and professional substratum, with ample and persistent reciprocal influences.[6] Hippocrates is Plato's contemporary, albeit younger. It is therefore easy to think that Plato, through Eryximachus, presents his interpretation of medical theory, establishing a dialogical relation with the *Hippocratic Corpus*.[7] This approach is consistent with the method employed by Plato against tradition or against the dominant doctrines of his time: Plato develops his positions starting from these doctrines, but he rewrites them to his advantage, giving them a different interpretation. As discussed below, a clear example of this method is the Platonic interpretation of Heraclitus.

According to Eryximachus, nature is composed of opposite forces whose dynamics create movement and transformation. The doctor qua good physicist and knower of the cosmos must know the erotic tendencies of elements in order to help them to come together in relations of mutual friendship. In Eryximachus' discourse, which inherits Pausanias' conception of double Eros, Empedocles' two cosmic forces — *philia* and *neikos* — assume an immanent character as forces that compose nature in ordered and disordered forms. Equilibrium is dynamic: in Empedoclean terms, it is possible to maintain that the predominance of *philia* over *neikos* does not cancel out *neikos* but shapes it in the right proportion. Eryximachus thus transforms the Empedoclean perspective which defines the starting point of his discourse by emphasizing the necessary coexistence of the two forces.[8] Such coexistence will not be conflictual as in Heraclitus, but it will unfold in harmonic proportion. Subsequently Eryximachus transforms Heraclitus' own maxim (DK 22, b51) to his own advantage.

> [...] perhaps Heracleitus intends as much by those perplexing words, 'The One at variance with itself is drawn together, like harmony of bow or lyre.' Now it is perfectly absurd to speak of a harmony at variance, or as formed from things still varying. Perhaps he meant, however, that from the grave and acute which were varying before, but which afterwards came to agreement, the harmony was by musical art created. For surely there can be no harmony of acute and grave while still at variance: harmony is consonance, and consonance is a kind of agreement; and agreement of things varying, so long as they are at variance, is impossible.[9] (trad. H. N. Fowler)

This is one of the most commented-on passages of Eryximachus' speech, especially because it can be considered as one of the sources for reconstructing the Platonic interpretation of Heraclitus. In the context of this article, I would like to highlight the concept of harmony that is expressed here through a shift in the meaning of Heraclitus' utterance. Harmony is not realized by discordant things but by transforming discordant things into concordant ones. For Eryximachus, Heraclitus intended to say that harmony is realized by things that were previously discordant and that, thanks to medical *praxis*, become concordant. Harmony is in fact both consonance (*symphônia*), and agreement (*homologia*).

The word *homologia* is central to the dialogic-dialectical method developed by Plato, which here takes on a cosmic value, in the sense of erotic relationship between the parts that make up the physical universe. The "cosmological medicine" permeates every dimension of reality, emerging therefore as an ethical cosmos.[10]

Before analyzing the ethical relevance of the harmonic technique I would like to explore the theme of the specific form that the harmonic composition takes in Eryximachus's speech. The physics described by Eryximachus is not an ordered and harmonic whole but a world in movement and transformation that must be ordered by a doctor-demiurge following the principle of harmony.

Plato, reporting Heraclitus's thesis in the above-mentioned passage of the *Symposium*, uses *sympheretai*. This linguistic slippage is interesting from a semantic point of view and indicates, in my opinion, different ontological commitments: *homologein* indicates a convergence of *logoi*, an agreement more than identification; the *sympheretai* indicates a process of unification, the action of putting together (*syn* + *pherô*) what is not together: the elements are held together by something else (the middle-passive form is used). In other fragments, however, we find the same *sympheretai* attributed to Heraclitus (DK 8), and this may suggest a general equivalence of the two terms in our author. However, in terms of the Platonic reception, it is interesting to underline that Plato interprets Heraclitus according to the *sympheretai* paradigm, and thus according to a process that holds together what is not together, namely the opposites.

In this way, Eryximachus emphasizes the role of technique and of human action in the universe. Such a role consists of creating a dynamic equilibrium by transforming discordant forces into concordant ones, without falling into the error of eliminating one of the two poles, but finding the right rhythm to enjoy the pleasure that the negative force offers whence a relation is established with the positive one. Moderation or temperance is thus not the dictatorship of the positive, but the right proportion between the different constituents of the universe, like the right proportion between water and wine to prevent intoxication, as explained by Eryximachus in 176 c 1-e 3.

Rhythm, which transforms the fast and the slow from discordant to concordant, is realized thanks to numeric harmony.

> [...] when a thing varies with no disability of agreement, then it may be harmonized; just as rhythm is produced by fast and slow, which in the beginning were at variance but later came to agree.[11]

From this perspective Eryximachus refers to the Pythagoreans, and, presumably, to Heraclitus, establishing a relation between the harmony which manifests itself in the cosmos and an "invisible" harmony. In fact it is the

number, a being that is invisible yet present in the visible, which creates harmony within the proportional relation. Musical harmony, which can be perceived through the ears but which is realized through the numerical proportion between high-pitched and low-pitched sounds is thus the bond holding together body and soul, the sensible and ideas.

Conversely, celestial harmony does not possess the double nature of Eros: Eryximachus argues in fact that in harmony itself (thus in the idea of harmony) there is no duality (187 c5-7). Duality is rather the model according to which the musician-demiurge as good craftsman must order the opposite forces which are present in the *physis*.

> [...] but when we come to the application of rhythm and harmony to social life, whether we construct what are called 'melodies' or render correctly, by what is known as 'training,' tunes and measures already constructed, we find here a certain difficulty and require a good craftsman.[12]

The topic of the cosmological function of celestial harmony obviously recalls the *Timaeus*. This dialogue clearly explains that the harmony of the microcosm should be related to that of the macrocosm. Accordingly, the health of the body will be properly defined as the right equilibrium among elements (81 e 6-86 a 8), the health of the soul as the absence of excesses in the constitution of its nature, good education and mode of life. Music resolves the task of healing the soul by restoring the balance lost through incarnation:

> [...] and then as much of the domain of the Muses as can be employed for the hearing of sound† was given for the sake of attunement. And attunement, whose movements are naturally akin to the circular motions of our souls, is useful to the man who makes intelligent use of the Muses not for mindless pleasure (which is nowadays taken to be the point of melody), but for the disharmony of the soul's revolutions that has arisen in us : attunement is an ally, provided by the Muses for the soul in its fight to restore itself to order and harmony. Rhythm also was given for the same purpose by the same benefactors, to support us because for the most part our internal state is inconsistent and graceless.[13] (Tr. R. Waterfield)

The right proportion amongst elements is defined in the *Timaeus* as conformity to nature, imbalance as a disorder that creates illness in the body and the soul. In fact, nature has been created by the demiurge in the best possible way, yet it presents imbalances due to the disorder of elements in the *chôra*. This explains the necessity of the ordering role of a magistrate-demiurge who legislates, as well as the healing practice of a doctor who heals the soul and the body, taking as a model the constitution of the Universe.[14]

Eryximachus' discourse distinguishes the hidden harmony from harmonic actions: the doctor, like the divine craftsman, creates harmony in the sensible universe on the model of the intelligible using the "double Eros" as a force; the hidden harmony, which is not subject to duality, acts as a model for the harmonic action, in a typical Platonic copy-model system of participation. The medical-demiurgical--musical art thus implies the restoration of a hidden proportion.

4. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE COMPOSITION OF ELEMENTS

Harmonic practice needs temperance as a law of composition. Eryximachus' discourse presents the theory of the composition of contraries, based on the law that "the similar loves the similar".[15] Eryximachus therefore endorses the concept of harmony as unity of opposites, yet in a way different from Heraclitus: the unity in question is possible only if the opposites become friends, transforming their nature from that of discordant opposites to a composition of similar elements.[16] A qualitative change takes place. Friendship does not imply a shift from opposition to identity, but from opposition to the proportion between similar elements. Proportion pertains in fact to the correct measure, the reciprocal relation between different elements. Through a quantitative transformation (in other words, by creating the right proportion) the contrasting relation between elements becomes harmonic. Elements change their oppositional qualities thanks to a quantitative change. For this reason Eryximachus maintains that Polyhymnian Eros must be retained but that its presence must be well proportioned in relation to that of Uranian Eros. The duality of Eros is therefore functional to the medical concept of harmonic proportion between elements.

Eryximachus' speech is not only theoretically — as well as chronologically — dependent on that of Pausanias: Eryximachus provides a medical justification of the force of love in nature, placing it in an ethical context. In the speech of Pausanias, Eros is understood in sexual terms: "noble Eros" gives education in exchange for the erotic relationship, whilst "base Eros" only exploits sexually the body of the beloved. In Eryximachus' speech, "noble Eros" educates the opposites, making them agree. The difference between "noble Eros" and "base Eros" lies in education that is based on *sophrôsynê*, temperance, in opposition to *pleonexia,* which constitutes "base Eros".

With regard to Plato's conception of justice as harmonious unity that emerges from the link between the parts of the soul and the parts of the city, where each performs its task, the dialogue of reference is obviously the *Republic*.

> SOCR. Then isn't it appropriate for the rationally calculating element to rule, since it is really wise and exercises foresight on behalf of the whole soul; and for the spirited kind to obey it and be its ally? GLAUC. Of course. SOCR. Now, as we were saying, isn't it a mixture of musical and physical training that makes these elements concordant, tightening and nurturing the first with fine words and learning, while relaxing, soothing, and making gentle the second by means of harmony and rhythm? GLAUC. Yes, exactly. [...] SOCR. What about temperance? Isn't he temperate because of the friendly and concordant relations between these same things: namely, when both the ruler and its two subjects share the belief that the rationally calculating element should rule, and do not engage in faction against it? GLAUC. Temperance in a city and in a private individual is certainly nothing other than that.[17] (Tr. C. D. C. Reeve)

In particular, this passage is central for understanding the passage of Eryximachus' speech we are analyzing: the harmonic and rhythmic action takes origin from the mixture (*krasis*) of music and gymnastics, but it is not limited to it. Education provided by the rational

part, which knows the laws of temperance, is also needed.

As previously mentioned, these elements are present in Eryximachus' discourse (it is possible to mention here *ho meta tês hybreôs eros*, cited specifically in relation to seasons (188 a 7), and its continuous emphasis on caution and temperance) and also, more generally, in Greek medicine. Knowing the physical environment in a broad sense is crucial in order to know the human being and the conditions of health and disease.[18] In the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters and Places* the healthy city is characterized by balanced seasons: such an equilibrium is the equivalent of moderation *(metriotês),* a state where there are not sudden changes (*metabolê*). Such changes are the ecological equivalent of *hybris*; excess in its moral dimension. In Plato, cosmological medicine takes on a philosophical meaning which pervades all fields of human activity, including ethics and politics. Arguably, Eryximachus' discourse is thus an expression of the Platonic tendency to translate onto the philosophical plane the implications of a model *peri physeôs*.

Corporeal illness, unhappiness, folly and the ignorance of the soul, disorder at a meteorological level, religious impiety, *hybris* from an ethical and political perspective, are expressions of an infraction of the harmonic law which regulates the universe. These aspects emphasize the necessity of a technique which is able to re-create harmony taking celestial harmony as a model.

The *Timaeus* is of fundamental importance in addressing the question concerning the practice of composing elements, in particular the theory of the mélange of the Same and the Different:

> He combined the two kinds of substance — the one indivisible and never changing, and the other the divided and created substance of the physical world — into an intermediate, third kind of substance, and then again, in the case of both identity and difference, he likewise formed intermediates between, in each case, that aspect of them which is undivided and that aspect of them which is divided in the physical realm. Then he took these three ingredients and made out of them a single, homogeneous mixture, though getting difference to be compatible with identity took force, since difference does not readily form mixtures. But once he had mixed identity and difference with substance and created a single blend out of the three ingredients, he divided up the whole mixture again, this time into as many portions as he needed, with each portion being a blend of identity,difference, and substance.[19]

Harmony induces the Different, refractory to composition, to mix with the Identical. In fact, compositions in fact will be born from the union and subsequent subdivision in parts (through particular numerical proportions) of the Identical, the Different and the intermediate substance. Compositions are thus born from three elements, thanks to the primary harmonizing work of the Demiurge, who operates on the two opposite principles of the Same and the Different.

However, the harmonic *technê* cannot order everything once and for all. In the same way in which the Demiurge's act is a continuous series of exhortations to the *chôra*, so in the narrative framework the doctor Eryximachus advises against excessive drinking (in other words, he gives the prescription and provides the motivations), but he needs to obtain the consent of the patient, who will subsequently decide

freely. The text in fact emphasizes that everyone will drink as he pleases without getting drunk (176 e 1-3). Eryximachus presents himself thus as a free doctor, using the terminology of the well-known passage of the *Laws* (720 b 8-e 5) in relation to the difference between doctors who are free and doctors who are slaves.

Harmonic *technê* is thus always linked to the theme of moral responsibility: the philosopher is also doctor, musician and demiurge in his harmonizing activity. Accordingly, there is no primacy of the physical plane over the ethical one, or of the ethical over the physical, but — we could say, inspired by our theme — a reciprocal and harmonic relation.

5. PLATO'S COSMOLOGICAL MEDICINE

It is not obvious that what is expressed by Eryximachus represents a theory that can be ascribed to Plato, not only because of the role that his speech plays in the economy of the *Symposium*, but also due to a problem which is internal to the non-authorial writing characterizing Plato's work. However, I believe that a comparison with other dialogues can be fruitful in order to collect hints in favor of the consistency between Eryximachus' thesis and a cosmological view possibly developed by Plato. This view would not be reducible to a physical conception of reality but should be properly understood as the expression of a dialectical and erotic cosmos based on the composition of parts.

The cosmological significance of medicine is ascribed to Hippocrates by Plato himself in *Phaedrus*[20] 270 c1-7, when Phaedrus tells Socrates that not only the nature of the soul, but also that of the body cannot be known without knowing the nature of the Whole. Nevertheless, the assumption that a cosmological medicine plays an important role both in Plato and in the Hippocratic corpus is highly controversial.

What is meant by "Whole"? The interpretations — not only with respect to this passage of the *Phaedrus*, but also in relation to other Platonic texts (cf. especially the *Parmenides*) — are divided between understanding the "Whole" in a physical sense, thus as "universe", and understanding it in a logical or metaphysical sense. Personally, I follow Brisson's interpretation[21] of the relationship between *holon*, *pan* and *hen,* an interpretation which allows us to understand the whole as "universe". In fact, I am convinced of the closeness between Plato's thought and pre-Socratic physics, even though in terms of a rewriting emphasizing the ethical aspect of the totality. From this perspective, cosmological medicine can take a "holistic approach", in the sense of considering the connection and the composition of the parts constituting the whole. The Platonic rewriting acts also in relation to "medicine" (as such), which cannot be intended only as care of the body but, in fact, develops as "harmonic *technê*" of the entire universe. In terms of the holistic approach developed by Plato, a key text is the *Charmides*. In the passage 155 e 5-157 c 6[22] Socrates emphasizes that good doctors, in order to treat the eyes, also treats the head, and to do so they treat the entire body. Moreover, as a doctor of the soul, Socrates says that to educate Charmides to temperance it is first necessary to cure his headache. Therefore, in this passage too, we can notice how, for Plato, the creation of the right composition of parts assumes always an ethical and educational meaning, which allows us to establish a relation between the practice of the physician and the practice of the philosopher.

The holistic approach is also recalled in the usage of the Hippocratic word for equilibrium, *eukrasia,* literally "good mixture" which is used

in *Timaeus* 24 c 6 in relation to the right combination of seasons, but not in Eryximachus' discourse, where the term used is *harmonia*, to emphasize how the right composition can occur only having as a context of reference the whole to which the parts belong. Plato uses in Eryximachus' discourse the word *harmonia* as, in my opinion, he aims to emphasize how this relation of proportion between different elements, typical of musical harmony, is present from a cosmological perspective in the combination of the seasons. Moreover, in the passage 188 a4, which concerns the seasons, Plato uses next to the word *harmonia* the term *krasis*, mixture, in order to recall not only Empedocles but also Hippocrates, and to emphasize how Hippocratic *eukrasia* assumes a philosophical meaning, whether or not conceived together with *harmonia*. In the *Philebus* musical harmony is realized through the combination of the Limited and the Limitless and — an aspect particularly relevant for our study — Socrates applies this concept to seasons.

> SOCR. Now take high and low, fast and slow, indeterminate things-isn't the same true? It at once introduces a determinant and establishes perfectly the whole art of music. PROT. Very true. SOCR. Again, in the case of extremes of cold and heat its advent removes what is far too much and indeterminate and produces what is measured and commensurable. PROT. Yes indeed. SOCR. So the mixture of indeterminate factors and determinants is responsible for good climate and generally for everything we have that is fine.[23]

The harmony of opposites is connected by Eryximachus, however briefly, to divination and religious practice. In *Timaeus* 71 c3-d4 we find a reference consistent with this topic, concerning the mixture of opposites within the liver that enables the operation of divination during sleep:[24]

> Alternatively, when some breath of mildness wafts down from the thoughts and paints the opposite kind of images on the surface of the liver, they afford a respite from bitterness by refusing to stir up or involve themselves with something alien to them. Instead, by exploiting the sweetness inherent throughout the liver for their own purposes, they straighten all its parts until they are free of distortions, wrinkles, and blockages, and they make the part of the soul that has been housed in the same part of the body as the liver gracious and cheerful, so that at night it can indulge in the modest entertainment of divination by dreams, which it has to rely on since it lacks the ability to reason and to apply intelligence.[25] (Tr. J. C. B. Gosling)

This passage enables us to grasp how the law of harmony acts not only between elements but, as in this case, also between images and physical elements — sweet and bitter — that constitute the liver.

The theory of the right composition of elements is used also on another fundamental level, the level of discourse: we may mention, as significant examples of this intersection, the prayer addressed to Pan that concludes the *Phaedrus* (279 b 9-c 5) or, more generally, the theme of *koinônia* and *symplokê* in the *Sophist*.[26] As already mentioned, the term *homologia*, which is typical of the dialogic-dialectical method of Plato, is used by Eryximachus to enable the transition from the physical to the ethical and dialectical plane. I therefore propose to understand "cosmological medicine"

not so much as a specific discipline in the medical field but as a Platonic reworking of the holistic approach characterizing the medicine of his times. This reworking, by using a philosophical key, enables Plato to extend the paradigm of the right composition to all fields, from ethics to psychology and politics. "Cosmological medicine" represents therefore a practice characterizing the dialectical philosopher, who recognizes himself as the good doctor establishing the right proportion between the parts.[27] The "medical" practice of the philosopher is therefore necessary against ethical and political disorder, which needs to be "cured" through a law of harmony. This law is embodied in the Good: in the *Philebus* (26 a 3-5), the Good performs the function of a good mixture so that the elements are well blended, insofar as, once again, an incorrect relation between elements causes the ruin of the whole within which they are contained.

CONCLUSION

The passages I have focused on in this article — it would be possible to mention and analyze many others — are in my opinion the sign of a general thematic concordance between Plato and some texts of the *Hippocratic Corpus* in relation to a "cosmological medicine". However, they also demonstrate — and this represents one main objective of this article — an extraordinary inventiveness in the way Plato approaches this topic from a philosophical perspective. This shift takes place already in Eryximachus' speech,[28] which, if read against the background of the *Timaeus*, enables us to grasp the holistic approach characterizing Plato's philosophy, as well as the need for a harmonic *technê*, understood from a perspective of ethical responsibility. Plato's effort in detecting and incrementing the philosophical meaning of medicine testifies his will to guarantee the epistemic primacy of philosophy and therefore to create a certain dependency of medicine on philosophy, precisely what Hippocrates sought to avoid.[29] Re-evaluating Eryximachus' discourse in this light enables us also to verify the positive role of his character and his discourse in the interpretation of the *Symposium*.

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NOTES

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1 Cf. also Plat., *Symp.* 177 a.

2 Bury 1909, Robin 1929, Dover 1980, Rosen 1987, Nehamas 1989.

3 For example Corrigan 2004.

4 In line with Edelstein 1945, Konstan and Young-Bruehl 1982, Rowe 1999, Hunter 2004, McPerrhan 2006, Cooksey 2010.

5 In this division, I am following Bury 1976.

6 Regarding the complex primal intertwining between philosophy and medicine, classical literature establishes the supremacy of philosophy over medicine (Edestein 1987, Cambiano 1991), whilst a reading which emphasizes the foundational contribution of medicine towards philosophy has been advanced in more recent years. To frame Eryximachus' speech within this context, and for an historical overview of the dissemination of medical material in the late fifth and early fourth century, cf. Craik 2001.

7 Hippocrates has been cited in *Prot.* 311 b-c, *Phaidr.* 270 c-d, *Charm.* 156 e.

8 In this paper I emphasize the physical essence of these two forces, considering them as divergent physical tendencies. Nevertheless, the forces in question can be meaningfully understood also from an ethical point of view, as *epithymia* and *philia*, as pursued by Konstan and Young-Bruehl (1982).

9 Plat., *Symp.* 187 a 3-b 6.

10 Giovanni Casertano emphasizes human responsibility in the achievement of an ethical cosmos through never-ending acts of persuasion of matter. Cf. Casertano 2003. From another point of view, Nicolas Boussoulas stresses the aesthetic dimension of erotic acts of composition, understood as sexual union. Cf. Boussoulas 1960. For a more contemporary interpretation of the Plato's erotic cosmos, and for a detailed bibliography about the topic, cf. Gordon 2012.

11 Plat., *Symp.* 187 b6-c1.

12 Plat., *Symp.* 187 c8-d4.

13 Plat., *Tim.* 47 c7-e2.

14 Starting from a lexicological analysis, Luc Brisson underlines this aspect, showing deep connections between physical and ethical matter. Cf. Brisson 1998. Following Brisson, and deepening the analysis on the connection between philosophy and medicine, Arnaud Macé emphasizes the role of the philosopher as the physician of the soul. Cf. Macé 2005. About the use of the mathematical notion of proportion applied to the ethical and political practice of the law in the city, cf. Bontempi 2009.

15 Thivel 2004 questions whether Eryximachus' theory is to be considered mainly as a theory of the opposites, arguing for the preeminence of the theory of the similar in his discourse.

16 Instead of considering the Platonic description of Heraclitus as stereotyped (for this traditional thesis see, for example, Wunenburger 1976), Robert Wardy proposes an Heracleitean reading of the whole dialogue, which starts exactly from the lines we are analyzing and points out their connections with other speeches, especially the speech of Pausanias (cf. Wardy 2002). I will present my position about the Platonic interpretation of Heraclitus in Candiotto 2015a where I underline the different conceptions of the two philosophers in relation to the law that must rule the movement between the opposites: immanent to the elements for Heraclitus, transcending them for Plato. The difference between the two philosophers can be grasped also by focusing on the essence of this law, one conflictual and the other harmonic. Regarding this aspect, cf. Fronterotta 2013, p. 56.

17 Plat., *Rep.* IV 441 e 8-442 d 3.

18 Ludwig Edelstein individuates the general atmosphere of Eryximachus' encomium in the Hippocratic text *On the Art*, cf. Edelstein 1945, 90. David Konstan and Elisabeth Young-Bruehl in the Hippocratic text *On Regimen*, cf. Konstan and Young-Bruehl 1982, 42.

19 Plat., *Tim.* 35 a 1-b 6.

20 About the polemical references to Hippocrates in the *Phaedrus,* made by Phaedrus *contra* Socrates, see Ayache 2002. I agree that the polemical topic was the autonomy of the arts, but I would further this thesis in

order to enlighten the Platonic strategy to establish the primacy of philosophy.

21 Cfr. Brisson 1994, 20-23, 43-73; Brisson 2002. This interpretation was criticized by O'Brien 2005.

22 For a more detailed analysis of this passage, cf. Candiotto 2013 where I describe Socrates as the true medician.

23 Plat., *Phil.* 26 a 2-b 4.

24 Barker 2000.

25 Plat., *Tim.* 71 c3-d4.

26 For my interpretation on the topic cf. Candiotto 2011 and Candiotto 2015b.

27 The interpretation of Plato delineated by the researches of Maurizio Migliori – now abridged in Migliori 2013 – is especially relevant for the theme of the dialectic composition of parts.

28 Accordingly, he does not represent the model of doctor which Plato seeks to oppose. Leven (2009) and others do not agree with this perspective, basing their thesis on the Platonic critique of the *technai*.

29 Cambiano 1991, 41.

Scaling the Ladder. Why the Final Step of the Lover's Ascent is a Generalizing Step

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ABSTRACT

The '*Scala Amoris*' (210a-212b), or 'Ladder of Love', constitutes the philosophical and aesthetic centrepiece of Socrates' *encomium* of Eros in Plato's *Symposium.* Here Diotima describes how a lover ascending up the Ladder directs his erotic attention to a number of difference kinds of beautiful objects, first bodies, then souls, just institutions and knowledge, until he catches a glimpse of Beauty itself. In this paper I advance an 'inclusive' reading of the lover's ascent – to use Price's 1991 terminology – with a particular emphasis on justifying such a reading concerning the final step.

Keywords : Plato, *Symposium*, *Scala Amoris*, Beauty.

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I

The '*Scala Amoris*' (210a-212b), or 'Ladder of Love', is the concluding image of Socrates' *encomium* of Eros in the *Symposium*.[1] Here Diotima describes how a lover ascending up the Ladder directs his erotic attention to a number of different kinds of beautiful objects: first bodies, then souls, just institutions, and knowledge, until finally, after looking on 'a sea of beauty', he catches a glimpse of Beauty itself.[2] This passage constitutes the philosophical and aesthetic centrepiece of Socrates' speech, and has been the subject of no small amount of analysis, particularly since the turn of the century. One of the perennial points of interest for scholars concerns whether the lover's ascent of the Ladder should be read 'inclusively' or 'exclusively' — to use the language coined by Moravcsik 1972. According to the inclusive reading, the lover, in his ascent, incorporates an increasing number of kinds of beautiful objects into his sphere of erotic concern, while on an exclusive reading the lover is understood as turning away from the previous objects of his erotic attention, as he identifies ever more valuable beautiful objects as he climbs the Ladder.

Following the prevalence of exclusive readings in the last quarter of the twentieth century,[3] more recent scholarship has settled on the position that the lover's ascent ought to be read inclusively.[4] However, most scholars have simply posited an inclusive reading without providing an adequate justification for their view. In this paper I give a theoretical grounding for an inclusive reading of the *Scala Amoris* passage.

My analysis falls into two parts. First, I consider the lover's ascent from the first step, in which he loves only a single beautiful body, through to the penultimate step of the ascent, in which he looks upon a 'sea of beautiful objects'. Here I offer a firm foundation for an inclusive reading of these steps through examination of the key terms, 'καταφρονήσαντα' (210b5-6) and 'σμικρόν' (210b6, c5). With this conclusion in mind, I then focus particularly on the final step of the ascent, in which the lover catches a glimpse of Beauty itself – the step that will be of primary concern in this paper. For the examination of this step I draw on a distinction between 'transcategorical steps' and 'generalizing steps', and justify an inclusive reading of the final step of the ascent by arguing, against the general consensus in the literature, that the final step is a generalizing step.

II

In order to justify an inclusive reading of the *Scala Amoris* passage as a whole it is first necessary to demonstrate the inclusivity of the lover's erotic attention in the initial stages of the lover's ascent, in those steps that precede the lover catching a glimpse of Beauty itself. This will in turn provide important support for an inclusive reading of the last step, in which the lover catches a glimpse of Beauty itself.

Given the divide in the literature between inclusive and exclusive readings of these stages of the lover's ascent, it is not surprising that there are various elements of the passage that, *prima facie*, support both readings. On the one hand, indicative of an inclusive reading is Diotima's claim that, having proceeded through a love of first bodies, then souls, just institutions, and knowledge, the lover is described as gazing at 'a sea of beauty' [πελαγός … τοῦ καλοῦ] (210d4). This description seems to suggest that the lover has not at this staged turned away from all kinds of beautiful objects besides knowledge, but rather that all together are objects of his shared erotic attention. On the other

hand, support for an exclusive reading is often located in Diotima's description of two earlier stages in the lover's ascent. The first concerns the lover's reaction to his pursuit of a single beautiful body after he has come to recognise that this kind of beauty is shared by all bodies (210b4-6), and the second concerns the lover's assessment of the value of beautiful bodies after he has become a lover of souls (210c3-6). Moravcsik 1972, 288-89 describes these two steps as 'disdaining steps', because they appear to involve the lover spurning the previous objects of his erotic concern once a new kind of beauty has caught his attention.

Such is the dilemma upon a *prima facie* reading of the dialogue. However, I argue that the passages cited in support of an exclusive reading, upon close examination, give us no reason to attribute an exclusive interpretation of this passage. Let us consider the two texts now:

> 210b4-6: τοῦτο δ' ἐννοήσαντα καταστῆναι πάντων τῶν καλῶν σωμάτων ἐραστήν, ἐνὸς δὲ τὸ σφόδρα τοῦτο χαλάσαι καταφρονήσαντα καὶ σμικρὸν ἡγησάμενον·
> 210c3-6: ἵνα ἀναγκασθῇ αὖ θεάσασθαι τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις καλὸν καὶ τοῦτ' ἰδεῖν ὅτι πᾶν αὐτὸ αὑτῷ συγγενές ἐστιν, ἵνα τὸ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλὸν σμικρόν τι ἡγήσηται εἶναι·

Usually these texts are translated in a way that favours an exclusive reading. For example, in the Cooper edition, Woodruff and Nehamas have:

> 210b4-6: When he grasps this, he must become a lover of all beautiful bodies, and he must think that this wild gaping after just one body is a small thing and *despise it*.
>
> 210c3-6: The result is that our lover will be forced to gaze at the beauty of activities and laws and to see that all of this is akin to itself, with the result that he will think that the beauty of bodies is *a thing of no importance*.

This translation presents an exclusive reading of the lover's ascent. In the translation of the first text the lover is said to 'despise' the previous objects of his erotic attention, suggesting that the lover comes to despise all of the previous objects of his erotic attention once he has ascended to a higher point on the Ladder. So also the lover of souls will despise his previous pursuit of bodies, and the lover of laws will despise the pursuit of souls, etc. The translation of the second text seems to give us some indication of why the lover's reactions are so strong. Once the lover has seen the value of beautiful laws, he comes to recognise the beauty of bodies to be a thing of 'no importance'. Again, this suggests that the lover has similar reactions to the previous objects of his erotic concern as he moves up the Ladder.

Examination of the Greek, however, casts doubt over this interpretation. In the first text, in which the lover is said to believe (ἡγησάμενον) that the lover of a single beautiful body is σμικρόν, the term that has been translated as 'a small thing'. In the second text, however, where Diotima states that the lover is said to believe (ἡγήσηται) the beauty of bodies is σμικρόν, it has been translated as 'a thing of no importance'. In this instance Nehamas and Woodruff's translation is too strong for the term. Given the similarity of language in the two texts the only accurate translation of σμικρόν in the second text would be 'a small thing'.

Nehamas and Woodruff's translation of the participle 'καταφρονήσαντα' is also problematic. The term here has been translated as

'despise', and although this is an accepted sense of this term, it also has the weaker sense of 'think slightly of'. In order to determine which translation is the most suitable, it will be necessary to consider the strong (s) and weak (w) versions and see which is more coherent:

> 210b$_S$: he must think this wild gaping after just one body a small thing [σμικρόν] and *despise it*.
> 201b$_W$: he must think this wild gaping after just one body a small thing [σμικρόν] and *think slightly of it*.

Two issues are relevant here. First, the fact that Diotima uses the term 'σμικρόν' rather than 'φαύλον' or 'ἀχρείον', or a phrase like 'οὐδέν εἶναι' gives us some insight here. In 210b$_W$ the adjective 'σμικρόν' and the participle reinforce each other's meaning in the sentence, as here the lover 'thinks slightly of' the love of that which has only 'slight' value. In 210b$_S$, by contrast, the meaning of the participle seems to conflict with 'σμικρόν', as it would be odd to go so far as to *despise* the love of something that has some value, even though it is only slight. Second, the weaker translation is consistent with the only other evidence of significance concerning the question of the inclusivity of this passage, the claim that the lover, at the penultimate step in his ascent, gazes upon a 'great sea of beauty'. Given these two points, I believe that the weaker sense of 'καταφρονήσαντα' is more appropriate here.[5]

Taking these points into consideration we can now revise the translations as follows:

> 210b4-6: When he grasps this, he must become a lover of all beautiful bodies, and he must think that this wild gaping after just one body is a small thing and *think slightly of it*.
>
> 210c3-6: The result is that our lover will be forced to gaze at the beauty of activities and laws and to see that all of this is akin to itself, with the result that he will think that the beauty of bodies is *a small thing*.

With these amendments the interpretation of the passage has changed. In the first text the lover does not despise his previous love of one beautiful body, as if he were wholly misguided in his erotic attachment to this object, although he does think slightly of lavishing so much attention on a single body now that he has come to appreciate that the beauty of all bodies is akin. And in the second text the lover of laws does still recognise some amount of value in the beauty of bodies, although he clearly now believes physical beauty to be slight in comparison with the beauty of objects such as laws and, presumably, souls.

A conservative approach to these texts, then, points to an inclusive reading, in which the lover continually incorporates new objects into his sphere of concern. As the lover moves up the Ladder, he does not go from being a lover of bodies to a lover exclusively of souls, and so on, shunning those objects he once valued so highly. Instead, the lover's ascent is one in which the lover recognises the beauty of an ever-increasing number of beautiful objects.

There is, however, an important caveat here. As he ascends the value that the lover attributes to a certain object does not remain constant, but changes as he moves from one rung to the next. At 210b4-6 we see that the object that once exhausted the lover's understanding of what is beautiful now shares a place with many other beautiful bodies, and at 210c3-6 we learn that, by the time the lover has recognised the beauty of laws, beautiful bodies have been relegated to a more peripheral place in his sphere of erotic

concern. That the lover values the beauty of laws over that of bodies is undoubtable, but that this does not preclude the lover from valuing both simultaneously should be appreciated.

The lover's ascent up the Ladder through these steps is one in which his understanding of what is beautiful continually grows, until he appreciates the beauty of a variety of different kinds of objects. This is the strongest reading that provides a consistent account of the relevant claims in the passage. It accounts both for Diotima's description of the early stages of the lover's ascent, and his claim that the lover, at the penultimate step of the Ladder, gazes on a 'sea of beauty'. In order to understand this image fully it will be necessary to consider the last step of the ascent, in which the lover comes to glimpse Beauty itself.

III

At the end of the previous section we left the lover near the top of the Ladder, gazing at a whole sea of beautiful objects. But there is still one last step the lover must take before he reaches the highest rung of the Ladder of Love: he must catch a glimpse of Beauty itself. Although Diotima spends more time detailing the lover's vision and activities at this stage in his ascent than all other stages put together (210e3-210a10), his description here is in many ways more obscure than at any other point in the *Scala Amoris* passage. This obscurity poses certain difficulties for justifying an inclusive reading of this final vision. At no point does Diotima explicitly describe the nature of the lover's interest (if any) in the previous objects of his erotic concern once he is in the presence of Beauty itself, and certain assertions he makes, *prima facie*, seem to recommend an exclusive reading of this step. First, the only mention that Diotima makes of the previous objects of the lover's erotic interest is by way of contrasting their nature to that of Beauty itself (211a6-8). Second, Diotima suggests that here the lover is engaged in a very different epistemological activity than at previous stages in his ascent. Where the lover engages with objects on lower rungs of the Ladder through the senses, Diotima states that one grasps Beauty by a very different means, by which he appears to mean the mind (211a3-5). Third, Diotima describes Beauty as the '*telos*' of the lover's ascent (211b9), and suggests that the lover's progress in previous stages of the Ladder has all been 'for the sake of Beauty' (ἕνεκα τοῦ καλοῦ, 211c2). And finally, she tells us that it is best to live in the presence of Beauty, as only here can we produce true virtue, rather than the mere images of virtue produced at previous rungs of the Ladder (212a3-10). Together, these assertions seem to suggest that, at the top of the Ladder, the lover has turned away from the sensory objects that once held his erotic attention in order to embrace an existence of mental contemplation of Beauty itself. From these descriptions, Beauty seems to loom like a monolith, unchanging and eternal, above the turbulent and undulating sea of beautiful objects below.

Given these issues many scholars who are proponents of an inclusive reading of all previous stages of the lover's ascent argue that this last step must be understood as exclusive.[6] But given the conclusion of the last section we have reason to doubt this position. As on the lower rungs of the Ladder, Diotima's description of Beauty itself does not necessarily exclude a continued appreciation of the many beautiful things. A number of contemporary scholars take this view, however more often than not they simply assert this view, rather than offer a systematic justification.[7] In what follows I will offer a firmer grounding for an inclusive read-

ing. In order to do this I wish to focus on an underlying assumption of exclusive readings, that being that this last step should be understood as a 'transcategorical step'. By contrast, I offer the view that this last step should be understood as a 'generalising step', and this distinction will be the present subject of analysis.

Moravcsik 1972 was the first scholar to suggest that the lover's ascent is composed of a number of qualitatively different kinds of steps — a position which has been the subject of some subtle adaptation, but which has been broadly accepted in the literature.[8] The two categories of steps that will be most relevant for our discussion are 'transcategorical steps' and 'generalising steps'. A transcategorical step is one in which the lover identifies a new category of beautiful objects in his ascent. For Moravcsik, Diotima employs a number of such steps in the lover's ascent, including when he turns from bodies to souls, from souls to laws and activities, and from laws and activities to knowledge. A generalising step, by contrast, is one in which the lover, rather than recognising a new kind of beautiful object, learns something new about those objects already within his sphere of erotic concern. Generalising steps are explicitly described at two points in the passage:

> 210a8-b1: then he should realise that the beauty of any one body is brother [ἀδελφόν] to that of any other.
> 210c3-5: The result is that our lover will be forced to gaze at the beauty of activities and laws and see that all this is akin [συγγενές] to itself.

As the key terms here indicate, central to both of these steps is the recognition of family resemblances between objects within certain classes of beauty. In the first quote the lover learns that the beauty of one body is akin to that of any other body; and the same is true in the second quote for beautiful laws. What appears to be going on here is that, at each of these points, the lover learns that the reason why one object within each of these classes is beautiful is the same as why any object within that class is beautiful. To clarify this idea let us take the example of beautiful bodies. In a generalising step the lover comes to appreciate that there are not several different, unrelated sources of physical beauty, as there might be if there were many different archetypes of physical attractiveness – for example, a principle which captures the beauty of lithe bodies as opposed to another discrete principle which captures muscular bodies. Instead, what he learns is that all physical beauty originates from its relationship to a single principle. To recognise that all beautiful bodies are akin, then, is to understand that all physical beauty is accounted for by reference to a single *logos*. Given the repetition of this description, it is reasonable to assume that a similar recognition occurs within every kind of beautiful object that the lover encounters before he comes to gaze on a whole sea of beauty. As he ascends the lover recognises that the beauty of all bodies, the beauty of all souls, and so on, is unified, and that the objects that manifest each kind of beauty are related through reference each to their own single principle.

Three points should be noted here. First, these quotes indicate that, by the time that the lover gazes on a sea of beauty, he is able to recognise the unity of beauty *within* particular categories of objects, but nothing is said about the lover's ability to recognise positive — as opposed to comparative — relationships *between* categories of objects. So although at this point the lover is able to recognise that all beautiful bodies are akin, and that all beautiful souls are

akin, we are given no indication that he thinks at this point, for example, that the beauty of all bodies is akin to that of souls. Second, from these excerpts it is clear that Diotima suggests that, in recognising that the beauty of bodies, or the beauty of knowledge, is unified, the lover is making important, positive developments in his ascent. And third, even though the beauty of all objects of a particular category is akin, this does not mean that all beautiful objects within this category are equally beautiful. For example, Alicia's body may be more beautiful than Alan's as, despite the fact that the beauty they manifest is akin, Alicia manifests this beauty more completely than Alan.

We can now return to the issue of how to understand the last step up the Ladder. In the literature, it is nearly universally accepted — or at least assumed — that the last step is a transcategorical step. On this view, the last step up the Ladder is one in which the lover comes to appreciate the beauty of one final, ontologically distinct object. *Prima facie* this is a natural reading of this last step, as in Diotima's description of the lover's final vision he seem to present Beauty itself as a new object, and, moreover, one entirely distinct from all other beautiful objects. Diotima describes it as supremely beautiful in all respects at all times, and in the familiar Platonic description of the Forms as 'itself by itself' (αὐτὸ καθ αὑτό, 211b1-2).

If the last step up the Ladder is a transcategorical step, the attempt to show that it is also inclusive becomes highly problematic. If Beauty is another objects, and it alone is necessary and sufficient for producing virtue, it is difficult to see why the lover would concern himself with the previous objects of his erotic attention, even if we admit that the do possess some slight value in relation to Beauty itself. If, however, the last step is not a transcategorical one, but a generalizing step, such difficulties are obviated, as Beauty itself would be understood as nothing more than the beauty that is manifest in all of the beautiful objects the lover has previously encountered. In order to advance such a reading I first detail the nature of the lover's final step as understood as a generalizing one, detail more fully which this justifies an inclusive reading of this passage, and finally provide a justification for this position.

As outlined above, generalizing steps are common in the lover's ascent, as for every category of object that the lover draws into his sphere of concern, he comes to appreciate the unity of beauty within that category. To catch a glimpse of Beauty itself is a generalizing step of a special sort, I suggest, because it involves the recognition of the unity of beauty between those various categories of beautiful objects. To clarify, in this last step the lover gives up on the idea that all various kinds of beautiful objects that he has encountered in his ascent — bodies, souls, laws, and knowledge — derive their beauty from different sources, as if one thing makes bodies beautiful, and another things makes souls beautiful (and so on). What he realizes in this final moment is that the beauty that each of these objects share is one and the same thing. In the last step up the Ladder, then, the lover does not come to recognize a new kind of objects. Instead, he comes to comprehend a hitherto unacknowledged relationship between all of the various beautiful objects that he has already encountered in his ascent. He appreciates that all these instances of beauty can be accounted for by a single *logos*, and so he recognizes how each object possesses beauty, and so the full extent of their relationship to each other. At the top of the Ladder the lover possesses an account of beauty that leaves out no instance of beauty, and includes nothing that is not beautiful.

An important implication of this reading concerns what Moravcsik has identified as transcategorical steps in the *Scala Amoris* passage, such as when the lover moves from loving beautiful bodies to beautiful souls, or beautiful souls to beautiful laws, etc. Initially, the lover will recognize these as transcategorical steps, as in the lower stages of his ascent he identifies each kind of beauty as wholly different in kind. However, in interpreting the final step up the Ladder as a generalizing step, it follows that in recognizing Beauty the lover has come to appreciate that this divided categorization of beautiful objects was mistaken. That is, the lover appreciates that he has not recognized a number of different kinds of beauty, but rather a variety of objects each of which possess the same attribute: Beauty. So although these movements may be transcategorical for other purposes of comparison — such as between sensible and super-sensible objects, in the case of bodies and souls respectively — in regards to their beauty, the lover comes to recognize that they are all to be grouped within the same category of Beauty.

Interpreting the last step up the Ladder as a generalising step constitutes a significant departure from the accepted view in the literature. However, I believe that there is evidence in the passage to support this interpretation. The most important evidence concerns the lover's activity on the penultimate rung of the Ladder. In analysing this step it is immediately striking that the lover does not move directly from being a lover of knowledge to a lover of Beauty, but that, between these stages, there is a step in which the lover gazes on a whole sea of beautiful objects. According to Diotima, the lover's primary activity at this stage is the generation of "many gloriously beautiful ideas [καλοὺς λόγους] and theories [διανοήματα], in unstinting love of wisdom" (210d5-6).

The generation of *logoi* is an important feature of the *Scala Amoris* passage, and the significance of these speeches and accounts in the lover's ascent has been increasingly recognised in the literature.[9] In addition to the excerpt quoted above, the generation of *logoi* is also mentioned at two other places in the passage:

> 210a6-b2: First, if the leader leads aright, he should love one body and beget beautiful ideas [λόγους καλούς] there; then he should realise that the beauty of any one body is brother to the beauty of any other and that if he is to pursue beauty of form he'd be very foolish not to think that the beauty of all bodies is one and the same.
>
> 210b6-c5: After this he must think that the beauty of people's souls is more valuable than the beauty of their bodies, so that if someone is descent in the soul, even though he is scarcely blooming in his body, our lover must be content to love and care for him and seek to give birth to such ideas [λόγους τοιούτους] as will make the young man better. The result is that our lover will be forced to gaze at the beauty of activities and laws and to see that all this is akin to itself.

Although the generation of *logoi* is only described explicitly at these three points, the repetition of language again leads one to believe that the lover produces these speeches throughout his ascent, as does the assertion Diotima makes in the discussion immediately preceding the *Scala Amoris* passage, in which he declares that the best lovers will 'teem with ideas' [εὐπορεῖ λόγων] in the presence of young men (209b8).

It is initially difficult to discern the content of these *logoi*. From the excerpts quoted above we at least know that they are i) beautiful and ii) that they make young men better. Looking slightly further afield in the *Symposium* helps us refine our understanding slightly. Given Socrates' reaction to Agathon's speech, which he criticizes as being pleasantly adorned but entirely empty in content (198b1-199b5), the *logoi* the lover generates in his ascent cannot be merely pretty pieces of oratory, beautiful in form alone; instead, they must be beautiful in content. But here still we are not much wiser. Perhaps the greatest insight we gain into the content of these *logoi* is found in the passage that immediately proceeds the *Scala Amoris* passage, where Diotima states that a true lover, in the presence of beauty, will 'teem with ideas concerning virtue' (εὐπορεῖ λόγων περὶ ἀρετῆς, 209b10).

Given this, we can conclude that at every rung of the Ladder the lover gives accounts and speeches to justify his attraction to those beautiful objects that he includes in his sphere of erotic concern. Because the lover of the *Scala Amoris* passage is not a lover of merely any variety, but one who loves 'correctly' (ὀρθῶς, 210a2), and in a manner in which Diotima doubts even a young Socrates could follow (210a1-4), we can assume that he is of a particularly systematic philosophical temperament. As such, it is doubtful that these speeches are merely trivial or flowery love songs; instead, it is much more likely that they are intelligently constructed accounts of what the lover understands as beautiful – although some beauty of form need not be absent from these. Taking the example of the lover of souls at 210b6-c5 quoted above, such a lover produces *logoi* in which he extols the supreme worth of the beauty of souls, while making some reference perhaps to the comparatively slight beauty of bodies, of which he is still a lover.

The purpose of these *logoi* is more easily discerned, as in 210a6-b2 and 210b6-c5 the result is that the lover advances to a higher point on the Ladder. In the first instance the generation of *logoi* for one beautiful body leads the lover to appreciate that the beauty of all bodies is akin – a generalising step – and in the second the production of *logoi* concerning beautiful souls necessitates that the lover recognises the beauty of laws and activities – what are initially recognised as transcategorical steps – and thence that the beauty of these new objects is akin to each other – another generalising step. Given that the result of the giving of these *logoi* is the development of understanding, we can suppose with some confidence the following state of affairs: By putting forward arguments or by saying good and upright things according to his understanding of the beautiful the lover comes to recognise either: i) in the case of the apparent transcategorical steps, that his account of what is beautiful is not exhaustive of all instances of beauty, and so helping him to appreciate the beauty of new kinds of objects; or ii) in the case of generalising steps, the essential relationship in the beauty of objects that one already recognises as beautiful, and specifically that their beauty can be accounted for by appeal to a single principle.

Returning to the issue of the penultimate step of the lover's ascent, it is important to note that the lover's production of *logoi* is similarly efficacious. As a result of generating *logoi* at this step he catches a glimpse of Beauty itself (210e2-211b5). But still pressing is whether the production of these *logoi* results in a transcategorical step or a generalising step. The evidence in this passage indicates the latter. At this rung of the Ladder Diotima's description of the lover 'gazing upon' a 'sea of beauty' indicates that

he is looking back on the myriad of beautiful objects that he has already encountered through his ascent, grouping them together into a continuum — albeit a rather formless one at this stage. This suggests that the lover is reflecting on the relationship between these various kinds of beautiful objects, and that in these *logoi* the lover attempts to account for how they all relate to one another — activities that, as we have seen, are central to generalising steps. The result is that the lover glimpses Beauty itself; that is, he comes to recognise that the beauty that is present in all objects is one and the same, regardless of what kind they are. In doing so the lover comes to understand this sea of beautiful objects, not as a series of discrete waves, each representing a different beautiful object or kind of beauty, but as part of a unified mass of beauty, that is shaped in accordance with Beauty itself.

In understanding the last step up the Ladder in this way, we now have a firm theoretical basis for advancing an inclusive reading of this last step. In order to demonstrate why this is the case it is first necessary to note the difference between the 'object' and the 'ground' of a desire. The object of a desire is the particular entity towards which the desire is intentionally directed, and the ground of a desire concerns the reason why the object is desired. Taking the lover's desire at the first rung of the Ladder as an example, the object of the lover's eros is a single body, while the ground of his eros is the beauty of this body. That is, the lover is erotically attracted to this body on account of its beauty. As he ascends the lover incorporates an increasing variety of objects into his sphere of concern, but for all of these objects the ground of his eros remains the same: he loves them all because they are beautiful. But in the initial stages of his ascent the ground of his eros does not appear to him to be single but manifold. Upon making an apparent transcategorical step the lover posits a different principle of beauty for each object in this category — so one for this body and another for that body, and so on. And even after generalising steps on the lower rungs he posits a discrete ground for his desire for each category of objects — one for bodies, another for souls, etc. His final revelation, however, is the recognition that the ground for his eros has always been the same, because all beautiful objects are beautiful because they each possess the attribute of Beauty.

In positing an exclusive reading of this last step commentators have confused the role of Beauty itself in the lover's eros. Beauty is not a new object of erotic desire; instead, it is the ground of the desire. In some ways this entails a genuine categorical shift in the lover's last step up the Ladder from recognition of the object of eros to the ground of eros. In this final step the real ground of the lover's erotic desire finally becomes the intentional objects of his understanding of his desire. From then on, the all beautiful objects pursued by the lover are pursued because the lover has his eros set on this ground. Far from turning away from the previous objects of his erotic concern upon catching a glimpse of Beauty, then, in this final step the lover recognizes that Beauty has been the ground of his erotic concern from the very beginning of his ascent. It is for this reason that Diotima offers the following description of Beauty itself:

> one goes always upwards for the sake of this Beauty, starting out from beautiful things and using them like rising stairs: from one body to two and from two to all beautiful bodies, then from beautiful bodies to beautiful customs, and from customs to learning beautiful things, and from these lessons he arrives in the end

> at this lesson, which is learning of this very Beauty so that in the end he comes to know just what it is to be beautiful (211b7-d1).

At the end of his ascent the lover does not turn away from the beautiful objects that held his attention at lower rungs. Instead, it is more accurate to say that the lover attends to Beauty itself and the objects that share Beauty as a feature together, through different faculties. The lover recognizes Beauty in the myriad of beautiful objects that he has encountered, and he experiences Beauty through these objects. The objects themselves are captured through the senses, but the lover's understanding of the Beauty they all share — that on account of which they are beautiful — is grasped by the mind.

But given this reading how do we account for those parts of Diotima's description of the last step of the Ladder that seem to imply a transcategorical reading? This confusion derives from the fact that the distinction between transcategorical and generalizing steps cuts across two domains. The first is the ontological, and here it should be noted that Beauty itself is not in a distinct ontological category from the objects on the lower rungs of the Ladder because Beauty itself is not a distinct object, but rather a feature all these various beautiful objects share. Conceptually, however, there is a sense in which the last step is transcategorical. It is on this conceptual level that Diotima describes Beauty itself as αὐτὸ καθ αὑτό. Because Beauty is the ground of the lover's eros, Beauty is conceived in an entirely different way to the objects of the lover's erotic attention. It alone is an object of the mind, by contrast to the various objects that have Beauty as a feature, which are objects of the senses. In the last step up the Ladder the lover sees the ground of his desire as representing his intentional object. But even though Beauty isn't an 'object' in any normal sense, Diotima has depicted it in an object-like way.

There are two likely motivations for this move. First, the abstract theoretical discussion that would have been necessary to outline this procedure would have grated with the poetical tenor of his speech, and would have been inappropriate in the light-hearted context of Agathon's symposium. And second, it is probable that, even if Socrates offered such a theoretical discussion, his audience would not have been able to comprehend it. At the beginning of the passage Diotima suggests that a proper understanding of this revelation is beyond a young Socrates; a figure who is still far more philosophical in his persuasion than any of the guests at Agathon's celebration. Given this, it is understandable that Diotima does not fully differentiate the ontological and conceptual ambiguity of his description. However, with evidence concerning the production of *logoi* at the previous rung of the Ladder, however, and the addition of phrases like 'what it is to be beautiful', an attentive audience has sufficient evidence to determine the true nature of this last step.

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NOTES

1 All quotes from Plato's dialogues in this paper are from their respective translations in Cooper's *Plato: Complete Works* 1997 unless otherwise noted.

2 Although it does not have a substantial impact on the line of argument in this article, I will note that I reject the idea that Socrates serves as a 'mouthpiece' for Plato, or Diotima for Socrates, in the sense that the former of either pair represent the philosophical positions and methods of the latter. As a result, I refer to Plato only in reference to those matters that concern the construction of the dialogue. The various claims of Socrates and Diotima will be attributed to these figures in turn.

3 See particularly Cornford 1972, Moravcsik 1972, Nussbaum 1994, and Bloom 2001. Note that in a later publication, *Plato and Platonism* 2000, 112, Moravcsik revises his view and advances an inclusive reading of the lover's ascent. Note also that there were some prominent proponents of an inclusive reading in this period, including Kahn 1987, Nye 1990, and Allen 1991.

4 See particularly Corrigan & Glazon-Corrigan 2004, Sheffield 2006, Kraut 2008, and Reeve 2009.

5 In this conclusion I am in the minority, as the majority of translators use the stronger sense of 'καταφρονήσαντα' – see especially Benardete & Bloom 2001, 'in contempt', Howatson & Sheffield 2008, 'despising, Jowett 2001, 'despise', and Lamb 1925, 'contemning'; however, Allen 1991 and Price 1991, 44 do opt for a weaker sense of the participle, and translate it as 'looking down'.

6 See particularly Santas 1988, Nussbaum 2001, and Ferrari 2008.

7 See particularly Kahn 1987, Nye 1990, Allen 1991, Rowe 1998, Kraut 2008, and Reeve 2009.

8 In addition to the two categories of steps discussed here, Moravcsik also breaks down the lover's ascent into what he calls Emotive steps, Creative steps, and Reason steps. A similar project of breaking down the lover's ascent into a variety of steps is also undertaken by Price 1991, who adapts Moravcsik's schema in a number of ways.

9 See especially Kahn 1999, 270, Hunter 2004, 93, Sheffield 2006, 125, and Reeve 2009, 302.

BOOK REVIEWS

Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy: Practicing a Politics of Reading. By Christopher P. Long.

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, pp. xxi + 205. $90.00 (hardback).

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Long's inspired and inspiring book is a veritable manifesto of the timeless relevance of the classics generally, and of Plato and Socrates in particular. Of Socrates' suggestion in the *Apology* that he be given free meals in the Prytaneum, Long writes (122): "By putting this suggestion into the mouth of Socrates, we are invited to consider the political implications of symbolically situating and nourishing the practice of philosophy at the very center of life." Serious students of Greek Philosophy are invited to reconsider occupying this center, and thus not only to read Long's book, but also to engage with it digitally (x-xi). Thanks to Long, potentially hackneyed phrases like "community of learners," "learning in the digital age," "collaborative learning," as well as both "advancing knowledge" and "transforming lives" are here given substance, tangible applicability, contemporary shape, and classical form (168-69): "The Platonic texts cultivate in us erotic habits of thinking and speaking attuned at once to the limits of *logos* and to its power to transform our relationships to and with one another. Just as Socrates sought to open those he encountered to the erotic dimensions of the attempt to speak truth toward justice by curing them of their delusions of knowing and cultivating in them a concern for what is best, so too Platonic writing opens an erotic space between the text and the reader in which our delusions of certainty give way to a concern for questions capable of transforming the course of our lives and our relationships with others."

The book contains seven chapters, of which the middle five deal with the *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Apology of Socrates*, and *Phaedrus*. The first chapter ("Politics as Philosophy") prepares the reader for Long's sense of the political (10): "Plato compels us to consider the extent to which philosophy itself is a political activity that requires us to ensure that all our relation-

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ships, be they public or private, are animated by an assiduous attempt to speak truth and seek justice." Arguing that Socrates has political obligations to both Hippocrates and the unnamed Companion in the dialogue's frame, Long's chapter on *Protagoras*, entitled "Crisis of Community," uses Socrates' threatened departure at the dialogue's center to indicate that what Protagoras offers is scarcely a dialogue-based community of learners (37): "if Hippocrates is to enter a community of education capable of nourishing his soul, it will need to be one that embodies the excellences of dialogue." Since the text where Socrates proclaims his possession of "the political art" is in *Gorgias* (521d6-e4), the chapter on that dialogue ("Attempting the Political Art") is particularly important for Long's project (6, 8, 12, 17, 42, and 170), there he articulates the meaning of that art into three parts (61-62; cf. 160-61 and 175): "first, the ability to look into the nature of the one with whom one is engaged; second, the ability to act rooted in an understanding of what is responsible for the present condition of the one for whom one cares; and third, the ability to thoughtfully anticipate what is best for the soul of the one for whom one is concerned." The central fourth chapter ("The Politics of Finitude"), the book's self-conscious "fulcrum" (xix), argues that the transition in the *Phaedo* between "Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy" is seamless (72): "Plato's poetic politics does with us precisely what Socrates sought to do with each individual he encountered." With the departure of Socrates as speaker, Plato as writer proves that (88-89): "reading itself can become a deeply political activity if, entering into dialogue with the text, we are willing to risk our opinions and possibilities in order to learn the political practice of living together in erotic relation to the truth fully cognizant, to the degree that we can be, of the ineluctable approach of your own concrete death." The title of the chapter on the *Apology* ("Socratic Disturbances, Platonic Politics") uses, ingeniously, the four times the audience interrupts the speech to illustrate that even here is "Socrates' disquieting insistence that the city and each of its citizens take the practice of questioning up into their very character as an animating principle" (110), creating in the process a ceaseless political engagement that transgresses the customary boundaries (119): "By subverting the dichotomy between the private and public by appearing the same in both spheres, Socrates seeks to reinvigorate the political power of justice as an erotic principle capable of transforming human life in common, for justice is an ideal that, while remaining ultimately elusive, becomes politically powerful when it is permitted to animate the life of a community as a living question. To allow the question of justice to inform our relationships with one another in every sphere of human interaction is to begin not only to live a philosophical life but to practice Socratic politics." Since the *Phaedrus* emphasizes the written word from the start, "The Politics of Writing" allows Long to locate the Socratic education of Phaedrus at the dialogue's heart (163): "for the great advantage Platonic writing has over Socratic saying is precisely that it has been written and so is preserved in ways that invite each new generation to confront what is written in the attempt to come to meaningful terms with it in our human lives together. These texts hold us accountable to them and, through them, we are held accountable to one another if we are willing to engage in collaborative, imaginative readings and re-readings of the texts and if we allow what is encountered in such readings and re-readings to alter the course of our lives together." A final chapter ("Philosophy as Politics") brings this graceful book to a fitting conclusion (170): "Platonic,

like Socratic, politics is the practice of erotic idealism."

The most creative aspect of the book is its use of the words "topology" and "topography," connected, of course, by the notion of "place." For Long, the place in question is broadly speaking "the learning community," a venue for dialogue, and for striving, collaboratively, for the good, the beautiful, and the just (5-6). The difference between the two words is that for Socrates, this place is opened up by his speeches, for Plato, by his writings (69-71). As a contribution to the study of Plato's dialogues, Long's book is a thoughtful meditation on the transition between Socratic speaking and Platonic writing: on how Plato, through a "topography" at once political and philosophical, sought to preserve intact, and indeed to immortalize (173, 176, and 178), the direct, immediate, erotic, and provocative power of Socratic "topology," understood as the ongoing practice of a deeply personal political art, practiced through dialogue in whatever place he might be, and equally dedicated to the betterment of any person he might meet. The reason the book culminates with the *Phaedrus* is because Socrates accomplishes the topological education of Phaedrus by means of *reading* Lysias together with him, and therefore embodies as well the dynamics of Platonic topography (131): "If the dialogue itself demonstrates the transformative power of collaborative reading, a reading of the dialogue attuned to what the written text shows will uncover the transformative power of Platonic writing itself. Such a reading, however, will need to be pursued in two intimately interconnected registers: (1) the topological register attends to the things Socrates says to Phaedrus and the manner in which Socrates' words turn Phaedrus toward the ideals of truth, beauty, and the good; (2) the topographical register attends to the ways Platonic writing in the *Phaedrus* cultivates in its readers an orientation toward these same ideals." Maintaining both of these "registers" at once demands from the reader an open-minded, erotic, and collaboratively dialogic ability for "practicing a politics of reading" (the book's subtitle) that allows Plato's topographical preservation of the Socratic paradigm of direct topological transformation (173): "If Platonic writing is political in a deep, Socratic sense, it enjoins an engaged politics of reading." Hence the "of" in the *Apology of Socrates* indicates at once the objective and subjective genitive (102n12): Socrates' defense of himself is at the same time Plato's defense of Socrates, and Long makes the *Phaedo* the fulcrum because its graphic account of Socrates' finitude is more than balanced by the dying man's eternal *logos* against misology (97): "The topography of Platonic politics, then, must be located in the figure of Socrates, the true Platonic erotic ideal, drawn in so compelling a way as to move us, generation after generation, to live a life and practice a death together animated by a common concern for justice and truth."

The only significant structural weakness in the book is that the previously published article on the *Gorgias* that becomes chapter 3 is poorly integrated into the flow of the argument as developed in the first two chapters; it fails to carry the reader forward, and occasionally betrays, disconcertingly, its extraneous origin. In an effort to explore the possibilities of "digital dialogue" in the context of what Long felicitously calls "hermeneutical imagination" (100), I registered on his website (and on the C. U. P. site dedicated to this book) a provocative comment about this chapter — i.e., the possibility that Callicles changed his mind after the speech of Socrates, and thereafter became the man we call "Plato" — and can report that the process is easy to navigate, and that Long

takes such "notes" seriously, and responds to them promptly. Long's openness to dialogue is therefore by no means "talk," and his approach to the secondary literature, primarily in the notes, is uniformly respectful, and motivated by an ongoing effort both to learn and to create common ground. A more important weakness is that the word "erotic" is both overused and underdetermined, especially since Long bases his reading of Socrates' last words in the *Phaedo* — the critical moment in the transition between Socratic topology and Platonic topography (66-69; cf. 120) — on an article by Laurel Madison (66n2 and 80n46), whose acknowledgment of a strictly tactical post-Platonism is as honest as it is illegitimate.

While "the just, the beautiful, and the good" are mentioned repeatedly (beginning on 5), the word "Ideas" in the Platonic sense appears only once, and only at the very end (185), where we learn, on David Roochnik's authority (185n42), that Plato "never claimed determinate knowledge of the Ideas." Instead, Long calls them "ideals," and thanks to the digital (i.e., searchable) version of the book available to all buyers (and even borrowers) through the Cambridge site, it is easy to prove that the word "elusive" is attached to these ideals with no less frequency than is the word "erotic" (the last section of the book is entitled "Erotic Ideals"). Consider how the words "elusive," "erotic," and "ideals" come together in a sentence near the end of the book that links Socratic topology to Platonic topography (183): "We experience the allure of Platonic dialogues even as they deploy distancing strategies of writing designed to diminish the aura of their own authority. In this sense, the written dialogues function much like the erotic ideals to which they so often appeal; for the dialogues present a figure of Socrates who is, like the ideals of justice, beauty, and the good themselves, at once alluring and elusive; and like our experience of those ideals, the allure of the Platonic Socrates is wholly saturated by an experience of his elusiveness." Even if we are ready to admit that "the problem of participation" is primarily embodied in Socrates' commitment to these ethical ideals — note here the influence Catherine H. Zuckert, *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 839; cf. 199n39, 484, and 804-5—it hardly seems likely that it was Plato's purpose to make them *more* elusive by connecting them to his topographically eternal, unforgettable, and vividly limned Socrates.

But even as "elusive," these "erotic ideals" are clearly central to Long's sense of Platonism, a sense, moreover, that he is determined not only to describe, but more importantly, to embody in his new administrative capacity. Especially since a broad array of Straussian or semi-Straussian scholars play so large a part in Long's scholarly imagination and background, it is refreshing to see that a fundamentally non-dogmatic step beyond Strauss's dogmatic insistence on "knowledge of ignorance" continues to shape the field, thanks in large measure to the benign influence of Stanley Rosen and what might be called "Penn State Platonism." In addition to Charles Griswold and Ronna Burger — who guide Long through the *Phaedrus* — it is the influence of Jill Gordon (especially 5n11 and 73n25), Roslyn Weiss (especially 49n29), Marina McCoy (especially 105n16), Arlene Saxonhouse (especially 118), and Catherine Zuckert (*passim*) that enlivens and repeatedly humanizes these pages, and thanks to his ongoing commitment to a fundamentally dialogical philosophical politics, Long emerges in this book as both synthesizer and pioneer. Gone with the wind is dogmatic anti-idealism, and even though one would like to have seen a fuller discussion of what Long means by "erotic," it

is difficult to imagine that he wouldn't need to distinguish it from the way it is deployed by Strauss, Seth Benardete, and Laurence Lampert. Given the origins of their approach in Nietzsche and Heidegger, it is interesting that the intellectual roots of Long's commitment to ideals that are at once elusive and transformative, philosophical and communitarian, both personally regulative and thoroughly political, also seems to have its roots in Germany, but in the school that Heidegger and his fellow Nazis effectively nullified: Marburg Neo-Kantianism.

Not only does Hans Vaihinger's characteristic *als ob* enter the narrative on 96 thanks to a quotation from James Wood, but the Marburg spirit is writ large on that page, a passage that also comes the closest to explaining what the word "erotic" means for Long: "These hypothetical ideals are erotic in a double sense. First, as ideals, they call us beyond the realities of our present modes of relation and draw us toward to new, more just and beautiful possibilities for human community. Second, however, as hypothetical, these ideals require the community to cultivate a culture of continuous critical questioning in order to determine how best to translate these ideals into new, more just and beautiful realities. Their erotic character is thus felt in their allure as ideals and in their elusiveness as hypotheses. These Socratic hypothetical ideals are much babbled about not because they are certain, eternal, and permanent but because they are capable of drawing those willing to seek them *as if* they surely existed into more just and truthful relation to one another. Plato writes this sober Socratic idealism into the text, and nowhere more eloquently than in the *Phaedo*, by setting it always into concrete ethical-political contexts in which the attempt to speak the truth is always animated by a desire to seek the Just, the Beautiful, and the Good. The topography of Platonic politics, then, must be located in the figure of Socrates, the true Platonic erotic ideal, drawn in so compelling a way as to move us, generation after generation, to live a life and practice a death together animated by a common concern for justice and truth." Given the fact that Long earned his Ph.D. at the New School, it is no surprise to find here the influence of Hannah Arendt, but that influence is, from the start, strictly dialectical (1-2; cf. 119n60). And even though Gadamer is cited frequently (xiv-xv, 83, 84n61, and 179-80), and his indirect influence through Drew Hyland is readily apparent (83n60; cf. chapter 4 as a whole), Long is really reviving — as what he calls "sober Socratic idealism" (96) — the moral seriousness, the ongoing political engagement, and the transformative role of necessarily elusive Ideas that flourished briefly in Marburg thanks, primarily, to Hermann Cohen.

But it is not the past that deserves the last word here: regardless of Long's pedigree with respect to intellectual history, it is his future impact that is the important thing. In the breakdown of the developmentalist paradigm (which Long never mentions), and in the interstices between the analytical anti-Platonism of G. E. L. Owen's students and the continental counterpart promulgated by the loyal students of Strauss, there has been emerging in the United States, topologically at Penn State, but topographically advanced in many other places too numerous to mention, a new consensus that Long has now been able to express in this elegant and compelling book.

Plato's Parmenides Reconsidered. By Mehmet Tabak

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L'intento perseguito dall'autore di questa coraggiosa monografia consiste nel dimostrare la sostanziale infondatezza della maniera più diffusa di interpretare il *Parmenide* platonico. In effetti, fatte salve le differenze, talora anche significative, che caratterizzano le indagini intorno a questo dialogo, sembra essersi imposta negli studi (soprattutto nell'ambito dell'area culturale anglofona) la convinzione che il *Parmenide* costituisca un punto di svolta fondamentale nel percorso filosofico di Platone. Una simile tendenza esegetica trova espressione sia nella diffusa convinzione che la prima parte del dialogo contenga una radicale auto-critica che Platone, per bocca di Parmenide, indirizza contro la versione della teoria delle idee contenuta nei dialoghi del periodo centrale, sia nel presupposto che l'esito teorico dell'esercizio dialettico che occupa la seconda parte del dialogo consista o nell'abbandono di questa teoria o in una sua sostanziale revisione. Gli studiosi che condividono un simile modo di interpretare il *Parmenide* sono poi propensi a considerare i dialoghi successivi, e in particolare il *Teeteto* e il *Sofista*, come lo sviluppo delle posizioni filosofiche formulate per la prima volta proprio nel *Parmenide*.

Il libro di Tabak si oppone fermamente a questo modo di vedere le cose. Lo studioso sostiene infatti che le obiezioni rivolte dal personaggio di Parmenide alla teoria delle idee esposta da Socrate sono del tutto inconsistenti dal punto di vista filosofico, che dunque esse non costituiscono affatto una sfida seria alla dottrina contenuta nei dialoghi del periodo centrale, e infine che la seconda parte del *Parmenide* non sviluppa una teoria positiva, alternativa alla concezione formulata da Socrate nei dialoghi precedenti e ribadita nella prima parte del *Parmenide*, ma contiene una sequenza di sofismi, fallacie e assurdità logiche, il cui solo scopo risiede nel dimostrare la contradditto-

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rietà e dunque l'assoluta insostenibilità delle posizioni eleatiche (e sofistiche).

È il caso di premettere che si tratta di un impianto esegetico che reputo nelle sue linee generali pienamente convincente, e la cui assunzione consentirebbe di affrontare con un atteggiamento ermeneutico corretto la lettura di questo misterioso dialogo.

Nel primo capitolo Tabak ricostruisce a partire dal *Fedone*, dal *Cratilo* e dalla *Repubblica* la concezione delle idee del periodo centrale. Gli assunti teorici fondamentali attengono alla natura assoluta e non qualificata di queste entità, che risultano auto-identiche, perfette, inalterabili, immobili e non mescolate alle cose sensibili, le cui caratteristiche dipendono dal fenomeno della "partecipazione" alle idee, le quali svolgono dunque una funzione di tipo causale; l'esistenza di una relazione tra le idee e le cose ordinarie non pregiudica in alcun modo la *separazione* delle idee, che va intesa nel senso dell'indipendenza e dell'autonomia ontologiche; le idee sono inoltre intelligibili, ossia conoscibili per mezzo della facoltà suprema dell'anima; infine, nei dialoghi centrali viene sviluppata un'epistemologia che riconduce i differenti gradi della conoscenza alla natura degli oggetti intorno ai quali la conoscenza stessa verte (pp. 5-28).

La concezione per mezzo della quale Socrate si propone di superare le aporie del molteplice avanzate da Zenone è, secondo Tabak, sostanzialmente identica alla dottrina dei dialoghi centrali (p. 29). Anche io sarei orientato ad avvicinare le due versioni, con una precisazione però, consistente nel richiamo alla circostanza che nella presentazione del *Parmenide* non compaiono accenni diretti all'anima e alla sua affinità (*syngeneia*) con il mondo delle idee, che costituisce uno degli elementi più significativi della *theory of forms* del *Fedone*, della *Repubblica* e del *Fedro*. Resta comunque indiscutibile che gli assunti fondamentali che definiscono la dottrina delle idee proposta da Socrate nella prima parte del *Parmenide* richiamino la concezione standard dei dialoghi sopra menzionati.

Prima di concentrarsi sulle obiezioni di Parmenide, Tabak fa una considerazione importante, che sembra in effetti supportare la sua interpretazione (pp. 29-35). Egli osserva, da un lato, che la figura di Zenone è agli occhi di Platone compromessa con la sofistica, dal momento che il suo allievo Pitodoro, il quale rappresenta l'anello di congiunzione tra gli eventi narrati e il racconto che Antifonte fa ai suoi ascoltatori, pagava per ascoltarne le lezioni, esattamente come facevano gli uditori dei sofisti (*Alc. I* 119 A). D'altro canto, neppure Parmenide, contrariamente a quanto solitamente si crede, risulta immune dalle riserve di Platone, il quale fa spesso seguire a dichiarazioni enfatiche (e non di rado ironiche) di ammirazione, smarcamenti netti e inequivoci dal pensiero del suo predecessore. Anche a proposito di questo punto ritengo che Tabak abbia assolutamente ragione; aggiungo che una più equilibrata valutazione dell'atteggiamento di Platone nei confronti di Parmenide non possa che giovare alla comprensione del pensiero di entrambi i filosofi.

A proposito delle due prime obiezioni che Parmenide rivolge a Platone, Tabak ha buon gioco nel dimostrare come esse presuppongano l'assunzione di un equiparazionismo ontologico del tutto estraneo alla concezione platonica delle idee. In effetti, tanto il celebre dilemma della partecipazione (che non può verificarsi né *kata holon* né *kata mere*), quanto l'ancora più noto argomento del 'terzo uomo' (che conduce all'ammissione di una molteplicità illimitata di forme), si fondano sull'illecito presupposto che le idee siano entità ontologicamente simili agli oggetti ordinari, ossia ai fenome-

ni spazio-temporali (pp. 38-44). L'argomento con cui Parmenide si propone di confutare la partecipazione delle cose empiriche alle idee (131 A-E) funziona solo una volta che le idee siano concepite come realtà estese nello spazio, e perciò separate da se stesse (se i particolari partecipano all'idea nella sua interezza) e divisibili (se i particolari partecipano a singole parti dell'idea). Il suggerimento di Socrate, il quale propone di assimilare la presenza delle idee sui particolari partecipanti a quella del giorno, che è uno e identico ma contemporaneamente presente nella sua interezza in molti luoghi, consentirebbe di superare l'aporia, ma esso viene completamente frainteso da Parmenide. L'argomento che conduce alla proliferazione delle idee (132 A-B) si basa, invece, sull'errato (ossia non-platonico) presupposto che l'idea sia ciò che è a causa di qualcosa di separato da se stessa, vale a dire, per menzionare l'esempio del *Parmenide*, che l'idea della grandezza sia grande in virtù della partecipazione a un'altra idea del grande. Quanto simili presupposti siano estranei alla logica della concezione presentata da Platone nei dialoghi centrali è evidente a chiunque e non richiede ulteriori conferme.

Una certa attenzione merita invece una brillante osservazione di Tabak, il quale contrappone la maniera "platonica" di intendere l'espressione *auto kath'hauto*, che indica appunto l'indipendenza e l'autonomia ontologica delle idee, al fraintendimento nel quale incorre il personaggio di Parmenide, il quale concepisce l'ipseità delle idee nel senso della loro assoluta separazione, la quale finisce per comportarne la sostanziale inefficacia causale rispetto alle cose empiriche (p. 49). Se si volesse sviluppare e approfondire il ragionamento di Tabak, bisognerebbe constatare come Parmenide intenda in senso strettamente simmetrico la nozione di separazione, la quale invece comporta, dal punto di vista di Platone, una relazione *asimmetrica*, in cui le idee sono, in quanto indipendenti, "separate", mentre i particolari fenomenici risultano, in quanto dipendenti causalmente dalle idee, non separati.

Nel complesso dunque il tentativo di Tabak di dimostrare la natura sofistica e inconsistente delle obiezioni di Parmenide risulta coronato da successo. È probabile che simili obiezioni rispecchino modi errati di concepire la dottrina di Platone, magari circolanti tra gli stessi allievi di quest'ultimo (e qui è quasi inevitabile menzionare Eudosso, il quale concepì la partecipazione in termini strettamente fisico-materiali, ossia come "mescolanza", *mixis*, adottando dunque un modello teorico molto simile a quello sulla base del quale il personaggio di Parmenide imposta il dilemma della partecipazione in 131 A-E).

Tutto ciò significa, evidentemente, che la concezione delle idee di Socrate, cioè quella contenuta nei dialoghi di mezzo, non viene scalfita da Parmenide e non ha nessun bisogno né di venire difesa, né tantomeno di essere rifondata. La seconda parte del dialogo non contiene dunque una "lezione" positiva, per la semplice ragione che il *côté* "positivo" del *Parmenide* è costituito dalla riproposizione della teoria delle idee dei dialoghi centrali.

Tabak porta poi un ulteriore elemento, questa volta drammatico, in favore della sua interpretazione. Si tratta della circostanza che nella seconda parte del dialogo Socrate viene rimpiazzato dal più giovane e inesperto dei presenti, quell'Aristotele destinato a diventare uno dei Trenta Tiranni. Un simile personaggio, un autentico *yes-man*, rappresenta, come Tabak osserva giustamente, "the perfect candidate to passively receive a barrage of sophisms from Parmenides" (p. 56). Il richiamo alla scarsa familiarità con la dialettica di questo personaggio non è nuovo, ma merita di venire valorizzato

in considerazione della sua rilevanza nell'economia drammatica del dialogo.

Nel terzo capitolo Tabak affronta l'esame del misterioso esercizio contenuto nella seconda parte del dialogo (pp. 59-125). Come anticipato, si tratta per Tabak di una serie di sofismi tramite i quali Platone si propone di dimostrare l'inconsistenza e la contraddittorietà delle posizioni rivali, ossia di Parmenide e dei Sofisti, ai quali il filosofo eleate viene sostanzialmente accomunato. In particolare, secondo Tabak solo la terza serie di argomenti, ossia quella che esamina le conseguenze per gli altri nell'ipotesi che l'uno sia (157 B-159 B), può considerarsi compatibile con la teoria platonica delle idee, mentre la prima, la seconda, la quinta e la sesta non fanno che parodiare il punto di vista eleatico. La settima (e in maniera parziale la quinta) serie di deduzioni presuppongono la concezione protagorea, cioè la medesima dottrina che viene esposta e confutata nella prima parte del *Teeteto*, mentre l'ultima deduzione costituisce una critica a Protagora effettuata da un punto di vista parzialmente rispondente alla concezione di Platone (che sarebbe in qualche misura presente, sia pure in forma negativa, nella quarta ipotesi, quella relativa alle conseguenze per gli altri nel caso che l'uno risulti da essi completamente separato: 159 B-160 B).

Si può naturalmente discutere sulla correttezza di una simile classificazione, che non sempre risulta del tutto convincente. Ma non c'è dubbio, almeno a mio avviso, che l'impianto generale dell'interpretazione della seconda parte del dialogo proposta da Tabak sia adeguato. In particolare mi sembra perfettamente rispondente all'andamento della *gymnasia* il richiamo al fatto che molti degli argomenti in essa contenuti presuppongono l'assunzione di una logica parmenidea, ossia di un'attitudine fisicista ed equiparazionista, sostanzialmente estranea alla prospettiva platonica. Per parte mia, mi sentirei di aggiungere che l'unico insegnamento che un simile esercizio è in grado di trasmettere a un ipotetico allievo risieda nell'impostazione fortemente deduttiva e consequenziale del ragionamento sviluppato da Parmenide, che rappresenta forse l'unica autentica eredità che Platone potrebbe avere ricavato dalla filosofia eleatica.

Il sincero apprezzamento che il recensore esprime per questo libro non lo esime dal lamentare l'eccesiva esiguità della bibliografia e il suo assoluto monolinguismo. Se Tabak avesse preso in considerazione con maggiore ampiezza la letteratura critica dedicata a questo dialogo, si sarebbe reso conto che molte delle tesi da lui sostenute non sono affatto nuove, e avrebbe potuto trovare ampia conferma alla sua interpretazione in alcuni studi relativamente recenti; per esempio a proposito dell'inconsistenza delle obiezioni di Parmenide e della natura non propositiva della seconda parte, avrebbe certamente potuto invocare a sostegno della sua lettura l'importante saggio di K. Dorter, *The Theory of Forms and* Parmenides *I* (pubblicato in J.P. Anton / A. Preus, *Essays in ancient Philosophy*, 3: *Plato*, New York 1989, pp. 183-202), o il prezioso volume di A. Graeser, *Platons Parmenides* (Stuttgart 2003), oppure ancora, *si parva licet*, l'edizione italiana del dialogo curata da chi scrive (Platone, *Parmenide*, Milano 2004).