

Ascent to the Beautiful

Plato the Teacher and the Pre-Republic Dialogues from *Protagoras* to *Symposium*

William H. F. Altman

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For Rosamond Kent Sprague

Socrates: ‘But I am asking you indeed [ὕμεις δὴ], along with Protagoras, O Hippias and Prodicus—for let this discourse be common indeed to you [ὕμεις]—whether I seem to you [ὕμεις] to be saying true things or to be speaking falsely [ψεύδεσθαι].’ Preternaturally [ὑπερφυῶς] were the things having been said seeming to all to be true.

Protagoras 358a1–5

Socrates: At this point we all began to be full of perplexity [ἀπορία]; then I, playing around with [προσπαίζων] them, asked: ‘Do you mind, since we are in perplexity [ἐν ἀπορία], if we ask these boys here [ταντὶ τὰ μειράκια]?’

Lovers 135a1–3

Socrates: Let us therefore keep watch lest somehow we be deceived [σκοπώμεθα μή πη ἄρ’ ἐξαπατώμεθα].

Hippias Major 293b9

And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren doo?

Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue 501–502

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Calais, Vermont
September 6, 2020

Preface

Reading Order and Order of Composition

The single most important thing a Plato scholar needs is a good sense of humor. Plato is playful, and although he will tell you any number of jokes—“any number” because you will be finding more—there is one that he principally loves, for he tells it repeatedly. So if you think that the dramatic genius who made a career of imitating Socrates was opposed to imitation, if you embrace the view that the greatest poet among philosophers rejected poetry, if you take at face value the written critique of writing Plato placed in Socrates’ mouth in *Phaedrus*, or if Socrates’ eloquence in *Gorgias* has persuaded you that Plato despised rhetoric,¹ then you should find another great philosopher to explicate. This is especially true if you can imagine yourself objecting that Plato would never have *deliberately* permitted his Socrates to contradict himself. I will call the shared basis of Plato’s characteristic joke “Performative Self-Contradiction,”² as when I say: “I don’t speak English,” and we should regard his use of it as deliberate, playful, and ubiquitous. So when Socrates, after having expressed his dissatisfaction with lengthy

1. Cicero was the first to get the joke; see *De Oratore*, 1.47: “I [sc. Crassus] read *Gorgias* with great care, in which book I admired Plato especially for this: because in ridiculing orators, he himself seemed to me to be the greatest orator.” Except where otherwise indicated, all translations will be my own.

2. Cf. “the non-consistency between one’s *proposition* and one’s *act of argumentation*” in Karl-Otto Apel, *The Response of Discourse Ethics to the Moral Challenge of the Human Condition as Such and Especially Today (Mercier Lectures, Louvain-la-Neuve, March 1999)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 43. For a recent overview of the place of performative self-contradiction in the dialogue between Apel and Jürgen Habermas, see Matthias Kettner, “Pragmatism and Ultimate Justification,” in Hauke Brunkhorst, Regina Kreide, Cristina Lafont (eds.), *The Habermas Handbook*, 43–48 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); see the same author’s “Ansatz zu einer Taxonomie performativer Selbstwidersprüche,” in Andreas Dorschel et al. (eds.), *Transzendentalpragmatik*, 187–211 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1993). Missing from both modern and ancient discussions (i.e., of *περιτροπή* or Retorsion) is a *deliberate* use of “performative self-contradiction.”

speeches in *Protagoras*,³ promptly launches into a long-winded speech of his own *in defense of Spartan brevity*,⁴ we are being told Plato's characteristic joke twice, quite apart from the fact that *Protagoras* itself is for the most part a long speech of Socrates.

The second most important thing a Plato scholar needs is the ability to read the dialogues in Greek with ease and pleasure. There is no substitute for this ability; it is a *sine qua non* (Latin helps). No translation will do, nor is one translation any better than another for serious purposes; experience will show that a dialogue read in Greek is different from one read in even the most competent translation. It is often said that Plato does not use a technical vocabulary, and it is characteristic of Plato's sense of humor that the *locus classicus* for this claim is the passage in *Republic* 7 where Socrates expresses indifference about the word *διάνοια* (*R.* 533d6–9), the most important technical term in the dialogues.⁵ In any case, Plato uses even his non-technical vocabulary in a technical way, and the ability we have recently acquired to discover with ease, e.g., how many times Plato uses *διάνοια* in *Parmenides*, or the much rarer word *ἐκμαγεῖον* in *Timaeus*,⁶ replicates the kind of memory Plato expects from his students, who of course spoke Greek and, living at the start of a revolution in literacy,⁷ had better memories than we do. Given the amount of Greek it contains, this book presupposes your knowledge of the alphabet, and to facilitate further progress, nouns (as above) and adjectives will generally appear in their nominative, verbs and participles in their infinitive forms. In short, it is our duty and should be our pleasure as serious students of Plato both to learn and teach Greek; to that end, I would recommend the

3. *Protagoras* 334c8–d1. All citations of the dialogues will be based on John Burnet (ed.), *Platonis Opera*, volumes 2–5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901–1907), E. A. Duke et al. (eds.), *Platonis Opera*, volume 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), and S. R. Slings (ed.), *Platonis Rempublicam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003). Abbreviations for Plato's dialogues—e.g., *Prt.* for *Protagoras*, also *Grg.* and *Phdr.*—will be in accordance with Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* [hereafter “LSJ”], revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones with the assistance of Roderick MacKenzie and with the cooperation of many scholars, with a Supplement (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968 [first edition in 1843]), xxxiii.

4. *Prt.* 342a7–343b3; I am grateful to Pedro Baratieri for this example. In addition to a good sense of humor, then, it is almost equally necessary to have friends with whom you can share the jokes you have found, and who can find others you will have missed. As per *Sph.* 251b6–7, this kind of “feast [θοῖνῆν]” is prepared for youngsters (τοῖς τε νέοις) and for such seniors who are willing to admit that they missed the joke the first time, i.e., “the late-learners” (καὶ τῶν γερόντων τοῖς ὀψιμαθέσι).

5. See William H. F. Altman, “Three Reasons That the Five Uses of *διάνοια* in *Parmenides* Are Significant” (paper presented at the International Plato Society on July 16, 2019); available at <https://www.academia.edu/39884153> (accessed November 23, 2019).

6. Plato expects us to connect the two times he uses *ἐκμαγεῖον* despite the truth of what A. E. Taylor wrote about *Ti.* 72c5 in *A Commentary on Plato's Timaeus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), 515: “The word is used in a totally different sense from that in which it was applied to the ‘matrix’ of *γένεσις* [sc. the Receptacle at 50c2].”

7. Cf. Philip Altman, “The New Age of Teaching,” available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Trply-WC-Qw> (accessed November 23, 2019).

Victorian method of beginning with Xenophon,⁸ and—always armed with “Middle Liddell” at the start—proceeding to a second Platonic dialogue only after having read enough of the *Iliad* for pleasure to have become “an encomiast of Homer” (*Prt.* 309a6) as well. As for the first, one could do worse than *Ion*. The rest of Greek literature can come later.

Third and finally,⁹ a Plato scholar must have read, at least in translation, *all* of Plato’s dialogues before setting out to write about any one of them. After reading extensively in the secondary literature on Plato over the last fifteen years, I have decided never to read another book about *Sophist* that does not discuss *Statesman* (and vice versa).¹⁰ Too many scholars have made things easy for themselves, and some seem more intimidated by the secondary literature than energized by the dialogues as a whole. In the bad old days, scholars frequently picked a topic or theme in Plato and found every passage in the dialogues that mentioned it, discussing each of them with a bare minimum of context. Although this practice continues, too many today content themselves with the equally inadequate alternative of offering a detailed account of a single dialogue with no discussion of its relation to any others. Without denying the jewel-like beauty and integrity of each, my goal is not to lose sight of the forest for the trees. As a result, one purpose of the present book is to facilitate reading Plato’s dialogues as a whole, i.e., to make it easier to do what every Plato scholar should already have done. Unfortunately, since the time of Schleiermacher (see Introduction), this has become considerably more difficult than it should be.

Beginning with the dawn of the nineteenth century, the authentic status of many of Plato’s dialogues has been denied. Although the high tide of

8. Cf. Albert Rijksbaron, “The Xenophon Factory: One Hundred and Fifty Years of School Editions of Xenophon’s *Anabasis*,” in Rijksbaron, edited by Rutger J. Allan, Evert van Emde Boas, and Luuk Huitink, *Form and Function in Greek Grammar; Linguistic Contributions to the Study of Greek Literature*, 376–406 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), on 379–386. Still useful is Allen Rogers Benner and Herbert Weir Smyth, *Beginner’s Greek Book* (New York: American Book Company, 1906), 8: “On the completion of the sixty Lessons, the student should be able to translate, without much difficulty, simple Attic prose. Many students will be found competent to begin at once the first Book of Xenophon’s *Anabasis*.” I will cite simply as “Smyth” Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, revised by Gordon M. Messing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956). In the “Author’s Preface” to the first edition (August 1, 1918), Smyth thanks Benner, first in alphabetical order.

9. For the importance of the number three, the first to have a middle, see Aristotle, *De Caelo*, 1.1: 268a10–15; whenever you discover *two* reasons why Plato did something, I would recommend looking out for a third.

10. Nor am I much interested in reading another book about Plato that does not contain a clear statement of the author’s opinion, either affirming or denying that Timaeus speaks for Plato when he claims at *Ti.* 90e6–91a1: “Among those who were born men, all that were cowardly and lived an unjust life were, according to the likely account [εἰκὼς λόγος], transplanted in their second birth as women.” See Peter Kalkavage, *Plato’s Timaeus; Translation, Glossary, Appendices, and Introductory Essay* (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2001), 130; as Kalkavage’s note on “napkin [ἐκμαγεῖον]” at 72c5 indicates (108n132), his translation is as good as they get.

“athetization” may be said to have passed—the process by which a given dialogue is shown to be “inauthentic,” and thus expelled from the canon of “genuine” dialogues—many works still remain beyond the pale entirely or at least continue to be the subject of heated debate. Despite the fact that there is good reason to think that such debates will never be won,¹¹ a new way of showing that a previously rejected dialogue is authentically Platonic will be presented here, and indeed this must be so given the subject matter of this book in particular. In addition to *Hippias Major*, I must discuss and explain the pedagogical place and purpose of *Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, and *Lovers*—which I am calling “the Elementary Dialogues” (see chapter 2)—just as if Plato wrote them. Although debates about authenticity are scarcely the most illuminating aspect of Plato scholarship, the nature of my project requires me to enter the lists, and beginning with the Introduction, I will be emphasizing the intellectual history of Plato’s nineteenth-century reception, especially in Germany.

The project of which this book is the first part begins with two unquestionable truths about Plato. The first of these is that the founder of the Academy was a teacher. I regard it as self-evident that all of my readers—should I be fortunate enough to have any—know this to be true. This explains, broadly, why the umbrella term for my project as a whole is: “Plato the Teacher,” and if it had been possible, the title of this book would be: “*Plato the Teacher*, volume 1: *Ascent to the Beautiful*.” The second truth is that Plato’s dialogues are *eminently teachable*, and have therefore been taught, debated, commented on, and used to teach philosophy to both beginners and advanced students for more than two thousand years. The synthesis of these two truths is the hypothesis that forms the quasi-historical basis for my project: it was Plato’s *eminently teachable dialogues* that constituted the Academy’s curriculum, and thus it was *his dialogues* that Plato the Teacher taught. To put it another way, the reason that so many have for so long found Plato’s delightful and instructive dialogues to be teachable is that Plato intended them to be so: he wrote them to be taught, first by himself, and then by a long train of others who now include both you and me.

Thanks to Aristotle’s remarks about a lost lecture on the Good and Plato’s “Unwritten Teachings [ἄγραφα δόγματα],” and drawing support from the critique of the written word that Plato wrote down in his *Phaedrus*, Plato’s

11. See Charles H. Kahn, “The Beautiful and the Genuine: A Discussion of Paul Woodruff’s *Plato, Hippias Major*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 2 (1985), 261–287, on 269: “We cannot hope for such ‘objective’ confirmation in the case of *Hippias Major*. So those of us who are confident in the belief that the dialogue is not by Plato will remain firm in our disbelief until (to borrow an image) Plato himself should stick his head up from below to inform us that he *did* write this piece after all.”

beautifully written and highly educational dialogues have played a surprisingly small part in the way scholars have imagined the Academy and Plato as a teacher. “Imagined” is the appropriate word here because we know next to nothing about this important matter, unless, that is, if all the information that we need—the dialogues themselves on my account—has been right here under our noses all along. A perusal of the available *external* evidence about “Plato in the Academy” will confirm our need for imagination:¹² the few scattered anecdotes that address this interpretive *tabula rasa* are of dubious veracity. On my hypothesis, however, the paucity of that evidence is of little consequence: the far more important *internal* evidence is the dialogues themselves. And since the Problem of the One and the Many plays an outside role in Platonic pedagogy, my deliberately ungrammatical claim that the (singular) evidence *is* the (plural) dialogues—obviously the dialogues *are* that evidence—points to the further development of what I will call “the Curricular Hypothesis.”

The development in question is the reconstruction of “the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues,” understood as the order in which the dialogues would most effectively be taught. The purpose of reconstructing this Reading Order is to find in the dialogues (plural)—always following Plato’s own indications and hints about how the dialogues are connected to one another—a coherent and integrated curriculum, an educational “one out of many” constructed in accordance with Plato’s remarkably effective and even more remarkably playful pedagogy. To summarize, then: since we know that Plato was a teacher, and since we have learned from the experience of millennia as well as our own that his dialogues are eminently teachable, it is somewhat more plausible than merely possible that it was through his own dialogues that Plato the Teacher taught. On the basis of this hypothesis, the most answerable question about the *way* he taught them—for we have no evidence to prove that they were read aloud, performed, or even discussed—is the *order* in which he would have taught them. This book, like its sisters, is an attempt to answer this question, and answering it involves using whatever clues and intimations the dialogues themselves contain—and they contain many—to reconstruct the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, reconstructing the order in which Plato *wrote* his dialogues has been the dominant interpretive paradigm, guiding or rather imperiously controlling the modern reception of his dialogues.¹³

12. See Alice Swift Riginos, *Platonica: The Anecdotes Concerning the Life and Writings of Plato* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), chapter 10.

13. For the evidence of concern with this question in antiquity, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, translated by Pamela Mensch; edited by James Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 3.38 (151), and L. G. Westerink, *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, second edition (King’s Lynn: Prometheus Trust, 2011), 44–45 (§24).

Arranged in accordance with what I will call “Order of Composition,” the dialogues have been used to elucidate “Plato’s Development,” and discrepancies or contradictions between them have been taken to indicate that Plato’s views changed over time on the matters in question. Taking as a fixed point the hypothesis that *Laws* was the last dialogue Plato wrote, the nineteenth century gave birth to a scientific approach that has used apparently unconscious features of Plato’s changing style to establish Order of Composition;¹⁴ this has made it difficult if not impossible to disengage the way we read the dialogues from the order in which he is most likely to have written them. For the most part unquestioned for more than a hundred years, the Order of Composition paradigm has recently begun to loosen its iron grip, but it still remains a powerful interpretive force. It is therefore in deliberate opposition to the Order of Composition paradigm that I am reviving an ancient concern,¹⁵ not with the order *in which Plato wrote the dialogues*—a matter on which I am agnostic¹⁶—but rather with the order in which a student may most profitably read them, and thus the order in which I am hypothesizing that Plato the Teacher intended them to be taught.

I am likewise agnostic on the question of how the Reading Order as I have reconstructed it evolved, as it must surely have done. My concern instead is with the dialogues as a whole,¹⁷ the body of work that the octogenarian Plato left to the world as what might be called “the Academy’s Eternal Curriculum.” I regard an anecdote preserved by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, to the

14. Path-breaking was Lewis Campbell, *The Sophistes and Politicus of Plato with a Revised Text and English Notes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1867), the importance of which is validated by Wincenty Lutoslawsky, *The Origin and Growth of Plato’s Logic; With an Account of Plato’s Style and of the Chronology of his Writings* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1897); more recently, see G. R. Ledger, *Re-counting Plato: A Computer Analysis of Plato’s Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), and Leonard Brandwood, *The Chronology of Plato’s Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

15. See especially A. J. Festugière, “L’ordre de lecture des dialogues de Platon aux Ve/VIe siècles,” *Museum Helveticum* 26 (1969), 281–296; also Michael Dunn, “The Organization of the Platonic Corpus Between the First and Second Century A.D.” (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1974), and his “Iamblichus, Thrasylus, and the Reading Order of the Platonic Dialogues,” in R. Baine Harris ed., *Studies in Neoplatonism: Ancient and Modern, Volume I*, 59–80 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976).

16. See William H. F. Altman, “The Reading Order of Plato’s Dialogues,” *Phoenix* 64 (2010), 18–51, on 38–39.

17. Cf. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, three volumes, second edition, translated by Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1943–1945), 2.105: “If we survey the course of Plato’s work as a whole, and then turn back to its beginnings, we shall see that its ruling idea is to carry the reader along through the Socratic conversations which gradually take him deeper and deeper into philosophy, and show him the connection between its separate problems. In order to devise such a plan, Plato must have felt that philosophical knowledge was best approached as a sort of education.”

effect that Plato was working on all of his dialogues until the end,¹⁸ as more plausible than the (strangely) influential view preserved in Diogenes Laertius that Plato left his *Laws* incomplete,¹⁹ not least of all because I regard *Epinomis*—the purpose of which is to complete the longer dialogue²⁰—as a genuine work of Plato.²¹ In any case, since my reconstruction of the Platonic Reading Order depends entirely on paying close attention to the dramatic details that connect one dialogue to another, it seems most likely to me that Plato was tinkering with such details until the very end.

Here then is what agnosticism looks like in this context: while it may be the case that *Laws* was the last work of an elderly Plato, there are countervailing features in that dialogue that suggest the playful humor of a younger man. At the other extreme, while it may be the case that Plato's most elementary dialogues were the products of his youth, the pedagogical effectiveness that makes them seem so easy compared with, e.g., *Laws*, might well have taken Plato many years of teaching experience to acquire and refine. As a general matter, of course, the Reading Order will reflect the obvious observation that a good teacher begins with simple lessons and gradually proceeds to more difficult ones; it should therefore come as no surprise that *Laws*—along with the rest of the dialogues customarily regarded as “late” with respect to Order of Composition—likewise appear at an advanced or late stage of the Reading Order. In fact the greatest differences between the Order of Composition established by stylometry and the Reading Order as reconstructed here implicate the four dialogues relating to the trial and death of Socrates that Thrasyllus, who created the edition through which Plato's dialogues have come down to us, placed first.²² But since Plato's dialogues were in circulation long before Thrasyllus created his edition, *Euthyphro* has come to be first for us only *indirectly*, and there are unmistakable dramatic indications in other dialogues that place

18. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Compositione*, 3.16: “And Plato wasn't through with combing and curling his dialogues, and braiding [ἀναπλέκειν] them in every which way, having reached his eightieth year.” For comment, see Altman, “Reading Order,” 39–40.

19. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.37 (151): “Some say that Philip of Opus transcribed Plato's *Laws*, which were preserved on wax tablets. They also maintain that Philip was the author of *Epinomis*.” In addition to the weakness of any “some say” statement in Diogenes, consider 151n96.

20. See William H. F. Altman, *The Guardians on Trial: The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues from Euthyphro to Phaedo* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016), 252–62; hereafter, “*Guardians on Trial*.”

21. See William H. F. Altman, “Why Plato wrote *Epinomis*; Leonardo Tarán and the Thirteenth Book of the *Laws*,” *Polis* 29 (2012), 83–107.

22. For the edition of Thrasyllus, see Harold Tarrant, *Thrasyllan Platonism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

it instead immediately after *Theaetetus* and therefore immediately before *Sophist-Statesman*. Indications of that kind are respected here:

1. <i>Protagoras</i>		19. <i>Timaeus</i>
2. <i>Alcibiades Major</i>		20. <i>Critias</i>
3. <i>Alcibiades Minor</i>		21. <i>Phaedrus</i>
4. <i>Lovers</i>		22. <i>Parmenides</i>
5. <i>Hippias Major</i>		23. <i>Philebus</i>
6. <i>Hippias Minor</i>		24. <i>Cratylus</i>
7. <i>Ion</i>		25. <i>Theaetetus</i>
8. <i>Menexenus</i>		26. <i>Euthyphro</i>
9. <i>Symposium</i>	18. <i>Republic</i>	27. <i>Sophist</i>
10. <i>Lysis</i>		28. <i>Statesman</i>
11. <i>Euthydemus</i>		29. <i>Apology of Socrates</i>
12. <i>Laches</i>		30. <i>Hipparchus</i>
13. <i>Charmides</i>		31. <i>Minos</i>
14. <i>Gorgias</i>		32. <i>Crito</i>
15. <i>Theages</i>		33. <i>Laws</i>
16. <i>Meno</i>		34. <i>Epinomis</i>
17. <i>Cleitophon</i>		35. <i>Phaedo</i>

This book covers the first nine dialogues listed in this table. Although sympathetic to the view of many ancient Platonists that *Alcibiades Major* was the proper place to begin the study of Plato—this will be considered in the Introduction along with the origin of modern doubts about the dialogue’s authenticity—there are good reasons to place it after *Protagoras* (see §1) and it is therefore that brilliant, complicated, and highly dramatic dialogue that stands first in the Reading Order as the subject of chapter 1. Chapter 2 (“The Elementary Dialogues”) will be devoted to *Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, and *Lovers*, all of dubious authenticity; here I will continue to uphold the claim made in the Introduction that it is the simplicity of Plato’s early dialogues—by which I mean “early” in the pedagogical sense of “elementary”—that is primarily responsible for their athetization. This same dynamic will appear in chapter 3, the subject of which is *Hippias Major*, presented as the mid-point between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*. The fourth chapter (“The Musical Dialogues”), which covers *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, and *Menexenus*, uses a broader conception of “music” than our own,²³ comprehending both

23. A conception, I should add, that is probably no more “ancient” than it is simply Greek; see the summary of Domna Samiou’s 2007 album “Songs of History and Heroes” (<https://www.domnasmiou.gr/?i=portal.en.albums&id=28>; accessed March 28, 2019): “The retelling of fine, magnificent, heroic deeds [cf. τὰ καλὰ] from the past has always inspired a future path for every nation [for an exception, see James Weldon Johnson, “O Black and Unknown Bards,” beginning with “you sang

poetry and history. Building on the growing concern with both rhetoric and history in *Menexenus*, the final chapter on *Symposium* shows why it is best understood as the end, goal, culmination, or *τέλος*—and this Greek word will appear frequently in what follows—of the series of dialogues that begins with *Protagoras*.

Throughout, my concern is with the interconnections between these dialogues, and more specifically, with the kinds of connections I will be claiming that Plato uses to indicate Reading Order. Because this approach is synthetic and synoptic, the chapters and sections are never designed to consider any one dialogue in isolation, and indeed it is not primarily the *interpretation* of these nine dialogues that is my principal concern.²⁴ To interpret a dialogue well means to account for everything written in it, for Plato is a consummately careful writer, and he is not writing only to be read—here comes a corollary of “the Curricular Hypothesis”—but to be even more carefully re-read. On the other hand, it is often the passages and details that Plato uses to connect the dialogues that suggest previously unexplored ways of interpreting them. To take a central example, a great deal of attention has been devoted to the question of whether or not “Plato’s Theory of Forms” is already present in *Hippias Major*. A pedagogical approach, by contrast, emphasizes how this dialogue *prepares* the reader for what is to come in *Symposium* as well as how it is illuminated by the passages and themes that connect it to its immediate neighbors *Lovers* and *Hippias Minor*.

As a result, the Curricular Hypothesis repeatedly opens up new ways of seeing how the dialogues teach. And although my purpose is not primarily polemical, it remains my belief that an over-concern with Order of Composition has proved on balance to have been detrimental to the better understanding of Plato. This is especially true of the dialogues considered in this book, so many of which have been excised from the canon. So while there is unquestionably a polemical element in play here, it should be regarded as primarily defensive rather than aggressive: it has been the modern failure to consider the possibility of a Platonic Reading Order that has led to the excision of delightful dialogues on the grounds that they cannot be easily explained in relation to Plato’s intellectual development or are simply unworthy of him. As Edward Gibbon remarked about Christianity, we should consider not only by

not deeds of heroes or of kings.”], the web on which its future is woven. Austere and Doric, as stern as the heroes they describe, these songs from history function both as chronicles and musical myths, and as lessons for the future.”

24. Books about Plato’s dialogues as a whole have generally considered them one by one, devoting a separate chapter to each. These chapters tend to proceed, not infrequently by means of summary and comment, in serial order through their various arguments. This will not be my approach, and it is unsafe to imagine that because, e.g., §12 is devoted to *Ion*, that discussion of *Ion* will only be found there. In order to illustrate the power of Reading Order, it is necessary to show how each dialogue not only builds on those that precede it but also prepares the student for reading those that follow.

whom but also *to whom* the Gospel was offered.²⁵ Although quasi-historical in the aforementioned sense, it is not, however, as “a weak and degenerate race of beings” that I have imagined Plato’s intended audience, but rather as adolescent boys, somewhere between the ages of the young Hippocrates, who knocks on Socrates’ door at dawn near the beginning of *Protagoras*, and the nineteen-year-old Alcibiades with whom Socrates talks for the first time in *Alcibiades Major*.

This emphasis on the youth of Plato’s intended readers grows out of my own experience as a public high school teacher. In much the same way that generations of philosophy professors have imagined Plato as one of them, and the Academy as a University, Residential College, or Research Institute,²⁶ so too am I imagining it after my kind, as an Academy like the one in Andover but a whole lot less expensive. What possible harm can come from offering a fresh perspective on these beautiful works of art? To begin with, I am offering a commonsense answer to a question that has provoked so many complex and long-winded replies: “Why did Plato write dialogues?” My answer is that he needed to be entertaining in order to capture the attention of his audience, a somewhat impatient and outspoken lot who were making that delightful but difficult transition from adolescence to young adulthood. And since I have already identified the philosopher’s obligatory Return to the Cave as the center of Plato’s teaching and thus the τέλος of his lesson plan,²⁷ I can find no reason to think that Aristotle, who arrived at the Academy at seventeen and then stayed on for twenty more years, demonstrated by doing so that he understood Plato any better than those who left his school in order to participate in the public life of Athens, as a considerable number of them did, and have left a mark on the historical record as a result.²⁸

Nor should the foregoing question about “a fresh perspective” be taken only as a plaintive assertion of harmlessness. There is another question that has spurred me on during the whole of the delightful but nonetheless difficult process that finally culminates in this book: Given that everyone

25. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 15, paragraph 2: “The great law of impartiality too often obliges us to reveal the imperfections of the uninspired teachers and believers of the Gospel; and, to a careless observer, *their* faults may seem to cast a shade on the faith which they professed. But the scandal of the pious Christian, and the fallacious triumph of the Infidel, should cease as soon as they recollect not only *by whom*, but likewise *to whom*, the Divine Revelation was given. The theologian may indulge the pleasing task of describing Religion as she descended from Heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy duty is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption which she contracted in long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings.”

26. See Harold Cherniss, *The Riddle of the Early Academy* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1945), 61–62.

27. See my *Plato the Teacher: The Crisis of the Republic* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2012), hereafter “*Plato the Teacher*.”

28. See especially Plutarch, *Reply to Colotes* (1126c), *Life of Phocion*, *Life of Dion*, *Life of Demosthenes*, and [Plutarch], *Ten Orators* on Lycurgus, Demosthenes, and Hyperides.

knows that the founder of the Academy was a teacher and that his dialogues are eminently teachable, how can it be possible that a public high school teacher from the United States of America, writing almost twenty-five hundred years after Plato's death, gets to be *original* in the long history of Platonic scholarship for claiming that Plato's dialogues constituted the Academy's curriculum? Coming up with this hypothesis did not require rocket science; it is common sense. Recalling the brilliant scholars who have written about Plato and taught his dialogues over the centuries, it simply beggars the imagination that I get to be original for promoting, defending, and elucidating a notion as obvious as this one.²⁹ God be praised! It would prove me senseless not to acknowledge my humblest gratitude for a boon so wondrously strange and undeserved.

Ascent to the Beautiful is the last in a five-volume series devoted to reconstructing the Platonic Reading Order. The sense of the word "last" must be clearly understood. While last in Order of Composition, this one stands first in the Reading Order of *Plato the Teacher*. The resulting discrepancy is deliberate and is intended to make the series as a whole the medium of its principal message: the order in which Plato wrote the dialogues is no indication of how they should be read nor in what order we should read them. In the third volume—last in Reading Order—will be found some general remarks expressing a realistic diffidence about the limited extent to which I expect the specific results of my reconstruction to be taken seriously.³⁰ Nevertheless, I remain somewhat more sanguine about the value in principle of offering an interpretive alternative to Order of Composition. Here then is an illustration of the interplay between the two paradigms, with Order of Composition in the left-hand column and Reading Order on the right:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Plato the Teacher</i> | 1. <i>Ascent to the Beautiful</i> |
| 2. <i>The Guardians in Action</i> | 2. <i>Ascent to the Good</i> |
| 3. <i>The Guardians on Trial</i> | 3. <i>Plato the Teacher</i> |
| 4. <i>Ascent to the Good</i> | 4. <i>The Guardians in Action</i> |
| 5. <i>Ascent to the Beautiful</i> | 5. <i>The Guardians on Trial</i> |

Naturally all four of its companions will be cited frequently in what follows. But since the realities of publishing have required that all of these books be self-contained and capable of standing alone, each one has included in its

29. Cf. John Glucker, "Plato in the Academy: Some Cautious Reflections," in Paul Kaligas et al. (eds.), *Plato's Academy: Its Workings and History*, 89–107 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 90–91.

30. See *Guardians on Trial*, 185–87; also *The Guardians in Action: Plato the Teacher and the Post-Republic Dialogues from Timaeus to Theaetetus* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016), xxiii–xxiv, hereafter "*Guardians in Action*."

Preface an overview of the seven principles that guide the Reading Order reconstruction as essayed in them, and this volume will be no exception:

§1. The first principle is the absolute primacy of pedagogical concerns. The Reading Order is reconstructed throughout on the principle that the student progresses step by step from the simple to the complex, and must therefore always be adequately prepared to take that next step. To take the first example: it is Plato's concern for effective pedagogy that justifies both the authenticity and priority of the elementary *Alcibiades Major*,³¹ and it is no accident that a concern for reconstructing the Platonic Reading Order would quickly but quietly disappear after Schleiermacher proposed that *Alcibiades Major* should be dropped from the canon. The fact that *Alcibiades Major* is making something of a comeback is therefore inseparable from the interpretive turbulence that has made the publication of *Plato the Teacher* possible.³²

§2. Freed at last from the metaphysical baggage of Neoplatonism, any pedagogical justification for regarding *Alcibiades Major* as a wonderful way to introduce the student to the Platonic dialogues immediately confronts the post-Schleiermacher objection that it, along with seven other dialogues (and the bulk of *Letters*), aren't by Plato. The second principle of the Reading Order proposed here is that it takes Plato as we find him, and therefore that none of the thirty-five dialogues transmitted by Thrasyllus is to be considered inauthentic *a priori*.³³ Instead, a new criterion for authenticity will be employed: a dialogue is authentic when it *fits snugly*, in accordance with sound pedagogical principles, between two others, i.e., the one that precedes and

31. For the ancient commonplace that *Alc.1* was the first dialogue a student should read, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.62; cf. Nicholas Denyer (ed.), *Alcibiades, Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 14: "By late antiquity this had become the standard view."

32. For indications of that renewed interest, see: Julia Annas, "Self-Knowledge in Early Plato," in D. J. O'Meara (ed.), *Platonic Investigations*, 111–138 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1985); Thomas L. Pangle (ed.), *The Roots of Platonic Political Philosophy: Ten Forgotten Socratic Dialogues, Translated, with Interpretive Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); Jean-François Pradeau (ed.), *Alcibiade. Platon; traduction inédite par Chantal Marbœuf et Jean-François Pradeau; introduction, notes, bibliographie et index* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999); Gary Allan Scott, *Plato's Socrates as Educator* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); Denyer, *Alcibiades*; Jakub Jirsa, "Authenticity of the *Alcibiades* I: Some Reflections," *Listy filologické/Folia philologica* 132, no. 3/4 (2009), 225–244; Marguerite Johnson and Harold Tarrant (eds.), *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Olympiodorus, *Life of Plato and On Plato First Alcibiades 1–9*, translated by Michael Griffin (London: Bloomsbury, 2015); and Olympiodorus *On Plato First Alcibiades 10–28*, translated by Michael Griffin (London: Bloomsbury, 2016). One imagines that the papers presented at a conference on "Plato's *Alcibiades I*" at Cambridge University in September 2018 will be published in due course.

33. Cf. Nikos G. Charalabopoulos, *Platonic Drama and Its Ancient Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 16–17.

the one that follows it in the Reading Order.³⁴ This principle of “the snug fit” is particularly important in *Ascent to the Beautiful* because it is only among “The Elementary Dialogues” (chapter 2) that a dialogue generally regarded as inauthentic (*Alcibiades Minor*) is found between two others of dubious authenticity (*Alcibiades Major* and *Lovers*), and can therefore derive the least possible support from its connections to its neighbors. To make up for this kind of deficit, increased attention is given to its relationship with *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, the “Bookends” of the series under consideration in *Ascent to the Beautiful* (see §7). Naturally “the principle of the snug fit” will also be used throughout to justify the particular placement within the Reading Order of those dialogues universally acknowledged to be authentic.

§3. The third principle is that dramatic details—as opposed to more subjective conceptions of pedagogical effectiveness (see principle §1)—are our best guide to the Reading Order and will therefore trump more speculative principles in cases of conflict. The salient case arises in §1: the introductory *Alcibiades Major* alludes to and therefore follows the more difficult *Protagoras* (cf. *Alc.* 111a1–4 and *Prt.* 327e3–328a1). But this does not mean that fictional chronology always trumps sound pedagogy as in the important study of the dialogues by Catherine Zuckert:³⁵ *Parmenides* is too difficult to be read first, and the fact that Menexenus is older in the ostentatiously anachronistic *Menexenus* than he is in *Lysis* is offset by the relationship of both dialogues to *Symposium*. To take another example: even though *Laches* clearly takes place later than the events narrated in *Charmides*, placing it first not only respects its comparative simplicity, but also honors the many dramatic connections between the two. In short: dramatic connections between dialogues need not always be chronological—when they are, Plato makes them unmistakable as in *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias* or *Theaetetus*, *Euthyphro*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*,

34. From this point forward, a bare reference to “the Reading Order” implies “as reconstructed here.” John Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato, Complete Works, edited with an Introduction and Notes* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997) deserves prominent mention not only for paying increased respect to the Platonic *dubia*, but also for reminding readers of reading order, especially on x: “Thrasyllos’ order appears to be determined by no single criterion but by several sometimes conflicting ones, though his arrangement may represent some more or less unified idea about the order in which the dialogues should be read and taught.” Cf. Charles H. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of Literary Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 48, on “an ideal reading order.”

35. In addition to Catherine H. Zuckert, *Plato’s Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009), see Laurence Lampert, *How Philosophy Became Socratic: A Study of Plato’s Protagoras, Charmides, and Republic* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010). For my reviews of these important books, see *Polis* 27 n. 1 (Summer 2010), 147–150, and *Polis* 28 n. 1 (Summer 2011), 166–170. For a critique of ordering the dialogues exclusively by dramatic dates, see my “*Laches* Before *Charmides*: Fictive Chronology and Platonic Pedagogy,” *Plato* 10 (November, 2010), 1–28. For the German origins of this approach, see Eduard Munk, *Die natürliche Ordnung der Platonischen Schriften* (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmler, 1857).

Apology of Socrates, Crito, and Phaedo—and therefore a much broader conception of dramatic detail will be employed in reconstructing the Reading Order of which the references “to speaking Greek [τὸ ἐλληνίζειν]” in *Protagoras* (Prt. 328a1) and *Alcibiades Major* (Alc. 111a1) may be considered paradigmatic.

§4. With a title suggesting a beginning and a dramatic setting that wakes the dawn (Prt. 310a8; cf. *Phd.* 118e7–8), *Protagoras* is both a difficult dialogue and a very vivid one: it brings to life the historical context for even the dullest student but would confuse even the brightest about a wide variety of important subjects. This is characteristic. The fourth principle is that Plato employs “proleptic”³⁶ composition: he begins by confusing the student in an ultimately salutary manner, i.e., about things that it is pedagogically useful for the student to be confused.

§5. The fifth principle is the absolute centrality of *Republic*,³⁷ and more specifically of the Allegory of the Cave.³⁸ Although less accessible to those who have not recently completed the series of dialogues beginning with *Protagoras* and ending with *Cleitophon* (cf. *R.* 520b6–7), *Republic* 6 and 7 contain the essence of Platonism, a claim central to the present study and to the series as a whole. Plato’s Socrates does not *know* that he knows nothing—he is rather not thinking himself to know the things that he does not (*Ap.* 21d7–8; cf. 29b6–7)—and Plato’s use of the dialogue form does not preclude the fact that he has a teaching.³⁹ In short, Plato the Teacher has a teaching, and the

36. I have borrowed this valuable term from Kahn. In addition to his *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 48, 59–60, and 265–67 (on the latter, see Altman, “Reading Order,” 28–29), see Charles H. Kahn, “Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues?” *Classical Quarterly* 31 (1981), 305–320, and “Plato’s *Charmides* and the Proleptic Reading of Socratic Dialogues,” *Journal of Philosophy* 85 (1988), 541–549.

37. Contrast Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics, Old and New* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 95: “If we try to jettison the assumptions that the *Republic* is a contribution to political theory, and that it is obviously the most important and central of the dialogues, the natural culmination of a development from the Socratic dialogues, and if we try to restore it to its ancient place—one dialogue among many in which Plato develops an argument about the sufficiency of virtue for happiness—we shall have done a great deal to restore balance and proportion to our study of Plato’s thought.” What makes her “one dialogue among many” invalid is that it is precisely because it is *not* for the sake of their own happiness that philosophers return to the Cave; cf. Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato’s Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 266: “They [sc. the Guardians] do not go down because it is better for them; they would be happier and better off doing philosophy.”

38. Hence the logical basis for beginning the series with *Plato the Teacher*.

39. Cf. Leo Strauss, “Plato” (1963) in Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (eds.), *History of Political Philosophy*, third edition, 33–89 (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1987), 33, followed by Michael Frede, “Plato’s Arguments and the Dialogue Form,” in James C. Klagge and Nicholas D. Smith (eds.), *Methods of Interpreting Plato and His Dialogues*, 201–219 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), especially on 214; for “knowledge of ignorance,” see Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1953), 32; “On Plato’s *Apology of Socrates and Crito*,” in *Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy*, 38–66 (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1983), 42;

most important source for it is his *Republic*, and more specifically its most famous part: the Allegory of the Cave. He is therefore both a philosopher and a teacher: a teacher who, while alive, taught others to philosophize and who continues to do just that through his writings. The dialogues as a whole are intended to transmit that teaching through (1) the dialectic represented in the dialogues, (2) the dialectic between the reader *and* the dialogue,⁴⁰ and (3) the inter-dialogue dialectic between the dialogues *when read in the proper order*. But “(2)” deserves the most emphasis, for the most important dialogue—especially at “the crisis of the *Republic*” (*R.* 520b5)—is always between Plato and the student.

§6. The basic principle underlying this classification is that Platonism, more or less as traditionally understood,⁴¹ can most easily be found in *Symposium*, the great central books of *Republic*, and in *Phaedo*.⁴² In accordance with the importance of the visual revelation that is the Platonic Idea, the relevant portions of these dialogues will here be called “visionary.” As a result, the Plato who constructed the Reading Order will closely resemble what used to be called “a Platonist”⁴³ (albeit a playful one) with the Ideas, Recollection, and Immortality all remaining central to his concerns. In other words: Plato has a visionary teaching, “Platonism” is a perfectly good term for that teaching, and it was Platonism that he taught in his playful dialogues.

§7. The seventh (and final) principle is more difficult to elucidate. To begin with, it identifies *testing*—by means, as it were, of an ancient ancestor of the true/false or multiple-choice question—as a crucial element of Platonic pedagogy. In order to test whether the student has a grasp on the truth, the teacher designs a series of carefully designed falsehoods that can only be resisted on the basis of what the student really knows. I call this pedagogy “*basanistic*,” from the Greek word βάσανος, which means: “test,” “torture,”⁴⁴ or—in the passage from *Gorgias* I regard as paradigmatic (*Grg.* 486d2–e6)—“touch-stone.” Along with *proleptic* and *visionary*, the *basanistic* element is

and my *The German Stranger: Leo Strauss and National Socialism* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2011), 17n65, 61n151, 209, 218, 274, 505, and 509.

40. Cf. Jill Gordon, *Turning Toward Philosophy: Literary Device and Dramatic Structure in Plato’s Dialogues* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1999), chapter 2.

41. For discussion, see *Guardians in Action*, §19.

42. Cf. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 142 and 274.

43. Cf. Dominic Scott, “Plato,” *Phronesis* 60 (2015), 339–350 on 349: “In his new book, Lloyd Gerson asks whether Plato was a Platonist, a question that many would answer in the negative.” See also James L. Wood, “Review of *The Guardians in Action*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 38 (2018), 205–211, *ad. fin.*

44. Cf. M. T. Tatham, *The Laches of Plato, with Introduction and Notes* (London: Macmillan, 1891), 67 (on *La.* 188a): “βάσανιστή, ‘examines.’ There is not necessarily any allusion to torture, which is not implied in the primary meaning of βάσανος.”

best understood as one of three theoretical and hypothetical springboards (*R.* 511b6; cf. *Smp.* 211c3) toward exegetical, hermeneutic, or even visionary clarity rather than as a rigid and exclusive technical term. Although there is a meaningful sense in which a given dialogue can crudely be called proleptic, visionary, or basanistic, it is better to think of this triad as interrelated elements that can also be deployed in a single dialogue, or even in a single passage.⁴⁵

It is the last of these seven principles that deserves further comment, especially since the hypothesis that Plato uses *basanistic pedagogy* is the primary exegetical innovation introduced in *Plato the Teacher*, and because its use is explored, elucidated, and defended in all five volumes. In the two books devoted to the post-*Republic* dialogues, the basanistic element is primarily deployed in the context of what Plato has *already* taught through Socrates in *Republic* 6–7. In relation to the central *Republic*, then, the dialogues that follow it are dominated by Plato’s use of the basanistic element, while the pre-*Republic* dialogues—including, of course, those under consideration in *Ascent to the Beautiful*—are best understood as primarily proleptic. But here great caution is necessary: although the pre-*Republic* dialogues are intended to prepare the student for reading Plato’s *Republic*—just as the pre-*Symposium* dialogues under consideration here prepare the student for reading *Symposium*—this does not mean that the basanistic element is absent in them.

Consider the following features of *Protagoras*: (1) the first thing Socrates asks his unnamed interlocutor to confirm is that he is an admirer of Homer (*Prt.* 309a6), (2) he prefaces his examination and questioning of Hippocrates by explaining that he was “testing his strength” (*Prt.* 311b1; cf. 341d6–9, 342a1, 348a1–6, 349c8–d1), and (3) in the midst of his exegesis of Simónides (*Prt.* 339e5–347a5), and before he introduces “the Socratic Paradox” at 345d9–e3, he says: “Let us, then, examine this in common, all of us: whether in fact I am saying what’s true” (*Prt.* 343c6–7; cf. 358a3–4). In relation to “(1)” my point is that Plato will presuppose (*Alc. I* 112a10–c1) and then test his reader’s knowledge of Homer, especially in *Hippias Minor* (see §11) long before he has opened up any visionary vistas of his own; he will do something similar with the history of Athens in *Menexenus* (see §15). As for “(2)” the fact that there are so many references to testing in *Protagoras* indicates that Plato is introducing the reader to his use of basanistic pedagogy from the start: like Hippocrates, our mettle is going to be tested. Finally, and even more generally, “(3)” states with great clarity the first principle of reading Plato well: we are always being asked whether we regard as true what his

45. See *Plato the Teacher*, §8.

characters are presently saying. The fact that this principle (or warning) is surrounded on both sides with the language of testing—as indicated by the passages cited in connection with “(2)” —and that it stands in the middle of a passage where even those who are most insistent that the Socratic Paradox (that no one errs willingly) is the cornerstone of “the philosophy of Socrates” must admit that Socrates is being playful if not downright mendacious, tends to support my claim, developed at length in what follows, that Plato tests us from the start by means of *deliberate deception*, applied, for example, to Homer in *Hippias Minor*, and to Thucydides in *Menexenus*. It is because of her pioneering work *Plato’s Use of Fallacy* (1962) that I have dedicated this book to Rosamond Kent Sprague,⁴⁶ the darling younger sister of my mother’s best friend.

Finally, it is incumbent on the author of *Ascent to the Beautiful* to offer some remarks on the translation of the Greek word *καλόν*. If this word ever completely lost its original meaning of “the visually beautiful,” it did so only temporarily in the dialogues of Plato, and one could do worse than visualize “the ascent” in question as a Platonist emancipation from precisely this primordially visible or aesthetic sense. On the other hand, the *τέλος* of that ascent unquestionably remains “beautiful,” and indeed surpassingly so; the difference is that it has become the Platonic *τὸ καλόν*, and therefore accessible only to a spiritual or rather *noetic* kind of “sight” (from *νόησις* at R. 511d8). Dissatisfaction with translating *καλόν* as “beautiful” is therefore perfectly natural, and the common distinction between aesthetic and moral beauty—the latter captured better by words like “noble,” “honorable,” and even “admirable”—is decent as far as it goes. But as everyone who has ever written about Plato’s use of the words *ιδέα* and *εἶδος* has emphasized *ad nauseam*, the language of “form” and “idea” remains visual, albeit now most often in the sense of “the eyes of the soul.” As a result, I am content to preserve “beautiful” in both its original and properly Platonized forms as an adequate translation of *καλόν* while encouraging readers to import the most beautiful features of words like “noble,” “honorable,” and “admirable” while ascending to the Platonic *τέλος*.⁴⁷

But I am less sympathetic to the current favorite “fine.” I well remember a lecture delivered by Father Joseph Owens at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto on the word *καλόν* that left me with the distinct impression that it really meant what “shines.” In any case, the impetus behind choosing “fine” is certainly a natural one, no matter how precious and flaccid the choice may seem. But I have come to have more

46. R. K. Sprague, *Plato’s Use of Fallacy: A Study of the Euthydemus and Some Other Dialogues* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1962).

47. For further discussion, see David Konstan, *Beauty: The Fortunes of a Greek Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

profound doubts about the attempt to find any single definition that covers all of the various things that are said to be *καλόν*. These doubts have arisen in the course of writing this book; it was while reading the secondary literature on *Hippias Major* that I began to lose faith in the Aristotle-inspired doctrine that “the Socratic dialogues” are best understood as “dialogues of definition.”⁴⁸ The relevant meaning of the verb “to define” is: “to discover and set forth the meaning of (something, such as a word)” — thus far Merriam-Webster — *in words*. In both *Lovers* and its sequel *Hippias Major*, this isn’t what Plato is trying (unsuccessfully) to do: his Socrates raises the *τί ἐστι* question (“what is X?”) in those dialogues not in order to “define” either philosophy or *τὸ καλόν* in words — i.e., to discover the one verbal formula that covers all of its various instances or uses — but to help Plato’s students begin *seeing* the one by *instantiating* the other, a process that culminates in *Symposium*. Inspired by Owens, then, I would be more inclined to see the Greek *καλόν* in the gleam that shone from the shields, breastplates, greaves, and helmets of the Ten Thousand Athenians at Marathon as beheld from below by the awestruck Persian invaders.

And in place of “fine,” I would suggest the word “gallant” as better capturing the non-visual element in what the Greeks, and not just Plato, called “*καλόν*.”⁴⁹ To begin with, thanks to the guttural-liquid sequence, the two words sound similar. Then there is the uncertain etymology of the French word “galant,” a word that enters the language only after crusaders had transited Greek-speaking regions on their way to the Levant. Most importantly, with OED definitions spanning the distance between “gorgeous or showy in appearance, finely dressed, smart” through “excellent, splendid, ‘fine’, ‘grand’” all the way up to “chivalrously brave, full of noble daring,” the English word “gallant” captures the Greek variety of *καλόν* nicely, and does so in a way that helps us to understand why Socrates will defend a distinctly un-gallant image of courage in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 360a4-5) before offering us a more properly *gallant* one in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc.1* 115b1-8). In a place where Marathon was hymned, where *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ* was proverbial,⁵⁰ where

48. See, for example, David Wolfsdorf, “Socrates’ Pursuit of Definitions,” *Phronesis* 48, no. 4 (2003), 271–312, on 275–76, Michael N. Forster, “Socrates’ Demand for Definitions,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 31 (Winter 2006), 1–47, and Ravi Sharma, “From Definitions to Forms?” *Apeiron* 40, no. 4 (December 2007), 375–395.

49. In addition to Domna Samiou’s “A Young and Gallant [*καλός*] Soldier,” cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 71–72 (Antigone to Ismene): “But know that whatever seems best to you, I will bury him; for me doing this, to die is noble.” The problem with “noble,” of course, is that it implies being “well-born”; “gallantry” admits of no such distinctions, and what makes Antigone’s action “beautiful” is that it is “chivalrously brave, full of noble daring,” a dictionary-definition of “gallant.” I will be suggesting that Plato’s *τὸ καλόν* is what inspires and motivates gallantry.

50. “Beautiful actions [*τὰ καλὰ*] are difficult” (*Hp. Ma.* 304e8). Thanks to Title IX, a host of sexist observations about the competitive spirit of adolescent boys — and the kind of pedagogy that turns that spirit to account (see *Ascent to the Good*, 113–15) — can now be consigned to the trash-heap.

Simonides' verses were on everyone's lips, and where the question "does virtue have parts" was discussed with zest, Plato's students had already been exposed to the kind of gallantry that Simonides captured perfectly in his epitaph for the heroes of Plataea:

Εἰ τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν ἀρετῆς μέρος ἐστὶ μέγιστον,
 ἡμῖν ἐκ πάντων τοῦτ' ἀπένειμε τύχη·
 Ἐλλάδι γὰρ σπεύδοντες ἐλευθερίην περιθεῖναι
 κείμεθ' ἀγηράτῳ χρώμενοι εὐλογίῃ.⁵¹

Aware of what *καλόν* had meant from the beginning—this explains why an ascent to the Beautiful precedes an ascent to the Good—Plato's students would revisit what *τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν* looks like once again in *Phaedo*, the last link in a chain of the most beautiful flute girls who ever danced, eternally interwoven, arm in arm.

51. *Palatine Anthology*, 7.253 (Simonides): "If to die gallantly [*τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν*] is the greatest part of virtue, Then above all others, chance has allotted this to us; For speeding to encircle Greece with freedom, We rest here enjoying a fame that won't grow old."

Introduction

Schleiermacher and Plato

Although *Alcibiades Major* was by no means the only Platonic dialogue whose authorship Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) called into question in his classic German translation of Plato’s works,¹ the introduction he provided for this dialogue is a particularly remarkable document.² Acknowledging in its first sentence that several ancient commentators regarded *Alcibiades Major* as the introduction to Plato’s dialogues as a whole,³ his enviable erudition allowed him to add the lost commentary of Iamblichus to the surviving commentaries of Proclus and Olympiodorus in its first footnote.⁴ But Schleiermacher rejects this ancient evidence, and his tone leaves no doubt that he was fully aware of the drastic step he was taking, and that he was at once compelled and delighted to take it:

In the present instance, however, it is imperative upon us not to shrink from declaring our opinion upon the dialogue in question. And therefore, let us once for all undertake to say, that this little work, which, with those who are accustomed to admire stuff wholesale, has ever been the subject of most special commendation, seems to us rather insignificant and poor [*ziemlich geringfügig*

1. Beginning with Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 1, part 1 (Berlin: 1804), generally cited as part of Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, second improved edition, 6 volumes (Berlin: Realschulbuchhandlung, 1817–1828).

2. For the various introductions to the dialogues (and supporting material), I will cite Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, edited by Peter M. Steiner with contributions by Andreas Arndt and Jörg Jantzen (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1996); I will include the relevant page number while making use of William Dobson (trans.), *Schleiermacher’s Introductions to the Dialogues of Plato* (Cambridge: Pitt Press, 1836) for translation.

3. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 319 (Dobson, 328): “It is well known that old commentators upon Plato celebrate this dialogue as the best introduction to the wisdom of the philosopher, and recommend beginners to give the preference to it in commencing the study of Plato’s writings.”

4. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 319n.

und schlecht], and that to such a degree, that we cannot ascribe it to Plato, even though any number of those who think they can swear to his spirit, profess most vividly to apprehend it in this dialogue.⁵

Schleiermacher's was unquestionably a bold and fateful step. The authenticity of Plato's *Alcibiades Major*, never questioned before him, remains contested today, more than two hundred years later. And thanks to its questionable status, the ancient problem of the proper Reading Order of Plato's dialogues—partially solved by the ancient Platonists already mentioned who placed *Alcibiades Major* first—has gone into the deep freeze from which my project is intended to extricate it. This Introduction has at its core a zero-sum decision: only if *Alcibiades Major* is a genuine Platonic dialogue can I demonstrate the existence of the Platonic Reading Order. Moreover, it is only from the hypothesis that Plato's dialogues constitute a well-ordered whole—and for this hypothesis, I will have Schleiermacher's unqualified support⁶—that I will be offering in the chapters that follow a *pedagogical* argument for the authenticity of *Alcibiades Major*,⁷ one that makes some room for Schleiermacher's verdict that, in comparison with Plato's other great dialogues, it is *ziemlich geringfügig und schlecht*. Consider in this context the second sentence of Schleiermacher's Introduction:

And it is certainly undeniable that in the first *Alcibiades*, a variety of matter is touched upon, and a number of questions started, upon which other writings of Plato afford more accurate conclusions, and that, notwithstanding, there is nothing too difficult or too profound and obscure even for the least prepared beginner [*für den am wenigsten vorbereiteten Neuling*].⁸

Inadvertently, Schleiermacher is providing the evidence for my own position: Plato wrote *Alcibiades Major* with the needs of an otherwise completely unprepared beginner in mind, and what explains and partly justifies his verdict that the dialogue is *geringfügig und schlecht* is its elementary place in Platonic pedagogy.

What makes this impossible for Schleiermacher himself to see is his famous claim that Plato's *Phaedrus* was not only the earliest of his writings

5. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 320 (Dobson, 329–30; modified).

6. Especially in the general introduction or *Einleitung* to *Platons Werke*, beginning with Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 29, where he claims that Plato's philosophy can only be understood insofar as “man die große Absichtlichkeit in der Zusammenhang seiner Schriften gehörig zu würdigen, und soviel möglich zu ahnden ist.”

7. For the circularity involved, and a Platonic basis for denying that it is a vicious one, see my “Reading Order and Authenticity: The Place of *Theages* and *Cleitophon* in Platonic Pedagogy,” *Plato: The electronic Journal of the International Plato Society* 11 (2011), 1–50, on 30–35.

8. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 319 (Dobson, 328–29; modified).

but that it properly introduces his philosophy as a whole.⁹ Later scholars have rejected this view with much the same unanimity that they have accepted his excision of *Alcibiades Major*, and considered in isolation, Schleiermacher's claims about the priority of *Phaedrus* are easily ridiculed.¹⁰ Complicating this kind of cheap shot¹¹ is the prior need to sort out the difference between chronological and systematic priority. Like me, Schleiermacher is less interested in the chronological order in which Plato composed his dialogues than would be the later scholars who rejected his claims about *Phaedrus*.¹² Further complicating the subsidiary question that divides us—that is, whether *Phaedrus* or *Alcibiades Major* better deserves to be considered the proper introduction to Plato's dialogues as a whole—is the contrast between the pedagogical orientation of my reconstruction of the Platonic Reading Order and Schleiermacher's far more systematic, philosophical, and indeed Germanic approach to the same problem:¹³ which of the dialogues of Plato we should read and study, and in what order.¹⁴

Although ultimately inseparable from his conception of “the whole of the Platonic Philosophy,”¹⁵ Schleiermacher's rejection of a pedagogically prior *Alcibiades Major* rests on a series of claims, both external to the dialogue and internal to it, that can easily be considered in a more direct manner. With respect to his external evidence, two of the dialogues upon which Schleiermacher relies to cast doubt on the authenticity of *Alcibiades Major* are also, as good fortune would have it, the bookends of the present study: *Protagoras*

9. In addition to Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.38, see Anonymous, *Prolegomena* (Westerink), 44 (24.6–10): “From the point of view of the author's own chronology [ἐκ μὲν τοῦ χρόνου τοῦ συγγραφέως] they say [λέγουσι] that the *Phaedrus* is the first, because there, they say [φασί], he raises the question whether one should write books or not; and if he had made up his mind whether to write or not then, how could he have written another book before? Another point is that in this dialogue he uses the dithyrambic style, apparently because he had not yet discarded the manner of dithyrambic poetry [‘the muse of dithyramps’ is a better translation of ἡ τῶν διθυράμβων μοῦσα].” Note that this section's topic, announced at 24.1, is ἡ τάξις τῶν Πλάτωνος διαλόγων (‘the order of Plato's dialogues’).

10. See Martin Heidegger, *Platon: Sophistes*, volume 19 of the *Gesamtausgabe*, edited by Ingeborg Schübler (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1992), 312–14; incidentally, Heidegger gives no indication that he had read Schleiermacher's introduction to *Sph*.

11. Cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Schleiermacher als Platoniker” in Gadamer, *Kleine Schriften*, volume 3, 141–149 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1972), 143: “Es wäre billig, die erstaunliche Sicherheit zu belächeln, mit der Schleiermacher seine eigene Anordnung der Dialoge für evident und unstreitbar erklärt.” He then devotes the next paragraph (143–44) to demonstrating why Schleiermacher's justification for an early date for *Phdr.* is “auffallend schwach.”

12. For a good overview in English, see Julia Lamm, “Schleiermacher as Plato Scholar,” *Journal of Religion* 80, no. 2 (April 2000), 206–239.

13. For background, see Andreas Arndt, “Schleiermacher und Plato,” in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, vii–xxii, especially beginning on xx: “Der Verstehensprozeß orientiert sich dann an der Idee einer organologischen Einheit, in welcher Teil und Ganzes aufeinander bezogen sind und sich wechselseitig erhellen.”

14. Cf. Anne Balansard and Isabelle Koch (eds.), *Lire les dialogues, mais lesquels et dans quel ordre: Définitions du corpus et interprétations de Platon* (Sankt Augustin: Akademia, 2013).

15. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 90; cf. 87.

and *Symposium*;¹⁶ his arguments about both will be considered in due course, beginning in the first section of chapter 1. In chapter 2, I will likewise consider some of his internal evidence, i.e., claims based on *Alcibiades Major* itself as a defective work of art. But important internal evidence of ineptitude can be considered now, before turning to the more difficult work of explaining what might be called Schleiermacher's "systematic" objections, so important for understanding why he sees *Phaedrus* as the proper introduction to Plato's philosophy and *Alcibiades Major* as spurious. Consider the following passage, with brackets added to facilitate analysis:

For [1] that Alcibiades has neither discovered nor learnt what is just, [2] that what is just and useful is the same, and then again [3] that Pericles, though an excellent statesman, and here more than in any other Platonic dialogue, extolled without a trace of irony, has, notwithstanding, imparted his sagacity to no one, all these points have no connection whatever with one another, and each stands in where it is only in its loose external relation to Alcibiades' imperfect state of mind.¹⁷

The fact that [1] stands first in this list of three illustrates what makes *Alcibiades Major* the perfect place to begin the study of Plato's dialogues, and both [2] and [3] are connected to Alcibiades' attempt to escape the consequence of his seemingly harmless admission that he must either [1a] have been taught by another or [1b] discovered by himself whatever he knows (*Alc. I* 106d4–e4). After Alcibiades is forced to admit that he has had no teacher who taught him about justice and injustice (*Alc. I* 109d1–e1) and even more delightfully after Socrates extorts from Alcibiades the admission that since there never was a time when he did not believe himself to know what justice is, he would never have had the motivation to seek after discovering it for himself (*Alc. I* 109e1–110d4), Alcibiades turns to the first of four expedients he uses—the second and third of which are [2] and [3]—to show that he might yet know or might not need to know what Socrates has just shown that he does not. Although these expedients grow directly out of [1], it is [1] itself that deserves our first attention, for any competent teacher can use it—in fact *Alcibiades Major* itself teaches any competent teacher how to teach it¹⁸—to illustrate the structure of the Socratic *ἐλεγχος*,¹⁹ for Plato leaves us in no doubt that the beautifully executed refutation that follows depends entirely on what seemed like an innocuous admission at 106d4–5.

16. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 324–25.

17. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322 (Dobson, 332).

18. Cf. "Der Pedant, der den 'ersten Alkibiades' schrieb," in Ivo Bruns, *Das literarische Porträt der Griechen im fünften und vierten Jahrhundert vor Christi geburt* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1896), on 340.

19. Cf. Simon Slings, *Plato, Clitophon; Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 163–64.

But before turning to [2] and [3] (along with the two other related expedients that Schleiermacher does not mention), consider his perfectly accurate observation about the trap Socrates sets for Alcibiades in [1]: “Alcibiades might have extricated himself out of a very inconvenient dilemma by the slightest mention of the doctrine of recollection.”²⁰ If, as Socrates will claim in *Meno*, knowledge is recollection (*Men.* 81c5–d5), then it is a special kind of teaching that resolves the antinomy of [1a] and [1b]: a skillful teacher can ask the student questions as carefully crafted as the one at 106d4–5 but not with the purpose to refute but rather *to provoke* the student to discover for themselves what they now have finally realized that they do not know (*Alc. I* 116e2–3; cf. 110c1–2). Plato is not interested in illustrating how Alcibiades “might have extricated himself out of a very inconvenient dilemma” because *at this early stage in the reader’s education*, his purpose is to rub our noses in that dilemma in order to prepare us for what he has in store for us in *Meno*. In this case, before consoling us with the notion that there must have been a time *when we did know* (*Men.* 86a6–10), he makes the opposite point that clinches [1b]: in order to have discovered the truth for ourselves, there must necessarily have been a time when we did not falsely believe ourselves *to know it already* (*Alc. I* 106e1–3).

The first of these expedients, not mentioned by Schleiermacher, is Alcibiades’ unusually insightful suggestion that he could have learned about justice the same way he learned Greek, i.e., from the many (*Alc. I* 110d5–111a4). This argument, crucial for determining the relationship between *Alcibiades Major* and *Protagoras*, will be considered in §1. Suffice it to say for now that even though all of the four expedients are certainly connected to [1] in a dramatic sense by what Schleiermacher aptly calls “Alcibiades’ imperfect state of mind,” he is nevertheless wrong to say that “all these points have no connection whatever with one another.” To begin with, even if their only connection *were* Alcibiades’ state of mind, that would be connection enough to vitiate Schleiermacher’s “no connection whatever.” But more importantly, it is not only Alcibiades that Socrates is reminding about the proper place to begin: Plato knows that *all students* needs to be reminded of what they do not know before they can be persuaded to take the trouble to search for it. It is therefore not Alcibiades alone who might search for a way to slither out of the realization that this will require a great deal of work. In short, the connection Schleiermacher fails to find is *pedagogical*: most every student has resorted to expedients of the kind Alcibiades uses, for all of us have a natural motive to think we know more than we do.

In stark contrast with the many whose claim to teach is vitiated by the variety of contradictory opinions about justice that they hold, Socrates offers

20. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322 (Dobson, 332).

Alcibiades—scarcely “without a trace of irony”²¹ thanks to a well-placed “perhaps”²²—the chance (or trap) to find in Pericles someone engaged in politics (τὰ πολιτικά at *Alc. I* 118b8) who *has* been taught what justice is by experts (*Alc. I* 118c3–6). In [3], then, Pericles’ putative claim to knowledge about justice is promptly undermined in a way that complements [1a]: if Alcibiades can point to nobody who has taught *him*, Pericles cannot point to anyone whom he has taught (*Alc. I* 119a1–7). In yet another passage that links *Alcibiades Major* to *Protagoras*—and note in this context that neither is there “the slightest mention of the doctrine of recollection” in the dilemma with which *Protagoras* ends (*Prt.* 361a5–c2)—Socrates proves that Pericles has not passed his alleged knowledge to [3a] his son Pericles (*Alc. I* 118d10–e2), [3b] Alcibiades’ brother Cleinias (*Alc. I* 118e3–4), [3c] Alcibiades himself (*Alc. I* 118e5–8), or indeed [3d] anyone else (*Alc. I* 119a1–3). The reason Alcibiades blames himself for having paid insufficient attention to Pericles (*Alc. I* 118e8) is not because Pericles is here being “extolled without a trace of irony” but because he is trying to find in his guardian something resembling the kind of knowledge he has just been shown to lack.²³

It is at this point that Alcibiades resorts to his fourth expedient: that since none of his rivals will know what justice is any more than he does, his natural advantages—without any need for practice or taking the trouble to learn (*Alc. I* 119b8–9)—will be sufficient for besting his rivals. It is this expedient that leads to the longest of Socrates’ speeches in the dialogue, describing Alcibiades’ worthy and well practiced rivals in Sparta and Persia (*Alc. I* 121a3–124b6). Schleiermacher dismisses this speech as an un-Socratic digression “more in the manner of Xenophon than Plato,”²⁴ and true it certainly is that there are echoes of Xenophon to be found here as well as elsewhere in the dialogue (see §2). But when the study of Plato’s dialogues is introduced by a conversation between Socrates and a bright, ambitious, and naturally gifted youth who seeks to evade the hard work that will be expected of him, we must begin to realize that it is not only “Alcibiades’ imperfect state of mind” that Plato is depicting here but the kind of expedients that *any* youngster might use, closely interconnected as they are by the desire to escape the consequences of [1].²⁵

21. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322 (Dobson, 332).

22. Cf. *Alc. I* 118c1–2: “Socrates: except very few and perhaps [ἰσως] your guardian Pericles.”

23. Cf. Ariel Hefler, *Socrates and Alcibiades: Plato’s Drama of Political Ambition and Philosophy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), 55 and 201n38.

24. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 321 (Dobson, 330).

25. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 41 (Dobson, 17). “Plato’s object was to bring the still ignorant reader nearer to a state of knowledge, or that he at least felt the necessity of being cautious with regard to him not to give rise to an empty and conceited notion of his own knowledge in his mind, on both accounts it must have been the Philosopher’s chief object to conduct every investigation in such a manner from the beginning onwards [von Anfang an], as that he might reckon upon the reader’s either being driven to an inward and self-originated creation of the thought in view, or submitting to surrender himself most decisively to the feeling of not having discovered or understood anything.” Does it go without saying that this perceptive analysis fits *Alcibiades Major* like a glove?

As base and lazy as this fourth expedient unquestionably is (*Alc. I* 119c2–5), it pales in comparison with what leads to [2], by far the most important part of the dialogue’s first half, divided as it is from its second by the Xenophon-inspired speech about Sparta and Persia.²⁶ Apart from the absence of the solution that Plato will only later offer in *Meno*, [1] is self-contained: it is a set piece of great argumentative beauty whose merit delightfully reveals itself fully to the untutored beginner. By contrast, the argumentative expedients to which Socrates will resort in order to meet Alcibiades’ ignorance-evading objection that he will not in fact be advising the Athenians on what is just or unjust but only about what is advantageous (*Alc. I* 113d1–8) create the problems around which all of the pre-*Republic* dialogues revolve, and around which Plato’s *Republic* itself will revolve until the heliocentricity of the Idea of the Good casts into the shadows of the Cave what is merely *good for me*.²⁷ For the present, Socrates will neither directly rebuke the youth for the baseness of his moral abdication, nor will he offer the rest of us the kind of inspiring vision of the Beautiful we will find in *Symposium* (see §17). Instead, Socrates advances a less than compelling argument that justice is necessarily advantageous, a position with which Plato will expect us to grapple until we reach the Cave; this argument will be the subject of §5. For now, it is enough to point out that [1], [2], and [3] are by no means as disconnected as Schleiermacher claims they are.

Although restoring *Alcibiades Major* to the canon of Plato’s authentic works is, as it were, a matter of life-and-death with respect to my Reading Order project, there is far more to be gained from a less polemical conversation with Schleiermacher. To put it another way, even though it is necessary to refute some of his findings—and his rejection of *Alcibiades Major* as a well-crafted introduction to the dialogues of Plato is naturally foremost among them—there are many others that it would be convenient to embrace as supporting other aspects of my project, beginning with the fact that it is not the chronological order in which Plato wrote his dialogues with which he is primarily concerned.²⁸ While he does in fact claim that *Phaedrus* is the earliest of Plato’s works, the core of that claim—apart from the youthful exuberance that he detects in its execution²⁹—is that it contains the germs (*Keime*), as he puts it, “of his whole philosophy.”³⁰ It is therefore not with Plato’s intellectual development that Schleiermacher is concerned; the order in which he arranges the dialogues reflects throughout the further clarification and development of conceptions already present in *Phaedrus*.³¹ In this crucial

26. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 187 (on *Alc. I* 123b5).

27. See *Ascent to the Good*, 1–2.

28. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 47–48, culminating with: “seine innere Entwicklung.” Cf. 85–87 on *Phdr.*

29. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 84, 87, and 90.

30. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 87.

31. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 87 (Dobson, 67; modified): “every skillful and self-experienced person will certainly allow that true philosophizing does not commence with

respect, then, Schleiermacher is an important ally in an attempt like mine to call into question the hegemony of the reception's post-Schleiermacher concern with Order of Composition.³²

In addition to this structural parallel, there are also many other points of agreement on the basis of which I could easily claim the support of Schleiermacher's authority for my own conceptions. Although I place *Republic* at the literal center of the reconstructed Reading Order, Schleiermacher's decision to place it at the end—attached to *Timaeus-Critias* but after *Sophist* and *Philebus*³³—offers support for my claims about its theoretical centrality (see Preface, principle §5). Even more germane is his refusal to identify the construction of a City as Plato's primary concern,³⁴ and his awareness that the Guardian who sacrifices her own happiness (*Glückseligkeit*) in order to enlighten others is “no common patriot [*kein gemeiner Vaterlandfreund*]”³⁵ confirms my own ongoing concern with the Return to the Cave as the spiritual center of Plato's central dialogue.³⁶ Nor is this surprising given the fact that Schleiermacher's teacher at Halle, Johann August Eberhard (1739–1809), would argue in his 1788 essay on “Concerning the Purpose of Plato's Philosophy” that it was “to educate [*bilden*] virtuous, capable, and wise citizens [*Staatsbürger*], magistrates, and advisors for the commonwealth [*dem gemeinen Wesen*].”³⁷ In addition to its influence on Schleiermacher's approach to *Republic*, Eberhard's essay anticipates *Plato the Teacher* with respect to both *Bildung* and the Cave.³⁸

Intermediate between the reading of one dialogue (i.e., *Republic*) and the systematic organization and ordering of all of them, there are several other noteworthy areas of mutual agreement, starting with Schleiermacher's ongoing concern with and constant reference to “the reader”³⁹ and “the capable

any particular point, but rather with at least an intimation of the whole [*sondern mit einer Ahnung wenigstens des Ganzen*], and that the personal character of the writer, as well as the peculiarities of his modes of thought and views of things in general, must be to be found in the first commencement of the really free and independent expression of his sentiments. Why, therefore, should not the communication of the Platonic philosophy begin thus?”

32. On this, see Renato Matoso, “As Origens do Paradigma Desenvolvimentista de Interpretação dos Diálogos de Platão,” *Archai* 18 (September–December 2016), 75–111.

33. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 303–12, especially 309: “*Philebus* is in this respect the principal point of entry to both great works [sc. *R.* and *Ti.*].” Cf. 363.

34. See especially “nur als Vorbild,” in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 361.

35. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 365–66 (Dobson, 387).

36. See *Plato the Teacher*, especially §16.

37. Johann August Eberhard, “Über den Zweck der Philosophie des Plato,” in Eberhard, *Neue vermischte Schriften*, 358–377 (Halle: Johann Jacob Gebauer, 1788), 358–59. See also Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 46–47.

38. For *R.* as *Bildungsroman*, see *Plato the Teacher*, §7.

39. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 394–95, Index entry on “Lesen, Leser (der platonischen Schriften),” not including 60 (Dobson, 37): “And to the inward and essential condition of the Platonic form belongs every thing in the composition resulting from the purpose [*Absicht*] of compelling the mind of the reader [*die Seele des Lesers*] to spontaneous production of ideas.”

reader” in particular.⁴⁰ If one were to subject the secondary literature on Plato to a word-based analogue of stylometric analysis, the gradations of each work’s comparative value could be easily assessed by searching for the frequency with which one encounters references to “the reader,” for the more a scholar locates the locus of Plato’s real concern outside of the dialogue, the better will they read it.⁴¹ Other crucial words are “deliberate” or “purposeful”—*absichtsvoll* for Schleiermacher⁴²—along with “riddle,” “hints,” “intimations,” and “contradictions.”⁴³ And then there is his search not only for the overall unity of Plato’s works as a whole, but his insistence that each of Plato’s genuine dialogues constitutes a not always readily visible higher unity of its own.⁴⁴ Skillfully employed by him in the paradigmatic case of *Phaedrus*,⁴⁵ Schleiermacher might have discovered the higher unity of *Alcibi-*

40. Consider the reference to “niemand, der ein würdiger Leser der Schriften des Plato wäre” in the opening paragraph of the general *Einleitung* in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 26; cf. 41–42 (Dobson, 18; modified): “the real investigation wears the garb of another, not like a veil [*Schleier*], but, as it were, an adhesive skin, which conceals from the inattentive reader [*dem Unaufmerksamen*], and from him alone, the matter which is to be properly considered or discovered, while it only sharpens and clears the mind of an attentive one [*dem Aufmerksamen*] to perceive the inward connection [*den innern Zusammenhang*].”

41. With *Plato the Teacher*, §16, cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 41 (Dobson, 17–18; modified): “To this end, then, it is requisite that the final object of the investigation be not directly enunciated and laid down in words, a process which might very easily serve to entangle many persons who are glad to rest content, provided only they are in possession of the final result, but that the mind be reduced to the necessity of seeking, and put into the way by which it may find it. The first is done by the mind’s being brought to so distinct a consciousness of its own state of ignorance, that it is impossible it should willingly continue therein. The other is effected either by an enigma [*ein Rätsel*] being woven out of contradictions [*aus Widersprüchen*], to which the only possible solution is to be found in the thought in view, and often some hint [*Andeutung*] is thrown out in a way apparently utterly foreign and accidental which can only be found and understood by one who does really investigate with an activity of his own.”

42. E.g., Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 60.

43. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 41, for *Widersprüche*, *Rätsel* and *Andeutung*; 95 (introduction to *Lysis*) for *Andeutungen* and *Winke*.

44. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 58–60 (Dobson, 37): “that frequent recommencement of the investigation from another point of view, provided nevertheless that all these threads do actually unite in the common center-point [*in dem gemeinschaftlichen Mittelpunkt*]; that progression, often in appearance capricious [cf. Schleiermacher’s strictures on the lack of cohesion in *Alc. I* discussed above], and only excusable from the loose tenor which a dialogue might have, but which nevertheless is always full of meaning and of art; the concealment, further, of the more important object under one more trifling; the indirect commencement with some individual instance; the dialectic play with ideas, under which, however, the relation to the whole and to the original ideas is continually progressing: these are the conditions some of which must necessarily be found in all really Platonic works that have any philosophical bearing.” Note that this discussion introduces the third and most important criterion for distinguishing authentic works of Plato from those that are inauthentic (49–62).

45. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 70–79. Particularly important for what follows is 78 (Dobson, 58–59; modified): “In such wise, therefore, we are driven from an outer to an inner, and as this last does itself in turn soon become an outer, we push still onwards even unto the innermost soul of the whole work [*bis zur innersten Seele des ganzen Werkes*], which is no other than the essence of those higher laws [*der Inbegriff jener höheren Gesetze*], the art, namely, of unshackled thought and informing communication, or, dialectics.”

ades Major in the fact that we cannot know what is to our advantage until we know ourselves.⁴⁶

The foregoing discussion of Schleiermacher points to an important introductory question: how should a work on Plato best comport itself to the vast secondary literature on the dialogues? As a general rule, the binary opposition between opposition and support, visible in the preceding paragraphs, governs this treatment, and at its worst involves the bare citation of supporting evidence (on the one hand) and reference, too often preceded by a mere *pace*, to views the author sees fit to reject with varying degrees of accuracy, seriousness, and contempt. Before turning to further discussion of the philosophical foundations of Schleiermacher's systematic approach to the organic unity and proper ordering of the dialogues, I want to challenge this interpretive binary, especially insofar as it generally attaches greater importance to authorities that can be used to support one's views than to those whose views stand in the sharpest possible opposition to one's own. In the present case—which I hope to show is paradigmatic—it is not the many important points of agreement with Schleiermacher just outlined that best advance my project, nor is it sufficiently instructive merely to oppose him on the authenticity of *Alcibiades Major*, no matter how necessary that opposition may be.

There is, by contrast, a more fruitful *dialectical* opposition to which I need to draw attention, and which will explain my approach to the secondary literature in this book and its companions. In *Plato the Teacher*, it will be an ongoing dialogue with Leo Strauss that exemplifies this approach, for his reading of *Republic* as a rejection of the political life, and thus as a self-interested justification of the philosopher's injustice,⁴⁷ perfectly captures the position diametrically opposed to what I, along with Eberhard, regard as Plato's own. In *The Guardians in Action*, particularly with regard to *Parmenides* and *Philebus*, it is the Tübingen School's identification of the Idea of the Good with the One as Plato's "Unwritten Teachings" that will furnish the most useful dialectical opposition to an argument that divides the Good from the One on the basis of the First and Second highest parts of the Divided Line.⁴⁸ In the second volume on the post-*Republic* dialogues, *The Guardians on Trial*, it will be G. E. L. Owen's reading of *Sophist* that takes center stage,⁴⁹ providing the same kind of dialectical friction that Socrates celebrates in the underestimated passage that joins *Republic* 4 to the seventh of Plato's *Letters*.⁵⁰ And

46. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 323; this passage will receive further consideration in §6.

47. In addition to *Plato the Teacher*, 229–31, see Altman, *German Stranger*, 508–10.

48. In addition to *Guardians in Action*, 249–54, see *Plato the Teacher*, §28 ("Higher Education: Why the Good Is Not the One").

49. See *Guardians on Trial*, 64–67.

50. See *Plato the Teacher*, chapter 5; for the connection between *Ep.* 341c4–d2 and *R.* 434d1–435a4, see 259–60.

in *Ascent to the Good*, the immediate sequel to this book, it will be Aristotle and the most radical followers of Gregory Vlastos whose views create the most illuminating contrast to what I take to be the Platonic approach to the so-called Socratic dialogues.⁵¹

Naturally Aristotle stands out among these secondary authorities on Plato as a towering figure in his own right. In addition to his greater antiquity, fame, and philosophical acuity, he also furnishes the primary evidentiary basis both for Vlastos's way of separating the Socrates of the early dialogues from Plato, and for the Unwritten Teachings emphasized by the Tübingen School;⁵² his influence is likewise detectable in Strauss and Owen.⁵³ As is the case with Schleiermacher, Aristotle's testimony can be, for my purposes, easily digested in relation to the support/opposition binary, far more easily, that is, than that of Owen or Hans Joachim Krämer, whom I take to be the lion of Tübingen;⁵⁴ Strauss I take to be intermediate between the two pairs in this respect.⁵⁵ In Aristotle's case, there are a core of claims about Plato, intermediate between his account of Socrates and his discussion of the Pythagorean elements in Plato's *Prinzipienlehre*, that offer ancient textual support to my own views: Plato regarded the Ideas as separate, he regarded mathematical objects as intermediate between the Ideas and sensible things,⁵⁶ and he did not identify the Good with Happiness (or *Glückseligkeit*),⁵⁷ as the most radical followers of Vlastos are presently claiming that he did.⁵⁸

But despite the greater fame and importance of Aristotle, I want to make a case here for the almost equal dialectical importance of Schleiermacher with respect to the study of Plato's dialogues. By this outlandish claim I do not mean to imply that his influence is greater than Aristotle's, although the new direction he gave to modern Plato studies by, e.g., the excision of *Alcibiades Major*, is not to be underestimated for its effect on us. Rather, it is his *dialectical* usefulness to which I want to draw attention, and in one critical respect—indeed in what I regard as *the* critical respect—his opposition to Plato is more sharply drawn, and therefore more dialectically useful and illuminating, than Aristotle's. Although Aristotle's opposition to Plato's separation of the Ideas is, as it were, absolute, he is at least aware that Plato did in fact separate,

51. See *Ascent to the Good*, lxiii–vi.

52. See *Ascent to the Good*, xlv–viii.

53. For Owen, see *Ascent to the Good*, 485n128; for Strauss (and Heidegger), see “The Heideggerian Origins of a Post-Platonist Plato,” in Adam J. Goldwyn and James Nikopoulos (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Classical Receptions: International Modernism and the Avant-Garde*, 220–241 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 225–27.

54. See *Guardians in Action*, 251n176.

55. See Altman, *German Stranger*, 490–91.

56. The Anglophone attack on the Intermediates began with Henry Jackson, “On Plato's *Republic* VI 509 D sqq.,” *Journal of Philology* 10 (1882), 132–150; see *Plato the Teacher*, 129n34.

57. See *Ascent to the Good*, xliii.

58. In addition to *Ascent to the Good*, xlv–vi, see xxviiiin42 on Terry Penner and Peter Stemmer.

e.g., the Idea of the Good, from the things of this world, and did so absolutely. Schleiermacher rejects Aristotle's testimony in this crucial regard,⁵⁹ and thus the Plato he translates, edits, defends, and even imitates, is *farther removed from the real Plato* than the Plato whom Aristotle is attacking throughout.

Schleiermacher's *floruit* coincides with the flowering or *Blütezeit* of classical (or is it romantic?) German philosophy; in any case, he belongs to the springtime of the greatest philosophical efflorescence of modern times.⁶⁰ Determining his philosophical importance in comparison with F. W. J. Schelling and G. W. F. Hegel can be left to others; what can be safely claimed here is that despite competition—for the influence of Plato on German philosophy in the years between 1770 and 1830 is everywhere apparent⁶¹—Schleiermacher is second to none with respect to the thoroughness and insight he brings to the dialogues,⁶² quite apart from the historical fact that Plato's impact on others was largely mediated by Schleiermacher's translations and introductions. But even more important than his place in the reception-history of Plato's thought by later Plato scholars beginning with Friedrich Ast (1778–1841)⁶³—who would athetize even more Platonic dialogues than the master had⁶⁴—is his

59. On Heinrich Ritter (ed.), *Geschichte der Philosophie; aus Schleiermachers handschriftlichem Nachlaße* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1838), 113–16 (unfortunately the excerpts from this important work in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, end with 111), see Gunter Scholtz, "Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre," in Kurt-Victor Selde (ed.), *Internationaler Schleiermacher-Kongress (1984, Berlin, West)*, 849–871 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1985), especially 867–68: "Der Dualismus zwischen den geistigen Ideen und den sinnlichen Dingen, die für Aristoteles die Grundstruktur des Platonismus bildet, löst sich in dieser Platon Deutung in ein Kontinuum auf: Allgemeine Kräfte [for *Kraft* as the German translation of Plato's δόγματα, see 853] erscheinen als besondere Kräfte, auch die Sinnenwelt ist eine Erscheinung von Kräften."

60. Cf. Gunter Scholtz, "Ast and Schleiermacher: Hermeneutics and Critical Philosophy" in Dermot Moran (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Hermeneutics*, 62–73 (London: Routledge, 2015), on 67: "The turn back to Greek and Roman antiquity as blossom and youth of the human spirit appears as a requirement of world history to achieve a perfect culture."

61. See Jean-Louis Vieillard-Baron, *Platon et l'idéalisme allemand (1770–1830)* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979).

62. See Christoph Asmuth, *Interpretation-Transformation: Das Platonbild bei Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher und Schopenhauer und das Legitimationsproblem der Philosophiegeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), chapter 5, especially 243: "Er [sc. Schleiermacher] ist das erste, der den systematischen Zusammenhang zwischen der Form und Gehalt der Platonischen Dialoge mit aller Klarheit herzustellen."

63. See Scholtz, "Ast and Schleiermacher."

64. In Friedrich Ast, *Platons Leben und Schriften; Ein Versuch, im Leben wie in den Schriften des Platon das Wahre und Aechte vom Erdichteten und Untergeschobenen zu scheiden, und die Zeitfolge der achten Gespräche zu bestimmen* (Leipzig: in der Weidmannischen Buchhandlung, 1816). Like Schleiermacher's claims about an early *Phdr.*, Ast's claim that, e.g., *Lg.* is not Plato's is easily ridiculed; what tends to get overlooked by scholars who take as an article of faith that (at least) *Alc. I*, *Alc. 2*, *Am.*, *Thg.*, *Cl.* (on which see Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 44), *Hipparch.*, *Min.*, and *Epin.* are inauthentic, fail to acknowledge their debt to Ast and Schleiermacher in this crucial respect. In any case, all Plato scholars remain indebted to Ast's *Lexicon platonicum sive Vocum platoniarum Index*, two volumes (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956 [originally published 1835–1838]). For Ast on *Lg.*, see my "A Tale of Two Drinking Parties: Plato's *Laws* in Context," *Polis* 27 (2010), 240–264, on 247n43.

enthusiastic embrace of the core conception of post-Kantian German philosophy and his unique ability to find it in Plato. It is this conception, which I regard as the *Kerngedanke* or thought-atom of the *Blütezeit*, that is responsible for Schleiermacher's claim that Aristotle was wrong to hold that Plato separated the Ideas, creating in the process "the dualism between the intelligible Ideas and sensible things [*der Dualismus zwischen den geistigen Ideen und den sinnlichen Dingen*]."⁶⁵ There is a higher synthesis that embraces and resolves differences (through *Aufhebung*) into a higher unity, a "ἓν καὶ πᾶν [one and all],"⁶⁶ whether Spinozistic,⁶⁷ Hegelian,⁶⁸ or Heraclitean,⁶⁹ that locates the absolute truth in the *coincidentia oppositorum*.⁷⁰

It is to this conception that Plato's own Platonism stands in the sharpest possible dialectical contrast, a contrast so sharp that no sharper can be conceived or even imagined, not even the one created by Aristotle. Plato is a dualist, and the separation of Being (οὐσία or τὸ ὄν) from Becoming (τὸ

65. With Scholtz, cf. Asmuth, *Interpretation-Transformation*, 233–34.

66. See Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*, new expanded edition (Breslau: Gottl. Löwe, 1789 [first edition, 1785]), xi: "Mein Hauptzweck bei diesem Auszuge ist, durch Zusammenstellung des [Giordano] Bruno mit dem Spinoza gleichsam die Summa der Philosophie des ἓν καὶ πᾶν [emphasis in the original] in meinem Buche darzulegen." For the impact of this book and the hermeneutics involved in understanding it, see Altman, *German Stranger*, 33–39 (Strauss wrote his doctoral dissertation on Jacobi).

67. The combination of Jacobi's tremendous influence on Schleiermacher with the latter's unconcealed admiration for Spinoza provides indirect evidence for the way of reading Jacobi's *Über die Lehre des Spinoza* adumbrated in the previous note. It would be interesting to explore the possibility that Schleiermacher's rejection of the esoteric Plato is connected to his awareness of an exoteric Jacobi. For Plato's displacement of Spinoza "auf den höchsten Gipfel der Göttlichkeit und der Menschlichkeit" (Schleiermacher, 1799), see Gunter Scholtz, "Platonforschung bei Schleiermacher," in Michael Erller, Ada Babette Neschke-Hentschke (eds.), with assistance from Robert Wennler and Benedikt Blumenfelder, *Argumenta in dialogos Platonis—Argumenta in dialogos Platonis. 2. Platoninterpretation und ihre Hermeneutik vom 19. bis zum 21. Jahrhundert*, 81–101 (Basel: Schwabe, 2012), on 82 (with reference). See also André Laks, "Platonisme et système chez Schleiermacher: des *Grundlinien* à la *Dialectique*" in Laks and Ada Neschke (eds.), *La naissance du paradigme herméneutique: de Kant et Schleiermacher à Dilthey*, second edition, 133–151 (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2008), 137–40.

68. The different connotations of *Begriff* in Hegel and Schleiermacher are succinctly described in Scholtz, "Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre," 868n17.

69. This, of course, is the crucial case for interpreting Plato, and the reconstructed Reading Order (see *Guardians in Action*, chapter 5) echoes Schleiermacher's with respect to the priority of *Cra.* and *Tht.* (but not *Phlb.*) to *Sph.* This order ensures that *für dem Aufmerksamen*—unfortunately, Schleiermacher does not notice it—Plato has already revealed the Protagorean origins of the Eleatic Stranger's conception of δόναμις (*Sph.* 247d8–e4), deployed against "the Friends of the Forms" (*Sph.* 247d8–248e4), in *Tht.* (156a3–7; cf. 157c4–6) where he has also linked Protagoras to Heraclitus (*Tht.* 152d7–e8), and this, of course, Schleiermacher has noticed (*Über die Philosophie Platons*, 195). Plato introduces Heraclitus by name in *Cra.* (401d4–5), first without reference to Parmenides (cf. *Cra.* 402a8–c3 and *Tht.* 152e2–7), but Schleiermacher's awareness of Plato's method of introducing an important theme or concept before clarifying it is well illustrated not only by this contrast but even more so by the elevated status of γένεσις in *Phlb.* (γένεσις εἰς οὐσίαν at 26d8), further clarified as Heraclitean only in *Cra.* (411c4–5), the dialogue that follows it in the Reading Order.

70. Cf. the introduction to *Sph.* (244–60) in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, especially 249–50, and Scholtz, "Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre," 850–52.

γγνώμενον or γένεσις) is the ontological basis of the Allegory of the Cave (*R.* 518c8–9; cf. 485a10–b3, 525b1–4). It is precisely because Plato *is* a dualist that he solved the Problem of the One and the Many,⁷¹ and he did so not by showing how the many could be unified—in the higher synthesis of the ἔν καὶ πᾶν⁷²—but by positing a One *that was in no sense Many* (*R.* 525e2–3), and thus was unlike any of the sensible things that most of us regard as real.⁷³ This utterly simple One would turn our attention away from γένεσις to οὐσία (*R.* 525c5–6), and through his Socrates, Plato taught us, along with the imaginary Guardians of his hypothetical City,⁷⁴ all about it in the arithmetic lesson of *Republic* 7 before exercising us thoroughly on both the atomic One and the infinitely plural or divisible “one” in *Parmenides*.⁷⁵ But it was also because Plato was a dualist that he recognized that none of his predecessors (except perhaps Parmenides)⁷⁶ had been, nor were any of his successors likely to be. As only someone who has effectively resisted it can be, he was fully aware that the *Drang nach Einheit*⁷⁷ is the thought-atom (although it is, of course, the opposite of a-tomic in the strict sense) of all deep thinking whether in China, nineteenth-century Germany, or ancient Greece,⁷⁸ and which received its classical expression in the involuntary self-contradiction(s) of Heraclitus: “Listening not to me but to the λόγος it is wise to agree that all things are one [ἔν πάντα εἶναι].”⁷⁹

Quite apart from the ubiquitous kind of Performative Self-Contradiction I described in the Preface, Plato’s interest in self-contradiction is made explicit

71. See *Guardians in Action*, §11.

72. Consider *Ti.* 68d2–7, *Phlb.* 13a3–4, and 14c8–10. Despite these warnings, I am not denying that Plato tests his readers with a variety of “one out of many” *Widersprüchen*; consider *R.* 443e1–2, 462a9–b2, and *Prm.* 143a2–3 in comparison with *Epin.* 991d8–992c3. Incidentally, it is often said that Schleiermacher translated all of Plato’s dialogues with the exception of *Ti.* and *Lg.*; he also failed to translate *Epin.*

73. Hence the truth of what Socrates says at *R.* 525d5–8: “This [sc. arithmetic], indeed, which just now we were discussing, how forcefully *upwards* does it lead the soul [ὡς σφόδρα ἄνω ποί ἄγει τὴν ψυχὴν], compelling us to speak of numbers in themselves, permitting in no kind of way that anyone pretending numbers merely visible or having bodies joined, would dare to speak of them!”

74. For the relationship between Hypothesis and Image (cf. *Vorbild*) in the Second Part of Divided Line (*R.* 510b4–6) and the Shorter Way (*R.* 435c9–d4), see *Plato the Teacher*, chapter 3.

75. On *Prm.* 143a2–9, see *Guardians in Action*, §12.

76. For the juxtaposition of the plural Παρμενίδαι of *Th.* 180e1–4, the silence-inspiring Παρμενίδης of *Th.* 183e5–184a3, and *Sph.* 241d5–7, see *Guardians on Trial*, §2.

77. For this “drive toward monism,” see *Plato the Teacher*, 73–75 and 153–54; *Guardians in Action*, 235, 240–41, and 349; and *Guardians on Trial*, 2–3, 98n102, 111, and 282.

78. For the parallel, see Wilhelm Dilthey’s lecture “Der Plato Schleiermachers” in Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, two volumes, second edition, 645–663 (Leipzig and Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1922), 648–50. For China, consider Yin and Yang.

79. Heraclitus, B50 (Diels-Kranz); for “self-contradictions,” aside from the fact that all *things* cannot be one—for the same reason that it required the Civil War to make it acceptable to describe what the grammatically plural “United States of America” *is*—there can be no distinction between what it would be wise as opposed to foolish to agree about, between yourself and anything about which you hear or with which you agree, nor between the speaker and the λόγος, if ἔν πάντα εἶναι.

throughout. The trap that Protagoras sets for Socrates involves the claim that Simonides has contradicted himself (*Prt.* 339b7–10), and when Alcibiades is forced at the culmination of [2] to contradict his claim that the just is something other than the advantageous (*Alc. I* 116d3–6), Socrates even leaves open a place for *voluntary* self-contradiction when he explains the cause of the youngster’s predicament: “Concerning the things, then, about which you make contradictory replies unwillingly [ἄκων], it is clear that about them, you do not know.”⁸⁰ Plato can cause one of his characters—and he expects “the careful reader” to realize that he has not done so ἄκων⁸¹—to contradict what they have said in another dialogue,⁸² what *they* have said in the same dialogue,⁸³ and even what all his characters have been saying in every one of his dialogues.⁸⁴ Indeed the give-and-take of the Socratic ἔλεγχος depends throughout on one character contradicting what another has said. But once Plato has given the reader the tools to identify “one out of many” as a self-contradiction—and any child can quickly be brought to realize à la Plato why every number counts Ones but that One itself cannot be a number⁸⁵—he depends on the fact that both young and old, no matter how late they may have learned how, will be able to see the force in the claim, even when it is being ridiculed, that “it is impossible for the many to be one and the one to be many” (*Sph.* 251b7–8).⁸⁶

Even in the more difficult “late dialogues,” then, Plato makes things simple, literally so in the case of the atomic and indivisible One (*R.* 526a4). For Platonism *is* simple, and my claim is that any *Neuling* can rise to its heights (before voluntarily descending to its depths) simply by pursuing a course of well-ordered studies inscribed in a series of delightful dialogues that commence with play and remain playful throughout. But precisely because he knew what he regarded to be true, Plato was fully aware of how to conceal, distort, and contradict that truth, and he describes this “anti-logical art” in

80. *Alc. I* 117a5–6. See also *Hp. Mi.* 371e7–8 and *R.* 382a11–c11.

81. For the praiseworthy application of “logographic necessity [ἀνάγκη λογογραφική]” (*Phdr.* 264b7) to Plato’s own dialogues, see Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 77 (Dobson, 56; modified): “it is the triumph of his artistic mind that in his great and rich-wrought forms nothing is without its use, and that he leaves nothing for chance or blind caprice to determine.”

82. E.g., *Prt.* 358a5–6 and *Grg.* 506c6–7.

83. E.g., *Prt.* 331c4–d1 and 333c5–7.

84. On the Athenian Stranger’s claim in *Laws* 7 that “unsettling contradictions [τὰ ἐναντία ἄλληλα ταράττοντα] promote poor learning [δυσμάθεια]” (*Lg.* 812e5–6), see *Guardians on Trial*, 296–98, and *Ascent to the Good*, xlii.

85. Cf. Jacob Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought and the Origin of Algebra*, translated by Eva Brann (New York: Dover, 1992), 51: “Everyone is able to see—if only it has been emphatically enough pointed out to him—that his ability to count and to calculate *presupposes* the existence of ‘nonsensual’ units.”

86. For the so-called late learners or “opsimaths,” see *Guardians on Trial*, 57–61.

Phaedrus (261d6–262c3).⁸⁷ Although Schleiermacher does not ignore this important passage,⁸⁸ he fails to give it its due. Using resemblances to turn something into its opposite “little by little [κατὰ μικρόν]” (*Phdr.* 262b5–7)—and most conveniently, to pluralize the One (*Prm.* 143a2) and unify the Many (*Phlb.* 25a1–4)—is difficult for the same reason that Platonism itself is simple; it is its negation that requires sophistication. On the other hand, making the Idea of the Good immanent “in the mixture,”⁸⁹ reconfiguring the Ideas as something other than χωρίς,⁹⁰ and blurring the frontier dividing Being from Becoming,⁹¹ all such moves must always begin with synthesizing two opposite things,⁹² i.e., with a “one” that is also many, and thus the antithesis of the simple truth that Socrates teaches us through arithmetic.

It is because Plato is training Guardians that *Sophist* belongs among the post-*Republic* dialogues: he fully realized that what he had taught them in *Republic* 7 could not be properly defended or even fully embraced by those who could not recognize, understand, and resist its negation. In a luminous article entitled “Schleiermacher and the Platonic Theory of Ideas,” Gunter Scholtz correctly identifies the introduction to Plato’s *Sophist* as the single most important text for understanding Schleiermacher’s conception of *die platonische Ideenlehre*,⁹³ and indeed for understanding not only Plato’s but also Schleiermacher’s own conception of dialectic.⁹⁴ Well aware of the manner in which the Tübingen School uses Schleiermacher’s Introduction to the dialogues as a whipping boy,⁹⁵ Scholtz uses his introduction to *Sophist* to reveal the deeper connection between the two,⁹⁶ and explicates

87. For ἡ ἀντιλογικὴ τέχνη (*Phdr.* 261d10–e2), see *Guardians in Action*, §7 (“The Science of Deception”).

88. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 73.

89. On “the mixed message” of *Phlb.* and its pedagogical purpose, see *Guardians in Action*, chapter 4.

90. Cf. the use of χωρίς at *Prm.* 130b2–3 with *Sph.* 252c3. On the latter, see *Guardians on Trial*, 54–55.

91. On γένεσις εἰς οὐσίαν at *Phlb.* 26d8, and μεικτή καὶ γεγεννημένη οὐσία at *Phlb.* 27b9–9, see *Guardians in Action*, 325–35; on *Ti.* 35a1–4, see 62–70.

92. Cf. Vittorio Hösle, “The Tübingen School,” in Alan Kim (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to German Platonism*, 328–348 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 342: “The idea of constituting reality out of two interacting principles standing in polar opposition to each other [i.e., as in Tübingen’s Plato] is strikingly similar to German Idealism.”

93. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 850–52.

94. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 860 (citation deleted): “Dialectic expressly arms itself against a Platonic χωρισμός, against an idealistic separation [*Trennung*] of *a priori* conceptual knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and experience-based understanding [*Erfahrungserkenntnis*] (ὁρθὴ δόξα). A correctly understood Platonism, as presented in *Sophist*, teaches [us] to combine these realms.”

95. See, e.g., Hans Joachim Krämer, *Platone e i fondamenti della metafisica: saggio sulla teoria dei principi e sulle dottrine non scritte di Platone con una raccolta dei documenti fondamentali in edizione bilingua e bibliografia*, introduction and translation from the German by Giovanni Reale (Milano: Vita e pensiero, 1982), 33–135; note Krämer’s exclusive concern with Schleiermacher’s *Einleitung*.

96. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 869.

what Schleiermacher calls the “innermost sanctum of philosophy” with “the coincidence of opposites” or the *coincidentia oppositorum*.⁹⁷

When Schleiermacher recognizes a ‘highest Being’ as a unity of opposites in *Sophist*, he has the τὸ ὄν τε καὶ τὸ πᾶν,⁹⁸ ‘the existent and the whole,’ in view, which according to Plato [i.e., the Eleatic Stranger] is one and many, in motion and at rest ([*Sph.*] 249d). And when he speaks in this connection of ‘life of the existent,’ then he is thinking of the concept of Being [*der Seinsbegriff*] that Plato [i.e., the Eleatic Stranger] deploys against the materialists and idealists of ‘the truly existent’ (τὸ παντελῶς ὄν), to which ‘in truth motion and life and soul and reason’ inhere (248e).⁹⁹

The passage Scholtz is describing is where the Eleatic Stranger refutes “the Friends of the Forms” in the famous “Battle of the Giants [γίγαντομαχία] about Being” (*Sph.* 246a4). I have placed brackets after Scholtz’s “Plato” twice because the remarkably easy first step toward understanding the post-*Republic* dialogues is to question whether the characters who dominate them—beginning with Timaeus, but including both the Eleatic and Athenian Strangers—speak for Plato, as Scholtz, or rather Schleiermacher, not only allows but requires the Eleatic Stranger to be doing here. Having just claimed that the apparently unchanging realm of οὐσία is changed by being known (*Sph.* 248d10–e5)—as if I were to claim that *you* have now changed simply because you have just *been mentioned by me*¹⁰⁰—it is the Eleatic Stranger, not Plato, who supports a remarkably weak argument, preemptively refuted in *Euthyphro* (*Euthyphr.* 11a6–b1),¹⁰¹ with even stronger and indeed theologized

97. Cf. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 850, with Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 248–50, especially “das innerste Heiligtum der Philosophie” (248), “dieses geforderte Durchdringen der Gegensätze” (249), and “Gemeinschaft mit den Gegensätzen” (250). For the tacit embrace of the One and Indefinite Dyad, consider 249 (Dobson, 252): “For first, starting with the statement of the impossibility, that these persons [he seems to have the Late Learners in mind; see Dobson, 251n, unfortunately not included in *Über die Philosophie Platons*] should have reached the sphere of abstract existence who begin with mere unity [cf. the One of the *Prinzipienlehre*], or they who continue to remain within the sphere of opposites [cf. the Indefinite Dyad of the *Prinzipienlehre*]; the real life of the existent, in which all opposites [sc. the Dyad] reciprocally penetrate and unite [thanks to the One], is pointed out, and at the same time it is shown that knowledge can subsist neither without rest nor without motion, neither without station nor without flux, neither with out constancy nor without progression, but in each pair requires a union of both.”

98. On *Sph.* 249d3–4, see *Guardians on Trial*, 52–53 and 111.

99. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 851–52.

100. For so-called Cambridge change, see P. T. Geach, *God and the Soul: Studies in Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion* (London: Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1969), 71–72. But unlike Geach’s example—where the father is no longer taller than his son only because the son has grown—the Stranger’s argument is entirely dependent on the grammatical distinction between active and passive, prepared by his earlier δὴναμις-based definition of “what is [τὸ ὄν]” or rather “the things that are [τὰ ὄντα]” (*Sph.* 247d8–e4).

101. Thanks to the ending of *Tht.* (210d2–4) and the beginning of *Sph.* (216a1), Plato tells us that *Euthyphr.* intervenes between the two, and my reconstructed Reading Order not only respects this dramatic link but searches for—and finds, as here—that link’s pedagogical significance. For the *Andeutungen* and *Winke* that Plato gives us through Reading Order, see *Guardians in Action*, xxxiv–vi. Note that Plato has already prepared us for *Sph.* 248e2–5 at *Cra.* 439e3–7, but he makes things easier in *Euthyphr.*

rhetoric, leading Theaetetus to admit that it would be monstrous indeed to withhold “motion and life and soul and reason [φρόνησις]” from “the truly existent [τὸ παντελῶς ὄν]” (*Sph.* 248e7–249a3).¹⁰² It is therefore in this passage as well that the Eleatic Stranger, once again recalling *Euthyphro*, justifies parricide (*Sph.* 241d3): it was “father Parmenides” (*Sph.* 241d5) who insisted that “what completely is” is unchanging (ἀκίνητον).¹⁰³

Indeed one of the principal merits of Schleiermacher’s introduction to *Sophist* is the way he treats Parmenides. To begin with, since he identifies the Eleatic Stranger with Plato, and since the Stranger is refuting “the Friends of the Forms,” Schleiermacher cannot identify “the Friends of the Forms” with Plato even though he is honest enough to admit that one might be tempted to do so.¹⁰⁴ Although initially prepared to find other scapegoats,¹⁰⁵ the post-Schleiermacher reception of *Sophist* in its Anglophone form, now guided by the Order of Composition, can afford to admit what Schleiermacher could not: that “the Friends of the Forms” represent an earlier Plato,¹⁰⁶—when he wrote *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, and *Republic*, for example—a Plato who, while writing *Sophist* in the wake of *Philebus* and *Parmenides*, no longer exists.¹⁰⁷

102. Both Plotinus and Proclus, our sources for Parmenides B3 (Diels-Kranz), quote it in reference to this passage, explaining why Plato attributes φρόνησις and φρονεῖν to τὸ παντελῶς ὄν. There are repeated echoes of B3 in Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 133 (quoted below), 249, and 251 (cf. Dilthey, “Der Plato Schleiermachers,” 649, and Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 862 and 867) and it is easy to see why the German reception of Parmenides made it inevitable that even without any solid evidentiary basis for doing so—see my “Parmenides’ Fragment B3 Revisited,” *Hypnos* 35, no. 2 (2015), 197–230, and *Guardians on Trial*, 101n110—B3 would be located in “Truth,” not “Opinion.” For an indication of the importance of this placement to Schleiermacher, consider this passage from his introduction to *Prm.* (133; Dobson, 118): “Meanwhile, for those who have well considered all up to this point, it will not be difficult to conceive that highest philosophical problem [die höchste philosophische Aufgabe] which already at times was haunting Plato’s mind as the only means of escaping from these difficulties—we speak of discovering somewhere an original identity of thought and existence [eine ursprüngliche Einerleiheit des Denkens und Seins]; Diels-Kranz translates B3 as: “den dasselbe ist Denken und Sein”, and deriving from it [my emphasis] that immediate [and dualism-negating] connection of man with the intelligible world [und aus ihr jene unmittelbare Verbindung des Menschen mit der intelligibeln Welt abzuleiten].”

103. Cf. *Sph.* 249a2, 249a10, and 249b5 with Parmenides B8.26 and B8.38 (Diels-Kranz).

104. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 252.

105. See Campbell, *Sophistes and Politicus*, 125–26, on which see *Guardians in Action*, 378.

106. See Henry Jackson, “Plato’s Later Theory of Ideas. V The *Sophist*,” *Journal of Philology* 14 (1885), 173–230, on 199–202, where he identifies the Plato of *Phd.* with “the friends of the forms.”

107. Building on the work of Campbell (1830–1908), Henry Jackson (1839–1921) is the crucial figure in this development beginning with the first of his articles on “Plato’s Later Theory of Ideas. I. The *Philebus* and Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* I. 6.” in *Journal of Philology* 10 (1882), 253–298. Note that it is not only *Prm.* but more prominently *Phlb.* (in company with Aristotle) that plays the decisive role here; see also Henry Jackson, “Plato’s Later Theory of Ideas. II. The *Parmenides*,” *Journal of Philology* 12 (1882), 287–331, especially on 298 (“the theory of ideas which is presented in the *republic* [sic] and the *Phaedo* has here [sc. in *Prm.* and *Phlb.*] received its deathblow”). Returning to the subject in Henry Jackson, “On the Supposed Priority of the *Philebus* to the *Republic*,” *Journal of Philology* 25 (1897), 65–82, the gulf between Jackson and Eduard Zeller can be bridged by replacing Zeller’s “Plato” with Socrates at 71–72. For Campbell’s awareness of Jackson’s importance in this development, see Lewis Campbell, “Review of *Plato and Platonism* by Walter Pater,” *Classical Review* 7, no. 6 (June 1893), 263–266, last word. For a useful summary of Jackson’s views, see Leo

But Schleiermacher's systematic arrangement eschews this kind of chronological expedient: he will claim, in fact, that *Symposium* and *Phaedo* illustrate the missing *Philosopher* that follows *Sophist-Statesman*,¹⁰⁸ while *Republic*, albeit completed by *Timaeus-Critias*, constitutes the $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ of his system.¹⁰⁹ Thanks to the early *Phaedrus*, there was no time in which Plato—from first to last the proponent of a dynamic dialectic that embraces and harmonizes what is both one and many, and what changes with what does not—to be one of those “Friends of the Forms” for whom Being is necessarily unchanging. As a result, Schleiermacher identifies them, and not without good reason, as Parmenides.¹¹⁰

Without explicitly confirming what the later reception tends to deny,¹¹¹ i.e., that the Eleatic Stranger really *is* a parricide, Schleiermacher's solution helps us to see more clearly that he is one. But Schleiermacher also helps us to see something even more important when he remarks in passing that the Eleatic Stranger “forms in an extremely remarkable manner [sc. ‘as a dialogic personage’] the transition, as it were, from Parmenides himself to the Pythagorean Timaeus.”¹¹² Opening up the possibility that Plato's *Timaeus* is rather Pythagorean than Platonic,¹¹³ he is likewise correct with respect to the Eleatic Stranger, but merely fails to realize that this transition had already occurred in Parmenides' poem itself. Unfortunately, the second step in understanding the post-*Republic* dialogues beginning with *Timaeus* is made considerably more difficult by the loss of the longer, second part of Parmenides' poem, the cosmological “Way of Opinion” (or $\Delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$) that he called “a deceptive cosmos of words.”¹¹⁴ But even without most of it, there is enough that remains to suggest that *Timaeus* was Plato's version of Parmenides' “Way of Opinion,”¹¹⁵

Sweeney, “Henry Jackson's Interpretation of Plato.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13, no. 2 (April 1975), 189–204.

108. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 273–74 (introduction to *Smp.*). Contrast this with Heidegger, *Platon: Sophistes*, who introduces or upholds the notion that there is no need for the missing *Philosopher* because the Eleatic Stranger—identified, of course, with Plato (479)—is himself demonstrating what the philosopher does and is (245–46 and 531–32). But Schleiermacher is already clearly tempted by this position; consider 250–51 (Dobson, 253–54; modified): “we may fairly regard the *Sophist* as the inmost core of all indirect speculations of Plato, and to a certain degree as the first, and in its kind as a perfect image of the man himself.”

109. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 384–87.

110. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 252–53. Note that no matter how appropriate this solution may be in fact, it is inconsistent with the Stranger's own (deceptive) account of Parmenides (*Sph.* 242c8–d7).

111. For discussion and references, see *Guardians on Trial*, 43–45.

112. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 251 (Dobson, 254–55).

113. On Cicero's translation of *Ti.*, where he intended to place the words of Timaeus in the mouth of P. Nigidius Figulus, a Pythagorean astrologer whose views were going to be criticized in a dialogue with Cratippus, see *Guardians in Action*, 23–25.

114. See Parmenides B8.52 (Diels-Kranz).

115. See *Guardians in Action*, 35–37. Schleiermacher is fully aware of the importance of “the Way of Opinion,” frequently ignored by those who regard Parmenides as nothing more than a monist, and he laments its loss in a revealing manner in *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 252 (Dobson, 255): “it is a

and thus that Schleiermacher was right not only to link *Timaeus* to *Sophist* but Parmenides to “the Friends of the Forms.” It is because of these connections that the Eleatic Stranger’s attempted parricide indicates neither Plato’s embrace of Parmenides’ physical opinions nor his rejection of Parmenidean ontology, but rather his creative redeployment of Parmenidean pedagogy.¹¹⁶

This way of teaching, which I call “basanistic” (see Preface, principle §7), is fully dependent on the teacher’s knowledge of the truth. It tests the student with deliberate falsehoods,¹¹⁷ and is most fully described in Plato’s *Phaedrus*, the dialogue that immediately follows *Timaeus-Critias* in my reconstruction of the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues.¹¹⁸ As already mentioned, it would be unfair to suggest that Schleiermacher ignores the passage on “the science of deception [ἡ ἀντιλογικὴ τέχνη]” in his brilliant introduction to *Phaedrus*, but his attention is quickly diverted to Socrates’ remarks about Collection and Division,¹¹⁹ in which Schleiermacher finds the germ or kernel, *necessarily present in Plato’s mind from the start*,¹²⁰ of the kind of dialectic that the Eleatic Stranger would describe in *Sophist*, now without the use of youthful myths,¹²¹ and ripe for scientific deployment in *Republic-Timaeus*.¹²² After all, Schleiermacher’s system revolves around only eleven first-class dialogues arranged in the following order: *Phaedrus*, *Protagoras*, *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Phaedo*, *Philebus*, *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias*.¹²³ Although he regards ten others as genuine (what he calls “the

erty that we have not, I fear, enough remaining of Parmenides to enable us to conceive Plato’s opinion about the philosopher, and especially for the reason that Plato nowhere expresses himself decidedly upon the philosophy of Parmenides as to the sensible world [as I claim he actually does in *Ti.*], though we might really feel ourselves authorized to refer much upon this subject [presumably also in *Ti.*, which, however, Schleiermacher regards as expressing Plato’s own views] to the Eleatic philosopher [sc. Parmenides], notwithstanding that he is not named as the author of it.”

116. See *Guardians in Action*, §2, and *Guardians on Trial*, §1.

117. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 41, quoted in n40 above.

118. See *Guardians in Action*, chapter 2.

119. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 73 (Dobson, 52; modified): “he shows, I say, that an aptitude at deceiving and undeceiving is requisite, an art of logical semblance, which can itself rest on nothing but a scientific method of comprehending similar notions under higher; and a like knowledge of the difference of notions, that dialectics, therefore, must be the true foundation of rhetoric, and that only what is connected with its principles, properly belongs to the art.” For discussion of the textual transition in *Phdr.* between this “art of logical semblance” and what Schleiermacher calls “the scientific method” see *Guardians in Action*, §8.

120. Cf. Julia A. Lamm, “Plato’s Dialogues as a Single Work of Art: Friedrich Schleiermacher’s *Platons Werke*,” in Balansard and Koch, *Lire les dialogues*, 173–188, on 186: “The *Phaedrus* is first because it anticipates all that is to come; it contains the seeds that will eventually grow into the ‘priceless fruit’ of the *Sophist*.”

121. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 79 and 133 (“die im *Phaidros* vorläufig mythisch dargestellten Lehren”).

122. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 255–57; cf. Scholtz, “Schleiermacher und die platonische Ideenlehre,” 855. See Gadamer, “Schleiermacher als Platoniker,” 148, for the useful insight that the influence of Spinoza explains what Schleiermacher regards as the “inner substantial connection” between *R.* and *Ti.*

123. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 54–55.

second-class”),¹²⁴ their authenticity depends on their connections to the Big Eleven; for example he connects *Symposium* to *Phaedo*.

Despite his insistence that Plato’s readers encounter the contradiction-spawning ἀντιλογική τέχνη described in *Phaedrus* before reading *Parmenides*¹²⁵—which along with *Theaetetus*, he correctly regards as preparatory to *Sophist*¹²⁶—Schleiermacher falls victim to the Eleatic Stranger’s apodictic “tone,”¹²⁷ wondering neither whether he speaks for Plato nor whether it is now Plato himself who is using “the science of deception.” My claim is that Plato *is* using it, and doing so in order to determine *our* loyalty to what Parmenides regarded as eternally ἀκίνητον, first glimpsed by Plato’s own students at the culmination of our “ascent to the Beautiful” in *Symposium*. As proved by Schleiermacher’s willingness to find the missing *Philosopher* at the intersection of Alcibiades’ and Socrates’ speeches in that great dialogue¹²⁸—consigned to an outgrown “middle period” by Plato’s post-Schleiermacher reception—Eberhard’s student still has one foot in the older world of Platonism, a world that, at least in Germany, will not long survive the dialectical profundities or “objective idealism” of the *Blütezeit*.¹²⁹ There is more dualistic Platonism in Nietzsche, who hated it, than there is in the Neo-Kantian admirer of Plato Paul Natorp, who would follow Schleiermacher in rejecting Aristotle’s testimony that Plato had separated the Ideas.¹³⁰ And sad to say, there is considerably more dualism in Natorp than there is in Heidegger.¹³¹

124. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 61.

125. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 134 (Dobson, 119; modified): “And with this, notwithstanding that he [sc. Parmenides in *Prm.*] had not pledged himself that such would be the result [but see *Phdr.* 261d6–8; with the list of topics, cf. *Prm.* 129d8–e1], he finds himself in the strange predicament, as it were involuntarily, that he is expressing manifold contradictions concerning the notion he selected [daß er von dem gewählten Begriffe vielfach widersprechendes aussagt; cf. *Phdr.* 262b5–8]. For the whole investigation separates into four parts, formed by the supposed existence or non-existence of unity [*Einheit*], and the consequences which follow for unity itself and all besides, and each of these parts attains to two contradictory results [zwei widersprechende Ausgänge].” Since *Einheit* can be configured as both an indivisible One and “the unifying principle” of Many, it is a “name” that is productive of deception; see *Phdr.* 263a6–c9. For the first two Hypotheses of *Prm.* as an example of ἡ ἀντιλογική τέχνη, see *Guardians in Action*, 255–56 and 221–24.

126. Cf. Henry Jackson, “Plato’s Later Theory of Ideas. IV The *Theaetetus*,” *Journal of Philology* 13 (1884), 242–272, on 268–69; here he usefully identifies the Protagorean κομψότεροι of *Tht.* 156a2–157c3 with the Eleatic Stranger—and hence the later Plato—despite the indication of basanistic testing at *Tht.* 157c4–d3.

127. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 252–53.

128. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 274.

129. Dilthey, “Der Plato Schleiermachers,” 649.

130. Paul Natorp, *Platos Ideenlehre: eine Einführung in den Idealismus*, second revised edition (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1922), 74.

131. What Schleiermacher said of Aristotle in *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 115, is better applied to Heidegger: “Das platonische Werden ist bei ihm das wahre Sein,” i.e., what Plato calls “Becoming,” Heidegger calls “Being.”

Despite the historical importance of his translation and reading of Plato's *Sophist*, Schleiermacher's influence would cast an even longer shadow on other dialogues, and on *Alcibiades Major* in particular. The fact that Schleiermacher was the first to doubt the dialogue's authenticity should not be regarded as a mere historical accident, as if some other German, French, Italian, or British scholar was waiting in the wings to do a few years later what Schleiermacher just happened to have done beforehand. For Schleiermacher's aspersions on *Alcibiades Major* to stick, as they have done, he needed to be German, and moreover to be the child of Germany's *Blütezeit*. I have tried to lay bare the philosophical core of what made his rejection of *Alcibiades Major* possible, tracing it back to a *Drang nach Einheit*, hell-bent on sweeping away Plato's χωρισμός or *Kluft*. But this is not to say that Schleiermacher rejected *Alcibiades Major* because it, e.g., sharply segregated Body from Soul—arguably the principal experiential basis of Plato's dualistic *Ideenlehre*—although it most certainly does so (*Alc. I* 129e3–130a1). It was rather its philosophical poverty, necessarily in comparison with the dialectical complexities that made post-Kantian German philosophy the highpoint of modern thought, that led Schleiermacher to dismiss it as *ziemlich geringfügig und schlecht*, a verdict whose authority emanated from the same pride-inspiring greatness that would make Hegel (1770–1831) the Beethoven (1770–1827) of philosophers.

Consider an authority greater than Schleiermacher's as representative of the historical and spiritual conditions that made his attack on *Alcibiades Major* both possible and effective. In 1796, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) wrote a brief but influential essay about Plato's *Ion*.¹³² Leaving for the proper place his comments on the dialogue (see §12),¹³³ the crucial point is that *Ion* concerns the interpretation of Homer only on the surface; in fact, it deals with interpretation generally, and thus of Plato's dialogues as well. In Plato's case, Goethe's claim certainly holds true: the *Beurteilung* of a great poet depends on “only intuition and feeling, and not actual knowledge [*nur Anschauen und Gefühl und nicht eigentlich Kenntnis*].”¹³⁴ I have left the word for “(critical) judgment” (*G. Beurteilung*) un-translated for the same reason that I have translated *Anschauen*—Schleiermacher prefers *Anschauung* but makes ample use of *Gefühl*¹³⁵—as “intuition” because Goethe's purpose is to

132. J. W. Goethe, “Plato als Mitgenosse einer christlichen Offenbarung (Im Jahre 1796 durch eine Übersetzung veranlaßt).” For this text and supporting materials, see Ernst Grumach (ed.), *Goethe und die Antike; eine Sammlung*, two volumes (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1949), 2.758–762.

133. See Hellmut Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion als Zeugnis platonischer Philosophie* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958), 1–5, for the views of Goethe, Schleiermacher, and August Immanuel Bekker.

134. Goethe, “Plato als Mitgenosse,” 760.

135. Cf. Dilthey, “Der Plato Schleiermachers,” 649: “In diesem Sinne hatten Schleiermachers ‘Reden über Religion’ der allmenschlichen religiösen Funktion die Kraft zugeteilt [emphasis mine:] *führend und anschauend im Universum ein Ganzes dessen göttlichen Grund zu bewahren.*”

contrast it with knowledge, and thus a more neutral translation like “contemplation” does not sufficiently distinguish it from what creates *Kenntnis*. As a great poet himself, Goethe attaches considerable value to feeling and his own not necessarily entirely rational insights; well and good: as Socrates proves, it is likewise not knowledge (i.e., τέχνη) that allows Ion to speak insightfully about Homer (*Ion* 536d2–3), or for that matter, that allowed Schleiermacher to speak so insightfully about Plato.¹³⁶ In this light, consider the last words of Goethe’s essay: “for the time is gone in which the Sibylls spoke wisdom from the depths of the earth; we demand criticism [*Kritik*] and will judge before we embrace something and apply to ourselves.”¹³⁷ More was necessary than merely the application of a long-overdue *Kritik* for Schleiermacher to reject *Alcibiades Major* as an authentic dialogue:¹³⁸ that critical spirit—exemplified if not introduced by Eberhard’s colleague at Halle, Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824)¹³⁹—needed to be placed in the service of an at least equally unwavering loyalty to one’s own *Anschauen und Gefühl*. It was only when armed with all three that Schleiermacher could now speak as an authoritative Sibyl of inauthenticity.¹⁴⁰

It has not been my intention to get lost amidst the mysteries or eccentricities of the *Blütezeit*; let’s just say, then, that it is my own *intuition and feeling*, not my knowledge, that has led me to offer some critical *Beurteilungen* on the kind of *Kritik* which inspired Schleiermacher to do what he did with a clear conscience to *Alcibiades Major*. Moreover, I have tried to suggest that

136. For the role of “divination” in Schleiermacher’s hermeneutics, see Scholtz, “Ast and Schleiermacher,” 69; see also his “Platonforschung bei Schleiermacher,” 90–91; note in this passage *fühlen, Ton, divinatorisch, angeschaut, and Ahnung*.

137. Goethe, “Plato als Mitgenosse,” 762.

138. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Philosophie Platons*, 319–20, where the views of ancient commentators on *Alc. I* can still command respect “even should our dialogue be discovered not to be a work of Plato before the judgment-seat of a sharp and genuine criticism [*vor dem Richterstuhl einer scharfer und genauen Kritik*].”

139. See Friedrich August Wolf (ed.), Πλατωνος Συμποσιον; *Platons Gastmahl: Ein Dialog* (Leipzig: Schwickschen Verlag, 1782); 9 (on *Smp.* 174d2), where he refers to *Alcibiades Minor* with no indication that he regards it as anything but Platonic. For his pioneering work on “Homer,” see §12.

140. Schleiermacher’s character is visible in the second edition *Zusatz* or “Addition” to his introduction on *Ion* in *Philosophie Platons*, 162 (Dobson, 151): “It is not without mature reflection that I leave this introduction to stand in the main as it was originally written; for it does not seem to me good to extinguish in a later edition all traces [N. B.:] of how circumspectly, and turning every thing to the best, I have gone to work with those dialogues ascribed to Plato which appeared to me at first suspicious, that my method of proceeding might be the less liable to be confounded, by attentive readers at least, with a frivolous and precipitate criticism coming in after the thing was decided upon. As for the rest, every reader who compares the annotations with the introduction will remark that I give more space to the grounds of suspicion than to the defense, which last however I thought it incumbent upon me to investigate in the case of a work which, with all its weaknesses, is not entirely without a Platonic tone; and even now I refrain from cancelling that defense, as it may pave the way towards explaining what is unquestionably Platonic in detail, supposing the work itself to be condemned as not genuine. But Bekker marks this and the following dialogues more decisively as ungenueine, and, in so doing, has my full assent.”

if he had not done it where and when he did, my job—and this is something I know—would be simpler. In this Introduction, I have tried to show that it is not Plato’s most elementary dialogues themselves, but rather the necessity of engaging in an *Auseinandersetzung* with secondary authorities on Plato that makes interpreting them difficult. True in general, this is particularly true—given the admitted simplicity of *Alcibiades Major*—in the case of Schleiermacher. But despite the resulting complexity, I have also tried to show that this kind of *Auseinandersetzung* has a higher dialectical purpose, and is useful for shining a brighter light on Plato.

In an introductory lecture on philology that Nietzsche delivered at the beginning of his career (1871), he made a brilliant observation: “Like genius itself, the Greeks are *einfach*, simple; for that reason they are the immortal teachers [*die Griechen sind, wie das Genie, einfach, simplex; sie sind deshalb die unsterblichen Lehrer*].”¹⁴¹ I have tried to trace Schleiermacher’s rejection of Plato’s immortal *Alcibiades*—a brilliant dialogue that only an experienced teacher could have written so simply—back to the word Nietzsche emphasizes here: *einfach*. Containing as it does the German word for “one,” it is the indivisible and Many-excluding One alone that is literally *ein-fach*, and is therefore the dialectical opposite of the *coincidentia oppositorum* that transcends the difference between “one” and “many.” It is perfectly true that there is an important place for Heraclitus and the Heraclitean *coincidentia oppositorum* in Plato’s thought, but not in the innermost sanctum of his philosophy.¹⁴² It was rather the necessarily contradictory evidence of sense perception, i.e., the fact that no sensible thing was any more one thing than another, that Socrates used to call forth (*παρακαλοῦν*) the contradiction-transcending arithmetical One in *Republic 7* (R. 523a10–525a3). By contrast, it was the exigencies of the *Zeitgeist* that made it necessary for Schleiermacher’s post-Spinoza Plato to be anything but *einfach*.

As for Nietzsche, the only point his admirable observation misses—for genius *is* simple—is that it is not *because* Plato is simple that he is an immortal teacher; it is because he is and remains (if only we would let him!) a great teacher *that he made things simple for us*. The best proof of the pedagogical origin of his simplicity are—and note that the plural “are” triggers the Problem of the One and the Many—the series of dialogues he intended his students to read between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, written as they are *für den am wenigsten vorbereiteten Neuling*. This Introduction has emphasized *Alcibiades Major* because I believe the ancient commentators were right: it *is* the properly Platonic place to begin the serious study of Plato. But despite

141. “Einleitung in das Studium der classischen Philologie (Vorlesung, Sommer 1871; dreistündig),” in E. Holzer (ed.), *Nietzsche’s Werke, Gedrucktes und Ungedrucktes aus den Jahren 1866–1877* (Leipzig: C. G. Naumann, 1910), 17.352; see also *Musarionausgabe*, Bd. 2, 337–365.

142. See *Guardians in Action*, 231–33.

the testimony of Aristotle, who vouches for two of them,¹⁴³ Schleiermacher placed every one of these dialogues—*Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, *Lovers*, *Hippias Major*, *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, and *Menexenus*—in his “third class,”¹⁴⁴ where several of them remain today. I have tried to indicate why he did so, and also why the foundational conception or *Grundbegriff* that led him to do so creates a useful dialectical friction that can help us to see Plato more clearly. But the fact remains that without them, it is impossible to see the truly Platonic version of a synthetic unity: the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues.¹⁴⁵

A critic might be forgiven for suggesting that the true purpose of the Reading Order hypothesis is to restore the likes of *Alcibiades Major* to the canon. But the so-called hermeneutic circle, for which Schleiermacher is sometimes given credit, provides my project with a more positive face, for one must know Plato’s dialogues *as a whole* in order to justify restoring any one of them to its proper place. Schleiermacher was able to divine the higher unity of the Platonic dialogues only by excluding a considerable number of them from serious consideration; beginning with the excision of *Alcibiades Major*, it is easy to see that his “whole” was anything but. It is also easy to see that even an exegete considerably less gifted than Schleiermacher can easily “divine the higher unity” of a restricted set of dialogues that has been tailor made for that purpose and cut to size *by the exegete himself*.¹⁴⁶ The reader will decide which approach is more respectful of Plato and “the hermeneutic circle” but I must insist that it is at least equally true that the Reading Order hypothesis has emerged from the careful consideration of *all* the Platonic dialogues as that it is dedicated to the restoration of any one of them. This Introduction has showed why restoring them involves some considerable difficulty, but in the chapters that follow, I hope to prove that such difficulties are merely external: the dialogues considered in *Ascent to the Beautiful* are easy, for beginning with *Alcibiades Major*, Plato the Teacher has made them so.

143. See W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, six volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967–1981), 4.191 and 4.312, on *Hp. Mi.* and *Mx.* respectively.

144. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 62.

145. See §14 below and *Guardians in Action*, §16.

146. Cf. Gregory Vlastos, *Socratic Studies*, edited by Myles Burnyeat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 29–33, where he explains why the absence of the ἐλεγχος in *Euthd.*, *Ly.*, and *Hp. Ma.* proves that they should not be regarded as “Socratic” but rather as “transitional.”

Chapter One

Protagoras as Gateway

SECTION 1. *PROTAGORAS* BEFORE *ALCIBIADES*

Especially for someone who embraces the ancient view that *Alcibiades Major* is the proper place to begin the study of Plato, and who does so, moreover, on the pedagogical grounds of the dialogue's evident accessibility to the neophyte (see Preface, principle §1), the question is a natural one: How can *Protagoras* possibly precede *Alcibiades* in the Reading Order? The answer is that Plato has told us that it does with the kind of hint that he typically uses to indicate such things (see Preface, principle 2).¹ Although Schleiermacher did not mention it, the first expedient to which Alcibiades resorts in order to wriggle out of the consequences of neither having had a teacher of justice nor of having discovered it for himself (*Alc. I* 110d3–4) is that he learned it the same way he learned Greek (*Alc. I* 111a1–4), i.e., from the many (*Alc. I* 110d9–11). In a dialogue in which Alcibiades has just been presented as both ignorant and slow to catch on (*Alc. I* 108c6–d3), this is by far the most intelligent thing he says in it. So when we discover Protagoras having made the same argument in *Protagoras* (327e3–328a1),² a dialogue in which Plato goes out of his way to ensure that even the dumbest reader will know that Alcibiades was there to hear the famous sophist use it (beginning at 309b5–7),³ he is telling us that Alcibiades is *parroting* what the young man has already

1. Cf. Schleiermacher's *Winke* and *Andeutungen* (see Introduction).

2. All otherwise unidentified citations in this section will be to *Prt*.

3. Cf. Reuben Ramsey, "Plato's Oblique Response to Issues of Socrates' Influence on Alcibiades: An Examination of *Protagoras* and *Gorgias*," in Marguerite Johnson and Harold Tarrant (eds.), *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator*, 61–76 (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 63: "In the *Protagoras* there are eleven separate references to Alcibiades who is, after all, only a subsidiary figure." This comes close to involuntary self-contradiction.

heard Protagoras say, i.e., that *Alcibiades Major* follows *Protagoras* in a dramatic sense.⁴

For Schleiermacher, the remarkable ignorance of Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Major* was grounds for its excision, and *Protagoras* was one of his most important pieces of external evidence because he's not so stupid there. My claim is that the exaggerated stupidity of Alcibiades, coupled with an unusually didactic Socrates, makes good sense if *Alcibiades Major* was written for the beginner.⁵ And it is precisely because Plato has exaggerated Alcibiades' ignorance—Socrates uses a game of “name the τέχνη” (*Alc. I* 108a12–e4) in the course of which he must teach him the word “music [μουσική]” (*Alc. I* 108d3–4)⁶—that his parroting of Protagoras stands out: it cannot be his own thought, and *Protagoras* proves that Plato expects you to recognize that it isn't. Although I have endorsed the conclusion that Olympiodorus and other ancient commentators reached about *Alcibiades Major*, it is important to note that none of them justified placing it first on the basis of its pedagogical simplicity but rather of its philosophical content: for them, it was primarily “about man,” and only indirectly “for the beginner.”⁷ By placing the first conversation between Socrates and Alcibiades after *Protagoras*, Plato shows that the young man's education has already begun with the lessons of a famous sophist, necessarily assimilated on the spot, as Socrates had warned Hippocrates that they must be (314a1–b4). This explains why Socrates does not challenge the “learning Greek” argument in *Protagoras*; by the time he refutes it in *Alcibiades* (*Alc. I* 111a5–e3), it will be the youngster's *Socratic* education that has begun.⁸

4. Cf. Zuckert, *Plato's Philosophers*, 231n28: “Alcibiades' use here ([*Alc. I*] 111a) of an argument Protagoras employed in the earlier conversation (at [*Prt.*] 327e) suggests that the young man may be repeating what he heard and that the conversation related in the *Protagoras* thus precedes that to be found in *Alcibiades I*.”

5. It will also help to explain why *Lovers*—on *Am.* 139a6–7, see §8 below—is authentic because it mediates between the *Alcibiades* and *Hippias* dyads in the Reading Order.

6. But note that Plato, as always, is principally *teaching us*; by deriving the meaning of μουσική from the Muses (*Alc. I* 108c11–12), he is not only preparing us for *Ion* and “the musical dialogues” (see chapter 4, especially §12) but introducing us to the Academy; see Olympiodorus, *Alcibiades I–9*, 76 (Griffin): “When he [sc. Plato after his travels] reached Athens he established a school in the Garden of Academus, marking off a certain portion of this gymnasium as a sanctuary for the Muses [see also 170n61].” So too Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 4.1. See also Riginos, *Platonica*, 119–21; even her typically deflationary account acknowledges “the connection Plato saw between philosophy and music” leaving it to Plato himself in *Alc. I* to establish the connection between music and the Muses.

7. See, e.g., Olympiodorus, *Alcibiades I–9*, 82: “And again, what the first treatise (*kephalaion*) in the *Enneads* is for Plotinus—[the one called] *What is the Living Being and What is the Human Being* [*Enn.* 1.1 (53)], in which [Plotinus] demonstrates that the combination [of body and soul] is a living being (*zōion*) and the soul a human being (*anthrōpos*)—that is what the *Alcibiades* is for Plato, and it has the same kind of target.”

8. To put it another way, if his friend is right that Socrates has been hunting Alcibiades in *Protagoras* (309a1–2), what happens after the youth is caught begins in *Alcibiades*.

Schleiermacher thinks it must have begun earlier, and he uses both *Protagoras* and *Symposium* to show why Plato could not have intended *Alcibiades Major* to represent the first conversation between the two:

In the *Protagoras* Pericles is still alive, and yet Socrates and Alcibiades appear as old acquaintances, who must already have conversed much with one another; and what Alcibiades tells us in the *Symposium*, must also be taken from the time of his bloom; for he can hardly intend to say that he wished to force himself as a minion upon Socrates when his bloom was passed.⁹

It is only while speaking to Alcibiades that Socrates makes the claim that his bloom is past (*Alc. I* 131e11), but the basis for that claim has already been revealed in *Protagoras*: despite the fact that Alcibiades is no longer a boy but already a man (309a3), he remains a properly beautiful object of pederastic love, and Socrates is still pursuing him (309a6–b2). Naturally Pericles must be alive in both dialogues if the one directly follows the other, so the serious point Schleiermacher makes here is that the two (already) “appear as old acquaintances” in *Protagoras*, and true it certainly is that both know things about the other that suggest prior familiarity. But *Protagoras* (319e3–320b1), *Symposium*,¹⁰ and most of all *Alcibiades Major* itself (*Alc. I* 104d2–5; cf. 106e4–9 and 110b1–5) explain how this could be the case even if they have never actually spoken to each other before: Socrates has been following Alcibiades around—hunting his bloom, as Socrates’ friend puts it (309a2), a beauty in which Alcibiades himself (foolishly) continued to place great value (cf. *Smp.* 217a2–6)—for years.

If Plato’s “learning Greek” clue is obvious, the second indication that *Alcibiades Major* follows *Protagoras* is that Alcibiades and Socrates never speak to each other in *Protagoras*.¹¹ Socrates tells his friend at the outset that Alcibiades “spoke many things on my behalf [ὕπερ ἐμοῦ], coming to my aid [βοηθῶν ἐμοί]” (309b6–7). What only becomes evident on examination is that Socrates’ ὕπερ ἐμοῦ is appropriate in a way that neither σὺν ἐμοί nor

9. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 324 (Dobson, 334). Note that at the time of their first conversation as described in *Smp.* 217a2–3, Alcibiades describes himself in the aftermath of *Alc. I* as believing (ἠγοῦμενος)—i.e., continuing to believe—that Socrates had been serious (ἔσπουδακέναι) “about his bloom.”

10. On *Smp.* 216e5–217b7, see §14.

11. See Lampert, *How Philosophy Became Socratic*, 143–44: “It has often been argued that *Alcibiades I* must have occurred before *Protagoras* because *Alcibiades I* opens with Socrates saying that I ‘have not so much as spoken to you during the many years the others came clamoring to converse with you’ (103a[4]). But Socrates does not speak to Alcibiades in *Protagoras*, he merely speaks in his presence. That *Protagoras* precedes *Alcibiades I* is indicated by the end of *Alcibiades I*, when Alcibiades says, ‘we will probably be changing roles, Socrates, I taking yours and you mine, for from this day nothing can keep me from attending on you and you from being attended on by me’ (135d[8–9]). That reversal of roles seems not to have occurred before *Protagoras*, a dialogue that shows Socrates attempting to win Alcibiades rather than already having won him.”

μὲτ' ἐμοῦ would have been, two easy ways of combining a preposition with a personal pronoun that would mean “[spoke] with me.” Such a clue is only accessible to those who search for it, and the text that offers the best evidence that they *do* speak to each other is written in a way that in fact proves no such thing, and yet explains why it might attract—and indeed has attracted¹²—the attention of those inclined, for whatever reason, to deny what I will call “the Priority of *Protagoras*.”

And we [ἡμεῖς, sc. Socrates and Hippocrates] had only just come in [first person plural of εἰσέρχασθαι], when just after us [ἡμεῖς] entered [third person plural of ἐπ-εἰσέρχασθαι] Alcibiades the beautiful [ὁ καλός], as you call him [cf. 309c2–3] and I agree that he is, and Critias, son of Callaeschrus. So, when we [ἡμεῖς] had entered [first person plural of εἰσέρχασθαι]—having discussed a few more minor details [ἔτι σμίκρ' ἄττα διατρίψαντες] and having taken in the whole scene [καὶ ταῦτα διαθεασάμενοι]—we went up [first person plural of προσιέναι] to Protagoras, and I said: Protagoras, you see we've come [ἦλθομεν, first person plural of ἔρχασθαι] to you, Hippocrates here and I [ἐγώ τε καὶ Ἴπποκράτης οὗτος].¹²

In order to show that Socrates and Alcibiades *do* converse in *Protagoras*, Robert Bartlett wants that second “we [ἡμεῖς]” to be a foursome, i.e., to include Alcibiades and Critias.¹³ The problems with taking it this way are as follows: (1) the previous pronouns ἡμεῖς and ἡμῶν can only be Socrates and Hippocrates, (2) the second εἰσέρχασθαι (and the participle διατρίψαντες) would now need to have a *different subject* from the first εἰσέρχασθαι, (3) προσιέναι would then likewise need to apply to all four, but since (4) ἦλθομεν (itself a form of ἔρχασθαι) can *only* apply to “both I and Hippocrates here,” (5) all three uses of ἔρχασθαι, like all three first-person pronouns, should be understood as applying *only to Socrates and Hippocrates*, and therefore that it is also only these two who “discussed a few more minor details.”¹⁴

12. 316a3–b2.

13. Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political Philosophy*, 226n4. Although rejecting Lampert's conclusion, Bartlett builds on *How Philosophy Became Socratic*, 36: “Socrates' report on the entry of Alcibiades and Critias contains a small ambiguity: he has just used *we* (*hēmeis*) to designate himself and Hippocrates, and he uses *we* again after stating that Alcibiades and Critias had just come in: ‘We had entered then, and having paused over some small matters and examined them, then went up to Protagoras.’ Is this *we* still just Socrates and Hippocrates, or does it include the two whose arrival he has just inserted?”

14. Since Socrates has already told us that Hippocrates and he have concluded an earlier discussion he does not allow us to hear (314c4–7)—and to which ἔτι (316a6) refers, for they *still* have something left to discuss—I am open to the possibility that Alcibiades is present in this second, equally unheard conversation to the extent that his arrival with Critias may well be its cause and *subject*, more on this below.

The relationship between *Alcibiades Major* and *Protagoras* has split the Straussian reception of Plato in an interesting way.¹⁵ Despite the better arguments of the two authorities that support the Priority of *Protagoras*, they are—as is often the case for reasons already explained in the Introduction—less illuminating than those who get things wrong. Ariel Helfer, for example, wants *Alcibiades Major* to be prior so that he can show how Socrates is corrupting the youngster in their first conversation.¹⁶ In fact, not only does Socrates claim in *Protagoras* that Alcibiades is *already* a corrupting influence (320a5–6), but he does so in a passage that Helfer takes to disprove the Priority of *Protagoras*,¹⁷ and which Schleiermacher took to prove the inauthenticity of *Alcibiades Major*.¹⁸ But as already mentioned in the Introduction, Pericles' inability to teach young Pericles, Cleinias, and Alcibiades, deployed by Socrates in *Protagoras* to demonstrate that virtue cannot be taught, is spun by Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Major* to show that Pericles, who himself *had* been taught it, could have passed it on to his son, Alcibiades' brother, and Alcibiades himself *were it not the case* that the first been an imbecile (which could hardly have been said in *Protagoras*), the second a madman, and the third because he failed to pay attention. In the context of Schleiermacher's claim about the lack of connection between the dialogue's opening arguments, Helfer helps us to find it: Alcibiades is already corrupt, and therefore seeks for dodges to excuse his ignorance in his first conversation with Socrates.

There are many other connections between the two dialogues;¹⁹ what makes the “learning Greek” connection decisive is that *it can go only one way*. But the etymology of “Protagoras”—something like “first in speaking” (cf. δῆμιγορεῖν at 329a1 and 336b3)—would make it a good place to begin even if the story Socrates tells didn't begin before dawn (310a8). And since only the bulk of the dialogue is that story, there is the brute fact of what I will call “the [*Protagoras*] Frame” to be considered: by focusing the student's

15. See also Christopher Bruell, *On the Socratic Education: An Introduction to the Shorter Platonic Dialogues* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 48. The condition for the possibility of this split is that Strauss, as Strauss and his followers like to say, “is silent” on the matter, an insinuating euphemism for “does not mention it.”

16. See Helfer, *Socrates and Alcibiades*. Aside from a glimmer at 63 (“we can say that Alcibiades has already been corrupted”), see 16–19, 90–91, 150–5, 165 (“We are yet left wondering as to the content of Alcibiades' Socratic education, or corruption, or both”), and 189–94 (“The Meaning of Socratic Corruption”). For further discussion of this book, and in particular for a response to the challenge Helfer poses at 201n38, see my “An Open Letter to Ariel Helfer” (February 28, 2018), available at https://www.academia.edu/37168659/An_Open_Letter_to_Ariel_Helfer (accessed April 5, 2019).

17. Helfer, *Socrates and Alcibiades*, 201n38 (see previous note).

18. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322.

19. Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political Philosophy*, 226–27n4: “To adduce as evidence of the priority of the Protagoras ‘the fact that many points large and small in *Alcibiades I* repeat and enlarge what Alcibiades heard in the conversation between Socrates and Protagoras’ [quoting Lampert] amounts to begging the question: one could just as easily say that the points indicated are repeated and (hence) summarized in the *Protagoras*.”

attention on Alcibiades from the start of *Protagoras*, it sets up what is to follow not only in *Protagoras* itself but even more so in the *Alcibiades* Dyad and *Symposium*.²⁰ When Socrates tells his friend that he frequently (θαμά at 309b9) forgot all about Alcibiades (309b7–9), we are, to be sure, being introduced to the dialogue’s most striking Performative Self-Contradiction, for despite Socrates’ repeated claim to being forgetful (334c8–d1; cf. 309a8–9), Alcibiades knows him well enough to know he isn’t (336d2–4), and thus we have already been warned, even before Socrates repeats the words Protagoras had used in the first half of the dialogue in the second (cf. 359b3–6 and 349d6–8), that Socrates’ memory is excellent. But the word θαμά has already begun to reveal the truth: the more “frequently” Socrates *forgot* Alcibiades, the more times he needed to have *remembered* him in order to do so.²¹ It is Socrates’ ongoing concern with the effect he is having on Alcibiades in *Protagoras* that makes it the prelude to *Alcibiades Major*.

Indeed the most important lesson to be learned from the Priority of *Protagoras* is that the dialogue’s first words are true: Socrates *has* just come “from a hunt (κυνηγέσιον), the one involving the bloom of Alcibiades” (309a1–2).²² This point is easy to miss because Socrates will also be hunting Protagoras in *Protagoras* (see §2), and could not have caught him up in the toils of argument without both Hippocrates’ cooperation (from προσ-ἤμεν πρὸς τὸν Πρωταγόραν at 316a7 to ἀπ-ἤμεν, the dialogue’s last word at 362a4) and Alcibiades’ support (317d10–e2, 336c2–d2, 347b3, and 348b2–c4). It is that support which brings about the young man’s capture as well, for by mopping the floor with the wisest man in Greece (309c11–d2), Socrates captures the young man’s attention, thereby explaining why Socrates says at the beginning of *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 106a1; cf. 104e3): “for now you will listen.” And if we were inclined to rationalize Socrates’ Divine Sign—which he explains

20. Cf. A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and his Work*, third edition (London: Methuen, 1929), on 238: “the little exchange of pleasantries . . . merely serves the purpose of dating the interview of Socrates and Protagoras.”

21. Cf. Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political Philosophy*, 227n4: “it is quite wrong to say that Socrates is there ‘attempting to win Alcibiades’ (Lampert 2010, 144) or is the ‘hunter’ (126n146) after him: this is exactly the incorrect assumption of the ‘comrade,’ which the *Protagoras* as a whole refutes—in fact, Socrates’ presence in the home of Callias has nothing to do with Alcibiades—and which Socrates himself throws cold water on when he tells the comrade that he *even* forgot about Alcibiades’ presence (309b7–9).”

22. Lampert, *How Philosophy Became Socratic*, 126n146: “*Alcibiades I* must be later than *Protagoras* because at its end Alcibiades announces that “we will probably be changing roles, Socrates, I taking yours and you mine, for from this day nothing can keep me from attending on {*paidagōgêsō*} you, and you from being attended upon {*paidagōgêsēi*} by me” (135d[9–10]): the hunter of *Protagoras* becomes the hunted because of the private conversation of *Alcibiades I*.” But by capturing Alcibiades’ attention qua hunter in *Prt.*, Socrates has already caused him to become the hunter before *Alc. I*; Alcibiades tells us so in *Smp.* 217a4–7. Cf. Zuckert, *Plato’s Philosophers*, 229: “Socrates’ demonstration of his ability to best Protagoras in speech seems to have impressed [cf. caught the attention of] two of the ambitious young Athenians present—Alcibiades and Critias.”

had up to the moment before *Alcibiades Major* prevented him from speaking to the young man (*Alc. I* 103a6–b1)—we could find a ready explanation in the fact that the competitive Alcibiades (336e1) will have been deeply impressed with the victory of the equally competitive Socrates (360e3).²³ But such is not Plato's inclination: the Sign is a particularly obvious example of what makes Socrates the object of wonder that he knows himself to be (*Alc. I* 104c4–6; cf. 103a1), actually is (*Alc. I* 104d3–5), and indeed needs to be if he is to capture the attention of a youngster as selfish, conceited, arrogant, and ignorant as Alcibiades, for if he can capture his, he can capture anybody's.

There remains, however, the brute fact of the pedagogical impropriety of placing a difficult dialogue like *Protagoras*, filled as it is with puzzles and problems,²⁴ before *Alcibiades Major*, an ostentatiously elementary dialogue whose simplicity and pedagogical priority constitutes its last best hope for a triumphant return to the canon. The $\pi\rho\omega\tau$ - in “Protagoras,” the dawn opening, and the Frame's hints notwithstanding, how could Plato possibly intend *Protagoras* to be read first? Why not let Bruell, Bartlett, and Helfer have their way? The answer must be because Plato has told us so without, however, telling us *why*. Before we return to *Protagoras* and find that the two never actually speak to each other, students of *Alcibiades* must make a choice the moment they encounter the youngster's use of τὸ ἐλληνίζειν (*Alc. I* 111a1) to dodge a Socratic javelin. For post-Schleiermacher students, the choice is easy: the author of *Alcibiades*—someone other than Plato—has borrowed the argument from *Protagoras*, just as that author has borrowed from other Platonic dialogues all of the passages in *Alcibiades* that resemble them. But for the pre-Schleiermacher reader—or rather for the *post*-post-Schleiermacher reader to whom my work is addressed—the choice is equally obvious: an authentic *Alcibiades Major* is pointing back to *Protagoras*, and doing so unmistakably. The question is not “that” but rather “how?” and “why?”

And here the brilliance of *Protagoras* comes to our aid: unlike *Alcibiades Major*, nobody could pronounce this great dialogue *geringfügig und schlecht*.²⁵ Schleiermacher too recognizes “the extreme delight which most readers take in this perfect work,”²⁶ and W. R. M. Lamb has described it well:

The masterly powers of description, characterization, rhetoric, and reasoning, which conspire in the *Protagoras* to produce, with such apparent ease, one rapid

23. The dilemma introduced here—human agency or divine—joins *Alc. I* to *Alc. 2* (see §7).

24. Cf. Charles H. Kahn, “Plato and Socrates in the *Protagoras*,” *Méthexis; Revista argentina de filosofía antigua* 1 (1988), 33–52, on 36: “In the *Protagoras*, on the other hand, nothing is straight-forward, everything is problematic: the hedonism, the final judgment on teachability, the nature of virtue itself and the relation between its parts, not to mention the discussion of Simonides' poem.”

25. Cf. Taylor, *Plato*, 235: “If there is any Platonic dialogue which can challenge the claim of the *Symposium* to be its author's dramatic *chef d'œuvre* it is the *Protagoras*.”

26. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 110 (Dobson, 93).

and luminous effect, have earned it a very high—with some judges the highest—place among Plato’s achievements in philosophic drama.²⁷

So let’s consider how much latitude Schleiermacher’s “most readers” will give us: can it be extended even to *der am wenigsten vorbereitete Neuling*? What if it is not a question of whether beginners could understand *Protagoras*—I’m willing to stipulate not only that they couldn’t but that Plato didn’t expect them to do so—but of whether they were sufficiently prepared to be delighted by it. To put that another way: is it or is it not the case that Plato’s *Protagoras* would, when considered as what Lamb aptly calls “philosophic drama,” capture *any given student’s attention* as effectively as Socrates manages to capture the attention of Alcibiades?

In fact it is not only the dialogue’s artistic perfections that are primarily responsible for its appeal. Quite apart from its complex narrative structure, its vividly described changes of scene, its unusually large cast of characters, and the profundity of the philosophical problems it raises without resolving, it is the contest or ἀγών (335a4) at its highly dramatic center that makes its charms irresistible. Naturally Schleiermacher recognized this as well: after having identified it as “a prize fight [*Wettstreit*] with the sophists” and “a regular philosophical prizefight [*Wettstreit*],” he writes:

Plato here allows this his peculiar talent to play in a vast range, and with great self-conscious skill, whence they who put a high value upon his study of the Mimes, and his approximation to the comic, might easily take up the notion that this ironical treatment, or annihilation as it might be called of the sophists, is to be understood as the chief object of the *Protagoras*.²⁸

Equally familiar to lovers of comedy and tragedy, and with its origins in the opening argument between Achilles and Agamemnon in Homer’s *Iliad*, the ἀγών at the center of *Protagoras* is intended to delight, and indeed neophytes—including Schleiermacher’s *am wenigsten vorbereitete Neuling*—might be even more inclined to take delight in it than those with more educated sensibilities.

But if the appeal of a prizefight, *Wettstreit*, or ἀγών begins to explain the “why,” we must return to the “how”: how could the serious study of the Platonic dialogues begin with *Protagoras*? To this question, W. K. C. Guthrie has offered the most compelling explanation:

27. W. R. M. Lamb, “Introduction to the *Protagoras*,” in *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, volume 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 86 (opening sentence).

28. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 106 (Dobson, 89). The two phrases before the blocked quotation are respectively 102/84 and 104/87.

If we look to the *Protagoras* for philosophical lessons, it may seem an irritating patchwork of niggling argument, irrelevant digressions, false starts and downright fallacy. Read as a play in which the most outstanding minds of a brilliant period meet and engage in a battle of wits, it will give a different impression. That is how it should be read.²⁹

Guthrie hits all the right notes here: it *does* take place in “a brilliant period”—for Pericles is still alive (319e3–320a1)—it *is* “a battle of wits,” and although Guthrie’s use of “downright” to modify “fallacy” could be replaced, as I have already begun to suggest in the Introduction, with “deliberate” (see further §4). But the decisive word—relegating any such differences to the shade, and seconding Lamb’s use of “drama” in the passage quoted above—is “play.”³⁰

Guthrie is dead right: *Protagoras*, unlike *Alcibiades Major*, should be read as a play,³¹ and at the play’s center is a well-staged and exciting *ἀγών*.³² What I take this to mean is that Plato designed his *Protagoras* to be seen, as a play must be, and I therefore propose that we should try to read it, at least the first time, as if it were being seen, not read.³³ It is on the basis of this distinction that I intend to reconcile the dramatic priority of *Protagoras* with the pedagogical priority of *Alcibiades Major*. While Plato intends the latter to be read, studied, and discussed line by line, he intends his *Protagoras*—at least initially—to be seen, admired, and wondered at *by beginners*. More specifically, it delights, confuses, and *captures the attention* of an audience that cannot be expected to decide whether or not virtue is one or many (329c6–d1), whether virtue as a whole is knowledge (361b1–2), whether it can be taught (319a10–b1), whether one thing has one opposite (332c8–9), whether pleasure is *ipso facto* good (351c2–6), or whether all of the wise really believe that nobody errs willingly (345d9–e2). It is therefore in the distinction between a text to

29. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy*, 4.235.

30. Cf. Riginos, *Platonica*, anecdote §14 (43–51), especially 44: “The sources are unanimous in mentioning that Plato wrote tragedy.”

31. Cf. Michael J. O’Brien, “The ‘Fallacy’ in *Protagoras* 349d–350c.” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 92 (1961), 408–417, on 417: “The *Protagoras* has always been regarded as one of Plato’s best pieces of drama and characterization. The playwright’s hand is evident everywhere.”

32. For a brilliant analysis of *Prt.*, see Andrea Capra, *Ἀγὼν λόγων: Il «Protagora» di Platone tra eristica e commedia* (Milan: LED, 2001); I am indebted to his insights throughout, but see in particular 102–103, from “l’approccio analitico” to “la possibilità che il personaggio Socrate possa mentire consapevolmente.” It is a tribute to the fair-mindedness of Christopher Rowe that Capra now teaches at Durham; see his review in *American Journal of Philology* 123, no. 3 (Autumn 2002), 521–524, climaxing with: “But if Capra’s argument as a whole does fail, then (as the book itself suggests) so has every other attempt to provide a coherent explanation of the *Protagoras* as a whole.”

33. For pioneering work on the performance of Plato’s dialogues as plays, see Nikos G. Charalabopoulos, “Plato’s Use of Theatrical Terminology,” in *Theatre: Ancient and Modern* (Open University: 2000), 198–214, and “Three Hypotheses on the Performance of Plato’s Dialogues.” *Philosophy Study* 3, no. 9 (September 2013), 888–894.

be seen and heard—as opposed to one that must be read and studied from the start—that I explain and will defend the Priority of *Protagoras*.

To begin with, an initial *Protagoras* is the paradigmatic example of Plato's use of prolepsis, or proleptic pedagogy (see Preface, principle §4). By this I mean that it effectively confuses the student on matters of critical importance, whetting their interest without satisfying it, and creating the kind of wonder that all the great Socratics used to educate their audience, whether they were auditors, readers, or spectators.³⁴ If Presocratic philosophy was born from wonder, Socratic philosophy is born from wondering about Socrates,³⁵ and no Platonic dialogue is more effective in kindling that kind of wonder than *Protagoras*. Consider the foregoing list of questions with the wonder-provoking Socrates now added: does *Socrates* think that virtue is knowledge, does he *really* think that virtue can't be taught or that one thing *actually* has but one opposite, can we really be sure that *Socrates* identifies the pleasant with the good, or that *he* really believes that nobody errs willingly? I want to suggest that the closer we are to experiencing *Protagoras* as a play being seen for the first time, the more certain will we be that the answers to all four of those questions must certainly be “yes”; our doubts will grow only with further acquaintance and careful study. Even as a play, of course, *Protagoras* could be seen again, and could be both read and reread as well.

Of the foregoing questions, the most delicious is whether virtue can be taught, for Plato is a teacher, and the Academy was his school. What brought his first students to him? What did they expect to learn? I want to suggest that the promises of Protagoras (318d7–319a2)—“the announcement I am announcing,” as he puts it (319a6–7)—point to the most probable answers: like the eager young Hippocrates, they hoped to learn how to speak well (312d7) and to be prepared to practice what Socrates calls “the political art [ἡ πολιτικὴ τέχνη]” (319a4) in order to become “most capable both to do and say [καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν] the things of the city [τὰ τῆς πόλεως]” (319a1–2).³⁶ To what extent they will be disabused of such childish notions “these pages must show,” but it is Socrates, not Protagoras, who makes the ἀγών revolve around the question of virtue (329b5–d2; especially ἀρετὴ at 329b7, 329c6, and 329c7). By introducing his students to the Academy with a dia-

34. Cf. Richard Rutherford, “Unifying the *Protagoras*,” *Apeiron* 25, no. 4 (1992), 135–156, on 155: “The consequences of all this is that the dialogue cannot be an ideal model of dialectical argument on ἀρετή; it is contaminated by other motives and methods, affected by the agonistic tendencies of the sophists [emphasis mine; naturally this serves to conceal Socrates' φιλονικία], soured by φιλονικία (‘desire to win’) on at least one side [emphasis mine; note the partial palinode with respect to Socrates' motives], and set against a background of spectators who want a show [emphasis mine; among these I am including Plato's neophytes, whose desire to find ‘a philosophically correct solution’ it is Plato's intention to whet and frustrate] rather than a philosophically correct solution.”

35. Cf. θαυμάζειν in Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.3.

36. Cf. the three uses of πράττειν τε καὶ λέγειν at Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.1–6.

logue that would give most anyone the first impression that Socrates thinks that virtue can't be taught,³⁷ Plato has made Performative Self-Contradiction his school's pedagogical foundation: he will teach his students ἀπετή by using his Socrates to deny—clearly and unmistakably from the start—that it is teachable.

But only from the start: as Schleiermacher pointed out, “Alcibiades might have extricated himself out of a very inconvenient dilemma by the slightest mention of the doctrine of recollection.”³⁸ The question of whether virtue is “teachable [διδάκτον]” (cf. 329b7 and 319a10) joins *Protagoras* to *Meno* as unmistakably as Alcibiades' first attempt to extricate himself from the trap in which Socrates has caught him joins *Protagoras* to *Alcibiades Major*—when he speaks about learning Greek from the Many—nor are those particular ligatures in any way unique or uncharacteristic. In searching for an explanation as to why Plato began the Reading Order of his dialogues with *Protagoras*, an amazing answer gradually emerges. Like a well-constructed overture, Plato's proleptic *Protagoras* prepares the audience for what is yet to come, and does so in a remarkably thorough way, seldom matched in its musical counterpart: it anticipates or alludes to *every one of Plato's dialogues* in some way or another. In order, then, to justify this chapter's title, I will show why *Protagoras* should be recognized as a gateway to the dialogues as a whole by briefly drawing attention to its most salient connections to each one of them.

Since both Hippias and Alcibiades appear and speak in *Protagoras*, there is really no need to do this in the case of either the *Alcibiades* or the *Hippias* dyads. But a promise is a promise: with *Alcibiades Major* connected to *Protagoras* by the Frame, *Alcibiades Minor* continues Socrates' praise of Sparta (cf. 342c3–d6 and *Alc.2* 148b9–149b4) while beginning to cast doubt on the principle that one thing has only one opposite (cf. 332a4–333b4 and *Alc.2* 139a13–d7). Of the dialogues considered in this book, Socrates narrates only *Lovers*; despite the Frame, *Protagoras* shares this feature with it, and in both dialogues, this allows Socrates to make his motives transparent in situations where they would otherwise not be (cf. 311a8–b2 and 333e2–5 with *Am.* 132d2–7 and *Am.* 134a3–5). *Hippias Major* begins to weaken our certainty that Socrates identifies the Beautiful with the Pleasant (cf. 360a4–8 and *Hp. Ma.* 298e7–299e2), an identification that follows explicitly from combining the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant, and likewise of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (cf. 358b3–6, 359e5–6, and 360b3 with *Hp. Ma.* 297b2–d2), also a crucial step in *Protagoras*. Next, *Hippias Minor* weakens our certainty about the claim that nobody errs willingly, and this will

37. *Plato the Teacher* argues that the Allegory of the Cave illuminates Justice, and that the friction between the Shorter and Longer Ways causes it to flash forth (*R.* 435a1–3).

38. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322 (Dobson, 332).

prove to be a particularly important connection (see §4 and §11). Thereafter, Socrates will return to his μακρολογία in *Ion* (see §12),³⁹ where Homer—the first author mentioned in *Protagoras* (309a6)—takes center stage if he hasn't already done so in *Alcibiades Minor* (*Alc.2* 147c6–d3) and *Hippias Minor* (*Hp. Mi.* 363a6–b5). Socrates' claim in *Menexenus* that it is easy to praise Athens before an Athenian audience makes his long-winded praise of Spartan βραχυλογία in *Protagoras* (342a7–343b7) all the more remarkable, and the links between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*—beginning with Alcibiades, Phaedrus, Eryximachus, Pausanias, and Agathon⁴⁰—are too many to be counted,⁴¹ but will of course be considered in due course.

Socratic narration returns in *Lysis*, *Euthydemus*, and *Charmides*. *Lysis* echoes the rejection of the one thing/one opposite principle in *Symposium* (cf. 332c8–9 with *Smp.* 201e8–202a4 and *Ly.* 220c1–7) and, thanks to Socrates' argument to the effect that good men will have no need of friends (*Ly.* 215a6–c2), it supports his claim while explicating Simonides that there is no such thing as a good man (344d8). Thanks to the claim that the brothers can teach ἀρετή, *Euthydemus* mimics the narrative structure of *Protagoras* (cf. 328b1–c4 and *Euthd.* 273d8–9), and the most discussed speech in *Euthydemus* begins with a claim about εὖ πράττειν,⁴² a phrase introduced in *Protagoras* and subjected to further study in *Alcibiades Major* (see §5). The obvious link between *Protagoras* and *Laches* is their shared emphasis on courage, including the specific examples related to the claim that courage is knowledge (cf. 349e8–350a5 and *La.* 193b5–c6).⁴³ The presence of both Charmides (315a1–2) and Critias (316a5) in what I will call “the Garden of Callias” is sufficient to link *Charmides* to *Protagoras* although the chronological proximity of the two dialogues might also be considered.⁴⁴ In the case of *Gorgias*, it suffices to mention the fact that Socrates formally withdraws the Equation

39. Naturally this does not exhaust the connections between *Ion* and *Prt.*; note that the latter's passage on melic poetry (325e4–326b4)—where the effects produced by good melic poets are confined to the auditors—matches the passage in *Ion* (533e7–8, 534a3, and 534a6) where it is the poets themselves who experience these effects. In addition, θεία μοῖρα makes an early appearance at 322a3.

40. See Dorothea Frede, “The Impossibility of Perfection: Socrates' Criticism of Simonides' Poem in the *Protagoras*,” *Review of Metaphysics* 39, no. 4 (June 1986), 729–753, on 747–48.

41. For a preliminary count, see Claus-Artur Scheier, “The Unity of the *Protagoras*: On the Structure and Position of a Platonic Dialogue.” Translated by Marcus Brainerd. *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 17, nos. 1–2 (1994), 59–81, on 79n64; including (no. 2) “the identical name of Hippocrates' father (310a9, 316b8, 328d8) with that of the narrator of *Symposium*.” Debra Nails judges this to be impossible in *The People of Plato: A Prosopography of Plato and Other Socratics* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002), 170, but fails to consider the possibility that Apollodorus' relation to Socrates has changed since the time of *Prt.*; with her citation of *Smp.* 172c5–6, cf. 173a1–3.

42. See *Ascent to the Good*, §3.

43. This connection is explored in *Ascent to the Good*, 144–48, in the context of Gregory Vlastos, “The *Protagoras* and the *Laches*,” in Gregory Vlastos, *Socratic Studies*, edited by Myles Burnyeat, 108–126 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

44. As in Lampert, *How Philosophy Became Socratic*.

of the Good and the Pleasant (cf. 351b4–e6 and 354b5–c3 with *Grg.* 495a2–497a5 and 506c6),⁴⁵ but a well-staged version of another ἀγών with a famous sophist is an even more obvious connection, especially given the ironic contrast that follows between *Protagoras* and *Theages*, where Socrates ostentatiously denies being able to promise the youth what is so readily promised by Protagoras to Hippocrates (cf. 318a9 and *Thg.* 130e5–7). As for *Meno*, there are many good reasons why it is so often paired with *Protagoras*,⁴⁶ but the emergence of recollection in the context of whether ἀρετή is teachable is the crucial one,⁴⁷ and sufficiently explains why it is in this dialogue that Plato tells us that Protagoras is dead (*Men.* 91e6).

And this brings us to *Republic*, where it is the *negation* of Socrates' initial suggestion that all five virtues—wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, and piety—are *one* that becomes the logical basis for the Shorter Way; there Socrates gives distinct definitions for four of them while ignoring piety (cf. 330b4 and 359a5–b1 with *R.* 427d8–428a11). Moreover, Thrasymachus will have no qualms about defending the position that Protagoras would be ashamed to endorse as his own (cf. 333b8–c1 and 333d4 with *R.* 348d3–6). But *Cleitophon* should not be forgotten amidst such riches: in it, the phrase “to be overcome by the pleasures [ἡττασθαι, ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν],” so crucial for Protagoras' overthrow (see §2), reappears (cf. 352e5–353a6 and *Clit.* 407d2–7). Although “man is the measure of all things” is remarkably never mentioned in *Protagoras*, it begins to become visible in *Republic* 6, and does so in contrast with what Socrates will soon reveal as the only true measure (cf. *R.* 504c1–d3). Most importantly, Socrates describes his entry into the Garden of Callias with phrases borrowed from Odysseus' descent into the underworld (cf. 315b9 and 315c8 with *R.* 327a1),⁴⁸ looking back on *Protagoras* from *Republic*, we discover that he was returning to the Cave from the start. And the hypothesis scouted earlier that the promises of Protagoras may indicate what Plato's students have come to the Academy to learn ἀρετή is confirmed by a reading of his *Republic* that puts the philosopher's obligation to return to the Cave, and there to πράττειν τὰ πολιτικά (cf. 319a1–2), at the center of things Platonic.⁴⁹

45. See *Ascent to the Good*, §11.

46. See Robert C. Bartlett (ed.), *Plato, “Protagoras” and “Meno.” Translated, with Notes, and Interpretive Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004) and Plato, *Protagoras and Meno*, translated by Adam Beresford with Introduction by Lesley Brown (London: Penguin, 2006), especially xv–xvii.

47. W. R. M. Lamb, “Introduction to the *Meno*,” in *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, volume 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 260: “The *Meno* takes up the question which the *Protagoras* left waiting for an answer—Can virtue be taught?”

48. See Heda Segvic, “Homer in Plato's *Protagoras*,” *Classical Philology* 101, no. 3 (July 2006), 247–262.

49. Broadly speaking, this is the thesis of *Plato the Teacher*.

Although Timaeus repeatedly uses the terms “story [μῦθος]” (*Ti.* 29d2, 59c6, and 68d2) and “account [λόγος]” (*Ti.* 30b7, 48d2, 53d5–6, 55d5, 56a1, 56b4, 57d6, 68b7, and 90e8) indistinguishably in *Timaeus*, Protagoras has long since taught us how they differ, first while introducing his so-called Great Speech (320c2–4), then while explaining a transition in the midst of it (324d6–7), and finally while summarizing the whole (328c3–4). Lest this be considered accidental, both Protagoras and Timaeus make earth and fire their primordial elements (cf. 320d2 and *Ti.* 31b6–8). As for *Critias*, we have both the return of Critias himself and another deployment of an ostentatiously political myth. The critique of writing in *Phaedrus* is anticipated twice in *Protagoras* (cf. 329a2–b1 and 347e3–4 with *Phdr.* 275d5–9), and the question of whether the virtues are many or one introduces the Problem of the One and the Many (329c5–e4), anticipated in *Meno* (*Men.* 77a5–9), first applied (*R.* 443e1–2 and 462b1) and then resolved in *Republic* (*R.* 525d8–e3), made problematic in *Timaeus* (*Ti.* 68d2–7), explored with precision in *Parmenides* (*Prm.* 137c4–166b3), and then further clarified and named in *Philebus* (*Phlb.* 13a3–4, 14c8–10, and 14d4–e4). Even if the presence of a young Socrates in *Philebus* is denied—his presence in *Parmenides* cannot be—that dialogue’s concern with discriminating among pleasures makes the problem of Socratic hedonism the salient connection between the two (cf. 351c2–3 and *Phlb.* 12c4–13c5), with Prodicus’ discussion of the verb ἤδεσθαι making the connection both specific and unmistakable (cf. 337c1–4 and *Phlb.* 12c8–d4). As for *Cratylus*, the fact that Callias, who has also been mentioned in *Philebus* (*Phlb.* 19b5), is Hermogenes’ brother (cf. 314e5–315a1 and *Cra.* 391b11–c5) must be considered less important than the emphasis on Protagoras (*Cra.* 385e4–391c9), the first mention of the *homo mensura* doctrine (*Cra.* 385e6–386a1), and the reappearance of Prodicus’ concern with “the correctness of names” in both (cf. 340b4–341c10 and *Cra.* 384b2–c1). And then comes *Theaetetus*, where the dead Protagoras is brought back to life and given the chance to defend the *homo mensura* doctrine he never mentions in *Protagoras* but which we will now be able to find in it if we look again (cf. 334a3–b7 and *Tht.* 161c2–d1).

Piety, the missing fifth virtue, finally reappears in *Euthyphro*, and the suggestion that it is linked to justice is itself a more specific link between the two (cf. 331a7–c3 with *Euthyp.* 11e4–12e9). The presence of Protagoras in Athens, and the sales pitch he promptly offers Hippocrates, illustrates why the Eleatic Stranger will compare the sophist to a hunter in *Sophist* (cf. 318a6–319a7 and *Sph.* 222a5–223b6) while the discussion of τὸ μέτριον (cf. 338a7–b1 and *Plt.* 283e3–7) and the art of measurement in *Statesman* echoes *Protagoras* even more directly (cf. 356d3–357b5 and *Plt.* 283c11–285c2).⁵⁰

50. Especially striking is the mention of “the power of appearance” (cf. 356c4–e2 and *Sph.* 233a8; see *Guardians on Trial*, 146n266; cf. 138n233).

But there is also a structural connection to the Eleatic dyad: the question Socrates puts to the Stranger about the sophist, statesman, and philosopher is anticipated by the question about the virtues he puts to Protagoras (cf. 329c6–d1 and *Sph.* 217d7–9). And when Socrates describe the audience’s delight at seeing those who claim to know being shown not to do so in *Apology of Socrates*, it is easy to recall what makes *Protagoras* so entertaining. If we are inclined to feel pity for Protagoras, we should recall that he could not have been trapped if he had held his ground on the equation of the good and the pleasant as manfully as the humble comrade in *Hipparchus* refuses to let Socrates persuade him that greed is good.

First *Minos*, then *Laws* and *Epinomis*, will focus on the laws of Sparta and Crete; the Laws of Athens will mention them in *Crito* as well. But the first time Socrates links them is in *Protagoras* (cf. 342a8–9 with *Min.* 318c4–d5, *Cri.* 52e5–53a1, and *Lg.* 624a3–6). As for *Crito*, there could be no starker contrast between what Socrates means by “to live well [εὖ ζῆν]” there and his use of it in *Protagoras* (cf. 351b4 and *Cri.* 48b5), where it constitutes his first attempt to trap the famous sophist. Among the many links between *Protagoras* and *Laws*, the following seem particularly significant: the role of punishment in the Great Speech (cf. 325a5–b1 and *Lg.* 653a5–c4), the usefulness of pain and pleasure more generally (cf. 358b3–d2 and *Lg.* 663a9–b6),⁵¹ and the wise denial of voluntary wrongdoing (cf. 345d9–e2 and *Lg.* 860c7–d5). *Epinomis* completes the restoration of piety begun in *Euthyphro* (cf. 325d4 and 330b6 with *Epin.* 989b1–990a2) and offers another pseudo-historical myth, this time to explain the astronomical origins of calculation (*Epin.* 978b7–379a6), thus implicating two of the τέχναι with which Protagoras promises never to bore his students (cf. 318d2–3 and *Epin.* 990a2–991c1). Along with *Laws*, it also fully demonstrates the Athenian Stranger’s skill when it comes to πράττειν τὰ πολιτικά.⁵² Finally *Phaedo*, like *Gorgias* before it, depicts Socrates formally repudiating the hedonic basis of virtue he had defended in the Final Argument of *Protagoras* (cf. 357d3–7 and *Phd.* 68e2–69b8), in a dialogue that ends at night to complement another that began before dawn.

Although the principle of “a snug fit” (see Preface, principle §2) is particularly useful for reestablishing, by means of Reading Order, the authenticity of the dialogues which Schleiermacher and his followers rejected, the principle applies to the genuine dialogues as well. Here, then, is another way to justify *Protagoras* as the first dialogue in the Reading Order: its connection to

51. See Marina Berzins McCoy, “Protagoras on Human Nature, Wisdom, and the Good: the Great Speech and the Hedonism of Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 21–39.

52. See *Guardians on Trial*, §11.

Phaedo, the last dialogue in it, is particularly close.⁵³ Leaving for later further discussion of Plato’s philosophical encyclopedia—for if the link between *Protagoras* and *Phaedo* is admitted, we literally have an educational cycle—an observation about the place of *Protagoras* in the Order of Composition is necessary: after all, if it refers to every other dialogue, must it not have been written last?⁵⁴ Resolutely agnostic on such questions, I will observe that it clearly was *finished* only after all the others had been written. By “finished,” compare the use of “leaving for later” in the previous sentence: since §18 of *The Guardians on Trial* has in fact already been written, these words are misleading. I regard Plato as more than equally capable of the same sorts of tricks, i.e., he can easily imply that something written late should be read early, or that something written earlier should only be read late.

But even a far more thorough account of how *Protagoras* functions as “a preview of coming attractions” would not conclusively prove that it should be read as a play. And unless we are prepared to recognize a theatrical revolutionary in Plato, the notion of a summarizing “overture” is doubtless anachronistic. On the other hand, it is also anachronistic to insist that Plato’s direct dialogues—*Alcibiades Major*, *Laches*, and *Gorgias*, for examples—are more suitable for performance than a narrated dialogue like *Protagoras*. Beginning with Gilbert Ryle,⁵⁵ the champions of a performed Plato have made the same error: despite the resemblance between direct dialogue to the body of a modern script, the latter also always contain written but unspoken directions as to scenery, motivation, props, and action; without these, virtually no play

53. Cf. Roslyn Weiss, “The Hedonic Calculus in the *Protagoras* and *Phaedo*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 27, no. 4 (October, 1989), 511–529, on 525: “We see then that the *Phaedo* approves of the life of φρόνησις not because of its greater pleasantness (more pleasant though it may be) and deplures bodily pleasures not because of their lesser pleasantness (less pleasant though they may be). The *Phaedo* is concerned with the attainment of ἀρετή, the road to which is indifference to pleasure and concern for wisdom and truth. By recognizing that indifference to pleasure is possible and that some people—philosophers—love φρόνησις more than pleasure, the *Phaedo* categorically rejects the psychological hedonism of the *Protagoras*.” For the opposite point of view, see Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny; Revised and Expanded Edition; Including the Strauss-Kojève Correspondence*. Edited by Victor Gourevitch and Michael S. Roth (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 101: “Thus the question of Socrates’ attitude toward hedonism is reduced to the question as to whether wisdom, the highest good, is intrinsically pleasant. If we may trust Xenophon, Socrates has disclosed his answer in his last conversation: not so much wisdom, or true virtue itself, as one’s consciousness of one’s progress in wisdom or virtue, affords the highest pleasure. Thus Socrates ultimately leaves no doubt as to the fundamental difference between the good and the pleasant. No man can be simply wise; therefore, not wisdom, but progress toward wisdom is the highest good for man. Wisdom cannot be separated from self-knowledge; therefore, progress toward wisdom will be accompanied by awareness of that progress. And that awareness is necessarily pleasant. This whole—the progress and the awareness of it—is both the best and the most pleasant thing for man. It is in this sense that the highest good is intrinsically pleasant.”

54. I am grateful to Greg McBrayer for raising this question in conversation.

55. Cf. Gilbert Ryle, *Plato’s Progress* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 37: “At the oral delivery of such dialogues [sc. those in *oratio obliqua*, like most of *Protagoras*] we, the audience, would be listening all or almost all the time to the sole voice of ‘Socrates,’ i.e. of Plato.”

could be staged.⁵⁶ With the scene depicted in the Frame's direct dialogue as a fourth, the narrated portion of Protagoras is enacted in three scenes: Socrates' bedroom, the transition that culminates in Callias' gateway, and finally the Garden of Callias. Plato's script also tells us the furniture needed to establish these scenes: a single bench in the Frame (310a3), a bed in the bedroom (310c1–2),⁵⁷ a door for the eunuch to slam (314d3–5), and the multiple benches or βάρη in the Garden.

Of course no ancient theatrical script uses either the modern method or Plato's to describe scenery and scene changes, and the hypothesis that *Protagoras* should be read as a play therefore depends on our ability to imagine Plato as a bold innovator—and bear in mind that the moment we admit that any Platonic dialogue was presented as a play, that would mark the first time in literature that a drama was performed *in prose*⁵⁸—at some point even surpassing modern playwrights with effects that most anyone would regard as “modern.”⁵⁹ It is therefore important that Plato makes use of the chorus (ὁ χορός), the most prominent characteristic of ancient drama:

‘The persons who followed in their rear [Socrates has just named Callias and his brother, Pericles' son Paralus, and Charmides (on one side); Pericles' other son Xanthippus, Philippides, and Antimoerus, on the other] whom Protagoras leads from each of the cities through which he travels, enchanting them with his voice just like Orpheus, and they, having been enchanted, are following along after that voice, and there were also some of our natives in the chorus [ὁ χορός]. Especially delighted was I watching this chorus [οὗτος ὁ χορός], how beautifully [καλῶς] they took care never to be an obstacle in front of Protagoras, but when he himself would make a turn [ἀναστρέφειν], they would do so as well, and also how well they split themselves in formation—these his auditors [οἱ ἐπήκοοι],

56. See Nikos G. Charalabopoulos, “The metatheatrical reader of Plato's *Protagoras*” in Felix Budelman and Pantelis Michelakis (eds.), *Homer, Tragedy and Beyond: Essays in Honour of P. E. Easterling*, 149–178 (London: Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 2001), on stage directions (152–53), props (154), and scenery-setting (154–58). On *Prt.* as “performance text,” see his *Platonic Drama and its Ancient Reception*, 226–38.

57. Although §2 will emphasize echoes of Xenophon on *Prt.*, the reference to ὁ σκίμπος at 310c1 (cf. *Clouds*, 254) and to astronomy and geometry at 318e2–3 (cf. *Clouds*, 201–203) suggest a similar role for Aristophanes. However the best evidence for the comedian's presence is only accessible to those who—having already seen or read *Smp.*—note his merely apparent absence in *Prt.*, unique among the speakers at Agathon's party.

58. The extent to which the mimes of Sophron—famously identified by Aristotle as having influenced Plato (*Poetics*, 1; 1447b9–11)—were written in prose must remain doubtful; see Kenneth Dover, “Sophron” in Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, fourth edition, 1384 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

59. See James A. Arieti and Roger M. Burrus (eds. and trans.), *Plato's Protagoras: Translation, Commentary, and Appendices* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 8–13 (“Plato's *Protagoras* as Prose Comedy”), and Kathryn Morgan, “Epic and Comedy in Plato's *Protagoras*,” in Rick Benitez and Keping Wang (eds.), *Plato's Poetics. Essays from Beijing*, 151–169 (Berrima Glen Berrima: Academic, 2016).

this way and that—and moving around in a circle [ἐν κύκλῳ περιούντες], they always [ἀεὶ] took their place in his rear, most beautifully.⁶⁰

Plato's chorus moves, and thanks to the stage directions in this passage, could easily be made to sing and dance.⁶¹ Nor is this the only place where the chorus could participate in song, for the Ode of Simonides provides an excuse for a real variety show. Apparently well known to all, this Ode could be sung by the chorus while being recited by Socrates, but whether or not ὁ χορός sings and dances, the incontrovertible evidence that there is one constitutes an important step forward.⁶²

After the comic dialogue with the grumpy eunuch at the door (314c7–e2), the word order of “finally, therefore, then for us the fellow opened up the door [ἢ θύρα]” (314e2) suggests, if it does not demand, the simultaneous pulling back of drapes or curtains to reveal the Garden tableaux. As a result, scenery and chorus emerge simultaneously in *Protagoras*, and from this point on, Socrates as protagonist is best imagined as describing what the audience will see and hear taking place behind his back. The fact that both Hippias and Prodicus are first described as sitting (315c1 and 315d4–5) suggests their static and symmetrical position on either side of the scene where the choral dance has been or perhaps continues to be performed; Socrates could here be imagined walking among two different sub-scenes, describing each, and identifying all those he names. From a theatrical standpoint, the booming voice of Prodicus (316a1) and the actions or props that lead Socrates to say that Hippias appeared to be speaking of “concerning nature [περὶ φύσεως]” (315c5) are scarcely consistent with either pantomime silence or frozen inactivity.

The chorus's centrality comes to an end with the entrance of Alcibiades and Critias at 316a4–5, most likely traversing center stage; Socrates' subsequent approach to Protagoras (316a6–b2) suggests a downstage or foreground dialogue with him (316b3–c4) until Callias, who up to this point has been only the leader of one of the two divisions of the chorus (314e5), becomes the impresario with the words: “Do you therefore wish that we should prepare so that seated you may converse?” (317d5–6). Finally, with the proper seating having been provided for the fictional audience (317d7–9), and with

60. 315a7–b8.

61. Cf. Plutarch, *Life of Aristides*, 1.4 (Bernadotte Perrin translation): “For both Epaminondas, who, as all men know, was reared and always lived in great poverty, and Plato the philosopher, took it upon themselves to furnish munificent public performances, the first, of men trained to play the flute, the second, of boys trained to sing and dance.”

62. For detailed consideration of the importance of ὁ χορός in *Protagoras*, see Charalabopoulos, “Metatheatrical Reader,” 159–62, and Bill Gladhill, “*Mousikē* and Sophistry in Plato's *Protagoras*,” *Illinois Classical Studies* 39 (2014), 17–37. See also David Carroll Preston, “Between the Dionysia and the Dialogues: The *agon* between Philosophy and Comedy” (Ph.D. dissertation: Royal Holloway, 2017), 32–36.

Callias and Alcibiades having retrieved Prodicus and his entourage (317d10–e2), the drama proper can begin at 317e3. No less noteworthy than the large number of named characters in the chorus who do not speak—including four characters who will eventually step forth from the chorus to give speeches in *Symposium*—is the large number of speaking parts in *Protagoras* when considered as a play. Including the friend from the Frame and the from the Gateway (both of whom speak without being named), there are ten of these: Socrates, Hippocrates, Callias, Protagoras, Alcibiades, Critias, Prodicus, and Hippias. In addition to the principal antagonists, comic parts are well represented, and the eunuch, Prodicus, and Hippias in particular could easily be played for laughs and would certainly receive them if they were so. But speaking parts are only the tip of a theatrical iceberg, and most of these—the exception is the eunuch—spend most of their time on stage as auditors, i.e., as οἱ ἐπήκοοι.

I was taught the advantage of staging “a play within a play” in an “Introduction to Theater” course I took as a freshman at Wesleyan. As Fritz de Boer explained it, when the actors themselves become an audience, they gain reality as a result—they are now in the same position that we are, and we, of course, are real—indeed the more artificial the acting in the “play” the actors are watching, the more real does the equally artificial “audience” itself become. As a result, the authentic audience is encouraged to forget that most of the actors are simply actors, for they are doing exactly what we are doing. It would be difficult to call this the oldest trick in the theater even though a case could be made for viewing the strictly theatrical function of the classical chorus as creating the possibility for precisely this trick. In any case, thanks to a numerous chorus and perhaps an even more numerous on-stage audience, Plato’s *Protagoras* is a play-within-a play *and then some*. Consider the parallel with two of Shakespeare’s plays. The equivalent of the Frame is the education of Christopher Sly in *Taming of the Shrew*: with the exception of the frame, *Shrew* is enacted for the benefit of a single player turned audience member, just like the Friend in *Protagoras*. But although the entry of Petrucchio in the wedding scene comes close to doing so—there is a large onstage audience to witness his antics and respond to them—the spectacle of Plato’s ἀγών holds center stage throughout. As for *Hamlet*’s famous play-within-a-play, it would reach the level of complexity comparable to Plato’s if Hamlet were describing everything—not only Claudius’s reaction, but the drama as a whole—to someone else, most likely Horatio (as the equivalent of Socrates’ ἑταῖρος). But as great a part as Shakespeare gives Hamlet, Plato has outdone him with the Socrates of *Protagoras*.

Here, the most accessible modern analogue would be the Stage Manager in Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*. In addition to narrating the whole—allowing a cast of actors to emerge from his narration in the process—both maintain

direct contact with the audience while frequently taking part in the story they are narrating, as the minister at Emily's wedding, for example. The character "Socrates" gets to do all this and more when *Protagoras* is "read as a play." What a part Plato has written! To begin with, even if the only thing Socrates did in *Protagoras* was "to mop the floor" with Protagoras, this would make it the part of a lifetime. But Plato has created the ancient equivalent of Henry Carr in Tom Stoppard's *Travesties*: Socrates is given the chance to narrate his own actions in a way that still allows him, as an actor, to step in and out of his narrative role at will in order to reenact the ἀγών at the play's center for his friend. With the parallels with Wilder and Stoppard in mind, only the various expressions for "he said" would need to be deleted in performance, in accordance with a process described in *Theaetetus*,⁶³ a dialogue linked to *Protagoras* in a particularly intimate way thanks to Protagoras "himself."

On the other hand, once Henry Carr becomes his younger self or the Stage Manager becomes the minister, he stays in character and doesn't "break the frame." Socrates takes the additional step: while describing his own actions to the ἐταῖρος by enacting them, Plato allows him to step out of his enacted character in order to address his on-stage audience directly, as when he tells him that Callias grabbed "the cloak of mine" when he pretended to abandon the prize-fight in the middle (335d1). It can be safely predicted that studies of Plato's narrative techniques, resulting in a new way of ordering the dialogues with respect to these techniques, will multiply in proportion as the Order of Composition loses its grip, for scholars will be ordering Plato's dialogues in some way or other until the end of time. Among these, Margalit Finkelberg stands out for her attention to metalepsis, i.e., breaking the frame;⁶⁴ she has identified the three times in *Protagoras* where Plato uses this technique by directly addressing his friend and thus returning to the world of the Frame. But I want to go a step further.

Guthrie's suggestion has thus far been implemented by imagining *Protagoras* without "he said," i.e., by imagining the characters Socrates is describing both doing and saying what Socrates tells his friend they said and did without narrative intrusion. As a result, a crucial aspect of what his "read as a play" requires is missing: nothing has been said of the play's off-stage audience, something every play needs to have in order to be a play. Finkelberg's attention to metalepsis is confined to Socrates' direct addresses to the friend, and it was only in the context of De Boer's introductory lesson that the actual audience has even been mentioned. In order, then, to implement Guthrie's suggestion fully, it is necessary for us, as the kind of readers he

63. See Anne-Marie Schultz, *Plato's Socrates as Narrator: A Philosophical Muse* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013), 1.

64. See Margalit Finkelberg, *The Gatekeeper: Narrative Voice in Plato's Dialogues* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 80–84.

desiderates, to imagine *the audience* that is watching *Protagoras* and who stand between the narrated action and us as readers. Imagining this kind of audience has a Platonic parallel for those who recognize *Republic*—i.e., the lengthy monologue of Socrates that *is* Plato’s *Republic*—as Socrates’ response to the speech of Cleitophon to which our hero does not respond in *Cleitophon*. When we read *Republic* as Socrates’ response to Cleitophon,⁶⁵ we must make an imaginative leap: we interpose an additional audience in between us, the dialogue’s readers, and Socrates’ intra-dialogue audience beginning with Glaucon. In the case of *Republic*, this interposition has the advantage of explaining what is otherwise unexplained: what has prompted Socrates to tell the ten-book story of his descent to the Piraeus. And since we cannot imagine that Socrates is literally telling *us* his story—since we are not in Athens, and do not yet exist—having him address *someone* is not so much speculative as necessary, for otherwise he would be telling his story to nobody. Of course we could almost as easily imagine that he is talking to Timaeus, Critias, and Hermocrates the day before *Timaeus*, indeed it would be interesting to consider whether the alleged inauthenticity of *Cleitophon* creates a greater obstacle to recognizing Cleitophon as Socrates’ audience than the more numerous reasons why it cannot be Plato’s *Republic* that Socrates summarizes at the start of *Timaeus*.⁶⁶

The textual basis for imagining the existence of this audience in *Protagoras* is found in the frame, where the ἐταῖρος prepares to listen to Socrates’ story by mentioning, for no apparent reason, his boy:

Friend [ἐταῖρος]: Why then should you not describe for us [ἡμεῖς] the colloquy unless something else prevents you, sitting down right here, having caused the boy here [ὁ παῖς οὐτοσι] to vacate his seat.⁶⁷

As the sequel proves, the significance of ὁ παῖς οὐτοσι is that his presence provides the sole basis for the Friend’s plural ἡμεῖς: from this point on, Plato is able to depict Socrates as telling his story *to more than one*, as of course he must be if we are to imagine an extra-dialogue audience between the narrated action and ourselves. Consider then the references to “y’all” and “we” in the brief exchange that constitutes the last words in direct dialogue in the *Protagoras* Frame:

Socrates: Very good indeed, I shall be obliged, if y’all will listen [second person plural of ἀκούειν]. *Friend*: And we [ἡμεῖς again] also to you, I assure you, if

65. See *Plato the Teacher*, Introduction.

66. See *Guardians in Action*, Introduction.

67. 310a2–4.

you should tell. *Socrates*: A twofold obligation. Well now, listen [second person plural of ἀκούειν again, this time imperative].⁶⁸

In accordance with ἀνάγκη λογογραφική,⁶⁹ Plato obtrudes the otherwise unnecessary boy in order to give Socrates the larger audience he must have if *Protagoras* is to be “read as a play.” The actor playing Socrates would only need to look at his off-stage audience while saying ἀκούετε,⁷⁰ en route to his “bedroom.” In short, Socrates the actor has “broken the frame” on a second level by speaking directly to us.

Will we respond? It is an essential function of an audience to applaud the players, and since *Protagoras* is a play-within-a-play, its moments of greatest dramatic complexity are the two times that its internal audience bursts into applause, the first time after “the Relativity Speech” of Protagoras (334c7–8) and the second after Protagoras has proved that Simonides has contradicted himself (339d10–e3). To begin with, it is generally a good rule of thumb in reading Plato to search for a third whenever something happens twice: Are we really prepared to believe that there never came a moment when the home-town crowd burst into thunderous applause for Socrates? This unheard acclamation, even if it only came from Socrates’ onstage Friend, points to the response of the dialogue’s audience, its “Cleitonphon,” if you will. So imagine the following: what if *that* audience were itself to burst into applause after Protagoras finished the Relativity Speech but *before* the onstage audience did, and thus before the play’s Socrates could *say* that it did? Were that to happen in sequence—offstage applause, onstage applause, and then Socrates’ narrative comment *about* that onstage applause—I submit that there would then follow a third round of even more thunderous applause from the play’s audience, and this time for Plato himself, i.e., for a playwright skillful enough to have anticipated the audience’s reaction to his play before it had occurred.

In order to explain why Plato placed the difficult *Protagoras* before the elementary *Alcibiades Major* in the Reading Order, I have advanced the hypothesis—supported by a variety of this brilliant dialogue’s features, both theatrical and theoretical—that it was performed as a play, and was staged for what might be called “the Academy’s incoming class,” i.e., for its Freshmen. It was, I am suggesting, too difficult for them to study, but just entertaining enough to capture their attention, and make them confident that by coming to Plato—as opposed to a rival educator like Isocrates, for instance—they

68. 310a5–7 (Lamb modified).

69. Literally “logographic necessity,” but meaning the kind of artistic necessity that renders nothing accidental in a well-written discourse; Plato introduces it in *Phdr.* (264a7) but it is implied by Socrates’ claim about Simonides (*Prt.* 344b1–2).

70. And here a third Shakespeare play comes to mind, when the Chorus addresses his imperatives to the audience, the “gentles all” of *Henry V*: “on your imaginary forces, work!”

had made the right choice. Whether or not its students were organized into classes, the Academy was a school, and every school must from time to time welcome its new students. These beginners constitute a plausible audience, not least of all because they too are seeing a famous teacher in action for the first time, and thus can easily identify with the eager young Hippocrates. And unless we want to imagine Plato himself, otherwise so elusive, playing Socrates onstage, it makes sense that the play these beginners are watching is being performed by older students, some of them appearing in speaking parts, others not. Confident that none of my readers will mistake the playful spirit in which I am offering these speculations, it can do no harm to devote the last three paragraphs of this opening section to imagining Plato's Academy on Opening Day.

The theory I find the most interesting and plausible is that what is occurring onstage in the Garden of Callias replicates what is actually taking place offstage in the Academy. Starting from young Hippocrates as a kind of academic "Everyman,"⁷¹ we can plausibly speculate that it was a day school in which the "day" began early by our standards, and that—as Protagoras promises *his* pupils—Plato's too will "depart for home" at the end of the day (318a7–8). To be sure the Good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) is a more appropriate τέλος for Plato's school than the sophist's promise that his students "always be progressing to the better [τὸ βέλτιον]" (318a9),⁷² and when Protagoras promises his future students that he will not be hurling them back into "both calculations and astronomy and geometry and music" (318e1–3), we can be certain that Plato will be even more guilty of teaching such technical subjects (τέχναι at 318e1) than Hippias would be. But why does Plato depict *three* teachers in the Garden? Could it be that the famous division of philosophy into Ethics, Physics, and Logic began with recognizable versions of Prodicus, Hippias, and Protagoras in the Academy?⁷³ Rather than seeing Plato's sympathy for Protagoras expressed only in the Great Speech—as too many others have done—I suggest that he is paying the venerable sophist a higher compliment

71. He does not follow through on his intentions: he meant to tell Socrates about the runaway boy but something else (τι ἄλλο) caused him to forget (310c4–5); spurred by his brother (310c6–7), he resolves to visit Socrates at once but thinks better of it (310c7–8). A comparison of 313c3–4 and *Alc. I* 112d10 diminishes the gap between Hippocrates and Alcibiades.

72. Note that the superlative form βέλτιστον ("best") appears fourteen times in *Alc. 2*, including two times when Socrates calls Alcibiades "O best (of men) [ὦ βέλτιστε]" (*Alc. 2* 143b6 and 147b7–8) and two times when "the best" (τὸ βέλτιστον) is qualified as "the best (things) for oneself" (*Alc. 2* 143b3–4, 143d8, and 146a8) which seems to be the way Protagoras is using "better." But what explains the unusually large number of times this word appears are Socrates' repeated references to both "the knowledge of the best [ἡ τοῦ βελτίστου ἐπιστήμη]" (*Alc. 2* 145c2, cf. 144d4–6, 145e8–9) including "the ignorance of the best" (*Alc. 2* 143e3–4 and 144a5).

73. For the origins of the three-part curriculum—ethics, physics, and logic—see Pierre Hadot, "Die Einteilung der Philosophie im Altertum," *Zeitschrift für Philosophische Forschung* 36, no. 3 (1982), 422–444.

through the dialogue's setting: it is Plato himself who can say "this is the announcement I am announcing [τὸ ἐπάγγελμα ὃ ἐπαγγέλλομαι]" (319a6–7) and the highly political applications that Protagoras promises (318e5–319a6) scarcely sound un-Platonic to someone who places the Allegory of the Cave in *Republic* 7 at the center of the Academy's "mission statement."⁷⁴

Hippocrates is an eager and brave young man (310d3), but he still has a great deal to learn. Above all, he wants to acquire eloquence—"to speak terribly well" (312d7) is how he puts it—and in *Symposium* and the three dialogues that precede it in the Reading Order, each of Plato's students will be learning rhetoric along with all the other things he is teaching them (see §14). But the detail that makes *Protagoras* such a perfect Gateway to the Academy—apart, that is, from six more references to the gateway (ἡ θύρα) of Callias' house (314c3–e2) to join the θύρα on which Hippocrates knocks at the start (310b1; cf. 314d2)—are the benches (τὰ βᾶθρα) that Protagoras mentions in his Great Speech. Plato gives the sophist the chance to describe exactly the kind of education his own "Freshmen" have received to date: "upon their benches [τὰ βᾶθρα] they come to know the poems of the good poets and are compelled to learn them thoroughly" (325e4–6). These same benches have already appeared twice, and they bridge the distance between what Plato's beginners have already done before coming to the Academy and what they are doing now. Seated on them first are the students to whom Hippias is answering questions about nature (315c2–7); these are then moved (317d7–e2) to create the arena—the stage-upon-the-stage for the play-within-the-play—in which Socrates and Protagoras will do battle. As a result, even though τὰ βᾶθρα will not be named again after the Great Speech, the entire audience, both onstage and off, are seated on them, and when it is Socrates who begins to expound the Ode of Simonides, Plato has established for his beginners a comforting sense of continuity all the more valuable because of the dizzying difference between this kind of education and anything they—or we, for that matter—have ever experienced before.

With Hippocrates and his fellows comfortably seated in the audience, let's not forget to close with the players themselves. Imagined as "a student production," *Protagoras* becomes a Gateway to the Academy in a more tangible sense. Naturally the parts of Socrates and Protagoras would be played by its "Seniors," but the casting decisions I find more interesting involve assigning the parts of Agathon, Phaedrus, Pausanias, and Eryximachus. In *Protagoras*, they are nothing more than glorified chorus members: they do not talk and

74. For the Xenophontic aspect of the promise at 318e5–6, see §2. Protagoras' promise of εὐβουλία is another indication of *Prt.*'s dramatic priority; cf. *Alc. I* 125e6. This connection makes *Alc. I* 125e6–127d8 a critique of Protagoras, as well as of Critias in *Chrm.*; on this, see *Ascent to the Good*, 210–11. There are likewise anticipations of *Smp.*, *Clt.*, and *R.* in this passage.

need not have advanced very far into the curriculum. But the student actors who most naturally would have played them must certainly have already studied Plato's *Symposium* and perhaps have already acted the same parts they are now silently playing while studying it. With this quartet imagined as those who are one step up from beginners, the casting of Alcibiades—along with Critias, Prodicus, and Hippias—would suggest some kind of Academic “in-between,” a “grade-level” intermediate between those who are no longer beginners—for they are in the offstage audience—and those who have been given the honor of playing Socrates and Protagoras. And given that there are even smaller speaking parts like Callias, the Eunuch, the Friend, and of course Hippocrates himself, it appears that there could have been more than one level in this Academic “in-between.” But too much of this kind of speculation can only detract from more serious matters, so let's quickly draw the curtain on this little scene and leave Plato's real life audience to sort things out as they see fit.

SECTION 2. XENOPHON BEFORE PLATO

If *Protagoras* is the Academy's Gateway, the writings of Xenophon are its Propylaea; such is this section's thesis. If Plato's debt to the *Memorabilia* hasn't already been acknowledged by the Friend's opening words,⁷⁵ it becomes evident with the arrival of Alcibiades and Critias (316a3–5). As was the case with the shared reference to learning Greek (see §1), there are no two ways about it: Xenophon did not devote a lengthy passage joining Critias and Alcibiades in *Memorabilia* 1 because Plato had already depicted them entering the Garden of Callias as a pair. This section's purpose is to revisit the relationship between the two greatest Socratics based primarily on *Protagoras*. Although its title speaks for itself, calling it “Xenophon after Plato” would likewise express an equally controversial claim: Xenophon's writings have survived because Plato needed them to do so. For how else are we to explain the fact that Xenophon, not Plato, is the first Greek philosopher whose writings have survived complete and indeed super-complete? In the wake of

75. See Nicholas Denyer (ed.), *Plato, Protagoras* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 65 (on 309a1): “πόθεν, ὦ Σόκράτες, φαίνη; has something in the air of ‘Where have you been all this time?’; cf. *Ion* 530a[1–2] πόθεν τὰ νῦν ἡμῖν ἐπιδεδήμηκας; and Xen. *Mem.* 2.8.1: Socrates ‘once saw another old friend {ἀρχαῖον ἐταῖρον} after a gap, and said to him πόθεν, Εὐθήρη, φαίνη;’ [note that []'s will always be mine; {}'s will indicate brackets in the quoted text].” Although Euthērus is a good name for one who ‘hunts well’—Denyer also cites *Memorabilia*, 1.2.24, for Alcibiades as “hunted [θηρώμενος]”—the more important point is that these are the only two times the question πόθεν φαίνη appears in Greek literature.

Schleiermacher's hatchet job⁷⁶—for he did to Xenophon something analogous to what he did to Plato's introductory dialogues, and on my account for much the same reason—how many today would be willing to explain the survival of Xenophon's complete works (and then some) on the basis of their intrinsic excellence?

In the traditional order of Xenophon's writings, *Hellenica*—a self-conscious if not entirely unproblematic sequel to Thucydides⁷⁷—stands first. So controversial in Xenophon's case, the parallel claim that Plato needed Thucydides' *History* to survive seems almost obvious: how would we know that *Protagoras* takes place before the War has begun, what it means that Socrates and Alcibiades were together at Potidaea, or what happened at Delium or Syracuse without Thucydides? But consider the following parallel question: how would we know about the Battle of Arginusae or the King's Peace without Xenophon? Nor is it a matter of understanding details or detecting anachronisms; it is only in *Hellenica* that the story of Alcibiades is completed, and neither Critias nor Charmides are so much as mentioned in Thucydides. It is obvious that Plato's readers need to know about the Thirty Tyrants if they are to understand him (*Ep.* 324c6–325b1); we must wonder: how could he be sure that they would be able to do so? Although the details are lost, it must be because the Academy survived Plato's death that his own writings would do so as well. And since we know the institution had the power to ensure Plato's literary survival, it also may have had the power to ensure Xenophon's, and beginning with the entrance Alcibiades and Critias in *Protagoras*, Plato's motive for ensuring that his writings would survive is obvious.

Most of this section will be concerned with the many connections between *Protagoras* and *Cynegeticus*, the treatise on hunting that stands last in the traditional order of Xenophon's writings. *Cynegeticus* is the only thing Xenophon wrote in which he states that his purpose in writing it was to offer advice that would last forever: "For I wish these things not to seem but to be useful, so as to be irrefutable into eternity [εἰς αἰεῖ]."⁷⁸ Since Thucydides

76. See Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher, "Über den Werth des Sokrates als Philosophen" (originally published in 1818) in Andreas Patzer (ed.), *Der Historische Sokrates*, 41–59 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchhandlung, 1987). For the effects of this essay on Xenophon's authority, see Louis-André Dorion, "A l'origine de la question socratique et de la critique di témoignage de Xénophon: l'étude de Schleiermacher sur Socrate (1815)," *Dionysius* 19 (December 2001), 51–74.

77. For the current *status quaestionis*, see Nino Luraghi, "Xenophon's Place in Fourth-Century Greek Historiography" in Michael A. Flower, *The Cambridge Companion to Xenophon*, 84–100 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): on 85: "Xenophon's *Hellenica* famously starts, without a proem, where Thucydides' book 8 ended—almost in mid-sentence. The joint is not perfect, and yet there can scarcely be any doubt that, unless what we read is not the real beginning of *Hellenica*, Xenophon's narrative emphatically presented itself as a continuation of Thucydides."

78. Xenophon *Cynegeticus* 13.7. All citations of Xenophon are based on E. C. Marchant (ed.), *Xenophontis Opera Omnia*, five volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900–1920.

famously had the same goal, the first and most important question must be: did Plato have this ambitious goal as well? The fact that Plato's dialogues *have* survived εἰς ἀεί, combined with the far more significant facts of their continuing relevance and unparalleled literary excellence, indicate the proper answer: "Of course he did." But it is only those who disagree, only those who imagine that by studying his dialogues they're not doing exactly what Plato intended them to do, and thus *proving him wrong* in the process of reading him, who possess the only sound basis for rejecting the claim that Plato required both Thucydides' *History* and Xenophon's *Hellenica* to survive, for they must insist that he was writing *exclusively for his own contemporaries*. Only in this case could he have counted on their personal familiarity—based on recent memory and firsthand knowledge—with the many historical events that are mentioned throughout his dialogues. As for the claim of Thucydides echoed by Xenophon, it is obvious why no parallel claim exists in Plato's writings: there is no Plato present in his dialogues to make this kind of first-person claim.

In another place, I have used the image of a relay race to explain the relationship between Plato and Xenophon.⁷⁹ Starting with the observation that Xenophon never wrote a Socratic dialogue in which an authorial voice is absent,⁸⁰ I take Plato's initial innovation to be the *direct* Socratic dialogue. But when Plato made the necessarily later decision to join his various self-contained dialogues into a greater whole—and by that I mean "the Reading Order of Plato's dialogues"—it was Xenophon who had already pointed the way to do so in the collection of Socratic dialogues that constitute his *Memorabilia*. To flesh out the relay race notion—it originates in Aulus Gellius,⁸¹ who was at pains to refute the widely held view that Xenophon and Plato were rivals—the first leg, run by Xenophon, is his *Apology of Socrates*, which contains the seeds of what will later become discrete dialogues in Plato's *Crito* and *Phaedo* in the second leg. Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, the third leg, will then set the pattern for a thematically-linked collection of dialogues which will ultimately allow Plato to reach "the same finish-line of virtue [*ad eandem virtutis calcem*]." ⁸² Finally, there is the fact that deserves more attention than it has received: no matter how late in his life any of Xenophon's writings may have reached their ultimate form, *he predeceased Plato*, who therefore had access to all of them several years before his own death.

79. See William H. F. Altman, "Division and Collection: A New Paradigm for the Relationship Between Plato and Xenophon," in Gabriel Danzig, David Johnson, and Donald Morrison (eds.), *Plato and Xenophon: Comparative Studies*, 99–114 (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

80. For the problematic character of the authorial voice in Xenophon, see Benjamin McCloskey, "Xenophon the Philosopher: *e pluribus plura*," *American Journal of Philology* 138 (2017), 605–640.

81. Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 14.3.

82. Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 14.3.

As Schleiermacher correctly observed (see Introduction), the long speech in *Alcibiades Major* seems “more in the manner of Xenophon than Plato.”⁸³ But Schleiermacher missed the forest for that single tree: more broadly, the *Alcibiades* dyad as a whole *repeatedly* echoes the first conversation between Socrates and Euthydemus in *Memorabilia* 4.2. The hypothesis that Plato did not write the *Alcibiades* dyad can explain these echoes easily: whoever wrote them had naturally read Xenophon, and borrowed from him. In fact the greatest advantage to be gained from the proponents of inauthentic “Platonic” dialogues like the *Alcibiades* dyad or *Lovers* is that the later in time they place the alleged forgery, the more it becomes necessary for them to admit that *their* author, at least, relied on Xenophon. In his path-breaking commentary on *Alcibiades Major*, Nicholas Denyer has already brought many such parallels to light,⁸⁴ and there is no need to rehearse them here. But in the context of suggestions already made in the Introduction, Plato’s use of Alcibiades to represent any given student gains support from the parallel between him and Xenophon’s otherwise unknown Euthydemus,⁸⁵ while Schleiermacher’s objection that Socrates and Alcibiades “appear as old acquaintances” in *Protagoras*—frequently cited as proof that their first conversation as described in *Alcibiades Major* must already have taken place—loses all of its force thanks to *Memorabilia* 4.2: in order to catch the attention of Euthydemus, Socrates has offered several provocative and revealing discourses in the young man’s presence *before speaking to him directly*.⁸⁶

83. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 321 (Dobson, 330).

84. Since Denyer is operating in a scholarly limbo with respect to the authenticity question, he can deftly draw Xenophon into the interpretive mix without prejudice on the first page of his commentary (*Alcibiades*, 83, on 103a1; abbreviations expanded): “All of Socrates’ dealings with Euthydemus, as represented at Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2, 3, 5 and 6, make instructive reading: for comparisons on points of detail, see the notes on 104a5 [4.2.1; bracketed citations that follow are to the passages in *Memorabilia* that Denyer cites in the relevant note], 104b7 [4.2.6], 104c2 [4.2.1 and 4.2.9], 104d7-9 [4.2.8], 104e5 [4.2.1], 105a7 ἐν θάττον, 106d6 ἐλπίδας [4.2.1], 112b1, 116e3-4 [4.2.19], 117e4 [4.2.26], 118b6-7, 118c3-4, 120c1 [4.2.6], 124b1 [4.2.24], 130d6 and 135c8 [4.2.22-23].” Given that this comment is attached to the word θαυμάζειν in the dialogue’s opening sentence (*Alc. I* 103a1), it is easy to see that the parallels with *Memorabilia* 4 are concentrated at the beginning of the dialogue, and this points toward my own thesis: Plato presupposes the student’s familiarity with Xenophon from the start.

85. See H. G. Dakyns, *The Works of Xenophon*, four volumes (London: Macmillan, 1890-1897), 3.1, xl-xliv: “On the personal note in the Ἀπομνημονεύματα: Who is Euthydemus? (in Bk. IV).” Following Dakyns, I take “Euthydemus” to be a *nom de clef* (cf. *Hellenica*, 3.1.2) for Xenophon himself, announced with: “I was present when he [sc. Socrates] was discussing these things with Euthydemus” (*Memorabilia*, 4.3.2). Plato therefore paid Xenophon a compliment at *Smp.* 222b2 by including “Euthydemus the son of Diocles” (see Nails, *People of Plato*, 151) among those whom Socrates deceived by posing as their ἐραστής when it was really he who was or became beloved, equipping him with a complimentary patronymic; given Xenophon’s pivotal dream (see *Anabasis*, 3.1.11-12; note the two uses of Διός, one with ἐκ, the other with ἄπο), the name “Fame from Zeus [Διοκλέος]” applies well to the son of Gryllus.

86. See Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.1-8, especially with regard to Socrates’ purpose—“wishing to stir up [κινεῖν] Euthydemus” (4.2.2)—and on the transition between what Plato’s Socrates accomplishes in *Prt.* (parallel to 4.2.2-7) in relation to what happens in *Alc. I* (4.2.8): “At the beginning,

Allowing Alcibiades to mention Euthydemus in Plato's *Symposium* is a subtle touch but there are also more obvious examples. Consider the list of devotees present in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 59b6–c6) in comparison with the list of true Socratics that Xenophon appends to his lengthy proof that neither Alcibiades nor Critias belong on it.⁸⁷ It is the hair of Apollodorus that Socrates strokes in Xenophon's *Apology*, Critobulus, Crito's son, is Socrates' interlocutor in *Oeconomicus*, the longest and most ingenious of Xenophon's Socratic dialogues, and Hermogenes is Xenophon's source for Socrates' last days; these are the first people named as present in Plato's *Phaedo*. As for Xenophon, he tells us that Simmias and Cebes were companions of Socrates in *Memorabilia*. If either had wanted to undermine the value of the other's testimony, these connections would have been suppressed. But as beautiful as the evidence of such mutual respect and support may be, it is Plato's dependence on the survival of Xenophon's writings that is this section's principal theme, and of that, the best evidence is the portrait of "Meno the Thessalian" in *Anabasis*; in *Ascent to the Good* (§14), I have shown why Plato's *Meno* is best understood in the context of Xenophon's priority.⁸⁸

Ancient testimony for this kind of pedagogical priority is found in *Chion of Heraclea*, "our only surviving example of the ancient epistolary novel."⁸⁹ At the center of its "single unified story" is Chion, a student of Plato's who leaves the Academy and returns to his native Heraclea in order to liberate it from tyranny, and who dies in his failed attempt to do so. This act of "tyrant-

then [μὲν οὖν], Euthydemus was listening to such speeches [λόγῳ] as Socrates was saying; but [δέ] when he was perceiving him [sc. Euthydemus] to endure more readily when he [sc. Socrates] might be discoursing, and listening more eagerly, he went alone to the saddler's shop, and with Euthydemus sitting next to him [said:], 'Tell me, Euthydemus.'" Their first conversation follows.

87. See Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.2.48.

88. A distinction must be made between compositional and pedagogical priority. Thanks to the fact that Xenophon predeceased Plato, there came a time when the latter could presuppose the *corpus Xenophonticum* as a whole in a *pedagogical* sense, i.e., that the future readers to whom he left his own writings would be familiar with Xenophon's. But the *compositional* priorities are considerably more complicated, and Altman, "Division and Composition" argues for the interplay of *mutual* influence, both back and forth—e.g., *Cyropaedia* as response to *Republic*, *Laws-Epinomis* as response to *Cyropaedia*—on the model of a relay race, and I will devote more attention to Order of Composition in a work in progress with the working title "The Relay Race of Virtue: Plato's Debts to Xenophon." With respect to the works under consideration in this book, however, I will be claiming that certain works of Xenophon are prior in *both* senses to (1) *Prt.* (cf. 316a4–5 and *Memorabilia* 1.2.12), (2) *Alc. I* (*Memorabilia* 4.2.24, 4.2.36, and 4.4.5), (3) *Alc. II* (*Memorabilia* 1.3.2, 3.9.6 and 4.2.36), (4) *Am.* (cf. 134e4–5, 137b7–c5, and 138b12–c10 with *Memorabilia* 3.4.11–12 and 4.2.11, as well as *Oeconomicus*, *On Horsemanship*, and *Cynegeticus*), (5) *Hp. Ma.* (cf. 295c8–e2 with *Memorabilia* 3.9.4–5 and 7), (6) *Hp. Mi.* (*Memorabilia* 4.2.20), (7) *Ion* (*Symposium* 3.6, 4.6, and *Memorabilia* 4.2.10), (8) *Mx.* (*Hellenica* through 5.1.31), and (9) *Smp.* (cf. 180c4–e1 and *Symposium* 8.9–10). Naturally this list of connections is best understood as merely preliminary and partial.

89. See Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 234: "If we accept a basic definition of the genre which allows only prose fictions composed of chronologically organized sequences of letters, without supplementary narrative, that cohere to create a single unified story, then *Chion of Heraclea* is our only surviving example of the ancient epistolary novel."

killing [τυραννοκτονία]⁹⁰ is historical: Chion of Heraclea *did* kill the tyrant Clearchus in around 352 B.C., when Plato was in his seventies.⁹¹ Naturally nobody believes that those we have are his actual letters—they are clearly an innovative work of art written much later—but no consensus has been reached even as regards the century of their composition, let alone the identity of their author.⁹² In any case, Xenophon enters the epistolary narrative before Chion reaches Athens, indeed the literary purpose of his entrance is to show that the youth may never have reached the Academy at all without the heroic example of “Xenophon the companion of Socrates [ὁ Σωκράτους γνώριμος].”⁹³ It is Chion’s admiration for Xenophon that overcomes his initial reluctance to devote himself to philosophy, as his father wants him to do. This fictional encounter illustrates how the writings of Xenophon can be understood as the Academy’s Propylaea.

Given its context in the novel as a whole, the third letter—from Chion to his father—must be counted as a narrative masterpiece, skillfully and creatively mixing the historical Xenophon’s actions as described in *Anabasis* with a fictional incident in Byzantium,⁹⁴ where Chion sees him for the first time rallying his dispirited soldiers:

While this was going on and the Greeks were in disorder, I saw a man wearing long hair, a person of beautiful and mild aspect, striding in their midst and stilling their passions. That was Xenophon.⁹⁵

Beautiful in appearance, Xenophon is also brave, and Chion’s narrative demonstrates its author’s familiarity with both *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*.⁹⁶ Next

90. I will be citing by letter and line numbers the text found in Ingemar Düring (ed.), *Chion of Heraclea: A Novel in Letters* (Göteborg: Weitzgren & Kerders, 1951), 43–79; this word is found at 17.6 and 17.18–19 (the letter to Plato); Chion’s motives are explained in relation to freedom in 14.19–28, climaxing with (translation Düring): “For in order to save the freedom [ἐλευθερία] of my city I must sacrifice some of me own.” So also 17.7–8, where his goal is to καταλύειν τὴν τυραννίδα.

91. See Düring, *Chion of Heraclea*, 9–12, for the relevant *testimonia*. For further discussion see, in addition to Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions*, chapter 9, David Konstan and Phillip Mitsis, “Chion of Heraclea: A Philosophical Novel in Letters,” *Apeiron* 23, no. 4 (December 1990), 257–279, and J. L. Penwill, “Evolution of an Assassin: The Letters of Chion of Heraclea,” *Ramus* 39, no. 1 (2010), 24–52, with up-to-date bibliography.

92. Most recently, see Pierre-Louis Malosse, *Lettres de Chion d’Héraclée* (Salerno: Helios, 2004), which favors the fourth century A.D. against the traditional first or second.

93. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.1.

94. On the historical inaccuracies in letter 3, see Düring, *Chion of Heraclea*, 84, and Malosse, *Lettres de Chion d’Héraclée*, 78–80.

95. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.3 (Düring). It is ancient testimony about his physical beauty that justifies identifying the young man listening to Socrates depicted on this book’s cover as Xenophon.

96. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 3.3.69 is where we learn that the phrase ἐπὶ πόδι ἀνάγειν means: “[to] retreat [while] facing [the] enemy” (LSJ II.10); cf. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.3 (Düring): “When, on the contrary, the soldiers exhorted him to yield to numbers, since he was alone, and finally let them make an end of their wearisome and hard roaming, he said: ‘Come to order [ἀνάγετε οὖν ἐπὶ πόδι] and

comes a Cicero-inspired tribute to Xenophon's eloquence,⁹⁷ captured not by his words—for Chion cannot hear them—but by the effect or end (τὸ τέλος) they have on his auditors:

And as in this thing at least they feared to disobey him, Xenophon—having taken his stand in their midst [εἰς μέσον]—was setting forth wondrous words [θαυμαστοὶ λόγοι] as the result [τὸ τέλος] of them made clear, for they were not distinctly audible to us.⁹⁸

It is a nice touch: the man of action is also a man of words.⁹⁹ But it is the actions of others that constitute the proof: his words speak more eloquently as a result. “This sight was a demonstration [ἐπιδείξις] of Xenophon's soul [ψυχῆ]; also how he was able both to think clearly [φρονεῖν] and to speak [λέγειν].”¹⁰⁰ Xenophon's invisible soul¹⁰¹—only made visible by his effect on others, and that includes Chion himself—is not only expressed in his inaudible words but more importantly in the kind of man he is.¹⁰²

The author of Chion's letters probably expected them to be a similar kind of ἐπιδείξις for us, and the encounter with Xenophon therefore introduces the novel's philosophical theme. Until Chion, the future tyrant-killer and would-be liberator, actually sees a philosopher in action, he had been justifiably worried that philosophy would divorce tranquil contemplation from heroic deeds.¹⁰³ For Xenophon's inaudible words not only inspire his soldiers to fight some Thracians but persuade Chion to study with Plato:

take counsel! There is no risk that the matter in our charge shall pass from our hands while we are deliberating!”

97. Cf. Cicero, *Brutus*, 200 and 290: “so that a mere passer-by observing from a distance though quite ignorant of the case in question, will recognize that he is succeeding and that a Roscius is on the stage.”

98. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.3.

99. Cf. καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν at 319a2 and Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.1–6.

100. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.4; cf. Düring's translation: “What I witnessed was a display of Xenophon's personality, his sound judgment and eloquence.”

101. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.3.14.

102. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.6: “And thus I was unaware that even toward courage [ἀνδρεία] those who have philosophized are better, and this, just now in fact, have I learned from Xenophon, not when he talked with me about it, but when he showed himself to be the kind of man he is [ὁποῖός ἐστι]. For having participated especially in the discussions of Socrates, he proved capable to save [σῶζειν] armies and cities, and in no respect has philosophy made him useless either to himself or to his friends.”

103. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.5–6: “For inactivity and tranquility, as you said to me, were the wondrous encomia of the philosophers. Therefore it seemed to me dreadful that if I, having become a philosopher, will be better in other things, but no longer bold, I will no longer be able to be either a soldier or a great man [ἀριστέύς] if it should be necessary.” Chion's original misgivings about philosophy, subsequently and quietly dispelled first by Xenophon and then by Plato himself, eventually become the basis for his ability to deceive Clearchus and deliver his city from tyranny (see Epilogue).

I introduced myself to him [sc. Xenophon], and he remembered your friendship with Socrates and encouraged me to study philosophy and, for the rest, did not talk at all like a soldier but like a very educated man.¹⁰⁴

As a result, Xenophon is responsible for the youngster's conversion, and he therefore tells his father: "Know then that I am now much more eager to sail on to Athens as a philosopher."¹⁰⁵

Although expressed in fictional terms, *Chion of Heraclea* nicely captures what I regard as an important and ancient perspective on Plato's dependence on Xenophon. Up to this point, I have described Xenophon's priority in philological terms, drawing heterodox conclusions from the fact that Plato had all of Xenophon's writings at hand before he finished his own life's work. Although the priority of Xenophon's Euthydemus to Plato's Alcibiades began to suggest it, the story of Chion's route to the Academy, mediated by his initial reluctance and prior infatuation with Xenophon, brings into view a more significant pedagogical priority: Plato anticipated that his students—and in particular that illusive interposed audience for *Protagoras* I postulated at the end of §1—were already familiar with the writings of Xenophon. In the balance of this section, my goal is more specifically to demonstrate that he wrote *Protagoras* with the possibility of his students' prior familiarity with Xenophon's *Cynegeticus* in mind. It is therefore the numerous connections between this treatise on hunting and Plato's *Protagoras* on which my case for the ongoing pedagogical priority of Xenophon will initially depend.

The only way to recreate for a modern audience an initial experience of *Protagoras* as a play would be to film an uncut version of it, and if I were to do so, I'd begin with a close-up of a frightened rabbit, keeping very still, with the sound of barking dogs and shouting boys drawing ever closer. Imitating the opening scene of Laurence Olivier's *Henry the Fifth*, the camera would then rise, leaving the hunters and the hunted below; we would slowly be transported from, e.g., Mount Hymettus, and drawing ever closer to a highly stylized Acropolis which would finally be revealed merely as a painted backdrop for a play that was about to begin in a public school in High Victorian England. Eton-like boys would noisily take their seats on benches (Gk. βάρβα) while student-actors, milling about behind an outdoor stage and clad in Greek garb with little sign of historical accuracy, would prepare themselves. After a brief silence enjoined by masters and prefects, and yet without any distinct words having yet been spoken, Socrates, the Friend, and his boy, would begin the play. Only after Socrates has uttered his imperative ἀκούετε, in English if need be, would the stage and most everything else

104. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.4 (Düring).

105. *Chion of Heraclea*, 3.5.

become invisible—his bedroom is dark—and only after the dialogue with the eunuch would the student actor playing Socrates give way to the realism of the man himself, once again in imitation of Olivier’s shift from the Globe to “the vasty fields of France,” as he enters the Garden of Callias much as Dorothy opens the farmhouse door to a colorful Oz. Of course the dialogue begins at the beginning:

Friend: From whence, O Socrates, do you appear? Or clear indeed [is it] from a hunt [κυνηγέσιον], the one for the seasonable bloom [ῥῶρα] of Alcibiades?¹⁰⁶

By arousing our sexual curiosity, Plato has captured his audience’s attention from the start. Meanwhile, Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus* is a treatise about trapping rabbits with dogs, although other kinds of game—and other kinds of hunters—appear toward the end.¹⁰⁷ The word κυνηγέσιον appears in its second sentence, the first of twenty-four iterations, nine of them in the singular; in the plural it generally refers to “hunting-grounds” rather than “the hunt” itself. The word ῥῶρα is also found eleven times in its natural and non-metaphorical sense, as here:

Go out early, so as not to lose the track, as those who go out late [οἱ ὀψιζόμενοι] prevent the dogs from finding the hare, and themselves from the benefit [ἡ ὠφελεία; sc. of hunting]. For the nature of the scent, being light and fleeting, does not linger in every season [ῥῶρα].¹⁰⁸

Thanks to Hippocrates, Plato’s *Protagoras* will get off to an early start as well. Emphasizing throughout the *benefit* of hunting, Xenophon describes the setting of the traps, the behavior and training of the dogs, and after praising lavishly the strength, suppleness, and agility of the hare, reaches the treatise’s rhetorical highpoint with Artemis’ victory over Aphrodite (5.33): “So charming is the prey that there could be no one who—seeing it tracked, found, pursued, and caught—would not forget even what he loves.” In *Protagoras*, it is the sophist who will become this graceful rabbit, and his capture will likewise be delightful to watch.

Only near the end of *Cynegeticus*, after Xenophon has concluded the technical part of his treatise on hunting, does he mention pleasure for the first time: “only this pleasure [ἡ ἡδονή] of the youth produces so many good

106. 309a1–2.

107. V. J. Gray, “Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus*,” *Hermes* 113, no. 2 (Second Quarter 1985), 156–172, revived interest in the treatise; for recent work, see Louis L’Allier, “Why Did Xenophon Write the Last Chapter of the *Cynegeticus*?” in Fiona Hobden and Christopher Tuplin (eds.), *Xenophon: Ethical Principles and Historical Inquiry*, 477–497 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), and Stephen Kidd, “Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus* and Its Defense of Liberal Education,” *Philologus* 58, no. 1 (2014), 76–96.

108. Xenophon *Cynegeticus* 6.4. Parenthetical references, e.g., (6.4) in the text of this section will hereafter refer to *Cynegeticus*.

things.”¹⁰⁹ But once introduced, the sequel leaves no doubt that ἡδονή is an important theme:

For it [sc. hunting] makes them both temperate and just on account of an education in the truth. For [our ancestors] perceived that it was by these that they were succeeding both in other matters and in those of war, while of other things it was depriving nobody—if they should wish to pursue any of the beautiful ones [τὰ καλὰ]—as do other bad pleasures [ἕτεραι κακαὶ ἡδοναί] which it is not necessary to learn.¹¹⁰

This reference to *bad* pleasures, and in particular those that prevent youngsters from pursuing τὰ καλὰ, renders Xenophon’s position at the end of *Cynegeticus* diametrically opposed to what Socrates will say about pleasure in “the Final Argument [of Plato’s *Protagoras*].” There he claims that it is only “the Many [οἱ πολλοί]” (351c3) who distinguish good pleasures from bad ones (351c2–6), while Socrates himself—followed, at first reluctantly (351c7–e7), by Protagoras (353e5–354c5) and then the other sophists (358a1–6)—famously equates the Pleasant with the Good (358a5–6; cf. 351d1–2):

Socrates: ‘These things [he refers to his explanation, just completed, of what it means ‘to be overcome by pleasure’; 357d1–e8] we would have replied to the Many. But I am asking you indeed [ὐμεῖς δῆ], along with Protagoras, O Hippias and Prodicus—for let this discourse be common indeed to you [ὐμεῖς]—whether I seem to you [ὐμεῖς] to be saying true things or to be speaking falsely [ψεύδεσθαι].’ Preternaturally [ὑπερφυσίως] were the things having been said seeming to all to be true. ‘You have confirmed, then,’ said I, ‘the pleasant to be good and the painful [ἀνιαρόν] bad.’¹¹¹

By hammering the word ὐμεῖς,¹¹² this important passage (see epigraphs) suggests the possibility—or rather introduces the revelatory reality on which I am claiming Platonic pedagogy depends—that Plato has found a way to speak directly *to you*. No doubt Socrates *is* asking Hippias and Prodicus to confirm something in the Garden of Callias, but Plato is also asking whether his Socrates *seems to you*, here and now, to be speaking true things or to be ψεύδεσθαι (LSJ: ‘*lie, speak false, play false*’ as well as ‘*say that which is*

109. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.7; beginning at 12.6, Xenophon describes the high esteem in which hunting was held by “our ancestors [οἱ πρόγονοι],” and it is they who saw that “only this pleasure,” etc.

110. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.8.

111. 358a1–6; cf. Lamb’s more readable translation: “And I ask you now, Hippias and Prodicus, as well as Protagoras—for I would have you make a joint reply—whether you think what I say is true or false [note that this shifts the emphasis from whether *Socrates* is saying true things to the truth of the things he is saying]. They all thought what I had said was absolutely true.”

112. I will use the word “hammer” (and indeed will hammer it) to draw attention to the way Plato draws attention to the importance of a particular word: he repeats it.

untrue, whether intentionally or not'). The sophists have no doubts about either Socrates' intentions or the truth; hence the hyperbolic ὑπερφυῶς. But Xenophon, who is more familiar with Socrates than you, the sophists, or any of his critics are, disagrees: insofar as Socrates is asserting the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant and using it to show that "being overcome by pleasure [ὑπὸ ἡδονῆς ἠττώμενοι]" (352d8–e1) is a laughably impossible condition (352d8–355c8), he is speaking falsely because for Xenophon, there are *many* bad pleasures, and "those being overcome by them" say or do things that are worse:

But many of those saying these things [sc. that hunting is detrimental to one's city and friends at 12.10]—illogical through envy—choose rather to be destroyed through their own badness than to be preserved by the virtue [ἀρετή] of others. For pleasures are many and bad [αἱ γὰρ ἡδοναὶ αἱ πολλαὶ καὶ κακαί] and those being overcome by them [ὧν ἠττώμενοι] are aroused either to say or do the worse things.¹¹³

It would be difficult to miss the central importance of "to be overcome by pleasures [ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν ἠττασθαι]" (352e6–353a1) in the Final Argument¹¹⁴—which aims to overcome the very possibility of this experience (τὸ πάθος at 352e6; τὸ πάθημα at 357c7)—and thus the significance of Xenophon's endorsement of its destructive reality, as an antidote to which, he is recommending hunting. And thanks to a substitution made possible by the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant, Socrates can describe the ridiculous possibility that anyone would do bad things, knowing that they are bad (355c1–d2), as "being overcome by the good things [ἠττώμενος ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν]" (355d2–3). According to Xenophon, by contrast, pleasures in general—the sole exception he mentions is the youthful pleasure of the hunt (12.7)—are "many and bad" and even familiarity with them is suspect.¹¹⁵ Indeed one might get the idea from Xenophon's *Cynegeticus* that a preference for pleasures over what Shakespeare will call "painful marching in the rainy field" (cf. 12.4), so far from being the measured foundation for a teachable and life-saving virtue, is more likely to be its opposite:

Those, then, who have submitted themselves continuously both to toil at something [τι μοχθεῖν] and to be taught [διδάσκεσθαι], they have lessons and

113. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.12.

114. Prepared at 352c5 (cf. 353c6–7) and entering at 352d8–e1, it is repeated at 353a5, 353c2, 354e7, 355a8–b3, 355c3, 355d6, 355e7–356a1, 357c7, and 357e2.

115. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.13 (E. C. Marchant translation): "Then by their frivolous words they make enemies, and by their evil deeds bring diseases and losses and death on themselves, their children and their friends, being without perception of the evils, but more perceptive than others of the pleasures. Who would employ these to save a state?"

laborious [ἐπίπονον] exercises for themselves but salvation [σωτηρία] for their cities; those, however, who are not willing to be taught [διδάσκεισθαι] through the laborious [διὰ τὸ ἐπίπονον], but to live among untimely pleasures, by nature these are worst.¹¹⁶

Several antitheses are important here: when σωτηρία emerges in the Final Argument (356d3 and 357a6–7), it is secured by maximizing ἡδονή through “the measuring art [ἡ μετρητικὴ τέχνη]” (356d4) in order “to save [σώζειν]” (356e2, 356e4, and 356e8) our life as an individual.¹¹⁷ In Xenophon, by contrast, individuals secure a civic σωτηρία through their personal avoidance of pleasure, i.e., διὰ τὸ ἐπίπονον, and thereafter his twelfth chapter emphasizes not “to save” but “to work hard” (three uses of πονεῖν in 12.16–17) and “hard work” (three use of πόνοϛ in 12.18–21). The shift to πόνοϛ is connected with a vivid description of virtue that hearkens back “to the great example of the ancients,” where the young students of Chiron—mentioning him allows Xenophon to refer back to the beginning of his treatise (1.1–17)—“learned many and fine things [πολλὰ καὶ καλά] starting with hunting expeditions [κυνηγέσια], from which was engendered in them great virtue [ἀρετή], on account of which even now they are admired.”¹¹⁸ As indicated by the doubled use of διδάσκεισθαι, then, the various contrasts between *Cynegeticus* and *Protagoras* are played out against a common backdrop: Xenophon is claiming that the ancients taught virtue through the labors associated with hunting, while Plato depicts Socrates gaining an enthusiastic (ὑπερφυῶς) endorsement from three modern sophists by using ἡ μετρητικὴ τέχνη as a means through which virtue might possibly be taught.

In the beautiful passage that brings the twelfth chapter of *Cynegeticus* to a close, Xenophon imagines a visible virtue that could also see us,¹¹⁹ and who—“she” is not only personified but denoted by pronouns and demonstratives fourteen times in the passage (12.18–21)—can only be captured with difficulty:

116. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.15.

117. Cf. 357a5–b4 (Lamb modified): “Socrates: ‘Well then, my friends, since we have found that the salvation of our life [ἐφάνη ἡμῖν ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ βίου οὐσα] depends on making a right choice of pleasure and pain—of the more and the fewer, the greater and the smaller, and the nearer and the remoter—is it not evident, in the first place, that measurement is a study of their excess and defect and equality in relation to each other?’ ‘This must needs be so.’ ‘And being measurement, I presume it must be an art and a science [τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη]?’ ‘They will assent to this.’ ‘Well, the nature of this art or science [τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη] we shall consider some other time.’” Cf. *Hp. Mi.* (see §11) and *Ion* (§12).

118. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.18.

119. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.21 (Marchant): “But in the presence of Virtue men do many evil and ugly things [πολλὰ κακὰ καὶ αἰσχρά; cf. πολλὰ καὶ καλά above], supposing that they are not regarded by her because they do not see her. Yet she is present everywhere because she is immortal, and she honors those who are good to her, but casts off the bad.”

If, then, they might see this—that she is watching them—they would advance into the labors [ιέναι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόνους] and the lessons through which she [sc. ἀρετή] is caught with great difficulty [ἀλίσκεται μόλις] and they would acquire her.¹²⁰

The notion that virtue *must be caught* gives *Cynegeticus* a pleasing literary unity: with various forms of the verb ἀλίσκεσθαι having already appeared twenty-one times, ἀλίσκεται is used four more times in chapter 11, where Xenophon concludes its technical part with a description of how “lions, leopards, lynxes, panthers, bears and all similar wild beasts are captured [ἀλίσκεται].”¹²¹ But the final use of ἀλίσκεται is unique, and Xenophon’s praise of hunting in the twelfth chapter reveals at the end that the labors (πόννοι) associated with κυνηγέσια are aimed at the acquisition of ἀρετή, and thus that “the big game” he is really hunting is virtue. As for Socrates, if he is trying to capture virtue, he famously fails (361c2–d6); but that does not mean that he fails as a huntsman, and Xenophon’s phrase ιέναι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόνους sheds light on the extent of his success.

Having reported the sophists’ enthusiasm with ὑπερφυῶς (358a3), and then having confirmed their collective endorsement of the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant (358a5–b3), Socrates quickly supplements it with the fateful Equation of the Good and the Beautiful:

Socrates: ‘Well now, my friends,’ I said, ‘what of this? All actions aimed at [ἐπί] living painlessly and pleasantly [τὸ ἀλύπως ζῆν καὶ ἡδέως, with ‘living painlessly’ on its own being τὸ ἡδέως ζῆν] are honorable [καλόν], are they not? And the honorable work [τὸ καλὸν ἔργον] is both good [ἀγαθόν] and beneficial [ὠφέλιμον]?’ They agreed.¹²²

When Socrates first proposes the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant to Protagoras, the sophist qualifies Socrates’ proposal that “living pleasantly [τὸ ἡδέως ζῆν] is good” (351b7–c1) with the caveat that this is so only when

120. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.21 (last words of chapter 12).

121. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 11.1 (Marchant).

122. 358b3–6. This passage, and the one in the next blocked quotation, will be revisited in §4. But for the present, it is important to note that the equation ἀγαθόν and ὠφέλιμον will play an important role in *Ascent to the Good* where Plato will force us to decide “for whom” τὸ ὠφέλιμον is beneficial in *Chrm.* (see especially 169–72). But precisely because the dividing line that connects that book to this one is the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful, it is necessary to distinguish Xenophon from Plato on a crucial point, particularly in the midst of this section’s ongoing love fest, and before reaching their joint victory over the sophists. Xenophon’s Socrates and Xenophon himself may well have equated τὸ καλόν with τὸ ὠφέλιμον and therefore relativized it to the task for which it proved beneficial (see §8 on *Memorabilia* 3.8.6–18 and 4.6.9) but Plato did not (*Smp.* 211a3–4) indeed the reason that the ascent to τὸ καλόν comes first *is because he did not*. See Rachel Barney, “Notes on Plato on the *Kalon* and the Good,” *Classical Philology* 105, no. 4 (October 2010), 363–377. For a second equally important and similar difference, see §5 on *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4.

one takes pleasure from τὰ καλά, i.e., the things that are beautiful, honorable, fine, noble, and admirable (351c1–2). At the start, then, he hesitates to state baldly: “all the pleasant things [τὰ ἡδέα] are good and the painful ones bad” (351d1–2). It has already become clear that Socrates finds a way to overcome *that* hesitation, and now the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful destroys its (honorable) basis.

The ramifications of adding the new Equation are not, however, immediately clear, and the alleged connection to Xenophon’s *ιέναι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόνους* only begins to become apparent in what Socrates says next:

Socrates: ‘Then surely,’ I went on, ‘right into bad things [ἐπὶ τὰ κακά] no one willingly goes or toward [ἐπὶ] the things that he thinks to be bad; nor is this, as it seems, in human nature: to wish to go forth [ιέναι] into [ἐπὶ] things he thinks to be bad instead of the good things [τὰ ἀγαθά].¹²³

Although *ιέναι* and *ἐπὶ* have not yet appeared side-by-side as in Xenophon, and even though it would be easy enough to equate *τοὺς πόνους* with τὰ ἀγαθά rather than τὰ κακά, it is more difficult to equate Xenophon’s *πόνουι* with “pleasant things [τὰ ἡδέα]” as required by the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant, and indeed he has made it obvious that it is precisely because those labors are *unpleasant* that they make the acquisition of virtue possible, caught as it is only with difficulty.

But little by little it becomes evident that Socrates is coming dangerously close to getting the sophists to agree that nobody is willing to *ιέναι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόνους* for the sake of virtue if those labors, however admirable or beneficial to the city, are painful *and therefore bad*. Those who refuse to do so are not (we are asked to believe) Xenophon’s “by nature worst,”¹²⁴ but suffer only from a lack of wisdom, which enters the Final Argument at 358c3. With *ἐπὶ τὰ κακά* introduced at 358c6–7 and *ιέναι* added at 358d2, we will be offered seven additional variations of the phrase—Socrates will substitute “the terrible things [τὰ δεινά]” for τὰ κακά in the last three of them¹²⁵—until Protagoras introduces the subject of “going forth into war [εἰς τὸν πόλεμον *ιέναι*]” (359e3–4). Naturally the subject of war has figured prominently in Xenophon’s encomium of hunting: since hunters are able to bed down in rough conditions, they will be good guardians,¹²⁶ in attacking they will be able to “go forth [ἐπ-ιέναι]” and follow instructions, when stationed in the front they will not leave their formations “on account of being able to endure

123. 358c6–d2.

124. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.21.

125. 358e3, 358e6, 359c3 (2), 359c6 (*ἐπὶ τὰ δεινά*), 359d1, 359d2 (*ἐπὶ τὰ δεινά*), and 359d5–6 (quoted below).

126. Note *φύλακες* at Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.2.

[καρτερεῖν],¹²⁷ when the enemy takes flight they will pursue them rightly and safely in any terrain, and in case of defeat, “they will be able both to save themselves but not ignobly [μὴ αἰσχροῶς] and to save others.”¹²⁸ All of this sounds καλόν but hardly pleasant, and a soldierly reticence, in itself noble, can be seen in Xenophon’s decision not to use καλῶς, especially since there is nothing more admirable than saving others.

Naturally Socrates does not ask Protagoras if going to war is pleasant, asking instead whether this “going forth [ιέναι]” is beautiful or base (αἰσχροῶν at 359e5).¹²⁹ Only after having secured the honorable answer does Socrates remind Protagoras that they have already accepted the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (359e5–7), a fatal step when it operates in tandem with the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant to yield the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful which now forces Protagoras to admit that since going to war is noble, it is also pleasant (360a2–3). Although Protagoras clings, honorably, to the view that it is cowards who “do not wish to advance into war” (360a1–2), Socrates can use his Equations, now tripled, along with their prior agreement that nobody would advance into bad things voluntarily (358c6–d2, 358e5–6, and 359d5–6), to show that cowards are cowardly only because of their ignorance as to what is equally beautiful, good, and pleasant:

Socrates: ‘Now do the cowards knowingly refuse to go to [ιέναι ἐπὶ] what is more honorable, better, and pleasanter?’ ‘Well, if we admit that too,’ he replied, ‘we shall undo our previous admissions.’¹³⁰

Complete victory is now within sight, for it is not because they are “overcome by pleasure” that cowards (to modify Xenophon) “save themselves basely [σῶζεσθαι αἰσχροῶς],” but because they are too ignorant to realize that since going to war is καλόν, it is also good—thus beneficial (358b5–6), presumably to themselves¹³¹—and therefore pleasant. As a result, people are incorrect in thinking that the brave go “into the terrible things [ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ]” (359c5–d4) since “nobody goes into the things he believes to be terrible” (359d5–6).¹³² Once (1) cowardice has been defined as ignorance of τὰ δεινὰ

127. Cf. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.3 and *La.* beginning at 192b9; note that τὰ δεινὰ are connected to fear (δέος) at *La.* 198b5–6, and thus *Prt.* 358e3 (see previous note) is preparatory for ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ.

128. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.4.

129. See Bernd Manuwald, “Lust und Tapferkeit: Zum gedanklichen Verhältnis zweier Abschnitte in Platons *Protagoras*.” *Phronesis* 20, no. 1 (1975), 22–50, on 40: “Zum angenehmen Leben führend—also καλόν und ἀγαθόν, ist jetzt die Rangfolge umgekehrt: καλόν und ἀγαθόν—also ἡδύ. Die Rangfolge wird—unter Verletzung der Logik—gerade auf den Kopf gestellt, und es ist sicher ein Zweck der Einführung der Begriffe καλόν und ἀγαθόν im Zwischenstück, diese Umkehrung zu ermöglichen und als Gegensatz zur hedonistischen Relation der Werte deutlich zu machen.” For *ἰέναι ἐπὶ*, see 33–36.

130. 360a4–6.

131. See earlier note on what is ὠφέλιμον in Plato and Xenophon.

132. The Socratic Paradox will be considered in §4 below.

(360c6–7 and 360d3)—with neither war nor (presumably) the πόνοι that prepare hunters for it included among those (for they are now τὰ μὴ δεινά of 360c6, 360d1, and 360d4–5)—and (2) its opposite defined as wisdom (360d1–2), Socrates exploits the same kind of chain reaction that produced the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful from the two prior equations to reach (3) courage is wisdom (360d4–5). Reduced to nodding his head at (1) and (2), Protagoras falls silent without nodding at (3), and when Socrates asks him why, he tells him to finish by himself (360d8). Socrates refuses:

Socrates: ‘One thing only,’ I said, ‘will I still be asking you: if, as at the start [τὸ πρῶτον], certain people still seem to you to be most ignorant and yet most brave?’ ‘You seem to me to φιλονικεῖν, Socrates, (thus causing) me to be the answerer [φιλονικεῖν μοι, ἔφη, δοκεῖς, ὃ Σώκρατες, τὸ ἐμὲ εἶναι τὸν ἀποκρινόμενον],¹³³ therefore I will gratify you and say that from the things that have been confirmed, it seems to me to be impossible.’¹³⁴

Translating the verb φιλονικεῖν is difficult, but its fundamental meaning—“to love victory”—must not be obscured, especially since it is emphatic by position. My own sense is that the reason his words are difficult to translate is because Protagoras is flabbergasted, but that he gets off to a good start: Socrates has mopped the floor with him *because that is what Socrates intended to do*,¹³⁵ and it is because φιλονικεῖν applies perfectly to his intentions and their consequences, that he now rubs salt in the sophist’s wounds. Naturally Socrates denies this:

Socrates: ‘Not,’ said I, ‘on account of anything else am I asking all of these things besides wishing to investigate how things stand concerning virtue [πῶς ποτ’ ἔχει τὰ περὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς; ‘how the things concerning virtue stand’] and whatever virtue [ἡ ἀρετή] is itself.’¹³⁶

The connection to *Cynegeticus* is striking: while Xenophon appears to be teaching us how to hunt for animals, he is really showing how virtue can be caught. In *Protagoras*, by contrast, although Socrates appears to be on virtue’s trail, he is really hunting animals, and he has just caught some “big game” in the person of Protagoras.

If Plato had written the thirteenth and final chapter of *Cynegeticus* in order to create a bridge between it and his *Protagoras*, he could scarcely have done

133. Cf. “I see, Socrates, you have set your heart on making me your answerer” (Lamb).

134. 360d8–e5.

135. Cf. Ann N. Michelini, “Socrates Plays the Buffoon: Cautionary Protreptic in *Euthydemus*.” *American Journal of Philology* 121, no. 4 (Winter 2000), 509–535, on 521: “Competitiveness (φιλονικία) and the desire to win at all costs, however, are inimical to Socratic argumentation, which requires close cooperation between the interlocutors and a mutual concern for truth.” The attached note cites Vlastos, *Socrates*, 113.

136. 360e6–8.

a better job. Xenophon's treatise on hunting famously ends with a blistering and highly rhetorical attack on the sophists. In its first sentence (13.1–2), he contrasts ἀρετή with “empty pleasures,” refers to “becoming good” (cf. 345e5–6), and initiates the chapter's reliance on antithesis: while the sophists claim to lead the youth to virtue, they teach bad things instead.¹³⁷ Against the overreliance of the sophists on words,¹³⁸ Xenophon presents himself as an unsophisticated proponent of wholesome thoughts.¹³⁹ He also distinguishes his own determination to learn the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) from those who know something about it—although Socrates is not mentioned, his influence is evident throughout, as we would expect—with a merely deceptive τέχνη purveyed by the sophists:

I am a layman [ἰδιώτης εἰμι], but I know that the best thing is to be taught the good [τὸ ἀγαθὸν διδάσκεισθαι] by one's own nature, and the next best thing is to get it from those who really know something good instead of being taught by those having the art to deceive [οἱ ἐξαπατᾶν τέχνην ἔχοντες].¹⁴⁰

Central to Xenophon's critique of the sophists is the ongoing use of antithesis, and in particular by contrasting them with philosophers;¹⁴¹ the latter are concerned with insight, the former with words,¹⁴² and it is this antithesis that establishes the unity of Xenophon's *Cynegeticus*:

Therefore to guard oneself [φυλάττεσθαι] against the precepts [τὰ παραγγέλματα] of the sophists I recommend but not to disprize the thoughts [τὰ ἐνθυμήματα]

137. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.1–2 (Marchant modified): “I am surprised at the sophists, as they are called, because, though most of them profess to lead the young to virtue, they lead them to the very opposite; for we have never seen anywhere the man whose goodness was due to the sophists of our generation, neither do their contributions to literature tend to make men become good [ἀγαθοῦς γίνεσθαι] they have instead written many books on frivolous subjects, books that offer the young empty pleasures, but in which there's no virtue [αἱ μὲν ἡδοναὶ κεναί, ἀρετὴ δ' οὐκ ἔνι], and to read them in the hopes of learning something from them is mere waste of time for they keep one from useful occupations and teach what is bad.”

138. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.3 (Marchant): “Therefore their grave faults incur my graver censure. As for the style of their writings, I complain that the language is far-fetched, and there is no trace in them of wholesome maxims by which the young might be trained to virtue.”

139. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.5 (Marchant): “I daresay that I do not express myself in the language of a sophist; in fact, that is not my object: my object is rather to give utterance to wholesome thoughts that will meet the needs of readers well educated in virtue. For words will not educate, but maxims [γνώμαι], if well found.”

140. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.4 (Marchant modified). Note (1) the connection between Xenophon's two ways of learning and the dilemma presented to Alcibiades (see Introduction on *Alc. I* 106d4–5), and (2) Plato's ability to use this τέχνη to teach τὸ ἀγαθόν.

141. Cf. Gabriel Danzig, “Alcibiades versus Pericles: Apologetic Strategies in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*,” *Greece & Rome* 61, no. 1 (April 2014), 7–28, on 10n3: “Xenophon does not make a categorical distinction between Socrates and the sophists in the manner of Plato.”

142. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.6: “Many others also blame the sophists of our generation—and not the philosophers—because they show themselves to be wise [σοφίζεσθαι] in words, not in thoughts.”

of the philosophers [οἱ φιλόσοφοι]; for the sophists are hunting [θηρᾶσθαι] the rich and young [πλουστοὶ καὶ νέοι] but the philosophers are equally friends to all [πᾶσι κοῖνοι καὶ φίλοι], for neither do they prize nor disprize the fortunes of men.¹⁴³

By giving Protagoras the opportunity to make his “sales pitch,”¹⁴⁴ and by staging a contest between the archetypical philosopher and the most seductive of the sophists, Plato dramatizes this sentence in *Protagoras*. And Xenophon’s description of the sophists as hunting the young and rich is so Platonic—the parallel with *Sophist* is obvious (*Sph.* 222a2 and 223b4)¹⁴⁵—that the thirteenth chapter has become the principal basis for denying Xenophon’s authorship of *Cynegeticus*. In particular, the antithesis between sophists and philosophers has been used to justify a post-Platonic date for what otherwise appears to be a youthful work of Xenophon, and intended for a youthful audience.

The first to deny Xenophon’s authorship of *Cynegeticus* was Lodewijk Caspar Valckenaer (1715–1785),¹⁴⁶ but Ludwig Rademacher (1867–1952) made a detailed case for excising it from the *corpus Xenophonticum* at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Thanks to Hermann Breitenbach (1883–1967), who followed his lead,¹⁴⁸ its inauthenticity is presently taken as established in Germany;¹⁴⁹ fortunately, V. J. Gray has recently renewed opposition to its excision among Anglophone scholars.¹⁵⁰ Rademacher usefully brought Plato

143. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.9.

144. With τὰ παραγγέλματα (13.9), cf. “the purport of what I profess [τὸ ἐπάγγελμα ὃ ἐπαγγέλομαι]” (319a6–7).

145. The theme of hunting becomes especially prominent in *Sophist*, where the sophist, Socrates, and the Eleatic Stranger (*Sph.* 235a10–c4; see also 218d4.) are all identified as hunters, opening the possibility that the hunter’s hunter is himself being hunted (see *Guardians on Trial*, 49 and 78–79). Naturally there are more significant connections between *Prt.* and the Eleatic Dyad than those mediated by *Cynegeticus*; see *Guardians on Trial*, 146n266 on *Sph.* and 125n89, 138n233, and 145–46n262, on *Plt.*

146. See Ludovicus Casparus Valckenaerus, *Diatribae de Aristobulo Judaeo, Philosopho Peripatetico Alexandrino* (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1806), 114n27. He confines his suspicion to some of those mentioned in the catalogue of Chiron’s alleged disciples at 1.2: “si sunt ista Xenophontis.”

147. L. Rademacher, “Ueber den *Cynegeticus* des Xenophon” (I and II). *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* (n.f.) 51 (1896), 596–629 and 52 (1897), 13–41.

148. H. R. Breitenbach, “Xenophon von Athen,” in *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* 9 A.2, 1569–1928 (1967), especially 1910–1921, where he refers (1913) to “die Unechtheit des ganzen *Kynegeticus*, eine These die L. Rademacher aufgenommen und in eindringlichen Stil- und Sprachanalysen mit an Sicherheit grenzender Wahrscheinlichkeit bewiesen hat.”

149. In addition to C. Joachim Classen, “Xenophons Darstellung der Sophistik und der Sophisten.” *Hermes* 112, no. 2 (Second Quarter, 1984), 154–167, on 154n1, see Rainer Nickel, *Xenophon: Leben und Werk* (Marburg: Tectum, 2016), 158–160. For criticism of Rademacher (in Latin) by a German scholar, see W. A. Baehrens, “De *Kynegetico Xenophonteo*.” *Mnemosyne* (n.s.) 54, parts 2/3 (1926), 130–145; he reviews the work of his countrymen on 130; note the curious concentration of attention to the question between 1911 and 1920.

150. See Gray, “Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus*,” 171: “It will never be possible to prove that Xenophon did write the *Cynegeticus*, only that he was capable of doing so. Because of this I need to argue as strongly as possible against the currently accepted opinion. This means pointing out other weaknesses in Rademacher’s argument.” For “renewed,” see Herbert Richards, “*The Minor Works of Xenophon*.”

into the center of the dispute: only in Plato's dialogues, and thus nowhere else in Xenophon,¹⁵¹ do we find the sharp distinction between philosophers and sophists.¹⁵² On this basis, he concluded that Plato's *Sophist* must predate *Cynegeticus*.¹⁵³ Since Xenophon's Socrates contrasts himself with sophists because *they* sell their knowledge while he dispenses his freely,¹⁵⁴ and since both Xenophon and Plato depict Socrates arguing with Hippias, this is a curious basis for excision: there is no need to assume that Xenophon depended on Plato in a case where both are far more likely to have depended on the historical Socrates. No more compelling is Rademacher's argument that "the author of the *Cynegeticus*," whose title proves that he coined the adjective *κυνηγετικός* (cf. *ἱππαρχικός* and *οἰκονομικός*) could not have coined the adjective *σοφιστικός*,¹⁵⁵ and therefore must have depended on Plato's *Sophist*.¹⁵⁶

Meanwhile, a curious feature of Breitenbach's erudite hatchet job is that it combines a strategic insistence on the work's unity¹⁵⁷—he is determined to

(Continued)," *Classical Review* 12 (1898), 383–390, and Marchant, *Xenophontis Opera Omnia* 5, 174–175. More recently, see Ralph Doty, "Figures of Speech: Philological Argument for and against Xenophon's Authorship of *Cynegeticus*," *Manuscripta* 45, no. 1 (2004), 19–24.

151. Cf. Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.1.13, and *Memorabilia*, 4.2.1; since I take both "Theopompus" and "Euthydemus" (see above) to be Xenophon himself, these texts chart his course from a pre-Socratic admiration of the sophists to the philosopher he became. On Theopompus, see Hartmut Erbe, "Xenophon's *Anabasis*," in Vivienne J. Gray (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Xenophon*, 476–501 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 494–95: "In several manuscripts, presumably already in antiquity [see *apparatus criticus* for line 19 in Marchant, *Xenophontis opera omnia* 3 on 2.1.12], the conclusion intended by the author was made, and it was assumed that the Athenian *Theopompus* was none other than Xenophon, who had been 'sent by god' on this march, or rather 'guided by god.'"

152. Rademacher, "Cynegeticus des Xenophon" (II), 18: "Die bis zu scharfster Gegensätzlichkeit durchgeführte Sonderung der Begriffe φιλόσοφος und σοφιστής findet sich für uns literarisch nachweisbar zunächst ganz allein in den platonischen Schriften."

153. So too Breitenbach, "Xenophon," 1914.

154. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.6.13 (Marchant): "To this [sc. the charge that in dispensing his wisdom freely, Socrates is just but not wise] Socrates replied: 'Antiphon, it is common opinion among us in regard to beauty [ἡ ὄρα] and wisdom that there is an honorable and a shameful way of bestowing them. For to offer one's beauty [ἡ ὄρα] for money to all comers is called prostitution; but we think it virtuous to become friendly with a lover who is known to be a man of honor.' Cf. ἡ ὄρα of Alcibiades at 309a2.

155. Rademacher, "Cynegeticus des Xenophon" (II), 23: "Hat X. wirklich als Jüngling den *Cynegeticus* verfasst, so muss man ihm auch wohl die Ehre anthun, ihn für den Schöpfer des Wortes σοφιστικός mit seinem durchaus eigenartig bestimmten Begriff zu halten, eines Wortes, das freilich dann in den späteren Schriften nicht mehr vorkommt."

156. Rademacher, "Cynegeticus des Xenophon" (II), 23 (continued from previous note): "Wahrscheinlicher ist aber dies Adjektiv als eine Erfindung des Platon anzusehen, die im *Gorgias* [Grg. 463b6; cf. *Prt.* 316d3] mit anderen Bildungen auf -ικός auftritt und in den platonischen Schriften als Gegensatz zu σοφός viel gebraucht wird, auch in der späteren Zeit eine Rolle zu spielen berufen ist. Wenn es *Cyneg.* 13. 7 heisst: καίτοι γέγραπται γε οὕτως, ἵνα ὀρθῶς ἐξῆι, καὶ μὴ σοφιστικούς ποιῆ ἀλλὰ σοφοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς, so versteht man diese Worte erst recht bei Vergleichung mit Platons *Sph.* 268b." He then quotes *Sph.* 268b10–c4. Note that the adjective σοφιστικός is used by Protagoras (died c. 420) to describe his art (ἡ σοφιστικὴ τέχνη) at 316d3; if we are looking for the word's father, he seems a natural choice.

157. See Breitenbach, "Xenophon," 1917–1918; the thirteenth chapter is inseparable from the twelfth: "Das 13. Kapitel aber für unecht und von 'Herausgeber' verfaßt zu erklären, geht nicht an, da es inhaltlich aufs engste mit Kap. 12 zusammenhängt . . . und Kap. 12 seinerseits führt 1.18 weiter." He naturally also notes the reference to the first chapter at 12.18.

excise the treatise as a whole¹⁵⁸—with a vitriolic contrast between the great ability for literary arrangement Xenophon displays across a wide variety of genres,¹⁵⁹ and *Cynegeticus*:

But nothing, not even the unanimity with which antiquity regarded this work as Xenophon's, justifies us to credit him with so great a monstrosity as to append to a technical treatise on hunting with dogs such a clumsy attack on the sophists.¹⁶⁰

Reading *Protagoras* with the hypothesis that Plato wrote it with *Cynegeticus* in mind overcomes Breitenbach's objection by revealing the treatise's unity: a philosopher and a sophist meet each other as rival hunters, and the philosopher not only proves to be more successful in hunting Alcibiades—the flower of Athens, and foremost among “the young and rich”—but ends up *hunting and capturing* his rival hunter as well. Indeed it is by hunting, trapping, and catching Protagoras that Socrates captures Alcibiades' attention (see §1). In this way, it is Plato who offers the best response to Breitenbach by illuminating the unity of *Cynegeticus* in *Protagoras*.

Indeed the interpretive effect is mutual and symbiotic: *Protagoras* reveals the unifying principle of *Cynegeticus* while *Cynegeticus* does the same for *Protagoras*. Pleasure holds the key to the latter. In contrast with the “difficult roads” Plato's guardians will need to travel,¹⁶¹ the sophists lack a pleasure-resistant commitment to τὸ καλόν, and Plato gives Protagoras the opportunity to advertise his wares—while emphasizing that it will not be laborious to acquire them (318d7–e5)—because Xenophon has already exposed him for what he is at 13.9: “I am advising you to guard yourselves against the messages of the sophists, but not to disprize the thoughts [ἐνθυμήματα] of the philosophers.” The ἐνθυμήματα of the philosophers make it possible to confuse them with the sophists,¹⁶² and sorting the one from the other will

158. Numerous attempts had been made to detach objectionable portions of the text while salvaging the remainder as authentic. Among these, see Joh. Mewaldt, “Die Composition des Xenophontischen *Kynegetikos*.” *Hermes* 46, no. 1 (1911), 70–92.

159. Cf. Breitenbach, “Xenophon,” 1914: “X. zeigt sonst in allen seinen Werken eine ausgesprochene Fähigkeit der Disposition und ein tadelloses Stilempfinden gegenüber den verschiedenen literarischen Genera.”

160. Breitenbach, “Xenophon,” 1914. Cf. “Außerdem ist der Angriff gegen die Sophisten überhaupt schlecht am Platze und zudem von größter Primitivität.”

161. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 12.2 (Marchant modified): “In the first place, when marching over rough roads [ὁδοὶ χαλεπαῖ] under arms, they will not tire: accustomed to carry arms for capturing wild beasts, they will bear up under their tasks. Again, they will be capable of sleeping on a hard bed and to be good guardians [φύλακες] of the place assigned to them.”

162. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.13 (Marchant modified): “Moreover, from the very attempt [sc. to be an effective hunter] they become better [βελτίους γίνονται] in many ways and wiser; and the reason why we will teach: for unless they abound in labors [πόννοι] and inventions [ἐνθυμήματα] and precautions [ἐπιμελείαι], they cannot capture game.” The importance of ἐπιμελεία has been hammered from the start: see 1.4, 1.12, and 1.17; it will be hammered again in *Alc. I*, with the young man's question at 124b7 being particularly significant. Cf. “how we can become as best as possible [ὅτι βέλτιστοι γενοίμεθα]” at *Alc. I* 124b10–c1. This will be discussed further in §6.

be an ongoing project in the Academy.¹⁶³ But the humor involved begins in *Cynegeticus*, where Xenophon eschews the use of rhetoric in the very sentences that are most cleverly constructed.¹⁶⁴ Beginning with a mythological catalogue of dubious veracity and ending with an eloquent attack on those who attach too much importance to eloquence,¹⁶⁵ the treatise gradually moves beyond the transmission of a virtue-producing τέχνη to a poetic revelation of a visible, immortal, and all-seeing ἀρετή, unseen by its pleasure-loving opponents (12.21).¹⁶⁶ This same upward motion will carry Plato's readers from *Protagoras* to *Symposium*,¹⁶⁷ constituting "an Ascent to the Beautiful" that initially lures some of us with the deceptively pleasure-friendly siren's song of "the art of measurement."

Made conspicuous by Protagoras' initial resistance, the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant (for the balance of this section, simply "the Equation") is principally responsible for his defeat. Whether or not the dialogue's action is best understood as a successful hunt, recognizable as such by the early reference to κυνηγέσιον, not even a careless and neophyte observer of *Protagoras* could miss the fact that Socrates has bested Protagoras in the ἀγών at the dialogue's center. If watching the capture of a nimble hare can cause the kind of response Xenophon describes (5.33), the spectacle of Protagoras' defeat is even more delightful, especially since so many scholars have taken Plato's portrait of the lithe and graceful sophist to be sympathetic. But since the role

163. See David D. Corey, *The Sophists in Plato's Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), including 295n31.

164. See L'Allier, "Why Did Xenophon Write," 485–486, especially: "But once we posit that Xenophon deliberately uses the tools of ancient sophistry himself, the difficulties begin to evaporate, since we can now look at this chapter as a defense of the text of the *Cynegeticus* rather than as a general attack on the sophists. Viewed in those terms Xenophon's attack is a sort of diversion, since the author focuses on the mistakes of the sophists in order to show that he himself is truly a philosopher when compared to them—while at the same time making clear that he can write as artistically as they do." Plato, through Socrates, does the same thing in *Prt.*

165. L'Allier, "Why Did Xenophon Write," 486: "He [sc. Xenophon] argues against those who confuse means, content and goals, precisely because he believes that a reader could confuse the *Cynegeticus*, with its grandiloquent introduction and rhetorical ending, with the work of a sophist." Once again, the same applies to *Prt.*, *mutatis mutandis*. Because he is not considering *Prt.*, L'Allier misses the parallel to Plato and Socrates at 494–495: "The main difference is that, for Plato, the sophist is not a role model, whereas Xenophon tries to use the individualistic hunter as an ideal. However, at first sight this new hunter, careful to preserve his own property and fond of traps and deception is, in relation to traditional hunting, what the sophist is to the philosopher. Thus the *Cynegeticus* appears sophistic both in its form (rhetorical and technical) and in its content (how to use traps and deception)." To catch the sophists, Socrates must deploy their own deceptive tricks against them; to attract students to the Academy, Plato uses Protagoras to make his own sale's pitch.

166. See Nili Alon Amit, "Xenophon's Virtue Personified," *Kentron* 32 (2016), 137–150.

167. Cf. Robert C. Bartlett, "On the *Symposium*," in Bartlett (ed.), *Xenophon, The Shorter Writings: Oeconomy of Socrates to the Jury, Oeconomicus, and Symposium; Translations, with Interpretive Essays and Notes* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 194: "Hermogenes secures his well-being with the greatest imaginable security by acting for the sake of what is noble in the spirit of perfect gentlemanliness, or by forgetting considerations of his own well being." *Eros* alone is capable of overcoming the self-contradiction contained in this thoughtful sentence.

of the Equation in this defeat must be obvious to anyone who has been able to follow the argument, a different connection to *Cynegeticus* suggests itself, one that justifies the suggestion that Socrates has caught “big game.” In the eleventh chapter, Xenophon recommends the use of a drug to poison these larger and more dangerous animals:

They are caught [άλίσκεται] in the mountains by an aconite-based drug [φάρμακον ἀκονιτικόν] on account of difficult terrain [δυσχωρία]: the hunters [participial form of θηρᾶν] use this as bait [LSJ A.2 on παραβάλλειν], mixing it into that which delights each [χαίρειν] around water and wherever else they go.¹⁶⁸

To the extent that Protagoras is caught (άλίσκεται), the Equation functions as Socrates’ φάρμακον ἀκονιτικόν, and this explains Protagoras’ initial resistance: he will not accept it until it is mixed with something else that delights him.

By considering Plato’s Socrates as a Xenophon-trained hunter, descending as Odysseus unto the δυσχωρία of Callias’ Garden where the sophist is surrounded by admirers, students, and colleagues, it becomes apparent that he mixes the Equation with three other more palatable delights. First he shows that it is *unpalatable to the Many* who persist in distinguishing good pleasures from bad ones (351c2–3). Despite having the necessary contempt for οἱ πολλοί (353a7–8), Protagoras refuses to swallow the bait on this basis (351c7–d7) but the second attempt succeeds: Socrates mixes the fatal drug with an eloquent and influential¹⁶⁹ speech on the omnipotence of knowledge (352a8–c7), a dish that Protagoras says it would be base (αἰσχρόν) for him to refuse (352c8–d3). A ridicule-inducing application of the Equation (355b4–c1) follows, precluding the possibility that knowledge can be “overcome by pleasure” (354e3–d6), and this prepares for “the measuring art” (355d6–357c1). But Socrates is determined to capture Hippias and Prodicus as well, and they swallow the poison (358a5–b3) only after he offers them a knowledge-valorizing (357c1–4), “overcome by pleasure”-eliminating (357c4–6 and 357e2), Equation-based (357d3–6), measurement-affirming (357d6–7), and Many-answering (358a1) sale’s pitch (357d1–e8) that attributes to ignorance and greed a refusal to remunerate them (357e7).

In offering the foregoing Xenophon-inspired overview of the Final Argument, it is not my purpose to flatten out the interpretive δυσχωρία that is Plato’s *Protagoras* by offering a revisionist reading of the dialogue that

168. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 11.2; cf. Marchant’s translation: “On the mountains they are sometimes poisoned, owing to the difficulty of the ground, with aconite. Hunters put it down mixed with the animals’ favorite food round pools and in other places that they frequent.”

169. For Aristotle and *Prt.* 352c1–2, see *Ascent to the Good*, lxvii–l.

ends up being as monochromatic as any other. It is my purpose, however, to show how *Cynegeticus* might have made such a reading plausible from the start, and by that I mean a reading that resists the view that since the Equation was accepted by Socrates in the dialogue, it must have been accepted by Plato while writing it. As “the preview of coming attractions” in §1 should have made clear, Plato only gradually shows his hand, and until the Equation and the balancing-act account of virtue are repudiated in *Gorgias* and *Phaedo* respectively,¹⁷⁰ there is plenty of room for a dead-pan reading like Aristotle’s. Indeed this is how Plato *is hunting us*: in addition to offering us a delightful spectacle, with a chase and capture at its climax, he also offers us a wonder-provoking interpretive conundrum, and it is precisely because *Protagoras* deliberately defies any monochromatic reading, whether dead-pan or revisionist, that our initial encounter with it inevitably makes us eager for more.

Nor does my case for the interpretive usefulness of *Cynegeticus* depend on linking the Equation to the use of a φάρμακον ἀκονιτικόν in Xenophon’s account of hunting lions, leopards, panthers, and bears; the same demurrer also applies to many other details in earlier parts of the treatise.¹⁷¹ At least as important as all of these collectively is the underlying critique of pleasure in the twelfth chapter. In direct opposition to the Final Argument stands Xenophon’s distinction between good and bad pleasures, the reference to being overcome by the many bad pleasures, and his claim that this (existent and dangerous) condition (cf. τοῦτο τὸ πάθημα at *Prt.* 357c7) can itself be overcome only by a laborious hunt for virtue.¹⁷² If Protagoras is hunting the young and rich, and Socrates is hunting both Alcibiades and the sophists, it is important to recognize that Plato *is hunting us*, his readers, in the benign and charming sense that his *Protagoras* is designed to capture our attention and

170. In fact the greatest revelation about *Protagoras* in *Phaedo* may be Socrates’ admission there (*Phd.* 91a1–3) that he tends to argue competitively (φιλονίκως) and not just philosophically (φιλοσόφως), thereby confirming the verdict of the hapless sophist.

171. In addition to the initial κωνηγέσιον, these include Xenophon’s awareness of the merely pro-paedeutic role of hunting (*Cynegeticus*, 2.1), the many references to the virtues (1.11, 12.7, 13.1–2) starting with justice (1.1), the rather anomalous role played by courage among these (3.5, 7.8, and 10.10), the early appearance of Homer (1.11–16), the early start (6.6, 6.13, 9.3, and 9.17), the man-hunt of Hippocrates (310c3–5), Prodicus still abed (315d4–6), the use of bait to catch Protagoras, the role of traps (9.16), a skillful hunter’s reliance on others, the reference to φύλακες or “guardians” (12.2), the ongoing concern with the training of σκύλακες (7.6–7 and chapter 7 generally), and the necessity for deception (3.7 and 3.9–10). For the σκύλαξ/φύλαξ relationship, see *Plato the Teacher*, 86–87.

172. It is, of course, possible to respond that Xenophon’s pleasure-based critique aligns him, against Plato, with the Many, but the fact that Socrates scores his upset victory over the leading sophists of the day points to a third point of intersection with *Cynegeticus*—in addition to the pleasure-critique and the accumulation of allusive parallels—its final chapter short-circuits the attempt to separate Plato from Xenophon on this basis.

welcome us into the garden of the Muses that was and always will remain Plato's eternal Academy.¹⁷³

And in the library of that Academy,¹⁷⁴ Xenophon's writings will forever belong between Thucydides' *History*—itself placed after Herodotus—and Plato's own dialogues. If the priority of *Protagoras* in the Platonic Reading Order is admitted, and its many connections to *Cynegeticus* acknowledged, the traditional order of Xenophon's writings begins to look Academic in origin. Starting with the seven-book *Hellenica*, the seven books of Xenophon's Socratic writings—the four-book *Memorabilia*, *Oeconomicus*, *Symposium*, *Symposium*, and *Apology of Socrates*—are placed between it and Xenophon's seven-book masterpiece, the *Anabasis of Cyrus*, the center of that order's five parts. After it comes the eight-book *Cyropaedia*, followed by the eight discrete works that constitute Xenophon's *scripta minora*. Although visible throughout, it is in the arrangement of these brief works in the fifth part that the hand of a master organizer is most obvious. Standing first are *Hiero* and *Agesilaus*, the only works among the eight named for a person. *Agesilaus* is followed by *The Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* because of the Spartan connection.¹⁷⁵ *The Constitution of the Athenians* is perfectly placed even if Xenophon didn't write it, and is followed by *Ways and Means* thanks to its Athens-specific purpose, one that it shares with *Cavalry Officer*. *Concerning Horsemanship* follows naturally while outdoor sports explain its connection to the final *Cynegeticus*. In this section, I have tried to show that between its culminating attack on the sophists and the Friend's initial reference to a κωνηγέσιον, *Cynegeticus* is appropriately followed—in both Reading Order and Order of Composition—by Plato's *Protagoras*.

SECTION 3. TAKING THE MEASURE OF PLATO'S PROTAGORAS

Near the end of his life, Henry Jackson suggested that there was a painting in Aristotle's lecture hall that depicted a scene from *Protagoras* on the basis of the following text in the *Prior Analytics*:

173. See Riginos, *Platonica*, §75.

174. If there is any irrefragable evidence that the Academy included a library in Plato's day, I've not come across it, senseless though it would be to deny that it did; see Konstantinos Sp. Staikos, *Books and Ideas: The Library of Plato and the Academy* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

175. Cf. Michael Lipka, *Xenophon's Spartan Constitution: Introduction, Text, Commentary* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 24: "In the *Protagoras* Plato shows himself informed about the Spartan fist fights, the special training of Spartan women and the xenelasiai (cf. Pl. *Prt.* 342b–d with [Xenophon, *Spartan Constitution*] 1.4, 4.4–6, 14.4)."

Thus it is obvious that some things are naturally predicable of nothing, for broadly speaking every sensible thing is such that it cannot be predicated of anything—except in an accidental sense; for we sometimes say ‘That white thing is Socrates’ or ‘That which is approaching is Callias.’¹⁷⁶

Having already used other stray remarks to indicate that his classroom also had a painting depicting Socrates in *Phaedo*,¹⁷⁷ Jackson commented on what Aristotle was pointing to when he said the word “that” twice:

Is there then in the story of the sophistical congress at Callias’ house any one moment which would give a painter an opportunity of representing Callias approaching Socrates? At 335c Socrates becomes or pretends to become restive and impatient of Protagoras’ continuous discourse, and rises to go, whereupon Callias, their host, intervenes.¹⁷⁸

Although Jackson’s astute “becomes or pretends to become” touches on the crucial question of Socrates’ deliberate use of deception in *Protagoras*, the important point for now is that if there were such a painting, it depicted the dialogue’s pivotal moment.

Socrates’ “Feigned Departure” (335c3–8) calls forth a flurry of speeches from the dialogue’s minor characters. First “the approaching Callias” speaks (335c8–d5), next Alcibiades for the first time (336b7–d5), and then Critias (336d6–e4). After them come the two great set pieces of Prodicus (337a1–c4) and Hippias (337c5–338b1), by far their most significant contributions to *Protagoras*. Finally, after Socrates deftly scotches Hippias’ attempt to get himself appointed as guardian of τὸ μέτριον (338b4–c6), Protagoras, now recognizing “what must be done” (ποιητέον at 338e2–3), “having been compelled to agree to question” (338e4), introduces the poem of Simonides (τὸ ἄσµα, beginning at 339b4) by means of which he will attempt to show that it “has not been made beautifully and rightly” (339b7–8). And thus begins the second and decisive second part of the ἀγών between Protagoras and Socrates, with the fatal terms arising from Alcibiades’ intervention reiterated right before the reluctant sophist begins: “and when he [sc. Protagoras] had questioned [Socrates] sufficiently, once again he would give an account, answering briefly” (338e4–5).

What makes Jackson’s explanation of Aristotle’s example so significant is that the Feigned Departure of Socrates at 335c8 constitutes the midpoint of

176. Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, 43a33–36 (Hugh Tredennick translation).

177. Henry Jackson, “Aristotle’s Lecture-Hall and Lectures,” *Journal of Philology* 35 (1920), 191–200 on 194–95. For Jackson’s importance and impact, see—in addition to notes in the Introduction—*Plato the Teacher*, 129n34, 319n76, and 321n80, *Guardians in Action*, 347n184, and the Index entry in *Guardians on Trial*, 517–18.

178. Jackson, “Aristotle’s Lecture-Hall,” 195.

Protagoras,¹⁷⁹ and thus constitutes the key to its structure. This structure is the subject of this section, but its very existence gives rise to a preliminary question. Those who teach the Platonic dialogues have long recognized the value of requiring students to outline them, but unfortunately we have no evidence of which I am aware that either Plato or later ancient Platonists required the same of theirs. The question is, then, should we imagine that they did? What can be said with certainty is that *Protagoras* proves to be remarkably symmetrical, and I will argue here that an awareness of its structural symmetries proves to be useful for recognizing (in Guthrie's words) "how the dialogue should be read" quite apart from his astute proposal that it should be read as a play (see §1), and more specifically as a play whose "Act II" begins after Socrates' Feigned Departure.

With the parallel between 314e3–317e3 and 335c8–338e6 having been recognized—and the roughly equal amount of text devoted to each is remarkable—the parallel structure of the two parts becomes obvious. In both acts of the *ἄγων*, a lengthy monologue, briefly introduced, is then followed by dialogue. To be more specific, just as the Great Speech of Protagoras (320c2–328d2) is introduced by a challenge from Socrates (318a1–320c1), so too is Protagoras' introductory claim that the poem of Simonides is self-contradictory (338e6–339e6) followed by Socrates' lengthy exposition and defense of the poem (339e6–347a5), beginning with calling on Prodicus for aid. Although the parallel between the Great Speech and the discussion of Simonides—the most important thing to be learned from this structural exercise—will receive the attention it deserves only at the end of this section, the remarkable textual equality between the two passages deserves immediate notice. It should also be added that Socrates' response to the Great Speech (328d3–329d2), forming the bridge between it and the dialogue that follows, is balanced with Socrates' dismissal of "the flute-girls" and the byplay surrounding it (347a6–348c4). It will be noticed that just as the challenge in the first half is longer than the second, so too is the expository aftermath of the second longer than the parallel passage in the first. Complementing the two roughly eight-page expositions are two book-ending passages, both of which occupy roughly three pages. These structural parallels look deliberate.

But at this point an obvious *asymmetry* marks the conversations that then ensue in each of the dialogue's two parts. The first (328d3–335c3) is little more than half the length of the second (348c5–362a4). In a dialogue that has proved itself so astonishingly symmetrical, this suggests that the symmetries

179. See C. L. Miller, "Two midpoints in Plato's *Protagoras*," *Modern Schoolman* 55, no. 1 (1977–1978), 71–79, on 73 ("the very midpoint"), Michael Eisenstadt, "Protagoras' Teaching in Plato's *Protagoras*," *Symbolae Osloenses* 56 (1981), 47–61, on 60n28 ("exact mid-point"), and Charles H. Kahn, "Plato and Socrates in the *Protagoras*," *Méthexis; Revista argentina de filosofía antigua* 1 (1988), 33–52, on 42: "Here, at the midpoint of the dialogue, we have a kind of intermission."

already indicated may have been merely coincidental or apparent. But Plato's artistry triumphs over this appearance: the reason that the dialectical section of the second part is longer than the corresponding section of the first is that some portion of it corresponds to *the beginning of the dialogue*, consisting first of the Frame and then of the conversation between Socrates and Hippocrates, including the comic interlude with the eunuch (309a1–314e2). When the almost six pages of this introduction are added to the seven pages of the shorter (first-part) dialogue, the result is another remarkable parity, off by less than a Stephanus page. If some portion of the Final Argument—preferably its ending—corresponds to one of the two opening scenes,¹⁸⁰ the relevant question then becomes: is it possible to determine where to divide the final dialogue so as to see that its second part corresponds with the two-part opening?

In a literary world governed by arithmetical symmetries, one might get a rough idea by subtracting the six pages of the opening from the dialogue's end at 362a4: such a calculation would put the break at around 356a, in the middle of the passage about “the measuring art.”¹⁸¹ As indicated by the analogy of using poison to catch big game in the previous section, a plausible break point occurs a bit later, after Socrates' art-based sales-pitch secures the enthusiastic endorsement of its veracity by all three sophists (358a4–5) followed by their embrace, without quibbling from Prodicus (358a7–b3), of the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant (358a5–6). It is with the strategic introduction of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful at 358b3–6 that the Final Argument reaches its final stage, and it is the resulting Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful—derived from the other two¹⁸²—that allows Socrates to prove that the brave go to war because they are knowingly choosing the pleasant over the bad.

The alleged pleasure of going to war sets up what I will call “the Xenophon Joke” of the dialogue: it is precisely by getting Protagoras to agree that

180. There is, for example, something to be said for linking Protagoras' concluding praise of Socrates (361d7–e6) to Socrates' praise for Protagoras in the Frame (309c1–d2), and in defense of a comparison based on ring-composition, the end of the dialogue (362a1–2) returns to the beginning by means of the middle (335c4–6); cf. Denyer, *Protagoras*, 204 (on 362a3): “εἰπόντες καὶ ἀκούσαντες brings us back full circle to 310a1.”

181. Cf. Malcolm Schofield, “Socrates versus Protagoras,” in Barry S. Gower and Michael C. Stokes (eds.), *Socratic Questions: New Essays on the Philosophy of Socrates and Its Significance*, 122–136 (London: Routledge, 1992), 133: “This [sc. *Prt.* 351b–357e] is the one stretch of Socratic argument in the dialogue which in my experience as a reader of articles and commentaries and especially as a teacher is found wholly compelling and absorbing as philosophy. It is a sustained and theoretically ambitious piece of thinking, palpably careful and devoid of slick short cuts (even if it doesn't work).”

182. In a dialogue where a variety of different things are equated with each other, it is remarkable that the art of Prodicus—praised by Socrates (341a1–4), implemented in the context of pleasure (337c1–4), and so clearly based on a capacity to distinguish rather than synthesizing—should be so ostentatiously ignored in practice.

there is no such thing as being overcome by pleasure that Socrates can use “pleasure” to overcome him, in other words: Protagoras is overcome because he agrees, against his better judgment, that the Pleasant is the Good. If the passage between the introduction of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful and the overthrow of Protagoras (358b3–360e5) corresponds to either the Frame or the conversation with Hippocrates, then the measurable symmetries of Plato’s *Protagoras* remain intact.¹⁸³

More readily tractable is the problem of connecting the end of *Protagoras* to the initial conversation with Hippocrates, especially since the final “we departed” indicates that the youth, who presumably departs with Socrates, has been fully weaned from his prior attraction to the sophist. The overthrow of Protagoras is, of course, intimately connected with his initial willingness to detach an unknowing courage from the rest of the virtues (360c7–e5), and between that overthrow and the departure of Socrates with Hippocrates (360e6–362a4), the question of virtue—its parts or unity—is front and center. What is not so obvious is the connection between Hippocrates and courage established, humorously, at the outset.¹⁸⁴ Here then, is another joke, and one that does not presuppose the reader’s familiarity with Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus*; indeed there are more jokes in this delightful dialogue—a few of them were indicated at the beginning of the Preface—than I am prepared to count. In the balance of this chapter, I will concentrate on only three of them, of which the Xenophon Joke is the first, although perhaps last in point of dramatic time, and also gotten (as it were) last. The second (mediating) joke will be the subject of §4, but the first, which sheds light on the dialogue’s symmetry, belongs here and involves the courage (ἀνδρεία) of Hippocrates.

Simply told: Socrates tells us at the start that he knew (participle from γινώσκειν at 310d2) the young man’s courage (ἀνδρεία at 310d3), and then proceeds to prove that rushing off to put his soul into the choric orbit of the Orpheus-like Protagoras is unwise (310d3–314b4). Quite apart from the *Cynegeticus*-inspired conceit that Hippocrates functions on *Protagoras* as either (poisoned) bait¹⁸⁵ or as “trap-watcher” once the early-rising hunters

183. To begin answering this question—for only a beginning can be made here—the first step is indicated by Reading Order: by making Alcibiades prominent by position, the *Protagoras* Frame will eventually be answered, balanced, and fully justified by *Alcibiades Major* as a whole. The reason that only a beginning can be made here is that only in §5 will I be able to analyze in detail the specific conversation in that dialogue that links Alcibiades to 358b3–360e5, i.e., the conversation about war and death (*Alc. I* 115b1–116b1) with the warlike Alcibiades that leads directly to an easily detectable misuse of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (116b2–c3). In due course, then, I will demonstrate the Alcibiades-based link between this passage (358b3–360e5) and the Frame that extends beyond the obvious connection between the Frame and *Alcibiades Major* as a whole.

184. Cf. Charles L. Griswold, “Relying on Your Own Voice: An Unsettled Rivalry of Moral Ideals in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Review of Metaphysics* 53, no. 2 (December 1999), 283–307, on 297–98.

185. Cf. *Euthd.* 272d2: *Socrates*: And as bait [δέλεαρ] for them [sc. the brothers], we will supply your sons.”

reach τὰ κυνηγέσια of Callias' Garden,¹⁸⁶ the youngster's philosophical contribution to the dialogue is that he embodies the antithesis of what Socrates will argue while hunting Protagoras: it is entirely possible to be brave without being wise. In his note on the use of ἀνδρεία at 310d3, Denyer comments:

this virtue will eventually become the focus of the discussion between Protagoras and Socrates. The discussion will start from a claim that the courageous are 'bold,' and rush toward things that the masses are afraid to approach' (349e1–3), like Hippocrates here. The discussion will conclude that 'wisdom about what is and what is not terrible is courage' (360d8). The discussion will not tell us how to square this conclusion with Socrates' definition of courage here in someone who will, at 313a1–c4, prove to be ignorant of the risks that he is running.¹⁸⁷

The important point is that it is only by recognizing this obvious and deliberate self-contradiction as a joke that we learn “how to square” the fact that Hippocrates is both courageous and unwise with the Final Argument.

The joke's takeaway, then, is that Socrates will later argue for a position—i.e., that since virtue is knowledge,¹⁸⁸ the courageous are necessarily wise—that *he knows is false*. It is above all the strangeness of Socrates that Plato uses to capture our attention, and without the intermingling of suspicion that his methods are questionable, we will not be fully caught. Of course an awareness that Socrates is prepared to use of the deceptive methods of Odysseus scarcely makes Protagoras into Achilles, even if his willingness to be sweet-talked into embracing the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant proves, via the Xenophon Joke, to be the dialectical equivalent of his Achilles' heel. In any case, it makes sense to end the portion of the Final Argument that corresponds to the Frame at, e.g., 360b3 (the final iteration of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful) and to find in 360b4–362a4 the rough equivalent of the conversation with the brave but foolish Hippocrates (311a8–314b6).

Although Socrates' recognition of Hippocrates' courage appears near the beginning of the dialogue, it is not immediately funny. In other words, it is not a joke at the start, but only becomes one in the Final Argument. And when encountered in a first reading, it is not yet funny for most even in retrospect. But since the dialogue's ongoing concern with the connection between courage and wisdom is so obvious, and since the overthrow of Protagoras is likewise so obviously connected to Socrates' argument for linking the two, it is only when readers encounter “knowing his courage” (310d2–3) *a*

186. Even without *Cynegeticus*, the three uses of ἀποδιδράσκειν (cf. 310c3 and 317a6–7) create a link between his runaway slave and Protagoras; even though the latter professes not “to run away,” Hippocrates is pursuing both.

187. Denyer, *Protagoras*, 69–70.

188. Socrates identifies without endorsing the view that whenever you learn *anything* that you previously did not know, you become better at 318b3–4.

second time that they are in a good position to get “the Hippocrates Joke.” It is this that makes 310d2–3 what I will call “a Key Passage,” a small and easily overlooked passage that unlocks and often deconstructs a much larger structure.¹⁸⁹ Another one of these (323a7–c2), enacted in the context of the Socratic Paradox, will be considered in §4.

In order to establish the contradiction between the courage of Hippocrates and his wisdom, Denyer’s comment (quoted above) aptly directs our attention to 313a1–c4, and before returning to the structural connections between the two parts of the dialogue’s *ἄγων*, this richly allusive passage is worth considering in more detail since it points to the place of *Protagoras* within even larger structures.

Socrates: And after this I said: ‘What then? Do you know into what kind of hazard [κίνδυνος] you’d be going, ready to submit your soul [ψυχῆ]?’¹⁹⁰

Although the mention of soul will prove decisive in the sequel, this initial question establishes the parallel with the wartime instantiation of the claim that “nobody goes voluntarily toward things which he thinks to be bad,”¹⁹¹ and it is this instantiation that will eventually connect 358c6–360b3 with *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 115a1–116d4). Plato is therefore preparing us for that dialogue when Socrates says:

Socrates: ‘Or if it were necessary for you to entrust [ἐπιτρέπειν] your body to something, thoroughly hazarding it to become either useful or useless, you would look around at many things, whether it is necessary so to entrust it [ἐπιτρεπτέον] or not, and summon as well your friends to a deliberation [συμβουλή], and your relatives too, considering it for many days. But concerning what you believe to be greater than your body, i.e., your soul [ψυχῆ], and in which all things that are yours [πάντα τὰ σά] either fare well [εὖ πράττειν] or ill, whether it becomes useful or useless, concerning this neither with your father nor your brother do you consult [ἐπικουεῖν], neither with any of your comrades.’¹⁹²

Since Socrates has already told his unnamed comrade that he often (θαμά) forgot Alcibiades in the company of the “more beautiful” Protagoras (309b7–9), it would perhaps be an exaggeration to identify his claim that Hippocrates is about to entrust his soul without having summoned to counsel *any* of his own comrades as the first demonstrably false thing that Socrates

189. See *Guardians in Action*, 388–90.

190. 313a1–2.

191. 358c6–d2: “*Socrates*: ‘Another thing, then,’ I said, ‘into the bad things [τὰ κακά], nobody willingly goes [ἔρχεσθαι], nor toward things he thinks are bad, nor is this, as it seems, in human nature to wish to go [ἔθέλειν ἰέναι] toward things he thinks to be bad instead of the good things [τὰ ἀγαθά].’”

192. 313a2–b1.

says in *Protagoras*. On its face, however, it is the first one that is easy to detect: it is contradicted by the fact that Hippocrates is presently *in the process* of “making counsel [συμβουλήν ποιεῖν]” (313b4) with Socrates himself.¹⁹³ Next, the first appearance of εὖ and κακῶς πράττειν—both used here in the colloquial sense of faring ill or well as opposed *doing* good things or bad ones¹⁹⁴—reminds us that even after receiving the cautionary συμβουλή from Socrates about the risk (κίνδυνος) of κακῶς πράττειν with respect to his soul, Hippocrates is nevertheless about “to do a bad thing willingly” (345d8), i.e., about to risk his most precious possession or rather simply himself. And this of course is the main point: with the claim that Hippocrates is now jeopardizing (διακινδυνεύειν at 313a3) πάντα τὰ σά, Plato introduces the central theme of *Alcibiades Major*: the care (ἐπιμελεία) of one’s ψυχή, i.e., of oneself (see section §6).

The anticipations of *Alcibiades* continue, making Hippocrates, not Alcibiades, the first interlocutor to use the expression “from what you are saying [ἐξ ὧν σὺ λέγεις]”¹⁹⁵ in an attempt to blunt the force of Socratic reasoning:

Socrates: ‘whether your soul is to be entrusted [ἐπιτρέπετον] to this recently arrived stranger [ξένος], but having heard the night before, as you say, having come at dawn about this, you make [ποιεῖν] no counsel or argument [λόγον], whether it is necessary to entrust yourself to him or not, but are ready to expend both the [money] of yourself [τὰ τε σαυτοῦ] and that [καὶ τὰ] of your friends as if already knowing completely that you must consort with Protagoras, whom you neither know [γινώσκειν], as you say, and with whom you have never conversed, naming him ‘sophist,’ but of what the sophist is to whom you are to entrust yourself, you seem unaware.’ And he, having listened: ‘It seems so, Socrates’ he said, ‘from what you are saying [ἐξ ὧν σὺ λέγεις].’¹⁹⁶

Consider here the word order Plato uses when Socrates refers to “both your money and that of your friends.” By postponing the word χρήματα, the reader encounters τὰ τε σαυτοῦ before reaching καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων χρήματα, and

193. Cf. 314b4–6. Note the use of ἴωμεν (314b6; cf. 311a2–5).

194. The equivocation involved is important, and will receive attention in section §5 in the context of *Alc. I* 116b2–5.

195. Note that just as Socrates does not challenge “the learning Greek” analogy in *Prt.* but shreds it in *Alc. I*, so too does Socrates not challenge Hippocrates here but converts Alcibiades’ recourse to the same device (ἐκ μὲν ὧν σὺ λέγεις οὐκ εἰκός at 112d10) into an important lesson—that it is the answerer not the questioner who is doing the talking—developed at length (*Alc. I* 110e1–113b7). With Alcibiades at 113b6–7, cf. Protagoras at 360e4–5.

196. 313b1–c4. Although this is the second time that Protagoras has been called simply “the stranger” (cf. 309c9), it is the first time Socrates calls him that, and students who are familiar with the Eleatic Stranger (ὁ ξένος first at *Sph.* 216b7) will be able to find numerous important and additional connections (see §1) between *Prt.* and *Sophist-Statesman*, of which another obvious one arises from comparing the opening words of *Plt.* (257a1–2) to 328d8–9 and a far more important and subtler one from comparing 313e2–314b4 with *Sph.* 234b5–e7 (see *Guardians on Trial*, 85–87).

even more than the previous link between one's ψυχή and πάντα τὰ σά, this semi-concealed appearance of “the things of oneself” once again prefigures *Alcibiades Major*, where the phrase appears frequently (beginning with *Alc. I* 127e9–128a3; cf. 128d6) as a synonym for the body.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, by linking ποιεῖν to λόγον in this passage—Hippocrates has not and cannot *make an argument* for studying with Protagoras—Plato gives his first indication of the third joke to be considered in §4.

But it is not only its link with *Alcibiades Major* that makes the dialogue with Hippocrates significant.¹⁹⁸ It is a well-worn platitude that Plato's “early dialogues” are aporetic in character, generally brief, and built around an unanswered “what is it” question. While generally agreeing that such dialogues are “early” with respect to *Republic*—*Euthyphro* being the exception (see §9)—I have found it more useful to think of them as “proleptic” (see Preface, principle §4), designed to prepare the student to begin thinking deeply about problems to be considered in later dialogues. An initial *Protagoras* is the paradigmatic example of Platonic prolepsis. It looks forward not only to its immediate sequel *Alcibiades Major*, but to *Alcibiades Minor*, *Hippias Minor*, *Symposium*, *Gorgias-Meno*, *Republic*, *Timaeus-Critias*, *Philebus*, *Sophist-Statesman*, and *Phaedo* as well, and a hypothesis has been offered to explain these connections and more. But it is also worthwhile to compare it to the traditional paradigm's notion of aporetic, and not only because the question Socrates asks Hippocrates: “what the sophist is [ὅτι ποτ' ἔστιν]” (313c1–2), function as the dialogue's τί ἐστὶ (or “what is X?”) question.

On the other hand, what makes *Protagoras* at once the κωνηγέσιον of Alcibiades and the ideal introduction to the dialogues as a whole, extends for beyond the dialogue with Hippocrates. The great ἀπορία posed by Plato's *Protagoras* is Socrates,¹⁹⁹ the wonder-provoking problem that preserved the Socratic revolution Cicero would so perfectly describe.²⁰⁰ In the opening sentence of *Alcibiades Major*, Socrates attributes to Alcibiades what he will call in *Theaetetus* the “originating principle of philosophy [ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας]” (*Tht.* 155d3), and indicates that the object of the young man's wonder is his own astonishing behavior:

197. Note that the soul/body contrast is already implied by the name “Hippocrates” thanks to the explicit reference to the doctor at 311b6; moreover, the hammered emphasis on μαθήματα for the soul (313c7, 313d5, 313e4, and 314a2) prepares for the contrast between the doctor, the farmer, and the teacher at *Am.* 134d1–e8.

198. In addition to Griswold, “Relying on Your Own Voice,” 294–303, see more recently Gro Rørstadbotten, “Turning Towards Philosophy: A Reading of *Protagoras* 309a1–314e2,” in Olof Pettersson and Vigdis Songe-Møller (eds.), *Plato's Protagoras: Essays on the Confrontation of Philosophy and Sophistry*, 137–152 (Cham: Springer, 2017).

199. For the connection of the two in *Sph.*, see *Guardians on Trial*, section §3.

200. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, 5.10.

Socrates: O son of Cleinias, I think you to be wondering [θαυμάζειν] that, having become your first lover [ἐραστής], now that the others have stopped, only I am not altered [ἀπαλλάττεσθαι], and that while the others became a crowd in talking to you, I for so many years have not even addressed you.²⁰¹

Well before Alcibiades' reply to this opening speech with θαυμάζω ("I am, in fact, wondering" at *Alc.1* 104d4) confirms that Socrates is correct, Plato has already managed to excite the reader's wonder with his Socrates: without having yet read *Symposium*, we must wonder what kind of ἐραστής he can be to Alcibiades if he has never even spoken to him; surely they can't (yet) be having sex (cf. *Alc.1* 131c5–7)! Even before explaining the yet more wondrous cause of this amazing behavior, then, Plato has already begun to engineer on the literary level the revolution in thought that will eventually relegate all previous philosophers to the status of "Presocratics." Although Aristotle will apparently confirm Plato's Socrates in making wonder the ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας,²⁰² it is for a paradigmatically Presocratic reason that he will do so: it is celestial phenomena he has in mind. Cicero, by contrast, will follow Xenophon in separating Socrates from Aristotle's cause of wonder: famously uninterested in heavenly things, Cicero's Socrates will call philosophy back down from the heavens.²⁰³ But Plato supplies the missing step: although wonder will still remain the ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας of Socratic philosophizing, Plato manages to replace wonder about celestial phenomena with wonder about Socrates. My claim is that we cannot take the full measure of *Protagoras* without realizing that it plays a crucial, introductory, and ongoing role in this larger transformation.²⁰⁴

Socrates never mentions his Sign in *Protagoras*, but it quickly makes an appearance in *Alcibiades* (*Alc.1* 103a4–b2): it is the responsible cause (τὸ αἴτιον at *Alc.1* 103a5) for the fact that Socrates has never before spoken to Alcibiades and thus that he is only now doing so. But as wondrous as the Sign itself undoubtedly is, the opening speech of Socrates in *Alcibiades* also forces Plato's readers to wonder about *Protagoras*, which begins with a discussion of Alcibiades predicated on the presumably well-known fact that Socrates is in love with him (309a1–2), and then goes on to describe both of them making speeches in the same place, and that while all three of Alcibiades' speeches are not only about Socrates but also uphold his interests in the contest with Protagoras (336b7–d5, 347b3–7, and 348b2–8), Socrates never

201. *Alc.1* 103a1–4; cf. 104c4–6: by ending the first speech with a return to its beginning, Plato further accentuates the importance of θαυμάζειν (104c4).

202. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A2 (982a12–17).

203. In addition to *Tusculan Disputations* 5.10, cf. Cicero, *Academica* 1.15, *De re publica* 1.16, and Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.2.11.

204. An indirect proof of its power to do so is the preponderant role that *Prt.* plays in shaping Aristotle's account of (the historical or actual) Socrates; on this see *Ascent to the Good*, Introduction.

actually talks, at least directly, to Alcibiades, let alone with him. Thanks to the Frame, then, it is impossible to miss that Alcibiades is of central importance in *Protagoras*, and yet the action depicted in the dialogue is perfectly consistent with the possibility that it takes place before Socrates has ever spoken to Alcibiades, i.e., before *Alcibiades Major*.

When Socrates tells Alcibiades that he will learn about the Sign later (*Alc. I* 103a6), he may well be pointing the reader forward to *Theages* or even to *Apology of Socrates*, but where learning more about Alcibiades himself is concerned, we will not need to wait so long: the young man will not only reappear in *Alcibiades Minor* but in *Symposium*. Nevertheless, his first appearance in *Protagoras* is mysterious, and the moment we realize that they do not speak to each other there, it becomes easy to see that Plato has made it so deliberately. Although the workings and motives of the Sign must necessarily remain mysterious, my claim is that when *Protagoras* is recognized as a hunt—whether or not we are aware of its connections to Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus*—we are offered some explanation for its action: “*Socrates*: But now [v̄v], since it [sc. the Sign] no longer opposes, thus have I approached, and I am hopeful that it will not oppose in the sequel.”²⁰⁵ The word v̄v is then hammered at the close of Socrates’ second long speech, the one that provokes Alcibiades to ask him to explain the following analogy:

Socrates: For just as you have hopes [ἐλπίδες] to demonstrate in the city that you are worth everything to it, demonstrating that there is nothing that you are unable to accomplish on the spot, so also I am hoping to accomplish something most great at your side, demonstrating that I am worth everything to you and that neither trustee nor relative nor anyone else is capable of providing the capacity [δύναμις] which you desire except me, along with God, however. Therefore, while you were younger, and before being full of so great a hope [ἐλπίς], it seems to me that God would not permit me to converse [διαλέγεσθαι], lest I should converse in vain. But now [v̄v] it has arrived, for now [v̄v] you would hear me.²⁰⁶

Protagoras provides the specific context for this repeated v̄v.²⁰⁷ It is in the aftermath of the conversation depicted there that Socrates has apparently made another trial of the Sign (cf. *Thg.* 128d2–5), discovering as a result that it no longer opposes what it had so long opposed, as Socrates awaited whatever moment it might be (ὀπηνίκα) when it would oppose no longer

205. *Alc. I* 103a6–b2.

206. *Alc. I* 105d7–106a1.

207. Note also the complementary use of v̄v in the Frame at 309b3–5: “*Companion*: What then of things now [v̄v]? For it is from his side that you appear? And how is the youngster disposed toward you? *Socrates*: Well, it seems to me, and not least of all, also in this very [v̄v] day.”

(*Alc. I* 105d5–6). It is Alcibiades' hope for power in Athens and beyond that explains his presence in the Garden of Callias: he is looking for those who can help him attain it. He arrives with Critias (316a3–5),²⁰⁸ whose bantering but playful criticism of the younger man (336d6–e4) suggests the behavior of the wily ἑραστής who pretends not to be one in *Phaedrus*.²⁰⁹ But it is Protagoras himself who is crucial here. It is *his* arrival in Athens that explains the presence of Alcibiades, and when he promises that his student “would be most capable [δυνατώτατος] both to do and speak the things of the city [τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράττειν]” (319a1–2), he sings the song that Alcibiades has come to hear, and in that, we know that he was not alone.

In *Alcibiades Major*, it is taken for granted that this is likewise what Socrates will help Alcibiades to do (*Alc. I* 105d2–4) with the crucial caveat that the young man must first be persuaded to take proper care of his ψυχή. *Protagoras* proves that Alcibiades has already made progress on one goal; *Alcibiades Major* will demonstrate he has made none on the other. In *Protagoras*, he gives ample evidence of his capacity for leadership by (1) brokering a solution to Socrates' benefit whereby the conversation or contest between Protagoras and Socrates will continue by granting Protagoras a meaningless primacy in long speeches (336b7–d5), (2) reminding the audience of the previously brokered deal whereby Protagoras will now ask the questions (347b3–7), and (3) challenging or shaming the unwilling Protagoras into a disastrous recommitment to διαλέγεσθαι (348b2–8). All three speeches are merely means to the same end, however: the contest between Socrates and Protagoras will continue, and in the dialectical portion of the dialogue's second round, Socrates will give plenty of evidence that it is he, and not Protagoras, who “is worth everything” to Alcibiades with respect to both action and speech. In this way, the evident political skill Alcibiades demonstrates in *Protagoras* will enable Socrates to bring his hidden self-ignorance to light in *Alcibiades Major*.

It is in this way, then, that Socrates both hunts *and catches* Alcibiades in *Protagoras*, but the wonder and confusion engendered by the highly questionable methods he uses to do so is the bait Plato uses to hunt and capture the rest of us. Everyone knows that “the Socratic method” induces a state of confusion called ἀπορία in his interlocutors, but it is easy to forget that Plato does much the same thing to his readers, and nowhere more so than in his proleptic *Protagoras*. To take its measure, we must consider its immediate effect on Alcibiades, but the ramifications of its effects on us will take longer to assess. The hypothesis that other encounters with this dialogue are built

208. See Zuckert, *Plato's Philosophers*, 224, for a valuable explanation of the pairing.

209. Note that any parallel between Critias and the speech of Lysias strengthens my case for the connection between *Criti.* and *Phdr.*, on which see *Guardians in Action*, §5.

into the curriculum *that begins with it* is an attempt to give *Protagoras* the time it needs to do this job, especially for a reading that is ultimately prepared to cast doubt on the sincerity of many of the claims Socrates makes in it, and about the methods he uses to validate them. Particularly on the basis of a first encounter, *Protagoras*' plaintive "you seem to me to love victory [φιλονικεῖν], Socrates" (360e3) and the eunuch's early assumption that the two fellows knocking on Callias' door are sophists (314d3) cannot be pe-remptorily dismissed.²¹⁰ After all, it is only in *Republic* 6–7 that we are finally given Socrates' considered response the multiplex τὸ ἀγαθόν of *Protagoras* (334b6–7), greeted by thunderous applause in the earlier dialogue (334c7–8).

Protagoras ends with Socrates giving a voice to the silent: the personified result of the argument volubly mocks the two interlocutors (361a3–c2). This audibility stands in stark contrast to the dialogue's first missing and therefore ostentatiously silent argument, the one Socrates and Hippocrates complete as it were offstage,²¹¹ specifically by reaching agreement (314c3–7) before knocking at Callias' door.²¹² While all teachers would be inclined to ask their students what we should make of the paradoxical reversal of positions described by "the present result of these arguments as if [they were] a person" (361a4), I would suggest that Plato has also found a way to make us wonder about what Socrates and Hippocrates have just agreed. If, as seems likely, it was to do what they are now about to do, the possibility that Hippocrates no longer wanted to go through with the plan deserves consideration, and certainly Socrates' three iterations of "let us go" (314b6; cf. 311a2–5) stand in revealing contrast to his final "we left." On the other hand, it is no less likely that Hippocrates has now agreed to let Socrates do all the talking, and thus to serve him either in the office of "net-watcher" or bleating goat; the hunt can begin.

As already indicated, each of the dialogue's two "hunts" (Xenophon prefers "runs"), "rounds," or Acts thus consists of three parts: a multi-character introduction climaxing with a challenge, an expository monologue, and then a spirited dialogue. Although the results of the two are different in the

210. As in Miller, "Two Midpoints," 79: "The *Protagoras* as a whole measures the difference between Socrates and this best of the sophists."

211. Cf. M. F. Burnyeat, "Dramatic Aspects of Plato's *Protagoras*," *Classical Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (May 2013), 419–422, on 422: "The imperfect *διελεγόμεθα* [at 314c4] has imperfective meaning ('we were discussing'), yet it is here [sc. 314c3–7] said to have agreement as its goal or τέλος: ἵν' οὖν μὴ ἀτελεῆς γένοιτο, where note the aorist optative with perfective meaning, i.e., 'in order that the discussion should not turn out incomplete'; . . . At the close of the dialogue they have failed to reach agreement on the question of the teachability of virtue when *Protagoras* calls a halt, saying it is time to do something else."

212. See Burnyeat, "Dramatic Aspects," 422: "By the time they arrive in the doorway to Callias' house, Hippocrates is no longer in a rush. He is a model of calm who shares Socrates' desire to reach agreement on whatever it was they were discussing along the way." Burnyeat describes his previous state of mind as "thoughtless haste" (422).

decisive sense—the hare escapes the net (or the lion the poison) in the first but is caught in the second—the structural parallels between the two dialectical sections are striking, beginning with instances of Protagoras hesitating. The most famous of these is in the second round, where Protagoras demonstrates an honorable hesitation to confirm the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant,²¹³ i.e., that “all the pleasant things are good and the painful things bad” (351d1–2) and thus that “both pleasure and good,” as he describes them a bit later, are “the same” (351e5–6). Also approximately three pages into the first “hunt,” we encounter a rather less decent hesitation from the sophist: he expresses his discomfort with the opposite kind of equation, that of justice and piety (331b8–c3). In the unsuccessful round, then, Socrates fails to get Protagoras to equate two terms in a way that demands a certain moral sublimity whereas in the second he overcomes the sophist’s initial hesitation and secures his agreement to a morally suspect Equation that leads directly to his being “overcome by pleasure.”

But the battle lines for the whole are established in “the First Round.”²¹⁴ After presenting Protagoras with three alternatives about the virtues (329c2–e2),²¹⁵ Socrates proceeds to unify or *reduce* each of three pairs of virtues: (1) justice and piety (330a3–332a1),²¹⁶ (2) wisdom and temperance (332a4–333b4),²¹⁷ and (3) justice and temperance (333b8–334c6).²¹⁸ If he were to

213. Cf. I. M. Crombie, *An Examination of Plato’s Doctrines* (volume 1): *Plato on Man and Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 237: “Protagoras hesitates to agree to this [sc. 351c2–6].”

214. Beginning with “First Round,” this paragraph is dependent on Gregory Vlastos, “Introduction,” in Plato, *Protagoras*, Benjamin Jowett’s translation, extensively revised by Martin Ostwald; edited, with an Introduction, by Gregory Vlastos, vii–lxvi (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956), on vi–vii.

215. The problem with schematics of this kind is that Plato embeds crucial texts within such clearly demarcated sections, as here at 329e5–6 where Protagoras not only makes the Hippocrates Joke transparent by saying that many of the courageous are not wise, but the more important claim that many of the just are unwise; all superior interpretations of *Prt.* must emphasize this text, as for example Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political Philosophy*, 43: “Will the wise as such ever be just? Or is justice the preserve of fools?”

216. Especially in the context of Vlastos’s Socrates, the passage at 331b8–d1 is of particular importance; it will be considered in §4.

217. The crucial but easily overlooked text in this section is “the Table of Opposites” at 332c3–6: since the Good and the Beautiful are going to be repeatedly but often fallaciously equated, it will be necessary for the student to recur frequently to the difference between “bad [κακόν]” and “base [αἰσχρόν].”

218. Here again, the pattern holds; in addition to the passage (333c3–9) where Socrates contradicts what he has just said at 331b8–d1 in “(1),” the speech on the relativity of τὸ ἀγαθόν (culminating with 334b6–7) can get lost if attention is confined to easily outlined sections like the three “reductions.” To hammer a point made in §2, the difference between Xenophon and Plato is that the latter never equates τὸ καλόν with what is ὀφελίμων, as Protagoras does with τὸ ἀγαθόν in his speech (334a3–c6) and it is essential to the architecture of the pre-*Republic* dialogues—and thus the two books, including this one, that I am devoting to them—that he does not.

have completed the third, the result would have united all three pairs,²¹⁹ leaving only courage to be brought into the fold (in the Second Round) but he is prevented from doing so; Plato's motives here will be considered in §5, where the ambiguity of the fallacy-spawning εὔ πράττειν (333d7) in both *Protagoras* and *Alcibiades Major* will be the subject. The fallacious application of "the One Thing/One Opposite Principle" (332c8–9) in "(2)" will likewise be revisited in *Alcibiades Minor*,²²⁰ before being rejected in *Symposium* for the sake of love and the philosopher, neither of which are either one opposite (i.e., good, beautiful, or wise) or the other (bad, base, or ignorant; see *Smp.* 201e3–202a3; cf. *Alc.2* 139a13–b1). The implications of "(1)" will take more time to unravel, implicating both "the Theory of Ideas" including "the Self-Predication of the Forms"²²¹—for justice is itself just (330b7–d1) and pious (330d1–e2)—and also the sophistries, importantly anticipated by Protagoras at 331d1–8,²²² of *Sophist*. In the latter, "what is not" need not be the opposite of what absolutely is, i.e., an internally complete and Parmenidean Being which alone is; it can also be "what is different" or rather "what is not [some particular thing],"²²³ justice, for example.²²⁴ In "(1)," by contrast, it is Socrates who uses this distinction *in reverse*:²²⁵ since justice is just, and justice is not (the same thing as) piety, then piety is not just (331a–b). In this way, the First Round aims to reduce four virtues to one;²²⁶ the Second attempts the further "reduction" of courage.

Likewise unbalancing the structural similarity between the two dialogic sections is the fact that Protagoras hesitates a second time in the first, refusing to embrace in his own name that the doers of injustice σωφρονεῖν (333c1–2). And this points to another pattern found only in the first round: in the case

219. See Rosamond Kent Sprague, "An Unfinished Argument in Plato's *Protagoras*," *Apeiron* 1, no. 2 (March 1967), 1–4.

220. Because Plato does not distinguish "contraries" from "contradictories" as such—he forces us to rather to understand the difference between "to be opposite" and "to be different from"—the One Thing/One Opposite Principle is itself the source of fallacy in "(2)" (cf. 333a5–b2) and beyond. Therefore, although Vlastos is correct that the opposition between temperance and folly is "deduced by the shadiest of logic" ("Introduction," xxixn19)—as will soon enough be revealed to the beginner in *Alcibiades Minor* (on *Alc.2* 138c9–139d6, see §7)—he fails to see (cf. xxixn18) that the Principle as Plato uses it is not only fallacious, but both crucially and deliberately so.

221. See *Ascent to the Good*, lxviii119.

222. On *Prm.* 148a4–c3 and *Sph.* 254a4–b6, see *Guardians in Action*, 280–81.

223. See *Guardians on Trial*, 25n35 and 44–45.

224. Terence H. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 306n6: "To show that justice is pious and piety just, Socrates resorts to a fallacious slide from 'not-just' to 'unjust' (331a7–b1)."

225. Ubiquitous in *Euthd.*; see *Ascent to the Good*, 60–61.

226. See Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory*, 103: "To reject Protagoras' account of the virtues Socrates defends UV [sc. 'the Unity of Virtue'] in a series of unsatisfactory arguments, and eventually by the argument from hedonism [note 6]." Such is Irwin's confidence in "the argument from hedonism" that 306–307n6 begins: "I have not discussed the first series of arguments for UV because I do not think they are necessary for the main argument."

of both of *its* hesitations, Socrates ostentatiously *does not press the point*. In this second instance, he not only allows Protagoras to argue for a position that he can easily deny is his own at the expense of Socrates' own consistency,²²⁷ but he also slackens the pace of his questions (333e5), a move fatal to his success since it allows Protagoras to riff on his favorite theme in the speech about the variegated or relative good (334a3–c6). So too in the case of the first hesitation: after an ineffective effort to get Protagoras to embrace the equation of the just and the pious (329c1–332a1), Socrates, after verbalizing his awareness that Protagoras has grown uncomfortable with the subject (332a2–3), gives the matter up and turns elsewhere (332a3–4). What makes the parallel between the two hesitations in the first part unmistakable is that Socrates' response to the first—which Protagoras is willing to overlook with his “if you wish” (331b5)—directly contradicts his response to the second, i.e., that the sophist should defend the position of the Many for the sake of “the argument” (333c5–9).

There is nothing similar in the second round, where there is only one hesitation, not two, and where Socrates finds a way to overcome it, although getting Prodicus and Hippias to jointly endorse the Equation may perhaps be considered a second case. Two other points of contrast should be noted: at no point in the second phase does Socrates contradict what he himself has just said, nor does he ever show any inclination to slacken his pace or change the subject in order to avoid causing Protagoras any discomfort. From the standpoint of achieving victory then, Socrates avoids the mistake that he makes twice in the first part. And by this I mean not only that he avoids contradicting himself or cutting Protagoras any slack the second time, but that he perseveres on the principal point and eventually overcomes the sophist's (and perhaps the three sophists') hesitation on the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant. The difference in structure between the two parts is therefore intrinsically connected to the different results reached in each, and when juxtaposed with the second part, the two parallel mistakes of the first become one.

The essential point, then, is that *Protagoras* has two rounds, divided by Socrates' threatened departure, and of the two, it is equally obvious that Socrates wins only the second. The most important parallel between the two dialogic sections is obvious, and thus the forest should not be forgotten for the trees: the two antagonists—engaged in the classically Greek ἀγών—are at center stage, sparring on virtue, its parts, and whether or not it can be taught. This is why the second round of dialogue begins, immediately after the dismissal of the poetic flute girls (347b9–348a9), with a summary of the previous round that returns to courage (349a6–d8), initial sticking point for any thesis regarding the unity of virtue (329e5). And in the second part,

227. For more on the self-contradiction that joins 331c4–d1 to 333c5–9, see §4.

Protagoras doubles down on this point (349d2–8) by making the statement that allows the allegedly forgetful Socrates to display his amazing powers of memory (359b2–6). But it is what happens in the interval between the two iterations that marks the distance between the two bouts: when Socrates repeats Protagoras' position on courage, he has already overcome the sophist's initial hesitation to accept the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant and has already slipped in the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful as well (358b6; cf. 351c1); he has thus secured the sophist's adherence to the agreements (360a5–6 and 360e4–5) that will be used to catch him at the end. By examining how he does this, the parallel between the two parts, despite their disparate results, becomes even more striking.

At the end of this process, Socrates relies on peer pressure before going in for the kill: by the time he repeats the words of Protagoras on the exceptional status of courage, he has brought Hippias and Prodicus into the argument (358a1–4). He has also already secured their enthusiastic agreement not only to the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant but also what will become known as “the Socratic Paradox,” i.e., “to the things he believes to be bad, nobody either goes or receives willingly” (358e5–8). This preparatory passage, implicating the other sophists, functions in the second round much as the applause that greets Protagoras' speech on the relativized good does in the first (334c7–8) *only in reverse*, and hence there is now no need for Socrates to feign departure. In other words, it is now *Socrates* who receives the approbation of the fictional audience in this play within a play. Having done so, it will be easy, after having connected his earlier position on courage to the most recent mutual agreements (359a2–d6), to tie Protagoras to the ridiculous claim that going to war and receiving wounds, even deadly ones, is pleasant because it is noble, and if noble, good (359d7–360b3), and that it is only because of their ignorance (*ἀμαθία*) of this “Triple Equation” that cowards behave differently from the courageous (cf. 359d7–9 and 360b4–c7).²²⁸ With this argumentative *τέλος* in mind, it is easy to see that it is Socrates' initial cool-headed response to the hesitation of Protagoras in the second part that is crucial.

After receiving the sophist's permission to lead the investigation (351e8–11), Socrates makes a speech in defense of the omnipotence of knowledge (352a1–c7), the one that persuaded Aristotle that he was now hearing “the real Socrates.”²²⁹ This speech lays the foundation for a strictly tactical alliance between Socrates and the sophists, now arrayed in unison against the Many on the question of “being overcome by pleasure” (352d4–e2). While the Many so underestimate the power of knowledge that they claim it can be

228. See Manuwald, “Lust und Tapferkeit,” 39–42.

229. See *Ascent to the Good*, lvii–lix.

overcome “now by spirit [θουμός], now by pleasure, now by pain, sometimes by love, and often by fear” (352b7–8), Socrates presents himself as the fellow-champion of knowledge, and directs the ensuing argument not against Protagoras, but against the Many, and thus on behalf of both knowledge (352d4–357e1) and the sophists (357e2–8), which is why he promptly appeals to them at this argument’s conclusion. Apparently arguing on the sophist’s behalf, Socrates secures Protagoras’ agreement in principle to the (first part of the) Equation (355b7–c3),²³⁰ then to “the Great Simplification” (355b3–c1), which will then make it possible to deny the possibility of “being overcome by pleasure” (355c1–8). Thereafter, Socrates—still using the fiction of an argument against the Many—can use “the art of measurement” (356d6) to bring the argument back to his initial defense of knowledge (357a1–e1).

It is above all the single-mindedness of Socrates’ response that distinguishes his winning approach in Act II from his failed effort in the first. But since the mistakes of the first are avoided in the second, the parallels between the two become no less conspicuous than their differences. One of these involves the role of “the Many.” In the first dialogue, Socrates will allow or even encourage Protagoras to state “their” position (333c7–9); in the second, he takes it upon himself to bring up “their” objections while also answering “them.” Another parallel involves the use of an agreed upon principle as a trap: in the second argument in the First Part, the One Thing/One Opposite Principle (332c8–9) is the analogue of the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant in the second, and it allows Socrates to accomplish on a smaller scale in “Act I” what he carries through with complete success in the second (332d1–333b4). The difference is that his success on the equation of temperance and wisdom merely suggests *by analogy* the desiderated equation of justice and piety (331b1–8), and it is because Socrates realizes the hollowness of his victory that he next encourages Protagoras to take up the position of the Many. In short: the One Thing/One Opposite Principle which Socrates deploys effectively in the first part is not directly related to overcoming Protagoras’ initial hesitation,²³¹ and it is far better to speak for the Many while also distancing yourself from what “they” say, than to allow your opponent to do either of those two things, let alone both of them.

But even though the same tactical elements are deployed in both arguments, the real difference is to be found in the two hesitations themselves. Protagoras is never going to admit his own injustice in public for reasons he has already explained in the Great Speech (323b2–c2), and getting him to

230. The parenthesis is necessary because it is only in the argument directed at the three sophists as a group that Socrates adds the equation’s second part, i.e., the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (358b5–7), thereby making possible the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful (360a3).

231. It does, however, reappear in the Final Argument, contributing to Socrates’ victory at 360b2–3: “And if not base, is it not beautiful?” On this see Manuwald, “Lust und Tapferkeit,” 45n52.

admit the identity of justice and piety will at worst commit him to a position that is merely false in his eyes, but is neither embarrassing nor damning. From the start of the second argument, by contrast, it is obvious that Protagoras senses there is a cost to be incurred by endorsing the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant, and Socrates uses a variety of tricks to get him to do so. But Socrates does this not in order to embarrass him or to refute him *on that point directly*: this Equation is only a means to the end of his subsequent overthrow by means of courage. As a result, it functions in Act II in the same way the One Thing/One Opposite Principle does in Act I. Can we think of a single thing to which both courage and piety are opposed? If not, Socrates is going to have a difficult time of it. At best he can show (as he does) that wisdom and temperance are the same thing. The lessons of the first argument are therefore that it is more effective to appear to be defending your opponent from the Many than to be attacking him yourself, that the Principle he hesitates to accept—and which will lead only indirectly to his overthrow—must be made to appear advantageous for him, and finally that a tactical alliance against “what the Many would say” is only effective when it is *you* putting words in “their” mouth, not your opponent.

At last we reach the most revealing structural similarity of all: the parallel between the Great Speech of Protagoras and the analysis of Simonides’ poem by Socrates. Commentators have tripped over themselves to find more than meets the eye in the first, and likewise to pass over the second with the utmost haste:

In his exegesis of the poet he [sc. Socrates] turns into a practical joker, almost a clown. He is entitled to his opinion that looking to poets for moral instruction is like getting your music from the clever harlots who dance and play the flute for the stupid bourgeois. But why act out this dubious metaphor in a labored one-man charade, throwing in some philosophical edification on the side, as when he drags in (by a misplaced comma) his doctrine that no man sins voluntarily?²³²

Although it was scarcely the intention of Gregory Vlastos to mark it as such, this proves to be a very good question, and in the following section, I will attempt to answer it. But what can be said now is that Vlastos makes a serious error when he writes: “351b–358d [i.e., the dialogic section of round two] is Socrates’ counterweight, in length and substance, to Protagoras’ Great Speech.”²³³ And there are two other errors that follow directly from this one: he fails to link 351b–358d to the dialogic section of Act I, and *therefore* fails to link the Great Speech to the exegesis of Simonides. The parallel between the Great Speech of Protagoras and Socrates’ de-

232. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xxiv.

233. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xxxviiiin46.

fense of Simonides is the single most important result of applying the art of measurement to *Protagoras* itself, beginning with dividing it into two equal parts. By overlooking this crucial parallel—and thus the structural and thematic link that creates what really should have been the obvious continuity between the Simonides episode and 351b–358d—Vlastos mistakenly attempted to preserve the Socratic Paradox from contamination by the “practical joker” who introduces it.

What makes this misguided effort even more misguided is that Vlastos regards the Paradox as itself *misguided* but refuses to countenance the possibility that Plato might have done so as well. And the equally mistaken valorization of the Great Speech likewise depends on failing to link it to the Simonides episode, thus obscuring the fact that Plato teaches us as much about Socrates in the second as he does about Protagoras in the first. Beginning with his 1956 “Introduction” to *Protagoras*, Vlastos has had a huge impact on the kinds of questions Anglophone scholars have brought to the study of this dialogue,²³⁴ most of them arising from his interpretation of 351b–358d.²³⁵ But despite any differences with those who later responded to him, and to whom he in turn responded, Vlastos knew that the real battle was with scholars like Paul Friedländer and Paul Shorey, who had claimed that Socrates’ arguments are “deliberately fallacious.”²³⁶ Consider the following passage in his 1972 article “The Unity of the Virtues in the *Protagoras*”:

When the perplexities which bedevil the Socratic formulae are recognized in the scholarly literature, it is rarely with the resolution to untie the knots: one finds scholars excusing themselves from the attempt by implying, or hinting, that Socrates could not have meant the outrageous things he said, and that he put them up only to test Protagoras and expose the sophist’s powerlessness to diagnose perversities in the Socratic theses and fallacies used in their defense.²³⁷

As indicated by this use of the word “perversities,” what Vlastos writes here must not only displace but also ignore what Socrates does as “practical joker” and “clown” in his “mock-exegesis of Simonides,”²³⁸ particularly since the word “perverse” figures prominently not only in the commentary of C. C. W.

234. See Vlastos, “Introduction,” xln50; this influential passage will be discussed in a later note.

235. See especially Terry Penner, “Socrates on the Strength of Knowledge: *Protagoras* 351B–357E,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 79 (1997), 117–149, and also Terrence M. Penner, “Plato and Davidson: Parts of the Soul and Weakness of Will,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Supplementary Volume 16 (1990), 35–74, where he not only defends *as Socratic* his “Diachronic Belief-Akrasia,” but “as a correct philosophical view of the phenomenon of akrasia” (47).

236. Gregory Vlastos, “The Unity of the Virtues in the *Protagoras*,” in Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, second edition, 204–265 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 223n4.

237. Vlastos, “Unity of the Virtues,” 222–23.

238. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xlv.

Taylor,²³⁹ but in Denyer's as well.²⁴⁰ Such assessments will be revisited in the next section.

For the present, consider Vlastos's comment on Plato's attitude toward Protagoras: "Plato, who tells us elsewhere of the sophist's 'good reputation, which to this day {a decade after his death} he retains,' says nothing in this dialogue to damage it."²⁴¹ Has Vlastos forgotten why Herodotus devotes the first part of his *History* to showing the greatness of Persia, or why Xenophon praises the agility and suppleness of the hare? The fact that Protagoras is bested in the fight that Socrates picks with him, *ipso facto* destroys his reputation as being "the wisest" of men (309d2). Despite his admission that Plato has no use for "the huckster of ideas," Vlastos discovers evidence of the sophist's "moral inhibitions" in the fact that "Protagoras refuses to admit that injustice is compatible with *sophrosyne*."²⁴² But since Plato has already allowed Protagoras to explain why nobody would admit his injustice in public in the Great Speech (323b2–c2),²⁴³ this evidence proves that the sophist's "inhibitions" need not be defined as "moral," especially if an unjust man can have the wisdom, courage, and self-control requisite to attaining his ends.²⁴⁴ Incidentally, it is probably the fact that this kind of unjust man could by no manner of means be described as "pious" that explains Socrates' (failed) procedure in the dialogic section of Act I. In any case, the symmetrical structure of Plato's *Protagoras* identifies as a hermeneutic fallacy the view that the apparently benign Great Speech is a more important part of the dialogue than the deliberately perverse interpretation of Simonides.

Although both Taylor and Guthrie make the same error,²⁴⁵ what makes Vlastos by far the most interesting case is that he not only severs the struc-

239. C. C. W. Taylor (ed.), *Plato, Protagoras; Translated with Notes*, revised edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1991 [first edition 1976]), 145 and 146.

240. Denyer, *Protagoras*, 6 and 155; see also "entirely fanciful" (152), "however unlikely" (152), "Socrates gabbles when his interpretation of Simonides is at its most strained" (160), "exaggerated" (161), and "the opportunity to misinterpret Simonides" (163).

241. Vlastos, "Introduction," viii.

242. Vlastos, "Introduction," viii

243. See Eisenstadt, "Protagoras' Teaching," 52–53: "The usual interpretation [the attached note, 59n24, does not mention Vlastos but is informative and elegant] of this is that Protagoras disagrees with those who believe that injustice and are incompatible. But that would contradict his remark at 323b according to which they are compatible: even if one is a known immoralist, he says there, it is madness to confess it, the path of sanity to deny it." Cf. Denyer, *Protagoras*, 109–110 on this passage, especially on 323c2, ending with: "At most it shows that there is a consensus that each of us has an enormous interest in being thought to be just."

244. For a succinct unmasking the Protagoras as a "teacher of injustice," see Robert C. Bartlett, "Political Philosophy and Sophistry: An Introduction to Plato's *Protagoras*," *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 4 (October 2003), 612–624, on 616–17.

245. Consider Guthrie's summary of the Simonides passage as Plato's parody of the sophists in *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 219: "After a few exchanges Socrates, the abhorrer of long speeches, offers to expound his own interpretation of the poet's meaning, and encouraged by all three Sophists launches into a long and ingenious parody of a Sophistic *epideixis*, which is gravely approved by Hippias but thoroughly distorts the poem's meaning and does nothing to further the main argument."

tural connection between the Simonides exegesis and the Great Speech, but after using the latter to valorize 351b–358d as its “counterweight,” and after ignoring that the Socratic Paradox that arises in the context of Simonides, he then makes the following moves: (1) he upholds as Platonic “the identification of the pleasant and the good,” and (2) rejects, as less true than what we find in Euripides, “the Socratic doctrine” that is proved on its basis, i.e., that “Knowledge is Virtue.” Without endorsing the views of those scholars, like Taylor, who radicalized Vlastos by discarding “(2),” I will conclude this section by showing how these two inharmonious conclusions begin to illustrate how serious an error Vlastos made in 1956 by misconstruing the true place of the Simonides exegesis in the structure of *Protagoras*, and thus why it is “(1)” that needs to be discarded, not only with regard to what Plato believed to be true “at the time of writing” *Protagoras*,²⁴⁶ but also what his Socrates is actually doing in the dialogue.

First of all, the inharmoniousness in question is an interesting and revealing variation on Vlastos’s customary *modus operandi*. He repeatedly makes the following moves: (a) he first takes an argument from the dialogues out of its dramatic context and (b) after assuming that Plato regarded it as valid (c) he shows that it isn’t (d) but how it could be made so, and finally (e) excuses Plato for not having had the tools to have made it so himself.²⁴⁷ While there is an exculpatory nod to “(e)” even here,²⁴⁸ Vlastos’s rejection of “Knowledge as Virtue” (I will follow his example by calling this “K”) is unusual: “The trouble with Socrates is not so much that he was wrong on this point (and I, for one, unquestionably think he was) as that his method did not provide him with the means by which he would be likely to correct or, at least, suspect his own error.”²⁴⁹ What makes this not only exceptional but also revealing is that Vlastos too has a method, and therefore fails to realize that his next

After a promising start that emphasizes Plato’s use of Performative Self-Contradiction, this sentence nevertheless ends poorly, since there is at least one thing in the passage that *does* “further the main argument,” as Guthrie elsewhere seems to be aware: “by violently wrenching a word from its proper connections in the sentence [Socrates] claims to find in Simonides his own conviction that no one does wrong willingly” (227). Guthrie’s phrase “his own conviction” is particularly worthy of note; so too Taylor: “Once again, Socrates’ assimilation of the poet’s thought to one of his own theses involves a blatant perversion of the plain sense of the poem” (Taylor, *Protagoras*, 146).

246. Vlastos, *Socratic Studies*, 125: “In my previous book on Socrates I blocked out the hypothesis on which my whole interpretation of Plato’s dialogues depends: Plato makes Socrates say in any given dialogue ‘whatever *he*—Plato—thinks at the time of writing would be of his most reasonable thing for Socrates to be saying just then in expounding and defending his own philosophy.’”

247. In addition to the argumentative strategy of Vlastos, “Unity of the Virtues,” cf. Gregory Vlastos, “The Argument in the *Republic* that ‘Justice Pays,’” *Journal of Philosophy* 65, no. 21 (November 7, 1968), 665–674 on 670: “Now that we have spotted the error [sc. equivocation on ‘justice’], we can see a simple way to patch things up: allow Plato, as a tacit premise, (H) the soul is just₁ iff it is just.” For further discussion, see *Plato the Teacher*, section §19.

248. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xlv.

249. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xlv.

sentence applies not only to his Socrates, but also, quite perfectly, as it turns out, to him:

He was too fascinated by the patterns into which he could organize his propositions to reflect with the needed sensitiveness and humility on matters that can only be learned from the facts themselves or [emphasis mine] *from those whose vision of the facts is more subtle and penetrating than one's own.*²⁵⁰

With due regard to the gentlemanly Vlastos, it is sufficient to cite only one who qualifies for this comparative distinction: Plato himself.²⁵¹

Vlastos naturally does not see it that way.²⁵² As a result, his Plato must endorse an Equation that Vlastos himself knows is wrong and which Socrates will contradict in *Gorgias*.²⁵³ And all because “it is most unlikely that Socrates would deliberately offer a false proposition as a premise for establishing his great proposition, *K*.”²⁵⁴ The “false proposition” is, of course, the Equation; Vlastos calls this “L.” Writing in 1956, Vlastos can still claim to uphold “the minority view which I believe is much more nearly right,” i.e., that L is not “a false proposition,” but is in fact “Socrates’ own position.”²⁵⁵ Clearly it is no longer the minority position today.²⁵⁶ But what makes Vlastos transitional is that unlike his more radical followers,²⁵⁷ he was still troubled by L: “It is certainly puzzling that Socrates should hang the whole proof of his great proposition, *K*, from what looks to us like a declaration of hedonism.”²⁵⁸ Not

250. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xlv (emphasis mine).

251. Cf. Gregory Vlastos, “An Ambiguity in the *Sophist*,” in Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, second edition, 270–322 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); 294n51: “Note especially the concluding remarks in [*Sph.*] 259c7–d7, where he [Vlastos means Plato, although only the Eleatic Stranger is fully warranted] inveighs against those who are content to exploit ambiguities but shirk responsibility for clearing them up [clearly this is what Vlastos never does; but cf. the passage he is discussing with *Prt.* 331d2–5]. Plato himself [but this *is* what Vlastos does: he ignores the dialogic dimension of Plato’s dialogues, and thus fails to see that what he is about to say applies to the Eleatic Stranger, not to Plato] *would have been open to this reproach* [my emphasis] if, having seen the ambiguity in ‘Motion is resting’ which makes it true in one sense, false in another, he had failed to explain it or even to call it to the reader’s attention.” For further discussion see *Guardians on Trial*, 102–111.

252. Cf. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xlv–xlv: “Had his [sc. Socrates’] method been less narrow he might have sensed how false was his metaphor [sc. poets as flute-girls] at the end of the mock-exegesis of Simonides, how much more than entertainment a moral philosopher could get from poets and others who are no great arguers but know the human heart.” Although he thinks he is referring to Euripides, Vlastos fails to grasp that Plato is also such a poet, and that *Prt.* in general—and the Simonides passage in particular—is the paradigmatic product of Platonic ποίησις. Note that Plato will do what no *previous* poet has done (*Smp.* 177c7–b1).

253. See *Ascent to the Good*, §11.

254. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xln50.

255. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xln50.

256. If were, Donald J. Zeyl, “Socrates and Hedonism: *Protagoras* 351b–358d,” *Phronesis* 25, no. 3 (1980), 250–269, would be regarded as definitive.

257. For Terry Penner, C. C. W. Taylor, and Terence Irwin as what Vlastos called “PTI,” see Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, 420 and 427. For Vlastos’ relationship with PTI, see *Ascent to the Good*, lxiv, 39, and 316–17.

258. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xl.

surprisingly, Vlastos tried to finesse the question.²⁵⁹ But the important thing is that (1) having isolated the part of dialogic section that most obviously echoes what Socrates says as “practical joker” in the Simonides episode to illustrate K (352d4–e2), and (2) having acknowledged that Socrates’ proof of K depends on L, then (3) having himself both finessed L and rejected K, he next explains (4) why he nevertheless considers L to be genuinely Socratic as follows:

to make *L* the premise for *K* would have been extremely misleading, for it would have encouraged the listener to believe a falsehood, and this Socrates, being what he is, would never do unless he put in clear and sufficient warning signs, of which there is not one in the argument.²⁶⁰

By “the argument,” of course, Vlastos means 351b–358d, and by misconstruing it as “Socrates’ counterweight” to the Great Speech, he fails to grasp that the false claim that “all of the wise” embrace the Socratic Paradox (345d9–e2),²⁶¹ coupled with the manifestly playful agonistic context in which Plato’s Socrates introduces it, are both what Vlastos called “warning signs,” warnings he chose to ignore.²⁶²

By refusing to consider the Socratic Paradox as anything other than both thoroughly misguided *and* genuinely Socratic—as Aristotle had done before him²⁶³—Vlastos also fails to display “the needed sensitiveness and humility” required from Plato’s best interpreters.²⁶⁴ The decisive importance of the structural connection between the Great Speech and “the [Simonides]

259. See Vlastos, “Introduction,” xli.

260. Vlastos, “Introduction,” xln50.

261. So thoroughly does this misconception distort his reading of *Prt.* that in Gregory Vlastos, “Socrates on Acrasia,” *Phoenix* 23, no. 1, Studies Presented to G. M. A. Grube on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday (Spring 1969), 71–88, commenting on “the crisper formula, οὐδείς ἐκὼν ἁμαρτάνει, often ascribed to Socrates in the scholarly literature,” on 80n32, he makes the following claim: “Socrates himself never puts his own thesis in just that form in the Platonic dialogues” presumably because Socrates states in the Simonides passage that (emphasis mine) “*none of the wise* believe that anyone among humans errs voluntarily [οὐδένα ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼντα ἔξαμαρτάνειν]” (345d9–e1). Although Vlastos regards the thesis as false, he never doubts that it is Socrates’ “great proposition,” and therefore never wonders why it is introduced by a “clown” or “practical joker” with a manifestly false claim: with the exception of Timaeus, the Eleatic, and the Athenian Stranger (Denyer will be quoted on this point in the next section), it is impossible to find among the ancients *any of the wise* who thought as Socrates here claims that all of them did. Cf. Taylor, *Protagoras*, 147: “Socrates’ claim that his thesis is universally accepted by the wise is ironical, as it was generally regarded as outrageously implausible (e.g., *Gorg.* 475e, Ar. *EN* VII.2, 114b25–8).”

262. Indeed one often wonders how many of Plato’s interpreters err knowingly—as Vlastos himself never did—in making him less Platonic than he is.

263. See *Ascent to the Good*, lx–lxi.

264. After all, it scarcely requires the dramatic skill with which Euripides portrayed Medea or the humane sensitivity to it displayed by Vlastos to know from personal experience that human beings often do bad things voluntarily, and all that is required in order to refute Socrates’ claim that no one does wrong willingly is to have the moral courage to say the word “*ποιῶ*,” meaning: “I do” (*Grg.* 495b2).

Exegesis” arises from the fact that Protagoras has *already* told us that even someone who knew himself to be unjust—especially if he were already a famous champion (ἀθλητής at 343c2)—would be crazy to admit it in public (323b3–5). But this is only one of three problems with the Socratic Paradox, and thus with the deadpan reading of *Protagoras* on which its status as paradigmatically “Socratic” has depended ever since Aristotle.²⁶⁵ The second is archetypically Platonic, and will be considered in the next section. But the third, archetypically Socratic, explains why the Reading Order ends with his trial and death. Some people march forward both courageously and knowingly into situations that will neither be pleasant nor good *for them*. This noble truth—easy to recollect since every decent person knows it—explains why an ascent to the Beautiful necessarily precedes the final ascent to the Good in Plato’s dialogues, and why it is only when confronted with the just demand to return to the Cave that the philosopher will finally discover the inner truth and greatness of the Socratic Paradox.

SECTION 4. INTERPRETING THE MISINTERPRETATION OF SIMONIDES

It is the reflexive character of any interpretation of the Simonides Exegesis that sets up the possibility of a Performative Self-Contradiction, especially if we decide, on the basis of a deadpan reading of “[the Dismissal of] the Flute Girls” (347b9–348a6) that in the absence of a poet (347e3–4; cf. 329a2–5), no interpretation of poetry is possible. The problem, of course, is that it requires *an interpretation* of the Flute Girls to show that Plato’s point is that no meaningful interpretation of poetry is possible,²⁶⁶ and it is only on the basis

265. For the decisive role of Aristotle in ensuring that most scholars take it for granted that the Socratic Paradox that we are encountering at 345d6–e4 and 352d4–e2 is (in Guthrie’s words) “his own conviction” (*History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 227 as quoted above), see the sections on Socrates (“Philosophical Significance”) in *History of Greek Philosophy* 3, and in particular 450–49 (“Virtue is Knowledge”) and 459–62 (“All Wrongdoing is Involuntary: Socrates A Determinist?”), which begins (459): “If virtue is knowledge, and to know the good is to do it, wickedness is due to ignorance, and therefore, strictly speaking, involuntary. This corollary made a deep impression on Plato, and in spite of his more advanced [sc. tripartite] psychology he retained it as his own up to the end.” As the sequel shows (459–60), *Ti.* and *Lg.* are the basis for this last observation. But the process that arrives at this point begins with Aristotle (450): “Once again let us start with Aristotle, about whose general value as a source enough has been said already,” and it is only after reviewing Aristotle’s testimony in general that Guthrie turns to *Prt.* as Aristotle read it (452–54), and then to Xenophon (455–57).

266. See Taylor, *Protagoras*, 148: “It is to be assumed that Plato intends the interpretation which Socrates has just given to show in an exemplary fashion what he regards as the cardinal fault in literary interpretation, viz. the impossibility of definitively establishing the writer’s meaning, with its consequent license to factitious ‘interpretations.’” One wonders what it is that persuades Taylor to exempt his own “interpretation” from this “cardinal fault.” Cf. the excellent questions raised by Marina Berzins McCoy, “Socrates on Simonides: The Use of Poetry in Socratic and Platonic Rhetoric,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 32, no. 4 (1999), 349–367 on 358: “Why would Socrates use poetry to set forth his own views in a dialogue in which he criticizes the act of poetic interpretation? Furthermore,

of an interpretation of the Simonides Exegesis that we can arrive at the view that interpreting it is “a waste of time.”²⁶⁷ Having shown the structural importance of the Exegesis in the architecture of Plato’s *Protagoras* (§3), it is now time to interpret the Exegesis accordingly, and the place to start is with the observation that the Great Speech has already shown why the Exegesis is of particular importance to Plato’s young students.

According to Protagoras, the interpretation of poetry is a traditional school exercise (325e4–326a3), and while viewing Socrates offer his delightfully confusing interpretation or misinterpretation of Simonides, they are seeing something very much like what all of them have seen and done before. As suggested in §1, the benches (τὰ βάρη) on which the intra-dialogue audience is seated (317d7–10) are the same benches upon which the extra-dialogue audience was seated before coming to the Academy (325e4). Plato has thus replicated, modified, and enhanced a pedagogical experience that creates continuity with what his young audience has already experienced. His original audience had probably already studied this poem in particular, and thus it was not Hippias alone who has a ready-made interpretation of it (347a7–b2); certainly Socrates declares at the start that he knows and has practiced it (μεμεληκός at 339b5–6):

‘You speak well,’ [Protagoras] said. ‘Does it then seem to you beautifully [καλῶς] to have been made [πεποιθῆσθαι] and correctly [ὀρθῶς], or not?’ ‘Indeed,’ said I, ‘and also correctly [τε καὶ ὀρθῶς].’²⁶⁸

A number of connections between Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus* and Plato’s *Protagoras* have already been mentioned in §2 in order to show how a treatise about hunting illuminates a dialogue with three famous sophists which opens with the curious mention of a hunt. But of all the passages in *Cynegeticus* that indicate its literary priority, and that suggest in the aggregate that Plato expected his readers to be already “practiced” in it (cf. μεμεληκός), perhaps the single most revealing of them elucidates this passage and the Exegesis that follows it:

Many others also blame today’s sophists [οἱ νῦν σοφισταί]—and not the philosophers—because they show themselves to be wise [σοφίζεσθαι] in words,

why would Plato, the author of a work of *poesis*—the dialogue—include a criticism of the interpretation of poetry in a written work that the reader presumably is expected to interpret?”

267. Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 137; I will be supplementing the discussion of Vlastos in §3 with references to “Does Socrates Cheat?” in his classic *Socrates* (132–56) in this section.

268. 339b7–8. Already in the ancient manuscripts, the lack of an antecedent for τε καὶ ὀρθῶς created problems, and ἐγὼτε replaced ἐγώ in order to avoid the troubling ἐγώ τε long before Bekker supplied the missing καλῶς. While most modern editors have followed his lead, I have translated the more difficult reading.

not in thoughts. It does not escape me that someone, perhaps one of their kind, will say that what has been written [γεγράφθαι] beautifully [καλῶς] and in an orderly way [καὶ ἐξῆς] has been written neither beautifully [οὐ καλῶς] nor in proper order [οὐδ' ἐξῆς], for it will be easier for them to criticize quickly but not rightly [ὀρθῶς].²⁶⁹

Exactly what Xenophon tells us that the epigones of the sophists of his day were wont to do to valuable writings,²⁷⁰ Plato's Protagoras will now proceed to do to Simonides (339b9–d9), and the back-to-back use of both καλῶς and οὐ καλῶς is what allows Plato—who will be illustrating in vivid detail what Xenophon has merely sketched—to delete καλῶς in “[beautifully] yes and correctly [τε καὶ ὀρθῶς].” More importantly, it is by replacing Xenophon's perfect passive infinitive “to have been written [γεγράφθαι]” with his own “to have been made [πεποιῆσθαι]” that Plato is already preparing for the joke at the center of the Exegesis. Like Xenophon's sophists, Protagoras will show that Simonides has contradicted himself (339b9–d9), and that means that he will prove that the poet will *later* say something that contradicts what he had said *at the start*, hence embellishing the “out of order [οὐδ' ἐξῆς]” in *Cynegeticus*.

Thanks to the entrapping admission Protagoras extracts from Socrates, Self-Contradiction is thematic in the Exegesis from the start: a poem in which the poet (ὁ ποιητής) contradicts himself has been made οὐ καλῶς (339b10), the same phrase Xenophon had used in the case of what “has been written.” Were it not the case that Plato has already caused Socrates to contradict himself in what already “has been written” in *Protagoras*, one might be inclined to interpret the Exegesis on this basis. But the joke at its center turns on the claim made in it that nobody errs voluntarily, or better, that none of the wise, Simonides included, believes that anybody *makes* bad things voluntarily (345d6–e4). Leaving for later discussion the relationship between the hammered use of ποιεῖν in the passage that introduces the Socratic Paradox and the use of the same verb (πεποιῆσθαι) to describe the quality of the poetic making in play here—whether καλῶς or οὐ καλῶς—there is also the crucial matter of whether or not these errors or faulty “makings” are deliberate and therefore made ἐκόν as opposed to ἀκόν. In criticizing Simonides' poem, Protagoras is assuming that the poet has contradicted himself involuntarily (ἀκόν); the joke at the heart of this section is that if Plato contradicts himself

269. Xenophon, *Cynegeticus*, 13.6 (Marchant modified).

270. Note that it is *Plato* who applies this passage to what the sophists *do to a poet*; the immediate sequel indicates that Xenophon has rather himself in mind; see *Cynegeticus*, 13.7 (Marchant modified): “And surely it [presumably Xenophon's *Cynegeticus*] has been written in this way, so that it may be done rightly [ὀρθῶς], and not so as to make [ποιεῖν] men sophisticated [σοφιστικοί] but wise and good: for I wish these things not to seem but rather to be useful [οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν αὐτὰ βούλομαι μάλλον ἢ εἶναι χρήσιμα], so that they may irrefragable into eternity [ἀνεξέλεγκτα ἢ εἰς αἰεῖ].”

in *Protagoras*, this will *not* prove that it is οὐ καλῶς πεποιῆσθαι if its self-contractions “have been made” both beautifully and *deliberately* (ἐκόν).²⁷¹

And so Plato gives us a choice. The popular alternative is that we can dismiss the Exegesis on the basis of the Flute Girls and take the fallacious imposition of a “Socratic Doctrine” like “nobody errs willingly” as proof that interpreting poets is what Vlastos calls a waste of time. This move is vitiated by a number of involuntary self-contradictions,²⁷² and to escape this reflexivity,²⁷³ it becomes necessary to claim that Plato’s dialogues are not poetry,²⁷⁴ and thus what he says about interpreting poets doesn’t apply to interpreting him.²⁷⁵ This, of course, Plato makes it easy to do: the great imitative poet of the dialogues has persuaded the majority of his readers that he detests poetry by imitating his Socrates banishing the poets—and Homer at their head—in his *Republic*.²⁷⁶ The fact that Plato will be discussing poetry repeatedly in the dialogues, not least of all in *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* (see chapter 4), must be assimilated on the basis of the Flute Girls: any errors of interpretation in them prove the point. But the fact that “Socrates seizes the opportunity to misinterpret Simonides”²⁷⁷ actually contradicts this point: a fallacious interpretation proves that a truer one is possible, and if Simonides does not believe that “nobody errs willingly” as Socrates claims he does in the Exegesis, then Socrates has erred in attributing that “doctrine” to him.

All of this therefore opens up the second possibility: that Socrates has erred deliberately in attributing to Simonides “a doctrine” that we all know neither Simonides nor “all of the wise” believed.²⁷⁸ On this path, then, instead of tak-

271. Note also ἐξἐπίτηδες (LSJ: “on purpose”) at, e.g., *Ion* 534e6.

272. Cf. Ryan Drake, “Extraneous Voices: Orphaned and Adopted Texts in the *Protagoras*.” *Epoché* 10, no. 1 (Fall 2005), 1–20, on 2: “Socrates’ objection to the practice of hermeneutics has serious implications not only for the educative value of the poetic tradition, but for the value of all inherited textual sources. In view of this criticism, the absence of interpretive authority remains a problem for every piece of writing that survives its author. If Socrates is to be taken literally in this claim, then we are compelled thereby to question our very practice of reading Plato; the *Protagoras*, as well as the rest of the dialogues, appears to be relegated to the status of extraneous voices no less than the poems of Simonides.”

273. See the discussion of “self-referential puzzles” (on which Drake depends) in Raphael Woolf, “The Written Word in Plato’s *Protagoras*.” *Ancient Philosophy* 19 (1999), 21–30, especially 23: “How can we draw any moral from a text without interpreting it? We appear to be faced with a book that warns us away from reading books.”

274. Cf. Penelope Murray (ed.), *Plato on Poetry*; *Ion*, Republic 376e–398b9; Republic 595–608b10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 14: “although the dialogues are poetic they are not poetry and it is poetry which is his real target.”

275. Note that when Socrates introduces the notion that we cannot ask authors about the meaning of their works, he refers not to poems but more generally to books: see βιβλία at 329a3.

276. See Murray (ed.), *Plato on Poetry*, 1–19, including a reference to the Exegesis as “obvious parody” (18).

277. Denyer, *Protagoras*, 163 (on 345a1–2).

278. Larry Goldberg, *Commentary on Plato’s Protagoras* (New York: Peter Lang, 1983), 186: “That men do bad and shameful things only unwillingly is a familiar Socratic precept but hardly one so universally accepted as he suggests, even among the wise. And certainly he knows this.” Cf.

ing the imposition of the Socratic Paradox on the hapless Simonides as proof that the interpretation of poetry is a hopeless exercise, the claim at the Paradox's core—that nobody makes bad things voluntarily (345d8–9)—is itself the kind of voluntary error the very existence of which it presents itself as denying. By the time we reach *Hippias Minor*—where an egregious distortion of Homer will be embedded in a Socratic discussion of voluntary wrongdoing that presents the good man as the one who, e.g., lies and deceives voluntarily (see §11)—it will require considerable ingenuity to reject the possibility that this second path is the correct one. In fact the trouble will be compounded there *if we don't take this path* because if knowledge allows the better man with the requisite ἐπιστήμη or τέχνη to do bad things voluntarily (*Hp. Mi.* 375b8–c3) this not only contradicts the Socratic Paradox that nobody does such things, but another “Socratic doctrine,” likewise first announced in the Simonides Exegesis: that Virtue is (nothing other than) Knowledge.²⁷⁹ It is by a most delicious paradox that Aristotle's testimony rescued *Hippias Minor* from excision since its outrageous conclusion—i.e., that the good man does unjust things voluntarily because the wiser and more capable man is the better one—contradicts Aristotle's own claims about Socrates and his doctrines.

There are at least three ways to refute the Socratic Paradox that nobody errs willingly. The first is to contradict Protagoras' claim in the Great Speech that even the doer of injustice would never admit to doing injustice (323b2–7).²⁸⁰ Independently of Christian penitence and Yom Kippur, there were Greeks who confessed their wrongdoing—Socrates will identify such confessions as the only legitimate use of rhetoric in *Gorgias*²⁸¹—and these provide what I will call “the Confessional Refutation of the Socratic Paradox.”²⁸² The second is best explained in relation to *Hippias Minor*.²⁸³ Even if experts err voluntarily thanks to their possession of craft or τέχνη, there is one “craft or knowledge” in which no craftsman would ever err deliberately: the knowledge,

Denyer, *Protagoras*, 166 (on 345e1–2): “the wise men who agree with Socrates on this point include various other characters in Plato: Timaeus in *Ti.* 86d–e, the Eleatic Stranger in *Sph.* 228c–d, and the Athenian Stranger in *Laws.*” After citing *Grg.* 467c–469e and *Meno* 77b–78b (on which see below), Denyer comments wryly: “Socrates presents arguments to induce others to join the consensus of the wise, but there is no sign that anyone else did.” He does name Epicharmus, “nobody is voluntarily wretched [πονηρός]” at DK 23.7 (note also the use of ποιεῖν) as an exception; cf. *Grg.* 505e1–2, *Tht.* 152e5, and Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 2.1.20.

279. For “nothing other than wisdom” at 358c2–3, see below.

280. This important passage will receive further attention in the context of the Unfinished Argument in §5.

281. On *Grg.* 480b7–d6, see *Ascent to the Good*, 251–58.

282. At 323a7–c2, Protagoras offers a proof or τεκμήριον all men must “take part” in justice if they want to remain among their fellows: a man would need to be insane to admit in public that he was unjust. The crucial moment is at 323b3, where Protagoras describes some one (τις) *who knows that he is unjust* and must be prevented from admitting it. For much-needed attention to this passage, see Coby, *Socrates and the Sophistic Enlightenment*, 123.

283. Or rather to Terry Penner's interpretation of *Hp. Mi.*, on which see §11.

identified with virtue by its proponents, that secures for us our own good, i.e., what is most advantageous for us.²⁸⁴ In response to the claim that nobody errs in pursuing his own best interest, there arises what I will call “the Noble Refutation of the Socratic Paradox.” Given the meaning of *καλόν*, this refutation is of singular importance in *Ascent to the Beautiful*, and Plato will introduce its basis in *Alcibiades Major*, as will become clear in §5 when the discussion returns to courage (*Alc. I* 115b7). But for the third of these refutations, Plato does not force us to wait: what I will call “the Performative Refutation [of the Socratic Paradox]” is found in the Simonides Exegesis itself, and indeed the self-refutation of the Paradox is concurrent with its introduction.

This section’s principal purpose is to substantiate that claim. Rather than use the Flute Girls to annihilate the foregoing misinterpretation of Simonides, using its errors as proof that interpreting the works of absent poets is not worthy of a serious philosopher, I will start from a corollary of the Curricular Hypothesis: *Plato considered the interpretation of his own works as the best available education in virtue and philosophy.*²⁸⁵ Even for those who insist that Plato isn’t a poet—an impossible claim to sustain in the context of *Symposium*,²⁸⁶ where Diotima finds it convenient to define *ποίησις* in the broadest way possible (*Smp.* 205b8–c9)²⁸⁷—the problem of interpreting his writings remains: whether or not the dialogues are poems, they certainly need to be interpreted. For example, when Aristotle interpreted Socrates to be upholding the Socratic Paradox and the power of knowledge on the strength of what Plato imitates Socrates saying in *Protagoras*,²⁸⁸ he was unquestionably offering us an interpretation of *Protagoras*, and not a particularly good or thoughtful interpretation at that.²⁸⁹ Although I do not regard Aristotle’s interpretation of *Protagoras* as deliberately mistaken, Socrates’ interpretation of Simonides—including but not limited to the imposition of the Paradox—is *a deliberate misinterpretation* on both his and Plato’s parts, and Plato expects us to recognize it as such. For this reason, “the Exegesis” (for so it will be called) is best understood as a microcosm of what makes Plato’s dialogues difficult to interpret: they are a memorable, entertaining, and thought-provoking mixture of truth and falsehood—the latter introduced just as de-

284. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4.

285. For the suggestion that it is not so much “doctrines” that Plato is principally teaching in the pre-*Republic* dialogues but rather the interpretive techniques needed to read *R.* intelligently, see *Ascent to the Good*, 488–89.

286. Cf. Rudolf Hirzel, *Der Dialog: Ein literarhistorischer Versuch*, two volumes (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1895), volume one, 197 (the context is *Smp.*): “Dass die platonischen Werke nicht streng wissenschaftlich sind, dass sie vielmehr an die Grenze der Poesie schweben, zeigt sich aber nicht bloss in negative Weise darin, dass sie um historische Wahrheit sich nicht kümmern. Tiefer ist ihnen der dichterische Charakter eingepägt, wie das der Macht des poetischen Genius in Platon entsprach.”

287. Cf. *Lg.* 811c9–10.

288. See Vlastos, *Socrates*, 96–97 (including 97n66) on T17.

289. See *Ascent to the Good*, lx, for his lack of awareness that *Prt.* is an *ἄγών*.

liberately as the former²⁹⁰—designed to teach the student how education in the Academy is going to work. It also serves to elucidate and strengthen the Curricular Hypothesis.

The stakes are therefore high. Since Plato allows his Socrates to describe the limitations of the written word in *Phaedrus* (*Phdr.* 274d4–278b4), it is not only obvious that he was aware of those limitations, but also that he is likely to have discovered them. And if we take this discovery to be Plato’s last word on writing, we will be forced not only to invent an unwritten image of what he really taught—and this, of course, has been done²⁹¹—but on that basis to minimize the significance of his literary output,²⁹² these beautifully crafted jewels of literary, poetic, philosophical, and pedagogical art. My claim, then, is that it is an error to imagine that the writer of these beautiful dialogues put more stock in a written critique of writing in one of the most beautiful of them than in all the rest put together. A better solution is to realize that Plato not only discovered the limitations of writing *but also discovered a way to overcome them.*²⁹³ Whereas most writers attempt to tell the truth and tell it to their readers straight,²⁹⁴ Plato the Teacher would enliven his writings by offering his readers a choice: explain away my self-contradictions, jokes, and deliberate deceptions, or embrace them by talking back to me, creating a living dialogue that it was always my purpose to create with those of you (necessarily “we few, we happy few”) who will not take my playful texts to be dead and therefore will not be content with but rather be amused by deadpan readings of them.²⁹⁵ By contradicting himself, by erring willingly, and especially by introducing a cast of lively and authoritative characters in the dialogues that follow *Republic* who would deny the truth of what he had already taught us there—the great difference between Being and Becoming, for example²⁹⁶—Plato created an art of writing that overcame the strictures which he invites the unwary to believe he himself accepted as literal.

290. Playfully introduced by Socrates at its start, the difference between εἶναι and γενέσθαι short-circuits the comforting claim that the Exegesis is nothing more than play: because of the importance of “the γένεσις-οὐσία frontier” (see *Guardians in Action*, 318; cf. 56, 154n35, 320, 365, and 424), the Exegesis also anticipates the sublime truth of Platonism, with the transcendent Idea of the Good at its core.

291. For bibliography on the “unwritten teachings” celebrated by the Tübingen School, see *Guardians in Action*, xxvii.

292. Cf. Thomas A. Szlezák, *Reading Plato*, translated by Graham Zanker (London: Routledge, 1999), 46, where the dialogues become “a witty game which gave him [sc. Plato] great pleasure.”

293. See *Guardians in Action*, 156 and 191–92.

294. Cf. *Ascent to the Good*, xl.

295. Cf. J. P. Sullivan, “The Hedonism in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Phronesis* 6, no. 1 (1961), 10–28, on 16: “To be literal-minded except where the immediate context stresses the ironic or humorous intention is as mistaken as believing that Plato never makes a mistake.”

296. See *Guardians in Action*, Preface, especially xv–xvi and xxix.

Nicholas of Cusa famously claimed that the *coincidentia oppositorum* was “the wall of paradise [*murus paradisi*],”²⁹⁷ and that only on the other side of it, necessarily inaccessible to those guided by intellect alone, could one achieve the “the vision of God” or *visio Dei*:

Hence, I experience the necessity for me to enter into obscuring mist [*caligo*] and to admit the coincidence of opposites [*coincidentia oppositorum*], beyond all capacity of reason, and to seek truth where impossibility appears [*et quaerere ibi veritatem ubi occurrit impossibilitas*]. And when—beyond that {rational capacity} and beyond every most lofty intellectual ascent, as well—I come to that which is unknown to every intellect and which every intellect judges to be very far removed from the truth [*et quod omnis intellectus iudicat remotissimum a veritate*], there You are present, my God [*ibi es tu, deus meus*].²⁹⁸

As indicated in the Introduction, Plato’s last word is not the *coincidentia oppositorum*, and indeed his art of writing, which depends on the reality of contradiction, would lose its power in *caligo* of this kind.²⁹⁹ But despite the fact that Plato isn’t comparable with G-d, his Academy is a kind of paradise,³⁰⁰ and its wall is *deliberate self-contradiction*, writ largest in what I have called “Performative Self-Contradiction.” For the majority (οἱ πολλοί) of interpreters, the possibility that a great philosopher would (playfully) contradict himself deliberately is an interpretive *impossibilitas*, and common sense, masquerading as Cusanus’s *intellectus*, will always judge deliberate error to be, of all hermeneutic possibilities, *remotissimum a veritate*. My claim, on the contrary, is that Plato can only be seen (*ibi es tu*) on the far side of the Academy’s wall.

In 1962, Rosamond Kent Sprague published *Plato’s Use of Fallacy*, and she wasted no time in making the crucial point:

There is no doubt that there are many fallacious arguments in Plato’s dialogues. This book is an attempt to try out the hypothesis that Plato was fully conscious

297. See Nicolas of Cusa, *De Visione Dei*, 37.9 in Adelaida Dorothea Riemann (ed.), *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia*, volume 6 (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2000), 35.

298. Cusa, *De Visione Dei*, 36.1–7 (Riemann, 6.34).

299. Cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.35 (Mensch on 150): “It is said that when Antisthenes was about to read one of his own works in public he invited Plato to attend. And when asked what he was planning to read, Antisthenes said, ‘A work on the impossibility of contradiction,’ to which Plato replied, ‘But how can you write on this subject?’ And because Plato had showed [the Greek verb is διδάσκειν, ‘to teach’] that the argument against [i.e., contradicting] contradiction was self-contradictory [περιτρέπεσθαι], Antisthenes wrote a dialogue against Plato called *Sathon* [the attached note reads: ‘this title, slang for penis in ancient Greek, implies some sort of crude attack on Plato’].” Note that Plato was accusing Antisthenes of *involuntary* self-contradiction, περιτροπή, or retorsion. For discussion, see Susan Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens; Texts, Translations, and Commentary* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015), 424–28 (on t148).

300. Cf. Xenophon, *Anabasis*, 1.2.7; this suggests that the Garden of Callias is a similar kind of παράδεισος.

of the fallacious character of at least an important number of these arguments, and that he sometimes made deliberate use of fallacy as an indirect means of setting forth certain of his fundamental philosophical views.³⁰¹

Although Sprague trained her fire on *Euthydemus*, and more particularly on the fallacies the brothers deploy there,³⁰² she included an important note on *Protagoras* that implicated Socrates' deliberate use of fallacy.³⁰³ Demonstrating a nice understanding of his strategy in the first half of the dialogue, she shows how the claim that "justice is just" is the first move in a three-stage "reduction of the virtues."³⁰⁴ Of the Final Argument, i.e., "the reduction of courage to knowledge," she writes:

The main lines of the argument [sc. on 'the reduction of the virtues] are not picked up again until after the Simonides interval, i.e., not until 349b. The remainder of the dialogue is then devoted to the more difficult task of the reduction of courage to knowledge. This argument also appears to be fallacious, and consciously so, but it is too long to be analyzed here. (See G. Vlastos' Introduction to Plato's *Protagoras* in the *Library of Liberal Arts* series, New York, 1956, p. xxxi. Professor Vlastos would not agree with me that the fallacies are deliberate, however.)³⁰⁵

This passage clearly demarcates what I have called "the Academy's wall," and it casts Gregory Vlastos in the role of what Cusanus called *intellectus*. Both Sprague and Vlastos agree that Socrates uses fallacious arguments, but the latter regards it as an *impossibilitas* that Socrates would "cheat," and therefore he excludes the possibility that either Socrates or Plato "sometimes made *deliberate* use of fallacy."

Before giving further attention to Vlastos's alternative, it is necessary to discuss Sprague's use of the word "fallacy," especially in the context of Richard Robinson's claim that since Plato *had no word for fallacy*, he could not have been aware that such a thing existed.³⁰⁶ Not surprisingly, Sprague spryly wrings the neck of this argument,³⁰⁷ but I want to offer a more textual response.³⁰⁸ As already indicated, Plato *does* have a word for self-contradiction: Protagoras not only sets out to demonstrate that Simonides'

301. Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, xi (opening words).

302. See *Ascent to the Good*, 66–67.

303. Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, 27–28n15.

304. Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, 28n15; her reconstruction of the Unfinished Argument (see §3) will be considered in §5.

305. Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, 28n15.

306. See Richard Robinson, "Plato's Consciousness of Fallacy." *Mind* 51, no. 202 (April 1942), 97–114.

307. See Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, 7–8n5, especially: "One might just as well argue that Plato attached no importance to metaphysics, since he has no name for this part of philosophy."

308. Cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 62–64.

poem cannot be καλῶς πεποιῆσθαι if “the poet says opposite things [ἐναντία] himself to himself [αὐτος αὐτῷ]” (339b9–10), but there are repeated references to ἐναντία λέγειν αὐτος αὐτῷ (340b3) in the first stage of the Exegesis (339d1, 339d4–5, 339d6–7, 340c3, and 340c8). And at the end of the Exegesis, Socrates adds another crucial term, when, speaking for Simonides, he says to Pittacus: “speaking falsely [ψευδόμενος, participle of ψευδέσθαι] about the greatest things, you seem to be speaking the truth” (347a2–3). Echoing Homer’s verdict on Odysseus,³⁰⁹ Socrates is already pointing to ψευδέσθαι as the more properly Platonic term for what Sprague calls “fallacy” in *Protagoras*, and Socrates’ use of “to test [ἀποπειρᾶσθαι]” (by means of deliberately false claim) in the Exegesis itself (341d8) points to the same place. Long before he discusses “deception [ἀπάτη]” in *Phaedrus*,³¹⁰ he has introduced “to deceive [ἐξαπατᾶν]” in *Hippias Minor*,³¹¹ where discussion of Odysseus will intersect with the conscious use of *deliberate* falsehood (*Hp. Mi.* 372d6; see §11). Instead of “Plato’s Use of Fallacy,” I propose: Plato’s use of deliberate deception and falsehood for a pedagogical end. And it is self-contradiction, easy to spot and made thematic in the Exegesis, that he introduces first.³¹²

It is not, however, my intention to deny Sprague’s claims that Socrates and other characters in the dialogues use what we would call “fallacious” or even “bad” arguments in the dialogues,³¹³ or that Plato expects us to recognize them as such; I am merely subsuming the first of these facts under the more textual umbrella of “deliberate deception,” and explaining the second

309. On Homer, *Odyssey*, 19.203 (“speaking many falsehoods, he made them seem like truths”), see *Guardians on Trial*, 321.

310. On *Phdr.* 261d10–262c4, see *Guardians in Action*, 150–56, and Bruno Centrone, “Fedro 261e7–262c4, o l’inganno della buona retorica” in Giovanni Casertano (ed.), *Il Fedro di Platone: struttura e problematiche*, 39–55 (Naples: Loffredo, 2011), especially 44n11.

311. Cf. ἐξαπατᾶν and ψευδέσθαι in Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.14 and 4.2.17 (including ἀπάτη); note also ἄκων and ἐκόν at 4.2.19–20.

312. Self-contradiction must appear first (i.e., in *Prt.*) because Plato is dealing with neophytes: he can only be deceptive about Homer (as he is in *Hp. Mi.*) after he has ensured his students have studied Homer, and he can only tell lies about Athenian history (as he does in *Mx.*; on which see §15) after his students have studied, e.g., Thucydides. Most importantly, he can only banastically blur the γένεσις-οὐσία frontier after having introduced it in *Republic*. Of course the grossest form of deliberate deception will verge on farce, as it does in *Hp. Ma.* thanks to “Socrates’ Double” (see §10).

313. Lest I be taken to be cheating myself, although Plato links “to make” with “argument [λόγος]” at 313b4, there is no basis in his vocabulary for attaching the adjective “bad” (in the sense of false, fallacious, or deceptive) to λόγος, as in “to make a bad argument.” The closest thing to such an expression is οὐ κακῶς λέγειν at *Thg.* 127b2, where Demodocus is saying that his son has just made a good point; he uses the positive καλῶς λέγειν to the same effect at *Thg.* 127c5. But even this usage is exceptional, for κακῶς λέγειν generally means: “to speak badly of” someone, i.e., “to trash-talk” as at *Men.* 94e3. It is only at *Hp. Mi.* 372a3 that ψευδέσθαι is explicitly linked to κακόν ποιῆν, so even though self-contradiction is already the mark of what “has not been made beautifully” in *Prt.*, it may be the case that it is only in retrospect—i.e., while encountering *Prt. again*, after studying *Hp. Mi.*—that we will understand the introduction of the Socratic Paradox in the Exegesis is its own Performative Refutation.

by means of basanistic pedagogy (see Preface, principle §7). But the alternative interpretive path must also be clearly understood, ably described by I. M. Crombie, likewise in 1962:

We cannot assume then that when Socrates argues fallaciously it is Plato's purpose that we should ascertain his meaning by asking to what end Socrates has been made to do so. All the same we shall naturally try, whenever we find a passage the reasoning of which is apparently sophistical, to find an interpretation of it which renders it valid, or at least to reconstruct the valid train of thought the presence of which in Plato's mind allowed the fallacy to pass undetected. In my judgment one or other of these enterprises will commonly be successful.³¹⁴

Crombie's successful reconstructions are Plato's plight. Between the alleged "charity"³¹⁵ of the first enterprise—i.e., "to find an interpretation of it [sc. Plato's reasoning] which renders it valid"—and the tacit condescension of the alternative, whereby the interpreter's task is to show why it is understandable that Plato made the mistakes he did and thus "allowed the fallacy to pass undetected," we remain (to paraphrase Cusanus) on the wrong side of a wall *ubi non est tu*.³¹⁶ One might be tempted to call this interpretive approach "Crombie-ism" were it not for Vlastos, champion of the "what Plato was trying to say here" school of interpretation.³¹⁷ The passage Sprague mentions in her *Protagoras* note is a good example of an even more serious interpretive error.³¹⁸

Where both Plato and Vlastos are concerned, self-contradiction is the place to begin. Since the latter regards "say only what you believe" to be "a standing rule of elenctic debate" (citing *Protagoras* 331c in the process),³¹⁹ he then comments: "If his interlocutors were to decline compliance with this rule, Socrates would have no purchase on them; his argumentative procedure would be stymied [note 29]."³²⁰ It is only in the attached note that he mentions *Protagoras* 333c, where Plato causes Socrates to contradict himself, i.e., ἐναντία

314. I. M. Crombie, *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines*, two volumes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 1.26.

315. On misplaced interpretive charity, see Joshua Landy, "Philosophical Training Grounds: Socratic Sophistry and Platonic Perfection in *Symposium* and *Gorgias*," *Arion* (third series) 15, no. 1 (Spring–Summer, 2007), 63–122.

316. Cf. Gerasimos Santas, "Plato's *Protagoras* and Explanations of Weakness," *Philosophical Review* 75, no. 1 (January 1966), 3–33, on 9: "I shall stay close to the text, but at the same time I shall give Plato the benefit of the doubt in cases of ambiguity and incompleteness of expression."

317. See *Plato the Teacher*, 219–21.

318. Cf. Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy*, 94–97, with the passage in Vlastos, "Introduction," xxxi–xxxvi, culminating with: "this is not to deny that he [sc. Socrates] occasionally makes grave errors . . . now consider." This passage will be quoted in full and discussed in §10 below.

319. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 111n21.

320. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 113.

λέγειν αὐτος αὐτῷ, on “this rule.”³²¹ Naturally Vlastos makes no comment on the close proximity of these two passages,³²² and therefore sidesteps the question of whether “Socrates” could possibly be unaware of the problem. Although “say only what you believe” creates a readily identifiable self-contradiction in *Protagoras*, it is not the one to which Plato draws the most attention, for Socrates’ claim that he is forgetful is not only implicitly contradicted by himself at the start (on θαμά at 309b9, see §1) but by Alcibiades (336d2–4),³²³ and even before applying his prodigious memory to the exact words of Protagoras (cf. 349d6–8 and 359b3–6), he has already demonstrated it in the Exegesis, for he clearly knows Simonides by heart.³²⁴ Of course such observations seem almost like nitpicking in the face of the most monstrous example of all: Socrates’ ability to tell us what has just happened (cf. 310a1) makes the dialogue as a whole (apart from the Frame) a Performative Self-Contradiction of “I happen to be a forgetful kind of person” (334c8–9).³²⁵

Vlastos begins the chapter called “Does Socrates Cheat?” by quoting Friedländer, Guthrie, and Kahn to the effect that he uses trickery, ambiguity, and deception;³²⁶ in answering “no,” he finds his allies among the more radical Socratists who followed in his footsteps.³²⁷ It is important that he frames the question in relation to Socrates; as a result, when he endorses Crombie’s “sane stand on this issue,”³²⁸ he does not mention Plato, for clearly Plato never “cheats” in order to win any arguments. To the extent that Plato uses deliberate deception in order to test his readers—as most every modern teacher does by creating multiple-choice exams—a better question might be: “Does Plato Teach?” In any case, after narrowing the scope of his claim with “when arguing seriously,” he lays down his own position as follows: “When engaged in elenctic argument, searching for the right way to live, he is in dead earnest—as much so as anyone could be about anything at any time.”³²⁹

321. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 113n29.

322. Cf. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 113n29 and 111n21.

323. Note the parallel with the way Plato uses Protagoras to point out the false conversion at 350c6–351b2 as analyzed in Sprague, *Plato’s Use of Fallacy*, 94–97. But more relevant to the immediate point is that Socrates clearly noticed Alcibiades attentively enough to remember—and thus has not forgotten—what he said about Socrates not being as forgetful as he claimed to be.

324. As noted by James Gordon Clapp, “Some Notes on Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 10, no. 4 (June 1950), 486–499, on 494.

325. As the first in the dialogues, this Performative Self-Contradiction is easy to spot and borders on farce; others, likewise present from the start, are both far less trivial and considerably more difficult to see, e.g., the relationship between Socratic Ignorance and Virtue is Knowledge (cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 162–63n178) in the light of Socrates’ evident excellences. But we will only be bold enough to do so having first realized from easier examples that Plato repeatedly deploys Performative Self-Contradictions.

326. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 132.

327. Taylor, Irwin, and Gerasimos Santas in Vlastos, *Socrates*, 132–33.

328. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 133n9 cites the passage quoted above.

329. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 133–34; nor is this enough: to “arguing seriously” and the elenctic context, he adds that it must also be “reasonable for him to think of the search as obedience to divine

As a result, when Vlastos denies “that Socrates would ever (knowingly, and in a serious vein) assert a false premise or endorse a fallacious argument,”³³⁰ he is coming very close to echoing what Socrates says while introducing the Socratic Paradox in *Protagoras* about the man—whom Simonides could not possibly be praising—“who voluntarily makes nothing bad [ὄς ἂν μηδὲν κακὸν ποιῆ]” (345d7–8), with the bad thing in this case being a false or deceptive premise, argument, or speech.³³¹ It is therefore interesting that Vlastos promptly turns to the Exegesis.

Naturally he attempts to defuse it. To begin with, it is “extra-elenctic,”³³² and by Vlastos’s standards, this ought to be enough. Presenting this interlude—but not what follows it—“as an out-and-out fight” in which Socrates “does everything he can to win,”³³³ Vlastos can safely refer to his “brazen maneuver,” “effrontery,” and even “willful travesty of the poet’s meaning,”³³⁴ following up a “pseudo-historical extravaganza” on Sparta with “his manhandling of the text, torturing crypto-Socratic wisdom out of it.”³³⁵ By this he means, of course, “the Socratic paradox that no one does wrong willingly,” and in the attached note, he makes a valuable point: “No clearer, sharper, enunciation can be found in the Platonic corpus than the one Socrates smuggles into his mock-interpretation of Simonides’ poem.”³³⁶ Vlastos feels safe in admitting all this—e.g., “Socrates is pulling the wool over his hearers’ eyes”³³⁷—because of what follows the Exegesis, i.e., the Dismissal of

command” on 134; for Vlastos’s deflationary approach to the Divine Sign, see *Ascent to the Good*, 375–84.

330. Vlastos, “Unity of the Virtues,” 223n5, quoted in Vlastos, *Socrates*, 134n17.

331. The verb ποιεῖν takes λόγος as its direct object at 333c3–4, and the particular λόγος in question will be directed by Socrates against another that has as good a claim as any to be called “bad” or at least “unjust,” i.e., that the doer of injustice can be said to σωφρονεῖν while doing it (333b8–c1). Note that Protagoras does not take up (or make) *this* (unjust or bad) λόγος willingly (333c1–3), and Socrates coaxes him into doing so at the expense of self-contradiction; thus there are three elements in 333b8–c9—(1) making a bad or shameful λόγος, (2) doing so, despite being initially unwilling to do so, and (3) deliberate self-contradiction—that bear directly on the Socratic Paradox as introduced in the Exegesis.

332. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 138: “shorter extra-elenctic Socratic capers.” Since this comes at the end of the passage on the Exegesis, my “to begin with” is too strong except in a logical sense of priority: Vlastos does not place it first because that would have made it obvious that he was begging the question, and therefore he offers other arguments first although based on his own definitions (i.e., “when engaged in elenctic argument” on 134), the mere fact that the Exegesis does not appear in an ἐλεγχος is sufficient to exclude it from (serious) consideration. It is, however, an important part of the ἀγὼν (see following note).

333. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 135; cf. Vlastos, *Protagoras*, where beginning with the Table of Contents (v–vi), he distinguishes a First from a Second Round, and continues the (boxing) metaphor in the “Introduction,” xxviii–xxxi. Strictly as a matter of boxing, the Exegesis is perhaps better understood as the Second, with the Final Argument as the Third and decisive Round; hence a preference for two Acts.

334. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 135.

335. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 136.

336. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 136n26. Most commentators are far less honest about this.

337. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 136.

the Flute Girls. Since the discussion of poetry has been *forced* upon him, “the wild constructions Socrates puts on Simonides’ verse” is fully justified because the whole has been “an exercise in triviality, a complete waste of time.”³³⁸ By dismissing the Flute Girls, Socrates

is protesting as a cop-out the shift out of question-and-answer argument into poetic exegesis which Protagoras had instigated. He is allowing his hearers to infer that his part in it had been a labored joke. Trapped into it, he played the fool to make fools of those who took it seriously.³³⁹

There are problems with this assessment. To begin with, it is Socrates himself who shifts “out of question-and-answer argument into poetic exegesis.” Although “both Prodicus and Hippias” along with “the others” (342a4–5) warmly welcome this shift, Protagoras himself does not, and falls back on his characteristic “if it pleases you” (342a3–4), the same words (cf. 331c3) that set up Socrates’ first self-contradiction in the dialogue.

The Exegesis itself consists of three parts: (1) a “question-and-answer argument” with Protagoras in which, despite the yeoman service of Prodicus, Socrates gets the worst of it (339e6–342a2), (2) Socrates’ long speech, beginning with his praise of Spartan brevity (342a6–347a5) but including the exegesis proper, and (3) the Flute Girls (347b9–348a6). Corresponding to these three parts are the following problems, and the first is: given that Socrates misinterprets the poem, is there any sense in our attempting to interpret it correctly? Next come the lessons of Socrates’ misinterpretation itself, and specifically whether it contains true doctrines, whether Platonic or Socratic, or not. Finally there is the problem of interpreting the Exegesis as a whole in the light of the Flute Girls, especially since Plato is every bit as inaccessible to us as Socrates claims Simonides is to him.

Turning first to “(1),” there are clearly some valuable lessons to be learned from what Socrates does there. To begin with, there is his claim that the poem has been “well-made [εὖ ποιήσεται]” (344b1) and specifically that it has been made carefully (μεμελημένως ἔχει at 344b2); also that it has a purpose or plan (ἡ βούλησις at 344b4). I take all of these claims to be self-referential, i.e., that they apply to Plato’s “makings” as well (as of course they do) and that Plato expects us to understand that they do. Second, there is the discussion of the meaning of χαλεπός, in which Socrates enlists the aid of Prodicus to show that the same word may have two different meanings as of course is often the case (341b5–d11). Third, there is the opening discussion of “to be [τὸ εἶναι; also τὸ ἔμμεναι]” and “to become” (340b3–c7), which, no matter how irrelevant this distinction may be to Simonides’ poem, will eventually

338. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 137.

339. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 137–38.

prove to be Platonic bedrock.³⁴⁰ Finally, by having Socrates draw attention in “(2)” to the placement of the words μέν (343c7–d6) and ἀλαθέως (343e3–344a6) in the poem’s opening lines,³⁴¹ Plato prepares the reader for the most important misinterpretation in the poem, where instead of praising the man who does nothing base or shameful willingly—the trigger for the Socratic Paradox—Simonides is tortured into the claim that although he sometimes praises *unwillingly* those who do bad things (345e6–346b8),³⁴² he willingly praises only those who don’t. To recur to Vlastos’ claim that Socrates engages in “(2)” unwillingly,³⁴³ it is important to note that Protagoras effectively blocks Socrates’ attempt to enlist the aid of both Hesiod (340c8–e7) and Prodicus (340e8–341e7) in “(1)” and that it is only in the aftermath of these failed argumentative attempts that Socrates resorts to the very same tool that previously led him to criticize Protagoras: the long, uninterrupted speech (341e7–342a2). Naturally I regard this shift not as something “Protagoras had instigated”³⁴⁴ nor as proof that “Socrates Cheats” but as another of Plato’s Performative Self-Contradictions.

A central problem with a deflationary approach to the Exegesis like Vlastos’ is that it fails to explain why it should be *this particular poem* that Plato chooses for this “exercise in triviality.” In a 1997 article, Glenn Most blends insight into that choice with what I regard as an important breakthrough regarding the correct interpretation of Simonides’ poem.³⁴⁵ He demonstrates that it is not primarily the difference between χαλεπός as “difficult” as opposed to “bad” that is in play—in fact the latter arises in the context of Prodicus’ analysis of δεινός³⁴⁶—but of the ancient distinction between χαλεπός as

340. The Exegesis thus not only introduces “the philosophy of Socrates” but Platonism as well, i.e., that which Plato was most particularly keen to teach us. For a direct attack on just this element in the Exegesis—not surprising given its author’s political engagements (see *Guardians in Action*, 136n529)—see Hermann Gundert, “Die Simonides-Interpretation in Platons *Protagoras*,” in *HPMHNEIA*, Festschrift Otto Regenbogen, 71–93 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1952), on 83.

341. Although the word ὑπερβᾶτόν appears only once in the dialogues (here at 343e3), the trope it names will reappear, most noticeably and importantly with the word for “forever” or “always”; cf. ἀεὶ at *Smp.* 205a7 where placing it after εἶναι creates the confusion—it should precede or immediately follow βούλεσθαι—that leads to its deliberately misleading second use at 206a9. See also the placement of the same word at *Ti.* 28a1, on which see *Guardians in Action*, 43–44.

342. On this, see *Ascent to the Good*, 319–22; Xenophon’s *Hiero* may also be apposite.

343. Bearing in mind that Vlastos uses “trapped into it” at *Socrates*, 138, we can find a Vlastos-inspired refutation of the Socratic Paradox if he has “played the fool” voluntarily.

344. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 138.

345. Glenn W. Most, “Simonides’ Ode to Scopas in Contexts,” in Irene J. F. de Jong and J. P. Sullivan (eds.), *Modern Critical Theory and Classical Literature*, 127–152 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994). Most’s paper has received insufficient attention even when it is mentioned, as in Bernd Manuwald (ed.), *Platon, Protagoras, Eingeleitet, übersetzt, und erläutert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 144: “(anders Most 1994, 137f.)” Let’s hope that Andrew Ford, “The Function of Criticism at the Present Time (432 B.C.): Text, Interpretation and Memory in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Poetica* 46, no. 1/2 (2014), 17–39, is a sign of better things to come.

346. An important word in *Prt.*, beginning at 312d7, first used in its positive sense. The importance (and “logographic necessity”) of 341a7–b5 (which sets up the discussion of χαλεπός and will

merely “difficult” (i.e., δύσεργον)³⁴⁷ as opposed to “impossible and not human [ἀδύνατον καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπειον]” (344c2).³⁴⁸ “Most’s Breakthrough”³⁴⁹ is all the more impressive because it implicates the proverb that figures so prominently in what I take to be Plato’s strategy for inspiring his students to make their ascent to the beautiful (see Preface, *ad fin.*): χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά. Here is the comment of Zenobius (second century A.D.) on it, cited by Most:

χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά: proverb that Plato also memorializes [ἤς μέμνηται καὶ Πλάτων]. And its source is said to be: Periander of Corinth was initially popular [δημοτικόν] in his rulings but later changed his choice and became tyrannical rather than popular. Pittacus the Mytilenean, having taken note of these things, and having feared about his own state of mind, forthwith fled from being tyrant of the Mytilenaeans. But being asked for what reason he surrendered his power, Pittacus said: ‘that it is difficult to be noble [χαλεπὸν ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι; cf. 339d5],’ having come to believe on account of what happened to Periander that it was most challenging of all [δυσχερέστατον] to maintain one’s own state of mind. But Solon, having ascertained these things, said: χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά, and from thence comes the proverb. But others hear this χαλεπὸν in place of impossible [ἀδύνατον], for to be good in all respects is impossible.³⁵⁰

As if this weren’t impressive enough, Most not only cites texts from Homer in which χαλεπὸν means ἀδύνατον καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπειον,³⁵¹ but also another ancient account of χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά where Solon responds to Pittacus’ claim that it might well be *too* difficult to be good, and who coins the phrase “having despised his weakness [μαλακία].”³⁵² These observations clearly put the matter in its proper light.

Pittacus is too soft for Solon, but he is too hard for Simonides. On Most’s reading, the detail that surrounds the claim that it is χαλεπὸν to be “truly [ἀλαθέως]” good in the first strophe (including “foursquare,” etc.) proves

be quoted below) only becomes clear at 359c6 where ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ replaces ἐπὶ τὰ κακά (358c6–d2) as mediated by ἐπὶ ταῦτα ἱέναι ἢ δέδουκεν (358e3), δέος (fear) being the etymological origin of “to fear [δέδουκέναι].” Even if it were true that nobody advances voluntarily into or receives τὰ κακά (358e5–6), it is not true that nobody advances voluntarily into the things they fear (358e3), and thus to say “into what he believes to be δεινὰ nobody advances” (359d5–6) is false quite apart from the fact that only Prodicus denies that δεινός can mean something like “wicked good.”

347. I.e., “difficult to do” (cf. 341d4–5), on which see Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 137 (on Apollonius the Sophist; first century A. D.).

348. Cf. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 1.1.3 on “neither impossible nor difficult.”

349. Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 136–38.

350. E. L. Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin (eds.), *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, volume 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1839), 172 (on χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά), cited in Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 138n31.

351. Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 138n30; on μολύ in Homer, *Odyssey*, 10.305, see *Plato the Teacher*, 399n123.

352. Leutsch and Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum*, 462 (on χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά).

that *there* it means “impossible.”³⁵³ Simonides is not contradicting himself because he fully realizes that *Pittacus* only meant to say that it was difficult but not impossible. *Simonides disagrees*. The low bar that *he* then sets for praiseworthy conduct is of a piece with his critique of Pittacus: it is enough to do nothing base willingly, for being truly noble is impossible,³⁵⁴ and it is only while they “fare well” that men can be called “good” (344e7–8). In this light, the choice of Simonides’ poem is *by no means random*, for it places us from the start on the first rung of our ascent to the Beautiful. We can join Simonides in proposing an easier goal *or* we can find ourselves inspired by Solon’s *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*. As for Socrates, he will make it easier for us to make the more beautiful choice by offering an account of virtue in the Final Argument that makes its attainment *even easier* than Simonides had already done. What is more, he will unmask the sophists by bringing them along with him *enthusiastically* (hence *ὑπερφυῶς* at 358a4): since it is not in human nature to wish to advance into things which one thinks are bad (358c7–d2),³⁵⁵ it is easy for anyone with knowledge, and who can thus recalculate the Beautiful as the Good (358b5; cf. 359e5–6), the Good as the Pleasant (358b6–7; cf. 355b5)—and thus the painful as the bad (355b5)—to make a choice so utterly un-Solonic that it will ultimately become plausible that *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ* really *does* mean that beautiful things are *bad*, if, that is, we can first agree that there is more pain than pleasure—i.e., more bad than good *for us*—in incurring wounds and death in wartime in order to rescue our friends (cf. *Alc. I* 115b1–4).

Brilliant though his article is, Most curiously expends no effort to show, on the basis of *Protagoras*, that Plato was aware of the double meaning of this use of ‘difficult’ (τὸ ‘χαλεπὸν’ τοῦτο), i.e., that he too knew that *χαλεπὸν* could mean ‘impossible’ (ἀδύνατον) as well as ‘difficult.’ But Plato promptly rewards the student who is now equipped with the correct hypothesis:

Socrates: But you [sc. Protagoras], so skilled in many other things, appear to be unskilled in this, and lack the skill that I can boast because of being a dis-

353. Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 138: “In the first passage, Simonides implies his own understanding of Pittacus’ saying (that is, it is ‘impossible’ to be good) by interpolating into it a series of hyperbolic determinants (*ἀλαθέως* [etc.; see 339b2-3]), and even though he does not explicitly assert that by *χαλεπὸν* he means ‘impossible’ rather than just ‘difficult,’ these determinants make his meaning quite clear.” Given the importance of André Laks and Glenn W. Most (eds.), *Early Greek Philosophy*, nine volumes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), it is interesting to note that Most thanks Laks on 127. For some critical comment on their approach, see §10 and my “Turning Points from Plato,” *Apeiron. Estudios de Filosofía* 11 (2019), 185–204, beginning on 195.

354. See Most, “Simonides’ Ode,” 140–41, especially: “not being *ἐκόν* not only exculpates someone for Simonides, it is now rewarded with the poet’s friendship and praise. In other words, what had earlier been a *minimal* condition (sufficing only to free the defendant from severe penalties) is now a *maximal* condition (sufficing to guarantee high rewards).”

355. The passage that reaches a climax here will be quoted and discussed below.

ciple [τὸ μαθητῆς εἶναι] of the great Prodicus; and so now you seem to me not to understand [μανθάνειν] that perhaps [ἴσως] Simonides was not taking this ‘difficult’ here [τὸ χαλεπὸν τοῦτο] in the way that you are taking it—but just as [ἀλλ’ ὅσπερ], concerning the [word] ‘awful’ [τὸ δεινόν], Prodicus here corrects me each time I use the word in praising you or someone else; when I say, for instance, that Protagoras is an awfully wise man, he asks if I am not ashamed to call good things awful [τάγαθὰ δεινὰ]. (For awful [δεινόν], he says, is bad [κακόν]; thus no one on this or that occasion speaks of ‘awful wealth’ or ‘awful peace’ or ‘awful health,’ but we say ‘awful disease [νόσος],’ ‘awful war [πόλεμος]’ or ‘awful poverty [πενία],’ taking ‘awful’ to be ‘bad’).³⁵⁶ Perhaps, therefore [ἴσως οὖν], this ‘hard’ as well [καὶ τὸ χαλεπὸν] the Ceans and Simonides are likewise [αὖ] taking as either ‘bad’ or something else [ἢ ἄλλο τι] that you do not understand [ἢ κακὸν ὑπολαμβάνουσι ἢ ἄλλο τι ὃ σὺ οὐ μανθάνεις]: let us therefore ask Prodicus, for it is fair to question him on the dialect of Simonides.³⁵⁷

As is so often the case after quoting a passage from Plato, one hardly knows where to begin.³⁵⁸ In addition to the italicized words that open up the gateway to Most’s Breakthrough, the peculiar grammar of ἴσως οὖν is worthy of consideration,³⁵⁹ as is the insulting praise of Protagoras,³⁶⁰ the revealing use of the less common meaning of μανθάνειν (cf. *Euthd.* 277e3–278a7), the emphasis on Prodicus,³⁶¹ and the identification of πόλεμος as one of those δεινὰ (cf. 359d5–6) that cannot be numbered among τάγαθὰ (359e3–7).

But nothing quite matches the power of that otherwise inexplicable ἢ ἄλλο τι, and thus the need for re-interpreting the interpretation of Simonides

356. Following J. Adam and A. M. Adam (eds.), *Platonis Protagoras; With Introduction, Notes and Appendices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), 155, who call this a parenthesis in their note on ἴσως οὖν καὶ τὸ χαλεπὸν (see below).

357. 341a2–b8 (Lamb modified); emphasis mine.

358. Although I always have a pretty clear notion of why I am going to quote some passage from Plato, I never fail to discover something new in it while preparing it for insertion in the text; in this case, see the following note.

359. Cf. Adam and Adam, *Plato, Protagoras*, 155 (on ἴσως οὖν καὶ τὸ χαλεπὸν): “Sauppe [sc. Hermann Sauppe (1809–1893)] remarks [astutely] that we should expect οὕτω καὶ τὸ χαλεπὸν to introduce the apodosis to the ὅσπερ clause (341a[7]): καὶ is however enough to show that we have reached the application [this is an error; it is the unexpected οὖν that shows this, while καὶ sets up the merely deceptive symmetry with δεινόν, a symmetry hammered with αὖ]: οὖν is introduced on account of the parenthesis from τὸ γὰρ δεινόν τοῦ κακοῦ ὄντος; and ἴσως marks the suggestion as only tentative.” Instead of completing the ὅσπερ/οὕτω claim, difficult enough since Socrates has established no actual connection between δεινόν and χαλεπόν, Plato makes the connection impossible by combining a definitive but completely unjustified οὖν with a self-contradictory ἴσως, as if at the end of a geometrical proof, the teacher were to say “therefore, perhaps.”

360. This constitutes a Performative Self-Contradiction because Socrates introduces an attempt to praise him at 341a8–9 while in fact proving that Protagoras does not understand (μανθάνειν) quite apart from the fact that Socrates could just as easily be praising someone else as equally wise, as he is in fact doing with Prodicus. And then, having shaped Prodicus to his use (341c2) through flattery (341a1–4), he promptly unmasks him as wrong (341d6–8; but see following note).

361. Cf. *Euthd.* 277e4 with the ability “to divide words correctly” (341c7–8).

in the Exegesis on the basis of Most's Breakthrough.³⁶² Although Prodicus will confirm, falsely, that Simonides takes *χαλεπόν* to mean *κακόν* (341c2), Plato gives the reader a second chance to discover "impossible" as that "or something else" when Prodicus responds to the erroneous substitution: "what other than this [τί ἄλλο ἢ τοῦτο] do you think Simonides meant?" (341c6–7). Thanks to Most, the answer has now become obvious, and has just been implied by the substitution itself: "it is bad to be [ἔμμεναι] noble" (341c5) is not only utterly implausible in comparison with "it is impossible to be noble," but Socrates' distinction between εἶναι/ἔμμεναι and γενέσθαι leads by a different route to Simonides' equally anti-Solonic conclusion: it is *impossible* to be good (cf. ἀδύνατον at 344c2 and 344e6).

As a result, when Socrates says a moment later to Protagoras that Prodicus was playing and seemed to be testing you (παίζειν and ἀποπειρᾶσθαι at 341d7–8) it is rather Plato who is still playing and really is testing *us*. The substitution of "bad" for "difficult" is itself "bad"—i.e., Socrates is making a deceptive substitution deliberately—and behind the hammered ἄλλο τι we are challenged to discover "impossible," exactly the thing Simonides will say about *becoming* a blameless man (τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι δυνατόν at 345c6). But let's not miss the forest for the trees: we will not be able to interpret the interpretation of Simonides correctly unless we realize that it is not Pitticus that Socrates is defending against Simonides nor Simonides that Socrates is defending against Protagoras—as Most's Breakthrough might suggest to some, and perhaps also to Most himself³⁶³—but rather it is Solon's *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ* that Plato is now challenging us to defend *against Socrates*.

The insight behind Solon's proverb is what Patrick Coby calls "the vulgar opinion about virtue," i.e., the view that virtue "is noble and for the very reason that it is difficult."³⁶⁴ In his chapter on "The Ode of Simonides (338–348c)," Coby introduces a useful distinction, originating in Socrates' citation of Hesiod in the "question-and-answer argument" phase of the Exegesis (340c8–d5) between this vulgar (and difficult) conception and what he calls "the easiness of virtue."³⁶⁵ Pointing out that "Socrates is entirely responsible for continued preoccupation with Simonides' ode"³⁶⁶—a valid observation that undermines Vlastos's attempt to palliate Socrates' trickery because in-

362. But note that the discovery of this ἄλλο τι is necessarily a *literary* phenomenon, inaccessible to those who simply hear the dialogue or see it performed.

363. See Most, "Simonides' Ode," 141n43: if Arthur W. H. Adkins "remains trapped in other moral concerns," how far distant must Most himself be from that "moral" majority" (141)? Cf. *Plato the Teacher*, 213–15 (on Adkins), and Altman, *German Stranger*, 242n36 (on "remains trapped").

364. Coby, *Plato's Protagoras*, 102.

365. Coby, *Plato's Protagoras*, 103. Cf. Protagoras' comment at 340e that "to possess virtue [ἀρετή]" is "of all things most difficult."

366. Coby, *Plato's Protagoras*, 104; cf. 111 ("for which Socrates bears complete responsibility").

terpreting it has been *forced* on him—he brings together “four interrelated Socratic doctrines” of which the third marks Coby’s own breakthrough:

Four interrelated Socratic doctrines are present in this section of the *Protagoras*: (1) that a human being fares well by knowledge, (2) that virtue is knowledge, (3) that virtue is easy, and (4) that no one does evil willingly.³⁶⁷

Consistent with the equation of “vulgar” and “difficult”—as if it were not οἱ πολλοί who always try to make things easy for themselves—Coby, like a good Straussian,³⁶⁸ will present Socrates as radicalizing Simonides,³⁶⁹ thus helping us to see more clearly what Socrates merely *appears* to be doing while Plato is actually playing with and testing us:

The poem analysis has the effect of moving knowledge into the forefront of human concerns. It serves then as an introduction to the dialogue’s concluding section in which knowledge, tailored to a hedonistic frame, is credited with the salvation of men.³⁷⁰

If the Beautiful is the Good, and the Good is the Pleasant, then the Beautiful is the Pleasant. This would make τὰ καλὰ anything but χαλεπά, for only ignorance (ἀμαθία at 358c2) would lead someone to choose the worse over the better, for it is not in human nature (358d1)—and you can’t get any more “vulgar” than this kind of ubiquity—to advance ἐπὶ τὰ δεινά (359c6–d6). In this way, Socrates has put us within easy reach of reversing Solon’s χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ and rewriting it as κακὰ τὰ καλὰ (cf. *Alc. I* 115b9), particularly where τὰ καλὰ includes the merely “vulgar” virtue of facing death in battle for the sake of others.³⁷¹

367. Coby, *Plato’s Protagoras*, 122.

368. Via George Anastaplo, as per Coby, *Plato’s Protagoras*, 9; cf. 126: “Socrates recommends to Protagoras, for whom Simonides functions as a surrogate, the better precaution of esoteric speech.” With his “nonheroic virtue” on 102, cf. Thomas L. Pangle, *The Socratic Way of Life: Xenophon’s Memorabilia* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2018), on 78: “As we contemplate this victory of heroic Virtue (in *Memorabilia* 2.1.21–34), we cannot but look back, in comparison, to the glimpses that Xenophon has given us of Socratic virtue in peak action: Socrates’s ceaseless pressing of the ‘What is . . .’ questions, his conversing about nature in a manner different from that of most others, and his joyful study, together with friends, of great old books. The life given over to this kind of (unheroic) virtue exhibits no core ambiguities or waverings. Its pleasure and its goodness [N. B.], in satisfying the mind’s needs, are inherent, and not claimed or bestowed as deserved.”

369. Coby, *Plato’s Protagoras*, 126: “Following Simonides, Socrates notes that being good is a privilege of god, and further, that being good is a matter of faring well [thus radicalizing Simonides’ claim at 344e7 that only while faring well are men good]. But Socrates [further] adds of his own that faring well is equivalent to possessing knowledge.” For the Εὐ Πάρτεται Fallacy, see §5.

370. Coby, *Plato’s Protagoras*, 126.

371. Cf. Coby, *Plato’s Protagoras*, 122: “When Simonides says that he commends those who willingly do nothing shameful, he means quite simply that his esteem encompasses those who refrain from intentionally perpetrating harm to others. Socrates’ treatment of this phrase (as evidenced by his later discussion of *akrasia* {incontinence}) [note that it is therefore only this ‘later discussion’ that calls forth ‘the Noble Refutation,’ on which see below]) eliminates the second party, victimized by another’s wrongdoing, and [emphasis mine] *considers only the harm inflicted against oneself.*”

In short, Coby has succinctly demonstrated that the Exegesis is no easily detachable digression but is rather intimately connected to the Final Argument that follows it, and he has done so on the basis of “the easiness of virtue.”³⁷² Moreover, with his “four Socratic doctrines,” he has laid down useful parameters for the discussion of the long speech of Socrates in the Exegesis. While everyone would agree that Socrates’ speech mentions one Socratic doctrine (the Socratic Paradox) and at least strongly implies another (i.e., that Virtue is Knowledge), Coby breaks almost as much new ground by adding that “a human being fares well by knowledge” as he does by adding “virtue is easy.” What makes Coby’s “a human being fares well by knowledge” so significant is that it honors the connection between Socrates’ misinterpretation of εὖ πράττειν as used by Simonides—i.e., the claim that any man is good while he is faring well and bad while faring ill (344e7–8)—to furnish the foundation for the claim that virtue as *doing* well (called an ἀγαθὴ πράξις at 345a1 and εὐπραγία at 345a3) is the kind of knowledge that can be learned and lost (cf. μάθησις at 345a2–4 and ἐπιστήμη at 345b5).³⁷³ It is on the student’s ability to recognize the two different meanings of εὖ πράττειν that the most important passage in the first half of *Alcibiades Major* depends (*Alc. I* 113d1–116d4), and for that reason, the section of “(2)” dealing with it will not be discussed until §5.

Thanks to this postponement, the Socratic doctrine at the center of this section will remain the Socratic Paradox. But separations of this kind, whether they entail dividing the Exegesis from the rest of *Protagoras*, or “virtue is knowledge” from “nobody errs voluntarily,” can rarely be sustained in interpreting Plato, and in order to frame further discussion of the Socratic Paradox, I am first going to analyze a passage in the Final Argument that illustrates the moment of transition between the introduction of the Paradox—the one that makes it ripe for a Performative Refutation—and the one that will call forth and demand the Noble Refutation.³⁷⁴ Although it is only the former that is at stake in the Exegesis, and although the full force of the latter, like further

372. This tallies with the purport of Simonides’ “Ode to Scopas” in Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Melic Poets* (London: Macmillan, 1900), 311–12: “It is uncertain whether the poet is endeavoring to free Scopas from an accusation based on some specific act of injustice, or to furnish him with an ethical code that may excuse a persistent policy of oppression. Like Pindar, Simonides understood the art τὸ καλῶ τρέπειν and preaches to his patron the ethics of the market-place.” Cf. Adam and Adam, *Plato, Protagoras*, 200, on “the easy-going morality of the poem.” For both references, I am indebted to C. M. Bowra, “Simonides and Scopas.” *Classical Philology* 29, no. 3 (July 1934), 230–239, on 230.

373. For Coby on εὖ πράττειν, see *Plato’s Protagoras*, 118: “But *eu pratein* is an expression sufficiently ambiguous as to invite Socrates’ use of it in a way clearly foreign to the sense of the poem.”

374. Here I must redeem the pledge made in §3 about a second Key Passage—this one in the Great Speech—that implicates the Confessional Refutation of the Socratic Paradox. At 323a7–c2, Protagoras offers a proof or τεκμήριον all men must “take part” in justice if they want to remain among their fellows: a man would need to be insane to admit in public that he was unjust. The crucial moment is at 323b3, where Protagoras describes some one (τις) *who knows that he is unjust*. Coby draws much-needed attention to this passage on *Plato’s Protagoras*, 123.

discussion of εἶ πράττειν, is more properly reserved for §5, this transition illustrates not only how *Protagoras* prepares for *Alcibiades Major* or how Plato has imbedded the apparently trivial trickery of the Exegesis into the Final Argument, but also how all four of Coby's "Socratic doctrines" stand in relation to philosophy as revealed through our ascent to the Beautiful in *Symposium*, where it is the difficulty of τὰ καλὰ that creates the summit from which we will finally catch sight of the sea.

Here, then, is the opening move in the transitional passage:

Socrates: 'Well now, gentlemen,' I said, 'what of this? All actions [πράξεις] that aim at this [ἐπὶ τούτου]—at [ἐπί] living painlessly and pleasantly [τὸ ἀλύπως ζῆν καὶ ἡδέως]—are they not beautiful [καλαί]? And the beautiful deed [τὸ καλὸν ἔργον] is both good [ἀγαθόν] and beneficial [ὠφέλιμον]?' They agreed.³⁷⁵

This is the first time in the dialogues that we encounter the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful; Socrates will refer back to this passage (359e5–6) immediately after asking Protagoras if it is καλόν or αἰσχρόν to go to war (359e3–5). It's a nice example of the double question,³⁷⁶ since it is considerably easier to answer the second in the affirmative than the first, especially since nobody who performs τὸ καλὸν ἔργον by going to war is thereby aiming at τὸ ἀλύπως ζῆν καὶ ἡδέως,³⁷⁷ although such a deed may well be both good and beneficial to others. And then there's *Symposium*: if the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful were simply true, it would not be easier for Socrates to respond to Diotima's question about τὰ ἀγαθὰ rather than τὰ καλὰ (on *Smp.* 204d8–e7, see §17).

Closer to the Exegesis are the two nouns ἔργον and πράξεις. Both have a corresponding verb: ἐργάζεσθαι (as in "to accomplish an ἔργον) and πράττειν (as in "to do a deed"). It is therefore noteworthy that neither of these verbs appears in what follows:

Socrates: 'Then if,' I proceeded, 'the pleasant is good, nobody [οὐδεὶς] neither knowing nor thinking other things to be better than those he is making [ποιεῖν], and possible [δυνατά], thereafter makes [ποιεῖν] those [other, i.e., worse] things, it being possible [to make, i.e., a third ποιεῖν understood] the better ones.'³⁷⁸

375. 358b3–6 (Lamb modified).

376. See Maurice Herbert Cohen, "Plato's Use of Ambiguity and Deliberate Fallacy: An Interpretation of the Implicit Doctrines of the *Charmides* and *Lysis*" (doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1964), 103–105.

377. Cf. Michael C. Stokes, *Plato's Socratic Conversations: Drama and Dialectic in Three Dialogues* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 427: "One might cavil at the suggestion that the good the brave man pursues the pleasant; how pleasant, even in total, is war?" Naturally Xenophon has already answered in *Cynegeticus*.

378. 358b6–c1 (Lamb modified).

Starting with οὐδείς, we reenter the world of the Socratic Paradox (cf. 345e1), and it is by returning to its introduction in the Exegesis—keeping in mind Vlastos’s words that “no clearer, sharper, enunciation can be found in the Platonic corpus [sc. of ‘the truth of the Socratic paradox that no one does wrong willingly’] than the one Socrates smuggles into his mock-interpretation of Simonides’ poem”—that we discover why the verb ποιεῖν has just been hammered:

Socrates: ‘For Simonides was not so ill-educated as to say that he praised a person who willingly makes [ποιεῖν] nothing bad, as though there were some who voluntarily make [ποιεῖν] bad things. I am fairly sure of this—that none of the wise men considers that any human being errs voluntarily [οὐδείς ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼν ἐξαμαρτάνει] nor voluntarily accomplishes [ἐργάζεσθαι] both base and bad things [αἰσχρὰ τε καὶ κακὰ]; they are well aware that all those making [ποιοῦντες, participle of ποιεῖν] the base and bad things [τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακὰ] do them involuntarily; and so Simonides does not say he gives his praise to the person who willingly makes [ποιεῖν] no bad things, but uses the word ‘willingly’ of himself.’³⁷⁹

The explanation of this ostentatiously hammered verb ποιεῖν is that the Performative Refutation of the Socratic Paradox is in play from the moment of its introduction. By using the poetic verb “to make” rather than to do (πράττειν) or to accomplish—if anything, the single appearance of ἐργάζεσθαι makes the five uses of ποιεῖν more conspicuous—Plato is showing us why the Paradox appears in the Simonides Exegesis in its first, clearest, and sharpest enunciation: the surrounding discussion is concerned with whether the poem has been well made (καλῶς πεποηῆσθαι) and the latter defined specifically in terms of self-contradiction (339b9–10). In addition to another time in the Exegesis where ποιεῖν will appear in the passive in relation to the manner in which the poem “has been made” (344b1), Socrates will also use it twice in the active sense (343c5 and 347a5), the last time in his speech’s last sentence: “It seems to me, Prodicus and Protagoras, that it was while intending [διανοοῦμενος; cf. *Ion* 530b10–c1] these things that Simonides has made [πεποιηκέναι] this ode” (347a3–5). Regardless of whether Simonides has contradicted himself in the ode involuntarily or was simply intending to make doing base or bad things (345e2) look good or rather good enough (345c6–11), we still must explain Socrates’ misinterpretation. And if we decide that *Socrates* has deliberately made a self-contradictory account or λόγος about the ode, he has performed a Performative Self-Contradiction by doing something that, according to the Paradox, nobody does, and has thus executed a Performative Refutation on the Paradox itself.

379. 345d6–e6 (Lamb modified).

But perhaps (cf. ἴσως at 345b5 and 340c9) it would be closer to the truth to say that Plato has only laid the foundations for a Performative Refutation of the Paradox in *Protagoras*. It is only in *Hippias Minor* that to speak falsely (ψεῦδεσθαι) will join more serious cases of voluntarily “making base and bad things [ποιούντες τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακά]” (*Hp. Mi.* 371e9–372a5), culminating with Hippias’ objection that the laws make allowance for “if somebody without knowing commits an injustice or lies or does [ποιεῖν] any other bad thing.” No doubt precisely because those who would defend the Paradox as distinctively Socratic—i.e., on the basis of *Protagoras*, albeit with the smallest possible attention to the Exegesis—could promptly object that it is only Hippias who says this, Plato just as promptly permits Socrates to counter the know-it-all in even stronger terms: “those who harm people, and do them injustice, and those who speak falsely [ψευδόμενοι] and are deceiving and are erring voluntarily, but not involuntarily, are better than those who do so involuntarily” (*Hp. Mi.* 372d4–7). Even if we allow Socrates to be in doubt that such men are *better*—as of course we should³⁸⁰—there is little warrant for denying that he thinks such men exist,³⁸¹ and even this “little” might almost be considered sufficient to create a fourth “Existential Refutation” of the Paradox.

Thanks to its Performative Refutation, however, we already *know* that such men exist, and that one of them is a better teacher and poet because he is speaking falsely, erring, and being deceptive *deliberately* for the sake of prompting us to discover the Beautiful for ourselves without doing us an injustice or making things that are both base and bad.³⁸²

Socrates: ‘and neither is this yielding to oneself [τὸ ἤττω εἶναι αὐτοῦ] anything other than [ἄλλο τι ἢ] ignorance [ἀμαθία] nor mastery of oneself anything other [ἄλλο τι ἢ] than wisdom [σοφία].’ They all agreed. ‘Well then, by ignorance [ἀμαθία] do you mean having a false opinion and to be deceived [ἐψεῦσθαι] about matters of importance?’ They all agreed to this also.³⁸³

The continuation of this transitional passage from the Final Argument measures our current distance from *Hippias Minor*. Here there is no question of voluntary lying or deception but only of *being* deceived, and thus it bears just as much on the Socratic doctrine that Virtue is Knowledge as it does on the Paradox. The phrase τὸ ἤττω εἶναι αὐτοῦ makes this the fourteenth iteration

380. See Vlastos, *Socrates*, 275–80.

381. When we decide that Socrates has reached an erroneous conclusion at *Hp. Mi.* 376a4–6, we are admitting the existence of ὁ ἐκὼν ἀμαρτάνων: Plato himself.

382. It is therefore not by exploiting “if someone such as this exists” (εἴπερ τις ἐστὶν οὗτος) that Plato expects us to disarm *Hp. Mi.* 376a4–6 but by showing why ὁ ἐκὼν ἀμαρτάνων is not in this case (see previous note) καὶ αἰσχρὰ καὶ ἄδικα ποιῶν, and why the one who is, is not ὁ ἀγαθός.

383. 358c1–5 (Lamb modified).

of (something like) “being overcome by pleasure or pain” (352d8–e1; cf. 352c4–7 for the first), and Plato’s emphasis on this notion has already been considered in the context of Xenophon (see §2) and the Xenophon Joke.

But like the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (358b5), “the [Wisdom/Ignorance] Binary” (for so it will hereafter be called) looks forward to *Symposium* (and beyond), especially since the addition of “nothing other than [οὐδὲ . . . ἄλλο τι ἤ]” to both σοφία and ἀμαθία creates a zero-sum (or excluded middle) opposition between them that will be revisited in *Second Alcibiades* (see §7). And it is the re-deployment of this fallacious Binary that will later allow Euthydemus to skewer Cleinias in *Euthydemus* (*Euthd.* 275d4) just as it is the Binary’s negation that will allow Socrates to define philosophy in *Lysis* (*Ly.* 218a2–6) after he allows Diotima to do so first in *Symposium* as that which is between (μεταξύ) wisdom and ignorance (*Smp.* 203e5–204b2).³⁸⁴ As a general rule, wherever σοφία and ἐπιστήμη (*Euthd.* 281b2–6) or ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη (357b4) become the ἀμαθία-negating basis of virtue, philosophy’s role in the ascent to the Beautiful and the Good will have been negated, and *Protagoras* introduces the student to that negation in a most engaging and entertaining manner, making it in the process the Gateway to the Academy.

Socrates: ‘Something else [ἄλλο τι], then.’ I said, ‘towards, mark it, bad things [ἐπί γε τὰ κακά] nobody willingly goes [οὐδεὶς ἐκὼν ἔρχεται] nor towards the things [ἐπὶ ἅ] he thinks to be bad, nor is this, as it seems, in human nature [ἐν ἀνθρώπου φύσει]: towards the things [ἐπὶ ἅ] he thinks are bad to wish to go [ἐθέλειν ἰέναι] instead of the good things [τὰ ἀγαθά].’³⁸⁵

This third ἄλλο τι announces the transition to a new form of the Paradox, the one that summons “the Noble Refutation,” i.e., the most beautiful and important refutation of them all. Its positive keynote is *advancing toward*, hence the emphasized ἐπί γε; the absence of ποιεῖν shows that we have now advanced beyond the form of the Paradox that made it ripe for a Performative Refutation in the Exegesis. Both ἰέναι and ἔρχεσθαι are verbs of motion, and the single most important movement in the Platonic dialogues is the philosopher’s return to the Cave.³⁸⁶ Is it within the bounds of human nature “to wish to go back down [ἐθέλειν πάλιν καταβαίνειν]” (*R.* 519d4–5),³⁸⁷ or is this too difficult, so difficult, indeed, as to be impossible? “Then will we do

384. In addition to Christopher Moore, *Calling Philosophers Names: On the Origin of a Discipline* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 249–50, see *Ascent to the Good*, 87–91 and §7 below.

385. 358c6–d2 (Lamb modified).

386. See *Plato the Teacher*, §16.

387. Note that Socrates is proposing the creation of a City in which the philosophers will not be allowed to μη θέλειν πάλιν καταβαίνειν; see *Plato the Teacher*, 174–75.

them this injustice,’ he [sc. Glaucon] said, ‘and will we make them live worse [χειρόν ζῆν], it being possible for them to live better?’³⁸⁸ On the basis of the Final Argument in *Protagoras*, we must conclude that “to wish to go [ἐθέλειν ἰέναι]” ἐπὶ τὰ κακά is something *nobody* will do; σοφία compels us to choose “to live painlessly and pleasantly [τὸ ἀλύπως ζῆν καὶ ἡδέως],” while to choose τὸ χειρόν ζῆν is ἀμαθία.³⁸⁹ *But if you were to choose it*, if you were to go back down voluntarily when it was possible to pursue a course of action that was better for you, would that not be the perfect example—the Platonic Form, as it were—of τὸ καλὸν ἔργον? It is this question, then, to which the Exegesis already points: is a voluntary return to the Cave *impossible* or is it merely difficult? Everyone who knows what χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά really means will know how Plato expects *you* to answer.

But I’m not claiming that Plato expected *anyone* to understand *Protagoras* in this way the first time they saw or read it, nor the second time neither. What I am claiming is that the Exegesis is neither an “exercise in triviality” nor a “complete waste of time, and a tasteless one.”³⁹⁰ It is rather a highly refined specimen of self-referential literary art that barely begins to reach its imaginative peak with the false claim that nobody would make a bad thing willingly.³⁹¹ By raising the question of how to interpret a written text at the start of the Reading Order, and then by interpreting such a text in a deliberately deceptive manner, Plato has laid the foundation for the education in philosophy *and* virtue he intends to provide, for even without the Curricular Hypothesis, our understanding of Platonic pedagogy must always revolve around the interpretation of his dialogues. What keeps them alive is already on full display in the Exegesis.

In this light, there is no need to address the interpretation of “(3)” in any detail. Situated in the context of the Allegory of the Cave, and thus of Plato’s ultimate goal for all of his students, from Hippocrates all the way to us—“so that the things of the city he may be most capable both to do and to speak [δυνατότατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν]” is how he allows Protagoras to proclaim it (319a1–2)³⁹²—his dialogues *are* merely flute-girls. *We* are responsible for learning virtue and are being taught what it is only to the extent

388. *R.* 519d8–9.

389. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 2.1.8–9.

390. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 137.

391. For some recent work on the Exegesis, see Hartmut Westermann, *Die Intention des Dichters und die Zwecke der Interpreten Zu Theorie und Praxis der Dichterauslegung in den platonischen Dialogen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 233–68, Franco V. Trivigno, “Childish Nonsense? The Value of Interpretation in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 51, no. 4 (October 2013), 509–543, and Charles Brittain, “*Deimos* (Wicked Good) at Interpretation (*Protagoras* 334–48)” in Verity Harte and Raphael Woolf (eds.), *Rereading Ancient Philosophy: Old Chestnuts and Sacred Cows*, 32–59 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); amidst a rich bibliography, Brittain praises Most and cites him several times, but to no great effect.

392. Cf. Euthydemus’ goal in Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.1: τῷ δύνασθαι λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν.

that Plato has found a way to provoke us to discover it for ourselves. It is his basanistic pedagogy that forces him to become just another absent poet, one who will eternally maintain a most majestic silence (*Phdr.* 275d6); he maintains this silence in order to challenge us to discover our own voices. If we read the Flute Girls straight—“if we prefer to speak in deadpan the irony” as Vlastos puts it³⁹³—we have the dead and departed Plato we deserve, for self-contradiction, fallacy, and deliberate deception is what keeps the dialogues alive, and it is for having taken the first step toward this realization that I have dedicated this book to Posy.

And so there will be no flute-girls in Plato’s *Symposium*; Eryximachus will see to that (*Smp.* 176e4–10). Instead, we will be invited to listen at length to those colorful individuals in Agathon’s dining room whom we barely met the first time in the Garden of Callias, now relying on their own intellectual resources, without any need for extraneous voices (347e3). What a laugh! These mimetic “men” are extraneous voices, and Plato is nurturing *our* inner resources by having us listen to them. Of course we are welcome to take the absence any flute-girls as a vindication of the last part of Socrates’ speech in *Protagoras*, but we would be foolish to so, for we will still necessarily be interpreting *Symposium*, and in it we will find Plato’s most perfect poem, an amazing blend of comedy and tragedy (see §15). Whether or not we will find Plato there must remain unclear, for it is up to us.

But we certainly won’t find him in *Protagoras* the first time we encounter it. We will be better able to do so after we read *Hippias Minor*, and thanks to the rejection of the Wisdom/Ignorance Binary, we will be even better equipped after reaching *Symposium*. But it won’t be until the crisis of the *Republic* that we will understand why Socrates said at the start: “towards bad things nobody willingly goes.” Plato’s Academy itself is a Performative Self-Contradiction on the “claim” that virtue cannot be taught. But how quickly we learn it will depend entirely on us, beginning with how fully we appreciate Plato and the humor of the Exegesis, an appreciation made infinitely easier for those who are inspired by *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ* to seek out τὸ καλὸν ἔργον and to want more than anything else both to say and to do it. Although Plato knows full well that he will not be responsible if any of these should happen to come his way, he will be ready for them if, by some divine dispensation, they do.³⁹⁴

In approaching the end of this chapter, it is important to insist that *Protagoras* must not be reduced to a stage in Plato’s Development, an interpretive move first made by Ast, the first to regard it as Plato’s first dialogue.³⁹⁵ What

393. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 136.

394. See *Ascent to the Good*, 368–71.

395. Ast, *Platons Leben und Schriften*, 70; note especially: “Die Mimische, Parodische, und Persiflirende tritt so überwiegend selbst vor dem Ironischen, wie wir es im *Phaidros* finden [he’s explicitly rejecting Schleiermacher’s claim in the passage as a whole], hervor, daß darin eben die Judendlichkeit der Verfassers nicht zu verkennen ist.” So too Pohlenz, von Arnim, Wilamowitz, and Friedländer.

makes *Protagoras* “a youthful dialogue” (*G. Jugenddialog*) is not that it was written by a youth. Plato never outgrew *Protagoras*: it is a poetic masterpiece of pedagogy, enticing us with all the right questions and confusing us with all the wrong answers.³⁹⁶ It was no change of mind that led Plato to repeal the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant in *Gorgias*, or to discover in Recollection a new way to answer the unanswered question of whether virtue can be taught and then to write his *Meno* in the light of that discovery. As for *Symposium* and *Republic*, he knew all about the Cave long before he caused Socrates to descend, in the guise of Odysseus, into the Garden of Callias, and he had caught sight of the sea from Diotima’s mountaintop long before his Socrates trapped the sophists with “the easiness of virtue” in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*.

It is our growth that *Protagoras* charts, not Plato’s. Our response to this brilliant dialogue will and must evolve, and insofar as we must begin with a deadpan reading or hearing of it—for none of us will have ever encountered a text of the kind *Protagoras* turns out to be—there is a real danger that this chapter will be taken as a whole, and this section of it in particular, as an *interpretation* of the dialogue. My intention, rather, has been to show why Plato intends the interpretation of *Protagoras* to be the ongoing business of the Academy—its alpha and omega as it were—and that not until we reach *Phaedo* will we see just how wrong we were to have ever imagined that the art of measurement could possibly be the key to virtue, not least of all because Socrates’ heroic death (*G. Heldentod*) stands in the sharpest possible contrast to its explicit τέλος, i.e., the preservation of our life. As for this section, my intention has been to show that we will misinterpret all of Plato’s dialogues if we dismiss the Exegesis as trivial.

But before we can begin to measure how an encounter with subsequent dialogues would cause a student’s understanding of it to evolve, we must first learn how to see *Protagoras* with fresh eyes once again, and the principal obstacle here is Aristotle. Instead of reducing the Exegesis to a joke on the grounds that it falsely ascribes otherwise truly Socratic doctrines to Simonides, we need to take seriously the fact that the student’s first encounter with these doctrines occurs in the alarming context of an extended joke.³⁹⁷

396. Cf. John Hartland-Swann, “Plato as Poet: A Critical Interpretation. Part II.” *Philosophy* 26, no. 97 (April 1951), 131–141, on 137: “Certainly we must not harbor a grudge against Plato for being a poet; but at the same time we have to bear in mind that he was a declared philosopher—and philosophers surely should do everything to avoid any part of their works becoming ‘une source de perplexités sans fin.’” The quotation is from Perceval Frutiger, *Les mythes de Platon* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1930), 225.

397. Cf. Alex Long, “Character and Consensus in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Cambridge Classical Journal* 51, no. 1 (January 2005), 1–20, on 6: “I will not discuss the sincerity of Socrates’ exegesis of Simonides here. I will, however, note that the context of the passage suggests that any failure of the exegesis to satisfy dialectical standards should not cause us alarm.”

Regardless of paradigm, it is not in *Gorgias* or *Meno* that the student first encounters the Socratic Paradox but all too often we come to *Protagoras* with Aristotle's claims about the historical Socrates already in mind.³⁹⁸ If Sprague is right that both the pre- and post-Exegesis arguments for the Unity of Virtue are deliberately fallacious, if there is an intrinsic connection between Virtue as Knowledge and a one-sided understanding of εἶ πρᾶττειν, and if we decide that the hammering of ποιεῖν in the first appearance of the Socratic Paradox is forcing us to consider the possibility that it is contradicted by the false claims Socrates is making about this particular piece of poetic making—including but not limited to the claim that Simonides endorsed the Paradox himself—then Aristotle's *paradoxical* portrait of Socrates needs to be revised.³⁹⁹ Acquiring fresh eyes requires emancipating ourselves from an interpretive echo chamber in which Aristotle's testimony is taken to prove that the Socrates we encounter in *Protagoras* is the historical Socrates of Plato's early "Socratic" phase. To put it another way: instead of seeing Aristotle's Socrates at work in *Protagoras*, we need to see Aristotle's misreading of *Protagoras* at work in a portrait of Socrates that it is now time to outgrow.

It is Aristotle who makes it possible for Vlastos and his more radical followers to read *Protagoras* as they do, and to construct "the philosophy of Socrates" on the basis of the Craft Analogy, the Unity of Virtue, Virtue as Knowledge, and the Socratic Paradox in its most ruthlessly "prudential" form,⁴⁰⁰ whereby nobody would ever voluntarily fail to secure *for himself* the greatest possible good, and that virtue, in the singular, is the τέχνη that most effectively secures the greatest possible benefit *for us*. There is no doubt that the foundations of this construction *are* to be found in *Protagoras*, and in *Ascent to the Good*, the ramifications of this crucial fact will be taken seriously throughout. But without Aristotle and Vlastos—and above all without an interpretation of Plato's dialogues that emancipates some subset of them from Plato himself and finds in it "the philosophy of Socrates"—no such construction could be conceived or even imagined as Platonic. At the risk of oversimplification, the virtue such a reading offers us is too easy to be

398. Cf. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work*, 235: "Aristotle must have regarded the dialogue [sc. *Prt.*] as a particularly ripe and masterful exposition of the Socratic moral theory, since he has taken directly from it his own account in the *Ethics* of the characteristic doctrines of Socrates."

399. Paradoxical to the extent that while maintaining that Socrates regarded Virtue as Knowledge and upheld the Socratic Paradox—the evidence is neatly cited in Vlastos, *Socrates*, 95–97—Aristotle regards "him" as mistaken on both counts; the latter may well have been what Plato expected his students to do. In other words, Aristotle thought he was refuting Socrates when he was really confirming Plato but he found it advantageous to attribute to (the historical) Socrates views that he could refute (see *Ascent to the Good*, lix–xli). For a similar phenomenon with respect to Aristotle's testimony about Plato, see *Plato the Teacher*, 309.

400. Gerasimos Santas, "The Socratic Paradoxes." *Philosophical Review* 73, no. 2 (April 1964), 147–164, on 149–57.

Plato's. To make the same point in more relevant terms, this kind of ἀρετή is not sufficiently difficult to be beautiful.

Beginning in *Alcibiades Major* and culminating in *Symposium*, Plato will be guiding us to discover for ourselves a nobler conception of virtue, only made possible by a post-Binary conception of philosophy. In the process, something like what I will henceforward call “the Reversal of *Protagoras*” will take place. Throughout the interconnected series of dialogues that follow, I will be calling attention to how this Reversal is accomplished and why. But it is crucial to a pedagogical reading of Plato that “the easiness of virtue” is not going to be reversed in the post-*Symposium* dialogues but rather used there as a springboard to the Idea of the Good, i.e., the Good that is more than what is merely good for me.⁴⁰¹ Plato has many good reasons to begin with *Protagoras*, and “the Hedonic Calculus” of the Final Argument is one of them: it is the perfect dialectical foil not only for moving beyond the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant but also the far more plausibly Platonic Equation of the Good and the Beautiful. I have emphasized the transition between the two different formulations of the Socratic Paradox, the one susceptible to the Performative Refutation in the Exegesis thanks to ποιεῖν, and the other “not in human nature” (or “prudential”)⁴⁰² restatement of the Paradox in terms of the alleged impossibility of advancing into things that one knows to be bad for oneself, because it is with the latter that Plato will commence the Reversal of *Protagoras* in *Alcibiades Major*.

But if *Protagoras* is the gateway to Plato's Academy, a chapter devoted to it can never really come to a conclusion, for it is the point of entry from which no true student will ever hereafter depart. Although there have been some excellent contributions to the better understanding of Plato's brilliant *Protagoras*,⁴⁰³ no interpretation of it can be considered complete, for

401. Arthur W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), on 251: “The *agathon* which the Greek pursued is not ‘something which is good for the majority, even if it harms me, and therefore I will put up with it.’ . . . *Agathon* to be pursued, must be ‘*agathon* for me’.” See the previous page (250) for Adkins' reliance on the Relativity Speech; this passage will be quoted in the next section.

402. See Santas, “Socratic Paradoxes,” 150n10: “In that argument [sc. ‘Meno 77–78’; cf. 147n1], however, Plato neither assumes, nor does he need to, that *kaka* must be harmful to all concerned, but only that they are harmful to anyone who has (possesses, gets) them; moreover, that argument is not at all concerned with people who do harm, but only with people who, according to Meno, desire (to possess, get, have) *kaka*, knowing or not that they are *kaka*. In the *Meno* and the *Gorgias* it is fairly easy to distinguish between versions of the moral and prudential paradoxes, but unfortunately the situation in the *Protagoras* is not so clear.” It is not only the transition between its two forms in *Prt.* that is confusing Santas here: he naturally has difficulty assimilating the Paradox's purport in the Exegesis to either his “moral” or “prudential” types. For the ease with which “Meno the Thessalian” is converted to (the “prudential” form of) the Socratic Paradox, see *Ascent to the Good*, §14.

403. For some exceptionally good attempts, see (on Plato) Wilhelm Eckert, *Dialektischer Scherz in den früheren Gesprächen Platons* (Nürnberg: U. E. Sebold, 1911), 98–137 (especially 103n120, 109, 116–17, and 136–37); on Socrates; see—in addition to Manuwald—Stokes, *Plato's Socratic Conversations*, chapter 4 (especially 407–37); and on Protagoras, see George Klosko, “Toward a Consistent

interpreting it must always regard itself as a work in progress. I have tried to explain this in relation to the student's ongoing progress through all of the Platonic dialogues in accordance with the Curricular Hypothesis, and it is tempting to invoke Hegel's well-documented difficulties with beginning his books since only the whole is the true. A less grandiose comparison is more appropriate. In 1810, Ludwig Friedrich Heindorf (1774–1816) published the Greek text (with commentary in Latin) of several Platonic dialogues including *Protagoras*.⁴⁰⁴ A moment before Socrates tells his friend that he was well aware of young Hippocrates' courage from the beginning, the eager youngster had told Socrates that he did not come the day before because "it seemed too late at night" (310c8), and Heindorf attached an interesting comment to the words πὸρῶ ἔδοξε τῶν νυκτῶν.⁴⁰⁵ After noting the verbal echo in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 217d4) and then citing three texts from Xenophon as parallels to something else Hippocrates has just said, Heindorf concludes: "These and many other things of this kind, passed over by us in other dialogues, in this one I have explicated more thoroughly on account of the fact that I judge it best for the beginner to commence the reading of the Platonic dialogues from it."⁴⁰⁶ Leaving any other differences between us to speak for themselves, this kind of beginning seems like the proper place to end.

Interpretation of *Protagoras*," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 61, no. 2 (1979), 125–142, Scott R. Hemmenway, "Sophistry Exposed: Socrates on the Unity of Virtue in the *Protagoras*," *Ancient Philosophy* 16 (1996), 1–23, and Bartlett. Note especially Hemmenway's "dual doctrine of virtue" (6–13) and Bartlett, *Sophistry and Political Philosophy*, on 82: "One cannot follow the arguments or the drama of this section [sc. the Final Argument] without accepting the extremely high probability of Protagoras' understanding himself to be a hedonist, but one who has been rendered by Socrates too cautious to admit it. It is a small step from his view of the conventional character of justice, and his debunking of such nobility as transcends the good for oneself, to the thought that the good for myself that I naturally seek is my own pleasure." Having mentioned in *Ascent to the Good* (93n377), that I had been unable to verify any further information on Eckert, I am most grateful to Hayden Ausland for informing me that he was killed in the First World War, at the head of his company *bei Vimy, vor Arras*.

404. Ludwig Friedrich Heindorf (ed.), *Platonis dialogi selecti*; Phaedo, Sophistes, Protagoras, volume 4 (Berlin: Hitzig, 1810).

405. Heindorf, *Platonis Protagoras*, 463.

406. Heindorf, *Platonis Protagoras*, 463: "Haec aliaque id genus plura, in aliis dialogis a nobis praetermissa, in hoc propterea explicui accuratius, quod ab hoc potissimum incipiendam tironibus Platoniorum librorum lectionem iudico."

Chapter Two

The Elementary Dialogues

The Alcibiades dyad and Lovers

SECTION 5. THE Εὖ Πράττειν FALLACY

The subject of this section is a single argument in the first half of *Alcibiades Major*, one of the three that Schleiermacher castigated as having only a “loose external relation to Alcibiades’ imperfect state of mind” (see “[2]” in the Introduction). But since this is not only the beginning of a new chapter but also the beginning of the first section in this book about a dialogue that I am claiming that Plato expects his students *to read carefully and understand fully*, some introductory remarks are in order. Regardless of how students (first) encounter *Protagoras* or the (limited) degree to which they understand it, its close connection to *Alcibiades Major* will now be taken as proved on the basis of the Frame. But since *Alcibiades Minor* is even more suspect than its bigger brother, only half of “the snug-fit principle” for authenticity (Preface, §2) has thus been established, and its connection with *Alcibiades Major* will not be considered until §7.

Fortunately, there is another level on which to construct an authenticity argument for the dialogues considered in this book, and *Alcibiades Major* can be used to introduce it. Regarded as the matched bookends of a series (see Preface, principle §2), *Protagoras* and *Symposium* are both closely and equally connected to *Alcibiades Major*, the former by the Frame, the latter by Alcibiades’ Speech. In due course, the connection between the *Alcibiades* dyad and *Symposium* will be considered with care (see §7 and §14), and both “Bookends”—a term that will be hereafter applied to *Protagoras* and *Symposium* as a pair—will play a significant role in the discussion of other dialogues as well. But in the crucial case of *Alcibiades Major*, there is a third level to be considered: its connection to *Republic* and the dialogues before and after it. As already indicated in the Introduction, my project as a whole

depends on the authenticity of *Alcibiades Major*, and for that reason, there may be a sense in which the proof of its authenticity will only be completed by the project as a whole. As it happens, there will be no need for quite so long a delay: the chapter on *Symposium* should complete the story. For the present, my goal is to show how the argument that the just things are the advantageous ones (τὰ συμφέροντα) in the first half of *Alcibiades Major* (113d1–116d4)¹ anticipates the Shorter Way in Plato’s masterpiece just as the passage from its second half to be considered in §6 anticipates the Longer.²

In §2, I explored the relationship between Xenophon and Plato, using parallels to demonstrate how the latter built on the former, and did so primarily in a positive way; only in a single footnote was the subject of their differences broached. Those differences all come together in this section, beginning with the fact that Xenophon never describes a conversation between Socrates and Alcibiades.³ There are three others to be emphasized, all connected to *Memorabilia* 3.8–9. The first is that Xenophon’s Socrates never slips between the two meanings of εὖ πράττειν;⁴ Plato’s Socrates, by contrast, is delighted to *slide* between “to do (things) well” and the colloquial use. Second, Xenophon’s Socrates—the great defender of καλοκάγαθία, their synthesis—never suggests that there is any distinction between ἀγαθόν and καλόν,⁵ whereas I am claiming throughout that the architecture of the pre-*Republic* dialogues as a whole presupposes that there is, *under certain conditions*, a crucial distinction to be made between them. For Plato’s Socrates, it is only the Good that may be ὠφέλιμον for some particular thing as per the Relativity Speech of

1. All otherwise unidentified Stephanus-page citations in this section (and the next) will be to *Alc. I*.

2. For an interpretation of *R.* based on this distinction, see *Plato the Teacher*.

3. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.2.40–46 reports a conversation “that is said [λέγεται]” to have taken place between Alcibiades and Pericles (1.2.40); the Xenophonic passage parallel to *Alc. I*—where they talk with each other for the first time (cf. *Smp.* 217a6–b5)—is *Memorabilia*, 4.2.8–39, i.e., the first conversation between Socrates and Euthydemus; note that Xenophon tells us that he was present at their next conversation in 4.3.2. For both bibliography and insight, I am indebted throughout to David M. Johnson, “A Commentary on Plato’s *Alcibiades*” (Ph.D. dissertation: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1996); thanks to his expertise in both Xenophon’s Socratic writings and *Alc. I*, he has been a particularly helpful resource.

4. On Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.8.14–15, see *Ascent to the Good*, 72–73. *Memorabilia* 4.2.26 does not appear to be an exception since the use of ἃ μὲν and ὧν δὲ as objects of what they understand—indeed the things they understand while *doing* them in the case of ἃ—are most easily understood as *the things* they do well. But in addition to *Cyropaedia*, 1.6.3 (where τὰ ἄριστα πράττειν seems to mean “faring in the best way”) and βέλτιον πράττειν at 1.6.5, see *Memorabilia* 3.9.9 where κακῶς πράττειν may mean: “to fare ill.”

5. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.8.5: “‘And do you think,’ he [sc. Socrates] said, ‘good [ἀγαθόν] to be one thing and beautiful [καλόν] something else? Do you not think that all beautiful things are also good in relation to the same things?’” It was Plato, not Xenophon, who recognized the pedagogical advantage of distinguishing, at least temporarily, a necessarily self-advantaging ἀγαθόν (cf. 3.9.4–5) from a more ennobling καλόν—as he allows Alcibiades to do in *Alc. I* (see below)—en route to the Idea of the Good.

Protagoras,⁶ not, as for Xenophon's, both the Good *and the Beautiful*.⁷ Finally, Xenophon's version of the Socratic Paradox implicates τὰ συμφέροντα, as in (Socrates is the speaker): "For I think all men are choosing among the givens what they think to be the most advantageous to themselves [συμφορώτατα αὐτοῖς], and these things they do."⁸

I am perfectly happy to concede the possibility that Xenophon may be right about the historical Socrates. At the very least, it is virtually certain that the historical Socrates played with the Paradox, the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful, and the ambiguity of εὖ πράττειν, and it is possible or even likely that he did so in a manner for which Xenophon is a more reliable witness than Plato. But it is Plato's Socrates—and his alone—that is my subject, and in this section I will show that on these three points of contrast, Plato modifies Xenophon's Socrates *and goes beyond him*, particularly in the direction of the sublime (see §12). For Plato, the *Heldentod* of Socrates will prove that he did not always choose τὰ συμφέροντα or to do the things that were συμφορώτατα *for him* (αὐτῷ). The use of the dative case here proves to be crucial. In the Relativity Speech, Protagoras relativizes "the multiform and polyvalent Good" (*Prt.* 334b6–7) as ὠφέλιμον, and demonstrates, to thunderous applause, that ὠφέλιμον always takes a dative, i.e., the thing, task, person, or other animal *for which* it is beneficial and therefore good (*Prt.* 334a3–b6 contains fifteen datives of this type). Before revealing in *Republic* the dativeless "Idea of the Good [ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα]" which marks the sublime τέλος of Plato's thought, he will distinguish—as Xenophon ostentatiously does not—what is καλόν from what is ἀγαθόν on just this basis: that the latter may (perhaps) be (nothing more than) what is ὠφέλιμον (for me), and is therefore "advantageous [συμφέρων]" as Alcibiades realizes that Justice is not:

Alcibiades: I think, Socrates, that the Athenians and the rest of the Greeks rarely deliberate as to which is the more just or unjust course: for they regard questions of this sort as obvious; and so they pass them over and consider which course will prove more advantageous [συμφέρειν] in the result. For the just things and the advantageous ones [τὰ συμφέροντα], I take it, are not the same, but many

6. See Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, 250: "What is *agathon* must, as it is said in *Protagoras* be beneficial to human beings, or at all events—taking into account Protagoras' objection—beneficial, *ophelimon*, to something."

7. For the relativity of the Good (qua ὠφέλιμον) in Xenophon, see *Memorabilia*, 3.8.2–3; this is then followed by a longer and parallel passage about the relative Beautiful (3.8.4–7; note especially πρὸς ἅ at 3.8.7) as χρησιμὸν (i.e., as useful *for* something) with the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful asserted in the form of a rhetorical question at 3.8.5. This passage, along with 4.6.9, will be revisited in §8 below. But for those who might be inclined to harmonize Xenophon and Plato even here, note that 3.8 as a whole is introduced with the debatable claim that Socrates answered Aristippus, who was intent on refuting him, "not like those guarding lest their account should be overthrown" (3.8.1).

8. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4.

people have gained advantage [λυσιτελοῦν] by great wrongs that they have committed, whilst others, I imagine, have gained advantage [συμφέρειν] from doing what was right.⁹

This is why Alcibiades, although he is claiming that only some of the just things are advantageous while others are not (115a1–3), rejects the possibility that just things could be anything other than beautiful ones (115a4–10).¹⁰ Although beautiful actions can never be base ones (115a6–8), Alcibiades, when asked, will reject the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (115a11–14) based on his belief that some of τὰ καλά are bad (κακά)—by which he means that they can be both bad and disadvantageous for those who do them—and that there are base things (αισχρά) that are good *for those who do them* (115a15–16).¹¹ This is the first time in the dialogues that one of Plato’s characters will distinguish good things from beautiful ones—Protagoras is browbeaten into abandoning the possibility of distinguishing them (see §3)—and it is easy to see that for Alcibiades, as for Solon (see §4), τὰ καλά are *difficult*, and that what makes them so is that doing them is not (always) to our advantage. Whether Xenophon or Xenophon’s Socrates believed that all men necessarily “are choosing the things they think to be most advantageous to themselves” or not, Plato is determined to make *you* wonder about this from the beginning, for if *Alcibiades Major* is genuine, it is a school text whose arguments are designed for a beginner to analyze, discuss, and evaluate. The argument by which Socrates will prove that the just things are always the advantageous ones will require him to uphold the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful against Alcibiades and to slide, fallaciously, between the two meanings of εὔ πράττειν in order to do so. The fallacy that makes this slide possible is this section’s subject.

It is an error to imagine that it is ever Plato’s purpose only to illustrate the differences between two of his characters;¹² his characters are there to advance his pedagogical ends and to enliven his chosen means of achieving them. Although Alcibiades has distinguished τὰ δίκαια as always necessarily καλά from τὰ καλά as sometimes κακά, it is Socrates who has forced him to do so. But it is Plato who has caused Socrates to do so, and not in order for him to refute Alcibiades but in order to teach his beginners, i.e., us. As a

9. 113d1–8 (Lamb modified). I am passing over both the delicious passage that links the incipient refutation of Alcibiades back to “[1]” in the Introduction (113d9–114b2) and the parallel relationship between *honestum* and *utile* in Cicero’s thought, especially in *De officiis*.

10. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.8.5: “For first of all, virtue is not good [ἀγαθόν] in relation to some things but bad [κακόν] in relation to others.” Naturally this claim follows from Socrates’ immediately prior assertion of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful, quoted above.

11. Note that the whole passage from 115a4–16 depends on the Table of Opposites at *Prt.* 332c3–5, the passage in the dialogue with the best claim to being truly canonical.

12. See *Ascent to the Good*, 194.

result, the example that Socrates gives of how Alcibiades must be thinking in order to show not only that τὰ καλά are sometimes κακά, but also that good things (for me) are sometimes base, ugly, and ignoble ones (αισχρά) is drawn from the stuff on which little boys' dreams are made:

Socrates: Are you then saying the following: that many in war, having gone to the aid [participle from βοηθεῖν] of a companion or relative, have received wounds and died, whereas those who have not gone to their aid [participle from βοηθεῖν], as needed, have come away healthy? *Alcibiades:* Very much so.¹³

Despite any theoretical difference with Xenophon, then, Plato's Socrates is describing the kind of gallantry that would have made the son of Gryllus attractive to his neophytes, and they will therefore read with great interest what happens next. But it is also necessary to consider what has already happened at the end of *Protagoras*: if there are such men as these who “run to the aid (βοηθεῖν)” of their comrades in war despite the risk of wounds and death, the classic case of advancing ἐπὶ τὰ δεινά (*Prt.* 359c6), then they are administering the Noble Refutation—without any argument from Alcibiades, Socrates, or Plato being necessary—to the Socratic Paradox as formulated after the transition (*Prt.* 358b6–d2), and already described in §4.

Plato now causes Socrates to connect, by way of opposition, this powerful image based on the fact of self-sacrifice in battle with the knowledge-based and pleasure-maximizing conception of courage he (deceptively) offered in the Final Argument (as it were) the day before:

Socrates: Therefore you are calling this kind of aid [βοήθεια] ‘noble [καλή]’ and insofar as it is the attempt to save those whom it is necessary, this is courage [ἀνδρεία], or is it not? *Alcibiades:* Yes.¹⁴

Here, then, Plato is forcing us to make a choice that tests our commitment to what is both noble and good, in a word, to ἀρετή in its traditional and most easily recognizable form.¹⁵ The consequences of this test will extend all the

13. 115b1–4.

14. 115b5–8.

15. Cf. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 7.5.15–17 in Robert B. Strassler (ed.), *The Landmark Xenophon's Hellenica; A New Translation by John Marincola with Maps, Annotations, Appendices, and Encyclopedic Index*, Introduction by David Thomas (New York: Anchor Books, 2010), 362: “The Athenians listened to their request, and even though they themselves and their horses had not yet had anything to eat that morning, they went out to bring assistance [ἐκ-βοηθεῖν] to the Mantineians. Who could fail to admire their bravery [ἡ ἀρετή]? For though they saw that the enemy coming against them were numerous, and though the cavalry had already suffered misfortune in Corinth; they gave no thought to this, nor to the fact that they were about to fight Thebans and Thessalians, men who had the highest reputation for horsemanship. Instead, they felt a sense of shame at the thought of being on the spot but failing to assist [ὀφελεῖν] their allies. So as soon as they caught sight of the enemy, they charged them, feeling a deep desire to win back their ancestral reputation [ἐρόντες ἀνασώσασθαι τὴν πατρίαν

way to “the crisis of the *Republic*,” for only those who pass it will return to the Cave.¹⁶ In *Protagoras*, he has just offered us an account of ἀνδρεία in accordance with “the easiness of virtue,” saying nothing whatsoever about a self-sacrificing act of βοήθεια. Instead, he has (deceptively) rendered it καλόν only because—since the Pleasant is the Good, the Good is the Beautiful, and the Beautiful is the Pleasant (*Prt.* 359e5–360a8)—it maximized our pleasure.¹⁷ In the Final Argument, war entered Socrates’ story only because Protagoras readily and emphatically admitted that going to war is beautiful, admirable, honorable, gallant, and fine (*Prt.* 359e4–5), i.e., something he could scarcely deny in public. Plato wants to know: Can *you* now deny that the account Socrates has just given of ἀνδρεία is the superior one?¹⁸

Of course we can, and indeed we already have. On the basis of Aristotle’s testimony, we have elevated the Socrates of Plato’s *Protagoras* to the status of the true and historical Socrates and—as if that were not enough—we have also for the most part followed Schleiermacher in making it impossible to read *Alcibiades Major* as an authentic source for Plato’s Socrates, let alone for the historical one. An inauthentic *Alcibiades*, then, takes this choice about ἀνδρεία as βοήθεια (and thus what is truly καλόν) away from us, and relocates it in a place of Aristotle’s choosing: between the allegedly Socratic and τέχνη- or knowledge-based account of courage in *Protagoras*—where the Unity of Virtue as Knowledge joins the Socratic Paradox—and the “Platonic” account, based on the possibly akratic but in any case tripartite soul of *Republic* 4. Poor Plato! By repeatedly calling the art of measurement “the salvation of our life [ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ βίου]” (*Prt.* 357a6–7; cf. *Prt.* 356d3, 356e2, 356e4, and 356e8–357a1), he must have thought he would be making it pretty obvious in *Alcibiades* that those who lack the courage to βοηθεῖν in wartime situations for the sake of their friends save their own skins by getting

δόξαν]. And by engaging the enemy there, they were responsible for saving everything that the Mantineans had outside their walls. Brave were the men among them who died [αὐτῶν δ’ ἀπέθανον ἄνδρες ἀγαθοί], and it is clear that the men they killed were equally brave. For no one had a weapon so short that he did not reach his enemy with it.” It is generally agreed that Xenophon’s son Gryllus was one of the Athenians killed in the action described here.

16. See *Plato the Teacher*, §16.

17. For discussion of the relationship between the Final Argument in *Prt.* and 115d1–116c8, see Eugenio Benitez, “Authenticity, Experiment or Development: The *Alcibiades I* on Virtue and Courage” in Marguerite Johnson and Harold Tarrant (eds.), *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator*, 119–133 (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 128–30.

18. Cf. Mark J. Lutz, *Socrates’ Education to Virtue: Learning the Love of the Noble* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 116: “Alcibiades readily agrees that courage is a noble thing that shines forth [cf. Fr. Owens on καλόν in the Preface] in rescuing friends and that it is readily distinguishable from what is bad about rescuing friends, namely, losing one’s life.” For Lutz on *Alc. I*, see especially 113–18, climaxing with “Socrates covers over the bad aspect of being courageous.” On the related passage in *Smp.* (see §16 below), see 92–96, including these useful questions on 94: “But exactly what solace does beauty provide that makes death easier to bear? How do we come to be moved by or eager to be *kalon*?”

away in health (115b3) at the expense of doing something αἰσχρόν. As a result, what is αἰσχρόν can also be ἀγαθόν (115a15–b3)—for they achieve their own good—just as what is καλόν can sometimes be κακόν, and thanks to the Table of Opposites (*Prt.* 332c3–6), this means that τὸ καλόν is different from τὸ ἀγαθόν. The final ascent to the Beautiful in *Symposium*, and thus the architecture of both this book and its sequel, depends on that difference (see §17).

For the present, Plato will allow Socrates to introduce some important technical vocabulary in order to justify his assertion of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful. “To the extent that [καθ’ ὅσον]” τὰ καλά are καλόν, they cannot be κακόν (116a10), if, that is, the Equation holds (116a3–5 and 116c1–3). Likewise, none of the base things (τὰ αἰσχρά) *qua* αἰσχρόν—for *qua* is what καθ’ ὅσον means here—can be ἀγαθόν (116a11). And this is only the *second* useful term of art for logical distinctions that Plato has now taught his beginners:

Socrates: Then going to the aid of friends in war, insofar [ἤ] as it is noble—in accordance [κατά] with an action of what’s good, i.e., the action of courage—you are calling it ‘noble’? *Alcibiades*: I seem to be, then [φαίνομαί γε].¹⁹

One can readily appreciate Alcibiades’ dazed φαίνομαί γε. The young man has never agreed that he calls coming to the aid of friends in war “noble” *only insofar as* “the action of courage” is in accordance with “an action of what’s good.” This is because Plato is primarily concerned here with teaching the reader how to use ἤ, κατά, and καθ’ ὅσον as useful tools for the practice of dialectic (cf. *R.* 537e1–539e3), which is, without naming the subject, what he is presently teaching them:

Socrates: And in accordance [κατά] with the action of what’s bad, i.e., the action of death, ‘bad.’ *Alcibiades*: Yes. *Socrates*: And therefore it’s fair to call each of these actions as follows: if you call something ‘bad’ insofar [ἤ] as it accomplishes something bad, insofar [ἤ] as good, it is also necessary to call something ‘good.’ *Alcibiades*: It seems so to me.²⁰

As dry as some of his students might find such things, Plato the Teacher enlivens the lesson with the ambitious Alcibiades, who takes the vividly accessible first step when he claims that he regards cowardice as on a par with death (115d10), and that he would not be deprived of courage even for the sake of life (115d7). If *his* example can’t prove that death should not yet be included among τὰ κακά—for Plato’s beginners aren’t beginning with *Apology of Socrates*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*—it points to something ineffable

19. 115e9–12.

20. 115e13–116a2.

within each of us that calls into question whether life belongs among τὰ ἀγαθὰ when it is purchased at the expense of τὸ καλόν. It is therefore a most welcome development that Ariel Hefler is not only unapologetically reading *Alcibiades Major* as a genuine Platonic dialogue, but that he perceptively notes that “by treating courage as if its nobility could simply be divorced from death and wounds, Socrates, badly distorts *the very idea of the noble*.”²¹ As a Straussian,²² breathing new life into Plato’s “Theory of Ideas” is pretty nearly the last thing on Hefler’s mind,²³ but he has done so involuntarily here: this “very idea” is “the Idea of Beauty [τὸ καλόν],” already becoming visible in *Alcibiades Major* well before the student catches sight of the sea in *Symposium*. I should emphasize from the start that it is scarcely impossible to see, especially by anyone who has sensed that something’s amiss in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*. And even though Hefler manages to avoid discussing *Protagoras* in his study of *Socrates and Alcibiades*,²⁴ one of his book’s endorsers has made the contrast with its Final Argument easy to see.²⁵

The foregoing is enough to show why the differences between Xenophon and Plato to which I pointed at the beginning of this section are of considerable pedagogical significance. Since Xenophon is no enemy of the noble, it is not entirely clear that these differences extend beyond pedagogy. But it is important to realize that we are presently living through a sea change in the reception of Xenophon,²⁶ and by that I am in no way pointing to my own views as evidence of it. The conventional argument for Xenophon’s inferiority is his merely conventional and gentlemanly morality—for the καλοκἀγαθός is a gentleman—and it was as a proto-bourgeois lightweight that he initially went into eclipse. Meanwhile, the dogma that he wrote *after* Plato proved to philologists that he was simply too obtuse to have understood him. The revival of Xenophon, first by Strauss and now by the Straussians, has been from the start *just as hostile* to the “noble and good” gentleman that Xenophon actu-

21. Hefler, *Socrates and Alcibiades*, 185 (emphasis mine).

22. For more on the European-style school of “political philosophy” brought into existence by Leo Strauss (1899–1973), see my *German Stranger*; note his many services to reading of Plato—despite his more numerous disservices to Plato himself—on 488–90.

23. See Hefler, *Socrates and Alcibiades*, 203n25; cf. Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 119–21.

24. See Hefler, *Socrates and Alcibiades*, 144–46.

25. Cf. Bartlett, “Political Philosophy and Sophistry,” 622: “Since it has just been shown to be impossible, given human nature, for human beings to advance willingly toward things they are frightened of, the courageous as much as the cowards must advance toward things they are confident (bold) about, that is, toward things from which they expect to gain some benefit: the courageous man enters battle because he believes doing so to be noble, hence good—hence pleasant (360a1–3)! In this way Socrates does everything in his power to link courage with knowledge or wisdom—the knowledge of what is advantageous for oneself—and so to strip courage of that which most elicits our admiration of it, its noble (self-sacrificing) character.”

26. See my “Review of Thomas L. Pangle, *The Socratic Way of Life: Xenophon’s Memorabilia*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 39, no. 1 (2019), 224–229; Pangle was Hefler’s thesis supervisor.

ally was as his nineteenth- and twentieth-century enemies were.²⁷ But having now constructed a less than gentlemanly image in his place, there are signs that they also intend to preserve the mainstream dogma that his writings are post-Platonic;²⁸ on that basis, Xenophon can be used to attack any residual idealism in Plato that may have managed to survive Strauss's contempt for Platonism.

But at least the Straussians are willing to consider Protagoras in *Protagoras* as a teacher of injustice (see §4, *ad fin.*) and Plato's *Alcibiades Major* as authentic; this opens the door to the Academy and leaves the possibility of Platonism alive. Consider, by way of a more properly "mainstream" approach, the following passage from Nick Smith's post-Denyer attack on an authentic *Alcibiades*:

At 115a11–c5, Socrates distinguishes between the goodness and nobility of courage (115b5–7) and the badness of certain of its consequences—specifically wounds and death (115b9). It is Socrates who introduces the idea that death and wounds are bad in this dialogue. But in Plato's *Apology* Socrates has a very different attitude about death.²⁹

Naturally this is an observation that justifies Smith in answering his article's question with a resounding "no." In fact, what becomes visible here is the same phenomenon that caused Schleiermacher to delete *Alcibiades*: "Alcibiades might have extricated himself out of a very inconvenient dilemma by the slightest mention of the doctrine of recollection."³⁰ Just as the Reading Order hypothesis depends on the elementary *Alcibiades* being authentic, so too does the interpretation of an authentic *Alcibiades* also depend on it being read *early in the Reading Order*, i.e., before either *Meno* or *Apology of Socrates*. Although written for beginners, *Alcibiades Major* has been written by a teacher who knows from the start that they have *Symposium*, *Meno*, *Republic*, and *Apology of Socrates* in their academic future, and the fact that Alcibiades values courage more highly than life (115d7; cf. 105a4–6 and 105c2–3) adumbrates the contempt for death that Plato will immortalize with Socrates' *Heldentod* in *Phaedo*.

27. See Dorion, "A l'origine de la question socratique," 62–63; cf. Strauss to Klein (New York City, 16 February 1939) in Strauss, *Gesammelte Schriften* 3, 567: "Xenophon is my special favorite, because he had the guts to dress himself up as a fool and thus endure through the ages: he is the greatest sneak that I know—I believe that he did in his writings exactly what Socrates did in his life. . . . in his case, morality is purely exoteric, and practically every word is ambiguous. 'Beautiful and Good' was an insult in the Socratic 'circle' like 'Philistine' or 'Bourgeois' in the nineteenth century."

28. See Pangle, *Socratic Way of Life*, 139, 215, 221n7, and 251n48.

29. Nicholas D. Smith, "Did Plato Write the *Alcibiades I*?" *Apeiron* 37, no. 2 (June 2004), 93–108, on 103–4. For Smith's place in the ongoing comeback of *Alc. I*, see Jirsa, "Authenticity of the *Alcibiades I*."

30. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 322 (Dobson, 332).

Plato reaches the argument's critical moment when he follows up the second iteration of the βοήθεια passage (116a6–9; cf. 115b1–8)—including the introduction of καθ' ὄσον (116a10–b1)—with the phrase καλῶς πράττειν, i.e., to do [something] nobly, beautifully, and gallantly. In context, this refers to the act of wartime βοήθεια itself—and that means courage (ἀνδρεία at 115b7)—in precisely the form of ἀρετή that Xenophon praised while alluding to the death of his son. Socrates has already used καλόν for the same purpose in *Protagoras*: he naturally does not begin with the claim that “those who wish to go into war” (*Prt.* 359e3–4) regard this “going” as pleasant; intermediate steps will be required to reach that outrageous and false conclusion. It is only after securing Protagoras' agreement that doing so is καλόν (*Prt.* 359e5) that he can borrow the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful from the transition passage (cf. *Prt.* 359e5–6 and 358b5) before—in accordance with the Xenophon Joke (see §2)—overcoming Protagoras with Pleasure (*Prt.* 360a7–8). Although I'm not claiming that all of Plato's students smelled a rat when they encountered *Protagoras* the first time, they will be better prepared to do so a second time thanks to having studied *Alcibiades Major* in the interim. Here again, the crucial intermediate step depends on the Equation: on its basis, Socrates is going to convert καλῶς πράττειν into εὖ πράττειν. And why should he not? The verb πράττειν (“to do”) remains the same, and καλῶς is the adverbial form of καλόν just as εὖ is the adverbial form of ἀγαθόν.

The reason why he should not must be clearly understood. The expression εὖ πράττειν not only has a colloquial meaning that καλῶς πράττειν doesn't but that colloquial meaning is in fact what the phrase generally means: not “to do [something] well” let alone to perform some difficult deed nobly,³¹ but rather “to fare well,” glossed by Socrates in *Euthydemus* as “to be happy” (*Euthd.* 280b6).³² As a result, if someone were to ask whether all men wish to εὖ πράττειν (as Socrates does, expecting an affirmative answer at *Euthd.* 278e3), an Athenian would not take such an answer to mean that we all strive with might and main to do everything we do well (let alone nobly) but rather that we all desire “to fare well,” i.e., to be happy and prosperously successful. The simplest way to understand the difference grammatically is that “to fare well” is complete without a direct object whereas “to do well” requires some thing or object *that we are doing well*,³³ for example, we are doing something

31. See Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 6.5.35, where an Athenian points out that it was “when they [sc. the Thebans] were doing well [ὅτε δὲ εὖ ἔπραττον] that they were [unjustly] opposing us” and thus *they were doing wrong* when they were doing well, i.e., when they were prosperous, powerful, and “faring well.”

32. Cf. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* 252: “To suggest that anything other than *eu pratein* could be the end of life is nonsense, and in the subsequent argument [sc. in *Euthd.*] *eu pratein* and *eudaimonein* are treated as interchangeable.”

33. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.14, where the non-colloquial or “Socratic” use is disambiguated from the missing colloquialism by consistently taking a direct object.

nobly when we run to the aid of our friends at the risk of death and wounds. But the simplest way to understand the difference colloquially is to consider our own “how ya’ doin’?” Any normal speaker of contemporary American English would consider the answer “I’m doing good” to mean “I’m fine,” not “I’m doing good (deeds).” So too with εὖ πράττειν, although it deserves mention that the grammatical version of *our* phrase (“I’m doing well”), whatever its advantages with respect to accuracy, destroys the possibility of what I will call “the Slide,” the critical moment in “the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy.”

Socrates: Moreover, then, also examine thusly [ὤδε]: whoever does nobly [καλῶς πράττειν], does he not also do well [εὖ πράττειν]? *Alcibiades:* Yes. *Socrates:* And those doing well [participial form of εὖ πράττειν], are they not happy? *Alcibiades:* For how could it not be so?³⁴

It is the Slide that allows Socrates to prove doing the right thing ensures our successful prosperity, i.e., that “doing well” entails “faring well.”³⁵ Nor is Socrates through with the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy: by defining happiness in terms of the acquisition of good things (δι’ ἀγαθῶν κτήσιν), he will next slide from the happiness that is identical with “faring well” to the kind of “doing well and nobly” that has led to the acquisition of those good things:

Socrates: And is it not through the acquisition of good things [δι’ ἀγαθῶν κτήσιν] that they are happy? *Alcibiades:* Most of all. *Socrates:* It is, then, by doing well and nobly [τῷ εὖ καὶ καλῶς πράττειν] that they are acquiring these things? *Alcibiades:* Yes. *Socrates:* Then the faring well [τὸ εὖ πράττειν] is good [ἀγαθόν]? *Alcibiades:* Yes. *Socrates:* And is not the doing of good [ἡ εὐπραγία] beautiful [καλόν]? *Alcibiades:* Yes.³⁶

Despite its etymological link with the slippery εὖ πράττειν, the word εὐπραγία—which, as something like “good deed doing,”³⁷ has a direct object built into it—can accurately be called καλόν.³⁸ That’s the beauty of this

34. 116b2–6.

35. See George Klosko, “Criteria of Fallacy and Sophistry for Use in the Analysis of Platonic Dialogues,” *Classical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1983), 363–374, on 368–69; note that Klosko invents “a purely hypothetical refutation” rather than simply citing *Alc. 1*.

36. 116b6–14.

37. Cf. the Wizard’s glossing of “philanthropists” as “good deed doers.”

38. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 149–50 (on οὐκοῦν καλὸν ἢ εὐπραγία at 116b13): “‘Now aren’t good deeds a fine thing?’ The shift [cf. ‘the Slide’] from ‘doing well’ to ‘good deeds’—two expressions that the unwary might think are equivalent, but are not in fact so—is an attempt to reproduce in English the effect of Socrates’ shift [hence there are really three ‘slides,’ of which this is the second] from τὸ εὖ πράττειν to ἡ εὐπραγία. If Socrates’ argument is to work [note that Denyer is *not* trying to make the argument ‘work’ by patching it up in the guise of ‘charity’ but rather illuminating the fallacy on which depends its capacity to persuade], Alcibiades must take these two expressions to be equivalent, as their common derivation suggests. But common [etymological] derivation is no guarantee of common [colloquial] meaning. And εὐπραγία can in fact be used of altruistic deeds, whose doer would

further slide: as happiness, τὸ εὖ πράττειν can just as accurately be called ἀγαθόν (116b11) as εὐπραγία can be called καλόν (116b13) while merely implying, thanks to the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful, that the two refer to the same thing. Indeed Socrates will need to remind Alcibiades of the Equation three more times (116c1–2, 116c4–5, and 116c13; cf. 116a3) in order to complete the argument, the last time because Alcibiades repeats his initial claim (see 115a9–10) that those who do τὰ δίκαια necessarily also do τὰ καλά (116c11–12). But at this point, Socrates has already proved that good things are to our advantage (116c7–8) and thus, thanks to the Equation, that both εὐπραγία in general, and more specifically, doing τὰ δίκαια, are to our advantage as well (116d1–3).

Without an eschatological myth to the effect that those who die nobly in battle, running to the aid of their friends, acquire some sort of *posthumous* happiness or εὐδαιμονία (*Mx.* 247a6; cf. *Smp.* 179c3–7 and 180b4–5), only a deceptive argument can prove that whoever decides to καλῶς πράττειν will necessarily εὖ πράττειν in the colloquial sense. The obvious fallacy in the Slide reveals both it and what follows as deliberately deceptive, and indeed points the student to the pivotal role of the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful in advancing this deception. While the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy is easily recognized as deceptive, the Equation that precedes and follows its initial implementation is much less obviously so, and will only gradually come into its own as such. But not until the Good as Idea is fully emancipated from *what is merely to my advantage* can either εὐπραγία in general or doing τὰ δίκαια specifically be called ἀγαθόν; until then, as long as they are ἀγαθά (and hence συμφέροντα) *only* because they are καλά, we will remain in the realm of deliberate deception, over which the Equation and the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy preside. In tandem, these constitute the pivot on which the pre-*Republic* dialogues turn, and this explains why the beginning of the end of the ascent to the Beautiful is the moment in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 204d4–205a4) when the Equation temporarily postpones the question of what it is we really gain from τὰ καλά (§17). There Plato will make it clear that the journey that is about to end with the great Ocean of Beauty began with this passage in *Alcibiades Major*.³⁹

There could be no more eloquent testimony to the discomfiture this ostentatiously fallacious argument has long caused Plato's defenders than the

be described as εὖ ποιῶν or εὐεργετῶν [cf. *Ap.* 36c4], rather than as (as doing good, rather than as doing ['faring' would be clearer, but Denyer counts on the reader's good grammar] well). In such a use, but only in such a use, εὐπραγία stands for something that would εὐπραγία be unconditionally fine [καλόν]." In case this note has not made it obvious, my debt to Denyer is more than a matter of repeated citation.

39. Cf. κτήσει ἀγαθῶν at *Smp.* 205a1–3—it is by the acquisition of good things that the happy are happy—with 116b7.

fact that Proclus' commentary on *Alcibiades Major* breaks off at 116b1,⁴⁰ immediately before the Equation-based conversion of $\kappa\alpha\lambda\omega\varsigma \ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota$ to $\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon} \ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota$ at 116b2–3. We know he didn't end his commentary here because Olympiodorus preserves a portion of what followed,⁴¹ and Olympiodorus himself is one of the first in a long line of Platonic commentators who thinks he is doing his author a service by construing a deliberately fallacious argument in such a way as to make it “work.” Breaking with that tradition, I am instead trying to show how easy Plato has made it for even a neophyte or *Neuling* to see that he is using a fallacious argument deliberately, and thus that it will only “work”—i.e., will achieve Plato's purpose as opposed to the allegedly “charitable” goal of his self-styled defenders⁴²—if the reader recognizes this. Not entirely unlike Smith, who takes the neglect of *Apology* to support the contention that *Alcibiades* is inauthentic, Olympiodorus must read later doctrines into the dialogue in order to make Socrates' argument Platonic.⁴³ There is, however, a better way, as E. R. Dodds proved while commenting on the use of $\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon} \ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota$ at *Gorgias* 507c3–5, and he deserves to be quoted at length:

Plato has taken advantage of the convenient ambiguity of $\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon} \ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota$. This phrase, and others of the same type, normally have the ‘passive’⁴⁴ sense of ‘faring well’; but they can also be used of action, e.g., Aeschylus, *Choephorai* 1044, where $\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon} \ \gamma' \ \xi\pi\rho\alpha\zeta\alpha\varsigma$ can only mean ‘You have acted rightly’ [citation of Bruno Snell deleted]. Plato similarly exploits the ambiguity at *Charmides* 172a1 [Greek deleted; see *Ascent to the Good*, 175] and 173d3 [Greek deleted; see *Ascent to the Good*, 176–78]; also at *Euthydemus* 281c1 [see *Ascent to the Good*, §3]. And it is again called into play at *Republic* 353e–354a [see *Ascent to the Good*, 172–73] and *Alcibiades Major* 116b [i.e., the passage under discussion here]. The argument was already criticized in antiquity (see Olympiodorus *In Alcibiadem* 121–3);⁴⁵ it is sometimes cited (e.g., by Gomperz and Wilamowitz)

40. William O’Neill (ed.), *Proclus, Alcibiades I, a Translation and Commentary*, second edition, (Dordrecht: Springer Science and Business Media, 1971), 222; cf. 238.

41. Proclus, *Alcibiades*, Fragment 3 on 224–25.

42. See Olympiodorus, *On First Alcibiades 10-28*, 65–75 (Lecture 14).

43. Olympiodorus, *On First Alcibiades 10-28*, 70–71; based on the Idea of the Good, he overrules the Equation: “For the nature of the good is one thing, that of the beautiful another. For likewise the good has transcended [Griffin’s translation of $\xi\pi\alpha\nu\alpha\beta\acute{\epsilon}\beta\eta\kappa\epsilon$ on 70; cf. 165n165] the noble from above” (70).

44. For an analysis of $\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon} \ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\upsilon\iota$ based on passive, active, and middle voices, see *Ascent to the Good*, 73–77.

45. But not by Olympiodorus himself, who is defending it from those attacks; see *On First Alcibiades*, 66: “Since Plato advanced these arguments, people who want to disparage this syllogism [sc. ‘the person who performs noble deeds, acts well; the person who acts well has well-being (*eudaimonia*); the person who has well-being does good deeds; therefore the person who performs noble deeds performs good deeds, and through this, it follows that the noble is the good’] enjoy a great deal of license for criticism.” He confuses the argument’s conclusion—which he will qualify—with its precondition, and by casting it as a syllogism in advance (66), he is preparing to defend it (70).

as an extreme case of Plato being taken in by words.⁴⁶ No doubt the Greeks did often take it for granted that, in Cornford's phrase, 'the structure of the Greek language reflected the structure of the world' (*The Unwritten Philosophy*, 43). But it is not easy to suppose that here [sc. *Grg.* 507c3–5] and in the passages just quoted Plato was unaware of what he was doing (cf. T. G. Tuckey, *Plato's Charmides*, 74 ff.).⁴⁷

Not easy at all,⁴⁸ and that is why this Golden Passage speaks for itself. As the numerous bracketed citations of *Ascent to the Good* indicate, the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy will become what in Portuguese is called a *fio condutor*—a kind of Ariadne's thread—that will guide the reader through the labyrinth of the pre-*Republic* and post-*Symposium* dialogues. But it is crucial to realize that it is here, in this passage of *Alcibiades Major*, that Plato places the thread in the hands of his beginners, for it is this passage that both first and also most clearly reveals it as the fallacy that it is, and thus as the fallacy Plato expects us to realize that it continues to be when we encounter it again in *Euthydemus*, *Charmides*, *Gorgias*, and *Republic* 1. In short, this passage is crucial for seeing what makes *Alcibiades Major* the first and most important of "the Elementary Dialogues." All the major interpretive poles are in play: quite apart from the brutal excision of the dialogue as a whole and the suppression of what Proclus had to say about it, misguided defenders like Olympiodorus will defend the argument against Plato's critics, the latter eager to prove the Great Man wrong. Meanwhile, giants like Gomperz, Wilamowitz, and Vlastos will try to show why Plato got things wrong by elucidating the primitive but pardonable misconceptions that made his inadvertent and unconscious errors possible. Against both uncritically historicizing critics and amiable but deluded defenders,⁴⁹ my task is to disinter the playfully Platonic position: Plato has erred deliberately, and thus we are already witnessing the initial stages of the Reversal of *Protagoras*.⁵⁰

46. Note the origin of the "what Plato was trying to say" school of interpretation.

47. E. R. Dodds, *Plato: Gorgias: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 335–36; I have expanded the abbreviations for the reader's convenience.

48. Despite "Crombie-ism" (see §4), see Crombie, *Examination of Plato's Doctrines*, 1.236: "He [sc. Plato] frequently uses arguments which are fallacious if the double meaning [sc. of εὖ πράττειν] is taken seriously, and I am sure he does it deliberately."

49. The polarity is ancient and pervasive: it will survive for as long as Plato's dialogues are read. Aristotle will deny that the universe has a beginning in time and claim that Plato erred by introducing the Demiurge while Speusippus and Xenocrates will defend Plato by claiming that the Demiurge is just a pedagogical convenience (see *Guardians in Action*, 57–58); John Cook Wilson will delightedly expose the errors in *Timaeus* while R. D. Archer Hind will try to patch every one of them up (see *Guardians in Action*, 27–29). The Platonic solution is simple here as well: the errors in *Timaeus* are real and deliberate but they are not Plato's because the character "Timaeus" does not speak for him (*Guardians in Action*, §1).

50. In a double sense, for the slide from nobility to happiness implicates both the Performative and the Noble Refutations of the Socratic Paradox, i.e., Socrates is making a flawed argument for the ignoble deliberately.

But the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy is more than a pedagogical device by which Plato warns us that deception is underway, as it is in “the Feigned Dialogue” in *Gorgias* 506c5–507c7.⁵¹ This is not to say, of course, that “a pedagogical device” of this kind is an unimportant thing. In the Introduction, for example, I suggested in the context of Schleiermacher’s veneration for the *coincidentia oppositorum* that whenever one of Plato’s characters pluralizes the One as Many or unifies the Many as “one” (cf. *Sph.* 251b8–9) deliberate deception is once again underway, for the Problem of the One and the Many serves as Ariadne’s thread in reading the more difficult post-*Republic* dialogues. But what makes the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy something more is the claim that doing the right things necessarily makes you happy. Although the Fallacy appears in *Republic* explicitly only at the end of book 1 (*R.* 353e1–354a4), it contains the essential substance of the Shorter Way as a whole and thus the obvious and exoteric teaching of Plato’s masterpiece: the life of justice is preferable to the life of injustice because practicing justice makes you happier, and furthermore, it is more pleasant. His masterpiece’s esoteric teaching, by contrast, is concealed in plain sight thanks to its first word: κατέβην (“I went down”). Returning to the Cave does not conduce to the Guardian’s personal happiness but is chosen in accordance with Justice in the light of the Good (*R.* 519d8–520e1). To put it another way, the last words of Plato’s *Republic* (εὖ πράττωμεν) do not mean: “let’s be happy.”

It is in the light of the Shorter Way that the morality of Plato’s deliberate use of pedagogical deception needs to be assessed. Especially at a time when the Socratic alternative that created “Presocratic Philosophy” is under attack and Socrates himself enrolled among the sophists,⁵² it may seem strange that a self-styled defender of Plato is repeatedly drawing attention to his self-contradictions, fallacious arguments, and anti-Platonic characters. One thing is certain: neither the Shorter Way nor the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy should be regarded as “noble lies,” especially if anybody is inclined to translate that “noble” with καλόν.⁵³ It is rather because of τὸ καλόν that we can see that both are inadequate, and that the various equations, fallacies, and shortcuts on which they depend are the ignoble antithesis of “noble” themselves. But even if the argument that “doing well” means “faring well” is based on equivocation, and even if the Shorter Way’s demonstration that justice is good *for*

51. On this, see *Ascent to the Good*, 285–92.

52. Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*, volume 8, 293–411; naturally this kind of approach will valorize Aristotle’s testimony at the expense of Plato’s and Xenophon’s—if only because *all* of Aristotle’s will be included, but only decontextualized fragments of the surviving Socratics—and in general replacing “Pre-Socratic Philosophy” with “Early Greek Philosophy” obscures Cicero’s discovery of the former; on *philosophia antiqua usque ad Socratem* (*Tusculan Disputations*, 5.10), cf. 33 D6 (in “Socrates”) and *Guardians in Action*, 17–18.

53. For the importance of Plato’s adjective γενναῖος at *R.* 414b8, see *Plato the Teacher*, §26 (“Genetic Fictions”).

you depends on a number of misleading hypotheses, such conclusions are scarcely immoral. Plato's esoteric teaching is noble, but that does not make the message on his surface immoral; it is rather neither beautiful nor *difficult enough*. This is why the ascent to the Beautiful precedes the ascent to the Good: it is easy for any competitive youngster to see that the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy is inconsistent with *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*.

And that goes double for the Final Argument in *Protagoras*. It is there, not in *Alcibiades Major* or *Republic 4*, that we might be inclined to find Plato's procedure morally suspect and even reprehensible. Socrates appears to deceive merely for the sake of winning (cf. *Prt.* 360e3) and by browbeating Protagoras into endorsing the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant—since the sophist's original inclination was to affirm that equation only when one was taking pleasure in τὰ καλὰ (*Prt.* 351c1–2)⁵⁴—he could easily be seen as shaking the foundations of morality. My response is that he is making τὸ καλὸν conspicuous by its absence just as he does in the Exegesis, particularly by means of the third member of his Triple Equation, i.e., the Equation of the Beautiful and the Pleasant. If this Equation does not collapse under the weight of its own intrinsic absurdity the first time we see *Protagoras*, it will be its foundation that is rocked—not that of morality, or rather ἀρετή—in *Hippias Major* (see §10) before its more plausible precondition, i.e., the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant, is leveled with the dust in *Gorgias*.⁵⁵ We might just as well say that Plato is destroying the foundations of both education and virtue by having his Socrates proclaim that he does not think that ἀρετή can be taught (*Prt.* 319a8–b1; cf. 361a6–7). But before examining how *Protagoras* prepares the reader for the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy as unmasked by the Slide in *Alcibiades Major*, a few more remarks on the morality of my exegesis of Plato are in order.

The last of this book's epigraphs is Chaucer's line to the effect that if gold rusts, what shall iron do, i.e., if what is most sublime and beautiful becomes corrupt—and this is what I'm claiming has been happening to Plato—what's to become of the rest of us? Born in a century where the Nazis murdered millions of Jews, I am too bookish to believe that the first people to define themselves in relation to a transcendent G-d would have been murdered if Plato—the greatest philosophical defender of transcendence—had not already been turned by brilliant men, not least of all in Germany, into something else besides. The name of those un-Platonic versions of Plato are legion, but whether as our source for an utterly self-seeking Socrates, as an Aristotle in training who ultimately outgrew his Platonism, as the esoteric cosmologist of the ἔν καὶ πάν, or as the proponent

54. For a more detailed analysis of this passage (“the Hesitation of Protagoras”) based on the comments of Taylor, see *Ascent to the Good*, 308–16.

55. See *Ascent to the Good*, §11.

of a merely exoteric morality that secretly unmasked philosophy as injustice,⁵⁶ the gold of Platonism has been rusting before my eyes, and I finally decided that enough was enough. Christianity has made the need to keep Plato's secret commitment to the intrinsic nobility of altruistic self-sacrifice unnecessary,⁵⁷ and the behavior of too many self-professed Christians has long since proved that divulging that secret has scarcely proved to be unsafe *for them*. Finally, if it seems completely ridiculous to imagine that the de-Platonizing of Plato could in any way be connected to the death-camps and the crisis of our own republic, then set me down as a book-crazed fool.

The first time the phrase εὖ πράττειν appears in *Protagoras*, Socrates uses it correctly (*Prt.* 313a8), and from a pedagogical perspective, that's as it must be: Plato needs to establish that he knows perfectly well what the phrase means *before* distorting it.⁵⁸ The initial dialogue with Hippocrates contains a number of riches: the basis of the Hippocrates Joke, the first Socrates-inspired blush in the dialogues (*Prt.* 312a2), the hammered importance of what any school must offer (i.e., five uses of τὰ μαθήματα at *Prt.* 313c7–314b1), and the speedy introduction and sustained use of the soul-body distinction (*Prt.* 312b8–314b4), arguably the evidentiary exemplar and origin of Platonism's characteristic *Kluft* or χωρισμός. It is in the context of the latter that Socrates deploys his initial εὖ πράττειν, imbedded in this wonderful sentence:

Socrates: 'If you had to entrust [ἐπιτρέπειν] your body to someone, taking the risk of its being made better or worse, you would first consider most carefully whether you ought to entrust [ἐπιτρεπέειν] it or not, and would seek the advice of your friends and relations and ponder it for a number of days: but in the case of your soul, which you value much more highly than your body, and on which all your affairs [ἐν ᾧ πάντ' ἐστὶν τὰ σά] either fare well or ill [ἢ εὖ ἢ κακῶς πράττειν], according as it is made better or worse, would you omit to consult first with either your father or your brother or one of us your comrades,—as to whether or no you should entrust [ἐπιτρεπέειν] your very soul to this newly-arrived foreigner; but choose rather, having heard of him in the evening, as you say, and coming to me at dawn, to make no mention of this question, and take no counsel upon it—whether you ought to entrust [ἐπιτρέπειν] yourself to him or not; and are ready to spend your own substance [τὰ σαυτοῦ] and that of your

56. Leo Strauss to Jacob Klein (New York City, 16 February 1939) in Strauss, *Gesammelte Schriften*, volume 3; *Hobbes' politische Wissenschaft und zugehörige Schriften—Briefe*. Edited by Heinrich Meier, with the editorial assistance of Wiebke Meier (Stuttgart and Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2002), 568 (translation mine): "It has therefore defined itself with utmost precision: the *Republic* is indeed an ironic justification [*Rechtfertigung*] of ἀδικία [injustice], for Philosophy *is* injustice—that comes out with wondrous clarity in the dialogue with Thrasymachus."

57. See my "Altruism and the Art of Writing; Plato, Cicero, and Leo Strauss," *Humanitas* 22 (2009), 69–98.

58. Cf. *Prt.* 356d1, the last time he uses it, also correctly (but note κακῶς πράττειν at 357e8, on which see §6).

friends, in the settled conviction that at all costs you must converse with Protagoras, whom you neither know, as you tell me, nor have ever met in argument before, and whom you call ‘sophist,’ in patent ignorance of what this sophist may be to whom you are about to entrust yourself [σαυτὸν ἐπιτρέπειν]?’⁵⁹

Given that this sentence as a whole could be looked at as apotrepitic (from the verb ἀποτρέπειν), i.e., that Socrates, with whom Hippocrates actually *is* taking counsel, is attempting to dissuade the youth from turning his soul over to Protagoras, the first four uses of “to turn over [ἐπιτρέπειν]” must be considered almost as humorous as its fifth is serious: σαυτὸν ἐπιτρέπειν in context anticipates the teaching of *Alcibiades Major* that your soul is yourself.⁶⁰ But the important thing for now is that εὖ πράττειν means: “to fare well,” and, in addition to using it correctly, Socrates also makes use of its opposite κακῶς πράττειν; he will do so twice.

Before considering the second time (*Prt.* 333d7)—which is the critical case from the perspective of the Slide—it is first necessary to redeem the promissory note offered in §4 and revisit Socrates’ misinterpretation of Simonides’ correct use of εὖ and κακῶς πράττειν in the Exegesis (*Prt.* 344e7–8). In defense of the proposition that it is not simply difficult to be good but *impossible* to be so given life’s vicissitudes, the poet had said that every man is (morally) good “having fared well [πράξας μὲν γὰρ εὖ]” and is (morally) bad when he is “faring badly [κακῶς, with πράττειν understood]. Although we might have expected this kind of relativity (or “situational ethics”) from Protagoras, its classic expression is found in Thucydides:

For in peace and good (external) circumstances [ἀγαθὰ πράγματα], both states and citizens have better thoughts since they do not fall into unwished-for necessities; but war, having snatched away the ease of the daily (routine), is a savage teacher, and assimilates the desires of the many to their present conditions.⁶¹

Since Plato sets his *Protagoras* while Socrates can still call himself young (*Prt.* 314b5) and Pericles is still alive (*Prt.* 320a1), the Peloponnesian War has not yet come along to prove Thucydides right, and if Plato’s academicians don’t realize this the first time, they will soon enough be required to demonstrate that they do in responding to the deliberate falsifications of history in *Menexenus* (see §15).⁶²

59. *Prt.* 313a6–c3 (Lamb modified).

60. See §6; consider also τὰ σαυτοῦ, which at 131a2–3 will be linked with the body.

61. Thucydides 3.82.2.

62. Incidentally, I have not meant to suggest that Plato expected his students to enter the Academy as entirely ignorant of either Homer or Athenian History; Socrates’ first question in *Prt.* suggests their presumed familiarity with the former, the mention of Alcibiades, with the latter. It is rather that Plato will require a “tested” knowledge of both—thus establishing an academic baseline regardless of how much or how little any given student knew of either upon entry—in the dialogues culminating with *Smp.*, with the need to demonstrate knowledge of Homer in *Hp. Mi.* and *Ion*, and of Athenian History in *Mx.*

For the literary present, Socrates promptly sets about to misconstrue Simonides' meaning, and one might well ask: for the sake of which "characteristically Socratic doctrine" does he do so this time? The answer becomes clear when Socrates gives the idiom its typically "Socratic"⁶³ twist: he assimilates both the poet's εὖ and κακῶς πράττειν first to "good-doing [ἀγαθὴ πράξις]" (*Prt.* 345a1) and then to εὐπραγία (*Prt.* 345a3), which—as we have already seen at *Alcibiades* 116b13—is synonymous with "the well done deed" and can be identified as καλόν on that basis. Here then is the Fallacy in a less obvious form, for in *Alcibiades*, εὐπραγία as an (object-taking) *act* of doing something well follows the Slide whereas here it constitutes it. This diverts our attention from the Fallacy to the doctrine that will be made to depend on it. Once identified with the relevant "learning" (μάθησις at *Prt.* 345a2 and 345a4) that makes, e.g., a doctor, "good," it will be *knowledge*—not the situational ease of peaceful flourishing, as in Thucydides and Simonides—that becomes the basis for doing (something) well.⁶⁴ Here, then, is the (dubious) point of origin for Virtue is Knowledge, the bedrock of an Aristotle-based Socratism: "In order to read into Simonides the doctrine that virtue is knowledge and vice ignorance, Socrates assigns to πράξας εὖ in the poem the meaning of *acting* well, rather than *far*ing well."⁶⁵

It simply cannot be an accident that two out of the three doctrines of "Socrates' Moral Psychology" that Aristotle identified as historically Socratic—i.e., Virtue is Knowledge and the Socratic Paradox, to which one is tempted to add the Unity of the Virtues—are not only found in and derived from Plato's *Protagoras*, but are introduced there in an ostentatiously deceptive context. To begin with, *Protagoras* as a whole, thanks to the ἀγών at its center, can safely be counted throughout as "an ostentatiously deceptive context."⁶⁶ In the midst of these shenanigans, we encounter the Socratic Paradox in a context beset by the poetic implications of Plato's hammered ποιεῖν, for had he used πράττειν ("to do") instead, there would be no textual evidence that he was intending to execute a Performative Self-Contradiction. And he has likewise vitiated the introduction of Virtue is Knowledge—thanks to Simonides' use of πράττειν (*Prt.* 344e7)—by enfolding it with, and indeed deriving it from, what *Alcibiades Major* will soon enough make clear (at least for those with eyes to see what since the nineteenth century has vanished from sight) is best understood as the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy.

63. I'm calling it "Socratic" on the basis of Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.14–15, along with Plato's dialogues.

64. On *Euthd.* 281b2–4, see *Ascent to the Good*, 75–76.

65. Adam and Adam, *Plato, Protagoras*, 165 (on τίς οὖν εἰς γράμματα κτλ. at *Prt.* 345a1).

66. To take but one recent example from the foregoing blocked quotation, Socrates has just castigated Hippocrates for not taking counsel with his elders in a passage where taking counsel with Socrates is precisely what Hippocrates is presently doing.

There can be no doubt that whatever crimes the twentieth century may have committed against Platonism, the way scholars are presently reading the dialogues—with ongoing and sustained interest in both the Play of Character and the Argument of the Action⁶⁷—marks an interpretive highpoint in the long history of Platonic hermeneutics. For entire centuries, even millennia, Plato has been taken to believe and uphold whatever it is that any of his major characters say in every single dialogue. This began early, with Aristotle's disastrous "as Plato says . . . in the *Timaeus*"⁶⁸ but it is at least temporarily in eclipse today. So let's imagine a bright young student who came to *Protagoras* with only the interpretive skills and knowledge that could come from having been taught the First Tetralogy of Thrasylus—i.e., *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*—by any competent teacher whose only peculiarity was that, for whatever reason, she never mentioned as paradigmatically "Socratic" the doctrines and contributions of Aristotle's Socrates, of which, likewise for whatever reason, our imaginary student has likewise never heard. Under these circumstances—where obedience to the Sign would take the place of "Socratic Intellectualism," and where Socrates' *Heldentod* would loom larger than Socrates' quest for definitions—I doubt that any competent reader who encountered *Protagoras* on these terms *without being able to read Aristotle's Socrates into it*, would conclude that this dialogue's Socrates regarded either of these "doctrines" as either unquestionably true or that we should regard them as characteristically Socratic.

And then there is the Unity of the Virtues.⁶⁹ Can it be an accident that the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy also plays a role in defending this third Socratic doctrine? As already presented in §3, Round One of the boxing match consists of three arguments or reductions, only two of them completed and none of them free from the suspicion of deliberate fallacy. The first employs self-predication, along with "different" as "not," to unify Piety and Justice; the second introduces the Table of Opposites and the One Thing/One Opposite Principle to unify wisdom and temperance. Since the unification of courage and wisdom will be the single theme of the dialogue's Act II, the crucial importance of Act I's third argument makes the fact that it remains unfinished all the more destructive of any interpretation of *Protagoras* that would take that dialogue to confirm that Socrates has successfully demonstrated the Unity of

67. See *Ascent to the Good*, §4.

68. Aristotle, *Physics*, 4.1 (209b11–12).

69. Note that Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.5—an interestingly circular passage suggesting something like the Unity of the Virtues—is embedded in a passage (3.8.2–3.9.15) that contains all of the positions taken by Xenophon's Socrates that I am claiming are only apparently but not in fact the positions of Plato's Socrates. As an alternative thought-experiment to the Aristotle-free reading of *Prt.* just proposed, someone sympathetic to the priority of Xenophon might consider whether a reader who had already met Socrates in *Memorabilia* 3 would think that *Prt.* was confirming or destabilizing such "doctrines."

the Virtues. For even if we were to overlook the problems associated with the respective unifications of justice-piety and wisdom-temperance—and that’s already a mighty big “if”—neither of these “unities” contributes anything toward the unity of (even four out of the five non-courage) virtues until we get some cross-mixing of the two pairs, of which there are four possibilities.

Of these, the one that Socrates chooses in “the Unfinished Argument” (for so it will be called) is to unify justice and temperance, and before considering the bizarre manner in which he purports to demonstrate their unity, it is worth taking a moment to wonder why he didn’t choose to unify justice with wisdom, piety with wisdom, or piety with temperance. Even if we decide that Protagoras, despite the god-talk of his Great Speech (*Prt.* 320c8–d6, 321a3–4, 321d1, 321d5–e3, and 322c1–d5)—culminating, indeed, with a talking god (*Prt.* 322d1–5)—is the atheist we independently suspect him to have been,⁷⁰ we must understand why Plato did not depict Socrates trying to argue Protagoras into the unity of justice and wisdom: Protagoras himself has already stated clearly that many who are just are unwise (*Prt.* 329e5–6). But if that means that Socrates chooses justice and temperance because he believes he will have more success in persuading Protagoras of their unity, then why does he proceed by what at best looks like a *reductio ad absurdum* (or some such negative consequence) of the view that they are different, i.e., that it is possible to combine temperance and *injustice*, i.e., that many or at least some of the unjust demonstrate temperance while committing injustice?

With that as a first and preliminary question about the Unfinished Argument, a second question is likewise properly raised in advance: why did Plato choose to leave it unfinished? One answer has already been suggested: by withholding the unifying capstone from the edifice already created by the two previous unifications, he is suggesting that we take the entire Reduction of the Virtues *cum grano salis*. But that’s only a start. A deeper question is whether we should really regard the Unfinished Argument as incomplete from a pedagogical standpoint. Here it is possible to distinguish two kinds of answer. The first is that Plato expects us to figure out how to finish the argument for ourselves. This alternative has two strong considerations in its favor: first of all, this kind of “fill-in-the-blank” problem might seem pretty characteristic of the playful pedagogy deployed by Plato the Teacher, and second, R. K. Sprague has already proposed an appropriately playful completion for it.⁷¹ But the other alternative has something to be said for it as well, and the proof of that is what the Unfinished Argument can already teach us *despite being*

70. “His Trial” and “Knowledge of the Gods” are the somewhat misleading titles (cf. R29 in the context of R30) for 31 P19, P20, and D10 in Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*. On the unfinished *Criti.*, see *Guardians in Action*, §4. Note that a chapter on Critias disappears from “The Sophists” in *Early Greek Philosophy*, replaced by one on Socrates.

71. Sprague, “Unfinished Argument.”

incomplete. With these questions in mind, let's turn to the second deployment of εὖ and κακῶς πράττειν in *Protagoras*, the one most likely to reveal the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy for what it is, i.e., a fallacy.

The context is a rich and important one. In order to persuade Protagoras to uphold the λόγος that any doer of injustice is being temperate while being unjust (*Prt.* 333b8–c1; cf. 333d3–4), Socrates must first contradict himself on Vlastos's "say what you think" principle (see §4 on *Prt.* 333c5–9) and in anticipation of the Socratic Paradox, Plato makes it obvious that Protagoras, even under these face-saving conditions, is taking up the shameful λόγος (with "I would be ashamed [αἰσχυνοίμην]" at 333c1, cf. τὰ αἰσχρά at 345e2–3) *involuntarily* (*Prt.* 333d1–3). In summary, then, Socrates has maneuvered Protagoras into defending what he is ashamed to acknowledge might be his own view: that in committing injustice, the unjust may yet proceed temperately, prudently, or thoughtfully, all of which may be considered elements of the word σωφρονεῖν (*Prt.* 333b8–9). Since Protagoras has already stated that the just are not always wise (*Prt.* 329e5–6), Socrates has good reason to think that Protagoras, in agreeing to defend the position of the many, is really defending his own covert position. But in any case, insofar as the advantageous is distinct from the just—which we have no good reason to think is a distinctive position of young Alcibiades alone (113d1–8)—it is obvious that someone can thoughtfully pursue and attain their own advantage while doing things that are unjust.

The argument proceeds as follows: Having established that σωφρονεῖν is synonymous with "considering well [εὖ φρονεῖν]" (*Prt.* 333d5) and that "considering well," in the specific case of those who are committing injustice, is synonymous with "planning well [εὖ βουλευεσθαι]" (*Prt.* 333d5–6), Socrates then asks:

Socrates: 'Whether,' and this was I, 'when they are faring well [εὖ πράττειν] in doing injustice or [when they are faring] ill [κακῶς]?' 'When well [εὖ].'⁷²

How can we tell when a criminal is well advised, and is thus "considering well" through his ability to σωφρονεῖν? The answer is: when he *succeeds* in his criminal enterprise, is not caught, jailed, and executed, but rather—and in full accord with the colloquial meaning of εὖ πράττειν—when he "fares well." Before considering what we should make of that—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say: before Plato gives us a moment to consider what we should think of that—Socrates continues, fatefully, with an apparent *non sequitur*:

72. *Prt.* 333d7–8.

Socrates: ‘Are you therefore saying that some things are good?’ ‘I say so.’ ‘Is it the case, then,’ and this was I, ‘that those things are good which are beneficial [ὠφέλιμα] to men?’⁷³

There are two problems here: first of all, Socrates never gets to advance any further with this line of questioning. After Protagoras lets loose an oath (*Prt.* 333e1), Socrates tells us that he decided to abate the intensity of his questioning (*Prt.* 333e4–5) while presumably attempting to reestablish the identity of good things with those that are ὠφέλιμα *to men*, thereby establishing the need for a dative (*Prt.* 333e5–334a2); the Relativity Speech puts an eloquent stop to all of that, leaving us in doubt as to where Socrates was going since the Unfinished Argument does not tell us.⁷⁴ But the other problem comes earlier, it *is* in the text, and it is also our best clue for reconstructing the ostentatiously missing argument that Plato never gives his Socrates the opportunity to complete, thereby creating a gap for the student to fill. Why does Socrates ask Protagoras whether he says that some things are good immediately after getting him to admit that when doers of injustice are well advised, they fare well? In raising this question, I want to emphasize that this is the first example in the dialogues of a question Plato intends his students both to raise and to solve that implicates *Alcibiades Major*.

In setting your traps, it is most important to know the endgame at the beginning (on 106d4–5, see Introduction), and in this case, the equivocation on εὖ πράττειν points the way. Prompted by Socrates, Protagoras admits that well-advised doers of injustice will *succeed* in gaining their objectives, i.e., that they εὖ πράττειν in the sense of “to fare well.” It is the *other* meaning of the phrase that will be revealed in *Alcibiades*: the kind of εὐπραγία that must be called καλόν, and therefore can without equivocation be equated with καλῶς πράττειν. If only in retrospect, Protagoras has been made to uphold the view—both damning in an ethical sense and self-contradictory—that those who do wrong *also do well and nobly*. And given the resistance Alcibiades shows to the notion that being unjust can ever mean τὰ καλὰ πράττειν or καλῶς πράττειν (115a4–10), it seems likely that Socrates would need to get Protagoras to admit first that ἀδικία is not καλόν and then—thanks to a move well-established in both dialogues—that it is likewise not ἀγαθόν (cf. *Prt.* 359e5–8). The contradiction he must therefore elicit is that successful injustice *acquires* good things but is not itself good:⁷⁵ insofar as it does the first, it “fares well,” but since it is not good-beautiful, it cannot “do well.” By working backwards, then, the crucial move is the successful acquisition

73. *Prt.* 333d8–e1.

74. Cf. Roslyn Weiss, *The Socratic Paradox and its Enemies* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 43.

75. Cf. *Guardians on Trial*, section §7.

of good things (cf. 116b7) through doing something *that is not itself good*, and which the person doing it cannot therefore decently be said “to be doing well” even if she succeeds.

Now let’s move in the opposite direction. By following up on the moment where Protagoras takes the bait with a question about good things, Socrates apparently aims to convert the repeated adverb εὖ (*Prt.* 333d5–8) into the “good things” (ἀγαθά); this reverses the procedure he will use in *Alcibiades* (116a10–b3). And by moving next to convert ἀγαθά into ὠφέλιμα (*Prt.* 333d8–e1), Socrates reveals once again that he is moving in the orbit of the complete argument Plato has given us in *Alcibiades* with τὰ ὠφέλιμα (with the doer understood as the relevant dative, as in “beneficial for him”) now standing in the place of τὰ συμφέροντα (cf. 116c7–d3). Having moved from adverb to an adjective turned noun, Socrates could then easily establish that “those who do well” necessarily acquire things that are beneficial *for them*, and thus are good things (τὰ ἀγαθά), the acquisition of which—as he tells us in *Alcibiades* (δὲ ἀγαθῶν κτήσις at 116b7; cf. *Smp.* 205a1)—defines what it means “to fare well.” And since Protagoras has already admitted that the well-advised doers of injustice are the ones that can be said to εὖ πράττειν, Socrates can show that they therefore acquire beneficial and good things, and do so by being unjust. And thus it happens that the acquisition of beneficial things once again emerges as the center of the argument that begins and ends with the ambiguity of εὖ πράττειν, just as the conclusion of the argument (ὁ λόγος at 116c5) in *Alcibiades Major* would lead us to suspect.

But as Sprague has made perfectly clear, “this dream is all amiss interpreted,” for it is completely irrelevant to Socrates’ alleged purpose in the Unfinished Argument! There he must show that temperance and justice are *identical*, and he will do so by demonstrating that temperance and *injustice* are incompatible. In that sense, it completely misses the point to show how the deployment of εὖ πράττειν might justify the *opposite* conclusion, i.e., that the successful criminal who commits his crimes well also *fares* well, and is therefore happy in the acquisition of good things which are advantageous to or rather beneficial for him (cf. *Hp. Mi.* 376b4–6). Surely Sprague’s reconstruction is more likely to be right if only because it yields what needs to be, in context, the desired result. Here is how it begins:

Soc. Let me see: we agreed just now that those who acted unjustly fared well when they acted in this way? *Prot.* Yes, we did. *Soc.* Now to fare well is to do right, isn’t that so, Protagoras? *Prot.* Yes, it is. *Soc.* And to do right must be to do good things, I suppose? We could hardly suppose it involves doing bad ones, could we? *Prot.* No, we could hardly suppose that.⁷⁶

76. Sprague, “Unfinished Argument,” 3.

Leaving the rest of her reconstruction to speak for itself, it is likewise tempting to leave this section without a conclusion, considering as precedent that Plato leaves his incomplete λόγοι incomplete for a reason. But the stakes are too high for that, even if—as seems possible—the Unfinished Argument in *Protagoras*, when reconsidered in the light of *Alcibiades Major*, has already taught us the most important thing we need to know about the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy.

And that, of course, is simply that *it is a fallacy*, a λόγος that creates ἀπάτη and thus enables the one who uses it to ψεύδουσθαι and ἐξαπατᾶν. The reason this section cannot end with *Protagoras* is that it is only in *Alcibiades Major* that Plato causes the deceptive Slide to be obvious to everyone, and this explains why it was recognized as a problem in antiquity. Modernity has solved this problem with a sledgehammer; the excision of *Alcibiades Major* has caused it to vanish. But since the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy will reappear in *Euthydemus*, *Charmides*, *Gorgias*, and *Republic*—to which *Protagoras* must of course be added—its use in *Alcibiades Major*, no matter how egregious and manifest in comparison, could scarcely be cited as grounds for rejecting that dialogue, and of course other grounds for its inauthenticity have been found. Nevertheless, the damage has been done: from a pedagogical standpoint, the Fallacy's deployment in *Alcibiades* stands out for the crystal clarity of its fallacious Slide. The dilemma that its use creates both there and elsewhere should force us to decide if Plato was deceived by an argument he regarded as compelling *or* whether he was using a deceptive argument deliberately, knowing it for what it is. In tandem with the Unfinished Argument, its use in the elementary *Alcibiades Major* strengthens the more Plato-friendly alternative while explaining why Socrates insists that the true lie is the one the deceiver falsely believes to be true (*R.* 382c4–5).

As important as it is to recognize from the start that Plato is using deception deliberately, the *content* of the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy proves to be of at least co-equal importance. To be sure an awareness of his deliberate use of deception is logically prior to our ability to grasp all of the ramifications of its deployment, but it is necessary to recognize a more teleological sense of priority that considers the end to which the Fallacy is merely a means. As already indicated, the reach of this particular deception extends all the way to the Shorter Way in Plato's *Republic*, and thus to the heart of his teaching. Just as we can only walk the Longer Way by transcending the Shorter,⁷⁷ so too is it necessary to recognize that the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy is a fallacy in order to transcend the conclusion Socrates uses it to justify. The claim that εὐπραγία entails happiness makes it possible to argue that “justice pays,” and

77. See *Ascent to the Good*, 274–75, and *Plato the Teacher*, §21.

thus that doing the right thing is “in the agent’s interests.”⁷⁸ For many, this claim becomes the core of Plato’s ethical teaching, and viewing it as such is probably inseparable from a City-centered reading of his masterpiece. The well-ordered soul “does well” and therefore “fares well”; happiness is the guerdon of its virtue. On the negative side, then, the recognition that the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy is a fallacy undermines, or at least begins to undermine, one of the most important “doctrines” the tradition has attributed to Plato. But there is also a positive side to this recognition, and it constitutes the true τέλος of the process.

It is not enough to recognize the fallacious nature of the Slide between one meaning of εὖ πράττειν and another: the crucial thing is to realize the gulf between καλῶς πράττειν—embodied unforgettably in *Alcibiades Major* as the courageous willingness to face death and wounds for the sake of our friends—and “to fare well.” It is this gulf that both the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful and the Slide are used to conceal, and thus it is an awareness of that gulf that constitutes the best way to bring the resulting problems to light. It is therefore not equivocation alone that we must recognize, for it is only *on the other side of false* that Plato expects us to find the truth. In order to see the Fallacy for what it is, we must have a lively sense of what made Simonides, presumably in one of his nobler moments, call τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν (see Preface, *ad fin.*): “the greatest part of virtue.” The first part of *Alcibiades Major* offers the beginner an account of ἀνδρεία that anyone with an inkling of what is καλόν will find infinitely more compelling than the “courage” they have just encountered in *Protagoras*. So even if the argument we are encouraged to reject will appear in a far more sophisticated form in *Republic*, it is the *positive* and ennobling alternative to that false argument that will be the motor force that will power our “Ascent to the Beautiful” in *Symposium*. There, Plato will use the word ὑπεραποθνήσκειν (*Smp.* 179b4, 180a1, 207b4, and 208d2) to describe the kind of ἀνδρεία that Socrates identifies as καλόν in *Alcibiades*: “to die on behalf of.” Since Plato always makes us discover the truth for ourselves, he will once again use deliberate deception to conceal its excellence with the mask of self-interest (see §16). But if we are able to remember “the noble truth” that makes the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy anything but “a noble lie,” we will better understand why a Funeral Oration for dead soldiers

78. Annas, *Introduction to Plato’s Republic*, 322 (emphasis mine): “I have stressed the way in which the absolute nature of justice’s requirements in the central books [in the Longer Way] undermines the kind of justification offered in the main argument. It will be clear by now to the reader that I take the developments of the central books actually to conflict with the course of the main argument. For if justice must be grasped as absolutely and unqualifiedly good, the requirements of justice will hold regardless of any personal points of view or interests; but Socrates undertook [in the Shorter Way] to show that justice was *in the agent’s interests*, and Books 2-4 and 8-9 in fact try to show that it is something which is worth having for the agent.”

in *Menexenus* precedes—in the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues—what Phaedrus and Diotima will say about *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν* in *Symposium*.

SECTION 6. THE MORE PERFECT MIRROR

The Xenophon-inspired speech (121a3–124b6) that divides *Alcibiades Major* into two equally important parts ends with Apollo’s imperative “know thyself [γνώθι σεαυτόν]” (124a8–b1) and it achieves its purpose. Socrates so skillfully describes the kind of *ἀγών*⁷⁹ that awaits the ambitious Alcibiades that the youngster, whose prior inclination had been to rely on his natural abilities (119b9–10),⁸⁰ responds by asking what kind of *ἐπιμέλεια* (124b7–8)—an umbrella term for careful learning, technique, and practice—will be necessary to make him competitive with his true *ἀντ-αγωνιστῆς* (119d7), the kings of Persia and Sparta. Along with the verb *ἐπιμελεῖσθαι*,⁸¹ *ἐπιμέλεια* dominates the passage between the introduction of *γνώθι σεαυτόν* and its reappearance at 129a2–4, and in addition to finding a place for god,⁸² hammering a crucial technical term,⁸³ and glancing ahead to some of his own dialogues,⁸⁴ Plato continues to emphasize his debt to Xenophon, and to his brilliant *Oeconomicus* in particular.⁸⁵ Of course not all parallels between Plato and

79. Although used only once in *Prt.*, *ἀγών* appears four times between 119c7 and 120b8, where it is coupled for the first time with the cognate verb *ἀγωνίζεσθαι*. Along with *ἀντ-αγωνίζεσθαι*, *συν-αγωνίζεσθαι* and *δι-αγωνίζεσθαι*, this verb appears six times between 119e1 and 124a5. In *Prt.*, Socrates captures Alcibiades attention by participating in an *ἀγών*; in *Alc. I*, Socrates builds upon that interest by imagining Alcibiades participating in an *ἀγών* of his own.

80. Cf. an argument for the priority of *Alc. I* to *Prt.* in Gregory A. McBrayer, “Corrupting the Youth: Xenophon and Plato on Socrates and Alcibiades,” *Kentron* 33 (2017), 75–90, on 86: “if Socrates is still interested in capturing Alcibiades as a student [sc. in *Prt.*], it would be foolish to deny that virtue or excellence is teachable, when the hook he uses to capture Alcibiades’ attention in *Alcibiades Major* would seem to depend upon virtue’s being teachable (*Alc. I*, 105c–d). For if virtue is not teachable, Alcibiades has no need for Socrates and can indeed rely on his natural capacities to achieve his grandest dreams.” Since Protagoras claims to teach virtue, Socrates’ argument in *Prt.* at once discredits the sophist and leaves *Alcibiades’* confidence in his natural ability unchallenged; with the young man’s attention having been captured before *Alc. I* begins (104c7–d1), the speech challenges that confidence, thus reversing *Prt.* pedagogically.

81. Used fourteen times between 127e1 and 128d11; *ἐπιμέλεια* appears in this passage only at 128b9, six other times in the dialogue as a whole.

82. The appearance of “if god wills [ἄν θεός θέλη]” (127e6) anticipates 135d6.

83. Introduced at 115e9–116a4 (see §5), ἤ (“insofar as”) reappears at 127a15–b3.

84. See *Ascent to the Good*, 209–11, for the connection between 127a14–e9 and *Charmides*.

85. The reference to rowers and their coxswains at 125c9 in the context of effective leadership (*ἄρχειν* at 125b9, 125c6, 125c13, and 125d8) recalls the memorable passage at the end of Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 21.3, where Socrates’ Ischomachus describes effective leadership (τὸ ἀρχικόν at 21.2) with the image of “the kind of coxswains [οἱ μὲν τῶν κελευστῶν; this word is found in Plato only here] who are able to say and do such things as sharpen the souls of men, making them willing to work” so that “they disembark, sweating and praising one another, both the one giving the orders and those obeying them.” And when Socrates picks up only on the kind of “like-mindedness” that joins wife to husband (126e5–127b4), the previous allusion to *Oeconomicus* (this time to chapters 7–10) is confirmed. Note also the frequency of *ἐπιμέλεια* and *ἐπιμελεῖσθαι* in this work, on which see Karl

Xenophon are literary, and since Xenophon's Socrates uses γνῶθι σεαυτόν to educate Euthydemus in *Memorabilia* 4.2,⁸⁶ it is more likely that both are imitating “the real Socrates” than that either is imitating the other.⁸⁷

But the deployment of γνῶθι σεαυτόν in *Alcibiades Major* leaves no doubt as to the identity of *il miglior fabbro*, and since it leads directly to the dialogue's most arresting passage—self-knowledge in the mirror of the eye (132c9–133c20)—it seems almost as blasphemous to assert *the equal importance of its two parts* as it is to emphasize Plato's debt to Xenophon, especially since the latter can safely be explained away by allowing “the author of *Alcibiades*”—i.e., someone other than Plato—to be Xenophon's (even more inept) imitator.⁸⁸ As it happens, the culminating proof of the first part's equal importance will only be found in the second (see below), and even though it is the fourth appearance of γνῶθι σεαυτόν that initiates the passage about the eye's mirror (132c10), its second has important consequences as well:

Socrates: Well then, could we ever know what art [τέχνη] makes the man himself better, if we were ignorant of what we are ourselves [τί ποτ' ἐσμὲν αὐτοί]?
Alcibiades: Impossible. *Socrates*: Well, and is it an easy thing to know oneself [τὸ γνῶναι ἑαυτόν], and was it a wretch [φᾶύλος] who inscribed these words on the temple at Delphi; or is it a hard thing [χαλεπὸν τι], and not a task for anybody [πᾶς]? *Alcibiades*: I have often thought, Socrates, that it was for anybody [πᾶς]; but often, too, that it was very hard [παγγάλεπον].⁸⁹

It is noteworthy that Alcibiades answers only the second part of Socrates' double question: he has expressed no opinion as to “who inscribed these

Joë1, *Der echte und der Xenophonische Sokrates*, two volumes (Berlin: R. Gaertner, 1893–1901), 1.492; see also the discussion of *Alc. I* that follows (495–502).

86. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 83 (on ὁ πᾶσι Κλεινίου), preparing the reader for the many salient parallels between *Alc. I* and *Memorabilia* 4.2; as previously noted, he refers here to sixteen of his later comments.

87. Cf. Jan-Markus Pinjah, *Platons Hippias Minor; Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Munich: Narr, 2013), 64–66 (“Die Abhängigkeit der *Memorabilien* 4.2 vom *Hippias Minor* und dem historischen Sokrates”).

88. See Henrich Arbs, “De *Alcibiade I* qui fertur Platonis” (Ph.D. dissertation: University of Kiel, 1906), 22–31, climaxing with: “I believe I have collected all the passages in Xenophon that were models for the author. What can be concluded? First it can now be concluded with even more certainly that Plato was not that author. Not only was Plato too great to be forced to imitate another so obviously, but Xenophon—whom the best authors of that age never mention—he would in no case have imitated. Therefore, since the author of *Alcibiades Major* reproduced Xenophon, it is for that reason manifest that he was not a great author.”

89. 128e10–129a6 (Lamb modified). In comparison with later attempts to define, e.g., courage (*La.* 190d8) in terms of “the craft analogy”—see Terence Irwin, “Recollection and Plato's Moral Theory,” *Review of Metaphysics* 27, no. 4 (June 1974), 752–772, on 765–66—it deserves notice how different is the kind of τέχνη that here depends on having already answered this initial articulation of the famous “what is X (τί ποτ' ἐστὶ)” question; naturally virtue cannot be the τέχνη that benefits us until we know τί ποτ' ἐσμὲν αὐτοί. One of the many signs that “Systematic Socraticism” (see *Ascent to the Good*, §2) is sub-Socratic is that it appeals to πᾶς—for everyone seeks to benefit themselves—while ignoring what is really παγγάλεπον.

words on the temple at Delphi,” leaving it for Cicero to hammer the point that it was not even a man,⁹⁰ let alone a man who could be called φαῦλος, who was responsible for the wisdom of Delphi, inscribed in stone.

Socrates: But, Alcibiades, whether it is easy or not, here is the fact that is the same for us all: knowing it [γνόντες μὲν αὐτό], perhaps we might know the care [ἢ ἐπιμελεία ἡμῶν αὐτῶν] of ourselves, but not knowing [ἀγνοοῦντες δέ], we never could. *Alcibiades:* That is so. *Socrates:* Come then, in what way can the self-itself [αὐτὸ ταῦτό] be discovered [εὐρίσκεισθαι]? For thus we may discover [εὐρίσκειν] what we are ourselves [τί ποτ’ ἐσμὲν αὐτοί]; whereas if we remain in ignorance of it we must surely fail. *Alcibiades:* Rightly spoken. *Socrates:* Hold on, by Zeus [ἔχε οὖν πρὸς Διός].⁹¹

The reason that Socrates says ἔχε οὖν πρὸς Διός is because he will postpone seeking to εὐρίσκειν what he has just said must first be the first to εὐρίσκεισθαι, i.e., “to be found.” Just as we cannot know the ἐπιμέλεια of ourselves until we can answer τί ποτ’ ἐσμὲν αὐτοί, so too we cannot do that until we have discovered αὐτὸ ταῦτό. These words are best left in Greek because their meaning is a mystery, and—in accordance with a hermeneutic method I will apply throughout⁹²—Plato intended them to generate the discussion they have generated by making their meaning mysterious *deliberately*. He will revisit the mystery at 130d3–5, but not before offering the beginner the sublime definition of the unitary soul that will guide his students through the labyrinth of tripartition they will encounter in *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Phaedrus*. From the beginning, the soul is that which uses the body as a tool (129e11–130a2; cf. ὄργανον at 129c8–d4) and, as a result, “what we ourselves are” is neither our body (129e3–8, 130a11–12, and 130c1) nor our soul and body in the aggregate (130a9–c4; cf. *R.* 611b11–c1).⁹³ As if to justify the dialogue’s ancient subtitle, Socrates concludes this discussion with: “It is still necessary to demonstrate to you more clearly that a man is the soul [ἢ ψυχὴ ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος]” (130c5–6); the bodily beautiful Alcibiades takes his oath that this seems to him to have already been demonstrated sufficiently (ικανῶς at 130c7).

Socrates: But if indeed it is not exactly [μὴ ἀκριβῶς], but yet measurably [μετρίως], it is sufficient for us [ἔξαρκεῖν ἡμῖν], for we will then [and only then, sc. τότε] know exactly [ἀκριβῶς] when we will discover [εὐρίσκειν] what just now [sc. at 129b5] we passed over because it would involve much consideration. *Alcibiades:* What is that? *Socrates:* As was just said [ἄρτι ἐρρήθη]: that first it would be necessary to consider the self-in-itself [αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό];

90. See Cicero, *De Finibus*, 5.44, and *De legibus*, 1.58.

91. 129a7–b5 (Lamb modified).

92. See especially *Ascent to the Good*, 431–32, and *Guardians in Action*, 55.

93. See also Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.3.14.

but now, instead of the self-in-itself [αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό], we have been considering what each [sc. ἄνθρωπος] in-itself is. And perhaps that will be sufficient [future of ἐξαρκεῖν], for we could say that there is nothing of ourselves [οὐδὲν ἡμῶν αὐτῶν] somehow still lordlier [που κυριώτερόν γε] than the soul [ἡ ψυχή]. *Alcibiades*: Clearly not.⁹⁴

The juxtaposition of this passage with the second reference to the Longer Way in Plato's *Republic* should be sufficient to persuade a fair-minded reader that Schleiermacher was too hasty in condemning *Alcibiades Major*:

Socrates: 'You remember, I presume,' said I, 'that after distinguishing three kinds in the soul, we established definitions of justice, sobriety, bravery and wisdom severally.' 'If I did not remember,' he said, 'I should not deserve to hear the rest.' 'Do you also remember what was said before this?' 'What?' 'We were saying, I believe, that for the most perfect discernment of these things another Longer Way was requisite which would make them plain to one who took it, but that it was possible to add proofs on a par with the preceding discussion. And you said that that was sufficient [ἐξαρκεῖν], and it was on this understanding that what we then said [ἐρρήθη τὰ τότε] was said, falling short of ultimate exactitude [ἀκριβεία; i.e., the source of what is known ἀκριβῶς] as it appeared to me, but if it contented you it is for you to say.' 'Well,' he said, 'it was measurably [μετρίως] satisfactory to me, and apparently to the rest of the company.' 'Nay, my friend,' said I, 'a measure [μέτρον] of such things that in the least degree falls short of what is [τὸ ὄν] does not do so measurably [μετρίως]. For nothing that is imperfect is the measure [μέτρον] of anything, though some people sometimes think that they have already done sufficiently [ικανῶς] and that there is no need of further inquiry.'⁹⁵

A series of precise and deliberate verbal parallels connects the failure to discover αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό in *Alcibiades Major* with the failure to consider the Idea of the Good along the Shorter Way,⁹⁶ where the tripartite soul is used to illuminate four of the five virtues introduced in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 349b1–2). What Alcibiades has just qualified as ἰκανῶς will prove to be insufficient until the Longer Way (*R.* 506d1–4) and the unmistakable rejection of the dictum that ἄνθρωπος is "the measure of all things [πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον]" (*Cra.* 385e6–386a1 and *Tht.* 152a2–3) marks a turning-point in our understanding of why *Protagoras* is the first of Plato's dialogues in a pedagogical sense.

But the more pressing task for now is to explain further why *Protagoras* precedes *Alcibiades*, and Plato helps us to do so following the third appearance of γνῶθι σεαυτόν (130e8–9). The *Protagoras* Frame begins with

94. 130c7–d7 (Lamb modified).

95. *R.* 504a4–c4 (Paul Shorey translation modified).

96. See David M. Johnson, "God as the True Self: Plato's *Alcibiades I*," *Ancient Philosophy* 19 (1999), 1–19, on 6n12; he also discovers a further parallel based on ἐπεικῶς (cf. 132b7 and *R.* 441c5).

the information that the erstwhile lovely boy has now become a bearded man (ἀνήρ at *Prt.* 309a3–5); Socrates now hammers this point (131c11–12, 131d4–5, and 131e11): although Alcibiades’ body has ceased its bloom (ῥα at 131e11; cf. *Prt.* 309a2), only now is he beginning to flower (ἀνθεῖν). Since to know what we ourselves are (τί ποτ’ ἐσμὲν αὐτοῖ) is to know ourselves as soul (130e8–9), and not as “the things of your self [τὰ αὐτοῦ]” (131a2–3),⁹⁷ it is Socrates alone who is Alcibiades’ lover (ἐραστής at 131e10; cf. 103a2 and 122a8) while all the others loved only his things (131e10–11). The nineteen-year-old Alcibiades of *Alcibiades Major* (123d6) is therefore not younger than the Alcibiades we meet in *Protagoras*,⁹⁸ and the second dialogue fully explains why the youngster is more articulate when it comes to setting the parameters of an ἀγών between Socrates and Protagoras (*Prt.* 336b7–d5, 347b3–7, and 348c1–4; note his alleged knowledge of what is just or δίκαιον at 347b4) *than when he is questioned about himself*, about whom he importantly knows *nothing*.

Anyone who has watched a group of high school freshmen, under the immediate influence of *Alcibiades Major*, trying to catch sight of themselves in a fellow pupil’s pupil will not find it so very difficult to believe that Plato was its author, for not until Leibniz’s students deserted the classroom in search of two identical leaves has a philosopher been able to transfer a lesson so artfully to life. Prompted by Alcibiades’ renewed request for understanding how we might take care of ourselves (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι at 132b4–5), Socrates explains the next step, i.e., “that it is necessary to take care of the soul [ὅτι ψυχῆς ἐπιμελητέον], and it is necessary to look into this [καὶ εἰς τοῦτο βλέπετον]” (132c1–2) while leaving the ἐπιμέλεια of bodies and possessions to others (132c4–5). Following the fourth appearance of γῶθι σεαυτόν (132c10), Socrates offers us Plato’s immortal analogy, which asks us to consider—just as if we were the fourteen year-old princes, now turning from hunting to our freshman year with Persia’s “kingly pedagogues” (121e3–5)—that if the Delphic imperative were counseling the eye to see itself (132d5–6), it would be telling it “to look into this [εἰς τοῦτο βλέπειν] looking into which [εἰς ὃ βλέπων], the eye will see itself” (132d7–8).

And of course the magic follows. Since Alcibiades knows that mirrors (κατόπτρα) make it possible to look at them and ourselves at the same time (132d10–e1), Socrates asks him if there “is something in” (ἐν-εστί τι) the

97. I.e., our hands and body generally—and least of all, to complete the triad, “the things of the things of ourselves [τὰ τῶν ἐαυτῶν]” (133d12), our possessions (131b13–c4). The tentativeness of *this* tripartite division will be revealed at 133d10–e2, where Socrates not only denies that we could know either τὰ αὐτῶν or τὰ τῶν ἐαυτῶν without first knowing ourselves. This claim revises what Socrates says—whether “what he will say” or “what he has already said” is more appropriate remains to be seen—in *Philebus*, on which see Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 239.

98. As noted by Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 324; he errs in taking *Prt.* to prove that “Socrates and Alcibiades appear as old acquaintances” (Dobson, 334).

eye by which we see that is itself like such things as *κατόπτρα*, and given the plethora of words based on the preposition “in [ἐν]” that follows, one might almost think that Plato was preparing the way for naming the *κάτ-οπτρον* in the pupil of the eye an *ἐν-οπτρον*, as he will do at 133c9:

Socrates: And have you observed [ἐν-νοεῖσθαι] that the face of the person who looks into [ὁ ἐμ-βλέπων] another’s eye is shown [ἐμ-φαίνεσθαι] in the optic confronting him [ἐν τῇ τοῦ κατ-αντικρὺ ὄψει], as in a mirror [ὥσπερ ἐν κατ-όπτρῳ], and we call this ‘the pupil’ [κόρη], being a kind of image of the person looking [ὁ ἐμ-βλέπων]?⁹⁹

Whatever Plato will choose to call this kind of mirror, Socrates tells Alcibiades that it is unique in three respects: (1) we are looking into what is best in the eye, i.e., that by which it sees (133a5–8), (2) “if it looks at any other thing in man or at anything else except what resembles this, it will not see itself” (133a9–11), and (3) it will be looking at that place “in which the virtue [ἀρετή] of the eye happens to inhere” (133b2–6).¹⁰⁰

Having reached 133b6, we are now on the verge of considering the passage at the center of this section, and it is important to realize at the outset that 133c8–17 would probably be the most controversial passage in the dialogues *as a whole* if *Alcibiades Major* were still regarded as authentic. The lines in question are unique in several respects: they are philosophically significant, they are not found in any of our manuscripts, and yet they have been preserved for us by two significant ancient authorities, Eusebius and Stobaeus. In the course of what follows, I will be trying to illuminate two equally important but opposite facts about the passage in question: (1) that it is in fact consistent with the rest of the dialogue and not “a foreign body” intruding into it, and (2) that there are nevertheless very good reasons why an intelligent person could think that the dialogue says something very different without it. As a result, although I will be arguing that 133c8–17, along with *Alcibiades Major* as a whole, should be restored—i.e., regarded as coming to us from Plato himself—I am just as interested in a *misreading* expedited

99. 132e7–133a4 (Lamb modified); before consonants formed by the lips (as here β and φ), ἐν becomes ἐμ-. I take the kind of looking implied by κατ-αντικρὺ to explain the prefix κατ- in *κατόπτρον*: apart from Alice, we merely look *at* a standard mirror; it is necessary to look *into* an *ἐνοπτρον*. The standard approach to the problem has been to make the latter the more general term; I am doing the opposite.

100. Socrates calls this, rather tentatively, ὄψις at 133b4–5, where it plainly means “sight.” Note that Lamb (see previous note) has accurately translated the same word at 133a2 as “optic,” meaning not sight but rather what sight sees. For discussion, see Jacques Brunshwig, “Sur quelques emplois d’ ὄψις,” in G. Hoogleraar (ed.), *Zetesis: Album amicorum door vrienden en collega’s aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. E. de Strycker ter gelegenheid van zijn 65e verjaardag*, 24–39 (Antwerp: Nederlandse Boekhandel, 1973). De Strycker argued that *Alc. I* is inauthentic in his “Platonica I; l’authenticité du *Premier Alcibiade*,” *Les études classiques* 11 (1942), 135–151.

by the passage's absence as in a more accurate reading of the dialogue that includes it.

Having reached the point where sight has been identified as the virtue of the eye, Socrates suspends further discussion of the *visible* side of the analogy—which arose from replacing γνῶθι σεαυτόν with “see thyself”—for the sake of its *intelligible* counterpart,¹⁰¹ with what the soul can *know*, now replacing what the eye can *see* when it looks into another eye:

Socrates: Is it then the case [ἄρ' οὖν], my dear Alcibiades, if soul too is to know herself [γνώσεσθαι αὐτήν], that it is necessary for her to look into soul [εἰς ψυχὴν αὐτῆ βλεπτέον], and especially into that very place of it [εἰς τοῦτον αὐτῆς τὸν τόπον] in which inheres the soul's virtue [ἀρετή], wisdom [σοφία], and into anything else to which this happens to be similar [καὶ εἰς ἄλλο ᾧ τοῦτο τυγχάνει ὅμοιον ὄν]? *Alcibiades*: It seems so to me, Socrates.¹⁰²

The words καὶ εἰς ἄλλο ᾧ τοῦτο τυγχάνει ὅμοιον ὄν are crucial for making the case that 133c8–17 are consistent with the rest of the dialogue, for they open the possibility that self-knowledge can arise *not only from looking into a part of the soul*, but also from looking into something else (εἰς ἄλλο) that is similar to this part, or rather—and accuracy is important because this other thing will be revealed to be God in the disputed lines (133c10 and 133c13)—*something else to which [ἄλλο ᾧ] this [τοῦτο] is similar*.

Thus, if the phrase ἄλλο ᾧ is already opening up a safe space for God,¹⁰³ Socrates has a good reason to posit next that the τόπος of the soul that is most similar to God would necessarily be its most divine part, thereby associating τοῦτο, which now reappears, with well-known intellectual operations:

Socrates: Can we, then, say that there is of the soul [ἐστὶ τῆς ψυχῆς] something more divine [θειότερον] than this [τοῦτο], concerning which there is both knowing and thinking [τὸ εἰδέναι τε καὶ φρονεῖν]? *Alcibiades*: We cannot.¹⁰⁴

101. For the explicit contrast between visible and intelligible, see *R.* 509d4.

102. 133b7–11 (Lamb modified).

103. Cf. R. E. Allen, “The Socratic Paradox,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21, no. 2 (April–June 1960), 256–265, on 264: “In the *First Alcibiades* it is argued that to know what we ourselves are (τὶ ποτ' ἔσμεν αὐτοί) we must know the Self Itself (αὐτὸ ταῦτό, 129b1), plainly a universal in which individual selves are grounded and from which they derive their nature. This view is not explicit in any other early dialogue; but dialectic, with its universality of definition, presupposes it, and so does Socrates' ethics, which assumes that men in seeking their own self-perfection seek a universal, an ideal harmony in which struggle and contention are reconciled. In self-knowledge, then, a merely relative good is transcended, and the individual is seen to be grounded in something deeper than himself. The *First Alcibiades* more than hints that the ideal is no mere essential structure, but an existent, God.”

104. 133c1–3 (Lamb modified). Note that there is no indication that ἀρετή is simply σοφία (cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 74n330).

Although a positive answer to this question by no means *compels* us to ignore the implications of the earlier ἄλλο ᾧ, those implications *can* be ignored when this question is *not* read in the context of the disputed lines that follow. In other words, this use of θεϊότερον could be said to open up an equally safe space for locating the divine *within* the soul, especially if the hendiadys of τὸ εἰδέναι τε καὶ φρονεῖν applies both to the contemplative part of the soul—although it is noteworthy that the phrase ἐστὶ τῆς ψυχῆς avoids any word for “part”—*and to God*.¹⁰⁵

Debate about the disputed lines has naturally focused on the lines themselves, but since my defense of them will attach equal importance to the fact that there are good reasons why someone could think that the dialogue says something very different without them, I will now quote the two exchanges without 133c8–17, which, if restored, would come between them:

Socrates: This (part) of her [τοῦτο αὐτῆς], then, resembles God [the manuscripts divide between ὁ θεός and τὸ θεῖον, i.e., ‘the divine’], and whoever is looking into this [εἰς τοῦτο βλέπων], and knowing all the divine [πᾶν τὸ θεῖον]—both God and thought [θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις]—would thus also know himself most of all. *Alcibiades*: Apparently. *Socrates*: And self-knowledge we admitted to be temperance. *Alcibiades*: To be sure.¹⁰⁶

If we read τὸ θεῖον instead of ὁ θεός,¹⁰⁷ the only time θεός appears in this section of the dialogue is in what looks like another hendiadys: θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις. Thus, although the first exchange can certainly be read as consistent with the disputed lines—reading ὁ θεός both here and at 133c10 and 133c14 as that mysterious “something else to which” (133b10) τοῦτο is once again said to be similar—the words θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις point in another direction,¹⁰⁸ tending toward the claim that the intellectual part of the soul is so like the divine (τὸ θεῖον at 133c4) that there is nothing more divine (θεϊότερον at 133c1) than it, and thus that whoever looks into this (εἰς τοῦτο βλέπων) will know the divine as a whole (πᾶν τὸ θεῖον), i.e., θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις considered as a single divine intellect, no more without than within.

The disputed lines stand—or rather stood, once and long ago—directly athwart this theologized hendiadys or “one out of two.” They do so by drawing a sharp distinction between God—on the one hand—and “the best in our

105. *Sph.* 248e7–249a3 will be quoted below.

106. 133c4–7 (Lamb modified).

107. Since the words—emphatic by position in the original—appear in the dative (τῷ θεῷ as opposed to τῷ θεῖο) the different articles are relevant only in the nominative. For an able defense of θεῖο, see Johnson, “God as the True Self,” 10n23.

108. After quoting 133b2–c6, Christopher Gill comments in *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 357: “As this quotation brings out, the stress is not so much on mutual recognition of shared goodness of character as on recognizing your essential character, identified with wisdom or god.”

soul” (133c10) on the other. They also explain the return of εἰς τοῦτο βλέπων (133c4–5), employed repeatedly in the visible part of the analogy (beginning at 131c1–2), and which now, for the first time, makes a four-part analogy possible or rather necessary by creating a division between two kinds of mirrors:

Socrates: Is it then the case [ἄρ’ οὖν] that just as [ὅθ’ ὥσπερ] mirrors [κάτοπτρα] are clearer [σαφέστερα] than the mirroring pupil [ἔνοπτρον] in the eye, both purer and brighter [καὶ καθαρώτερα καὶ λαμπρότερα], so also [οὕτω καὶ] God [ὁ θεός] happens to be both purer and brighter [καθαρώτερον τε καὶ λαμπρότερον] than the best in our soul [τὸ ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ψυχῇ βέλτιστον]? *Alcibiades*: It is indeed likely, Socrates.¹⁰⁹

This passage—the first exchange of two in the disputed lines—is the soul of “the Γνώθι Σεαύτον Analogy” (for so 132c9–133c20 as a whole will be called), for it is only by using the word ἔνοπτρον¹¹⁰ that the following analogy emerges: an external mirror (i.e., a κάτοπτρον) is to our internal and ocular ἔνοπτρον what God is to whatever is best ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ψυχῇ. As a result, θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις (133c5), no longer construable as a hendiadys, have been distinguished as *two different things*, one both brighter and purer than the other. And as the hammered hendiadys καθαρώτερον τε καὶ λαμπρότερον makes clear, this is only half of the story: that just as (ὅθ’ ὥσπερ)¹¹¹ an external mirror is purer and brighter than the ἔνοπτρον in our eye, so too is God purer and brighter than the ἔνοπτρον (113b13) in our soul, that by which we see in a spiritual sense:

Socrates: Looking then into God [ὁ θεός], we would be using that most beautiful internal mirror [ἔνοπτρον], and among the human things [τὰ ἀνθρώπινα], into the soul’s virtue [ἀρετή], and thus most of all will we see and know ourselves. *Alcibiades*: Yes. *Socrates*: And self-knowledge we admitted to be temperance [σωφροσύνη]. *Alcibiades*: To be sure.¹¹²

To begin with, I claim that this second exchange makes better sense when placed after the disputed lines than when it is read immediately after 133c4–7 because it completes the four-part analogy. The way ἔνοπτρον is used here parallels the way Socrates deployed ὄψις to mean first the object of vision (133a2) and then as “sight” (133b5) *as it must*: the visible half of the Γνώθι Σεαύτον Analogy depends on the fact that an act of seeing *sees itself being seen*. As for the mention of ἀρετή, Plato will remind us of this passage at the

109. 133c8–12.

110. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236–37 (on 133c9; ἔνόπτρον).

111. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236 (on 133c8; ὅθ’).

112. 133c13–20.

commencement of “the virtue dialogues” in *Laches*,¹¹³ thereby suggesting that the best account of the best things among τὰ ἀνθρώπινα—the virtues in particular—must acknowledge itself as being merely partial, proceeding as it does not ἀκριβῶς but at best μετρίως, and thus not ἰκανῶς (*R.* 504b5–c4). To the extent that the conversation turns immediately to σωφροσύνη rather than to ὁ θεός, we are witnessing the third time that Socrates has refused to take the Longer Way, for the disputed lines tend to dissolve the mystery of αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό.¹¹⁴ We can only truly know ourselves by looking into a purer and brighter mirror—in short, “the More Perfect Mirror”—just as Socrates said at 130c9–10 that we would not know sufficiently or accurately *that man is the soul* (130c5–6) until we discover what we passed over at 129b1–3. I will leave it to others, as Plato does, to decide for themselves whether the parallel between ὁ θεός and αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό in *Alcibiades Major*, and the parallel between αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό and the Idea of the Good in *Republic* 6,¹¹⁵ invite us to use αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό as the middle term connecting the Idea of the Good to God, remarking merely that Plato’s refusal to connect them would adequately explain why piety is not included among the four virtues under consideration in his *Republic*.

In the Introduction, I noted Schleiermacher’s statement that “the highest philosophical task [*die höchste philosophische Aufgabe*]” is “discovering somewhere an original identity of thought and existence and deriving from it that immediate connection of man with the intelligible world.” Having shown how Plato used words like ἀκριβῶς, μετρίως, and ἰκανῶς to connect *Alcibiades Major* to *Republic*, I now want to suggest that when treated as a hendiadys,¹¹⁶ the phrase θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις connects it to the critical moment in *Sophist* when the Eleatic Stranger uses theologized rhetoric to join φρόνησις and φρονεῖν to τὸ παντελῶς ὄν:

Stranger: But for heaven’s sake, shall we let ourselves easily be persuaded that motion and life and soul and mind [φρόνησις] are really not present to absolute being [τὸ παντελῶς ὄν], that it neither lives nor thinks [φρονεῖν], but awful and

113. On the parallel with *La.* 190a1–b5, see *Ascent to the Good*, 168 and 174n214; also my “*Laches* before *Charmides*: Fictive Chronology and Platonic Pedagogy.” *Plato: The Electronic Journal of the International Plato Society* 10 (2010), 1–28, on 5–7.

114. For the possible connection between “the self itself” and God as mirror in “the addition,” see Owen Goldin, “Self, Sameness, and Soul in ‘*Alcibiades I*’ and ‘*Timaeus*.’” *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 40 (1993), 5–19, on 15: “an identification of the Self Itself and ὁ θεός is at least invited.” Unfortunately, this article is not cited in Johnson, “God as the True Self,” where the case for this identification is more forcefully pressed on 7, 13, and 15–16.

115. In this context, the emphasis on τὸ βέλτιστον in *Alc.2*—if independent of the *knowledge* (ἐπιστήμη) of it (as at *Alc.2* 145c1–3), an independence strongly implied by repeated references to being ignorant or the ignorance of it (*Alc.2* 143e3–4 and 144a5), or mistaking it (*Alc.2* 146a11–12)—constitutes a more direct and proximate anticipation of the Idea of the Good.

116. Cf. Johnson, “God as the True Self,” 16.

holy, devoid of mind, is fixed and immovable? *Theaetetus*: That would be a shocking admission to make, Stranger.¹¹⁷

The Stranger's insistence that we insult the highest existent by denying it φρόνησις explains what happened to *Alcibiades Major* as well, i.e., why it might have seemed to be an abrogation of *die höchste philosophische Aufgabe* to separate "the best in our soul" from ὁ θεός and thus why any move, however drastic, that contributed to reading θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις as a hendiadys created a desirable outcome.

In an article on "the deconstruction of γνῶσις σεαυτὸν in *Alcibiades Major*,"¹¹⁸ Jacques Brunschwig made an interesting observation: those who regard the dialogue as genuinely Platonic tend to regard the disputed lines as interpolated, while those who emphasize their integral connection to the rest of the dialogue tend to reject the whole as inauthentic.¹¹⁹ Although there is considerable evidence to back up "Brunschwig's Claim,"¹²⁰ there are also exceptions, and for the present, the two that are most relevant are Schleiermacher, who rejected the disputed lines before rejecting the dialogue as a whole,¹²¹ and the author, who not only upholds the authenticity of both the disputed lines *and* the dialogue as a whole, but who regards the disputed lines as an important proof of its authenticity. But as already indicated, I am equally interested in trying to show something else: that an ancient *deletion* of the disputed lines helps us to understand the modern rejection of *Alcibiades Major* as a whole.

Schleiermacher says nothing about the disputed lines in his Introduction to *Alcibiades Major*,¹²² and there is likewise no indication in his translation that

117. *Sph.* 248e7–249a3.

118. J. Brunschwig, "La déconstruction du 'connais-toi toi-même' dans l'*Alcibiade Majeur*." *Recherches sur la Philosophie et le Langage* 18 (1996), 61–84.

119. Brunschwig, "La déconstruction," 71–72.

120. The most illuminating contrast between luminaries is Paul Friedländer, *Plato*, three volumes, translated by Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Bollingen, 1958–1964), 2.351n14 (for authenticity but against "the (Neoplatonic?) expansion of the genuine text"), and Werner Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development*, translated by Richard Robinson, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948), 165n1 (against authenticity on the basis of "the expansion"). See also Maurice Croiset (ed. and trans.), *Oeuvres complètes de Platon*, volume 1 (Paris: Les belles lettres, 1925); R. S. Bluck, "The Origin of the *Greater Alcibiades*," *Classical Quarterly* 3, no. 1/2 (January–April 1953), 46–52, on 46n2; Eugen Dönt, "'Vorneuplatonisches' im Großen Alkibiades," *Wiener Studien* 77 (1964), 37–51, especially 39–40; Brunschwig himself, "La déconstruction," 61; Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236; and Christopher Gill, "Self-Knowledge in Plato's *Alcibiades*," in Suzanne Stern-Gillet and Kevin Corrigan (eds.), *Reading Ancient Texts; Volume I: Presocratics and Plato; Essays in Honour of Denis O'Brien*, 97–112 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 97n1.

121. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 3, part 2, 252.

122. Unless, that is, the word *Brocken* refers to the disputed lines at Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 323 (Dobson, 333): "Accordingly, if we are to name something as the proper subject-matter of the dialogue, scarcely anything else remains but the insight into the nature of the god-head [*Hineinschauen in die Gottheit*], which is recommended as a means for the knowledge of man, but our dialogue is incapable of discussing this subject except in the most meager style; so that

there is any textual problem.¹²³ But he does translate the lines in the notes, curiously mentioning only Stobaeus but not Eusebius.¹²⁴ He regards the passage as “an attempt [on the part of ‘our author,’ who of course is not Plato] to improve the immediately foregoing passage, which is not very clear,” adding that *der Verfasser* might have felt an obligation to expand further on “how the soul could look into God.” As to the Γνωθι Σεαυτον Analogy as a whole, he seems to have some misgivings—for how could he not?—about denying Plato’s agency in creating “this otherwise beautiful and quite properly Platonic comparison.”¹²⁵ But his most interesting note concerns αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό (“a deep thought that leads first to the World Soul”). Schleiermacher is disconcerted by the fact that the author has not followed up on *der Begriff der Selbstheit*, and while admitting that Plato often throws out hints, insists nevertheless that “never would the profoundest hint [*die tiefsinnigste Andeutung*] of the most basic and broadest kind have been so tightly compressed.”¹²⁶ So keen to find the kernel of Plato’s *Sophist* in *Phaedrus*, Schleiermacher cannot find something antithetical but no less profound in *Alcibiades Major*.

Although the foregoing exceptions to Brunschwig’s Claim are not entirely without interest, there is a great deal more to be learned from R. S. Bluck, who validates it. Like Paul Friedländer,¹²⁷ Bluck wrote his doctoral dissertation on *Alcibiades Major*,¹²⁸ but to the opposite effect, i.e., to demonstrate its inauthenticity, and a few years later, he published some of his findings in “The Origin of the Greater *Alcibiades*.” Upholding the connection between 133c8–17 and the rest of the dialogue on the basis of passages both earlier and later—this internal evidence will be discussed below—he regards the emphasis on God in the disputed lines as evidence of a “new [and post-Platonic] philosophy,” finding parallels in Aristotle’s *Protrepticus*, *Eudemian Ethics*, *On Philosophy*, and *On Prayer*.¹²⁹ His discussion of the latter is particularly

the morsel [*Brocken*] seems in fact not worth the whole apparatus, independent of the fact, that the particular members of this apparatus are not in any way connected with it.” The fact that the disputed lines explain more clearly than any other part of the dialogue this *Hineinschauen in die Gottheit* “as a means for the knowledge of man,” Schleiermacher’s decision to suppress them before excising the whole dialogue appears to make that suppression all the more dubious; my purpose, by contrast, is to show that it was also necessary.

123. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 3, part 2, 252.

124. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 3, part 2, 365.

125. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 3, part 2, 364.

126. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke*, volume 3, part 2, 362–63.

127. See Paul Friedländer’s *Der Grosse Alcibiades: Ein Weg zu Plato* (Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1921), and *Der Grosse Alcibiades, zweiter Teil: Kritische Erörterung* (Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1923); cf. Bluck, “Origins,” 46n2.

128. See R. S. Bluck, “The Greater *Alcibiades* attributed to Plato: An introduction and commentary, together with an appendix on the language and style,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1949). See 126–27 on the disputed lines. I am grateful to David Johnson for making it possible for me to read this document.

129. Bluck, “Origins,” 51.

interesting. In order to prove that Aristotle thought there was something higher than “mind and existence [ὁ νοῦς καὶ ἡ οὐσία],” Simplicius preserved the following: “God [ὁ θεός] is either mind [ἢ νοῦς ἐστίν] or something beyond mind [ἢ ἐπέκεινά τι τοῦ νοῦ].”¹³⁰ Bluck’s comment is delicious, affirming as it does the hendiadys reading of θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις: “the addition ‘or something beyond Mind’ may be due simply to a sort of modesty.”¹³¹ Ignoring the fact that the disputed lines explicitly reject the position such “modesty” would be deployed to conceal, Bluck assimilates “the mirror of God” to astronomy, a strategy that allows him, following Werner Jaeger,¹³² to link *Alcibiades Major* to *Epinomis*.¹³³

Although Bluck cites a parallel passage from the end of *Eudemian Ethics* to illustrate Aristotle’s “modesty,”¹³⁴ he fails to call attention to an even more relevant passage from the end of that treatise:

For God [ὁ θεός] is not a ruler in the sense of issuing commands [ἐπιτακτικῶς ἄρχων] but is the End as a means to which wisdom [φρόνησις] gives commands [ἐπιτάττειν].¹³⁵

By emphasizing the verb ἐπιτάττειν, Aristotle reminds us of the question Alcibiades never answers: was “the one commanding [ἐπιτάττειν] us to know ourselves” (130e8–9) “a worthless wretch [φραῦλος]” (129a3)? It is often said that it is the Jews whose G-d issues commands, but where self-knowledge is concerned, it is Apollo who is ἐπιτακτικῶς ἄρχων, i.e., “ruling proscriptively,” while the Name “I am what I am” forces the Israelites to discover the divine origins of self-ignorance *for themselves*. Here Athens and Jerusalem coalesce, for the question Alcibiades *does* answer leaves open the possibility that self-knowledge is universal, for everyone (πᾶς at 129a5) could easily say: “I am what I am.” In Israel, G-d makes this answer impossible, for only G-d is what all of us wrongly assume ourselves to be. In Greece, by contrast, Apollo *commands* us to reach the same conclusion. Cicero spells out what Plato does not: God, not Man, is the source of γνῶθι σεαυτόν,¹³⁶ and thus it

130. W. D. Ross (ed.), *Aristotelis, Fragmenta Selecta* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 75.

131. Bluck, “Origins,” 48n6.

132. Jaeger, *Aristotle*, 165n1: “The *Epinomis* also stands [i.e., as does *Alc. 1*, which ‘culminates in the thesis, elaborately and somewhat pedantically developed, that the Delphic maxim ‘know thyself’ can be realized only through the self contemplation of νοῦς in the mirror of the knowledge of God’] for this reduction of all ethical questions, both of happiness and of virtue, to the question of the knowledge of God.”

133. Bluck, “Origins,” 51 (emphasis mine): “*Epinomis* (which, if written by Plato, was his last work) again emphasizes the importance of self-knowledge and of the Delphic oracle, *and the essential oneness of human and divine mind*.”

134. Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 8.2; 1248a22.

135. Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 8.3; 1249b15 (H. Rackham translation).

136. See *De legibus* 1.58: “*Marcus*: For she alone [sc. philosophy] has taught us, among all other things, what is most difficult: that we would know ourselves. So great is the force and gravity [sen-

is only by looking to God, making use of what is best and most beautiful “in our soul,”¹³⁷ that we can begin to know ourselves.¹³⁸

If any fourteen-year-old has all the tools necessary to connect this More Perfect Mirror to Apollo’s γνῶθι σεαυτόν, the mystery of αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό will take considerably longer to clear up, but Bluck’s Aristotle-based solution once again points us in a revealingly wrong direction:

the writer of the *Alcibiades* refers to mind as αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό. . . . In the *Protrepticus*, moreover, mind is the divine element in man, the real ‘self,’ and its function is contemplation; and this accords with the part played in our dialogue by the αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό.¹³⁹

Once again, Bluck fails to grasp that the effect of the disputed lines is to prize apart the hendiadys that immediately precedes them, and by identifying αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό with φρόνησις, he continues to follow the same soul-based path based on what each of us is (αὐτὸ ἕκαστον at 130d4)—for φρόνησις is “that [part?] of the soul” that is most divine (φρονεῖν at 133c2)—that Socrates distinguishes from a longer way that would require us first to consider αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό (130c9–d5). As already indicated, Plato’s students must decide for themselves whether to identify αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό with God on the basis of 133c8–17, and more importantly what to do with that identification when they encounter the Idea of the Good in *Republic* 6 (*R.* 504a4–505a6).

The use of ἔνοπτρον at 133c9 and 133c14 illustrates why making that decision is necessary. The Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν Analogy has already hurled us into the orbit of the Divided Line,¹⁴⁰ with the less perfect mirror in the eye occupying

tentia of this precept that it was not attributed to any human being but to the Delphic God.” On this, and much more, see Pierre Boyancé, “Cicéron et le *Premier Alcibiade*,” *Revue des Études Latines* 22 (1964), 210–229. For Cicero’s familiarity with *Alc. I*, see *Tusculan Disputations*, 1.52; other passages are cited in Johnson, “Plato’s *Alcibiades*,” 63.

137. 133c10, i.e., our ἔνοπτρον (133c13–14); note the three-step process: only after first looking toward God (133c13), can we recognize as distinct “the human things [τὰ ἀνθρώπινα]” (133c14; cf. *Ap.* 20d6–e3)—“the soul’s virtue” in particular (133c14–15)—“and thusly would be most able [καὶ οὕτως ἂν μάλιστ’α]” to see and know ourselves (133c15–16). Only by first catching sight of what’s higher can we know ourselves.

138. With Cicero, *De legibus*, 1.29 (“*Marcus*: if the depravity of our customs, the emptiness of our opinions, were not twisting and deflecting the weakness of our minds from whence it had begun, nobody would be as similar to himself as all of us are to everyone else”), cf. “(1)” in Bluck, “Origins,” 46 (opening words): “The arguments usually propounded to show that the *Greater Alcibiades* as not written by Plato seem to me, by themselves, inconclusive. I believe that it would be better to begin by arguing (whether we retain the doubtfully authentic lines at 133c[8–17] or not) that we are given (1) a suggestion of a generic or universal likeness between one innermost ‘self’ and another, and (2) a method of acquiring wisdom and of apprehending God that are hardly in keeping with Plato’s dialogues.” See Altman, *The Revival of Platonism in Cicero’s Late Philosophy: Platonism aemulus and the Invention of Cicero* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016), 45–50.

139. Bluck, “Origins,” 46–47.

140. Discovered by Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236 (on 133c8–17): “Thus, as in the analogy of the Line (*Rep.* 509d–511e), both vision (with its contrast between reflections in pupils and clearer reflections

its lowest place. The first cut in the Line between visible and intelligible, quickly followed by analogous cuts in each resulting section (*R.* 509d6–8) is anticipated, first, by the difference between γνῶθι σεαυτόν and its mirror-based παράδειγμα (132d3). Next, it is doubly anticipated by the difference between the two kinds of mirrors in the visible section, and by the analogous difference between θεός (actually it is ὁ θεός at 133c4, 133c10, and 133c13) and φρόνησις, i.e., “the best thing in our soul” (133c10) in its intelligible counterpart. So when Denyer writes of the disputed lines that “they make explicit one final detail in the analogy: the comparison between mirrors and God,”¹⁴¹ but then goes on to cast doubt on *their* authenticity on the basis of Plato’s unparalleled use of ἔνοπτρον,¹⁴² he not only fails to give the proliferation of ἐν-words at 132e7–133a3 its due (see above), but the fact that it is only by adding a new word for “the internal but imperfect mirror in the κόρη of the eye”¹⁴³ that Plato could find a place for God at the opposite extremity of what will only become the Divided Line in *Republic* 6.

Albeit of negligible value in comparison with the internal evidence that 133c8–17 is an integrated part of *Alcibiades Major*, and the equally Platonic evidence that joins it to *Republic* 6, there is a parallel passage in the first of Plutarch’s *Platonic Questions* that deserves mention.¹⁴⁴ In order to explain the seemingly antithetical relationship between Socrates’ certainty about his divine mission and his own intellectual barrenness—obviously *Theaetetus* provides this context—Plutarch offers the following four-part analogy based

in mirrors), and the intellect (with its contrast between human wisdom and the clearer wisdom of God), provide analogies for the way that the realm of vision as a whole is like, but inferior to, the realm of intellect [citation deleted]. These lines therefore give a fair exposition of what is already implicit in the analogy.” This last sentence will be further considered below.

141. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236; I have deleted a parenthesis—“(last mentioned at 133a3)” —following “mirrors.”

142. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 237: “Plato’s standard word for mirror is κάτοπτρον (used seventeen times).” Bluck does his best to assimilate Plato’s ἔνοπτρον with astronomy at “Origin,” 49n5. And it is true that the Athenian Stranger’s long and arduous route to self-divination—which I take to be the acme of Platonic ignorance and thus the antithesis of Socrates’ “human wisdom” (*Ap.* 20d8)—runs through the heavens or rather the φρόνησις or νοῦς that both knows and guides them (cf. μεταλαβὼν φρονήσεως εἰς ὧν μᾶς at *Epin.* 986d2–3 with *Lg.* 896e8–897b4). See *Guardians on Trial*, 324n3 and 334n48; the latter describes the connection between this passage in *Laws* and Parmenides B3, which Proclus also connected to *Sph.* 248e7–249a3 (see Introduction).

143. Cf. the beautiful passage in Johnson, “God as the True Self,” 9: “But what does Socrates mean when he says the eye sees itself by looking to the pupil [i.e., the κόρη]? Literally it sees itself reflected in the pupil; but in a deeper sense it sees itself reflected *as* the pupil, i.e., it sees that it is essentially a pupil. Eyes, as it happens, have different colors; pupils do not. All pupils are the same. So all eyes are also essentially the same; they are what sees [cf. ἔνοπτρον at 133c14]. The eye is not restricted, then, to looking at literal reflections of itself, for it can look at other eyes, avoiding the problem of reflexivity.”

144. For Plutarch’s Platonism, and in particular for a magisterial reading of the first of his “Platonic Questions,” see Jan Opsomer, “Divination and Academic ‘Scepticism’ according to Plutarch,” in Luc Van der Stockt (ed.), *Plutarchea Lovaniensia: A Miscellany of Essays on Plutarch*, 164–194 (Louvain, 1996), and his *In Search of the Truth: Academic Tendencies in Middle Platonism* (Brussels: Palais der Academiën, 1998), 132–184.

on hearing: just as we cannot hear sounds clearly if there is an internal buzzing in our ears, so too we cannot accurately “hear” the arguments of others if our mind is teeming with its own pre-established conceits and conceptions.¹⁴⁵ According to Plutarch, it is precisely Socrates’ intellectual barrenness that opens him to divine wisdom: “if nothing is apprehensible and knowable to man, it was reasonable for god to have prevented Socrates from begetting inane and false and baseless notions and compel him to refute the others who were forming such opinions.”¹⁴⁶ Once the divine becomes responsible for “Socratic ignorance,” it is easy to see that Plutarch’s analogy corresponds to the one based on vision in *Alcibiades Major*: the imperfect mirror in our soul—although our most beautiful ἔνοπτρον (133c13–14)—is still buzzing with error and conceit; God, as the More Perfect Mirror without, enjoins silence within.¹⁴⁷

Although I have been calling 133c8–17 “the disputed lines,” they are more commonly styled “the Eusebian Addition,” and it is therefore not surprising that the fullest treatment of their relationship to the rest of the dialogue, and the most authoritative or at least the most useful discussion of their authenticity, is in a critical edition of the relevant book of Eusebius’ *Praeparatio evangelica*.¹⁴⁸ Geneviève Favrelle takes the amiable position that the Addition is inauthentic because it is unnecessary: it merely restates what has already been said at 133c4–8.¹⁴⁹ She could have strengthened her case by giving more emphasis to καὶ εἰς ἄλλο ᾧ τοῦτο τυγχάνει ὁμοιον ὄν at 133b10,¹⁵⁰ for as previously mentioned, the “other thing to which” this τοῦτο happens to be ὁμοιον (i.e., similar) will end up being—and therefore in the author’s mind already *is* (hence ὄν)—ὁ θεός. And although he neither cites Favrelle nor emphasizes

145. See Opsomer, *In Search of Truth*, 157n141; cf. 135n23.

146. Plutarch, *Platonic Questions*, 1000b–c in Plutarch, *Moralia*, volume 13 part 1, translated by Harold Cherniss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 25.

147. In this light, even a critic of the disputed lines like Julia Annas, who confirms Brunschwig’s Claim by upholding the authenticity of *Alcibiades* as a whole in her path-breaking “Self-Knowledge in Early Plato,” inadvertently offers evidence for its Platonic provenance on 123n51: “Further, the suspected passage spoils the metaphor. We were told that to see itself an eye should look at another eye (as seems reasonable in a culture with metal mirrors which would not give as clear a reflection of the eye as another eye would). Analogously, a soul should look at another soul, and there see God. But now we are abruptly told that God is a better and clearer mirror, just as there are better mirrors than the eye for an eye. So looking at God is now different from looking at the mirror in another soul. God thus seems to be both outside and inside the soul. It is tempting to see the passage as the work of a late pagan, or Christian writer, concerned to save Plato from the view that God is in our own souls, and hurriedly bringing God in as something external to us.”

148. See G. Favrelle (tr. and ed.), *Eusèbe de Césarée: La Préparation Évangélique, Livre XI* (Paris: Sources Chrétiennes, 1982), 350–74.

149. Favrelle, *Préparation Évangélique*, 363–66. See also C. A. Bos, “Interpretie, vaderschap en datering van de *Alcibiades Major*” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Amsterdam, 1970), 114.

150. As do both Bluck, “Origins,” 48n2, and Rudolph Wiggers, “Zum großen Alcibiades, p. 132d–133c.” *Philologische Wochenschrift* 25 (18 June, 1932), 700–703.

133b10,¹⁵¹ Denyer reaches the same conclusion: “These lines therefore give a fair exposition of what is already implicit in the analogy.”¹⁵²

But the mere fact that “the Eusebian Addition” is in fact *consistent* with the rest of the dialogue, and hence should not be regarded as a foreign body intruding into it, is no more central to my purpose in this section than the even more interesting fact that there are nevertheless very good reasons why an intelligent person could view things differently. In other words, even if Favrelle and Denyer are exegetically correct, the fact that it is easy to think that the dialogue means *something very different without them* must be given its due, especially since the difference in question has everything to do with whether we regard God as within or without.¹⁵³ I have pointed to θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις, taken as a hendiadys, as central for such a view, and in the notes to this section, if not in the text, I have suggested that Plato himself knows how to make such a view seem Platonic, as he does with increasing clarity and intensity in *Timaeus*,¹⁵⁴ *Theaetetus*,¹⁵⁵ *Sophist*,¹⁵⁶ *Laws*,¹⁵⁷ and *Epinomis*.¹⁵⁸ To point forward to a difficult point that will only become clearer in the course of studying the post-*Republic* dialogues (cf. σαφέστερα at 133c8), Plato’s

151. Cf. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 235 (on 133c4): “τῷ θεῷ ἄρα τοῦτ’ ἔοικεν: from the premise that nothing of the soul is more divine than the intellect (133c1–2), it is reasonable to infer that the intellect resembles God.”

152. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 236. Cf. Christopher Moore, *Socrates and Self-Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 124 (emphases mine): “These lines answer no questions about the means by which one knows the god, nor advance more than a merely metaphorical explanation for the improvement in self-knowledge these better reflective surfaces provide. Indeed they *mostly* restate the implications of the preceding analogy. They do, however, answer one question, and add *one odd piece of information*. God is purer and brighter than the best in the soul; this suggests that *god is separate from the soul*.”

153. Consider the observation of Schleiermacher’s mentor, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Allwill*, translated and edited by George di Giovanni (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1984), 524 (emphases in original): “I repeat: God is, and is *outside* me, a *living, self subsisting being* [*Wesen*], or *I am God* [*Ich bin Gott*]; a different and larger font is used here for emphasis]. There is no third.” Cf. Thomas H. Curran, *Doctrine and Speculation in Schleiermacher’s Glaubenslehre* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1994), 8 (“Schleiermacher’s reverence for Jacobi is well attested”); Jacqueline Mariña, *Transformation of the Self in the Thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 46–49; and especially Julia A. Lamm, “Schleiermacher’s Post-Kantian Spinozism: The Early Essays on Spinoza, 1793–94,” *Journal of Religion* 74, no. 4 (October 1994), 476–505; and her *The Living God: Schleiermacher’s Spinoza* (College Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

154. On *Ti.* 90a2–d7, see *Guardians in Action*, 102–106. Cf. John Bussanich, “Socrates and Religious Experience,” in Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar (eds.), *A Companion to Socrates*, 200–213 (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), on 212: “In *Alcibiades I* this care for the self aims at knowledge of one’s soul, the ideal self (129a–130c). The highest stage of self-knowledge is the realization of oneself as a purified mind in communion with being (*Republic* 611b–612a): ‘Now we ought to think of the most sovereign part of our soul as god’s gift to us, given to be our guiding spirit (*daimon*)’ (*Timaeus* 90a2–4). Socratic perfectionism begins with the Delphic demand to know one’s limits but culminates in a suprarational awareness of the self as godlike.”

155. On *Th.* 176b1, see *Guardians in Action*, 390–92.

156. On *Sph.* 248e7–249a3, see *Guardians on Trial*, 606.

157. See *Guardians on Trial*, 271–74.

158. See *Guardians on Trial*, 341–42.

Alcibiades Major offers beginners some claims about both God and the soul that are καὶ καθαρότερα καὶ λαμπρότερα than those with which they will later need to grapple as Guardians.

It is for this reason that the views of Denyer and Favrelle, although friendly to “the Eusebian Addition” in spirit if not in letter, are less useful than the position taken by Harold Tarrant in “Olympiodorus and Proclus on the Climax of the *Alcibiades*” (2012):

It is clear then that Olympiodorus would reject any reading at 133c that would have Alcibiades gaze into any god outside the human soul. This would of course include 133c10–11 from the disputed lines: ‘so the god too happens to be purer and brighter than what is best within our soul.’ The passage alerts us to the key point in the ancient struggle over the meaning of the dialogue’s climax: the tradition of which Olympiodorus is part has Alcibiades directed towards a god within the human soul or ‘self,’ while the tradition to which Eusebius subscribes has him directed towards a single external god that is apparently the brightest mirror in which a human might see his inner self.¹⁵⁹

Nor is it difficult to imagine what Tarrant means by “the *tradition* to which Eusebius subscribes.” Nevertheless, it is worth listening to him spell things out: “It should be evident from this that the additional lines that constitute 133c8–17, while not necessarily devised for Christian purposes, nevertheless suit many Christian philhellenes very well.”¹⁶⁰

The great advantage of Tarrant’s suggestion is that it acknowledges that there is something of great importance at stake here, and Brunschwig made another important contribution to the better understanding of *Alcibiades Major* by distinguishing a “horizontal” reading of the dialogue (without the Addition) from a “vertical” one,¹⁶¹ a distinction easily explicated in relation to theocentric as opposed to anthropocentric approaches regarding the Γῶθι Σεαῦτον Analogy.¹⁶² My first response to Tarrant’s suggestion is that it ignores the fact that Christians were just as capable of deleting pagan literary artifacts that *anticipated* Revelation as they were of foisting the truth upon those artifacts by way of improvement or self-confirmation; after all, Christianity couldn’t be true because Plato had anticipated it, and Cicero’s *Horten-*

159. Harold Tarrant, “Olympiodorus and Proclus on the Climax of the *Alcibiades*,” *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 1 (2007), 3–29, on 12.

160. See François Renaud and Harold Tarrant, *The Platonic Alcibiades I: The Dialogue and its Ancient Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 187–89 (“The Christian *Alcibiades*”); for useful comment and bibliography, see Johnson, “God as the True Self,” 12n30.

161. Brunschwig, “La déconstruction,” 72–76. See also “Les deux théologies,” in Jean Pépin, *Idées Grecques Sur l’Homme Et Sur Dieu* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1971), 18–20; for further comment on the disputed lines, see 192–99.

162. As in Gill, “Self-Knowledge,” 104 and 107–109.

sibus went missing only after it had already led Augustine to G-d.¹⁶³ Indeed the principal advantage of Tarrant's suggestion is that it is a vast improvement on the traditional thesis that Neoplatonists were responsible for the Addition, a view appropriately refuted by Burkhard Reis in 1999.¹⁶⁴

My second response to Tarrant's suggestion is that it is an ingenious solution to the wrong problem. In addition to (1) the preparation for *ἔνοπτρον* at 132e7–133a4, (2) the *ὅ τοῦτο ὁμοιον* anticipation (133b10), and (3) the surviving *τῷ θεῷ τοῦτ' ἔοικε* (133c4), there is the indirect illumination that the passage itself shines on *αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό*. First, the disputed lines confirm the Analogy's connection to *Republic* 6 because of its own fourfold connection to the Divided Line. They also intimate that self-knowledge through *ὁ θεός* has the same kind of priority to self-knowledge through the soul (i.e., that which each of us really is) that *αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό* has already been said, mysteriously, to have (130d3–5). Finally, there is what happens after 133c8–17, centering on (but not confined to) 134d4–5, a passage that—although often cited, and with good reason, as self-standing proof that the disputed lines are consistent with the rest of the dialogue—must and will be considered in context. It is in the light of all this evidence that instead of joining Tarrant in a hunt for those who interpolated the passage,¹⁶⁵ the time has come to initiate an alternative investigation of the passage's natural enemies,¹⁶⁶ by which I mean those ancient Plato scholars *who deleted it*.¹⁶⁷

163. See Altman, *The Revival of Platonism in Cicero's Late Philosophy*, 77–80; cf. *Plato the Teacher*, 281–83.

164. See Burkhard Reis, "Im Spiegel der Weltseele. Platon, *Alkibiades* 133c8–17 und der Mittelplatonismus," in John J. Cleary (ed.), *Traditions of Platonism: Essays in Honour of John Dillon*, 83–113 (Aldershot, UK and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1999), 89–90, concluding with: "Eine neuplatonische Herkunft der Zeilen, wie sie z.B. Croiset (1953, 110n1) und Friedländer (1964, 334n13) erwogen haben, muß als unwahrscheinlich gelten." Why? See earlier on 90: "Gott [for Porphyry] spiegelt sich also im Spiegel der Seele wider und nicht umgekehrt die Seele im Spiegel Gottes, wie es der Verfasser von *Alc. I* 133c8–17 formuliert." See also Alessandro Linguiti, "Il rispecciamento nel Dio: Platone, *Alcibiade Primo*, 133c8–17," *Civiltà Classica e Christiana* 2 (1981), 252–270, on 266–67.

165. As also in John Dillon, "Tampering with the *Timaeus*: Ideological Emendations in Plato, with Special Reference to the *Timaeus*," *American Journal of Philology* 110, no. 1 (Spring 1989), 50–72.

166. See Michel Foucault, *L'herméneutique du sujet: Cours au Collège de France (1981–2)*; edited by F. Ewald, A. Fontana, and F. Gros (Paris: Gallimard, 2001) and more accessibly *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France (1981–2)*, edited by Frederic Gros, translated by Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 52–54. For comment, see Gill, "Self-Knowledge," 100–104.

167. Cf. Johnson, "God as the True Self," 12: "The disputed lines are most likely not in the texts of Plato known to Olympiodorus or Proclus, neither of whom mentions them; nor, as far as we can judge, were they addressed in a recently discovered middle Platonic commentary on the *Alcibiades I*. This also tells against the notion that the lines are a Neoplatonic interpolation, however. Neoplatonic interpreters were usually faithful to the word if not the spirit of their texts, and they would have had little motive to interpolate the disputed lines, as they preferred to make self-knowledge a means to knowledge of the divine rather than the other way around." The attached note (12n29) returns to the commentaries: "it is just possible that Proclus [cf. 12n27] and Olympiodorus did see the lines in their texts, but passed over them in silence since they were not in line with the usual Neoplatonic teaching."

Ironically, it is Schleiermacher who has made such an investigation plausible. As moderns, we are, of course, fully aware of the latest attempt to delete *Alcibiades Major* as a whole. But thanks to the influence of that modern deletion, we have failed to realize that the divine κόρη of the dialogue had already been excised long before. As a preliminary basis for a new version of Tarrant's hunt, I would therefore situate the Neoplatonic or rather "the [Immanentist] Deletion" (for so I will call it) midway between Thrasyllus and Schleiermacher. By beginning the First Tetralogy with *Euthyphro*, and likewise by relegating *Alcibiades Major* to the Fourth, Thrasyllus had already initiated "the Demotion of *Alcibiades*," and his edition (first century A.D.), the basis of all our surviving manuscripts, constitutes the Deletion's *terminus a quo*. Depending on when *Alcibiades* received its ancient subtitle—"concerning the nature of man"—the Demotion may well have begun earlier than Thrasyllus, for the Γνωθὶ Σεαυτόν Analogy as a whole might rather point to God as the dialogue's true σκοπός.¹⁶⁸ But given his own philosophical proclivities to immanence (which Tarrant ably documents),¹⁶⁹ his unparalleled power as an editor (Schleiermacher would exploit a similar power in order to justify his own far more drastic deletions),¹⁷⁰ and the placement of *Alcibiades Major* in his edition (against which Albinus protested in the second century A.D.),¹⁷¹ Thrasyllus seems to be the likeliest perpetrator.¹⁷²

168. As pointed out by Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 323 (quoted above).

169. See Tarrant, *Thrasyllan Platonism*, 108-124; for Thrasyllus' immanentist orientation, see the last full paragraph on 124 as well as the first full paragraph on 114. More specifically, the use of φρόνησις in what Tarrant regards as the Thrasyllan material in Porphyry (section 12 of Porphyry quoted on 111) suggests why the Immanentist Deletion immediately follows 133c5, indeed the desire to valorize θεὸν τε καὶ φρόνησιν as a hendiadys motivates the Deletion at least as much as a desire to minimize the purer and brighter θεός of 133c10. In this light, Tarrant would be over-Aristotelianizing in 111n9; it is not Aristotle's (practical) φρόνησις but Plato's "god-linked" and hendiadys-based version of it at 133c5 that Thrasyllus had in mind, and Tarrant's use of "mirrored" on 112 may begin to suggest why he is wrong to state on 113 that the passage he is discussing (i.e., Thrasyllus as preserved by Porphyry on 110-11) "has no obvious roots in the Platonic corpus."

170. See Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 51-53, climaxing with (Dobson, 29-30): "But if our confidence in the authenticity of the collection is thus shaken, any one endowed with any, however little, talent for such investigations, will be fain to allow that, in strictness, each particular work must itself be its own voucher that it is Platonic."

171. See *The Prologue of Albinus*, 4 (translation by Brandon Zimmerman): "there are those who divide the dialogues into tetralogies and place at the head a tetralogy composed of *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*: *Euthyphro* . . . This opinion is that of Dercyllides and Thrasyllus: their intention, it seems to me has been to make a classification according to the dramatic characters and the circumstances of their life. This may be useful for another purpose, but not for the one which we want to attend to now, for we want to find the beginning and order of teaching according to wisdom." Cf. Albinus, 5: "If then someone is naturally well-endowed, of the age preferable for the giving of oneself to philosophy, if he has made the choice to approach the work into to train in virtue, if he has faculties trained in mathematics, if his leisure lets him be detached from political events, he will begin through the *Alcibiades* to turn and apply himself to himself and to know what it is necessary to be concerned about."

172. As for the mixed message of the Neoplatonic commentaries, cf. Tarrant, "Olympiodorus and Proclus," 6, and Olympiodorus, *On First Alcibiades 10-28*, 185n502. The crucial point for me is that the priority of *Alc.1* in the Reading Order does not depend on their testimony—none mention the dialogue's simplicity any more than Albinus does (see previous note)—but on the evidence provided by Plato himself, beginning with the *Protagoras* Frame.

Beyond this, I refuse to play detective, for my subject is Plato, and the Reading Order of his dialogues. This section's purpose is merely to show how reading *Alcibiades Major* well requires reading the Eusebian Addition and thus rethinking it as a Deletion. In addition to the internal considerations I regard as decisive,¹⁷³ the arrival of a second-best and merely mirror-like ἔνοπρον, in tandem with αὐτὸ τὸ αὐτό as “first [πρῶτον]” (130d3), connects the dialogue to *Republic*, the pivot on which the Reading Order turns. To use Brunschwig's terms, (“middle-period”) Platonism—up to which the series of dialogues culminating with *Symposium* is leading us, en route to *Republic*—is rather *vertical* than horizontal, and is therefore best understood in terms of “ascent.” Although it would serve no practical purpose to explain the transcendent Idea of the Good on a theocentric basis, it is preferable to a resolutely anthropocentric (or “vertical”) explanation that makes it immanent in our own εὐδαιμονία.¹⁷⁴ As a whole, my project is prepared to find an important and necessary place in Platonic pedagogy for “flight and assimilation to God [φύγη δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῶ]” (*Tht.* 176a9–b1) but it is not for the sake of the kind of happiness made possible by an apolitical philosopher's contemplation of celestial νοῦς¹⁷⁵—by the equally divine νοῦς within, and foreshadowed by misreading θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις (cf. *Tht.* 176b2)—that Socrates pursues Alcibiades into the Cave in the initial *Protagoras* or dies in a jail-cell in the final *Phaedo*.

The balance of this section will consider what happens after 133c8–17, and it is because the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy returns there that I claimed at its start that the dialogue's two parts—despite the easily recognized literary excellence and greater philosophical profundity of the Γνώθι Σεαύτον Analogy—are *equally* important. Following the fifth and final reference to γνώθι σεαύτον (133c18), Socrates will apply the revised claim that we can know neither “our things” (i.e., our bodies) nor “the things of our things” without knowing ourselves (133d5–9) to politics: “whoever is ignorant of his things” will necessarily be ignorant of “the things of others” (133e4–6),¹⁷⁶ and therefore, as either statesman or house-holder (πολιτικός and οἰκονομικός at 133e9–11),¹⁷⁷ will not know what he is *doing* (πράττειν at 134a2), a verb that signals the imminent return of the Fallacy:

Socrates: Nor will he know [εἰδέναι] what he is doing [πράττειν]. *Alcibiades:* No, I agree. *Socrates:* And will not he who does not know [μὴ εἰδέναι] make

173. Cf. Johnson, “Commentary on Plato's *Alcibiades*,” 172 (last word on 133c8–17): “So while the secondary tradition provides the only evidence for c8–17, the evidence is hardly of the strongest sort. On the other hand, nothing in the secondary tradition clearly indicates that c8–17 are spurious. Given the internal evidence for the lines, they are better retained.”

174. Broadly speaking, this is the thesis of *Ascent to the Good*.

175. But note φρόνησις at *Epin.* 986d3.

176. This argument will appear *in reverse order* at *Am.* 138a1–7, where self-knowledge is derived from the ability to distinguish whether *others* are useful or useless.

177. Cf. *Am.* 138c7–8.

mistakes [ἐξ-αμαρτάνειν]? *Alcibiades*: To be sure. *Socrates*: And in making mistakes [ἐξ-αμαρτάνειν], will he not do badly [κακῶς πράττειν] both in private and in public? *Alcibiades*: Of course. *Socrates*: And in doing badly [participial form of κακῶς πράττειν] he will be wretched [ἄθλιος]? *Alcibiades*: Yes, very. *Socrates*: And what of those for whom he is doing [πράττειν]? *Alcibiades*: They will be wretched also.¹⁷⁸

No less equivocal than its positive counterpart, κακῶς πράττειν can be either active or passive, and it is deployed first by Socrates to mean “to screw up,” i.e., to err or ἀμαρτάνειν by ignorantly *doing* (things) *badly*, and then—thanks to the Fallacy’s Slide—“to (passively) fare ill,” i.e., to be wretched (ἄθλιος). In short, this passage shows Socrates equivocating on κακῶς πράττειν just as he did on εὖ πράττειν in the first part of the dialogue.¹⁷⁹

The Unfinished Argument in *Protagoras* (see §5), the first time that we encounter the Slide,¹⁸⁰ has already prepared us for this combination of εὖ and κακῶς πράττειν:

Socrates: ‘And being sensible is being well-advised [εὖ βουλευέσθαι] in their injustice?’ ‘Let us grant it,’ he said. ‘Does this mean,’ I asked, ‘if they fare well [εὖ πράττειν] by their injustice, or if they fare ill [κακῶς]? ‘If they fare well [εὖ].’ ‘Now do you say there are things that are good [ἀγαθά]?’¹⁸¹

But is only what happens next in *Alcibiades Major* that suggests what would have happened next in *Protagoras*, thereby shedding light on why Socrates supplements the claim that the unjust prove themselves to be well-advised in the execution of their crimes only when they fare well [εὖ πράττειν] *by* doing them—for they cannot decently said “to do well” *in* doing them—with a question about ἀγαθά:

Socrates: Then it is impossible to be happy [εὐδαίμων] if one is not temperate [σώφρων] and good [ἀγαθός]. *Alcibiades*: Impossible.¹⁸²

If this is impossible in *Alcibiades*, then it would also be impossible in *Protagoras* that the unjust fare well (εὖ πράττειν as synonymous with to be εὐδαίμων)¹⁸³ even when they prove themselves to σωφρονεῖν—i.e., by being

178. 134a2–10 (Lamb modified).

179. The negative version of the Slide is implied in *Prt.* 357d7–e8 where κακῶς πράττειν as “to fare badly in both private and public” (*Prt.* 357e8) is derived from ἀμαθία πράττειν at 357e1.

180. It bears repeating that we first encounter εὖ ἢ κακῶς πράττειν in the colloquial sense, and thus without the fallacious Slide, at *Prt.* 313a8.

181. *Prt.* 333d5–8. The addition of ὀφέλιμα at 333d9–10 indicates that *Men.* 87e1–2 will be necessary for completing the Unfinished Argument, especially since ὀφελεῖν is qualified as “the things that benefit [ὀφελεῖν] us” at *Men.* 87e6.

182. 134a13–b1.

183. *Euthd.* 280b6.

well-advised (εὖ βουλευέσθαι)—in successfully doing *bad things* (κακά) as opposed to ἀγαθά, things that anyone who is σώφρων and ἀγαθός would never do, let alone “do well” (εὖ πράττειν). And the continuing relevance of what happens next in *Alcibiades* to what *doesn't* happen in the Unfinished Argument (precisely because it is unfinished) culminates in what Socrates says about justice *and* temperance,¹⁸⁴ the paired subjects of the Unfinished Argument.

In addition to establishing a substantive connection with *Protagoras*, the passage under consideration also reveals the unity of *Alcibiades Major* itself by connecting the most important passages in each of its two parts:

Socrates: Doing justly and temperately [δικαίως πράττειν καὶ σωφρόνως], both you and the city will do God-pleasingly [θεοφιλῶς πράττειν]. *Alcibiades*: It is likely. *Socrates*: And, as we were saying in what went before [καὶ ὅπερ γε ἐν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἐλέγομεν], you will do so [πράττειν] looking at what is divine and bright [εἰς τὸ θεῖον καὶ λαμπρὸν ὁρῶντες]. *Alcibiades*: So it appears. *Socrates*: Well, and looking thereon [ἐνταῦθά γε βλέποντες] you will behold and know both yourselves and your good things [τὰ ὑμέτερα ἀγαθά]. *Alcibiades*: Yes. *Socrates*: And so you will do things both correctly and well [ὀρθῶς τε καὶ εὖ πράττειν]? *Alcibiades*: Yes.¹⁸⁵

Saving for later a discussion of the four variations on εὖ πράττειν in this crucial passage—i.e., δικαίως πράττειν, σωφρόνως πράττειν, θεοφιλῶς πράττειν, and ὀρθῶς πράττειν—the first thing to note is the second exchange, for even the most committed opponents of “the Eusebian Addition” are hard-pressed to read it as anything other than an allusion pointing back to 133c8–17,¹⁸⁶ and specifically, thanks to τὸ θεῖον καὶ λαμπρὸν, to God as καθαρώτερον τε καὶ λαμπρότερον (133c10–11). But even though the words ὅπερ γε ἐν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἐλέγομεν identify 133c8–17 as the prior context for what Socrates says here, the immediately contextual reason that he refers back to “looking at God [εἰς τὸν θεὸν βλέποντες] (133c13)—cf. ἐνταῦθά γε βλέποντες here—is that it is only by doing so that we can θεοφιλῶς πράττειν.

The question, then, is what do these words mean? In order to begin answering, five things need to be considered first: (i) with specific reference to this

184. 134c9–12: “*Socrates*: Therefore it is not the ability to do whatever you please [ὄτι ἂν βούλη], nor is it ruling that it is necessary to secure for yourself or the state, but justice [δικαιοσύνη] and temperance [σωφροσύνη]. *Alcibiades*: Apparently.” Cf. *Am.* 138b5.

185. 134d1–11 (Lamb modified); θεοφιλῶς πράττειν is introduced as follows: δικαίως μὲν γὰρ πράττοντες καὶ σωφρόνως, σὺ τε καὶ ἡ πόλις θεοφιλῶς πράξετε.

186. See Favrelle, *Préparation Évangélique*, 369–70; her case for disconnecting λαμπρὸν from 133c9–11 would be stronger if 134e4 did not follow 134d5. Antonio Carlini (ed. and trans.), *Alcibiade, Alcibiade secondo, Ipparco, Rivali* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1964), 169–74, calls for deleting 134d4–6 while suppressing 133c8–17; in doing so, he was anticipated by Stallbaum (see Johnson, “Commentary on Plato’s *Alcibiades*,” 180).

passage, LSJ defines θεοφιλῶς πράττειν as “to act *as the gods will*,” (ii) the word θεοφιλής, from which the adverb θεοφιλῶς is derived, can be used either passively (as “dear to the gods,” “highly favored”) or actively (as “loving God”); as a result, (iii) the evident connection between it and εὖ πράττειν—which of course can likewise be used either actively and passively—creates a set of four logical possibilities,¹⁸⁷ of which only the fourth can be safely excluded, (iv) all three of the other variants of εὖ πράττειν in this passage—δικαίως πράττειν, σωφρόνως πράττειν, and ὀρθῶς πράττειν—are clearly and exclusively active in sense, meaning respectively “to act justly,” “to act temperately,” and “to act correctly,” and (v) 133c8–17 is clearly flagged as relevant and perhaps determinative of whatever θεοφιλῶς πράττειν means here.¹⁸⁸

But even more important than the answer *is the fact of the question itself*, for the necessity of posing it in the context of the foregoing considerations has already proved the existence of three important connections. First, there is the connection between the two parts of *Alcibiades Major*: the problem of θεοφιλῶς πράττειν connects the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy in the first part to the Γνώθι Σεαυτόν Analogy in the second. Second, since the binding theme of *Alcibiades Minor* is the gods (mentioned twenty-one times in fourteen Stephanus pages), ὁ θεός (ten times), and above all, what is especially valued by the gods (*Alc.2* 149e6–150b3, especially 150a6–b1), the question raised by the end of *Alcibiades Major* connects it to the sequel, a crucial result in relation to Reading Order. And finally, since the word θεοφιλής will reappear in the last sentence of Diotima’s discourse in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 212a6),¹⁸⁹ Plato has found a way to connect the first dialogue in which Socrates speaks to Alcibiades to the last one in which he does so. Naturally this is not the time to explore the last of these connections; the second will be considered in the next section. But Plato leaves no doubt that it is the first that demands the reader’s attention in the immediate sequel (quoting once again the first exchange):

Socrates: And so you will do things both correctly and well [ὀρθῶς τε καὶ εὖ πράττειν]? *Alcibiades*: Yes. *Socrates*: Well now, if you act in this way [sc. ὀρθῶς τε καὶ εὖ πράττειν], I wish to warrant solemnly that you [plural; sc. ‘both you and the city’ at 134d1–2] will be happy [ὑμᾶς ἐθέλω ἐγγυήσασθαι

187. These are: (a) to act in a god-loved manner, (b) to act in a god-loving manner, (c) to fare in such a manner as to be god-loved (and that would seem to mean: to be divinely or blessedly happy, with emphasis, perhaps, on the etymology of εὖ-δαίμων), and (d) to fare in such a manner as to be loving god.

188. See André Motte, “Pour l’authenticité du *Premier Alcibiade*.” *L’Antiquité Classique* 20, no. 1 (1961), 5–32, on 16, for the suggestion—more valuable than the one he makes on 12—that θεοφιλῶς πράττειν means “piety.”

189. Cf. Johnson, “God as the True Self,” 16: “The *Alcibiades I*, to compare it most cursorily with the *Symposium*, notes the superiority of the final vision of the divine self itself over that of the self as it appears in other souls, just as the vision of beauty far surpasses that of beauty in the beloved.”

ἤ μὴν εὐδαιμονήσῃν.]. *Alcibiades*: For you are a reliable warrantor [ἀσφαλῆς ἐγγυητής].¹⁹⁰

By joining it to ὀρθῶς πράττειν, Plato makes it impossible to doubt that εὖ πράττειν is being used here in its active sense, with a direct object implied, but instead of using the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy to slide effortlessly into the passive sense of “to fare well,” as he did in the dialogue’s first part, Socrates—for the second time since 133c8–17¹⁹¹—substitutes the verb “to be happy [εὐδαιμονεῖν; here in the future]” for εὖ πράττειν (passive). *Although it is the Slide that entitles him to this result*, it is no longer on it that Socrates relies. If it were, to begin with, there would be no need to gloss εὖ πράττειν (passive) as εὐδαιμονεῖν. But more importantly, there would then be no need for Socrates, in executing the Slide from εὖ πράττειν (active) to either εὖ πράττειν (passive) or εὐδαιμονεῖν, to solemnly asseverate his assurance that the one necessarily entails the other. Simply put: if Socrates regards the Slide as legitimate and the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy as something other than fallacious, he does not need to be a reliable ἐγγυητής in order to make the claim that whoever “does well” will *ipso facto* “fare well,” i.e., be happy.

Denyer therefore raises the right question in his Golden Comment on this passage: “ἤ μὴν introduces a strong and confident asseveration,” and its main use in prose is, as here, in a formal oath or pledge, reported in indirect speech. But why a pledge?”¹⁹² After contrasting what happens here with 116b5–6,¹⁹³ he offers the reader an even more striking contrast to what I have called “the Feigned Dialogue” in *Gorgias*;¹⁹⁴ although he does not cite other uses of the Fallacy in *Euthydemus* and *Republic*, as Dodds did, he does mention *Charmides*,¹⁹⁵ commenting as follows on Socrates’ claim there “that people who act in a good way (εὖ πράττοντας) are bound to be happy (εὐδαιμοναζ)”:

The argument is too brisk, since it is possible to act well even under grim circumstances (e.g., it is possible to remain loyal, even under torture), and since grim circumstances are widely thought to make one unhappy even when they don’t make one act badly (e.g., it seems that nobody is happy when tortured, even if he remains loyal). In particular, this argument might be charged with equivocating: the claim that good people always εὖ πράττουσιν is obvious only when εὖ πράττειν is contracted to ‘do the right thing’; yet the claim that those who εὖ πράττουσιν are always happy is obvious only when εὖ πράττειν is expanded to ‘have a life in which all goes well.’¹⁹⁶

190. 134d10–e3 (Lamb modified).

191. See 134b7–c2.

192. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 242 (citation of Denniston deleted).

193. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 242.

194. On *Grg.* 506c5–507c7, see *Ascent to the Good*, 280–95.

195. On *Chrm.* 171d2–172a3 (“the Happy City”), see *Ascent to the Good*, 174–77.

196. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 242.

Even if this is an overly cautious way of using the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy to show that “Socrates Cheats” (see §4), the important point is that by raising the question “but why a pledge,” Denyer has revealed how Plato allows us to see that Socrates has already cheated in the first half of *Alcibiades* and will—in *Euthydemus*, *Charmides*, *Gorgias*, and *Republic* 1 (see §5)—do so again and again. *Alcibiades Major* is an authentic Platonic dialogue because it ensures that when he does so, we will know what he is doing, and that he is doing it deliberately. It is not because Plato regards deliberate deception as pleasing to God that his Socrates will do these things, however: it is because whatever else θεοφιλῶς πράττειν may turn out to mean, to do so will require looking into something far more Beautiful than our own happiness, and acting accordingly.

It is tempting to end here, but the repeated claim that the dialogue’s two parts are equally important ultimately requires qualification, for the speech that divides the dialogue in two is an obvious third. On either side of the center, to be sure, we can learn what Plato was attempting to teach, and the return of εὖ πράττειν at the end illustrates how Plato’s use of basanistic pedagogy, beginning with training in the detection of deliberate fallacy, works in tandem with an ongoing reaffirmation of what transcends ourselves. The fact that these two come together harmoniously in Plato’s most elementary dialogue illustrates how the restoration of *Alcibiades Major* does more than provide the basis for a return of the Reading Order paradigm: it strengthens the case for the *Kluft* or χωρισμός along with the pedagogical tools he used to teach it. But if we can learn about *what* Plato was teaching and *how* he attempted to teach it from the synergy between the dialogue’s two parts, the speech at its center teaches us something just as important: Xenophon-inspired as it is, it helps us to see more clearly *who* Plato taught.¹⁹⁷ Ambitious youngsters who had learned the ways of Sparta’s kings,¹⁹⁸ and who could imagine traversing the rich valleys of Asia,¹⁹⁹ would discover in the Academy an even more solid

197. 105c4–6: “Socrates: And I think you believe that apart from Cyrus or Xerxes, nobody has been worthy of discussion [λόγος].” In the attached note (*Alcibiades*, 96–97, on 106c5), Denyer does not mention *Cyropaedia*.

198. Denyer discovers two allusions in the dialogue to Xenophon’s *Agesilaus*; see *Alcibiades*, 86 (on 104a6–b1) and, “for another allusion to this book,” 174 (on 121a5–b1).

199. 123b3–c3: “Socrates: I [ἐγώ] once heard from a trustworthy man [ἀνὴρ ἀξιόπιστος] among those who had gone up [ἀναβεβηκότας] to the King, who said he traversed a region very ample and good in a journey of nearly a day which the inhabitants call ‘the belt of the King’s woman,’ and there is also another which again is called ‘veil,’ and others, many places beautiful and good, chosen out for the ornamentation of the woman, and each of the places having names from each part of her ornaments.” Cf. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 187 (on 123b5): “it is hard not to catch in this word [ἀναβεβηκότας at 123b4] an allusion to Xenophon, the author of the *Anabasis*,” especially since he adds (on 123b7–c1; abbreviation expanded): “in *Anabasis* 1.4.9, Xenophon claims that he camped in a place allocated to a Persian Queen in order to provide her belt.”

and Socratic basis for what had already united the virtues in Xenophon, piety at their head.

SECTION 7. BETWEEN *ALCIBIADES* AND *LOVERS*

As a dialogue of doubtful authenticity sandwiched between two others of similar status, *Alcibiades Minor* presents a unique challenge: it gains little from its connection to *Alcibiades Major* and nothing from its connections to *Lovers*. As a result, whatever support “a snug fit” (see Preface, principle §2) may offer other Platonic *dubia*, the new way to meet the challenges created by the post-Schleiermacher reception on offer here is largely neutralized in this case.²⁰⁰ Beginning with *Alcibiades Major*, every other doubtful dialogue gains some security from its connection to at least one notoriously genuine one, *Protagoras* in its case. Even the despised *Hipparchus*—which Thrasylus placed between *Second Alcibiades* and *Lovers* in the Fourth Tetralogy—can draw some support from its alleged connections to *Apology of Socrates*, and thus not only from its more obvious connections with the equally despised *Minos*.²⁰¹ Dental bridges are only effective when the spanning space between abutment teeth is small; in this unique case, there are no such teeth, indeed there is not even a tooth.

Nevertheless, the relevant connections exist, and some of them are conspicuous. With respect first to *Lovers*, the last word of *Alcibiades Minor* is “lovers [ἔρασταί]” (151c2),²⁰² which suggests that Ἐρασταί is indeed the next dialogue’s properly Platonic title. But Plato’s principal clue is the mention of “much learning [πολυμαθία]” at 147a5;²⁰³ *πολυμαθία* enters *Lovers* early (*Am.* 133c11) and quickly becomes thematic as a possible definition of philosophy (*Am.* 133e5); it appears a third and final time in the reported dialogue’s last audible words (*Am.* 139a4–5). And no matter how unsatisfactory others may regard the *Alcibiades* and *Hippias* dyads as abutments, *Lovers* is

200. This “new way,” along with its relation to the older philological elements of that critical reception—recently updated in the case of *Alc.2* by Hubertus Neuhausen, *Der Zweite Alkibiades. Untersuchungen zu einem pseudo-platonischen Dialog* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2010)—will receive further attention in §8 (“Reading Order and Authenticity”); in this section, the emphasis will be on illustrating in practice the theory explicated there.

201. On *Hipparch.*, see *Guardians on Trial*, §7; also 178 (on *Min.*) and 191 (on *Ap.*).

202. All otherwise unidentified Stephanus-page references in this section are to *Alc.2*. Note also that the dialogue’s first word is “Alcibiades [Ἦ Ἀλκιβιάδῃ]” (138a1).

203. This connection (and much else besides) is noted by Harold Tarrant, *The Second Alcibiades: A Platonist Dialogue on Prayer and Ignorance* (forthcoming in 2020 from Parmenides Press), on 112: “I do not suggest that it is likely that our dialogue has the same authorship as the *Erastae*, but it seems to me not unlikely that they date from roughly the same period.” On the same page, he draws attention to “our knowledge of ourselves as human beings” in *Am.* 135a5–11; cf. *Alc.1* 124a8, 131b4, and 133c18–19. I am very grateful to this amiable scholar for sharing his manuscript with me.

itself an easily recognizable bridge between Hippias the notorious polymath (*Hp. Mi.* 368b2–e1) and the physically fit (*Alc. I* 104a3–4) but ostentatiously unmusical Alcibiades (*Alc. I* 108c6–d4). In fact, just as the principle of the snug fit is being implemented in this section before a more theoretical discussion of it in the next, so too—as will become clear below—does *Alcibiades Minor* implement the contrast between music and gymnastics in practice that will only become thematic in *Lovers* (*Am.* 132d1–2).

Leaving until the end the musical link between *Alcibiades Minor* and *Lovers*, I will for the present likewise do nothing more than mention the theological connection between the interplay of the sacred and profane in *Alcibiades Minor* and the disputed lines in *Alcibiades Major* discussed in the previous section (§6); elucidating that connection will be this section’s principal concern. Suffice it to say for now that the obvious subject of *Alcibiades Minor* is prayer, and therefore, as already mentioned, both god and the gods appear in it repeatedly. Particularly remarkable is the conflation of the oppositional Divine Sign (τι δαυμόνιον ἐναντίωμα at *Alc. I* 103a5–6) with “the God [ὁ θεός]” (*Alc. I* 105e7) at the start of *Alcibiades Major*, and one could do worse than imagine that Socrates himself functions as an apotrepic δαυμόνιον to Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Minor*. After all, the unifying dramatic action of the dialogue is that Socrates intercedes to prevent Alcibiades from praying to the gods, and perhaps its greatest interpretive challenge arises from the fact that by preventing Alcibiades from seeking from the gods what Socrates has claimed only Socrates himself can provide (but see *Alc. I* 105e5), Socrates may be thought to displace god not once but twice, indeed this would explain why it is Socrates, not any of the gods, that Alcibiades crowns at the end (151a7–b1).²⁰⁴

In addition to implementing the snug fit principle by placing *Second Alcibiades* between *Alcibiades* and *Lovers*,²⁰⁵ I will also be making use of its connections to *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, the Bookends of the series. After all, Alcibiades will crown Socrates *again* in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 213a5–e2),²⁰⁶ and the links between *Second Alcibiades* and *Protagoras*, if less visually dramatic, prove to be even more conspicuous. Among the seven dialogues that stand between the Bookends (see Preface), *Hippias Major* occupies the fourth and middle place. As a result, if Plato has applied ring-composition to any of the internal pairs as he had to the external one—for the links between

204. Cf. Jacob A. Howland, “Socrates and Alcibiades: Eros, Piety, and Politics,” *Interpretation* 18, no. 1 (Fall 1990), 63–90, on 85–86: “By identifying himself with the wise Athena, however, Socrates comes to occupy the place vacated by the gods. . . . Socrates also does not seem to fear the gods’ jealousy; he accepts the crown with pleasure, along with whatever else Alcibiades may wish to give him (*Alc. 2* 151b4–5).”

205. See Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 117–27, for connections between *Alc. 2* and *Am.* with appropriate emphasis on πολυμαθία.

206. Cf. Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 78n18.

Protagoras and *Symposium* are obvious (see §1)—then there should be some relevant connections between *Second Alcibiades* and *Ion*, and indeed enough has already been said to suggest that one of these is theological. Finally, and quite apart from ring-composition,²⁰⁷ *Alcibiades Minor* is clearly linked as junior partner to *Alcibiades Major* as *Hippias Minor* is to *Hippias Major*, indeed my own preference will be to coordinate the titles of the two pairs throughout.

But the term “minor” is misleading in relation to pedagogy: *Hippias Minor* and *Second Alcibiades* are shorter than their larger twins but both are considerably more difficult. This explains (see Preface, principle §1) why both are second, and rather than look for progress (or its opposite) in the characters Alcibiades and Hippias, Plato’s readers should look instead to their own academic progress. Beginning with *Protagoras*, Socrates is the mystery each reader needs to plumb, and in both *Alcibiades Minor* and *Hippias Minor* (see §11), Plato will require active readers intent on getting to the bottom of his strangeness. As we will see, Homer is crucial for provoking this result in both cases, obviously in the case of *Hippias Minor*, but no less importantly in *Second Alcibiades*, where “the poet”²⁰⁸ will be praised effusively (147c6–7) and quoted repeatedly (142d4–e1, 146b3–4, 149c8–e1, and 150d9). It is thanks to these quotations, along with equally obvious and repeated allusions to Attic Tragedy (beginning with 138b9–c1 and ending at 151b9–10),²⁰⁹ that *Alcibiades Minor* can be recognized as “musical” in the same sense that *Hippias Minor* and *Ion* are (see chapter 4): they are literary in general, poetic in particular, and therefore under the direct supervision of the Muses (*Ion* 533d1–534b3; cf. *Alc. I* 108c11–12).²¹⁰

Plato’s emphasis on education in both music and gymnastic is well known to readers of his *Republic* (e.g., *R.* 404b5–6), but the distinction—introduced in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 326b6–c3), explicated in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 107e5–108d3), implemented (as we shall see) in *Second Alcibiades*, and then made thematic in *Lovers* (*Am.* 132d1–2)—also provides a useful way to reconsider the Bookends. While the Exegesis of Simonides in *Protagoras* must be considered a musical interlude, the Dismissal of the Flute Girls with which it concludes (*Prt.* 347b9–348a2)—a Performative Self-Contradiction on my account (see §4)—makes the passage at least equally what I am calling “gymnastic” (cf. *Prm.* 135c8, 135d2–7, 136a2, and 136c4–5). *Symposium*, on the other hand, is thoroughly musical, and therefore ends with Socrates conversing with two accomplished musicians (*Smp.* 223c4–d6) after a veritable feast

207. This subject will be revisited in §17.

208. Twice in Olympiodorus, *On Plato First Alcibiades*, 1.80.

209. On which see Tarrant, *The Second Alcibiades*, 11–13 and 86–89.

210. On Greek Music, see §12.

of literary delicacies (*Smp.* 198b1–3). *Second Alcibiades* is already pointing forward to this τέλος, and as such establishes its link not only to *Symposium* itself—the dual crowning of Socrates represents only the tip of an iceberg in this respect—but to *Lovers*, *Hippias Minor*, and *Ion*.

In *Republic*, Socrates claims that it is necessary to exercise (γυμνάζειν) the Guardians in many studies (*R.* 503e2),²¹¹ and it is not because of the capital importance of physical exercise that the first four post-*Symposium* dialogues take place in gymnasia.²¹² They are rather devoted to mental gymnastics or practice.²¹³ *Alcibiades Minor* helps us to see more clearly that Plato regarded *Protagoras* as “gymnastic” in this sense, and although the principle of the snug fit makes its relationship to *Alcibiades Major* and *Lovers* the primary basis for reconsidering its authenticity, its connection to *Protagoras* is a scarcely less important proof. As a result, the first passage from the dialogue to be considered is *not* what I am calling “musical” (that element will be saved for last) but rather “gymnastic” in this mental sense. But before exploring 138c9–140d5, it is necessary to emphasize that the distinction between music and gymnastics is by no means absolute and that for Plato in particular, it is in no sense cut and dried. As suggested on the microcosmic level by the Exegesis (and its aftermath), and as playfully implemented on the macrocosmic level throughout *Protagoras* and the corpus in general, Plato uses music to exercise and test his readers’ wits, i.e., the literary form of his dialogues, both refined and delicious from a musical standpoint, has a gymnastic purpose throughout.

Plato scholars have long debated,²¹⁴ and will continue to debate until the end of time, whether Socrates is guilty of making a false conversion at *Protagoras* 350b6–7.²¹⁵ With respect to this remarkable exchange as a whole my verdict would echo Osric’s: “Nothing, neither way.” But with respect to “the Protest of Protagoras” (*Prt.* 350c6–351b2), *Alcibiades Minor* settles the only question that can be settled: Plato clearly wants his readers to be aware of the deceptive and fallacious use of false conversion—hence the extended lesson

211. As a point of origin for what I am calling “basanistic pedagogy,” the whole passage will be quoted (*R.* 503d12–504a1; translation Shorey modified): “It is necessary to test [βασανιστέον; cf. *R.* 503a1–2 and 503a6] them in the toils and fears and pleasures of which we then spoke, and we have also now to speak of a point we then passed by, that we must exercise [γυμνάζειν] them in many studies [μαθήματα], watching them to see whether their nature is capable of enduring the greatest and most difficult studies [μαθήματα] or whether it will faint and flinch [Shorey cites *Prt.* 326c1–3 for comparison; see previous paragraph] as men flinch in the trials and contests of the body.” The passage that follows (*R.* 504a2–b7) reintroduces the Longer Way. For the hammered μαθήματα, see below on *Am.* 134e6.

212. See *Ascent to the Good*, 54.

213. See *Ascent to the Good*, §3.

214. See O’Brien, “The ‘Fallacy’ in *Protagoras*,” 408n1.

215. In honor of this book’s dedicatee, see in particular Sprague, *Plato’s Use of Fallacy*, 88–97. For the absolution of Socrates, see Roslyn Weiss, “Courage, Confidence, and Wisdom in the *Protagoras*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1985), 11–24.

in logic Socrates offers both Alcibiades and us at 139d7–140d6—quite apart from the question of whether Protagoras is correct that Socrates is guilty of it in the earlier dialogue.²¹⁶ In addition to linking Socrates' discussion of false conversion back to the second part of Round One in *Protagoras* (see §3) beginning with the ἄφρονες of 138d1 (cf. ἀφροσύνη at *Prt.* 332a4), Plato confirms the discussion's pedagogical importance by linking it forwards to *Phaedo*, for one of his many hints that the Final Argument there is inadequate is that Socrates converts disease and fever (*Phd.* 105c2–4), specifically explicated as an illegitimate conversion in *Alcibiades Minor* (140a7–9).²¹⁷

Equally useful from a gymnastic standpoint is the logical basis of Socrates' explication of false conversion. While every feverish patient is sick, sickness comes in many other forms (139d9–140b2); there are also many different types of craftsmen beginning with the overlapping doctors (140b1–c4). More relevant to the context is the lesson Socrates draws from those who are crazy (cf. *Prt.* 332a4–333b4): while the insane are senseless, not all of the senseless are insane (140b5–e9). Perhaps the most salutary side effect of the ongoing denial of the authenticity of *Second Alcibiades* is that scholars who reject it are prepared to allow *its* author, at least, to be dependent on Xenophon. Indeed the only ancient evidence that it is not a genuine work of Plato's—from the Plato-hating Athenaeus—is the claim of some that Xenophon was its author.²¹⁸ Where the proper relationship between Plato and Xenophon is concerned, *Memorabilia* 3.9 remarkably rises once again to the forefront of our concerns (see §5). To begin with, it anticipates two links between *Protagoras* and *Second Alcibiades*: despite the fact that Xenophon's Socrates regarded madness as the opposite of wisdom,²¹⁹ he did not identify ignorance with madness,²²⁰ even though he placed “closest to madness” (ἐγγυτάτω μανίας) “the double ignorance”²²¹ of thinking you know what you do not (ἂ μὴ οἶδε δοξάζειν τε καὶ οἶεσθαι γινώσκειν), i.e., the kind of ignorance to which Socratic Ignorance is the antidote. Moreover, he pairs this double ignorance more specifically with self-ignorance or τὸ ἀγνοεῖν ἑαυτὸν (cf. τὸ γνῶναι ἑαυτὸν at *Alc. I* 129a2).²²² Finally, it is in *Memorabilia* 3.9.4 that Xenophon

216. See Taylor, *Plato, Protagoras*, 158 (on 349e1–350c5): “it seems incredible that Plato should wish to represent Socrates as arguing in such a morally and intellectually discreditable fashion.” Cf. Manuwald, *Platon, Protagoras*, 167–68.

217. Among the numerous links between *Prt.* and *Phd.* noted in *Guardians on Trial*, §18, note that *Phd.* as well refers to every other Platonic dialogue (449–50); cf. §1 above.

218. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 11.114; on the value of this testimony, see Altman, “Collection and Division,” 105–108.

219. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.6.

220. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.6.

221. See Danielle A. Layne, “Double Ignorance and the Perversion of Self-Knowledge,” in James Ambury and Andy German (eds.), *Knowledge and Ignorance of Self in Platonic Philosophy*, 206–222 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

222. All the references to Xenophon here are likewise in *Memorabilia*, 3.9.6.

writes: “Between Wisdom and Prudence he drew no distinction.”²²³ In other words, the aforementioned parallels mean that whoever wrote *Alc.2* had read and studied Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4–6 with considerable care.²²⁴

While the Protest of Protagoras on Socrates’ alleged use of false conversion appears in the second half of *Protagoras*, the sophist makes no objection to the argument Socrates uses in the first half to show that wisdom and temperance are the same. *Alcibiades Minor* suggests that Plato leaves lodging *this* objection to the reader, for Socrates now draws attention to the weak points of the same argument he had used before. Commentators on *Protagoras* have long recognized that Socrates equivocates on the word “senselessness [ἄφροσύνη],”²²⁵ making it first the opposite of wisdom (*Prt.* 332a5) and then of temperance (*Prt.* 332a6–333e5). In *Alcibiades Minor*, Socrates rejects the equation of madness and senselessness not only because most people, no matter how senseless, do not carry on like madmen (139c10–d4), but also, and more gymnastically, by showing that ἄφροσύνη is the more comprehensive term, and that madness (μανία) is merely the most extreme case of senselessness (140c5–d5). Moreover, what makes this passage so instructive is that before illustrating its inadequacy, Socrates has “proved”—necessarily by means of a fallacious or rather deliberately deceptive argument—that the senseless *are* insane (138c9–139c1).

What makes the parallel with *Protagoras* impossible to miss, however, is that both arguments depend on the One Thing/One Opposite Principle (139b11; cf. *Prt.* 332c8–9).²²⁶ More specifically, if both wisdom and temperance are the opposite of ἄφροσύνη, then both ἄφροσύνη and μανία are the opposite of φρόνησις, and are therefore the same (139c1). The difference this time is that Socrates does not emphasize the role the One Thing/One Opposite Principle has played in proving Protagoras inconsistent with himself (cf. *Prt.* 333a1–b2); instead he has indicated its role in making the argument *false* (139d3–6). The role of the One Thing/One Opposite Principle in *Alcibiades Minor* once again places it between the Bookends in a pedagogical sense: having been deceptively exploited by Socrates in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 332c3–333a1 and 360b2–3), it will be rejected by Diotima in *Symposium* (*Smp.*

223. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.9.4.

224. Or, if we must insist on the priority of Plato, then *Alc.2* must have been written during Plato’s lifetime. The more radical solution on offer here—subject to revision elsewhere—is that Plato had read Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, and focused on 3.8–9 in particular while writing *Prt.* and *Alc.2*; he did so because he anticipated that his students were already familiar with at least Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*—hence the joint entrance of Critias and Alcibiades (*Prt.* 316a4–5)—and *Cyneticus* when they arrived at the Academy, thus providing the factual basis for Xenophon’s influence in the fictional recreation in *Chion of Heraclea* (see §2).

225. E.g., Vlastos, “Introduction,” xxix.

226. As noted by Taylor, *Protagoras*, 122 (on 332a4–333b6); unfortunately, *Alc.2* does not reappear on 128 when Taylor writes: “one would suppose that many people and actions display neither wisdom nor folly.”

201e6–202a4). *Alcibiades Minor* prepares Plato’s readers for this rejection. Indeed this despised but pedagogically useful dialogue’s anticipation of *Symposium* is no less striking than its retrospective criticism of deliberately fallacious arguments in *Protagoras*.

Before deploying the One Thing/One Opposite Principle in *Alcibiades Minor* (139b11), Plato has also prepared his readers to distinguish what we call “contraries from contradictories.”²²⁷ Plato’s approach is different, however, and does not use our concepts: Socrates instead gets Alcibiades to affirm that there is *no middle ground* between being sick and being well (139a4–9), thereby introducing what will later be called “the Law of the Excluded Middle.” The fact that Socrates then asks Alcibiades whether “there is some intermediate (or ‘through the middle’) third condition [ἔστι τι διὰ μέσου τρίτον πάθος]” (139a14) between being sensible and senseless (139a13–b1) shows that “the author of *Second Alcibiades*” deserves credit for discovering how to teach this law, or rather something resembling it.²²⁸ In order for the argument, once fortified by the One Thing/One Opposite Principle, to reach the *wrong* conclusion, Alcibiades will naturally need to deny that there is any such a “third condition,” but only after being given a second chance to restore what is “between” (μεταξύ) two opposites (139b8–10). It is by means of the crucial word μεταξύ that Plato wants us to understand why “different from” need not implicate “not” (see §3), and the aftermath will also show why Socrates’ argument is deceptive: it is because there are many states “between” (μεταξύ) ἀφροσύνη and μανία—and this intermediate plurality need not always be, as here, a series of gradations (140c5–d3)—that ἀφροσύνη is not the same as μανία any more than fever is convertible with disease.

When Diotima rejects the One Thing/One Opposite Principle, it is the word μεταξύ that will play the central role (*Smp.* 202a3, 202b5, 202d11, and 204b1–5): not only is there something between what is base and what is beautiful (*Smp.* 201e6–202b5), but there is also a μεταξύ between wisdom and ignorance (*Smp.* 202a2–10). Moreover, it will be here that both ἔρος (*Smp.* 203c1–204b5) and philosophy will be found (*Smp.* 204a1–b5).²²⁹ With the words τι διὰ μέσου τρίτον πάθος (139a15), *Alcibiades Minor* has not only

227. For analysis, see Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 14–17.

228. Note that our “Law” begins with the reality of “the concrete particular” whereas the Platonic equivalent has already made the “second sailing” turn to λόγοι: even if *this man* is either sick or well, that does not exclude the possibility that there are many intermediate states between “sickness” and “wellness.” The so-called Self-Predication of the Forms annihilates this distinction on an Aristotelian basis, treating “beautiful” as if it were a predicate we are applying to the thing “beauty,” whereas what alone is beautiful is *Beauty*.

229. In *Smp.* we will learn why the effort to discover philosophy in *Lovers* fails, for it is only knowledge, and not ignorance, that was considered there (see §8). And it is in *Second Alcibiades* that the benefits of ignorance, not knowledge, first appear (143a7–d2). Cf. Thoreau’s famous question in *Walden*, chapter 1: “How can he remember well his ignorance—which his growth requires—who has so often to use his knowledge?”

introduced a technical expression for the condition of being *μεταξύ*, but has also proved itself to be *μεταξύ* relative to *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, and that in a double sense. In *gymnastic* terms, it has pointed forward to the logical *μεταξύ* where Diotima will discover philosophy, and looking backward, it has likewise illuminated the One Thing/One Opposite fallacy that underwrites the argument for the identity of *σοφία* and *σωφροσύνη* in *Protagoras*. But on an equally accessible and indeed juvenile level—well tailored to the prurient interests of an adolescent—it also occupies a *musical* *μεταξύ* between the *Protagoras* Frame and the revelations of Alcibiades in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 219b3–d2), for Plato ensures that its readers must remain ignorant about, yet fascinated by, *the possibly profane dimension of the relationship between Socrates and Alcibiades*.

It is easy to see the dramatic tricks Plato has used in order to make the logic lesson of *Second Alcibiades* accessible to the neophyte (138c9–141a1; with the end, cf. 138b9–c8). It requires a bit more imagination, at least for the staid, sober, and elderly, to realize that Plato has those same neophytes in mind when it comes to *sex*. The hypothesis that Plato’s students entered the Academy at fourteen (cf. *δις ἑπτὰ* at *Alc. I* 121e3)—and thus that Aristotle was remarkable for entering it at seventeen not because he was unusually young—explains why he begins *Protagoras* as he does. Solely on the basis of the Friend’s second question (*Prt.* 309a1–2), there is virtually no adolescent on earth who would not ask (unless scared into silence by a teacher’s likely scorn) whether or not Socrates is having sex with Alcibiades.²³⁰ In *Socrates and Alcibiades*, Ariel Helfer has claimed that the asexual sex-scene Alcibiades describes in *Symposium* is a disappointing anticlimax.²³¹ This claim is even more useful than it is false, for if we keep Plato’s neophytes in mind, we will realize that his intended audience will find it anything but anticlimactic. Instead, it clarifies what most all of them have been wondering about from the very beginning, and gives the lie to what the most outspoken of them have long since been whispering. Beginning with the opening of *Protagoras*,

230. Hence the need for the first note by E. Lledó (trans.), *Protágoras* in Platon, *Diálogos I*, 489–589 (Madrid: Gredos, 1981), 502; in order to assure the reader that there is no sexual dimension in the Friend’s opening words, he must quickly cite *Smp.*: “Esa atracción se expresa con frecuencia en términos eróticos; pero no hay razones para dudar del testimonio explícito de Platón de que ese eros Socrático no comportaba una experiencia física homosexual, al modo del llamado «amor dorio». El testimonio puesto en boca de Alcibiades en el *Banquete* (215a–219d) es clarísimo al respecto.” Cf. C. W. Taylor, “Socrates the Sophist” in Lindsay Judson and Vassilis Karasmanis (eds.), *Remembering Socrates: Philosophical Essays*, 157–168 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), on 159: “Now we might think that this [‘the person who is expressly described as a hunter of rich and prominent young men is not Protagoras but Socrates, whose anonymous friend describes him in the opening sentence of the dialogue (309a1–2) as having come straight from the hunt (*apo kunēgesiou*) for Alcibiades’] merely attests a popular and mistaken perception of Socrates as the *erastēs* of Alcibiades; after all, we (having read the *Symposium*, which Socrates’ unnamed friend presumably has not) know that it was Alcibiades who pursued Socrates erotically, not the other way round.”

231. Helfer, *Socrates and Alcibiades*, 161–69; note especially “falls hopelessly short” (162).

continuing through Socrates as “lover-educator” in *Alcibiades Major*,²³² but only reaching the height of musical (naturally in the sense in which we use the word “literary”) and sexual tension in *Alcibiades Minor*, Plato counts on his students being fascinated by this crudest but likewise most natural of questions (see §14).

It would be naïve to ignore the role changing attitudes towards sex are playing in the current revival of interest in Plato’s *Alcibiades Major*. A collection of essays entitled *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator* (2012) is a sign of the times,²³³ and the books of Jill Gordon²³⁴ and Betty Belfiore,²³⁵ appearing in that same year, are further evidence of new wave of interest in Platonic erotics; they deserve both gratitude and careful attention. Of particular interest in the context of the previous section is the sexualization of the Γνωθι Σεαυτόν Analogy in *Alcibiades Major*.²³⁶ By literalizing the scene’s mechanics, it becomes easy to *imagine* Socrates and Alcibiades gazing into each other’s eyes,²³⁷ and when the Great Speech in *Phaedrus* is applied to this

232. See Johnson and Tarrant, *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator*.

233. Some comment on the Greek word ἐραστής is necessary: Although Socrates frequently applies the word to his rivals (*Alc. I* 103b4, 104c2–3, 104e5, and 131c), he also refers to himself as “a lover [ἐραστής]” throughout (*Alc. I* 103a2, 104e5, 131e; cf. the rather more elliptical uses at 122b7–8 and 123d7–8). On the other hand, when Alcibiades describes their first “one-on-one” conversation (*Smp.* 217b3–7), he accurately downplays the sexual element of Socratic ἐρως and the three times the verb ἐρᾶν (i.e., “to love” in an erotic and probably sexual sense) is applied to Socrates in *Alcibiades Major*, it is used to distinguish love of body from Socrates’ own love of Alcibiades’ soul (*Alc. I* 131c9–d1; cf. ἐράσθαι at 131c6). And although Socrates uses the noun ἐρως five times in the dialogue, the first two refer to giving it up (*Alc. I* 104c5 and 104e8), the third to its being jeopardized by Alcibiades (*Alc. I* 119c5), and the last two (paired) usages refer to the transference of ἐρως from Socrates to Alcibiades (*Alc. I* 135e1–3). As we shall see, *Alcibiades Minor* is more titillating; perhaps this will ultimately contribute to its resurrection.

234. See Jill Gordon, *Plato’s Erotic World: From Cosmic Origins to Human Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), especially 146–66. This book builds on Jill Gordon, “Eros and Philosophical Seduction in *Alcibiades I*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 23 (2000), 11–30; for her influence, see Hege Dypedokk Johnsen, “Erôs and Education: Socratic Seduction in Three Platonic Dialogues” (Ph.D. dissertation: University of Stockholm, 2016).

235. Elizabeth S. Belfiore, *Socrates’ Daimonic Art: Love for Wisdom in Four Platonic Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), see especially 31–67; for useful bibliography “on the erotic connotations of the gaze,” see 61n72.

236. Gordon, “Eros and Philosophical Seduction,” 13: “Socrates’ image of the eye charges the dramatic scene with erotic energy, as well. To gaze into a lover’s eyes can be alluring, intimate, intense.” So too *Erotic World*, 151; cf. Belfiore, *Daimonic Art*, 58–61.

237. The role of imagination is appropriately emphasized by Gordon: after the passage quoted in the previous note, she adds: “We might imagine the exquisitely handsome Alcibiades at the very moment when Socrates creates this image and wonder what transpires between them. Does he meet Socrates’ eyes? In that moment, a spark could be ignited in the young man that fuels his desires even further and inspires him to become this man’s devoted boy. Or perhaps this is a moment during which Alcibiades *cannot* meet Socrates’ eyes, ashamed of his shortcomings, a moment therefore unlike what he has experienced with any other lover or suitor before” (*Erotic World*, 151; so too Gordon, “Eros and Philosophical Seduction,” 13). But in both places she concludes: “Regardless of Alcibiades’ reactions, Socrates’ creating the image of the lover and beloved intently gazing into each others’ eyes [i.e., the tableaux that she is imagining, for no hint of it can be found in the text] further excites the drama with the power of eros.”

unwritten but scarcely improbable moment of eye-to-eye contact,²³⁸ the result is a conception of Socratic erotics that would probably repulse a homophobe. Meanwhile, one scarcely needs to be homophobic to find something repellent in a less spiritual but more explicitly physical image of Socratic seduction,²³⁹ and somewhere between Gabriel Danzig and the Belfiore-Gordon nexus, one might locate the following passage by Victoria Wohl, who has just quoted *Alcibiades Major* 132d5–133c7:

If (as many scholars believe) this dialogue was the traditional starting point for a course of Platonic philosophy, the optical *paradeigma* introduces many key themes of the program to come: the priority of the soul over the body, the importance of knowing and working on yourself, the divinity of the intellect [note the deletion of 133c8–18]. The passage also implicitly aligns this philosophical program with a pederastic erotics. Nicholas Denyer, in his commentary on this passage, remarks that ‘glaringly absent is explicit mention of how erotic are looks from, or into, someone’s eyes.’ But if this erotics is not explicitly elaborated, it is implicit in the passage.²⁴⁰

Although “pederastic erotics” is a modern expression and “homophobia” a modern word, ancient antipathy to Plato as a defender of pederasty, arising from the homosexual implications and subtexts of several of his dialogues, is already fully developed in Athenaeus (second to third century A.D.), and the same passage from his *Sophists at Dinner* that mentions the view that Xenophon wrote *Alcibiades Minor* proves very useful for explaining what I have already suggested was an “[ancient] Demotion of *Alcibiades Major*” (see §6):

The things he [sc. Plato] has said about Alcibiades in *Symposium*, neither are they worthy of being discussed in the open [εἰς φῶς λέγεσθαι]; also in the first of the discussions [διάλογοι] with him [sc. *Alc. I*]; as for the second [sc. *Alc. 2*] it is said by some to be by Xenophon.²⁴¹

238. As in Belfiore, *Daimonic Art*, 61–64, climaxing with: “Socrates has long been in love with Alcibiades’ beautiful soul, even before conversing with the young man, and his love, we may assume, increases as he engages in dialectic with Alcibiades, thereby gazing into his soul and helping it to become more beautiful. Alcibiades, in contrast, comes to love Socrates in the first place as a result of soul-gazing. When Alcibiades returns Socrates’ psychic gaze, by seeking self-knowledge through dialectic of soul with soul, he not only sees himself, reflected in Socrates’ soul, he also sees and falls in love with the best part of Socrates’ soul.”

239. See Gabriel Danzig, *Apologizing for Socrates: How Plato and Xenophon Created Our Socrates* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 164–70.

240. Victoria Wohl, “The Eye of the Beloved: *Opsis* and *Eros* in Socratic Pedagogy,” in Marguerite Johnson and Harold Tarrant (eds.), *Alcibiades and the Socratic Lover-Educator*, 45–60 (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 46. It deserves mention that David M. Halperin, beginning with his “Plato and Erotic Reciprocity,” *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986), 60–80, is an important and indeed seminal interlocutor for Wohl (58n8) and both Belfiore (*Daimonic Art*, 65n86) and Gordon (*Erotic World*, 151n7) as well.

241. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 11.114 (506c).

Although the section of book 11 in which this passage is found will attack Plato for many other reasons,²⁴² the homophobic background is obvious not only in the apophysis that quickly follows,²⁴³ but because Athenaeus recurs to it at the end, in the context of one of his most malicious charges:

Other things are promulgated against the man; also [things which] we ourselves are deriving from his discourses that we are not disclosing, other things [like] symposia and also speeches spoken about ἔρωϛ [that are] also terribly inappropriate [καὶ μάλ' ἀπρεπεῖς], [speeches] which he has composed in contempt for those reading them, just as also the majority of his disciples are tyrannical fellows [τυραννικοί τινεϛ] and have become slanderers.²⁴⁴

In the context of this καὶ μάλ' ἀπρεπεῖς verdict on the speeches about love in *Symposium*, it begins to look like what we call “homophobia”—probably originating in the imperial reforms of Augustus but soon enough to draw strength from other sources—may have caused Thrasyllus to segregate Plato’s most erotic dialogues in a series: *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*, *Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, *Hipparchus* (assassinated by two lovers), and *Lovers*,²⁴⁵ of which the most significant result would be the Demotion of *Alcibiades*.

But it would be an error to imagine that hostile responses of this kind are nothing more than anachronistic impositions of later value-systems onto Plato’s texts. The speech of Pausanias in *Symposium* clearly is a defense of what Wohl calls “pederastic erotics,” and its echo in *Euthydemus*,²⁴⁶ along with its possible origin (see §15) in Socrates’ attack on sexualized ἔρωϛ in Xenophon’s *Symposium*,²⁴⁷ prove the existence of a lively and ancient debate on the matter.²⁴⁸ Moreover, in another archly anti-Platonic passage in which he focuses his fire primarily on Plato’s anachronisms,²⁴⁹ Athenaeus quotes at length the passage from Xenophon’s *Symposium* in which Socrates attacks Pausanias in order to show that Pausanias says no such thing in Plato’s

242. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 11.112–118.

243. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 11.114: “of the things which have been said against Alcibiades, I am keeping silent [σιωπῶ].” I suggest that this early σιωπῶ anticipates and prepares for both the Demotion and ultimate Excision of *Alc. 1* (and *Alc. 2*) and that it is therefore no accident that these dialogues will return in times that are more sexually tolerant.

244. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 11.118.

245. Given the (alleged former) relationship between Parmenides and Zeno (*Prm.* 127b1–6) and the title of *Phlb.*, the whole of the Third as well as the Fourth Tetralogy of Thrasyllus may also be connected if the editor was resolutely hostile to what Wohl calls a “philosophical program” aligned “with a pederastic erotics.”

246. On *Euthd.* 282a7–b6, see *Ascent to the Good*, 101–102.

247. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.7–41; for Pausanias, see 8.32–34.

248. Cf. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.42 (Marchant): “The rest of the company now engaged in a discussion of the views propounded by Socrates.” For those views, see previous note.

249. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 5.55–61.

Symposium.²⁵⁰ But the things that Pausanias *does* say in favor of a sexualized pederasty as long as the boyfriend believes that he is giving his favors to the lover for the sake of ἀρετή (*Smp.* 184e6–185b5) ensure that the final revelation that Socrates' relationship with Alcibiades *is not and never was intended by Socrates to be a sexual one* is by no means anticlimactic. On the contrary: Plato has caused the suspicions he kindled in the *Protagoras* Frame (“Well, what of it?” at *Prt.* 309a6) and then left hanging at the end of *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc.1* 135e1–4) to reach their pre-*Symposium* highpoint in the dance of the sacred and profane near the end of *Alcibiades Minor*:

Socrates: It is therefore a necessity to wait around until somebody [τις] may learn how it is necessary towards gods and also towards men [άνθρωποι] to comport oneself. *Alcibiades*: When, then, will this time [ό χρόνος ούτος] come to be, Socrates, and who's the one who will be doing the educating [τίς ό παιδεύσων]? For to me I would seem [μοι δοκῶ] most pleasantly [ήδιστα] to see [ιδεῖν] this very man [ούτος ό άνθρωπος]. Who is he [τίς έστιν]? *Socrates*: The one [ούτος] to whom there is careful concern for you [ούτος ᾧ μέλει περι σοῦ]. But it seems to me [δοκεῖ μοι] just as [ῶσπερ] for Diomedes, Homer says that Athena from his eyes [ἀπό τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν] removed [ἀφαιρεῖν] the fog [ή ἀχλύς] ‘so that he might well know [εὔ γινώσκειν] whether god it be or also man [ήμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα].’ Thus, also for you, it is necessary first, someone having removed [participial form of ἀφαιρεῖν] the fog [ή ἀχλύς] from your soul [ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς] which now happens to be present, so that only then to bring [things] to bear through which you will come to know [γινώσκειν] whether bad it be or even noble [ήμὲν κακὸν ἠδὲ καὶ έσθλόν]. For now you do not seem to me [μοι δοκεῖς] to have been able. *Alcibiades*: Let it be removed [ἀφαιρεῖν in the imperative form: ἀφαιρεῖτω] whether he wishes that to be the fog [ή ἀχλύς] or anything else [ἄλλο τι]: for I am prepared to flee from none of things enjoined by that one [ὑπ' έκεινοῦ], whichever man [ἄνθρωπος] he be, so long as I might become better. *Socrates*: But that one too [κάκεινος] has wondrous great willingness concerning you.²⁵¹

It will take more than one paragraph to unpack this passage but three of its most important aspects must be recognized from the start: (a) it is based

250. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner*, 5.56.

251. 150d1–151a2. For a more readable translation, see Lamb's: “*Socrates*: It is necessary, therefore, to bide one's time until one can learn how one should behave towards gods and men. *Alcibiades*: Well, when will that time arrive, Socrates, and who is to be my instructor? For I feel I should very much like to see who the man is. *Socrates*: It is he who is concerned about you. But I think, as Homer relates how Athena removed the mist from the eyes of Diomedes, ‘That he might well discern both god and man,’ so you too must first have the mist removed which now enwraps your soul, and then you will be ready to receive the means whereby you will discern both evil and good. For at present I do not think you could do so. *Alcibiades*: Let him remove the mist or whatever else he likes to call it: for I am prepared to obey every one of his commands, without shirking, whoever the man may be, so long as I am to be the better for them.” Note that there is no basis, other than a desire to keep the text chaste, for Lamb's “to call it.”

throughout on the varying degree of distance between god and man as recognized by Socrates, Alcibiades, Diomedes, Athena, and the reader, (b) the fog (ἡ ἀχλύς) in question is the incapacity to distinguish the two—a problem intimately related to the disputed passage in *Alcibiades Major*, as I showed in the previous section—(c) Alcibiades, who wants to know τίς ὁ παιδεύσων, is sure that “the one who will educate” is an ἄνθρωπος, and very much wants to see (ιδεῖν), presumably with his eyes (ὑπὸ as opposed to ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν) this very man (οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος), and (d) Socrates never confirms that this one (κάκεινος), i.e., οὗτος ὃ μέλει περὶ σοῦ, is an ἄνθρωπος, and therefore leaves open the possibility that the ὁ παιδεύσων is, as the line from Homer about Athena and Diomedes suggests, a god.

From these preliminary observations, I derive the following conclusions: (1) Alcibiades is putting Socrates in the place of a god, and thus is radically misunderstanding the ambiguous expression “the one who will educate” (ὁ παιδεύσων), (2) the physicalized nature of that misunderstanding—the failure to distinguish man from god and thus to remove (ἀφαιρεῖν) the fog from his soul (ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς)—is ultimately and graphically responsible for the failed sexual seduction of Socrates that Alcibiades will describe in *Symposium*, and most importantly (3) the Addition (*Alc.I* 133c8–17) really is the Deletion, i.e., “the More Perfect Mirror” is an integral and original part of *Alcibiades Major*, and that, thanks to “(1),” and to be demonstrated by “(2),” it is now being misunderstood or rather negated by Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Minor* in a manner far more accessible to Plato’s neophytes. Lest it go without saying, from these three conclusions or indeed from any one of them, I infer that *Alcibiades Minor* is a genuine Platonic dialogue, proved as such by its position in the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues.

Although the soul/body distinction is an obvious place to start—hence ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς as opposed to ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, and the resulting distance between Alcibiades’ verb of seeing (ιδεῖν) and Socrates’ verb, derived from Homer, of knowing (γινώσκειν)—let’s start with the repetitions, for this is Plato’s preferred method of teaching through texts. The three uses of the noun ἄνθρωπος, the three uses of the verb ἀφαιρεῖν, and the three references to ἡ ἀχλύς stand out, but the triad of μοι δοκῶ, δοκεῖ μοι, and μοι δοκεῖς are subtler. As indicated by his (so difficult to translate) μοι δοκῶ (“I seem to me”), Alcibiades is unable to see beyond himself; Socrates can see both what Alcibiades seems to be (μοι δοκεῖς) and what objectively does so (δοκεῖ μοι). The self-absorption of Alcibiades’ μοι δοκῶ (cf. *Smp.* 172a1) is responsible for his preference throughout for construing “the one who will educate” as an ἄνθρωπος, whereas Socrates is just as determined to create a safe space between man and god, and indeed it is precisely the ὥσπερ that highlights the blurring of this distinction. This is why Socrates wants to ἀφαιρεῖν this

fog, but the fact that it has by no means been removed ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς of Alcibiades explains why the handsome young man mentions “the other thing” (ἄλλο τι) he is willing to “take off” should Socrates wish him to do so.²⁵²

“Be careful what you wish for” is the conceit at the center of *Alcibiades Minor*, and since Socrates is turning Alcibiades away from prayer on the grounds that ignorance may cause him to pray for what would harm him, it is certainly possible to find here what Hubertus Neuhausen calls “the seduction of Socrates.”²⁵³ But much depends on whether we take the “of” in this phrase to indicate a subjective or objective genitive: is Socrates the seducer or is he the one being seduced? When Alcibiades says: “whether he wishes that to be the fog *or anything else*,” he implies that Socrates will be the one who decides what should be taken off. But as we will discover in *Symposium*, the *carte blanche* he offers here is the true “seduction of [objective genitive] Socrates.” In accordance with the reversal of roles already announced at the end of *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 135d7–10), Alcibiades is now enacting the sexualized seduction of Socrates, for the ἄλλο τι he will allow to be removed is not the fog of ignorance but *his clothes*.²⁵⁴ As he will explain later, he set great stock by his physical beauty (cf. ὄρα at *Smp.* 217a5–6), and Plato allows him to enact here—for those who can see it—the same sexualized coquetry he will drunkenly describe at Agathon’s. This is the profane upshot of “the Diomedes Passage,” and it explains why Plato allows Alcibiades to endorse the same position at 150e6–8 that the pederast Pausanias defends in *Symposium*, i.e., that the boy should be prepared to gratify the ἐραστῆς sexually as long as (he believes, as per *Smp.* 184e4–5) that the lover, Socrates in this case, is intent on making him better.

But this attempted seduction plays out against the contrasting backdrop of the sacred, as it must. Alcibiades’ willingness to gratify Socrates sexually is the outward sign of his failure to distinguish Socrates from a god, the same problem that led more serious men to contemplate and execute the Deletion. In *Alcibiades Minor*, Plato uses Homer to indicate the line of division between the sacred and profane, and Socrates entrusts its revelation to Athena, configuring the relationship between the desiderated ὁ παιδεύσων and Alcibiades by comparison with—as indicated by the simile-introducing ὅσπερ—the goddess and Diomedes. The sacred is precisely what Alcibiades

252. This passage is the second of three times in the early dialogues that Plato uses the phrase ἄλλο τι with powerful effect. For its use at *Prt.* 341b6, see §4 on Most’s Breakthrough; for *Hp. Ma.* 299d8, see §9.

253. See Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 73–80 (“die Werbung des Sokrates”).

254. The standard word for “put off one’s clothes, strip” is ἐκδύεσθαι (LSJ I.3), a word Plato rarely uses but which appears at 147e7–149a1: “*Socrates*: Changing yourself up and down [with ἄνω καὶ κάτω, cf. *Ion* 541e8], neither do you ever stop, but whatever might seem most likely to you, this too has been stripped off [ἐκδεδυκέναι] once again and no longer seems so.” Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, 3.114 (τεύχεά τ’ ἐξεδύοντο) and 13.510–11 (τεύχεα καλὰ ὁμίουν ἀφελέσθαι) for the relevant synonymy.

neglects and the profanity of his attempted seduction illuminates the fog of ignorance that only a god could remove from his soul. Alcibiades' concern is with Socrates the man, but Socrates is not the relevant agent: he cannot say when the time will come, or when (and if) the young man will know. As indicated by the indefinite "remover" behind the participle ἀφελόντα (150e1–2), it cannot be Socrates who takes the first step of removing ἡ ἀχλύς but he can easily be mistaken for the one taking it. In this way, the entire passage might be said to grow out of the difference between Alcibiades' "if you wish" at the end of *Alcibiades' Major* and Socrates' corrected version "if god should wish" (*Alc.1* 135d3–6).²⁵⁵ More simply, Plato is using the ambiguity of "the Seduction of Socrates" to connect the *Protagoras* Frame to the denouement of *Symposium* by means of the *Alcibiades* dyad.

In an intellectual climate that has used "the later dialogues," where the sharp distinction between Being and Becoming (cf. *Prt.* 340b4–6) is blurred basanistically,²⁵⁶ to create a version of Plato who either outgrew his Platonism or even never embraced it,²⁵⁷ the foregoing distinction between "sacred" and "profane" must likewise go the way of the dodo even if his most elementary dialogues, now the *disiecta membra* of a once beautiful edifice, were to recapture some scholarly attention. In other words, the mere revival of interest in "the Socratic Lover-Educator" is no guarantee that this rebirth will serve his creator's ends, and so it proves to be. For Wohl, "the philosopher-lover gazes into the eyes of his beloved and sees himself as a god,"²⁵⁸ and that seems about as Neoplatonic as you can get. It is almost as if we were reading *Alcibiades Major* from the befogged perspective of Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Minor*. Indeed that is precisely what Plato expected some of us to do, and thus why both dialogues are authentic,²⁵⁹ linked by what *Symposium* will later reveal about Alcibiades no less than by that toward which the disputed passage from *Alcibiades Major* once pointed. Fortunately, Wohl turns to Xenophon, and not surprisingly finds something far more Platonic there,²⁶⁰ for how could there not be, given how little of the sacred she finds when she returns to Plato?

This brings us back to the optical paradigm of the *Alcibiades*. There the lover looks into the soul of his beloved and sees a sacred statue, a *korê*, but the god it represents, as we have seen, is just himself. Alcibiades in the *Symposium* fails

255. The question of whether Socrates speaks to Alcibiades the first time because he has properly calculated the effect the *Protagoras* ἀγών has had on the youth or because the Sign has only now withdrawn its opposition raises the same problem in another form.

256. See *Guardians in Action*, 326–335, especially 329.

257. See *Guardians in Action*, 328n123.

258. Wohl, "Eye of the Beloved," 47.

259. This, of course, is not to deny that in comparison with the Bookends, both of these dialogues—designed for the entertainment and instruction of beginners—may be considered, and not altogether unjustly, as *ziemlich geringfügig und schlecht*.

260. Wohl, "Eye of the Beloved," 53–57.

to enact the narcissistic self-regard Socrates recommends in the *Alcibiades*; instead, when he looks at the other he sees a divine image not of himself, not of the Forms, but of Socrates, in all his particularity.²⁶¹

It cannot be an accident that the Diomedes Passage in *Alcibiades Minor* bears so directly on the disputed lines in *Alcibiades Major*. By presenting Alcibiades as being befogged in just this way, Plato hopes to remove the fog from his students' eyes or rather from the reader's soul. Those who have both read and absorbed the message of the More Perfect Mirror have already grasped that self-knowledge is only possible for the one who has learned from Athena the difference between Man and God, and who comports herself accordingly (150d1–2). Alcibiades doesn't and hasn't, and somewhere along the line we too have lost the textual capacity to see that Plato does. It is not "narcissistic self-regard" that Socrates recommends, nor is his last word "the divine within." But legions of others, especially in antiquity, have wanted it to be so, and thus have found what they wanted in "the divine Plato." It neither is nor should it be difficult for them to do so, because as the Diomedes Passage proves from the start, Plato was well aware of the *Drang nach Einheit* that motivated these legions—for men become gods *when all things are one*—and before discovering if any of us will revolt when some "divine man" (*Lg.* 818c3) gets the chance to rule Magnesia,²⁶² he will have used the ὁμοιώσις θεῶν (*Tht.* 176b1) of the *Theaetetus* Digression²⁶³ to flush out those who will never be content with the merely "human wisdom" of Socrates (*Ap.* 23a5–7), he who tried to make it crystal clear in the elementary *Alcibiades Major* that without recognizing a god *without*, there is neither self-knowledge nor virtue (*Alc. I* 133c13–17).

With its origins in Plato, the kind of ἀχλύς that blurs our vision along the god/man frontier naturally fell heaviest on those who regarded the ὁμοιώσις θεῶν as a seminal and characteristically "Platonic doctrine."²⁶⁴ And thanks both to recent discoveries among papyri and the ongoing revival of interest in the commentary tradition created by (Middle- and) Neoplatonists who held

261. Wohl, "Eye of the Beloved," 57.

262. See *Guardians on Trial*, §11.

263. See *Guardians in Action*, §18.

264. As does the author of the fragment from the anonymous commentary on *Alc. I.*; see F. Lassere, "Anonyme, Commentaire de l'*Alcibiade I* de Platon" in F. Declève Caizzi, M. S. Funghi, M. Gigante, F. Lassere, and A. Santoni, *Varia Papyrologica*, 7–23 (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1991), on 18, and *Corpus dei Papiri Filosofici Greci e Latini. Testi e Lessico nei Papiri di Cultura Greca e Latina. Parte III. Commentari* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1995), 65 (Lassere). With Stefania Fortuna, "Per un'origine cristiana de Platone *Alcibiade I* 133c8–17." *Koinonia* 16 (1992), 119–136, cf. Reis, "Im Spiegel der Weltseele," 99–102, culminating with: "Entscheidend ist vielmehr die Tatsache, das der Papyrus die Einbeziehung des *Alkibiades* in die Diskussion um die ὁμοιώσις θεῶν bezeugt" and beginning with: "Dennoch wird das *telos* der Philosophie bei den meisten Mittelplatonikern bekanntlich in eine andere Formel gekleidet, nämlich jener von der ὁμοιώσις θεῶν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν."

such views, it has recently become possible to recreate their mindset, as Tarrant does (see §6) near the end of his article on “Olympiodorus and Proclus on the Climax of the *Alcibiades*,” where, having already advanced arguments against “the Eusebian Addition,”²⁶⁵ he also offers his own version the text that the Addition (seems to have)²⁶⁶ replaced:

Socrates: So you too Alcibiades, because you are as yet unable to look around at your own self, look into me, and not into any random part of me but into the highest; and if you find here some bright wisdom that calls upon you now, draw close to me so that you may follow it. *Alcibiades*: Indeed I do see such a thing, Socrates. *Socrates*: And this is rather like its ‘god’, and by looking into this and perceiving here all that is divine, its god and its wisdom, in this way you could best know yourself too.²⁶⁷

Had Socrates said such words, Alcibiades could easily be forgiven for mistaking him for a god.²⁶⁸

As mediated by Tarrant, this is where Proclus and Olympiodorus converge with Gordon and Wohl. Only Gordon addresses the Addition,²⁶⁹ but the long quotation of the passage preceding it in Wohl,²⁷⁰ cutting off exactly where I am claiming the Deletion began, points to the same place. The best evidence for locating the divine “within” in *Alcibiades Major* is the θεόν τε καὶ φρόνησιν of 133c5, and that is why the Deletion began there, not only to get rid of the countervailing evidence but also to emphasize by position *the best available evidence for the desiderated position*. The proof that Plato realized that many would find this erroneous position tempting is that *Alcibiades Minor* follows *Alcibiades Major* in the Reading Order: it will be easy for Alcibiades, having once come under Socrates’ influence, to regard *him*, in all his wondrous strangeness, as divine, i.e., as not merely obedient to “the god” (beginning at *Alc. I* 105e5–106a1; cf. 103a4–6) but also as some kind of god himself. By mixing this confusion with the sexual “die Werbung des

265. Tarrant, “Olympiodorus and Proclus,” 6–12.

266. Tarrant, “Olympiodorus and Proclus,” 24: “It should be clear that my understanding of the process here implied, approaching the wise man (φρόνιμος) as educator or Platonic lover and following him, does at least agree substantially with the interpretation that Olympiodorus and Proclus adopt even if it can offer no direct insight into the reading [sc. of *Alc. I*, 133c] that the former appears to be using. Some would argue that it tells against there having been any genuine lines in place of c8–17, but that is less than clear.”

267. Tarrant, “Olympiodorus and Proclus,” 24–25 (I have expanded abbreviations for the interlocutors); note also the following on 25: “Any such text would be adding material before 133c4, not simply where c8–17 are placed by Eusebius. I do not wish to push such a reconstruction, and offer it only as one of many possibilities.”

268. Cf. Benny Lévy, *L’Alcibiade: Introduction à la lecture de Platon* (Lagrasse: Verdiers, 2013), 389–91.

269. See Gordon, *Erotic World*, 165n6, on “some disputed line in the text”; cf. Belfiore, *Daimonic Art*, 59, 59n68, and 47n37.

270. Wohl, “Eye of the Beloved,” 45–46.

Sokrates” in *Symposium* (this time with the necessary *objective* genitive), Plato makes the fogbound error illuminated by the Diomedes Passage at once palpable and risible, for Alcibiades will famously persist in finding divine images within the nesting doll of his Sokrates (*Smp.* 215b2–3; cf. 216e5–217a2).²⁷¹

It is therefore a blessing for the student of Reading Order that despite being snugly fit “between *Alcibiades* and *Lovers*,” *Alcibiades Minor* also mediates between the second part of Round One of *Protagoras* and the words and actions of Alcibiades in *Symposium*. When the drunken Alcibiades crowns Sokrates with the ribbons he had brought for Agathon (*Smp.* 213d8–e6), he is replicating the error he has already made at the end of *Alcibiades Minor*: the crown he had brought for a god he now gives to Sokrates (151a7–b4). He does so not because Sokrates has finally persuaded him that his ambitious political goals could bring him great harm—as of course Plato knows that *we* would know that they did²⁷²—but because he has not learned to distinguish man from god. It would palliate this error to imagine that it is simply Sokrates’ intrinsic excellence that makes it possible; this frontier gets blurred for more selfish reasons. But the crowning of Sokrates, coupled with the young man’s willingness to remove, on the other’s command (150e6–7), something other (ἄλλο τι) than the fog from his soul, joins *Alcibiades Minor* to *Symposium*; a most welcome result given that a snug fit between two other (equally) dubious dialogues scarcely offers either sufficient support.

But it would not be a blessing if the reader’s takeaway from all of this is: that with the Reading Order in place and the Deletion restored, it now becomes *easy* to see what Plato the Teacher intends to teach us. It would better express my position to say that it remains difficult to do so *but is now no longer impossible*. On the level of the profane, Plato causes Sokrates to respond to his crowning in a manner that keeps us in a state of sexual suspense that will only be relieved at Agathon’s victory party: “But I am receiving both this [sc. the crown] and would gladly see myself having received anything else [ἄλλο τι] of the things to be given by you.”²⁷³ And this is only the humorous echo from the tip of a theological-political iceberg: it will be the frontier di-

271. For comment on τὰ ἐντὸς ἀγάλματα (“the [divine] images within” at *Smp.* 216e6), see Wohl, “Eye of the Beloved,” 57–58, ending with: “Perhaps, then, Alcibiades plays such a central role in Plato’s *Symposium*—and in Platonic philosophy in general—not because he follows the optical paradigm of the *Alcibiades* but precisely because he rejects it. By refusing to turn Sokrates into a mirror for his own self-regard (an ironic refusal for a man famed for his narcissism) he allows us to see Sokrates as a unique and desirable object.” Better would be: By refusing to see himself in the More Perfect Mirror to which Sokrates points him in 133c8–17—in which this narcissist would see the limitations of his own self-regard—he turns Sokrates into a uniquely desirable object.

272. Or at least will have ensured that we do before reaching *Smp.* thanks to the history lesson in *Mx.*; on this see §15 below and Altman, “Reading Order,” §4.

273. 151b4–5.

viding Being from Becoming, Soul from Body, and God from Man that Plato is training his Guardians to guard, and that is why the Diomedes Passage (150d6-9) is found between “the Crowning of Socrates” (151a8–b1) and what I will call “the Alcibiades Ambiguity” (150b5–7), here in context:

Socrates: Certainly it would seem that both justice and wisdom [δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ φρόνησις] are held in especial honor both by the gods and by men [καὶ παρὰ θεοῖς καὶ παρ’ ἀνθρώποις]—for those with a mind [οἱ νοῦν ἔχοντες]—both the wise [φρόνιμοι] and just [δίκαιοι] are none other than those knowing what it is necessary to do and to say both in relation to gods and men [καὶ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους]. But I should like now to ascertain from you what you have in mind [ὅτι ἐν νῶ ἔχεις] in relation to these things. *Alcibiades*: But to me, Socrates, in no other way does it seem than just as it does to both you and the god [συ τε καὶ θεός]; for indeed it would not be fitting [εἰκός] for me to be one voting against the god [ἀντίψηφον ἐμὲ τῷ θεῷ].²⁷⁴

By asking Alcibiades ὅτι ἐν νῶ ἔχεις, Socrates is trying to ascertain whether or not the young man is one of those human beings who—as only those οἱ νοῦν ἔχοντες do—value δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ φρόνησις. This pair is then itself paired with the repeated pairing of gods and men. Regardless of whether Socrates’ question supports or undermines the Unity of the Virtues, it certainly undermines the position of Protagoras that some of the δίκαιοι are not σοφοί (*Prt.* 329e6), and depending on how we read Alcibiades’ answer, he has at the very least demonstrated the kind of σωφροσύνη (*Prt.* 323b4–6) that is compatible with recognizing what it is now appropriate (εἰκός) for him to do: he must not admit to be voting against the god (ἀντίψηφον ἐμὲ τῷ θεῷ), and he does not. The Ambiguity, then, is whether he is making a distinction when he says “συ τε καὶ θεός.” It is possible that he is. But skepticism is necessary,²⁷⁵ especially from those who recognize the fallacious or deceptive basis of the argument in the first half of *Alcibiades Major* that identified the just with the advantageous (see §5); in an Athens that rejects that identification—as Alcibiades does—the Athenians can clearly be φρόνιμοι (by effectively securing τὰ συμφέροντα) without being δίκαιοι (cf. *Alc. I* 113d3–5). Certainly Socrates would not have cited the Diomedes Passage from Homer if he were sure that Alcibiades recognized that συ τε καὶ θεός wasn’t either a joke or a hendiadys.

As long as the passage from Homer means “so that you might better know god from man [ἡμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα],” the arrangement of “bad” and

274. 150a6–b7.

275. Cf. Angela Hobbs, *Plato and the Hero: Courage, Manliness and the Impersonal Good* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 258: “He [Alcibiades] has absolutely no inclination to use his love for Socrates as a step in the ascent from such personal and sensuous passions towards love of the impersonal and non-sensible Form of Beauty itself.”

“noble” in Socrates’ gloss (with ἐσθλόν, cf. *Prt.* 339c4–5 and 341c4–5)—“through which things you will know bad from noble [ἡμὲν κακὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν]”—is perfectly unobjectionable. But the Ambiguity arises not simply because Socrates is testing Alcibiades but because Plato is testing *you*, and if there were not going to be some readers who would regard σὺ τε καὶ θεός as the germ of the *Übermensch*—to be further developed by Critias and Timaeus, by the Eleatic and the Athenian Strangers—he never would have written *Laws*.²⁷⁶ It is therefore not only because Alcibiades’ speech in *Symposium* will comically prove him to be thoroughly befogged that Plato makes us wonder about the sincerity of his σὺ τε καὶ θεός: Plato cannot test whether *we* have absorbed the lesson of the More Perfect Mirror without seeing how we will respond to that other noteworthy pairing of θεός τε καὶ φρόνησις just before the Deletion (*Alc. I* 133c5). As the sequel suggests, there were men who would regard it too as a hendiadys, and I have offered an account of the steps they would take to make it seem that Plato thought so as well.²⁷⁷ In accordance with Heinrich Heine’s famous saying about book burning,²⁷⁸ we must therefore ask: If they could make *Plato* into a monist—i.e., “if gold ruste” (see §5)—what will such iron men do to any other dualists they come across?

Theological-political darkness aside, there is a great deal of music in *Alcibiades Minor*, especially in the form of references to tragic and epic poetry. Considering that Socrates needed to teach Alcibiades the word for music in *Alcibiades Major* (μουσική at *Alc. I* 108d3), Reading Order can explain this transition: in *Lovers*, Socrates will be discussing philosophy with a devotee of μουσική (*Am.* 132d1–2), which is what Plato’s reader is necessarily in the process of becoming. To begin with, then, consider Tarrant’s claim in his forthcoming monograph on the dialogue:

Alcibiades II is among those dialogues that most freely use epic and dramatic material to illustrate philosophic argument. Literature is sometimes treated as an *authority*, particularly Homeric literature, while drama, especially Euripides, is used for increasing the dramatic effect of particular passages.²⁷⁹

276. On *Lg.* 624a1, see *Guardians on Trial*, 260, 285–85, and 449n407.

277. Just as those who are intent on obliterating the καλόν-ἐσθλόν for the sake of the self-interested συμφέροντα may think themselves φρόνιμοι while regarding the δίκαιοι as themselves foolishly befogged, and thus might actually regard τὰ καλά not as χαλεπά but as actually “bad” (cf. κακόν at *Prt.* 341b8), so too might they map ἡμὲν κακὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἐσθλόν directly, not chiasmatically, onto ἡμὲν θεὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, with the resulting “noble man” being the one who links being κακόν to (a befogging belief in) god. Plato couldn’t open the door to the truth without confronting such men. Note the explicitly theological “big proof” that Socrates provides to prove that χαλεπόν could not mean κακόν (*Prt.* 341d9–e7).

278. “Das war ein Vorspiel nur, dort wo man Bücher verbrennt, verbrennt man auch am Ende Menschen.”

279. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*.

Naturally the Diomedes Passage alone would be sufficient to justify Tarrant's italicized "authority." But tragedy both enters early and exits late. The blinding of Oedipus (who enters at 138b9–c1) not only anticipates the fog that has heretofore prevented Diomedes from distinguishing god from man, but creates the exemplar for the kind of self-destructive prayer that gives the dialogue its obvious and binding theme.²⁸⁰

To begin with, Oedipus is useful or rather logographically necessary for setting up the φρόνιμοι/ἄφρονες dilemma (138b9–d2), leading to the passage where Plato helps us to see Round One of *Protagoras* in a clearer light. He will return at the end when Creon, his successor, sees Tiresias wearing a crown (151b5–7). Socrates' use of the quotation from Euripides (151b9–10) is deliciously complex: like Creon, he is seeing somebody crowned—as Socrates himself has just been—but this likewise makes Socrates similar to the crowned Tiresias. It is Socrates' ability to see himself that makes him similar to both Tiresias and Creon, and it is this ability that Alcibiades (and the rest of us) lack because we see only "the things of our self" (*Alc. I* 128d3–7). Most clearly in the Deletion, Socrates has traced this inability to our collective failure to see ourselves in the More Perfect Mirror, the lack of which now returns in the Diomedes Passage as ἡ ἀγλὺς. Having been crowned by the fog-bound Alcibiades, Socrates therefore finds himself in no less of a storm than Creon did (151c1). Despite the apparent purport of the *Protagoras* Flute Girls, then, we not only find ourselves interpreting poetry—and Plato's dialogues just as if they too were poetry—but also watching Socrates interpret both himself and Alcibiades through the medium of poetry.

The praise Socrates showers on Homer is even more remarkable, and anticipates both *Hippias Minor* and *Ion*. In preserving one of our only lines from *Margites* (147b1–d7) and then interpreting it, Socrates is not rejecting the interpretation of poetry because interpreting it is impossible but rather practicing that art with skill or cunning (147d2–4) as he must because poets "are both chary and are not wishing to demonstrate for us but much rather to conceal [ἀποκρύπτεσθαι] their wisdom" (147c2–4). Not unlike Plato, they speak in riddles (147b9 and 147d2). This is what makes them difficult to understand (δύσγνωστον at 147c5), not simply because they aren't around for us to ask them questions (*Prt.* 329a3–4 and 347e3–4). In the context of Reading Order, the passage from *Margites* allows Plato to introduce Hippias the polymath²⁸¹ (hence πολυμαθία τε καὶ πολυτεχνία at 147a5) just as the praise for "the most divine and wisest poet" (147c6–7) prepares us for *Ion*. But future

280. For attention to "Tragische Verblendung," see Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 180–87.

281. As noticed by Robert G. Hoerber, "Plato's *Lesser Hippias*," *Phronesis* 7, no. 2 (1962), 121–131, on 124.

developments aside, Plato is making a crucial point here about interpreting his own kind of poetic riddles, particularly when he *misquotes* Homer.

Harold Tarrant's study of *Second Alcibiades* has many excellent features, but he outdoes himself in two brief sections, one called "Pseudo-Homeric Lines" and the other "The Poet's Prayer Reconsidered."²⁸² In the first, he analyzes Socrates' quotation from the *Iliad* (8.548 and 850–52) at 149c8–e3, and reaches a perfect conclusion:

One must therefore consider the possibility that these three lines have actually been added here to manufacture Homeric evidence that did not in fact exist. The gods were always divided in their support for Greece or for Troy, and there is no justification within the *Iliad* for the notion that the Trojans were hated by all of them. Material has been cobbled together out of three different books of the *Iliad*, with the greatest adherence to meter, except for the last line and a third which were used by Homer three times, coming in the part that most conflicts with Homer's view of the gods, his understanding of sacrifice, and even his language. The author uses an eclectic combination of quotation, paraphrase, and invention to suggest, contrary to all the evidence, that Homer's gods paid attention to the virtues of those who approached them and ignored their rich offerings as being tantamount to bribes.²⁸³

The suggestion, then, is that Socrates is misquoting Homer *deliberately*, thereby testing the reader's knowledge of the *Iliad*. Although Tarrant does not regard "the author" of *Second Alcibiades* to be Plato, his explanation arrives at a nice approximation of what I am calling Plato's use of "basanistic pedagogy,"²⁸⁴ and even though he is more inclined to find its basis in "the noble lie,"²⁸⁵ he also aptly cites Bruno Centrone on the deliberate use of ἀπάτη in *Phaedrus*.²⁸⁶

In "The Poet's Prayer Reconsidered," Tarrant goes a step further in revealing the use of deliberate deception at this elementary stage of the Reading Order. By examining the context of Socrates's paraphrase of the *Odyssey* (1.32–34) at 142d4–e1, Tarrant shows how "the author" is preparing the

282. See Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*.

283. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*, 75.

284. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*: "The alleged evidence, whether a false story from the Athenian past (cf. the Atlantis-story) or some purely invented Homeric lines, is justified in terms of the appropriate nature of the overall message, and may have been an accepted feature of this kind of instructive entertainment; it might be the kind of noble lie that is sanctioned at *Republic* 414b–c."

285. For comment, see §5.

286. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*, quotes Centrone, "*Fedro* 261e7–262c4," 54: "It is therefore possible to interpret many dialogues as examples of philosophical rhetoric in this particular aspect, that is to say in the sense of a misuse that occurs in small steps [cf. κατὰ μικρόν at *Phdr.* 262a2, on which see *Guardians in Action*, 151–53] of a 'deception [*inganno*]' oriented positively toward the reader's conversion." Cf. Manuwald. "Lust und Tapferkeit," 43 (on the Final Argument in *Prt.*): "Andererseits erfolgen unter dem 'Deckmantel' eines auflockernden Zwischengespraches die Veränderungen so behutsam und schrittweise, daß die gedanklichen Verschiebungen nur mit Mühe bemerkt werden."

reader to recognize the later distortion (i.e., at 149c8–e3),²⁸⁷ and that’s only the beginning. When Socrates then goes on to quote two otherwise unattested lines (143a1–2) from some unknown poet he calls “wise”—“a wise one that poet may well be [κινδυνεύει . . . φρόνιμος τις εἶναι ἐκεῖνος ὁ ποιητής]” (142e1–2; cf. 148b5–8)—he once again reaches the appropriate conclusion:

The one person that we do know of who adopted the same policy on prayer as does this passage of the *Alcibiades II* and the reported poet happens to be Socrates, who is said by Xenophon to have prayed only for what was good on the grounds that the gods knew best what that was, while people who asked for gold and silver or for tyranny were essentially gambling on things of which the outcome was uncertain. And the ‘Socrates’ of the *Alcibiades II* says nothing to exclude the possibility that he himself is the relevant poet, just as he does nothing to exclude the possibility that he himself may be the educator who will teach Alcibiades how he should behave towards gods and men (150d), and indeed encourages Alcibiades to believe that he is that person (150d–151a) as he had also done in the *Alcibiades I* (105e2–5, 124c5–10). I therefore tentatively conclude that the lines of the poet are in fact the invention of the author of the monologue, who has likewise supplied, in the same meter, much of the alleged quotation from the *Iliad*.²⁸⁸

Tarrant has solved another case of concealed identity: the “wise poet” Socrates quotes is Xenophon’s Socrates.²⁸⁹ And his certainty that Socrates is also “the educator who will teach Alcibiades how he should behave towards gods and men” in the Diomedes Passage is fully consistent with his approach to “the Eusebian Addition,” for it is the absence of a clear Socratic distinction between god and man that makes it possible for Tarrant to claim that Socrates is likewise referring to himself—as Alcibiades assumes, equally erroneously, that he is—and not to the god, as ὁ παιδεύσων (150d4), “the one to whom there is careful concern for you” (150d6), and “that one as well” (κάκεινος at 151a1). In short, Tarrant has correctly solved two out of the three cases of concealed identity in *Alcibiades Minor*; only God is missed.

287. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*: “One might even claim that the passage is the very evidence one needs to counter Socrates’ [later] claims about the gods’ disregard of rich sacrifices after the resumption of the monologue, for immediately after Zeus’ words Athena seizes the opportunity to remind Zeus of the undeserved sufferings of Odysseus, and in establishing his merits she refers directly to his generous sacrifices, for which Zeus himself then expresses his own appreciation (*Od.* 1.60–61, 66–67).”

288. Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*. See: “there is no independent verification of the claim of ‘Socrates’ here to be a following a wise poet, any more than there is independent verification of his alleged lines from the *Iliad* at 149d5–6. Therefore it seems to me entirely reasonable to suspect that the ‘wise poet’ is none other than whoever composed this two-part monologue.” See also: “The identity of the author is of course more difficult to ascertain, but it seems that there is a certain playfulness over questions of authenticity and of the authority of his material.”

289. See Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.3.2.

Plato will continue playing musical games of this kind in *Lovers*, and it is with a passage in it that I will hereafter call “the Seed-Sower of Studies” (*Am.* 134e6–135a5) that this section will end. Like the passages implicated in the last blocked quotation from Tarrant, Plato is once again playfully challenging (cf. προσπαίζων at *Am.* 135a2) his readers to identify someone who remains unnamed. But in *Lovers*, he goes a step further: the correct answer is neither Socrates as “the Wise Poet” nor the god as “the one who will educate” but rather Plato himself, who is throughout sowing the seeds of philosophy not least of all by creating the cases of concealed identity he has just now challenged us to solve in *Alcibiades Minor*. Thanks to his skillful and measured use of the musician’s athletic rival (*Am.* 134a3–b2),²⁹⁰ Socrates has reduced the devotee of μουσική to a blushing silence (*Am.* 134b3–4); he then sets up “the Seed-Sower” by asking first who knows the beneficially “measured” quantity when it comes to the body (*Am.* 134e1–3) and then concerning the sowing of actual crops (περι σπερμάτων σπορᾶς at 133e4–5). This leads to a third question, the one that stumps all three interlocutors, but must not stump Plato’s readers:

Socrates: ‘And whom should we be justified in asking as to the moderate degree and kind, in regard to the sowing and planting [σπορά τε καὶ φύτευσις] of studies [μαθήματα] in the soul [prepared at 134d4–9]?’ At this point we all [cf. τρεῖς ὄντες at 134e3] began to be full of perplexity [ἀπορίας μεστοί]; then I, playing with them [προσπαίζων αὐτούς], asked: ‘Do you mind, since we are in perplexity [ἐν ἀπορίᾳ], if we ask these boys here [ταυτὶ τὰ μειράκια]? or perhaps we are ashamed, as Homer said the suitors were, and do not think it fit there should be someone else who will string the bow?’ Then, as it seemed to me that they were losing their zeal for the argument, I tried to pursue the inquiry in another way, and said: ‘But what, as nearly as we can guess, are the kinds of learning [τὰ μαθήματα] which the philosopher should learn, since he is not to learn all things or many things?’²⁹¹

Lovers is the only dialogue between *Protagoras* and *Symposium* that Socrates narrates, and direct dialogues like the *Alcibiades* dyad, the *Hippias* dyad, and *Ion-Menexenus* are not as well suited for “breaking the frame” as Plato does here. The reader will note that nobody other than Socrates actually

290. Thanks to the participle τραχηλιζόμενος (see LSJ on τραχηλιζω) at *Am.* 132c8, Sandra Peterson not only identifies the athlete as a wrestler (414), but building on the evidence that Plato was a wrestler (with 430n22, cf. *Plato the Teacher*, 67–68), she makes an interesting suggestion in the last sentence (430) of “Notes on *Lovers*” in Alessandro Stavru and Christopher Moore (eds.), *Socrates and the Socratic Dialogue*, 412–431 (Leiden: Brill, 2018): “Perhaps the wrestler wrote the narrative, to save the memory of an actual occasion.” If there is any merit in this suggestion, a case could be made for identifying his “rival lover” as Xenophon—via the literary “Euthydemus” of *Memorabilia* 4 (see §2)—and this would provide a playful basis for the many connections between *Am.* and Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* to be detailed in §8.

291. *Am.* 134e6–135a9.

speaks in this passage: all three of us (τρεις ὄντες), he says, were ἀπορίας μεστοί. But it is only “the rival lovers” who are really ἐν ἀπορία, and the moment Socrates tells us, his *external* audience, that he was *playing* with his internal audience (i.e., προσπαίζων αὐτούς), he has not only given us advance warning of his own tricks (cf. *Hp. Ma.* 300d3) but has created a playfully Platonic place *for us to find ourselves*. It is by suggesting that they consult ταῦτὶ τὰ μειράκια that Plato breaks the frame, for it is only “these boys here” who can identify the Seed-Sower of Studies. Readers will only discover Plato in his dialogues by finding themselves directly addressed in them.²⁹² In this case, the adolescents in question would seem to be only those little boys who were discussing physics (*Am.* 132a3–b3) until Socrates came along and reduced such stuff to merely “Presocratic Philosophy.” But with his demonstrative ταῦτὶ τὰ μειράκια, Plato is pointing outwards to us, his students, presently engaged in learning philosophy from the series of τὰ μαθήματα that “the Seed-Sower of Studies” has carefully and measuredly crafted for this very purpose.²⁹³ The proof of his skill is the Reading Order of his dialogues.

On the verge of *Hippias Major* (see §8)—the delightful dialogue that will put us on the path to Platonism—the frame-breaking in *Lovers* has already divided Plato’s readers into two classes. Among “these boys here,” there are some who have found the playful Plato amidst the textual shadows in which he has by no means completely concealed himself; there are also those who have not been able to do so, either because they have never even read *Lovers* or because, despite having done so, they have not discovered Plato’s game, and thus how useful a narrated dialogue can be. It cannot be an accident that the musician’s subsequent answers about the studies it is necessary for a philosopher to learn (*Am.* 135a6–9)—the first with its appeal to δόξα (*Am.* 135b1–7), the second revealing his petty concern with having something noteworthy to contribute,²⁹⁴ and the third highlighting his fatal acceptance of the pentathlon analogy (*Am.* 136a5–b2)—are at once less defensible and more risible than his preliminary appeal to Solon (*Am.* 133c4–9). Unlike Plato’s knowing readers, the musical lover has demonstrably failed to find either the philosopher in Socrates or the Seed-Sower of Studies in Plato.²⁹⁵ But readers who *have* found them in *Lovers* have now looked Plato in the eye, and for them, the dialogues will never be the same: they have passed through the Looking Glass of the text. While even the dullest student will soon feel

292. Cf. *Guardians in Action*, 5.

293. With the hammered use of μαθήματα, cf. *R.* 503e2–3 (quoted above); for Plato’s dialogues as μαθήματα, see *Plato the Teacher*, 338–40.

294. *Am.* 135c7–d7, noting especially συμβάλλεσθαι γνώμην at 135d4; see Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 121–23, for the connection between this passage and Aristotle, and with *De partibus animalium* 1.1; 639a8–10 in particular.

295. Nor is he alone; see Dale Wilt Evans, “Plato’s *Minos*, *Hipparchus*, *Theages*, and *Lovers*: A Philosophical Interpretation” (Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1976), 168–70.

empowered by seeing what Hippias cannot—Socrates himself behind his Double in *Hippias Major* (see §10)—those who can recognize Plato's seeds have already begun to flower in *Lovers*. While only the god knows whether the seeds he is sowing will bear fruit, the σπορά τε καὶ φύτευσις is Plato's, and as a master teacher, he has every reason to be proud of it.

Chapter Three

Hippias Major

Between Protagoras and Symposium

SECTION 8. READING ORDER AND AUTHENTICITY

Before Schleiermacher deferred to Immanuel Bekker's "more critical than thou" verdict on *Ion* (see Introduction), he had offered two different theories about the dialogue which he regarded as equally plausible: it was either the work of one of Plato's students, guided by hints and remarks from his teacher, or it was the early and incomplete work of Plato himself.¹ Since Schleiermacher was famously committed to *Phaedrus* as the first fruit of Plato's youth, it was for him the paradigmatic *Jugenddialog* or "youthful dialogue." But with the abandonment of Schleiermacher's *Phaedrus*-first ordering of the dialogues, the category *Jugenddialoge* would now be applied increasingly by his successors to such works as were considered developmentally "early" (and eventually outgrown in a doctrinal sense) to the eventual exclusion of the class of dialogues whose artistic clumsiness or youthful exuberance suggested the author's apprenticeship.² Although only the germ of such conceptions was present in Schleiermacher's second alternative on *Ion*, his first points to another meaning for the term *Jugenddialog*: a dialogue written by one of Plato's youthful disciples in imitation of the master.

In his 2011 commentary on "the *Greater Hippias*,"³ Ernst Heitsch (1928–2019) argued that it should be regarded as a *Jugenddialog* in this

1. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 160.

2. Cf. Guthrie, *Greek Philosophy* 5, 391–92 (on *Am.*): "If one admits (as everyone nowadays does [n4 attached]) the presence of certain indications that this is not a prentice work of Plato's early years, it is only with reluctance." This wistful tone emerges from the replacement of the artistically immature by the doctrinally early *Jugenddialog*; the former retained the power to preserve, and the judicious Guthrie regrets its passing.

3. Ernst Heitsch (ed. and trans.), *Platon, Grösserer Hippias; Übersetzung und Kommentar. Mit einem Beitrag von Franz von Kutschera* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).

second sense. Following Eduard Zeller (1814–1908),⁴ he placed its time of composition in Plato’s lifetime but attributed its authorship to one of Plato’s youthful students.⁵ But Heitsch had also devoted considerable attention to the more obvious sense of the term *Jugenddialog*. Now following Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff (1848–1931), he had earlier argued with characteristic forcefulness that *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* were written before Socrates’ death,⁶ and were therefore Plato’s *Jugenddialoge* par excellence. Although what makes Heitsch a person of special interest is his recent attempt to run Plato’s *Hippias Major* out, or rather, *back* out of town—it had been making a comeback⁷—he is an excellent interlocutor for other reasons as well. Indicated by his reliance on Zeller and Wilamowitz, he illuminates the intellectual history between his own efforts and the process that began with Schleiermacher,⁸ and he singles out George Grote (1794–1871)—notable among post-Schleiermacher Plato scholars in upholding the authenticity of the entire Thrasyllan canon⁹—for particular criticism.¹⁰ Above all, he shifts the authenticity debate to the domain of hard-nosed philology,¹¹ where his style and erudition allowed him to make the strongest possible case. Finally, his two different conceptions of what it means to be a Platonic *Jugenddialog* point to a third alternative Heitsch never considered: Plato’s *Jugenddialoge* are those dialogues Plato wrote for youngsters.

From the pedagogical perspective guiding this study, all of Plato’s dialogues are *Jugenddialoge* in this third sense. As the founder of the Academy,

4. E. Zeller, “Review of *Platon’s sämtliche Werke*; übersetzt von Hieronymus Müller, mit Einleitungen von Karl Steinhart,” *Zeitschrift für die Alterthums-wissenschaft* 9, nrs. 31–33 (1851), 246–264; on the transition in the meaning of *Jugenddialog*, cf. “Plato ist in seiner ersten Periode unverkennbar von der Sokratischen Einseitigkeit noch nicht frei” with “wenn vielmehr auch Platos Genius nur allmählig zu der Reife gediehen sein kann, in der wir ihn auf der Höhe seiner schriftstellerischen Thätigkeit erblicken, so hindert nichts, die Spuren seines Werdens in den Werken die seinen namen tragen, aufzusuchen.” Both passages are found on 250.

5. Heitsch, *Grössere Hippias*, 8; he attaches Zeller’s “Review,” 256–59, as an appendix (133–35).

6. Ernst Heitsch, “Dialoge Platons vor 399 v.Chr.?” *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* 6, no. 1 (2002), 303–345.

7. Especially thanks to Paul Woodruff (ed. and trans.), *Plato, Hippias Major; Translated with Commentary and Essay* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1982).

8. See Heitsch, “Dialoge Platons,” 308–336; note the attention to Franz Susemihl, *Die genetische Entwicklung der Platonischen Philosophie*, two volumes (Leipzig: Teubner, 1855–1860), who distinguished between Schleiermacher’s conception of the Platonic dialogues as “die Stufen eines vom Elementaren schrittweise aufsteigenden philosophischen *Lehrcursus*” (emphasis mine) and Plato’s *Lernkursus* (i.e., “die Stadien der fortschreitenden Geistesentwicklung ihres Urhebers” (vol. 2, pt. 2, vii)).

9. George Grote, *Plato and the Other Companions of Sokrates*, three volumes, second edition (London: John Murray, 1867); note that the chapter on the *Hippias* dyad immediately follows the one on the *Alcibiades* dyad, and that the chapter on *Am.* is followed by an appendix (452–53) on authenticity in general. See Catherine Zuckert, “Grote’s Plato,” in Kyriakos Demetriou (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to George Grote and the Classical Heritage*, 273–302 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), especially 285–86.

10. See Heitsch, “Dialoge Platons,” 318–324; cf. Guthrie, *Greek Philosophy* 5, 391n4, the note attached to the passage quoted above.

11. See Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 7–8 (quoted below).

Plato the Teacher—whether when he was young or old—wrote them for the instruction and entertainment of youth. But Heitsch’s verdict on *Hippias Major* refines this broader conception, and in the course of this section I hope to show the merit of his hypothesis that it was written by a young student late in Plato’s own lifetime. Agnostic about Order of Composition, I regard *Hippias Major* as the best evidence that it might have been the *old* Plato who was writing the *Jugenddialoge* he placed at the beginning of the Reading Order. By contrast, Heitsch ignores the possibility that *Hippias Major* was written for the youth while offering the alternative hypothesis that it was written by a youth.

Midway between *Hippias Major* as a singular instance of a dialogue that an old Plato wrote for the youth, and the more comprehensive claim that all of his dialogues could be described in much the same way, is the fact that most of the dialogues included in the canon of Thrasyllus but currently regarded as spurious are ostentatiously student-friendly. This admittedly imprecise term applies to *Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, and *Lovers* in the obvious way: since I am claiming they belong at the start of the Reading Order, Plato needed to make them elementary. In a broader sense, even the other pre-*Symposium* dialogues currently regarded as genuine are student-friendly in this sense, and this explains not only why Heitsch and Kahn regard *Hippias Minor* and *Ion* as youthful works,¹² but why Zeller and Heitsch thought that *Hippias Major* was written by a student. As for the other *dubia*,¹³ I have argued elsewhere that *Cleitophon* was written to make *Republic* easier for the student,¹⁴ and that *Epinomis* was intended to do something similar for *Laws*.¹⁵ Placed between *Gorgias* and *Meno*,¹⁶ *Theages* comes as respite in much the same way that *Hipparchus-Minos* offers relief in relation to *Sophist-Statesman* and *Laws-Epinomis*.¹⁷ From my perspective, then, the dialogues that best illustrate Plato’s generosity as a teacher—and that’s virtually indistinguishable from the claim that Plato *was* a teacher—are those that have excited the most suspicion.

It would be difficult to prove that *Hippias Major* is a greater proof of Plato’s pedagogical skill than *Alcibiades Major*, but in this chapter I hope to show that it comes close, and will use the authenticity debates both dialogues have inspired to do so. In section §6, I suggested that first the Demotion,

12. See Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, ch. 4 (“Plato as a Minor Socratic: *Ion* and *Hippias Minor*”).

13. I.e., “the doubtful [dialogues].” I will reserve this term for dialogues of contested authenticity in the canon of Thrasyllus; about the *spuria* or “spurious [dialogues]” Thrasyllus appended to his edition as “bastards [νοθεύμενοι],” I will hereafter say nothing.

14. See *Ascent to the Good*, 483, and *Plato the Teacher*, 35.

15. See *Guardians on Trial*, 265–66.

16. See *Ascent to the Good*, 123.

17. See *Guardians on Trial*, 177–79, 196, and 200–204.

then the Deletion, and finally the Excision of *Alcibiades Major* were all somehow ideological in character: before being banished on artistic grounds by Schleiermacher, there were earlier signs that the dialogue was doctrinally or socially objectionable. By contrast,¹⁸ the argument against *Hippias Major*, especially in its traditional or pre-Heitsch form, has been inextricably bound up with the question of Plato's Development. As an "early dialogue" in form, it is also—thanks to allusions to or at least anticipations of "Plato's Theory of Forms"—a "middle" dialogue in content, and since that content was allegedly accessible only to an older Plato, it must have been a younger follower who actually wrote the dialogue.¹⁹ It is therefore in some sense even better evidence of Plato the Teacher's pedagogical skill and cunning than *Alcibiades Major*, and I should note that my agnosticism about the order in which Plato composed his elementary dialogues has always been tempered by my suspicion that only an experienced teacher could have written them.²⁰

This is not to say, however, that Plato's skill as a teacher rests exclusively on dialogues that have been dismissed as inauthentic. Although Heitsch was following Wilamowitz by placing the composition of *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* before Socrates' death, his great predecessor had placed *Protagoras* in this category as well.²¹ It too, Wilamowitz claimed, was a product of Plato's youthful exuberance, and the evident delight its author took in comedy, drama generally, and Socrates' unabashed sophistry proved it.²² Nor was Wilamowitz alone: Hans von Arnim had already begun his 1914 study of *Platos Jugenddialoge* with a chapter on *Protagoras*,²³ and although his argument seems more modern—he explains Socrates' commitment to the Socratic

18. But see Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 20–24.

19. For the sake of clarity, then, I am distinguishing three meanings for the term *Jugenddialog*, with two subdivisions in the first: (1) a dialogue written by the young Plato, recognizable as such either because it is (a) artistically inept or (b) doctrinally immature; (2) a dialogue written by a young student of Plato's in (artistically inept) imitation of the master *but only after exposure to his mature doctrines*, and (3) a dialogue whose youthful features arise from the fact that Plato the Teacher wrote it for youngsters.

20. For evidence that Plato wrote *Alc. I* in his mid-sixties, see Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 152 (on 116d8 Περαιρηθίος), and cf. 105c5 (as indicating a reference to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*) with Deborah Levine Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: Style, Genre, and Literary Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 23.

21. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Platon*, two volumes, second edition (Berlin: Weidmannschen Buchhandlung, 1920), volume 1, 140–154. Heitsch rejects this view without contempt; see Heitsch, "Dialoge Platons," 330n70: "Ich halte diese Meinung zwar für falsch, doch nicht für so abwegig, daß sie einer Beachtung gar nicht mehr wert wäre."

22. Chapter 4 of Wilamowitz, *Platon* 1 (124–154) is entitled "Jugendübermut [youthful high spirits]"; see especially 127 ("*Protagoras* ist dann eine Komödie"); so also 132 and 140), 153 ("er hat das Feld gefunden, auf dem er sein dramatisches Talent frei tummeln kann und loswerden"), and 152 ("Socrates sich auf den Standpunkt den Sophisten stellt, um den Protagoras zu besiegen, also den Sophisten in ihrer Kunst überlegen ist"). On this last point, see also 149.

23. Hans v. Arnim, *Platos Jugenddialoge und die Entstehungszeit des Phaidros* (Leipzig-Berlin: Teubner, 1914), 1–37.

Paradox as a product of Plato's (eventually outgrown) Socratic phase²⁴—he too sees the hero's use of eristic arguments as proof of its author's youth.²⁵ So the same dynamic applies here as well: Plato's *Protagoras* is a *Jugenddialog* because Plato wrote it *as* a youth, not because it was written *for* the youth and thus intended to capture *their* attention.

The new approach to authenticity on offer here situates this distinction between “by” and “for” in the context of Reading Order. In other words, even if Plato's elementary dialogues are best understood generally as *Jugenddialoge* in a third and pedagogical sense, the *proof* that they are genuine—as a matter of both practice and theory—depends on demonstrating that each is a well-connected part of an integrated curriculum I am calling “the Reading Order of Plato's dialogues.” As a result, despite whatever merits a dialogue has in itself from an artistic, doctrinal, or even a pedagogical standpoint, it will be its connections to other dialogues—deliberate signposts of Reading Order on my account—that I consider decisive from an evidentiary standpoint. In practice, of course, the two are not so easily distinguishable, especially when it is precisely any given dialogue's artistic, doctrinal, and pedagogical merits that provide the best evidence of its close connection to its neighbors. In the preceding section, this method has been applied to *Alcibiades Minor*; now the theory behind this method must be generalized.

And unfortunately the place to begin is with the old approach to inauthenticity, especially in its most sophisticated post-Schleiermacher form as recently revived by Heitsch. As indicated in the Introduction, Schleiermacher's otherwise wholesome awareness of Plato's literary genius led him to use a conception of artistic unity to excise *Alcibiades Major*, a purge that set all subsequent inauthenticity arguments in motion. In addition to exclusively internal considerations, easily criticized as subjective, Schleiermacher seems to have had a more influential prejudice against the notion that Plato could have written paired dialogues,²⁶ and despite the evidence of Aristotle, he went so far as to say that *Hippias Major* alone should be regarded as genuine if, that is, *either* of the *Hippias* dialogues were to be so regarded. The question of the Platonic dyad is crucial for reconstructing the Reading Order,²⁷ and it is interesting that Heitsch begins his commentary on *Hippias Major* by showing—accurately in my judgment—why Plato's dialogues were not originally organized into tetralogies.²⁸ But Heitsch emphasizes the late date of Thrasyllus' edition not in order to uncover how Plato himself might have

24. Arnim, *Platos Jugenddialoge*, 9.

25. Arnim, *Platos Jugenddialoge*, 8.

26. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 326 (last word on *Alc. I*) and 334 (on *Hp. Ma.* and *Hp. Mi.*).

27. See *Guardians on Trial*, 174–78.

28. Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 7–8.

ordered his dialogues (as I have essayed to do)²⁹ but only to cast doubt on the kind of authenticity argument, like Grote's, that regards as genuine every dialogue that Thrasylus included in his tetralogical scheme:

Only such a timetable for the introduction of this ordering makes it understandable that among those texts extant in the Academy at the time in question, and there regarded as Platonic, there were also several in the edition that would thereafter be taken as definitive, that will with certainty be unattributed to Plato by modern philology [*die moderne Philologie*], for on it alone depends the competence for judgment on such questions. And to these belong not only the entire Fourth Tetralogy [sc. *Alcibiades*, *Second Alcibiades*, *Hipparchus*, and *Lovers*] but also *Hippias Major*.³⁰

It is therefore on *die moderne Philologie* that Heitsch primarily relies. It is difficult to determine whether this “modern” applies just as much to the eighteenth-century *Kritik*—which got the various battles over authenticity going in the first place—as it does to Heitsch's own philological practice, but whether on the basis of a tautological continuity or on a further refinement of *Kritik*, he has chosen the battleground most favorable to his project. Predicated on a historically inflected erudition whose breadth and depth necessarily surpasses that to which those who had naively regarded a given text as authentic could possibly lay claim, *die moderne Philologie* is such a powerful weapon because it forces those who would combat its results to respond point by point to the philological evidence, and therefore the greater the number of questionable vocabulary choices, grammatical solecisms, inept borrowings, and generally “un-Platonic” usages the critic can list, the better from a polemical standpoint. A failure to respond to any one of them is tantamount to ignoring them all, for it is always in the aggregation of de-authenticating evidence that the philological case for spuriousness depends.³¹

Before his commentary, Heitsch had already published a forty-page monograph on *Hippias Major* entitled “the limits [*Grenzen*] of a philological authenticity-critique [*Echtheitskritik*].” Opening with the observation that “only a few philologists have a sense for thorough literary analysis and who do not dismiss with a shoulder-shrug the alleged petty pedantry [*Kleinigkeitskrämerei*] without which nothing can be accomplished in such matters,”³²

29. See *Guardians on Trial*, 170–73.

30. Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 7–8.

31. See Ernst Heitsch, “Grenzen philologischer Echtheitskritik: Bemerkungen zum Großen *Hippias*,” *Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse* 4 (1999), 1–40.

32. In fact, Heitsch is quoting Wolf Friedrich's (inadequate) paraphrase of Bertil Axelson (1906–1984); see Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 5n1. His failure to cite the page reference to *Unpoetische Wörter* perhaps indicates the limits of his own patience with *Kleinigkeitskrämerei*.

Heitsch's essay masterfully reveals not so much the limitations (*Grenzen*) of *Kritik* as the limitations of those who will challenge or ignore his findings, for they will thereby demonstrate their philological incompetence to adjudicate such questions. After quoting Wilamowitz and citing Kahn,³³ he divides his brief into two parts: a short section containing two thematic objections follows twenty-seven closely argued pages devoted to twenty critical observations based on *die moderne Philologie*.³⁴ In the piece's final paragraph, Heitsch obliges the typical reader by distinguishing the single objection in each of these two parts that he regards as decisive for making his case, and thereby invites the unwary into thinking that his case depends on the author's misuse of ἀλλὰ γάρ and the failure of *der Verfasser* (i.e., the unnamed author) to uphold a dramatic continuity between an allegedly more wary and critical Hippias of the genuine *Hippias*—i.e., *Lesser Hippias*—and the simpleton around whom Socrates runs circles in what Heitsch calls “the *Greater Hippias*.”³⁵

In the hands of those who practice *Echtsheitskritik*, “philology [φιλολογία]” proves to be the wrong word: confronted with a λόγος like *Hippias Major*—which is, after all, a pretty funny dialogue³⁶—Heitsch the φιλόλογος can find nothing lovable (φιλόν) in it.³⁷ Perhaps this is what *die moderne Philologie* really is: the opposite of an ancient *philo*-logy, best described by Socrates in *Phaedrus*:

Socrates: And a third kind of possession and madness [κατοκωχή τε καὶ μανία] comes from the Muses. This takes hold upon a gentle and pure soul, arouses it and inspires it to songs and other poetry [ἢ ποιήσις], and thus by adorning [κοσμεῖν] countless deeds [ἔργα] of the ancients, educates [παιδεύειν] later generations. But he who without the divine madness comes to the doors of the Muses, confident that he will be a good poet by art [τέχνη], meets with no success, and the poetry [ἢ ποιήσις] of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen.³⁸

33. Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 6–7.

34. Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 7–34.

35. Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 40. Perhaps if Hippias were *abler* in *Hp. Ma.* than he is in the sequel, and especially if the author of *Hp. Mi.* had left less room for an astute reader's objections—see Ernst Heitsch, “Erkenntnis und Lebensführung: Eine Platonische Aporie,” *Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse* 9 (1994), 3–126, on 27n51—Heitsch's thematic and continuity-based objection would have more bite; as for ἀλλὰ γάρ, the only passage where Socrates seems to misuse the particle will be considered below.

36. Cf. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 108: “The *Hippias Major* is the most forthrightly comic of all the works attributed to Plato.”

37. For the double meaning of φιλόσ—both actively ‘loving’ and passively ‘dear’—see *Ascent to the Good*, 92–95.

38. *Phdr.* 245a1–8 (Harold N. Fowler translation).

If this account of the good poet captures Plato's own view, it applies to the good critic of ἡ ποίησις as well,³⁹ and indeed a similar account will soon enough be applied to Ion as merely an *interpreter* of poetry (*Ion* 536b4–d3). Why not, then, simply leave the modern τέχνη of philology to Heitsch, while counting, however naively, on “both possession and madness [κατοκωχή τε καὶ μανία]” to come to my aid while trying to set in order (κοσμεῖν) the thirty-five works [ἔργα]—each of them the product of a necessarily poetic ποίησις—that my favorite ancient poet used to παιδεύειν his students?

In any case, I will neither cherry-pick Heitsch's list for handily refutable objections nor answer all twenty of them in twenty-seven closely reasoned pages of my own.⁴⁰ But I will make two observations: first, Heitsch has surrendered the most powerful tool of *die moderne Philologie* by following Zeller in placing the composition of “the *Greater Hippias*” in Plato's lifetime. It was anachronism that brought down *The Donation of Constantine*,⁴¹ and since Heitsch admits that the objectionable use of ἀλλὰ γάρ can be found in Isocrates,⁴² the dialogue's author could just as easily be considered an innovator as a misuser; indeed the existence of slang proves that the two are often one and the same.⁴³ Second, it is deeply satisfying that Hippias' scarcely uncritical or unwary claim that Socrates fails to notice the big things, preferring instead to cut things up into unnaturally discontinuous particles (*Hp. Ma.* 301b2–7)—and Heitsch considers this important passage (see §9) with great care and insight⁴⁴—applies quite perfectly to his own practice of *Echtheitskritik* in a monograph that both begins and ends with a polemical defense of *Kleinigkeitskrämerei*.⁴⁵

A nice analogue to whatever it is that Hippias means by “naturally continuous bodies of being” (*Hp. Ma.* 301b6) is the Reading Order of Plato's dialogues considered as the *corpus Platonicum*. By anchoring his case on a single use of ἀλλὰ γάρ—for Heitsch shows that of the five times it appears in the dialogue, it is used correctly three times, and is misused only once by Socrates⁴⁶—Heitsch

39. For the broadest possible sense of “making”—and thus capacious enough to include the works Plato himself made—see *Smp.* 205b8–c10.

40. As G. M. A. Grube did in defense of *Hp. Ma.*, in “On the Authenticity of the *Hippias Major*,” *Classical Quarterly* 20, no. 3–4 (July–October 1926), 131–148; he was responding to the list of stylistic and vocabulary-based objections in Dorothy Tarrant, “On the *Hippias Major*,” *Journal of Philology* 35 (1920), 319–331, on 324–330.

41. Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, translated by G. W. Bowersock (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), xii.

42. Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 118.

43. See Tarrant, “On the *Hippias Major*,” 326: “All these sorts of words—burlesque, slang, lecture-room phrases—would seem to indicate the young student.” Naturally this criticism supports my claim that *Hp. Ma.* is in fact a *Jugenddialog*, written by an experienced teacher who knows his students.

44. Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 27–31.

45. See the last paragraph of Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 40; with *Kleinigkeitskrämerei*, cf. the translation of *as Kleinigkeiten* on 37.

46. See “4)” in Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 18.

not only fails to consider *Hippias Major* as a unified work of art but pays even less attention to its place within a still greater artwork.⁴⁷ It is in this twofold failure to consider dubious texts in the light of a larger whole that reveals the true limitations of *Echtheitskritik*.⁴⁸ The approach to Plato's *Letters* demonstrates this failure on a microcosmic level: criticism has focused on the (dubious) historicity of *individual letters* instead of pausing to consider the collection as a whole and *as a work of art*.⁴⁹ As for the macrocosmic level, the consideration of *Alcibiades Minor* in the previous section has already demonstrated in practice a new way of reconsidering each of the Platonic *dubia* not only in relation to its immediate neighbors, but to larger structures as well.

The contrast between the old proofs of inauthenticity based on *die moderne Philologie* and the new kind of authenticity-proof based on Reading Order is perhaps most visible in the case of parallel passages. One of the great strengths of traditional *Echtheitskritik* is that anything in a given text for which there is no Platonic parallel can be dismissed as un-Platonic while parallel passages can be dismissed as (clumsy) imitations.⁵⁰ For example, Alcibiades' claim that he learned justice the same way he learned Greek (*Alc. I* 111a1) could be taken as an inept imitation of *Protagoras* 328a1, and when Socrates says a few lines later that no teachers could be considered κρήγυοι—a word found nowhere else in Plato's dialogues—"when they never agree with themselves about the same things" (*Alc. I* 111d11–e2), this singular usage can be regarded as equally un-Platonic. I would be more inclined to consider the two cases in tandem, and suggest that Plato proves himself to be one of the truly κρήγυοι—an unusual and poetic word about which he has therefore invited us to wonder—because he has just drawn our attention to the fact that his Socrates shreds in one dialogue the same argument his Protagoras deployed without challenge in another.

If the greatest strength of *Echtheitskritik* is the vicious circularity of this parallel-unparalleled Catch-22, its greatest weakness is that, having first deployed a tough-minded skepticism against a text's traditionally (and uncritically) accepted authorship, it must necessarily resort next to an equally naïve species of speculation in order to find some other *Verfasser*—the term German scholars frequently use for the putative author—of whose alleged authority or even existence, to speak generally, no hard evidence exists.⁵¹ In

47. Only when quoting Zeller (135) is the substantive connection between *Smp.* and *Hp. Ma.* mentioned in Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*; cf. his own citations of *Smp.* (63n73 and 65n78).

48. See, e.g., W. A. Heidel, *Pseudo-platonica* (Baltimore, MD: Friedenwald, 1896), 27–39.

49. See *Plato the Teacher*, §24.

50. Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 16–17.

51. For a typical example, see Karl Steinhart, "Einleitung" to *Alkibiades der Zweite* in Hieronymus Müller (trans.), *Platon's sämtliche Werke*, volume 1, 509–519 (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1850), on 518–19; rejecting the dialogue's Stoic provenance—tempting if the opposite of wisdom is folly—Steinhart points to "irgend einen unbekanntem, zugleich für Platon begeisterten Anhänger des Antisthenes als der Verfasser."

identifying the culprit, I would observe that the strength of the case for any dubious text's authenticity is in inverse proportion to the chronological and doctrinal distance between the critic's "most likely suspect" and its traditional author.⁵² In the case of *Hippias Major*, the proximity of the living Plato to one of his students in the Academy is virtually authenticating. As for more complex cases, it is easy to see how "the search for sources" (i.e., *Quellenforschung*) that *die moderne Philologie* applied to legitimate ancient authors, emerged from *Kritik* generally and *Echtheitskritik* in particular: here the need to posit an even more speculative source became absolute. In Plato's case, this kind of *Quellenforschung* had one salutary side effect: as already mentioned, it partially annulled the ban on seeing Xenophon's influence on the Platonic dialogues, albeit only on those that were now *no longer considered to be his*.⁵³

As indicated in the previous section, the most obvious example, thanks to Athenaeus, is *Second Alcibiades*. Thanks to the chronological and indeed doctrinal proximity between Plato and Xenophon, the ancient rumor that Xenophon had written the dialogue weakens the claims of those who use *die moderne Philologie* to locate its author long after Plato's death.⁵⁴ More importantly, even though Schleiermacher's essay "Über den Werth des Sokrates als Philosophen" had diminished Xenophon's authority—for it was *his* "worth as a philosopher" that really suffered⁵⁵—Schleiermacher's rejection of the dialogue would eventually make it possible for philologists to state the obvious: that whoever had written *Second Alcibiades* had read Xenophon, and had incorporated material from his Socratic writings in doing so.⁵⁶ And even more significant than the influence of *Memorabilia* 3.9 on *Alcibiades Minor* is the impact of *Memorabilia* 3.8 on *Hippias Major*. But before turning to the details concerning the latter, it is necessary to emphasize that this is by no means an isolated case.

52. As in John Dillon, "Dubia and Spuria" in Gerald A. Press (ed.), *The Continuum Companion to Plato*, 49–52 (London: Continuum, 2012) on 50: "Unlike *Alc.2*, this [sc. *Am.*] could be a product of the later Old Academy."

53. Even here, unfortunately, the post-Schleiermacher prejudice remains strong. Consider Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 398n11: "I am happy to see that two careful scholars, in two independent studies of these parallels [sc. 'between the *Hippias Major* 290a ff. and *Mem.* 3.8.2–7'], have both come to the conclusion that Xenophon is *not* dependent here on the *Hippias Major*. [A.] Delatte (1933: 103–107) concludes that either the *Hippias Major* is borrowing from Xenophon [as of course I am claiming that it does] or both are reflections of 'relativist' passages in earlier Socratic literature. The second alternative seems more likely. It is confirmed by [F. D.] Caizzi (1964: 87f.), who argues that Xenophon's Socrates is here making use of Antisthenes." And with the postulation of Antisthenes as *Urquell*, we enter the world of Joël, *Der echte und Xenophontische Sokrates*.

54. See both Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*, and Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*.

55. See Schleiermacher, "Über den Werth des Sokrates als Philosophen," 77: "Xenophon was a statesman but no philosopher."

56. See Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 6–8, 89–93, 106–109, 150–77, 188, and 204.

As already indicated in section §2, the initial conversation with Euthydemus in *Memorabilia* 4.2 presents many parallels to the initial conversation with Alcibiades, and I also indicated that the pre-conversational relationship between Alcibiades and Socrates that Plato depicts in *Protagoras* has a parallel in Xenophon. In addition to containing the germ of *Alcibiades Major*, including a reference to the Delphic injunction,⁵⁷ *Memorabilia* 4.2 also anticipates *Alcibiades Minor* when Euthydemus admits that he no longer has any notion of what the object of his prayers should be.⁵⁸ Given these parallels between Socrates' conversations with Euthydemus in Xenophon and with Alcibiades in Plato, another remarkable connection is the fact that a dialogue between Socrates and Hippias interrupts the series of conversations between Socrates and Euthydemus in *Memorabilia* 4.⁵⁹ In this dialogue (4.4), Socrates identifies Hippias as a polymath,⁶⁰ and does so in a manner that brings a previously discussed passage from *Alcibiades Major* to mind.⁶¹ Bear in mind that it is the emergence of *πολυμαθία* in *Alcibiades Minor* that most obviously connects that dialogue to *Lovers* (see §7). As for *Lovers* itself, the many connections between it and Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* will be explored later in this section after indicating the impact of *Memorabilia* 3.8 and 4.6 on *Hippias Major*.

But let's not miss the forest for the trees. The particularly close relationship between Plato's elementary dialogues and the Socratic writings of Xenophon is that both, at least from Plato's perspective, should be regarded as *Jugenddialoge* in the pedagogical sense, i.e., written to attract the attention of the youth (see §6, *ad fin.*). Schleiermacher's insistence that *Phaedrus* was Plato's earliest dialogue has continued to cast a veil over Plato's intentions long after his followers dismissed this view with self-satisfied contempt, and its principal victim has been the pedagogical *Jugenddialog* itself.⁶² For much the same reason that the reconstructed Reading Order places the elementary dialogues before the more complicated ones, Xenophon's Socratic writings had traditionally been viewed as having been written before Plato's,⁶³ and by highlighting the parallels between *Protagoras* and Xenophon's ostentatiously youthful *Cynegeticus* in §2, I am trying to show that Plato himself shared this

57. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.24–31.

58. Amazingly, Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.36 is cited only once in Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 112n58.

59. For more specific connections between *Memorabilia* 4.4 and both *Alc.2* and *Hp. Ma.*, see Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 204–19.

60. See *διὰ τὸ πολυμαθῆς εἶναι* at Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.4.6.

61. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.4.6: “But you, perhaps, on account of being a polymath [*διὰ τὸ πολυμαθῆς εἶναι*], are never saying the same things about the same things [*περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν οὐδέποτε τὰ αὐτὰ λέγεις*].” With the latter bracketed phrase, cf. *Alc.1* 111e1–2.

62. It is therefore no accident that the earliest critic of Plato's elementary dialogues was also the author of “Über den Werth des Sokrates als Philosophen” (see §2).

63. Consider *πρῶτος* at Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.62.

view, and repeatedly demonstrated that he presupposed his student-reader's prior familiarity with Xenophon. But the dismissal of Schleiermacher's *Phaedrus*-first conception would lead neither to the restoration of *Alcibiades Major*—and the series of dialogues that depended on it, as so many rings from a magnet (*Ion* 533d5–e3)—nor to restored respect for Xenophon's Socratic writings, on which those dialogues themselves depend. In short, the ultimate result of Schleiermacher's rejection of the pedagogical *Jugenddialoge* was the creation of "Plato's early" or "Socratic dialogues," i.e., *Jugenddialoge* in a strictly chronological or developmental sense.

In turning to *Hippias Major*, I will begin with Heitsch's brilliant observation⁶⁴ that Socrates warns Hippias to pay close attention in the following passage precisely because it is now Socrates himself—and not either Hippias or Socrates's obnoxious neighbor (see §10)—who for the first time in the dialogue makes an attempt to define τὸ καλόν:

Socrates: I say that it is—but [ἀλλὰ γάρ] watch me very closely, paying careful attention lest I will be talking nonsense [μὴ παραληρήσω]—this: for indeed then let this be beautiful [καλόν] for us: whatever is useful [χρησίμων].⁶⁵

Socrates himself quickly refutes his own (cautiously offered) identification of καλόν and χρησίμων: something can only be beautiful if it is useful for bringing about a *beneficial* result (ὠφέλιμον in *Hp. Ma.* 296c5–e6). My claim is that the quickly refuted identification of τὸ καλόν with what is χρησίμων marks a turning point in Plato's use of Xenophon's Socratic writings, for Xenophon's Socrates implies as much in *Memorabilia* 3.8—of which there is another telltale echo in this passage⁶⁶—before asserting the bald identification in 4.6. Even if the context of the latter constitutes something like an analogue to the warning Socrates offers here—Xenophon's purpose in *Memorabilia* 4.6 is to try to show how Socrates made his companions more dialectical⁶⁷—there is a very good reason for Socrates to advise Hippias (and us) to watch him closely, for it would be very difficult, to take a Platonic example (see §5), to prove that dying for one's friends, however καλόν, is χρησίμων for the dead hero.⁶⁸

64. See Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 83n114.

65. *Hp. Ma.* 295c1–3.

66. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.8.4 (πρὸς δρόμον . . . πρὸς πάλην) with *Hp. Mi.* 374a1 and *Hp. Ma.* 295c9: τὸ μὲν πρὸς δρόμον, τὸ δὲ πρὸς πάλην. In addition, the juxtaposition of this athletic reference with μουσική at 296d4 points back to *Lovers*, while "the practices [ἐπιτηδεύματα] and laws" of 295d5 (as well as 298b2–3 and 298d1–2) anticipates *Smp.* 210c3–4. With respect to the latter, I mean simply that readers who reach *Smp.* 210c3–4 will be reminded of what they learned in *Hp. Ma.*, where these words were hammered.

67. See my "Dialectic in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*: Responding to 4.6." *Guiracá* 34 no. 2 (2018), 110–133.

68. On courage, see Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.6.10–11.

Crucial for connecting *Hippias Major* to Xenophon, this passage also addresses Heitsch's claims about ἀλλὰ γάρ,⁶⁹ for this is the only passage in the dialogue where Socrates seems to misuse the phrase to mean nothing more than an emphatic or "capital B 'but' [ἀλλὰ]," and without any indication that γάρ retains any explanatory force.⁷⁰ By means of parenthesis—for the γάρ clause in prose *implies* a (textually implicit) explanation *for* the "but" rather than stating it—Heitsch has already anatomized the proper function of the particle-combination in his commentary.⁷¹ But in this case, he points out that the phrase that follows ἀλλὰ γάρ—"watch me very closely, paying careful attention lest I will be talking nonsense"—is the logical consequence *only* of the "but" and offers no explanation as to *why*, i.e., (Greek γάρ) *for what reason*, Hippias and the reader must pay close attention. But (cf. ἀλλά) either because Plato's students *have* paid close attention to Xenophon's Socrates when *he* is talking nonsense,⁷² or because Plato is preparing them to take the next step beyond Xenophon, Plato is not misusing ἀλλὰ γάρ in this passage, for (cf. γάρ) even here, and indeed particularly here, there is an audible and scarcely parenthetical γάρ: "(for) I *will* be talking nonsense [παραληρήσω]." What makes the Platonic Idea of Beauty what it is, i.e., καλόν, will not be relative to anything else (*Smp.* 211a3–4) including that "in relation to which [πρὸς ὃ]" (*Hp. Ma.* 295d8) any given thing is χρησίμων.⁷³

As for *Lovers*, it would require something like Heitsch's twenty-five pages to list and discuss in detail all the connections between it and Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*.⁷⁴ Naturally these connections would not, in any case, prove

69. For background, see J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, second edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 98–108.

70. See Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 117–19, and Heitsch, "Grenzen," 17–19.

71. With "particle-combination," cf. *Partikelkombination* in Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 117; for the use of parentheses, see 118.

72. And have thus been made more dialectical by the (deliberately debatable) identification of the καλόν and the χρησίμων in *Memorabilia* 4.6.9.

73. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 184, appropriately links Xenophon's relativism on this point at *Memorabilia* 3.8.1–7 to Protagoras at *Prt.* 334a3–b7, where Plato introduces the reader to the question of to what (or to whom, as at *Chrm.* 164b1, on which see *Ascent to the Good*, 169–70) something is ὠφέλιμον, the same problem that arises in relation to χρησίμων, i.e., for what or for whom something is (capable or δυνατόν of being) useful. Unfortunately Woodruff, despite his awareness of what he astutely calls "the problem of incompleteness" (67; cf. 186), mistakenly seeks to harmonize Plato and Xenophon on this point ("for once" at 183), and in the process makes rather a mess of things at the end (183–89). I will return to this in §9.

74. By this I don't mean to suggest that *Oeconomicus* is the only work of Xenophon to which Plato's dialogue refers; the comprehensive definition of a political (πολιτική) and "kingly art [βασιλική τέχνη]" with which *Lovers* concludes (*Am.* 138b10–c10; see following note) is not only anticipated by *Oeconomicus* 13.5 but also at *Memorabilia* 3.4.11–12 (cf. ἡ οἰκονομική and *Am.* 138c9–10) and 4.2.11 (cf. οἰκονομικοί and *Am.* 138c2), and no less importantly emerges from the τέχνη that allows someone "to punish correctly [κολάζειν ὀρθῶς]" horses and dogs (*Am.* 137b7–c12; cf. Xenophon, *On Horsemanship*, 8.13; although κολάζειν does not appear in Xenophon's *Cynegeticus*, one is entitled to assume his ability to do so ὀρθῶς there as well) before being applied to human beings (cf. *Am.* 137c13–d4 with *Oeconomicus* 5.15 and especially 13.6–8, a passage that includes colts and puppies).

that *Lovers* is authentic; after all, Xenophon might very well have influenced *its* author without that influence having any connection either to Plato or the Reading Order of his dialogues. But it can do no harm to mention some of the more important of them: (1) the three references in *Lovers* to οἰκονομική and the οἰκονόμος (*Am.* 138c2–10), (2) the philosopher who does not know how “to manage well [εὖ οἰκεῖσθαι]” his own οἰκία or household at the end of *Lovers* (*Am.* 138e4–7) in contrast to Ischomachus, who Xenophon’s Socrates uses to teach Critobulus οἰκονομική or οἰκονομία in *Oeconomicus*,⁷⁵ (3) the presence in both dialogues of a kingly rule, practiced equally by an actual king (βασιλεύς) and the overseer of an οἰκία,⁷⁶ (4) the absence of any distinction between “a kingly art [βασιλικὴ τέχνη]” as practiced by a βασιλεύς and its tyrannical counterpart (τυραννική) in *Lovers* (*Am.* 138c7–10) as opposed to the sharp contrast between those who secure willing obedience—whether as king, general, or overseer of an οἰκία⁷⁷—and the tyrant who rules the unwilling with which *Oeconomicus* convincingly ends,⁷⁸ and (5) the contrast in both between the (so-called) liberal and illiberal arts (or τέχναι), well understood by both the musician and Critobulus.⁷⁹ Finally—and arguably too important to include in this truncated list—there is (6) the probable origin of the crucial “Seed-Sower of Studies” passage,⁸⁰ already discussed at the end of §7.

Given these parallels, it is once again worth wondering with Peterson whether Plato intended the musical lover to more closely resemble himself—as would at first seem obvious—or Xenophon; cf. *Memorabilia* 4.2.1, *Grg.* 485c3–e2, and Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.48 and 3.4; note the reference to *Am.* in the latter.

75. Beginning in Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 7.1. As an example of another parallel missing from this list, cf. 11.22–23 and *Am.* 138e9–10.

76. Cf. Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 21.10 and *Am.* 138c7–10.

77. See Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 21.2–11.

78. See Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 21.12. The reason the authenticity of *Erastai* must be reconsidered in the context of Xenophon is that anyone who has read *Oeconomicus* will be encouraged to doubt whether what Socrates says at *Am.* 138c7–10 is either Socratic, Platonic, or more importantly, true. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.6.12.

79. Cf. *Am.* 135b1–7 and Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 4.1–3.

80. Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 17.7–10 (Marchant): “‘Well now, is casting the seed a complicated problem?’ [the speaker throughout the following dialogue is Socrates, here raising a question about sowing; for the greater part of *Oeconomicus*, Xenophon depicts him narrating a conversation between himself and Ischomachus, just as Plato depicts Socrates narrating a conversation between himself and the musician in *Am.* This similarity creates yet another important parallel between the two dialogues but in Plato’s case, the reader replaces Xenophon’s Critobulus; this replacement is crucial for responding appropriately to the Seed-Sower of Studies] ‘By all means let us take that also into consideration, Socrates. I presume that you know as well as I [ironic since Socrates is presently speaking through Ischomachus; this kind of irony reaches a peak with Ischomachus’ repeated claim that Socrates will *hereafter* be able to teach others how to farm; see 15.10, 18.9, and 20.24] that the seed [τὸ σπέρμα] must be cast by the hand?’ ‘Yes, I have seen it.’ ‘Ah,’ he said, ‘but some men can cast evenly, and some cannot.’ ‘Then sowers no less than lyre-players need practice, that the hand may be the servant of the will.’ ‘Certainly. But suppose that some of the land is rather light and some rather heavy?’ ‘What do you mean by that?’ I interrupted. ‘By ‘light’ do you mean ‘weak,’ and by ‘heavy,’ ‘strong?’ ‘Yes, I do; and I ask you whether you would give the same quantity of seed to both kinds, or to which you would give more?’ [cf. *Am.* 132d1–6; in *Am.*, the egghead is the analogue of

As for the application of “Reading Order and Authenticity”⁸¹ to *Lovers*, its opening words serve a dual purpose: they place the dialogue between *Protagoras* and *Hippias Major*. When Socrates enters the school,⁸² he sees two adolescents (τὰ μενράκια at *Am.* 132a4) earnestly discussing circles in an astronomical context (*Am.* 132a5–b3); Protagoras has already connected Hippias to astronomy and geometry specifically (*Prt.* 318e2–3), and Plato has connected him to a discourse about physics (περὶ φύσεως) from the start (*Prt.* 315c5–6). Socrates’ suspicion that Anaxagoras may have inspired the youngsters’ debate (*Am.* 132a5) connects the dialogue to *Hippias Major*, where Anaxagoras is mentioned three times in its opening pages (*Hp. Ma.* 281c6 and 283a2–4). Emerging from the question of whether philosophizing is beautiful (καλόν at *Am.* 132b6–10, 132e9, 133b5, and 133b8) or its opposite (αἴσχρον at *Am.* 132c2, 132c10, and 133b8), the discussion depicted in *Lovers* quickly turns to the prior question of what philosophy is (*Am.* 133b7–c3). Although the question of philosophy emerges in a dramatic sense from the subjects associated with Hippias and Anaxagoras, the dialogue’s action confirms Cicero by depicting the characteristically Socratic abandonment of those subjects:⁸³ the adolescents break off their “Presocratic” discussion of the heavens to listen to a kind of philosophizing that makes philosophy itself the theme,⁸⁴ and does so explicitly for the sake of determining whether it is καλόν.

Reading Order makes good sense of what is happening here. When Socrates states that Hippocrates is ignorant of “what a sophist is” (*Prt.* 313c2) or asks Alcibiades in *Alcibiades Major* “what is [τί ἐστίν] this taking care of oneself?” (*Alc. I* 127e9), these passages arguably introduce a characteristically Socratic move.⁸⁵ But when he applies it in *Lovers* to philosophy (τι οὖν

strong or fertile soil and therefore receives more Socratic ‘seed’ than the jock]. ‘Well, my principle is this: the stronger the wine, the more water I add; the stronger the bearer, the heavier the burden I put on his back; and if it is necessary to feed others, I should require the richest men to feed the greatest number. But tell me whether weak land, like draught animals, becomes stronger when you put more corn into it.’ ‘Ah, you’re joking, Socrates,’ he said, laughing.” As, of course, “he” is: like Socrates in *Lovers*, he knows to put less corn into the weak land. Christopher Bruell, “The *Lovers*” in ed. Thomas Pangle (ed.), *The Roots of Political Philosophy: Ten Forgotten Socratic Dialogues*, 91–110 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 106, points to his awareness, albeit undeveloped, of this parallel.

81. A less historical and more accessible paper on this subject is Altman, “Reading Order and Authenticity”; see also *Guardians on Trial*, §6.

82. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.4, identifies the school as Plato’s own, citing Ἀντρασται as genuine.

83. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, 5.10; for Cicero’s role in the discovery of “Presocratic Philosophy,” see *Guardians in Action*, 17–18. The programmatic statement of Socrates’ disinterest in discussions περὶ φύσεως—enacted in *Lovers* before being historicized in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 95e9–99d2)—is Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 1.1.11.

84. See especially Brandon Zimmerman, “The *Lovers* as an Embodiment of the Socratic Turn” (unpublished paper delivered at a Graduate Student Conference at Catholic University, 2012); Strauss-inspired interest in *Lovers* also takes its cue from the opening; see especially cf. Bruell, “*Lovers*,” especially 104 and 107–108, and Michael Davis, “Philosophy and the Perfect Tense: On the Beginning of Plato’s *Lovers*,” *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 10 (1985), 75–97.

85. Between 312c4–5, 360e6–8, and 361c5–6, *Prt.* comes close.

ἔστι at *Am.* 133c3), there can be no doubt about what he is doing. Socrates makes the point—for the first but not the last time in the dialogues⁸⁶—that we can't know whether, e.g., philosophy is καλόν, without knowing first what *philosophy* is (*Am.* 133b7–9). Plato leaves it to the reader to realize that we likewise cannot know whether philosophy is καλόν until we know *what the Beautiful is*. And this, of course, is the subject that will link *Hippias Major* to *Symposium*, thus pointing to the first visionary moment in the dialogues (see Preface, principle §6). Emerging smoothly from the problem of philosophy in *Lovers*, the investigation of τὸ καλόν in *Hippias Major*, likewise raised by a τί ἐστι question (τί ἐστι τὸ καλόν; at *Hp. Ma.* 286d1–2), thus links the two dialogues and ties both of them to *Symposium*.

The point is an important one. In addition to the principle of the snug fit (see Preface, principle §2) that situates *Lovers* between *Hippias Major* and the emergence of πολυμαθία in *Alcibiades Minor*, an equally strong indication of its authenticity is teleological, with *Symposium* regarded as the τέλος of the series of which it is an integral part. If the first words of *Lovers* connect it to *Protagoras* and *Hippias Major*, its last words connect it to *Symposium*,⁸⁷ where along the way to the culminating ascent to the Beautiful, Diotima finally answers the τί ἐστι question posed in *Lovers* (*Smp.* 204a1–b5). Anticipated by identifying Love as neither αἴσχρο nor καλόν (*Smp.* 201a8–202a3)—for this is the passage that explicitly repeals the One Thing/One Opposite Principle already rendered questionable in *Alcibiades Minor* (see §7)—philosophers are rather οἱ μεταξύ (*Smp.* 204b1) and hence Love is a philosopher (*Smp.* 204b4–5), situated “between” being wise (σοφός) and ignorant (ἄμαθής). This account is first dramatized or impersonated at the end of *Lovers* by Socrates’ description of the two rival lovers themselves:

Socrates: With me having said these things, the wise one [ὁ σοφός], having been put to shame by the preceding remarks, fell silent while the ignorant one [ὁ ἄμαθής] said these things were thus and the others praised the remarks.⁸⁸

In the context of *Symposium*, we can see that the silence of the wise is closer to the truth about philosophy than the affirmation of the ignorant or the praises of the crowd. Socrates has therefore sowed his seeds wisely, giving more of it to the fertile soil,⁸⁹ while by shaming ὁ σοφός,⁹⁰ he shows that he

86. See *Men.* 71b3–4, 86d3–6, and 100b4–6; cf. *R.* 354b1–c3.

87. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 316 (Dobson, 325): “The spuriousness of this little dialogue is proved by everything we meet in it from beginning to end.”

88. *Am.* 139a6–8 (Lamb modified).

89. See Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 17.8–10.

90. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.2.23: “By the Gods, Socrates,” he said [Euthydemus is speaking], “I was considering it important to philosophize philosophy [φιλοσοφεῖν φιλοσοφίαν] through which most of all I was thinking to educate myself in the things most appropriate for a man striving

knows how to punish correctly in a pedagogical sense. But the ashamed silence of the wise lover merely points the way forward to the *Symposium* solution, perhaps the single most important “doctrine” found in the pre-*Republic* dialogues. Socrates can demonstrate philosophy’s uselessness in *Lovers* only because its musical defender conceives of it as *knowledge*—whether in the form of many τέχναι (on the model of the pentathlon) or one master τέχνη (on the model of the measuring art in *Protagoras*). In incipient opposition to the Binary, Plato has already pointed forward to Diotima’s μεταξύ-based conception of philosophy as intermediate between wisdom and ignorance in *Alcibiades Minor*, which combines criticism of the One Thing/One Opposite Principle (cf. *Euthd.* 288d8) with Socrates’ defense of ignorance in response to Alcibiades’ apparently “Socratic” condemnation of it (*Alc.2* 143a7–b2; cf. *Euthd.* 281e5).⁹¹

Building on *Alcibiades Minor*, then, *Lovers* prepares us for *Symposium* by its subject, its conclusion, and its presentation.⁹² And by way of validating my suggestion about the doctrinal importance of a μεταξύ-based conception of philosophy, the story does not end there: Socrates will repeat Diotima’s doctrine before leaving a place for it in *Lysis*,⁹³ and Plato will reveal the traps that a return of the Wisdom/Ignorance Binary makes possible at the start of *Euthydemus*.⁹⁴ In the meantime, the wise Hippias will replace the ignorant Alcibiades after *Lovers* because Plato is leading us to *Symposium*. In short, Plato’s use of two rival lovers—one called σοφός, the other ἀμαθής—is an easily accessible literary device that introduces the crucial μεταξύ between σοφία and ἀμαθία and enlivens it in a dramatic sense. It is between the gymnastics of the jock and the music of the egghead that we will ultimately discover philosophy, exactly what will not be discovered in *Lovers*.

But it is with respect to Reading Order that *Lovers* is most truly μεταξύ, and not only because it is snugly fit between *Alcibiades Minor* and *Hippias Major*. Thanks to the rival lovers at its dramatic center, it mediates between

for gentlemanliness [καλοκάγαθία]. But now you can imagine how dispirited I am while seeing myself, despite these preparatory labors, unable to answer a question concerning things it is especially necessary to know, having no other way on which proceeding I might become better [βελτίον γενέσθαι; cf. *Alc.2* 150e8].”

91. On the basis of moves “to treat the value of ignorance and non-recognition as relative” (on 3) and thus “towards a ‘sceptic’ Socrates” (on 5), a New Academy origin for *Alc.2* is the theme of Harold Tarrant, “Crantor as the Author of *Alcibiades II*” (conference paper, “Crantor of Soli,” Milan, January 10, 2020), in support of a suggestion made at the end of Tarrant, *Second Alcibiades*.

92. Cf. Irmgard Männlein-Robert, “Zur literarischen Inszenierung eines Philosophie-konzeptes in den pseudoplatonischen *Anterastai*” in Klaus Döring, Michael Erler, and Stefan Schord (eds.), *Pseudoplatonica: Akten des Kongresses zu den Pseudoplatonica vom 6.-9. Juli 2003 in Bamberg*, 119–133 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2005), on 131: “Sokrates erscheint, ganz wie der Eros der Diotima-Rede des *Symposiums*, als Mittlerwesen, als personifizierter Drang nach Wissen und Weisheit, für die jedoch kein fester Begriffsinhalt erarbeitet wird.” See also 127–28 on the aporetic/dogmatic “Paradox.”

93. See *Ascent to the Good*, 89–92.

94. See *Ascent to the Good*, 87–88; the Binary is introduced at *Prt.* 358c2–3.

Alcibiades and Hippias and the doubled dialogues Plato devotes to each. Socrates has already called Hippias both wise and beautiful (*Hp. Ma.* 281a1) but Alcibiades is only beautiful (*Prt.* 316a4). It is *Lovers* that justifies Plato's surprising decision to depict Alcibiades as being ignorant of the word music (*Alc.1* 108c10) because in retrospect, he was already playing the dumb jock to Hippias the wise, whose sophomoric *πολυμαθία* (*Hp. Mi.* 368a8–e1) has already been exposed as inadequate before his matched dyad even begins. Nor should the homoerotic connection between *Alcibiades Minor* and *Lovers* be forgotten, for this seems to have been uppermost in Thrasyllus' mind.

In a recent article that seems to be part of a trend,⁹⁵ Emily Katz and Ronald Polansky show that “this brief but complex dialogue repays our attention.”⁹⁶ Although they sidestep the authenticity debate,⁹⁷ the core of their case is that it is not philosophy as defined but rather *as performed* that makes *Lovers* worthy, if not of Plato, then at least of our attention.⁹⁸ While emphasizing “the Argument of the Action,” they also use the dialogue to show *how Plato should be read*,⁹⁹ and especially with the important claim that “Socrates' possibly faulty reasoning is clearly deliberate,”¹⁰⁰ they build on the case first made by Sprague.¹⁰¹ With memorable forays on the usefulness of bad arguments,¹⁰² and therefore on the need—underestimated by the musician—for accuracy (*ἀκρίβεια* at *Am.* 136a8; cf. 135d1) in revealing them as such,¹⁰³

95. See also Sandra Peterson, *Socrates and Philosophy in the Dialogues of Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 201–205.

96. Emily Katz and Ronald Polansky, “The Performance of Philosophizing in the Platonic *Lovers*,” *American Journal of Philology* 139 (2018), 397–421, last word (420).

97. Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 397n1.

98. Cf. the distinction between *λόγος* and *ἔργον* in Antoine Pageau-St. Hilaire, “La double signification de la philosophie politique socratique dans *Les Amoureux rivaux*.” *Ithaque* 14 (2014), 1–24, on 15–21.

99. Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 398.

100. Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 408.

101. I.e., in Sprague, *Plato's Use of Fallacy* (see §4); for her sympathetic reading of *Erastai*, see Rosamond Kent Sprague, *Plato's Philosopher-King: A Study of the Theoretical Background* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1976), 119–21.

102. Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 407: “By thus adroitly challenging his interlocutor, Socrates shows that even logically faulty reasoning can sometimes be beautiful (and useful) philosophizing. Socrates asks whether good persons are useful or useless ([*Am.* 136b4–5; cf. 133d2–3], and then proposes that if the good (*agathoi*) are useful (*chrēsimoi*), the bad (*ponēroi*) are useless (*achrēstoi*, 136b7–9). This looks logically problematic [cf. one thing/one opposite]. Regardless of whether useful and useless are exclusive alternatives, good and bad may not be, for there is also the neither good nor bad [cf. the *μετάξυ* in *Smp.*]. So even if all the good are useful, strictly by contraposition [cf. the Protest of Protagoras] all the not useful are not good, since possibly neither good nor bad [cf. the *τι διὰ μέσου τρίτον πάθος* in *Alc.2*]. But the lover makes no objection. Aside from the problematic logic, instances occur in which the not good and even the bad can be useful. Most pointedly, their very conclusion that the bad are useless—which is likely faulty and hence bad [cf. Plato's Deliberate Use of Fallacy]—falsifies itself [cf. Performative Self-Contradiction] by proving useful for refuting the musical lover.” Note that at least three of the explanatory brackets connect *Am.* as Katz and Polansky are reading it to *Alc.2* (see §7).

103. Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 405–408.

they break new ground, especially since they are proving that taking *Lovers* seriously can no longer be considered an exclusively Straussian preserve.¹⁰⁴ In short, this piece is most welcome as a purely text-imminent argument for the dialogue's value.¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, my ongoing claim is that every dialogue must be understood in the context of its neighbors, and that especially in the case of the doubtful dialogues, a text-imminent defense, no matter how welcome and insightful, is insufficient.

In the present case, *Lovers*, *Symposium*, and *Euthydemus* offer a convenient illustration of the interplay of proleptic, visionary, and basanistic elements (see Preface, principles §4, §6, and §7) with respect to φιλοσοφία in the Platonic Reading Order. The first confuses us in a productive manner while using the wise and ignorant lovers as a dramatic hint to prepare us for the visionary teaching of Diotima. *Euthydemus* then tests our awareness that philosophy, like Love, is situated between σοφία and ἀμαθία (*Smp.* 203e5–204a4; cf. *Ly.* 218a2–b3)¹⁰⁶ not only because the brothers exploit the zero-sum Binary that leaves nothing between them (*Euthd.* 275d4) but because Socrates himself offers an exclusively knowledge-based protreptic to philosophy (*Euthd.* 278e3–282d3) before embarking on a fruitless search for the same kind of knowledge-based master-τέχνη (*Euthd.* 288d9–292e5) that creates the search for “the Grand Synthesis” that has already led to this “one out of many” alternative to πολυμαθία in *Lovers*:

Socrates: ‘Hence they are all the same, as it seems: king, tyrant [τύραννος], statesman [πολιτικός],¹⁰⁷ house-manager [οικονόμος], master, and the temper-

104. In addition to Bruell, “*Lovers*”; Davis, “Philosophy and the Perfect Tense”; and Evans, “Plato’s *Minos*,” chapter 5 (155–89); see Seth Benardete, “Socrates and Plato: The Dialectics of Eros” in Ronna Burger and Michael Davis (eds.), *The Archeology of the Soul: Platonic Readings of Ancient Poetry and Philosophy*, 244–260 (South Bend, IL: St. Augustine’s Press, 2012). On Bruell, see Katz and Polansky, “Performance of Philosophizing,” 419n38; note the reference to Bruell’s *Socratic Education* just after the note on 419.

105. If I were to argue for Plato’s authorship of *Erastai* on the basis of the dialogue alone, I would point to the final variation on the theme that the pentathlete philosopher proves to be useless “while [ἔως]” there are expert craftsman (or the crafts they practice) present. Plato first uses then reuses (for emphasis) the phrase at *Am.* 136d9, *Am.* 137a4–5 and *Am.* 137b1, and then reminds us of it—albeit while replacing ἔως with ὁπότεν—at *Am.* 138d4–5. In all of these cases, the crafts are those we would expect, i.e., actual τέχναι (*Am.* 137b1) practiced by existent δημιουργοί (*Am.* 136d9 and 137a5). But as prepared by the ὁπότεν variation, it is with the fourth appearance of the ἔως-phrase at *Am.* 138e3–4 where Socrates claims that the philosopher will prove to be useless *while* in the presence of the “judge [δικαστής]” or “king [βασιλεύς]” (*Am.* 138d5) who possesses “the kingly art [ἡ βασιλική τέχνη]” (*Am.* 138b15 and 138c8–9). It is only here that Plato’s purpose in hammering the phrase becomes plain: unlike the crafts and craftsmen introduced the first three times, in this case there is and could be no craftsman who possesses the requisite craft (see especially *Am.* 138c7–10); with this “nobody” of a τις (*Am.* 138e4), cf. the allusion to Odysseus as ὅστις at *Am.* 135a5.

106. See *Ascent to the Good*, 87–90.

107. Although not strictly germane to the question of Reading Order, the use of this word is not the only connection between *Am.* and the Eleatic dyad. In structural terms, a discussion of the φιλόσοφος obviously fills the gap created by the dyad. And beginning with the discussion of τὰ μέτρα (*Am.*

ate man and the just man; and there is one art: kingly [καὶ μία τέχνη ἐστὶν βασιλική], tyrannical [τυραννική], political, despotic, economic [οικονομική], justice, temperance.’ ‘Apparently [φαίνεται] it is so,’ he said.¹⁰⁸

If philosophy were σοφία, it might look like this, but it isn’t and doesn’t. In the context of *Symposium*, then, it is simply the brute fact of this aggressively knowledge-based and ignorance-annihilating τέχνη that vitiates an attempt to explain philosophy and leads to the final ἀπορία in *Lovers*. But thanks to this passage’s deliberately provocative identification of βασιλική with τυραννική, we are already witnessing the humorous inversion of the conclusion of Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus*.¹⁰⁹

And then there’s Beauty, which links *Lovers* backwards to *Protagoras* and *Alcibiades Major*, and then forwards to *Symposium* through *Hippias Major*. Socrates first derives the equation of justice and temperance (*Am.* 138a9–b5; cf. *Alc. I* 134c10–11)¹¹⁰ from the ability to punish rightly (κολάζειν ὀρθῶς),¹¹¹ a hammered phrase that emerges abruptly from the ability, famously associated with Xenophon,¹¹² to discipline horses and dogs (*Am.* 137b6–c5),¹¹³ and then incorporates these two virtues into a knowledge-based Grand Synthesis that combines virtuous rule with its vicious opposite (i.e., τυραννική). Socrates can only “properly punish” the musician after having fallaciously discriminated the καλόν as good from the useless as αἴσχρον (*Am.* 136e1–4).¹¹⁴ *Hippias Major* follows *Lovers* not only because the discussion of philosophy in the earlier dialogue unfolds in the context of what is καλόν (*Am.*

134a8–e8; cf. τὸ μέτριον at *Plt.* 284d6–e8) and the paired examples of the doctor and steersman (*Am.* 136c7–d8; cf. *Plt.* 297e8–12), coupled with this reference to the πολιτικός, suggest a continuity that may implicate Order of Composition. If so, the decision to begin the Reading Order with two dyads may have been contemporaneous with the decision to end it with three. In any case, note also the musician’s quickly spurred attempt to answer Socrates with “both” (cf. *Am.* 136d1–3 and *Sph.* 249d4).

108. *Am.* 138c7–11 (Lamb modified). For Aristotle’s criticism, see Neuhausen, *Zweite Alkibiades*, 123; in searching for *der Verfasser* of *Alc. 2* and *Am.*, Neuhausen finds a quarrel between the Academy and the Lyceum on this issue (125).

109. In *Oeconomicus*, Socrates inspires Critobulus to learn οἰκονομική, an art Crito’s son is inclined to despise, by linking it to the more glamorous arts practiced by kings and generals (cf. *Oeconomicus*, 4.12); in *Lovers*, Socrates humiliates the wise musician (*Am.* 139a6) by showing that a pentathlete philosopher is unworthy even of managing his own household as long as (ἕως) there is someone who possesses the kind of knowledge embodied in the Grand Synthesis (*Am.* 138e1–7).

110. Dependent on temperance as self-knowledge (*Am.* 138a7), the argument establishing this equation (*Am.* 137d14–138b5) makes the connection with *Alc. I* even more obvious.

111. *Am.* 137c1, 137c4, 137c6–7, 137c9–10, 137d2, 137d11, 137e1, 138a12, and 138b1.

112. Cf. Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 13.6–8, especially the two uses of κολάζεσθαι; as already indicated, the foregoing list of parallels was truncated.

113. Just as *Alc. 2* blurs the frontier between god and man, this passage in *Am.* does the same for man and beast; hence the ridiculous horse, cow, and dog whose lack of self-knowledge (*Am.* 137e8–15) is not derived from the fact that they are animals. The motives of human beings and animals will prove to be distinct in *Smp.* (see §16).

114. Note that after witnessing the Triple Equation of the Good, the Beautiful, and the Pleasant in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 360a3), *Alcibiades Major* encourages us to question the equation of the Good and the Beautiful in matters of life and death (*Alc. I* 115a9–b10), while Socrates himself will tacitly divide the Beautiful from the Good by his confusion in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 204d10–e7), on which see §17.

132b6–133b6; cf. 137a1–2) but also because the refutation of the musician depends on the intervening Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (*Am.* 133d2–4). It was only Xenophon—albeit in his effort to explain how Socrates made his companions more dialectical in *Memorabilia* 4.6—who would simply identify the Beautiful with the Useful,¹¹⁵ and if we wondered why Plato’s Socrates added the intervening step between καλόν and χρήσιμον in *Lovers* instead of simply equating the two directly,¹¹⁶ we will be rewarded by this exchange in *Hippias Major*:

Socrates: Well, then, this power and these useful things [τὰ χρήσιμα], which are useful [χρήσιμον] for accomplishing something bad [κακόν]—shall we say that they are beautiful [καλόν], or far from it? *Hippias*: Far from it, in my opinion, *Socrates*.¹¹⁷

Consider the foregoing, then, as a new kind of authenticity-proof based on Reading Order, for *Alcibiades Minor*, *Lovers*, and *Hippias Major* with some help from Xenophon.¹¹⁸

With respect to the important passage just quoted that disjoins what is χρήσιμον from what is καλόν, Heitsch can find no Platonic parallel for the speediness of Socrates’ peculiar self-refutation,¹¹⁹ and he never mentions ei-

115. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.6.9; see Altman, “Dialectic in Xenophon,” 126–29.

116. *Am.* 137a1–4 (Lamb modified): “The matter stands somewhat like this: we agreed that philosophy is beautiful [καλόν], as are philosophers themselves admirable [καλοί] and that philosophers are good [ἀγαθόν]; and that good men are useful [χρήσιμον], and wicked men [πονηρόν] useless [ἄχρηστόν]: but then again we agreed that philosophers, so long as [ἔως] we have craftsmen, are useless [ἄχρηστόν], and that we always do have craftsmen. Has not all this been agreed?” It is only when Socrates tries to dislodge Polus from the claim that suffering an injustice is bad, while doing one is never καλόν, that he identifies the latter with the χρήσιμον (*Grg.* 474d7).

117. *Hp. Ma.* 296c5–d2 (Lamb).

118. For more on *Hp. Ma.* and Xenophon, see Peter Vrijlandt, *De Apologia Xenophontea cum Platonica comparata* (Leiden: A. W. Sijtoff’s, 1919), 159–167. In addition to the athletic allusion mentioned in an earlier note (164), Vrijlandt explicates *Hp. Ma.* 281a1 with *Memorabilia* 4.4.5 (159–60), 286e2 and 287b3 with 3.8.1 (162), 288c10 with 3.8.6 (162), 288d6–e1 with 3.8.6 (163), 290e10 and 293e2–4 with 3.8.7 (163), 289c4–5 with 3.8.6 (163), and, of course, the discussion of τὸ καλόν as χρήσιμον at 295c1–e4 with 3.8.4–5. In the rudeness of Aristippus, who attempts to refute Socrates throughout 3.8, he finds the origin of Socrates’ unnamed Double (162–63), pointing more convincingly to the equation of the Good and the Beautiful (as χρήσιμον)—unquestioned throughout by Xenophon (especially in 3.8.5) but ridiculed and at the least questioned by Plato’s Socrates at *Hp. Ma.* 297c3–d11—as proof that Plato is responding to, and progressing beyond, Xenophon. Indeed Plato’s progress is best measured by his Socrates’ rejection of the relativism of Xenophon’s when the latter says at 3.8.3 that “if you are asking me if I know anything good that is the good of nothing, I neither know nor want to know.” Vrijlandt strikes the keynote on 164–65: “That *Hippias Major* was unknown to Xenophon while he was writing *Memorabilia* 3.8 (as well as 4.6.8–9) is therefore intelligible per se. The parallels will be explicated best if we shall assume that Plato—just as a writer of history does from arid annals; just think of Tacitus—has taken material from Xenophon’s writings, and has turned it to his own use and decorated it in such a manner that not only is the result no slavish borrowing [*mutuatio*] but rather a charming and witty transformation [*mutatio*], as well as an amazing step forward in philosophizing [*et admirabilis in philosophandi progressio*].”

119. Heitsch, *Grösserer Hippias*, 84.

ther *Lovers* or Xenophon in his commentary on the *Greater Hippias*. Where other dialogues are concerned, his attention would appear to be confined to the *Lesser Hippias*,¹²⁰ but thanks to his reliance on the Wilamowitz-version of the *Jugenddialog* theory, Heitsch is actually an heir to a long tradition that judged the *Greater Hippias* to be what might better be called “the *Later Hippias*.”¹²¹ Initiated by F. W. Röllig,¹²² endorsed by Wilamowitz, and then systematized by Dorothy Tarrant,¹²³ the theory that the dialogue is a young student’s imitation of Plato, written late in the master’s life, has been used—and indeed was invented—to explain the puzzling combination of (1) what look like references to the dialogue by Xenophon and Aristotle,¹²⁴ (2) allusions in it to ostensibly later Platonic dialogues,¹²⁵ and most importantly (3) the jarring presence of what seems to be “middle-period” Platonism in this formally “early” dialogue.¹²⁶ So jarring is this last feature, and so pervasive the influence of developmentalism, that defenders of the dialogue’s authenticity like Paul Woodruff generally play down its Platonist features,¹²⁷ assimilating it chronologically to other early dialogues of definition, while it is arguments against its authenticity, including those of Kahn and Holger Thesleff,¹²⁸ that implicate a “*Later Hippias*.”

120. I.e., to the discontinuity claim developed first in Heitsch, “Grenzen,” 34–38.

121. For an excellent account of this *Schülertheorie*, see Marion Soreth, *Der platonische Dialog Hippias Maior* (Munich: Beck’sche, 1953), 1–4.

122. F. W. Röllig, “Zum Dialoge *Hippias maior*,” *Wiener Studien* 22 (1900), 18–24, beginning with “Schüler Platos” (22) as opposed to a *Fälscher* or forger. But he has prepared the ground on 20: “The incivilities [*Derbheiten*] that he [sc. the author, as opposed to Plato] places in Socrates’ mouth, and his evident delight with this comedy appears in fact to reveal his youth [*Jugend*].”

123. See especially Dorothy Tarrant, *The Hippias Major attributed to Plato, with Introductory Essay and Commentary* (Cambridge, UK: At the University Press, 1928), xvi–vii.

124. For Aristotle, see Max Pohlenz, *Aus Platos Werkezeit; Philologische Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1913), 126–127, and (to opposite effect) Grube, “Authenticity of the *Hippias Major*,” 134–35; cf. Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, ix–x. For Xenophon, see Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, xv–xvi, 49 (on χύτρα), and especially 66 (on both ὁ ἄν χρησίμου ἦ and τὸ μὲν πρὸς δρόμου, τὸ δὲ πρὸς πάλην).

125. Röllig, “*Hippias maior*,” had emphasized *Grg.* and *Phlb.*; while embracing his approach—see especially Dorothy Tarrant, “The Authorship of the *Hippias Major*,” *Classical Quarterly* 21 (1927), 82–87, on 87 at “4.”—Tarrant had concentrated primarily on the dependence of *Hippias Major* on *Phd.*—i.e., on “the Theory of Forms”—from the start; see Tarrant, “On the *Hippias Major*,” 320–323.

126. Tarrant, “On the *Hippias Major*,” 319: “If genuine, the dialogue would on grounds of style and atmosphere be most naturally placed within the early ‘Socratic’ group; yet it stands apart from these, both in manner and in matter.” See previous note for “matter.”

127. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 66 and 178; see also Soreth, *Hippias Maior*, 42–46. For criticism of this feature in the latter—expressed in terms of whether or not *Hippias Major* presupposes *Phd.*; if it doesn’t (Woodruff and Soreth) it is genuine, if it does, it is not—see Joseph Moreau, “Review of Marion Soreth, *Der platonische Dialog Hippias Maior*,” *Revue des Études Anciennes* 56 (1954), 191–192, and Annemarie Capelle, “Platonisches in *Grösseren Hippias*,” *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 99 (n.f.), no. 2 (1956), 178–190, especially 182–84.

128. Holger Thesleff, “The Date of the Pseudo-Platonic *Hippias Major*,” *Arktos* 10 (1976), 105–117.

Thanks to Peter Geach's discovery of "the Socratic Fallacy" in 1966,¹²⁹ Kahn proves to be the most interesting case. Although building on Tarrant's claim that the dialogue contains too much Platonism to be a work of the early Plato,¹³⁰ Kahn's 1985 review of Woodruff broke new ground by brushing aside the latter's attempt, part of a generally deflationary approach to the dialogue's Platonism, to show that the Socrates of *Hippias Major* does not commit the Socratic Fallacy "of supposing that a person cannot use a word correctly unless he can define it."¹³¹

Plato is careful, as the author of the *Hippias Major* is not, to avoid formulating the principle [sc. 'how can one test a proposed definition of *X* against alleged counter examples unless one knows that the example is or is not *X*?'] in a way that invites the charge of circularity *in the search for definitions*. (This is the one case where accepting the *Hippias Major* as authentic might affect our philosophical interpretation of Plato's work, and affect it negatively.)¹³²

To the exigencies that led to the need for "the *Later Hippias*," Kahn reveals a new interpretive imperative: not only is the dialogue doctrinally late, it is doctrinally false, and therefore would have a negative impact on our assessment of Plato as a philosopher—and thus no longer just as an inept artist¹³³—if it were genuine. But the other italicized phrase is more interesting, especially because Kahn has elsewhere distinguished himself by questioning the value of Aristotle's testimony about Socrates.¹³⁴

When Socrates reports in *Hippias Major* that his annoying neighbor will ask "if I am not ashamed, making bold to discourse about beautiful practices [ἐπιτηδεύματα], while being manifestly refuted concerning the Beautiful, and thus do not know even what this very thing is,"¹³⁵ neither of them would be satisfied if either merely *defined* what is in every case καλόν. Supported equally by certain dialogues of Plato and Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 4.6,¹³⁶

129. P. T. Geach, "Plato's *Euthyphro*: An Analysis and Commentary," *Monist* 50, no. 3 (July 1966), 369–382.

130. See Kahn, "The Beautiful and the Genuine," 267–73 and 283–86, especially 271–72: "the author must not only have known the dialogues extremely well but must have had a clear enough sense of the difference between the middle dialogues and earlier works to produce a dialogue of search that avoids the terminology and metaphysics of the middle dialogues while anticipating one or two of their doctrines."

131. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 139, quoted in Kahn, "The Beautiful and the Genuine," 274.

132. Kahn, "The Beautiful and the Genuine," 274 (emphases mine).

133. See Kahn, "The Beautiful and the Genuine," 268, where he quotes Wilamowitz.

134. See Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 79–87.

135. *Hp. Ma.* 304d5–8.

136. For the impact of *Memorabilia* 4.6 on Aristotle's description of Socrates' use of induction and his contribution to the syllogistic method, particularly at *Metaphysics* M. 4; 1078b23–30, see Heinrich Maier, *Sokrates: Sein Werk und geschichtliche Stellung* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr: 1913), 91–102, and Anton-Hermann Chroust, "Socrates in the Light of Aristotle's Testimony," *New Scholasticism*, 26, no. 3 (July 1956), 327–365, on 331–46. See also 334–35 for evidence of Aristotle's familiarity

Aristotle famously tells us that Socrates sought definitions (ὀρίσμοι) of the virtues,¹³⁷ but however well this claim may be applied to *Protagoras* or rather to *Laches*, *Charmides*, and *Euthyphro*—the latter being the crucial case because it was here that Geach discovered the Socratic Fallacy—it does not apply to what happens with the care of ourselves, philosophy, and the Beautiful in *Alcibiades Major*, *Lovers*, or *Hippias Major*, and perhaps this helps to explain their current status. In any case, the debate about the Socratic Fallacy,¹³⁸ with its emphasis on properties,¹³⁹ predication,¹⁴⁰ and, of course, Aristotle’s “the universals or the definitions,”¹⁴¹ inevitably seems more in Aristotle’s manner of than Plato’s. Neither Socrates nor anyone else could believably call philosophizing one of those practices (ἐπιτηδεύματα)¹⁴² that is “fine” without a first-hand knowledge of what it is to philosophize—and this is what Plato wants us to be doing, not supplying a definition for it—as well as an increasingly clear vision of the Beautiful itself, which I take to be whatever it is that is inspiring Plato to use Socrates, *Hippias Major*, and *Symposium* to teach us how to catch sight of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν,¹⁴³ not to

with Xenophon’s works, a familiarity explained by my claims (§2) about the role they played in the Academy; note that Aristotle was in his fifth year there when he, along with many others (see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.55), wrote his *Gryllus* (see 334n25), a tribute to Xenophon’s fallen son.

137. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* M. 4; 1078b17–19 (W. D. Ross modified; emphasis mine): “Socrates occupied himself concerning the ethical virtues [περὶ τὰς ἠθικὰς ἀρετὰς], and in connection with them became the first to raise the problem of universal definitions.” Cf. A. 6; 987b1–4, especially περὶ τὰ ἠθικά, and M. 9; 1086a37–b5. For translations of Aristotle, I rely on Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, two volumes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

138. For an excellent and recent discussion of the *status quaestionis*, see William J. Prior, “Socratic Metaphysics,” in John Bussanich and Nicholas D. Smith (eds.), *The Bloomsbury Companion to Socrates*, 68–93 (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

139. E.g., Prior, “Socratic Metaphysics,” 91: “Socratic forms are properties of phenomenal objects, however independent of objects they may be.”

140. Even if αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν were a property of phenomenal objects (see previous note), “beauty” is not predicated of it (see *Ascent to the Good*, lxvii); it is simply the Beautiful. Prior, “Socratic Metaphysics,” 71–76, does a very good job with the deflationary reading of *Hippias Major*. in R. M. Dancy, *Plato’s Introduction of the Forms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 77–78, concluding with: “I would mention in particular the anticipation of the Argument from Relativity in *Hippias Major* (287e–289d) discussed above. For Dancy this argument is one large step removed from the Argument from Relativity, in that its scope is limited to the beauty of a maiden, and not generalized to all beautiful things. For me the step is a small one, and is almost inevitable when one realizes that there is nothing special about the example of a maiden, that she simply typifies the entities in the phenomenal world. In general, I think the Socratic dialogues anticipate the Platonic theory of Forms in many ways such as this.” So, too, John Malcolm, “On the Place of the *Hippias Major* in the Development of Plato’s Thought,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 50 (1968), 189–195, on 193–94.

141. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* M. 4; 1078b30–31 (translation W. D. Ross); ὁ μὲν Σωκράτης τὰ καθόλου [‘the universals’] οὐ χωριστὰ ἐποιεῖ οὐδὲ τοὺς ὀρίσμοὺς [‘the definitions’].” For Aristotle’s strategy here, see *Ascent to the Good*, lxi.

142. Cf. *Am.* 135e (Lamb modified): “I daresay it may be something of this sort [sc. the all-around skill of a pentathete] that you would suggest as the effect produced by philosophy on those practicing [participial form of ἐπιτηδεύειν] this particular practice [τοῦτο τὸ ἐπιτηδεύμα].”

143. I am indebted throughout this discussion to Francesco Fronterotta, “The Development of Plato’s Theory of Ideas and the ‘Socratic Question,’” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 32 (Sum-

define it in words.¹⁴⁴ It is or at least will turn out to be a Platonic Idea—not any given “F-ness”—for which we are searching, and to call the Beautiful “self-predicating” is to confuse *what an Idea is* with a “property” that can be “predicated” of it.¹⁴⁵

The connection between *Hippias Major* and *Euthyphro* has been frequently noted,¹⁴⁶ and it is an interesting one. Both are (chronologically or developmentally) *Jugenddialoge* in form,¹⁴⁷ but both use language associated with “the Theory of Forms,” and it is this mutual association that is responsible for the fact that both have exposed Plato to the charge of committing the Socratic Fallacy.¹⁴⁸ As a result, both have created headaches for those who

mer 2007), 37–62, and here in particular to 44: “the truth requirement for the definitional question in the *Hippias Major* no longer consists in a form of ‘extensional’ universality (i.e., in the search for a universal *definiens* that extensionally embraces all the possible exemplifications of the *definiendum*), but in a form of ‘causal-ontological’ universality (i.e. in the search for a *definiens* which designates a *definiendum*, conceived as a universal reality producing the same effects in every single possible case) [the attached note cites ‘Kahn, *Socratic Dialogue*, 172–8’] an answer to the Socratic question ‘what is X?’ can now be given solely by *indicating* [emphasis mine] a unique and universal object—qualified by Plato as an ‘Idea’ or ‘Form’ itself.” For comment, see Prior, “Socratic Metaphysics,” 88–91.

144. Cf. Sir David Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 16 (emphases mine): “What led Plato to his interest in definition, if we take this hint [he has just quoted *Hp. Ma.* 286c5, proof-text for the Socratic Fallacy], was the conviction that no one *can apply a word correctly* unless he can frame some general account of its meaning. Not only, as he often says, is pointing to instances no true answer to the *problem of definition* [for which I would substitute: the problem of what *αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν* really is]; we cannot be sure that we are pointing to genuine instances unless we first know what the *definition* [better: ‘what *αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν*’] is; knowledge of connotation must precede knowledge of denotation.” Cf. Geach, “Plato’s *Euthyphro*,” 377 (emphases in the original): “what the argument [sc. at *Euthyp.* 10a–11b] does validly derive from its premises is that ‘God-loved’ and ‘pious’ have a different *connotation*, even if they *denote* the same men and actions. But have we the right to ascribe any such distinction to Plato? I doubt if any such distinction is anywhere even clearly exemplified, let alone formally expounded.”

145. Cf. Aristotle, *Topics* 5.5; 135a12–14; since *τὸ καλόν* is the same as “the fitting [*τὸ πρέπον*]” (as per *Hp. Ma.* 296d4–5) it is impossible for “what is fitting for each thing” to be that which “makes each thing beautiful” (as at *Hp. Ma.* 290d5–6), for in that case, “the fitting [*τὸ πρέπον*] would be a property [*ἴδιον*] of the beautiful [*τὸ καλόν*].”

146. In addition to Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 189–90, see Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas*, 12–17 (in “The Beginnings of the Theory,” 11–21); cf. “it seems probable that the *Euthyphro* is the first dialogue in which either of the words appears, in its special Platonic sense” (12) and “*Hippias Major* furnishes one of the earliest instances of the phrase *αὐτὸ τὸ* [a phraseology that leaves room for *Alc. I.*; see §6], which became one of the standard expressions for an Idea” (17). See also Malcolm, “Place of the *Hippias Major*,” 194n12, and more recently, Fronterotta, “Plato’s Theory of Ideas,” 42–45 and 49.

147. In this paragraph, I will make use of all three conceptions of a *Jugenddialog* in the following order: (1) a dialogue of Plato’s youth (as here), (2) a dialogue (the old) Plato wrote for the youth, i.e., made elementary for the benefit of his students, and (3) a dialogue written by a youth other than Plato with the master’s mature views in mind.

148. Cf. Gerasimos Santas, “The Socratic Fallacy,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (April 1972), 127–141, on 134–137; at the end, he finally distinguishes “the form” from “a definition” while using Recollection to reach a Platonist’s response on 141: “This past knowledge, one could then say, makes it possible for us now to recognize and tell examples when we don’t know the definition [it gets better]; in turn, the examples can serve as at least the occasion and the guide for discovering a definition; and the definition, in turn can be tested against the examples and, *more importantly* [emphasis mine], against the form itself.”

try to arrange the dialogues by Order of Composition,¹⁴⁹ since neither can be as “early” or as “metaphysically innocent”¹⁵⁰ as both of them have been made to seem. An agnostic approach to Order of Composition notwithstanding, both indicate to me that Plato never lost the ability to write *Jugenddialoge*,¹⁵¹ and this ongoing ability provides a better explanation for the same phenomenon that led Heitsch—building on Zeller, then following Röllig, Wilamowitz, and Tarrant—to posit a nameless student-imitator on whom their peculiar but revealing conception of a *Jugenddialog* depends. From the perspective of Reading Order, by contrast, *Hippias Major* can anticipate *Symposium* for the same reason that Plato could have written *Euthyphro* with its “late” neighbors *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* already in mind,¹⁵² for one merely reminds his readers of the same “separation”¹⁵³ toward which the other had pointed the way so long ago.

But in relation to the Order of Composition paradigm, for which this difference must remain invisible and even unthinkable, it is the similarity between the two dialogues that stands out. For those who grapple with the Socratic Fallacy, the similarity between *Euthyphro* and *Hippias Major* is inescapable,¹⁵⁴ and since Geach rivaled Meletus in his lack of sympathy for Socrates,¹⁵⁵ those who rose to the latter’s defense have found it equally necessary to configure *either both or neither* dialogue as alternately “robust” or “deflationary” with respect to “Plato’s Earlier Theory of Forms.”¹⁵⁶ In other

149. See Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas*, 2–4, especially interesting because *Hp. Ma.*, which this great Aristotelian argues is genuine on the basis of Aristotle’s testimony (*Topics* 102a6, 125a13, and 146a21–23 on 3–4) figures so prominently in the discussion that culminates with: “I go so far as to place it [sc. *Hp. Ma.*], tentatively, after the *Euthyphro*.”

150. Prior, “Socratic Metaphysics,” 75.

151. Cf. Zeller, “Review of Steinhart’s *Platon’s sämtliche Werke*,” 258 (reprinted in Heitsch, *Grössere Hippias*, 135): “But by the time that Plato had developed his own characteristic principle in the Theory of Ideas [in der *Ideenlehre*], he could under no circumstances have written—and Steinhart recognizes this—a work like *Hippias Major*.”

152. See *Guardians on Trial*, §2.

153. The thesis of Prior’s “Socratic Metaphysics,” announced first on 70, is that the sole difference between Plato’s Theory of Forms and “Plato’s Earlier Theory of Forms,” i.e., what we encounter in *Euthyphro* and *Hp. Ma.*, is that there is no separation (or *Kluft*) in the latter; see especially 82: “The ontology of the elenctic dialogues differs from that of the middle dialogues only in a single respect: separation.”

154. In addition to, e.g., Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 176–79, see Hugh H. Benson, “The Priority of Definition and the Socratic Elenchus,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 8 (1990), 19–65, on 52–53; naturally this claim does not hold for those, like Kahn, who simply athetize the latter, or who follow Vlastos—see especially Vlastos, *Socratic Studies*, 29–33—in regarding *Hp. Ma.*, but not *Euthyphro*, as “transitional,” as does John Beversluis, “Does Socrates Commit the Socratic Fallacy?” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (July 1987), 211–223, in 221n4.

155. Cf. Geach, “Plato’s *Euthyphro*,” 372: “I am sure that imbuing a mind with the Socratic fallacy is quite likely to be morally harmful.”

156. See R. E. Allen, “Plato’s Earlier Theory of Forms,” in Gregory Vlastos (ed.), *The Philosophy of Socrates: A Collection of Critical Essays*, 319–334 (Garden City, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 1971), 332–33, for the origins of Prior’s claims about “separation.” See also R. E. Allen, *Plato’s Euthyphro and the Earlier Theory of Forms* (London: Routledge, 1970). See William J. Prior, “Socrates Metaphysician,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 27 (Winter 2004), 1–14, on 3–4 for his debt to Allen.

words, since it is impossible to ignore the “middle-period” language found in both (εἶδος and ἰδέα in particular), one must *either* prove that language’s metaphysical innocence *or* be prepared to postpone the date when Plato wrote them.¹⁵⁷ A cruder expedient, suggested by Kahn’s response to *Hippias Major*, would be to athetize both,¹⁵⁸ and considering their similarities—running the gamut from ontological content to two equally ridiculous interlocutors¹⁵⁹—the fact of their different fates is remarkable. One must ask: how differently might we have come to regard *Euthyphro* if Thrasyllus had not placed it first in his edition?

In response to these similarities, it deserves consideration that beginning with Schleiermacher,¹⁶⁰ the authenticity of *Euthyphro* has likewise been contested.¹⁶¹ In 1861, Christian Schaarschmidt considered damning the presence of the words εἶδος and ἰδέα—i.e., the language of Form and Idea—because they validated the same kind of deflationary ontological approach that others would later champion: “the author [*der Verfasser*] regards ἰδέα as a mere concept.”¹⁶² Five years earlier, Friedrich Ueberweg, on the basis of both ἰδέα and οὐσία,¹⁶³ had branded *Euthyphro* as the work not of a well-meaning student but of “a forger [*ein Fälscher*].”¹⁶⁴ Even in English, J. A. Stewart was still willing to entertain the possibility—which had recently been revived by Paul Natorp¹⁶⁵—that *Euthyphro* was inauthentic in 1909,¹⁶⁶

157. In addition to the table in Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas*, 2, see in particular Hans Raeder, *Platons philosophische Entwicklung*, second edition (Leipzig: Teubner, 1920), 128–130.

158. In fact, Kahn is excellent on *Euthyphro*. in *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 175–78, culminating with: “Of all the references to forms and essences in the dialogues of definition, this passage of the *Euthyphro* [6d10–e7] is richest in terms and phrases that anticipate the full theory of Forms.” With the exception of “paradigm [παράδειγμα]” (*Euthyphro*. 6e6)—which will figure so prominently in *Sph.* on which see *Guardians on Trial*, 83 and 41—all of these “terms and phrases” are found in *Hp. Ma.* as well.

159. It is on the basis of *Euthyphro* as a “dangerous nutbar” that Rachel Barney offers an ironic reading of Socrates’ claim to etymological inspiration at *Cra.* 396d2–e1; see her *Names and Nature in Plato’s Cratylus* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 54.

160. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 125 (Dobson 110) notes “many peculiarities in the execution which, instead of the already approved and finished master, betray a not unsuccessful, and therefore complacently consequentializing imitator, eager to push to extremes the moderate acquisition of a little dialectics and a somewhat superficial irony.”

161. Cf. Ast, *Platons Leben und Schriften*, 469–474 and 457–462 (on *Hp. Ma.*); in arguing for the inauthenticity of the latter, he notes many important parallels with *Prt.* (462).

162. C. Schaarschmidt, *Die Sammlung des Platonischen Schriften zur Scheidung der echten von den echten untersucht* (Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1866), 394. See *Guardians on Trial*, 28–29 for the robustly Platonic response of Nietzsche’s Plato teacher (429n337) to *Sph.*

163. The transition of *Euthyphro*. from dubious to unquestionable can be detected in Rudolph Hirzel, “οὐσία,” *Philologus* 72 (1913), 42–64, where only *Hp. Ma.* is taken to task (56–57).

164. Friedrich Ueberweg, *Untersuchungen über die Echtheit und Zeitfolge Platonischer Schriften und über die Hauptmomente aus Platons Leben* (Vienna: Carl Gerold’s Sohn, 1861), 251.

165. See Paul Natorp, *Platons Ideenlehre*, 39n1; in the second edition (1922), he retracts the claim (525) he made in the first (1902) without, however, deleting the note.

166. J. A. Stewart, *Plato’s Doctrine of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), 17–18.

a step for which A. E. Taylor excoriated him.¹⁶⁷ Conversely, it is probably because of his ardent support for a wholesomely Platonist *Euthyphro* that W. A. Heidel,¹⁶⁸ whose doctoral dissertation was the famously critical *Pseudo-platonica*, never broaches there the possibility that *Hippias Major* might be inauthentic,¹⁶⁹ even though he still found it necessary to respond to, or at least mention, those who thought that *Euthyphro* was.¹⁷⁰

With this historical excursus as background, consider the following parody of a Heitsch-style attack on *Euthyphro*: “The would-be parricide of this inferior little dialogue¹⁷¹ is manifestly a different person from the skilled etymologist who has so inspired Socrates in *Cratylus*.¹⁷² As for *die moderne Philologie*, a critic might point out that “the verb *κατατομεῖν*—used three times in *Euthyphro* (*Euthyp.* 3b6, 5a8, and 16a3) but found nowhere else in

167. See A. E. Taylor, “Review of *Plato’s Doctrine of Ideas* by J. A. Stewart.” *Mind* (n.s.) 19, no. 73 (January 1910), 82–97, on 92 (emphasis mine): “Prof. Stewart should really not have repeated, in a way which does not altogether suggest disapproval, Natorp’s fantastic assertion that *so thoroughly characteristic a work* is spurious.” Given that piety is not included among the virtues in *R.*, I am suggesting that it is thanks to its initial position in Thrasylus that Taylor regards it as such; athetizing a work that so many readers had come to regard as “thoroughly characteristic” would give athetizing the bad name it deserves.

168. In addition to W. A. Heidel, “On Plato’s *Euthyphro*.” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 31 (1900), 163–181, see William Arthur Heidel (ed.), *Plato’s Euthyphro; with Introduction and Notes* (London: American Book Company, 1902), 26–27.

169. On the basis of Aristotle’s testimony in Heidel, *Pseudo-platonica*, 7; for his awareness of the connection between *Hippias Major* and *Euthyphro*, see W. A. Heidel, “Review of *Platons Philosophische Entwicklung* by Hans Raeder,” *The Philosophical Review* 16, no. 2 (March 1907), 184–190, on 188: “This same dialogue [sc. *Euthyphro*] presents several striking resemblances, commonly overlooked [as Heidel ought to know, since he fails to mention them in his *Plato’s Euthyphro*], to *Hippias Major*, which is regularly dated early. Thus, when Hippias, responding to a demand for a definition of beauty, replies (287e) that it is ‘a beauty,’ that is to say, a beautiful girl, one is properly reminded of *Euthyphro*, who defines piety by saying that it is doing as he is doing, to wit, prosecuting his father (5d). Compare also 296e with 10a ff., 297c–d with 11e ff., and study the closing scenes of the two dialogues. Hence one may be pardoned a doubt when Raeder (p. 104) says that εἶδος, which is found also in *Euthyphro* (6d), occurs first in the *Hippias Major*, and that the use of the word contains only a ‘germ’ of the Theory of Ideas.” Heidel knows that it is more than this in *Euthyphro*, but from a Reading Order perspective, Raeder’s sentence—especially when considered in the context of the Seed-Sower of Studies in *Am.*—is perfect: “Hierin birgt sich aber nur ein Keim der Ideenlehre.”

170. See Heidel, “On Plato’s *Euthyphro*,” 176–78, concluding with (emphasis mine): “I shall not pause to review in detail the arguments against the authenticity of our dialogue which are based upon considerations of language and the Platonic doctrine of Ideas [note 2]. Others have dealt with these questions in a manner calculated to satisfy all reasonable demands.” In the attached note, he cites Shorey, Bonitz, and Zeller to support his position. Of these, see in particular Hermann Bonitz, “Zur Erklärung des Dialogs *Euthyphron*,” in *Platonische Studien*, second edition, 215–227 (Berlin: Franz Vahlen, 1875), 226–27; with the following parody, cf. 226n8.

171. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 124: “eine sehr untergeordnete Arbeit” with Ast, *Platons Leben und Schriften*, 471: “eine mit seinen grösseren Werken nicht vergleichbare Schrift.”

172. A welcome observation for anyone who wishes to march more boldly through the door opened in David Sedley, *Plato’s Cratylus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 40–41, beginning with: “since *Euthyphro* is portrayed in the dialogue Plato named after him as a religious bigot, it is easy to infer [as, e.g., Barney does] that fingering him as Socrates’ source of inspiration is tantamount to dismissing the etymologies purportedly inspired by him. But it need not be so.”

Plato except *Laws* and *Epinomis*¹⁷³—proves that this inept imitation of an early Socratic dialogue was actually written later than those paradigmatically late works. Moreover, because it is only in *Euthyphro* and *Epinomis* (*Epin.* 985c8) that καινοτομεῖν means: ‘to innovate in religious matters,’ the probable author of both equally un-Platonic works—both concerned with piety,¹⁷⁴ a virtue not included in *Republic*—is Philip of Opus.”¹⁷⁵

Of course it is not on the basis of this parody that I regard *Hippias Major* to be an authentic Platonic dialogue but rather because (to review only those connections Plato the Teacher has used to make things obvious) the lecture on Homer it announces (*Hp. Ma.* 286a3–c2) has just been delivered in *Hippias Minor* (*Hp. Mi.* 363a1–b1),¹⁷⁶ and because the question with which it grapples—“what is the Beautiful? [τι ἐστὶ τὸ καλόν]”—emerges elegantly in *Lovers*, where Socrates shows that determining whether or not philosophy is καλόν cannot be decided before we have answered the question: “what is philosophy?” As for *Lovers*, Reading Order proves its authenticity because πολυμαθία, the notion of philosophy Socrates refutes there—thereby already preparing us to find it between wisdom and ignorance in *Symposium*—emerges in *Alcibiades Minor* before being embodied in Hippias, the know-it-all who twice plays ὁ σοφός to Alcibiades’ equally doubled ὁ ἀμαθής.

SECTION 9. PLATO'S PONS ASINORUM

Euclid is reported to have told a king: “there is no shortcut [ἀτραπός] to geometry,”¹⁷⁷ but by beginning his edition with *Euthyphro*, Thrasyllus attempted to provide just such a “royal road” to Platonism. Connected to the immortal *Phaedo* by both dramatic circumstance and its “Socratic” antcipa-

173. *Lg.* 656e2, 709a6, 797b4, and 797c1; also *Epin.* 985c8.

174. See Leonardo Tarán, *Academica: Plato, Philip of Opus, and the Pseudo-Platonic Epinomis* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1975), 32: “the author concludes that the highest part of virtue, i.e. wisdom, is piety.”

175. It will never cease to amaze me that scholars have taken the “some say” statement in Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.37, about Plato leaving an incomplete *Lg.* to Philip of Opus who then wrote *Epin.*, as virtually unquestionable interpretive bedrock—for stylometric analysis depends entirely on the presupposition that *Lg.* is Plato’s last work, for which this text is our oldest evidence—while ignoring the claim that Diogenes makes in his own name that Xenophon was “first [πρῶτος]” to record Socratic conversations (2.48).

176. For a brilliant analysis of the two dialogues as a pair, see Otto Apelt, “Die beiden Dialoge Hippias” in *Platonische Aufsätze*, 203–237 (Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1912), ending with a thought-experiment: what if Aristotle’s testimony had not confirmed the authenticity of *Hp. Mi.*? It is a pleasure to cite Apelt, a fellow high-school teacher.

177. Proclus, *A Commentary to the First Book of Euclid’s Elements; Translated, with an Introduction and Notes* by Glenn R. Morrow (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 57: “Ptolemy once asked Euclid if there was not a shorter road to geometry than through the Elements, and Euclid replied that there was no royal road to geometry.” For “shortcut,” see LSJ.

tion of the Platonic ἰδέα, *Euthyphro* is indispensable for giving the reader early access to “the Theory of Ideas,” and the results would be disastrous quite apart from the resulting Demotion of *Alcibiades Major*. Lulled into the illusion of full appreciation by the moral sublimity of its dramatic setting and its singing swans, readers who come to *Phaedo* with no more experience of what it is to read a Platonic dialogue than what they have encountered in *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, and *Crito* will not only have ipso facto acquired lazy habits—for there are broad swaths of the dialogue that are unintelligible without an acquaintance with many other dialogues, and indeed with all of them¹⁷⁸—but are likewise now fully prepared to outgrow its “teaching” when they finally come to read *Parmenides* and *Philebus*. Based on the parallels between *Euthyphro* and *Hippias Major* (see §8), an early reading of the one usurps the role Plato assigned to the other, for in the pedagogical economy of the Platonic Reading Order, *Hippias Major* is Plato’s equivalent of Euclid 1.5: it is the ass’s bridge or *pons asinorum* without the mastery of which no further progress is to be expected.¹⁷⁹

Euthyphro prepares the reader for *Phaedo* in the same way that *Hippias Major* does for *Symposium*, and it is appropriate that this—the middle section of the middle chapter of a book that spans the distance between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*¹⁸⁰—should treat *Hippias Major* as the pedagogical masterpiece that it is. The architecture involved is itself a thing of great beauty. Of the seven dialogues between the two Bookends, it stands in the middle. So great a masterpiece of the fine art of teaching is *Greater Hippias*, in fact, that this section can only begin the process of exploring its excellences; Plato’s brilliant expedient of doubling Socrates will not be considered until §10. Here, the focus will be on the dialogue’s structure and content apart from its principal conceit, and since Plato is at some pains to emphasize the geometrical interests of Hippias—and to suggest the almost modern connection between that interest and his expertise in physics—I am using the geometrical metaphor of the *pons asinorum* to describe it. But as beautiful as its internal structure may be, its place in the Reading Order, usurped by *Euthyphro* on my account, can and must be shown to be even more elegant, if, that is, it is possible to undo the damage done by Thrasyllus’ attempt to give Plato’s (royal?) readers an ἀτραπός.

178. See *Guardians on Trial*, 448–50.

179. All otherwise unidentified Stephanus-page references in the remainder of this chapter are to *Hp. Ma*.

180. *Hippias Major* mediates the distance between the Beautiful as Pleasant in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 360a3) and the Beautiful as τέλος in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 211a2–212a7), and since I am claiming that it prepares for the latter, it could just as easily been written before as after it. Note that it is one of the great ironies of this dialogue’s reception that Kahn, the discoverer of proleptic composition (*Preface*, principle §4), is its foremost living critic.

His mistake was easy to make. In many respects, the shorter *Euthyphro* would seem to be a much easier dialogue than *Hippias Major* despite its later position in the Reading Order. On the other hand, the tools necessary for a full appreciation of *Euthyphro*—which Reading Order shows to be a marvelous blend of a delightful respite between, and a revealingly comic commentary upon, crucial passages in both *Theaetetus* (*Th.* 176b1) and *Sophist* (*Sph.* 248e2–5)¹⁸¹—are no more than indicated by Thrasyllus’ decision to follow the First Tetralogy with *Cratylus*, *Theaetetus*, and the Eleatic Dyad. It also deserves mention that Thrasyllus did far better with *Hippias Major*, for the Seventh Tetralogy preserves or at least anticipates the Reading Order by following it with *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, and *Menexenus*. It is the dialogues that precede *Hippias Major* whose role Thrasyllus managed to obscure: having first joined *Protagoras* to three other similar dialogues—i.e., *Euthydemus*, *Gorgias*, and *Meno*—he demoted *Alcibiades Major*, *Alcibiades Minor*, and *Lovers* to the Fourth Tetralogy while joining them to *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, the longest and sexiest of Plato’s homoerotic dialogues (see §7). Having already suggested that the Demotion of *Alcibiades* was in part a result of a now dominant and Rome-inspired homophobia, locating the tetralogy that began with *Hippias Major* directly after *Euthydemus*, *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, and *Meno* must have seemed perfectly logical, albeit at the expense of Thrasyllus’ dubious decision to segregate the long dialogues of the Sixth from the shorter ones of the Fifth.

In comparison with this hodgepodge blend of insight and ignorance, the Reading Order as recovered or reconstructed here is a thing of geometrical beauty. Mediated by *Lovers* (see §8), the *Alcibiades* and *Hippias* Dyads are equally necessary to the mountaintop from which we will catch sight of the sea in *Symposium*. In Thrasyllus’ First Tetralogy, *Euthyphro* introduces *Phaedo* in a dramatic if not a doctrinal sense. In the Reading Order, Plato prepares his beginners for *Symposium* by combining the dramatic preparation embodied in the *Alcibiades* dyad—especially the universally accessible sexual tension of “Socrates’ Seduction” only relieved by the Great Speech of Alcibiades—with doctrinal preparation in *Hippias Major*, aptly described by Theodor Gomperz as “a kind of propaedeutic prelude,”¹⁸² for a vision of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν. As a result, we reach the following equation: *Alcibiades* dyad + *Hippias Major* = *Symposium*, and the greater advance preparation for

181. See *Guardians on Trial*, 36–37 and 41.

182. Cf. Theodor Gomperz, “Die deutsche Literatur über die sokratische, platonische, und aristotelische Philosophie. 1899 und 1900,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 15 (1902), 119–153, on 135: “Und nur, wenn etwa Platon selbst, vor der Abfassung des *Gastmahls* [sc. before writing *Symposium*], aber mit dessen Grundgedanken [sc. ‘das Schönen an sich als einer selbständigen Idee’ on 134] schön vertraut, das Gespräch [sc. *Hp. Ma.*] verfaßt hätte, als eine Art propädeutischen Vorspiels, würden beide Schwierigkeiten [i.e., the difficulties that arise from placing its composition either after *Smp.* and *R.* or before them] in gleicher Weise gehoben.”

Symposium in the Reading Order stands in sharp contrast to the truncated and inadequate preparation—at least doctrinally—that *Euthyphro* provides for *Phaedo*. So important (and noble) is Socrates’ *Heldentod* that all of Plato’s dialogues prepare for it, but when read too early, it invites the sophisticated to imagine its author outgrew it. Although I would never want to underestimate the inspiring effect created by either the death scene or the swans in *Phaedo* whenever encountered, the only thing I can imagine that could match the unalloyed literary delight of encountering *Symposium* in the proper order would be reaching the rooster for Asclepius only after having read every other Platonic dialogue.

In Plato’s scheme, then, we first ascend to *Symposium*,¹⁸³ Thrasyllus’ short-cut prepares us to outgrow *Phaedo*. It is the Reading Order’s *separation* of the three great dialogues of “separation” that reveals the crucial role of Platonism in Plato’s dialogues: only when *Symposium*, *Phaedo*, and *Republic* are combined by Order of Composition into a neatly compact and segregated phase of Plato’s (outgrown) Development,¹⁸⁴ can the consensus emerge that the creator of Platonism should not be enrolled among “the friends of the forms” (*Sph.* 248a4–c2).¹⁸⁵ Although the separation of the Idea of Beauty from the merely visible beauties of this world will be allowed to disappear in the dialogues that separate *Symposium* from *Republic* (cf. *Euthd.* 300e3–301a4 and *Smp.* 211a5–b5)—except, that is, from the place it now occupies in the sympathetic reader’s soul—it will reappear in *Republic* 5 in preparation for the Idea of the Good in *Republic* 6–7. We have therefore been both inspired by Diotima and battle-tested, particularly in *Gorgias* (cf. *Grg.* 474d5–e1 and *Smp.* 211a3–5) by the time we are challenged to return to the Cave, a challenge that can only apply to those alone who have first climbed out of it thanks to a post-visible ascent to the Beautiful. As for reading *Phaedo* on its own, we are going to make several serious mistakes if we think its author hadn’t already described the hypothetical method and the necessary role of images in *Republic* 6,¹⁸⁶ or hasn’t exploded the “the Big” by “the Third Man” in *Parmenides*.¹⁸⁷

Thanks to the mediating role played by Beauty in the final ascent to the Good, *Hippias Major* sets this crucial process in motion. Although there are hints of Justice (see §5), the Idea of the Good, and the Divided Line in *Alcibiades Major* (see §6), it is not mere adumbration or intuitive inspiration

183. Cf. Hobbs, *Plato and the Hero*, 223: “The *Republic* descends from the realm of the Forms to the everyday world: at 516e4 the Philosopher-Ruler ‘goes down’ (*katabas*) from the sunlit heavens back into the cave. The *Symposium* moves in the opposite direction: it ascends from the everyday world of individual loves and their beautiful flesh to the vision of Beauty itself. In terms of our moral progress, therefore, the *Symposium* is prior.”

184. On the resulting *cordon sanitaire*, see *Ascent to the Good*, xliii.

185. See *Guardians on Trial*, 19, 30–32, and *Guardians in Action*, 378.

186. See *Guardians on Trial*, 383–84.

187. See *Guardians on Trial*, 384–86.

that Plato counts on his *Hippias Major* to provide his beginners: it is the necessary and well-designed literary, logical, pedagogical, and ontological preparation for the Diotima-discourse in *Symposium*, and thus for “the great ocean of Beauty” (*Smp.* 210d4) that we will see from its mountain peak. As a result, the first thing that must be said about the dialogue from a pedagogical standpoint is that it is at once easy and difficult. Breaking anyone’s allegiance to the physical and the visible is not easy, but Plato the Teacher does his level best to make it seem to be so. He has made *Hippias Major* as funny and accessible as he can. But it is also *indispensable*, and without building on the foundation it provides, the reader can make no further progress. Equally because of its simplicity, elegance, and pedagogical necessity, then, *Hippias Major* is Plato’s *pons asinorum*: it is the gateway to *Symposium* and to all the riches that can be ours only *after* we have crossed over the river.

If only because *Hippias Major* seems to be less difficult and important than it really is, it is the discussion of “the fitting [τὸ πρέπον]” (293c7–295c1) that will begin to determine who will have successfully crossed the bridge,¹⁸⁸ for Plato has made the moment of crossing seem easy, born as it is in our contemptuous laughter for Hippias’ obtuse failure to understand the Double’s question. As Heitsch points out (see §8), it is only at 294c1–3 that Socrates offers a definition in his own name for the first time, and it should already be obvious, thanks to what Woodruff has called “the problem of incompleteness,” that further discussion of τὸ χρήσιμον will play the central role in this section.¹⁸⁹ But it is the discussion of τὸ πρέπον that marks the moment of transit: unlike the proposals that follow, beginning with χρήσιμον, it is “Socrates’ Double,” in a moment of pedagogical pity (293d1–e5), who proposes revisiting something that emerged from the second of Hippias’ three proposals: what makes each thing καλόν is whatever is fitting (πρέπειν) for each (290d5–6).¹⁹⁰ Although the difference between Socrates and his Double is merely apparent, it is significant in a literary sense, and because the Double is explicitly drawing on one of Hippias’ earlier attempts (cf. 293e4–5 and 290c7), the discussion of τὸ πρέπον therefore divides the dialogue’s first Hippias-phase from its Socrates-phase.

188. For a πρέπον-centric reading of *Hippias Major*, see Ivor Ludlam, *Hippias Major: An Interpretation* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991), a lively piece of work the substance of which is succinctly identified by Michael J. O’Brien, “Review of *Hippias Major: An Interpretation* by Ivor Ludlam,” *Classical Review* 43, no. 1 (1993), 185–186, on 185: “In the end it is said to be the author’s intent to imply that τὸ καλόν = τὸ φαινόμενον πρέπον.” O’Brien fails to note is that Ludlam distinguishes the Beautiful from the Good on this basis on 181, i.e., that the latter is not merely τὸ φαινόμενον πρέπον.

189. As noted in §5, one of the most important pedagogical advances that Plato makes on Xenophon is that the latter—his predecessor on my account (see §2)—identified the καλόν with the χρήσιμον in *Memorabilia*, 3.8.5–6 and 4.6.9; more on this below.

190. Cf. Hans-Jürgen Horn, “*Hippias Maior*: Untersuchungen zur Echtheitsfrage des Dialogs” (Doctoral dissertation: Universität zu Köln, 1964), 33–39.

Speaking of phases, it is important to consider how symmetrical *Hippias Major* really is. The fact that its first Hippias-phase (286c3–293c5) has three parts is clear: Hippias proposes a beautiful girl (287e4–289d5), gold (289d6–291c9), and an ideal Greek life (291d9–293c5).¹⁹¹ The question, then, is whether the Socrates-phase also contains three parts, i.e., whether there are two or more different attempts to say what τὸ καλόν is following the reappearance of τὸ πρέπον. Regardless of the intervening number, the last attempt—what I will call “the Double Definition” (introduced at 297e5–298b1)—is by far the longest (297e3–304e), roughly equal in length to the Hippias-phase as a whole. But if there is any meaningful sense in which the Double Definition itself consists of three parts—and since it contains a digression in the middle (300b6–303a11), there is a *prima facie* basis for so dividing it¹⁹²—then it begins to look like it initiates a *third* phase of the dialogue, rather than constituting either the third or fourth “definition” in the Socrates-phase. This would place another triad *between* the Hippias-phase and the Double Definition: τὸ πρέπον (293e4–295c1), what is useful or χρήσιμον (295c1–296e1), and τὸ ὠφέλιμον, i.e., the beneficial (296e1–297e2).¹⁹³ Note that this would place “the useful” in the dialogue’s center, a result that Xenophon’s influence explains.

Robert G. Hoerber (1918–1996) was able to find so many triads in *Hippias Major* that he combined the discussion of χρήσιμον and τὸ ὠφέλιμον into one—the second of “Socrates’ three suggestions,” with the Double Definition as the third—in order to preserve a triadic structure for the Socrates-phase of the dialogue.¹⁹⁴ Locating the discussion of χρήσιμον in the middle *of the middle phase* gives the dialogue an even more neatly triadic structure. Hence Hoerber’s decision to combine the second and third members of that phase

191. The principal purpose of the latter (from the perspective of Reading Order) is the introduction of Achilles (292e8–293a1), a topic that will be further developed in §10, in *Hippias Minor* (see §11) and in *Symposium* (see §16).

192. Cf. Michael L. Morgan, “The Continuity Theory of Reality in Plato’s *Hippias Major*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 21, no. 2 (April 1983), 133–158, on 134: “The *elenchos* that follows has three parts: (I) 298d5–300b3; (II) 300b4–302c7; (III) 302c7–303d10.”

193. For a brilliant defense of this three-part structure, see David Wolfsdorf, “*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2: Plato’s Critique of a Corporeal Conception of Forms and of the Form-Participant Relation,” *Apeiron* 39, no. 3 (September 2006), 221–256; he introduces the structure on 239 and then connects the three proposals of the Hippias-phase to the three proposals of the *first* Socrates-phase—the Double Definition being at once the third phase of the overall argument *and* the second Socrates-phase—on 250: “Socrates’ first three definitions correspond to each of these modes of conceptualizing beauty: the decorous, which is conceived in sensual terms and rejected on the grounds that it makes things appear rather than be beautiful; the useful, which is rejected on the grounds that that which is instrumental to a bad end is not beautiful (that is, has negative value); and the beneficial, which of course entails the concept of goodness.”

194. Robert G. Hoerber, “Plato’s *Greater Hippias*,” *Phronesis* 9, no. 2 (1964), 143–155, on 146–47.

was probably an error.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, Hoerber managed to reveal something important about Platonic pedagogy. He was an impressive Plato scholar, and there are few who reviewed more books: in addition to middling efforts on Sprague, Vlastos, and Strauss, he was excellent on Krämer,¹⁹⁶ Friedländer,¹⁹⁷ and Guthrie.¹⁹⁸ After a single book on Plato's *Republic*,¹⁹⁹ Hoerber created an impressive series of articles on individual dialogues: *Symposium* (1957), *Euthyphro* (1958), *Lysis* (1959), *Meno* (1960), *Republic* (1960 and 1961), *Hippias Minor* (1962), *Hippias Major* (1964), and *Laches* (1968). And among these, the one on *Hippias Major* stands out: in addition to a valuable section on "intertwining,"²⁰⁰ he discovers so many "triplets"²⁰¹ in the dialogue that no fair-minded reader can doubt that Plato is making a point here about the value of triads.²⁰² In short, *Hippias Major* is very symmetrical indeed.

With respect to the three-part Hippias-phase, the first attempt is clearly designed to be risible, and presents Hippias as temperamentally or intellectually unable to grasp that Socrates is not asking him to identify a some physi-

195. Cf. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 46: "Hippias' answer starts a series of seven proposed definitions, an unusually high number for such dialogues." The Double Definition is the seventh of these. Note that I am throughout characterizing these as "definitions" under protest (see §8).

196. In addition to drawing attention to Krämer's reliance on a single sentence (*Grg.* 506e1–2) from the Feigned Dialogue (see §5), Robert G. Hoerber, "Review of *Arete bei Platon und Aristoteles: Zum Wesen und zur Geschichte der platonischen Ontologie* by Hans Joachim Krämer." *Classical Journal* 57, no. 3 (December 1961), 131–132, contains this amiable confession on 132: "In all fairness both to the author and to our readers, we admit a preference for the views of Professors Shorey and Cherniss, and therefore shall leave any criticism on this aspect of the volume to reviewers who are more favorably disposed to Krämer's position."

197. Robert G. Hoerber, "Review of *Plato, Vol. 3: The Dialogues, Second and Third Periods* by Paul Friedländer and Hans Meyerhoff," *Classical Philology* 66, no. 3 (July 1971), 192–193, on 192: "The soundness of the author's approach to Plato shines through particularly in his understanding of the entire Platonic corpus and in his keen analysis of various literary clues."

198. See Robert G. Hoerber, "Review of *A History of Greek Philosophy. Volume IV: Plato: The Man and His Dialogues: Earlier Period* by W. K. C. Guthrie," *Classical Outlook* 54, no. 5 (January 1977), 57 (first word): "Undoubtedly Guthrie's work will be the standard opus on Greek philosophy for some years to come."

199. Robert George Hoerber, *The Theme of Plato's Republic* (St. Louis, MO: Eden, 1944) is an early critique of interpreting the City in *R.* as "Plato's Political Theory." On the latter, see *Guardians on Trial*, 207–209.

200. Hoerber, "Greater Hippias," 149–50.

201. Hoerber, "Greater Hippias," 147–49, e.g., on 148: "Hippias expresses his third definition of 'beauty' [sc. at 291d9–293c5] in two sets of triplets. Concerning one's life there are three requisites—1) wealth, 2) health, 3) honor among the Greeks; and another three requisites are related to death—1) the reaching of old age, 2) previous suitable burial of parents, 3) suitable burial by children (291d–e). When Socrates objects to the narrowness of Hippias' third attempt, he also phrases his remarks in three pairs—a definition of 'beauty' should include 1) wood and stone, 2) humans and gods, 3) action and learning (292d). Socrates' remarks, furthermore, refer to three levels of mythological characters—1) gods, 2) demigods, 3) 'heroes,' who were not sons of gods (292e–293b). The references also occur in three groups—1) Achilles, his grandfather Aeacus, and others, 2) Heracles, 3) Tantalus, Dardanus, Zethus, and Pelops (292e–293b)." Cf. Robert C. Hoerber, "Plato's *Lysis*." *Phronesis* 4, no. 1 (1959), 15–28, on 17–20.

202. See *Ascent to the Good*, 54n242, 125, and 229; *Plato the Teacher*, 120–23, 142n75, 248, and 292; *Guardians in Action*, 280–83, and *Guardians on Trial*, 277–83.

cal thing or “concrete particular”²⁰³ that is beautiful—like a girl (287e3–4), a horse, or all of τὰ καλὰ (288e8–9)—but rather to tell him about αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν (288a8, 289c3, and 289d2), i.e., not what is καλόν but rather what is “the Beautiful itself.” The central problems surrounding both the dialogue’s authenticity and its place either among the dialogues or outside of them come together in the run-up and refutation of “the Virgin Solution” (especially 289c1–d5). If we judge the author’s language to imply that he already embraces “the Theory of Forms,” then we will be told that Plato is not the author, especially since the dialogue’s comedy here is so broad—even for the reader who has not yet gotten the joke of the Double (286c5–d2)—and its Hippias so risibly obtuse, that its author must have been young (see §8). In response, the limitations of “Hippias” should be understood as pedagogical, not as temperamental, intellectual, or indeed actual, for “he” is merely one of Plato’s characters: his Hippias is obtuse for the sake of the student,²⁰⁴ not because Plato is intent on ridiculing “him.” And when *Hippias Major* is identified as the *pons asinorum* that connects the relativism of Protagoras’ (nearly) show-stopping speech in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 334a3–c6) to the ruthlessly derelativized αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν of the Diotima Discourse in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 210e2–211b5), “the author’s language” likewise serves Plato’s pedagogical purpose.

But the current defense of an authentic *Hippias Major* is no friendlier to this solution than is Heitsch’s attack on it. Before publishing his tide-turning 1982 commentary on the whole dialogue, Paul Woodruff stated with great clarity the guiding motive of his approach to rehabilitating *Hippias Major* in a 1978 article on “Socrates and Ontology.”²⁰⁵ Since his goal was to assimilate the dialogue to “the philosophy of Socrates” as defined by Vlastos, Woodruff needed to demonstrate that it is likewise “innocent of metaphysics.”²⁰⁶ And this is what his paper purports to have proved:

I conclude that there is no evidence in the present passage to support [R. E.] Allen’s thesis that the forms of the early dialogues exist separately from their instances. Socrates spurns Hippias’ fine virgin not because she does not exist, but because she does not explain. In the *Hippias Major*, Socrates’ ‘What is it?’ question is ontologically neutral. We may admit the dialogue to the canon of

203. Cf. Eugène Dupréel, *La légende socratique et les sources de Platon* (Brussels: Robert Sands, 1922), 200–201: “Hippias, met à la base de sa philosophie l’affirmation des êtres individuels.”

204. Ruby Blondell, *The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 163n217: “Only in Xenophon does he [sc. Hippias] complain of Socratic mockery (*Mem.* 4.4.9; cf. 4.4.11).”

205. Paul Woodruff, “Socrates and Ontology: The Evidence of the *Hippias Major*,” *Phronesis* 23, no. 2 (1978), 101–117.

206. Woodruff, “Socrates and Ontology,” 101–102: “Socrates’ inquiries do not and need not require him to engage in metaphysical speculation. The early dialogues that represent Socrates are thus innocent of metaphysics.”

Plato's earlier works without danger to the cliché that they represent the innocence of philosophy.²⁰⁷

Although Woodruff argues that it would be a mistake to read "Plato's middle dialogues" into *Hippias Major*,²⁰⁸ he is willing to admit that this "innocence" is already subject to what he calls "temptation,"²⁰⁹ and therefore readily admits the obvious: "I am not denying that Socrates' question harbors the seeds of Plato's lavish ontology."²¹⁰ In fact, the whole piece deserves careful study, beginning with its first word (i.e., "Aristotle")²¹¹ and its hyper-Vlastosian response—so out of place when coming from a commentator on *Hippias Major*—to the question: "Does Socrates Cheat?"²¹²

If Woodruff's approach does not prove that Plato's *Hippias Major* is itself "beautiful," it at least proves that it is pedagogically *πρέπον* (i.e., appropriate) for Plato's neophytes, *χρήσιμον* (i.e., useful) for flushing out those students (like Aristotle) who are never going to cross the bridge into Platonism, and finally *ωφέλιμον* (i.e., beneficial) for pointing forward to the transcendent Good by way of the Beautiful.²¹³ Plato has anticipated Woodruff's "the seeds of Plato's lavish ontology" with the Seed Sower of Studies in *Lovers* (see §7), and as a direct result, "Platonism" is *not* fully present in *Hippias Major*. If it were, Plato's students couldn't laugh their way into discovering it for themselves while watching Socrates' Double run circles around Hippias and his Virgin. In *Hippias Minor* (see §11), Socrates will explain why the absence of, e.g., Platonism in the dialogue does not prove that it wasn't in the mind of "the author" while writing it: only one who knows the truth can effectively conceal it. It is therefore Woodruff's use of "tempt" and "temptation" that strikes the exactly the right note about these early dialogues:

They are ontologically neutral in that there is no particular ontology that they require, and, though they tempt one to provide them an ontology, the proof of

207. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 113.

208. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 105: "we must avoid the danger of reading into the *Hippias Major* doctrines from Plato's middle dialogues."

209. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 102; this passage will be quoted in the text below.

210. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 109; cf. "the latency of ontologies in Socrates' language" on the same page.

211. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 101: "Aristotle notes with approval that Socrates did not separate the forms." Cf. 110: "If Socratic forms are causes at all, they are probably more like Aristotelian formal causes. In as much as they are like Aristotelian formal causes, the inference to IIb [sc. 'F-ness (or the F) exists apart' on 109] collapses, for Aristotle's forms do not exist apart. In any event, we should be reluctant to interpret Plato through Aristotelian concepts." This last observation, perfectly true though it is, is quite perfectly bizarre in context.

212. Woodruff, "Socrates and Ontology," 115n26: "It would be tiresome to give here the catalogue of those who think Socrates is not the 'despotic logician' but the great bamboo-zler. In fact, Socrates has nothing but contempt for the deliberate use of fallacy. It is child's play (*Euthydemus* 278b)." Note that all men wish to εὖ πράττειν at *Euthd.* 278e3.

213. This polarity also exists, of course, on the interpretive level; for a "Form-friendly" reading of *Hp. Ma.*, see, e.g., Malcolm, "Place of *Hippias Major*."

their neutrality is that Plato and Aristotle respond differently, but with equal respect, to the temptation. Socrates' exercises in definition are at the same time a rich breeding ground for Plato's lavish ontology and assimilable gracefully to Aristotle's more austere one.²¹⁴

Regardless of the series of misconceptions that make it possible for Woodruff to place Aristotle and Plato *on an equal footing* with respect to the challenge of (the historical) Socrates—all of them deriving from Aristotle himself—his use of “temptation” captures perfectly a crucial element of Platonic pedagogy. Despite the fact that (Plato's) Socrates is by no means searching for “a definition” of (one of) “the virtues” in *Hippias Major*, and despite the fact that Aristotle's certainty that (the historical) Socrates did not “separate the Forms” rests on his response to (only some of) Plato's imitations of Socrates, the possibility that not all of Plato's students will pass over his *pons asinorum* is built into the very notion that there is in fact a bridge to be crossed. Plato's pedagogical skill is evident in the dialogue's Hippias-phase because he makes crossing it look easy. He does this by making Hippias—and those who, like “him,” resist “the crossing”—look like blockheads. But Aristotle's response to Plato's dialogues proves that this crossing is not easy at all—it has only been made to seem like it is—for there are smart students like the Stagirite who will refuse to cross and who will exert their ingenuity to discover some means by which to justify their refusal to do so.

As a result, we will not discover the outer limit of Plato's pedagogical skill only by concentrating on the poetic devices he deploys in order to render risible Hippias' refusal to consider αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν apart from any or indeed all of the sensible particulars that we might otherwise be inclined to call “beautiful.” Instead, Plato gives Hippias a refreshingly modern or at least sophisticated basis for rejecting the kind of “separation” toward which *Hippias Major* is pointing (301b2–c3), and thereby prepares us to realize that he is “making wise the simple” while also causing “the wise” to look ridiculous. To put it another way: Plato illuminates both sides of the bridge, and even—to give Woodruff the benefit of the doubt—shines more light on the kind of thinking that is prepared to defend the dark or anti-Platonic side of it. Better than anyone else, Eugène Dupréel has illuminated this darkness by finding a kind of proto-Aristotelianism in Plato's *Hippias*,²¹⁵ and he will therefore prove to be

214. Woodruff, “Socrates and Ontology,” 102.

215. Dupréel, *La légende*, especially chapter 8 (“Le «Grand Hippias» et l'Idéalisme au Ve siècle”). For the Anglophone reception of Dupréel, see Paul Shorey, “Review of *La Légende Socratique et les Sources de Platon* by Eugène Dupréel,” *Classical Philology* 17, no. 3 (July 1922), 268–271 (especially: “All over-ingenious books are protected against critical reviewing by the fact that a really critical review would occupy as much space as the book itself. . . . Once more I am sorry to seem to take a purely negative position toward what is after all a well-written, laborious, stimulating, thought-provoking piece of work, which every Platonic library should possess” on 271); Glenn R.

a valuable interlocutor when we reach the end of the Double Definition. But before turning to the dialogue's central (three-part) part—the second of three if the Double Definition is considered separately as a third—the following passage that precedes the Virgin must be given its due:

Socrates: That is good, by Hera, Hippias, if we are to take the fellow in hand. But without hindering you, may I be imitating him [μιμούμενος ἐγὼ ἐκεῖνον], and when you answer, take exception [ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι, as at LSJ II.4: ‘take hold of for the purpose of finding fault, reprehend, attack’] to what you say, in order that you may give me as much practice as possible? For I am more or less experienced in these exceptions [ἀντιλήψεις (LSJ 5, citing this passage: ‘objection’) is a noun likewise derived from the verb ἀντιλαμβάνειν]. So, if it is all the same to you, I wish to take exceptions [ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι] that I may learn more vigorously. *Hippias*: Oh yes, take exceptions [imperative form of ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι].²¹⁶

By placing this passage immediately after Socrates has deceptively introduced his “Double,” Plato must be making a point by hammering the verb ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι, and I would suggest that this point is the following: Just as Socrates will “take hold of for the purpose of finding fault, reprehend, attack” the various answers of Hippias—in order to better “handle” the Double, of course—so, too, must we be prepared to do the same to Socrates himself, offering our own ἀντιλήψεις where necessary. In other words, just as Socrates claims to be the “I” who is now going to be “imitating that man [μιμούμενος ἐκεῖνον],” so, too, is the imperative form of ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι directed at you by Plato, the real ἐγὼ where his dialogues are concerned. This frame-breaking directive anticipates its later use in *Gorgias*, where Socrates introduces the Feigned Dialogue by using the same verb:

Socrates: Still, if we are going to do this, for my part I [ἐγὼγε] think it is necessary for all of us to be competitive in relation to knowing the truth, what it is, concerning the things of which we are speaking and what is false; for it is a common good to all for this to become clear. I [ἐγὼ] will go through with the argument [ὁ λόγος] as it seems to me to be, but if to any of you [τις ὑμῶν] I seem

Morrow, “Review of *La légende Socratique et les sources de Platon* by Eugène Dupréel,” *Philosophical Review* 32, no. 1 (January 1923), 103–105 (especially: “One of the most interesting sections of the book is the part devoted to the reconstruction of this ‘pre-Aristotelian Aristotelianism’ which Professor Dupréel, after examination of the *Cratylus* and the *Hippias Major*” on 104), and (although he is reviewing a later book, his comments on *La légende* are pertinent) Harold Cherniss, “Review of *Les Sophistes: Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias* by Eugene Dupreel.” *American Journal of Philology* 73, no. 2 (1952), 199–207 (with the quotation from Shorey, cf. the similar but less conciliatory remarks on 207). The most detailed, important, and critical review is reprinted as Auguste Diès, “*La Légende Socratique et les Sources de Platon*” in Diès, *Autour de Platon: essais de critique et d’histoire*, volume 1, 182–209 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1927); it will be considered in due course.

216. 287a2–8 (Lamb modified).

to be confirming to myself things that aren't so [μή τὰ ὄντα], it is necessary [sc. for τις ὑμῶν] to ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι and to refute [ἐλέγχειν].²¹⁷

Nor is the use of ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι the only link between *Hippias Major* and *Gorgias*, and indeed the echoes (or anticipations) of the latter have played a large role in debates about the former's authenticity.²¹⁸

Although ostensibly applicable only to the fraudulent “Double,” the scope of Plato's ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι is best understood in relation to Woodruff's astute observation that the discussions of the (first) three “definitions” of “the Socratic Approach” constitute an exercise in logic.²¹⁹ Although Woodruff, still following Aristotle, places too much emphasis on what he calls “the logic of Socratic *definition*,” he makes a brilliant point about the incomplete use—and by logical extension, also the complete one—of the adjective καλόν, i.e., the question of *that for which* or *in relation to what* is “the fine” πρέπον, χρήσιμον, or ὠφέλιμον:

Socrates tries [note the influence of the Vlastosian ‘what is Plato trying to say here’ school of Platonic hermeneutics] to take the incompleteness of ‘fine’ into account (p. 110), proposing to define it by such similarity [*sic*] incomplete predicates as ‘the appropriate’ and ‘the able.’ But both of these appear to be the logical causes of too many different sorts of things, and both need to be tied down, or completed, in such a way as the general commendatory use of ‘fine’ is preserved and explained.²²⁰

Woodruff's typographical error—by “similarity” here he clearly is trying to write “similarly”—is revealing: “incomplete” is precisely what Plato's αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν is not. This “Logic Lesson” therefore extends far beyond the exclusion of non-commendatory uses of incomplete words like “the able” (which cannot be “fine” because it makes it possible to do bad things no less than good ones at 296c3–d6) to the problem of “the incomplete itself,” or rather the only kind of “fine” that is intrinsically complete: αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν.

It is tempting to honor the central place of the passage on the χρήσιμον (295c2–d7) by placing it at the center of the present section and thus of this book as a whole. It is here that Plato parts company with Xenophon on what it means to be καλόν, and he does so conspicuously—as already suggested

217. *Grg.* 505e3–506a3.

218. In addition to Tarrant, “Authorship,” 87, see Röllig, “*Hippias maior*,” 20–24.

219. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 62: “In the end, we have learned more about the rules of definition from these arguments than we have about what it is to be fine. What we have in Stage Two [which for Woodruff includes the Double Definition along with τὸ πρέπον, the χρήσιμον, and τὸ ὠφέλιμον] is essentially an exercise in the logic of Socratic definition.”

220. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 62; on 110, he considers the necessarily “commendatory” aspect of καλόν, appropriately supplementing the traditional “beautiful” and his own “fine” with “noble” and “admirable.”

in the notes of §8—by using Xenophon’s own examples of running and boxing.²²¹ By using the relativizing preposition πρὸς for both (295c9) and then in general (295c9–d6),²²² Plato indicates why Diotima (at *Smp.* 211a3–4) will ultimately separate αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν from that preposition specifically:

Socrates: looking out toward [ἀποβλέποντες πρὸς] each of these—for what [ἦ] it has been suited naturally, for what [ἦ] it has been wrought, for what [ἦ] it has been enacted—‘the useful,’ on the one hand [τὸ μὲν χρήσιμον]—for what it is useful [ἦ χρήσιμον], and in relation to what it is useful [πρὸς ὃ χρήσιμον], and whenever it is useful [ὅποτε χρήσιμον]—‘beautiful [καλόν]’ have we said it to be; but [δέ] ‘the useless [τὸ ἄχρηστον]’ in all such manner, ‘base [αἰσχρόν].’ Does it not seem so to you, Hippias? *Hippias*: To me it does.²²³

Here, then, is Plato’s break from Xenophon:²²⁴ with the reader having been prepared in *Lovers*,²²⁵ he jettisons the equation of καλόν with τὸ χρήσιμον in *Hippias Major*.²²⁶ By tempting us to believe that mere capacity (i.e., δύναμις at 295e7–296a4) is καλόν, Socrates exposes the essentially amoral *Machtpolitik* of Hippias and those like him,²²⁷ finding another incomplete and therefore relativizing formula in “for whatsoever it is capable [εἰς ὅπερ δυνατόν]” (295e7–8). Both this kind of morally neutral δύναμις and the philosophy-negating Binary of wisdom as simply finest—and ignorance as basest (296a5–6)—will be further exposed in *Hippias Minor*.²²⁸ And intrinsically connected to that coming exposure is the first post-*Protagoras* reappearance of the Socratic Paradox, for in order to relativize δύναμις and χρήσιμον, Socrates will show that those who err must first have the capacity to do bad

221. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 62.

222. Cf. Gomperz, “Die deutsche Literatur,” 133 (he is reviewing Röllig, “*Hippias Maior*”): “die alte sokratische Lehre von der Relativität des Schönen (Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.6.9, cf. 3.8.5 f.)—eine Lehre, die übrigens auch unser Gespräch ([*Hp. Ma.*] 295c ff.) zwar kennt, aber aufgibt.”

223. 295d6–e4. The hammered use of ἦ is reinforcing the logic lesson in *Alc. I* (see §5), now extended importantly to the vocabulary of relativity; with ἦ, πρὸς ὃ, and ὅποτε here, cf. τῆ, τότε, and πρὸς at *Smp.* 211a2–4, where of course it is the relativity of τὸ καλόν in all three cases that is expressly denied.

224. Bearing in mind the possibility that this “break” is more apparent than real if the dialectical circumstances of *Memorabilia* 3.8 (where Socrates is tangling with the refutation-mongering Aristippus) and 4.6 (where Xenophon is trying to show how Socrates made his interlocutors more dialectical) are intended to indicate that Xenophon’s Socrates doesn’t really identify καλόν with χρήσιμον.

225. At *Am.* 137a1–4, the identification of καλόν with χρήσιμον is merely implied by the explicit identifications of καλόν with ἀγαθόν (133d2–4) and ἀγαθόν with χρήσιμον (137a3); since the musician’s claim that philosophy is καλόν (137a1–2; cf. 133b5–6) fails because Socrates can show that the philosopher is useless—ἀχρεῖος at 138e3; cf. the introduction of the ἄχρηστοι at 136b4–9—the absence of the crucial identification constitutes the reader’s preparation for its explicit rejection in the sequel.

226. As indicated by Thucydides, 2.63.3, this equation should be qualified with the adjective “plague-bound”; the two were identified as a result of the plague.

227. See Heitsch, *Grössere Hippias*, 87n116 for another connection to *Grg.*, this time to 466b4–e12.

228. And again in “the First Protreptic” in *Euthd.*, beginning with εὖ πράττειν.

things (or indeed “anything else”)²²⁹ even if it is only involuntarily that they actually do them:

Socrates: Those, then, committing errors [οἱ ἐξαμαρτάνοντες] and both accomplishing bad things [κακά ἐργαζόμενοι] and doing [ποιούντες] involuntarily [ἄκοντες] anything else [ἄλλο τι]; if these weren’t able [μὴ δύνασθαι] to do [ποιεῖν] these things, they would never be doing [ποιεῖν] them?²³⁰

It is on the basis of all this that Plato’s reaches the conclusion that Xenophon’s Socrates apparently did not: “It is *not*, then, dear Hippias, both the capable [τὸ δυνατόν] and the useful [τὸ χρήσιμον] for us [ἡμῖν], as it seems, that is τὸ καλόν” (296d2–3).²³¹ Long before *Symposium*, then, Plato has already emancipated αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν from τὸ χρήσιμον ἡμῖν, and especially in the larger context of the earlier contrast between the Final Argument in *Protagoras* and the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy in the first part of *Alcibiades Major*, it is difficult to overstate the critical and indeed central importance of this disjunction.

But the true center of the pre-*Republic* dialogues, albeit not the center of Plato’s *pons asinorum* and thus not of their pre-*Symposium* half, is the separation of the Good and the Beautiful that arises here from discussion of τὸ ὠφέλιμον (296e1–297d11). Relying on Xenophon, Woodruff regards the identification of the fine and the beneficial as Socratic bedrock,²³² but until

229. Note the post-comma position of “anything else [ἄλλο τι]” in Burnet’s text: “οἱ οὖν ἐξαμαρτάνοντες καὶ κακά ἐργαζόμενοι τε καὶ ποιούντες ἄκοντες, ἄλλο τι οὔτοι, εἰ μὴ ἐδύναντο ταῦτα ποιεῖν, οὐκ ἂν ποτε ἐποίησαν;” Beginning from the fact that there are no commas in our manuscripts, and therefore that any we find arise from a modern editorial decision, the reason Burnet places a comma before ἄλλο τι is that he is trying to preserve the Socratic Paradox as it appears in the (*Prt.*) Exegesis (in addition to ἐξαμαρτάνοντες and ἐργαζόμενοι, note the hammering of ποιεῖν, on which see §4) and therefore wants κακά to be the object of both ἐργαζόμενοι τε καὶ ποιούντες, with the resulting thought completed by ἄκοντες. With Burnet’s comma, we must supply “[is] anything else [the case but that] these”; without the comma in that position (and I will be translating with the comma *after* ἄλλο τι, not before it), the statement makes the true claim—false only to the extent that it implies that *whatever* we do, we do ἄκοντες—that we would not do these things (i.e., either bad things or *anything else*) if we were unable to do them. Cf. Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, 67 (on 296b): “ἐργαζόμενοι τε καὶ ποιούντες. If the expression is not merely pleonastic, we may perhaps distinguish κακά ἐργαζόμενοι as ‘engaging in bad proceedings’ and κακά ποιούντες as ‘producing bad things’ (in the concrete sense).” The closest thing to a relevant comment on this passage in Heitsch, *Grössere Hippias*, 84, suggests a closer connection to *Hp. Mi.* than one would have expected from him.

230. 296b5–8.

231. Note the potential hyperbaton on ἡμῖν, which could mean nothing more than “for us, it seems” that neither τὸ δυνατόν nor τὸ χρήσιμον is τὸ καλόν. Consider also the difference between taking αὐτῷ or *παρέπεται* (“it accompanies him”) or with ἡ τοῦ βελτίστου ἐπιστήμη at *Alc.2* 145c2, i.e., the knowledge of what is best *for him*.”

232. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 62: “a statement the historical Socrates undoubtedly believed: that the fine is the beneficial (295e5, see p. 183). Yet none of the proposals is allowed to stand.” Naturally, Xenophon plays a large part in Woodruff’s “The Fine Is Beneficial” on 183–87, beginning with: “Xenophon’s Socrates insists that fine things be beneficial (*Memorabilia* 3.8.4 ff. and 4.6.8–9) and uses strikingly utilitarian examples of fineness (compare the manure basket, 3.8.6, with the pot of *Hippias Major* 288a10). In the notorious beauty contest, Xenophon’s Socrates argues [fallaciously and in fun; cf. Joël, *Sokrates*, 1.429: ‘dieses Product übermüthiger Weinlaune’] for his superiority

ὠφέλιμον is purged of its relativity, it can be nothing of the kind, at least where Plato's Socrates is concerned.²³³ Beginning with the Relativity Speech of Protagoras,²³⁴ Plato has pounded the intrinsic incompleteness of ὠφέλιμον into our heads.²³⁵ In *Hippias Major*, Socrates will make a false start in an ongoing attempt to de-relativize it by preserving what Woodruff calls “the general commendatory use of ‘fine,’”²³⁶ i.e., he will show that the beneficial is productive of the good, and is therefore its cause (296e7–297a1). After distinguishing any thing's cause from the thing itself (297a2–3), Socrates establishes an early link—it will return with a vengeance in the post-*Republic* dialogues²³⁷—between what something *makes* and what not only becomes *but which will become Becoming* (i.e., τὸ γιγνόμενον at 297a6, 297a7, and 297b1). As a result, Plato creates a dialectical situation in which the Good does what the Idea of the Good will never do: *it becomes* (thanks to the agency of τὸ καλόν at 297b2–3). Nor is any of this adventitious: Socrates' proposal that we will discover “in the *ιδέα* of some father [ἐν πατρός τιος ἰδέα]” how τὸ καλόν is related to τὸ ἀγαθόν (297b6–7), marks the closest approach to the truth—i.e., its negation—in the pre-*Republic* dialogues.

The lesson will quickly become clear. Just as the father is not the son nor the son the father (297b9–c1), and just as the cause is different from the thing that comes into being as a result of it (τὸ γιγνόμενον again at 297c1–2), so, too, must the Beautiful as ὠφέλιμον—which can only be “beneficial” insofar as it is productive of what's good (296e7)—be *different* from the Good:

Socrates: By Zeus, O Best of Men, neither, then, is the Beautiful [τὸ καλόν] good [ἀγαθόν] nor the Good [τὸ ἀγαθόν] beautiful [καλόν], or does it seem to be possible to you from the things that have been said? *Hippias:* No, by Zeus, it does not appear [possible] to me.²³⁸

over a young boy by citing the utility of his less attractive features (*Symposium* 4.5). Nonutilitarian considerations *intrude* [my emphasis] on a judgment of fineness in the *Oeconomicus* (8.19 ff.), but this is exceptional.”

233. As with Woodruff, so too Wolfsdorf must find a way to finesse the Equation's rejection here; see “*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2,” 251: “the rejection of Socrates' third definition is misguided.” For his anachronistic solution, see 239–40.

234. Cf. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 184, on Socrates' response to “a trap laid by Aristippus” in *Memorabilia* 3.8: “Socrates (here sounding remarkably like Protagoras in *Protagoras* 334a ff. [sc. the Relativity Speech] claims that anything good or fine is good or fine for something.” This is a nice indication that it is with the post-dative Good and Beautiful that Plato goes beyond Xenophon's Socrates.

235. While admitting the relativity of χρήσιμον, Joseph Moreau, “Le Platonisme de l'*Hippias Majeur*,” *Revue des études grecques* 54 (1941), 19–42, on 34, attempts to elevate τὸ ὠφέλιμον as absolute or complete: “au χρήσιμον, l'indifféremment utilisable, il faut dans la définition du beau substuer l'ὠφέλιμον, l'absolument utile, le bienfaisant (295e–296e).”

236. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 62.

237. See *Guardians in Action*, 56–59 (on *Ti.*) and 331–35 (on *Phlb.*).

238. 297c3–6.

No matter how discontented both Socrates and Hippias may thereafter pronounce themselves to be in the wake of this oath-certified disjuncture (297c7–d9), the deed is done: the middle term that united the Good with the Pleasant and the Pleasant with the Beautiful in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*—i.e., the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful—has been called into question for a second time (cf. *Alc. I* 115a11–16) and not by Alcibiades, as before,²³⁹ but now by Socrates himself. And out of the resulting confusion (“I am at an impasse [ἀπορῶ],” says Socrates at 297d11) will come yet another reversal of the Final Argument in the Double Definition, this time bearing on the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful. But before moving on to the third phase of this three-part search—for as already indicated, I am modifying Hoerber and many others by suggesting that we count the discussions of τὸ πρέπον, the χρήσιμον, and τὸ ὠφέλιμον as a three-part *second* phase—my reason for regarding the discussion of ὠφέλιμον as central must be clearly understood.

As should now be obvious, it is not central if the second phase, as I am claiming, consists of three parts: the discussion of χρήσιμον is. And relative both to *Hippias Major* as a well structured whole in itself and as the mid-point between *Protagoras* and *Symposium* as the Bookends of the series of dialogues considered in this book, the discussion of χρήσιμον *is* central. By demonstrating the immorality of regarding an incomplete notion of usefulness, capacity, power (and even knowledge, as will be further developed in *Hippias Minor*) as simply beautiful, it unmasks the language of relativity (ἢ, πρὸς ὃ, and ὅποτε at 295d8–e1) that will be repudiated in *Symposium*. It is therefore not the central place of χρήσιμον in the architecture of the series culminating with *Symposium* that is being questioned, but rather the centrality of ὠφέλιμον in the architecture of the series culminating in *Republic* that is being affirmed. The crucial claim, then, is that the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful is the keystone of that architecture, and that it will only be *after* the Idea of the Good becomes just as de-relativized, vis-à-vis τὸ ὠφέλιμον, as the Beautiful has now been from what’s χρήσιμον—beginning here in *Hippias Major* and culminating in *Symposium*—that it will be possible to affirm the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful as simply true, Socratic, and Platonic.

But until the Idea of the Good becomes something greater than what is merely beneficial *for me*,²⁴⁰ we will need to struggle against that Equation

239. Nor later, as by Polus, in *Grg.* 474c9–475e1. On the Equation in this passage, see *Ascent to the Good*, 296–99; note that this passage—where τὰ καλά are defined πρὸς ὃ ἂν ἕκαστον χρήσιμον ἢ in order to uphold the Equation at 474d7—figures prominently among the links between *Grg.* and *Hp. Ma.* in Röllig, “*Hippias maior*,” 21. I take this connection to indicate the well-remembered importance of Plato’s *pons asinorum*.

240. For the first critical moment in the post-*Symposium* dialogues—there has already been such a moment in *Smp.* itself (see §17 below)—see *Ascent to the Good*, 169–72 on *Chrm.* 164a1–c7.

in the gymnastic dialogues that follow *Symposium*.²⁴¹ Plato begins with an ascent to the Beautiful culminating in *Symposium* because he knows that a deliberately deceptive negation (beginning with the Final Argument in *Protagoras*) of some ineffable mixture of Marathon, the proverbial *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*, the cowardice-despising ambitions of Alcibiades (see *Alc. I* 115d7), and an inborn awareness—from which the pride, the proverb, and such ambitions arise—is most likely to spark an Achilles-style revolt among his students. In other words, it will be *easier* for them to recognize that τὸ καλόν, while “good,” is not necessarily “good for me” but is rather what is noble, difficult, gallant, admirable, and only on that basis truly “fine” and “beautiful.” And this is only the beginning. By returning from the light of the Good to the darkness of the Cave, Plato’s Philosopher-Guardians are going to discover the place where not only the Good and the Beautiful may perhaps become one, but where they might be united by Justice. They will be prompted to make this discovery by the single most important deception in the dialogues, i.e., when Socrates says in *Republic* 1 (*R.* 347d6–8): “For every one in the know would choose rather to be benefited [ὠφελεῖσθαι] by someone else than be bothered with benefiting [ὠφελῶν] another.” Only through the Idea of the Good can we come to recognize *as inferior* what is merely “beneficial for us [ἡμῖν ὄφελος]” (*R.* 505a6–b1) regardless of whatever other things we know or are able to obtain may be.

In turning next to the Double Definition, the first thing to note is that aside from the bifurcation that causes it to be “double,” its essential and unified basis is the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful, i.e., the third and most objectionable component of the Triple Equation in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*. It is therefore intrinsically connected to *Protagoras*, hardly surprising given the rapid-fire allusions to the Relativity Speech (295d6–e2), the Socratic Paradox (296b5–8), and the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (297c3–4) that precede its introduction (297e5–298a1). Moreover, it is intrinsically connected to the Reversal of *Protagoras*. If either or both of the restrictions placed on the Pleasant are upheld, we must reject the unqualified Equation of the Good and the Pleasant; nor does it fare any better if we affirm neither the Pleasant through hearing nor through sight. As for its connection to *Symposium*, the other Bookend, the sense-qualified Pleasant necessarily counts the beautiful as visible and audible, and no less important from a Platonist perspective than derelativizing the Beautiful is the more elementary task of emancipating it from the physical and hence the merely sensible (*Smp.* 211a5–b5).

It is therefore in preparation for a sense-emancipated Beautiful that Socrates promptly offers the first of two objections to his own Double

241. See *Ascent to the Good*, §1.

Definition. It is probably not through hearing or through sight (or indeed through the senses generally; cf. 298d1–5) but rather in relation to “some other [ἄλλο τι] concept [εἶδος]” (298b4)—and “concept” is the least Platonic thing that the word εἶδος means here—that both beautiful institutions or practices (τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα) and laws (οἱ νόμοι) are said to be pleasant (298b2–4), if, that is, “pleasant” is what they might correctly be said to be in the first place. In addition to the fact that Plato has already drawn our attention to ἄλλο τι at 296b7 and that it will reappear at 298c4 and more importantly at 299d8 (see also §4 and §7), his choice of τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα and οἱ νόμοι in particular points forward to *Symposium*, where the pair reappears, and likewise in the context of (a post-sensible) Beautiful, i.e., “the Beauty in the practices and the laws [τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις καλόν]” (*Smp.* 210c3–4).²⁴² Given these parallels, the relevant passages in *Hippias Major*, *Symposium*, and *Gorgias*²⁴³—when considered in that order, of course—neatly instantiate what I am calling the proleptic, visionary, and basanistic elements in Platonic pedagogy.

If the first objection to the Double Definition points forward to the far side of the bridge, the other points backwards to the near side. In *Protagoras*, while attempting to prevent the departure of Socrates, Hippias makes a speech (*Prt.* 337c7–338b1) based on the distinction between “nature [φύσις]” and “convention [νόμος]” (*Prt.* 337d1–3). If the first objection hasn’t already broached the question of whether Hippias could regard οἱ νόμοι as either beautiful or pleasant—he has called νόμος “a tyrant among men” in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 337d2)—Socrates’ objection to his own introduction of any distinction among pleasures (like “through hearing” or “through sight”) looks even more like the kind of objection Hippias might have made had he been more forthright. Certainly Socrates—or rather his Double—uses the same tricks “the real Socrates” had used in *Protagoras*, pretending to unite his views with those of Hippias (298e4; cf. *Prt.* beginning at 352d5) and in explicit contempt for “what seems to the Many [οἱ πολλοί] to be beautiful” (299b1–2; cf. *Prt.* 352d2–3). It is οἱ πολλοί who regard some pleasures, including those of sex, as “base” (or even “basest to see” at 299a6) rather than “beautiful.” This looks like “Socrates” is daring Hippias to assert the primacy of φύσις

242. Moreover, this pair will likewise reappear in a similarly “doubled” definition in *Gorgias* (*Grg.* 474a6)—where things said to be “beautiful” are so “either through some pleasure, or some benefit, or through both” (*Grg.* 474e2–3)—a passage that likewise implicates not only the Equation of the Pleasant and the Beautiful (beginning at *Grg.* 474d7–8) and the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful (*Grg.* 474d1–2) but re-relativizes the latter as first χρήσιμον (*Grg.* 474d7; cf. χρεία at 474d6) and then as ὠφέλιμα (*Grg.* 474e8; cf. ὠφελία at 474e3) while re-enslaving it to physical things like “bodies and colors and shapes and sounds” (*Grg.* 474d3–4). See Dodds, *Gorgias*, 249–50 for useful comments on the incompleteness of ὠφέλιμον, on ἀποβλέπων at 474d4, and on the relationship between *Grg.* and *Hp. Ma.*

243. See also *Ascent to the Good*, 297–98.

over νόμος, for it is merely by “convention” that the most intense and indeed most natural pleasures are being excluded by the addition of “through sight and hearing” (298d6–299a1). Why Hippias refuses to take the bait will be considered in the next section.

But why Socrates should offer this distinction-devouring bait must be explained now. Whether or not Hippias is a secret and φύσις-friendly proponent of “the Unity of the Pleasures,”²⁴⁴ the basis upon which Socrates’ Double proposes to make any distinctions within the realm of pleasures—since it is not qua pleasant that they can be distinguished²⁴⁵—points to the first characteristically Platonic purpose behind the Double Definition:

Socrates: ‘Is it not,’ then, he will say, ‘through something else [ἄλλο τι] than that they are pleasures that you chose these pleasures out from the other pleasures, seeing the kind of thing in both [ἐπ’ ἄμφοῖν] having something different [ἔχουσι τι διάφορον] from the others, and looking toward which [εἰς ὃ ἀποβλέποντες], you are saying they are ‘beautiful’?’²⁴⁶

Having already encountered ἀποβλέποντες (295d6–7) and ἄλλο τι (296b7) in noteworthy passages, their combination here sparks interest, and in both *Meno* (*Men.* 72c6–d1) and *Republic* (*R.* 540a8), the verb ἀποβλέπειν will be associated with “the Forms,”²⁴⁷ in the latter, with the Idea of the Good. If “the separation of the Forms” remains only “a temptation” in *Hippias Major*,²⁴⁸ here we should consider ourselves being tempted, for it is precisely on the basis of τὸ καλόν that we can discriminate among pleasures.²⁴⁹ In short: those who are here said to be ἀποβλέποντες are “looking off toward” an ἄλλο τι that either already is or will eventually become *the Beautiful itself*.

244. The connection to *Phlb.* is noted by Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, and the section of her Introduction entitled “The Theory of Pleasure in Plato’s Dialogues and in the *Hippias Major*” (lxviii–lxxv), will be revisited at the end of this section.

245. 299d2–7 (Lamb): “*Socrates:* ‘Does, then,’ he will say, ‘any pleasant thing whatsoever differs from any pleasant thing whatsoever by this, by being pleasant? I ask not whether any pleasure is greater or smaller or more or less, but whether it differs by just this very thing, by the fact that one of the pleasures is a pleasure and the other is not a pleasure.’ ‘We do not think so.’ Do we? *Hippias:* No, we do not.”

246. 299d8–e2. I have translated ἐπ’ ἄμφοῖν in the manner least friendly to Platonism; it might also be “besides” or even “in addition to, over and above” (LSJ, with dative, l.e.), both in accordance with *Smp.* 210a8–b3.

247. Cf. Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, 74 (on εἰς ὃ ἀποβλέποντες καλὰς φατε αὐτὰς εἶναι): “so *Euthyphro* 6e[5], εἰς ἐκείνην (sc. τὴν ιδέα) ἀποβλέπων.” She also cites *Phdr.* 237d1–2, *Grg.* 474d3–5, and *R.* 501b1–2.

248. Cf. “L’apparition de la séparation dans l’*Hippias Majeur*” in Luca Pitteloud, *La séparation dans la métaphysique de Platon: Enquête systématique sur le rapport de distinction entre les Formes et les particuliers dans les dialogues* (Sankt Augustin: Akademia, 2017), 29–45.

249. As Xenophon has done in *Cynegeticus* (see §2).

But as Plato insists in his *Letters*, the true and the false must be learned together,²⁵⁰ and the second characteristically Platonic purpose behind the Double Definition is that the Digression in its midst allows Hippias to introduce what has been called “the Continuity Theory of Reality” (301b2–c2).²⁵¹ This is where Dupréel found “le noyau [core, *Kern*, or kernel] de l’aristotélisme,”²⁵² and quite apart from the role that it has played in authenticity debates (see §8), it is remarkable for its anti-Platonism. Far from making Hippias look like a fool, the Continuity Theory makes him look presciently modern, for the criticism it implies is far more applicable to Plato’s Platonism than it is to Aristotle’s Socrates. Thanks in particular to “the separation of the Forms,” Plato’s Socrates *is* looking past “continuous bodies of being” (301b6) and his friends really *are* “cutting off the Beautiful and each of the things that are in their discourses [ἐν τοῖς λόγοις]” (301b4–5; cf. *Phd.* 99e5). In a nutshell, Plato’s *pons asinorum* combines the ridicule of the first phase with the logic lesson on incompleteness (and its opposite) in its second with a series of more challenging tasks in its culminating third, and one of them is to show *the compatibility of the highly sophisticated and the risible*, not least of all by showing how risible Plato’s position looks from the sophisticated point of view:

Hippias: You, Socrates, do not look at the wholes of things {τὰ ὅλα τῶν πραγμάτων} nor {do} those with whom you habitually converse; rather, you test [κρούειν] by taking up [ἀπολαμβάνειν] in your arguments [ἐν τοῖς λόγοις] the beautiful [τὸ καλόν] and each of the things that are and by cutting them into bits [κατατέμνοντες]. For this reason it escapes you that the bodies of being [σώματα τῆς οὐσίας] are naturally [πεφυκότα] large and continuous [μεγάλα καὶ διανεκῆ]. And now this has escaped you to such a degree that you think that

250. *Ep.* 344b1–3 (Harward): “For both must be learnt together; and together also must be learnt, by complete and long continued study, as I said at the beginning, the true and the false about all that has real being.”

251. Following Morgan, “Continuity Theory,” 139. The richest discussion of 301b2–c2 is Wolfsdorf, “*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2”; he begins his remarks on the *status quaestionis* (223–26) by describing Dupréel and his most important critic in a useful way: “Over the last century, three sustained examinations of *Hippias Major* 301b2–c2 have been published. The first occurs in Eugene Dupréel’s *La légende socratique et les sources de Platon* of 1922. Dupréel argues that Hippias attacks Socrates’ commitment to ‘réalisme idéaliste,’ that is, to the metaphysical realist position that Forms (des Idées) exist separately from concrete beings. In 1927 Auguste Diès severely criticized Dupréel’s interpretation as an extravagant departure from the text—‘comment osez-vous en tirer tout un système de métaphysique?’ [Diès, *Autour de Platon*, 194]—and replaced it with a reading *wholly innocent of metaphysics* [my emphasis].” On the third discussion, i.e., Morgan’s, he notes on 24: “Morgan appears to be ignorant of Dupréel’s and Diès’ contributions, for he mentions neither. Morgan also neglects Paul Woodruff’s edition of *Hippias Major* of 1981 [sc. 1982]. Woodruff has but brief comments on 301b2–c2. Still, it is worth noting that he rejects Dupréel’s treatment as ‘madcap’ and cites Diès’ discussion approvingly [hence Wolfsdorf’s use of ‘innocent’ as it is found in passages from Woodruff, “Socrates and Ontology” quoted above]. In short, Morgan’s discussion occurs in a relative vacuum, and Dupréel’s and Diès’ papers are now eighty years old.”

252. Dupréel, *Légende Socratique*, 206.

there is something [εἶναι τι], either a property [πάθος] or a being [οὐσία], which is at the same time with respect to both but not each or conversely with respect to each but not both. In this way, your thinking is unreasonable, undiscerning, foolish, and unthinking.²⁵³

Since Sir Thomas Heath's commentary on Euclid's *Elements* was the first scholarly book that inspired me to fall in love with scholarship,²⁵⁴ I am perhaps more inclined than I should be to take it on his authority that Hippias discovered the *quadratrix*,²⁵⁵ for the attribution is far from certain.²⁵⁶ As preserved by Pappus of Alexandria (c. 290–c. 350 A.D.), the generation (γένεσις) of this *quadratrix* contains a number of equally remarkable words while the diagram that illustrates it makes the Cartesian Coordinate System look a good deal less revolutionary than I had previously supposed.²⁵⁷ Unlike what Socrates will say about geometrical figures elsewhere (*Euthd.* 290c2–3), Hippias was not discovering the properties of some already “given” object *but rather generating it*. He did so by means of *movement*; hence one of the most remarkable words in the passage is “let it be moved [κινεῖσθω].”²⁵⁸ Without exploring all the details here,²⁵⁹ the crucial thing about this moving point is that it is being moved continuously (κινουμένη ὁμαλῶς) at a uniform speed

253. 301b2–c3 as translated in Morgan, “Continuity Theory,” 139; the {}'s are Morgan's. Note that this speech, *pace* Heitsch (see §8), scarcely makes Hippias look like a fool.

254. Thomas L. Heath, *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements, Translated from the Text of Heiberg with Introduction and Commentary*, three volumes, second edition, revised and with additions (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925); see 415–16 for discussion of *pons asinorum* as one of those “Popular Names for Euclidean Propositions” (Euclid 1.5 is found on 251–55).

255. On “Hippias of Elis,” see Sir Thomas Heath, *A History of Greek Mathematics*, two volumes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921), see 1.182, but the detailed account of “The Quadratrix of Hippias” (1.225–29) is found in the context of a later section on “The squaring of the circle” (1.220–35).

256. Cf. “remains more than doubtful” in Cherniss, “Review of Dupréel,” 204n11. The relevant texts can be found in Ivor Thomas (ed. and trans.), *Greek Mathematical Works*, two volumes (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 1.144–61 (especially 146–49) and 1.336–339 (Pappus on the Quadratrix). Cf. 337n'a' with Heath, *History of Greek Mathematics*, 225–26.

257. See Thomas, *Greek Mathematical Works*, 1.336 for both γένεσις and the diagram. Although the latter assigns no arithmetical values to the axes, we are clearly looking at what will become “the unit circle.”

258. Pappus, *Greek Mathematical Works*, 1.337–39 (Thomas): “Let $AB\Gamma\Delta$ be a square, and with center A let the arc $BE\Delta$ be described [sc. this creates the prototype of ‘the unit circle’ for the arc in question is one quarter of a circle with its radius being the sides of the square], and let it be so moved [κινεῖσθω] that the point [σημεῖον] A remains fixed [τὸ μὲν A σημεῖον μένειν] while [the point] B is carried along [τὸ δὲ B φέρεσθαι] the arc $BE\Delta$; furthermore let $B\Gamma$, while always remaining parallel to AD , follow the point B [τὸ B σημείω φερομένω . . . συνακολουθεῖτω, i.e., let it follow the *moving* point B] in its motion along BA and in equal times let AB , moving uniformly [ἐν ἴσῳ χρόνῳ ἢ τε AB κινουμένη ὁμαλῶς; note that ἐν ἴσῳ χρόνῳ should be translated ‘in an equal time’; nevertheless, the uniform motion denoted by κινουμένη ὁμαλῶς is the crucial thing here], pass through [διανύτω is translated by ‘let it pass through,’ i.e., let the line through the moving point and parallel to the base pass through] the angle BAD [corresponding to the x and y axes in a unit circle] (that is, [let] the point B pass along the arc $BE\Delta$), and [yet another ‘let’ is needed here] $B\Gamma$ pass by [παροδεύτω] the straight line BA (that is, let the point B traverse [φερέσθω] the length of BA).”

259. See Heath, *History of Greek Mathematics*, 1.229–30 for the apt criticisms of Sporus of Nicaea (c. 240–c. 300 A.D.).

(ἐν ἴσῳ χρόνῳ) and it must traverse (φερέσθω), pass along (παροδεύετω), and most importantly pass through (διανυέτω) the whole of a spatial magnitude. All of this implies the existence, associated with Hippias, of *the mathematics of change* consistent with the Continuity Theory of Reality that Plato attributes to him in *Hippias Major*. Note also that this approach to mathematics is quite perfectly inconsistent with unmoving geometrical objects and numbers made of discrete and separate units.²⁶⁰ The subsequent mention of irrationals (303b7) may be a further indication that Heath's mathematically sophisticated Hippias is likewise the author of the Continuity Theory we find in Plato's dialogue.²⁶¹

Although Dupréel clearly thought Hippias was its author,²⁶² he also provides the necessary countervailing evidence by showing how the Theory specifically contradicts "the Theory of Forms,"²⁶³ and is therefore probably better understood as responding to it,²⁶⁴ i.e., as contrived by Plato himself to illuminate a revealing counter-position (cf. §4 on "the easiness of virtue"). In any case, others have sought the pre-Socratic origins of Hippias' thought as reflected by the Continuity Theory both before Dupréel and after

260. It is precisely the Cartesian Coordinate System that makes it so difficult for moderns to understand Plato's utterly simple solution to the Problem of the One and the Many—see *Guardians in Action*, §11—because it treats "one" as an infinitely divisible length (or magnitude) between zero and one on both the x- and y-axes. The moving point must traverse—i.e., pass through—that magnitude continuously, uniformly, and without interruption exactly as if One were one continuous thing, whereby its "unity," and that of the resulting arc—i.e., the quadratrix—replace the (true) unity of the unmoving and indivisible point whose "movement" creates "it" (i.e., a line understood as a moving point) while passing through (another equally fraudulent "unity") "it" (i.e., the infinitely divisible magnitude configured as "one").

261. On irrationals (ἄρρητα) in *Hp. Ma.*, see E. de Strycker, "Une énigme mathématique dans l'*Hippias Majeur*," *Mélanges Emile Boisacq, Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves* 5 (1937), 317–326, and Joseph A. Novak, "Plato and the Irrationals—Part 2." *Apeiron* 17, no. 1 (June 1983), 14–27; for my "solution" to the enigma, see §10.

262. Dupréel, *La légende*, 200: "de toute évidence nous trouvons ici les termes de l'auteur de la théorie, c'est-à-dire d'Hippias lui-même."

263. Albeit only to reject it as an "exégèse fantasiste," Diès, *Autour de Platon*, 205, quotes in full the Golden Passage in Dupréel, *La légende*, on 203–204 where he summarizes the Continuity Theory: "The greatest error is to attribute Being, that is to say a separate existence, to those attributes common to a multitude of objects of which each is designated by a concept (λόγος) such as the Beautiful, and thus to believe that real things [i.e., οὐσία in the Theory] are constituted by the addition of all the distinct concepts that affirm themselves in it."

264. After quoting κρούετε δὲ ἀπολαμβάνοντες τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν ὄντων ἐν τοῖς λόγοις κατατέμνοντες (301b4–5) in *La légende*, 201, Dupréel exclaims: "Voilà l'idéalisme; vous idéalistes [he is speaking as Hippias], vous considérez le beau en la pregnant et en découpant chacun des êtres en les concept qui s'en affirment, tels que le beau, le bon, etc." Cf. Wolfsdorf, "*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2," 243: "The participle κατατέμνοντες is at the crux of Hippias' criticism. Indeed, the place of the participle at the end of the sentence is emphatic. Hippias claims that Socrates in his discussions cuts up that which is beautiful and each thing. In opposition to Socrates' discursive dissection, Hippias insists that bodies of essence are so great (οὕτω μεγάλα) by nature (πεφυκότα) and continuous (διανεκῆ)." The sentence that follows will be quoted in the text.

him,²⁶⁵ surely this is more productive than regarding it as nothing more than a parody.²⁶⁶ But building on the proto-modern mathematics of the *quadratrix*, I am more inclined to find the comrades of Dupréel's Hippias among modern thinkers rather than Aristotle. The Stagirite is the founding father of the substance-predicate ontology that the Continuity Theory's approach to *πάθος* (as predicate)²⁶⁷ and *οὐσία* (as subject)²⁶⁸ appears to be *rejecting*.²⁶⁹ When David Wolfsdorf writes: "Hippias thus contrasts Socrates' *λόγοι* about things with the nature (*φύσις*) of things themselves: in nature bodies of essence are so great and continuous, whereas in Socrates' discussions they are dissected,"²⁷⁰ he is pointing to a place where the ancient distinction between *φύσις* and *νομός*, readily applicable to the philosophy of language,²⁷¹ intersects with the modern suspicion of the concealment of Being initiated by the turn to *λόγος*,²⁷² and when he accuses the Socratics (and Platonists?) *twice* of

265. Among his predecessors, see especially W. Zilles, "Hippias aus Elis." *Hermes* 53, no. 1 (January 1918), 45–56, on 47; more recently, see Morgan, "Continuity Theory," 143–44, on Empedocles; he unwisely dismisses allusions to Anaxagoras on 150, especially in 150n32). For *διανεκῆ* in Empedocles DK B59, see, e.g., Tarrant, *Hippias Major*, 78 (on *διανεκῆ*), a valuable note.

266. See Diès, *Autour de Platon*, 195 and 202.

267. See Heitsch, *Grössere Hippias*, 94–95n142; with "οὐσία und πάθος als äquivalent," cf. Heidegger's "black table" below.

268. For the use of *οὐσία* in *Hippias Major*, see E. Seymour Thompson (ed.), *The Meno of Plato, Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Excursuses* (London: Macmillan, 1901), 255–56; endorsing the view that we have "phrases actually quoted from the sophist," he usefully quotes (cf. xxix) the first two sentences of this passage from Grote, *Plato and the Other Companions of Socrates*, 1.384: "The Rhetor [sc. Hippias] accuses the Dialectician [sc. Socrates-Plato] of departing from the conditions of reality—of breaking up the integrity of those concretes, which occur in nature each as continuous and indivisible wholes. Each of the analogous particular cases forms a continuum or concrete by itself, which may be compared with the others, but cannot be taken to pieces, and studied in separate fragments [note 'u']. The Dialectician on his side treats the Abstract (τὸ καλόν) as the real Integer, and the highest abstraction as the first of all integers, containing in itself and capable of evolving all the subordinate integers: the various accompaniments, which go along with each Abstract to make up a concrete, he disregards as shadowy and transient disguises." The attached note justifies the vocabulary that follows (384n'u'): "The words *διανεκῆ σώματα τῆς οὐσίας πεφυκότα*, correspond as nearly as can be to the logical term Concrete, opposed to Abstract. Nature [cf. *φύσις*] furnishes only Concreta, not Abstracta."

269. Note in particular Hippias' use of *λέξις* at 300c3. Is our manner of speaking (G. *Sprachgebrauch*) consistent with *φύσις*, i.e., does Socrates suffer from "inexperience [*ἀπειρία*]" (300c2) about two different things at 300c2–3?

270. Wolfsdorf, "*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2," 243 (note again the connection with "the second sailing in *Phd.*). I am grateful to David for sharing with me an unpublished introduction to an unfinished article on "Hippias and the *Giganto-machia*," where he usefully links the Continuity Theory to *Sph.* 246b9–c2 (Wolfsdorf's translation): "*Eleatic Stranger*: They [sc. the somatists as seen by the formalists] take the bodies {advocated by the giants} and what they (the giants) call the truth, and they cut them up into small pieces (*κατὰ σμικρὰ διαθραύοντες*) in their discourses (*ἐν τοῖς λόγοις*), and they call this 'becoming' (*γένεσιν*) instead of 'being' (*οὐσίαν*)."

271. Hence the attention to *Cratylus* in Dupréel, *La légende*, chapter 9 ("Le *Cratyle* et les Origines de l'Aristotélisme").

272. See especially Martin Heidegger, *Plato's Sophist* [Marburg lectures of 1924], translated by Andre Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 125: "Λόγος is not the place where *ἀληθεύειν* is at home, where it is autochthonous." Cf. 417,142, and 128: "in *διαίρεσις* [note that Heidegger is discussing Aristotle here, not Plato] there resides the moment by

“concealing from themselves” (ὁμᾶς λανθάνει at 301b6 and σε λέληθεν at 301b7) “the wholes of things,” it is not difficult to imagine Plato’s Hippias as a champion, *avant la lettre*, of Heideggerian ἀ-λήθεια.

Although the principal mechanism by which Socrates makes himself look foolish in *Hippias Major*, i.e., the Double, will be discussed in next section, it is by giving Hippias the opportunity to introduce the Continuity Theory of Being that Plato allows the sophist to appear wise. This appearance is of considerable pedagogical significance. It was not enough to distinguish Hippias’ clumsily concrete examples of beautiful things from αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, nor to amplify his ridiculous obtuseness by drawing attention to his self-certainty,²⁷³ polymath expertise, and failure to see through “the son of Sophroniscus” (298b11). While using these comic devices to make things easier for his students, Plato is already at pains to help them see the necessarily sophisticated means by which Hippias’ failure to distinguish τὸ καλόν from any concrete particular can be made to look both wise and insightful. It was therefore insufficient for Plato to show that Hippias is merely a blockhead; as illuminated by those who are willing to take the Continuity Theory seriously, its purpose is to indicate the necessarily sophisticated albeit still risible means by which alone blockheadedness can be justified. What makes this move necessary is the utter simplicity of Platonism—a simplicity that justifies the four adverbs with which Hippias insults Socrates and his friends in the Theory’s coda (301c2–3)²⁷⁴—for what could be dumber than to respond to questions about what is truly and in all cases beautiful, just, and good, with answers like “Beauty,” “Justice,” and “the Idea of the Good?”

Implicit in the notion of *Hippias Major* as the *pons asinorum* is that not all of Plato’s students will cross the bridge, and to imagine that Plato the Teacher would have wished to kick those who didn’t do so out of the Academy is to misunderstand Platonic pedagogy *radically*. His dialogues, particularly those that follow *Republic*, teem with sophisticated blockheadedness and wise foolishness, for only those who understand such things can defend Platonism’s simplicity. Beginning with the ‘Through the Looking Glass’ moment in *Lovers* (§7, ad *fin.*), Plato is splitting his students, and he has more pedagogical

which λόγος, because it lets something be seen as something, takes apart [*auseinandernimmt*] (table-black [cf. ἐν τοῖς λόγοις κατατέμνοντες]) the whole (black table [cf. τὰ μὲν ὅλα τῶν πραγμάτων]) at the very outset.” Cf. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, 1.13: “es giebt kein ‘Sein’ hinter dem Thun, Wirken, Werde” in *Kritische Studiensausgabe*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, fifteen volumes (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1967), on 5.279.

273. See Franco V. Trivigno, “The Moral and Literary Character of Hippias in Plato’s *Hippias Major*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 50 (2016), 31–65.

274. 301c3: ἀλογιστως καὶ ἀσκέπτως καὶ εὐήθως καὶ ἀδιανοήτως. Thanks to the contrast between νοήσις and διάνοια at R. 511d8, the first and last of these adverbs seem particularly humorous; it is with the objects of διάνοια, beginning with One and Two (the basis of λογιστική)—not with the transcendent Ideas—that Socrates will refute Hippias.

sympathy for “the dumb jock” than he does for the musical “egghead” whose principal concern is to toss in a clever comment or ask some question that makes him look smart (*Am.* 135d1–7). When confronted by *Sophist*, for example, some of Plato’s students will want to ask self-serving questions about the sense in which “what is not” can be said to be. In contrast to such as these, Plato hopes that at least one will wonder aloud whether the Eleatic Stranger has ever been fishing. This bifurcation of the wise from the simple is implicit in the difference between the *Alcibiades* and *Hippias* dyads, and becomes visible in *Hippias Major*, about which Ivor Ludlam has usefully observed: “the dramatist has let it be known that Socrates represents the truly wise man who nevertheless appears totally stupid, while Hippias represents the truly stupid man who nevertheless appears totally wise.”²⁷⁵

Paradoxically, the Continuity Theory of οὐσία is a clearer indication that “the author” of *Hippias Major* is already a Platonist than are the merely tempting indications or anticipations of “the separate Forms” in the dialogue’s first half that Woodruff is so determined to prove are “metaphysically innocent.” Plato’s Recollection-based pedagogy precludes simply stating the truth in a form to be memorized; instead, he first (proleptically) points in its direction with ἄλλο τι (296b7), and then (basanistically) contradicts it. It is therefore no accident that it is Hippias who first uses the word οὐσία in the dialogue (301b6 and 301b8)²⁷⁶ or that the first time Socrates uses it, he is summarizing the Continuity Theory (301e4). Naturally it is well beyond this kind of οὐσία—the italics are intended to point towards ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας at *Republic* 509b8—that we will glimpse (i.e., by the visionary element in Platonic pedagogy) the Idea of the Good.²⁷⁷ Hippias’ use of οὐσία is already helping us to see—a neater trick than the one entailed by Whitehead’s “footnotes to Plato”—how Heidegger will convert Plato’s γένεσις and τὸ γινόμενον into “Being.” Finally, it is by denying the separate existence of Platonic οὐσία in advance of its introduction in *Republic* 7 that we will discover the second characteristically Platonic feature in the Double Definition, i.e., the one that negates its first: ἄλλο τι as Idea.

Its third characteristic feature points to the Problem of the One and the Many,²⁷⁸ for Plato’s solution to this Problem is his principal method for

275. Ludlam, *Hippias Major*, 72; cf. 179: “the paradox whereby Socrates and Hippias both appear wise and foolish simultaneously.”

276. For the first time in the dialogues, see *Prt.* 349b4; for the relationship between the Continuity Theory and the choice about the virtues that Socrates gives Protagoras at *Prt.* 329c6–d8, see Wolfsdorf, “*Hippias Major* 301b2–c2,” 231–32, and Morgan, “Continuity Theory,” 149–152.

277. The second time Socrates uses οὐσία (302c4–5) appears to “follow” a rather more Platonic use; cf. τὸ κοινὸν τοῦτο (300a10) with κοινονία (*R.* 476a7), on which see below.

278. Having praised Hoerber at the beginning of this section for finding so many triads in *Hp. Ma.*, it is necessary to distinguish the kind of “interpretive” triad responsible for my “three characteristically Platonic features” from the text-imminent triads he discovered. On the other hand, it is an Aristotle-endorsed Platonic triad to which I am pointing, for the first “feature” implicates the Ideas, the second—through the Continuity Theory of Reality—“sensible things,” and the third, “the Intermediates,” beginning with the One. For the importance of this triad, see *Guardians on Trial*, 281–83.

“making wise the simple.” Plato allows Hippias to deploy the Continuity Theory in order to counter Socrates’ claim that it is possible for something that is true *about both of two things when taken together* to be untrue of each of them when taken singly (300b4–301b1). It is no accident that Socrates’ proof of the objectionable proposition depends exclusively on arithmetic (302a1–b4), for it is principally by the One, understood as the principle or ἀρχή of Number, by which Plato intends to shatter our naïve faith in the Continuity Theory of Reality. Two things are collectively “two” but each of them is “one,” and Plato’s One is in no sense either “two” or any other kind of multitude, whether numerable or “indefinitely many.” Precisely because every physical object is an infinitely divisible aggregate of parts—pending, that is, the discovery of the etymological “atom”—none of them can be called “One,” and the flip side of that easily grasped proposition is that the One cannot be a physical object. Along with deploying the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy as if it were not fallacious (see §5), either pluralizing a “one” or unifying a multitude—both of which are rendered ridiculous by Plato’s utterly simple Solution to the Problem of the One and the Many—are the clearest signs of Plato’s pedagogical generosity, with the aforementioned simplicity of Platonism itself constituting its culminating sign.

Since Plato was clearly interested in mathematics, it is natural to wonder how advanced his understanding of mathematics really was, and in relation to the *quadratrix* of Hippias, “his knowledge does not appear to have been more than up to date.”²⁷⁹ Heath therefore strikes the right note when he claims that for Plato “the value of the two sciences [sc. geometry and arithmetic] consists in the fact that they draw the soul toward truth and create the philosophic attitude of mind, lifting on high the things which ordinary habit would keep down,”²⁸⁰ and Socrates states with great clarity the reason that the lesson in arithmetic in *Republic 7* deals primarily with the indivisible One:

Socrates: “This arithmetic, indeed, which just now we were discussing, how forcefully *upwards* does it lead the soul [ὡς σφόδρα ἄνω ποι ἄγει τὴν ψυχὴν] compelling us to speak of numbers in themselves permitting in no kind of way that anyone pretending numbers merely visible or having bodies joined, would dare to speak of them.”²⁸¹

Whenever the quality of “twoness” is allowed to “occupy” two things, thereby causing them to become two,²⁸² we are making a return trip to the

279. Heath, *History of Greek Mathematics*, 1.294.

280. Heath, *History of Greek Mathematics*, 1.284.

281. *R.* 525d5–8.

282. On the Final Argument in *Phd.*, see *Guardians on Trial*, §16. But note for the present that since each of us is “one” (302a2–3), each of us is therefore “odd” (302a3–5), just as being “occupied” by “the idea of the three” at *Phd.* 104d5–e1 makes it impossible for the them to be “even.”

realm of Hippias, for though *both* are two, *each* is only one (302a1–7). The units out of which Plato’s numbers are made are not divisible and we cannot allow them to be treated as if they were (R. 525d8–e3).

It is therefore of great importance that Hippias agrees that “one” is odd (302a4–5), something it could only be *if it too were a Number*, which One is not.²⁸³ As already suggested in discussing the *quadratrix*, it is a short conceptual leap from the geometrical circle-segment to a unit-circle with a radius of “one,” but even if it isn’t, the Cartesian “one,” conceived as an infinitely divisible spatial magnitude, has now become ours, and our understanding of Plato has suffered as a result. We are taught from an early age that despite the fact that the symbol “ $\frac{1}{2}$ ” is manifestly indicating only *one part out of two*, we imagine that we are dividing “one” in half. As a result, our “one” becomes what Plato’s isn’t, and therefore cannot do what Plato’s does: it cannot emancipate our souls from (some version of) the Continuity Theory. Plato’s discovery that the arts and sciences most productive of certainty depend on units whose indivisibility not only distinguished them from every physical thing (*Phlb.* 56b4–57c4)—indicating in the process that to be One, they must be separated from οὐσία (*Prm.* 143a4–9)—constituted his most significant *pedagogical* breakthrough, and even though he is only hinting at or rather introducing the pedagogical role of the One in *Hippias Major*, it is no accident that when Socrates uses Beauty to introduce “the Theory of Ideas” in *Republic* 5, his method will be familiar to Glaucon:

Socrates: ‘It would be by no means easy to explain it to another,’ I said, ‘but I think that you will grant me this.’ ‘What?’ ‘That since what’s beautiful [καλόν] is opposite to what’s base [αἰσχρόν], they are two.’ ‘Of course.’ ‘And since they are two, each is one [οὐκοῦν ἐπειδὴ δύο, καὶ ἓν ἑκάτερον].’ ‘That also.’ ‘And in respect of the just and the unjust, the good and the bad, and all the forms [τὰ εἰδη], the same statement holds, that in itself each is one, but that by virtue of their communion [κοινωνία] with actions and bodies and with one another they present themselves everywhere, each as a multiplicity of aspects.’ ‘Right,’ he said.²⁸⁴

The fact that the three characteristic features of the Double Argument come together in a single passage in Plato’s *Republic* not only indicates the pedagogical reach of *Hippias Major* but also suggests why doubts about its authenticity will never be entirely suppressed. It is, however, only under the dominion of the Order of Composition paradigm that generations of scholars have been trained to regard with a skeptical eye this brilliant

283. I.e., since numbers are necessarily plural.

284. R. 475e6–476a9 (Shorey); on “and with one another” (and Shorey’s note on it), see *Guardians on Trial*, 56–57.

dialogue that so economically advances, and at such an early stage in the curriculum—and that means: on a level that any youngster can understand—the long-term goals of Plato the Teacher.²⁸⁵ Already provoking his readers to be ἀποβλέποντες toward τὸ καλόν as that ἄλλο τι that determines which pleasures are αἰσχροῦν (299d8–e1), Plato uses two powerful weapons to shatter the separation-resistant “communion [κοινωνία]” of those διανεκῆ σώματα τῆς οὐσίας πεφυκότα (301b6): the humble εἷς (302a2) and the δύο (cf. *R.* 476a3 where the masculine εἷς is replaced by the neuter ἔν), i.e., “one and two.” The number δύο not only provides the logical basis for *any* division that cuts things up ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, and without which we could not be ἀπολαμβάνοντες τὸ καλόν, but it is also the basis for distinguishing the kind of ἔν that no δύο can be—i.e., the true One of which there are two in “two”—from the fraudulent “ἔν” that purports to “unify” the Many as φύσις.

SECTION 10. DECEIVING WITH THE DOUBLE

Given that Socrates practices deception of the grossest kind in *Hippias Major*, it is noteworthy that he accuses Hippias of deceiving *him*:

Socrates: And I am worried, comrade, lest you should be playing [παίζειν] with me and purposely deceiving [ἐκὼν ἐξαπατᾶν] me, so forceful and numerous [πολλά] are those that appear to me.²⁸⁶

The “many [πολλά]” to which Socrates refers are the countless examples of things that are, e.g., of a certain *number* collectively, while each of them remains *one* individually, and since this is a preview of important developments,²⁸⁷ the suspicion that Plato allows Socrates to voice here contributes something to our awareness of this passage’s importance. But the words he uses point backwards as well as forwards, especially if we’re willing to recognize ἐξαπατᾶν as a form of wrong-doing (cf. *Hp. Mi.* 372d4–7):

285. Cf. Ross, *Plato’s Theory of Ideas*, 4: “the dialogue shows signs of a development in the theory of Ideas which it is hard to assign to anyone but Plato. Here, for instance, and nowhere else, Socrates points out the difference between most Ideas, which are true of each and all of a number of things, and Ideas of number, which are true of a group but not of its individual members.” For Ross on the Intermediates, see *Guardians on Trial*, 380–82; because he rejects them, he (incorrectly) regards numbers as Ideas.

286. 300d2–4.

287. Introducing as it does the Intermediates, and thus both the Problem of the One and the Many and Plato’s solution to it; see §9 and the Introduction.

if we are, then the mere possibility that Hippias is doing it ἐκόν is enough to call the Socratic Paradox into question on an existential basis (see §4) even before we reach *Hippias Minor*. Confirming that this connection is deliberate—i.e., that Plato expects us to recall *Protagoras*—is the use of παίζειν, for Socrates uses this verb when he accuses Protagoras of playfully testing him with a claim that doesn't reflect the sophist's real position (*Prt.* 341d7).²⁸⁸

As a general principle, we should always put ourselves on guard when Socrates accuses his interlocutor of deceiving him, and in order to dispel any possible ambiguity, what I mean is that Plato is warning us that it is Socrates himself who is being deceptive. First made unmistakable in *Hippias Major* thanks to the transparent fiction of Socrates' Double,²⁸⁹ deliberate deception will receive independent consideration (and defense) in *Hippias Minor*, and there again Socrates will accuse Hippias of deceiving him (ἐξαπατᾶν at *Hp. Mi.* 370e10) and will do so in the midst of a passage where Socrates is deceiving not only his interlocutor but us as well (see §11). This will happen again at the end of *Ion* (see §12).²⁹⁰ As a species of Performative Self-Contradiction—for Socrates is in the process of doing what he is claiming his interlocutor would be *wrong* to do—the general principle is not, to put it mildly, universally accepted. But *Hippias Major* makes the first step impossible to deny, and this in part explains the opposition the dialogue has encountered. In response, my claim is that when Socrates tells his interlocutors to consider whether he is speaking the truth (as at *Prt.* 343c6–7 and 358a1–4), he isn't going to be; when he warns the boys to take heed “lest we should be deceived” in *Lysis* (*Ly.* 219b6) or warns his wider audience to refute and “take him to task” if he should speak falsely in *Gorgias* (ἀναλαμβάνεσθαι at *Grg.* 506a2–3), we would be well advised to do as he says. Moreover, when

288. Socrates has just admitted that he is προσ-παίζων with his interlocutors in *Lovers* (*Am.* 135a2); the Seed Sower thus prepares the reader for seeing his playfulness here as well.

289. For a recent response with bibliography, see Trivigno, “Moral and Literary Character.” 48: “In order to understand the significance of the absent questioner [sc. Socrates' Double] device, it is crucial to distinguish Plato's aims as an author and Socrates' aims as philosophical interlocutor.”

290. The *locus classicus* for Socrates' deceptive accusation that he is being deceived while he is in the process of using deception is *Hipparchus* (see *Guardians on Trial*, §7), and this in part explains its excision. Only here does one of Socrates' interlocutors do what both Hippias and Ion should have done, i.e., respond to Socrates' claim that someone else is deceiving *him*—“you are trying to deceive me [ἐξαπατᾶν]” say Socrates to the comrade at *Hipparch.* 228a6—by turning the tables and telling Socrates the truth: “Comrade: You are deceiving me” (*Hipparch.* 228a8–9 and 229e1). For a similar warning, but this time in a humorous context that conceals its universal applicability, see *Smp.* 214e10–11: “If anything I say's not true, interrupt [imperative of ἐπιλαμβάνειν] in the middle, and state that I'm speaking this falsely [τοῦτο ψεύδεσθαι].” The speaker is the drunken Alcibiades; Crito interrupts “in the middle” at *Euthd.* 290e1–2 (see *Ascent to the Good*, 116–17).

he puts us on guard lest we receive from him a counterfeit account in *Republic* (κίβδηλον *R.* 507a5)²⁹¹ that is exactly what he is intends to offer us.²⁹²

This is not, however, to deny the validity of Socrates' claim that Hippias is being deceptive in *Hippias Major*. Although the polymath sophist doesn't realize that he is being deceived about the existence of Socrates' Double, he is perfectly candid about his own willingness to deceive "him" (298b5–6), and on the important (post-aesthetic) point that the Double Definition scarcely applies to things like laws and institutions (298b2–4). Moreover, Plato has caused Hippias not only to reveal that he is ready, eager, and willing to deceive in the future, but that he has long since made a practice of doing so. Although he is a staunch believer in progress, Hippias finds it expedient to present himself as a defender of the past (282a5–8). Where things get more interesting is when we apply Hoerber's insight about triads in *Hippias Major* to the number of Hippias' deceptions in the dialogue. In this case, the hidden third likewise emerges in relation to the Double Definition, but does so, as it were, on the opposite side of the first: how will Hippias respond when Socrates' Double inquires about pleasures that don't arise only through sight and hearing, things that are doubtless pleasant (ἡδύ) but by no means beautiful (καλόν), and culminating with sexual intercourse, which is at once most pleasant and most ugly?²⁹³

Between the Final Argument in *Protagoras* and Diotima's Discourse in *Symposium*, "the Ἄλλο τι Passage [of 299d8–e2]" plays an important part (see §9): it is precisely τὸ καλόν that furnishes the basis for discriminating among pleasures and ultimately, even among goods (see §17), thus calling into question not only the Equation of the Beautiful and the Pleasant but that of the Good and the Beautiful. But in the run-up to this passage beginning at 299a6, Socrates' Double goads Hippias into abandoning the basis for any such discrimination:

291. For the importance of the verb εὐλαβεῖσθαι (*R.* 507a4) as warning, and thus a further example of the principle in question, see *Guardians in Action*, 317 (especially 317n88), and *Guardians on Trial*, 423 and 429. Note in this passage the phrase "lest I will in some way deceive you unwillingly [ἐξαπατᾶν ὑμᾶς ἄκων]" for which 300d2–4 has prepared us. The use of εὐλαβεῖσθαι culminates in *Phd.* (see 90d9 and 91c3–6); on this verb, see Boris Hogenmüller, *Der semantische Wandel im Werk Platons: εὐλάβεια, εὐλαβής, εὐλαβεῖσθαι in den Platonis opera und der Appendix Platonica* (Marrburg: Tectum, 2015).

292. See *Plato the Teacher*, 190–93.

293. 298e7–299a6 (Lamb modified): "Socrates: 'Why, then,' he will say, 'if they are pleasures no less than the others, do you take from them this designation and deprive them of being beautiful?' 'Because,' we shall say, 'everybody would laugh at us if we should say that eating is not pleasant [ἡδύ] but is beautiful [καλόν], and that a pleasant odor is not pleasant [ἡδύ] but is beautiful [καλόν]; and as to the act of sexual love, we should all, no doubt, contend that it is most pleasant [ἡδιστον], but that one must, if he perform it, do it so that no one else shall see, because it is most ugly [αἴσχηστον] to see.'"

Socrates: If we say this, Hippias, ‘I too understand,’ he will perhaps say, ‘that you have all along been ashamed to say that these pleasures are beautiful, because they do not seem so to people; but that is not what I asked, what seems to the many to be beautiful [ὁ δοκεῖ τοῖς πολλοῖς καλὸν εἶναι], but [ἀλλά] what is so [ὅτι ἔστιν with καλὸν understood].’²⁹⁴

Appealing first to the sophist’s contempt for οἱ πολλοί with the characteristically Platonic difference between what is and what merely seems to be²⁹⁵—in the sequel, the even more distinctively Platonic distinction between what is (εἶναι) and what becomes (γινόμενον) makes a second appearance (299b4; cf. 293c2 and *Prt.* 340b4–5)—Socrates gives Hippias a choice to honor this ἀλλά with another ἀλλά by upholding something else (τι ἄλλο) instead of continuing (ἔτι) to uphold the Many’s (merely conventional) discrimination among pleasures:

Socrates: Then we shall say, I think, just what we posited [ὑποτιθέναι], i.e., We said indeed [γέ] that the part of the pleasant—the part arising [γινόμενον] from both sight and hearing—is [εἶναι] beautiful. But [ἀλλά] are you still [ἔτι] going to get some use from this response, or is there also something else [τι ἄλλο] we should say, Hippias? *Hippias:* In relation to what has been said, indeed [πρὸς γε τὰ εἰρημένα], it is necessary to say no other things than these. *Socrates:* ‘Y’ all are speaking beautifully indeed [καλῶς δὴ λέγετε],’ he will say.²⁹⁶

Since Hippias distinguished himself memorably for upholding the superiority of φύσις to the tyranny of νομός in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 337c7–d3), his unwillingness to offer τι ἄλλο here, simply for the sake of consistency with what has proceeded, not only reflects poorly on the extent of his own candor but helps us to understand why all three sophists endorse the Equation of the Good and the Pleasant (*Prt.* 358a5–b3) in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*.

In a dramatic sense, perhaps Hippias has learned his lesson: bad things happen to Socrates’ interlocutors whenever he goads them into a public endorsement of the view that all pleasures are good insofar as they are pleasant and thus are by nature beautiful as well. But Plato’s concern is with the reader, and even when he depicts one of his characters learning a lesson, it is for the reader’s sake that he does so. Insofar as the Double Definition calls into question the Equation of the Pleasant and the Good—as the foregoing makes obvious, its restriction to sight and hearing has the purpose of accomplishing this—it implicates the Final Argument in *Protagoras*. Thanks to τὸ καλόν, the connection between *Hippias Major* and *Symposium* is also obvious, and

294. 299a6–b2 (Lamb modified). For the distinction between δοκεῖν and εἶναι in Xenophon, see *Cynegeticus*, 13.7.

295. See *Plato the Teacher*, §7.

296. 299b2–8 (Lamb modified).

was duly emphasized in this book's central section (§9). But nobody is going to understand what Plato means by τὸ καλόν who does not know that “beautiful things are difficult [χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ]” (304e8), and this means that nobody who thinks that cowards run from battle because they fail to measure how much more pleasant it would be for them to go to war (*Prt.* 359e3–360a8) is going to make the ascent to the Beautiful. It is therefore not only in relation to Hippias' attack on the tyranny of νόμος that the importance of his alleged deception must be measured, but in relation to the Final Argument, the outlying defenses of which are presently being overrun not only by attacking the Equation of the Beautiful and the Pleasant, but also by showing how the likes of Hippias might best be able to defend it.²⁹⁷

If Hippias is being deceptive here, Socrates is largely responsible, and as if to match those of his interlocutor, there also seem to be a triad of what might be called “minor deceptions” in his case as well. The first, and most important, implicates this questionable application of the plural verb “seem” to the noun “triad,” which *seems* more obviously singular if, that is, we disregard the fact that One is not a Number.²⁹⁸ In other words, it is Socrates who asks Hippias to confirm that “one” is odd (302a4–5), which of course it can only be if it *is* a number; this must therefore count as a Socratic deception. Likewise based on mathematics, but shifting the locus of deception from the utterly simple—and on my account importantly Platonic—to the more sophisticated plane of irrationals, is Socrates' suggestion that two odd numbers can just as easily combine into an even one as two even numbers can, so, too, can two “irrationals” in combination become rational (303b6–c1), a claim that no one who regards irrationals as either geometrical or numerical could possibly think to be true.²⁹⁹ Rounding out the triad is Socrates' early suggestion, likewise false, that the Seven Wise Men—who of course included Solon—did not engage in politics (281c7–8).³⁰⁰ If Plato had in every case some deeper reason for sprinkling *Hippias Major* with these deceptions, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain what those reasons might be.

297. As, for example, by the Continuity Theory of Reality: Presocratic φύσις can overcome the “tyranny” of a νομός-based conception of τὸ καλόν (*Prt.* 337d1–e1), i.e., one that regards it as normative.

298. For discussion, see Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought*, 57–59.

299. For the classic basis of further discussion in English, see Heath, *History of Greek Mathematics* 1.304 and more generally 156–57 and 202–12. For detailed discussion, see de Strycker, “Une énigme mathématique,” and the same author's “De irrationalen in den *Hippias Maior*,” *L'Antiquité Classique* 10, no. 1 (1941), 25–36, another attempt to absolve Plato of error, this time by making multiplication rather than addition the basis of combination. Cf. Paul-Henri Michel, *De Pythagore à Euclide. Contribution à l'histoire des mathématiques préeuclidiennes* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1950), 501–504; admitting the possibility of error is Novak, “Plato and the Irrationals,” 18.

300. Along with David Sider, “The Apolitical Life: Plato, *Hippias Maior* 281c,” *L'Antiquité Classique* 46, no. 1 (1977), 180–183, see Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 37 (on 281c8): “The men Socrates mentions did not abstain from affairs of state, but Hippias chooses to proceed as if the absurdity were true, rather than refuse Socrates' praise.” Cf. Bruns, *Das literarische Porträt der Griechen*, 348.

It is by keeping Plato's pupils in mind that fresh solutions to such problems repeatedly emerge. To put that another way, the best solutions, like the most mathematically elegant ones, tend to be simple. Although there is something to be said for, e.g., linking Socrates' false insinuation about the Seven Wise men to the shallowness of Hippias' pretense of valuing the ancients, or—to take another example—for using Socrates' two mathematical deceptions to distinguish the kind of student who gets lost in complexities and therefore scorns the simple souls that only great teachers can teach to outstrip the smart-alecks, the simplest solution is that it is the mere *fact* of these deceptions that is important, and that we are being trained first to identify and then to count them. *Hippias Major* is the first dialogue where Plato seems to be determined to teach his students how to count to three, including how to look for the missing third, and Socrates' claim about "irrationals" is thus the equally difficult to spot analogue of Hippias' politic refusal to uphold φύσις at 299b6–7. But the important point, the simple point, is that Plato's *Hippias Major* is the first dialogue in which Plato is determined to teach even the dull-est of his students *that Socrates deceives*. And he does so primarily, of course, through the Double. It is therefore not only with respect to ἀπὸ τὸ καλὸν that *Hippias Major* is Plato's *pons asinorum*.

Platonic pedagogy begins with *Protagoras*, and before this book is complete, I want to show the sense in which it ends with it as well. Befitting its central position between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, *Hippias Major* prepares his students to read, hear, see, and understand *Protagoras* in a different way from the way they heard, saw, and understood it at first, and the simplest way to explain that difference is that every one of them will now *know* that Socrates is perfectly capable of foisting the most egregious kind of deception on his interlocutors. However shallow were our initial doubts about Socrates' sincerity on first acquaintance, and no matter how deep those doubts will penetrate the second time, they will now necessarily penetrate deeper than they did at first. Although I have tried to show that this retrospective process begins with the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy in the first part of *Alcibiades Major* (see §5), then continues with the deconstruction of the argument that establishes the equivalence of wisdom and temperance in *Alcibiades Minor* (see §7), and implicates the interpretive subtlety required for understanding dialogues that Socrates narrates in *Lovers* (see §8), *Hippias Major* marks an unmistakably obvious turningpoint in the Reversal of *Protagoras* thanks to the brute fact of Socrates' Double. In a dialogue that is by no means lacking in important lessons, the most important of these is both the easiest to learn and the funniest to get.³⁰¹

301. See Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 176, for a just assessment.

Naturally Socrates' Double has attracted scholarly attention, not only in older debates about authenticity,³⁰² but more recently as an interesting phenomenon in its own right.³⁰³ Woodruff, who calls him "the Questioner," strikes the right note with regard to the older question: "The Questioner is in fact the most original feature of the *Hippias Major*, and the least likely to have been supplied by an imitator of Plato."³⁰⁴ Hippias asks Socrates three times who his neighbor might be (ἔναγχος τις at 286c5), all with the interrogative "who is he? [τίς ἐστίν;]."³⁰⁵ While framing his questions, Hippias reveals that if he doesn't yet know "who," he at least knows what kind of person the Double is: he is "someone uneducated [ἀπαιδευτός τις]" (288d1–2) and "someone ignorant [ἀμαθής τις] (290e3); with the last question he allows the fellow to be "the man [ὁ ἄνθρωπος] (298b5–6)."³⁰⁶ And in the three passages that follow as being implicated by these questions (288d1–5, 290d10–e3, and 298b10–c2), Hippias is offered some answers, of which the first is perhaps the funniest: "The kind of guy, Hippias, who's not subtle but uncouth [οὐ κομψὸς ἀλλὰ συρφετός] giving thought to nothing other than the truth [οὐδὲν ἄλλο φροντίζων ἢ τὸ ἀληθές]" (288d4–5). He is also identified by Socrates as "very troublesome [μέρμερος πάνυ]" (290e4)³⁰⁷ and finally as "the son of Sophroniscus [ὁ Σωφρονίσκου]" (298b11). The last, of course, gives away the game³⁰⁸—for those who didn't get the joke the first time—since Socrates has already identified himself by his patronymic in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 131e3).

Confronted with the doubling of Socrates,³⁰⁹ we might well ask: which is the real "son of Sophroniscus"?³¹⁰ Is he the rude Questioner or the far more

302. See Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 44n47 (on 286c5) for bibliography.

303. See Halsten Olson, "Socrates Talks to Himself in Plato's *Hippias Major*," *Ancient Philosophy* 20 (2000), 265–287, and most recently A. G. Long, *Conversation and Self-Sufficiency in Plato* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), ch. 3 ("Socrates' Housemate in the *Hippias Major*").

304. Woodruff, *Hippias Major*, 45; for further comment, see 107–108.

305. 288d1 (τίς δ' ἐστίν ὁ ἄνθρωπος;), 290e1 (τίς ἐστίν;), and 298b10 (τίς οὗτος;)

306. At 292a8, after Socrates tells Hippias that he'd get a beating for offering such an answer, the sophist wonders whether "the man is some kind of slave-master of yours [δεσπότης τις σοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος]."

307. Hesychius—see William Chase Greene, *Scholia Platonica* (Haverford, PA: American Philological Society, 1938), 175, note on 290e—glosses μέρμερα with "difficult [χάλεπá]" as well as δεινά (on δεινός, see *Prt.* and §4), and "worthy of thought [φροντίδος ἄξια]" which suggests, in the aggregate, "difficult to understand for being wicked smart."

308. See Ludlam, *Hippias Major*, 59–62, calling for excising 298b10–c2 as an interpolation, and concluding: "With the removal of the interpolation, we are freed from the obligation to identify the Questioner as the son of Sophroniscus." For additional comment and bibliography, see Soreth, *Hippias Maior*, 49–50, and especially 50n1 for this passage's role in the early authenticity debates.

309. Cf. Capelle, "Platonisches in größeren Hippias," 186: "die Verdoppelung des Sokrates," and "Socrates' double" in Vasilis Politis, *The Structure of Inquiry in Plato's Early Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 108 and 230n7.

310. Cf. Mateo Duque, "In and Out of Character: Socratic *Mimēsis*" (Ph.D. dissertation: Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2020), who insightfully combines the problem of the doubled Socrates with the core issue of the Double Definition on 268–69: "Toward the end of

accommodating fellow who the Double might beat with a stick (292a6–7) if he were to pose as knowing what he does not in fact know (298c10–11)? In a dialogue shot through with triads,³¹¹ the answer is that he is neither of these two but rather a *third person* equally capable of being either or both. In other words, “the Real Socrates” is neither of the two versions we meet in *Hippias Major* but rather the Socrates who decides which of those two he will be in any given situation. This, at least, would be the best answer if we were to forget Plato’s agency in the process, for Socrates is never anything more nor less than Plato’s Socrates, and what Plato’s Socrates is doing in *Hippias Major* is revealing just how deceptive he can be, especially when dealing with a vainglorious but by no means exclusively ridiculous sophist. The trick is to make such men look laughable, and it is Plato who is using his Socrates to do so. From a pedagogical standpoint, the complex Socrates who can be either the Questioner or the Questioner’s victim is Plato’s answer to the complex (παντοδαπόν) and variegated (ποικίλον) version of “the good” that Protagoras offers us in the Relativity Speech (*Prt.* 334b6–7). If it weren’t already clear from our first encounter with the Exegesis, Plato is now revealing his Socrates to be both παντοδαπός and ποικίλος in the service of some ἄλλο τι that is anything but.

The student is the winner. While Hippias is deceived by the Double, the student is not. Plato the Teacher can therefore achieve at least two important purposes: he can teach the student that Socrates and his creator can be deceptive deliberately, and by sharing with the student a joke that the wise Hippias does not “get,” he can increase the student’s confidence. Can we find a third? Of course we can: he is entertaining his students while instructing them, tailoring a joke—albeit one with a serious purpose—to their juvenile sensibilities, and also to mine. It’s true that being so puerile would eventually get his dialogue into trouble, but it’s difficult to believe that he gave that possibility any thought. What he principally needed to do, he did: he showed Socrates deceiving Hippias with the Double. Without the student’s awareness that Plato repeatedly and deliberately causes his characters to be deceptive, his dialogues are lifeless things. Socrates deceives Hippias because it is his intent to do so, but all of Plato’s characters, including Socrates, will only be made to

their conversation, Socrates finds (301d–303c) something that can be attributed to both Hippias and him—namely that they are a duo—but cannot be attributed to each individually (without the other). This example is ironic because Socrates has been doubling his self this entire time throughout their conversation. So, there’s a sense in which Socrates *is* capable of being a double or a duo by himself. By performing the role of the ‘annoying questioner,’ Socrates has doubled himself, and thus undermines or contradicts what he asserts that ‘being double’ or ‘being a duo’ (ἀμφοτέρως) cannot be attributed to an individual.”

311. It would be on the basis of the three question-passages that I would respond to Ludlam’s excision proposal; not that Socrates tells Hippias he would not know him even if he were to tell him the man’s name (290e2).

deceive because Plato wants them to do so, and all these deceptions are performed for the sake of increasing the student's ability to recognize deception.

It is therefore only after crossing the bridge that Socrates warns us: "Let us then keep watch [σκοπώμεθα] lest we should somehow be deceived [ἐξαπατᾶσθαι]" (293e9). Brimming with self-confidence and contempt, we handle the Hippias-phase of the dialogue as heroes, but Plato is now determined to test our resolve. It is important to realize that he has placed those who have transited the *pons asinorum* in the position of Achilles: in ridiculing the three responses of Hippias, they too have shown their contempt for beautiful maidens, gold, and a conventionally successful life,³¹² one with no place for Peleus to weep over his dead son.³¹³ So far so good, and a continuing concern with Achilles, as mediated by Homer's *Litai* (*Iliad* 9), will connect *Hippias Major* to its sequel (§11) and beyond (§16). By beginning the Socratic proposals with τὸ πρέπον—and more specifically by allowing the Double to introduce it (293e4-5) with Socrates to warn us against being deceived by it (293e5-9)—the testing begins immediately. Following the initial σκοπώμεθα with the imperative "look, then! [ὄρα τοίνυν]" (293e11), Socrates confronts us for the first time with the essential distinction where deception is concerned: between *what is* and *what merely seems to be* (293e11-294a2). The fact that Hippias unhesitatingly chooses the latter (294a3-5) not only helps us to cling more tightly to the former, but allows Plato to introduce the language of deception: if it is the purpose of τὸ πρέπον to cause something to *seem* (φαίνεσθαι) more beautiful rather than to be so (εἶναι), then the identification of τὸ καλόν with τὸ πρέπον makes the former "a kind of deception [ἀπάτη τις]" (294a7).

It is only by detecting ἀπάτη that we will be able to resist it, and although the theory behind this "science of deception" will only be explained in *Phaedrus* (*Phdr.* 261d10-262c4),³¹⁴ it is already being practiced in *Hippias Major*, beginning with the three proposals of the dialogue's middle section. As already emphasized in §9, what τὸ πρέπον, χρήσιμον, and τὸ ὠφέλιμον have in common makes them scarcely less inimical to Platonism than the three materializing responses of the Hippias-phase: they all relativize the Beautiful. As such, they *seem to be* but are not adequate accounts of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν. By beginning with τὸ πρέπον, Plato can first hammer the εἶναι/φαίνεσθαι distinction (294b1-c2) and then—thanks to another usefully misguided response from Hippias (293c3-4)—introduce an equally useful distinction between what is so *in fact* (τῷ ὄντι at 294c5-9) and is merely *opined* to be

312. See the speech of Agamemnon in *Litai* for Achilles' resistance to gold (Homer, *Iliad*, 9.122, 126, and 137) and for girls (9.128-133); the two come together when he spurns Χρυσόθεμις (9.145), one of Agamemnon's daughters (cf. 9.388-390).

313. See Homer, *Iliad*, 24.485-542.

314. See *Guardians in Action*, §11.

so (δοξάζεσθαι at 294c9)³¹⁵ before returning to the εἶναι/φαίνεσθαι distinction yet again (294d5–e6). Naturally the upshot is that τὸ καλόν cannot be τὸ πρέπον but rather some other thing (ἄλλο τι at 294e8).³¹⁶ But the real problem affects all three proposals of this Socrates-phase equally, and nowhere does Plato make their relativizing incompleteness obvious, except, that is, by ending with τὸ ὠφέλιμον.

Rectified first in *Cratylus* and then in *Theaetetus*, the absence of “man is the measure of all things” in *Protagoras* is not the least remarkable of this dialogue’s many remarkable features. In its absence, the nearly show-stopping Relativity Speech of Protagoras must serve as its stand-in, and it does so in order to prepare us for understanding what makes the equation of τὸ καλόν and τὸ ὠφέλιμον in *Hippias Major* yet another example of deliberate deception in that dialogue, and on a much more significant level than the Double. Thanks to the high degree of intertextuality between *Hippias Major* and Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, Plato has found a way to juxtapose a relativistic, purely practical, and utilitarian conception of the Beautiful and the Good with what will eventually become manifest as Platonism.³¹⁷ Not yet ready to describe Socrates’ heroic willingness to die like a hero for the benefit of others—and Plato’s dialogues will ensure that he will be benefitting others forever—Plato can use the widely known example of Homer’s Achilles as a reasonable facsimile of an idealistic, theoretical, and altruistic conception of τὸ καλόν as other-benefitting gallantry. The Relativity Speech, embracing men, animals, and plants as its dative objects, raises the crucial question of for whom τὸ ὠφέλιμον is beneficial; in the post-*Symposium* dialogues, and

315. Cf. “those who opine [δοξάζειν] and are deceived [ἀπατᾶσθαι] contrary to what really is [τὰ ὄντα]” (*Phdr.* 262b2).

316. Given the hammered distinction between εἶναι and φαίνεσθαι, it is noteworthy that Plato promptly tests the student’s awareness of their opposition by combining the participle for “being something” (ὄν) with a participle from the verb “to seem” in the same passage that introduces this ἄλλο τι (294e7–9; Lamb): “Socrates: Whew! Our perception of what the beautiful is has fled away and gone, Hippias, since the appropriate has been found to be [ἐφ’ ἄνη ὄν] something other than the beautiful.”

317. See in particular Joël, *Sokrates*, 1.425–449 on “Das Wertprinzip” in “Die Sokratische Tugendlehre.” Emphasizing Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.8–9 and 4.6 throughout the section, Joël confronts the claim in Georg Ferdinand Dümmler, *Akademika: Beiträge zur Literaturgeschichte der Sokratischen Schulen* (Giessen: Ricker, 1889), on 180–87, that Xenophon is responding to *Hp. Ma.* (426–32, see also 436), and is at pains—as always—to distinguish Xenophon’s Socrates from the genuine article. The latter he situates between Xenophon’s (whose Socrates really needs to be understood in relation to Aristippus and especially Antisthenes; see 429–432, and 441–44) and Plato’s, using “Virtue as Knowledge” as Aristotle-based bedrock (437). While Plato will fully idealize, de-relativize, and de-materialize the Good and the Beautiful as Ideas (436 and 440–41)—a process already underway in *Hp. Ma.* (435–36)—the historical Socrates will de-relativize the Xenophontine and thus thoroughly utilitarian Good that makes things Beautiful only in relation to their usefulness (434–35, 445) as the kind of knowledge that makes them useful, thus relying heavily on the First Protrectic in *Euthd.* (438–39).

beginning in *Symposium* itself (see §17), self-benefit will become the necessary dialectical foil for bringing the altruistic alternative to light.³¹⁸

What else could be expected from a teacher who used *Protagoras* as his school's curtain raiser? As Socrates makes explicit at the end of that dialogue, there is a jarring discord between his ongoing attempt to show that Virtue is Knowledge and his equally ongoing doubts about whether Virtue can be Taught (*Prt.* 361a6–b3). But “discord” is too weak: it is amidst the rubble of the argument he uses to “establish” the unity of wisdom and temperance—the argument to which Plato promptly returns in *Alcibiades Minor* in order to reveal the limitations of the One Thing/One Opposite Principle (see §7)—that Socrates uses this merely musical metaphor (*Prt.* 333a6–8). At the end of *Protagoras*, Socrates ventriloquizes “the recent outcome [ἔξοδος] of the arguments” (*Prt.* 361a4) in order to accuse himself: “you are rushing headlong into self-contradiction [σεαυτῷ τάναντία σπεύδεις]” the personified ἔξοδος tells him (*Prt.* 361a7–b1. What are we then to say when Vlastos needs to use the phrase ὡς σὺ σπεύδεις in the sentence that follows to prove that Virtue is Knowledge is “a cardinal Socratic doctrine” (*Prt.* 361b3–7)?³¹⁹ When he writes: “*Protagoras* 361b: Socrates holds that all the virtues are knowledge, ‘insisting’ on it (or ‘urging it, ὡς σὺ σπεύδεις),” and then cites texts from Aristotle to prove it, Vlastos is not wondering in the least about the identity of “the Real Socrates,” but we must ask: is “he” the proponent of the “cardinal doctrine,”³²⁰ the skeptic who doubts that Virtue can be taught, or the ventriloquized voice that accuses himself of self-contradiction? And if

318. Xenophon anticipates this crucial move. Consider, for example, the speech of Agesilaus' brother Teleutias in *Hellenica*, 5.1.14–17; despite the conflation of τ' αγαθὰ καὶ τὰ καλὰ (16) and the concluding appeal to εὐκλεία (17), the hammered use of τὰ ἐπιτήδεια (four times in the speech) leaves no doubt that συν-ευδαιμονῶμεν (16) “was largely a matter of loot.” What makes this naked appeal to self-benefit so important is that Xenophon has already called the reader's attention to whatever it was that made it possible for Teleutias to dispose his men to be led by him, a thing (“by Zeus”) that “seems to me to be worthy for a man to consider” (5.1.4). Indeed Xenophon is considering τὸ ἀρχικόν—roughly speaking, the essence of leadership (cf. *Oeconomicus*, 21.2–12—throughout his writings, and Teleutias is not the only example of a leader who secures voluntary obedience by rewarding his followers on a material basis, as one would horses (*Horsemanship*, 8.13) or slaves (*Oeconomicus*, 5.16). It is Socrates (*Memorabilia*, 1.1.16, 3.3.8–15, and 3.5), Xenophon himself (*Anabasis*, 6.5.14–25), and Gryllus (*Hellenica*, 7.5.16) who offer us the virtuous alternative.

319. Gregory Vlastos, “Elenchus and Mathematics: A Turning-Point in Plato's Philosophical Development,” *American Journal of Philology* 109, no. 3 (Autumn 1988), 362–396, 381n59 (the note attached to “a cardinal Socratic doctrine”); on this “Golden Footnote,” see *Ascent to the Good*, 495–97.

320. See Nicholas D. Smith, “A Problem in Plato's Hagiography of Socrates,” *Athens Journal of Humanities and Arts* 5, no. 1 (January 2018), 81–103, on 86: “Socratic virtue intellectualism has been a source of great controversy among scholars in recent years. But their disagreements are mostly on details and not on whether or not Plato depicts Socrates as an intellectualist about virtue. No one seems to doubt this, and on this point it seems ancients and moderns are entirely in agreement. So the second of the three claims that create the trilemma [sc. the inharmonious relationship between ‘Socratic Virtue Intellectualism,’ ‘the Socratic Disclaimer of Knowledge,’ and Socrates as ‘an exemplar of virtue’] that is our focus here does not seem likely to be mistaken.” Note that Smith has just quoted *Prt.* 361a3–b7.

we decide that he is all three, which of them corresponds most closely to the man who invents his Double in *Hippias Major*?

One of the reasons that *Alcibiades Minor* won't be returning to the canon anytime soon is that Socrates promptly brings the young man up short when Alcibiades attempts to present himself as having been converted by the argument against prayer.³²¹ In rebuttal, Socrates manufactures “some fellow [τις ἀνὴρ]”—“who might happen to be wiser than both you and me”—who takes issue with his blaming ignorance (ἄγνοια) so uncritically (*Alc.2* 143b6–c3). To be sure Alcibiades remains incredulous about whether there could be any matter that it would be better for someone to remain ignorant than to know (*Alc.2* 143c4–7). But it is rather to overcome the reader's incredulity that Plato introduces philosophy in *Lovers* before embarking on the *Hippias* dyad, for there could be no better way to illustrate the limitations of knowledge than by showing the extremes of ignorance to which the famous polymath is subject. Alcibiades may be a corrupt and overly ambitious dope, but Hippias is worse: a thoroughly misguided know-it-all. To insist that these two pairs of dialogues are unworthy of Plato because his Alcibiades is not smart enough and because his Hippias is too stupid is to miss the point: as indicated by the jock and the egghead in *Lovers*, Plato is offering his students a twinned typology of the kinds of learners they should equally avoid being.

Lovers fails to arrive at a proper definition of philosophy because configuring it as a τέχνη falls prey to the same problems that knowledge does in *Alcibiades Minor* and τὸ χρήσιμον does in *Hippias Major*: it is useful for both good and ill (296c6–d1). There are things of which it is better to be ignorant (*Alc.2* 143c8–d7), and the kingly craft is also the tyrannical one (*Am.* 138b15). What *Lovers* succeeds in doing is showing why neither the wise (ὁ σοφός) nor the ignorant (ὁ ἀμαθής) is capable on their own of deciding whether philosophy is αἰσχροτόν, as the ἀμαθής thinks, or καλόν, as the σοφός insists (*Am.* 139a7–8; cf. 132c1–133b6). This is why Plato is merely planting seeds,³²² and leaving it to his students to recognize him as the Seed Sower of Studies (*Am.* 134e6–8). To put it another way, it is in the ἀπορία that follows Socrates' question that philosophy will be found, and this explains why Plato will allow Hippias the σοφός to call the Double “ἀμαθής” in *Hippias Major* (cf. 281a1 and 290e3). And when, despite *Alcibiades Minor* and *Lovers*, the zero-sum Binary of ἡ σοφία and ἡ ἀμαθία—i.e., wisdom as “most beautiful

321. *Alc.2* 143a6–b2 (Lamb): “*Alcibiades*: It is difficult, Socrates, to gainsay [ἀντιλέγειν] what has been well spoken: one thing, however, I do observe—how many evils are caused to men by ignorance [ἄγνοια], when, as it seems, we are beguiled by her not only into doing, but—worst of all—into praying to be granted the greatest evils.”

322. Note that the τέχνη of *Am.* 138b15–c10 is not rejected because of what it combines but because it reveals the “uselessness [ἀχρηστον]” of the philosopher (*Am.* 138e3; cf. 136d9–e4); are we ashamed (*Am.* 135a3–5) to reject it for a better reason?

of all [πάντων κάλλιστον]” and ignorance as “most base of all [πάντων αἰσχιστον]” (296a4–6)—emerges in the context of the not yet refuted identification of τὸ καλόν with what’s χρήσιμον in *Hippias Major*, we are being subjected to deliberate deception. Socrates’ warning that we should watch out lest we may be being deceived (293e9) proves that deceiving us is precisely his creator’s intent.

And deceived about deception is what we have been. Instead of acknowledging that ἀπατή is an intrinsic part of Platonic pedagogy, we have used Plato’s *Development* to historicize whatever self-contradictions we can’t use sophistry to palliate or excision to destroy. Instead of realizing that philosophy—i.e., that which it was Plato’s primary goal to teach us—is neither σοφία nor ἀμαθία but rather what is between them (μεταξύ at *Smp.* 204b4–5), we have followed the path Aristotle has laid down for us, where the Socratic Paradox joins Virtue is Knowledge as “a cardinal Socratic doctrine.” It is Aristotle who has left us to deal with the train wreck created by the inharmonious relationship between Virtue as Knowledge as “doctrine” and Socratic Ignorance.³²³ Despite the fact that *Protagoras*, which Aristotle quotes as evidence both for the power of knowledge and of its resistance to incontinence (*Prt.* 351c1–2),³²⁴ gives ample evidence in the Exegesis alone that they are nothing of the kind, we have taken the Stagirite at his word that (erroneous) “doctrines” is what they were for that most elusive of entities: “Socrates himself.” It is not Aristotle’s Socrates who transcended the relativity of the Beautiful as χρήσιμον or the indeterminacy of the Good as τὸ ὠφέλιμον by pointing toward the Idea of the Good, it must have been someone else who located philosophy between wisdom and ignorance, for the Real Socrates must surely have thought wisdom the only Good (*Euthd.* 281e2–5) and persisted in regarding ἡ σοφία as the most beautiful thing of all (*Euthd.* 296a5).

There is a certain beauty to this mysterious “somebody else,” for Socrates makes it just as easy to imagine that Diotima arrived on the scene out of nowhere to teach him about Love as it is to believe that it was his troublesome housemate who made him ashamed to discuss beautiful things without knowledge of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν. It is not only the Beautiful that joins *Hippias Major* to *Symposium*, it is the pedagogical fiction of “Socrates Schooled,” for in both dialogues Socrates pretends that he is being taught while in reality this particular deception is Plato’s chosen means for teaching us. Consider the life history of the One Thing/One Opposite Principle as an example of proleptic, basanistic, and visionary elements in Platonic pedagogy. Introduced without critical comment in in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 332c8–9; but see 333a2 and

323. Aristotle escapes the need to deal with this because he only mentions Socratic Ignorance once (*Sophistical Refutations* 34; 183b7–8).

324. For Aristotle’s use of this passage, see *Ascent to the Good*, lvii–ix.

333a8–b2), subjected to scrutiny in *Alcibiades Minor* (*Alc.* 2 139a13–c2), it is finally discarded by the didactic Diotima in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 201e8–202b5). When Socrates comforts Agathon with the illusion that he used to make the same kind of mistakes before Diotima set him right (*Smp.* 201e3–7), Plato is likewise comforting us for being sucked into accepting the Principle in *Protagoras*, despite what will look like generous hints in retrospect. It is easier to learn when our own teachers *depict themselves as having been taught*, and indeed this is the basis for the uproarious feast the Eleatic Stranger provides for youths and late-learners: the latter are confessing to the former that they were once as ignorant as the beginners are now.

But it is no accident that the most extended and most deceptive example of “Socrates Schooled” is Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus*. So believable is the gentleman farmer Ischomachus, and so different from Socrates himself—except, that is, in his methods of teaching³²⁵—that the reception has been not so much deceived by this little masterpiece as thoroughly bamboozled by it.³²⁶ If we can find it more believable that Diotima was Socrates’ preceptor in Love than that Aspasia was teaching him rhetoric (see §13), most unbelievable of all is that Socrates was actually being taught about agriculture by Ischomachus; Xenophon captures with enviable dexterity the acme of this aspect of Socratic pedagogy. As already mentioned in §8, there are repeated allusions to *Oeconomicus* in *Lovers*, and the fact that we meet the Double immediately after reading the latter is another indication of Plato’s debt to Xenophon, for even if “Socrates Schooled” was a device used by “the Real Socrates,” we can only *prove* that it was a device employed by the two greatest Socratics. But whatever its pedagogical advantages may be—and they are many—it is still an act of deliberate deception, for “Socrates” is using Aspasia, Diotima, and Ischomachus not only to teach Critobulus, Agathon, and Menexenus, but to teach us, i.e., “these boys here [ταῦτὶ τὰ μαιράκια]” (*Am.* 135a3).

What makes *Hippias Major* a turning point in the practice of Platonic pedagogy is that the deception is both unmistakably deliberate and completely undeniable. It was Plato’s intent to make sure that every reader would recognize it as such, and to that end, it was crucial to depict Hippias as *not* getting the joke, regardless of how implausible it would be for “the real Hippias” not to have done so. Leaving aside for the time being the fact that the dialogues

325. Note the connection between the role geometry (γεωμετρία) plays in *Men.* and the didactic methods of “Ischomachus” while teaching Socrates agriculture through recollection and images in *Oeconomicus*, 17.13–15. Since γεωργία is the simplest art to learn because it is natural, everyone already knows how to do it (*Oeconomicus*, 16.8).

326. See Leah Kronenberg, *Allegories of Farming from Greece to Rome: Philosophical Satire in Xenophon, Varro, and Virgil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 37–38, for a useful summary of two interpretive schools (“interpretations of the work turn on how the reader interprets the character of Ischomachus”) neither of which emphasizes that Ischomachus is merely Socrates’ character, invented by him to educate Critobulus.

themselves are intrinsically deceptive—for if they were not, how could we possibly find ourselves criticizing these fictions for lapses in verisimilitude?—the crucial point for now is that it is precisely because Hippias *isn't* in on the joke *that the reader is*, and therefore we find ourselves delighted, especially if we are willing to imagine ourselves as *ταῦτι τὰ μαιράκια*, seated on benches (*τὰ βᾶθρα*) in the Academy's Garden. But even if we are not, it will require nothing less than excising *Hippias Major* to conceal from ourselves that Plato has depicted his Socrates practicing deception on the broadest scale with the Double before defending deception directly, on the basis of a knowledge-based theory, in *Hippias Minor* (see §11).

Naturally the discussion of Socrates' claim that the knowledgeable man is the one best able to deceive will be at the center of the next section. But it is important to set out in advance the most basic reasons why *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor* are connected in this way. With respect to deception, they are linked as practice is to theory. Obviously attempts have been made and will continue to be made to deny that *Hippias Minor* is a theoretical defense of deception, a denial that must rely heavily on "if there is such a man" (*Hp. Mi.* 376b5–6); there will also be those who celebrate the opposite point of view.³²⁷ But in tandem, both dialogues advance Plato's ongoing Reversal of *Protagoras*, and both should therefore be reexamined in the context of the Seed Sower of Studies. Although *Hippias Major* weakens our certainty that Socrates endorses uncritically the Equations on which the Final Argument depends, and although *Hippias Minor* tends to undermine two "cardinal Socratic doctrines" since it is *knowledge* that allows a good man to do wrong voluntarily, the desirable upshot of the dyad is not a new set of doctrines but rather an increased awareness on the reader's part that "let us then keep watch lest we somehow be deceived" (293c9). Having just seen Socrates gull Hippias, we should be in no doubt that he is perfectly capable of gulling us as well.

My purpose throughout this study is to put the dialogue between Plato and his readers at the center of all things Platonic. As a result, the question of specifically *Socratic* deception, along with the debate concerning "cardinal So-

327. See Laurence Lampert, "Socrates' Defense of Polytopic Odysseus: Lying and Wrong-Doing in Plato's *Lesser Hippias*," *Review of Politics* 64, no. 2 (Spring 2002), 231–259; David Lévy, "La figure d'Ulysse chez les Socratiques: Socrate *polutropos*," *Phronesis* 50, no. 3 (2005), 181–214; and Paul Chan, "Introduction" to *Hippias Minor or The Art of Cunning: A New Translation of Plato's most controversial dialogue*, 13–30 (Brooklyn, NY and Athens: Badlands and DESTÉ Foundation, 2015), especially 23: "Throughout the dialogue Socrates questions the veracity of Hippias's claims as if he were exposing the lies of a con artist, and conflates Hippias's inferior intellect with his talent as an artisan, as though they went hand in hand. But what is less remarked upon is how cunning Socrates is in outwitting Hippias, and the degree to which he is willing to use crafty, even outlandish arguments to make his points. Socrates here is no paragon of virtue but, rather, the shrewd and seasoned philosopher who demonstrates how cunning he must be in order to unmask the hollow authority of an inferior form of thinking."

cratic doctrines,” is merely incidental to an ongoing attempt to focus attention on the pedagogical practices of Plato the Teacher. The neologism “basanistic” emerged from a growing suspicion that Plato was testing his students in those “later dialogues” on which revisionists were basing their claim that Plato had abandoned Platonism. But by working backwards from the late and difficult dialogues at the end of the Reading Order to the elementary and “early” ones with which it begins, I have become increasingly aware that it was Plato’s use of deliberate deception that provided the logical basis for those later tests. In other words, even before giving his readers the “vision” they would need to defend as his Guardians in the post-*Republic* dialogues, Plato was already teaching them from the beginning—if not in *Protagoras* itself, then in the dialogues that followed and began the process of reversing what we thought we knew about it—to recognize his deliberate use of deception, and, along with it, “the morality of fallacy.”³²⁸ In *Hippias Major*, he makes this impossible to miss, thanks to the Double; in its sequel, he will go farther.

Between the frank simplicity of the *Hippias* Dyad and the ontological complexities that begin in *Timaeus* and continue through *Laws*, stands Sprague’s *Plato’s Use of Fallacy*. It is probably no accident that she responded in 1962 to what Vlastos had written about *Protagoras* in 1956 (see §4): his humorless reading of the dialogue, taken as evidence of “the philosophy of Socrates,” marked a sea-change in its earlier reception, which had been more inclined to regard it as a youthful *jeu d’esprit* (see §8). Although she focused her fire on *Euthydemus*, it deserves emphasis that her interest in and awareness of the kinds of fallacy it contains had been sparked by A. L. Peck, to whom she dedicated her pioneering study.³²⁹ Peck had realized that the Eleatic Stranger uses one of the fallacies held up for ridicule in *Euthydemus*.³³⁰ What makes Sprague’s work intermediate is not only that the *Euthydemus-Sophist* link spans the distance between pre- and post-*Republic* dialogues, but because it is once again his deliberate use of deception that creates the logical foundation for “Plato’s Use of Fallacy.” In other words, it is the brute fact of deliberate deception, obvious to everyone in *Hippias Major* thanks to the Double, which joins the fallacious arguments of the brothers in *Euthydemus* to the creation of the Eleatic Stranger.

As already noted in §1, there is a passage in *Statesman* that echoes Socrates’ description of “the art of measurement” in the Final Argument of *Protagoras* (cf. *Prt.* 356c4–e2 and *Plt.* 283d7–285c2). But that echo is only the smoke

328. See George Klosko, “Plato and the Morality of Fallacy,” *American Journal of Philology* 108, no. 4 (Winter 1987), 612–626.

329. Sprague, *Plato’s Use of Fallacy*, v; cf. xiv.

330. See A. L. Peck, “Plato and the ΜΕΓΙΣΤΑ ΓΕΝΗ of the *Sophist*: A Reinterpretation,” *Classical Quarterly* 2, no. 1/2 (January–April 1952), 32–56; the crucial passage (on 46) is quoted in *Ascent to the Good*, 62n273.

from a volcano whose magma emerges from Plato's ongoing use of basanistic pedagogy. In order to justify the inordinate length of his discussion of weaving, the Stranger delivers an even more complex discourse on "the measured [τὸ μέτριον]" (beginning at *Plt.* 283e3). As already mentioned, it is Hippias who introduces τὸ μέτριον when he calls for a referee to regulate the length of speeches in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 338b1). More importantly, when the Eleatic Stranger finally reaches the end of his discourse on "the measured," one of the three terms he uses to gloss τὸ μέτριον is τὸ πρέπον (*Plt.* 284e6). It is therefore a perfectly natural question to ask: by τὸ πρέπον, does the Stranger mean to express what is beautiful τῷ ὄντι ("in fact," i.e., in accordance with εἶναι) or, like Hippias, what merely seems to be (φαίνεσθαι)? The answer is disturbing for those who believe that Plato regards the Eleatic Stranger as some kind of improvement on Socrates—naturally I don't deny that he *seems* to be one—and who are therefore willing to take seriously his claim that Socrates, doubled once again as a dog is to a wolf, is himself the practitioner of "a well-born sophistic [γενναία σοφιστική]" (*Sph.* 230a5–231b8).

It would be preferable to regard the Eleatic Stranger himself as a practitioner of σοφιστική, and although the evidence for doing so is naturally developed in detail elsewhere,³³¹ the important thing is that the creation of a character who appears to be Plato's ideal philosopher, and who has persuaded many scholars that he embodies Plato's revision or rejection of Platonism, is best understood as a highly developed form of the same kind of deception that Socrates practices on Hippias with the Double. By training us to recognize that Socrates can deceive from an early stage in our Academic education, the Seed Sower of Studies puts us on our guard, and ultimately he will shift the locus of deceit from Socrates to those who will undermine and reverse the gallant, sublime, and transcendent truths Plato has used him to teach us, especially in *Republic* 6–7. In the present case, the Eleatic Stranger also glosses τὸ μέτριον as τὸ δέον or "the needful" (*Plt.* 284e7), a word he has already used to describe the kind of image making (*Sph.* 235e7–236a1) that will eventually be linked to the sophist's art in *Sophist* (cf. *Sph.* 236c3–d4 and 266d9–e2). There, he had distinguished the kind of image that retains the symmetries of the original with the kind of deliberate and artful distortions that make an image merely appear to do so, for if this art of φανταστική is not employed, the, e.g., upper parts of a giant statue will appear to be smaller than "the needful [τὸ δέον]" (*Sph.* 235e5–236a2).

The crucial point is that it is not Plato's aim to deceive per se: his goal is to enable us to *see through his own deliberate deceptions*, i.e., to see his deceptions for what they are and "to bring them to light" (*Phdr.* 261e2–4). He repeatedly deploys the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy because *Alcibiades Major* has

331. See *Guardians on Trial*, §3.

made it so easy for us to see that it *is* a fallacy; he will pluralize the “one” and unify the Many because identifying such errors is child’s play (*Phlb.* 14c8–e4). Plato’s readers have already gone beyond relativizing the Beautiful as an incomplete “useful” or “the beneficial” in *Hippias Major* long before encountering the Idea of the Good in *Republic* 6–7, and Plato will now test if we are immune to re-materializing it in a life—as in *Philebus*—or in a man. So when the Eleatic Stranger, who is at pains to make himself appear to be Plato’s *Philosopher*,³³² ridicules “the late learners” for their determination “to resist in every way [ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι παντί]” (*Sph.* 251b7–8; cf. *Hp. Ma.* 287a2–8) those who try to make the many one and the one many, and who, in response to those who call a man “good,” insist that only the Good is good (*Sph.* 251b8–c2), we are witnessing the most complex level of Plato’s basanistic pedagogy, for here Plato has created a character who is not only defending false views with deceptive arguments *but who is ridiculing true ones*.

It has recently become even more important to decide whether it is Socrates or the Eleatic Stranger who is practicing σοφιστική. In his book on the sophists, David Corey has made the salient point: “he [Plato] sees in the relationship between Socrates and the sophists a possible entry point to the practice of philosophy,”³³³ and the hypothesis of an initial *Protagoras* suggests that Corey’s “possible” doesn’t go quite far enough. Even on a first reading, this dialogue will suggest to many that Socrates can use the tricks of the sophists against them, but my emphasis on his deliberate use of deception now threatens to become itself deceptive thanks to the way Socrates is treated in *Early Greek Philosophy* (2016).

In its nine volumes, André Laks and Glenn Most are attempting to overturn the concept of “Presocratic Philosophy” as a whole, and Plato along with it, by enrolling Socrates among the sophists, snugly fit there between Gorgias and Prodicus.³³⁴ They begin the relevant chapter in volume eight with “Socrates {≠ DK},”³³⁵ but that “≠” is radically insufficient, since including Socrates would have made the book they are rendering obsolete—the three volumes of *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*³³⁶—into a Performative Self-Contradiction. But “≠ DK” does something more than reveal the revolutionary nature of

332. See *Guardians on Trial*, 72–74.

333. Corey, *Sophists in Plato’s Dialogues*, 6; cf. 232: “the process of attempting to differentiate Socrates and the sophists is such a rich and enlightening enterprise, as Plato constructs it, that progress can only be made by those who are willing to look at the problem from a Socratic point of view—that is, to become a Socratic philosopher.”

334. Gorgias, Socrates, and Prodicus are chapters 32, 33, and 34 in Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*, volume 8 (“The Sophists. Part One”).

335. Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 8.298.

336. Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, Griechisch und Deutsch*, three volumes, seventh edition edited by Walther Kranz (Berlin-Charlottenburg: Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1954).

the step Most and Laks are so happy to take in overturning Diels-Kranz; it also conceals the misconception at the center of their section on “Socrates.” In fact, they are needlessly re-fragmentizing the unforgettable character that both Plato and Xenophon strove to preserve,³³⁷ creating in the process a particularly unsatisfactory version of “the historical Socrates” who might be called “Socrates_{DK}” naturally with heavy emphasis on his “doctrines.”³³⁸ By gathering the *testimonia* they do in the way that they do,³³⁹ Most and Laks are preserving this pseudo-historical “Socrates” with the *methods* of Diels, and therefore treating “him” as the kind of “Pre-Socratic” historical phenomenon that Plato’s Socrates is not and was never intended to be.

But Plato’s Socrates is “himself” a deception, and the antidote against our being deceived will not be found in *Early Greek Philosophy* or *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae*.³⁴⁰ The proper antidote is rather to be found in the dialogues themselves. Plato wants us to understand that, how, and why we are being deceived, i.e., that he is deceiving us in such a way as to make it possible “to bring to light” the deceptions he knowingly places in the mouths of his characters. When Socrates calls into question the identification of what’s χρήσιμον with τὸ καλόν, it is no more Plato’s intent to challenge Aristippus, Antisthenes, or Xenophon on the veracity of *their* portraits of “the Real Socrates” than it is his intent to show that the Double in *Hippias Major* is the genuine article. In order to lead us to the bright and luminous region where a de-relativized and de-materialized Beauty can prepare us to catch a glimpse of the Idea of the Good, and then to exhort us to return to the Cave—fully prepared, as we must be, for the illusions we will meet there by a series of contests with the likes of the Eleatic Stranger and the sophists who preceded him—Plato will cause “Socrates” to say whatever will help his students to reach that virtuous τέλος. And he will test us with far more deceptive characters once we have managed to reach it.

This is not to say that Plato’s Socrates is an unbelievable character; on the contrary. Indeed he is so well drawn *as a character* that we tend to forget

337. Cf. Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 8.294: “any attempt to reconstruct his ideas on the basis of his two most famous disciples, Xenophon and Plato—two profoundly different spirits—is speculative.”

338. Subject headings in Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*, chapter 33, include: “Virtue as Knowledge,” “The Unity of Virtue,” “It is Impossible to Choose Evil,” and “Intemperance Is Impossible,” and it should likewise surprise nobody that these four subsections contain six *testimonia* from *Prt.*—three more than the *testimonia* from all the other Platonic dialogues in these subsections combined—and four from Aristotle. For *Prt.*, see D36, D39, D42, D44, and D49; for Aristotle, see D37, D38, D40, and D50; D46 and D51 are from *Magna Moralia*. “D” stands for “doctrines.”

339. For example, when P1 (*Early Greek Philosophy*, 298–99) tells us that Socrates was the son of Sophroniscus on the basis of Diogenes Laertius (citing Plato in *Th.*), something more than *Alc. I* and *Hp. Ma.* gets misplaced.

340. Gabriele Giannantoni, *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae*, four volumes (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1990).

that a character is all that he is. Consider Vlastos's attempt to palliate "his" occasional but necessarily inadvertent errors in reasoning:

This is not to deny that he [sc. Socrates] occasionally makes grave errors; we shall see one of them in the following section [sc. of *Prt.*]. It is only to insist that as a practitioner of logical inference, and one who practices on his feet, in the stress of live debate, and with no calculus or any formal patterns of influence to guide him, Socrates is not a bungler, but a master.³⁴¹

Quite apart from the ill-conceived remarks about Socrates' unfortunate lack of the propositional calculus, the real problem here is that Vlastos makes *Socrates* the relevant agent, something Plato's deceptive artistry has made it all too easy for him to do.³⁴² In point of fact,³⁴³ Plato is the mimetic poet who is now merely imitating Socrates "on his feet, in the stress of live debate," and his skill as an imitator is so great that he has managed to take Vlastos in completely.

Nor is Socrates the only character that Plato has managed to create so successfully. Although "the play of character" is a minor matter where the direct and elementary dialogues with Hippias, Alcibiades, Ion, and Menexenus are concerned, there is sufficient characterization in all ten speaking parts in *Protagoras*—including the Friend, the doorkeeper, and Callias—for any competent actor to work with, and *Symposium* is even more vivid in this respect. The crucial point is that Plato has managed to deceive us thoroughly: he makes us believe we are listening to real people, causing us to imagine the dining room and the Garden without asking ourselves why it is so easy to do so. To say nothing more of his even more amazing capacity to persuade us that he is the enemy of imitation, it is in the dialogues culminating with *Republic* where his mimetic artistry reaches its zenith: Cephalus, Polemarchus, Thrasymachus, Adeimantus, and Glaucon might just as well be people that we know. Brilliantly deceptive when creating characters in indirect dialogues like *Republic*, *Charmides*, *Euthydemus*, and *Lysis*, Plato shows himself to be no less skillful in making us believe that Laches, Nicias, Gorgias, Polus, Callicles, and Meno are real people in the direct dialogues he builds around them. Plato's literary art, then, in addition to all of the other things that it is, is an art of deception.

341. Vlastos, "Introduction," xxxvi.

342. Cf. L. A. Kosman, "Platonic Love," in W. H. Werkmeister (ed.), *Facets of Plato's Philosophy*, 53–69 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1976), 59: "Plato is a philosophical poet, which means that the arguments we encounter are mimetic; they are imitation arguments, not of Plato, but of the fictional Socrates, Theaetetus, Lysis, and so on."

343. Cf. Hayden W. Ausland, "On Reading Plato Mimetically," *American Journal of Philology* 118, no. 3 (Autumn 1997), 371–416, on 392: "It is the philosopher's intermediate role that accounts for the Platonic ambivalence between philosophy and poetry."

Nor should those venerable authority figures that dominate the post-*Republic* dialogues be forgotten: here Plato has managed to deceive most of his readers into thinking that Timaeus, Socrates in *Philebus*, the Eleatic, and the Athenian Strangers are speaking for him. Since not one of these fellows is half as entertaining, unpredictable, or funny as the Socrates who enlivens, e.g., the dialogues considered in this book, we seem to be more comfortable with imagining Plato, at least in his final form, as pompous, didactic, boring, and longwinded. Here the deception built into basanistic pedagogy becomes one with Plato's literary artistry, for he is testing us with what he seems to have assumed *we* would imagine—correctly for the most part—that “serious philosophy” looks like. To imagine that the Athenian Stranger speaks for Plato is not only to radically misunderstand what made Socrates his hero, but no less importantly, lulls us into mistaking thoroughly the kind of person *he* was, for we will have forgotten Plato's playfulness, his brilliant sense of humor, the liveliness of his wit, and the fecund creativity of his imagination. So skillful has Plato been in deceiving us deliberately that our most eminent modern authorities have been inclined to find him in the characters least like himself.

In a study devoted to *Plato the Teacher*, it would probably beg the question to claim that Plato has managed to *deceive* us into forgetting that he was a teacher. As a result, it has become difficult to hear the laughter of his first students when Socrates claims in *Republic* 7 that nobody under the age of thirty should be exposed to dialectic (*R.* 537c9–539e3), when the Eleatic Stranger expresses complete indifference about the choice of interlocutor as long as he be pliable (*Sph.* 217c3–218b7), or when the Athenian Stranger denounces with vehemence “the wild boy” (*Lg.* 808d4–5). But nobody can deny that Plato has proved remarkably skillful in concealing himself. The effect on Vlastos has just been remarked, but even critics far more sensitive to the dramatic features of the dialogues have imagined that it could ever have been Plato's primary purpose to limn the intellectual limitations of Crito, Phaedrus, Alcibiades, or Glaucon. My ongoing claim is that it is *by recognizing his capacity to deceive* that we can bring Plato into the light, and that it is only in direct dialogue with his students that it is possible to look him in the eye. It is therefore when Socrates invites *you* to hear at the start of *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 310a7) or addresses “you” at the crisis of the *Republic* (*R.* 520b5), that Plato is “breaking the frame,” for it is only theatrical concealment that makes it possible to draw back the curtain.

The curtain itself is a masterpiece of deception. As we can see from Xenophon's *Hellenica*, Plato's Athens was a mere shadow of the proud imperial city she had been in his youth, but you'd never know it from his dialogues. It's not just that Plato makes Athens a believable backdrop to his dramas, but

more importantly that the Athens he brings to life, especially in *Protagoras*, was already dead. It is easy to see that Plato's artistry made it possible for Mary Renault to write *The Last of the Wine*,³⁴⁴ but the concealed basis of her ability to do so is that Plato himself created the world's first historical novel. Obvious when he weaves an historically unknown character like Callicles into his tapestry, he is no less amazing when he surprises us with men we thought we already know from Thucydides and Xenophon like Alcibiades, Nicias, Critias, and Meno. He has created a world, and deceived us into thinking that it was his world in some far more material sense than it really was. It was *his* only because he remembered and recreated it, not because it was real.³⁴⁵ And he recreated it for us, because out of all of Plato's many deceptions, the one that proves to be the most uncanny is that, despite the historical verisimilitude of his drama's backdrop, he proves himself capable of making some of us believe that he is present, and can still talk to us directly.³⁴⁶

Finally, there is the greatest deception of them all. Plato the Teacher makes a rigorous and difficult course of study look like child's play. Naturally some will say that this claim rests on nothing more solid than the Reading Order hypothesis, and perhaps that is true. But it has ever been my intent to follow Plato's own clues about the structure of his curriculum, not to maximize its effectiveness in accordance with my own limited pedagogical lights. A chapter on *Hippias Major* seems as good a place as any to make these points because it really is a *Jugenddialog*, and the elementary lessons it teaches the youth are so simple, fresh, and funny—without being in any way inconsequential or shallow—that it is particularly useful for catching sight of Plato the Teacher. Regardless of how old he was when he wrote it, he wrote it for beginners, and with the gross deception of the Double, he drew back the curtain on his own artistry and revealed the secret of his eternally lively pedagogy. If the wall of the Academy is deliberate self-contradiction (see §4), we all pass through the Looking Glass with Plato's *pons asinorum*, for our watchword will hereafter be σκοπόμεθα μή πη ἄρ' ἔξαπατώμεθα.

344. Mary Renault, *The Last of the Wine* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956).

345. Cf. Gerald A. Press, "Plato's Dialogues as Enactments," in Francisco J. Gonzalez (ed.), *The Third Way: New Directions in Platonic Studies*, 133–152 (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1995), 144: "The measure of Plato's success in this is that he is the only one whose fictional world has so regularly and so persistently been mistaken for the historical one."

346. See *Plato the Teacher*, 258–59.

Chapter Four

The Musical Dialogues

Hippias Minor, Ion, and Menexenus

SECTION 11. DECEPTION DEFENDED?

Given that “music [μουσική]” has a far wider reach in Greek,¹ it’s a bit silly to single out *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, and *Menexenus* as Plato’s “musical dialogues.” It’s true that the Muses—already linked to μουσική in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc.1* 108c7–d1)—figure more prominently in *Ion* than in any other dialogue, although in deference to *Phaedrus*, none of the nine are mentioned in *Ion* by name.² But *Hippias Minor* stands out among the dialogues for mentioning neither the Muses nor music,³ despite the fact that few dialogues are more concerned with “the poet”⁴ and none where the verb ποιεῖν is more frequently used to describe Homer’s poetic, and, by extension, his *musical* “making.”⁵ We learn in *Menexenus* that Socrates is studying μουσική (*Mx.*

1. See Kristin Sampson, “The Significance and Ambiguity of Music in Plato,” in Hallvard Fossheim, Vigdis Songe-Møller and Knut Ågotnes (eds.), *Philosophy as Drama: Plato’s Thinking through Dialogue*, 143–160 (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

2. As four are in *Phdr.*, i.e., Terpsichore (dance) at 259c6, Erato (lyric poetry) at 259d1, Calliope (epic) at 259d3, and Urania (astronomy) at 259d4. The Muses are mentioned in *Alc.1*, *Ion*, *Smp.*, *Euthd.* (and invoked), *Men.* (counting 99c11–d1), *R.*, *Ti.*, *Criti.*, *Phdr.*, *Phlb.* (67b6), *Cra.*, *Tht.* (with their mother Μνημοσύνη at 191d4–5), *Sph.* (counting ἁμούσος τις καὶ ἀφύλδοσος at 259e2), *Plt.* (counting 307b1 and 309d2, perhaps more appropriate for an ἁμούσος τις καὶ ἀφύλδοσος to use), *Lg.*, and *Epin.*; without Μοῦσα, the word μουσικός appears in *Prt.*, *Am.*, *Mx.*, *La.*, *Chrm.*, *Grg.*, *Crit.*, and *Phd.*

3. So, too, *Hp. Ma.* (ἁμούσως at 292c7), *Prm.* (although the poet Ibycus is mentioned at 136e9–137a4), *Euthyp.* (although ποιητής appears four times), *Ap.* (ποιητής five times), *Hipparch.* (but note Hipparchus’ services to poetry at 228b4–c6), and *Min.* (but note ἀόλητική at 318b1–c1). For the lack of “music” words in *Alc.2*, see following note.

4. Six uses of ὁ ποιητής in *Alc.2*; two in *Hp. Mi.* (364e2 and 370e1).

5. “To make” (ποιεῖν) as *poetic* making appears twelve times in the dialogue, and in tandem with the thirteen times that ποιεῖν is used to mean “to do,” as it is used five times in the introduction of the Socratic Paradox at *Prt.* 345d8–e5 (this passage will be quoted below), this frequency is essential to the role of *Hp. Mi.* in the Reversal of *Protagoras*.

236a1), and Aspasia points to the blurring of the lines separating virtue, rhetoric, and music when she says: “and poets, having already beautifully hymned their [sc. the ancient heroes’] virtue in music [ἐν μουσικῇ], have manifested it to all” (*Mx.* 239b7–8). Beginning with the Great Speech (*Prt.* 325d7–326b4) and the exegesis of Simonides (beginning with *Prt.* 338e6), Plato’s dialogues have been “musical” from the start, and both Muses and music will reappear in *Symposium*.⁶ But *Hippias Minor* initiates a heightened concern with “literature,” and more specifically, Plato’s concern turns to Homer there and in *Ion*, and to History in *Ion* and *Menexenus*.⁷

It is often said that Plato banished the poets from his City, but quite apart from being a poet himself, he certainly writes a great deal about interpreting them. As a result, when “the philosophical conversation [ἡ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατριβή]” about music or literature turns to the intention (διάνοια at *Ion* 530b10–c1) that led an author to make (ποιεῖν) a poem or literary artifact, and thus to how we are to interpret it (ἐρμηνεύειν at *Ion* 535a6–7), the conversation is not only about Homer, Simonides, or Thucydides but also about Plato himself, and the way you (συ) are presently interpreting him. Consider the opening words of *Hippias Minor*:

Eudicus: But you, indeed [σὺ δὲ δῆ]: why are you silent [τί σιγᾶς], Socrates, with Hippias having demonstrated [ἐπιδείκνυται] so many things, and neither are you jointly praising any one [τι] of the things he said or are you refuting [ἐλέγχειν], if anything [τι] seems to you [συ] to have been said not beautifully [μὴ καλῶς]? And [this is remarkable] especially since we ourselves [αὐτοῖ] have been left behind, we who most of all might have made claim in response [ἀντιποιεῖσθαι] to take a share for ourselves [μετεῖναι ἡμῖν] in the conversation about philosophy [ἡ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατριβή].⁸

Plato describes Socrates has having just been exposed to the exposition of Hippias (363a1–2; cf. *Hp. Ma.* 286a5–b7) but we too will reread these opening lines after having been exposed to his *Hippias Minor*. Unlike Socrates, we have not been allowed to hear the discourse of Hippias, but this opening applies no less to us: like Eudicus, Plato expects “you, indeed [σὺ δὲ δῆ]” to

6. Although Melpomene (tragedy) and Thalia (comedy) are not mentioned by name, they must be considered present there thanks to Agathon and Aristophanes; Urania and Polyhymnia (choral singing) are mentioned there at *Smp.* 187d7 and 187e1 respectively.

7. Although Euterpe (instrumental music) is likewise not mentioned, I would suggest that Clio was Plato’s particular Muse; like Achilles, he is singing the κλέα ἀνδρῶν (*Iliad*, 9.189) and it is easy to forget how much sense for history was required in order to make the Athens of his youth so visible for us (see §10, *ad fin.*). In any case, consider James A. Adam, *The Republic of Plato, Edited with Critical Notes, Commentary and Appendices*, two volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902), 2.306: “But there is often a touch of playfulness when Plato professes to be serious, so there is usually an undercurrent of serious meaning in the frolics of his Muse.”

8. *Hp. Mi.* 363a1–5; hereafter, all otherwise unidentified text references will be to *Hp. Mi.*

make some kind of response in return (ἀντιποιεῖσθαι),⁹ and given the widespread view that something goes awry in this dialogue in particular, the suggestion that it is necessary to ἐλέγχειν, to participate for ourselves (μετεῖναι ἡμῖν) in the ensuing conversation (ἢ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διατριβῇ), will likewise be based on the distinction between finding something (τι) to praise in Plato's dialogue, and the need to ἐπιδείκνυαι something else (τι) that we ourselves (αὐτοῖ) will judge “to have been made [πεποιῆσθαι]” μὴ καλῶς, i.e., not beautifully.

And this, of course, has been the problem of poetic interpretation from the start, i.e., beginning with *Protagoras* (see §4) where the sophist asks Socrates to take a stand on Simonides:

Socrates: ‘Does it seem to you to have been made [πεποιῆσθαι] beautifully [καλῶς] and correctly, or not?’ ‘Very, yes and correctly,’ I replied. ‘And does it seem to you to have been made beautifully [πεποιῆσθαι] if the poet [ὁ ποιητής] says opposite things [ἐναντία] himself to himself [αὐτὸς αὐτῷ]?’ ‘Not beautifully [οὐ καλῶς],’ was my response.¹⁰

Since it is generally believed, and with good reason, that Socrates is contradicting himself when he claims at the end of *Hippias Minor* that “the good man [ὁ ἀγαθός]” is “therefore the one voluntarily erring [ὁ ἐκὼν ἀμαρτάνων] and doing [participle from ποιεῖν] both base and unjust things” (376b4–6), it would appear that this dialogue itself “has not been made beautifully [πεποιῆσθαι μὴ καλῶς],” and this would explain the attention that has been showered on εἴπερ τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος, i.e., “if there is such a man.”¹¹ A different approach will be taken here, starting from this statement's proximity to the Socratic Paradox that nobody errs willingly (οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼν ἐξαμαρτάνει at *Prt.* 345e1–2), and since so many have doubted that such a man exists, I will try to show that *Hippias Minor* takes a gigantic step toward the Reversal of *Protagoras*.¹² For Socrates has not only demonstrated that

9. See Pedro Luz Baratieri, “*Hippias Menor*: Pedagogia Platónica, Homero e Intellectualismo.” *Hypnos* 42, no. 1 (2019), 89–113, at 99n25, for the suggestion that “the others” whom Hippias had asked Socrates to bring to his Homer lecture—“whoever, having heard, are capable of judging what has been said” (*Hp. Ma.* 286c1–2)—already include the reader.

10. *Prt.* 339b7–10.

11. See, e.g., Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 197–98; it is made thematic in Weiss, *Socratic*, chapter 4 (“The *Hippias Minor*: “If There Be Such a Man”).

12. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 164 (first sentence from Dobson, 154): “For if the *Hippias* [sc. *Hp. Mi.*] were a supplement to the *Protagoras* this [sc. ‘that the good man errs intentionally and only the bad man unintentionally’] ought manifestly to have been brought into connection with the supposition there advanced, that no man errs intentionally. But there is no indication [*Spur*] of this, but instead it could sooner be thought that this supposition, relying merely on the strength of its presentation in *Hippias*, could be presented so defenselessly [*so unbeschützt*].” What Schleiermacher seems to mean is that if Plato had intended *Hp. Mi.* to support the Paradox as presented in *Prt.*, he would have defended it more effectively; this is true as far as it goes.

there *is* a man who does base and unjust things willingly, but more importantly Plato has proved that there is a poet who errs voluntarily in presenting such a man as ὁ ἀγαθός, or rather as better (ἀμείνων) than Achilles:

Socrates: Indeed, Eudicus, there are some points in what Hippias was just now saying of Homer, about which I should like to question him. For I used to hear your father Apemantus say that the *Iliad* would be a more beautiful [κάλλιον] poem [ποίημα] for Homer [τῷ Ὀμήρῳ] than the *Odyssey* [i.e., ἡ Ἰλιάς κάλλιον εἶη ποίημα τῷ Ὀμήρῳ ἢ ἡ Ὀδύσσεια], and just as much more beautiful [κάλλιον] as Achilles was better [ἀμείνων] than Odysseus; for each of these, he said, one having been made [πεποιῆσθαι] for Odysseus, the other for Achilles. So that is a point about which, if it is agreeable to Hippias, I should like to ask—what he thinks about these two men [περὶ τοῖν ἀνδρῶν τούτων], which of them he says is the better [ἀμείνων]; for many other and varied things he demonstrated [ἐπιδείκνυται] for us about Homer and other poets.¹³

Here then is Socrates' response, and it opens the door to Plato's two most musical dialogues, i.e., those that most prominently depend on the interpretation of literature or μουσική. *Ion* bears the subtitle "or on the *Iliad*," but it would have been better applied to *Hippias Minor*, which turns on the proper interpretation of *Iliad* 9—what Plato calls "*Litai*" (364e8), or "the pleas"—i.e., the embassy to Achilles led by Odysseus and Ajax, and preceded by Phoenix.¹⁴ Plato's use of the dual form in describing Odysseus and Achilles (cf. περὶ τοῖν ἀνδρῶν τούτων) will prove to be ironic because modern Homer scholars have showered more attention on the duals in *Litai* than they have on the question Socrates has just raised, and that Plato evidently found more important: whether the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* was *for Homer* the more beautiful poem, and thus whether Achilles or Odysseus was the better man. Leaving for later the way "the duals in *Iliad* 9" have short-circuited the question Socrates raises here (see §12), the important thing is that beginning in *Hippias Minor*, Plato is honoring Homer, and making the student's ability to discern and interpret his intentions the prerequisite—a literary or musical *pons asinorum* as it were (see §9)—to the proper interpretation of his own dialogues. And it is above all because Homer's poems exist outside of Plato and that we can thus read *Litai* for ourselves—carefully comparing it to the lies Socrates will deliberately tell about it—that *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* may be called "Plato's two most musical dialogues." But by raising the question of interpretation, they also take a giant step toward making us realize that all of Plato's dialogues are "musical."¹⁵

Litai begins with the plight of the Greek army now that Achilles, dishonored by Agamemnon, has withdrawn from battle. Advised by Nestor,

13. 363a6–c3 (Lamb modified).

14. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.168–69.

15. See *Ascent to the Good*, xl–xliii.

Agamemnon sends Odysseus and Ajax on an embassy to plead for his return, a return that will lead to his early death, as Achilles is well aware from the start.¹⁶ In a speech Odysseus repeats for the most part word for word, Agamemnon tells the embassy what concessions he is now willing to offer,¹⁷ and it is on this “for the most part” that Socrates’ deliberate distortion of the comparative truthfulness of Odysseus and Achilles depends. Odysseus makes two speeches in *Litai*, the one to Achilles,¹⁸ which fails terribly, and another to Agamemnon,¹⁹ which is even less faithful to Achilles’ reply than Odysseus’ first speech was to what Agamemnon had said. It is not, however, what Achilles replies to Odysseus that Odysseus distorts. At the center of *Litai* are the three speeches of Achilles, the first in response to Odysseus,²⁰ the second to Phoenix, and the third to Ajax, after that man of few words—another victim of Odysseus’ lies²¹—achieves what the eloquent Odysseus doesn’t: Achilles’ assurance that he will return to battle when the Trojans reach the tents of the Myrmidons.²² The gradual softening of Achilles’ intransigence is the theme of the *Iliad*, and Homer creates a microcosm of it in *Litai*; it is this softening that Odysseus suppresses in his report to Agamemnon. And it is this softening that Socrates will make the basis for his misinterpretation of *Litai*: Achilles lies but Odysseus doesn’t.

Just as modern Homerists are more interested in what the duals of *Iliad* 9 tell us about the origin and development of the merely “Homeric” epics, so, too, modern Plato scholars have been more concerned with what *Hippias Minor* tells us about “Plato’s Development” than about what he is teaching us about Homer. One interpretive school starts from the premise that Plato, like Socrates, was still fully committed to the Socratic Paradoxes, and thus that anything in the dialogue that seems not to bear directly on the Craft Analogy, Virtue as Knowledge, and of course the view that nobody errs willingly, is of secondary importance;²³ hence the comparative neglect of Socrates’ interpre-

16. Homer, *Iliad*, 1.352.

17. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.115–161.

18. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.225–306; see Nestor’s words at 9.180–81 for this failure’s significance.

19. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.677–692.

20. Cf. Jasper Griffin, *Homer, Iliad Book Nine; Edited with an Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 109 (on 9.307–429): “This is the most splendid speech in Homer, in range and power.” Cf. 19.

21. Cf. *Ap.* 41b2 and Xenophon, *Apology of Socrates*, 26.

22. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.650–53.

23. Most recently, see Russell E. Jones and Ravi Sharma, “The Wandering Hero of the *Hippias Minor*: Socrates on Virtue and Craft,” *Classical Philology* 112 (2017), 113–137, on 113: “the *Hippias Minor* points the way to a successful elaboration and defense of the craft analogy and, thereby, to a secure foundation for the Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge.” For the Paradox, see 128: “The bad people one encounters are simply ignorant, and thus the dialogue indirectly supports the Socratic thesis that no one does wrong voluntarily.” As Socrates’ comparisons at 371a3–6 and 371d6–7 show (note especially $\phi\rho\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$ at 371a5 and $\tau\epsilon\chi\nu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$ at 371d6), the dialogue itself contains at least one counterexample: either Odysseus or Achilles is a knowing wrongdoer.

tation of *Litai*.²⁴ As for the Homerists, it is the premise that there is, as we now know, *no longer any actual Homer*, that guides their interest in those duals; as a result, the question that Socrates raises—which of his two epics *Homer* regarded as more beautiful, and which of *his* heroes was better—is equally neglected by both camps. In fact, the question Plato raises at the beginning of *Hippias Minor* takes us to the heart of both Homer and philosophy: like Plato, Homer challenges us to choose the dead Achilles over the more successful Odysseus, for Plato's hero returns to the Cave to die there, and Socrates expresses his choice by quoting Achilles in the courtroom (*Ap.* 28d1–3).

But before examining Socrates' exposition of *Litai* in detail, it is necessary to situate this examination in the context of Reading Order. The connection between *Hippias Major* and *Hippias Minor* is in any case obvious, but in addition to some Homeric hints (*Hp. Ma.* 285a8–b4),²⁵ including the death of Achilles (*Hp. Ma.* 292e7–293a1),²⁶ there is the central problem of deception that joins them, beginning with Socrates' Double (see §10). Although Socrates' final claim in *Hippias Minor* will be that the good man is the one who voluntarily does base and unjust things (376a4–6), he has already asked the far more revealing question: “Have not those voluntarily lying [ψευδόμενοι, participle from ψεύδω] showed themselves to be better than those doing so involuntarily?” (371e7–8). The point, of course, is that Socrates has just lied to Hippias in *Hippias Major*, for he has concealed from him the fact that the Double is himself.

As for *Ion*, in addition to connections like those discovered by Heitsch (see §8) based on Order of Composition, Hellmut Flashar has identified some beautifully Platonic ones, beginning with: “for at the beginning of this dialogue the sophist Hippias has just given a lecture about Homer, and thereby demonstrated the same proof of his ability that was not [‘that will not be’

24. Cf. Mary Whitlock Blundell, “Character and Meaning in Plato's *Hippias Minor*” in James C. Klagge and Nicholas D. Smith (eds.), *Methods of Interpreting Plato and His Dialogues*, 131–172 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), on 134: “The central Homeric section has similarly been dismissed as one of ‘a few humorous digressions’, an ‘interlude’ or ‘resting place’, or an ‘intermezzo’, while Vicaire views Homer and his heroes throughout as mere ‘pretexts.’”

25. Note that Nestor, whom Hippias calls “wisest [σοφώτατος]” (364c6 and 364e1), will give advice to the son of dead Achilles at *Hp. Ma.* 286b3, and to his own son at *Ion* 537a5. Socrates calls Hippias himself σοφώτατος at 366d2–6 and 368b2; but according to Heraclitus, the σοφώτατος among men is an ape in relation to the god at *Hp. Ma.* 289b4.

26. This is the crucial connection, and much more important than the relationship between the presentation described in *Hp. Ma.* and the one just delivered before *Hp. Mi.*; to be buried nobly by your offspring after having yourself done the same for your parents (291d9–e2) is exactly what Achilles does not receive, as Socrates points out. Achilles' Choice is decisive for assessing the comparative excellence of Achilles and Odysseus, not their comparative veracity. Although it is not the Noble Refutation of the Socratic Paradox (see §4) that *Hp. Mi.* performs, its Achilles-based connection with *Hp. Ma.* allows the reader to see that it is waiting in the wings; it will take center stage at *Ap.* 28c1–d4. As for the Socratic Paradox at *Ap.* 25d1–26a8, it is of course true that Socrates does not corrupt the young willingly, but the words οὐδὲ ἄλλον ἄνθρωπον οὐδένα, precisely because they echo *Prt.* 345e1–2, do not mean that nobody else does so, but that there is nobody whom Meletus will persuade.

would be better] given to Ion.”²⁷ This “difference in similarity” is crucial for understanding *Ion* (see §12), and Flashar also notices that five passages from Homer are quoted in each dialogue, only the first of which is not recited by Socrates. Just as the technical critic in *Ion* must know good poems and bad ones, so must “the good man” in *Hippias Minor* know how to speak falsely as well as truly when it comes to “both crafts and knowledges” (375b8–9; cf. *Ion* 532c6). Finally, “the train of thought in general is presented in both dialogues that both concern a simple and straightforward elenchus that is interrupted in the middle by a Socratic speech [*eine Sokratesrede*].”²⁸

In *Hippias Minor* that *Sokratesrede* will be devoted to *Litai* (369e2–371d8), and as Flashar says, it interrupts or rather grows out of (369a4–e2) a more typical conversation (365c8–369a3) about the interplay of truth and falsehood that allows the same man who knows the one to be effective in offering the other. But this conversation begins with Homer, and is introduced by something Socrates claims not to understand:

Socrates: When you said that Homer has made [πεποικίμεναι] Achilles the best [ἄριστος] and Nestor the wisest [σοφώτατος], I thought I understood what you meant, but when you said that the poet had made Odysseus the man ‘of the most twists and turns [πολυτροπώτατος]’—well—as for this, to tell you the truth [τοῦτο δ’, ὥς γε πρὸς σὲ τάληθῆ εἰρήσθαι], I don’t know at all what you mean [παντάπασιν οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅτι λέγεις]. So tell me, that I might learn something more from you: didn’t Homer make Achilles a man of many twists and turns?²⁹

Since the first thing that Homer tells us about the man Odysseus in the *Odyssey* is that he’s πολύτροπος, the deception begins early. Plato emphasizes this not only by Socrates’ complete failure to understand what Hippias means, but also by his own ostentatious commitment to tell the truth. No less importantly, by admitting, even before he begins to show that Odysseus is better than Achilles, that he *understands* why Homer has made the latter ἄριστος, Socrates gives us the first of many hints that he himself does not believe what he will be claiming, and thus that by arguing that Achilles and not Odysseus is the πολύτροπος, he is erring voluntarily. In any case, this now provokes Hippias’ response, and the first of those five quotations from Homer:

Hippias: Not at all, Socrates. Rather, he made him the most straightforward and the most truthful. In fact, in the ‘Prayers,’ when he [sc. Homer] has them

27. Hellmut Flashar, *Platon, Ion; Griechisch-deutsch herausgegeben* (Munich: Heimeran, 1963), 59.

28. Flashar, *Ion*, 59.

29. 364d7–e4 (Z. Culverhouse translation modified); see F. Zenon Culverhouse, “Plato’s *Hippias Minor*: A Translation and Commentary” (Ph.D. dissertation: Claremont Graduate University, 2010). I am grateful to the author for allowing me access to this useful work.

conversing with one another [ἤνικα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ποιεῖ αὐτοὺς διαλεγομένου], he says for him [αὐτῷ], Achilles to Odysseus [λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς πρὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεά]:

Son of Laertes in the line of Zeus, resourceful Odysseus,
I must state the matter bluntly,
I will do exactly as I intend to do.
For as hateful to me as the gates of Hades
Is he who hides one thing in his mind, but says another.
But exactly as I say, so also will it be done.³⁰

The games begin with Plato's initial use of αὐτῷ, which would certainly mean: "he speaks to him"—i.e., Achilles speaks to Odysseus—if λέγει αὐτῷ were not followed by ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς πρὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεά, which can *only* mean that Achilles is speaking *to Odysseus*, and thus that λέγει αὐτῷ, if it is not redundant, must mean something else. Since Homer is the subject of the previous ποιεῖ, we can either take him to be the subject of λέγει, and find Achilles in that αὐτῷ to which ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς would be exegetical, *or* we can shift the subject of λέγει to ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς, in which case αὐτῷ refers to Homer himself.³¹ More important than an either/or solution to this problem, it is best to realize that Plato has created it *as a problem* deliberately, and it will become clear in the *Sokratesrede* itself that Plato is playing on the ambiguity of the same personal pronoun—i.e., αὐτός as used by Socrates (371a8)—from the start. But there is more: since this αὐτῷ either refers to Achilles or to Homer, we are given a clue as to where Homer's sympathies lie: in declaring his enmity for the liar, Achilles either speaks to Odysseus *for* Homer or Homer is speaking *for him* in what Achilles says to Odysseus. Hippias continues:

Hippias: With these verses he [sc. Homer] reveals each man's way: Achilles is truthful and straightforward, but Odysseus is a man of twists and turns—he's false—for he makes Achilles say these verses to Odysseus [ποιεῖ γὰρ τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα εἰς τὸν Ὀδυσσεά λέγοντα ταῦτα τὰ ἔπη].³²

With this, then, Hippias offers Plato's second clue to the reader. While it is perfectly true that Achilles says these words *to* Odysseus (λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς πρὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεά), it is by no means clear that he is saying them

30. 364e4–365b2 (Culverhouse).

31. See George Smith (ed.), *Platonis Ion et Hippias Minor; For the Upper Forms of Schools* (London: Rivington, Percival, and Co., 1895), 87–88 (on 364e) for the best solution: αὐτῷ is an ethical dative indicating that Achilles is speaking *for* Homer, a solution I am claiming that Plato intends the reader to reach only after some initial confusion. For that confusion, see Culverhouse, "Plato's *Hippias Minor*," 149–50 on 364e9; for the lack of it, see *bei ihm* at Pinjah, *Platonis Hippias Minor*, 11; cf. 185 for parallel lack of attention to πρὸς αὐτὸν at 371a8.

32. 365b3–6 (Culverhouse modified).

about Odysseus, let alone that in doing so, he either is speaking for Homer (λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἀχιλλεύς at 364e9) or Homer (as the subject of both ποιεῖ and λέγει) for him. Hippias therefore forces us to think about Homer's intent: the reason *he* makes Achilles say these lines to Odysseus is that *he has made* Odysseus a liar, i.e., what Hippias calls πολυτροπώτατος. After all, the careful reader knows that *Odysseus has just lied* by suppressing the truth about what *Agamemnon* had been willing to offer Achilles.

Socrates: Now, Hippias, I think I understand what you are saying. By 'the man of many twists and turns' it looks as though you mean the false man. *Hippias:* Yes indeed, Socrates! Homer has often portrayed Odysseus like this, both in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. *Socrates:* Therefore, it seems, Homer thinks that the truthful man and the false man are different and not the same [ἐδόκει ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικεν, Ὀμήρω ἕτερος μὲν εἶναι ἀνήρ ἀληθής, ἕτερος δὲ ψευδής, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁ αὐτός]. *Hippias:* How could he not, Socrates? *Socrates:* Do *you* think he does too, Hippias? *Hippias:* Why, of course! It would certainly be strange if I didn't.³³

With this summary of what Hippias has said, Socrates finds the thesis he will devote the elenchus that follows to refuting: he will show that both Homer and Hippias are wrong to think that the true man is different from the false one, and it is precisely in these terms that Aristotle mentioned Plato's *Hippias*,³⁴ thereby insuring its present status as a genuine Platonic dialogue. In terms familiar to the student from *Protagoras* (cf. the hammered use of ἐπανερέσθαι at *Prt.* 329a2–b1), Socrates therefore proposes leaving Homer behind:

Socrates: Let us set aside Homer for now since we can't ask him what he was thinking when he made these verses [ἐπανερέσθαι τί ποτε νοῶν ταῦτα ἐποίησεν τὰ ἔπη]. But since you are obviously taking up his cause and since you agree with what you say Homer means, answer on behalf of Homer and yourself alike. *Hippias:* So be it. Ask what you want, but be brief.³⁵

But in fact Homer is essential to the dialogue, and therefore he will return in the *Sokratesrede*, and the reason for this must be clearly understood. Plato is *not* out to prove that poetry is impenetrable to interrogation (i.e., is inaccessible to ἐπανερέσθαι) because the poet is not around to tell us what he was thinking (τί ποτε νοῶν) when "he was making these verses [ταῦτα ἐποίησεν τὰ ἔπη]." Rather, by making Socrates lie about Homer and therefore *deliberately misinterpreting* the poet's intentions—but doing so in a manner that

33. 365b7–c7 (Culverhouse).

34. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 5.29, 1025a5–6 (Ross): "This is why the proof in the *Hippias* that the same man is false and true is misleading."

35. 365c8–d5 (Culverhouse modified).

allows the careful reader to discover the truth through the falsehoods that conceal it—Plato is proving to you (σὺ) in practice that the same man (αὐτός) is both false and true.

The intervening conversation turns on τέχνη (four uses and a fifth implied between 367e9 and 368e5) and thus a process that began with Socrates quoting Homer’s *Margites* in *Alcibiades Minor* (*Alc.2* 147b1–d8) now reaches its culmination (see §7). Having failed to construe philosophy as some kind of master-τέχνη built on πολυμαθία in *Lovers*, Plato introduces us to the πολυμαθής par excellence in *Hippias Major*, and this is why the passage Flashar conceives as an elenchus in fact ends with a long speech (368a8–369a2) that celebrates the various τέχνηαι of *Hippias*.³⁶ The philosophy-annihilating Binary of the wise and the ignorant introduced in *Lovers* (see §8) and itself to be annihilated in *Symposium*, is here on full display: only the wise as opposed to the ignorant (cf. ἀμαθεῖς ἢ σοφοί at 365e10), the former as knowers (ἐπιστήμονες at 366a3; cf. 367e9 and 368d3), are able to deceive (ἐξαπατᾶν at 366a1, first at 365d8), i.e., to lie consistently while the ignorant may sometimes stumble on the truth involuntarily.³⁷ Introducing the connection between the wise and the good (ὁ ἀγαθὸς καὶ σοφός) in the context of being most able indeed (δυνατότατός γε) to lie (ψεύδестhai),³⁸ Socrates then extends the basis of wisdom (σοφία) in this sense from the various τέχνηαι—naturally associated with and embodied in *Hippias* himself³⁹—to “all the knowledges [πασαὶ αἱ ἐπιστήμαι]”:

Socrates: Come then, *Hippias*, frankly examine in this way whether matters are ever any different than this in all [forms of] knowledge [πασαὶ αἱ ἐπιστήμαι]. For completely [πάντως] in most crafts [τέχνηαι] you’re the wisest of all men

36. The first to be named as such is astronomy at 367e8–368a1 (Culverhouse modified): “*Socrates*: Let’s next go on to investigate the third, astronomy, of which craft [τέχνη] you consider yourself even more knowledgeable than the preceding ones, right *Hippias*? *Hippias*: Yes.”

37. 367a2–5 (Culverhouse modified): “*Socrates*: Or may it be that, on the one hand, the ignorant person [ὁ μὲν ἀμαθής] has a mind to speak falsely, but often he says what is true unintentionally [ἄκων], because of his lack of knowledge, but you, a wise person [σὺ δὲ ὁ σοφός], would speak falsely about these things consistently, if you had a mind to do so? *Hippias*: Yes, it is as you say.”

38. 367e1–7 (Culverhouse modified): “*Socrates*: Then isn’t the good and wise [ὁ ἀγαθὸς καὶ σοφός] geometer [γεωμέτρης] most able indeed [δυνατότατός γε] to do both? And if anyone is false about geometric diagrams, it is him, the good one [ὁ ἀγαθός], right? For he’s able [δυνατός], but the bad one was unable to lie [ὁ δὲ κακὸς ἀδύνατος ἦν ψεύδестhai] so that *he* would not be false, the one is not able to lie, as we agreed. *Hippias*: That’s right.”

39. 368d2–e5 (Culverhouse modified): “*Socrates*: And regarding the crafts [αἱ τέχνηαι] that I just now mentioned, you said that you came with knowledge superior to the others, and regarding rhythm and harmony and proper grammar, and very many other things in addition to these, as I seem to recall. And apparently I forgot your artful skill of memorizing, in which you claim to be most brilliant. I believe I’ve also forgotten many other things. But here’s what I’m saying: look at your own crafts [αἱ τέχνηαι]—they are enough—and those of others [αἱ τῶν ἄλλων; τέχνηαι understood] and tell me: among the cases that we’ve agreed upon, could you find any instance where one person is true and the other false, and they are separate and not the same?”

[πάντων σοφώτατος εἶ ἀνθρώπων], as I once heard you boast, extolling in the marketplace beside the bankers' tables your abundant and enviable wisdom [σοφία].⁴⁰

In an interpretive world where, thanks to Aristotle, *everybody knows* that Socrates believed that Virtue is Knowledge, *Lesser Hippias* will always be a problem. The phrase *πασαί αἱ ἐπιστήμαι* (368b1) admits of no exclusions, and thus there can be no *τέχνη* or *ἐπιστήμη* that guarantees a virtuous or even a merely moral use. As a result, if Aristotle was right to claim that Socrates regarded, albeit falsely, the virtues as *ἐπιστήμαι*,⁴¹ this must apply to them as well. The same craft that can be used for good can be used for ill, and that's why it is on the basis of knowledge that *ὁ ἀγαθὸς καὶ σοφὸς* alone errs willingly. Even if we decide at the end that Socrates is wrong to say that the good man is the one who not only errs but who does base and unjust things voluntarily (376b4–6), it won't be because such a man possesses a *τέχνη* or *ἐπιστήμη* that prevents him from doing them.⁴² Moreover, even if we decide that such a man does not do base and unjust things voluntarily, the dialogue as a whole—and the discussion of Homer's *Litai* in particular—instantiates the refutation of the most paradoxical of the Socratic Paradoxes, for through Socrates, Plato is erring willingly even if by doing so he is not doing anything base or unjust. In short, *Hippias Minor* will force us to choose between a deadpan reading of *Protagoras* and Plato's use of basanistic pedagogy, between Plato's Socrates and Aristotle's.

It is Socrates who forces the return to Homer, allegedly as proof that the same person is both true and false.⁴³ Not without good reason, Hippias accuses Socrates of missing the big picture as per the Continuity Passage in *Hippias Major* (see §9), and offers to complete his demonstration (“I will show [ἀποδείξω]”) that “Homer made Achilles better than Odysseus and not false.”⁴⁴ Socrates, on the verge of modeling the same deliberate falsehood

40. 368a8–b5 (Culverhouse modified).

41. See Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 1.5; 1216b2–10.

42. Cf. Blondell, *Play of Character*, 158–59: “His [sc. Socrates'] skill at speaking purposeful ‘falsehoods’ obviously has much in common with the slippery, persuasive and verbal Odysseus, as opposed to Achilles, the truthful man of action who falls short of others in discussion. But as the dialogue shows implicitly, the skill that makes such ‘falsehood’ possible must be used by the right people for the right ends, ends that must be established *externally to the skill itself*.”

43. 369a3–b7 (Culverhouse): “*Hippias*: I don't understand what you're saying, Socrates. *Socrates*: That's probably because you're not making use of your skill of memory—clearly you don't think it's necessary—so I'll remind you: you do know that you said Achilles is true but Odysseus false and a man of many twists and turns, right? *Hippias*: Yes. *Socrates*: Then do you see now that it has been made clear that the same person is both false and true, so that if Odysseus was false, he's now also true, and if Achilles was true, he's now also false? These men are not distinct from one another, nor are they opposites, but similar.”

44. 369b8–c8 (Culverhouse): “*Hippias*: Oh Socrates, you are always weaving arguments of this sort, where you pick out whatever is the most vexing part of the argument and lay hold of it, combing the smallest detail, but you don't debate the whole matter with which the argument is concerned.

on which Plato's critique of virtue as a τέχνη or ἐπιστήμη depends, presents himself as exactly the kind of student Plato expects us to become:

Socrates: Oh Hippias, I assure you I don't dispute that you are wiser than I, but I'm always accustomed, whenever someone says something, to pay attention, especially when I think that the speaker is wise, and desiring to learn what he's saying, I question it thoroughly [διαπυθάνεσθαι] and consider it over and over [ἐπανασκοπεῖν], and compare/contrast [συμβιβάζειν] what's being said, so that I understand it [καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν μαθεῖν ὅτι λέγει, διαπυθάνομαι καὶ ἐπανασκοπῶ καὶ συμβιβάζω τὰ λεγόμενα, ἵνα μάθω]. And if I think the speaker is no good, I don't ask him [ἐπανερέσθαι] anything or care about what he says. This way you will know who I think is wise, for you will find that I'm persistent about what this person says and question him so that I benefit by learning something.⁴⁵

It is the reader who must be desirous of learning what Plato is saying, and each of us must henceforth apply this quartet of interpretive verbs: ἐπανερέσθαι, διαπυθάνεσθαι, ἐπανασκοπεῖν, and συμβιβάζειν—all of them present tense, first person singular, in the text—to what he is writing. A reader who doesn't question Plato, who doesn't return to his λεγόμενα again and again, who does not compare passages, either in a single dialogue or between several, and who therefore cannot say to him: "I am ascertaining by thorough inquiry [διαπυθάνομαι] your own intentions in these dialogues" (cf. πρῆξιμην at 363a6), will get nowhere. But since we are still at an elementary stage in our education, Plato provides us with external and independent evidence—just as he will in *Menexenus*, when Aspasia's speech repeatedly distorts the facts of Athenian History (see §15)—of the questions we need to ask and the comparisons we need to make.

Socrates: So even now I've noticed while you were speaking, that the verses you just now mentioned where you indicate that Achilles speaks to Odysseus as though he were a deceiver, that seems strange to me, if you're telling the truth, since Odysseus, on the one hand, nowhere seems to have lied [ὁ μὲν Ὀδυσσεὺς οὐδαμοῦ φαίνεται ψευδόμενος], he of many twists and turns [ὁ πολύτροπος], but Achilles seems to be a man of many twists and turns [ὁ δὲ Ἀχιλλεὺς πολύτροπος τις φαίνεται], along the lines of your argument. He speaks falsely [ψευδῆσθαι], at least.⁴⁶

Now, if you want, with a lot of evidence I'll demonstrate [ἀποδείξω] to you, with a satisfactory argument, that Homer made Achilles better_A than Odysseus and not false, and that he made Odysseus deceitful, a teller of many falsehoods, and inferior to Achilles. If you want, present another argument in response to mine, one that is better_A. That way, those present will know which of us speaks better_A." For the subscripts, see Culverhouse, "Plato's *Hippias Minor*," 8: "I have translated every instance of ἀμείνων as 'better_A' and βελτίων with 'better_B.' This way, the reader can see precisely where Socrates uses each term and can decide whether there is the pattern of usage I suggest there is."

45. 369d1–e2 (Culverhouse modified).

46. 369e2–370a3 (Culverhouse modified).

This, then, is the thesis of what Flashar calls the *Sokratesrede*, and it is here that Plato makes it easy to see how the interpretation of poetry need not be abandoned on the grounds that poets themselves are not around to answer the questions we put to them (ἐπανερέσθαι). Naturally Socrates will be able to prove that Achilles says different things to Odysseus, Phoenix, and Ajax: *Litai* wouldn't be a microcosm of the *Iliad* if its hero didn't soften, or if he had chosen to leave Troy tomorrow, as he tells Odysseus he's going to do. By the time he responds to Phoenix, he is already saying that he will make the decision whether to leave or not tomorrow morning,⁴⁷ not simply to leave on the spot, as he has just said to Odysseus. And by the time he responds to Ajax, the change is even more obvious: he won't let the Greeks be pushed into the sea and their ships burnt. Now we can argue whether these changes amount to lying, and if only because his softening leads him to contradict himself, the hard-hearted can perhaps sustain Socrates' use of ψεύδεσθαι and even his πολύτροπός τις. But what cannot be sustained is Socrates' claim that Odysseus never seems to have lied (369e5–370a1). He does so twice. Thanks to Hippias, Plato has already forced us to wonder whether Achilles responds to Odysseus as he does because Odysseus has borne false witness as to the terms and spirit of Agamemnon's offer. The purpose of the remainder of the *Sokratesrede* is to bring to light Odysseus' second lie, i.e., the false witness about the spirit and terms of Achilles' response he will subsequently offer Agamemnon. But the more general point is that the interpretation of poetry is not the waste of time that Socrates pretends it is in *Protagoras*: a deliberately false interpretation of a poem *proves that a true one is possible*.

Plato did not banish Homer from his Academy; instead, he wrote an entire dialogue that turned on the interpretation of a single book of the *Iliad*. As if that were not sufficient, he then joined that dialogue to another built around exactly the kind of person who has the skills to know that Socrates is lying when he claims that Odysseus never seems to have lied in *Litai*. Ion the rhapsode has come in for more than his share of abuse, but nobody can deny that he knows Homer's poems by heart. It is therefore necessary for him not only to recognize but also to memorize the differences between what Agamemnon says to Odysseus and what Odysseus says to Agamemnon, etc. Consider as an example what Socrates says after quoting Achilles' statement to Odysseus that he is returning to Phthia tomorrow morning:

Socrates: Having said these things, at one time before the entire army and another time to his own comrades, nowhere does he seem either to have prepared nor to have attempted to drag down [καθέλκειν] his ships as about to sail homeward, but very nobly [πάνυ γενναίως] neglects to tell the truth.⁴⁸

47. See Homer, *Iliad*, 9.427–29, especially ἦν ἐθέλησιν.

48. 370d2–6 (Lamb modified).

Only Ion or someone like him would know why Socrates uses the verb καθέλκειν, i.e., “to drag down.” The verb is not found in Achilles’ response to Odysseus, but it is found in Odysseus’ report to Agamemnon:

Achilles threatens, tomorrow at first light,
To haul [ἔλκειν] his well-benched warships out to sea.⁴⁹

Of course not all hints need to be so subtle, for Plato is generous.

Having made Socrates’ deception impossible to miss with the Double in *Hippias Major*, Plato now adds a new kind of clue for detecting his use of it in less obvious circumstances, as twice in the following:

Hippias: That’s because you’re looking at it wrong, Socrates. For when Achilles says something false he’s not portrayed as saying something false with a scheme in mind, but unintentionally, because he was compelled by the army’s misfortune to stay and help. But when Odysseus speaks falsely, he does so intentionally and with a scheme in mind. *Socrates*: You’re deceiving me, my dear Hippias, imitating Odysseus yourself [ἐξαπατᾷς με, ὃ φίλτατε Ἰππία, καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα μιμῆ]!⁵⁰

As he will do again in *Ion* (cf. 543e4 and 542a3), Plato is warning us to be on our guard, for it is the reader who must say to Socrates: “you are deceiving me.” As for the second, if Hippias is imitating Odysseus, that proves his point. More importantly, if Socrates is imitating Odysseus by claiming ὁ μὲν Ὀδυσσεὺς οὐδαμοῦ φαίνεται ψευδόμενος, then Plato is using basanistic pedagogy. The trick of using this educational tool effectively is that the deception must be plausible enough for the typical or lazy reader to believe that the author regards it as true but yet easy enough for a good student, or even a reasonably inquisitive one, to see through,⁵¹ especially by applying to the text—as he has just taught us to do—the four first-person singular verbs of 369d4–6. Throughout *Plato the Teacher*, I am showing that it is much easier to detect Plato’s deliberate use of deception for a student who encounters the dialogues in the Reading Order, but even when a reader has not done so, Plato allows Socrates to give us plenty of help, as he does next through exaggeration:

49. Homer, *Iliad*, 9. 682–83 (Robert Fagles translation); see Homer, *The Iliad*, translated by Robert Fagles; Introduction and Notes by Bernard Knox (London: Penguin, 1990), 274.

50. 370e5–11 (Culverhouse modified).

51. Cf. Sullivan, “Hedonism in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” 22: “This whole conversation [sc. *Prt.* 351b–359a] is skillfully done: the reader is given sufficient indications to realize (as he might anyway from his knowledge of Plato’s methods) that Socrates is being ‘ironic’ (see below), but the Sophists and the ordinary man (were he present) are to be taken in and regard Socrates as committed to the thesis because that is the natural interpretation of the questions and general drift of the argument.”

Hippias: No way, Socrates! What do you mean? What are you getting at?
Socrates: You claim that Achilles doesn't speak falsely [ψεύδεσθαι] out of plotting—Achilles, who was such a wizard [γότης] and a plotter [ἐπιβουλος] along with his pretense [ἡ ἀλαζονεία], as Homer made him to be [ὡς πεποίηκεν Ὀμηρος].⁵²

These are the opening words of the crucial passage in the Socrates' exegesis of Homer's *Litai*.

For Achilles to change his mind is one thing, but to call him these things borders on farce. It is not, however, on the basis of farce that Plato expects us to see through Socrates and thus to detect his own use of deliberate deception: it is rather on the basis of a careful reading of Homer's *Iliad* in tandem with an equally careful reading of Plato's *Hippias Minor*:

Socrates: so that so much more even than Odysseus [καὶ τοῦ Ὀδυσσεώς] does he [sc. Achilles] seem to plan [φρονεῖν], in addition to deceiving him [λανθάνειν αὐτόν] easily while pretending [ἀλαζονευόμενος], so that [standing] opposite him [ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ, i.e., standing in front of Odysseus, looking him in the face] he himself dared to contradict himself [αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἐτόλμα ἐναντία λέγειν], and to deceive [λανθάνειν] Odysseus. For in no way at all [οὐδὲν γοῦν] does he seem, having spoken to him [πρὸς αὐτόν], to be perceiving him to have lied [αὐτοῦ ψευδομένου], Odysseus I mean [ὁ Ὀδυσσεύς]. *Hippias*: What kind of things are you saying, Socrates?⁵³

The key word in this passage is αὐτός, the slipperiness of which was introduced by Hippias with αὐτῷ at 364e9. Here Socrates uses it five times, and it is the fourth time—πρὸς αὐτόν at 371a8 (cf. πρὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεῖα at 364e9–10)—that is crucial for detecting the second lie of Odysseus, the one where he misconstrues Achilles' response in his report to Agamemnon, i.e., πρὸς αὐτόν.

The first αὐτός (371a5) applies to Odysseus: Achilles is deceiving *him* (λανθάνειν αὐτόν) because standing face-to-face with him (Odysseus again), he—this third αὐτός is now Achilles, as is the fifth—is not only attempting to λανθάνειν Odysseus and to ψεύδεσθαι to him, but he does so successfully. The evidence of this successful deception—the proof that Achilles is even more capable of what it means to φρονεῖν here and in *Hippias Minor* generally (cf. the three uses of φρόνιμοι at 365e5–366a3)—is that *while talking to Agamemnon* (πρὸς αὐτόν), Odysseus indicates in no way at all (οὐδὲν γοῦν) that Achilles has contradicted himself, i.e., that he is *not* going to leave tomorrow, even though in his anger at the liar Odysseus and his chief

52. 371a1–4.

53. 371a4–b2.

Agamemnon, he said at first that he would. And Plato will allow Socrates to twist the knife for those who are taking him literally after quoting Achilles' suppressed reply to Ajax (371b8–c5), thus giving *them* the chance to prove themselves “forgetful” of what Odysseus was contriving by “forgetting” what Achilles said to him.⁵⁴

“Scholars have wondered ever since antiquity why Odysseus reports only Achilles' first and most hostile speech.”⁵⁵ Although Plato contributes nothing to clarifying Odysseus' motivations the second time he bears false witness, and even though the explanation for the first time he does so that Plato places in the mouth of Hippias leaves room for improvement—for it is surely not *because* Achilles is talking to Odysseus that we should apply lines about liars *to* Odysseus (365b5–6)—nobody since Demodocus⁵⁶ or rather Homer has contributed more to “the Quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus”⁵⁷ than Plato (363b5–c3). What must guide any reader's choice is: “the Choice of Achilles” and thus the motive (διάνοια) behind it, and it is noteworthy that when first Phaedrus (*Smp.* 179e1–180a2) and then Socrates discuss his choice to stay in Troy and die there (*Ap.* 28c1–d4), they will both cite *Iliad* 18 rather than *Iliad* 9,⁵⁸ which suggests that it *was* for the sake of his fame (cf. *Smp.* 208d2–6), not because of his gallantry, regardless of whether or not that gallantry was “conspicuous.” With respect to τὸ καλόν, consider Aristotle:

In like manner those who praise or censure a man do not consider whether he does expedient things [συμμεροντα] or harmful ones [sc., harmful to herself], but often make it the ground of actual praise that, having neglected the profitable [τὸ λυσιτελοῦν] to himself [αὐτῷ], he did what is beautiful [ὃ τι καλόν], for example they praise Achilles because he ran to the aid [βοηθεῖν] of his fallen comrade Patroclus knowing that he must die when to live was possible. In this case, a death of this kind is nobler [κάλλιον] but the advantageous [τὸ συμφέρον] is to live.⁵⁹

54. 371c6–d7: “*Socrates*: So, Hippias, do you then consider the son of Thetis to be so forgetful [ἐπιλήσιμον]—and at that, having been educated by the most wise Chiron—that just after abusing pretenders [οἱ ἀλαζόνεζ] with the most extreme abuse, he himself [αὐτος] straightway said to Odysseus that he will sail away, but to Ajax that he will stay, but not as both plotting and believing Odysseus to be a simpleton [ἀρχαῖον] and in order to excel him [αὐτον] both in this same craftiness [αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ τεχνάζειν] and in speaking falsely [αὐτοῦ αὐτῷ τούτῳ τῷ τεχνάζειν τε καὶ ψεύδεσθαι περιέσεσθαι]?”

55. Griffin, *Iliad Book Nine*, 145 (on 676 ff.).

56. See Homer, *Odyssey*, 8.75–82.

57. See my “Coming Home to the *Iliad*” (March 25, 2011), available at: https://www.academia.edu/6804950/Coming_Home_to_the_Iliad (accessed May 8, 2019).

58. Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, 18.94–96.

59. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1.3; 1358b38–1359a5 (W. Rhys Roberts translation modified); cf. ἐβοήθησε τῷ εταίρῳ Πατρόκλῳ with *Smp.* 179e5; this leaves little doubt that Plato stands behind Aristotle's third persons.

By both gaining fame *and* returning home,⁶⁰ Odysseus has persuaded some or even most of Homer's readers that he has won the contest, for we imagine him alive in Ithaca, in safe possession of τὸ συμφέρον, while his rival Achilles is not only dead, but—if Odysseus is to be believed—complaining about his lot in Hades (cf. *R.* 516c8–e2). On the verge of challenging us to return to the Cave in *Republic* 7, Socrates will famously quote Odysseus' report of Achilles in Hades from the *Odyssey* in a manner that valorizes Odysseus' own choice in *Republic* 10 (*R.* 620c3–d2).⁶¹ What makes *Hippias Minor* so important is that, while following Homer's example in tempting *his* readers to prefer Odysseus to Achilles, Plato has taught us that Odysseus is *not* to be believed precisely by having Socrates falsely affirm the opposite. As for Aristotle, the juxtaposition of ὁ τι καλόν as self-sacrifice with τὸ συμφέρον and τὸ λυσιτελοῦν helps us to see more clearly the gulf between a science of measurement that maximizes our pleasure and achieves “the saving of our life [ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ βίου]” in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 356e5–6 and 357a6–7) with the gallant βοηθεῖν in *Alcibiades Major* (see §5), the first step in “the longer way” that proceeds through *Menexenus* (see §13) and *Symposium* (§16) to “the crisis of the *Republic*.”⁶²

Failing to see that “the Ancient Quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy” is harmoniously resolved on every single page of Plato's poetic and mimetic dialogues, and therefore condemned to view the banishment of Homer as dispositive on the basis of a deadpan reading of *Republic* as “Plato's Political Theory,” most readers have overlooked the middle section of *Hippias Minor*, configuring as a mere “*jeu d'esprit*”⁶³ what is in fact a second and even more obvious Performative Self-Contradiction on the claim that nobody *makes* bad or base things voluntarily (*Prt.* 345d6–e4). But before returning to that passage in order to show how Plato accomplishes a Reversal of *Protagoras* in *Hippias Minor*, it is first necessary to emphasize the paradoxical relationship between Aristotle and “this humanly delicious, highly philosophical, and really superbly constructed little masterpiece.”⁶⁴

Even more than *Protagoras*, on which Aristotle himself depended, it is Aristotle who is responsible for making it well nigh impossible to doubt that Plato's Socrates (at least in “the early Socratic dialogues”) was fully committed to the Socratic Paradox that nobody errs voluntarily *and* that virtue is (or the virtues are) knowledge. What I will call “Aristotelian Paradox” is that if

60. Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.410–16.

61. See *Plato the Teacher*, 388–90.

62. See *Plato the Teacher*, §16.

63. Penner, “Socrates on the Strength of Knowledge,” 118n4.

64. Terry Penner, “Socrates and the Early Dialogues” in Richard Kraut (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, 121–169 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 133.

Aristotle himself had not vouched for its authenticity,⁶⁵ the banishment of *Hippias Minor* from the canon would join the banishment of Homer from the City as interpretive bedrock precisely *because it contradicts two of Aristotle's own claims about Socrates*.⁶⁶ In other words, Aristotle is paradoxically responsible for preserving the data that refutes him. Stuck with the resulting conundrum, the only solution is an interpretation of *Hippias Minor* that leaves both “virtue is knowledge” and “nobody errs voluntarily” intact,⁶⁷ and as the notes to this paragraph have begun to suggest, the honor of having done so belongs to Terry Penner, and his views will therefore be considered here with care. But first, it is necessary to revisit the introduction of the Socratic Paradox in *Protagoras*:

Socrates: For Simonides was not so ill-educated as to say that he praised a person who willingly did nothing bad [ὄς ἂν ἐκὼν μηδὲν κακὸν ποιῆ], as though there were some who voluntarily do bad things [οἱ ἐκόντες κακὰ ποιοῦσιν]. I am fairly sure of this—that none of the wise men considers that any human being errs voluntarily [οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼν ἐξαμαρτάνει] nor voluntarily accomplishes [ἐργάζεσθαι] both base and bad things [αἰσχρὰ τε καὶ κακά]; they are well aware that all those doing [ποιοῦντες, participle of ποιεῖν] the base and bad things [τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακά] do them involuntarily [ἄκοντες ποιοῦσιν]; and so Simonides does not say he gives his praise to the person who willingly does no bad things [οὐχ ὄς ἂν μὴ κακὰ ποιῆ ἐκὼν], but uses the word ‘willingly’ of himself.⁶⁸

The principal reason that *Hippias Minor* effectively and deliberately reverses *Protagoras* is that a discussion of Homer as “maker” permits Socrates to hammer the verb ποιεῖν throughout the dialogue. This hammering obvi-

65. Friedländer, *Plato* 2, 146: “Let us be frank to learn from the admission that without the explicit testimony of Aristotle, probably few critics could consider the *Hippias Minor* a genuine Platonic work [note 6].” As 326n6 points out: “Despite the quotation by Aristotle [citation deleted], the dialogue is regarded as un-Platonic by Schleiermacher and Ast.” But see Karl Fr. Hermann, *Geschichte und System der Platonischen Philosophie* (Heidelberg: C. F. Winter, 1839), 432, beginning with: “auch ohne dieses Zeugnis.”

66. There are at least five paradoxes associated with Aristotle’s testimony on Plato and Socrates. With respect to the latter, there is the one just mentioned; see §4 (*ad fin.*) for another. A similar pattern is visible in one of the paradoxes regarding Plato: Aristotle repeatedly attributes to Plato views for which Aristotle himself, not the dialogues, is our source and which Aristotle finds it easy to refute; on Indivisible Lines, Ideal Numbers, and the Equation of the Good and the One, see *Plato the Teacher*, 308–10, *Guardians in Action*, 214–15, and *Guardians on Trial*, 278n250. Logically prior to this paradox is a second: that Aristotle’s testimony about mathematical objects as “Intermediates” contradicts his testimony about the three views just mentioned; on this, see *Plato the Teacher*, §28 and *Guardians in Action*, 213–14. Finally, there is the paradox that Aristotle’s testimony about the Idea of the Good and the Separation of the Forms stands athwart the attempt to defend, especially on the basis of *Phlb.*, “the Aristotelian τέλος of Plato’s Development” (see *Guardians in Action*, 424).

67. Cf. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 197: “One thing we know for certain about Socrates [cf. Socratic Ignorance] is his claim that virtue is knowledge and all wrong action is involuntary [note 3].” 197n3 reads: “Besides passages in Plato such as *Prt.* 345d, *Meno* 78a–b, *Gorg.* 468c [all discussed in this section below], we have evidence in Xenophon (e.g., *Mem.* 4.6.6; volume 3, 445 [for *Memorabilia* 4.6, see §8]) and [N. B.] the explicit criticisms of Aristotle.”

68. *Prt.* 345d6–e6 (Lamb modified).

ously begins here, at the Paradox's literary point of origin: its five uses in this passage are the tip of an interpretive iceberg of parallels, as we will see. In section §4, the hammered use of ποιεῖν in the Paradox's introduction was taken as evidence that we are witnessing a Performative Self-Contradiction: Socrates is erring deliberately by misinterpreting the poem of Simonides and errs most egregiously by attributing the view that nobody errs voluntarily to the poet, who clearly believed no such thing.⁶⁹ It is therefore the poetic contexts that those who are confronted by the Aristotelian Paradox must emphasize: since Plato regards the interpretation of poetry as a waste of time—and offers outrageous interpretations of both Simonides and Homer to prove it—we can safely ignore the fact that Socrates is refuting the Socratic Paradox at the same moment that he introduces it. But *Hippias Minor* complicates this interpretive move because Socrates is using Homer, however deceptively, to make a moral judgment, no matter how misguided, about a class of agents (οἱ ποιῶντες, particularly those doing τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακά) that Socrates has already used Simonides to prove do not even exist: οἱ ἄμαρτάνοντες ἐκόντες, i.e., those who err voluntarily.

In addition to sharing its poetic context, then, *Hippias Minor* now adds deliberate wrongdoing to the mix, and Aristotle's authority is most visible in the interpretive imperative that makes it necessary to harmonize Socrates' claim in *Protagoras* that οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼν ἐξαμαρτάνει with the hammered claim in *Hippias Minor* that the better men are not only lying (ψευδόμενοι) voluntarily but are doing something considerably worse than that:

Socrates: For my opinion, Hippias, is the exact opposite of what you say; I think that those who injuring [οἱ βλάπτοντες] people and doing injustice [ἀδικοῦντες] and lying [ψευδόμενοι] and deceiving [ἐξαπατῶντες] and erring voluntarily [καὶ ἄμαρτάνοντες ἐκόντες], not involuntarily, are better than those who do so involuntarily.⁷⁰

Since Plato clearly does not believe that all five of these participles apply, it is easy for him to add the partial palinode that follows, but even after doing so, he at the very least reaffirms the one participle that contradicts the canonical statement of the Socratic Paradox:

Socrates: Sometimes, however, the opposite of this seems to me to be the case, and I am all astray about these matters, evidently because I am ignorant; but now

69. Cf. Terry Penner, "Socrates" in Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield (eds.), in association with Simon Harrison and Melissa Lane, *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, 164–189 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 180 (on *Prt.*): "Socrates wrests from Simonides' poem . . . two intellectualist morals that are apparently quite unintended by Simonides."

70. 372d3–7 (Lamb modified).

at the present moment a sort of paroxysm of my disease has come upon me, and those who err voluntarily [οἱ ἐκόντες ἀμαρτάνοντες] concerning anything [περί τι] appear to me better than those who err involuntarily.⁷¹

Palinode notwithstanding, the argument of *Hippias Minor* as a whole is based on the existence of οἱ ἐκόντες ἀμαρτάνοντες.⁷²

As a result, even if his περί τι opens the door too wide, Socrates has not only endorsed the claim that there are men who lie, err, and deceive voluntarily in statements like this one but *he has already instantiated their existence* in the *Sokratesrede* in the person of himself. By lying about Odysseus, Socrates has refuted the principal claim of the Socratic Paradox, forcing its defenders to ignore the discussion of Homer on the grounds that the interpretation of poetry is unworthy of serious attention. Whatever flaws it has as an interpretation of Homer just go to show why we should not waste our time interpreting poets, in short: “Plato banished Homer from his City.” Some version of this step is necessary, but not sufficient: in order to leave the Socratic Paradox intact, its defenders must argue that the final result, thanks to escape hatch provided by “if there is such a man” (376b5–6), performs a *reductio ad absurdum* on the whole chain of argument that leads to the outrageous conclusion that the good man not only errs willingly but is “doing base and unjust things voluntarily” (376b5).

There is, however, a more obvious expedient than throwing the baby out with the bathwater. It is the claim “those doing injustice (οἱ ἀδικοῦντες) voluntarily are better men” that we will ultimately be challenged to find absurd, and Plato has provided us with the proper means to do so. It is only a morally neutral craft or τέχνη like medicine that allows its practitioners to be βλάπτοντες (as in the poisoning doctor), but those doing injustice voluntarily are neither just nor good. How do we know Plato thinks that but doesn’t come right out and say it? Because the other three participles—ψευδόμενοι, ἐξαπατῶντες, καὶ ἀμαρτάνοντες ἐκόντες (372d5–6)—admit of a moral deployment when the lie, deceit, and error in question is the deliberate failure to discriminate justice and the virtues from “crafts and knowledges” (375b8–c1), precisely because they aren’t morally neutral. Plato leads us to the truth by deriving absurd consequences from the affirmation of what’s false.

In addition to undermining Aristotle’s Socrates, such a move has two other unpalatable consequences, both of which show why *Ion* will follow *Hippias Minor* in the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues. To begin with, Plato has

71. 372d7–e3 (Lamb modified).

72. Vlastos does his best with the palinode and the paroxysm in the addition to “Does Socrates Cheat?” on *Hp. Mi.* (“The *Hippias Minor*—Sophistry or Honest Perplexity?”) in *Socrates*, 275–80; notice in particular his recourse to “Aristotle’s clearer vision” (279) and the claim that the Socratic Paradox “is a misguided and confused doctrine.”

just allowed Socrates to prove that there *is* a craft of interpreting poetry, Plato's dialogues included, for by speaking falsely about a text, Socrates has left room for us to prove that his interpretation is not the true one. As Flashar points out, and as will be emphasized in the next section, Ion is never given the chance to demonstrate his ability to interpret Homer, but Plato has already forced *us* to do so in *Hippias Minor*. The second consequence is that even if interpreting Homer does not depend on “divine dispensation [θεία μοῖρα]” alone—as Socrates will claim in *Ion* (534b7–c1)—it may very well be the case that the choice to refrain from “doing base and unjust things voluntarily” *does depend on it*, for justice is not a morally neutral craft. More importantly, θεία μοῖρα may be even more necessary for those who choose to do noble and just ones when doing them is *antithetical* to τὸ συμφέρον and τὸ λυσιτελοῦν αὐτῷ.⁷³ For if we configure virtue on the basis of the Craft Analogy as that form of τέχνη or ἐπιστήμη that secures our happiness in the same way that medicine secures health, then we are confronted with the following:

Socrates: What then? The more citharistic and more flutistic—and all the other things [καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα] that are in accordance with both the crafts and knowledges [αἱ τέχναι τε καὶ ἐπιστήμαι, i.e., τὰ κατὰ τὰς τέχναις τε καὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας]—is not the better soul the one voluntarily accomplishing [ἐργάζεσθαι] the bad things and the base things [τὰ κακὰ καὶ τὰ αἰσχροῦ] and errs [ἐξάμαρτάνειν, i.e., ἐκοῦσα τὰ κακὰ ἐργάζεται καὶ τὰ αἰσχροῦ καὶ ἐξάμαρτάνει], but the worse involuntarily? *Hippias*: Apparently.⁷⁴

There is a *reductio ad absurdum* in *Hippias Minor*, but it is the one it performs on what will subsequently become the Aristotle-endorsed dogma that Socrates (erroneously) regarded virtue as knowledge. The words τὰ κατὰ τὰς τέχναις τε καὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας, with that τὰ glossed as τᾶλλα πάντα, leave no wiggle room, and when combined with the unpalatable conclusion of 376a4–6, Plato's solution may perhaps begin to become thinkable.

There is a third element in the Aristotelian Paradox that puts the other two in perspective. Aristotle famously thought that Socrates was *wrong* to think either that nobody errs willingly or that virtue is knowledge. So if *Hippias Minor* proves that (Plato's) Socrates (of the early dialogues) embraced *neither* of the doctrines that Aristotle regarded as erroneous—i.e., if Socrates himself has erred willingly while interpreting Homer *and* has demonstrated that all τέχναι τε καὶ ἐπιστήμαι can be deployed for a vicious end, thereby

73. For the distinction, see Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.28. Jones and Sharma, “Wandering Hero,” posit on 130 what they call “a radical thesis to which Socrates is famously committed: One can never unjustly promote one's own interest”; whether this gets them over the problem posed by 376a4–6 is unclear, but it certainly is insufficient for motivating the radical *action* for which Plato celebrated Socrates and for the lack of which Cicero appears to have chastised Plato.

74. 375b7–c3.

performing a *reductio ad absurdum* on the claim that virtue is either—then the Stagirite can be correct about the “doctrines” *while being wrong about Socrates*. To put it simply: when read after *Protagoras* and between *Hippias Major* and *Ion*, *Hippias Minor* undoes those “doctrines” on a recognizably Platonic basis. Aristotle is right: *Hippias Minor* is a genuine Platonic dialogue and his Socrates, drawn from *Protagoras*, is wrong. The problem is that *his* Socrates is not the Socrates we meet in *Hippias Minor*, and by making it impossible for the followers of Schleiermacher to excise this puzzling little dialogue, Aristotle has provided the rest of us with the basis for rejecting his own claims about Socrates while at the same time reaching a response to both “virtue is knowledge” and the Socratic Paradox that *confirms* Plato’s use of deliberate deception, basanistic pedagogy, and Performative Self-Contradiction, for he is foremost among those who are ψευδόμενοι, ἐξαπατῶντες, καὶ ἀμαρτάνοντες ἐκόντες.

In short, the simple solution to these complexities is that while Aristotle based his claims about “Socrates’ Moral Psychology” primarily on *Protagoras*,⁷⁵ Plato is continuing the Reversal of *Protagoras* in *Hippias Minor*, particularly with respect to the Socratic Paradox. Socrates refers to it repeatedly, and in words that recall *Protagoras* 345e1–2: he gives us “those erring willingly [οἱ ἐκόντες ἐξαμαρτάνοντες]” (372e2), “those involuntarily doing each of these things [οἱ ἄκοντες τούτων ἕκαστα ποιοῦντες]” (372e5–6), and “which of the two are better, those voluntarily [ἐκόντες] or those involuntarily erring [ἀμαρτάνοντες]” (373c7–8). As already mentioned, his principal device is the hammered use of ποιεῖν, and after having identified ποιεῖν with ἐργάζεσθαι,⁷⁶ he establishes the link to the alternate form of οὐδέεις ἀνθρώπων ἐκὼν ἐξαμαρτάνει at *Protagoras* 345e2: “nor do they accomplish [ἐργάζεσθαι] base and bad [αἰσχρὰ τε καὶ κακὰ] things willingly.” As for those “bad and base things,” hammered immediately afterwards in *Protagoras* (τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακὰ at *Prt.* 345e3), they reappear to be hammered once again in *Hippias Minor*:

Socrates: Then the one running badly [κακῶς] accomplishes this: a bad and base thing [κακὸν καὶ αἰσχρόν] in the race?” *Hippias*: A bad one. *Socrates*: Is it therefore not the case that the good runner voluntarily accomplishes [ἐργάζεσθαι] this bad thing [τὸ κακὸν τοῦτο] and the base thing [τὸ αἰσχρόν], but the bad one involuntarily?⁷⁷

75. See *Ascent to the Good*, lvii–lx.

76. 373d8–e1: “*Socrates*: Now is not running to do [ποιεῖν] something? *Hippias*: To do [ποιεῖν] indeed. *Socrates*: And if to do, is that not to accomplish [ἐργάζεσθαι] something? *Hippias*: Yes.”

77. 373e1–5.

These verbal echoes are the best evidence that Plato must have expected his beginners to read *Hippias Minor* with this text from *Protagoras* either in front of or behind them.

In section §4, I distinguished between three refutations of the Socratic Paradox. *Hippias Minor* completes the second of these: “the Performative Refutation.”⁷⁸ In tandem with the verbal echoes of *Protagoras* detailed above, Socrates’ once again offers a deliberate misinterpretation of a poet, but now broadens what it means to err and accomplish bad and base things willingly to the kinds of activities that are Plato the Teacher’s stock in trade: lying and deceiving deliberately for a benign pedagogical purpose. The reason that Plato exposes his students to *Protagoras* first—the reason I am hypothesizing that he intended them to hear and see it before reading it—is not that he wants them to see through all the various contradictions it contains, least of all the Performative Self-Contradiction at the center of the Simonides exegesis, i.e., the claim that nobody errs willingly. Rather, he expects them to take it literally and therefore to be utterly confused by it, not least of all because they have come to the Academy in large part, at least, to be taught virtue. And with Homer’s *Litai* ringing in their ears, they will now witness Socrates lying to Hippias once again (see §10), and this time in a manner that for the first time looks directly back to *Protagoras*:

Hippias: Socrates, Eudicus, always makes confusion in arguments, and seems to want to make trouble. *Socrates*: Most excellent Hippias, I do not do these voluntarily at all [οὔτι ἐκὼν γε ταῦτα ἐγὼ ποιῶ]—for then I should be wise and clever, according to you—but involuntarily, so forgive me; for you say, too, that he who does evil involuntarily ought to be forgiven.⁷⁹

Since Socrates has just demonstrated *ad oculos* (or is it *ad aures*?) that the negative is out of place, the truth is rather: ἐκὼν γε ταῦτα ἐγὼ ποιῶ, i.e., he has lied about Odysseus just clumsily enough that we are not going to be deceived about his deliberate use of deception. In *Hippias Minor*, Plato has therefore *defended* the kind of deception that is intrinsic to basanistic pedagogy.

In turning now to Terry Penner, the first thing to grasp is that the Performative Refutation of the Socratic Paradox is no longer in play as far as *his* analysis of the dialogue is concerned, and it is only *his* position—not that

78. Cf. Theodor Gomperz, *Griechische Denker; Eine Geschichte der Antiken Philosophie*, volume 2, fourth edition (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1925), 234: “Plato hat [sc. in *Hp. Mi.*]—daran zweifeln wir nicht—den Punkt genau erkannt, an welchem die Induktion zu einer fehlerhaften wird, und dem Leser die Aufgabe gestellt, ihn herauszufinden. Er selbst ‘fehlt freiwillig!’” But cf. 51: “Niemand fehlt freiwillig—diese drei Worte umschließen den Kern des Sokratismus.” Self-Contradiction notwithstanding, Gomperz’s solution to *Hp. Mi.* anticipates Penner’s; nobody errs willingly in the case of happiness or εὐδαιμονία (“mit der die Gerechtigkeit auf engste verwachsen ist”), distinguished as *das oberste Lebensziel*.

79. 373b4–9 (Lamb).

of Socrates in *Hippias Minor*—to which it will now be necessary to deploy the Noble Refutation. This should be obvious from the way that Penner paraphrases the Paradox: “No one errs willingly {at getting what is best for them}.”⁸⁰ When I say, then, that the Performative Refutation is no longer in play, it is not because Penner has recognized, addressed, or refuted it. Rather, by adding those {}’s to the Paradox, he might just as well be seen to be admitting as to be rejecting it. As a result, although I will be analyzing Penner’s response to *Hippias Minor*, it is important to grasp at the outset that he will not be responding to the Paradox in the form that I am claiming that Plato uses Socrates to refute it in *that* dialogue.

Instead, Penner needs the Paradox in its self-interested form (i.e., ‘no one errs willingly at getting *what is best for them*’) in order to uphold the Aristotle-based doctrines upon which I am claiming Plato performs a *reductio ad absurdum* in *Hippias Minor*: the Socratic Paradox itself and Virtue as Knowledge (or craft).⁸¹ In order to defend as both true and Socratic the doctrines that Aristotle believed to be Socratic but false, Penner needs the Paradox to be true in the form that exposes it to the Noble Refutation, the one that begins in *Alcibiades Major* (section §5) based on facing wounds and death by coming to the aid of others (*Alc. I* 115b1–3), if, that is, it does not begin in the Exegesis. Penner must therefore get out in front of *Hippias Minor* in analyzing and interpreting it, for even though both forms of the Paradox are already present in *Protagoras* (see §4)—i.e., in the forms that expose it to both the Performative and the Noble refutations—it is only in *Gorgias* and *Meno* that the Paradox takes on its *exclusively* self-interested form. Nevertheless, Penner’s analysis is invaluable for showing how *Hippias Minor* undermines the Craft Analogy, the Socratic doctrine that Virtue is Knowledge, and the Socratic Paradox itself.

80. Penner, “Socrates on the Strength of Knowledge,” 118. The context in is important, and the words before and after this quotation—numbered “(1)” à la Vlastos—will be quoted: “the famous Socratic dictum [(1)] figures very prominently in the environs of the discussion of the strength of knowledge [note 4].” The attached note reads: “Affirmed no less than four times in the immediate sequel to our passage [{*Prt.*] 358b6–c1, c6–d4, 358e2–359a1, referred back to at 360a4–6} it being also one of the subjects taken up in the exegetical *jeu d’esprit* at 358 ff., esp. 345d–347a.” The passages Penner cites, beginning with “if, then, I said, the pleasant is good” (*Prt.* 358b6–7) indicate that instead of “getting what is best for them,” it would be more literal to gloss the gloss with “on the understanding that the better is the more pleasant.” As already indicated, the Paradox in this form comes under attack in *Alc. I* and then in *Hp. Ma.* (see §10).

81. Cf. Vlastos, *Socrates*, 280: “Failing to discern that moral virtue would be under-described as a power or craft, since if it were it could be used for either good or evil ends, he [sc. Socrates] finds himself betrayed into concluding, however hesitantly, that he who uses such power voluntarily for evil ends must be the better man.” As already indicated, it was, according to Vlastos, “Aristotle’s clearer vision, which empowered him to discern how wrong it was to define moral virtue as a power or craft, for power or craft could be used for either good or evil” (279).

Penner's most thorough analysis of *Hippias Minor* is found in "Socrates on Virtue and Motivation" (1973),⁸² and therefore it is important to begin by mentioning that he upheld the same position in 2011.⁸³ At the center of his analysis is the need to limit the reach of "the ambivalence premiss in the form: a man skilled at Φ -ing will be skilled at the opposite of Φ -ing."⁸⁴ He must square this premise with what he takes to be Socratic bedrock, i.e., "that Socrates took justice, and indeed virtue in general, to be an art or science or power ($\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$),"⁸⁵ and he announces his strategy at the start: "it will be my claim that we cannot understand—or refute—Socrates' thesis that virtue is a science or art independently of the thesis that no one errs willingly (and vice versa)."⁸⁶ Having derived "the just man is the one skilled at living (i.e., living well)"⁸⁷ from *Republic* 1, he must show that "the Ambivalence Premise" does not apply to that art, which would yield the absurd result: "the just man is the man skilled at living badly."⁸⁸ He turns to *Hippias Minor* to justify this exemption:

I now turn to showing how these apparent contradictions in, and highly unintuitive apparent consequences of, the idea of virtue as an art vanish—or at least almost vanish—when we take into consideration another thesis of Socrates, viz., (14) No one errs willingly.⁸⁹

Although he does not add the bracketed "at getting what is best for them" to the Socratic Paradox in 1973,⁹⁰ his article's argument already depends on that addition, and will therefore end with *Gorgias* 466–468,⁹¹ and *Meno* 77–78.⁹²

82. Terry Penner, "Socrates on Virtue and Motivation," in E. N. Lee, A. P. D. Mourelatos, and Richard Rorty (eds.), *Exegesis and Argument: Essays for Gregory Vlastos*, in *Phronesis*, 133–151 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), 139–143.

83. See Terry Penner, "Socratic Ethics and the Socratic Psychology of Action: A Philosophical Framework," in Donald R. Morrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, 260–292 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), on 273–77.

84. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 139; in fact he has already introduced this as "the principle of the ambivalence of the arts" on 137.

85. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 136; the sentence continues: "That Socrates took justice, and indeed virtue in general, to be an art or science or power ($\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$) is obvious from *Rep.* 1 and from the *Hippias Minor* (375d ff.)."

86. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 135.

87. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 136; note that his summary of *R.* 352d9–354a4 on 136–37—culminating with "(6) The just man will be happy" on 136—does not mention the role that the "ambivalence" of $\epsilon\upsilon\ \pi\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\epsilon\iota\nu$ plays in achieving this result on 137.

88. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 138.

89. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 138–39.

90. Cf. Terry Penner, "The Historical Socrates and Plato's Early Dialogues," in Julia Annas and Christopher Rowe (eds.), *New Perspectives on Plato: Ancient and Modern*, 189–212 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2002), 206n9, where they do appear.

91. On "Penner's Passage," see *Ascent to the Good*, 272, 331–33, and 345.

92. See *Ascent to the Good*, §14; it is naturally easy to prove to a scoundrel like Meno that he never does or would do anything that he knew or believed was not good for him.

Penner's summary of 375d7–376b6 accurately culminates with the claim of Socrates that has proved so controversial: "(20) A man who does disgraceful acts willingly is a better man than the man who does disgraceful acts unwillingly," and Penner's plan is to deny "(21) there are men who do disgraceful acts willingly," i.e., to deny the existential "if there is such a man" in 376b4–6.⁹³ There is, of course, nothing original in that: the immoral conclusion has long served as lightning rod. What makes Penner original is that he does not object to the existential "if" on a *moral* basis, but only because it clashes with the Socratic Paradox:

If (21) is false, Socrates is saying, then no falsehood will result from (20), and no unreasonable moral appraisals will be made of men doing disgraceful acts. But it is [not] hard to see that Socrates thinks (21) false. He thinks it is false because he thinks that (14) no one errs willingly is true.⁹⁴

It is here that the bracketed addition must come into play, for as Penner puts it: "Notice, however, that (14) is elliptical for a fuller statement, since Socrates clearly does not think *in general* that existential hypotheses of the form (22) 'There are men skilled at Φ -ing who err willingly at Φ -ing' are false."⁹⁵ This is an important admission. By making it, Penner has opened the door to the Performative Refutation of the Socratic Paradox, i.e., that there clearly *are* men who err voluntarily, and moreover that it is a craft—i.e., skill at Φ -ing—which allows them to do so. But he can easily afford to make this admission because: "(22) will apparently be false of just one value of ' Φ ,' viz. do acts of *greatest advantage for their own happiness*."⁹⁶ Here then the bracketed material returns, and with it a non-moral rejection of 376a4–6 on the grounds that there is one craft, science, or art that is not subject to the Ambivalence Premise.⁹⁷

In other words, Penner is upholding the Ambivalence Premise in the case of all the arts and sciences (*αἱ τέχναι τε καὶ ἐπιστήμαι*) *other* than virtue or justice,⁹⁸ and that sole exception arises from the fact that Penner's (unitary) "virtue" is the sole craft whose craftsmen necessarily always do (*ποιεῖν*) "acts

93. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 139–40.

94. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 140; the absence of "not" in the text is clearly involuntary, nor will I suggest that it is a Freudian slip.

95. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 140.

96. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 142.

97. Cf. Terry Penner, "Desire and Power in Socrates: The Argument of *Gorgias* 466A–468E That Orators and Tyrants Have No Power in the City," *Apeiron* 24, no. 3 (September 1991), 147–202, on 187n32: "Justice's merit is not its 'morality,' but its making you happier."

98. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 141: "the ambivalence premiss [sc. 'a man skilled at Φ -ing will be skilled at the opposite of Φ -ing'] would not have application if propositions of the form of (22) were not sometimes true." He then cites 367a8–b1 to prove: "(23) There are men who err willingly in telling falsehoods about numbers."

of greatest advantage for their own happiness.” As a result, Penner has refuted the Socratic Paradox for every craft-value of Φ with the exception of the post- or pre-moral “virtue” of infallibly pursuing happiness as τὸ συμφέρον and τὸ λυσιτελοῦν αὐτῶ:

Indeed there is no reason to think Socrates thinks the existential hypotheses corresponding to (23) and (22) false for *any* cases of Φ -ing of which there is an art—except with those arts which are virtues (or, if there is in fact only one virtue, that art which is virtue).⁹⁹

And it is, of course, the Unity of Virtue that Penner champions and indeed had already done so earlier in 1973.¹⁰⁰ As for the moral implications, Penner already needs to use “moral” (in quotation marks) to explain his position:

Socrates would deny that there are two senses of ‘good,’ a ‘moral’ one and a ‘functional’ one. Instead, as we see from the ἔργον argument [sc. in *R.* 352d9–354a4] and elsewhere, he insists that (V1) The good man is the man skilled at living. (This is the import of ‘Virtue {i.e. goodness in a man} is an art.’)¹⁰¹

In other words, we need not distinguish this science as “moral” because it remains purely functional; we need only understand its *end*, and about this, Penner is crystal clear:

Consider, then, a man who is not only *good* at living, but also *succeeds* at living, i.e., who lives *well*.” When does a man live well? Socrates’ answer is evidently (e.g., *Euthydemus* 279a2–3 with c5–8, e1–2, 280c6–8, 281b2–4, 282a1–7; and see also *Republic* 1.353e10 with 354a1): (V2) A man lives well = he is happy = he does well = he does good acts.¹⁰²

Here we can see the crucial importance of the Εἶ Πράττειν Fallacy, or better, the necessity of Penner’s failure to realize that in fact *it is a fallacy*, a failure that arises in no small part from the excision of *Alcibiades Major*. By equating “he is happy” with “he does good acts,” he is endorsing the fallacious Slide, this time from εἶ πράττειν without a direct object—i.e., “to fare well” and hence “to be happy” (*Euthd.* 280b5)—to εἶ πράττειν with a direct object, i.e., “he does [things] well” and thus “does good acts.” And in addition to the fact that he needs to posit “acts” where there are none (as in εἶ πράττειν = he does well = he is happy), Plato is going to force him to affirm the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful that allowed Socrates to slide, in

99. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 141.

100. He cites Terry Penner, “The Unity of Virtue,” *Philosophical Review* 82 (1973), 35–68, in Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 143n6 and 143n7.

101. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 141.

102. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 141.

the opposite direction, from the self-sacrificing καλῶς πράττειν of *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 116a6–b3) to εὖ πράττειν:

If we also knew that for Socrates (V3) A man does good acts = he does fine acts, we would have the same explanation for the account of justice in *Rep. I* ([reference deleted; he refers to the summary of *R.* 352d9–354a4 on 136]) as for the account of justice in the *Hip. Min.* ([reference deleted; he refers to the summary of *Hip. Mi.* 375d7–376a1 on 139]). In each case there would be no confusion of ‘moral’ and ‘functional’ uses of ‘good’; and we should expect the ambivalence difficulty to be met in the same way in both cases, since we would have (V4) No one errs willingly at living = no one errs willingly at doing fine acts.¹⁰³

There are three equivocations here: (1) on εὖ πράττειν (i.e., everyone who desires to εὖ πράττειν desires to πράττειν good acts, (2) good acts are beautiful acts by the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful, and (3) πράττειν has become ποιεῖν, which famously takes the hammered τὰ αἰσχροῦ καὶ τὰ κακὰ as its direct object in the initial statement of the Socratic Paradox (*Prt.* 345e2–3). As a result, Penner is undermining his own argument even while making it,¹⁰⁴ for the safest way to make virtue perfectly functional is to make it aim only at what is good *for me*, not at what is καλόν, i.e., beautiful, admirable, honorable, fine, or gallant.

But Penner’s fashioning of the argument not only fails to look back to *Alcibiades Major*, where Plato’s students have been initially prepared to reject it: in addition to depending entirely on *Euthydemus*,¹⁰⁵ his argument also looks forward to *Gorgias* and *Meno*.¹⁰⁶ Initially confused by *Protagoras*, the readers of *Hippias Minor* begin to see why it is false to say that nobody errs, lies, or deceives voluntarily, and also why virtue in general and justice in particular is unlikely to be τέχνη like, e.g., astronomy. But even though

103. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 141–42.

104. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 142: “Now (V3) seems antecedently likely on the natural assumption that the just acts of *Rep. I* are fine acts, and that the fine acts of *Hip. Min.* are just acts. But in any case, Socrates at *Hip. Min.* 376a5 is evidently treating *bad acts* and *fine acts* as opposites; so (V3) does seem to be justified. Hence (V4) will also be justified.”

105. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 142: “(V4) can be confirmed by simply reflecting on why Socrates believes (14[‘No one errs willingly’]) as applied to (21[‘there are men who do disgraceful acts willingly’]). He believes it, surely, because he thinks that to err willingly is to err willingly at living, and that is to wish what is bad and disadvantageous for oneself (see e.g. *Euthyd.* 278e3 [all men wish to εὖ πράττειν], 279a1–3 [‘since we wish to εὖ πράττειν, how would we εὖ πράττειν? Would it not be if there were many good things for us?’]).”

106. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 142: “But no one wants what is bad [why not ‘and disadvantageous’ again, as in the previous note?] for oneself, what will lead to one’s unhappiness (cf. *Meno* 77b–78d, *Gorgias* 466a–468d and—referring back to this passage—*Gorgias* 509e5–7). Given (V3) and (V4) then, we can show that ‘No one errs willingly at doing fine acts’ applies to the *Hip. Min.* argument [despite 376a2–4: ‘Socrates: Whenever, then, the more powerful and wiser soul accomplishes disgraceful acts, it does them voluntarily, by reason of power and art’] because ‘no one wishes to be unhappy’ is taken for granted.”

Hippias Minor has given us a (second) Performative Refutation of the Socratic Paradox, the deployment of that Paradox in connection with “the art of measurement” in the Final Argument of *Protagoras* has already pointed to the need for the Noble Refutation, and beginning with καλῶς πράττειν in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc.1* 116b2), Plato has been challenging us to supply it. The fact that *Gorgias* creates problems for *Protagoras* is well known:¹⁰⁷ by formally rejecting the Good-Pleasant Equation, it undermines that dialogue’s other use of the Socratic Paradox as well, which is ultimately why Penner must recast it with the slippery εὖ πράττειν from *Euthydemus* (*Euthd.* 278e3). But as Penner has emphasized, the Socratic Paradox reappears in *Gorgias*, i.e., in a post-pleasure context, and that is why he must validate his reading of *Hippias Minor* by citing *Gorgias* 509e5–7, where it returns from “Penner’s Passage” (*Grg.* 466a–468e):

Socrates: But what about doing injustice? Whether if he should not wish to do injustice, this is sufficient, for he will not do injustice, or in this case also is it necessary to provide oneself with a certain capacity [δύναμις] and art [τέχνη] so that if he should not learn and practice these things, he will do injustice? Why haven’t you been answering this very thing [αὐτό γε τοῦτο] for me, O Callicles [τί οὐκ αὐτό γέ μοι τοῦτο ἀπεκρίνου, ὦ Καλλίκλεις]? Whether [πότερον] we seem to you to have been rightly compelled to agree in the earlier discussions [ἐν τοῖς ἐμπρόσθεν λόγοις], Polus and I, or not, at the time we agreed that no one is wishing [participial form of βούλεσθαι] to do injustice [ἀδικεῖν], but that unwilling are all those doing injustice [ἀδικεῖν]? *Callicles*: Let it be as you would have it, Socrates, in order that you may come to a conclusion of your argument. *Socrates*: Then for this purpose also, as it seems, a certain power [δύναμις] and art [τέχνη] must be acquired [παρασκευαστέον], so that we will not do injustice. *Callicles*: To be sure.¹⁰⁸

Naturally the significance of this passage is discussed elsewhere,¹⁰⁹ but the simple point is that Callicles refuses to admit the obvious: that it is not a δύναμις or a τέχνη that keeps us from doing injustice—and more importantly, that inspires us to perform just ones, as Socrates is doing—but rather a choice, the very choice that Socrates is trying to force Callicles to make. And it is for this crucial passage that *Hippias Minor* is already preparing us:

Socrates: But now once more answer me: Is not justice [ἡ δικαιοσύνη] either a sort of power [δύναμις τις] or knowledge [ἐπιστήμη], or both [ἀμφοτέρα]? Or must not justice inevitably be one or other of these? *Hippias*: Yes.¹¹⁰

107. See *Ascent to the Good*, §11.

108. *Grg.* 509d7–510a5.

109. See *Ascent to the Good*, 338–43; on “Penner’s Passage,” see 331–35.

110. 375d7–e1 (Lamb).

It is upon this proposition that *Hippias Minor* is performing a *reductio ad absurdum*, and that is why it is precisely “base and unjust acts” that will define the acme of absurdity at 376a4–6. But Socrates has already spelled out the consequences of agreeing to it:

Socrates: Then injustice is a power [δύναμις] of the soul, and the more powerful soul is the more just, is it not? For we found, my friend, that such a soul was better [ἡ δυνατότερα ψυχῆ δικαιοτέρα ἐστί]. *Hippias*: Yes, we did. *Socrates*: And what if it be knowledge [ἐπιστήμη]? Is not the wiser soul more just [ἡ σοφωτέρα ψυχῆ δικαιοτέρα], and the more ignorant more unjust [ἡ δὲ ἀμαθεστέρα ἀδικοτέρα]? *Hippias*: Yes. *Socrates*: And what if it is both? Is not the soul which has both, power and knowledge [ἐπιστήμη καὶ δύναμις], more just, and the more ignorant more unjust? Is that not inevitably the case? *Hippias*: It appears to be. *Socrates*: This more powerful and wiser soul, then, was found to be better and to have more power to do [ποιεῖν] both beautiful and base acts [καὶ τὰ καλὰ καὶ τὰ αἰσχροῦ] in every kind of action was it not? *Hippias*: Yes.¹¹¹

It will only be in *Gorgias* that we will learn that Penner is right: “we cannot understand—or refute—Socrates’ thesis that virtue is a science or art independently of the thesis that no one errs willingly (and vice versa).”¹¹² But thanks to the Performative Refutation of the Paradox in *Hippias Minor*, Plato has prepared us to do so despite the fact that he could not know that so many would read his dialogues through Aristotle’s eyes.

As Penner’s favorite example of the tyrant and his chief minister shows,¹¹³ it may be necessary to do any number of bad things *to others* in pursuit of our own happiness,¹¹⁴ at which, he claims, all of us blamelessly and inevitably aim. Or do we? Are there not men and women who make the more difficult and thus more beautiful choice every day all over the world, in validation, whether conscious of the Greek proverb or not, that *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*? Fully

111. 375e1–376a1 (Lamb modified).

112. Penner, “Socrates on Virtue,” 135.

113. See Penner, “Desire and Power in Socrates,” 186–87: “The tyrant kills his chief minister; as a result, his throne is preserved in the best possible way; as a result, he gets more time for gardening; as a result, he is happier than he would be if he undertook any other action available to him in the situation he then found himself in. Suppose that the tyrant’s beliefs here are true. That is, suppose that the scenario the tyrant envisages does in fact truly describe what will happen. In such a circumstance, Socrates would have to admit that the tyrant has done what he wished (wanted, willed, desired, or whatever). For when he did the action that seemed best to him, he did in fact get what he wished (wanted, willed, desired, or whatever) from the action. So he did what he wished.” Cf. 189: “This makes the killing of the chief minister that results in happiness a different killing of the chief minister from the one that results in living miserably ever after.”

114. Cf. 376a2–5 (Lamb modified): “*Socrates*: Whenever, then, it [sc. ‘the more powerful and wiser soul’] accomplishes [ἐργάζεσθαι] disgraceful acts [τὰ αἰσχροῦ], it does them voluntarily, by reason of power and art [δύναμις καὶ τέχνη]; and these, either one or both of them, seem to be [constitutive] of justice. *Hippias*: So it seems. *Socrates*: And to do injustice [ἀδικεῖν] is to do bad things [κακά ποιεῖν], and not to do injustice [μὴ ἀδικεῖν], beautiful ones [καλὰ]. *Hippias*: Yes.”

aware of how his Ambivalence Premise undermines the view that justice is a τέχνη/ἐπιστήμη,¹¹⁵ Penner's exceptional "art" has long since received a Noble Refutation on the plains of Troy. To be sure Penner's clever but ignoble solution has its own kind of beauty: he has managed to undermine all three of the "Socratic doctrines" he is attempting to uphold by bringing them together exactly where Achilles' Choice refutes them.¹¹⁶ Penner is right: we must choose between Aristotle's testimony about Socrates and Plato's *Hippias Minor*, and this dilemma is the logical culmination of the Aristotelian Paradox. In response to Plato's dialogue, Penner has admitted that *in the case of every other art*, the Socratic Paradox—i.e., the very "dictum" he needs "to be Socratic"¹¹⁷—is false, for in all other cases, "there are men skilled at Φ-ing who err willingly at Φ-ing."¹¹⁸ And since he upholds the Unity of Virtue, he must maintain that this utterly self-serving ἐπιστήμη τε καὶ τέχνη will be "leading to brave acts in circumstances of danger," which is exactly what the Noble Refutation can easily show that it will not do. In the end, the crowning beauty of Penner's misinterpretation of Plato's *Hippias Minor* is that it shows how harmoniously this musical dialogue has connected a deliberately fallacious story about Achilles and Odysseus to an equally fallacious one

115. Cf. Penner, "Socratic Ethics," 276: "To return to the *Lesser Hippias*, is it really philosophically credible that a philosopher of Socrates' stature would have given up so fundamental and even essential a notion as responsibility? No wonder some scholars think Socrates must have been reducing to absurdity the idea of virtue as a science or as an ability or power (*dunamis*), and that he must have rejected any supposed functionalist confusion of virtues with sciences." This passage is continued in next note.

116. Cf. "Penner's Choice" in Penner, "Socratic Ethics," 276 (continued from previous note): "Unfortunately [for whom? Penner delights in it], this view is implausible as an interpretation of the *Lesser Hippias*. For why on earth would Plato both want to reduce to absurdity the view that justice is an expertise (by showing that on this functionalist view, just people would do injustice willingly), and also want to show us how to avoid the conclusion that experts at justice would do unjust deeds (by using 'no one errs willingly')? *The interpreter must choose* [emphasis mine]: Either (a) Socrates is attacking the idea of virtue as a science on the a priori grounds [it is rather on the a posteriori grounds of the *reductio ad absurdum* performed in *Hp. Mi.*] that Socrates could not possibly have identified virtues with science, or motivation with ability [there would be no need for a *reductio* on this view if it were not possible that he might have done so, nor would he have revisited that possibility in *Grg.*]; or (b) Socrates is arguing that, with a correct theory of motivation (including 'no one errs willingly')—that is, with the Socratic psychology of action [as elucidated by Penner, of course]—there is no problem with the idea of virtue as a science—or indeed as an ability or power (*dunamis*)."

117. Penner, "Socratic Ethics," 276 (continued from the previous note; emphasis mine): "One cannot affirm both (a) and (b). Anyone who takes the dictum 'no one errs willingly' to be Socratic can hardly be in doubt that the second option is the one to choose."

118. Penner, "Socrates on Virtue," 142–43 (emphasis mine): "(22) 'There are men skilled at Φ-ing who err willingly at Φ-ing' will apparently be false of just one value of 'Φ,' viz. do acts of *greatest advantage for their own happiness*.' And it is reasonable to believe that if there is a single science [ἐπιστήμη and/or τέχνη] of good and evil, as Socrates apparently believed [the attached note cites texts from *La.* and *Chrm.* in reference to Penner's "The Unity of Virtue"], this will be the art of happiness; so it will be reasonable to believe that the art of happiness is just one art—*leading to brave acts in circumstances of danger*, temperate acts in circumstances of temptation, etc. But that is another story." For Penner on *La.* (and Christopher Rowe on *Chrm.*), see *Ascent to the Good*, §6.

about the good man’s τέχνη-grounded willingness to err deliberately *by doing things both base and unjust*.

SECTION 12. INSPIRED INTERPRETATION?

When Socrates says: “You are deceiving me [ἐξαπατᾷς με], dearest Hippias, and are yourself imitating Odysseus” (*Hp. Mi.* 370e10–11), he is doing even more than giving away the game. Since Socrates’ interpretation of *Iliad* 9 required him to demonstrate that “Odysseus the polytropic [ὁ πολύτροπος] seems never to have lied [ψεύδεσθαι]” (*Hp. Mi.* 369e5–370e1), his accusation that Hippias is acting like (at the very least *his*) Odysseus, proves his interlocutor’s point, to say nothing more of the fact that it is Socrates who is doing the lying and deceiving while interpreting Homer’s *Litai* (see §11). Just as importantly, the words ἐξαπατᾷς με give Plato the chance to establish the link between *Hippias Minor* and *Ion*, and since the rhapsode’s alleged ability to interpret Homer is at that dialogue’s center, the fact that Socrates uses the same expression twice in his last speech (ἐξαπατᾷς με at 541e4 and 542a3)¹¹⁹ establishes a double link—based on both Homer and deception—between the two that indicates their contiguity in Reading Order.¹²⁰

Although Plato has given us sufficient information in *Hippias Minor* that it is not Hippias but Socrates himself who is doing the deceiving with respect to Odysseus and Achilles, the reappearance of ἐξαπατᾷς με in *Ion* makes it even easier: Socrates claims that Ion is deceiving him because the rhapsode has failed to follow through on his promise to demonstrate (ἐπίδεικνύναι) his ability to say “many and fine things about Homer” and thus to prove that he has ἡ περὶ Ὀμήρου σοφία:

Socrates: But in fact, Ion, if you are speaking the truth that it is by art and knowledge [τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη] that you are able to praise [ἐπαινεῖν] Homer—you who have promised that you know many and fine things about Homer

119. All otherwise unidentified Stephanus-page references in this section are to *Ion*.

120. Cf. Schleiermacher’s first sentence on *Hp. Mi.* in *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 162 (Dobson, 152): “This dialogue has a great similarity to the *Ion*, considered as well in itself and its whole design, as anyone must see on a comparison of the two, as in reference to the ambiguity of its Platonic origin.” Likewise in the Order of Composition paradigm, *Ion* and *Hp. Mi.* have been frequently joined as *Jugenddialoge*; see §8 for Wilamowitz and Heitsch, including Ernst Heitsch, “Die Argumentationsstruktur im *Ion*,” *Rheinisches Museum* 133, nos. 3/4 (1990), 243–259, on 244–47, and now Ernst Heitsch (ed.), *Plato, Ion, oder, Über die Ilias* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck et Ruprecht, 2017), 27–28. See also Hermann, *Geschichte und System*, 431–39 (where they are the two earliest), Wilamowitz, *Platon* 1, 132–39, Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, chapter 4, and Carl Werner Müller, “Die Dichter und ihre Interpreteten: Über die Zirkularität der Exegese von Dichtung im platonischen *Ion*,” *Rheinisches Museum* 141, nos. 3/4 (1998), 259–285, on 285; note the review of relevant *Sprachstatistik* in 284–85n84.

[πολλά καὶ καλά περὶ Ὁμήρου] and are claiming to be about to demonstrate it [ἐπιδείξιν; future of ἐπιδεικνύναι]—you are deceiving me [ἐξαπατᾷς με] and you are by no means about to demonstrate it [ἐπιδείξιν] and so far from displaying the subjects of your skill, you decline even to tell me what they are, for all my entreaties. You are a perfect Proteus in the way you take on every kind of shape, twisting about this way and that [στρεφόμενος ἄνω καὶ κάτω],¹²¹ until at last you elude my grasp in the guise of a general, so that you need not demonstrate [ἐπιδεικνύναι] how awesome [δεινός] you are with respect to your wisdom about Homer [ἡ περὶ Ὁμήρου σοφία].¹²²

The problem is that Socrates' ἐξαπατᾷς με does not target the rhapsode's claim to be the greatest general in Greece (541b3–5) but rather his failure to do the very thing that Socrates himself has *twice* prevented Ion from doing (531a1 and 536d8–e1),¹²³ and which I will call “the Silencing of Ion.” Already obvious from the foregoing, Plato allows Socrates to hammer the doubly deceptive claim that Ion is deceiving him by refusing to ἐπιδεικνύναι his ἡ περὶ Ὁμήρου σοφία in the sequel:

Socrates: If then, being technical [τεχνικός]—as I was saying just now—you are deceiving me [ἐξαπατᾷς με] after having promised to demonstrate [ἐπιδεικνύναι], then you are unjust; if, on the other hand, you are not technical [τεχνικός], but by divine dispensation [θεία μοῖρα] are possessed [κατεχόμενος] by Homer, and—knowing nothing [μηδὲν εἰδώς]—you speak many and fine things [πολλά καὶ καλά] about the poet, just as I have said about you, you are in no way unjust.¹²⁴

The first time that Socrates prevents Ion from demonstrating that he is δεινός concerning Homer leads to his proof that the rhapsode isn't τεχνικός—i.e., that he lacks τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη (532c5–9)—because he is only able to speak fluidly and copiously (εὐπορεῖν at 532c3 and 533c6) *about Homer* and not about inferior poets; this establishes another link between *Ion* and *Hippias Minor*. Having just demonstrated that the possession of all τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη allow their possessors to accomplish what's both bad and base voluntarily (*Hp. Mi.* 375b8–c1), the parallel case is that a rhapsodic τέχνη would allow Ion to do the same with the poets—i.e., to determine whoever speaks well *or badly* concerning those things about which all poets speak

121. Cf. ἄνω καὶ κάτω στρέφεις immediately after σὺ με ἐξαπατᾷς at *Hipparch.* 228a9–10. For another connection between *Ion* and *Hipparch.* 228b7–c1, this one based on the standardization of the Homeric text, see Hellmut Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion als Zeichnis Platonischer Philosophie* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958), 23n1.

122. 541e1–542a1.

123. As both noticed and emphasized by Fernando Muniz, “Performance e Élenkhos no *Íon* de Platão,” *Archai* 9 (July–December 2012), 17–26.

124. 542a2–6.

(531e9–532b7)—a thing that Ion cannot do (532b8–c4) and as an admirer of Homer has no interest in doing. If we are repelled by Socrates' claim that τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη allows the τεχνικός to do the base and unjust things voluntarily (*Hp. Mi.* 376b4–6) when he is good (*Hp. Mi.* 376b6), we should be able to find Ion's refusal to concern himself equally with the good and the bad more attractive than his critics, beginning with Goethe, have found either him or Plato's delightful *Ion* as a whole, i.e., "in sum [ἐν κεφαλαίῳ]" (531e9). After all, what is it that prevents someone with a τέχνη from applying it indiscriminately to do (ποιεῖν at *Hp. Mi.* 376b5; cf. §4) what's good and bad, true and false, base and beautiful?¹²⁵ Since it can't be the τέχνη itself, Ion's lack of it in *Ion* doesn't look so bad in the context of *Hippias Minor*, and if the explanation that he cannot interpret lesser poets well is proof of his dependence on θεία μοῖρα, then that is also as good an answer as any to the question I just posed.¹²⁶

The Silencing of Ion—the fact that Socrates (and Plato) will never give Ion the chance to demonstrate the kinds of things he can say about Homer—is the key to the dialogue. Socrates may well be right—we'll never know—when he tells the rhapsode: "you say many and fine things about the poet [πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ λέγεις περὶ τοῦ ποιητοῦ]" (542a5). What we *can* know is that Socrates' deceptive account of *Litai* in *Hippias Minor* has set the bar very low, and that offering a better interpretation of Homer's intentions in *Iliad* 9 plays to Ion's unchallenged strong-suit: his undeniable knowledge of the exact wording of the text. A great deal of nonsense written about *Ion* could have been avoided if it were generally acknowledged that Memory is the mother of the Muses,¹²⁷ and that Ion's ability to memorize Homer's poems proves that at the very least, it is false to say that he knows *nothing* (cf. μηδὲν εἰδώς). In addition

125. Cf. Paul Woodruff, "What Could Go Wrong with Inspiration? Why Plato's Poets Fail," in Julius Moravcsik and Philip Temko (eds.), *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*, 137–150 (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1982), on 145 (emphasis mine): "A *technē* subordinates an activity to what after Aristotle we would call a final cause. A man with a *technē* can explain and justify what he does in his profession on the grounds that it is necessary for some distinct and valuable end."

126. Given the decisive importance of Hermann, *Geschichte und System* for distinguishing an early "Socratic" period in Plato's writing beginning with *Hp. Mi.* and *Ion* (see Gomperz, *Griechische Denker*, 562, 227n1, on *Hermanns vornehmstes Verdienst*), it is interesting that although he makes the subordinate place of Socrates' merely human wisdom (because "Weisheit nur der Gottheit zukomme," and citing *Ap.* 23b2–4 in 324n295) "die Spitze der ganzen sokratischen Lehre" (238), such is his loyalty to the intellectualism of the historical Socrates—based on Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.6 (!) in 324n297, 397n298, and 329n324—that when he finds it necessary to show that the Socratic Paradox is not intended to lessen responsibility because the ignorance in question is the "Vernachlässigung [i.e., neglect] des von der Gottheit selbst vorgezeichneten Wegs zur wahren Bestimmung des Menschen" (248), his note on "eine besondere göttliche Führung" (i.e., θεία μοῖρα on 330n329) does not mention *Ion*, nor does the prior note on the Paradox (330n328) mention *Hp. Mi.*, which he attempts to defuse on its basis (434) by using "if there is such a man" (331n332 and 601n257).

127. See Penelope Murray, "Poetic Inspiration in Early Greece," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 101 (1981), 87–100, on "Memory" (92–94).

to the fact that he needs to know the difference between 9.134 and 9.276,¹²⁸ Ion is aware that Odysseus has suppressed what Agamemnon has said while speaking to Achilles,¹²⁹ and also what Achilles has said in response to Phoenix and Ajax while speaking to Agamemnon.¹³⁰ In order to refute Socrates' claim in *Hippias Minor* that Odysseus seems never to ψεύδουσθαι, Ion can rely almost entirely on memory alone. As to how he would have explained that difference and those suppressions, there is no reason to assume that he could not offer lucid explanations (533c4–8) or have πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ to say about them. In any case, thanks to the Silencing of Ion, Plato opens up a place for the reader to do so.¹³¹

The operative word is δῖα νοῖα (three times between 530b10 and 530d3): it is his insight into Homer's *intention* about which Ion claims to speak so fluidly but is never allowed to demonstrate.¹³² Moreover, since both Homer and Plato are artists who speak through a large cast of characters—indeed, the dialogue created by the eight major speeches in *Iliad* 9 is a perfect example of the parallel—it is a question alike of the speakers' and of the author's intentions. As a result, by wondering what Odysseus intended when he suppressed what Achilles said to Phoenix and Ajax while speaking to Agamemnon, we are also wondering about Homer's intention in singing the scene as he does. When Socrates says that “to thoroughly learn [ἐκμανθάνειν] his [sc. Homer's] intention [δῖα νοῖα], not only his verses, is enviable” (530b10–c1), we need only consider how badly Socrates has bungled the intentions or δῖα νοῖα of Odysseus, Achilles, and above all Homer in *Hippias Minor*, to realize that Ion may well possess an enviable capacity (ζήλωτόν at 530c1)—in fact a capacity that Socrates himself envies (hence ἐζήλωσα at 530b5)—quite apart

128. See Griffin, *Iliad Book Nine*, 107 (on 9.276; cf. 91 on 9.134 θέμις): “The alteration must be a psychologically motivated one—at this most sensitive point Odysseus thinks it well to throw in an extra ‘my lord.’” This is a perfect example of the kind of observation that Ion was well prepared to make, and since Achilles can be sure (1) that Odysseus is speaking for Agamemnon (cf. 9.226, 9.260, 9.263, 9.269, and especially the doubled δώσει and the ὁμεῖται in 9.270–74), and (2) that Agamemnon himself would certainly not have called him ἄναξ in this defensive context—i.e., “I didn't have sex with her but I sure could have if I had wanted to”—Ion would have firm grounds for (3) explaining 9.312–3 on the basis of Odysseus' deceptive “alteration.”

129. Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.158–61 and 9.300–306, on which see Griffin, *Iliad Book Nine*, 94 (on 158–61): “Odysseus, who repeats Agamemnon's offer word for word, has the tact not to quote these blustering lines to Achilles.” Against this palliative “tact” (cf. “much more tactful” on 108 with reference to 9.300), consider Achilles' repeated use of μ' ἀπάτησε at 9.344 and 9.375, the Homeric origin of Plato's ἐξαπατᾷς με.

130. Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.688–694 and, in addition to 9.427–431, most importantly 9.618–19 (which makes it clear that he may not leave), 9.650–55 (which make it clear when he will rejoin the battle) and 9.674–75 (to both of which questions Achilles' implicit answer, suppressed by Odysseus, is now “yes”). See comment and bibliography in Griffin, *Iliad Book Nine*, 146 (on 676ff.).

131. It is therefore by allowing us to fill the rhapsode's shoes that Plato is teaching us a τέχνη for how to interpret Homer: study the repetitions, taking particular note of deletions or additions, as well as the use of the same lines used in revealingly different circumstances; on the most sublime of these, see *Plato the Teacher*, 391n81. These tools can be applied to interpreting Plato.

132. For δῖα νοῖα as “intention” or “plan,” see (in addition to LSJ) Herodotus 1.46 and 1.90.

from his fancy clothes (530b6 and 535d2–3), itinerary (530a3), and trophies (530b1). Even without being allowed to demonstrate, Ion has proved himself a forerunner to Aristarchus, who likewise regarded Homer as the greatest of poets and Hesiod as his inferior by a long way.¹³³ And had he been allowed to do so, Ion might easily have anticipated, e.g., G. S. Kirk’s illuminating insight that Homer’s reason for having Ajax speak last in *Litai* is because as a fighter he has so often been the last line of defense.¹³⁴ It is with something between the insights of Aristarchus in the Homeric *scholia*, and Socrates’ deliberate falsifications in *Hippias Minor*, that we must fill the silence that Plato has deliberately created, fully aware that Socrates prevented Ion from filling it, and thus that it is Socrates who is being deceptive when he says ἐξαπατᾷς με.

But let’s not get too swept up by the play of character in Plato’s dialogues, easy though it is for us, his magnetized audience (cf. 535e7–9) to do so thanks to his consummate skill as a poet in dramatic prose. Plato leaves an interpretive silence in *Ion* because he has just compelled us to fill the same silence for ourselves in *Hippias Minor*. In response to Socrates’ deceptive account of *Litai*, Plato has already forced us to become Ion the Interpreter.¹³⁵ And given the morally dubious status of τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη as revealed in the prior dialogue,¹³⁶ Plato’s juxtaposition of θεία μοῖρα in “the Magnet Speech” (for so it will be called) with the two τέχνη-refuting cross-examinations that frame it, now forces the reader to play interpretive rhapsode to Plato himself. No matter how attractive the abandonment of authorial intent may recently have become, it is as destructive of our capacity to say πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ about Plato as it is about Homer (see below).

On the verge of an interpretive abyss, a reader intent on recovering Plato’s δῆλονα will find herself in a position much like Ion’s, i.e., silenced. Although a willingness to reconsider and reinterpret Plato’s dialogues on the basis of Reading Order need not depend on θεία μοῖρα—for a τέχνη-based defense of that interpretive paradigm can be imagined—it does depend entirely on imagining Plato as a teacher with intentions (see Preface, principle §6) and that the order in which he intends for us to read his dialogues—so clearly marked in the case of *Hippias Minor* and *Ion* that even those working in the

133. See Francesca Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018), 695–702 (on Hesiod) and 736 (on Homer).

134. See Griffin, *Iliad Book 9*, 142 (on 624).

135. Indeed it is only in the context of *Hp. Mi.* that the ancient subtitle of *Ion* (i.e., “On the *Iliad*”) can be justified, for Socrates asks Ion about performing both (535b3–c3). On that subtitle, see Immanuel Bekker (ed.), *Platonis Dialogi Graece et Latine*, ten volumes (Berlin: Reimer, 1816–1823), 4.426 (on περι Ἰλιάδος): “Non enim de Iliade solum sed etiam Odyssea in hoc dialogo agitur.” It is to the verdict against authenticity Bekker announces here (see §8) that led to Schleiermacher’s revealing note (see Introduction).

136. Already adumbrated by the doubled τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη at *Prt.* 357b4–5.

nineteenth-century paradigm have repeatedly joined them¹³⁷—is a legitimate but too long overlooked method for discovering those intentions and bringing them to light. In short, Plato's *Ion* is not exclusively or even primarily about interpreting Homer, but rather, by using Socrates' interpretation of *Litai* in the dialogue that precedes it as a gateway, it self-consciously opens the door to interpreting Plato. Nor is this surprising since this is what we have implicitly been doing from the start and will continue to be doing throughout.

But before considering the question of inspired interpretation and its antithesis, it is necessary to mention the connections between *Ion* and Xenophon, and also between *Hippias Minor* and Antisthenes.¹³⁸ Although it remains easier to acknowledge that Plato may have written with Antisthenes in mind than Xenophon¹³⁹—the same applies to Aeschines Socraticus,¹⁴⁰ who can likewise be seen in the background of *Ion*—the exchanges between Antisthenes and Niceratus in Xenophon's *Symposium* have too many parallels with Plato's *Ion* to be accidental.¹⁴¹ To those who have argued for, or simply assumed, Plato's priority,¹⁴² I would point to his use of the word δίανοια

137. Albeit generally not in the right order; as in Smith, *Platonis Ion et Hippias Minor* (but note his apt comment on v: "These dialogues are therefore peculiarly suited to those who are beginning the study of Plato"). Although Kahn likewise joins the two in *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, he not only discusses *Ion* first (104–113) but instead of joining Socrates' "perversity" in interpreting Achilles in *Hp. Mi.* (115) to the Homeric theme of *Ion*, he seems to make perversity itself the link (cf. "perverse" on 102), leading to the important error on 119: "Taken alone, the *Ion* is self-contained." For an exception, see Albert Rijksbaron, *Plato, Ion Or: On the Iliad, Edited with an Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 14n28.

138. The best place to begin is with Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, 584–622, but the games began with Ferdinand Dümmler, *Antisthenica* (Halle: Hendels, 1882), 29–38.

139. Cf. Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, 598: "I find it hard to doubt that Plato is responding to Antisthenes in *Hippias Minor*" with 591: "Both of these passages [sc. *Iliad*, 11.630 and 23.335–37] are also mentioned by Plato's Socrates in *Ion* (537a8–b5, 538c2–3), which implies either that Xenophon is using *Ion* as his source or that the texts have a common source [note the exclusion of Xenophon's possible priority]. If Xenophon were using *Ion*, one might expect him to have picked up some of the points Plato's Socrates raises about different kinds of knowledge." This observation cuts the other way; Plato is expanding on Xenophon here and especially in *Smp.* (see §15).

140. See Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 18–29; see also "Antisthenes and the *Hippias Minor*" on 121–24, and Charles H. Kahn, "Aeschines on Socratic Eros," in Paul A. Vander Waerdt (ed.), *The Socratic Movement*, 87–106 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994). For Antisthenes and *Ion*, see Pohlenz, *Aus Platos Werkezeit*, 188.

141. See Müller, "Der Dichter und ihre Interpretieren," 277–81, especially 279: "Die Verbindungslinien, die zum platonischen *Ion* führen [sc. from Xenophon's *Symposium*] sind unübersehbar." Note that among the *testimonia* for Antisthenes in Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, 185A (584–88) is Xenophon, *Symposium*, 3.5–6, and 186 (589–91) is *Symposium*, 4.6.

142. See Hans Diller, "Probleme des Platonischen *Ion*," *Hermes* 83, no. 2 (1955), 171–187; despite 172, cf. 176: "Trotzdem dürfte sich die Frage der Priorität [sc. between Plato's *Ion* and Xenophon's *Symposium*] kaum mit restloser Sicherheit entscheiden lassen." Cf. Flashar, *Der Dialog*, 24–25; preferable is Wilamowitz, *Plato* 2, 34: "Der *Ion* steht mit dem *Symposion* des Xenophon unzweifelhaft in Beziehung, und am nächsten liegt hier wie sonst [an admission of the customary prejudice], die Abhängigkeit auf Xenophons Seiten zu suchen wenn es nur sicher zu stellen wäre [a *testimonium* to both prejudice and fact]. Bei Xenophon 3.5 rühmt sich Nikeratos, *Ilias* und *Odysee* auswendig zu wissen; Antisthenes wirft ihm ein, das täten die Rhapsoden auch und wären doch zugestandenermaßen besonders dumme Kerle. Sokrates bestätigt damit, daß die Rhapsoden nicht wie Nikeratos bei

to prove Xenophon's.¹⁴³ In order to show how silly rhapsodes are, Xenophon emphasizes that they try to reveal not Homer's *διάνοια* but rather his *ὑπόνοια*,¹⁴⁴ a term used by Plato in *Republic* 2 to describe those who offered allegorical interpretations of Homer (*R.* 378d5–e4), i.e., the poem's *hidden or secret* meaning. Antisthenes is on point not only because he discusses Homer with Niceratus in Xenophon's *Symposium*,¹⁴⁵ but also because he defended Odysseus as *πολύτροπος* along the same lines that Socrates does in *Hippias Minor*.¹⁴⁶ But by substituting *διάνοια* for *ὑπόνοια*, i.e., by shifting the problem of Homeric interpretation from a physics-based allegorizing to a more properly Socratic investigation about the *truth* of each character's all-too-human intentions¹⁴⁷—those of Odysseus, in particular—and then by placing his expanded version of Xenophon's remarks about rhapsodes directly after

Stesimbrotos und Anaximandros den verborgenen Sinn [sc. *ὑπόνοια*, on which see below] der homerischen Gedichte gelernt hätten. Die Dummheit der Rhapsoden konnte Xenophon ebensogut nach dem *Ion* verallgemeinern wie der Verfasser des *Ion* [for this use of *Verfasser*, see Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 8–9] im Anschluß an Xenophon an einem Prachtexemplar zeigen. Ion macht aber selbst darauf Anspruch, den Homer zu erklären, besser als Metrodor, Stesimbrotos und Glaukon. Das macht einen Unterschied; das Verhältnis der Abhängigkeit ist nicht faßbar.”

143. Consider Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 31: “Wenn Plato statt [N. B.] *ὑπόνοια* für die gleiche Sache das Wort *διάνοια* wählt, bedeutet dies, daß die *ὑπόνοια* der angebliche Gehalt ist, den die Sophisten suchen, während durch *διάνοια* der eine, wirkliche, authentische Gehalt des dichterischen Wortes ausgedrückt ist.” Hence the error in Diller, “Probleme,” 175n3.

144. See Xenophon, *Symposium* 3.6, and *Memorabilia* 1.3.7.

145. *Symposium*, 3.5–6 and 4.6.

146. See the illuminating discussion of *testimonium* 187 (591–622) in Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, especially 597–98, 602, and 611 (on *εἰ δὲ οἱ σοφοὶ δεῖνοί εἰσι διαλέγεσθαι*). But the crucial claim in this Homeric *scholium* is the hypothetical of Antisthenes: “if the wise are good” (see 613). Cf. Silvia Venturelli, “L’*Ippia minore* di Platone e il suo rapporto con Antistene (S. S. R. V A 187),” *Studi Classici e Orientali* 61, no. 1 (2015), 77–96.

147. The italicized “truth” is justified by the ostentatiously false depiction of Odysseus and Achilles in *Hp. Mi.*, about which Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 123–24, is illuminating, and will be quoted with comment: “We can now see how one motive for the Homeric Material in *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* [only at the end of the chapter does Kahn join them on this basis] may well be a polemical response to Antisthenes, Plato’s most prominent and ultimately most hostile competitor as heir to the Socratic tradition. Plato’s response will have been particularly apt if, as seems quite possible, Antisthenes represented Socrates himself as engaging in this quasi-philosophical form of Homeric exegesis [but it is also possible that Antisthenes represented himself as doing so, and that Plato’s response was to depict Socrates offering the same arguments in *Hp. Mi.* for claims that Antisthenes had *earnestly* defended in his dialogue]. Whatever Socrates’ own practice may have been—and that we do not know—Plato [Kahn is poised to go off the rails here:] is adamantly opposed to the use of poetic interpretation as a mode of doing philosophy [in fact, writing dialogues that demand a highly developed use of ‘poetic interpretation’ is Plato’s (playful) mode of *teaching* philosophy on an elementary level]. That opposition is most fully expressed in [a deadpan reading of] the *Protagoras* passage quoted above (347b–348a) [on which see §4], but it is clearly implied not only in the *Ion* but also [here comes the accurate claim that will undermine Kahn’s deadpan reading of both *Prt.* and *Ion*:] in *Hippias Minor* by (a) giving a deliberately misleading account of Achilles’ character [i.e., an account *so false* that it demands a *true* ‘poetic interpretation’ in response], supported by a deep [but deeply flawed] knowledge of the Homeric text [and therefore demands from the reader a deep *but accurate* knowledge of that text in order to refute Socrates’ ‘deliberately misleading account of Achilles’ character’], and (b) using the distorted picture of Achilles as a model of the outrageous paradox that the best man [cf. the best teacher] is the one who does wrong on purpose [i.e., who has just offered ‘a *deliberately* misleading account of Achilles’ character’].”

his Antisthenes-inspired *Hippias Minor*,¹⁴⁸ Plato takes a characteristic step beyond the pioneering Socratic to whom he owed so much.

Historicist philology aside, the more important point for now is that just as Socrates' misinterpretation of *Litai* in *Hippias Minor* makes it easier to imagine what an alternative and superior interpretation of Homer would look like—whether inspired or technical, whether from Ion or the reader—so, too, it will be easier to imagine what an inspired interpretation of Plato's *Ion* would look like by contrasting it with a ruthlessly literal and uninspired one.¹⁴⁹ For that purpose, I will single out a 2004 article that purports to do something similar. In “On (mis)interpreting Plato's *Ion*,”¹⁵⁰ Suzanne Stern-Gillet attacks “the ‘Romantic’ interpretation of the dialogue” on the basis of the following claims that I will number for convenience: (1) Ion is brainless, (2) Socrates is sarcastic, (3) *θεία μῦθα* is essentially meaningless, (4) the Magnet Speech is at best bifurcated in relation to seriousness and sarcasm, (5) Ion quickly assents to the thesis of the Magnet Speech, (6) Shelley's “Romantic” interpretation of the Magnet Speech can be dismissed, (7) the link between *Ion* and *Symposium* is important for analyzing the former, (8) poetry and its interpretation cannot be considered a *τέχνη*, (9) *Ion* supports the view that Plato was opposed to poetry, and (10) Homer's special excellence is denied. I will examine and document these (mis)interpretive moves in reverse order.

Plato's poet, far from being a creative artist, is denied the authorship of his poems. Far from being hailed as a genius, he is given no praise for his poems.¹⁵¹

148. Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, 584–622, leaves little room for doubt on this. As “Plato's most prominent and ultimately most hostile competitor as heir to the Socratic tradition” (Kahn), Antisthenes may have depicted *himself arguing against Socrates*, not Hippias (cf. 598–99); if so, the position preserved in the Homeric *scholium* that Antisthenes regarded as true is the same one Plato's Socrates reveals to be false by arguing for it in *Hp. Mi.*, thus offering another Platonic example of turning an opponent's weapons against him.

149. Cf. Suzanne Stern-Gillet, “Proclus and the Platonic Muse,” *Ancient Philosophy* 31 (2011), 363–380, on 363: “This sense of disbelief [sc. ‘that Plato's views on poets and poetry could be as disparaging as a literal interpretation of the dialogues would lead us to believe’] is what prompts students of Plato, time and again, to return to the corpus in the hope of finding new scraps of evidence, however minuscule, to show that, in spite of what he wrote, Plato did value poetry, Homer's poetry in particular.” On the contrary, the evidence that Plato valued poetry and insisted on the student's ability to interpret it is found on every page of every dialogue, not least of all because “the Play of Character” (see *Ascent to the Good*, §4 including 94n383 for my debt to Ruby Blondell) makes what she calls ‘a literal interpretation of the dialogues’ impossible. Meanwhile, *Hp. Mi.* and *Ion* provide sufficient evidence for Plato's insistence on the pedagogical value of debating the meaning and merit of Homer's poetry. Cf. *Alc. I* 112b4–5.

150. Suzanne Stern-Gillet, “On (mis)interpreting Plato's *Ion*,” *Phronesis* 49, no. 2 (2004), 169–201. For its continuing impact, see most recently Lorenzo Ferroni and Arnaud Macé (eds. and trans.), *Platon, Ion* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2018); for her more recent work on related subjects, see, in addition to “Proclus and the Platonic Muse” (see previous note), Suzanne Stern-Gillet, “Hesiod's Proem and Plato's *Ion*,” *Classical Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2014), 25–42.

151. Stern-Gillet, “Plato's *Ion*,” 194.

This claim lays the foundation for “(10).” Stern-Gillet has already applied the Magnet Speech to Homer as follows:

As the simile of the Magnesian stone suggests, the rhapsode’s ineptitude mirrors the poet’s own. Must we conclude, then, that, in Socrates’s eyes, Homer is a fraud, just as Ion is a fraud? To the extent that the poet writes of the traditional *technai* of chariot-driving, medicine, spinning, sea-faring etc., the answer would appear to be ‘yes.’¹⁵²

This wouldn’t be so bad if Stern-Gillet took account of Nestor’s advice to Antilochus in context,¹⁵³ and went on to show that while a charioteer knows more about chariot-driving than Homer’s Nestor, Homer nevertheless proves himself a peerless poet in his account of how Achilles took pity on Eumelus and gave him the second prize even though his chariot finished last, how Antilochus was angered by losing second prize, how Achilles changed his mind and gave Eumelus another gift instead, how Menelaus—who had nearly crashed because Antilochus had not followed his father’s advice—was angered, how Antilochus wisely mollified him by offering him the second-place prize, how Menelaus relented and refused it, and finally how Homer allowed Achilles to complete the narrative’s cycle by giving a gift to aged Nestor, whose advice Socrates asks Ion to recite.¹⁵⁴ But she doesn’t take account of that context, and he *is* a great poet. Unfortunately, there is nothing in Stern-Gillet’s account that distinguishes bad poets from good ones,¹⁵⁵ or Homer from Tynnichus.¹⁵⁶

The result is the eminently banish-able Homer of *Republic*, all praise for him from Socrates (530b10; cf. *Alc.2* 147c6–7), and all his own excellence to the contrary notwithstanding.¹⁵⁷ And it is precisely because he does not regard poetry as a τέχνη in accordance with “(8)” that she justifies “Plato’s anti-poetry stance in the *Ion*,” i.e., “(9)”:

Poetry, therefore, fails to meet the criteria of Platonic *technē*. For all the high value that we ascribe to it, poetry consists in the disenfranchisement of knowledge and reason. Because he was concerned to contain such forces, Plato distrusted poetry.¹⁵⁸

152. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 188.

153. For a praiseworthy attempt to extract significance from this passage in *Iliad* 23, see Lewis Fallis, *Socrates and Divine Revelation* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2018), 115–17.

154. See Homer, *Iliad*, 23.534–650.

155. A distinction Socrates hammers (533e6 and 533e8); cf. *Smp.* 209d1.

156. Cf. Woodruff, “What Could Go Wrong,” 142–43: “the most beautiful poem can sing through the mouth of the worst of poets (534e6). Making poems is not evidence of any sort of knowledge or ability.” Must we really apply the lesson of the lost poem of Tynnichus to Homer’s epics? Cf. *φουλότατος* at 534e6 with *θειότατος* at 530b10 and *Alc.2* 147c6.

157. Cf. Quintilian, *Oratorical Education*, 10.50, climaxing with *intellectu sequi*.

158. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 190.

Not surprisingly, her account of τέχνη makes no mention of *Hippias Minor*. This allows her to offer the following assessment based on *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, and *Phaedrus*: “From the evidence of these three dialogues, we may infer that an activity ranks as a *techne* if: (1) it aims at truth.”¹⁵⁹ As for *Symposium*, her argument focuses on preventing Diotima’s general account of ποιήσις (*Smp.* 205b8–c9) from being applied to any poetic τέχνη.¹⁶⁰ Naturally, she has no interest in linking Ion’s claim to εὐπορεῖν with “and to this man he [sc. the Platonic lover] speaks fluidly [εὐπορεῖν] concerning virtue and how it is necessary for a man—the good one—to be and what he must practice, and he attempts to educate him” (*Smp.* 209b7–c2; cf. the perfectly general περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων at 534b8–c1).

By any standard—including position,¹⁶¹ content, influence, and literary attractiveness—the Magnet Speech is the heart of *Ion*.¹⁶² With respect to its influence, Stern-Gillet focuses on P. B. Shelley in “(6),” and since his *A Defense of Poetry* notoriously adds an internal poetic *ingenium* or genius to the external influence of the Muse hymned in the Magnet,¹⁶³ it is high time for this great Romantic to make a gracious exit from serious discussions of the dialogue, particularly in the wake of Coleridge’s far more apposite and illuminating response (more on this below). Beginning with the claim that “Socrates cunningly mixes flattering and unflattering language” in the Speech,¹⁶⁴ Stern-Gillet proceeds to flatten the flattery.¹⁶⁵ Although the claim that Ion “eagerly accepts Socrates’ suggestion that good poets are so by divine dispensation” in accordance with “(5)”¹⁶⁶ has as much to do with “(1)” as with the Speech itself, it is importantly false, since he resists the application of this model to himself (536d4–7) and indeed disproves it (535e3–6). In any case, essential to the flattening of “(4)” is her deflationary account of θεία μοῖρα, whereby—“once Socrates’ speech

159. This list continues as follows on Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 187: “(2) it embodies general principles on the nature of its subject-matter or defining activity; (3) it derives from such principles standards of excellence; (4) it is concerned with the good of its object or recipient; (5) it can give a rational account of itself; and (6) it can be imparted by teaching.” In addition to (1), *Hp. Mi.* is inconsistent with (3) and (4).

160. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 172–77.

161. See Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 54–77, especially 75 for *Dreiteilung* and *triadischen Prinzip*.

162. Cf. Herzstück in Müller, “Der Dichter und ihre Interpreten,” 264: “Diese Rede, die das Herzstück des Dialogs darstellt und auf der der Ruhm der kleinen Schrift basiert, gliedert sich in drei Abschnitte, von denen die beiden monologischen Hauptteile einen dialogischen Zwischenteil umrahmen.” Unfortunately, Müller fails to note his debt to Flashar (see previous note).

163. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 192 (in “Shelley’s Cloudy Platonism”): “Shelley did not consistently view poetic inspiration as a gift from some outside agency.”

164. See Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 178 (for the quotation) and also 195: “Plato’s Socrates’ view is that poems come from a source that is other than the poet’s intellect and reason. He makes this point in two ways. In his flattering mode, he ascribes the charm or power of poetry to some extra-human source, such as divine dispensation. In his unflattering mode, he takes a reductivist stance and describes poems as manifestations of mental imbalance, if not madness.”

165. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 182; cf. Müller, “Der Dichter und ihre Interpreten,” 268.

166. See Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 172n6 and 180.

is divested of its mythological trappings, reduced in scope and translated into everyday speech¹⁶⁷—what begins as “a rare divine gift”¹⁶⁸ and ends by becoming “the ambiguous notion of *theia moira*,”¹⁶⁹ has in the interim become a mere “sop”¹⁷⁰ that Plato did not think “could adequately account for either the poetic impulse or the execution of the product.”¹⁷¹

This leaves Socrates and Ion to be considered. With respect to “(2),” Stern-Gillet leaves only as much seriousness in Socrates’ position as will justify reading *Ion* as “an early attack on poetry.”¹⁷² Socrates must be equally insincere in locating poetry’s source in *θεία μοῖρα* and in contrasting Ion’s knowledge with a “poetic” (532c8) or “the rhapsodic craft [ἡ ῥαψωδικὴ τέχνη]” (538b4). This situates her reading between Christopher Janaway,¹⁷³ whom she attacks,¹⁷⁴ and Hellmut Flashar,¹⁷⁵ whose views she attempts to assimilate.¹⁷⁶ Janaway amiably supplements a poetic τέχνη with a necessary *souçon* of inspiration necessary for attaining “the fine,” i.e., the *καλόν* (validated by the insertion of *καλῶς* at 534c2);¹⁷⁷ there is very little room for

167. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 197; see also 180: “Socrates’ main speech, for all its pretty metaphors, is uncharacteristically didactic and ponderous.” Cf. “metaphysical garb” in Christopher Rowe (ed.), *Plato: Symposium; Edited with Introduction, Translation and Notes* (Oxford: Aris and Phillips, 1998), 201 (on 212b1–3).

168. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 178.

169. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 199.

170. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 194: “Plato’s poet, far from being a creative artist, is denied the authorship of his poems. Far from being hailed as a genius, he is given no praise for the fineness of his poems. Far from being a person of the ‘most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination’ [the quotation is from Shelley], he is some kind of frenzied and uncontrolled hierophant. Instead of soaring above the everydayness of rule-following practices, he is not said even reliably to engage in them. Whenever he utters profound truths, he does so unwittingly. True, he is favored with *theia moira*. Ion was satisfied with that sop. Should he have been?”

171. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 198; cf. R. E. Allen, “Comment” (on *Ion*) in Plato, *Ion, Hippias Minor, Laches, Protagoras*, translated with Comment by R. E. Allen, 3–7 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 7: “The *Ion* does not present a theory of poetry or of rhapsody, and to describe rhapsody or poetry as a matter of divine apportionment without intelligence is not to praise it but to dismiss it.”

172. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 199.

173. See Christopher Janaway, “Craft and Fineness in Plato’s *Ion*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 10 (1992), 1–23, and *Images of Excellence: Plato’s Critique of the Arts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), especially chapter 1 (“Rhapsody”) and 162–74.

174. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 183–84.

175. Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*; for Janaway on Flashar, see *Images of Excellence*, 16, 18n13, and 28–29.

176. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 190n64.

177. See Janaway, “Craft and Fineness,” beginning with 2: “it is specifically the *fineness* of their [sc. ‘the rhapsode as performer and as regards the poet’] output that cannot be explained by way of *tekhne*.” See also 15–16 (including n27) and 22 (on “the production of beauty”). In 16n27 he acknowledges the influence Kenneth Dorter, “The *Ion*: Plato’s Characterization of Art,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 32 (1973–1975), 65–78; see especially 75: “There is a sense of *kalon*, then, which has its source in divine inspiration rather than human skill.” It is above all in his insistence that the source of “fineness” is “from outside” (beginning at “Craft and Fineness,” 1)—as, of course, *αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν* will reveal itself to be in *Smp*.—that makes Janaway’s perspective “inspired,” especially in comparison with Stern-Gillet’s.

Socratic sarcasm here. As for the even more amiable Flashar, Stern-Gillet can afford to agree with his proof that Socrates is not seriously upholding the existence of a poetic τέχνη,¹⁷⁸ but must ignore or reject his motives for doing so: although *Ion himself* has no claim to being possessed by it,¹⁷⁹ there is such a thing as poetic inspiration *from without*.¹⁸⁰ It is here that Flashar and Janaway join forces in defense of Plato against Stern-Gillet, whose evident affection for Gilbert Ryle¹⁸¹ probably explains why her Plato is in no danger of being mistaken for a Platonist.¹⁸²

Joining Flashar, then, Stern-Gillet throws *Ion* under the bus, albeit not for the sake of redeeming *Ion* as Plato's "eulogy of poetry"¹⁸³ or to make room for the inspiration that makes a beautiful poem "fine."¹⁸⁴ First of all, her language is strong: "the rhapsode in question is a brainless performer full of himself."¹⁸⁵ In fact, "full of himself" is exactly what *Ion* is not (cf. "outside of yourself" at 535b7–c1), for it is his métier to play Proteus (541e7). Unless the judges who award him prizes are as brainless as Stern-Gillet says *Ion* is, the reason he wins them is that he *becomes* Achilles, Odysseus, Penelope, and all the other characters that populate Homer's epics, i.e., becomes someone other than himself. The fact that he wins, and that he is astute enough—for all the artistic frenzy that makes his bravura performances possible (535c4–8), the dimensions of which Socrates proves himself to be fully aware (535b2–c3)—to keep one eye on the audience (535e1–6), makes him less inspired but by the same token less brainless. While Stern-Gillet avoids saying that *Ion*'s failure to demonstrate his ability to say "many and fine things" about Homer's διάνοια proves that he *cannot* do so,¹⁸⁶ she never explores the ramifications of his repeated attempts to demonstrate that ability—with the explicit purpose

178. See Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 54 and 77–96, with his thesis announced on 80: "Platons Beweisverfahren ist darauf abgestellt, zu zeigen, daß nicht etwa nur *Ion* diese τέχνη nicht besitzt, sondern daß eine ῥαψωδική τέχνη in dem Sinne, wie sie im *Ion* dikutiert wird, überhaupt nicht geben kann." Note that Stern-Gillet's endorsement of this view in "Plato's *Ion*" 190n64, contradicts her aforementioned commitment to "literal interpretation" (see Stern-Gillet, "Proclus," 363).

179. See Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 74–75; cf. 37 and 75 for the silencing of *Ion*.

180. See Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 76–77, 90–93, and 139.

181. See Gilbert Ryle, *La notion d'esprit: pour une critique des concepts mentaux*; translated by Suzanne Stern-Gillet; Preface by Francis Jacques (Paris: Payot, 1978), and Suzanne Stern-Gillet, "Gilbert Ryle." *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 30, no. 117/118 (1976), 227–228. For Ryle's baleful influence on the reading of Plato (see following note)—mediating as it does between his teacher, John Cook Wilson, and his students, especially G. E. L. Owen and Terry Penner—see *Ascent to the Good*, 42n196 and 484n124.

182. Cf. Ryle, *Plato's Progress*, 9–10: "If Plato was anything of a philosopher, then he cannot have been merely a lifelong Platonist."

183. See Stern-Gillet, "Plato's *Ion*," last word.

184. As in Janaway, *Images of Excellence*, 31–32, culminating with: "What he [sc. *Ion*] produces is genuinely fine and admirable, and it is these qualities in particular which Plato wishes to explain as having a divine source."

185. Stern-Gillet, "Plato's *Ion*," 171.

186. Rijksbaron, *Plato, Ion*, erroneously remarks on 10: "the embarrassment shown by *Ion* when he is invited to explain Homer." Cf. Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 37 and 75, on the silencing of *Ion*.

the second time of showing that while doing so he is *not* out of his mind (536d4–6)—any more than his prodigious memory, his acting ability, or in general his proven ability to recite Homer better than anyone else in Greece. In the end, any defense of Ion must eventually come back to Homer’s own excellence, and one thing is certain: Socrates may have banished Homer from his City, but Plato never banishes Homer from his dialogues.¹⁸⁷

But a defense of Ion—the man, not the dialogue—cannot end there, but rather with his role in connecting *Ion* to *Menexenus*.¹⁸⁸ When Pericles delivered his Funeral Oration in Thucydides, he did so as one of Athens’ ten elected *generals*.¹⁸⁹ Many of the battles described in ancient literature begin with an account of the speeches the opposing generals made to their soldiers;¹⁹⁰ it is with *this* in mind that we need to revisit Ion’s claim to be at once the greatest Homeric rhapsode and the greatest general in Greece. Placed in the mouth of Niceratus son of Nicias—whose own speech on the brink of the Great Harbor indicates that the battle is already lost¹⁹¹—the claim that Homer teaches one how to be a general appears in Xenophon’s *Symposium*,¹⁹² and Socrates himself lends credence to it while discussing Homer with a general in *Memorabilia*.¹⁹³ But nothing in Plato compares with the way Ion responds to Socrates’ claim that if Ion could be a general, he wouldn’t be a rhapsode. Although the speech of “Ion the Ionian” (541c3–6) and Socrates’ revealing reply to it (541c7–e1) will be quoted and considered in more detail only in the last chapter (see §15), the salient point is that Ion speaks not only for his native Ephesus but for all the Greek cities on the Asian side of the Aegean, under the control of Athens until bartered away to Persia in the King’s Peace, the acme of anachronism in *Menexenus*. As for Socrates, his unique and flat-footed defense of Athenian imperialism will begin with the example of a foreign-born general of whom no historical record exists (541c7–8).

What makes *Ion* such an important dialogue is that every scholar who writes about Plato occupies the same position in relation *to him* that Ion does to Homer. We are Plato’s interpreters, and we too should ask ourselves all of the relevant questions: Is it our intention to say *πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ* about him?

187. See Alfonso Flórez, *Platón y Homero: diálogo entre filosofía y poesía* (Bogotá: Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2019).

188. For insightful remarks on this, see Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 33–34.

189. See Andrew Ford, *The Origins of Criticism: Literary Culture and Poetic Theory in Classical Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 201–208 (“Homer and the Generals”), especially 203 (emphasis mine): “The separation of musical and military skill reflects a complex change in the office of general (*stratēgia*) after Pericles.”

190. See Edward Anson, “The General’s Pre-Battle Exhortation in Graeco-Roman Warfare,” *Greece & Rome* 57, no. 2 (October 2010), 304–318.

191. Thucydides, 7.60.5–65.1 and 7.69.2–3; naturally the intervening speech of Gylippus is brimming with confidence, especially powerful is 7.67.4–68.3.

192. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 4.6; cf. R. 599c6–d1.

193. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.1.2–4.

Do we know Plato's works by heart? Could any one of us be safely and accurately described as an "admirer [ἐπαίνετης]" (*Prt.* 309a6; cf. 536d3 and 542b4) of Plato—i.e., one who is prepared to praise (ἐπαίνειν) him—on the analogy of what Socrates asks his unnamed friend at the start of *Protagoras*? Are we aware of what it is that makes Homer such a great poet—i.e., in no way comparable with Tynnichus (cf. 534d5–7 and 530b10)—and by extension what makes Plato a great poet, philosopher, and teacher as well? Are we committed to revealing Plato's διάνοια along with affirming the existence of "authorial intent" that any such revelation requires? If we are not, we should move on to some other precinct of philosophy. But if we are, and if we enjoy some measure of success in doing so, is it because we possess a τέχνη that makes it equally easy for us to expound Aristotle as well as Plato, and say equally fine things about the Presocratics and the Hellenistic schools? Finally, when we travel the world giving invited lectures as Professors of Ancient Philosophy while dressed in accordance with our particular form of self-fashioning, are we really any better or even any different from Ion? And if we leave no room whatsoever for θεία μοῖρα in our own ability to find new things in Plato every time we read one of his wondrous dialogues, is it really Ion who should be regarded as "full of himself"?

In opening up a discussion of "inspired interpretation," it is not my intent to remove the question mark in this section's title. But after reading an article like Stern-Gillet's, published in a prestigious journal like *Phronesis*, one needs to raise the question of whether a question mark is required, for her interpretation annihilates its possibility. Like Socrates' interpretation of *Litai*, I have tried to show that hers sets a very low bar, and to the extent that the interpretations of Janaway, Flashar, and even Shelley are superior to hers, I have no problem with explaining that superiority in terms of θεία μοῖρα, for it really does prove to be possible to read the Magnet Speech without being attracted by it, as the three just named all obviously were, and as Stern-Gillet just as unquestionably was not. I began the Preface with desiderating "a good sense of humor," and any one person's possession of such a thing is better explained by θεία μοῖρα than by τέχνη. The fact that Socrates can say such beautiful things about the Muses and their interpreters in his Speech (534e4–5)—thus setting up his attempt to present rhapsodes as the interpreters of those interpreters (cf. 535a6–10; cf. 530c3–4)—proves that it is only by giving an inspired speech himself that Socrates can prove that it is not by τέχνη that Ion can say πολλά καὶ καλά about Homer, and that is just the flip-side of saying that it is by θεία μοῖρα that he *can* do so and does. If that seems too strong, then let's say that it is by θεία μοῖρα that a critic can entertain the possibility that it is θεία μοῖρα that makes Socrates' Magnet Speech possible, and thus the basis for an "inspired interpretation."

But an “uninspired interpretation” is easier to explain. Its characteristics are many, but it is best to begin with an unquestioned loyalty to Aristotle’s *Protagoras*-based portrait of Socrates,¹⁹⁴ and thus with the alleged difference between the Socrates of Plato’s “Socratic” dialogues and what we find Socrates talking about, for example, in *Republic*.¹⁹⁵ If Socrates did not “separate the forms,” we are not going to find him introducing the Idea of Beauty in *Symposium* or preparing us to understand what it isn’t in *Hippias Major*. And most uninspired of all is the sad circumstance that we have entered an interpretive universe where the Order of Composition paradigm can justify the elimination of an entire dialogue simply because it appears to be inconsistent with a particular conception of Plato’s Development.¹⁹⁶ Explaining inter-dialogue contradiction by changes of mind, and expending great effort in the name of charity to harmonizing intra-dialogue contradictions out of existence, an uninspired interpretation of Plato must neutralize the evidence of *Ion*, generally by taming it in the higher name of τέχνη. As for θεία μοῖρα, the external Muse is the clearest indication that the truth is outside and above us since the More Perfect Mirror (*Alc. I* 133c8–17) and it is that externality that opens the Longer Way to the Idea of the Good. It was because Aristotle was not the only student he taught in the Academy who rejected the possibility of a separate, external, and transcendent Idea—i.e., of Platonism—that Plato takes θεία μοῖρα seriously: he knew that those who not only accept that possibility but who grow a poet’s wings by falling in love with it, would do so through no agency of his own. At most, Plato possessed a pedagogical τέχνη (cf. *R.* 517d3–4) that would infallibly reveal which of his students were open to θεία μοῖρα, and thus which of them were not.

And it is in defense of that τέχνη—a pedagogical craft that depends on *the one who knows* making false statements deliberately (*Hp. Mi.* 367a4–5)—that I am interpreting *Ion* in the context of Reading Order. If θεία μοῖρα plays a part in that larger project, it is only because I can find no other explanation for the fact that no one else has claimed that the Platonic dialogues, arranged in accordance with Plato’s own clues, constitute the Academy’s eternal curriculum. But the claim itself is scarcely divine: it relies on nothing more than a bone-headed and distinctly American willingness to see old things with new eyes, for it simply combines the fact that Plato was a teacher with the equally obvious fact that his dialogues have proved themselves over the centuries to be eminently teachable. Even if the ancient subtitle of *Ion* were not “On

194. See *Ascent to the Good*, Introduction.

195. Cf. Terry Penner, “Thought and Desire in Plato,” in Gregory Vlastos (ed.), *Plato: A Collection of Critical Essays, II: Ethics, Politics, and Philosophy of Art and Religion*, 96–118 (London: Macmillan, 1971), 96n1: “‘Socrates’ I shall here use for the Socrates of the *Protagoras*; ‘Plato’ refers to the Socrates of the *Republic*.”

196. See Denyer, *Alcibiades*, 21–24.

Homer's *Iliad*," its connection to *Hippias Minor* would be obvious.¹⁹⁷ Once seen, the Homer-based connection ramifies: the revelation of the morally bankrupt status of τέχνη και ἐπιστήμη in *Hippias Minor* palliates the proof that Ion's ability to explain Homer's διάνοια effectively—and that means at the very least to do so better than Socrates himself has just done—does not depend on it. As for the proof that Ion would possess the requisite τέχνη only if he could interpret Hesiod as well as he interprets Homer, the fact that, e.g., I am unable to say πολλά και καλά about Aristotle is no proof that I lack the necessary skill—a combination of τέχνη and θεία μοῖρα as I see it—for doing so about Plato; naturally about the applicability of this καλά (about πολλά there can be no doubt), the reader must judge.

The mirror image of recognizing Plato as a teacher who is teaching through his dialogues is that *we* are his students, and that he is using his dialogues *to teach us*. In the present case, the significance of the Silencing of Ion is not what it tells us about either Socrates or Ion but what it leaves room for us to do: we must return to Homer in search of the διάνοια that causes him to make (ποιεῖν) his characters say and do (πράττειν) what he makes them do and say. A poet Plato may be, and in *Symposium*, he will prove that his poetic τέχνη will allow him to write a comedy and a tragedy at one and the same time (see §15),¹⁹⁸ but only as a means to an end. He is primarily Plato the Teacher, and the most important dialogue is always the unwritten one with us, his students (see Preface, principle §5), thematized in *Lovers* with the Seed Sower. Although grounded in the brute fact of the Academy, the existence of *this* dialogue—an awareness of it, and a proclivity to interpret the dialogues on its basis—begins to look like the essential feature of “inspired interpretation,” for uninspired interpretations ignore the necessary role of the reader. But the concomitant ability to find in Plato a *playful* teacher, to interpret his errors as deliberate,¹⁹⁹ to look beyond a deadpan reading and especially beyond Aristotle's, and finally to recognize Performative Self-Contradiction as Plato's most characteristic joke, all of this requires a sense of humor, and

197. For useful observations on the connection, see Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 28, 43–44, 48, and 103.

198. See John P. Harris, “Plato's *Ion* and the End of his *Symposium*,” *Illinois Classical Studies* 26 (2001), 81–100, for the unfortunate consequences of embracing Flashar's insistence (see 84n16) that there can be no ραψωδική τέχνη, i.e., it ultimately forces Harris to conclude (100): “there is no poetic technê.” But it is rather the negation of any μεταξύ at 97 that is primarily responsible: “It is essential to understand what Socrates is implying here [sc. at 537c4–d7; he might also have cited 535b4–7]: according to the Socratic point of view, being ‘enthused’ and possessing technê (i.e., technê,) [note that the second criterion for technê, on 85—‘a technê effects a useful result’—has been called into question in *Hp. Mi.*] are mutually exclusive. Having one immediately disqualifies a person from having the other. In other words: if god is in, reason is out.”

199. Cf. Hölsle, “Tübingen School,” 337n29: “We are therefore well advised to assume that most if not all the obvious fallacies in the Platonic dialogues are deliberate.”

nobody who has one of those will insist that *their* possession of it (or by it) owes more to τέχνη than it does to θεία μοῖρα.

But there is also a technical basis for its existence. In *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the Iliad*, Francesca Schironi has recently laid out the great Homeric scholiast's core assumptions, and the first of them is that "Homer was a flawless poet."²⁰⁰ Aristarchus also assumed that "Homer was the sole Author of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*,"²⁰¹ and like Ion in *Ion*, he regarded Hesiod as inferior to Homer.²⁰² He also made "an intimate knowledge of the work he was analyzing" (and thus "an excellent memory") essential to the critic's task.²⁰³ Like Hippias is *Hippias Minor*, he regarded Achilles as morally exemplary and Odysseus as a vastly inferior trickster.²⁰⁴ Of these, the first assumption is the most important: not only will Plato refuse to yield up his secrets to anyone who despises him, but he will reveal them only to those who love him, and who find in him "a flawless poet" along the lines of Aristarchus' Homer. But there are crucial differences. Aristarchus was determined to interpret Homer on the basis of Homer alone, and he saw it as his interpretive task to purge Homer of any seeming contradictions.²⁰⁵ In Plato's case, it is above all within the intra-dialogue contradictions—in this case, the fact that *Ion* can be read either as Marsilio Ficino read it or as Goethe did,²⁰⁶ either as Stern-Gillet reads it or as I do—that we will discover Plato the Teacher. As for "to clarify Homer through Homer alone,"²⁰⁷ Plato's musical dialogues require us to interpret *Hippias Minor* and *Ion* through Homer, and *Ion* and *Menexenus* through Thucydides, Herodotus, and Xenophon.

200. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 736.

201. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 737.

202. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 695: "Aristarchus identified all the poets after Homer as 'Neoteroi,' including the poets of the Cycle and Hesiod."

203. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 740.

204. See Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 710–17 on Achilles, and 720–21 on Odysseus, especially: "Perhaps the same idea [sc. 'further confirmation of Odysseus' deceitful nature'] is behind Aristarchus' comments on *Il.* 9.677–688, when Odysseus reports to Agamemnon the result of their embassy to Achilles. He tells him that Achilles refuses to fight again and that he is planning to leave (which is what Achilles said at *Il.* 9.356–363), but omits that he also told Ajax that he will fight again if Hector reaches the ships of the Myrmidons (at *Il.* 9.644–655). According to Aristarchus, these details have been omitted on purpose by Odysseus so that the Greeks would not trust in Achilles' help but rather would take serious measures to defend themselves." This explanation leaves plenty of room for Ion or someone like him to offer a better account of Homer's δῖάνοια: to admit that both Ajax and Phoenix had softened Achilles' resistance after rejecting his own speech out of hand would require Odysseus to admit his failure to persuade, the area in which he surpasses Achilles.

205. See "Assumption 2.2" in Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 736–37.

206. For this useful pairing, see E. N. Tigerstedt, *Plato's Idea of Poetic Inspiration* (Helsinki: Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum, 1969), 24.

207. See Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians*, 75.

There is a well-documented tradition that there was a *τέμενος* to the Muses in the Academy,²⁰⁸ i.e., “a piece of land marked off [the verb *τέμνειν* means ‘to cut’] from common uses and dedicated to a god” (LSJ) or in this case, to the nine daughters of Memory. I believe it. *Ion* is my favorite Platonic dialogue, a choice that has sometimes made me feel lonely but never unhistorical. The first speech I memorized as a boy intoned: “Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them, printing their proud hoofs in the receiving earth,” and as a History Teacher, I’ve made a career of helping my students do just that. I can’t visualize Aristotle’s “musical Coriscus” but Plato’s Callicles, Alcibiades, Hippias, and *Ion* are real people for me, just the Garden of Callias and Agathon’s dining room are real places. Reading Plato is a musical experience, and I read him under the aegis of Clio, the Muse of History. While no one would deny that Plato regarded music as an essential part of education, few take seriously the claim that he was consciously *making* music; more than any other dialogue, his *Ion* is the proof that he still is. It should therefore not be so difficult to imagine a student who regards *Ion*’s lack of a *τέχνη* as a point in his favor, and who will therefore be delighted—as the modern reception emphatically is not—by the reappearance of *θεία μοῖρα* in *Theages* (*Thg.* 128d2) and *Meno* (*Men.* 99a6).²⁰⁹ Instead, we have excised the one and deflated the other. Most everybody who reads the secondary literature on Plato recognizes that some interpretations are better than others; I’d prefer to say that some are more inspired.²¹⁰ This distinction allows those who scoff at such a thing to regard the “inspired” as benighted while for scoffers, being called “uninspired” is no insult, since inspiration is something in which they put no stock.

All of this was already in view when Goethe encountered Graf zu Stolberg’s Preface to his translations of *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, and *Ion* in 1795. Stolberg was a Christian, and like Origen, whom he quotes,²¹¹ he sought to embrace Plato as a forerunner of Divine Revelation.²¹² Goethe would have none of such senseless poesy. Singling out *Ion* in a way that Stolberg had not,

208. See Riginos, *Platonica*, §75; for Plato’s use of the word, see *Lg.* 738c7, 758e5 (note the juxtaposition with κρηνῶν), 761c3 (note the *νάματα* and κρήναι in 761b4–c2), and 946d1–2 on Apollo.

209. On the connection, see Raphael Woolf, “The Self in Plato’s *Ion*,” *Apeiron* 30, no. 3 (1997), 189–210, on 198–99.

210. As an example of inspired inspiration—albeit primarily inspired by Nietzsche—see Jorge Mario Mejía Toro, *El teatro filosófico y la rapsodia. Otra interpretación del Ion platónico* (Medellín: Editorial Universidad de Antioquia, 2003).

211. Leopold Graf zu Stolberg (trans.), “Vorrede” to *Auserlesene Gespräche des Platon in Gesammelte Werke der Brüder Christian und Leopold Grafen zu Stolberg*, volume 17, i–xvi (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1827), xiv n.

212. Stolberg, “Vorrede,” xv–xvi: “A cool and nourishing breeze emerges out of these writings: it was that breeze at break of day whose [rosy fingered] dawn had long before already comforted a small inspired corner of the east with brighter light, from which four centuries years later the sun emerged, in full and radiant splendor.”

Goethe had already expressed his disgust for the count's Christian enthusiasm in a letter to Wilhelm von Humboldt even before he published his essay in 1796.²¹³ Not only is Goethe the original proponent of Stern-Gillet's "(1)" and "(2)"—for Ion is a dimwit and Socrates is joking²¹⁴—but he opened the door for Schleiermacher with his very first comment on the dialogue:

How, for example, can *Ion* be offered as a canonical work [*als ein canonisches Buch*] when this little dialogue is nothing but a persiflage [*nichts als eine Persiflage ist*]? Probably because at the end there is mention of divine inspiration!²¹⁵

What did Goethe mean by suggesting that *Ion* should *not* be regarded *als ein canonisches Buch*? Since it was presumably the "mention of divine inspiration" that fired von Stolberg's enthusiasm, he probably meant nothing more than that Stolberg has offered it "as a canonical book," i.e., as a pre-Christian testimony of divine truth, *and thus* in line with the *biblical* canon. But in a larger context, Goethe was taking an important step in the direction of refusing to see *Ion* "as a canonical book" of *Plato*. Two points deserve emphasis: von Stolberg used a quotation from *Alcibiades Minor* as his book's epigraph,²¹⁶ and only nine years later, Schleiermacher would go beyond Goethe's criticisms while proving that *Ion* should not be regarded *als ein canonisches Buch* in a stronger sense than Goethe himself had imagined.²¹⁷

213. Printed in Grumach, *Goethe und die Antike*, 758: "Have you seen the grotesque Preface to Stolberg's Platonic Dialogues? It's too bad he hasn't become a priest, to whom such a mentality belongs, so that neither shying nor shamed he now elevates an oblate scrap as God before the whole educated world and presents a manifest piffle [*Persiflage*], as for example *Ion* is, for our adoration as a canonical book." To Schiller, he had already spoken of *eine Art Kriegserklärung gegen die Halbheit*, the latter an interesting word in the context of μεταξύ.

214. See Grumach, *Goethe und die Antike*, 759–60: the one is *nur ironisch*, the other is presented *als einen äußerst beschränkten Menschen* (for translation, see below). For important comment, see Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 3: "derived from Goethe and applied point-by-point against the authenticity of *Ion* in modern scholarship are the follow claims: (1) *Ion* is a *Persiflage* with no serious counterpart, (2) when he talks of θεία μοῖρα, Socrates is merely ironic, (3) *Ion* the rhapsode is depicted as unbelievably stupid; had he the slightest degree of knowledge he would have responded to Socrates' uncalled-for [*unsachlichen*]; it is this adjective that makes *Hp. Mi.* 369b8–c2 apposite; cf. "immer neue Holzwege" in Heitsch, "Argumentationsstruktur," 258] questions differently, (4) the end of the dialogue is strange, where *Ion* must choose between being a malefactor or a demigod [cf. *Halbheit* in the previous note]."

215. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Plato as Party to a Christian Revelation," in *Essays on Art and Literature*, volume 3, edited and translated by John Gearey, 200–203 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 200.

216. Stolberg, "Vorrede," i: "Beautiful things to the good [τὰ καλὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς] (*Alc.2* 148c3); this is "the Spartan Prayer," and is predicated on the difference between the two words, as in: "May it be given to the good to perform noble deeds." Cf. *Mx.* 234c1–4.

217. See Javier Aguirre, "Goethe, Schleiermacher y la valoración del *Ion*," *Éndoxa* 29 (2012), 73–92, on 74–79 and 90. Although Schleiermacher does not mention Goethe in his Introduction to *Ion*, he either rejects the famous man's reading of the dialogue or uses it to deny Plato's authorship at *Über die Philosophie Platons*, 157 (Dobson 145): "Now it will be at once manifest to every reader that it cannot have been Plato's ultimate object to put a rhapsodist to shame in such a manner." Cf. Müller, "Die Dichter und ihre Interpreteten," 275n44.

In any case, Goethe's 1796 description of Ion is revealing:

Plato depicts Ion as an extremely limited person, who, to be sure, can recite Homeric verse with expression and move an audience. He is also a person who does not hesitate to talk about Homer, but probably [*wahrscheinlich*] more to paraphrase than to explain a passage, more to seize the opportunity simply to say something than to bring his audience closer to the spirit of the poet through his own interpretation [*als durch seine Auslegung die Zuhörer dem Geist des Dichters näher zu bringen*].²¹⁸

Goethe's use of *wahrscheinlich* is particularly honest and insightful. Fully aware that Socrates never gives Ion the chance to offer any *Auslegung*, Goethe openly admits that although it is "likely" such an interpretation would be valueless, such a claim cannot be anything more than *wahrscheinlich*. With regard to the other bracketed passage, it is noteworthy that Goethe takes it for granted that the goal of a good *Auslegung* would be to make *der Geist des Dichters* more accessible, and thus confirms the value of Ion's alleged ability to reveal Homer's intention or *διάνοια*. But what makes the longer passage even more significant is its larger context: Goethe is still assuming in 1796 that there *is* such a thing as *der Geist des Dichters* in Homer's case.

Goethe's pre-publication letters to von Humboldt and Schiller were written in 1795, the same year that F. A. Wolf published his *Prolegomena to Homer*.²¹⁹ The connection between Goethe's attack on *Ion* and Wolf's rejection of Homer as author is remarkable not only because of this synchronicity: the rhapsode's self-proclaimed ability to explicate Homer's *διάνοια* obviously depends entirely on the reality of the poet Homer, for if there were no Homer, there would be no such thing as *der Geist des Dichters* to explicate. We therefore stand at the confluence of three silences. For the oldest, Plato is responsible: Socrates prevents Ion from offering an *Auslegung*, and even though it may be *wahrscheinlich* that it would not bring us any closer to *der Geist des Dichters*, the Silencing of Ion prevents us from being sure. The second begins with Goethe: not only will Socrates silence Ion but soon enough Schleiermacher will silence *Ion*. But the culminating silence will silence both *Ion* and *Hippias Minor* even more completely, for in Wolf's wake there will no longer be a poet behind either of the epics (let alone both of them) and thus neither *Geist* nor *διάνοια* for an interpreter to explicate. As a result, even if Goethe's *wahrscheinlich* were to be disproved, and Ion were to be allowed to explain brilliantly, e.g., what was Homer's intent when he caused Achilles to respond to Odysseus' speech

218. Goethe, "Plato as Party," 201.

219. Friedrich August Wolf, *Prolegomena ad Homerum sive de Operum Homericorum prisca et genuine forma variisque mutationibus et probabili ratione emendandi*, volume 1 (Halle: Libraria Orphanotrophis, 1795); the subtitle reads: "or concerning the original and genuine form of the Homeric works and of their various mutations and the likely method of restoring them."

in *Litai* as he did (on *Hp. Mi.* 370a4–5, see §11), his explanation would by now have become entirely irrelevant, for there never was any Homer in whose *Geist* any such *διάνοια* could possibly have existed.

The modern reception of *Litai* proves the point: as every Homerist knows, the duals in *Iliad* 9 have provoked more interest and comment than the lines that play such a big part in *Hippias Minor*:

For as hateful to me as the gates of Hades is that man
Who hides one thing in his heart but says something else.²²⁰

Thanks to Homer's post-Wolf disappearance, we are certainly not wondering whether it is Agamemnon or Odysseus that he intends Achilles to have in mind here.²²¹ On the basis of Socrates' lies in *Hippias Minor*, and of the Silencing of Ion in *Ion*, I will suggest as equally *wahrscheinlich* the possibility that the rhapsode would have offered a compelling and inspired defense of the latter, better than the one Hippias offers (*Hp. Mi.* 365b3–6). In direct opposition to Socrates' claim that Odysseus does not seem to *ψεῦδεσθαι*, Homer would be conferring on Achilles the uncanny ability to recognize what the reader already knows, and that Ion, thanks to his prodigious memory, knows better than anyone: Odysseus has deceitfully suppressed the end of Agamemnon's speech. Ion the actor and Ion the interpreter become one if we imagine the manner in which he would have called attention to those lines when he sang them as Agamemnon, for to bring *die Zuhörer dem Geist des Dichters näher*, he needed to do nothing less. Even without the accompanying *Auslegung*, then, Ion the rhapsode needed to find a way to show the audience what Odysseus has done, i.e., that he has lied.²²²

Naturally I am not proposing that we bring Ion back from the dead: it is now the reader to whom Plato leaves the task of explaining Homer's intentions. But in the wake of Wolf, how can we still take seriously the view that it was *Plato* who banished Homer? Both Plato's *Hippias Minor* and his *Ion* are incompatible with a world in which Homer no longer exists, and moreover exists as the author of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. There is no need to expatiate on Wolf's impact on "the ancient quarrel" between Odysseus and Achilles, for he annihilated the condition of its possibility: no Homer, no unitarianism; no unitarianism, no quarrel. The ability to prefer Achilles

220. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.312–13.

221. See Agathe Thornton, "Once again, the Duals in Book 9 of the *Iliad*." *Glotta* 56, no. 1/2 (1978), 1–4, on 4: "Achilles, in his reply, is aware that something is amiss, and feels up against deceit. With magnificent irony, the poet makes him liken the deceiver—whether it is Odysseus or Agamemnon—to Hades, just as Agamemnon, in words not conveyed to Achilles, had compared Achilles to Hades." This is the kind of brilliant insight that Homer's brilliance calls forth from his interpreters, and of which Ion should not be assumed to be incapable.

222. As for those duals, I suppose that Ion (or someone like him) would have anticipated Aristarchus: Homer refers to Ajax and Odysseus as the embassy's heroic core; Phoenix is merely a useful appendage to the pair of heroes.

to Odysseus is at once an ancient and pre-Platonic exercise in virtue *and* a demonstration of the inner workings of *θεία μοῦσα*. It is therefore a personal pleasure to quote my cousin Mary Truitt Hill, a high school English teacher, who once told me: “I regard myself as a failure as a teacher if my students don’t prefer the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*.” For sure it is the more difficult choice, but thanks to *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*, this counts for very little to someone who can think like a Greek, or better yet, can imagine how the adolescents Plato taught had thought. In an intellectual context that still recognized the real “Homeric Question,” a bare minimum of deliberate deception on their teacher’s part would be sufficient to set them on the path to getting things straight. In any case, Plato is not finished with Achilles, Odysseus, or the Gates of Hell (see §16) for Socrates will finally return to Phthia on the third day (*Cri.* 44b3).²²³

Instead of considering *Ion* in the context of *Hippias Minor*, scholarly discussion situates it in relation to *Phaedrus*, *Republic*, and *Laws*, focusing not on Homer, but on Plato’s attitude toward poetry in general; this explains the outsized role Shelley’s *A Defense of Poetry* plays in the literature. But in a brilliant study of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834),²²⁴ James Vigus has demonstrated that another English Romantic poet has far more to contribute to this discussion. What makes Coleridge so relevant is that he was equally sensitive to the moral critique of poetry in Plato’s *Republic* and the reality of poetic inspiration.²²⁵ Tracing the basis of Coleridge’s reception of the dialogues to a demiurge-based reading of *Timaeus* originating in Plotinus and Schelling,²²⁶ Vigus then uses *Ion* to show “that Plato’s attitude toward inspiration is, like that of mimesis, explicitly negative, but with positive implications based on the possibility of rationally scrutinizing the utterances of the inspired poet or rhapsode.”²²⁷ The pertinent example here is Socrates’ critical remarks about his own speeches in *Phaedrus*,²²⁸ but Vigus breaks new ground on *Ion* by tracing Coleridge’s “double-mindedness” to Plato’s own.²²⁹ Not surprisingly, a discussion of “Kublai Khan,” about which Coleridge himself wrote in a critical vein, plays an important role Vigus’s discussion of “The Ancient Quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy” as reenacted in Coleridge’s at once poetic and critical psyche.²³⁰

223. For an illuminating suggestion about the echo of Achilles in *Phd.*, see the last word of Hayden W. Ausland, “Socrates’ Appeals to Homer’s Achilles in Plato’s *Apology of Socrates* and *Crito*,” in Hallvard Fossheim, Vigdis Songe-Møller, and Knut Ågotnes (eds.), *Philosophy as Drama: Plato’s Thinking through Dialogue*, 51–77 (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

224. James Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge* (London: Legenda, 2009), especially chapter 3 (“The Ancient Quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy”).

225. See Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 66–70.

226. Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 70–74.

227. Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 67; the section on *Ion* (74–82) is thoughtful apart from a particularly unfortunate remark about the silencing of *Ion* on 78: “*Ion* was unwilling or unable to submit his own or Homer’s words to reflective scrutiny.”

228. Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 77–78.

229. Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 80.

230. Vigus, *Platonic Coleridge*, 82–87.

But Xanadu is a long way from Athens, and the juxtaposition of truth and beauty in “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer” (1816) makes John Keats (1795–1821) at least equally deserving of attention. First of all, there is George Chapman himself (c. 1559–1634). As the quintessential Ὀμήρου ἐπαινέτης (*Prt.* 309a6; cf. 541b4) among the English,²³¹ Chapman discusses *Ion* in the various epistles and addresses with which he introduced his translation, and it is almost as if his “To the Understander,” the last of these, was written with Keats in mind.²³² Having experienced exactly what Chapman wanted his understanding readers to experience, Keats concluded:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.²³³

The problem, of course, is that it was not Cortez but rather Balboa to whom Keats’s lovely image applies; as far as τέχνη, memory, and mimesis are concerned, the poet falls short.²³⁴ And yet there is more to the image than its factual basis, and every sensitive reader of Plato’s *Ion* will know that Keats had been inspired by Chapman just as Chapman had been inspired by Homer, that “never-equalled poet” who, in turn, scarcely conceals the improbable source of his own inspiration.²³⁵ The same is true for the shallowness of Socrates’ either/or, τέχνη vs. θεία μοῖρα, account of poetry.²³⁶

231. George Chapman, “To the Understander,” in Richard Herne Shepherd (ed.), *The Works of George Chapman; Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, Edited with Notes*, 13–14 (London: Chatto & Windus, 1924), 14: “Since then this never-equalled Poet is to be understood, and so full of government and direction to all estates; stern anger and the affrights of war, bearing the main face of his subject, soldiers shall never spend their idle hours more profitably, than with his studious and industrious perusal; in whose honors his deserts are infinite.” Of particular importance for sorting out the different tasks assigned to τέχνη and θεία μοῖρα is his comparison of Homer and Virgil in the dedicatory epistle to Earl Marshal, originally published in 1598.

232. Chapman, “To the Understander,” 14: “will my young master the reader affect nothing common, and yet like nothing extraordinary?”

233. John Keats, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer.”

234. Cf. Dorter, “The *Ion*,” 76: “This sense of beauty is the essential one in art, for it is certainly possible to regard an art work as beautiful even if it is representationally ‘inaccurate.’”

235. See Penelope Murray, “Homer and the Bard,” in Tom Winniffrith, Penelope Murray, and K. W. Gransden (eds.), *Aspects of the Epic*, 1–15 (London: Macmillan, 1983), especially 11: “The Homeric bard is an inspired being, blessed with the gift of divine knowledge; but he is also a craftsman, responsible for his own creations.” With her remarks on Phemius (11–12; see following note for the reference), cf. E. N. Tigerstedt, “*FUROR POETICUS*: Poetic Inspiration in Greek Literature before Democritus and Plato,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 31, no. 2 (April–June 1970), 163–178, on 168, and Stern-Gillet, “Hesiod’s Proem,” 39: “the trope of the poet as beloved pupil of the Muses proved to have a dynamic of its own, of which no poet since Homer has been in full control. Homer’s repeated expressions of dependence upon the Muse, together with the imperatives (ἄειδε, ἔννεπε) which he uses to address them, may well have been a stylistic artifice on his part but, even if they were, they yet carried highly ambiguous connotations, as testified by Phemius’ puzzling claim [since it contradicts Socrates’ either τέχνη/or θεία μοῖρα account of poetry on which her deadpan reading of *Ion* depends] to be both self-taught and divinely inspired.”

236. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, 22.347–48.

Of course not all readers of Plato's *Ion* are sensitive in this way and indeed some of them are deliberately insensible to such things as makes the souls of others soar; as a result, the most powerful images in the Magnet Speech—the comparison of the poet to garden-visiting bees (534b2), the poet's lightness (534b3) and wings (534b3–4), and of course the magnet itself—have been interpreted as an attack on poetry, emphasizing the poet's powerlessness, insubstantiality, triviality, flightiness, and irrationality.²³⁷ Although not as drastic as denying the existence of Homer altogether and then separating his two epics from each other before dividing each of them into a pastiche of strands over which no poet's δίανοια could possibly preside, the sarcastic reading of the Magnet leads to a correspondingly sub-Platonic place.

In Achilles' response to Odysseus in *Iliad* 9, and even more importantly in Odysseus' account of Achilles' words in *Odyssey* 11 (R. 516d5–6),²³⁸ Plato challenges us to come up with a better response to “the Homeric Question,” for he had discovered in Homer not only a teacher but an independently brilliant mind combined with a self-confessed dependence on external inspiration, a condition with which he could identify. It is more difficult than one might think to determine which of the two created the most compelling defense of poetry, but by calling attention to the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, Plato demanded that every sensitive reader of his own dialogues must first prove themselves to be a Ὀμήρου ἐπαινέτης. As for the much-discussed quarrel between philosophy and poetry, its Platonic resolution occurs every time a sensitive soul, nourished on nectar in the Academy, returns to the Cave despite a personal preference for “[from] springs, honey-flowing out of those orchards and vales of the Muses [ἀπὸ κρηνῶν μελιπύτων ἐκ Μουσῶν κήπων τινῶν καὶ ναπῶν]” (534b1).²³⁹

As they are in Homer's *Litai*, τέχνη and θεία μοῖρα are perfectly combined in Plato's *Ion*. With respect to the former, the dialogue is symmetrical: bookended by an introduction (530a1–d8) and a conclusion (541e1–542b4), it consists of five parts. In accordance with ring-composition, two balanced

237. Cf. Stern-Gillet, “Plato's *Ion*,” 182, and Müller, “Der Dichter und ihre Interpreten,” 268. In response, consider Janaway, *Images of Excellence*, 34 (emphasis mine): “we are pushed in one of two directions: either the account is meant not seriously, but as an ironic demolition of the poets' own pretensions; or Plato's metaphorical flights offer serious praise of poetry *by essentially poetic means*. The dialogue as a whole cannot be read as praising poetry unequivocally; but its obvious irony belittles not so much poetry as one character's ill-thought-out claim to a kind of knowledge and expertise he does not have.” This is a clear statement of why both Janaway and Flashar—both of whom have their hearts in the right place in comparison with Müller and Stern-Gillet—need “to throw *Ion* under the bus.” As should be obvious, I take the silencing of *Ion* to be his most interpretively significant defense, to which both Socrates' evident eagerness to play rhapsode himself, and *Ion*'s frank admission of the effect Socrates' Magnet has had on him, will be added below. But his *cri de cœur* on behalf of all the oppressed Ionians (541c3–6) should not be forgotten (see §15), as in Heitsch, “Argumentationsstruktur,” 258: “*Ion* ist offensichtlich nicht mehr als ein Spielball.”

238. See *Plato the Teacher*, 383–84; Hades links the two passages (see earlier note).

239. Cf. Cicero, *Pro Archia* 12–14 and 18.

sections of Socratic βραχυλογία (531a1–533c8 and 536e2–541e1) surround the no less characteristically Socratic μακρολογία at the dialogue’s center.²⁴⁰ Indicating the interpretive importance of the Silencing of Ion, both of these dialogic and elenctic passages begin with Socrates diverting the (potentially) honey-flowing streams of Homeric explication into humbler channels (cf. *Hp. Mi.* 369b8–c2), the first at 531a1 and the second at 536d8–e1. Plato continues to distinguish himself as τεχνικός by making further use of ring-composition in the dialogue’s central section, which as Flashar has ably demonstrated,²⁴¹ is itself sub-divided into three parts. Its two speeches bookend the conversation that reveals Ion’s double-mindedness, i.e., his admission that despite being transported to Troy and Ithaca to the extent that his hair stands on end and tears fill his eyes (535b1–c8), he is still capable of noting the audience’s reaction to his skill as a rhapsode (535e1–6), thereby disproving Socrates’ insinuation (535d1–7) that a man who cries and carries on as Ion does must be out of his mind. With his triad in mind—indeed Flashar finds a further triad *in the middle* of the middle section!²⁴²—Plato’s *Ion* would consist of seven parts, arranged in accordance with ring-composition; so much for Plato’s poetical τέχνη, announced here and about to be deployed on a larger scale in *Symposium*.²⁴³

On the other hand, the revelation of Ion’s double-mindedness, important though it is for calling into question a purely irrational explanation of his (silenced) rhapsodic art, is only the dialogue’s center in a numerical sense. Conceived as a three-part unity, the Magnet Speech begins with the Magnet itself (533d3–e3) and then applies the simile to the relationship between poet and Muse (533e3–535a1); no doubt with one eye on his own audience, Socrates then pauses to learn Ion’s (transported) reaction to what he has just said (535a1–2). The central and dialogic section (535a3–e6) then effects a transition between Ion as Socrates’ audience (535a3–5) through Ion as a performer (535b1–d7) to Ion’s impact on *his* audience (535d8–e6). Having reached

240. Cf. Stern-Gillet, “Plato’s *Ion*,” 171: “The elenchus that follows falls into two parts, separated by an uncharacteristically long speech by Socrates.”

241. Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 73–77.

242. See Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 75.

243. Cf. Kahn, *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, 108–110, on “the one-to-one mapping principle” (109), and Harris, “Plato’s *Ion* and the End of his *Symposium*,” 97 (quoted above); in the connection between *Smp.* 201e10–203a7 (Diotima on the μεταξύ) and 223d2–6 (Socrates on comedy and tragedy), the One Thing/One Opposite Principle—the logical basis for both Kahn’s principle and Harris’s either/or—is overthrown twice (it is overthrown in *Ion* by the ridiculous either/or choice Socrates offers Ion at 542a6–7). With respect to τέχνη, see especially *Smp.* 203a1–6: “Whosoever is wise [σοφός] in such things is a demonic man [δαίμωνιος ἀνὴρ], but he who is wise [σοφός] in another way—either concerning arts [τέχναι] or handiwork—is the base mechanical [ὁ βάνουσος].” Cf. Flashar, *Der Dialog Ion*, 65 (on the Magnet): “von hier aus führt den Weg zu der vor allem in *Symposium* vollzogen näheren Bestimmung des dämonischen Zwischenreiches zwischen Gott und Mensch.” So also Friedländer, *Plato* 2, 133: “It is this demonic realm-in-between [*Zwischenreich*] that is shown (though not named) in the *Ion*.”

that point, Socrates begins a second speech that applies the Magnet simile to the audience (535e7–9), creating a fourfold chain of rings (535e9–536b4). With this apparatus in place, he proceeds to explain the dancing of Ion’s soul (536b8) and his ability to εὐπορεῖν (536b8 and 536d2), hammering the distinction between τέχνη and θεία μοῖρα (536c1–2 and 536d2–3) on either side of another simile that likens poetic interpretation to the frenzied possession of the Corybants (536c2–6), and concludes by answering Ion’s question as to the cause (τὸ αἴτιον at 536d1; cf. 532b8) of his ability to do what he does (536b4–d3),²⁴⁴ or rather what he is going to be prevented from doing.

But this time, Ion responds very differently than he did to Socrates’ first speech, i.e., to the Magnet Speech *par excellence*. While admitting that “you are speaking well, Socrates” (536d4), Ion tells him that he has not only failed to persuade him that “possessed and raving mad am I praising Homer” (536d5–6) but that Socrates himself would recant that claim “if you were to hear me speaking about Homer” (536d7), i.e., the very thing Socrates will not allow Ion to do. This is why the (three-part) dialogic interlude is at best the dialogue’s arithmetical center τέχνη; its true center θεία μοῖρα (I am using the datives to indicate “by τέχνη” and “by θεία μοῖρα” respectively) is the Magnet Speech itself, to which Ion, after being prompted, responds in broken grammar—thereby revealing the effect Socrates’ words have had on him—as follows:

Socrates: Or does it not seem to you that I am speaking the truth, Ion? *Ion:* Yes, by Zeus, to me it does; for it touches somehow my, by these speeches [λόγοι], the soul, Socrates, and to me they seem by divine inspiration [θεία μοῖρα] to us from the gods these things—the good poets [οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταί]²⁴⁵—to interpret [ἐρμηνεύειν].²⁴⁶

It is Socrates’ evident ability to touch Ion’s soul²⁴⁷ that makes the preceding speech the *Herzstück* of the dialogue and this brief exchange the dialogue’s

244. Ion raises the dialogue’s τί ἔστιν question at 533c7–8, in this case, “why is it?”

245. Cf. Rijksbaron, *Plato, Ion*, 118: “Since Plato rejects poetry and does not consider it a good idea to spend too much time on it, ‘good poets’ cannot exist, of course.”

246. 535a3–5; I have preserved the Greek word order at the expense of clear expression. Cf. Lamb’s translation: “*Ion:* Yes, upon my word, I do: for you somehow touch my soul with your words, Socrates, and I believe it is by divine dispensation that good poets interpret to us these utterances of the gods.”

247. Cf. Joseph Moreau, “Les thèmes platoniciennes de l’*Ion*,” *Revue des Études Grecques* 52, nos. 246–247 (July–September, 1939), 419–428, on 426–27 (emphasis mine): “L’idée de demander la poésie une base d’éducation, un enseignement moral, est de toutes les époques; mais c’est précisément une telle éducation que Platon juge insuffisante, car elle ne fait que véhiculer une opinion qui peut être accidentellement droite, mais qui, détachée de la réflexion philosophique qui la fonde (ce qui est ordinairement le cas chez le poète ou son commentateur), est sans autorité et sans efficacité; elle reste extérieure à l’âme et n’y plonge pas de racines.” How one of Racine’s countrymen could have written this nonsense amazes me.

most important passage.²⁴⁸ As Ion has already admitted—and it is the admission from which all the rest follows, leading directly to the first mention of τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη (532c6)—when *anybody* is speaking about *any* other poet, he cannot so much as bring himself to pay attention:

Ion: Then what can be the reason [τὸ αἴτιον], Socrates, why I pay no attention when somebody discusses any other poet, and am unable to offer any remark at all of any value, but simply drop into a doze [νυστάζειν], whereas if anyone mentions something connected with Homer I wake up at once and attend and have plenty to say?²⁴⁹

As indicated by the grammatically chaotic and frenzied excitement of Ion's *enthusiastic* response (cf. 533e5, 535c2, and 536b3), Socrates' Magnet Speech does not cause him to νυστάζειν. What does this mean? The place to begin is with Ion's request to learn τὸ αἴτιον of his own curious behavior. The three-part center of Plato's *Ion* constitutes Socrates' attempt to honor that request, and thus he concludes his second speech with a phrase beginning: "and this is the cause [τὸ αἴτιον]" (536d1). But Socrates has failed to explain that αἴτιον not only once but twice, for he has failed to explain two different aspects of Ion's mysterious behavior. Insofar as Ion wants to know why he can contribute to conversations about Homer and can say "many and fine things" only about him, Socrates' explanation is ungrounded in any evidence. Not only does Socrates refuse to allow Ion to explicate Homer, he even usurps the rhapsode's humbler role of reciting his verses, for Plato grants him the chutzpah—although it is better understood as a sincere expression of his envy (530b5–c1)—to recite more lines of Homer in Plato's *Ion* than Ion himself does (cf. 536a8–b5, i.e., six lines for Ion, with seventeen for Socrates (538d1–3, 539a1–b1, and 539b4–d1). And insofar as Ion wants to know why the discussion of no other poet holds his attention, his response to the Magnet negates the existence of that phenomenon as well: Socratic poetry has touched his very soul.

The Magnet Speech is a masterpiece of variety, a rhetorical mansion with many delightful rooms and registers. Even while laying out his thesis at the start (533c9–d3), Socrates adopts a hierophantic tone: "I am going, then, while showing forth [ἀποφανόμενος] to you" (533c9–d1). The simile is Homer's stock and trade, particularly in the *Iliad*, and Plato's first (beginning with ὥσπερ at 533d3) is amazing. Explaining what it means to be divinely inspired (ἔνθεοι) on its basis, Socrates first lets forth a torrent of

248. See Maicon Reus Engler, "Secularização e Praticidade: A *Poética* de Aristóteles em sua Relação com a Teoria da Arte Grego e com a Filosofia Trágica" (Doctoral dissertation, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 2016), 142–44.

249. 532b8–c4 (Lamb).

poetic eloquence in describing οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταί (533e6),²⁵⁰ using a second simile, doubled this time (533e8 and 534a4; cf. 536c2–6) to do so. Socrates then goes a step further by describing the gardens of the Muses from which they come to us (534a7–b3); this allows for a third simile beginning with the telltale ὥσπερ (534b2–4) now configuring the poets as bees, and therefore light, winged, and holy (534b3–4).²⁵¹ And so by the time we encounter another ὥσπερ in the second speech (536c2), we scarcely realize *that it is the real Ion who has now become the simile*, so real has the poetic myth in the Magnet Speech become. From a real stone to a divine poet, from the poet to the bacchants, from the equally frenzied song-makers (μελοποιοί at 534a1–2) to their beautiful songs (τὰ καλά μέλη at 534a2), from those songs to the honey (μέλι at 534a5; cf. 534b2) culled from the Muses' beautiful gardens, from the gardens to the bees and thus back to the poets, from the poets to Ion himself, two realities—a stone and a rhapsode—have bookended the poetic seat of imagination and inspiration. In moralizing this spectacle, Socrates adds the unforgettably concrete proof based on Tynnichus (534d4–e1), on the basis of which he claims—and this is the best part—that it is the god who has demonstrated (ἐνδείξασθαι) for us that the greatest poems are not of human origin but are divine (534e1–535a1). Socrates has not only usurped Ion's role as reciter but as interpreter as well, here showing forth (αποφανόμεμος; cf. *Smp.* 209e2) what the god—Apollo through the Muses—is demonstrating (ἐνδεικνύμενος at 534e6) through Homer and all other ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταί.

250. See St. George Stock, *The Ion of Plato with Introduction and Notes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), 12 (on οἱ μελοποιοί at 533c8): “Plato’s sentences sometimes go round and round like a hurdy-gurdy in a way that makes one giddy. The one before us is a good example. ‘For all the good epic poets utter [λέγουσι] all these fine poems, not from art, but under inspiration and possession [κατεχόμενοι], and the good lyric poets in like manner, even as those who are seized with Corybantic frenzy do not dance so long as they are in their senses, so also the lyric poets do not compose these beautiful melodies [τὰ καλά μέλη ταῦτα ποιῶσιν] when they are in their senses, but when they have entered into the melody and the rhythm they start their revels and under possession, just as the Bacchae draw honey and milk from the rivers under possession [κατεχόμενοι], but not when they are in their right senses, so the soul of the lyric poets does this, as they themselves say [λέγουσι; he has translated 533e5–534a7].’ If we enclose in a parenthesis the words from ὥσπερ to μελοποιοί it will be seen more clearly that the first μελοποιοί is the subject to ποιῶσιν. ὡσαύτως looks backwards (in like manner as the epic poets [note that this ‘manner’ is a matter of poetic τέχνη, as is the entire ‘hurdy-gurdy’ Stock is describing]), not forwards to ὥσπερ. κατεχόμενοι [by which he means the second one bracketed above] is a good instance of *nominitivus pendens* [i.e., a subject left hanging]: owing to a change of construction [i.e., in imitation of the poetic frenzy he is describing] which throws the sentence out of gear (anacoluthon). Plato was going to say ‘and under possession they drew honey and milk from the rivers.’” An excellent start, Stock needed to think more like a poet with respect to the repetition of λέγουσι (in addition to the two uses bracketed here, see 534a7 and 534b7, the latter being the culminating and triumphant “and they speak [λέγουσι] the truth”) and more like a rhapsode in explaining the succession of ὡσαύτως ὥσπερ (533e8): stronger than both Burnet’s comma and Stock’s open parenthesis, there is between them a theatrical pause, a eye motile with thought, and a gasp for breath between them, achieving fluid ease only with τὰ καλά μέλη ταῦτα [which I take to be self-referential, for Plato is presently making one of “these,” i.e., one of τὰ καλά μέλη, a poem in (rhythmic) prose about poetic inspiration.

251. For Guthrie’s affection for this passage, see *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 211–12.

And among those, Plato has just shown forth and demonstrated that he, too, deserves a place. The more mindless that Socrates claims good poets must be, the more the Magnet Speech resembles a Performative Self-Contradiction.²⁵² It defends the divine inspiration that an uninspired reading takes it to attack *and* constitutes an attack on τέχνη that such a reading takes it to defend. In other words, it is only through *an inspired speech* that Socrates can prove that Ion has no τέχνη—just exactly as if he would be a better interpreter if he had one (cf. *Smp.* 202e3)—and it is only by becoming the greatest philosopher among poets that Plato can prove that all poets are mindless. Anticipating and justifying Alcibiades’ praise for Socratic λόγοι in *Symposium* (*Smp.* 215c6–d6), the Magnet takes hold of Ion’s soul because it is the medium of its own message,²⁵³ and the deepest level of the Speech’s Socratic irony is not detected by those who find in it merely *sarcastic* praise for *irrational* poesy because those who do so are unaware that they are finding an attack on poetry in what is itself an inspired poem.

As is so often the case, Plato has handed us the literary equivalent of a Rorschach inkblot,²⁵⁴ and it is only ourselves that we will measure by our responses to it. By following a false attack on Achilles in *Hippias Minor* with a poetic critique of poetry that would preclude—on an equally deadpan reading of *Ion*—the possibility that Ion or anyone else could give a true one, Plato has forced us to respond to Socrates’ opening words: “So what of it? Are you not an admirer of Homer?” (*Prt.* 309a6). This is what we must prove ourselves to be while interpreting Plato’s musical dialogues, but he can do nothing more than point us to Homer and then challenge us to choose. On the other hand, every time they walked past the τέμενος of the Muses in the Academy, his students would be reminded that even if Homer had inspired their teacher, it would not be Plato alone who had inspired them to make *their* choices, for what made his pedagogical τεχνή Platonic (*R.* 518c4–d8) was that it consis-

252. Cf. Murray, *Plato on Poetry*, 13: “The paradox that the most poetic of philosophers banished poets from his ideal state and condemned mimesis, yet often used the mimetic techniques of poetry in his own work has often been noted.” And again on 14: “How can we reconcile this hostility to mimetic literature with the fact that Plato appears to be [?] a mimetes himself?” In addition to *Plato the Teacher*, §34, especially 381–82, see Rick Benitez, “Iron Rings, Ravens and the Vast Sea of Beauty,” in Benitez and Keping Wang (eds.), *Reflections on Plato’s Poetics*, 1–5 (Berrima Glen Berrima: Academic, 2016), 2: “Plato is not the sort of philosopher who stands consistently by a metaphor. His Socrates presents a good example: at one time he is a gadfly, at another he is a midwife; now he is a stingray, later he is an asp. Or, he is one of those statues of Silenus one finds in the market, with gods inside. Or, he is Achilles, or Odysseus, or Teiresias, or Marsyas, or Orpheus. Plato has many different images of Socrates.”

253. Although Marshall McLuhan’s famous phrase is apt, the close proximity of the phenomenon it describes to Performative Self-Contradiction—it is its opposite, or complement—indicates that it is better understood as “Performative Self-Confirmation.” The Magnet not only affirms the reality of divine inspiration as the means of demonstrating that Ion has no τέχνη but also confirms its reality by performance. Cf. “self-referential” in §17.

254. Cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 391–92.

tently and characteristically cut out a sacred space for *θεία μοῖρα* (*R.* 492e2–493a3).²⁵⁵ Indeed “the separation of the forms” and the More Perfect Mirror require nothing less, nor should Socrates’ Sign be ignored (cf. *Ap.* 31c8–d1 and *Thg.* 128d2).

SECTION 13. RHETORIC REJECTED?

In his essay *On the Style of Demosthenes*,²⁵⁶ Dionysius of Halicarnassus (resident in Rome from 30 to 8 B.C.) examines the opening of Aspasia’s speech in Plato’s *Menexenus* (*Mx.* 236d4–238b1), quoting individual sentences and then commenting on them with care.²⁵⁷ He also quotes at length, this time without comment, a longer and considerably more important passage (see below) from the speech’s second part (*Mx.* 246c4–248e2). This emphasis on Plato in an essay about Demosthenes is remarkable, and the discussion of *Menexenus* is extensive and located in the essay’s center.²⁵⁸ For Dionysius, the agent in question is Plato, not Aspasia,²⁵⁹ and his concern throughout—given the context of Demosthenes it could scarcely be otherwise—is Plato’s style, i.e., what might generally be styled his use of *rhetoric* (cf. ῥητορικὴ at *Mx.* 235e5, 236a1, and 236a4). Dionysius does not attempt to defend the notion that Plato is relevant to a discussion of rhetoric: he takes it for granted that he is and that his readers will understand him to be so.²⁶⁰ He never quotes from *Gorgias*, and his quotations from *Phaedrus* are selected to illustrate Plato’s rhetorical excesses,²⁶¹ not his opposition to rhetoric. Plato is criticized, to be sure, but not for inconsistency. It is rather *as a rhetorician* that Plato is criticized, not for the seeming anomaly that the philosopher who ostensibly deplored rhetoric is using it.²⁶² The question is: is Plato using rhetoric *well*. In short, Dionysius’ goal is to assess the effectiveness of Plato’s rhetoric in

255. For the necessary role of *θεία μοῖρα* in Platonic pedagogy—based on *Thg.* as the link between *Grg.* and *Men.*—see *Ascent to the Good*, 370–71.

256. I will cite as “Dionysius, *Demosthenes*” the text of Hermann Usener and Ludwig Rademacher (eds.), *Dionysii Halicarnasei quae extant*, volume 5, *Opusculorum*, volume 1 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1899), 127–252; I will use their chapter, page, and line numbers.

257. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 24–29.

258. For the importance of his criticism of Plato, see “Letter to Pompeius,” in W. Rhys Roberts (ed.), *Dionysius of Halicarnassus, The Three Literary Letters: Ep. ad Ammaeum 1, Ep. ad Pompeium, Ep. ad Ammaeum 2* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1901), 27–30 and 87–128; the relevant passage is 1–2 (87–105).

259. Since both *Mx.* 237e1–7 and 238d2–5 concern women (the earth as mother in the latter), Dionysius may have skipped them in order to avoid discussion Aspasia’s literary agency.

260. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 23.178.8–16, refers to those who regard Plato as a well-nigh divine stylist; the scholion at 23.178.13 names Cicero. Note that *λέξις*, translated as “style” in the title, will also be translated as “passage” where the context requires it.

261. See Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 7; *Phdr.* is quoted five times.

262. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 26.186.6–7 implies Plato’s inconsistency in banishing the poets.

comparison with that of Demosthenes and, on the basis of *Menexenus*, he finds it to be inferior. To say nothing of the comparative verdict, it is by no means clear that his criticisms are undeserved.²⁶³

Although Dionysius never quotes from *Gorgias*, he does refer to Gorgias himself in the context of his criticism of Plato:

Whereupon, as if having descended [καταβάς] from his noble and magnificent words to puerilities [τὰ μειράκια], he [sc. Plato] arrives thusly at Gorgianic theatrics [τὰ θεατρικὰ τὰ Γοργία]—I refer to antitheses [ἀντιθέσεις] and the even balancing of phrases [παρισώσεις]—and through these antics, he decorates his expression.²⁶⁴

This too is remarkable, especially since Dionysius is an important source for our knowledge about Gorgias.²⁶⁵ As for Plato, while his ability to imitate the ἀντιθέσεις and παρισώσεις of Gorgias is only made manifest to all in *Symposium* (see §14), it is important to note that Gorgias is first mentioned in *Hippias Major* (*Hp. Ma.* 282b4–5). From that beginning, there is some reason for finding his influence, particularly of his *Encomium on Helen*,²⁶⁶ in *Hippias Minor*, where instead of defending a despised Homeric character, Socrates deflates a revered one (see §11). With Dionysius as an important witness for the dumbfounding effect Gorgias had on the Athenians,²⁶⁷ Philostratus tells of a connection between Gorgias and Aspasia,²⁶⁸ as a result, there is good reason to believe that he is operative in *Menexenus*,²⁶⁹ and may be in the background of *Ion* as well.

As inconsistent all of this may seem to be with the image of Plato as rhetoric's foe, it is perfectly consistent with Dionysius' attempt in *On the Style of Demosthenes* to show that Plato is Demosthenes' inferior with respect to

263. See in particular 26.184.20–185.4 on *Mx.* 236e1–3, on which more below. But since it is clear that Plato expects a phrase like this to be examined, the same is probably true about the opening line of the speech (*Mx.* 236d4–6), which Dionysius regards as and indeed proves to be repetitive (see *Demosthenes*, 24). Aside, then, from the assumption that he is criticizing Plato's personal effort to write a great speech, his way of reading *Mx.* seems to be on the mark, and his criticisms for the most part justified.

264. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 25.184.14–19. See also 5.138.2–5 (Laks and Most): “He {scil. Plato} prides himself inappropriately and immaturely on his poetic figures that produce the utmost displeasure, and especially the Gorgianic ones.”

265. See Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* 8, chapter 32; in addition to D23b (quoted in previous note), see P13, D12, D21, R2, R13, and R14.

266. See Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* 8, 32 D24 (166–185).

267. Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* 8, 32 P13 and R2; with ἐκπλήττειν in P13b, cf. *Ion* 535b2; with ἄπτεσθαι in R2, cf. ἄπτει at *Ion* 535a3.

268. Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* 8, 32 R3.

269. On *Mx.* 243a1–2, see τρῶπεια ἐστήσαντο in Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy* 8, 32 D28 (247, lines 4–5), and Adolf Trendelenburg, *Erläuterungen zu Platons Menexenus* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1905), 21 (on 243a). In tandem, these two allusions in close proximity are determinative.

rhetoric. It is in the context of this inferiority that Dionysius quotes a lengthy passage from Demosthenes' *On the Crown* immediately after quoting the address of the dead to their children and parents in *Menexenus*.²⁷⁰ To be clear, then, the quotation from Demosthenes follows first a careful and virtually line-by-line analysis of the opening of Aspasia's speech,²⁷¹ and then the unbroken quotation of a later passage from it. Although Dionysius has already subjected three sentences from this later part to critical scrutiny,²⁷² he is generally more positive about the end of *Menexenus* than its opening,²⁷³ a pattern that reverses his mixed verdict of the speech's—not the dialogue's, mind you—first sentence. In other words, after a highly critical analysis of the opening of Aspasia's speech in *Menexenus*, Dionysius then quotes a passage he regards as the best Plato has to offer in that speech, and only then quotes a passage from Demosthenes that he regards as superior to Plato's best, marking the transition between the two as follows:

This passage seems to be for Plato the most beautiful [κάλλιστα] in this speech; indeed it's done for the most part beautifully [καλῶς]—‘for it does not seem best to lie’—except that the form of it is just political [πολιτικόν], not fitted for competition [ἐν-αγών-ιστον]. Let us examine in comparison [ἀντιπαρεξετάσωμεν] with this, then, taking a passage [λέξεις] from Demosthenes' speech on behalf of Ctesiphon [sc. *On the Crown*]. It is not a summoning [παράκλησις] of the Athenians to the beautiful and virtue [ἐπὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν], as in Plato, but an encomium of the city because it regards all other things to be inferior to honor and reputation, which beautiful actions [καλαὶ πράξεις] bring with them even if someone might not succeed with them. And the passage is as follows:²⁷⁴

And having quoted Demosthenes without comment, Dionysius appeals to the reader to recognize that while there is a comparison, there is truly no contest:

There is no one who would not agree if only he might have a measured perception concerning speeches and might be neither a sorcerer nor some kind of crank [δύσπερις τις] that the passage just quoted differs from the earlier one to the same extent that weapons of war differ from their ceremonial stand-ins, and as true

270. For *De Corona* I will cite S. H. Butcher (ed.), *Demosthenis Orationes*, volume 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903).

271. In analyzing *Mx.* 236d4–238b, Dionysius skips only the following: 236e5–237b1, 237c3–7, 237d2–6, 237e1–7, and 238d2–5; the last two were mentioned in a previous note.

272. *Mx.* 247a2–3 (this passage will receive attention below), 247d7–8, and 248d4–5; in addition, the sentence immediately following the long quotation (*Mx.* 248e2–3) is also quoted in the critical passage in Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 26.186.11–187.1.

273. Cf. Stavros Tsitsiridis, *Platons Menexenus: Einleitung, Text, Kommentar* (Stuttgart and Leipzig: Teubner, 1998), 85n157, on “die nicht unbegründete Kritik des Dionysios an dem epinetischen Teil . . . im Gegensatz zu der Anerkennung für die Paränese und die Paramythie.” For caution on Dionysius' citations generally, see 100–101n208.

274. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 30–31.197.1–11.

spectacles do from illusions [εἰδῶλα], as bodies nourished in the sunlight and by hard work differ from those pursuing shade and a lazy rest.²⁷⁵

Since *De Corona* or “On the Crown” is generally regarded as Demosthenes’ masterpiece, the comparison with Plato’s *Menexenus* is probably in any case unfair.²⁷⁶ Moreover, Dionysius underestimates (in the introductory passage) the degree to which Demosthenes too is summoning the Athenians to ἀρετή and τὸ καλόν,²⁷⁷ and also that Aspasia is likewise more concerned with honor and reputation than success (cf. *Mx.* 247a4–b4). It is, of course, perfectly true that a school exercise like Plato’s *Menexenus*—which seems to capture what Dionysius means by calling it πολιτικόν—is aptly described in terms that recall the pleasant and shady rills of the Muses in *Ion* (534a7–b3), for it cannot be compared with a real speech delivered amongst the deepening shadows of the Athenian twilight. But the real problem is that Dionysius, writing in Cicero’s wake, is overlooking the evidence, presumably far better known to him than to us,²⁷⁸ that *Demosthenes was Plato’s student*,²⁷⁹ and therefore that his evident superiority to his teacher, whether as an orator or (as Cicero will say) “whatever else it is that I am”²⁸⁰—redounds to the credit of both. In fact, by inverting the roles of sun and shade, Dionysius has per-

275. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 32.200.21–201.4. The passage continues (lines 4–12): “For the one achieves nothing beyond good looks and for its sake its beauty is in untrue things, whereas in the other there is nothing that does not conduce to the useful and true. And it seems to me that no one errs by likening the style [λέξις] of Plato to a flowery spot for a pleasant rest, having indeed ephemeral pleasures, while [likening] the discourse of Demosthenes to a fruitful and fecund land, deficient neither in the necessities of life nor the out-of-the-way things that delight.”

276. Cf. Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 23; noteworthy in this section are his praise for Plato’s Socratic style in *Phlb.* (178.21–179.1), his grounds for not choosing *Ap.* (179.23–180.4), his remarks on *Smp.* (180.7–9)—which he regards as evidence for Plato’s eloquence, as per §14—his claim that Plato is imitating Thucydides in *Mx.* (180.9–12), and his rejection of Demosthenes’ *Funeral Oration* as inauthentic (180.14–16).

277. See Edmund M. Burke, “*Contra Leocratem* and *de Corona*: Political Collaboration?” *Phoenix* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1977), 330–340, on 337: “Under Demosthenes’ careful orchestration, the trial over Ctesiphon’s proposal [i.e., the occasion for his *De Corona*] became something other than a defense of Demosthenes’ political career; it became in sum a staged debate between traitor and patriot, pro- and anti-Macedonian. Indeed, the themes played upon by Demosthenes in his defense—patriotism, the glory of Athens’ past, honor, liberty—were exactly those which were at the heart of the Lycurgan program of restoration.” For Lycurgus as Plato’s student, see [Plutarch], *Lives of the Ten Orators*, 841, with further comment below.

278. See Cicero, *De oratore* 1.89, *Brutus* 121, *Orator* 15, and *De officiis* 1.4.

279. For an unusually sympathetic discussion of this evidence, see Andrea Wörle, *Die politische Tätigkeit der Schüler Platons* (Darmstadt: Kümmerle, 1981), 47–52. For more recent denials, see Kai Trampedach, *Platon, die Akademie und die zeitgenössische Politik* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1994), 126–29; Laurent Pernot, “À l’école de Platon” in Pernot, *L’Ombre du Tigre: Recherches sur la réception de Démosthène*, 21–60 (Naples, M. D’Auria, 2006); and Danielle S. Allen, *Why Plato Wrote* (West Sussex: Blackwell, 2010), 193n14.

280. Cicero, *Orator* 12: “Of course I’m also aware that I often seem to be saying original things when I’m saying very ancient ones (albeit having been unheard by most) and I confess myself to stand out as an orator—if that’s what I am, or in any case, whatever else it is that I am [*aut etiam quicumque sim*]—not from the ministrations of the rhetoricians but from the open spaces of the Academy.”

factly captured the difference between the teacher who offered a παράκλησις to τὸ καλόν and the student who took up that call by returning to the Cave, and delivering speeches that were at one and the same time πολιτικόν and ἐναγώνιον.

On the other hand, there may be some reason to think that Dionysius did not so much ignore as (tacitly) deny that evidence;²⁸¹ if so, that would mean making him our oldest example of a scholar whose evident lack of sympathy for Plato would lead him to controvert a claim “as consistently denied by modern scholars as it is asserted by ancient sources.”²⁸² In any case, it should surprise nobody that the origins of our current certainty that Cicero drew the wrong conclusion from the fact that “Demosthenes is said to have repeatedly read Plato carefully [*lectitavisse Platonem studiose*] and even to have heard him”²⁸³ are to be found not in Augustan Rome but nineteenth-century Germany.²⁸⁴ But it is interesting that Quintilian not only offers a proof that

281. Cf. Harvey Yunis, “Dionysius’ Demosthenes and Augustan Atticism,” in Richard Hunter and Casper C. de Jonge (eds.), *Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Augustan Rome*, 83–105 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), on 86–87: “unlike Cicero, the Greek rhetorical teacher [sc. Dionysius] had no role in Roman politics and thus no stake in reviving Demosthenes for political reasons of his own. Dionysius embraces Atticism and champions Demosthenes for aesthetic reasons, though there is a pointedly political side to the whole project of *On the Ancient Orators*.” Note that he also regards *Against Aristogeiton 2* as spurious (Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 57.250.21–251.1) and indeed was the first to do so; for the implications for Plato, see most recently Allen, *Why Plato Wrote*, 191n6.

282. A. E. Douglas, *M. Tulli Ciceronis Brutus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), 100 (on 121.22. *audivisse*); after listing the other passages in Cicero, Douglas adds references to Tacitus, Quintilian, Plutarch, and [Plutarch]. For an attempt to situate this evidence in the context of a quarrel between philosophy and rhetoric, see Craig Cooper, “Philosophers, Politics, Academics: Demosthenes’ Rhetorical Reputation in Antiquity,” in Ian Worthington (ed.), *Demosthenes: Statesman and Orator*, 224–45 (London: Routledge, 2000), on 239–40; note that the basis of this image is Antonius in Cicero’s *De oratore* 1.85–90, on whom see Altman, *Revival of Platonism*, 30–32.

283. Cicero, *Brutus* 121; note that Cicero ends this section by confirming something resembling Dionysius’ comparative claim (G. L. Hendrickson): “But his style [sc. Demosthenes’], if transferred to philosophy, would seem to pugnacious [*pugnacior*], if I may use the word; theirs [sc. philosophers, but given the context, Plato in particular], transferred to the courts, too pacific [*pacatior*].” The intervening portion of this important passage will be quoted below.

284. Wörle, *Die politische Tätigkeit*, 48n2 and 50, points to the agency of Arnold Schaefer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit*, volume 1 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1856), 280–81; in fact, Schaefer relies on Karl Hermann Funkhänel, “Dissertatio de Demosthene Platonis discipulo,” in Antonius Westermann and Funkhänel (eds.), *Acta Societatis Graecae*, volume 1, 287–306 (Leipzig: Koehler, 1836). Note that there are three kinds of evidence that any critic, starting with Funkhänel, must disarm: (1) a long line of ancient authorities, beginning with Hermippus, who made the claim (290–94), (2) Demosthenes’ letters, especially the one that survives (292–93), and (3) Demosthenes’ style (294–305) or his career more generally (see below). With respect to “(1),” it is probably not irrelevant that Schaefer is primarily responsible for making “[Plutarch]” (as opposed to Plutarch) the author of *The Lives of the Ten Orators*, which connects Aeschines (840), Lycurgus (841), Demosthenes (844), and Hyperides (848) to Plato; see Arnold Schaefer, “Commentatio de libro vitarum decem oratorum,” in Schaefer (ed.), *Ad Examen Anniversarium*, 1–38 (Dresden: Bochmann, 1844). I will not be revisiting “(2)” but will rather add a new twist to “(3)” based on a reading of Plato that identifies Cicero as a Platonist and places the Return to the Cave at the center of his concerns.

Demosthenes was Plato's student,²⁸⁵ but uses the same passage Dionysius quoted from *De Corona* to prove it:

And what then of Demosthenes? Has he not surpassed all of those [sc. Attic orators], lean and circumspect, in force, sublimity [*sublimitas*], energy, refinement, and composition? Does he not delight in figures of speech [*figurae*]? Does he not shine with metaphors? Does he not, with made-up speech [*oratio ficta*], give a voice to silent things [*dat tacentibus vocem*]? And isn't that oath sworn in the name of those warriors slain for the city at Marathon and Salamis sufficiently manifest to teach [*satis manifesto docere*] that his preceptor was Plato? And would we ever call *him* [sc. Plato] 'Asian,' whom it is often necessary to compare with poets infused with divine inspiration [*instincti divino spiritu vates*]?²⁸⁶

Naturally Plato has already demonstrated in *Ion* that he is comparable to those *instincti divino spiritu vates*, and the center of this section will be the passage in *Menexenus* when it is Aspasia, through the *ficta oratio* quoted by Dionysius, who *dat tacentibus vocem*.

For the present, however, the key word in this passage is *sublimitas*.²⁸⁷ Quintilian's word creates a link to another ancient author—and probably one who was responding directly to Dionysius²⁸⁸—who quotes “the Marathon Oath” (for so I will call it) to link Plato and Demosthenes:

Demosthenes is bringing forward a reasoned vindication of his public policy. What was the natural way of treating the subject? It was this. ‘You were not wrong [sc. to fight the losing Battle of Chaeronea], you who engaged in the struggle for the freedom of Greece. You have domestic warrant for it. For the warriors of Marathon did no wrong, nor they of Salamis, nor they of Plataea.’ When, however, as though suddenly inspired by heaven and as it were frenzied

285. The principal modern defender of the connection between Plato and Demosthenes to whom Funkhanel responds is J. H. Scholten, *Disquisitio de Demostheneae Eloquentiae Characterere* (Across the Rhine: Robert Natan, 1835).

286. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 12.10.23–24; he has just named Lysias, Isocrates, Andocides, Hyperides, Lycurgus, Aristogeiton, Isaeus, Antiphon, and Aeschines.

287. For this, Cicero uses the unusual word *granditas* in the as yet unquoted part of *Brutus*, 121: “and this is apparent [i.e., that ‘Demosthenes studied Plato carefully and heard him, as it is said that he did’] from the kind [*genus*] and grandiloquence [*granditas*] of his words; he even says this in one of his letters about himself.”

288. Following G. C. Richards, “The Authorship of the Περὶ Ὑψους,” *Classical Quarterly* 32, no. 3/4 (July–October 1938), 133–134, who is building on a hint in W. Rhys Roberts, “The Literary Circle of Dionysius of Halicarnassus,” *Classical Review* 14, no. 9 (December 1900), 439–442, on 440: “This passage shows that Gn. Pompeius Geminus [the recipient of *Ep. ad Pompeium*] was a great, though not an indiscriminating, admirer of Plato, of whom he writes in terms not unlike those employed by the unknown writer of the *De Sublimitate*. Indeed, if conjecture is to seek an author for that treatise in the age of Augustus, this Pompeius might be named with far more plausibility than Dionysius himself, whose claims were at one time advocated.” The probable link to the house of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus suggests that the debate between Dionysius-Caecilius and Longinus-Pompeius may have had a political dimension, with Longinus, Cicero, Demosthenes, and Plato on the other side of “Augustan Atticism.”

by the God of Prophecy, he utters his famous oath by the champions of Greece ('assuredly ye did no wrong; I swear it by those who at Marathon stood in the forefront of the danger'), in the public view by this one Figure of Adjuration, which I here term *Apostrophe*, he deifies his ancestors.²⁸⁹

Naturally Longinus has many other choice things to say about Plato in *On the Sublime*.²⁹⁰ But in order to bring him into harmony with Dionysius and Quintilian, two things require emphasis, and the first is emphasized by Longinus: since "the oath is framed for vanquished men, with the intention that Chaeronea should no longer appear a failure to the Athenians,"²⁹¹ what makes it supremely eloquent is its unrepentantly idealistic hyperbole,²⁹² *for even if Demosthenes had known* that the battle would be lost, he swears by the heroes of Marathon that it was nevertheless a fight that needed to be fought.²⁹³

Quintilian's proof forces us to ask whether anyone else's student would have dared to intone this thoroughly impractical but unquestionably gallant paradox, and when considered in the larger context of *Ascent to the Beautiful*, it commands respect. But a less controversial paradox—and the crucial one in this section—emerges from the intersection of Dionysius, Longinus, Cicero, and Quintilian: whether or not the latter were right that he taught Demosthenes, *Plato was unquestionably teaching rhetoric*. In the context of Reading Order, this should be obvious: if not with the Great Speech of Protagoras (*Prt.* 320c8–328d2) or Socrates' speeches on Sparta and Simonides (*Prt.* 342a6–347a5) and then about Sparta and Persia (*Alc.1* 121a3–124b6), then certainly beginning with the study of the speeches in *Iliad* 9, so necessary for

289. W. Rys Roberts, *Longinus On the Sublime; The Greek Text Edited after the Paris Manuscript with Introduction, Translation, Facsimiles, and Appendices*, second edition (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1907), 91–93; hereafter "Longinus, *On the Sublime*" cited by chapter and section numbers.

290. See especially Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 12.2–5, 13.3–4, and 14.1.

291. Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 93; spelling of "Chaeronea" altered. On the Marathon Oath in a Platonic context, see also Scholten, *Disquisitio*, 156–163.

292. The passage quoted by Dionysius begins with Demosthenes, *De Corona*, 199 (C. A. and J. H. Vince translation modified): "As he [sc. Aeschines] lays so much stress on results, I wish to speak, yes, a kind of paradox [βούλομαι τι καὶ παράδοξον εἰπεῖν]. And by Zeus and the gods, let nobody wonder at my hyperbole [καὶ μου πρὸς Διὸς καὶ θεῶν μηδεὶς τὴν ὑπερβολὴν θαυμάσῃ] but with good will, examine what I am saying. Suppose that the future had been revealed to all of us, that every one had known what would happen, and that you, Aeschines, had predicted and protested, and shouted and stormed—though in fact you never opened your mouth—even then the city could not have departed from that policy, if she had any regard for honor, or for our ancestors, or for the days that are to come."

293. In addition to Demosthenes, *De Corona*, 208, cf. 205 (Vince and Vince modified): "The Athenians of that day [sc. during the Persian Wars] did not search for a statesman or a commander who should help them to a servile security: they did not ask to live, unless they could live as free men. Every man of them thought of himself as one born, not to his father and his mother alone, but to his country [cf. *Ep.* 358a2–8]. What is the difference? The man who deems himself born only to his parents will wait for his natural and destined end; the son of his country will be willing to die [ἀποθνήσκειν ἐθελήσει] rather than see her enslaved, and will look upon those outrages and indignities, which a commonwealth in subjection is compelled to endure, as more dreadful than death itself."

understanding *Hippias Minor* (see §11), then followed first by the inspired Magnet Speech in *Ion* (§12) then by Aspasia's Funeral Oration in *Menexenus*, and soon to culminate in the great feast of speeches that is Plato's beautiful *Symposium* (§14), the emphasis on rhetoric is so obvious that it requires a deadpan insistence on Plato's opposition to rhetoric, based primarily on *Gorgias*—an insistence absent from the four ancient authorities just named²⁹⁴—to deny it. The eloquent Plato is teaching us eloquence. Even if there were not a number of “Attic Orators” (minor or otherwise) who listened to Plato in the Academy,²⁹⁵ the texts themselves constitute irrefragable evidence of Plato's concern with and manifest ability to produce eloquent speeches.

But whatever may be the earlier indications of that concern, *Menexenus* marks a turning point. When Socrates identifies Aspasia as his teacher (ἡ διδάσκαλος at *Mx.* 236e3; see also 235e4 and 236a1), identifies her expertise as “concerning rhetoric [περὶ ῥητορικῆς]” (*Mx.* 235e5), and claims that “she has produced many *other* orators, and good ones [ἄλλους πολλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς πεποιήκε ῥήτορας]” (*Mx.* 235e5–6; emphasis mine) beginning with Pericles and now including Socrates himself—for it is no wonder, says Socrates, that a man whose teachers in music (μουσική) and ῥητορική are Connos and Aspasia respectively, is able “to be formidable in speaking [δεινὸν εἶναι λέγειν]” (*Mx.* 236a2–3)—considering all this, Plato's concern with teaching ῥητορική becomes unmistakable. Edward Schiappa has argued that Plato invented the term “rhetoric” and introduced it in *Gorgias*,²⁹⁶ the hammered appearance of the word in *Menexenus* (*Mx.* 235d–236a4) combined with that dialogue's earlier place in the Reading Order, suggest a somewhat earlier but still Platonic origin. And if Plato began his instruction in philosophy, ἀρετή, and αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν in *Protagoras*, and did so more specifically with the crack of dawn entrance of the young Hippocrates, burning with the desire to δεινὸν εἶναι λέγειν (cf. *Prt.* 312d5–7) precisely because

294. See in particular Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 2.24–29.

295. See Allen, *Why Plato Wrote*, 193n14: “My own interpretation of the rhetorical patterns of argument and vocabulary to be found in the orators would confirm pseudo-Plutarch's identification of Lycurgus, Aeschines, and Hyperides as students of Plato while also confirming doubt about the claims that Demosthenes [for her dismissal of Burke, “*Contra Leocratem* and *De Corona*,” see 127, 191n6, and 195n32] studied with him.” This creates useful dialectical friction with my position on Demosthenes and Aeschines; for the political ramifications, consider 119–20: “In the person of Aeschines, Demosthenes saw the convergence of a drive toward less egalitarian institutions at home, support for Philip, and a consequent support for Philip's efforts to sow oligarchies in the Greek city-states; moreover, he saw Platonism lodged at the heart of this convergence. Soon enough, of course, Philip himself would be explicitly aligned with this tradition; in 343 he recruited Plato's student, Aristotle, to teach his son, Alexander.”

296. Edward Schiappa, “Did Plato Coin *Rhētorikē*,” *American Journal of Philology* 111, no. 4 (Winter 1990), 457–470; see especially 465: “Moreover, good reasons can be identified for Plato to coin the term ῥητορική. *Gorgias* was written about the same time as *Menexenus*, a piece in which Plato also attacked ῥητορική—despite [N. B.] providing what came to be regarded by Athenians as a good example of funeral oration.”

such was the less lofty goal that brought many youngsters to the Academy, he had a professional or moral obligation to give his students what they wanted *and then some*, especially since his principal rival as a schoolteacher was Isocrates,²⁹⁷ Milton's "old man eloquent."²⁹⁸

Beginning with his claim to be a disciple of Prodicus (*Prt.* 340e8–341a4), Socrates has presented himself as someone who is willing to be taught, and who has been. But in *Hippias Major*, Plato takes a further step: he depicts Socrates in the *process* of being taught, a phenomenon I am calling "Socrates Schooled" (see §10). Beginning with the annoyingly instructive questions of the Double, we witness this for the first of three times in the dialogues that culminate in *Symposium*. By presenting the Funeral Oration in *Menexenus* as having been taught to Socrates by Aspasia (*Mx.* 236b8–c7) despite his advanced age (*Mx.* 236c7–9; cf. *Euthd.* 272c2–5), we are now far closer to *Symposium*—the most important example of Socrates Schooled in the dialogues²⁹⁹—than to *Protagoras*. Here he not only claims that Conus and Aspasia are his teachers (*Mx.* 235e9–236a1), but offers proof that Aspasia is, and does so by both word and deed, the latter in the form of his memorized delivery of the speech itself. To say nothing about the way rhetoric is being taught in both dialogues, the fact that Socrates describes Aspasia as his *feminine* teacher (ἡ διδάσκολος at *Mx.* 236c2) and then represents Diotima in the process of teaching him in *Symposium* (beginning with *Smp.* 201d5), constitutes an unmistakable link between them, creating a "snug fit" with respect to Reading Order. More importantly, the pedagogical value of this conceit is obvious: Plato is using "Socrates Schooled" to illustrate or model for *his* students what learning looks like, proving that there is no shame in being taught.

No matter how ironic its immediate context makes it seem to be, the larger context indicates the critical importance of Socrates' claim that dying in war

297. For a less collegial interpretation of their rivalry—based, of course, on the view that Plato was the uncompromising foe of rhetoric—see Schiappa, "Did Plato Coin," 385 (emphasis mine; immediately follows the passage quoted in the previous note): "The combined target of *Gorgias* and *Menexenus* was nothing less than the most important public speaking practices in Athens: defense in the law-courts, speaking in the assembly, and the important political act of eulogizing the war-dead. If Plato could identify the 'product' of his rival Isocrates' training [i.e., ῥητορικὴ] as *something unnecessary or undesirable*, so much the better for the reputation of Plato's school." For useful bibliography on the rivalry between Plato and Isocrates, see Galen O. Rowe, "Two Responses by Isocrates to Demosthenes," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 51, no. 2 (2nd quarter, 2002), 149–162; based on the view that Demosthenes was Plato's student (151), Rowe argues that Isocrates was attacking Plato through Demosthenes (160–61).

298. John Milton, "To the Lady Margaret Ley," 6–8: "as that dishonest victory / At Chaeronea, fatal to liberty / Kil'd with report that Old man eloquent."

299. At least, that is, with respect to an actual person, a qualification that allows for the instruction Socrates receives from the Laws of Athens in *Crito*. One might also object on the basis of *Prm.*—surely a far better basis than *Ti.*, *Sph.*, or *Plt.*—for other examples of Socrates Schooled.

(τὸ ἐν πολέμῳ ἀποθνήσκειν) is καλόν.³⁰⁰ By “the larger context,” I refer to the fact that all three instances of Socrates Schooled implicate and indeed revolve around τὸ καλόν. Moreover, since I have identified the passage about incurring wounds and death for the sake of aiding one’s friends in wartime in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 115b1–10 and 116a6) as being of decisive importance not only in the context of the series of dialogues culminating in *Symposium* but for the architecture of Plato’s pre-*Republic* dialogues as a whole (see §5), there is a pedagogical logic that connects *Menexenus*—so often considered a puzzling outlier in the corpus³⁰¹—to the ascent to the Beautiful. There can be no personal advantage to the dead hero in strictly human terms like “happiness [εὐδαιμονία]” (*Mx.* 247a6): posthumous rewards for the gallant τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν (see Preface, *ad fin.*) are available only in the afterlife, as in *Gorgias*,³⁰² or in the form of fame (see §16). Whether applied in a vivid and persuasive myth, an eloquent epitaph, or a sublime Funeral Oration that enshrines the dead in the city’s eternal memory, *rhetoric is omnipresent*. But more important than these post-mortem examples are the kinds of speeches—of which these are only a subset—that persuade those who are still alive that it is καλόν to sacrifice your life for others, or to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν (see §5, *ad fin.* and §16).

Among the examples of such speeches, Demosthenes’ *De Corona* stands out, for although Dionysius of Halicarnassus was correct that it is an encomium of the city, it is also an exhortation to its citizens *to be worthy of their heritage*, and therefore its sublimity is by no means accidental but flows from the kind of self-sacrifice, even in a losing cause, that the speech is extolling. In short, Demosthenes is eloquent *because he must be*:

But it is not, it is not that you erred, O Men of Athens, having risen to danger [κίνδυνον] on behalf of everyone’s freedom and salvation [ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀπάντων ἐλευθερίας καὶ σωτηρίας κίνδυνον ἀράμενοι]; by those of our ancestors who went forward out to danger [προκινδυνεύειν] at Marathon I swear it, and by those who stationed themselves alongside [παρατάττεσθαι, i.e., alongside the Spartans and opposite the Persians]³⁰³ at Plataea, and those fighting by sea at Salamis, and those off Artemisia, and many others, those now lying in our civic memorials: good men, whom all of them alike our city, having deemed them

300. *Mx.* 234c1–6: “*Socrates*: In truth, Menexenus, to fall in battle seems to be a splendid thing in many ways [πολλαχῆ] κινδυνεύει καλόν εἶναι τὸ ἐν πολέμῳ ἀποθνήσκειν]. For a man obtains a splendid and magnificent funeral even though at his death he be but a poor man; and though he be but a worthless fellow, he wins praise, and that by the mouth of accomplished men who do not praise at random, but in speeches prepared long beforehand.”

301. Cf. Nickolas Pappas and Mark Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy in Plato’s Menexenus: Education and Rhetoric, Myth and History* (London: Routledge, 2015), i: “*Menexenus* is one of the least studied among Plato’s works, mostly because of the puzzling nature of the text.”

302. See *Ascent to the Good*, §12.

303. See *Ascent to the Good*, 191–92.

worthy of the same honor laid to rest, Aeschines [ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας, οὓς ἅπαντας ὁμοίως ἢ πόλις τῆς αὐτῆς ἀξιώσασα τιμῆς ἔθαψεν, Αἰσχίνῃ], and not those who proved successful among them nor only those who won. And justly, for by all of them has the work [ἔργον] of good men been done [πράττεσθαι].³⁰⁴

Leaving the eloquence of this famous passage to speak for itself, three observations are in order, the first about Dionysius. In discussing *Menexenus* 236e1–3, he criticized Plato for mixing the verb “to be done [πράττεσθαι]” with the noun “work [ἔργον],” exactly as Demosthenes does here, in two paired phrases: ἔργων γὰρ εὖ πραχθέντων and λόγῳ καλῶς ῥηθέντι as opposed to, for example, using a cognate accusative like ἔργον ἐργάζεσθαι in the first.³⁰⁵ But by connecting εὖ to πράττεσθαι in the first clause, Plato was erroneously suggesting in the second—thanks to the ambiguity of εὖ πράττειν (see §5 and §11)—that one only needs to speak καλῶς of those who have “fared well” or who have succeeded, exactly the opposite point that Demosthenes is making about the heroes of Chaeronea. It therefore looks like he composed his masterpiece with Plato’s error in mind, for he is guilty of the same stylistic infelicity of combining πράττεσθαι and ἔργον, *but to exactly the opposite effect*.

The second observation begins with Longinus, who used this passage to illustrate what might be called “the Rhetoric of Inspiration” if, that is, such a phrase does not imply that inspiration is only a matter of rhetorical appearances.³⁰⁶ “But when, just as if suddenly [ἐξαίφνης] inspired by a god, and having become possessed by Apollo [φοιβόληπτος] in prophecy, he speaks out that oath by the best men of Hellas.”³⁰⁷ According to Longinus, the result of Demosthenes having become φοιβόληπτος is then transferred to his audience:

and into the jurymen having emplaced the mind-set of those who then went out into danger [προκινδυνεύειν], and having transformed the nature of his demonstration into a transcendent sublimity and passion [εἰς ὑπερβάλλον ὕψος καὶ πάθος] and that secure belief which rests upon strange and preternatural oaths, and as at once a kind of medicine and an antidote having sent down into the souls of his auditors a discourse, so that having become light [κουφίζεσθαι] by these encomia, they are to consider themselves to be no less bound to the battle

304. Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 208.

305. At *Demosthenes*, 26.184.20–185.4, Dionysius also protests the use of εὖ and καλῶς albeit without touching on the error to which I am calling attention in what follows, which could have been avoided by the following switch: ἔργων γὰρ καλῶς πραχθέντων λόγῳ εὖ ῥηθέντι. Beginning with *Alc. I* 115a6–16, the difference between the Beautiful and the Good embodied here in the seemingly innocuous exchange of εὖ and καλῶς (cf. *Alc. I* 116b2–3) is essential to the architecture that places *Ascent to the Beautiful* prior to *Ascent to the Good*, for those who καλῶς πράττειν do not always εὖ πράττειν when the latter means “to fare well” rather than “to do well.”

306. Cf. “The Rhetoric of the Immaterial Sublime” (610–17) in James I. Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

307. Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 16.2.

against Philip than to the victories won at Marathon and Salamis, for by all of these, he has departed, having snatched up his auditors with him through τὸ σχηματισμόν.³⁰⁸

I have left τὸ σχηματισμόν untranslated because it might refer to the speaker's bearing and attitude *or* his rhetorical “figure” or stratagem. In any case, the chain effect that this passage creates has reminded others of the Magnet Speech in *Ion*,³⁰⁹ and with good reason. The second point, then, is that by referring to both Connus and Aspasia as his teachers (διδάσκαλοι at *Mx.* 236a1), Socrates is pointing back to *Ion* in *Menexenus*, for if the latter influenced Demosthenes, the same evidence (as explicated by Longinus) indicates that the former inspired him as well, for the σχηματισμόν through which he seized his audience was (a Rhetoric of) Musical Inspiration.

The third observation will take us back through *Ion* to *Hippias Minor*. Both Longinus and Quintilian are eloquent about Plato's debts to Homer, and since I am using the latter's proof that Demosthenes heard the dialogues—if only the elementary ones considered in *Ascent to the Beautiful*—his inspiring account of the inspired Plato will be quoted first:

Of the philosophers, from whom Cicero confesses himself to have drawn most of his eloquence [*eloquentia*], who would doubt that Plato stands first, whether in acuteness of expression or by a certain divine and Homeric readiness of eloquence [*eloquendi facultas divina quaedam et Homerica*]? For far above a prosaic oratory and what the Greeks call ‘pedestrian’ does he rise, and to me it is not by native genius of a man but he rather seems to be infused with the oracle of the Delphic god [*Delphici oraculo dei instinctus*].³¹⁰

Longinus also recognizes Plato's debt to Homer, stating: “But it is most of all Plato who has drawn into himself such innumerable rivulets from that flowing Homeric spring [ῥῆμα].”³¹¹ This use of ῥῆμα (cf. *Ion* 534b1) in the context of Homer suggests that there is more of Plato in *Ion* the rhapsode than one might think, and that if Plato were not the source of Demosthenes' Marathon

308. Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 16.2; “a transcendent sublimity and passion” is Rhys Roberts's translation.

309. E.g., Casper C. de Jonge, “Dionysius and Longinus on the Sublime: Rhetoric and Religious Language,” *American Journal of Philology* 133, no. 2 (Summer 2012), 271–300, on 279: “The idea of possession also plays a role in Longinus' portrayal of the sublime author, who sometimes reminds us of the inspired poet of Plato's *Ion* [note 22].” Cf. 279n22: “In 13.2, Longinus adapts and reworks Plato's metaphor of the magnetic chain (*Ion* 533d: Homer, rhapsode, audience), introducing a chain between the author imitated, author who imitates and his audience.”

310. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 10.81. On the religious language, see De Jonge, “Dionysius and Longinus.”

311. Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 13.3.

Oath, he was at least the source of Quintilian's and Longinus' ability to praise it so eloquently.³¹²

From these three observations about the Marathon Oath, I derive the following point about Plato: by the time we reach the rhetoric lesson in *Menexenus*, he has already persuaded us indirectly of the amazing power of Homer's eloquence in *Hippias Minor* and directly of his own in *Ion*. Since Dionysius concluded by identifying Demosthenes as "the man in the arena" and Plato as the lazy singer in the shade, he might have done better, strictly as a matter of comparative eloquence, to compare the Marathon Oath with the Magnet. There, Plato has given us an unforgettable simile (*Ion* 533d3–e5),³¹³ a sudden willingness to take a long rhetorical flight (*Ion* 533e5–534a7), the amazing string of genitives plural (*Ion* 534a7–b3) followed by that succinct and sublime truth-claim (*Ion* 534b3), then the passage that inspired Longinus and Quintilian to think of Plato himself as φοιβόληπτος and *Delphici oraculo dei instinctus* (*Ion* 534b3–7), and finally the sober chain of reasoning—bolstered by the unforgettable proof based on Tynnichus, the "one-hit wonder" (*Ion* 534d4–e1)—that ultimately connects the Muse and Homer as source to *Ion* as audience through Socrates as poet-orator (*Ion* 534b7–535a2), who all the while is pretending (this is *his* σχηματισμόν) that it is not himself, but the rhapsode who is inspired.³¹⁴

Having now offered evidence that ancient readers had good reason to think that *Menexenus* was a proper basis for discussion of Plato's own use of rhetoric, and that the turn to rhetoric embodied in it emerges from *Ion*, the remainder of this section will consider (1) the rhetorical highpoint of the second part of Aspasia's speech, (2) the speech as a whole in the context of Dionysius' claim that Plato was imitating the Funeral Oration of Pericles in Thucydides, and (3) the more general question of a properly Platonic relationship between

312. Cf. D. C. Innes, "Longinus and Caecilius: Models of the Sublime." *Mnemosyne* 55, no. 3 (2002), 259–284, on 268: "he [sc. Longinus] evokes the creative power of *mimesis* in his own imitation of Plato's magnetic chain of inspiration in *Ion* 533d, inspiration which like that of frenzied corybants or bacchantes moves from the Muse to poet (Homer) to rhapsode to audience. So in a similar chain here, Homer, like the frenzied Pythia in Delphi, inspires others, especially Plato, who then inspires Longinus—who shows his own creative originality by associating Platonic poetic madness with the Pythia of Delphi and by linking this to the notion of *mimesis*—and all this in elaborately rich style."

313. There should be a comma or pause between τούτων and ἄλλον at *Ion* 533e3–4.

314. It is therefore with *Ion* in mind that we should read Socrates' famous remarks—ironic in the context of the portion of the speech that Dionysius analyzed—about the amazing power of speech to hold him "spellbound, believing himself in the moment to have become greater and nobler and more beautiful [καλλίων]" (*Mx.* 235b1–2) for at least the next three days (*Mx.* 235b8–c1) with "the en-fluted speech and its din flowing into my ears from the speaker" (*Mx.* 235c1–2), returning to earth only on the fourth or fifth day having returned from the Islands of the Blessed (*Mx.* 235c2–4). It is there that Phaedrus will tell us that Homer's Achilles dwells (*Smp.* 180d4–5) despite what Homer's Odysseus says in *Republic* 7 (*R.* 516d4–e2) in order to make returning to the Cave appear to be something other than καλόν (see §16) just as Aeschines tried to make the fallen heroes of Chaeronea the proof that Demosthenes was unworthy of the Crown.

rhetoric and philosophy. This preview is necessary primarily because of what this section will not contain: discussion of the lush profusion of historical inaccuracies in the first part of Aspasia's speech, culminating in the anachronism of the King's Peace. These errors are crucial for joining *Menexenus* to *Symposium* in the Reading Order,³¹⁵ but discussion of their pedagogical purpose will be postponed until §15.³¹⁶ The justification for privileging in order of presentation the *rhetorical* link between *Menexenus* and *Symposium* over the at least equally important historical link between them is the *musical* element in Plato's early dialogues, on fullest display in *Ion*. Of course, neat divisions of this kind, no matter how necessary to any presentation they may be, must prove to be misleading where Plato is concerned.³¹⁷

In turning to "(1)," it is no accident that the rhetorical highpoint of the address of the dead to their children (*Mx.* 247a2–6) will also turn out to be inseparable from the passage of greatest "philosophical" or rather doctrinal importance in *Menexenus* (*Mx.* 246e7–247a6), a coincidence that already bears on "(3)." For the present, however, it is first necessary to recall Quintilian's claim that Demosthenes *oratione ficta dat tacentibus vocem*, for in the addresses to both their children and parents, Plato—through Socrates and Aspasia of course—"is giving a voice to the silent with a made-up speech." In channeling the silent voices of the dead, Aspasia functions once again as the "interpreter [ἑρμηνῆς]" described in *Ion* (535a9), and she therefore downplays her own agency:

Socrates: I [sc. Aspasia] will express to you both what things I heard from them [sc. the dead] and also such things as they would gladly now—having gained the capacity [δύναμις, i.e., to do so]—say to you, conjecturing [sc. as to the latter] from the things they were saying then. But [now] it is necessary to believe that you are hearing from them the messages I am bringing [ἃ ἀπαγγέλλω].³¹⁸

The last word is important, and it will be hammered after the dead have finished their speeches (*Mx.* 248e1 and e2). But hammering it there has the further purpose of drawing attention to the even more important word ἐπέσκηπτον, which was joined to ἀπαγγέλλειν the first time it was used, and is joined to it again after they have spoken (*Mx.* 248e1): before the dead fathers died "they were solemnly enjoining us to announce [ἡμῖν ἐπέσκηπτον ἀπαγγέλλειν]" (*Mx.* 246c3). It is to this *inaudible discourse* that Aspasia refers in the quoted passage: the "things I heard from them" *then* are the

315. See Altman, "Reading Order," section §4.

316. Note, however, that a central component of that discussion—the claim that Plato intended the reader of *Mx.* to have already read Thucydides—is already implicit in "(2)."

317. Cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 189.

318. *Mx.* 246c4–7.

basis on which she will deduce what they would gladly say to you *now*. Note that Aspasia stands in the same position to the dead that Socrates does to Aspasia, although when she concludes with “and I [ἐγώ], as devotedly [ὡς προθυμότερα] as I am able [δύναμαι], am announcing [ἀπαγγέλλω]” (*Mx.* 248e1–2), it has become difficult to decide who the ἐγώ behind those first-persons really is, and that means we should keep in mind the possibility that it is Plato, especially since his eloquence is about to be on full display:

Socrates: On account of these things, both first and last [καὶ πρῶτον καὶ ὕστατον], and through it all, with full devotion, do completely try [καὶ διὰ παντός πᾶσαν πάντως προθυμίαν πειρᾶσθε] so to be that, first and foremost [μάλιστα μὲν], you surpass us and those who went before in good repute [εὐκλεία], but if not, know that for us, should we defeat you [νικᾶν] in virtue [ἀρετή], that victory [ἡ νίκη] brings shame [αἰσχύνη], but that our defeat [ἡ δὲ ἥττα], if we should be defeated [ἡττᾶσθαι], brings happiness [εὐδαιμονία].³¹⁹

Taking Demosthenes as the canon of Attic eloquence, consider first the following parallels. Aside from the initial π in *πρῶτον*, there is nothing that prepares us for the sudden infusion of inspired alliteration that follows. With this, compare the passage in *De Corona* where the fact that Aeschines’ name begins with an *a* leads to a string of words beginning with that vowel—*ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας, οὓς ἅπαντας ὁμοίως ἢ πόλις τῆς αὐτῆς ἀξιώσασα τιμῆς ἔθαμεν, Αἰσχίνην*—that equals in number, but more importantly in rhetorical audacity, the six initial π ’s in Plato.³²⁰ More importantly, there is the paradoxical reversal of victory and defeat, for the principal conceit of the Marathon Oath is that the defeated have been victorious with respect to both *εὐκλεία* and *ἀρετή*. In Plato, it is already the glory of the dead *to be defeated*, for if they surpass their children in *εὐκλεία* and *ἀρετή*, that victory will bring defeat. “You did not err,” intones Demosthenes, for had you not lived up to the example of those who fell at Marathon, the result would have been what Plato here calls *αἰσχύνη*, placing it in remarkable contrast to *εὐδαιμονία*. Happiness is incompatible with shame but is not only compatible with a posthumous defeat, *but is only available to those who have been posthumously defeated*. Solon’s immortal claim in Herodotus that none should be called blessed until they are dead,³²¹ is now extended to the hereafter: “we will not be happy unless we are defeated by you in a contest for *εὐκλεία* and *ἀρετή*” is what the fathers “were solemnly enjoining us to announce,” and the children should not expect a friendly reception from them when they arrive in Hades unless they come as victors in that contest (*Mx.* 247c1–3).

319. *Mx.* 247a2–6.

320. See Dionysius, *Demosthenes*, 26.186.11–13; the basis for his criticism is not explained but the likelihood is that he finds the alliteration excessive and tasteless.

321. Herodotus, 1.32.7–8.

Thanks to this use of εὐδαιμονία, the implications of this eloquent passage should already have begun to become clear.³²² The conventional understanding of “the philosophy of Socrates,” emerging in the shadow of Aristotle, is that Virtue is Knowledge, and more specifically—as developed most forcefully by the so-called Socratics like Penner (see §11) who emerged in Vlastos’s shadow—it is the knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) or wisdom (σοφία) that secures our εὐδαιμονία.³²³ In the passage just quoted, Socrates has called that understanding into question: only after they have *died* can the dead achieve εὐδαιμονία, and then only if they have begotten in their children the same complete devotion—that διὰ παντὸς πᾶσα πάντως προθυμία—that has led them to do what they have done, ably described by Demosthenes as being willing to undergo danger (cf. κινδυνεύσειν at *Mx.* 246c4) ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀπάντων ἐλευθερίας καὶ σωτηρίας. *Menexenus* stands between *Ion* and *Symposium* in the Reading Order of Plato’s dialogues because the inspired eloquence that emerges in the first will be connected to “giving birth in the beautiful” in the other, for Plato has all along been preparing us for a revelatory vision of τὸ καλόν.³²⁴

Diotima’s revelation will necessarily have a negative component, for having gained a vision of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, one will no longer “bring forth illusory phantoms of virtue [εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς]” (*Smp.* 212a3–4). That revelation is already implied here, not only because a notion of ἀρετή that secures “the human good” of a necessarily this-worldly εὐδαιμονία has already been called into question, but because of the words that immediately precede the rhetorical high-point of Plato’s *Menexenus*:

Socrates: And every form of knowledge when sundered from justice and the rest of virtue is seen to be plain roguery rather than wisdom [πᾶσά τε ἐπιστήμη χωριζομένη δικαιοσύνης καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἀρετῆς πανουργία, οὐ σοφία φαίνεται].³²⁵

Although attempts have been made to harmonize this passage with both “the Unity of Virtue” and “Virtue as Knowledge” in the service of a conception of ἀρετή that configures it as the τέχνη that achieves our εὐδαιμονία, its purpose is rather to remind the reader of the critique of ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη that emerged in *Hippias Minor* (see §11 on *Hp. Mi.* 375b7–c3) and then flourished in the *Magnet* (see §12). By no manner of means does this passage assert the Unity of Virtue: it rather contradicts that doctrine first by separating

322. This is the first mention of εὐδαιμονία in the pre-*Smp.* dialogues; it becomes commonplace only with *Smp.* and the dialogues that follow it. For fuller discussion and *Sprachstatistik*, see §17.

323. See also *Ascent to the Good*, §2.

324. For distinguishing the Idea of the Good from εὐδαιμονία, see *Ascent to the Good*.

325. *Mx.* 246e7–247a2.

δικαιοσύνη from ἐπιστήμη, and then by separating δικαιοσύνη from “the rest of virtue.”³²⁶ In fact, it even separates σοφία, the most knowledge-friendly part of virtue, from ἐπιστήμη.³²⁷ The flood of eloquence that immediately follows is the expression of these separations.

Federico Petrucci has recently used a distinction between “virtue_k” and “virtue_h” to disarm the challenge Plato has posed to (what is now called) “Socratic intellectualism” in this passage.³²⁸ For Petrucci, authentic, i.e., “Socratic” virtue, is knowledge-based, and hence what he calls “virtue_k” (“k” for “knowledge”). On the other hand, virtue_h

consists in *performing virtuous actions*, above all in certain situations, without necessarily having attained any specific epistemological or psychological vantage point; it can be considered a demotic or political virtue,³²⁹ and it is based on *habit*.³³⁰

His goal, then is to prove that “the identification of virtue, and especially of courage, with loyalty to the army and death in war is directly borrowed from tradition and does not represent an instance of virtue_k.”³³¹ About *Menexenus* 246e7–247a2 he writes:

The meaning of ἐπιστήμη here is ambiguous. By using it, Plato is not referring to the knowledge that grounds virtue_k, because this could never turn into πανουργία. Rather, ἐπιστήμη may be considered a form of technical knowledge that is to be used in accordance with justice. While this reading would appear to strip Plato’s theory of virtue_k (and intellectualism) of its foundations, it is

326. See Etienne Helmer (trans. and ed.), *Platon, Ménexène* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2019), 153–54, for the connection between this passage and the repudiation of the Hedonic Calculus at *Phd.* 69b6–7.

327. See *Ascent to the Good*, 74n330, 80–83, and 132–33.

328. Federico Petrucci, “Plato on Virtue in the *Menexenus*,” *Classical Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (2017), 49–70.

329. With this phrase, cf. Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.63 (Walter Miller translation): “This, then, is a fine saying [*praeclarum*] of Plato’s: ‘Not only must all knowledge that is divorced from justice be called cunning rather than wisdom,’ he says, ‘but even the courage that is prompt to face danger, if it is inspired not by public spirit [*utilitate communi impellitur*], but by its own selfish purposes [*sua cupiditate*], should have the name of effrontery rather than courage.’” Andrew R. Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero’s De Officiis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 192 (on *praeclarum*) does not mention *Mx.* as Cicero’s source but quotes Nicias from *La.* 197b1–c1, adding: “Note that the contrast of motives between *sua cupiditas* and *utilitas communis* is absent from Plato.” Petrucci’s qualification of virtue_h as “political and demotic” shows that it is implied in *Mx.*, which is in any case Cicero’s source for *non solum scientia, quae est remota ab iustitia calliditas potius quam sapientia est appellanda*. Note that Cicero’s interest in this passage is “philosophical” rather than “rhetorical.”

330. Petrucci, “Plato on Virtue,” 50, emphasis mine: “virtue_h” rests on habit.

331. Petrucci, “Plato on Virtue,” 57; the passage continues amiably enough: “At the same time, however, nothing suggests that Plato is implicitly criticizing this traditional virtue, or that this virtue is theoretically incompatible with virtue_k, as the ironic reading would imply. It seems, on the contrary, that Plato seriously presents traditional virtue as a form of virtue.”

nonetheless upheld by the relationship that Plato establishes here between ἐπιστήμη, σοφία and virtue.³³²

Unfortunately for Petrucci, *Hippias Minor*—which he naturally does not mention—has just proved that neither ἐπιστήμη nor τέχνη is, or must be used, “in accordance with justice,” and that both are compatible with πανουργία. Nor should it go unsaid that a professor’s contempt does nothing to diminish what Petrucci calls “virtue_h.”

Turning now to the relationship between *Menexenus* and Pericles’ Funeral Oration in Thucydides, the first point to make is that even if Plato did not in fact compose his Funeral Oration with Thucydides’ in mind, every one who reads *Menexenus* “from this day ‘til the ending of the world,” even if they reach this disjunctive conclusion, will have looked at both and compared them.³³³ It is similar to the relationship Plato created between *Republic* and *Timaeus*: even those who decide that the conversation summarized in the one was not the conversation transcribed in the other will necessarily already have been forced to compare them, and indeed those who disjoin them after making this comparison will necessarily be those who have read both with particular care and thoroughness *as Plato required that they should*.³³⁴ Thanks to the choice of Aspasia and the mention of Pericles (*Mx.* 235e7), it requires the triumph of erudition over common sense to deny the obvious in the case of *Menexenus* and Thucydides,³³⁵ but Plato wins even in the process of being misunderstood: he has forced his readers to do what he wanted them to do, and that is to compare the two speeches for themselves.

Since I have emphasized a passage from the address of the dead to their children in Aspasia’s speech, the place to start is with the parallel passage in Thucydides, indeed this parallel may stand καὶ πρῶτον καὶ ὕστατον, both first and last. To begin with, the dead do not speak in Thucydides: Pericles speaks not only for them, as Aspasia does, but *instead* of them: he is not their ἔρμηνῆς, as she is. As a result, the conceit that forms the basis of the most eloquent passage in Aspasia’s is necessarily absent from Pericles’ Funeral Oration, and highlighting this difference is the fact that while both speeches

332. Petrucci, “Plato on Virtue,” 59; “none the less” in the original.

333. For the most interesting defense of Plato’s knowledge of Thucydides, see Pohlenz, *Aus Platos Werdezeit*, 238–256; unfortunately it does not inform his equally interesting and well-informed discussion of *Mx.* (256–309). See also Erich Bayer, “Thukydidēs und Perikles,” *Würzburger Jahrbücher* 3, no. 1 (1948), 1–57, on 30–36.

334. Mark Zelcer, “Reading the *Menexenus* Intertextually,” in Harold Parker and Jan Maximilian Robitzsch (eds.), *Speeches for the Dead: Essays on Plato’s Menexenus*, 29–49 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), on 48–49 (last word): “Given all the evidence presented it is reasonable to read Pericles’ speech without Plato’s but not Plato’s without Pericles’. Plato’s early readers would have instinctively put the two together and made many of the connections made in this paper, as should we.”

335. See Ilse von Loewenclau, *Der Platonische Menexenus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1961), 34–37.

contain an address to the children of the dead and an address to their parents (*Mx.* 247c5–248d6), the order of those two addresses is reversed. Making this look more intentional is the fact that the address to the children in Thucydides is not only second in order but considerably shorter than its parental counterpart; Plato strikes a balance between them, and there are a number of passages in the second address that deserve praise. In particular—since we are poised on the brink of *Symposium*—the one that stands out is Aspasia’s claim that the gods have heard and fulfilled the prayers of the parents, “for it was not for immortal children but for good and well-reputed ones they prayed, and these they have got, being the greatest of good things” (*Mx.* 247d4–5; cf. *Smp.* 207d1–2). Here, then is Thucydides:

Turning to the sons [πασι δ’ ἀδ’] or brothers of the dead, I see an arduous struggle before you. When a man is gone, all are wont to praise him, and should your merit be ever so transcendent, you will still find it difficult not merely to overtake, but even to approach their renown. The living have envy to contend with, while those who are no longer in our path are honored with a goodwill into which rivalry does not enter. On the other hand if I must say anything on the subject of female excellence to those of you who will now be in widowhood, it will be all comprised in this brief exhortation. Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men whether for good or for bad.³³⁶

Like Aspasia’s, Pericles’ address to the children envisions a competition with the dead. But Thucydides emphasizes external obstacles to success—i.e., the envy of contemporaries and the exaggerated veneration for the past—not those with which Plato is concerned. There, the dead exhort their children “to the practice of virtue” (*Mx.* 246e1), knowing that without doing so, possessions and practices, wealth, and good looks are both base and bad (*Mx.* 246e1–7). And the culminating claim that even knowledge “without virtue and the rest of virtue” is roguery (*πανουργία* at *Mx.* 246e7–8) further emphasizes the *internal* obstacles to winning the contest. Although he has included their brothers in the address to the sons, Pericles will end the speech with the external rewards that await them,³³⁷ thereby neatly reversing—although it is really Plato who is making the switch—between material and spiritual rewards (on the one hand) and between external and internal obstacles (on the other). In Aspasia’s speech, then, the ability to overcome internal temptations will lead to a warm reception in the hereafter while in Pericles, the material support of the state will recompense the sons

336. Thucydides, 2.45 (Dent).

337. Thucydides, 2.46.

for the unequal contest that the faulty values of their contemporaries will necessarily impose on them.³³⁸

But let's not miss the forest for the trees: on the brink of the Diotima Discourse, it is Pericles' praise for the woman who is neither praised nor blamed nor even mentioned that creates the sharpest possible contrast with Plato's *Menexenus*.³³⁹ If Aspasia gives a voice to the silent dead with her *ficta oratio*,³⁴⁰ Socrates is also giving Aspasia herself a voice, and the significance of his decision to do so will become manifest to all in *Symposium*. To be schooled by his rude male Double in *Hippias Major* is one thing; the conceit that the silenced woman of Pericles' Funeral Oration is in reality its creator (*Mx.* 236a8–b6) is a stroke of genius in the context of Reading Order. After tracing the rhapsode's source of eloquence back to the Muses in *Ion*, the feminization of inspiration continues in *Menexenus*, for it is easy to see that Plato is playfully comparing Aspasia to Pericles' secret Muse. In *Symposium*, Socrates will make his own Muse public for all to see: Diotima will be anything but silent, and will combine the gruff manner of the Double with all of Aspasia's eloquence and then some (see §14).

Having noted that Pericles succinctly mentions the care that the city (ἡ πόλις) will provide for the sons of the dead until they reach manhood, it can do no harm to draw attention to the fourteen feminine participles, the three feminine pronouns, and the five words beginning with π that Aspasia uses to make ἡ πόλις the active agent in providing ἐπιμέλεια for those who have died in the peroration of her speech:

And of the city's care [ἐπιμέλεια] you know yourselves, that having made [θεμένη] laws, she cares [ἐπιμελεῖται] for the children and parents of those who have died in war, and differently from the other citizens has it been enjoined, upon the ruling body that is the greatest, to prevent their mothers and fathers from suffering an injustice; she herself co-parents [συνεκτρέφει αὐτή] the children, striving [προθυμουμένη] as much as possible that their becom-

338. Cf. A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, volume 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 103 (on 2.35.1): "if Plato had Thucydides in mind, he was determined to make his *epitaphios* as trite as that of Pericles was distinguished; hence the paradoxical attribution to Aspasia." On the other hand, by commenting πασι δ' αὖ at 2.45.1 (on 142) with "cf. *Menex.* 246d–247b," Gomme might seem to be retracting this unduly sharp contrast.

339. Cf. Zelcer, "Reading the *Menexenus*," 34–35.

340. Particularly noteworthy is *Mx.* 248a7–c2, where the fiction that the dead are speaking is suddenly renewed (Lamb): "*Socrates*: Of such a character we request our friends to be, and desire them to appear, even as we now display ourselves as such, being neither aggrieved nor alarmed overmuch if it so be that at this present crisis we must die. We beseech both fathers and mothers to pass the rest of their lives holding to this same conviction, and to be well assured that it is not by mourning and lamenting us that they will gratify us most; nay, if the dead have any perception of the living, it is thus that they would gratify us least, by debasing themselves and bearing their sorrows with a heavy heart; whereas by a light-hearted and temperate demeanor they would gratify us most." Cf. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 6.4.16.

ing orphaned be unclear to the them; in the form of a father she herself [αὐτή] has stood [καταστῆσα] to them while they are still children, and when they have come to the goal of manhood, she sends them back to their own, having decorated [κοσμήσασα] them with their military equipment, demonstrating and recalling to their memory [ἐνδεικνυμένη καὶ ἀναμνηήσκουσα] the practices of their father by giving them [διδούσα] the tools of their paternal virtue; and at the same time, for the sake of a good omen, to be led to return to their paternal hearth she has led [ἄρξοντα], in strength, and decorated with arms. And having honored [τιμῶσα] the dead themselves, she never leaves them, and annually she herself [αὐτή] performs [ποιούσα] the lawful ceremonies in common for all which in private are done for each, and in addition to these things, she has instituted [τιθεῖσα] athletic contests and equestrian ones, and of every kind of music, and in short having placed herself [καθεστηκυῖα] in the portion of an heir and son to the deceased, of a father to the sons, of a guardian of their parents, she takes [ποιουμένη] all care [ἐπιμέλεια] of all for all time [i.e., πᾶσαν πάντων παρὰ πάντα τὸν χρόνον ἐπιμέλειαν ποιουμένη].³⁴¹

Through the fiction that Socrates has been taught rhetoric by Aspasia, it is Plato who is teaching *us* rhetoric, and given the dismissal of Antiphon (*Mx.* 236a4), whose speech Thucydides so much admired,³⁴² it begins to look like *Menexenus* is the first installment in the famous quarrel between an “Attic” austerity of speech (on the one hand)³⁴³ and the fuller style that Cicero will famously defend and employ,³⁴⁴ and which is on full display here.

On the rhetorical level, Plato may well be giving his readers a choice between two rhetorical styles by juxtaposing the lush “Asiatic” profusion of Aspasia’s peroration with the magisterial “Atticism” of Pericles;³⁴⁵ in any case, the history of rhetoric bears eloquent testimony to the pedagogical value of this juxtaposition.³⁴⁶ But the important point is that Dionysius, Longinus, Quintilian, and Cicero were not wrong to read Plato for lessons in rhetoric: those lessons are there, and even before asking us to compare Socrates and Aristophanes, Agathon and Phaedrus, Alcibiades and Exyismachus, he has forced us to compare Pericles and Aspasia *as orators*. And let’s not forget

341. *Mx.* 248e6–249c3.

342. Thucydides, 8.68.2.

343. On Thucydides’ “austere word arrangement (σύνησις αὐστηρά),” see Casper C. De Jonge, “Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Thucydides” in Sara Forsdyke, Edith Foster, and Ryan Balot (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Thucydides*, 641–658 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 643.

344. See Cicero, *Orator*, 20–24, and *Brutus*, 290–91. Cf. Yunis, “Dionysius’ Demosthenes.”

345. See Cicero, *Brutus*, 287.

346. In addition to George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric & its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, second edition, revised and enlarged (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), chapters 4–6, see Jeffrey Walker, *The Genuine Teachers of this Art: Rhetorical Education in Antiquity* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), chapter 5 (“Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Notion of Rhetorical Scholarship”), especially 253–62 (“Demosthenes, Thucydides”).

Pausanias, either, although the ability to recognize the special qualities of his speech, along with the ability to recognize the anachronism in *Menexenus*, depend on Xenophon. But it is probably a mistake to think of Plato as being engaged in a contest with Thucydides,³⁴⁷ whether on the political or rhetorical level. The primary justification for staging *Menexenus* as a pseudo-Periclean Funeral Oration—replete as it is with errors and distortions that only readers of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon can identify (see §15)—is that it draws attention to the most famous passage in the most important of the three historians Plato is expecting his students to read.

As already mentioned (§10), the most extended example of Socrates Schooled is not found in Plato, but in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, a work Cicero translated in his youth;³⁴⁸ he also translated *Protagoras*.³⁴⁹ Although it would require pulling a rabbit out of a hat to show the inner connection between Cicero's high regard for both Xenophon and Plato (on the one hand) and his characteristic views about the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy on the other, there is a golden passage in *Pro Archia* that begins to do the trick:

For unless I had persuaded myself from youth by the precepts of many and by much literature that there exists nothing to be pursued with great effort in life except for praise and the honorable [*honestum*], but that in pursuing them, all tortures [*cruciatu*s] of the body, all dangers of death and of exile must be considered of small consequence, I would never have hurled myself into so many and such great battles on your behalf [*pro vestra salute*]; cf. Demosthenes' ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀπάντων ἐλευθερίας καὶ σωτηρίας] and against these daily attacks of profligate men.³⁵⁰

The Latin for Plato's τὸ καλόν is Cicero's *honestum*, and this passage is best understood as a pre-mortem Funeral Oration for himself, or rather—and this is true of every Funeral Oration—for the ennoblement of those who hear it. The stuff of that Oration is merely implied here, but he offers more specificity in the sentences that follows it:

All literature, all philosophy, all history abounds with incentives [*exempla*] to noble action, incentives which would be buried in the black darkness were the light of the written word not flashed upon them. How many pictures [plural of *imago*] of high endeavor the great authors of Greece and Rome have drawn

347. Cf. Loewenclau, *Der platonische Menexenos*, 35: “der Philosoph tritt in ihm [sc. *Mx.*] gewissermaßen einen Wettstreit mit der Historiker an.”

348. Cicero, *De Officiis*, 2.87.

349. See Thelma B. Degraff, “Plato in Cicero,” *Classical Philology* 35, no. 2 (April 1940), 143–153, on 145n11; the source is Priscian, *Institutiones grammaticae*, 6.11.63.

350. Cicero, *Pro Archia* 14.

for our use, and bequeathed to us, not only for our contemplation [*ad intuentum*] but for our imitation [*ad imitandum*]. These I have held before my vision throughout my public career, and have guided the workings of my brain and my soul by meditating on patterns of excellence.³⁵¹

Perhaps the most important but in any case the most controversial *imago* that Cicero used *ad imitandum* was the “image”—and an apt word it is, since modern scholarship has for the most part come to regard it as an illusion—of Demosthenes as Plato’s student, schooled in the Academy,³⁵² and inspired to dedicate his life *pro vestra salute* in response to Diotima’s call to give birth in the Beautiful. Illusion or no, it explains Cicero’s unparalleled veneration for both,³⁵³ and at the same time encapsulates his views about the compatibility of rhetoric and philosophy.³⁵⁴ When motivated by the benefit of others (*utilitate communi impellitur*) and not by one’s own desire (*sua cupiditate*), then rhetoric—like courage and most everything else³⁵⁵—is useful, and to that extent “good.” The surest means to reject so plausible a position is to deny its possibility: self-interest is inescapable and what appears to be altruism is better explained by psychopathology or “the selfish gene.” And the only answer to this kind of argument is to point to the historical *exempla* that Cicero has just named, without which “I would never have hurled myself into so many and such great battles on your behalf.” In response to those *exempla*, trench warfare ensues, and is fought out in countless places; the value of the ancient evidence that Demosthenes was Plato’s student is one of these.

About the *exempla* of Lucretia and Scaevola, Goethe famously remarked: “If the Romans were great enough to invent such stories, we should at least be great enough to believe them.”³⁵⁶ Nobody believes that Cicero simply invented the story of Demosthenes as Plato’s student, but must we find fault with him for believing it? The intrusion of “a rhetorical question” here is not adventitious: Goethe’s point requires rhetoric, especially since the spirit of an antithetical *Kritik* (see Introduction) had already taken root in his famously capacious soul. Precisely because self-sacrifice can only be construed as

351. Cicero, *Pro Archia*, 14 (N. H. Watts translation). Unfortunately, this passage is not discussed in Rebecca Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

352. The epigraph of Scholten, *Disquisitio*—at once the most erudite and eloquent defense of that *imago*—is *Phdr.* 261a 4–5: εἰ μὴ τις ἰκανῶς φιλοσοφήσῃ οὐδὲ ἰκανὸς ποτε λέγειν ἔσται περὶ οὐδενός, i.e., “unless someone philosophizes sufficiently, he will never be sufficient to speak about anything.”

353. See Caroline Bishop, “Roman Plato or Roman Demosthenes? The Bifurcation of Cicero in Ancient Scholarship,” in Altman (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Cicero*, 283–306 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

354. Beginning with Cicero, *De inventione*, 1.1–5.

355. See Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.63 (quoted above).

356. *Conversations of Goethe with Johann Peter Eckermann* (Wednesday, October 15, 1824).

self-benefiting by means of myth—thanks to “the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns” (cf. *Ap.* 29a7–b2)—a myth-less defense of such greatness requires eloquence, and leads first of all to an ascent to the Beautiful in the form of “the gallant.” The solution to Cicero’s paradoxical claim that only those devoted to the highest studies can be truly eloquent³⁵⁷ is that *they alone need to be*: rhetoric is required to persuade a person to prefer the transcendent and impersonal Good to one’s own advantage, and the first steps in the argument that leads to that τέλος are the historical *exempla* that fired his youthful imagination, for it was by them that he was persuaded to persuade himself to prefer the *honestum* to life itself; hence the more than rhetorical value of the *imago* of the young Demosthenes hearing Plato’s *Menexenus*, and learning from it.

In bringing to a close a chapter devoted to “the musical dialogues,” it is necessary to recur to first principles, and here again Cicero’s *Pro Archia* comes in handy. He is defending a poet, and he borrows the imagery of Plato’s *Ion* to do so:

We have it on the highest and most learned authority that while the other arts are matters of science and formula and technique, poetry depends solely upon an inborn faculty, is evoked by a purely mental activity, and is infused with a strange supernal inspiration [*et quasi divino quodam spiritu inflari*].³⁵⁸

So circumscribed is our modern conception of “music” that it has become easier to imagine that Plato’s *Ion* is more seriously concerned with τέχνη than it is with θεία μοῖρα (see §12). While reconsidering *Menexenus* in the context of Reading Order, a point of intersection between rhetoric, philosophy, and music begins to emerge, and it is easiest to see in the word “suddenly [ἐξάιφνης]” which Longinus used in describing the Marathon Oath. There, in the midst of his own apologia *pro vita sua*, Demosthenes paused before pouring forth his idealistic hymn to having fought a losing battle in accordance with the stored-up and collective commitment to τὸ καλόν that inspired Athens at her best to do her best. By placing *Menexenus* between *Ion* and *Symposium*, Plato suggests this place, but Dionysius also indicates their point of intersection, for despite the reversal of sunlight and shade, his criticism is just despite the reversal of darkness and light: the Magnet-like eloquence of Aspasia arises from the sunshine of the Good while *De Corona* is delivered in the shadows of the Cave.

Nevertheless, it is the same eloquence, born from Homer and History, and that means: inspired by the Muses. It is not only when Socrates mentions Connus or when he dances (*Mx.* 236c11–d2)—for Terpsichore is the Muse of

357. See Cicero, *De oratore*, 1.5.

358. Cicero, *Pro Archia*, 18 (Watts).

dance—that what the Greeks called μουσική enters *Menexenus* but through-out, for Clio is the Muse of History. And she therefore also presides over the interpretation of ancient texts, both inspired and otherwise, if only because no perfectly sane person would bother to debate whether the long-dead Demosthenes was or wasn't Plato's student in the Academy. For those on either side of the debate, the past must have become real, for both are imagining the reality of something they cannot, have not, and will never see. My embrace of Goethe's *bon mot* in the case of the Plato-taught Demosthenes—whether as *exemplum* or *imago*—emerges from an interpretation of Plato that puts his attempt to inspire the likes of Cicero to do what he did at the center of his concerns, identifying that project as the ideological foundation on which he built his eternal Academy. Naturally the word “ideological,” like the previous uses in of “idealistic” in this section, should be taken in a Platonic sense, and therefore grounded in ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα, i.e., in the Idea of the Good. But whatever were the (non-Platonic) ideological differences that separated Athenian politicians, all of them alike were the heirs of Marathon and Salamis, of Artemisia and Plataea, and all therefore inherited a collective and (Clio-inspired) musical memory of τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν, the abstract essence of which Plato would capture in αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, and identify as the source of philosophy's pursuit of ἀρετή (*Smp.* 212a3–5) as well as the only justifiable goal of rhetoric's pursuit of eloquence. In short: the ascent to the Beautiful precedes the ascent to the Idea of the Good.

Plato's ability to exploit this collective historical memory for a pedagogical end, at once philosophical and rhetorical, begins to explain his puzzling *Menexenus*, for along with the proverbial *χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ*, he will use the rhetoric of wartime heroism to remind his students of what ἀρετή in action looks like. Dionysius was therefore on the mark here as well: the passage he quotes is exactly what he calls it: a *παρακλήσις*—the verb *παρακαλεῖν* from which this word for “summons” derives appears twice at the end of *Gorgias*³⁵⁹—ἐπὶ τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὴν ἀρετήν. In her address to the parents, Aspasia will anticipate not only Shakespeare's “now attest that those whom you call fathers did beget you”³⁶⁰ but also Milton's “what may comfort us in

359. *Grg.* 527e5–7: “*Socrates*: This then let us follow, and to this let us summon [*παρακαλώμεν*] the others; not that to which you trust yourself and summon me [*παρακαλεῖν*], for it is worth nothing, O Callicles.” Note the echoes of *Mx.* at the end of the previous and penultimate sentence (*Grg.* 527e2–5): “let us use the account that has now shown forth, which signifies for us that this is the best way of life: practicing [*ἀσκεῖν*; cf. *Mx.* 246e1] both justice and the rest of virtue [*καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἡ ἄλλη ἀρετή*; cf. *Mx.* 247a1] both living and dying [emphasis mine].”

360. *Mx.* 247d7–e2 (Lamb): “*Socrates*: Moreover, by bearing their calamities thus bravely they will clearly show that they are in truth the fathers of brave sons and of a like bravery themselves; whereas if they give way they will afford grounds for suspecting either that they are no fathers of ours or that we have been falsely belauded.”

a death so noble.”³⁶¹ As the fecund source of such eloquent echoes, there is surely enough in the second part of her speech to justify the presence of a Funeral Oration among the elementary dialogues. But the profusion of patriotic eloquence in the service of τὸ καλόν justifies only half of that presence, and it is understandable that the equally important historical distortions of the first part of Aspasia’s speech—and thus the possibly misguided patriotism that would depend on those lies being true—has entirely concealed that partial justification. Like Aspasia’s speech itself, my treatment of *Menexenus* is split, and only after connecting *Symposium* to it on a rhetorical basis (§14) will I pay the overdue debt to its other half by considering the pedagogical justification for those distortions (§15), a project merely suggested here by the discussion of Thucydides’ Funeral Oration. Even then, the task will not be complete, for Aspasia and Diotima have more in common than being the eloquent women who schooled Socrates, and the distortions of both—for Diotima’s speech has its deceptive component as well—will ultimately coalesce, as they must, in the student’s ascent to αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν (§16).

But it is not with “a preview of coming attractions” that this chapter must end. It is above all the misguided insistence that Plato simply rejected rhetoric that is responsible for the modern certainty that Demosthenes could not have been Plato’s student. In *Lives of the Ten Orators* we read: “He [sc. Demosthenes] took as his models Thucydides and the philosopher Plato, who some say was his main teacher.”³⁶² If it was from the former that Demosthenes learned how to conceal the just under the guise of the expedient, it was from Plato that he received the inspiration to return to the Cave in the first place. But the most recent edition of this text attaches the following comment to these words: “that Demosthenes was taught by Plato is almost certainly erroneous, given Plato’s contempt for rhetoric.”³⁶³ Despite the fact that Cicero had long since exposed the Performative Self-Contradiction at the basis of Plato’s eloquent attack on rhetoric (see Preface), the opposition continues to be taken as self-evident and definitive. It should not be. Although marginally better than this peremptory verdict, the following misses the point as well:

it is quite credible that he [sc. Demosthenes] attended some of Plato’s lectures when he was young. But clearly Hermippus believed that he gave up such attendance once he became keen on oratory.³⁶⁴

361. *Mx.* 248c3–4 (Lamb): “Socrates: As for our own fortunes, they have already reached that climax which is the noblest of all for mortal men; wherefore it is more fitting to magnify than to mourn them.”

362. [Plutarch], *Lives of the Ten Orators*, 844b (Robin Waterfield translation).

363. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (eds.), *Lives of the Attic Orators: Texts from Pseudo-Plutarch, Photius, and the Suda*, Robin Waterfield (trans.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2015), 215 (on “He took as his models . . . teacher”).

364. Douglas M. MacDowell, *Demosthenes the Orator* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 22.

Regardless of what Hermippus believed, the relationship between the Academy and further study of rhetoric makes perfect sense on a Platonic basis. It was not those who stayed on at the Academy who best understood Plato, but those who had been enchanted by Plato's Socrates in the musical dialogues and who then returned to the Cave with his music ringing in their ears.

In Socrates' last dream as described in *Phaedo*, he is told: "Make music, Socrates, and create it" (*Phd.* 60e6–7).³⁶⁵ Like the presence of Menexenus on our hero's last day (*Phd.* 59b9), his response to this directive is revealing:

'I formerly thought it was urging and encouraging me to do what I was doing already and that just as people encourage runners by cheering, so the dream was encouraging me to do what I was doing, that is, to make music, because philosophy was the greatest kind of music and I was working at that.'³⁶⁶

Socrates the musician tends to disappear from current discussions about Plato's "Socratic dialogues," and thus the intersection where *Ion* and *Menexenus* meet is completely forgotten. But it was to his beginners that Plato had already explained what Socrates would eventually mean by saying that since philosophy was the greatest music, he was already making it. This explains what made it possible for Longinus to use a word like φοιβόληπτος (cf. *Phd.* 84d9–85b7) while describing Plato's eloquence. It was their teacher's eloquence that held them rapt, not only as Socrates' has just held *Ion* (*Ion* 535a3–4), but also as Apollodorus the rhapsode is now about to hold all of us rapt again.³⁶⁷ If "the musical dialogues" culminating in *Symposium* have done their job, Plato's students will be prepared for the rather more gymnastic difficulties that lie ahead (*Ep.* 340d6–341a7),³⁶⁸ for they will now be inspired to see the long race through to its end (cf. *Phd.* 61a1 and *Prt.* 335e4), reminded as they have been not only that τὰ καλὰ must always be χαλεπά but that what "beautiful things" make possible (cf. *Smp.* 204d8–9) is a death-defying vision of Beauty itself (*Smp.* 211d8–212a7), and that Socrates played, sang, danced, and died like the inspired and therefore inspirational hero that he was because *it* will always and eternally be what it is.

365. For discussion of this passage, see Gabrièle Wersinger Taylor, "Socrate, fais de la musique!" in Wersinger and F. Malhomme (eds.), *Mousikè et Aretè: la musique et l'éthique, de l'antiquité à l'âge moderne: actes du colloque international tenu en Sorbonne les 15–17 Décembre 2003*, 45–62 (Paris, Vrin, 2007), and M. R. Engler, "On Plato's Interpretation of his own Philosophy: *Phaedo*'s testimony on the diaphora between Poetry and Philosophy" (July 2016); available at: https://www.academia.edu/30236925/On_Plato_interpretation_of_his_own_philosophy_Phaedos_testimony_on_the_diaphora_between_poetry_and_philosophy (accessed April 28, 2019).

366. *Phd.* 60e7–61a4 (Fowler translation).

367. For the insight that Apollodorus is the rhapsode of *Smp.*, I am grateful to Pedro Baratieri.

368. On this distinction, see *Ascent to the Good*, xxix n. 47.

Chapter Five

Symposium as τέλος

SECTION 14. INTEGRATING SYMPOSIUM

Commenting on his speech, Agathon informs us that it combines both play (παιδιά) and “measured seriousness [σπουδὴ μετρία].”¹ The comment is a curious one. First of all, should we regard it as part of the λόγος itself, or is it rather a post-λόγος comment on the speech he has just been finished? Indicating that this is a question Plato wants us to raise, it can also be applied to the speeches of Pausanias (185c2–3), Eryximachus (188d9–e4), and Aristophanes (193d6–e2), who likewise offer internal assessments of the speech each has now ostensibly finished. Moreover, since both Socrates (212b8–c3) and Alcibiades (222a7–b7) make use of the convention without using it for self-comment—the speeches of Phaedrus and Apollodorus are exceptional for not including any kind of detachable final comment—Plato is challenging us to wonder whether an apparently extra-λόγος coda is in fact a useful and perhaps necessary part of such λόγοι. Among all of these, Agathon’s coda stands out for another reason: he is further challenging us not only to determine which parts of his λόγος—τὰ μὲν as opposed to τὰ δέ—have partaken of παιδιά and what of σπουδὴ μετρία.²

1. 197e6–8 (C. J. Rowe translation): “‘Let this speech [λόγος] from me, Phaedrus,’ he said, ‘stand as my dedication to the god, sharing [μετέχων] as it does partly [τὰ μὲν] in play [παιδιά], partly [τὰ δέ] in a modest seriousness [σπουδὴ μετρία], to the best of my personal ability.’” All otherwise unidentified references in this chapter will be to *Smp.*

2. In Agathon’s case, the two questions can perhaps be answered together. Given the transcendent eloquence of his peroration (197d1–e5), remarked as unsurpassable by Socrates (198b4–5)—and note that Socrates clearly believes Agathon’s speech has reached “the (part) at its end [τελευτή]” (198b4) *before* the coda—it is arguably the coda itself that provides the self-deprecatory παιδιά in comparison with the σπουδὴ μετρία of his carefully measured antitheses, deployed by him for a serious purpose.

But there is a deeper question: is it possible for one λόγος to combine two opposite things? Leaving aside for a moment the possibility of mixing the true and the false in a single speech, it is impossible to raise this question here without asking whether Plato was offering an indirect but coda-like comment on his own λόγος, the *Symposium* as a whole, when he depicted Socrates advancing the argument that it belongs to the same man to know how to create both comedy and tragedy, and therefore that the tragedian by art (τέχνη) is a comedian as well (223d3–6). Following a well-blazed trail,³ this crucial interpretive question will receive an affirmative answer in §15. But prior to a tragi-comic reading of *Symposium* designed to show how the same λόγος can be two opposite things at the same time—and therefore constitutes proof that Plato is the poet his Socrates describes—there is a more basic question to which he draws our attention. On the practical level, this question appears in Agathon’s coda, and the same coda-like claim will reappear in *Phaedrus* when Socrates challenges us to discover where he has laid hold of some truth in his Great Second Speech, and where—tending in another direction—he has been measuredly playful (*Phdr.* 265b2–c3). Plato has also raised this question on a theoretical level, first in the speech of Eryximachus (187a3–c2), and then even more basically in the speech of Aristophanes, where Plato allows him to hammer the claim that two can be combined into one (191d2–5 and 192d5–e9).

Aristophanes’ myth is based on the original unity of multiple parts like arms, legs, heads, etc., in what the poet calls “our archaic nature [ἡ ἀρχαία φύσις ἡμῶν]” (192e9–10; cf. 189d6, 191d1–2, 193c5, and 193d4). It is therefore not a *coincidentia oppositorum* that results when “two” become what “two” cannot possibly be, i.e., One. Instead, according to Aristophanes, it is a restoration of an original if fraudulent species of primeval “unity.” Based on the principle that like welcomes like (192a5 and 192b5), the paradox that Two can become or even eternally *be* One (εἶναι at 192e4)—the contradiction at the heart of the Problem of the One and the Many (see Introduction and §9)—is “resolved,” once again in the manner that triggers the Problem, by the fact that “two” has only arisen from splitting the original “one” (191d5; cf. *R.* 527e1–3). As a result, Plato allows Aristophanes to anchor every deep thinker’s *Drang nach Einheit* in Love (ἔρως): “To the desire and pursuit of the whole [τὸ ὅλον], then, ‘love’ is the name [τοῦ ὅλου, οὖν, τῆ ἐπιθυμίας καὶ δώξει, ἔρως ὄνομα]” (192e10–193a1). In this context, all attempts to unify Plato’s *Symposium* and then to integrate it with the rest of “the dialogues as a whole” must be regarded as itself a species of (interpretive) ἔρως, or rather as a paradigmatic example of the kind of ἔρως championed by Aristophanes.

3. See, especially, Diskin Clay, “The Tragic and the Comic Poet of the *Symposium*,” *Arion* (n.s.) 2, no. 2 (1975), 238–261.

As one of the world's greatest pieces of literature, Plato's *Symposium* deserves its own book and not merely its single chapter in this one. Fortunately, it is not a comprehensive interpretation of the dialogue that is now required. My task is rather to show how *Symposium* is integrated into the Reading Order, or better: to prove that it deserves this particular place in that Order. In accordance with the principle of "the snug fit" (Preface, §2), this would require showing that it belongs between *Menexenus* and *Lysis*. An explanation of its relationship to the latter will appear only in *Ascent to the Good* (§1); it is therefore its relationship to *Menexenus*—based on the juxtaposition of rhetoric (in addition to this section, see §13) and history (see §15) in both dialogues—that is of primary importance. But it is no accident that it is a speech in *Symposium* that raises, however inadequately, the problem of "the Whole," and any adequate account of the dialogue's place in the larger cosmos of Plato's dialogues must sharply distinguish the way it is integrated into the strictly artificial τὸ ὅλον of the Reading Order with the ἔρωσ for recovering the kind of φύσις-based unity described by Aristophanes.⁴ With pre-Socratic physics represented by Hippias beginning in *Protagoras*, then connected to Anaxagoras in *Lovers*, the appearance of first Parmenides,⁵ and then Heraclitus (187a3) in *Symposium*, are circumscribing what Socratic philosophy is not: an attempt to reduce the Many to One by recovering the original unity of φύσις.

It is in this context that the speech of Eryximachus lays the foundation for pondering Aristophanes' claim that ἔρωσ is the name for our *Drang nach Einheit*. The good doctor takes Heraclitus to task for stating that opposite things—to the extent that they remain different—cannot be brought into harmony. By denying that Heraclitus has spoken καλῶς (187a4; cf. *Prt.* 339b9–10), Eryximachus is making the point that Heraclitus has contradicted himself (hence ἀλογία at 187a7) and Plato emphasizes the weakness of the word-based argument to this effect (187a3–c2) not only because Eryximachus develops it with pedantic repetition (187b6–7 and 187c1–2 are superfluous) but also because it contradicts his cosmological principle that opposites attract (186b6–7).⁶ But despite its weaknesses, Eryximachus' argument is the ancestor of many later attempts to harmonize the Platonic dialogues: things that were different *before* can be brought into harmony *later* (cf. 187a8–b2),⁷ i.e., differences, once temporalized, can be eliminated. Instead of finding in

4. See *Guardians in Action*, §16.

5. At 178b9; but note the further reference suggested by Socrates' unwillingness to swap "Truth" for "Opinion" at 218e6: ἀλλ' ἀντι δόξης, ἀλήθειαν καλῶν, κτᾶσθαι ἐπιχειρεῖς. On the two parts of the poem of Parmenides, see *Guardians in Action*, §2.

6. In lieu of *Ascent to the Good*, it should suffice as a down payment on "the snug fit" to point out that the rival principles of Eryximachus and Aristophanes reappear in *Lysis* (*Ly.* 214a6–b5 and 215c5–d4).

7. Note the *locus classicus* of the "what Plato was trying to say" interpretive trope.

the dialogues sharp and deliberate contradictions, the Order of Composition paradigm resolves those differences by claiming that what Plato thought earlier is not what he later came to think, and within the speech of Eryximachus we can find its antecedent, both with respect to literalism and its developmental solution to the problem of harmony.

First, then, there is the problem of uniting *Symposium* with what follows and precedes it, and second only to locating *Euthyphro* and its companions in Thrasyllus' First Tetralogy at the end of the Reading Order, the placement of *Symposium* before "Socratic" dialogues like *Lysis*, *Euthydemus*, *Laches*, and *Charmides* constitutes its most anomalous feature. As already indicated, the justification for this placement can only be begun here by anchoring *Symposium* as the bookended τέλος of a process that begins in *Protagoras*. But it can do no harm to mention that just as the relevant cosmological principles deployed by Eryximachus and Aristophanes will reappear in *Lysis* (*Ly.* 214b3–4 and 215c5–6), so, too, will Potidaea (219e5–220e7) and Delium (220e7–221c1) make their first appearance in *Symposium* before becoming the dramatic basis for *Laches* and *Charmides*.⁸ In the prior/later dynamic of Plato's Development, *Symposium* has generally been corralled between the "not yet" of his early dialogues and the "no longer" of his later ones, joining *Phaedo* and *Republic* in an outgrown "middle period." In fact, what unites the late placement of *Phaedo* to the early placement of *Symposium* in the Reading Order is that both pose a challenge to the Order of Composition's not yet/no longer trope, a developmental dynamic whose influence has been for far too long been virtually unquestioned.

But even though the speech of Socrates is at once (1) the τέλος of the ascent to the Beautiful, (2) the crucial μεταξύ on the Longer Way to *Republic* 7, and (3) the advance preparation for our hero's death in *Phaedo*, the principal result of placing *Symposium* after *Hippias Minor*, *Ion*, and *Menexenus* (§13) is that it forces the proponent of Reading Order to acknowledge a truth so obvious that it has become easy to overlook: the subject of *Symposium* is speeches (λόγοι). It is doubtless the case that the speech of Socrates is the most profound and important of these, but it is only one of many, fused not only into a more comprehensive unity by Apollodorus or Aristodemus, but into the harmonizing synthesis of tragedy and comedy for which Plato alone could be responsible. More important than the playful connection between the speech of Aspasia in the one and the speech of Diotima in the other, it is the emergence of ῥητορική in *Menexenus*, inseparable from Socrates' claim that Aspasia is teaching him "rhetoric" (*Mx.* 236a1), that makes it impossible to miss the obscured secret of first unifying and then integrating *Symposium*: Plato was teaching his students ῥητορική (see §13), and the interpreter's prin-

8. See *Ascent to the Good*, §7.

cial duty with respect to that well kept secret is to indicate how he intended to do so.

Speaking as the leader of a silent chorus, the comrade asks Apollodorus: “Which were the speeches [οἱ λόγοι]?” This question leaves no doubt that the subject of Plato’s *Symposium* is λόγοι or rather—in order to avoid the ungrammatical juxtaposition of the singular “the subject is” with the plural “speeches” that triggers the Problem of the One and the Many—that it is a λόγος about λόγοι. It is a question Apollodorus has heard before, and not only because he has already told the comrade that a certain Glaucon had recently inquired (172b2–3): “concerning the erotic speeches; which were they?” In fact, the comrade is repeating a question that Plato has already forced us to imagine, the one that precedes the written dialogue: the things “concerning which [περὶ ὧν] you [plural] are asking” (172a1) are those very λόγοι. Moreover, Apollodorus fully understands the question he has been asked and thus the way in which he must answer it, and so for the second time he will attach a preface to his account of those λόγοι (cf. 172a2–173c2 and 174a3–178a5). Thus when the comrade asks the second time “which were the speeches,” Apollodorus replies (173e7–174a1): “They were [λόγοι understood], then, these which are as follows, or rather, [this will justify both of his prefaces:] from the beginning, just as that one [sc. Aristodemos] was narrating [them], I too will try to narrate [them] for you [plural].”

As earlier with *Protagoras*, I suggest that once again we are dealing with a play, and at the end of this section, I will describe three passages in *Symposium* (174d2–4, 176d1–e9, and 194a1–b1), each of which contains multiple allusions to that earlier dialogue. Once again, a narrator steps forth to play chorus to a plural audience, and once again the dramatic elements, including scene setting, are unmistakable. But the differences are equally remarkable, and can be explained by the hypothesis that those who were *then* watching *Protagoras* are *now* performing *Symposium*,⁹ for no competent teacher—assuming one had the available time—would ever voluntarily forego having her students read this marvelous dialogue aloud. To begin with, the speaking parts, though equal in number, are far more evenly balanced than in *Protagoras*, and although Socrates may still have the biggest part, there are many actors who would prefer to play Alcibiades, Aristophanes, or even Agathon. Since Socrates is no longer the narrator, his role no longer dominates, and this makes the part of Apollodorus just as meaty as that of the aforementioned speakers. Of course the most obvious link to “*Protagoras* the Play” is the reappearance—now fleshed out by their speeches—of the previously silent chorus members Eryximachus, Phaedrus, Pausanias, and Agathon.

9. Cf. Peter H. von Blanckenhagen, “Stage and Actors in Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 33, no. 1 (1992), 51–68.

In response to the comrade's unheard initial question, the first thing Apollodorus says is that he is "not unpracticed [οὐκ ἀμελέτητος]" with respect to answering it. In the dialogue's opening line, then, are already visible the two principal ways that *Symposium* constitutes an education in ῥητορικὴ. By employing litotes—for obviously what Apollodorus is saying is that *he is very well prepared indeed* to narrate "which were the speeches," and is ready, eager, and willing to reenact them *once again*—Plato alerts us to the importance of rhetorical analysis, here emphasizing the role of recognizing rhetorically effective figures of speech in preparation for using them in one's own speeches. Equally important is what this kind of "practice" actually entails. In the case of Apollodorus, the result of that preparation is that he is now able to recite from memory this prodigious λόγος about λόγοι,¹⁰ much as Ion the rhapsode was able to recite all of Homer. But once we imagine *Symposium* as a play, it is each of the drama's ten student actors who must likewise be οὐκ ἀμελέτητος, and that means that all of them have practiced their parts—including memorizing them—and are prepared to deliver them in an effective manner. If *Protagoras* was a student production, I suggest that by performing *Symposium*, his fledglings were auditioning for it.

Like the division of "philosophy" into ethics, physics, and logic, the division of rhetoric into invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery seems a natural one, and even though it is equally post-Platonic, it can be used to further divide the two ways that Plato taught rhetoric through his *Symposium*.¹¹ With respect to the second, a performance of *Symposium* would require practice in both memory and delivery. With the power of a rhapsode's delivery tellingly described in *Ion* (*Ion* 535b2–c8) and the difficulty associated with learning a speech by heart adumbrated in *Menexenus* (*Mx.* 236b8–c1), the student has already been prepared for performing *Symposium*. And while the study of litotes and other figures of speech belongs to "expression" (λέξις), Plato is offering his students preparation in "arrangement" (τάξις) as well. Agathon's coda and Apollodorus' prefaces have already been mentioned, and such are merely the tip of a rhetorical iceberg. Between rhetorical analysis and dramatic performance—both present in embryo from the start thanks to οὐκ ἀμελέτητος—*Symposium* can be used to teach four out of rhetoric's five canonical parts, and thanks to Diotima's Discourse (209b7–c2,

10. Cf. the characteristically colorful response to this accomplishment in Bruce Rosenstock, "Mourning and Melancholia: Reading the *Symposium*," *Philosophy and Literature* 28, no. 2 (October 2004), 243–258, on 244: "The *meletē*, the 'practice,' which Apollodorus engages in by memorizing and repeating the speeches is hardly erotic; it seems, in fact, *neurotic*." Instead, I regard it as "rhetorical." For "characteristically," see "Socrates as Revenant: A Reading of the *Menexenus*," *Phoenix* 48, no. 4 (Winter 1994), 331–347.

11. I am indebted throughout this paragraph to Kathleen E. Welch, "The Platonic Paradox: Plato's Rhetoric in Contemporary Rhetoric and Composition Studies," *Written Communication* 5, no. 1 (January 1988), 3–21.

210c1–6, and 210d4–6), the dialogue will illuminate the wellsprings of “invention” as well.¹²

Quite apart from the possibility that Plato revolutionized drama by creating a synthesis of both comedy and tragedy in his *Symposium* (and, of course, that’s exactly what I claim he did),¹³ his no less revolutionary theatrical innovations are more difficult to spot but not for that reason any less important. To begin with, there is Plato’s use of narrators like Apollodorus in *Symposium* and Socrates in *Protagoras*; if these dialogues were actually performed, a host of innovations would be necessary in order to perform them, especially when the narrator is also an actor in the drama he is narrating. Would there have been two actors playing Socrates in *Protagoras*? Would the staged action freeze while the narrator was explaining things? Would the actors employ pantomime while the narrator described their unspoken actions? Anyone who imagines translating an (almost) uncut version of a narrated dialogue to the stage will discover the need for a host of creative expedients quite apart from whether or not one decides to retain or eliminate expressions like “he said.” With its roots in the tragic chorus, Plato’s use of narrators alone would make him a theatrical revolutionary, and it’s easy to understand why those who think the dialogues were performed are better able to imagine a performance of *Gorgias* and *Meno* than *Protagoras* or *Symposium* (see §1).

An even greater innovation is more difficult to spot. It is worth repeating that if Plato’s dialogues were performed as dramas, this marked the first time that a genius ever wrote a play *in prose*. As every actor knows, it is easier to memorize poetry, and therefore it is more difficult for orators to learn their own speeches than it was for Ion, Niceratus,¹⁴ or Socrates to recite the speeches of Homer. Plato’s prose dramas are therefore excellent preparation for developing the orator’s capacity to memorize, and it is in this context that Socrates’ insistence that the Guardians must have good memories (*R.* 486d1–3) intersects with the pre-*Symposium* references to Hippias’ mnemonic τέχνη (*Hp. Ma.* 285e7–10 and *Hp. Mi.* 368d6–e1). Nor is it only memory that is implicated in the translation of a prose text to a live performance. While Plato’s use of metered speech in *Symposium* has received attention,¹⁵ the way in which the dialogue contributes to and indeed demands the ability to

12. Cicero illustrates the primacy of philosophy with respect to invention in *De inventione* 1.1–5 by taking as his theme a critique and a defense of rhetoric from a philosophical perspective. With *ut existimem sapientiam sine eloquentia parum prodesse civitatibus, eloquentium vero sine sapientia nimium obesse plerumque, prodesse numquam* (1.1), cf. *Alc.* 2 144d6 and 146e2: ὀλιγάκις μὲν ὠφελεῖν, βλάπτειν δὲ τὰ πλείω.

13. Cf. David Sider, “Staging Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Politeia* 1, no. 4 (Fall 2019), 1–21, on 19; this article contains many valuable observations on performing *Smp.*

14. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 3.5.

15. See Friedrich Blass, *Die Rhythmen der attischen Kunstprosa: Isokrates-Demosthenes-Platon* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1901), especially 75–82 on *Smp.*

master the proper reading of unmetred but hardly unstructured prose aloud has been overlooked. Since there is no need to conform Plato's instruction in rhetoric to the five parts into which it was subsequently divided, the ability to read carefully written prose properly belongs equally to what would later be called ὑπόκρισις—i.e., the actor's ability to deliver the lines effectively—and λέξις or expression, for I suspect that Plato never wrote a sentence without considering how it sounded, and thus how it should be read aloud.

Long before he became a famous professor, my friend Gordon Teskey taught me that no pianist *reads* a sonata while sitting quietly in an armchair: she plays it on the piano. His point was that the written texts of the ancients are nothing more than the bare indications of what was originally a *musical* performance. Consider as an example Pausanias' scarcely poetic description of the two kinds of ἔρωσις.¹⁶ Quite apart from the fact that our manuscripts lack punctuation altogether, the punctuation supplied by, e.g., John Burnet,¹⁷ some additional punctuation is required to clarify its prosaic logic:

ἡ μὲν γέ, που πρεσβυτέρα καὶ ἀμήτωρ, Οὐρανοῦ θυγάτηρ, ἦν δὴ καὶ 'Οὐρανίαν' ἐπονομάζομεν· ἡ δὲ νεωτέρα, Διὸς καὶ Διώνης, ἦν δὴ 'Πάνδημον' καλοῦμεν. ἀναγκαῖον δὴ καὶ ἔρωσις—τὸν μὲν τῆ ἑτέρα συνεργὸν—'Πάνδημον' ὀρθῶς καλεῖσθαι, τὸν δὲ, 'Οὐράνιον.'

Since analysis of this kind can only be done in Greek, I will leave it at that, merely noting a number of other passages that most ostentatiously demand similar treatment,¹⁸ for most every Greek or Latin sentence needs what might be called “internal” or “supplemental punctuation.” As a general matter, then, it is not only a passage from Pausanias that can illustrate how necessary it is for an orator to learn where to pause (cf. 185c4).

The dialogue teems with passages that demand rhetorical analysis. Starting with the double antitheses of its first clause (197d1), where Plato equips both pairs with homoioteleuton,¹⁹ Agathon's pre-coda masterpiece is the notorious example:

16. 188d6–e3 (H. N. Fowler): “Surely there is the elder, of no mother born, but daughter of Heaven, whence we name her Heavenly; while the younger was the child of Zeus and Dione, and her we call Popular. It follows then that of the two Loves also the one ought to be called Popular, as fellow-worker with the one of those goddesses, and the other Heavenly.”

17. 188d6–e3 (Burnet): ἡ μὲν γέ που πρεσβυτέρα καὶ ἀμήτωρ Οὐρανοῦ θυγάτηρ, ἦν δὴ καὶ Οὐρανίαν ἐπονομάζομεν· ἡ δὲ νεωτέρα Διὸς καὶ Διώνης, ἦν δὴ Πάνδημον καλοῦμεν. ἀναγκαῖον δὴ καὶ ἔρωσις τὸν μὲν τῆ ἑτέρα συνεργὸν Πάνδημον ὀρθῶς καλεῖσθαι, τὸν δὲ Οὐράνιον.

18. 184d3–e4, 186b7–c5, 187e6–188a1, 191c8–d3, 193c5–d5, 196a7–b3, and 215d1–6.

19. ἀλλοτριότητος μὲν κενοί, οικειότητος δὲ πληροί [‘who empties alienation, replenishes intimacy’]. This is a perfect example of Plato's use of ἀντιθέσεις and παρισώσεις—i.e., antitheses and the even balancing of phrases—criticized by Dionysius of Halicarnassus as “Gorgianic theatrics” (see §13).

He [sc. ἔρως] it is who casts alienation out, draws intimacy in [see previous note]; in all such friendly gatherings as the present, at feasts and dances and oblations he makes himself leader [ἡγεμών]; politeness contriving [πορίζων], moroseness outdriving [ἐξορίζων]; kind giver of amity, giving no enmity; gracious, superb; a marvel to the wise, a delight to the gods coveted of such as share him not, treasured of such as good share have got; of luxury, tenderness, elegance, graces and longing and of yearning father [πόθου πατήρ]; careful of the good, careless of the bad [ἐπιμελής ἀγαθῶν, ἀμελής κακῶν being a third example of paired ἀντιθέσεις and παρισώσεις]; in toil, in fear, in yearning, in discourse steersman [κυβερνήτης], [as] boatswain, champion, deliverer best [ἄριστος]; of all gods and men ornament [κόσμος]; leader fairest and best, whom every one should follow, joining tunefully in the burthen of his song, wherewith he enchants the thought of every god and man.²⁰

No sooner have we recognized the effect than Agathon uses it again (197d4; cf. 197d7–8), and the combination of harmony and difference that joins πορίζων to ἐξορίζων is particularly elegant. Likewise elegant is the late placement of capping nouns like ἡγεμών (197d3), πατήρ (194d7)—πόθου πατήρ being particularly striking—and κόσμος (197e2), although he achieves an equally powerful effect by following a string of four synonyms for ἡγεμών with that final ἄριστος (197e2) to match the way the first of these nouns (κυβερνήτης at 197e1) follows another carefully arranged set of four. But it is not Agathon's speech alone but only his *in particular* that repays such analysis, and when his lover Pausanias uses two sets of four matched participles at 181d3–7,²¹ this likewise contributes to the reader's education in rhetorical elegance.²²

Naturally I am not suggesting that Plato expects his students to take the speeches of, e.g., Pausanias and Agathon as models to imitate; they are better understood as quarries from which to draw useful information about rhetorical technique. As a result, it is necessary to balance the μὲν of their effective figures of speech with the δέ of their rhetorical infelicities. The pedantic repetitiveness of Eryximachus at 187a6–c2 is clearly an example of something to avoid; neither can the eloquent Agathon be praised for his account of the first three virtues (196b5–d4) or the *ad nauseam* repetition of words

20. 197d1–e5 (Fowler modified).

21. 181d3–7 (Fowler modified): “For I conceive that these are those who, beginning [ἀρχόμενοι] to love them at this age, having prepared [παρεσκευασμένοι] for being with them [συνεσόμενοι] as long as life shall last, and purposing to live together [συμβιωσόμενοι] in common, but not having deceived them [ἐξαπατήσαντες], having taken them [λαβόντες] as young through thoughtlessness, and having mocked them [καταγελάσαντες], to depart, running away [ἀποτρέχοντες] after another.”

22. Cf. Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, 1.9: “he demands to read Plato, not for the sake of adorning his life, but of decorating his diction and speech [*oratio*], not that he may become more temperate, but more elegant [*lepidior*].” Taurus is describing a youngster who wants to read *Smp.* and *Phdr.* in particular.

derived from “tender [ἀπαλός],” of which there are nine (including Homer’s) between 195c7 and 196a2. In addition, then, to mixing the effective with the foolish, Plato is capable of combining rhetorical effectiveness with a thesis-undermining self-contradiction, as when Eryximachus reaches his pre-coda peak with an eloquent sentence—albeit not entirely unmixed with the doctor’s proclivity to repetition—that simultaneously undoes the bifurcation of ἔρωϛ he took over from Pausanias and negates his earlier critique of Heraclitus:

Thus much, and great, yet still more all-encompassing [πᾶς in the feminine] is the power he has, all-combined, this all-encompassing Love [ὁ πᾶς Ἔρωϛ], he who perfects good things with temperance and justice, both among us and among the gods, this the one who the greatest power has, and for us an all-encompassing [πᾶς in the feminine again] happiness prepares, who with one another are able to consort and even to be friends with those greater than ourselves, the gods.²³

The speech of Aristophanes has too many excellences to mention quite apart from the simplicity and humor with which he tells his famous myth. Avoiding the use of rhetorical embellishment is rhetoric’s second oldest trick, and Plato’s Aristophanes illustrates its mastery. Deserving particular attention are (1) the appeal to the auditor’s imagination after the most vivid description imaginable (189e5–190a4), (2) the internal punctuation needed to make 190b5–c1 sing as the descriptive and rhetorical masterpiece it is, (3) the sentence that introduces the Problem of the One and the Many with such simplicity and grace (191c8–d3), (4) the lightning brevity of 192a2–3, and (5) the immortal description of the *Drang nach Einheit* (192e9–193a1). But it is scarcely surprising that the comic poet excels himself when placing words in the mouth of a character, and the amazing mixture of rhetorical balance and brutal *Realpolitik* in the speech of Zeus (190c7–d3) is exceeded only by the second question posed by Hephaestus, which combines even greater rhetorical symmetry with perfect romanticism:

‘Do you desire [ἐπιθυμεῖτε] to be joined in the closest possible union *with* one another [ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ γενέσθαι ὅτι μάλιστα ἀλλήλοισι], so that you shall not be divided by night or by day *from* one another [ὥστε καὶ νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι ἀλλήλων]? For if this you desire [ἐπιθυμεῖτε], I am ready to fuse and weld you together in a single piece [συν-τῆξι καὶ συμ-φουσησαι εἰς τὸ αὐτό], that being two, you have become one [ὥστε δύο ὄντας, ἕνα γεγονέναι]; that so long as you live, the pair of you, as being one [ὡς ἕνα ὄντα], may share a single life; and that when you die, there again in Hades [ἐκεῖ αὖ ἐν Ἅιδου], instead of two, to be one [ἀντὶ δυοῖν, ἕνα εἶναι], having doubly died together

23. 188d4–9 (Fowler modified).

[κοινῆ τεθνεῶτε; the verb is dual]. Bethink yourselves if this is your heart's desire, and if you will be quite contented with this lot.²⁴

As for Socrates' speech, quite apart from its alethic- or truth-value, its continuous portion (208c1–212a7) replicates the *scala amoris* ("ladder of love") on the rhetorical level.²⁵ Beginning with merely dyadic alliteration,²⁶ and continuing through an increasing use of triplets,²⁷ the speech reaches an ornamental climax with a triadic deployment of homoioteleuton that puts Pausanias to shame.²⁸ Since the conclusion of the sentence that begins at 209b5 and continues until 209c2 will be translated below for the sake of its content, it is worth mentioning that the sentence that follows it (209c2–7) is a perfect example of how a passage can sing given the proper pauses.²⁹ But having emphasized the excellence of the second rhetorical question of Hepha-

24. 192d5–e4 (Fowler modified).

25. Most obviously, of course, at 211c3–d1.

26. 208c4, 208d1, 208e5, 209a4; beginning (perhaps) at 209a5, dyadic initial vowels become its counterpart at 209b1–2, 209c1, and the delicious 210a6–7 (cf. 212a3) before becoming a triple with ἐ- at 210a3 and with ἐπι- 210c6. And it is there that the alliterative dyad triumphantly returns in the following rhetorical masterpiece (210c6–d6; following Rowe's punctuation): "He should be led on after the practices to the sciences [μετὰ δὲ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐπὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας], so that there also he may see their beauty, and by looking toward much [πρὸς πολὺ] of the beautiful already, no longer that of just one—like a maid, admiring a child's beauty [παιδαρίου κάλλος]—or that of one man [ἀνθρώπου τινός] or of one practice [ἐπιτηδεύματος ἑνός; this and the previous two brackets will be considered below], being a wretch enslaved and speechless [σικρολόγος, i.e., that which the sequel proves that Socrates isn't], but having been turned to the full sea [πολὺ πέλαγος] of the beautiful and beholding it, to many and beautiful speeches [πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς λόγους] and most fitting ones he gives birth and thoughts [καὶ μεγαλοπρεπεῖς τίκτηι καὶ διανοήματα] in unstinting philosophy [ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἀφθόνῳ]." With respect to delivery, the words that follow the formulaic but elegant πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς λόγους are particularly important: by adding another adjective ending with a long syllable followed by a verb composed of two of them (καὶ μεγαλοπρεπεῖς τίκτηι), the rhythm slows to a drum beat ("pace-tick-tay") in sharp contrast to reading the next addition (καὶ διανοήματα ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἀφθόνῳ) with a brief (pentametric) pause between two elisions as: διανοήματ' ἐν; φιλοσοφί' ἀφθόνῳ (di-a-no-EH-ma-TEN; phil-os-o-pher-APH-thaw-NO).

27. 208e4 (ἀθανασίαν καὶ μνήμην καὶ εὐδαιμονίαν), 209b6 (καλῆ καὶ γενναία καὶ εὐφραῖ), 209d1 (καὶ εἰς Ὅμηρον ἀποβλέψας καὶ Ἡσίοδον καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ποιητὰς τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς), 210c1 (καὶ ἐρᾶν καὶ κήδεσθαι καὶ τίκτειν), 210d2–3 (see following note), 210d4–5 (πολλοὺς καὶ καλοὺς [λόγους] καὶ μεγαλοπρεπεῖς; see previous note), and 211b4–5 (μήτι—μήτε—μήδε). Note that the triple becomes four immediately before the alethic climax at 211a8–b1 (ἐν ζῳῳ ἢ ἐν γῆ ἢ ἐν οὐρανῳ ἢ ἐν τῷ ἄλλῳ), which is then followed in the climax that follows at 211b1–2 by another triple (ἀλλ' αὐτὸ—καθ' αὐτὸ—μεθ' αὐτοῦ) or two (μονοειδὲς αἰεὶ ὄν), for with respect to delivery, a second use of separation fits the gravity of the situation: mo-no-AY-des—ah-AY—ON: "but itself, by itself, with itself; uniform, everlasting, existent."

28. Consider the subtle use of homoioteleuton with -ος in the triple παιδαρίου κάλλος ἢ ἀνθρώπου τινός ἢ ἐπιτηδεύματος ἑνός (210d2–3). The passage is translated in an earlier note.

29. 209c2–7: "For I believe that by holding onto the beautiful [for the last time, what *could* be τὸ καλόν—in the genitive and dative the two are indistinguishable—is only ὁ καλός, 'the beautiful boy'] and by consorting with him, such things as he [sc. ὁ καλός] was long ago conceiving, he now brings forth and bears, and [the other] both present and absent remembering, he too, cooperating with him, helps to nourish the newborn, so that a much greater cooperation with one another than that of [raising] children such men as these maintain, and a friendship more enduring, for they have cooperated for the sake of more beautiful and more deathless children."

estus in Aristophanes' speech, it is Diotima's penultimate rhetorical question that suggests the full scope of Plato's eloquence, complementing its crucially important content (see §17):

'What then are we to think,' she said, 'if what should come to be for someone [τῷ] is to glimpse [ἰδεῖν] the Beautiful itself [αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν]—pristine, pure, unmixed [εἰλικρινές, καθαρόν, ἄμεικτον]—not surfeit with human flesh and colors and much other mortal nonsense [μὴ ἀνάπλεων σαρκῶν τε ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ἄλλης πολλῆς φλυαρίας] but if he might be able to glimpse more fully [κατιδεῖν] as one [μονοειδές] the divine Beautiful itself [αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν].'³⁰

Approaching the precipice of repetitiveness thanks to (1) ἰδεῖν and κατιδεῖν, (2) αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν and αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν, and (3) the near synonymy of εἰλικρινές, καθαρόν, ἄμεικτον, the replacement of "(3)" by the appropriately unifying μονοειδές (which now returns from 211b1), the divinizing addition to αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν—which would require a dramatic pause after αὐτὸ and emphasis on the second syllable of θεῖον—and the enhancement of ἰδεῖν by the prefix κατ-, a triad of doubles is only one of three triples in this amazing sentence.

Style aside, Socrates' speech is the dialogue's most variegated, combining as it does the dialogue with Agathon (199d5–201c9), the creation of the character Diotima (201d1–e3), the mimetic dialogue with "her" (201e3–208b9)—including the use of myth (203a7–e5)³¹ and some pointed response to his rivals as befits the speaker who speaks last (205d10–e7 and 208d2–7)—and above all the continuous and flowing eloquence at its conclusion (208c1–212a7), to which a coda (212b1–c3) and a dialogic false start (194a1–e3) might be added.³² But the speech it criticizes most harshly, it also criticizes unfairly (see §16 on Diotima's criticism of Phaedrus) and we don't fully realize its relation to the other speeches—especially on the crucial question of whether it is necessary for the beloved to gratify the lover sexually, as claimed by Pausanias³³—until we reach the speech of Alcibiades (217c7–

30. 211d8–e4.

31. With the pairing of Poros and Penia, cf. *Prt.* 321b6–d3.

32. Cf. Anne Sheppard, "Rhetoric, Drama and Truth in Plato's *Symposium*," *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 2, no. 1 (2008), 28–40, on 37: "Socrates' speech is a mixture, starting with dialogue and a simply told fable but going on to make grand unargued claims in a much loftier style. It combines a style like that of Aristophanes and Protagoras with a style like that of Agathon and Gorgias but both styles are used to convey important Platonic ideas, not sophistic fantasies."

33. See 183d6–8; prepared by 182a1–3, 182b1–4, and 182c7–d4; defended at 184b5–6, 184c7–e4, and 185b2–5), instantiated by his beloved Agathon, and supported, at least tacitly, by the others (186b8–c1, 192a2–5, and 180b2). Pausanias assimilates Socrates, who is pursuing a bearded youth in the *Protagoras* Frame, to the kind of ἐραστής he is defending; see Luc Brisson, "Agathon, Pausanias and Diotima in Plato's *Symposium: Paederastia and Philosophia*," in J. H. Lesher, Debra Nails, and Frisbee C. C. Sheffield (eds.), *Plato's Symposium: Issues in Interpretation and Reception*, 229–251 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2006), 241; cf. Dümmler, *Akademika*, 43–44.

219b2), or rather its asexual climax.³⁴ On the whole, it would be difficult to say whether it is Socrates' speech itself, or that of Alcibiades, which praises *all* of his speeches (215d1–6), that provides the best evidence of his rhetorical mastery. Moreover, since what Socrates says with so much eloquence at the end of Diotima's Discourse has the great advantage of being what Plato and Platonists generally regard as being true, Socrates' rhetorical ability is better illustrated in *Phaedrus*—at least for those who think that a speech's eloquence is separable from its moral excellence—when he joins Pausanias in proving that it is necessary for the beloved to gratify the lover sexually,³⁵ i.e., something that we are entitled to regard as false and indeed have been trained to recognize as such in the *Symposium*.

But it is rather at the intersection of two *Symposia* that we have been fully trained. No attempt to unify Plato's *Symposium* is complete without taking some account of its relationship to Xenophon's, the subject of which is not (erotic) speeches but gentlemen at play.³⁶ Although Pausanias himself is not present, Xenophon's Socrates attacks him in the dialogue's only speech about *ἔρωξ*,³⁷ and it is primarily on the basis of this attack that the present consensus regards Xenophon's *Symposium* as a response to Plato's.³⁸ The obvious problem here is that Xenophon's Socrates takes Pausanias to task for what Phaedrus (almost) says in Plato's *Symposium* (178e3–179a2); as a result, Xenophon must be presented as at once derivative and carelessly so.³⁹

34. For a further suspense-building connection between the speeches of Pausanias and Alcibiades, relieved only by the climax of latter's, see Francesca Pentassuglio, "Socrates *Erotikos*: Mutuality, Role Reversal and Erotic *Paideia* in Xenophon's and Plato's *Symposia*," in Gabriel Danzig, David Johnson, and Donald Morrison (eds.), *Plato and Xenophon: Comparative Studies*, 365–390 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), on 379.

35. Socrates identifies the thesis of the Great Speech—on which see *Guardians in Action*, §9—when he contrasts his two speeches as follows (*Phdr.* 265a2–3): "The two were opposites; the one said that it was necessary to gratify the one who loves [τῷ ἐρῶντι . . . δεῖ χαρίζεσθαι], the other said the one who doesn't [ἐναντίω που ἦσθην: ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὡς τῷ ἐρῶντι, ὁ δ' ὡς τῷ μὴ δεῖ χαρίζεσθαι, ἐλεγέτην]." Cf. τὸ ἐραστῆ παιδικὰ χάρισασθαι (184d2–3).

36. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 1.1.

37. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.32. Of secondary importance but tending to the same dilemma—i.e., that if Xenophon is imitating Plato, he does so carelessly *in the very passages on which the imitation claim is based*—is 8.34, where Socrates claims that Pausanias had cited "the Thebans and the Eleans" to support his own position; cf. 182b1–6 where he contrasts his own position from what is lawful in Elis and Boeotia.

38. Even the foremost Anglophone defenders of Xenophon's priority—see Holger Thesleff, "The Interrelation and Date of the *Symposia* of Plato and Xenophon," *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 25 (1978), 157–170, on 167, and Gabriel Danzig, "Intra-Socratic Polemics: The *Symposia* of Plato and Xenophon," *Greek, Latin & Byzantine Studies* 45 (2005), 331–357, on 348–49—use the expedient of a rewrite to account for the alleged dependence of the speech of Xenophon's Socrates on *Smp*.

39. The ready solution to Xenophon's "error" is that Pausanias, either in person or as a character in someone else's dialogue, had said what Xenophon's Socrates claims that he had (*Symposium*, 8.32–33). As if to block this solution, Athenaeus writes (*Sophists at Dinner*, 5.56; translation by C. D. Yonge modified): "But that Pausanias never said anything of the sort we may see from the *Symposium* of Plato. For I know of no book at all which is written by Pausanias, nor is he introduced by any one

But thanks to the presence of the combative and prolific Antisthenes in Xenophon's *Symposium*,⁴⁰ it could easily be to *his* version of Pausanias—to say nothing of the historical Pausanias himself—that Xenophon's Socrates is responding.⁴¹ Above all, what proponents of Plato's priority have failed to recognize is the remarkable manner in which Plato's Pausanias steals the bifurcation of ἔρωξ from Xenophon's Socrates, and in the service of the very thesis for which *Xenophon's* Socrates takes *his* Pausanias to task.⁴² Xenophon's Socrates draws the line between good and bad ἔρωξ at the sexual act itself;⁴³ Plato's Pausanias *socratizes* that dividing line—it is καλον to gratify a lover sexually *but only for the sake of virtue* (185b1–2 and 185b5)—in much the same way that “Stesichorus” will *platonize* that position in *Phaedrus*.⁴⁴ If it is more difficult to see how deceptively Platonic is Stesichorus' speech in *Phaedrus* without reference to Pausanias' speech in Plato's *Symposium*, Xenophon's *Symposium* makes it that much easier for us to see how deceptively Socratic the speech of Plato's Pausanias really is.⁴⁵ More importantly,

else as speaking of lovers and their boyfriends, but only by Plato. But whether Xenophon has absolutely invented this story, or whether he fell in with any edition of Plato's *Symposium* which reports what happened in a different manner, is of no importance; still we must take notice of the blunder as far as the time is concerned.”

40. Emphasized in particular just after Socrates' speech begins at Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.3–6, on which see Prince, *Antisthenes of Athens*, 57–62. Given the disparaging remarks Athenaeus makes about “the Dog” elsewhere (*Sophists at Dinner*, 5.63 and 11.115), his “for of Pausanias I know of no book [Πανσανίου γὰρ οὐκ οἶδα σύγγραμμα]” should not be regarded as dispositive if Antisthenes was using him as a character, quite apart from the other errors he makes in cataloguing Plato's errors (e.g., Meno in *Euthd.* at 11.114).

41. See Joël, *Sokrates*, volume 2, part 2, 708–16 (where he argues for a *Symposionprotreptik* by Antisthenes) and 912–49 (“Plato's *Symposion* in Parallele zu Xenophon und in Beziehung auf Antisthenes”). If it is to Pausanias as mediated by Antisthenes that Xenophon is responding, it is relief to find at last a place where recourse to Antisthenes is both illuminating and plausible. See also Prince, *Antisthenes*, 59 (“Antisthenes did write a sympotic text, which is active elsewhere in Xenophon's *Symposium*”), Maier, *Sokrates*, 17–18n1 (especially: “But this λόγος of Pausanias [sc. to which Xenophon's Socrates responds] cannot be Plato's speech of Pausanias. And that Xenophon is directly attacking it as [citation of Ivo Bruns deleted] assumes, is out of the question”), and Pohlenz, *Aus Platos Werdezeit*, 394–400.

42. In Xenophon's *Symposium*, it is Socrates who introduces the distinction between the two Aphrodites (8.9); while diffident about his knowledge of theology (8.9), the purpose of Socrates' speech is to exhort Callias to practice—by claiming that Callias is already doing so, a Socratic trick Hermogenes explains to us (8.12)—the spiritual ἔρωξ he aligns with the Uranian Aphrodite (8.10), exploited by Plato's Pausanias beginning at 180d4–e1.

43. Hence the paradox that the clearest and most succinct description of “Platonic Love” is found in Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.12: “I plan to bear witness to him [sc. Callias] that likewise much stronger is the ἔρωξ of the soul than that of the body.”

44. See *Guardians in Action*, 185–87. Since I failed there to connect the Great Speech of Socrates to the speech of Pausanias in *Smp.*, consider the following analogy: Socrates' Second Speech in *Phaedrus* : Socrates' speech in Plato's *Symposium* :: Pausanias' speech in Plato's *Symposium* : Socrates' speech in Xenophon's *Symposium*. Both “Stesichorus” and Pausanias call for the beloved to gratify the lover sexually, but the first borrows the love-language of Plato's Socrates, the other, of Xenophon's, both to opposed effect.

45. Note that the same passage in Xenophon's *Symposium* that shows him to be a careless reader of Pausanias' speech (8.32) also shows him to be an astute reader of it: he would have seen a defense

it is impossible to realize how brilliantly Plato has built on his predecessors without recognizing the extent of his debt to Xenophon.⁴⁶

Leaving further discussion of Xenophon for the next section, there is an important issue that must now be faced squarely in this one. Even if one were to devote a full commentary to the claim that Plato's *Symposium* constitutes an effective practical education in ῥητορικὴ—a project which would require illustrating, line by line, all the figures of speech, felicitous arrangements, and theatrical techniques necessary for effective oratory⁴⁷—this would not negate but rather complement the common view that Plato is the first and most famous critic of rhetoric. The solution to this riddle is that an awareness of rhetoric's power to deceive is impossible for those who have not mastered it, and who therefore could not make use of its tricks themselves. It is therefore not surprising that *Symposium* is absent from most discussions of Plato's views on rhetoric.⁴⁸ It is merely propaedeutic to *Gorgias* in this respect and even more so to *Phaedrus*, precisely because of the latter's technical approach to deception.⁴⁹ Rather it is in relation to *Protagoras* that

of sexualized pederasty where an encomium of ἔρωσ appears to be. What makes Pausanias' speech in *Smp.* so deceptive is that "he" borrows the Uranian Aprodite from Xenophon's Socrates and then joins her to ἀρετή in order to justify the sexual gratification that Xenophon's Socrates uses the two Aphrodites and his Pausanias to attack (*Symposium*, 8.32–34).

46. See Pohlenz, *Aus Platos Werdezeit*, 400: "Here there are only two possibilities: either Xenophon—before he came to his special theme [sc. at 8.9–12], i.e., a speech in praise of a purely spiritual ἔρωσ—pointed briefly in its introduction [8.1] to his connection to Plato with respect to the essence of ἔρωσ, or Plato borrowed from this single paragraph of Xenophon's [cf. *Crito* and Xenophon, *Apology*, 23] not only the essence of ἔρωσ as δαίμων, but also spun out the individual attributes of his various speeches in praise of love; he [sc. Plato] therefore also owes him [sc. Xenophon] in principle the entire conception of his work." The "single paragraph" in question is Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.1 (Marchant modified): "'Gentlemen,' said he, 'it is to be expected of us, is it not, when in the presence of a mighty deity [δαίμων; cf. Socrates in *Smp.*] that is coeval with the eternal gods [cf. *Phaedrus*], yet youngest of them all in appearance [cf. Agathon], in magnitude encompassing the universe [cf. Eryximachus], but enthroned in the heart of man,—I mean Love,—that we should not be unmindful of him, particularly in view of the fact that we are all of his following?'" For the Xenophonic basis for Pausanias' speech, see previous note; for Plato's motives in introducing Aristophanes and Alcibiades, see §15.

47. The most useful Anglophone attempt to do so is the classic commentary by R. G. Bury (ed.), *The Symposium of Plato; With Introduction, Critical Notes and Commentary* (Cambridge: Heffer and Sons, 1909), especially at xxiv–xxxvi and lii (but note the absence of comment on "style and diction" in the case of Socrates' speech). In his particularly valuable discussion of "the tricks and ornaments proper to the sophistical schools of rhetoric" in the speech of Pausanias (xxvii–xxviii), he pays tribute to Arnold Hug (ed.), *Platons Symposium*, second edition (Leipzig: Teubner, 1884); in addition to offering the kind of rhetorical analysis on which Bury relies (in particular, see 52–53), Hug is the most effective defender of the priority of Xenophon's *Symposium* (see xviii–xxxi; for the parallels between 8.1 and *Smp.* in the previous note, see xxix); a priority that Bury rejects (lxvii–viii) while offering a valuable note (xlviin1) that points to "the missing third" solution based on Joël.

48. For exceptions, see, in addition to Sheppard, "Rhetoric, Drama and Truth," Wayne N. Thompson, "The *Symposium*: A Neglected Source for Plato's Ideas on Rhetoric," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 37, no. 3 (Spring 1972), 219–232, Nathan Crick and John Poulakos, "Go Tell Alcibiades: Comedy, Tragedy, and Rhetoric in Plato's *Symposium*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94, no. 1 (2008), 1–22.

49. See *Guardians in Action*, §7.

unifying or rather integrating *Symposium* as part of an ongoing education in λόγοι becomes initially understandable. Just as the reason that *Protagoras* begins with a direct dialogue about the beautiful Alcibiades only becomes fully intelligible in *Symposium*, the dawn entrance of the eager young Hippocrates in the narrated dialogue that follows is explained there as well. The youth wants to study with Protagoras for the same reason that most of Plato's students probably wanted to study with him, and even though it was by no means his principal office, in *Symposium* he too will become the desiderated "overseer of making one speak well [ἐπιστάτης τοῦ ποιῆσαι δεινὸν λέγειν]" (*Prt.* 312d6–7). This is why Cicero called Plato: "that most serious authority and master not of understanding only but also of speaking."⁵⁰

Plato's eloquence is no doubt the principal evidence that he was indeed what Cicero calls a *magister dicendi* (see §13), and his eloquence is on fullest display in *Symposium*.⁵¹ But there is other evidence that Plato was a teacher of rhetoric, for Cicero was not his only student. It is rather in the first generation of the Academy's graduates—i.e., those who heard Plato and then went forth to political careers as orators and statesmen—that this evidence can be found. Although his political mentor Chabrias likewise has some claim to the distinction,⁵² it is more clearly Phocion (b. 402) who was one of Plato's first Athenian students;⁵³ Dion (b. 408), at least among those whose names we know, was the oldest *tout court*.⁵⁴ In Plutarch's *Life of Phocion*, the man who was elected general more times than any other,⁵⁵ makes a useful observation about the distinction between generals and orators, one that recalls Ion's claim, seconded by Xenophon's Niceratus,⁵⁶ that he has learned from Homer how to be a (speech-giving) general:

50. Cicero, *Orator* 10: *ille non intellegendi solum sed etiam dicendi gravissimus auctor et magister Plato*.

51. Cf. Sheppard, "Rhetoric, Drama and Truth," 39 (last word): "The *Symposium* is neither a tragedy nor a comedy nor, indeed, a satyr-play. It is a prose dialogue in which Plato uses the techniques of rhetoric in a highly dramatic way. Plato is implicitly criticizing comic drama, tragic drama and epideictic rhetoric and trying to show how the techniques of rhetoric can be used and combined with Socratic dialectic in both the grand style of tragedy and the simpler style of comedy to convey what he believes to be the truth."

52. See Lawrence Trittle, *Phocion the Good* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 50–55.

53. Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, is a crucial document for reconstructing the political orientation of Plato's Academy during his lifetime; in addition to passages cited below, see 4.1, 14.4, and the Socratic death scene at 36.2–38.2. But the comparison with Cato at 3.1 in comparison with 32.4 (where Phocion puts *Grg.* 469b8–c2 into practice at the expense of the Athenians) is equally important for illustrating (Plutarch's awareness of) the limitations of Phocion's Platonism.

54. See William Wiens, "Violence and the Origins of *to Kalon*," in Heather L. Reid and Tony Leyh (eds.), *Looking at Beauty to Kalon in Western Greece: Selected Essays from the 2018 Symposium on the Heritage of Western Greece*, 15–35 (Fonte Aretusa: Parnassos, 2019), 34, on the death of Dion and thus the use of τέθνηκεν καλῶς and πᾶν ὀρθὸν καὶ καλόν at *Ep.* 334d8–e3.

55. Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 8.1.

56. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 4.6; note the influence on *Ion*.

Seeing that the public men of his day had divided up as if by lot the work of general and of orator, some of them only speaking in the assembly and proposing decrees, such as Eubulus, Aristophon, Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and Hyperides, and others—men like Diopieithes, Menestheus, Leosthenes, and Chares—advancing themselves by serving as generals and waging war, Phocion wished to resume and restore the political behavior [πολιτεία] of Pericles, Aristides, and Solon, which was equally apportioned to both spheres of action.⁵⁷

Naturally I am suggesting throughout that it was Plato's Πολιτεία that inspired the Platonic synthesis for which Phocion strove.⁵⁸

But a no less Platonic aspect of this passage can be found in the list of unsynthesized orators: Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and Hyperides were all said to be Plato's students. To take Hyperides first,⁵⁹ there is a funeral oration among his surviving speeches in which he identifies the purpose of a good education, and thus, tacitly, of his own:

I believe all of us know that it is for this that we educate the youth: that they may become good men, and of those who have become, in time of war, men excelling in virtue [ἀρετή], it is obvious [πρόδηλον] that, being children, they were nobly [καλῶς] educated.⁶⁰

Echoing Simonides' epitaph (see Preface),⁶¹ he adds a Platonic touch by referring to those who are willing to expose *their bodies* to danger,⁶² "they have expended life that others live well."⁶³ In imagining the welcome the dead heroes will receive from the ancients in Hades, Hyperides pays tribute to *Menexenus*, where the dead heroes will only welcome their own children if they, too, have been heroic (*Mx.* 247c1–4).⁶⁴ With his "the choice

57. Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 7.3; for translation and comment, see Jennifer Tolbert Roberts, *Athenians on Trial: The Antidemocratic Tradition in Western Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 117.

58. For the title of Plato's *Republic*, see *Plato the Teacher*, 1.

59. [Plutarch], *Ten Orators* (Hyperides), 848d–e (Fowler): "After being a pupil of the philosopher Plato, along with Lycurgus, and of the orator Isocrates, Hyperides entered upon public life at Athens at the time when Alexander was interfering in the affairs of Greece." Cf. G. L. Cawkwell, "Hyperides" in Hornblower and Spawforth, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 717–718 (Oxford: University Press, 2012), on 717 (without apparatus): "(389–322 BC), prominent Athenian statesman, rated second only to Demosthenes amongst the Ten Orators. He studied rhetoric under Isocrates." The curious student will repeatedly encounter this equally curious suppression of Plato's influence.

60. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 8; all references to Hyperides and Lycurgus are based on *Minor Attic Orators II; Lycurgus, Dinarchus, Demades, Hyperides*, translated by J. O. Burtt (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954).

61. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 16: τῆ Ἑλλάδι [τῆν] ἐλε[υθερ]ίαν περιθεῖναι. Note that the remains of the speech are fragmentary.

62. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 15: οἱ κινδυν[εύειν ἐθ]έλοντες τοῖς σόμασ[ιν].

63. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 26.

64. On Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 35, see *Minor Attic Orators II*, 534 (Burtt): "There is no surviving parallel to the passage in which the leader [sc. Leosthenes] is depicted in Hades as welcomed by the heroes of old." Cf. *Ap.* 40e7–41c7. With *Funeral Speech*, 43, cf. *Ap.* 40c5–e7.

they chose,”⁶⁵ he likewise pays tribute to the string of cognate accusatives in Pausanias’ speech, and with his “things worthy of dirges [θρήνων] have they not suffered [πεπόνθασιν] but of fulsome praises [ἐπαίνων] have they done [πεποιήκασιν],”⁶⁶ he honors Agathon’s favorite (Gorgianic) tricks of ἀντιθέσεις and παρισώσεις, for the use of which Dionysius of Halicarnassus took Plato to task (see §13). And who can say where rhetoric ends and Platonism begins in the following?

For if what to others is most painful—death—has become for them the chief author [ἀρχηγός] of great goods, how is it right to judge them unlucky, or how even to have departed from life, but not rather, to have been born [γεγονέναι] from the beginning [ἐξ ἀρχῆς] a nobler birth [γένεσιν] than the actual first?⁶⁷

Next comes Lycurgus, Hyperides’ classmate in the Academy.⁶⁸ If we can see the influence of *Menexenus* on Hyperides, it is Plato’s *Ion* that seems to have captured Lycurgus’ admiration, for he takes every opportunity to recite poetry in his only surviving speech.⁶⁹ In tandem with Hyperides’ *Funeral Speech, Against Leocrates* more importantly reveals what might be called “a vocabulary of gallantry,” of which the key words are: “danger [κίνδυνος]” and “to undergo danger [κινδυνεύειν]”⁷⁰—including “to wish to undergo danger [ἐθέλειν κινδυνεύειν]”⁷¹ and even “to be willing to die [ἐθέλειν

65. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 40: προαιρέσεως ἧς προεἶλοντο. For the string of cognate accusatives in Pausanias’ speech, see 182e2–183a8. For Socrates’ use of cognate accusatives in a rhetorical setting, see *Ap.* 19c4 and 36c4; cf. 18c4–5.

66. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 42.

67. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 28. Note the orator’s refusal to apply the word θάνατος when describing “the virtue of those who have not been destroyed,” and “who thus for the sake of beautiful things [ὐπὲρ τῶν καλῶν] have departed this life, but they will have the life of those taking part in an everlasting band [τάξις]” (27).

68. [Plutarch], *Ten Orators* (Lycurgus), 843d (Fowler): “He attended the lectures of Plato the philosopher and at first devoted himself to philosophy; then, after being a pupil of the orator Isocrates, he had a notable public career both as a speaker and as a man of action.” For “classmate,” see 848d. For the parallel suppression of Plato (“his literary style was influenced by that of Isocrates, but he is a much less careful writer, being often negligent in the matter of [avoiding] hiatus”), see G. L. Cawkwell, “Lycurgus,” in Hornblower and Spawforth, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 872, despite this opening: “(c. 390–c. 325/4 BC), Athenian Statesman, of great importance after the battle of Chaeirona (338). The principal evidence about him is the ‘Life’ in [Plutarch] *Lives of the Ten Orators*.”

69. Cf. Cawkwell, “Lycurgus,” last word: “His disregard of proportion is shown by his inordinately long quotations from the poets.” Had he not been a proficient rhapsode, he could not be accused of this. Note also the discussion of rhapsodes at Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 102, on which see Ferroni and Macé, *Platon Ion*, 16n95.

70. For κίνδυνος, see Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 130, 133, 144, and 147, Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 40; cf. *Ap.* 28c3 and 28d4. For κινδυνεύειν, Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 143, Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 17. Cf. *Ap.* 28d7 and context.

71. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 129: “for they passed a law concerning all of those who were not willing to undergo danger for the city [τῶν μὴ ‘θελόντων ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος κινδυνεύειν].” Cf. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 15.

ἀποθνήσκειν]⁷²—“to remain steadfast [ὑπομενεῖν],”⁷³ “to run to the aid of [βοηθεῖν],”⁷⁴ “endurance [καρτηρία],”⁷⁵ “freedom [ἐλευθερία],”⁷⁶ and of course both καλόν and καλῶς.⁷⁷ For example, Leocrates “was not enduring [ὑπομενεῖν] danger [κίνδυνος] on behalf of freedom [ἐλευθερία],” and after reciting some lines of the *Iliad*, Lycurgus says:

Hearing these lines, gentlemen, our ancestors likewise emulated such deeds, and holding virtue so highly that not only on behalf of their city [πάτρις] but of the whole of Greece in common they were willing to die [ἐθέλειν ἀποθνήσκειν].⁷⁸

Of the two references to *Symposium* in this speech, one is so important that Plato’s text (208d4–6) cannot be fully understood without it; this passage (“Against Leocrates,” 83–88) will be considered in §16. The other borrows the vocabulary of gallantry from Diotima (207b2–4): “Birds at least, which by nature are best fitted for a swift escape, can be seen to be willing to die [ἐθέλειν ἀποθνήσκειν] for their young.”⁷⁹

In an article on “The Platonism of Lycurgus,” Robert Renehan does for Lycurgus what no one has yet dared to do for Demosthenes: he takes seriously the ancient evidence that he was a student of Plato’s and then analyzes his only surviving speech for evidence of his influence.⁸⁰ Perhaps the most striking feature of Renehan’s analysis is the emphasis on *Laws*. In discussing the lengthy quotation from Tyrtaeus in “Against Leocrates,” for example, he remarks that Lycurgus is only the second author who tells us that Tyrtaeus was an Athenian; the first was Plato (*Lg.* 629a4–5).⁸¹ And in discussing the foregoing passage on the birds, he highlights the phrase ὑπὲρ τῆς αὐτῶν νεοττιᾶς ἐθέλοντα ἀποθνήσκειν in order to connect it to *Laws* 814b2–4,⁸² not to *Symposium*. But when the first and last words of this phrase are combined into the verb ὑπερ-ἀποθνήσκειν, it is Phaedrus who comes to mind. In a

72. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 104 (on the heroes of Marathon) and 107. Cf. *Ap.* 41a8.

73. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 130, 133, and 147; Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 24. Cf. *La.* 193a9, *Grg.* 507b8, and *Ap.* 28c4.

74. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 133 and 149 (τῆ πατρίδι); Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 5. Cf. *Alc. I* 115b2–3.

75. Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 24, 34. Cf. 219d7 and *La.* 192b9.

76. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 147; Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 40. Cf. *R.* 561c1–2, on which see *Plato the Teacher*, 352–53.

77. See especially ὑπὲρ καλῶν at Hyperides, *Funeral Speech*, 27, and πρὸ τοῦ καλοῦ at Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 100.30, also καλόν (to die in Tyrtaeus) at 107.1.

78. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 104.

79. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 132 (translation Burt).

80. Robert F. Renehan, “The Platonism of Lycurgus,” *Greek, Roman & Byzantine Studies* 11, no. 3 (1970), 219–231.

81. Renehan, “Platonism of Lycurgus,” 227–28.

82. *Lg.* 814b2–4: “just as birds [cf. τὰ πτηνά at 207a9] fighting for their children, even against the strongest [cf. ισχυροτάτους at 207b4] predators, are both willing to die [ἐθέλειν ἀποθνήσκειν] and to undergo the danger of all dangers [πάντας κινδύνους κινδυνεύειν].”

speech more replete with the vocabulary of gallantry than any other passage in Plato, Phaedrus uses this verb twice (179b4 and 180a1) before further “disinteresting” it further with ἐπ-αποθνήσκειν at 180a1; when it reappears in Socrates’ Diotima Discourse (207b4 and 208d2), it will create the friction that fuels the reader’s ascent—and for that locution, one might prefer the more historical: *fueled* Lycurgus’ ascent—to the Beautiful (see §16).

Before quoting the lost biography where a certain Philiscus claimed that “Lycurgus become great and set right [κατορθοῦν] many things which it is not [i.e., which would not be] possible to be set right [passive of κατορθοῦν] for one who had not been an auditor of Plato’s speeches [λόγοι],”⁸³ Olympiodorus has already mentioned—in his commentary on *Gorgias*—that both Lycurgus and Demosthenes were Plato’s students (μαθηταί).⁸⁴ If Quintilian felt it necessary to prove that Demosthenes was Plato’s μαθητῆς (see §13) because there was already suspicion that he had not been, those suspicions were recent, for Cicero had no doubts on the matter. And no more than Plutarch did Olympiodorus have such doubts several hundred years later. Why those suspicions arose, and why, once having arisen, they became modern dogma, is unclear, but a deadpan reading of *Plato as rhetoric’s inveterate enemy* clearly played a part. On the other hand, the role of politics should not be forgotten: a tyrannical environment was inhospitable to a tyrant-hating or “tyrannicide” Academy, and it can hardly be an accident that beginning with Dion’s attempt to liberate Syracuse, the most famous of Plato’s students who went forth into the world—and that really means that they returned to the Cave—were Athenian politicians who opposed the hegemony of Macedon, for that is the other thread that unites Hyperides, Lycurgus, and Demosthenes,⁸⁵ and the last-named belongs there:

The Athenians of that day did not search for a statesman or a commander who should help them to a servile security: they did not ask to live, unless they could live as free men. Every man of them thought of himself as one born, not to his father and his mother alone, but to his country [ἠγάετο γὰρ αὐτῶν ἕκαστος οὐχὶ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῇ μητρὶ μόνον γεγενῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ πατρίδι]. What is the difference? The man who deems himself born only to his parents will wait for his natural and destined end; the son of his country is willing to die [ἀποθνήσκειν ἐθελήσει] rather than see her enslaved, and will look upon those outrages and

83. For his program of political rectification, see Michele Faraguna, “Lycurgan Athens?” in Vincent Azoulay and Paulin Ismard (eds.), *Clisthène et Lycurge d’Athènes: autour du politique dans la cite classique*, 67–86 (Paris: Sorbonne, 2012). For bibliography on *Against Leocrates*, see 73n37; for Plato’s influence, see 74n40.

84. Olympiodorus, the Younger of Alexandria, *Commentary on Plato’s Gorgias*, edited by Robin Jackson, Kimon Lycos, and Harold Tarrant (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 1998), 268; cf. Renehan, “Platonism of Lycurgus,” 219.

85. The interplay between Phocion and this trio is at the heart of Plutarch’s *Life of Phocion*; cf. 9.5–6, 10.3, 16.2–4, 17.2, 21.1, 23–24.1, and 27, on which see the penultimate note in the Epilogue.

indignities, which a commonwealth in subjection is compelled to endure, as more dreadful than death itself.⁸⁶

Is the soaring idealism of this passage to be dumbed down into nothing more than an appeal to Petrucci's "virtue_h" or "the language of conventional patriotism"? Who made it so? Whose speeches about the necessity to serve the city were more eloquent than Plato's? It should be obvious from *Crito* as well as from *Apology* and *Phaedo* that it was for the sake of his city and its benighted citizens that Socrates too was "willing to die," and that his *Heldentod* was just as inspiring an example of what τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν really means (cf. *Ep.* 334e1) as the death died by the heroes of Plataea (see Preface). If Plato's students arrived at his gateway thinking only to benefit themselves, his goal was to bring about their conversion by persuading them in his immortal λόγοι—all thirty-five of them—to benefit others, for doing so was noble, and gallantry is beautiful. They were, moreover, for the most part Athenians, and even if the spirit of Marathon was no longer a working reality, every one of them knew—as every citizen of every great country must know—that there was once a shining moment when the Beautiful by nature (φύσει) was also the Beautiful by consensual belief (νομῶ) and that the freedom for which our ancestors fought and willingly died is still worth fighting and dying for. Nor should we forget that Demosthenes is echoing a passage from Plato's *Letters*:

But this it is necessary for you to take to heart: that each of us [ἕκαστος ἡμῶν] has not been born for himself alone [οὐχ αὐτῷ μόνον γέγονεν] but of our birth, the city [ἡ πατρίς] has a certain share, as do our parents and the rest of our friends.⁸⁷

Cicero liked this passage as well, and his Latin version of it is worth quoting: *non nobis solum nati sumus*.⁸⁸ There must be a parallel between Cicero's certainty that he is quoting Plato when he quotes the ninth from his *Letters* and his equal certainty that Demosthenes was Plato's student.⁸⁹ Perhaps it is because his admiration for *On the Crown* was so great that he planned to translate the speech into Latin; he tells us in fact that he *had* translated it.⁹⁰ But it is not altogether certain that the parallel is best explained only in

86. Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 205 (translation by C. A. and J. H. Vince).

87. *Ep.* 9.358a2–5.

88. Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.22.

89. For Cicero's repeated claims about Demosthenes as Plato's student, see *De oratore* 1.89, *Brutus* 121, *Orator* 15, and *De officiis* 1.4. After citing the aforementioned passages—the text in *Brutus* on which he is commenting reads: "Demosthenes is said to have repeatedly read Plato carefully [*lectitavisse Platonem studiose*] and even to have heard him"—references to Tacitus, Quintilian, Plutarch, and [Plutarch] are added in Douglas, *M. Tulli Ciceronis Brutus*, 100 (on 22. *audivisse*).

90. Cicero, *De optimo genere oratorum*, 14. For the references to *divinus auctor Plato* in this piece, see 15–17.

relation to Cicero. Both stem from a way of understanding Plato—a modern way, as A. E. Douglas points out—that differs profoundly from the way Cicero understood him. Is it possible that the current failure to emphasize, let alone our ongoing attempt to ignore or explicitly deny the evidence that Plato was the teacher of Demosthenes, Hyperides, Lycurgus, and even Cicero himself, is connected to what has made it impossible for us to imagine that Plato’s dialogues constituted the Academy’s curriculum? If these future statesman studied with Plato, it was not as grown men that they did so; the Academy was rather preparing them to do what the best of them ended up doing, i.e., making beautiful speeches for something other than their own good. Is that not precisely what Plato himself is doing? Is he not referring to his own λόγοι—indeed to the λόγος in which he is presently describing such λόγοι—as well as to himself when he writes:

it suffices for him both to love and to care and to give birth to speeches [λόγοι] of this kind and to seek out such of them as will make the young better, whereby one would be compelled to behold once again the Beautiful [τὸ καλόν] in practices and laws [the whole phrase is: τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις καλόν], and to see that all this is akin to himself, whereby he will be led to understand that the beautiful with respect to the body [τὸ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλόν] is a tiny thing [σμικρὸν τι].⁹¹

It is easy to forget how much eloquence is required to persuade a youngster, and particularly a handsome one (cf. 217a5–6), that the beauty of the body is a tiny thing in comparison with the beauty of laws and institutions. And it requires even more of it to lead them to the realization that τὸ καλόν exists apart, independently of either τὸ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις καλόν or τὸ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καλόν, let alone that when we catch sight of it—as Plato will do his best to compel us to do in the immediate sequel (210c6–211b5)—we will have caught sight of it *once again* (αὖ θεάσασθαι at 210c3) and thus will recognize our kinship with what we have seen. In the defense of the fatherland (ἡ πατρίς) against the inexorable power of Macedon—and in spiritual kinship with their city, both its laws and institutions, and its gallant history—the Attic orators, and not least the minor ones, fashioned λόγοι of their own, aimed to inspire a patriotic willingness to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν. Given the evidence that the most eloquent of these patriots were Plato’s students, given the eloquence with which *Symposium* in particular teems, given the use of the word ὑπεραποθνήσκειν in that dialogue, and above all given the vision of the unseen τὸ καλόν to which the eloquence of all its speeches is aiming as both theme and source, we should be prepared to find its unifying purpose,

91. 210c1–6.

for without eloquence, it is impossible to remind anyone that benefitting oneself is a μικρόν τι.

Reconsidering the unity of *Symposium* is one thing; my project demands integrating it, purpose and all, with the rest of the Reading Order, and that means defending the place that Order assigns to it. About that, the most important point is that it completes a cycle of dialogues that begins with *Protagoras*, and as mentioned above, there are three passages in it that contain multiple references to that earlier dialogue. The third of these begins with Socrates' use of the verb ἀγωνίζεω at 194a1 and continues at least as far as the reference to Agathon's courage (ἀνδρεία at 194b1; cf. *Prt.* 310d3). If *Protagoras* was first presented as a play, Socrates is recalling that mode of presentation by comparing the gathering in Agathon's dining room to an ἀγών staged in a theater (τὸ θέατρον at 194a6). Furthermore, when Socrates says "he would be forgetful [ἐπιλήσιμων]" (194a8) if he forgot Agathon's unruffled performance yesterday, he gives the lie to the move he makes in *Protagoras* when he claims to be ἐπιλήσιμων (*Prt.* 334c8–9), the very thing he denies being here. There are also some structural connections that come to mind in this context: not only does Socrates make a long speech of his own in *Symposium*, but he proves himself to be anything but ἐπιλήσιμων once again (see §4) by the way he responds in his long speech to the speeches of Phaedrus, Agathon, and Aristophanes.

The other two passages announce the connection between the Bookends at the start (174d2–4 and 176d1–e9). After quoting the same passage from Homer he had quoted in *Protagoras* (cf. 174d2 and *Prt.* 348d1), Socrates establishes a connection between going to Agathon's with Aristodemus and going to Callias' with Hippocrates: in both cases, the journey begins with "let us go [ἴωμεν]" (174d3 and *Prt.* 314b6) and in both the narrator describes conversations that Plato does not allow us to hear (cf. 174d4 and *Prt.* 314c4–7). The second begins with Eryximachus using the word "difficult [χάλειπὸν]" to mean "bad" (176d1) recalling Socrates' dubious early move in interpreting Simonides (*Prt.* 341b8–d8; with the role of Prodicus in this passage, cf. 177b3–4); it continues until Eryximachus, recalling what Socrates had said after completing his interpretation—and of course both Eryximachus and "Phaedrus the Myrrinousian" (176d5–6; cf. *Prt.* 315c3) were present when he did so—suggests sending the flute-girl away (176e6–7; cf. *Prt.* 347d3–e1). Moreover, the reference to their gathering as a συνουσία (176e2; in addition to *Prt.* 347e1 and 347e7, cf. "symposia" or τὰ συμποσία at *Prt.* 347c4) in which "to be together [συνεῖναι]" (176e8) recalls the hammered use of that verb in the Flute Girls in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 347c6, 347d2, 347d5, and 348a1). Naturally there are other passages that recall *Protagoras* only once, and among those, Agathon's proof that ἔρος is temperate (196c4–8) is particularly important (cf. *Prt.* 352b3–355b3).

But let's not miss the forest for the trees: it is the famously asexual sex scene in Alcibiades' speech that causes *Symposium* to complete the cycle that began in the *Protagoras* Frame. It is the fact that the series of dialogues between the Bookends are the most elementary and musical among the thirty-five—and have fallen under the modern authenticity-ban as a direct result—that best explains why the failed seduction is anything but anticlimactic. Instead, it captures the complete attention of the youth, and uses a concrete example of what we still call “a Platonic relationship” to dramatize Plato's most abstract and conceptually difficult teaching: the Idea of Beauty exists *separately*, and thus is not to be found in even the most beautiful of bodies. Nobody who has taught adolescents could possibly doubt that any given youngster's first response to the opening of either *Alcibiades Major* or *Protagoras* would be a question most professors would regard as inappropriately sexual: “Hey, Mr. Altman, is Socrates *fucking* Alcibiades?” Although this urge is exacerbated in a homophobic social climate, the question to which it gives rise was equally inevitable in Athens—especially in the context of what we learn in Pausanias' speech—for it is a *natural* question, and the kind of question that adolescents in particular are by nature suited to raise. Plato the Teacher knew that, and while constructing the first and easiest part of his curriculum, he kept the irrepressible sexual curiosity of youth in mind; he will later initiate those same students into the most difficult part of the curriculum on exactly the same basis in *Phaedrus*.

In the setup to the seduction scene, Alcibiades unites *Symposium* with the *Alcibiades* dyad. The comparison between Socrates and a nesting doll (215a3–217a2) with the images of the gods *within* (215b2–3 and 216e6) is itself an image of the theological misconception that unites the *Alcibiades* Deletion to the fog Socrates tried to remove, unsuccessfully as it turns out, in *Alcibiades Minor* (see §7). And in a single continuous passage, Alcibiades describes the relationship between *Protagoras* and the two dialogues that follow it:

Whether anyone else has caught him in a serious moment and opened him, and seen the images inside, I know not; but I saw them one day [i.e., at *Alc. I* 132e7–133c17], and thought them so divine [θεῖα; cf. *Alc. I* 133c1, 133c5, 133c10, and 133c13] and golden, so perfectly fair and wondrous, that I simply had to do as Socrates bade me [cf. *Alc. 2* 150e5–8]. Supposing him [i.e., previous to this revelation, i.e., through *Prt.*] to have been serious about my youthful bloom [ἡ ἐμῆ ὥρα], I supposed I had here a godsend and a rare stroke of luck, as being in my power—by gratifying [χαρίζεσθαι] Socrates [sc. sexually]—to hear everything whatsoever he knew [a prodigious amount, as proved by his victory over *Protagoras* in *Prt.*]; for I was enormously proud of my youthful charms [ἡ ὥρα; the repeated phrase establishes the connection to ἡ Ἀλκιβιάδου ὥρα at

Prt. 309a2]. Having conceived these things [i.e., in response to *Prt.*, and thus between it and *Alc. I*], and before this being unaccustomed without an attendant to be alone with him [thus setting up their first conversation], then sending away my attendant [Critias at *Prt.* 316a5?], I was together with him alone—for it is necessary to speak the whole truth to you; you must all mark my words, and, Socrates, you shall refute me if I lie. Yes, gentlemen, I went and met him, and the two of us would be alone; and I thought he would seize the chance of talking to me as a lover does to his dear one in private, and I was glad. But nothing of the sort occurred at all [in *Alc. I*]: he would merely converse with me in his usual manner [for no matter how divine Socrates' subject matter, it fell short of Alcibiades' *erotic* expectations], and when he had spent the day with me he would leave me and go his way.⁹²

Sparked first by the Friend's opening remark about Socrates' hunt for ἡ Ἀλκιβιάδου ὄρα, the reader's growing sexual curiosity will find no resolution in the interval between *Alcibiades Minor* and the passage that will resolve it in *Symposium*, but Plato knows that curiosity is there, for he has kindled it, and even here he is kindling it still, particularly in Pausanias' defense of sexualized pederasty.⁹³

But even though Plato makes us wait for *Symposium* in a sexual sense, he continues to prepare us in that interim for its unification with all that comes before, and for its most important revelations at that. While calling into question the One Thing/One Opposite Principle in *Alcibiades Minor* looks back to a fallacious argument in *Protagoras* (see §7), it also prepares us for the revelation of philosophy in the Diotima Discourse, a revelation for which Plato continues to prepare us in *Lovers* (see §8). Second only to the revelation of τὸ καλόν, situating philosophy between σοφία and ἀμαθία is the most important doctrinal innovation in *Symposium*, and this section's emphasis on ῥητορική is best understood only as a corrective to its comparative neglect. Especially since our current reception of Plato's "early" or "Socratic" dialogues is whipsawed between the extremes of "Virtue is Knowledge" on the one hand and

92. 216e5–217b7 (Fowler translation modified). For a succinct rejection of this chronology, see David Gribble, *Alcibiades and Athens: A Study in Literary Presentation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 261: "In the *Symposium* the episode in which Alcibiades tries to seduce Socrates must surely take place when Alcibiades is under the age of 19."

93. See Harry Neumann, "On the Sophistry of Plato's Pausanias," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 95 (1964), 261–267, beginning with: "Plato's Pausanias (*Symposium* 180c1–185c3) has been condemned as a sophist who makes a perverted use of morality to achieve his real goal, a legitimation of pederasty," a claim based in large measure on Gerhard Krüger, *Einsicht und Leidenschaft: Das Wesen des platonischen Denkens*, third edition (Frankfurt am M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1963 [first published 1939]), 95–104. For the view that Pausanias speaks for Plato here, see Dümmmler, *Akademika*, 43–44: "Nun ist nach Pausanias bei Platon [*Smp.*] 181b der ideale Liebhaber schon daran kenntlich, daß er nicht Knaben liebt, sondern Jünglinge, welche schon beginnen νοῦν ἴσχειν τοῦτο· δὲ πλησιάζει τῷ γενειάσκειν, ein Kriterium, welches Platon im Eingang des *Protagoras* auf das Verhältniß von Sokrates zu Alkibiades anwendet."

“Socratic Ignorance” on the other, it is particularly important that once philosophy is revealed to occupy the *μεταξύ* between wisdom and ignorance in *Symposium*, our recollection of that revelation will be tested, and not without deception, in both *Lysis* and *Euthydemus*. Thanks to its defense of deliberate deception, *Hippias Minor* therefore prepares for the first two post-*Symposium* dialogues no less than it does for the deceptive speeches we will encounter in *Symposium*. As for *Hippias Major*, its importance for welding *Symposium* to the series that precedes it cannot be overstated: only one other dialogue offers anything like comparable preparation for Diotima’s revelation of τὸ καλόν.

But it is scarcely unimportant that this revelation occurs in a speech, and does so in a dialogue filled with speeches described in what is itself a well-rehearsed speech (172a1 and 173c1). For this aspect of *Symposium* our preparation begins with *Ion*, where Socrates not only demonstrates inspired eloquence for the first time in the dialogues, but where the Magnet—with its description of a series of rings arranged from high to low and closest to farthest, all depending on the power of something that remains *external* to them all—prepares the student for τὸ καλόν almost as much as *Hippias Major* does. And when Socrates describes the spellbinding effect of eloquence in *Menexenus* (*Mx.* 235a7–b2 and 235b8–c5), the effect that patriotic speeches have on the way foreigners respond to Socrates (*Mx.* 235b3–8) is the ironic counterpart of the effect that Socrates’ own speech has just affected another foreigner (*Ion* 535a3–5). By causing two of the Muses to appear in the speech of Eryximachus (187d7–e2), Plato reminds us to look for them elsewhere in *Symposium*, and since this section began with Agathon’s inspiration-diminishing coda (197e6–8), it is easy to see that the corresponding part of Socrates’ speech (212b1–c3)—not least of all because of the delicious alliteration in “and having been persuaded [*πεπεισμένος*], I try [*πειρώμαι*] to persuade [*πείθειν*] the others” (212b2–3)—enhances rather than diminishes the spellbinding effect of the eloquent perorations (197d1–e5 and 211d1–212a7) that precede both, thus suggesting that of the two, it is not the prize-winner of today who has truly mastered *ῥητορικὴ*. Whether it is from Aspasia, the Muse, or from someone else that his Socrates has learned it, Plato makes you decide.

SECTION 15. HISTORY AND TRAGEDY

The conclusion of Xenophon’s *Symposium* reveals it to be a comedy: a love scene performed onstage by two attractive actors—in Xenophon, the “flute girls” banished by Socrates in *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 347d4) and by Eryximachus

in *Symposium* (176e4–10) still play an important role—inspires those who have just seen it to rush off as quickly as they can in order to reenact their own version of the classic comic finale offstage:

And at the end [τέλος], the symposiasts seeing them [sc. young actors enacting Dionysius and Ariadne] to be departing for the bedroom having already embraced one another, the unmarried among them swore to get married while the married ones, having mounted their horses, sallied forth to their wives that they might enjoy them.⁹⁴

Although Xenophon doesn't include Socrates among either of these groups, neither does he exempt him from the classic comedic trope, for Socrates now joins Callias—whose honorable intent is to accompany his beloved (and his father) on their walk home⁹⁵—having just given his blessing to his union with Autolycus on the understanding that it will not involve sexual intercourse.⁹⁶ The concluding triumph of the comic element in Xenophon's *Symposium* arises directly from his view that it is not only the serious deeds of excellent men that are worthy of remembrance, but also those done in play.⁹⁷

Years before he published his commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, the Swiss philologist Arnold Hug (1832–1895) wrote a fifty-six page article “Concerning the Mutual Relationship between the *Symposia* of Xenophon and Plato” (1852) which remains the most detailed and persuasive defense of Xenophon's priority.⁹⁸ Anticipating the position of Peter Vrijlandt (see §8), and indeed articulating the view that every proponent of Xenophon's priority must share, Hug argues that we gain a greater appreciation for Plato's genius when we recognize the brilliant manner in which he manages to improve on his predecessor.⁹⁹ The difference is crucial: with a Plato who builds on Xenophon, we are offered the mutual relationship of a great innovator with an even greater artist; with the reverse, we are left with a clumsy and careless imitation of Plato (see §16).¹⁰⁰ If ever there were some use for “the principle

94. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 9.7; “that they might enjoy them” is from Marchant's translation. For Ariadne and Dionysius, see 9.2–6.

95. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 9.7 (immediately following the passage just quoted, and constituting the dialogue's last word; translation Marchant): “As for Socrates and the others who had lingered behind, they went out with Callias to join Lycon and his son in their walk. So broke up the banquet held that evening.”

96. See Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.7–11, 8.28, and 8.37.

97. Paraphrasing Xenophon, *Symposium*, 1.1.

98. Arnold Hug, “Ueber das gegenseitige verhältniss der symposien des Xenophon und Plato,” *Philologus* 7, no. 4 (1852), 638–695.

99. See Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 655–56, 666, and 695.

100. Cf. Scheier, “Unity of the *Protagoras*,” 80n64: “Xenophon would have had to have been a writer with a regrettable lack of judgment ([the parenthesis cites Wilamowitz, *Plato*, 1.94, which includes “Xenophon war ein redlicher, aber herzlich beschränkter Mensch”])—which, as is well known, he was not—were he to have written his *Symposium* after having read Plato's *Symposium*—and his *Protagoras*.”

of charity”—otherwise so detrimental to Plato¹⁰¹—it is here, for the priority of Xenophon redounds to the credit of both. Even if Xenophon is Plato’s inferior as a writer and thinker—and as already mentioned, it would be difficult to find someone who isn’t¹⁰²—there is great consolation in the observation, charitable to both, that it was on Xenophon’s foundations that Plato unblushingly built.¹⁰³ Hug puts it this way: “Plato has repeatedly ennobled [*veredeln*] and idealized situations, actions, and characters that appear smaller and lower in Xenophon.”¹⁰⁴ Once linked to the Greek *καλόν*, the German verb *veredeln* captures perfectly the kind of heightening (or *Steigerung*) that was necessary in order to guide and inspire the student’s ascent to the Beautiful. It also justifies the claim that the character in Plato’s dialogues is a Socrates having become beautiful (*καλός*) and new (*Ep.* 314c4).

Presented in tabular form in his Plato commentary,¹⁰⁵ Hug’s list of parallels between the two *Symposia* is noteworthy, not least of all for his emphasis on the obvious: both dialogues depict post-victory parties in which the victor’s lover plays a prominent part.¹⁰⁶ Lavishing attention on the important role Pausanias plays in both,¹⁰⁷ Hug deals forthrightly with the germ of Plato’s *Symposium* found at the beginning of Socrates’ speech about ἔρωc in Xenophon that so bothered Max Pohlenz,¹⁰⁸ and offers a detailed account of the *status quaestionis* to date.¹⁰⁹ The article is built on the distinction between

101. In addition to *Ascent to the Good*, 64, *Guardians in Action*, xxviii47, 49, and 283, and *Guardians on Trial*, 293n296, see the useful discussions of misplaced hermeneutic charity in Georgia Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, *Playful Philosophy and Serious Sophistry: A Reading of Plato’s Euthydemus* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 4 and 41–42n78, and Landy, “Philosophical Training Grounds,” 63.

102. I often encounter the criticism that my Plato is too much of a genius, too conscious in his writings, and implausibly aware of where he wants to take us from the start; my emphasis on his debts to Xenophon and many others should be weighed in the balance, for he stands at the culmination of a great cultural efflorescence.

103. See Hug, *Platons Symposion*, xxv–xxvii.

104. Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 689; but notice that Plato’s *veredeln* builds on and enhances Xenophon’s (657).

105. Hug, *Platons Symposion*, xxviii–xxx; cf. Dakyns, *Works of Xenophon*, 3.1, lix–lxi.

106. Cf. Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 639–40, and *Platons Symposion*, xxv.

107. See Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 662, 680–81, and 685–87, climaxing with: “The speech of Pausanias thus appears as a sophistical-jesuitical [Hug was Swiss, and indeed *ein Pfarrerssohn*] defense of pederasty [*Knabenliebe*].” See Hugo Blümner, “Hug, Arnold” in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 50 (1905), 503–504, edited by der Historischen Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, on 503.

108. Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 678–82.

109. This account is of more than historical interest in that the debate reached its highpoint in the dialogue between Hug and K. F. Hermann; see Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 640–41, and (for a more compact version) Hug, *Platons Symposion*, xxv–xxvii n2). There are quotations from Hermann’s hard-to-get *Platonis convivium prius Xenophonteo scriptum esse censet* (1834) on 649–50, 682, 684, and 687. In the context of Hermann, note Xenophon’s role in the first stage of separating the historical Socrates from Plato on 644, and Hug’s comment on 649: “Plato schildert nicht der histor. Sokrates (mit obiger ausnahme) und will es auch nicht; Xenophon hingegen will dies tun.” Cf. *wollte* on 648.

general and particular,¹¹⁰ and in both cases, Hug's awareness of similarities allows him to emphasize subtle and revealing differences. As an example of the latter, Hug derives an explanation of Plato's choice to (unduly) complicate the question of transmission (172a1–174a2) from the obvious chronological problems arising from Xenophon's historically impossible claim that he was present at Callias' symposium;¹¹¹ in response to his predecessor,¹¹² Plato deliberately casts doubt on the veracity of Apollodorus' secondhand report from the start. And Hug perceptively contrasts the enacted sex-scene between "Ariadne and Dionysus" with which Xenophon's comic *Symposium* concludes with the thwarted sex-scene Alcibiades describes.¹¹³

But Hug fails to note the dramatic implications of Plato's brilliant decision to replace the comic "Dionysus" with the drunken and Dionysian Alcibiades.¹¹⁴ By doing so, Plato added the *tragic* element to Xenophon's delightful comedy. While fully preserving his predecessor's commitment to illustrating gentlemen "at play [ἐν τοῖς παιδῶσις],"¹¹⁵ Plato has placed his party on the brink of the city's destruction, and however comical the speech of Alcibiades may be and indeed is, the fact of that speech—its delivery at this particular time and place—is tragic. This section is entitled "History and Tragedy" because my purpose is to show that the two are inseparable in Plato's *Symposium*, and it is that inseparability which makes it possible for him to combine tragedy with comedy. To state the claim succinctly: it is *the historical circumstances* of Plato's (frequently comic) *Symposium* that make it a tragedy, and the single most important of those circumstances is the gigantic tragi-comic fact of Alcibiades himself, and of his role in the catastrophic Sicilian Expedition. Although I have thus far emphasized rhetoric as the easily overlooked link between them (see §13), the principal reason that *Symposium* follows

110. In Hug, "Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss," the "general grounds" (642–66) are divided into questions of chronology (642–44), historical accuracy (644–56), and composition (656–66); the "particular grounds" (666–95) are divided into the further and richer development in Plato of various passages in Xenophon (667–77)—good examples here are the references to Sileni in Xenophon 4.19 (675–76) and "being bitten" at 4.28 (676)—Plato's introduction of sharp divisions into what was unified in Xenophon's Socrates (677–89)—it is here that Hug unpacks 8.1, i.e., Pohlenz's passage (678–82)—and the one introduced with the *veredeln*-passage translated above (689–95).

111. For the claim that Xenophon presents himself through Hermogenes, see my talk "In Search of a Post-Strauss Xenophon" (November 17, 2011) available at https://www.academia.edu/5145764/In_Search_of_a_Post-Strauss_Xenophon (accessed April 16, 2019).

112. See "Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss," 654–56, especially the concluding discussion—beginning with *ein neues licht* on 656—of Plato's hammered references to παραγεγόμενος (Xenophon, *Symposium*, 1.1) in the introduction: παραγεγόμενον (172b2), παραγένου (172b7), and παραγγόνει (173b2–3) in support of: "It [sc. Plato's introduction to *Smp.*] stands in conscious opposition against that brief introduction in Xenophon's: in it, Plato wants to present his standpoint [sc. with respect to synoptic veracity] as completely different standpoint from Xenophon's."

113. See Hug, "Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss," 664.

114. Cf. Kenneth Dover (ed.), *Plato, Symposium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 160 (on κίτροῦ; 212e1), cf. 175e8–9 and 212e7–8.

115. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 1.1.

Menexenus in the Reading Order of Plato's dialogues is because it is Aspasia's account of Athenian history in the one that prepares us to find tragedy in the other. The purpose of this section is to validate that claim.

Because tragedy is easily construed as a "higher" form than comedy, a certain elevation, heightening, or *Steigerung* results from the mere addition of the tragic element to Xenophon's amiable comedy. But the brilliance of Plato's dramatic *Steigerung* is not confined to this addition: Plato will heighten the comic element as well. The replacement of Philippus as "laugh-maker [γελωτοποιός]"¹¹⁶ by Aristophanes (cf. γελωτοποιεῖν 189a8)—the greatest of comedians—elevates the dialogue's comic element at the same time that its tragic historical circumstances have elevated the dialogue as a whole. Moreover, by allowing Agathon to host his *Symposium*—Callias, of course, is the host of Plato's *Protagoras*—the presence of Aristophanes at the victory celebration of a tragic poet will make it possible to embody or represent the acme of his dramatic genius in the wee-hours dialogue between Socrates and the two poets (223c4–d6). This dialogue thus becomes the outward sign of the inward and spiritual grace that makes Plato's *Symposium* one of the most astonishing gems in world literature. But just as it does not diminish the brilliance of that gem to see how it emerged from the comparatively less shiny treasure that is Xenophon's *Symposium*, so too does it not detract from Plato's *Symposium* to show that its most astonishing effect depends on the priority of *Menexenus*.

The shift of scene from the house of Callias to Agathon's is the merely external device that Plato found useful for creating a drama that would be at once comic and tragic. The more important shift was chronological or rather historical. Despite his unparalleled familiarity with the facts of Athenian history, Xenophon doesn't even bother to create a setting for his *Symposium* that would render plausible his claim to have been present. But he also doesn't bother to do the reverse: our ability to place the dialogue in the environs of the Peace of Nicias (421 B.C.) depends on the anachronism-exposing Athenaeus.¹¹⁷ It is rather Plato for whom the historical setting of *Symposium* is anything but accidental or tangential to his purpose. Plato's principal advance on Xenophon—and I take it that his ability to combine comedy and tragedy into one integrated work of art¹¹⁸ was his principal advance on *everyone*, including Xenophon—depended on staging his *Symposium* just a few short years later, critical years in the history of Athens illuminated by Thucydides, and especially by the tale of Alcibiades' drunken revels on the eve of the Great Fleet's departure for Syracuse.¹¹⁹

116. Hug, "Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss," 658.

117. See Dakyns, *Works of Xenophon*, 3.1, 293n9.

118. Cf. Hug, "Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss," 666: "The Platonic *Symposium* thus presents itself as an organically structured artwork [*ein organisch gegliedertes Kunstwerk*]."

119. See Thucydides, 6.27–29.

As a result, despite the giant step beyond Xenophon that Plato took in his *Symposium*, his ability to take that step depended on Xenophon not once but twice. He built not only on his predecessor's *Symposium* but on his *Hellenica* as well. The reason that Plato's *Menexenus* can prepare us for his *Symposium* is that the errors and distortions it contains have a pedagogical purpose: they test the reader's knowledge of Athenian history. *Menexenus* is propaedeutic to *Symposium* because only the student who has that knowledge—and from the perspective of Plato the Teacher, that means only the student who can demonstrate that they possess such knowledge by passing a test on it¹²⁰—will be able to find tragedy in it and thus to understand its most brilliant and educational conceit. And not Thucydides alone but also Xenophon's *Hellenica* is propaedeutic to *Menexenus*, for only those who have read at least as far as its fifth book will know that Aspasia has taught Socrates a speech that refers to events that took place after both were dead. In other words, the most egregious distortion in a speech *rife with them* can only be spotted by the following two kinds of readers: one (μὲν) comprised exclusively of Plato's contemporaries whom we can imagine as having had an independent knowledge of Athenian history based on their own lived experience,¹²¹ and also (δὲ) those, like ourselves, who were not alive at the time, but who have read Xenophon's *Hellenica*.

In a section of their recent book entitled “The *Menexenus* and the historians,” Nickolas Pappas and Mark Zelcer raise the important issue of “what Plato read.”¹²² While downplaying the influence of Attidographers (like Hellanicus; see §16), they offer evidence for Plato's familiarity with Herodotus,¹²³ and hit the right note with respect to Thucydides:

Plato must have known the version [sc. of the Funeral Oration] as it appeared in Thucydides, and he must have read much of the rest of the *History*. Can we imagine a Plato so uninquisitive that he read the speech and set out to reply to it but did not bother reading the rest?¹²⁴

But their exclusive concern with what Plato *had read* leads to a considerably less perceptive remark about Xenophon: “Nothing in the *Menexenus* depends

120. For ancient evidence that students, particularly those who were ἄμωστοι, wanted to read *Smp.* too soon, see Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 1.9; the passage is quoted in the Epilogue.

121. For contemporary ignorance concerning Athenian history, see K. J. Maidment, *Minor Attic Orators* 1, 495.

122. See Pappas and Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy*, 195–96.

123. Pappas and Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy*, 195: “Plato seems to have read Herodotus, at least by the time he wrote the *Timaeus*, which contains several allusions to the *Histories*, including what is close to a direct quote from its first sentence; [see n62]. . . . But Herodotus will not inform the specifics of history as told in the *Menexenus*.” I accept the claim made on one side of the ellipsis (some remarks about *Tht.* have been deleted) and will challenge the one made on the other below.

124. Pappas and Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy*, 196.

on Plato's having read the *Hellenica*.¹²⁵ Without claiming that Plato *himself* depended on Xenophon for information about, e.g., his relative Critias,¹²⁶ I am at some considerable pains to show that Plato depends *and always will depend*—hence the importance of the second (δέ) alternative in the previous paragraph—on Xenophon for supplying information that *his readers* will need to know, and that with respect to *Menexenus*, a great deal depends on *their* “having read the *Hellenica*.”

In an illuminating chapter on *Menexenus* in her 2004 study *Lessons of the Past*, Frances Anne Pownall offered a chronological template for juxtaposing Plato's dialogue with the whitewashing of Athenian history by other Attic orators.¹²⁷ Although it will be useful to consider what Aspasia has to say about the Persian Wars, the Peloponnesian War, and the Corinthian War,¹²⁸ my concern is not so much with events as with “what Plato expected his students to have read,” and this will put the emphasis on the three *historians*, and I will begin with Xenophon before returning to Herodotus. But what makes Pownall's work so important is that she is the only scholar who not only emphasizes the historical inaccuracies in Aspasia's speech,¹²⁹ but who places unique emphasis on Aspasia's consistent efforts *to make selfish actions look altruistic*. And behind this emphasis, there is a further excellence, particularly in the context of *The Ascent to the Beautiful*: she applies the word “noble” repeatedly to the merely professed altruism of the Athenians.¹³⁰ This is an important insight because it integrates Plato's dialectical lesson on Athenian history and its historians with his ongoing and overriding concern with τὸ καλόν, which beginning with the example of wartime βοήθεια in *Alcibiades Major* (*Alc. I* 115b5), has identified an altruistic and self-endangering concern

125. Pappas and Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy*, 195.

126. See *Ascent to the Good*, 207–208.

127. See chapter 2 (“The *Menexenus*: Plato's Critique of Political Rhetoric”) in Frances Anne Pownall, *Lessons from the Past: The Moral Use of History in Fourth-Century Prose*, 38–64 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004). For Pappas and Zelcer on Pownall, see *Politics and Philosophy*, 211n73: “As for Pownall, he emphasizes the historical inaccuracies in the *Menexenus*, but with too much stress on demonstrating that the dialogue as a whole is parodic; see Pownall (2004: 49).”

128. For her five-part division of historical periods, see Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 39–45: “legendary history” (39–40), “the Persian Wars (40–41), Athens' “maritime empire” (41–42), “the Peloponnesian War” (42–44)—she usefully emphasizes four cruxes in the War: “the assistance given to Plataea” (42), “the ill-fated Sicilian expedition” (42–43), “the final defeat at Aegospotomi” (43), and “the so-called Thirty Tyrants (43–44)—and “the Corinthian War” (44–45), with particular emphasis on “the ignominious terms of the King's Peace” (44). Note that Xenophon's testimony becomes determinative before Aegospotomi.

129. See especially M. M. Henderson, “Plato's *Menexenus* and the Distortion of History,” *Acta Classica* 18 (1975), 25–46.

130. Concluding with Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 64 (emphasis mine): “his [throughout, Pownall refers to Aspasia-through-Socrates as ‘the speaker,’ treating ‘him’ as male] ironic attribution to the Athenians of *noble and altruistic behavior* reveals all the more clearly that their self-image as protectors of the weak and oppressed serves only to justify their imperialism, both past (with a nudge at Pericles in particular) and present.” See also 53, 56, and 59.

with the safety of others (cf. 220d5–e2) as καλόν. In other words, Aspasia is praising nobility as selfless—which it is—at the same time that she is falsely attributing it to the Athenians. As a result, Plato’s lesson in Athenian History serves a double purpose: because it contains deliberate falsifications of them, *Menexenus* tests the student’s familiarity with the writings of the historians. But because those falsifications flourish between the allegedly altruistic and the merely self-serving, they also contribute to the reader’s ascent to the Beautiful.

Well before Aspasia reaches the Corinthian War (395–386 B.C.)—and thus the events that neither she nor Socrates (d. 399) lived long enough to experience—Plato has been testing our knowledge of Xenophon’s *Hellenica*. Obviously our knowledge of the Peloponnesian War and in particular of Alcibiades’ role in it depends on both Thucydides and Xenophon,¹³¹ and when Aspasia reaches the Battle of Arginusae (*Mx.* 243b7–c7) we enter the territory over which the latter’s testimony exclusively presides.¹³² In preparation for what we will encounter in *Laws*,¹³³ Plato now challenges us to find most every statement Aspasia makes to be false, misleading, or deceptive, something that at this early stage we can only do on the basis of external evidence, in this case, the evidence provided by Xenophon’s *Hellenica*. Arginusae is magnified and distorted (*Mx.* 243c1–d1), Aegospotomi deleted (*Mx.* 243d1–4), and the War, thanks to Athenian ἀρετή, is brought to a victorious end (*Mx.* 243d1). To the extent that Athens is defeated, it is because she has defeated and conquered herself (*Mx.* 243d5–7); no more than Alcibiades are either Critias or the Thirty Tyrants mentioned by name. But of more significance than these merely historical distortions is the excursus on Athens’ all-too-ready and blameworthy willingness to run to the aid of others (βοηθεῖν at *Mx.* 244e5, 245a1, 245a2, 245a4, and 245a6)¹³⁴ this sets up the *doubled* distortion of Aspasia’s account of the Corinthian War.

131. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.57: “It is said that he [sc. Xenophon] also made famous the works of Thucydides, which remained unknown until then, and which he could have appropriated for his own purposes.”

132. Although it is far from certain that *Mx.* 243a7–b1 refers to Arginusae (cf. 243b7–c1)—for which Xenophon is our source—it is even less clear that it refers to anything in Thucydides, as 243b1–7 seems to do.

133. See my “A Tale of Two Drinking Parties: Plato’s *Laws* in Context,” *Polis* 27 (2010), 240–264, on 247.

134. *Mx.* 244e1–245a7 (Lamb): “*Socrates*: And in truth, if one desired to frame a just accusation against the city, the only true accusation one could bring would be this,—that she has always been compassionate to excess [ὡς αἰεὶ λίαν φιλοκτιρμῶν] and the handmaid of the weak [τοῦ ἥττονος θεραπ�ίς]. And in fact, on that occasion, she proved unable to harden her heart and adhere firmly to her resolved policy of refusing to assist [βοηθεῖν] any in danger of enslavement against those who wronged them; on the contrary she gave way and lent assistance [βοηθεῖν]. The Greeks she aided [participle of βοηθεῖν] herself and rescued them from slavery, so that they remained free until such time as they enslaved each other once more; but to the King she could not bring herself to lend official aid [βοηθεῖν] for fear of disgracing the trophies of Marathon, Salamis and Plataea, but she permitted

“Doubled,” that is, because no such account is historically possible; the historical distortions in detail regarding the Corinthian War—and about the King’s Peace in particular (*Mx.* 245b2–e6)¹³⁵—are therefore built upon the foundational distortion of the glaring anachronism at the dialogue’s center. But Aspasia’s account of the King’s Peace, no matter how adventitious the anachronism may cause it to appear, is carefully grounded in what has gone before, and that in three ways. Throughout the speech, Aspasia has emphasized (1) peace treaties,¹³⁶ (2) the implacable hostility between Athens and the (Persian) barbarians,¹³⁷ and (3) Athens’ defense of the freedom of her fellow Greeks,¹³⁸ the very freedom which Athens now bargains away to Persia in the King’s Peace.¹³⁹ And in the aftermath of this revelation, Pownall has discovered a third level of *retrospective* deception (emphasis mine):

Thus, this concluding portion, with its pessimism and *reversion to the truth*, reveals the falseness of much of the preceding excursus and signals the hollowness of the standard claims of the Athenian democracy.¹⁴⁰

exiles only and volunteers [φυγάδες δὲ καὶ ἐθελοντές] to assist [βοηθεῖν] him, and thereby, beyond a doubt, she saved him.” Both as source and as participant, it is easy to find Xenophon in the words *φυγάδες δὲ καὶ ἐθελοντές*; see *Hellenica*, 3.1.4–6.

135. See Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 5.1.29–31; for further discussion, begin with G. L. Cawkwell, “The King’s Peace,” *Classical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1981), 69–83, and E. Badian, “The King’s Peace,” in Michael A. Flower and Mark Toher (eds.), *Georgica: Greek Studies in Honour of George Cawkwell* (University of London: *Institute of Classical Studies*, Supplement 58, 1991), 25–48.

136. See Robert Clavaud, *Le Ménéxène de Platon et la rhétorique de son temps* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1980), 161–66.

137. In addition to Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 57, consider 55: “He [on ‘The Speaker,’ see 49] says that the Athenians forgave the barbarians but at this time were angry with the other Greeks for having joined the barbarians against them [*Mx.* 245b3–c3]. The fact that this statement is inconsistent with previous statements in the *epitaphios* serves to reveal its patent inaccuracy. The Speaker has just claimed (244b[1–3]) that the reason why the Athenians were able to achieve such complete reconciliation following the civil discord caused by the rule of the Thirty [not mentioned by name] was that they forgave one another because they were of the same stock [*Mx.* 244a1–3]. The fact that now the Athenians are prepared to forgive the barbarians [*Mx.* 245b5] reveals the previous statement to be insincere. Furthermore, The Speaker has stated earlier that in contrast to the other Greeks, the Athenians think it proper to wage war against the barbarian to the point of destruction (242d[1–4]). By means of these inconsistencies, the Athenian claim to be *misobarbaroi* [*Mx.* 245c6–d2] in contrast to the other, *philobarbaroi* Greeks [cf. *μειζοβάρβαροι* at *Mx.* 245d6] is revealed to be hollow.”

138. Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 57.

139. Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 57: “It is clear that, by their acceptance of the terms of the peace, the Athenians have committed that act, which just above (245d) has been called shameful and unholy (αἰσχρὸν καὶ ἀνόσιον [*Mx.* 245e1]) the surrender to Persia of the Greeks of Asia Minor.” As the opposite of *καλόν*, the use of *αἰσχρὸν* is significant. Note also the fact that the full phrase—“on account of not being willing to do a base and impious deed [ἔργον ἐργάσασθαι]”—contradicts the Socratic Paradox.

140. Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 57. Because Pownall is examining *Menexenus* in the context of Greek historiography, she identifies its purpose as “an integral part of Plato’s thinly disguised attack on contemporary rhetoric and politics” (63, emphasis mine); this explains the mention of “Athenian democracy.”

In addition to those emphasized by Pownall,¹⁴¹ M. M. Henderson had already drawn attention to this “reversion to the truth” following Aspasia’s deceptive account of the Peace itself:

Plato glosses over Athens’ failure to live up to her reputation; but, in order to do so, he has to emphasize how crippled Athens was by 386 B.C.—‘as crippled as she had been in 404 B.C.,’ he says. Deliberately—it can hardly be otherwise—Plato now admits that Athens formerly had been warred down: τὸ πρότερον καταπολεμήθημεν (245e[3]), whereas earlier (243d[3–4]) he had claimed ‘men formed the opinion (and it seemed true) that our city could never be warred down (καταπολεμηθῆναι) not even by all mankind.’ So yet another pretension has been exposed.¹⁴²

In other words, there are three levels of distortion in play with respect to the King’s Peace in Plato’s *Menexenus*: (a) the glaring anachronism that makes *any* account of it impossible, (b) Aspasia’s distortion of the historical record as provided by Xenophon’s *Hellenica*,¹⁴³ and (3) a retrospective revelation, through Pownall’s “reversion to the truth,” of earlier distortions in her speech.¹⁴⁴

By far the most important of the latter in the context of *Ascent to the Beautiful* as a whole regards the repeatedly alleged altruistic motives of Athens to which the abandonment to Persia of the Greek cities in Asia—including, for example, Ion’s Ephesus (cf. *Mx.* 245b4–5 and *Ion* 530a2)—now gives the lie,

141. See Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 39–44.

142. Henderson, “Plato’s *Menexenus*,” 44.

143. See Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 56–57, beginning with “transparently revisionist history,” especially: “the whole process of peace negotiations appears to be rolled into one set, for there were at least three attempts at peace during this period: a conference at Sardis (Xenophon, *Hellenica* 4.8.15), a separate one at Sparta (Andocides 3.33), and the King’s Peace of 387/6 (Xenophon, *Hellenica* 5.1.30–36). The Speaker claims that Athens is the only Greek state not willing to hand over the Greeks of Asia Minor to the Persians through hatred of the barbarian (245c). This statement appears to be referring to the first set of negotiations at Sardis in the 390s, for Xenophon agrees that the Athenians were not willing to agree to these peace terms but indicates that they refused the proposed peace terms for much less noble motives—because the autonomy clause would not allow them to keep their colonies of Lemnos, Imbros, and Scyros (*Hellenica* 4.8.15). . . . The Speaker glosses over the terms of the peace, which ceded all the Asian Greeks to the Persian king (Xenophon, *Hellenica* 5.1.31), and comments instead upon the fact that the Athenians have obtained what they desired; their walls, ships, and colonies (245e[4–5]).”

144. Cf. τὸ πρότερον καταπολεμήθημεν at *Mx.* 245e3—the beginning of Pownall’s “reversion to the truth”—with Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 5.1.29: φοβούμενοι [sc. the Athenians] δὲ μὴ ὡς πρότερον καταπολεμηθεῖσαν; this verbal echo alone is sufficient evidence that Plato has composed Aspasia’s speech with Xenophon’s account in mind, despite Badian, “The King’s Peace,” 34 (emphasis mine): “That Athens accepted the Peace unwillingly, and only under pressure from what seems a minor and far from irreparable naval defeat was apparently (as is clearest in the *Menexenus*) due to the vivid memories of 404; and this is confirmed by Xenophon (5.1.29).” So deep is the prejudice against Xenophon’s priority that Badian wants us to believe that *Mx.* served as an *historical* source for *Hellenica* despite what he has correctly observed on 32 (but note the use of “very”): “Obviously, no one can take [sc. *Mx.*] historical surveys very seriously.”

and it is here that Pownall must be quoted at length, especially because of the basic question she answers:

Why does Plato continue the historical survey contained in the *logos* until he passes the point where any pretense that Socrates ever delivered this speech can still be maintained? The answer must be that by continuing the survey up through the Corinthian War, Plato is able to show that the Athenians' professedly noble motives belong in fact to the realm of self-interest [note 73]. The twin pillars of the Athenians' proud boast always to be acting purely altruistically are their claims that they have always fought for the freedom of others [note 74] and have continually opposed the barbarians [note 75].¹⁴⁵

Supported by the accompanying notes, this is by far and away the most insightful explanation of the anachronism in *Menexenus* I have found in the secondary literature.¹⁴⁶ In the next section (§16), I will examine Diotima's claim that the allegedly altruistic motives of Alcestis, Codrus, and Achilles were in fact grounded on their self-interested pursuit of personal fame (209d2–e1), and in the light of that parallel, I propose the following as the three principal reasons that *Symposium* follows *Menexenus* in the Reading Order: (1) it continues and deepens the education in ῥητορικὴ commenced in the earlier dialogue (see sections §13 and §14), (2) the tragic element in *Symposium* depends on the knowledge of Athenian history presupposed by and tested in *Menexenus* (proving this is the present section's purpose), and (3) for the reason Pownall identifies, the *particular* anachronism that tests our knowledge in accordance with “(2)” also prepares us for the test on altruism and self-interest—decisive for our ascent to αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν—that emerges in *Symposium* thanks to the juxtaposition of Socrates' Diotima discourse and the speech of Phaedrus, both of which address the motives of Achilles and Alcestis in a way that makes Aspasia the reversed or mirror image of Diotima (see §16).¹⁴⁷

145. Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 58–59.

146. Most recently, see Harold Parker and Jan Maximilian Robitzsch (eds.). *Speeches for the Dead: Essays on Plato's Menexenus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018). Pownall cites Lucinda Coventry, “Philosophy and Rhetoric in the *Menexenus*,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 109 (1989), 1–15, in *Lessons of the Past*, 59n73 (see previous blocked quotation), but her debt to this article is not connected to the interplay of self-interest and nobility but to Coventry's advance (4n9) on Charles H. Kahn, “Plato's Funeral Oration: The Motive of the *Menexenus*,” *Classical Philology* 58, no. 4 (October 1963), 220–234, with respect to the role of the King's Peace; see “reversion to the truth” above. Kahn's article is reprinted in Parker and Robitzsch—for further comment on this seminal article, see Altman, “Reading Order,” 35–36—Pownall is cited only in Harold Parker, “A Strange Migration from the *Menexenus* to the *Laws*,” 113–134, on 120.

147. Cf. Robert C. Bartlett, “How to Rule the World: An Introduction to Xenophon's *The Education of Cyrus*,” *American Political Science Review* 109, no. 1 (February 2015), 143–154, on 147 (Greek for transliterations): “No λόγος, moreover, could prompt the soldiers to ‘grasp firmly, by means of the judgments [they form], that it is more choiceworthy to die while fighting than to save themselves by fleeing’ ([Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*] 3.3.51). This last formulation is especially striking,

It was a commonplace among the Neoplatonist commentators that Plato had a singular aim or subject in view in every dialogue, and they therefore devoted a great deal of energy to discovering the σκόπος of each.¹⁴⁸ With the foregoing list in mind, this is as good a place as any to offer some general remarks on why this energy was sometimes misplaced. First of all, it is not my intent to replace “one” purpose with three of them; after all, the most obvious link between *Menexenus* and *Symposium* is that Socrates speaks through a wise woman in both. Without denying that the search for a single unifying purpose of a Platonic dialogue must always remain a temptation,¹⁴⁹ a more comprehensive search for that dialogue’s place in the Reading Order offers the student a more variegated approach which yields—appropriately, given the great variety of content in each one of them—a kaleidoscopic result in the search for its σκόπος. To say, for example, that the (singular) purpose of *Menexenus* is to mediate between *Ion* and *Symposium*, yields any number of links, and is thus more respectful to the variety, “stuffed with most excellent differences,” that is any Platonic dialogue.

For example, thanks to the texts Pownall cites in note 74, the link between *Menexenus* and *Ion* also becomes clearer. When Ion makes the apparently merely farcical claim that Homer has taught him how to be the greatest general in Greece, Socrates asks him why he persists in being a mere rhapsode; his reply gives a voice to the Ionian cities like Ephesus that Athens controlled at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War:

Ion: Because while [μὲν] our city, Socrates, is ruled by you [pl., i.e., you Athenians] and led by your generals [στρατηγεῖσθαι], it has no need of a general, neither [δέ] would your [city] nor that of the Spartans choose me as general, for you [both] consider yourselves sufficient.¹⁵⁰

It is therefore “Ion the Ionian” who speaks for the cities that Aspasia’s Athens professed to liberate in the Persian Wars before delivering them over to Persia at the end of the Corinthian War. As a result, Ion catches Socrates flat-footed, loyal soldier of the Athenian Empire as we discover for the first time

since Cyrus has never uttered and will never utter such a thought, in such blunt terms, to his men—that is, to prefer ‘death’ (ἀποθνήσκειν) to flight and to do so only for the good that is ‘praise’ [parenthesis deleted]. Is this the whole of the ‘profit’ or ‘advantage,’ including the pleasure, that actions in accord with the *peak of nobility* [emphasis mine] procure for one?” Bartlett thinks his rhetorical question performs a *reductio ad absurdum* on αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν; in fact, both Plato and Xenophon—cf. *Cyropaedia*, 6.4.5–6, 7.3.10, and 7.3.14—have managed to create such a λόγος, the latter by having one of his characters use a rhetorical question to “prove” that no such λόγος is possible (3.3.51).

148. See most recently John Finamore, “Iamblichus, the Commentary Tradition, and the Soul,” in Harold Tarrant, Danielle A. Layne, Dirk Baltzly, and François Renaud (ed.), *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Plato in Antiquity*, 366–380 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), on 367, with bibliography in 367n7.

149. See *Plato the Teacher*, 37, and *Ascent to the Good*, 225 and 257.

150. *Ion* 541c3–6.

in *Symposium* that he is (219e5–221c1); hence the spluttering citation of the otherwise unknown Apollodorus of Cyzicus (*Ion* 541c7–8), the first of three foreign-born generals he cites to prove Ion wrong (*Ion* 541c7–d4).¹⁵¹ But Plato’s readers can only know that Apollodorus is otherwise unknown, and thus that Socrates really is spluttering, if they have failed to find him in pages of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon,¹⁵² something they can obviously only do after having acquired a detailed knowledge of all three, which is what *Menexenus* requires them to do. From an Ionian perspective, then, the irony is palpable when Aspasia—following Herodotus¹⁵³ in her account of how Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius, “enslaved the opinions of all mankind” (*Mx.* 240a3–b3)—says that Darius “with his ships gained control of the sea and of the islands [ναυσι τῆς τε θαλάττης ἐκράτει καὶ τῶν νησῶν]” (*Mx.* 239e4–240a1),¹⁵⁴ the very thing that the Athenians did while allegedly fighting for the freedom of the Greeks on the Asian side of the Aegean.

But with respect to the intersection of History and Tragedy, no other Athenian writer of poetry or prose compares with Thucydides. It was not his intent, as it was evidently Plato’s, to combine comedy and tragedy in one eternal masterpiece. It is rather the austere grandeur of Aeschylus that permeates the tragic story of how the victories at Marathon and Salamis would put the Athens in the same place *The Persians* had placed Xerxes.¹⁵⁵ Now it would be the Athenians who were warned, not this time through oracles and dreams but through the prescient reasoning first of Pericles, and then of Nicias. This secularization of the supernatural apparatus enhances rather

151. Note that the spluttering continues in the addendum to this passage, where Socrates addresses Ion directly as an Ephesian at *Ion* 541c4–e1 (Lamb modified): “*Socrates*: My excellent Ion, you are acquainted with Apollodorus of Cyzicus, are you not? *Ion*: What might he be? *Socrates*: A man whom the Athenians have often chosen as their general, though a foreigner; and Phanosthenes of Andros, and Heracleides of Clazomenae, whom my city invests with the high command and other offices although they are foreigners, because they have proved themselves to be competent. And will she not choose Ion of Ephesus as her general, and honor him, if he shows himself competent? What [do you say; τί δέ;] Are you Ephesians not by origin [τὸ ἀρχαῖον] Athenians, and is Ephesus inferior to no city?” The reference to the Ephesians as originally Athenian seems to be based on one of Codrus’ sons (see §16). And since there are possible allusions to Phanosthenes in Andocides, *On the Mysteries* (1.149) and Heracleides in Andocides, *On the Peace* (3.29), this passage offers the best evidence that Plato expected the readers of *Smp.* to know that Phaedrus (1.15) and Eryximachus (1.35) were implicated in the profanation of the Mysteries and the desecration of the Herms.

152. For Phanosthenes of Andros (*Ion* 541d1), see Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.1.18–19.

153. Pappas and Zelcer, *Politics and Philosophy*, 183; cf. *Alc. I* 105c5.

154. Cf. Henderson, “Plato’s *Menexenus*,” 35: “and to whom does the phrase ναυσι τῆς τε θαλάττης ἐκράτει καὶ τῶν νησῶν more apply than to the Athenians?”

155. See Francis Macdonald Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (London: Edward Arnold, 1907), 201–220 (“Eros Tyrannus”), beginning with: “The Melian Dialogue, as we have already seen, suggested to an ancient critic the parallel between the imperial people and the Eastern monarch. Thucydides, by perpetual coincidences of thought and phrase, and by the turn and color of all this part of his narrative, has with evident design emphasized this parallel, and so turned against Athens the tremendous moral which his countrymen delighted to read in the *Persians* of Aeschylus and the *History* of Herodotus.”

than diminishes the impact of Thucydides' tragedy, for the tragic is no longer an artistic convention but the stuff of reality. As a result, "the fourth Attic tragedian"¹⁵⁶ chose not to describe the ship-to-ship fighting in the Great Harbor of Syracuse but rather allowed us to see, hear, and feel the reactions of the Athenian audience,¹⁵⁷ no longer safely seated in the Theater of Dionysus, but now watching as an impotent audience their own tragedy from the encircling shore. It was here that Thucydides created a high-water mark for Greek prose that Plato would have been hard pressed to surpass, and indeed, that is precisely why Plato did not attempt to surpass it; instead, he incorporated it, reserving his *Symposium* for those who had that tragic scene seared into their minds.¹⁵⁸

Inseparable from the tragedy in the Great Harbor is its absent protagonist Alcibiades. The Athenians are where they are, either on the shore or in the ships, solely because of him. And he is not there because there were too many Attic Nights when he was so drunk that he would have found it very difficult to prove he hadn't mutilated the Herms.¹⁵⁹ This is why Plato places him where he does in *Symposium*. It was not only Nicias who stood athwart Alcibiades' ambitions or Pericles who warned against going out to look for trouble,¹⁶⁰ Socrates joins them in the failed attempt to prevent Alcibiades from wrecking the city with his *ἔρως* for empire.¹⁶¹ For it was not only from Socrates' speech in Xenophon's *Symposium* that Plato got the idea for staging the whole of his around *ἔρως*: the substitution of Alcibiades for "Dionysus and Ariadne" shows that Thucydides' *History* was at least equally necessary. If Socrates was the only guest who spoke of *ἔρως* in Xenophon's, Alcibiades is the only one at Agathon's who doesn't, but only because every reader of Thucydides knows that he has already made his fatal speech on the subject.¹⁶²

My claim, then, is that Plato ensures that all of this is in the reader's mind—Athens at her peak, the Great Harbor of Syracuse, the warnings, and the misplaced *ἔρως* of Alcibiades—because *Menexenus* precedes *Sympo-*

156. The insight belongs to Moses Hadas.

157. See Thucydides, 7.71.

158. See my "Ancient Civics for Modern Times" (February 25, 2011) available at https://www.academia.edu/6803734/Ancient_Civics_for_Modern_Times (accessed April 22, 2019).

159. See Thucydides, 6.28.1–2.

160. See Thucydides, 1.144.1 (J. M. Dent translation): "I have many other reasons to hope for a favorable issue, if you can consent not to combine schemes of fresh conquest with the conduct of the war, and will abstain from willfully involving yourselves in other dangers."

161. Thucydides, 6.24.3; for bibliography on this text, see Altman, "Reading Order," 36n23, to which should be added Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus*, 208–209; Mary P. Nichols, "Philosophy and Empire: On Socrates and Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium*," *Polity* 39, no. 4 (October 2007), 502–521; and Mateo Duque, "Two Passions in Plato's *Symposium*: Diotima's *to Kalon* as a Reorientation of Imperialistic *Erōs*," in Heather L. Reid and Tony Leyh (eds.), *Looking at Beauty to Kalon in Western Greece: Selected Essays from the 2018 Symposium on the Heritage of Western Greece*, 95–110 (Sioux City, IA: Parnassos Press-Fonte Aretusa, 2019).

162. Thucydides, 6.16–18.

sium in the Reading Order of Plato's dialogues. There is a deep prejudice, allegedly enshrined in the mythology of St. John's College, that the great masterpieces can stand on their own, and should be encountered in their pristine purity, isolated from introductions and uncontaminated by "historical background." How convenient that the Johnnies encounter Plato's dialogues only after reading Homer, the tragedians, Herodotus, and Thucydides! Plato's dialogues do not stand apart in "splendid isolation" either from each other or from the treasures of Greek literature to which Plato had access.¹⁶³ Never has there been a better illustration of Hegel's claim that a world has already grown dim by the time that Athena's owl takes wing than the relationship between Plato, his predecessors, and his city. Setting *Protagoras* in the halcyon days of the ancient version of July 1914,¹⁶⁴ and *Symposium* at the moment of the tragedy's crisis, Plato ensures that the War will haunt his dialogues, and the central *Republic* in particular.¹⁶⁵ Independent of the knowledge that will make the defeat of Athens "a story and a byword throughout the ages"—and that means without a thorough knowledge of the authors who have made it so—Platonism is reduced to a pale and merely neo-Platonic image of itself. With respect to music, then, Plato's dialogues, as the last flight of Athena's owl, confirm Hegel's insight.

But not with respect to politics, for Plato is a teacher, and great teachers look to the future while making their students learn the lessons of the past. By founding his Academy in the midst of the events that will culminate in the hypocrisy and humiliation of the King's Peace, where walls rebuilt with Persian gold must recompense the Athenians for the loss of honor their ancestors won at Marathon and Salamis, Plato's purpose was—if another anachronism can be tolerated—to prove Hegel wrong. While leaving her audience in no doubt that a selfless fight to the death for the freedom of others is where the beautiful meets the gallant, and where a shining and admirable nobility is born from τὸ καλόν, Aspasia will require a long series of lies to make the Athens of Plato's today what she could be, was, and should be again. This is Plato's project: not to believe that the city already measures up to Aspasia's lies but rather, by seeing Athens as she presently is in comparison with the Idea of Beauty, to give birth to the beautiful λόγοι that will make his students the best that they can be (210c1–3), and thus to inspire the likes of Demosthenes, Lyc-

163. And to which it was likewise in his interest as a teacher to insure that we—his future students—would have access as well. At the end of §2, I suggested that the order in which the writings of Xenophon have come down to us indicates that the Academy played a decisive role in their preservation. See also *Guardians in Action*, 37–39, for further discussion.

164. See Michael Frede, "Introduction" to Plato, *Protagoras*. Translated, with Notes by Stanley Lombardo and Karen Bell, vii–xx (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1992), ix–xv, climaxing with: "One important part of the background of the dialogue, then, is the social and political situation of Athens, which is about to embark on an imperialist war that will end in complete disaster."

165. See *Plato the Teacher*, 49–53 and 57–65.

urgus, and Hyperides to make beautiful speeches of their own, to complement the beautiful actions performed by Dion and Phocion. The fact that Plato died before “Chaeronea, fatal to liberty” proves that his hopes survived him, and even after dusk settled over the Greek World, the Owl of Minerva would yet inspire Cicero’s speeches and actions three centuries later in Rome.

Reading and writing almost twenty-five centuries after Plato’s death, my principal concern has been and remains the reconsideration of the dialogues as “the eternal curriculum of the Academy.” But it is no accident that quasi-historical remarks and speculations must play a larger part in this book than elsewhere in *Plato the Teacher*. With respect to eternity, of course, Plato remains the same, and the dialogues—if all of them can be recovered, that is—are what they are. But the most elementary among them necessarily reveal more about their intended readership than any of the others. It is one thing to say that Plato expected the readers of his *Republic* to have already read *Protagoras*, *Symposium*, *Gorgias*, and *Meno*, and although it expresses this kind of priority in different terms, the Order of Composition paradigm often offers support for claims of this kind. But quite apart from the fact that many of them need to be brought back from inauthentic oblivion, the dialogues at the beginning of the Reading Order are different. The Reading Order hypothesis must consider what Plato expected *from his beginners* and thus directs our attention to what those beginners must have been like. And especially when Plato’s concern with rhetoric becomes unmistakable in *Menexenus* and *Symposium*, and when a contemporary event like the King’s Peace becomes prominent in the former, those beginners—thanks to the historical connection between the Academy and a considerable number of “Attic orators” minor and otherwise—come more clearly into view, and the insights that arise as a result cannot be ignored especially because the connections that make them possible have for too long been overlooked or suppressed.

But “Imagining the Academy” as it may have been in Plato’s lifetime is even less than secondary or tangential to my project; indeed when privileged, it becomes antithetical to it. The students who experienced the Corinthian War did not need to read Xenophon any more than Plato did; it is only in the context of “the eternal Academy” that Plato’s dependence on Xenophon and the greater historians who preceded him can be argued and proved. The proof is as follows: the reason the Academy survived Plato’s death is because he took steps to ensure that it would, and the survival of his dialogues depends in equal measure on his intention that they should do so and the consummate care and skill that went into their creation. For all of his many debts to Thucydides, not the least of them is that Plato left it to him to state what should be equally obvious about his own writings: that they constituted, by intention, “a possession into eternity.” It is not the immediate and merely

imagined Academy of quasi-historical speculation that required the survival of Thucydides, Xenophon, and many others: it is the dialogues themselves that cry out for their support and elucidation, and by that I mean: the dialogues of Plato as they have come down to us. The moment we admit that Plato wrote not only for his contemporaries but also for us it must become obvious that he wrote *Menexenus* with Xenophon in mind.

This is not to say that Xenophon is more important to Plato than Thucydides, and it would better reflect this section's purpose to say that Plato would not have written *Symposium* as he did without having ensured to the best of his ability that Thucydides would be in his reader's mind. But since my claim is that it was in the immediately pre-*Symposium* text in Athenian history embodied in *Menexenus* that Plato attempted to ensure this result, and since the anachronism of the King's Peace is inaccessible to us without *Hellenica* 5,¹⁶⁶ the emphasis falls on Xenophon. Out of place chronologically in Plato's *Menexenus*, the King's Peace is nevertheless intrinsic to Aspasia's ongoing concern with treaties, with Athens as *μισοβάρβαρος* (*Mx.* 245c7–d1), and with a long series of false claims about the city's selfless commitment to the *ἐλευθερία* of the Asian Greeks. It is also the historical culmination of her speech, which has been distorting Xenophon's account since Cyzicus, including the emphasis on Arginusae, the suppression of Aegospotomi, and the celebration of an unconquerable Athens, so badly beaten in the Peloponnesian War. And of course I am also advancing an ongoing argument commenced in §2, supporting earlier claims about the priority of *Cynegeticus* and *Memorabilia* 1 to *Protagoras*, *Memorabilia* 4 to the *Alcibiades* dyad, *Oeconomicus* to *Lovers*, *Memorabilia* 3.8 and 4.6 to *Hippias Major*, and Xenophon's *Symposium* to *Hippias Minor* (through Antisthenes), *Ion*, and *Symposium*.

But in the context of Plato's *Symposium*, the importance of Thucydides' *History* dwarfs that of Xenophon's *Hellenica*, and since its principal advance on Xenophon's *Symposium* is the addition of the tragic element, Thucydides presides over both parts of "History and Tragedy." It is therefore the Sicil-

166. With respect to compositional as opposed to a longer term pedagogical priority, I will consider the evidence that one of the divisions of Xenophon's *Hellenica*—and by that I mean the various stages of composition through which the work progressed before it reached its final form—likewise concluded with the King's Peace in "Xenophon and Plato," where I will argue, more or less in accordance with the typical nineteenth-century view (cf. Dakyns, *Works of Xenophon*, volume 1, lviii–lxiii) and partly on the basis of *Mx.* itself (cf. *Smp.* 182b6–7) for a division following 5.1.34, with the near repetition of *εἰ μὴ ἀπίοιεν ἐκ τῆς Κορίνθου, ὅτι πόλεμον ἐξοίσει πρὸς αὐτοὺς* at 5.1.34, followed by *φρουρὸν φήναντες ἐπ' αὐτοὺς, εἰ μὴ ἐξίοιεν ἐκ Κορίνθου* at 5.1.36, indicating the break. Although John Dillery, *Xenophon and the History of My Times* (London: Routledge, 1995) argues against this division (see 13–15, especially 256n27), I intend to show that his emphasis on 5.4.1 in a virtually tragic story of Spartan arrogance after the King's Peace (chapter 8; cf. 5.1.36) in fact supports it (see especially 206–207). Note that the reader's awareness of a second anachronism in *Smp.*—see Dover, *Plato, Symposium*, 119; cf. 10 for a possible third—depends on *Hellenica* 5.2.5–7.

ian Expedition that now demands attention, mentioned for the first time in *Menexenus*:

And a Third War [τρίτος δὲ πόλεμος] after this peace treaty was both unexpected and terrible [ἀνέλπιστος τε καὶ δεινός], wherein many brave men lost their lives and now lie there [ἐνθάδε]. Many of these [μὲν] reared up numerous trophies of victory in Sicily on behalf of the freedom [ἐλευθερία] of the Leontinians, running to their aid [βοηθεῖν] on account of their oaths, they sailed to those regions, but [δέ] on account of the voyage's length, with the city having succumbed to a quandary [ἀπορία] and unable to reinforce them, falling short in this, they fared ill [δυστυχεῖν].¹⁶⁷

Others have explicated the multiple distortions of Thucydides in this account.¹⁶⁸ But in this section's larger context, it is the use of βοηθεῖν and ἐλευθερία that are of special significance, indicating the ongoing Aspasian alchemy that tries to turn the lead of self-interest into the gold of altruism. Also of immediate concern is the triple suppression of Alcibiades: it is because of him that the πόλεμος was anything but ἀνέλπιστος and it was because of Nicias' speeches in opposition to him that there could have been no doubt that the renewal of the war would be δεινός; finally, the ἀπορία to which Athens succumbed resulted from Alcibiades' recall and subsequent flight, not from the distance of Syracuse.

But Plato balances the suppression of Thucydides with his apotheosis. Nothing could be more destructive of the *History*'s grounding insight than Aspasia's τρίτος πόλεμος, for the division of the War into three parts undermines the great historian's insight that the Peloponnesian War was one. On the other hand, nothing could better honor the culminating place that the Sicilian Expedition or rather the Tragedy in the Great Harbor plays in that *History* than the fact that Aspasia makes the transition to Xenophon here:

Socrates: Yet for their prudence and their valor they have received more praise from their foes of the opposite army than the rest of men from their friends. Many others of them fought in the sea-fights in the Hellespont, where in one single day they captured all the enemy's ships, besides defeating many others.¹⁶⁹

167. *Mx.* 242e4–243a5 (some traces of Lamb's translation remain).

168. See Shawyer, *Menexenus of Plato*, xiii (on διὰ δὲ μήκος τοῦ πλοῦ, i.e., "on account of the voyage's length"): "The selection of the dull, steady, mediocre Nicias as one of the leaders; the recall of Alcibiades; the adoption of a deliberate rather than a dashing plan of campaign; the dilatoriness with which the Athenian wall of circumvallation was built; and the incompetence of a large popular body as war executive, must be added to the only reason which could be alleged in a public eulogy." More detailed and insightful is Trendelenburg, *Erläuterungen*, 21 (on 243a).

169. *Mx.* 243a5–b1 (Lamb modified).

Aside from the self-contradiction that makes “many others” worse than superfluous after the previous “all,”¹⁷⁰ there is no such “single day” in Thucydides, while the best way to make Aspasia offer at least a reasonable facsimile of the truth—a fool’s errand on a par with the attempt to preserve Critias’ tale of Atlantis by attributing it to his grandfather¹⁷¹—is to cite Xenophon’s description of an Athenian victory in the Hellespont that led to the capture of sixty enemy ships.¹⁷² Aspasia therefore parts company with Thucydides—having long since parted company with the truth—with the tragic reality of that horribly understated “they met with an unfortunate result [ἐδυστύχησαν]” (*Mx.* 243a5).

But between that verb and the battle that can’t be the one Thucydides has described,¹⁷³ comes this curious sentence about the praise of their enemies: ὧν οἱ ἐχθροὶ καὶ προσπολεμήσαντες πλείω ἔπαινον ἔχουσι σωφροσύνης καὶ ἀρετῆς ἢ τῶν ἄλλων οἱ φίλοι,¹⁷⁴ and I can’t persuade myself that Plato is not saying through Aspasia that the enemies of Athens—like the Syracusan Hermocrates and the Spartan Gylippus, both of whom figure prominently in Thucydides—have more praise for *their* temperance and virtue than the friends of the Athenians have praise for *them*. Construed in the customary way, the statement is false; the Expedition and its destruction is the supreme example of Athenian folly. But if construed in the manner I suggest, it not only means that Aspasia is still channeling Thucydides but that she is doing so in a manner that prepares the reader to find another reference to the Sicilian Expedition in *Critias*, where Plato depicts the Syracusan hero Hermocrates—principal architect of Athens’ defeat—on the verge of hearing the kind of speech that Nicias gave twice in Thucydides.¹⁷⁵ As many have noticed,¹⁷⁶ there is a parallel between the imperialist Atlantis that is now preparing a foolish expedition against ancient Athens and the events in which Hermocrates participated and from which Critias profited; the speech of Zeus that Plato does not allow Critias to deliver is the kind of speech that would have saved Athens from the misplaced ἔρωος of Alcibiades. In this way, the Sicilian Expedition haunts Plato’s *Critias* as well.

It haunts his *Republic* in a similar way, beginning with that dialogue’s opening words: “I went down to the Piraeus [κατέβην χθὲς εἰς Πειραιᾶ]”

170. As noted by Trendelenberg, *Erläuterungen*, 21.

171. See *Guardians in Action*, 117–21.

172. See Shawyer, *Menexenus of Plato*, xiii–xiv (on 243b): “If the captured ships were those going to aid Chios and Lesbos in revolt, only ten, and these ‘empty’, were taken; but the reference may be to Cyzicus (B.C. 410) when sixty vessels were taken or sunk. Cf. *Xen. Hell.* 1.1.18.”

173. For further discussion, see Trendelenberg, *Erläuterungen*, 21–22 (on 243b).

174. *Mx.* 243a5–7. On “das Verständnis [d]ieses absichtlich geschraubten Satz,” see Trendelenberg, *Erläuterungen*, 21, and Tsitsiridis, *Platons Menexenus*, 315–17.

175. Thucydides, 6.9–14 and 6.20–23.

176. See especially P. Vidal-Naquet, “Athènes et l’Atlantide: structure et signification d’un mythe platonicien,” *Revue des études grecques* 77 (1964), 420–444; cf. *Guardians in Action*, 124–26.

(*R.* 327a1). Although the culmination of Athens' tragedy will not be staged until we reach the Theater of the Great Harbor in book 7 of Thucydides' *History*, an arguably even more poignant moment begins in book 6—likewise described from a spectator's perspective¹⁷⁷—with the description of how, at dawn on the appointed day, and accompanied in their descent by virtually the entire city, the Athenian Expeditionary Force (and its allies), “having gone down to the Piraeus [ἐς τὸν Πειραιᾶ καταβάντες],” now boarded their ships, filling them with treasure and the flower of her manhood. “And it was at this present moment [καίρῳ], when they were now already about to depart from one another in the midst of such dangers that more than when they voted to sail did the terrible risks [τὰ δεινὰ] make their entrance.”¹⁷⁸ Followed immediately by the speech of Hermocrates that rouses the Syracusans to the need for self-defense in the face of an onslaught whose existence they continue to ignore,¹⁷⁹ Thucydides' description of the departure of the Great Fleet is the *καίρῳ* of his Tragedy,¹⁸⁰ and without saying anything nearly as clumsy as Antony's “those with tears, prepare to shed them now,” the race to Aegina with which it ends cannot be imagined without shedding them. After their departure, Plato and Xenophon—both too young to have sailed—were Socrates' last best hope.

To a more explicit degree, the disaster in Sicily haunts Plato's *Laches*, but since the subject of this section is *Symposium*, and since the connections between *Symposium* and *Laches*—along with the similar connections between *Symposium* and its companion dialogue *Charmides*—exist independently of a shared concern with the Sicilian Expedition, a preliminary discussion of those connections is in order. The simple fact is that Alcibiades describes Socrates as a soldier in Plato's *Symposium*, and more specifically his performance as a soldier at Delium and Potidaea (219e5–221c3); Thucydides' *History* provides the context for those descriptions.¹⁸¹ Moreover, in relation to my claim that *Menexenus* not only tests the reader's knowledge of Thucydides but of Herodotus and Xenophon's *Hellenica* as well, it is important to note

177. Cf. Rachel Bruzzone, “Thucydides' Great Harbor Battle as Literary Tomb,” *American Journal of Philology* 139, no. 4 (Winter 2018), 577–604, on 580: “Like the Great Harbor battle, this departure is largely focalized through the eyes of the spectators.”

178. Thucydides, 6.31.1.

179. Thucydides, 6.32.3.

180. See Thucydides, 6.30–32.2.

181. Cf. Shawyer, *Menexenus of Plato*, xiii (on ἐν τῇ Σφαγγῷ): “The only episode in the war referred to by Plato, yet not the most important; an artificial prominence was given to it, owing to picturesque detail [sc. in Thucydides], from the first, despite Cleon's just criticisms. The yearly invasions of Athens, the plague and famine, the siege of Plataea (deserted by her ally), Delium, and the campaigns of Brasidas in the north must all be taken into account.” On the importance of Plataea, see *Ascent to the Good*, 191–93 and 201–202; the suppression of Plataea begins with deleting its contribution at Marathon (*Mx.* 240c4–d1), on which see Loewenclau, *Der platonische Menexenos*, 83, Tsitsiridis, *Platons Menexenus*, 275, and Kahn, “Plato's Funeral Oration,” on 225.

that along with the connection between *Laches* and Herodotus' account of the Battle of Plataea,¹⁸² there is an even more determinative connection between *Charmides* and Xenophon's account of the Thirty.¹⁸³ Naturally a fuller account of these matters will be found elsewhere.

Even more important than the implication that the two highly historical dialogues *Laches-Charmides* follow *Menexenus* is the claim that they follow *Symposium* as well, and thus that it is in Alcibiades' speech that the reader *first* encounters Socrates as a soldier. Alcibiades provides a marvelous introduction to that subject, for Plato has found a way to have another character describe Socrates' heroics as an eyewitness. The fact that Alcibiades' account of the retreat at Delium (220e7–221c1) is fuller than that of Laches in *Laches* (*La.* 181b1–4) tends to support *Symposium*'s priority but the decisive evidence is that only the reader who combines evidence from it and Thucydides can make sense of Socrates' description of the fighting around Potidaea in *Charmides*.¹⁸⁴ Although not strictly relevant to "History and Tragedy," the connections between *Lysis-Euthydemus* and *Symposium*—resting above all on Diotima's account of philosophy as between σοφία and ἀμαθία (204a1–b2) in both dialogues,¹⁸⁵ but including several other connections in *Lysis*,¹⁸⁶ and an echo of Pausanias' speech (184b6–d5) in *Euthydemus*¹⁸⁷—provide further evidence for the priority of *Symposium* to *Laches-Charmides* in the Reading Order.

Having reviewed the evidence for that priority in the post-*Symposium* dialogues, the more important matter for now is the pre-*Symposium* evidence for that priority, and that evidence centers on Alcibiades. His drunken entrance not only has its origins in Aspasia's deceptive account of the Sicilian Expedition (*Mx.* 242e4–243a5), in Thucydides' ἔρωσ- based explanation of what made what she calls "the third war" anything but ἀνέλπιστος (*Mx.* 242e5),¹⁸⁸ in Plato's brilliant addition of the tragic element to his respectful *Steigerung* of Xenophon's comic *Symposium*, but in the story that begins in the *Protagoras* Frame and continues in the *Alcibiades* dyad. If what makes *Protagoras* an early dialogue is its dramatic priority to the elementary *Alcibiades Major* (see §1), what makes *Symposium* an early dialogue is above all its connection to *Protagoras*. As a result, when Alcibiades makes his confession or *Selbstanklage* in *Symposium*,¹⁸⁹ admitting that he has become the equivalent of Hippocrates' runaway slave (*Prt.* 310c3) despite the fact that he now tries

182. See *Ascent to the Good*, 191–93.

183. See *Ascent to the Good*, 205–208.

184. See *Ascent to the Good*, 197–203, noting in particular 200n292.

185. On *Ly.* 218a2–6, see *Ascent to the Good*, 20 and 87–90; on *Euthd.* 275d3–4, see 69 and 80–83.

186. See *Ascent to the Good*, §1, especially 20–26.

187. On *Euthd.* 282a7–b6, see *Ascent to the Good*, 101–103.

188. Cf. εὐέλπιδες at Thucydides, 6.24.3 in the context of ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι (6.24.2).

189. As suggested by Maicon Engler in a memorable three-way dialogue on April 19, 2019, that included Pedro Baratieri; this section owes a great deal to both. For *Grg.* 480b7–d6 as *Selbstanklage*, see *Ascent to the Good*, 251–58.

to configure Socrates as the satyr (215b4),¹⁹⁰ we know—thanks to the history lesson administered in *Menexenus*—that he is now on the verge of fleeing (cf. φεύγειν at 216a5–b6) to Sicily. The fact that his flight will continue to Sparta and Persia (cf. *Alc. I* 120a5–8) to Athens’ cost, and that he will thereby justify the Laconic brevity of Xenophon’s contra-speech in *Hellenica* 1,¹⁹¹ Alcibiades also justifies Socrates’ attempt to exert the same kind of influence on him that the opening of *Menexenus* tells us he exercised on Menexenus (*Mx.* 234b3–4). In short, we realize that “History and Tragedy” has haunted the series of dialogues that begin with *Protagoras* only when we reach *Symposium*.

Thereafter, it can be presupposed, as it is in *Laches*. The reader already knows Nicias’ fate, and well understands that what Socrates says about the strategic role of soothsayers (*La.* 198e2–199a3) is at once prophetic and tragic. Thanks to our musical education in the pre-*Symposium* dialogues, Plato ensures that we have become Clio-inspired prophets,¹⁹² knowing not only what the future has in store for Nicias and Laches, for Charmides and Critias, but for Alcibiades and Athens as well. Plato can be confident that the disastrous retreat from Syracuse and the quarries to which it ultimately led will be in the mind’s eye of his auditors when they encounter *Laches* because he has already made sure that the horror of the Sicilian Expedition constitutes the tragic background of his *Symposium*. And Alcibiades’ demonstration of Socrates’ courage and temperance (see σωφροσύνη καὶ ἀνδρεία at 219d5) as a soldier at Delium and Potidaea is thereby already in the reader’s mind when they witness a collective failure to adequately describe those virtues in *Laches* and *Charmides*. Finally, since the notion that virtue is the *knowledge* of good and bad (cf. *La.* 199e4 and *Chrm.* 174b10)—so attractive to those whose primary interest in the dialogues of Plato is “the philosophy of Socrates”¹⁹³—is derived from the (alleged but in principle impossible) knowledge of *future* goods and bads in *Laches* (*La.* 199b10–e4), the strictly musical access to the future that Plato recreates in his dialogues makes a mockery of the pseudo-Socratic views of Nicias and Critias.¹⁹⁴

Having now reviewed the Expedition’s ghostly appearances in *Symposium*, *Laches*, and *Republic-Timaeus-Critias*, it is remarkable that the prophetic

190. Cf. Diskin Clay, “Platonic Studies and the Study of Plato,” *Arion* 2, no. 1 (1975), 116–132, on “a genuine Platonic puzzle: Why did Satyros run away?” (131). On this, see Scheier, “Unity of the *Protagoras*,” 79n64, no. 10.

191. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 1.4.17; cf. McBrayer, “Corrupting the Youth,” 81: “Xenophon relates in great detail the opinion of those who supported Alcibiades and recognized his successful defense, while giving Alcibiades’ opponents’ views very brief remarks.”

192. See *Ascent to the Good*, 208–209.

193. See *Ascent to the Good*, §6.

194. For the role of the future, see *Ascent to the Good*, 158–61; for Nicias and Critias, see 56, 123n14, 469n47, and 496.

element also permeates the only other time Socrates mentions it; aside from *Menexenus*, he does so only in *Theages*, and in the context of his Sign:

Socrates: And furthermore, concerning the business in Sicily [περὶ τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ] from many will the two of you hear [sc. Theages and his father] about the things I was saying about the destruction of our army.¹⁹⁵

Naturally discussion of this controversial text will be found elsewhere,¹⁹⁶ but the answer to those who claim that *Theages* must be inauthentic because here the Sign is said to be prophetic is that it need not be so if it interceded *after Socrates had decided to join the Expedition himself*.¹⁹⁷ In other words, the purely apotroptic character of the Sign as described in *Apology* (*Ap.* 31d3–4) and *Theages* itself (*Thg.* 128d3–5)—i.e., that it only intercedes to stop Socrates from doing what he has already decided to do—is upheld in this instance if Socrates had made a decision to accompany Alcibiades to Sicily, thus creating a third example of their joint military service in addition to Potidaea and Delium. From the fact that Sign stopped *him* from doing so, Socrates might easily deduce that the Expedition would result in “the destruction of the army.”

In arguing for the authenticity of *Theages* in *Ascent to the Good*, I cited three dialogues subsequent to it in the Reading Order that contained “backward-pointing allusions,” a term reserved for allusions that would cause a reader to see in *Theages* something different from what they saw in it the first time.¹⁹⁸ I distinguished allusions of this special and indeed rather uncanny kind from the more common variety, specifically citing a reference to *Symposium*. When Socrates quotes young Aristides’ claim that the youngster made the most progress when he was touching him (ἄπτεσθαι at *Thg.* 130e3), Plato allowed the reader to validate Aristides’ earlier claim that he never learned anything from Socrates (*Thg.* 130d4) because Socrates had rejected the possibility that wisdom could be transmitted by touch in his opening conversation with Agathon (cf. ἄπτεσθαι at 175d5). Thanks above all to the words “and doing wondrous things [καὶ θαυμαστὰ δρῶντες]” (*Tht.* 151a3),¹⁹⁹ the story of Aristides as retold in *Theaetetus* allows the reader of *Theages* to imagine the objectionable things that Aristides was actually doing while saying the things that have been principally responsible for that dialogue’s excision. Here, I want to make the further suggestion that *Theages* itself, in addition to being the recipient of three backward-point allusions, makes one

195. *Thg.* 129c8–d2.

196. See *Ascent to the Good*, 397n111.

197. See *Ascent to the Good*, 396–97.

198. See *Ascent to the Good*, 389–96.

199. See *Ascent to the Good*, 395–95.

of its own, and this time the recipient is *Symposium*, a dialogue to which it clearly alludes in a straightforward way thanks to the verb ὑπεσθαι.

Complementing the two conversations between Socrates and Hippocrates that Plato does not let us hear in *Protagoras*—the first before they knock on Callias' gate (*Prt.* 314c4–7), the other after the entrance of Alcibiades and Critias (*Prt.* 316a3–7)—are the two times in *Symposium* where Socrates is depicted as “coming to a stand” (ἰστάναι at 175a8, 175b2, 220c4, 220c5, 220c7, and 220d3) to consider some matter about which Plato allows Apollodorus to tell us nothing. Consonant with my ongoing approach to the dialogues, I read all four of these passages as Plato's challenge to the reader: “What do *you* think Socrates was thinking about in Potidaea (220c3–d5, especially φροντίζων τι at 220c7) and what is your theory as to why he stopped on the way to Agathon's (174d4–7, 175a7–9, and 175c5)? And since Socrates and Hippocrates had already reached a conclusion (*Prt.* 314c6–7), what do you think they were discussing (*Prt.* 314c4–6), and why did they now need to renew their private conversation (*Prt.* 316a6)?” Beginning with the first mystery in *Symposium*, we know that Socrates is considering something in solitude (174d5) and this prefigures the famous all-night meditation in Potidaea, with the two incidents linked by three pairs of the same verb hammered in each (175a8–b2, 220c4–5, and 220c7–d3).

Ten years ago, in an introductory article on “The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues,” I used *Menexenus*, *Symposium*, and *Lysis* to illustrate the proleptic, visionary, and basanistic elements on which my reconstruction would be based.²⁰⁰ Focusing exclusively on the historical link between *Menexenus* and *Symposium*—the other two equally important links mentioned above have only come into view while writing this book—I offered a historical and tragic explanation of Socrates' Potidaea meditation: it was not a beatific vision of αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν that had entranced him because the moment of vision is better understood as a sudden and instantaneous καιρός.²⁰¹ He was rather meditating about a series of events unfolding in time (χρόνος), the kind of series that chess-players, for example, must consider.²⁰² Because of the role Potidaea plays in Thucydides' *History*, Plato chose a perfect place for Socrates to imagine the disaster that was about to unfold, and in which he now found himself playing a part. Only readers already familiar with that *History* could possibly come up with such a theory, and thanks to *Menexenus*, this was exactly what Plato expected the readers of *Symposium* to be. Like Thucydides,

200. See Altman, “Reading Order,” 21–28.

201. For a meditation on “the moment” in *Smp.*, see Francisco J. Gonzalez, “Temps discontinu, souvenir et oubli: les stratégies narratives du *Banquet*,” *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 4 (October–December 2013), 477–489.

202. See Altman, “Reading Order,” 37–38.

then, Socrates too expected the War to be massive from the beginning,²⁰³ and Plato created an amusing “fill-in-the-blank” problem that now pointed ominously to the disaster that was about to unfold.

Unlike the all-night meditation, Socrates is only briefly delayed on the way to Agathon’s (174c4–6). Since I believe that Plato wants us to realize that Socrates and Hippocrates were strategizing on the way to Callias’ in *Protagoras*—i.e., that they had agreed that the youngster would be used to bait Protagoras, and that they would leave together²⁰⁴—it is tempting to imagine that Socrates is doing something similar in *Symposium*,²⁰⁵ and certainly his delayed entry does enkindle in Agathon a desire for him (174e12–175c4) and for his wisdom (175c6–d1) that he will exploit to the fullest in his wondrous speech (201e4–5). But for those readers whose knowledge of history has allowed them to discover what makes Plato’s *Symposium* tragic, the imminent departure of the Great Fleet—the vivid yet deadly expression of Alcibiades’ ἔρωσ—makes the disaster in Sicily the unnamed, uninvited, but omnipresent guest at Agathon’s victory party. Despite that disaster’s spectral presence in other dialogues, it is only in *Theages* that it will be mentioned again, and it is that mention that provides an explanation for Socrates’ delay: it was on the way to Agathon’s that Socrates heard the voice that blocked the decision he had already made, and warned him as a result to expect nothing good περὶ τῶν ἐν Σικελίᾳ. Nor would it have been only as one more experienced hoplite that Socrates could have served the city in the trenches *vor Syrakus*,²⁰⁶ for it is difficult to imagine that Alcibiades would have fled as he did rather than face prosecution in Athens²⁰⁷ if it had meant deserting Socrates. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence in *Symposium* that Alcibiades had already deserted him before the fleet left.

The important thing, however, is the presence of that uninvited Sicilian guest,²⁰⁸ and it is a testimony to Plato’s artistry that it was by staging his *Symposium* only five years later than Xenophon’s that he could reimagine the essence of Athens—this charmed conversation on the edge of an abyss—in so dramatic a form. By replacing an enacted Dionysus with the drunken Alcibiades, and by transferring the victory from athletics to tragedy, Plato achieved, albeit with considerable help from his friends, one of the most astounding

203. Thucydides, 1.1.1.

204. The plan required modification after Alcibiades arrives; Hippocrates doesn’t participate in Socrates’ Feigned Departure, the ruse that secures Alcibiades’ aid (*Prt.* 336b7).

205. See Pedro Luz Baratieri, “Por que Sócrates se atras ao ir à casa de Agatão no *Banquete*? Uma resposta à luz da erótica de Sócrates e Platão,” *Revista Seminário dos Alunos PPGLM UFRJ* 10 (2019), 101–123; in support of the parallel, cf. ἐν τῷ προθύρῳ at 175c8 and *Prt.* 314c3.

206. On the model of the German *vor Verdun* (“before” or “in front of”) or—in *memoriam* of Wilhelm Eckhart—*vor Arras*; for “trenches,” cf. τάφρον at Thucydides, 6.101.

207. Thucydides, 6.61.6.

208. Cf. Συρακόσιος τις ἄνθρωπος at Xenophon, *Symposium*, 2.1.

effects in world literature, ably described by Thomas Mann in the Preface to his masterpiece:

The exaggerated pastness of our narrative is due to its taking place before the epoch when a certain crisis shattered its way through life and consciousness and left a deep chasm behind. It takes place—or, rather, deliberately to avoid the present tense, it took place, and had taken place—in the long ago, in the old days, the days of the world before the Great War, in the beginning of which so much began that has scarcely yet left off beginning. Yes, it took place before that; yet not so long before. Is not the pastness of the past the profounder, the completer, the more legendary, the more immediately before the present it falls [*Aber ist der Vergangenheitscharakter einer Geschichte nicht desto tiefer, vollkommener und märchenhafter, je dichter 'vorher' sie spielt*]?²⁰⁹

Nor is it only the opening of *Der Zauberberg* that is relevant to what makes Plato's *Symposium* one of the crown-jewels of world literature, for Plato has also anticipated the end of Mann's novel:

Out of this universal feast of death, out of this extremity of fever, kindling the rain-washed evening sky to a fiery glow, may it be that Love one day shall mount?²¹⁰

It is a sublime alternative to the ἔρωξ of Alcibiades that will “mount the highest heaven of invention” in Socrates' “Diotima Discourse.” As a Platonist, Plato has staged that ascent between the abysmal stench of the quarries of Syracuse—the Athenian equivalent of Mann's summation of the First World War as “this universal feast of death”—and the vision of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν that is the τέλος of Plato's *Symposium*, itself the τέλος of a series of dialogues that begins with *Protagoras*. But it is important to recognize that this masterpiece is also something more: it is the culmination of a long line of towering literary achievements made possible by the many different voices of Athena's violet-crowned city; Plato is no *deus ex machina*, for he stood on the shoulders of giants.

SECTION 16. ALCESTIS, CODRUS, AND ACHILLES

Since the Reading Order does not begin with *Parmenides*, it is not based on telling “the story of Socrates” in chronological order. Despite an ongoing emphasis on the important role that the student's battle-tested knowledge

209. Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg* (1924) based on *The Magic Mountain*, translated by H. T. Lowe Porter (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), v.

210. Mann, *Magic Mountain*, 716 (last word).

of Athenian History plays in Platonic pedagogy (see §15), the purpose of that knowledge is not a reconstruction of a Reading Order that places, e.g., *Charmides* before *Laches* on a strictly chronological basis.²¹¹ Recognizing the serial order of the following fourteen dialogues—more than a third of the corpus—doesn't depend on our exact knowledge of dates:²¹² (1) *Protagoras*, *Alcibiades Major*, and *Alcibiades Minor*, (2) *Cleitophon*, *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias*, and (3) the series that begins with *Theaetetus* and ends with *Phaedo*. In a nutshell, *Symposium* does not take place in 416 B.C. because of what we learn from Athenaeus.²¹³ Rather, it takes place on the verge of the Sicilian Expedition because of what we have learned from Thucydides and now from Plato. And since no beginner is in a position to understand *Parmenides* without having read *Republic 7* and *Phaedrus*,²¹⁴ the attempt to replace Order of Composition with the sequential story of Socrates—what Eduard Munk called “the natural order of Plato’s dialogues” (1857)²¹⁵—ends up substituting one form of chronological over-determination for another.²¹⁶

In relation to the pedagogical basis of the Reading Order, then, *Parmenides* proves that Plato knew how to write “a prequel,” and given the speeches of Nestor in the *Iliad* and Eurycleia in the *Odyssey*, it's easy to discover who taught him. But the appearance of a much younger Socrates in *Parmenides* is not quite as abrupt as it seems. What might be called “the problem of the prequel” has already arisen in *Phaedrus*, the dialogue that immediately precedes it. Given the many connections between *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*—beginning with *Phaedrus* himself—it is natural to ask: “Which comes first?” and by placing the one among the pre- and the other among the post-*Republic* dialogues, the current consensus is both understandable and proper.²¹⁷ But it is not clear that it is accurate, and scholars would have read *Phaedrus*' speech in *Symposium* with greater respect if they entertained the possibility that *Symposium* follows *Phaedrus* in a dramatic sense, and thus that *Phaedrus* is putting into practice at Agathon's party what he learned about rhetoric on the banks of the Ilissus. In any case, the adjudication of this question depends entirely on a willingness to *re-read* the speech of *Phaedrus*²¹⁸ with that pos-

211. See Altman, “*Laches Before Charmides*.”

212. As in Nails, *People of Plato*, 308–329.

213. See *Sophists at Dinner*, 5 (217a).

214. See *Guardians in Action*, 143, 157–58, and 221–23.

215. Munk, *Die natürliche Ordnung*.

216. See my “Review of Catherine Zuckert,” 150.

217. See John D. Moore, “The Relation Between Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*,” in J. M. E. Moravcsik (ed.), *Patterns in Plato's Thought*, 52–71 (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1973).

218. Cf. Alessandra Fussi, “The Desire for Recognition in Plato's *Symposium*,” *Arethusa* 41 (2008), 237–262, on 239 (emphasis mine): “In the *Symposium*, *Phaedrus* gives the first of six speeches in praise of Eros. Authoritative commentaries will tell you that the speech, being the first, is also the simplest and the most superficial. This account corresponds to the impression that one gets *at a first reading*.”

sibility in mind only after having read *Phaedrus*, and given the important role of rereading in the latter,²¹⁹ that begins to look like what Plato wants us to do.

An early indication can be found in *Symposium* itself, and the need to reread the speech of Phaedrus will be the principal subject of this section.²²⁰ Although Diotima criticizes Aristophanes as well, her criticism of Phaedrus is different: it is by no means clear that Alcestis and Achilles did what they did for the sake of their own fame (207d2–6). My purpose here, in fact, is to prove that “she” is *wrong*, and that Plato has caused her to be so as a crucial part of our ascent to the Beautiful, especially as prepared by *Menexenus* and *Alcibiades Major*. It is because she is wrong, for example, that he teaches us to recognize that Socrates’ speech resembles “the ladder of love” it describes (see §17). But on the literary level, this means that we must (1) read Phaedrus’ speech, (2) read Diotima’s criticism of Phaedrus, (3) reread Phaedrus to see if that criticism is just, (4) reread Diotima’s criticism in the light of our re-reading, and finally (5) draw our own conclusions. Something like this process will be reenacted here.

But first, some general remarks on the importance of rereading and prequels in Plato’s dialogues are in order. By placing a performance of *Protagoras* at the Academy’s gateway, the need for rereading has played a necessary if implicit part in the Reading Order from the start. By the time we see *Protagoras* again—and more importantly, when we read and study it with the care it demands—we will find in it a very different dialogue than we found, heard, or read the first time. It is therefore in the gulf between hearing and studying that I explained the Priority of *Protagoras*: it would be almost as gross an example of pedagogical malpractice to expect students to master the art of *reading* a Platonic dialogue by beginning with *Protagoras*, as it would be to begin their philosophical education with the study of *Parmenides*. The importance of rereading should be especially obvious in the context of *Symposium*, for the reappearance of Phaedrus, Eryximachus, Pausanias, Agathon, and Alcibiades allows us to return to *Protagoras* with transformed insight. Moreover, this character-based transformation is merely the outward and explicit counterpart of the far more important changes of perspective arising from the way the series of dialogues between *Protagoras* and *Symposium* has made it possible to revisit the former with more critical eyes, hence combining both the Priority and the Reversal of *Protagoras*. Indeed the two anticipations in *Protagoras* of “the critique of writing” in *Phaedrus* (*Prt.* 329a2–4 and 347e3–7) are only the tip of a hermeneutic iceberg: the Platonic

219. See *Guardians in Action*, §10.

220. For detailed consideration of the speech, see Irley Franco, *O Sopro do Amor: Um Comentário ao discurso de Fedro no Banquete de Platão* (Rio de Janeiro: Palimpsesto, 2006); see also Robert Wardy, “Father of the Discourse: Phaedrus’ Speech in the *Symposium*,” *Revue de Philosophie Ancienne* 30, no. 2 (2012), 133–184.

refutation of Socrates' *Schriftkritik* is the student's evolving understanding—whether by rereading or repeated performances—of *Protagoras*. The Reading Order *begins* with a prequel that demands to be reread.²²¹

Consider the case of Menexenus: he appears in three dialogues just as Phaedrus does, two of them in close proximity to *Symposium*. To begin at the end, Plato will revolutionize our appreciation for this young man's gifts by placing him by Socrates' side in *Phaedo* along with his cousin Ctesippus (*Phd.* 59b9). Since we see Ctesippus learning the art of eristic in *Euthydemus*, and since Ctesippus is said to have taught Menexenus that art in *Lysis*, Plato has arranged these dialogues in reverse order, a conclusion supported by the fact that Menexenus is older in *Menexenus* than he will be in *Lysis*. Although we could make the decision to arrange these dialogues in relation to Menexenus' age, this would miss the point: it is the pedagogical progress of his readers, not the chronological age of his minor characters—or even of his major one, as demonstrated by *Parmenides*—with which Plato the Teacher is concerned. The crux with respect to Menexenus is *Lysis*: Plato invites us to find Lysis to be the more philosophical of the two friends (*Ly.* 213d6–e6) but since we already know from *Menexenus* that the youngster is interested in politics (*Mx.* 234a4–b2), can see through Socratic irony (*Mx.* 249d12–e2), and is nevertheless determined to take Socrates' advice (*Mx.* 234b3–4), not all of us will need to wait until *Phaedo* to discover that appearances may be deliberately deceiving.²²²

It is in *Phaedo*, of course, that Socrates offers us his autobiography, with emphasis on “the second sailing” that followed his abandonment of Presocratic physics, i.e., the transformation—adumbrated in *Lovers* (see §8)—that made “Presocratic philosophy” recognizable by contrast with Socrates' own practice. It is only when we reach *Phaedo*, then, that we can wonder if the young Socrates of the *Parmenides* prequel has or has not made “the Socratic turn.” This problem becomes even more acute in the dialogue that follows *Parmenides* in the Reading Order: there are no indications of how old Socrates is in *Philebus* and he makes a number of statements there that suggest he has not yet made the final decision about Anaxagoras that he tells us he had made in *Phaedo*.²²³ If Menexenus looks significantly more Socratic in *Lysis* after we have read *Phaedo*, the reverse is true of Socrates himself when we reread *Philebus* in its light. The fact that *Parmenides*, the most obvious prequel in the corpus, can be placed between *Phaedrus* and *Philebus* on

221. Cf. Cyril Connolly, *Enemies of Promise*, revised edition; first published in 1939 (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 19: “Literature is the art of writing something that will be read twice.”

222. For discussion, see *Ascent to the Good*, §4.

223. See my “Socrates in Plato's *Philebus*” (November 14, 2018) at https://www.academia.edu/37794270/Socrates_in_Platos_Philebus (accessed on April 8, 2019).

grounds that have nothing to do with literary chronology begins to suggest why we will miss something important if we substitute more commonplace conceptions of narrative linearity for what we find in the dialogues.

Finally, there is that most mysterious pair: *Hipparchus* and *Minos*. Although the connection between the latter and *Laws* was widely recognized in antiquity,²²⁴ and although most anyone can see the connection between *Minos* and *Hipparchus*,²²⁵ the two were separated by Thrasyllus before being reunited through inauthenticity and excised in Schleiermacher's wake. As is the case throughout *Plato the Teacher*, I am basing the argument for restoring them to the canon on Reading Order, under the principle of "the snug fit."²²⁶ But in this exceptional case,²²⁷ the interpretation of these two dialogues depends on our ability to place them between *Apology* and *Crito* in the Reading Order, something we only be able to do so after having reached the end of Socrates' story in *Crito* and *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 116b8–d7). The same kind of approach could also be usefully applied to *Philebus*: it looks "late" because it is complex while *Hipparchus* and *Minos* look "early" for the opposite reason. But Plato has left the discovery or restitution of narrative linearity to his students; indeed the Order of Composition paradigm represents a modern attempt to supply another species of linearity across the board. Unfortunately, this attempt has harmonized contradictions with a wrecking-ball, ignoring in the process that Plato was a teacher, and that he is eternally operative only in the student's timeless present.

The process that will eventually compel us to reread the speech of Phaedrus probably begins with Diotima's first use of the verb "to die on behalf of [ὑπεραποθνήσκειν]" at 207b4,²²⁸ but it is the passage that immediately follows its second use at 208d2 that is decisive. In order to understand that crucial passage in context, it is perhaps sufficient to begin at 208b2:

‘Through this device [sc. ‘by replacing what goes off or is antiquated with something fresh, in the semblance of the original’], Socrates, what's mortal partakes of immortality, both in body and in all other things; otherwise it's impossible [ἀδύνατον δὲ ἄλλῃ]. Do not therefore wonder [θαυμάζειν] if everything by na-

224. See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.37.

225. For bibliography, see *Guardians on Trial*, 178–79n19.

226. See *Guardians on Trial*, chapter 3.

227. See *Guardians on Trial*, 183–97.

228. Following H. N. Fowler, I will generally translate this verb as "to sacrifice one's life for." See 207a7–b6 (Fowler): "'For you [Diotima is addressing Socrates] must have observed the strange state into which all the animals are thrown, whether going on earth or winging the air, when they desire to beget: they are all sick and amorously disposed, first to have union one with another, and next to find food for the new-born; in whose behalf they are ready to fight hard battles, even the weakest against the strongest, and to sacrifice their lives [ὑπεραποθνήσκειν]; to be racked with starvation themselves if they can but nurture their young, and be put to any sort of shift.'" Note that this is the first of two passages in *Against Leocrates* where Lycurgus refers to *Smp.* (see §14).

ture values the offshoot of itself [εἰ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἀποβλάστημα φύσει πᾶν τιμᾶ], for the sake of immortality this eagerness and love accompanies all.²²⁹

Here Diotima repeats in substance and extends in breadth what she has already said about animals the first time she used ὑπεραποθνήσκειν: it is through their children that human beings too come to partake of immortality. Plato is therefore once again encouraging us to return to Phaedrus because the story of Alcestis told by Phaedrus (179b5–d2)—to which it will be necessary to return—not only emphasizes her willingness to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν for he husband (179b7–8) but just as importantly must emphasize *the refusal of Admetus' parents to do so* (179b8–c3).²³⁰

Having just been told not to wonder (i.e., to θαυμάζειν) at 208b4, Socrates next disobeys his imaginary teacher:

On hearing this speech [ὁ λόγος] I wondered [θαυμάζειν], and said: ‘Really, can this in truth be so, most wise Diotima [ὃ σοφωτάτη Διοτίμα]?’ Whereat she, just as the perfected sophists [ὡσπερ οἱ τέλει σοφισταί]: ‘Be certain of it, Socrates [εὖ ἴσθι, ἔφη, ὃ Σώκρατες].’²³¹

For the effect of likening Diotima to οἱ σοφισταί, *Protagoras* and the *Hippias* dyad have prepared us: from Socrates, this is no complement. But it would be better to say that from Plato, this is a *warning*, alerting his readers to be on their guard. Having recently become identifiable to ourselves as philosophers (204a1–b2), there is not enough of the μεταξύ between wisdom and ignorance in Socrates' σοφωτάτη, and whatever doubts we may have had after being told “don’t wonder [μὴ θαύμαζε]” are now strengthened by the comparison with οἱ τέλει σοφισταί and the apodictic tone of Diotima’s sophistic “well you know.” Another wonder-overcoming explanation immediately follows:

‘Since also in the case of human beings—should you wish to have looked into their love of honor [ἡ φιλοτιμία]—you would be amazed [θαυμάζειν] by their irrationality [ἡ ἀλογία] concerning the things which I have said *unless* you consider, having taken it to heart, how awfully they are affected by a love of making a name for themselves [ἔρωσ τοῦ ὀνομαστοῖ γενέσθαι] ‘and laying up fame immortal for all time to come [καὶ κλέος ἐς τὸν αἰὶ χρόνον ἀθάνατον καταθέσθαι].’

229. 208b2–6, following Bury, *Symposium of Plato*, 117 (on ἀδύνατον δὲ ἄλλη) by reading ἀδύνατον for ἀθάνατον on the basis of 207c9–d6, especially δύναιται δε ταύτη μόνον at 207d2. With τιμᾶν here, cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.3.13–17.

230. Note that the one time Xenophon uses the verb ὑπεραποθνήσκειν (*Cynegeticus*, 1.14), he is describing the willingness of Antilochus to die on behalf of his father Nestor (cf. *Ion* 537a5); this example simultaneously confirms Phaedrus on the comparative excellence of the lover and the beloved—the child being similar to the latter, the parent to the former—and reverses Diotima’s emphasis on *parental* self-sacrifice.

231. 208b7–c1.

For the sake of this, they are prepared to encounter the danger of all dangers [κινδύνους τε κινδυνεύειν . . . πάντας] yet still more than for the sake of their children, and to expend money, to labor at any labors whatsoever [πόνους πονεῖν οὐστινασοῦν] and to sacrifice their lives [καὶ ὑπεραποθνήσκειν].²³²

Were Socrates to take mankind's φιλοτιμία into account, claims Diotima, he would not wonder at their ἀλογία. But we must ask: what is it that would make him wonder in the first place, and in doing *what* would they manifest this irrationality? With respect to the wonder-provoking actions, Diotima—once again resembling οἱ τέλει σοφισταί—borrows a pair of cognate accusatives: the irrational behavior she will explain by means of φιλοτιμία is our/their willingness to κινδυνεύειν κινδύνους πάντας and πονεῖν πόνους οὐστινασοῦν. But just as the significance of φιλοτιμία will be clarified and deepened by identifying it with a kind of love—the ἔρως τοῦ ὀνομαστοῦ γενέσθαι, i.e., the love of becoming famous by “making a name for ourselves”—so, too, will the significance of “all dangers” and “any labors” be deepened and brought to an otherwise irrational and wonder-provoking head by the return of ὑπεραποθνήσκειν. It is hardly obvious how giving up one's life can make one deathless, and indeed one might wonder whether the two—thanks to the shared basis in ‘death’ that joins ἀθάνατον to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν—are united only in self-contradiction. And thanks to the hammered use of rhetorical ornamentation following the de-authorizing comparison between Diotima and the sophists, we are already on guard when Diotima responds to Phaedrus, unmistakably this time:

‘Are you then imagining,’ she said, ‘Alcestis to have died [ἀποθνήσκειν] for Admetus, or Achilles to have died after [ἐπαποθνήσκειν] Patroclus, or your own Codrus to have died in advance [προαποθνήσκειν] on behalf of the kingdom of his children, *not* considering a deathless memory of virtue [ἀθάνατος μνήμη ἀρετῆς] to be in store for them which now we have?’²³³

The operative fallacy here is *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Given the memory of them “which now we have,” we are entitled to assume that they did what they did *for the purpose* of achieving that result. In other words, it is on the basis of their subsequent and epiphenomenal fame that we can read our way back into their prior and pre-deed state of mind. It is in this dubious context that we should consider the difference between ἐπαποθνήσκειν and προαποθνήσκειν: the former applies to dying *after* the dead have died—ritual

232. 208c2–d2. For insight into the role of φιλοτιμία in Diotima's Discourse, see Knut Ågotnes, “*Philotimia*. On Rhetoric, Virtues, and Honor in the *Symposium*,” in Hallvard Fossheim, Vigdis Songe-Møller, and Knut Ågotnes (eds.), *Philosophy as Drama: Plato's Thinking through Dialogue*, 123–139 (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

233. 208d2–6.

suttee comes to mind—the latter to, e.g., soldiers who draw the enemy’s fire in order to allow their comrades to escape. With “to die [ἀποθνήσκειν]” as the common element, the three different versions can be temporalized: with ἐπαποθνήσκειν applied to sacrificing oneself for those who have already died and προαποθνήσκειν for dying in advance for our friends, ὑπεραποθνήσκειν either applies to the present or captures the generic essence that subsumes the two temporalized variations. In any case, Diotima has derived the προ- of motivation from the ἐπ- of result.

Plato allows Diotima to make her point in the form of what we have come to call a “rhetorical question.” Of course, the question is rhetorical in quite another sense as well thanks to the triad of ἀποθνήσκειν, ἐπαποθνήσκειν, and προαποθνήσκειν, all riffing off the ὑπεραποθνήσκειν she has borrowed from Phaedrus. And that, of course, is the crucial matter: it is because she has borrowed two of her three examples—Achilles and Alcestis—from Phaedrus, that the question she poses here compels us to return to that earlier speech and reread it. But let’s not miss the forest before our eyes for the trees we will discover by looking back: although “she” asks the question with the expectation that it can only be answered in one way—like a perfect sophist-ess, as it were—it need not be so, and K. J. Dover has put the point perfectly:

Perhaps the notion that Alcestis would not have died for Admetus had she not been sure of posthumous fame . . . would not have seemed so grotesque to a Greek as it does to most of us.²³⁴

By presenting a morally objectionable explanation of a beautiful action in the mouth of a character immediately after Socrates has compared Diotima to οἱ τέλει σοφισταί, Plato’s basanistic pedagogy challenges us to answer this question in another way, and he would pass along this pedagogical technique to Cicero:

I say that a successful eulogy of virtue must shut out pleasure. But you must no longer expect me to show you this. You must do your own introspection. Scan the contents of your own mind, deliberate thoroughly, and ask yourself which you would prefer: to enjoy continual pleasure, experiencing the state of tranquility that you frequently mentioned and spending your whole life without pain (as you Epicureans generally add, though it cannot happen); or to be a benefactor of

234. Dover, *Plato, Symposium*, 152 (on 208b7–209e4). Dover’s criticism, which he no doubt considered consistent with his noteworthy remark in the Preface—“His [sc. Plato’s] distinctive values, attitudes, assumptions, cravings and passions are not mine, and for that reason I do not find his philosophical arguments even marginally persuasive” (viii)—is apt; his only error is the assumption that Plato did not expect his readers to find this notion grotesque.

the whole human race, enduring the labors of Hercules to bring it aid and succor in its hour of need?²³⁵

By implicating the reader in an extra-textual dialogue, the great Socratics kept Socrates alive, and Plato was their master. He wants us to object to the point that Diotima is making, just as Dover does. And Plato helps us to do so by allowing “her” to make that highly objectionable point in the form of a question that he has placed in a suspicious context that also sends the reader back to a far less objectionable explanation for the same phenomenon as elucidated by another character earlier in the dialogue. It is therefore important that “she” has no doubt, for it is precisely *her* certainty that Plato uses in order to make *us* doubtful:

‘Far from it,’ she said, ‘but I think on behalf of deathless virtue [ἀρετή ἀθάνατος] and of such well-famed repute [τοιαύτη δόξα εὐκλεής] everyone does everything [πάντες πάντα ποιῶσιν], and to the extent that they are better, to that extent more so; for they love the deathless [τὸ ἀθάνατον].’²³⁶

So Plato gives “her” the chance to answer the question as well, and in doing so, Diotima once again broadens and deepens her point. Everything that everyone does—and the better the things they do, the truer becomes her explanation of why they have done them—is done for the sake of their fame. As a result, we have been treated to a wonder-negating explanation of the profound ἀλογία implicit in that apparently least selfish of acts: a willingness to die on behalf of another, i.e., to *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν*.²³⁷ Those who are willing to encounter death for another are in fact intent on securing deathless fame for themselves. Despite the fact that birds are scarcely concerned with their place in history, Diotima shamelessly builds on her previous use of *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν* (207b4), discovering now a second way to turn the gold of

235. Cicero, *De finibus*, 2.118 (Raphael Woolf translation).

236. 208d6–e1.

237. In order to justify the priority of self-love, Aristotle must likewise explain a willingness to *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν* on the basis of the advantage that accrues to the agent; note the datives in *Nicomachean Ethics*, 9.8; 1169a (Ross and Urmsen modified): “It is true of the good man too that he does many acts for the sake of his friends and his country, and if necessary dies for them [*ὑπεραποθνήσκειν*]; for he will throw away both wealth and honors and in general the goods that are objects of competition, [the reverse alchemy begins here:] gaining for himself [ἑαυτῷ] the beautiful [τὸ καλόν]; since he would prefer a short period of intense pleasure to a long one of mild enjoyment, a year of noble life to many years of humdrum existence, and one great and noble action to many trivial ones. And for those who die for others [participate from *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν*], perhaps this happens [τοῦτ’ ἴσως συμβαίνει]; they are choosing, then, a big beautiful for themselves [αἰροῦνται δὴ μέγα καλὸν ἑαυτοῖς]. They will throw away possessions on condition that their friends will gain more, for possessions accrue to the friend but the beautiful to himself [αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ καλόν]; *thus the greater good he allots to himself* [emphasis mine; τὸ δὴ μείζον ἀγαθὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀπονέμει].” Note that in the epitaph of Simonides, the verb ἀπονέμειν also appears, but there the dead have not allotted (ἀπένεμε) to themselves the chance for τὸ καλῶς θνήσκειν.

self-sacrifice into the lead of selfishness. From a pre-modern defense of “the selfish gene” that explains a bird’s willingness to fight and die for the nestling’s sake, she now slides to Achilles, whose choice to stay, fight, and die in Troy must have already depended on the fame Homer would bring him, and who would not have chosen as he did had he not been sure that his exploits would someday be sung. This reverse alchemy constitutes a critical moment in the student’s ascent to the Beautiful.

Because Plato placed it first, the speech of Phaedrus is easily forgotten and is therefore the best-concealed speech in *Symposium*.²³⁸ But that doesn’t mean he wants us to forget it, and in a Platonic vindication of Heidegger’s notion of truth as un-concealment (ἀ-λήθεια), he uses Diotima to bring it out of the shadows. Diotima’s question is brief, but Phaedrus discusses each of his three examples—Alcestis (179b5–d2), Orpheus (179d2–e1), and Achilles (179e1–180b5)—at considerable length, beginning as follows:

‘And indeed, to die on behalf of others [ὑπεραποθνήσκειν] only lovers [μόνοι . . . οἱ ἐρῶντες] are willing to do, not only [οὐ μόνον] men but also women. Of this Pelias’ daughter Alcestis too provides sufficient witness to the Greeks on behalf of this claim [ὑπὲρ τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου]: she alone [μόνη] was willing to die [from the verb ἀποθνήσκειν] for her husband [ὑπὲρ τοῦ αὐτῆς ἀνδρός ἀποθανεῖν].’²³⁹

It is remarkable that two words appear in this passage three times apiece, the first being the preposition ὑπέρ. If the passage proves that Alcestis was willing to die *on behalf of* her husband (ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἀνδρός), it also proves that Plato is telling us her story ὑπὲρ τοῦδε τοῦ λόγου, i.e., in order to teach us what it means to ὑπερ-αποθνήσκειν. And if we understand that word,²⁴⁰ we will remark the significance of that third use of “only” (cf. μόνοι, οὐ μόνον, and μόνη) for it is not Alcestis *alone* who is willing to die for others—countless fathers, soldiers,²⁴¹ firemen, and other unsung heroes have done

238. Since Plato mentions the “army of lovers” in the speech of Phaedrus (178e4–5), Xenophon—whose Pausanias famously mentions it in his *Symposium*, 8.32—had evidently forgotten that speech *if he wrote second*, but if Plato wrote with Xenophon in mind, he has found another way to call attention to this easily overlooked speech.

239. 179b4–8.

240. And the purpose of this passage, as indicated by the intensifying γε after ὑπεραποθνήσκειν and continuing until the return of both ὑπέρ and ἀποθνήσκειν in ὑπὲρ τοῦ αὐτῆς ἀνδρός ἀποθανεῖν, is precisely to teach the reader the meaning this important neologism, a word that captures perfectly the paradigmatic action inspired by τὸ καλόν.

241. Like the Pausanias of Xenophon’s Socrates (see §14), Phaedrus refers to an army comprised of lovers and their beloveds that does not exist (178e3–179a2); since it doesn’t, there have been many soldiers who have been willing to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν on behalf of their comrades *without* being bound together by sexualized ἔρωσ, and if there were to be such an army, what would make it invincible is that it would not be the lovers alone (μόνοι οἱ ἐρῶντες) but the beloveds as well who would be willing to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν on behalf of their ἐρῶντες, or, for that matter, for the sake of any of their comrades.

so much, and mothers in the greatest numbers of all²⁴²—it was rather *only* Alcestis who was willing to die *for Admetus*:

‘Although he [sc. Admetus] had both father and mother, she [sc. Alcestis] was surpassing them to such an extent in friendship [ἡ φιλία] on account of love [διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα] as to prove them to be unrelated to their son and connected to him only in name [ὀνόματι].’²⁴³

The significance of Phaedrus’ ὀνόματι becomes evident only when we return to this passage from Diotima’s discourse. “She” had claimed that what dissolves the irrationality (ἄλογία) of self-sacrifice is the fame that accrues to those who ὑπεραποθνήσκειν: they do what they do—indeed everyone does everything that they do (208d8)—on account of the “love of becoming famous [ἔρωσ τοῦ ὀνομαστοὶ γενέσθαι]” (208c4–5). But the use of ὀνομαστοί now allows the parents of Admetus to disprove the reverse alchemy that Diotima is applying to Phaedrus’ ὑπεραποθνήσκειν not once but twice. Connection to their son in name (ὀνόματι) is explicitly made insufficient for making his parents desire to become ὀνομαστοί by dying so that *he* might live as even the parents of wild animals—i.e., those without the ἔρωσ τοῦ ὀνομαστοὶ γενέσθαι—are said to be willing to do (207a7–b6). Although Alcestis is said to act διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα, it is explicitly with respect to ἡ φιλία that she surpasses her husband’s selfish parents,²⁴⁴ and here again we may think of an army of non-lovers or an even larger legion of mothers. Naturally Phaedrus has said nothing yet about fame: he is pointing, as he should, to φιλία and ἔρωσ, whether of women or men, whether storied or unsung, as the origin of ὑπεραποθνήσκειν. The reward for such action he locates elsewhere:

‘And having done this deed [ἐργασαμένη τὸ ἔργον], it was judged so beautiful [καλόν] not only by men but also by gods [οὐ μόνον ἄνθρωποις ἀλλὰ καὶ θεοῖς] that among many having done [πολλοὶ . . . ἐργασαμένοι] many and beautiful things [πολλὰ καὶ καλά], to an easily counted number indeed have the gods given this prize [τοῦτο γέρας]: to send the soul back up from Hades, but cher-

242. See my “Tullia’s Secret Shrine: Birth and Death in Cicero’s *de Finibus*,” *Ancient Philosophy* 28 (2008), 373–393.

243. 179b8–c3.

244. Cf. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 8.18 (Socrates is speaking of lovers who do not have sex): “Those indeed for whom being loved is mutual [κοινὸν τὸ φιλεῖσθαι], how is it not necessary that these look upon each other pleasurably, converse amicably, and both trust and are trusted, and take forethought for each other, take mutual pleasure in noble deeds, are vexed together should any mishap occur, to pass their time in mutual delight when they are in health, but if either should falter, to maintain their companionship yet more steadily, and to take care of the other while absent even more than when present? Are not all these things marks of passionate love [ἐπαφρόδιτα]? On account, then, of these kinds of actions, mutually loving their friendship [ἅμα ἐρῶντες τῆς φιλίας] and making use of it down to old age, they pass through life.”

ishing her deed [τὸ ἔργον] up they sent hers, so much the gods as well honor especially both the seriousness that concerns love and its virtue [ἀρετή].²⁴⁵

Without denying that human beings too have the capacity to reward the kind of ἀρετή Alcestis has demonstrated with praise and fame, Phaedrus looks past Diotima's framework to the gods. Phaedrus emphasizes that the gods are inscrutable: while many have done (πολλοὶ ἐργασαμένοι) the kind of deed (τὸ ἔργον) that Alcestis has done (ἐργασαμένη)—for noble deeds are many (πολλά καὶ καλά)—only a few have received τοῦτο γέρας, i.e., the boon of emancipation from Hades. Naturally “the future's not ours to see,”²⁴⁶ and thus both posthumous fame from the lips of men and post-mortem rewards from the inscrutable gods are an unstable foundation on which to ground a decision to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν. In other words, if one's motive to do a deed that's truly καλόν depends entirely on the unknowable future actions of unpredictable beings, we are back in the realm of Diotima's ἀλογία, quite apart from the fact that a selfish pursuit of one's own fame negates the selflessness that made the deed famous in the first place. On the contrary: what will eventually make Alcestis' action rational in Diotima's own terms is αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν; in her all-too-human present, it is the feeling of φιλία inspired by ἔρως for her beloved Admetus. The unpredictable guerdon of the divine γέρας Alcestis receives further emphasizes the fallacious application of *post hoc propter hoc* that mars this lower stage of Diotima's discourse, for her suppression of what makes the ἔργον of Alcestis καλόν here (208d2–6) implements Plato's plan—after compelling us to revisit the speech of Phaedrus—“to send [us] back up [ἀνεῖναι πάλιν]” (179c7) to τὸ καλόν there (see §17).

The school's characteristic fight against the light is illuminated when first Leo Strauss and then Stanley Rosen apply Diotima's *post hoc propter hoc* fallacy to the speech of Phaedrus itself: “what Phaedrus wittingly or unwittingly does is to subject eros to the criterion of gain, a selfish consideration.”²⁴⁷ Rosen uses “the gods” to explain why:

Phaedrus denies the selflessness of Alcestis by having the gods give her a present (179c6: γέρας) of resurrection. Even for the lover virtuous action submits to the standard of gain.²⁴⁸

245. 179c3–d2.

246. In the context of the role that the future plays in *La*.—see *Ascent to the Good*, 156–61—it is noteworthy that Plato leaves it to Xenophon to make the commonsense claim that the future is in principle unknowable; see *Anabasis*, 6.1.21 and *Hipparchicus*, 9.1.

247. Leo Strauss, *On Plato's Symposium*, edited with a Foreword by Seth Benardete (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 53. These lectures were given in 1959.

248. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's Symposium*, second edition; first published in 1968 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 55.

And having purged what makes ὑπεραποθνήσκειν beautiful in the case of Alcestis, Strauss can get to the bottom of things when he turns to Socrates:

We must go a bit deeper. Love of one's own self, self-love, inspires indeed all human actions, at least to the extent that it enters into all human actions, and that makes sense.²⁴⁹

Instead of serving as an instructive foil to Diotima—who naturally observes “silence about the gods”²⁵⁰—Strauss's Phaedrus becomes an even lower proponent of the same selfishness,²⁵¹ now calculating the self-benefit that accrues to the beloved.²⁵²

For Phaedrus himself, however, it is the famous Orpheus who serves as foil to Alcestis. Him, too, the gods “send back up” from Hades after he contrived to enter it alive—as Odysseus will claim he did as well—but he returns with only a phantasm of Eurydice. Unlike Alcestis, he “dares not to die for the sake of love” and he, too, is rewarded in accord with his deserts:

‘But Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, they [sc. the gods] sent back with failure from Hades, showing him only a wraith of the woman for whom he came; her real self they would not bestow, for he was seeming to be a coward [μαλθακίζεσθαι], like the minstrel [κιθαρωδός] that he was, and not to dare to die [οὐ τολμᾶν ἀποθνήσκειν] for the sake of love as Alcestis did, when he contrived [διαμηχανᾶσθαι] the means of entering Hades alive. Wherefore they laid upon him the penalty he deserved, and caused him to meet his death at the hands of women.’²⁵³

In addition the role reversal that makes the man inferior to the woman,²⁵⁴ the three infinitives tell Phaedrus' story: it is because Orpheus, unlike Alcestis,

249. Strauss, *On Plato's Symposium*, 225; the passage continues: “This kind of eros is higher than the eros directed toward procreation and offspring, insofar as it includes concern with virtue. As is shown by the many spoiled brats, love of offspring does not necessarily go together with love of virtue, but love for immortal fame is inseparable from concern with virtue. On the other hand, however, love of immortal fame is more selfish: the man does not forget himself for the sake of other human beings.”

250. Strauss, *On Plato's Symposium*, 224: “Diotima uses these two examples [sc. Alcestis and Achilles] as examples of eros for fame and speaks only of their fame among men. Silence about the gods here.”

251. Strauss, *On Plato's Symposium*, 56: “Phaedrus's point of view, to state it succinctly, is that of profit, of calculation, of gain.” Cf. 53, likewise on Phaedrus: “Therefore his speech is the lowest of all the speeches.” Consider also Rosen, *Plato's Symposium*, 257: “Diotima reinterprets the examples of Alcestis and Achilles, introduced by Phaedrus, but emphasizes their love of honor rather than material gain.”

252. Cf. Strauss, *On Plato's Symposium*, 53–56, and Rosen, *Plato's Symposium*, 56–57.

253. 179d2–e1.

254. For other role reversals in the dialogue (on Orpheus and Alcestis, see 264n4), see Radcliffe G. Edmonds III, “Socrates the Beautiful: Role Reversal and Midwifery in Plato's *Symposium*,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 130 (2000), 261–285.

οὐ τολμᾶν ἀποθνήσκειν that he shows himself to μαλθακίζεσθαι,²⁵⁵ his need to scheme (διαμηχανᾶσθαι) is the direct result. It is this third infinitive that points to the weakness of the self-benefitting model of ὑπεραποθνήσκειν: if it is a γέρας from the gods or fame from men that motivates her willingness to die for Admetus in accordance with *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, it is Alcestis who is shown to διαμηχανᾶσθαι. And that, of course, is exactly what she does not do, and why Phaedrus contrasts her with Orpheus.

It is important to realize that Phaedrus is in fact defaming the famous Orpheus.²⁵⁶ And it is specifically as a singer of songs (κιθαροφῶδός)—and thus himself a praise-singer or fame-giver—that Orpheus is defamed. Once transmuted into epic poetry and epideictic rhetoric, “the clear song of Orpheus” becomes the principal means through which κλέος is bestowed or besmirched.²⁵⁷ It is therefore through the arts of Orpheus that a singer or speaker can convert self-sacrifice into self-benefit on Diotima’s model, a process that has already begun *with its mirror image* in *Menexenus* (see §15). There, the praise-singer disguised Athenian self-interest as selfless altruism,²⁵⁸ the reverse of what Diotima is now doing to Alcestis. In tandem with Aspasia’s, then, Phaedrus’ speech illustrates how terribly uncertain “having done the deed” for the sake of making a name for yourself really is: fame is unstable, and “subject to the breath of every fool.” Together with Aspasia’s deceptive whitewash of Athenian motives, Phaedrus’ hatchet job on Orpheus undermines fame as a motivating force by illustrating just how fickle it is. In the end, there will be left only one secure foundation for ὑπεραποθνήσκειν: the intrinsic excellence of the act itself in the light of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, an excellence that Aspasia cannot manufacture nor Diotima besmirch.

But regardless of the end to which it is consistently put, Strauss’s practice of careful reading along with his habitual concern with the center yields here, as often, a significant dividend: he accurately links Orpheus, the second of Phaedrus’ three examples, to Codrus, the third of Diotima’s.²⁵⁹ Despite the ar-

255. See Franco, *O Sopro do Amor*, 115 (on 179d6). Note that Protagoras is likened to Orpheus at *Prt.* 315b1. This may explain the appeal of “a preservation of life for us [ἡμῶν σωτηρία τοῦ βίου]” beginning at *Prt.* 356d3.

256. For Phaedrus’ revisionist innovations, see Bury, *Symposium of Plato*, 28 (on 179d Ὀρφέα), especially “by making O.’s descent an act of μαλακία rather than of τόλμα” and “by representing O.’s death to be the penalty for this cowardice rather than for his irreverence to Dionysus.”

257. For thoughtful remarks on this aspect of κλέος, see Marcel Detienne, *The Writings of Orpheus: Greek Myth in Cultural Context*, translated by Janet Lloyd (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 73; “the clear song of Orpheus” is from Matthew Arnold’s “Memorial Verses April 1850.”

258. Cf. Pownall, *Lessons from the Past*, 59: “Plato is able to show that the Athenians’ professedly noble motives belong in fact to the realm of self-interest. . . . Athens’s altruistic claims are revealed quite explicitly to be false, as we have seen, by the exaggerations and inconsistencies contained throughout the *epitaphios*.”

259. Strauss, *On Plato’s Symposium*, 224: “Diotima replaces Orpheus with an Athenian example, the old Athenian king Codrus.”

arithmetical asymmetry, there is no doubt that the return of Alcestis and Achilles links the disappearance of Orpheus to his replacement: “your Codrus” as Diotima calls him. And since “the fame of Codrus,” i.e. that for the sake of which Diotima claims that he did what he did, is an interesting subject in its own right, a return to Diotima’s comments about him will precede a reconsideration of what Phaedrus has said about Achilles.

The first thing that needs to be said about Codrus the King is that Plato’s *Symposium* itself is our *oldest source* for the story to which Diotima merely alludes. If the speech of Phaedrus demonstrates how easy it is to defame the famous, the speech of Diotima suggests how fame can be created *post facto*, a fact that no matter how self-evident it may be in other contexts, is here destructive of Diotima’s claims about what motivated Codrus to do as he did. Although Plato is our oldest *literary* source for the story of how Codrus used deception to save Athens,²⁶⁰ there are three later pieces of information that are important for interpreting what Diotima says about him there, beginning with her words “your Codrus,” none of which can be considered completely independent of *Symposium*. Diogenes Laertius tell us that Plato was descended from Codrus on his father’s side.²⁶¹ As a result, whatever fame this legendary king had acquired was particularly well known to Plato and his relatives. The second is that Codrus was said by some to have been the last King of Athens.²⁶² This legend is arguably inseparable from Plato’s story, since it was precisely the self-sacrifice by which Codrus saved Athens that made his ancestors decide that no one else deserved thereafter be her King.²⁶³ Finally, there is the remarkable circumstance that it would be Lycurgus,²⁶⁴ one of Plato’s students (see §14), who recounts at length the oldest version of the story of how Codrus saved Athens in his *Against Leocrates*, the story to

260. See Uta Kron, “Patriotic Heroes,” *Ancient Greek Hero Cult: Proceedings of the Fifth International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, organized by the Department of Classical Archaeology and Ancient History, Göteborg University, 21–23 April 1995* (Stockholm: P. Aströms, 1999), 61–83, on 75: “The only preserved, Attic representation of Kodros in the interior of the name-giving, red-figured cup of the Codrus-Painter in Bologna dates from c. 440/430 B.C.” It can be seen on 76, and in more detail in plates 15.1, 16.1, and 16.2 in Uta Kron, *Die Zehn Attischen Phylonhoroen: Geschichte, Mythos, Kult und Darstellungen* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1976); for the Marathon dedication at Delphi described by Pausanias (10.10.1), see 215–27.

261. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.1.

262. See [Aristotle], *Constitution of Athens*, 3.3.

263. For a succinct retelling, see “Codrus,” in *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, eleventh edition (New York, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1910), 6.637: “in Greek legend the last king of Athens. According to the story, it was prophesied at the time of the Dorian invasion of the Peloponnesus (c. 1068 B.C.) that only the death of their king at the enemy’s hand could ensure victory to the Athenians. Devoting himself to his country, Codrus, in the guise of a peasant, made his way into the enemy camp, and provoked a quarrel with some Dorian soldiers. He fell, and the Dorians, on discovering that Codrus had been slain, retreated homeward, despairing of success. No one being thought worthy to succeed Codrus, the title of king was abolished, and that of archon (q.v) substituted for it. See Lycurgus, *Leiocr.* 84–87, Justin 2.6, Velleius Paterculus 1.2 [‘modern’ authorities deleted].”

264. See Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 84–87.

which Diotima merely alludes. With these facts in mind, reconsider the little that Diotima says about Codrus:

‘Are you then imagining,’ she said, ‘Alcestis to have died for Admetus, or Achilles to have died after Patroclus, or your own Codrus [ὁ ὑμέτερος Κόδρος] to have died in advance [προαποθνήσκειν] on behalf of the kingdom of his children [ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν παίδων], *not* considering a deathless memory of virtue [ἀθάνατον μνήμην ἀρετῆς] to be in store for them which now we have [ἦν νῦν ἡμεῖς ἔχομεν]?’²⁶⁵

Thanks to the family connection, the words ὁ ὑμέτερος Κόδρος apply most forcefully to Plato himself, not to the Athenians generically. And if Codrus was indeed the last king of Athens, the sequel proved that it was emphatically not ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν παίδων that he did what he did: the kingship (ἡ βασιλεία) would henceforth pass *from* the hands of his children (οἱ παῖδες). Finally, given our lack of any evidence for the pre-Platonic fame this selfless action on behalf of Athens had gained for Codrus—augmented by the fact that it would be one of Plato’s students who would in fact secure that fame for him—we must wonder about the extent of that ἀθάνατον μνήμην ἀρετῆς, i.e., the memory which, as Diotima puts it, “we presently have [νῦν ἡμεῖς ἔχομεν]” of him. I, therefore, offer this passage as our best evidence that Plato ever explained a passage in one of his dialogues to his students, offering as evidence the hypothesis that Lycurgus learned the story of Codrus from Plato’s oral instruction while reading *Symposium*. If this hypothesis is correct, then Plato was undermining Diotima’s *post hoc ergo propter hoc* explanation of the King’s willingness to προαποθνήσκειν *simply by telling the story*, previously unknown to them and the other Athenians, to Lycurgus and his fellows in the Academy.²⁶⁶

What is not a matter of speculation is that the longest of the ancient *scholia* on Plato’s *Symposium* is devoted to Codrus.²⁶⁷ In other words, ancient scholars writing and teaching some centuries after Plato still found it necessary to augment the memory ἦν νῦν ἡμεῖς ἔχομεν of Codrus, i.e., he remained unknown to their contemporaries. The *scholium* can be divided into four parts of which the first—a father-to-son list of the Athenian Kings ending with Codrus—is attributed to Hellanicus.²⁶⁸ The second is more discursive,

265. 208d2–6.

266. Although he will question whether Codrus was succeeded by archons and not by his son Medon, [Aristotle] is our oldest surviving source that Codrus was considered by οἱ πλείους to be the last king of Athens (see *Constitution of Athens*, 3.3).

267. See Greene, *Scholia Platonica*, 63–64 (on ‘208d Κόδρον’); I will cite this *scholium* in the following notes by line number, uncounted in Greene.

268. Greene, *Scholia*, 63.1–10. For a reading of the *scholium* that gives more credence to the view that all of it comes from Hellanicus, see Jon Hesk, *Deception and Democracy in Classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 90, but note “may have,” “probably still,” and “if this story does really come from a history by Hellanicus.”

and tells an entertaining story, albeit of limited relevance to *Symposium*, about Codrus' father, Melanthus.²⁶⁹ The relevant story begins with Codrus "who died on behalf of the fatherland [ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος] in the following manner."²⁷⁰ The contrast with Diotima's ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν παιδῶν is remarkable but unremarked.²⁷¹ We then get Lycurgus' version:²⁷² the god's oracle that Athens could only be saved if the Peloponnesians killed her king, Codrus' decision to masquerade as a woodsman, his confrontation with two enemy soldiers, and how he provoked one of them to kill him after throwing down the other.²⁷³ Finally, without mentioning Codrus' connection to Plato but leaving open the possibility that Codrus was the last King—since the kings were replaced by "archons," ἀρχή need not imply kingly rule—the scholiast concludes with a proverb:

he [sc. Codrus] died, having left the rule [ἀρχή] to Medon, the elder of his sons. His younger son Neleus became the regent of the twelve Ionian cities. From which they say that for the Athenians a kinship with the descendants of Codrus has led to the proverb 'better bred than Codrus,' applied to the very wellborn.²⁷⁴

Leaving aside what this tells us about Plato himself, there is nothing in the way that Lycurgus tells the story of Codrus indicating that it was already well known to his audience; his emphasis is rather on its antiquity.²⁷⁵ Interestingly, Xenophon provides the most obvious precedent for Lycurgus' procedure: in *Memorabilia*, Socrates advises Pericles' son to instill patriotism in the Athenians by reminding them of "the most ancient of whom we hear, their ancestors."²⁷⁶ Although Lycurgus does not claim to be reminding the Athenians about Codrus,²⁷⁷ the evidence that the legend had been previously

269. Greene, *Scholia*, 63.10–26.

270. Greene, *Scholia*, 63.27.

271. Cf. Hesk, *Deception and Democracy*, 93: "it is clear from the scholion on Plato that his rise and self-sacrifice secures the withdrawal of the Dorians, the survival of Athens and the continuity of his family's hegemony [overstated if 'hegemony' means 'kingship']. For Plato's Diotima it was the last consequence which motivated the king and she draws on a typically Greek notion of *kleos* to emphasize the fact that the manner of Codrus' defeat ensured his immortal fame."

272. Cf. Hesk, *Deception and Democracy*, 93: "Lycurgus' version is essentially the same as that outlined in the scholion described above but it is longer and more detailed." Hesk needs Hellenistic to be an early source because if he isn't, this sentence is anachronistic.

273. Greene, *Scholia*, 63.27–33.

274. Greene, *Scholia*, 63.33–64.37. For the link between Codrus (and therefore Athens) to those Ionian cities, see Georg Busolt, *Griechische Geschichte bis zur Schlacht bei Chaeroneia*, volume 1, second edition (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes, 1893), 305–314; the discussion of Ephesus (307–10) is probably relevant to Socrates' claim that the Ephesians were originally Athenians (*Ion* 541d6).

275. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 83: "I wish to go through for you some scraps from the ancients [μικρὰ τῶν παλαιῶν], so that using them as paradigms [παρδείματα], you will be better advised both about these matters and about others."

276. See Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3.5.9–10.

277. Despite Burt, *Minor Attic Orators* 2, 75, where he uses "let me remind you of a few past episodes" to translate the sentence rendered more accurately in n275.

recorded, though inconclusive, must be mentioned;²⁷⁸ with at best a single exception, it attests to the memory of Codrus as a King, not as the (last) king who sacrificed his life for the city and thereby became famous.²⁷⁹ In the end, Bernd Steinbock—author of a fascinating article on the patriotic aims of Lycurgus—is forced to rely on Plato:

That Codrus' popularity did not wane in the fourth century can be deduced from two very brief allusions in Plato and Aristotle and the proverb εὐγενέστερος Κόδρου, which all presuppose the knowledge of Codrus' story as point of reference. In Plato's *Symposium*, Diotima, as reported by Socrates, used Codrus alongside Alcestis and Achilles as examples of people who died willingly in the expectation of an enduring memory of their noble deed (Pl. *Smp.* 208d).²⁸⁰

And this, of course, is precisely the weight that I am suggesting Plato's version of the Codrus story was deliberately constructed *not* to carry. If the story was well known independently of Plato and Lycurgus, then those who knew it were aware that it was *not* for the sake of the kingdom of his sons (cf. ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν παιδῶν at 208d4–5) that Codrus, the last king of Athens,²⁸¹ did what he did. And if, as I tend to believe, it was first Plato and then his students who were making Codrus famous for his self-sacrifice, Plato was making the point that his prior lack of fame for sacrificing himself proves that there is no *post hoc* to read back into his *propter hoc*. On this account, it is by playing Orpheus to his ancestor before passing the lyre to Lycurgus that Plato has put the fickleness of fame in its place, and he does so at the same

278. See especially Bernd Steinbock, "A Lesson in Patriotism: Lycurgus' *Against Leocrates*, the Ideology of the Ephebeia, and Athenian Social Memory," *Classical Antiquity* 30, no. 2 (October 2011), 279–317, on 284: with respect to Hellanicus, the only evidence that he knew the story is the assumption that he is the source of the scholium as a whole, not only for the genealogy with which it begins and to which Hellanicus' name is attached; since he was a genealogist, this is unlikely. Nor does the lost poem of Panyassis do the trick (284n21). Since Herodotus mentions the Peloponnesian invasion in the context of Codrus (5.76), one might claim that he knew of it—I am grateful to Professor Steinbock for discussing this and other possibilities with me—but it seems on the whole too good a story for him not to have told if he did. The best evidence is the fragment of Pherecydes preserved in Iulius Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 10.1, where he says that Codrus used a κρόπιον to kill someone; Lycurgus says Codrus struck the first Dorian with a δρέπανον (*Against Leocrates*, 86). This strongly suggests that Pherecydes told the story before Plato, although Steinbock's point stands: "not everybody among Lycurgus' audience would be familiar with Panyassis or the Atthidographers [sc. Hellanicus] and historians [sc. Pherecydes]." Steinbock does what he can with archeological evidence on 284–85; although he cites the ceramic evidence on 286 (see following note) to support the previous conjectures (cf. 304 and 304n137 on the cup), with the exception of Pherecydes' scythe or billhook (284n20), nothing ties any of this to the actual story.

279. Steinbock, "A Lesson in Patriotism," 286: "By the middle of the fifth century, Codrus occupied a prominent position in Athenian mythology. This is attested by his depiction on a vase by the Codrus Painter, dated to the 430s (*ARV2* 1268.1), 32 and by the inclusion of his statue among Athenian tribal heroes on the Cimonian Marathon monument in Delphi (Paus.10.10.1)."

280. Steinbock, "A Lesson in Patriotism," 286.

281. As emphasized in particular by Velleius Paterculus, 1.2.1: *Eodem fere tempore Athenae sub regibus esse desierunt, quarum ultimus rex fuit Codrus, Melanthis filius, vir non praetereundus.*

moment that he forces his students to reread the speech of Phaedrus—and this, of course is the important thing—and thus to see through Diotima’s ignoble explanation of his ancestor’s motives to the essence of τὸ καλόν.

As told by Diotima, the tale of Codrus once again dresses the King in the garb of a beggar: the ascription of a selfish motive to his selfless act reenacts his original deception.²⁸² Velleius Paterculus explains the deception perfectly: “Who would not admire him, who sought death by the same arts by which life is sought by cowards?”²⁸³ Odysseus will feign madness to escape from the War;²⁸⁴ Codrus will do the opposite.²⁸⁵ But more important is the point of contact between Codrus’ use of deliberate deception and Plato’s: the king will deceive his enemies by changing his clothes; the teacher will deceive his students with a deceptive account of Codrus.²⁸⁶ Lycurgus saw through the deception:

And so noble [γενναῖοι] were our kings then, gentlemen, that they preferred to die [ἀποθνήσκειν] on behalf of the safety of those they ruled [ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν ἀρχομένων σωτηρίας], rather than living, to immigrate to another land. For they say that Codrus, telling the Athenians in advance to take note when he should depart this life, having taken a beggar’s clothes so that he might deceive [ἀπατᾶν] their enemies²⁸⁷

Lycurgus shows that he is not deceived: it is *for the safety of his subjects* that Codrus chose to die. But Lycurgus is also revealing how *Symposium* influenced him, and thereby showing us how Plato’s teaching revealed itself in practice. It is Plato’s verb ὑπερ-αποθνήσκειν (“to die on behalf of”) that

282. Hesk, *Deception and Democracy*, 94: “In this account [i.e., Lycurgus’], Codrus’ disguise involves dressing down to the appearance of a beggar (λαβὼν πτωχικὴν στολήν). Even more than the guise of the woodcutter as presented in other accounts of this story, Codrus’ transformation into a beggar marks a complete reversal of his social status. Like the Homeric Odysseus back on Ithaca, Codrus uses the superficial trappings of the beggar to make his royal status unrecognizable. The content of the oracle makes a ruse involving this effacement and replacement of Codrus’ social identity a necessity if Athens is to be saved.”

283. Velleius Paterculus, 1.2.2: *Quis eum non miretur, qui iis artibus mortem quaesierit, quibus ab ignavis vita quaeri solet?*

284. For Odysseus’ pre-War deception, see Apollodorus, *The Library*, two volumes, translated [with superior notes] by Sir James George Frazer (London: William Heinemann, 1921), 2.176–77n2.

285. For an analogy based on Odysseus’ post-War deception, Hesk, *Deception and Democracy*, 94 is relevant as well: “Unlike the Homeric Odysseus, however, Codrus regains his identity in memorialization alone. Odysseus uses deceit and violence to survive and claim back his wife, household and his territorial rights over Ithaca. In short, Odysseus’ deceit of the suitors facilitates his return to full social identity as king of Ithaca. Codrus’ ruse, although similarly formulated in terms of disguise and violence, is conceived specifically for the purpose of self-annihilation.”

286. Cf. Steinbock, “A Lesson in Patriotism.” 287: “Lycurgus’ emphasis on the altruistic nature of the kings’ [king’s?] self-sacrifice for the deliverance of the entire community is especially noteworthy when contrasted with the reference in Plato’s *Symposium*. There, Diotima remarks (as related by Socrates) ‘that your Codrus died in defense of the kingship of his sons.’”

287. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 86.

Lycurgus uses to connect Codrus' choice to those it benefitted. And it is also this verb that constitutes the link between the two passages in *Symposium* to which Lycurgus refers in *Against Leocrates*, indeed it creates a third reference that connects Codrus to Diotima's self-sacrificing birds.

From Socrates to the Cave, from Achilles to Cicero, from Phaedrus to Diotima, ὑπεραποθνήσκειν is the soul of "Plato's Political Theory." To be sure the reception of Plato has long since proved itself to be more comfortable with imagining him as the proponent of an authoritarian philosophizing, despising Athens, and concerned only with dreaming up a Kallipolis or Magnesia. Lycurgus points us in a better direction. With his rhetorical skill and political service to Athens,²⁸⁸ his honest oversight of the city's finances,²⁸⁹ his concern with public buildings,²⁹⁰ his many contributions to literature,²⁹¹ his patriotic efforts on behalf of the ephebeia,²⁹² the anti-Macedonian orientation of his politics,²⁹³ and his hatred for Alexander,²⁹⁴ Lycurgus shows us what going back down into the Cave looked like to Plato's own students. But however impressive may be the achievements of the statesman, we should not forget the devotee of the Muses who first fell in love with *Ion* as a youngster. In any case, it is *Symposium* that he is channeling now, and this is why ὑπεραποθνήσκειν reappears when Lycurgus applies the story of Codrus to the cowardly Leocrates, who fled his country and its sacred institutions when the Macedonians had proved themselves unstoppable at Chaeronea:

Is there any resemblance between Leocrates' love for his country [ἡ πατρίς] and the love of those ancient kings and were choosing, having deceived their

288. See Cawkwell, "Lycurgus."

289. Cf. Cawkwell, "Lycurgus," 872: "Clearly he played the major part in the control of the city's finances for a period of twelve years," and [Plutarch], *Ten Orators*, 841b–c and 842f. See also Faraguna, "Lycourgan Athens," 86.

290. [Plutarch], *Ten Orators*, 841d.

291. See [Plutarch], *Ten Orators*, for the construction of the theater (841d), laws related to comedy (841e), public copies of the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, along with statues for them (841e), choral performances in the Piraeus (842a). On all of this, see Johanna Hanink, *Lycourgan Athens and the Making of Classical Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), especially 83–89.

292. Stewart Irvin Oost, "Review of *The Ephebic Inscriptions of the Fourth Century B.C.* by O. W. Reinmuth," *Classical Philology* 70, no. 1 (January 1975), 75: "Although the institution is now proved not to have been a creation of the 330's and 320's, it particularly flourished then, in the atmosphere of renesant patriotism at Athens under the leadership of Lycurgus."

293. [Plutarch] begins his account with the fact that the Thirty Tyrants killed Lycurgus' grandfather; see *Ten Orators*, 841b. Cf. 841e (Fowler): "And therefore, when King Alexander demanded his surrender, the people [ὁ δῆμος] did not give him up."

294. Cf. [Plutarch], *Ten Orators*, 842d: "And again when the Athenians were hailing Alexander as a god: 'And what sort of god would he be,' he said, 'when it is necessary for those *leaving* his temple to purify themselves [περιρράνεσθαι]?"

enemies, to die on her behalf [ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς] and to trade in exchange their own life [ψυχῆ] for its common security?²⁹⁵

In a 1977 article, Edmund M. Burke links Demosthenes to Lyscurgus in a common project to restore Athenian patriotism in the wake of Chaeronea.²⁹⁶ While noting that “both were adamant anti-Macedonians” and that “on a number of occasions, Lyscurgus and Demosthenes worked in consort,”²⁹⁷ he unfortunately fails to note that either was Plato’s student,²⁹⁸ let alone that both were. This omission has recently become even more regrettable thanks to the discovery of another substantial fragment from Hyperides in 2008,²⁹⁹ easily linked to Demosthenes and Lyscurgus by their shared anti-Macedonian and patriotic intent.³⁰⁰ In the Epilogue, I will return to the scholarly amnesia surrounding “the political activity of Plato’s students”³⁰¹ in the context of “Imagining the Academy.”

295. Lyscurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 88; for discussion of the plural “kings” in the context of deception, see Hesk, *Deception and Democracy*, 95–96. The passage continues (Burt): “It is for this reason that they and only they have given the land their name [ἐπόνυμοι] and received honors like the gods, as is their due. For they were entitled, even after death, to share in the country which they so zealously preserved.” For the significance of ἐπόνυμοι, see Steinbock, “Lesson in Patriotism,” 290.

296. See Edmund M. Burke, “*Contra Leocratem* and *de Corona*: Political Collaboration?” *Phoenix* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1977), 330–340, and Faraguna, “Lyscurgan Athens,” 75–76.

297. Burke, “*Contra Leocratem* and *de Corona*,” 335; so also 339: “the evidence strongly suggests close collaboration of generally consonant political views for the purpose common political objective: revitalization of the popular will.” Cf. Rowe, “Two Responses by Isocrates to Demosthenes,” 159; for comment on Rowe, see Allen, *Why Plato Wrote*, 196n32; here she must not only reject the view that Demosthenes was Plato’s student, but since she admits that Lyscurgus was—beginning with Danielle S. Allen, “Changing the Authoritative Voice: Lyscurgus’ *Against Leocrates*,” *Classical Antiquity* 19, no. 1 (April 2000), 5–33, on 8, this provides the basis for her critique of “Platonism” (see 8n5)—she must even dismiss Burke’s claim that he and Demosthenes were collaborating.

298. For comment on Burke’s paper and also for 58n57 (which must count as progress), see Meinolf Vielberg, “Die religiösen Vorstellungen des Redners Lykurg,” *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 134 (n.f.), no. 1 (1991), 49–68.

299. See Chris Carey, Mike Edwards, Zoltán Farkas, Judson Herrman, László Horváth, Gyula Mayer, Tamás Mészáros, P. J. Rhodes, and Natalie Tchernetska, “Fragments of Hyperides’ *Against Diondas* from the Archimedes Palimpsest.” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 165 (2008), 1–19.

300. See Judson Herrman, “Hyperides’ *Against Diondas* and the Rhetoric of Revolt,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 52 (2009), 175–185, on 176: “Hyperides characterizes Diondas as a paid sycophant working for Philip, who repeatedly harassed the leading anti-Macedonian politicians in the Athenian courts. Diondas, about who nothing aside from his prosecution of Hyperides was previously known, is now said to have initiated some fifty failed cases, not only against Hyperides (three in one day supposedly), but also against other well-known leaders: Demosthenes (fifteen times, according to Hyperides, Lyscurgus, and Charidemus.” See Carey et al., “Fragments of Hyperides,” 6.15–22. Cf. Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 17.2 (Bernadotte Perrin translation): “Alexander was demanding the surrender of Demosthenes, Lyscurgus, Hypereides, Charidemus, and others.” One wonders what inside information allowed Aristotle’s student to make such an intelligent demand (see Epilogue).

301. For exceptions, see Allen, *Why Plato Wrote*, Wörle, *Die politische Tätigkeit der Schüler Platon*, 47–69, and Matthias Baltes, “Plato’s School, the Academy,” *Hermathena* 155 (Winter 1993), 5–26, on 19: “And what of its relationship with the city of Athens? After the Athenians had unjustly put to death Plato’s teacher Socrates, Plato adopted a highly critical attitude to its politics, but he did that in such a way that the influential politicians of Athens continually sought contact with him [note

In the meantime, it is necessary to return to Achilles, the second member of Diotima's and the third of Phaedrus' trio. The latter's account begins by contrasting Achilles with Orpheus, and this makes sense since Phaedrus will end his speech by explaining the degree of honor that the gods bestowed upon—in ascending order, beginning with the punishment they visited on Orpheus—Orpheus, Alcestis, and Achilles:

Not as they honored Achilles, the son of Thetis, and sent him away to the Islands of the Blessed, since—having learned from his mother that he would die after having killed Hector, but that not having done so, coming home he would die an old man—he dared [τολμᾶν] to choose [αἴρῃσθαι] to come to the aid [βοηθεῖν] of his lover Patroclus, and, having gained vengeance, not only to die on his behalf [ὑπεραποθνήσκειν] but also to die after [ἐπαποθνήσκειν] the dead.³⁰²

The reference is to *Iliad* 18,³⁰³ not *Iliad* 9, and this fact is remarkable: had Plato wanted his Diotima to be taken more seriously than Phaedrus, he could easily have made him refer to the greater κλέος Achilles would gain if he decided to remain at Troy and die there.³⁰⁴ According to Phaedrus, the “choice of Achilles” is not for fame; it is to dare (τολμᾶν) to choose (αἴρῃσθαι) to come to the aid (βοηθεῖν) of Patroclus, and that means a choice to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν, now appearing for the second and last time in his speech.

It is unclear that the willingness to ἐπαποθνήσκειν is more impressive to gods and men than to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν; it certainly seems more pointless, since it does not result in anyone's safety. The only thing toward which it points unequivocally is a complete lack of concern with *results*, with obvious consequences for Diotima's *post hoc propter hoc*. It is not, however, this hierarchy of motivation that Phaedrus emphasizes,³⁰⁵ but rather the comparative worth of self-sacrifice when performed for a beloved by a lover or, as in the case of Achilles, when performed by the beloved for his ἐραστής:

109]. His pupils even involved themselves actively in the state, without Plato imposing any veto on this.” 25n109 lists the orators Aeschines, Demosthenes, Hyperides and Lycurgus, and the politicians Chabrias and Phocion as “reported to have been Plato's pupils.”

302. 179e1–180a2.

303. As Socrates will do again in *Ap.* 28c3–d4; see *Iliad*, 18.94–99.

304. Homer, *Iliad*, 9.410–16; note especially κλέος ἄφθιτον (413) and κλέος ἔσθλον (415); cf. Diotima's καὶ κλέος ἐς τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον ἀθάνατον καταθέσθαι—a poetic gloss on “a love of becoming known names [ὄνομαστοί]”—at 208c5–6.

305. Cf. Kenneth Dorter, “A Dual Dialectic in the *Symposium*,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 25, no. 3 (1992), 253–270, on 268: “For Phaedrus, eros is the urge to subordinate oneself to another, culminating in its highest manifestation as self-sacrifice. ‘Only lovers are willing to die for another,’ he says (179b), implying that this is the defining quality of eros, the quality that distinguishes eros from everything else. Phaedrus's conception of eros as the sacrifice of oneself for the sake of another is the only one that recognizes the self-transcendent aspect of eros.”

‘For this indeed with surpassing admiration [ὑπεραγασθέντες] the gods so exceptionally honored him [sc. Achilles]: that he was in this way valuing his lover [ἔραστής] over everything [περὶ πολλοῦ ποιεῖν]. And Aeschylus is talking nonsense in alleging that Achilles was in love with Patroclus, he who was more beautiful not only than Patroclus but also than all the heroes as well, and was still beardless, since he was so much younger, as Homer says.’³⁰⁶

With respect to both rhetorical ornament and content, the most important phrase here is *περὶ πολλοῦ ποιεῖν*:³⁰⁷ above all else, Achilles values Patroclus.³⁰⁸ One can only imagine his rightful wrath if someone with the mind of Thersites were to suggest that it was his own *κλέος* about which he would always and inevitably *περὶ πολλοῦ ποιεῖν*, and that is exactly what Plato is forcing us to imagine when we reread the speech of Phaedrus with Diotima’s reverse alchemy in mind.

It is therefore the disinterestedness of the beloved that most pleases the gods, for the power of love has the capacity to make an inspired (ἔνθεος) lover the equal of “the best by nature.”³⁰⁹ And it is important to recall Diotima’s claim that it is precisely ἔρωσ for fame (208c4-d2) and the deathless (208e1) that motivates the likes of Achilles to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν when reading what Phaedrus says next:

But [ἀλλὰ γάρ] this is truly the virtue [ἀρετή] the gods most honor, for the one [sc. ἀρετή] concerned with love they wonder at even more and admire [ἄγασθαι] and reward [εὖ ποιεῖν] when the beloved [ὁ ἐρώμενος] cherishes [ἀγαπᾶν] the lover [ὁ ἔραστής] than when the lover does the boyfriend [τὰ παιδικά]. For a lover is more divine [θειότερον] than a boyfriend, for he is inspired [ἔνθεος].³¹⁰

If it was neither his ἔρωσ for Patroclus nor our ἔρωσ for κλέος that motivated Achilles’ choice to ἐπαποθνήσκειν, what was it? My claim is that Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and Hyperides knew Plato’s answer. In any case, we learn at the end that Achilles will not be found in Hades, for Phaedrus’ account

306. 180a2–7.

307. Note that the ὑπέρ- in ὑπεραγασθέντες means “surpassingly,” not “on behalf of.” On the other hand, the verb ἄγασθαι at 180a8 will build on this word.

308. Note that Phaedrus is not implying that Achilles and Patroclus are having sexual relations; there is therefore no conflict between what he says here and what Xenophon’s Socrates says at *Symposium* 8.31: they agree that Aeschylus is wrong. On this point, see Hug, “Über das gegenseitige Verhältniss,” 682–83.

309. Cf. 179a5–b3: “And to leave the boyfriend [τὰ παιδικά] behind or not to run to his aid [βοηθεῖν] when he’s in danger [κινδυνεύων]—none so bad [κακός] whom Love himself [αὐτός ὁ Ἔρωσ] could not render inspired [ἔνθεος] towards virtue [ἀρετή] so as to be equal to the best by nature [ὁ ἄριστος φύσει]. And simply as what Homer calls ‘to inspire fury’ [cf. *Iliad*, 10.482 and 15.262; *Odyssey*, 9.381] the god does to some of the heroes, this same thing Love [ὁ Ἔρωσ] provides to lovers, coming to be through him.” The first use of ὑπεραποθνήσκειν follows promptly at 179b4.

310. 180a7–b4. I have tried to translate ἀλλὰ γάρ as if it were not simply “strongly adversative” (cf. §8 for Heitsch on *Hp. Ma.*), but it isn’t easy.

both begins (179e2) and ends in the same place: “On account of these things they also honored Achilles more than Alcestis, having sent him off to the Islands of the Blest.”³¹¹

The implications of this passage extend all the way to “the crisis of the *Republic*.” There, Glaucon will affirm Socrates’ suggestion that the one who has exited the Cave would “deem himself happy [εὐδαιμονίζειν] in the change, and pity the others” (*R.* 516c5–6) and Socrates then cites Homer to prove that the former would not be desirous of the praises and rewards (γέρα at *R.* 516c9; cf. γέρας at 179c6) bestowed on “those who are honored and most powerfully ruling among them” (*R.* 516d4–5). More specifically, Socrates quotes the words of Achilles as narrated by Odysseus (*R.* 516d5–6),³¹² thanks to the latter’s alleged descent into Hades, his encounter with Achilles *there* is used to justify a refusal to return to the Cave. If we take Odysseus to be speaking the truth, Pindar and now Phaedrus are on the less authoritative side: Homer has placed Achilles in Hades,³¹³ not in the Islands of the Blest. But in the Platonic context, the abode of Achilles has even greater consequences, especially since Odysseus’ preference for the life of one who minds his own private business will be valorized in the Myth of Er (*R.* 620c3–d2). As a result, the choice of Odysseus in *Republic* 10 and the words of Achilles in *Republic* 7 combine to make a Homeric case against returning to the Cave. But if Phaedrus and Pindar are right, it is not Homer’s case but only *the case being made by Odysseus* that Plato merely *appears* to endorse. By quoting Achilles in Hades—i.e., by falsely placing him where he is not—Homer’s Odysseus redeems Phaedrus’ Orpheus: having returned from Hades alive, he is now able to play defaming poet to his rival,³¹⁴ for Odysseus’ Achilles now has cause to regret his decision to ὑπεραποθνήσκειν.³¹⁵

311. 180b4–5; note that *Mx.* 235c4 prepares us for this destination.

312. Homer, *Odyssey*, 11.489–91.

313. See Friedrich Solmsen, “Achilles on the Islands of the Blessed: Pindar vs. Homer and Hesiod,” *American Journal of Philology* 103, no. 1 (Spring 1982), 19–24, on 20 (emphases mine): “He [sc. Pindar in *Second Olympian*, 79–81] must have expected it [i.e., placing Achilles in the Islands of the Blessed] to be convincing, since otherwise it could not have replaced the *authoritative version of Achilles’ fate after death*. In the Homeric ‘Nekyia’ when Odysseus encounters Achilles’ shade in the Underworld and compliments him on the pre-eminent status which he enjoyed among the living and presumably continues to have after death, he receives a most discouraging answer: Achilles would prefer to be alive as a day-laborer employed by a poor peasant than to rule as king over all of the shades (*Od.* 11, 477 ff., esp. 482–91 [this is the passage Socrates quotes in *R.* 7]). To visualize the ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν in such gloomy surroundings and in such an unhappy state of mind must have been very distressing. A more pleasant alternative would be welcomed, but to prevail against *the tremendous authority of Homer* would not suffice.” On 20–21, Solmsen shows how Homer can be made to support Pindar; we need only imagine that Thetis would have besought Zeus to release her dead son from Hades.

314. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, 8.75–82.

315. Cf. James Barrett, “Plato’s *Apology*: Philosophy, Rhetoric, and the World of Myth,” *Classical World* 95, no. 1 (Autumn 2001), 3–30, on 22: “we need first to appreciate that Achilles’ reply to Odysseus at *Odyssey* 11.488–91 represents a striking departure from the characterization of Achilles in the *Iliad*. Here Achilles embraces a fundamentally Odyssean point of view.” For further discussion, see *Plato the Teacher*, §35.

As befits its central place in the Reading Order, *Republic* is the turning point in our evolving understanding of Plato's position in the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, i.e., the ancient "Homeric Question" immortalized or rather just barely preserved in *Hippias Minor* (see §11). Beginning in his *Apology*, it becomes obvious that Socrates takes Achilles as his role model, not Odysseus. There he will cite the same passage from *Iliad* 18 to which Phaedrus had referred (cf. 179e3–4 and *Ap.* 28c4–9), now using Achilles' decision to face death by remaining in Troy not only to illustrate the hero's excellence but also to explain his own parallel decision to stay at his post in Athens (*Ap.* 28c9–d9).³¹⁶ And when he uses the words of Achilles from *Iliad* 9 to explain how he knows when he will die (*Cri.* 44b3; cf. *Hp. Mi.* 370c3), Plato allows him to hammer the same point. Of course it is not simply because of his similarity to Achilles that we are to understand Socrates' own decision to υπεραποθνήσκειν, and he gives Plato's readers much stronger evidence that he does so for the sake of Athens (*Ap.* 30d6–32a3)—to ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος, as Lycurgus tells us that Codrus did—than Achilles did for "fruitful Phthia." But just as Socrates does in *Crito*, Achilles, too, will remain,³¹⁷ and we should not so emphasize his wrath as to obscure his ultimate decision to βοηθεῖν,³¹⁸ for it is because of him that the Greek army is not driven into the sea, in accordance with the promise he gave to Ajax in *Litai*, and which Odysseus chose not to report to Agamemnon. Speaking of Odysseus, it is no accident that Socrates imagines himself conversing with Palamedes and Ajax if there should be an afterlife (*Ap.* 41b2) or that the Homeric basis for the journey to Crete that the Athenian Stranger undertakes in *Laws-Epinomis* is another lying speech of Odysseus.³¹⁹

But Plato's emphasis on the quarrel between Achilles and Odysseus begins much earlier, even earlier than *Hippias Minor*, where he makes that quarrel a culture-wide interpretive problem (*Hp. Mi.* 363b1–c3). Already in *Hippias Major*, the sophist's attempt to explain what is καλόν has required him to negate Achilles (*Hp. Ma.* 291d9–e2; cf. 292e8–293a1), and the subsequent attention to *Iliad* 9 in *Hippias Minor*, coupled with the discussion of Homer in *Ion*, are all propaedeutic to the conflict that arises in *Symposium* when we revisit the speech of Phaedrus after reading the Diotima discourse. Nor does the quarrel end at 208d3, for the drunken Alcibiades will insist that Socrates

316. See *Guardians on Trial*, §9.

317. Cf. αἴθει μὲνων at Homer, *Iliad*, 9.412 and 3.291; with κίχθει there, cf. 9.416.

318. Cf. Elizabeth Belfiore, "The Image of Achilles in Plato's *Symposium*," in Pierre Destrée and Radcliffe G. Edmonds III (eds.), *Plato and the Power of Images*, 29–46 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), on 39: "Socrates' courage, then, differs from that of Achilles in that it is combined with wisdom and the other virtues. This kind of courage enables Socrates to save his own life and that of his companion [i.e., Alcibiades at 220d6–e2]. Achilles' courage, however, leads to the opposite result: disaster for himself and his friends."

319. See *Guardians on Trial*, 321.

cannot be compared to Achilles (221c6), the very proposition that Plato will allow Socrates to refute in *Apology of Socrates*. But all of this only goes to show that *Republic* really is a turning point—with the return to the Cave as its hinge, as it must be in a *Republic*-centered construction of the Reading Order (see Preface, principle §5)—for just as we are inclined to agree with Alcibiades about the unparalleled Socrates in *Symposium*, so too Socrates himself has inclined us to believe that he prefers Odysseus in *Hippias Minor*, and that he certainly agrees with his Diotima that Achilles' motives were selfish and thus the opposite of *καλόν*. After all, not everyone will bother to return to the speech of Phaedrus,³²⁰ and even among those who do, all who have no use for the gods³²¹ will find little reason to question the reverse alchemy endorsed in Socrates' speech when Diotima applies it to actions performed on behalf of τὸ καλόν.

Indeed the process begins in *Protagoras*, as it must. It is precisely the descent of Odysseus into Hades that Socrates is channeling from the start, and this necessarily creates an initial impression that Socrates has more in common with the wily Odysseus than with the son of Thetis (*Ap.* 28c3). Indeed it is only after we reach *Republic*, where Plato implicates Achilles and Odysseus on two opposite sides of the crisis at its heart, that we can once again revisit *Protagoras* with fresh eyes.³²² The return to the Cave will lead to Socrates' death, and his initial attempt to separate Alcibiades from Critias and the sophists—the first thing Plato allows us to see him doing, and doing successfully thanks to *Alcibiades Major*—will come to illustrate in retrospect what it means to *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν*. But Socrates can only capture the attention of Alcibiades by deploying the deceptiveness of Odysseus for a selfless end, *just as Codrus did*. As a result, Plato's readers must answer Socrates' first question (*Prt.* 309a6) in the affirmative, and ultimately what it will mean to be “an admirer of Homer”³²³ is the ability to find in Plato's hero a second Achilles who can *use* the tricks of Odysseus. It was the ability to use rhetoric in the Cave that would distinguish the best of Plato's students—as “Attic orators” whether “minor” or not, whether

320. Cf. Belfiore, “Image of Achilles,” 39: “Achilles' courage in dying after Patroclus is motivated by *philotimia*, love of honor, by means of which he hopes to achieve the ‘immortal memory of virtue . . . which we now have’ (208c2–d6).” For her comments on Phaedrus, see 37: “According to Phaedrus, Achilles, the son of Thetis (179e1), who is not the lover but the beloved of Patroclus (180a4–7), is honored by the gods because he helped (βοηθήσαζ) Patroclus, and did not merely die for him (ὑπεραποθανεῖν), but actually died in addition to him (ἐπαποθανεῖν) (179e1–180a2). Diotima uses the same word ‘to die in addition’ (ἐπαποθανεῖν), in saying that love of honor, *philotimia*, led Achilles to die in addition to Patroclus (208c1–d6).”

321. By which I mean Strauss and Rosen, not Belfiore; the latter merely takes Diotima's word for it (see previous note).

322. See Capra, *Ἀγὼν λόγων*, 135–38 (“I'eristica nella caverna”).

323. Note that the line Socrates quotes there is found in both the *Iliad* (24.348) and the *Odyssey* (10.279); to praise Homer properly, we must know both poems.

in Athens or in Rome³²⁴—for they alone “preferred to die [ἀποθνήσκειν] on behalf of the safety of those they ruled [ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν ἀρχομένων σωτηρίας].”³²⁵ It is these who are Plato’s true Guardians (*R.* 347d4–6),³²⁶ not the nonexistent philosopher-kings of an imaginary city.

SECTION 17. CATCHING SIGHT OF THE SEA

Diotima’s first unanswered question (204d8–9) is decisive for everything that comes afterwards, not only in the remainder of her discourse but also in the dialogues between *Symposium* and *Republic*. More specifically, it is the substitution of τὸ ἀγαθόν for τὸ καλόν at 204e1–2 that makes her first unanswered question decisive: we are forced to decide what to make of a substitution—hereafter, “the [*Symposium*] Substitution”—that allows Socrates to answer a variant of it with an easy alacrity:

‘But,’ she said, ‘just as if someone [τις], having changed, instead of the Beautiful [τὸ καλόν] and now using the Good [τὸ ἀγαθόν] might seek to ascertain: ‘Come on, Socrates: the person who loves, loves good things; why does he love them?’ ‘For them to accrue,’ said I, ‘to himself [literally, ‘to come into being for himself, i.e. γενέσθαι αὐτῷ].’ ‘And what will there be for that man for whom good things [τὰ ἀγαθὰ] come to be [γενέσθαι]?’ ‘This can I more fluently [εὐπορώτερον] answer: that he will be happy [εὐδαιμων].’ ‘And it is by the acquisition of good things [κτησὶς ἀγαθῶν] that the happy [οἱ εὐδαιμονες] are happy [εὐδαιμονες].’³²⁷

324. For Cicero on Codrus, see *Tusculanae Disputationes*, 1.116: *Clarae vero mortes pro patria oppetitae non solum gloriosae rhetoribus, sed etiam beatae videri solent. Repetunt ab Erechtheo, cuius etiam filiae cupide mortem expetiverunt pro vita civium; Codrum, qui se in medios inmisit hostis veste famulari, ne posset adgnosci, si esset ornatu regio, quod oraculum erat datum, si rex interfectus esset, victrices Athenas fore.*

325. Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 86; for the sacrifice of Erechtheus’ daughter (see previous note), see the long quotation from Euripides’ *Erechtheus* at 100, especially lines 30–35, which link τὸ καλόν (30) to “she who dies on behalf of this city [πόλεως θανούση τῆσδ’ ὑπὲρ]” (35). For the shared theme, cf. Cicero, *De finibus*, 62: “Who the savior of his city, Codrus; who the daughters of Erechtheus does not greatly praise?” By way of an answer, consider Allen, “Changing the Authoritative Voice,” 30: “Euripides’ *muthos*, as Lycurgus calls it, which is capable of instilling a love of country in the souls of citizens [cf. 26: ‘When Lycurgus quotes Euripides’ *Erechtheus*, he picks a passage that not only extols the virtues of sacrifice for the public good but also explicitly sets the virtues of self-sacrifice against the vices of acting for private benefit’], is treated by Lycurgus as being about the ‘ancestors’ of the late fourth-century Athenians, despite the story’s status as *muthos* and despite being, on Lycurgus’ own terms, therefore somewhat untrue. The self-sacrifice of Erechtheus’ daughter is given as an historical account of how the ancestors of the fourth-century Athenians behaved; it is not treated as a fable, a fiction with a moral point. Lycurgus, like Plato, seems to think that fake stories about their ancestry are necessary to the contemporary virtue of citizens.” Note that two of her sisters chose to join her, another example of τὸ ἐπαποθνήσκειν.

326. On *R.* 347d2–8, see *Plato the Teacher*, §8.

327. 204e1–205a4; using Rowe’s translation (*Symposium*, 85) for the question τις poses.

Assessing the degree of that variation is the decisive thing, for upon our decision depends the course of our ascent to the Beautiful. If we regard the Substitution as proof of their identity—based on the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful as introduced in the Final Argument of *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 358b5, 359e5–6, and 360b3)³²⁸—we are committing ourselves to a eudaemonist reading of the famous “Ascent Passage” in *Symposium*.³²⁹

Happiness or εὐδαιμονία is scarcely mentioned in the pre-*Symposium* dialogues.³³⁰ In *Protagoras*, the word εὐδαίμων is found once: in an echo of Xenophon’s *Anabasis*, the household of young Hippocrates is said to be “large and prosperous [μεγάλη τε καὶ εὐδαίμων]” (*Prt.* 316b9), and since Xenophon repeatedly applies the hendiadys to cities, it is probably no accident that two of the three times the verb εὐδαιμονεῖν is used in *Alcibiades Major* it is applied to a city (*Alc. I* 134b8 and 135b4): it is virtue, not wealth that will allow cities “to prosper.” One of the two times that the adjective εὐδαίμων appears in the dialogue,³³¹ it is made dependent on being temperate and good (134a13–14). But the other use is the important one:

Socrates: And those who fare well [οἱ εὖ πράττοντες] are they not happy [εὐδαίμονες]? *Alcibiades*: How could they not be? *Socrates*: And are not men happy [εὐδαίμονες] through acquisition of good things [ἀγαθῶν κτήσις]? ‘Most of all.’³³²

This is the passage that Diotima echoes in the aftermath of the *Symposium* Substitution; Plato leaves it to us to remember the earlier entanglement of the εὐδαίμονες with those who εὖ πράττοντες by means of the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy, i.e., what precedes the truism that the εὐδαίμονες are “happy” through ἀγαθῶν κτήσις.

Symposium marks a turning point in the frequency with which εὐδαιμονία, εὐδαίμων, and εὐδαιμονεῖν appear in the dialogues. Before Socrates uses εὐδαίμων four times in the immediate context of the Substitution (204e7–9), he has already echoed Agathon’s claim that all the gods are εὐδαίμων (202c6–7; cf. 195a5–7); he will use the word εὐδαιμονία once in its after-

328. See David Sedley, “The Speech of Agathon in Plato’s *Symposium*,” in Burkhard Reis and Stella Haffmans (eds.), *The Virtuous Life in Greek Ethics*, 47–69 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 49n1.

329. See especially Rowe, *Symposium*, 177–81. For recent criticism of the eudaemonist reading, including attention to the pre-Rowe role of Kurt Sier, *Die Rede der Diotima; Untersuchungen zum platonischem Symposium* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1997) in promoting it, see Thomas Tuozzo, “Saving Diotima’s Account of Erotic Love in Plato’s *Symposium*,” forthcoming in *Ancient Philosophy* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2021).

330. It appears only in *Menexenus*; see *Mx.* 247a6 and 247e7. For discussion of the first of these, see §13 above.

331. It also appears once, and ironically, in *Alc. 2* at 141d9.

332. *Alc. I* 116b5–8. The only time Socrates uses the verb εὐδαιμονεῖν in the dialogue, it is likewise derived from εὖ πράττειν (134d10–e2); for discussion this passage, see §6 above.

math (208e4).³³³ But between Phaedrus (one use), Eryximachus (two), Aristophanes (two), and Agathon (three including εὐδαιμονίζειν at 194e6), the symposiasts use “happiness” words the same number of times as Socrates has used them in all the dialogues between *Protagoras* and *Menexenus* combined (eight). And that’s only the beginning: such words will become frequent in *Lysis* (six), *Euthydemus* (fifteen), *Charmides* (nine), and *Gorgias* (thirty-five), the latter including five uses of εὐδαιμονία (*Grg.* 470e8, 478c5, 492c6, 496b5, and 523b2) and the appearance of a new variation: εὐδαιμόνως ζῆν (*Grg.* 494c3–d7).³³⁴ In *Euthydemus* (*Euthd.* 280b6), *Charmides* (*Chrm.* 172a2–3), and *Gorgias* (*Grg.* 507c4–5), the εὐδαιμόνες will be identified as εὖ πράττοντες by means of the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy, and the use of εὖ πράττειν in *Euthydemus* is particularly significant: when Socrates claims first that all men desire to εὖ πράττειν (*Euthd.* 278e3), and then glosses εὖ πράττειν with εὐδαιμονεῖν later in the First Protreptic, he is echoing the first assertion of what Vlastos called “the Eudaemonist Axiom” in the *Symposium* Substitution.³³⁵

In *Ascent to the Good*, I will explore the path that regards the Substitution as proof of the identity of the Good and the Beautiful.³³⁶ Although Plato has already pointed to the best reason for *not* identifying them—the Substitution cannot be based on their identity since if it were, it would not have been more difficult for Socrates to answer Diotima’s first question than its eudaemonist variant³³⁷—he has others, and in the post-*Symposium* dialogues, thanks in large part to the intersection of εὐδαιμονεῖν with the Εὖ Πράττειν Fallacy (see §5), he will show why that path proves to be a *cul de sac*.³³⁸ The problem with the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful is that it fails to distinguish two different ways of regarding the Good: if the τέλος of our striving is our own happiness,³³⁹ then the Good remains—as per the Logic Lesson in *Hippias Major*—decisively *incomplete* (see §9), i.e., it is not simply what is simply or

333. 208e2–5 (Rowe): “‘Those, then,’ she said, ‘who are pregnant in their bodies turn their attention more towards women, and their love is directed in that way, securing immortality, a memory for themselves, and happiness [εὐδαιμονία], as they think, for themselves for all time to come through having children.’”

334. Socrates offers a variant in the Substitution’s aftermath at *Grg.* 508b1–2; with δικαιοσύνης καὶ σοφροσύνης κτήσει εὐδαιμόνες οἱ εὐδαιμόνες, cf. 205a1.

335. See Vlastos, *Socrates*, 203.

336. See *Ascent to the Good*, §1.

337. Harry Neumann, “Diotima’s Concept of Love.” *American Journal of Philology* 86, no. 1 (January 1965), 33–59, on 38: “Assuming that her substitution implies the identity of the two terms, interpreters have usually overlooked problem here. If they were identical, why was it necessary replace one by the other?”

338. See *Ascent to the Good*, §3.

339. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 4.1.2: “For he [sc. Socrates] was of the belief that such men as these [sc. ‘the good natures’], having been educated, are not only themselves happy, and manage their own households beautifully, but also are able to make other people and cities happy.”

completely good, but rather “what is good for us.”³⁴⁰ In *Ascent to the Good*, I will use “the Good_E” (or the eudaemonist Good) to denominate Happiness, grounded on the Eudaemonist Axiom, as “the good for us,” and identify the *Symposium* Substitution as its point of origin,³⁴¹ that book’s central theme will be the contrast between the Good_E and the transcendent Idea of the Good, or “the Good_T,”³⁴² understood as the τέλος of our ascent to the Good. In other words, the Substitution is based on the equation of Beauty with the Good_E, and this book’s sequel takes the “Eudaemonist Shortcut”³⁴³ seriously—having apparently been made characteristically “Socratic” in *Lysis* and *Euthydemus*³⁴⁴—not as having already been superseded in *Symposium* on the basis of a more than eudaemonist Beauty at the climax of Diotima’s Discourse. This section’s purpose, by contrast, is to show that the eudaemonist Good has in fact already been superseded there for those who have accomplished an ascent to the Beautiful.

As the last note indicates, Christopher Rowe will figure prominently in *Ascent to the Good*, and its first section will examine his reading of *Symposium*, unsurpassed for subordinating Platonist transcendence to Terry Penner’s conception of a ruthlessly self-serving and eudaemonist “Socratism.”³⁴⁵ But there are other eudaemonist readings of Diotima’s Discourse that are at once less ruthless and more integrative; these attempt to harmonize an admittedly transcendent Idea of Beauty as τέλος within an ultimately eudaemonist framework. The same problem that besets such readings will reappear in another form in *Euthydemus*: if Happiness is the τέλος of our striving, then wisdom—i.e., the knowledge or art by which εὐδαιμονία is maximized, and thus instrumental to achieving it—should not be called the only good (*Euthd.* 281e1–5).³⁴⁶ Emerging from the German reception, Harry Neumann is noteworthy for a very explicit attempt to subordinate the Beautiful to the

340. Cf. Stokes, *Plato’s Socratic Conversations*, 155: “On the other hand, the proposition that all men desire beautiful things is not nearly so well-recognized a truth in the Greek philosophers. Things beautiful, fine or honorable (to offer again several translations of this complex word) were not necessarily ‘good,’ or ‘advantageous to the agent.’” In addition to the rest of this paragraph, see 181.

341. See *Ascent to the Good*, xviii, including n12 for bibliography.

342. See *Ascent to the Good*, xxviii–xxix.

343. See *Ascent to the Good*, 21, 85, and 105–107.

344. See especially Terry Penner and Christopher Rowe, *Plato’s Lysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). On the importance of Rowe’s *Symposium* (1998) for a eudaemonist reading of “the Final Ascent” in *Smp.*, see *Ascent to the Good*, 4–10; cf. liv–lvi and lxx–lxxi.

345. See especially Terry Penner, “The Forms, the Form of the Good, and the Desire for Good, in Plato’s *Republic*,” *Modern Schoolman* 80 (March 2003), 191–233; for “Systematic Socratism, see *Ascent to the Good*, §2; on Penner, see lxx–lxxvi, 5, and 561.

346. On “the Santas Circle,” cf. *Ascent to the Good*, 35–36, and Gerasimos Santas, *Goodness and Justice: Plato, Aristotle, and the Moderns* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 37: “If wisdom is the *only* self-sufficient good, and happiness is a good (indeed the good), as Socrates certainly holds, it follows either that happiness is not a self-sufficient good, which seems paradoxical; or that wisdom and happiness are identical, which also seems paradoxical.”

Good;³⁴⁷ a more synthetic approach, using Hegel's methods to finesse self-contradiction by embracing it, distinguishes D. C. Schindler;³⁴⁸ the roots of this approach can be found in L. A. Kosman.³⁴⁹ But two more recent and typical Anglophone efforts along these lines, both published in *Phronesis*,³⁵⁰ fall prey to inadvertent self-contradiction in revealing ways. Ralph Wedgwood, after an unusually strong embrace of the identity reading of the Substitution,³⁵¹ explains why this reading remains problematic,³⁵² and after offering a very perceptive account of what makes τὸ καλόν an "agent-neutral, non instrumental value,"³⁵³ he nevertheless devotes the balance of his paper to showing how the "intrinsic value" of the Idea of Beauty can be instrumentally subordinated to happiness.³⁵⁴ And in "The *Symposium* and Platonic Ethics: Plato, Vlastos, and a Misguided Debate," Frisbee Sheffield, after fudging the

347. See Neumann, "Diotima's Concept," 38–39: "For both Diotima and Socrates, love's real goal is not the beautiful, but the good. Lovers yearn for happiness and this means to be in possession of the good always (205a1–206a13)."

348. D. C. Schindler, "Plato and the Problem of Love: On the Nature of Eros in the *Symposium*," *Apeiron* 40, no. 3 (September 2007), 199–220; for a dialectical synthesis of opposites, see especially 215: "But, while it is true that, if we, so to speak, absolutize relativity as those do who characterize Platonic eros as essentially self-referential, then we do in fact exclude absoluteness, the reverse is not true: the absolute cannot define itself in opposition to, and therefore relative to, the relative without contradiction. Instead, to be absolute is precisely to be inclusive of all possible relations."

349. See Kosman, "Platonic Love," 66–67.

350. It is a grave mistake to weight publications in this journal more highly than in others, unless, that is, the deliberate τέλος of such metrics is the institutionalization of a de-Platonized Plato.

351. Ralph Wedgwood, "Diotima's Eudaemonism: Intrinsic Value and Rational Motivation in Plato's *Symposium*," *Phronesis* 54, no. 4/5 (2009), 297–325, on 300: "Diotima plainly assumes that the answer to the question, 'What happens to you when the beautiful things that you desire become your own?' is exactly the same as the answer to the question 'What happens to you when the good things that you desire become your own?'"

352. Wedgwood, "Diotima's Eudaemonism," 303: "However, he [sc. Socrates] also treats the two terms as differing in meaning, since he thinks that it is easier to judge that one becomes happy when good things 'become one's own' than to judge that one becomes happy when beautiful things 'become one's own' (204d–205a); if the terms were synonymous, there would be no difference at all between the judgment expressed by one of these terms and the corresponding judgment expressed by the other." By eliding (or Aristotelianizing) the Idea of the Good, he promptly quenches this light: "So what exactly is the difference in meaning between these two terms in Plato's usage? I tentatively suggest that, as it is used in this context [emphasis mine], ἀγαθόν has a conceptual tie to the notion of the good life [emphasis in the original], something counts as ἀγαθόν in the relevant sense just in case it is one of the constituents of the good life—where it is assumed that the good life is the happy life."

353. See Wedgwood, "Diotima's Eudaemonism," 302, on "beautiful" as "a 1-place predicate," i.e., complete; cf. (on the same page; emphasis in the original): "What is καλόν is simply what merits being admired or praised or valued by anyone. This explains why the property of being καλόν is not agent-relative in the same way as the property of being good for me." Note that only the Good_E is "agent-relative" in this sense; like αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, the Good_I is complete.

354. The previously mentioned self-contradiction enters Wedgwood, "Diotima's Eudaemonism," at 304: "To lead a good or happy life [sc. the Good as τέλος] is to lead a life in which one stands in the appropriate relations to things of intrinsic value [sc. the Beautiful as (subordinate) τέλος]." Cf. 308, 319 ("the Form of Beauty is the abstract universal that explains the underlying similarity and unity among all the particular things that are beautiful or intrinsically valuable [my emphasis]; and so in this way the Form of Beauty also explains the nature of happiness, which is the ultimate object of all our rational desires"), and 321–322.

Substitution,³⁵⁵ does what she can to make εὐδαιμονία—as “the intellectual activity of contemplation of τὸ καλόν”³⁵⁶—the τέλος of the Ascent passage.³⁵⁷

On the other side are those more sympathetic souls who attempt to overcome the self-serving implications of the eudaemonist reading by showing how the Final Ascent makes the philosopher’s culminating activity “other-directed.”³⁵⁸ This too echoes an older problem: how the philosopher’s return to the Cave for the benefit of others also benefits the philosopher herself. Having tackled the problem of the Return as a young man,³⁵⁹ Richard Kraut approaches the parallel problem in *Symposium* in an unusually direct manner,³⁶⁰ calling into question the Ascent’s eudaemonist framework.³⁶¹ Beginning with J. M. Rist,³⁶² and then receiving some rather more hard-headed support from Julius Moravcsik,³⁶³ attention to the creative elements in the

355. See Frisbee Sheffield, “The *Symposium* and Platonic Ethics: Plato, Vlastos, and a Misguided Debate,” *Phronesis* 57, no. 2 (2012), 117–141, on 123–24.

356. Sheffield, “*Symposium* and Platonic Ethics,” 137; note Aristotle’s influence here and on 139: “it is suggested that contemplation is a god-like activity: its practitioner becomes ‘dear to the gods’ (212a6) [note the slide from ‘god-beloved’ to ‘godlike’; it is αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν that earns the adjective θεῖον at 211e3, not the ‘contemplator’]. Can these features of contemplation contribute to an account of its nature and form part of an argument for the superiority of contemplation in the happy life?”

357. Sheffield, “*Symposium* and Platonic Ethics,” 137–38: “Socrates provides a clear and consistent account [unlike the one we are about to be offered] of the phenomenon of human desire, and reasons for his central claims. He argues for a conception of happiness as the highest good [this on the basis of the Substitution, and thus only the ‘postulates’ that follows, not the preceding ‘argues,’ applies], and postulates this as the end of all human striving (205d). The *Symposium* may be one of the first dialogues in which we are presented with a substantive philosophical sense of *telos* [a very useful observation, suggesting the link to *Ly.*] where it is connected to the pursuit of goals [note that in the context of *Smp.*, this only applies to αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν as singular; the plural is necessary for the purpose of fudging] we desire for their own sake, and used to characterize the pursuit of a *summum bonum* [with both ‘a’ and a term capacious enough to imply εὐδαιμονία without excluding αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, the fudging continues; cf. the following ‘a’]. In postulating *eudaimonia* as a *telos* [an advance on the previous ‘argues,’ but at the expense of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, visible only in the *raison d’être* of that that lonely ‘a’] he suggests criteria to guide the search for the sort of good that can satisfy this desire.”

358. See Frisbee C. C. Sheffield, *Plato’s Symposium: The Ethics of Desire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 152–53, 168, and 178.

359. On Richard Kraut, “Egoism, Love, and Political Office in Plato,” *Philosophical Review* 82 no. 3 (July 1973), 330–344, as well as his “Return to the Cave: *Republic* 519–521,” in Gail Fine (ed.), *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Soul*, 235–254 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), see *Plato the Teacher*, 204–209 and 221–222.

360. Most recently in Richard Kraut, “Eudaimonism and Platonic *erōs*,” in Pierre Destrée and Zina Giannopoulou (eds.), *Plato’s Symposium: A Critical Guide*, 235–252 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

361. See also Richard Kraut, “Plato on Love,” in Gail Fine (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Plato*, 268–310 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), especially 289–94.

362. Thanks in part to a generous citation of a beautiful passage from A. J. Festugière, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1936), 336; John M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche: Studies in Plato, Plotinus, and Origen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 36, is itself a lovely defense of the creative generosity that flows from a vision of the Form.

363. See J. M. E. Moravcsik, “Reason and Eros in the ‘Ascent’-Passage of the *Symposium*,” in J. Anton and G. Kustas (eds.), *Essays in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, volume 1, 285–303 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1971), 285–86, especially on C1, C2, and C3. But cf. 292: “About the over-all aspirations we can conclude one thing with certainty. Both *Meno* 77–78 and *Symposium* 205

Final Ascent has counterbalanced the egoist approach among Anglophone scholars,³⁶⁴ and in “Is Socratic *erōs* in the *Symposium* Egoistic?” Timothy Mahoney offers a useful typology that distinguishes two kinds of “other-directed” or “non-egoistic” readings:

Those who judge it to be egoistic focus on what they take to be the acquisitive and egocentric aspects of Socrates’s claim that *erōs* is wanting to possess the good forever for the sake of one’s own *eudaimonia* (204e–5a, 206a) [note 4]. Those who judge it not to be egoistic focus on the benevolent and productive aspects of *erōs*: it causes mortals to give birth to and to nurture physical and ‘spiritual’ children (206b), to sacrifice themselves for these children when necessary (207b), and, at the highest levels of procreation, to give birth to and to nurture true virtue (212a) [note 5]. There is also a third group comprised of those who claim that *erōs* is egoistic at its lower levels, but non-egoistic at its highest level [note 6]. I believe that this last group is right.³⁶⁵

So do I.³⁶⁶ But before going into that, I need to emphasize another paper, dedicated to Moravcsik’s memory: in “Moral Transformation and the Love of Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*” (2010),³⁶⁷ Suzanne Obdrzalek has offered a two-stage reading that makes exactly the right point with great clarity:

More fundamentally, the problem with *erōs* for immortality is that it is directed at an inferior object, oneself. It is only when one turns outside oneself towards objects which are truly perfect, immortal and divine—the Forms—that one achieves a mortal sort of perfection, but at this point, one cares about something outside of oneself and the mortal realm, and one’s own incompleteness ceases to really matter [note 5].³⁶⁸

show Plato believing that these over-all aspirations aim at what people take to be good for them.” On the passage in *Meno* where Socrates exposes the Socratic Paradox to what might be called “the Ignoble Refutation” (cf. §4 above) by having Meno the Thessalian accept it, see *Ascent to the Good*, §14.

364. But see Kraut, “Eudaimonism and Platonic *erōs*,” 235 (opening words): “My goal here is to propose an alternative to a widely accepted way of understanding Plato’s moral philosophy in general and the *Symposium* in particular. According to the orthodox interpretation that I wish to challenge, Plato is a ‘eudaimonist.’”

365. Timothy A. Mahoney, “Is Socratic *erōs* in the *Symposium* Egoistic?” *Apeiron* 29, no. 1 (March 1996), 1–18, on 2–3; all three of the attached notes contain valuable bibliography; 2n4 includes Vlastos, Martha Nussbaum, Kosman, and Santas; 2n5 includes Thomas Gould, John D. Moore and David Halperin along with Kraut and Price (see below; on Markus and Irwin, see *Ascent to the Good*, 29); and 3n6 discovers Rist and Julius Moravcsik, *Plato and Platonism* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992), 112: “we leave egoism behind.” For Mahoney on the Return to the Cave, see *Plato the Teacher*, 232–34.

366. See also Lorelle D. Lamascus, *The Poverty of Eros in Plato’s Symposium* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 12–23.

367. Suzanne Obdrzalek, “Moral Transformation and the Love of Beauty in Plato’s *Symposium*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 48, no. 4 (October 2010), 415–444; for Moravcsik, see 444n85.

368. Obdrzalek, “Moral Transformation,” 417.

As Obdrzalek's note 5 begins to indicate, bifurcated readings of the Ascent have traditionally begun with the distinction between the Lesser and Higher Mysteries.³⁶⁹ Starting with Hermann (1839), this distinction has been used to divide (the historical) Socrates—and even Xenophon's version of him³⁷⁰—from Plato's Socrates or rather from Plato himself.³⁷¹ After all, it is at the climax of the Ascent Passage that Diotima introduces as a transcendent *reality* what was only a *temptation* in *Hippias Major* (see §9), and if the earlier dialogue is Plato's *pons asinorum*, then his *Symposium* is the philosopher's bridge, the *pons philosophorum*. Of course this kind of division was easier to make for those who took Platonism and thus the transcendent Idea of Beauty seriously; the current prevalence of eudaemonist readings of the Ascent demonstrates that we are now in a very different world from, e.g., F. M. Cornford's.³⁷² Although sympathetic to those who made the Higher Mysteries the dividing line in Diotima's Discourse, my approach to defending a two-stage reading of the Ascent like Mahoney's or Obdrzalek's will recur to Diotima's "First Unanswered Question" (204d8–9) in order to show that it receives an answer at its climax (211d8–212a7), or rather that the climax of the Ascent *is* its answer. An analysis of the Diotima Discourse that uses the three questions Diotima puts to Socrates *that he can't answer* is the third of three interpretive innovations I will use to break the eudaemonist-altruist logjam that has made εὐπορία (with εὐπορώτερον at 204e6, cf. εὐπορεῖ at 209b8) regarding the Final Ascent hard to find.

The first has already been covered in the previous section (§16). If we take Diotima's account of Alcestis, Codrus, and Achilles to be Plato's, we will naturally be inclined to endorse a eudaemonist and self-serving reading of the Ascent.³⁷³ Meanwhile, defenders of the other-directed reading must

369. See Ferdinand Horn, *Platonstudien* (Vienna: Tempsky, 1893), 247–48n1; so common was this view at the outset that Georg Ferdinand Rettig (ed.), *Platonis Symposium in usum studiosae iuventutis et scholarum cum commentario critico* (Halle: Waisenhau, 1875) broke new ground by denying it on 300–301; Horn improves upon him.

370. See Hermann, *Geschichte und System*, 523. With Diotima's suggestion that Socrates may not be able to follow (ἔπεσθαι) her in the sentence that introduces the Higher Mysteries (209e5–210a4), cf. ἐπώμεθα in the last sentence of *Grg.* (527e5–7). See *Ascent to the Good*, 365.

371. Neumann, "Diotima's Concept of Love," 34: "Thus Diotima's role has also been viewed as Plato's completion or criticism of the historical Socrates by means of the Platonic Socrates or idealized Socrates." The attached note (34n7) is useful.

372. See F. M. Cornford, "The Doctrine of Eros in Plato's *Symposium*," in *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays*, edited by W. K. C. Guthrie, 68–80 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), on 75 (quoted in *Ascent to the Good*, 13n48).

373. See Neumann, "Diotima's Concept of Love," 41: "Diotima's 'Ruhmbegierde' [for this word, see the following blocked quotation] has justly been condemned sophistical, if a sophist is a teacher more enamored of fame than of the truth or the well being of his students. This shortcoming is inherent in her concept of love and goal of her love is not the beautiful, but the acquisition of happiness by giving birth in or through the beautiful." Cf. Wedgwood, "Diotima's Eudaemonism," 315, and Gerasimos Santas, "Plato's Theory of Eros in the *Symposium*: Abstract," *Noûs* 13, no. 1 (March 1979), 67–75, on 70–71. For amiable discontent, see F. C. White, "Virtue in Plato's *Symposium*," *Classical*

either dodge the problem entirely or resort to a bifurcated reading, generally based on distinguishing the Higher from the Lower Mysteries. It is rare to find a critic as direct and on point as Wilamowitz, who properly emphasizes Socrates' remark that Diotima now spoke like one of those perfect sophists (ὡσπερ οἱ τέλειοι σοφισταὶ at 208c1):

Diotima now speaks fully as a sophist-ess. The striving for immortality is directed at the yearning for fame [*Ruhmbegierde*] and the perpetuation of one's name. It is to be hoped that this motive for the sacrifice of Alcestis, Achilles, and Codrus is not Plato's actual opinion [*Platons wirkliche Meinung*]; here we would rather uphold the speech of Phaedrus, 179b.³⁷⁴

As implemented in §16, Plato's use of basanistic pedagogy offers a basis for strengthening Wilamowitz's hopeful intuitions about *Platons wirkliche Meinung*, and thus for weakening the argument that Diotima's use of a self-serving *Ruhmbegierde* proves that the agent's happiness is the τέλος of the Ascent.

Passing on to the second innovation, §15 has offered evidence that strengthens the other-directed side of the interpretive debate. In *Platons Symposium: Ein Programm der Akademie* (1888), Ludwig von Sybel dedicated some eloquent pages to the important claim that Socrates' remarks about the comic and tragic poet were self-referential with respect to Plato himself.³⁷⁵ To put it simply, what has been missing from the anti-egoist side of the debate has been its failure to note let alone emphasize *the self-referential aspects of the Ascent*.³⁷⁶ In his analysis of the passage, Moravcsik identified the three times that Diotima uses what he called "creative" reasons for moving on to a higher stage, all of them involving the production of educational λόγοι.³⁷⁷ Combined with von Sybel's programmatic reading of *Symposium*,³⁷⁸ these passages suggest that the kind of ἔρωσ that Diotima describes is Plato's own, and that the production of virtue-oriented λόγοι for the youth illustrates exactly

Quarterly 54, no. 2 (December 2004), 366–378, on 368–69; with Obrzalek, "Moral Transformation," 419–420, cf. "reason to question Socrates' sincerity" on 423.

374. Wilamowitz, *Platon* 2, 173. Disarmingly personal, Wilamowitz goes on to reject *Ruhmsucht* as the motivating force behind Homer and Lycurgus (174), and he uses the parallel with Aspasia in *Menexenus* to distance Socrates from Diotima on this point; nor does he scruple, when passing over to the climax of the Ascent, to find there "Plato's deepest remarks about his actual inner life [*sein eigenes Innenleben*]."

375. Ludwig von Sybel, *Plato's Symposium: Ein Programm der Akademie* (Marburg: N. G. Elwerts, 1888), 90–94. With "self-referential" here, cf. Performative Self-Confirmation (§12).

376. Coming closest is the last word of Anthony Hooper, "The Memory of Virtue: Achieving Immortality in Plato's *Symposium*," *Classical Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (December 2013), 543–557, beginning with 556: "Plato's dialogues themselves could be read as performing just this function." Cf. Sheffield, "*Symposium* and Platonic Ethics," 130n23, and White, "Virtue in Plato's *Symposium*," 374–75.

377. Moravcsik, "Reason and Eros," 286.

378. See especially von Sybel, *Plato's Symposium*, 11 and 94.

what it meant for the Academy's founder "to bring forth in the Beautiful." This innovation is important because a "production of virtue" τέλος for the Ascent—typical of other-directed readings of the passage³⁷⁹—suffers from the same defect as its eudaemonist opponent: both make the Idea of Beauty instrumental to something else. Proper emphasis on the self-referential aspect of the Ascent makes Plato's own activity dependent only on his vision of the Beautiful (212a3–4).

There is another implication of the self-referential aspect of Diotima's Discourse that also deserves mention. Consider the charge that Vlastos brought against Plato:

Plato is scarcely aware of kindness, tenderness, compassion, concern for the freedom, respect for the integrity of the beloved, as essential ingredients of the highest type of interpersonal love.³⁸⁰

Leaving aside the manner in which basanistic pedagogy depends on and therefore respects every student's integrity by preserving their freedom of choice, there is the intrinsic kindness and compassion built into the teacher's profession to be considered. Plato's own compassion is nowhere more obvious than in the elementary and musical λόγοι with which he introduced his students to philosophy. Moreover, Platonic ἔρωσ should be recognized as the kind we have come to expect or rather to demand from the teachers of our children. By this I mean that we don't expect them to fall in love with their students as individuals. Since it is reasonable to assume that Plato charged no tuition,³⁸¹ every student who entered the Academy received the benefits of a love at once compassionate and paternal,³⁸² and along with desexualizing this ἔρωσ, his commitment to direct it toward something beyond both teacher and student is at once a pedagogical "best practice" and—as indicted by the contrast with the pederast Pausanias (see §14)—an arguably necessary professional safeguard against suspicion of abuse. Plato was teaching all manner of boys,³⁸³ and was doing so in a society that was famously familiar with

379. See especially A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, second edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 48–53.

380. Gregory Vlastos, "The Individual as Object of Love in Plato," in Vlastos, *Platonic Studies*, second edition, 3–42 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), on 30.

381. As an example of what we know and don't know about the Academy, consider the fact that we have no external evidence that proves Plato charged no fees for attending it. Despite this *tabula rasa*, it is obvious that he didn't.

382. Cf. Bernhard Huss, *Xenophons Symposium. Ein Kommentar* (Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1999), 389 (on 8.17): "Um diese Ziele erreichen zu können [cf. 'Streben nach καλοκάγαθία'], braucht ein junger Mann einen 'Trainer,' väterlichen Freund oder, nach X.s Verständnis des sokratischen Eros, 'geistigen Liebhaber' ['der geistig Liebende dagegen τὰ τοῦ παιδὸς κατὰ σπουδάζει'] der ihm durch seine eigene Vorbildfunktion in protreptisch-pädagogischer Weise voranzukommen hilft." Cf. Plato the Teacher.

383. For the women Plato is said to have taught, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 3.46.

sexualized pederasty. It is in the context of both that we should reconsider those aspects of Platonic Love that Vlastos found so objectionable.³⁸⁴

The third and most important innovation is more complicated to explain, but it begins with the recognition that Diotima's First Unanswered Question is just that: the first of what turn out to be *three* questions she poses that Socrates can't answer. She poses the second—the most complicated of the three—at 206b1–4; although it contains three sub-questions in one, it is usually described as a question about the product (τὸ ἔργον) of ἔρωτος (206b3). I will analyze it in due course, but the important thing for now is that at 206b5–6, Socrates states that he relies on Diotima to answer her own (second) question, for he cannot. And with the words “And I once again [αὖ] was saying that I did not know” (207c2), Socrates indicates the third unanswered question, this one about the cause (τίς αἰτία at 207b7; cf. ἡ αἰτία at 207c7) that explains why animals as well as human beings are prepared “to die on behalf of” of their offspring, i.e., τὸ ὑπεραπο-θνήσκειν (207b4). The claim at the center of this section is that these three questions are posed and answered *on the basis of ring-composition*:³⁸⁵ the third and last question is answered first (207c8–e1), the second next (207e1–210e1), and the first is answered last. It is above all by the recognition that the first or pre-Substitution question finally receives an answer,³⁸⁶ and indeed that it does so only at the end of the Discourse, that constitutes the Platonist basis for rejecting the eudaemonist reading of the Ascent.

But before considering each of the Three Questions and their answers, it is necessary to take a step back and consider the question that Socrates poses before Diotima has posed even the first of hers:

I said, ‘Well then, dear visitor—given that you’re right: if Love is like this, what use [χρεία] does he have for human beings?’³⁸⁷

384. For another response to Vlastos on these issues, see Clay, “Platonic Studies,” 121–27.

385. For valuable work on Plato's use of ring-composition, see Twyla Gibson, “The Philosopher's Art: Ring Composition and Classification in Plato's *Sophist* and *Hipparchus*,” in Keith Thor Carlson, Kristina Fagan, and Natalia Khanenko-Friesen (eds.), *Orality and Literacy: Reflections across Disciplines*, 73–109 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011); for additional bibliography, see 106n12.

386. Cf. G. R. F. Ferrari, “Platonic Love,” in Richard Kraut (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, 248–276 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 254: “We might have thought that Diotima's purpose in substituting the apparently easier question is to help him [sc. Socrates] cope with the more difficult one. Yet she does not return to it—introducing instead a fresh question (206b1–4) [sc., the *second* unanswered question]. Socrates, whom Diotima assumes to run after beautiful boys like all young men of his age (211d3–8), cannot say why he does so [note τὰ καλὰ at 204d9]—cannot say what a person gains by possessing the beautiful. It turns out that he will not have the answer to Diotima's question until, after much preparatory teaching, she has spoken to him of the mysteries of the Beautiful itself (210a–212a).”

387. 204c7–8 (Rowe).

Socrates' question explains why *he* will be able to answer only Diotima's post-Substitution or eudaemonist variant: he wants to know what *χρεία* or usefulness *ἔρωσ* has *for us*, i.e., what makes it *χρήσιμον*.³⁸⁸ It is, therefore, the utilitarian and relativizing mindset *implicit in this question* that explains why she “answers” it with her first question. In addition, then, to the fact that *Hippias Major* has already rendered the Substitution's Equation of the Good and the Beautiful problematic (see §9),³⁸⁹ the question Socrates asks Diotima recalls the problem, exposed in that dialogue's central argument, of identifying τὸ καλόν with a necessarily incomplete adjective like *χρήσιμον* which must always be “useful” *for something*.

In accordance with ring-composition, the first question Diotima answers is the last one she poses: the cause (αἰτία) of the willingness of both human beings and animals to *ὑπεραποθνήσκειν* on behalf of their young is that “the mortal nature seeks as much as possible [ὡς δυνατόν] to be forever and deathless” (207d1–2). Both question and answer remain on what might be called the lowest rung or level. Indeed this is what one would expect from the revelation of an *ἔρωσ* that applies to all animals indiscriminately, and therefore Diotima emphasizes that her answer applies first to the genesis of children (ἢ γένεσις at 207d2–3) and then to the body generally (207e1). But precisely because the answer is indiscriminate in this way, it already prepares us for one of two reasons that the case of Alcestis does not prove what Diotima will claim that it does, i.e., that it is because “the mortal nature seeks as much as possible to be forever and deathless” that her self-sacrifice was motivated by *Ruhmbegierde*. If Diotima's answer really applied to human beings, it would have been the parents of Admetus, not his wife, who would have sacrificed himself for him, just as the birds do (cf. 207a6–b6 and 179b8–c3). In other words, Diotima has explained what *χρεία* birds and other animals gain from their parental *ἔρωσ*—and thus what should have made it equally *χρήσιμον* to the parents of Admetus, but for some reason failed to motivate them—but not what caused Alcestis to sacrifice herself on her husband's behalf.

As already indicated, the second question is more complex, and must therefore be analyzed:

“Now if love is always for this,” she proceeded, “what is the method [τρόπος] of those who pursue it, and what is the behavior [πράξις] whose eagerness

388. For the connection between *χρεία* and *χρήσιμον*, see *Grg.* 474d6–7.

389. The next time the Equation will be called into question (*Grg.* 474c9–d2), the connection between what is *χρήσιμον* and its root (*χρεία*) will be quickly established (*Grg.* 474d5–7), and when Socrates will later argue there that rhetoric's proper *χρεία* is when it is used to accuse oneself, one's relatives, and one's city of injustice (*Grg.* 480b7–d6), it is difficult to see, at least without the aid of a myth, how such self-accusation could possibly be *useful or beneficial to me*, especially since Socrates goes on to argue that we should do everything in our power to ensure that wrongdoers keep possession of as many “good things” as possible, including life-everlasting (*Grg.* 480e5–481b1).

[σπουδή] and straining are to be termed love? What actually is this effort [τὸ ἔργον]? Can you tell me?""³⁹⁰

First of all, the question is explicitly predicated on the post-Substitution account of what love always is; given that premise, Diotima inquires about (1) its *τρόπος*, i.e., the manner of those who pursue *ἔρως*, (2) in what kind of *πράξις* is *ἔρως* manifested, particularly with regard to its seriousness (*σπουδή*) and expenditure of effort, and (3) what is τὸ ἔργον in the case of love, i.e., its characteristic product. I take the second of these to be answered first with the prompt emphasis on offspring (*τόκος* at 206b7), bringing forth (*τίκτειν* at 206c3), and begetting (*ἡ γέννησις* at 206c7–8), combined in the famous formula about bringing forth “in the beautiful [ἐν τῷ καλῷ]” (206c5 and 206e5; cf. 206b7–8). Because this conception applies to bodily birth and begetting—I take this to be the specific *πράξις* to which the middle part of the question refers—it leads to the third part of the question which, once having been answered, shifts attention to οἱ τρόποι at 206e2, promptly explained as mental or spiritual but in any case connected with non-bodily things, including knowledge (207e2–208a3). The repetition of ὁ τρόπος (208a7) and ἡ σπουδή (208b6) prove that Diotima has returned to answering the second question *after she has answered the third*, thus proving the presence of ring-composition.

This leaves τὸ ἔργον, and it is perhaps with the characteristic *ἔργα* that she mentions at 209e2 that she completes her answer to the second question, and clears the deck at last for answering the First. Since Diotima introduces the High Mysteries at 209e5–210a2, there is an intimate connection between the traditional bifurcation of the Discourse and the tripartite division I am proposing; in other words, it is within the Higher Mysteries that Diotima will answer her First Unanswered Question having now answered the second and the third of them. But even if “the answer to the First Unanswered Question” and “the Higher Mysteries” are two terms that refer to the same passage, the difference between them is important, and particularly so for adjudicating the debate between an egoistic or eudaemonist reading of the Ascent and its “other-directed” or altruistic alternative.³⁹¹ On my account, it is the Substitution—based on the Equation of the Good and the Beautiful—that makes the eudaemonist reading plausible and indeed what might be called “a temptation.”³⁹² But if the passage devoted to the Higher Mysteries

390. 206b1–4 (Fowler).

391. Cf. G. R. F. Ferrari, “Moral Fecundity: A Discussion of A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 9 (1991), 169–184, on 170: “He [sc. Price] believes it [sc. ‘moral fecundity’] can resolve the dichotomy between egoism and altruism.”

392. Note the difference, however, between Woodruff’s *proleptic* “temptation” to find the transcendent Idea in *Hp. Ma.* (see §9) and the *basanistic* element now in play: one tempts us to rise, the other tempts us into falling short.

restores the pre-Substitution Question by answering it, then it is precisely the eudaemonist premise that no longer applies in the final stages of the Ascent.

The *prima facie* evidence that this is the case, as always in Plato, is his choice of words; there are both negative and positive indications of this kind. One of the principal weaknesses of the eudaemonist reading is that no “happiness” words appear in the Final Ascent; indeed the last appearance of εὐδαιμονία at 208e5 is applied to those who seek immortality, remembrance, and happiness (“as they suppose”) through their children (208e1–5). Promptly contrasted with those who bring forth in a spiritual sense (κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν at 208e5–209a1), a noticeable increase in the use of καλόν and related words is the result: between 209a6 and the beginning of the Higher Mysteries at 209e5, there are six instances as opposed to two appearances of ἀγαθόν. This trend continues and becomes more evident in what follows: including the word for “beauty” (τὸ κάλλος beginning at 210a8), καλόν-words outnumber ἀγαθόν in the Final Ascent by thirty-three to none.³⁹³ As a result, nothing whatsoever is said about those who catch sight of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν (211d3) being εὐδαιμόνες or about any ἀγαθῶν κτήσις (i.e., “acquisition of good things”) that would make them so. Amidst this linguistic desert—deliberately parched on my account for the sake of the Ascent’s oasis—defenders of a eudaemonist τέλος must construe or imply as “happy” Diotima’s references to the resulting life (ὁ βίος at 211d1 and 211e4).³⁹⁴ Even less plausibly must θεοφιλῆς at 212a6 be equated with “happiness” (cf. 179c3–d2 and 180e2–b5).

Although the last actual use of “ἔργα” precedes the beginning of the Higher Mysteries, it is noteworthy that it is only thereafter that references to “beautiful discourses” begin. There are three references to καλοὶ λόγοι (210a8, 210c1–3, and 210d4–6) and indeed all three appear in a single eloquent sentence (210a4–e1) as punctuated by Burnet. It is from the last part of that sentence (see §14) that this section takes its title:

393. Cf. Obrzalek, “Moral Transformation,” 430–31, deserves to be quoted at length: “Following the myth, things take a strange turn: Socrates asks Diotima what use *erōs* is. In her explanation, she offers to clarify matters by replacing beauty with goodness (204e1–3). No justification is given for the switch; as a result of this argumentative sleight-of-hand, the beautiful disappears as the object of *erōs* and is replaced with the good. At 206e2–5, Diotima emphatically insists on the demotion of beauty: ‘*Erōs* is not, as you think, of beauty, but of birth in beauty.’ Beauty, once the object of *erōs*, has become a mere drug for inducing labor. The shifting in the object of *erōs* does not stop here; the good, too, disappears or, at least, is subsumed within immortality, and immortality is elevated from a mere means to securing the good to the proper object of *erōs*. This demotion makes *beauty’s dramatic reentry in the ascent* [emphasis mine; so too the italics that follow] is striking. The entire opening of the ascent is a 28-line long sentence, culminating in the initiate’s sudden vision of Beauty (210e1–6). Beauty, then, has been reintroduced as the proper object of *erōs*; *this constitutes the reply to Socrates’ original question.*”

394. Note the repeated citations of “(211d)” in Sheffield, “*Symposium* and Platonic Ethics,” 122, 126, 133, and 136 (twice).

and turning rather towards the main ocean of the beautiful may by contemplation of this bring forth [τίκτειν] in all their splendor many and beautiful discourses [πολλοὶ καὶ καλοὶ λόγοι; cf. *Ion* 530d3, 534b9–c1, and 541e3–4] and meditation in a plenteous crop of philosophy [ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ ἄφθονῶ]; until with the strength and increase there acquired he describes a certain single knowledge connected with a beauty which has yet to be told.³⁹⁵

Naturally there can only be such λόγοι if there is an audience to hear them, and by applying the adjective ἄφθονος to φιλοσοφία, it is clear that it is an “unstinting” generosity toward others that makes them possible.³⁹⁶ Although the self-sacrifice of Alcestis, Codrus, and Achilles is grounded in an even higher level of other-directed generosity, we should not forget the “unstinting philosophy” that is motivating Plato to produce the λόγος we are presently reading; such is the fruit of reading the passage as self-referential. Nor should we forget the labors (πόννοι at 210e6) that we have already expended to read the λόγοι that precede it “in the proper order and correctly” (210e3),³⁹⁷ and the ability to recognize them as the natural effusion of a soul whose primary concern is no longer with his personal εὐδαιμονία but with our education. At the risk of begging the question, there is nothing καλόν in Diotima’s λόγος about Alcestis, Achilles, and Codrus,³⁹⁸ but much that is so in the λόγος of Plato that contains and transcends it.³⁹⁹

In *Hippias Major*, Socrates introduces the relativity of τὸ καλόν with the preposition πρὸς, as in the initial claim that the eyes are χρήσιμον “in relation to seeing [πρὸς τὸ ἰδεῖν]” (*Hp. Ma.* 295c6). In the passage that follows—at the center of the central argument of the dialogue on my account (see §9)—χρήσιμον is linked to and illustrated by the use of πρὸς four more times (*Hp. Ma.* 295c8–e3), a passage that begins with a verbal echo of Xenophon (*Hp.*

395. 210d3–e1 (Fowler modified).

396. Cf. R. A. Markus, “The Dialectic of Eros in Plato’s *Symposium*,” in Gregory Vlastos (ed.), *Plato: A Collection of Critical Essays, II: Ethics, Politics, and Philosophy of Art and Religion*, 132–143 (London: Macmillan, 1971), on 140 (emphasis mine): “The nature of *erōs* has undergone the preliminary transformation required in order to talk about love for, and desire for αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν {the beautiful itself}, the absolute subsistent beauty in which all other beautiful things participate. We know by now that desire for this is ‘desire’ in a very queer sense: it is desire to give rather than to receive, a kind of generosity rather than a kind of need. It culminates in togetherness with the object loved and in a creative bringing forth in its presence from the lover’s superabundance.”

397. 210e2–6 (Fowler modified): “When a man has been thus far tutored in the lore of love, passing from view to view of beautiful things, in the proper order and correctly [ἐφεξῆς τε καὶ ὀρθῶς], suddenly he will have revealed to him, as he draws to the goal [τέλος] of his dealings in love, a wondrous vision, beautiful in its nature; and all those previous toils [πόννοι] were for the sake of this, Socrates.”

398. Cf. C. D. C. Reeve, “Plato on Begetting in Beauty (209e5–212c3),” in Christoph Horn (ed.), *Platon, Symposium*, 159–190 (Berlin: Akademie, 2012), on 160: “The reputation-reality indifference of beauty, but not of goodness explains why it is easier to answer Diotima’s question about why we love or desire good things than about why we love beautiful ones.”

399. Cf. Obdrzalek, “Morality and Beauty,” 428n33: “Finally, one of the conclusions of Socrates’ speech will be that one should not express one’s erotic tendencies through seeking self-perpetuation—for example, through propagating one’s *logoi* in the hope of securing undying fame.”

Ma. 295c9)⁴⁰⁰ and ends with the general statement, likewise derived from *Memorabilia* 3.8, that each thing is καλόν “in relation to” (i.e., πρὸς) that for which it is χρήσιμον (*Hp. Ma.* 295d8–e1; cf. 295c3). As a result, it is the negation of the πρὸς-relationship that is of particular importance in the *via negativa* approach to αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν in the sentence that follows our having caught sight of the sea:

‘First of all, it is ever-existent and neither comes to be nor perishes, neither waxes nor wanes; next, it is not beautiful in part and in part ugly, nor is it such at such a time and other at another, nor in one respect beautiful and in another ugly [οὐδὲ πρὸς μὲν τὸ καλόν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ αἰσχροτόν], nor so affected by position as to seem beautiful to some and ugly to others.’⁴⁰¹

It is apparently the same Socrates who tied χρήσιμον to πρὸς in the center of *Hippias Major* who still needs to ask Diotima about the usefulness (or χρεία) of ἔρωσ to human beings (204c8), and one might do worse than imagine that it is now Plato, through the priestess, who is showing Xenophon’s Socrates a better way to refute Aristippus than by the recourse to relativism he deployed in *Memorabilia*, 3.8.

Diotima begins her answer with another echo of Xenophon: “This, indeed [sc. the answer to your question] after these things [sc. the Myth] I will attempt to teach you [πειράσομαι διδάσκειν]” (204d1–2). As already noted, the suggestion that it is Xenophon’s Socrates whom Plato is leaving behind in the Higher Mysteries goes back to Hermann; it was likewise endorsed—with greater consistency—by Hug.⁴⁰² Even after the decay of the equation of Xenophon’s Socrates with the historical Socrates, the Higher Mysteries were taken to constitute Plato’s advance on the latter if no longer on the former. It is therefore significant that Xenophon puts himself in the same relation to the reader in *Memorabilia* 4.6 that Diotima now takes in relation to Socrates. Although I have emphasized *Memorabilia* 3.8 in connection with the equation of καλόν and χρήσιμον, the baldest statement of this identity, including the use of πρὸς, is found in *Memorabilia* 4.6.9: “The useful [τὸ χρήσιμον] then is beautiful [καλόν] in relation to what [πρὸς ὃ] it may be useful [χρήσιμον].” It is because *Memorabilia* 4.6.1 begins with: “And how he [sc. Socrates] was making his companions more dialectical [διαλεκτικώτεροι], even this [καὶ τοῦτο] I will attempt to say [πειράσομαι λέγειν]” that I mention this, for I have come to believe that Socrates—and here you can choose any of the versions of Socrates you prefer—did not make his auditors διαλεκτικώτεροι

400. πρὸς δρόμον and πρὸς πάλιν at Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.8.4; cf. *Hp. Mi.* 374a1.

401. 210e6–211a5 (Fowler).

402. See Hug, *Platons Symposium*, 157; “greater consistency” since Hermann argued for Plato’s priority with respect to Xenophon’s *Symposium*.

by speaking the truth to them straight, but rather by provoking them, with the deliberate deployment of deception, into discovering it for themselves. In other words, even if Plato goes beyond the Socrates of *Memorabilia* 3.8 in the Higher Mysteries, it is not clear to me that he could have done so without the Xenophon of *Memorabilia* 4.6.

Having quoted Socrates' initial question about the usefulness or *χρεία* of *ἔρωσ* (or *Ἔρωσ*) for human beings *and* the Substitution passage that ends with defining the *εὐδαίμονες* in relation to the *ἀγαθῶν κτήσις*, it is now necessary to consider with care the precise wording of Diotima's First Unanswered Question itself, for the proof that the climax of the Ascent *is the answer to this question* depends on the replication of its peculiar vocabulary and grammatical structure. Here is the passage that introduces it:

For that he [sc. *Ἔρωσ*] is of this kind, indeed, and that Love [sc. *ὁ Ἔρωσ*] has come into being thusly [sc. in accordance with the just-told Myth], he is [ἔστι; presumably now simply *ἔρωσ* or 'love'] of *τῶν καλῶν* as you say [sc. as Socrates said to Agathon at 201a3–b8 and 201c4]. But if someone [τις] were to ask us: 'why is *ὁ Ἔρωσ* of *τῶν καλῶν*, O Socrates and Diotima [sc. 'why is Love of beautiful things/boys/girls,' for *τῶν καλῶν* is gender-indeterminate]?'⁴⁰³ But this is clearer: the one loving [*ὁ ἐρῶν*] loves *τῶν καλῶν*; why does he love [them]? And I said, 'that they may come to be for him [*γενέσθαι αὐτῷ*].'⁴⁰⁴

There are several difficulties in the immediate run-up to the Unanswered Question, and at this stage it is the meaning of *τί, ὁ ἐρῶν, τῶν καλῶν, and γενέσθαι αὐτῷ* that require discussion. With regard to the interrogative *τί*, it can mean either "what" or "why," and I take it here to mean the latter. I also take it that Diotima is replacing *ὁ Ἔρωσ* with *ὁ ἐρῶν* for clarity's sake, but given the parallel, noted by others, between *ὁ Ἔρωσ* and Socrates,⁴⁰⁵ along with the parallel between philosophy and *Ἔρωσ* emphasized by Diotima herself, it is best to keep the question open, perhaps so open as to embrace whatever it may prove to be that makes either Socrates or *φιλοσοφία* something of useful to human beings. Be that as it may, the meaning of *τῶν καλῶν* must remain indeterminate for now, and the emancipation of the neuter *τὰ*

403. Cf. Rowe, *Symposium*, 83: "Why, Socrates and Diotima, is Love of beautiful things?"

404. 204d2–11.

405. Illuminated brilliantly in Catherine Osborne, *Eros Unveiled: Plato and the God of Love* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 90–96, 101–103, and 116: "It [sc. 'seeing with the vision of love'] is an attitude that takes us outside of ourselves, to see ourselves as lacking and inadequate [cf. the More Perfect Mirror], which enables us to proceed on the road of philosophy, a road we should never set out on if we did not first remove our shoes and follow the spirit of Socrates, or Eros, who can inspire us with the love of wisdom." Cf. Pohlenz, *Platos Werdezeit*, 393: "So ist Sokrates wirklich der *ἐρωτικός*, ja er ist noch mehr, er ist die Verkörperung des *μέγας δαίμονος*, das Eros, auf Erden."

καλά from οἱ καλοὶ as beautiful boys, introduced in the Question itself, is an ongoing theme of the Ascent (through 211c1–2).⁴⁰⁶

But it is the meaning of γενέσθαι αὐτῷ that is the crucial matter. Rowe translates the relevant sentence as “to possess them for himself,”⁴⁰⁷ and in this he is far from atypical. As the Substitution proves, however, “possession” is unambiguously expressed by κτήσις, as “it is by the possession [κτήσις] of good things that the happy are happy” (205a1). The problem here is evident by contrasting Rowe’s translation of the Question itself—“what will the person who possesses beautiful things get by possessing them”—with Plato’s Greek, where τὰ καλά is not the object of the verb “to possess” (for there is no such verb in the original) but rather the subject of γενέσθαι, and where that verb appears only once, not twice as in Rowe’s translation:

‘But still this answer yearns for the following question: What [τί] will there be for that man for whom beautiful things [τὰ καλά] come into being [γενέσθαι]?’
I said that I didn’t find this question at all easy to answer.⁴⁰⁸

This, then, is Diotima’s First Unanswered Question, and it clarifies three of the previous ambiguities: τί has now clearly become “what” and no longer “why,” τῶν καλῶν has been de-sexualized as the neuter “beautiful things [τὰ καλά],” and γενέσθαι can no longer be straightforwardly translated as “to possess.” Although difficult to translate into readable English, the question preserves the grammatical construction of Socrates’ first reply as well as that of its post-Substitution replica (204e5), and asks: “what comes into being for him,” i.e., γενέσθαι plus a dative of “for whom.”

In turning now to an exegesis of the Final Ascent, I will begin with a passage frequently cited by proponents of “the eudaemonist reading,” and that despite the absence of εὐδαιμονία in it.⁴⁰⁹ Although the “γενέσθαι plus dative”

406. But Xenophon’s Socrates indicates that the point of transition is already implicit in τὰ καλά at *Symposium*, 8.17, where the true lover is more serious about “the excellences [τὰ καλά] of the boy than his own pleasures [ἡδέα].”

407. Rowe, *Symposium*, 85. Cf. Wedgwood, “Diotima’s Eudaemonism,” 303: “‘become one’s own’” and Osborne, *Eros Unveiled*, 102: “‘accrue to him.’” For criticism of Osborne’s reading of *Smp.*, especially her claim on this page that “the motivation is still self-interest,” see Timothy A. Mahoney, “Aspiring to the Divine: Love and Grace,” *Apeiron* 30, no. 1 (March 1997), 63–71, on 65–66.

408. 204d8–9.

409. Beginning with Sheffield, *Plato’s Symposium*, 42: “Happiness, Socrates will argue, consists in a godlike life of contemplation of the divine form (211d1–3),” consider her other citations of 211d1–3: “*Eudaimonia* was not conceived as a state of felicity, or a transitory feeling of pleasure or contentment, but whatever it is that makes one’s life a worthwhile and flourishing one. That is why the account leads towards the specification of contemplation as the life worth living for human beings (211d1–3)” on 81, “The rather compressed description of contemplation and virtue at the end of the ascent gives us no reason to think that there is anything further required for *eudaimonia*. ‘It is here, if anywhere,’ we are told, ‘that life is worth living for a human being, in contemplation of beauty itself ‘ (211d1–3)” on 134, and 148: “What does seem to be strongly suggested is that *eudaimonia* resides in the contemplation of the form (211d1–3).”

structure is likewise absent, its use of the dative to describe *for whom* the resulting life (ὁ βίος at 211d1) is livable points to further developments and indeed will be replicated in a later sentence (211e4–212a2) in which it is this same life itself that *comes to be*.⁴¹⁰

‘It is here, my dear Socrates,’ said the visitor from Mantinea, ‘if anywhere, that life [ὁ βίος] is worth living for a human being [ἀνθρώπων], in contemplation [θεωμένῳ] of beauty itself [αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν].’⁴¹¹

I will be using Rowe’s translation throughout this exegesis to illustrate how it serves the eudaemonist reading he champions, not because of its accuracy. Here, for example, he converts the dative participle θεωμένῳ into the noun “contemplation” whereas the proper translation would be: “for the human being having caught sight of.” If not for Rowe himself, then for Sheffield, it is Aristotle’s view that the contemplative life is the *happiest* that lurks in the background, as of course it should not.⁴¹²

Although the longer sentence that follows contains neither γενέσθαι nor the dative, it will not only be quoted for the sake of continuity but also because it dissolves, as the First Unanswered Question did earlier, the ambiguity preserved by τῶν καλῶν through 211c2. Since it is by catching sight of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν that one is emancipated from οἱ καλοὶ (i.e., from beautiful boys)—and by extension, from the eudaemonist conceptions of the previous speakers, for whom love brings happiness⁴¹³—the foregoing use of θεωμένῳ is particularly significant:

‘That, if ever you see it [sc. αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν; the verb of seeing is ἰδεῖν], it will not seem to you to be of the same order as gold, and clothes, and the beautiful boys [οἱ καλοὶ παῖδες] and young men that now drive you out of your mind when you see [ὄρων] them, so that both you and many others are ready, so long

410. Note that γίγνεσθαι at 212a1 is the present infinitive of the verb; I am using its aorist infinitive γενέσθαι for convenience since it appears more frequently in this form.

411. 211d1–3 (Rowe).

412. Cf. Sheffield, *Plato’s Symposium*, 112–13: 112–13: “The life of contemplation, as opposed to the life of honor, is revealed as the best human life (211d1–3). It will be the task of this chapter to examine why this satisfies the desire for *eudaimonia* to the greatest extent.”

413. Cf. Sheffield, *Plato’s Symposium*, 212: “If what we want is a good whose possession [cf. κτῆσις ἀγαθῶν at 205a1] delivers *eudaimonia* (205a1–3 with 180b7 [from the conclusion of Phaedrus’ speech, where it is κτῆσις of ἀρετῆ and εὐδαιμονία by the likes of Alcestis and Achilles that is being described], 188d8 [the conclusion of Eryximachus], 193d5 [the conclusion of Aristophanes], 194e6 [Agathon’s introduction], 195a5 [where Agathon’s Ἐρως is the happiest of all the happy gods], 205a1 [i.e., the Substitution]), this is found, above all, [my emphasis:] *in the life of contemplation* (211d1–3 with 212a1–5).” As previously mentioned, “the life” reappears at 211e4–212a2. Naturally the citations from Eryximachus, Aristophanes, and Agathon prove only that *they* want Love to be “a good whose possession delivers *eudaimonia*,” and thus that the Substitution temporarily lowers Socrates’ account to *their* level. As for Phaedrus, the notion of posthumous happiness, already introduced at *Mx.* 247a6 (see §13), is inconsistent with what is currently called “human flourishing.”

as you can see [ὄρωντες] your beloveds and be with them always (if somehow it were possible), to stop eating and drinking, and just gaze at them [θεᾶσθαι] and be with them.⁴¹⁴

Since what is finally going “to come into being” for the beholder (cf. the θεωμένω of 211d2) is precisely a *vision* of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, it is the panoply of vision-words that makes this passage so important, with the final θεᾶσθαι—note that there is no “at them” in the Greek—being particularly significant, since that verb has already been used to transcend on a Platonist basis the kind of “seeing” that ἰδεῖν, ὄρων, ὄρωντες, and θεᾶσθαι itself are here being used to describe.

‘What [τί] then,’ she said, ‘do we suppose *it would be like if someone succeeded in seeing beauty itself* [emphasis mine; the Greek is εἴ τῳ γένοιτο αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν ἰδεῖν] pure, clean, unmixed, and not contaminated with things like human flesh, and color, and much other mortal nonsense, but were able to catch sight [κατιδεῖν] of the uniformity of divine beauty itself [αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν]?’⁴¹⁵

“If it were to come into being [the verb is γενέσθαι] for someone [τῳ in the dative] to see the Beautiful itself” is the proper translation of εἴ τῳ γένοιτο αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν ἰδεῖν. But just as important as the fact that Rowe doesn’t get it right is that he nevertheless doesn’t dare to get it completely wrong: there is no trace this time of his earlier mistranslation of γενέσθαι plus the dative as “to possess [it] for himself.” In addition to replicating the unanswered question’s γενέσθαι plus the dative—for the indefinite τῳ stands in the place of the earlier αὐτῷ and ἐκείνῳ (204d7 and 204d9)—Diotima is once again using τί to introduce *this* question (cf. 204d8). But in the light of its similarity to the earlier question, it is really *an answer in the form of a question*: what will there be for that one for whom τὰ καλά come to be (204d8-9) is αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν ἰδεῖν, i.e., to see the Beautiful itself. The three adjectives Diotima uses to describe the Beautiful positively, along with the three things of which it is not full, are scarcely irrelevant to what Platonism actually is. Its “pure serene” has already been ably described at 211a5–b5, where in addition to the first appearance of “uniform” (μονοειδές at 211b1; cf. 211e4), the distortions that will be foisted on the Platonic Idea by Timaeus and the Athenian Stranger (cf. 211a8–9) and by the Eleatic Stranger (with μηδὲ πάσχειν μηδέν at 211b4–5 cf. πάσχειν at *Sph.* 248e4) are preemptively rejected. But for the present, it is the insertion of θεῖον in αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν that is most significant, for we are now reentering the world where θεοφιλῶς πράττειν replaced εὐ πράττειν at the end of *Alcibiades Major* (on *Alc. I* 134d1–e7, see §6).

414. 211d3–8 (Rowe).

415. 211d8–e4 (Rowe).

‘Do you think it’s [γίγνεσθαι] a worthless life [βίος],’ she said, ‘if a person turns his gaze in that direction [ἐκεῖσε βλέποντος ἀνθρώπου] and contemplates [θεωμένου] that beauty with the faculty he should use, and is able to be with it [συνόντος]?’⁴¹⁶

Contrary to my usual practice, I have left the three participles βλέποντος, θεωμένου, and συνόντος—along with the ἀνθρώπου who is said to be doing them—in the genitive because it is important to understand that it is precisely not “the life of contemplation” that is said “to come to be” *for someone*. Instead, it is the life *of a man* that here “comes to be,” for γίγνεσθαι and γενέσθαι are two forms of the same verb. As also previously noted, the eudaemonist reading depends heavily on the word βίος at 211d1–4; as a result, its reappearance here is significant. Because it reappears immediately following the first use of the dative plus γενέσθαι/γίγνεσθαι construction we have encountered (i.e., at 211d8–e1) since the First Unanswered Question, it is important that it is *not* that construction that appears *in the context of a life*—which might be the sort of thing one could be said “to possess”—but rather of what comes into being (i.e., γενέσθαι/γίγνεσθαι) for the person who “turns his gaze in that direction,” i.e., toward αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν. And since it is *a vision of that object* that now comes into being *for* the one looking at it, I will leave intact all the datives in Diotima’s last sentence while still quoting Rowe’s translation:

‘Or do you not recognize,’ she said, ‘*that it is under these conditions alone* [my emphasis; the Greek is ὅτι ἐνταῦθα αὐτῷ γενήσεται, the last being the future form of γίγνεσθαι/γενέσθαι], as he sees [ὀρῶντι] beauty with what has the power to see it, that he will succeed in bringing to birth, not phantoms of virtue, because he is not grasping [ἐφαπτομένῳ] a phantom, but true virtue, because he is grasping [ἐφαπτομένῳ] the truth; and that when he has given birth to [τεκόντι] and nurtured [θρεψαμένῳ] virtue, *it belongs to him to be loved by the gods* [emphasis mine; the Greek is: θεοφιλεῖ γενέσθαι] and to him [ἐκεῖνῳ] if to any human being [τῷ ἄλλῳ ἀνθρώπων], to be immortal [ἀθανάτῳ]?’⁴¹⁷

Beginning, then, with “what will come into being [γενέσθαι] for him there” (the proper translation of ὅτι ἐνταῦθα αὐτῷ γενήσεται), the answer is: he will become the one seeing (ὀρῶντι) Beauty and not attaching himself to what’s false (the first ἐφαπτομένῳ) but attaching himself to what’s true (the second ἐφαπτομένῳ). The next two datives, joined to another γενέσθαι, establish by a change in tense a prior condition: having first become the one who

416. 211e4–212a2 (Rowe).

417. 212a2–7 (Rowe).

brought forth (τεκόντι)⁴¹⁸ and then having nurtured (θρεψαμένω)⁴¹⁹ true virtue *in someone else*, he becomes “beloved of god,” another dative promptly followed by three more (ἐκείνω, τῷ ἄλλω, and ἀθανάτω). This, then, is the answer to Diotima’s First Unanswered Question, for all these datives signify what will “accrue” to, or rather “come into being,” *for* him.

Having now emphasized the dative-plus-γενέσθαι structure of this amazing sentence and on that basis having placed it in the context of the First Unanswered Question, Diotima’s emphasis on virtue must be considered. In particular, it is the *contrast* between the true ἀρετή that the visionary (i.e., the ὁρῶντι, or “the one seeing”) is said to have brought forth and nourished (212a5–6) as opposed to those “phantoms of virtue [εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς]” (212a4) that deserves further consideration and thus a more literal translation than Rowe’s:

‘Or are you not taking it to heart,’ she said, ‘that there, it will come into being only for the one seeing—with that by which the Beautiful [τὸ καλόν] is seeable—to bring forth [τίκτειν] not phantoms of virtue [εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς], since it is not of a phantom [εἶδωλον] that he is taking hold [ἐφάπτεσθαι] but something true [ἀληθῆ], since he is taking hold [ἐφάπτεσθαι] of the truth [τὸ ἀληθές]; and having brought forth true virtue [ἀρετὴ ἀληθές], and having nourished it, it is possible for him to become beloved of god [θεοφιλῆς], and if to anyone of human beings [it is possible to become] immortal, [it is] even to that man.’⁴²⁰

The extraordinary degree of linguistic connection between this passage and “the Battle Hymn of the *Republic*” (*R.* 534b8–d1) deserves emphasis.⁴²¹ There, ἐφάπτεσθαι is twice applied not to the truth but *only* to an εἶδωλον. This crucial passage serves as the principal epigraph for both *The Guardians in Action* and *The Guardians on Trial*, where it is construed as a warning to Plato’s students not to fall prey to the εἶδωλα of authoritative wisdom they will be offered repeatedly in the post-*Republic* dialogues by the likes of Timaeus and the two Strangers. Here, however, the reference is less personal; it is directed to εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς, and such phantoms can only be recognized as such in contrast with ἀρετὴ ἀληθές and τὸ ἀληθές more generally. But the crucial point is that one cannot lay hold on these (ἐφάπτεσθαι)—and thus bring forth (τίκτειν) something other than εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς—unless a logically prior vision of αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν *will have come into being for him*,

418. As, on my account, Plato has done in his students. Cf. Ferrari, “Moral Fecundity,” 181: “in the higher reaches of the ascent, the boy is no longer mentioned.”

419. And has done so both in the physical Academy and in its eternal avatar.

420. 212a2–7.

421. On “the Battle Hymn,” see *Plato the Teacher*, 21–22, 198–99, and 346–48; see also *Guardians in Action*, vii and 462, and *Guardians on Trial*, vii and 564 (*Republic*, Battle Hymn in).

for only then does he gain the ability to τίκτειν true virtue, and then, having brought it forth and nourished it, to become θεοφιλής.

Naturally this text figures prominently in the other-directed readings of the Ascent, for there must be other human beings in whom to bring forth and nourish true virtue. But it is seldom noticed that it is only *after* one has brought forth and nourished ἀρετὴ ἄληθές in others—the two participles τεκόντι and θρεψαμένῳ are both aorists—that one thereby becomes θεοφιλής and possibly deathless. With Achilles and Alcestis having already demonstrated the kind of ἔρωσ-*inspired* virtue that can make a claim to being “beloved of god” (179c5–d1),⁴²² and with Plato’s dialogues having demonstrated *ad oculos* the extent to which he has himself achieved immortality, he leaves it to us to decide about his own motives. Did Diotima’s correction of Phaedrus reflect *Platons wirkliche Meinung* and thus was it for the sake of his own fame that he created these beautiful discourses? Or did he create these καλοὶ λόγοι to bring forth true ἀρετὴ in us, motivated by the kind of impersonal and doubly other-directed love all great teachers have for all their students—“to love, pure and chaste from afar” as per *Man of La Mancha*—even those students he hadn’t pre-deceased by several millennia?⁴²³ It will be easy for those who love Plato to decide how to answer this question, and since he leaves answering it to us, those who recognize *him* will know that he loves us back.⁴²⁴ Having already posited the self-referential aspects of the Ascent (especially at 210a4–e1) as an anodyne against Vlastos’s charge of cold-heartedness, it is the basanistic element in Platonic pedagogy that explains what makes the relationship necessarily a personal one.

Although the pleasure-measuring “some shadow-sketch [σκιαγραφία τις]” of virtue in *Phaedo*—“in reality both slavish and having in it nothing either healthy or true” (*Phd.* 69b7–8)—is often mentioned in the context of Diotima’s εἰδωλα ἀρετῆς,⁴²⁵ the full force of the parallel passes unnoticed, and

422. Cf. Fussi, “Desire for Recognition,” 241: “Phaedrus’s argument, as if mirroring in style the ascent described in Diotima’s final revelation, reaches higher and nobler planes as he proceeds to speak about the capacity of some lovers for heroic sacrifice and finally concedes that the beloved, too, is capable of extreme sacrifice for the sake of his lover. Selfishness, then, gives way in Phaedrus’s speech to nobler and nobler examples of selflessness.”

423. With “doubly other-directed,” cf. Obdrzalek, “Moral Transformation,” 433: “Plato’s solution to the problem of *erōs* is, in fact, twofold. On the one hand, his proposal is that we can achieve a mortal sort of perfection and completion by standing in an admiring, contemplative relationship to the Forms. However, there is a further, very significant result of our becoming absorbed in Beauty: not only do we become directed towards something which has value, but in this process, we become directed away from ourselves.”

424. See *Ascent to the Good*, 90–92.

425. E. g., Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 390n2; see also bibliography attached to the following in White, “Virtue in Plato’s *Symposium*,” 376: “Diotima asserts that the virtue of the true lover is true virtue, not an image or set of images of virtue (εἰδωλα ἀρετῆς), and she is often taken to be making the *Phaedo*’s contrast between true virtue and ‘the painted representation of virtue fit only for slaves’ ([*Phd.*] 69a–c) [note 49].”

what we find at the apex of *Symposium* achieves something even more than a retrospective critique of the Final Argument in *Protagoras*.⁴²⁶ The presence of ring-composition in the Final Ascent not only tips the balance away from an egoist to an other-directed pole: by putting the Substitution in its proper place as a mere Shortcut, the more difficult and Platonist basis of true virtue—i.e., its dependence on a vision of the transcendent Idea of Beauty—reveals that a merely instrumental conception of the virtues that subordinates them to the τέλος of εὐδαιμονία, repeatedly defended on the basis of the Εὔ Πράττειν Fallacy, yields nothing more than εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς.⁴²⁷ Although the resulting battle between true and phantom virtue will only be fully joined in the post-*Symposium* dialogues between *Euthydemus* and *Meno*, not all of Plato's students will need to wait for the Good_T in order to see the shadowy status of the εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς that aim at nothing higher than the Good_E. Every decent person the world over knows that it is indifference to one's own personal good that makes an action admirable,⁴²⁸ and it did not require Judeo-Christianity to make mankind aware “that greater love hath no man than that he give up his life for his friends.” What Plato thought this truth *did* require was to be grounded in a vision of the very essence of αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, and it was to uphold a conception of gallantry in action—recognized as noble, beautiful, and fine by a long line of Greek authors from Homer to Demosthenes, whether conspicuous or not—that Socrates says: “both now and always I am praising the power and the courage [ἡ ἀνδρεία] of Love insofar as I am able.” After all, even young Hippocrates is recognizably brave (*Prt.* 310d2–3).⁴²⁹

Plato introduced his beginners to philosophy with *Protagoras* for many reasons (see §1). But one of them is that most anyone knows that ἡ ἀνδρεία in particular is not a life-saving matter of maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain, and would thus eventually recognize that the conception of virtue defended in its Final Argument is nothing more than an illusory εἶδωλον. Although a principled preference for τὸ καλόν over against τὸ σύμφερον

426. See *Guardians on Trial*, §18.

427. For the “Battle Hymn” in *Ascent to the Good*, see 16–17.

428. Cf. William J. Prior, “Eudaimonism and Virtue,” *Journal of Value Inquiry* 35 (2001), 325–342, on 338: “The chief fault with *eudaimonism* in the minds of modern moral philosophers is its grounding of ethical motivation in the good of an agent. This runs counter to a *widespread intuition among moral philosophers* [emphasis mine; it is more widespread than that, confined neither to moderns nor to moral philosophers, and Plato's Theory of Recollection becomes the basis not for *teaching* virtue, but for reminding people of what they already *intuit* it to be by making deliberately deceptive claims about, e.g., Alcestis] that the business of moral philosophy is the justification of action that is entirely objective and other-regarding.”

429. See Pohlenz, *Platos Werdezeit*, 373: “Das Höchste aber ist, wenn der Geliebte für den Liebhaber sein Leben dahingibt. Davon träumt er wie unsere Jungen [Pohlenz is writing in 1913; on the impact of the First World War, see *Plato the Teacher*, 394] vom Heldentod fürs Vaterland (180b).” Cf. von Sybel, *Platons Symposion*, 48–49, climaxing with: “Sokrates war gut nicht um Glückseligkeit, sondern aus Pflicht.”

had been badly shaken by the War and the Plague,⁴³⁰ there was still enough of it left, even in Alcibiades—arguably the very symbol of Athenian corruption—for Plato to build the decisive argument in the first part of his most elementary dialogue around that preference (see §5). For some it would be necessary to reach the abrogation of the Good-Pleasant Equation in *Gorgias* to shake their beginner’s faith in the Final Argument of *Protagoras*;⁴³¹ for others, the “eventually” would extend all the way to *Phaedo* and beyond. But there is already more than enough for some students in the series of dialogues that culminates with *Symposium*, and for these, it will not only be Phaedrus, Pausanias, Eryximachus, and Agathon whom they will now see in a new light. The ascent to the Beautiful precedes the ascent to the Good—this is why happiness-words proliferate in the post-*Symposium* dialogues (see above)—because disambiguating the Good_r from the Good_e is more difficult than seeing that it cannot be true that the brave go to war because they know it is pleasant (*Prt.* 360a7–8), that heroes incur wounds and death to rescue their friends because they will be happy by doing well and thus faring well (*Alc. I* 116a5–b5), or that Alcestis, Achilles, and Codrus died the deaths they did for the sake of their future fame (208d2–6), especially if one of them hadn’t yet become famous. Finally, the fact that Socrates will soon enough be joining them in his own *Heldentod* explains why we will meet Apollodorus again, along with Menexenus and Ctesippus, in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 59b6–10).

With respect to the Reading Order, *Symposium* points both forward and back, and not simply because it fits snugly between *Menexenus* and *Lysis*.⁴³² Although its erotic connection with *Phaedrus* is obvious, it is in connection to *Republic* 5 that its central (ninth) place in the seventeen pre-*Republic* dialogues proves to be most significant, and an unwillingness to believe that the Glaucon of the Apollodorus frame (172c3)⁴³³ is Plato’s brother is not only shortsighted but bizarre in the context of Socrates’ remark that although it would not be easy for another to do so, “You, I believe, will agree with me about the following” (*R.* 475e6–7) just prior to re-introducing the Beautiful. Others have noted specific references to (or anticipations of) *Gorgias* and *Meno*,⁴³⁴ but it is in the context of the εἶδωλα ἀρετῆς and the aforementioned proliferation of “happiness-words” that the dialogues between *Lysis* and *Meno* can be recognized as the rigorous gymnastic training that Plato will use to test those who have been appropriately entranced by the sweet music they will hear at the climax of Diotima’s Discourse. It was all downhill for the Ten Thousand after their cohesion and virtue allowed them to catch sight

430. See *Ascent to the Good*, 202–204, especially on Thucydides 2.51.5.

431. See *Ascent to the Good*, §11.

432. Altman, “Reading Order,” uses these three dialogues to introduce the concept.

433. Cf. Bury, *Symposium of Plato*, 3 (on 172c) and Rowe, *Symposium*, 127 (on 172a3).

434. See Pohlenz, *Platos Werdezeit*, 381, including 381n2.

of the sea midway through Xenophon's *Anabasis*,⁴³⁵ but Plato has no intention of letting that happen to us. The Eudaemonist Shortcut already implicit in the *Symposium* Substitution—and soon enough to blossom into the Shorter Way of his mighty *Republic*⁴³⁶—will serve as the sort of basanistic temptation that it will be our responsibility to resist if we are to tackle the more arduous ascent to the Idea of the Good.

Naturally this is a very different kind of “temptation” from the one we encountered in *Hippias Major*. There it was *ἀπὸ τὸ καλόν* that remained just over the horizon behind the next ridge. And important as are the future developments toward which *Symposium* points, it is in its relationship with the series of which it is the *τέλος* that the true beauty of the Platonic Reading Order comes into view. Having emphasized throughout the relationship between *Symposium* and *Protagoras* as Bookends, it is the entire structure of the nine dialogues considered in *Ascent to the Beautiful* that now deserves praise, especially in the context of Plato's use of ring-composition in the final Ascent. Once placed in the middle of the series, *Hippias Major* not only creates the arithmetical symmetry between the three “elementary” dialogues between it and *Protagoras* (on the one hand) and the three “musical” dialogues between it and *Symposium* on the other; it also reveals Plato's use of ring-composition on a grander scale, i.e., in the construction of the Reading Order. Considered in this light, there are three pairs of pre-*Symposium* dialogues between the Bookends that pivot around the central *Hippias Major*: *Alcibiades Major/Menexenus*, *Alcibiades Minor/Ion*, and *Lovers/Hippias Minor*.

Within the uneasy alliance between (1) Socratic Ignorance, (2) Socrates as an exemplar of virtue, and (3) the Aristotle-endorsed claim that the historical Socrates *incorrectly* regarded Virtue as Knowledge, the latter is the weak link,⁴³⁷ and in this study and its sequel, I have dared to defend this heretical view. Naturally things get easier when Socrates treats this “cardinal Socratic doctrine” as a mere hypothesis in *Meno*,⁴³⁸ but not much.⁴³⁹ What should be easy to prove is that while Virtue is a (if not the) primary concern of Socratic as opposed to Presocratic philosophy, Plato—as his Socrates reveals first in *Symposium* through Diotima—regarded philosophy *as neither knowledge nor ignorance*, but rather placed it between them, and that he was at some considerable pains to make sure they remembered it in *Lysis* and *Euthydemus*.⁴⁴⁰ It is the connection between *Lovers* and *Hippias Minor* that prepares

435. See Tim Rood, *The Sea! the Sea! The Shout of the Ten Thousand in the Modern Imagination* (London: Duckworth, 2005).

436. See *Ascent to the Good*, 1, 46–47, and 289.

437. See Smith, “Plato's Hagiography.”

438. See *Ascent to the Good*, 494–97.

439. See *Ascent to the Good*, 439–42.

440. See *Ascent to the Good*, 89–92, for the hypothesis that φιλοσοφία is “the First Friend.”

us to understand what happens to philosophy in *Symposium*: after failing to determine what kind of knowledge or τέχνη philosophy is in *Lovers* (see §8), *Hippias Minor* proves that all τέχνη and ἐπιστήμαι enable their possessors to perform acts both bad and base (*Hp. Mi.* 375b8–c3). As a result, and even after excising *Lovers*, *Hippias Minor* can only be construed as a defense of “Virtue as Knowledge” by reducing virtue to the one science that aims exclusively at self-benefit (see §11). But when they are considered together, placed as they are on either side of *Hippias Major*, both *Lovers* and *Hippias Minor*—building on the incipient defense of ignorance in *Alcibiades Minor* and the inspired rhapsode’s lack of τέχνη and ἐπιστήμη in *Ion*—sharpen the dilemma with which *Protagoras* ends, especially since *Meno* will show that it is not by being taught “what virtue is” that Plato intends for his students to acquire it.

And this is where “divine dispensation [θεία μοῖρα]” must enter. Precisely because Virtue is not the kind of Knowledge that Plato can use Socrates (or Socrates can use Diotima) simply to teach, the practitioner of basanistic pedagogy knows for a fact that it is beyond his personal control as an educator to pass it along to his students. Unfortunately, our current discontent with the God-based dimension of Plato’s thought is even stronger than our uncritical acceptance of Aristotle’s Socrates as both “the historical Socrates” and the Socrates of “Plato’s early dialogues.” As a result, *Alcibiades Major* (even without the More Perfect Mirror) is still on life-support, *Alcibiades Minor* and *Theages* are beyond reviving, and *Ion* has had to fight for its life. Despite the excision of the one and a resolutely τέχνη-friendly reading (like Stern-Gillet’s) of the other, *Ion* and *Alcibiades Minor* are both clearly oriented to the divine, and in their case, the presence of ring-composition extends to Socrates’ claims about “the divine Homer” in both (*Alc.2* 147c6–7 and *Ion* 530b10). And thus, while neither the inspired Socrates of *Ion* (see §12) nor Socrates the concealed poet of the perfect prayer in *Alcibiades Minor* (*Alc.2* 142e1–143a5 and 148b5–8) are any more congenial to current sensibilities than the obedient servant of Apollo (*Phd.* 85b4–5) or the equally obedient recipient of the Divine Sign (*Alc.1* 103a4–b1), θεία μοῖρα is what it is even if we refuse to allow θεοφιλῶς πράττειν to trump its fallacious cousin (*Alc.1* 134d1–e3). Prepared by following the source of inspiration from the rings of iron back to the Magnet in *Ion*,⁴⁴¹ the reader who reaches *Symposium* will know how to climb through τὰ καλά all the way back up to their attractive source in the equally magnetic pull of αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν. Finally, what accrues to the philosopher at the culmination of that Ascent—once having

441. See Gerhard Faden, *Platons dialektische Phänomenologie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005), 15–17, 88, and 303, for the connection between *Ion* and the Divided Line, with the magnet analogous to the Line’s First (and highest) Part.

begotten others and nourished them—is to become θεοφίλης, and that’s the pious limit of what Plato the Teacher strove to be.⁴⁴²

And finally, there are the two dialogues at a third remove from the center. The link between *Alcibiades Major* and *Menexenus* is dying for your friends in battle, for the gallant will know why it is specifically “the power and the courage [ἀνδρεία] of love” that Socrates is praising as best he can, both now and always, in the coda (212b7–8; cf. ἀνδρεία at *Alc. I* 115b7 and *Mx.* 247d4–e1). In an earlier note, I quoted in the original German some words that Pohlenz wrote in 1913, but in memory of Wilhelm Eckert—and many other promising young Plato scholars and Platonists on both sides of No Man’s Land—they deserve to be translated here:

Inspired, he [sc. Phaedrus in *Smp.*] tells how Love urges one on even to self-sacrifice [*Aufopferung*]. But the highest is when the Beloved gives his life for the Lover. Of that he dreams, like our own youth, of a hero’s death [*Heldentod*] for the fatherland [*fürs Vaterland*] (180b).⁴⁴³

The words “like our own youth,” so terrible in the context of “this universal feast of death” (Mann) that would erupt the following year, apply to Plato’s time as well, and it was their keen and prior awareness of what a *Heldentod* looked like that would have made many of Plato’s first students resistant to the Final Argument of *Protagoras* from the start, even if they hadn’t already read Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus*. As a resolute opponent of the First World War,⁴⁴⁴ I can well understand why this element of Platonism has been forgotten or concealed in its aftermath. But with all due respect to Wilfred Owen’s identification of Horace’s *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* as “the old lie,”⁴⁴⁵ Plato’s Athens stood on the verge of patriotic extinction and would

442. As opposed, that is, to becoming a θεός himself, the impious goal desiderated by the philosopher of the *Theaetetus* Digression, the Eleatic Stranger’s restorative Myth in *Statesman*, or the Athenian Stranger himself, all in accordance with the process that begins with *Timaeus-Critias*. I very much regret that I encountered Irmgard Männlein-Robert’s “Der ferne Gott—Ideen auf Distanz? Die siebte Aporie im Kontext (Plat. *Prm.* 133b4–135b4),” a conference paper delivered in Paris on July 18, 2019, only after having published my volumes on the post-*Republic* dialogues. It is precisely in opposition to “the immanent god” joining *Timaeus*, *Theaetetus*, *Statesman*, and *Laws-Epinomis* that “the distant god” of *Parmenides*—whose “distance” precludes the possibility of any knowledge-based despotism being exerted on us (*Prm.* 134d9–11)—not only prepares the student to resist what is to come in the aforementioned dialogues, but proves what I have long suspected: that Platonism laid the foundation for the separation of Church and State.

443. Pohlenz, *Platos Werkezeit*, 373; it is often remarked that the German youth went off to the First World War with the works of Schopenhauer in their back-packs; 386–87 is as nice a statement as I have found of how Plato, as mediated by Schopenhauer, contributed to their readiness for *Aufopferung*.

444. See my “Singin’ in the Shade: An Introduction to Post-Post-War Thought” in Matthew Sharpe, Rory Jeffs, and Jack Reynolds (eds.), *100 years of European Philosophy Since the Great War: Crisis and Reconfigurations*, 27–41 (New York: Springer, 2017).

445. Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est,” ending with: “If in some smothering dreams you too could pace / Behind the wagon that we flung him in, / And watch the white eyes writhing in his

give way to Macedon shortly after his death, despite the best efforts of several of his most noteworthy students.

Perhaps if Plato's "Program of the Academy" had ended with *Symposium*, there would be some justification for a post-War rejection of the kind of idealism that finds nobility in self-sacrifice *fürs Vaterland*. But thanks to the Sicilian Expedition—the uninvited guest at Agathon's celebration (see §15)—there is no ignorant bellicosity even at this early stage of the Reading Order, and especially in the post-*Republic* dialogues, Plato's watchword will be: "We won't get fooled again." If a few more young Europeans had become immune to the bellicose *ἔρως* of Alcibiades in the light of its tragic consequences, and who had acquired the interpretive skills and suspicion of authority needed to see through the theological-political tricks of Timaeus, Critias, the Eleatic, and the Athenian Strangers while they were studying Greek, they might have been more resistant to those who took advantage of their willingness to die like heroes for a better tomorrow in 1914. A voluntary Return to the Cave remains a noble ideal, and with no shortage of indications that we are presently facing the crisis of our own Republic—a theological-political crisis that will make us "a story and a byword throughout the world"⁴⁴⁶—there is more need than ever for philosophers who are willing to follow the example of Plato the Teacher, not least of all by becoming teachers themselves. Nobody goes into the profession without realizing that they might very well be happier and certainly more prosperous by choosing "to flourish" along more conventional lines, and that's how it should be, for it is not on a eudaemonist basis that one makes the life-altering decision for *αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν*. Like any rewards there may be for virtue in the afterlife, the joys of being a teacher are only accessible to those who preferred what is honorable to what is advantageous in the first place, as Justice demands.

face, / His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin; / If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood / Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs, / Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud / Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,— / My friend, you would not tell with such high zest / To children ardent for some desperate glory, / The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est / pro patria mori.*"

446. "For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword throughout the world." John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630), in John R. Vile (ed.), *Founding Documents of America: Documents Decoded* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2015).

Epilogue

Imagining Plato's Academy

Others have imagined it, of course, and among them, my favorite is P. A. Brunt.¹ In "Plato's Academy and Politics," Brunt attempts to discredit any evidence for Plato's active concern with politics and thus for preparing philosophers to return to the Cave. Earlier in his career, Brunt had attempted to dissolve what little evidence remains that Cicero knew that Caesar was conspiring against the Republic from an early date.² True to form, his account of the Academy is anything but Ciceronian. Of Plato's students he writes:

They are indeed said to have included some Athenians in public life: Chabrias, Demosthenes, Hyperides, Lycurgus, Phocion. The testimony, especially for the first two, is unreliable. Zeller observed that there is no trace of Platonic Ideas in the speeches of the orators named. Equally there is none in their policies.³

Naturally it does not occur to Brunt that it was not "*in their policies*" but rather in their decision to enter public life *after* having left the Academy—to return to the Cave of political life—that testifies to Plato's influence. As for the anti-Macedonian orientation of their "policies," Brunt is far less critical while considering countervailing evidence *against* what might be called "a tyrannicide Academy."⁴ Taking the *Theaetetus* Digression as his point of

1. P. A. Brunt, "Plato's Academy and Politics," in Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought*, 282–342 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). For earlier efforts, see Hans Herter, *Platons Akademie*, second edition (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 1952), 25–26.

2. On P. A. Brunt, "Three Passages from Asconius," *Classical Review* 7 nos. 3–4 (December 1957), 193–195, see my *Revival of Platonism*, 68n49.

3. Brunt, "Plato's Academy," 300–301; better on this evidence, found primarily in Plutarch, is Pierre Maxime Schuhl, "Platon et l'activité politique de l'Académie," *Revue des Études Grecques* 59–60 (1946), 46–53.

4. See Brunt, "Plato's Academy," 289–99.

orientation,⁵ and emphasizing for corroboration the reluctance of philosophers to return to the Cave,⁶ Brunt concludes: “The evidence on the political activities of Plato’s students is too weak to sustain in itself the thesis that it was one of his chief aims to prepare them for statecraft.”⁷

Useful for creating dialectical friction, Brunt’s account must be recognized as no less imaginative than mine. Nor are we alone. There are so many basic questions about Plato’s Academy that have not even been raised, let alone answered, and our lack of evidence about how the school functioned in Plato’s lifetime creates an interpretive *tabula rasa*.⁸ Was the Academy a day school? How old were Plato’s students, what did they come to learn, and what did he expect them to have learned already? How many of them attended, and how many teachers other than Plato taught them there? Based on a new way of thinking about *Protagoras* in §1, I have suggested some answers to these questions, but other equally natural questions remain: how long did Plato expect his students to stay in the Academy? Was there anything like “graduation,” and if so were there any kind of requirements in order to graduate? Were there junior and senior students or grade levels of any kind? In what way, if any, did the Academy resemble what we think of as a school, and what kind of pedagogy did Plato employ in it? In offering answers to such questions—natural questions to raise despite the fact that few have raised them⁹—one preliminary point needs to be emphasized: the answers I offer *are no more speculative than any others*. We simply do not know, and therefore can do nothing more than speculate. In a word, we can only *imagine* Plato’s Academy.

5. Brunt, “Plato’s Academy,” 301: “In the *Theaetetus*, Plato pictures genuine philosophers as men preoccupied with the investigation of nature ([*Tht.*] 173e) and in pursuit of a godlike moral perfection (176b–d).”

6. Brunt, “Plato’s Academy,” 303–304: “Moreover, even in the ideal state the philosophers, while engaged in the contemplative life, which incidentally yields the purest and most lasting pleasures ([*R.*] 586f.), will descend with reluctance from the eternal sphere of light and truth to the transient shadows of the Cave.”

7. Brunt, “Plato’s Academy,” 330; the explanation for this “in itself” is that Brunt has now supplemented his earlier discussion of “the political activities of Plato’s students” with “theoretical” readings of *R.*, *Plt.*, and *Lg.* (304–312) and a deflationary account of Plato’s relations with Dion (314–330), albeit allowing on 329 that “Dion did liberate Syracuse ([*Ep.*] 336a) and did intend to give the city a just system of laws.” Naturally the attached note (329n90) reminds us: “it remained a mere design.”

8. Before launching into his own version, the extent of our ignorance—as well as the practices usually deployed to fill the void—are entertainingly discussed in Cherniss, *The Riddle*, 61–62, concluding with: “The external evidence for the nature of the Academy in Plato’s time is extremely slight.” More recently, see Gucker, “Plato in the Academy,” 89: “the issue of Plato’s teaching activities is like a jigsaw puzzle in which most of the pieces are missing.” For such evidence as remains, see Riginos, *Platonica*, 119–150.

9. Cf. G. C. Field, *Plato and His Contemporaries: A Study in Fourth-Century Life and Thought* (London: Methuen, 1930), 59: “For whom did he write the dialogues? What aim did he hope to achieve in them? What was their relation to his oral teaching? Some answer must be attempted, though it can only be a conjecture.”

Of those who have done so, most have taken their orientation from the course of studies described in *Republic 7*.¹⁰ A good example is H. I. Marrou's magisterial *Histoire de l'Éducation dans l'Antiquité*.¹¹ Drawing heavily on Plato's *Protagoras* to describe *sophistic* education in the chapter preceding the one devoted to the Academy,¹² he also situates Plato in the context of both later and contemporary developments. The latter are significant, and no attempt to imagine the Academy can afford to ignore Isocrates,¹³ the other great schoolmaster of the day. Offering Plato the faintest of praise,¹⁴ Isocrates belittles the importance of the same mathematical studies that Plato's *Protagoras* connected to Hippias (*Prt.* 318d9–e4). But there are two different ways to substantiate the claim that *Republic 7* describes the kind of instruction offered in the Academy. While Marrou (and of course many others) tend to imagine the Academy both through and beyond *Republic 7*¹⁵—where the arithmetic lesson on the indivisible and infinitely repeatable One tends to vanish into the cube roots of Theaetetus—I would see the studies as they are described in *Republic 7* as useful for imagining the Academy simply because reading *Republic 7* constitutes an education in those subjects.

The difference is, of course, that unlike previous imaginings, mine are based on the hypothesis that reading Plato's dialogues, *Republic* included, constituted the Academy's curriculum. While there is no evidence that it did, there is likewise no proof that it didn't. There is an assumption, even a prejudice that it didn't, but "the Curricular Hypothesis" has one advantage to make up for that: all the evidence for imagining the Academy *on its basis* actually

10. Friedländer, *Plato* 1, 92: "If any details may be assigned to the Academy, it is the instruction of the guardians in the *Republic*." So, too, Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* 4, 22: "It is reasonable to assume that the curriculum in the Academy was modeled on that which he sets out so carefully in the *Republic*."

11. H. I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'Éducation dans l'Antiquité* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1948).

12. Fifteen passages from *Prt.* are cited in Marrou, *Histoire de l'Éducation*, 89–101.

13. Consider the description of his own students (note the reference to tuition) in Isocrates, *Antidosis*, 289 (George Norlin translation): "For while in the prime of vigor [ἐν ταύταις ταῖς ἀκμασίς], when most men of their age are most inclined to indulge their passions, they have disdained a life of pleasure [αἱ ἡδοναί; if the choice to continue their studies with Plato or Socrates was recognized to result in a sacrifice of αἱ ἡδοναί, this sheds light on any given student's response to the Final Argument in *Prt.*]; when they might have saved expense and lived softly, they have elected to pay our money and submit to toil [πονεῖν]; and, though hardly emerged from boyhood [ἄρτι δ' ἐκ παιδίων], they have come to appreciate what most of their elders do not know, namely, that if one is to govern his youth rightly and worthily and make the proper [καλή] start in life [ἀρχὴ τοῦ βίου], he must give more heed [ἢ ἐπιμέλεια; cf. *Alc. I* 119a9 and 127e9–128a3] to himself than his possessions [τὰ αὐτοῦ; cf. *Alc. I* 128a2 and 128d3–5], he must not hasten and seek to rule over others [as of course Alcibiades paradigmatically wishes to do, and as Socrates prevents Menexenus from doing at *Mx.* 234b4] before he has found a master [ὁ ἐπιστατῶν; cf. ἐπιστάτης τοῦ ποιήσαι δεινὸν λέγειν at *Prt.* 312d6–7] to direct his own thought, and he must not take as great pleasure or pride in other advantages [ἀγαθά; cf. *Alc. I* 133c23 and 134d8] as in the good things which spring up in the soul [τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐγγιγνόμενα; cf. *Alc. I* 133b9] under a liberal education [ἡ παιδεία]." Plato was dead when Isocrates wrote this.

14. Isocrates, *Antidosis*, 261–69.

15. Marrou, *Histoire de l'Éducation*, 122–26.

exists, i.e., the dialogues of Plato, including *Republic 7*. In my case, imagining the Academy follows from applying the Curricular Hypothesis to the existing evidence in order to recreate a plausible ordering of those dialogues, now reconsidered as a coherent curriculum. As a result, it is unnecessary to privilege *Republic 7* as our best evidence of what Plato taught in the Academy because better evidence is found in the dialogues *as a whole*. This is not to say that emphasis on *Republic 7* is misguided, however; so pedagogical a text must necessarily contain crucial evidence. But I place less emphasis on the five mathematical sciences than on the five years Socrates allocates to the study of dialectic (*R.* 539e2–3). Following Socrates in the belief that the mathematical sciences are merely a prelude (*R.* 531d6–8), I regard the thirty-five dialogues as a whole—once arranged in their proper order (cf. *R.* 537b7–c3)—as the education *in dialectic* Plato offered his students in the Academy.

In comparison with the considerable distance dividing Brunt's apolitical image of the Academy from my own,¹⁶ a veritable imaginative chasm opens up here. The five years Socrates mentions in *Republic 7* begin when the Guardians have reached the age of thirty (*R.* 537d3) and end when they reach thirty-five; youngsters, who would abuse dialectic, should not be exposed to it at an early age (*R.* 537e1–539c4). As a result, the passage about dialectic in *Republic 7* has already played an important role in discussions of the Academy, engendering two equally misguided ways of imagining it: if Plato taught youngsters in the Academy, he could not have taught them dialectic,¹⁷ or if exercise in dialectic was an integral part of the curriculum, Plato's students must have been mature men.¹⁸ Although "literalism" is not an adequate description for these equally humorless suggestions—after all, using *Republic 7* to imagine the Academy necessarily requires imagination from every interpreter—it is between them that we can find the playful Plato. Imagine instead the Academy's third-year students laughing at another of Plato's Performative Self-Contradictions while they debate—although one would like to think that by this point in their education there was no need to debate but only delight in such matters—whether Socrates is right to exclude young men of their age from doing what they have done since first encountering *Protago-*

16. For another example, cf. the political emphasis in C. W. Müller, "Platons Akademiegründung," in Müller, *Kleine Schriften zur antiken Literatur und Geistesgeschichte*, 422–439 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1999) with the a- or even anti-political approach informing Ernst Kapp, "Platon und die Akademie," in Kapp, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, edited by Hans Diller and Inez Diller (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1968).

17. Cf. Marrou, *Histoire de l'Éducation*, 124–27, and Cherniss, *Riddle*, 66.

18. Cherniss, *Riddle*, 69–70: "If this section of the *Republic* is in any way applicable to Plato's own activity in the Academy, it certainly forbids us to suppose that he there came before pupils under thirty years of age, who did not have and could not get the training which he believed to be a necessary preliminary even for the carefully selected students of his ideal state, and glibly lectured to them on the doctrine of ideas; in fact, it makes it seem highly improbable that he lectured on the doctrine or tried to teach it formally at all." Cf. Friedländer, *Plato* 1, 98: "The significant thing is not the Academy as an institution but as a way of life."

ras. The moment we begin to imagine Plato's students as boisterous adolescents, our capacity for imagining the Academy increases, and this capacity should inform our response to the Athenian Stranger's claim that "the boy is of all wild beasts the most difficult to manage [δυσμεταχειριστότατον]" (*Lg.* 808d4–5), for it is above all in *Laws* that Plato counts on his charges, like puppies, to use dialectic with great delight while ripping things to shreds (*R.* 539b4–7).¹⁹

Based on the fact that education as described in both *Republic* 7 and *Laws* 7 is consistently measured in years, and that five of them are devoted to dialectic in the former, I imagine the following answers to the questions raised above: Plato expected his students to stay in the Academy for five years, and they graduated when they had reached thirty-five, i.e., when they had read all thirty-five of his dialogues. Since the course of study required five years to complete, there were not only junior and senior students but five distinct grade levels as measured by a student's progress through the dialogues. And as the principal basis for imagining what an academic year looked like in Plato's Academy, I offer as evidence the nine dialogues considered in this book, beginning with *Protagoras* and ending with *Symposium*. It is a balanced and well-rounded introduction to philosophy, understood as intermediate between ignorance and wisdom. As an experienced public high school teacher,²⁰ I can confirm that several hours a day of hearing, reading, discussing, and performing these dialogues could be accomplished by a typical freshman in their fifteenth year—a day-student, of course—let alone an Athenian with leisure (cf. *Prt.* 326c3–6) who had made the choice to be there. An even handier example of what I am calling "an Academic year" would be devoted to Plato's *Republic*, along with *Cleitophon* and *Letters*.

Without by any means dispensing with the evidence of *Republic* 7, then, my approach to imagining the Academy depends more heavily on *Protagoras*, and does so in two different ways. The first imagines Hippocrates as the typical freshman, arriving at the Academy in order to learn how to speak cleverly (*Prt.* 312d6–7) so that "he would be most capable of both saying and doing the things of the city" (*Prt.* 319a1–2). It also imagines the Garden of Callias, in which the freshman's education begins, as an image of the Academy itself, with Plato as its "Protagoras," assisted, perhaps, by a "Hippias" to teach physics and a "Prodicus" to teach logic. As suggested at the start, Plato

19. For the proof-text that the Athenian Stranger does not speak for Plato, likewise in *Laws* 7 (*Lg.* 812d4–e7), see *Guardians on Trial*, 296–98, and *Ascent to the Good*, xlii.

20. In making the point that those who imagine the Academy tend to do so ("by a more or less unconscious retrojection"; 61) on the basis of their own experience, see Cherniss, *Riddle*, 62: "No American, to my knowledge, has yet undertaken to prove that it was really the prototype of our co-educational state university, though the evidence for such an interpretation would be no weaker than is that for some of the others, since according to one tradition—or scandal, if you please—there were two women in the student body."

allows Protagoras to describe the education these freshmen have *already* received in the Great Speech (*Prt.* 325e4–326a4) and the complementary discussion of Simonides led by Socrates creates a sense of continuity with that elementary education: still seated on benches, Plato’s students will now be reading and studying the artifacts of a greater poet. But there’s a second way of using *Protagoras* to imagine the Academy, and it provides more answers. By combining the hypothesis that Plato’s freshmen saw *Protagoras* as a play on the opening day of a five- or even simply multi-year Academic program, the result is that Plato’s students would see *Protagoras* again at the start of each new “academic” year, and more specifically, that they saw it performed a second time after having read, studied, and possibly performed *Symposium*.

Part of this book’s purpose is to show how Plato ensures that they will see *Protagoras* very differently than they did the first time after having studied the dialogues that culminate in *Symposium*. And it is the intentionality behind this difference—as when the audience realizes the merely apparent absence of Aristophanes thanks to the presence of Phaedrus, Eryximachus, Pausanias, Agathon, and Alcibiades²¹—that illustrates what I regard as the playfully Platonic response to the critique of writing his Socrates offers us in *Phaedrus*: the same text manifestly does *not* say the same thing each time we read it (see *Guardians in Action*, §10). Nor is it only the fact that a series of repeat performances of *Protagoras* provides an experiential basis for recognizing the *Schriftkritik* as another example of Performative Self-Contradiction. A deadpan reading of that critique has probably always been the principal obstacle to filling in the *tabula rasa* of Academic pedagogy with the Curricular Hypothesis.²² Since Plato valued the written word so little, we read, it must have been an extra-textual oral instruction that he imparted in the Academy. Only by imagining an inaudible oral teaching could more than two thousand years of Platonic scholarship have strangely managed to overlook the commonsense possibility that it was Plato’s eminently teachable dialogues that constituted the original and eternal curriculum of his Academy.

Even when they are read in the most haphazard order imaginable, reading those dialogues and debating how to interpret them is an education in itself. But by imagining an *orderly* way to read them, based on sound pedagogical principles, I have tried to show how Plato develops and refines our ability to interpret his own writing en route to the acquisition of virtue. When Socrates,

21. Goldberg, *Commentary on Plato’s Protagoras*, 329, discovers the comic implications of Aristophanes’ absence in *Prt.*; a review of Goldberg by C. C. W. Taylor, “Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Classical Review* 35, no. 1 (1985), 67–68, promptly rejects the discovery.

22. Cf. Friedländer, *Plato* 1, 118: “There is no doubt that Plato, in his early [this is said on the basis of *Prt.*; see 113 and 165] and even in his later years, was conscious of the problematic nature of all writing and that he did not believe he had said the most serious things in his written work, that is, in what has come down to us and what we are often inclined [erroneously?] to regard as his greatest creation, and perhaps the greatest achievement of the Greek genius.”

after interpreting Simonides, dismisses the value of trying to interpret an absent poet, we are still left with the necessity of interpreting the meaning of that dismissal, and the moment we begin doing so—in dialectical opposition to the contradiction he has just created—we enter the eternal Academy. In analyzing the series of dialogues that culminates with *Symposium*, I have emphasized the Reversal of *Protagoras*, i.e., the passages in subsequent dialogues that might cause one of Plato's readers to see *Protagoras* in a new light, and *Hippias Minor* stands out in this respect. By allowing Socrates to offer a transparently and deliberately deceptive interpretation of *Iliad* 9, Plato forces us to confront and interpret the fact that the same dialogue that flatly contradicts the claim that nobody errs willingly *in theory* does so in practice as well. Flattening out and humorlessly explaining away Plato's self-contradictions—which is standard operating procedure for the Order of Composition paradigm—is the principal stumbling block to interpreting his dialogues well.

This flattening out is in large measure a factor of age. Plato's most influential interpreters have not only been elderly professors but most of them seem to have forgotten what it was ever like to be young. For the same reason that Socrates himself repeatedly plays rhapsode in *Ion*, no adolescent would be content to hear Plato or anyone else play rhapsode while merely reading *Symposium* aloud to them. The dialogue *begs* for performance, and in the number of its speaking parts, we can easily imagine the dimensions of a "class" or "year" in the Academy. Whatever deeper reasons Plato may have had for writing dialogues, the most obvious one has been overlooked by the sophisticated: they are entertaining, and embody a playful pedagogy designed to capture the attention of a youthful audience; in a word, they make learning *fun*. And if the same student who memorized and performed Agathon's speech while studying *Symposium* at the end of the first year then got the chance to impersonate him silently in a performance of *Protagoras* staged for a new incoming class at the start of the second (albeit as little more than a chorus member), we are imagining the Academy *as a school*, and indeed a remarkably effective one at that. There is no existing evidence that makes this way of imagining the Academy *any* less plausible than what we have been offered by those who interpret Plato's dialogues as the markers of his changing views, or who have imagined his school as an anti-democratic think-tank dominated by an oral teaching that located his principal concern somewhere between natural-mathematical exploration and the kind of constitution-writing enacted in *Laws*.

In §14, I employed an obscenity to capture a glimpse of Plato's students: no adolescent could have avoided wondering whether Socrates was having sex with Alcibiades. It is in relation to that question that the multi-year

curricular hypothesis makes the most sense by getting it off to a ripping start. Once raised at the beginning of *Protagoras*, the question of sex is elevated by deliberate opacity and ambiguity in the *Alcibiades* dyad, only to be resolved by Alcibiades himself—the only source some of Plato’s students would have believed—in *Symposium*. While others might consider a prurient interest in such matters as an obstacle to “serious philosophy,” Plato uses it to capture the attention of even the dullest freshman, and perhaps it was one of the Academy’s unwritten rules that more advanced students should not gratify the curiosity of inquisitive beginners as to whether Socrates and Alcibiades were “getting it on.”²³ In short: beginning with the question-provoking *Protagoras*, the Curricular Hypothesis uses all the dialogues—not just *Phaedrus*, *Republic* 7, and *Laws*—to imagine the Academy, and the playful character of Plato’s instruction merges with his pedagogical effectiveness the moment we realize that the universally accessible comedy of Alcibiades’ failed seduction of Socrates participates in the Idea of τὸ καλόν in the form of “Platonic Love,” thereby making it possible for all of Plato’s students to compass as neophytes a Platonic ascent to the Beautiful.

With *Symposium* imagined as the τέλος of the first of the Academy’s five-year program, it becomes child’s play to imagine the subsequent curricular articulations. Even though there are anticipations of every Platonic dialogue in *Protagoras*, some connections are more significant than others. Since *Phaedo* stands last in the reconstructed Reading Order, its rejection of a measurement-based conception of virtue indicates that proximity to *Protagoras* scarcely requires consistency with it. Although the dialogues between *Euthyphro* and *Phaedo*—including *Sophist*, *Statesman*, and *Laws*—are considerably longer and more difficult than those between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, it is hardly impossible to imagine that Plato’s fifth-year students have by now been prepared to read and learn from them. As for the fourth year, it would begin with a post-*Republic* performance of *Protagoras* in which the Great Speech usefully anticipates the mixed use of μῦθος and λόγος in *Timaeus*; the revival of Protagoras himself in *Theaetetus* would be that year’s culmination. As for the second year, I will give further consideration to “the Repeat Performance Hypothesis” (or “RPH”) in *Ascent to the Good* because

23. Cf. Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 1.9. (John C. Rolfe translation): (John C. Rolfe translation): “my friend Taurus continued: ‘But nowadays these fellows who turn to philosophy on a sudden with unwashed feet, not content with being wholly ‘without purpose, without learning [ἄμουσοι], and without scientific training,’ even lay down the law as to how they are to be taught philosophy. One says, ‘first teach me this [*hoc me primum doce*],’ another chimes in, ‘I want to learn this, I don’t want to learn that’; one is eager to begin [*incipere gestit*] with the *Symposium* of Plato because of the revel of Alcibiades, another with the *Phaedrus* on account of the speech of Lysias.’” Note that both of these texts excite sexual curiosity and, more importantly, that the students wanted to read them too early, i.e., out of proper order.

of the close connections between *Protagoras* and *Laches*, *Charmides*, *Gorgias*, and especially *Meno*.

But the interpretive freedom made possible by an Epilogue, especially one that is explicitly based on the workings of imagination, must open the Academy's gateway just a bit wider. To begin with, the hypothesis that each of the five Academic years began with a performance of *Protagoras* frees us from the constrictive goal of offering a single comprehensive interpretation of this brilliant and delightfully confusing dialogue. Instead, the purpose of *Protagoras* is fully achieved when it gets Plato's students interested in what's to come. Whether or not we ultimately come to regard Virtue as Knowledge, the Unity of the Virtues, the Socratic Paradox, and the Hedonic Calculus as either "Socratic Doctrines" or "Platonic conclusions,"²⁴ will depend on what we have learned from the dialogues that follow. Of these puzzles, Plato seems to have regarded the Paradox as particularly educational, and if it continues to command the loyalty of some after *Hippias Minor* and *Republic*, they will find comfort, not comedy, in *Timaeus*, *Statesman*, and *Laws*. What seems most remarkable is the manner in which certain dialogues are so well-suited to reshaping our first impressions of *Protagoras*, and regardless of the doctrinal differences between our first and latest encounter with it, our changing experiences are going to disprove the critique of writing in *Phaedrus*. *Protagoras* bookends nicely with *Phaedo* in the following respect: just as the latter is the only dialogue which we can apply our knowledge of every other, so too the former is equally unique in being the only dialogue whose interpretation lies open until the end.

Most striking of all is the correlation between *Protagoras* and the following dialogues: *Symposium*, *Meno*, *Republic*, *Theaetetus*, and *Phaedo*. Although *Gorgias* and *Philebus* are in the same league thanks to the prominence of pleasure, the connections between these five and *Protagoras* are of a different order. This book has emphasized the connections between *Protagoras* and *Symposium*, with Socrates and Alcibiades, Agathon and the rest, and the philosophy-negating Binary of ἀμαθία and σοφία as the most important. But given the aporetic end to the initial conversation of whether or not virtue can be taught—a question that Plato the Teacher must find a way to answer positively somehow—*Meno* stands out almost as much, and Recollection not only offers an answer to the *Protagoras* ἀπορία but also, as

24. See Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*, revised edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 111 (in chapter 4; "The *Protagoras*: a science of practical reasoning"): "It is only with the aid of the hedonistic assumption that Socrates is able to reach conclusions that he clearly claims as his own. . . . We are, then, in the peculiar position of being unable to get rid of hedonism as a view of the character Socrates without distortion of the text, but unable, also, to see why such a controversial and apparently un-Platonic thesis should be allowed, undefended and even unexplored, to play such a crucial role in a major argument for important and well-known Platonic conclusions."

Schleiermacher pointed out, an easy way out of the question Socrates uses to skewer Alcibiades. As for *Republic*, a Cave-based response to the initial *κατάβασις* is a perfect example of “the Transformation of *Protagoras*,” unlikely to be less important than the kind of Reversal of *Protagoras* I have emphasized here, for now we see Socrates in new light. Equally transformative is the resurrection of Protagoras in *Theaetetus*, for it is now Protagoras whom we see differently. As for *Phaedo*, it must be said that the counterfeit measurement of virtue justifies having paid greater attention to the Reversal than the Transformation of *Protagoras*. But more importantly, all of these connections in tandem offer a second textual basis—this one anchored in the dialogues as a whole, not on a single passage in only one of them—for imagining a five-year Academic program.

Although imagining the Academy’s curriculum as a five-year program depends entirely on applying the reference to five years in *Republic* 7 to a *Protagoras*-punctuated reconstruction of the dialogues themselves, there also exists ancient evidence for “five years” as an Academic time-unit. The apocryphal *Letters of Chion of Heraclea*, already mentioned in the context of Xenophon (see §2), provides ancient evidence for other significant aspects of the way I am imagining the Academy, so many, in fact, that if I were given the opportunity to manufacture apparently ancient evidence to support my views, I could not have imagined anything that does so as effectively; I am therefore more grateful to Katarzyna Jażdżewska than I can easily express for bringing this text to my attention in 2014. In the twelfth letter, Chion informs his father that although he had intended to spend ten years at the Academy, he has decided to return home. The significance of those ten years has been explained in the eleventh: although his father wanted him to return home after five years (“you meant that five years were enough”), Chion believes this is an insufficient time-period (“five years is too short”) for him “to acquire virtue,” a *τέλος* that confirms my view that an initial *Protagoras* executes a Performative Self-Contradiction on the Academy’s purpose. Chion explains the subsequent reference to ten years with the letter’s third reference to five years: “Having therefore spent *another five years* [ἄλλη πενταετία], we will return, god willing.”²⁵ This reference to an ἄλλη πενταετία provides independent and ancient support for a five-year course in Plato’s Academy.

The penultimate letter, the sixteenth, is even more remarkable. Here Chion writes directly to Clearchus, the tyrant he will assassinate.²⁶ Chion assures Clearchus that the philosophy he has imbibed in Plato’s Academy has ren-

25. Düring, *Chion of Heracleia*, 63.

26. Brunt emphasizes that Clearchus was said to have studied at the Academy in “Plato’s Academy and Politics,” 289: “Clearchus made himself a peculiarly savage tyrant, and was at last killed by men who vainly tried to liberate the city. They too are said to have included Plato’s pupils [this is closest he comes to mentioning Chion], but it is more significant that they were of high birth; they probably

dered him entirely harmless. In the grand tradition of Diotima and the Athenian Laws in *Crito*, he includes in this letter a speech addressed to himself by the goddess “Tranquility [Ἡσυχία],” who reminds him: “you practiced justice, acquired self-control, and learnt to know God.” The stated reason that he poses no possible threat to Clearchus is that philosophy does in fact “soften the soul into quietude [ἡσυχον],” and the letter reaches a pinnacle of deception by falsely confirming exactly what Chion had initially feared was true before he met Xenophon:

When I was settled in Athens, I did not take part in hunting [κυνηγεῖν], nor did I go on shipboard to the Hellespont with the Athenians against the Spartans, nor did I imbibe such knowledge as makes men hate tyrants and kings, but I had intercourse with a man who is a lover of a quiet life and I was instructed in a most godlike doctrine. The very first precept of his was: seek stillness [ἡσυχίαν ποθεῖν].²⁷

Having devoted himself to “contemplating the principles of nature,” Chion includes an even more specific reference to the “assimilation to God [ὁμοίωσις θεῷ]” in the *Theaetetus* Digression, asking: “What can be more beautiful [κάλλιον] than to devote one’s leisure solely to one’s immortal self and try to bring that part of oneself into closer contact with that which is akin?”²⁸ In this way, Chion’s original misgivings about philosophy become the basis for his ability to deceive Clearchus and thus to attempt the liberation of Heracleia from tyranny:²⁹ what he had previously feared now becomes the spell by which he persuades the tyrant that he has nothing to fear from a student of Plato.

In the most recent edition of *The Letters of Chion* (2004), Pierre-Louis Malosse’s remarkable comments on this sixteenth letter create the kind of dialectical friction that makes him even more useful than Brunt:

Curiously, it is in his deceptive letter to Clearchus that Chion reveals himself to be most Platonic; it is there that he discusses subjects of metaphysical order (the divine part of the human soul) and properly philosophical (the necessary

acted from motives characteristic of aristocrats rather than on doctrinaire principles.” For an eloquent defense of τυραννοκτονία in Xenophon’s *Hellenica*, see 7.3.6–12.

27. Düring, *Chion of Heraclea*, 75 (16.5); see also 104: “Our author speaks in general terms of expeditions to the Hellespont. He might have thought of the expeditions of Chabrias.” Düring notes the connection to *Cynegeticus* on the same page.

28. *Chion of Heraclea*, 16.6 (Düring on 75); with the remark that follows—“(For I say that the divine things [τὰ θεῖα] are akin to the divine [τῷ θεῖῳ])”—cf. *Alc. I* 133c1–6 (without the disputed lines).

29. The attempt failed (hence Brunt’s “vainly” in n26). For a pragmatic as opposed to Brunt’s sociological “refutation” of Chion’s act on this basis, see Justin 16.5.5: “Qua re factum est, ut tyrannus quidem occideretur, sed patria non liberaretur,” a result also emphasized by Penwill, “Evolution of an Assassin,” 47n14. Cf. the Marathon Oath.

conditions for study, the idea philosophy learns first how to search); it is there that he constructs his personification [*prosopopée*] of Ἡσυχία (serenity) modeled on the Laws who appear in *Crito*. But since the text is presented in the previous letter as intended to give the impression that it has been penned by ‘a mere windbag,’ is it necessary to grasp that the author does not care about Plato? This throws into doubt the sincerity of the Platonism in the work as a whole.³⁰

Whether *The Letters of Chion* were written in the first or the fourth century A.D., its unknown author has a far better understanding of Platonism than Malosse thinks. If Cicero had ever mentioned Chion, I would have some evidence for attributing the *Letters* to him, for it is not in the subservient political quietism of a Plotinus but rather in the active political involvement of Dion, Phocion, Demosthenes, Lycurgus, Hyperides, and Cicero, that I have presented—throughout the five volumes of *Plato the Teacher*—an equally plausible alternative to the way Brunt would have us imagine Plato’s Academy in its original form, and by that I mean: before Chaeronea.

More respectable than *The Letters of Chion* is Plutarch’s *Life of Phocion*. As noted in §14, it is a particularly important document for reconstructing the political orientation of Plato’s Academy during his lifetime, not least of all because Phocion was fifteen years old in 387, the year usually mentioned as the date of its founding. The interplay of Phocion, Demosthenes, Lycurgus, and Hyperides is at the heart of his *Life*, most importantly when Phocion supports meeting Alexander’s demand that Athens surrender this Academic trio as the price of its defeat.³¹ Fortunately, Phocion is overruled, and Plutarch has already offered us valuable information on his relationship with the three.³² Although it would be too much to say that Phocion was pro-Macedonian—Demades plays that role in Plutarch’s *Life*—his prudent and sensible policy was that Athens, having now been beaten, should give way to the victor’s demands.³³ The others, however, are less pragmatic in their patriotism, and Demosthenes—thanks to “the Marathon Oath” in *On the Crown* (see §13)—famously so. The denouement occurs almost twenty years after Chaeronea when Antipater, having defeated another Athenian bid for independence, renews Alexander’s unmet demand. Four of Plato’s students are the active players in this revealing drama: over Xenocrates’ objections,

30. Malosse, *Lettres de Chion d’Héraclée*, 89.

31. Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 17.2; cf. Hyperides, *Against Diondas* (on which see §16). I will spell out my earlier insinuation in that section that it was from Aristotle that Alexander knew that the alumni of the Academy were particularly dangerous to the Macedonian cause.

32. See Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 9.5 (on Demosthenes), 9.6 (on Lycurgus), and 10.3 (on Hyperides) along with the debate with Demosthenes in the context of Chaeronea (16.2–4); cf. 23–24.1 on Leosthenes, subject of Hyperides’ *Funeral Speech*.

33. See Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 16.4 and 21.1; cf. 9.6 where Phocion makes the (self-contradictory?) claim: “Many things have I have recommended to them [that are] beautiful and expedient [καλὰ καὶ συμφέροντα].”

Phocion is once again willing to sell out Demosthenes and Hyperides.³⁴ The split of the principled party along with the mediating role of Xenocrates were infallible symptoms of the Academy's incipient transformation following Plato's death. But returning to the Cave is fraught with such perils, and it was for them that Plato had prepared his students,³⁵ and thanks to his dialogues, he continues to prepare us for them still.

34. See Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*, 27, especially 27.4 for Xenocrates' objections. For Demosthenes' overriding and consistent concern for τὸ καλόν, see Plutarch, *Life of Demosthenes*, 13.4.

35. Cf. Müller, "Platons Akademiegründung," 433: "Das Verlassen der Akademie ist Teil der Rückkehr in die Höhle."

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Having been persuaded by Plato's *Republic* that Justice requires the philosopher to go back down into the Cave, **William H. F. Altman** devoted his professional life to the cause of public education; since retiring in 2013, he has been working as an independent scholar on the continuation of *Plato the Teacher*. Born in Washington, D.C., where he was educated at the Sidwell Friends School, and with degrees in philosophy from Wesleyan University, the University of Toronto, and the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, he was a public high school teacher in Vermont, California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia; between 1980 and 2013 he taught social studies, history, philosophy, English, drama, and Latin as well as offering extra-curricular instruction in Ancient Greek. He began publishing scholarly articles in philosophy, intellectual history, and classics in 2007, and received his doctorate in 2010 with a dissertation on Hegel. *Ascent to the Beautiful* is the first (though published last) of his five-volume study of the reading order of Plato's dialogues, followed by *Ascent to the Good: The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues from Symposium to Republic* (2018), *Plato the Teacher: The Crisis of the Republic* (2012), *The Guardians in Action: Plato the Teacher and the Post-Republic Dialogues from Timaeus to Theaetetus* (2016), and *The Guardians on Trial: The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues from Euthyphro to Phaedo* (2016). With the publication of *Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche: The Philosopher of the Second Reich* (2013), he completed "A German Trilogy" that includes *Martin Heidegger and the First World War: Being and Time as Funeral Oration* (2012) and his first book, *The German Stranger: Leo Strauss and National Socialism* (2011). He is also the author of *The Revival of Platonism in Cicero's Late Philosophy: Platonis aemulus and the Invention of Cicero* (2016) and the editor of *Brill's*

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