

The Seal of the Author

Paradigm, *Logos* and Myth in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*

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Abstract

Recent trends in scholarship on Plato's philosophy have shifted emphasis from an almost exclusive focus on inductive and deductive logical techniques, and even ethics, to the treatment of image, myth and the literary dimension, above all in the work of scholars such as Kahn, Rowe and Gonzalez. In keeping with this trend, recent scholars, like Gill, Notomi and Collobert, have postulated the need for a philosophical image on the basis of a reading of the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. This thesis examines the unique significance given to the term 'paradigm' in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*. Paradigm is Plato's term for image. A close reading of these dialogues shows, however, that such an image is "philosophical" or dialectical only insofar as it leads to a proportionate grasp of higher, invisible, ethical realities. This is the connection the specialist work on image in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* bears to wider scholarship on the literary dimension of Plato.

Plato provides, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, three ways of making use of paradigms: (1) the use of an analogy, like the city and the soul and the weaving analogy, which is functionally equivalent to the analogy of the city and the soul, (2) an inductively defined universal essence, for example, the universal essence of a human being, like Socrates, and (3) an ethical character, like the Socrates Plato presents in his dramatic composition, or other characters presented in myth. The distancing effect Plato uses in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* suggests that Plato, himself, is the philosophical artist or image-maker.

This is an important topic for one unifying reason. The question of a philosophical image in Plato remains unanswered or inadequately answered. Although the *Sophist* and *Statesman* treat this question, the exceeding technicality of these dialogues has lead commentators, unanimously, to treat the exploration of image and essence in these Eleatic dialogues, as a kind of island, separated from Plato's work. My study, by leading readers of Plato to a greater awareness of the importance of these works for Plato on image and Plato as artist, turns this island into a peninsula.

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Introduction

“[T]hought and speech are the same [διάνοια μὲν καὶ λόγος ταὐτόν], except that what we call thought [διάνοια] is speech that occurs without the voice, inside the soul in conversation [διάλογος] with itself.”

-*Sophist*, 263e2-5

Plato's dialogues are works of art, conversations sprung from the mind of an author who chose to dramatize the life of philosophy. Plato is legendarily said to have burned his tragedies when he met the questioning philosopher Socrates, but he is also said to have kept a copy of Aristophanes' comedies under his pillow. Indeed, his dialogues, themselves, are dramatic and literary in shape and character. Even though Plato critiques poets like Hesiod and the dramatists, as well as mimesis or artistic portrayal in general, his philosophical work takes literary form. His dialogues depict a Socrates not primarily as an historical person but as a literary character. Plato characterizes a Socrates who is questioning and skeptical but who also explains that philosophy involves a search to grasp the essential nature of Forms or universal Ideas. Recent scholars have shifted attention to the question of the importance of understanding Plato as an artist who uses the dialogue form to represent his philosophy. This work is linked with new work studying the *Sokratikoi logoi*, portrayals of the life of a fictionalized Socrates, as a genre of literature in the fourth century to which authors like Plato and Xenophon contribute. A few new works have devoted attention to the implications of this new approach for Plato's later dialogues.¹ The most pertinent of these studies give focus to the exploration of image in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

¹ An exception to this rule is the collection of essays by Gill, C. and McCabe, M.M. eds., *Form and Argument in Late Plato*, Oxford, Clarendon, 2004. Cf. Zuckert, C., *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009.

The term paradigm, as the *Sophist* and *Statesman* show, signifies a philosophical image. Gill proposes the notion of “phantasmata” or “life-like appearances” that gain the “audiences’ complicity but which has avowedly no truth status.”² Collobert, drawing upon the work of Gill, suggests that the philosophical image, implied by Plato in the *Sophist*, must be a sort of “good” or informative phantasm. Yet Plato presents a critique of images in the *Sophist*, this critique echoes the critique of images that he calls *phantasms* in the *Sophist* and *Republic X*. In the *Republic* and *Sophist*, Plato defines the *phantasm* as a merely human image, the kind of disproportionate image used by poets or sophists. My view is that Plato proposes paradigm to signify this implied philosophical image, and the choice of this term enables him to claim his status as a sort of philosophical artist, in rivalry with the tradition of epic and dramatic poets.

My thesis explores the sense of paradigm as a kind of philosophical image in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. As such, it is a contribution to specialist literature on the status of image and mimesis in these two later period works. I will contrast and show the similarities that the lesson in using paradigms, in the *Sophist* and, above all, the *Statesman* bears with other dialogues. The Eleatic Visitor shows the Younger Socrates how to use a paradigm to produce a logos, to produce a myth and to use a paradigm to produce an analogy which yields a philosophically informative image. The dialogue is as much an exercise in rhetoric and mythic composition as it is logic. Yet the dramatic placement of the dialogue also has more general implications, which contribute to the new trend in the literature. Authors like Kahn, Lane and Gonzalez are critical of the bifurcation between a skeptical, historical earlier Socrates and a dogmatic or doctrinal Socrates in Plato’s dialogues. My interpretation will, in part, show how Plato’s Socrates is a literary character, even in the dialogues often thought to be most historically faithful, like the *Apology*.

² Gill, C., “Plato on Falsehood–Not Fiction,” in Gill, C. and Wiseman, T.P., eds., *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 1993, p. 50-51.

Paradigm, in dialogues like the *Timaeus* and even the *Republic*, signifies a universal and celestial Form which serves as a model upon which images are based. However, through the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, paradigm acquires the significance of a visible model that leads to a grasp of higher, unseen, ethical realities. Plato stages a representation of the Eleatic Visitor offering dialectic or philosophical instruction in how to use paradigms to a Younger Socrates. This echoes a similar and related lesson about the relation between dialectic, Forms and paradigm that Plato, in the *Parmenides*, had presented a Parmenides and Zeno imparting to a Younger Socrates. A point of this lesson had been to explain that paradigms cannot be identified directly with invisible essences or Forms, because paradigms are images or visible models. Nevertheless, the use of visible models proves to be necessary in order to grasp higher essences. For instance, the model of the individual human enables us to inductively define the essence of humanity. However, models can also be used to provide analogies, like the analogy of the city and the soul. Plato also implies that paradigms can be used in the act of mythical and narrative construction or composition, in the presentation of myths. Most strikingly, Plato calls Socrates himself a paradigm, implying that he, as artist or composer not only of myths in dialogues but of dramatic dialogues, is making use of a character, Socrates, who leads to this higher grasp of invisible realities.

Paradigm may mean visible model, but the term has an intermediate role in Plato's philosophy, connecting the visible to the invisible. Plato's *Statesman* introduces the sense of paradigm as a model or image that brings a true belief about a higher, ethical reality. This applies to the use of a model, like the city and the soul, that Plato describes as a kind of portrait which Socrates, as philosopher, uses to depict the soul. It also applies to the use of inductive example, the definition of a human being.

Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman* include expositions of logical technique and also explore rhetoric and even narrative composition. Although these dialogues do not exhibit the

level of artistic mastery that dialogues like the *Republic*, the *Timaeus* or the *Apology* show, they exhibit not only a logical but an artistic self-consciousness, which is, in certain respects, a great deal more notable. Plato's Eleatic Visitor attempts to define the scientific or philosophical artist, in contradistinction to the sophistic or poetic composer. Plato suggests, through the exchange between these characters, that there is a sort of craftsman or demiurge, echoing the divine artist of the *Timaeus*. Such an artist would use divine models or paradigms to bring true beliefs about essential reality. By creating a distancing effect, through these dialogues, Plato intimates that he, as artist composing the dialogues, is the philosophical artist which the Eleatic Visitor's search implies exists.

Plato's own dialogues, as dramatic and poetic compositions, are artistic productions. Although they feature characters who use techniques of demonstration, the dialogues themselves are merely probable or plausible portrayals, based only loosely on historical events. This is a characteristic not only of Plato's dialogues, but the genre of literature to which these dialogues belong. The Socratic discourses themselves have, as narratives, this probable quality. They are presented as dialogues that bring the ethical truth of life, regarding what people represented would do, given the circumstances. Plato actually shows the Eleatic Visitor critiquing the questioning activity of the character, Socrates.

This study focuses specifically on the later period work. However, it fits into a general scholarly approach that recent interpreters have proposed in critique of an earlier model of interpreting Plato's philosophy. The problem of image and paradigm, in Plato's philosophy, relates not only to the notion of essential Forms but also to the portrayal of Socrates, as a character, in Plato's dialogues. Although this is a contribution to the specialist work on late dialogues, like the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, it is also a contribution to a recent, general trend in secondary literature on Plato. Platonic scholarship, in the second half of the 20th century, was devoted to the question of Plato's theory of Forms and the related question

of concern for the historical Socrates. More recent trends have explored the role of Plato as dramatic artist, and these new interpretations challenge the assumption that the question of an historically authentic Socrates and the question about essential Forms need to be separated in the consideration of Plato's literary work.

Recent interpreters, like Kahn and Lane, have challenged the view that, when we read Plato's dialogues, we should distinguish an historical Socrates from a romanticized or fictionalized Socrates, who introduces a Platonic notion of Forms. For this reason, Kahn describes his work as "deliberately provocative, since" his desire is to "challenge both the chronology and philosophical interpretation generally accepted for the dialogues called Socratic."³ In this article, Kahn maintains that he is "not primarily interested in questions of chronology, or even in Plato's intellectual 'development.'"⁴ Rather, his purpose is to "challenge" the "view" that "tends to assume that Plato's motivation in" the so-called earlier or Socratic "dialogues was primarily historical[.]"⁵ That is, Kahn challenges the view that the so-called earlier depictions of Socrates are meant merely "to preserve and defend the memory of Socrates by representing him as faithfully as possible."⁶ Instead, Plato's Socrates, even in dialogues often considered earlier, like the *Euthyphro*, is propounding doctrinal notions about essential Forms in the act of considering the nature of essential definitions. This is a pedagogical or propaedeutic device on the part of Plato. My view is that this literary device extends to the later dialogues.

Kahn's critique of Vlastos' approach represents a considerable shift in contemporary scholarship on Plato. Vlastos, according to Lane, "takes naïve developmentalism to its extreme, by arguing that Plato's dialogues at each stage record his 'honest' views, even if

³ Kahn, C., "Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues," Smith, N.D. ed. *Plato: Critical Assessments, Vol. 1, General Issues of Interpretation*, Routledge, London, 1998, p. 120.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

these are sometimes no more than a ‘record of honest perplexity.’”⁷ Most dubiously, Vlastos “also takes an extreme stance on the Socratic problem, by insisting that the ‘Socratic’ dialogue represents not just Plato’s view of the man, but an accurate historical account.”⁸ Lane extols “Charles Kahn” for developing a “version” of “sophisticated developmentalism.”⁹ Kahn argues that “the characteristic concerns of Socrates such as definition and virtue are protreptic to Platonic middle period concerns.”¹⁰

The earlier developmental framework of interpreters like Vlastos is based upon “two claims” or assumptions:¹¹ (1) Plato offers, in earlier dialogues, an historically authentic Socrates who says nothing about Forms; (2) in middle and later work, Plato presents a fictionalized Socrates who offers theories about eternal and immutable Forms (2). Kahn, with Lane, questions what he calls the “counterpart assumption” to the assumption that the so-called earlier dialogues give a faithful account of the historical Socrates.¹² According to this assumption, Socrates, in the middle period dialogues, comes to be seen “as a mouthpiece to express whatever philosophical doctrines Plato himself holds at the time of writing.”¹³ Kahn accepts that “there must be some truth in both assumptions” since “Plato surely does attempt to give a life-like portrait of Socrates and also sometimes puts in Socrates’ mouth views which must be Plato’s[.]”¹⁴ Kahn, nevertheless, objects that “neither assumption takes seriously into account the fact that the dialogues are works of dramatic art, and in most cases of dramatic fiction.”¹⁵ If we regard Plato’s works as a whole as fictive, according to Kahn and Lane, we can overlook the need to ascribe to Plato a portrait that perfectly matches with an historical Socrates. In this way, Kahn’s approach bears similarities with the third way of

⁷ Lane, M., “Socrates and Plato: An Introduction,” in Rowe, C., & Schofield, M. ed., *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge Up, 2000, p. 161.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Kahn, C., “Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues,” *op. cit.*, p. 120.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Gonzalez,. Gonzalez holds that Plato presents skeptical arguments through his literary rendering of Socrates but also has this same Socrates introduce doctrines about Forms.¹⁶

There are close parallelisms between the criticisms of Vlastos expressed by Lane and Kahn and the views expressed by Gonzalez of a need for a third way of Platonic interpretation.¹⁷ Gonzalez holds that to “the unprejudiced reader, it is evident that there is no single “theory of forms” in the dialogues.”¹⁸ Rather, one finds what “one scholar has called “impressionistic language” from which readers, starting with Aristotle, have attempted to construct a “theory of forms.”¹⁹ Plato’s language concerning the Forms is often vague, especially in dialogues like the *Republic* and *Phaedo*. Indeed, no completely coherent, single account of what Forms means can be reconstructed from the dialogues alone. Yet Plato does talk about the essential Forms in a more specific, technical way, in dialogues like to *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

These technical expositions, taken in conjunction with Aristotelian testimony, can be used to shed light on the relation that formal essence bears to induction and deductive argument. My view is that the differences in Plato’s presentation of Forms have a specific relation to his use of logical techniques of induction and deduction, in the course of dialectical exchange. Plato presents, in a protreptic manner, the notion of defining or refuting a defined universal essence but explains this notion with greater technical acuity through the *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*. This consideration is, itself, tied up with Socrates as not only an example or paradigm of a particular human, but as a character Plato as a literary artist portrays in his dialogues.

¹⁶ Gonzalez, F., “Introduction,” *The Third Way: New Directions in Platonic Studies*, Lanham Md., Rowman & Littlefield, 1995, p. 2-3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.* See Fine, G., “Aristotle’s Criticism of Plato,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, suppl. Vol. 1972 James C. Klagge and Nicholas D. Smith eds., 1972, p. 13-41.

My second section will examine how universal definitions implicitly signal universal essences. This is the case even in the so-called earlier dialogues. My argument about the later dialogues simply follows the work of Kahn. Kahn holds that Plato's earlier dialogues prepare the way protreptically for the later introduction of a notion of Formal essences, in dialogues like the *Republic*. Even in an early dialogue, the *Euthyphro*, Plato makes use of the terminology of essence. This search for essences is not detached or dispassionate. Rather, it takes place in the embodied context. However, Plato represents characters using logical techniques to pursue ethical definitions not as a form of historical record but as a creative reworking and reimagining of historical events.

Aristotle again provides a helpful glimpse into Plato's work. Here, it is in his interpretation of drama and myth. In Aristotle's reflection on ancient literary composition, a reflection that encompasses the genre to which Plato's dialogues are contributions, poetic writing is, itself, associated not so much with notions of self-conscious falsity and fictionality as plausibility and possibility. Plato constructs scenarios based on the moral qualities of characters. He offers a dramatic presentation not as an historical testimony but in a way that shows how they should have or could have behaved or spoken under the historical circumstances he represents.

He shows Socrates deliberating with Nicias, Laches and Alcibiades, as well as his accusers, Meletus, Anytus and Lycon at his trial. The use of techniques of induction and induction, as well as the appeal to image and myth, is integrated in the context of an existing society. My second section will examine the logical principles of deduction and induction with this in mind. Plato is reimagining an earlier context and presenting characters engaging in philosophical practice for an ethical purpose. Xenophon provides helpful dramatic parallels, as a fellow composer of extant literature about Socrates.

Plato's dialogues are not an exercise in presenting the social history of Athenian life but are reflections on virtue, which also instruct in the use of inductive and deductive argumentative technique. Plato shows Socrates scrutinizing traditional notions about ethical virtue and the good life in a way that is critically integrated with the tradition of Greek society. Indeed, Plato's use of the dialogue form to display dialectic methods and techniques is meant to explore the implications of thoughts about virtue for the life and action of the characters themselves. The "obstacles" which characters encounter are as important as the gains they achieve.²⁰

That is to say, the imperfections in the application of logical technique or the use of image and myth are as instructive about ethical life and the life of philosophy as the successful application of these modes of discourse. Plato is altering and transforming received conventions and not simply working within them. By presenting Socrates as a character who rationally scrutinizes received traditions, there is bound to be difficulty. Perhaps the greatest difficulty that these more ordinary characters face is the need to grasp technical notions about essential, Formal realities which appear to be remote from the concerns of everyday life. Socrates insists, above all else, that he is engaged in the process of scrutinizing the nature of virtue and the character of practical life.

The essential Form is connected with the defined essence of a particular natural or artificial entity. There are Forms of plants and animals, as well as individual virtues and emotional states. The method of collection and division can characterize these higher and lower genus and species. But Plato, also, proposes general categories or common notions. This arrangement, this recognition of inductive technique, along with the use of hypothetical, deductive technique, undergirds the protreptic presentation of essential Forms, in the early and middle dialogues. In later period dialogues, these notions are treated with greater

²⁰ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-Not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 68

technicality, but they are implicit even in the earlier work. However, the ethical underlay of this use of logical techniques of demonstration and definition still remains.

The same holds for Plato's portrayal of sophists, like Gorgias and Protagoras, as well as earlier thinkers, like Parmenides and Zeno. Plato's dialogues present an exploratory reimagining of conversations as they might have happened. This is meant to serve an ethical purpose, a model or pattern for conversations that readers of the dialogues might undertake themselves. Plato also appropriates these characters in order to communicate his own philosophical views. This shows the social aspect of dialectic, how dialectic practice is embedded into the practical context of existing communities and, for this reason, why dialectic bears an association with rhetoric.

Plato actually uses the method of collection and division to correct the speech of an orator, suggesting an interconnection between rhetoric and dialectic method. The method of collection and division is one of the most thoroughly elaborated techniques in Plato's dialogues for offering a rational account to provide a universal definition. Consequently, it is generally agreed that the method of collection and division is not the divine method of dialectic (*cf. Phdr.* 266b). If it were, collection and division would provide a universal definition, identical to the "divine" and formal paradigm beyond representation. Recent scholars tend to agree that collection and division is a worthwhile technique. Such scholars, nevertheless, recognize that this procedure for classification should be regarded merely as one "dialectical" method among others. Even the most adequately definition proposes only an idealized possibility of an essence which mere humans can never know that they have grasped with assurance. Plato affirms that the first definition of statesmanship is inadequate. However, the rational account of the human species, as hairless bipeds, might be an an indication of an alternate possibility for a universal definition of humanity (*Pol.* 263d-e; *cf. Metaphysics* 1037b8-16).

Plato uses the same word, paradigm, to mean both the models which the Eleatic Visitor uses in his dialectical or philosophical exchange and the models which the divine author of creation, in the *Timaeus*, uses. By making his character Socrates call himself a paradigm, Plato implies that he is the divine or divinely inspired human author. He is the philosophical artist who, unlike earlier poets and traditional dramatists, represents the most important concerns in a just and measured way, using a paradigm and paradigms or visible models and images to lead to a proportionate grasp of what is suitable and just.

Plato embraces, in making a myth, the enchantments of traditional poetry while attempting to improve upon previous work. Gebauer and Wulf observe that Plato “regards youth’s fascination with models and examples of all sorts as irresistible.”²¹ Poetry plays such a major role in “education” for ethical life, because it is perhaps the most “important source of youth’s experience with examples and models.”²² Plato maintains that “poetry has inadequately fulfilled its pedagogical task in relation to young people.”²³ If “poetry represents” the models of the heroes of the Greek past as “unrestrained, avaricious, and wanton” and “even” asserts that “gods have committed wicked deeds” and “that not even Zeus is free of deficiencies” then poetry “squanders” the opportunity to make a constructive contribution to education. Plato self-consciously reworks this standard in accordance with aesthetic and ethical principles which he outlines in *Republic* II and III.

Plato reworks Hesiod’s Myth of Kronos in the creative act of composing his own *Myth of Kronos*. This enacts the standards for representation outlined in *Republic* II and III. The *Apology* follows the *Statesman* in the dramatic sequence. The *Statesman* ends with the Visitor questioning a Younger Socrates about Socratic activity. His words, like the *Republic* itself, echo language from Sophocles’ *Antigone*. This suggests that, in similar manner, Plato

²¹ Gebauer, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Reneau, D., trans., University of California Press, Berkley, 1995, p. 34.

²² Gebauer, G. and Wulf, C., *op. cit.*, p. 34-35.

²³ Gebauer, G. and Wulf, C., *op. cit.*, p. 35.

is actually altering and reworking mythical tropes from existing drama in his own presentation of the events around the trial and death of Socrates. Not only Plato's own myths but even aspects of his representation of characters, in his dialogues, have a narrative and mythic quality. Sophocles' chorus calls Oedipus a paradigm for humanity. In similar manner, in the *Apology*, Plato has Socrates call himself a paradigm. In this way, Plato leaves his stamp as the author. Plato, as artist, is presenting a literature which is meant to rival the antecedent tradition, in a philosophical appropriation and creative recomposition of earlier work.

The *Sophist* and *Statesman* provide a striking portrayal of an alternate but related sense of paradigm. Through the characters he depicts, Plato makes a claim as an inspired or divine artist, who uses divine paradigms, in the image of the craftsman or demiurge of the *Timaeus*, as a rival to antecedent poets, participating in their tradition of inspired composition. In the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato shows the Eleatic Visitor providing philosophical exercises in the use of paradigm, expressing a sense quite different from but related to the sense of paradigm in the *Timaeus*.

My approach brings together more recent work on the philosophical dimension of Plato's artistry and a specific problem inherent to the interpretation of the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. As commentators have long noted, there is a missing dialogue which should follow the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. This is a puzzle for interpreters of Plato, who wish to determine why Plato did not produce a fourth, implicitly promised, dramatic installment. Gill, in her recent *Plato's Philosopher*, points out this question:

“So the question is: why did Plato promise the *Philosopher* and then fail to write it? I shall argue that Plato offers various sketches and studies of the philosopher but deliberately withholds the dialogue in order to stimulate his audience to *combine the pieces into the full portrait he did not paint* [my italics]. Why make this bold claim instead of supposing

that Plato died before he could write it, or moved on to other projects contrary to his original plan, or any number of possible explanations?”²⁴

Developing a line of thought expressed among other interpreters, Gill maintains that Plato asks his readers to infer the nature of the philosopher from incidental comments in these two dialogues. Gill develops this view most fully in her recent work: “Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman* present themselves as the first two dialogues of a projected trilogy undertaken to define three kinds of expert: the sophist, the statesman, and the philosopher.”²⁵ The “*Sophist* and *Statesman* define the first two kinds, and both dialogues advertise the *Philosopher*, but the anticipated final dialogue is missing.”²⁶ As Gill affirms the “*Sophist* and the *Statesman* repeatedly herald a final dialogue.”²⁷ This attempt at reconstruction is a fruitful one, but it is best understood not in light of these dialogues alone but the wider drama of Plato’s dialogues.

The poetic dimension of the exchange is recognized even with Plato’s introduction of the Eleatic Visitor. As Gill notes, in “the beginning of the *Sophist*, Theodorus introduces the Eleatic visitor to Socrates and describes him as a keen philosopher, and the introduction prompts a conversation about philosophers.”²⁸ Plato has “Socrates remark that philosophers appear in several guises—sometimes as sophists, sometimes as statesmen and sometimes they appear completely mad (*manikos*) (*Sph.* 216a1-d2).”²⁹ Plato never composed a dialogue entitled the *Philosopher*. Gill maintains that in the course of the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, “Plato offers various sketches and studies of the philosopher but deliberately withholds the dialogue in order to stimulate his audience to combine the pieces into the full portrait he did not paint[.]”³⁰ Part of this discussion indicates a need to define the *Philosopher* as an

²⁴ Gill, M.L., *Philosophos: Plato’s Missing Dialogue*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

essence derived from an empirical individual. Yet Plato also specifies the need to provide this model as an individual portrait.

Plato has Socrates call himself a model in the *Apology* and portrays the life of this exemplary thinker through his dialogues more generally. The *Apology*, which follows the *Statesman* in dramatic sequence, is the dialogue in which Plato has Socrates present himself as a paradigm and also call himself a paradigm of humanity. For this reason, this dialogue serves the purpose of providing the account of the philosopher, in his own words, faced with the people of Athens. It is, however, above all, Plato's dramatization of the death of Socrates, his artistic portrayal of a model philosopher. Although we need not deny the historicity of Socrates, we can see that Plato's portrait of Socrates is largely an exploratory reimagining, wrought from the perspective of a fourth century thinker, looking back on a fifth century context and drawing upon contemporary literature in the act of reconstructing the earlier epoch. Plato paints a portrait of a Socrates who conforms with a Platonic conception of what an idealized philosophical life should be like, rather than an accurate historical portrait of how it necessarily was.

Plato shows how to use paradigms to produce both *logoi* and *mythoi*, yet these two terms are actually closely related and in certain contexts almost interchangeable. In the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, he gives a lesson in using a paradigm to provide a rational definition, an analogy and a mythic narrative. By having Socrates call himself paradigm, in the dramatically subsequent *Apology*, Plato leaves his seal or stamp as the author and the philosophical artist. Myths recounted and recited by characters like Socrates, Timaeus and the Eleatic Visitor self-consciously alter earlier, mythic tradition, tropes drawn from poets like Hesiod and Homer in a way that suits Plato's ethical standard. But Plato's own dialogues alter tropes from Greek tragedy and comedy, also worked in accordance with Plato's standard for a philosophical, literary composition. The lesson in using paradigms,

above all, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, illustrates that this is the case. Since philosophy and dialectic are ways of using visible models to lead to higher realities, Plato, as dramatic composer of the dialogues, is the philosophical artist that the Eleatic Visitor of *Sophist* and *Statesman* implies. The *Statesman* shows that paradigm means a philosophical model, which can be used in conventional modes of rational discourse but, also, to produce images and even narrative myths. Plato's *Philosopher*, though it does not go by that name, is the *Apology*, because there Plato makes Socrates call himself the model or paradigm. In this way, Plato leaves his seal as the author.

Section I

Paradigm in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*: The Philosophical Use of an Image

“[Socrates:] Then, we must consider tragedy and its leader, Homer. The reason is this: We hear some people say that poets know all crafts, all human affairs concerned with virtue and vice, and all about the gods as well, he must have knowledge of the things he writes about, or else he wouldn’t be able to produce it at all. Hence, we have to look to see whether those who tell us this have encountered these imitators and have been so deceived by them that they don’t realize that their works are at the third degree of remove from truth (since they are only images [φαντάσματα], not things that are), or whether there is something in what these people say, and good poets really do have knowledge of the things most people think they write so well about” (*Rep.* 598d6-599a5, tr. G.M.A. Grube).

“It has turned out, my dear fellow, that the idea of a ‘model’ itself in its turn also has need of a model to demonstrate it [παραδείγματος, ὃ μακάριε, αὖ μοι καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα αὐτὸ δεδέηκεν].”

“Young Socrates: How so? Explain, and don’t hold back for *my* sake.”

“Visitor: Explain I must, in view of your own readiness to follow. I suppose we recognize that when children are just acquiring skill in reading and writing [τοὺς γὰρ που παῖδας ἴσμεν, ὅταν ἄρτι γραμμάτων ἔμπειροι γίνωνται—]...” (*Stm.* 277d9-e3, tr. C. Rowe)

“Visitor: Well then, have we grasped this point adequately, that we come to be using a model [παραδείγματός] when a given thing, which is the same in something different and distinct, is correctly identified there, and having been brought together with the original thing, brings about a single true judgment [ἀληθῆ δόξαν] about each separately and both together” (*Stm.* 278c3-6).

Plato’s philosophical dialectician must be aware that images are only an aid to grasping higher, ethical, invisible realities. Socrates in the *Republic* avows that the poet produces deceptive illusions. Equally, the Visitor in the *Sophist* says that sophists produce deceptive illusions through a mastery of greater and lesser spatial proportions. Even though both poets and sophists are conventionally esteemed as ethical teachers, Plato, through his dialogues, suggests that they merely pretend to have ethical wisdom, lacking an appropriate sense of ethical measure or proportion. In the *Statesman*, when the Visitor introduces the dialectical or philosophical use of visible model or paradigm, even though he continues to use

the language of proportionally greater and lesser, he does not speak in terms of strictly visible proportions and distances. Instead, the “lesser” entity is “visible” and spatial, while “greater” signifies the ethical order of the mind or soul. A dialectician may use a paradigm in order to make a comparison between two unlike entities, the lesser visible entity and the greater, invisible and ethical reality. This intellectually grasped ethical order cannot be directly perceived but can only be understood through a process of thought and reasoning. Plato’s Socrates both dialectically questions opinions and provides models of virtue and justice, like the analogy or comparison of the city and the soul. It is, however, the emphasis on the intrinsic limits of the visible, even the visible paradigm, which explains how Plato’s philosophical characters can consistently avow the ultimate incapacity to lead others to this higher, invisible ethical insight without the active process of reasoning.

The argument in this section draws upon recent work of Gill, which compares different senses of paradigm in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* to the *Parmenides*. Gill identifies a connection between the sense of paradigm as Form and paradigm as visible model. However, she holds that the views presented in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, as well as in the *Parmenides*, represent a departure from Plato’s middle period approach to image and essential Form. My view, like Gill’s, is that Plato technically differentiates between paradigm and essential Form in order to show two related ways of using a model. Unlike Gill, I do not regard this treatment of paradigm and essential Form as a departure from his middle period views. Rather, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato explains and develops his notions about essential Form in a more logically precise manner. Thus, my work extends a view of Kahn, to be elaborated at greater length in the second section, on the *protreptic* or preparatory character of Plato’s treatment of definition and the Forms to encompass the later period works. Plato shows how to define, inductively, a visible model or example, and thus provide the account

of the Formal essence of the named entity. Plato uses the dramatic form of dialogue to convey the practice of dialectic in different ways in different places.

This logical use of a visible model is connected to another way of using models. One can use the same, essentially defined, visible model or paradigm to provide an ethically informative analogy. My treatment of Plato's differentiation between essential Form and visible model poses an answer to a question about philosophical image raised in Notomi and Collobert's work on the *Republic* and *Sophist*. Although the first part of this section is devoted to the metaphysical relation between essential Form and visible model, the remainder of this section explores the implications of this differentiation between essential Form and paradigm for Plato's poetic use of images and analogies.

The definition of *mimesis* or image-making in Plato is present both in the description of the poet and sophist in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*. Plato treats both the poet and sophist as image-makers who use words to make images. Plato compares the poet or sophist to a painter, who produces images of all things with words, makes use of illusions of perspective, deceives the young, and has a consequent unhealthy and deleterious ethical influence. The *Statesman* presents the philosophical appropriation of image-making to follow the critique of image-making and mimesis in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*. In the *Statesman*, Plato compares the dialectician to a painter with words. Such a person would be an expert at mimesis or representation.

1.1 Imitation in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*

1.1.1 *Mimesis and the Dramatic Form of Dialogue*

Halliwel, in his recent, fundamental study on mimesis in Plato and Aristotle, has described the ambivalence in Plato's thinking between the opinion that philosophical truth demands an unmediated grasp of an ineffable reality but that humans must use models for the

purpose of reflection.³¹ Halliwell's choice of the term model is extremely apt, and my thesis will show how this ambivalent term is given a special significance, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, which has wider implications for our understanding not only for Plato's philosophy but the essential connection between Plato's philosophy and his literary art. Plato, in the *Republic* and elsewhere, treats the understanding of essential Forms as a way of transcending the mere use of image or mythic narrative.

The most basic characterization of *mimesis* occurs in the third book of Plato's *Republic*.³² Imitation or *mimesis* occurs when one makes oneself in voice or appearance like another (*Rep.* III, 393c5-6).³³ *Mimesis* is, in the simplest terms, the imitation of speech, gesture and voice. Plato treats painting, sculpture, poetic composition, recitation, dramatic production and the associated arts of music as forms of *mimesis*. Plato's use of the term is as important for his critique of the arts as his definition of the arts and above all, the art of poetic composition. Plato defines poetry as a narrative or mythological representation of a complete (ὅλη) action.

“That's absolutely right. And now I think that I can make clear to you what I couldn't do before. One kind of poetry and story-telling employs only imitation—tragedy and comedy, as you say. Another kind employs only narration by the poet himself—you find this most of all in dithyrambs [τῆς ποιήσεως τε καὶ μυθολογίας ἢ μὲν διὰ μιμήσεως ὅλη ἐστίν]. A third kind uses both—as in epic poetry and many other places, if you follow me” (*Rep.* 394b9-c5).

Mimesis (μimḗsis), as poetry (τῆς ποιήσεως) and mythology (μυθολογίας), is the representation of a complete action (*Rep.* 394b9c-5; cf. *Sph.* 264a). Plato explains the notion of *mimesis* while recognizing both its good and bad uses. The concept of dramatic representation applies both to the “poet” (*Rep.* 393c) and “the recipient or reciter” (*Rep.*

³¹ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002, p. 70-71.

³² Belfiore, E., “A Theory of Imitation in Plato's *Republic*,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 114, 1984, p. 123.

³³ Collobert, C., “Poetry as Flawed Reproduction,” in Destrée, P. and Herrmann, F.G. eds., *Plato and the Poets, Memnosyne Supplement*, vol. 328, Leiden, Brill, 2011, p. 55.

396a-b, 396d).³⁴ There is a process of “self-likening” and “assimilation” to the models put forth in the poetry.³⁵ This experience of the “dramatic mode” makes the “mind” orient itself “inside” the “viewpoint of the speaker.”³⁶ This “close psychological identification allows for a deepening of the poetry’s effects on the mind” (*Rep.* 396d-e). This has to do with the “plasticity of the (young) soul” to such suggestion, which can be easily molded by such enticing enchantment (*Rep.* 377a2-c6).³⁷ The uncritical and often unquestioning quality of this kind of mimetic identification, especially with characters who exhibit not virtuous but vicious behaviour, is what Socrates takes issue with in the *Republic*. Socrates notes that a “decent man” will refuse to recite “mimetic poetry depicting immoral behavior.”³⁸

As composer of dramatic dialogues, Plato portrays Socrates encouraging the young to pattern themselves after good people but also to critique good people when they are not in a good state. However, his wording is ambiguous because he’s not only talking about people we encounter in life; he’s talking about people we encounter in drama. Plato’s character, Socrates, is prompting the young to cultivate their own, critical intelligence and, in so doing, actually seek to become virtuous. However, Plato’s dialogues are themselves literary productions in which a character who stands as a model is encouraging people to do this. Plato thinks that the poet should encourage listeners to imitate the good person, and Socrates uses paradigm to signify ethical example in associated passages (*Rep.* III, 398a1-b5; 409b-d).³⁹

Halliwell also recognizes the Socrates paradigm as an exemplary figure and explains antecedent paradigms, for instance the example (παράδειγμα) of Sophocle’s Oedipus in

³⁴ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002, p. 52.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52-53.

³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 53.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁹ Tate, J., “Imitation’ in Plato’s *Republic*,” *Classical Quarterly*, 22, 1928, p. 16.

Oedipus Rex.⁴⁰ However, Socrates calls himself an exemplar (παράδειγμα) in Plato's *Apology* (*Apol.* 23b1). The reason for this ambivalence is that Plato's dialogues are themselves mimetic or dramatic creations. Plato's use of the artistic form of dialogue is equally accompanied by a critique of mimesis.

By centering upon this "concept of mimesis[.]" Plato unifies "certain linguistic customs while excluding others; he constructs wholly abstract typologies, applying the linguistic label "mimesis" to specific extracts of social, artistic, and practical action."⁴¹ Plato, in defining the notion of *mimesis*, "makes use of vague, nonspecific expression with diffuse usages of a verbal label, one that is clearly determined by broader theoretical interests, which he then uses to characterize a specific subject matter."⁴² Halliwell notes a strain of continuous tension in the work of Plato, a vacillation between a view that mimesis is necessary but is also incomplete. This is a function of the fact that Plato is actually appropriating the literary form itself, as a philosophical instrument, through his use of dramatic dialogues.

Interpreters like Kahn and Gonzalez, as noted in the introduction, have critiqued the developmental interpretation of Plato, which ignores Plato's work as a literary composer. These interpreters have placed an important emphasis on Plato's use of the dramatic form of dialogue. In the dialogues, Plato, as author, presents characters like Socrates and other philosophical speakers, like Parmenides and the Eleatic Visitor, stressing the need to master dialectic. Dialectic methods, like the Socratic *elenchus*, enable inquirers to use reasoned argument to identify contradictions in thought and speech. Plato frequently portrays Socrates seeking logically consistent, universal definitions for the traditional, Greek ethical virtues and holding that this search forms the basis of the ethically best life. In the middle period

⁴⁰ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems*, *op. cit.*, p. 116-117.

⁴¹ Gebrauer, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Reneau, D., trans., University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 4.

⁴² *Ibid.*

dialogues, Socrates, with greater confidence, announces that universal Forms provide a stable basis for not only our understanding of reality but our ethical life. The method of collection and division, introduced in the late period dialogues, enables inquirers to compose universal statements which represent the essential Form of any given, named natural or artificial empirical entity. Plato proclaims that this questioning search for truth, which depends upon stable, universal Forms, has an ethical purpose and enables inquirers to ascend to a grasp of the ethical Good. The dramatic dialogues are meant to be the medium through which this is achieved.

The original or paradigm is the model or example, which is the standard to be imitated.⁴³ This is the ordinary Greek sense of the word paradigm. For this reason, it is not surprising that Plato, in works like the *Timaeus*, uses this same term, paradigm, in conjunction with mimesis to explain the relation between “material world and eternal paradigm.”⁴⁴ But, interestingly, Plato does not actually use the word paradigm when explaining the imitative relation that the essential Form of a thing bears with the individual. Socrates explains, in *Republic* X, that artistic products exist at two levels of remove from reality. Natural organisms, like animals and artificial products, have an essential nature that can be grasped through the apprehension of the Form.

The Form of a bed is the essential nature, and the carpenter or craftsman grasps something of this nature, which he imitates in the production of a particular bed. However, according to Socrates, in the *Republic*, artists, like painters and poets, lack this understanding and merely produce images which mimic but do not explain the essential nature or Form of the bed. Socrates declares that these universal Forms are the originals upon which individuals are based. The philosopher and dialectician can come to grasp these universal essences through reasoning and speech. It is not the person who merely creates images but

⁴³ Murray, P. *Plato on Poetry*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford, Clarendon, p. 595.

the one who grasps Forms who has the highest knowledge—ethical insight into the nature of virtue. For this reason, Plato often refers to the Forms as paradigms.

The dramatic form of dialogue is centrally important to showing what dialectic is. As Gonzalez asserts, “[n]ot only does dialectic employ images (in comparisons) and proceed from images (the concrete situation that instantiates the truth sought), but what we know of it through the Platonic dialogues is itself an image.”⁴⁵ Plato’s own drama enacts the practice of philosophy as questioning dialogue about the most important concern, the good, just and ethical life. Gonzalez elaborates this view further, stating that “Plato chose to communicate the truths of philosophy by imitating the process of philosophizing.”⁴⁶ He maintains that “the process (dialectic) not only employs imitation, but it is itself an object of imitation.”⁴⁷ Gonzalez acknowledges that an “examination of the use of images in dialectic is further complicated by a need to explain the relation between this dialectic and its instantiation in written dialogue.”⁴⁸ There are many levels of mimesis or imitation at play.

In the final Book of the *Republic*, Plato treats this question of the different levels of mimesis the most comprehensively within his corpus. Gonzalez claims that to “understand the role that imitation (*mimesis*) plays at all three levels distinguished above, an account is needed both of its nature and its correct and incorrect uses.”⁴⁹ Gonzalez recognizes that the “most thorough account of imitation, as well as the most thorough critique of its poetic use, are to be found in passages of the *Republic*, especially Book X.”⁵⁰ Further, “the role played by images in dialectic extends beyond the use of comparisons and analogies” to the use of

⁴⁵ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue: Plato’s Practice of Philosophical Inquiry*, Evanston Illinois, Northwestern University Press, 1998, p. 130.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

myths.⁵¹ In parallel with Gonzalez, Collobert maintains that Plato's myths consist of images or likenesses.

The image of the sun, which represents the Good, as well the Myth of the Cave and the Myth of Er, have an important function or role in Platonic philosophy. In the *Sophist* a positive term for image is implied, and this use of images can also be applied to the production of myths. Plato, however, only explicitly introduces the full sense of paradigm as an image or likeness, which can be used for the purpose of making an analogy, in the *Statesman*. This use of models extends to the composition of a myth and the use of analogies.

Plato's dialogues and dramas include the portrayal of certain ethically dubious figures. Plato's ethically orienting myths are composed in a way that is in line with Socrates' "philosophical" standards of mythic representation, as ethical models for imitation. However, the monological myth can only be considered "dialectical" to a limited extent. But dialectic or philosophy is a practice of ethical dialogue rather than monologue, and the dialogues themselves are actively composed by an author who uses narratives that portray this dialectical practice.

Plato uses the literary form of dialogue in order to depict or portray the practice of Socrates as philosopher. Gonzalez stresses that the "ethical" dimension of philosophical understanding is captured through the dialectic practice, the speech as much as the action of these dialogues. Gonzalez considers the "dialectician's role as *imitator*" in the *Republic*.⁵² This role as imitator or artistic creator demands a suitable sense of ethical measure. Indeed, for Plato, the capacity to represent or portray action and events in speech is associated with an awareness or lack of awareness of the invisible, intellectual normative and ethical standard of measure. Thus, Gonzalez is justified in saying that the dramatic form of dialogue is the

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

means by which Plato communicates the practical nature of philosophy and dialectic. The dialogues themselves and the portrayal of Socrates have a mythic dimension, and this myth, like others, needs to be questioned.

1.1.2 Republic X and Sophist

Republic X, the *Sophist* and *Statesman* offer theoretical characterizations of *mimesis* and image-making. Plato's term, *mimesis*, applies to painters or sculptors who represent visible, living and artificial objects. Plato describes sophist and poets as *mimetes* who make images. Sophists and poets are comparable to painters who produce images with words. Notomi provides the most comprehensive account of how the "criticism of the imitative artist in *Republic X* anticipates, and is protreptic to, the full treatment of the sophist in the *Sophist*."⁵³ This "common feature reveals why the poet and sophist should be criticized as imitative artists."⁵⁴ Notomi recognizes that "the *Sophist* supplements and develops the argument of the *Republic*" by explaining more fully the sense in which a sophist and, by extension, the poet creates images and illusions through the use of words.⁵⁵

False perceptual judgment is comparable to false reasoning. The Visitor, in the *Sophist*, differentiates not only between true and false judgment but also between true and false sentences that represent these judgments, classing the false proposition as a verbal form of illusory image. Yet, even though Plato clarifies that 'images', in the strictest terms, cannot communicate the highest ethical truths, paradigms can provide analogies which are true judgments about ethical realities, even though such philosophical analogies are not themselves factually true or false propositions.

The *Statesman* follows the *Republic* in developing a sense of paradigm as a visible model which is able to explain a higher order ethical or spiritual reality. In this way, the *Statesman*

⁵³ Notomi, N., "Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*," in Destrée, P. and Herrmann, F.G. eds., *Plato and the Poets, Memnosyne Supplement*, vol. 328, Leiden, Brill, 2011, p. 317.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

completes the discussion which began in the *Sophist* and provides technical ground for a familiar dialectical practice in Plato's *Republic*. Notomi and Collobert differ in the details of their analysis of *Republic* X and the *Sophist*. Yet both recognize that these dialogues contain thorough criticisms of mimesis and image-making. Further, both scholars also agree that these two dialogues suggest a need for a suitable appropriation of literary form for philosophical purpose. According to Notomi, "the target of [Plato's] criticism" in *Republic* X is "not poetry or, to use a Modern expression, literature as such" in strict "contrast...with philosophy."⁵⁶ Rather, he critiques the existing tradition of poetry, as not conforming to a standard of a suitably philosophical literary work. Plato's "famous phrase" about the "ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy" (*Rep.* X, 607b) might "mislead us, the modern readers, in multiple ways."⁵⁷ Yet the use of the term quarrel itself suggests a need on the part of the philosophical dialectician to appropriate the use of image, mythical expression and, above all, dramatic creation to provide an alternative ethical model for imitation.

Philosophy has an ethical aim, but so does its "rival[.]" poetry. Through his characters, Plato as author, pits his own, relatively novel claim as an ethical educator against the commonly held view that traditional poets provide a repository of "encyclopaedic knowledge" and "wisdom for life and civic education."⁵⁸ As Notomi claims, "Philosophy and Poetry compete with each other in the cultural, social and political areas, as the *Republic* as a whole indicates."⁵⁹ In Collobert's words, Plato's dialogues, images and myths are an instance of "the conscious appropriation of literature for philosophical ends."⁶⁰ That is, Plato does not merely criticize existing poetry; he puts poetry or the use of image, myth and dramatic dialogue, to philosophical use.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 299-300.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁶⁰ Collobert, C. "The Platonic Art of Myth-Making: Myths as Informative *Phantasma*," in *Plato and Myth, Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, Memnosyne Supplement, vol. 337, Collobert, C., Destrée, P., Gonzalez, F. eds., Leiden, Brill, 2012, p. 87.

Plato contrasts, in *Republic X*, the paradigm of the city and the soul with the work of the traditional poets. His own visible model or image provides an explanation of moral psychology and describes in visual terms the invisible justice of the soul. Reflecting upon the paradigm of the city and the soul, the Kallipolis he has described, Socrates adds that “our city has many features that assure me that we are entirely right in founding it as we did, and, when I say this, I’m especially thinking of poetry” (*Rep.* 595a1-3). Socrates asserts that they should not “admit” to the just city “any” poetry “that is imitative [μιμητική]” (*Rep.* 595a5). They “have distinguished the separate parts of the soul [ἐπειδὴ χωρὶς ἕκαστα διήρηται τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς εἶδη],” and “it is even clearer” having made these distinctions between the parts of the soul “that such poetry should be altogether excluded” (*Rep.* 595b1). Poetry stimulates unreasoning emotion and the appetites. When reason loses control over the spirit, the passion and the appetites, this leads to the greatest forms of injustice, both for the city and the individual human soul.

Gonzalez makes this point with clarity: “Socrates’ criticism of poetry in Book X of the *Republic* is concerned with determining two things: the nature of poetry and its effect on the soul.”⁶¹ Poetry, as Gonzalez recognizes, is a serious question for Plato: “If poetry were simply an idle amusement, then, no matter how shallow or remote from the truth it might be, Socrates would feel no need to discuss it here and at the end of his account of the just republic and the just soul.”⁶² However, “poetry, which has a much more significant claim to authority in the ethical life of a culture, can, actually, lead to the corruption of our thought (λώβη τῆς ἀκουόντων διανοίας, 595b5-6).”⁶³ Socrates thinks that “poetic imitation” as such “is dangerous only to those who do not possess an antidote (φάρμακον), a knowledge of its real nature (595b6-7).”⁶⁴ That is, “imitation is dangerous only when it is taken for something

⁶¹ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 130-131.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

other than what it truly is.”⁶⁵ The remedy “that can cure one of whatever ill effects poetic imitation may have is simply *knowledge*.”⁶⁶ This knowledge is knowledge of the character of *mimesis* itself. To understand the nature of *mimesis*, according to Plato, we must turn first not to visible particulars or even the images which copy visible particulars, but the originals upon which images are based, the essential Forms. Socrates explains that the reason the traditional poets and dramatists lack the ethical insight or understanding to which they pretend is because they do not grasp the essential Form.

If *mimesis* is properly understood, we will be in a better position to evaluate the character and influence of the poets. Socrates says to Glaucon that “[b]etween ourselves—for you won’t denounce me to the tragic poets or any of the other imitative ones [πρὸς τοὺς τῆς τραγωδίας ποιητὰς καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντας τοὺς μιμητικούς]—all such poetry is likely to distort the thought of anyone who hears it, unless he has knowledge of what it is really like[.]” This knowledge serves as a remedy [φάρμακον] “to counteract” the ill effects of poetic enchantment (*Rep.* X, 595b5-7). Socrates avows that “even though the love and respect” he has “had for Homer since” he “was a child makes” him “hesitate to speak,” he must, nevertheless, present this critique (*Rep.* X, 595b9-c4).⁶⁷ This critique of poetry is necessary because “no one is to be honored or valued[.]” not even Homer or the tragedians, “more than the truth” (*Rep.* X, 595c1-3). The nature of *mimesis* must be grasped, if we are to understand the potentially ethically corrupting power exerted by the Muse inspired songs of Homer and his myriad dramatic progeny (*Rep.* X, 595c).

Socrates asks Glaucon the question of “what imitation in general is” (595c7-8).⁶⁸ The “focus on ‘imitation in general (*mimesis holos*)’ governs the whole course of the

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ ῥητέον, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ· καίτοι φίλια γέ τίς με καὶ αἰδῶς ἐκ παιδὸς ἔχουσα περὶ Ὀμήρου ἀποκωλύει λέγειν. ἔοικε μὲν γὰρ τῶν καλῶν ἀπάντων τούτων τῶν τραγικῶν πρῶτος διδάσκαλός τε καὶ ἡγεμὼν γενέσθαι. ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ πρό γε τῆς ἀληθείας τιμητέος ἀνὴρ, ἀλλ’, ὃ λέγω, ῥητέον.

⁶⁸ μίμησιν ὅλως ἔχοις ἂν μοι εἰπεῖν ὅτι ποτ’ ἐστίν; οὐδὲ γάρ τοι αὐτὸς πάνν τι συννοῶ τί βούλεται εἶναι.

examination.”⁶⁹ As Gonzalez notes, it “is this knowledge which Socrates proceeds to request from Glaucon (595c).”⁷⁰ According to “his own confession, Socrates is possessed by a love for poetry (especially Homer) and therefore needs the antidote as much as anyone.”⁷¹ It is here, in *Republic X*, that “the term ‘imitation’ is used in the broad sense of ‘artistic representation’, in contrast with the narrow sense of ‘mimicking’ or appearing in the previous treatment of poetry elaborated in Books II and III (*Rep.* 393c-398b).”⁷² This is where Plato actually provides a definition of what *mimesis* and poetry is.

“Then, we must consider tragedy and its leader, Homer [τε τραγωδίαν καὶ τὸν ἡγεμόνα αὐτῆς Ὅμηρον]. The reason is this: We hear some people say that poets know all crafts, all human affairs concerned with virtue and vice, and all about the gods as well [τέχνας ἐπίστανται, πάντα δὲ τὰ ἀνθρώπεια τὰ πρὸς ἀρετὴν καὶ κακίαν, καὶ τὰ γε θεῖα]. They say that if a good poet produces fine poetry [τὸν ἀγαθὸν ποιητὴν, εἰ μέλλει περὶ ὧν ἂν ποιῇ καλῶς ποιήσειν], he must have knowledge of the things he writes about, or else he wouldn’t be able to produce it at all. Hence, we have to look to see whether those who tell us this have encountered these imitators and have been so deceived by them that they don’t realize that their works are at the third degree of remove from truth (since they are only images, not things that are) [αἰσθάνονται τριττὰ ἀπέχοντα τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ῥάδια ποιεῖν μὴ εἰδότι τὴν ἀλήθειαν—φαντάσματα γὰρ ἀλλ’ οὐκ ὄντα ποιοῦσιν], or whether there is something in what these people say, and good poets really do have knowledge of the things most people think they write so well about” (*Rep.* 598d8-599a5).

Plato portrays Socrates as saying that poets generate phantasms [φαντάσματα] instead of things that are real. Collobert, drawing upon Gill, maintains that Plato has a notion of informative phantasms, which are in opposition to the illusory phantasms presented by poets like Homer and Hesiod, as well as dramatic poets like Sophocles and Aristophanes.

“Do you think that someone who could make both the thing imitated and its image [τό τε μιμηθησόμενον καὶ τὸ εἶδωλον] would allow himself to be serious about making images [ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν εἰδώλων δημιουργίᾳ] and

⁶⁹ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*,” *op. cit.*, p. 311.

⁷⁰ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, p. 130-131.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 311.

put this at the forefront of his life as the best thing to do?” (*Rep.* 599a7-b1)⁷³

Plato portrays Socrates as saying that making images would not be the best thing for a person to do. This is because the images he is talking about do not represent reality but illusion. However, Plato himself is a dramatic composer, someone who offers dialogues as images of truth, appropriating the medium of poetry for philosophical purposes. Even though Socrates, as a character, does not here say this, Plato, as author, implies that this should be the case in his very act of presenting Socrates saying it. Although Socrates, as Plato portrays him, does not or did not write, someone else must bring an image or model of essential reality through the writing and composition. The author, making his claim in explicit rivalry with Homer and the dramatic poets, is Plato himself. He offers his own dialogues, his own *Sokratikoi logoi*, as well as the Socrates he himself portrays, as an ethical model, presenting alternative art to the tradition of Homer and the dramatic poets.

Plato’s poetic claim to paradigmatic authorship is not chiefly made through Socrates, in the *Republic*. Rather, it is achieved through another character, the Eleatic Visitor, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. The Eleatic Visitor reasons that there is a divine form of poetry, which can bring truth. He does this by distinguishing the false phantasm of the poet from the paradigm of the philosophical dialectician. The paradigm is the model upon both which imitations are based. The conclusion of my argument will be that Plato, as author in the *Statesman* has the Eleatic Visitor introduce the term paradigm to signify such a philosophical model or image.

1.1.3 Forms and Imitation

Gill explains that in the middle period “dialogues a *paradeigma* is a separate Form, an abstract perfect particular, whose nature is exhausted by its own character.”⁷⁴ However, even

⁷³ οἷε οὖν, εἴ τις ἀμφότερα δύναιτο ποιεῖν, τό τε μιμηθῆσόμενον καὶ τὸ εἶδωλον, ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν εἰδώλων δημιουργίᾳ ἑαυτὸν ἀφεῖναι ἂν σπουδάζειν καὶ τοῦτο προστήσασθαι τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ βίου ὡς βέλτιστον ἔχοντα;

here, there is a relation that the Form bears to image, insofar as the particulars or “participants” of a Form “are conceived as *likenesses* or *images* of it[.]”⁷⁵ Particular individuals “share with the form the same character, but they all fall short of it because they exemplify not only that character but its opposite.”⁷⁶ A particular, large entity is large only relative to other objects. A hill might be larger than a person. However, the same hill is smaller than a mountain. Plato introduces his hypothesis of universal Forms in order to bring objective stability to perceptual relativity. But the essential Forms of ‘Largeness’ and ‘Smallness’, which are used to gauge relative magnitude, have their characteristics not relatively but absolutely. For this reason, universal Forms, rather than particular individuals, are the source of our understanding.

Even the most admirable individuals possess or partake of the essential qualities of ‘Beauty’ or ‘Goodness’ in a relative manner. The general, essential type of beauty is what is beautiful and what makes the individual or the particular instance of a beautiful woman, beautiful. That is, “[m]undane beautiful objects are plagued by all forms of relativity—Helen is beautiful compared to other women but not beautiful compared to a goddess; she is beautiful in her physical appearance, but not in her soul or her actions; she is beautiful in your eyes but not mine and so on.”⁷⁷ The universal and invisible Form of Beauty is the standard of comparison for the beauty of particular individuals, like Helen of Troy: “the Form of the Beautiful, which is supposed to explain her beauty, is simply and unqualifiedly beautiful (*Symp.* 210e5-211d1).”⁷⁸ The sense in which a person, like Helen of Troy, can be regarded as externally or internally beautiful depends upon an accord with certain ideals which are

⁷⁴ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *art. cit.*, p. 1. The *Republic* but, above all, the *Timaeus*, treat the celestial paradigm and Form. In the *Republic*, the vague language of Form and celestial model is used to describe the essence with which philosopher-kings must be familiar to ground the ethical life of the community (*Rep.* 484c8; 500e3; 529d7; 540a9; 557e1; 559a8; 561e6; 592b2). The first four instances where paradigm means essential Form are *Timaeus* (28a-c; 29b). Five other instances occur at *Timaeus* (31a4; 37c8; 38b8; 38c1; 39e7). Two other instances occur later in the dialogue (48e5; 49a1).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

independent of particular circumstances, rather than qualities that are inessential or accidental.

Plato talks about the need to be guided by stable realities that exhibit enduring proportions. Plato pursues dialectic in a manner comparable to geometric and arithmetic inquiry, reasoning that ethics and normative aspects of life should have the same sort of lasting objectivity. Just as mathematicians seek to demonstrate permanent things, Plato stresses that these absolute notions of Beauty and Good are of a higher order and are meant to ground ethical life. It is difficult to see how, exactly, this account of the order of Beauty and Good matches with his more specific characterizations of particular essential Forms, like the form of a triangle or a human individual, or even the form of a quality like big or small and red or blue. That Plato does not make the distinction between the logical and the ethical aspects of the dialectic search for essential natures is linked to the dramatic context of the *Republic* itself. He is only giving a self-consciously naive characterization, which is explained in greater technical detail in works like the *Parmenides* and the *Sophist*. This is not surprising, given that the purpose of the *Republic* is to offer a comprehensive account of the just life as a whole, for the individual and community, as it relates to philosophy.

He does express the basic notion, which carries throughout his work, into the later dialogues, that stable essence and stable Formal reality are what give meaning to changing particulars. Socrates assumes this view in the *Republic* as firmly as in the *Phaedo* or the *Symposium*. Plato considers this principle earlier in the *Republic*. We cannot believe in “beautiful things [μὲν καλὰ μὲν πράγματα]” without recognizing the source of particular or individual beauty in the “beautiful itself [αὐτὸ δὲ κάλλος]” (*Rep.* 476c1). One who believes only in particular beauty, the beauty of Helen, “is living in a dream rather than a wakened state” (*Rep.* 476c). It is “dreaming... to think that a likeness is not a likeness but rather the thing itself that it is like [τὸ ὁμοίον τῷ μὴ ὁμοίον ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ]” (*Rep.* 476c5).” This term

omoion is a synonym for image or copy. Plato insists, throughout the *Republic*, that images do not, in themselves, convey this highest truth.

The one who believes in “the beautiful itself [αὐτὸ καλὸν]” can “see both it and the things that participate in” the Form (*Rep.* 476c). Such a person, also, does not “believe that the participants are it or that it itself is the participants [τὰ μετέχοντα]” (*Rep.* 476d1). We regard such a person as “awake.” The person who is “asleep” merely has “opinion [δόξαν ὡς δοξάζοντος]” of a person who merely judges appearances, while we call the “thought” of the one who grasps the universal Form of Beauty “knowledge” (*Rep.* 476d4-5). Notomi describes these passages 478e-479d6 of *Republic* V as the familiar contrast between “appearance” and “reality.”⁷⁹ In the *Republic* X, Plato explains the relation between images of the poet and these higher, Formal realities.

Plato speaks of his hypothesis about essential Forms not as a theory but as a customary procedure, an undefended hypothesis or assumption. Socrates, in the context of considering the meaning of *mimesis*, turns to what he calls a “usual procedure” (ἐκ τῆς εἰωθυίας μεθόδου) or “customary method” of investigation. This method is to “hypothesize a single form [εἶδος] in connection with each of the many things (τίθεσθαι περὶ ἕκαστα τὰ πολλά) to which we apply the same name (ταὐτὸν ὄνομα)” (*Rep.* 596a5-8). This named Form is the ‘one-in-many’ of which many particulars participate. In the *Republic*, without actually providing an essential definition of the essential Form of a particular natural or artificial entity, such as a bed, Plato nevertheless clearly communicates that the grasp of

⁷⁹ Notomi, N., *The Unity of Plato’s Sophist*, *op. cit.*, p. 142. Knowledge of the Forms is, thus, connected to Plato’s criticism of poetry: “Book X of the *Republic*, in criticizing poetry, characterises it as a kind of imitative art which is concerned not with reality but only with appearance.” Such “[a]pppearance turns out to be the key term for the essence of imitation in this argument, since a poet is compared with a painter who imitates the work of other craftsmen, and makes images as they *appear* to be such and such and not as they *really are*.” For instance, in a painting, the painter copies the bed which the skilled carpenter has made. But the carpenter’s bed is itself merely an imitation of the celestial or heavenly Form of a bed. Socrates judges that the true object of understanding is the universal Form. Even here, in the final book of the *Republic*, the way Socrates expresses himself suggests that he is not saying everything about these essential Forms, or providing a coherent systematic account, but merely providing a convenient formulation which captures, for present purposes, the most basic features he wishes to express.

Formal essence is to be preferred to the portrayal of accidental features of a visible entity which one wishes to characterize, like a table or a bed.

In *Republic* X, Plato maintains that the philosophical dialectician must achieve a grasp of the intellectual essence of ordinary natural and artificial empirical entities. Poets, with their mythological embellishments, represent only the surface features of artificial and natural empirical entities, presenting a mere reflection even of the ordinary instance or example of a particular bed. Nevertheless, Plato himself introduces mytho-poetic language, both in the *Republic* and the *Timaeus*, when describing the nature of the essential Form. Socrates and Glaucon agree that the reality which is first in nature is not the particular, visible example of a bed.

This first level of reality (1) consists of the bed which a “god” (θεὸν ἐργάσασθαι) makes and which Socrates calls the bed in nature (ἡ ἐν τῇ φύσει οὐσα). This bed in nature is the essential Form, which is grasped by our intellect (*Rep.* 597b4-5). The two lower tiers of reality are not intellectual but instead accessible to the senses. There is, next, (2) the “work” of a carpenter, which is in an imitation of the work of a god. This is the visible, particular instance of a bed. Further, (3) there is the bed of a “painter[.]” which is a copy produced as an imitation or image of the work of a carpenter. “Painters” as well as poets, who are painters in words, capture merely the superficial features of the bed, which is the work of a carpenter. Furthermore, this bed is itself merely an imitation or instance of the essential, universal bed which covers all of the particular instances. Plato here captures with economy the fundamental notion of a stable, substantial essence.

Having explained that the Form corresponds to a single named entity, Socrates next explains that a Form is a ‘one-in-many,’ asserting that there can only be one bed in nature. Plato goes on to proclaim that the essential Form provides a rational source of unity for the multiple and particular individuals. He claims that “the god, either because he didn’t want to

or because it was necessary for him not to do so, didn't make more than one bed in nature, but only one, the very one that is the being of a bed" (*Rep.* 597b-c). He holds that "[two] or more of these have not been made by a god and never will be" (*Rep.* 597b-c).⁸⁰ "The god knew this" following reason and "wishing to be the real maker of the truly real bed and not just a maker of a bed, he made it to be one in nature" (*Rep.* 597d).⁸¹ Socrates tells Glaucon that the reason the god could not make two original beds is that "if he made only two, then again one would come to light whose form they in turn would both possess, and that would be the one *that* is the being of a bed and not the other two" (*Rep.* 597c).⁸² Plato emphasizes the unity of the Form in the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. This unity contrasts with the multiplicity of particular individuals. No absolute list of characteristics of Forms can be enumerated. However, these four characteristics helpfully summarize the qualities Plato has just given to the Forms.

- (1) The Form defines a single named entity.⁸³
- (2) The Form is invisible, grasped by the intellect rather than sense.
- (3) The Form is immutable.
- (4) The Form is a one or unity over many.
- (5) The Forms are paradigms

The final characteristic is, however, specifically contested in the *Parmenides*. Yet this does not ultimately undermine the fundamental notion that this middle period characterization of Form represents. In the *Timaeus*, Plato offers a mythic picture of the Forms as paradigms. Nevertheless, in a rigorous, technical sense, an essential Form cannot be both an invisible essence and a visible model. The visible model can, however, be

⁸⁰ δύο δὲ τοιαῦται ἢ πλείους οὔτε ἐφυτεύθησαν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ οὔτε μὴ φυῶσιν.

⁸¹ ταῦτα δὲ οἶμαι εἰδῶς ὁ θεός, βουλόμενος εἶναι ὄντως κλίνης ποιητῆς ὄντως οὔσης, ἀλλὰ μὴ κλίνης τινὸς μηδὲ κλिनοποιός τις, μίαν φύσει αὐτὴν ἔφυσεν.

⁸² ὅτι, ἣν δ' ἐγώ, εἰ δύο μόνας ποιήσειεν, πάλιν ἂν μία ἀναφανείη ἥς ἐκεῖναι ἂν αὐτὴ ἀμφοτέραι τὸ εἶδος ἔχουεν, καὶ εἴη ἂν ὃ ἔστιν κλίνη ἐκείνη ἀλλ' οὐχ αἱ δύο.

⁸³ This list of terms is drawn from Allen, R.E., *Plato's Parmenides*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1997, p. 114-203.

essentially defined through inductive methods of definition. One can define a named entity, like an individual circle in an essential way, characterizing it as ‘a figure whose extremities are at every point equidistant from the center.’

One can name a triangle and define a triangle essentially as ‘a figure bound by three sides.’ These geometric entities can be visibly represented by individual circles and squares. However, in each case, the multiple instances are merely expressions of a higher, immutable unity. The other four characteristics, however, do match with the defined named entity which is characterized through the method of collection and division. The *Timaeus* introduces the notion of substantial essences of substances like “fire” and also “gold” (*Tim.* 49c; tr. D. Zeyl *Tim.* 50a-b). Gold can be shaped in a variety of ways; it can be given a number of different properties. However, what makes real gold is a qualitative kind or essence, and this endures beyond any particular instance of gold, like a golden bracelet. Yet Plato’s illustration of gold is actually meant to show something more fundamental. It is to show that there is no permanent gold outside of the substance or Idea of gold. A particular “this” or “that is not the essence of gold. In the *Timaeus*, Plato calls the essential Forms “paradigms” which the divine craftsman uses to create the universe—a cosmos which is merely an imitation or image of these paradigmatic models.⁸⁴

“Since these things are so, it follows by unquestionable necessity that this world is an image of something [τούτων δὲ ὑπαρχόντων αὖ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη τόνδε τὸν κόσμον εἰκόνα τινὸς εἶναι]. Now in every subject it is of utmost importance to begin at the natural beginning, and so, on the subject of an image and its model [περὶ τε εἰκόνοσ καὶ περὶ τοῦ παραδείγματος], we must make the following specification: the accounts [τοὺς λόγους] we give of things have the same character as the subjects they set forth. So accounts of what is stable and fixed and transparent to understanding are themselves stable and unshifting. We must do our very best to make these accounts as irrefutable and invincible as any account may. On the other hand, accounts we give of that which has been formed may be like the reality, since they are accounts of what is a likeness, are themselves likely, and stand in proportion to the previous accounts, i.e., what being is to becoming,

⁸⁴ Philips, J.A., *art. cit.*, p. 464.

truth is to convincingness [δὲ εἰκόνοσ εἰκότασ ἀνὰ λόγον τε ἐκείνων ὄντασ: ὅτιπερ πρὸσ γένεσιν οὐσία, τοῦτο πρὸσ πίστιν ἀλήθεια]. Don't be surprised then, Socrates, if it turns out repeatedly that we won't be able to produce accounts on a great many subjects-on gods or the coming to be of the universe-that are completely and perfectly consistent and accurate. Instead, if we come up with accounts no less likely than any, we ought to be content, keeping in mind that both I, the speaker, and you, the judges, are only human. So we should accept the likely tale [τὸν εἰκότα μῦθον] on these matters. It behooves us not to look for anything beyond this" (*Tim.* 29b1-d2).

This is how Plato's *Timaeus* differentiates between rational accounts, which provide understanding and probable, mythic accounts about the gods and the origin of the universe. Rational, essential determinations can give us greater assurance than these other kinds of approaches to interpreting reality. The *Timaeus* picture may be instructive, but Plato's choice to elaborate the vision in a monological myth prevents thorough, dialectical scrutiny of the relation between the terms paradigm and essential Form. Nevertheless, *Timaeus*' vivid, mythological presentation of the relation between the unchanging objects of rational understanding, the essential Forms, and changing reality, is made exceedingly clear to the reader through this mode of instructive presentation. Sense appearance can only produce changing beliefs. Reason, however, grasps that which is unchanging, and an understanding of the unchanging is a grasp of the essential Forms. Plato, in a sense, applies the geometric and arithmetic model to the whole of nature, reckoning that there are essences of living species and the elements, as much as these mathematical realities.

"[W]e must begin by making the following distinction: What is *that which always is* [τί τὸ ὄν ἀεί] and has no becoming, and what is that which becomes but never is [τί τὸ γιγνόμενον μὲν ἀεί, ὄν δὲ οὐδέποτε]? The former is grasped by understanding, which involves a reasoned account [τὸ μὲν δὴ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου]. It is unchanging. The latter is grasped by opinion, which involves unreasoning sense perception [δόξη μετ' αἰσθήσεωσ ἀλόγου δοξαστόν]. It comes to be and passes away, but never really is. Now everything that comes to be must of necessity come to be by the agency of some cause, for it is impossible for anything to come to be without cause. So whenever the craftsman looks at what is always changeless and, using a thing of that kind as his model, reproduces its form and character, then, of necessity, all that he so completes is beautiful [ὁ δημιουργὸσ πρὸσ τὸ κατὰ ταῦτα ἔχον βλέπων

αεί, τοιούτῳ τινὶ προσχρώμενος παραδείγματι, τὴν ἰδέαν καὶ δύναμιν αὐτοῦ ἀπεργάζεται, καλὸν ἐξ ἀνάγκης]. But were he to look at a thing that has come to be and use as his model something that has been begotten, his work will lack beauty” (*Tim.* 27d9-28b3).

The visible cosmos is itself an image based on the cosmic paradigm (παράδειγμα) or original (*Tim.* 29c1-2). This use of the term paradigm, a synonym of image, signifies an essential reality beyond image. Plato’s myth describing the physical structure of the universe is, however, only a probable (περὶ τὸν εἰκότα μῦθον ἀποδεικνόμενος) representation (*Tim.* 29d1-2). As we shall see, this mythical mode of representation is simply one way of presenting universals, but it is an important one. The Eleatic Visitor describes the activity of the craftsman of the universe in the comparatively more fanciful Myth of Kronos of the *Statesman*. Timaeus speaks of the whole cosmos as being formed by a divinity who draws it into order in accordance with reason and Good.

The exploratory description will be elaborated in even more embellished mythical language in the Myth of Kronos of *Statesman*. This again dramatizes the principles of cosmic dynamics through mythical language, describing demiurge who brings a universe back into order on the basis of reasoned intelligence, counter to the straying of the errant cause. This description presents individual celestial entities like the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars as imitating a divine model in accordance with teleological purpose.

This mythical conception of essential Form as paradigm does not stand when subjected to rational argumentation and dialectical scrutiny. In the *Parmenides*, Plato presents the so-called middle period view of the essential Forms to Parmenides and Zeno in order to resolve paradoxes concerning unity and multiplicity. In the course of the discussion, Parmenides dialectically refutes the fifth characteristic, the equivocation of paradigm with essential, universal Form in the *Parmenides*. At the same time, while he rejects the view that essential Forms are paradigms, Parmenides continues to support Socrates’ hypothesis that

universal Forms must be presupposed in order to bring objective truth and ethical order to visible reality. The mythical description of essential Forms as models or paradigms, though provisionally instructive, does not actually survive rigorous dialectical scrutiny.

This problematic shift in the meaning of paradigm is a source of considerable controversy in Platonic scholarship. It has led one noted scholar to contend that the *Timaeus* be dated along with middle period dialogues like the *Republic* and *Phaedo* rather than the late period *Parmenides* and *Statesman*. Owen claims that “the suggestion refuted by *Parmenides* is precisely the account of the relation between Forms and particulars given in the *Timaeus* (e.g. 29b, 48c-49a, 50d1, 52a, 53c).”⁸⁵ For Owen, interpreters like Ross are “forced to suggest that in the *Timaeus* the defeated version of μέθεξις is retained as a ‘metaphorical way of describing the relation’[.]” Yet Owen accuses Ross of inconsistency in holding of the “[εἰκώς λόγος] in the *Timaeus*,” that ““in general for his metaphysics, Plato would claim that this is true.”⁸⁶ According to Owen, “Plato does not again introduce such παραδείγματα to explain predication [and] in the *Politicus* (277d-278c) he emphasizes the different and important function of the expression παράδειγμα, and in the *Philebus* (15b-17a) he either leaves the nature of μέθεξις an open question or [Owen thinks] implies a different analysis.”⁸⁷

On the basis of his reading of the use of paradigm in the *Parmenides* and *Statesman*, Owen recommends that we place the *Timaeus* alongside the *Republic* in chronology.⁸⁸ He claims that at “one stage of the earlier argument in the *Parmenides* (132c12-133a7) Socrates defines μέθεξις in terms of ὁμοιώματα and παραδείγματα[.]”⁸⁹ That is, Socrates defines visible images in terms of their participation in paradigms. However, *Parmenides* ultimately

⁸⁵ Owen, G.E.L., ‘The Place of the *Timaeus* in Plato’s Later Dialogues’, in Allen, R.E., ed. *Studies in Plato’s Metaphysics*, London, 1965, p. 318-319.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 320-321.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 313. Owen gives the clearest explanation of this difficulty. Although Owen, at the time of writing his article, recognized that it is “nearly axiomatic among Platonic scholars that the *Timaeus* and its unfinished sequel the *Critias* belong to the last stage of Plato’s writing” that he wished “to undermine that conviction by undermining the grounds on which it is commonly based” and “sharpening the paradoxes it imports into the interpretation of Plato.”

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

presents a “critique of the notion, propounded by Socrates, that individuals ‘participate’ in paradigmatic forms which they are “like”.”⁹⁰ For Owen, this leads to the introduction of an alternative sense of paradigm as model used for comparison in the *Statesman*. This model fosters an awareness of that which is beyond representation.

If we recognize that Plato is simply using the dialogue form to express aspects of the notion of essence and the relation this bears to logical argumentation, we need not be puzzled at this difference in the treatment in the *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*. If we see the dialogues in this way, it enables us to abandon the definitive need to present a single, systematically coherent formulation of the doctrines about Forms, which Plato’s dialogues never offer.⁹¹ Plato not only presents a self-consciously naïve formulation of the Forms in dialogues like the *Phaedo*, *Republic* and *Timaeus* but a more self-consciously sophisticated account in dialogues like the *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*. The examination of the drama in not only his early and middle dialogues but also in Plato’s late dialogues serves to clarify his thoughts about Forms.

The character Socrates, from the dramatic point of view of Plato’s dialogues, had been a teenager when he was first confronted with the argument that Forms are not paradigms.⁹² In the *Parmenides*, a Younger Socrates encounters Parmenides and Zeno in Athens. They arrive as Eleatic Visitors or Visitors from Elea. The dialogue begins after Zeno has offered a series of demonstrative arguments which show paradoxes concerning appearance. Zeno presents these arguments in order to defend the view of Parmenides, his master, that all is one and that Being is the only reality.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 318-319.

⁹¹ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 331. As Kahn underscores, in the middle period dialogues, “Plato explicitly refers to the Forms as a hypothesis or assumption (110B-101D) and that in general he does not provide arguments in defense of this assumption.” Kahn identifies two “arguments” for the existence of the Forms, in *Timaeus* (51d-e), when Forms are “said to be required for the distinction between rational knowledge (*nous*) and true opinion” as well as the *Phaedo* (74b-c) where they are said to be stable in comparison with “perspectival appearances.”

⁹² This whole treatment closely paraphrases my consideration of the first part of the *Parmenides* in *The Apories of the Parmenides: A Prelude to the Philosophical Dialectic*, Dalhousie Classics Department, 2004.

This is a dialectical use of refutation which actually anticipates Socrates' practice of elenctic refutation. In the drama of Plato's dialogues, Socrates, himself, proposes the hypothesis about essential Forms and learns "dialectic" techniques of argumentation from Parmenides and Zeno. Although he extols the Younger Socrates for the innovation of his notion of universal, essential Forms, Parmenides nevertheless argues that to make this view more coherent, Socrates needs to master dialectical techniques of refutation and argumentation. This attribution of an innovative notion of Forms makes much more sense, if we see it simply as a fictional device on the part of Plato.

Plato presents his Parmenides as insisting, at the same time, that essential Forms are somehow necessary for thought, and Plato represents Eleatic Visitor as being in accord with this basic view in the *Sophist*.⁹³ Despite the skeptical, dialectical critique of essential Forms which Parmenides puts forth, Plato depicts him as, nevertheless, endorsing the "doctrinal" view that Forms are somehow necessary. Argumentative refutation and the search for essential Forms are associated, even at the very beginning of Plato's dramatic portrayal of Socrates. Parmenides asserts that dialectical refutation and criticism would actually be impossible if the essential Forms did not serve as a standard or basis for making judgments about relative appearance. Dialectic would not be possible without the Forms (*Prm.* 135c1-2). In the *Sophist*, Plato explores how dialecticians use words and language just as painters use images to portray reality. Rather than deny that there are Forms, the Visitor shows how Forms or universals, in fact, provide the basis of our power to make language meaningful and intelligible.

This vital consideration, until very recently, has been practically ignored by scholars. The *Timaeus* occurs, dramatically, after the *Parmenides*, and *Timaeus* uses paradigm to signify Form in this dialogue, without objection from Socrates. Further, a middle aged

⁹³ Vlastos, G., "The Third Man Argument in the *Parmenides*," *Philosophical Review*, 3, 1954, p. 319-49.

Socrates, in the *Republic*, and an Elder Socrates, on the brink of death in the *Phaedo*, use the same basic expression of the Form as a unified entity, apart from the perceptible and in which the perceptible participates as the Younger Socrates of the *Parmenides*. In the *Republic*, Socrates upholds that the customary procedure is to posit a Form whenever we see a likeness between two or more entities. If, for instance, we see a single bed or dog, we posit a corresponding Form of bed or dog to account for the particular instances. From a dramatic point of view, there is no fundamental shift or change of attitude.

Yet developmental interpreters like Vlastos, Owen and Gill hold that there is a doctrinal shift in Plato's development. They hold that there is a change not just in presentation but in the understanding about the nature of the Forms. The relative chronological dating of the composition of Plato's dialogues—the *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*—is important for their argument that Plato's views change over time. The *Sophist* and *Statesman* "are important" according to Gill's assessment "in exhibiting Plato's views on method and metaphysics after he criticized his own most famous contribution to the history of philosophy, the theory of separate, immaterial forms, in the *Parmenides*."⁹⁴ In this regard, these dialogues "seem more down-to-earth and Aristotelian in tone than the dialogues dated to Plato's middle period, like the "*Phaedo* and the *Republic*."⁹⁵ That is, in these later dialogues, Plato deliberately treats with greater complexity subject matter which he elsewhere presents more simplistically.

Kahn, Lane and Gonzalez provide a critical key which enables us to approach the reading of the *Sophist* and *Statesman* more fruitfully. Lane believes that Kahn's view about

⁹⁴ Gill, M.L., "Method and Metaphysics in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*," p. 1. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-sophstate/> Gill also stresses that in the *Sophist* and, above all, the *Statesman*, this theoretical and metaphysical consideration obviously, also, bears some relation to practical or political interest. Indeed, interpreters like Gill recognize that the "*Statesman* also offers a transitional statement of Plato's political philosophy between the *Republic* and the *Laws*." Dated and classed as resting among theoretical or scientific dialogues like the *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus*, Plato's most theoretical and speculative dialogue, the "*Sophist* and *Statesman* show the author's increasing interest in mundane and practical knowledge."

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

the *protreptic* character of definition, in relation to Forms, is more sophisticated. There might be a development in the way Plato treats the Forms, but this is a choice in literary presentation rather than a change in substance. Owen, as Lane explains, “enlisted the *Statesman* in his well-known argument that Plato did change his mind about the Forms[.]” According to Owen’s argument, “the *Timaeus* (in which Forms appear) must therefore be dated to the ‘middle period’, after which a ‘late’ Plato critical of Forms and concerned with the analytic philosophy of language produced the *Parmenides*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Philebus*, and *Laws*.”⁹⁶ According to Lane, Owen’s “polemic, though unconvincing in some details, helped to establish a robust (though not uncontroversial) tradition of reading the ‘late’ dialogues without reference to Forms and in the spirit of philosophical analysis.”⁹⁷

Gill echoes the opinion of Vlastos and Owen in recognizing the record of “on-going perplexity[.]”⁹⁸ She wonders if “Socrates” was “simply too inexperienced” in the *Parmenides* “to answer” questions about the Forms “adequately[.]”⁹⁹ Plato is, however, presenting a Younger Socrates who is offering the simplified, naïve conception of the Forms.¹⁰⁰ He needs to learn from *Parmenides* how to grasp the sense of his own hypothesis with sophistication. Plato is not perplexed but dramatizes perplexity in preparation for a more complex and logically rigorous exposition. This *protreptic* shift, from middle to later echoes the comparable shift from early to middle. We can see that Plato is treating his Forms differently in different places, withholding and giving responses to questions in order to recognize the potency of the notion of universal Forms but, also, the limits of our capacity to grasp them

⁹⁶ Lane, M., *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 16.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁹⁸ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *art. cit.*, p. 28. Gill, following Owen, holds that these dialogues provide an alternative conception of paradigm: “Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman* use a notion of a model (*paradeigma*) which is quite different from the one with which we are familiar from dialogues like the *Phaedo*, *Parmenides* and *Timaeus*.”⁹⁸ Gill questions that Plato continues “to treat forms as he did in the *Phaedo* and *Republic*” arguing that the “objections” of the *Parmenides* lead him to alter his views.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Gill, M.L., “Model in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *Journal of the International Plato Society*, 6, p.1.

adequately. That is, the chronological and stylistic periodization suggests that Plato had a sort of master plan.

The reader is meant to see his own perplexities through the character, Socrates, in the *Parmenides*, in order to prepare the way for the sophisticated treatment, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. Plato introduces the Eleatic Visitor in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* in order to address some of the puzzling difficulties introduced in the *Parmenides*. Gill perceives this dramatic aspect when she notes that by “using a visitor from Elea, Plato invites his audience to recall Parmenides' own positions and performance in that earlier dialogue.”¹⁰¹

Gill represents the consensus among commentators about the relation between the *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*, when she explains that “Plato replaces Socrates with the visitor from Elea because Elea was the hometown of Parmenides, and in the *Sophist* Plato plans to criticize Parmenides' dictum that we cannot speak or think of what is not (237a).”¹⁰² Gill justifiably supposes that “readers are meant to recall the *Parmenides*, a dialogue staged some fifty years earlier, in which Parmenides himself led the conversation.”¹⁰³ Gill notes that after “criticizing Plato's middle period treatment of forms (inadequately defended by a youthful Socrates), Parmenides announced that before positing forms Socrates should undertake rigorous philosophical training.”¹⁰⁴ In the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, the Eleatic Visitor introduces further dialectical exercises while still claiming that universal Forms must bear a relation with visible reality. This consideration is actually anticipated in the *Parmenides* itself.

“That isn’t reasonable either, Parmenides,” he said. “No, what appears most likely to me is this: these forms [εἶδη] are like patterns in nature [ὥσπερ παραδείγματα ἐστάναι ἐν τῇ φύσει], and other things resemble them and are likenesses [τὰ δὲ ἄλλα τούτοις εἰκέναι καὶ εἶναι ὁμοιώματα]; and this partaking of the forms [ἡ μέθεξις ... τῶν εἰδῶν] is,

¹⁰¹ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” p. 3: “(For discussion of the dialogue form in these late works, cf. Frede 1996, Rowe 1996, and C. Gill 1996).”

¹⁰² Gill, M., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *art. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

for the other things, simply being modeled on them [εἰκασθῆναι]” (*Prm.* 132c11-d4).¹⁰⁵

Parmenides rejects this notion precisely because he says that paradigms are images or likenesses (*Prm.* 132d3)! If a Form were simply a likeness, then every time another likeness arose between two things, there would be another Form. The practice of dialectic, in the sense of hypothetical refutation, and the consideration of Formal essence are here closely connected. This is a striking instance of a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Symbols: Fx = “x is a Form.” Px = “x is an Paradigm.” Ix = “x is an image or likeness.”

1. $Ix \rightarrow \sim Fx$
2. $Fx \rightarrow Px$
3. $Px \rightarrow Ix$
4. $Fx \rightarrow Ix$ (2, 3 hypothetical syllogism)
5. $Fx \rightarrow \sim Ix$ (1 contraposition)
6. | Fx (subproof assumption)
7. | Ix (4, 6 modus ponens)
8. | $\sim Ix$ (5, 6 modus ponens)
9. | $Ix \ \& \ \sim Ix$ (7, 8 conjunction)
10. $\sim Fx$ (5, 6, 7, 8 reductio ad absurdum)¹⁰⁶

Plato shows Parmenides, with Socrates, entertaining the hypothesis that there is a “compelling necessity for that which is like to partake of the same one form [εἵδους μετέχειν] as what is like it [τὸ δὲ ὅμοιον τῷ ὁμοίῳ]” (*Prm.* 132d7). Second, he states that if “like things are like by partaking of something [τὰ ὅμοια μετέχοντα ὅμοια]”, the thing the like

¹⁰⁵ These considerations were first approached in my unpublished “The Aporiai of Plato’s Parmenides: A Prelude to the Philosophical Dialectic,” Dalhousie University, Classics Department, 2004. My approach to these problems remains different but, in certain respects, the same. The doctrinal reading of these passages is now inflected and mediated through the introduction of a recognition of the importance of elements of skepticism, the literary form and the notion of Platonic, literary authorship.

¹⁰⁶ Robbie Moser suggested this correction and more adequate proof in correspondence prior to submission.

thing partakes in will “be the form itself [αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδος]” (*Prm.* 132e3). However, they had agreed earlier that the Form is not an image or likeness but that upon which images are based. Every time that one recognized a similarity between, for instance, two people, one would have to posit another human Form or essence. However, the Form or essence of a human being must be a unitary, invisible reality, beyond any particular manifestation.

Parmenides seems to imply that essence must nevertheless manifest through the individual paradigm, model or image of a given person. If there were not a Form (ἰδέαν) for each entity, the power of dialectic (διαλέγεσθαι) would be destroyed (*Prm.* 135c1-3). Parmenides says, in this context, that it would be impious to deny that the Forms are connected to the particulars of this world, just as it would be impious to declare that the gods care not for human affairs. This is what makes the Eleatic Visitor’s introduction of a novel use of the paradigm so interesting. In section II, my argument will show how paradigm is used to signify an inductive example which can be used to define a universal essence. This sense of paradigm occurs not only in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* but in the middle and even early dialogues. Plato composes dialogues like the *Laches*, *Charmides* or *Euthyphro*, in order to prepare readers to accept the possibility of universals. Readers, presumably attracted to Plato’s writing through his earlier dialogues, are thus prepared not to reject offhand the readily comprehensible and at the same time self-consciously naïve presentation about universal Forms in the *Republic* and *Phaedo*. This, however, is not the only important implication of the critique of Form as paradigm in the *Parmenides*. It, also, frees up the use of paradigm for the purpose of making analogies.

1.1.4 Paradigm as Visible Model

The *Statesman* provides the technical term visible model or paradigm. My view is that this provides a basis for philosophical use of images, a philosophical mimesis. However, the practice of using images, comparisons or analogies, as well as myths is a familiar one,

especially in the *Republic*. Gonzalez explains that “whether drawing an analogy or telling a story, there are times when the dialectician finds it necessary to appeal to the imagination of his interlocutors through the use of images” (εἰκόνες).¹⁰⁷ “Reason” demands not only the use of propositional arguments but “in this case requires images as aids in the attainment of a certain insight.”¹⁰⁸ And if “dialectic is to serve the function of awakening insight into truth, it must know how to employ correctly not only language and argumentation, but also images.”¹⁰⁹

Plato, in the *Parmenides*, unsettles the distinction between paradigm and likeness or image. Plato’s ordinary view is that the image is simply an imitation of the Form or paradigm. The term “*eikon*” is associated with notions of “likeness, comparison and similarity (See *Phd.* 87b3).”¹¹⁰ Collobert notes that the “first three words share the meaning of representation—*eikazo* means to represent, to compare, to draw.”¹¹¹ Socrates, in the *Phaedrus*, discusses how certain practitioners of rhetoric make use of images (εἰκονολογία) (*Phdr.* 267c).¹¹² Plato, in the *Phaedrus*, talks about how one might use a “great thing to explain a small entity” or a “small entity to explain a great entity” (*Phdr.* 267b).¹¹³ But in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* the model or paradigm acquires the significance of an informative image.

Gonzalez, commenting on these passages of the *Republic* notes that when “Adeimantus asks, can it be that cities will not be free of evil until philosophers become rulers? Socrates replies that this question needs to be answered with an image (δι’εἰκόνος,

¹⁰⁷ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 129.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Collobert, C., “The Platonic Art of Mythmaking: Myths as Informative *Phantasma*,” in *Plato and Myth*, op cit., p. 88.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² McCall, M., op. cit., p. 4-5 and 45.

¹¹³ See Collobert, C., art. cit., p. 95. Even though Plato frequently uses the word *eikon* with reference to the philosophical images he deploys, especially in the *Republic*, “Plato” does not in the “*Sophist*” define “the *eikōna*-maker” as “the knowledgeable imitator.”

487e4-5).¹¹⁴ According to Gonzalez, “Adeimantus’ sarcastic response is very revealing: “And you, Socrates, are surely not used to speaking in images!” (οὐκ εἰωθας δι’ εἰκόνων λέγειν, 487e6).¹¹⁵ As Gonzalez observes, the “implication is that responding with an image is common practice with Socrates, perhaps even to the point of being tiresome.”¹¹⁶ Gonzalez enumerates a variety of instances, in the *Republic*, where Socrates uses the word εἰκών in this way:

“At the beginning of book 7, Socrates asks us to compare (ἀπεΐκασον, 514a1) our state of education to men dwelling in a cave, incapable of seeing anything but the shadows cast on the wall in front of them by implements situated behind their backs (this image is also called an εἰκών at 514a4, 517a8, 517d1). In book 9, Socrates responds to the claim that injustice is profitable to the unjust man who is reputed just, by fashioning in his discourse an image of the soul (588b10). On a larger scale, the Myth of Er with which the dialogue ends is an imitation of the rewards of justice. Finally, there is a sense in which the just city that forms the greater part of the dialogue is itself an image of justice in the individual soul (see 369a1-3). Add to this a wealth of imagery on a smaller scale, such as that of the dog used to describe the nature of the philosopher (εἰκών), and Adeimantus’ ironic exclamation will appear by no means unwarranted.”¹¹⁷

Robinson notes that both the terms paradigm and image are used to mean images which provide helpful models throughout the central books of the *Republic*.

“To return to analogy in the sense intended in this chapter, there seems to be no word in Plato that conveys a concept close to this. (The nearest are εἰκών and παράδειγμα, of which the correct translations are usually something like ‘image’ and ‘example’.) There are, however, certain passages that offer something approaching discussions of analogy. The first of these is the introduction of the great analogy between man and city in the *Republic*:”¹¹⁸

Even before he explains the use paradigm to provide an image, the Visitor reasons that every image is modeled after the original or paradigm (παράδειγμα) (*Sph.* 235d5-e2).

Gill’s work explains that in “the *Sophist* and *Statesman* a model involves a mundane example

¹¹⁴ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 129.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 131-132.

¹¹⁸ Robinson, R., *Plato’s Earlier Dialectic*, op cit., p. 210.

whose definition is relevant to the definition of some more difficult concept under investigation, the target.”¹¹⁹ Further the “steps taken to define the example also reveal a useful procedure to be transferred to the more difficult case.”¹²⁰ Lane notes that the Visitor’s “analysis (277d-279a)” of paradigm “is the longest and most detailed discussion of examples as such, or any of its sisters—analogy, image, comparison—in Plato.”¹²¹ It is the “[d]issatisfaction with the shepherd definition, even as modified by the story,” which “provokes the analysis” of the general notion of a visible model.¹²² It is only after the division and myth are treated that the Eleatic Visitor begins to explain more fully what a paradigm is, stating the following: “It is difficult... without using examples (*paradeigmasi*) to show any of the greater things sufficiently well (*hikanos*). Every one of us is like a man who sees things in a dream and thinks that he knows them perfectly and then wakes up, as it were, to find that he knows nothing (277d1-4).”¹²³ As Lane recognizes, the “inclusion of statecraft among the ‘great things’ which must be shown by example, picks up the contrast between investigation of the great (*megas*) by using a small (*smikros*) example, at the very beginning of the *Sophist* (So. 218c7-d2; cf. St. 279a8).”¹²⁴ The Visitor critiques the misuse of disproportionate images in the *Sophist*. However, in so doing, he relies upon his own (not yet fully explained) dialectical method of employing proportionate, visible models.

1.1.5 *Sophist and Poet as Image-Maker*

The misuse of visible images confounds the understanding and has a resultant, harmful ethical influence. Socrates describes the poet as “someone able to make *all* things, on earth, in heaven, and in Hades” and “Glaucón” exclaims “‘What an amazing sophist you

¹¹⁹ Gill, M.L., “Models in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *art. cit.*, p. 1. Collobert, C., *art. cit.*, p. 97. Collobert, in parallel with Gill, notes the need to identify an “essential and common feature” the image shares with the target entity “that the image aims to illuminate.”

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

are talking about!’” (*Rep.* 596d).¹²⁵ Although “poets such as Homer and Hesiod” are the central concern, even in *Republic* X, “when the common notion that the poets educate (*paideuein*) Greek people and *make* (*poiein*) them better is refuted, this refutation seems to aim at the sophist as well.”¹²⁶ In the *Sophist*, Plato “defines the sophist as the imitator (*mimetes*) of the wise’ (*Soph.* 268c).”¹²⁷ The *Sophist* “does not[.]” like the *Republic*, “deal with a poet or poetry in a direct way[.]”¹²⁸ Yet the *Sophist* “examines the foundations of Plato’s earlier criticism of poetry in *Republic* X[.]”¹²⁹ This is, “namely, the ontological basis of the art of the image-maker.”¹³⁰ According to Notomi, Plato’s interest can be seen in the “remarkable correspondences between the two dialogues.”¹³¹

Plato asserts “that all poetic imitators, beginning with Homer, imitate images of virtue and all the other things [πάντας τοὺς ποιητικοὺς μιμητὰς εἰδώλων ἀρετῆς εἶναι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ποιοῦσιν] they write about and have no grasp of truth (*Rep.* 600e4-6).” But a poet or “a painter, though he knows nothing about cobblery, can make what seems to be a cobbler to those who know as little about it as he does and who judge things by their colors and shapes” (*Rep.* 601a4-6).¹³² The poet lacks an understanding of the ordinary, practical arts, and this contributes to his limited grasp of the highest form of understanding—ethical or practical insight. This ignorance of the practical arts, as much as ignorance of the essence of natural entities, is linked to the fact that the poet simply makes copies of images of natural and artificial entities. The craftsman, the cobbler or carpenter, knows how to produce with correct rather than distorted proportion the product of his craft—a table or a sandal. Since the

¹²⁵ Notomi, N. “Image-Making in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 315. Cf. Halliwell, S., *op. cit.*, 1988, p. 117-118.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 315-316.

¹²⁷ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*, in *Plato and the Poets*,” *op. cit.*, p. 311.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² οὐκοῦν τιθώμεν ἀπὸ Ὅμηρου ἀρξαμένους πάντας τοὺς ποιητικοὺς μιμητὰς εἰδώλων ἀρετῆς εἶναι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ποιοῦσιν, τῆς δὲ ἀληθείας οὐχ ἅπτεσθαι, ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν, ὁ ζωγράφος σκυτοτόμον ποιήσει δοκοῦντα εἶναι, αὐτός τε οὐκ ἐπαῖων περὶ σκυτοτομίας καὶ τοῖς μὴ ἐπαῖουσιν, ἐκ τῶν χρωμάτων δὲ καὶ σχημάτων θεωροῦσιν;

sophist and poet represent even the table or chair with disproportion, for Socrates, it is no surprise that such pretenders also lack a grasp of the highest understanding, virtue, the practical awareness of how to live a good and just life.

The poet described in *Republic X* shares the features of the sophist defined in the *Sophist*.¹³³ Plato argues in both *Republic X* and the *Sophist* that an uninformed image-maker has an ethically harmful influence. Socrates maintains that “an imitator” does not “have knowledge [ἐπιστήμην] of whether the things he makes are fine or right through having made use of them” (*Rep.* 602a1). Socrates declares that the poet or “imitator [ὁ μιμητής] also does not have “right opinion [ὀρθὰ δοξάζει] about whether the things he makes are fine or bad [πρὸς κάλλος ἢ πονηρίαν]” (*Rep.* 602a8-9). Those who engage in poetic representation [ἐν τῇ ποιήσει] lack “wisdom [πρὸς σοφίαν]” or a practical understanding of human action (*Rep.* 602a11-12). Given that the poet lacks understanding but has mastered the art of illusion, he is able to fill “the majority of people who know nothing [τοῖς πολλοῖς τε καὶ μηδὲν εἰδόν]” with erroneous opinions about the just life (*Rep.* 602a-b). He “doesn’t know the good or bad qualities of anything [πονηρὸν ἢ χρηστόν]” and “imitate[s]...what appears fine or beautiful [φαίνεται καλόν]” rather than the invisible Beauty or Goodness which remains beyond representation.

The poet or sophist speaks convincingly but without a proper grasp of practical truth; “this kind of imitation [μιμεῖσθαι τοῦτο]” is “concerned with something that is third from truth [περὶ τρίτον μὲν τί ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας]” (*Rep.* 602c1-2). Yet poetry, like painting, has the “power [δύναμιν]” to convince us through perceptual judgment (*Rep.* 602c). There are instances where an object “looked at from close at hand doesn’t seem [φαίνεται] to be the

¹³³ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 311-312.

same size as it does when looked at from a distance” (*Rep.* 602c).¹³⁴ Clearly, the examination of the character of appearance is of pivotal importance.

The reasoning power, which is grounded in the essential Forms, should prevent us from being confused by deceptive appearances. The Form provides a means of escaping the relativity which threatens to overthrow not only a stable understanding of reality in epistemology and ontology but stable norms in the practical domain of ethics. Plato defines appearances (*phainetai*) in the *Republic* in the following way: Socrates asserts that an object, like a stick, “looks crooked when seen in water and straight when” we see the object “out of” water (*Rep.* 602c). Plato also mentions other optical illusions, like objects that look “both concave and convex because our eyes are deceived by its colors” (*Rep.* 602d). Faulty perceptual judgment arises from this and “every other similar sort of confusion” which is “present in our soul” (*Rep.* 602d). Painters and artists “exploit this weakness in our nature” since such “*trompe l’oeil painting* [ἡ σκιαγραφία], conjuring [γοητείας], and other forms of trickery have powers that are little short of magical” (*Rep.* 602d1-3). Socrates, in this way, emphasizes the power of reasoning (*logistikon*) over the power of appearance.¹³⁵ Discursive reasoning and argumentation, along with a grasp of the essential nature of the natural or artificial entity that we encounter, is a kind of remedy to poetic trickery and the distortions of sophistic illusion and eristic.

This rational and logical aspect of human character is of a more elevated ethical order than the irrational dimension of the human person. There is a “part of the soul that forms a belief contrary to the measurements,” but this is not the rational “part that believes in accord [κατὰ τὰ μέτρα] with them” (*Rep.* 603a). Socrates’ view is that “the part that puts its trust in measurement and calculation [τὸ μέτρῳ γε καὶ λογισμῷ] is the best part of the soul [βέλτιστον...ψυχῆς]” (*Rep.* 603a4-5). For this reason, “the part that opposes it is one of the

¹³⁴ Notomi, N., “*The Unity of Plato’s Sophist*,” *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹³⁵ Notomi, N., *The Unity of Plato’s Sophist*, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

inferior parts in us” (*Rep.* 603a).¹³⁶ At the same time, this very best part of the soul is itself invisible and beyond perceptible representation.

While Socrates presents this view of reasoning in the *Republic*, the Visitor will develop, at greater length, an account of how to use words to judge things in either a truthful or false way: “This, then, is what I wanted to get agreement about when I said that painting and imitation [ἡ γραφικὴ καὶ ὅλως ἡ μιμητικὴ] as a whole produce work that is far from the truth, namely, that imitation really consorts with a part of us that is far from reason [φρονήσεως], and the result of their being friends and companions is neither sound nor true” (*Rep.* 603b1). Thus “imitation [ἡ μιμητικὴ] is an inferior thing that consorts with another inferior thing, to produce an inferior offspring” (*Rep.* 603b).

The analogy or paradigm of painting or picturing is just that. Poets and sophists use voice and language to convey thought. However, this principle does not “apply only to the imitations we see [κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν]” but to “the ones we hear [κατὰ τὴν ἀκοήν]-the ones we call poetry [ποίησιν]” (*Rep.* 603b). Socrates thinks that we must not “rely solely on mere probability [εἰκότι μόνον πιστεύσωμεν] based on the analogy with painting [ἐκ τῆς γραφικῆς]” (*Rep.* 603b10-c1). Indeed, we “must go directly to the part of our thought [τῆς διανοίας] with which poetic imitations consort and see whether it is inferior or something to be taken seriously” (*Rep.* 603c1). This is where he makes a shift from visible, perceptual representation to the invisible, psychological, rational order of the human mind.

Plato critiques poetic illusion so thoroughly because poets hold a psychological influence which extends to ethical life, action and conduct. Sophists and poets are able to stimulate the emotions, influencing the reasoning process and, ultimately, the practical action of their auditors. Socrates defines “imitative poetry” as poetry which “imitates human beings acting voluntarily or under compulsion” in such a way that the characters portrayed undertaking

¹³⁶ τὸ ἄρα τοῦτο ἐναντιούμενον τῶν φαύλων ἂν τι εἴη ἐν ἡμῖν.

“actions” are thought to be “doing either well or badly” in a sense that is related to the “experience” of “pleasure or pain” (*Rep.* 602c). This sense of mimesis as a form of action will be explored at greater length in the third section, with closer attention to Plato’s own appropriation of techniques of mythmaking. However, for the present, let us return to the critique of the misuse of images more generally.

Halliwel stresses the importance of this paradigmatic comparison with painters: “Plato’s position presupposes that poetry does in its own medium something comparable to what the painter does in his[.]”¹³⁷ According to Plato, “the poet offers verbal images of men, gods, objects and events, just as the painter does in visual form.”¹³⁸ Since they merely copy reality “what both artists achieve is no more substantial, no more informed by understanding, and therefore no more valuable, than turning a mirror on the ordinary world around us.”¹³⁹ Yet the critique of the fantastic representation of the poet and sophist, as verbal masters of portraiture, is even more severe.

This question of image is tied with the question of perception and perspective. Notomi points out that, in the *Republic* and *Sophist*, “both arguments refer to the difference of appearances depending on an audience’s point of view” (*Rep.* 598a, 602c-d; *Soph.* 235e-236a).¹⁴⁰ As the painter displays a painting to ‘children and foolish adults’ or ‘ignorant young children’, the poet and the sophist speak to their audience, namely young and ignorant people” (*Rep.* 598c-d).¹⁴¹

Gill observes that the “Stranger[.]” who had explained the sophist first through a simpler craft paradigm, “introduces a new model [παράδειγμα] (233d) to help us recognize the special nature of the sophist’s art.”¹⁴² The painter is “the man who promises he can make

¹³⁷ Halliwel, S., *Plato: Republic 10 with translation and commentary by S. Halliwel, op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*,” *op. cit.*, p. 312.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Gill, M.L., “Models in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” in *art. cit.*, p. 11.

everything by means of a single expertise [μῖα τέχνη πάντα ποιεῖν]” (*Sph.* 234b5-8).¹⁴³ This artist, “being expert at drawing [τῇ γραφικῇ τέχνῃ δυνατὸς] produces things that have the same names as real things [μιμήματα καὶ ὁμώνυμα τῶν ὄντων]” (*Sph.* 234b9-c3). With his mastery of perspective, showing “his drawings from far away he’ll be able to fool the more mindless young children into thinking that he can actually produce anything he wants to” (*Sph.* 234bc4-7). However, the sophist, like the poet, is not a painter with visual images but an artist who makes use of spoken words.

The Visitor explains, in Gill’s words, that “someone might achieve the same result with statements (*logoi*), making larger things appear small, and easy things hard (234c-e).”¹⁴⁴ Note that this language comes very close to the language that Socrates and the Visitor use when talking about using paradigms as visible models. The Visitor, however, stresses that such a “person, too, could fool young people who don’t know.”¹⁴⁵ In short, the sophist is “a sort of wizard, who imitates things with words (234e–235a).”¹⁴⁶ The consideration of appearance is linked with “the sophist’s skill at imitating people who truly know the things he appears to know.”¹⁴⁷ This is one of the connections between sophistry and poetry.

This is where the Visitor recognizes that we will “expect that there’s another kind of expertise [τινα ἄλλην τέχνην]—this time having to do with words [περὶ τοὺς λόγους]—and that someone can use it to trick young people when they stand even farther away from the truth about things [ἔτι πόρρω τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς ἀληθείας]” (*Sph.* 234c1-5). This person would put “words” in the ears of children and “by showing them spoken copies” or images “of everything [δεικνύοντας εἰδῶλα λεγόμενα περὶ πάντων]” such speakers would “make them believe that the words are true[.]” Such a “person who’s speaking” to the young claims to be the practically or ethically “wisest person there is [ποιεῖν ἀληθῆ δοκεῖν λέγεσθαι καὶ τὸν

¹⁴³ Notomi, N., *The Unity of Plato’s Sophist*, op. cit., p. 125-126.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

λέγοντα δὴ σοφώτατον πάντων ἅπαντ' εἶναι]” (*Sph.* 234c6-7). The sophist or wise teacher, as image-maker in his use of words, is also making a superlative ethical or practical claim.

The paradigm is here treated as the visible model upon which copies are based. This first “type of imitation” is called by the Visitor “the art of likeness-making” (*Sph.* 235d).¹⁴⁸ Likeness-making is the way an artist (Plato has here in mind a painter) “produces an imitation by keeping the proportions [κατὰ τὰς τοῦ παραδείγματος συμμετρίας] of length, breadth and depth of his model, and also by keeping the appropriate colors of its parts” (*Sph.* 235d6-e1). Theaetetus, a young mathematician, who is, perhaps, naïve about artistic methods or techniques of representations, says “don’t all imitators try to do that” (*Soph.* 235e)? The Visitor assures Theaetetus that they do not, and this constitutes the basis for the distinction between the two types of imitators or image-makers. In the *Sophist*, the Visitor’s mode of argumentation suggests that only the practice of defining general ideas or discerning between true and false statements is important for the dialectician. That is, logical discourse alone is dialectical or philosophical. The Visitor, indeed, prides himself on his capacity to use collection and division to accurately define the sophist as an image-maker.¹⁴⁹ Yet as we shall promptly see, this sense of rational measure extends to measure in the use of images and even the composition of myths.

The *Sophist* presents a thorough critique of the sophist as someone akin to a sculptor or painter who is an image-maker with words. He clarifies that copy-makers are not “the ones who sculpt or draw very large works [οὐκ οὖν ὅσοι γε τῶν μεγάλων πού τι πλάττουσιν ἔργων ἢ γράφουσιν]” (*Sph.* 235e5-6). This is because if “they produced the true proportions

¹⁴⁸ μίαν μὲν τὴν εἰκαστικὴν ὁρῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τέχνῃ.

¹⁴⁹ “Visitor: So it’s settled. We’ll divide the craft of copy-making [διαίρειν τὴν εἰδωλοποικὴν τέχνην] as quickly as we can and we’ll go down into it. Then if the sophist gives up right away we’ll obey the royal command and we’ll capture him and hand our catch over to the king. But if the sophist slips down somewhere into the parts of the craft of imitation [κατὰ μέρη τῆς μιμητικῆς], we’ll follow along with him and we’ll divide each of the parts that contain him until we catch him. Anyway, neither he nor any other kind will ever be able to boast that he’s escaped from the method of people who are able to chase a thing through both the particular and general” (*Sph.* 235b-c).

of their beautiful subjects...the upper parts would appear smaller than they should, and the lower parts would appear larger, because we see the upper parts from farther away and the lower parts closer” (*Sph.* 236a).¹⁵⁰ The Visitor thinks that this beautifying, artistic use of disproportion distorts and confounds understanding.

The sophist is like a painter who uses inexact proportions and so creates illusions. Plato thinks that “those craftsmen say goodbye to truth [τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐάσαντες οἱ δημιουργοὶ]” and they “produce in their images [τοῖς εἰδώλοις] the proportions that seem [δοξούσας] to be beautiful instead of the real ones” (*Soph.* 236a5-6). The Visitor proclaims that “the first sort of image [εἰκόνα]” should “be called a likeness, since it’s like [εἰκός] the thing” (*Sph.* 236a8-9). A.E. Taylor translates the division of this “branch of *mimicry* [τῆς γε μιμητικῆς]” as “the art of *copying*” (*Soph.* 236b1). This requires a mastery of a sense of relative difference between the lesser and greater entity.

The Visitor uses not only a visible model but his method of collection and division to classify the art of the sophist, who is ultimately described, like the poet, as a kind of image-maker using words. The mimetic art (τέχνη μιμητική) is the general class to which the more specific classes, the art of making an *eikôn* (εἰκαστική) and the art of making a *phantasm* (φανταστική), belong (*Sph.* 236a). Both forms of representation, the image (εἰκόν) and the phantasm (φάντασμα), are species or types of images (εἶδωλα).

The *phantasm* is an image that alters the proportions of the original or paradigm to suit the viewer. The *eikôn* has the sense of a reflection or copy of the original. An artist’s craft (τέχνη) is not just to replicate or produce an image (εἰκόν) but to recognize how to use proportions appropriately to accommodate the viewer or listener.

¹⁵⁰ εἰ γὰρ ἀποδιδόεν τὴν τῶν καλῶν ἀληθινὴν συμμετρίαν, οἷσθ’ ὅτι μικρότερα μὲν τοῦ δέοντος τὰ ἄνω, μείζω δὲ τὰ κάτω φαίνονται ἂν διὰ τὸ τὰ μὲν πόρρωθεν, τὰ δ’ ἐγγύθεν ὑφ’ ἡμῶν ὁρᾶσθαι.

This kind of distorted image contrasts with “the true copy” or *eikon* and should be described as an “*illusion* [φάντασμα]” (*Sph.* 236b7). This “type of product is very common, alike in painting [κατὰ τὴν ζωγραφίαν] and in all forms of mimicry [κατὰ σύμπασαν μιμητικὴν]” (*Sph.* 236c1-2). The sculptor, Phidias, is associated with introducing optical proportions.¹⁵¹ Certain contemporary painters like Apollodorus and Zeuxis as well as some sculptors had become masters of perspective and visual representation and benefited from the technique of shading (σκιαγραφία).¹⁵²

As Morgan observes, “[r]epresentational viewing requires several recognitions on the viewer’s part.”¹⁵³ A person “must have some understanding of the notion of representation, of imitation, of being a copy of something else.”¹⁵⁴ This requires that one “be attentive to one’s own detachment as a viewer from both the object viewed and the object represented, even if it is oneself.”¹⁵⁵ Further, a person “must be clear on the separation between the representation and what it represents.”¹⁵⁶ At the same time, one “need not, of course, be absolutely clear on all of this, especially on what representational viewing is, although someone else might have good reasons to seek reflective clarification of that notion.”¹⁵⁷ The Visitor insists that “a work which appears to the unfavourably placed spectator” is “a copy of a beautiful object” (*Sph.* 236c). However, it “would lose all resemblance to the alleged original, if one could only get an adequate view of its vast proportions” (*Sph.* 236c). The name for the discrepancy between appearance and original is *appearing*. This is what the Visitor describes, in a way that parallels the image-making of the poet, as the illusion which the sophist creates.

¹⁵¹ Keuls, E., “Plato on Painting,” *The American Journal of Philology*, 95, 2 (Summer, 1974), p. 108.

¹⁵² Morgan, M.L. “Plato, Inquiry, and Painting,” *Apeiron*, 23:2 (1990, June), p.121. See, also, Steven, R.G., “Plato and the Art of His Time,” *Classical Quarterly*, 27, 1933, p. 150.

¹⁵³ Morgan, M.L. *art. cit.*, p. 128. Cf. Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

The Visitor, having offered a critique of the potentially distorting power of images, next insists that the paradigm is a way of using a visible model to show correctly the proportions of a higher, invisible ethical reality. In the *Statesman*, Plato can introduce analogies and probable myths, because he has explained the distinction between truth and falsity in the *Sophist*. In this dialogue, Plato explains the nature of propositional truth. Gonzalez holds that dialectic is not “confined” to the search for essential definitions through argumentation and the “verbal analyses” of propositions.¹⁵⁸ He claims that one of the conditions of “philosophical mimesis” is the recognition of the “inadequacy” of image.¹⁵⁹ Only someone who is consciously aware that the image is “quite unlike” the “original” can move “beyond appearance.”¹⁶⁰

Halliwell recognizes that “the *Sophist* uses the concept of mimesis as part of its devastating critique of the “sophist” as an intellectual and cultural imposter[.]”¹⁶¹ Still, at the same time, the *Sophist* “includes several indications of a less than monolithic view of art.”¹⁶² At the same time, there is, as Halliwell recognizes, an ambiguity that carries throughout Plato’s work. Halliwell recognizes this paradox as a fundamental “tension between discrepant impulses in Plato’s thinking.”¹⁶³ On the one hand, Plato sometimes insists that “reality cannot adequately be spoken of, described or modeled” but only “experienced in some pure, unmediated manner” through reason (λόγος) intelligence (νοῦς) and thought (διάνοια).¹⁶⁴ The “second” of these “discrepant impulses” is that, according to Plato, “all human thought is an attempt to think about, describe or model reality[.]”¹⁶⁵ Halliwell even claims that in certain dialogues Plato suggests that there is no radical distinction between

¹⁵⁸ Gonzalez, F., *op. cit.*, p. 77-78.

¹⁵⁹ Gonzalez, F., *op. cit.*, p. 143.

¹⁶⁰ Gonzalez, F., *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁶¹ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, *op. cit.*, p. 62-63.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, p. 70.

¹⁶⁴ Halliwell, S., *op. cit.*, p. 70.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

concern for the “pursuit of truth (philosophy)” and “merely plausible beliefs (rhetoric).”¹⁶⁶ In the course of the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato explains how a visible model or paradigm can be used in order to offer a *logos* that brings a true judgment about the ethical order of the soul. In this way, Plato is, according to my argument, able to develop the notion of visible paradigm and fully explicate the positive use in the *Statesman*.

1.2 Paradigm as Model which Brings True Judgment about the Invisible, Ethical Order of the Soul

At the outset of the *Statesman*, Plato points to a shift in the mode of the discourse. Although the *Sophist* has made use of rational techniques of definition and demonstration, based on geometric and arithmetic methods familiar to Theodorus and Theaetetus, the Eleatic Visitor and the Elder Socrates agree upon a need to consider, now, not quantitative but qualitative proportions. In the *Statesman*, Plato differentiates between the analogy of a geometer and arithmetician’s art (κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τὴν τῆς ὑμετέρας τέχνης) and the analogy which will provide the account (λόγος) of the statesman (πολιτικός) (*Stm.* 257b2-4). Plato has the Visitor repeat twice Socrates’ emphasis upon the importance of qualitative, rather than quantitative modes of appraisal (*Stm.* 258d-259d, 284e4-8). The sense of qualitative measure arises most fully in the Visitor’s claim that there is, in fact, an art of measuring all things correctly. The purpose of the weaving paradigm is to introduce this higher order art of measure.

Plato develops further the notion of paradigm (παράδειγμα) and defines it as a way of producing an adequate representation. The Visitor affirms in the *Statesman* that a paradigm (παράδειγμα) provides a rational account (λόγος) by which correct judgment

¹⁶⁶ Halliwell, S., “Philosophy and Rhetoric,” in Worthington, I. ed., *Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action*, London, Routledge, 1994, p. 23.

(δοξαζόμενον ὀρθῶς) or accurate representation of an entity is achieved (*Pol.* 278c-d).¹⁶⁷

Such a philosophical practitioner of representation could generate, through speech or verbal images, a form of inquisitive mimesis (ἡ ἱστορική τις μίμησις) which could produce insight and understanding (*Sph.* 267d-e). This suggests that mimesis, accompanied with scientific insight (μετ' ἐπιστήμης), is simply verbal representation consisting of paradigms (*Sph.* 267d-e).¹⁶⁸ At the same time, Collobert and Gill stress that there is a sense in which such an image, used to provide an analogy or used in composing myths, would transcend the bounds of merely factual truth.

The Visitor states in the *Statesman* that a paradigm can be used to provide a correct judgment (δοξαζόμενον ὀρθῶς) about two entities which are essentially unlike each other (*Stm.* 278c-d).¹⁶⁹ This is achieved by comparing two unlike entities, a visible model to an invisible and higher ethical reality, like the ethical order of the soul or the idea of the Good. Plato's explanation of the use of a paradigm or model to make an analogy is expressed using ordinary language. In Plato's words, as Rowe translates them, "we come to be using a model when being the same thing in something different and distinct is correctly identified, and having been brought together with the original thing, it brings about a single true judgment [συνάμωφ μίαν ἀληθῆ δόξαν] about each separately and both together" (*Stm.* 278c3-c7). In Rowe's translation, "using a model [παραδείγματός]" we compare "the same thing in something different and distinct [ὄν τὰντὸν ἐν ἐτέρῳ]" (*Sph.* 278c3-4).

Plato alters the mode of discourse at a very late stage in a discussion, embracing not only binary logic but a logic of possibility. The second section will explain how, in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, which are dialogues dramatically antecedent to the *Statesman*, Plato

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Goldschmidt, V., *Le paradigme dans la dialectique platonicienne*, Paris, PUF, 1947, p. 2.

¹⁶⁸ Collobert, C., "The Platonic Art of Myth-Making: Myths as Informative *Phantasmata*," Collobert, C., Destrée, P. and Gonzalez, F. eds., *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, Brill, Leiden, 2012, p. 94.

¹⁶⁹ Goldschmidt, V., *Ibid.*

shows that error or false judgment occurs when we take one entity to be what it is not. However, in the *Statesman*, the Visitor expands the compass of dialectical reasoning to include the use of analogies—the comparison between two unlike things.

Plato establishes a distinction between factual truth and falsity. However, he then expands his approach towards reasonable discourse to encompass statements that are not simply factually true or false propositions but assertions of possibility.¹⁷⁰ The purpose of the *Statesman* is specifically to stress the limits of logical, geometric-based modes of definition and argumentation, methods that are rigorously deployed in the *Sophist*. The myth itself is an enactive exploration of possibilities that exist beyond the limits of strictly binary logic. In discussions of ethical matters, dialectical exchanges involving the use of images or paradigms can provide illuminating explanations in ethical or practical life. To some extent, the logical critique of images opens the path for this self-aware, philosophical use of images and myths.

Collobert comes close to describing the paradigm as the Eleatic Visitor describes it in the *Statesman*. Collobert's article on the use of image in the *Sophist* stresses this relational or comparative quality of the image. The "relation between image and object" is "that of otherness and sameness."¹⁷¹ She asserts that "comparing X to Y is asserting that Y is different from X."¹⁷² According to Collobert, "for the comparison to be relevant and appropriate, that is, to illuminate X, there must be a relation of sameness of whatever sort between X and Y."¹⁷³ In the *Statesman*, as noted above, the Visitor actually does identify the paradigm as the visible model that can be used to produce a correct judgment.

¹⁷⁰ Gebrauer, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995, p. 32. Gebrauer and Wulf note that "*mimesis*" in the sense of narrative or mythic expression might be regarded as a broader extension of analogy and metaphor.. Such metaphorical *mimesis* creates an identity between two unlike things where the "distinction between object of imitation in a broader sense and the respect in which it is imitated is entirely absent, and the object becomes a simple one." Auditors and viewers identify with artistically portrayed characters both like and unlike themselves.

¹⁷¹ Collobert, C., "The Platonic Art of Mythmaking: Myth as Informative *Phantasma*," in *Plato and Myth*, in *op. cit.*, p. 88.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

Gill does not adequately stress the perspectival dimension or the relation to measure. Gill notes that in both the *Sophist* and *Statesman* a “model is supposed to be simple and easy to grasp, whereas the target is great and difficult.”¹⁷⁴ Gill clarifies that a “good model consists of a trivial example, which is perceptible and can be easily pictured.”¹⁷⁵ According to Gill, the “instructor uses the example to teach a method of inquiry, which is to be extended to some harder case.”¹⁷⁶ She recognizes the importance of the “*content* of the *paradeigma*—for instance, on angling as a sort of hunting (which is relevant to the sophist), or on weaving as a sort of intertwining (which is relevant to the statesman).”¹⁷⁷ Collection and division is the logical, definitional method which Plato uses to inductively define a named entity, like the craft products of carpentry, weaving or fishing. However, essentially defined, ordinary, empirical entities can also be used to explain higher, invisible, ethical realities that cannot be represented directly. As Gill notes the “[c]ontent” of the visible paradigm or model “matters, but the definition of the example also displays a particular structure discovered by a certain procedure, which is to be transferred to the more difficult case.”¹⁷⁸ The more difficult case is always associated with the invisible, ethical and psychological domain. By stressing the paradigm as a definable, named, visible entity that can be “transferred” to a “more difficult case[,]” he introduces the use of paradigm or visible model, corresponding to the positive use of image.

The method of collection and division, which will be explored more thoroughly in the next section, is used to define the paradigm of angling and the paradigm of weaving in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.¹⁷⁹ The Visitor “introduces the investigation of the sophist with the

¹⁷⁴Gill, M.L., “Models in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *Journal of the International Plato Society*, 2006, 6, p. 16.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ It is interesting to observe that the use of metaphor and analogy are also theoretically elaborated in Aristotle with reference to similarities and dissimilarities of genus and species. Aristotle affirms, for instance, that

model of an angler.”¹⁸⁰ In the *Sophist*, “angling” is first used to reveal “the original definitional procedure, dichotomous division[.]”¹⁸¹ When the Visitor proposes the paradigm of weaving in the *Statesman*, he not only defines weaving through division but uses essential affinities “weaving” shares with the statesman to “show how to mark off the statesman from other kindred experts who operate in the same domain[.]”¹⁸² The purpose of collection and division is to provide the essence of a named entity. The whole objective of the discussion, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, is to provide rational accounts which exhibit similarities and differences between the sophist and statesman and the philosopher. This profession of “angling” or “fishing with a special sort of hook” is “a humble profession, which everyone recognizes.”¹⁸³ Angling is a “single observable activity”¹⁸⁴ These visible models explain the invisible, ethical order of the human soul, just as the paradigm of the city explains the soul in the *Republic*, and the analogy or image of the sun explains the character of the invisible, intellectual and ethical order of the Good.

Geometric realities, like circles, triangles and squares are determinately and essentially different from each other. Further, just as one can essentially differentiate the human species from other kinds of animal, one can differentiate different artificial crafts, like fishing and weaving, from each other. Yet the science of ethical life and wisdom is beyond the merely visible, demanding an insight into the invisible and intellectual order of the soul, as much as an awareness of a Good that is beyond visible reality. The matters of the highest importance are these ethical considerations. The grasp of the nature of ordinary visible models or examples of artificial and natural entities can help to achieve such ethical or practical understanding. However, one must move beyond the visible to the invisible sphere

analogies are particularly graphic when they relate two very different kinds of entities. See *Rhetoric*, 1411b21 and *Poetics*, 1457b.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

of human psychology in order to perceive the transcendent Good. Analogies can be used to indirectly portray that which is beyond direct representation.

Gill shows how Plato's general categories bridge the gap between the logical questions about definition and demonstration and the use of philosophically informative comparisons or analogies. Plato introduces the common notions or general kinds of sameness and difference in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. In the *Sophist*, the Visitor shows how collection and division enables us to provide the essential difference, which differentiates a named entity, like a human being, from all other animal species. Gill maintains that the "Statesman presents a single complex division, which progressively sharpens our *logos* of the statesman."¹⁸⁵ However, the ultimate definition of the statesman, which the Visitor provides, takes the form of an analogy. This is said to bring a true belief about the reality under consideration, even though it takes the form of a kind of dream, akin to Socrates own dream of the ideal city of Kallipolis, his image of the city and the soul.

Plato introduces the model of angling to explain the sophist and weaving to explain the statesman. The "model (*paradeigma*)" is "useful in a dialectical inquiry" in the following way.¹⁸⁶ As El Murr observes, "Gill's main thesis is clear: a *paradeigma* becomes truly useful when not only the sameness between the example and the target but also their difference are recognized ("the inquirers recognize, not only the feature that is *the same* in the example and target, but also the *difference* between the two embodiments and the procedural difference those different embodiments entail")."¹⁸⁷ These terms capture what is expressed in the crucial passage of the *Statesman* where the Visitor defines a paradigm or model.

To return to Gill on paradigm, in order to explain this use of example, Gill uses the reference to "a model house or a model housing project, which shows on a small scale how

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸⁶ El Murr, D., "Paradigm and Diarexis: A Response to Gill's Models in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*," *Journal of the International Plato Society*, 2006, 6, p. 1.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

the parts of a house fit together or how a house fits into a community, Plato's *paradeigmata* reveal the structure of the target or its place within some larger structure."¹⁸⁸ Gill introduces her own example to explain what Plato means. She says that the small scale housing project is merely a smaller visible example of the larger housing project. Plato specifically stresses the importance of using visible paradigms, examples or models to illustrate higher, invisible realities. Indeed, his most famous visible paradigm, the paradigm of the "city" is meant to explain the invisible reality of the human soul. Gill explains that "unlike a model house or housing project, which is useful in building actual houses or communities, Plato's models reveal how the *conceptual* components of the target should fit together or how the target itself is related to other objects."¹⁸⁹ Gill also thinks that "structural features shape its definition."¹⁹⁰ "I will use the word "example" when the issue is the similar content of the model and target."¹⁹¹ "I will speak instead of a "model," when an example is used to reveal a procedure and a content-neutral structure to be looked for in the target."¹⁹² The city shares essential features with the human soul. Both the just city and the just soul are divided into three related parts and these three parts, in their relation, bear intellectually meaningful and ethically illuminating correspondences with one another.

The human intellect, spirit and appetite are akin to the philosophical city. In the same way, the idea of the Good bears meaningful correspondences with the visible image or model of the sun. As the sun is the source of vision, the Good is the source of intellectual light and understanding. The use of models and images in the *Republic* anticipates this more elaborate discussion of the nature of paradigm in the *Statesman*.

¹⁸⁸Gill, M.L., "Models in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*," in *j. cit.*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

1.2.1 *Paradigm of the City and the Soul in the Republic*

Socrates says that the “investigation we’re undertaking is not an easy one but requires keen eyesight” (*Rep.* II, 368c). He states that “we should adopt the method of investigation that we’d use if, lacking keen eyesight, we were told to read small letters [γράμματα μικρὰ] from a distance and then noticed that the same letters existed elsewhere in larger size and on a larger surface [τὰ αὐτὰ γράμματα ἔστι που καὶ ἄλλοθι μείζω τε καὶ ἐν μείζονι]” (*Rep.* II, 368c-d). He suggests that they would consider “it a godsend” to “be allowed to read the larger ones first and then to examine the smaller ones, to see whether they really are the same” (*Rep.* II, 368c-d). This use of grammar and letters to explain the process of comparing entities of different stature is more fully explained in the *Statesman*.

This, I argue, is the philosophical mastery of perspective that Collobert has described. The importance, in the *Republic*, as much as the *Statesman*, rests upon the invisible, ethical character of the entity that the visible model is meant to describe. Adeimantus asks “how is this similar to our investigation of justice [ἐν τῇ περὶ τὸ δίκαιον ζητήσει]” (*Rep.* II, 368e). Socrates explains “that there is the justice [δικαιοσύνη] of a single man [ἄνδρὸς ἐνός] and also the justice of a whole city [ὅλης πόλεως]” (*Rep.* II, 368e). The “city is larger than a single man [οὐκοῦν μείζον πόλις ἐνὸς ἀνδρός]” (*Rep.* II, 368e). Socrates is actually using the analogy of visual perspective. He is talking about comparing that which is larger to that which is smaller. However, according to my argument, what Socrates actually means here is to use a visible model or paradigm to explain an invisible, ethical reality.

Socrates stresses how he will use a perspectival technique in order to better explain the nature of the invisible order of the human soul. As Gill explains, a paradigm is a way of using a larger entity to explain a smaller entity or a smaller entity to explain a larger entity. However, visual perspective is not as important as the invisible character of the entity which the visible paradigm is meant to explain.

“Perhaps, then, there is more justice in the larger thing [δικαιοσύνη ἐν τῷ μείζονι], and it will be easier to learn what it is. So, if you’re willing, let’s first find out what sort of thing justice is in a city [ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι] and afterwards look for it in the individual [ἐν ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ], observing the ways in which the smaller is similar to the larger [τὴν τοῦ μείζονος ὁμοιότητα ἐν τῇ τοῦ ἐλάττονος ἰδέᾳ ἐπισκοποῦντες]” (*Rep.* II, 368e-369a).

Socrates uses the term for speech or reasoning when he first introduces the comparison or analogy of the city and the soul. He says that if they can “watch a city coming to be in theory,” then they will “also see its justice coming to be, and its injustice as well” (*Rep.* II, 369a). “If we could watch a city coming to be in theory [πόλιν θεασαίμεθα λόγῳ], wouldn’t we also see its justice coming to be, and its injustice [τὴν δικαιοσύνην...τὴν ἀδικίαν] as well” (*Rep.* 369a). Plato elaborates this vast picture of the philosophical city to explain reason ruling over spirit and passion.

Plato invokes his metaphor of rule as a “master of oneself” rather than a master over other human beings (*Rep.* 430e). This expression would be “absurd” if it were not for the fact that “within man himself, in his soul, there is a better part and a worse; and that he is his own master when the part which is better by nature has the worse under its control” (*Rep.* 431a-b).¹⁹³ The image communicates the order of the higher or reasoning self over the lower order of the self.

When Socrates reminds Adeimantus and Glaucon that they have been exploring the city and the soul analogy to “discover what justice and injustice [δικαιοσύνην...ἀδικίαν] are like” later on in the *Republic*, he calls the comparison a paradigm three times (*Rep.* 472c5). Socrates uses the term *paradeigma* to describe his activity.

“Then it was in order to have a model [παραδείγματος ἄρα ἕνεκα] that we were trying to discover what justice itself [αὐτό...δικαιοσύνην] is like and what the completely just man would be like, if he came into being, and what kind of man he’d be if he did, and likewise with regard to injustice and the most unjust man. We thought that, by looking at how

¹⁹³ Dorion, L.A., “Plato and *Enkrateia*,” in Bobonich, C., and Destrée, P., eds. *Akrasia in Greek Philosophy*, Leiden, Brill, (*Philosophica Antiqua Series* 106), p. 129.

their relationship to happiness and its opposite seemed to us, we'd also be compelled to agree about ourselves as well, that the one who was most like them would have a portion of happiness most like theirs. But we weren't trying to discover these things in order to prove that it's possible for them to come into being" (*Rep.* 472c4-d2).

Plato has Socrates compare himself to a painter who uses words to correct perspectival methods to portray a greater and nobler reality. He explicitly uses the term *paradeigma* to signify the model he uses. Further, this suggests that he, as a philosopher, is engaging in the dialectical activity of exhibiting an invisible order of human moral psychology through his portrait. Socrates describes his own activity here with reference to painting. The Visitor, as we shall see, does the same with reference to his own use of a myth.

Owen maintains that the novel significance *paradeigma* gains in the *Parmenides* and *Statesman* confirms that Plato changed his ideas about Forms from the middle period to the later period. However, the word *paradeigma* is used in the way the Visitor defines it in the *Statesman* and even in the *Republic*. In the use of the paradigm or image of the city and the soul, Socrates compares himself to a painter. Plato paints a portrait using this model of the city and the soul. Plato says that "a words painter if, having painted a model [γράφας παράδειγμα] of" the person who was "the finest and most beautiful human being [κάλλιστος ἄνθρωπος]" should have "rendered every detail of his picture adequately" (*Rep.* 472d4-5). Yet he insists that the person is only truly such a philosophical artist if he could "prove that such a man could" also "come into being [δυνατὸν γενέσθαι τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα]" (*Rep.* 472d6-7). Both the perfect city and perfect man are possibilities pointed through the imaginative capacity of the artist, and Socrates believes that by proposing the model of the city and the soul they "were making a theoretical model of a good city [παράδειγμα ἐποιοῦμεν λόγῳ ἀγαθῆς πόλεως]" (*Rep.* 472d9-10). Note that the term *paradeigma* occurs here, and the term *logos* or reasoned speech is also present. This suggests that Plato conceives of his use of illuminating analogies as a kind of ethical reasoning.

Still, even if it is impossible to found this city, it does not make the discussion less beneficial in revealing the nature of the human soul (*Rep.* 472e). But Socrates insists, using this model of the city and the soul, that the community will only be happy if philosophers become kings (*Rep.* 473c-e). The Visitor's explanation of the statesman or philosopher-king, like Socrates' description of justice through the paradigm or model of the city of the soul, is an analogy, an image or comparison. In Book VI of the *Republic*, as Gonzalez notes, "Adeimantus opposes to Socrates' claim that rulers must be philosophers the view of the majority that philosophers are at best useless and at worst pernicious (487b-d)."¹⁹⁴ Plato introduces a persuasive image or paradigm, his model of the city and the soul to justify his view. In the *Statesman*, Plato's technical introduction of the notion of paradigm to signify the positive, philosophical use of image merely echoes dialectic practice in the *Republic*.

The city and soul paradigm is central to the *Republic*'s exploration of justice. The Eleatic Visitor introduces a model of weaving to explain the activity of the statesman. Both paradigms are almost functionally equivalent. The just city is one where the philosopher-king orders the political community, the warrior and labour classes, in accordance with intelligence. The just person reins in his spirit and appetite through the use of rational intelligence. The Eleatic Visitor portrays the statesman or philosophical ruler as one who orders the warrior classes, the spirited types, and the labouring classes, or productive types, to produce a just and happy order. Socrates agrees that this paradigm and image is a suitable portrait. Before turning to the elaboration of the weaving paradigm in the *Statesman*, it is helpful to turn to another image which we find in the *Republic*. Socrates also explains that the idea of the Good, which is beyond the visible, is like the visible image of the sun.

Plato uses the sun analogy to explain the relation between the soul or the mind and the Good. Socrates says that "[s]ight isn't the sun [οὐκ ἔστιν ἥλιος ἢ ὄψις], neither sight itself

¹⁹⁴ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 131.

nor that in which it comes to be, namely, the eye [ὄμμα]” (*Rep.* 508a11-b1). However, sight is “the most sunlike [ἡλιοειδέστατον] of the senses” (*Rep.* 508b2). He explains that sight “receives from the sun the power it has, just like an influx from an overflowing treasury” (*Rep.* 508b). The sun is not sight, just as the Good is not the soul. However, though the “sun is not sight,” the sun is “the cause of sight itself and seen by” sight (*Rep.* 508b).

Plato’s whole scheme presupposes a subordination of visible images to invisible, mental realities. Socrates nevertheless recognizes that he is using an image to communicate this invisible reality. He encourages Glaucon to “examine” the sun “image” (τὴν εἰκόνα) used to represent the Good “in more detail as follows” (*Rep.* 509a9). Indeed, Plato’s Socrates holds that the commonalities which the sun shares with the Good are numerous: “the sun not only provides visible things with the power to be seen but also with coming to be, growth and nourishment, although it is not itself coming to be” (*Rep.* 509b). The more accessible, visible image of the sun is meant to explain the greater invisible reality of the Good. Image is a synonym of model. As noted above, however, image is also said, in the *Sophist*, to be based on the model or paradigm.

The intellectual vision of the invisible Good is related to the vision of the philosopher-kings of the *Republic*. The sun (ἥλιος...ἀναλογον) analogy presents the sun as the source of visible reality, the brightest body in the heavens (*Rep.* 508a10-b1). This visual representation expresses how thought (νοούμενα) relates to the domain of the visible (*Rep.* 508c1). Socrates expresses much the same reasoning for this practice of using a visible depiction to depict the invisible in the *Republic*, as the Visitor does in the *Statesman*.

The sun is both the source of light and existence. Socrates states explicitly that the sun analogy is central for enabling our grasp of the relation between the visible (τὰ ὁρώμενα) and the mental (*Rep.* 508c2). Collobert considers the analogy of the Good, compared with the sun as an image that is meant to help the philosophical dialectician to grasp the sense of the

Good. Collobert has noted the association between the term for image and likeness in this passage. The image of the sun is described as most like (ὁμοιότητα) the Good (*Rep.* 509c6). There is an important set of similarities between “the Good and the sun” which “the image is meant to capture.”¹⁹⁵ The methodological procedure for identifying such salient affinities is explained more fully through the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

Plato explains the importance of taking into account “the viewer and the viewpoint in seeing an image”¹⁹⁶ In Collobert view, in the *Sophist*, Plato “considers the various arts of image making and” delves “into the nature of philosophical image.”¹⁹⁷ As she avers, Plato implies that “a philosophical image” must be a “well-grounded copy[.]”¹⁹⁸ This very emphasis upon the importance of grasping the essence of the model or original is the reason why the discussion in the *Sophist* prepares the way for the more complete elaboration of the use of paradigms to provide analogies in the *Statesman*. To use the actual Greek terminology which the Visitor employs, a philosophical or scientific user of images needs to have a knowledge of the visible model or paradigm.

Collobert recognizes that in the *Sophist*’s treatment of image the “ideas of comparison and likeness are tied together and constitute the essential elements of the definition of image.”¹⁹⁹ An “image” is, in Collobert’s words, able to “substitute” for the “object” by serving as a “copy” which is able to “reproduce” visually the original object.²⁰⁰ The *eikon* reproduces, in a proportionally accurate way, the *paradigm*. In contrast, “[p]hantasma often refers to something almost unreal, a mere appearance or vision (*Rep.* VI, 510a2).”²⁰¹ Plato, in

¹⁹⁵ Collobert, C., “The Platonic Art of Mythmaking: Myths as Informative *Phantasma*,” *art. cit.*, p. 97.

¹⁹⁶ Notomi, N., *The Unity of Plato’s Sophist: Between The Sophist and Philosopher*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 124.

¹⁹⁷ Collobert, C., “The Platonic Art of Mythmaking: Myths as Informative *Phantasma*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 87.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95. “The philosopher must, moreover, be a master of image-making and from this perspective meet the three following criteria: he has first, a knowledge of the nature of the original; next, a knowledge of the correctness of the copy; and thirdly, a knowledge of the excellence with which the copy is executed” (*L.* II, 669b1–3).”

¹⁹⁹ Collobert, C., “The Platonic Art of Mythmaking: Myths as Informative *Phantasma*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 88.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

dialogues like the *Republic*, frequently uses the term *eikon* and *paradigm* when making an analogy which compares two unlike things. For instance, in his use of the analogy of the sun and the Good, as Collobert explains:

“Plato provides us with an image that he does not term at first an *eikon* but rather *analogon* (*Rep.* VI, 508c1). The *analogon* of the Good helps us to understand what the Good is. Plato formulates the analogy in the following way: what the sun is in the visible realm with respect to vision and visible things is what the Good is in the intelligible realm with respect to the mind and the intelligible. Further, the sun is the image (*eikona*: 509a9) and likeness of the Good (*omoietatos*: 506e4, *omoietata*: 509c6).”²⁰²

Collobert states that the Good is visibly grasped through the use of the image of the sun. This apprehension depends upon the grasp of essential similarities.

“The truth about what the object is constitutes the guiding principle of the making of philosophical images. In this sense, a myth consists of an image *qua* likeness of a true account, which, therefore, it approximates. As Coulter puts it, a myth is not ‘a direct rendering of it’. Hence, if Socrates often affirms that truth-value of myths, it is because it captures the essential features of the original, and therefore, helps us to grasp it (e.g. *Phd.* 114d1-2). It is an approximation because the image is necessarily incomplete and impoverished, as we have seen. Some features of the image are true accounts of the object, that is, those which resemble its original, but not all of them. Unlike improper images, a philosophical image possesses articulated similarities and dissimilarities with its object.”²⁰³

The terms *paradigm* and *eikon* are actually used by Plato to signify images used to convey philosophically significant analogies. However, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato provides the most exact characterization of the sense in which analogies are philosophical. The protreptic dimension of Plato extends not only to logic but to rhetorical technique and the use of image.

1.2.2 *Paradigms of Angling and Weaving in the Sophist and Statesman*

This procedure is introduced in the *Sophist* and generalized in the *Statesman*: “Use of the example in the present inquiry will be a special case—an example—of its required use for

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

the definition of all the greater things.”²⁰⁴ Commentators puzzle over the expression “greater things.”²⁰⁵ My interpretation is that the expression ‘greater things’ has an ethical significance (cf. *Stm.* 285a8-286b1). The grammar paradigm is used to explain how a single paradigm can be used to provide an analogy.²⁰⁶ Greater entities are ethical realities of a psychological order. This is the rational command of the mind over the spirit and passions.

Not merely logic but language is the means through which we achieve a grasp of these realities. This is why a grammatical example is introduced as the paradigm of paradigms. This grammar paradigm, in the *Statesman*, is actually an extension of the use of grammar to explain logic and the composition of proposition in the *Sophist*. In the *Sophist*, grammar enables us to discern the logical relations between subject and predicate in an adequate way, which does not produce an illusion or factually false proposition. However, paradigms can be used to draw meaningful relations between two things that are not alike. Plato accepts that analogies, which are not factually true or false propositions, can bring a correct understanding about realities of an ethical order.

This use of paradigm to mean a visible model that provides an analogy actually occurs first in the introduction to the *Sophist*. The named example of the art of fishing is first presented inductively as a paradigmatic example which can be defined through the method of collection and division. The Visitor arrives at the “definition of angler by first locating his activity in a wide kind, art or expertise (*technē*)” (*Sph.* 218e).²⁰⁷ He “then divides art into two subordinate kinds, productive and acquisitive, then continues to divide the acquisitive branch until he reaches his goal.”²⁰⁸ The “resulting definition” provides the “definitional structure to look in the harder case.”²⁰⁹ Even in the *Sophist*, the Eleatic Visitor is using a paradigm in

²⁰⁴ Lane, M., *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman*, op. cit., p. 61.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ Gill, M., “Models in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” art. cit., p. 4.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

conjunction with the method of division in a way that is supposed to illustrate analogically something about the psychological and ethical order. Visible affinities with an observable, productive craft illuminate not only the invisible character—the sophistic pretender to wisdom—but the philosopher or lover of wisdom.

Both collection and division and the use of a defined paradigm to provide an analogy bear a complementary relation. These two dialectical techniques help the Visitor and Theaetetus to grasp the nature of the sophist through seven successive attempts at division. The “division that leads to the first definition of the sophist—a hired hunter of rich young men—matches that of the angler down to hunting, after which the branches diverge, since the sophist hunts creatures that live on dry land, whereas the angler hunts creatures that inhabit the water.”²¹⁰ The Visitor states that “I think you need to begin the investigation” for “the sophist—by searching for him and giving a clear account of what he is” (*Sph.* 218b). This procedure requires that the Visitor and Theaetetus identify “a name in common” even if they have “each used it for a different thing” (*Sph.* 218c). The Visitor thinks that “we always need to be in agreement about the thing itself... by means of a verbal explanation” (*Sph.* 218c). This procedure is in contrast with proceeding “without any such explanation and merely agreeing about the name” (*Sph.* 218c).

The sophist is, for reasons not explicitly elaborated in this passage, a difficult “target” to define.

“But it isn’t the easiest thing in the world to grasp the tribe we’re planning to search for—I mean, the sophist—or say what it is. But if an important issue needs to be worked out well, then as everyone has long thought, you need to practice on unimportant, easier issues first. So that’s my advice to us now, Theaetetus: since we think it’s hard to hunt down and deal with the kind, *sophist*, we ought to practice our method on something easier first—unless you can tell us about another way that’s somehow more promising” (*Sph.* 218b-d).

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

This is what we find. The Visitor supposes that there is a need “to focus on something trivial and try to use it as a model [περί τινος τῶν φαύλων μετιόντες πειραθῶμεν παράδειγμα] for the more important issue” (*Sph.* 218d8-9). The Visitor, when he introduces this paradigm of “the *angler*” (ἄσπαλιευτήης), explains that this model is “unimportant and easy to understand [εὐγνώστον μὲν καὶ σμικρόν]” (*Sph.* 218e2). Again, he stresses that angling is “recognizable to everybody,” however, in itself, angling is “not worth being serious about” (*Sph.* 218e). The angler “can have an account given of it just as much as more important things can [λόγον δὲ μηδενὸς ἐλάττωνα ἔχον τῶν μειζόνων]” (*Sph.* 218e2-4). The Visitor claims that he is using a “method” (μέθοδον) to search for the rational account or “definition” (λόγον) of that which he is seeking (*Sph.* 219a1-2). The method of collection and division is associated with the Socratic method of definition.

Plato explicitly describes the use of paradigm in terms of a mastery of proportional perspective. However, Plato does not speak in terms of strictly visible and perceptible proportions but speaks of how the model provides visible correspondences with the greater or higher intellectual and ethical reality it is meant to describe. This is anticipated in the *Sophist*, before it is fully explained in the *Statesman*. Having established that in the ensuing discussion they will determine the relation between sophist, statesman and philosopher, the Eleatic Visitor introduces a general procedure by which one can use a paradigm (παράδειγμα) to compare something “larger” and “greater” with something “smaller” and “less important” by means of an analogy (*Sph.* 218c-d). For instance, the Visitor uses the paradigm of the lesser (φαύλων) art of angling (ἀλιευτική), in order to provide an account of the sophist (*Sph.* 218d6). The Visitor notes that this smaller paradigm explains the greater (μείζονος) entity, the sophist (*Sph.* 218d7-e2).²¹¹ The Visitor also insists that one must first

²¹¹ Gill, M.L., “Division and Definition in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” in Charles D., ed., *Definition in Greek Philosophy*, Oxford, Clarendon, 2010, p. 172.

define this inductively chosen visible example, and then define the universal essence of the example through the dialectical method of collection and division.

Since both the use of a paradigm or visible model and collection and division require that the dialectician discern pertinent similarities and differences between entities, the Visitor's use of paradigm and division often appears not only related but identical. Indeed, the Eleatic Visitor does not clearly differentiate between the use of the paradigm of fishing and the divisions that show the similarities sophistry shares with the art of fishing (*Sph.* 221c-15, 221d5-223b5).²¹² Both the use of collection and division and the use of analogy provide an account by identifying meaningful similarities and differences. However, in the *Statesman*, the Visitor explains much more clearly that collection and division defines the essential character of an inductively selected empirical paradigm, like fishing, weaving or the human species, as this species relates to the genus of water-based, land-based or two or four-footed animals. Even the Visitor himself recognizes that the process of division is tedious. However, it is only as tedious as scientific techniques for grasping the essential nature of visible or empirical entities are. The critique, both in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*, of sophist and poet, is that they lack an essential grasp of the entities which they merely superficially represent through distorted images. If the essential nature of these empirical or visible models of natural and artificial entities is grasped, then the dialectician can use them to make analogies that explain realities of an invisible, intellectual and ethical order.

Only in the *Statesman* does the Eleatic Visitor develop and explain the purpose of using essentially defined paradigms to provide a meaningful analogy about ethical realities. Socrates makes use of paradigms in this way in the *Republic*. The way that the Visitor and Socrates use paradigms to provide analogies is basically the same. In both instances, in the

²¹² Miller, M., *The Philosopher in Plato's Statesman*, Las Vegas, Parmenides Publishing, 2004, p. 60.

process of using paradigms, Socrates and the Visitor compare themselves to painters and make reference to a need to cultivate a sense of appropriate proportion.

1.2.3 *Paradigm and Correct Proportion*

The Visitor fully explains the nature of the visible model or paradigm only when he recognizes that the myth that he has just recounts, in the *Statesman*, is out of proportion. Having presented his *Myth of Kronos*, the Visitor says that “our discussion does not yet seem to have given complete shape [σχῆμα] to the king [ὁ βασιλεὺς]” (*Stm.* 277a2-3). The Visitor says that “just as sculptors sometimes hurry when it is not appropriate to do so and actually lose time by making additions and increasing the size of the various parts of their work beyond what is necessary, so too in our case [καθάπερ ἀνδριαντοποιοὶ παρά καιρὸν ἐνίστε σπεύδοντες πλείω καὶ μείζω τοῦ δέοντος ἕκαστα]” (*Stm.* 277a4-8). He introduces the method of using a paradigm “in order to give a grand as well as a quick demonstration [τῷ ταχὺ καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς δηλώσαιμεν] of the mistake in the route” that they “previously took [τὸ τῆς ἔμπροσθεν ἀμάρτημα διεξόδου]” (*Stm.* 277b). However, the Visitor has also introduced the myth in order to correct the earlier definition of the statesman as shepherd, which had been reached by the method of collection and division.

The Eleatic Visitor explains what he has been attempting to do through the use of division and myth: “we thought it was appropriate to the king to give large-scale illustrations [τῷ βασιλεῖ νομίσαντες πρέπειν μεγάλα παραδείγματα ποιεῖσθαι], and took upon ourselves an astonishing mass of material in the shape of the story [θαυμαστὸν ὄγκον ἀράμενοι τοῦ μύθου], so forcing ourselves to use a greater part of it than necessary” (*Stm.* 277b). He stresses the disproportion of the myth and says, “thus we have made our exposition longer, and have in every way failed to apply a finish to our story [διὸ μακροτέραν τὴν ἀπόδειξιν πεποιήκαμεν καὶ πάντως τῷ μύθῳ τέλος οὐκ ἐπέθεμεν]” (*Stm.* 277b). Their “account, just like a portrait, seems adequate in terms of its superficial outline, but not yet to have received

its proper clarity [ἀλλ'ἀτεχνῶς ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν]" (*Stm.* 277b). That is, as a philosophical dialectician, the Eleatic Visitor is attempting to give an account or *logos* of the statesman but is also attempting, like a painter with words, to provide an adequate portrait of the statesman. However, he makes an important distinction between the paradigm of painting and the dialectical use of reasoning. Although the Visitor first compares himself to an artist or sculptor, he then clarifies that it is not "as it were with paints or any other kind of handicraft, but speech and discourse [ὁ λόγος], which constitute the more fitting medium for exhibiting every kind of living creature [ὥσπερ ζῶον τὴν ἔξωθεν μὲν περιγραφὴν ἔοικεν ἱκανῶς ἔχειν τὴν δὲ οἶον τοῖς φαρμάκοις καὶ τῇ συγκράσει τῶν χρωμάτων ἐνάργειαν οὐκ ἀπειληφέναι πω], for those who are able to follow; for the rest, it will be through handicrafts [ἄλλοις διὰ χειρουργιῶν]" (*Stm.* 277a1-c6). The reasoned understanding of the essential nature of natural and artificial entities provides an intellectual basis for illustrating questions of ethics. By using analogies or appealing to myths, the Eleatic Visitor is not abandoning rational techniques of demonstration or definition. Instead, as a philosopher, he is making a self-conscious choice to use images and myths to illustrate significant philosophical points.

The philosopher, who uses logical reasoning, makes use of speech as a scientific technique. In the *Sophist*, as will be explored in greater depth in the next section, the Visitor gives much greater focus to the use of logical techniques of definition and demonstration to dispel illusion and antilogic. However, logic is also an art of speech, associated with other arts of speech like grammar and rhetoric. Dialectic, as an ethical practice, overlaps with rhetoric, in applying reasoning to the domain of ethical and political concern. Rhetoricians engage not only in argumentation but use images to delight and persuade. Having criticized the sophistical misuse of images in the *Sophist*, the Eleatic Visitor, in the *Statesman*, introduces a philosophical and dialectical use of visible models or paradigms. Further, Plato has the Visitor say that this use of visible models to provide analogies enables us, in some

cases, to explain questions of an ethical and political order better than more conventionally rational techniques can.

In the *Statesman*, Plato expands upon the comparison with grammar found in the *Republic* passages that considered the use of the paradigm of the city and the soul. The Visitor suggests that “we recognize” that the following process happens “when children are just acquiring skill in reading and writing [γραμμαμάτων ἔμπειροι]” (*Stm.* 277e2-4). The Visitor believes that young children, when learning to read, “distinguish each of the individual letters well enough in the shortest and easiest syllables, and come to be capable of indicating what is true in relation to them” (*Stm.* 277e6-8). However, “once again they make mistakes about these very same letters in other syllables and think and say what is false [δόξη τε ψεύδονται καὶ λόγῳ]” (*Stm.* 278a1-4). This process of learning how to grasp smaller, easier syllables in composition is beneficial, because “the easiest and best way of leading” children “on to the things they’re not yet recognizing” is to begin with things that are more ordinary and familiar (*Stm.* 278a5-6).

“E.S.: To take them first back to those cases in which they were getting these same things right, and having done that, to put these beside what they’re not yet recognizing, and by comparing them demonstrate that there is the same kind of thing with similar features in both combinations, until the things that they are getting right have been shown set beside all the ones they don’t know, and once they have been shown like this, and so become models, they bring it about that each of all the individual letters is called both different, on the basis that it is different from others, and the same, on the basis that it is always the same as and identical to itself, in all syllables” (*Stm.* 278a8-c1).²¹³

The *Statesman* introduces a model or paradigm as a kind of comparison between two unlike things, which brings a true judgment. Here, the Visitor says that we use a paradigm when we come to a correct judgment by comparing two different, named entities that are

²¹³ ἀνάγειν πρῶτον ἐπ’ ἐκεῖνα ἐν οἷς ταῦτα ταῦτα ὀρθῶς ἐδόξαζον, ἀναγαγόντας δὲ τιθέναι παρὰ τὰ μήπω γινωσκόμενα, καὶ παραβάλλοντας ἐνδεικνύναι τὴν αὐτὴν ὁμοιότητα καὶ φύσιν ἐν ἀμφοτέραις οὖσαν ταῖς συμπλοκαῖς, μέχριπερ ἂν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγνοουμένοις τὰ δοξαζόμενα ἀληθῶς παρατιθέμενα δειχθῇ, δειχθέντα δέ, παραδείγματα οὕτω γινόμενα, ποιήσῃ τῶν στοιχείων ἕκαστον πάντων ἐν πάσαις ταῖς συλλαβαῖς τὸ μὲν ἕτερον ὡς τῶν ἄλλων ἕτερον ὄν, τὸ δὲ ταῦτόν ὡς ταῦτόν ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτα ἐαυτῷ προσαγορεύεσθαι.

distinct from each other. Plato's most famous model is that of the city and the man. We can arrive, apparently, at true opinions or beliefs about the invisible, just or unjust order of the soul by using the visible model of the city and the soul. This passage is so important that I will present two different additional translations before returning to examine the passage even further, using again Christopher Rowe's more recent but, in some ways, less clear translation.

“Str: Have we not gathered enough information now to show how the method of Example proceeds? It operates, does it not, when a factor identical with a factor in a less-known object is rightly believed to exist in some other better-known object in quite another sphere of life? This common factor in each object, when it has been made the basis of a parallel examination of them both, makes it possible for us to achieve a single true judgment about each of them as forming one of a pair” (*Stm.* 278c).²¹⁴

The Visitor explains the general procedure he had used at the beginning of the sophist. He used a lesser, visible model—angling or fishing with a hook—to explain the activity of the sophist. The Visitor uses a participle of the verb διασπάω, meaning “to separate” or “to tear asunder.” The other thing has been separated from the first thing. Taylor's translation is actually the clearest:

“Eleatic: Then we understand clearly how *example* comes into play. It arises when one and the same thing in diverse contexts is rightly judged and compared, and so creates a single true judgment about each of the contexts thus brought together” (*Stm.* 278c).²¹⁵

This passage serves as the foundation of the fundamental study on the second sense of paradigm in Plato. Victor Goldschmidt, in his study of this notion, writes that it is in the *Statesman* that Plato defines paradigm (παράδειγμα) with the most precision: “Un texte du *Politique* surtout définit avec une grande précision le paradigme comme un procédé dialectique.”²¹⁶ In *Statesman*, the Visitor explains “that we come to be using a model (παράδειγματός) when being the same thing in something different and distinct, it is

²¹⁴ Skemp, J.B., trans., *Plato: The Statesman*, Bristol, Bristol Classical Press, 1987, p. 160.

²¹⁵ Taylor, A.E., trans *The Sophist and the Statesman*, Klibansky, R. and Anscombe, E., eds. Edinburgh, Nelson, 1961, p. 288.

²¹⁶ Goldschmidt, V., *Le paradigme dans la dialectique platonicienne*, Paris, PUF, 1947, p. 2.

correctly identified, and having been brought together with the original thing, it brings about a single true judgment (δοξαζόμενον ὁρθῶς) about each separately and both together” (*Stm.* 278c2-6; *Rep.* 602a8-9). The use of analogy is another form of grammatical expression.

In the *Sophist*, Plato associates the use of logical technique with the grammarian’s art or science of combining words correctly into sentences. Geometric and arithmetic techniques are familiar to the geometers and arithmeticians with whom they are discussing this problem—Theodorus, Theaetetus and the Younger Socrates. However, both Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor stress the importance of grammatical and linguistic training. Part of language is, of course, logic, and a lesson in logic is undertaken in the *Sophist*.

Plato explains that a logical and propositional understanding of dialectic is actually insufficient on its own if we wish to explain matters of a higher, invisible, ethical significance. The Visitor revisits the notion of the need for the dialectician to combine words in an appropriate manner and grasp their logical interconnections, as he explains in the *Sophist*.

“E.S.: Then would we be surprised if our minds by their nature experienced this same thing in relation to individual letters of everything, now collecting themselves in some cases with the aid of truth in relation to each single thing, now, in others, all at sea in relation to all of them, and somehow or other getting the constituents of the combinations themselves right, but once again not knowing these same things when they are transferred into the long syllables of things and the ones that are not easy?” (*Stm.* 278c10-d6).²¹⁷

The Visitor uses this grammar motif to explain the process by which the dialectician logically draws together essential types properly and provides accurate descriptions of that which is either true or false. In the *Sophist*, false judgments can only be either false

²¹⁷ θαυμάζοιμεν ἂν οὖν εἰ ταῦτόν τοῦτο ἡμῶν ἢ ψυχῇ φύσει περὶ τὰ τῶν πάντων στοιχεῖα πεπονθυῖα τότε μὲν ὑπ’ ἀληθείας περὶ ἕνα ἕκαστον ἕν τι σὶν συνίσταται, τότε δὲ περὶ ἅπαντα ἐν ἑτέροις αὖ φέρεται, καὶ τὰ μὲν αὐτῶν ἀμῇ γέ πη τῶν συγκράσεων ὁρθῶς δοξάζει, μετατιθέμενα δ’ εἰς τὰς τῶν πραγμάτων μακρὰς καὶ μὴ ῥαδίους συλλαβὰς ταῦτα ταῦτα πάλιν ἀγνοεῖ;

combinations of ideas or false statements about particular individuals. Illusory images are explained as kinds of factual misjudgments about existing reality. However, in the *Sophist*, Plato explains that there are visible models or images that provide true judgments. However, these kinds of statements are not meant to give a true or false account of visible reality but, instead, to explain higher, invisible ethical and psychological realities.

The Visitor believes that there is a way of using a visible model to provide a correct judgment. Such a judgment is not a true or false statement but a grasp of the invisible, ethical order of the just and unjust. Ethical or practical awareness, which is beyond the empirical and perceptible, cannot, however, arise if a person has false understanding of the way things actually are. A rational and logical understanding of the essential, scientific nature of reality and an awareness of the difference between a true representation of reality and the illusory distortion of reality is a precondition for a philosophical form of rhetoric and even poetic composition. The Visitor insists that it is impossible “to begin from false belief [ἀρχόμενος ἀπὸ δόξης ψευδοῦς] and get to even a small part of truth [ἐπὶ τι τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ μικρὸν μέρος], and so acquire wisdom [φρόνησιν]” (*Stm.* 278e1-2). In the *Statesman*, the uses of the term *phronesis*, however, make it clear that the Visitor is no longer chiefly talking about propositional truth but rather a sense of invisible and intellectual proportion concerning matters of ethical significance. He is no longer discussing the strict truth and falsity of statements. Rather, he is giving a more complete view of dialectic as a way of reaching ethical, practical truth. This is what enables him to use a paradigm to produce not only an illuminating analogy but also use paradigms to compose an ethically meaningful myth, which is beyond the domain of the verifiable and falsifiable.

The Visitor had introduced the model or paradigm of angling in order to explain the art of the sophist. However, he ceases to rely, from that point on, exclusively on the method of collection and division. This he did only to insist that dialectic is the proper composition

of words, drawing together or weaving sentences that are correct representations of facts. As well, he recognized that weaving together ideas correctly was an even higher form of dialectical expression. Now, in the *Statesman*, he returns to the notion of a visible model.

The Visitor maintains that it is “a hard thing, my fine friend, to demonstrate any of the greater subjects [ἱκανῶς ἐνδείκνυσθαι τι τῶν μειζόνων] without using models [παραδείγμασι]” (*Stm.* 277d1-2). These greater subjects are the invisible, ethical realities. Note that the Visitor returns to Socrates’ language of the dream. Plato introduces the language of moving from a dreamlike state to a state of greater awareness: He says that it “looks as if each of us knows everything in a kind of dreamlike [ὄναρ] way, and then again is ignorant of everything as it were when awake” (*Stm.* 277d1-4).²¹⁸ Following the myth, this signals a shift in the Visitor’s methodological approach, revisiting a theme he had treated at the outset of the *Sophist*.

The Visitor is clear that this use of paradigms or models has a connection with knowledge. He admits that their use has “stirred up the subject of what happens to us in relation to knowledge [περὶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης] in a very odd way” (*Stm.* 277d5-7). The grammar paradigm is not simply an incidentally chosen example but *the central example*, which explains the underlying nature of paradigms. He reasons that it “has turned out” that “the idea of a ‘model’ itself in its turn also has need of a model to demonstrate it [Παραδείγματος, ὃ μακάριε, αὐτὸ μοι καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα αὐτὸ δεδέηκεν]” (*Stm.* 277d8-9). This has been a recurrent theme. The *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* treat this grammatical analogy as well.

These passages consider how to use comparisons between two different entities, which are on a different scale, for the purpose of explanation. The Eleatic Visitor returns to the dream of the *Republic*, the model of the city and the soul. The nature of the statesman or philosopher-statesman is of an ethical order. This works in both ways. Just as the

²¹⁸ Κινδυνεύει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἕκαστος οἷον ὄναρ εἰδὼς ἅπαντα πάντ’ αὖ πάλιν ὥσπερ ὕπαρ ἀγνοεῖν.

philosopher-king exemplifies ethical virtue, the tyrant exemplifies ethical vice or injustice. This is why understanding the relation between statesmanship and philosophy is just as important as differentiating philosophy from sophistry.

“E.S.: Well, if that’s the way it is, the two of us would not at all be in the wrong in having first attempted to see the nature of models as a whole in their turn in the specific case of a further small model, with the intention of then bringing, in order to apply it to the case of the king, which is of greatest importance, something of the same sort from smaller things somewhere, in an attempt once more through the use of a model to recognize in an expert, systematic way what looking after those in the city is, so that it may be present to us in our waking state instead of a dream?” (*Stm.* 278e5-e11)²¹⁹

Socrates had stressed that poets are even more ignorant than common craftsmen, like carpenters. These common craftsmen possess, at least, a knowledge of the artifacts they produce. If we take collection and division as a procedure that enables us to define or provide the essence of a visible living thing, an animal or plant, or a visible craft, the Visitor, providing definitions of paradigms, demonstrates his awareness of this. More conventionally reasonable speech leads to a turn to analogical speech, which bears an ethical and normative significance.

1.2.4 The Paradigm of Weaving Defined through Collection and Division

Plato’s Visitor asserts that we have to put aside thousands of other craftsmen to identify the king (*Pol.* 279a2-4).²²⁰ One who practices weaving (ὕφαντική) disputes with other craftsmen who deal with the care and furnishing of clothing, those who produce instruments for the fabrication of cloth (*Pol.* 281e8-9). The weaver places these other arts in subordination to himself, as “*sunaitiai*” of “helping causes” (*Pol.* 281e10).²²¹ However, the

²¹⁹ οὐκοῦν ταῦτα εἰ ταύτη πέφυκεν, οὐδὲν δὴ πλημμελοῖμεν ἂν ἐγὼ τε καὶ σὺ πρῶτον μὲν ἐπιχειρήσαντες ὅλου παραδείγματος ἰδεῖν τὴν φύσιν ἐν σμικρῷ κατὰ μέρος ἄλλῳ παραδείγματι, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα μέλλοντες, ἐπὶ τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως μέγιστον ὄν ταῦτόν εἶδος ἀπ’ ἐλαττόνων φέροντές ποθεν, διὰ παραδείγματος ἐπιχειρεῖν αὐτὴν τῶν κατὰ πόλιν θεραπείαν τέχνην γνωρίζειν, ἵνα ὕπαρ ἂντ’ ὀνείρατος ἡμῖν γίγνηται;

²²⁰ Goldschmidt, V., *op. cit.*, p. 70.

²²¹ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” p. 26-27.

weaver himself engages in the productive art of combining the warp and the woof, two strands of yarn, to produce textiles (*Pol.* 282c).

This use of an ordinary art to illustrate the ethical order is familiar within Plato's work. Nevertheless, Cole avers that the "comparison of statesmanship or the political art (ἡ πολιτικὴ τέχνη) with weaving must have come as a jolt to Plato's contemporary readers."²²² The art of "weaving was in the classical world a paradigmatically feminine activity, whereas politics is [*sic*] just as exclusively a masculine activity."²²³ For Cole, "the weaving paradigm illustrates the lack of symmetry between life under the reign of Kronos and life in political societies in other ways as well."²²⁴ Cole maintains that the "alternating epochs contrast with each other on the issue of self-reliance and self-direction."²²⁵ In the myth, "weaving" is "listed among the *technai* which jointly construct human life in the self-directing epoch (274d)."²²⁶ Other interpreters have stressed the place of weaving among the arts.

Plato's Kallipolis is an order in which women enter into political life. In the *Republic*, Socrates' recognizes that his proposal to have women enter into public or political life in his paradigmatic city, Kallipolis, could be met with laughter. This reference to humour might implicitly allude to Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, a play in which women enter public life in an unexpected comic reversal of the traditional Greek and Athenian conception of gender roles. Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* also introduces an elaborate comparison between weaving and politics. El Murr suggests that by selecting the paradigm of weaving, a paradigm which gives an account of political life which is basically identical to the *Republic*'s paradigm of the city and the soul, Plato's purpose is to use this originally comic motif in order to further defend the philosophical seriousness of the proposal of enabling women to enter into the political

²²² Cole, E.B., "Weaving and Practical Politics in Plato's *Statesman*," *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 29, p. 195.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

sphere.²²⁷ Melissa Lane, in an alternate form of this view, suggests that by using the weaving analogy in the context of explaining politics, Plato means to « neutralise » the art of weaving²²⁸

Lane resists the view that weaving is presented as a reversal of expectation, an undoing of the division between domestic and public sphere. However, she acknowledges this as one of the recognized interpretations of Plato's choice to use weaving to describe the art of the statesman. As Lane argues, "any feminising of weaving is eliminated from Plato's Statesman" by "the early denial of any difference between expertise needed to rule an *oikos* (household) and a *polis* (city or political community) (259b7-c4)."²²⁹ Lane draws attention to the Visitor's actual divisions of weaving in order to make her point. She stresses that weaving is identified, in the argument, as resting among a number of traditionally masculine arts, like "carpentry, building joinery, and so on[.]"²³⁰ This suggests that Plato did not regard weaving as particularly masculine or feminine. His purpose is rather to "re-organize our cognitive map" and "neutralize" weaving as an art, rather than reverse the significance in a startling manner.²³¹

El Murr's observation says much more about the general practice of using ordinary paradigms of visible natural and artificial entities in order to explain higher realities of an ethical order. The pastor or shepherd characterization was "axiologiquement équivalente" to the statesman.²³² This is associated, according to El Murr, with the method of using a paradigm itself. El Murr coins the term "neutralisation axiologique" to explain this.²³³ He produces a model on a lesser scale in order to treat what is greater.²³⁴

²²⁷ El Murr, D., « Le Paradigme du Tissage dans le Politique, » *Kairos*, 19, 2002, p. 54-55.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 168.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²³² El Murr, D., « Le Paradigme du Tissage dans le Politique, » in *j. cit.*, p. 56.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

All ordinary arts, which produce visible products like tables, chairs or cloths, are of disproportionately lesser significance than the higher, practical understanding of ethics. The search to determine the relation between sophist, statesman and philosopher, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, is an effort to discern the nature of the essence of the philosopher-king. As Plato explains in the *Republic*, as well as in the *Statesman*, such a person would engage in the most important activity, through the ordered balance of his or her own soul, giving order and meaning to the ethical and political life of the community.

The Visitor searches for a “model [παράδειγμα]” that is “occupied in the same activities as statesmanship, on a very small scale [σμικρότατον]” (*Stm.* 279a7-8). This model would be something to “compare” statesmanship with “in a satisfactory way” (*Stm.* 279a9-b1). And by “Zeus, Socrates, if we don’t have anything else to hand, well there is weaving—do you want us to choose that?” (*Stm.* 279b2). The Visitor’s method is first to turn to the method of collection and division in order to define the essence of the lesser model. The Visitor thinks that they should “do the very same thing” they “did in what preceded, dividing each thing by cutting parts of parts [τέμνοντες μέρη μερῶν ἕκαστον διηρούμεθα]” but now “in relation to weaving [περὶ ὑφαντικὴν]” (*Stm.* 279b7-10). He believes that he will “get back to what is useful in the present context after covering everything as briefly and quickly as [he] can” (*Stm.* 279c1-2). El Murr asks a simple but important question : « pourquoi, alors que nous attendions une division du tissage, c’est une division d’objets, ou d’instruments de protection qui est élaborée ici ? »²³⁵ As with the Myth of Kronos, Plato’s purpose seems to be at least somewhat comical. The Visitor has said that they will take little time making this division, but this lesser division is unusually time-consuming.

El Murr draws attention to the protective character of weaving. The Visitor reasons that “all the things we make and acquire [δημιουργοῦμεν καὶ κτώμεθα, τὰ μὲν ἔνεκα τοῦ

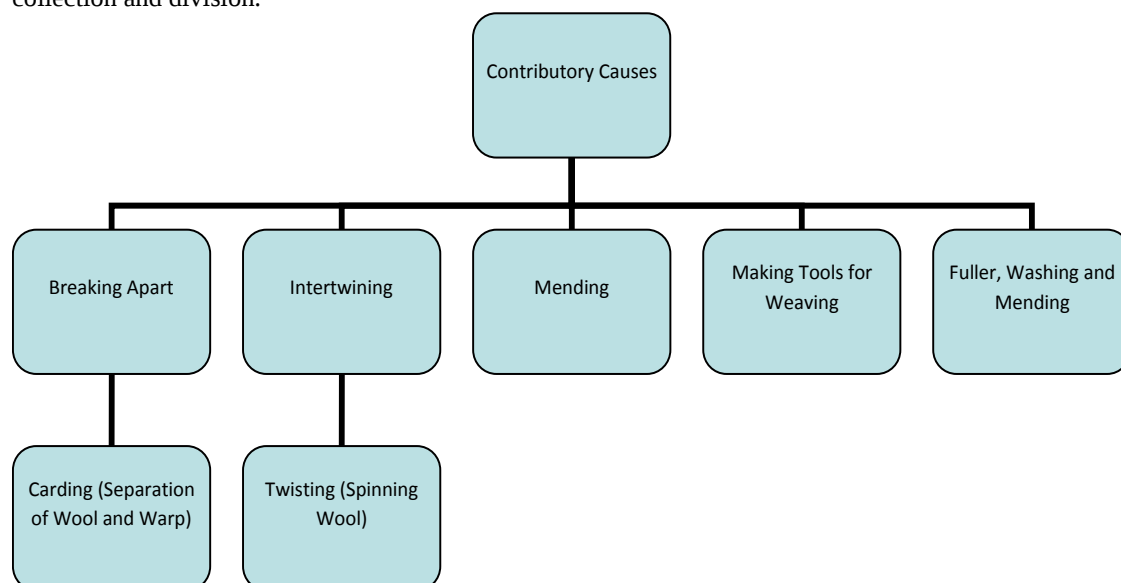
²³⁵ El Murr, D., « Le Paradigme du Tissage dans le Politique, » in *j. cit.*, p. 81.

ποιεῖν] ” are of two kinds. Either they are (1) “for the sake of doing something” or (2) they are “things that protect us from something’s happening to us” (*Stm.* 279c6-8). The Visitor gives focus to the protectives. Of the “preventatives, some are charms, whether divine or human, warding things off,” and “others” are “forms of defence” (*Stm.* 279c9-280a1). The element of divine or human charm we will explore further, in the consideration of speech and persuasive power. But it is helpful first to note what the Visitor says about defense. The Visitor divides forms of defense into two kinds. He says that “of forms of defense some are ways of arming for war, others forms of protection” (*Stm.* 280a2-3).²³⁶ The weaving of cloth leads to a defense comparison which gains a civic significance.²³⁷

All productive arts or crafts, carpentry, fishing and weaving are merely ordinary when compared to the highest, ethical and political art of wisdom. But this capacity involves the

²³⁶ “[O]f forms of protection some are screens, others means of warding off hot and cold weather; of the latter type of protective some are shelters, others coverings; of coverings one sort consists of things spread under, a different sort of things put round; of things put round, some are cut out in one piece, a different sort are compound; of the compound some are perforated, others bound together without perforation; of the unperforated some are made of the ‘sinews’ of things growing from the earth, others of hair; of those made of hair, some are stuck together by means of water and earth, others themselves bound together with themselves. It is to these preventives and coverings manufactured from materials that are being bound together with themselves that we give the name ‘clothes’; as for the name of ‘statesmanship’ to the sort of expertise that especially had charge of the state, so too now shall we call this sort ‘the art of clothes-making’, from the thing itself? And shall we say that weaving too, in so far as it represented the largest part in relation to the manufacture of clothes, does not differ at all, except in name, from this art of clothes-making, just as in that other case we said that the art of kingship did not differ from that of statesmanship” (*Stm.* 279c6-280a7).

²³⁷ For a superior diagram, see Miller, M., *The Philosopher in Plato’s Statesman*, Parmendies Publication, Las Vegas, 2004, p. 62. This is a simplified sketch of the attempt to define weaving and contributory arts through collection and division.



proper use of speech. At the same time, without a capacity to grasp the essential character of even these ordinary arts, no one can hope to grasp the essence of higher, invisible ethical reality. A broader scientific understanding, furnished by techniques of definition and argumentation derived from geometric and arithmetic reasoning, is a precondition for dialectical exchange. However, the higher, ethical reality is beyond the merely empirical. It is of an invisible, psychological character.

This is why the Eleatic Visitor devotes a level of attention to defining these ordinary crafts in extensive and even tedious detail. Even when he has identified weaving as a form of protective covering, The Visitor confesses that “weaving [ἱματίων ὑφαντικὴν]” has been not yet “adequately described [ἱκανῶς εἰρησθαι δόξειεν]” since it has “not yet been divided off [διώρισται] from those co-operative arts that border on it, while it had been parceled off from many other related ones [πολλῶν δὲ ἐτέρων συγγενῶν]” (*Stm.* 280a9-b3). However, the salient feature, which the Eleatic Visitor points out, is a feature that is shared by all arts. All arts are kinds of measure, and this measure is not the measure of ordinary human judgment. It is a measure which is a standard that, like arithmetic and geometric realities, transcends individual human subjectivity.

This introduction of the notion of correct measure here is exceedingly important for my overall argument. Plato explains this sense of models in the *Statesman* in order to provide a philosophical supplement to the critique of the sophist’s distorted misuse of images in the *Sophist*, as well as the critique of the poet’s distorted misuse of images in *Republic X*. The Visitor must explain how this measure is not merely a measure of perceptible proportions. Rather, the philosophical dialectician uses perceptible proportions in order to illuminate or clarify the intellectual and ethical order of the human mind. The intellectual and ethical order is of a greater and nobler stature than the merely perceptible and visible order. The visible model or paradigm is an image meant to communicate something of this

higher order reality. Thus, the use of paradigm to signify visible image is not a complete departure from the fundamental idea, in the *Republic* and *Phaedo*, that essential Forms transcend images and yet are in some way communicated through images.

The Visitor admits that the Younger Socrates did not “follow what’s been said” and for this reason they “must go back again, starting from the end” (*Stm.* 280b5-7). The Visitor, however, eventually does reach the salient affinity with the art he is seeking. This affinity is the capacity to bring measure. This ability to produce speech with suitable measure, to represent truth rather than falsity and represent a higher ethical order is what distinguishes the philosopher or philosopher-king, the true statesman, from the sophist, the pretender to wisdom.

1.2.5 *Paradigm and the True Art of Measurement*

The philosophical-statesman orders the community through verbal reasoning. The Visitor speaks of the need to draw together (συγχωτική) and draw apart (διαχωτική) disparate elements (*Stm.* 282b6). Socrates *elenchus* is meant to serve this purpose. As we shall see in the next section, the *Sophist* mentions the importance of separating and combining in alleviating “mental ills” (*Sph.* 226b-c).²³⁸ Again, this also echoes the Visitor’s claim in the *Sophist* of the need for the dialectician to combine and separate Forms (*Sph.* 253e1-253d6). The “common” feature of statesmanship and weaving is “combining and interweaving”.²³⁹ The Visitor uses the language of purification (χαθαρόν) to describe what the statesman’s words are meant to achieve (*cf.* *Stm.* 268c10). The true words of a statesman should ameliorate the spiritual health and so the happiness of the community.

The Visitor thinks that “many sophisticated people sometimes say, supposing themselves to be expressing something clever [τι σοφὸν], to the effect that there is in fact an

²³⁸ Owen, G.E.L., “Plato and the Undepictable,” in E. Lee, A. Mourelatos, and R. Roty eds. *Exegesis and Argument*, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1973, p. 359-360.

²³⁹ Owen, G.E.L., *art. cit.*, p. 359.

art of measurement relating to everything that comes into being [μετρητική περὶ πάντ' ἐστὶ τὰ γινόμενα]” (*Stm.* 285a). The Visitor confirms that “that’s actually the very thing we’ve just said” (*Stm.* 285a). This is what sophists, like Protagoras, claim to do. The Visitor turns, however, to a special craft, much like Socrates does, in order to provide a model for an appropriate form of measurement.

Plato addresses the ethical need to search for a divine measure, beyond mere human measure in the *Protagoras*. Socrates supposes that “salvation in life depends on the right choice of pleasures and pains, be they more or fewer, lesser or greater [τοῦ τε πλεονος καὶ ἐλάττονος καὶ μείζονος καὶ μικροτέρου], farther or nearer” and thus, “first of all” on “measurement [μετρητική], which is the study of relative excess and deficiency and equality [ὑπερβολῆς τε καὶ ἐνδεΐας οὕσα καὶ ἰσότητος]” (*Prot.* 357b). Further, “since it is measurement [μετρητική], it must definitely be an art, and knowledge [τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη]” (*Prot.* 357b). This active, ethical practical awareness must underlie the proper use of speech. The Eleatic Visitor actually suggests that the lesser craft of weaving is unimportant compared to the higher, ethical insights brought by philosophy. The weaving paradigm, like the city and the soul paradigm, is meant to exhibit truths of an invisible, ethical order. According to Notomi, there is, in the *Sophist*, an ironic reference to Protagoras.

“The ironical reference to Protagoras and others may suggest that the sophists might excel the poets in that the former manage a higher deception than the latter. For it implies that the sophists at least succeed in getting admiration from people. We might detect a certain difference between these two in the final definition in the *Sophist*: the sophist is classified as the ‘ironical imitator’, who having vague awareness of his own ignorance pretends to possess knowledge; in this division, the other species constitutes the ‘simple-minded imitator’, who is characterized by sheer ignorance (*Sph.* 267e-268a). If the latter is to be identified with the poet, we may say that the reference to the sophist in *Republic X* indicates the ironical feature of his imitation, in contrast with the poet as sheer ignoramus.”²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*,” *op. cit.*, p. 316.

Unlike the poet or sophist Plato describes in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*, the Visitor grasps or seeks to grasp the Formal essence of ordinary arts like carpentry, angling and weaving through the definitional method of collection and division. At least, this is what the Visitor claims to do. However, the Visitor emphasizes the menial nature of such practical crafts, asserting that no one “would want to hunt down the definition of weaving [τὸν τῆς ὀφαντικῆς...λόγον] for the sake of weaving itself” (*Stm.* 285d9). The word paradigm does not occur in this passage. Yet, since the word weaving was earlier introduced as a paradigm, this weaving paradigm is what the Visitor is talking about. Plato’s emphasis on the comparatively trivial nature of the visible paradigm underscores the fact that any visible reality, even those which are used to explain higher, ethical realities, is of intrinsically lesser worth than higher, invisible spiritual realities.

The Visitor recognizes that he has just described the spurious art of the sophist as a form of image-making which uses measure to distort perspective. He notes self-consciously that he, himself, is making a claim to an art of measure akin to that of the sophist. In the *Sophist*, he explores the relation between existence and that which does not exist. This lays the logical basis for a rational and measured account of reality. But here he is making the shift to an account of ethical measure. Perhaps as a humorous aside, although he claims to be presenting an art of measure, the Visitor actually notes that his own speeches, through the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, have demonstrated an almost consistently unmeasured quality as exercises in rhetoric. The Visitor says he has a need to “remind” everyone of “the reasons why” they have spoken “all of this on these subjects” (*Stm.* 286b).

“Visitor: Not least because of the difficulty we found in accepting the length of our talk about weaving—and about the reversal of the universe, and about the being of non-being which is the sphere of the sophist; we reflected that it had a rather great length, and in all these cases we rebuked ourselves, out of fear that what we were saying would turn out to be superfluous as well as long. So, the thing for you to say is that the foregoing was for the sake of all those cases, in order that we shan’t suffer any of this sort of misgiving on future occasions” (*Stm.* 286b-c).

The Visitor refers, in the above passage, to the section about the “length of our talk about weaving” or the “being of non-being” which we will treat in the next section, as well as the lengthy explanation of the “reversal of the universe” or Myth of Kronos, which we will treat in the third section. Even though the Visitor claims to have cultivated an acceptable sense of qualitative measure, which is beyond mere geometric and arithmetic calculation, much of the humour (if it can be called that) in the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* revolves around whether his own speeches are too short or lengthy. Although Plato’s presentation might be humorous, the Eleatic Visitor insists, nevertheless, on the seriousness of the purpose.

“Well, I said that you and I must be careful to remember what we have now said, and to distribute censure and praise of both shortness and length, whatever subjects we happen to be talking about on each occasion, by judging lengths not in relation to each other but, in accordance with the part of the art of measurement we previously said we must remember, in relation to what is fitting” (*Stm.* 286c-d).

This art of measurement would require the appropriate use of paradigms in speech in order to produce correct analogies that explain the nature of the soul. In this manner, it is a sense of ethical measure which can ground political life. However, it is also an epistemological and ontological sense of measure. The method of collection and division is a means of accurately describing the essential nature of empirical objects. This awareness of natural and artificial entities and their nature provides a stepping stone to reaching higher, invisible, ethical realities. Plato’s irony as a composer of dialogues is to show the highly theoretical Visitor, himself, speaking, either too much or too little, while the Visitor is providing an explanation about the need to speak the appropriate length (*Stm.* 286d-287a).²⁴¹

²⁴¹ “Visitor: Well, that’s right, but we mustn’t refer *everything* to this. For one thing, we shan’t have any need for a length that first in relation to pleasure, except perhaps as an incidental consideration. And again, as for what contributes towards the inquiry into the subject set before us, what we have said commits us to making a second and not a first priority of the question of how we might find it most easily and quickly, and to give by far the greatest and primary value to the pursuit itself of the ability to divide by classes. In particular, if the account is very long but renders the hearer better at discovering things, our business is to take this one seriously and not feel at all irritated at its length, and similarly if a shorter one, in its turn, has the same effect. Then again, over and above this, if in relation to such discussions someone finds fault with the length of what is said and will not put up with going round in circles, we must not let such a person go just like that without a backward glance-

1.2.6 *Paradigms as Visible Models which Lead to the Apprehension of Invisible, Ethical Realities*

My own argument represents a critique of Owen's developmentalist conception of the place of the *Statesman* within Plato's work. Since Plato continues, in the *Statesman*, to stress that visible models are important not for themselves but for explaining invisible, ethical realities, then Plato does not, fundamentally, change his philosophical ideas. Rather, he merely uses the dialogue form to stress different features of his thoughts about logic, ethics and poetic expression in different places. By not considering the ethical import of the invisible, Owen overlooks this point.

Owen, in another classic article on Plato's later dialogues, helpfully notes that Plato stresses, in these passages of the *Statesman*, the limits of the depictable. Owen notes, commenting on this passage of the *Statesman*, that it "is the μέγιστα that cannot be depicted, and we have already met statesmanship as a μέγιστον ὄν where weaving was called σμικρότατον" (*Pol.*, 278e7-8, 279a7-b2).²⁴² As Lane explains, Owen's article shows how Plato makes, here, the a distinction between "depictable" entities like "humans" or a bird like a "crane" and those things which cannot be "pictured" and which need a "logos (definition, argument, verbal explanation)."²⁴³ The craft of the "statesman" is a kind of entity which is undepictable, which cannot be pictured directly.²⁴⁴

with his having made the simple complaint that what has been said has taken a long time. We should think it right that he should also demonstrate, in addition, that if it had been shorter it would make the partners in the discussion better dialecticians and better at discovering how to display in words the things there are. We shall take no notice at all of other sorts of censure and praise, relating to some other criteria, nor even seem to hear such things at all when they are said. Now enough of these things, if I have your agreement too; let's go back again to the statesman, and bring the model of weaving, which we talked about before, to bear on it."

²⁴² Owen, G.E.L., "Plato and the Undepictable," *art. cit.*, p. 358.

²⁴³ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 71.

²⁴⁴ White, D., *Myth, Metaphysics and Dialectic in Plato's Statesman*, Hampshire, Ashgate, p. 66. Miller, M., *op. cit.*, p. 80. White stresses that "the definition of paradigm in the *Statesman*" includes both "metaphysical" and "epistemological" components. The Visitor here elaborates the limits of representation and asserts the difference between perceptible and "immaterial things" (*Pol.* 286b). Miller draws comparison with words from the *Seventh Letter*, which underscore the need for a name, an image and an account (λόγος) to achieve insight (*Seventh Letter*, 344b-c). Miller explains that the comparisons between such superficially different entities are meant to "point beyond themselves" to invisible likenesses (*Pol.* 265). However, both White and Miller, like

A picture can be helpful in visualizing such invisible realities. The way that he develops the analogy of weaving demonstrates that this is the case. The use of pictorial “analogy” is illuminating, because it can describe that which is, strictly speaking, beyond direct representation or portrayal. Although images, like the analogy of the sun, represent or depict the Good, this form of representation is indirect, since it is a use of a visible model or image to represent something which cannot itself be directly visibly seen. The Visitor gives much greater focus to the use of visible models as indirect ways to explain realities that are beyond direct representation or portrayal. He stresses that speech and reasoning are the fundamental conditions for grasping these higher, ethical realities.

“But I think the majority of people don’t recognize that to some of the things that are there are certain perceptible likenesses [τῶν ὄντων ῥαδίως καταμαθεῖν αἰσθηταί τινες ὁμοιότητες] which are there to be easily understood, and which it is not at all hard to point out, when one wants to make an easy demonstration to someone who asks for an account of one of these things which involves no trouble and without recourse to verbal means” (*Stm.* 285d9-286a2).

Owen notes that the distinction between depictable and undepictable is “recalled” when the Visitor offers his analogy (*Pol.* 286a7-b2).

“[C]onversely, for those things that are greatest and most valuable, there is no image at all which has been worked in plain view for the use of mankind [τοῖς δ’ αὖ μέγιστοις οὔσι καὶ τιμιωτάτοις οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδωλον οὐδεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους], the showing of which will enable the person who wants to satisfy the mind of an inquirer to satisfy it adequately by fitting it to one of the senses” (*Stm.* 285a3-286a7).”

Owen and Lane note the use of the Greek term for great things, but in this context the term “honourable things” is used in conjunction with the expression meaning “greatness”. Plato uses a normative, ethical term when he introduces the nature of the higher or greater invisible reality. This reveals his ethical purpose. He believes that there is no image (οὐκ ἔστιν εἶδωλον) for the most important and honourable realities (μέγιστοις οὔσι καὶ

Owen, fail to recognize that in this passage the Visitor is referring to the ethical reality, the order of the human soul.

τιμιωτάτοις) (*Pol.* 285d). By explaining that greater means more honourable (τιμιωτάτοις), Plato is shifting from the specifically logical sphere of propositional truth and falsity to the normative, ethical sphere. This highest form of understanding is fundamental insight into ethical or practical life.

The conception of paradigm presented in the *Statesman* aligns with the vision of the importance of such visual comparisons for explaining invisible reality. Gonzalez correctly emphasizes the fact that, ultimately, Platonic dialectic is a practice of ethical dialogue meant to lead to an insight beyond representation. In critiquing the Visitor's discourse, in the *Statesman*, he overlooks this very important passage, which merely underscores the points made in the passages of the *Republic* and *Phaedo* on dialectic method upon which his own interpretation of dialectic is based:

“That is why one must practice at being able to give and receive an account of each thing [δεῖ μελετᾶν λόγον ἐκάστου δυνατόν εἶναι δοῦναι καὶ δέξεσθαι]; for the things that are without body, which are finest and greatest [τὰ γὰρ ἀσώματα κάλλιστα ὄντα καὶ μέγιστα], are shown clearly only by verbal means and by nothing else [λόγῳ μόνον], and everything that is now being said is for the sake of these things. But practice in everything is easier in smaller rather than in relation to the greater [ῥάων δ' ἐν τοῖς ἐλάττοσιν ἢ μελέτῃ παντὸς πέρι μᾶλλον ἢ περὶ τὰ μείζω]” (*Stm.* 285a8-286b1).

In the *Sophist*, Plato has the Eleatic Visitor explain the need to establish a basis for logic and to distinguish between true statements and false or illusory statements. Also, in the *Sophist*, he had shown how to differentiate universal types through the method of collection and division, to define the universal and essential nature of ordinary, artificial crafts like angling and weaving, as well as natural entities, like birds and humans. According to my interpretation, the Visitor explains that this is a general methodological inquiry into the use of paradigm to make a comparison between two things which are essentially unlike each other. This creates, as we shall see in the next section, a space between simple factual truth and probability or the credible.

The higher reality is not the ordinary, visible paradigm or model, but the ethical order of the soul, which is invisible and beyond representation. If Plato had regarded dialectic as a purely logical activity of definition and argumentation, then he would have stopped the dialectic lesson at the conclusion of the *Sophist*. However, reading further into the *Statesman*, we see that he extends the scope of dialectic to include not only the search for essential definitions and argumentative refutation but, as well, the use of comparisons or analogies. The active and living practice of thoughtful dialogue more than any individual methodology or technique is dialectic.

Plato's explanatory analogy, made through the use of a single paradigm, draws deep and illuminating affinities. The insight these analogies bring, into what Plato calls "invisible realities", is proportionate to the extent to which the types of things chosen are perceptibly unlike each other. The use of analogy is simply another way to provide a rational account (λόγος), another means for the Eleatic Visitor and the Younger Socrates to become (διαλεκτικωτέροις γίγνεσθαι) "better dialecticians" (*Pol.* 285d). Thus, the purpose of the *Statesman* is not only to show the limits of conceiving rational account (λόγος) exclusively in terms of depicting universal classes and definitions, but as well, it further expands the horizon of dialectic to encompass myth and analogy as well.

He says that the weaving paradigm is not sought for the sake of itself. He does not use the term image; rather, he uses the term 'likeness', a synonym for image. What he stresses is that verbal means alone enable us to attain a grasp of realities, ethical realities, that are beyond direct visible representation. This is how dialectic training moves beyond geometric style methods of definition and demonstration, even the concern for trivial artificial and natural entities, to explore the ethical and political world of meaning and purpose. Indeed, just as Socrates introduces the paradigm of the city and the soul to explain justice, the Eleatic Visitor speaks of the ordering power of an intelligent statesman in

fostering the virtue of the political community.

At this point, we arrive at the description of the practical role of the statesman. The statesman is responsible, according to the Visitor's words, for weaving ethical virtue within the community. The paradigm of weaving (τὸ τῆς ὑφαντικῆς παράδειγμα) describes a craftsman who combines the warp and the woof, which correspond to the classes of the city (πάντα τὰ γένη) (*Pol.* 305e8). The bolder, firm, spirited or courageous disposition corresponds to the warp. The milder, softer, pliant or modest disposition corresponds to the woof. The whole city must be divided into classes (*Pol.* 305e91-0). The statesman-weaver draws together these different classes (*Pol.* 309b-c). According to the Visitor, a conscientious leader must be, according to the Visitor, aware of an important, recurrent dispute within communities (*Pol.* 306a).

The explanation the Visitor offers of his paradigm should remind us of the paradigmatic image of Plato's *Republic*, which describes the ordering of productive and spirited classes by intelligent rule. The dispute the Visitor describes is between those who are dominated by spirit and those who are dominated by appetite (*Pol.* 306b). The spirited seek honour and renown, while others are occupied with material acquisition. Sentiments and desires for recognition or for material wellbeing are not in themselves intrinsically vicious but only partially so. These virtues of courage and prudence, when integrated, are expressions of thoughtful intelligence, in both individual and community.

The Eleatic Visitor recognizes that members of each group prefer their own. However, this partisan and preferential sentiment contributes to the detriment of the community (πόλις) as a whole (*Pol.* 307d). The dispute between classes (γένη) might be a "kind of play" (*Pol.* 307d). Nevertheless, the internal conflict between the spirited and productive classes concerning the "most important things" turns out to be a "disease" for any

community (πόλις) (*Pol.* 307d-e).²⁴⁵ The virtue of prudence demands the appropriate sense of measure and restraint. The role of the statesman-weaver is to serve as conscientious speaker and guide. The task of this person is not to favor one group over the other but rather to harmonize and make complimentary the virtues expressed, only partially, by members of both groups apart.

This is the relation between cosmic order and the order of civic life. One of the central purposes of the Visitor's *Myth of Kronos*, as well as his consideration of the nature of philosophical questioning, is to show that humans must cultivate an understanding of nature itself, as much as human, ethical nature. The statesman is a productive craftsman (δημιουργός) who works in accordance with the ideal (*Pol.* 308c-309b). The care (ἐπιμέλεια) which this craftsman provides is meant to echo that which the craftsman (δημιουργός) in the Age of Kronos provides for the cosmos (κόσμος) as a whole (*Pol.* 310c., cf. *Pol.* 273a, 274b, 274d).²⁴⁶ Imitating the autonomy of the cosmos itself, in the Age of Zeus, the statesman in our own age nevertheless uses the divine gift of speech to persuade the members of the community or the city to live an ordered life. But given that Plato's second city is itself imaginary, this suggests that, again, Plato is simply interiorizing this view. He is painting pictures of nobler cities, generating a literature of the possible to elevate us above what actually is.

The analogy provides the final definition. This has been prepared for through the introduction of a corrective myth. The Eleatic Visitor's myth, which will be explored in the third section, is ambivalent in the sense that it is meant to convey the point that humans, in the present age, act autonomously, in the absence of divine direction, but with the help of a divine gift. This gift is not only the gift of rational speech but the use of mythical language.

²⁴⁵ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 164.

²⁴⁶ White, D., *op. cit.*, p. 127.

The point of the myth is to underscore that we live, in mythical terms, not in the Golden Age of Kronos but the Age of Zeus, where the world and the people within it act autonomously. Political leaders are not themselves divine. However, Plato does use traditional, poetic language to describe the art of discourse as a gift from the gods. Ultimately, he makes a sort of claim to wisdom, through his use of mythic language, which constitutes a rival claim to the traditional claim of poets and sophists.

This traditional claim, as we shall see in the next section, also underlies the connection between logic and the philosophical use of rhetoric, in contradistinction with the sophistic practice of rhetoric. In the *Republic*, the Eleatic Visitor follows Socrates in showing how philosopher-kings should use not only reasoning but analogies and myths to convince people to seek, both individually and collectively, a virtuous and just life. This is precisely what poets, in *Republic X* and sophists, in the *Sophist*, have been described as unable to do properly. This statesman thoughtfully weaves the community with the texture of his words.

The wisdom of the statesman (ὁ πολιτικός) consists in weaving together or combining the qualities of bravery and prudence and, thereby, fostering virtue (ἀρετή) and friendship (φιλία) in order to bring happiness (εὐδαιμονία) for those within the community (*Pol.* 311b7-c6). The fabric of society is robust when there is equilibrium between the two dispositions but easily torn if the bold and the restrained are at odds. Though an image, the paradigm of weaving, like all of the other paradigms in this dialogue, must be open to dialectical question and revisions, if it is not to become a mere image and imitation. Poets and sophists cannot do this, precisely, because they rely on mere images. They lack not only a clear, rational grasp of the essence of ordinary, perceptible reality but also a higher grasp of invisible, ethical reality. Yet, as in the *Republic*, the Visitor relies on a paradigm or visible model which is, ultimately, not distinguishable from an image. The sophist and philosopher are superficially similar, in the sense that both remain closely akin as claimants to the role of a

just king. However, this superficial similarity is only skin deep. It is the invisible, ethical character of the soul and the genuine search for understanding which distinguishes the philosopher or lover of wisdom from the sophist who merely pretends to have this understanding.

The Visitor recognizes an absence of genuine teaching, dialectic and philosophy as science, in words of political rhetoric. However, this does not mean that the understanding of the practice of rhetoric and poetics are not in some sense facets of philosophy and human science. Plato depicts his characters in this discussion engaging in conceptual expression no less than questioning dialogue. This questioning is meant to reveal the limits of mere depiction and representation as much as to express the possibilities of *mimesis*.

The notion of paradigm answers the question that the critique of poets and sophistic image-makers in the *Sophist* and *Republic* X poses. This section explores Plato's definition of the poet and sophist, in the *Republic* and *Sophist*, as image-makers who imitate originals, and are comparable to painters, who provide distorting appearances and illusions in words which confuse young people and have, thus, a deleterious influence on the ethical life of the political community. Through the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato presents the philosophical dialectician as one who uses visible paradigms or models, is comparable to a painter or sculptor, produces correct judgments about invisible realities, and questions false opinions in order to have a favourable influence on the ethical life of the community.

The next section will explore the logical dimension of dialectic more fully, through an exploration of the use of methods of definition and argumentation, induction and demonstration in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. Having established in this first section the distinction between paradigm and essential Form, my argument will be developed further with an exploration of the relation between essential definition and logical argumentation, both inductive and deductive. This second section will also explain more fully the definition

of visible models or examples through the use of collection and division and the relation this practice bears to essential Forms.

Many interpreters hold that in Plato, there is an earlier and later dialectic, a hypothetical method of argumentative refutation and a divisional method of definition. According to my assessment, these two logical techniques—argumentation and definition—are complementary not only in the so-called Socratic dialogues but throughout Plato's work. Following Kahn, my interpretation presupposes that Plato uses the dialogue form to explore different facets of logical technique, and holds that the practice of essential definition and argumentation in the so-called early or Socratic dialogues is linked with the middle dialogues. My position in the second section will extend Kahn's view to encompass later dialogues, like the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. According to my claim, this connection between essential definition and essential Form is completed in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. It is possible to regard logical techniques of definition and demonstration as dialectical, because dialectic is, above all, not to be identified with any particular logical technique. Rather, both techniques can be introduced in dialectic exchange to clarify matters of ethical significance and cultivate a more ethical disposition.

Section II

Thoughtful Speech: The Ethical Dimension of Elenchus and Collection and Division in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*

This section considers dialectic in a more conventional manner. However, one of the purposes of this section is to draw further attention to the role which the dialogue, as a dramatic form, plays in our understanding of Plato's dialectic and philosophy, as well as the role of Plato as an author of dialogues. This will prepare the way for further consideration of this question in the final section, which treats not only the dramatic elements of Plato's philosophy but myth. In Plato's dialogues, dialectical methods of universal definition and proof are often presented in association with one another. Plato stresses the rigour of arithmetic calculation, as well as geometric definition and demonstration. The purpose of using these rational methods, like using comparisons or analogies, is ultimately to clarify matters of ethical significance.

Plato shows Socrates bringing the rigour of arithmetic calculation or geometric definition and proof to the sphere of ethical concern. His purpose, in so doing, is to suggest that just as there is stable objectivity in the sphere of mathematics, there is objectivity in ethics. The emphasis, in this section, is not only on the cultivation of logical techniques of definition and deductive demonstration but inductive technique as well. Interpreters who separate Plato's use of deductive from inductive technique produce a fragmented picture of the logical aspect of Platonic dialectic. By recognizing the interconnection between these two techniques, my effort will be to offer a more coherent view regarding Plato's thoughts on rational techniques of theoretical inquiry. However, Plato also shows, as author, an awareness of the uncertainties of practical life. He presents Socrates in discussion with other characters who sometimes express views different from the views of Socrates. This shows

that Plato is aware that philosophy and theoretical inquiry takes place within a wider field of practical and social life.

Plato presents the techniques of definition and demonstration within the dialogue form itself. The chief purpose of dialectic is ethical in character. There is, however, also a rhetorical and even persuasive element to Plato's portrayal of Socrates, in discussion with other characters, among them sophists like Gorgias and Protagoras, as well as political leaders like Laches and Alcibiades. Plato appeals to emotion by showing a practical awareness of the element of human prejudice in the dramatic situations in which dialectical exchanges take place. Plato, as author, uses not only Socrates but other characters to dramatize philosophy in action and to display the manner in which philosophical discussion might take place.

The characters in the dialogues are meant to serve, to some extent, as models, both good and bad, for the way in which philosophy should be enacted or carried out. Thus, my discussion of the relation between logical techniques will connect with a treatment of the relation which these techniques bear to rhetoric. The search for objective truth takes place in a social space, wherein, we are all constrained by our own prejudices. As Plato has Socrates suggest in the *Phaedrus* that the philosophical cultivation of the power of plausible speech or rhetoric demands an awareness of the science of human psychology, the order of the soul. Thus, the element of persuasion, credibility and belief should be borne in mind, even when we use these more rigorous forms of inquiry. As Plato seems to recognize, the use of image and myth often bears a far more compelling and persuasive power than does the use of more conventional rational techniques alone. Plato frequently shows Socrates in ordinary situations, using rational techniques, images and even myths to convey philosophical notions. The *Sophist* and *Statesman* provide, with unusual technicality, a lesson in how paradigms or visible models can be used not only in rational argumentation but in the presentation of

images, which serve as illuminating analogies and in the construction and composition of myth.

Strictly speaking, paradigm, as visible model, is not an essential Form. This distinction, however, established in the first section, provides a basis for using inductive examples or paradigms to provide an essential definition. The visible example or model is the visible source from which essential definitions are inductively derived. Yet the uses of such formal logical or empirical modes of inquiry are subordinate or secondary to the ethical import of the interchange. This is what makes the dialogue, as dramatic form, an effective way to convey or communicate this practice, since characters enact the use of these techniques and indicate ethical motives in the act of applying them. Philosophical dialectic, in this way, overlaps with rhetoric as a mode of reasoning concerning speech which applies to the ethical sphere.

Plato invokes the term dialectic in contexts where he insists on the cultivation of rational techniques of demonstration and methods of definition. The geometric basis of Plato's logical techniques explains why Plato regards definition and demonstrative refutation as associated. The Socratic *elenchus* and collection and division are ultimately matching elements of dialectical inquiry. The dialectician can propose a definition of a real essence or natural kind, through collection and division, but such an inductive generalization may always prove to be the spurious definition which the *elenchus* refutes. This is why Plato describes thoughtless divisions as a kind of sophistic practice of eristic. Such thoughtless divisions disregard meaningful or significant similarities and differences between things. Aristotle's testimony further corroborates how the inductive technique of defining essence and deductive techniques of demonstration and argumentation are connected. However, as Charles Kahn notes, Aristotle's testimony about Plato's method of collection and division

and the relation it bears to notions of essence and deduction must be carefully scrutinized in order to give proper understanding to Plato's work.

My approach to the relation between Plato's understanding of logical methods of induction and deduction and his use of the dialogue form to show characters practicing these methods draws from recent work of Kahn. Kahn's own approach involves a critical reading of testimony of Aristotle about Plato's inductive and deductive methods, and my approach will do the same. Aristotle maintains that the search for formal essence is connected with the use of deductive inference and deduction. According to Kahn, Aristotle's claim that the Platonic hypothesis or notion of formal essences is disconnected from Socrates' search for essential definitions simply superimposes Aristotle's own views about primary substance onto Plato's Socrates. For Aristotle's Socrates, the universal definition of humanity exists only insofar as it inheres in particular humans. This is one of the reasons why Aristotle's testimony about Plato's notions of essence, deduction and induction is highly instructive but, at the same time, systematically misleading if simply taken at face value.

Plato's dramatization of the use of these logical methods of deduction and induction, his act of representing people in ordinary situations, makes it more appropriate for him to express technical terms of logic using ordinary language rather than technical terms. That is to say, Plato shows people speaking as they might in ordinary situations. Yet Plato also exhibits an awareness of principles of inference and deduction. "Deductive arguments [,]" as Kahn observes in his treatment of the relation between dialectic and the method of hypothesis, "must have been familiar procedures in mathematics: they can be documented in philosophy since the time of Parmenides and Zeno."²⁴⁷ Thus, "it comes as no surprise that Plato's early dialogues are in possession of a terminology for premises as "what has been agreed upon" or accepted by the interlocutors (*ta homologomena*)" (*Gorg.* 77c7; cf. *Hippias*

²⁴⁷ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 309.

Minor, 368b3; cf. *Prot.* 332d).²⁴⁸ That is to say, Plato recognizes the fallacy of *petitio principii* or begging the question. Plato insists upon the importance of not confusing the conclusion with the premise of an argument.

Plato also introduces the demonstrative technique of *reductio ad absurdum*. He holds that we can use what is agreed upon for “calculating consequences (*sullogizesthai*)” in order to determine if one is contradicting oneself or “saying what is opposite to itself (*enantia legein heautoi*)” (*Hippias Minor*, 371a6; *Lch.* 196b4). Plato has Socrates come close to Aristotle’s terminology for the demonstrative syllogism and his use of the refutative technique of *reductio ad absurdum*, but Plato’s Socrates never, in his dialogues, systematizes these terms in the way that Aristotle does in his treatises. Although Plato’s digressions about a hypothetical method can be interpreted as descriptions of deductive technique, typically Plato merely shows Socrates practicing this logical method. But Plato usually presents Socrates doing so using ordinary language expressions, rather than relying on technical expressions. That is to say, Plato does not technically explain the method of the deductive syllogism, even though Socrates uses the term ‘syllogism’ in the course of discussion.

Plato does portray Socrates providing brief expositions of what he calls a method of hypothesis, which has been interpreted as an anticipation of deductive technique. Equally, in certain key places, Plato elaborates the method of collection and division. This is an inductive technique, familiar also from the technical treatises of Aristotle, which enables an inquirer to make universal generalizations on the basis of empirically chosen examples or models. As with deduction, Plato also often relies more on ordinary language and expression, relying implicitly on the technique of discerning between different kinds without always clearly expositing the methodology. This is linked to the choice of the literary form of dialogue, rather than a technical treatise, a literary genre which enables Plato to dramatize

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

the living practice of philosophical dialogue in Athens and other local contexts familiar to his reading public. For this reason, it is in many ways instructive to turn to the testimony of Aristotle, who treats inductive and deductive techniques dramatized in Plato's dialogues with much greater acuity and technical rigour. Yet Aristotle's criticism of collection and division makes it difficult to perceive the complementarity this inductive technique bears with the method of hypothesis or deduction.

Further, Aristotle's misrepresentation of Plato's thoughts on definition, demonstration and essence masks the extent of Aristotle's own debt to Plato's thoughts about definition, essence, deduction and induction. Aristotle makes "deprecatory remarks" about the method of division in *Prior Analytics*, maintaining that "the method involves a *petitio principii*" (*Anal. Prior. A* 46a 31 ff.).²⁴⁹ Division, when it is binary, entails an either/or selection between two possible routes. Practitioners of division, as depicted in Plato's dialogues often merely select one of the choices over the other, without providing a justification. Aristotle explains that division, therefore, introduces an undefended assumption and so is not an instance of deductive argument.

Aristotle proposes the following premises as an instance of division in order to show how collection and division fails as a syllogism. He indicates the higher class to which man belongs; he asserts that "man is an animal" and then he introduces the choice or dichotomy with the statement "an animal either is mortal or is immortal."²⁵⁰ According to Aristotle, it does not follow demonstratively from these two premises that "man is mortal."²⁵¹ It only follows that "man either is mortal or is immortal[.]"²⁵² That is, the "successive steps of the division" do not introduce an important inferential step, and so "nothing is really proved

²⁴⁹ Taylor, A.E., *Plato: The Man and His Work*, London, Methuen & Co, 1926, p. 337.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*

when the division has reached its end.”²⁵³ In order to be a valid demonstration, Plato would have had to introduce a separate premise, denying the consequent and employing a *disjunctive syllogism* to justify the conclusion that “man is mortal.”

Symbols:

Hx = x is a human. Ax = x is an animal. Mx = x is mortal.

Ix = x is immortal.

1) $Ax \rightarrow Mx \vee Ix$

2) $Hx \rightarrow Ax$

3) Mx

Proof of Argument:

4) $Hx \rightarrow Mx \vee Ix$ (1, 2 Hypothetical Syllogism)

5) Hx

6) $Mx \vee Ix$ (4, 5 Modus ponens)

7) $\sim Ix$ (6, 7 Disjunctive Syllogism)

$\therefore Mx$

Ryle expresses or articulates this criticism of Aristotle more fully. Division is “not a process of demonstration, as Aristotle points out.”²⁵⁴ With collection and division, a highly generic concept is assumed from the beginning “without proof” and then more specific concepts are derived from the higher order concept.²⁵⁵ Therefore, inquirers relying exclusively on this method could not distinguish between formally valid and invalid inferences in a technically precise manner. For this reason, Aristotle terms Platonic division a “weak syllogism”.²⁵⁶ However, Platonic *diaresis* is not, like syllogistic demonstration, a strictly formal system of proof. Plato introduces collection and division as an inductive technique, which is used to provide general definitions of visible models.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 377-78.

²⁵⁴ Ryle, G., “Plato’s *Parmenides*,” *Mind*, 28, 1939, p. 321. Ryle cites *Prior Analytics*, 46a, *Posterior Analytics*, 91b and 96b. For a more nuanced summary of Ryle’s own appraisal of the nature of dialectic, see *Plato’s Progress*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1966, p.132-133.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *Prior Analytics*, I, 31a. Aristotle frequently contrasts the method of dialectic, which treats “commonly received opinion” with his own, superior technique of syllogistic proof. See Aristotle, *Topics*, 101a-101b.

Even though Aristotle's testimony is an historical source for our understanding of the relation between Plato's dialectic method and logic, his criticisms of Plato are often misleading. As Taylor holds, Aristotle's criticism of division "misses the mark."²⁵⁷ For instance, when "we are told in the *Sophist* that hunters capture their prey either by snaring or by wounding, we are presumed to know from our acquaintance with the facts of life that a rod and line are not a snare; there is no intention to prove the point by making the division."²⁵⁸ Taylor observes that neither "the syllogism nor any other formal logical device can enable us to dispense with first-hand acquaintance with facts."²⁵⁹ That is to say, the logical use of deductive technique does not absolve us from the need to rely upon induction and empirical inquiry. Although it is quite reasonable to imagine that "some members of the Academy may have overlooked this limitation in their enthusiasm[,]" Aristotle's "own method of syllogism is subject to precisely the same conditions."²⁶⁰

That is to say, a syllogistic demonstration, in order to be sound, requires a factually true or false major premise and minor premise. As Taylor notes, this "method, like all scientific method, will not work *in vacuo*."²⁶¹ Even though the formal or inferential validity of a syllogism does not depend on the truth or falsity of the premises, the soundness of an argument does require a turn to empirical, inductive methods. Collection and division is particularly important for discerning the universal, essential character of natural entities, like the human animal.

Aristotle is correct to differentiate this inductive technique from deductive technique. However, as Cherniss recognizes, though Aristotle is critical of the method, he holds that "diæresis[.]" when "[r]eformed in accordance with these criticisms" is "a serviceable

²⁵⁷ Taylor, A.E., *op. cit.*, p. 378.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

instrument for establishing definitions and the basis for the classification of natural kinds.”²⁶² Aristotle actually regards a modified form of collection and division as an inductive complement to syllogistic demonstration (*Prior Analytics* I, 31; *Posterior Analytics* II, 5). As Ambuel observes, “method of division, in Aristotle’s eyes, may prove a useful tool in inductively defining what a thing is, but it cannot hope to demonstrate deductively definition.”²⁶³ Aristotle’s “reformed” division introduces a rigorous distinction between higher kind or *genus* and specific kind or *species*. For Aristotle, the properly defined species is the substance of a particular individual. Aristotle defines, for instance, the human as a rational animal. This distinguishing feature, ‘rational’, when coupled with the general class to which humans belong, is the essence of a particular human, like Socrates. Aristotle, in spite of his methodological criticisms, agrees with Plato that natural species have essences.

Aristotle’s chief criticism is that *diarexis* is not a method of demonstration (ἀπόδειξις). The formal structure of a syllogistic argument is valid or invalid regardless of empirical considerations. Indeed, the mere “use of the formal method of Collection and Division is no guarantee of the correctness of a resulting definition.”²⁶⁴ Yet Aristotle seems to have accepted that the method “was regarded as capable of proving what the nature of a thing was[.]”²⁶⁵ Both in the case of divisional classification and syllogistic demonstration, the philosophical enquirer should recognize that “the formal method must be supplemented by the dialectician’s experience.”²⁶⁶ Indeed, Aristotle himself closely associates collection and division with induction.

The Greek language itself sheds a certain amount of light on this confusion about induction and deduction. The Greek etymology of these logical terms shows a close association between the Platonic and Aristotelian terminology for inductive and deductive

²⁶² Cherniss, H., *Aristotle’s Criticism of Plato and the Academy*, Baltimore, John Hopkins Press, 1944, 48-49.

²⁶³ Ambuel, D., *Image and Paradigm in Plato’s Sophist*, Parmenides Publishing, Zurich, 2007, p. 16.

²⁶⁴ Bluck, R.S., *Plato’s Meno*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1961, p. 35. See *An. Pr.* 46a31 ff. cf.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35-36.

argumentation. The root of the term, like the other term for demonstration (ἀπόδειξις), is the verb meaning to show or display (δείκνυμι). However, this suffix is shared by *paradeigma* (παράδειγμα). *Epagoge* is Aristotle's term for induction. Aristotle's own use of syllogistic demonstration is like the method of hypothesis which Plato shows Socrates using. Essential, universal premises, discerned through the appropriate use of collection and division, are meant to yield the universal scientific statements which explain the essential classes to which visible, particular individuals, like Socrates, belong. These inductive and deductive techniques of demonstration bear a relation to the discourse of the orator, but the use of these techniques can also lead to the abuse of these techniques.

Just as the attempt to produce argumentative contradictions in and of itself is mere eristic, *diaresis*, exercised arbitrarily, can yield accurate definitions no better than any other method. Plato even calls the misapplication or misuse of division a form of *eristic*. Yet Ambuel is quite justified in recognizing that for Plato, there is a difference between the procedure of division and the act of discovery, just as for Aristotle, there is a distinction between inductive discovery and deductive demonstration. The “what” of an entity is “discoverable but not provable.”²⁶⁷ In syllogistic demonstration, we assume the premises to have been properly discovered through induction.²⁶⁸ Socrates can only be known through “acquaintance” or empirical familiarity, yet the essence of Socrates, as a human being, must be arrived at through inductive generalization.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ Ambuel, D., *op. cit.*, p. 14-15. For Aristotle, there is “an underlying distinction between demonstration and discovery: we may indeed be able to demonstrate specific attributes of a thing in virtue of that thing's being a certain kind, but the essential attributes of the kind must be inductively presupposed.”

²⁶⁸ All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

²⁶⁹ Ambuel, D. *op. cit.*, p. 15. We may validly deduce from the two premises “All men are mortals” and “Socrates is mortal” that “Socrates is a mortal.” However, the essence of Socrates “can only be “known” by acquaintance.”

It is, perhaps, for this reason that “Aristotle associates *diarexis* with induction[.]”²⁷⁰ As we have seen, the example or paradigm, like weaving or angling, is selected by the Visitor, as an individual, and given universal definition through this method. Thus, the truth or falsity of premises in syllogistic argumentation is always dependent on these sorts of inductive or empirical techniques. This applies to universal statements as much as particular statements. However, in Plato’s dialogues, there is an important link between the use of deductive techniques and the attempt to provide a definition of the formal essence of an entity.

Aristotle’s logical and metaphysical works introduce the notion of essential definition in the context of treating problems about deduction and induction. Note that Aristotle insists that, in Plato, universal essences are supposed to form the major premise in deductive inference. However, Plato’s dialectic, according to Aristotle, his search for essential definitions, lacks the rigour of his own syllogistic method since “dialectic was not yet strong enough to be able to examine contrary theses without an essential definition.”²⁷¹ As Aristotle critically remarks, universal statements which form the major premise or minor premise of a syllogism need not be essential definitions. However, this remark also shows that Aristotle saw Plato or Plato’s dialogues as connecting universal definition with the practice of demonstration. Furthermore, the syllogisms which provide the most scientifically sound conclusions are those which introduce the essentially defined essence as a major premise.

Plato uses the example or paradigm (τοῦ λόγου τὰ παραδείγματα) of single letters to explain the composition of a sentence or proposition in the *Theaetetus* (*Tht.* 202e4). Admittedly, he, admittedly, first uses the example of spelling a syllable correctly, drawing together “S” with “O” to form the first syllable of the name “Socrates” (*Tht.* 203a). However, as the discussion progresses, Socrates eventually applies this example to the

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 84.

attribution of qualities to individual, named persons like himself, Socrates, and ‘Theaetetus’ (*Tht.* 209c). Socrates, in the *Theaetetus*, introduces the “dream theory” for combining or weaving elements as letters; then the Visitor again introduces the grammar example shortly before he explains the correct joining of the parts of a sentence (*Tht.* 202a-b; *Sph.* 253a-b; 262a-263a). In the context of the *Sophist*, this grammar example is introduced again as an illustration, not merely of combining letters into syllables but combining nouns and verbs into grammatically correct sentences. The Visitor introduces the paradigm or example of the man (παράδειγμα...ἄνθρωπον), who can be attributed with a potentially endless variety of qualities (*Sph.* 251a1a7).

“Visitor: Surely we’re speaking of man even when we name him several things, that is, when we apply colors to him and shapes, sizes, defects and virtues. In these cases and a million others we say that he’s not only a man but also good and indefinitely many different things. And similarly on the same account we take a thing to be one, and at the same time, we speak of it as many by using many names for it” (*Sph.* 251a).

The grammar example is merely an analogy to illustrate what Plato means by dialectic. The Visitor says that this involves the combination of Forms. In this way, Plato may be indicating at least a general awareness of the practice of using letter variables to denote the subject and predicate of a premise (*Sph.* 253d-254b). In these passages, Plato does not clearly differentiate between the logical validity of premises and the truth of the statements. Above all, he does not use letter variables in the manner that Aristotle does in his logical treatises. If Plato’s Visitor is also speaking about deductive methods in these passages, then he is not clearly differentiating induction from deduction. Yet the inductive example of the individual human, Socrates, and the human species itself, as a universal or essential type, are clearly reminiscent of those which Aristotle himself uses to illustrate the nature of the syllogism in such familiar examples as:

All A are B.
All B are C.

All A are C.

All men are rational animals.

Socrates is a man.

Socrates is a rational animal.

Aristotle recognizes how Plato's own use of methods in the dialogues does not completely reflect his own conception of deductive validity. Charles Kahn interprets the ensuing passages, found in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, as thoughts which derive from a reading of Plato's dialogues, rather than testimony of an independent understanding of the teachings of an historical Socrates. The issue of the connection between induction, deduction and essential definition becomes clearest when we consider Aristotle's account of what he describes as the difference between Socrates and Plato. Although Aristotle vigorously distinguishes his position from that of Plato, Aristotle's own notion of the scientific essence only slightly modifies Plato's own views about definition and Formal universality. According to Kahn, Aristotle's separation of Socratic definition and Platonic essence is what leads to the misleading interpretation.

"Socrates concerned himself with the moral virtues, and in reference to these he was the first to seek universal definitions... It was reasonable to seek the essence (*to ti esti*), because he was looking for deductive inference (*sullogizesthai*); and the starting-point for deduction is the essence. For dialectic was not yet strong enough to be able to examine contrary theses without an essential definition [i.e., the method of hypothesis did not yet exist.] For there are two things that one can rightly assign to Socrates: inductive arguments (*epatikoi logoi*) and universal definitions (*to horizesthai katholon*). And both of these are concerned with the starting point (*arche*) of science."

"Socrates, however, did not make the universals (*ta katholon*) separate, nor did he separate the definition. But they [the Platonists] separated these and they called such entities Forms (*ideai*)" (*Met. M. 4. 1078b17-32*).²⁷²

This passage of Aristotle has greatly influenced historians of philosophy who use it as a basis for distinguishing between the Socratic practice of seeking essential, ethical definitions and Plato's notions about Formal essences. However, Kahn maintains that the

²⁷² Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 84.

misinterpretation of these passages has led to a faulty reading of Platonic dialectic and the Platonic dialogues. According to Kahn, “[d]espite Aristotle’s evident care here to assign to Socrates a distinct and limited contribution, there is no reason to accept the account as historically more reliable than the earlier report of what Cratylus and the Pythagoreans had to contribute to the doctrine of forms.”²⁷³ Rather, Aristotle is presenting Plato’s relation to Socrates in such a way that it corresponds with his own theory of demonstrative science:

“We can see here that the motive ascribed to Socrates for his interest in definition presupposes Aristotle’s own theory of science and dialectic, according to which scientific first principles are provided by definitions, whereas (Aristotelian) dialectic can function hypothetically on the basis of alternative opinions. On the other hand, Aristotle’s reference to the pursuit of definitions for “the moral virtues” shows that he (like Xenophon) had Plato’s dialogues of definition in view, and is prepared to treat them as evidence for the historical Socrates. Aristotle also insists upon the point that, unlike Plato, Socrates did not separate the object of universal definitions from sensible particulars. Furthermore, adds Aristotle, Socrates was right not to separate them (*Met. M.* 9. 1086B3-5). Thus it turns out that Aristotle’s acceptance of the dialogues of definition as historical evidence for Socrates is essential not only for his account of the origin of the theory of Forms but also for his criticism of that theory. He lays the basis for this criticism by, in effect, attributing his own notion of universals to Socrates.”²⁷⁴

Interpreters have traditionally taken what Aristotle says here at face value. However, Aristotle is neither relating what he understands independently about the difference between the teaching of Socrates nor is he placing this genuine understanding of Socrates’ historical teaching in relation to what he knows about Plato’s thought from personal acquaintance. Rather, as Kahn argues, Aristotle attributes his notion of universals to the character Socrates who is depicted in Plato’s so-called earlier dialogues. Kahn holds that methods of essential definition and refutation practiced in the so-called earlier dialogues are presented by Plato in a way that prepares readers to encounter the discussion of essential Forms in dialogues like the *Republic*.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.* p. 85.

Kahn argues that this holds for the early and middle dialogues. My view is that this *protreptic* principle applies equally for Plato's later dialogues. Plato's treatment of logic, definition and demonstrative argumentation are aligned throughout his work. However, as a literary device, he treats the same methods in different dialogues with a greater or lesser degree of technicality. The *Sophist* and *Statesman* and associated dialogues like the *Theaetetus* and *Parmenides*, although they introduce new elements, do not represent a fundamental departure from Plato's earlier thought. Rather, Plato's later treatment of notions of essential definition, demonstrative argumentation and Formal essence merely adds additional layers to our existing understanding of dialectic as practiced in earlier dialogues and in the *Republic*. Indeed, philosophical practice and dialectic never ceases to be a fundamentally ethical endeavour, and so it is inexact to identify dialectic with any specific logical technique.

2.1 Definition and Proof

2.1.1 The Complementarity of Dialectic Methods of Definition and Elenchic Refutation in Relation to Rhetoric in Plato's Dialogues

Dorion applies such an ethical reading of Platonic dialectic in his approach to the *Sophist*. Dorion holds that the "description of the elenchus in the *Sophist* includes both a logical aspect and a moral aspect, where the logical dimension is nevertheless clearly subordinated to the moral dimension."²⁷⁵ The same holds for collection and division. The Visitor holds that refutation is immoral if it is not directed by the ethical motivation to seek truth. Similarly, if a proposed, universal definition is actually false, the dialectician's failure to realize this can have harmful ethical consequences. Just as faulty argumentation leads to poor thinking, erroneous and unreal classification can lead to harmful ethical consequences. Before turning to the treatment of definition and argumentation in the later dialogues, it is

²⁷⁵Dorion, L.A., "Aristotle's Definition of Elenchus in Light of Plato's *Sophist*," Fink, J.L., ed., *The Development of Dialectic from Plato to Aristotle*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 268.

helpful to begin with a brief account of dialectic method in the earlier dialogues. My interpretation of dialectic in the later work, like the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, presupposes Kahn's interpretation of the continuity which links expositions of dialectic in Plato's early and middle work. And so my exposition will include a considerable amount of supplementary exposition from Kahn's Plato and the *Socratic Dialogue*.

Plato uses the term path (μέθοδος) or second best way (δεύτερον πλοῦν ἐπὶ τὴν αἰτίας ζήτησιν) to signify the scientific search to discover the cause of an entity (*Phd.* 99c-d). Plato claims that his preferred method for discerning the scientific cause is the method of dialectic (διαλέγεσθαι). The dialectician seeks to characterize the essence (ἡ οὐσία) of an entity, identified by a name (ὄνομα), by giving a (λόγος) or definition. Socrates employs the language of *ousia* (τὴν οὐσίαν) to denote the essence or ultimate cause of a named entity, even in the *Euthyphro*, in the attempt to define the virtue of holiness (τὸ ὅσιον) (*Euth.* 11a6-8).²⁷⁶ In the so-called Socratic dialogues, as much as anywhere else in Plato, Socrates is seeking, through definitions, the kinds of universal essences which are described in the *Republic*. Indeed, he uses the word Form twice to signify the essence which he seeks to capture through a universal definition.

Socrates explains that he is seeking the universal or essential nature of piety or holiness. He must define the nature of piety in such a way that all instances of piety are accounted by it.

“Socrates: Bear in mind that I did not bid you tell me one or two of the many pious actions but that form itself that makes all pious action pious, for you agreed that all impious actions are impious and all pious actions pious through one form [ἐκεῖνο αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδος ᾧ πάντα τὰ ὅσια], or don't you remember?”

“Euthyphro: I do.”

“Socrates: Tell me then what this form itself [τὴν ἰδέαν] is, so that I may look upon it, using it as a model [παραδείγματι], say that any action of yours or another's that is of that kind is impious.”

²⁷⁶ Dixsaut, M., *Les métamorphoses de la dialectique chez Platon*, Paris, Vrin, 2003, p. 32.

“Euthyphro: If that is how you want it, Socrates, that is how I will tell you.”

“Socrates: That is what I want.”

“Euthyphro: Well then, what is dear to the gods is pious, what is not is impious” (*Euth.* 6d-7a).²⁷⁷

The proposed definition of piety is, then, open to refutation or critique. Furthermore, Plato is by no means merely presenting a methodological exposition of logical technique in the *Euthyphro*. He is using rational technique to consider ethical questions. Euthyphro’s proposed definition presents an occasion for a nuanced dialectical exchange in which Euthyphro’s definition of piety is refuted. Plato’s Socrates says, in the *Republic* and other places, that the gods do not conflict in their opinions. Within Greek tradition, the tradition of Homer, Hesiod and the dramatists, gods are represented as conflicting in their opinions about what is just or good. Thus, Socrates questions Euthyphro, in elenctic fashion, asking whether the gods love what is just because it is itself just or what is just is just simply because it is what the gods love.

Euthyphro, it must be remembered, is on his way to court to convict his father on the charge of murder. Socrates, meanwhile, is himself about to meet the accusations of impiety and corruption of the youth made against him by Meletus. Socrates observes that if Euthyphro believes the traditional accounts of the gods, it is in no “way surprising if your present action, namely punishing your father, may be pleasing to Zeus but displeasing to Cronus and Uranus, pleasing to Hephaestus but displeasing to Hera, and so with any other gods who differ from each other on this subject” (*Euth.* 8a-b). For this reason, traditional piety, as Euthyphro has defined it, cannot be identified with justice (*Euth.* 10e-11b). Plato presents Socrates not as merely endorsing received views about the gods but arguing in a way that anticipates or prepares for the trial of Socrates. As importantly, Socrates actually explains virtue and justice with reference to universal ideas in an earlier dialogue. This is,

²⁷⁷ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 157.

dramatically speaking, the same Socrates who presents an alternative vision of how gods should be portrayed, in the *Republic*. The continuity this early work and middle period work is, however, difficult to perceive for those who assume, with interpreters like Vlastos and Guthrie, that Plato, in the earlier dialogues, is merely attempting to faithfully represent an “historical” Socrates.

Readings of the testimony of Aristotle and Xenophon have traditionally lead interpreters to regard the search for definitions, as portrayed in such dialogues as the *Euthyphro*, *Charmides* and *Laches*, as a genuine feature of the practice of the historical Socrates. However, historians of philosophy follow Aristotle in maintaining that the search for definition characteristic of the “historical” Socrates is philosophically unrelated to the search for essential Forms which Plato depicts Socrates as exploring in the *Republic* and *Phaedo*. Yet Kahn has recently provided an alternative assessment of the situation. Kahn holds that Aristotle’s assertion that the Socratic practice of definition is distinct from the Platonic notion of the essential Form derives from Aristotle’s reading of the Platonic dialogues and composers of other Socratic discourses, such as Xenophon. According to Kahn, in the Platonic dialogues, Plato makes a self-conscious choice to present the Socratic search for essential definitions *protreptic* to the middle period notion of essential Forms. As we can see above, even in one of the most apparently Socratic dialogues, the *Euthyphro*, Plato uses the supposedly middle or late period terms like *ousia*, *eidos* to signify universal essences. *Paradigm*, even here, signifies the inductive example meant to be universally defined. Interpreters like Vlastos are, therefore, mistaken to treat earlier period dialogues of definition as disconnected from the middle period views about essential Forms.

Interpreters like Vlastos have held that Aristotle’s testimony is corroborated by Xenophon, who portrays Socrates pursuing definitions without any mention of essential Forms. Combining Aristotle’s testimony with Xenophon’s presentation, we can recognize a

more “historical” or faithfully represented Socrates in certain dialogues. Plato presents Socrates as offering a notion of essential Forms or ideas, which is not attributed to Socrates by either Aristotle or Xenophon. However, Kahn maintains that Xenophon, like Aristotle, does not represent an unproblematic or reliable, independent historical source about Socrates. According to Kahn, Xenophon’s “memories of Socrates and above all his acquaintance with Socrates’ philosophical practice are in constant need of enrichment from the writings of those (like Antisthenes, Aeschines, and Plato) who had known Socrates better, had stayed with him until the end, and had remained in personal contact with the Socratic community after his death.”²⁷⁸ Although “a previous generation of scholars looked to Xenophon for a more reliable historical report of Socrates’ philosophy, a critical reader today will see him as largely reflecting (and refracting through his own personal lens) what he had read in the work of Socratics better informed than himself.”²⁷⁹ To put it bluntly, Kahn is saying that Xenophon’s writings on Plato should be regarded to a substantial extent not as a memory of the historical Socrates but as derivations or imitations of Plato’s work. The level Xenophon’s debt to Platonic writings is, according to Kahn, nowhere more evident than in the consideration of the relation between ethics and methods of definition. This is an extract from Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* which describes Socratic dialectic practice:

“And in this way, he said, men become most excellent, most happy and most capable of discussion (*dialegesthai*). He said that discussion (*dialegesthai*) took its name from the coming together to deliberate in common by distinguishing things according to kinds (*dialekontas kata gene*). Therefore one should make every effort to prepare oneself for this and to have a care for this. For from this source men become most

²⁷⁸ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 76.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29-30: “The Socratic writings of Xenophon (*Memorabilia*, *Apology*, *Symposium*, *Oeconomicus*) are too extensive to be surveyed here. And there is no reason to believe that the writings made any impact whatsoever on Plato. To the contrary, on the subject of Socrates Xenophon seems rather like a sponge, soaking up ideas, themes, and even phrases from [other Socratics and composers of *Sokratikoi logoi* like] Antisthenes, Aeschines, and Plato. This is to be explained by the fact that, whereas the other Socratics were writing in the 390s and 380s, within ten or fifteen years after Socrates’ death, Xenophon’s Socrates works were apparently composed much later, perhaps in the 360s, after the first generation of Socratic literature had made its appearance.”

excellent, the best leaders, and most skilled in discussion (*dialektikotatoi*)” (*Memorabilia*, IV.5.12).²⁸⁰

Note Xenophon’s use of the middle and late period, Platonic terminology of “distinguishing things in accordance with kinds (*dialegontas kata gene*).” Kahn ingeniously explains that Xenophon does not provide a more correct historical record of Socrates’ practice, for the following reason. Kahn maintains that it is more probable that Xenophon derives his understanding of Socratic practice of essential definition from Plato’s dialogues and, perhaps, also the dialogues of other Socratics. Xenophon’s debt to Plato is revealed by his lack of grasp of the meaning of the terminology of essential definition, universal Form and collection and division. Kahn expresses his view in his interpretation of the above passage:

“Coming as it does at the end of a long account of the advantages of *sophrosune* and self-control (*enkrateia*) and the disadvantages of *akrasia* or lack of self-control, this passage clearly understands skill in *dialegesthai* to consist in prudent deliberation concerning what is good and what is bad, so that the person who is *dialektikotatos* is the one who is most skillful in choosing what is good, avoiding what is bad. That is how Xenophon understands the notion of “sorting things according to kinds in IV. 5. 11. Thus Xenophon has managed to convert a technical notion of Platonic philosophy (dialectic as the capacity to distinguish things according to natural kinds) into a mundane conception of practical wisdom, by means of an un-Platonic etymology, taking *dialegein* to mean “sorting things out.”²⁸¹

Xenophon, even though he uses the terminology found in the Platonic dialogues, does not use the technical term *gene* to mean a Platonic natural essence, a universal class or type. This might be a vestige of the influence of Plato’s writing, but Xenophon does not develop or present this notion in the way that Plato does. Socrates makes clear even in Plato’s dialogues of definition, like the *Laches*, that he seeks to define the universal character of a named entity, like the definition of courage. Later dialogues, like the *Phaedrus* and *Sophist*, explain how this practice of general definition sorts out the different kinds or essential Forms of

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

things, deepening the treatment of universal Forms which Plato provides in dialogues like the *Republic*. However, when Xenophon uses this Platonic technical terminology, he “proceeds to illustrate Socratic training in “dialectic” by “pursuit of definitions,” but “Xenophon understands this training in purely banal terms.”²⁸² When Plato presents Socrates as sorting kinds, in his dialogues, Socrates is “sorting into kinds” or Formal essences and types.

Xenophon’s Socrates also neglects to explore the ethical paradoxes which Socrates and Euthyphro consider through techniques of argumentative refutation, in Plato’s *Euthyphro*. Xenophon’s Socrates also neglects to explain the purpose of the exchange. Given that they are using Plato’s technical terminology, relating to essences or kinds, they should be seeking to define the essence of the virtue. Xenophon’s Socrates should be explaining that they must search for a universal definition, a definition which does not admit of counter-instances.²⁸³ Even though Xenophon introduces Plato’s technical terminology in

²⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 78: “Socrates believed that those who know what each thing is (*ti hekaston eie ton onton*) are also able to explain it to others, whereas it is not surprising that those who do not have this knowledge go wrong themselves and make others go wrong (*sphallein*). For this reason in his inquiries with his associates he never ceased to ask what each thing is (*ti hekaston eie ton onton*).

Now it would be a great task to describe how he defined all things (*panta hei diorizeto*). I will say enough to make clear his mode of inquiry.

First, he investigated piety in this way.”

Tell he, he said, Euthydemus, what sort of thing (*poion ti*) you believe piety to be.

By Zeus, he answered, most excellent (*kalliston*).

Can you say what sort of person the pious man is?

I think, he said, he is someone who honors the gods.

Is it permissible to honor the gods in any way one wishes?

No, there are laws and customs (*nomoi*).

So the person who knows these laws will know how one ought to honor the gods?

I think so, he said.

Then will the one who knows how one ought to honor the gods think that he ought to do this otherwise than he knows?

Certainly not.

Does someone honor the gods otherwise than as he thinks he ought?

I think not.

So the person who knows what is lawful concerning the gods will honor the gods lawfully?

Certainly.

Therefore anyone who honors them lawfully honors them as he ought?

Of course.

But the person honoring them as one ought is pious?

Certainly.

So the pious person is rightly defined by us as the one who knows what is lawful concerning the gods?

I think so.” (*Memorabilia*, VI. 6.1-4)

dramatic situations identical to those portrayed in Plato's dialogues, Xenophon does not appear to understand what seeking essential definitions is supposed to be.

Xenophon's language nevertheless suggests that Socrates should be seeking to posit and test universal, essential definitions. However, when it comes time for Socrates and Euthyphro to propose a definition of the virtue of piety, as Kahn notes, Xenophon merely offers "an account of Socratic religion" which "is banal and conventional[.]" If "Xenophon read the *Euthyphro*, he learned nothing from its contents."²⁸⁴ The root purpose of using dialectic method, as presented in Plato's dialogues, is to define in such a way that one isolates the stable, universal essence of the virtue in a formulation which is not refuted by counter-instances. However, this fact completely eludes Xenophon, even when he employs and, as Kahn appears to suggest, thoughtlessly mimics Plato's use of terminology, as well as situations and characters which Plato and other Socratics conventionally portrayed.

The presentation of technical methods of definition and demonstration within the dialogues frequently takes the form of the definition of virtues or critical consideration of received notions about virtues. Yet this undertaking is presented by Plato as part of an idealized pursuit of ethical self-realization. My presupposition that Plato's early period or Socratic presentation of essential definitions and his middle period notion of essential Forms hinges upon Kahn's argument.

My purpose is simply to expand this view about the relation between essential definition and universal Form to encompass the later dialogues. Furthermore, throughout the Platonic dialogues, Plato uses rational techniques of definition and argumentation in the context of exploring questions of ethical significance. My argument in this section is that the dialectical method of collection and division is directly connected with the notion of Formal essences introduced in dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and *Republic*. My view that definition

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

and Formal essence are associated is strengthened by Kahn's work on the relation between the so-called early and middle period dialogues.

The characters who are portrayed seek essences, practicing modes of rational discourse. Kahn maintains that definition in these so-called earlier Socratic dialogues is *proptreptic* to the treatment of the consideration of universal Formal essence in the middle dialogues. Of course, the "only thing resembling a technical term in the" so-called Socratic "dialogues is the word *ousia* or "essence," and that is simply the nominalized form of the *ti esti* question, *what-it-is-ness* that the what-is it?"²⁸⁵ Socrates may not in these dialogues offer theoretical digressions on the nature of the essential or universal Form, but what Socrates does insist "upon is the unity and identity of such an essence for all the items rightly called by the same name or (as we would say) described by the same predicates."²⁸⁶ Plato's treatment of Formal essence in the *Phaedo* and *Republic* might be more explicit, but the ingredients of the notion of essential Form are present even in the most apparently historical Socratic dialogues.

"So Laches and Nicias, each of you tell us who is the cleverest person with whom you have associated in the matter of educating young men, and whether you acquired your knowledge of the art from another person or found it out for yourselves, and, if you learned it from someone, who were your representative teachers, and what other persons share the same art with them. My reason for saying all this is that, if you are too busy because of your civic responsibilities, we can go to these men and persuade them, either by means of gifts or favors or both, to look after both our boys and yours too so that they won't put their ancestors to shame by turning out to be worthless. But if you yourselves have been the discoverers of such an art, give us an example [παράδειγμα] of what other persons you have already made into fine men by your care when they were originally worthless" (*Lch.* 187a-b).

Socrates is in debate with noted Athenian statesmen, the generals Laches and Nicias. Socrates uses the term example or παράδειγμα to signify a particular youth who has been made into a good, excellent and courageous person under their tutelage, suggesting that the

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

existing, Athenian order and the reputed statesman do not provide suitable moral education for the youth. But again, Socrates insists that he is not so much searching for a particular instance of courage as the universal essence which makes one courageous.

An instance of this procedural directive to provide a more universally accurate definition can be drawn from the *Laches*. When Socrates asks a famous Athenian general, Laches, to provide a definition of courage, Laches maintains that “if a man is willing to remain at his post and to defend himself against the enemy without running away, then you may rest assured that he is a man of courage” (*Lch.* 190e). Plato, in the act of composition, is not recounting what Laches did say but rather would say, given the circumstances and the question as posed to him. Socrates, however, objects to this hypothesis by insisting that there are instances when it is not virtuous and courageous, but rather bold and vicious not to retreat. Thus, he presents a counterexample to the general Laches’ definition of courage.

This is an illustration of a demonstrative technique, a refutation of a requested selected example or image of what courage is. Plato has Socrates specify a need to explain courage by casting the net wider, offering a more general and inclusive definition which would account for all individual instances. In order to provide a more comprehensive answer, he casts the net wider and stipulates that if we wish to provide an “answer to the question “What is courage?”” then we “must specify something that is the same in resisting not only fear but also pleasure and pain and other difficulties, “the same in all these cases” (*Lch.* 191e10, 192b6).²⁸⁷ Laches and Socrates ultimately decide the “courage” is “knowledge” of what to hope and what to fear (*Lch.* 199b). Socrates seeks a definition which will adequately account, without exception, for all particular occurrences of the named entity, courage. Yet even an awareness of this more adequate definition, proposed in place of an inferior definition, would not simply enable a person to become practically courageous, since

²⁸⁷ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 336.

such a person would still have to act, in a given situation, in accordance with an understanding of what is to be hoped for or feared in that given situation.

Plato's composition of works, such as the *Laches*, reflects, as Kahn points out, the perspective of a fourth century writer who is aware of the disastrous Sicilian expedition in which Nicias and Laches were involved. Plato uses the dramatic occasion to explore the implications of those events not in a strictly factual manner but a probable one. The composition occupies a space between what is strictly true or false. That is, Plato portrays a conversation between these fictionalized characters based on ethical or normative concern for the likelihood of how people should behave, given the circumstances.

Socrates, with prudence, counters the general, who boldly maintains the need to hold the line in battle. The specific virtues of prudence and courage must be understood in relation to the broader category of virtue itself, which encompasses both prudence or temperance and courage or fortitude. Yet even the progressive broadening of the definition of courage ultimately leads to a recognition that courage, like the others virtues, depends on a kind of practical knowledge of what must be done in a given circumstances.

A similar thing happens in the *Charmides*, but here it is with reference to the virtue of prudence, rather than courage. Plato portrays a similar instance in the *Laches*. The temperant and quiet young Charmides first defines temperance as "a sort of quietness" which is "admirable" (*Chrm.* 159c). But there are instances where "quickness and speed" are "more admirable than slowness or quietness" (*Chrm.* 160b). Thus, prudence, like courage, must be a form of knowledge. Ultimately, the dialogue concludes, first, with the proposal that prudence must be "the science of itself and other sciences" (*Chrm.* 168b).²⁸⁸ However, this science is also "the absence of science" (*Chrm.* 167c). This final recognition, which follows

²⁸⁸ Dorion, L.A., "Plato and *Enkrateia*," *op. cit.*, p. 121.

the ultimate definition, underscores the always questioning and searching character of this endeavour.

Virtue demands not only the expression of a single, defined quality, the virtue of courage or temperance. Rather, it demands self-mastery over both spirit and passion, which requires an integrated conception of virtue itself which encompasses the lower virtues. In this work, Plato is using a specific kind of rational methodology of defining a particular instance of a virtue in a way that does not meet exceptions. But the discussion is attended by the particular occasion, circumstances and events. As a dramatic composer, Plato is showing how to use rational technique, but he is doing so in a way that reflects situations not as they actually happened but as they could have been.

A similar encounter also happens in the *Meno*. In this instance, Socrates makes use of an explicit geometric comparison to illustrate the kind of precision which can help when considering questions of virtue. Socrates expresses in the *Meno* the same need to provide a definition which will account for all the instances of the named entity, virtue. Meno thinks that there is a public, masculine virtue and a feminine, domestic virtue (*Men.* 71e-72a).²⁸⁹ Plato, here, makes Socrates allude specifically to natural scientific classification and, then, geometric definition and demonstration. To a certain extent, natural scientific and mathematical reasoning provides a standard of precision for thinking and reasoning about ethical questions and the nature of virtue. This again exhibits Socrates as a type, as a person of particularly disreputable character, involved in a Persian expedition.

Socrates explains that just as biological species of insects, like bees, can be precisely defined, the “same is true in the case of the virtues” (*Men.* 72c). Even if the “virtues are many and various, all of them have one and the same form which makes them virtues, it is

²⁸⁹ “[I]f I were asking you what is the nature of bees, and you said that they are many and of all kinds, what would you answer if I asked you: “Do you mean that they are many and varied and different from one another in so far as they are bees? Or are they no different in that regard, but in some other respect, in their beauty, for example, or their size or in some other such way?”

right to look to this when one is asked to make clear what virtue is” (*Men.* 72c-d). Once again, emphasizing the numeric plurality of virtues, Meno lists “courage” as “virtue, and moderation, wisdom and munificence and very many others” (*Men.* 74a). Socrates, however, objects that he should be searching for “one which covers all the others” (*Men.* 74a). In order to explain, technically, what he means, Socrates turns to a universal definition in mathematics, in geometry.

Plato has Socrates insist that the definition should be universal in scope. He turns to an example drawn from geometric definition in order to illustrate his point. Socrates proposes to provide an essential definition of shape. He insists that although it is possible to enumerate particular instances of the species or kinds of shapes, like circles, squares and triangles, the essential definition which he is presently seeking must encompass shape as a whole and account for all of the specific instances. Although he first posits a definition of shape as “that which always accompanies color[,]” Socrates ultimately poses a more adequate definition by proposing that “a shape is the limit of a solid [στερεοῦ πέρας σχῆμα]” (*Men.* 75c-76a). This definition is sufficiently universal to account for all of the instances. Shapes like “spheres” and “cubes” are species of the more general or general class of shape which fall under the higher class.

These more specific types of shapes are themselves definable in ways that do not admit of counter-instances. For this reason, geometric definition is the standard for others kinds of definitions, the definitions of natural and artificial entities, as well as the definitions of ethical virtue and the specific virtues. Plato offers definitions of geometric shapes like circles, squares and triangles in the course of providing geometric demonstrations, as hypotheses. Socrates, in the *Meno*, for instance, includes the definition of a square as “a figure in which all four sides are equal” (*Meno.* 82c). The “particular example” that the author of the *Seventh Letter* uses is the geometric ‘circle’. The universal definition of the

‘circle’ as a ‘figure whose extremities are at every point equidistant from the center’ enables us to grasp the essence of any particular instance of a circle-the shape of a circle appearing on a clock or wheel. After introducing his ‘circle’ example, the author explains that the “same thing is true of straight-lined as well as of circular figures” (*Epistle VII*, 342c).²⁹⁰ Even if the *Seventh Letter* is not authentic, this captures the principle which is expressed in the *Meno*. Geometric definitions of figures like circles and the definition of shape more generally provide a model for the standard of universality which Socrates seeks in his attempt to provide ethical definitions for the traditional virtues.

An ethical virtue is properly defined when the relation of all particular instances of the virtue fall under the description or definition. Socrates, in the *Meno*, uses the method of geometric demonstration in order to illustrate how he wants to treat the question about virtue (82a-87c). Thus, dialectic method is by no means limited to the practice of proposing definitions; it is necessary that an adequate universal definition survive demonstrative refutation.

As in geometry, hypotheses are defended through deductive argument. Such geometric hypotheses are open to refutation, other kinds of hypotheses or general statements made about natural and artificial entities, as well as hypotheses about virtue and ethical life, are subject to argumentative refutation. If a proposed hypothesis, in this case, a definition, conflicts with another known truth, it is to be rejected as inadequate. From the earliest dialogues, Plato presents definition and refutation as associated techniques. Yet the situations and incidents are also important for grasping the specific application of rational approaches to ethical questions.

“Socrates: I shall certainly not be lacking in eagerness to tell you such

²⁹⁰ “There is something called a circle, and its name is the very word we have just used. Second, there is its definition (λόγος), composed of nouns and verbs with the predicate. The figure whose extremities are everywhere equally distant from its center” is the definition of precisely that to which the names “round,” “circumference,” and “circle” apply. Third is what we draw or rub out, what is turned or destroyed; but the circle itself to which they all refer remains unaffected, because it is different from them” (*Seventh Letter*, 342b).

things, both for your sake and my own, but I may not be able to tell you many. Come now, you too try to fulfill your promise to tell me the nature of virtue as a whole and stop making many out of one, as jokers say whenever someone breaks something; but allow virtue to remain whole and sound, and tell me what it is, for I have given you examples [παραδείγματα]” (*Men.* 77a-b).

The term *paradeigma* is a reference to the mathematical example which he had earlier used. Socrates specifies that ethical definitions of virtue must have the level of universality which compares to that in his geometric example of shape. Meno, then, provides a universal definition which purportedly draws from poetic precedent. However, he does so in a way which comes nearer to Plato’s requirement for universality.

“Meno: I think, Socrates, that virtue is, as the poet says, “to find joy in beautiful things and to have power.” So I say that virtue is to desire beautiful things and have the power to acquire them” (*Men.* 77b).

Socrates scrutinizes his answer.

“Socrates: Do you mean that the man who desires beautiful things desires good things?—Most certainly” (*Men.* 77b-c).

To simply garner goods or beautiful things is no more virtue than not to provide them. However, whatever is done with justice is virtue. Whatever is done without justice is base.

“Socrates: Then to provide these goods would not be virtue any more than not to provide them but whatever is done with justice will be virtue, and what is done without anything of the kind is wickedness” (*Men.* 79a).

Socrates further explains the principle he wishes to illustrate. He has given Meno a general example of figure as a whole or higher kind, in relation to more specific shapes like circles. In similar manner virtue bears a relation to parts like justice and temperance. Just as Socrates did not seek the definition of a particular shape, like the shape of a circle, but shape itself, so he here is seeking the definition not of a particular virtue, like courage or prudence, but virtue itself. Paradigm inductive example or model to be universally defined, the requested definition of the name shape, used as a model to describe how Socrates wanted the word virtue to be defined.

“Socrates: We said a little while ago that each of these things was a part of virtue [μόριον ἀρετῆς], namely, justice and moderation and all such things [τὴν δικαιοσύνην καὶ σωφροσύνην καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα]?-Yes?”

“Socrates: Then you are playing me, Meno.-How so Socrates?”

“Because I begged you just now not to break up or fragment virtue, and I gave examples [παραδείγματα] of how you should answer. You paid no attention, but you tell me that virtue is to be able to secure good things with justice, and this, you say, is a part of virtue” (*Men.* 79a-b).

This is one of the purposes of practicing *elenchic* refutation. Yet the illustration which Socrates uses goes beyond mere abstract methodology. Socrates, having chastised Meno for being unable to grasp the fine geometric distinctions he has been showing him, shows that even a young slave boy has sufficient self-mastery to grasp the geometric principles, the lesson which has eluded Meno. With Alcibiades, Socrates has converted a political metaphor into an interior, psychological principle of self-mastery. Socrates action seems designed to show the haughty Meno just how misguided he is. He is thoughtless in characterizing virtue as a passion or “desire” to have the power simply to acquire externally good things [τὸν τῶν καλῶν ἐπιθυμοῦντα ἀγαθῶν ἐπιθυμητὴν]” (*Men.* 77b). The capacity to cultivate these techniques of reason is meant to engender a kind of self-command or self-control, which is virtue itself.

Gonzalez, in undertaking this critique, specifically challenges the “foundationalist” and “deductive” account of this hypothetical method, claims that it finds little or “no support in the text.”²⁹¹ He claims that nowhere “does Socrates say that *episteme* consists of mutually explaining and supporting propositions.”²⁹² At the same time, if dialectic is a form of ethical dialogue which may encompass even the use of rational technique, based on geometric or arithmetic modes of demonstration or calculation, there is no reason necessarily to exclude the use of deductive methods from this practice of ethical exchange.

²⁹¹ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 230.

²⁹² Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 230.

It is possible, indeed, to interpret the hypothetical method as an anticipation of the use of deductive technique. As Kahn notes, the “*Phaedo* does not refer to dialectic as such” but Socrates does speak about “the art of argument [*he peri tous logous techne*]” or “art” which is sometimes confounded “with antilogic arguments” which “aim” merely “to contradict (*antilogikoi logoi*)” (*Phd.* 90b).²⁹³ Socrates comes to offer “an account of his own method of argument (*logoi*) at 99E ff.” and the “concept of *hypothesis* plays a central role.”²⁹⁴ One proposes a hypothesis and then determines if this statement or hypothesis conflicts with other known beliefs.

Plato comes close to making the important logical distinction between the validity of a demonstration and the soundness of the major and minor premise, in a syllogistic argument. He “develops in a new way the distinction first drawn in the *Meno* between...what follows from the hypothesis and whether the hypothesis is true.”²⁹⁵ Socrates instructs, in the *Meno*, that it is important first to “examine what results from the hypothesis (*ta ap’ ekeines hormethenta*) to see whether they accord with one another or not (*ei allelois sumphonei e diaphonei*, 101D5).”²⁹⁶ However, the “justification of the hypothesis itself is another matter.”²⁹⁷

Plato shows, through the speech and action of these characters, that mixing up the premises with the conclusions is a type of logical fallacy. Socrates also insists that it is only “the lovers of antilogic (*hoi antilogikoi*)” who “will mix up the discussion of the starting-point (*arche*) with the discussion of what results from it (*ta horomena*).”²⁹⁸ If, however, “you are a philosopher who wants to discover truth (*ta onta*), you must keep the distinction

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

clear” (*Phd.* 101e).²⁹⁹ This indicates not only an implicit awareness, on the part of Plato, as author composing the dialogues, of the logical fallacy of *petitio principii*; it also shows an implicit awareness of the notion of a deductive proof. Again, Socrates does not call this hypothetical procedure dialectic in the *Phaedo*. However, he does speak about the hypothetical method in the context of his explanation of dialectic as ethical dialogue in Book VI of the *Republic*. Kahn stresses the importance of the cultivation of logical method in the central books of the *Republic*.

“This new technical sense of *dialektike*, as meaning roughly “(the art of philosophical analysis and explanation by means of discussion,” is also required for four more instances of the feminine form in the pages that follow. In two cases (and in two cases only) this form stands alone as a grammatical substantive: “we have placed dialectic (*he dialektike*) as a copingstone over the sciences (534E7); and mathematical science must be studied as preliminary to *dialektike*” (*Rep.* VI, 536d6).³⁰⁰

Plato introduces dialectic as a kind of science which is concerned with the examination of speech. Philosophy is this science, and so even in the *Republic*, there is a kind of implicit overlap with the domain of rhetoric and poetic composition.

“This, then, is the kind [τὸ εἶδος] of thing that, on the one hand, I said is intelligible, and, on the other hand, is such that the soul is forced to use hypotheses in the investigation of it, not travelling up to a first principle, since it cannot reach beyond its hypotheses, but using as images [εἰκόσι δὲ χρωμένην αὐτοῖς] those very things of which images were made in the section below, and which, by comparison to their images, were thought to be clear and to be valued as such” (*Rep.* 511a-b).

Plato’s language, in these central sections of the *Republic*, describing dialectic method, is surprisingly vague. He combines a variety of different notions about using hypotheses and images. However, he does not offer a systematic exposition of what he actually means. He simply says that dialectic is the best thing available in completing educational formation.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

“I understand, if not yet adequately (for in my opinion you’re speaking of an enormous task), that you want to distinguish the intelligible part of that which is, the part studied by the science of dialectic [τὸ ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι ἐπιστήμης τοῦ ὄντος τε καὶ νοητοῦ], as clearer than the part studied by the so-called sciences, for which their hypotheses are first principles. And although those who study the objects of these sciences are forced to do so by means of thought rather than sense perception, still, because they do not go back to a genuine first principle, but proceed from hypotheses, you don’t think that they understand them, even though, given such principle, they are intelligible. And you seem to me to call the state of the geometers thought but not understanding, thought being intermediate between opinion and understanding” (*Rep.* 511c-d).

This method of logical inquiry enables us to distinguish between truth and falsity and lead us to clarity in thought. However, Plato stresses the normative and ethical aspect of this use of logical technique over other considerations.

“[D]ialectic is the only inquiry that travels this road, doing away with hypotheses and proceeding to the first principle itself, so as to be secure. And when the eye of the soul is buried in a sort of barbaric bog, dialectic gently pulls it out and leads it upwards, using the crafts we described to help it and cooperate with it in turning the soul around. From the force of habit, we’ve often called these crafts sciences or kinds of knowledge (ὑπὸ τῶν τεχνῶν), but we need another name, clearer than opinion, darker than knowledge. We call them thought somewhere before. But I presume that we won’t dispute about a name when we have so many more important matters to investigate” (*Rep.* 533c-e).

The use of inductive and deductive technique is fundamental to the proper apprehension of speech. However, this has such a significant importance, because it ultimately leads to the apprehension of the ethical good.

“Then the same applies to the good [περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ]. Unless someone can distinguish in an account the form of the good from everything else, can survive all refutation, as if in battle, striving to judge things not in accordance with opinion but in accordance with being, and can come through all this with his account still intact, you’ll say that he doesn’t know the good itself or any other good [τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέαν]. And if he gets hold of some image of it, you’ll say that it’s through opinion, not knowledge, for he is dreaming and asleep throughout his present life, and, before he wakes up here, he will arrive in Hades and go to sleep forever” (*Rep.* 534b-c).

Plato portrays Socrates here insisting that there is the need “to give and receive an account [λόγον αὐτῷ τε καὶ ἄλλῳ διδόναι]” in a back and forth exchange (*Rep.* 534b). One should come to be able to practically differentiate the good from all, particular good things (*Rep.* 534c). This higher method of using speech is Socrates compares to teach younger children grammatical (γραμμαίας) exercises (*Rep.* 534d). Elenchic refutation or the use of collection and division to define essences, specific techniques meant to provide accurate characterizations of individual entities, is secondary to this ultimately ethical purpose.

Plato’s choice to portray characters in dramatic dialogues engaging in this practice is a deliberate artistic decision. Even in the act of literary composition itself, Plato, as author, enacts the process of dialogue. Thinking, as Plato has Socrates say in *Theaetetus*, is a dialogue of the soul with itself. Writing dialogues or dramas is simply a physical enactment of this interior thought process.

This process takes a myriad of different forms, depending on the situation, context and needs of the speakers at play. Sometimes this involves the use of images and at other times this involves the use of methods of more conventional modes of rational discourse. According to Gonzalez, this practice does not culminate or terminate, as some interpreters think, in the use of logical techniques alone, apart from any appeal to forms of reasoning which are not techniques of propositional logic. Gonzalez again critiques Robinson’s view that the *Phaedo*’s description of the method of hypothesis represents a “completely self-contained, vacuum tight logical system.”³⁰¹ Rather, dialectic is an open practice of dialogue which is presented in works which are themselves literary compositions.

Gonzalez maintains that this passage is not so much a “testing of a hypothesis to see if inconsistent conclusions can be deduced from it[,]”³⁰² but rather his critique also extends to those who regard the method of collection and division as an important dialectical technique.

³⁰¹ Gonzalez, F., *Dialectic and Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 196.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

Gonzalez, in associated passages, critiques the view of Vlastos, who argues that the “*definition or account of the essence of a form*” is now the cause which Plato is seeking, on similar practical grounds.³⁰³ However, this does not preclude the possibility that in certain dramatic situations this method of division might not help with ethics. The turn to geometry and arithmetic can also be ethical. Indeed, in the *Meno*, the attention Socrates gives to the slave boy, instead of the brash aristocrat Meno, constitutes precisely such an instance where geometry and arithmetic show how virtue, conscientiousness, temperance and restraint should be practiced. In my view, this exposition of division protreptically underlies division and demonstration. The suggestion of Gonzalez that dialectic brings much broader potentialities than that afforded by the use of geometric and arithmetic based techniques of reasoning alone is, nevertheless, justified.

The suggestion of Gonzalez that dialectic brings much broader potentialities than that afforded by the use of geometric and arithmetic based techniques of reasoning alone is justified. As Socrates says, since we do not have a first best method for investigating the highest things, we are left with merely a “second best” method, which is simply using discourse or speech.³⁰⁴ Plato portrays Socrates, in the *Phaedo*, making plain his desire to seek the true cause (αἴτιος). Natural science (ἱστορίαν περὶ φύσεως), inquiry into nature, the examination of the motions of the motions of celestial bodies or the structure of terrestrial organisms, is only complete when we recognize the foundation of nature in “rational purpose (νοῦς)” (*Phd.* 96a). Plato thinks that it is a second best way (δεύτερος πλοῦς) to examine good directly. This second best way is a result of our lack of clear grasp of the principles which govern the courses of the world. Sometimes we need not only words but images in words to provide the explanations of ethical meaning which we seek to make manifest.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ Gonzalez, F., *Dialogue and Dialectic*, op. cit., p. 203.

In his discussion of rational accounts and dialectic, Plato has Socrates in the *Phaedo* speak not only of the use of logic but also the use of other modes of reasoned expression. These alternative modes of reasoning include the appeal to images or visible models. According to Socrates, we may use “rational accounts or speech (ἐν λόγοις),” in order to treat “the good in image rather than act in image rather than in deed [ἐν εἰκόσι μάλλον σποπεῖν ἢ τὸν ἐν ἔργοις]” (*Phd.* 100a). It is impossible to communicate the nature of the good directly. Therefore, we must rely upon this second best way (δεύτερος πλοῦς), using images in this manner (εἰκάζω τρόπον τινά), such as comparisons or analogies, to illuminate the nature of the good (*Phd.* 99e). That dialectic method makes use of image implies that it bears some relation to the use of likeness and images we find in others kinds of speakers. However, these images are not good in themselves, but they are meant to point to a higher, ethical and spiritual reality. No doubt Plato places an important emphasis, as Gonzalez maintains, on living dialogue, discourse and exchange. Plato makes his character, Socrates, speak these words, but they also occur in a literary text, as contributions to a genre which represents his life discourse or speech. This suggests that Plato’s literary works themselves are at some level philosophical. Like the practice of living dialogue, his dialogues, themselves, represent a second best way of treating the Good.

Examples, in dialectical exchange, do not merely apply to instances of ethical virtue. Plato has Socrates use the term ‘example’ when pointing to an important written inscription. This example illustrates the ethical need to search for self-knowing and, ultimately, self-control. This example, in the disputed dialogue, is meant to contrast outward appearance with inward self-knowing.

“Socrates: Now, how can we get the cleverest knowledge of our soul? If we knew that, we’d probably know ourselves as well . . . By the gods-that admirable Delphic inscription we just mentioned-didn’t we understand it?”

“Alcibiades: What’s the point of bringing that up again, Socrates?”

“Socrates: I’ll tell you what I suspect that inscription means, and what advice it’s giving us. There may not be many examples of it [οὐδὲ πολλὰ τοῦ εἶναι παράδειγμα αὐτοῦ], except in the case of sight.”

“Alcibiades: What do you mean by that?”

“Socrates: You think about it, too. If the inscription took our eyes to be men and advised them, “See thyself,” how would we understand such advice? Shouldn’t the eye be looking at something in which it could see itself?” (*Alc.* 132d)

Plato portrays Socrates as telling Alcibiades that we need not so much cultivate outward sight but inward sight. This reflects the deep interiorization of ethical virtue which Plato’s idealized educational itinerary, described in the central books of the *Republic*, entails.

“Socrates: Then if the soul, Alcibiades, is to know itself, it must look at a soul, and especially at that region in which what makes a soul good, wisdom, occurs, and at everything else similar to it.”

“Alcibiades: I agree with you, Socrates.”

“Socrates: Can we say that there is anything about the soul which is more divine than that where knowing and understanding take place?”

“Alcibiades: No, we can’t.”

“Socrates: Then that region in it resembles the divine, and someone who looked at that and grasped everything divine-vision and understanding-would have the best grasp of himself as well.”

“Alcibiades: So it seems.”

“Socrates: But we agreed that knowing oneself was the same as being self-controlled.”

“Certainly” (*Alc. I* 133b-c).

Plato is writing not in the fifth century but in the fourth century. He is making plausible inferences about situations he could not possibly have witnessed. And yet this process of mimetic identification and creation with the people Plato is portraying, offers Plato the occasion to consider theoretical questions about virtue and the search for self-knowledge. The act of composing the dialogues is part of the process of examination and exploration. This very term for narrative also means reasoned discussion.

The author, Plato, engages in a constructive process of inquiry, through the act of composition; the philosopher, Socrates, engages in a dialogue with the young, future statesman. Yet he encourages Alcibiades to look not outward but inward. He asks Alcibiades to rule over himself rather than others. In the plausible scenario which Plato

composes, Socrates assesses the character of the youth. As he weighs the potentially corrupting influence of the political life to which Pericles has recommended Alcibiades, he encourages a need for a deeper and more interior form of self-mastery and self-control. This rhetorical and probable dimension underlies not only Plato's literary art but even his logical exploration.

2.1.2 *Dialectic and Rhetorical Composition*

Not only the recognition of the chiefly ethical import of dialectic, but the dramatic context of the dialogues allows us to better appreciate the use of dialectical techniques. These dialectical techniques, as used by different characters, bear a close association with one another. In this section, by establishing an account of the relation which paradigm bears to logical methods of definition and argumentation, my effort is to yield not only a more coherent picture of dialectical techniques based on geometric and arithmetic technique, but the relation such technique bears to rhetoric.

The practice of logical methods of demonstration and definition Plato portrays as coextensive with the philosophical pursuit of wisdom and virtue: "Plato" through his dialogues "attempts to dissociate dialectic (the genuine art of argumentation) from sophistry and rhetoric" even though both are "to be pursued within the art of *logos*" (*Phd.* 89d-91c; *Sph.* 253b-c).³⁰⁵ The composition of a sentence involves the joining of words. Even the use of the same term, *logoi*, to describe the activity shared by both sophists and philosophers suggests an essential relation between the two practices.

Asmis notes that the technical term 'rhetoric' (*rhetorike*) was not common even in the early fourth century BCE and shows no appearance in the extant literature of the fifth century BCE.³⁰⁶ The term rhetor (ῥήτωρ) is associated, etymologically, with ῥέω, the verb signifying speech or utterance. Asmis suggests that "the sophists and rhetoricians seem to

³⁰⁵ Notomi, N., "Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*, in *Plato and the Poets*," *op. cit.*, p. 306.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

have designated their own specialty as ‘the art of speeches’ (*logon techne*).³⁰⁷ The historical Gorgias, not Plato’s character, represented in the *Gorgias*, uses the term rhetoric in the *Encomium of Helen*. But Plato, as composer of dialogues, portrays characters like Socrates, Gorgias and Protagoras engaging in discursive exchange. The dramatic projection is a means of exploring the relation between rhetoric and dialectic, as much as to provide a critique of rhetoric or mere persuasion when unaccompanied by truth.

The historical record about the works of sophists, like Protagoras and Gorgias, is far less complete than the characterization of these sophists which we find in Plato. Recently, however, scholars have shown a need for more critical scrutiny in evaluating Plato’s creative appropriation of these sources. As we saw in the first section, Plato does much to theorize the practice of poetry and artistic representation. In similar, Plato does much to theorize the practice of rhetorical presentation and composition. Schiappa notes that there is “no record of Protagoras using the word [*rhetorike*], even in the Platonic dialogue named after him.”³⁰⁸ Schiappa recognizes that instances of the word outside Plato, in texts which antecede Plato, are “surprisingly rare.”³⁰⁹ Asmis also notes that this philosophical consideration of this “new use of language” runs parallel with the “sophists” who also “developed theories of language.”³¹⁰ This record of sophistic theories of language can be found in the extant text of Gorgias.

Plato’s composition of scenarios which feature Socrates and Gorgias, as well as Protagoras, rework tropes found in sources which would have been familiar to Plato. Plato does not represent their teaching or that of Socrates in the manner of a dispassionate observer. He, instead, actively reshapes and dramatizes their thought in a way that suits his own

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ Schiappa, E., *Protagoras and Logos: A Study of Greek Rhetoric*, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1999, p. 42. For more on this see Schiappa, E., “Did Plato Coin *Rhetorike*?” *American Journal of Philology*, 111, 1990, p. 457-70. See, also, Cassin, B., *L’effet sophistique*, Paris, Gallimard, 1995.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

³¹⁰ Asmis, E., “Plato on Poetic Creativity,” in Kraut, R. ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 340.

purpose. We are, indeed, as Asmis recognizes, “fortunate that one of the few extant writings of the sophists contains a brief theory of language-the first in the Western tradition.” In Gorgias’ “*Encomium of Helen*” Gorgias “personifies language, *logos*, as a “great potentate, who with the tiniest and least visible body achieves the most divine works” (DK. 82, B11, 8). The “works” created by language are, remarkably, its effect on others.” When *logos* is unaccompanied by persuasion, it “shapes the soul as it wishes.” Just as drugs can drive various humours from the body and end either illness or life, so language can set up various emotions in the soul and “drug and bewitch with an evil persuasion” (DK. 82 B11, 13-14). For this reason, it is not surprising to see Plato, as author, portraying Socrates engaging in discussion with other characters, like Protagoras and Gorgias, who practice rhetoric. He uses precisely the same kind of terminology in dialogues like the *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Phaedrus* and *Sophist* to compare the relation between the speech of the sophist and that of the philosopher, reworking this language for his own, philosophical purposes. Plato might have Socrates criticize particular rhetorical practitioners, but this only draws more attention to how Socrates’ use of reasoning and the practice of rhetoric are associated with each other. It also draws attention to how Plato is dependent upon sources related not only to Socrates but sources like Gorgias’ *Encomium of Helen*.

Plato presents Socrates as critical of the mere practice of rhetoric in the *Gorgias*. Plato’s Socrates explains, in discussion with Gorgias, that he is “referring to the ability to persuade by speeches judges in a law court, councillors in a council meeting, and assemblymen in an assembly [ἐν δικαστηρίῳ δικαστὰς καὶ ἐν βουλευτηρίῳ βουλευτὰς καὶ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐκκλησιαστὰς] or other political gatherings [πολιτικὸς σύλλογος] that might have taken place” (*Gorg.* 452e). Socrates says, ironically, that this extraordinary art and “ability” would give Gorgias the power over the mind would enable him to make those who merely tend body, “the doctor [τὸν ἰατρόν]” or “the physical trainer [παιδοτρίβην]” of his

subordinates (*Gorg.* 452e). Even the “financial expert” will “turn out to be making more money for somebody else instead of himself” while Gorgias has “the ability to speak and to persuade the crowds [τῷ δυναμένῳ λέγειν καὶ πείθειν τὰ πλήθη]” (*Gorg.* 452e).

Socrates, at this point in the discussion in the *Gorgias*, challenges Gorgias on this point. He says that Gorgias has “come closest to making clear what craft [τέχνην]” he takes “oratory [τὴν ῥητορικὴν] to be” (*Gorg.* 453a). Socrates accepts that Gorgias says “that oratory is a producer of persuasion [πειθοῦς δημιουργός ἐστιν ἡ ῥητορικὴ]” (*Gorg.* 453a). But Socrates asks if there is “anything else oratory can do besides instilling persuasion [πειθῶ] in the souls of an audience [τοῖς ἀκούουσιν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ποιεῖν]” (*Gorg.* 453a). In contrast, Socrates describes himself as “one of those people who in a discussion with someone else really want to have knowledge of the subject the discussion’s about” (*Gorg.* 453b).³¹¹ He “consider[s]” Gorgias “one of them too” (*Gorg.* 453b). The critique of persuasion and belief underlies the reply which Socrates and the Visitor share.

Plato insists upon the appropriate cultivation of logical technique in the use of speech. Since the dramatic dialogues portray the relation which practitioners of rhetoric bear with Socrates as a character, we might appreciate better the actual, application of these techniques in Plato’s different dramatic dialogues. This approach would enable us to interpret the conclusions of developmental scholars, like Richard Robinson, with greater literary sophistication. Robinson overemphasizes the developmental chronology when he claims that “we hear no more of the hypothetical method after the *Parmenides*[:]”³¹² Robinson says that Plato turns with “renewed enthusiasm of the *Phaedrus* and *Sophist* is based on the new method of ‘division’.”³¹³ Yet this perception is as much an effect of Plato’s dramatic presentation as developmental chronology, since Plato does, from a dramatic point of view,

³¹¹ ἄκουσον δὴ, ὦ Γοργία. ἐγὼ γὰρ εὖ ἴσθ’ ὅτι, ὡς ἐμαυτὸν πείθω, εἴπερ τις ἄλλος ἄλλῳ διαλέγεται βουλόμενος εἰδέναι αὐτὸ τοῦτο περὶ ὅτου ὁ λόγος ἐστίν, καὶ ἐμὲ εἶναι τούτων ἕνα: ἀξιῶ δὲ καὶ σέ.

³¹² *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³¹³ *Ibid.*.

treat division in conjunction with refutation. In the early, middle and late dialogues, when he refutes definitions, he does so with the aim of establishing whether they have a greater or lesser degree of generality. The word paradigm or visible model has a dual sense of individual example but also higher, general kind. Through the paradigm, we are able to see the universal and even the ethically ideal.

The *Parmenides* is, from a dramatic point of view, the earliest dialogue about Socrates. In this dialogue, he introduces the notion of Forms, but he also explores the method of hypothesis. The *Phaedo* is the last dialogue in which the character Socrates appears. In this work, Socrates, indeed, mentions the method of hypothesis, along with the Forms. Thus, from a dramatic point of view neither the method of hypothesis nor the Forms have not been abandoned. Forms, even when presented in a naïve way, always seem to signify something like the contemporary, logical, ‘universal class’. Plato deliberately, in a protreptic fashion, chooses not to explain these more sophisticated notions, like genus and species, with technicality, in earlier work. This is both a literary and rhetorical choice.

Rhetorical features are present in even the most logical dialogues, but the *Phaedrus* is the work where the importance of rhetorical and literary composition is most explicitly discussed. Paradigm is connected not only to logic but to rhetoric and literary composition. Here, in the context of a discussion of rhetoric and oratorical composition, Plato invokes the notion of an example or paradigm. The lack of clarity which Lysias shows in his speech is a result of an inattention to logic, the initial presupposition as well as the definition.

“Socrates: So, shall we look for instances of what we called artful and artless in the speech of Lysias you carried here and in our speech?”

“Phaedrus: That’s the best thing to do-because, as it is, we are talking quite abstractly, without enough examples [παραδείγματα].”

“Socrates: In fact, by some chance the two speeches do, as it seems, contain an example of the way in which someone who knows the truth can toy with his audience and mislead them. For my part, Phaedrus, I hold the local gods responsible for this-also, perhaps, the messengers of the Muses who are singing over our heads may have

inspired me with this gift: certainly I don't possess any art of speaking"
(*Phdr.* 262c-d).

Usually, Plato depicts Socrates scrutinizing spoken statements, which may derive from a written, poetic tradition. However, here, Socrates actually invites Phaedrus to read the beginning of the speech in order to test and scrutinize the initial written presupposition of what Lysias has said in the speech. The written example is taken as the paradigm, that is to say, it is the inductive, definable example of "erotic" love, which Socrates here wishes to test, just as he has tested the definitions of the traditional Athenian virtues of prudence and courage. Socrates again Phaedrus to read the beginning of Lysias' speech and Phaedrus again repeats that one who is not in love has a better life than one who is in love, because a person who is in love with another person will regret having done favors for the lover (*Phdr.* 262e-263a; *Phdr.* 263b-c).

Socrates scrutinizes and criticizes this initial presupposition of Lysias' speech on erotic love. This is one of the important aspects of the hypothetical method, which demands that we heed our initial presuppositions, in the initial formulation, in an effort to demonstrate a conclusion, establishing a close connection between logic and what we call rhetoric or the composition of speeches. The inductive technique of division, like deduction, is meant to clarify the terms of expressed at the outset of the argument or speech in a written discourse. It improves the rhetorical ability of the speaker.

"Socrates: It follows that whoever wants to acquire the art of rhetoric must first make a systematic division and grasp the particular character of each of these two kinds of thing, both the kind where most people wander in different directions and the kind where they do not."

"Socrates: Second, I think, he must not be mistaken about his subject; he must have a sharp eye for the class to which whatever he is about to discuss belongs" (*Phdr.* 263b-c).

Socrates encourages Phaedrus to compose a written speech upon the basis of a better or more adequate characterization of the nature of love, which will capture the universal

essence of romantic attachment. When Phaedrus volunteers a line of a love song, as an answer, Socrates puts aside this definition as an inadequate example:

“Socrates: Well, then, if that upsets you, let’s leave that speech aside—even though I think it has plenty of very useful examples [παράδειγματα], provided one tries to emulate [μιμεῖσθαι] them as little as possible—and turn to others. I think it is important for students of speechmaking to pay attention to one of these features” (*Phdr.* 264c).³¹⁴

The term paradigm is specifically applied to a spoken poem which Socrates asks Phaedrus not to imitate. It is a bad paradigm in the sense of being a badly written ethical model to follow, a lyrical snippet from a paltry love song. Socrates had presented his own scientific speech on love, guided by the rational intelligence afforded to him by his awareness of the lofty and divine method of collection and division. But he has also asked Phaedrus to imitate his paradigm and not another poet’s paradigm.

This very method, furthermore, also shows that love is a form of madness and inspiration.

“Phaedrus: What do you mean?”

“Socrates: They were in a way opposite to one another. One claimed that one should give one’s favors to the lover; the other, to the non-lover.”

“Socrates: I thought you were going to say “madly,” which would have been truth, and also just what I was looking for: We did say, didn’t we, that love is a kind of madness” (*Phdr.* 265a).

This is where Socrates makes the division, which is meant to correct Lysias’ faulty presupposition. Although certain types of passionate feeling and unconscious sentiment are merely human pathologies, which are evil in the sense that Lysias says love can be, there are forms of inspiration and erotic experience which are not merely human but divine.

³¹⁴ This application of an instance of a paradigm or example to rhetorical presentation and composition is not unique. A similar instance of the use of paradigm in the context of oratorical recitation takes place in the *Euthydemus*. Plato has Socrates give an instance of a kind of composition that one should follow:

“When I heard this I was delighted and said, “There, Dionysodorus and Euthydemus, is my example [παράδειγμα] of what I want a [*protreptic* or *hortatory*] argument (τῶν προτρεπτικῶν λόγων) to be, though amateurish, perhaps, and expressed at length and with some difficulty. Now let either of you who wishes give us the same in a professional manner” (*Euthy.* 282d5).

“Socrates: And that there are two kinds of madness, one produced by human illness, the other by divinely inspired release from normally accepted behavior” (*Phdr.* 265b).

In any case, the use of the technique of collection and division, in the *Phaedrus*, is introduced to explain not only the appropriate principles for composing a speech but a formal appreciation of the emotional qualities which the speaker evokes in his listener. It is used to reveal ethical and emotional distinctions which better allow us to form speeches or discourses, and to engage in rhetorical and even, perhaps, narrative exposition and exploration.

Notomi maintains that the “broad appellation” of the art of speech “covers not only rhetoric (namely performed in court, assembly or festival) but also philosophical argumentation later called logic.”³¹⁵ In this “theory Plato expounds[,]” logic and rhetoric are associated; an “art of rhetoric is conceivable for use in advancing the truth,” but the condition is that dialectic should be “be known to the orator first” (260d3 *ff.*).³¹⁶ For Plato, this logical dimension is indispensable, as he insists that the “perfect orator,” in “a phrase which was to echo through the later rhetorical schools, must have a natural ability improved by knowledge and practice (269d2 *ff.*) and must study philosophy, whence he will derive loftiness of mind and effectiveness (269e4 *ff.*).”³¹⁷ However, the “rhetoric which this perfect orator will practice will have a strong logical element.”³¹⁸ Yet Socrates declares that he and Phaedrus should feel sorry for “honey-tongued” orators, like “Pericles” and perhaps Aspasia as well, to whom Plato fictively ascribes a fictional composition, an imagined Funeral Oration (*Phdr.* 269a-c; *Mnx.* 236b1-3).³¹⁹ As we have seen above, Plato portrays Socrates using collection and division to correct an inferior speech; this enables Plato, as the author composing this

³¹⁵ Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic X* and the *Sophist*, in *Plato and the Poets*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 306.

³¹⁶ Kennedy, G., *The Art of Persuasion in Ancient Greece*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ Plato’s view, in the *Phaedrus*, seems to be closer to Aristotle’s view that rhetoric is the antistrophe or counterpart to dialectic (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1354a).

dialogue, to present a new and, perhaps, better vision of love than the one portrayed in the previous speech. Thus, these rational techniques underlie a capacity to provide a better form of rhetoric or oratory (*Phdr.* 269a-c).³²⁰

Plato, as author, often dramatizes the contrast between his character Socrates and other characters. Plato may have Socrates criticize individual sophists, like Gorgias and Protagoras, in certain places. However, in the *Phaedrus*, Plato actually makes Socrates himself offer philosophical theorization about rhetorical expression as well literary composition. Plato suggests that an awareness of underlying philosophical principles actually improves composition, making speeches truly beautiful. Although, by no means can simple persuasion be thought to amount to dialectic itself, the ability to adapt theoretical discourse into the framework of practical or ethical life, as Jane Curran notes, is not without some merit (*Phdr.* 267d-271a).³²¹ Before further exploring the enactment of the ethical use of divisions, I will exposit the basic methodological principles underlying division.

The use of images and mythic recitation can have a much more potent psychological influence than the mere use of demonstrative techniques. At the same time, in certain situations, more conventional, rational techniques, the use of induction and deduction might work.

³²⁰ Plato's view, in the *Phaedrus*, seems to be closer to Aristotle's view that rhetoric is the antistrophe or counterpart to dialectic (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1354a). "Socrates: And what if the "honey-tongued Adrastus" (or perhaps Pericles) were to hear of all the marvellous techniques we just discussed-Speaking Concisely or Speaking in Images and all the rest we listed and proposed to examine under the light? Would he not be angry or rude, as you and I were, with those who write of those techniques and teach them as if they are rhetoric itself, and say something coarse to them Wouldn't he-being wiser than they are-reproach us as well and say, "Phaedrus and Socrates, you should not be angry with these people-you should be sorry for them. The reason they cannot define rhetoric is that they are ignorant of dialectic. It is their ignorance that makes them think they have discovered what rhetoric is when they have mastered only what it is necessary to learn as preliminaries. So they teach these preliminaries and imagine their pupils have received a full course in rhetoric, thinking the task of using each of them persuasively and putting them together into a whole speech is a minor matter, to be worked out by the pupils from their own resources"?"

³²¹ Curran, J., "The Rhetorical Technique of Plato's *Phaedrus*," in *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 19, 1986, p. 69: "This technique of Plato's, which combines theory and practice, lies at the heart of the *Phaedrus*. Its recognition, however, has not been uncontested among commentators. De Vries considers it obvious, requiring no explanation or in-depth analysis: "With a conscious artist like Plato, the enunciation of the artistic principle of course implies that he supposed that the dialogue in which the principle was formulated showed the required unity." This statement ignores the difference between the dialogue form, involving two individuals both contributing to a discussion, and the speech form, in which only one person is speaking."

“Socrates: Since the nature of speech is in fact to direct the soul (ἐπειδὴ λόγου δύναμις τυγχάνει ψυχαγωγία οὔσα), whoever intends to be a rhetorician must know how many kinds of soul there are [ψυχῇ ὅσα εἶδη ἔχει]. Their number is so-and-so many; each is such-and-such a sort [καὶ τοῖα καὶ τοῖα]; hence some people have such-and-such a character and others have such-and-such. Those distinctions established, there are, in turn, so-and-so many kinds of speech, each of such-and-such sort. People of such and such sort in connection with such-and-such issue for this particular reason, while people of such-and-such another sort are difficult to persuade for those particular reasons” (*Phdr.* 271d).

This use of the persuasion and likelihood actually depends upon a dialectical or scientific awareness of the character of the human soul and different psychologies, the way different people respond in different situations not only as individuals but as members of general psychological types.

“When he has learned all this-when, in addition, he has grasped the right occasions for speaking and holding back; and when he has also understood when the time is right for Speaking Concisely or Appealing to Pity or Exaggeration or for any other of the kinds of speech he has learned and when it is not-then, and only then, will he have finally mastered the art well and completely. But if his speaking, his teaching, or his writing lacks any one of these elements and he still claims to be speaking with art, you’ll be better off if you don’t believe him” (*Phdr.* 272a-b).

Socrates may be exaggerating here, but he is coming close to truth in asserting that people in a “lawcourt” actually make decisions on the basis of these convincing qualities rather than far more intensive and rigorous modes of reasoning. The same holds for works of dramatic and literary composition. Rhetorical and literary composition reflects only a probable or likely understanding.

“Socrates: Well, these people say that there is no need to be solemn about all this and stretch it out to such lengths. For the fact is, as we said ourselves at the beginning of this discussion, that one who intends to be an able rhetorician has no need to know the truth about the things that are just or good or yet about the people who are such either by nature or upbringing. No one in a lawcourt, you see, cares at all about the truth of such matters. They only care about what is convincing. This is called, the “likely,” [τὸ εἰκός] and that is what a man who intends to speak according to art should concentrate on. Sometimes, in fact, whether you are prosecuting or defending a case, you must not even say what actually happened, if it was not likely [μὴ εἰκότως] to have

happened-you must say something that is likely [τὰ εἰκότα] instead. Whatever you say, you should pursue what is likely and leave the truth aside: the whole art consists in cleaving throughout your speech” (*Phdr.* 272d-273a).

Plato presents characters using rigorous techniques of deduction and induction. Parmenides and Zeno, as well as the Eleatic Visitor, are dramatized in conversation with Socrates. More rigorous logical techniques, nevertheless, should underlie the use of techniques of composition. Plato’s method of division is actually a means of discerning types of virtues, but this method also relates to discerning different types of emotional responses. For this reason, collection and division is introduced in the *Phaedrus* in order to enhance a particular speech. Plato embeds the use of rigorous techniques of philosophical discourse into the heart of his own literary composition.

2.2 The Method of Collection and Division

2.2.1 Methodology of Division

Plato first introduces the method in a dialogue on the nature of rhetoric and erotic love, the *Phaedrus*. Yet collection and division, as noted in the previous section, does not at all uniquely apply to the discernment of psychological types and classifications of particular emotions, like the feeling of erotic love. Collection and division, a scientific method of making *logoi*, although first offered in *Phaedrus*, receives fullest exposition in *Sophist* and *Statesman* (*Sph.* 227a7-b1). The practitioner of division identifies the name (ὄνομα) of an entity and, through division and combination (διαίρεσις καὶ συναγωγή), seeks to define the essence, giving the named entity’s definition (λόγος) as a member of a single, real, universal class. With this method, the inquirer isolates an entity by name and seeks the essence of the entity through comparison and contrast with other entities. This is a highly general mode of inquiry and analysis and can be deployed in any field of inquiry. The methodology of division involves three steps:

- (1) *The dialectician begins by identifying the name for the entity he or she wishes to define, for instance 'humanity' or the 'statesman'.³²²*
- (2) *The dialectician starts from a higher kind (γένος) or more generic type, and, typically but not always, dichotomously differentiates features until he or she reaches the specific kind or name he or she is seeking.*
- (3) *Having reached the final differentiating characteristic, the inquirer then collects all characteristics divided on the right hand side into a single definition (λόγος) the natural or artificial entity in question. The inquirer has, then, completed the definition or λόγος of the sought entity.*

The definition of the human animal will be the central essential definition in my own exposition of the method of collection and division. The Visitor defines humans as a species of animal belonging to the biped class, differentiated from other bipeds as hairless (*Stm.* 262b-c).³²³ The final differentiating characteristic marks off the scientific essence of the entity from all other essences. Like modern mathematical set theory or empirical methods such as differential medical diagnosis and taxonomy, collection and division characterizes the class of which the entity in question is merely a member (*Stm.* 262d-e).

The definition can be of an artificial or a natural entity. However, geometric figures, arithmetic numbers, affections and passions or ethical virtues, as we have seen, can be defined through division as well. The Eleatic Visitor merely stresses, as noted in the previous section, that empirical, natural and artificial entities, like the products of the crafts of fishing and weaving or animal species, like humans or birds, are easier to define than higher, ethical realities, which are to some extent beyond direct visible portrayal. Philosophy, sophistry and statesmanship, which have a relation to the invisible, ethical order of the soul are easier to

³²² Moravcsik, J.M., "Plato's Method of Division", in *id.* ed., *Patterns in Plato's Thought*. Boston: D. Reidel, 1973, p. 177.

³²³ The Eleatic Visitor, when undertaking the division of the human species within the animal kingdom, asks the Younger Socrates to choose, for himself, the correct path of divisional 'cuts'. The Young Socrates wishes to divide animal species into two overall classes (γένη), humans and the rest of the animals put together (*Stm.* 263c). The Younger Socrates is attempting to divide too rapidly. Humans must be situated, the Eleatic Visitor says, within the class of land animals and differentiated from quadrupeds in order to be correctly situated within the natural species.

explain by way of analogical comparison with the visible crafts than through the use of collection and division alone.

Aristotle's account of the methodology and the example he employs to explain the methodology corresponds with the division of the *Statesman*, by providing an important instance where Aristotelian and Platonic text mutually supplement one another. According to Aristotle, one begins first with the higher kind (γένη ἐστὶ τό τε πρῶτον) and “proceeds towards the specific determination by marking of differentiating characteristics [καὶ μετὰ τούτου αἱ συλλαμβανόμεναι διαφοραί]” (*Met.* 1037b28-30).³²⁴ With respect to natural species, a comparatively higher kind might include the class ‘animal’. A comparatively smaller natural class, including fewer members, could be the class ‘fish’ or ‘hoofed-quadrupeds’. A higher kind of art might be ‘productive’ or ‘acquisitive’. ‘Fishing’ would be, for instance, a less generic class of art, and a comparatively lower class than ‘fishing’, containing fewer members, would be ‘hunting for fish with a hook’.

Aristotle observes that undertaking the procedure of *diairesis* for the human species, one would first begin with the genus, animal, and then go on to recognize that differentiating feature which distinguishes a specific class of animals, humanity, from the wider genus (*Met.* 1037b8-16). Plato proposed, for instance, to define, through differentia, the human species to be that animal which is distinct from all other species by virtue of walking on two legs. The “definition (ὁ ὁρισμός)” is the “account (ὁ λόγος) that arises from the differences [ἐκ τῶν διαφορῶν λόγος]” (*Met.* 1037b28-30; *cf.* *An. Post.* 92 a 29). Aristotle differs from Plato in lucidly explaining the “genus as a higher type from the species which it encompasses and clearly asserting that the entity sought is defined by its differentia” (*Met.* 1037b8-16). The method, as modified by Aristotle, forms the basis of Linnaean classification, which still

³²⁴ These sections draw heavily from my unpublished presentation for the *Ancient Philosophy Research Group* at the University of Ottawa, on The Method of Collection and Division in Plato's *Sophist* from 2006.

underlies observational biological taxonomy. However, the method is applicable to any class of entities one should wish to define.

Like deductive argumentation or refutation, this method appears to have a basis in geometric or mathematical definition. The method is applied to natural and artificial types, as much as ethical virtues and passions or affections. The method of division is supposed to be a strictly scientific method, a way of depicting the relation between, often empirical, classes or types. Nevertheless, Socrates, in the *Phaedrus*, does apply the method to the consideration of the passion of erotic love, and the Eleatic Visitor uses the method to consider ethical character, in determining the relation between sophist, statesman and philosopher. Like deductive argumentation, this technique of definition can apply to any named entity, but Plato's portrayal in the dialogues of dialectic always show him using such rational methods, ultimately, to clarify matters of ethical importance.

Plato holds that it is, at some level, important to properly characterize the essence of ordinary, empirical natural and artificial entities. He criticizes both poets and sophists for this lack of essential understanding even of ordinary empirical, artificial and natural entities. Poets and sophists use words only to portray the surface characteristics of visible exemplars, without grasping their essence.

Poetic and sophistic image-makers cannot pretend to an understanding of virtue or wisdom, because they do not even possess a basic understanding of the ordinary natural and artificial entities which, in their merely superficial manner, they imitate and portray. For this reason, the Eleatic Visitor insists on the need to provide a rigorous empirical classification of humanity, defining all members on the basis of the essential but still perceptibly observable characteristics, as 'featherless bipeds' and, thereby, differentiating the essence of humanity

from all other species of animal.³²⁵ The seven divisions of types of protective covering noted in the previous section are also empirical classes, presented for the purpose of instruction. Although the Visitor recognizes that his weaving paradigm is a trivial example, an essential grasp of this trivial example is necessary for proper ethical understanding and forms the basis of our ability to use the model as an illuminating image. The purpose of this use of examples or paradigms, as I have argued in the first section, is ultimately ethical in nature.

The object of the method of division is to discern a specific kind through a series of divisions. The Eleatic Visitor's practice is often to make binary divisions. The technical term the Eleatic Visitor and Socrates employ to denote specificity, when using the method of collection and division, is the otherness or difference (διαφορά). The definition of the sought entity is reached after a series of divisions, when we specify the final differentiating characteristic (τὴν διαφορὰν), the sign or distinguishing mark (σημεῖον) which differentiates the entity in question from all others (*Tht.* 201c-d.).³²⁶ For instance, when we differentiate the nature of, for instance, the human from all other animals as a 'hairless biped' or rational animal, then we have delineated a λόγος. This is nevertheless always a search for an idealized possibility.

The term difference (διαφορά) is used in conjunction with the method of collection and division to mark off the associations between kinds (γέννη). Dividing "according to kinds, we must distinguish each type from the other, then we say that we have the dialectical knowledge" (*Sph.* 253c-d; *Phdr.* 265d-266b).³²⁷ Such terminology will be familiar to

³²⁵ The illustrative example of the empirical definition of humanity as hairless bipeds, bearing affinities with other empirical definitions of animals, shall, for the purpose of clarity, serve to illustrate the method generally. The problem of using corporeal or empirical craft analogy within the procedure of dividing those types concerned with the care of the soul, sophistry, statesmanship and philosophy, becomes most overt within the division of the statesman itself, it is best to suspend the treatment of the corporeal-soul, empirical non-empirical problem until later.

³²⁶ Cornford, F.M., *Plato's Theory of Knowledge: The Theaetetus and Sophist translated with commentary*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 162. Once dismissed, has recently been restored to prominence by David Sedley. See Sedley, D., *op. cit.*, p. 174-178.

³²⁷ See Julius Stenzel, *Plato's Method of Dialectic*, D.J. Allen, trans., Oxford, Clarendon, 1940, p. 111-112.

students of Aristotle, whose testimony concerning the practice of division within the Academy is indispensable to our understanding.

The Eleatic Visitor claims, in *Sophist*, that, by defining the real type to which the entity belongs, the inquirer attempts to reach dialectical or scientific knowledge (τῆς διαλεκτικῆς ἐπιστήμης). In the *Sophist*, Plato makes the Visitor reason that sophists produce false judgments and *phantasms* rather than scientific understanding (ἐπιστήμη), by failing to differentiate properly between classes when offering a universal definition or by making a misjudgment about an individual. These scientific definitions can be made not only for geometric figures and numbers but for artificial and natural entities as well. The passions or emotions and even the ethical virtues, in principle at least, can be defined in this manner.

If there is a true rhetoric or a true art of speech, it must not merely be persuasive. This virtuous kind of seductive speech must also be based upon a general scientific understanding and a grasp of the nature of the human soul. It's not some weaving net meant to capture prey as the first paradigm of the sophist as fisher of men suggests. Rather, it is a means of improving souls. The kind of rhetoric which the philosopher practices must be intellectual and practically true. The discernment of rational truth should lead, ultimately, to an awareness of the ethical good, through a grasp of the moral psychology. For this reason, Socrates maintains that only the philosopher or dialectician, who explores the science of psychology and the moral order of the soul, can be a true orator or rhetor.

Socrates claims that the speech of this rhetor, Lysias, is defective, because Lysias has failed to define the subject of his speech ("love") properly at the outset of his speech. Although erotic love is a sickness, Lysias has failed to recognize this illness as a species of divine, rather than pathological, madness (*Phdr.* 244a-245c). Division is introduced as a method for clearing up conceptual ambiguities. Socrates introduces the method of collection

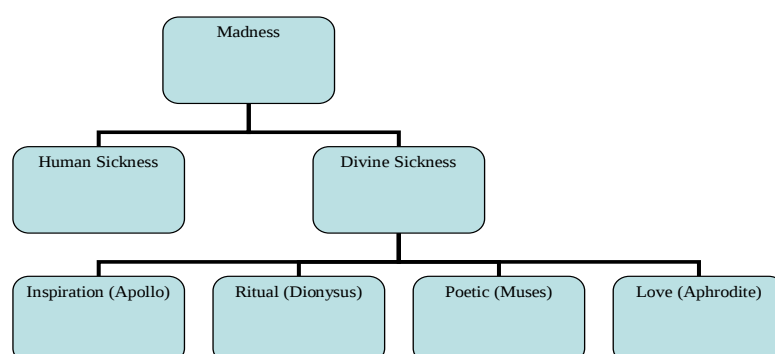
and division, in the *Phaedrus*, to differentiate types of love and madness (*Phdr.* 265b-c).³²⁸

The purpose of offering a definition of love is to clarify ambiguities in the two antecedent speeches on love. By defining our terms, in this case ‘erotic love’, at the outset, we are more likely to produce a speech which enables us to understand a reality as seemingly mysterious, irrational and indefinable as love, in a rational way.

Lysias has said that erotic love is simply an evil or madness. This, according to Socrates, is a result of his inability to distinguish between harmful and beneficial forms of madness or inspiration. Plato introduces his dialectical method of collection and division in order to differentiate two types of madness. The first type of madness is pathological, produced by illness. The second is inspired of the gods (*Phdr.* 265a-b). Of the forms of madness inspired by gods, there is the prophecy of Apollo, the ecstatic, ritual madness of Dionysius, the poetic inspiration of the Muses and the madness of love brought by Aphrodite.³²⁹

This method applies not only to the definitions of sickness or madness but all kinds of phenomena. The first “consists in seeing together things that are scattered about everywhere and collecting them into one kind [εἰς μίαν τε ιδέαν συννοῶντα ἄγειν τὰ πολλαχῆ]

³²⁸ τῆς δὲ θείας τεττάρων θεῶν τέτταρα μέρη διελόμενοι. The types of divine madness Plato articulates are four in number. The first is prophetic madness, which issues from Apollo. The second is telestic or ritual madness, whose patron is Dionysius. The third kind is poetic madness which issues from the Muses, and a fourth kind, erotic madness, which issues from Aphrodite and Eros. The division of madness into four is a direct counterexample for the absolute stipulation that the divisions be binary. Figure 2: Kinds of Madness, *Phaedrus*, 265a-c:



³²⁹ Dodds, E.R., *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkley, University of California Press, 1951, p. 64

διεσπαρμένα]” (*Phdr.* 265d). Each “definition shall pertain to that which one intends to teach [ἵνα ἕκαστον ὀρίζομενος δῆλον ποιῇ περὶ οὗ ἂν ἀεὶ διδάσκειν ἐθέλῃ]” (*Phdr.* 265d).³³⁰ He even notes that whether the “definition was or was not correct, at least it allowed the speech to proceed clearly and consistently with itself” (*Phdr.* 265d). This is a clear recognition of the fallibility of division. However, it is, also, an indication of a link between division and deduction. That is to say, whether the universal proposition, the definition, is true or false, at least, there is clarity in the initial terms of the discussion.

The enactive quality of division is as important as the methodological principles which underlie it. The use of collections and “divisions [τῶν διαιρέσεων καὶ συναγωγῶν]” enables us to both speak and to think [ἵνα οἷός τε ὃ λέγειν τε καὶ φρονεῖν]” in an appropriate, rather than a confused manner, as has been shown above (*Phdr.* 266b).³³¹ Although Plato himself uses mythical or divine language in the context of recounting inspired myths, he also uses such embellishments to describe the use of ordinary expressions based on geometric and arithmetic modes of calculation. A person who could lead another to understanding in this way would be considered divine (θεοῖο), just like a *miaeutic* inquirer practicing the art of the midwife to become more divine.

The view that *diarexis* was an important aspect of dialectic was once commonplace in Platonic scholarship.³³² However, the fragmented, developmental picture of Plato’s thought has led many interpreters to see this method in falsely dichotomous terms, and place the two techniques in opposition to one another. The periodization of Plato puts collection and division in a later period and contrasts this later dialectic technique with the earlier, deductive

³³⁰ In *Phaedrus*, here we see the term definition (ὀρίζομενος) appear in verbal form.

³³¹ τοῦτων δὲ ἔγωγε αὐτός τε ἐραστής, ὃ Φαῖδρε, τῶν διαιρέσεων καὶ συναγωγῶν, ἵνα οἷός τε ὃ λέγειν τε καὶ φρονεῖν: ἐάν τέ τιν’ ἄλλον ἡγήσωμαι δυνατόν εἰς ἐν καὶ ἐπὶ πολλὰ πεφυκόθ’ ὄραν, τοῦτον διώκω ‘κατόπισθε μετ’ ἵχνιον ὥστε θεοῖο.’

³³² Stenzel, J.A., *Plato’s Method of Dialectic*, Allen, D.J. trans., Oxford, Clarendon, p. 75-85; Robin, L., Paris, PUF, 1936, p. 109-122; Taylor, A.E., *Plato: The Man and His Work*, London, Methuen & Co., 1926, p. 386-392; Cornford, F.M., *Plato’s Theory of Knowledge: The Theaetetus and Sophist translated with commentary*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1935, p. 262-278.

method of hypothesis. Yet I argue that the two methods throughout Plato bear a complementary relation. This is itself enacted through the dialogue. When pursuing a logical path, Plato's dialectician uses techniques of definition and argumentative refutation together.

2.2.2 Subordination of the Definitional Method of Division to Ethics

Plato recognizes, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, that collection and division can be used to define comparatively trivial natural and artificial entities, like the crafts of angling, carpentry and weaving, or the nature of animals like oxen or birds. Above, I offered grounds for treating the *elenchus* as an ethical and logical technique and then provided a neutral description of the methodological procedure of collection and division. It is important to establish the neutrality both of techniques of definition and argumentative refutation. This enables us to see both as subordinate to ethical purpose.

Plato recognizes both the interconnection and the ethical significance of division and contradiction in the *Republic*: "Many a man falls into this practice against his will. When he thinks that he is reasoning he is really disputing, just because he cannot define and divide [κατ'εἶδη διαιρούμενοι], and so know that of which he is speaking; and he will pursue a merely verbal opposition [κατ'αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα διώκειν], in the spirit of contention, and not of fair discussion'" (*Rep.* 454a).³³³ This would seem to imply that contradictions arise when we do not define a real class, that is, when we make a false generalizations or fail to even recognize the need to identify some general truth and so confound distinctions with each other. For this reason, the two processes of classification and the identification of a false generalization, through *reductio ad absurdum*, are complementary. One seeks an idealized representation of the essence, but there is never a way to know with assurance that a definition accurately portrays the essence.

³³³ Stenzel, J., *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Myles Burnyeat has recently drawn attention to the need to mitigate Ryle's relegation of *diagnosis* or classification to mere propaedeutic. Burnyeat recognizes the plurality of different significances that justification can take, the methods of "definition", "analysis", "classification" and "differentiation" must be included alongside with "articulate statement", "justification", "proof" and "explanation".³³⁴ Burnyeat's approach is much more agreeable. A guiding principle is that divisions be realized with not only an intellectual but an ethical integrity. The Eleatic Visitor insists on not making certain definitions and deviating from certain paths on purely ethical or moral grounds. He does not observe these stipulations absolutely, because these methodological principles are merely heuristic guidelines, rather than an ultimate binding constraint.

Plato holds, as a general rule, that genus-species bifurcate in binary patterns. Ryle maintains, consciously echoing the objection of Aristotle, that "most generic concepts do not subdivide into just two polarly opposed species[,]" indeed, in most cases "there are numerous species of a genus or sub-species of a species." In the application of the method Plato, himself, furthermore, does not follow, absolutely, the rule of binary division.³³⁵ This is, however, no objection. Plato explains in certain instances why binary divisions are most likely to yield objective qualities while, also, recognizing that thoughtless binary thinking can have unethical consequences. While in certain situations it is advisable to avoid binary differentiation, there is some healthy justification for following, as a rule of thumb, binary divisions.³³⁶

³³⁴ Burnyeat, M., *op. cit.*, p. 240. "Articulate statement; definition, analysis, and classification; differentiation; justification, proof, and explanation-most of these can in suitable contexts be counted *a reason* for something, all of them can help us gain knowledge and understanding both of objects and of true propositions about them. But they can do this only because (to echo the suggestive phrasing of 184d) there is some single form-soul, mind, reason, or whatever one ought to call it-to which they converge and which combines their several contributions into a structured whole."

³³⁵ Ryle, G., *art. cit.*, p. 322.

³³⁶ The binary stipulation is also overturned at *Statesman*, 287c.

The Visitor offers an instructive digression to explain why. The goal of the process of division is to discern “a real class”. The ever-present danger is to “take off one small part of its own, leaving many large ones behind” in a manner that is “without reference to real classes” (*Stm.* 262b). As a rule of thumb, it is “safer to go along cutting through the middle of things, and that way one will be more likely to encounter real classes” (*Stm.* 262c). The Visitor himself, in *Statesman*, recognizes the limits of binary division. The Visitor remarks that he wishes to tell Socrates “more clearly” out of “good will towards” his “natural endowments” that “it is impossible to show” him “what” the Visitor means “with absolute completeness” (*Stm.* 262c). The test case, as is often the case in Plato, is the mathematical theory of number.

The Eleatic Visitor, much like Socrates, in the *Meno*, uses a mathematical example to explain why divisions should be made in a binary fashion. Arithmetic, just like geometric reasoning, is a fundamental aspect of rational thought. One divides numbers into odd and even. Binary mathematical distinctions tend to be the most useful, but they must be carried out thoughtfully and with the aim of actually discerning a real, essential Formal class. Furthermore, binary division should not be a binding constraint, if it leads to something unreal. The Eleatic Visitor even asserts that it is ethically objectionable if it does.

He cites as an instance an example of an arbitrary division. For instance, “cutting off the number ten-thousand from all the rest, separating it off as a single class, and in positing a single name for all the rest supposed here too that through getting the name this class too came into existence, a second single one apart from the other” (*Stm.* 262c-263a). The Visitor wishes to evade such erroneous number theory. It would be “better” that “the division” be done “more by real classes and more into two” (*Stm.* 262c).

This binary stipulation also applies in biological classification. The human species (τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος), for instance, is better divided into (ἄρρενι καὶ θήλει) male and female

(*Stm.* 262d-263a). However, even these kinds of biological distinctions can become inappropriate in other contexts, for instance, in cultural life. The distinction between masculine and feminine is essential. It is a meaningful, natural difference we may discover in a variety of species, including humans.

Plato, as dramatic composer, even considers situations beyond the actual and immediate. He portrays Socrates addressing the role of women in an ideally just political society in order to illustrate how the erroneous use of classification can lead to misunderstanding and harmful ethical consequences. We have to determine in what respect we are considering “the nature [ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις]” of the entity in question. Socrates maintains that ethical character, which is rooted in intelligence, is the grounds for enabling one to serve as “guardians of the city [εἰς φυλακὴν πόλεως]” (*Rep.* 456a-b). To forbid an individual who possesses the proper virtues for guardianship from participation in political leadership on the basis of gender would be, simply, as inappropriate as barring a skilled bald or a long haired man, on the basis of his own physical characteristics, from pursuing the craft of a cobbler or shoemaker (*Rep.* 454c). When it comes to fulfilling the social function of serving as a guardian, gender is not a relevant determinant. Thus, this is an instance where a particular binary division should be rejected. Again, the methodological stipulation which the Visitor makes is completely contingent upon moral or ethical grounds.

The goal of the process of division is to discern “a real class”. The ever-present danger is to “take off one small part of its own, leaving many large ones behind” in a manner that is “without reference to real classes” (*Stm.* 262b). As a rule of thumb, it is “safer to go along cutting through the middle of things, and that way one will be more likely to encounter real classes” (*Stm.* 262c). Masculine and feminine, of course, constitute natural classes for Plato. They are expressions of biology. Nevertheless, when this binary reasoning is applied

in a faulty way to the normative or ethical domain, it may lead to both intellectually false and ethically harmful consequences.

The Visitor regards the principle of making a correct division as associated with ethical and cultural concern. A second harmful binary division which the Visitor points out is the familiar cultural division of the fifth century, between ‘barbarians’ and ‘Greeks’. Against ordinary Athenian convention, the Visitor would refuse to accept the following as an essential division. He would object “if someone tried to divide the human race into two and made the cut in the way that most people here carve things up, taking the Greek race away as one, separate from all the rest, and to all the other races together, which are unlimited in number, which don’t mix with one another, and don’t share the same language—calling this collection by the single appellation of ‘barbarian’” (*Stm.* 262c.). Plato, as a fourth-century author, reflecting upon the fifth century, in composing the *Statesman*, proposes a critical qualification of a convention in this earlier epoch. Even though this division superficially corresponds with the sometimes useful binary criterion, the Visitor objects to it on ethical grounds, claiming that it is false and inappropriate.

Plato does not portray the Visitor as regarding cultural distinctions as completely unimportant. Indeed, he says that it is meaningful to recognize positive cultural differences between groups. For instance, we should “only split of Lydians or Phrygians (Λυδοὺς δὲ ἢ Φρύγας ἢ τινὰς ἑτέρους πρὸς ὅπαντας) or anyone else and ranged them against all the rest when one was at a loss as to how to split in such a way that each of the halves split off was simultaneously a real class and a part” (*Stm.* 262d-263a).³³⁷ Yet, although regional differences can be meaningfully recognized, the human species, as a whole, remains one.

Ackrill recognizes that there is, “in fact, abundant evidence that Platonic division into kinds is not, and is not thought of as being, necessarily dichotomous.” In *Philebus*, Socrates

³³⁷ Chiesa, C., «De Quelques Formes Primitives de la Classification, » in *Reading the Statesman*, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

explicitly accepts that classes can be divided into two, three or some other number (*Phlb.* 16d). In defining the weaver, as noted in the previous section, the Visitor undertakes seven divisions (*Stm.* 279c-280a). The search for a real class enables us to properly understand the world and, in so doing, have a better grasp of ethical and political reality. Plato reasons that misunderstanding the nature and capacities of males and females, as much as thoughtlessly dividing humanity into Greeks and Barbarians, has harmful ethical and political implications. But Ackrill and other authors do not fully recognize that this choice to deviate from binary divisions emerges chiefly out of a regard for ethical and normative considerations.

The point of collection and division is not to establish inerrant methodological principles of inference. Rather, collection and division is supposed to be a means of seeking the definition which corresponds with the ‘real class,’ the universal or essential Form which does not admit of exceptions. The essence of a natural entity, like a man or an artificial entity like a table, is more than the superficial appearance of an individual person like Socrates or an individual table. The point of using this technique is to capture the essence of all the named entities—all men generally or all tables generally in a single, universal, scientific formulation.

This is why Plato often speaks in the language of calculation when discussing the need to distinguish the true from the false, the reality from the illusory representation. Although Plato treats this problem only superficially in *Republic X*, he actually explains how false judgments arise and how they are different from true judgments in the *Sophist*. The implication of the use of this method is not only ethical; these logical techniques also have a bearing on the epistemological and ontological structure of reality.

Aristotle’s account, which has strongly influenced the view that there is a Socrates who propounds a Platonic ‘theory of ideas’ distinct from an historical Socrates, portrayed in

Plato's dialogues. Here, Aristotle makes clear that Socratic essential definition is distinct from Platonic universal Forms or ideas:

“For in his youth Plato had become acquainted with Cratylus and the Heraclitean doctrines that all sensible things are always in flux and there is no knowledge of them; and this is what he later believed. Plato afterwards took Socrates as his teacher, who was concerned with moral philosophy and not with the study of nature; but in these matters Socrates sought for the universal (*to katholou*) and was the first to focus attention on definitions. Plato therefore came to the conclusion that this [concern for universal definitions] referred to something else and not to sensible things. For it was impossible that the general definition should be of the sensible things, since these were always changing.”

“Plato, accordingly, called such entities Forms (*ideai*), and held that sensible things were distinct from these and named by reference to them. For things are named after Forms (*eide*) on the basis of participation [in the corresponding Forms]. But he only changed the name “participation” (*methexis*). The Pythagoreans say that things exist by imitation (*mimesis*) of numbers; Plato changed the name to participation (*Met.* A.6, 987a32-b12).”³³⁸

Aristotle superimposes, according to Kahn, his own philosophical ideas onto a characterization of Socrates that was largely derived from Plato's dialogues. Commenting on the above passages, Kahn asserts that “[m]any historians of philosophy have followed this account of the origin of Plato's theory of Forms.”³³⁹

Kahn, however, holds that this account of the relation between Socrates and Plato's philosophy “is just as arbitrary and schematic as Aristotle's account of his predecessors.”³⁴⁰ Further, he argues that there “is no reason to suppose that Aristotle had any good evidence for the earlier development of Plato's thought.”³⁴¹ When Aristotle “arrived in Athens as a youth at seventeen, Plato was sixty years old and had probably recently completed the *Phaedrus*, *Parmenides* and *Theaetetus*.”³⁴² These late period dialogues, indeed, include content which comes close to the characterization Aristotle offers:

³³⁸ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 81.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*

³⁴² *Ibid.*

“The importance attributed by Aristotle to the theory of flux probably reflects the fresh impact of the *Theaetetus* (“This is what he later believed.”) And the exaggerated estimate of Pythagorean influence corresponds to the intellectual atmosphere of the Academy in Plato’s later years.”³⁴³

Kahn denies credibility to the view that “Aristotle is relying here on an oral tradition in the Academy, or even that he discussed these matters with Plato himself.”³⁴⁴ Kahn maintains that such “an assumption is entirely gratuitous” since we “know nothing of the personal relations between Plato and Aristotle (who was his junior by nearly forty-five years).”³⁴⁵ For this reason, we have every reason to believe that Aristotle’s view is almost entirely conditioned by a reading of Plato’s dialogues. Aristotle, according to Kahn, simply describes the activity which Socrates undertakes in various dialogues focused on attempting to define the essence of ethical virtues.

Aristotle indicates that his familiarity with Plato’s thought derives chiefly from his reading of these dialogues, which are dated close to his arrival at the Academy. He does this by asserting that for Plato “it is impossible to offer an enduring, universal definition of a particular perceptible thing” (*Met.* 984b1-5; 987a30-b; cf. *Tht.* 151e-152a). As we have seen above, Plato, to some extent, recognizes the validity of the relativity of perception which his Protagoras defends in the *Theaetetus*, a late dialogue dated somewhere near Aristotle’s arrival at the Academy.

Another later dialogue, the *Parmenides*, though it does not explicitly introduce division as a method for defining essences, mentions *genus* and *species* terminology in the context of asserting a need for stable forms or essences. As Parmenides explains to the Younger Socrates in the *Parmenides*, essential Forms are actually necessary in order for there to be a stable object for human thought (*Prm.* 135b-c). If there were not “Forms for entities [εἶδη τῶν ὄντων]” and there were not “a kind for each thing [γένος τι ἑκάστου],” then there

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

would be no place to turn “thought [τὴν διάνοιαν]” and the possibility of philosophy or “dialectic [τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι]” would be destroyed (*Prm.* 135c).³⁴⁶ Aristotle, in spite of his grasp of the Platonic notion of essence as a definition which gives rational meaning to particular individuals, overlooks the connection between the Socratic practice of essential definition and the elaboration of the logical structures of Formal realities. There are also logical parallelisms in Plato and Aristotle with Plato’s introduction of more general or generic categories.

Higher kinds govern the relations between lower levels of existence, the genus and species levels which come closer to immediate or direct visible perception. There is a kind of hierarchy among the universals or Forms. Gill observes that in “addition to categorical kinds like the sophist and statesman, there are also the great kinds discussed in the *Sophist*—change, rest, being, sameness and difference.”³⁴⁷ It is important to realize that these higher “kinds were recognized in the *Parmenides* (esp. *Parmenides* 130b; cf. the “common notions” at *Theaetetus* 184–186).”³⁴⁸ These universals are not perceived by the passive senses but actively give meaning to the flux of experience.

The method of collection and division is a technique for defining relations between higher and lower species of natural and artificial entities, as well as geometric and arithmetic relations. However, as Gill recognizes, “these great kinds seem very different from ordinary kinds like the sophist and statesman” or the human animal or the form of a circle.³⁴⁹ Plato maintains in the so-called later dialogues that “being, sameness, and difference” actually

³⁴⁶ This observation about the necessity for Forms, again, derives from an argument first presented in my master’s thesis. See my unpublished master’s thesis ‘The *Aporiai* of Plato’s *Parmenides*: A Prelude to the Philosophical Dialectic’, Dalhousie University, 2004.

³⁴⁷ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,’ *art. cit.*, p. 28.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.* “*Theaetetus*: You mean *being and not-being, likeness and unlikeness, same and different; also one, and any other number applied to them* [*my italics*]. And obviously too your question about odd and even, and all that is involved with these attributes; and you want to know through what bodily instruments we perceive all these with the soul.” (*Tht.* 185d).

³⁴⁹ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” *op. cit.*, p. 28.

“structure other kinds, enabling them to be what they are and to relate to one another.”³⁵⁰ “Dialectic” actually “aims to discover and articulate those structures. Structural kinds are closely tied to dialectic, as Parmenides foretold, but both forms and dialectic seem to have developed apace since the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*.”³⁵¹ This should not, however, be regarded as a departure from the fundamental idea of stable Forms or essences, apart from sensible experience.

Aristotle’s conception of the universal statement and syllogistic demonstration admittedly differ from the notions which Plato expounds in his more technical works. Rational techniques of definition and demonstration, like the method of collection and division, make speech more eloquent.³⁵² However, that Aristotle insists on differentiating his approach from that of Plato masks for readers unfamiliar with these later works the extent to which their thought overlaps.

The method of division shows how it extends to the definition of natural and artificial entities. Correct definitions or classifications of universal, natural or artificial entities, like ‘star’, ‘man’, ‘ox’, ‘horse’, ‘circle’, ‘square’, can equally be ascribed or predicated, truly or falsely, to a particular individual. Like geometric definitions, these universal propositions, which convey a stable, essential nature, can be introduced into syllogistic demonstrations in order to produce conclusions. In the course of defining the statesman as shepherd, Plato comes close to providing Aristotle’s definition of humans as rational animals.

Plato introduces a technique for arriving at definitions of formal essences. This would be the secondary substance in Aristotle’s account of substance. However, Plato also

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² See Ambuel, D., *op. cit.*, 16: Aristotle, the father of science, though a critic of Plato’s method of collection and division, was not blind to the merits. It serves as the basis of Aristotelian as well as Linnaean, observational biological classification. Ambuel notes that “method of division, in Aristotle’s eyes” might “prove a useful tool in inductively defining what a thing is, but it cannot hope to demonstrate deductively definition.” Collection and division is a mean of fostering λόγος showed “what the nature of a thing was[.]” See Bluck, R.S., ed., *Plato’s Meno*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 35. See *An. Pr.* 46a31 ff.

recognizes the predication of ‘accidental’ qualities in a way that comes very close to Aristotle’s views about how primary substance or the individual human expresses a myriad of inessential qualities which escape scientific definition. Socrates shows how overemphasis on accidental qualities of particular individuals ultimately leads away from anything like enduring, scientific understanding.

The Visitor gives emphasis, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, to a distinction between the essential and accidental features of humanity. He calls the instance of ‘man’ an inductive example or paradigm [παράδειγμα...ἄνθρωπον] in this case (*Sph.* 251a).

“Visitor: Surely we’re speaking of man even when we name him several things, that is, when we apply colors to him and shapes, sizes, defects and virtues. In these cases and a million others we say that he’s not only a man but also is good and indefinitely many other things. And similarly on the same account we take a thing to be one, and at the same time we speak of it as many by using many names for it” (*Sph.* 251a-b).

This position coincides with Aristotle’s above characterization of Plato’s views of the nature of sense perception. The physical resemblance between Socrates and Theaetetus serves as a central point of reflection about the ultimately unknowable nature of sense particularity in the *Theaetetus*. Socrates and Theaetetus are individuals who may each be described as having these characteristics. Socrates supposes that he must know the following: “‘This is Theaetetus-one who is a human being, and has a nose and eyes and mouth’, and so on through the whole list of limbs” (*Tht.* 209b).

“It will not, I take it, be Theaetetus who is judged in my mind until this snub-nosedness of yours has left imprinted and established in me a record that is different in some way from the other snub-nosednesses I have seen; and so with the other details of your makeup. And this will remind me, if I meet you tomorrow, and make me judge correctly about you” (*Tht.* 209c).

Plato, intriguingly in this passage, plays on the famous uniqueness of the appearance of Socrates by recognizing that even this can bear close kinship or resemblance with that of another person. Socrates attempts to differentiate himself from Theaetetus unambiguously.

But even here, he must use nouns like “nose” and “eyes” and describes individuating qualities, adjectives like “snub” and “bulging,” which resemble his own physical characteristics. Even an exhaustive description would simply be an image of the person, not the reality of that individual person, which is, in fact, ever-changing and inexhaustible.³⁵³ Language is a tool which enables us to grasp, imperfectly, certain features of reality. In Plato’s view, when we use language to generate or create realities, we are speaking falsely.

Theaetetus, or a description of Theaetetus’ characteristics, would, as noted above in the *Cratylus*, reproduce the individual person of that name. However, instead, language most often merely captures certain accidental features of the individual person—features which are subject to change. Even the essential identification of permanent features, the species of which an individual is a member, does not describe the particular but exhibits the features which that individual shares with all other members of the human species.

“To the extent that these examples focus on particulars rather than universals as objects of knowledge, that they offer no system for arriving at final differentiation, and that the unique feature that they select could well be regarded as inessential, they do not convey deep Platonic insight, but rather confirm Socrates’ implied disclaimer when he calls this a popular criticism. The Platonizing implications of the definition are, in a way that by now we have come to expect, the Platonic subtext, not in Socrates’ own words.”³⁵⁴

This whole discussion of the limits of our capacity to characterize any given particular individual prepares the way for the introduction and technical elaboration of the method of

³⁵³ Gonzalez, F., *Dialogue and Dialectic*, op. cit., p. 82. Cratylus maintains that “all names are correctly given” (*Crat.* 429b-c). Cratylus defends his position by asking Socrates “how can anyone say the things he says and not say something that is? Doesn’t speaking falsely consist in not saying things that are” (*Crat.* 429d)? Socrates counters that what Cratylus is saying amounts to an affirmation that there is no falsity. The discussion of naming takes place in the *Cratylus*, which is associated with the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. Cratylus holds that a name must completely stand for what it names. As Gonzalez puts it, Socrates says that “Cratylus’ standard for what counts as a name is so high that it results in the collapse of the distinction between language and reality.” “Cratylus” effectively maintains that “a name, in order to be a name, must reproduce perfectly and exhaustively all the characteristics of the object that it is supposed to make manifest.” “Socrates” however “points out” that “a perfect imitation would be no imitation but a duplicate of the object imitated (423a-d).” Simply to utter the name, Socrates or Cratylus or Theaetetus, is obviously not sufficient to reproduce perfectly all of the characteristics of the named individual. Thus, the *Cratylus*, like the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, draws attention to the fact that discourse, even rigorous, logical discourse only enables us to consider selected features of particular individuals.

³⁵⁴ Sedley, D., *The Midwife of Platonism, Text and Subtext in Plato’s Theaetetus*, 2004, p. 175.

collection and division. David Sedley recognizes the philosophical import of these two examples: “The *logos* of the sun would be, he says (208d1-4) that it is ‘the brightest of things in the heavens that orbit the earth’ while that of Theaetetus would (209b2-c1) pick out, not shared features like his having a snub nose and bulging eyes, but unique features of his snub nose and his bulging eyes.”³⁵⁵ The accidental features may be enumerated, capturing the facts about a particular individual. However, the rationally discerned scientific essence reveals a deeper reason behind the movement and chaos of the cosmos.

The essential definitions of these celestial phenomena, like the sun, represent the essence of living spirits and divinities in Plato’s mythic language. It seems as though the sun could be uniquely defined as the brightest body in the heavens. Yet, there might be brighter bodies in the heavens, that is, other stars. This is why it is the essence, rather than the particular individual, which is important. This is the case even if the particular individual is a particular sun. In a similar manner, the particular individual human being, like Socrates, is merely the expression of the human scientific essence. Plato’s methodology of defining essences, as much as his methodology for refuting them, is open to possibility, i.e. to the possibility of eternal revision and correction.

The Platonic view entails the idea that a sense of purpose emerges from our scientific apprehension of astronomical, elemental or biological entities. This approach to reality, rooted in arithmetic and geometric modes of interpretation, serves as the basis of natural science. This essential mode of characterization extends in Plato to ethical life, and applies to the characterization of virtues, as well as the order of political constitutions which are themselves paradigms for states of the human soul.

If we reflect carefully, we can see that the names and the qualities we ascribe to them are universal Forms. These can be accidental qualities, but, as well, a dialectician can define

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.174-175.

the essence of the human species, of which Theaetetus, Socrates and Theodorus are part. Plato presupposes a metaphysics of essential substance. The universal relations might be expressed in modern predicate logic as follows:

Symbols: $Sx = x$ is a Sun $B = x$ is the brightest body in the heavens.

$Hx = y$ is human $T = y$ is a two-footed, featherless biped.

$\forall x (Sx \rightarrow Bx)$

$\forall y (Hy \rightarrow Ty)$

Sedley notes that the method of collection and division, which is a means of searching for stable essences, is important for the following reason:

“It is only when a method is added for achieving the differentiation that this account of knowledge will become philosophically adventurous. The mundane examples offered by Socrates show that he does not yet have such a method in mind.”³⁵⁶

The *Sophist* is sometimes said to feature only a treatment of the method of collection and division, thus diminishing reliance on argumentative refutation. The first entities, which the Eleatic Visitor defines in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, are the mundane paradigm of fishing or angling, but, after a series of divisions, this eventually culminates in an extremely precise definition which is, in essence, a specific account of the universal essence of the elenchic activity which is practiced by Socrates. Socrates has shown, in the *Theaetetus*, the ineffable, unknowable and inexpressible character of himself, as particular individual or any particular individual for that matter. This definition shows something of the essence of philosophy, though the Visitor is evasive about the individual to whom this essential definition corresponds.

2.2.3 Protagoras and Socrates in the *Theaetetus*

Plato, as author, clearly shows the integration of dialectic with rhetoric in the *Phaedrus*. He does this by using the logical technique of collection and division to improve

³⁵⁶ Sedley, D., *The Midwife of Platonism, Text and Subtext in Plato's Theaetetus*, 2004, p.171.

and enhance the composition of an errant speech on love. However, Plato also shows the integration of dialectic with rhetoric in the *Theaetetus*. These passages are more often interpreted as a refutation of Protagoras. However, this refutation also exhibits a kind of integration of Protagorean relativism with a Socratic style emphasis on the objectivity of logic.

Plato, in the *Theaetetus*, portrays Socrates describing his method of refutation using an analogy or metaphor with the art of the midwife, the *maieutic* art. Socrates flatters no one with the *maieutic* method, it is a means of searching truth, and it is a means of improving others. Plato has Socrates, in the *Theaetetus*, claim to practice a medicinal art, but this emerges from his own ignorance rather than his knowledge. It is a result of a search for truth rather than a grasp or apprehension of wisdom. Socrates, in the *Theaetetus*, gives a medical or medicinal characterization of his dialectic questioning. As the midwife tends to the body, he tends to or cares for the soul but cannot himself “give birth to wisdom” (*Tht.* 150c). Indeed, this is a “common reproach” made against Socrates, that “though he questions others,” he himself “can bring nothing to light” (*Tht.* 150c). Indeed, he confesses that “there is no wisdom in me” (*Tht.* 150c). Since people so often fail to recognize their own ignorance, they lead themselves into error by “caring more for false phantoms [ψευδῆ καὶ εἰδῶλα περὶ πλείονος ποιησάμενοι τοῦ ἀληθοῦς] than for truth” (*Tht.* 150e5-7). Although Plato’s image might also suggest that the midwife could give birth to beautiful, true portraits in words, the context of the *Theaetetus* implies that it is the refutation of false propositions offered by others which is at issue.

The midwife comparison or analogy works because the art applies to another person, a partner in discussion, rather than Socrates himself. The “mind” of Theaetetus is “in labour with some thought it has conceived” and so it is Theaetetus’ role to do “the best” he “can to answer the questions” which Socrates asks (*Tht.* 151b). Socrates explains that his

questioning is a form of spiritual purification of error. One can “examine” the “statements” of interlocutors like Theaetetus and “judge one or another of them to be an unreal phantom [εἶδωλον καὶ μὴ ἀληθές]” (*Tht.* 151c3-4). This phantom might be regarded as a false propositional statement or another form of incorrect assertion.

Plato, in his dramatic portrayal of Socrates, nevertheless has Socrates anticipate and foreshadow his looming trial. The gadfly of Athens is at the same time not blind to the fact that people can mistake his intent. Socrates recognizes that people in Athens often “do not see that I am doing them a kindness[,]” and he declares that the divine spirit guides him. Socrates believes that “no divinity is ever ill-disposed towards man, nor is such action on my part due to unkindness” (*Tht.* 151c-d). He reckons, counter to those who would contest his practice, that he is “not permitted to acquiesce in falsehood and suppress the truth [ψεῦδος τε συγχωρῆσαι καὶ ἀληθὲς ἀφανίσαι οὐδαμῶς θέμις]” (151d1-2). Yet, in the voice of Protagoras, whom Socrates had questioned in the Golden Age of Periclean Athens in Plato’s *Protagoras*, Socrates recognizes that not everyone shares this perspective. Plato makes Socrates state that this *maieutic* practice makes himself and his collocutor more modest but also, paradoxically, more like ‘god’.

Plato embellishes this rational practice with images and metaphors, as well as with the language of divine influence. Yet he is describing, and will continue to describe throughout the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, the logical foundations of demonstration, inductive definition and the discernment of the true and false proposition. At the same time, logic, insofar as it enables us to discern truth from appearance, gives us a glimpse into the nature of belief, the plausible and the persuasive. This mastery of the plausible, persuasive and flattering is the specialty of Protagoras.

Plato does not simply show Socrates refuting Protagoras but uptaking Protagoras’ voice. Indeed, that Plato actually portrays Protagoras in an elaborate way in the *Protagoras*

is a sign that he has reflected upon and integrated the work of this thinker. Plato, as author, also speaks through the voices of both his characters, Protagoras and Socrates. In the *Protagoras*, he presents them both in the Athens of Pericles and in the company of sophists, like Hippias and Prodicus. But in the *Theaetetus*, where an old man Socrates awaits his trial, Protagoras is already dead. Since Protagoras cannot speak for himself, Socrates speaks for him.

Plato provides a philosophical refutation of Protagorean relativism, in critique of the mere appearance or the *phantasma*. But Plato, as author, speaking through Socrates speaking as Protagoras, shows that the Protagoras portrayed in *Protagoras* is also Plato's own mouthpiece. When Socrates and Theaetetus consider whether knowledge is perception or appearance, "Socrates immediately paraphrases this answer with Protagoras' famous doctrine that 'Man is the measure of all things'" (DK 80 B1; cf. *Tht.* 152a2-4).³⁵⁷ Socrates explains to Theaetetus that this "doctrine means that 'as each thing appears (*phainetai*) to me, so it is for me, and as it appears to you, so it is for you, you and I each being a human being" (*Tht.* 152a6-8)."³⁵⁸ This notion of appearance is explored, as Notomi recognizes, in "the *Theaetetus*," where we "see the other two examples of 'phantasia'."³⁵⁹ In reply "to the question of what knowledge (*episteme*) is, Theaetetus answers that knowledge is sense-perception (151e1-3)."³⁶⁰ The view that appearance or opinion is simply reality excludes the possibility of false judgments about things. As Notomi notes: "The connection between this doctrine and Theaetetus' answer is suggested in the following equation:"³⁶¹

"Soc.: But doesn't this expression 'it appears' (*phainetai*) mean
'he perceives it'?"
"Tht: Yes, it does."

³⁵⁷ Notomi, N., *Unity of Sophist*, op. cit., p. 263.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

“Soc: Appearing (*phantasia*) and perception, then, are the same in the case of hot and everything like that. So it seems that things are for each person as he perceives them.”

“Tht: Yes, that seems so. (*Tht.* 152b11-c4).”³⁶²

Protagoras’ view has potent epistemological and ontological implications, as Burnyeat explains: “Protagoras’ doctrine, as Plato interprets it, maintains the relative truth of all appearance: however things appear to someone as *things are for this person* just the way they appear, and if they appear different then *for that person* they really and truly are different.”³⁶³ That is, for Plato’s Protagoras, there is no objective or rational, logical criteria for discerning what is true or false beyond the standard of the individual human subject—the believer. This critique of Protagoras, both in the *Protagoras* and *Theaetetus*, is a significant and philosophically important gesture.

This underlying teaching about the mobility and relativity of reality has a potent ethical and social force. When Protagoras speaks, even through the words of Socrates, he speaks, in part, for Plato. The Eleatic Visitor, like Socrates in the *Theaetetus*, expresses sympathetic gestures towards the ethical aspect of this relativism or perspectivism without compromising a commitment to higher, objective, ethical ideals. In a similar manner, he considers not only the importance of recognizing absolute and objective standards but a need to recognize the social import, in human life, of individual opinion as well as collectively shared beliefs.

Protagoras, as an adept practitioner of rhetoric, is bright enough to know that Socrates’ approach (Socrates’ *maieutic* method) is not perfect either. But Socrates knows

³⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 263-264.

³⁶³ Burnyeat, M., *The Theaetetus of Plato*, with trans. Of M.J. Levett, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1990, p. 7-8. In footnote 12, Burnyeat acknowledges that the “question how far Plato gives a faithful account of the historical Protagoras need not concern us.” This perspectivism Socrates, in the *Theaetetus*, associates with Heraclitus. Further, Socrates associates the view he imputes to Protagoras to Heraclitean doctrine: “Heraclitus’ contribution is the thesis that everything is changing all the time, as summed up in the famous paradox ‘You cannot step into the same river twice’ (cf. 160d): ‘all things flow like a stream’.” As Plato presents it here in the *Theaetetus*, Protagoras’ claim that man is the measure rests upon the view or theory of Heraclitus that all things are moving. However, the notion of knowledge itself, if it is to be distinguished from the flux of appearance and changing, depends upon our capacity to use reasoning to discern stable reality and assert the truth or falsity of a given occurrence.

this, and he expresses, in a certain sense, how Protagoras is right about him. McCoy imagines that it is a fundamental source of difference between Socrates and Protagoras that Socrates regards his process of “question and answer” as a “social one” which is “necessitated by the demands of individual reason” and feels that “Protagoras continually misunderstands the nature of Socrates’ questions.”³⁶⁴ But in the *Theaetetus*, Socrates restates Protagoras’ view himself.

Protagoras and Socrates both share the claim that the art they practice improves speech and makes people better and more virtuous than they would otherwise be. Protagoras voices this counsel with sympathy, asserting that people “will seek” the “company” of Socrates, if they think of Socrates “as their friend” (*Tht.* 167c). If Socrates’ questioning is just, his collocutors will experience ‘shame’, they will “loathe themselves, and seek refuge from themselves in philosophy, in the hope that they may thereby become different people and be rid forever of the men that they once were.” However, Socrates recognizes that Protagoras would caution him that if he follows this “common practice” and does “the opposite,” then Socrates as philosopher “will get the opposite results” (*Tht.* 167c). People will not feel delight at having been corrected by a well-meaning Socrates. Instead, if Socrates practices without the beautifying power of flattery, people will perceive him as an adversary, someone who is cruel and means to slight and insult others; they will think that Socrates is simply a sophist, perceiving him as a person who merely pretends to have wisdom. This is exactly what has happened with Anytus in the *Meno*. He could accept Socrates questioning the sophists but not the statesman, questioning Protagoras but not questioning Pericles or Themistocles.

Socrates recognizes, in the voice of Protagoras, that his dialectic could be seen as akin to sophistic eristic, a controversial mode of speech (ἀμφισβήτει λόγῳ ἀντιδιεξελθών) pursued

³⁶⁴ McCoy, M., *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists in Ancient Greece*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 71.

for the sake of controversy itself, the kind which makes enemies rather than friends (*Tht.* 167d5-6). He uses exactly the same word, which the Eleatic Visitor does above, to describe such a controversialist. Socrates, again speaking in the voice of Protagoras, notes that rather than making questioning “philosophers[,]” Socrates will make (τοὺς συνόντας ἀντὶ φιλοσόφων μισοῦντας) those who are with him hate philosophy (*Tht.* 168a8-b1). Socrates might even be aware that he is about to face the ire of an Athenian public. He indeed recognizes that his practice of questioning can be perceived as a form of malice, rather than what it really is, a means of improving others. Socrates, in the voice of Protagoras, accepts that this objection could be made against him, and that he should take into account the relativity of perspective. Plato emphasizes this in his portrayal of Socrates’ quest for self-knowledge. His Socrates does not appear to lack a knowledge or grasp of the misunderstanding his practice has engendered in others.

Plato has Socrates himself highlight, in the *Theaetetus*, the practical and theoretical difference between the views of his own Socrates and those of his own Protagoras as characters. The ethical and epistemological views of Protagoras, no less than Socrates, are deeply interconnected: “You will genuinely try to find out what our meaning is when we maintain (a) that all things are in motion and (b) that for each person and each city, things are what they seem to them to be. And upon this basis you will inquire whether knowledge and perception are the same thing or different things” (*Tht.* 168b-c). That is to say, Plato’s Protagoras’ views about reality are connected with his views about ethics, his endorsement of the received conventions of whatever community he happens to be teaching in.

Plato presents Protagoras as a character, along with Socrates. Although he clearly favours Socrates as a paradigm of the philosophical life, Protagoras’ views should be regarded as substantially integrated with Plato’s own philosophy. Socrates repudiates Protagorean relativism as untenable, at both the epistemological and ethical level. But he

does show a comparatively sympathetic understanding of this position, and engages with it in a sustained manner before providing his refutation.

“Socrates: You are kind, my friend. Tell me now, did you notice that Protagoras was complaining of us, in the speech that we have just heard, for addressing our arguments to a small boy and making the child’s nervousness a weapon against his ideas? And how he disparaged our method of arguments as merely an amusing game, and how solemnly he upheld his ‘measure of all things’ [τὸ πάντων μέτρον] and commanded us to be serious when we dealt with his theory?” (*Tht.* 168c7-d4).

Socrates challenges the relativism of this Protagorean position. Plato makes Socrates defend his *maieutic* technique, his mode of questioning and testing beliefs. However, he also makes Socrates defend the associated notion of epistemological objectivity. He defends this objective standard on the basis of the ultimately self-refuting character of epistemological relativism. Socrates refutes the Protagorean, relativistic ontology which he describes with characteristic economy (*Tht.* 169d3-171e9). As Sedley maintains, Socrates’ critique of “the measure doctrine boils down to the following:”

“(1) Many people believe that there are false beliefs.
Therefore,
(2) if all beliefs are true, there are false beliefs;
(3) if not all beliefs are true, there are false beliefs.
(4) therefore, either way, there are false beliefs.”³⁶⁵

The fact that people disagree with the view that there is only true opinion is proof that the view that all opinions are true is false. If the opinion of people who think that there are false opinions is false, then there is a false opinion... namely, their own opinion that there is a false opinion. This accounts for the close attention to the nature of falsity and illusion, in the *Sophist*, and the consideration of the possibility of expressing that which is not. Plato makes Socrates, his most sympathetic character, ultimately, reject this view, because it is both epistemologically and ethically dishonest.

³⁶⁵ Sedley, D., *Ibid.*

The *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* together do help to fully explain the nature of purely propositional modes of interpreting reality. The phantasm is introduced, in the course of the discussion, to describe images and statements which are false or distortions. As Notomi recognizes, this capacity to make a false judgment by making use of relativity is captured in the word phantasm:

“Here, ‘*phantasia*’ means ‘appearing’ as in ‘it appears to someone that’, and that can be replaced in this argument by ‘perceiving’. In this introduction appearance is restricted to perceptual appearance, but later the range of Protagorean doctrine is enlarged to cover” ethical “non-perceptual judgments (*doxa*) (cf. 170a3-4): for example, to judge that someone is wise.”³⁶⁶

In the *Sophist*, the Eleatic Visitor introduces a characterization of the *elenchic* practice of using the method of collection and division. This antecedes an exposition of the logical fundamentals of the distinction between strictly propositional truth and falsity. At the same time, the Visitor’s scientific characterization of the *elenchus*, through division, evocatively echoes Socrates’ earlier self-characterization as practitioner of maieutic art in the *Theaetetus*. Furthermore, the Eleatic Visitor actual develops, with greater additional technicality, the underlying distinction between truth and falsity. Evocatively, by characterizing Socrates as a noble sophist, the Visitor echoes Socrates’ own heedful self-admonition in the voice of Protagoras in the *Theaetetus*. Multiple layers of distancing are at play, Plato classifies and characterizes his own central philosopher through a strange Visitor hailing from Elea.

The method of collection and division is applied in seven successively more adequate definitions of the sophist. The sixth definition clearly bears a close association with Socratic practice. In the sixth division, the Eleatic Visitor describes the “sophist” as one who “purifies souls of beliefs that interfere with learning” and this ‘sophist’ “looks a lot like Socrates.”³⁶⁷ The exchange in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* reveals aspects of the philosopher in association

³⁶⁶ Notomi, N., *Unity of Sophist*, op. cit., p. 264.

³⁶⁷ Gill, M.L., “Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s *Sophist* and *Statesman*,” in op. cit., p. 9-10.

and in contradistinction with the sophist and statesman. The Visitor is self-conscious in advancing the question of this charge. The “Stranger queries using the label “sophist” in this case and calls the art he has just uncovered the “noble” art of sophistry.”³⁶⁸ Dorion eloquently characterizes the Visitor’s definition, in the *Sophist*, of the Socratic *elenchus* as a kind of noble sophistic, describing the effects of this practice on interlocutors:

“They lose their inflated and rigid beliefs about themselves that way, and no loss is pleasanter to hear or has a more lasting effect on them. Doctors who work on the body think it can’t benefit from any food that’s offered to them until what’s interfering with them from outside is removed. The people who cleanse the soul (οἱ καθαίροντες), my young friend, likewise think the soul, too, won’t get any advantage from any learning that’s offered to it until someone shames it by refuting it (πρὶν ἂν ἐλέγχων τις τὸν ἐλεγχόμεν εἰς αἰσχύνην καταστήσας), removes the opinions that interfere with learning (τοῖς μαθήμασιν), and exhibits its cleansed (καθαρὸς), believing that it knows only those things that it doesn’t know, and nothing more-”

“Theaetetus: That’s the best and most healthy minded (σωφρονεστατή) way to be.”

“Visitor: For all these reasons, Theaetetus, we have to say that refutation (ἐλεγχος) is the principal and most important kind of cleansing.”³⁶⁹

The Eleatic Visitor is constantly stressing the need for the dialectician to attain a proper understanding of universal Forms and to produce correct judgments: “Indeed, the Sixth definition of the *Sophist* allows us to understand in what sense Socrates is a new kind of educator: if the teacher transmits knowledge to his students, it remains true to say that Socrates was nobody’s teacher.”³⁷⁰ My view is that definition, essential form and argumentative refutation are linked throughout Plato’s work. Both the *elenchus* and collection and division are complementary facets of the same underlying rational search for understanding, and so Plato does not treat them as completely distinct or dissociated techniques. Rather, Plato portrays and dramatizes characters using both techniques in the

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ Dorion, L.A., “Aristotle’s Definition of Elenchus in Light of Plato’s *Sophist*,” in *op. cit.*, p. 252.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

discussions about ethical questions. Furthermore, the logical techniques of definition and demonstration are dialectical, in a sense, only insofar as they pertain to ethical questions.

The two logical methods, definition and demonstration, are complementary aspects of dialectic exchange and not completely distinct forms of dialectic practice, an earlier dialectic and a later dialectic. According to a developmental account, such as that of Robinson or Stenzel, Plato, in the later dialogues, supplements this middle period characterization of dialectic method as a form of demonstration by offering methodological expositions of a different logical technique, the inductive and empirical method of collection and division (*Phdr.* 266c). However, this form of naïve developmentalism, as Lane has called it, is not necessary if we recognize that Plato uses the dialogue form to exposit different modes of argumentation, different styles of dialectical reasoning and different ways of talking about paradigms in different places. If dialectic can be regarded as a form of ethical dialogue, such ethical questioning can involve not only the practice of logical, geometric style techniques of definition and demonstration but also the use of analogies and to some extent mythic narratives used for the purpose of moral explanation. The purpose of turning to these techniques is a part of interior self-exploration as much as knowing about the external world.

This technical distinction between truth and falsity is fundamental for logic. However, it also opens the door to a space between logic, between strict truth and falsity, the realm of the probable, the fictional and fantastic and imaginary, as much as the realm of possibly true beliefs which fall outside of ordinary strictures of rational thought. This is why there is, ultimately, a turn away from strict geometric and arithmetic modes of reasoning, characteristic of the exchanges in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, towards a fuller embrace of rhetoric and narrative composition in the *Statesman*. But before turning to this, let us return to the matter of fact and falsity.

2.3 Truth and Falsity and the Plausible or Possible

Plato, in the course of the *Theatetus*, *Sophist*, presents the most rigorous characterization of logical modes of discourse. This has been interpreted as laying the ground for a sort of distinction between propositional truth and falsity. Even this, however, like the use of the notion of fiction is a superimposition of a modern concept into an ancient context. Indeed, it does not completely reflect Plato's own usage, and the very shift from the *Sophist* and *Statesman* seems designed to undermine the sense that there is an absolute or rigid distinction between logos and myth. However, interpreters are still not wrong to see in the *Sophist* Plato's most rigorous effort to distinguish between the true and false statement or proposition. Once we distinguish between the 'identity', 'existential' and 'predicative' senses of 'is', we can avoid asserting, on the basis of a misunderstanding of the principle of non-contradiction, that complex statements are somehow always contradictory.³⁷¹

Socrates anticipates this discussion of logic using the paradigm of grammar and letters (τοῦ λόγου...τὰ παραδείγματα) in the context of attempting to determine the nature of the statement or rational account (*Tht.* 202e4). This is the introduction not of mere grammar but what the tradition and we ourselves have come to call logic. Plato implies the need to use logical 'terms' or the elements as parts of a statement or proposition in the *Theaetetus*. Socrates introduces the notion of a "Dream Theory" according to which rational statements can be understood (*Tht.* 201d-202c). David Sedley provides a highly economical list of the "[s]even principles which underlie" what Socrates calls his "Dream Theory".³⁷² However,

³⁷¹ Kahn, C., "On Some Philosophical Uses of the Verb 'To Be'," *Phronesis*, 26, 1981, p. 117. "What follows for the One here is that both Being (οὐσία) and Not-Being (μὴ οὐσία) belong to it, since (i) it is *not* by hypothesis ("it does not exist"), but (ii) the argument shows that it must also have a share in *being* something, namely, being non-existent (τῷ ἐνί, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἔστι, τοῦ εἶναι ἀνάγκη μετεῖναι εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι 162B5-6). Since for the One in this hypothesis the possible being is that of the (veridical) copula, when the negative being is that of the predicate "exists", there is no real contradiction."

³⁷² Sedley, D., *op. cit.*, p. 154. "(1) Complex things have a *logos*, which consists in a list of their elements, which for this very reason, their elements themselves do not have a *logos*, since what is authentically an element is not further reducible to elements of its own."

"(2) Elements can be named."

"(3) Elements viewed as such, cannot have anything further said of them, not even that they 'are.'"

this dream theory, which represents an effort to arrive at the indefinable elements or letter terms of statements, actually leads to a recognition that indefinable elements are never completely isolated and can only be grasped through combinations.

Socrates presents in the *Theaetetus* this conception of basic, indefinable units of language without any mention of universal Forms. As Burnyeat holds, the analysis of a statement or proposition should bring us down to simple ‘names’ which cannot be further analyzed or defined.³⁷³ However, in point of fact, this aspiration is misguided, since “[n]o such statement is possible.”³⁷⁴ Indeed, the simple element which Socrates posits in the *Theaetetus* is supposed not to be a complex but an indefinable word. Thus, the “only word that belongs uniquely and exclusively to an element is a name.”³⁷⁵ However, even unique names are capable of designating more than one individual. The name ‘Socrates’ can apply not only to one Socrates but to another individual named Socrates. In order to produce meaningful individual and universal statements, we need to combine such names as ‘man’ or ‘Socrates’ with verbs and adjectives. In logical terms, we need to combine subjects with predicates. Individual letters only make sense with reference to syllables and syllables with words. In a similar manner, individual names only make sense in organic relation and combination with other words. This process of rationally identifying and judging separate qualities in an individual enables us to distinguish between Socrates and Theaetetus, or between the Elder Socrates and the Younger Socrates.

Grammar is associated with rhetoric, which is the competency of the sophist. Yet Plato makes both Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor propose this comparison with grammar to explain dialectic. In the context of the *Sophist*, Plato is talking about discerning the scientific

“(4) Elements are unknowable but complexes are knowable (plus truly judgeable).”

“(5) Elements are perceptible.”

“(6) All things, us included, consist of elements.”

“(7) Letters of the alphabet are examples of elements; syllables are examples of complexes.”

³⁷³ Burnyeat, M., *op. cit.*, p. 157.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

relation which exists between different essential or formal types, without really adequately differentiating between deductive and inductive technique.

The grammarian knows “which kinds of letters can associate with which [οἶδεν ὁποῖα ὁποίοις δυνατὰ κοινωνεῖν]” and this person is an “expert [τέχνης]” in so doing (*Sph.* 253a7-10). The paradigm which the Visitor turns to in the *Sophist* and which he calls explicitly the paradigm of paradigms in the *Statesman* is the art of grammar (τέχνης ... τῆς γραμματικῆς) (*Sph.* 253a10-11). The Visitor explains that more “than the other letters the vowels run through all of them like a bond, linking them together” (*Sph.* 253a). This linking comparison is meant to make us see that “without a vowel no one of the others can fit with another” (*Sph.* 253a). Letters, vowels and consonants exist in certain combinations. The grammarian understands which combinations work and which do not.³⁷⁶

The analogy explains the art of grammar, but he is using it to explain a higher order use of language—namely, logic. This grammar analogy applies as much to the identification of essential kinds, the inductive definition of universal essences from individual paradigms or inductively selected examples, as it applies to single sentences. Plato is talking about how natural or artificial classes of entity relate to one another. Through the method of collection and division, he takes visible models and defines their essential nature, differentiating natural and artificial types from all other universal kinds. The Visitor emphasizes the need for the speaker to weave together words with measure. He says that “we’ve agreed that kinds mix with each other in the same way” (*Sph.* 253b10).³⁷⁷ The dialectician or philosopher is a person who can convey to us or “show us” through the application of correct reasoning

³⁷⁶ In music, this is the case with “high and low notes” [περὶ τοὺς τῶν ὀξέων καὶ βαρέων φθόγγους] and the “musician is the one with the expertise [τέχνην ἔχων γινώσκειν μουσικός] to know which ones mix and which ones don’t, and the unmusical person is the one who doesn’t understand that” (*Sophist*, 253b). The Visitor, in the context of the *Sophist*, has chiefly in mind appropriate combinations of kinds when using the method of collection and division.

³⁷⁷ τί δ’; ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὰ γένη πρὸς ἄλληλα κατὰ ταῦτα μείζεως ἔχειν ὡμολογήκαμεν, ἄρ’ οὐ μετ’ ἐπιστήμης τινὸς ἀναγκαῖον διὰ τῶν λόγων πορεύεσθαι τὸν ὀρθῶς μέλλοντα δεῖξαι ποῖα ποίοις συμφωνεῖ τῶν γενῶν καὶ ποῖα ἄλληλα οὐ δέχεται; καὶ δὴ καὶ διὰ πάντων εἰ συνέχοντ’ ἅτ’ αὐτ’ ἐστίν, ὥστε συμμείγνυσθαι δυνατὰ εἶναι, καὶ πάλιν ἐν ταῖς διαιρέσεσιν, εἰ δι’ ὅλων ἕτερα τῆς διαιρέσεως αἵτια;

“which kinds harmonize with which and which kinds exclude each other” (*Sph.* 253b10-c2). Such a person has “some kind of knowledge [μετ’ ἐπιστήμης] as he proceeds through the discussion“ (*Sph.* 253b10c1). This passage is of tremendous importance for understanding the *Sophist*: “So there clearly must be a science which considers what “concepts” will “blend” so as to give rise to “discourses” (λόγοι) and what will not, and again whether there is a class of concepts which, like the vowels in spelling, make all combinations possible, and another class which gives rise to distinctions (253c).”³⁷⁸ But there is an even more elevated, more general and more universal level of reality which one who practices collection and division can reach: “And in addition doesn’t he have to know whether there are any kinds that run through all of them and link them together to make them capable of blending [συμμείγνυσθαι]” (*Sph.* 253c2). Also, the dialectician must determine “when there are divisions [ἐν ταῖς διαιρέσεσιν], whether certain kinds running through the wholes are always the cause of division” (*Sph.* 253c1-3). Higher kinds like ‘sameness’ and ‘difference’ are extremely generic and run through many lower types. However, higher natural genera include ‘animals’ or ‘plants’. By blending these kinds properly we arrive at the definitions of individual species, like the human species.

Here, the importance of identifying and characterizing universal Forms is unmistakable. Theatetus suggests that this “requires knowledge” and “probably just the most important kind [ἐπιστήμης δεῖ, καὶ σχεδόν γε ἴσως τῆς μεγίστης]” of knowledge (*Sph.* 253c4-5). The Visitor never denies the importance of the method of collection and division as a dialectical procedure:

“Visitor: So, Theaetetus, what shall we label this knowledge? Or for heaven’s sake, without noticing have we stumbled on the knowledge that free people have [ἐλάθομεν εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐλευθέρων ἐμπεσόντες ἐπιστήμην]? Maybe we’ve found the philosopher even though we were looking for the sophist [κινδυνεύομεν ζητοῦντες τὸν σοφιστὴν πρότερον ἀνηυρηκέναι τὸν φιλόσοφον]” (*Sph.* 253c6-9)?

³⁷⁸ Taylor, A.E., *op. cit.*, p. 387.

This passage has led Stenzel to argue that collection and division is simply the “divine” in mythic language or the scientific method of dialectic. Plato’s dialectic is generalized and freed, according to Stenzel, from applying merely to the discussion of ethical virtues and passions but encompasses the natural essences, as much as the character of artificial entities and geometric objects. That is to say, all of the foundations of what we now call science. This includes classifications of protons and neutrons, as well as the chemical elements of the periodic table, elements like Oxygen, Hydrogen and Carbon. However, it also extends to biological types of species and plants, from extinct glyptodonts, to the penguins of Antarctica.

The Visitor defines “expertise in dialectic [τῆς διαλεκτικῆς...ἐπιστήμης]” as being able “to divide things by kinds [τὸ κατὰ γένη διαιρεῖσθαι] and not to think that the same form is a different one or that a different form is the same [μήτε ταὐτὸν εἶδος ἕτερον ἡγήσασθαι μήτε ἕτερον ὄν ταὐτὸν]” (*Sph.* 253d1-3). However, he does, in the *Statesman*, as we have seen in the previous section, qualify his statement that the correct use of collection and division in itself is the purpose of dialectical inquiry. Rather, the Visitor believes that the purpose of using such techniques is to seek the higher ethical order of meaning. Yet the recognition of the character of essences, even of ordinary artificial and natural entities, can lead to a grasp of natures of a higher, ethical order.

Plato, in the *Republic*, declares that poets lack the basic scientific understanding of reality which would ground a capacity to make effective and balanced use of such images. The poet, indeed, lacks a suitable empirical knowledge of natural and artificial entities. Socrates explains, in the *Republic*, that “a poetic imitator uses words and phrases [τοῖς ὀνόμασι καὶ ῥήμασιν] to paint colored pictures of each of them” (*Rep.* 601a4-5). The poet uses these verbal images “in such a way that others, as ignorant as he, who judge by words, will think he speaks extremely well about cobblery or generalship or anything else whatever,

provided-so great is the natural charm of these things-that he speaks with meter, rhythm, and harmony, for if you strip the poet's works of their musical colorings and take them by themselves, I think you know what they look like" (*Rep.* 601a-b). In *Republic* X, Socrates is at one with the Eleatic Visitor in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* in assuming the need for close familiarity with the essence of geometric figures and number, as well as the essence of natural and artificial entities.

Homer, Hesiod and dramatists do not, according to Socrates' account, even possess an empirical understanding of the products of artificial crafts like cobblery, metal-working or weaving. In the words of Socrates, "a maker of an image-an imitator [ὁ τοῦ εἰδώλου ποιητής, ὁ μιμητής]-knows nothing about that which is [τοῦ μὲν ὄντος] but only about its appearance [τοῦ δὲ φαινομένου]" (*Rep.* 601b9-c2). A "cobbler and metal-worker" would make the "reins and mouth-bit" for the saddle of a horse and the "horseman" would be skilled at riding (*Rep.* 601c10-14). However, the "painter does not know how the reins and mouth-bit have to be" (*Rep.* 601c7-8). This, further, "holds for everything" as for each thing there are these three crafts, one that uses it, one that makes it, and one that imitates it" (*Rep.* 601d1). Just as the painter merely imitates the image, the speaker merely produces a verbal image of the entity he represents. The poet, however, lacks an understanding of the essence of the paradigm or original which he copies. It can be inferred from this that they also lack an understanding of the essential natural entities, like animals and plants, which they portray.

The identification of particular types, like "human" in relation with features like "biped" enables us to recognize permanent, intelligible structures in empirical reality. The Visitor thinks that one who can divide "according to kinds" will be "capable of adequately discriminating a single form spread out all through a lot of other things [μίαν ἰδέαν διὰ πολλῶν]" (*Sph.* 253d5-6). This is why collection and division can be used in dialectic exchange, and why it is a more developed expression of the earlier, Socratic attempt to define

formal essences. This method enables one to formulate a *logos* which is an account of the one in many for any given named entity.

“Visitor: So if a person can do that, he’ll be capable of adequately discriminating a single form spread out all through a lot of other things, each of which stands separate from the others. In addition he can discriminate forms that are different from each other but are included within a single form that’s outside them, or a single form that’s connected as a unit throughout many wholes, or many forms that completely separate from others. That’s what it is to know how to discriminate by kinds how things can associate and how they can’t” (*Sph.* 253d5-e2).³⁷⁹

This dialectic method is like argumentative refutation in the sense that it can be applied generally. Any statement might be subject to elenctic refutation. Thus, any natural or artificial entity might be given a universal and essential definition. A proposed definition is meant to represent an idealized possibility, but we humans can never have complete assurance that we have finally reached the sought truth. This accounts for the enduring importance of the Socratic method, which is always able to undermine the belief that one knows or has definitively reached the truth.

Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor call philosophy and dialectic a love of wisdom rather than wisdom. The Visitor is careful to assert that one can “assign this dialectical activity only to someone who has a pure and just love of wisdom” (*Sph.* 253e).³⁸⁰ Not only does elenctic practice enable us to challenge inadequate definitions, Plato explains that drawing together kinds in a way that is thoughtless and disassociated from a search for truth is actually, itself, a form of *eristic*.

The Eleatic Visitor only hints at the use of paradigm to provide a visible model for higher, invisible realities in the *Sophist*. This is an appropriate choice on Plato’s part, because the major task of the *Sophist* is to define the sophist as a pretender to wisdom, an

³⁷⁹ οὐκοῦν ὃ γε τοῦτο δυνατὸς δρᾶν μίαν ιδέαν διὰ πολλῶν, ἐνὸς ἐκάστου κειμένου χωρὶς, πάντα διατεταμένην ἱκανῶς διαισθάνεται, καὶ πολλὰς ἐτέρας ἀλλήλων ὑπὸ μιᾶς ἔξωθεν περιεχομένης, καὶ μίαν αὖ δι’ ὅλων πολλῶν ἐν ἐνὶ συνημμένῃ, καὶ πολλὰς χωρὶς πάντῃ διωρισμένης· τοῦτο δ’ ἔστιν, ἢ τε κοινωνεῖν ἕκαστα δύναται καὶ ὅπῃ μὴ, διακρίνειν κατὰ γένος ἐπίστασθαι.

³⁸⁰ ἀλλὰ μὴν τό γε διαλεκτικὸν οὐκ ἄλλω δώσεις, ὥς ἐγὼμαι, πλὴν τῷ καθαρῶς τε καὶ δικαίως φιλοσοφοῦντι.

image-maker who produces false judgments and false statements. The overwhelming emphasis of the discussion about dialectic and philosophy, in the *Sophist*, takes the form of the consideration of the nature of the true and false statement, as well as an explanation of the method of collection and division as a means of articulating universal statements on the basis of observable examples. Plato's purpose, in the *Sophist*, is to show that the grammatical, logical and ethical acumen of the philosophical dialectician is superior to the grammatical, logical awareness of the sophist.

Even in the *Sophist*, Plato has his Visitor emphasize that their discussion about the sophist and philosopher is an exercise. He avows the limits of our capacity to define what the philosopher is with complete assurance. The higher, ethical dimension of philosophical dialectic makes philosophy beyond any particular method or technique. Plato's Visitor, nevertheless, stresses the proximity the philosopher bears to the sophist.

“Visitor: We'll find that the philosopher will always be in a location like this if we look for him. He's hard to see clearly too, but not in the same way as the sophist” (*Sph.* 254a).³⁸¹

The Visitor explains, using the light analogy, that the “sophist runs off into the darkness of *that which is not* [εἰς τὴν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος σκοτεινότητα], which he's had practice dealing with, and he's hard to see because the place is so dark (*Sph.* 254a4-5).” This is an embellished description which echoes the language of the central books of the *Republic*. However, as we shall see, here the Visitor is describing, along with the discernment of stable essence, the reality of the factually true proposition and the unreality of the false proposition.

“Visitor: But the philosopher always uses reasoning to stay near the form [τῇ τοῦ ὄντος ἀεὶ διὰ λογισμῶν προσκείμενος ἰδέα], being. He isn't at all easy to see because that area is so bright and the eyes of most people's souls can't bear to look at what's divine” (*Sph.* 254a8-10).

³⁸¹ τὸν μὲν δὴ φιλόσοφον ἐν τοιοῦτῳ τινὶ τόπῳ καὶ νῦν καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνευρήσομεν ἐὰν ζητῶμεν, ἰδεῖν μὲν χαλεπὸν ἐναργῶς καὶ τοῦτον, ἕτερον μὴν τρόπον ἢ τε τοῦ σοφιστοῦ χαλεπότης ἢ τε τούτου.

This visual comparison is very important. The poet or sophist creates dark and unreal illusions or phantasms, making reality with the illusion of truth. They create illusory statements which betray an incapacity to understand true reality, the Formal essences of natural and artificial entities. However, this lack of a grasp of things and their essence also inhibits their capacity to reach higher, ethical insights.

“Visitor: We’ll think about the philosopher more clearly soon if we want to. But as far as the sophist is concerned we obviously shouldn’t give up until we’ve gotten a good enough look at him” (*Sph.* 254b4-5).

The sense that we give to our particular experiences is, for Plato, an effluence of this higher, Formal reality. It is, for this reason, somewhat reassuring that the Visitor merely uses the ordinary and familiar comparison of weaving to describe the process by which we bring together the parts of a sentence. Visitor claims that it is the “weaving together of forms [εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν ὁ λόγος] is what makes speech possible for us” (*Sph.* 259e5-6). As he will say below, we need to bring together the Form of ‘man’ with the Form of ‘learns’ in order to say simply that ‘man learns’. ‘Theaetetus learns’ would actually be unintelligible as a statement if ‘Theaetetus’ were understood as the indefinite array of fluctuating aspects which he would be if he were not essentially, in the first place, a man with qualities.

The weaving analogy is important, because we do not merely weave Forms correctly. We can weave the Forms badly. Just as existing statesmen, the Visitor will later say, revisiting the grammar paradigm, weave together cities that are imperfect, the sophist can weave together imperfect sentences which are false and illusory. The *Sophist*, thus, introduces the rigorous differentiation of true propositions from illusory or false ones. As the Visitor says, the mimetic creation of illusions encompasses not only painting but the “class includes all the plastic, dramatic, rhetorical, and literary arts.”³⁸² Philips recognizes that “in saying that their products” of artists “are not what they appear to be, we are denying them

³⁸² Philips, J.A., *art. cit.*, p. 459.

existence in the full sense.”³⁸³ The philosopher and dialectician needs to be formed in grammar, and this provides a basis for reasoning and the use of more advanced techniques of definition and argumentation.

These techniques, which we now call logic, establish for us a technical distinction between the true and the false, illusion and reality. Philips recognizes that, in the *Sophist*, the question of *phantasma* leads to the Visitor’s treatment of being and non-being, as well as the question of how statements about things which do not exist are possible.

“How can anything be said not to be what it appears to be? Then we must say that not-being is. And so the divisions of the mimetic craft have launched us into the problems of not-being. Even though we cannot affirm that the products of mimesis are invested in the panoply of existence, even though being and reality and truth cannot be predicated of them (and we agree they cannot), we must nevertheless affirm that they somehow are-and so that non-being is-or we must acknowledge defeat and abandon our inquiry into the nature of the sophist. So we embark on the discussion of non-being.”³⁸⁴

Plato says that poets and sophists, in their practice of rhetoric, engage in an art of speech and produce *logoi*. However, philosophers and dialecticians use *logoi* as well. Plato explains that the difference between the two is that philosophers seek truth, through rational methods of argumentation and definition, like the elenchus and collection and division, where sophists produce contradictions and illusions. The Visitor explains that if “speech’s being” were not “one kind among *those that are*” then we could “be deprived of philosophy-to mention the most important thing” (*Sph.* 260a5-7).³⁸⁵ The Visitor recalls that “[t]hat which is *not* appeared to us to be one kind among others, but scattered over *those which are* (*Sph.* 260b6-7).³⁸⁶ Illusions are distorted appearances or judgments about things which actually exist.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ πρὸς τὸ τὸν λόγον ἡμῖν τῶν ὄντων ἔν τι γενῶν εἶναι. τούτου γὰρ στερηθέντες, τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, φιλοσοφίας ἂν στερηθεῖμεν: ἔτι δ’ ἐν τῷ παρόντι δεῖ λόγον ἡμᾶς διομολογήσασθαι τί ποτ’ ἔστιν, εἰ δὲ ἀφηρέθημεν αὐτὸ μὴδ’ εἶναι τὸ παράπαν, οὐδὲν ἂν ἔτι πού λέγειν οἴοι τ’ ἡμεν.

³⁸⁶ τὸ μὲν δὴ μὴ ὄν ἡμῖν ἔν τι τῶν ἄλλων γένος ὄν ἀνεφάνη, κατὰ πάντα τὰ ὄντα διεσπαρμένον.

A stick which appears to be bent when placed in water as a result of an optical illusion which is merely apparent, it represents even the superficial appearance of the stick in a distorted and inaccurate way. In the previous section, we noted how, in *Republic X*, the verbal illusions of the poets were likened to a bent stick in water. It is here that we see Plato actually answer how techniques of induction and definition enable a grasp of the essence. The analysis of the logical form of the particular statement enables us to distinguish between the propositionally true and the verbal illusions not only of the poet but the sophist.

2.3.1 True Propositions as Measured Statements and False Propositions as Illusions

Burnyeat notes that one way of recognizing what is happening in the *Theaetetus* with belief and knowledge is to explore dialogues which follow it. Burnyeat recognizes that the “weaving” motif introduced in the *Sophist* applies chiefly to collection and division.

“One way readers can come to grips with these issues [in the *Theaetetus*] is by journeying on to the *Sophist*, *Statesman*, and *Philebus*. (The *Statesman*, which is the sequel-dialogue to the *Sophist* as the *Sophist* is to the *Theaetetus*, is obsessed with the idea of weaving). The three dialogues practice and describe methods of definition which involve both classification and analysis at the same time. Generic kinds are taken as wholes and steadily divided to reach the type or kind under investigation. The type can then be defined by ‘weaving together’ (the image recurs at the culmination of the *Sophist*-268c) the names of the kinds forming the hierarchically structured system within which the type has been located.”³⁸⁷

The weaving of words applies not only to the weaving of Forms, the drawing together of the essential. It also involves the drawing together of words into ordinary statements. Cornford offers the classic account in *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, a work which is simply a translation and commentary of Plato's *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*.³⁸⁸ Indeed, in these dialogues, Plato provides a more thorough account of what we (within the tradition more fully established by Aristotle) would call *logic* than anywhere else in his work. However, the examination is not merely logical but involves an exploration of the epistemological and

³⁸⁷ Burnyeat, M., *op. cit.*, 199.

³⁸⁸ Cornford, F.M., *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1935, p. 309-320.

ontological bases of logical discourse. Plato provides through the discussion between Socrates and Theaetetus first and then Theaetetus and the Eleatic Visitor a treatment of the problem of contradiction. This treatment is typically considered as a treatment of the question of the difference between what modern logicians call the “existential” and “predicative” senses of the verb “to be”. But it could, also, be an exploration of the possibility of what rests between what is and what is not.

The weaving analogy also applies to drawing together much more mundane sentences. Nevertheless, these propositions, which may be either true or false, are of fundamental importance. The Visitor is here laying logical foundations for Socrates’ habitual practice of distinguishing between true and false sentences which we might interpret as factual propositions. This is the very capacity to use logic and science to break the spell of the mythic and poetic imaginary world.

The Visitor deduces that it is, in a sense, necessary to recognize that people are capable of saying that which is not. That is, they are capable of expressing things which are untrue. Plato’s Visitor affirms that “that which is not...blends with belief and speech [δόξη τε καὶ λόγῳ μίγνυται]” (*Sph.* 260b10). The reason is as follows. If *that which is not* “doesn’t blend with” speech “then everything has to be true” (*Sph.* 260c). However, “if” non-being or nothingness does blend with speech, “then there will be false belief and false speech [δόξα τε ψευδὴς γίγνεται καὶ λόγος], since falsity in thinking and speaking amount to believing and saying *those that are not*” (*Sph.* 260c1-4). If “there’s falsity then there’s deception” (*Sph.* 260c). I can believe not only in a Doctor stepping into a police box in Durham, England, but Doctor Who, stepping into the Tardus, to travel to the distant past, visiting the denizens of the lost city of Atlantis.

False propositions, like perceptual illusions, arise when we judge or believe something to be what it is not. The capacity to produce such factually untrue words is what

enables a person to generate sophisms and produce poetic statements. The ability of the sophist or poet is, literally, to make people believe in things which do not exist, like centaurs or unicorns. That is to say, the discussion of phantasms lays the ground for a notion we might superimpose upon the ancient context, the notion of fictionality. But that also means that speech always entails both possibilities. Both true and false beliefs are forms of speech. Rhetoric and dialectic suffuse and interpenetrate each other as purported arts of speech.

Plato uses the example ‘Theaetetus sits’ and ‘Theaetetus flies’ to illustrate his point. One can say that Theaetetus or Socrates flies in the air, through the mere combination of words and, thus, illusorily describe people in a false and unreal manner. One can conjure up this image in a person’s mind. This careful exploration of the nature a factual or propositional truth and falsity is the central theme of the *Sophist*.

Plato’s exercise in defining the sophist brings a deeper theoretical awareness of the difference between true statements and false or illusory ones. The Visitor maintains that “if there’s deception then necessarily the world will be full of copies, likenesses and appearances [εἰδώλων τε καὶ εἰκόνων ἤδη καὶ φαντασίας]” (*Sph.* 260c9). The Visitor believes that “the sophist [σοφιστήν] had escaped into this region” (*Sph.* 260c10-11). However, the Visitor claims that when the sophist did this, he “denied that there has come to be or is such a thing as falsity [τὸ παράπαν μὴδ’ εἶναι ψεῦδος]” (*Sph.* 260d1-2). According to Plato, the sophist “has denied that anyone either thinks or says *that which is not*, on the ground *that which is not* never in any way has a share [μετέχειν] in being” (*Sph.* 260d). The Visitor moves from speculations about the nature of existence or reality to a consideration of speech.

The ability to make something which does not exist appear to exist is the source of falsehood. One cannot think that the “copy-making and appearance making [εἰδωλοποιικήν καὶ φανταστικήν]” which the sophist does practice do “not exist [παντάπασιν οὐκ ἔστιν]” (*Sph.* 260d8-e1). Copy-makers and image-makers exist. If such appearance makers did not

exist, there would be no falsity. According to such a scheme, “belief and speech” do not associate “with that which is not [ἐπειδὴ δόξα καὶ λόγος οὐ κοινωνεῖ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος], and that without this association falsity totally is not” (*Sph.* 260e1-2). Yet the Visitor will show that there is such a thing as false belief and such a thing as a false statement.

An explicit association between belief or judgment and speech occurs in the following passages. Plato’s Visitor proposes to “take up speech [λόγον] and belief [δόξαν]” (*Sph.* 261c5-6). In this way, they “can calculate whether *that which is not* comes into contact with” belief and speech. The other possibility would be that belief and speech are “both totally true and neither one is ever false” (*Sph.* 261c9). This second possibility is the one which the Visitor and Theaetetus reject.

Owen recognizes that *Sophist* positively treats ‘nothing’ and ‘something’ in the absence of “a study of subject predicate structure in the account of existence[.]”³⁸⁹ Frede offers an interpretation of “Plato’s discussion concerning statement.”³⁹⁰ Frede maintains that central to this discussion “is the claim that a statement minimally has two parts, a name (*onoma*) and a verb (*rhema*), as Plato identifies the two kinds of parts.”³⁹¹ In logical terms, the subject and predicate join together to produce a statement. However, these interpretations overlook what follows, after the *Sophist*. As noted above, rhetoric, the word, is connected to *rhema*, another Greek word for words. The connected exercise which follows the logical exercise in the *Sophist* is a dialectical exercise in rhetoric, enabled by this earlier exchange.

The Visitor then explains the two constituent elements of the smallest grammatical or logical unit which can be considered meaningful speech (λόγος). The first “kind is called names [ὀνόματα] and the other is called verbs [ρήματα]” (*Sph.* 262a1).³⁹² In order for a

³⁸⁹ Owen, G.E.L., “Plato on Not-Being,” in *Logic, Science and Dialectic: Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1986, p. 35.

³⁹⁰ Frede, M., “Plato’s *Sophist* on False Statements,” *Cambridge Companion to Plato*, in *op. cit.*, p. 413.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

³⁹² The Visitor states that “a name is a kind of spoken sign that’s applied to things that perform an action” (*Sph.* 262a). The “verb” is “as sort of indication that’s applied to an action” (*Sph.* 262a). According to the Visitor,

statement, an assertion which is either true or false, we need to combine a subject with a predicate (*Sph.* 262c). The Visitor proposes a simple statement, “man learns [‘ἄνθρωπος μανθάνει,']” as an example of the “shortest and simplest kind of speech [λόγον]” (*Sph.* 262c9-10). The above example of the ‘weather is cold’ is a similar instance of a simple sentence.

Plato explains the nature of the true and false statement. The Visitor imagines “thought and speech the same, except that what we call thought [διάνοια] is speech that occurs without the voice, inside the soul in conversation with itself” (*Sph.* 263d). When thought articulates speech out loud “the stream of sound from the soul that goes through the mouth is called speech [λόγος]” (*Sph.* 263e). Statements can be affirmed, but we “know that speech [ἐν λόγοις]” we can choose to make either an “affirmation” or a “denial [φάσιν τε καὶ ἀπόφασιν]” (*Sph.* 263e11-12). That is, I can say the ‘weather is not cold’ or ‘man does not learn’. When either the “affirmation or denial occurs as silent thought inside the soul, wouldn’t you call that belief” (*Sph.* 264a1-2). People, evidently, carry inside of their souls or minds a mixture of true and false beliefs about the world and reality. Many of these beliefs are false, some of these beliefs are possible, but only some must be true. Rhetoric can make anyone believe anything, but philosophy is supposed to make people believe what is true. This is what enables Plato to portray his philosophical dialectician, Socrates, as an ideal philosopher who scrutinizes and examines statements. He uses the elenchus to test beliefs and to refute falsehoods by showing when they conflict with other known truths.

names and verbs “fit together with speech [λόγος]” and “the simplest and smallest kind of speech...would arise from that first weaving [ἡ πρώτη συμπλοκή] of name and verb together” (*Sph.* 262c).” This is the origin of the notion of a grammatically complete sentence. Plato explains how the different parts of speech work together. The Visitor holds that “no speech [λόγος] is formed just from names spoken in a row, and also not from verbs that are spoken without names” (*Sph.* 262a). To string together a series of names produces a meaningless expression, for instance, “if somebody says ‘lion stag horse’ [then] the series wouldn’t make up speech [λόγος]” (*Sph.* 262c). To string a series of verbs together, for “example, ‘walks runs sleeps,’ is just as meaningless and also “wouldn’t be speech [λόγον]” (*Sophist*, 262b). These sentences are, simply put, ungrammatical. However, they are, also, logically meaningless.

Plato gives an example of a proposition which is true and a false proposition. Both represent something. The Visitor asks Theaetetus if he “can tell” him “what” the statement he has made is “about” (*Sph.*262e). The first statement the Visitor makes is “Theaetetus sits [‘Θεαίτητος κάθηται.’]” (*Sph.*263a2). And he says that it is “not a long piece of speech [μὴ μακρὸς ὁ λόγος]” but one which is, literally, “measured [μέτριος]” (*Sph.*263a). The Visitor tells Theaetetus that it is his “job to tell” the Visitor “what it’s about, what’s it of” (*Sph.*263a).¹ Theaetetus answers: “Clearly, it’s about me” (*Sph.* 263a). Next, however, the Visitor introduces a second statement about Theaetetus. The Visitor offers a second statement: “Theaetetus (to whom I’m now talking) flies [‘Θεαίτητος, ὃ νῦν ἐγὼ διαλέγομαι, πέτεται.’]” (*Sph.* 263a9). Both express a “quality [ποιόν]” and the quality is either truth or falsity. Theaetetus recognizes that the “second” statement is “false” while the first statement “is true” (*Sph.* 263b2-3). The false statement is not meaningless sound, but it is untrue or unreal.

The Visitor, in the *Sophist*, follows up Socrates’ exposition, in the *Theaetetus*, in order to show how unreality enters into human mind, through belief, or, more accurately, false belief. A non-existent state of affairs can be depicted through composing a false sentence (*Sph.* 262a-263b). A true statement or proposition, to put it simply, creates a picture of an existing state of affairs. “Theaetetus sits” is a sentence which accurately depicts the state of affairs when the name corresponding to Theaetetus carries out the action, expressed through the verb or predicate “sitting”. One can combine the name “Theaetetus” with a verb or predicate such as “flying”.³⁹³ In this way, Plato has provided a way of explaining how visual illusion or falsity can arise. The capacity that we have, as dialecticians, to draw words together enables us to speak in a way that is either true or false.

Sx= x sits.

Fx = x is flies.

³⁹³ Cornford, F.M., *op. cit.*, p. 314-316.

Sx

$\sim Fx$

$(\exists x)Sx$

$(\exists x) \sim Fx$

This existential instantiation of a particular statement is anticipated in the Visitor's discussion of the factual truth and untruth of different propositions about Theaetetus. However, the logical consideration of predication is not entirely separate from the ethical domain. Judgment applies not only to perceptible reality but the intellectual qualities of the mind or soul.

Reasoning, thus, stretches beyond mere surface description. The Visitor is not only presenting a case of the truth and false. In so doing, he opens a space for the possible. This could be expressed in terms of modal logical notation. No interpreter, in my reckoning, has yet suggested that Theaetetus possibly flies.

$\Diamond Fx$

Plato certainly does not say that one can never say that anyone flies. Many people fly in Plato's myths. The *Myth of the Phaedrus* is a case in point. Theodorus can misdescribe Theaetetus as ugly, when he should describe him as beautiful, since this reflects the purposeful order of his soul (*Tht.* 189d-190d).³⁹⁴ This mischaracterization emerges out of a lack of awareness of the higher importance of Theaetetus soul, his intellectual and spiritual beauty. This turn to ethical qualities like Goodness and Beauty requires a shift from mere factual and propositional truth and falsity, an open stance towards what is possible or probable or believable or credible, rather than what simply understood to be or not to be. Beautiful souls fly high, and this is part of what the discussion of the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* are supposed to prepare for.

³⁹⁴ Burnyeat, M., *The Theaetetus of Plato, with trans. Of M.J. Levett*, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1990, 81.

These kinds of normative essences are frequently discussed in dialogues like the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*. The interior order of the soul is, however, sometimes better explored through the use of paradigms or images which convey these deeper ethical truths in a more vivid manner. At the same time, the awareness of how to formulate a true or false statement is a base consideration in the cultivation of dialectical technique. Through logic, the Visitor has broken the spell of the sophist, just as Socrates, in *Republic X*, had broken the spell of the poet. Plato shows both Socrates and the Visitor breaking the spell merely to cast their own, to present their own fantastic descriptions and mythical narratives. An awareness of the nature of truth and falsity, is, as we shall see in the next section, an important dimension for the appreciation of the ethical or practical significance of fictional and embellished myth. The myth is not so much about truth or falsity but the domain of belief, the imaginable, the possible, and this is why it is related to rhetorical and even narrative or mythic composition.

Dialectic method, conceived as logic, is a practice of examining statements. The aim can be to establish inferential validity or to discern an essential or real kind. However, it must, also, be, in certain cases at least, to establish whether a particular or singular proposition is actually true and false. Kahn points out that the *Cratylus* supplements the account in “the *Sophist*” where Plato “is concerned only with the truth and falsity of complete sentences.”³⁹⁵ The “point is simply that the use or application of ὀνόματα can go wrong.”³⁹⁶ This

³⁹⁵ Kahn, C., “Language and Ontology in the *Cratylus*,” in *Exegesis and Argument*, E.N. Lee, A.P.D. Mourelatos, R.M. Rorty ed., Humanities Press, New York, 1973, p. 161.

³⁹⁶ Kahn, C., “Language and Ontology in the *Cratylus*,” p. 161. Much of the discussion in the *Cratylus* takes place between Socrates and his colloquutor, Cratylus. Socrates draws attention to the “possibility of the false use of a name” and goes “against Cratylus” by pointing out that “we may make a mistake either by applying the wrong common noun, like “man” or “woman,” or the wrong proper name, like “Hermogenes son of Smicrion” (*Cratylus*, 429, 431a). We can mistakenly attribute properties to the subjects we describe or to the the names we identify.

Mx = x is a man.

Wx = x is a woman.

misattribution applies as much to perception as intellectual judgment.³⁹⁷ Proper names would, ideally, designate single individuals like Cratylus, Theaetetus or Socrates.

A considerable amount of memory is involved here. Socrates had engaged in an intensive discussion the day before, with *Theaetetus*. Theaetetus learned a considerable amount about grammar, not only letters or the elements or parts of speech, as well as questions about subjects, predicates and the verb “is”, in his discussion with Socrates. This is just before Socrates left to meet the accusation made against him. As Sedley remarks, all of the “ingredients” of this discussion of the true and false statement are present in the *Theaetetus*. This is appropriate, because Socrates’ practice of refuting statements, which he compares to a form of *maeutic* in the *Theaetetus*, and which the Visitor describes as an *elenchus* in the *Sophist*, presupposes these grammatical and logical notions.

Plato portrays Socrates as observing, in language which is compatible with the language of the Visitor but far less abstract than the Visitor, that the verb “is” forms the basis of our capacity to make simple judgments. A “true judgment states what *is* the case.”³⁹⁸ If, for instance, the statement “‘The wind is cold’ is true, the wind *is* cold.”³⁹⁹ The “term ‘being’, then is no high-flown abstraction; it is simply the general notion corresponding to the ordinary everyday use of ‘is’.”⁴⁰⁰ This is the sense in which the weaving of the Forms, the

³⁹⁷ Gonzalez, F., *Dialogue and Dialectic*, op. cit., p. 82. Cratylus maintains that “all names are correctly given” (*Cratylus*, 429b-c). Cratylus defends his position by asking Socrates “how can anyone say the things he says and not say something that is? Doesn’t speaking falsely consist in not saying things that are” (*Cratylus*, 429d)? Socrates counters that what Cratylus is saying amounts to a claim that there is no falsity. The discussion of naming takes place in the *Cratylus*, which is associated with the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. Cratylus holds that a name must completely stand for what it names. As Gonzalez puts it, Socrates thinks that “Cratylus’ standard for what counts as a name is so high that it results in the collapse of the distinction between language and reality.” “Cratylus” effectively maintains that “a name, in order to be a name, must reproduce perfectly and exhaustively all the characteristics of the object that it is supposed to make manifest.” “Socrates” however “points out” that “a perfect imitation would be no imitation but a duplicate of the object imitated (423a-d).” Simply to utter the name, Socrates or Cratylus or Theaetetus, is not, however, to reproduce perfectly all of the characteristics of the named individual.

³⁹⁸ Burnyeat, M., *The Theaetetus of Plato, with trans. Of M.J. Levett*, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1990, 59.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

drawing together of grammatical nouns, verbs and adjectives, of logical subjects and predicates, makes speech possible for us.⁴⁰¹

Socrates and Theaetetus had earlier considered this question in the *Theaetetus*. Socrates shifts from epistemology to ontology in this section, asserting that instead “of ‘knowing or not knowing’, let us take being or not being” (*Tht.* 188c-d). A person “who thinks *what is not* about anything cannot but be thinking what is false (*Tht.* 188c). However, a person who “thinks” must “think something” (*Tht.* 189a). In an absolute sense, Parmenides is correct, “it is impossible to think that which is not” (*Tht.* 189b). However, the Eleatic Visitor, developing further this distinction between otherness and non-being, comes close to saying it. He comes close to implying that he is, in fact, committing an act of intellectual parricide against Plato’s Eleatic Parmenides.

“We do recognise the existence of false judgment as a sort of misjudgment, that occurs when a person interchanges in his mind two things, both of which are, and asserts the one is the other. In this way he is always thinking of something which is but of one thing in place of another, and since he misses the mark he may fairly be said to be judging falsely” (*Tht.* 189b-c).

If, however, the Visitor is saying that you cannot use a greater thing to explain a smaller thing or a like thing to explain something that is unlike, then why does he, himself, in the *Statesman*, introduce the use of a paradigm to provide correct beliefs about two different entities? Why is this not simply a form of deception as well? This must be because the use of paradigms to provide correct beliefs is not about representing a visible affinity between two unlike things but rather an invisible correspondence linking a comparatively more trivial,

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42. 311-312: Footnote 37 Plato, in the above passage of the *Theaetetus*, recognizes adjectives, only implicitly, through the identification of the notion of a *quality*. However, as Burnyeat points out, this is a great innovation on his part, for he is actually coining the word *quality*. “Socrates” as Burnyeat contends “apologizes for the strangeness of the expression because this is the first occurrence in Greek of the word *poiotes*, ‘quality’ or ‘what-sort-ness’ coined by Plato from the interrogative adjective *poios* ‘of what sort?’” Cicero, in his *Academica*, “was imitating this passage” of Plato’s *Theaetetus* “when he coined *qualitas* from *qualis*, the Latin equivalent of *poios*” (*Academica* I, 24.6) Thus, ultimately “the *Theaetetus* is responsible for our word *quality*.” However, in addition to the consideration of nouns and adjectives, the *Theaetetus* introduces use of the verb “is” as copula joining names with the accidental qualities which characterize them.

visible model with a higher, invisible, intellectual and ethical reality. This invisible, ethical reality is beyond the merely factual. The false is simply false and is not. But the possible is what might be, what could be and what should be, and it is deeply connected to the ethical and normative domain.

2.3.2 *Correct Division as Measured Statement in the Statesman*

Plato's Visitor clearly expands dialectic to include the use of comparisons between unlike things. However, he does not, in so doing, abandon his earlier statements about the importance of properly relating kinds through the method of collection and division. He explains that wise but unpracticed people cannot make suitable judgments because of "their not being accustomed to carrying on their investigations by dividing according to real classes [τὸ μὴ κατ' εἶδη συνειθίσθαι σκοπεῖν διαιρουμένους ταῦτά]" (*Stm.* 285a4). The Visitor, with Socrates, stresses that philosophical dialecticians are actually better than sophists or rhetorical practitioners at using words, because they are attentive to the real relations that inhere between things and in things. The Visitor essentially restates the view which Socrates has expressed in the *Phaedrus*. He feels that sophists introduce contradictions as a result of inadvertently making divisions inappropriately. He regards the ability to divide correctly or speak properly as part of the general art of measure.

Indeed, the Visitor points out two major mistakes again prior to making his weaving division, which we considered as used in an analogy in the previous section: (1) they make "the people in question throw these things together at once, despite the degree of difference between them, thinking them alike [τοσοῦτον διαφέροντα συμβάλλουσιν εὐθὺς εἰς ταὐτὸν ὅμοια νομίσαντες]" (*Stm.* 285a4-5). Then again, (2) a second mistake is to "do the opposite of this by dividing other things not according to parts [οὐ κατὰ μέρη διαιροῦντες, δέον]" (*Stm.* 285a9-b2). Having recognized the two common errors, he reasserts the general principle. The "rule is that when one perceives first the community between the members of

the group of many things,” one should work until he or she “has penned all the related things within one likeness and actually surrounded them in some real class” (*Stm.* 285c). This practice enables us to see the one-in-many, and “one should not desist until in all those various unlikenesses, when they are seen in multitudes” (*Stm.* 285c). But this is in a context where he is about to use the carefully defined weaving analogy to weaving a dream second city, which merely echoes Socrates’ first city, Kallipolis, as a paradigm, an image which brings a true and proportionate belief about ethical life and the domain of psychological interiority.

Gonzalez is correct to infer that the ultimate aim of dialectic exchange is to achieve an insight which is normative and ethical in character. At the same time, even in the *Republic*, Socrates clearly describes intervening steps, by which dialecticians seek the relations between different forms, comparing the nature of different living and artificial types or kinds and comparing them to recognize similarities and differences. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates avows his love for this method of collection and division, a method which enables him to define the forms of madness, human and divine.

“For it is indeed the case, in a certain way, that all the products of the various sorts of expertise share in measurement [μετρήσεως]. But because of their not being accustomed to carrying on their investigations by dividing according to real classes, the people in question throw these things together at once, despite the degree of difference between them, thinking them alike-and then again they also do the opposite of this by dividing other things not according to parts, when the rule is that when one perceives first the community between the members of the group of many things, one should not desist until one sees in all those various unlikenesses, when they are seen in multitudes, one should be incapable of pulling a face and stopping before one has penned all the related things within one likeness and actually surrounded them in some real class. So let this be enough for us to say about these things, and about modes of excess and defect [περὶ τῶν ἐλλείψεων καὶ ὑπερβολῶν]; and let’s just keep hold of the fact that two distinct classes of measurement have been discovered in relation to them, and remember what they are” (*Stm.* 285a1-c2).

The need for an appropriate sense of measure underlies the search for essences, and this measure is an ethical one. According to Plato, one who does this badly engages in a form of eristic. The Visitor uses collection and division in order to attempt to provide definitions of the sophist and statesman, in relation to the philosopher. These are not trivial entities. Indeed, Plato is exploring moral psychology and ethics. His exploration of the relation between sophistry and politics leads him to consider, even in the division which will be regarded as erroneous, the complex relation between truth, illusion and what is good in ethical life.

The practice of logical methods of demonstration and definition Plato portrays as coextensive with the philosophical pursuit of wisdom and virtue: “Plato” through his dialogues “attempts to dissociate dialectic (the genuine art of argumentation) from sophistry and rhetoric” even though both are “to be pursued within the art of *logos*” (*Phd.* 89d-91c; *Sph.* 253b-c).⁴⁰² Indeed, the course of the discussion in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* is an effort to delineate the philosophical dialectician from the sophistic practice. This statements of the *Phaedrus* recalls not only Zeno’s mention of likeness and unlikeness (ὁμοιά τε εἶναι καὶ ἀνόμοια) Parmenides, drawn from the writings or books (τοῦ γράμματος...τὰ γράμματα) of the Eleatic dialecticians Zeno and Parmenides (*Prm.* 127b-c). Yet Plato has Socrates apply the treatment of such general categories and the contradiction spinning to public life. The eristic use of refutation extends to the Assembly and the courts, and these techniques can be used either to persuade or to confound.

“Socrates: Now, don’t we know that the Eleatic Palamedes is such an artful speaker that his listener will perceive the same thing to be both similar and dissimilar, both one and many, both at rest and in motion?”

“Phaedrus: Most certainly.”

“Socrates: We can therefore find the practice of speakers on the opposite sides not only in the lawcourts and in the Assembly. Rather, it seems that one single art-if of course, it is an art in the first place,

⁴⁰² Notomi, N., “Image-Making in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*, in *Plato and the Poets*,” *op. cit.*, p. 306.

governs all speaking. By means of it one can make out as similar anything that can be so assimilated, to everything which it can be made similar, and expose anyone who tries to hide the fact that this is what he is doing” (*Phdr.* 261d-e).

Plato explains that this means of exploiting or making use of similarities and dissimilarities is what produces persuasion. The proper use of dialectic is necessary to avoid being confounded by this use of rhetoric.

“Socrates: I think it will become clear that if we look at it this way. When is deception most likely to occur-regarding things that differ much or things that differ little from one another.”

“Phaedrus: Regarding those that differ little.”

“Socrates: At any rate, you are more likely to escape detection, as you shift from one thing to its opposite, if you proceed in small steps rather than larger ones” (*Phdr.* 261e-262a).

This is a place where Socrates signals between identifying contradictions and identifying meaningful similarities and dissimilarities. This notion the Visitor expresses again, in the context of discussing the methodology of collection and division, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

“Therefore, if you are to deceive someone else and to avoid deception yourself you must know precisely the respects in which things are similar and dissimilar to one another.”

“Socrates: And is it really possible for someone who doesn’t know what each thing truly is to be to detect a similarity-whether large or small-between something he doesn’t know and anything else.”

“Phaedrus: That’s impossible.”

“Socrates: Clearly, therefore, the state of being deceived and holding beliefs is contrary to what is the case comes upon people by reason of certain similarities” (*Phdr.* 262a-b).

Superficial affinities between different things can be a source of confusion. Indeed, people can be lead to mere plausible beliefs by this practice of drawing apparently meaningful but actually unreal affinities between different things. That is to say, when one, for instances, mistakes merely human pathology for divine forms of inspiration or madness, this is the mistake which, Socrates says, Lysias has made in his speech to Phaedrus.

“Phaedrus: That’s what happens.”

“Socrates: Could someone, then who doesn’t know what each thing is ever have the art to lead others little by little through similarities away from what is the case on each occasion to its opposite? Or could he escape this being done to himself?”

“Phaedrus: Never.”

“Socrates: Therefore, my friend, the art of a speaker who doesn’t know the truth and chases opinions instead is likely to be a ridiculous thing-not an art at all!”

“Phaedrus: So it seems” (*Phdr.* 262b-c).

Rhetoric is a cultivated capacity to enter into the public sphere and speak, persuasively or convincingly, in the Assembly (βουλή) or (ἐκκλησία), as well as in the law courts (δικαστήρια), and Plato presents a vision of sophists as members of a kind of poetic tradition which encompasses drama as well.⁴⁰³ It is for this reason, highly appropriate that it is not in the *Sophist* but the *Statesman* that Plato embarks upon his dialectical exercise in the use of image and myth. Oratorical composition and the use of images or likenesses is a specialty of the rhetor, as much as the poet or mythmaker.

Plato has Socrates say very much the same thing, at the end of the *Theaetetus*, with the looming trial of Socrates. According to Socrates, in these contexts, people merely rely on an awareness of the probable or likely, rather than what is true. Yet the two domains, logic and rhetoric, insofar as both deal with the use of words, are clearly related.

The paradigm, which is supposed to bring true beliefs, is a way of using images, and even myths, to move beyond the ordinary and familiar use of factually true or false statements. The discussion in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* is preparation for the far more imaginative and exploratory investigation of rhetoric and narrative composition which takes place in the *Statesman*. It is here, thus, useful to make a few remarks again linking dialectic with rhetoric in order to prepare the way for the transition to the next section, through the

⁴⁰³ See Kerferd, G.B., *The Sophistic Movement*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 16. Junis notes that as “the mass institutions of direct democracy grew in Athens in the fifth century, so to grew the importance of persuasive public speaking and the opportunity for experts, teachers and techniques in that emerging field.” Junis, H., “Plato’s Rhetoric,” in Worthington, Ian ed., *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, Sussex, Blackwell, p. 76.

division of the statesman as shepherd of humanity, which prepares the way for the composition of Plato's Myth of Kronos.

The *Statesman* presents an exercise in the use of paradigm and the composition of myth. Rowe considers the possibility that the "*Statesman* offers us an example of philosophy in action" and claims that the dialogue could be considered a "store of reminders" to "mimic in order to carry out an appropriate philosophical exchange."⁴⁰⁴ Rowe, ultimately, concludes that the *Statesman* does not constitute the integrated model for dialogue hoped for in the *Phaedrus*.⁴⁰⁵ It is, however, precisely this shift from rigorous, rational techniques of inductive and deductive inquiry which makes the exchange a work of philosophical rhetoric and mythic composition.

Plato's decision to make the Visitor's presentation of the method of division in the *Statesman* so odd might be simply be this; he wishes to show that the theoretical use of logical techniques needs to be supplemented by the use of image and myth. This is why Plato supplements his exercise in logical technique, through the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, with a lesson in rhetoric and poetic composition, the use of plausible and persuasive speech, rather than mere propositional or factual discourse. This opens the path to narrative composition, which involves the introduction of elements which go beyond mere factual or propositional truth and falsity. This has to do with the limits of human understanding itself.

Even the use of rigorous logical methods like collection and division and argumentative refutation can, however, lead to results which ultimately prove false. Furthermore, a lack of appropriate social awareness of the importance of ordinary opinion and belief can lead not to truth but comical result. Much of the deployment of "dialectic" and the method of refutation, the "hypothetical method" which Plato portrays Parmenides and Zeno teaching the Younger Socrates, might be meant as a kind of joke. The second part of the

⁴⁰⁴ Rowe, C., "The *Politicus* : Structure and Form," in Gill, R. and McCabe, M.M., eds., *Form and Argument in Late Plato*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1996, p. 153-178.

⁴⁰⁵ See the "Introduction" to Rowe, C.J., *Statesman*, trans., Warminster, Aris & Phillips Ltd , 1995, xi.

Parmenides might simply be meant as “a highly enjoyable philosophical jest” which also “provokes the thoughtful mind, by the manifest impossibility of the conclusions reached, to reflections which may prompt the reader to discover the source of the trouble for himself.”⁴⁰⁶ Taylor holds notes that it was “presumably meant to amuse the literary circles but to fructify in the students of the Academy.”⁴⁰⁷ This kind of comic treatment of dialectic or argumentative technique is not unique to Plato’s drama. What holds for the method of hypothesis in the more extravagant passages of the *Parmenides* holds for the method of division in the *Statesman*. Plato’s own complicated divisions, in the *Statesman*, would, in this way, actually reflect the observation of an extant poet. The comic poet, Epicrates, lampooned not Socrates and the “Thinkery” but Plato, his associates and the Academy for practicing this very technique.⁴⁰⁸ In these passages, the poet ridicules the meticulousness with which Plato instructs students to proceed with divisions. A comic event involving a Sicilian doctor mocking their activity ensues. However, Plato merely encourages them to continue on, beginning again from the “genus of the pumpkin.”⁴⁰⁹

Socrates’ own purpose, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, is, just as in the *Parmenides*, a mixture of the serious and the humorous. He is bringing literary flourish to the elaboration of a logical and natural scientific technique of definition, which is meant to characterize biological species in an essential way. Plato shifts away from elaborate divisions of the

⁴⁰⁶ Taylor, A.E., *Plato: The Man and His Work*, Methuen, London, 1926, p. 370.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁸ Epicrates, in *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, Kock, T. ed., 3 vols., Leipzig, 1880-1888, p. 287-288. Mueller, I., *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, Kraut, R., ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 171-172. “What about Plato, Speusippus and Menedemus? What subjects are they dealing with now? What thought, what argument are they investigating? If you’ve come knowing anything tell these to me with discretion.”

“I can talk about these things clearly. At the Panathenaic festival I saw a band of gay youths at the gymnasium of the academy and heard them say unutterably weird things. They were making distinctions concerning nature, life and animals, the nature of trees and the general of vegetables. Among other things, they were studying the genus of a pumpkin.”

“How did they define it? What is the genus of a plant? Reveal this to me if you know.”

“Well, first they all stood silent, bent over, and they thought for a considerable time. Suddenly, while the young men were still bending over and reflecting, one of them pronounced it a round vegetable, another a grass, the third a tree.”

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, “It didn’t bother them. Plato was there, and he enjoined them, very gently and without agitation, to try again from the beginning to distinguish the genus of the pumpkin. They proceeded to do so.”

shepherd and the nature of humanity, which actually, if Aristotle's testimony is accurate, reflect Plato's technical understanding of human essence. However, in the process of defining the statesman, the notion of rhetoric and persuasive speech, itself comes into play, and the statesman, like the sophist, is ultimately defined as a persuasive speaker and mythmaker who does this. Although the ensuing defense of division has a serious purpose, the humorous element in the division of the statesman and humans is probably not lost on Plato as dramatic author of this exchange.

2.4 Division of Statesman as Shepherd and the Human Animal

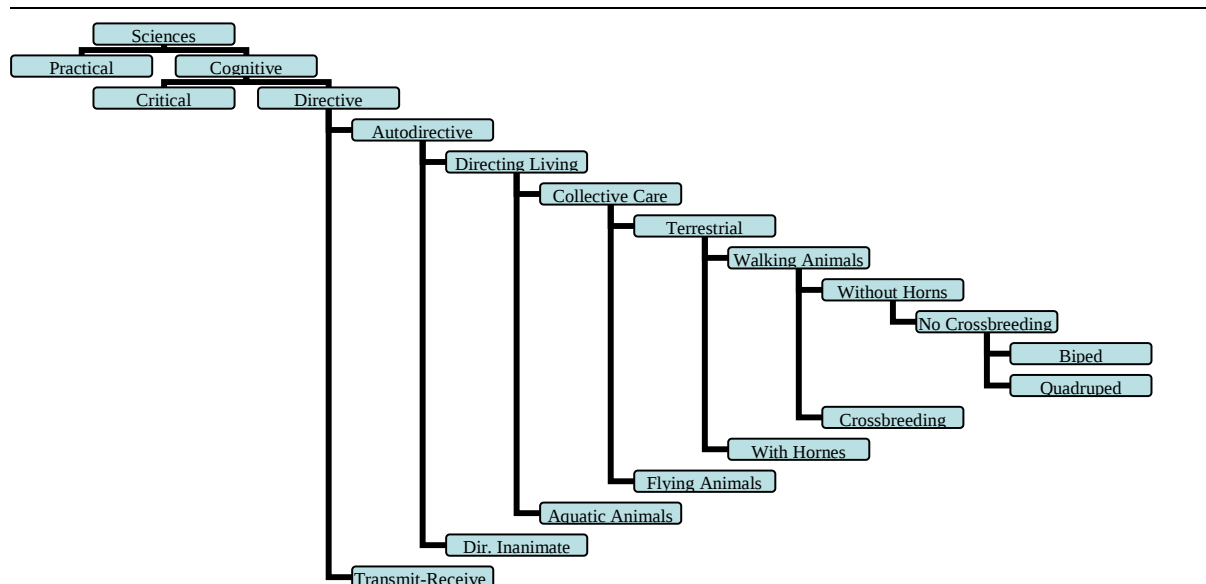
The *Statesman's* division of the statesman as shepherd, as is often remarked, is the division which gives division a bad name. Although there is some serious purpose to this division, it is likely that it and the lengthy weaving division are both meant to produce a kind of comical effect, since they are so extravagant, elaborate and fraught with error. Nevertheless, valuable philosophical lessons can be drawn from parts of this division. Further, the division is ultimately incorporated with the myth, which suggests the underlying imaginative and image-oriented purpose to which this definition is put in this particular dialogue.

Plato, in his first definition of the statesman, actually suggests the identity of theoretical and practical or ethical understanding. The Eleatic Visitor differentiates the art of the statesman or king (βασιλεύς) from manual labor as intellectual thought (γνωστικάι).⁴¹⁰

⁴¹⁰ Definition 1 of 'Statesman': *Statesman*, 258b-266b. Based on Brisson, L. and J.F. Pradeau trans., *Politique*, Paris, Flammarion, 2003, p. 21 :

Theoretical sciences do not “involve any practical actions” such arts “simply provide knowledge” (*Stm.* 258d). The Eleatic Visitor continues to use the language of the body. The attention to the body and bodily limitation places limits on dialectical aspiration to enduring theoretical insight.

The Eleatic Visitor sees the ‘architect’ as directing a group in accordance with an example. He says that such a person must understand how “to complete those material objects they cause to come into being from not having been before” (*Stm.* 258d-e). We can influence matter through physical force, but there is also a psychological and mental dimension to power. The Visitor says as much, asserting that the ruler or king by influencing the human mind “[πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς]” (*Stm.* 259c7-8). The leader or political ruler produces, through images, myth and rhetoric, the opinions and ethical outlook of the members of the community, as much as through the threat of forceful coercion.⁴¹¹



⁴¹¹ Rowe, C., “The *Politicus*: Structure and Form,” in *op. cit.*, p. 159. “The first and crucial step is for ES to secure YS’s agreement that the ‘art of statesmanship’ (πολιτική) is a matter of expert knowledge, or ἐπιστήμη, and their first division is of the various kinds of knowledge. These are either concerned with ‘doing’, and the production of new ‘bodies’ or material products, or with knowing to the exclusion of doing. Statesmanship belongs to the latter category, ES says, because statesman-kings exercise their function much more by the use of their minds than by the use of their hands (259c6-d1). This point prepares the way for the ensuing division of the second category of sciences into the purely theoretical and the directive (ἐπιτακτικά), whose practitioners are not mere spectators but overseers of other people who do the relevant things. That, of course, is the kind of knowledge or expertise (τέχνη) that statesmanship is; it is also self-directive (αὐτεπιτακτική), not something that gives orders to others which it receives from someone else.”

A dialectician or philosopher can question and offer theoretical or formal patterns, describing and characterizing ethically significant types, such as the class of the political leader.⁴¹² Plato here defines the specialty of the statesman in comparison with architecture. It is here that he explains the limits of geometric and arithmetic conceptualizations of ethical and political life. The Visitor is quick to note that an arithmetician or geometer, like Theodorus, has the liberty to depart once his demonstration has been made (*Stm.* 259e5-6; *Stm.* 260a). However, the theoretical questioner or thinker of the qualitative and practical or ethical domain is in this sense unlike an arithmetician or a geometer, since he lives in a world where practical decisions must be made. This is the connection that philosophy and statesmanship bear with the art of speech.

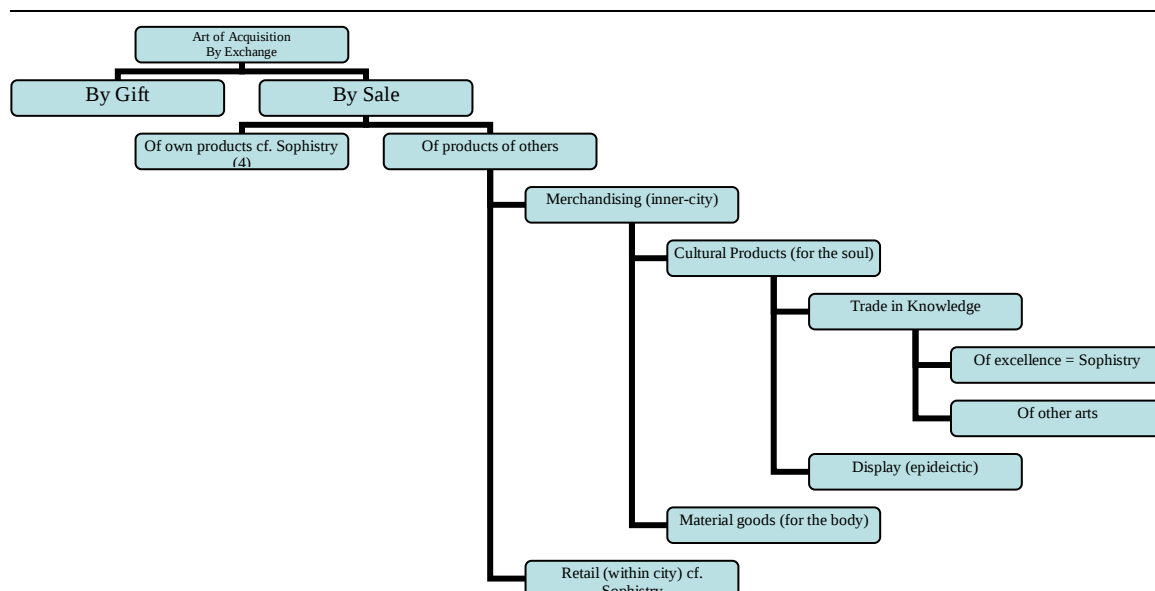
Plato describes the statesman as associated with the deliberative counselor. The counselor confers practical counsel about how to speak in public and how to convince crowds (*Stm.* 259b). The Visitor earlier defined ‘sophistic’ counselors as retail traders of speech, like contemporary public relations experts.⁴¹³ The herald, whom the Visitor describes in

⁴¹² The measure of the political leader differs (διαφορὰν) from the arithmetic and geometric modes of calculation (λογιστικῇ... ἐν τοῖς ἀριθμοῖς). Cultural awareness, like these quantitative practices, involves thinking (γνωστικαί) as well as the directive part (τὸ ἐπιτακτικὸν μέρος) and critical thinking or τὸ κριτικὸν (*Stm.* 260b3-5). The statesman or leader is akin to the architect, in this sense, that he or she oversees and directs production, whereas the calculator (ὁ λογιστής), the geometer or arithmetician, shall not be given any additional task (τι πλέον ἔργον δώσομεν).

⁴¹³ Definition Sophist 2: *Sophist*, 223c-224c

comparable terms, is a person who is not a giver of gifts but a practitioner of base commerce.⁴¹⁴ The sophist, Protagoras, claimed to be such a counselor. However, the Eleatic Visitor notes that such a public speaker is not free to question but is rather as a counselor or speaker, subordinate to the ruler or king (*Stm.* 260e-261a).⁴¹⁵

The Visitor asserts that a ‘statesman’ uses speech, rhetoric and myth, in the production of opinion which forms the social or collective imagination of the community. The Visitor recognizes political leadership of a king, in conjunction with counselors with whom he engages in discussion, as a technical mode of managerial ordering and control. He thinks that “those in control of others that we can think of as employing directions” are found “issuing their directions” always “for the sake of something’s coming into being” (*Stm.* 261b). The rhetorical speaker produces persuasion and belief, states of mind, through an appeal to images. If such beliefs go unquestioned, then such speech is thought control and



⁴¹⁴ The Eleatic Visitor distinguishes between ‘retail’ and ‘wholesale’ trade. The Visitor explains that the “retailer” is one who “takes over someone else’s products, which have previously been sold, and sells them on, for a second time.” On the other hand, there is the “‘self-seller’ or producer who sells his own products” (*Stm.* 260d). Like the retailer, “the class of heralds takes over directions that have been thought up by someone else, and itself issues them for a second time to another group.” Like the ‘self-seller’, “class of kings appears set apart from the class of heralds” (*Stm.* 260d).

⁴¹⁵ The fifth characterization or ὁ λόγος of the ‘sophist’ (ὁ σοφιστής), emphasizes the commercial nature of sophistic practice. It is an art or τέχνη of money-making, by *eristic* or contest (ἐριστική) concerning ethical teaching (*Sph.* 266a) The Eleatic Visitor expands, here, in the context of characterizing the statesman’s relation to heraldry, which is a kind of speech attending speechmaking for kings and princely rulers.

propaganda. This criticism of Socratic questioning is considered more fully in the later part of the *Statesman*.

The human herdsman or statesman cultivates through speech the opinions of the members of the community.⁴¹⁶ The production of “things that come into beings” consists of two separate kinds, some are artificial (ἄψυχα) and others like tended animals and plants are living and have souls (ἔμψυχα). Plato depicts or figures the statesman as a shepherd. Such a vision suggests uncritical and un-philosophical social passivity.⁴¹⁷ By questioning the division through myth, the Visitor deepens insight into the methods of rhetorical practitioners and poets. However, before turning to reflections on analogy and myth, the dialectical exchange that the Visitor makes in his digression on the relationship between humans and other animals is worth considering, since this exchange is also meant to lead the Younger Socrates into being attentive when making fine distinctions. This formal and conceptual discussion, a scientific image or representation of humanity, has practical and even ethical implications.

The goal of the last segments of the division of the statesman is to discern the biological classification of humanity.⁴¹⁸ This is in accord with the typical objective of a practitioner of collection and division, to distinguish a type or class.⁴¹⁹ In this case a natural species, different from all other species. It will now be shown how “the human [τὸ ἀνθρώπινον]” is different from “all other living creatures [ἕτερον τῶν ἄλλων συμπάντων θηρίων ἔν]” (*Stm.* 263c2-6). The Eleatic Visitor proposes to define the human species as distinct from all other species by virtue of “walking on two legs” (*cf. Metaphysics*, 1037b28-

⁴¹⁶ Cf. S.R.L. Clark, “Herds of Free Bipeds,” in Rowe, C., ed., *Reading the Statesman: Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum (International Plato Studies, vol. 4)*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1995, p. 236. The leader, like a shepherd, produces ‘thought’ in speech and force, in action, leads the dogs or auxiliaries, in watching over the herd. Clark underscores this unflattering characterization.

⁴¹⁷ For an excellent critique of the totalitarian potential for ‘brain-washing’ nascent in the Visitor’s characterization of statesmanship, see Gonzalez, F., “The Eleatic Visitor Does not Speak for Plato,” in *Who Speaks for Plato*, Gerald, A., ed., Rowan and Littlefield, Oxford, p. 180-183.

⁴¹⁸ Cherniss, H., *op. cit.*, p. 46-48.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48-49.

30).⁴²⁰ The Visitor asserts the relative worth or value of different species, humans may be an animal, but humans are more divine (θειότερον) than certain other species (*Stm.* 271e5-7). This clearly suggests that rational capacity is our defining trait. But again, the Visitor insists on overlooking this possibility. This, indeed, probably suggests that this model (τὸ παράδειγμα ποιέμων τε καὶ βουκόλων τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιμέλειαν ἔχοντα) itself, even the human component, should probably merely be regarded as a probable image (*Stm.* 275b4).

The Socratic *elenchus*, questioning through refutation, rather than the method of collection and division, is conventionally posed as a philosophical contrast with *eristic* disputation. However, in the *Philebus*, Socrates notes that what distinguishes *eristic* or disputations (τὸ ἐριστικῶς) argument from genuine dialectic speech (τὸ διαλεκτικῶς) is that the *eristic* orator is not only willfully but sometimes even unintentionally negligent. Such carelessness in making fine distinctions can incite controversy. Socrates, in the *Philebus*, acknowledges the need to be attentive in deploying the method of collection and division, composing any statement but, above all, a definition (λόγος) not too quickly or with insufficient consideration for the matter at hand (*Phlb.* 17a). Definitions can be neither too broad nor too narrow. The ethical importance of the method is central to the *Philebus*, a dialogue in which Socrates seeks to define the ordered relation between pleasure and the Good.

With respect to the biological definition of humanity, the Visitor opens ethical questions about the significance of the Younger Socrates' choices. The training exercise is not simply meant to display the λόγος through division but to encourage the Younger Socrates to think critically about the choices being made in the formulation of this definition. The Young Socrates suggests dividing the human species into two families (γένη), humans and the rest of the animals put together.

⁴²⁰ It is again difficult to imagine that Plato, in composing these passages, is not in dialogue with Aristotle (*cf. Metaphysics*, 1037b28-30)

The Eleatic Visitor questions the choice of defining humans as “rational” (φρόνιμον) animals, since the “crane”, a type of bird or feathered biped might be rational. In characterizing humanity, we must be “wary of everything of this sort” (*Stm.* 263d-e). That is to say, he is apprehensive about completely separating humans from all other animals. This is a scientifically correct consideration, and the Visitor presents two alternative routes to define humanity. However, Plato, as author, chooses to make him insist upon a definition that is probably incorrect. This is one of the signs of the fallibility of the Eleatic Visitor, and the need to begin to question what he is saying.

The statesman (πολιτικός) has been portrayed as a shepherd. The pastoral leader is the shepherd (νομεύς) who tends the human flock (ἀγέλη) or community (*Stm.* 263c2-6). There is much preparation for the ensuing characterization of humanity as tended and reared by divine shepherds in the Visitor’s *Myth of Kronos*. The Visitor divides all animals into domesticated, tame or wild (*Stm.* 264a, cf. *Parts of Animals*, 643b). He asserts that since humans are “with tame things” the “knowledge” they seek “must be looked for with reference to herd animals” (*Stm.* 265b). This is where the two possible routes of division come into play.

The Visitor explains that not aquaculture (ὕδροτροφικὸν) but herding on land (ξηροτροφικὸν) is of interest to him (*Stm.* 264d). Humans are ‘terrestrial animals’ and so the science (τέχνη) of the king (τὸ βασιλικὸν) bears an affinity with the practices of shepherds and terrestrial herders. Dry land rearing is separated “by reference to the winged and what goes on foot.” Finally, “the expertise to do with the management of creatures that go on foot—we must show it being cut into two, like an even number” (*Stm.* 264e). This description, which initially seems to simply reflect the technical science of a natural scientist, like a contemporary biologist, is a prelude to the introduction of another way or path, the way of myth.

Even here Plato, with his Visitor's divisions, is beginning to self-consciously echo Hesiod's biographical self-presentation, in the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*. Hesiod, who began as a shepherd, then became a farmer, and this provides grounds for his authority as counselor to a king. The Visitor, in the *Sophist*, like Socrates in the *Phaedrus*, says that collection and division is a gift which makes us divine, just as Socrates says that the *maieutic* makes us humbler and more like god. Here, the man who so thoroughly critiqued the poets and sophists in the *Sophist*, echoing Socrates' critique in *Republic X*, becomes an inspired mythmaker himself. He, further, uses myth and narrative as a mode of argumentation and exploration. He enacts a vision of a world, drawing on existing mythic tradition and tries to offer paradigms or models which give a true picture of the statesman, in relation to the wider order of the cosmos. In so doing, however, he abandons neither deductive nor inductive technique.

The Visitor considers that political practice of the statesman (πολιτικός) is akin to the practice of the (βομεύς) 'herdsman'. Such a statesman shows care (ἐπιμέλεια) in forming the community (*Stm.* 276c-e). The Visitor, however, immediately sees his own definition as problematic, since it neglects to differentiate the statesman, adequately, from all other types. Other members of the community like "merchants, farmers, millers and bakers" and also "gymnastic trainers" and "doctors" provide human care (*Stm.* 267e-268a). This recognition that his definition is too broad demands that he specify with greater care.

The Visitor recognizes the care as 'free' or 'voluntary' rather than forced. Definitions can be too broad or they can be too narrow. That is to say, Plato refutes the definition of the statesman as shepherd on the basis of other known evidence. He shows that he has not essentially defined the entity by recognizing that the definition conflicts with other known facts. This proves the complementarity of division and refutation.

Collection and division is not a “later” dialectical method which replaces methods of argumentative refutation. At the same time, we cannot say that the faulty division leads Plato to discard the method for some other method, because he uses it again to define weaving later in the *Statesman*. Rather, division is an inductive method of logic which complements deductive refutation. The refutation of the faulty division of the *Statesman* illustrates that division and argumentative refutation are complementary logical techniques. Yet the turn to myth seems designed to show the limits of the mere use of rational technique, especially as it applies to the domain of ethical concern.

“Socrates: The art of the greatest representatives of wisdom-the men called orators and lawyers. These men, I take it, use their art to produce conviction not by teaching people, but by making them judge whatever they themselves choose. Or do you think there are any teachers so clever that within a short time allowed by the clock they can teach adequately to people who were not eye-witness the truth of what happened to people who have been robbed or assaulted? (*Tht.* 201a-b).

When a lawyer persuades people, he is merely “causing them to judge” (*Tht.* 201b). That is to say, the act of persuasion is merely to make others believe:

“Socrates: Then suppose a jury has been justly persuaded of some matter which only an eye-witness could know, and which cannot otherwise be known; suppose they come to their decision upon hearsay, forming a true judgment: then they have decided the case without knowledge, but granted they did their job well, being correctly persuaded?” (*Tht.* 201b).

Socrates encounters Euthydemus, whose father has been convicted of a violent crime, shortly after the *Theaetetus*. This might be the violent incident which Plato means for his reader to bear in mind. Socrates does not actually name himself as a culprit, but we might imagine that since he is about to be charged a crime, when he meets the accusations at the Stoa of the Basileus, his culpability in some transgression is at issue. Myles Burnyeat makes use of the examples of accusations against Oedipus and Alcibiades in considering Socrates’

digression about the jury.⁴²¹ Plato describes a situation where a lawyer rightly convicts a person, perhaps Socrates himself, by convincing a jury member or jury members. He persuades them that Socrates carried out a crime which he actually did commit. Plato explains that this jury member has rightly convicted the person, but he has done so without knowledge.

Knowledge demands true belief (*Tht.* 201d). To have such understanding would, however, require the knowledge of a god. Plato's divisions of the statesman as shepherd ultimately lead to such a realm or domain, a lost kingdom of Golden Age of Kronos, an Edenic realm, a Paradise Lost, from which we have been cast out. This story has been told by Hesiod. Plato, as author, makes the Visitor say that Hesiod told it wrong, which leads us to wonder what really did happen. The Visitor draws upon the narrative details familiar from Hesiod and other sources in order to present a new myth, as a creative exploration of possibilities. But the reflection upon the myth also leads to a questioning of the activity of the Elder Socrates. The drama of Socrates own trial is soon coming, and Plato seems to be inviting us to question not only the myth; he is asking us to question the dramatic composition of which he is author, in which Socrates figures as a character. Socrates, himself, as he is represented in his trial, reworks mythic features of an earlier model, the model of the Theban king Oedipus, as well as the daughter of this king, Antigone. The final section on myth will consider not only Plato's myths in the sense of monological compositions but aspects of the dialogues themselves as, in part, an expression of fictive and mythical imagination. This applies even to the dialogue traditionally esteemed most reliable as historical testimony, Plato's *Apology*.

⁴²¹ Burnyeat, M. "Socrates and the Jury," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, p. 172-7.

Section III

Platonic Myth

“Field-dwelling shepherds, ignoble disgraces, mere bellies: we know how to say many false things similar [ὁμοῖα] to genuine ones, but we know, when we wish, how to proclaim true things.”

-Theogony, 25-26

“If all these were practiced in this way, and they were done on the basis of written rules and not on the basis of expertise, what on earth would be the result?”

“Young Socrates: “It’s clear both that we should see all the various sorts of expertise completely destroyed, and that they would never be restored, either, because of this law prohibiting inquiry; so that life, which even now is difficult, in such a time would be altogether unliveable.”⁴²²

-Statesman, 299e

“What is probable, gentlemen, is that in fact the god is wise and that his oracular response meant that human wisdom is worth little or nothing, and that when he says this man, Socrates, he is using my name as an example [παράδειγμα], as if he said: “This man among you, mortals, is wisest who, like Socrates, understands that his wisdom is worthless. So even now I continue this investigation as the god bade me-and I go around seeking out anyone, citizen or stranger [ξένων], whom I think wise. Then if I do not think he is, I come to the assistance of the god and show him that he is not wise.”

-Apology, 23b

*“O generations of mortals,
I count your lives as equal
To nothingness itself.
For who, tell me who,
Has happiness that stretches further
Than a brief illusion
And, after the illusion, decline?
Considering you as my model [παράδειγμ’ ἔχων],
Considering your daimon [τὸν σὸν δαίμονα], yours alone,
O wretched Oedipus
I count no mortal blessed.”⁴²³*

-Oedipus Rex, 1186-96

⁴²² Cf. Apology, 24e-25b.

⁴²³ Kirkwood, G.A., *A Study of Sophoclean Drama*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1992, p. 169.

Catalin Partenie recognizes that although the consensus is not universal, “more scholars argue nowadays that Plato’s philosophy is interwoven with myth.”⁴²⁴ Myth constitutes a mode of discourse of another order than logical techniques of definition and argumentation. Yet the two registers of discourse are not totally disconnected from one another. The critique of image in the *Republic* X and the *Sophist*, which is also a critique of myth, leads to the introduction of a positive term for visible model in the *Statesman*. Such models or philosophical images can be used not only to produce ethically informative analogies but also myths. My view is simply that paradigm, rather than phantasm, is the “informative image” which scholars like Gill, Notomi and Collobert say there must be.

Lane and Sayre accept that a paradigm can be used to provide a meaningful analogy and that paradigms are used in collection and division to draw meaningful affinities.⁴²⁵ However, Lane argues that the myth’s use of paradigms is only “apparent.”⁴²⁶ Lane’s criticism is to some extent justified. The sense in which the Myth of Kronos consists of paradigms is the least clearly specified among the uses of paradigm in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. The definition of the statesman as shepherd, once it has been incorporated into the construction of an elaborate Myth of Kronos, is called a paradigm or model [κατὰ τὸ παράδειγμα ποιμένον τε καὶ βουκόλων τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιμέλειαν ἔχοντα]” (*Stm.* 275b4) Plato compares the speaker with a sculptor or painter with words; he, then, asserts that the extremely elaborated and detailed myth consists of “a series of large paradigms [μεγάλα παραδείγματα]” (*Stm.* 277b4). To further explain what he means by the use of paradigm, the Visitor introduces, as in the *Sophist*, the comparison with grammar, calling it “the paradigm of paradigms [Παραδείγματος...τὸ παράδειγμα]” (*Stm.* 277d9). Grammatical training is, in Greek context, closely associated with the study of myth and narrative. Traditional narratives

⁴²⁴ Partenie, C., *Plato’s Myths*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, p. 19.

⁴²⁵ Sayre, K., *Method and Metaphysics in Plato’s Statesman*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2006, p. 55-58.

⁴²⁶ Lane, M., *Method and Politics in Plato’s Statesman*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1998, p. 18 and p. 120.

and myths provide the ethical role models for the young, just as laws provide a basis of conduct for people when they reach maturity.

This disproportionate use of paradigms to make a myth is also connected with the use of the final analogy. The Visitor, next, explains that a smaller model of “weaving” can provide a suitably proportionate paradigm. This paradigm gives a correct opinion about the activity of the statesman over a justly ordered state in a way that is functionally identical to the paradigm of the city and the soul of the *Republic* (*Stm.* 278e9; 279a4; 279a7). He also calls this paradigm a rational account. The Elder Socrates vocally agrees that the Visitor has produced a fine portrait of the statesman with his weaving analogy. The *Statesman*, like the *Sophist*, continues to feature the logical technique of collection and division. However, it is much more of an exercise in the philosophical use of analogy and myth, as well as an exploration of ethical life. In this section, I argue that the composition of the Myth of Kronos is an exercise in mythmaking which corresponds with the ethical recommendations for guardians composing or selecting myths in *Republic* II and III.

My approach draws from recent scholarship on the mythic dimension of Plato, especially the work of Brisson and Most. These scholars have proposed general features of Platonic myth, extrapolated from Plato’s general discussion of myth, in the *Republic* and *Laws*, and shared elements of various myths as present in different dialogues. The Myth of Kronos includes virtually all the principles which Most identifies as features of a Platonic myth. Gill and Tomasi have done much to show the self-consciously fictive quality of the *Statesman* myth, enacting the fiction which Plato describes in *Republic* II and III. According to my interpretation, the didacticism with which Plato’s Visitor introduces and exposits his myth in the *Statesman* shows that this particular myth is an illustrative lesson in how to make a Platonic myth. Plato’s myths, like antecedent myths, are meant to be ethically or practically informative, though they are also merely exploratory and probable. Paradigm bears a specific

sense not only as image but also the sense of ethical role model. These uses of paradigm in the context of myth and the discussion of myth elsewhere in Plato to supplement what he means by paradigm and imitation in the myth of the *Statesman*.

My argument is that Eleatic Visitor encourages the Younger Socrates, as a lesson of his myth, to pursue a life of philosophy; this choice is indifferent to whether or not he lives in the Golden Age or the Age of Zeus. Having learned from this myth, the Younger Socrates answers no to the Eleatic Visitor's question of whether philosophical questioning should be condemned. He chooses, with the Elder Socrates, a life of philosophy, asserting that the unexamined life is not worth living. The myth, like many other myths in Plato, has a purpose of encouraging a person to practice philosophy, and Plato even shows that the Younger Socrates has learned the lesson of the myth.

Gonzalez maintains that the Eleatic Visitor does not speak for Plato on the basis of his criticism of the Socratic practice of questioning. However, the view which I defend below is that we should not primarily reject what the Visitor says in favour of Plato or Socrates. The issue is whether we should accept Plato's paradigms, Plato's dramatic portrayal of Socrates and his embellished portrayal of utopic cities over the tradition of earlier poetry. Indeed, who is to say that Homer, Hesiod and the tragic and comic dramatists do not corrupt but rather provide an ethical foundation for life? Who is to say that Plato's own paradigmatic models, his Kallipolis or his own character, Socrates, are not corrupting? Plato allows the reader to decide for himself by opening not only the myth to question but his own fictively embellished character, Socrates, to question. In so doing, he enables the reader to question not only the myth but the drama within the dialogue. Plato is, thus, consistent in his critique of all forms of mimesis, even his own mythical and dramatic work.

The myth is practically and ethically informative. Much of this section is devoted to an exploration of the way in which Plato draws upon and reworks the style of self-

presentation characteristic of poets like Hesiod and Homer. He selectively draws upon elements of their narratives, using critical recommendations which are clearly elaborated in *Republic* II and III, as well as *Republic* X. These recommendations are a guide for reworking earlier myths.

Plato presents the Eleatic Visitor, in the *Statesman*, creatively reworking the Hesiodic Myth of Kronos. Plato's philosophical pretense is that he is composing a fiction which is ethically more veritable than the myth of Hesiod. Plato not only criticizes the ethical content of Hesiod's poetry, but he also shows how to make myths in ways which constructively improve upon the original. He does so in a way which actually echoes aspects of Hesiod's own poetic self-presentation. Plato introduces his own philosophical dialogues as a kind of literature which serves as an alternative to earlier narratives and dramas.

3.1 Platonic Mimesis and Mythmaking

3.1.1 *The Construction of Platonic Myth*

In the *Timaeus*, Critias notes that the practitioner of poetic representation (μίμησις) who is an image-maker must represent "earth and mountains and rivers and forests and all of heaven and the bodies that exist and move within it, and render their likeness" (*Tim.* 107b-c). Since we are knowledgeable of such things through a lifetime of familiarity, we are particularly critical of those who do not accurately represent the details. In this dialogue, Critias explains that we embrace the depiction of "the heavens and things divine with enthusiasm" since the truth about such things exceeds human comprehension (*Crit.* 107c-d).⁴²⁷ Mythic representation does not capture essential features of reality with the exactitude of logical techniques. The presence of thought (διάνοια) marks the use of verbal pictures (*Tht.* 206d1-2). Plato recognizes a "mimetic relationship between language and reality."⁴²⁸

⁴²⁷ Brisson, L., *Les mots et les mythes*, Maspero, Paris, 1982, p. 82.

⁴²⁸ Collobert, C., "The Platonic Art of Myth-Making: Myths as Informative *Phantasmata*," *art. cit.*, p. 90.

Factual, scientific exploration, undertaken through inductive and demonstrative methods like collection and division occur in the same world of linguistic representation as mythic expression.⁴²⁹

The Atlantis Myth is a central instance of the recognition of the probable or possible character of narrative explanation. However, the Myth of Theuth, in the *Phaedrus*, represents an interesting instance where the authenticity and credibility of the account is actually challenged by the listener. In the *Timaeus*, Timaeus attributes his narrative to Solon, who himself learned the account of the Myth of Atlantis from Egyptian priests. Critias' claim goes unchallenged by other characters. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates, recounting his Myth of Theuth, maintains that Naucratis, the Egyptian priest, communicated to Socrates the narrative explaining the origin of the art of writing. According to this myth, Amon Re, an analogue of Zeus, granted this gift to humanity through Theuth, an Egyptian divinity paralleling the Greek Hermes (*Phdr.* 274c1-275b2). Socrates provides a myth which explains the origins of writing but draws attention to the dangers it brings for learning. We see that Phaedrus immediately questions its factual validity when Socrates has finished his story, but the details are far less implausible than the Eleatic Visitor's *Myth of Kronos* (*Phdr.* 274e-275b).

Phaedrus immediately and explicitly challenges the mythical narrative which Socrates has just recounted on the grounds that it is merely an invention of Socrates, despite the fact that the Myth of Theuth is vastly more plausible than the Myth of Kronos. Phaedrus exclaims "Socrates, you're very good at making up stories from Egypt or whatever else you want!" (*Phdr.* 275b) Socrates' reply to this is telling. He makes reference to more familiar "priests of the temple of Zeus at Dodona" as authenticating authorities but mentions that these "priests" held "that the first prophecies were the words of an oak" (*Phdr.* 275b-c). Part of the act of composing or creating a narrative is to be open to unexpected possibility and to

⁴²⁹ Collobert, C., «L'Odyssée ou la naissance de la fiction, » *Revue philosophique de la France à l'étranger*, 129, 1, 2004, p. 23.

experience the plausible. Socrates underscores this by stressing the need to believe things based not on their authoritative source but their truth.

Socrates insists that we should listen to the words of “an oak or a stone” as long as it is true. If Socrates has truly revealed the nature of writing and the challenges it creates for human life, then this story merits Phaedrus’ attention. At the same time, he is asking Phaedrus not to inquire into the source but merely to pay attention to the practical truth of what he is saying.

Gill’s characterization of the effects of Myth of the *Statesman* on most readers is helpful to bear in mind. In his earlier work, Gill holds that there is a distinction between “surface fiction and deeper-level truth.”

“In this story, which anticipates the Atlantis story at a number of points, Plato disposes us to expect a fiction, and then, as it were, plays with the reader, offering an account which might seem authentically historical (or pre-historical), but which is gradually revealed as a functional fable. The game with the reader (played out much more fully in the Atlantis story) is a minor feature in the *Statesman*. But in both cases it is as though Plato, having explained the distinction between surface fiction and deeper-level truth, deliberately blurs the distinction, if only temporarily, in order to sting the reader into recognizing it for himself.”⁴³⁰

But even fictionality and mythic composition or creation can bear truth. Plato introduces the meaning of paradigm to signify a kind of image which the dialectician or philosopher can use. This is a philosophical term for image which provides a counterpoint and supplement to the negative critique of the *phantastic* image in the *Sophist*. Paradigms can be used in ways that convey the possible. This rests outside of the merely true or false. The *Statesman* self-consciously expands the discursive register beyond mere truth and falsity to open a path to the mysterious, magical and truly wondrous.

⁴³⁰ Gill, C., *art. cit.*, p. 71.

3.1.2 *Myth of Kronos, Exploration of Possibility and Plato's Reworking of Antecedent Myth*

The *Statesman* more clearly elaborates the use of paradigm (παράδειγμα) for the purpose of dialectical representation. This mode of vocal representation exceeds the constraints of propositional truth or falsity. Plato asserts that we can use plausible similarities, “things which are most alike [ὁμοιότητες]”, to produce “a rational account [λόγος] for the purpose of demonstration [ἐνδείξασθαι]” (*Pol.* 285e; cf. *Prm.* 132d1). The phantasm is merely a false proposition or a distortion of reality, which brings a factually false belief about the way things are. However, paradigms or images, used by a dialectician, can bring true beliefs.

The Golden Age motif is strangely and intentionally reminiscent of the *Republic's* motif of philosopher-kings and guardians of a communal society, just as the characterization of the demiurge is reminiscent of the *Timaeus*. However, the myth itself is a kind of creative and constructive exploration. It expresses possibility rather than actuality and pushes beyond the strict criteria of truth and falsity described in the *Sophist*.

The Myth of Kronos does not, however, as the Visitor admits, properly realize the task. Even though he says that it consists of large paradigms, he has presented them in a way that is out of proportion, and so he must introduce a single smaller myth to provide a final, suitable analogy of the statesman as weaver. Initially, this might seem disappointing. However, by introducing a myth which works only partially, presented as disproportionate but still making use of paradigms (in a somewhat fragmented stop and start manner), Plato is showing through his character how to make a myth. Furthermore, this exploration of mythic construction leads to a questioning of Socrates and his activity by the Younger Socrates. The mirroring device by which the Younger Socrates questions the Elder Socrates is meant to evoke in the reader an awareness of the constructed character of Plato's own Socrates. This

narrative and dramatic construction Plato presents as a paradigm. Socrates, in a dialogue which follows the *Statesman* in dramatic sequence, calls himself a paradigm.

Though, as Philips notes, Plato regards sophists as spurious practitioners of arts, he still regards the capacity to engage in artistic portrayal and composition as a skill (τέχνη).⁴³¹ The “mimetic craft” can create representations and “imitations in the sense that” the entities “appear to be (*phainetai*) what they are not.”⁴³² Plato defines falsity, in the *Sophist*, as that which appears to have reality and yet does not, strictly speaking, exist. The philosophical, artistic creator equally produces narrative in a self-conscious manner. My view is that the mythic exploration of the *Statesman* brings an account of what might or could have happened. Plato uses the term paradigm to stress the ethical import of the myth put forth.

An important transitional term is figure (σχῆμα) which connotes the sense of appropriate quantitative measure bearing a normative or ethical import. Plato uses the term figure (σχῆμα), to connote the form of virtue (ἀρετή) (*Rep.* 365c). Yet the Visitor aims to produce a proportional shape not as a visual sculptor but as a philosophical artist shaping images through words.⁴³³ In his critical remarks towards traditional poetry, Plato explains that the poet, Hesiod, is like a “painter” who “paints something which is not a likeness of what he wishes it to resemble” (*Rep.* 377e).⁴³⁴ The Eleatic Visitor and Socrates use the motif of portraiture together with reference to the paradigm of weaving, in echo of the paradigm of the city and the soul. However, the most elaborate reference to painting with words takes place after the Eleatic Visitor had introduced his modified and reworked version of Hesiod’s *Myth of Kronos*.

⁴³¹ Philips, J.A., “Mimesis in the *Sophistes* of Plato,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 92, 1961, p. 460.

⁴³² Philips, J.A., *art. cit.*, p. 460.

⁴³³ Collobert, C., *art. cit.*, p. 99.

⁴³⁴ Demand, N., “Plato and the Painters,” *Phoenix*, 29, 1975, p. 8-9.

The Eleatic Visitor recognizes that his own *Myth of Kronos*, though an improvement on that of Hesiod, is not adequately proportioned for the task of defining the king or statesman. Before he opts for an even more measured and balanced paradigm (παράδειγμα) to compare with the statesman, he makes remarks about the myth-makers as people who use words in the way that painters use images. Morgan notes that Plato often uses such allusions to painting in the context of dramatic figuration. In Kallipolis, a philosophical leader or ruler would make the city as happy (εὐδαιμονήσειε πόλις) as possible by drawing upon the divine paradigm in artistically sculpting or producing the work (οἱ τῷ θεῷ παραδείγματι χρώμενοι ζωγράφοι) (*Rep.* 500d10-e4).⁴³⁵ The myth does not describe the organization but presents a view of political life in a Golden Age without political constitutions, where humans are tended directly by divinities.

“It would be a fine thing for us, Socrates. But this mustn’t be just your view alone; I too have got to share it in common with you. And as it is, according to my view our discussion does not yet seem to have given complete shape [σχῆμα] to the king [βασιλεύς], but just as sculptors sometimes hurry when it is not appropriate to do so and actually lose time by making additions and increasing the size of the various parts of their work beyond what is necessary, so too in our case, I suppose in order to give a grand as well as quick demonstration of the mistake in the route we previously took, we thought it was appropriate to the king to give large-scale illustrations [μεγάλα παραδείγματα], and took upon ourselves and astonishing mass of material in the shape of the story, so forcing ourselves to use a greater part of it than necessary; thus we have made our exposition longer, and have in every way failed to apply a finish to our story, and our account, just like a portrait, seems adequate in terms of its superficial outline, but not yet to have received its proper clarity, as it were with paints or any other kind of handicraft, but speech and discourse, which constitute the more fitting medium for exhibiting every kind of living creature, for those who are able to follow; for the rest, it will be through handicrafts” (*Pol.* 277a-c).⁴³⁶

This reference to adequacy or inadequacy in portraiture or representation occurs in the sections where Socrates criticizes Hesiod’s representation. Morgan points out that the Visitor

⁴³⁵ Morgan, M., ‘Plato and the Painters,’ *Apeiron*, 23, 1990, p. 129 and p. 144. ἀλλ’ ἐὰν δὴ αἰσθωνται οἱ πολλοὶ ὅτι ἀληθῆ περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγομεν, χαλεπανοῦσι δὴ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις καὶ ἀπιστήσουσιν ἡμῖν λέγουσιν ὥς οὐκ ἂν ποτε ἄλλως εὐδαιμονήσειε πόλις, εἰ μὴ αὐτὴν διαγράψειαν οἱ τῷ θεῷ παραδείγματι χρώμενοι ζωγράφοι;

⁴³⁶ Collobert, C., *art. cit.*, p. 99.

recognizes that he has at the “level of mythology” made the “same mistake” as he had through the method of collection and division.⁴³⁷ The Visitor appears to regard this identification or misidentification as on par with his earlier error in the use of collection and division. This has led Collobert and Gill to maintain that the Myth of Kronos serves an “argumentative” function, since it corrects an erroneous definition provided by a rational, argumentative technique. The myth is unusually strange, even for a Platonic myth. Further, the Eleatic Visitor, as noted above, actually owns up to the fact that the myth does not properly provide a definition of the sought entity. Thus, the argumentative import can only be ethical or practical. The Visitor does, as noted in the first section, accept that the use of a single paradigm, employed as an analogy, will enable him to correct the error. The paradigm which the Visitor offers takes the form of an analogy. This is the account (λόγος) which the speakers eventually accept as an adequate representation of the statesman (πολιτικός).

The manner in which the *Statesman* uses paradigm most impressively is in the composition of a myth. The Eleatic Visitor made use of collection and division in order to offer a λόγος of the statesman as shepherd of the human herd. His myth describes a Golden Age where humans were tended like sheep by spirit guardians. This narrative is not without precedent in Greek tradition. As we shall see at greater length below, the myth originates in Hesiod. However, the Visitor changes Hesiod’s narrative in order to provide alternative paradigms which suit his own mimetic standards.

The Visitor takes up Hesiod’s *Myth of Kronos* and invents his own Myth of the Golden Age. More significantly, he shows the Younger Socrates how to do what he is doing, making and narrating a myth of the kind often found in Plato’s dialogues. In the exchange between the two characters, this is the first exercise in producing such a narrative account. In

⁴³⁷ Morgan, K., *Myth and Philosophy from the Presocratics to Plato*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 257.

the *Republic*, the Visitor observes the standards which Plato sets concerning representation. Indeed, the Visitor specifically renders a narrative which extricates the elements that Socrates critiques in the *Republic*. He changes Kronos and Zeus from the way they are portrayed in Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* in order that they conform to a certain ethical standard outlined in *Republic* II and III.

Most, recognizing his dependence on the work of Brisson, identifies "eight principles" which enable a reader to determine "those parts of a Platonic dialogue which can be identified as Platonic myths[.]"⁴³⁸ In greater detail than Most, Brisson expounds the Platonic standards of myth-making and mimetic representation, indicating the source of Plato's practice in earlier tradition.⁴³⁹ Most's principles for identifying a Platonic myth serve as a helpful, general guide. Complementing Brisson's more extensive study, Most's article offers the most economical recent summary of the principles of Platonic myth. The Visitor actually signals to the Younger Socrates that he is engaging in mythic construction when composing his Myth of Kronos. Plato uses the dramatic form to show his characters making use of logical techniques like induction and deductive refutation, without always signaling that he is using these specific methods. In a similar manner, Plato often shows characters composing mythic narratives, in various dialogues, without explaining the principles of poetic and narrative construction or presentation. The Eleatic Visitor is, however, unusually overt and didactic not only in his presentation of a myth but in his explanation of how to narrate and compose one.

The language of the *Timaeus* speaks of the need for the cosmos to imitate the divine paradigms upon which the demiurge models the world. This echoes the earliest, vague language of the central books of the *Republic*, where it is simply said that a philosopher-statesman or philosopher-king must grasp the higher order models in ordering the city (*Rep.*

⁴³⁸ Most, G., "Plato's Exoteric Myth," *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, Leiden, Brill, 2012, p. 16-18.

⁴³⁹ Brisson, L., Naddaf, G. trans., *Plato as Myth-maker*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 13-14.

500e3; 529d7; 540a9). This activity of a philosophical ruler, which in mythic language is based in a grasp of paradigms, merely mirrors the activity of the higher order celestial motions.

The Visitor, reworking a traditional myth in dialogue with the Younger Socrates, is not only a philosophic mythmaker and poet, but Plato's *Statesman* also offers a unique and instructive demonstration of how to make the kinds of myths that occur in Plato's own dialogues, in spite or perhaps because of the imperfection in the use of paradigms in the act of construction. By narrating his account, Plato's Eleatic Visitor works in the manner of those practicing within the rhapsodic and poetic tradition. Plato compares Hesiod to a sculptor or painter who sculpts badly. The Visitor seeks to master the use of shape, as a painter masters visual representation or the musician masters rhythm and sound (*Pol.* 277a-c). This *Statesman* offers a practical instance of an exercise in the uses of paradigms, an instance which illustrates what is explained in the theoretical discussion of Platonic mimesis or narrative composition found in the *Republic* and the *Laws*.

3.1.3 Platonic Mimesis

The most basic characterization of *mimesis* occurs in the third book of Plato's *Republic*.⁴⁴⁰ Imitation occurs when one makes oneself in voice or appearance like another (*Rep.* 393c5-6).⁴⁴¹ *Mimesis* of speech, gesture and voice becomes like the model (κατὰ σχῆμα).⁴⁴² The term σχῆμα, as noted above, is closely associated with image and model. Plato allows for a 'good' or 'scientific' form of imitation, as opposed to a 'bad' imitation. These good forms of imitation are hymns to the gods and eulogies to good men. This

⁴⁴⁰ *Republic* (393c5-6). See Belfiore, E., "A Theory of Imitation in Plato's *Republic*," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 114, 1984, p. 123.

⁴⁴¹ Collobert, C., "Poetry as Flawed Reproduction," *Plato and the Poets*, Brill, Leiden, 2011, p. 55.

⁴⁴² Penelope Murray notes that mimesis, before Plato, already involved a wide range of concepts, including "vocal mimicry, dramatic enactment and imitation" but "also the imitation of behaviour and visual representation." Plato expands the use of the term mimesis to encompass and explain not only music and dance but the relation between language and reality, "material world and eternal paradigm." Murray, P. *Plato on Poetry*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 3.

capacity to employ a model enables one to represent mortal and divine life in a suitable fashion, but the model need not be good. There are also bad models which bear an instructive significance.

Plato offers an earlier account of imitation where he discusses a need to present people acting in a good way. Thus, ethical standards for representation apply not only to divinities but mortal humans. The “harmony in songs” will imitate (μιμήσαιοτο) “the tones and actions of brave men[,]” and “harmony, rhythm and grace will be allied with imitations (μιμήματα) of good and temperate characters.”⁴⁴³ As expressed in the *Republic*, one must observe the conduct of one who is beautiful (καλός) and good (ἀγαθός) as well as a measured person (ὁ μέτριος ἀνὴρ), as expressed in the *Republic*.⁴⁴⁴ Plato provides a medical analogy to describe the importance of familiarity not only with good but bad and vicious characters as well (*Rep.* 408d-c).

Plato here provides three instances of the term paradigm to illustrate his meaning about the medicinal power of being aware of both virtuous and vicious models (409a-409d). In youth, good people appear foolish and naïve, and this is because they have no paradigm or model of experiences of vice.

“That’s right, he *does* rule other souls with his own soul. And it isn’t possible for a soul to be nurtured among vicious souls from childhood, to associate with them, to indulge in very kind of injustice and come through it able to judge other people’s injustice from its own case, as it can diseases of the body. Rather, if it’s to be fine and good, and a sound judge of just things, it must itself remain pure and have no experience of bad character while it’s young. That’s the reason, indeed, that decent people appear simple and easily deceived by unjust ones when they are young. It’s because they have no models in themselves of the evil experiences of the vicious to guide their judgments [ἔχοντες ἐν ἑαυτοῖς παραδείγματα ὁμοιοπαθῆ τοῖς πονηροῖς]” (*Rep.* 409a1-b2).

⁴⁴³ Tate, J., “‘Imitation’ in Plato’s *Republic*,” *Classical Quarterly*, 22, 1928, p. 16.

⁴⁴⁴ Tate, J., *art. cit.*, p. 16.

A good judge of character must, for this reason, be familiar with bad models in order to act prudently. He keeps both in his mind in order that the one serve as a model for conduct and the other a warning for what not to do (*Rep.* 409b3-c2). In spite of his earlier statement that young people should be protected from harmful images, Socrates clarifies that mature people who are virtuous should, in fact, be aware of both good and bad models for conduct. Like physicians who understand both the sources of disease and the remedies for disease, virtuous people should be able to recognize both vicious conduct and virtuous behaviour in themselves as well as others. A virtuous person, in Plato's mythical imagination, is someone who is a guardian in the city and is like a spiritual physician who is familiar with both the causes of illness and health (*Rep.* 409c3-e2).⁴⁴⁵

Socrates explains that those who "legislate in our city for the kind of medicine we mentioned and for this kind of judging, so that together they'll look after those who are naturally well endowed in body and soul" (*Rep.* 410a). Plato expands on this view in the *Laws*. He holds that athletic training brings courage when combined with musical training, which brings moderation (*Rep.* 410b-412a). In a striking parallelism to the above *Republic* passages, Plato introduces three additional instances of paradigm. After he introduces a legal specification that certain kinds of divine activity cannot be represented, he describes his

⁴⁴⁵ "And he'd be good, too, which was what you asked, for someone who has a good soul is good. The clever and suspicious person, on the other hand, who has committed many injustices himself and thinks himself in the company of those like himself, because he's on his guard and is guided by models [παράδειγματα] within himself. But when he meets with good older people, he's seen to be stupid, distrustful at the wrong time, and ignorant of what sound character is, since he has no model [παράδειγμα] of this within himself. But since he meets vicious people more often than good ones, he seems to be clever rather than unlearned, both to himself and to others"

"That's completely true."

"Then we mustn't look for the good judge among people like that but among the sort we described earlier. A vicious person would never know either himself or a virtuous one, whereas a naturally virtuous person, when educated, will in time acquire knowledge of both virtue and vice. And it is someone like that who becomes wise, in my view, and not the bad person."

"I agree with you"

approach as a sort of model for how to select and compose literature for the city (*Leg.* 801b9-c6).⁴⁴⁶

The discussion of music is coextensive with the discussion of spoken narrative, since both are involved in traditional Greek cultural formation. The Athenian Visitor describes the ordinary practice of drawing selected passages together in the course of grammatical education. However, he is also indicating the deficiencies of uncritical memorizing (*Leg.* 810e6-811a7). The Athenian Visitor in the *Laws* says that the actual discussion which they have been undertaking up to this point serves as the guide or model for the kind of writing which he would regard as laudable. This literary work would serve as a model for people to imitate in justly arranging their lives (*Leg.* 811b9-812a3).⁴⁴⁷

The Athenian Visitor has expressed with great clarity that grammatical models, what we would call literary exemplars or model, bear a central significance in the pedagogy and

⁴⁴⁶ “Athenian: So what lesson [παράδειγμα] can we say this doctrine [λόγον] holds for us? Surely this: that authors in general are quite unable to tell good from bad (τὸ τῶν ποιητῶν γένος οὐ πᾶν ἱκανόν ἐστι γινώσκειν σφόδρα τά τε ἀγαθὰ). We conclude that the composer who embodies this error in his words or even in his music, and who produces mistaken prayers, will make our citizens pray improperly when it comes to matters of importance-and, as we were saying, we shan’t find many more glaring mistakes than that. So can we establish this as one of our model laws of music.”

⁴⁴⁷ “Athenian: Well then, in a nutshell, what sort of estimate will do them all justice? I imagine everybody would agree if I put it rather like this. Each of these authors has produced a lot of fine work, and a lot of rubbish too-but if that’s so, I maintain that learning so much of it puts the young at risk.”

“Clinias: So what recommendation would you give the Guardian of the Laws?”

“Athenian: What about?”

“Clinias: The model [τί παράδειγμά] work that will enable him to decide what material all the children may learn, and what not. Tell us, without any hesitation.”

“Athenian: My dear Clinias, I suspect I’ve had a bit of luck.”

“Clinias: How’s that?”

“Athenian: Because I haven’t got far to look for a model [παραδείγματος]. You see, when I look back now over this discussion of ours, which has lasted from dawn up till this moment-a discussion which I think I sense inspiration of heaven-well, it’s come to look, to my eyes, just like a literary composition. Perhaps not surprisingly, I was overcome by a feeling of immense satisfaction at the sight of my ‘collected works’, so to speak, because of all the addresses I have ever learned or listened to, whether in verse or in this kind of free prose style I’ve been using, it’s *these* that have impressed me as being the most eminently acceptable and the most entirely appropriate for the ears of the younger generation. So I could hardly commend a better model [παράδειγμα...βέλτιον] than this to the Guardians of the Laws in charge of education. Here’s what he must tell the teachers to teach the children, and if he comes across similar and related material while working through prose writings, or the verse of poets, or when listening to unwritten compositions in simple prose that show a family resemblance to our discussion today, he must on no account let them slip through his fingers, but have them committed to writing. His first job will be to compel the teachers to learn this material and speak well of it, and he must not employ as his assistants any teachers who disapprove of it; he should employ only those who endorse his own high opinion, and entrust them with the teaching and education of the children. That, then, is my doctrine [μῦθος] on literature and its teachers [περὶ γραμματιστῶν τε εἰρημένος ἅμα καὶ γραμμάτων], so let me finish there”

ethical formation of the young. He also asserts that the very discussion which he and his collocutors are undertaking should be taken as one such model. This passage reinforces my view that Plato is claiming that his dialogues, among them the *Republic* and the *Laws*, draw critically upon existing poetic tradition to provide an alternative model to existing poetry. It is only in the *Statesman* that such a model, explained in conjunction with grammar, is technically explained. However, in the *Gorgias*, Plato uses paradigm to mean a narrative exemplar meant to serve as a warning.

Socrates even presents his myth in a way that it is meant to provide a kind of narrative correction of Callicles poor reasoning. This is, indeed, the context where the expression paradigm arises, to signify a bad ethical role model (*Gorg.* 525b-c). In the myth of *Gorgias*, this model, itself, reworks facets of Homer's presentation of the afterlife. Socrates, refers to a myth using the term for a rational account (*Gorg.* 522e). This would not be surprising if Socrates were merely using the sense of rational account in the traditional sense of a speech or narrative.

But Socrates specifically introduces the term for myth in order to differentiate his rational account about the afterlife with unreal fables. Socrates says that Callicles will "think that it's a mere tale [μῦθον], I believe, although I think it's an account [λόγον], for what I'm about to say I will tell you as true" (*Gorg.* 522e). This use of *logos* where one would expect *mythos* suggests that Plato regards reasoning as more expansive than mere logic. In this myth itself, Plato draws attention to particular ethical examples meant to be instructive for Callicles (*Gorg.* 525b-c).⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁸ "It is appropriate for everyone who is subject to punishment rightly inflicted by another either to become better and profit from it, or else to be made an example [παραδείγματι] for another, so that when they see him suffering whatever it is he suffers, they may be afraid and become better. Those who are benefited, who are made to pay their due by gods and men, are the ones whose errors are curable; even so, their benefit comes to them, both here and in Hades, by way of pain and suffering, for there is no other possible way to get rid of injustice. From among those who have committed the ultimate wrongs and who because of their crimes have become incurable come the ones who are made examples of [τὰ παραδείγματα]. These persons themselves no longer derive any profit from their punishment, because they're incurable. Others, however, do profit from it

Socrates mentions the word example three times in this passage. There are instances of terrible tyrants “undergoing eternal punishment in Hades as kings and potentates” such as “Tatalus, Sisyphus and Titys” (*Gorg.* 523b). This suggests that philosophers, like Socrates, compose poetry, drawing upon existing precedent, which gives people correct beliefs about ethical life.⁴⁴⁹ Socrates asserts that to imitate paradigms (παράδειγματα) correctly is to live a good life (*Tht.* 177e-177a).⁴⁵⁰ Traditional myths are a useful source upon which to draw.⁴⁵¹ In some ways, the Visitor emulates facets of the earlier myth. Yet he is more than a mere ‘imitator’. He does not simply copy. He molds and sculpts from the scattered fragments of earlier myth in order to construct a narrative which is supposed to meet the criteria of *Republic* II and III.

3.2 Plato’s Creative Transformation of Hesiod’s *Myth of Kronos*

3.2.1 Principles of Platonic Myth

Plato might use the dramatic art to portray characters engaging in rational methods of definition and argumentation. However, the dialogues also contain monological myths, much more like the images and analogies, which are meant to serve an instructive purpose. Mimesis is an associated term, since particular entities imitate the formal reality. However,

when they see them undergoing for all time the most grievous, intensely painful and frightening sufferings for their errors, simply strung up there in their prison in Hades as examples [παράδειγματα], visible warning to unjust men who are ever arriving.”

⁴⁴⁹ Tate, J., *art. cit.*, p. 17.

⁴⁵⁰ “Two patterns, my friend, are set up in the world, the divine, which is most blessed, and the godless, which is most wretched. But these men do not see that this is the case, and their silliness and extreme foolishness blind them to the fact that through their unrighteous acts they are made like the one and unlike the other. They therefore pay the penalty for this by living a life that conforms to the pattern they resemble; and if we tell them that, unless they depart from their “cleverness,” the blessed place that is pure of all things evil will not receive them after death, and here on earth they will always live the life like themselves—evil men associating with evil—when they hear this, they will be so confident in their unscrupulous cleverness that they will think our words the talk of fools.”

⁴⁵¹ Gebruier, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Reneau, D., trans., University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 32: *Mimesis* can be considered “as the imitation of concrete action” and, also, “emulation”. “Mimesis designates the process in which someone is imitated in regard to something; there is a representation, an occasion, and a point of view for the mimetic action; often a motive can also be identified.” The sense of emulation presupposes “that the valuation involves an ethical point of view. Persons imitated exist as models, for example, “the excellent men of earlier times.” ”

Plato equally gives mimesis the sense of poetry, narrative and dramatic representation of characters in action.

The principles Most proposes for identifying a Platonic myth in some ways parallel Aristotle's recommendations for mythic composition in the *Poetics*. To some extent, we explored in the previous section how Aristotle's testimony relating to *Sokratikoi logoi* and the relation between dramatic and historical genres are associated. Most's principles, which in many ways echo Aristotle's discussion in the *Poetics* of techniques for composing a tragic myth, will serve as something of an interpretive guide in my argument that the Eleatic Visitor is showing the Younger Socrates how to make a myth by drawing on previous narratives in a way that accords with a certain set of ethical criteria outlined by Plato in *Republic* II and III. The *Statesman* myth captures almost every feature, as it clearly draws from a number of pre-existing myths, which the Visitor recognizes as familiar from other sources.

Not only does the Eleatic Visitor encourage the Younger Socrates to open himself to the unexpected and the incredible, he shows the Younger Socrates, in a methodical fashion, how to make a myth, just as he showed him how to practice the rational method of collection and division. Myths are monologues, rather than dialogues, but the Visitor breaks up the myth a number of times to signal what he is doing and how he is doing it, citing his sources, and introducing the beginning, middle and end while inviting the Younger Socrates to draw the lesson of what he is saying. In the Visitor's myth of the *Statesman*, the following principles are apparent and applied in the practice of composing his Platonic myth, showing the Younger Socrates how to compose one himself.

1. *Plato's myths are almost always monological.*
2. *Platonic myths are probably always recounted by an older speaker to younger listeners.*⁴⁵²

⁴⁵² Most, G., *art. cit.*, p. 12. Most notes that "die platonische Mythen" are both for "älteren" and "jüngeren Zuhörern" rather than a small audience with only a specialist interest.

3. *Platonic myths go back to older, explicitly indicated or implied, real or fictional oral sources.*⁴⁵³
4. *Platonic myths always deal with objects and events that cannot be verified.*⁴⁵⁴
5. *Platonic myths generally derive their authority not from the speaker's personal experience but from the tradition.*⁴⁵⁵
6. *Platonic myths often have an explicitly asserted psychagogic effect.*⁴⁵⁶
7. *Platonic myths are never structured as dialectic but instead always as description or narration.*
8. *Platonic myths are always found either (a) at the beginning of an extended dialectical exposition or (b) at the end of one.*

Most emphasizes both the lack of dialogue in Platonic Myths and their singularly mono-logic character.⁴⁵⁷ Most notes that with “the exception of this eight feature” all the other characteristics he indicates “are thoroughly typical of the traditional myths which were found in the oral culture of ancient Greece.”⁴⁵⁸ However, these myths “Plato himself often describes and indeed vigorously criticizes.”⁴⁵⁹ The *Statesman* myth is not the only myth which includes these kinds of interpretive or instructive digressions; all other Platonic myths exhibit a certain level of self-consciousness in presentation. However, the Myth of Kronos is presented in such an unusually self-conscious way that it can only be interpreted as an

⁴⁵³ Most, G. *art. cit.*, p. 12. Platonic myths are “von nicht nachprüfbaren Gegenständen” and so may serve as “Atiologie” for “den Urzeiten” by communicating a vision of a world remote from our own.

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Brisson, L., *Les mots et les mythes*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁴⁵⁵ Most, G., *art. cit.*, p. 12. Most notes that myth does not come “aus der eigenen Erfahrung des Sprechers” but “aus der Tradition[.]”

⁴⁵⁶ Graziosi, B., *op. cit.*, p. 20. Most, G., *art. cit.*, p. 12. Most notes that there is “eine psychagogische Wirkung” to Platonic myth, which constitutes an “Appell des Mythos an die Emotionen” which is “über die rationale pleasure and understanding.

⁴⁵⁷ Most, G., „Platons exoterische mythen,“ in Janka, M. and Schäfer, C. eds., *Platon als Mytholog. Neue Interpretationen zu den Mythen in Platons Dialogen*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002, p. 11-13. The *Statesman* myth shares a great deal with myths of origin. Like the *Timaeus*, it provides, at some level, an account of the creation of the world (29d-92c). However, it also, like the *Protagoras* myth, recounts the origins of political community (320c-323a). The origin of writing, in the *Myth of Theuth*, is treated in the *Phaedrus* (274b-275b). However, the Eleatic Visitor's myth is, to some extent, also an account of the origin of human sexuality, which, though not strictly, narratively incompatible with Aristophanes' myth is certainly different from the one presented in the *Symposium* (189c-193d). Humans, in the Age of Kronos, like the androgynous humans portrayed in Aristophanes' myth, are without gender and only begin to reproduce biologically in the Age of Kronos. Perhaps, in the backdrop of Plato's mythical imaginary, this is where Zeus, following Kronos' tendance of the Golden Age humans, in the Age of Zeus, split the androgynous humans up. Indeed, the Myth of Kronos captures some of the silliness of the Aristophanic myth.

⁴⁵⁸ Most, G., *art. cit.*, p. 19.

⁴⁵⁹ Most, G., *art. cit.*, p. 19.

exercise in how to make a myth on the basis of earlier poetic tradition.

Hesiod's encounter with the Muses on Mount Helikon is his authentication as bard. This confers a kind of ethical authority on the mythical narratives Hesiod will recount (*Theogony*, 26-38). The Muses, as daughters of Zeus, are invoked in Homer (*Odyssey*, I, 1-10; *Iliad*, II, 484-493) and in Hesiod (*Theogony*, 1-2, 22-23, 36-55). Collobert observes that Homer depicts the singer (αοιδός) in terms of the understanding (ἐπιστήμη) which his narrative (μῦθος) reflects (*Odyssey*, XI, 366).⁴⁶⁰ Yet the act of composition in Plato, as with archaic singers like Homer and Hesiod, is arguably not connected merely to rational and self-conscious procedures but involves a certain degree of unconscious purpose.

Plato presents an account of poetic inspiration which does not presuppose the level of self-conscious intention which Collobert ascribes to Homer and Hesiod in the composition of the poems. Plato explains that the skill (τέχνη) of the poet, in his presentation of the nature of poetic inspiration, consists in orienting and ordering himself in accordance with divine, rather than merely human, motivation (*Tim.* 27c2-3).⁴⁶¹

Plato, echoing earlier scholarly interpretations of claims to divine inspiration in Hesiod, maintains that poetic inspiration does require a loss of conscious self-command. The abandonment of self-command in the act of inspired composition and recitation suggests, however, a lack of τέχνη on the part of the poet. If inspiration is in fact the source of a poet's skill, then the poet has no skill.⁴⁶² Penelope Murray stresses that this "inspiration" takes place independent of "conscious mind".⁴⁶³ Yet Janaway notes that although poets "cannot explain their successes in terms of rational procedures they have followed[,]" Plato accepts

⁴⁶⁰ Collobert, C., «L'Odyssée ou la naissance de la fiction», *j. cit.*, p. 16.

⁴⁶¹ Collobert, C., "Poetry as Flawed Reproduction: Possession and Mimesis," in Destrée, P. and Herrmann, F.R., eds., *Plato and the Poets*, Brill, Boston, 2011, p. 41.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*

⁴⁶³ Murray, P., "Poetic Inspiration in Early Greece," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 101, 1981, p. 88-90; Collobert, C., *Parier sur le temps: la quête héroïque d'immortalité dans l'épopée homérique*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2011, p. 162-171.

that there is a poetic craft.⁴⁶⁴ Gonzalez recognizes that Plato's stance towards poetic rapture is, at least, ambiguous.⁴⁶⁵ On the other hand, as Dorion maintains, and we shall see further below, even Socrates' claim to a spirit and the authority of the Oracle of Delphi could simply be a Platonic literary conceit.

Plato as author presents his voice in the third person, through the words of constructed characters who stand as an inspired, philosophical speaker. He does this in order to authenticate his own claim as philosophical artist. As Gill observes, Homer has *Odyssey* "tell stories" which "the audience knows are lies[.]"⁴⁶⁶ According to Gill, if "Odysseus can create fictions so, by implication, can Homer."⁴⁶⁷ Gill, however, asserts that there is a distinction to be made between "Homeric fictional poetry and Hesiodic factual poetry."⁴⁶⁸ Hesiod draws the distinction in his prologue of the *Theogony* (27-8) between his own statements and the "plausible" [ὁμοία] statements of other poets, which merely "resemble" truth.⁴⁶⁹ Heath holds that Hesiod accepts that persuasive speech may be no more than plausible falsehood, a literary conceit meant for the purpose of moral edification, a fictive meant to authenticate his own authorial status.⁴⁷⁰ This validating history is a narrative of progress from a role of shepherd to that of farmer and household head, having achieved a significant victory at a singing contest at Chalcis.

Haubold notes that 20th century scholarship "depicted Hesiod as an archaic peasant who formulated his 'convictions' in a simplistic" and even "chaotic manner."⁴⁷¹ However, "the pendulum of critical opinion has swung back in" Hesiod's "favour, suggesting that

⁴⁶⁴ Janaway, C., *Images of Excellence: Plato's Critique of the Arts*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1995, p. 16.

⁴⁶⁵ Gonzalez, F., "The Hermeneutics of Madness," in *Plato and the Poets*, *op cit.*, p. 105.

⁴⁶⁶ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁴⁶⁷ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁴⁶⁸ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁴⁶⁹ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁴⁷⁰ Heath, M., "Hesiod's Didactic Poetry," *The Classical Quarterly*, 35, 1985, p. 245-263; Griffith, M., "Personality in Hesiod," *Classical Antiquity*, 2, 1, April, 1983, p. 37.

⁴⁷¹ Haubold, J.H., "Shepherd, Farmer, Poet, Sophist: Hesiod on his own Reception," in Boys-Stones, R. and Haubold, J.H. eds., *Plato and Hesiod*, Oxford, Clarendon, p. 11-16.

Hesiod's persona is carefully tailored to his poetry, and that the Hesiodic corpus represents a sophisticated attempt to understand the world and to communicate that understanding."⁴⁷²

The Boetian bard crafts with sophistication an account of his country roots precisely with the aim of legitimizing himself as a wellspring of wise counsel.

“One time they taught Hesiod beautiful song while he was pasturing lambs under holy Helicon. And this speech the goddesses spoke first of all to me, the Olympian Muses, the daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus: “Field-dwelling shepherds, ignoble disgraces, mere bellies: we know how to say many false things similar [ὁμοῖα] to genuine ones, but we know, when we wish, how to proclaim true thing.” So spoke great Zeus’ ready-speaking daughters, and they plucked a staff, a branch of luxuriant laurel, a marvel, and gave it to me; and they breathed a divine voice into me, so that I might glorify what will be and what was before, and they commanded me to sing of the race of blessed ones who always are [γένος αἰὲν ἐόντων], but always to sing of themselves first and last” (*Theogony*, 22-34).

Hesiod actually recognizes that the Muses are able to speak truth, along with lies, and he seems eager to pursue this in the composition of his own narratives, which purportedly speak of truth. The “narrator of the *Works and Days*” reminisces about his encounter with “the Muses on Mount Helicon” so as to confirm “our impression of a mature man who looks back over a significant stretch of his life” (*Works and Days*, 659).⁴⁷³ His work as a herdsman and then an agriculturalist shows progress from sensible youth to level-headed maturity. Hesiod is introduced as “a shepherd” who “as yet lacks any relevant knowledge of his own.”⁴⁷⁴ In “early Greek epic” shepherds tend to be “fallible” and no “epic character ever boasts of being a shepherd.”⁴⁷⁵ Haubold notes that farmers “are usually older than shepherds and hence more authoritative.”⁴⁷⁶ His first song, the *Theogony*, describes a life herding sheep at the base of Mount Helicon (*Theogony*, 22-35). The youthful shepherd becomes a mature cultivator of land by the time he composes *Works and Days*.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

My approach will be to compare the authorial claim of Plato and that of Hesiod. Plato does this indirectly, through the speech of characters in his dialogues, whereas Hesiod makes this claim directly. The ground of this work has been lain by Haubold. Haubold identifies a parallelism between Hesiod's self-presentation and the crafts the Visitor associates with statesmanship in his first definition of the statesman. The Visitor classifies "household management" and "agriculture" when he develops his first definition of the statesman (*Pol.* 258e). The management of a household is comparable with the management a kingdom which the statesman provides to a wider community (*Pol.* 259d). The Visitor shows concern for giving practical advice to the individual in taking care of domestic affairs, as much as for providing sage advice for the community as a whole. This account of mastery in taking care of a farm or home enhances Hesiod's authority as inspired singer, able to guide those who listen in the most important matters since these are often simply the most ordinary and everyday matters.

The *Theogony*, composed when Hesiod was a younger man, does not address any specific person. However, the *Works and Days* is different. Hesiod names a particular person, Perses, a charge, who receives his instruction. Hesiod uses his status as an estate holder and proficient cultivator of the land as a sign that he is prepared to teach his younger charge, Perses, as well as kings seeking his counsel, about the just and good life. The Eleatic Visitor teaches the Younger Socrates about the nature of the king and the statesman. First he describes the kind of person he seeks as a shepherd and then he uses a myth with a fanciful description of agriculture.

Hesiod presents himself as a teacher of the Greeks and a repository of sage advice, able to direct the young and even the old and the powerful (*Works and Days*, 10). The poet counsels prudence and moderation as well as courage, since justice (δική) rather than wanton

or outrageous violation (ὑβρις) wins out in the end (*Theogony*, 276-281).⁴⁷⁷ The bard encourages Perses, his charge, to devote his thought to δική rather than violence (*Works and Days*, 274). He avows that for humans justice is “best” (*Works and Days*, 376). This is the path to prosperity and happiness (*Works and Days*, 280-281). In Hesiod’s assessment, a person who is idle, who neglects his farm and who engages in quarrels will encounter misfortune.

A person who is restrained and conscientiously takes care of his own affairs will seek to avoid conflict with others.⁴⁷⁸ Violence and deception must be avoided. Hesiod reproves false oaths as unjust and asserts that whoever tells a lie harms δική or justice (*Theogony*, 283-285). The Boetian bard accepts that enchantment suits his public role as counselor. A good βασιλεύς should seek the wisdom of justice so that his judgments will, through soothing words, be realized before the community and the assembly of people (*Theogony*, 85-90, 100-103). However, the Visitor appears to draw upon the example of Hesiod. Hesiod regards his task as a singer (ᾠοδός) as providing counsel for the king (βασιλεύς) and the community as a whole (*Works and Days*, 225-248).⁴⁷⁹ To end quarrels and bring peace and justice through eloquence are tasks shared by both a good king (βασιλεύς) and the bard (ᾠοδός). This wisdom is brought by “the Muses” as a sacred “gift to humankind.”⁴⁸⁰ The association between sophistry and statesmanship or the art of the king is continuous with Greek poetic tradition. When Plato questions the poet, he is also questioning the sophist, the one who claims wisdom and the sacred gift to humankind.

Beall emphasizes the prophetic power of one who witnesses the justice (δική) of

⁴⁷⁷ Griffith, M. *art. cit.*, p. 60.

⁴⁷⁸ Heath, M., *art. cit.*, p. 248.

⁴⁷⁹ Walker, J., *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 4-5.

⁴⁸⁰ Walker, J., *op. cit.*, p. 4-5.

Zeus, enabling the poet and seer to witness the courses of past, present and future.⁴⁸¹ This insight is not that of a mere human king but that of the ruler of mortals and gods. Such wisdom enables a singer to serve as a total guide to life. Thus, Hesiod's claim over other poets is that he has such inspiration and such a capacity to see what is true and just.⁴⁸² The guidance of a poet brings happiness not just to individuals but to the community as a whole.

Plato's consideration of the relation between sophist and statesman, philosopher and philosopher-king resonates with the earlier and traditional association between inspired speech and the role of one who shows leadership among people. Hesiod claims insight into the justice of Zeus. Yet Plato critiques Hesiod's portrayal of the ruler of gods and mortals. Plato's criticism of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* is not actually linked to the factual falsehood of Hesiod's presentation. Plato explicitly says, in the *Republic*, that even if these accounts about the gods were true, the myth-maker would have to pass them over in silence. Plato's objection, which he voices through the character Socrates and then shows, through the Eleatic Visitor's creative mythic composition, is that Hesiod's depiction of the gods does not correspond to the vision of justice (δική) which Hesiod himself accepts. Hesiod exhorts Perses to be just but in the same context describes the gods as carrying out acts of violence and theft themselves.

3.2.2 *Depiction of the Gods in Hesiod's Myth of Kronos and Hesiod's Ethical Counsel to Kings*

Plato's critique of the poets in part emerges out of the fact that poets like Homer and Hesiod actually do make the claim of being ethical or moral teachers in their poems. Hesiod's myths are replete with representations of scenes of gratuity which Hesiod's own ethical instructions, at least as these instructions pertain to the life of mortals, explicitly

⁴⁸¹ Beall, E.F., "Hesiod's Treatise on Justice: *Works and Days* 109-380," *j. cit.*, p. 161.

⁴⁸² Pucci, P., *Hesiod and the Language of Poets*, Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1977, p. 53.

counsel against. Hesiod, nevertheless, regards his own depictions of the actions of gods as bearing an ethically normative force.

Plato introduces an explicit criticism of Hesiod's Myth of Kronos in the *Republic* and then reworks the myth in the *Statesman*. This claim in the *Republic* and the *Statesman* testifies to Plato's own rivalry with the poets themselves. Plato's counsel accords, to some extent, with Hesiod's practical views about the need for restraint and an awareness of one's own limitations. However, he takes issue not with Hesiod's counsel for mortal action but with Hesiod's representation of divine action. Plato asserts that divinities should not be portrayed in a manner that actually conflicts with genuine ethical standards. In *Republic* II and III, he outlines this as the fundamentally objectionable quality of Hesiodic and Homeric poetry.

Hesiod, like Homer, makes the claim that he is conveying a sense of justice. However, he portrays conflict between Zeus and the other divinities. In Hesiod, the gods Kronos and Zeus contest one another through force as much as deception. The primordial (πρώτιστα) divinities (θεῖοι) are Chaos (Χάος) and Gaia (Γαῖα) in Hesiod's *Theogony* (116-120). Earth or Gaia bore Ouranos (Οὐρανός), the sky god, and Ouranos became father (πάτερ) of the Titans (*Theogony*, 207). The "crooked-counseled" Kronos (Κρόνος) violently overthrew his own father, through a stratagem (*Theogony*, 154-162). Gaia provides Kronos with a sickle to castrate his own father, Ouranos (*Theogony*, 167-172). The wound produced the Erinyes, the giants, as well as the foaming Aphrodite Cytheria. Kronos, then, fathered Zeus and the other gods. Zeus overthrew Kronos in comparable fashion.

Plato's *Myth of Kronos* eliminates the indecency of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos*. Depictions of the divine actions for which Plato criticizes Hesiod in the *Republic* are completely omitted by the Visitor, from his own *Myth of Kronos*. Mortals, especially mortal kings, who receive counsel from inspired poets like Hesiod, claim the wisdom of the gods. In

Hesiod, the only practical advice which humans must observe, even the most powerful human kings, is to fear succumbing to excess or hubris and, thus, invite, through their excess, the wrath of the gods. Yet the gods themselves in Hesiod behave badly.

This is the source of Plato's critique of Hesiod. This, as we shall see below, is the source of reproach in Plato's critique of Homer and, above all, Hesiod in the *Republic*. Plato takes the vices of the gods as a sign of a need to correct and even improve the narratives told about gods by his antecedents (*Theogony*, 452-470).⁴⁸³

The details of the confrontation between Zeus and Kronos, entirely absent from Plato's creative reworking of the Myth of Kronos in the *Statesman*, are worth recounting in full. The Visitor's narrative at the same time follows the same course, a shift in regal succession from Kronos to Zeus (*Theogony*, 453-491). Zeus, repeating the cycle of cosmic parricide, becomes in Hesiod's account of the Myth of Kronos, the king of gods and mortals, who attained rule through an act of deception and violent sedition. When Zeus forces Kronos, in an act of victory, to wretch "a stone", the new king of the universe boasts by placing the stone upon the "broad earth in sacred Pytho, down in the valleys of Parnassus, to be a sign thereafter, a marvel for mortal human beings" (*Theogony*, 492-506).⁴⁸⁴ The father of gods and men establishes the sacred rock at Pytho in the valley of Parnassus.

⁴⁸³ "Rhea, overpowered by Cronus, bore him splendid children [Ῥεῖη δὲ δμηθεῖσα Κρόνῳ τέκε φαίδιμα τέκνα], Hestia, Demeter, and the golden-sandaled Hera [Ἰστίην Δήμητρα καὶ Ἥρην χρυσοπέδιλον], and powerful Hades [Ἰφθιμόν τ' Αἴδην], who dwells in mansions beneath the earth and has a pitiless heart, and the loud-sounding Earth-shaken and the counselor Zeus [Ζῆν' τε μητιόεντα, θεῶν πατέρ' ἡδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν], the father of gods and men, by whose thunder the broad earth is shaken. Great Cronus would swallow these down as each one came from the mother's holy womb to her knees, mindful lest anyone else of the Sky's illustrious children should have the honor of kingship among the immortals. For he had heard from Earth and starry Sky that, mighty though he was, he was destined to be overpowered by a child of his, through the plans of great Zeus. For this reason, he held no unseeing watch, but observed closely, and swallowed down his children; and unrelenting grief gripped Rhea. But when she was about to bear Zeus, the father of gods and men, she beseeched her own dear parents, Earth and starry Sky, to contrive some scheme so that she could bear her dear son without being noticed, and take retribution for the avenging deities of her father and of her children, whom great crooked-counseled Cronus had swallowed down."

⁴⁸⁴ "Swiftly then the king's strength and his splendid limbs grew; and when a year had revolved, great crooked-counseled Cronus, deceived by Earth's very clever suggestion, brought his offspring up again, overcome by his son's devices and force. First he vomited up the stone since he had swallowed it down last of all; Zeus set it first in the broad-pathed earth in the sacred Pytho, down in the valley of Parnassus, to be a sign thereafter, a marvel for mortal human beings."

Zeus and the Olympian gods ground their oaths on this basis (*Theogony*, 501-506). This is the supreme irony, and part of the discrepancy in Hesiod's presentation of the divinities. The testament to trustworthiness, the oath, is founded upon the act of a cosmic ruler who behaved unjustly, making use of deception and unmeasured violence to rise to the rank and position he achieved. The telling of truth is rooted in ruses and an initial act of violence.

Plato critiques the traditional Greek poetic representation of the gods, including those of Hesiod. For Plato, the divinities of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* do not accord with a measured sense of peace, justice or restraint. Plato, in the *Republic*, specifically singles out this Hesiodic narrative about the gods as an instance of a particularly harmful and unacceptable representation of divine action. Mythic expression should fit what Plato describes as superior ethical standards, upheld in his paradigmatic city, Kallipolis. The Eleatic Visitor carries out much of Plato's counsel concerning the Myth of Kronos. Plato mentions in the *Republic* the story of how Kronos was "punished by his own son" Zeus. Plato actually admits that if we determined somehow that a god, Kronos, was overthrown by another god, Zeus, this account would have to be denied on ethical grounds. Socrates introduces this notion in the *Republic*, when considering education in poetry and music, in tandem with athletic and gymnastic instruction (*Rep.* 376e9-377a7).⁴⁸⁵

"And he freed from their deadly bonds his father's brothers, Sky's sons, whom their father had bound in his folly. And they repaid him in gratitude for this kind deed, giving him the thunder and the blazing thunderbolt and the lightning, which huge Earth had concealed before. Relying on these, he rules over mortals and immortals" (*Theogony*, 492-506).

⁴⁸⁵ "Do you include stories under music and poetry?"

"I do."

"Aren't there two kinds of story, one true and the other false?"

"Yes."

"And mustn't our men be educated in both, but first in false ones?"

"I don't understand what you mean."

"Don't you understand that we first tell stories to children? These are false, on the whole, though they have some truth in them. And we tell them to small children before physical training begins." (*Rep.* 376e9-377a7).

Plato is like Hesiod in recognizing that narratives concerning the remote past can only be plausible—earlier myths are uncertain in character (*Rep.* 377c7-378a6).⁴⁸⁶ However, he stresses the ethical or moral import of possible representations. Thus, he in many ways follows Hesiod in asserting his own advance as philosophical artist over his poetic antecedents. Perhaps the greatest weakness in Plato's own presentation of Socrates is that he asserts that "even if" the parricide of Zeus against Kronos "were true", the act of parricide "should be passed over in silence, not told to foolish young people" (*Rep.* 377e). In any event, according to Socrates, notions like the contest between the gods and the giants should be reworked and rendered in such a way that they express ethical truth.

"And they shouldn't be told in our city, Adeimantus. Nor should a young person hear it said that in committing the worst crimes he's doing nothing out of the ordinary, or that if he inflicts every kind of punishment on an unjust father, he's only doing the same as the first and greatest of gods."

"No, by god, I don't think myself that these stories are fit to be told."

"Indeed, if we want the guardians of our city to think that it's shameful to be easily provoked into hating one another, we mustn't allow any stories about gods warring, fighting, or plotting against one another, for they aren't true" (*Rep.* 378b1-c3).

Plato here has Socrates stress the need to extricate vicious action from myths and cease to recount narratives about gods "warring, fighting, or plotting against one another" (*Rep.* 378c). The Visitor's creative alteration of earlier myth is anticipated in his own

⁴⁸⁶ "We'll first look at the major stories, and by seeing how to deal with them, we'll see how to deal with the minor ones as well, for they exhibit the same pattern and have the same effects whether they're famous or not. Don't you think so?"

"I do, but I don't know which ones you're calling major."

"Those that Homer, Hesiod, and other poets tell us, for surely they composed false stories, told them to people, and are still telling them."

"Which stories do you mean, and what fault do you find in them?"

"The fault one ought to find first and foremost, especially if the falsehood isn't well told."

"For example?"

"When a story gives a bad image of what the gods and heroes are like, the way a painter does whose picture is not at all like the things he's trying to paint."

"You're right to object to that. But what sort of thing in particular do you have in mind?"

"First, telling the greatest falsehood about the most important things doesn't make a fine story—I mean Hesiod telling us about how Uranus behaved, how Cronus punished him for it, and how he was in turn punished by his own son. But even if it were true, it should be passed over in silence, not told to foolish young people. And if, for some reason, it has to be told, only a very few people—pledged to secrecy and after sacrificing not just a pig but something great and scarce—should hear it, so that their number is kept as small as possible."

mention of the battle of the gods and the giants, which he recounts in similar manner to the myth about the shift from the Age of Kronos to the Age of Zeus. The myth is reworked in such a way that it leads to an amicable resolution (*Sph.* 247a-249b; *Rep.* 378d-e).⁴⁸⁷

Plato cites particular myths of Homer and Hesiod as being egregious or immoral. This is a sign that it is not, chiefly, the factual truth or falsity but the moral or ethical significance of the narrative that is of concern for him. Plato is, as Gill notes here, “making it plain that he does not believe there can be any factually accurate account of the distant past.”⁴⁸⁸ For this reason, in “the kind of story-telling (*muthologia*) we have been discussing, we do not know the exact truth about events of the distant past” (*Rep.* 382d1-2).⁴⁸⁹ This is what opens the possibility for creative invention and exploration, through the act of narrative construction. Plato’s objection to Homer, Hesiod and the dramatists is that they do not provide ethically suitable portraits of either human or divine characters. For this reason, narrative composition is a kind of inspired way to examine, consider and explore possibilities of what came before. Plato “does not mean that we can modify our imaginative account to correspond with known facts of the remote past,” because, in dealing with the distant, legendary or remote past, we cannot know what happened with any kind of assurance.⁴⁹⁰ As composers and compositors of narrative, we can only explore possibilities, draw upon existing record, and reconstruct.

⁴⁸⁷ “The battles of gods and giants, and all the various stories of the gods hating their families or friends, should neither be told nor even woven in embroideries. If we’re to persuade our people that no citizen has ever hated another and that it’s impious to do so, when *that’s* what should be told to children from the beginning by old men and women; and as these children grow older, poets should be compelled to tell them the same sort of thing. We won’t admit stories into our city—whether allegorical or not—about Hera being chased by her son, nor about Hephaestus being hurled from heaven by his father when he tried to help his mother, who was being beaten, nor about the battle of the gods in Homer. The young can’t distinguish what is allegorical from what isn’t, and the opinions they absorb at that age are hard to erase and apt to become unalterable. For these reasons, then, we should probably take the utmost care to insure that the first stories they hear about virtue are the best ones for them to hear” (*Rep.* 378d-e).

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 66-67.

Gill's emphasis on the nature of the gods is precisely what is important. The line between "truth and falsity is exceedingly imprecise here."⁴⁹¹ As Gill notes, Plato even "carefully distinguishes conscious and unconscious falsity at 382a-c, and it is unconscious falsity, that is, ignorance, of which he is most critical."⁴⁹² Here is where Gill sees something like fictionality as operative and as bearing a healthy, medicinal quality (*Rep.* 382c-d).⁴⁹³ Socrates stresses that people who compose narratives must make these myths as ethically true as possible. The treatment of narrative leads to a medicinal metaphor. If we did not follow the appropriate prescription of a doctor, it would lead to us making a "worse mistake" than if we simply followed the doctor's orders (*Rep.* 389c). The paradigm of the city and the soul is elaborated and extended further with the myth of metals. Socrates explains that this myth has a sort of persuasive power.

"Nothing new, but a Phoenician story which describes something that has happened in many places. At least, that's what the poets say, and they've persuaded many people to believe it too. It hasn't happened among us, and I don't even know if it could. It would certainly take a lot of persuasion to get people to believe it" (*Rep.* 414b-d).

This myth of metals is associated with the paradigm of the city and the soul, since it serves as an explanation for the three ordered stratification which underlies the city of Kallpolis. Here, Socrates uses the word myth to introduce this narrative, an alteration of the Hesiodic motif of the Golden Age. This myth is described as a series of great paradigms which do not give a completely accurate picture of the ideal city (*Rep.* 414d-415d). Hesiod himself had offered his Golden Age myth as a kind of moral narrative, meant to instruct us

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.* Plato, thus, considers the need for the painter of words to be true to the ethical character of the divinities he portrays. Plato, as Gill notes, compares the "writer" to a "portrait sculptor or painter, who achieves the "truth" by being faithful to the nature of his subject (377e), even if the narrative medium of his portraiture" contains factually "false" elements. The truth of individual elements of the portrait might be uncertain, but Gill contends that the criteria which he works upon concerns the "nature of their subjects (gods and semi-divine heroes)" which enables Plato "to stigmatize individual episodes as false."

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*

about our own condition through a description of a legendary or fabled epoch of lost happiness or bliss.

“If you wish, I shall recapitulate another story [ἕτερόν τοι ἐγὼ λόγον], correctly and skillfully, and you lay it up in your spirit: how the gods and mortal human beings came about from the same origin.”

“Golden was the race of speech-endowed human beings [χρύσειον μὲν πρώτιστα γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων] which the immortals, who have their mansions on Olympus, made first of all. They lived at the time of Cronus, when he was king in the sky; just like gods they spent their lives, with a spirit free from care, entirely apart from toil and distress [τε πόνων καὶ οἰζύος]. Worthless old age did not oppress them, but they were always the same in their feet and hands, and delighted in festivities, lacking in all evils; and they died as if overpowered by sleep” (*Works and Days*, 106-115).

Note that Hesiod uses the word *logos* (λόγον) and *myth* interchangeably. He uses *logos* to mean the story or account which he is about to recount.

Hesiod speaks of a Golden Age of humanity. These Golden Age humans are meant to serve as a legendary standard of blessedness and virtue against which the degenerations of successive generations can be judged. This is the era in which humans were characterized by virtue. However, the Boetian poet avows that earth covered over the human race (γένος) of this Golden Age (*Works and Days*, 109-119). Yet the formerly Golden Age humans eventually emerge from the earth to become spirits (δαίμονες). Having received a “kingly honour” (τοῦτο γέρας βασιλῆιον ἔσχον), spirits from the golden age go on to serve as protectors of mortal humanity (φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων), judging cruel deeds (*Works and Days*, 120-126). The Golden Age people are better than those of subsequent ages, characterized by justice but also semi-divine.⁴⁹⁴ The Silver, Bronze and subsequent ages present, for the large part, a narrative of increasing degeneration of the people.

Hesiod suggests that Golden Age humans serve as examples for conduct and the good life. The Visitor, in contrast, invites the Younger Socrates to question these Golden Age humans as examples for the way to live. In Hesiod, the people of the Silver and Bronze age

⁴⁹⁴ Querbach, C., “Hesiod’s Myth of the Four Races,” *Classical Journal*, 81, 1, 1985, p. 2-3.

are worse, characterized by ὕβρις and, as mere humans, descend beneath the earth. However, Hesiod makes an allowance for “blessed heroes” of the Iron Age, who are given a special abode on the “perimeter” of the earth (167-168).⁴⁹⁵ He goes on to say that the present age, in which we live, is the worst and most lamentable.

This, in some ways, echoes the Plato’s own myth of metals. Plato, however, reworks the motif of metals. In the Myth of the Metals, Humans are borne of different metals from the earth and belong to the class of Gold, Silver or Bronze on the basis of birth. His autochthonous myth, though of an aristocratic pedigree, is actually the source of social mobility within the vision of an idealized society. Those who are born of the Bronze person might, through merit, rise to the Silver or Gold standard. Conversely, the Gold might descend to the Silver or Silver to Bronze. By giving the Younger Socrates the choice to live well and practice philosophy, the Visitor allows for the possibility that the Younger Socrates, even though not of the Golden Age, might become blessed or happy.

In Hesiod, the Golden Age is described as a life of leisure and bliss. In the *Republic*, the races emerge from the earth in a mythic past and the city should be ordered in accordance with the Gold, Silver and Bronze. Plato presents, through his paradigmatic city of Kallipolis, a socially structured order of philosophical rulers, auxiliaries and laboring classes. However, there is upward and downward social mobility. Plato’s account vastly condenses and alters Hesiod’s Myth of the Races, which is connected with the Myth of the Golden Age of Kronos (*Works and Days*, 127-155). And there is yet another race (*Works and Days*, 156-173); Hesiod is among the fifth race of men. He laments his lot for having been born to this fate (*Works and Days*, 174-201). The noble fiction of the myth of the metals which Plato introduces here is a variant of Hesiod’s conception of the shift from the Golden Age of Kronos to the Silver Age to the Bronze Age, or the Bronze Age to the Iron Age. These

⁴⁹⁵ Querbach, C., “Hesiod’s Myth of the Four Races,” *j. cit.*, p. 3.

subsequent ages are not even explicitly mentioned in the Visitor's own Myth of Kronos or Myth of the Golden Age. However, the Visitor, composing his myth with paradigms, admits that he has not succeeded as a painter in adequately portraying his subject.

Even the most lofty and imaginative myths contain elements of factual verity. Certain facets of the *Timaeus* myth and even the myth of the *Statesman* correspond with Plato's understanding of astronomy. The ethical purpose which Platonic myths introduce is beyond rational, strictly propositional, factual truth and falsity. Even in the *Timaeus*, which consists largely of a myth recounted by an astronomer, the ethical dimension is pronounced. Goldschmidt and, more recently, Burnyeat have given attention to this probable function of myth. However, this opinion was anticipated in the earlier work of Goldschmidt. Goldschmidt maintains, in his study of the Platonic use of paradigm, that the use of paradigm in the context of myth connotes a sense of probability or the "probable":

"Le mythe s'adresse soit au savant, soit à l'élève. Il procède ou d'une intention de recherche, ou d'une intention pédagogique. « Probable », il l'est tantôt en raison des limites imposées à l'intelligence humaine, tantôt pour respecter la faiblesse de l'élève. Un savoir plus rigoureux ne conviendrait pas, ici à l'objet, là à l'auditeur."⁴⁹⁶

Goldschmidt notes the potent connection between the appeal to paradigm "par analogie" and paradigm through "mythe[.]"⁴⁹⁷ Like an analogy, the myth expresses in Burnyeat's terms a "logical relation" or in Goldschmidt's terms "lien de parenté" between one entity and another.⁴⁹⁸

Plato introduces the distinction between myth and rational account. However, this does not preclude us from recognizing that in places the term acquires, again, the traditional significance of narrative and speech. In a recent article contributing to the study of myth in Plato, Burnyeat relaxes the sense of rational account (λόγος), while expanding the scope of

⁴⁹⁶ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

logic and the reasonable to encompass mythic explanation. “Accounts” (λόγοι) need not only be “individual statements” but also can be “complex statements” as well as complexes of many statements.⁴⁹⁹ A myth (μῦθος) could “not possibly be a single statement.”⁵⁰⁰ However, it can be a “complex of statements” which equally reveal a certain “logical relation[.]”⁵⁰¹

Even though the conception of the cosmos which the *Timaeus* presents is not rigorously exact, the general view of the world it presents is *likely*. The Platonic term for image (*eikon*) is even etymologically associated with the probable (*Crat.* 430e-432c, 439a1-3). Burnyeat maintains that Plato explains the limits of our capacity to represent the ultimate character of the physical world most fully in the *Timaeus*. By calling the *Timaeus* myth an *eikōs muthos*, Plato recognizes that physical descriptions of the cosmos, even his own, are merely *eoika*. Thus, for Burnyeat, Plato is more our contemporary than are the progenitors of Copernican or Newtonian Classical physics.⁵⁰² Contemporary physicists recognize the probable quality of physical explanation and are more critical of the view, commonly held among classical physicists, that the results of physical science are deterministic. The new models of the cosmos brought by quantum mechanics and relativity, though quite different from those proposed by Plato, echo this probable and uncertain quality. In contrast, Rowe holds that Plato’s uncertainty and his emphasis on probability echoes not so much the limits of physical science but the limits of logic itself. Rowe maintains that since human understanding of itself is “finite and limited” the rational account (λόγος) no less than the myth (μῦθος) must be seen as a mere “utterance” which is “provisional, inadequate” and “at best approximating to truth.”⁵⁰³ That is to say, mythic explanation does not aim to express

⁴⁹⁹ Burnyeat, M.F., “*Eikos muthos*,” in Partenie, C. ed., *Plato’s Myths*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2009, p. 176.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*

⁵⁰³ Partenie, C., *op. cit.*, p. 19.

reasoned truth with logical or mathematical necessity.

The *Statesman* lacks the probable character of the *Timaeus* myth. The Visitor proceeds through the myth as a kind of compositional exploration. Although he seeks a more genuine vision of the nature of the cosmos and life for us, he avows that the paradigms which he has used in making the myth do not present a true belief or account of the statesman, because he has used them in an unmeasured way. Even though the *Statesman* myth, like the *Timaeus* myth, includes astronomical features which reflect Plato's understanding of the physical world, the science fiction effect of world reversal and the backwards motion of time are introduced in such a way that it makes this particular myth somewhat improbable, though not devoid of true elements.

The Eleatic Visitor, in spite of the manifest strangeness of the details of his own mythic description, ultimately insists that the Myth of Kronos has served an argumentative purpose. It is "gradually made plain that the whole account is designed to illustrate a point in the argument (274b, 274e)."⁵⁰⁴ The myth corrects the division of the statesman as shepherd. It explains, through a kind of narrative reason, how in our own age, the Age of Zeus, statesmen are not shepherds who tend humanity. Even the sophist, Protagoras, in recounting his Myth of Prometheus, another associated Hesiod inspired myth, introduces his myth and then explains it with a rational *logos*. The Eleatic Visitor, in the *Statesman*, reverses the order of mythos and logos. The myth explains what was unreasoned in the rational definition and not the other way around. The definition of statesman as shepherd, defined through the rational method of collection and division, is correct by a mythic account.

The move from the rigorous, logical treatment of propositional truth and falsity in the *Sophist* to a mythic composition in the *Statesman* is a shift in discursive register. Socrates and Theaetetus have explained the distinction between propositional truth and falsity. The

⁵⁰⁴ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-Not Fiction," *op. cit.*, p. 70-71.

myth presents a greater open stance towards possibilities which in rigorous terms have not been determined to be either true or false. It is an exploration of the possible or probable. The Visitor, effectively, trains the Younger Socrates in making a myth, which can only aim to be probable. Yet he also leads him to an interpretation of the myth's argumentative significance.

The Visitor takes the second path as an inspired poet and mythmaker. The Visitor describes the way (ὁδός) of myth as a viable path (*Pol.* 268d5). He also questions, in philosophical manner, the content of the myth which he is producing and invites the Younger Socrates to do the same. The Visitor actively applies the principles of Platonic mythmaking by creatively altering Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos*, his Myth of the Golden Age.

3.2.3 Authorship of Platonic Myth

Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* is one such narrative which exercises a normative role in Athenian and Hellenic society. Plato's *Statesman* provides an unusually singular instance, in the Platonic corpus of a character, the Eleatic Visitor, following through with the reforms which Socrates has recommended in the *Republic*. The Visitor does not explain in the passages where he elaborates his myth that he is presenting a myth which accords with the *Republic's* recommendations. But he does explain that his mythmaking is a kind of painting or portraiture, which makes use of visible models or paradigms. Further, he uses the poetic device of making a claim to a divine gift and asserts, in rivalry with Hesiod, that his account of the Myth of Kronos and the Golden Age is actually true. As he does so he explains that he is recovering the true *Myth of Kronos*, rather than inventing an altered myth by drawing upon Hesiod's work.

Mythic production, recitation and interpretation can serve to yield understanding about our place within the cosmos by the affinities such narratives bear with our own condition (*cf. Phdr.* 229c-230b). Plato is far more apprehensive than his antecedents about

the dangers of this form of identification. At the same time, the audience which receives myth is itself engaging in a form of imitation, emulating the thoughts and sentiments depicted through representations. This practice of *mimesis*, as the Visitor recognizes in dialogue with the Younger Socrates, has an ethical significance. The Visitor's *Myth of Kronos* is 'philosophical' according to my view, because he opens even his own myth for the Younger Socrates to question. The ensuing presentation is meant to show, in considerable detail, just how Plato transforms Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* in an act of philosophical poetics.

Plato actually presents Socrates in the *Sophist* authenticating the divine status of the Eleatic Visitor to the mathematician Theodorus, who introduces the Visitor to Socrates. He is a man from "from Elea and he's a member of the group who gather around Parmenides and Zeno" (*Sph.* 216a-b). He guarantees to those present that the Visitor is divine and an exceedingly philosophical individual. Indeed, Socrates says "you are bringing a god without realizing it, like the ones Homer mentions" (*Od.* IX. 270-71; *Sph.* 216a-c). Therefore, the Eleatic Visitor is granted by Plato's speakers the authority of one possessing divine wisdom. The Eleatic Visitor is also, in accordance with the second principle, older than the Younger Socrates.

The Eleatic Visitor reiterates that they have been undertaking an exploration which attempts to provide a true account of the king as statesman (ὁ λόγος ὀρθὸς φανεῖται καὶ ἀκέραιος ὁ περὶ τοῦ βασιλέως), using the motif of shepherd of humanity (*Stm.* 268c2-3). The objective is to exhibit the shape of the king (σχῆμα βασιλικόν) or *politikos* (τὸν πολιτικόν), but the definition is faulty (*Stm.* 268c5-7). Following this warning, the Visitor advises the Younger Socrates about the need to do something else if they are not to bring "disgrace" to the conclusion of the "argument [τὸν λόγον]" (*Stm.* 268d1-2). When the Visitor introduces his myth in the *Statesman* he prefaces what he is about to say and so prevents the Younger Socrates from making such an exclamation about the implausibility of what he is saying.

“Visitor: By mixing in, as one might put it, an element of play [παιδιάν]: we must bring in a large part of a great story [μέγαλου μύθου], and as for the rest, we must then-as in what went before-take away part from part in each case and so arrive at the furthest point of the object of our search” (*Stm.* 268d-e).

Plato’s Visitor encourages the Younger Socrates to give the attention to detail which a child might.

“In that case, pay complete attention to my story, as children do [τῷ μύθῳ μου πάνυ πρόσεχε τὸν νοῦν, καθάπερ οἱ παῖδες]; you certainly haven’t left childish games [παιδιὰς] behind for more than a few years” (*Stm.* 268e).

There is a shift away from the register of true and false propositional discourse, like that in the *Sophist*. Rather, we must turn to the plausible, credible or possible in pursuing that path of mythic and narrative creation. This expansion of the domain of discursive possibility is so complete that the Visitor even insists that the myth contributes to the “argument” and then goes on to introduce a verbal model or image to provide an analogy which he calls a rational explanation of the nature of the statesman.

The Visitor is not merely widening the array of discursive possibilities. He is explaining how to compose a myth by drawing upon traditional myths; however, he insists upon the need to render the details so that they accord with the ethical standards that Socrates clearly outlines in *Republic* II and III for composing a Platonic myth, portraying the gods in a probable way which accords with their nature. The detail with which the Visitor explains his compositional methodology, cites the familiar sources and explains his justification is worth exploring in full. Before even recounting his myth, he explains that the Younger Socrates is already familiar with some of the contents of his account. However, the Eleatic Visitor’s approach is to say that much of the trace has been “obliterated” and that he

is relating something that “others have reported in a scattered way” (*Stm.* 269a-b).⁵⁰⁵ This is the Visitor’s means of exploring narrative possibilities yet untold.

It is also helpful to note in the introductory exposition of the myth that there seems to be a kind of self-conscious reversal of the expected mythos-logos order. The Myth of Kronos has an “argumentative function” in that it explains what the statesman is not, reversing the order from *logos* to myth.⁵⁰⁶ There are important parallels with Protagoras’ own self-authenticating statements when he introduces his *Myth of Prometheus*, a myth which also explains the origin of the arts. Protagoras decides not to recount first a speech to explain his sophistic art. Instead, he opts to tell a story and then provide a reasoned account. This choice is associated with the enjoyment that mythic recitation brings.

“I wouldn’t think of begrudging you an explanation [λόγος], Socrates,” he replied. “But would you rather that I explain by telling you a story, as an older man [πρεσβύτερος] to a younger audience [νειότεροι], or by developing an argument?”

The consensus was that he should proceed in whichever way he wished.”

“I think it would be more pleasant [χαριέτερον], he said, “if I told a story [μῦθος]” (*Prot.* 320c).

⁵⁰⁵ “Visitor: Then I’ll begin. There have occurred in the past, and will occur in the future, many things that have been told through the ages [τῶν πάλαι λεχθέντων πολλά...φάσμα]; one is the portent relating to the quarrel between Atreus and Thyestes [περὶ τὴν Ἀτρέως τε καὶ Θέηστου λεχθεῖσαν ἔριν]. I imagine you remember hearing what people say happened then.

Young Socrates: You’re referring, perhaps, to the sign of the golden lamb.

“Visitor: Not at all; rather to that of the changing of the setting and rising of the sun and the other stars [περὶ τῆς μεταβολῆς δύσεως τε καὶ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἄστρον]-it’s said that they actually began to rise in the region from which they now rise, and rising from the opposite region, and that then after having given witness in favor of Atreus the god changed everything to its present configuration.”

“Young Socrates: Yes indeed, they do say this as well.”

Visitor: And what’s more, we’ve also heard from many about the kingship exercised by Cronus [βασιλείαν... Κρόνος] exercised.

“Young Socrates: Yes, from a great many.”

“Visitor: And what of the report that earlier men were born from the earth and were not reproduced from each other?”

“Young Socrates: This too is one of the things that I have been told through the ages.”

“Visitor: Well, all these things together are consequences of the same state of affairs, and besides these thousands of others still more astonishing than they; but through the great lapse of time since then some have been obliterated, while others have been reported in a scattered way, each separate from one another. But as for the state of affairs that is responsible for all these things, no one has related it, and we should relate it now; for once it has been described, it will be a fitting contribution towards our exposition of the king [τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἀπόδειξιν].”

⁵⁰⁶ Collobert, C., “Taxonomies of Platonic Myth,” unpublished presentation, *Platonic Myth Conference*, University of Ottawa, May 31, 2008, p. 3.

Plato as author is the voice behind both characters, Protagoras and the Eleatic Visitor. Therefore, we can regard the overall mythic backdrop within the dialogues as associated. The Visitor's presentation echoes that of another myth. Protagoras, the sophist, presents his *Myth of Prometheus* for the purpose of enjoyment but also to explain the origin of the arts and, above all, his own art of sophistry, which is a divine gift from the heavens. However, Protagoras supplements his myth with a serious explanation, a *logos*, in which he explains that he is like an advanced grammarian who teaches not only speech and techniques of persuasion but also the virtue which Athenians and other Greeks already, to an extent, possess.

The Myth of Kronos, in contrast, has an argumentative function. The serious, philosophical dialectician, rather than using a *logos* to explain a myth, corrects a faulty *logos* or definition with a myth. This myth itself has still made an inaccurate and inadequate use of paradigms. The Visitor explains that, as a mythic composer, he has been like a sculptor who has used too much material. This occasions the need to explain the meaning of paradigm, returning to the comparison with grammar, explaining that we do not merely essentially define paradigms of particular individuals or ascribe propositionally true or false qualities to them. We can also use paradigms to provide accounts which bring correct beliefs about higher, invisible realities.

The Visitor invites the Younger Socrates to embrace a posture which is open to the level of plausibility appropriate to narrative composition and recitation, in order to appreciate the exchange. There is a spirit of play which this exchange demands (*Pol.* 268d-e). The Visitor explains further that the Younger Socrates ought to give the kind of thoughtful attention which children give when they focus on such a mythic narrative (*Pol.* 268e-5). The Younger Socrates recognizes these stories as familiar from the poets, and the Visitor confirms that there are ancient reports of the kingship which Kronos exercised. There are also reports of

the reversal of the course of the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars, as well as the birth of humans from the earth (*Pol.* 269a-b). Rather than say that he is simply inventing a new story using these familiar elements, the Visitor's literary approach is to say that he is attempting as an exploratory possibility to recover their original meaning. According to the Visitor, poets like Hesiod have misunderstood these reports; as an authoritative speaker, he will attempt to provide a comparatively truer myth.

Although the Visitor draws from other cultural repositories, most of what is contained in his myth is derived from Hesiod, who describes, as we have seen above, an account of humans watched over by divine guardians or spirits of the Golden Age of Kronos (*Works and Days*, 111-22). Hesiod alludes to the theme of autochthony, the native origin from the earth of the people of Hellas and of cities such as Athens. This descriptive motif becomes central in the Eleatic Visitor's narrative. The Visitor insists that the myths from which the parts are gathered have preserved something of the original truth albeit in distorted form.

The highest divinity or god, described as the demiurge, rules over the cosmos. Yet the outer extremities of the cosmos are ordered by the planets, the god Kronos, or the god Zeus, who occupy these tiers. Plato echoes Hesiod's view that the gods Kronos and Zeus bear a superordinate relation over mortals in the administration of what is "proper [θήμις]" and "just [δίκη]" (*Pol.* 269c-d). The enduring immortality of the gods, as in Hesiod, outmatches the mortality of humans. Plato asserts that "the most divine beings alone [θειοτάτοις...μονοῖς] remain always [ἀεὶ] in the same immortal condition (*Pol.* 269d5). For this reason, the world must be steered by a god (*Pol.* 269e8).

"This universe the god [αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς] himself sometimes accompanies, guiding it on its way and helping it move in a circle, while at other times he lets it go, when its circuits have completed the measure of time allotted to it; then it revolves back in the opposite direction, of its own accord, being a living creature and having had intelligence [φρόνησιν] assigned to it by the one who fitted it together in the beginning. This

backward movement is inborn in it from necessity, for the following reason” (*Stm.* 269c-d).

The Hesiodic *Myth of Kronos* depicts a succession from Ouranos to Kronos to Zeus. Ouranos could be the outer sphere of stars and Kronos and Zeus the outer spheres of planets. However, the recognition of a temporal shift is indicative of the etymology of Kronos himself. In any event, the cosmos as a whole is personified and treated as a living spirit, an entity imbued with a spirit and intelligence (*Pol.* 269d). However, the world is also driven by an “inborn urge” which runs counter to the intelligent course of the god.⁵⁰⁷ This compulsion against the right and just order of things leads to death and destruction.⁵⁰⁸ The action of a god who is the author (παρὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ) restores immortality to the world (*Pol.* 270a5, 273b1-2).⁵⁰⁹ Plato dramatizes the recovery of the world order after a cataclysm borne of this recalcitrant motion.

The upheaval marks the shift from the first to the second cosmic era, from the Age of Kronos to the ensuing Age of Zeus. The Visitor’s account of the nature of cosmic motion is not simply or merely a mythic personification of astronomical phenomena as we find in Hesiod. Hesiod maintains that Kronos or time gave birth to Ouranos or the heavens. Plato captures the sense in which, in his own view, astronomical time is set by the motion of the stars and planets. He does this through the effect of the reversal of the cosmos portrayed in his myth. The reversal of the cosmos produces a sort of science fiction effect, making time go backwards or, more accurately, making living things begin life looking older but only gradually becoming younger (*Stm.* 271a-c).

Plato’s mythical description reflects not only a different astronomical understanding from that of Hesiod but a different standard for ethical conduct for divinities. Plato, in his own practice of poetry depicting mortals and gods, eliminates the element of conflict between

⁵⁰⁷ Robinson, T.M., “Demiurge and World-Soul in Plato’s *Politicus*,” *American Journal of Philology*, 88, 1967, p. 59.

⁵⁰⁸ Mohr, R.D., “The formation of the cosmos in the *Statesman* myth,” *Phoenix* 27, 1978, p. 250-2.

⁵⁰⁹ Lidell & Scott, *op. cit.*, p. 613.

the sky gods, Ouranos, Kronos and Zeus. The actions of the gods in Plato's myths, as in Homer and Hesiod's myths, determine the fate for mortals on earth. Plato's depiction of divine action excises the strife and violence of Hesiod's depiction. The cycle of change brings chaos and destruction for those who occupy the κόσμος (*Pol.* 270b). Only a few humans survived this period. Hesiod had described the shift to the Iron Age of Heroes from a Golden Age of Kronos (*Works and Days*, 109-126). The shift to the present Age of Zeus from the Golden Age of Kronos includes an added scene of retrograde, cosmic rotation. Plato depicts the events quite differently from the way in which they are depicted in the source material of Hesiod.

The conflict between Gaia, the Olympian gods, Zeus and his father, Kronos, animates the action of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* leading from the Golden Age to the Age of Zeus. The Visitor depicts no clash between the gods. At the same time, the Visitor's introductory words about cosmic upheaval foreshadow the complicating action which leads the Eleatic Visitor's narrative to a conclusion. The introduction, describing the gods above, prepares for a depiction of the setting, the life and the world of mortals dwelling upon the earth. While Hesiod depicts Kronos and Zeus in contest for cosmic supremacy, Plato denies the possibility that two gods, such as Kronos or Zeus, oppose each other in the movement.

3.2.4 *Description of the Golden Age and Narration of the Shift from the Age of Kronos to the Age of Zeus*

Plato has the Visitor encourage the Younger Socrates to believe in what he is about to say, but this is for the most part an artistic pretense. In Plato's myths, the gods or demigods working beneath the godhead are shepherds of humanity. The Visitor later maintains that this shepherd motif, which featured in the myth (τὸν μῦθον), has been a paradigm (παράδειγμα) (*Stm.* 275b4-7). The Retrograde Humans were like plants, born of the earth at the moment of inception, remembering nothing from before (*Pol.* 272a1-2). Humans of the Golden Age were more divine (θειότερον) than other animal and plant species (*Pol.* 271e5-7). The spirit

god herded (θεός ἔνεμεν) humans at this time, just as humans now tend livestock themselves as shepherds of sheep.

The Golden Age description of bountiful life follows. This matches the description of the plenty and bounty of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* in style as well as diction. Hesiod describes Golden Age individuals who come prior to subsequent Silver, Bronze and Iron Ages (*Works and Days*, 248-255).⁵¹⁰

Plato's *Myth of Kronos* has only two ages, the Age of Kronos and the present Age of Zeus. Nevertheless, this is the passage from which the Eleatic Visitor draws most fully. He alters the descriptive language into a new account, as evidenced below. The gods are the 'statesmen' of humanity in the cosmic age when they were 'shepherded' or tended without a *polis*. What at first seems to be an essential definition of the πολιτικός as shepherd of humanity is transformed into an elaborate myth about mortal humans tended by divine spirits acting as shepherds. This myth is rooted in an earlier narrative of Hesiod. Yet The Visitor claims to be searching and grasping for a more authentic truth. Furthermore, Plato has the Visitor insist that this myth is a kind of reasoning, a sort of rational argument:

"Visitor: You have been keeping up with the argument [τῷ λόγῳ] well. As for what you asked, about everything's springing up of its own accord for human beings, it belongs least to the period that now obtains; it too belonged to the one before. For then the god began to rule and take care of the rotation itself as a whole, and as for the regions, in their turn, it was just the same, the parts of the world-order having everywhere been divided up by gods ruling over them. As for living things, divine spirits had divided them between themselves, like herdsmen, by kind and by herd, each by himself providing independently for all the needs of those he tended, so that none of them was savage, nor did they eat each other, and there was no war or internal dissent at all; and as for all the other things that belong as a consequence to such an arrangement, there would be tens of thousands of them to report" (*Stm.* 271d-e).

⁵¹⁰ "As for you kings [ὧ βασιλῆς], too, ponder this justice [τῇδε δίκην] yourselves. For among human beings there are immortals nearby, who take notice of all those who grind one another down with crooked judgments and have no care for the gods' retribution. Thrice ten thousand are Zeus' immortal guardians of mortal human beings [φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων] upon the bounteous earth, and they watch over judgments and cruel deeds, clad in invisibility, walking everywhere upon the earth."

The eternal peaceful time of bliss has such an overabundance of elements and features. Plato shows the Visitor ceding that he must overlook these details.

“But to return to what we have been told about a human life without toil, the origin of the report is something like this. A god tended [θεός ἐνεμεν] them, taking charge of them himself, just as now human beings, themselves living creatures, but different and more divine [θειότερον], pasture other kinds of living creatures more lowly than themselves; and given this tendance, they had no political constitutions [πολιτεῖαι], nor acquired wives and children, for all of them came back to life from the earth, remembering nothing from the past. While they lacked things of this sort, they had an abundance of fruits [καρποί] from the trees and many plants, which grew not through cultivation but because the earth sent them up of its own accord [αὐτομάτη]. For the most part they would feed outdoors, naked and without bedding; for the blend of the seasons was without painful extremes and they had soft beds from abundant grass that sprang from the earth. What you are hearing about, then, Socrates, is the life of those who lived in the time of Cronus; as for this one, which they say in the time of Zeus, the present one, you are familiar with it from personal experience. Would you be able to judge which of the two is more fortunate?” (*Stm.* 272a-b).

The self-conscious use of archaism is also a feature of the Eleatic Visitor’s language, which is meant to add a mythic effect. Plato’s composition does not only draw from existing or traditional narrative. Plato even makes use of ancient locutions which we find in Hesiod to create the effect of a sort of lofty, reverend antiquity. Most notes in his seventh principle that the language of myth is most often “narrative” or “descriptive” rather than argumentative. Genette notes that Plato makes this important distinction between mere “description” and “narrative” accounts in the *Republic*.⁵¹¹ An account (λόγος) may be the narration (δύγησις) of events or a descriptive choice of words (λέξις), (*Rep.* 392c6-393c7; cf. *Theogony*, 38).⁵¹²

The Visitor relies upon the archaic language of Hesiod in order to convey a sense of august reverence in the listener for the antiquity of the narrative he is relating. Both use comparable language to depict an Age of Kronos. Herded humans drew fruits (καρποί)

⁵¹¹ Genette, G., «Frontières du récit,» *Communications*, 8: *L'Analyse structurale du récit*, Paris, Seuil, 1981, p. 162-166.

⁵¹² Brisson, L. *Les Mots et les Mythes*, op. cit., p. 84-85.

from the trees which grew spontaneously (αὐτομάτη) from the earth (*Pol.* 272a5-6). Hesiod also describes the spontaneity (αὐτομάτη) and abundance of fruit (καρπός) in the Golden Age of Kronos (*Works and Days*, 118-120). Plato's passages describing a life of bliss draw upon the striking imagery and archaic choice of words (λέξις) which bears close comparison with Hesiod's song. Brisson points out that even the unusual detail of humans being born with white hair is imported from *Works and Days* (181-2).⁵¹³

The visual images are factually implausible, but they are meant to be practically and ethically instructive. They express something fundamental about the character of human origins and social organization, as well as our place in the world. The community in the Myth of Kronos lacks republics (πολιτεῖαι). However, the absence of autonomous political organization is made possible by the beneficence of nature and the gods in this Golden Age. In the strict terms of collective, material satisfaction, the Golden Age is more congenial for inhabitants than the present age, in which humans must bring public order to the community (πόλις) without a beneficent cosmos. This description in Plato of a Golden Age condition where humans had no need for sciences and arts, as in Hesiod, is meant to underscore the corresponding need for arts and sciences for human survival. This description of arts and sciences includes the science of political leadership or statesmanship which includes the cultivation of techniques of oratory or rhetoric, as well as mythic composition.

There is a concern for the tranquility of humans in the Golden Age in both Hesiod and Plato. Beall recognizes that Hesiod describes humans as experiencing both a "tranquil" life and a "tranquil death" in the Golden Age.⁵¹⁴ Similarly, according to the Visitor's narrative, Golden Age humans had no need for shelter, as painless seasons prevailed and soft beds of

⁵¹³ Brisson, L., « Interprétation du Mythe du *Politique*, » in Rowe, C. ed., *International Plato Studies*, 4, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1995, p. 361.

⁵¹⁴ Beall, E.F., "Hesiod's Treatise on Justice: *Works and Days* 109-380," *The Classical Journal*, 101, 2, 2005/2006, p. 170.

grass always rose up from the fertility of the earth to provide places for restoration and repose (*Pol.* 272a6-b1). Without bedding they lived and pastured in open air (*Pol.* 272a5-6). This is, however, where the Visitor's narrative differs in detail.

The Visitor had defined the role of the statesman as a shepherd of humanity. In the Visitor's version of the Golden Age myth, 'guardian spirits' protect Golden Age humans who emerge from the earth. The humans did not have human statesmen or even a city (πόλις), nor did they divide into families. Humans lived as a collective (*Pol.* 271e9-272a1). In these respects, the Golden Age echoes the blessed and happy philosophical city of Kallipolis in Plato's *Republic*. In Plato's Kallipolis, guardians do not possess women or children. This *Myth of Kronos* depicts people living within a Golden Age, tended by guardian spirits who care for all of their needs.⁵¹⁵ Such Golden Age people in Hesiod were simply better. The Visitor, however, makes their happiness much more ambivalent, dependent on the kind of life these people chose for themselves.

The Visitor alters this descriptive detail of the Myth of Kronos. His spirits (δαίμονες) serve this protective function as guardians (φύλακες) for mortals who spring from the earth. Hesiod's account describes, again, a race of Golden Age mortals who, in death, are covered-over by the earth, at the close of the Age of Kronos. They then become guardian spirits in the Age of Zeus. In the Eleatic Visitor's narrative, however, guardian spirits tend humans who are born of the earth in the Age of Kronos. The Visitor invites the Younger Socrates to question the state of those humans who lived in this age of blessedness. This question, which the Visitor himself answers, is only preparation for another question to follow, deepening the Younger Socrates consideration of the character of the philosophical life.

⁵¹⁵ Vidal-Naquet, P., «Le mythe du *Politique*, les ambiguïtés de l'âge d'or et de l'histoire,» *Le chasseur noir. Formes de pensée de société dans le monde grec*, Paris, La Découverte, 1991, p. 93-94.

My own application of mythmaking principles to an interpretation of the *Statesman* must diverge from Most's first principle, as well as his eighth principle. Most notes that myths are usually monological and come at the beginning and end of a dialogue or dialectical exchange. Psychagogic digressions and asides are common when Plato shows characters reciting myths, but the Visitor makes so many asides that it actually breaks up the flow of the myth. The Eleatic Visitor, deviating from this ordinary Platonic convention, introduces a dialogical break half-way through the recounting of his myth. This persistent didacticism is a sign that the Visitor is not merely reciting the myth but showing the Younger Socrates how to make a myth.

Plato's Visitor stresses the deficiencies of human perspective in the Golden Age. He asks the Younger Socrates to question whether we would be happier (εὐδαιμονέστερον) in the Age of Kronos (ἐπὶ Κρόνου) or the present time (ἐπὶ Διός), the Age of Zeus (*Pol.* 271c). The Visitor answers that it depends upon the choice of life of philosophy (ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν) and questioning (*Pol.* 272a-b). The Younger Socrates at this point is unable to answer the question. He has not yet accepted the philosophical path, but the Visitor encourages him to do so.

The Visitor exhorts the Younger Socrates to avoid public banality and idle chatter. Instead, he must cultivate the attentive awareness which philosophical questioning brings. The Eleatic Visitor asserts in a philosophical, interpretive digression that if humans in the Golden Age took advantage of leisure and philosophized with practical understanding (φρονήσις), then they were happier (εὐδαιμονίαν) (*Pol.* 272c1-5). Even this moment of questioning is modeled on the didactic injunction which Hesiod makes to his charge Perses. However, where Hesiod's counsel is direct, the Visitor, instead, opens the question first before giving him the answer. The Visitor, by giving the Younger Socrates the chance to

learn, prepares the way for the Younger Socrates to make up his own mind at a later point in the dialogue about the Elder Socrates' life of philosophy and questioning.

“Visitor: Well then, if, with so much leisure available to them, and so much opportunity to get together in conversation not only with human beings but also with animals-if the nurslings of Cronus used all these advantages to do philosophy, talking both with animals and with each other, and inquiring from all sorts of creatures whether any one of them had some capacity of its own that enabled it to see better in some way than the rest with respect to the gathering of wisdom [πρὸς τὸ μὴ μόνον ἄνθρωποις ἀλλὰ καὶ θηρίοις διὰ λόγων δύνασθαι συγγίγνεσθαι, κατεχρῶντο τούτοις σύμπασιν ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν], the judgment is easy, that those who lived then were far, far more fortunate [πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν] than those who live now. But if they spent their time gorging themselves with food and drink and exchanging stories with each other and with the animals of the sort that even now are told about them, this too, if I may reveal how it seems to me, at least, is a matter that is easily judged. But however that may be, let us leave it to one side, until such time as someone appears who is qualified to inform us in which of these two ways the desires of men of that time were directed in relation to the different varieties of knowledge and the need for talk” (*Stm.* 272b-d).

This is probably a humorous play on the earlier division, indicating that species of birds might be able to communicate and use rationality. But the most important thing about this digression is that it is a mythical choice of life motif. A similar choice of life motif occurs in other myths of Plato. The characters in Plato's *Myth of the Cave*, just like his *Myth of Kronos*, are illustrative because, in spite of the fact that they are ostensibly unlike us, we should liken their condition (ὁμοίους ἡμῖν) with our own (*Rep.* VII, 515a5; *Pol.* 272b). These mythical descriptions have a powerful influence on us; they bring attention to facets of our own life by displaying, often fancifully, a condition remote from our own. A much more interesting connection arises in comparing this myth to the Myth of Er in the *Republic*. In the myth of Er, there is an invitation to choose various lives and follow the model of the chosen life. This choice of life motif in the Myth of Kronos echoes the Myth of Er. Yet, here, we look to the distant past, a state of bliss and subsequent calamity, rather than an eschatological

future state with the torment or bliss of an afterlife. In both cases, the speaker presents the choice as an ethical or moral lesson.

Plato depicts the gods differently, making them accord with his standards of virtuous conduct while retaining core features of the traditional narratives. As the cosmos “turned about and came together with itself, impelled with opposing movements” a “great tremor...brought about another destruction of all sorts of living things” (*Pol.* 273a).⁵¹⁶ After the cataclysmic shift in direction and a sufficient lapse of time, the commotion eventually ceased. Plato uses paradigms to depict an awe-inspiring scene of destruction. This terrifying event is the shift in the rotation of the cosmos. In the Visitor’s account, this event is not occasioned by the ‘parricide’ which causes the shift from the Age of Kronos to the Age of Zeus in Hesiod’s account.⁵¹⁷

Two senses of *mimesis* are important to bear in mind. There is the *mimesis* of artistic creation, and there is also the *mimesis* of those who enjoy artistic creations, the public or audience.⁵¹⁸ Plato acknowledges that the choice to represent gods and mortal humans brings a kind of creative freedom. Human observers are highly critical of misrepresentations of humans. Unusual occurrences in narratives about the divine are comparatively more plausible, given that such depictions fall outside of ordinary human experience.

Plato’s Eleatic Visitor presents the different world periods in the *Statesman* (268e-274e).⁵¹⁹ Events fantastic in force and significance push beyond the limits or constraints of ordinary human experience. The myth (μῦθος) of *Timaeus* is merely probable or likely (*Tim.* 29a). This is a much more credible account than the one in the Myth of Kronos, with which it shares certain similarities. Mythic representation of the gods allows space for the

⁵¹⁶ Mohr, R.D., “Disorderly motion in Plato’s *Statesman*,” *Phoenix*, 35, 1981, p. 204.

⁵¹⁷ O’Connor, D., “Rewriting the Poets in Plato’s *Characters*,” *Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 79.

⁵¹⁸ Gebrauer, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Reneau, D., trans., University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 31.

⁵¹⁹ Most, G., *art. cit.*, p 10.

uncanny or incredible. Such uncanny happenings, to use mythic language, transcend the bounds of mortal experience. The Visitor's description of the Golden Age is exceedingly fantastic, since the paradigms have been used in an unmeasured manner, as the Visitor says, in the act of making his verbal, mythic portrait.

The ethical significance of the myth bears the standard of truth. Halliwell stresses that for Plato the "influence of works of art on their audiences' beliefs and feelings does not depend solely or even principally on the factual status of their contents, but can operate also, and no less potently, through the normative standards of "truth" in the exemplary significance that characters represent."⁵²⁰ The words and sentences drawn or woven together need not correspond with strict canons of factual discourse. At the same time, they should be qualitatively and ethically meaningful.

Plato is, through the Visitor, exploratorily attempting to show how the gods should be, with his Myth of Kronos, even though he admits himself that he does not quite get it right. The social significance of mythmaking is vital, since "gods and heroes, the central characters of so many myths, have a paradigmatic standing in the value systems of the culture."⁵²¹ Plato had represented Socrates asserting the view that poets do not have knowledge of good and bad (*Rep.* 602a). Plato famously depicts philosophers and poets as engaged in an endless quarrel (*Rep.* 607b-c).⁵²² The poet is an image-maker who delights others with illustrations and copies of reality which are rooted in situated cultural tradition. Plato's philosopher, in contrast, seeks universal abstractions beyond the immediate impressions of sensation. At the same time, Plato not only provides a critical and theoretical explanation of the sense of *mimesis* and poetry, he is also an author and artist depicting the words and action of men and gods through the voice of his fictional character, the Eleatic Visitor.

⁵²⁰ Halliwell, S., *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁵²¹ Halliwell, S., *op. cit.*, p. 51.

⁵²² See Most, G, "What Ancient Quarrel Between Poetry and Philosophy?" in *Plato and the Poets*, Destrée, P. and Herrmann, F.G. eds., Brill, Leiden, 2011, p. 1-20.

Plato's critical analysis of the representation of mortals and gods in Homer and Hesiod is famous. For Plato, the depiction of gods in Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* and other mythic accounts is debased. If traditional myths are to be preserved in a way that is compatible with public wellbeing, such myths must be altered. Thus, the reworking of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* takes the form of creative recovery. The Eleatic Visitor, as we shall see, explicitly indicates the modifications to the Myth of Kronos which Socrates envisions in the *Republic*, and he explains to the Younger Socrates in dialogue how to realize these emendations. The association between speech and song, as audible rather than visual modes of representation, is potent. It is indeed, historically the case that, as a "repository" of wisdom, "poetry was one of the most influential forms of discourse in the traditional life of the polis" of Plato's day.⁵²³ Poetic expression often entailed the recitation of myths set to song and dance.

Ethical character demands a kind of measure in action and conduct. Plato echoes Hesiod's own locutions in describing the musical and cultural pedagogy he hopes for his young, imagined leaders of the future. In keeping with the Greek motif associating ethical and musical harmony, he asserts the need for a philosophical speaker to imitate melody (μέλος), as well as harmony (ἁρμονίας) and rhythm (ῥυθμός) appropriately both in the reception and production of music and speech (*Rep.* 398c11-d10). Hesiod as singer or bard (ᾠοιδός) provides musical accompaniment to his account to soothe as much as to instruct. Such imitation should be not only enchanting but genuinely beautifying.

The central objective of this section is to show, in considerable detail how the substance, style, events and diction of Hesiod's *Myth of Kronos* are transmuted and metamorphosed in a philosophical manner. The narrative presentation of both myths in conjunction with salient digressions will show the Visitor's power as questioning composer

⁵²³Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, op. cit., p. 49.

of narrative. Without this parallel presentation, the central facet of the Visitor's unusual *Myth of Kronos* might be lost on the reader. Hesiod's myth clearly describes the displacement of Kronos by Zeus. The Visitor's narrative is, in contrast, allusive.

The lack of clarity in the Visitor's narrative leads to a question for interpreters of the *Statesman*. The scholar must explain in what sense, to what extent and in what sequence Kronos and Zeus control the motion of the cosmos. Presumably, the reason for the allusiveness of the Visitor's language is that the Visitor wants to avoid explicit mention of the vicious details of Hesiod's original myth. He assumes that his listeners are already familiar with the lurid and violent actions expressed in a narrative universally culturally shared. In this way, the Visitor is representing Zeus and Kronos in a paradigmatically appropriate fashion.

3.2.5 Two or Three World Periods

A central question in recent scholarship concerns the number of periods of world rotation. Rowe explains that the "traditional way of talking about the myth" recognizes only two stages: the Age of Kronos "in which a god is in control" and the Age of Zeus or "the present age, when everything is reversed[.]"⁵²⁴ However, he maintains that the "evidence of the text is firmly in favour of the three-stage cycle[.]"⁵²⁵ The second stage occurs between the Age of Kronos and the Age of Zeus, and this is the present age.⁵²⁶ Hesiod's myth portrays the kingly succession not of mortals but celestial gods. In Hesiod, Cronos overthrows Ouranos, making him the visible sky, and then Zeus, the son of Cronos, overthrows Zeus in similar manner.

An additional and complicating factor is the fact that scholars dispute whether the import or lesson of the myth is to establish the presence or absence of gods in the cosmos.

⁵²⁴ Rowe, C.J., "Introduction" to *Statesman*, Rowe, C.J. trans., Warminster, Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1995, p. xiii.

⁵²⁵ Rowe, C.J., *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

⁵²⁶ Rowe, C., „Zwei oder drei Phasen? Der Mythos im *Politikos*,“ in Janka, M., and Schäfer, C. eds., *Platon als Mythology: Neue Interpretationen zu den Mythen in Platons Dialogen*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002, p. 162-168.

In the *Timaeus* myth, the god who generates the universe is described as working over the lower orders of celestial divinities. The fact that the Visitor diminishes the personification of the divinities, Kronos and Zeus, speaking of the cosmos as the son of its progenitor, suggests that the Visitor's understanding of astronomical phenomena personifies what is essentially a teleological naturalism. Thus, the point of the myth is not merely to depict a retreat of the gods from a cosmos which is now autonomous but to suggest that there are actually no gods beyond the permanent realities of the celestial spheres.

These different interpretations are all represented in the secondary literature on the Myth of Kronos. Christopher Rowe maintains that the chief difference is between the epoch when humans are left alone and those in which a god commands.⁵²⁷ Rowe's thesis has the advantage of recognizing the control of the cosmos by a divinity in two separate stages. Rowe's justification is that in both cases the universe is controlled by a "rational" spirit (*Pol.* 269d).⁵²⁸ Ferrari's endorsement of the traditional interpretation of "two distinct periods" of world rotation is more defensible.⁵²⁹ Ferrari maintains that there is an absence of a "god" in the current period of Zeus, and "humans" must "take over the task of pitching wits against necessity and controlling our lives."⁵³⁰ Yet the Visitor will stress, in the manner of Hesiod, that the divine inspiration needed to preserve the community is a divine gift ($\theta\epsilon\tilde{\omega}\nu\ \delta\tilde{\omega}\rho\alpha$). By taking up the myth of succession from Hesiod, we can most reasonably infer that the Visitor is also adopting the motif by which Zeus inherits dominion over mortals and gods from Kronos.

Some have stressed the autonomy of the world in the absence of a god. The Myth of Kronos describes a flight of spirits and gods in such a way to explain their absence in our

⁵²⁷ Rowe, C., "On Grey-haired Babies: Plato, Hesiod, and visions of the past (and future)," in Boys-Stones, G.R. and Haubold, J.H. ed., *Plato and Hesiod*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 298-299.

⁵²⁸ Rowe, C.J., *op. cit.*, p. xiii.

⁵²⁹ Ferrari, G.R.F., "Myth and Conservatism in Plato's *Statesman*," in Rowe, C. ed., *International Plato Studies*, 4, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1995, p. 92.

⁵³⁰ Ferrari, G.R.F., *art. cit.*, p. 92.

lives. This is no doubt a feature of Plato's curious myth. Further, Plato preserves accounts of the gods while presenting an astronomical vision which actually, if we ignore the already comparatively diminished, anthropomorphized, personified action of the divinities, presents an historically accurate picture of the cosmos.

Plato renders divinities less anthropomorphic insofar as he personifies the cosmos. In the *Sophist*, as Mohr notes, the Eleatic Visitor distinguishes between causes which arise without thought and causes which arise with thought (διανοία), reasoning (λόγος) and understanding (ἐπιστήμη); the Visitor identifies the movement of the cosmos as an act of intelligent motion (*Sph.* 265c).⁵³¹ The cosmos has a certain level of autonomy and is able to “set itself in order, into the accustomed course that belongs to it, itself taking charge of and mastering both the things within it and itself” (*Pol.* 273a). One interpretation is that the universe is acting on its own, without any god. Plato presents Socrates, no less than the Visitor, describing the stars and planets as celestial intelligences which operate of their own accord. Certain missing details can be supplemented if we turn to the description of the cosmos in the *Timaeus*.

Even though the creation myth is meant, in part, to instruct about features of the cosmos, it also bears the stamp of a mythic composition. Vlastos maintains that this creation myth of the *Timaeus* should also be regarded as bearing a fictive status. He asserts this on normative or ethical grounds. The “behaviour of the Craftsman is determined by his character as a god.”⁵³² These qualities include his “supreme beneficence (30ab)[.]”⁵³³ According to Vlastos, it is the god's “ethos” or character which determines this activity. The characterization of divinities differs from Homer and Hesiod in accordance with standards outlined in the *Republic*. Plato affirms that it is “impossible for a god to wish to change

⁵³¹ Mohr, R.D, *art. cit.*, p. 215.

⁵³² Vlastos, G., “Creation in the *Timaeus*: Is It a Fiction?” in *Studies in Greek Philosophy*, vol. 2, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1995, p. 269.

⁵³³ *Ibid*

himself” (*Rep.* 318c). For this reason, the celestial rotations remain permanently in the same state and are instructed or taught to do so by the higher echelons of the cosmos. Further, Vlastos holds that unlike “the Homeric deities” a god, in Plato, can “never cause evil but only good (379b-380c).”⁵³⁴ For this reason, the “world creation is an act of supreme beneficence (30a-b).”⁵³⁵ Although the cosmic motions are mechanical and can be described by astronomers with a certain degree of mechanistic precision, these motions, like the motions of living animals, are teleological and tend towards the realization of some good as an end. Plato’s conception of astronomy is, again, different from contemporary physics. However, in his mythic account, he implies that even the comparatively precise geometric and arithmetic calculations of astronomers reflect only a possible or probable understanding of the way celestial rotations work.

The Eleatic Visitor’s account of celestial motion presents this astronomical principle, mythically personified through the narrative action. The Myth of Kronos dramatizes the shift from world epochs, only briefly alluded to in the *Timaeus*, where the cosmos itself, as a celestial divinity, is threatened with destruction. The demiurge or father assures the immortality of the visible heavens. The motions of the universe are compelled by a necessity. However, this “Straying Cause” underlies the tumult described in the Myth of Kronos of the *Statesman*. In Vlastos’ words, the demiurge draws upon the celestial model in working order into what is ultimately a “disordered change” (*Tim.* 47e-48b).⁵³⁶

This straying cause is linked with the third kind of constituent element of the universe, becoming. The first is the paradigm; the second is the thing upon which it is based. The third is intermediate between the two:

“The new starting point in my account of the universe needs to be more complex than the earlier one. Then we distinguished two kinds [γένος],

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁶ Vlastos, G., “The Disorderly Motion in the *Timaeus*”, *Classical Quarterly*, 33, 1939, p. 76.

but now we must specify a third, one of a different sort. The earlier two sufficed for our previous account: one was proposed as a model, intelligible and always changeless [ἐν μὲν ὡς παραδείγματος εἶδος ὑποτεθέν, νοητὸν καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτα ὄν], a second as an imitation of the model, something that possesses becoming and is visible [μίμημα δὲ παραδείγματος δεύτερον, γένεσιν ἔχον καὶ ὁρατόν]. We did not distinguish a third kind at the time, because we thought that we could make do with the two of them. Now, however, it appears that our account compels us to attempt to illuminate in words a kind that is difficult and vague. What we must suppose it to do and be? This above all: it is a receptacle of all becoming—its wetnurse as it were.” (*Tim.* 48e-49a).

Gill maintains that many “commentators have compared the receptacle to a mirror, and the analogy seems” to her “apt.”⁵³⁷ Throughout “the *Timaeus* Plato uses the metaphor of imaging [,] and “Forms are models (παραδείγματα) and phenomena images (μιμήματα).”⁵³⁸ The images or imitations are dependent upon the model or paradigm, just as reflections in a mirror depend upon the objects which they reflect. The essential Form itself is, as Gill notes, so important that Timaeus initially compares the “Form” itself “to a father (50d1.3).”⁵³⁹ The essence is the deep reality (οὐσία) and the “image is the joint offspring of Form and receptacle (50d1-4)” (*Rep.* 52c2-5).⁵⁴⁰ Plato mythically portrays the nature of essence in the *Timaeus* myth, essences which can be apprehended through rational technique of definition, induction and argumentative demonstration.

Plato’s choice to make the Visitor use the term paradigm to signify a model or models which can be used to provide analogies or to make myths seems intended to evoke this divine, mythical association. However, the cosmic description which the Eleatic Visitor introduces does not include an explicit description of celestial paradigms. In the *Statesman*, the language of paradigms and imitation clearly echoes the creation myth of the *Timaeus*, but again this mythic language is vague and inexact as a rigorous characterization of the nature of

⁵³⁷ Gill, M. L., “Matter and Flux in Plato's *Timaeus*,” *Phronesis*, 32, 1987, p. 48.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

the Formal essence. The sense of imitation is used chiefly to describe the hierarchical motion of celestial spheres, which are themselves divinities.

One of the most curious features of the Visitor's Myth of Kronos is that Zeus and Kronos are not actually named by the Visitor as the gods to whom he is referring in each successive age. Given that the reversed Golden Age cosmos is called the Age of Zeus, the cosmic god to whom the Eleatic Visitor is referring, in his description of the reversed cosmos is presumably Zeus. Kronos occupies the outer sphere as an outer planet. Thus, Horn maintains that it must be Zeus who takes control in the second epoch. There is talk of the god remembering the teaching (διδασχίην) of the craftsman (δεμιουργοῦ) and father (πατρός) (*Pol.* 273b1-2).⁵⁴¹ This god or father god is presumably meant to be identified with the demiurge of the *Timaeus*, who lords over divinities.⁵⁴²

Outside of this sphere of Saturn is Ouranos or the Sky itself, which was said to be Kronos. Horn holds that the reason why the identity is difficult to detect is because Plato or the Visitor has to eliminate the details of the narrative from which he is drawing (*Rep.* 377e). The lack of specificity is multifold. Even in the *Timaeus*, Timaeus omits the description of the outer sphere of planets, which include Jupiter and Saturn, corresponding with the Greek divinities, Kronos and Zeus. In Hesiod, furthermore, Kronos is time. In the myth, there is a play on this with the introduction of the notion of a reversed time.

My view is that the chief purpose of this choice is to eliminate harmful depictions. This portrayal of the divine actions between Kronos and Zeus is meant to be more ethical, a

⁵⁴¹ Horn, C., "Why Two Epochs of Human History? On The Myth of the *Statesman*," *Plato and Myth: Studies on the Use and Status of Platonic Myths*, Collobert, C., Gonzalez, Destrée, P. F., eds., Leiden, Brill, 2012, p. 409.

⁵⁴² "O gods, works divine whose maker and father I am, whatever has come to be by my hands cannot be undone but by my consent. Now while it is true that anything that is bound is liable to be undone, still, only one who is evil would consent to the undoing of what has been well fitted together and is in fine condition. This is the reason why you, as creatures that have come to be, are neither completely immortal nor exempt from being undone. Still, you will not be undone nor will death be your portion, since you have received the guarantee of my will-a greater, more sovereign bond than those with which you were bound when you came to be" (*Tim.* 41a-c).

portrayal of divinities which serves as an alternative to that of Hesiod. As Socrates says in the *Republic*, even if Hesiod's Myth of Kronos were true, we would have to pass over the details in recounting the myth to the young. The probable exploration of events is linked with the ethical credibility of the narrative.

The Visitor alters the events which Hesiod represents about the shift of power from Kronos to Zeus. The Visitor omits cruelty and violence as well as the parricide from his *Myth of Kronos*. We can identify the god who is learning from the father god with Zeus, because of the planetary connection. Even in Modern Greek, the planet Jupiter is called Δίας. This choice is meant to enact and make the myth suit the ethical standards of Platonic myth-making, which are outlined in *Republic* II and III. The Eleatic Visitor produces a philosophical myth which preserves aspects of the earlier representation while transmuting others. In accordance with the standards for mythic representation which Plato introduces in the *Republic*, this makes it an acceptable narrative.

The relationship between Kronos and Zeus is not represented as a parricidal sacrifice, as in the account of Hesiod. Rather, the Visitor underscores the importance of the instruction the god gives to the world, enabling the cosmos to achieve a relative degree of order and balance. The god or steersman takes up control. In parallel with this passage, Plato explains that citizens within the city seek the wisdom of gods. Furthermore, humans, in our own Age of Zeus, are recipients of a similar kind of understanding, arts and sciences which we must use to autonomously guide our own lives.

Plato has shown how to introduce a myth and draw from sources. Plato, now, has the Visitor explain that he is now "rousing our story into action, in order to move the story forward and bring it to its end" (*Stm.* 272e). The Visitor describes a moment when the 'steersman' restores order to the cosmos. Having experienced a descent of the cosmos, he returns to his place at the helm of the ship (*Pol.* 273c-d). The Visitor describes deviation as

emerging from necessity (ἀνάγκη) by way of spontaneous desire (σύμφθοτος ἐπιθυμία) running counter to what is proper (θέμις) in the direction of cosmic motion (*Pol.* 269e7).⁵⁴³ The world itself regains motion when it has been left to act of its own accord. Plato is probably describing the various celestial divinities, as well as spirits, relinquishing their place as steersmen of the cosmos in a moment which “has been described as the end point of everything” (*Pol.* 273e). This nautical analogy recurs later in the context of the discussion of the tragedy and misfortune which besets not just the cosmos but cities, newly formed in the Age of Zeus.

“What has been described, then, is the end-point of everything [τοῦτο μὲν οὖν τέλος πάντων εἴρηται]; as for what is relevant to our showing the nature of the king, it is sufficient if we take up the account from what went before [τὸ δ’ ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἀπόδειξιν ἱκανὸν ἐκ τοῦ πρόσθεν ἀπομένους τοῦ λόγου]. When the cosmos had been turned back again on the course that leads to the sort of coming-into-being which obtains now, the movement of the ages of living creatures once again stopped and produced new effects which were the opposite of what previously occurred. For those living creatures that were close to disappearing through smallness began to increase in size, while those bodies had just been born from the earth already gray-haired began to die again and return to earth. And everything else changed, imitating [ἀπομιμούμενα] and following on the condition of the universe, and in particular, there was a change to the mode of conception, birth and rearing, which necessarily imitated [μίμημα] and kept pace with the change to everything; for it was no longer possible for a living creature to grow within the earth under the agency of others putting it together, but just as the world-order had been instructed to be master of its own motion, so too in the same way its parts were instructed themselves to perform the functions of begetting, birth and rearing so far as possible by themselves, under the agency of a similar impulse” (*Stm.* 273e-274b).

This is where Plato’s Visitor recounts the events of a vast and ancient cataclysm. This influenced not only the planetary gods but the guardian spirits themselves, who fled from their earthly abode into the aether.

“So all the gods [δαίμονι θεοί] who ruled over the regions together with the greatest divinity, seeing immediately what was happening, let go in their turn the parts of the cosmos that belonged to their charge and as it turned about and came together with itself [μέρη τοῦ κόσμου τῆς αὐτῶν

⁵⁴³ Mohr, R.D., “Disorderly Motion in Plato’s *Statesman*,” *Phoenix*, 35, 1981, p. 202-203.

ἐπιμελείας], impelled with opposing movements, both the one that was beginning and the one that was now ending, it produced a great tremor in itself, which in its turn brought about another destruction of all sorts of living things. After this, when sufficient time had elapsed, it began to cease from noise and confusion and attain calm from its tremors; it set itself in order, into the accustomed course that belongs to it, itself taking charge of and mastering both the things within it and itself, because it remembered so far as it could the teaching of its craftsman and father [τὴν τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἀπομνημονεύων διδασχὴν εἰς δύναμιν]” (*Stm.* 273a-b).

The nautical image finds echo again when the Visitor describes the challenges faced by the statesman who seeks to guide the community with insight and intelligence. The Visitor finds it striking that among cities some show strength and endure and some do not (*Pol.* 302a). Many perish when their captains lack understanding (*Pol.* 302a-c). That is, the Visitor also recognizes the misfortune which occurs when communities lack a practical understanding of the way that life should be ethically and politically ordered (*Pol.* 303c). When Hesiod makes his claim of poetic wisdom, the wisdom of Zeus, borne of the Muses, he claims that it is a practical wisdom, an understanding of virtue, which can direct mortal kings. The Visitor is searching for precisely this sort of understanding, this art of the king, this science of statesmanship. In keeping with Socrates’ critique of claims to wisdom, as a philosophical dialectician rather than a poet or sophist, he stresses not his claim to wisdom but that such understanding ever eludes our grasp. This extremely odd paradox is explored even further when Plato has the Visitor question Socrates’ claim to question all practitioners of the arts and sciences.

The Myth of Kronos emphasizes renewal which follows a period of destruction. The Visitor re-introduces a ‘god’ to offer guidance because the world without divinity ends up destroying itself (*Pol.* 273c-d). The Visitor describes the ‘steersman’ reorienting the world and rendering the stars, the sun, the moon and the earth, once again immortal (ἀθάνατον) (*Pol.* 273c-d). In the *Timaeus*, Timaeus had asserted that the lesser divinities depended upon the activity of the demiurge to sustain their immortality. The countermotion of the straying

cause has a destructive influence even on the visible heavens, which, in the myth, are these celestial divinities (*Pol.* 274a).

The Eleatic Visitor is describing the activity of the god bringing order to the universe. Of course, this echoes the language of the *Timaeus*. However, the authorial character of this activity of putting the cosmos in order is meant to echo the Eleatic Visitor's own work as a creative composer of the myth. This indirectly points to Plato's own authorship of this speaker and the other characters within the dialogue.

“[But] in separation from him, during all the time closest to the movement of his letting go, it manages everything very well, but as time moves on and forgetfulness increases in it, the condition of its original disharmony also takes greater control of it, and, as this time ends, comes to full flower. Then the goods it mixes in are slight, but the admixture it causes of the opposite is great, and it reaches the point where it is in danger of destroying both itself and the things in it [ἐπὶ διαφθορᾷς κίνδυνον αὐτοῦ τε ἀφικνεῖται καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ]. It is for this reason that now the god who ordered it [θεὸς ὁ κοσμήσας αὐτόν], seeing it in difficulties, and concerned that it should not, storm-tossed as it is, be broken apart in confusion and sink into the boundless sea of unlikeness [εἰς τὸν τῆς ἀνομοιότητος ἄπειρον ὄντα πόντον], takes his position again at its steering-oars, and having turned round what had become diseased and broken apart in the previous rotation, when the world was left to itself, orders it and by setting it straight renders it immortal and ageless [ἀθάνατον αὐτὸν καὶ ἀγήρων ἀπεργάζεται]” (*Stm.* 273a-e).

The purpose of the mythic exchange is not, as in the *Timaeus*, primarily to explicate the motions of the heavens or the character of nature. It is to show the Younger Socrates how to make or compose a narrative. Just as the god shows the divinity, which is the world, how to bring the world together, the Visitor is showing or instructing the Younger Socrates how to compose and tell a story. For this reason, he says that he is the one using paradigms, rather than the divinity or god represented in the myth.

The Visitor not only recounts this life-orienting narrative, but he also shows the Younger Socrates how to make such a narrative. The *Timaeus* myth might describe the cosmos as ordered by a craftsman or artist in accordance with celestial models. This particular use of paradigms is not an exercise in definition or providing an analogy, but an

exercise in mimesis and mythic composition. One person shows another how to use models or images to make a myth.

Plato recognizes *mimesis* as requiring the unfolding of a “plot” which includes an “intrigue” in order to constitute a narrative.⁵⁴⁴ Kennedy notes that Socrates instructs Phaedrus in the importance of a *proemium*, narrative and epilogue in rhetorical composition as much as mythic composition (*Phdr.* 237a-241c).⁵⁴⁵ The Visitor actually signals to the Younger Socrates when they have “the point” which rouses “our story into action, in order to move forward and bring what follows to its end” (*Pol.* 272d-e). That is, he signals the transition from the introduction to the complicating action. Next, he signals that they are approaching the *dénouement* and resolution. Plato the poet shows his Visitor explaining poetics to the Younger Socrates. He indicates that they have reached “the point that” their account “has long been designed to reach” (*Pol.* 274a). By making these asides, the Younger Socrates should be learning not only how to appreciate a myth but how to construct and compose a myth himself.

The Visitor opts to consider only those implications which relate to human beings and not animals. This is an important preparation for the introduction of the notion of a kind of godly inspiration. Humans have access to a kind of inspiration which can enable them to orient themselves in life (*Pol.* 274a). The sciences are able to provide us with a kind of autonomy and self-sufficiency which was lacking in the Age of Kronos. The Age of Zeus is an age where the gods are absent. However, like Hesiod, the Eleatic Visitor makes a general claim to a gift from the gods. The gift of the gods is a gift which the mythical humans of the Age of Kronos did not need, when mortals were tended by guardian spirits (*cf. Theogony*, 585-612). These gifts from the gods are all of the sciences and arts. However, the Visitor’s

⁵⁴⁴ Gebrauer, G. and Wulf, C., *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, Reneau, D., trans., University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 55.

⁵⁴⁵ Kennedy, G., *op. cit.*, 77.

discussion of the art of the statesman and the sophist is the consideration of an art or science of rhetoric, mythmaking and poetic composition. In a sense, the Visitor is describing, in a manner comparable to Hesiod, the source of wisdom in a gift of the gods. Yet the Visitor also, in a manner that parallels Hesiod's own Myth of a Golden Age, stresses the remoteness or absence of divinities from human life.

3.2.6 *The Visitor's Description of the Divine and Poetic Instruction*

The Visitor introduces his notion of the crafts and sciences as gifts of the gods to humanity at the close of the description of the end of the Golden Age. He insists on the absolute necessity for arts and sciences in the present age. The Visitor indicates the same kind of instruction as a god-given gift. Plato, in keeping with the tradition of bards and singers and poets, speaks of speech as a gift from the gods. There are ancient reports that humanity has been granted a gift of the gods that is an "indispensable necessity [ἀναγκνία]" for us now in the present condition. It provides us with teaching (διδασχῆ) and education (παιδεύσις) (*Pol.* 274c). The Visitor's conception of the arts and sciences is exceedingly general. All sciences contribute to enabling humanity to preserve itself in the face of a hostile nature. Plato echoes Hesiod's own affirmations about the gifts of the gods, granted to him through poetic inspiration but also by Prometheus. Just as the demiurgic god shapes an imperfect universe, Plato is showing characters shaping material into coherent narrative order. As he indicates that he is concluding his story, he also makes a kind of divine claim to inspiration (*Stm.* 273e-274e).⁵⁴⁶ This poetic inspiration has a potent ethical force.

⁵⁴⁶ "We are now at the point that our account has long been designed to reach. To go through the changes that have occurred in relation to the other animals, and what causes, would involve a description of considerable length; those that relate to human beings will be shorter to relate and more to the point. Since we have been deprived of the god who possessed and pastured us, and since for their part the majority of animals—all those who had an aggressive nature—had gone wild, human beings, by themselves weak and defenseless, were preyed on by them, and in those first times were still without resources and without expertise of any sort; their spontaneous supply of food was no longer available to them, and they did not yet know how to provide for themselves, having had no shortage to force them to do so before. As a result of all this they were in great difficulties. This is why the gifts from the gods [θεῶν δῶρα], of which we have acquired ancient reports

This language is repeated by the Eleatic Visitor. Human cities seek autonomy. Cities follow or imitate the motions of the whole cosmos, which we imitate either in the Golden Age of Kronos or the Age of Zeus (*Pol.* 274d-e). The Athenian Visitor recounts a brief version of the Myth of the Golden Age of Kronos. This Age when Kronos (Κρόνος) was king (βασιλεύς) is that in which there was greatest happiness (εὐδαίμων), an era which is the greatest imitation (μίμημα) of the most just order (*L.* 713b-d).⁵⁴⁷ That is, the Golden Age paradigmatically imitates (παραδεδέγμεθα) the best model (*L.* 713b). In this era, as in *Statesman's* myth, humans were tended by guardian spirits (δαίμονες) just as “humans tend flocks” (*L.* 713b).⁵⁴⁸ The Eleatic Visitor in the *Statesman* also uses the terms of mimesis explicitly. The Younger Socrates is expected to compare his own condition with that of the characters depicted in the narrative.

In the *Laws*, the Athenian Visitor offers a parallel retelling of the Myth of Kronos in a Golden Age before politics, without the ludicrous extravagance of the Visitor's presentation (713a-e). There is some measure of internal, imaginative coherence in Plato's different myths. However, the reader of Plato's myths should not ask for logical consistency. A central purpose of the Myth of Kronos might be to stretch the credibility of these many different elements to such an extent, in a single myth, that the reader should become aware of the fictive quality of all Plato's myths. Plato's own depiction of the paradigm of the city and the soul, in whatever form it takes, is at some level an imaginative creation.

[πάλαι λεχθέντα], have been given to us, along with an indispensable requirement for teaching and education; fire from Prometheus, crafts from Hephaestus and his fellow craft worker, seeds and plants from others. Everything that has helped to establish human life has come about from these things, once care from the gods, as has just been said, ceased to be available to human beings, and they had to live their lives through their own resources and take care for themselves, just like the cosmos [ὅλος ὁ κόσμος], as a whole, which we imitate [συμμιμούμενοι] and follow for all time, now living and growing in this way, now in the way we did then. As for the matter of our story, let it now be ended, and we shall put it to use in order to see how great our mistake was when we gave our account of the expert in kingship and statesmanship in our preceding argument.”

⁵⁴⁷ Stewart, J.A., *The Myths of Plato*, London, MacMillan, 1905, p. 190.

⁵⁴⁸ Stewart, J.A., *op. cit.*, p. 190.

The *Statesman* is often thought to occupy a transitional space between the *Republic* and the *Laws*. In the *Republic*, the ideal city, Kallipolis, is presented as a godly paradigm (παράδειγμα), an alternative, for collective organization (*Rep.* 500e). In the *Statesman*, although one may classify six types of existing political order as either just and unjust there is a seventh ideal order which is best or most just (*Pol.* 291d-292b). Although Plato encourages us to imitate the order of the just city, he also seems to be suggesting in the *Statesman* that we imitate the order of a particular just individual, Socrates.

This is a myth about the origins of writing and political institutions. There are clear affinities which this discussion bears with the *Phaedrus* and *Protagoras*. It is important to note that the Myth of Prometheus, in *Protagoras*, is much more evidently beholden to Hesiod's description of the defiant demigod. Protagoras, like the Visitor, eliminates the element of conflict between gods, in this case, between Zeus and Prometheus. Yet Plato's Protagoras, who is not guided by an ideal paradigm, simply accepts actual teachings of existing communities as his paradigm.

Protagoras uses the grammatical analogy to explain the act of learning how to model one's life properly.

“And when they quit going to school, the city in turn compels them to learn the laws and to model their lives on them [ἡ πόλις...τούς τε νόμους ἀναγκάζει μανθάνειν καὶ κατὰ τούτους ζῆν κατὰ παράδειγμα]. They are not to act as they please. An analogy might be drawn from the practice of writing-teachers, who sketch the letters faintly with a pen in workbooks for their beginning students and have them write the letters over patterns they have drawn. In the same way the city has drawn up laws invented by lawgivers in the past and compels them to govern and be governed by them. She punishes anyone who goes beyond these laws, and the terms for this punishment in your city and others is, because it is a corrective legal action, ‘correction’ (*Prot.* 326d).

Plato's Protagoras uses the same kind of grammatical comparison as Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor to describe his activity. Just like Socrates and the Visitor, a mastery of language is associated with an awareness of ethical norms or standards, embodied not only in

myths but in the legal codes of various societies. The Visitor's explanation is that virtue is taught. Protagoras completely endorses Athenian conventions about teaching. He does not in any way scrutinize, at least overtly, the content of existing myth. He simply avows that the narratives and myths of youth, imparted through grammatical training are just (*Prot.* 325d-326c). When pupils reach a certain age, they learn to imitate these poetic and musical models and eventually the laws of the city.

Asmis maintains that Plato's Protagoras provides historical claims about the practice of sophists. In "Plato's *Protagoras*, Protagoras (fl. C. 450 B.C.), leader of the first generation of sophists, proclaims that he was the first person to claim a place openly with the tradition of Greek education (316-317)."⁵⁴⁹ According to Asmis, as "heir to the poets," Plato's Protagoras "considers the most important part of education to be the criticism of poetry (338e-399a), and he illustrates his contention by attacking a well known poem of Simonides[.]"⁵⁵⁰ These are no doubt practices of historical sophists. However, Plato frames the exchange between Protagoras and Socrates about the nature of virtue in a highly specific manner, in a way which is, in fact, integrated with his own philosophical scheme.

The "sophists were also the first to teach methods of argument."⁵⁵¹ However, unlike "the poets, they claimed no authority for their teachings except their own "wisdom"."⁵⁵² Rather, if we are to take the Myth of Protagoras as an example, they "emphasized the practical utility of their teaching, which they regarded as the culmination of a series of inventions devised by humans for their own advancement."⁵⁵³ Yet it is better to recognize that Protagoras is presented not as a strictly historical person but as a character in Plato's drama. Plato is engaging with a particular historical tradition but dramatizing the relationship

⁵⁴⁹ Asmis, E., "Plato on Poetic Creativity," in *op. cit.*, p. 348.

⁵⁵⁰ Asmis, E., "Plato on Poetic Creativity," in *op. cit.*, p. 340.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*

between the sophist, Protagoras, and the philosopher, Socrates, in a way that conforms with his own philosophical outlook.

Protagoras merely stands for the kind of position relative to that which Plato ascribes to Socrates. Protagoras asserts that he has knowledge of wise things or ethical and practical understanding (*Prot.* 312c.). Some people are expert “painters and carpenters” but sophists are “expert at making people clever speakers” (*Prot.* 312e). Socrates maintains that Protagoras’ practice of speech should be identified with a “political art [τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην]” (*Prot.* 319a). This mode of participating in the organization of individuals within the community is meant to contribute to “producing people who are good citizens [ποιεῖν ἄνδρας ἀγθοὺς πολίτας]” (*Prot.* 319a4-5). If this were an art, it would be most beautiful [καλόν...τέχνημα] (*Prot.* 319a8-9).

Plato, as author, makes Protagoras express a myth which reveals features of cultural life. It is deeply stimulating and compelling, but it is spoken by someone who Socrates is challenging and questioning. Brisson notes that no exhaustive study has yet been made of Plato’s *Myth of Protagoras*.⁵⁵⁴ This is because the status of the “authorship” is unclear.⁵⁵⁵ Van Riel suggests that this “myth” is “part of Platonic philosophy” and “not just a stunning example of the sophistic argumentation with which Plato disagrees.”⁵⁵⁶ This is attested by “objective links” which the myth bears with the “*Laws* and the *Politicus*.”⁵⁵⁷ With respect to the *Statesman*, the link is that the “reign governed by laws is the best imitation of ideal statesmanship and threatens to be perverted when rulers take themselves to be ideal statesmen.”⁵⁵⁸ The condition of “ideal statesmanship” is not “common” and for this reason

⁵⁵⁴ Brisson, L., “Le mythe de Protagoras: Essai de l’analyse structurale,” in *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*, 20, 1975, 7.

⁵⁵⁵ Van Riel, G. “Religion and Morality: Elements of Plato’s Anthropology in the Myth of Prometheus,” in *Plato and Myth*, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 146

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 146

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155

everyone must follow the law.⁵⁵⁹ Van Riel claims that this is present in Protagoras' declaration that the "basis for the state is that citizens have the basic capacity to accept and respect the law."⁵⁶⁰ Protagoras invites Socrates, sophists like Prodicus and Hippias, and future political leaders like Alcibiades to listen to his story; he asks them to recall a time when the gods existed and there were not yet mortal races (*Prot.* 320c-d).

Zeus, at this time, called upon Prometheus and Epimetheus to distribute capacities among mortal animals. Epimetheus had distributed all the natural capacities to other animals, excepting humanity. Humans were, however, left without protection or defense since Epimetheus, whose name means 'afterthought' had shown a lack of 'forethought' in the distribution of gifts. Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought,' was left to steal fire from the divine and distribute amongst humans for their protection. Prometheus granted to them the productive crafts. Socrates recommends, in *Republic* II and III, against retaining the vicious portrayal of divine action. Protagoras, while creatively reworking Hesiod's Myth of Prometheus, retains the word 'theft' in his own interpretation of the story. At the same time, the story is modified to conform to Athenian democratic sensibilities. In a manner similar to the Eleatic Visitor, Protagoras is not simply an uncritical observer but actively modifies the narrative.

Plato has Protagoras echo the language of Hesiod, but this language is adapted to a democratic context. Through Hermes, Zeus distributes modesty (αἰδῶ) and justice (δίκην) among humans so that cities might be united in order and friendship (πόλεων κόσμοι τε καὶ δεσμοὶ φιλίας συναγωγοί) (*Prot.* 322c). *Nomos* or law would allow for the preservation of Athens, as well as other cities. Zeus proclaims that all who question the 'shame' or contest law merit death: "Death to him who cannot partake of shame or justice, for he is a pestilence

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 155

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

to the city” (*Prot.* 322d). This emphasis on the ethical importance of received or established social convention is characteristic of Protagoras’ approach.

Protagoras universalizes the claim of justice and distributes it among everyone, assuring that no one goes beyond the bounds of the justice established by Zeus. Hesiod’s vision of justice is framed in terms of a caution against human excess or outrageousness, in a word, *hubris*. This is linked to Hesiod’s conception of justice as an expression of the power of Zeus. His narrative of divine action clearly displays the power of the divine king. Zeus has the power to lead even a mortal king into ruin (*Works and Days*, 276-280). The bard’s directive counsel and practical instruction to Perses could not be clearer; it is an admonishment to the listener to avoid violence, deception and theft, in a word *hubris* (ὕβρις). For Hesiod, The standard of human happiness can be judged through comparing our own condition with that of the denizens of previous ages. The present age is the worst condition. However, there was once an age much better than our own.

Protagoras does not offer the story in the way that Hesiod had. Plato even has Protagoras alter Hesiod’s myth so as to conform with the customs and laws of Athenian cultural life. In the “earlier version of the myth, there was greater hostility between Prometheus and Zeus.”⁵⁶¹ In Hesiod, the insolent Prometheus “spoke in mockery of Zeus, who knows eternal counsels; but crooked-counseled Prometheus addressed him in turn, smiling slightly[.]” Zeus “did not forget his deceptive craft: “Zeus, most renowned, greatest of eternal living gods, choose from these whichever your spirit in your breast bids you” (*Theogony*, 545-547). This is the origin of “white bones upon smoking altars for the immortals” (*Theogony*, 550-557). However, the detail is passed in Protagoras. The kind of false offering to Zeus, as presented in Hesiod, is the type of transgression overtly critiqued and condemned by Plato’s Socrates in *Republic* II and III.

⁵⁶¹ Miller, C.L., “The Prometheus Story in Plato’s *Protagoras*,” *Interpretation*, 7, 2, 1978, p. 22.

“But Zeus concealed this, angry in his heart because crooked-counseled Prometheus (Forethought) had deceived him [*Theogony* 535-57]. For that reason he devised baneful evils for human beings, and he concealed fire; but the good son of Iapetus stole it back from the counsellor Zeus in a hollow fennel-stalk for human beings, escaping the notice of Zeus who delights in the thunderbolt” (*Theogony*, 454-459)

It is then that Zeus wrought vengeance on him:

“But the cloud-gatherer Zeus spoke to him in anger: “Son of Iapetus, you who know counsels beyond all others, you are pleased that you have stolen fire and beguiled my mind—a great grief for you yourself, and for men to come. To them I shall give in exchange for fire and evil in which they may all take pleasure in their spirit, embracing their own evil” (*Works and Days*, 53-58).

Here, Protagoras’ *Myth of Prometheus* intersects with the Eleatic Visitor’s use of collection and division. Farming (ἡ δεμιουργικὴ τέχνη) provided for food and clothing but “left them in want of defence against wild animals (τὸν τῶν θηρίων πόλεμον ἐνδεής)” (*Prot.* 322b). In terms of the backdrop of Plato’s myths, this defense and protection is necessary following the Age of Kronos, in the more hostile Age of Zeus.

Plato should be recognized as the author of all these myths, which are spoken by characters in his dramatic dialogues. Protagoras’ myth, just like that of *Timaeus*, in some sense, supplements the myth which is offered by the Eleatic Visitor in the *Statesman*. Humans in the Age of Kronos were far more docile, animal and plant-like, subsisting without agriculture. One can see in this earlier Myth, offered by Protagoras to Socrates and others present, a depiction of humans only beginning to develop cultural organization and becoming both aggressive hunters and prudent cultivators of the land.

Humans, in their inception, were without defense from predators. Yet they acquired the art of combat or war from the gods as part (μέρος πολεμική) of the political art (πολιτικὴν τέχνην) (*Prot.* 322b). This line constitutes a striking echo with the first definition in the *Sophist* of the role of the sophist or teacher, as hunter, as well as agonist. Plato indicates this association between rhetoric and statesmanship in the *Statesman*. The Visitor says that the

“art of the general” and “rhetoric too seems to have been separated quickly from statesmanship, as a distinct class, but subordinate to it” (*Stm.* 304d-e). Athletic and grammatical or musical training are the two elements which form virtuous individuals in the state. These gifts are given to humanity in Plato’s mythical description.

Plato’s Protagoras does not include this detail. The sophist claims that this gift is granted to humanity from Prometheus, the gift of the crafts and sciences. This establishes a basis for human life. Zeus decrees that the ethical or political art of justice is distributed, universally, to humans by Hephaestus. Protagoras introduces an interpretive speech (λόγος) to explain more fully the significance of his *Prometheus Myth* in light of his own cultural role as practical and ethical teacher (*Prot.* 320c).

Counter to Socrates, the sophist claims that virtue is teachable. It is imparted through instruction.

“Plato’s *Protagoras* suggests how a sophist like Prodicus handled one of the most popular passages in the *Works and Days*, Hesiod’s allegory of *arête*. In much-quoted verses (already paraphrased by Simonides: 579 PMG), Hesiod explained that Baseness and Misery (κακότητα) is always nearby and easy to be found, whereas Excellence or Prosperity (ἀρετῆς) dwells at the end of a long, steep road and is not reached without sweat (287-92). According to Socrates, ‘Prodicus and many other people agree with Hesiod that becoming good is hard, for “in front of excellence” the gods have put “sweat”, but when one “reaches the top, then it is easy, difficult though it is” to acquire (340d)[.]’⁵⁶²

Protagoras’ approach, in a certain sense, adapts Hesiod’s general observations to the particular democratic context. One instance explaining the character of the justice of Zeus can be found in the fable of the hawk and the nightingale. This fable shows how a king (βασιλεύς), and anyone else who wishes to possess practical wisdom (φρόνησις) must recognize that mortals are constrained by Zeus (*Works and Days*, 202-203). In his fable, the hawk has the power to do what it will with the song-bird or nightingale. Zeus is greater than

⁵⁶² Ford, A., ‘Plato’s Two Hesiod’s,’ in Boys-Stones, G.R. and Haubold, J.H., eds., *Plato and Hesiod*, Oxford, Clarendon, 2010, p. 150.

all mortal humanity and all of the gods. The hawk overcomes a nightingale, and so the weaker can always succumb to the force of the stronger.

“And now I will tell a fable to kings who themselves too have understanding [νῦν δ’ αἶνον βασιλεῦσιν ἐρέω φρονέουσι καὶ αὐτοῖς]. This is how the hawk addressed the colorful-necked nightingale, carrying her high up among the clouds, grasping her with its claws, while she wept piteously, pierced by the curved claws; he said to her forcefully [πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν]; “Silly bird, why are you crying out? One far superior to you is holding you. You are going wherever I shall carry you, even if you are a singer; I shall make you my dinner if I wish, or I shall let you go. Stupid is he who would wish to contend against those stronger than he is: for he is deprived of victory, and suffers pains in addition to his humiliations.” So spoke the swift-winged hawk, the long-winged bird” (*Works and Days*, 202-212).

Note that the hawk speaks words to the nightingale which are called a *mythos*. This, again, is an indication of the fluid character of the logos-mythos distinction in Hesiod’s work. Plato’s own ethic certainly counsels against excess. However, the moral of Hesiod’s fable is that a person, even a powerful king, is “witless” or foolish, if he contends “with the greater” (*Works and Days*, 210-211).⁵⁶³ Since ὕβρις can lead even powerful mortals and “mighty kings” to ruin, Hesiod’s charge “Perses” surely cannot bypass “the power of Zeus” or contest the will of Zeus (*Works and Days*, 212-215).⁵⁶⁴ The fates not only of individuals, but also of the city (πόλις), depend upon remaining within the bounds of justice (*Works and Days*, 226-227).⁵⁶⁵ Plato, in contrast, asserts, through Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor, that happiness and virtue is determined by acting in accordance with a Good to which Zeus and other divinities conform.

Hesiod’s own narrative self-presentation, in song, is one of self-justification in the face of his own competitors, as a guide to appropriate path in life. The gods bring wisdom to the poet and speaker no less than the farmer. One must, according to Hesiod, establish a

⁵⁶³ Nelson, S., “The Justice of Zeus in Hesiod’s Fable of the Hawk and the Nightingale,” *Classical Journal*, 92, 3, 1997, p. 240-41.

⁵⁶⁴ Nelson, S., *art. cit.*, p. 240-41.

⁵⁶⁵ Beall, E.F., “Hesiod’s Treatise on Justice: *Works and Days* 109-380,” *The Classical Journal*, 101, 2, 2005/2006, p. 173-174.

domestic footing before pursuing public life (*Works and Days*, 27-41). If a human were to know the ways of the gods fully, and not just in part, then he “would easily be able to work in just one day so as to have enough for a whole year even without working” (*Works and Days*, 45-48). Here we see a return to the important agricultural motif. All “the work of cattle and of hard-working mules would be ended” (*Works and Days*, 42-46). Humans have no assurance of a divine gift, since the “gods keep the means of life concealed from humanity” (*Works and Days*, 42-44).⁵⁶⁶ This is the reason why we do not live in the Golden Age, where the condition was much more favourable.

The Boetian bard had exhorted Perses to prudence. In directing a farm, he would experience insight into nature and the cycles of the seasons and the patterns and changes of the sky. Plato’s Visitor recognizes that the gift of agricultural craft, in spite of its earthly nature, is a gift brought to us from the gods, along with all the gifts of the sciences and the arts. The Visitor, in his myth, also stresses the gifts that have descended from Olympus, sky or heaven, like “fire from Prometheus, crafts from Hephaestus, and his fellow craft-worker,” as well as “seeds and plants from others” (*Stm.* 274c-d). The agricultural character of craft wisdom echoes Hesiod’s own agricultural claim in the *Works and Days*. The path to the abundance and happiness which virtue brings is arduous and difficult (*Works and Days*, 286-292).

Both Plato and Hesiod encourage people to work hard and not succumb to idle forms of amusement. However, the Visitor specifically stresses the need to pursue philosophy. This itself, modifies a traditional poetic injunction in Hesiod to work in order to achieve excellence.

“For you, Perses, you great fool, I will speak my fine thoughts: Misery is there to be grabbed in abundance, easily, for smooth is the road and she lives very nearby; but in front of Excellence (Ἀρετῆς) the immortal

⁵⁶⁶ Nelson, S. *art. cit.*, p. 238.

gods have set sweat, and the path to her is long and steep, and rough at first-yet when one arrives at the top, then it becomes easy, difficult though it still is” (*Works and Days*, 286-292).

Hesiod does not, in this admonishing aside, connect the need to work with the Golden Age. Plato’s contrast between the leisurely denizens of the Golden Age and the need for us, in our own condition, to work is nevertheless very much in keeping with the spirit of Hesiod’s admonition to Perses (*Works and Days*, 286-319). However, where Hesiod’s Golden Age is a lament for a lost Golden past, Plato introduces the Golden Age in a way that is meant not to encourage a desire to revisit a remote, Golden past but rather to embrace present possibilities, to seek a life of philosophy.

Plato’s ethical views, his views about the nature of virtue, do not completely deviate from those expressed by Hesiod. However, his own reworking of Hesiodic myth draws attention to the inconsistencies between Hesiod’s exhortation to virtuous conduct and his portrayal of the vices of gods and mortal heroes. The Visitor implies that traditional myths like those of Hesiod encourage people not to practice virtue and philosophy but vices like “feasting and gorging.”⁵⁶⁷ The Visitor’s *Myth of Kronos* contains an internal, philosophical critique of the enchanting practice of myth-making and poetry itself, while teaching how to compose or narrate myths.

He actually makes the same grammatical analogy as the Eleatic Visitor, but the sense in both is contrasting. Protagoras endorses Athenian convention. The Eleatic Visitor, like Socrates in the *Republic* and the Athenian Visitor in the *Laws*, critically scrutinizes earlier models of law in the way that he does the work of earlier poets (*Prot.* 326d-e). Following his myth, Protagoras in his explanatory *logos* refers to the Athenian political order as a paradigm. Plato’s Visitor, as we see below, speaks in such a way as to make the Younger Socrates questioningly emulate, rather than thoughtlessly imitate, the example or paradigm of the

⁵⁶⁷ El Murr, D., “Hesiod, Plato and the Golden Age,” in Boys-Stones, G.R. and Haubold, J.H. eds., *Plato and Hesiod*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 292.

Elder Socrates. Plato uses the term associated with grammar, which means both painting and writing (τὰ γεγραμμένα), when discussing the extent to which to imitate existing laws (*Stm.* 300e). This is reminiscent of the discussion of writing in the *Phaedrus*. Yet Plato's vision of the best or ideal society is one which has existed nowhere on earth apart from human thought and imagination. At the same time, there is some level of concession, in the *Statesman* and *Laws*, to existing constraints.

“To sum up, the laws in force impose the greatest possible unity on the state-and you'll never produce a better or truer criterion of an absolutely perfect law than that. It may be that the gods or a number of the children of the gods inhabit this kind of state: if so, the life they live there, observing these rules, is a happy one indeed. And so men need to look no further for their ideal [παράδειγμά γε πολιτείας]: they should keep this state in view and try to find the one that most nearly resembles it. This is what we've put our hand to, and if in some way it could be realized, it would come very near immortality and be second only to the ideal. Later, God willing, we'll describe the third best” (*L.* 739d-e).⁵⁶⁸

The Eleatic Visitor, while accepting the notion of a best political order, talks about the importance of existing institutions. Existing precedent, in Sparta, Athens, Crete and others places can serve as a model or guide. Training in athletics should be done on the basis of existing models which work. Training and athletic formation can draw upon existing precedent.⁵⁶⁹ Similar examples apply in lawful selection of music and poetry. At the same time, similar critiques of excesses of lamentation to those found in *Republic X* are still to be found in the *Laws* (*Rep.* 612a-614a) The Athenian Visitor bans mournful dirges, then he says

⁵⁶⁸ Plato continues, in both the *Statesman* and the *Laws*, to acknowledge that the order which Socrates describes in the *Republic* is the best possible order. The Athenian Visitor says that in the “ideal society and state” where there is “the best code of laws” and “where the old saying ‘friends’ property is genuinely shared’ is put into practice as widely as possible throughout the state (*L.* 739c). He also says that in this state, presumably Kallipolis, is the best, but he cedes that we exist in a world of only the second best: “Now I don’t know whether in fact this situation-a community of wives, children and all property-exists anywhere today, or will ever exist, but at any rate in such a state the notion of ‘private property’ will have been by hook or by crook completely eliminated from life” (*L.* 739c).

⁵⁶⁹ He turns to two models [παράδειγμασι] of appropriate training (*L.* 794e7). He uses a “Scythian practice [ὁ τῶν Σκυθῶν νόμος]” as an “illustration” of the appropriate use of two hands saying that: “a Scythian doesn’t use his left hand exclusively to draw his bow and his right hand exclusively to fit in the arrow, but uses both hands for both jobs differently” (*Laws*, 794e). He further adds that there “are a lot of other similar examples [παράδειγματα ἐν ἐνιοχείαις] to be found-in driving chariots, for instance, and other activities-from which we can see that when people train the left hand to be weaker than the right they are going against nature” (*L.* 795a4).

that “the gods to whom we sacrifice should always be offered our prayers” (*Leg.* 800d-801a). Third, he holds that in offering prayers to the gods they should “never request an evil under the impression that it is a kind of benefit” (*Leg.* 801b). The Athenian Visitor and Socrates, in the *Republic*, alter existing customs by turning to an ideal. But this contrasts with the sophistic practice which Plato portrays Protagoras endorsing. This is the one whereby the teacher merely adapts to the context and endorses received convention without positing an ideal beyond the present condition.

Plato’s Protagoras completely endorses Athenian convention and says that the myths compiled and taught by grammarians are correct and the laws serve as an appropriate model. Like Socrates, the Athenian Visitor says that poets are not genuine teachers of virtue and their work should be altered and changed by instructors (*Leg.* 801c-d).⁵⁷⁰

The composition of poetry and the composition of law are also treated as associated domains in the *Phaedrus*. Plato notes this towards the end of the dialogue when he says that “our playful amusement regarding discourse is complete” (*Phdr.* 278b). Recognizing the importance of cultivating oratory, Socrates first encourages Phaedrus to “go and tell Lysias that we came to the spring which is sacred to the Nymphs and heard words charging us to deliver a message to Lysias and anyone else who composes speeches” (*Phdr.* 278b). However, in addition to orators, he should also tell “Homer and anyone else who has composed poetry either spoken or sung” (*Phdr.* 278c). Finally, he encourages Phaedrus to

⁵⁷⁰ “Athenian: So what lesson can we say this doctrine [παράδειγμα] holds for us? Surely this: that authors [τῶν ποιητῶν γένος] in general are quite unable to tell good from bad. We conclude that the composer who embodies this error in words or even in his music, and who produces mistaken prayers, will make our citizens pray improperly when it comes to matters of importance-and, as we were saying, we shan’t find many more glaring mistakes than that. So can we establish this as one of our model laws of music?”

“Clinias: What?”

“Athenian: That a poet should compose nothing that conflicts with society’s conventional notions of justice, goodness and beauty. No one should be allowed to show his work to any private person without first submitting it to the appointed assessors and the Guardians of the Laws, and getting their approval. (In effect, we’ve got our assessors already appointed-I mean the legislators we chose to regulate the arts, and the person we elected as Minister of Education.) Well then, here’s the same question yet again: are we satisfied to adopt this as our third principle and our third model law? Or what do you think?”

bear in mind “third” political leaders and legislators such as “Solon and anyone else who writes political documents that he called laws” (*Phdr.* 278c). The work of lawgivers like the Athenian Solon or the Spartan Lycurgus should be critically scrutinized by the philosopher. The work of the lawgivers, Solon and Lycurgus, is imperfect, but, like the poetry of Hesiod and Homer, it is instructive.

Socrates states this in the following manner in the *Phaedrus*: “If anyone” whether orator, poet or statesman “has composed these things with a knowledge of the truth, if you can defend your writing when you are challenged, and if you can yourself make the argument that your writing is of little worth, then you must be called by a name derived not from these writings but rather from those things which you are seriously pursuing” (*Phdr.* 278d). Even a person like Socrates, who recognizes this, should not be called wise. Socrates concedes that “to call him wise, Phaedrus, seems to me too much, and proper only for a god. To call him wisdom’s lover—a philosopher—or something similar would fit him better and be more seemly” (*Phdr.* 278d). The pursuit of wisdom more than the pretension to wisdom applies not only to spoken exchange but to writing itself. Writing nevertheless has a vital importance, since it provides a record, an imitation of wisdom which endures beyond particular circumstances. As the Visitor maintains, if codified laws are abandoned or forgotten, the body politic will be like patients without the prescriptions for good health.⁵⁷¹

In the *Statesman*, Plato discusses the status of grammar and writing with reference to the composition or the imitation of just laws. The Visitor holds that making codes of laws is inferior to virtue. A lawmaker will “set down the law for each and every one according to the principle of ‘for the majority of people, for the majority of cases, and roughly, somehow, like

⁵⁷¹ Ferrari, G.R.F., “Myth and Conservatism in Plato’s *Statesman*,” *art cit.*, p. 395. That the laws and conventions of an art are equivalent to the transmitted memory of practitioners is here made explicit. Gill maintains that the Visitor intends to lead the Younger Socrates to a critical conception of law. Christopher Gill argues that the Visitor’s intention in this section explaining the nature of written law is to replace a naïve understanding of constitutional law with a critical understanding constitutional law. See Gill, C., “Rethinking constitutionalism in *Statesman*,” Rowe, C. ed, *Reading the Statesman: Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum (International Plato Studies, vol. 4)*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1995, p. 292-305.

this', whether expressing it in writing or in the unwritten form," which is a practice of "legislating by means of ancestral customs" (*Stm.* 295a).⁵⁷² Plato recognizes here the merit of traditional institutions by arguing that these traditional injunctions are the result of the contribution of intelligent lawmakers, providing useful general stipulations to account for all particular cases. Yet he recognizes, at the same time, the imperfection of law and the importance of situational judgment. To some extent, with Protagoras, the Eleatic Visitor has in mind the Athenian example of democracy, but this principle of following earlier constitutional models extends to other existing constitutions. Socrates had used this regal language of self-control in the *Phaedrus*, but the control was self-mastery, rather than the mastery of others.

“[Socrates:] Now if the victory goes to the better elements in both their minds, which lead them to follow the assigned regimen of philosophy, their life here below is one of bliss and shared understanding. They are modest and fully in control of themselves now that they have enslaved the part that brought trouble into the soul and set free the part that gave it virtue” (*Phdr.* 256a7-b3).⁵⁷³

These are the writings which provide guidance for us in the absence of a genuinely prudent leader. The chief speaker of the *Statesman* likens our condition to that of a patient of a doctor (ὁ ἰατρός) who is absent (*Pol.* 295c). The Visitor's language is reminiscent of that of Socrates in the *Phaedrus*, who describes the need for a king in possession of wisdom and

⁵⁷² The Athenian Visitor, in the *Laws*, introduces the Spartan example. Just as earlier poets, like Homer and Hesiod, provide examples upon which to draw, earlier authors of comparatively just constitutions serve as models in this. He holds the need to have a historical example [παράδειγματος] to go by” (*L.* 691d). Aristodemus, a divine leader “took your single king and split it in two,” conferring rule to his sons Procles and Eurysthenes “so as to restrict powers to a more reasonable proportion” (*L.* 691d). The legendary leader, Lycurgus, “combined human nature with some of the powers of a god” when “leadership was still in a feverish state” he “blended the obstinacy and vigor of the Spartans with the prudent influence of age by giving the twenty-eight elders the same authority in making important decisions as kings” (*L.* 691d). These kinds of legislative decisions, which are repositories of wisdom codified from previous ages, help to preserve the state. The historical examples provide a basis for our own his state that is contemplating the adoption of laws modeled on it [περί παντός νόμου κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ παράδειγμα]” (*L.* 722a). Such laws are, as the Eleatic Visitor says, imperfect. However, if we act in the absence of this direction, it can lead to even more destructive consequences. This kind of precedent is the source of the legislative proposals which Plato presents. As with the written record of the work of poets like Homer and Hesiod, Plato uses the work and writings, the laws of legendary leaders like Lycurgus and Solon to present his own political vision.

⁵⁷³ Dorion, L.A., “Plato and *Enkrateia*,” p. 132.

understanding to provide remedies (*Phdr.* 274e). The received tradition of writing, the representations or depictions in words of suitable or appropriate action, is helpful. People, indeed, have written teachings which serve as ethical “reminders” and instructions which serve to augment the spiritual and physical health of the community (*Pol.* 295c; *Phdr.* 274e). This is the activity which the statesman is expected to undertake in drawing together or weaving the community described as second best. This second-best community is, furthermore, itself another model or paradigm of a city, very similar to Socrates’ own paradigm, the city of Kallipolis, although different from it. At the same time, even in this second city, this notion of the king is just as “metaphorical” as it is in reference to the paradigm of Kallipolis in the *Republic*. The order of rational mastery over spirit and passion is merely an analogy which explains the rational, autonomous order of the self or soul.

Plato introduces the notion of imitation in the *Timaeus* to describe the divine activity of the rotating cosmos. The shepherd divinities rule and tend humans in the mythic age of Kronos. The earth is ordered by the movements of the heavens, and the teaching of the gods is necessary to ensure the stability of this order. Protagoras holds that existing political constitutions and laws should serve as the model. But Plato presents an image or paradigm according to which a good, philosophical ruler should order the community. Just as existing poetry is deficient when compared with the ideal, existing political institutions and laws are instructive but deficient in comparison with the best order. The Visitor endorses an ideal state, like the communal arrangement of Socrates’ own Kallipolis, where philosophers serve as leaders or guardians of humanity. This image communicates the notion that rational order and intelligence should underlie the composition and interpretation of written law.

The Visitor explains that cultivating judgment in action is important. In a society without the possibility for error, one would wish for a person, a guardian spirit like those depicted in the Golden Age, to sit “beside each individual perpetually throughout his life” in

such a manner that he would be “accurately prescribing what is appropriate to” each person (*Stm.* 295b). This regal language specifically applies to the rational conscience of a virtuous and ordered person. Even in the democratic context of Athens, the thoughtful person or the sovereign (τὸν μετὰ φρονήσεως βασιλικόν) should prevail (*Stm.* 294a5-8). This need for situational judgment which transcends codified rules is necessary because law (νόμος) in principle cannot account for what is “best and most just for all time” (*Stm.* 294a10-b5). Practical wisdom transcends imperfect, codified rules, since in practical action, we must judge what is right or wrong. Socrates’ own philosophical search for wisdom displays this very living pursuit or search for a practical understanding of what is Good. But Plato is presenting a romanticized portrait of an idealized philosopher. Plato’s own writings, from the *Apology* to the *Republic* and the *Laws*, cannot be thought to codify what is best and most just for all time. As in the tragic drama of Sophocles, Plato dramatizes the limits of human wisdom, the limits of the wisdom of the wisest and most virtuous human individual.

3.3 Socrates as Paradigm: The *Statesman*, the *Apology* and the *Theban Plays*⁵⁷⁴

A new body of literature has given emphasis to the constructed character of the *Sokratikoi logoi*. Kahn, even though he emphasizes the constructed and composed character of these Socratic narratives, insists that he does “not doubt the historicity of the figure of Socrates as presented in the dialogues.”⁵⁷⁵ Kahn has, however, proposed to “challenge” the “view” which “tends to assume that Plato’s motivation in” the so-called earlier or Socratic “dialogues was primarily historical[.]”⁵⁷⁶ That is, Kahn challenges the view that the so-called earlier depictions of Socrates are meant merely “to preserve and defend the memory of Socrates by representing him as faithfully as possible.”⁵⁷⁷ Drawing upon Kahn’s work on the fictive character of the *Sokratikoi logoi*, Dorion defends, even more radically than Kahn, the

⁵⁷⁴ Similar parallelisms between the Sophocles’ Theban plays and Plato’s *Statesman* are presented in Crotty, K., *The Philosopher’s Song*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2009, p. 173-206.

⁵⁷⁵ Kahn, C., “Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues,” *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

view that Plato's story of Oracle and his account of his guardian spirit in the *Apology* is a mythic embellishment. If the "story of the oracle in the *Apology* is an invention" which is meant to be understood as a myth, then it can be regarded to some extent as creatively composed "fiction."⁵⁷⁸ The use and reworking of mythic tropes can also be understood as a self-conscious construction of Plato as author.

Aristotle places the *Sokratikoi Logoi* in an ambiguous relation to drama but also to the genre of history. The aim of the historian is to represent historical events with accuracy. However, dramatic representation works in accordance with certain probable, ethical standards: "Tragedy represents people nobler than us." In contrast, comedy "is a representation of inferior people, not indeed in the full sense of the word bad, but the laughable is a species of the base or ugly" (*Poetics*, 1449a). The stock conventions of the genres of comedy and tragedy condition the way characters are portrayed in these respective dramatic forms.

Tragedy presents the sorrowful misfortune of traditional characters of a noble and ideal standing, whereas comedy provides more freedom for construction and invention. Plato, in his composition of *Sokratikoi logoi*, combines aspects of both dramatic genres in a kind of exploratory rethinking and reworking of earlier mythic and dramatic portrayal (*Poetics*, 1451b).⁵⁷⁹ In both tragedy and comedy, a lack of self-knowledge leads either to tragic or comic results. Lack of self-knowledge is a source of comedy when the character is weak or ignoble, but tragedy happens when the noble or powerful person shows ignorance in action (*Phlb.* 49b-c). In the *Philebus*, Plato has Socrates mention the recommendation of "the famous inscription in Delphi" to "Know thyself" as a guiding ethical instruction (*Phlb.* 48b-

⁵⁷⁸ Dorion, L.A., "Plato's *Apology* as Myth of Origins," in *Plato and Myth*, *op. cit.*, p. 419-420.

⁵⁷⁹ "In the case of comedy this has now become obvious, for comedians construct their plots out of probable incidents and then put in any names that occur to them. They do not, like the iambic satirists, write about individuals. In tragedy, on the other hand, they keep to real names. The reason is that what is possible carries conviction. If a thing has not happened, we do not yet believe in its possibility, but what has happened is obviously possible. Had it been impossible, it would not have happened."

d). Yet not only on the stage of a play but also on the stage of life “pleasures are mixed with pains” (*Phlb.* 50b-c). The pure intelligence, untainted by pleasure and pain, is unattainable in human life. Thus, the consideration of the conventions of dramatic genres leads to a consideration of the relation between the mixed life and the life of pure intelligence.

Socrates says that pleasure in human life is always mixed with pain, since pleasure is “always a process of becoming” and there is no “being at all of pleasure” (*Phb.* 53c). A small quantity of a clear substance (λευκός) is to be preferred to a large quantity of a mixture.

“Well, now, we don’t need to run through many more examples to justify our account of pleasure, but this example suffices to prove that in the case of pleasure, too, every small and insignificant pleasure that is unadulterated by pain will turn out to be pleasanter, truer, and more beautiful than a greater quantity and amount of the impure kind (*Phlb.* 53b8; 53c3).

Here, Plato uses the term paradigm. Socrates introduces the model or example of a clear liquid in order to describe the best life, a life of intelligence not uncontaminated by pleasure or pain (*Phlb.* 53c). Proper dramatic representation would display the good or virtuous individual achieving happiness; but this is no the kind of portrayal of life which we see in existing dramatic genres. Plato assimilates drama with rhetoric, affirming that he is willing in a limited way to what is pleasant in so far as it “enslaves all the rest” (*Phlb.* 58a-b). Yet the Good, grasped through prudent intelligence would bring a life of “perfect self-sufficiency” and self-mastery, beyond the mixed life of pleasure and intelligence, which gets the “second-prize” (*Phlb.* 61a). Plato, in his own drama, presents Socrates neither as a comic nor as a tragic character. Rather, he is a character who actively pursues self-understanding, in accordance with the Delphic injunction.

Plato as author of dramatic dialogues attempts to show Socrates in the most self-commanding way possible, experiencing the greatest happiness, mixed with the least pain, through Socrates’ choice to be as rational as possible. Yet in the drama which leads to

Socrates' death, Plato portrays Socrates subjected to a trial and ultimately condemned to drink a potent mixture of poisonous hemlock.

My own interpretation of the trial of Socrates draws upon the work of Dorion. Dorion critiques not only Vlastos but also Kahn. Kahn maintains, with Vlastos, that the *Apology* should be regarded primarily as an instance of historical testimony. Kahn holds that Plato's Socrates should be regarded as a fictional character in virtually every dialogue. However, Kahn holds that the situation is different with the *Apology*. As Dorion notes, Kahn is at one with the "several commentators" who "refuse to consider the *Apology* to be a *logos sokratikos*."⁵⁸⁰

"If we survey the Platonic writings with this question in mind, we are struck by the fundamental contrast between the *Apology* and the rest of Plato's work. There is first of all a sharp difference of literary form. The *Apology* belongs to a traditional genre, the courtroom speech revised for publication; the dialogues all belong to the new genre of "Conversations with Socrates." But underlying this literary contrast there is a more fundamental difference. The *Apology* reflects a public event, the trial of Socrates, which actually took place, and at which Plato and hundreds of other Athenians were present. The dialogues represent private conversations nearly all of them fictitious. In the one case where the setting of a dialogue is unquestionably historical, namely the death scene in the *Phaedo*, we are explicitly told that Plato was not present. So none of Plato's dialogues purports to be an actual event witnessed by the author. Plato has deliberately given himself almost total freedom to imagine both the form and content of his Socratic conversations."⁵⁸¹

Kahn holds that even the so-called early dialogues, not merely the middle and later dialogues, have the fictive status. However, according to Kahn, the case of the *Apology*, which is traditionally considered an earlier dialogue, is unique.

"The situation is quite different for the *Apology*. As the literary version of a public speech, composed not by the speaker but by a member of the audience, the *Apology* can properly be regarded as a quasi-historical document, like Thucydides' version of Pericles' Funeral Oration. We cannot be sure how much of the speech as we have it reflects what Socrates actually said, how much has been added or altered by Plato. But if, as we imagine, Plato composed the speech to defend Socrates'

⁵⁸⁰ Dorion, L.A., "Plato's *Apology* as Myth of Origins," p. 419.

⁵⁸¹ Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

memory and to show the world that he was unjustly condemned, it was essential to present a picture of Socrates in court that could be recognized as authentic. Even admitting the large part played by Plato's literary elaboration, there are external constraints that make his *Apology* the most reliable of all our testimonies concerning Socrates."⁵⁸²

This echoes the assessment of Vlastos:

"Plato's *Apology* has for its mise en scene an all-too-public occasion. The jury alone numbered 501 Athenians. And since the town was so gregarious and Socrates a notorious public character, there would have been many more in the audience. So when Plato was writing the *Apology*, he knew that hundreds of those who might read the speech he put into the mouth of Socrates had heard the historic original. And since his purpose in writing it was to clear his master's name and indict his judges, it would have been most inept to make Socrates talk out of character."⁵⁸³

This might lead the reader to suspect that such interpreters are questioning the status of the contents of Plato's dialogues as something other than historical testimony. This, indeed, would be correct. Kahn insists that he does "not doubt the historicity of the figure of Socrates as presented in the dialogues."⁵⁸⁴ However, he does "doubt the historicity of the dialogues themselves as reports of philosophical conversation in the fifth century."⁵⁸⁵ Dorion, who like Kahn affirms the historicity of Socrates, pushes Kahn's reasoning in an even more radical direction. Even Kahn is at one with the "several commentators" who "refuse to consider the *Apology* to be a *logos sokratikos*."⁵⁸⁶ Dorion's position is particularly radical, because he extends Kahn's reasoning to encompass the *Apology* itself: "Although [Kahn] insisted greatly on the fictional dimension of the *logoi sokratikoi* and on the impossibility of reconstituting the thought of the historical Socrates based on *logoi sokratikoi*, C. Kahn maintains that the Platonic *Apology* is a case apart inasmuch as it is the text which is most likely to correspond to a 'quasi-historical' document and to an 'historical account' of

⁵⁸² Kahn, C., *Plato and the Socratic Dialogue*, op. cit., p. 88.

⁵⁸³ Vlastos, 1971, 3. Quoted in Morrison, D., "On the Alleged Historical Reliability of Plato's *Apology*," *Archiv.f. Gesch. D. Philosophie*, 82, 2000, p. 243.

⁵⁸⁴ Kahn, C., "Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues," op. cit., p. 135.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁶ Dorion, L.A., « Plato's *Apology* as Myth of Origin, » in *Plato and the Poets*, op. cit., p. 419.

Socrates' philosophy."⁵⁸⁷ Although he disputes that the earlier dialogues are historical, Kahn defends the view that the *Apology* must be regarded as genuine, historical testimony.

“This position is not just Kahn's; in fact many commentators consider that the *Apology* is not a *sokratikos logos*, since therein Plato reports on a speech which has the status as an historical event which several hundreds of people were witness to; this would have kept him from dealing as he pleased with the historical truth and would have constrained him to report, if not the letter, then at least the spirit of the defense Socrates pronounced before the court.”⁵⁸⁸

Dorion's argument, in critique of Kahn, is of some importance for my own thesis. Plato's *Theaetetus*, *Sophist* and *Statesman* present Socrates just prior to his trial in the *Apology*. Interpreters like Kahn have no problem accepting that the genre of literature of which Plato's dialogues are representative have a fictional or invented, dramatic dimension. Indeed, Plato's drama, the *Sokratikoi logoi* are as much beholden to the poetic and dramatic genres of tragedy and comedy. Dorion affirms that the historical actuality of the trial and condemnation of Socrates does not preclude the possibility that the *Apology* contains “what may amount to a considerable fictional element.”⁵⁸⁹ Indeed, Dorion regards the occurrence of multiple *Apologies* not as a sign of the independent historical authority of these texts but a sign that all are contributions to a stock, literary genre. Dorion affirms that the “the very existence of several *Apologies* by different authors confirms that the theme of Socrates' trial and defense was no less a subject of rivalry, among Socratics, than other themes on which they competed in writing dialogues.”⁵⁹⁰ Even though only Xenophon and Plato's *Apologies* are extant, there were many other examples of portrayals of Socrates' trial. According to Dorion, a close examination of the variety of different accounts of this particular event and the differences between them confirm that even this work contains fictive elements.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 420.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Dorion claims that if “the Platonic *Apology* were a faithful report of the trial of Socrates, we would have to consider that other, rival accounts of the trial of Socrates, among them the *Apology* of Xenophon, are not faithful[.]”⁵⁹¹ But this “amounts to affirming the superiority of Plato’s testimony over Xenophon’s, as was done in the heyday of the Socratic question.”⁵⁹² We can escape this dilemma if we recognize the extent to which Plato’s Socrates, even as portrayed in the *Apology*, is a composed or composited reconstruction of an event, rather than an instance of historical testimony. It is a creative reimagining, meant to bear a kind of ethical authority.

Dorion recognizes that something like this must be the case when he notes the actual discrepancies in the accounts of Xenophon and Plato. According to Dorion, even the *Apology* should be considered a fictional text.⁵⁹³ Dorion claims that if the “story of the oracle in the *Apology* is an invention...it is thus a fictitious account.”⁵⁹⁴ This, if correct, would make the whole of Plato’s work an exercise in inventive literary composition.

Aristotle’s *Poetics* provides observations on the *Sokratikoi Logoi*, in relation to other dramatic genres, which indicates to us that Plato’s dialogues and the works of Xenophon are not unique but are rather contributions of single authors to an existing genre of literature. Aristotle, when interpreted in a critical manner, provides helpful testimony concerning Plato’s thoughts about logic and essential Forms. Aristotle’s remarks, in the *Poetics*, about the genre of *Sokratikoi logoi* help us to understand better Plato’s purpose in choosing the dramatic form. Kahn’s study opens with the observation that there has “never been a comparative study of the Socratic dialogue form.”⁵⁹⁵ Kahn suggests reasons for this:

“This may be due in part to the mistaken belief that Plato was not only the perfecter but also the inventor of the form. But such is certainly not the case. Aristotle in his *Poetics* refers to the *Sokratikoi logoi* (“Socratic

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

discourses” or “Conversations with Socrates”) as an established literary genre” (*Poetics*, 1447b11).⁵⁹⁶

This is a testimony of the novel dramatic form. Note that the word *logoi* itself features as a title in the genre. When Plato, in his dialogues, refers to dialectic as involving the use of *logoi*, the title of the literary genre to which Plato’s dialogues belong might have been more clearly in mind for Plato’s contemporary readers. The sense that what they were reading constituted an expression of philosophy could have been more evident to Plato’s contemporary readers than to us.

“But the art which employs words either in bare prose or in metres, either in one kind of metre or combining several, happens up to the present day to have no name. For we can find no common term to apply to the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and to the Socratic dialogues [Σωκρατικοῦς λόγους]” (*Poetics*, 1447b).

The listing of various authors like Sophron and Xenarchus to this genre is what reveals that Plato and Xenophon’s work was simply a contribution to an existing genre. Many of the alternative portraits of Socrates can actually be reconstructed from doxographic evidence. Much of the early section of Kahn’s work is devoted to this task.

Aristotle, again, provides a helpful glimpse into Plato’s work. Here it is in the consideration of Plato as literary author, as one who contributes to the genre of *Sokratikoi logoi*. Both Kahn and Gill inform my work in this new stream of research. Gill turns to Aristotle to explain the relation between the modern notion of fiction, comparing Plato’s dialogues to ancient Romances, and presenting his composition in contemporary terms of literary reception and interpretation. However, Gill accepts that this superimposition is something of an anachronism. In Aristotle’s reflection on ancient literary composition, a reflection which encompasses the genre of *Sokratikoi logoi* to which Plato’s dialogues are contributions, poetic composition is associated not so much with notions of self-conscious falsity and fictionality as plausibility and possibility.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Aristotle accepts poetry as not mere “fiction” but “as a mode of analysis or interpretation of reality” and “comparable to non-mimetic modes[.]”⁵⁹⁷ Fictional or romance, as a genre, can be helpful for enabling us to better grasp the nature of an ancient genre which combines elements of the tragically “serious and ideal” with the “comic or unideal.”⁵⁹⁸ Gill compares the approach to reading the *Sokratikoi logoi* with the romance and embellishments of “Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus*[.]” These kinds of works contain “dramatic elaborations in the interstices of historical and quasi-historical accounts.”⁵⁹⁹ In a similar manner, the poetic composer of *Sokratikoi logoi* presents an idealized vision of how things should be rather than a factual account of how they were.

This idealized or moralizing and ethical use of historical or quasi-historical events can be seen as operative within the *Sokratikoi logoi*, as a genre, and the Platonic dialogues, as instances of this genre of writing. Gill asserts that not only in Xenophon but even in Thucydides himself, who represents a touchstone of ancient historical accuracy, we find examples of “fictionalized interstices in a factual account” (Thucydides, 1.22).⁶⁰⁰ Plato’s dramas portray characters who feature in this historical account, such as Alcibiades, Nicias and Laches. Yet Plato presents a romanticizing and moralizing picture of their interchange with other characters, like Socrates.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁷ Gill, C., “Plato on Falsehood—Not Fiction”, in Gill, C. and Wiseman, T.P., eds., *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1993, p. 80. Gill’s original analysis draws heavily from the work of Perry on ancient fiction, applying notions about Ancient Romance to Plato and Xenophon’s work: Perry, B.E., *Ancient Romances*, Berkley, 1967, 74-75 and 87: According to Perry, the “idea of the novel as a literary form does not come into being until, through the agency of a new class of writers morally and sentimentally inspired by a new middle-class idealism, a complete and sudden break is made with traditional literary practice.” There appears, according to Perry, although still drawing upon antecedent mythic motifs and models, the “plastic and plasmatic license” to “invent” to an “unlimited extent” has no precedent even in Old or New comedy. These “ancient, idealized Romances” are “generally called dramatic (δραματικόν), like the plot of tragedians.” Yet Perry’s own analysis indicates that in the passages of Cicero and Quintillian where the *fabula* (μῦθος) are considered, in “none of these definitions is there anything technical or fundamental in the way of literary classification or terminology” but only, as in Aristotle, the attempt to describe their “comparative truth or plausibility.”

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁵⁹⁹ Gill, C., *art. cit.*, p. 80.

⁶⁰⁰ Gill, C., *art. cit.*, p. 80.

⁶⁰¹ Gill, C., “Plato on Falsity and Not Fiction,” in *op. cit.*, p. 68. “Even Thucydides, writing in a straightforwardly historical mode, does not, after his famous programmatic comments (allowing himself to

Aristotle clearly differentiates between historical truth and the probable quality of what we might interpret as fiction. He talks about the universal significance of such drama as related to the normative bearing it carries. Thus, Alcibiades is represented in Plato and Xenophon for morally edifying purposes, as an example of a person who could have become virtuous but instead went wrong. However, Thucydides, in contrast, merely relates the factual events and actions which were carried out. A person like Socrates or Alcibiades might be represented within the historical genre but also in other genres, like comedy or the romanticized genre of the Socratic discourses.

“A “particular fact” is what Alcibiades did or what was done to him. In the case of comedy this has now become obvious, for comedians construct their plots out of probable incidents and then put in any names that occur to them. They do not, like the iambic satirists, write about individuals. In tragedy, on the other hand, they keep to real names. The reason is that what is possible carries conviction. If a thing has not happened, we do not yet believe in its possibility, but what has happened is obviously possible. Had it been impossible, it would not have happened.” (*Poetics*, 1451a-b).

Plato’s act of dramatic composition, culminating in the trial of Socrates, in the *Apology*, as well as associated dialogues, is an exploratory reworking or dramatic recomposition which has such an ethical import. However, let us return first to Dorion’s challenge to historical elements of the *Apology* itself. As Dorion contends, “[m]ore and more commentators consider the *logos sokratikos* to be a literary genre allowing its author a broad freedom of invention, both as regards the staging and content of the remarks attributed to the various characters, including Socrates.”⁶⁰² This has led more recent interpreters to affirm that “that the very genre of the *logos sokratikos* authorizes and encourages fictionality, it is not at all astonishing that Plato might have fabricated the circumstances of such and such

compose speeches in light of the analysis of events and their significance), offer localized signals about the degree of fictionality involved in each case. For Plato, writing in a mode whose generic status (in so far as it can be placed precisely in relation to other practices of the day) is not straightforwardly historical, there is even less reason to do so.”

⁶⁰² Dorion, p. 419.

discussion, ‘reported’ in the dialogues, but also the discussion’s theme, as well as the remarks lent to various characters taking part in the discussion.”⁶⁰³ Although Dorion goes even further than Kahn in his own work, his own re-evaluation is rooted in Kahn’s scholarship on this question.

Dorion maintains that Plato’s *Apology* is simply part of a genre of literature portraying Socrates’ trial. Dorion challenges this kind of assessment of the content of the *Apology*. He holds that if “the *Apology* is *logos sokratikos*, just as are the other dialogues, nothing, at least in theory, prevents Plato’s having also imagined certain scenes or certain exchanges reported in the *Apology*, including perhaps the story of the oracle.”⁶⁰⁴ The historical element certainly cannot be denied, but the genre itself is meant to present an idealized version of what Socrates, as a person, should do in given circumstances. My interpretation draws upon Dorion’s observation about the mythic quality of the *Apology*. However, my emphasis is upon the *Apology* as dramatic composition which self-consciously alters existing dramatic motifs.

The purpose of the trial is to offer a defense of Plato’s own conception of the philosophical life. Socrates does so as an orator who speaks truth, just as Plato, in portraying Socrates, speaks truth as an author. If we recognize that he is as much presenting an alternative form of drama as providing a critique of existing drama, we can see how these observations Aristotle makes about dramatic form apply. Poetry and drama give the “general truth [καθόλου]” about what a certain type or certain sort of individual might necessarily, according to probability, do or not do in a particular situation [τῷ ποίῳ τὰ ποῖα ἅπαντα συμβαίνει λέγειν ἢ πράττειν κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον]” (*Poetics*, 1451b). In contrast, the historian aims to record the facts and events of history as they actually factually occurred.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰³ Dorion, p. 419.

⁶⁰⁴ Dorion, L.A., “Plato’s *Apology* as Myth of Origins,” *op. cit.*, p. 419.

Aristotle's use of the specific example of "Alcibiades" could bear an ambivalent significance, since this particular historical character is portrayed both in the historical treatise of Thucydides and the moralizing work of Xenophon and Plato. When Plato composes narratives and dialogues describing exchanges between Socrates and Alcibiades, he is exploring possibility or what might have happened between these two people, actively creating and constructing an inspired scenario. The act of creation is, itself, a form of inquiry. Plato presents not a factual account of events but offers Socrates as a dramatized, idealized type.

In the *Apology*, Socrates describes himself as lacking the capacity to speak convincingly before the group, with the persuasiveness (πιθανῶς) of the (ῥήτωρ) orator (*Apol.* 17a-b). Plato has Socrates say that the virtue of rhetoric and the "excellence" of "a speaker is telling truth" (*Apol.* 18a). Dorion draws careful attention to the elaborate rhetorical construction of Plato's actual speech, and his use of the kinds of persuasion orators traditionally employ. However, it is perhaps more instructive to draw attention to the compositional elements of the *Apology* and the circumstances of the trial of Socrates, as a drama.

Plato's choice to mention Aristophanes' play is an indication that he wishes to place his own dramatic portrayal of Socrates and other characters in contrast with the dramatic work of other poets. In Xenophon, although there is a mention of the Delphic claim which echoes the Theban plays, Socrates does not say anything about Aristophanes or his comedy. Socrates, in Plato's *Apology*, almost overlooks the actual accusations which the portrayed accusers have leveled against him. Meletus, Anytus and Lycon have brought Socrates into court on their own charges. But Socrates has a greater "fear" of the earlier accusers and accusations than the charges of "Anytus and his friends" (*Apology*, 18b). The earlier accusations "got hold of

most of [the Athenians] from childhood,” and “persuaded the [Athenians] and accused [Socrates] quite falsely” (*Apol.* 18b).

Socrates then reframes the accusations which his accusers have made in a way that fits Aristophanes’ portrayal of the character, Socrates, in the *Clouds*. He says that he has been accused of making the weaker argument the stronger argument and speaking of the things above and below the earth.⁶⁰⁶ However, Xenophon’s Socrates makes no reference to the play of Aristophanes in his *Apology*. That is, Xenophon’s own account of Socrates’ defense, though it includes a reference to his claim of inspiration from a guardian spirit, as well as the authenticating words of the Oracle of Delphi, does not include this comic reference. This might, again, be a sign that Xenophon is largely dependent upon Plato in his compositions about Socrates. Plato has introduced these dramatic elements in a way that self-consciously echoes earlier dramatic portrayal. However, Xenophon’s *Apology* does not capture Plato’s self-conscious artistic effort to blend motifs from existing comedy and tragedy in such a way. However, in Plato, the drama of the *Apology* and the events surrounding Socrates’ death conform with a specific and clearly articulated philosophical and dramatic aesthetic, outlined in *Republic X*.

Plato makes Socrates avow that his purpose is to destroy the calumny or slander against him (*Apol.* 19a1; 24a3). In so doing, he makes an authenticating appeal to his divine sign. However, Dorion holds that this appeal to the testimony of divine witnesses is unjustified in a legal context, because Socrates should be appealing only to witnesses who can be corroborated.⁶⁰⁷ Dorion affirms that “je doute que Apollon soit très bon témoin car il

⁶⁰⁶ This is precisely the account of Socrates which Aristophanes presents. He describes Socrates as a naturalist. Socrates maintains that “you know, these” clouds and meteorological, natural phenomena, “are the only real divinities; all the rest is bunkum” (*Clouds*, 365). Strepsiades asks him straightforwardly if Socrates does not “think that Olympian Zeus is a god” (*Clouds*, 366-367). Socrates answers: “Zeus? Who’s Zeus? What rubbish you talk. There is no Zeus!” (*Clouds*, 370). Strepsiades tells his son Pheidippides that “there is no Zeus” (*Clouds*, 827). Strepsiades even says that “Vortex is king now; he’s driven Zeus from power” (*Clouds*, 828).

⁶⁰⁷ Dorion, L.A., “Elenchos Dialectique et Elenchos Rhetorique,” *art. cit.*, p. 83.

est lui-même évidemment impossible de témoigner en personne.»⁶⁰⁸ Dorion further asserts that: « Chéréphon est mort et ne peut pas lui-même se porter témoin de la véracité du récit de Socrate sur l'Oracle. »⁶⁰⁹ This is a place where Dorion identifies the distancing in Plato's presentation of the Oracle as authenticating testimony : « Socrate invoque le témoignage du frère de Chéréphon (21a), dont il ne sait pas s'il était lui-même présent à Delphes.»⁶¹⁰ In my view, this is much more a sign of the mythic and narrative quality of the exposition in even the *Apology*. Throughout the *Eleatic Trilogy*, Plato signals to the reader both the composed and exploratory nature of his own presentation of Socrates.

The genre of drama and, above all, tragic drama captures and displays the uncertainty of human deliberation in decisive trials, like the trial of Oedipus or Antigone, as presented in Sophocles' Theban plays. Dorion, in a more recent treatment, developing his earlier rhetorical examination of the *Apology*, suggests that Plato's *Apology* also contains mythic elements. He holds, on the basis of ancient testimony, that the claim Socrates makes of being authenticated by the Oracle of Delphi should be regarded as Platonic myth or invention.⁶¹¹

This Delphic association is precisely the dramatic signal to the reader that what Plato is offering is not meant to belong to the genre of historical composition so much as dramatic art. Dorion shows how the historical occurrence of Socrates' trial and condemnation does not preclude the possibility that the *Apology* contains "what may amount to a considerable fictional element."⁶¹² He holds that the "the very existence of several *Apologies* by different authors confirms that the theme of Socrates' trial and defense was no less a subject of rivalry,

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82-83.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹¹ Dorion, L.A., "Plato's *Apology* as Myth of Origin," *op. cit.*, p. 421. Dorion notes that since "antiquity authors have voiced doubts about its authenticity, Plutarch reports in these terms the incredulity expressed by the Epicurean Colotes:" "At the very outset Colotes throws in his reserves: after relating that Chaerophon returned from Delphi with the oracle about Socrates that we all know, he comments: 'we shall dismiss this business of Chaerophon's, as it is nothing but a cheap and sophistical tale.'" (*Adv. Colotem*, 1116e-f).

⁶¹² Dorion, L.A., "Plato's *Apology*: A Platonic Myth," in *op. cit.*, p. 420.

among Socratics, than other themes on which they competed in writing dialogues.”⁶¹³ Using Most’s principles of Platonic myth, Dorion holds that we can identify this affirmation of the *Apology* as an indication of the mythical, fictive quality of the tale which Socrates is about to recount.

“Perhaps some of you will think I am jesting, but be sure that all that I shall say is true. What has caused my reputation is none other than a certain kind of wisdom. What kind of wisdom? Human wisdom [ἀνθρωπίνην σοφίαν], perhaps. It may be that I really possess this, while those whom I mentioned just now are wise with a wisdom more than human; else I cannot explain it, for I certainly do not possess it, and whoever says I do is lying and speaks to slander me. Do not create a disturbance, gentlemen, even if you think I am boasting, for the story [τὸν λόγον] I shall tell does not originate with me, but I will refer you to a trustworthy source. I shall call upon the god at Delphi as a witness to the existence and nature of my wisdom, if it be such. You know Chaerophon. He was my friend from youth, and a friend of most of you, as he shared your exile and your return. You surely know the kind of man he was, how impulsive in any course of action. He went to Delphi at one time and ventured to ask the oracle-as I say, gentlemen, do not create a disturbance-he asked if any man was wiser than I, and the Pythian reply that no one was wiser. Chaerophon is dead, but his brother will testify to you about this” (*Apology*, 20d-21e).

This authorial gesture on the part of Plato is an act of constructive recomposition, meant to signal the reader to the mythical and dramatic sources from which he is drawing. The choice of the name “Chaerophon” is significant. Aristophanes lists Chaerophon, along with Socrates, as one of the persons who teaches about the purely naturalistic motions of the heavens, and Socrates and Chaerophon are also associated with a “Thinkery” which teaches people to be able to “win a case whether you’re in the right or not” (*Clouds*, 96-97). Pheidippides and Strepsiades note that they will find these sophists at this Thinkery (*Clouds*, 104). Plato, in his creative recomposition, lends this element a lofty, tragic air, by making “Chaerophon” the man responsible for the report of Socrates’ divine claim, from the Oracle of Delphi, to be the wisest man in Athens (*Apol.* 21a). That is to say, Plato, as an author, is creatively reconstructing and reconstituting tropes from a familiar drama. Although

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*

Xenophon mentions this comic detail in the *Memorabilia*, the mention of this comedy is completely absent from Xenophon's report in the *Apology* (Xenophon, *Apology*, 10-14).⁶¹⁴

Plato is self-consciously altering an element of a dramatic play. This could be a sign, again, that Xenophon is simply imitating Plato's *Apology* without grasping his underlying purpose. Plato, in this case, is making an effort to transfigure tropes of earlier mythic and dramatic poetry to match his own ethical aesthetic. Plato presents a Socrates who bears similarities with the Socrates of Aristophanes; Plato's Socrates is, however, Aristophanes' Socrates in precisely those ways which Plato says that characters in comedy, as a genre, are unworthy of imitation.

“Then by those very gods about whom we are talking, Meletus, make this clear to me and the jury: I cannot be sure whether you mean that I teach the belief that there are some gods— and therefore I myself believe that there are gods and am not altogether an atheist, nor am I guilty of that— not, however, the gods in whom the city believes, but others, and that this is the charge against me, that they are others. Or whether you mean that I do not believe in gods at all, and that this is what I teach to others.—This is what I mean, that you do not believe in gods at all.” (*Apol.* 26c-d).

Plato completely reinterprets and alters the portrayal of the other drama, introducing his own interpretation of Socrates and his activity. Indeed, Plato's dramatic portrayal of the trial and death of Socrates even echoes not so much the comparison Socrates himself makes with the comedy but the tragic ambivalence of Sophoclean drama. Plato makes Socrates' intellectual quest an ethical quest for self-understanding. This, again, is a clear signal to contemporary Athenians that Socrates presented in a way that is based upon the model of Oedipus. Plato uses the language of the daimon or guardian spirit, as well as the association with the Oracle of Delphi, a trope which he imports not from Aristophanic comedy but Sophoclean tragedy.

⁶¹⁴ Van Der Waerdt holds that we should actually regard Aristophanes as a source of historical testimony which presents a faithful interpretation of Socrates' thought. Indeed, the reputation of Socrates in Athens is mentioned in Xenophon, and, briefly, “Socrates recounts from Critobolus how he undertook to recover from his Aristophanic reputation as an idle chatterer with his head in the air” (*Mem.* 11, 3). Van Der Waert, P., “Socrates in the *Clouds*,” Van Der Waert, P., ed., *The Socratic Movement*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994, p. 53.

Plato presents Socrates at odds with the existing leaders of the community, as bearing an ambivalent status as a sort of philosopher-king and potential saviour of the community. However, his saving power is completely interior, having to do entirely with the soul. This emphasis on the contrast between the order of justice as it should be and existing civic law is itself merely a dramatic motif which is drawn from the tradition of Greek drama. Sophocles' Theban plays feature precisely such motifs of the struggle between received law and a higher ethical justice which is beyond written code, as well as the tragic fall of a king who, driven by his divine spirit, succumbs to tragic misfortune in a quest for self-knowing.

In the *Apology*, in order to test the assertion of the Oracle of Delphi, Socrates describes how he would approach the men of politics (τῶν πολιτικῶν), who were, in accordance with commonly held opinion, regarded as possessing prudent judgement (*Apol.* 21c5-6).⁶¹⁵ Socrates asserts, even before those who have accused him of pollution and corruption, that he proved himself the wiser person (σοφώτερος) (*Apol.* 21c6-7). He learned this through his dialogue (διαλεγόμενος) or discussion with them. Socrates in the *Apology* calls himself a model or paradigm (παράδειγμα) of candour, integrity and truthful speech (*Apol.* 23b). Faced with an Athenian jury, Plato makes Socrates affirm that he is driven by a mythical god or spirit (δαίμων) (*Apol.* 40a-b; cf. *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1194-96). For Dorion, this origin myth simply describes or provides an origin for rational, philosophical activity. However, my view is that Plato's dramatic alteration of this Theban motif is part of a much more elaborate philosophical and literary construction. It is an act of creative exploration and recombination of familiar motifs, reworked in such a way as to present the trial of Socrates and his condemnation as a dramatic event.

⁶¹⁵ The ensuing ten pages are reworked from my unpublished "Socrates and Oedipus: Plato's Philosophical Transformation of a Tragic Paradigm," presented at the *Canadian Philosophical Congress* in Victoria, June, 2013.

Plato's readers would clearly have been aware of the traditional dramatic sources from which these mythical motifs derive. Sophocles describes Oedipus as a paradigm of human limitation. Within the scheme of Greek Tragedy, even the greatest mortal understanding cannot discern, with complete assurance, the will of the gods. Oedipus, the king of Thebes experiences tragic misfortune when he discovers that he has unwittingly and shamefully killed his father and married his mother. Sophocles' chorus pronounces that Oedipus is a paradigm (παράδειγμα) a restraint upon the mortal aspiration for contentment and happiness. Oedipus, though a figure of scandal stretching the limits of private and public humiliation, stands at the same time as a magnanimous figure, who is noblest and most generous just before plummeting into disgrace:

“ΧΟ. ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν,
 ὡς ὑμᾶς ἴσα καὶ τὸ μη-
 δὲν ζώσας ἐναριθμῶ.
 Τίς γάρ, τίς ἀνὴρ πλέον
 Τᾷς εὐδαιμονίας φέρει
 ἢ τοσοῦτον ὅσον δοκεῖν
 καὶ δόξαν γ’ ἀποκλῖναι ;
 τὸν σὸν τοι παράδειγμ’ ἔχων,
 τὸν σὸν δαίμονα, τὸν σὸν, ᾧ
 τλᾶμον Οἰδιπόδα, βροτῶν
 οὐδὲν μακαρίζω” (*Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1186-96)

“O generations of mortals,
 I count your lives as equal
 To nothingness itself.
 For who, tell me who,
 Has happiness that stretches further
 Than a brief illusion
 And, after the illusion, decline?
 Considering you as my model,
 Considering your daimon, yours alone,
 O wretched Oedipus
 I count no mortal blessed.”⁶¹⁶

Halliwell expresses this traditional notion in the following way:

⁶¹⁶ Kirkwood, G.A., *A Study of Sophoclean Drama*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1992, p. 169.

“Oedipus’ life is here interpreted as a “model,” a kind of measure or touchstone, in terms equally of what he had previously appeared to accomplish and of what he has now irretrievably lost: the curve traced by his rise and fall, and beneath which the agency of a god (*daimon*, 1194) can be felt, in a doubly and ironically paradigmatic light, and his case encourages the chorus to extrapolate to all “generations of mortals,” and to conclude that all happiness or flourishing, *eudaimonia*, is a cruel mirage.”⁶¹⁷

Sophocles clearly displays his tragic vision through the paradigm of Oedipus, a blessed and noble king. This king is destined to fall to tragic misfortune and disgrace. The lesson is that human life remains uncertain for even the best, noblest and wisest mortal human being. The city of Thebes, at the outset of *Oedipus Rex*, has succumbed to plague. Oedipus recognizes individual and collective affliction and struggles to remedy this scourge upon the city (*Oedipus Rex*, 60-65). Creon, the brother of Oedipus’ wife, Jocasta, reveals through the Oracle of Delphi that the murder of a former king, Laius, brought *miasma* or pollution upon the community, as the crime has yet to be expiated (*Oedipus Rex*, 112-114). Oedipus faced with this epidemic proves *pharmakon*. He is both the civic illness and the remedy, the poison and the antidote.

Creon and Oedipus request the art (τεχνή) of the wise seer Tiresias to help resolve the riddle of this pestilence. Tiresias reveals reluctantly, then boldly, that Oedipus is the cause of *miasma* or contamination in Thebes, since Oedipus (φονεά σέ φημι τάνδρος οὐ ζετεις δίκας) is the slayer, the patricidal murderer he seeks (*Oedipus Rex*, 362). Oedipus, at first a paradigm of nobility and magnanimity, contests the blind seer, Tiresias, as well as the Theban noble, Creon, with haughty conceit. When slandered by Oedipus, Tiresias goads the king to resolve his own riddle. The proud King Oedipus, having solved the riddle of the

⁶¹⁷ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, op. cit., p. 117.

Sphinx, boasts of his potent, searching intelligence. Oedipus is slow but does manage to resolve what turns out to be the mystery of his own existence.⁶¹⁸

Oedipus has unwittingly and unknowingly killed his father Laius. This is revealed fully when a lowly shepherd, tasked with ridding Laius and Jocasta of the ominous child Oedipus, explains that rather than exposing the cursed newborn, he took pity and preserved the life of the infant child of the king of Thebes, refusing to carry out the royal order to expose the young prince and instead chose to leave Oedipus to other parents. The shepherd did this in spite of the fact that it had been foretold that if Oedipus lived, he would slay his father. Upon the fateful realization that the parricide has indeed already occurred, Oedipus loses his wife and mother Jocasta to suicide brought on by her intense feelings of guilt and despair.

This is the curious ambiguity of Oedipus. Guilty of the pollution which afflicts his city, Oedipus succeeds in unearthing the truth about his birth and actions. This is in spite of the supplication from his wife and mother Jocasta to abandon his catastrophic course. The tragic hero or exemplar undoes himself by doing in so far as he is able what is right. Oedipus is unwilling to heed Jocasta's warning to refrain from learning who he is (*Oedipus Rex*, 1068). He chooses a life of searching, seeking out self-understanding. This choice brings an encounter with the wonder and astonishment of his fate.

Oedipus blinds himself in shame, confronted with the horror of his birth and the dreadfulness of his actions. The dramatic provocation of emotion is meant to stimulate an emotional response which stretches the limits of understanding. Segal describes the mimetic quality of "the cathartic effect" which "is mirrored back to the audience through the play's

⁶¹⁸ Pucci, P. 'Reading the Riddle of Oedipus Rex' in Pucci, P., *The Language of Tragedy: Essays in Greek Tragedy in Honour of Gordon M. Kirkwood*, Atlanta, Ga, Scholars Press, 1998, p. 55.

stage acting and weeping, either by the chorus or by a major protagonist.”⁶¹⁹ The emotional response of the audience has an intellectual force.

The wise and searching king has brought himself to ruin for the sake of his community. The very act of searching, as the audience should understand, reveals the horror of genuine knowing. Oedipus needed to consult a shepherd who had spared his life, though Laius and Jocasta had left him to be exposed for fear of the prophecy that he would kill his father. This brings Oedipus to the realization that he is both the son of Laius, the former husband of his wife and mother, and that he is his father’s murderer. In spite of the terror of his actions, he is, in some sense, innocent.⁶²⁰ Yet Oedipus, experiencing disgust and remorse, blinds himself.

This is a tragic consequence but it also opens the path towards atonement with the gods, for the *miasma* or pollution of his existence.⁶²¹ The audience, whose sentiment of pity and revulsion is mirrored through the language of the chorus, expresses dismay and disgust at Oedipus’ life and deeds. This depiction of suffering is not without thoughtful purpose. The witness to Oedipus’ experience is meant to feel deep wells of compassion for this extraordinary but agonizing and tormented person.⁶²²

It should not be forgotten that Sophocles’ Oedipus, though he undergoes a shameful reversal of fortune, is meant to be a noble exemplar.⁶²³ Oedipus accepts that his expulsion is for the good of Thebes (*Oedipus Rex*, 1436-37).⁶²⁴ In a sense, both in life and death through fateful trial, Oedipus fulfills the pattern of the hero. Dodds stresses that the nobility of “Oedipus is great because he accepts responsibility for all his acts, including those which are

⁶¹⁹ Segal, C., ‘Catharsis, Audience, and Closure in Greek Tragedy’, in Silk, D.S., ed, *Tragedy and the Tragic: Greek Theatre and Beyond*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 156.

⁶²⁰ Dodds, E.R., in Segal, C. ed., *op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁶²¹ Bowra, C.M., *Sophoclean Tragedy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1944, p. 210.

⁶²² Segal, C., ‘Catharsis, Audience, and Closure in Greek Tragedy’, in Silk, D.S., ed, *op. cit.*, 1996, p. 167.

⁶²³ Vernant, J.P. and Vidal-Naquet, P., *op. cit.*, p. 115-116.

⁶²⁴ Howland, J. *art. cit.*, p. 541.

objectively most horrible, though subjectively immoral.”⁶²⁵ Oedipus had originally asserted, with considerable leniency, that he would allow a person who accepted guilt to leave Thebes in exile, (γῆς δ’ ἄπεισιν ἀσφαλῆς) unharmed (*Oedipus Rex*, 229). However, in the course of the very same speech, with no person coming forth to claim guilt, he says that he wishes an even worse fate (νῦν δ’ ἐς τὸ κείνου κρᾶτ’ ἐνήλαθ’ ἢ τύχη) than being destroyed by misfortune (*Oedipus Rex*, 260). That is to say, Oedipus had said that the killer of Laius should meet the most extreme penalty.

Oedipus, accused of corrupting Thebes, questions the Chorus, Tiresias and Creon in *Oedipus Rex*.⁶²⁶ Learning from the Oracle at Delphi of the need to atone for the taking the life of Laius, he first shows esteem for Creon and reverence for the seer Tiresias. Still, provoked by the accusation against himself, he quickly turns against both.⁶²⁷ Oedipus protests his innocence in the face of Tiresias and Creon, calling them the corrupters. Eventually, accepting his fate, the man once King of Thebes becomes a wandering exile.

3.3.1 *Parallels between Socrates and Oedipus*

At his own trial, Socrates accuses Meletus of advancing slanderous accusations (διαβολαί) against him (*Apol.* 20b). He asserts that the slander arose as a result of his search for a human wisdom (*Apol.* 20d-e). The wisdom of Socrates is justified on the basis of the Oracle of Delphi and his own guardian spirit, a god (*Apol.* 20e). Plato, in the *Apology*, employs diction and wording close to that of Sophocles, in *Oedipus Rex*. Socrates in the *Apology* calls himself a model for humanity (παράδειγμα) of candour, integrity and truthful speech (*Apol.* 23b), faced with an Athenian jury. Like Oedipus, Socrates is driven by his spirit (δαίμων) (*Apol.* 40a-b; *Oedipus Tyrannus*, 1194-96). Nonetheless, the accusers call

⁶²⁵ Dodds, E.R., ‘On Misunderstanding *Oedipus Rex*’, in Segal, E., *op. cit.*, p. 187.

⁶²⁶ Kirkwood, G.A., *op. cit.*, 129-130.

⁶²⁷ Kirkwood, G.A., *op. cit.*, 130-131.

Socrates “most polluted” (μιαρώτατος) in his corruption of the youth (*Apol.* 23d).⁶²⁸ His response is to accuse his accusers of corruption. Socrates, however, consents eventually to condemnation and punishment. Refusing to be banished or to flee into voluntary exile, in the manner of Oedipus, he accepts the sentence of death.

Socrates maintains that the Oracle of Delphi has declared that he is in possession of wisdom and practical insight superior to all other Athenians (*Apol.* 23b). Oedipus had boasted of the favour the god bestowed before confronting the challenge of the plague, sparked by the pollution of the murder of Laius. However, Socrates is vindicated. The philosophical paradigm refuses to succumb to the temptation to indulge in lamentation. Plato’s paradigm is stalwart in the face of misfortune. His depiction of Socrates, however, echoes and reverberates with the openness and uncertainty of the Greek poetic tradition itself.

Socrates echoes Oedipus’ boast of superior understanding, asserting even before those who have accused him of pollution and corruption, that he proved himself the wiser person (σοφώτερος) (*Apol.* 21c6-7). Plato leads readers to identify with a hero, just as Sophocles leads his audience to identify with Oedipus, in his own tragic depiction.⁶²⁹ Plato, in this way, would seem to court or draw upon the emotional reversal at play in tragedy. Plato, however, presents Socrates as another kind of hero; he presents his Socrates as a paradigm who, unlike the tragic hero Oedipus, resists the pull of the excesses of grief and lamentation in the face of misfortune. This construction or recomposition of the event is presented, in the same manner as myth, as a matter of what is merely probable. The ethical or normative significance of the portrayal or representation, however, is ultimately what is most important.

This is what makes Socrates a different kind of hero. He is a different sort of paradigm or example to emulate than that afforded by the tragic example of Sophocles’ Oedipus. Socrates, like Oedipus, stands as a symbol for Delphic self-understanding. As a

⁶²⁸ Howland, J., *art. cit.*, p. 539.

⁶²⁹ Vernant, J.P. and Vidal-Naquet, P., *Mythe et tragédie en Grèce ancienne*, *op. cit.*, p. 104-105.

philosophical exemplar, he asserts the need (*gnosthi seauton*) to know himself. When his accusers question Socrates' mode of life, he asserts with eloquent conviction that the unexamined life is not worth living (*Apol.* 38b). Though Socrates has been admonished for his life of questioning, he continues to insist that engaging in dialogue every day about what is good and just is the greatest good for men (*Apol.* 38a).

Oedipus is a scapegoat, an awesome figure who is both frightening and inspiring. Similarly, Socrates' condemnation makes him an example of the philosophical life, memorable and inspiring, whose case is not only intellectually stimulating but emotionally and spiritually haunting to think about. Once King of Thebes, Oedipus arrives in Athens as a foreigner. He is first a beggar but then becomes the saviour of the city (*Oedipus at Colonus*, 459-60). At one time, he had accepted the justice of his misfortune, but he appears in old age to have reconsidered and no longer thinks himself to blame. In similar manner, Socrates accepts guilt but, also, avows his blamelessness.

Socrates holds to the gods, rather than the Athenians (*Apol.* 35d). However, in the *Crito*, Socrates, perhaps humbled by his trial, expresses reservation at the contravention of *nomoi* (*Crit.* 51c-52d; 52e-54d). Both hold to the laws of the city. The Platonic figure, however, avoids the emotional expurgation and lamentation which characterizes the noble, tragic paradigm of Sophocles. Sophocles invites viewers to identify with and emulate but also distance themselves from his hero, Oedipus. Halliwell stresses Plato's critique of tragedy and the emphasis on "Socratic imperturbability" in the *Apology* and the *Phaedo*. This is Plato's purpose as a dramatic author, in presenting the events of Socrates' life and death. This dramatic purpose is implied through the Athenian Visitor, in the *Laws*, who affirms that "we ourselves aspire to be poets of the finest and best tragedy" (817b).⁶³⁰ Plato presents Socrates as a paradigm who is an alternative to the tragic paradigm of Oedipus. At

⁶³⁰ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, *op. cit.*, p. 116-117.

the same time, he draws upon and reworks familiar tropes of the Oedipus narrative.

Socrates is depicted as a philosophical hero or paradigm, holding to reason and questioning philosophically while restraining himself from indulging in grief and lamentation. Plato presents a condemnation of Socrates which echoes the tragic fate of heroes depicted by tragic dramatists like Sophocles. Though we are left lingering, Plato's depiction replaces tragedy with rational optimism. In the *Phaedo*, Plato's Socrates' confidence is based, in part, in arguments for the immortality of the soul and a mythic account of an afterlife both terrifying and inspiring. Plato, as artist, pushes beyond even the shameful dread of death by depicting a world where the wrongs of the present life are corrected by the action of the spirits and gods of the cosmos. Plato composes a myth of the afterlife in the *Phaedo*, reworking traditional motifs. However, Plato also reworks the example of a philosophical Socrates, who resists lamentation.

"...We found Socrates recently released from his chains, and Xanthippe—you know her—sitting by him, holding their baby. When she saw us, she cried out and said the sort of thing that women usually say: "Socrates, this is the last time your friends will talk to you and you to them. Socrates looked at Crito. "Crito," he said, "let someone take her home." And some of Crito's people led her away lamenting and beating her breast" (*Phd.* 60a-b).

Socrates, oddly, speaks of being prompted by a "dream" to write poetry.

"And while he was saying this, he was holding a cup, and then drained it calmly and easily. Most of us had been able to hold back our tears reasonably well up till then, but when we saw him drinking it and after he drank it, we could hold them back no longer; my own tears came in floods against my will. So I covered my face. I was weeping for myself, not for him—for my misfortune in being deprived of such a comrade. Even before me, Crito was unable to restrain his tears and got up. Apollodorus had not ceased from weeping before, and at the moment his noisy tears and anger made everybody present break down, except Socrates" (*Phd.* 117c-d).

"What is this," he said, "you strange fellows. It is mainly for this reason that I sent the women away, to avoid such unseemliness, for I am told one should die in good omened silence. So keep quiet and control yourselves" (*Phd.* 117e).

Plato depicts Socrates resisting lamentation in the way that is encouraged in *Republic* X. In this way, Plato's Socrates presents an alternative model to Oedipus, Antigone or even Socrates himself as portrayed by Aristophanes in the *Clouds*. The others watching Socrates' death even express shameful grief, which Socrates says, in *Republic* X, that virtuous people should not express.

“The officer was weeping as he turned away and went out. Socrates looked up at him and said: “Fare you well also, we shall do as you bid us” (*Phd.* 116c-d).

Gill holds that the detail with which Socrates' death is represented, specifically his physical resistance to the effects of hemlock, echoes his restraint and physical endurance, as described in the encomium of Alcibiades, in the *Symposium*. Plato offers this dramatic instance as an “historical event” which is “transformed into a representation of a philosophical idea” and, according to Gill, this should “alert us to the fact that many of what seem to be authentic glimpses into the life, and death, of the historical Socrates may in fact be illustrative pictures, attached or inset, like the myths of Plato's dialogues, into the argument.”⁶³¹ Socrates, furthermore, resists tragic lamentation, even when surrounded by friends who succumb to this instinctive urge. In this way, he conforms to the standards of Plato's critique of tragic representation in *Republic* X.

3.3.2 *The Critique of Tragic Lamentation in Republic X*

The critique of tragic lamentation is the most robust in *Republic* X. Plato depicts Socrates as saying that mortal heroes and even ordinarily virtuous people ought not to succumb to the pleasures of excessive grief and lamentation. Socrates is the hero Plato represents as resisting the pleasures of succumbing to sorrow in the face of misfortune. Plato characterizes tragic drama, counting the epic poet Homer as such a tragic poet, in the following manner: “We say that imitative poetry imitates human beings acting voluntarily or

⁶³¹ Gill, C., “The Death of Socrates,” *Classical Quarterly*, 23, 1 (May 1973), p. 28.

under compulsion, who believe that, as a result of these actions, they are doing either well or badly and who experience either pleasure or pain in all this” (*Rep.* 603d). There is an internal struggle which goes on with people who are themselves caught up in misfortune in life. Socrates describes the psychological state of such an individual (*Rep.* 603c-d). Public convention and law (νόμος) cautions against excessive expressions of tragic grief (ἔλεος).

To identify with a noble or pitiable tragic hero is the central device of the Greek tragedians. Plato questions the influence of this dramatic technique, asserting that “if a decent man loses his son or some other prized possession,” then “he’ll bear it more easily than the other sorts of people” (*Rep.* 603e). One part of his soul is telling him “to resist his pain” while “his experience” is telling him to “give in” (*Rep.* 604a-b). Plato maintains that genuinely good, exemplary, noble people ought not to act as exemplars like Oedipus, in dramas like those of Sophocles.

Tragic representation brings pleasure to audiences by showing figures in states of extreme grief and sorrow. However, in so doing, tragic representation teaches the wrong way to act in the face of misfortune (*Rep.* 604b). Even the conventional view expressed in received νόμος is that a virtuous person must show stalwart courage and resolution whether events turn “out to be good or bad in the end” (*Rep.* 604b-c). Plato affirms even more strongly that this convention is rooted in reason itself. Rational optimism and poise should prevent us, even when we experience a major calamity, from weeping like children who have tripped and fallen (*Rep.* 604d). The unconscious, visceral and earthy force of emotion must, in the heroic vision Socrates offers, be counteracted by the rational self-control of the higher spirit. Socrates not only explains this in the *Republic*; he, himself, serves as an alternative paradigm to exemplars like Oedipus. At the same time, Plato represents Socrates in a way which retains elements of this earlier model.

The rational and responsible reaction of a philosophical exemplar, like Socrates, to suffering is not the natural or instinctual one. Plato notes, through Socrates, that the gain of tragic representation is the “enjoyment” it brings (*Rep.* 606a-c). The epics of Homer and tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles stimulate wells of pleasure through the representation of grief and sorrowful lamentation. Socrates says that we should regard such narratives in the way we might an intoxicating but wayward lover (*Rep.* 608b). Plato asserts that this transference of emotion from a tragic figure like Oedipus to the audience has a disorienting influence. We should, nevertheless, resist this enchantment. The pleasure and enjoyment one experiences through the depiction of grievous suffering brings more harm than good. A philosopher, on the model of Socrates, would be able to choose the optimism of scientific understanding, theoretical through to practical, resisting the primordial courses of desire.

Plato reworks elements of existing Greek drama into his own drama around the trial of Socrates, from the *Statesman*, through the *Apology*, *Crito* and *Phaedo*. In the *Statesman*, Socrates is actually questioned by the Eleatic Visitor and considers the relation between higher order ideals and existing law in a manner that echoes the clash between the now Theban king, Creon, and the daughter of Oedipus, Antigone. The language of the ship of state, as well as the concern for observing written versus a higher, unwritten law, themes which figure in the circumstances surrounding Socrates trial, are present in the Theban plays of Sophocles. *Antigone* represents an astonishing interfamilial clash, emerging in the wake of earlier conflict. Antigone, devoted to family, stands against Creon, the king of Thebes.⁶³² Polyneices, brother of Antigone and Ismene, and son of Oedipus, has stood against Thebes, a traitor to his city. Creon holds to duty and law, preventing Polyneices’ burial, for the supposed benefit of the Theban πόλις (*Antigone*, 511-515). Antigone, in turn, holds to the

⁶³² De Romilly, J, *La tragédie grecque*, PUF, Paris, 1970, p. 84.

unwritten laws of blood, burying her brother against Creon's edict.⁶³³ She asserts that she acts with the justice of the gods, rather than the human justice of Creon.

Plato's Visitor considers the question of whether anyone can contest written law and asks whether the person who claims a higher law of conscience should be able to question law. This is a clear echo of the *Antigone*. The Visitor also uses the language of a ruler, guiding the ship of state and ambivalently considering the possibility of doling out punishment. These elements present echoes of the features of the mythic tragedy represented in Sophocles' *Antigone*.

The Chorus is initially critical of Antigone's outrageous contestation of Creon, the king of Thebes, in the wake of the death of Eteocles. However, these representatives of the voice of public reason are equally apprehensive about Creon's potential error in preventing the solemn rites of Eteocles' fallen brother and competitor for the crown, Polyneices. To complicate matters, Haemon, son of Creon, in some sense, stands for the will of the πόλις, against his father's decree, alongside Antigone. Creon is pushed by his son to assert "explicit tyranny" by claiming that the πόλις is the mere property of the ruler, himself (*Antigone*, 738).⁶³⁴ This is not a simple case of a clash between family and state but a drama which integrates both with what Kathryn Rosenfield has called "nebulous density."⁶³⁵ The ethical ambiguity of the drama tells us much about the limits of the human capacity for deliberation.

Creon, prior to the reversal of the play's course, would appear to stand for civic justice against a wayward and criminal Antigone, daughter of the outcast Oedipus. Antigone had recognized herself as 'foolish' in her undertaking to bury Polyneices. She is considered a traitor to his city, acting against Creon's explicit decree. The Chorus does not immediately

⁶³³ Kirkwood, G.A., *op. cit.*, p. 122.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 126-7.

⁶³⁵ Rosenfield, K.H., "Getting into Sophocles' Mind through Hölderlin's *Antigone*," *New Literary History*, 30, 1, 1999, p. 109.

side with Antigone.⁶³⁶ Though the unfolding of the narrative would appear to vindicate Antigone over Creon, it is not immediately or ultimately clear that Antigone is completely in the right.

The Chorus of elders recognizes that Antigone has disobeyed the decree of the king (*Antigone*, 415-17). Further, these elders recognize that Antigone displays the temper of her father, Oedipus (*Antigone*, 418-20). The Chorus sees Zeus' law, the eternal law, as binding and unable to be transgressed by the sin of man.

“Your power, O Zeus, what sin of man can limit?
All-aging sleep does not overtake it,
Nor the unwearied months of the gods; and you,
For whom time brings no age,
You hold the glowing brightness of Olympus” (655-70).

We see Antigone not as an exemplar of the will of the gods but a mere mortal standing in conflict with political power. The Chorus, representing the elders of Thebes, asserts that Antigone has offended Dike and the power of the gods. At the same time, there is a sense that these noble heroes, as a result of human limitation, could not avoid this tragic fate.⁶³⁷

Creon holds to his edict, which is an expression of civic *nomos*, and regards himself as saviour of the city. Creon, echoing Socrates stellar ship captain, avows that the ship keeps safe those who sail straight (πλέοντες ὁρθῆς) and make friends (*Antigone*, 189-190). He, as steering guide, shall increase the city through laws (*Antigone*, 191). The ruin of the city is provoked by the heedlessness of their ‘captains’ or kings. Creon, the successor to the son of

⁶³⁶ Segal, C., “Sophocles Praise of Man and the Conflicts of the *Antigone*,” *Arion*, 3, 2, p. 47-49.

⁶³⁷ David McNeill notes that the chorus sees Antigone as a *daimonion teras*, a “spiritual prodigy or portent” while Antigone’s self-description is more modest, as “a resident alien at home neither with the living nor the dead.” McNeill goes on to suggest that a “wholly autonomous agent is without proper place in our world” but without this “aspiration” For “the impossible end of moral autonomy, the world would be no fitting place to live.” Burke maintains that “Antigone’s burial ritual has a form of objective representation that is symbolic and unclear on account of its materiality. Her performance of the ritual represents and repeats the unclarity in the objective order.” Burke, Victoria I., ‘Hegel, Antigone, and First-Person Authority,’ *Philosophy and Literature*, 34, (October, 2010), p 378. McNeill, David, *Antigone’s Autonomy, Inquiry*, Vol. 54, No. 5, p. 436, October 2011. Rober William notes that “Antigone remains a kind of revolutionary. She represents and performs the revolutionary potential of sexual difference.” William, R., “Antigone’s Nature,” *Hypatia*, 25, 2 (April 2010), p. 426.

Oedipus, Eteocles, befalls misfortune no less than the father of Antigone.

The notion of civic sickness pervades *Antigone*. Creon had asserted the sickness of Antigone and Haemon.⁶³⁸ As the drama unfolds, the situation is reversed. Tiresias, the seer who had asserted the *miasma* of Oedipus, in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, says directly to Creon that he “brings the sickness to the city [καὶ ταῦτα τῆς σῆς ἐκ φρενὸς νοσεῖ πόλις]” (*Antigone*, 1015). Tiresias asserts that Creon’s words run counter to the will of the gods. Creon is at first as blind to the warnings of Tiresias as those of his son, Haemon.

Creon is left with as great a misfortune as Antigone’s own father, Oedipus, and her family.⁶³⁹ Creon, in the last minute, turns away from stern legalism and reconsiders his decision, seeking to save Antigone and Haemon from the calamity Tiresias has foreseen and the Chorus has, now, begun to see. By the time, however, that Creon has reconsidered his *hubris*, his wife and son, Eurydice and Haemon, are dead. The Chorus sees that it is “too late” (*Antigone*, 1270). Haemon, lamenting the death of his beloved Antigone, has been pushed to suicide. Eurydice takes her own life in grief. The Chorus leaves a grieving Creon with an assertion of the contingency of human life and the overarching power of the gods. Creon has been taught and achieved wisdom but, only, through suffering (*Antigone*, 1347-1353).

Creon had spoken with the Chorus and others of the importance of rule, law-making and the power of deliberation. Good deliberation (εὐβουλία) is the greatest benefit for the city. Not “to think [μὴ φρονεῖν] is the worst of ills [πλείστη βλάβη]” (*Antigone*, 1050-1051). The goal of such deliberation is “to save the city [σώσας πόλιν]” (*Antigone*, 1058), the ship of

⁶³⁸ Nussbaum, M., *The Fragility of Goodness*, op. cit., p. 54: “Antigone’s attack on civic values is taken as a sign of mental incapacity (732); Ismene’s sympathy reveals a similar mindlessness (492, 561, cf. 281). Haemon is urged not to ‘throw out his reason’ (648-9) by adopting her ‘sick’ beliefs. (At a crucial point in the action, Tiresias will turn Creon’s language of mental health against itself. Speaking of deficiency in practical wisdom, he says, ‘But you yourself have been full of that sickness’ (1052, and cf. 1015).”

⁶³⁹ Kirkwood, G.A., op. cit., p. 126.

state.⁶⁴⁰ Plato simply adapts this language and these themes in presenting his own Kallipolis as an ideal.

The paradigms and imagery echo an expression contained in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*.⁶⁴¹ Oedipus reputedly has received the help of a god (*Oedipus Rex*, 38-39). Oedipus himself was tested (βασάνωι), by answering the riddle of the Sphinx (*Oedipus Rex*, 493). The Chorus, comprised of the elders of the city deliberating about what is the best course, recognizes Oedipus on the basis of this test as the savior of the city. Plato's myths creatively rework Hesiod and Homer. Plato's dramatic work, which represents a romanticized embellishment of historical events, reworks the portrayal to introduce themes from existing drama.

Plato's Visitor describes the need for self-sufficiency and rational autonomy in his discussion of the nature of the kingly intelligence. But this philosophical language merely reflects the poetic language of Sophocles' *Antigone*. Creon offers a similar motif of a ship of state. At the same time, this language of kingship should be regarded, just as in the *Republic*, with the notion of a philosopher-king, as purely metaphorical.

These political images are chiefly images of self-rule and self-control. The Eleatic Visitor claims that even the most rationally composed forms of written code (νόμος), when taken in itself, is like a stubborn and ignorant person (ὥσπερ τινὰ ἄνθρωπον αὐθάδη καὶ ἄμαθην) allowing no person to act in any way (καὶ μηδὲνα μηδὲν ἔδοντα ποιεῖν παρὰ τὴν

⁶⁴⁰ Nussbaum, M., *The Fragility of Goodness*, *op. cit.*, p. 58: "Creon alludes here to an image already established in political rhetoric, one which rapidly became a commonplace of Athenian patriotism (*Rep.* 389d, 488a-89a). The city is a ship; without her, citizens could do nothing. She must be in good shape for friendship to prosper (cf. *Thu II. 60 orthoumenon* Demosthenes fr. 252) So much is unexceptional; the lines were quoted with approval by Demosthenes as an exchange with Aeschines (who apparently acted the role of Creon) would have said to himself offstage as well had he been a good citizen (*De Falsa Legatione*, 246-50)."

⁶⁴¹ See Kirkwood, G.A., *A Study of Sophoclean Drama*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 188-189: Wisdom, in practical life, is not fixing on received codes but being open to fluctuations of human life. "In *Antigone* and *Oedipus at Colonus*, it is clear that wherever their sympathies may lie, the choruses are primarily elders of Thebes and Colonus, respectively, and their attitude to what is going on is always shaped by the responsibilities and special interests of their position. In *Oedipus Tyrannus*, they are devoted to Oedipus; but in the very passage in which they most firmly state their devotion (498-511), it is quite clear that they feel a civic rather than a strictly personal loyalty (unlike the chorus of Ajax); it is Oedipus as savior of Thebes whom they revere: "For the winged maiden came upon him, a manifest thing, and in the test he was proved wise and a blessing to the city; therefore he shall never be judged guilty of evil by my judgment (509-511)."

ἑαυτοῦ τάξιν) against his own command (*Stm.* 294b7-c4). To simply observe a law unthinkingly or uncritically, even a law which was intelligently formulated in a given context, is to neglect to recognize that people are unlike and that actions and situations are different in each case and at each time (*Stm.* 294b1-5). The rational intelligence of a philosopher like Socrates, to use mythic language, is guided by his guardian spirit. Such intelligent or prudent judgment enables a person to act differently on each occasion. This is to be preferred to the uncritical observance of laws which might, in certain situations, simply not apply.

The Eleatic Visitor also shows himself to be in agreement with Plato's Socrates on the provisional merit of observing laws. Even after he has been condemned, Socrates, in the *Crito*, presents a speech where he honors the *nomoi* or laws, and he encourages Crito to follow the example it has set (*Crito*, 51c-52d; 52e-54d). The Visitor addresses the ethical issue of questioning political or communal standards of behavior. Making codes of laws is inferior to virtue; lawmakers can only "set down the law for each and every one according to the principle of 'for the majority of people, for the majority of cases, and roughly, somehow, like this', whether expressing it in writing or in the unwritten form," which is a practice of "legislating by means of ancestral customs" (*Stm.* 295a). This is effectively the task which the Athenian Visitor undertakes in the *Laws*. However, Plato has provided a helpful critique of codification in the *Statesman*, which should lead the reader to recognize that just like mythic accounts, lawful norms which are codified must always be subject to rational critique.

The existing order is not that of Plato's paradigmatic, ideal state, Kallipolis. The actual situation is one in which we cannot find philosophical rulers with ease, if we could ever find them at all. Indeed, the Visitor does not even differentiate between a leader who possesses understanding and one who does not. A person engaged in the art of kingship (βασιλῆα) exercising rule should imitate written laws with intelligence (κατὰ νόμους,

μιμούμενος τὸν ἐπιστήμονα). Yet Plato's Visitor does not distinguish by name the person who imitates law with correct judgment from the one who does so with genuine understanding (*Stm.* 295a). Plato's Visitor, like Protagoras, expresses respect for existing institutions, laid down by previous statesmen, since they even though reflect as written works something of reason. However, with Socrates, the Visitor recognizes our condition as imperfect.

Our condition is best compared to being a patient of a "doctor" who has "gone out of the country and away from his charges for what he thought would be a long time" (*Stm.* 295c). Plato describes our state as a condition wherein a doctor is *in absentia*. The doctor or physician of state, believing that "the people being trained, or his patients, would not remember the instructions" gave *grammata* as written "reminders" to the citizens (*Stm.* 295c). This is how the Eleatic Visitor describes our own condition, in the Age of Kronos. We are left with the sciences, a gift of the gods, but we do not possess any clear access to the purposes of the divine. A person who is a skilled doctor is not bound by written codes, since these are only reminders of his expertise.⁶⁴²

Plato's characters, Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor, are his *porte parole*, speaking authenticated words on his behalf. His Visitor also maintains that the version of Hesiod is preserved in corrupted form, and so, again, traditional poets like Homer and Hesiod cannot be thought of as providing an education in virtue in the way that Plato's myths and his dramatic portrayal of Socrates does. In the same way, these earlier constitutional and legal models do not match the creative production of the *Republic* and *Laws*. But even these models of ideal cities should not go unquestioned.

Plato opens even his own mimetic work to question, and his critique of mimesis in the *Republic* would not be consistent if this had not been done. If Plato is improving upon

⁶⁴² Ferrari, G.R.F., "Myth and Conservatism in Plato's *Statesman*," in *Reading the Statesman*, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

antecedents, questioning myths and received opinions, rather than merely imitating the work of those who came before, this critical stance must be applicable to his own work as well.⁶⁴³

If, as Plato maintains, there is an objective standard of intellectual and ethical truth which exists independently of Plato's own dramatic writings, then even Plato's own work must be subject to objective critique. Plato's Visitor illustrates this through his critique of the myth of a Golden Age, but this leads to the consideration of the narrative and indeed mythic status of the idealized paradigmatic character, Socrates himself.

3.3.3 Questioning the Socratic Paradigm and Choosing the Life of Philosophy

One of the most puzzling and problematic features of the *Statesman* is that, at a particular moment, the Visitor questions the practice of Socratic questioning and actually asks the Younger Socrates if they should propose a law which would condemn questioning as sophistry. Rowe and Gonzalez have, for different reasons, held that the Visitor's criticism of Socrates is genuine, and he actually proposes to condemn Socratic inquiry. Rowe recognizes in Plato that the paradigm or "the Socratic model of philosophy" is "something like (but not quite) free inquiry" and that this vision of Socrates as philosophical paradigm "remains at the center of his thinking to the end."⁶⁴⁴ Rowe recognizes, in Plato, that this "model is encapsulated in the character of Socrates who appears in the dialogues and who always represents the ideal philosopher, especially through his aspect as *know-nothing*."⁶⁴⁵ Socrates, rather than persuade, often simply asserts his desire to seek truth, which entails an endless and relentless questioning of received convention and opinions.⁶⁴⁶ Plato continues, in the *Statesman*, to introduce motifs from the *Republic*, while anticipating the trial depicted in the

⁶⁴³ Griffith, H., *op. cit.*, p. 58-59.

⁶⁴⁴ Rowe, C., "Killing Socrates: Plato's Later Thoughts on Democracy," in *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁶⁴⁵ Rowe, C., *art. cit.*, p. 75.

⁶⁴⁶ Rowe, C., *art. cit.*, p. 75: Rowe asserts that Socrates "might be a kind of 'equalitarian'". As Rowe recognizes, however, Socrates' "democratic credentials are pretty shaky." He goes on to assert that Socrates might "suppose that he and every citizen has a kind of contract to obey the city's (democratic) laws." Rowe recognizes at the same time that on what "little evidence we have" Socrates "disbelieved in the correctness of the fundamental principle of Athenian democracy, that 'he who wishes may speak'."

Apology.

“And further still it will be necessary to establish a law against all the following things. Suppose anyone is found inquiring into steersmanship and seafaring, or health and truth in the doctor’s art, in relation to winds and heat and cold, above and beyond the written rules, and making clever speculations of any kind in relation to such things. In the first place one must not call him an expert doctor or an expert steersman, but a stargazer, some babbling sophist” (*Stm.* 299b).

This is a direct challenge to the view that Socrates outlines in the *Republic*. At the same time, the Visitor also echoes Socrates’ own language in the *Republic*. Socrates compares the condition of those in the city to a ship experiencing a mutiny of the crew. This comparison occurs at exactly the point where Adeimantus points out that Socrates’ use of images is almost tiresome (*Rep.* 487e-489a). This image is presented when Socrates is in middle age, but it foreshadows his eventual trial. The *Statesman* echoes this language, from the *Republic*, and he shows that it bears a relation to Socrates’ upcoming trial. The Elder Socrates is now about to face his accusers, in the trial Plato portrays in the *Apology*.

Plato, in the *Republic*, uses this example of the ship captain. Plato has Socrates make this claim about the way cities are governed. The captain would safely guide the ship by the courses of the stars. The pretenders, in this view, are no doubt sophists, but they also seem to include ordinary people as thoughtless as we ourselves (*Rep.* 493a-c). Socrates suggests that philosophers, who have a claim to divine wisdom, bear this responsibility (*Rep.* 496a-e). Yet this claim would only apply to an imaginative order, such as his own paradigmatic city, Kallipolis. There would first be a need for an adequate constitution or political order in which philosophers would rule. For this reason, this city should be regarded more as a model for ethical and self-control than anything else.

“That’s exactly my complaint: none of our present constitutions are worthy of the philosophic nature, and, as a result, this nature is perverted and altered, for, just as a foreign seed, sown in an alien ground, is likely to be overcome by the native species and to fade away among them, so the philosophic nature fails to develop its full power and declines into a different character. But if we were to find the best constitution, as it is

itself the best, it would be clear that it is really divine and that other natures and ways of life are merely human” (*Rep.* 497b-c).

The “crew” ultimately condemns him as “babbling star-gazer” and overthrows him. If Plato’s character, Socrates, is the philosophical-statesman, in spite of the fact that he holds no political power, he has been charged and will be condemned in this way. The Eleatic Visitor recognizes this, and he even asks the Younger Socrates the implications for condemning Socratic style inquiry.

The Eleatic Visitor uses language which echoes the accusations made against Socrates at his trial. However, he proposes this not as an accusation against a specific individual but as a general law. Here we see the Visitor continue to explore the type of discourse characteristic of deliberation about law in an assembly. This type of deliberation is, of course, associated with the judicial sphere.

“The next provision will be that anyone who wishes from among those permitted to do shall indict him and bring him before some court or other as corrupting other people younger than himself and inducing them to engage in the arts of the steersman and the doctor not in accordance with the laws, but instead by taking autonomous control of ships and patients” (*Stm.* 299b-c).

“If he is found guilty of persuading anyone, whether young or old, contrary to the laws and the written rules, the most extreme penalties [εσχάτοις] shall be imposed on him. For (so the law will say) there must be nothing wiser than the laws; no one is ignorant about what belongs to the art of the doctor, or about health, or what belongs to the art of the steersman, or seafaring, since it is possible for anyone who wishes to understand things that are written down and things established by ancestral customs” (*Stm.* 299c).

Plato frequently portrays Socrates offering critiques of sophistic teachers, like Protagoras. However, Plato, through the Eleatic Visitor, invites the reader to question even his own artistic creation and model for a philosophical life—Socrates. The Eleatic Stranger, at the same time, opens the question as to whether his own injunction against questioning tradition should be questioned. The ensuing passage constitutes a shift in tone. It exhibits how the Visitor remains a rhetorical questioner and dialectician, rather than a mere

practitioner of rhetoric. The term, of course, does not appear in Plato. However, the Visitor offers what might be interpreted as an enthymeme or incomplete syllogism, the rhetorical counterpart for the complete or scientifically demonstrative syllogism.

The Younger Socrates is given two premises to an argument by the Eleatic Stranger. As an exercise, the Younger Socrates is again expected to provide the conclusion which the Visitor neglects to provide.⁶⁴⁷ That is to say, the Eleatic Visitor as a practitioner of rhetoric leads the Younger Socrates to draw the unstated conclusion of his premise:

“Suppose then these things came about, Socrates, in the way we say, both in relation to the sorts of expert knowledge, and to generalship, and all the art of hunting, of whatever kind; to painting, or any part whatever of all the art of imitation; to carpentry, the whole of tool-making, of whatever kind, or again farming and the whole of the expertise that deals with plants. Or again, suppose we imagined a sort of horse-rearing that took place according to written rules, or all herd-keeping, or the art of divination, or every part included in the art of the subordinate, or petteia, or all the science of numbers, whether perhaps dealing with them on their own, or in two dimensions, or in solids, or in speeds. If all these were practiced in this way, and they were done on the basis of written rules and not on the basis of expertise, what on earth would be the result” (*Stm.* 299b-e)?⁶⁴⁸

The Visitor questions the example of Socrates, proposing a regulation against inquiry. The Younger Socrates recognizes, however, that the result of preventing a questioning inquiry would destroy those very arts and sciences which, as we have learned from the Myth of Kronos, the city needs for its survival. The Younger Socrates in the wake of the Visitor’s accusation defends the philosophical mode of life:

“Young Socrates: “It’s clear both that we should see all the various sorts of expertise completely destroyed, and that they would never be restored, either, because of this law prohibiting inquiry; so that life, which even now is difficult, in such a time would be altogether unliveable” (*Stm.* 299e).

The best situation is the one where philosophical understanding prevails. However, the Eleatic Visitor speaks of written record as a second best way. There is a need to observe

⁶⁴⁷ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1356b.

⁶⁴⁸ Cf. *Apology*, 24e-25b.

and respect existing codes in our actual situation, since written codes, to a certain extent, express an inherited practical wisdom or understanding. An ordinary person, without any practical understanding, could “take it upon himself to do different things” contrary to the conventional laws. However, such a person would more likely act in such a way as to bring “an evil still greater than the previous one” (*Stm.* 300a). The Visitor uses the strong language of error in order to express the gravity of such a mistake (ἀμαρτήματος ἀμάρτημα πολλαπλάσον), which would produce a harm many times greater than one who simply acted in accordance with law or convention (*Stm.* 300b). The language of mimesis occurs throughout this section discussing law and written code. However, the technical resonance of the term used for tragic flaw is here unmistakable. Socrates echoes Antigone in deviating from accepted norms, seeking a higher ideal than the order of Athens or any given city. However, he echoes the tragic ambiguity of Sophocles’ *Antigone*. Creon upholds the laws of the city, rejecting the notion that there is some other, higher law. In spite of their opposing claims and the dramatic conflict it engenders, both express a point of view which is not entirely incorrect.

The medium of dramatic dialogue allows for Plato, just like other Greek dramatists, to introduce an element of ambivalence into the discussions. Plato’s Visitor asserts that as a second best way (δεύτερος πλοῦς) it is necessary “to allow neither individual nor crowd ever to do anything contrary to” laws “proceeding, for those who establish laws and written rules about anything whatever” (*Stm.* 300c).⁶⁴⁹ The Visitor expressed earlier the limits of received codes, but now he becomes stern and unyielding in upholding such regulations. He says that

⁶⁴⁹ Nancy, M., « La critique de Socrate par L’Étranger dans le *Politique*, » in Rowe, C. ed, *Reading the Statesman: Proceedings of the Third Symposium Platonicum (International Plato Studies, vol. 4)*, Sankt Augustin, Academia Verlag, 1995, p. 234 : “Pour l’Étranger, c’est au contraire la preuve que force ne doit pas rester à la loi, mais à l’homme royal pourvu d’intelligence” (294 a 7-8).” See *Phaedrus*, 274e: “ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς γράμμασιν ἦν, “Τοῦτο δέ, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τὸ μάθημα,” ἔφη ὁ Θεῦθ, “σοφωτέρους Αἰγυπτίους καὶ μνημονικωτέρους παρέξει μνήμης τε γὰρ καὶ σοφίας φάρμακον εὐρέθη.” Ὁ δ’ εἶπεν “ὦ τεκνικώτατε Θεῦθ, ἄλλος μὲν τεκεῖν δυνατὸς τὰ τέχνης, ἄλλος δὲ κρίναι τίν’ ἔχει μοῖραν βλάβης τε καὶ ὠφελίας τοῖς μέλλουσιν χρῆσθαι.””

the rational norms and codes of law are “imitations of the truth of each and every thing[.]” having been issued from practical apprehension insofar as it can be “written down” (*Stm.* 300c-d). In the same breath, however, he stresses that this is only a second best condition. The best condition would be the one in which a philosophical ruler prevailed.

Writings must serve as a basis of our understanding, but active interpretation and thought, which is the soul’s dialogue with itself, must underlie correct apprehension. Indeed, one may cultivate judgment until one is “no longer imitation [μίμημα] but that very thing that is most truly what it sets out to be [αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθιναίον]” (*Stm.* 300d-e). The use of the word ‘paradigm’ is completely absent from this section of the *Statesman*. However, in the *Apology*, which follows the *Statesman* in dramatic sequence, Socrates does call himself a paradigm.

The *Timaeus* describes the images of our world as imitations of a celestial paradigm (48e5).⁶⁵⁰ However, paradigm comes to signify, through the course of *the Sophist and the Statesman*, a visible model which leads to higher ethical understanding. In the *Sophist*, the Visitor explains that the image or imitation must imitate the measured proportions of the paradigm (235d7).⁶⁵¹ Socrates calls himself a paradigm in the *Apology* (23b1). The model is the original upon which imitations are based. However, this particular philosopher, as represented in the dialogue, is, in a sense, simply an image or visible expression of the essence of philosophy. This would not, however, be merely to copy Socrates or be an imitation of him. Rather, it would be to embody, in a unique way, the ideal of a philosophical life.

The Younger Socrates, just like Theaetetus, merely resembles Socrates superficially. Plato introduces the notion of paradigm to mean essential Form in the *Timaeus* and the city

⁶⁵⁰ τὰ μὲν γὰρ δύο ἱκανὰ ἦν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν λεχθεῖσιν, ἓν μὲν ὡς παραδείγματος εἶδος ὑποτεθέν, νοητὸν καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταῦτα ὄν, μίμημα δὲ παραδείγματος δεύτερον, γένεσιν ἔχον καὶ ὁρατόν.

⁶⁵¹ μίαν μὲν τὴν εἰκαστικὴν ὁρῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τέχνῃ. ἔστι δ’ αὕτη μάλιστα ὁπόταν κατὰ τὰς τοῦ παραδείγματος συμμετρίας τις ἐν μήκει καὶ πλάτει καὶ βάθει, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτι χρώματα ἀποδιδούς τὰ προσήκοντα ἐκάστοις, τὴν τοῦ μιμήματος γένεσιν ἀπεργάζηται.

and the soul is presented as a model in the *Republic*. In the *Statesman*, a model is defined as a visible sign which can lead to a grasp of higher, ethical realities. Plato, as artist and author, presents Socrates as such a model. He asks us not merely to follow this model blindly, but through his Visitor to question him. If Plato did not open Socrates to question in the *Statesman*, then he would be guilty of presenting his own model as more than an image of truth, which is the same charge he lays against other dramatists and poets.

The Younger Socrates is choosing to imitate the life not of a particular constitution but of the philosopher, Socrates.⁶⁵² The activity of questioning and philosophizing is itself the source of the science upon which all writing is based. Plato's dialogues might present models or examples in a way that is meant to improve upon previous poetic work. However, Plato can only portray Socrates as a character in his dialogues, in what is itself an imitation of the actual living practice of dialogue, which is philosophy itself.

Plato exhibits characters uttering narrative or mythic monologues. However, Plato's own writings in prose are more akin to dramas. Plato, in the *Republic*, distinguishes between simple, third person narrative and a "narrative through mimesis" in which the poet himself speaks in character.⁶⁵³ There is also a third or compound style of presentation, which occurs in epics. In this third or mixed style, the speaker speaks both as himself and through the characters in the narrative. This third choice allows for multiple levels of distancing and identification. The Eleatic Visitor is inviting the Younger Socrates to identify, critically but sympathetically, with the Golden Age humans in his myth of Kronos. At the same time, Plato, as author, is inviting his readers to identify, alternately, with the Eleatic Visitor, the Younger Socrates and the Elder Socrates.

The identification with characters is essential in *mimesis* or representation. However,

⁶⁵² Miller is right to note that the whole context of the *Theaetetus*, *Sophist* and *Statesman* presupposes the trial of Socrates. For this reason, it is appropriate to consider the trial, itself, in the *Apology*, in this final section of my thesis on the *Statesman*. See Miller, M., *The Philosopher in Plato's Statesman*, Las Vegas, Parmenides Press, 2004, p. 1-2.

⁶⁵³ Halliwell, S., *The Aesthetics of Mimesis*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Plato also maintains that it is potentially misleading and harmful for the poet to conceal his own person and speak with the voice of characters in the narrative, as much as for the audience to identify with characters (*Rep.* 393c).⁶⁵⁴ Since Plato is himself an author of dialogues in which he does not appear in his own person, Plato recognizes that it is only beneficial to identify with characters such as Socrates, as portrayed in the Platonic dialogues, if the reader does this with a spirit of critical detachment and distance.

“But you must, I said. Maybe you’ll understand it better if I put it this way. Isn’t everything said by poets and storytellers [ὑπὸ μυθολόγων ἢ ποιητῶν λέγεται] a narrative [διήγησις] about past, present or future?”

“What else could it be?”

“Aren’t these narratives either narratives alone, or narrative through imitation, or both?”

I need a clearer understanding of that as well” (*Rep.* 392c-d).⁶⁵⁵

Plato, in this incident, differentiates between Homer narrating the story about how “Cryses begs Agamemnon to release his daughter” and narration, like:

*“And he begged all the Achaeans
But especially the two sons of Atreus, the commanders of the army”* (Il. i., 15-16).

Plato then portrays Socrates describing the act of authorial identification. The poet or author makes the listener or hearer think that his thoughts are the thoughts of one character, then he makes them think that his thoughts are the thoughts of another character. For instance, Homer tries to make the audience “think that he’s Chryses, then he tries to make the audience think that he’s the priest himself—an old man.” This kind of imitation is similar to theatrical production, and it enables the author to hide himself from view.

“[The] poet himself is speaking and doesn’t attempt to get us to think that the speaker is someone other than himself. After this, however, he speaks as if he were Chryses and tries as far as possible to make us think that the speaker isn’t Homer but the priest himself-an old man. And he

⁶⁵⁴ Tate, J., *art. cit.*, p. 17.

⁶⁵⁵ ἀλλὰ μέντοι, ἣν δ’ ἐγώ, δεῖ γε: ἴσως οὖν τῇδε μᾶλλον εἴσῃ. ἄρ’ οὐ πάντα ὅσα ὑπὸ μυθολόγων ἢ ποιητῶν λέγεται διήγησις οὔσα τυγχάνει ἢ γεγονότων ἢ ὄντων ἢ μελλόντων;

composes pretty well all the rest of his narrative about events in Troy, Ithaca, and the whole Odyssey in this way” (*Rep.* 393a-b).⁶⁵⁶

Plato explains that the poet is able to hide himself by speaking through other characters: “If the poet never hid himself [μηδαμοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἀποκρύπτοιο ὁ ποιητής], the whole of his poem would be a narrative without imitation [ἄνευ μιμήσεως]” (*Rep.* 393d). Tragedy and comedy are, however, a form of imitation.

The alteration in the standard actually applies to a good man himself. If a “moderate man” were to come upon the “words and actions of a good man in his narrative” he would be “willing to report them as if he were that man himself, and so” would not “be ashamed of that kind of imitation.” However, Plato says that it would be necessary to idealize the characters in the imitation of other people’s dramas. Note that Plato is here talking here not about appreciating or being influenced by the work of another dramatist, but the act of narrative composition itself. He can report things when he comes upon the “words or actions of a good man in his narrative” and he will be “willing to report them as if he were the man himself.”

“Well, I think that when a moderate man comes upon the words or actions of a good man in his narrative, he’ll be willing to report them as if he were that man himself, and he won’t be ashamed of that kind of imitation [ἐπὶ τῇ τοιαύτῃ μιμήσει]. He’ll imitate this good man most when he’s acting in a faultless and intelligent manner, but he’ll do so less, and with more reluctance, when the good man is upset by disease, sexual passion, drunkenness, or some other misfortune. When he comes upon a character unworthy of himself, however, he’ll be unwilling to make himself seriously resemble either the inferior character—except perhaps for a brief period in which he’s doing something good. Rather he’ll be ashamed to do something like that, both because he’s unpracticed in the imitation of such people and because he can’t stand to shape and mold himself according to a worse pattern [οὐκ ἐθελήσει σπουδῇ ἀπεικάζειν ἑαυτὸν τῷ χεῖρονι]. He despises this in his mind, unless it’s just done in play” (*Rep.* 396d-e).⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵⁶ λέγει τε αὐτὸς ὁ ποιητής καὶ οὐδὲ ἐπιχειρεῖ ἡμῶν τὴν διάνοιαν ἄλλοσε τρέπειν ὡς ἄλλος τις ὁ λέγων ἢ αὐτός· τὰ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ὥσπερ αὐτὸς ὢν ὁ Χρύσης λέγει καὶ πειρᾶται ἡμᾶς ὅτι μάλιστα ποιῆσαι μὴ Ὅμηρον δοκεῖν εἶναι τὸν λέγοντα ἀλλὰ τὸν ἱερέα, πρεσβύτερον ὄντα. καὶ τὴν ἄλλην δὴ πᾶσαν σχεδὸν τι οὕτω πεποιήται διήγησιν περὶ τε τῶν ἐν Ἰλίου καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰθάκῃ καὶ ὅλη Ὀδυσσεύα παθημάτων.

⁶⁵⁷ ὁ μὲν μοι δοκεῖ, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, μέτριος ἀνὴρ, ἐπειδὴν ἀφίκηται ἐν τῇ διηγήσει ἐπὶ λέξιν τινὰ ἢ πράξιν ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ, ἐθελήσειν ὡς αὐτὸς ὢν ἐκεῖνος ἀπαγγέλλειν καὶ οὐκ αἰσχυνεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τῇ τοιαύτῃ μιμήσει, μάλιστα μὲν μιμούμενος τὸν ἀγαθὸν ἀσφαλῶς τε καὶ ἐμφρόνως πράττοντα, ἐλάττω δὲ καὶ ἥττον ἢ ὑπὸ νόσων ἢ ὑπὸ ἐρώτων ἐσφαλμένον ἢ καὶ ὑπὸ μέθης ἢ τινος ἄλλης συμφορᾶς· ὅταν δὲ γίγνηται κατὰ τινὰ ἑαυτοῦ ἀνάξιον, οὐκ ἐθελήσειν σπουδῇ ἀπεικάζειν ἑαυτὸν τῷ χεῖρονι, εἰ μὴ ἄρα κατὰ βραχύ, ὅταν τι χρηστὸν ποιῇ, ἀλλ’

This describes Plato's actual practice of reworking not mythic tropes found in poets like Hesiod, who recite narratives, but dramatic compositions of poets like Sophocles and Aristophanes. The term Plato uses denotes the good type of man, rather than the good individual. Plato says that if he were to come upon a good man, this moderate man would be able to report these words as if "he were that man himself" and that he would not "be ashamed of that kind of imitation." But he says also that "he'll do so less, and with more reluctance, when the good man is upset by disease, sexual passion, drunkenness, or some other misfortune." This echoes the Visitor's above caution against imitating the behaviour of Golden Age people who behave badly.

The view about the best constitution in the *Statesman* and the *Laws* corresponds with the paradigm of the city and the soul in the *Republic*. There is a best model or paradigm of the city, but there are worse models as well. Socrates elaborates different constitutions in *Republic* VIII (543a-569c). The philosophical-statesman is guided by the true model of a constitution. However, this model or paradigm reflects the just order of the soul. The practical applicability of such a model is limited and constrained by conditions. Indeed, given the constraints of life as it is, Plato himself can only represent it through literary art.

This best of model is explicated in the *Republic*. The Kallipolis Plato describes is one in which philosophical leaders are chosen to become statesmen, and in this city the "kings must be those among" the people "who have proved to be best, both in philosophy and warfare" (*Rep.* 543a). Plato describes his own best city as a kind of sculpture, painting or portrait (*Rep.* 540c). However, the term model does not only signify the best condition but also comparatively worse ones.

αἰσχυνεῖσθαι, ἅμα μὲν ἀγύμναστος ὢν τοῦ μιμεῖσθαι τοὺς τοιούτους, ἅμα δὲ καὶ δυσχεραίνων αὐτὸν ἐκμάττειν τε καὶ ἐνιστάναι εἰς τοὺς τῶν κακίωνων τύπους, ἀτιμάζων τῇ διανοίᾳ, ὅτι μὴ παιδιᾷς χάριν.

Myths can provide not only positive models but also models which provide warning. Myths of the afterlife present models of just and unjust lives. However, Plato also introduces examples not only of good but also bad or comparatively worse political constitutions. He maintains that “if there are five forms of city, there must be five forms of the individual soul” (*Rep.* 544e). Plato earlier described a “constitution [ἡ πολιτεία]” which is a “midpoint between aristocracy and oligarchy” (*Rep.* 547c). The middle constitution will imitate [μιμήσεται] some aspects of the aristocratic, honour-favouring constitution [πολιτείαν] and some aspects of the oligarchic or wealth-favouring constitution (*Rep.* 547d). As elsewhere in the *Republic*, he does not fully elaborate the method of collection and division, but he is speaking in terms of delineating forms and types of constitutions and demonstrating the relation they bear to one another. Plato describes the “democratic” constitution as the one with the greatest variety of models, both good and bad.

“Because [democracy] contains all kinds of constitutions [πάντα γένη πολιτειῶν] on account of the license it gives its citizens. So it looks as though anyone who wants to put a city in order, as we were doing, should probably go to a democracy, as to a supermarket of constitutions, pick out whatever please him, and establish that.”

“He probably wouldn’t be at a loss for models [παραδειγμάτων] at any rate.”

“In the city, there is no requirement to rule, even if you’re capable of it, or again to be ruled if you don’t want to be, or to be at war when the others are, or at peace unless you happen to want it. And there is no requirement in the least that you not serve in public office as a juror, if you happen to want to serve, even if there is a law forbidding you to do so. Isn’t that a divine and pleasant life while it lasts.”

“It probably is-while it lasts” (*Rep.* 557d-558a).

Ultimately, this political use of models always comes back to ethical self-control. Plato introduces a more ambivalent use of paradigm [τι παράδειγμα] in order to distinguish between the healthy and unhealthy consumption of food (*Rep.* 559a-c). A person who consumes in excess goes beyond the bound. Reason should order and restrain the appetites. The democratic situation can produce a variegated order where reason does not rule but rather passion and caprice (*Rep.* 561c-e). It is this excess and lack of self-control—slavery to

capricious passion—which produces unfreedom. The lawless democratic order, unchecked by any codified constraints, is, for this reason, able to produce a tyrant—a leader who is guided not by rational understanding but by ephemeral desires. It is precisely these individuals who are condemned in the vivid myths of the afterlife.

The ideal order is unlike any which exists on earth. For this reason, Plato expresses the need for philosophers to turn to a celestial model to guide their lives.

“I understand. You mean that he’ll be willing to take part in the politics of the city we were founding and describing, the one that exists in theory, but I don’t think it exists anywhere on earth.”

“But perhaps, I said, there is a model of it in heaven, for anyone who wants to look at it and make himself its citizen on the strength of what he sees [ἐν οὐρανῷ ἴσως παράδειγμα ἀνάκειται τῷ βουλομένῳ ὁρᾶν καὶ ὁρῶντι ἑαυτὸν κατοικίξειν]. It makes no difference whether it is or ever will be somewhere, for he would take part in the practical affairs of that city and no other.”

“Probably so, he said” (*Rep.* 592a-b).

This model of the ordered cosmos responds to the model of the ordered or best city. This model, in turn, corresponds to the most ordered individual soul. However, Plato also describes the five different constitutions, which also correspond to different psychological types. The Visitor, in a similar manner, introduces what he calls six “defective” constitutions. Although the order where intelligence guides over written law would be ideal, lawful codes do embody received wisdom in a way that should not be overlooked.

The three comparatively defective but nevertheless lawful constitutions are democracy, aristocracy and monarchy. Yet lawless democracy, oligarchy and tyranny are even more defective. Socrates explains how this lawless form of democratic order produces a tyrannical leader in *Republic* IX (571a-592b). True freedom must be ordered by a rational mastery over the passions. The Eleatic Visitor explains in a similar manner that when a single individual comes to power, guided by passion rather than rational order and intelligence, we see the rise of a tyrant.

“Visitor: And what is the case when some one ruler acts neither according to laws nor according to customs, but pretends to act like the person with expert knowledge, saying that after all one must do what is contrary to what has been written down if it is *best*, and there is some desire or other combined with ignorance controlling this imitation? Surely in those circumstances, we must call every such person a tyrant” (*Stm.* 301c)?

The Myth of Er and the Myth of the *Gorgias* speak of the need to avoid choosing the life of a tyrant. Plato’s description of successive constitutions, which echoes the successive ages in Hesiod’s account of the shift from various ages to the present age also warns against succumbing to tyranny. Plato’s choice of the use of the word imitation is, again, what is most telling. As we have established, imitation is a term for dramatic and artistic portrayal. The Visitor insists that these kinds of constitutions arise, and even tyranny arises, because people succumb to the passions and do not follow reason. The ultimate source of tyranny is a lack of rational control over the self. Rather than proposing the enactment of a political project, Plato is presenting a literary model for readers to imitate. Plato’s literary work is meant to surpass that of earlier artists, who fulfilled a similar role as cultural educators and ethical teachers.

Even though, with Socrates, the Visitor recognizes an ideal or best order, he still acknowledges the merits of existing constitutions. The Eleatic Visitor is at one with Socrates in the *Republic*. We need to draw upon the divine model of Kallipolis in order to produce happiness for the community. In the *Statesman*, the Eleatic Visitor stresses, to a greater degree, the precariousness of the effort to introduce these kinds of measures. There is a danger of introducing reforms in a way that is so radical that it actually destroys what is good in existing constitutions. At the same time, such existing constitutions “from time to time sink like ships and perish, and have perished, and will perish in the future through the depravity of their steersman and sailors, who have acquired the greatest ignorance about the greatest things[.]”

“Visitor: Do we wonder, then Socrates, at all the evils that turn out to occur in such constitutions, and all those that will turn out for them, when a foundation of this sort underlies them, one of carrying out their functions according to written rules and customs without knowledge—which if used by another expertise would manifestly destroy everything that comes about through it? Or should we rather wonder at something else, namely at how strong a thing a city is by its nature? For in fact cities have suffered such things now from time without limit, but nevertheless some particular ones among them are enduring and are not overturned. Yet many from time to time sink like ships, and perish, and have perished, and will perish in the future through the depravity of their steersmen and sailors, who have acquired the greatest ignorance about the greatest things—although they have no understanding about what belongs of the art of statesmanship, they think they have completely acquired this sort of expert knowledge, most clearly of them all” (*Stm.* 302a-b).

This “depravity” does result out of a kind of pretention to knowing. The Visitor is with Socrates in recognizing that the ideal case is best. However, he also stresses the importance of existing institutions, and the hubristic danger of thinking that you know what you are doing when you, in fact, do not. The Visitor’s injunction echoes Socrates’ own claim that he is merely searching for an appropriate kind of understanding rather than pretending to have possession of it.

Socrates calls Kallipolis, his ideal city, a godly παράδειγμα (*Rep.* 500e). The weaving paradigm also represents such a paradigmatic order. At first, the Visitor appears open to the notion of a best leader (*Stm.* 303d-e). At the same time, as with Socrates in the *Republic*, this hope for a best leader and best civic order is expressed in a way that is equally tied with Plato’s own imaginative construction. As Socrates asserts in the *Republic*, the Visitor asserts that a statesman must be tested and separated like gold (*Stm.* 303d). Plato asserts that one must separate and be a paradigmatic individual who exhibits the exemplary virtue, character and practical wisdom “like a god from men” (*Stm.* 303a-b). Nevertheless, such divine claims are best reserved for the order of poetic expression. This language merely reflects the testing of King Oedipus. Plato’s literary work simply represents a philosophical transfiguration and reworking of the earlier dramatic productions.

El Murr comes nearest to voicing this view concerning human mortality. The Visitor asserts that in the “seventh constitution...the ideal rule, must be separated from the other ones... ‘like a god from men’.”⁶⁵⁸ However, the recognition of the superiority of the ideal or utopian case of the divine individual only “confirms[,]” as El Murr indicates further, “the gap between divine and human ruling is impossible to bridge” and, for this reason, “even if an ideal ruler steers the ship, he will remain a man ruling other men.”⁶⁵⁹ This greater recognition of human limits is what leads to the positing of a second and third best order in the *Laws*, which presumably supplements the account of the best order that Socrates offers in the *Republic*.

“Well, it seems that in the same way we have now separated off those things that are different from the expert knowledge of statesmanship, and those that are alien or hostile to it, and that there remain those that are precious and related to it. Among these, I think, are generalship, the art of the judge, and that part of rhetoric which in partnership with kingship persuades people of what is just and so helps in steering through the business of cities; as for these, in what alone by himself, that person we are looking for” (*Stm.* 303d-304a)?”

The Visitor does not only introduce “generalship” and the “art of the judge” but also “that part of rhetoric which in partnership with kingship persuades people of what is just [ῥητορεία, πείθουσα τὸ δίκαιον] and so helps in steering through the business of cities” (*Stm.* 304a). If true statesmanship is to be identified with philosophical leadership, as it is with the rule of philosopher-kings in the *Republic*, then the Visitor appears to be saying that the rhetorical and deliberative arts go hand and hand with it. Not only Plato’s ideal order but also the second-best order, presumably that of the *Laws*, are simply imaginative creations. They are metaphors meant to guide the spirit more than political proposals to be practically enacted and realized.

The paradigm of the just city, the city ruled by philosophers who watch over the

⁶⁵⁸ See Murr, El, D., ‘Politics and Dialectic in Plato’s *Politicus*’, unpublished essay, p. 19.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

spirited warriors and labouring classes, is merely rearticulated by the Visitor. This ordering of the city is meant to prevent anyone from claiming the position of the philosopher-statesman. Plato actually endorses the Protagorean view about the need for a kind of modesty, and this leads to a description of a law-abiding order.⁶⁶⁰

“In just this very way, it seems to me, the art of kingship-since it is this that itself possesses the capacity belonging to the directing art-will not permit the educators and tutors, who function according to law, to do anything in the exercise of their role that will not ultimately result in some disposition which is appropriate to its own mixing role. It calls on them to teach these things alone; and those of their pupils who are unable to share in a disposition that is courageous and moderate, and whatever else belongs to the sphere of virtue, but are thrust forcibly away by an evil nature into godlessness, excess and injustice, it throws out by killing them, sending them into exile, and punishing them with the most extreme forms of dishonour” (*Stm.* 308e4-309a3).

Plato dramatically presents the Visitor denying that he is proposing to enact a form of tyranny. However, in Sophocles’ drama, this is precisely the result of Creon’s claim. Antigone is condemned to death, and subsequently Creon meets misfortune through the loss of his son. This second mention of purging and killing, which follows the Visitor’s proposal of a law, which would condemn Socratic inquiry, is alarming. It clearly echoes these Theban motifs of tragic misunderstanding.

This is one of the reasons why, in his article on the *Statesman*, Gonzalez argues that the Visitor does not speak for Plato.⁶⁶¹ According to Gonzalez, the Eleatic Visitor “adopts the Socratic method of question and answer in semblance only.”⁶⁶² Most significantly, in both the second-best and best order, Socratic questioning would be condemned. At the same time, Plato still makes use of language familiar from Aristophanes *Clouds*, calling the person who wishes to steer the ship of state a *meteorologos*.⁶⁶²

Gonzalez holds that the ideal order which the Visitor describes would also lead to

⁶⁶⁰ Van Riel, G. “Religion and Morality: Elements of Plato’s Anthropology in the Myth of Prometheus,” *art. cit.*, p. 155.

⁶⁶¹ Gonzalez, F., “The Eleatic Visitor: His Master’s Voice?” in Prest, G. ed., *Who Speaks for Plato?* Rowan and Littlefield, New York, 2000, p. 161.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

Socrates' sentence of death.⁶⁶³ Indeed, Plato's dramatic portrayal echoes tragic motifs a great deal more than did Aristophanes' comic depiction of Socrates. Gonzalez perceives that the tragic implication of the law which the Visitor has proposed would be to condemn Socrates.

“[E]ven if the ideal state were possible, we would see that it too would exclude Socrates! The Stranger's discussion recognizes only two alternatives for the philosopher: either he must attain the knowledge that will enable him to rule the city always for the best, something that apparently only a god could do, or he must stop philosophizing and allow the laws to rule. It is significant that after ranking the different forms of second-best governments, from monarchy to democracy to tyranny, the Stranger identifies the leaders of all of them with “the greatest sophists among sophists” (τῶν σοφιστῶν σοφιστάς, 303c5, tr. Rowe). The Stranger therefore recognizes only two possibilities, the ideal statesman or the sophist, just as in the Sophist he recognized only the wiseman or sophist. In either case, there is no place for Socrates. As the silent or rather *silenced* Socrates must recognize, he has been sentenced to death by what the Stranger has said.”⁶⁶⁴

The “ideal statesman” seems simply unattainable, and anyone who pretended to be the ideal statesman should simply be regarded as a pretender.⁶⁶⁵ In the Visitor's vision, his paradigm of weaving is used to describe the activity of the statesman. However, this model of weaving describes an order where “behavior” is determined by “interbreeding and indoctrination.”⁶⁶⁶ According to Gonzalez, it is difficult to see “anything of ourselves” in this

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 176. “Could Socrates and his philosophizing thrive in one of these second-best forms of government in which laws reign supreme? The Stranger's answer is clear: such a government cannot allow any inquiry that would question or threaten its laws. It can recognize no claim to wisdom greater than the wisdom of its laws (οὐδὲν γὰρ δεῖν τῶν νόμων εἶναι σοφώτερον, 299c5-6). So that we cannot fail to see the connection to Socrates' immanent trial. Plato, as it were, hits us over the head with it. He has the Stranger make an extensive analogy in which medicine and seamanship are practiced according to laws enacted by a general assembly of mostly unqualified citizens and in which private inquiry into these arts is therefore forbidden (297e8-299e10). Anyone who pursued such private inquiry would be denied the name “doctor” or “seaman” and would instead be called a “man with his head in the clouds (μετεωρολογος), one of these chattering sophists (ἀδολέσκητιν τινὰ σοφιστήν)” (299b7-8, tr. Skemp). It would be legal for anyone to indict such a man on the charge of corrupting younger men and influencing to go in for steersmanship and medicine in an illegal manner by setting up as doctors or captains on their own authority (299b8-c3, tr. Skemp). The allusion to Socrates' indictment on the previous day could not be clearer. But what is the point. It shows that the second best government the Stranger describes is one which would necessarily sentence Socrates to death. Such a government depends on the absolute authority of its laws concerning what is good and bad: philosophical inquiry into the good is incompatible with such authority. The price to be paid by rule according to law is the sacrifice of philosophy. If this is the only form of government possible for us, Socrates' execution is not only necessary but *justified*.”

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

picture, which would rob us of the “proper dignity of human beings.”⁶⁶⁷ This dignity is robbed by the characterization of humans as breeding animals. Gonzalez does not maintain that the “Stranger’s methods and its results are worthless” but that “Plato takes great care to distance himself from them.”⁶⁶⁸ Yet the order which the Visitor describes is almost exactly the same as that which Plato’s Socrates describes as the ideal order in the *Republic*. The Visitor and Socrates may differ from one another, but on these central points, Plato portrays both characters as expressing the same underlying views. It is the interchange and play between characters, not merely the voice of a single character, which expresses Plato’s thought.

Plato’s idealized utopias are works of the imagination. The order which the Eleatic Visitor is describing is, at a certain level, still akin to the arrangement described in both the *Republic* and the *Laws*. Formation in athletics and music is supposed to engender a communal spiritual balance which enables the community to flourish and achieve happiness. The *Sokratikoi logoi* even though they reflect historical reality to some extent are themselves romantic embellishments of history. Plato composes not only his myths but his dramatic narratives as illustrative of various aspects of the life of philosophy, presenting these literary works as an alternative to traditional poetry and drama. The claim that Plato is practicing a kind of poetry which rivals traditional poetry is most explicit in the *Laws*.

This dialogue does not feature Socrates. Legend has it that when Plato met Socrates, he burned his tragedies. Yet in the *Laws*, which is sometimes regarded as his final work, Plato asserts through the Athenian Visitor that he, as an author, is in competition with tragic poets and that his representation of a better city should be taken as a work of art. Plato, even in his *Apology*, provides a drama which serves as an alternative to earlier tragedies, like the

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

tragic portrayal of Sophocles' Theban plays (*L.* 817a-b).⁶⁶⁹

Plato reworks the traditional dramas in his portrayal of the trial of Socrates. While advancing the language of the ship of state, the Eleatic Visitor contrasts the present order with an ideal vision and considers whether Socrates should be condemned. All of these dramatic features, which carry through the *Apology* and *Crito*, evoke the tragic drama of Sophocles' Theban plays. However, Plato also introduces a more explicit myth of a Golden Age, which is meant to evoke a sense of the Kallipolis that Socrates describes in the *Republic*, while indicating how it escapes our grasp.

Plato as author reworks these motifs to present a compelling but also in many ways disturbing image of life. The issue is less whether or not Socrates, the Eleatic Visitor or even Protagoras (who endorses existing law without recognizing any kind of alternative ideal political condition) speaks for Plato. The key issue is whether or not these utopian schemes which Plato constantly and always sympathetically introduces, either for reforming the political order or for better understanding ethical and political life, are in any way desirable, even on the imaginary plane.

Are the remote and distant worlds which Plato so often describes in the *Republic*, *Laws* and in the Atlantis Myth of the *Critias* truly representations of a just and ideal order? Or are they, as imaginative productions or works of art, to be considered even more potentially ethically damaging and harmful than the traditional poetry and drama which Plato claims such paradigms or models improve upon? Plato's questioning of the Golden Age challenges a supposedly ideal and blissful lost epoch. Nevertheless, the Younger Socrates

⁶⁶⁹ "But what about our 'serious' poets, as they're called, the tragedians? Suppose some of them were to come forward and ask us some such question as this: 'Gentlemen, may we enter your state and country, or not? And may we bring our work with us? Or what's your policy on this point?' What would be the right reply for us to make to these inspired geniuses? This, I think, 'Most honored guests, we're tragedians ourselves and our tragedy is the finest and best we can create. At any rate, our entire state has been constructed so as to be a 'representation' of the finest and noblest life-the very thing we maintain is most genuinely a tragedy. So we are poets like yourselves, composing in the same *genre*, and your competitors as artists and actors in the finest drama, which true law alone has the natural powers to "produce" to perfection (of that we are quite confident).'"

chooses to follow the life of philosophy, in the manner of the Elder Socrates, in spite of the vicissitudes of a world far from Plato's paradigmatic ideal. The Visitor has provided his model of weaving, which represents a lesser image of the ideal city of Plato's Socrates. In offering this second imaginary city in the form of the Visitor's weaving image, Plato reminds us not only to pursue a life like that of Socrates, but to dream of distant worlds, recovering a past forever lost and unfolding future possibilities as of yet undreamed.

3.3.4 *Rhetoric and Myth in the Definitions of the Sophist and Statesman*

The use of the paradigm to provide an analogy is still part of a search to isolate the Formal essence of the entity. The Visitor says that he is seeking the essential Form (εἶδος) of the statesman. But this essential Form is no ordinary or trivial entity like angling, carpentry or weaving. The essence of the philosopher-statesman is to embody the highest, ethical order of understanding. For this reason, Plato claims that the king is one of these greatest classes of entities (τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως μέγιστον ὄν ταῦτόν εἶδος) (*Pol.* 278e7-8; cf. *Pol.* 285e4). This is where the Visitor introduces the depictable weaver paradigm (ὕφαντική) to explain the character of the statesman. Lane, commenting on this section of the *Statesman*, has explored more fully the cultural precedent of weaving words to explain "political activity."⁶⁷⁰ The Visitor goes out of his way to pick an ordinary art in order to use it as a means of describing the most elevated, ethical reality.

The Visitor's detailed grasp of the nature of weaving is meant to show that he has, unlike sophists and the traditional poets that Plato has critiqued in *Republic* X and the *Sophist*, an essential grasp of the nature of this ordinary visible art. The weaving warp consists of a series of cords made of firmer material, upon which the woof, consisting of more pliant material, is woven. The weaver must bear the filament with careful hand, ensuring that he or

⁶⁷⁰ Lane, M., *Method and Politics in Plato's Statesman*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 165-166.

she exhibit measure with each successive lay of the cord, as he or she lines warp over the welt in overlapping rows (*Pol.* 283c-284b). The statesman, in a manner comparable to the weaver, places himself over and in relation to other craftsmen in the community (*Pol.* 290b-d). The statesman-weaver also separates himself from partisans (*Pol.* 291-303d). The Visitor, describing the subordinate but associated sciences, recognizes the special relation which statesmanship bears to strategy and jurisprudence but most especially rhetoric, the art of forming words appropriately (*Pol.* 303e-305d). Sophists and philosophers both claim, in some sense, to be experts in using words to ethically improve the community.

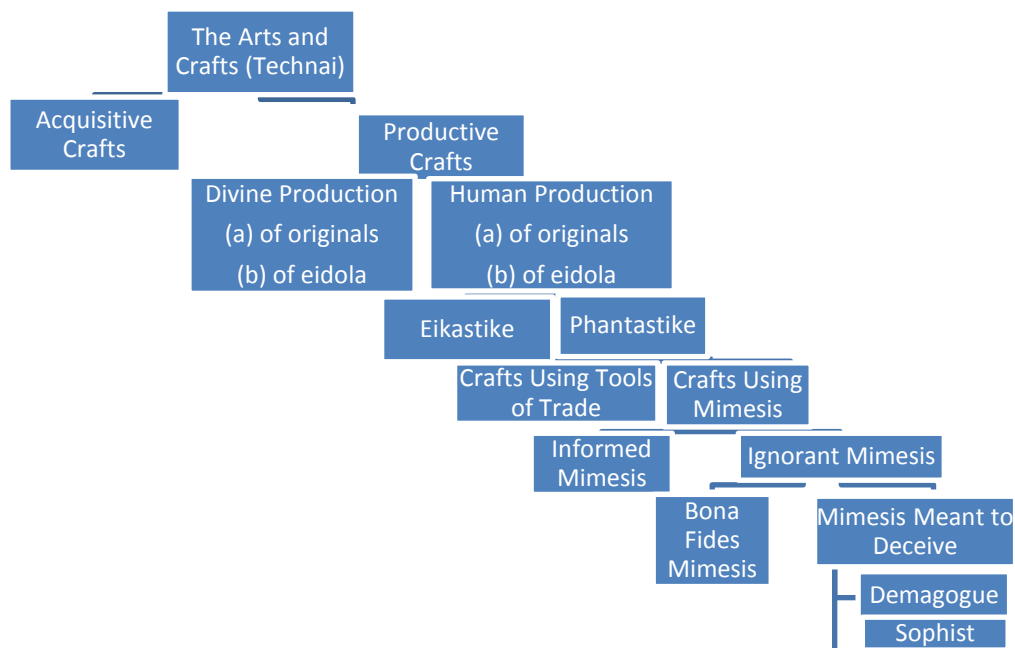
The characterization of the statesman actually connects with the later presentation. The Visitor asserts that the statesman is, like the sophist, a kind of practitioner of persuasion and rhetoric. However, statesmen in existing society do not do this properly. The sophist engenders real beliefs rather than understanding and statesmen similarly produce only beliefs through rhetoric and the composition of myths. Indeed, they are practitioners of mimesis as are the poets and sophists.

Plato has the Visitor conclude the *Sophist* with a definition of mimesis as a form of poetic creation which brings mere belief. Further, he asserts in the *Statesman* that existing statesmen are merely the greatest sophists of sophists. The Visitor concludes the *Sophist* by claiming that the sophist practices a form of representation (μίμησις) which is an expression of opinion (δοξαστική) rather than understanding (ἐπιστήμη). This kind of poetic making (ποίησις) or more specifically image-making does not come from the divine but from mere human belief (*Sph.* 265a-268d; cf. *Sph.* 235b-236d).⁶⁷¹ Not only does Plato's Visitor deride

⁶⁷¹ This diagram is adapted from Philip, J.A., "Mimesis in the *Sophistes* of Plato," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 92, 1961, p. 461.

sophists, in the *Statesman*, he extends the characterization of the sophist to include the people the sophists train, those who actually enter into political life. Existing statesman lack the sort of insight they need to govern the community.

Plato shows the highly conceptual and theoretical Eleatic Visitor, like Socrates, questioning this sophistic and rhetorical science of ‘image-making’ and ‘imitation’. This critique of poets and sophists extends to political leaders as well. Indeed, “all political leaders who do not possess knowledge [πασῶν πλὴν τῆς ἐπιστήμονος]” are the greatest ‘imitators’ (μεγίστους ὄντας μιμητὰς), “they are not really knowledgeable statesmen but factional partisans [οὐκ ὄντας πολιτικούς ἀλλὰ στασιαστικούς] and “the greatest sophists of sophists [μέγιστους ... τῶν σοφιστῶν σοφιστάς].” For this reason, they put forth “the greatest of images [εἰδώλων μεγίστων]” (*Stm.* 303b8-c5).⁶⁷² Still, the Visitor instructs the Younger Socrates in the dialectical use of paradigm, in word imagery and the composition of myth. This parallelism of sophist, statesman and philosopher is completed through the course of the *Sophist* and *Statesman*.



⁶⁷² οὐκοῦν δὴ καὶ τοὺς κοινωνοὺς τούτων τῶν πολιτειῶν πασῶν πλὴν τῆς ἐπιστήμονος ἀφαιρετέον ὥς οὐκ ὄντας πολιτικούς ἀλλὰ στασιαστικούς, καὶ εἰδώλων μεγίστων προστάτας ὄντας καὶ αὐτοὺς εἶναι τοιούτους, μεγίστους δὲ ὄντας μιμητὰς καὶ γόητας μεγίστους γίγνεσθαι τῶν σοφιστῶν σοφιστάς.

Rhetoric and myth are a science of persuasion, but merely being persuaded is not science. The use of images and myths practiced by existing statesman is not a form of teaching or instruction. The statesman or leader of a community must be adept at rhetoric or the persuasiveness (τὸ πειστικόν) in speech as well as able to appeal like a ‘poet’ to ‘mythology’ (διὰ μυθολογίας)” but this mere rhetoric is (μὴ διὰ διδαχῆς) not teaching (*Stm.* 304c10-d4). The leader of a community (πόλις), the *politikos*, must be convincing (τὸ πειστικόν) for a large crowd (πλήθους τε καὶ ὄχλου διὰ μυθολογίας ἀλλὰ μὴ διὰ διδαχῆς) and make use of mythological narrative (*Stm.* 304c10-d4). The philosophical appropriation of literature is a turn away from the actual political order, towards a more interior vision, which has to do with the ethical self. The weaving motif merely echoes the original paradigm of the city and the soul.

3.3.5 *The Weaving Paradigm as an Image*

Like the Kallipolis of the *Republic*, an elaboration of the paradigm of the city and the soul, the Visitor’s paradigm of the statesman as weaver remains merely a beautiful portrait of what civic life should be. A paradigm (παράδειγμα), even though it is meant to lead to a higher, invisible insight, does simply remain a visible image (εἰκών).⁶⁷³ The Eleatic Visitor, comparing himself to a sculptor or plastic artist, had said that he used models which were too great in composing the myth. He then explains the need for suitable proportion by again introducing the notion of model or paradigm, explaining that grammar is the paradigm of paradigms. In so doing, he differentiates his own art of grammatical and pictorial measure from the merely human art of measure which is presumably ascribed to Protagoras. Protagoras, indeed, likened his own practice of speech to an advanced form of grammar meant to ameliorate the community.

⁶⁷³ McCall, M., *Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison*, Harvard, Cambridge, 1969, p. 16.

This is how the dialectical or philosophical lesson of the *Statesman* concludes. In describing the art of the king (ἡ βασιλική) as a weaving together of different natures, Plato uses the expression “using an image” (κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα) to refer to the weaving paradigm (*Pol.* 309b4-6).⁶⁷⁴ As noted in the first section, there are numerous instances in which Plato uses image (εἰκών) to signify an analogy or metaphor in the *Republic*. Yet, as we have also seen, Plato frequently uses the expression *logos* when he introduces a myth as well. In the more primordial and originary Greek sense expressed by poets like Hesiod and Homer, *logos* and myth were equivalent expressions. But Plato is not contradicting himself in so doing. Although Plato ultimately has the Eleatic Visitor make paradigm and image mean the same thing in the *Statesman*, the Visitor had said earlier that images cannot communicate the most important realities (*Pol.* 309b4-6). This affirmation also echoes Socrates’ claim about the limits of using images to explain higher order realities.

Even though the weaving motif is both an image and a paradigm, it is also a *logos* which brings a true belief about the essential nature of the statesman. The use of a paradigm for the purpose of making an analogy is an extension of philosophical inquiry. That paradigm (παράδειγμα) can be nearly synonymous with image (εἰκών) connects the usage of paradigm in the *Statesman* with the use of paradigm in dialogues like the *Republic*. Self-conscious interpretation is more significant than the particular word used. A search for insight and understanding is what distinguishes a practitioner of philosophical elocution. Plato reproaches those who imitate poorly rather than emulating and expressing themselves using paradigms.

The person who questions while imitating can lead others down an appropriate route. However, the Visitor stresses that there is no guarantee that this will be the case. At any rate, the Visitor holds to an ideal, carrying on the legacy of Socrates’ speech about the ideal order

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

of the *Republic*. Weaving is simply one of the images used to represent the order of the city and the soul (*Rep.* 411a, *L.* 735a, 738b3, 771d).⁶⁷⁵ The *Statesman* has provided a dialectical exercise which shows the Younger Socrates how to select and define a paradigm and then to use these essential correspondences to provide an ethically illuminating analogy. Plato again introduces the weaving paradigm in the *Laws*, which suggests that the image of the second best city is realized in the composition of this work (*L.* 734e-735b).

The Elder Socrates, who is about to face his trial, does not disapprove of the exchange which has taken place between the Eleatic Visitor and the Younger Socrates. The strongest evidence for the argument I am making can be found in the final words of the Elder Socrates. Socrates, silent throughout almost the whole of the *Statesman*, concurs that the Visitor has produced a most beautiful (κάλλιστα) portrait of the statesman (τὸν πολιτικόν) or the kingly man (τὸν βασιλικὸν ἀπετέλεσας ἀνδρα) by using a paradigm of weaving to make this comparison or analogy (*Pol.* 311c). This, no less than the definitions brought through collection and division, is a *logos*.

Plato has Socrates recognize that the analogy must be regarded as a portrait or representation. A paradigm is a visual entity which a philosophical dialectician can use to depict an entity which is beyond direct, perceptible representation. The analogy is a way of using a smaller entity to explain a more significant entity or a larger entity to explain a smaller entity. The advantage over collection and division, as a dialectical method, is to awaken in the dialectician a sense of an invisible reality which transcends the immediacy of

⁶⁷⁵ Fredal, J., *Rhetorical Action in Ancient Athens: Persuasive Artistry from Solon to Demosthenes*, University of Southern California Press, Carbondale, 2006, p. 115: The notion that political order demands the balance of the opposing drives of appetite and spirit, realizing a civic balance of temperance and courage, is a Platonic commonplace, most familiar from the *Republic*. The example of the city and the soul is an instance of an analogy which, once interpreted, aids to understand the character of virtue and ethical life. This analogy recurs in the *Laws*, where the task of the ‘statesman’ or leader is described, once again, as weaving together the warp and woof, the courage and moderation within the city. Plato endorses this practice in the *Laws*, where common sacrifice among members of “tribes” is meant to “encourage mutual, intimate acquaintance and social intercourse of all kinds.”

sense. Analogy offers a capacity to identify affinities between unlike entities and so this allows it to serve as a path towards insight into that which is beyond representation.

Most significantly, as we can see through the exchange in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato's word paradigm (παράδειγμα) signifies the positive term which the dialectician can appeal. The Visitor's dialectician, who appeals to paradigms in order to produce speech and myth, is not unlike the statesman and sophist he describes—a weaver of words who represents through appeal to images. The only way to distinguish the philosopher from the sophist and statesman is to recognize the need to question the paradigms (παράδειγματα) which he or she uses.

Plato's dialogues might provide Socrates as a model or paradigm for how to engage in philosophical dialogue. However, this cannot lead us to overlook the unique quality of the philosophical characters in dialogues who introduce techniques of rational examination which push beyond traditional *mimesis*. Although the reforms presented in Plato's ideal city are only creations of artistic imagination, they reflect the fact that philosophers should not hold thoughtlessly to tradition but actively question received wisdom.

Plato's Visitor communicates this very vision by way of a paradigm—an image. In this sense, the Visitor merely echoes what Plato's Socrates has already done in the *Republic* with his vivid model of the city and the soul. Plato's finest contribution does not rest in any successful political project but in his literary presentation not only of Socrates but the imaginative political orders which Socrates and other characters dream up. Plato's dialogues portray the life of Socrates, but they also introduce the fictional romance of an order, a city which rests beyond ordinary experience. Plato has Socrates describe himself as a painter in putting forth this model in words, just as the Eleatic Visitor describes himself as producing portraits through his use of paradigms.

Plato, in the *Statesman*, shows the Eleatic Visitor enacting the recommendations

which Socrates lays out for mythmaking in the *Republic*. He explains how to alter myths of Hesiod in an appropriate manner. Most significantly, the Visitor asks the Younger Socrates to question and interpret the story. Poetic inspiration is vital in mythic composition, but in a certain sense the Visitor is more dialogic and questioning in posture. The hope is that the Younger Socrates can learn on his own how to draw together and deploy paradigms or images to recount myths in a Platonic manner. Not only Plato's myths but Plato's dialogues themselves are expressions of mimesis, so a philosophical spirit must always subject them to critical questioning.

Plato presents the Eleatic Visitor's Myth of Kronos as a self-consciously composed reworking of Hesiod's Myth of Kronos. This self-conscious exercise in mythic composition actually echoes the presentation of Hesiod. At the same time, he constructs the myth in accordance with recommendations that Socrates provides, in the *Republic*, for making a myth and specifically, in critique of Hesiod's mythic representation of Kronos.

The Visitor, though not a character featured in Plato's *Republic*, would observe all the recommendations which Socrates stipulates generally with regard to the depiction of gods and men, and in this specific case, the divine succession from Zeus to Kronos. Plato depicts this character, drawing together these parts into a mythic narrative with a beginning, middle and end, explaining at each stage how he is leading the narrative from a foreshadowing introduction, to the setting, to the complicating action, the conclusion and the *dénouement*. The Visitor learns from this mimetic and mythic exposition of paradigms. More significantly, he invites the Younger Socrates to question his mythic paradigms.

The Eleatic Visitor, as a character, asks the Younger Socrates to identify with the characters in this myth within a dialogue. Not only does the Eleatic Visitor invite the Younger Socrates to question his narrative, but the Eleatic Visitor later questions the philosophical questioning of the Elder Socrates. The Younger Socrates, having learned from

the discussion and interpretation of the Myth of Kronos, chooses to identify with the Elder Socrates and to pursue the life of philosophy. The lesson which the Younger Socrates learns from the narrative is later applied in a critical identification with the Elder Socrates. However, Socrates is merely a character, a model or paradigm presented as part of Plato's dramatic composition of dialogues. Plato's use of paradigms or models, in the sense of ethical exemplars, extends not only to myth but to the dialogues themselves.

Conclusion

“[We] ourselves aspire to be poets of the finest and best tragedy.”

-*Laws*, 817b

Recent scholars have devoted increasing attention to the artistic dimension of Plato. This constitutes a shift from an earlier period of scholarship, which focused on logical and ethical features, often at the expense of the literary, mythic and poetic dimension of Plato's work. This study will contribute to this broader field of work by offering sustained interpretation of Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman*. My study illustrates how these two dialogues constitute training in the use of logical technique, analogy and the composition of mythic narrative. In a much more general manner, these two dialogues self-consciously signal the reader to the composed, narrative quality of Plato's dialogues. Paradigm is not only the term which Plato uses for the essential Form; paradigm is the seal of the author, a word Plato uses to signal the reader to the constructed character of his own philosophical, artistic and literary creation.

This study places these two dialogues in special relation to Plato's work as a whole. Curiously, only one major recent study has been devoted to the relation between the dialogue form and argument in Plato's later dialogues. However, the form and content of the *Sophist* and *Statesman* suggest that philosophy or dialectic itself involves the use not merely of logical technique but the self-conscious appropriation of techniques of rhetorical and poetic composition. Plato's dialogues are themselves dramatic and artistic productions or compositions. Plato expresses his philosophical vision through the medium of literature, introducing mythic narrative and analogical explanation. This extends the dialectical lesson beyond induction and deduction.

Plato introduces the term paradigm to signify a philosophically informative image in the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*. The first section of this thesis explains how paradigm and

essential Form are related but distinct throughout Plato's work and how paradigms can be used to provide illuminating analogies. The second section shows how inductively selected examples or models can be essentially defined, and that this essential characterization is meant to represent the Formal essence. Thus, paradigms can be used in inductive and deductive argumentation. The third and final section illustrates the more tenuous but still present connection between paradigm, in the sense of ethical exemplar, and mythic and narrative composition. This final section underscores the importance of the selection of this term not only for the composition of myths within Plato's dialogues but also the mythic and narrative quality of dialogues themselves. Plato does not merely exhibit philosophical techniques but utilizes the dialogue form to appropriate literature for philosophy.

My view that paradigm is Plato's term for philosophical image, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, is a response to a question posed by interpreters of the *Sophist*. Collobert, Notomi, Ambuel and Christopher Gill have established the need for a philosophically informative image on the basis of their readings of Plato's *Sophist*. Rather than the informative *phantasma* which Gill and Collobert propose, my argument, as substantiated in this thesis, is that the paradigm is a much more suitable candidate for a term signifying a philosophical image. This term is introduced in the *Sophist*, but the significance is fully elaborated and applied to the use of analogy and the composition of myth in the *Statesman*. The Eleatic Visitor recognizes division of craft of a godly craftsman (*Sph.* 265c). Plato proposes that divine understanding issues from a god (*Sph.* 265c3-e3). Plato accepts even that the formal paradigm, which exists apart from representation, must be understood with reference to artistic creation.

Interpreters like Mary-Louise Gill and Melissa Lane have recognized the importance of paradigm in Plato's *Statesman*, much like I have throughout my study. However, these interpreters have emphasized the difference which the sense of paradigm bears from the

ordinary sense. In so doing, they have neglected to recognize that Plato's paradigm is a response to the positive, philosophical image which the *Sophist* implies there must be. Lane agrees with Ambuel that the use of paradigms in the *Statesman* means "something very different" from the formal conceptual use of "model-copy" in such dialogues as the "*Timaeus*" in which "the copy will necessarily be an imperfect version of the original."⁶⁷⁶ Lane recognizes that, in the *Statesman*, a paradigm denotes "the sharing of a common structure or element which unites two quite disparate entities."⁶⁷⁷ This expands upon the fundamental study of Goldschmidt, who recognizes that paradigm is a term for model which brings correct judgment.⁶⁷⁸ The sense is distinct but related to the sense of paradigm as essential Form. Although my work recognizes the distinctions between the use of paradigm in the *Timaeus* and *Statesman*, my approach is to suggest that these differences are a result of Plato's *protreptic* use of the form of literary dialogue, rather than a shift in his views about ideas.

My study clearly shows that in the *Statesman* Plato simply gives a technical explanation of the use of paradigms, such as the analogy of the city and the soul, in the *Republic*. In this way, my work integrates earlier observations of interpreters of the *Sophist* and *Statesman* by drawing attention to the ambivalent quality of paradigm as a model which communicates the nature of an invisible essence. The visible paradigm can also yield insight into Formal, essential realities. Owen and other developmental interpreters are, therefore, incorrect to affirm that the use of paradigm in the *Statesman* represents a complete departure from the use of paradigm in the *Republic* or *Timaeus*.

Plato explains the meaning of the word paradigm more fully in the *Statesman*, the sequel to the *Sophist*. He gives paradigm the sense of a model which a dialectician can use to correctly represent an entity under consideration. The paradigm is introduced as a means of

⁶⁷⁶ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁶⁷⁷ Lane, M., *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁶⁷⁸ Goldschmidt, V., *op. cit.*, p. 2.

making a correct judgment (δοξαζόμενον ὀρθῶς) in the *Statesman* (*Pol.* 278c-d). The Visitor compares his own use of paradigms to grammar and the use of words (*Pol.* 277c-d). The statesman, like the sophist, is a productive weaver of words (cf. *Sph.* 253e1-253d6). The Visitor explains that using paradigms is an art of measure (*Pol.* 283d). For instance, the Visitor uses the paradigm of fishing to explain the sophistic art in the *Sophist* (*Sph.* 218c). In so doing, he says that he is using a less important entity to explain a greater and more important entity (*Sph.* 218c-d). The Visitor offers the final account of the statesman by comparing the more important political art with the lesser art of weaving (*Pol.* 279db). One can use a paradigm to make an analogy, using a visible likeness (ὁμοιότητες) to explain the undepictable, highest entities (*Pol.* 285e). Plato shows the Eleatic Visitor using paradigms in a variety of ways, including the method of collection and division. However, this is only to clarify that which lies beyond the limits of portrayal or representation. No image alone, but only reasoning and discourse, can communicate the highest realities (*Pol.* 285d). With this proviso, Plato differentiates his Visitor, a dialectician who uses paradigms, from the sophistic image-maker.

My analysis, in the first section, has shown that the significance which paradigm acquires is that of a visible model or image which can lead to a grasp of essential realities. This is by no means a radical departure from views expressed in the *Republic* or even the *Timaeus*. Paradigm often bears a highly ambiguous significance in the *Republic*. In the *Timaeus*, paradigm explains the technical underlay of Formal essence, though there is a considerable amount of mythic embellishment designed to visualize what needs to be grasped in a purely intellectual manner.

Plato uses the weaving model to explain how the statesman produces ordered virtue among the warrior and labouring classes of the city, echoing Socrates' own analogy of the city and the soul. The analogy, which he calls a visible 'paradigm' or model, can explain the

higher, invisible order of justice in the human soul. The fundamental thrust of this image is to convey the notion that visible images can be used to explain invisible, ethical realities which are beyond the capacity of direct, visible portrayal. Although the actual practice of dialectic in the *Republic* presupposes that paradigms and images can be used in this fashion, Plato explains this sense of paradigm or visible model with technical clarity only in the *Sophist* and, above all, the *Statesman*. After the critique of poetic and sophistic images in the *Republic* and the *Sophist*, Plato introduces, in the *Statesman*, the notion of paradigm as a visible model to which the dialectician can appeal to explain higher, invisible realities. In both cases, Socrates and the Visitor compare themselves, in their use of models, to painters of words who strive to provide proportionate and measured explanations of higher, ethical realities. With regard to the use of images, this makes the philosophical dialectician a kind of rival to both the sophist and poet. Yet this rival must, according to Plato, be first formed in logical and scientific techniques which clearly differentiate between logical and scientific truth and falsity.

This consideration of the question of philosophical image in Plato's *Sophist* and *Statesman* has wider implications for Platonic scholarship as a whole. One central question in Platonic scholarship concerns the historical Socrates and the extent to which Plato faithfully represents this Socrates, in certain dialogues. A second related question involves how we should evaluate a fictive Socrates or other characters presenting a theory of Forms. This overarching question is influenced by notions about Plato's chronological development. Interpreters traditionally have regarded Plato as shifting from a view where he presents Socrates more faithfully to a later period, where Plato presents Socrates presenting a notion of Forms or ideas which is simply Plato's own.

My consideration of the notion of paradigm in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* diminishes the divide between the consideration of essential Forms and visible images. In these

dialogues, Plato explains that visible paradigms can reveal the essence of higher, invisible, ethical realities. Further, such paradigms can be used not only in conventional, logical discourse but also in the use of analogies or even the composition of a myth. Not all readers are, however, likely to find my view convincing. The reasons for this actually precede current controversies in Platonic scholarship.⁶⁷⁹ As interpreters like Lane and Gonzalez note, a long tradition of controversy has separated interpreters who focus on the literary character of Plato's dialogues and those who emphasize particular philosophical doctrines or teachings about essential Forms contained within the dialogues.⁶⁸⁰ Lane recognizes that staunch advocates of the doctrinal interpretation must overlook the fact that Plato speaks about essential Forms in different ways in different dialogues.⁶⁸¹ Plato calls Forms paradigms in the *Timaeus*, but paradigms are differentiated from essential Forms in the *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*. Contradictions in Plato's presentation are obviously present. However, a naïve form of unitarianism, which glosses over the dramatic nuances of the dialogues, does much to diminish the importance of the literary form. It is a mistake to assume that a completely coherent interpretation of the relation between Formal essence and logical technique can be drawn from the dialogues. However, it is equally a mistake to affirm that Plato has no clear thoughts on the relation between deductive and inductive technique and formal essence in his dialogues.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p. 158. At the same time, Lane also notes that this "polemic" is "based on remarkably little evidence." Interpreters in the "nineteenth century" made "ingenious attempts to study, not the substantive claims made in the writing, but rather features of Plato's prose style suitable for stylistic measurement." However the "purported objectivity of stylometry depends as much on interpretative assumptions as do older methods of establishing the order of the dialogues by philosophical arguments." Further despite "the theoretical possibilities of convergence, the two schools of interpretation "doctrinal and skeptical "with their contrasting attitudes to chronology have been in a sustained polemic since the 19th century[.]"

⁶⁸⁰ Gonzalez, F., "The Third Way," *op. cit.*, p. 12. "The irreconcilable opposition between the "doctrinal" interpretations" whether it takes Unitarian or Developmental approach and the skeptical approach which gives preference to "the dialogue form is most evident if one considers the cornerstone of this interpretation: its attribution to Plato of a "theory of forms.""

⁶⁸¹ Lane, M., "Socrates and Plato: An Introduction," in Rowe, C., & Schofield, M. ed., *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge Up, 2000, p. 156. Lane affirms with Gonzalez that the "most dogmatic Unitarian position, like that of the neo-Platonists, assumes that Plato never contradicts himself or advances contradictory arguments, and interpreters the dialogues in line with that assumption."

The developmental dating is established by critical interpreters on the basis of whether Socrates is merely depicted as engaging in a skeptical *elenchus*, or whether Socrates or other characters either advance or criticize the so-called ‘theory of forms’. As Lane notes, “no dating of the dialogues by Plato survives (else there would be no controversy).”⁶⁸² The early dialogues are of a skeptical nature, while the mature position, presented in the so-called middle dialogues is the developed position. Yet the history of the divide between doctrinal and skeptical readers goes back to Plato’s Old and New Academy.⁶⁸³ Furthermore, developmental interpreters hold that Plato’s view about the Forms evolves, from the so-called early or Socratic period dialogues, like the *Apology*, to the middle, doctrinal dialogues, like the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*, and the later critical dialogues, like the *Parmenides*, *Sophist* and *Statesman*.

The ‘theory of forms’ and the Socratic question are related because the early dialogues are often regarded as providing a more faithful portrait of the historical Socrates, who pursues ethical definitions. The middle and late dialogues introduce a notion of Platonic forms or paradigms unrelated to Socrates. My view is that discrepancies in the treatment of Forms in the so-called early, middle and late works is, in large part, a pedagogical expression related to Plato’s protreptic use of the dialogue form. Interpreters like Gonzalez and Kahn draw upon the tradition which sees Plato’s philosophy and his use of the dialogue as fundamentally linked.⁶⁸⁴ However, in some ways, my approach to the issue of essential Forms is closer to that of Kahn than Gonzalez.

Plato’s fundamental notions about the relation between essential definition, argumentation and essential Form do not alter but are simply differentiated by context. I rely extensively on Kahn’s work, which demonstrates how, even in an early dialogue like the

⁶⁸² *Ibid.* p. 158.

⁶⁸³ Gonzalez, F., “The Third Way,” *op. cit.*, p. 2-3.

⁶⁸⁴ Gonzalez, F., “The Third Way,” in *op. cit.*, p. 4. Gonzalez suggests that Schleiermacher’s “most important bequest to modern Platonic studies was his insistence that the philosophical content of the dialogues was inseparable from their form.”

Euthyphro, Plato is talking about Forms. My argument provides evidence demonstrating how in early and middle dialogues, Plato implicitly alludes to the use of collection and division as a means of defining particular natural and artificial entities. Also, in later scientific dialogues like the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, Plato reverts to the use of image and myth, explaining further techniques like the use of paradigm to provide analogies, which are central in the *Republic*, in which Socrates calls the image or analogy of the city and the soul a paradigm.

Plato is not, as an earlier generation of developmental interpreters suggest, altering ideas from stage to stage. He is simply presenting them differently in different places. As we can see, Plato is technically explaining, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, a use of paradigm or image which is presupposed in dialogues like the *Republic*. No less than Form, paradigm is to some extent present even in the earliest dialogues, where it signifies an inductively selected example. As I have shown, in dialogues like the *Euthyphro*, *Laches* and *Meno* Plato uses terms paradigm and Form in the context of explaining the need to provide an essential definition of an ethical virtue or refute a proposed definition. In the *Phaedrus*, he even shows that the logical sense of example applies to rhetorical and poetic composition and analysis. However, it is only in the *Sophist* and *Statesman* that Plato explains the use of inductively chosen models with a high degree of explicit technicality.

Plato depicts Socrates requesting individual models or examples to be universally or essentially defined. Inductive generalization and the use of techniques of demonstrative refutation are a preliminary requirement for employing such models correctly. For this reason, my shift in focus in the second section was to the cultivation of arithmetic and geometric-based, logical techniques of definition and demonstration in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, emphasizing that the cultivation of these rational techniques is subordinate to ethical consideration.

The central parts of my thesis were meant to show how the middle period sense of an essential Form of a natural or artificial entity can be generally captured through the method of collection and division. It is the defined essence which does not admit of counter-examples. Such a *logos* would express the invisible essence of a visible natural or artificial example, like a bird or human, a carpenter's table or chair, or the product produced by the warp and weft of the weaver. However, if a universal definition does not capture the essential features of the named geometric, natural or artificial entity, then it can be refuted by a counterexample. Inductive techniques of universalization and deductive techniques of demonstration are fundamentally interrelated. In a certain sense, Plato's Forms are ethereal, and the mythic language of a work like the *Timaeus* helpfully explains what he means by the use of this term. However, the notion of Formal essences actually underlies the most practical forms of natural and social scientific inquiry. There would be no stable science at which to aim if it were not for this notion of essence, and there would be no capacity to improve on our understanding if proposed definitions of essences could not be refuted.

Plato's logical exploration in the *Sophist* culminates with the consideration of the true and false proposition. Such propositions are pictures in words.⁶⁸⁵ The consideration of the structure of the sentence establishes a technical distinction between truth and falsity. Interpreters who neglect to continue on to the *Statesman*, however, misinterpret the significance of this gesture in the *Sophist*. Rather than bar the path to the use of analogy and myth—probable rather than conventionally logical forms of discourse—the logical exposition in the *Sophist* prepares a way to the discursive shift, which takes place in the *Statesman*. The *Sophist* prepares the way for a more open and expansive register of discourse, which would introduce modes of reasoning which might be analogical or even narrative in character.

⁶⁸⁵ Crivelli, P., *op. cit.*, p. 24-25. Notomi, N., *op. cit.*, p. 134.

Although in the second section, I stressed the importance of dialectic method as cultivation of rational technique, my overall view of Platonic dialectic and the use of dialogue demands that logical method of collection and division, as much as elenchic refutation, be subordinate to ethical purpose. The ethical underlay of dialectic and dialogue makes the dialogue form the vehicle of Plato's philosophy. These dialogues show characters making use not only of techniques of logical argumentation but also appealing to images and myths.

Plato as author might present Socrates engaging in a critical dialogue with sophists, like Gorgias and Protagoras. However, Plato is also dependent upon these figures as sources. He alters and characterizes these individuals to suit his own philosophical purpose. Rather than simply reject rhetorical and literary composition, a close reading seems to suggest that Plato instead selects motifs present in their work as equally as he draws inspiration from the example of Socrates. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato clearly shows Socrates expressing a need for orators and rhetorical composers to become skilled in rational techniques of logic, in order to lay a basis for a true oratory. Furthermore, even at a technical, logical level, Plato appears to recognize the limits of the capacity for even demonstrative proofs or inductive characterizations to reach certain conclusions about particular entities. To some extent, philosophy, as much as rhetoric works or operates within the sphere of what is plausible or credible.

Rather than blocking the path to rhetoric, image and poetic expression, the consideration of logical technique and the notions of propositional truth and falsity actually prepares the way for this possibility. The *Sophist*, taken on its own, might suggest that dialectic is merely a rational technique of demonstration and definition. Yet the *Statesman* constitutes a considerable shift in the register of the discussion, moving from the distinction between truth and falsity to the possible and probable, the exploration of the world of mythic narrative and mythic composition. My treatment of Plato's consideration of rhetorical

composition in the *Phaedrus* prepared the way for the application of principles of narrative and mythical composition in the *Statesman*. The thoughtful act of composition is itself a facet of philosophical exploration and discovery. In this way, unlike Rowe, my view is that the *Statesman* constitutes a philosophical exercise not only in the use of rational technique but in the use of rhetoric and myth, which expands the compass of discursive possibility. The fallibility, as much as a division, is a sign of the philosophical character of the exchange.

The third section presented the myth of the *Statesman* as an exploration of narrative possibility.⁶⁸⁶ The turn to narrative has primarily ethical or moral purpose; it is not an attempt to provide an accurate account of factual events, using rigorous methods of deductive and inductive reasoning. This final section treats the notion of authorial and mythic self-presentation in traditional poets, as well as Plato, as author. In the third section, the parallels between Platonic and Hesiodic myth in the third section offer a more sustained treatment not only to Collobert and Gill's work on myth and image; my approach also introduces the work of scholars who have considered the self-conscious narrative composition in poets like Homer but, above all, Hesiod, as well as Plato.

My view is that Plato uptakes this tradition of poetic and mythic representation but explicitly affirms that narratives must be ethically improved in accordance with the prescriptions of *Republic* II and III, as well as *Republic* X. In the *Statesman*, the Eleatic Visitor enacts these changes. First, the Visitor invites the Younger Socrates to give the myth the attention of a child, and the Younger Socrates agrees to this. Though some of the details

⁶⁸⁶ Gill, in his seminal article, affirms that Plato is responsible for the birth of 'fiction'. I recognize with Gill, in the third section, 'fiction' as a sophisticated, self-conscious game in which both speaker and participant recognize the constructed character of what is being said. Gill, Plato explains this practice clearly in *Republic* II and III, and this is the sense of the meaning of the "noble lie". Furthermore, myths like the Myth of Atlantis and the Myth of Kronos in the *Statesman* practically enact the recommendation of the *Republic*. This notion of an informative phantasm underlies this view. My approach is not to generalize this notion of noble deception to all of Platonic myth but rather, to affirm that Plato seeks mythic discourse as a way of providing a proportionate representation of higher, ethical realities.

will appear familiar to the Younger Socrates, the Visitor presents an original interpretation of the myth. That is, the Eleatic Visitor exhibits poetic license in creating his own narrative.

Plato shows the Visitor undertaking a narrative exploration of possibilities about the cosmos and human life. In the *Sophist*, following up the critique of poetic images in *Republic* X, Plato presents the Eleatic Visitor providing a technical distinction between logical truth and falsity, in the course of using geometric and arithmetic based techniques of definition and demonstration. The Eleatic Visitor classes poetic and sophistic verbal illusions as instances of factual falsity, and describes the task of the dialectician as a discernment of logical and scientific truth.

In an explicit critique of the use of techniques of geometric and arithmetic calculation, the Visitor and the Younger Socrates undertake an exercise in training for the dialectic use of visible models or images. This entails not only a cultivated use of proportional models which disclose higher, ethical and psychological realities; it also entails an expansion of reason to encompass narrative possibility and plausibility. Plato makes his characters self-consciously introduce conventions of mythic, authorial self-presentation, in dialectical exchanges. Plato, as author, claims a kind of divine authority through characters like Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor. In this way, he presents his own work in rivalry with the work of poets like Hesiod, as much as dramatists like Sophocles. Plato, through his dialogues, presents an alternative to traditional myth. He presents himself, through his characters, as an authoritative author of these alternative myths. Plato does not make dialectic practice exclusively the cultivation of rational techniques of demonstration and definition. Indeed, the cultivation of rational techniques of demonstration and definition is ancillary to ethical and practical purpose. The literary search in composition takes the form of an exploration of the possible and ideal.

This ambivalence is expressed in the faulty use of paradigms which Plato's Eleatic Visitor himself recognizes in his composition of a Myth of Kronos. The Myth of Kronos

represents an instance of an enactment of Platonic mythmaking. However, even though it is helpful to turn to other myths to explore parallelisms in narrative detail, when Plato's Visitor says that his myth consists of a series of large paradigms, it does not reflect Plato's ordinary terminology for introducing or concluding a myth. Rather, in this relatively isolated instance, Plato uses the term to make the Eleatic Visitor echo the activity of the demiurge in the *Timaeus*, using paradigms to compose the myth in the way that the author of the cosmos uses paradigms to generate the cosmos. At the same time, Plato's alternate use of *mythos* and *logos* to signify either rational account or narrative composition, echoed in his use of a *myth* to correct a *logos*, is surprising to those who see Plato as consistently introducing a rigid division between rational and narrative expression.

My work draws upon the general treatment of Platonic myth in Most and Brisson. This act of narrative reworking applies not only to Plato's myths but Plato's dialogues, which contain mythic elements. Interpreters like Kahn and Gill have introduced the notion of fictionality in the exploration of this literary genre. My approach, however, draws more fully upon Gill's qualification of his earlier position about the fictionality of certain Platonic myths. My reading of Platonic myth introduces fiction in a qualified manner but follows Gill's recommendation to avoid the term 'fictionality' in favour of the use of terms like the 'construction' or the 'invention' of "truth."⁶⁸⁷ As Gill has emphasized, the act of composing or constructing poetic work can itself be regarded as a form of exploration.⁶⁸⁸ This is an indication, as Kahn has noted that this genre of composing literature about Socrates was comparatively new. This is actually a far more appropriate way to conceive of the character of poetic activity and mythic or narrative composition in antiquity.

⁶⁸⁷ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-Not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁶⁸⁸ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-Not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 76. Gill cites St. Croix, G.E.M., "Aristotle on History and Poetry," in B. Levick, *The Ancient Historian and His Materials*, Farnborough Hants, 1975, 45-58. "In Aristotle's *Poetics*, we find some comments which seem to indicate an acknowledgement of, and interest in, the fictionality of literature, of a kind that is rather different from the material discussed so far. Aristotle discusses, for instance, the extent to which a tragic poet must stick to traditional stories, or is free to make up stories; he also discusses what is involved in plot composition and in the emotional realization of what is being portrayed."

Gill observes that the fact that we ourselves pose the question about ancient narratives and drama in terms which fall outside collectively shared notions is itself a Modern innovation. Indeed, Plato composes for an audience which recognizes poetry as a source for collective, ethical standards. By defending alternative norms, his work has a bearing not only on the individual self but collective life.⁶⁸⁹ Plato's own presentation of Socrates, as Dorion recognizes, contains mythical elements.

Plato draws elements from Sophocles' Theban plays, as well as Aristophanes' *Clouds*, in shaping drama surrounding Plato's presentation of the trial of Socrates. My conclusion is that the critical consideration of Socrates, which follows the composition of the myth, is meant to signal the reader to the constructed and exploratory character even of Plato's *Apology*. Plato dramatically prefaces the *Apology* with the discussion of paradigm in the *Statesman*. Indeed, in the opening installment of the *Eleatic Trilogy*, Socrates meets the accusation that he himself is a sophist, an accusation which led to the drama of his trial (*Tht.* 210b-d). In the *Apology*, Socrates calls himself an example (παράδειγμα) in this philosophical practice of questioning dialogue, above all in his questioning of political leaders, poetic narratives and the rhetoric of sophists within the community (*Apol.* 23b). The Eleatic Visitor does not rally to Socrates' defense but, rather, considers as an open question whether philosophy and Socratic questioning should be permitted at all.

Gonzalez, Rowe and other interpreters have treated these passages as the Visitor's serious accusation against Socrates. Miller proposes that these passages represent the Eleatic Visitor's philosophical defense of Socrates. However, by overemphasizing the political significance of the Visitor's words, these interpreters have overlooked Plato's self-conscious use of the ambivalent, traditional language of Greek tragedy. Plato has the Visitor assert the

⁶⁸⁹ Gill, C., "Plato on Falsity-Not Fiction," in *op. cit.*, p. 84. Gill quotes Taylor, C., *Sources of Self*, p. 29-30. "The idea that artistic experience should normally be analysed in terms of the relationship between individual author and an individual reader emerges, if at all, only late and intermittently. At the same time, as indicated already, the role of the poet, like the historian, orator, or philosopher, is conceived as expressing the communal truths of society."

need for a second best method (δεύτερος πλοῦς) of observing written code and law (*Pol.* 300c-d). A person who lacks appropriate understanding can make a most grievous error (ἀμαρτήματος) or commit a tragic mistake (*Pol.* 300b). Yet, the Visitor also asserts the possibility of transcending mere imitation and grasping the higher understanding of ethical realities which transcends ordinary human constraint (*Pol.* 300d-e).⁶⁹⁰ This very uncertainty is echoed in the portraiture of Socrates himself.

The *Eleatic Trilogy* underscores the challenges which philosophers face both in attempting to grasp individual examples and differentiate individuals from others but also to grasp essences apart from individuals. This discussion of the logic of essence and example leads to the consideration of individuation in artistic portrayal. Plato had asserted that a description of Theaetetus, though in certain respects bearing an affinity with Socrates, could never fully capture his uniqueness (*Tht.* 209c). However, in the *Statesman*, the artistic character of this mirroring gesture becomes much more explicit. Here, Socrates is compared again to a character who resembles him. In this dialogue, the Younger Socrates compares the Elder Socrates to himself. The Visitor explicitly uses the language of imitation or mimesis in this act of comparison.

Plato is portraying the life of philosophy through Socrates. It would be impossible to grasp the universal without such an individual, but the universal transcends the limits of any given individual. Plato as author is not to be identified with Socrates. Plato introduces Socrates as a paradigm of the philosophical life. His writings have the potential to be instructive, but if they are not properly understood, they are merely images. The Visitor asks the Younger Socrates to consider a world where Socratic questioning would be outlawed. The Younger Socrates affirms that life in such a world would not be worth living, and there

⁶⁹⁰ This section on the Socratic paradigm and imitation draws but substantially modifies the treatment of ethics found in essay entitled 'A Rule Less Than Divine' presented for Dimitri El Murr's seminar on Plato's Political Philosophy at the Sorbonne, in the Winter Semester of 2009.

would be no chance in such a world for either individual or collective happiness (*Pol.* 299; *cf.* *Apol.* 38b). As such, the Younger Socrates is not copying or imitating the Elder Socrates, but emulating the Elder Socrates. Just like the Younger Socrates, we as readers become more philosophical through thoughtfully imitating the models produced by artists. However, this very lesson he has learned from the Eleatic Visitor's myth that the life of philosophy is the best life. A narrative or mythic account has provided greater philosophical instruction than had a rational account.

Socrates the Younger has applied this insight in thinking for himself, questioning the words of the Eleatic Visitor, on the behalf of Socrates the Elder, as a true imitation. Plato's Socrates, though he critiques poetry, recognizes the limitations of his own insight, his own ignorance and his own dependence upon the inspiration of his own divine sign or guardian spirit (δαίμων) (*Ap.* 23b; *Men.* 99d-e). No human, even Socrates—perhaps especially Socrates—can provide assurance of understanding about the most important things. Plato creates distances between himself as author and the characters that he represents, though his characters, like Socrates and the Eleatic Visitor, make divinely authorizing claims. In this way, Plato, as author, echoes, through his characters, the kinds of divine claims to inspired wisdom present in poets like Hesiod and even Sophocles. Yet Plato recognizes, at the same time, the dangers of uncritical identification with characters. This applies as much to Socrates and his own paradigmatic characters as the gods and mortals of traditional poets like Hesiod. The Visitor encourages the Younger Socrates to reflect upon the myth, and this enables him to learn about how he should answer a subsequent question.

Plato uses the dialogue as literary form to represent the activity of philosophical dialogue. Plato's chief paradigm for such activity is Socrates. Socrates to a great extent conforms to the standard of justice in his choice of a life of philosophy. However, Plato's Socrates is also an artistic creation. In calling Socrates a paradigm, Plato leaves his stamp as

author. Any mere representation or paradigm must be questioned, even Plato's own. Plato's own writings might be regarded as a model or standard for how to practice philosophy. It is, nevertheless, up to each individual to identify with and imitate the paradigm either well or badly. Plato invites us to make this choice ourselves, by identifying with another character, the Younger Socrates.

Socrates would not be worthy of emulation had he not been first a philosophical paradigm himself. Holding to the truth of philosophy as a unique paradigm, Socrates pushes to the limits of human potential. At the same time, the Eleatic Visitor has questioned the question. A philosopher is one who would question both mortal and divine paradigms. Even paradigmatic exemplars do not provide unmediated insight into truth. This is why the Visitor stresses the positive power of paradigmatic representation as much as the limits.

Plato, as author, assimilates poetry and sophistry, rhetoric and mythological composition, and applies it to philosophical ends. Plato does this throughout his dialogues by dramatizing the interchange between the philosopher Socrates and sophists like Protagoras and Gorgias. However, the *Sophist* and *Statesman* are unique in presenting Socrates in discussion with another philosophical character who instructs characters not only in conventional, rational techniques but also in the use of image and narrative composition.

Plato's portrayal of Socrates, in his *Sokratikoi logoi* and even the *Apology*, is chiefly moral or ethical rather than a strictly factual, historical exploration.⁶⁹¹ Plato, in the *Sophist* and *Statesman*, indicates his own status as author through the Visitor, in his exchange with Theaetetus and the Younger Socrates. Plato's literary construction suggests that, though he is simply one artist in rendering his portrait of Socrates, he is nevertheless the authoritative artist. This portrait is a work of art rather than a mere work of history. As Michelin

⁶⁹¹ "Since living persons are the objects of representation, these must necessarily be either good men or inferior—thus only are characters normally distinguished, since ethical differences depend upon vice and virtue—that is to say either better than ourselves or worse or much what we are. It is the same with painters. Polygnotus depicted men as better than they are and Pauson worse, while Dionysius made likenesses [ὁμοίους εἰκαζεν]" (*Poetics*, 1448b).

observes, Plato's "Socrates is a *persona* so vital that this figure has usually been treated as historical rather than literary[.]"⁶⁹² Yet Socrates appears first not in Greek historical sources but in the 5th century work of the comic poet Aristophanes and in an embellished genre of literature, the *Sokratikoi logoi*, produced by 4th century authors such as Xenophon and Plato. Even though there is no doubt an historical basis for Socrates, the image of Socrates as an intellectual oddity and an eccentric was embellished to the point of mythology not only by these authors but in the tradition of modeling and sculpture. The sculptural and art historian, Zanker, recognizes that "the image of Socrates in both art and literature was assimilated to a conventional paradigm, that of a Satyr, who represented a kind of ideal of ugliness, an inversion of the norms of beauty."⁶⁹³ Plato, as dramatic composer, mixes comedy with tragedy in order to convey a figure of a spiritual, rather than a merely physical order of ideality.

In his treatment of portrayals of intellectuals and poets in sculpture, Zanker maintains that such idealization was equally applied to poets like Sophocles. This idealizing convention may have been applied to tragic poets like Sophocles and possibly lost sculptures of Plato.⁶⁹⁴ Indeed, only busts of Plato survive, which portray Plato not in a Socratic manner but in the manner of a "good Athenian citizen."⁶⁹⁵ However, in her work on Plato's Socratic mask, Micheleni concludes that it is more fruitful not to differentiate but rather to merge aspects of a quasi-historical Socrates with the authorial Plato who "readers are invited to reconstruct out of the dialogues[.]"⁶⁹⁶ Micheleni proposes that "the ambivalent relation between the two is

⁶⁹² Micheleni, A., "Plato's Socratic Mask," in Micheleni, A. ed., *Plato as Author : The Rhetoric of Philosophy*, Leiden, Brill, 2003, p. 45.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 46-47.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59. The conventional image of Plato is of the "*kalos k'agathos*." Plato stands as the "confident aristocrat" who "needs neither bravado nor humility, his grooming is perfect without being fussy, his manners impeccable, his appearance conventionally handsome, and his body perfectly toned by athletic work."

⁶⁹⁵ Zanker, P., *The Masks of Socrates*, Shapiro, A., trans., Berkeley, University of California Press, 1996, p. 40-50.

⁶⁹⁶ Micheleni, A., "Plato's Socratic Mask," in Micheleni, A. ed., *Plato as Author : The Rhetoric of Philosophy*, Leiden, Brill, 2003, p. 65.

one key to understanding the remarkable work of their hidden creator.”⁶⁹⁷ Still, in spite of such efforts at imaginative reconstruction, Michelini recognizes that Plato’s “implied authorial *persona*” which is “projected by the works” rests in Plato’s “absence.”⁶⁹⁸ As author, Plato presents himself through other characters, and so the image of the author and the character he portrays are, in some sense, united. Joyce compares the artist and author to the God of creation, standing above his work, paring his fingernails and working himself out of existence. Like the demiurge of his *Timaeus*, Plato stands above his Kronos and Zeus, his gods and spirits, his portraits of Parmenides and Zeno, Gorgias and Protagoras, Laches, Alcibiades and the Eleatic Visitor, with his central authenticating voice and paradigmatic ideal, Socrates.

Plato describes the possibility of a philosophical artist through the *Sophist* and *Statesman*. Such an artist would use paradigms as images to represent higher, invisible, ethical realities, in literary composition. Plato means for himself to be understood as the author, the philosophical artist and the composer, contributing as one individual to the artist or dramatic genre of *Sokratikoi Logoi*. By having Socrates call himself a paradigm, in the *Apology*, after having just explained in the *Statesman* that paradigms are visible models meant to lead to a higher, philosophical insight into invisible reality, Plato, effectively, leaves his stamp as the author. He is the person who paints, with words, the philosophical image and dramatizes the life of philosophy. He simply presents Socrates as a character to realize this aim. Plato might have perfected the genre of *Sokratikoi Logoi*, but he was, as Kahn recognizes, only one among the contributors to this literary genre. This rendering of Socrates uses inductive and deductive techniques of argumentation, and, in Plato’s dialogues, he also presents vivid images and models, like the paradigm of the city and the soul, to convey the character of ethical life and the need for self-mastery and self-control. Plato composes not

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

only the drama of the life and death of Socrates, but he also shows characters reciting myths which alter and transform motifs present in Homer and Hesiod. This is equally for an ethical purpose. Socrates wrote nothing. However, Plato's philosophy is not only incidentally but essentially literary; he creatively adopts the form of literature and renders it up to the life of philosophy. With his uses of the word paradigm, he leaves his seal as the author.

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