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Themes in Plato, Aristotle, and Hellenistic Philosophy

KEELING LECTURES 2011–18

Edited by Fiona Leigh

ICS INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

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DIRECTOR & EDITOR: GREG WOOLF

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EDITED BY
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INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
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The cover image shows a painted *hydria* from Attica, *c*. 450 BC.
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PREFACE

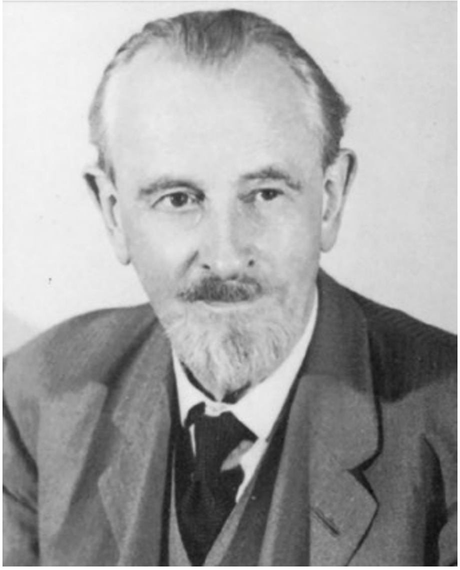
Stanley Victor Keeling was a Lecturer and Reader in the Department of Philosophy at University College London until his retirement in 1954, where, during World War II, he also served as Head of Department. Upon his death in 1979, his wife having predeceased him, Keeling left his estate to a friend and former student with the wish that, if possible, he would like to see an annual lecture on Greek philosophy given at UCL by a distinguished scholar of international note in the field. This friend (who wished to remain anonymous) generously supplemented Keeling's estate, making possible not only the annual S. V. Keeling Memorial Lecture in Ancient Philosophy (since 1981), but also a series of Keeling Colloquia in Ancient Philosophy (the first in 1994), and the Keeling Graduate Scholarship (since 2008). In 2013, the anonymous donor passed away and left a further legacy which resulted in an expansion of the Graduate Scholarships programme, and the creation of the Keeling Centre in Ancient Philosophy at UCL in 2016. In addition to the annual memorial lecture, colloquia, and scholarships programme, the Keeling Centre now also hosts a Keeling Scholar in Residence, an annual Graduate Conference in Ancient Philosophy, a Keeling Research Fellow (from time to time), occasional visiting academics, and supports numerous events in ancient philosophy in and around London.

Curiously, S. V. Keeling did not himself specialise in the field of ancient philosophy. Educated at Trinity College Cambridge (BA Philosophy), UCL (MA Philosophy), and Toulouse-Montpellier (Doctorat ès lettres), Keeling's philosophical work was for the most part centred on Descartes and McTaggart. His principal published works were an annotated edition of McTaggart's work, *Philosophical Studies* (London 1934), a monograph entitled *Descartes* (London 1934), and the 1948 annual British Academy Master Mind Lecture, which Keeling gave on Descartes (*Proceedings of the British Academy* 34 [1948], 57–80). Keeling nonetheless had an abiding affection for, and a firm belief in the central importance of, ancient Greek philosophy. It is said that in Paris, where he moved after retirement and remained until his death, he and his wife often read Greek philosophy to one another in the evening after dinner. This was the period in which he conceived his wish to foster and promote ancient philosophy at UCL, for the benefit of students and academics at UCL, but also in London more generally.

***

The papers in this volume comprise the S. V. Keeling Memorial Lectures in ancient philosophy from 2011–18, with an additional paper from Gisela Striker, based on her 2004 Keeling Lecture (previously unpublished), and with the exception of the 2012 Keeling Lecture given by Richard Sorabji (since absorbed into his *Moral Conscience Through the Ages* [Chicago 2014]). The reader will find that in their published form the papers have often preserved elements of their original delivery as lectures, and so frequently retain a certain oral style. (In addition, individual authors' choices in relation to minor stylistic matters, *e.g.* the marks used to indicate long vowels in transliterations of the Greek, and the style of abbreviation of ancient texts used, has also been retained.) It is hoped that the papers thus preserve the character of a lecture, while setting out and arguing for their readings of ancient texts in a manner appropriate to written scholarly work.

F. V. L., London 2020



Stanley Victor Keeling

KEELING PUBLICATIONS

Previously published S. V. Keeling Memorial Lectures

Modern Thinkers and Ancient Thinkers, ed. R. W. Sharples (UCL Press, London: 1993)
Perspectives on Greek Philosophy, ed. R. W. Sharples (Ashgate, Aldershot: 2003)

Previously published Keeling Colloquia

Aristotle and Moral Realism, ed. Robert Heinaman (UCL Press, London: 1995)
Whose Aristotle? Whose Aristotelianism? ed. R.W. Sharples (Ashgate, Aldershot: 2001)
Plato and Aristotle's Ethics, ed. Robert Heinaman (Ashgate, Aldershot: 2003)
Philosophy and the Sciences in Antiquity, ed. R.W. Sharples (Ashgate, Aldershot: 2005)
The Eudemian Ethics on the Voluntary, Friendship, and Luck, ed. Fiona Leigh (Brill, Leiden: 2012)
Particulars in Greek Philosophy, ed. R.W. Sharples (Brill, Leiden: 2009)
Self-Knowledge in Ancient Philosophy, ed. Fiona Leigh (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2020)
Moral Psychology in Ancient Thought, eds Fiona Leigh and Margaret Hampson (forthcoming: Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2021)

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Gábor Betegh is Laurence Professor of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Christ's College Cambridge. He works on ancient philosophy, in particular on ancient metaphysics, cosmology, theology, and the connections between ancient philosophy and the history of religions.

Susanne Bobzien is Professor of Philosophy at Oxford University and Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford. Previously, she was professor of philosophy at Yale University and taught at The Queens' and Balliol Colleges, Oxford. She is the author of several books, including *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy*, and has published numerous articles both in contemporary philosophy and in ancient philosophy, with a focus on logic, paradoxes, and vagueness as well as determinism, freedom, and moral responsibility. She is a Fellow of the British Academy.

Lesley Brown is an emeritus member of the Philosophy Faculty of the University of Oxford, and a former Fellow of Somerville College, Oxford. She has published extensively on Plato's *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*. More recently she has worked on issues arising from agreement in Plato. Beside the essay in this volume, recent articles include 'Aristotle (with the help of Plato) against the claim that morality is "only by convention" ' in *Ancient Philosophy Today: DIALOGOI* 1.1 (2019) and 'Rethinking Agreement in Plato' in *Virtue, Happiness, Knowledge: Themes from the work of Gail Fine and Terence Irwin* (Oxford 2019).

Gail Fine is Professor Emerita at Cornell University (where she taught from 1975 until her retirement in 2017), Visiting Professor of Ancient Philosophy at Oxford University, and Senior Research Fellow Emerita at Merton College, Oxford. She is the author of *On Ideas: Aristotle's Criticism of Plato's Theory of Forms* (Oxford 1993), *Plato on Knowledge and Forms: Selected Essays* (Oxford 2003), and *The Possibility of Inquiry: Meno's Paradox from Socrates to Sextus* (Oxford 2014). She is also the editor of the *Oxford Handbook of Plato* (Oxford 2008; 2nd ed. 2019), and of *Plato 1 and 2*, in the *Oxford Readings in Philosophy* series (Oxford 1999). She has also written over fifty articles in ancient philosophy.

Dorothea Frede studied Philosophy and Classics at Hamburg and Göttingen, and was a lecturer, assistant, and associate professor in the United States from 1971 to 1991. She has held a professorship at Hamburg University (1991–2006), was co-editor of *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* (1994-2004) and Adjunct Professor at the University of California Berkeley (2006–11). Her main publications include: *Aristoteles und die Seeschlacht* (Göttingen 1970; a shorter version in English OSAP 1985); *Plato, Philebus, translation with introduction and notes* (Indianapolis 1993); *Platon, Philebos, Übersetzung mit Kommentar* (Göttingen 1997); *Aristoteles. Nikomachische Ethik. Übersetzt, eingeleitet und kommentiert* (Berlin 2020). She has also written many articles and contributions to books on Plato, Aristotle, Hellenistic philosophy, and on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. She is a member of the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Göttingen.

Margaret Hampson is an IRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy, Trinity College Dublin, and an associate of The Plato Centre, Trinity College Dublin. Prior to joining TCD, she worked as Research Associate at the Keeling Centre for Ancient Philosophy, UCL and completed her PhD in the Department of Philosophy, UCL, in 2017. Her research engages primarily with Aristotle's ethics and moral psychology, with a particular focus on moral habituation and the concept of the fine, though she has wider interests in Plato's account of moral development and Hellenistic theories of the emotions. She has published in journals such as *Phronesis* and *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie,* and has work forthcoming in edited collections on Plato and the history of habit.

Fiona Leigh is Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Director of the Keeling Centre for Ancient Philosophy at University College London. Her main interests lie in ancient philosophy, especially Plato's metaphysics, epistemology, and moral psychology, and she has published a number of papers in ancient philosophy, mainly on Plato, in journals and collected volumes such as *Phronesis* and *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy.* She is also the editor of *Self-Knowledge in Ancient Philosophy* (Oxford 2020), of volume 3.2 of *The Australasian Philosophical Review* (2020), of *The Eudemian Ethics on the Voluntary, Friendship, and Luck* (Brill 2012), and is an Associate Editor for the journal, *MIND*.

A. A. Long is Professor Emeritus of Classics and Irving Stone Professor of Literature Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, where he is also an affiliated member of the department of Philosophy. Before moving to the USA in 1983, he held teaching positions at the Universities of Otago, Nottingham, and Liverpool, and at University College London, which is his alma mater. Long is the author of *Hellenistic Philosophy. Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics* (2nd. ed., Berkeley & Los Angeles 1986) and co-author with D. N. Sedley of *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge, 1987). His most recent books include *Greek Models of Mind and Self* (Cambridge, Mass. 2015); *Seneca. Letters on Ethics*, with Margaret Graver (Chicago 2015); and *Epictetus. How to be Free* (Princeton 2018).

Malcolm Schofield is Emeritus Professor of Ancient Philosophy and Fellow of St John's College at Cambridge, where he has taught since 1972. He is probably best known for his co-authoring (with G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven) of the second edition of *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge 1983). *The Stoic Idea of the City* (Cambridge 1991) and *Plato: Political Philosophy* (Oxford 2006) are among his major solo publications. More recently he edited the collection *Aristotle, Plato, and Pythagoreanism in the First Century BC* (Cambridge 2013). He is the author of many papers on the philosophy of Cicero, whose political philosophy is the subject of his latest book, now in production at Oxford University Press.

David Sedley (born London 1947) took his BA at Trinity College Oxford in 1969, and his PhD at University College London in 1974. He was Dyson Junior Research Fellow in Greek Culture at Balliol College Oxford, 1973–75. He then taught until his retirement in 2014 at the University of Cambridge, where he became Laurence Professor of Ancient Philosophy from 2000, and remains a Fellow of Christ's College. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, an International Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and an Honorary Fellow of Trinity College Oxford. He has edited *The Classical Quarterly* (1986–92) and *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* (1998–2007). His books include *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (1987, with A. A. Long), *Plato's Cratylus* (2003), *The Midwife of Platonism: Text and Subtext in Plato's Theaetetus* (2004), and *Creationism and its Critics in Antiquity* (2007), based on his 2004 Sather Lectures at UC Berkeley.

Gisela Striker is Walter C. Klein Professor of Philosophy and of the Classics, Emerita at Harvard University. She has worked mainly on Hellenistic philosophy (a collection of her *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* was published by Cambridge University Press in 1996) and on Aristotle's logic. Her translation with commentary of Aristotle's *Analytics Book I* was published in 2009 in the Clarendon Aristotle Series.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COLLECTIONS OF FRAGMENTS, DOXOGRAPHIA

DK	Diels and Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (*The Fragments of the Pre-Socratics*)
D.L.	Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum* (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers*)
LM	Laks and Most, *Early Greek Philosophy*
LS	Long and Sedley, *Hellenistic Philosophy* (vols 1 and 2)

Authors are listed in chronological order.

WORKS OF PLATO

Crat.	*Cratylus*
Crit.	*Crito*
Gorg.	*Gorgias*
Leg.	*Leges (Laws)*
Phd.	*Phaedo*
Phdr.	*Phaedrus*
Plt.	*Politicus (Statesman)*
Prm.	*Parmenides*
Prot.	*Protagoras.*
Rep.	*Republic*
Soph.	*Sophist*
Symp.	*Symposium*
Theaet.	*Theaetetus*
Tim.	*Timaeus*

WORKS OF ARISTOTLE

Arist. *De Int.*	*De Interpretatione*
De An.	*De Anima*
EE	*Eudemian Ethics*
EN	*Nicomachean Ethics*
Metaph	*Metaphysics*
Pol.	*Politics*
Rhet.	*Rhetoric*

WORKS OF EPICURUS

Ep. Men	*Epistula ad. Menoeceum (Letter to Menoeceus)*

WORKS OF CHRYSIPPUS

SVF	*Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta (Fragments of the Ancient Stoics)*

WORKS OF CICERO

Cic. *Fat.*	*De Fato* (*On Fate*)
Div.	*De Divinatione (On Divination)*
De. Or.	*De Oratore (On the Orator)*
Fin.	*De Finibus(On the Ends)*
Lael.	*Laelius de Amicitia (Laelius on Friendship)*
Luc.	*Lucullus*
Nat. D.	*De Natura Deorum (On the Nature of the Gods)*
Off.	*De Officiis (On Duties)*
Q. Fr.	*Epistulae ad Quintum Fratrem (Letters to his brother, Quintus)*
Rep.	*De Republica (On the Republic)*
Tusc.	*Tuscanae Disputationes (Tuscan Disputations)*

WORKS OF SENECA

Ep.	*Epistulae (Letters)*
Epist.	*Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium* (*Moral Letters to Lucilius*)

WORKS OF PLUTARCH

Comm. Not.	*De Communibus Notitis Adversus Stoicos* (*Against the Stoics on Common Notions*)
De An. Procr.	*De Animae Procreatione in Timaeo (On the Generation Of the Soul in Timaeus)*
Mor. Progr.	*Moralia, Progress in Virtue*
Plut. *Quaest.*	*Quaestiones Convivales* (*Convival Questions*)
Plut. *St. Rep.*	*De Stoicorum Repugnantiis* (*On the Self-Contradiction of the Stoics*)

WORKS OF EPICTETUS

Diss.	*Dissertationes* (*Discourses)*

WORKS OF SEXTUS EMPIRICUS

S.E. *M.*	*Adversus Mathematmicos (Against the Mathematicians)*
Sext. Emp. *Math*	*Adversus Mathematmicos (Against the Mathematicians)*

WORKS OF GALEN

Gal. *Inst. Log.*	*Institutio logica* (*Introduction to Logic*)
Galen *Loc. Aff.*	*De Locis Affectis (On Affected Parts)*
Gal. *PHP*	*De Placitis Hippocratis Et Platonis (The Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato)*

WORKS OF ALEXANDER OF APHRODISIAS

Alex. *An. Pr.*	*In Aristotelis Analyticorum Priorum Librum I Commentarium (Commentary On Aristotle's* Prior Analytics *I)*

WORKS OF APULEIUS

Apul. *Herm.*	*Peri Hermeneias* (*On Interpretation*)

WORKS OF DIOGENES LAERTIUS

D.L.	*Vitae Philosophorum* (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers*)

WORKS OF PORPHYRY

Porph. *Ad Marcellam*	*Ad Marcellum (To Marcella)*

WORKS OF LACTANTIUS

Inst.	*Institutiones Divinae (Divine Institutes)*

WORKS OF PROCLUS

In Tim.	*In Timaeum Commentaria (Commentary on* Timaeus)

WORKS OF AMMONIUS

Ammon. *Int.*	*In Aristotelis De interpretatione Commentarius* (*Commentary on Aristotle's* De Interpretatione)

WORKS OF SIMPLICIUS

Simpl. *in Cael.*	*In Aristotelis De Caelo Commentaria* (*Commentary on Aristotle's* De Caelo)
Simpl. *in Cat.*	In Aristotelis Categorias Commentarium (*Commentary on Aristotle's* Categories)

WORKS OF STOBAEUS

*Ecl.*Stobaeus	*Eclogues*
Stob.*Ecl.*	*Eclogues*

WORKS OF AUGUSTINE

CD	*Civitate Dei (City of God)*

INTRODUCTION

MARGARET HAMPSON AND FIONA LEIGH

Established in 1981, the annual S.V. Keeling Memorial Lecture in ancient philosophy at UCL is given by a scholar of international renown in the field on any topic of their choice in ancient philosophy, up to and including the works of Plotinus. There is no particular topic or text upon which any Keeling Lecturer is asked to speak, and so there is no given theme that unifies any set of Keeling Lectures, except those arising by chance. So it is with the current volume of papers arising from the Lectures, most of which were given between 2011 and 2018 (the exception is Gisela Striker's paper, based upon her 2004 Lecture). As it happens, however, the nine papers that make up the volume, on Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Cicero, can be said to present a happily balanced mix of papers concerned either with a question or issue in 'practical philosophy' (moral or political philosophy), or with a topic within 'theoretical philosophy' (metaphysics, epistemology, or logic), or, in some cases, with an enquiry that straddles the two. The papers in each case contribute novel arguments and insights to an existing or hitherto unseen scholarly debate, or on a textually based problem or question.[1]

In chapter 1, 'Agreements, contracts, and promises in Plato', Lesley Brown asks how important a role do the notions of agreement, consent, and contract play in Plato's philosophy. The concept of agreement (*homologia*; to agree, *homologein*), as Brown points out, can take a variety of forms, each of potential philosophical significance: (i) agreement can take the form of a logical relation between propositions or beliefs, and between one's beliefs or avowals, where 'to agree' is to be consistent with, or consonant with, or to correspond to; (ii) it can take a declarative form, where one agrees that… or declares that…, marking one's assent to a proposition, or concord with another; and (iii) it can take a more performative or promissory form, where one agrees to do or to undertake something. Recently, Brown has investigated the topic of agreement in its declarative form and its significance within the Platonic corpus.[2] Since to say that 'A agrees that P' can often convey the thought that A agrees with the speaker or a third party—that is, that the speaker or third party also holds that view—many have assumed a particular significance attaches to Socrates' frequently asking his interlocutors 'do you agree that P?'. For, this question suggests that P is a view also endorsed by Socrates—and perhaps Plato too. But Brown argues that agreement in its declarative form need not be taken to indicate agreement with another and can instead simply mark a subject's assent to a proposition; thus, nothing can be inferred from the use of *homologein* about the beliefs of anyone other than the subject who claims to agree.

In her paper for this volume, Brown turns her attention to the performative or promissory sense of agreement—agreeing to do such-and-such—and the related notions of promising, contracts, and consent. This sense of agreement, like the declarative sense, appears throughout the Platonic corpus, and in a variety of contexts. It is discussed in the everyday ethical context of keeping one's promises (*Crito*, *Republic* IV), in an ethical-cum-political context, as a potential foundation for justice (*Republic* II, *cf. Protagoras*), and even in the context of philosophy of language, where agreement or convention is mooted as a candidate theory for the correctness of names (*Cratylus*). Each of these discussions has been a topic of much scholarly interest in its own right, and in examining Plato's treatment of agreement in each of these areas, Brown draws on and contributes to recent work by Nicholas Denyer, Rachana Kamtekar, and others.[3]

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[1] As they are based on lectures delivered to an audience, many of the papers have retained their oral style of delivery.

[2] Brown 2018.

In tracing Plato's treatment of agreement through these various contexts and discussions, however, Brown reveals a common reluctance on the part of Plato's characters to accord a major importance to agreement in each of these areas. Whilst it is agreed that everyday morality requires that one abides by one's agreements or promises—with the important proviso that such agreements are just—great antipathy is shown towards any attempt to ground justice or morality in agreement. Brown thus shows how, in this respect, Plato stands in stark contrast to many modern moral and political philosophers (notably Rawls, Gauthier, and Scanlon)[4] who give a foundational role to agreement in justice and moral philosophy. Yet Brown also shows that the antipathy shown to agreement as a foundation for justice also explains Socrates' reluctance to accord a major role to convention in the correctness of names; an area in which convention and agreement might otherwise be thought to play a benign and perhaps even necessary role. Moreover, Brown offers a diagnosis of this common antipathy towards agreement as a basis for justice and the correctness of names, that connects it with certain deeper and widespread Platonic concerns. For agreements, as Brown notes, can be made by and sustained by ordinary people, not merely by experts, and they can change—and this precludes them occupying a foundational or explanatory role.

Gail Fine's '*Epistêmê* and *doxa*, knowledge and belief, in the *Phaedo*', chapter 2 of this volume, examines the concepts of *epistêmê* and *doxa* (generally translated as 'knowledge' and 'belief' respectively) in the work set on the last day of Socrates' life. It is an understatement to say that while these concepts are central to any understanding of Plato's epistemology and metaphysics, they have been the subject of not inconsiderable controversy. One source of debate concerns the proper objects of these powers or states. Until the publication of two seminal articles by Fine, the traditional view took it that *epistêmê* was of or 'set over' Forms, while *doxa* was of or 'set over' the participants in Forms, items in the sensible world ('sensibles'). Fine challenged this so-called 'Two Worlds' view (TW) as a reading of the *Republic*, arguing instead that belief is set over true and false propositions, and knowledge over true propositions.[5] A further, but connected, debate concerns the nature of the cognitive states or powers, *epistêmê* and *doxa*, themselves in the dialogues: can they be straightforwardly mapped on to our contemporary conceptions of knowledge and belief, or are they distinct notions, peculiar to ancient thought, or to Plato? The latter is thought to be suggested by TW: if *epistêmê* and *doxa* range over separate classes of objects, it seems they cannot be assimilable to contemporary notions of knowledge and belief, whereas if knowledge is justified true belief, knowledge and belief can range over the same objects.

To date, attention has largely focused on texts such as the *Republic* and the *Meno*; in her paper, Fine advances the debate concerning our understanding of *epistêmê* and *doxa* by turning our attention to the *Phaedo*. This chapter forms a pair with a recently published article in the *British Journal of the History of Philosophy*, where Fine argues that in the *Phaedo* Plato did not endorse TW.[6] With this result in mind, Fine argues in her paper for this volume that Plato's treatment of *epistêmê* and *doxa* in the *Phaedo* does not reveal these to be radically different concepts to 'knowledge' and 'belief' and that his conceptions of these states are closer to modern views than has sometimes been thought. In doing so, she engages with recent work by Jessica Moss and others who have argued that the notion of 'belief' cannot be assimilated to that of *doxa* in Plato, because the latter is in some texts presented as broader than the notion of belief (*Republic* X), and in others rarer than belief (*Theaetetus*), and is, moreover, closely tied to the notion of an appearance (*phantasia*).[7] Fine's paper also takes issue with claims in the literature that *epistêmê* in Plato ought not be understood as compatible either with contemporary notions of knowledge as something like understanding (most recently argued by Whitney Schwab), or with a more narrow ancient notion of knowledge as restricted to Forms rather than sensibles (as *e.g.* Lloyd Gerson has contended).[8] Fine's strategy is first to isolate the concepts of belief and knowledge before asking whether different conceptions or instantiations of these concepts are found in a close reading of the passages relevant to *epistêmê* and *doxa* in Plato's *Phaedo*.

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[3] See Denyer 2008; Kamtekar 2004: 131–70.

[4] Rawls 1971; Gauthier 1986; Scanlon 2000.

[5] Fine 1978: 121–39; Fine 1990: 85–115. *Cf.* 2004: 41–81.

In chapter 3, 'Socrates' "Second Voyage" (Plato, *Phaedo* 99d–102a)', David Sedley argues, contrary to the majority of scholars, that neither the method of hypothesis Socrates describes in his philosophical autobiography in the *Phaedo*, nor the final argument for the soul's immortality in that dialogue—of which the second voyage is an integral part—depend on the existence of Forms. Sedley begins by drawing attention to a distinction that has gone largely unnoticed in translations and the critical literature, namely the distinction at 101d1–3 between 'the hypothesis itself' and 'the safe part of the hypothesis'. Most translations have rendered the latter 'the safety of the hypothesis', as if the hypothesis were itself deemed safe, but, as Sedley argues, this is both insensitive to the Greek construction and entails a conceptual oddity. The distinction Socrates draws in the context of his investigation of causes, argues Sedley, is between (i) the hypothetical postulation of transcendent entities, Forms, as causes of the possession of attributes or properties by the separate individual things that partake of them, and (ii) a causal claim at the heart of this hypothesis, namely that the F (or F-ness) makes F things F, stripped of metaphysical assumptions about the nature of F (for instance, transcendence and separation). Whilst the claim that 'the F itself makes F things F' is assigned only a hypothetical status so long as it has not been proven that there is an F itself, the claim that 'The F makes F things F' is almost trivially true; it is the 'safe part' of the hypothesis.

The significance of this structural feature of this methodological passage is revealed when we turn to the sequence of safe causal answers that then follow. One section here is typically assumed to refer explicitly to transcendent Forms, namely 101b9–c7, where Socrates explains the cause of 'coming to be two' in terms of 'having a share in twoness'. But the structure of the passage that Sedley outlines precludes such a reading, which, Sedley shows, is not mandated, as is frequently supposed, by the use of key terms there (*metaschesis*, 'getting a share in', and *ousia*, 'being'). Thus, argues Sedley, when Socrates claims that there is no other way of each thing coming to be (*e.g.* 'two') except by sharing in the being of what it shares in ('twoness'), he is arguing that things come to be such as they are ('two') because they come to possess that specific property ('being two'). The many scholars who have criticized the adequacy of citing F (or F-ness) as the cause of something being F have missed the great strength of Socrates' causal theory and the strategy it gives rise to. By starting out with a 'safe' but explanatorily thin cause (such as F-ness), one can cautiously proceed to more informative and robust causal explanations that retain the self-guaranteeing truth of the 'safe' core, such as the claim that fire, as essentially hot, brings heat to other things and so makes them hot.

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[6] Fine 2016: 557–72.

[7] Moss 2014: 213–38; Lorenz 2006. *Cf.* Moss and Schwab 2019 (which paper however coincided with Fine's chapter and so is not treated at length).

[8] Schwab 2015, Gerson 2003; *cf.* Burnyeat 1980: 163–91.

Of course, the reliability of the 'safe part' of the hypothesis is no warrant for acceptance of the hypothesis itself, and so, Sedley argues, Socrates provides recommendations of the kind of use and stages of testing appropriate to hypotheses when they are systematically applied to the phenomena to be explained. He warns against 'clinging' to a hypothesis before it has been adequately tested and goes on to provide a demonstration of testing a successful hypothesis, in his argument that it is by 'tallness', rather than 'by a head', that one person is taller than another (100e–101b). The successful testing of a hypothesis, then, does not establish the existence of what it hypothesizes—testing does not vindicate the hypothesis in that sense. This, Sedley suggests, in the case of Forms awaits further proof and analysis in the *Republic*. So, once tested, the hypothesis and its 'safe', explanatorily reliable, and fruitful core, is suitable for deployment in the final argument for the immortality of the soul, without presupposing or relying upon the existence of Forms.

In chapter 4, 'Politics and divinity in Plato's *Republic*: the Form of the Good', Anthony Long's focus is an examination of the precise relation between divinity and politics in that work. To the modern, Western reader, the connection between these topics might not appear immediately obvious; indeed, the suggestion that these are intimately connected might even be worrisome to the reader more familiar with the *separation* of church and state. But, as Long makes clear, Plato in the *Republic* is not advocating a theocracy, if by that we mean a political system administered by a priestly college, nor indeed is the notion of divinity that informs Plato's politics one that is adequately captured by the notion of god or gods. Rather, Long argues, Plato invokes the notion of divinity as such, assigning to this the role of absolute ruler, and in virtue of which we might establish policies and rulers that are as excellent as possible.

Throughout the corpus, Plato has Socrates speak of 'the god' (singular), 'gods', or 'divine things', and this alternation between the singular and plural is one reason Long favours the term 'divinity' over 'god' or 'gods'. But as he also notes, Plato has Socrates use the term *theios* in a way that signifies the divine quite generally, leaving open its referents: Plato calls the Forms divine, and in this way signals that the term *theios* needn't signify any kind of being with the mind and intentions of a person. As Socrates' description of the initial stages of the young guardians' education early in the text reveals, divinity has two characteristic marks (to which the stories told to the young guardians must adhere): (i) it is absolutely good (that is, always beneficent and never harmful), and (ii) it is immutable, simple, and never deceptive. Long's novel interpretation thus takes the Form of the Good to be divinity *par excellence*. The Sun analogy illustrates the goodness of the Form of the Good, for it not only provides benefit to humans insofar as it provides the analogue of the sun's illumination, but also rules over the intelligible realm and bestows existence on the Forms that are its constituents. It is also, of course, unchanging and true. Moreover, Socrates calls the sun 'god' in the course of the analogy, and it would be perverse, surmises Long, for Socrates to attribute divinity to the sun and resist attributing it to the Form of the Good, which is after all the superior item under illustration. The Form of the Good is not a particular god, but rather the essence of divinity.

This divine principle provides a basis for the intelligible structure of reality, and the goal of political philosophy is represented by Plato as achieving access to this divine order, assimilating it intellectually and implementing its practical application for the social good—achievable through the mathematical and philosophical training outlined in the middle books of the *Republic*. Interestingly, then, far from advocating a traditional theocracy, Long argues that Plato essentially secularizes theocracy, making it tantamount to the rule of philosophical reason. This study also points to what may have been the true concern underpinning the indictment and execution of Socrates by the Athenians on the grounds of impiety: the extraordinary idea that the world's supreme divine power is absolute goodness, and this is to be accessed neither in the temple nor through ritual sacrifice, but through our own rational faculty and capacity to do philosophy.

Gábor Betegh, in his 'The ingredients of the soul in Plato's *Timaeus*', chapter 5 of this volume, enquires into the deeply mysterious account of the Demiurge's creation of the world soul by mixing all together two kinds of portions of each of 'being', 'sameness', and 'difference' in Plato's *Timeaus*. The passage at 35a–b and those that immediately follow it have long raised a host of questions for the reader: should the talk of 'mixing', and the suggestion that the soul is composed of ingredients, be taken literally, or should they rather be read metaphorically, as Timaeus' own description of his long account as a *mythos* allows? What to make of the sudden introduction of the Forms of Being, Sameness, and Difference into the picture, and the apparent distinction between the Forms and the corresponding properties, as attributes, *i.e.* those of being, sameness, and difference? In what sense are these Forms either central to the constitution of soul, or explanatory of its nature (or both)? To these Betegh adds another: what explains Timaeus' silence on his usual method here? That is, why does he not explicitly adopt the explanatory procedure, roughly, of reverse engineering, whereby practical reasoning is attributed to the Demiurge, given the materials and limitations he works with, and aims at the production of the phenomena?

As with other scholars before him, Betegh notes the probable relation to Plato's discussion of the so-called 'greatest kinds' in the *Sophist* (254–59), which prominently features the Forms or kinds, Being, Sameness, and Difference. The interpretation offered, however, goes far beyond the usual observation of apparent relevance and suggested connections. Beginning with the suggestion that Plato intended the reader to engage in the method of reverse engineering herself, Betegh argues that there is textual evidence that the *explanandum* is the cognitive function of the soul, specifically, its ability to formulate *logoi*, meaningful statements, by which rational beings are able to think about and at times track the way the world is—incorporating both Forms and sensible objects—so as to come to know that world. Again, with other scholars, Betegh takes Plato to be working with a 'like from like' principle in the account of the production of soul, but departs from the common metaphysical reading of the mixture as a mixture of the categories of 'being' and 'becoming', which produces soul as an ontological intermediary. Instead, by drawing on various passages from the *Sophist*, he argues for a cognitive reading of the *Timaeus* whereby the soul's constitution from Being, Sameness, and Difference, and the corresponding attributive properties, furnish it with the capacity to be receptive to the world, similarly structured by relations of being, sameness, and difference. The soul's constituents furnish it with the general structure of judgements—the silent *logoi* occurring inside the soul as thought—while the world provides the appropriately structured material for the content of those judgements.

In her 'Aristotle on the importance of rules, laws, and institutions in ethics', chapter 6, Dorothea Frede tackles a longstanding source of contention between interpreters of

Aristotle concerning the role of general rules within his ethics. On the so-called 'particularist' interpretation of Aristotle's ethics, he is taken to deny a role for general rules as prescriptive guides to action, and to emphasize instead the need for particular judgements on a case-by-case basis. The particularist interpretation finds its most prominent advocate in John McDowell, who in a series of influential articles[9] not only denies that morality could be captured in anything like a set of general rules, but emphasizes in particular the role of perception in filling the gap between general advice and decisions about particular actions. In favour of such a particularist interpretation would seem to speak (i) Aristotle's repeated caveats concerning precision in ethics, and his emphasis on the requirement for individual agents to determine in any case what is appropriate; (ii) his emphasis on the role of experience over general knowledge in determining what to do in any situation; and (iii) his picture of moral education, emphasizing as it does the need for habituation and training over instruction. But the particularist interpretation has its detractors too, in the form of 'universalists' or 'generalists' who affirm the role of general rules in Aristotle's ethics. Prominent amongst these is Terence Irwin (2001), who affirms the role of generalizations in ethics, with the acknowledgment that ethical generalizations are 'usual', rather than necessary, and often inexact. In this way, Irwin argues, ethical rules are not dissimilar to rules as they feature in the natural sciences, where in contrast to fields such as mathematics, they hold only 'for the most part', and not of necessity.

In her paper for this volume, Frede examines afresh the role of general rules within Aristotle's ethics, and, like Irwin, concludes that they do play an important role for Aristotle. Like Irwin, too, Frede shows that the putative evidence in favour of rule-scepticism does not support that conclusion, although Frede's treatment of this evidence extends beyond the remarks on imprecision and the role of perception in ethics that are the main focus of Irwin's earlier discussion. Rather than suggesting, as Irwin does, that Aristotle's remarks about the imprecision of ethics are intended to signal the 'usual' rather than 'necessary' status of ethical rules, Frede argues that such remarks are designed to make the point that not all cases are alike, and that many general rules call for qualification. And this by no means amounts to a denial that there are general rules about what is to be pursued or avoided, what is good or bad, and so on. The well brought-up person, Frede argues, will have knowledge of general rules, and Aristotle's discussion of the voluntary makes clear that ignorance of universal principles or laws counts as no excuse where moral action is concerned. That many general rules will require qualifications and must be adapted to the particulars of a situation explains also Aristotle's emphasis throughout the ethics on the need for experience. Whilst routine cases allow for the fairly unreflective application of rules of thumb, more difficult cases require much calibration of options, and depend on an agent's experience of such varied possibilities. Finally, whilst Aristotle's account of moral education places habituation and training at its centre, such training is not rote, and will crucially involve explanations and justifications for why certain actions are wrong, why others are fine, and so on.

Frede's paper, however, not only arbitrates in the debate between particularists and universalists, but—having secured a role for general rules and laws in Aristotle's ethics—introduces a much less explored question of the role of political institutions within Aristotle's ethics. Political institutions, one might suppose, fall within the scope of Aristotle's *Politics*, not his *Ethics.* Yet whilst these receive little explicit mention in the *Ethics*, Frede argues that the importance of institutions underpins Aristotle's distinctions between, and concern with, the virtues of liberality, magnificence, *megalopsychia* (magnanimity), and *philotima* (love of honour). Thus, where it is often assumed that Aristotle's ethics will shed light on certain issues in his politics, Frede shows how certain typically political concerns might shed light on concepts within his ethics.

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[9] McDowell 1979: 331–50; 1980: 359–76; 1996: 19–35; 1998: 23–49. See also Wiggins 1980: 221–40. For a more moderate particularist interpretation, see Price 2005: 191–212.

In chapter 7, Gisela Striker, in her 'Mental health and moral health: moral progress in Seneca's *Letters*', addresses the question of the nature and extent of Stoic therapy. Like other Hellenistic schools, the Stoics regarded philosophy not simply as an intellectual exercise, but as aimed at the art of living, and philosophical teaching not simply as a means of instruction, but as a kind of therapy for the soul. That philosophy should be understood specifically as a form of 'therapy' is importantly connected with a view of our psychic condition as something that can be understood in terms analogous to that of physical health. And just as the aim of those who care for the body is to bring us into a good bodily condition, so too the aim of the Stoic therapist is to bring us into a good psychic condition. Since the publication of Martha Nussbaum's highly influential *The Therapy of Desire,* the last quarter of a century has seen an increased interest in the notion of Stoic therapy and the questions that arise in connection with this conception of philosophy.

On the question of the nature and extent of Stoic therapy, and its connection to their conception of psychic health, Striker urges us to see the ways in which Stoic psychic therapy extends far beyond the treatment of the passions that is the focus of much contemporary scholarship. The aim of Stoic therapy is to bring the subject towards virtue, part of which involves the eradication of false beliefs about what is good and bad. Passions, according to the Stoics, are constituted by value judgements—fear is a belief about some impending evil, joy a belief about some good—but since, for the Stoics, only virtue is truly good, the judgements which constitute the passions are necessarily false and must be eradicated.[10] Many commentators, then, have focused on the Stoic conception of the passions and the means by which they are to be eradicated.[11] But, as Striker notes, even when the worst excesses of the passions have been left behind, there remains a long way to go to attain virtue. Through an examination of Seneca's *Letters to Lucilius*, Striker outlines a stage of psychic therapy that is the psychic analogue of Plato's gymnastic training, which promotes strength and beauty in the body once its diseases have been eradicated. Striker thus explores what psychic strength and beauty amount to and how these are established once the 'diseases' of the soul (*i.e.* passions) have been eradicated. Striker's examination of Seneca also reveals a stage in moral development, not recognized by all Stoics, wherein the subject has achieved the state of a Stoic 'sage' but does not yet realize it, and so fails still to achieve the supervenient benefits of wisdom that are crucial to happiness.

Through her examination, however, Striker also approaches the less-explored question of the relation between Stoic therapy and the modern practice of psychotherapy: what similarities are there between these practices, and in what way do they diverge? Striker reveals a number of interesting points of contact between the two practices, though in the respect that the two share a commitment to treating psychic disorder, Striker notes that Stoic therapy is in some ways narrower than modern psychotherapy: it recognizes only the passions as the source of psychic disorders, and not the host of factors that are recognized by modern psychotherapists. In other ways, however, Stoic therapy is much broader in its scope than any version of modern psychotherapy, for it aims at more than restoration of 'normal' mental and social functioning, promising real moral improvement. Striker argues, however, that the kind of guidance offered by the Stoics might nonetheless be seen as an ally or complement to modern psychotherapy, and insofar as it forms part of a more comprehensive perspective on what is needed for a happy human life, there may well be a continued relevance to the Stoic conception of care of the soul.

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[10] For an introduction to the Stoic theory of value, see Sharples 1996; Long 1974 [reprinted 1986]; Schofield 2003: 233–56.

[11] In addition to Nussbaum 1993, see Brennan 2003: 257–94; Brennan 2005; Graver 2007.

In his 'Debate or guidance: Cicero on philosophy', chapter 8 of this volume, Malcolm Schofield takes up an issue that has continued to exercise philosophers: that of reconciling the debate-driven nature of theoretical philosophy with its practical aims. The source of the tension, as Schofield sees it, lies in the fact that philosophy, insofar as it aims at truth, requires vigorous debate and invites challenges to any proposed conclusions; yet insofar as it seeks also to inform our practical lives, offering guidance in practical matters, what it offers must be definite, and convey the appearance, at least, of definitiveness. The problem is most acute in the fields of moral and political philosophy, where the topics of academic investigation are those that impinge most directly on our practical lives, and the aims of the philosopher are, at once, to uncover truths in these matters and to offer guidance as to how we should live. In contemporary philosophy, the tension between these two aspects of moral and political philosophy is most apparent in the treatment of utilitarianism or other forms of maximizing consequentialism in philosophical ethics and public policy respectively: within philosophical ethics, such theories have been subject to much scrutiny, and have emerged from this in an unfavourable light, whilst in the sphere of public policy, utilitarian approaches are accepted, without question, as the only plausible candidates in decision making.[12] This tension—between philosophy understood as debate, and as guide to living—is by no means new, however, and perhaps nowhere is it more apparent than in the writings of Cicero. For Cicero's philosophical outlook was closely aligned with that of the academic sceptics, emphasizing the lack of certainty and the need always to consider opposing arguments, yet at the same time Cicero was clear that philosophy is a guide for life (*Tusculan Disputations* 5.5) and such guidance is what he claimed to offer his readers. In fact, as Schofield shows, this tension is not merely apparent to Cicero's readers, but was a subject of focus for Cicero himself, who not only articulates in various places the difficulty of reconciling these aspects of philosophical pursuit but also offers strategies (both explicit and implicit) for dealing with such difficulties in various contexts. In his contribution to this volume, Schofield thus traces Cicero's treatment of these issues across four texts—*De Legibus*, *De Officiis*, *De Republica,* and the *Tusculan Disputations*—with a view to showing how debate and guidance can be reconciled, at least in the view of one ancient philosopher.

Despite Cicero's alignment with the outlook and methodology of the Academic sceptic school, in which vigorous debate was encouraged and the possibility of certainty disclaimed, as Schofield points out we see in a number of texts a certain eschewal of debate. In *De Legibus*, the character Cicero seemingly abandons the freedom of the Academic sceptic to consider any philosophical question as he judges best, adopting a scholastic approach favoured by certain authority figures, and moreover advocating for the startling claim that debate about the matters in question is to be silenced. His reason for doing so, Schofield argues, has to do with his specific and practical aim of bringing stability to cities and maintaining the condition of citizens, a task which requires the identification of principles that can be accepted by a broad swathe of thinkers, and the observance of a number of constraints. As it seems, where a philosophical foundation for civic life is sought, principles which provide such a foundation need not be true but must be fit for purpose; they must be accepted on the authority of philosophers who have shown it to be carefully considered; and dissent regarding such principles is to be silenced. But it is not only when developing the basis for a practical legislative project that Cicero thinks it best to eschew debate, for in *De Officiis* we see the exclusion of debate where what is on offer is individual moral guidance. Where debate does play a role it is as a precursor to such guidance, as something to be recollected by the giver of advice, when considering what moral positions are the most persuasive. But debate must not be included alongside such guidance. In the various dialogues that make up the *Tusculan Disputations*, however, Schofield suggests we see an attempt by Cicero to reconcile guidance with debate. Here, in various places, Cicero's writings display an essentially Socratic structure, from which philosophical guidance, or therapy, then flows. The key difference between these dialogues and the other texts discussed, argues Schofield, lies not in the subject matter as such, but rather in the respective audiences and their assumed moral and intellectual conditions. Where an audience is assumed to be in a state of good moral health, argumentation is not needed in the delivery of advice. But when the moral condition of an audience is poor, such discussants must be argued out of their mistaken views. To the extent that Cicero recognized the importance of consensus if philosophy is to speak with authority, Schofield shows that he is thus in alignment with the views of contemporary political philosophers, such as Jonathan Wolff, who emphasizes the need to draw more people into a consensus view, so that policy can be more widely endorsed.[13]

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[12] For discussion, see Wolff 2006: 1–22.

Last, but certainly not least, in the final chapter of the volume, chapter 9, Susanne Bobzien makes the case for the startling view that the renowned German logician, Gottlob Frege (1848–1925) plagiarized the Stoics' logical work, at least in the single, unified form it was available to him at the time via the first volume of Carl Prantl's *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande* (*History of Western Logic*, never translated into English), published in 1855. Bobzien starts by establishing the very high likelihood that Frege read Prantl's multivolume *Geschichte der Logik im Abendland*, and points out that his knowledge of Greek and Latin would have enabled him easily to read the copious presentation of Stoic fragments in the footnotes. She also notes that Frege's work shows an acquaintance with Aristotle's logic. Most of Bobzien's paper, however, is focused on establishing the cumulative textual support for her principal contention of plagiarism.

The textual evidence is organized around the positions of the Stoics (and their appearance in Prantl) on a number of central topics in logic, each of which is then paired with Frege's corresponding position on the same topic as found in his many published and posthumously published later works and letters. The substantial agreement that Bobzien claims can be found between the two logical systems is underpinned, in her view, by a single central conception held in common by both the Stoics and Frege, namely that of 'incorporeal contents' of both thought and communication, which are given expression in language. These contents were called *lekta* by the Stoics, while in general Frege made use of the term 'sense' (*Sinn*). Accordingly, each of the topics Bobzien surveys concerns a philosophical issue pertaining to the question of the relation between these contents and their expression in language: incomplete and complete contents, assertoric contents (or propositions), commands, questions, indexicals, first-order logic and universalization, and a range of topics falling under the general area of propositional logic, namely, negation, contradictories, double negation, compound propositions (with binary connectives), conjunction, disjunction, conditionals, and sentences with causal content.

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[13] Wolff 2011: 4–5.

Bobzien's cumulative case is constructed by carefully considering a large number of cases in the original Greek, Latin, or German (though the reader needs none of these). Her study reveals a striking correlation between Frege and Stoic logic as it is found in Prantl: there is a very large number of parallel cases between the two, elements of Stoic logic not in Prantl are missing in Frege's logical work, and some minor differences between Stoic logic and Frege's logic can be traced to a misrepresentation or misconstrual of the Stoic position in Prantl. Moreover, if Frege did have knowledge of Stoic logic, Bobzien argues, it is much more likely that he would have obtained it from the single work of the day that collected the logical fragments, rather than by separately consulting the scores of Greek and Latin works in which they were interspersed.

One example of similarity between the two is on the topic of assertoric contents (or propositions). As Bobzien notes, an important achievement in Frege is the distinction between expressing and asserting the content of a thought. In many respects, however, the details of Frege's account parallel the Stoic account of assertibles (*axiômata*). For instance (although there are further parallels on this topic), both the Stoics and Frege claim that the relevant content (a thought for Frege, an assertible for the Stoics) is uttered when stated, that the assertoric content (thought or assertible) is said or expressed thereby, and that the assertoric content is also asserted thereby. One difference concerns their respective views about expression of emotion. Bobzien sets out the Stoic emotivist position, whereby the content said with sentences that contain such expressions go beyond assertibles by addition of the emotional element, and become something neither true nor false. But Prantl misconstrues a sentence in Ammonius and takes the Stoics to understand such expressions as 'containing the True and the False'. Similarly, Frege considers emotive expressions as a compound of a thought, which has a truth value, and an emotion-eliciting element.

Bobzien concludes that the weight of evidence, consisting in over a hundred parallels, makes it extremely unlikely that Frege did not consult and draw on Stoic logic—in particular, on the logic of Prantl's Stoics—in articulating his own logical works. The question whether he did so consciously or whether he regarded it unnecessary to acknowledge the role of Stoic thought in the formation of his own considered views, is deliberately left open.

Important new arguments and textual observations, then, are brought to bear by the various distinguished authors in this volume on a wide range of topics within ancient thought, ranging over the spheres of practical and theoretical inquiry. The contributions to theoretical philosophy take in Stoic logic (Bobzein), Platonic epistemology (Fine), and Platonic metaphysics (Sedley) and mind (Betegh), while those on topics and debates in 'practical' philosophy are on particularism in Aristotle's ethics (Frede), the role of agreement in establishing what is just in Plato (Brown), and the role of Stoic therapy in the good life (Striker). Finally some chapters draw on both spheres of philosophical discourse – on divinity, metaphysics, and rule in Plato (Long), and on the tension between unfettered debate in theoretical inquiry and the determineness required from practical philosophy as guide in Cicero (Schofield).

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AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, AND PROMISES IN PLATO

LESLEY BROWN

I. Introduction

How important a role do the notions of agreement, consent, and contract play in Plato's philosophy? The topic of agreement in Plato is a large one, and spans many kinds of agreement.[1] My findings are that Plato accords little weight to agreement, consent, or contract in the ethical and political spheres, especially when contrasted with modern theorizing, where they play a much more central role.

I start by delimiting the scope of this discussion. One kind of agreement not discussed in this essay is agreement as a logical relation between propositions or beliefs. Having a consistent set of beliefs is a state to be desired. Having inconsistent beliefs is often deplored in Plato's dialogues, and the removal of such internally inconsistent beliefs is an oft-mentioned goal.[2] As well as agreement in the sense of consistency among one's beliefs, agreement between one's beliefs and one's avowals—sincerity—is an important value for Socrates, who famously insists that those with whom he is in conversation say what they believe.[3] But these are not the kinds of agreement treated here. Nor do I discuss the agreement between parties to a conversation that is often mentioned as a desired goal (together with arriving at the truth) of a shared discussion.

My topic is agreement to do such and such, together with the related notions of promising, contracts, and consent. This type of agreement is signified by the Greek verb *homologein*, used for agreeing to do something, where this is roughly equivalent to promising or consenting to something; the cognate noun *homologia* is used for an agreement or promise. In many texts we find the term *homologia* paired with *sunthēkē*, contract (I discuss these uses in sections III, IV, and VI of this chapter). Borrowing terminology from Raz, we can call the agreeing that is akin to promising *performative agreeing*, and we can call the related kind of *homologia* a performative agreement or, more simply, a promise.[4] In Greek (as with the related use of the English 'agree') to *homologein* in this use is to undertake to someone to do something. The verb (as with 'promise') always indicates a public act (usually but not necessarily a speech act) and not some private mental event or state. The syntax typically (but not invariably) distinguishes it from another important use of the verb, also usually translated 'agree', in which it represents a speech act of affirming or of giving it as one's opinion that something or other. I give the label ‘declarative’ to this other use of the verb *homologein* (meaning ‘to affirm’), which is much found in Plato’s dialogues in both narrative and conversational exchanges.[5]

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[1] This study develops some arguments first aired in my Keeling lecture of March 2012. Brown 2018 is an exploration of a different kind of agreement in Plato (declarative agreement) (*cf.* n. 5, below).

[2] *Gorg.* 482b–c: Socrates tells Callicles that it is far worse for one person to be discordant with himself and to contradict himself than for others not to agree with him.

[3] Irwin 1993 discusses and offers an explanation for the rare occasions in Socratic discussions where Socrates relaxes the rule of sincerity in order to discuss theses not believed by the person defending them.

[4] Raz 1986: 80–81.

In English we typically distinguish between a promise, made by one person to another, and an agreement, in which two or more parties enter into reciprocal commitments. But the Greek verb *homologein* (‘to agree to do’) and the noun *homologia* do duty in both cases. They can be used where English might prefer ‘promise’, of an undertaking made *to* another, even if it is not an agreement *with* that other.[6] It is for this reason that I use ‘promise’ as a rough equivalent of ‘agree [to do …]’ and of ‘agreement [to do …]’ where these represent the Greek terms.

II. ‘Vulgar’ agreement or promising

Most, perhaps all, ethical codes include the injunction that (other things being equal) one should keep one’s agreements, one’s promises. In Plato’s dialogues we find this commonplace invoked at a number of points in connection with agreements about how the conversation should be pursued. At the opening of the *Sophist*, the closing of the conversation that is figured in the *Theaetetus* as taking place the previous day—when Socrates had to go off to the lawcourts—is recalled by the renowned geometer Theodorus with the words, ‘In keeping with yesterday’s agreement (*homologian*), Socrates, we have come here in a timely way, bringing with us this stranger […]’ (216a1–20). Similarly, at *Critias* 106b, Timaeus speaks of handing over the discussion to Critias *kata tas homologias*, ‘as agreed’.

In the dialogues, we find a ready acceptance of the moral principle that one should do what one has agreed to, but with a proviso. The proviso is ‘provided it is just’, or, in other words, ‘provided that what you promised to do is just’ (*i.e.* is not unjust). This version of the everyday moral principle is found at *Crito* 49e4–6, as the prelude to Socrates’ famous argument, put in the mouth of the Laws, that by remaining in Athens Socrates had agreed to obey the laws, and hence should do what he had agreed. I will have more to say on this in the next section. The proviso ‘provided it is just’ (*dikaia onta*) reminds us of the discussion of justice in *Republic* 1. In a well-known exchange, Cephalus has volunteered that returning what you owe and telling the truth are just. Socrates, however, points out that each of these—returning a loan from a friend (*i.e.* keeping a promise to return something) and telling him the truth—would be done unjustly if the friend who lent you his weapon has subsequently gone mad (*Rep.* 331c).

The ethical commonplaces, that agreements should be kept and that one should tell another the truth, are accepted, but only with the relevant proviso: you shouldn’t do these otherwise required things if in so doing you wrong someone, or do something wrong. And these ethical commonplaces, including the injunction not to be untrustworthy in respect of oaths or of agreements, are among the everyday moral rules invoked with the label ‘vulgar’ (*phortikos*) at *Republic* 4. Here Socrates undertakes to confirm his account of true justice (in which each part of the soul, or of the city, ‘does its own’) against a list of what are conventionally labelled unjust actions (*Rep.* 442d10–443b2).[7] We do not find in Plato an outright expression of puzzlement about the basis for the obligation to keep promises (of the kind famously voiced by Hume). But his treatment of keeping agreements in *Republic* 1 (exceptions to the principle that one should do what one has agreed to do) and in *Republic* 4 (the designation 'vulgar justice', and the search for an underlying account of justice that unifies and grounds the piecemeal moral rules) show that Plato did not regard the injunction to keep agreements as a fundamental and self-explanatory aspect of morality.

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[5] Brown 2018 is an in-depth discussion of what I have labelled declarative *homologein*. My thesis is that *homologein* need not indicate a matching belief: ‘When an interlocutor is asked to *homologein*, or when he declares that he has agreed to a thesis (*hōmologēsa*), no one else’s beliefs are indicated thereby’ (Brown 2018: 31). The interlocutor is not asked to agree with the speaker, or with anyone else.

[6] *Cf. Phaed.* 115b6, c2, where Socrates (using *homologein*) envisages promises made by Crito and others to him, not a joint agreement with him.

I have rehearsed here Plato's treatment of the *fragment* of ethical conduct that concerns the keeping of agreements in order to contrast it with a very different kind of thesis, one that bases the *whole* of morality (or of justice) on agreement, as in so-called contract theories. Plato was aware of and rejected such theories, as I discuss in section IV below. But first, more detail on the invocation of the issue of sticking to just agreements found in the *Crito*.

III. The 'Crito' on abiding by just agreements

In the *Crito*, when his friend Crito begs him to escape from prison, Socrates counters his pleas with a series of arguments as to why he should remain in prison and accept the sentence. Much of the work consists in a rhetorical *tour de force* in which Socrates impersonates the Laws of Athens to harangue himself with arguments grounding their demand that he obey them unconditionally. Critics are divided on whether Plato intends to distance the arguments used by the Laws from those used by Socrates in his own voice. The unconditional obedience demanded by the personified Laws appears to be at odds with Socrates' claim in the *Apology* that if the jury were to order him to give up philosophizing, he would disobey them. The arguments have sparked a lively controversy, with many and diverse attempts to read the dialogue in such a way that Socrates is not represented in his own voice as being committed to the conclusion that he owes unconditional obedience to the laws.[8]

My aim here is not to reopen that controversy. Instead I want to scrutinize the language of agreement in order to be clear about just what Socrates is arguing in his own voice and in that of the Laws. As mentioned above, the principle that agreements should be kept is first mentioned by Socrates when he asks Crito whether one should do the things one has agreed with someone to do (provided those things are just) or whether one should, instead, play false (49e6–7).[9] One should do them, comes the reply. A few lines later, Socrates directs a new question to Crito: 'By escaping and not obeying the city, will we be harming those we should least harm, and will we be abiding by the things we've agreed, they being just, or not?'[10] While Crito readily accepted the principle that one should do what one has agreed to do, provided it is just, he is puzzled by the follow-up question, as he has not yet understood something that is soon to be revealed: that Socrates believes that by escaping he would be harming those he should least harm and—the key point for our purpose—he would be failing to abide by an agreement he has made. By way of explanation—'Look at it like this' (50a6)—Socrates proceeds to impersonate the Laws in an imaginary speech. And among their other claims they argue that Socrates has made an agreement with them to do what they command (51e3–5), such that by escaping from prison and from his sentence he would be breaking it and, hence, would wrong the Laws. Famously, they argue that it is by something he did, *viz*. by staying in Athens after he has come of age, and not by anything he said, that he has made the agreement.[11]

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[7] The list of unjust actions is labelled *phortika*, vulgar, at 443e1–2; our case is at 443a6–7, being *apistos ē kata horkous ē kata tas homologias*.

[8] Kraut 1984 offers a reading whereby the personified Laws in their speech allow that disobedience is sometimes justified. Weiss 1998 and Harte 1999 find indications that Plato does not mean for Socrates to endorse the arguments used by the Laws, so that Socrates is not committed to their authoritarian stance.

[9] *Crit.* 49e6–7: *poteron ha an tis homologēsē(i) dikaia onta poiēteon ē exapatēteon*. For the construal, see n. 10, below.

[10] *Crit.* 50a1–3: *emmenomen hois hōmologēsamen dikaiois ousin.* Some critics (including Adam 1933: 60) suggest a different construal. They understand Socrates to be asking, in the earlier passage, 'should one do the things one has agreed to be just' and, in the second, 'will we be sticking to the things we agreed to be just'. LSJ *s.v. homologeō* II.2 claims that this is a possible construal, but there seems to be no parallel case. Both the construction and the development of the argument support the interpretation assumed here, according to which Socrates intends agreeing to *do* something (and not agreeing *that* something). His question, using 'we', must be understood as asking, in effect, 'Will I be sticking to …', since it is only Socrates who is envisaged as escaping and not obeying the city. In

In examining the Laws' argument that Socrates made an agreement with them, I confine myself to a few points.[12] Earlier I said that a performative agreement, that is, something like a promise, must be a public act, but that it need not be made verbally. So it is possible to argue—as Plato does here—that a person enters into an agreement by virtue of something they do rather than by anything they say. However, this can only be the case when certain conditions hold, chief of which is that the person either knew, or was culpable in not knowing, that to act in that way counted as entering into a commitment, making a promise to do something. A classic example is that of ordering food in a restaurant, where it is well known that to do so is in effect to agree to pay for the meal. I do not think that this condition is satisfied in the case of remaining in one's city, as there seems to be no evidence that adult Athenians were aware that simply remaining in Athens constituted promising to obey the laws. Since they probably held themselves to be obligated to obey the laws independently of any promise to do so, it is implausible to suppose that they were aware that remaining constituted promising. Nonetheless, Socrates, in his own person as well as in the person of the Laws, accepts that he has 'agreed this agreement with them'.[13] The Laws go on to frame the alleged agreement in quasi-political terms, speaking of how, if Socrates were to run away, it would go against 'the treaties and agreements by which you undertook to act as a citizen towards us'. Here the Laws use the term *sunthēkai* (treaties or contracts) as well as *homologiai.*[14] Again at the close of their speech (54c2–4), the Laws repeat that Socrates would, by escaping, be breaking his 'agreements and treaties towards us'. This weighty terminology heightens the rhetorical effect of pinning a solemn agreement onto Socrates.

Despite using the term *sunthēkai* (treaties or contracts), the Laws are not claiming that there is some joint understanding, some reciprocal agreement, between the Laws (or the city) and a citizen such as Socrates. The agreement they allege is very much a one-way thing, a promise by the citizen to obey, with no mention of reciprocal promises by or guarantees from the *polis*. The Laws do indeed speak of the benefits that accrue to a citizen such as Socrates, but these form no part of the argument that Socrates made an agreement with them to obey them. I think this also emerges from the language in which they speak of him breaking 'agreements and treaties *towards us*' (54c3–4).

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the mouth of the Laws, he answers the question by demonstrating that he would, by escaping, be doing these things. See especially 54c1–6.

[11] *ergō(i)*, 51e4; *ergō(i) kai ou logō(i)*, 52d6.

[12] For a fuller discussion, see Brown 2006.

[13] *Crit.* 52a7–8: *egō autois hōmologēkōs tugchanō tautēn tēn homologian*. I pass over the further strange and flawed argument by which the Laws claim that Socrates, by being unusually satisfied with Athens, had most of all agreed to obey the city (52b–c).

[14] *Crit.* 52d2–4: *Para tas sunthēkas te kai tas homologias kath'has hēmin sunethou politeuesthai.*

Finally, what of the proviso entered when the principle of keeping agreements was first mentioned: when Socrates asked Crito whether one should do the things one has agreed with someone, *provided they are just*? The Laws do seek to argue that the agreement was just, but the point they make is a different one about justice or fairness. They claim that Socrates was not compelled to make the agreement, was not tricked into it, and was given plenty of time to leave Athens 'if we didn't please you and the agreements didn't seem just to you' (52e). Here they mention a number of factors which, in everyday moral and legal parlance, could be held to justify a person in not keeping a promise: compulsion, fraud, or being rushed into making it. Here again we find Plato invoking everyday assumptions in deploying ethical principles, all the while mounting a novel and daring claim to the effect that Socrates' behaviour counts as making an agreement of the relevant kind.[15]

This discussion has left untouched many interesting questions about the ethical positions mounted in the *Crito*. Its purpose has been to see how Plato exploits an everyday principle about keeping one's agreements (*i.e.* promises), with its everyday provisos, in the cause of making a daring claim that a citizen such as Socrates has made an agreement to obey his city's laws. We found Plato exploiting the idea that one can make an agreement by what one does, rather than by what one says, but in a context in which the claim is an implausible one (not leaving Athens on attaining one's majority is making an agreement to obey the city's laws). It has been noted how the rhetorical temperature is raised by framing the alleged promise in the legal/political jargon of making and breaking contracts or treaties (54c3–4: breaking (*parabas*) your agreements and contracts (*sunthēkas*) towards us). Before leaving the *Crito*, we should note the other arguments Socrates and the Laws offer for obedience. These appeal to factors independent of any obligation voluntarily incurred by Socrates: the wrongness of harming the laws/the city given the benefits that the laws and the city have provided (51d), and given their status as more deserving of esteem and honour and absolute obedience even than one's parents (51a–c). So much, then, for Plato's treatment of the everyday principle that one should keep one's agreements.

IV. Agreement and contract as the foundation of justice

Moral and political theories giving a foundational role to agreement are found in both ancient and modern philosophy, and we shall shortly examine Plato's critical treatment of one such theory. Rawls, Gauthier, and Scanlon are among the best known twentieth-century writers giving a foundational place to agreement, although the kinds of agreement invoked by each are rather different. In the face of scepticism about any historical agreement, theorists such as Rawls appeal to what is called hypothetical agreement, the notion of something that rational persons *would* agree to. Critics then retort that a merely hypothetical agreement cannot be binding; to which defenders of (a version of) contractarian theory reply that the hypothetical agreement should not be seen as promissory agreement but, rather, as a mechanism by which to discover fair principles.[16]

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[15] Kraut 1984: 30 links 52e, where the Laws draw attention to the absence of compulsion, deceit, and time shortage, to the initial exposition of the principle of keeping agreements provided that they are just. See n. 9, 'If 52d8–e5 is not the passage in which the Laws affirm the principle of just agreements, then what is?'. Harte 1999: 126 notes that the Laws do not qualify their insistence that agreements must be kept with the proviso 'provided they—sc. the actions promised— are just', and infers that their speech should not be read as something Socrates endorses. I follow Harte in holding that the reference to just agreements in what the Laws say is a different point from the principle that one should do what one has agreed to do, provided it (the thing to be done) is just. But I do not conclude a lack of endorsement from Socrates, noting how deeply entwined are the views of Socrates and those of the Laws (see, for instance, 52a6–8, 52d4–7).

In considering any such theory a key question to be asked is: what kind of agreement is in question? Is it an agreement to a set of beliefs such as a set of moral principles or a given political arrangement? Or is it rather supposed to be an agreement *to do* something, akin to a promise or contract? Or perhaps both: an agreement to a set of principles together with an agreement, that is a promise, to obey them? Whatever the case actually is with recent theories appealing to agreement, it is clear from the terminology used in the ancient versions of the theory I examine below that they appeal to *agreement in the sense of a promise or a contract*. As we shall see in section VII, the difference between an agreement to do something and agreement in the sense of shared beliefs will prove to be important in our scrutiny of Plato's views on agreement.

The best known locus for a theory basing morality (or justice) on an agreement is that found in *Republic* 2. There, Glaucon puts forward what is known as the social contract theory of the origin of justice. Glaucon distances himself from this view, saying that he is renewing the account of Thrasymachus and reporting what 'some people' say about the origin of justice. This indicates what we know, that the theory was current in the intellectual climate in which Plato was writing.

> Glaucon: Listen to this on the subject I first mentioned—what justice is and what its origins are. They say that to do injustice is naturally good and to suffer injustice bad, but that the badness of suffering it so far exceeds the goodness of doing it that those who have done and suffered injustice and tasted both, but who lack the power to do it and avoid suffering it, decide that it is profitable to come to an agreement with each other (*allēlois sunthesthai*) neither to do injustice nor to suffer it. As a result they began to make laws and covenants (*sunthēkas*) and what the law commands they call lawful and just. […] People value justice not as a good but because they are too weak to do injustice with impunity. Someone who has the power to do this, however, and is a true man, wouldn't make an agreement with anyone (*oud'an heni pote sunthesthai*) not to do injustice in order not to suffer it.
>
> (*Rep.* 358e3–359b3)

Here we have an early version of what has come to be known as Contractarianism (as now distinguished from Contractualism).[17] That is, it is a theory which takes its start from the assumed self-interest of all parties. But Glaucon's account goes beyond an assumption of universal self-interest. A striking feature of the version he offers is that he couples it with a very bleak picture of human motivation. It is human nature, he tells us, to be motivated by

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[16] Verbeek, Bruno and Morris, Christopher, "Game Theory and Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/game-ethics/: 'However, this is to misunderstand the nature of these theories; hypothetical rational agreement is not meant to be *promissory*. Rather, it is first of all *heuristic*, a mechanism designed to determine the nature and content of mutually beneficial, fair principles'.

[17] 'Contractarianism, which stems from the Hobbesian line of social contract thought, holds that persons are primarily self-interested, and that a rational assessment of the best strategy for attaining the maximisation of their self-interest will lead them to act morally (where the moral norms are determined by the maximisation of joint interest) and to consent to governmental authority'. Cudd, Ann and Eftekhari, Seena, "Contractarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/contractarianism/>.

pleonexia (359c5). This is not mere self-interest, but the desire to get the better of, to get one up on, our fellow human beings. People are held back from wronging others only by fear of being wronged by those others in return—so the theory Glaucon is reporting claims. Hence the supposed agreement neither to wrong nor to be wronged; in order to escape the bad situation of being in danger of being wronged by others, people will make a bargain and give up the supposed good of being able to wrong others so as to gain an advantage for themselves. But—as the end of the quoted passage alleges—no real man would accept the *pis aller* of making an agreement neither to wrong nor be wronged, because a real man could wrong others with impunity. It is being in this position that represents the ideal state of affairs according to this bleak version of the theory.

So, the story postulates an actual agreeing between parties. And it specifically casts this agreeing as a kind of contract, using the verb meaning to contract, *suntithenai*, and the noun *sunthēkai*. We may think this is not a crucial feature of the account, for it is possible to read it as representing morality as a set of promises that vulnerable people *could have made*, recognizing that the universal making and keeping of such agreements served their individual interests better than a free-for-all. Either way, there is the possibility of a 'free rider' here—of someone who can wrong others with impunity while still benefitting from the fact that those others are law-abiding. This is presented as a crucial problem for the theory: the possibility of someone (such as Gyges with his ring of invisibility) being able to escape punishment for their misdeeds while benefitting from the law-abidingness of others.

We would not expect Plato's Socrates to have any sympathy with a theory which makes the foundation of morality an essentially defensive agreement between self-interested and basically hostile parties who enter into it and abide by it only as long as it is in their own interest to do so. And, indeed, he does not, since this theory is open to the objection that, on this account of the nature of justice, it is only having the *reputation* for justice that benefits a person, not actually *being* just. Socrates goes on to accept Glaucon's invitation to reject the theory and to argue instead that each person's justice is a good for that person, individually, and regardless of what their fellows think of them or how they treat them. By way of answering Glaucon's challenge, and with the help of the city-soul analogy, Socrates will go on to give his famous account of justice in the individual person. It is a harmonious arrangement and balance of the three parts of a person's soul, where each part of the soul does its own work. Such a harmony in the soul is akin to health in the body, and is even more valuable to possess than bodily health. This Socratic account is in stark contrast to the 'social contract' theory which construes the benefits of justice as accruing to us not from our own individual just character or conduct, but from that of society as a whole, and specifically from the just conduct we receive from our fellow citizens, officials, and so on. On Glaucon's theory, our own just conduct is nothing but a burden to us—another's good (*allotrion agathon*), as Thrasymachus had claimed. The so-called social contract theory of morality or justice is thus presented in a poor light in *Republic* 2, and the reader is left in no doubt of Plato's unfavourable attitude. Locating the origin of justice in a supposed agreement has the added drawbacks of making it contingent, not necessary; time-bound and not timeless; a product of human choices and not a matter of nature.

One earlier indication of the kind of theory Glaucon reports is found in a fragment of a work by the fifth-century sophist Antiphon. Antiphon Fr. 44 (On Truth/*Alētheia*) contrasts matters of law with matters of nature: matters of nature are necessary while matters of law are agreed (*hōmologēta*) rather than being produced by nature. 'Those who transgress what is a matter of law/convention (*nomos*) avoid shame and punishment if they escape the notice of those who made the agreement (*tous homologēsantas*)'. A transgression of nature, however, even if unnoticed, is still bad for you, for then you are harmed by reality (*di'alētheian*) and not by mere opinion (*dia doxan*).

Although Antiphon does not here use the language of contracting (*suntithenai*, *sunthēkai*), as Glaucon did, his reference to those who *made the agreement* strongly suggests that he has in mind agreeing in the sense of entering into an agreement to act in certain ways. The public in general, those who may or may not witness your misdeeds, are spoken of as the ones who made an agreement. Instead of the more common antithesis between what is by nature and what is a matter of *nomos* (law or custom), Antiphon here contrasts what is by nature with what has been agreed.

Plato returns briefly to the theory that justice is grounded in agreements or compacts in *Laws* 10, where the chief speaker, the Athenian Stranger, makes plain his disapproval of this view. In sketching the views of certain atheists, the Stranger here links two shocking claims that the atheists are said to make, one about the origins of belief in the gods and the other about the origins of justice.

> Athenian Stranger: These people say the gods exist by artifice (*technē*), not by nature but by some laws/conventions (*nomois*), and are different in different places, according to the agreements different peoples made among themselves when laying down laws/conventions (*sunhōmologēsan nomothetoumenoi*) […] [N]othing is just by nature […] [T]he most just thing of all is what someone can get away with by force.
>
> (*Laws* 889e–890a)

First, the gods are merely constructs of human making, differing according to the agreements of different peoples. Second, on the basis of these same theories nothing is just by nature (*phusei dikaion*), and *force majeure* is the mark of what is most just. Here a denial of objective or natural justice is presented as part of a theory debunking religious views as mere products of different local conventions that originated in agreements.

I have drawn attention to texts outlining theories which base morality or justice in agreements, construed as contracts, and have noted how, in the case of the two Platonic sources, the theories are unsympathetically received. A related but different account is briefly sketched in Plato's *Theaetetus*, when Socrates develops Protagoras' theory that Man is the Measure. While earlier discussions of the theory interpreted it as claiming that what appears to an individual person is for that person—that is, as relativizing appearances and beliefs to an individual—a later development has Protagoras proposing that whatever seems just or noble to each city is so for that city, as long as it holds things thus.[18] Socrates here leaves the view about what is just and noble unrefuted (although he doubtless rejects it), instead pointing out that no one would dare to make the same claim about what is beneficial. No one would have the gall to claim that whatever a city lays down as *beneficial* to itself will in fact benefit the city (175a5–b2). The Protagorean claim about how a city's views determine what is just and noble in that city can be construed as a kind of theory that bases justice on agreement, although no term for agreement is used. But we do come close to the language of agreement when Socrates characterizes the view as holding that *to koinē(i) doxan*—what is judged, or held, or decided *in common*—becomes what is true (about justice) for as long as it is so decided (175b5–6). This is not exactly an agreement in the sense of a contract between competing parties, but it is in the sense of a joint resolve to outlaw and disvalue certain types of conduct, calling them unjust.

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[18] *Theaet.* 167c4–6. See also 168b5–6, 172b3–6, and 177c9–d2.

V. Protagoras' Great Speech: a different kind of theory of the origin of morality

Here I argue that, contrary to how it is sometimes represented by critics, the brief account of the origins of society and of morality in the Great Speech in Plato's *Protagoras* should not be classed as a version of the social contract theory. Protagoras has accepted the challenge to show that virtue can be taught, and that, in practice, everyone in a civilized society possesses it. With the help of a myth, he explains how men came to be able to live together in law-governed cities, respecting each other and co-operating against the wild beasts. According to the myth, Zeus, seeing how men were unable to co-operate at first, sent his messenger Hermes to bring men *aidōs kai dikē*, a sense of shame and justice. The prosaic equivalents are *dikaiosunē* and *sōphrosunē*, justice and moderation, both necessary for a well-ordered society. Zeus, according to the myth, instructed Hermes to bestow these gifts on all, not just a few. The gift was to ensure that there would be 'order within cities and bonds of friendship to unite them'.[19]

Stripped of the mythical overlay, the claim amounts to this: the gradual development among human beings of a sense of shame, respect for others, and bonds of friendship was necessary for a system of inter-personal morality to develop. Here we find a more appealing, and surely more realistic, picture of human nature than that found in Glaucon's theory. Protagoras' version stresses the evolution of the pro-social human trends. It is striking that there is no terminology of contract or agreement in the *Protagoras* account, although commentators nevertheless do not hesitate to regard it as a version of the contract theory.[20] Denyer has advanced a detailed argument in which he notes a number of passages that—on his reading—presuppose that Protagoras' theory is a version of the social contract theory. His argument is ingenious, citing scattered remarks which show that Protagoras recognizes how men are liable to selfishness. But I don't think that these passages support Denyer's likening of the Protagorean account to that of Glaucon. Denyer argues that Protagoras must invoke a *contract* between ruthlessly self-interested parties as the solution to conflict between them. But his speech has no suggestion of a contract. Instead, Protagoras appeals to how selfish traits are countered by the pro-social tendencies towards living in harmony, tendencies which are both required by and fostered by communal living. This is what Zeus' gift to mankind of *aidōs* and *dikē* represents, and these arguably provide a more stable basis for co-operation than does a supposed contract.

I suggest that in the myth presented by Protagoras—a more sympathetic version of the story of the origin of society and social norms—Plato deliberately avoids Glaucon's terminology of contract (*sunthēkē*), because that suggests an arrangement between self-interested, indeed selfish, parties, lacking any basis in mutual respect, ties of friendship, and the like.

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[19] *Prot.* 322c2–3: *poleōn kosmoi kai desmoi philias sunagōgoi.*

[20] Most recently Denyer 2008: 107–08, who compares Protagoras' version with that of Glaucon and those of earlier sophists. At 108 Denyer refers to comments on later passages which, on his reading, support the interpretation of this part of the myth as a version of the social contract theory.

VI. Agreement and contract in the 'Cratylus' on naming

A starring role for *sunthēkē*—contract, compact, or convention (I discuss the translation shortly)—is found in the *Cratylus'* debate about the correctness of names. Rival theories about correctness are mooted, with Cratylus adhering to the view that there is a natural correctness of naming, while Hermogenes defends the view that, as he initially says, 'there is no other correctness of a name than convention and agreement'. The Greek terms are *sunthēkē kai homologia*, precisely the pair of terms Plato uses in the *Crito*—as we saw in Section III when the Laws try to pin on Socrates an agreement to obey them. I propose to examine some of the terminology used for the 'convention' theory and some puzzles in the exposition of the theory.

This intriguing discussion of the 'correctness of names' has received several recent scholarly treatments of a very high calibre. At the opening of the dialogue, the two alternative accounts of the correctness of names are sketched, known as the nature view and the convention view. It will be useful to lay out a very brief summary of the plot. Hermogenes spells out his convention view early on, after which Socrates criticizes it, first by a loose association with Protagoras' views and then by an argument insisting that the use of words, like the use of any other tool, requires an *expert*, someone who respects the nature of the thing named when employing their expertise. Socrates takes it that they have refuted the convention view, and a long section pursuing the 'nature' theory follows, with copious demonstration of Socrates' skill at linguistic decoding and providing etymologies. Next he examines the so-called first names, and the idea that their correctness requires *resemblance* between their elements and the elements of what is named. At this point, Socrates starts to be critical of the nature theory—now at last defended by the previously silent Cratylus. In an important and much disputed stretch—I call it 'the return of convention'—Socrates changes tack and argues for some role for convention in the correctness of names. He persuades the reluctant Cratylus that convention and habit contribute something to the indication of what we are thinking of when we speak, and that 'it's necessary to make use as well of that vulgar thing convention (*sunthēkē*) for the correctness of names'.[21]

At the start, Hermogenes tells us what Cratylus believes, indicating Cratylus' objection to invoking convention in the correctness of names:

> Hermogenes: Cratylus here, Socrates, says there is a natural correctness of name for each thing there is, and what some people conventionally agree to call something (applying a bit of their voice that they utter to the thing) isn't a name; rather there's a natural correctness of names for Greeks and barbarians, the same for everyone.
>
> (*Crat.* 383a4–b2)[22]

Next he lays out his own view, in three stages, which I indicate by the numeration in brackets:

> Hermogenes: Well, Socrates, I've often discussed this with Cratylus and lots of others, but I can't be persuaded that (H1) there's any other correctness of a name than

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[21] Critics are strongly divided on what moral Plato intends here. While earlier critics welcomed 'The Return of Convention' passage as showing Socrates injecting a dose of common sense into the proceedings and puncturing the folly of the resemblance theory, more recently Barney 1997 and Sedley 2003 have both tried to redress the balance. They insist that Plato did take etymology seriously, and that it is a mistake to understand Socrates to be giving up the nature theory entirely. Ademollo 2011 finds more support for the 'convention' theory in Socrates' final position.

[22] Translations from *Cratylus* are based on those in Ademollo 2011.

> convention and agreement. (H2) For it seems to me that whatever name one imposes on something, that's its correct name, and if you change it by imposing another one, and don't call the thing by the former name any more, the new name is no less correct than the old, just like when we change the names of our slaves. (H3) For no name belongs by nature to anything, but only by custom and the habit of those who've made a habit of calling things by those names.
>
> (*Crat*. 384c10–d7)

In his opening claim, (H1), we find the terms *sunthēkē kai homologia*, familiar from the *Crito* and from political and legal discourse. While *sunthēkē* has previously been translated 'contract', here, where the discussion centres on the correctness of naming, 'convention' is preferred. Some conventions, such as the Geneva Convention or the Hague Convention, result from explicit, dateable agreements. Others have no such origin in an explicit agreement and are more akin to custom, mentioned along with habit in H3. If we are to think of language as a matter of convention, then the second type of convention—the one not originating in an explicit agreement—is the better model, as Lewis argued.[23] H3 mentions custom and habit. There are differences between these. While customs are essentially shared, a habit can be that of a single person; and while customs (like conventions) are generally normative, a habit is not. Other things being equal, one should abide by a custom, but this is not the case with a habit. So we have something of a mixed bag in the four terms found in H1 and H3: convention, agreement, custom, and habit. But the first three have some important features in common: they denote *shared* practices, and they are *normative*. These features, and especially that of being something shared, are surely crucial if they are to play a part in a theory of the correctness of names.

That is why Hermogenes' second claim, H2, seems so out of place, for it focusses on the naming choices of a single individual. This is out of kilter with his other characterizations of the convention theory. The remark emphasizes how something individual, contingent, and changeable can (allegedly) still possess correctness. But the example of a master renaming his slave is so far removed from ordinary naming practices that its probative value is very weak. Some have tried to defend the coherence of his account—combining the communal with the individual—by noting that in H2 he speaks of name-*giving*, while H1 and H3 are about *using* a name.[24] But even if we accept this defence, the claim about an individual's ability to impose whatever name they please seems far-fetched. And it is a weak point of his presentation that he sandwiches a remark about an individual's naming decisions (H2) between two claims focusing on something communal: convention, agreement, custom.

I pass over the lengthy stretch in which Socrates argues against the convention theory, in part with the claims that correct naming requires expertise and is not a task anyone can perform, as the convention theory claims. And I pass over the long stretch in which he defends the theory of natural correctness with an etymological demonstration of how to decode correctly given names, hastening on instead to the point at which convention comes back into the picture. Socrates asks Cratylus:

> Or do you prefer this other way that Hermogenes and lots of others suggest, that words are *suthēmata* (passwords, agreed tokens) that indicate to those who have made

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[23] Lewis 1969.

[24] Barney 1997; Sedley 2003.

> the convention (*tois sunthemenois*) and know the items beforehand; and that it's this, convention, that is the correctness of names, and it makes no difference whether one makes a convention like the one now in force or, quite the contrary, calls 'big' the thing now called 'small', and vice versa?
>
> (*Crat*. 433e2–9).

The terminology here is important. The essence of a password, to which the theory as here expressed likens names, is that it is something shared. Passwords are established to allow communication between several parties. This idea of language as a means of interpersonal communication continues when Cratylus has to concede that he can understand the term *sklēros*, meaning hard, even though (since it contains the sound L) it apparently does not resemble what it denotes—as it should do on his account.

> Cratylus: Of course I do <understand it>, because of habit.
>
> Socrates. When you say 'habit' do you think you're saying anything different from convention? Or is this habit you speak of anything except when I utter this I think of that, and you recognize that I think of that? Isn't this what you're talking about?
>
> Cratylus: Yes.
>
> Socrates: Then if you recognize this when I make the utterance, you get from me an indication?
>
> Cratylus: Yes.
>
> Socrates: The indication comes from what is unlike, if L is unlike the hardness you're speaking of. But if that's so, didn't you *make a convention with yourself*, and the correctness of the name turns out to be a matter of convention for you, since both the like and the unlike letters indicate, meeting with habit and convention. And even if habit isn't convention, it still wouldn't be right to say that likeness does the indicating, but rather habit, because it can indicate both with what's alike and with what's unlike, apparently. And since we grant this, Cratylus—I'll take your silence for consent—then necessarily convention and habit contribute something to the indication of what we're thinking of when we speak. Because, dear friend, if you'll turn to numbers, where do you think you'll be able to find names that are like each number, if you don't allow your *agreement and convention* to have some authority over the correctness of names? Now I too like the idea that, as far as possible, names are like things. But I'm afraid that this dragging in of likeness is rather sticky—to quote Hermogenes {at 414c3}—and it's necessary to make use as well of *that vulgar thing, convention*, for the correctness of names.
>
> (*Crat*. 434e4-435c7)

On the basis of this intriguing passage I make two observations. The first is to note how Socrates wavers between recognition of the essentially *shared* nature of convention, as in his first quoted remark, and a strange claim that the convention theory of naming postulates 'making a convention *with oneself*'. This, I submit, is a bad mistake: one cannot make a convention with oneself (or make a promise to oneself, despite what is often supposed). Of course, one can make a private resolution to do something, but that is emphatically not making a convention or agreement with oneself. The remark tars the convention theory with the taint of individualism, oddly in tension with the stress elsewhere in this exchange on the key role of inter-personal understanding.

The second point concerns the end of the passage quoted, where Socrates argues that there is some role for convention in accounting for the correctness of names, but nonetheless calls it something vulgar, commonplace. The use of this epithet perhaps reflects what we saw in section II, that abiding by agreements is one of the commonplace elements of everyday morality. But it also, and more importantly, reflects something that Plato finds objectionable in conventions or agreements: they can be made by, and sustained by, everyday folk, and not merely by experts. And they can change, which is another drawback in Plato's eyes for anything foundational or explanatory. Indeed, even today people often find it objectionable when language changes due to popular usage. So the marks against agreement, contract, or convention playing a foundational role in morality—that it is contingent, changeable, and not a matter of expertise—presumably explain his labelling of convention as vulgar (*phortikē*), even while he recognizes that convention must play a part in the matter of correctness of names, *i.e.* in language.

After this brief examination of Plato's treatment of the role of convention in language, I now return to agreement in the ethico-political sphere, still with the aim of discerning how much value Plato accords agreement, and what sort of political agreement he favours.

VII. What kind of agreement is required for the best political arrangements?

Must a ruler, or a ruling class, rule with the consent or agreement of the governed, in Plato's view? I start with what may seem to be a flat contradiction, between what Socrates says in *Republic* 4 about agreement in the best city, and a pronouncement in the later dialogue the *Statesman*. Plato gives his leading speaker in the *Statesman*, the Eleatic Stranger, a remarkable claim. There is one and only one criterion for a correct *politeia*—constitution or political arrangement—and that is whether or not the rulers possess the right kind of knowledge. If they do, then it does not matter whether they rule according to or without laws, whether they rule over willing or unwilling subjects, and whether they are poor or wealthy (*Statesman* 293c, *cf.* 292a, c). Making it irrelevant whether or not they rule according to laws is highly troubling, as too is the irrelevance of whether they rule over willing or unwilling subjects, for, surely, a good city is one in which the subjects consent to be governed, or at least in which they are not unwilling subjects.

This claim can be softened a little by appealing to other material from the *Statesman*. Cooper has shown how a ruler with the relevant knowledge will encourage some participation from the city's citizens.[25] Nonetheless, as Cooper concedes, the Stranger provocatively compares the expert ruler to the expert doctor, in the respect that neither departs from their expertise if they use force to get their clients to do what the expert knows is best for them. The verdict in the *Statesman* is, thus, uncompromising: the criterion for the best constitution is that its rulers possess the knowledge of statesmanship, and no weight should be given to whether or not persons possessing this knowledge rule with the consent of the ruled.

At first blush there seems to be a contradiction between this view and that which we find in *Republic* 4 when Socrates lays out the four virtues of a good person and, correspondingly, of a good city. When he turns to the virtue of moderation (*sōphrosunē*) as it applies to a city, he justifies the earlier hint that it will prove to be some kind of harmony by saying that a city with this virtue will be one in which the same belief about who should rule is found in both the rulers and the ruled (*Rep.* 431d10–e2). Socrates goes on to use the terms *homonoia* (concord) and *homodoxia* (sameness of belief), as well as *symphōnia* and *harmonia*, for this desired state of affairs. So Socrates may here seem to be stipulating that the best state, possessing moderation, will be one in which the subordinates have agreed to be ruled by their betters.

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[25] Cooper 1999: 186–90.

These terms, especially *homonoia* and *homodoxia*, evidently indicate some kind of agreement. I shall argue that the agreement in question should not be construed as consent, that is, as the subordinate agreeing to be ruled by their betters. *Homonoia* is standardly paired with *philia*—friendship, in contrast to war or *stasis*, strife.[26] It was apparently a buzzword among conservative political thinkers, indicating a willingness to accept the wise guidance of one's betters. In one use, then, it represents the value of everyone getting along together, with no insubordination from the subjects. But, in a rather striking way, Socrates characterizes it here as something more than just getting along well. Rather, *homonoia* is to be found when the same belief about who should rule is held by all three classes. It is equated with *homodoxia*, literally 'likeness of belief', a term that may have been invented by Plato. In a penetrating article entitled 'What's the Good of Agreeing?', Rachana Kamtekar has discussed this part of *Republic* 4, and this particular issue, at length.[27] Rendering *homonoia* as 'agreement', she answers her own question with the claim that political agreement is good when it is the product of an education that cultivates citizens' capacities for judgement.[28] The burden of Kamtekar's paper is to emphasize the intellectual aspect of Socrates' presentation of *homonoia* in the *polis*; even the lowest class is to be educated to 'appreciate what is genuinely valuable about their constitution and government—which is what brings about political agreement'.[29] This approach is very enlightening, but we must be careful in noting what kind of agreement is advocated. When Socrates advocates a shared belief about who should rule, this belief is certainly a kind of agreement. However, in my view we should distinguish it from an *agreement to rule* (on the part of the guardians) or an *agreement to be ruled* (on the part of the rest). We may accept that political agreement is a virtue for Socrates, but we should not equate this with the lower classes agreeing to be ruled (as well as the rulers agreeing to rule).

Is this a distinction without a difference? I think not. It is one thing to agree that (*i.e.* to believe that) something should happen, but it is quite another thing to agree to—that is, to consent to—do or undergo it. I may agree that I should have my tooth extracted, but that is not the same as consenting to its extraction. The description of a moderate city as one in which the citizens share a belief about who should rule and who should be ruled shows that (rather surprisingly) moderation is represented as depending on the beliefs of all concerned. Agreement between beliefs is advocated, but this is distinct from requiring that the lowest classes agree to be ruled. Requiring that the lowest classes agree (*i.e.* believe in common with the rulers) that the guardians should rule does not equate to an insistence that the lowest classes consent or undertake or agree to be ruled.

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[26] *E.g.* at *Rep.* 351d5–6: 'injustice produces warring; justice produces concord (*homonoia*) and friendship'. Kamtekar 2004 has a useful discussion of fifth- and fourth-century uses of the term *homonoia.*

[27] Kamtekar 2004.

[28] Kamtekar 2004: 148.

[29] Kamtekar 2004: 168.

By insisting on this distinction, two points can be made. First, we can go some way towards removing the apparent conflict between the *Statesman's* insistence that the willingness or consent of the subjects forms no part of the criterion of the best constitution, and the characterization of moderation in *Republic* 4 as some kind of agreement (*homonoia*, *homodoxia*). Kamtekar's very different solution is to insist on a distinction between city and constitution. She points out that, in the *Republic*, agreement to the rule of the experts is a virtue of the *city*, while what we find in the *Statesman* is a 'declaration that the willingness of subjects to be ruled by the ruler is irrelevant to the correctness of the *constitution*'.[30] Instead, I have suggested that we keep clear the distinction between an agreement in the sense of a concurrence of beliefs—required in *Republic* 4 to render the city a moderate, and in that respect good, city— and an agreement or consent to being ruled, which the *Statesman* denies is a requirement for the best constitution. In Plato's eyes, it is of value, indeed a virtue, that all parts have the same belief—*i.e.* the correct one—about who should rule. That the lowest class in the city should consent has no such value: that message of the *Statesman* is perfectly consistent with how I understand the role of agreement in *Republic* 4.

Second, the distinction chimes with what this chapter has sought to emphasize throughout. In discussing the kind of agreement that is akin to promising or entering into a contract, Plato's characters have made clear their reluctance to accord a major importance to that particular kind of agreement. It is true that Socrates accepts that the keeping of one's agreements (promises, contracts) is a part of everyday morality, and that he shows awareness of the everyday provisos surrounding the keeping of agreements (sections II and III). But great antipathy is shown towards any attempt—such as the one related by Glaucon—to give the voluntary entering into agreements a more significant role in the foundation of morality (or, even worse, into theories about the gods) (section IV). Such antipathy perhaps also accounts for the way in which Socrates plays down any role for *sunthēkē*, convention, in an area in which it would seem both harmless and necessary, that of the so-called correctness of names (section VI). As we saw, even when arguing for some role for convention in our mutual understanding of language, Socrates still characterizes *sunthēkē* as vulgar or commonplace. Neither in morality nor in political theory nor in philosophy of language does Plato allow 'that vulgar thing, convention', to play a foundational role.

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[30] Kamtekar 2004: 163.

EPISTÊMÊ AND *DOXA*, KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, IN THE *PHAEDO*

GAIL FINE

I. Introduction

Lately, some commentators have argued that *epistêmê*, as Plato understands it, is not knowledge as we understand it nowadays; and that *doxa*, as he understands it, is not belief as we understand it nowadays.[1] Some have maintained this on the ground that Plato, in their view, individuates *epistêmê* and *doxa* by reference to their objects, whereas knowledge and belief are not individuated by their objects. In particular, it has been argued that Plato thinks there is *epistêmê* but not *doxa* about Forms, and that there is *doxa* but not *epistêmê* about sensibles. (This is a version of what is often called the Two Worlds (TW) Theory.)[2] So, for example, Jessica Moss writes that '[i]f we can have beliefs about intelligibles, then Plato does not mean by *doxa* what we mean by belief'.[3] Since, in her view, Plato does not allow *doxai* about intelligibles, she infers that *doxa* is not belief. She also argues that, at least in *Republic* 10, *doxa* is broader than belief, although she thinks that, at least in the *Theaetetus*, it is too narrow to count as belief.[4] Similarly, it has been argued that *epistêmê* is not knowledge because it is more difficult to attain than knowledge is—although, as we shall see, it has also been argued that Plato sometimes conceives of *epistêmê* too broadly for it to count as knowledge.[5]

To decide about this, we need an account both of how Plato conceives of *epistêmê* and *doxa* and also of how 'we' understand knowledge and belief nowadays. But doing this is difficult: for commentators differ not only on the question of how Plato conceives of *epistêmê* and *doxa*, but also on that of what knowledge and belief are. Hence two commentators could agree about how Plato describes *epistêmê* but disagree about whether it is knowledge, because they have different views about what knowledge is. Or they might agree about what knowledge is, but disagree about how Plato describes *epistêmê*. Similarly, *mutatis mutandis*, for belief.

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[1] For the view that *epistêmê* is not knowledge, see *e.g.* Burnyeat 1980: 173–91 and 1981: 97–139; Annas 1981; Nehamas 1985: 1–30; Schwab 2015: 1–36. For the view that *doxa* is not belief, see *e.g.* Moss 2014: 213–38; Moss and Schwab 2019: 1–32. This last paper was published too late for me to take full account of it.

[2] There are many formulations of TW, not all of which are obviously equivalent. In Fine 1978 (repr. 2003) and in Fine 1990 (repr. 2003), I argue that *Republic* 5 is not committed to TW; and in Fine 2004: 41–81 I argue that the *Meno* is not committed to it. Fine 2016: 557–72, to which the present chapter is a companion, argues that the *Phaedo* is not committed to this position either.

[3] Moss 2014: 217.

[4] Moss 2014. See also Moss and Schwab 2019. Neither of these papers discusses the *Phaedo* which, however, is my focus here.

[5] For the view that *epistêmê* is more difficult to attain than knowledge is, see the articles cited in n. 1, above. For the view that it is sometimes conceived of too broadly to count as knowledge, see my discussion of Gerson in section V, below.

These are not just abstract possibilities. For example, I have mentioned that one reason Moss gives for thinking that *epistêmê* and *doxa* are not knowledge and belief is that the former but not the latter are individuated by their objects. Ralph Wedgwood agrees with Moss (and many others) that Plato takes *epistêmê* and *doxa* to have different objects (and so favours TW). He nonetheless takes *epistêmê* to be knowledge, and to have several important features characteristic of knowledge as some epistemologists conceive of it nowadays.[6] Moss and Wedgwood agree that Plato accepts TW; but they disagree about whether that implies that *epistêmê*, as he conceives of it, is not knowledge.

Or, to take another example, Whitney Schwab has recently argued that *epistêmê*, as Plato conceives of it in the *Meno*, is not knowledge, but a different phenomenon, understanding.[7] Several commentators agree that *epistêmê*, for Plato, is understanding. But it is sometimes thought that understanding is either knowledge as such or a kind of knowledge.[8] This is disagreement about how to understand understanding, not about how Plato conceives of *epistêmê*.

Here I find it helpful to distinguish the *concepts* of knowledge and belief from particular *conceptions* of them.[9] A *concept* of knowledge or belief specifies an abstract general account of them; different ways of filling in those accounts yield different *conceptions* of them. Even contemporary epistemologists have different conceptions of knowledge and belief. But we should not infer from this fact alone that they have different concepts of knowledge and belief.[10] Similarly, even if Plato's conceptions of *epistêmê* and *doxa* differ from some or all contemporary conceptions of knowledge and belief, they might nonetheless be conceptions of shared concepts of knowledge and belief.

For an analogy to this way of proceeding, consider the famous question of whether, when Plato explains justice in the *Republic* as a certain sort of psychic harmony, he is explaining justice in the sense in which Glaucon and Adeimantus understand it.[11] David Sachs famously answered 'no'; in his view, Plato is talking about something else altogether and so he commits the 'fallacy of irrelevance'. Others have argued that Plato has an unusual view of justice—but, for all that, it is still a view of justice. It is useful to point out how Plato's view of justice differs from other views of it. But we should be careful before concluding that he is not talking about justice at all. Similarly, even if Plato's conceptions of *epistêmê* and *doxa* differ from some or all contemporary conceptions of knowledge and belief, they might nonetheless be conceptions of shared concepts of knowledge and belief.

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[6] Wedgwood 2018: 33–56.

[7] Schwab 2015.

[8] Schwab 2015: 25 describes Foley 2012: 8 as holding the first view, for which see also Sliwa 2015: 57–74. Burnyeat seems to favour the second view: see the articles cited in n. 1, above. See also *e.g.* Greco 2014: 285–302. For the view that understanding is not even a kind of knowledge, see *e.g.* Hills 2009: 94–127 and her 2016: 661–88. For criticism of Hills 2009, see Sliwa 2015.

[9] For this terminology, see Rawls 1971: 9. See also Wiggins 1980: 79 n. (Thanks to David Charles and Tim Williamson for this reference. As Williamson (correspondence) notes, Wiggins' notion of a concept is different from that of Rawls.) Bonjour 2010: 57–83 seems to use 'concept' where I (following Rawls) use 'conception'; and he seems to use 'conception' where I (again following Rawls) use 'concept'. Thanks here to Whitney Schwab.

[10] Schwab thinks it would be 'imprudent' to assume that there is a shared general account of knowledge; hence he restricts himself to asking whether *epistêmê* is knowledge as it is *standardly* understood in contemporary epistemology (2015: 2). As he acknowledges, however, even if it is not knowledge as it is *standardly* understood in contemporary epistemology, it might be knowledge as it is sometimes, if not standardly, understood in contemporary epistemology. And even if it is not a contemporary conception of knowledge, it might be a conception of the general concept of knowledge, just one that is not current.

[11] See *Republic* 4. For Sachs, see his 1963: 141–58. For one of many replies to Sachs, see Dahl 1999: 207–34.

But how, one might ask, can we can tell when A and B have different conceptions of a single concept rather than different concepts? Plato addresses this, if only briefly, by applying 'commonplace tests' (*Rep*. 442e), arguing that the account he has provided preserves enough of our intuitions or generally shared beliefs about justice; he also argues that his account does the right sort of explanatory work.

Perhaps there is no completely uncontroversial account of the concepts of knowledge and belief (not much is *completely* uncontroversial!). Still, I will take the concept of belief to be that of taking something to be true; this is, at any rate, a familiar view of belief.[12] On this concept of belief, if one merely entertains the possibility that the oar is bent in water, or wonders whether it is, or acts as though it is, or accepts that it is as a hypothesis about whose truth one suspends judgment, one does not thereby believe that the oar is bent in water. But if one takes it to be true that the oar is bent in water—if one thinks it is the case that the oar is bent in water—one believes that it is. There are disputes about whether, to believe that x is F, one must actively consider whether it is and then on that basis decide that it is; about whether beliefs can be passively acquired; and about the extent to which belief is sensitive to reasons. Different ways of resolving these disputes yield different conceptions of belief, not different concepts of it.

I can now be more precise about why Moss thinks that in some dialogues *doxa* is too broad to count as belief, whereas in others it is too narrow to do so. She thinks it is too broad because she thinks that in *Republic* 10 it includes non-doxastic appearances, as when it seems to me that the oar seems bent in water but I do not take it to be bent. And she thinks it is sometimes too narrow because she thinks that in, for example, the *Theaetetus* it requires actively considering and answering a question. Since belief requires taking to be true, non-doxastic appearances are not beliefs; since it does not require actively considering a question, restricting *doxa* to such cases makes it narrower than belief.[13]

As to knowledge, I will take the concept of it to be that of a truth-entailing cognitive condition that goes beyond and is cognitively superior to mere true belief.[14] This leaves open the question of precisely how knowledge differs from mere true belief (*i.e.* from true belief that falls short of knowledge); different ways of answering this question yield different conceptions of knowledge, not different concepts of it. Some think the key difference is justification—either some justification or other, or justification of a certain sort or level. Others think the key difference consists in having acquired one's knowledge in a certain way. Many other suggestions have also been offered. But these are all different conceptions of a single concept of knowledge.

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[12] See, for example, Schwitzgebel, 'Belief', in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer Edition, 2015). Moss and Schwab 2019 also favour this account of belief. One might argue that taking p to be true is not sufficient for believing that it is true; for one might take p to be true (say, because a trusted expert tells one that it is) without at all understanding what it means; yet to believe that p, one must understand what p means. Here it might be helpful to distinguish levels of understanding. If a trusted expert tells me that p, using a foreign language I do not at all understand, that is not enough for me to believe that p. If, however, a trusted chemist tells me, in a language I understand, that water is H_2O, then, even if I am ignorant of chemistry, I might thereby believe that water is H_2O: I have enough understanding for that if I have some beliefs about water (*e.g.* that it is liquid and can be found in lakes and rivers) and grasp that H_2O is a chemical compound. However that may be, the correct account of belief should be robust enough to preclude non-doxastic appearances from counting as beliefs, but not so robust as to require that one know that p in order to believe that p. Thanks here to discussion with David Charles.

[13] *Cf.* Lorenz 2006. Moss and Schwab 2019 think that *doxa* is too narrow to count as belief because it is not the genus, taking to be true, but just mere belief, belief that falls short of knowledge.

[14] See my 2004: 41–81 and my 2010: 121–56. One might object that my account of the concept of knowledge is an account just of propositional knowledge, and that there are other sorts of knowledge that are not truth-entailing (*e.g.* knowing-how, or knowing a person, place, or thing). Similarly, one might object that my account of the concept of belief is just an account of what it is to believe that p, and that there are other sorts of belief that are not like that (*e.g.* believing in someone or something). I will not enter into these issues here. The account of knowledge that I suggest leaves open the possibility, but does not imply, that knowledge is a species of, or at least implies, belief. Both the view that knowledge is a species of belief and that it implies belief are controversial. Williamson 2000, for example, denies that knowledge is a species of belief, although he thinks that it implies it. Price 1967: 41–59, at 42 (originally published in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 35 (1934–35), 229–52), argues that knowledge does not even imply belief. (However, in his 1969: 86 he notes that what he really means is that knowledge does not imply mere

I can now also be more precise about why *epistêmê* is sometimes thought to be too demanding to be knowledge. We have already seen that *epistêmê* is sometimes taken to be understanding; and it is sometimes thought that understanding is more difficult to attain than knowledge is because, for example, understanding is holistic, whereas one can know a single thing or proposition on its own. Relatedly, it has been thought that, in order to have any *epistêmê* at all, one must grasp both why something is so and also that there are Forms. But it is often thought that there is knowledge-that, which falls short of knowledge-why; the latter is thought to be required for understanding but not for (all) knowledge. Nor would most people say that all knowledge requires a grasp of Platonic Forms.

With these concepts of belief and knowledge in mind, we can now ask whether, when Plato discusses *doxa* and *epistêmê*, he is discussing belief and knowledge as such, or just particular kinds or species of belief and knowledge, or something else altogether. If he is discussing belief and knowledge as such, or particular kinds or species of belief and knowledge, we can ask what his conceptions of them are and how they contrast with this or that contemporary conception of them.

Here, however, we should proceed piecemeal, asking how he conceives of *doxa* and *epistêmê* in a given dialogue: for he might conceive of them differently in different dialogues. In what follows, I restrict myself to the *Phaedo*. Interestingly, although Plato's views about *epistêmê* and, to a lesser extent, *doxa,* have often been discussed in connection with, say, the *Meno*, *Republic*, and *Theaetetus*, they have not been much discussed in connection with the *Phaedo*. Presumably this is because they are not there the focus of explicit theoretical discussion, in contrast to the way they are treated in *Republic* 5 and the *Theaetetus*, both of which aim to say what *epistêmê* is and how it differs from *doxa* or true *doxa*.[15] Still, the *Phaedo* uses the terms *doxa* and *epistêmê* several times;[16] and Plato says, or implies, various

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belief, a claim that is not controversial if 'mere belief' is belief that necessarily falls short of knowledge.) Moss and Schwab 2019 think it would be a 'complete non-starter' to say that knowledge does not imply belief, when belief is just taking to be true; but they argue that since for Plato *doxa* is 'mere belief', it follows that knowledge does not imply belief.

[15] As Kahn remarks (1996: 339, n. 13), '[t]he contrast between knowledge and true opinion is not as conspicuous in the *Phaedo* as are the other three anticipations noted from the *Meno* (essences, recollection, and hypothesis)'. I touch on essence and recollection below.

[16] It also uses other cognitive terms that might (or might not) be thought to indicate knowledge and belief: *e.g.* (for the first) forms of *eidenai*, *gignôskein*, and *phronein*; and (for the second) forms of *oiesthai*, *hêgeisthai*, and *dokein*. Even if Plato does not use any specific words to mean 'knowledge' or 'belief', he could indicate in some other way that he is talking about knowledge or belief. Be that as it may, I focus on the dialogue's use of *epistêmê* and the associated verb, and its use of *doxa* and *doxazein*. I generally leave *dokein* to one side. However, so far as I can tell, in the *Phaedo* Plato seems to speak interchangeably of having a *doxa*, *doxazein*, and *dokein*. So, for example, 81b4 has *dokein*; 83d4-–e3 makes the same point as does the passage of which 81b4 is a part, but it has *doxazousan* and *homodoxein*. 98e2 has *edoxe*, 99a2 has *doxa*, 99a7 has *ta doxanta*; no difference is intended. 69d2 has *doxa*; 69d6 makes the same point, but it has *hôs emoi dokei*. It is not surprising that the terms should at least sometimes be used interchangeably, since they are cognates.

things about them. It is worth asking what we can infer about his understanding of them in this dialogue.[17]

II. Doxa in the Phaedo

The *Phaedo* uses forms of *doxa* eight times (at 66b2, 69d2, 70b9, 82c6, 95a9, 96b7 [two occurrences], and 99a2); and forms of *doxazein* seven times (67b4, 68b3, 83d6, 83d7, 84a8, 92a7, and 108c7).[18] Let us begin by asking about these occurrences of the terms.[19]

According to Michael Frede, in the *Phaedo aisthanesthai*:[20]

> is restricted to cases of awareness that somehow involve the body and that constitute an awareness of something corporeal. But even now it would be rash to assume that the verb means "sense-perception". For in these cases it is used almost interchangeably

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[17] One might argue that, if the dialogue does not explicitly theorize about the terms, it provides no evidence of how Plato really understands them. That would, however, be a controversial claim. Consider the following methodological suggestion by Lyons 1969: 139-40, in his influential book *Structural Semantics: An Analysis of Part of the Vocabulary of Plato* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell): 'Plato himself was very much concerned with examining what some would call the 'concepts' of *sophia*, *technê*, and *epistêmê* and with their explication and redefinition in terms of his own philosophy; and commentators discussing Plato's use of these lexemes have tended to concentrate their attention on the passages where he seeks to do this. [Footnote 1: For criticism of scholars' tendency to concentrate on the particular passages when terms are being defined, rather than to base their conclusions on the whole, *cf.* C.W.R. Larson, 'Platonic synonyms'. It might almost be said that explicit definition of a term by an author is evidence that it does not generally mean what he says it does!] The principle I have adopted, with regard to the interpretation of the passages in which Plato explicitly defines or discusses the lexemes that fall within the scope of the inquiry, is the following: I attempt to elucidate them in terms of other passages in which the lexemes in question are used, as it were, unconsciously. This is in accord with a principle familiar in linguistics: to accept everything that the native speaker says *in* his language, but to treat with reserve anything he says *about* his language, until this has been checked.' (Thanks to Huw Duffy for the reference.) I think the 'principle familiar in linguistics' goes too far. But it would also go too far to say that, in attempting to understand how Plato conceives of *doxa* and *epistêmê*, we should discount all uses of the terms except those that occur in passages in which he is explicitly theorizing about them. How Plato uses the terms when he is not theorizing about them provides some guidance at least about what he takes the concepts of *epistêmê* and *doxa* to be, and that, in turn, imposes constraints on his conception of them. It would be undesirable if Plato, in theorizing about *epistêmê* and *doxa*, or in using the terms in a 'strict' sense, committed the fallacy of irrelevance. His precise notion of the terms should, at the minimum, be continuous with, and illuminate, other uses. So it is worthwhile exploring those uses. Nor, as we shall see, are all the occurrences of forms of *doxa* and *epistêmê* in casual contexts, which is another reason not to dismiss them out of hand.

[18] Despite these occurrences, Morgan 1984: 249 says that 'there is no mention of belief in the *Phaedo*'. He also says that 'there is no support for employing the distinction between belief and knowledge' in the *Phaedo*. (Morgan's point is not that *doxa* is not used for belief, or that *epistêmê* is not used for knowledge.) For a detailed discussion of Plato's use of *doxa* and related terms, see Lafrance 2015. However, Lafrance does not discuss the *Phaedo*.

[19] In what follows I focus on some salient occurrences of the terms, but I do not systematically discuss all of them. For the record, though, all but one seem to me to use the term for belief in the sense described in the previous section, as taking to be true. The outlier is 82c6, which uses *adoxian* for dishonour or lack of respect or repute.

[20] Frede 1999: 378. Unfortunately, Frede does not cite any passages. Although he translates *dokein* and *doxazein* differently, I assume he doesn't think they have different senses in the passages he has in mind. For if he did think that, then, given that he thinks that *aisthanesthai* is used (almost) interchangeably with both, he would be committed to the view that the term is ambiguous; but that does not seem to be his view. However, if, as he says, *aisthanesthai* is used (almost) interchangeably with *dokein* and *doxazein*, then these three terms are either (almost) synonymous or at least (almost) co-extensive. Since he says that *doxa* does not mean 'sense-perception', perhaps he intends only the latter view. But if the terms were really (almost) interchangeable, a stronger view would seem to be licensed. One of Frede's concerns in the quoted passage is to argue that, in the *Phaedo*, perception involves belief; it is not restricted to mere sensory awareness, as Frede thinks it is in *Theaetetus* 184–86. But Frede argues not only that perception involves belief, but also that belief is restricted to sensibles; and that is my present focus. I discuss the *Phaedo*'s view of perception in Fine 2017: 65–109.

> with “dokein” and “doxazein”, “to seem” and “to believe”. The realm of belief, as opposed to the realm of knowledge, is the bodily world with which we are in bodily contact as a result of which this world appears to us in a certain way, as a result of which we have certain beliefs about it. There is no ‘doxa’, no belief about the ideas, because the ideas are not the kinds of things with which one could have the kind of contact that gives rise to a belief or a perception. But, just as it would be a mistake to infer from this that ‘doxa’ means ‘sense-perception’, so there also is no need to assume that ‘aisthesis’ means ‘sense-perception’, though standard cases of ‘aisthesis’ will be cases of sense-perception.

However, contrary to Frede, the *Phaedo never* uses *aisthanesthai* interchangeably with *doxazein*.[21] Indeed, in 96b *doxa* and *aisthêsis* are explicitly contrasted. Here Socrates asks:[22]

> And is blood that by which we think (*phronoumen*), or air, or fire? Or is it none of these, but the brain that supplies the senses of hearing, seeing, and smelling, from which memory and belief come to be; and <is it the case, as they say, that> from memory, and belief that has become stable, knowledge (*epistêmê*) comes to be in these ways? (96b4–8)

It is true that Socrates is here describing views with which he was enamoured when he was young, and he makes it clear that he no longer accepts all of them; so we should not assume that he accepts everything he says in the passage. Nonetheless, the passage shows that he is aware of a view according to which *aisthêsis* and *doxa* are not interchangeable; and nowhere in the dialogue does he explicitly reject this view. Let us look at some sample passages.

At 99a2 Socrates says that his bones and sinews have the *doxa* that it would be best for him to flee, a *doxa* that Socrates thinks is false. One might think that any *doxa* that bones and sinews have would have to be about what is perceptible. But even if that is so, that falls short of saying that *doxa* and *aisthêsis* are used interchangeably. It is one thing to say that a *doxa* is about what is perceptible, another to say that it is itself a perception.

99a2 is not the only place where something bodily has a *doxa*. At 83d the body and some souls are said to *homodoxein*: they share some *doxai*, in particular the *doxa* that only what the body says (*phê(i)*) is real (or true: *alêthê*); again, this is a *doxa* that Socrates thinks is false. The *doxa*, like the one had by his bones and sinews, is about sensibles insofar as it takes only them to be real; but, again, this does not imply that the term *doxa* is interchangeable with *aisthêsis*.

But whatever we say about these two passages, there are other passages where *doxa* and *doxazein* are clearly not used (almost) interchangeably with *aisthêsis* and *aisthanesthai*, for the simple reason that they are about what cannot be perceived. For example, in 66b1–67b5 Socrates describes a *doxa* (66b2; *cf.* 68b3, 67b4, *doxazein*) that genuine philosophers (*tois gnêsiôs philosophois*, 66b2) have; their *doxa* includes claims about Forms.[23] At 69d2, Socrates says that, according to his *doxa*, certain people (whom he describes) pursue philosophy correctly; as the dialogue makes abundantly clear, anyone who pursues philosophy correctly countenances (or, if all goes well, will eventually countenance) Forms. At 70b9, Cebes says he would like to hear Socrates' *doxa* about the soul. At 92a7, Socrates says that Simmias will have to change his *doxa* that learning is recollection if he continues to think that the soul is an attunement. The argument for the claim that learning is recollection rests crucially on the view that Forms exist; so this passage also suggests that there are *doxai* about Forms.

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[21] This is not to say that perception, in the *Phaedo*, does not involve belief. I am commenting only on Plato’s use of *doxa* and *doxazein*. Plato could of course think that perception involves belief even if he does not use *aisthanesthai* (almost) interchangeably with *dokein* or *doxazein*. Although I do not think that *doxa* and *aisthêsis* are ever used interchangeably in the *Phaedo*, it would do for my purposes if the dialogue countenances *doxai* that are not about sensibles.

[22] *phronoumen* seems to be used here for thinking in general rather than for wisdom in particular, though elsewhere in the dialogue it is generally used for wisdom. In this passage, perception plainly falls short of *doxa*. However, it does not follow that it does so elsewhere in the dialogue: Plato might speak of perception in more than one way (which would not imply that he is confused about different sorts of perception). As Gallop 1975: 91 puts it, ‘Plato’s language for sense experience is often hard to interpret’. Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own. However, I rely heavily on Gallop 1975 and on Sedley and Long 2011. I have also benefitted from Rowe 1993, as well as his 2007 book (Rowe 2007a). Although these works by Rowe are not translations, they both translate some passages. Further references to Rowe are to his 1993.

I noted earlier that one reason that has been given for thinking that *doxa* is not belief is that it has its own special objects. Whatever is true in other dialogues, in the *Phaedo doxa* does not have special objects: one can have *doxai* not only about sensibles, but also about Forms and souls.

One passage, however, might seem to count against this view. At 84a2–b4 Plato says:

> the soul of a philosophical man would reason in the way said. It would not think that, though philosophy ought to release it, yet, while philosophy is releasing it, it ought to surrender itself of its own accord to pleasures and pains, to bind it again <to the body>, and ought to carry out the endless task of a Penelope, working in reverse at a kind of web. Rather, securing respite from these things, following reasoning and always <engaging> in it, and viewing what is true and divine and not the object of belief (*adoxaston*), and being nurtured by it, it thinks that it ought to live this way for as long as it lives and that, when it has died, by reaching what is akin and of the same kind as itself, it is rid of human ills.

Gallop takes this passage to say that there can be no beliefs about Forms.[24] If he is right, either the *Phaedo* is inconsistent (allowing *doxai* about Forms in some passages, but disallowing them here), or else I have misinterpreted the passages that I took to allow such *doxai*. (One might say there are *doxai* but not beliefs about Forms. However, that is not Gallop's point and I ignore that issue for the moment.)

But I do not think we need to accept Gallop's interpretation. Socrates is describing a philosopher whose soul has secured 'respite from these things'—that is, from such things as bodily pleasures and pains—so that he can engage in reasoning, that is, in thought that is independent, or relatively independent, of perception; indeed, someone who is engaged in enough such reasoning to be able to 'view' Forms and to be nurtured by them. *For such a person*, Forms are *adoxasta*; for he has knowledge, not mere *doxa*, about them. The point is not that *no one* can have *doxai* about Forms. The point is rather that *the philosopher who has reached the position that Socrates describes* does not have them.[25]

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[23] It is worth noting that the genuine philosophers describe their *doxa* in somewhat hesitant terms (*hôs eoiken*, 67a2; *isôs*, 67b1, though see Rowe's note *ad loc*); and that Socrates ascribes it to them rather tentatively as well (66b3; 67b3–5). Olympiodorus says that the genuine philosophers' *doxa* derives its content, not from what is lower (*katôthen*), but from thought (*dianoia*). There are, he says, two sorts of *doxai*—presumably he means those derived from perception and those derived from thought (5.13). Similarly, Damascius (1.103) says that the *doxa* at issue here does not rely on perception and is not about sensibles; rather, he says, it is like a *dogma* derived from *dianoia* and *epistêmê*. For Olympiodorus and Damascius, see Westerink 2009 (originally 1977).

[24] Gallop 1975, note *ad loc*. See also Kahn 1996: 347, n. 23; 361, n. 35. In the second of these two passages, Kahn says that '[i]n every careful statement of the basic dichotomy [of being and becoming], *doxa* and sense perception belong together as taking *to gignomenon* as their object (*e.g. Tim*. 28a2), whereas the reality of the Forms is *adoxaston* (84a8)'. This leads him to dismiss *Rep*. 506b–e, where Socrates says he has *doxa* but not knowledge about the Form of the good, as a 'dramatic aside'. It would also commit him to rejecting as careless many occurrences of *doxa* in the *Phaedo*, which likewise are not restricted to *to gignomenon*. The more occurrences one has to reject, the less plausible is the account that leads one to do so.

III. Belief in the Phaedo

So far, we have seen that Plato allows *doxai* about Forms. But does the *Phaedo* use *doxa* for belief? If it does not, then, even though it allows *doxai* about Forms, it would not follow that it allows beliefs about them.[26] However, it seems to me that, in the passages we have looked at, whoever (or whatever) is said to have a *doxa* takes its content to be true. If so, the *doxai* at issue are beliefs.

One might argue that, although that is so, still, all the examples of *doxai* are of *mere* beliefs: that is, of beliefs that fall short of knowledge. One might then infer that, at least in the *Phaedo*, *doxa means* 'mere belief', not 'belief', where the latter term names a genus of which mere belief is just one species. If that view is right, then *doxa* in the *Phaedo* is not belief as such but, at best, a species of belief.[27]

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[25] For a similar interpretation, see Rowe 1993, note *ad loc*. (It is not clear, however, whether he thinks the term means 'mere belief' or is just being used to indicate mere belief, without that implying that the term means 'mere belief'.) 84a8 is the only passage in the Platonic corpus that says that Forms are *adoxasta*. TLG lists 63 occurrences of the term. Only one is pre-Platonic, from an otherwise unknown fragment of Euripides, cited in the Suda without any context. Sextus frequently uses the term for sceptics who live *adoxastôs*: here the term is applied to a person, not (as in the *Phaedo*) to Forms.

It might seem to count against my interpretation that the two preceding epithets that are applied to Forms—being true and divine—are not person relative in the way I have suggested that *adoxaston* is. (Thanks here to Lesley Brown and Raphael Woolf.) However, the claim about nourishment that follows is person relative (although, as Brad Inwood has pointed out to me, grammatically *adoxaston* goes with the preceding epithets). *Cf.* 84b1 with b4; the latter has 'such nurture', which suggests that one can be nurtured in different ways and to different degrees. Plato is indicating that he has in mind being nurtured *in such a way as to have knowledge*. The passage should be read with 83d4–e4 (discussed briefly above), where some souls are said to have the false *doxa* that only the corporeal is real; these souls have mere *doxa* (and a false one at that), and they are said to become of the same character (*homotropos*) and nurture (*homotrophos*) as the body. In 84a1–b8, by contrast, the soul realizes that Forms are what is real and it is nurtured by them; it engages in the right sort of reasoning and so no longer has the false *doxa* that it has in 83d4–e4. It is in this sense that Forms are *adoxasta*: when one acknowledges their existence and reasons about them in the right way, one no longer has mere *doxa*; and one is nurtured in a different way. In *Rep*. 490b6–7 Plato also describes someone who has been nurtured (*trephoito*, 490b6) in such a way that he has knowledge.

One might argue that *adoxaston* means 'not the object of *doxa*', and that the point is therefore that no one can have any *doxai*, of any sort, about Forms. However, even if *adoxaston means* 'not the object of *doxa*', it does not follow that no one can have any *doxai*, of any sort, about Forms. The contrast with 83d4–e4 makes it plausible to think that the point is just that the person at issue does not have just beliefs about Forms, for that person has knowledge. *Cf. Rep*. 345e, where Thrasymachus says he does not *oiesthai* something; rather, he knows (*eidenai*) it. *Oiesthai* is here *used* for merely believing something; but that is not what the word *means*. (Strictly speaking, at 345e3 Socrates asks Thrasymachus whether he *oiei* something; Thrasymachus then says 'no, but I know it (*eu oida*)', by which he means that he has knowledge, not just belief. Similarly, I might say 'It's not raining, it's pouring'. In saying this, I do not mean that it is not raining, nor am I using 'not raining' in an unusually restricted sense; I am using it idiomatically to convey the thought that it is not raining lightly.

On another possible interpretation of *adoxasta* (suggested to me by Rachana Kamtekar), the *–tos* ending indicates what is suitable or characteristic: Forms are not the proper objects of *doxa* in the sense that that is not what they are for, which does not imply that one cannot have *doxai* about them. *–tos* endings can be used in this way. Aristotle, for example, arguably sometimes uses *hairetos* in this way: see *e.g. Top*. 116a13ff. (Thanks here to Terry Irwin.) See also LSJ, *s.v. hairetos*.

[26] Although neither would it follow that it does not. As I have mentioned (n. 16, above), there are various ways in which Plato could indicate that there are beliefs about Forms; he need not use the term *doxa* to do so.

However, even though all the *doxai* mentioned in the *Phaedo* fall short of knowledge, we should not infer from that fact alone that *doxa* means ‘mere belief’, if only because Plato has not offered a general analysis of what *doxa* is. The mere fact that the examples he gives are of mere beliefs does not show that he would not use the term more widely. We need to distinguish the *meaning* of the term from its *extension* or *reference* in a given context.

And there are dialogues, both before and after the *Phaedo*, in which Plato uses the term *doxa* for a genus of which mere *doxa* is just one species. He does so, for example, in *Meno* 98a, where he defines *epistêmê* as a species of true *doxa*. He also does so in *Republic* 5. Both dialogues also use the term for *doxai* that fall short of *epistêmê*. Plato finds it natural to use the term both ways.[28] (Similarly, in English we sometimes speak of knowledge as implying belief, although we also say such things as ‘I don’t believe it’s raining; I know it is’.) So the mere fact that all the *doxai* mentioned in the *Phaedo* fall short of knowledge, or *epistêmê*, does not show that *doxa*, as Plato understands it, does not mean ‘belief’.

To my mind, what is striking about the *doxai* that Plato mentions is not that they are mere beliefs but, rather, two other facts. First, many, though not all, of them are held for considered reasons and as a result of reflection; they are not all mere ‘superficial seemings’, nor are any of them non-doxastic appearances. Rather, all the *doxai* in the *Phaedo* involve taking something to be true, and so they are all beliefs in ‘our’ sense. Secondly, they are not restricted to sensibles. The *scope* of *doxa* in the *Phaedo* is broader than it is often thought to be: it is not restricted to sensibles but extends to Forms. Its *nature* is also broader than it might have been thought to be: though some *doxai* (such as those ascribed to the body, or to parts of the body: 83d6–7; 99a2) are superficial and ill-judged, others (such as the *doxa* of genuine philosophers) are deeply considered. Despite these differences, they all involve taking to be true, and so they are all beliefs. Nor is there any reason to suppose that all *doxai* fall short of knowledge or that the term *means* ‘mere belief’, in such a way that *doxa* is just a species of belief, as we understand the term. Rather, *doxa means* ‘belief’, although it is *used* just for cases that are mere beliefs.[29]

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[27] For the view that Plato takes *doxa* to be ‘a deficient cognitive attitude’, see Vogt 2012: 9 (see also Moss and Schwab 2019). In her view, *doxa* involves taking to be true, though its content always falls short of knowledge (10–11); so she seems to think that *doxa* is a species of belief as ‘we’ understand it. I am not sure, though, whether she thinks *doxa means* ‘mere belief’ or is just *used* in that way, although it *means* ‘taking to be true’. For, although she says that all *doxai* fall short of knowledge and are deficient, she also says that ‘*Doxa* is the technical term for “belief,” understood—minimally—as holding to be true’ (10). Unfortunately, she does not explore the *Phaedo*.

[28] These claims about the use of *doxa* in the *Meno* and *Republic* are controversial. I defend them in Fine 2003, chapters 3 and 4, and in Fine 2004. For a different view of the *Meno*, see *e.g.* Shope 1983: 12–13; Sedley 1996: 79–103. For a different view of the *Republic*, see Gonzalez 1996: 245–75.

Gorg. 487a is another place where *doxa* seems to be used for the genus: Socrates says that if Callicles agrees with him about what he (Socrates) believes, then those beliefs will be true; he does not mean that it follows that the beliefs are mere true beliefs (they might be, but that is not what is implied). In asking, in the *Theaetetus*, what needs to be added to true belief so as to yield knowledge, Plato also seems to use the term both generically and for mere belief. (In saying this, I don’t mean to imply that Plato accepts what is sometimes called an ‘additive’ model of knowledge. For recent discussion, see Broadie 2016: 87–117.

In saying that Plato uses *doxa* both generically and for the species of mere belief (just as we use ‘belief’ in the same two ways), I do not (*pace* Moss and Schwab 2019) mean that he uses it in two different *senses*. In my view, *doxa means* taking to be true, but is sometimes *used* more narrowly, with the context making it clear which use is at issue.

[29] One might argue that, although all the *doxai* mentioned involve taking to be true, that does not preclude the possibility that Plato would also use the term for what we would call non-doxastic appearances; and, if he would, *doxa* does not *mean* ‘taking to be true’. That is true. But the dialogue does not provide any support for the view that

IV. Epistêmê in the Phaedo

Let us now ask how the *Phaedo* uses *epistêmê* (*epistasthai*).[30] The term is used relatively frequently in the discussion of the theory of recollection (TR), but less frequently outside it, where there are just a handful of occurrences (61b6, 90d7, 96b8, 96c4, 97b4, 97d5, 108d8, and 117a8). Let's begin by looking at these latter occurrences.

At 61b6, Socrates says that he has *epistêmê* of (*êpistamên*) Aesop's fables; and he indicates that he has a high degree of familiarity with them, not just a casual acquaintance.[31]

In the so-called misology passage, Socrates says that if we dismiss arguments[32] (*logoi*), we deprive ourselves of the opportunity to acquire truth and *epistêmê* about the things that are (*tôn de ontôn tês alêtheias te kai epistêmês sterêtheiê*, 90d6–7); in order to acquire these, we have to become skilled[33] about which arguments to accept and which to reject.[34]

We looked at 96b earlier, focusing on its contrast between *doxa* and *aisthêsis*. The passage also contrasts *epistêmê* with *doxa*; indeed, it is the only passage in the dialogue that explicitly does so. What it says about them recalls the *Meno*'s account of *epistêmê*, according to which *epistêmê* is true *doxa* that is tied down with reasoning about the explanation (*aitias logismô(i)*); this confers the sort of stability needed for *epistêmê* (*Meno* 98a). There are, however, some differences. For example, unlike the *Meno*, the *Phaedo* passage does not say that *epistêmê* involves reasoning about the explanation—although, as we will see, both *logos*[35] and *aitia* are important later in the dialogue.

At 97b, Socrates says that he cannot persuade himself that he has *epistêmê* of (*epistamai*) why one comes to be. He used to think he knew (*epistasthai*, 96c3; *eidenai*, 97c6) this; but he no longer thinks he does.

At 97d5, he says that whoever knows (*eidenai*) the highest good will also know what is worst, since the best and the worst are objects of the same *epistêmê* (97d5).

At 108d8, he says that even if he knew (*êpistamên*) the many things he has just been

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doxa includes non-doxastic appearances, and, as we have seen, it counts against the view that *doxa* is restricted to sensibles or to superficial seemings. (These are different: the genuine philosophers have deeply considered views about sensibles; misologists have superficial seemings about arguments, taking them to be bad when they haven't thought them through. One can have a superficial attitude, or a deeply held view, about anything; neither is restricted to its own objects.)

[30] According to Lyons 1969, in Plato the verb is much more specialized than the noun (*e.g.* 175). This might lead one to think that the use of the noun does not indicate knowledge as opposed to mere true belief. In the theory of recollection, however, the noun and the verb are at least sometimes used interchangeably. For example, 74b2 uses the verb; 74b4 switches to the noun. I shall translate *epistêmê* as 'knowledge', without meaning to prejudge the issue of whether it is knowledge as such, a kind of knowledge, or something else again. I ask in due course how we should understand it.

It is worth noting that, at 75d8, Socrates says that to *eidenai* something is to have *epistêmê* of it (or to have acquired *epistêmê* of it: *labonta tou epistêmên echein*) and not to have lost it. This suggests that to *eidenai* something is to have (or to have acquired) *epistêmê* of it; so one might infer that *eidenai* and *epistasthai* are synonymous. However, despite 75d8, Plato sometimes seems to use *eidenai* more broadly than *epistasthai*. See, for example, 63e6.

[31] Hence Gallop 1975 translates *êpistamên* as 'know by heart'.

[32] Gallop 1975, and Sedley and Long 2011, translate *logos* in this context as 'argument'. *Logos* can also be translated in many other ways, for example as 'account', which is the usual translation when Socrates speaks of *logon didonai*, to give an account.

[33] *meta technês*, 89e7; *atechnian*, 90d3.

[34] This suggests that reasoning in a certain way is at least necessary for acquiring *epistêmê*. Nothing is said about what sorts of objects one must reason about.

[35] One might argue that *logos* and *logismos* are importantly different, but I will not explore that issue here.

talking about (seeming to imply that he does not), still, there is not time, given the length of the relevant *logos* (discussion or argument or account) and the limited time he has left, to convey it all to Simmias—though, he adds, nothing prevents him from telling Simmas what he has been convinced (*pepeismai*) of.

At 117a8, Socrates says that his jailer knows (*epistêmôn*) 'these things'; presumably that includes knowing how much poison to administer.[36]

As these passages make clear, the dialogue allows us to have *epistêmê* of sensibles; *epistêmê* is not restricted to Forms, or even to intelligibles more broadly conceived.[37] It is also, at least in some cases, easy to come by.

Let us now ask how *epistêmê* (*epistasthai*) is used in the theory of recollection.[38] Cebes introduces the theory of recollection at 72e, whereupon Simmias asks what proofs (*apodeixeis*, 73a5) there are of it. Cebes replies:

> One especially fine argument (*logos*) is that when people are questioned, if someone questions them well,[39] they state the truth about everything for themselves. And yet they wouldn't be able to do so unless *epistêmê* and a correct account were present in them. Then, if one presents them with diagrams or something else of that sort, one shows most clearly that this is so.

This passage alludes to the *Meno*, in which Socrates also defends the theory of recollection. He does so there by questioning a slave about a geometry problem; eventually the slave is able to answer the question correctly for himself. Socrates argues that if the slave were to be questioned further, he would acquire *epistêmê* of the answer (by the time Socrates is through with him, he has only a true *doxa* about it).[40] He also argues that the slave's, and our, ability to acquire *epistêmê* can be explained only by positing pre-natal *epistêmê* of some range of things (81a–86c).[41]

Simmias is not satisfied with Cebes' brief account of recollection, so Socrates provides another argument in its favour. From 73a–74a, he lays out general conditions for recollection. He begins by mentioning a necessary condition: 'We agree, I take it, that if someone is going to recollect something, he must have known (*epistasthai*, 73c2) it at some earlier time'. Let us call this the *Prior Epistêmê Requirement*. It can be formulated as follows:

> PER: If A is reminded of y by x at t1, A had *epistêmê* of y before t1.

He then mentions a sufficient condition:[42]

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[36] For more on the jailer, see 63e. Interestingly, though Socrates says that the jailer has *epistêmê*, the jailer himself says that 'we grind only as much as we think (*oiometha*) is the right amount to drink' (117b). Perhaps the jailer is more epistemically modest than Socrates thinks he needs to be.

[37] Not all of these passages are about *epistêmê* of sensibles; but some of them are. Thanks here to Barbara Sattler.

[38] There is an enormous amount of literature on the theory of recollection in the *Phaedo*. For two especially helpful discussions, see Ackrill 1997: 13–32 and Dancy 2004, ch. 2. What I say here about recollection draws on my 'Recollection and Innatism in the *Phaedo*', in *Wisdom, Love, and Friendship in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, eds G. Sermamoglou-Soulmadi and E. Keeling (Berlin, forthcoming).

[39] Olympiodorus, *Commentary on the Phaedo* 11.12, comments: 'That is to say, in the right, Platonic way, not as the Peripatetics handle them, nor with an eye to cheap triumphs, but with the readiness to hold out a hand to one's interlocutor, if he stumbles' (trans. Westerink).

[40] Hence in the *Meno* there can be both *epistêmê* and true *doxa* about at least some of the same things.

[41] I discuss the *Meno*'s account of recollection in detail in Fine 2014.

[42] Or an allegedly sufficient condition: it is not in fact a sufficient condition. See Fine, forthcoming (n. 38, above).

> Now do we also agree that whenever *epistêmê* comes in the following sort of way, it is recollection? I mean in some such way as this: if someone, seeing or hearing or having some other perception of one thing, not only recognizes (*gnô*) it but also comes to think of (*ennoêsêi*) something else, which is the object not of the same *epistêmê* but of a different one, aren't we right to say that he recollected this second thing, the one of which he had the thought?

Let us call this the *Different Epistêmê Requirement*. It can be formulated as follows:

> DER: If A perceives x at t1, and not only recognizes x but also thinks of something else, y, that is the object of a different *epistêmê*, A recollects y.

Plato's strategy is to show that the sufficient condition (DER) is sometimes satisfied; hence we can infer that the necessary condition (PER) obtains; and so we had some prior *epistêmê*.[43] One of Plato's examples is that, on seeing and recognizing Simmias, I might think of Cebes, who is other than Simmias and the object of a different *epistêmê*.[44] In this case, I recollect Cebes and so, by PER, I have prior *epistêmê* of him. If I can have *epistêmê* of Cebes, *epistêmê* of sensibles is possible.

Having discussed 'ordinary' cases of recollection—such as when, on seeing and recognizing Simmias, I recollect Cebes—Socrates turns to another sort of case. First he asks whether we say that there is such a thing as the Form of equality; Simmias agrees that we do (74a9–b1). Socrates then asks whether we *epistametha* what it is; Simmias agrees that we do (74b2–3). This has been thought to conflict with 76b4–c3, where Socrates says that, if someone knows something, they can give an account (*logos*) of it. Yet, Simmias thinks, no one (except perhaps Socrates) can give accounts of Forms. How, then, can 'we' know what the Form of equality is?

Various ways of resolving this seeming contradiction have been proposed. On one of them, 'we' in 74b2 includes all or most people, and 'knowledge' is ordinary, garden-variety knowledge: all or most of us can classify things as equal, or 'know' the correct use, or the meaning, of the word 'equal'. The point in 76b4–c3, by contrast, is that no one (except perhaps Socrates) has philosophical or high-level knowledge of Forms. Since the sense of 'know' differs (or since the levels of knowledge differ) in the two passages, they do not conflict.[45]

One difficulty with this interpretation is that 74a9–b1 says that 'we' say that there is such a thing as the equal: that is, we think there is such a thing as the Form of equality. 'We', here, are clearly we Platonists (or we in the Socratic circle). As Ackrill says, it would be 'very awkward' for 'we' to have a different reference in 74b2.[46]

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[43] At least, this seems to be one of his strategies. In fact, it is not clear that it really is, but the issue need not concern us here. See Fine, forthcoming (n. 38, above).

[44] It is not clear why Simmias and Cebes are objects of different knowledge. For example, both can be perceived and so in that sense are objects of the same knowledge. Ackrill suggests that the point is that to think of Simmias is not *eo ipso* to think of Cebes; they are objects of different knowledge in that thinking of (or knowing) the first does not imply thinking of (or knowing) the second. Olympiodorus suggests that, in the context at hand, one perceives Simmias and imagines Cebes (who is not at the time before one), and perception and imagination (*phantasia*) are different kinds of knowledge (*gnôsis*) (11.5). On the view I favour, x and y are objects of a different knowledge just in case knowledge of one is not ultimately grounded or explained in terms of knowledge of the other. For accounts that are similar to mine, see Bolton 1979: 320–332 and Harte 2006: 21–42.

[45] For versions of this view, see Ackrill 1997: 28–29; Bostock 1986: 66–72.

[46] Ackrill 1997: 28.

On another view, which I favour, ‘we’, in both 74a9–b1 and 74b2, indicates we Platonists (or we in the Socratic circle); and *epistêmê*, in both 74b2 and 76b4–c3, involves being able to give an account which, in the case of Forms, requires being able to give a satisfactory answer to the relevant ‘What is F?’ question. On this view, there is no shift in the scope of ‘we’ or in the sense of ‘know’ (or level of knowledge). But 74b2 and 76b4–c3 nonetheless don’t conflict, because they concern different Forms. The point in 74b2 is that we Platonists know the answer to the ‘What is F?’ question with respect to the Form of equality; the point in 76b4–c3 is that we do not know the answer to that question for various *other* Forms, including, for example, the moral Forms.[47] That is because it is harder to know some Forms than others.[48]

On the first view, everyone, or nearly everyone, has *epistêmê* of what equality is. Hence at least some *epistêmê* is widespread and easy to come by. On the second view, 74b2 does not imply that any *epistêmê* is easy to come by. And indeed, insofar as it implies that only Platonists know what the Form of equality is, it mentions a case of *epistêmê* that is not widely shared. However, the second view does not imply that *all epistêmê* is difficult to come by. It at most implies that non-Platonists do not know what any Forms are. It does not follow that non-Platonists have *no epistêmê*.

That would follow, however, if, to have any *epistêmê* at all, one must have *epistêmê* of Forms. But *Phaedo* 74 does not by itself imply this; nor do any of the passages we have explored so far.[49] Indeed, some of them might seem to have implicitly rejected it. For, as we have seen, the jailer, for example, has *epistêmê* of how much poison to administer; but even if he listened in on Socrates’ conversations, he presumably would not have *epistêmê* of Forms, if that required having *epistêmê* that there are Forms and being able to answer the ‘What is F?’ question about them. Further, we can recollect our friends, and so have (or had) *epistêmê* of them; and Socrates says there are many such cases (*muria*, 73d10–e1). But in recollecting our friends, we do not seem thereby to have *epistêmê* of Forms.

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[47] For this way of resolving the seeming conflict, see Hackforth 1955: 75–76; Rowe 1993, notes *ad loc*; Scott 1995. Sedley 2007: 68–86 in a way splits the difference between the two interpretations: he thinks everyone who has done some elementary mathematics has *epistêmê* of the Form of equality, where that involves grasping an answer to the ‘What is F?’ question about it (not just being able to classify things as equal), though not everyone is aware that what they are defining is a Form. So, even though ‘we’ has broad scope in 74b2, the knowledge at issue is higher level than Bostock 1986, for example, takes it to be. Although Sedley agrees that in 74a9 ‘we’ is restricted to ‘we’ in the Socratic circle, he thinks 74a12 extends it to potentially everyone. He thinks the shift is justified by the fact that Plato uses the indicative in 74a9 but the subjunctive in 74a12. However, the shift from the indicative to the subjunctive seems to indicate just that Socrates first expresses his own view, and then reaffirms it, asking whether Simmias agrees.

On Sedley’s view, ‘we’ in effect have *de dicto* knowledge that equality is thus and so; and that gives us *de re* knowledge of the Form. That is, we can answer the ‘What is F?’ question about the Form of equality, although we do not realize that that this is what we are doing since we (ordinary people) do not acknowledge the existence of Forms. On my view, by contrast, only *de dicto* knowledge is at issue. Plato begins by saying that ‘we’ say that there is such a thing as the equal itself (74b2), where that is plainly *de dicto*; and only then does he say that we know what it is. It is just those who say that there is a Form of equality, where that is *de dicto*, who know what it is, again *de dicto*.

[48] If we Platonists do not know this, *a fortiori* neither does anyone else. Plato often suggests that it is harder to know moral Forms than it is to know other Forms: see *e.g. Eu.* 7c3–d8; *Phdr*. 263. *Phd.* 65 implicitly separates out the moral Forms from others; see also *Meno* 72d4–e9.

[49] It is sometimes thought that the claim is made, or is at least implicit, in 65–67 as well as in the Affinity Argument (78b4–84b8). I argue against this view in Fine 2016. In section VI of the present chapter, I ask whether the *aitia* passage makes or implies this claim.

V. Is epistêmê knowledge?

So far we have seen that Plato countenances *epistêmê* not just of Forms but also of sensibles. Indeed, he seems to countenance *epistêmê* of sensibles even if one does not have it of Forms; and some *epistêmê* is easy to acquire and routinely had. So, if *epistêmê* is knowledge, Plato, at least in the *Phaedo*, allows knowledge of sensibles (contrary to TW); allows us to have such knowledge even if we do not know Forms; and takes some knowledge to be easy to come by.[50]

But is *epistêmê* knowledge? According to Lloyd Gerson, precisely because the *Phaedo* allows *epistêmê* of sensibles, we should conclude that the term does not indicate knowledge: '[t]he key operative term in this argument [the theory of recollection] is "knowledge" (*epistêmê*), but it appears to be used so loosely that it is virtually equivalent to "cognition". For example, it is used for objects of sense-perception as well as for Forms (*cf.* 73C8, D3, 74b2). A self-conscious technical restriction in the use of the term *epistêmê* such as we shall find in *Republic* is not in evidence here'. Whereas some commentators think that *epistêmê*, as Plato conceives of it, is not knowledge because it is too *high level*, Gerson's concern is the reverse: that, Plato uses the term *epistêmê* in the theory of recollection for cases that are too *low level* to count as knowledge.

Gerson mentions the *Republic* but not the *Meno*. Yet there too, Plato contrasts *epistêmê* with *doxa* (and with true *doxa* that falls short of *epistêmê*). If he uses *epistêmê* in a way that contrasts with *doxa* both before and after the *Phaedo*, that gives us some reason to suppose that he also does so in the *Phaedo*.

Still, let us explore Gerson's view. We can break it into two. First, he thinks that *epistêmê* does not always indicate knowledge in the *Phaedo* because we are allowed to have it of sensibles. Here Gerson assumes that the *Phaedo* endorses TW. However, I have argued elsewhere, on grounds independent of the *Phaedo*'s use of *doxa* and *epistêmê*, that the *Phaedo* is not committed to TW.[51] Secondly, he thinks the term is used so broadly that it includes more than knowledge: it ('virtually') includes all cognition.

Let us spend some time with this second point. Gerson does not say how extensive he takes cognition to be. Be that as it may, so far as I can tell, as it is used in the *Phaedo*, *epistêmê* is truth entailing or factive: it is not used for what is false. Still, one might think the term is used so broadly that it includes mere true belief, in which case it is not used for knowledge in particular. However, I think a case can be made for the claim that all the occurrences of *epistêmê* in the dialogue are used in a way that contrasts with mere true belief.[52]

Plato provides some hints about what he takes *epistêmê* to be. In particular, as we have seen, at 76b he says that if one knows something, one can give an account (*logon didonai*; *cf.* 73a10, *orthos logos*) of it.[53] To give an account of a Form, in such a way as to have *epistêmê* of it, requires being able to give a correct answer to the 'What is F?' question with respect to it. Such an answer specifies the Form's essence. We might infer that, in general, to have *epistêmê* of who or what something is, we need to have *epistêmê* of its essence. In that case, we cannot have *epistêmê* of sensibles unless they have essences.

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[50] Gerson 2003: 66. See also his 1999: 1–15.

[51] See Fine 2016.

[52] Here I am responding to the members of audiences in various places, and especially to David Charles, who followed up with helpful written comments and discussion.

[53] I take this to be a condition on all *epistêmê*, not just on *epistêmê* of Forms. In doing so, I give myself the harder case. For if it were a condition just on *epistêmê* of Forms, it would be easier to argue that *epistêmê* is widespread and (in some cases) easy to come by.

It is disputed whether the *Phaedo* takes, or allows, sensibles to have essences.[54] If (as I think) it does, then, even if having *epistêmê* of x requires grasping x's essence, we can, so far as that condition goes, have *epistêmê* of sensibles. And if it is easy to grasp their essences, then this condition does not make *epistêmê* difficult to attain. Perhaps Simmias' essence, for example, consists in his origins, or in his being human. It is not obvious that it is difficult to grasp these.[55]

However, perhaps, even if the *logos* of a Form specifies its essence, not all *logoi*, of the sort necessary for *epistêmê*, do so. If that is so, then, even if sensibles do not have essences, it would not follow that there is not *epistêmê* of them. Perhaps the relevant accounts just need to enable one to distinguish something one has *epistêmê* of from other things one has encountered, and with which it might easily be confused. So, for example, if I have *epistêmê* of Cebes, I can distinguish him from Simmias, even though they look somewhat alike.

One might object that having such a distinguishing mark is necessary, not just for *epist*êm*ê*, but also for true belief. [56] If it is, then perhaps the relevant sort of *logos* must not only enable one to distinguish what one knows from something else with which it might easily be confused, but must also be significant in a relevant way. Having heard that Meno is 5'10" is not sufficient for having *epistêmê* of him (or of who he is); but perhaps grasping who his parents are, what sort of person he is, and how he occupies his time, are sufficient.[57]

Perhaps even that is not sufficient for *epistêmê*. But then, Plato does not say that having a correct account is sufficient for having *epistêmê*; he says that it is necessary for doing so. And his examples suggest a further necessary condition for having it: one must have a sufficient degree of familiarity with what one knows. The jailer, for example, is quite familiar with poison and with how much it takes to be effective; Socrates is quite familiar with Aesop's fables; I am familiar with my friends.[58] Perhaps having a significant distinguishing mark as well as sufficient familiarity is sufficient for turning a mere true belief into *epistêmê*. One can satisfy these conditions with respect to things other than Forms and without knowing Forms. One can also satisfy them without having *epistêmê* of *why* something is so, but only having *epistêmê that* it is.

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[54] Deciding about this is complicated because, among other things, there is dispute both about how to distinguish essential from non-essential properties and also about how if at all Plato draws the distinction. I discuss this briefly in Fine 2014: 35–38. In my view, *Phd.* 102ff. distinguishes essential from non-essential properties, and takes at least some sensibles to have essences. 102 says that Simmias is not tall 'by nature', though he is Simmias by nature; this suggests that he has an essence (being Simmias)—though Plato does not say what it consists in. Similarly, *Phd.* 103 is naturally taken as saying that snow is essentially cold, and fire essentially hot. Snow and fire are here sensible stuffs, not the Forms of snow and fire; so once again, at least some sensibles have essences. Whether one can know anything about them if one does not know their essences, or a relevant Form, are further questions.

[55] Grasping these might be difficult if, for example, knowing his origins is not just knowing who his parents are but knowing the particular sperm and egg he comes from (this is Kripke's view); or if, to know that he is human, one needs to know the Form of humanity, or at any rate some Form or other. See n. 54, above, and n. 73, below.

[56] *Tht*. 208c–209e seems to argue that this is not sufficient for knowledge, or *epistêmê*, of x, since it is necessary even for *thinking* about x and so for having a true or even a false belief about x. But even if Plato thinks this, he might also think that there are different kinds of distinguishing marks, and that grasping any one of them is sufficient for belief but not for knowledge, or *epistêmê*; for knowledge, or *epistêmê*, one must grasp a special sort of distinguishing mark. Not all distinguishing marks are equal. I discuss the passage in the *Theaetetus* in Fine 2003, chapter 10. See also the Introduction to that volume, and Fine 2014, chapter 2, section 2.

[57] This fits well with Foley's suggestion (2012: 1–2) that what must be added to true belief so as to get knowledge is more true beliefs, where the true beliefs needed are determined by what is at issue: 'when someone has a true belief but does not know, there is some significant aspect of the situation about which one lacks true beliefs—something important that she does not grasp or quite "get"'. What counts as significant? Essence is sufficient, but not clearly necessary. Perhaps what is significant depends on the sort of thing at issue, or on what else we want to know about the thing.

[58] What counts as 'a sufficient degree of familiarity'? Is it knowledge or true belief? I discuss this sort of issue in connection with the *Theaetetus* in Fine 2013, chapter 10.

Plato does not explicitly offer this account of *epistêmê*. However, he does say that *epistêmê* requires a correct account; and perhaps it is significant that he does not explicitly mention Forms or *aitiai* in doing so. (In the context, he is talking about *epistêmê* of Forms; so in that sense he mentions Forms. But he does not say that, in general, the right sort of *logos* has to mention Forms.) Further, in his examples, the person with *epistêmê* is familiar with what she has *epistêmê* of.[59] Nor is this account merely consistent with what he says: it is suggested by what he says.

On this account of *epistêmê*, all the cases of *epistêmê* so far discussed count as genuine cases of it: the term is not being used loosely. Further, according to this account, *epistêmê* is knowledge in the sense I suggested at the outset: it is a truth-entailing cognitive condition that goes beyond and is cognitively superior to mere true belief. But *epistêmê* is quite extensive and (in some but not all cases) easy to come by: certainly more extensive and easier to come by than it is taken to be by those who think that, in the *Phaedo*, one cannot have any knowledge, or *epistêmê*, until one is discarnate;[60] but also more extensive and easier to come by than it is taken to be in the *Meno* where, as we have seen, *epistêmê* always requires a grasp of why what one has *epistêmê* of is true.[61]

VI. The aitia passage

I now turn to an important passage that we have not yet considered—the famous *aitia* passage (95b–107b)—which might seem to be incompatible with the account of *epistêmê* that I have suggested. For one might think the passage argues that one cannot provide an account of the sort needed for *epistêmê*, unless one can provide an *aitia* (explanation) of why what one has *epistêmê* of is true or is as it is, and that that, in turn, requires one to have *epistêmê* of Forms. If all *epistêmê* requires a grasp of why what one has *epistêmê* of is true or is as it is, then all *epistêmê* is *epistêmê*-why: there is no bare *epistêmê*-that something is so. This makes all *epistêmê* more difficult to acquire than knowledge is often taken to be nowadays, since it is often thought nowadays that one can know *that* something is so without knowing *why* it is so.[62] If all *epistêmê* also requires one to have *epistêmê* of Forms, then *epistêmê* is more demanding still; for most people do not even grasp that there are Forms.[63]

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[59] One might challenge this claim, for doesn't Plato give, as an example of recollection, seeing a lyre and thinking of a man? Yes, but he doesn't spell the example out. Perhaps he means that we can recollect the, or a, lyre-player, of whom we have *epistêmê*.

[60] In Fine 2016, I discuss (and reject) the view that the *Phaedo* restricts knowledge to (some of) those who are discarnate.

[61] There are also, however, continuities with the *Meno*. For example, both dialogues take *epistêmê* to require an account. Both dialogues, in my view, also allow both *epistêmê* and *doxa* about both Forms and sensibles. To be sure, the Forms discussed in the *Meno* might differ in various respects from those discussed in the *Phaedo*. But in saying, in *Meno* 71, that he does not at all know what virtue is and so lacks all knowledge about virtue, Socrates indicates that he takes himself to lack all knowledge of the Form of virtue; yet he expresses various beliefs about it, such as that it is some one thing, the same in all cases. And in allowing that we can have *epistêmê* of who Meno is, and of the way to Larissa, Plato allows *epistêmê* of sensibles.

[62] If, however, the *Phaedo* in the end requires an *aitia* for all *epistêmê*, it agrees with the *Meno* on that point. See n. 61, above.

[63] I assume this account of *epistêmê* in the *Phaedo* in Fine 1999. See also section 5 of Fine 2008. I discuss the *aitia* passage in detail in Fine 1987: 69–112, reprinted as Fine 2003, chapter 14. However, I do not there take a stand on

Not only is *epistêmê* so understood more difficult to acquire than knowledge nowadays is often thought to be, but it is also more difficult to acquire than some occurrences of the term in the dialogue suggest. For example, we might think that the jailer has *epistêmê* because, based on his experience, he can explain why this is the right amount of poison to administer. But, presumably, he does not have *epistêmê* if, in order to have it, he needs to have an *aitia* that requires having *epistêmê* of Forms. For that, as we have seen, requires being able to answer the 'What is F?' question about Forms, which, presumably, the jailer cannot do. Or again, we are said to have *epistêmê* of our friends when we recollect them. But it is not clear that recollecting them involves any sort of *aitia*, let alone one involving Forms.[64] And that, in turn, might lead one to think that we should discount some of the occurrences of *epistêmê* in the dialogue—contrary to what I have been suggesting.[65]

But does the *aitia* passage imply that all *epistêmê*, or knowledge, requires having an *aitia* and that that, in turn, requires one to have *epistêmê* of, or to know, Forms?[66] Let us see.

At 95e7–96a4, Socrates says that in order to know, and to give an account (*eidenai*, *logon didonai*, both at 95d7, which 95e7–96a4 then explains) of the fact, that the soul is immortal, one needs a thorough inquiry into the *aitia* of coming and ceasing to be. This suggests that the sort of *logos* that enables one to know that the soul is immortal will specify why it is.

This might seem to imply that all knowledge requires grasping why what one has knowledge of is true or is as it is. But that is not implied. Indeed, it does not even imply that all knowledge about the soul requires grasping an *aitia*. It says only that one needs to grasp an *aitia* in order to know that the soul is immortal. That leaves open the possibility that one can know *other* things about the soul without grasping an *aitia*. More generally, perhaps whether a *logos* requires an *aitia* depends on what is at issue. The mere fact that to know that the soul is immortal requires knowing why it is does not imply that, in general, to know that x is F, one must know why it is. Perhaps there are special reasons why knowledge of Forms is necessary for knowing that the soul is immortal that do not generalize to all knowledge.[67]

Socrates proceeds to say that when he was young, he was keen to acquire the sort of wisdom (*sophia*) called 'inquiry into nature'; for he thought it would enable him to know (*eidenai*, 96a9) the *aitia* of why each thing comes to be, why it perishes, and why it exists.

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the epistemological issues I discuss here.

[64] One might argue, however, that even if having *epistêmê* of our friends does not involve having *epistêmê* of any Forms, it does involve grasping, for example, why they act as they do; and perhaps this is sufficient for having an *aitia*, even if just a low-level one.

[65] It is worth noting that the same problem arises in the *Republic*. Books 5–7 are often taken to argue that one cannot have any *epistêmê* at all unless one has it of Forms. Yet in Book 10, Plato says that the user of, for example, a flute has *epistêmê*, whereas the flute-maker, though he looks to a Form, has only true belief, in virtue of attending to what the user says. We cannot simply dismiss the remarks in Book 10 as conversational or non-philosophical.

[66] The passage does not explicitly say that all *epistêmê* requires having an *aitia* or grasping Forms; nonetheless, it could imply this. But forms of *epistêmê* and *epistasthai* are rare in the *aitia* passage, though they do occur (see the beginning of section IV for a list). As far as I can tell, in the relevant parts of the *aitia* passage Plato does not intend any difference between *epistasthai* and *eidenai* (see *e.g.* 97d4–5). Because *epistêmê* is used so rarely in the passage, I will generally speak here in terms of knowledge, asking what, if anything, the passage says is required in order for a person to have knowledge, and both how that compares with the account of *epistêmê* that I suggested in section V and whether it counts as knowledge as I described it in section I.

[67] And this is arguably the case. For the final argument for the immortality of the soul relies on the hypothesis that there are Forms (100b). In explaining how this is so, Socrates introduces the so-called safe and clever *aitiai*. The soul figures in the latter, by being that which brings life to whatever it occupies. Socrates proceeds to argue that it can do so only if it is immortal; hence it is immortal. It does not follow that every case of knowledge rests on the hypothesis that there are Forms, or requires an *aitia* that involves Forms.

However, he eventually decided that that sort of inquiry would not give him the knowledge he wants. His reason is not that he decided that one cannot know why sensibles come to be, perish, and exist. It is that he decided that the sorts of 'explanations' he used to favour—such as that if we add one to one, we get two—are not genuine explanations. Eventually he settled on the so-called safe *aitia* (100e) which says (for example)—not, as he used to think, that something is beautiful because of its bright colour, but—that something is beautiful if and only if, and because, it participates in the Form of beauty. Of course, merely *saying* this does not confer knowledge of why something is beautiful: one must know what the Form of beauty is and be able to explain how something participates in it. But the clear suggestion is that when one can do so, one knows why it is beautiful (if it is).

Here three points are important. First, Socrates might seem to be saying that, to have any knowledge at all, one must know an *aitia*. However, he seems to be explaining, not how knowledge as such is possible or what it consists in, but, rather, what is involved in knowing *why* something is so—why x is F, or why p is true. To say that I cannot know why something is beautiful unless I know both that it participates in the Form of beauty and what that Form is, does not imply that I cannot know that it is beautiful without knowing why it is.[68]

Perhaps Socrates thinks that knowing why x is F, or why p is true, is just one level of knowledge, whereas the account of *epistêmê* that I suggested in section V is of knowledge as such, which includes, as another and lower level of knowledge, knowing that x is F or that p is true, without knowing why x is F or why p is true. To have any knowledge at all, one must satisfy the general account. But that leaves room for levels of knowledge. One level involves merely knowing *that* something is so; we can attain this level of knowledge without knowing Forms and without knowing explanations. A higher level of knowledge involves knowing *why* something is so; and, at least in some cases, one can attain this level of knowledge only if one knows a relevant Form.[69] The *aitia* passage is concerned with this higher level of knowledge. I have argued elsewhere, again on grounds independent of the dialogue's use of *epistêmê*, that the *Phaedo* countenances levels of knowledge, as Plato also does elsewhere—most famously in the Divided Line in the *Republic*, where he posits two levels of knowledge (as well as two levels of belief).[70]

If the *aitia* passage is limited in this way, we can continue to take all the occurrences of *epistêmê* to indicate knowledge. We just have to see that there are two levels of knowledge: knowing *why* something is so puts one at a higher level of knowledge than one is at if one knows only *that* something is so. Further, one can have this lower level of knowledge without knowing any Forms, and perhaps there are also some *aitiai* that do not involve grasping Forms.

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[68] Socrates might be distinguishing knowing-that from knowing-why in 97d–e: *first* Anaxagoras would tell him (*phrasein*) that things are a certain way; *then* he would tell him why they are that way. However, perhaps the use of *phrasein*, rather than, for example, *eidenai* or *epistasthai*, is significant.

[69] *Cf.* the three-stage view that David Charles attributes to Aristotle, according to which one can know that something is so without knowing why it is so. However, Charles thinks this is a departure from Plato. Charles develops the three-stage view especially in Charles 2000. I discuss Charles' view of Plato in Fine 2014: 99–103 and 2010: 125–52.

[70] Perhaps appealing to levels of knowledge also explains the seeming differences between what Plato says about *epistêmê* in *Rep*. 5–7, on the one hand, and in Book 10, on the other hand (see n. 65, above). For levels of knowledge, see also *Philebus* 55c–59d. Damascius, 1.80, says that the *Phaedo* recognizes levels of truth (*bathmous tês alêtheias*), both in the objects of cognition (*gnôsis*) and in cognition itself; here he mentions the Divided Line in the *Republic*, but in order to explain Plato's attitude to the senses in the *Phaedo*. Baltzly 1996: 131 thinks that Damascius is wrong to see an affinity between the *Phaedo* and the *Republic* on this point. In Fine 2016, I side with Damascius. The *Phaedo* also countenances levels of accuracy (65e3), clarity (83c), reality or truth (83c; *cf.* 65e2), purity (65e6), and separation (*e.g.* 65e3–4). It also allows that we can reason in better and worse ways (65c6–9).

Secondly, Plato does not say that in order to know why x is F, one needs to know the Form of F. Rather, one can know why x is F only if one knows the Form of F *if there is such a Form*. But the range of Forms, in the *Phaedo*, seems to be limited to cases where sensibles exhibit compresence of opposites: there is a Form of F only if sensibles are, in the relevant way, F and not F. Bright colour 'makes' some things beautiful, others ugly; hence beauty cannot be bright colour.[71] But the *Phaedo* is not committed to there being a Form of, for example, Cebes, or even a Form of humanity. Perhaps, then, in some cases one can know why x is F without knowing a Form of F, and perhaps without knowing any Forms at all.[72]

Thirdly, the passage does not restrict knowledge to Forms. We know why the Parthenon is beautiful when we know that and how it participates in the Form of beauty, whose definition we know. Socrates is not denying that sensibles can be known. Rather, he is explaining what it takes to know why they are as they are, in cases where there are Forms.[73]

Even if Plato had said that all knowledge requires knowing-why and that that, in turn, requires knowing Forms, knowledge of sensibles would not be precluded. All that would follow is that all knowledge requires knowing why what one knows is true or is as it is which, in turn, requires knowing Forms. This allows knowledge of sensibles; it is just that such knowledge would require knowledge of Forms and would therefore be difficult to come by insofar as most people do not know any Forms. That knowledge is (sometimes) easy to come by whereas *epistêmê* is not was one of the objections to taking *epistêmê* to be knowledge mentioned at the outset. One might argue, however, that even if all *epistêmê* is difficult to come by, that does not mean that it is not knowledge as such. For on this account of *epistêmê*, it still counts as a conception of knowledge, as I have understood the concept of knowledge here. Perhaps Plato just has more demanding conditions for *epistêmê* than some contemporary epistemologists have for knowledge; that by itself would not show that *epistêmê* is not knowledge as such. Even if one is reluctant to endorse this view, one might still allow that *epistêmê* so conceived is at least a species of knowledge.

But, on the interpretation I prefer, the *aitia* passage does not say that all knowledge requires knowledge of Forms or even knowing-why. It says only that some knowledge-why requires knowing Forms. That is compatible with *epistêmê*'s being knowledge, on the account of *epistêmê* I suggested in section V above. On that account, we can continue to maintain that the *Phaedo* not only allows us to have *epistêmê* of sensibles, but also allows us to have it even if we do not have *epistêmê* of Forms or of why sensibles are as they are; we can also continue to maintain that *epistêmê* is knowledge.[74]

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[71] I discuss reasons for positing Forms in Fine 1993. The *Phaedo* does not explicitly deny that there are Forms in further cases. But none of its arguments implies their existence; nor are such further Forms mentioned. Indeed, their absence is conspicuous in some places. For example, in the so-called clever or sophisticated *aitia*, Plato says that snow and fire are explanatory entities. But they are not Forms; they are ordinary physical snow and fire. (However, a full statement of this sort of *aitia* will mention Forms. Snow, for example, brings on the Form of cold; and fire brings on the Form of heat.) See Fine 1987.

In *Rep*. 523–5, in the famous 'finger' passage, Plato says that in some cases the senses reveal things adequately and clearly, whereas in other cases the soul is puzzled. For example, the soul is not compelled to ask what a finger is, since sight does not say that a finger is also not a finger. But the soul is compelled to ask what, for example, largeness and smallness are, because sight mixes them up. On the interpretation I favour, the point is that, although perception (or, more precisely, reasoning based on perception: see Fine 2017) can identify examples both of fingers and of things that are large and small, and can also explain what it is to be a finger, it cannot explain what it is to be large or small. See Fine 1993: 59. If this is also Plato's view in the *Phaedo*, it would explain why Forms are mentioned in only a few special cases.

[72] However, one might think that, even if there is no Form of humanity, still, we can grasp why Cebes is human only if we grasp some other Form—perhaps the Form of life, which the clever *aitia* seems to countenance. Even if this is so, it implies only that we need to grasp a relevant Form to have knowledge-why; it does not imply that all knowledge is knowledge-why.

[73] For the view that the *aitia* passage allows knowledge of sensibles, see also Taylor 2008: 175–76, n. 15. *Cf.* Frede 1998: 191–209 and 2000: 241–65.

VII. Conclusion

In section I, I mentioned two reasons that have been given for distancing Plato's account of *epistêmê* and *doxa* from modern accounts of knowledge and belief: first, that *epistêmê* and *doxa*, unlike knowledge and belief, are individuated by their objects; and secondly, that his conditions for *epistêmê* and *doxa* are either more, or less, demanding than are the conditions for knowledge and belief. I have argued that neither view of *epistêmê* and *doxa* fits the *Phaedo*. The dialogue does not individuate *epistêmê* and *doxa* by their objects; in particular, and contrary to TW, both *epistêmê* and *doxa* range over both sensibles and Forms. Further, the dialogue takes some, but not all, *epistêmê* and *doxa* to be easy to come by—just as modern accounts of knowledge and belief take some but not all knowledge and belief to be easy to come by.[75] The *epistêmê* involved in 'ordinary' cases of recollection is easy to acquire; *epistêmê* of moral Forms is not. The bones and sinews' *doxa* that Socrates should flee, and the *doxa* that only sensibles are real, are easy to acquire; the philosophers' *doxa* is not.

Further, all the cases of *doxa* in the dialogue are cases of taking to be true; so they are all beliefs, as I have understood belief here. And all the cases of *epistêmê* are cases of being in a truth-entailing cognitive condition that goes beyond and is cognitively superior to mere true belief; so they are all cases of knowledge, as I have understood it here.

All in all, what the *Phaedo* says about *epistêmê* and *doxa* is closer to some modern views of knowledge and belief than has sometimes been thought. This is perhaps a surprising result about a dialogue that is often thought to be especially 'other-worldly'.[76]

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[74] At 102c, Socrates might be taken as saying that 'Simmias is taller than Socrates' is not true; what is true is that 'Simmias is taller than Socrates because of the tallness he has', or 'Simmias has tallness in relation to Socrates' smallness'. If he thinks that 'Simmias is taller than Socrates' is not true, then it cannot be known, since knowledge implies truth. Still, if the suggested rephrasings can be known, then knowledge of sensibles is still possible—although, in this case, it seems to require knowing why they are true, and (where there are Forms) knowing Forms. However, Socrates' point might be, not that 'Simmias is taller than Socrates' is not true, but just that it is not perspicuous and is liable to misinterpretation insofar as it does not reveal the explanation of that state of affairs (which, in this case, involves Forms) and insofar as it might lead one to think that Simmias is essentially taller than Socrates—that he is taller than Socrates in virtue of who he is, rather than in virtue of having tallness in him. It is not clear that this point implies that one can know that Simmias is taller than Socrates only if one knows why it is true that he is, which, in turn, requires knowing the Form of tallness (and the Form of smallness).

[75] So, for example, one might argue that on many contemporary views of knowledge and belief, it is easy to believe that slavery is acceptable (many people did believe this at various times in history) but difficult to have beliefs about, for example, quantum mechanics, since in this case acquiring the relevant concepts is difficult. *A fortiori*, it is difficult to acquire knowledge of quantum mechanics but, one might think, easy to know that it is sunny outside.

[76] Talks based on earlier versions of some of this material were given at the University of Paris at Nanterre (March 2014); as the J. L. Ackrill Memorial Lecture in Oxford (March 2014); as the Keeling Lecture at University College London (March 2014); and at a plenary session of the British Society for the History of Philosophy (held in York in April 2015). Versions more closely related to the present paper were given at a workshop on ancient and contemporary epistemology held at NYU in September 2017 (where my commentator was Stephen Grimm); at a working group in ancient philosophy at Yale in October 2017 (where my commentator was Daniel Ferguson); and at Stanford in March 2018 (where my commentator was Huw Duffy). Thanks to the audiences on these occasions for helpful discussion; to my three commentators; and to Lesley Brown, David Charles, Verity Harte, Terry Irwin, and Rachana Kamtekar for helpful discussion and written comments.

SOCRATES' 'SECOND VOYAGE' (PLATO, *PHAEDO* 99D–102A)*

DAVID SEDLEY

The *Phaedo* is Plato's most extended defence of the soul's immortality. Its final argument sets out to show that the soul is not simply a very durable entity, capable of continuing to exist after the body expires; rather, it is the sort of thing that *in its very nature* could not perish. Socrates, who is expounding this argument barely an hour before his own execution by hemlock, is at pains to emphasize to his gathered philosophical friends that appreciating the force of the argument is not just a matter of following its logic. It requires in addition a deep and reflective understanding of causation, an understanding which it has taken Socrates himself a substantial part of his philosophical life to attain.

To explain this autobiographical point further, Socrates divides his own intellectual history into two halves or, we might say on his behalf, two 'voyages'. The first voyage is a narration of his failed youthful attempt to pursue a Presocratic agenda: to find the causes operative in the cosmos, but with an enhanced application of the teleological principles with which his predecessor Anaxagoras had done no more than flirt. The second half of his intellectual history, explicitly dubbed by Socrates his 'second voyage',[1] amounts to the historic transition from Presocratic to Socratic and Platonic philosophy. This move involved a shift towards the study of reality via *logoi* ('discourses', 'arguments', 'theories')—a fundamentally *a priori* approach to philosophy that replaced the empiricism which had previously dominated.[2] It is the methodology with which the Second Voyage passage is concerned that will be the focus of the present chapter.

At the end of the Second Voyage passage, when Socrates has finished explaining this new method to Cebes, the following responses ensue (102a2–8). First of all, within the narrated dialogue we read,

> 'What you say is very true,' said Simmias and Cebes together.

The frame dialogue then breaks in:

> ECHECRATES. Indeed, Phaedo, as well they might. For I think he put that wonderfully lucidly, even for someone with little intelligence.
>
> PHAEDO. Quite so, Echecrates, and everyone there thought so.
>
> ECHECRATES. Yes, and so do we, who weren't there but are hearing it now.

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[*] Thanks for helpful and searching comments are due to audiences at Pisa, Queen's University Belfast, Ann Arbor, Toronto, Yale, Fribourg, Edinburgh, London Ontario, and London UK; also to an anonymous reader.

[1] A δεύτερος πλοῦς is a second-best means (see Martinelli Tempesta 2003), but the self-deprecation here and in the surrounding context invites the suspicion of Socratic irony.

[2] The method is not here explicitly associated with dialectic, but the repeated references to 'answering' (100d9, e2, 101c9, d3, d4) are sign enough that we are here in the world of Socratic question-and-answer investigations.

This unexpected applause for Socrates' lucidity is humbling for any modern reader who has tried to make sense of the passage, surely one of the least self-explanatory in the entire Platonic corpus. Whether or not the praise is an authorial joke (a possibility that I am inclined to doubt), it should redouble our efforts to seek a way through the thicket of the passage's terminology.

I mention terminology in particular here because a remarkable feature of the passage is that it appears to operate with a terminology largely of its own. Although one of its terms, 'hypothesis', was a technicality that was already familiar to Plato's readers, from the *Meno* in particular, its other recurrent terms neither were nor became an established part of Plato's usage regarding philosophical method. These idiosyncratic terms centre around the notion of 'clinging' (ἔχεσθαι) to something 'safe' (ἀσφαλές), the musical metaphors of 'harmony' and 'disharmony' (συμφωνεῖν, διαφωνεῖν) between propositions, and the idea of 'ignoring' (χαίρειν ἐᾶν) irrelevant or misleading aspects of the inquiry. It may be its use of these informal metaphors that convinced Plato that the exposition was sufficiently user-friendly to warrant Echecrates' remarks.

In the hope of clarifying this terminology, I shall start from near the end of the passage, with a distinction that seems to have gone unnoticed in the critical literature—at any rate for the period of two centuries between Heindorf's edition of the *Phaedo* and the recent translation by Alex Long[3] (on which I had the privilege of collaborating and which is, with a few minor modifications, the translation used throughout the present chapter). What is this distinction? At 101d1–3, referring back to 100b–e, Socrates distinguishes between, on the one hand, 'the hypothesis itself' (d3, αὐτῆς τῆς ὑποθέσεως, picked up at d5–6 by ἐκείνης αὐτῆς) and, on the other, 'that safe part of the hypothesis' (d2, ἐκείνου τοῦ ἀσφαλοῦς τῆς ὑποθέσεως). I do not think that this distinction has been correctly understood. Virtually all[4] translations and commentaries over the last two centuries have rendered this latter phrase along the lines of 'the/that safety of the hypothesis'. They thus understand the text as if the hypothesis itself is being deemed safe here, contrary to the natural expectation that a hypothesis, something only provisionally or conditionally taken to be true, will, by definition, be less than safe. Quite apart from its conceptual oddity, this rendition seems to me to be insensitive to the Greek construction. The wording 'the F of x', where 'the F' is the definite article τὸ followed by a neuter singular adjective, standardly means 'the F part of x'. To pick a nearby example from the *Phaedo* itself, at 106e4–5 we will be told that, when death comes to someone, 'the mortal of him' (τὸ […] θνητὸν […] αὐτοῦ) dies. This certainly means not that his mortality dies[5] but, rather, that the mortal *part* of him dies.[6] Likewise ἐκεῖνο τὸ τῆς ὑποθέσεως ἀσφαλές should mean 'that safe part of the hypothesis'. Thus translated, the text gives us a very natural contrast between (i) clinging to the safe part of the hypothesis, and (ii) clinging to the hypothesis itself.

If this more accurate rendition saves us from the unwelcome implication that a hypothesis can be assumed to be safe, it may seem to confront us with an only slightly less unwelcome implication, that a hypothesis can have a safe part.[7] An examination of the preceding passage will show that this latter is, nevertheless, exactly what Plato does intend.

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[3] D. Sedley/A. Long 2011.

[4] As indicated above, prior to Sedley/Long 2011: 96, the one exception of which I am aware (my thanks to Paolo Crivelli for bringing it to my attention) is Heindorf 1810: 196, who construes the phrase as I do. Less precise but leaning in the same direction is Trabattoni 2011: 199, 'quel punto saldo rappresentato dall' ipotesi'.

[5] *Cf. Phdr.* 248b7, *Laws* 653b6–7. I have yet to find a Platonic passage in which 'the F of x' means 'x's F-ness'.

[6] Likewise at 80c2–3 'the visible of him' (τὸ […] ὁρατὸν αὐτοῦ), *i.e.* his body, remains for a time.

In order to see why, we must start at the beginning of the methodological description, 100a3–b9:

> '[…] on every occasion I hypothesize whatever theory (λόγος) I deem most robust, and then I set down as true whatever I think harmonizes with it—both about cause and about everything else—and as false whatever doesn't. I want, though, to tell you more clearly what I'm talking about. I think that at the moment you don't understand.'
>
> 'Indeed I don't,' said Cebes, 'not altogether.'
>
> 'This is what I'm talking about,' he said, 'nothing new, but what I've never stopped talking about, on any other occasion or in particular in the argument thus far. Well, I'll set about giving you an exhibition of the sort of cause which I've pursued. I'll go back to those things that have been our frequent refrain, and start from them, first hypothesizing that there are such things as a Beautiful alone by itself, and a Good, a Large, and all the rest. If you grant me these and accept that they exist, I hope to use them to exhibit causation to you, and to discover that the soul is immortal.'

In introducing the method here, Socrates conveys the impression that on the occasion of any inquiry ('both about cause *and about everything else*') he chooses whichever seems to be the strongest hypothesis appropriate to that particular inquiry. But in his second explanation, where he is meant to be clarifying the first one, he speaks of only one hypothesis, namely the theory of Forms (Simmias has already, with Socrates' apparent approval, called this theory a hypothesis back at 92d),[8] a theory which he here associates rather specifically with the current inquiry into causes. It might seem best, then, to take the present hypothesis, that of Forms as causes, to be no more than an illustrative *example* of the hypothetical methodology he has in mind.

This is not the only explanation possible. A more attractive way of explaining the apparent variability of the hypothesis may be to understand that any inquiry whatsoever starts with Socrates hypothesizing the existence of Forms. The Forms hypothesized at this stage are not necessarily the Forms in general, however, but whichever Forms appear to be relevant for the particular inquiry. Thus, to anticipate the example to which he is about to turn, if your inquiry is into the causal question of what makes things beautiful, or, for that matter, into the definitional question of what beauty is, you will probably start by hypothesizing that there is a transcendent Form of Beautiful, and perhaps also a Form of Ugly. One reason why such postulations are in principle deemed hypothetical by Plato is that, as he was to make clear in the *Parmenides* (130b–d), he had remained reluctant to admit that there is a Form to correspond to every general term, but had been in doubt as to where to draw the boundary between those terms with corresponding Forms and those without. Allied to that uncertainty is the question, never discussed but often lurking in the Platonic dialogues, of whether negative value-Forms like Unjust, Bad, and Ugly need be postulated alongside their positive opposites, or whether failure to partake in the positive Form might be enough to account for the presence of the negative property. The method Socrates is going to sketch here is one that could help to confirm or disconfirm the existence of the Form or Forms hypothesized in any given inquiry.

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[7] This is the reason given by Rowe 1993: 247 for not translating 'that safe part': 'no part of the hypothesis has been identified […] as "safer" than any other'.

[8] The status of the theory as a hypothesis is also brought out by its citation in conditional form at 76d–e, setting out the consequences (a) if there are Forms, and (b) if there are not. It should be borne in mind that the only Greek word for a conditional at this date is ὑπόθεσις.

Regardless of this choice between hypothesizing the Forms in general and hypothesizing the specific Forms required by the current inquiry, it is the *causal* role of Forms, rather than, say, their definitional or taxonomic functions, that will dominate the rest of the present discussion. The immediately following lines emphasize the key causal point (100c4–d6):

> It appears to me that if anything is beautiful other than the Beautiful itself, it is beautiful on account of nothing other than its having a share of *that* Beautiful. And that is what I say about them all. Do you accept that sort of cause?'
>
> 'I do,' he said.
>
> 'Well then,' he said, 'I no longer understand those other wise causes, and I can't recognize them either. Suppose someone tells me why something or other is beautiful, and says that it is because it has a vivid colour or shape, or some other such thing. I ignore those other explanations, because I am confused when they are all around me, and I keep the following at my side, in my straightforward, amateurish, and perhaps simple-minded way: nothing makes it beautiful other than that Beautiful's presence, or association, or whatever its mode and means of accruing may be.'

This is quite explicitly an inquiry into the causes of beauty, and Socrates' conviction—his chosen hypothesis—is (a) that there is a transcendent Form of Beautiful, and (b) that this Form is the best candidate to be the cause of some object's being beautiful. As he clearly indicates, self-professed aestheticians might invoke instead such alleged causes as the object's shape and colour, but Socrates has learnt to ignore such alternative causal accounts, which lead to confusion. We will shortly be enabled to work out the reason for this (by comparing the argument at 100e8–101c9): the very same colour or shape that here underlies beauty might elsewhere underlie some object's ugliness (thus the colour that makes a sunset beautiful would not make your face beautiful). The Form of Beautiful, by contrast, can contribute only beauty, never ugliness. This contrast captures the conceptual superiority which Forms, if they exist, enjoy over other alleged causes, and which makes the postulation of Forms the strongest starting hypothesis for an inquiry.

We can now look again at the closing words of the passage just quoted, along with their continuation (100d4–8):

> Nothing makes it beautiful other than that Beautiful's presence, or its association, or whatever its mode and means of accruing may be. For I am no longer insisting on this, but only that it is because of the beautiful that all beautiful things come to be beautiful.[9]

In the first sentence, Socrates' insistence is on singling out the transcendent Form of Beautiful as the relevant cause. Since it is taken to be transcendent, and therefore separate from all individual beautiful things, to postulate its existence entails postulating or assuming some means by which it 'accrues' to those things so as to make them beautiful. But *how* it does this—by being present in them, by association with them, or by whatever other possible means—is a secondary metaphysical issue and one that Socrates does not need to settle in order to pursue the inquiry. The connective ‘For’ (γάρ, d6) which opens the second sentence introduces Socrates’ reason for his lack of concern with the metaphysical issue: it is because henceforth the only thing he really *insists* on—as distinct from adopting in a merely hypothetical manner—is a reduced version of the causal thesis, one *stripped of all metaphysical assumptions*:[10] ‘For I am no longer insisting on this, but only that it is because of the beautiful that all beautiful things come to be beautiful’ (τῷ καλῷ πάντα τὰ καλὰ γίγνεται καλά). That is, the reason why he is not insisting on his previous assertion is that he is not at this stage any longer including transcendence in the causal account. That ‘the F-*itself* makes F things F’ is condemned to being a hypothetical claim so long as it has not been proven that there is in fact an F-itself. By contrast, that ‘the F makes F things F’ is, in Plato’s typical usage, a trivially true affirmation. And there, in a nutshell, we have *the ‘safe part’ of the hypothesis*. As Socrates goes on to say (100d8–e3):

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[9] […] οὐκ ἄλλο τι ποιεῖ αὐτὸ καλὸν ἢ ἡ ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ εἴτε παρουσία εἴτε κοινωνία εἴτε ὅπῃ δὴ καὶ ὅπως προσγενομένου· οὐ γὰρ ἔτι τοῦτο διισχυρίζομαι, ἀλλ' ὅτι τῷ καλῷ πάντα τὰ καλὰ γίγνεται καλά.

> ‘For I think that it is safest both for me and for another to give this reply, and I believe that if I cling to this I could never fall, but that it is safe both for me and for anyone else to reply that it is because of the beautiful that beautiful things are beautiful.’[11]

I do not mean to pretend that the transitional pair of sentences at 100d4–8 cannot be read other than in the way I have proposed. Most interpreters, indeed, have taken Socrates’ refusal to insist on ‘that Beautiful’s presence, or association, or whatever its mode and means of accruing may be’ as no more than his acknowledgement, made in passing and with little direct bearing on the current excursus, that he has not yet settled the question of exactly how to analyse the Form-particular relationship. These interpreters have correspondingly assumed that the references to ‘the beautiful’ which follow this acknowledgement continue to be to the transcendent Form of Beauty, rather than, as I have proposed, to beauty in general without metaphysical determination. My point is not that the text could not be read in this way, but that if we do so read it we entirely lose our hold on the architecture and meaning of the Second Voyage passage. There *must* be a transition from the hypothesis of the Form of Beauty as cause to the ‘safe’ postulation of beauty (metaphysically unspecified) as cause; 100d4–8 is the only place where the transition can take place. It is upon that necessity that I ultimately rest my case.

When Socrates says ‘For I am no longer insisting on this’, what he is setting aside is the entire metaphysical package: that there is a separated Form of Beauty, the Beautiful itself, which despite its separation manages, by one means or another, to ‘accrue’ to particular things and make them beautiful. He is leaving aside both the postulation of the Form’s existence as a separate entity and the consequently required additional assumption that it nevertheless somehow or other accrues to particulars. Instead, he is concentrating on what remains, now pared down to the virtual truism that it is the beautiful that makes beautiful things beautiful.

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[10] This move away from metaphysical assumptions is, I think, reinforced by a striking moment of intertextuality with the *Hippias Major*. There, at 289c9–e6, Socrates had framed the question ‘What is the beautiful itself?’ by asking what ‘form’ (εἶδος), by ‘accruing’ (triple use of the same verb, προσγενέσθαι, as at *Phd.* 100d6, where the new OCT wrongly emends it away) to things, causes them to be or appear beautiful. That question was so far from implying a transcendent cause that Hippias confidently answered ‘Gold!’. Socrates is now in a sense returning to that metaphysically level playing field, where it had already been treated as beyond all doubt that ‘it is because of the beautiful that all beautiful things are beautiful’ (287c8–d1, τὰ καλὰ πάντα τῷ καλῷ ἐστι καλά’).

[11] After some hesitation, I have departed from the Sedley/Long 2011 translation: ‘For I think that it is safest *to give this reply both to myself and to another*, and I believe that if I cling to this I could never fall, but that it is safe *to reply both to myself and to anyone else* that it is because of the beautiful that beautiful things are beautiful’. With the alternative construal adopted, whereby Socrates is concerned for the philosophical safety of others as well as himself, the ground is better prepared for 101d3–4 as interpreted below.

A closer look at the exact wording chosen does in fact vindicate this unconventional reading of the vital transitional passage. When Socrates says, ‘For I *no longer insist* on this’ (οὐ γὰρ ἔτι τοῦτο διισχυρίζομαι), the reference of ‘this’ must by clear implication be to something that he *has previously* insisted on. What is that thing? It can hardly be the choice between the competing accounts of how Forms ‘accrue’ to particulars, because he has at no point insisted on *any* answer to that question; hence, on the more conventional reading he could at most be dropping his previous insistence on *asking* that question. But both the natural meaning of the verb translated as ‘insist’, and a survey of Plato’s uses of it elsewhere, confirm that its content is always some explicit truth claim.[12] And when we look at what precedes, it emerges that that truth claim previously affirmed but now set aside can only be Socrates’ forceful existential claim about the Form of Beauty—along with, of course, the corollary that it somehow ‘accrues’ to particulars, without which it could hardly be said to exercise its causality on them. Having indicated at the end of the first sentence that the precise nature of this accruing can here be left open, Socrates goes on in the second sentence to explain (hence γάρ, ‘For […]’) why it can: it is because he is henceforth setting aside (‘no longer insist[ing] on’) the entire metaphysical hypothesis, in order to focus instead on the safe causal claim that it entails.

With the transition from the hypothesis itself to its ultra-safe inner core thus explicated, we may now turn to that inner core. It asserts that what makes things beautiful is, quite simply, beauty. The formula’s safety is achieved partly by its near-tautological form and partly by its leaving it open *what* beauty makes a thing beautiful. This is not necessarily a transcendent Form, Beauty itself: it could just as easily be beauty viewed as an immanent universal, or even the thing’s own particular beauty, that makes it beautiful. The safety of the formulation is achieved partly by leaving that question entirely open.[13]

Importantly, now that the reference to a transcendent Form has been dropped, no contestable existential assumption remains.[14] Given that the explanandum is something beautiful, it *goes without saying* that there is such a thing as beauty. It would in fact look like a self-contradiction to say, 'This thing is beautiful, but there is no such thing as beauty'.[15]

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[12] I am especially grateful to Rusty Jones for impressing this point on me. The twenty-nine occurrences of διισχυρίζεσθαι that the TLG identifies in Plato all unambiguously connote the assertion of a truth claim. Only twice does it have as its object or content the assertion of an answer to a question: *Charmides* 169a8–b1, διὸ καὶ οὔτ’ εἰ δυνατόν ἐστι τοῦτο γενέσθαι, ἐπιστήμης ἐπιστήμην εἶναι, ἔχω διισχυρίσασθαι, οὔτ’ […]; *Laws* 812a5–6, εἰ δὲ τὸ ὅλον κατορθοῦμεν ἢ μή, χαλεπὸν ἴσως διισχυρίζεσθαι. Even these passages are clear and explicit in specifying the question to which no answer will be insisted on, whereas the *Phaedo* passage would, uniquely, leave the presence and nature of the question for the reader to infer from a loose and incomplete disjunctive description, ἡ ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ εἴτε παρουσία εἴτε κοινωνία εἴτε ὅπῃ δὴ καὶ ὅπως προσγενομένου (100d7–8).

[13] As Alex Silverman has impressed on me, the assertions of ‘safety’ may be endangered by Socrates’ frequent formula *no other than*, implying that F-ness is the *only* cause of F things’ being F (101a1–4, c2–5, *cf.* 100c5, d4–6). Arguably, this restriction could not itself be an intuitively obvious truth, but would depend on systematic exposure of the competing ‘wise’ causes as fraudulent. One possible reply is that in Plato’s usage ‘no other than’ sometimes just amounts to ‘precisely’ and cannot literally mean ‘only’, *e.g. Prm.* 150c4–6, *Soph.* 257d12. I am inclined in any case to take the notion of a safe cause from its canonical expression at 100d6–e3, where no such ‘only’ is present. The use of ‘no other than’ might alternatively be thought to depend on the intuitive obviousness of each thing having just one fundamental cause: cf. Ebrey 2014: 252, who points out that ‘διὰ τί;’ (‘Why?’) already presupposes a singular answer to the causal question, and that in the *Phaedo* Socrates often talks *as if* each thing had just one cause. Against this however stands Socrates’ explicit approval of a twin-cause account at 98e.

[14] The question arises, properly pressed on me by Agnes Callard, as to whether the safe part of the hypothesis is itself hypothetical. I tentatively reply that it is in its very nature a part of the hypothesis, but that it is not itself a hypothesis or hypothetical. I mean that, outside the context of the hypothesis, one could not non-trivially answer the

That 'the beautiful' in this causal formula is equivalent to 'beauty' is fully borne out by the series of examples of safe causation that now follow:

> 100e5–101a5: things come to be large, or larger, because of *largeness*, and small because of *smallness*.
>
> 101b4–7: things are more numerous because of *numerousness*, and are larger because of *largeness*.

These safe answers are recommended to Cebes by Socrates as being far preferable to such confusing answers as that someone is larger because of a head, that ten is more than eight because of (*i.e.* by) two, and that addition or division is the cause of one becoming two. (We will return later to his reasons for this preference.) That they are indeed intended as examples of 'safe' causation is guaranteed, it seems to me, by the fact that, at the end of the list, Socrates says to Cebes (101c7–d2):

> But as for those divisions and additions and the other such ingenuities, you'd ignore them and leave them for those wiser than yourself to answer with. But you for your part would, as the saying goes, be scared of your own shadow and inexperience, and you'd cling to *that safe part of the hypothesis*, and answer accordingly.

This should put it beyond doubt that from 100d6, starting with the case of beauty, the entire sequence of causal answers recommended by Socrates represents not the hypothesis of transcendent Forms as causes but, rather, that ultra-safe virtual tautology that nestles inside it, the principle that F things are made F by F-ness.

I must now make it clear why it has been important to establish this key structural feature of the methodological passage. Among the sequence of safe causal answers there is one stretch which is typically assumed to refer explicitly to transcendent Forms (101b9–c7):

> 'Next, if one were added to one, wouldn't you make sure not to say that the addition was the cause of coming to be two, or that the division was the cause if it were divided? You'd loudly exclaim that you don't know any other way of each thing coming to be except by getting a share of the distinctive being of each thing in which it gets a share (μετασχὸν τῆς ἰδίας οὐσίας ἑκάστου οὗ ἂν μετάσχῃ, c3–4); that in these cases you have no cause of coming to be two other than getting a share of twoness (τὴν τῆς δυάδος μετάσχεσιν, c5); that those things that are going to be two must get a share of this (τούτου μετασχεῖν, c6); and that whatever is going to be one must get a share of oneness.'

It is easy to see why this excerpt has been assumed to refer to metaphysically transcendent Forms as causes. Particulars are said here to acquire their properties because of their 'getting a share' (μετάσχεσις) in a distinctive 'being' (οὐσία). *Metaschesis* makes us think of its cognate

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question 'What makes this thing F?' by saying simply 'F-ness'; nevertheless, when one hypothesizes that it is F-ness itself that makes F things F, one may recognize how this depends on the unassailability of the truism that F-ness is what makes F things F. Thus, to examine the safe part in its own right, as Socrates goes on to do, is not to imply that this truism has any value outside the context of hypothesis. Otherwise he could have left hypotheses unmentioned, and simply concentrated on the safe truism.

[15] This incidentally defuses a difficulty raised by Denyer 2007: 89, n. 2.

and virtual equivalent *methexis*, the relationship of particulars to Forms critically explored in the first part of the *Parmenides*. And *ousia* is of course a Platonic buzzword for Forms.

My reply is threefold. First, the entire structure of the passage, as I have just outlined it, precludes such a reading. If the causes cited were Forms, we would be dealing here with the hypothesis itself, not its carefully whittled down ‘safe part’.

Second, if Plato had meant to refer to transcendent Forms here, he could have retained the unambiguous nomenclature for them already used at the beginning of the methodological passage: *e.g.* ‘a Beautiful alone by itself’ (καλὸν αὐτὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ, 100b6), and ‘the Beautiful itself’ (αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, 100c4–5), referred back to later as ‘*that* Beautiful’ (ἐκείνου τοῦ καλοῦ, 100d5). To talk instead of mere ‘duality’ and ‘oneness’ falls significantly short of an explicit reference back to those same Forms.

Third, there is absolutely no reason why the two terms *metaschesis* and *ousia* need narrow down the reference to a case of metaphysical transcendence. μετέχειν + genitive is an extremely common expression in Plato for the possession of a property, and it refers to the Form–particular relationship only in a minority of cases. At *Timaeus* 27c2, when Timaeus says that he will open his speech with a prayer, as is done by ‘all those who μετέχουσι σωφροσύνης’ (have a share of moderation), this is a simple predication, without metaphysical overtones.[16] As for *ousia*, in the *Phaedo* this is indeed used to refer explicitly to the Forms five times (65d13, 76d9, 77a2, 78d1, and 92d9), but always by picking out a particular *kind* of *ousia*, for example (76d7–9) ‘[…] the things we are always harping on about—a Beautiful and a Good, and all *that kind of* Being’ (καὶ πᾶσα ἡ τοιαύτη οὐσία). In the *Phaedo*, Plato has not yet made the move, familiar from the later dialogues *Republic* and *Timaeus*, of denying being to the sensible world.[17] He should therefore not regard ‘being’ as a term that is sufficient by itself to distinguish transcendent entities from any others. *Ousia* is, in any case, a flexible term in Plato, having much the same semantic range as the verb ‘to be’ itself does. Sometimes it does indeed amount to ‘essence’ or ‘reality’. However, at *Theaetetus* 185a–c we learn that to express, with regard to a colour and a sound, the minimal thought that they both ‘are’ is already to have mentioned their *ousia*, and in context this is ‘being’ in the simple sense conveyed by the humble copula[18]—the most basic use of ‘be’ in Greek. So when, in the passage just quoted, Socrates says that ‘you don’t know any other way of each thing coming to be except by getting a share of the distinctive being (τῆς ἰδίας οὐσίας, 101c3) of each thing in which it gets a share’, he need mean no more than that two is a specific predicate, and that when things come to *be* two they do so because they come to share the property of possessing that specific predicate with all the other things that are likewise two.

It is time to take stock. Socrates recommends a method which starts out, always or at any rate typically, by hypothesizing a comprehensive or selected set of Forms to fit the particular inquiry undertaken. By way of illustration, he applies this to causal inquiries and advertises the advantages of such an approach by pointing out the following. The invocation of hypothesized Forms as causes has as its inner core a completely secure causal principle, that F-ness is what makes F things F. Reliance on this core principle, he explains at some length, enables you to play safe when others are tying themselves in knots with more sophisticated causal explanations.

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[16] For a similar use in *Phd.*, see 94a1–4.

[17] *Cf.* the description of intelligibles and sensibles as ‘two kinds of beings (ὄντων)’ at 79a6.

[18] That this is the copula, and not a marker of existence or reality, is shown by the fact that, in the same context, everything of which εἶναι is said also has οὐκ εἶναι said of it (185c).

But the reliability of the safe part of the hypothesis does not vindicate the hypothesis itself. We must therefore turn to Socrates' advice for the proper use and evaluation of the hypothesis. This comes in three stages: the selection of the hypothesis, its application, and its justification. The first stage, which we have already met, runs as follows (100a3–4):

> '[…] on every occasion I hypothesize whatever theory (λόγος) I deem most robust.'

It may be pointless to interrogate the text as to precisely how the hypothesis' initial 'robustness' or 'strength' is supposed to be recognized. But if we assume that the hypothesis chosen is normally centred on the existence of certain transcendent Forms, any reader of Plato will understand what kinds of consideration would lead him to judge such a theory to be maximally robust. The postulation of, say, justice as a separated Form enables its definitional analysis to be pursued in a manner independent of specific civic and other contexts. And it likewise, in accordance with the causal principle we have already met, allows that specific Form's causal transmission to be mapped in a way that would be impossible for culturally embedded types of justice, *e.g.* returning what you owe, the effects of which would not even be just in all circumstances. The strength of the Form hypothesis would be even clearer in the case of beauty, the actual example with which Socrates works here. Only by postulating a separated Form of Beauty can we hope to study its essence without reference to the countless cultural contexts which constrain and potentially distort the meaning of beauty (*cf. Symp.* 211a).

So much for the initial postulation of the hypothesis. Next, Socrates continues (100a4–7):

> I set down as true whatever I think harmonizes (συμφωνεῖν) with it—both about cause and about everything else—and as false whatever doesn't.

This way of applying the hypothesis has often been thought to be logically incoherent.[19] Does 'harmonize with' (συμφωνεῖν) mean 'follow from' or merely 'be consistent with'? If it means 'follow from', then it will be reasonable to put down as true whatever follows from the hypothesis, but madness to put down as false whatever fails to follow from it. Many, indeed most, truths will fail to follow from it, but will still be truths nonetheless. If, on the other hand, 'harmonize with' means 'be consistent with', it will be fine to treat as false whatever propositions fail to be consistent with the chosen hypothesis, but madness to treat as true whatever propositions are consistent with it. For with any given truth the great majority of falsehoods will turn out to be perfectly consistent. However, this dilemma does not show that Plato is confused, just that συμφωνεῖν cannot be straightforwardly identified with either of the suggested logical relations—following from and consistency with.

What we should envisage instead is a procedure along the following lines. Suppose you are investigating what makes things beautiful. You start by hypothesizing that there is a Form of Beauty, that is to say a single, context-independent, absolute and unvarying principle of beauty, accessible by pure thought. You do not yet have a working definition of this principle, and you recognize that there may turn out to be no such principle, but you map out the territory on the default assumption that there is. How do you do this? You review the attributions of beauty that others base on such context-dependent factors as shape and colour. Finding them incoherent, you systematically 'ignore' (χαίρειν ἐᾶν, 100d2) these causal accounts, and instead you construct a causal tree in which all instances of beauty are derived from that single Form. Or, in Socrates' terminology, you put down as true all causal explanations of beauty that 'harmonize', or fit in, with the hypothesis of this Form's existence and causality, and set aside all those that do not. That is, you treat as true all and only those causal explanations of the things' beauty that take due account of the hypothesized Form and its causal role. Plato's notion of συμφωνεῖν thus turns out to signify something stronger than mere logical consistency: two theses 'harmonize' only when they cohere to tell a unified story, or, to follow the musical metaphor chosen, to make a single melody.[20]

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[19] The problem was crisply and influentially formulated by Robinson 1953, ch. 9.

We have now seen how the Form hypothesis is first selected and then applied, at least in a context of causal inquiry. What follows next is Socrates' lengthy recommendation of its 'safe' inner core, the principle that 'It is F-ness that makes[21] F things F', which we have already considered. I take the point of this strategy to be that, although it does not vindicate the hypothesis that the Forms in question exist, it advertises the explanatory advantages that they will offer, should they turn out to exist. If your subject is the causal explanation of things' being F, the unidirectional and conflict-free causal powers attributable to the Form of F-ness would enable you to steer your way safely through the minefield of causal attribution, and to seek in all contexts a single cause correlated exclusively to things' being F.[22] Thus the methodology of appealing to safe causes can be taken to convey, by way of illustration, Socrates' reasons for working with the hypothesis of Forms, as he typically does in those Platonic dialogues that are usually dated around the time of the *Phaedo*.

Plato's appeal in the *Phaedo* to these safe causes has been received with little enthusiasm. If you want to know the cause of things' being beautiful, it is said, then learning that it is in fact beauty that makes them beautiful not only is not much of an advance, but also, worse, advertises as a 'cause' something which in reality does no causing at all. However, I think that this kind of criticism risks missing the strength of Plato's causal theory. Take the simple question, what causes something to become hot? Plato's safe answer would be 'heat' (105b6–c1).[23] If this does not yet sound to us much like causation, the statement that heat makes things hot at least has the merit of being a self-guaranteeing truth. From there, Plato can proceed to what he calls a more subtle kind of cause, fire. To say that fire makes things hot (105c2) is undoubtedly both causal and informative, yet, because fire is understood as itself essentially hot, it remains close enough to being a self-guaranteeing truth. Something essentially hot *ipso facto* has the power to confer heat, and never coldness. You might insist on going still further, nominating as the cause of things or people being hot such factors as friction or fever. But by now there is nothing whatsoever self-evident about your causal attributions. The actual causing of hotness that is done by friction or fever is inscrutable (to anticipate David Hume's critique of causation), especially since, as Plato will readily point out, these very same factors might just as easily result in your being cold as in your being hot—think, for example, of friction with an ice cube or of shivering with a fever. Understood in this way, Plato has done very well to start out each time with the safest, if thinnest, cause;

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[20] For a fine explication of the musical metaphor, see Bailey 2005.

[21] For 'makes' as connoting a causal relation in the *Phaedo*, and for much more of what I say and assume about Platonic causation here, see further Sedley 1998.

[22] Analogously, we might further speculate, if your subject is the definition of F, the availability of a Form of F-ness would preserve the unity of the definiendum and hence of the definition too.

[23] It is true that heat is not in these lines explicitly called the 'cause' of things' being hot, as Denyer 2007: 93–94 stresses. But it is here called the content of a 'safe answer', with unambiguous reference back to 100d8–e3, where Socrates has made it clear that safe answers are answers to causal questions.

to progress from there, with due caution, to thicker but still safe causal accounts; and to call a halt before the component of causality altogether disappears from view. When we proceed further with the argument of the Second Voyage, we will see this distinction between safe and unsafe causes systematically applied.

So much for the enhanced understanding of causation. Socrates' hypothetical method, we should also recall, is not limited to causal inquiries (100a6), and I have suggested definitional inquiries as another context in which it should be expected to operate. Here too the value of 'safe' causes is not hard to discern. To continue with Socrates' own chosen example, suppose that you want to explain things' beauty. Only when you understand that what makes them beautiful is not colour, shape, or context, but simply beauty, do you know what you have to investigate. You have, that is, to investigate the definition of beauty.

A third and final way of appreciating the value of safe causes is to recognize that in Socrates' final proof of the soul's immortality, to which the Second Voyage serves as a prelude, what will do most of the work is not the actual hypothesis of Forms, which have no more than a minor walk-on part, but the enhanced understanding of causality to which that hypothesis has given rise in our passage by vindicating 'safe' causes. As Socrates said when introducing the hypothetical method (100b7–9), 'If you grant me these [the Forms] and accept that they exist, I hope to use them *to exhibit causation to you*, and to discover that the soul is immortal'. The pivotal point of the argument will be at 105b–c, where Socrates refers back explicitly to the principles of 'safe' causation, and builds on them a new kind of causal 'safety', one on which the final proof of immortality ultimately rests.

Let us now return to the text of the Second Voyage. The next task is set out at 101d3–5:

> But if someone were to cling to the hypothesis itself, you would ignore him [or 'it'] and not answer until you had managed to consider its results and see whether you found them to be in harmony or disharmony with each other.

This is one of the Second Voyage's more mysterious sentences, and it has caused much consternation. It has seemed obvious that it must be an instruction as to how to defend the hypothesis against attack. Yet the words 'if someone were to *cling to* the hypothesis itself' reiterate a term, ἔχεσθαι + genitive, that has already, on the contrary, been used twice in the passage (first at 100d9, and second at 101d1–2, directly before the present sentence) for 'cling to' or 'rely on', and which is virtually unattested in any sense remotely like 'attack'.[24] We must therefore follow the clue we are given and see where it leads. So far, what has been recommended for 'clinging to' is the 'safe part' of the hypothesis, namely the causal principle that it is F-ness that makes F things F. Evidently, then, the mistake made by the imagined respondent is that of relying, no longer just on the safe part of the hypothesis, but on the hypothesis itself. This can only mean that the respondent has taken the actual existence of the Form or Forms in question to be settled beyond dispute, and to be no longer hypothetical. If so, the mistake targeted by Socrates is that of prematurely endorsing a theory which is still under investigation.[25]

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[24] This point is argued effectively by Blank 1986: 147–48 and by Trabattoni 2011: 199–201 n. 206.

[25] This may favour 'ignore it' (*i.e.* the hypothesis) rather than 'ignore him' at 101d4. The former reading is also favoured by 101e1–2, where the error of the ἀντιλογικοί is that of not separating talk about the 'starting point' (ἀρχή) from talk about its results: what they ought to do, the implication may be, is to 'ignore' the starting point itself so long as they are still checking the coherence of its results. Unfortunately, the identity and methodology of the opponents in question (on whom see also 90b–c) are largely a matter of guesswork. On this passage *cf.* Blank 1986.

We should not be surprised to find this methodological error highlighted in the *Phaedo*. Just a few pages earlier, Socrates has criticized much the same error as being the origin of 'misology' or 'distrust of arguments'. Those, he explained, who rush to endorse theories uncritically are liable to be disappointed by them in the longer run, and eventually to lose faith in the power of argument itself (89d–90d). Indeed, Simmias, one of the principal interlocutors, has himself exhibited just such a tendency, by uncritically endorsing the hypothesis that the soul is an attunement of bodily elements (92c–d), then just as quickly losing faith in it when it is criticized by Socrates (92d–95a). In our present passage, the description of someone treating a hypothesis in a manner inappropriate to a hypothesis, namely by relying on it as the truth, seems to me to resume that same theme of misology and to incorporate into Socrates' method a means of counteracting it.

How then is premature reliance on a hypothesis to be resisted? The first part of the advice, as we saw, is to 'ignore' (χαίρειν ἐᾶν) someone or something. It is left unclear whether Socrates' advice is to ignore the hypothesis, or to ignore the person relying on it,[26] but either way the advice no doubt means that the hypothesis should be left unused. (*Cf.* 100d2 for 'ignore' in a similar sense.)

The second part of the advice is not to 'answer' until the results of the hypothesis have been tested. The word 'answer' points to a dialectical context, and the advice is therefore in all probability to avoid being drawn yet into any dialectical engagement that rests on the hypothesis.

The third part of the advice is to test the results of the hypothesis by seeing whether they are in 'harmony' or 'disharmony' with each other. This return to the concept of theoretical harmony (συμφωνεῖν) that we met earlier in the passage has caused puzzlement, since it has been wondered how a single proposition, even if false, could be expected to entail two or more mutually contradictory or inconsistent propositions. However, in dialectic, where additional premises agreed by both parties are standardly incorporated into the refutation of an initial proposition, it is a perfectly familiar fact that formal contradictions can be generated from that proposition. This was, indeed, the established method of Zeno of Elea, considered by Aristotle to be the founder of dialectic, whose book consisted of a series of arguments each of which inferred from the premise 'There are many things' a pair of mutually contradictory results, *e.g.* that the many things are both finite and infinite in number.

Nor do we need to look so far afield, since the *Phaedo* itself contains two examples of just such a treatment of a hypothesis. Hence this is one place in the Second Voyage passage where it should be comparatively easy to relate the methodological prescriptions to Socrates' practice in the very same dialogue. At 85b–86d, Simmias has proposed the theory that the soul is an attunement of bodily elements, and suggested that this view might undermine Socrates' own thesis of the soul's immortality, since on such an account the soul could not possibly survive the dissolution of the elements. Simmias (93c10) and Socrates (94b1) both refer to this theory explicitly as a hypothesis, making it the only theory other than the theory of Forms itself to be dubbed a 'hypothesis' in the *Phaedo*. Socrates' response, one might say without inaccuracy, is to refuse to answer Simmias as regards this hypothesis' alleged implications for the immortality of the soul until he has examined the hypothesis itself. And in proceeding to examine the hypothesis, he might indeed be said to examine its results and to show that they are in disharmony with each other. All this closely anticipates the methodology described in the present part of the Second Voyage.

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[26] See, however, n. 25, above.

What, then, is meant by asking whether the results of the hypothesis are in harmony or disharmony with each other? In Socrates' critique of the attunement hypothesis, there was no allegation of formal self-contradiction, comparable to Zeno's antinomies. Nevertheless, the refutation turned on the finding that, by starting from the attunement hypothesis, it was not possible to give a fully coherent account of the soul. For example, since one soul is no more a soul than another is, souls should be unable to differ from each other in attunement; however, another basic requirement of any adequate psychology is that it account for moral or intellectual differences of quality between souls, and that suggests that souls *will* have to differ in attunement from each other after all (93a–94b). This seems to be just the kind of 'disharmony' that Cebes has now been advised to look out for. And it was used in the earlier passage precisely to stop Simmias from clinging prematurely to his hypothesis that the soul is an attunement.

In interpreting this recommended method of testing a hypothesis in terms of the harmony or disharmony of its results, we can well continue to assume the same notion of harmony as that which proved to be appropriate at the opening of the Second Voyage passage. If the results of the attunement theory are in disharmony with each other, that disharmony is revealed, not necessarily by demonstrating any formal contradiction implicit in the theory, but by showing that, when you set out to apply it, you will not be able to tell a single coherent story from beginning to end. The 'results' of the hypothesis are in Greek τὰ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ὁρμηθέντα (101d4), literally 'the things that took their starting point from it'. This imprecise terminology, we can now see, does not refer narrowly to formal entailments of the hypothesis. What may or may not prove to be in mutual disharmony are not these, but the full range of its applications—in other words, what becomes of a hypothesis when you set out to apply it systematically.

The other place in the *Phaedo* where we can find this same methodology being used is in the Second Voyage passage itself, this time with regard to a *successful* hypothesis. At 100e–101c, as we have seen, the merits of the hypothesis of Forms as causes are extensively advertised, applying the distinction between safe and spurious causation that I outlined earlier. To exhibit the safety of sticking to causal accounts of the form 'F things are made F by the F', Socrates contrasts them at some length with the alternative model, a more 'sophisticated' but also hazardous approach to causes, typically of the form 'x is made F by y'—for example, when A is a head taller than B, that 'A is made larger by a head'. And he exposes the alleged contradiction (101a6, ἐναντίος λόγος) involved in such causal accounts: according to them, the very same thing, a head, that makes A larger also makes B smaller. An alternative version of the contradiction, presumably intended as semi-humorous (at any rate, Cebes laughs at it, 101a8–b1), is that on such an account a head, something small, is the cause of someone's being large. Plato is operating with a set of causal principles widely agreed to operate throughout and beyond the *Phaedo*, according to which it is a virtual self-contradiction to assert that something causes its own opposite, or that one and the same cause causes opposite effects.

We need not dwell here on the question of why Plato regularly assumes such assertions to be incoherent. For present purposes, it is enough that he does assume it. So when he recommends checking a hypothesis to see whether its results are in mutual harmony or disharmony, we need not doubt that he has especially in mind the immediately preceding contrast between causal accounts that generate incoherence, such as making a head simultaneously the cause of things' both being large and being small, and those which do not, such as making largeness the cause of someone's being large.

This test, we must remember, is invoked as a way of checking whether the chosen hypothesis is viable or not. Of the two competing hypotheses considered in the *Phaedo*—the attunement theory and the theory of Forms—one fails the test and one passes it.[27] It is important to note that in the latter case, that of the theory of Forms, the success does not relate to the postulation of transcendent Forms, *i.e.* 'the hypothesis itself', but only to its 'safe' inner core. This shows that the test is not aimed at final confirmation of the hypothesis, but at showing that, if confirmed, it will be a fruitful hypothesis to apply.

This leaves the question how the hypothesis itself can ever be confirmed. The apparent answer is sketched in just a few words (101d5–e1):

> When, however, you had to give an account of that hypothesis itself, you would do so in the same way, hypothesizing again another hypothesis, whichever higher one seemed best, until you came to something sufficient.

It is commonly, and in my view rightly, supposed that Plato here is sketching in barest outline what will become in the *Republic* the top section of the Divided Line. There, the hypothesized concepts that are typically called upon, and successfully applied, by mathematicians, as represented in the second section down, are now in their own turn traced, along an upward path, to an unhypothetical first principle, identifiable with the Form of the Good. Here in the *Phaedo*, the counterpart of that first principle is described merely as 'something sufficient' (τι ἱκανόν). This has sometimes been translated as 'something adequate' and glossed as if it represented something *merely* adequate, as though even in this final stage the hypothetical mode had not been fully left behind. But the usage of the same adjective elsewhere in the *Phaedo* shows that it can convey an entirely sufficient proof, without any hint of reservation (*e.g.* 77a5, ἱκανῶς ἀποδέδεικται). Thus, the minimal sketch in our passage can perfectly well be said to mark out a space which the *Republic*'s idealized account of dialectic will later fill. And the method envisaged is indeed one that will undertake to place the previous hypothesis on an entirely firm footing.

Given that it can be fully understood only in the light of the later *Republic*, there is reason to think of this recommendation as forward-looking. Notice, then, that in the Second Voyage passage Socrates starts out describing his own habitual method, but at 100e8 he switches to suggesting to Cebes what he, Cebes, would do when confronted with a choice of hypotheses, and the advice about grounding the initial hypothesis on a higher one is part of that same advice to Cebes. Socrates, we should remember, is in the last hours of his life. It makes sense that he should here be bequeathing methodological advice to his successors. Cebes may be the formal recipient of the advice, but I would take him to be standing proxy for the absent Plato. Socrates is here shown sanctioning the future direction that Plato himself will take.[28]

Despite this parting gesture towards the higher reaches of Platonic dialectic, it would be hard to deny that the main focus of the Second Voyage is not on the hope of conclusive proof—an ideal which Socrates certainly does not here pretend to have attained, and which we may take to be a task he is instead bequeathing to his successors. Rather, it is on the proper handling of hypotheses *as hypotheses*, and in particular on how to make the best of the theory of Forms despite its admittedly provisional status. At the centre of that manifesto is the theory’s ability to provide the basis of a dependable causal theory—the causal theory that (as promised at 100b7–9) will be developed further at 102–7 in order to secure Socrates’ final proof of the soul’s immortality.

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[27] As the anonymous reader points out to me, this might be considered to be the same test as the one that the hypothesis of Forms will itself ostensibly fail in part 1 of the *Parmenides*.

[28] *Cf.* 99c6–8, where Socrates' readiness to 'become anyone's pupil' in order to learn teleological physics predicts Plato's writing of the *Timaeus*, in which Socrates does just that.

In introducing the hypothesis of Forms at 100b4–c2, Socrates remarks to Cebes:

> ‘[…] I’ll go back to those things that have been our frequent refrain, and start from them, first hypothesizing that there are such things as a Beautiful alone by itself, and a Good, a Large, and all the rest. If you grant me these and accept that they exist (ἃ εἴ μοι δίδως τε καὶ συγχωρεῖς εἶναι ταῦτα), I hope to use them to exhibit causation to you, and to discover that the soul is immortal.’
>
> ‘But,’ said Cebes, ‘if you were to assume that I *am* granting them to you, you would not be proceeding prematurely.’

Granting and accepting the hypothesis of Forms here clearly means not regarding it as conclusively proven (as ‘clinging to it’ might have meant) but treating it as a sound working hypothesis. Despite Cebes’ signs of haste, Socrates does not in fact get him and the others to grant the hypothesis for another two Stephanus pages—not until after the methodological excursus we have been examining is complete. But when, immediately after that excursus (102a11–b2), all those present now ‘agree’ that the Forms exist, as a basis for Socrates’ final proof of immortality, they are doing exactly what we were led to expect: adopting it as their own hypothesis, along the lines recommended to Cebes in the Second Voyage excursus. We are therefore entitled to infer that, in the eyes of Cebes and his companions, the Forms in general have in those intervening two pages passed the test of producing harmonious results, while rival theories have been shown up as bound to produce inharmonious ones. Cebes, who unlike Simmias (*cf.* 77a2–5) had not visibly ‘clung to’ the hypothesis of Forms right from the start, has now been taken through a series of the theory’s ‘results’ (ὁρμηθέντα), and has seen that they are systematically harmonious right across the board. That is why he is ready to follow along with Socrates’ final proof of immortality, and will, when it is complete at 107a, declare himself fully convinced by it. The methodologically unsound Simmias, by contrast, who will confess at the end that he remains less than fully convinced, will be urged by Socrates to re-examine ‘the initial hypotheses’ (107b5), in the hope that doing so will help him better appreciate the force of the argument. There can be no doubt that those hypotheses are, once again, identifiable with the postulation of the various Forms. The understanding of causality required by the Last Argument[29] depends on repeated testing of the Form hypothesis, with close attention to its ‘safe’ core, in contrast to the explanatory chaos that results from inattention to it. Cebes has achieved this deep understanding, but Simmias still has some way to go.

We can now begin to glimpse why Socrates began at 100a–b by leaving it ambiguous whether the hypothetical method starts out from the postulation of those Forms that are appropriate to the current inquiry, or from the postulation of Forms quite generally. Most typically, it would indeed start out from Forms selected for their relevance to the inquiry in hand, but in the present instance, where the aim was to make the kind of causation exercised by the Forms credible to Cebes and his companions in order to ground the ensuing Last Argument for immortality, the focus is on Forms in general.

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[29] For the purpose and structure of the Last Argument, see Sedley 2018.

Although there is much that remains obscure about the hypothetical method sketched in these pages, I shall venture the following final thought. The *Phaedo* belongs to a group of Platonic dialogues which make productive use of the theory of Forms, in what many since Aristotle have perceived as a move beyond the open-ended spirit of Socrates' interrogative method. That is perhaps one reason why Plato takes enormous trouble in this dialogue to emphasize that the existence of Forms remains no more than Socrates' working hypothesis. Nevertheless, he insists in the Second Voyage passage, those who are sufficiently discriminating in choosing, and methodical in applying, their hypothesis can, even while remaining in the hypothetical mode, derive vital philosophical understanding from it. Consider two examples. The earlier demonstration, by appeal to Recollection, that the soul pre-existed its present incarnation was said to depend on the hypothesis of Forms (76d–e): *if and only if* there are Forms is there necessarily Recollection.[30] And at the close of the philosophical conversation we will see how Socrates could even face death cheerfully, thanks to insights about the soul's essential immortality which he has derived from an enhanced understanding of causation, those insights having themselves emerged from his hypothesis that there are transcendent Forms. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that the entire argument of the *Phaedo* is an exercise in hypothetical method.

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[30] *Cf.* n. 8 above.

POLITICS AND DIVINITY IN PLATO’S *REPUBLIC*: THE FORM OF THE GOOD[1]

A. A. LONG

Plato’s dialogues engage with perennial topics. Among the most prominent of these are politics and divinity. How do these two topics, so unrelated from our modern Western perspective, fit together in his oeuvre? A third constant in most of Plato’s works is the person of Socrates. What is the importance of Socrates to Plato’s treatment of politics and divinity? In asking these two questions, I will focus on Plato’s most celebrated dialogue, *Politeia* in Greek, standardly and misleadingly translated as ‘Republic’ (from the Latin expression for the Roman state, *res publica*), but better rendered by ‘political constitution’. This translation helps us to see how Plato can move seamlessly from talking about politics to discussing the human mental and moral constitution (*psych* in Greek), and vice versa. Plato’s psychology is also a politics and ethics, and his politics and ethics move back and forth into and out of psychology.

Besides the *Republic*, set in Athens and narrated by Socrates to one or more unnamed persons (could these include the always anonymous author himself?), late in his life Plato wrote two further dialogues on politics from which he omits Socrates as an interlocutor. One of these works, entitled *Statesman*, sketches the notion of the rule of law, while the other, actually called *Laws* and written last of all the dialogues, treats the same theme at enormous length. Plato did not write any work on theology specifically, but all three dialogues—*Republic*, *Statesman*, *and Laws*—draw on god, gods, or divinity generically, in their approaches to politics.[2]

The key question for Greek political theorists was Who or What should rule? In the *Republic*, Socrates makes access to a *divine* and ultimate principle (called The Form of the Good) the pinnacle of education for the philosopher rulers of his ideal community. What should rule, according to the *Republic*, is goodness or divinity as such, transmitted and prescribed to the community in the knowledge constitutive of philosophy. I will call this theological function, which will be central to my argument, 'metaphysical and axiological'. In the *Statesman*, divinity is primarily present in a fantastic story that contrasts a Golden Age of divinely governed and pre-political life with the present era in which expert statesmen and laws compensate for the absence of direct divine governance. I will call the theological function in this dialogue 'allegorical/mythical'. In the *Laws*, Plato assigns gods their traditional role as the focus of community worship, but he also (in book 10) grafts on to these ritual functions elaborate and original proofs of divine causality based on the orderly motion of the heavens, as well as an ancillary proof concerning divine providence. I will call this theological function 'religious and cosmological'.

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[1] I am extremely grateful to Dr Fiona Leigh and her Philosophy colleagues for inviting me to give the Keeling lecture on May 18, 2017. As a UCL graduate and former faculty member, I have special reasons to value the honour of returning to my London academic home in this way. For the published version of the lecture, I have largely retained the style of oral delivery because my aim was to make my argument accessible to a broad audience, and that continues to be my goal. Much that I say is drawn directly from Plato’s text and needs little by way of further commentary or nuance. Controversy, however, pertains and is bound to pertain to the divine status that I accord to the Form of the Good in the *Republic*. To set this thesis in its historical context, and to extend my argument for it beyond the limits of the lecture, I have appended a freshly written conclusion. I have benefited from comments by the Keeling audience in the Gustave Tuck Lecture Theatre of UCL, and also by comments I received a week later when, as Michael Frede Memorial Lecturer, I spoke on the same topic at the British School at Athens. Andrea Nightingale, John Ferrari, Christopher Rowe, and David Sedley kindly read earlier drafts. I have gratefully attended to their responses in preparing the lecture for publication and also to comments from the press reader for this collection of Keeling lectures.

[2] The bibliography on Plato’s treatment of god(s) and divinity is much too extensive to be surveyed fully here. Works that I have found particularly helpful include Benitez 1995, Bordt 2006, Broadie 2011, Johansen 2004, McPherran 1986, Menn 1992, Rowe 2013, and Sedley 1999 and 2007b.

These various functions of divinity are broadly consistent with one another in the ways in which Plato uses them, and one dialogue may feature all five (as the *Republic* does), but they are not what we would expect from an author with completely hard and fast, or doctrinal, ideas about god. Divinity in Plato is always authoritative and absolute in what it signifies. But Plato was flexible, exploratory, and creative in the use to which he put divinity in different contexts. While he can write in the manner of a systematic philosophical theologian, as he does at the end of the *Laws*, or in the manner of a divine creationist, as he does in the immensely influential cosmological dialogue *Timaeus*, his ways of presenting and using divinity are, overall, suggestive rather than definitive. They speak to philosophical issues and address distinct philosophical contexts rather than being dogmatic and immediately imperative.

I make these points because Plato's theological creativity and audacity have been underemphasized in recent work. Scholars write excellent studies of Plato's conception of god or gods, but they rarely ask where he is coming from and where he is situating himself in the polytheistic and superstitious culture of Athens.[3] We also need to detach ourselves from standard theological concepts (especially the essential goodness or personhood of god) in order to grasp the freshness that his divine attributes had before they were assimilated into the cultures he has profoundly influenced. Let me explain.

In all the political dialogues (and in Plato generally), divinity has three fundamental and inter-entailing attributes: (1) it instantiates what is essentially good in itself; (2) it identifies the ultimate cause of order and beauty in the universe at large; and (3) it authorizes the rule of the reasoning that Plato takes to be essential to personal and political wellbeing. Plato's political dialogues incorporate divinity because they seek to dramatize and establish policies and rulers that are as excellent as humanly possible. These works tell us who or what (whether philosophy or expert statesmanship or law) should have supreme authority in a city or a state, for the sake of the collective happiness, wellbeing, and virtue of citizens. To that end, Plato has recourse to divinity as the standard and paradigm for the philosophical ruler of the *Republic*, for the statesman of the dialogue of that name, and for the legislator of the *Laws*.

Plato was vitriolic about the failings of the political systems of his own time—whether oligarchy, democracy, or absolute rule ('tyranny' in Greek)—but his dialogues (unlike Aristotle's *Politics*, where divinity and traditional gods barely appear) do not analyse the ways in which Greek communities actually governed themselves. The primary project of Plato's politics was not a descriptive and dispassionate analysis of the social world as he found it, but a radical exploration of how to make civic arrangements as good as possible for all concerned. Athens, as he saw it, had erred appallingly in trying and executing Socrates for alleged impiety and corruption.[4] Many of what we take to be Plato's earliest writings defend Socrates' idiosyncratic patriotism and present him in the guise of an intensely involved critic of political rhetoric, with the bitterly ironic claim to be 'Athens' only true student and practitioner of politics' (*Gorgias* 521d). As to divinity itself, on the basis of words that Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates, he was not only determined to expose the travesty of the charges of irreligion but also to publicize the actual piety of Socrates by representing him as fervently committed to divinity, as we see in the following passages:

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[3] Notable exceptions include Morgan 1990 and McPherran 2006.

T1 Socrates calls his public role as questioner, gadfly, and moral reformer a lifelong service to *the* god: *Apology* 30a–e.[5]

T2 Socrates concludes his defence by asserting that 'a good man cannot be harmed in life or in death, and that his affairs are not neglected by *gods*' (plural *theoi*, without a definite article, not 'by *the* gods', as the word is normally translated): *Apology* 41d. His final words (ibid. 42a) declare that only 'the god' (singular) knows 'which of us [whether he himself or the members of the jury] faces the better lot'.

T3 Socrates ends his conversation on piety with the religious zealot Euthyphro by expressing disappointment at not acquiring wisdom from him concerning 'divine things' (*ta theia*): *Euthyphro* 15e–16a.

T4 Socrates declines to escape from prison, as urged by his friend Crito, and concludes their conversation with the words: 'Let us act in the way I have proposed, since this is the way *the god* (*theos*, singular) is leading us': *Crito* 54d.

T5 Socrates' final words before dying: 'Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius; make this offering [all of you] without fail': *Phaedo* 118a.

As we see in these texts representing Socrates' last days, Plato has him sometimes speak of 'the god' (singular), or 'gods' (plural), or of 'divine things'. He does not have Socrates specify any leading divine name, such as Zeus, or Athena, or even Apollo, although he does credit Socrates with invoking, in his final words before the hemlock prevented further speech, the recently established medical deity Asclepius. We are probably to take the singular god of the *Apology* to be Apollo of the Delphic oracle, but Plato may be deliberate in not naming Apollo there (see n. 5, above). In any case, readers raised in monotheistic cultures are bound to be puzzled by the way in which plural and singular nouns frequently alternate in Plato's references to god(s) in these passages.[6] That is one reason why I use the word 'divinity', instead of god or gods, in this chapter's title. But there are also much deeper reasons.

As we find in the text from the *Euthyphro*, Socrates speaks there of 'divine things', using the neuter plural of the adjective *theios*, which signifies 'divine' quite generally, leaving the term open as to its referents. Many things besides Olympian deities can have the *theios* attribute in Greek literature, including exceptional human beings and abstract entities such as nature or fortune. *Theios* also admits of degrees, such that something may be more or may be most divine, and sometimes, in ordinary Greek, the word is used hyperbolically, as we may say of something delightful, 'how divine!'. In using 'divinity' instead of god, I seek to capture this breadth of reference, and I especially want to prevent us from automatically thinking that anything divine in Greek must signify a being with the mind and intentions of a person. Plato, as we shall soon see in detail, calls the metaphysical Forms of the *Republic* and elsewhere divine (*theia*): they are emphatically not persons but perfect exemplars of such qualities as justice and beauty, and they are headed by one very special Form, the Form of the Good, which I will discuss in detail below.[7]

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[4] The official charges against Socrates at his trial were 'corrupting the young, and not believing in (*nomizein*) the gods (*theoi*) in whom the city believes but in other new [or strange] divinities (*kaina daimonia*)': *Apology* 24b.

[5] The use of the singular *theos* makes it likely that the reference is to Apollo, as it is explicitly at *Phaedo* 58b, 61a5, and 85b7. But see Burnyeat 1997 for the view that Socrates' not naming 'the god' in the *Apology* context is tantamount to his rejection of Athenian civic religion.

[6] On Plato's alternation between singular and plural *theos*, see Bordt 2006: 79–95 and Rowe 2013: 326–27.

In asking about the connection between divinity and politics in Plato, I aim to avoid standard connotations of our modern and Western usage of the word 'god', and especially that of 'God' with a capital G. Plato was not a monotheist, but he often invokes a singular deity that is supreme, a deity who is superior to other divine beings, calling it King or Overseer or Measure of all Things, or just 'the god'. When he writes 'the gods', he generally leaves the plural reference vague. Contemporary readers may have taken him to be gesturing to the Olympian gods of popular religion, but these figures were not Plato's divinity at the deepest level of his thought. Where he mentions Zeus or some lesser god by name, he is using the language of myth and religious convention, not philosophy.[8]

God, gods, and divinity

Plato begins and ends the *Republic* with divinity. The celebrated first sentence (327a), spoken by Socrates, runs:

> T6 'I went down to the Piraeus yesterday with Glaucon the son of Ariston, to offer a prayer to the goddess, and I also wanted to see how they would manage the festival since they were celebrating it for the first time'.[9]

The final book, hundreds of pages later, presents the amazing story of the warrior Er, whose soul left his supposedly dead body, witnessed the future fate and life choices of other recently deceased persons, and returned to bring him back to earthly life. After recounting Er's out-of-the body experience of the postmortem destinies of souls, Socrates concludes the dialogue (621c) by recommending that he himself and his fellow discussants should believe in the soul's immortality and in the unflinching practice of justice:

> T7 'If you go along with me in believing that the soul is immortal, and able to endure every contingency good or bad, we will always stick to the high road and practice justice accompanied by reason (*phronēsis*) in every way. Then we will be pleasing

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[7] Plato uses the adjective *theios* some thirty times in the *Republic*. He applies it to exceptional human beings, including the guardians of the ideal state (331e6, 368a4, 383c4, 469a5); the universe as comprising both the human and the divine (368a4); the divine as distinct from the human (497c2); the rational component of the soul (416e5, 589e4, 590d1); and the paradigm for the ideal state (500e3). The most abstract instances of the word, corresponding to English 'the divine' or 'divinity as such', are *theia physis* (366c7), *to daimonion te kai theion* (382e6), and contexts from the *Republic*'s central books where discussion focuses on the Forms (see 500c9, 517d4, 532c1). For a comprehensive survey of Plato's use of *theios*, see van Camp 1956.

[8] On ancient philosophy's gestures in the direction of monotheism, see Frede 1999b and Bordt 2006: 79–85.

[9] The goddess not named here is later (354a) identified with the Moon divinity Bendis, whose nocturnal cult had recently been inaugurated in Attica.

> to ourselves and *the gods*, both while we remain here, and when we carry off the prizes of justice, like parading victors in the games. That way we will fare well both here and on the millennial journey that we have described.'

Divinity, then, frames the entire *Republic* from beginning to end, but its context shifts from Socrates' participation in a nocturnal religious festival to a projected life or sequence of many lives under divine supervision. Socrates' downward journey to the Piraeus, often interpreted as anticipating the middle of the dialogue's Cave allegory, is matched at the end of book 10 with what he calls 'sticking to the high road'. The imagery of low and high, and down and up, is central to the dialogue's most radical political proposal—that the goodness essential to philosophical rule requires a mental ascent from the muddle and vicissitudes of ordinary life to the understanding and modeling of supra-sensible or ideal goodness.

The fact that divinity frames the entire *Republic* invites extensive interpretation. How does it contribute to the investigation of justice, the work's ostensible purpose, and the political and psychological contexts that occupy so much space? If I am right in thinking that the seemingly impersonal Form of the Good is the *Republic*'s principal divinity, why does Plato not say so clearly when Socrates broaches this crucial topic in texts I will shortly review? In such dialogues as the *Timaeus*, with its creative and beneficent Demiurge, or the *Statesman* with its myth of Kronos and Zeus, or the *Laws* with its celestial rulers and 'divine cosmic supervisor', Plato does present his readers with explicit and personalized divinity. There too he attributes *nous*—reason, or intelligence, or mind—to his supreme divinity, or perhaps identifies the divinity *with* this attribute. If the corresponding attributes are absent from the Form of the Good, or at least kept silent, why is that, and can it be right to call the Form of the Good the dialogue's supreme divinity?

I propose to approach these questions as if we were reading the *Republic* for the first time, from beginning to end, without reference to what we think Plato has written about gods or divinity before, or what he will write about them later. And, as I proceed, I would like to reiterate and emphasize two of my preliminary points: first, Socrates' fervent commitment to an essentially benevolent deity or deities; and second, the staggering novelty, as I take it to be, of incorporating divinity, conceptualized as supremely good, into massive and radical works on politics.

We may draw a contrast with Thucydides, whom Plato certainly read very closely.[10] Both men were profound diagnosticians of contemporary politics and they were equally ruthless in exposing the failings of Athenian democracy. Unlike Plato, however, Thucydides analyses political events and political players in a completely secular manner, focusing on ordinary human fears, ambitions, misjudgments, and insecurities. Thucydides rarely moralizes, and—my main point of contrast here—he assigns no causal role to divinity, either as a superhuman agent of events or as an ethical sanction and model, although he does acknowledge that superstition is a factor in the minds of ordinary people. Plato, who was still more pessimistic than Thucydides in his political expectations, looks to divine authority in formulating his alternative politics, no matter how utopian their practical prospects might be.

In his longer dialogues, Plato characteristically situates the theme that is of central importance to his argument in or near the middle. That is conspicuously true of the *Republic*, as the narrative ascends from the nocturnal scene of everyday life in the Piraeus, first to the imaginary construction of an ideal 'city in words', and then to the sun-like Form of the Good.

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[10] On Plato and Thucydides, see Schofield 2006, Shanske 2007, and Farrar 2013. The *Histories* of Herodotus, of course, is full of gods. But they are neither political nor beneficent.

Having begun his narrative with a visit to a religious festival, Socrates draws further attention to conventional religion by taking us to the house of the elderly businessman Cephalus, who had been conducting a private sacrifice. This event sets the stage for the entire *Republic*. Cephalus explains that he has been troubled by fear of being required after death to atone for wrongdoing in the life he has already lived (330d–331b). As we have just seen (T7), at the end of the *Republic*, Socrates concludes with an afterlife myth of rewards and penalties that confirms Cephalus' reasons to be anxious about divine justice.

In the next sequence of discussion, Socrates gets his amoral sparring partner, Thrasymachus, who had identified justice with the interest of rulers as distinct from subjects, to grudgingly concede that the gods are just and that an unjust man (such as Thrasymachus had praised) is at enmity with them (352a11). Did Athenians at this date, however, generally share Socrates' endorsement of divine sanctions as supportive of justice? Not if they were hardheaded realists like Thucydides. To underline the sceptical posture that was widespread at the time, the second book of the *Republic* presents Socrates with challenges that anticipate Reformation worries about Papal indulgences and the like. Perhaps the gods actually are, as experience suggests, erratic in their dispensation of good or bad fortune; perhaps they can be influenced by sacrifices and incantations so as to favour wrongdoers and neglect the virtuous (364b). Socrates is asked to prove that just persons are incomparably better off than unjust persons here and now, irrespective of what happens to them in the afterlife, of whether anyone, divine or human, will ever know, and of whether or not justice reaps rewards for its practitioners in the end (367b–e).

In order to discover the nature of justice, Socrates begins by imagining how it would emerge in a city that is designed to promote internal peace and external security for its people. The educational curriculum, he proposes for a start, will need to be corrected so as to present children only with appropriate role models. To that end, first and foremost, storytelling must be strictly controlled by expurgating the unsuitable representations of gods and heroes featured in Homer and other poetic books.

T8 *Socrates*: 'It behooves the city's founders to know the marks (*typoi*) on which the poets should model their stories [about gods] [...]'

> *Adeimantus*: 'Quite right; but as to this very point, the marks for describing divinity (*theologia*), what should they be?'
>
> *Socrates*: 'Something like this—the poets should always represent what (the) god is really like [...]' (379a)

Appropriate stories must adhere to two primary marks of divinity: first, they must show it in its true nature as absolutely good, meaning always beneficent and never harmful; and second, they must show it as immutable, simple, true, and never deceptive.[11]

This is one of the rare Platonic contexts in which a speaker posits defining attributes of divinity, and it is distinctive in stating them in formalist or essentialist terms. Plato uses the singular 'god' throughout the treatment of the 'good' mark (379b–e), and likewise in his initial characterization of the second mark of immutability, simplicity, and truth (380d–381c). The poetic texts that Socrates proposes for expurgation allude to individual gods (Kronos, Zeus, Hera, Ares, *etc.*), but his proposed reformation of the poetic tradition focuses upon the nature of divinity as such. A few pre-Platonic authors, most notably the poet philosopher Xenophanes, had already expressed reformist attributes of divinity, including the immutability of a supreme deity. But the idea that goodness, signifying unqualified beneficence, is divinity's primary hallmark appears to have few, if any, parallels in texts that are older than Plato or Xenophon, in whose writings Socrates' imprint is evident. Even in this context, our present passage is unique in its formal manner of expression.

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[11] Plato combines *typoi* with *nomoi* in referring back to the patterns or delineations that poets should use in their descriptions of divinity (380c, 383c). Hence, some scholars translate *typoi* by 'norms' or 'rules'; see Burnyeat 1999: 259 and Bordt 2006: 50.

I emphasize this point because I think Plato is preparing his readers here for the Form of the Good.[12] That difficult notion is still a hundred pages distant, but I take its coming to be carefully anticipated here. The causative and immutable Good (to call it so) will be the climactic point of the *Republic*'s educational curriculum and the metaphysical foundation of its utopian political agenda. Here, at the beginning of Socrates' educational reforms, Plato gives his readers an anticipatory glimpse of what will prove to be the dialogue's ultimate and most profound thoughts about divinity.

Before reaching this peak, however, Socrates introduces the tripartite class structure for the incipient community by playfully infusing politics with mythical theology (*Republic* 413b–417b). According to Athenian tradition, the original citizens of Athens were *autochthonous*, literally 'born of the [Attic] land'.[13] Patriotic myths sprang up around this notion, including the story that Athena fostered the Attic soil's nurslings by giving them the olive. Having described primary education for the *Republic*'s emerging citizens, Socrates now proposes that they be told a 'noble falsehood', to the effect that they not only sprang fully armed from mother earth, but were even constituted *by a god*, out of gold, silver, and bronze, thus endowing the populace genetically with three distinct aptitudes (414c1–415c).

This passage always attracts attention. What I want to focus on here is not the standard worry that Socrates plays fast and loose with truth and initiates his utopia with flagrantly alternative facts. As he himself acknowledges, the literal details of the myth are incredible on first hearing, like Hesiod's sequence of human degeneration from gold to iron (*Works and Days* 109–201), which was clearly in Plato's mind. What stands out above the metallic allegory is the origination of this community in divine genetics, linking politics to divinity by stamping a god's necessarily excellent craftsmanship on the make-up of the first citizens.

Here we should note the stark difference between Socrates' divinized ideology and the celebrated speech that Thucydides (2.34–46) put into the mouth of Pericles to commemorate the Athenian soldiers killed early in the Peloponnesian War. Unlike Plato, Thucydides gives Pericles no word about gods or literal autochthony, although he does make much of the Athenians' indigenous origins and ancestral glory. Plato marked his disagreement by writing in the *Menexenus* a funeral speech that is both a pastiche and a correction of Thucydides' Periclean oration, for in the Platonic version much is made of autochthony and divine support for Athens.[14] This is a striking instance of how Thucydides' secular history differs from Plato's normative politics, in which the presence of divinity plays a central role.

At this point in the *Republic*, a first-time reader may have forgotten the highly abstract delineations of divinity (T8) with which Socrates prefaced his prescriptions for the educators of his utopia's citizens. The bland religiosity of the autochthony passage with its myth of metals seems to be confirmed when, some pages later, Socrates declares, on the following grounds, that the rituals of the emerging ‘city in words’ should be left to Apollo’s Delphic oracle:

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[12] This point is central to the interpretation of Plato's theology in the *Republic* developed at length by Bordt 2006.

[13] See Loraux 1993, part 1.1 'Autochthony: an Athenian Topic'.

[14] 237b–238b.

> T9 ‘We have no knowledge of these things, and in establishing our city, if we have any sense, we won’t be persuaded to trust them to anyone other than the ancestral authority.’ (427b)

Where is Plato taking his readers at this juncture, with the rudiments of the utopia now in place, buttressed seemingly by uncritical religious conservatism?[15] Actually, between here in book 4 and the beginning of book 10, god as an individual and gods as a collective largely disappear from the discussion. What we find instead, as Socrates expounds the character and virtues of philosophers, are occurrences of the adjective for ‘divine’ (*theios*) applied to philosophers and to the ideal objects (Forms) that are philosophy’s special study.[16] Philosophy, not mythical or conventional theology, will now become the dialogue’s route to divinity.

Divinity and philosopher rulers

Uttering the *Republic*’s most famous political paradox, Socrates declares that the only recipe for private and public wellbeing is for philosophers to become rulers or for rulers to become philosophers, meaning persons who are ‘lovers and spectators of truth’ (475c–e) as distinct from being lovers of sights and sounds. ‘Truth’ here stands for the domain of what Plato famously calls Forms or Ideas, stable and knowable realities as distinct from everyday phenomena, which are too multiform and changeable to be the objects of knowledge.[17] The claim amounts to the proposition that philosophers are uniquely qualified to rule because they alone can distinguish mere appearances and changeable instances of justice, beauty, and goodness from the perfect paradigms of justice itself, beauty itself, and goodness itself.[18] Thus they will be equipped to reproduce the human likeness of these paradigms and so safeguard the city’s laws and pursuits (484d).

With this allusion to suprasensible Forms or Ideas, Socrates moves the discussion from the utopian politics of communal property and gender equality to an account of ‘a philosophical nature’, and its contrast with the myopic and self-seeking nature of power-hungry politicians (book 6). Prior to this point, Socrates’ tone as the leading discussant has been good humoured and even light-hearted, but now in this central part of the dialogue the tone becomes dark and bitter, in allusion to recent Athenian politics, only lightening up to delineate the philosopher and the miracle that would have to occur if such a figure were vouchsafed to find a community that would tolerate and foster philosophical rule.

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[15] Although the Delphic oracle figures prominently in the legislative proposals of the *Laws*, I find it hard to credit Plato’s sincere trust in an institution that had been so frequently discredited and manipulated. Socrates, however, advocates consultation of Apollo concerning the obsequies of those of the utopia’s ‘divine’ guardians who die on military service (*Rep*. 469a). For further references in the dialogue to traditional religious practices, see the passages cited under ‘religion’ in Ferrari 2000.

[16] See 500c9, 517d4, 518e2, 532c1, 540c2.

[17] See Woolf 2009.

[18] The Forms that Socrates first instances as objects of the philosopher’s knowledge are beauty, justice, goodness, and their opposites (476a), doubtless because these are the most essential as models for public policy and administration. Taken at face value, this passage posits the existence of negative Forms—of ugliness, injustice, and badness. If that were Socrates’ point, it would completely wreck the normative nature of Platonic Forms. So I take Socrates to be saying that the ugly, unjust, or bad (*i.e.* anything so qualified) is what it is by virtue of being contrary to the beautiful, just, and good.

Socrates specifies the philosophical nature as the absolute antithesis of 'small-mindedness', using the unusual word *mikrologia* (486a), which harks back to his indictment of those who are only keen on sights and sounds. Expressed positively, the philosophical mentality is always focused on 'aspiring to grasp the totality of things, both divine and human'. Dwelling on this synoptic aspiration, Socrates asks, expecting and getting a negative answer, whether such a capacious mentality, with its 'visualization (*theōria*) of all time and all existence (*ousia*) will regard human life as a big deal'? The question is worrying, since what we thought we were after was precisely how to make human life and society as good as possible. What the divine (as distinct from the human) comprises here is 'the existence that persists forever and is not made to wander by coming to be and passing away' (485b). The philosopher, Socrates says, longs to know that whole, and to know all of it (ibid.).

One of Socrates' earlier 'marks' of divinity was immutability (380d). It was not fully clear in that context, expurgating Homer and so forth, why Socrates should be so insistent on this attribute. Now, with the knowable and changeless Forms on the agenda for the first time in the *Republic*, we see that they satisfy this condition. Stepping outside the dialogue, we should also recognize that, in applying the notion of divinity to metaphysical beings as distinct from personalized gods and goddesses, Plato is stretching its range of application far beyond conventional usage. Are we to suppose that the Forms also satisfy Socrates' primary divine attribute, that of being essentially good? We are not being asked at this stage of the discussion to take them in aggregate to be good, in the sense of being beneficent or doing good. But we are being asked to take them to be supremely desirable as objects of knowledge, and as knowable precisely because they are unitary, stable, perfect, and everlasting, as we have already been told that divine beings must be.[19]

The divinity of the Forms is not the only focus of theology in this central part of the *Republic*. Divinity also applies to philosophers themselves, or at least it would apply to them if their philosophical potentiality were able to realize itself in an appropriate environment.

T10 'If the philosopher's nature, as we posited it, obtains appropriate learning, it must develop into and reach every virtue. But if it is sown in an inappropriate place and that is where it grows and is nourished, it will turn out the opposite except with the help of some god.' (492a)

In the former case and under the best political arrangements:

T11 'The philosopher's nature will show itself to be *in reality* a divine thing (*theion*), while all other natures and pursuits are merely human.' (497c)

As noted above, the word *theios* can be used as a way of saying that something is really great, splendid, or special. That is clearly one of the associations of the word here, but it is far from all that Plato seeks to convey. Drawing on the causality of like's attraction to like, Socrates goes on to characterize the philosopher's mental association with the Forms:

T12 *Socrates*: 'As he observes and studies things that are organized and always in the same state [*i.e.* the Forms], that neither do wrong to one another nor suffer wrong from one another, all being in a rational and harmonious order, he imitates them

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[19] The divinity of the Forms is particularly prominent in the palinode of the *Phaedrus* (*cf.* 246d–e, 249c) where they are represented as higher in status than the traditional gods. See Nightingale 2018.

> and becomes as like them as anyone can.[20] Or do you think that there is any way for someone to consort with anything he admires and not to imitate it?'
>
> *Adeimantus*: 'No, that would be impossible.'
>
> *Socrates*: 'So the philosopher, by consorting with what is harmonious and divine, becomes as harmonious and divine as is humanly possible.' (500c)

Does Plato envision a possible continuum between human and divine, rather than a division, with mere humanity at the bottom and perfect divinity at the top? Approximation to divinity and comparative divinity are difficult ideas to accommodate. Let me just say that the qualification 'divine as far as humanly possible' represents an aspirational hybrid, not the metamorphosis of shedding humanity and literally turning into a deity. The philosopher's harmony and rational order recall Socrates' earlier proof that the individual's justice is a harmonious state of soul under the rule of reason (book 4, 443d). Here, that central doctrine of the *Republic* acquires massive reinforcement from the just person's godlikeness, mediated by affinity between a rationally structured philosophical disposition and the divinely structured cosmic order.

In the *Timaeus*, Plato imagines the principal divinity as a cosmological craftsman (Demiurge) whose exemplary goodness displays itself in making the best possible physical world out of chaotically moving material, on the pattern of the ideal Forms (28c–30c). In our present context Plato gives Socrates an analogous account of philosophical rulers, who use the *divine* paradigm of cosmic order so as to become the 'craftsman' (demiurge again) of moderation and justice and all public (demotic) virtue, not only for themselves but also for their community at large (500d). Taking utopianism to its limit, Socrates envisions philosophers as artists painting a picture of a brand-new community on a canvas from which they have scrubbed off all previous images of people and institutions. Using the ideal virtues as their model, the philosophers are to compare with them the human character-type they are trying to produce from the new constitution, mixing colours, adding here and erasing there, until they come up à la Homer, with a 'godlike form and likeness' (501b).

The rhetoric is beguiling. But a reader could be forgiven for regarding all the divinity talk thus far as a mere trope, like the phrase just quoted from Homer, with no secure purchase on theological reality or any reality. As if in response, Socrates startles his interlocutors by abruptly telling them that they have omitted to discuss the most important topic of study, which he names the Form of the Good. How is this an omission, and how does it bear on our understanding of divinity in Plato's politics?

T13 'You have often heard me say that the most important thing to learn is the Form of the Good; it is by relating to that Form that just things and everything else become useful and beneficial.[21] You certainly know that this is what I am going to say, and you know, besides, that our knowledge of it is inadequate. But you know that without this knowledge, if we lack it, however much we know other things none

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[20] We are accustomed, unlike Plotinus, to interpret Plato's Forms as inanimate and mindless beings, but that interpretation is difficult to accommodate to the denial of their wrongdoing or suffering wrong. Perhaps the ethical language is inadvertent or simply rhetorical, but I find it more probably motivated by the Forms' divine status. The philosopher's admiration and imitation of a mindless paradigm is an uncomfortable thought and not one that Plato advertises in the *Republic*.

[21] 'Relating to' is my translation of the rather surprising word *proschrēsamena*, which most literally means 'using in addition'. It could also be translated by 'accessing' or 'depending on'.

> of them is any more benefit to us than possessing something without the good.' (505a)

Let us recall how Socrates previously posited goodness and immutability as the twin 'marks' of divinity. Since then, his primary focus has been on the nature of justice. Under questioning, he had stated that justice is a good 'of the finest and most beautiful kind' (358a), meaning that it is to be valued both for its own sake and for its consequences, but he has not yet elucidated in what ways justice is useful and beautiful. What do its utility and beauty consist in exactly? Moreover, people disagree about goodness. Many identify goodness with pleasure, while a much smaller number take it to be knowledge (505b). If we don't know the nature of goodness, or if we do not think that there is such a thing, are we in a position to know why it is beneficial to be just? This is the question that launched the entire project of the *Republic*, and it must resonate for anyone who believes in human progress and betterment. If philosopher rulers cannot answer it accurately or at least convincingly, how can they organize and govern the state in an optimal manner?

At this point Socrates voices one of the dialogue's most profound and optimistic statements, while also tinged with the melancholy characteristic of the authentic voice of Plato:

> T14 'Isn't it clear that in the case of justice and beauty many people opt for semblances of them, and even if things aren't really just or beautiful, they choose their actions, acquisitions and beliefs accordingly. But when it comes to goods, no one is content to own only their semblances. Everyone [not just philosophers] is after the realities (*ta onta*) and has no regard for the mere semblances. Every soul is in pursuit of the real good and does everything for its sake. The soul has a divine intuition (*apomanteuomenē*) that good really exists, but it is at a loss (*aporousa*) and unable to grasp adequately what it is or apply to it the stable belief it has about other things, and so it misses out on any benefit it might derive from them.' (505e)

This passage recalls other Socratic contexts with its claim that all people desire good things or the things that they genuinely believe to be good.[22] But the passage also contains significant novelties in its claims, first, that there is a *real* good that motivates everyone at all times, however dimly they perceive it, and, second, that most people are unable to achieve the goods they desire, because of false beliefs about the nature of their desired goods, anticipating the shadowy consciousness of the prisoners in the allegory of the cave. A further novelty occurs in the word *apomanteuomenē*, for which I borrow Tom Griffith's happy translation, 'divine intuition'.[23] Plato probably coined this very rare word for just this context, and he repeats it a little later, near the beginning of book 7 (516d). The underlying thought is again Socratic in its notion that people in general have latent and unarticulated true beliefs about the virtues. However, Plato has, if I am right, added to this the notion that you do not have to be a philosopher to have glimmers of *rational* understanding. It is the human condition to possess, what Plato later calls, the golden chain of rationality (*Laws* 605a) that connects us directly with divinity and, therefore, with the possibility of genuine understanding of truths.[24] That rational endowment undergirds the philosopher's quest for unconditional knowledge of goodness in the upcoming section of the *Republic.* In light of this universal human yearning for the good, divinity promises to make being human a big deal after all. And so I come at last to this chapter's principal thesis and relative novelty—the claim that we should interpret the Form of the Good as Plato's divinity par excellence in the *Republic*.

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[22] See *Rep.* 438a, *Gorg.* 468a, *Prot.* 358d, *Symp.* 206a.

[23] In Ferrari 2000: 211.

[24] See also *Plt.* 309c on the soul's 'divine bond'.

The Form of the Good

With a great display of diffidence, Socrates offers his dialogical partners three analogies or images (Sun, Divided Line, and Cave) to help elucidate the Form of the Good as the prime object and ground of all philosophical knowledge and the source of all value. In the interests of brevity and clarity, I will focus here only on the Sun. This particular analogy should suffice to show why I am convinced that Plato wants his readers to identify the Good as the *Republic*'s supreme divinity.

Socrates introduces the Sun analogy by prefacing it as an account not of the Good as such, but only of the Good's 'offspring' (506e–507a).[25] The analogy works with the following equivalences: sun = the Good; visible things = intelligible things (Forms); light = truth; and eye = intellect. The sun's light preeminently gives us the ability to see and makes things visible to sight by means of the eye. The eye's ability to see is *served with* this ability (note the metaphor of stewardship) as an overflow (*epirruton*) from the sun:[26]

T15 'In the domain of thought the Good stands in the same relation to intellect and intelligible things as the sun, in the visible realm, stands in relation to sight and things that are seen.' (508c)

Socrates develops the analogy by likening the mind's variable range of its understanding of the Good to the eye's variable range of vision in its relation to sun/light.

T16 'When the soul concentrates on the region where truth and reality shine forth, it thinks and knows and clearly has understanding (*nous*), but when it focuses on the region mixed with obscurity, on what is subject to becoming and ceasing, it resorts to opinion and loses its keen vision, and its opinions fluctuate, and it seems like something without understanding.' (508d)

Next, taking vision and light to be 'sun-*like*' but secondary and derivative in relation to the sun itself, Socrates makes the corresponding move for the Good: knowledge and truth are 'good-*like*' but secondary and derivative in relation to the Good itself (509a).

Where does goodness figure in the Sun analogy, in addition to the obvious benefit of providing illumination? The answer brings us to two further points of the analogy, which underscore its relevance to politics. First, the sun as the 'celestial god that *has authority* over light' (508a) is ruler in the heavens (509d), and, second, the sun is the cause of the biological cycle of birth and growth and of nutriment (509b). Correspondingly, the Good *rules over* the intelligible realm (509d), and, second, it bestows 'existence and being' on the Forms that are that realm's constituents (509b). We hardly need to be reminded that discovering the source of beneficial rule is central to Plato's politics, and that it is the nature of divinity (*to theion*) to rule.[27] As exemplary beings, the Forms of justice and so forth owe their existence and excellence to the Good just as fauna and flora owe their origin and development to the sun's light and heat. We will also be true to the spirit of the text if we correlate the sun's visible regularity and order with the systematic structure that Socrates attributes to the domain of ideal Forms.

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[25] In representing the Good as a benevolent father, Plato anticipates his description of the Demiurge at *Timaeus* 37c.

[26] The metaphor of overflow influenced Plotinus' doctrine of the Forms as emanations from the Good or One. See Rist 1967, chapters 3, 5, and 6.

Socrates, as we have just seen, calls the sun a god. It would be strangely perverse for Plato to have Socrates attribute divinity to the sun, the foil of the analogy, and resist its assignment to the Good, which is clearly the superior item in the analogy. In fact, as I read Socrates' ensuing discussion with Glaucon, we are meant to regard the Good not as a particular god (*theos*), but rather as divinity in the highest degree or as the very essence of divinity:

T17 *Socrates*: 'The Good is to be honoured[28] still more highly than knowledge and truth.'

Glaucon: 'That's an incredible beauty you are describing, if it is the cause of knowledge and truth, but surpasses them itself in beauty. You are not referring to pleasure, are you?'

Socrates: 'Be quiet![29] Take a closer look at the analogy. You will agree, I think, that the sun not only grants the things we see their capacity to be seen, but also grants them their coming to be (*genesis*), growth and nurture, though it is not itself (a) coming to be. So you should say that things that are known not only owe their being known to the Good, but also depend on it for their very existence and being (*ousia*), though the Good is not (a) being but still beyond being and exceeding it in dignity (*presbeia*) and power (*dynamis*).'[30]

Glaucon says with a laugh: 'By Apollo, what divine (*daimonios*) superiority!'

Socrates: 'Well it's all your fault for forcing me to give my opinion of it.' (509a)

The next two analogies (the Line and Cave) elaborate on the unique status and power of the Good, characterizing it in the Line as the absolute ground or primary principle of all reality (Forms), and in the ascent from the Cave, by analogy with the sun again, as the most mentally dazzling and illuminating object and source of understanding. Then Socrates tells Glaucon, in explaining the Cave:

T18 'Whether it is really true, only god (*theos*) knows, but here are my thoughts about

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[27] See *Phd.* 80a3, where the context concerns the role of the soul as that which should rule the body because of its likeness to 'the divine'.

[28] 'To be honoured' (*timēteon*) is a condition that pertains particularly to the reverence due to divine beings.

[29] 'Be quiet' (*euphēmei*), as Ferrari 2000 notes, 'refers to the silence of religious rites'.

[30] Discussion of the metaphysical transcendence attributed to the Good in this sentence would take me far afield from this chapter's main theme. I note here only that Proclus, in his *Commentary on Republic* excursus 11, takes Plato to posit three goods: the transcendent Form of the Good, the ordinary Form of good, and the good in us. Socrates, Proclus says, does not fully reveal the transcendent Form of the Good, keeping it a mystery and identifying it with the primary god. The point I take from the passage translated in the main text (509a) is the theological resonance of the words *presbeia* and *dynamis*. Note that in *Laws* 896b the Athenian Stranger characterizes soul's status, in his proof of its divinity, as *presbutatē*.

> it. In the intelligible realm the Form of the Good is the last thing to be seen and only with difficulty, but once it has been seen we must conclude that it is the *cause* of all that is correct and fine in everything, since *it gives birth to* both light and the lord of light in the visible realm, and is in the intelligible realm lord (*kuria*) and author of truth and understanding (*nous*); and it follows, accordingly, that whoever intends to act intelligently in private or in public must see it.' (517b–c)

To which Glaucon responds, 'O I do agree, at least as best I can follow!'. Here Socrates presents the Good as supreme, not only in the intelligible realm (designated here as 'divine things' (*ta theia*), 517d) but as the source of the sun itself, and, hence, of the cosmos as a whole. The passage is, of course, replete with metaphor, but I do not think that the agency attributed to the Good in 'giving birth' and 'authoring' and 'illuminating' is mere metaphor. To read Plato thus would totally miss the spirit of the text. We are conceptually very close to the cosmic Demiurge of the *Timaeus*, the creator craftsman god, explicitly so named, who is not only good and wanting everything to be as good as possible, but is actually 'the very best of the eternal, intelligible beings' (*Timaeus* 37a). Here, in the *Republic*, the focus is on the human world of politics, not the make-up of the cosmos as such. And if readers are still wondering why Plato never applies the word *theos* to the Good, they can take comfort from Socrates' description of it as the most blessed part of reality (*eudaimonestaton tou ontos*, 526e), language that can only connote divinity par excellence.[31]

It has not been generally noticed, to consolidate this identification, that in the so-called 'digression' of the *Theaetetus* (which echoes or anticipates this part of the *Republic* very closely) Socrates repeats or anticipates this phrase, 'most blessed part of reality', when he speaks of the 'divine and *eudaimonestatos* paradigm that exists in reality' (176e; *cf. Rep*. 500c–d). In the *Theaetetus*, the context is explicitly about assimilating oneself to unnamed *god* (*theos* singular) by becoming as just as possible (176c).[32] Here in the *Republic*, that assimilation is the culmination of the training Socrates assigns to apprentice philosopher rulers after their thirty years of study, military service, and political administration.

> T19 'When they are fifty years old, those who have survived and fully excelled in their functions and studies are to be brought to the culmination of their service. They are required to *lift up their mind's eye and focus it unswervingly on the absolute source of illumination to everything*,[33] and after seeing the Good itself, they are to use it as their model (*paradeigma*) in regulating the community, its individuals and themselves, each of them in turn for the rest of their lives.' (540a–b)

And then, when they die, they depart to the Islands of the Blest, memorialized in their community as divinities (*daimones*) themselves 'if the Pythian priestess consents', or at least as 'blessed and divine' (*eudaimones te kai theioi*).[34]

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[31] See Adam 1902 *ad loc*. The singular *theos*, maker of Forms in the painter passage of *Republic* 10 (597b), has sometimes been identified with the Good; see Adam *ad loc* for such proposals in nineteenth-century scholarship. Proposals of this kind have since gone out of fashion, see Denyer 2007: 287, and the question of this god's identity remains. I am grateful to Tim Clarke for prompting me to mention this passage.

[32] See Mahoney 2004.

[33] Plato's language becomes elevated here, as I try to bring out in my translation. 'Look up to' seeks to capture both the literal sense of *apoblepein* and its metaphorical sense of 'admire' and 'depend upon' (*cf. Phdr*. 240b on beloved and lover). 'Auto', the neuter pronoun meaning 'itself', occurs both with 'the source of light' and with 'the Good' to intensify the status of this special Form.

[34] I take this reference to conventional religion to be a strong confirmation that the description of the guardians'

Socrates, politics, goodness, and divinity

If the Form of the Good is the *Republic*'s principal divinity, as I have argued, what does that tell us about Plato's politics in this work? To put the question most challengingly, do Socrates' philosopher rulers abandon the rule of reason for theocracy? If, by theocracy, we mean something like a political system administered by a priestly college with authority derived from a supernatural power or a sacred text, the answer is a categorical negative. Plato, we may say to the contrary, has secularized theocracy, making it tantamount to the rule of philosophical reason. The Good in the *Republic* has the standard Greek attributes of supreme divinity—power, beauty, and immortality—but it is not a god, in the sense of a supernatural being or a being essentially beyond human understanding. We might, rather, call it hyper-natural.[35] The Good's beneficial influence on the world and on human life is evident in visible nature (as witnessed by the role of the sun). As to its special status as the supremely transcendent Form, this ultimate principle, unlike an Olympian god, is accessible to minds that have run the full gamut of mathematical and philosophical training and who are predisposed to see it because of their own excellence and devotion to the common good.

Much can be conjectured concerning the Good's bearing on Plato's metaphysics (see my conclusion, below), but here I return to my main brief concerning the Good's divinity by asking the following question. Is it the extraordinary notion that philosophers can in principle access and assimilate absolute goodness that restrained Plato from explicitly calling the Good *a* god or *the* god, even though we are plainly to think of its divinity or to think of it as divinity?[36] Mark McPherran, in a fine study of Platonic religion, has written: 'We are encouraged to think of the Good as a god in several ways', but after enumerating these ways he pulls back, saying the Good 'cannot be a mind, a *nous*, that knows anything' and so 'cannot be a god'.[37] What inhibits McPherran is the Good's transcendent status, which he takes to exclude its having intelligence, unlike representations of god as a superhuman intellect or *nous* in the *Timaeus* and *Philebus*. Yet nothing in the text of the *Republic* prevents us from crediting the Good with intellect, as many ancient Platonists did, and from treating it as the forebear of what Aristotle calls '*Nous* and god' or 'the good and *nous*'.[38]

However, I do not think the Good's divinity should be decided on the basis of its having or being or *needing* intellect. Its divinity is not represented in the *Republic* as a set of thoughts or rational processes serving a creationist agenda, like those of the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*,

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final vision of the Good is entirely consonant with standard theistic language.

[35] I have been asked why Plato doesn't mention the Good's divinity *explicitly*. I respond that he does not need to because, as the culmination of Socrates' earlier discussion of the attributes (including divinity) of the other Forms, it follows *a fortiori* that the Good as a Form and the cause of Forms must be incomparably divine. David Sedley has suggested to me in conversation that we should perhaps regard the Good as the Form of Forms.

[36] See Gerson 1990: 62: 'Although Plato does not call the Form of the Good "god", he does ascribe to it an elevated status, as in 509b9–10, which would not make the use of that term particularly puzzling'; and Nettleship 1898: 233: 'Plato has assigned to a form or principle the position and function which might be assigned to God, but he still speaks of it as a form or principle. With this reserve, we may say that the *easiest* way to give Plato's conception a meaning is to compare it with certain conceptions of the divine nature, for example with the conception of the "light of the world"'.

[37] McPherran 2006: 252–53.

[38] See *EN* 1096a24, *EE* 1217b31, and *Metaph*. 1072b14–1073a13, on which *cf.* Menn 1992. Broadie 2011: 81, writing of the Platonic Good, as distinct from the 'world-making intellect' of the Demiurge, wonders whether 'the Good *is* an intellect and the quiddities [the other Forms, I presume] are in it'. The comparison of the Good to the sun highlights not only the illumination that both divinities generate (anticipating the notion of a final cause) but also their creativity (efficient causation), which in the case of the Good, comprises the entire domain of other Forms.

but as eternal and changeless excellence in being the world's supreme source of order and harmony and intelligibility. In the *Phaedo* (probably written shortly before the *Republic*), Plato made my essential point by having Socrates look to 'the good' as such (*to agathon*, without calling it 'Form') as the world's '*divine* binding power and [teleological] cause', leaving the details of its agency unexplained.[39] Plato could represent divinity in the polytheistic ways of traditional religion, with its presumed effects on the material circumstances of human life—fertility, weather, wealth, national success, and so forth, whether for good or ill. He lets some of his characters voice such beliefs. He is also an amazing theological mythmaker, as we have seen in parts of the *Republic* surveyed above. But early in the work, as we have also seen, he makes Socrates strike out in a momentously different direction, first by positing god or divinity to be essentially and immutably good, and then by making the Good itself the foundation of human virtues and the world's supreme cause. The representation of the Good as sun-like in brilliance and life-enhancement is a striking image, but the imagery does not make the Good itself a myth. On the contrary, Plato endows it with attributes that anticipate familiar post-Platonic attributes of god, such as being transcendent, supreme, the ground of being, absolutely beneficent, and describable not in itself but by its effects.

How the Good was to be pictured beyond these great attributes was not relevant to Plato's purpose in the *Republic*, was in any case hardly answerable by human beings, and was also, perhaps, a hubristic question. What a philosopher could try to do, using the tools of rigorous argument, was to develop the intuition that there is such a thing as objective and absolute and efficacious goodness, and to advocate for its discovery and implementation in human virtues and social wellbeing.

This observation brings me back to Socrates, and his bearing on divinity in Plato's politics. Plato studies in modern times have been strongly marked by questions about the author's intellectual development and the roles that he assigns to his leading character Socrates. Many scholars have treated the *Republic* as essentially Platonic and only nominally Socratic, but there is a welcome tendency today to read the work as deeply Socratic in its ethical and religious presuppositions.[40] Socrates was not a philosopher king, but Plato, when sketching that extraordinary figure, makes his Socrates character mention the peril such a person would likely encounter in real life. In doing so, he clearly alludes to Socrates' own recent trial and execution, and vindicates Socrates' unacknowledged political benefactions and piety.[41] There is nothing like this in Plato's later works on politics, in which he replaces Socrates with the Eleatic stranger in the *Statesman* and the anonymous Athenian in the *Laws*. The Good, too, has completely vanished from these dialogues, where the goodness of divinity is either represented through myth and dogmatic postulates or through the evidence from the celestial motions of divine reason at work. The *Laws*, unlike the *Republic*, ends with something like an official theocracy, a nocturnal council that will administer severe penalties for atheism, the very charge that had gotten Socrates into trouble and had helped to launch Plato's philosophical career half a century earlier (although he perhaps gestures to the Good in the *Philebus*, where he brings Socrates back and has him offer measure, beauty, and truth as 'a unified form' (*idea*) of goodness).[42]

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[39] Socrates complains that contemporary thinkers seek explanation of nature in terms of a physical force rather than searching out and positing some 'divine power' (*daimonia ischus*) that disposes things 'in the best way possible, because they do not believe that what binds and holds things together is the truly good and binding' (*Phd.* 99c). For Plato's omission of the explicit Form of the Good from this dialogue, see Bluck 1955: 15–16. Socrates does name 'the good itself' along with 'the beautiful', 'the just', and 'the holy' at *Phd.* 75c.

[40] See Schofield 2006 and Rowe 2007b.

[41] *Republic* 496d; *cf.* 517a.

Did Plato get the Form of the Good from Socrates, by which I mean from his reflections on Socrates' revolutionary innovations in ethical inquiry? The metaphysical status and luminosity of the Good, its primacy over all other beings, were entirely Plato's invention, but the essential goodness of divinity was a notion that he shared with and indeed learned from Socrates.[43] As the source and apex of the Platonic Forms, the Good was not anticipated by Socrates, but the way you get to it, or try to get to it, includes systematic question and answer, advancing and testing hypotheses in the search for irrefutable definitions of justice and other ethical notions.[44] That was the Socratic method as Plato had repeatedly presented it in earlier writings. This dialectic, as Plato calls it in the *Republic*, had gotten Socrates into deep trouble at Athens. We are told about this in Socrates' own voice in Plato's *Apology*, where we learn that powerful figures in the state found Socrates' method, or professed to find it, deeply subversive. Plato's defence of Socrates, as I mentioned earlier, is premised on Socrates' claim that, in his interrogative pestering and exposure of the morally ignorant and confused, he is doing the god's work, the work of an anonymous god in the singular case.

So, let me end with the following question and recall the start of this chapter. . Could it be that, behind the political charge against Socrates of introducing new divinities (*daimonia*) and not worshipping the city's gods, it is not Athenian worries about Socrates' 'daimonion' (his weird and intermittently prohibitive divine sign), that we should detect, as is often implausibly assumed on the weak basis of *Euthyphro* 3b and Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 1.2.[45] Might Socrates' alleged impiety have been motivated by something immeasurably more dangerous than that, namely: the extraordinary idea that the world's supreme divine power, did we but know it, is absolute goodness, and accessible, not in temple and ritual sacrifice, but by its divine offshoot in ourselves, our rational faculty and capacity to do philosophy?

Conclusion

My main claim in this chapter is that divinity in the *Republic* (*to theion*) is paradigmatically represented by the Form of the Good. This principle, we are to understand, undergirds the intelligible structure of reality as such, granting it immutable excellence. The goal of a political philosopher is to achieve access to this divine order of things with a view to assimilating it intellectually and implementing its practical application for the social good. I acknowledge that Plato does not call the Good 'god' or 'a god', although he does apply the word *theos* to the sun, its visible analogue. Plato's reticence, I suggest, is culturally and philosophically well motivated—culturally, because the Good bears no resemblance to any god that Plato's contemporaries could recognize; philosophically, because, as the text of the dialogue states (509a), the Good transcends description and surpasses the status of anything to which it could be likened in ordinary language. The Good, I propose is neither a particular god nor is it God in the sense of the monotheist tradition. It is 'the divine' as such—the objective source and instantiation of absolute goodness, and the source of benefit to everything else, whether a form or a particular, that can truly be called good. Hence, I call the Good not god but divinity. Platonists, philosophers who like the theory of Forms, and existentialist theologians in the mold of Paul Tillich should welcome this notion.[46]

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[42] *Philebus* 64e–65a.

[43] See Sedley 2007b: 79–92, drawing on Xenophon as well as Plato, and concluding, in a comparison and contrast with Diogenes of Apollonia, that 'divine intelligence, craftsmanship and power had all been emphasized by the preceding tradition, but it was left to Socrates to give comparable importance to divine goodness', with the 'essential goodness of god' becoming a 'recurrent motif of Plato's Socratic dialogues'.

[44] See *Republic* 352a–534c, which expounds the paradigm of the Divided Line.

[45] See Burnet 1924: 128, to the contrary.

More than one hundred years ago, James Adam, whose commentary on the *Republic* is still unsurpassed in English scholarship, wrote: 'The majority of interpreters are now agreed in identifying Plato's idea of the Good with his philosophical conception of the Deity'.[47] Adam could have appealed to the authority of Zeller, whose arguments in his equally unsurpassed *History of Greek Philosophy* 1889 may be the best thing that has yet been written on the subject. Scholars writing in German and French continue to adopt the interpretation (for instance Neschker-Henschke 1995 and Bordt 2006), but it has long been out of fashion in the English-speaking ancient philosophy community. Why is that?

For three principal reasons, I think. First, divinity (as I have characterized it) is not a concept that is amenable to philosophical analysis in our contemporary intellectual climate. Scholars are relatively comfortable in discussing the notion of a divine and beneficent creator, such as we find in Plato's *Timaeus*, or the Stoic *Logos* named Zeus, or Aristotle's Prime Unmoved Mover, construed as a super intellect and teleological cause. These notions can be understood as quasi-persons or as agents with minds that have at least some affinity to our own. The Form of the Good is completely unknowable in that way, and hence outside the scope of divinity, or at least particularized divinity, according to the historical and conceptual frames of reference of Anglo-American philosophy.

A second and related reason for balking at this interpretation is the entrenched belief that it is 'characteristic of the Platonic conception of deity' to be or have *nous*,[48] as I noted above with reference to McPherran's reluctance to treat the Good as a god.[49] Hackforth, in an earlier treatment of Plato's divinity as *nous*, proposed that 'Theism became part of Plato's philosophy, as distinct from his religious belief, [only] at a later period than that of the *Republic*'.[50]

Nothing in the *Republic* explicitly forbids us from endowing the Good with *nous*, but its apparent absence from all the later Platonic corpus is an important point in its own right. Did Plato drop the transcendent Form of the Good from those works because he was unhappy with the obscurity for which it soon became notorious? Or, as I much prefer to think, did his later focus on the 'mind of god' develop in concert with his cosmological interests, letting the Good stand as a complementary but distinct theological venture, as the approach to divinity most pertinent to politics and ethics?

My third suggested reason for the scholarly detachment of the Good from divinity is that its role as a super Form invokes concepts of harmony, proportion, and teleology that do not seem to depend on or betoken anything specifically divine.[51] In other words, the divinity of the Good is redundant because it contributes nothing to its causality that is not already subsumed under these concepts and their mathematical applications.

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[46] See Boys-Stones 2018: 163: 'I assume that all Platonists identify the first god with the form of the good which in turn is identical with the form of beautiful'. *Cf.* Plotinus, *Ennead* 1.6.9.

[47] Adam 1902: vol. II, 51.

[48] So Cherniss 1944: 605.

[49] Menn 1995 is the most thorough presentation of this position.

[50] Hackforth 1936: 447. Shorey 1895 was an earlier supporter of Hackforth's detachment of the Good from the theism of the *Timaeus*, *Philebus*, and *Laws.*

[51] For good suggestions along these lines, see Denyer 2007, Fine 1990, Miller 2007, Santas 1999, and Sedley 2007a.

As a non-theist myself, I sympathize with this kind of thinking. But to foist it on Plato would be hopelessly anachronistic. Goodness, beauty, and stability are the essential attributes of divinity in his understanding of *to theion* throughout. They are paradigmatically instantiated in the Form of the Good: that is to say, harmony, proportion, teleology, and mathematical structure actually *are* Plato's divinity in its highest manifestations.[52]

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[52] Cairns 2007 is replete with treatments of these notions, but the book's introduction and fourteen contributions make no mention of god, gods, divine, or divinity.

THE INGREDIENTS OF THE SOUL IN PLATO'S *TIMAEUS*[1]

GÁBOR BETEGH

Timaeus starts his long narrative about the creation of the cosmos and all the living beings in it by describing the steps through which the divine craftsman created the world's body. He tells his friends on the basis of what reasons the Demiurge decided that the world should be constructed out of exactly four elements, why he used up all of them for the creation of the cosmos, and why he decided to shape the body of the cosmos into a perfect sphere. But of course, as Timaeus hastens to add, the cosmos, this blessed divine being, has a soul as well. And as soon as he reminds himself and his interlocutors that the cosmos is an ensouled, rational living being, he immediately realizes that he got the narrative sequence of the events wrong. He should have started with an account of the creation of the *soul* of the world, because the Demiurge obviously did not ignore that soul is prior to body, and accordingly he must have created the soul first. Once Timaeus has recognized his mistake, he straight away launches into his intricate and fanciful account describing how the Demiurge fabricated the soul, starting with the list of the ingredients the Demiurge put into his mixing bowl to produce the concoction out of which he then fashioned the soul. This is what Timaeus tells about the first stages of this process:

> The components from which he made the soul and the way in which he made it were as follows. In between the being that is indivisible and always in the same state, and the one that is divisible and comes to be in the case of bodies, he mixed a third, intermediate form of *being*, from the other two. Similarly, he made a mixture of the *same*, and of the *different*, in between their indivisible, and divisible kinds among the bodies. And he took the three and mixed them together to make a uniform mixture, forcing the *different*, which was hard to mix, into conformity with the *same*. Now when he had mixed these two together with *being*, and from the three had made a single mixture, he re-divided the whole mixture into as many parts as his task required, each part remaining a mixture of the *same*, the *different*, and of *being*. (35a1–b3)[2]
>
> συνεστήσατο ἐκ τῶνδέ τε καὶ τοιῷδε τρόπῳ. τῆς ἀμερίστου καὶ ἀεὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἐχούσης οὐσίας καὶ τῆς αὖ περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένης μεριστῆς τρίτον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ συνεκεράσατο οὐσίας εἶδος, τῆς τε ταὐτοῦ φύσεως αὖ πέρι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἑτέρου, καὶ κατὰ ταὐτὰ συνέστησεν ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ τε ἀμεροῦς αὐτῶν καὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὰ σώματα μεριστοῦ· καὶ τρία λαβὼν αὐτὰ ὄντα συνεκεράσατο εἰς μίαν πάντα ἰδέαν, τὴν θατέρου

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[1] After the Keeling Lecture, I had the opportunity to present successive versions of this paper at NYU, at Austin, and at the Centre Léon Robin. A preliminary version was presented at the University of Milano. I would like to thank my audiences at all these occasions. I am especially grateful for further comments to David Sedley, Marko Malink, Sara Magrin, David Ebrey, and Marwan Rashed, my respondent at the Centre Léon Robin, and to Fiona Leigh for inviting me to give a Keeling Lecture and for her thorough editorial work and patience.

[2] Translations are based on Cornford 1997 unless otherwise indicated.

> φύσιν δύσμεικτον οὖσαν εἰς ταὐτὸν συναρμόττων βίᾳ. μειγνὺς δὲ μετὰ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ἐκ τριῶν ποιησάμενος ἕν, πάλιν ὅλον τοῦτο μοίρας ὅσας προσῆκεν διένειμεν, ἑκάστην δὲ ἔκ τε ταὐτοῦ καὶ θατέρου καὶ τῆς οὐσίας μεμειγμένην.

The text is very condensed, and apparently different textual variants circulated in antiquity, so ancient and modern interpreters have disagreed on what the original list of ingredients was. Nonetheless, pretty much all commentators nowadays accept Proclus' construal of the text, according to which the Demiurge started with six ingredients: two types of *being*, two types of *same*, and two types of *different*. One of each pair is related to, or characteristic of, or belongs to, eternal, indivisible Forms, whereas the other is related to divisible, corporeal, physical, entities.[3] According to this reading, in the first step, the Demiurge created an intermediate mixture of the three pairs individually, and finally he combined these three intermediates into one mixture.[4] This is the mixture out of which the Demiurge then fashioned the soul of the cosmos and, as we learn a little later, the immortal rational souls of human beings.

This is a point at which readers of the *Timaeus* might have become acutely aware of the advantages of the dialogue format over continuous speeches. It would have been terrific if as soon as Timaeus uttered these sentences, Socrates had played his usual role, jumped in and interrupted his friend. He could have said something like this:

> Timaeus, my dear friend, hang on a minute. I don't understand a word of what you are saying. You have duly warned us that your account will be in some ways mythical—I fully appreciate that. So I take it that your language of mixing, stirring, and cutting, all the culinary and metallurgic imagery, should not be taken quite so literally. That's all fine. But still. What about the ingredients of this concoction, the two types of being, same, and different? A moment ago, when you described so splendidly the creation of the body of the world, you took due care to explain *why* the Demiurge needed exactly four elements to produce our world, why he used precisely those four, and why he made the body of the world spherical. And now you simply—or should I say brusquely—state, without any explanation, that the Demiurge took these twice three, and mixed them together to create the soul of the world and—as I guess you will tell us soon—our own rational souls. What is more, just a couple of minutes ago, in the prelude to your speech, you insisted—I can even remember your words—that the very first thing we should do is strictly to distinguish between, as you said, '[w]hat is that which always *is* and has *no becoming*, and what is that which *becomes* and never *is*' (27d–28a). But aren't you now blurring that very distinction by saying that both types of being are types of *being*? So, please my friend, be patient with us, and explain to us: what are these ingredients, and why did the Demiurge decide to use precisely these in order to create the soul of the cosmos and our own rational souls? You will surely

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[3] Timaeus uses genitives to describe the ingredients' relation to indivisible, changeless, eternal entities, and the prepositions περί and κατά to describe the relationship of the ingredients to bodies. Both locutions are somewhat vague and allow different translations. As we will see, one of our main tasks is precisely to try to understand better what these locutions entail.

[4] According to the main alternative reading based on a textual variant, favoured by a number of ancient readers of the *Timaeus*, and in particular by Plutarch in *De An. Procr*., as well as by some earlier modern commentators, the Demiurge started with only four original ingredients, two types of being, out of which he created intermediate being, and then he mixed this intermediate being with the mixture of the same and the different. I will throughout assume Proclus' six-ingredient list. The main gist of my suggestion is however compatible with the alternative construal as well (*cf.* n. 9 below).

> forgive my insistence, as you yourself have just reminded us that the soul is more important than the body, and we both agree that the soul is of particular concern to us in order to know who we are and to live a happy life.'

Unfortunately, the *Timaeus* is not a proper dialogue, and Socrates does not interrupt his friend to express his puzzlement. And I don't think that the queries I have put into my counterfactual Socrates' mouth ever receive an explicit answer in the rest of Timaeus' long speech. We do get some clues—and I will of course try to make the best use of them. Perhaps even more strikingly, these and related questions concerning the ingredients of the soul, and the absence of a teleologic explanation for them, rarely if ever get asked in the extensive current literature on the *Timaeus*.[5] Commentators standardly note that the trio of being, same, and different must in some way be related to the Greatest Kinds of the *Sophist*. Indeed, as Francis MacDonald Cornford wrote in his seminal commentary on the *Timaeus*, these terms 'would be simply unintelligible to anyone who had not read and understood the *Sophist*'.[6] If a complete understanding of the *Sophist* is required, we might just as well give up right away—at least I myself wouldn't claim that I have fully understood that text. But I hope I can show that we might still make some headway taking at least some relatively uncontroversial clues from the *Sophist*, even if not quite in the way it is usually assumed.

At any rate, even if they note the connection with the *Sophist*, interpreters don't go much further in exploring the nature and significance of it. For instance, even those who take it as obvious that the ingredients of the soul are lifted from the passages concerning the discussion of the Greatest Kinds in the *Sophist* don't usually ask why the remaining two of the five Greatest Kinds, Motion and Rest, are not included among those ingredients.[7] Even more importantly, they don't even try to explain why Timaeus introduces the results of the *Sophist* at this particular point, in speaking about the ingredients of the soul, whereas he does not seem to make any further reference to the *Sophist* in the rest of his speech.

When we try to find answers to this set of questions—including the ones I have put into my fictional Socrates' mouth—our best bet is to see how Timaeus' usual explanatory scheme would apply to the composition of the soul. Timaeus' procedure, in most general terms, goes roughly like this. He takes a presumed fact about or phenomenon of the world, and then submits it to reverse engineering. In other words, he constructs a piece of practical reasoning, which starts with a set of possibilities and constraints, and aims at the overall best outcome, and has as its conclusion the phenomenon to be explained.[8] Timaeus then attributes this piece of practical reasoning to the Demiurge, or the Demiurge's helpers, and says that (it is likely that) these are the reasons that motivated the choices and decisions of the Demiurge and his auxiliaries in creating the phenomenon or entity in question. For instance, Timaeus can consider that he has given a plausible explanation of the presumed fact that the cosmos is built up of the four elements when the four elements end up as the conclusion of practical reasoning, which starts with certain givens and constraints, and aims at the overall best possible outcome. This is how he has just explained that the Demiurge had to start with fire and earth – because these two were necessary for visibility and tangibility conceived as the two marks of bodies—but then it was for the overall best that he added two more elements, water and air, so that these two can function as bonds between fire and earth. He also duly explains why he needed exactly two such bonds. Or Timaeus can consider that he has successfully explained the constitution and shape of the human head by the younger gods—who are doing their best to emulate the practical reasoning of their father—when he came up with a plausible story as to why it was the best decision for the younger gods to use only a relatively thin layer of bone, without adding a further protective layer of flesh and sinews, to house the spherical rational soul (75a–c).

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[5] The most relevant discussion is in Frede 1996, to which I am much indebted. Corcilius 2018, in his excellent paper on the cognition of the world soul, touches upon some related questions. I was very happy to see that Corcilius and I have independently arrived at similar views on a number of questions concerning the cognitive activities of the world soul. Importantly, however, Corcilius also does not address the question of the teleological explanation of the composition of the soul. I will also indicate in footnotes some of the points where his and my interpretations differ.

[6] Cornford 1997: 61.

[7] *Cf.*, most recently, Corcilius 2018: 55: 'One cannot rule out that Plato might have had in mind here all five of the greatest kinds introduced in the *Sophist* (being, sameness, difference, motion, and rest)'. In fact, the *Sophist* offers an immediate answer to the question why Motion and Rest are not part of the Demiurge's mixture. As we learn at 250a, these two kinds are 'completely contrary to each other', and then at 254d–255a the Visitor adds that these two kinds don't blend with each other. If so they cannot be part of the same mixture. I thank David Sedley for this point. On the question why Motion and Rest don't mix with each other, and, furthermore why the other Forms don't participate in either Motion or Rest, see Leigh 2012.

[8] On demiurgic practical reasoning, see Burnyeat 2009.

As my fictional Socrates has just pointed out, the trouble is that in the case of the ingredients of the world soul, Timaeus does not seem to follow his usual procedure. He has duly explained the demiurgic reasoning which resulted in the presumed fact that the body of the cosmos and the bodies of human beings are constituted of these four elements, whereas he apparently failed to provide the demiurgic reasoning which resulted in the presumed fact that the soul of the cosmos and the rational soul of human beings are constituted out of the two types of being, same, and different.[9] However, as Timaeus also reminds us, the soul is much more important than the body. So if he wanted to stick to his own explanatory principles, Timaeus must have thought that the Demiurge chose precisely these ingredients to construct the soul *for a reason aiming for the best*—but he has apparently failed to tell us what that reason was. Given that Timaeus has failed to tell us, but since we still want to understand this all-important matter, the best we can do is to try to apply his usual method, and do the reverse engineering ourselves, and make an attempt to uncover the Demiurge's reasons. Or to put it differently, we should make an attempt to understand why it is good, indeed the best possible, that the world soul and our souls are composed of these ingredients.

In order to do that, we should first try to identify the phenomenon, or phenomena, for which the list of ingredients is supposed to be explanatory. In the case of some later stages of the fabrication of the world-soul, the explanandum is clear. For instance, the angle of the *khi* in which the circles of the Same and the Different are set is explanatory of the angle of the celestial equator and the ecliptic (*Tim.* 36b6–c2, cf. 38c ff.). Similarly, the division of the circle of the Different into seven concentric circles is clearly motivated by astronomical considerations, namely to account for the orbits and motions of the planets (*Tim.* 36c4–d7). Then there are other features of the world soul which seem to serve double duty. For instance, as Aristotle points out in *De Anima* 1.3, the highly complex mathematical–harmonic division of the soul is likely to have both astronomical and cognitive explanatory roles: it is supposed to explain the fact that the circles of the heaven move in well-ordered, harmonious ways, and at the same time explain that we have musical and mathematical abilities, are able to manipulate numbers and ratios, and resonate to musical scales and harmonies (*De An.* $406^{b}26$–$407^{a}2$). On the other hand, it still remains unclear and unexplained what motivates the very first step of the creation of the soul, the choice of its ingredients. Moreover, it still remains unexplained why Timaeus apparently applies the results of the *Sophist* precisely at this point.

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[9] The only point where his usual explanatory mode enters the description is when Timaeus points out that the Demiurge had to face a constraint and had some trouble mixing the different with the same.

There is no indication that the list of the ingredients themselves has any role in explaining the astronomical functions of the world soul. But the text does contain a clue which suggests that the explanandum is primarily the cognitive function of the soul. Indeed, the only other point in the text where the ingredients of the soul are mentioned again is the dauntingly difficult passage which describes the internal monologue of the world soul. Let me quote:

> Because the soul is a mixture of the nature of the same, the different, and being, these three components, and because it was divided up and bound together in various proportions, and because it circles round upon itself, whenever it comes into contact (ἐφάπτηται) with something whose being is scatterable [*i.e.* a physical particular] or else with something whose being is indivisible [*i.e.* a Form], it is moved throughout its whole self and tells (λέγει) what exactly that thing is the same as, or what it is different from, and in what respect and in what manner, as well as when, it turns out that they are the same or different and are characterized as such, this applying both to the things that come to be [*i.e.* physical particulars], and to those that are always changeless [*i.e.* Forms]. And when the account (λόγος) that is equally true whether it is about what is different or about what is the same, and is borne along without utterance or sound within the self-moving thing, then, whenever the account (λόγος) concerns anything that is perceptible, the circle of the different goes correctly and proclaims it throughout its whole soul, and this is how firm and true opinions and convictions come about, whenever on the other hand, the account concerns any object of reasoning, and the circle of the same, running smoothly, reveals it, the necessary result is understanding and knowledge; and if anyone should ever call that in which these two arise not soul, but something else, what he says will be anything but true. (37a2–c5)
>
> ἅτε οὖν ἐκ τῆς ταὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς θατέρου φύσεως ἔκ τε οὐσίας τριῶν τούτων συγκραθεῖσα μοιρῶν, καὶ ἀνὰ λόγον μερισθεῖσα καὶ συνδεθεῖσα, αὐτή τε ἀνακυκλουμένη πρὸς αὑτήν, ὅταν οὐσίαν σκεδαστὴν ἔχοντός τινος ἐφάπτηται καὶ ὅταν ἀμέριστον, λέγει κινουμένη διὰ πάσης ἑαυτῆς ὅτῳ τ' ἄν τι ταὐτὸν ᾖ καὶ ὅτου ἂν ἕτερον, πρὸς ὅτι τε μάλιστα καὶ ὅπῃ καὶ ὅπως καὶ ὁπότε συμβαίνει κατὰ τὰ γιγνόμενά τε πρὸς ἕκαστον ἕκαστα εἶναι καὶ πάσχειν καὶ πρὸς τὰ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἔχοντα ἀεί. λόγος δὲ ὁ κατὰ ταὐτὸν ἀληθὴς γιγνόμενος περί τε θάτερον ὂν καὶ περὶ τὸ ταὐτόν, ἐν τῷ κινουμένῳ ὑφ' αὑτοῦ φερόμενος ἄνευ φθόγγου καὶ ἠχῆς, ὅταν μὲν περὶ τὸ αἰσθητὸν γίγνηται καὶ ὁ τοῦ θατέρου κύκλος ὀρθὸς ἰὼν εἰς πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν διαγγείλῃ, δόξαι καὶ πίστεις γίγνονται βέβαιοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, ὅταν δὲ αὖ περὶ τὸ λογιστικὸν ᾖ καὶ ὁ τοῦ ταὐτοῦ κύκλος εὔτροχος ὢν αὐτὰ μηνύσῃ, νοῦς ἐπιστήμη τε ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀποτελεῖται· τούτω δὲ ἐν ᾧ τῶν ὄντων ἐγγίγνεσθον, ἄν ποτέ τις αὐτὸ ἄλλο πλὴν ψυχὴν εἴπῃ, πᾶν μᾶλλον ἢ τἀληθὲς ἐρεῖ.

The very first word of the passage, ἅτε, which I have translated somewhat lamely as 'because', but which could also be rendered as 'in as much as', or 'in so far as', guarantees that there is an explanatory link between the ingredients and structure of the soul and its cognitive abilities and activities. When we try to understand the motivations of the Demiurge for starting with these ingredients, our best bet is to try to unpack that ἅτε, and understand in what way the ingredients of the soul are supposed to be explanatory of the cognitive activities and abilities of the soul.

Here is the gist of my suggestion, which I will argue for and develop in the rest of the paper. The emphasis in this passage is not on the cognitive abilities of the soul in general, but more specifically on the soul's ability to formulate *logoi*, meaningful statements.[10] More precisely, the characterization of them as the silent *logoi*, constituting the internal cognitive life of the soul, warrants consideration of them as judgements. So, to render it in terms of demiurgic practical reasoning: the Demiurge wanted the cosmos and us to be rational beings, who have the ability to be or become knowers of the world. But he also realized that one can only be or become a knower of the world if one can formulate *logoi*, judgements, which can successfully track how things are in the world. And he also knew that in order to be able to formulate successful *logoi* about both indivisible intelligible beings like the Forms, and the divisible corporeal entities of the physical world, the soul must be composed of precisely these ingredients.[11]

If this line of practical reasoning would, by and large, get Timaeus' approval, my remaining task is to explain why the Demiurge thought that precisely these ingredients are necessary to enable the soul to formulate meaningful *logoi* that can track how things in the world are.

Moreover, once we realize that the immediate explanandum is the soul's ability to formulate *logoi*, meaningful statements, the relevance of the *Sophist* becomes immediately apparent. As I shall argue, the results of the *Sophist* are pertinent not only, or not even primarily, because of the ontological theory of the Greatest Kinds but rather because the *Sophist* is the dialogue in which Plato offers his most elaborate account of the structure and formation of well-formed *logoi*, in which, as we shall see, being, difference, and sameness have a crucial role. The primary explanandum is thus the following: given how the world is, and what the structure of well-formed *logoi* is, what are the psychological conditions that enable us to capture and track the world in well-formed *logoi*? More generally, what does the soul have to be like to be rational, and a knower of the world?

Before I come back to the relationship between the *Sophist* and the *Timaeus*, let me briefly indicate in what ways the suggestion I have just outlined differs from some alternatives. There have of course been other commentators who have tried to explain the composition of the soul by reference to its cognitive capacities. What appears to be common to these interpretations is that they take Timaeus' epistemology to be a rather straightforward case of the ancient epistemological principle of 'like is known by like'.[12] Indeed, according to the most widespread reading, the primary explanandum of the composition of the soul is the assumed fact that the soul is an ontological intermediate which is somehow between the world of Forms and the physical realm. According to this line of interpretation, it is by its ingredients, by the fact that it contains two types of being, sameness, and difference, that the soul does not belong squarely in the domain of either the immutable, intelligible Forms, or the ever-changing perceptible corporeal physical entities, but is somehow between the two, or a mixture of the two. However, continues this line of interpretation, the ontological status of the soul has epistemological ramifications as well: precisely because it is constituted of both types, the soul is able to cognize both the intelligible Forms and physical particulars.[13] Note that this reading relies almost exclusively on the two types of being in the soul, and does little to explain the role of the same and the different – and, connectedly, it ultimately fails to explain the relevance of the *Sophist*.[14] Nor does it explain why Timaeus calls both types ‘being’, in apparent contrast with his previous insistence on the strict distinction between being and becoming. Just as importantly, it does not address the thorny question of what it would mean and involve that the two ontological realms somehow become mixed.

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[10] In a way, my reading is thus continuous with the interpretation of 'Crantor and his followers', who, according to the testimony of Plutarch (*De An. Procr.* 1013a), focused on the cognitive function of the soul in explaining the list of ingredients, 'supposing that the soul's peculiar function is above all to form judgements of the intelligible and the perceptible objects and the differences and similarities occurring among these objects both within their own kind and in relation of either kind to the other, say that the soul, in order that it may know all, has been blended together out of all and that these are four, the intelligible nature, which is ever variable and identical, and the passive and mutable nature of bodies, and furthermore that of sameness and of difference because each of the former two also partakes of diversity and identity' (trans. Cherniss). Note that Crantor apparently based his reading on a four-ingredients list which includes two kinds of being, sameness and difference.

[11] The characterization of the two kinds closely resembles the characterization of the Forms and physical particulars in the Affinity Argument of the *Phaedo* (see esp. *Phd.* 80b; *cf. Tim.* 51e–52a).

[12] On the applicability of the 'like is known by like' principle to the cognition of the (world) soul, see now the Appendix to Corcilius 2018: 101–103. As will become clear, I agree with his criticism of a naïve, immediate use of the principle. I hope, however, it will also become clear in what ways my suggestion differs from Corcilius'.

In a highly condensed form, Aristotle in *De Anima* 1.2 offers a more comprehensive, and to my mind more interesting, version of the ‘like is known by like’ reading. In his dialectical overview of his predecessors’ opinions, he says that those who focused primarily on the cognitive—and not so much on the kinetic[15]—functions of the soul made the soul out of what they took to be the primary element, or elements, of things. Aristotle quotes Empedocles’ verses as the most explicit formulation of this approach:

> For it is by earth that we see earth, by water water,
> By aether divine aether, and by fire destructive fire,
> And affection by affection, and strife by baneful strife. (B109 DK = D207 LM)
>
> γὰρ γαῖαν ὀπώπαμεν, ὕδατι δ’ ὕδωρ,
> αἰθέρι δ’ αἰθέρα δῖαν, ἀτὰρ πυρὶ πῦρ ἀΐδηλον,
> στοργῇ δὲ στοργήν, νεῖκος δέ τε νείκεϊ λυγρῷ·

And immediately afterwards, Aristotle adds:

> In the same way, Plato in the *Timaeus* makes the soul from the elements; for the like is known by the like, and things are from the principles. (404b13–18)
>
> τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον καὶ Πλάτων ἐν τῷ Τιμαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκ τῶν στοιχείων ποιεῖ· γινώσκεσθαι γὰρ τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον, τὰ δὲ πράγματα ἐκ τῶν ἀρχῶν εἶναι.

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[13] Note that even without its double ingredients, the soul is difficult to fit into the binary ontological scheme Timaeus has introduced in the proem. In so far as the Demiurge created the souls, the soul does not seem to belong in the realm of ‘that which always *is* and has *no* becoming’. On this account, the soul seems to belong among the the entities that ‘come to be’. However, Timaeus says that the mark of those entities that come to be is perceptibility (28a) – yet, the soul does not seem to have this distinctive characteristic of things that (have) come to be. It is invisible (36e) and its movements had to be made visible by the addition of the fiery body of the stars and planets. *Prima facie*, it seems obvious that the soul is not tangible either. This question however might be more complicated depending on how we interpret the way in which it comes into contact with perceptible bodies. See the discussion of ἐφάπτηται in 37a below, also with reference to Betegh 2019 and Corcilius 2018.

[14] *Cf.* Cornford 1997: 64.

[15] The only interpreters who would disagree are apparently Xenocrates and his followers, who, according to Plutarch’s testimony (*De An. Procr.* 1012e–1013a), thought that the presence of Same and Different in the mixture is supposed to be explanatory of the soul’s motion. This interpretation however is dependent on the—rather farfetched—identification of the Same with rest, and the Different with motion.

Aristotle thus claims that Plato in the *Timaeus* identified the constituents of the soul 'in the same way', that is on the basis of the same epistemologically oriented theory of soul, as did Empedocles. Apparently, on Aristotle's interpretation, the only substantive difference between Empedocles and the *Timaeus* is that they disagree on what the elements and *arkhai* of things are.

Crucially, in contrast to the one just discussed, Aristotle's interpretation does not focus on the intermediary ontological status of the soul, but rather involves a claim about the constitution of all the entities of both ontological realms. In this way, it manages to avoid the tricky question of how (the being of) the two realms can mix. On this reading, the constituents of the soul are at the same time the ultimate principles and elements of all entities in either ontological realm, and this is why the soul can have cognitive access to both realms.[16] To render this reading in terms of demiurgic practical reasoning, the Demiurge wanted the soul to be able to cognize all the entities in the world, and he was aware of the epistemological principle of 'like is known by like', and, moreover, he knew what the ultimate constituents of all the entities in both ontological realms are, and therefore he composed the soul out of these ultimate constituents. On this reading, it turns out then that there is in fact nothing special about the ingredients of the soul, in so far as all the other things in both ontological realms are constituted of the very same things as well; just as in Empedocles both the soul and everything else in the world are constituted of the four elements.

Although pursuing this question here would take us too far from our present concerns, it is worth noting that it becomes clear from the continuation of the text that Aristotle identified the Same and the Different with the One and the Dyad, which he—together with a number of Platonists—took to be Plato's first principles. This is why Aristotle can claim that Plato also constituted the soul out of the elements and principles of all things. And this is why in the continuation of the text, he pretty much ignores the two types of being, and concentrates on the Same and the Different, which he takes to be Plato's ultimate elements and principles of things.

The analogy with Empedocles, as well as the explicit reference to the 'like is known by like' principle, suggest that on Aristotle's reading the ingredients of the soul somehow provide us with the *contents* of our thoughts in an immediate way, comparable to direct perception—note once again the analogy with Empedocles. Consequently, and in contrast to what I have suggested above, in this account *logoi*, statements about the world, don't seem to have any special role, but knowledge is based on some sort of immediate recognition. We can know what a thing is because what a thing is is determined by its constituents, and the soul, by being composed of the same ingredients, can recognize those constituents, and therefore recognize what the thing is.

As opposed to this, what I would like to suggest is that the composition of the soul enables us to cognize the world *not* because the ingredients directly provide the *content* of our thoughts, and not because the ingredients directly reveal to us what a thing is in virtue of the thing's being composed of the same ingredients. Indeed, the *Timaeus* does not contain any indication to the effect that entities in either ontological realm would be *composed* of being, same, and different. Rather, I would like to maintain that the ingredients of the soul enable us to cognize the world, and all entities in it, because they provide the general *structure* or *form* of our judgements in a content-neutral way. We process our experience of the world by recognizing samenesses and differences between entities in the world. The ingredients of the soul do not give us immediate access to what a thing is, or what its properties are, but they make it possible for us to form judgements by which we can grasp and express what a thing is and what its properties are through grasping and affirming the thing's relation to other things in terms of sameness and difference.[17]

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[16] Note that Aristotle's language does not correspond to the way in which Timaeus speaks about *arkhai* and *stoikheia* in the corporeal realm. According to Timaeus, the *arkhai* and *stoikheia* are certainly not the Same and the Different, and moreover are not the four elements, but are, rather, the two elementary triangles that compose the elements. Accordingly, in his discussion of the construction and inter-transformation of fire, air, water, and earth, he consistently reserves the term 'element' (*stoikheion*) for the two types of elementary triangles (54d–56c), whereas in 53d6-7 he also allows that 'The *arkhai* yet higher than these [*i.e.* higher than the triangles] are known to god and to men who are dear to god'.

The sequence of the events of creation in Timaeus' narrative is once again revealing. As we have seen, Timaeus emphasized that the Demiurge created the soul before the body, and the four elements that constitute the body of the world. So when the Demiurge took being, same, and different 'which comes to be in the case of bodies' (περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένης) to mix into the concoction of the soul, he had not as yet created those very bodies. He had not as yet deliberated on how many elements he would need for the creation of the best cosmos, what those four would be, he had not as yet figured it out that it would be best to give fire, air, water and earth the shape of four regular solids, and had not as yet decided that the best thing would be to create those regular solids from elementary triangles—so he had not as yet decided that these elementary triangles would actually be the ultimate elements (*stoikheia*) of the physical world. According to the sequence of the events, at the time of the creation of the soul, the Demiurge had not as yet known what the elements of bodies and their properties would be, and consequently there were no bodies as yet to have being, sameness, and difference.[18] But what the Demiurge must have known already at that stage was that no matter what types of bodies there would be, and what they would be like, they would certainly be the same as themselves and different from one another, similar in certain respects and different in others, and therefore that the soul ought to be such that it should be able to grasp, and form judgements about, those basic relations—sameness and difference—no matter how the bodies would actually turn out to be.

What I will try to show in the next step is that in attributing such a role to being, same, and different as ingredients of the soul, the *Timaeus* could indeed draw on the account of *logoi* that we get in the *Sophist*. So let us see more closely in what way the *Sophist*'s account of *logoi* can help us with the ingredients of the soul. First of all, in the *Sophist*—right before they launch into the discussion of what a *logos* is and how we form *logoi*—the interlocutors agree that if we were deprived of our ability to formulate *logoi*, we would, most crucially, be deprived of philosophy. What is more, they also add that, even more generally, without *logoi* we would no longer be able to say anything meaningful (*Sophist* 260a). As I have suggested above, this is precisely the primary motivation of the Demiurge. He recognized that the ability to formulate *logoi* is the mark of a rational being. He therefore wanted to ensure that we are able to produce *logoi*, so that we can be rational beings, and, optimally, able to do philosophy.

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[17] This is also the gist of Corcilius' account of the cognition of the world soul in Corcilius 2018, although he arrives at this conclusion by a somewhat different route.

[18] I have phrased this in terms of a temporal sequence of events, in line with a literal interpretation of Timaeus' cosmological narrative (which I am inclined to accept on independent grounds). Note however that my argument is compatible with the non-literal interpretation as well, in so far as the non-literal interpretation takes temporal priority in the narrative to stand for ontological and explanatory priority. If so, what appears at a later stage of the narrative should not enter into the explanation of an entity that, according to the cosmological narrative, appears at an earlier stage.

In the *Sophist*, we moreover learn that there are ontological and linguistic conditions of possibility for the formation of *logoi.* The ontological condition is that the different kinds can combine with each other. If kinds could not combine and mix, we could only name things in isolation, and could not say anything further about them. Instead of meaningful *logoi*, we would be restricted to mere naming, or at best to simple statements of identity, as the so-called late learners request on the basis of their mistaken ontology. In the central part of the dialogue, the Eleatic Visitor demonstrates that kinds can indeed combine with each other. The details of exactly how this is achieved—like pretty much everything in the *Sophist*—is vexed. But commentators generally agree—and this is sufficient for my present purposes—that what make the combination of kinds possible are the so called vowel-kinds, and, moreover that Being, Different, and probably also Same,[19], are precisely these vowel-kinds. These kinds permeate all other kinds, and thereby enable the most basic relations between them, so that all the kinds can be the same as themselves, be different from each other, and that some of them can participate in others.[20]

Although some commentators have tried to argue that the other two Greatest Kinds, Motion and Rest, are also vowel-kinds, there are strong reasons to think that they are not.[21] If so, although Motion and Rest are highly relevant for the *Sophist*'s ontology, they are not relevant in identifying the ontological conditions of possibility of *logoi*.

At any rate, before he turns to the linguistic analysis of *logoi*, the Eleatic Visitor can already say that 'for it is due to the combination of kinds with each other that *logos* has come to be for us' (or according to an alternative translation, 'for we have found that it is due to the combination of kinds with each other that *logos* is possible'; διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀλλήλων τῶν εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν ὁ λόγος γέγονεν ἡμῖν 259e). So, the vowel-kinds are the conditions of the combination of kinds, and thereby the ultimate ontological conditions of possibility of *logoi*. Once he has set out the ontological conditions, the Eleatic Visitor then continues by explaining the linguistic conditions of the formation of meaningful *logoi*, or truth-apt sentences.

Let us now see what the linguistic conditions of *logoi* are according to the *Sophist*. Once again, everything I touch upon in the *Sophist* is hotly debated, so I will try to stick, as far as possible, to the minimally contentious points, and to those which are the most immediately relevant for my discussion. What seems at any rate clear is that the Eleatic Visitor starts with the distinction between two kinds of linguistic signs, *onomata* and *rhemata*, which can combine. When the speaker fits an *onoma* and a *rhema* together, we get a *logos*, a meaningful sentence. In this *logos*, the *onoma* functions as the subject term, whereas the *rhema* functions as the predicate. Most—although perhaps not all—interpreters would furthermore agree that an *onoma* and a *rhema* each have to designate an entity that is. This is how *onomata* and *rhemata* can jointly constitute what the Eleatic Visitor somewhat obliquely calls 'the double kind of vocal indicators about being' (ἔστι γὰρ ἡμῖν που τῶν τῇ φωνῇ περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων διττὸν γένος, 262a6). Only that which is a sign or indicator of a thing that *is* can function as an *onoma* or a *rhema* in a *logos*. This is what guarantees that the *logos* is about something. For as the Eleatic Visitor says,

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[19] So, *e.g.*, Gill 2012: 151 and *passim*.

[20] Crivelli 2011: 116 takes it that only Being and Different are vowel-kinds. It seems to me however that in so far as the function of vowel-kinds is to enable relations between kinds, Same should be included: it is what enables a kind to be identical with itself; *cf.* 256a12–b2. Incidentally, the analogy with the function of vowels in language seems to go in the same direction: a vowel can connect two instances of the same consonant.

[21] On Motion and Rest not being vowel-kinds, see Leigh 2012 and Crivelli 2011: 116ff, arguing against Lentz 1997.

> Whenever there is a *logos*, it must necessarily be about something; and it cannot be about nothing. (262e5–6)[22]
>
> λόγον ἀναγκαῖον, ὅτανπερ ᾖ, τινὸς εἶναι λόγον, μὴ δὲ τινὸς ἀδύνατον.

To which a little later he adds:

> And if it were about nothing, it would not be a *logos* at all. For we have stated that it belongs in the realm of impossibilities for there to be a *logos* such that that *logos* is about nothing. (263c9–11)
>
> μηδενὸς <δέ> γε ὢν οὐδ› ἂν λόγος εἴη τὸ παράπαν· ἀπεφήναμεν γὰρ ὅτι τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἦν λόγον ὄντα μηδενὸς εἶναι λόγον.

It is much more contentious what kind of entities can be indicated by *onomata* and *rhemata* respectively.[23] The range of examples used by the Eleatic Visitor is very restricted. The only examples of *onomata* are those of individual physical particulars, like Theaetetus, and animal kinds (man, lion, stag, horse), and the only examples of *rhemata* are verbs of action like walks, runs, sleeps, flies, understands. Moreover, *rhema* is characterized as what indicates actions (*praxeis*), whereas *onoma* is described as the linguistic sign that indicates those things which perform the actions indicated by the *rhemata* (*Sophist* 263a3–4 and 262a6–7). This restricted list of examples and apparently restrictive characterization of *onomata* and *rhemata* seems to be in tension with the Visitor’s claim that they are giving a general account of *logoi* (*Sophist* 263c1–3), and that all *logoi* must consist of an *onoma* and a *rhema*. Clearly, taking *onoma* and *rhema* in such a restricted way, and especially limiting *rhemata* to action verbs, would leave out many types of predication—importantly including those which express a large range of the combinations of kinds, which as we have seen was precisely the ontological precondition of *logoi*.

This is the point where we would expect a more comprehensive integration of the ontological and linguistic preconditions of *logoi*—and this is where such expectations get painfully frustrated by the text. At this juncture, I am avowedly going beyond what is explicitly warranted by the dialogue. But taking into account that the ontological precondition of *logoi* is explicitly said to be the combination of kinds, and, moreover, that the two parts of a *logos* have to pick out two entities that are, and are related to each other in a specific way, perhaps we can say that at the most general level a *logos* affirms that a relation holds between the two entities indicated by the two parts of the *logos*, and that the relation affirmed in the *logos* corresponds to the specific ways in which kinds combine with each other due to the vowel-kinds. As we have seen above, the vowel-kinds provide the most general structure of reality by establishing the fundamental relationships among entities of identity, difference, and sameness, whereas *logoi*, at the most fundamental level are such that they can track these relationships. On the reading I am tempted to favour, we should include cases which express how the vowel-kinds determine the way in which, say, the kind Largeness is related to itself, it is related to other kinds, and, moreover, the way in which things that can be characterized as large and small are related to it; the vowel-kinds can do all this, without however fully determining or exhausting what Largeness itself is. Note that if we restricted the scope of *rhemata* to action verbs like walks, runs, sleeps, flies, and understands, the outcome would be that we would not be able to formulate *logoi* about Forms or to do dialectics. And this would be in contrast with the claim we have just seen that we need *logoi* in order to be able to engage in philosophy (260a6–9). Indeed, the type of fundamentally important statements that the Visitor formulates about the Greatest Kinds consist precisely in establishing relations of sameness and difference among them. It would be very odd indeed if these statements would not count as *logoi*.

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[22] Translations from the *Sophist* are from Rowe 2015 with modifications.

[23] For a helpful analysis, with a discussion of the scope of *onomata* and *rhemata*, see Crivelli 2011, chapter 6.

According to the suggestion I have just made, the *Timaeus* builds on these results, but also adds a further set of conditions by specifying what the soul has to be like so that it can formulate *logoi*. The *Timaeus* thus not only draws on the *Sophist*, but also completes it, by adding to the ontological and linguistic conditions as set out in the *Sophist* the psychological conditions of the possibility of formulating *logoi*.

So let us return to Timaeus' description of the cognitive activity of the soul of the cosmos and see how it relates to the ontological and linguistic conditions as specified in the *Sophist*. Let me quote the passage again:

> Because the soul is a mixture of the nature of the Same, the Different, and Being, these three portions, and because it was divided up and bound together in proportions, and because it circles round upon itself,[24] *whenever it comes into contact* with something (A) *whose being is scatterable* or else with something *whose being is indivisible*, it is moved throughout its whole self and says (λέγει), whatever it may be (B) that this thing (A) *is the same as*, or *is different from*, and in what respect and in what manner, as well as when, it turns out that each of them is, and is acted upon, relative to each thing, this applying both to the things that come to be, and to those that are always changeless. (37a2–b3)

First, note that the subject term of each *logos* formulated by the world soul is picked out by coming into contact with, or grasping (ἐφάπτηται) an entity (A). In another paper, I have argued that the verb ἐφάπτηται should not be understood as referring to chance encounters between the circles of the world soul and random things in the world. Rather, the verb indicates that the soul actively seeks out and intentionally comes into contact with specific entities in a systematic way (*cf.* also *Timaeus* 90c, *Symposium* 212a).[25] Indeed, 'grasping' is, I think, a better translation of ἐφάπτηται than 'coming into contact' or 'touching'. Even if for no other reason, this translation is preferable because 'coming into contact' or 'touching' is a reciprocal relation whereas the kind of cognitive grasping I am speaking about is not. But no matter whether we understand and translate it as 'grasping' or 'touching', it is clear that the soul can only grasp or come into contact with entities that are.[26]

It is no less important to notice that the entities 'touched' or 'grasped' by the world soul can belong to either or both ontological domains. Indeed, we can even apply here the famous criterion of being, formulated in the *Sophist*, as the capacity to act and be acted upon (*Sophist* 247d8–e3). All the things that enter into the causal relation of ‘touching’ or ‘grasping’ with the soul evidently satisfy that criterion, no matter whether they are intelligible or corporeal. Be that as it may, the grasping of an entity by the soul, I would maintain, is the cognitive counterpart of the way in which, according to the *Sophist*, an *onoma* picks out and designates something that is, or, as the text says, ‘has being’ (οὐσιαν [...] ἔχοντος τινος).

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[24] As Marwan Rashed helpfully suggested to me, the first part of the sentence is also a reminder of how from the (presumably) zero-dimensional mixture of the six ingredients, through the creation of the (presumably) one-dimensional chain of proportions, and then the formation of the (clearly) two-dimensional χ, and finally the bending and closing of the circles too determine a sphere, we finally arrive at the three-dimensionally extended world soul. The soul's three-dimensional extension, and co-extension with the world's body, is apparently a further condition of possibility of its cognitive achievements. It is still unclear to me how this progression in dimensionality is related to what we read in the continuation of Aristotle's testimony in *De An.* 1.2 quoted above, and according to which '*nous* is the monad, science or knowledge of the dyad (because it goes undeviatingly from one point to another), opinion the number of the plane, sensation the number of the solid' (404^{b}22–25).

[25] *Cf.* Betegh 2019: 134–7; Lee 1976: 98–9, n. 26. For 'grasping', see also Reydams-Schils 1997.

[26] For a discussion of ἐφάπτηται with a somewhat different conclusion, see now Corcilius 2018: 84–90.

In the second step, the soul affirms the specific ways in which this entity is related to some other entity (B).[27] The way Timaeus formulates this claim makes clear that these relata are also things that are. Moreover, these entities can also belong to either of the two ontological domains. At this point, we can also mobilize what we have learnt from the *Sophist*: the entity that is designated by the *rhema* does not need to be an object or thing in the traditional sense, but can also be an activity, such as sitting or flying. This is reassuring in so far as it allows the soul to formulate true *logoi*, which also involve activities—this is a point which would not be quite so obvious from the text of the *Timaeus* itself.

So the world soul picks out two entities, of either or both ontological domains, and affirms the relations between them. In the Greek, the section ὅτῳ τ’ ἄν τι ταὐτὸν ᾖ καὶ ὅτου ἂν ἕτερον might describe how the soul identifies subjects, and then the rest of the sentence, πρὸς ὅτι τε μάλιστα καὶ ὅπῃ καὶ ὅπως καὶ ὁπότε συμβαίνει κατὰ τὰ γιγνόμενά τε πρὸς ἕκαστον ἕκαστα εἶναι καὶ πάσχειν καὶ πρὸς τὰ κατὰ ταὐτὰ ἔχοντα ἀεί, describes how it predicates things of them, the predication of being expressed by the word ‘being’ (εἶναι) in b2. πάσχειν in relation to each other seems to refer to a causal relation between entities of being affected, or more particularly to the possession of a certain property that can be predicated of the item, and which is the result of a causal relation with another entity. As commentators have noted, this causal relation appears to refer in particular to the possession of a property due to a participation relation.[28] At any rate, the *logoi* thus formulated can both serve to articulate relations within the same ontological domain as well as across the two ontological domains.

Importantly, Timaeus clearly states that all these predications take the form of affirming different forms of the sameness and difference between the two entities. How closely this can, or should, be mapped onto the *Sophist* is not entirely clear, and I would not like to press the parallel unduly. It seems to me that, at the very least, in the case of the affirmations of difference, the two texts might be quite close. For one of the key moves of the Eleatic Visitor in cornering the sophist consists precisely in demonstrating that all negations or negative predications can be parsed in terms of difference (257b). (Exactly how he achieves this is once again hotly debated, but it seems clear and uncontentious that this is what he claims to have achieved.) If so, all predications involving negations can be covered by the world soul's affirmations of difference between the relata.

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[27] Corcilius 2018: 54 and 67 takes it that the world soul, in the same *logos*, systematically establishes the samenesses and differences of the subject term with *all* other entities in the world. This would result in an infinitely complex, holistic, conjunctive *logos*, including all temporal relations of the subject term, of a Leibnizian type. It seems to me unlikely that Timaeus envisioned that the world soul simultaneously formulates *logoi* of such infinite complexity about all the things in the world. This kind of infinitely complex *logos* could hardly function as an archetype for orderly and systematic human cognition and ‘internal dialogue’. The world soul, as an ideal cognizer which we should emulate, ought to be a systematic thinker who produces *logoi* in a systematic, orderly way. Surely, the world soul, by being extended throughout the cosmos, and indeed even enveloping the body of the world from the outside, has the ability to compare any given thing it grasps with any other given entity. In that sense, the knowledge of the world soul is indeed holistic. But it does not need to compare any given thing with every other thing in the cosmos in a single *logos*, and in infinitely many *logoi* simultaneously. Note also that the text speaks about δόξαι καὶ πίστεις [...] βέβαιοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς in the plural. Moreover, as things change in the physical realm, the world soul needs to formulate *logoi* at each moment tracking the actual state of the world. Of course, it does not mean either that in its internal dialogue, the world soul formulates these *logoi* in isolation. It also seems to suggest that the world soul formulates a plurality of *logoi*, each with its own truth value. Incidentally, the fact that the world soul is said to envelop the world’s body from the outside (36e), and the outer circle is that of the Same, and the circle of the Same is responsible for issuing *logoi* about Forms, might be a slight indication that the world soul can be in contact also with entities that are not, strictly speaking, in the physical world, but in some sort of extra-cosmic, or rather non-spatial, domain, comparable to the ὑπερουράνιος τόπος of the *Phaedrus*. Otherwise we have to assume that the Forms are somehow spatially within, or immanent in, the physical world, as *e.g.* Frede 1996: 39–40 and 49 does.

[28] Proclus *in Tim*. ii. 304. 20 Diehl, with reference to *Soph*. 244b–245a; Taylor 1928: 177–78; Corcilius 2018: 69.

As opposed to negations, the *Sophist* does not offer an explicit analysis of positive affirmative sentences in terms of the vowel-kinds. It is thus unclear whether or not we could, or indeed should, try to read back into the *Sophist* what the *Timaeus* appears to say about positive predications. At any rate, Timaeus helpfully adds that *logoi* can also include temporal and other qualifications and specifications, so that the soul can announce 'in what respect and in what manner, as well as when' (ὅπῃ καὶ ὅπως καὶ ὁπότε) the relata are the same or different. It means that what can be predicated of the entity 'grasped' by the world soul can be considerably more complex than '*x* is the same as *y*' or 'φ-ing is different from *z*'. This is helpful in so far as it allows more complex statements than the simplest monadic predications that the Eleatic Visitor in the *Sophist* uses to illustrate *logoi*.[29] Note moreover, that the list of these qualifications strongly suggests that sameness and difference are not necessarily absolute terms. In particular, sameness affirmed in the *logos* does not need to be self-identity or a definition, but can be sameness in a specific respect, in a specific manner, for a specific period of time, *etc*. This considerably broadens the concept of sameness operative in these *logoi*. I find it very tempting to think that in the final analysis all kinds of positive declarative statements get covered by—or can be parsed in the form of—this type of sentence affirming qualified sameness, just as, in line with the *Sophist*, all kinds of negations will be covered by—or can be parsed in the form of—the *logoi* which affirm difference between the relata.[30]

Just as importantly, the qualified sameness and difference, stating in what respects a given entity is the same as and in what respects it is different from might cover cases of similarity.[31] The relation of similarity is crucial in so far as it is the relation that holds between Forms and physical particulars, which 'bear the same name' as the relevant Form, as is stated at *Timaeus* 52a (τὸ δὲ ὁμώνημον ὅμοιον).

Note also that, fully in line with what I argued earlier in relation to the *Sophist*, it is clear that when we try to understand the list of the ingredients of the soul from the way in which they are involved in the soul's ability to produce *logoi*, the question as to why motion and rest are not among the ingredients of the soul simply disappears. Motion and rest are (on most interpretations) not vowel-kinds, and are not involved in the formation of *logoi* as structure-giving concepts. So there is simply no need for them among the ingredients of the soul. Of course, motion and rest will be important in the creation and functioning of the soul. Thinking, the formation of *logoi*, does require the motion of the soul—or to put it even more strongly, thinking *is* the circular motion of the soul.[32] Once the frame of the soul is ready, the Demiurge has to set the whole structure in motion (*Timaeus* 36c). In this way, motion is indeed among the psychic preconditions of the formation of *logoi*, but not at the level of the structure-giving concepts of being, same, and different. Rather, it is thanks to the motion of the soul that the structure-giving concepts can be deployed in forming *logoi*.

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[29] *Soph*. 262c–d makes clear that there are more complex *logoi*; they only use the simplest ones for illustrative and explicative purposes.

[30] *Cf. e.g.* what Lorenz 2006: 87 writes in relation to the *Theaetetus*: 'Put more generally, what I take Socrates to be drawing attention to is the fact that the ability to raise and settle questions of whether something or other bears some feature is inseparable from the ability to grasp that the feature in question is related to certain other features, and how it is related to them, for instance by opposition'. Corcilius then adds a further important difference: 'unlike human perceivers, the world soul has no direct grasp of the individual components that constitute the web or order in isolation from each other'. I cannot find textual support for this distinction. Moreover, if we can only grasp content, be that about physical particulars or Forms, in the form of *logoi* which have the same basic structure, I can't see how humans, as opposed to the world soul could have a 'direct grasp' of them. Indeed, it would be odd if we would be somehow better off than the ideal divine cognizer.

[31] This is especially good news in view of the fact that, arguably, all the examples involving the same appear to be cases of self-identity.

Is this, then, an instance of the 'like is known by like'? In a way yes, in so far as the presence of the two kinds of being, same, and different enables the soul to recognize these relations in the world. However, in Empedocles' account, when the cognizer cognizes fire by fire, the object of cognition is fire itself, whereas in Timaeus' account the objects of cognition are what the soul 'touches' or 'grasps', and the twice three enables the soul to recognize and express in *logoi* the relations that hold between these entities. The *logos* thus formed is not about being, sameness, and difference, but about entities in the world that are in those relations with one another.

Can the above analysis, which shifts the focus from the Greatest Kinds to the role of the relevant concepts in *logoi*, help to understand why the Demiurge starts with *two* sets of being, same, and different? It might—although I have to admit that my suggestions at this point are even more tentative and speculative. What the two sets might express is that the concepts of being, same, and different deployed in the formation of *logoi* about Forms and physical particulars are irreducibly different. Perhaps we can say that a predication, for instance 'is large', expresses irreducibly different relations depending on whether the subject term is a physical particular or a Form, the Form of Largeness. Given that 'large' is the same in both predications, the difference can only come from the fact that although both predications involve 'is', the copula captures irreducibly different relations in the two cases. In fact, although the *logoi* in both cases are expressed in terms of 'being', in one case it captures something that according to the binary ontological division of Timaeus' proem is 'being', in the other case it captures something that is 'becoming'. We could also say that 'is the same as' or 'is different from' capture connected, but still very different, relations depending on the domain to which the subject and predicate terms belong.[33]

The epistemological correlate of this distinction is captured in the immediate sequel of the passage quoted above about the formulation of *logoi* by the world soul. For Timaeus right away adds that although the *logoi* will be equally true no matter what the relata are, when the relata are perceptible physical particulars, the *logoi* will be opinions and convictions (δόξαι καὶ πίστεις), and will be declared by the circle of the Different, whereas when the relata are intelligibles, the resulting *logoi* will be reason and knowledge (νοῦς ἐπιστήμη τε). I take it that this difference is the correlate of the irreducible difference between the 'is' in 'is large' in a predication the subject term of which is the Form Largeness, and a predication the subject term of which is a particular which happens to be large. Similarly with predications involving 'is the same as' and 'is different from'.

An additional advantage of construing the two types of being in the soul in this conceptual or predicational way is that it by-passes the complication that the ontological reading necessarily involves. For, as we have seen above, the ontological reading implies that the two domains somehow have to mix, and also that by being composed in part of the being of bodies, the soul is also at least partly corporeal.[34]

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[32] For discussions of the relationship between thinking and the revolution of the circles of the soul, see the classic article by Lee 1976; Karfík 2004: 185ff.; Corcilius 2019: 61–62.

[33] This might also be close to what Frede 1996: 48 means when she writes, 'the soul needs to be aware of the fact that it uses language and concepts differently when it moves in its two different circles'.

Up until now, I have based my analysis on the section of the text which describes the working of the soul of the cosmos. In so far as the cosmos is presented as the ideal divine thinker, it could be maintained that this analysis covers only a very narrow range of cognitive activities: divine thoughts. So—the objection could go—it is not merely the case that the *logoi* of this ideal thinker are unfailingly true, but also that these are only very specific types of *logoi*. The cosmos as the ideal thinker does not entertain any petty thoughts, and does not get distracted into daydreaming. Its soul is constantly formulating the highest kinds of *logoi*—which amounts to saying that it is constantly and exclusively engaged in philosophy and dialectic. But then, the objection might continue, it would not be surprising at all to find that dialectic consists precisely in tracking and affirming sameness and difference. And even if, as we have seen, the objects of the world soul's cognition include corporeal entities, these might again be limited to a narrow range, for instance to heavenly bodies, allowing that apart from proper dialectic and philosophy, the cosmos also pursues mathematical astronomy. All in all, could it not be the case that the analysis presented thus far covers only a very narrow range of cognitive activities?[35]

It seems to me that the text contains clear indications to the effect that the above general analysis of the way in which the soul formulates *logoi* is applicable to a much wider range of cognitive activities.[36] Consider, for instance, Timaeus' explanation of the cognitive state of new-born babies in whom the sudden influx and outflow of all kinds of physical stuffs, and all the havoc that accompanies incarnation, completely mess up the circles of the rational soul:

> They mutilated and disfigured the circles in every possible way so that the circles barely held together and though they remained in motion, they moved without rhyme or reason, sometimes in the opposite direction, sometimes sideways and sometimes upside down—like a man upside down, head propped against the ground and holding his feet up against something. In that position his right side will present itself both to him and to those looking at him as left, and his left side right. It is this very thing—and others like it—that had such a dramatic effect upon the revolutions of the soul. Whenever they happen to encounter (περιτύχωσιν) something outside of them

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[34] Frede 1996: 51 ends up by suggesting that the ingredients of the soul are Forms, but still quite radically different kind of Forms than those in the Paradigm, and then she speaks about the '"swallow-tailing" of the Forms into two kinds in the Timaeus'. To my mind, this causes many unnecessary complications. To begin with, the ingredients of the soul show so many traits that seem to be incompatible with any standard characterization of Forms (*e.g.* indivisibility and immobility or changelessness), that I find it unhelpful to call them Forms and thereby stretch so widely what it means to be a Form.

[35] A particularly tricky question is whether the world soul has memory and whether it can formulate *logoi* about relations that obtain in the future. Can things that existed but no longer exist, or things that will exist but don't as yet exist be objects of its cognitive activities? The only slight clue we seem to have is that, as we have seen, it can formulate *logoi* that include temporal qualifications.

[36] *Cf.* Corcilius 2018: 52, who also takes it that the cognitive activities of the world soul (also) stand for an ideal cognitive agent and therefore offer 'a general account of intellectual cognition that is based on the very same principles as this that governs human intellectual activity'. He then adds that 'This, to be sure, regards human cognitive activity only *to the extent that it is intellectual*; it does not concern the (perceptual) presuppositions of specifically human intellectual cognition'. It seems to me however that even though the physiological process of perception is distinctly human, the way in which the world soul processes content about physical entities is also the ideal form of the way in which the human rational soul can process content based on perception.

> characterizable as same or different, they speak of it (προσαγορεύουσαι) as 'the same as' something, or as 'different from' something else when the truth is just the opposite, so proving themselves to be misled and unintelligent. (43e1–44a3, trans. Zeyl)
>
> […] στρέψαι στροφάς, πάσας δὲ κλάσεις καὶ διαφθορὰς τῶν κύκλων ἐμποιεῖν, ὁσαχῇπερ ἦν δυνατόν, ὥστε μετ᾽ ἀλλήλων μόγις συνεχομένας φέρεσθαι μέν, ἀλόγως δὲ φέρεσθαι, τοτὲ μὲν ἀντίας, ἄλλοτε δὲ πλαγίας, τοτὲ δὲ ὑπτίας: οἷον ὅταν τις ὕπτιος ἐρείσας τὴν κεφαλὴν μὲν ἐπὶ γῆς, τοὺς δὲ πόδας ἄνω προσβαλὼν ἔχῃ πρός τινι, τότε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ πάθει τοῦ τε πάσχοντος καὶ τῶν ὁρώντων τά τε δεξιὰ ἀριστερὰ καὶ τὰ ἀριστερὰ δεξιὰ ἑκατέροις τὰ ἑκατέρων φαντάζεται. ταὐτὸν δὴ τοῦτο καὶ τοιαῦτα ἕτερα αἱ περιφοραὶ πάσχουσαι σφοδρῶς, ὅταν τέ τῳ τῶν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ταὐτοῦ γένους ἢ τοῦ θατέρου περιτύχωσιν, τότε ταὐτόν τῳ καὶ θάτερόν του τἀναντία τῶν ἀληθῶν προσαγορεύουσαι ψευδεῖς καὶ ἀνόητοι γεγόνασιν.

Because the circles of their souls are in such a disorganized and deformed state, moving even in the opposite direction, these tiny tots are incapable of thinking straight. This has two consequences. As opposed to the world soul's systematically seeking out its objects of cognition, these babies just stumble upon random things outside themselves. (Note that the verb used is περιτύχωσιν, as opposed to ἐφάπτηται, to describe the way in which the souls of babies come into contact with entities.) Moreover, even about these haphazard objects they hardly ever hit upon the truth because the circles of their soul move in a disorderly way and even in the opposite direction. However, what is crucial for us now is that, according to this account, the soul's circles already at their totally confused state, soon after incarnation, try to formulate (silent or not so silent) *logoi* in terms of sameness and difference about any old thing they encounter. Even though the thinking process is disorderly, because the motions are disorderly and the circles deformed and somewhat fragmented, and the truth value of the *logoi* are often false because of the direction of the motions, the general *form* of the *logoi* are still the same, because no matter what, the circles are formed of the same mixture and therefore of the same ingredients. Even babies have the ability to deploy these basic concepts because their souls are constituted of them.

Timaeus then adds that if everything goes well, the soul naturally regains its original structure and its motions become more orderly again. There is thus a natural process of recovery for the soul. But if further conditions are given, the soul can get even closer to its original, fully rational state. And, as Timaeus explains in the coda to his long speech, if all the conditions are given and all the efforts are made, at the end of this process the motions of the soul of the human being get to resemble the motions of the world soul as closely as possible, and this is how the human being can become *eudaimon*, and approach divine happiness. In this supremely happy state of the human being, the rational soul formulates *logoi* almost as systematic in their interrelations, and almost as reliably true as those the divine world soul formulates. In other words, the orderly human soul is able to track and affirm in its *logoi* the sameness and difference among entities as they obtain in the world. And in so far as it engages both in dialectics and in the type of cosmology Timaeus is doing, it can also discover how the Greatest Kinds permeate the world, how the vowel-kinds enable kinds to mix with each other, how being, same, and different ultimately structure the world, and how this can be tracked, processed, and used in formulating *logoi*. The rational soul can thus understand the fundamental structure of the world, and can also understand *how* it can understand the fundamental structure of the world.

We can see then that from the very low-level cognition characteristic of newborn babies to the highest level of human, and indeed divine, rationality, the very same type of fundamental operation is in play. Similarly, the same basic type of cognitive activity is operative from perception to the highest-level, most abstract dialectic in so far as all these cognitive acts involve *logoi*—are propositional—and try to track and affirm sameness and difference among entities. Once again, all this is possible because no matter how disorderly or orderly the circles of one's soul are, they are still constituted of exactly these ingredients.[37]

Let me very briefly compare these results with what we find in two other dialogues. First, the ingredients of the soul as I have presented them are closely related to the so-called *koina*, or common concepts, of the *Theaetetus.*[38] In his final argument against the thesis that knowledge is perception, Socrates lists those concepts which the soul grasps, and which are involved in making judgements about perceptible objects, but which the soul did not, and could not, acquire from perception. We meet our familiar triad of being, same, and different, already at the first step of the argument:

> Socrates: Now when it comes to a sound, a colour, first of all don't you have this very thought about both of them, that both of them *are*?
>
> Theaetetus: I do.
>
> Socrates: And that each of them *is different* from the other, and the *same* as itself.
>
> Theaetetus: Of course. (187a7–b1)
>
> Σωκράτης: περὶ δὴ φωνῆς καὶ περὶ χρόας πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸ τοῦτο περὶ ἀμφοτέρων ἦ διανοῇ, ὅτι ἀμφοτέρω ἐστόν;
>
> Θεαίτητος: ἔγωγε.
>
> Σωκράτης: οὐκοῦν καὶ ὅτι ἑκάτερον ἑκατέρου μὲν ἕτερον, ἑαυτῷ δὲ ταὐτόν;
>
> Θεαίτητος: τί μήν;

However, these three will then turn out to be only the first of the *koina* proper to the soul. The list of *koina* is longer, and includes odd and even, number, like and unlike, beautiful and ugly, good and bad. In the *Theaetetus*, although there is some emphasis on the first three, the list remains unstructured and open-ended. Moreover, we don't get any indication as to how the soul acquired the *koina* in the first place. It seems to me that this work is done jointly by the *Sophist*, the explicit sequel of the *Theaetetus*, and then by the *Timaeus*. In the *Sophist*, we understand that, and why, the trio of Being, Same, and Different indeed has priority over the other *koina*. Then, in the *Timaeus* we get an account of the way in which they are *in* the soul. We learn that the most fundamental trio are actually hard-wired in the soul at the deepest possible level: they are what constitute the very stuff of the soul.[39]

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[37] That the soul basically functions in the same way independently of whether it processes perceptual data or cognizes the Forms, see Frede 1996: 32. Frede 1996: 40-41 also emphasizes that the world soul and the individual human rational soul function in basically the same way. See also, with respect to perception, Silverman 1990. *Cf.* also Corcilius 2018: 94, speaking specifically about the world soul: 'The world soul, according to the interpretation presented here, has only knowledge by account (*logos*). All its knowledge is in that sense propositional'.

[38] For a more elaborate comparison, see Frede 1996.

[39] At *Tht.* 186a, Socrates says that the soul 'examines the being' of the *koina* by comparing them (πρὸς ἄλληλα

Then there are, in the *Timaeus*, further items from the list of *koina* which are also built into the soul, but one level up, not at the level of ingredients, but instead at the level of structure. Once he is ready with the mixture, the Demiurge gives structure to the soul according to number and proportion, involving odd and even, as well as the first items of the number series, and the three most important and most harmonious proportions. All these are not acquired by the soul, but constitute the soul. But, crucially, the steps and stages of the construction of the soul draw a clear distinction between the three structure-giving concepts and the further list of concepts and structures and relations proper to the soul which enter at a later stage.[40]

Connected to this question, it is worth noting that the picture presented here does not presuppose, but is fully compatible with, the theory of recollection.[41] To begin with, the discarnate soul can only learn anything meaningful from its encounter with the Forms if it is able to form *logoi* about them. As we have seen, for that, it already needs to be able to deploy the concepts of being, same, and different. If so, the disincarnate soul already needs to have these concepts in place even prior to its first encounter with the Forms. The soul is not a complete *tabula rasa*, or empty wax tablet, not only at embodiment, but even 'before' the encounter with the Forms.

Similarly, for the process of recollection during our incarnate life. That these concepts are deployed in recollection is trivially true in so far as we have seen that they are deployed already in the most rudimentary cognitive processes of a child. But even more specifically, according to the account of recollection we get in the *Phaedo*, the process starts with the recognition that the property instantiated in the perceptible physical particulars is *different* from the relevant Form.[42] As we read in the *Phaedo*:

> 'Consider then,' said he, 'if this is the case. We say, I take it, that there is an Equal—I don't mean a stick equal to another stick, or a stone equal to a stone, or anything else of the kind, but something *different* besides all these, the Equal itself. Should we say that there is such a thing or not?
>
> σκόπει δή, ἦ δ' ὅς, εἰ ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει. φαμέν πού τι εἶναι ἴσον, οὐ ξύλον λέγω ξύλῳ οὐδὲ λίθον λίθῳ οὐδ' ἄλλο τῶν τοιούτων οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ ταῦτα πάντα ἕτερόν τι, αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον· φῶμέν τι εἶναι ἢ μηδέν;

And a little later:

> Upon seeing that either sticks or stones or some other things were equal, wasn't it from them that we came to think of it, *different* as it is from them? Or doesn't it appear different to you? Consider it in this way as well. Don't equal stones and sticks sometimes, despite being *the same ones*, appear at one time equal, at another not? (74a9–b8)

σκοπεῖσθαι). He does not however spell out that this comparison is based on establishing samenesses and differences in *logoi*. The contrastive aspect, in terms of ἐναντιότης, is emphasized in relation to the perception of hard and soft at *Tht*. 186b. *Cf.* Corcilius 2018: 98.

[40] Would Timaeus' account of the creation of the soul cover all the *koina* of the *Theaetetus*? A case can be made that the mathematical–harmonic structure of the soul, its perfectly spherical shape, also involves the like and the unlike, as well as the beautiful and the good. But, arguably the list of the *koina* in *Theaetetus* is open, and we don't need to squeeze everything into the construction of the soul.

[41] This is one of the main upshots of Sedley's (2019) claim that there is recollection in the *Timaeus*. *Contra* Johansen 2004: 173–74.

[42] *Cf.* Bedu-Addo 1991.

> νυνδὴ ἐλέγομεν, ἢ ξύλα ἢ λίθους ἢ ἄλλα ἄττα ἰδόντες ἴσα, ἐκ τούτων ἐκεῖνο ἐνενοήσαμεν, ἕτερον ὂν τούτων; ἢ οὐχ ἕτερόν σοι φαίνεται; σκόπει δὲ καὶ τῇδε. ἆρ' οὐ λίθοι μὲν ἴσοι καὶ ξύλα ἐνίοτε ταὐτὰ ὄντα τῷ μὲν ἴσα φαίνεται, τῷ δ' οὔ;

In other words, we recognize the difference between a perceptible physical particular and the relevant Form, and we recognize it because the *same* physical entity appears different in different relations or at different times or for different perceivers. All in all, recollection could obviously not get off the ground if the soul were not already able to grasp and deploy the concepts of being, same, and different.

All this talk about concepts hardwired in our souls and structuring our thoughts may sound awfully Kantian. In a way this is the case, but in a way it isn't. Timaeus would, it seems, agree with Kant that we don't have any other possible way to represent and cognitively process the world than by grasping and deploying these concepts which are built into us and constitute the deepest structure of our rationality. Yet there is a crucial difference. Kant wants to show that we can have no guarantee that there is some pre-ordained fit between the way our thinking works, how we represent and form statements about things, on the one hand, and how things really are, on the other. We have also seen that in the *Theaetetus* we get no explanation as to why and how the *koina* are in the soul, or even what it means that they are proper to the soul. It is, moreover, merely taken for granted that they are such that the soul can successfully track reality by deploying them. In the *Theaetetus*, and indeed in other Platonic dialogues, it is a mere assumption that the soul is rational and is able to track reality successfully.

The *Timaeus* at least makes an attempt to explain why and how there could be such a fit between the cognitive apparatus of the soul and the world. There can be such a fit because the soul was providentially created by the Demiurge who understood well the structure of reality and knew also what the soul should be like to be rational and capable of understanding reality. Remarkably, the *Timaeus* is the only Platonic text in which the soul is said to be created. This fact has caused considerable headaches to Platonists like Plutarch who had to perform a series of interpretative acrobatics in order to harmonize the *Timaeus* with those Platonic dialogues in which the soul is presented as eternal. But making the soul a creation of the providential Demiurge makes, I think, perfect sense precisely because in this way we can have, if not a steadfast guarantee, then at least some well-grounded hope that the human soul is such that it can indeed access and track reality. Obviously, this solution will not satisfy Kant—for him, this is still simply a glaring case of *deus ex machina*.

Indeed, at a certain point in the *Philebus*, Socrates says to Protarchus that 'it was a gift from the gods to men' that we are able to recognize identity, similarity, and difference. As Socrates claims, '[u]nless we are able to do this for every kind of unity, similarity, sameness, and their opposite, in the way that our recent discussion has indicated, none of us will ever turn out to be any good at anything' (19b, trans. Frede), so that we are able 'to identify the sub-kinds that exist between a generic unity and its many instances'.[43] It is a vexed question how the god-given method of the *Philebus* is related to the method of dialectics as described in the *Sophist* and the *Statesman*.[44] Even if my analysis is not able to settle this question, it might at least suggest a way in which we should understand what Socrates meant when he said that 'it was a gift from the gods to men'.

But even if Timaeus' explanation of the fit between mind and world will not satisfy Kant, perhaps Socrates would be content with the answer I have tried to provide on behalf of Timaeus. So Timaeus could finally say in response to the fictional question I have started with:

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[43] Fletcher 2017: 186.

[44] Frede 1996 links the use of the *koina* of the *Theaetetus* with the method described in the *Philebus*.

‘This is, then, Socrates, my likely account. The Demiurge composed our souls of these ingredients because he is good, and therefore wanted the cosmos to be a blessedly happy god, and wanted us to have at least a hope of a happy life. And he knew that, for that, we would need to be able to do philosophy, and for philosophy we would need *logoi*, and to be able to formulate *logoi* our souls would need to be composed of precisely these twice three ingredients. If you accept my likely account, you perhaps agree, my friend, that composing the soul out of these ingredients may well have been the greatest gift the Demiurge could give us.’

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ARISTOTLE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF RULES, LAWS, AND INSTITUTIONS IN ETHICS[1]

DOROTHEA FREDE

The title of this chapter may strike both specialists and non-specialists as preposterous, albeit for quite different reasons. The non-specialists may wonder that the importance of rules and laws in Aristotle's ethics should be in need of discussion at all. For, did not Aristotle, the 'father of principles', by this very fact become the father, or at least the forefather, of all fields of study? Metaphysics, physics, biology, logic, poetics and rhetoric, and, not least of all, ethics and politics—it was Aristotle who turned them into systematic fields of study by reflecting on their principles and rules of procedure.[2] What, then, could be questionable about rules and laws in Aristotle's ethics? The specialists, by contrast, may find even the attempt presumptuous, to present in one short chapter an authoritative treatment of a topic that has been a matter of controversy among some of the most distinguished scholars in the field in recent decades. After all, the relevance of general rules in Aristotle's ethics has been a bone of contention between the so-called 'particularists' and the 'universalists' or 'generalists'. While no one denies the emphasis that Aristotle puts on rules, laws, and political institutions in his *Politics*, it is a matter of debate what place they have in his ethics, because of its focus on the particular conditions of moral actions. As Aristotle keeps repeating, a decision must conform to the so-called 'parameters of action' with respect to the particular circumstances: whether it concerns the person it ought to (*hon/hôi dei*), the way it ought to (*hôs dei*), the moment it ought to (*hote dei*), and so forth.[3] Decisions must therefore be tailored to the situation of the agent and his action. While older translations saw no problem in attributing rules to Aristotle, contemporary translators of the *Nicomachean Ethics* seem to be wary of committing him to general rules, and *a fortiori* to laws in ethics, and they therefore avoid 'rule' as a translation of *logos* or *orthos logos*. Because no one wants to present Aristotle as a rule-ethicist, most translators resort, instead, to translations such as 'account', 'reason', or 'prescription'.[4]

It is not possible to do justice to this problematic in a short paper. No attempt will be made to discuss the intricate details that underlie the different particularist positions.[5] Instead, *Part I* will work out that and why there is a real problem here, so that it becomes clear that rule-scepticism does not just concern one of those scholastic quibbles in which specialists love to engage. *Part II* will show that rule-scepticism is unfounded, because a universalist account can accommodate the particularist concerns. *Part III* will deal with the role of institutions.

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[1] An ancestor of this chapter was presented as part of a Symposium at the World Congress of Philosophy in Athens in 2013. It profited greatly from the discussion in London, from critical suggestions by Anthony Price, and from revisions of the manuscript by M. M. McCabe.

[2] Nothing hangs on the difference between 'principles' and 'rules', given that principles, in the case of actions, are rules. 'Rules' is the preferred expression here because of their affinity to laws.

[3] *EN* II 3, 1104b21–28 *et pass*.; these 'parameters' concern both actions and affections. That the formulations contain impersonal 'oughts' is lost in those translations that use 'right' instead of 'ought'.

[4] '*Orthos logos*' is rendered by 'la règle' in Gauthier and Jolif 1970, by 'right rule' in Ross' original translation of 1915. But revisions of Ross have 'account' or 'right account' (Urmson in Barnes 1985) or 'reason' and 'correct reason' (Brown 2009; Irwin 1999) or 'prescription' and 'correct prescription' (Broadie and Rowe 2002).

[5] The most influential particularist interpretation of Aristotle to this day is that of McDowell 1979, 1980, and 1996, but see also Wiggins 1980. Price 2005: 191 comments on particularism: 'This label, being applicable to somewhat different claims, rather identifies a tendency than a dogma'. Price argues for a moderate kind of particularist

I. The basis of rule-scepticism

There are several reasons that speak against assigning a major role to rules in Aristotle's ethics, reasons that seem, indeed, to favour a particularist interpretation. This discussion will confine itself to three points:

(1) There are repeated *caveats* in the text concerning precision in ethics.
(2) The focus on particular actions gives a central place to experience rather than to general knowledge.
(3) Moral education is based on habituation and training rather than on instruction.

A proper evaluation of these three points requires a closer look at the central passages in Aristotle that seem to support a particularist interpretation.

(1) It is undeniable that, at the very beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle issues a general warning against the expectation of precision in ethics (I 3, 1094b13):

> Our discussion will be adequate if it has as much clearness as the subject-matter admits of, for precision (*to akribes*) is not to be sought for alike in all discussions, any more than in all the products of the crafts. Now noble and just actions […] exhibit much variety and fluctuation, so that they may be thought to exist only by convention, not by nature. […] We must be content, then, in speaking of such subjects and with such premises to indicate the truth roughly (*pachylôs*) and in outline (*typôi*), and in speaking about things which are only for the most part true (*hôs epi to poly*), and with premises of the same kind, and to reach conclusions that are no better.[6]

That there are only 'rules of thumb' *prima facie* does not sound too off-putting. For, in natural philosophy, Aristotle also admits that many things do not happen of necessity, but only 'for the most part', so that ethics would seem to be in good company. Only mathematics and astronomy do not admit exceptions to the rules but require strict necessity. 'Advocates of rules' might, therefore, not feel overly disturbed by this initial *caveat*. But Aristotle repeats his warning several times, with increasing urgency.[7] By far the most outspoken warning against general rules comes at the beginning of book II (2, 1104a3–10):

> Matters of conduct and questions of what is good for us have no fixity, any more than matters of health. The general account (*tou katholou logou*) being of this nature, the account of particular cases (*tôn kath' hekasta logos*) is yet more lacking in exactness,

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interpretation that is germane to this chapter's general line of argument. However, he largely focuses on the question of the 'grand end view', *i.e.* the overall view of happiness, which will be bypassed here, and he explains at length the 'mechanism' assumed by Aristotle for decision-making. I assume, without argument, that the ends are determined by the occasion (*EN* II 2, 1104a5–10; on the 'grand end-view', see the criticism in Broadie 1991: 198–202). A judicious discussion of the need of a general view of the good life is provided by Vogt 2017 and, from a different angle, by Leunissen 2017.

[6] The translation is that of Ross with revisions by Brown 2009.

[7] *Cf.* I 7, 1098a25–32: 'We must […] not look for precision in all things alike, but in each class of things such precision as accords with the subject matter, […] for the carpenter and the geometer investigate the right angle in different ways, the former does so in so far as the right angle is useful for his work […]'.

> for they do not fall under any art (*technê*) or precept (*parangelia*),[8] but the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion, as it happens also in medicine or navigation.

And then Aristotle adds that, given this predicament, 'we must give what help we can' (1104a10–11). Thus, ethics, in Aristotle's eyes, seems to be a field that relies heavily on the individual's aptitude in order to make up for the fact that there are no strict general rules, so that decisions are up to the individual agent's assessment.[9]

(2) This picture seems to accord well with the attention that is given to the way that moral decisions are made and also to the fact that particular circumstances determine what is right and wrong about them. For Aristotle pays quite some attention to deliberation and choice, and both are clearly geared to particular ends and aims. Furthermore, what is right and wrong in actions depends on who the agent and the recipient are, as well as on the particular circumstances of the action. Particular actions are determined (a) by the agent's view about the good that is to be wished for in a given situation, and (b) by his or her calculation of the ways and means that are necessary and appropriate to bring about that wished-for aim. Decision, *proairesis*, is always concerned with the particular circumstances of the ensuing action. Personal discretion is therefore necessary with respect to the aforementioned 'parameters of action and affection', and such discretion requires experience rather than general rules. Aristotle emphasizes this aspect on several occasions when he asserts that understanding of particulars is more important than that of the universal conditions (VI 7, 1141b14–21): 'Nor is practical reason concerned with universals only—it must recognize the particulars; for it is practical, and practice is concerned with particulars'. To illustrate this, Aristotle does not use examples taken from moral contexts here but, rather, examples taken from medicine:

> This is why some who do not have universal knowledge but have experience are more effective than those who do have universal knowledge but don't have experience. For if a man knew that light meats are digestible and wholesome, but did not know which sorts of meat are light, he would not produce health, but the man who knows that chicken is wholesome is more likely to produce health. Now practical reason is concerned with action; therefore one should have both kinds of knowledge, or the particular one rather than the universal.

In the following chapter Aristotle adds the information that, because practical wisdom is concerned with particulars, young people can excel in mathematics but they cannot be practically intelligent (VI 8, 1142a15): 'but a young person has no experience, for it is length of time that gives experience. It is because the objects of mathematics exist by abstraction, while the first principles of these other subjects come from experience'.

(3) If these considerations speak for a particularist interpretation, by far the most important argument in its favour seems to be contained in Aristotle's explanation of the acquisition of the virtues of character. For that acquisition, he famously says, is not a matter of instruction, as in theoretical science, but of habituation and practice. That is what the name 'ethical virtue' signifies, as witnessed by its etymological derivation—from *ethos* with the short '*epsilon*'

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[8] '*Parangelia'* is often used to designate military orders.

[9] Particularists do not deny the existence of rules and laws in Aristotle, but they treat such passages as a confirmation that he does not assign to them any important function.

rather than with the long '*êta*' (II 1, 1103b18f.).[10] Habituation is assigned the crucial role in the search for the nature of virtue of character:

> It is from the same causes and by the same means that every virtue is both produced and destroyed, and similarly every art, for it is from playing the kithara that both good and bad kithara-players are produced. And the corresponding statement is true of house-builders and of all the rest; men will be good and bad builders as a result of building well or badly. […] This, then, is the case with virtues also: by doing the acts that we do in our transactions with other men we become just or unjust, and by doing the acts that we do in the presence of danger, and by being habituated to feeling fear or confidence, we become brave or cowardly. The same is true of appetites and anger; for some men become moderate and good-tempered, others self-indulgent and irascible, by behaving one way or the other in the appropriate circumstances.
>
> (II 1, 1103b6–21)

This depiction of the acquisition of character-traits does indeed, at least *prima facie*, speak for the assumption that the formation of the agent's personality leaves most, if not all, to repetitions of the appropriate actions under particular circumstances. In the end, the individual agent will have acquired not just the habit of acting in a certain way under different particular conditions, but also of liking or disliking acting in the appropriate way. The result of such habituation will be a kind of 'fine tuning' of the individual's moral sentiments. The morally well-formed mature individual will thereby have acquired a moral taste that allows him or her to make the right choice in the given circumstances. Moral experience, thus, turns out not only to be a training in coping with different particular situations in the right way but also presupposes a 'sentimental education' that provides the motivation to act properly because the agent aims to bring about a certain end in a certain way, and to avoid doing the opposite. Under normal circumstances, such a person will be able to make the right decisions, because she is, by disposition and habit, sufficiently attuned to cope with such situations in the right way, without any need to resort to rules or laws.

This concludes the, admittedly rough, summary of the main points of argument that seem to favour a particularist interpretation of Aristotle's ethics and to leave little or no room for general rules and standards, let alone for laws and institutions. The particularists do not deny the existence of general rules and laws but they deny that they are of use when it comes to decision-making. An implicit appropriation of the proper standards and rules by the moral agent is all that is required for moral actions. The—necessarily brief—rejoinders to this claim will not dispute that there is something right about the particularist view concerning all three points; they do, however, aim to show that the particularist arguments do not tell the whole story, and that the whole story is significantly different from the one-sided picture that has just been drawn on all three counts.

II. The reasons against rule-scepticism

(1) The question of precision can be dealt with briefly. The *caveat* concerning precision comes in immediately after Aristotle has introduced, with quite some fanfare, political science as the 'master science of life' (I 2, 1094a25): 'It would seem to belong to the most authoritative

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[10] The etymological explanation is mentioned also in *EE* II 1, 1220a38–b3; it goes back to Plato *Leg*. 792e.

(*kyriôtatê*) and that which is most truly the "most architectonic science" (*architektonikê*)'. It is treated as the 'master science' of life on two counts. First, it sets up the target for human life so that human beings know what to aim for. Second, it provides laws that regulate the citizens' lives in a thorough fashion (1094a26–b7):

> For it ordains which of the disciplines should be acquired in a state/city (*polis*), and which class of citizens should learn and up to what point they should learn them, […] and since, again, it legislates (*nomothetein*) as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, the end of this science must include those of the others, so that this end must be *the* human good. For even if the end is the same for a single man and for a state, that of the state seems something greater and more complete, and though it is worthwhile to attain the end merely for one person, it is fine and more god-like to attain it for a nation or for city-states. These, then are the ends at which our inquiry aims, since it is political science, in one sense of that term.

This piece of text has been quoted in full, because it suggests that the master-science of life determines, by legislation, all aspects of the life of the citizens.[11] Because Aristotle does not, at this point, indicate how detailed such legislation is supposed to be, the legislation may consist of general instructions concerning life in the community. But this is, in a way, contradicted by the fact that this very master-science is immediately afterwards subjected to the *caveat* with respect to its precision: it can work only 'roughly and in outline', because of life's many vagaries (I 3, 1094b16–19): 'But goods exhibit that kind of fluctuation because they bring harm to many people; for before now people have been undone by reason of their wealth, and others by reason of their courage'. The kind of legislation that Aristotle has in mind concerns, then, particular actions that fall into the domain of specific virtues of character, such as courage, liberality, or magnanimity.[12] As the discussion of universal justice in book V shows, Aristotle's political science is, in the moral sense, much more demanding than the kind of justice that was codified by the laws of a Greek polis. For the polis will require acts of all types of virtues of character from its citizens.[13] If we go by Aristotle's catalogue of virtues in *EN* III–V, the citizens do not just have to display courage when on military duty, as well as justice, liberality and where applicable, magnificence, both in public and in private, but also equanimity, friendliness, truthfulness, and even ready wit in everyday life.[14]

That the reference to a master-science at the beginning of the *EN* is no mere window-dressing—a glorious start that is then dropped—is witnessed by the fact that Aristotle occasionally refers to the master-scientist, to political science, and, most of all, to the legislator, throughout the *EN*.[15] That this emphasis on a master-science and legislation at the beginning has not much impressed the particularists must be due to the fact that, in his depiction of the good life and its conditions, Aristotle seems to focus almost exclusively on the individual. It is the individual who is supposed to live the life of an *autarkous* person with friends, family, and fellow citizens.[16] It is the individual's active life that is the happy life if it is lived in full deployment of his/her best abilities. And the virtues, both the virtues of character and the virtues of reason, are discussed extensively as the conditions that constitute such a good individual life.

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[11] Barnes 1980 (2006) therefore regards Aristotle's regimentations as totalitarian.

[12] Although this point cannot be argued for in detail here, it should be pointed out—against a frequently made erroneous assumption—that the *caveat* does not concerns Aristotle's principle of ethics themselves, but only the rules and laws of conduct determined by the master-science of life. Similar conditions apply to sublunary physics: its principles and fundamental concepts are true and unchangeable, although particular events can deviate from the regular way. The reasons for the imprecision in ethical and physical matters differ, however. In physics, exceptions to the rule are due to accidental interferences by external factors, in ethics exceptions are attributable human deliberate behaviour.

[13] On the question of the completeness of the virtues of character *cf.* Frede 2014.

[14] For further elaboration and discussion of the view that for Aristotle, courageous action proper is limited to (certain kinds of) action in battle, see Frede 2014: 94–97.

[15] The 'architectonic science' is mentioned in the distinction between different kinds of *phronêsis* in VI 8 1141b22–

If this turn to the individual seems to speak against the importance of general rules, it should be kept in mind that the same conditions apply to all mature human beings: they are supposed to develop and to make use of those abilities that characterize human nature, abilities that require the same kind of training to develop whether in respect of character or rationality. There are laws and standards that regulate the good life of the community, and they also regulate the good life of the individual, so that their moral and intellectual upbringing consists in getting to know these rules and standards. That this is indeed so comes to the fore in the detailed discussion of the virtues in the *EN*. As is only to be expected, it is most prominent in the discussion of justice. For justice comes in two forms. There is universal justice, which requires that the citizens act virtuously in compliance with the laws of the city.[17] And there is particular justice, which requires the citizens to comply with the standards of distributive and corrective justice. To be sure, Aristotle is aware of possible shortcomings of the laws, in response to which he introduces the conception of equity as a corrective of the laws' inevitable defects, which are due to their general character being unable to fit all particular cases. But the need for equity does not undermine the authority of the laws as such: equity is just a corrective to make the laws applicable to those cases that are either not or not adequately covered by the letter of the laws (V 10).

That the rules of the master-science apply only 'roughly and in outline' should therefore come as no surprise. As we all know, not all cases are alike, so that there are always exceptions to the rules. And that seems to be all that Aristotle has in mind when he talks about the fact that good and noble actions are subject to much fluctuation, so that 'some persons have been undone by reason of their wealth and others by reason of their courage' (1094b18f.). These fluctuations are actually not very alarming. Wealth can, no doubt, be very dangerous under certain circumstances: it can act as a temptation either to its possessor, so that he comes to wrack and ruin, or it may tempt other people to plot against him—and similar conditions apply in the case of courage. But this does not mean that there are no general rules concerning how to handle one's wealth, or how to behave in a courageous way. In fact, Aristotle's detailed discussions of courage and liberality in his depiction of the particular virtues seem designed to provide at least the basis for such rules and standards, even though he does not give any concrete examples of rules of behaviour.

In fact, my plea for particularism in *Part I* of this chapter had to proceed in a quite selective way. For, at the same time that Aristotle seems to dispute the existence of general rules, he also affirms them. For when he claims that 'matters concerned with conduct and questions of what is good for us have no fixity', he also talks about general rules, as the text quoted earlier shows:

29, and again at the beginning of the discussion of pleasure in VII 11, 1152b1–3. But legislation and the legislator are referred to throughout the text of the *EN*. This topic is continued in the *Politics*, for which see Horn 2013: 223–46.

[16] *Cf. EN* I 7, 1097b6–11.

[17] On the importance of the laws, *cf.* Striker 2006; Lee 2014.

> The general account (*ho tou katholou logos*) being of this nature, the account of particular cases (*ho peri tôn kath' hekasta logos*) is yet more lacking in exactness; for they do not fall under any art or precept, but the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the occasion.
>
> (II 2, 1104a5–8)

The *caveat* merely concerns the applicability of those general rules. This distinction is relevant with respect to the disciplines Aristotle refers to here as his paradigms: to medicine and navigation. Of course, there are rules that captains are taught in navigation-school, just as there are rules that doctors are taught in medical school. The point is just that they have to be adjusted to the particular circumstances, sometimes quite unusual ones, and that for those unusual circumstances there are neither rules nor precepts.[18] Furthermore, as Aristotle asserts, different disciplines have more or less strict rules. Thus there are no uncertainties concerning reading and writing, for the lucky Greeks, while medicine, property-management and navigation contain lots of uncertainties, because the individual conditions vary so much (III 3, 1112b1–8).

Unfortunately, Aristotle does not mention general rules often in the *EN*, and where he gives examples, they are typically taken from disciplines other than ethics, most of all from medicine and dietetics: heavy water is unhealthy; light meat is good for digestion; sweets are to be avoided; rest and abstention from food are good for feverish persons. Concerning moral rules there are just bare hints. Thus Aristotle mentions that one ought, in general, to pay one's debts, but when it is a question of paying a ransom for one's own father then he should be given preference to one's creditor (IX 2, 1165a3). That Aristotle seems to be wary of providing examples of moral rules should come as no surprise. Especially in ethics, general rules immediately seem to call for qualifications,[19] while the medical examples of a general character are accepted without demur.

Nevertheless, Aristotle clearly presupposes that the morally well-brought up person will have knowledge of general rules, of what is to be done and what is to be avoided, of what is good and what is bad. Thus, in the discussion of the voluntary and involuntary, he insists that while ignorance of certain particular circumstances of an action counts as an excuse, ignorance of the universal principles and laws does not (III 1, 1110b31–33; 5, 1113b30–114a3). Every mature grown-up is supposed to know those rules and laws. The maxim *ignorantia legis non excusat* was as valid then as it is nowadays. And although Aristotle sometimes emphasizes the importance of experience of particulars, he equally emphasizes the importance of knowledge of the universal—in fact, he regards it as indispensable. If practical reason—*phronêsis*—is concerned with the particulars, and if empirical knowledge can be superior in certain cases, it is, nevertheless, important to combine the ability to make special adjustments with general knowledge:

> […] though some particular detail may be well looked after by an unscientific person, if he has studied accurately in the light of experience of what happens in each case, […] none the less will it be agreed that if a man wishes to become master of an art or science he must go to the universal, and come to know it as well as possible.
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> (X 9, 1180b13–23)

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[18] Particularists do not, as a whole, deny the existence of general rules but rather their relevance and importance for decision-making.

[19] General injunctions concerning lying, killing, or the return of property, are liable to provoke objections to their applicability under all circumstances (*cf.* Plato, *Rep.* 331b–d).

Although a discussion of the concept of *akrasia* would take us too far afield here, it should be kept in mind that Aristotle's explanation of this interesting phenomenon presupposes the existence and knowledge of general rules: The acratic person in principle knows and accepts the general rules but does not apply them in particular cases because of an interference by strong appetites (VII 3), an interference that the enkratic person is able to resist. Without general rules there would be neither *akrasia* nor *enkrateia* as they are conceived of by Aristotle.

(2) If rules play such an important role, why, then, does Aristotle in the discussion of actions, which are, after all, the main concern of ethics, pay so much attention to the particulars that 'particularists' seem to have a point when they deny, if not the existence, the importance of general rules? The point is indeed that moral actions—*praxeis*—do concern the particular circumstances. And the virtues of character as well as of practical reason are designed to make the agents capable of coping with those circumstances. That is what habituation is to make them fit for, and what deliberation and decisions are all about. Actions are not done in an empty space of abstract principles: they are called for in particular situations. Therefore Aristotle is—by his standards—fairly explicit as to how actions come about.

A brief sketch has to suffice here. First there is the wish for some particular good or end in a given situation. That wish in turn is determined by what appears good to the agent, and that impression depends on his or her character (*EN* III 4). Once the end is fixed, the agent deliberates concerning how to achieve that wished-for end. In other words, the deliberation concerns the appropriate ways and means by which to bring about that particular end.[20] And once deliberation reaches the point at which the agent is able to act, the decision is made (III 3).

This all sounds like plain sailing. The question is just: what determines a person's wishes—and also her choice of the means? Is it particular likes and dislikes, or is it general principles—or both? This is a hard question to answer, for Aristotle is quite reticent in this respect. But I do want to opt for 'both' and to explain briefly what speaks for that assumption. Of course, a person in a particular situation will make up her mind about a particular good to aim for. Let us say, a friend in need asks me for assistance. If I have a generous character, I will wish to help that friend. One does help one's friends in need; that is the general maxim that determines my wish and deliberation from the start. But the decision concerns this particular case, *i.e.* the decision to help *this* friend, not just friends in general. And the particular circumstances determine my deliberation: whether to give money, how much money to give, in what way to give it, and so on. That deliberation also depends on the particular circumstances: who the friend is—never give money to a gambler or to an alcoholic—how to give it so as not to appear tactless, *etc*. Furthermore, there is the question of whether I can supply money right away or have to borrow it myself, so that I will have to insist on an early return, *etc*. All these considerations Aristotle sums up under the so-called 'parameters of action' that he repeats time and again like a mantra in the discussion of the different virtues of character: to the person *one ought*, in the way *one ought*, to the degree *one ought*, at the time *one ought*, *etc.* (II 3, 1104b25–28; 5, 1106b21–28 *et pass.*).

How are these 'oughts' determined? Again, I think that there are general standards of appropriateness *plus* the need to make adjustments for the particular circumstances. For, as happens often in life, no two cases are exactly alike. Thus, giving £200 to one person may be stingy, but over-generous to another. In routine cases, one may follow rules of thumb and act without further reflection; in tricky cases one may have to do a lot of calibrating the pros and cons of acting in one way rather than another. And that is why Aristotle insists so much on practice and experience, for it is necessary to learn how to cope with that wide spectrum of possibilities. But the need to make adjustments to the particular circumstances and the fact that unusual circumstances require unusual actions does not imply that such actions are not justifiable in general terms. In fact we expect that all morally well-brought-up people will be able to agree that and why a particular decision is right or wrong, once they know the particular circumstances.

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[20] Against the assumption by some scholars that the means are morally neutral, it has to be pointed out that the parameters of action and affection also concern the deliberation concerning the means and that Aristotle at one point emphasizes that these means should not only be as easy but also as fine as possible (*EN* III 3, 1112b17: *kallista*).

Aristotle unfortunately avoids casuistry most of the time, so we have to make a lot of the few examples he gives. Most prominent is his example of an action that he regards as a mixture between a voluntary and an involuntary action, that of the captain who throws the cargo overboard in a storm in order to save his ship (III 1, 1110a8–11). There may be no fixed rule about when, precisely, one should act in that way. But if the captain is right about acting in that particular situation then he should not only be able to justify his act in a naval court but the same justification will apply to captains if they find themselves in exactly the same situation. If such matters were to depend on the individual's intuitions or feelings alone, then it would make no sense to say that s/he acts 'as one should', 'when one should', 'how one should', *etc*. That this is often overlooked is due to the third point that needs to be addressed, namely the fact that Aristotle attributes moral education to habituation.

(3) *Prima facie* it may seem that moral education through habituation is meant to instil certain modes of feeling and behaviour in the individual in such a way that the agent can dispense with general rules and standards. For the very idea of acquiring one's character by practice seems to suggest that the ways of acting and feeling will become 'second nature'[21] so that the person does not need to reflect on general rules and standards. Instead, she will be guided by her well-trained habits and feelings to get things right. Moreover, the fact that Aristotle contrasts scientific education *via* instruction, and moral education *via* habituation (II 1, 1103a14–18) would suggest that it is indeed the adoption of habits, including intellectual habits, that determine one's decisions. Particularists do not claim that we can dispense with all thought. That could apply only to habits such as table-manners, touch-typing, riding a bicycle, or swimming, habits that, once acquired, require no thought. Moral decisions do require both feelings and thought, but the feelings and thoughts are supposedly fine-tuned to the different situations so that general rules and standards are neither necessary nor useful.

A brief justification must suffice for rejecting these claims. It concerns the fact that Aristotle compares the acquisition of moral dispositions, like that of justice or moderation, with that of two rather demanding arts: *i.e.* with playing the kithara and house-building (II 1, 1103b6–12). He does not elucidate this comparison in detail, but the point he makes is very simple: practicing well turns you into a good kithara-player, practicing badly turns you into a bad one; and the same condition applies to house-building. But neither of these two arts is acquired by mere repetition or drill. Of course, architecture in Aristotle's time did not require as much mathematics as students have to master nowadays. But it does require quite some general knowledge, including mathematical precision, if the houses are not to collapse. Playing the kithara was equally demanding.[22] In antiquity a musician had to master the rather complicated harmonic systems. To be born with perfect pitch certainly helps, but it is not sufficient on its own: even in order to tune one's instrument one has to know what chords belong to the Dorian, the Lydian, or the Mixolydian mode, *etc*. Of course, practice is needed—one has to get it into one's ears and into one's fingers. Studying Aristoxenus' *Harmonica* alone will not do. But music is a skill that presupposed a lot of general knowledge as well as detailed know-how. Was Aristotle aware of all the complicated ins and outs of music? Not only was singing to the accompaniment of the lyre or the kithara part of the education of every upper-class youth, but Aristotle's design of the education of the citizens at the end of the *Politics* shows that he was quite versed in the ins and outs of Greek music.[23] And he does not treat it as a skill that is acquired by habituation only.

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[21] *Cf. EN* VII 10, 1152a29–33.

[22] In *Pol*. VIII 6, 1341a8–19 the kithara is banished from the education of children as too 'technical'.

Given this background, it should come as no surprise that Aristotle does mention instruction in his discussion of the training of one's moral capacities (*EN* II 1, 1103b12–14: '[…] men will be good or bad builders as a result of building well or badly. For if this were not so, there would have been no need of a teacher, *didaxontos*). And in that connection Aristotle once again refers to the legislators: in order to make the citizens adopt the right habits by practice they issue the appropriate laws—and good politicians get the laws right, while bad politicians get them wrong (1103b2–6). Now, what do the laws have to do with habituation? They set the standards of what is right and what is wrong about human activities—of what is just, what is unjust, what is courageous, what is cowardly, and so on.

In short, moral practice does not consist in the adoption of mere habits; it also presupposes the adoption of the right standards, and in a conscious way. For 'habituation' does not work by the mere imitation of the behaviour of others, like in a dumb-show. Apart from following role-models it must also include explanations and justifications: in order to act justly you have to know what it is to be just, and what distinguishes a particular just action from a particular unjust action. Such learning is required from early on: children are told that something is right or wrong and why it is so—that is what praise and blame are all about. Moral approval and disapproval are not confined to clapping and booing. That the acquisition of virtues also requires practice, and cannot rely on discussion and instruction only, is due to the need to engage in *action* oneself: one has to be in a given situation in order to learn how to make particular decisions. Reading a book will not do. For, and this point deserves special emphasis, Aristotle thinks that only habituation by practice makes a person *like* acting in a certain way. Again, this is not the result of sheer repetition but, rather, the realization of achievement. The necessary conditions for taking pleasure in a type of activity are at least two: the realization of one's ability to perform the activity well and the conviction that it is worthwhile (*kalon*). The appreciation of an action's worthwhileness is the decisive factor in moral concerns, just as it is in other activities as well. For there are lots of things we have learned to do by daily practice that do not give us the faintest feeling of pleasure or satisfaction, because we regard them as necessary but not as 'fine'.

How does one learn to appreciate what is fine? The example of kithara-playing is instructive about that point, too: in acquiring that skill one also learns to appreciate music for its own sake, and not just because one is good at its exercise. The same is true of architecture and of all other disciplines with valued ends that the Greeks would call '*kala*'. In the case of moral actions, this means that one learns to appreciate the role that these actions play in human life—in one's own life as well as in that of the community. This is the crucial point, it seems, and while that point has not been missed by certain commentators, it does seem not to have received the acknowledgement it deserves.[24] To acquire that kind of 'moral taste' takes time and experience. But once you have acquired that appreciation you will enjoy doing that kind of activity for its own sake. This includes activities that do not serve one's self-interest. Justice, as Aristotle affirms, is 'the other man's good' (V 1, 1130a3: *allotrion agathon*). One has to enjoy doing just acts in order to do them not only voluntarily but readily. And while many of us may seem to be born with a natural sense of fairness, this is not so in all cases. It takes not only habituation but also the acquisition of the right standards. For you have to be right about what makes a certain action just. It is for this reason that right moral action requires both the virtues of character, the right emotional attitude towards acting and being acted on a certain way, and practical reason, the right judgment of what is the right and the wrong way to act in a given situation. As Aristotle has it, the two are inseparable, and they are acquired in tandem. As human beings mature, both their emotive and their rational capacities develop together.[25]

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[23] Aristotle gets into a quite elaborate discussion of the effects of the different modes and ends up with a critique of the modes that were permitted and banished by Plato (*Pol*. VIII 7).

III. The importance of institutions

The inclusion of institutions, besides rules and laws, requires some justification. First, something needs to be said about the meaning of 'institution', for there is no corresponding Greek term that immediately comes to mind. The concept is used, nowadays, in a variety of senses that are concerned with the structure or mechanisms of the social order but that are not confined to formally or legally defined organizations. Institutions can be public or private, official or unofficial, with or without charter or statutes. The meaning that is presupposed here is narrower than this wide use of 'institution'. It concerns not the overall organization of the state, but the political offices or functions, which are the citizens' tasks in maintaining public order, the tasks that Aristotle defines as '*archai*', as offices, in the *Politics*.[26]

Second, the inclusion of the discussion of institutions in Aristotle's ethics requires an explanation. For the discussion of offices is confined to the *Politics*. Aristotle gives detailed descriptions there of the different kinds of offices and functions that are necessary for the organization of a state and treats them as essential for the life of a prospering community. Most significantly, he distinguishes between three 'powers': (i) deliberative/legislative, (ii) judicial, and (iii) executive = magistrates/particular offices (III 1; IV 14–16). He does not, of course, recommend a separation of powers in the modern sense but, rather, a division of functions. For, although Aristotle does not forbid the same people from participating in all three functions, he is aware of the fact that the corresponding activities differ in kind, and he recommends assigning different functions to different office-holders, at least in communities where that is possible (15, 1299a34–b9). Furthermore, the *archai* also include the 'unlimited' offices (*aoristoi archai*) of the jury in court and the members of the public assembly, so that participation in office virtually includes all citizens.

The different magistracies are introduced in *Pol.* IV 15, 1299a15–1300a8 and elaborated on in VI 7–8, 1321a5–1323a10.[27] In these passages, Aristotle distinguishes between offices that are merely necessary (*anankaia*) for the maintenance of life in a community and those that serve good order and decency, so that a state cannot be well-governed without them (VI 8, 1321b6–9). The offices he regards as essential in his own ideal city are enumerated, in a rough summary, in VII 15.

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[24] Habituation does not lead to automatic behaviour, but rather to the acquisition of judgment and taste.

[25] This point is made, albeit in a rather brief way, in the discussion of the necessary connection between the virtues of character and practical reason in *EN* VI 2; 12, 1144a6–11; 13, 1144b30–32 *et pass*.

[26] *Cf. Pol.* III 1, 1274b38: 'The constitution is the order (*taxis*) of the inhabitants of the state'. Given that he limits citizenship to those who have the right to participate in government, that order determines the 'institutions'; (*Pol.* III 1, 1275a19–23): 'The citizen whom we are seeking to define is a citizen in the strictest sense […] and his special characteristic is that he shares in the administration of justice and in offices (*archai*)'. A brief and concise overview of the organization of the Greek city-state is provided by Hansen 2006.

While no-one can, thus, deny the importance of institutions in Aristotle's politics, there is, *prima facie*, little evidence that they play a significant role in his ethics. And even if there are good reasons for treating politics as the continuation of ethics, as part of the 'philosophy of human affairs', this fact does not *per se* make institutions an important part of his ethics. There is no mention of offices or political functions in the discussion of the virtues of character.[28] The term *archê* is never used in the *EN* (or in the *EE*) in the sense of 'office' but only in that of 'principle' or 'beginning'. To be sure, the conception of justice, as depicted in book V, presupposes that the citizens owe a certain behaviour to the state and to each other, and the office of the judge is mentioned in the discussion of retributive justice (*EN* V 4, 1132a20–32). But Aristotle is concerned there with the restitution of injuries and not with the institution of jurisdiction as such.[29]

If I claim that institutions are important in Aristotle's ethics, it is, rather, because he refers to the citizens' functions and duties at least indirectly in the discussion of some of the virtues of character other than that of justice. For some of the virtues are essential for the common good. This applies not only to courage, the readiness to lose one's life for the safety of the fatherland, which requires military functions of all kinds, but also to magnificence, to high-mindedness, and to the love of honour. For, as I want to argue, it is the political background that explains Aristotle's otherwise quite peculiar separation of a liberality (*eleutheria*) that concerns smaller amounts of money from a magnificence (*megaloprepeia*) that concerns large expenses (*EN* IV 1 and 2), as well as the separation of a high-mindedness (*megalopsychia*) that concerns high honours from an ambition (*philotimia*) that concerns ordinary honours (IV 3 and 4).

Reflection on the functions of those virtues in the city shows that these subdivisions are neither the result of an undue fastidiousness on Aristotle's side nor of a wish to extend his catalogue of virtues as far as possible. He has important distinctions in mind. For, while liberality concerns the give and take between private persons, magnificence concerns the public and there is no mutuality involved in it. Large expenditures on behalf of the city were not only expected from wealthy citizens, but they were sometimes imposed on them, such as the equipping of a trireme, the staging of a drama-production, the heading of an embassy, the erection of buildings like temples, sanctuaries, *etc*. Such virtuous actions were not confined to the provision of the funds for those public purposes, they also required the carrying out of the respective work. And as Aristotle's depiction of the right mean between the vices of vulgarity and niggardliness shows, important aspects of public life depended on the way these obligations were fulfilled.

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[27] The second part of the *Athenaiôn Politeia* is largely dedicated to the offices in Athens during Aristotle's lifetime. Although Aristotle is not regarded as the author of this text, it must be the work of a member of his school and part of the 'collection of laws and constitutions' referred to in *EN* X 9, 1181b7 (*cf.* Diogenes Laertius 5.27.1: 'The Constitutions of 158 Cities').

[28] The only exception is the comparison of the relationships between the members of the family with those between the citizens in the discussion of friendship in Book VIII 9–12.

[29] *Cf. EN* V 4.

Even more important for the well-being of a city were the functions of *megalopsychia*, the virtue that aims for high honours,[30] and that of ordinary ambitiousness, *philotimia*, the virtue that aims for plain honours (*EN* IV 3 and 4). It is not immediately obvious that Aristotle has offices in mind, in the case of both kinds of virtues, since he does not use that particular term. Thus, especially in the depiction of *megalopsychia*, the aims of the great-hearted man remain somewhat mysterious, for Aristotle confines himself to mere indications concerning the actions of the *megalopsychos*: he aims for 'great things' (*megala*) and for the 'noblest deeds'. It is an important precondition of that virtue that the person is not only worthy of those great deeds but that he has the right estimate of his worth. Because Aristotle does not specify the kinds of deeds he has in mind but instead becomes ensconced in an extensive description of the behaviour of the great man, some interpreters have regarded the great-minded man as Aristotle's paragon of all virtues of character, while others have reacted to the specification of that person's behaviour with either ridicule or disgust.[31]

What Aristotle does not say, but should have said, is that the great-minded person is the statesman. That his 'great deeds' may also involve great danger is explained by the fact that the famous statesmen of the golden age and beyond were at the same time also military commanders. Once we realize that Aristotle has the *stratêgoi* in mind, the fact that he requires the right estimate of one's worth as a condition of that virtue loses its strangeness. Not everyone should aim to become a *stratêgos* or harbour similar ambitions. Indeed, a great deal of harm accrued to Greek cities from the ineptness of their leaders, as well as from their over-ambitiousness. If the statesman is Aristotle's target, that fact also explains the concern for dignity and the kind of aloofness he assigns to the great-minded man: such behaviour is necessary for a person in that position, and it seems no accident that Aristotle's depiction of the behaviour of the *megalopsychos* in public reminds one of Thucydides' portrait of Pericles.[32]

The fact that high honours are limited to persons worthy of statesmanship and military command, explains, then, why the aim for ordinary honours is treated as the subject of a separate virtue. The ordinary honours do not just concern public recognition, awards, *etc.*, but the ordinary offices in the city. Again, Aristotle does not point this out, but he must have counted on his contemporaries' understanding of what kind of honours, *timia*, he has in mind. For the city's organization depended on the citizens' readiness to assume a host of public offices: to act as supervisors of the state of the roads, of the walls, of the wells, of the buildings, of the market; in short, to take care of all the functions that Aristotle enumerates in his *Politics* and describes in detail in the *Athenaion Politeia*. And the virtue of *philotimia* guarantees that the magistrates will fulfil their functions for the right reason: for the public good rather than for gain, personal reputation, or power.

That Aristotle pays so much attention to 'honour' as the incentive to engage in public works has a simple reason: there was no professional administration in Greek city-states; there was, in fact, not even a police in the polis. All functions were taken care of by amateurs, so to speak, who worked without pay, for the sake of honour only. This fact is usually taken for granted, but, in the evaluation of Aristotle's discussion of those virtues that are concerned with high and ordinary honours, it deserves special notice that these virtues aim at the fulfilment of duties that are essential for the maintenance of public order.[33]

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[30] That this is the main function of this virtue gets lost in translations of '*megalopsychia*' by 'pride', as in Ross, or 'greatness of soul', as in Broadie and Rowe. '*Megaloprepeia*' = magnificence or munificence, the ability and willingness to shoulder public expenses, is also a virtue concerned with the common good (*EN* IV 3), but Aristotle treats it, rather, as a matter of financial worth and taste.

[31] *Cf.* Stewart's remarks on IV 3, 1125a12–16; Hardie 1968: 119.

[32] Thucydides' *Histories* II 65; *cf.* Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* 5.1–3.

This concern also explains why Aristotle was not a friend of the democratic system, especially of electing all lower officers by lot, *i.e.* all offices with the exception of the *strategoi* and the treasurers. For election by lot was designed to avoid the accumulation of competence and of the corresponding power, as were the short terms of all offices and the restriction of many of them to a single term. If Aristotle was an 'anti-democrat', it was not because he was a friend of oligarchic systems, as is often claimed.[34] Instead, he favoured an 'aristocracy of experts' whose task was to take care of the administration of the city so as to maintain public peace and order and the means of defence against aggression from outside.[35]

This is not the occasion for deeper reflections on the indispensability of the professional administration in modern states. But for all our complaints about the cumbersomeness of bureaucracy, we must realize that public order essentially depends on the functioning of an able administration. Without the continued work of the administration, every change of government would result in anarchy. No such continuity of a trained administration existed in the Greek polis, and this is one of the reasons why *stasis* is treated as such a threat by both historians and philosophers. For stasis did not just mean the upset of the government and violence among the citizens, it also meant the discontinuation of all public order.

Aristotle does not seek the remedy for what he regarded as the deficiencies of the existing political systems in a professionalization of the administrators. Instead, he seeks it in the moral education of the citizens. He enjoins, therefore, that education should be a public rather than a private concern and that it should be the same for all citizens (*EN* X 9, *Pol.* VII 13, 1332a39–b11 *et pass.*). 'For all citizens' does not mean for all inhabitants but only for those that have the time and education to profit from such an education and to engage in politics. That is why he excludes from citizenship the lower class that has to live by their labour (*Pol.* III 4 and 5; VII 8). This exclusion applies to the 'unlimited offices' of the jurors in court, as well as to the members of the council and of the public assembly.[36]

If Aristotle thinks of any sort of 'professionalization' of public offices, it concerns that of the legislators who are to provide for the public moral education. But their training in legislation is not to come from yet to be founded law-schools but, rather, from Aristotle's philosophical instructions. His legislators are to benefit from his investigations of the principles of ethics and politics, which he sums up in the *EN* under the title of 'the philosophy of human affairs' (X 9, 1181a23–b23). As he explains there, future legislators need, in addition, to be prepared for their profession by a thorough study of the existing cities, their laws and institutions, so that they understand what works well and what works poorly in different constitutions. Ultimately, this study should lead them to an understanding of what the ideal form of constitution is that they should aim for by the appropriate laws. Aristotle does not aim for philosopher-kings, but for philosophically educated legislators.

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[33] Because all offices were 'honorary' functions, it was particularly important, as Aristotle sees it, that the city should not be too large: for such rule it is necessary that the citizens know each other. *Pol.* VIII 4, 1326b12–19: 'A ruler's task is to issue orders and to decide. But in order to decide lawsuits and distribute offices on the basis of merit, each citizen must know what sorts of people the other citizens are. For where they do not know this, the business of electing officials and deciding lawsuits must go badly, since to act haphazardly is unjust in both these proceedings. But this is plainly what occurs in an overly populated city-state'.

[34] Most Greek city-states in the fourth century BC were either democratic, in the sense that politics was in the hands of the working poor, or they were oligarchic, in the sense that government was in the hands of the upper class that did not have to do manual work. If this is the only alternative, then Aristotle sides with the oligarchic form of government. But he is not a friend of a rule of wealth, as witnessed by his repeated critique of wealth as the standard and of the character produced by wealth (*Pol.* I 9–11; *Rhet.* II 16). Instead, in his assessment of the existing forms of states he recommends a mixed constitution that combines oligarchic and democratic elements, for there needs to be a certain amount of wealth as well as the cooperation of the two classes (*Pol.* IV, 7–9).

[35] In his depiction of the 'city of his prayers' (*kat' euchên*), he does not specify the offices needed in any detail, but confines himself to its 'parts'. As he states, not all the parts that are necessary for the maintenance of the community should be granted the right to participate in politics. Thus farmers, craftsmen, and the labour-class are excluded; military matters and deliberation, as well as the judiciary, are assigned only to the leisured class (*Pol.* III 4; VII 8 and 9).

[36] On the disfranchisement of the class of labourers, *cf.* Frede 2005.

It must remain a moot point as to whether Aristotle entertained the hope that those of his students with an interest in politics would be able and willing to act as legislators and to carry out the design of a state that comes close to his ideal city. Aristotle is cautious about the chances of realizing such a constitution. That his design is not a 'utopia', a never-never-land, is shown by repeated remarks stating that its conditions are not impossible (*Pol.* II 6, 1265a18; VII 4, 1325b39). If it is a fiction, it is a fiction for a purpose. For, even if legislators can only aim for the best under the given circumstances, it is crucial that they have a proper conception of what constitution to aim for; for that it is necessary to know what constitution best does justice to human nature.[37] Approximation to that ideal requires the conception of an end, a *telos*, that guides the political scientist.

It is hard to say how optimistic Aristotle was with respect to the success of future legislators under the conditions of his time and age. Aristotle never mentions the increase of power of the Macedonian kingdom under Philip II and Alexander the Great, and the effects of its dominance over the Greek city-states. Aristotle confines his critique of states that aim at military prowess and at the conquest and suppression of their neighbours to Sparta, and it is hard to say whether he thereby intended a criticism of Macedonian politics. To be sure, Philip and Alexander did create new city-states as they expanded their power, like that of Philippopolis in Thrace or Alexandria in Egypt. However, these new-founded cities were not autonomous small communities of the kind Aristotle had in mind but were rather intended as the centres of their expanding empire and its consolidation. It is highly questionable whether, for Aristotle, they would have represented the type of community that provided the opportunity for the kind of legislation he has in mind, because such cities would hardly require the institutions, and therefore also not the virtues, that determine the particular moral training of the citizens that Aristotle regards as indispensable for the 'city of his prayers'. For the rules, laws, and institutions are to provide the opportunity for the individual citizens to develop and to deploy their moral and intellectual virtues—these are the aim of their education, an education that aims to make them fit, each in their own way, to contribute to the common good. But once the character of the polis changes, so too do the conditions of the good life that are the purpose of the rules, laws, and institutions that are to regulate the lives of the citizens.

NB: The polis did not lose its importance, and even retained some of its independence, under the sovereignty of the Macedonian kings and the successors to Alexander the Great because no centralized administration was instituted by the new overlords. The kings, rather, relied on the continued functioning of the local units; government therefore largely remained a local affair and the responsibility of the citizens of the different poleis. And that situation did not change much after the Roman conquest of Greece. A certain amount of professionalization of administrative functions emerged only during the later Roman Empire, albeit not of a very efficient or elaborate kind. But such administration as there was consisted largely in controlling agencies, whose main concern was the collection of taxes and the organization of the military forces. The local municipalities therefore retained a certain amount of independence and its order continued to depend on the engagement of local voluntary officials.[38] Thus, the polis did not disappear as a political institution under the imperial powers of later antiquity. However, Aristotle's ethics and political philosophy clearly had no influence on that development, and it seems to have received little attention even in the schools of philosophy. If Aristotle's ethics had become a neglected topic, as witnessed by the scarcity of commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* in late antiquity, his *Politics* was totally ignored.

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[37] For Aristotle, a city-state was a community of similar people aiming for the best possible life (*Pol.* VII 8, 1328a34–36). This requires an aristocracy of the mind that shares the same values. It excludes all those who cannot—for reasons not under their control—share in those values or in that form of life. It also explains why Aristotle insists, time and again, that certain parts of the city—like those people who provide food, tools, weapons, and wealth—are necessary parts of the state but not citizens in the proper sense; for they are not able to take care of the well-being of the state in deliberation and jurisdiction (*Pol.* VII 8).

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[38] *Cf.* Garnsey and Humfress 2001, ch. 3, 'Emperors and Bureaucrats'.

MENTAL HEALTH AND MORAL HEALTH: MORAL PROGRESS IN SENECA'S *LETTERS*

GISELA STRIKER

I.

The Stoic conception of philosophical teaching as a kind of therapy of the soul has received a good deal of attention in recent years, due not only to Martha Nussbaum's book,[1] but also to a revived interest in the role of the emotions and their relation to moral character.[2] Because the Stoics regarded all emotions as illnesses and made much of the methods they designed to get rid of them in order to attain the ideal state of freedom from passion (*apatheia*), most of the discussion has focused on the treatment of the passions. I do not intend to rehearse that subject here, but instead to draw attention to the later stages of Stoic moral education, which begins when the worst excesses of the passions—uncontrollable propensities to emotional outbursts such as fits of rage or inconsolable grief—have been left behind. Philosophical therapy will no doubt have to begin with the passions, because they are the cause of the most violent and dangerous diseases of the soul, according to the Stoics, but once a person has come to realize this and begun to work towards her psychic health, there is still a long and difficult way to go. One might say that such a person will have reached a minimal level of sanity, but she is still far from the ideal, and not just because she is in danger of relapsing. This second part of Stoic moral education, or spiritual guidance as one might also call it, is the main subject of Seneca's *Letters to Lucilius* (*Ep.*), which present the reader with a case history, as it were, of advanced Stoic therapy. Seneca makes it clear at the beginning of the series that both Lucilius and he himself are past the worst dangers and temptations, partly no doubt because they are both of an age—beyond fifty—where some of the passions, at least, no longer constitute a perpetual threat. It seems to me that a look at this part of the therapeutic program might shed some light on an intriguing question raised by the analogy between medical treatment and philosophical training: namely the relation between mental and moral health (if there is such a thing).

Modern psychotherapists do not usually promise to improve the moral character of their patients. Although the notion of mental health is notoriously murky, it seems safe to say that the aim of contemporary psychotherapy is the modest one of making people able to function 'normally' in everyday life, where this includes, say, the ability to work, have reasonably good relations with others, and enjoy one's life to the extent that it might be enjoyable. Still, even if mental health is clearly not the same as moral virtue, there seem to be some connections. Think of the case of certain criminals who are considered to be psychologically disturbed, such as child abusers or wife beaters. It would seem that normal social functioning includes a minimal sense of morality, and psychotherapists who deal with such patients are at least also trying to improve their patients' moral behaviour. Perhaps one could suggest that mental health is a prerequisite for moral improvement. But there seems to be at least some overlap between psychotherapy and moral education, and so one might ask whether the Stoic—or more generally, the Hellenistic—conception of 'caring for the soul' might still have a point.

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[1] Nussbaum 1993.

[2] See Graver 2007, with extensive bibliography.

I should begin by acknowledging that the modern distinction between mental health and moral virtue is of course no innovation. The Stoic slogan 'All fools are madmen' was a paradox, intended to shock rather than to be taken literally. So Cicero remarks at *Tusculan Disputations* 4.30, 'there is a kind of mental health that may belong also to fools, as when a mental disturbance is removed by medical treatment and purgation'. The point of the Stoic slogan was that moral depravity is just as bad as lunacy. But since the ancient notion of mental disturbance was no doubt much more narrow than our own, modern psychotherapists might still find themselves in the same field as their ancient counterparts—witness, for example, the contemporary notion of 'emotional disturbance'. And while the aims of modern psychotherapists are more modest than those of the ancients, they are still similar in that ancient moralists as well as modern psychotherapists are in the business of helping their patients to lead better or happier lives. The main difference seems to lie in the fact that happiness is no longer supposed to have much to do with morality. But with this, of course, most ancient philosophers strongly disagreed. Perhaps a look at the Stoic ideal can also help us to understand why they thought moral virtue would guarantee psychological wellbeing as well.

II.

In order to demarcate the earlier stages of Stoic therapy, mainly concerned with the extirpation of the passions, from the more advanced stages, it is useful to begin with a distinction that Cicero introduces in *Tusc.* 4.29–32. This distinction shows that the Stoics extended the analogy between the treatment of the body and the treatment of the soul to cover not only the cure of diseases but also what Plato (in the *Gorgias*, 464B–465D) called 'gymnastics'. Doctors are needed to treat disorders of the vital functions of the body; trainers will start their work with basically healthy bodies and aim at strength and beauty. The Stoic therapist has both functions: he will have to deal with outright 'diseases', mainly the passions, in the first place, but once the patient has recognized these as the illnesses they allegedly are and has gained some degree of control over them, his further education will aim at strength and beauty as well:

> As in the body a certain fitting shape of the limbs together with a certain lovely colouring is called beauty, so in the mind we speak of beauty with respect to an evenness of beliefs and judgments combined with constancy, firmness and stability, such as follows virtue or comprises virtue itself. Likewise, strength of soul resembling the strength and sinews and effectiveness of the body is also described by similar terms.
>
> (*Tusc.* 4.31).

Virtue, then, is not just mental health, but inner beauty and strength as well. This should come as no surprise, since the Greek word used for moral goodness in Hellenistic times is precisely *to kalon*—beauty. But how exactly are we to understand this notion of virtue as beauty of the soul?

Seneca offers some clues in *Ep.* 120, which deals with the question of how we acquire the (correct Stoic) notion of the good. This notion, he tells us there, comes from observation and analogy—namely, the analogy between body and soul:

> I will tell you what this analogy is. We had come to know the health of the body: from this we came to think that there is also a health of the mind. We had come to know the strength of the body: from this we inferred that there is a vigour of the mind as well. Certain actions that were kind, humane, courageous had amazed us: we began to admire them as though they were perfect.[3] (4–5)

Beauty appears in the picture after a longish portrait of the virtuous man. Here Seneca says:

> From what then did we come to understand virtue? It revealed itself to us by its order, its grace and constancy, the harmony of all actions among themselves, and a greatness that rises above everything else.[4] (11)

This *is* a description of beauty, given that the notion of beauty, familiar at least from Plato on, was indeed one of orderliness and symmetry.

Seneca has switched from the good to virtue because he can already assume, at this stage in the correspondence, that these two are the same. Once we have grasped the analogy between body and soul, it seems, we are prepared to observe the inner beauty of the virtuous person. He then goes on to explain that this impression is produced by a threefold consistency. There is, first, the fact that the virtuous man never curses his fate, always accepting whatever happens without complaint—so there is no conflict between his thoughts and desires and the course of events ordained by Nature (12–13). Second, the virtuous man is unwavering in his judgments—a consistency that is due to his unfailing adherence to the truth (19: *Vero tenor permanet, falsa non durant*). Third and last, the wise man is at one with himself, he is the only one who is truly one person or who performs only a single role: *Magnam rem puta unum hominem agere. Praeter sapientem autem nemo unum agit* (22; *cf.* Epictetus, *Dissertationes* 4.2.10). The wise man is exactly as he wants to be.

In other words, there is consistency between inner and outer events, consistency among what we would call beliefs due to their truth, and complete congruence between the person's moral standards and her actual performance. The first kind of consistency is postulated, of course, on the basis of Stoic metaphysics—their belief in the rationality and goodness of the world order. I take it that this part is difficult to make sense of from a contemporary point of view, given that hardly anyone, with the possible exception of some very religious people, would be inclined to share the Stoics' metaphysical or cosmological convictions. The second and third kinds are more interesting. With regard to the second, we have to keep in mind that the judgments or beliefs in question will include value judgments and moral principles, and that the Stoics assumed that desires are to be identified with value judgments. The inner harmony and peace that is supposed to go with the sage's infallibly correct judgment is due to the absence of conflicting aims as well as factual beliefs. Since a Stoic would be firmly convinced that only moral goodness has any real value at all, he would never be inclined to go against his moral principles, and the Stoics evidently thought that this would rule out all inner conflicts. We might find this over-optimistic—there may be situations in which even moral obligations do clash and there is no clear way of making the right decision. Nonetheless, it is plausible to think that a high degree of consistency in one's value judgments and moral beliefs would be a desirable thing indeed, saving one from agonizing doubts or guilty feelings. It is also plausible to think that a person who is not plagued by doubts and indecision might be liked and admired by many others—assuming, of course, that her beliefs and principles are reasonable and well founded.

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[3] *Quae sit haec analogia dicam. Noveramus corporis sanitatem: ex hac cogitavimus esse aliquam et animi. Noveramus vires corporis: ex his collegimus esse et animi robur. Aliqua benigna facta, aliqua humana, aliqua fortia nos obstupefecerant: haec coepimus tamquam perfecta mirari.* Seneca probably took over the analogy between outer and inner beauty from the Stoic Panaetius; *cf.* Cicero, *Off.* 1.14: *Itaque eorum ipsorum quae aspectu sentiuntur nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit; quam similitudinem natura ratioque ab oculis ad animum transferens multo etiam magis pulchritudinem constantiam ordinem in consiliis factisque conservandam putat* ('No other animal, therefore, perceives the beauty, the loveliness, and the harmony of parts, of the things that sight perceives. Our rational nature transfers this by analogy from the eyes to the mind, thinking that beauty, constancy and order should be preserved, and much more so, in one's decisions and in one's deeds', trans. Atkins, with minor modifications).

[4] *Ex quo ergo virtutem intelleximus? Ostendit illam nobis ordo eius et decor et constantia et omnium inter se actionum concordantia et magnitudo super omnia efferens sese.*

The third kind of consistency may be the hardest to achieve, but is probably crucial for the Stoic claim that virtue will make one happy. Perhaps the best contemporary term for this inner state might be 'integrity'—if by this one means a character that will not admit the all-too-common compromises between one's considered judgments and one's actual behaviour. Notoriously, people are apt to judge others more harshly than themselves, and, when challenged on this point, can be very ingenious in finding excuses to defend themselves against the charge of having broken the rules they expect others to follow. A person of integrity might be one who will not do this—either because she does in fact always behave in the way she thinks is right, or because she is willing to admit her mistakes. The unity ascribed to the Stoic sage is obviously of the first sort—he is supposed to be above all temptations, unhesitatingly and confidently following his rational judgment. I assume that the unity Seneca has in mind here is distinct from the previous sort of consistency because it is possible that a person might be entirely consistent in judgment as well as in action, yet find it difficult to abide faithfully by her own standards (*cf.* Chrysippus, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (SVF) III 510). The ideal Stoic, by contrast, will never feel tempted to stray from the path of virtue; he is sure of himself, calm and serene, and, according to Seneca at least, even joyful in the thought that no evil can befall him.

This, then, is the state of character and mind that Seneca and his friend aspire to. Its beauty lies in its harmony and regularity, its strength in its constancy, and both of these can only be achieved when all illnesses and disturbances of the passions have been removed.

III.

I will now turn to *Ep.* 75, the letter in which Seneca sets out a Stoic ranking of the last stages of moral progress before full virtue. Seneca's description (75.9–14) starts from the top—the class of people who are closest to wisdom but do not yet fully possess it. They have already left behind all vices and passions, and they have learned what is really to be embraced; they are also beyond the danger of backsliding. All they lack is self-confidence—as Seneca puts it, 'they do not know that they know' (*scire se nesciunt*). This is because they have not yet tested their own strength sufficiently. Only experience, it seems, can show them that they are actually beyond all danger. Before we return to this point, it will be worth briefly considering the other stages.

On the second level are those who no longer suffer from any 'diseases' (ingrained emotional dispositions that have become part of their character), although they may still be afflicted by some episodes of affection. A person may, for example, occasionally get angry but will no longer be irascible, or she may feel fear of death or of pain, but she will no longer be obsessed with it, and so on. Since there are these episodes, the danger of relapsing is still present, and the person is still on the slippery slope (*in lubrico*) where one episode may lead on to the next and thus reintroduce the emotional dispositions the Stoics called diseases. Clearly, these people are below the level of the first group.

The third group consists of those who have shed some but not all of their emotional diseases, and who are obviously also still liable to occurrent emotions, presumably of all kinds. This third rank, Seneca says, is probably the best he and Lucilius can hope for, and it already requires considerable effort. There may be some hope for them to advance even further, but Seneca fears that they will be held back by their vices, which make them treat their efforts at moral improvement as a kind of leisure time occupation (*quantum vacat*, 16). Yet the rewards, if they should manage to overcome their laziness, so to speak, are truly magnificent—and Seneca concludes with one of his many vignettes of the blessed state of the Stoic sage.

The three ranks I have just described are, I think, the ones Seneca wants to distinguish, but his presentation is somewhat confused because it emerges in §10 that some Stoics did not recognize Seneca's first stage—sages who do not yet know they are sages—and hence described the level closest to perfection as the one Seneca wants to rank second.[5]

It is easy to see why some Stoics would have refused to recognize Seneca's first rank as a stage of *progress*, for people at this stage actually are already sages, whether they know it or not, so why count them still among those who are making progress? 'Nobody is beyond the danger of badness unless he has shed it entirely; but nobody has shed badness unless he has replaced it by wisdom', as Seneca reports their view (10). So these people would put Seneca's first rank on the side of wisdom, but they would probably not deny that there is a period during which a person who has reached wisdom would not yet be aware of it, since the claim that the transition from folly to wisdom will not be noticed by the sage-to-be was a well-known, and sometimes ridiculed, bit of Stoic doctrine (see SVF III 539–542). The doctrine itself is curious and may well have been introduced in response to some epistemological puzzle raised by Diodorus Cronus, as David Sedley has suggested.[6] However, what interests me at this point is not why the Stoics held this view, but what Seneca makes of it. It seems fairly clear from the few brief passages that report the Stoic view that the Stoics did not think of the transitional period as being very long, so as to count as a distinct stage on the way to the ultimate end. Their point was probably just that even the sage would not be able to discern exactly the moment in which he makes the transition to complete wisdom—after all, it would be the step from making no mistakes to being infallible. More importantly, one would expect the aspiring sage to be more concerned with practising virtue than with observing his own progress at every moment. I suspect that the reason why Seneca wants to see the transitional period as a stage *before* the final end is that a person who had not yet realized that he had become a sage would also not yet enjoy what Seneca elsewhere (*De vita beata* 3.3–4; 4.4–5; 15.2) describes as the 'supervenient' consequences of wisdom—tranquillity, security, and a sense of freedom.

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[5] The side-remark about the alternative view of the first stage leads him to offer a brief explanation of the difference between what the Stoics called 'diseases' (*morbi*)—ingrained emotional dispositions—and 'affects' (*adfectus*) — episodes of emotion that he claims to have often mentioned before. In fact, the relevant passage only comes later (*Ep*. 85.10ff.), and I suppose that this paragraph was inserted here before Seneca's own succinct description of the second rank in section 13. What has happened, I think, is that he has combined a three-stage schema with one that has only two, lacking his own first rank. But then the first rank of the other schema should simply count as his own second.

[6] See Sedley 1977: 94–95.

At the beginning of the correspondence with Lucilius (*Ep.* 9.21), Seneca quotes with approval, as expressing a kind of natural common notion, the line of an unknown comic poet: 'He is not happy who does not believe he is' (*non est beatus esse se qui non putat*). The person who thinks he lacks something cannot count as being content with his life, even if he is mistaken in his belief. A sage who does not yet realize that he is one could not be certain that he has achieved wisdom,[7] and this would prevent him from enjoying the tranquillity and the sense of liberation that come with the thought that one has left all dangers behind. Knowing that you have reached the goal is crucial for happiness. And so while Seneca sometimes emphasizes the point that joy and tranquillity are consequences, not constituents of the end, which is simply living in agreement with nature, he also often identifies the happy life itself with the inner state that results from perfect virtue. This is not a deviation from orthodox Stoicism, I think. The Stoics would insist on the distinction between virtue and its psychological consequences in order to make the point that virtue must be desired for its own sake, not for the pleasures it brings—this is the argument Seneca makes in the *De vita beata*. But once virtue has been achieved, it cannot fail to bring the joy and security that make happiness complete.

The picture that Seneca offers here gives a fairly clear account of the path of moral reform that leads from the initial recognition of one's wretched and corrupt state to the supreme self-assurance and serenity of the Stoic sage. It is strikingly different from the better known Aristotelian account of moral education which begins in childhood and leads, if all goes well, to a stage of maturity at which the individual has acquired a solid moral character and feels secure and competent in the exercise of his rational capacities in virtuous action. The Stoic story requires a break in a person's development that can only come at the adult stage. It seems inevitable, according to the Stoics, that a child should initially develop into a creature of more or less uncontrolled emotion, due mainly to the corrupting influence of parents and family (the very people whom Aristotle would expect to watch over the natural and orderly development to virtue). Hence the Stoics thought that a conversion would be needed to set one on the path to virtue. This is, of course, why Stoic spiritual guidance is presented as analogous to medical treatment. Aristotle's more optimistic picture, one might say, covers only the part that is parallel to gymnastic training. But while Aristotle seems to think that if the natural talents are given and the external circumstances are favourable, education to virtue will work fairly smoothly, the Stoics hold that, even after the initial conversion, striving for virtue is a perpetual struggle against the ever-present dangers of the passions. It is no wonder that the Stoic theory should have been so much more influential than the Aristotelian one among Christians who believed in original sin. Nevertheless, the Stoic story also includes the steps that lead to moral and intellectual perfection, and so can be compared not just to a cure but also to the training that produces strength and beauty in the body. By treating this process as a case of recovery, however, the Stoics may be offering a more insightful account of what is meant by such old adages as the claim that virtue is hard to attain. They emphasize the fact that one's performance often falls short of one's own standards and expectations. Where Aristotle suggests that practising the right way of acting, under the guidance of parents and teachers, will make morally good conduct almost a matter of instinct, the Stoics ask us first to recognize our faults and then to be always on the alert against possible temptations. They harp upon the distance between most people's professed moral ideals and their everyday ways of living—one of the reasons, no doubt, why the almost superhuman figure of the Stoic sage plays so important a role in their teaching. Where Aristotle seems to think that intelligent upper-class Greek males should have no great difficulties in becoming practically wise adults (*phronimoi*), the Stoics, being less elitist and aristocratic, insist that it takes reflection and conscious effort as well as practice to become morally good.

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[7] See the descriptions in Plutarch, *Mor. Progr.* 75D (SVF III 539): ἀγνοεῖ καὶ ἀμφιδοξεῖ and *Stoic. repugn.* 1043A: τὸν ἐκ φαύλου γενόμενον σπουδαῖον [...] τῆς ἀρετῆς μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι παρούσης ἀλλ᾽ οἴεσθαι τὴν κακίαν αὐτῷ παρεῖναι.

It may be that the Stoic Panaetius, an aristocrat and well-known admirer of Aristotle, tried to strike a compromise here by focusing on the rules of conduct for good men in an ordinary and less exalted sense (Cicero, *de Officiis* 1.46; 3.13–16), as opposed to the ideal of perfection represented by the sage. But he did not thereby deviate from orthodox Stoic doctrine—the ideal, and hence also the conception of the human good, remains perfect moral virtue alone. However, those who might be regarded as having achieved that ideal now become heroes or saints—rare exceptions from the ordinary run of people rather than the respectable good citizens Aristotle seems to envisage for his 'polity' (and Cicero for the Roman senate). There certainly is a point to this move. Embracing the accepted standards of the upper classes can easily lead to complacency, and this is one danger of which later Stoics at any rate seem to be acutely aware. Epictetus cites as a sign of moral progress that a man will never claim to be worth much or to possess any knowledge; he advises those who are on the path to virtue to keep a watchful eye on themselves as though they were their own enemy lying in wait (*Encheiridion* 48.2–3). Seneca's letters are full of self-deprecating remarks, constantly reminding himself and his friend of the long distance that lies between them and the ideal.

As a result of the Stoics' insistence on the deficiencies of ordinary people, their conception of the human good turned into something that appears to be so far beyond most people's reach that one is tempted to write it off as a conception of human happiness. The Stoics claimed that nothing short of perfection can make us happy, but also, of course, that moral perfection would be sufficient to guarantee happiness. If one looks at Seneca's enthusiastic descriptions of the inner state of the sage, one might be inclined to agree with him on this last point. What Seneca imagines and describes with all his literary and poetic skills is a state in which a person is completely at one with herself and willing to accept whatever happens, including the worst misfortunes, in the belief that all that she is responsible for, and all that really matters, is her own moral integrity, and that nothing inflicted by others or simply happening by accident can deprive her of this. It seems plausible to think that such a person would be free from daily anxieties and worries of ordinary people—she is not deeply attached to anything that lies beyond her own control, but she is disposed to appreciate whatever small good things come along. (The dark side of this portrait, as I have argued elsewhere,[8] is the implied lack of attachment to other people, friends as well as humankind in general.) The best examples I can think of that might show how this could be seen as a form of happiness are the Stoics' own favourite, Socrates, on the one hand, and Christian saints and martyrs, on the other. Moral heroes and saints, indeed—but how plausible is it to claim that *only* such people can be happy?

The Stoics were given to arguing that wisdom and happiness can be achieved only if a person firmly believes that virtue is the only good, so that no trade-off between moral and other alleged goods is possible. I do not think one has to agree with the Stoics on this point.

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[8] Striker 1991, reprinted in Striker 1996: 278–80.

As far as I can see, it should be sufficient if a person is convinced that serious moral evil outweighs all other evils, so that she would hate herself and be miserable if she committed a grave moral wrong. Moral virtue may require difficult sacrifices, however, and that, more prosaically speaking, is presumably the reason why saints and heroes are rare exceptions. One may appreciate the role that moral ideals can play in keeping one from becoming complacent, but there is also something to be said for putting up with some (not all) of one's own weaknesses—for example, the weaknesses one is prepared to forgive or overlook in one's own friends and everyday companions. This should not be confused with complacency: to say that one has made a forgivable mistake is not the same as saying that one should go on cheerfully doing more of the same, rather than trying to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Taking this into account, one might arrive at a more modest conception of a satisfactory human life while still acknowledging that most of us could and should try to do better than we actually do. I suppose this is why Seneca thinks that he and Lucilius might find it quite an achievement already to have reached even the third rank on his scale of progress[9]—but this would obviously be no reason for self-congratulation.

IV.

Whether we accept the Stoic ideal of perfection and happiness or not, I think we might agree that the Stoic account of moral reform adds some important features to an account of moral education, features that are missing from Aristotle's optimistic portrait of education, as well as from the pessimistic view that both Plato and Aristotle take of the chances of progress for anyone below the level of a chosen few. It also seems plausible to compare moral reform to something like recovery from illness or, later on, gymnastic training, if one starts from the assumption that the person who is trying to improve her moral character begins with a kind of conversion that makes her see herself as weak and perhaps even despicable.

Which brings me back to the analogy between mental and moral health from which I began. We have seen how Stoic moral therapy goes beyond the mere restoration of 'normal' mental and social functioning by aiming at a state of inner harmony and contentment that may appear desirable indeed, but that also probably lies beyond what most of us could ever hope to achieve. Stoic moral therapy also has a much larger scope than any version of psychotherapy in that it includes the attempt to make people realize that they need treatment, an attempt that we find, for example, in many of Epictetus' little sermons. So the Stoics are obviously much more ambitious than modern psychotherapists, who hope at best to help their patients to fit in with the rest of us, being no worse, but also no better off, than their fellow humans.

On the other hand, Stoic moral therapy in its first stage after the necessary conversion appears to be curiously one sided and limited in treating the emotions as the single cause of all vices and disturbances. Modern psychotherapy recognizes a host of other factors that may lead to psychic disorders, including some that have grave moral consequences. Some patients, such as so-called sociopaths, seem in fact to suffer from a lack of ordinary emotional capacities rather than excess. The same is likely to be true of cold-blooded criminals like concentration-camp doctors: while it might be possible to concoct a story according to which their crimes are not due to a lack of human feeling, but only to some excessive attachment to a misguided idea of science, or an ideology of racism, this would seem to be an attempt to make the facts fit the theory. Other psychological disorders will nowadays be blamed on traumatic experiences such as the death of a close relative, or abuse by parents, and so on. This makes it difficult even to compare the Stoic account with the much more complicated one we would be given now. If there is an overlap, it must be limited to a few specific cases. But perhaps it might make sense to compare the Stoic convert who is trying to reform herself to a person who is depressed through lack of self-esteem. Modern psychotherapists would probably see their task as one of reconciling a patient with her own shortcomings, making her feel better about herself by giving up exaggerated expectations. This applies, for example, to the case of anorexic young women who think they are fat and ugly, but also (more common among graduate students) to people who fall into utter despair because they are not geniuses. On the Stoic side, I suppose, this would be described not as adjusting one's standard to one's feeble performance but as learning to accept things as they are when one cannot change them, and realizing, perhaps, that the situation is not as bad as one might have believed. When it comes to moral standards, however, it is at the very least questionable whether a psychotherapist should try to make her patient feel better about herself by being content with what may be a rather nasty character (not to mention outright criminal impulses). The first adjustment could be described as taking a more realistic view—it is not, after all, a disaster if you are not very slim, let alone if you are not a genius; the second, however, might end up fostering unjustified complacency and self-deception. But the idea of living up to certain standards, both of society at large and of one's own, seems to play a significant role in both cases. So, I would suggest that even a modern psychotherapist may have to observe a distinction between accepting one's own limitations and accepting one's moral faults by making them look like excusable weaknesses. However, this is a point at which a modern psychotherapist might well decide that she is no longer responsible, being content instead with the avoidance of actual criminal wrongdoing. Yet her patient might still feel the need for further help, being really contrite and unhappy with the kind of person she is. It seems to me that something like Stoic moral therapy might well be what such a patient would be looking for—and the analogy with training would not be inappropriate in that it emphasizes the need for guidance and support. Here is Seneca once again (*Ep.* 52.2–3):

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[9] Compare Seneca's defense of his modest achievement at *De vita beata* 17.3–4: Exige itaque a me, non ut optimis par sim, sed ut malis melior: hoc mihi satis est, cotidie aliquid ex vitiis meis demere et errores meos obiurgare.

> No man by himself has sufficient strength to rise above [his folly]; he needs a helping hand, and someone to extricate him. Epicurus remarks that certain men have worked their way to truth without anyone's assistance, carving out their own passage. […] Again, there are others who need outside help, who will not proceed unless someone leads the way, but who will follow faithfully. […] We ourselves are not of that first class, either; we shall be well treated if we are admitted into the second. Nor need you despise a man who can gain salvation only with the assistance of another; the will to be saved means a great deal, too.'[10]

The point at which psychotherapy and moral education overlap, then, is perhaps also the point at which they were at some point separated, one becoming a branch of medicine, the other of education, both having gone together for a long time in the old role of the confessor or spiritual adviser. If this is correct, then the kind of moral guidance that the Stoics offered might legitimately be seen as a close ally or complement of ordinary psychotherapy. It would be part of a more comprehensive perspective on what is needed for a satisfactory human life. Mental health is no doubt a prerequisite, but another important factor may well be living up to one's own standards, and the process that makes one able to do this may, although it need not, take a form that is still quite illuminatingly compared to a kind of therapy.[11]

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[10] Trans. Gummere. *Nemo per se satis valet ut emergat; oportet manum aliquis porrigat, aliquis educat. Quosdam ait Epicurus ad veritatem sine ullius adiutorio exisse, fecisse ipsos viam. [...] quosdam indigere ope aliena, non ituros si nemo praecesserit, sed bene secuturos. [...] Nos ex illa prima nota non sumus; bene nobiscum agitur, si in secundum recipimur. Ne hunc quidem contempseris hominem qui alieno beneficio esse salvus potest: et hoc multum est, velle servari.*

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[11] Earlier versions of this paper were read at the University of Siena, Cornell University, and as a Keeling lecture in London in 2004. I am grateful for the criticisms and suggestions I received on all these occasions. Since I have been working on other subjects in the following years, I have not attempted to bring this essay up to date with respect to the many publications on Stoic ethics and Stoic psychology that have appeared in the intervening years. As far as I can see, it still raises a point that may be of some interest.

DEBATE OR GUIDANCE? CICERO ON PHILOSOPHY

MALCOLM SCHOFIELD

I. Introduction

In his essay 'Making the world safe for utilitarianism',[1] the political philosopher Jonathan Wolff highlights a contrast between the credit rating of utilitarianism—or of what he calls maximizing consequentialism—in philosophical ethics, and its standing where decision-making in matters of public policy is concerned. 'Utilitarianism', he comments, 'has been out of favour in philosophy for some time'. Certainly there are a number of alternative approaches to ethics which attract greater interest and more support in contemporary philosophy, all typically occasioning subtle and vigorous debate in journals and on the conference scene. On the other hand,

> while philosophers have turned away from maximizing consequentialism, public policy decision making has embraced it. Many areas of public policy are dominated by cost-benefit analysis, which at least in its purest form is a particularly crude form of consequentialism: consequentialism of money.

Philosophers, Wolff suggests, should find this worrying; 'some', he goes on, 'have duly reported themselves worried'.[2] However, what he himself concludes (and there are similar remarks in others of his writings) is that 'while there are plenty of more appealing approaches to personal morality, we do not seem to have many candidate alternatives for public policy decision making'.[3]

In this chapter, I will be discussing a similar phenomenon in the philosophical writings of Cicero, in the first instance precisely in his treatment of the political sphere and, in particular, of a much-discussed passage of *De Legibus*.[4] More generally, we find in Cicero a tension between, on the one hand, a conception of philosophy and philosophical ethics as in its very nature a debate, and, on the other, the idea that the point of doing philosophy is to find and advocate a sound basis on which we can live our lives. To amplify a little, as Cicero sees it, some views in ethics have more going for them, some less, but to the mind of the Academic sceptic that he is, none has established itself as beyond serious further intellectual challenge. To do ethics properly means understanding the main ethical systems which have been or could be proposed, and getting involved in the intricate and apparently unending debate over their merits and demerits.[5] However if philosophy is to fulfil its primary function—to supply foundations both for our common existence and for our lives as individuals—it looks as though we must settle for embracing some particular ethical position, despite our recognition that doing so must be problematic.

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[1] Wolff 2006a.

[2] Wolff 2006a: 2–3.

[3] Wolff 2006a: 19.

[4] The same general issue is interestingly pursued, particularly with reference to politics and to this same passage of Book 1 of *De Legibus*, in Nicgorski 2016: 15–58.

[5] For the Academics' encyclopedic method, see, for example, Algra 1997.

The general point can conveniently be illustrated from the *Tusculan Disputations* (45 BC), a sequence of dialogues to which I shall return in due course. Here Cicero speaks of philosophy itself in contrasting modes. On the one hand, in the preface to Book 2 he says that while in the *Academic books* (written earlier in the same year) he has set out the case for Academic scepticism with all due precision, nothing would be more welcome than some counter-argument. The characteristic activities that gave Greek philosophy its vitality were the disputes and disagreements of thinkers who really understood the subject (*Tusc.* 2.4). On the other hand, the preface to Book 5 assures us that philosophy is the guide for life, the explorer of virtue, the expeller of vice: human life is dependent on it (*Tusc.* 5.5). The five books of the work taken together 'have made apparent the things most necessary for living happily' (*Div.* 2.2).[6] Or, as Book 3 of *De Finibus* (another of the dialogues of 45 BC) had put it, philosophy is the *art* of living a life (*Fin.* 3.4; *cf. Tusc.* 1.1, *Off.* 2.6).

The tension between the two ideas is obvious. If philosophy is to guide us, it must tell us something definite and convey at least the appearance of definitiveness: that death is something that should not trouble us, or that virtue is uniquely sufficient in itself to give us happiness. But if philosophy is to work out answers to the questions people ask about these and similar topics, it needs to debate them vigorously and to welcome challenges to any conclusions it may reach—without the debate it will lose its vigour and thereby its capacity to guide us. But the definiteness and definitiveness that philosophy needs if it is to provide people with firm ethical guidance will be hard to come by if debate brings—as it characteristically does—disagreement, and still more so if it brings irreconcilable disagreement.

It is not just that this tension in Cicero's discussions of philosophy and philosophical ethics is apparent to us his readers. He was himself acutely aware of the difficulty, articulates it in different ways at different points in his writings, and develops different strategies—explicitly or implicitly theorized as such—for coping with it in different contexts. One place where Cicero's sense of the problem emerges with special clarity is in the *Lucullus* (again 45 BC), in the course of a long critique of the discussions of dogmatic philosophers. This critique constitutes the final main section of the sceptical reply to the Stoicizing epistemology which had been developed in the first main part of the dialogue. A particularly good example is the treatment, developed in a characteristic stretch of distinctively Ciceronian philosophical rhetoric, of divergences between Stoic and Peripatetic ethics (*Luc.* 133–4):

> The Stoics hold that all moral errors are equal, but with this Antiochus most forcefully disagrees. Then please may *I* be allowed to consider which of the two views I should follow? 'Cut it short', he says. 'Do for once decide on something or other'. Even given that the arguments on either side appear to me acute and of equal weight? [...] Here's an even bigger disagreement. Zeno thinks the happy life is found in virtue alone. What does Antiochus say? 'Yes', he says, 'the happy life, but not the happi*est*'. [...] I am torn. Sometimes one view seems more persuasive to me, sometimes the other. Yet unless one or other of them is right, I think that virtue lies utterly prostrate.

And so it goes on for several pages more, even if at one point Cicero owns up to finding it difficult to tear himself away from Antiochus' Peripatetic conception of the ends of life—'I haven't to date found anything more persuasive' (*Luc.* 139).

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[6] All translations from Cicero are my own.

Perhaps the most succinct and explicit statement of the problem he faces, given his own philosophical outlook, comes in the preface to Book 2 of *De Officiis* (44 BC), the last of Cicero's philosophical writings (*Off.* 2.7):

> An objection is brought against me—by educated men, indeed—who ask whether I think my behaviour is altogether consistent. For although I say that nothing can be known for certain, nonetheless I am in the habit of holding forth on various subjects, and on this occasion I am engaged in formulating advice (*praecepta*) about our obligations.

I have now mentioned three of the four texts—*De Legibus*, *Tusculan Disputations*, and *De Officiis*—that will be my case studies in this chapter (the fourth will be *De Republica*). I shall tackle first a remarkable passage from Book 1 of *De Legibus*, where the silencing of debate on the fundamentals of public policy is advocated (section II). Next we turn more briefly to Book 3 of *De Republica*, in which, by contrast, Cicero stages a confrontation between two views on justice, here as in Book 1 of *De Legibus* taken to be the value that political philosophy needs to make central (section III). The final text to be examined in any detail will be the most complex of them all, calling accordingly for the fullest treatment. This is the remarkable attempt Cicero makes in the *Tusculan Disputations* to harmonize conflicting philosophical positions in the service of ethical guidance for the individual (section IV). We shall then briefly consider Cicero's approach to individual guidance in a different literary genre, as exemplified by *De Officiis*, in which debate is alluded to but not conducted. Some brief concluding remarks will round off the chapter (coda).

II. Silencing debate

One of the most intriguing moments in all Cicero's philosophical writing comes in Book 1 of *De Legibus*, a dialogue probably unfinished and unpublished, and usually dated to around 51 BC.[7] It occurs at the point in the dialogue at which, following the first main sequence of argument (*Leg.* 1.16–34), Cicero says that he is now going to make some remarks on his principal thesis: that justice is rooted in nature. The other discussants—his brother Quintus and his close friend Atticus—consider this to be completely unnecessary. The arguments they have just been given by Cicero have already convinced them of the truth of the thesis; Atticus briefly recapitulates them in explaining why (*Leg* 1.35). Cicero replies that although they are right to think that the conclusion follows from those arguments, he is nonetheless going to follow the scholastic method favoured by some philosophers (doubtless he means the Stoics: *cf. e.g. Tusc.* 5.18–19), and dedicate a separate treatment to the topic.

Atticus exclaims (*Leg.* 1.36):

> I take it your own freedom as to how to discuss things has gone missing—or else you are the sort of person not to follow your own judgment in a debate, but to submit to the authority of somebody else.

In other words, Atticus is accusing Cicero of abandoning—temporarily or permanently—the freedom the Academic sceptic claims to consider any philosophical question on its merits and as he judges best, in contrast to adherents of the other schools. Other philosophers are standardly represented in the dialogues as being required to tackle questions only by using the methods sanctioned in their schools, and only on the doctrinal basis accepted by them. 'We alone are free', Cicero will say in Book 5 of the *Tusculan Disputations*, whereas others are subject to 'laws imposed on the way they debate' (*Tusc.* 5.33). The echo of Academic sceptic talk in Atticus' intervention here, and its confirmation that Cicero is already an Academic sceptic at the time of writing, were not often picked up by scholars until Woldemar Görler pointed out what he rightly called this 'massive indication' in a brilliant article of 1995.[8] Once noticed, it is indeed decisive for interpretation.

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[7] On the dating, see Dyck 2004: 5–12.

Cicero does not altogether deny Atticus' charge, although he makes it clear that he is not abandoning Academic independence of judgment as a general policy (*non semper*). Why, then, does he bow to authority (to the extent that he does) on this occasion? Because he is embarked on a specific project in applied political theory, which has the *practical* aim of 'putting commonwealths on a firm footing, bringing stability to cities, maintaining every kind of people in a sound condition' (*Leg.* 1.37). That requires in the first instance positing basic principles that are aptly supplied and have been assiduously investigated (*bene provisa et diligenter explorata*). Such a stipulation in fact impeccably parallels Academic methodology, although Cicero does not emphasize the point. The testing of impressions that Academics insist on when the stakes are high requires 'meticulous consideration' (*accurata consideratio*) and 'most assiduous exploration' (*diligentissime circumspexerit*, *Luc.* 36). The importance of the political project he articulates is presumably what dictates the need for just such a careful and dedicated treatment of its ethical foundations.

So how does one pursue such a treatment? Here Cicero's policy will be to identify principles which commend themselves (*probentur*) to those who think that what is morally admirable is either the only good or an incomparably great good—*i.e.* the Stoics or the Platonists and Aristotelians (*Leg.* 1.37–38)—whose differences on that issue are subsequently to be treated as verbal, not substantive, in line with the view of the non-sceptical Academic Antiochus (*Leg.* 1.54–55). Yet here, too, is another echo of Academic sceptic methodology. Such Academics do not claim certain knowledge. What can command their assent is whatever line of thought seems most *persuasive* or *deserving of approval* (*probabile*) or seems *nearest* the truth. But there is in the present case a crucial variation—constituting the degree of surrender of his own judgment that Cicero is admitting. As we have seen, identifying a theory of justice that will support the construction of a good constitutional system requires acknowledgement that we are to be concerned with the public sphere, and with practice as well as theory. Once this thought is registered, it will not suffice for Cicero and his interlocutors to agree (or disagree) among *themselves* about what seems most probable or nearest the truth: that would be too fragile a basis for the enterprise. The theory to be proposed should have the approval of a broad swathe of thinkers who all accept that what is good or in itself desirable is the morally admirable alone, or incomparably more so than anything else.

In other words, the right thing is to make sure one has *their probatio*, not—as standardly in Academic scepticism—simply to make one's own mind up. That said, however, as Jed Atkins has pointed out, we should recall that it was precisely the mutual corroboration of witnesses required in the determination of important legal cases to which Carneades appealed in explaining the Academic method: a method described as the rigorous testing of impressions that we engage in 'in matters that contribute to happiness', to ensure so far as we can that they are 'undiverted and throughly explored' (Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.184). Moreover, as Atkins also observes, Cicero does *choose* to take this approach, and, thus, 'in a manner of speaking' exercises his free judgment.[9] Indeed, in a rather similar context in the preface to *De Officiis*, he insists (*Off.* 1.6) that in relying on the same philosophical tradition as is called in aid here, he does so ‘using my own judgment and discretion’ (*iudicio arbitrioque nostro*).

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[8] Görler 1995: 103 [= Görler 2004: 257–58].

There is a further and more unsettling dimension to the stance Cicero is adopting. He next tells us (*Leg.* 1.39) not merely that it means rejecting—unsurprisingly—the views of the Epicureans, whose hedonistic conception of the good and pursuit of pleasure leaves them (he insinuates) without any understanding of what involvement in the public sphere entails, and who had better stay away from it. More startlingly, those views must be rejected in this context *even if true*, even if they *say* (*dicunt*, indicative mood) what is true and not (as we might have expected) if they *were to be saying* what is true (although editors have proposed emending the text to get the subjunctive *dicant*). The passage echoes one in *De Oratore* (55 BC) where a similar treatment is accorded to Epicureanism in the context of enquiry ‘not into what is the truest philosophy, but the one most closely tied to the orator’. We should warn Epicureans to keep quiet about their doctrine—‘as if it were a holy secret’—that there is no role in public affairs for the wise person, ‘even if it is (*est*; once again some editors substitute the subjunctive *sit*) absolutely true (*verissimum*)’ (*De Or.* 3.64). This might be regarded as Cicero’s version of Plato’s Noble Lie, or more particularly of the variant in Plato’s own *Laws*, where, after a stretch of dialogue developing the case for thinking that the just life is pleasanter than the unjust, the Athenian Visitor proposes that even if that were not the case, any lawgiver who was even the slightest use—assuming he was prepared, for a good purpose, to lie to the young—could devise no more profitable or persuasive *falsehood* (*Laws* 663d–e).

The final price to be paid by Cicero the Academic in launching into the serious political project he is undertaking—and the final stage in the surrender of his own judgment—is that he will also have to ask the sceptical Academy of Arcesilaus and Carneades to ‘stay silent’: they throw all these matters into total confusion (*Leg.* 1.39). In other words, it would be completely unhelpful for the statement of principle underpinning Cicero’s political project to be met by a classic Academic *counter-argument*, such as an argument to the effect that wisdom dictates the pursuit of self-interest, not what is alleged to be ‘natural’ other-regarding justice. What he would not want, in short, would be any repeat of Carneades’ reputed delivery in Rome, on successive days in 155 BC, of speeches first for and then against justice. This episode would already be familiar to the reader of *De Legibus* from Book 3 of Cicero’s *De Republica* (54–52 BC), where it is replicated after a fashion in the debate between Philus and Laelius that Cicero makes the centrepiece of that whole dialogue, and to which we shall be returning shortly. All the same, says Cicero, ‘I would like to conciliate it [*sc.* the new Academy]. I don’t dare push it aside’ (*Leg.* 1.39). For, of course, Academic sceptics are not *committed*, as Epicureans are, to *doctrines* that are incompatible with those which the *De Legibus* project is to take as its basis. It is open to them to approve whatever in the end seems to them most probable or persuasive or nearest the truth (*cf. e.g. Div.* 2.150, *Off.* 3.20).

In this manner, Cicero concludes a remarkable passage of philosophical writing. To summarize, he here temporarily abandons full-blooded Academic scepticism in order to undertake a practical project in applied political theory: establishing a philosophical foundation—the doctrine of the natural basis of justice—for ‘putting commonwealths on a firm footing, bringing stability to cities, maintaining every kind of people in a sound condition’. Such an enterprise requires the observance of a number of constraints:

- *Pragmatism*: the foundational principle need not be true, but must be fit for purpose.

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[9] Atkins 2013: 183–85.

- *Authority*: the appropriate principle must be accepted on the authority of philosophers who have shown it to have been considered carefully.
- *No debate*: dissent or query regarding the principle is to be 'silenced'—these form no part of the relevant methodology.

There is an evident similarity between Cicero's approach here and Jonathan Wolff's attitude towards utilitarianism and cost-benefit analysis, to which I referred above. However, Wolff stresses that he is defending utilitarianism and cost-benefit analysis in public policy decision making as decision procedures rather than as moral theories, and as decision procedures 'only under certain highly constrained conditions'.[10] In discussing risk management elsewhere, he talks of laying the groundwork 'so that the moral questions appear in clear focus', not of offering answers to those questions, or of articulating 'the normative framework' for the enterprise.[11] Cicero might have found those statements somewhat pusillanimous. If utilitarianism is what public policy decision making is principally to rely on, other conflicting stances in philosophical ethics are to that extent being put aside. So even if utilitarianism is called in aid only because it enables the adoption of a decision procedure which can be claimed to be objective, plausibly enough for the purpose of achieving a result that will gain a measure of public acceptance, it is hard to see how it is not effectively being treated as its 'normative framework'.

At the same time, Cicero has his own ways of indicating the theoretical limitations of the approach to political theory he is advocating in this *De Legibus* passage. The account of its content just given shows him not only flagging up his marginalization of Epicurean and Academic sceptic stances, but conceding the possibility that there may in truth be greater validity in what they claim or argue than in the position he is embracing. As Raphael Woolf puts it: 'One might say that to announce loudly that one is closing down debate is itself to initiate a debate'. Woolf goes on to add a further apt comment:

> Cicero, I suggest, is using the notion of uniformity of outlook to illustrate a crucial feature of the theory he is advocating. The idea of natural law is precisely the idea that there is a universal set of normative principles applicable in all contexts. If this idea is correct, then there is indeed no room for divergence of opinion about what justice is.[12]

It is also significant that Cicero makes the Epicurean Atticus his principal interlocutor in Book 1 of *De Legibus*.[13] *De Legibus*, after all, is a dialogue, indeed one of Cicero's liveliest dialogues, not a treatise propounding its proposals dogmatically. Nor does Cicero simply ignore Atticus' own philosophical commitments. When he invites him to sign up to a basically Platonic and Stoic thesis on the rule of all nature by god or nature or some other power, Atticus makes it clear that he does so for the sake of the argument to be developed on its basis, and explicitly brackets his own Epicureanism (*Leg.* 1.21–22). As I point out elsewhere,[14] when he offers a summary of that argument, he does so in terms which abstract from its specifically Stoic commitments (*Leg.* 1.35). And when, in the sequel to the passage we have been considering, Cicero mounts against cultural relativist versions of legal positivism a defence of the view (couched in essentially Stoic terminology) that 'there is only one justice, which constitutes the bond among humans, and which has been constituted by the one law, which is right reason in commands and prohibitions' (*Leg.* 1.42–48), he has already clearly been attacking the Epicurean view of justice in some detail (*Leg.* 1.40–41, where the manuscript text resumes after a lacuna). Atticus is not made to offer any direct comment on Cicero's extended assault on other views such as these when eventually it is brought to a close (*Leg.* 1.52). Perhaps trying to rekindle a sense of genuine dialogue at this point, Cicero announces that the next topic will be the dispute between the Old Academy and the Stoics on the good. Urbanity and a different perspective are not however restored until Atticus' next intervention. This is a sardonic anecdote about disagreement in philosophy, which was told him—he says—by Phaedrus: tellingly enough, an Epicurean, like himself (*Leg.* 1.53).

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[10] Wolff 2006a: 3.

[11] Wolff 2006b: 410, 427.

[12] Woolf 2015: 117.

[13] So Woolf 2015: 116–17.

[14] Schofield (forthcoming).

One might suggest at this point something that could appear to pose a more troublesome objection both to Cicero's procedure and to the conclusions he draws from its employment. If his objective is the achievement in practice of a consensus on foundations for a stable and sound political settlement, does he not need to persuade citizens at large of his proposals? Finding a cluster of good philosophical schools who would grant their approval to his proposals is one thing. Actually getting them implemented is quite another. For a reply to this purported difficulty, it would suffice to distinguish between the basis on which Cicero's political recipe is recommended (its principles would be approved by a consensus of the soundest philosophers in the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition) and the audience to whom it is being recommended. Within the frame of the dialogue the audience consists of the non-philosophers Atticus and Quintus, but as the projected readership of its text he is addressing the Roman political elite. Conceivably, Cicero hoped that if sufficient numbers of his peers took its proposals to heart, whether immediately or at some future date, a consensus on their implementation might—in some form or to some extent—emerge among those best placed and equipped to bring about political reformation.

III. Full-throttled debate

Cicero sometimes writes as though political theory—discussion of the best form of *res publica* or of what laws and customs are beneficial—belongs within the intellectual province of the experienced statesman, whereas treatment of what is good or bad, of obligation, and of how we should live (*bene vivendi ratio*) is for the philosopher to work at and then carry through into practice (*De Or.* 1.209–13, *Div.* 2.9–12). He credits Carneades with this division of labour (*Div.* 2.9), which belonged within a broader survey of professions that is executed in Socratic style. Such a survey was designed for use in sceptical critique of overweening pretensions entertained by some one among them. One thing that is clear about the contrast is that it is not to be construed as a sharp division between theory and practice. The assumption is rather that experience needs to inform political theory, and that philosophical findings can and should shape our lives.[15] Another thing that is obvious enough (*cf. De Or.* 1.214–18) is that there is no reason in principle why someone might not become equipped with capacities both for political theory and for philosophy, and achieve accomplishment in each. Then again, doing good political theory might require good philosophical reflection: as Cicero clearly indicates in his treatment of justice in Book 1 of *De Legibus*, and especially in his explicit references to philosophical schools and traditions at *Leg.* 1.37–39 (discussed in section II above).

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[15] We might compare the opening pages of *De Officiis*, where its topic of obligation is said to involve two kinds of question: one relating to the criteria for what things are good (*finis bonorum*: see Allen 2014 for the explanation of this expression, frequently employed by Cicero), the other to rules of guidance (*praecepta*) (*Off.* 1.7).

Yet does the philosophy called in aid of political theory necessarily have to exclude debate (as in the treatment of justice in Book 1 of *De Legibus*)? The evidence of *De Republica*, to which *De Legibus* is presented as the companion dialogue, suggests that Cicero thought otherwise. In a letter to his brother Quintus dated to October or November 54 BC, he described the topic of *De Republica* as 'the best system for a citizen body (*civitas*) and the best citizen (*civis*)' (*QFr.* 3.5.1). The participants in the conversations it purports to describe were Scipio, Laelius, and other leading political figures from two or three generations earlier, gathered in 129 BC at what is represented as a critical moment for the Roman Republic, a few days before Scipio's sudden death (*Rep.* 1.14–18, *Lael.* 14). The work was constructed on a grander scale than any of Cicero's other writings, in six books, apparently conceived as three pairs. Books 1 and 2 dealt with 'the best system', Books 5 and 6 with 'the best citizen', while the central books (as in Plato's *Republic*) addressed more foundational topics: Book 3 considered justice as the foundation of political order while Book 4 examined the institutions, customs, and practices needed to bring up virtuous citizens properly.

Book 3 survives only in fragmentary form. However, it had been known for centuries—from a report by Augustine in the *City of God*—that at the end of Book 2 Cicero had left hanging for the next phase of the discussion a key question about justice. Is it impossible to conduct the *res publica* without injustice? Or does its conduct on the contrary require justice of the highest order? According to Augustine, Book 3 went on to pursue that question by staging a major debate (*magna conflictio*) in which Philus, one of the discussants, argued the case for the unavoidability of injustice, to be answered by Laelius putting the opposite case (August. *CD* 2.21). A few extracts, along with other information about the content of the two speeches, were available elsewhere in Augustine and in other later authors, most importantly Lactantius. Lactantius focuses on Philus' arguments, but also (*Inst.* 5.14.3–5) records the important information[16] that Cicero was here modelling his treatment on what he represented as the Academic sceptic Carneades' delivery of opposed speeches on justice (although first the positive, then the negative case) while on a diplomatic mission sent by the Athenians to Rome in 155 BC. Then, in 1819, substantial portions of the text, mostly of Philus' speech, became known through the discovery of a palimpsest containing sections of *De Republica*, including most notably much of the first two books. At that point it became clearer than ever that Cicero wanted his readers to side with Laelius rather than Philus, who made it plain from the outset that he dissociated himself from the immorality of the view he was about to advance *argumenti causa* (*Rep.* 3.8). Evidently, however, he thought that the debate needed to be heard.

Reconstruction of how either Philus or (still more) Laelius organized his argument is difficult and has any way to be conjectural; scholarly agreement has accordingly proved hard to achieve. For our purposes, all that we need to note is that the material Cicero included in those arguments contained a good deal of philosophical argumentation about ethical fundamentals. To quote a recent summary of one reading of Philus' case, offered by James Zetzel:[17]

> […] moving from the grandest idea of law and justice being identical, through the more cautious Aristotelian idea of justice as another's good—already rejected by Thrasymachus in *Republic* 1—to the vulgar consequentialism of the Epicureans,

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[16] Recently argued in Powell 2013 to be fanciful misinformation, if taken at all literally.

[17] Zetzel 2017: 318. I discuss Laelius' reply in Schofield 2017.

> ending with the picture of a world in which only a fool would pay any attention to moral standards, and in which […] a monarch is no better than a brigand.

By contrast:

> Laelius starts from this utter negation of morality and reverses it: by the time he is finished, we can again believe in justice, this time as a transcendent moral standard independent of any human failings.

So presentation of philosophical debate can be important in Ciceronian political theorizing, as in every area of his philosophical enquiries. How then to account for its presence at the very heart of *De Republica* but its exclusion from *De Legibus*? The obvious and simple answer is that the two dialogues constitute examples of two different genres. While neither excludes philosophy (as understood in the terms referred to at the beginning of this section), *De Republica* is a work primarily of political theory as theory, whereas *De Legibus* works out a practical legislative project. Here Cicero replicates in his own fashion a salient difference between Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, very much the models for his *De Republica* and *De Legibus*.

The philosophical debate between Thrasymachus and Socrates in Book 1, together with the challenge reformulating Thrasymachus' stance thrown down to Socrates by Glaucon and Adeimantus at the beginning of Book 2, is what fuels the entire trajectory of the *Republic*, the main purpose of which is not, in fact, to develop a political theory but to illuminate the nature of justice and the good. The *Laws*, by contrast, is shaped by the legislative project to which it gradually works its way round. The conversation represented in the dialogue is dominated by an anonymous Athenian Visitor who more resembles a Solon than a Socrates, even if his identity as an Athenian thinker is crucially shaped by Socratic ethics. It contains plenty of theoretical reflection but virtually no philosophical debate. There is occasional, and not insignificant, disagreement on topics such as tolerance by society of drinking or of homosexual practices, and in Book 4 we get an echo of Socrates' debate with Thrasymachus in Book 1 of the *Republic.* It is true that argument from time to time against other philosophical views is of crucial importance in enabling the Athenian to set out fundamental ideas governing the whole framework of the project. His critique of a militarist conception of the proper goal for a *polis* at the beginning of Book 1 is what is made to trigger his account of the values that will inform his own view of its proper goal. The attack on atheism in Book 10 provides an argument for the religious structure that shapes the life of the good city that he delineates, as well as its constitutional, institutional, and legislative provisions. Nowhere, however, is there two-sided philosophical debate.

A picture begins to form. In the sphere of politics, debate is called for when discussion is primarily conducted at the level of theory. But when political theory is to be applied in a practical project of legislation, debate will be unwelcome, as liable only to muddy the waters or blunt the message.

IV. Academic therapy

This view of the unwelcomeness of debate is the picture with which Cicero seems to leave us in the dialogues of 55–51 BC. But among the works he composed when he returned to writing philosophy in 46–44 BC, we find one that is clearly conceived as practical in intent but in which there is debate in profusion, even though the overall objective is persuasion and guidance. The five dialogues that make up the *Tusculan Disputations* (45 BC) constitute a work that, together with *De Officiis*, comes as close as Cicero gets to a personal manifesto in his philosophical writings (despite a disclaimer at *Tusc.* 5.11). Their practical intent is apparent from the account of their scope and purpose that Cicero gives in the retrospective catalogue of his philosophical writings presented in the preface to Book 2 of *De Divinatione* (composed in the spring of the following year) (*Div.* 2.2):

> My five subsequent books of *Tusculan Disputations* explained the key prerequisites of a happy life. The first is about making light of death, the second is on putting up with pain, the third deals with the alleviation of distress, and the fourth with other mental disturbances. The fifth covers the subject which sheds more light than any other on the whole of philosophy. It teaches that virtue is sufficient on its own for a happy life.

The philosophy of the *Tusculans* is not merely practical. It is represented as a sort of medicine, an art or science of healing the mind (*Tusc.* 2.43, 3.6: *animi medicina*; *cf. e.g.* 4.58–61, 83–4). This distinctive conceptualization of how ethics has a practical effect was common ground between Hellenistic philosophers, as has been amply discussed in recent scholarship. Epicurus ended his ethical *Letter to Menoeceus* by promising his addressee that if he practiced all the *Letter*'s teaching night and day, he would never be deeply disturbed, but would live a godlike existence among humans (*Ep. Men.* 135). Elsewhere, explicitly invoking the medical analogy, he pronounced as empty the discourse of a philosopher that provides no effective treatment for any human passion (Porph. *Ad Marcellam* 31 [= LS 25C]). The fourth of the books of Chrysippus' *On Emotions*, which seems also to have enjoyed a separate life as *Therapeutics*, followed the theory of the first three books (which it seems to have recapitulated) with therapeutic advice (Galen *Loc. Aff.* 3.1 [= *SVF* 3.457], *PHP* 5.6.45 [= *SVF* 3.458]). Cicero's own teacher, the Academic Philo of Larissa, mapped the different modes of philosophical discourse by deploying an elaborate comparison with the corresponding jobs a doctor has to perform (Stob. *Ecl.* 2.39.20–41.25).[18]

Both Epicurus and Chrysippus had worked out a body of ethical and psychological doctrine from which therapeutic consequences readily flowed, and could then be formulated in appropriate advice. The Academic sceptic holds no such doctrines. Debate and questioning are his métier. Cicero might have decided, as earlier in *De Legibus* and subsequently (as we shall see) in *De Officiis*, to bypass the debate and report instead his own conclusion concerning which school had the more persuasive view on the topics pursued in each of the *Tusculans*' five books. He might then have gone on to articulate therapeutic advice on that basis. In fact he undertakes something methodologically bolder and intellectually more challenging, following in the Socratic spirit he invokes at the outset (*Tusc.* 1.8; *cf.* 5.11). He allows plenty of divergent views to have their voices, rehearses debates between them, and engages in such debate with them himself. In short, philosophical debate is what drives a good deal of the *Tusculans*' theoretical argumentation (with Book 2 constituting something of an exception), albeit with practical guidance remaining the overall objective. This attempt to combine the two modes of debate and guidance, along with other distinctive features of the *Tusculans*, goes to make these dialogues one of the most innovative and experimental works in the Ciceronian corpus.[19] It is as though, within the sphere of personal ethics at any rate, he has come to think that a more flexible and imaginative approach to the requirements of guidance could be attempted than he had taken for politics in *De Legibus*.

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[18] The recent literature includes, notably, Nussbaum 1994 and Sorabji 2000. For Chrysippus' *On Emotions*, see Tieleman 2003; for Philo, see Brittain 2001: 255–95.

[19] See the important monograph of Gildenhard 2007 for treatment of the distinctiveness of the *Tusculans*.

For practical purposes, the controversy that Cicero thus places centre stage does require some form of resolution. One option would presumably have consisted in plumping for one or other of the views discussed as the more persuasive (and showing it to be so). It is often wrongly supposed that the *Tusculans* do take this path, and can best be described as Stoic (true with some qualifications only of Books 3 and 4). Alternatively—and this turns out to be a closer general approximation to the truth—he might engineer a degree of harmony between discordant philosophical voices, replicating in a different mode the policy that he had adopted in Book 1 of *De Legibus* for laying foundations for applied political theory.[20] He would then need to devise a determinate and suitably persuasive therapeutic recipe accordingly.

The *Tusculans* constitute an extensive, complex, and highly nuanced text, and any half-way adequate attempt at a summary of the variety of the ways in which Cicero tackles such challenges would require a full essay all to itself.[21] A first observation, however, is that in the first of the dialogues he certainly represents himself as having delivered the therapy of which he talks. Thus, at the beginning of Book 2, this is how Cicero's quite lively adolescent interlocutor of the first two books (*cf. Tusc.* 2.15, 28) responds to Book 1's treatment of the fear of death (*Tusc.* 2.10; *cf.* 1.119): 'From this kind of anxiety, believe me, I have been so freed that I consider nothing to be less in need of concern'. And at the conclusion of the argument of Book 2 against the view that pain, to be characterized in Book 5 as 'virtue's fiercest antagonist' (*Tusc.* 5.76), is the worst thing that can happen to us, he is made to say that he hopes he has been freed from the two things he most feared over the two days occupied by this pair of dialogues (*Tusc.* 2.67).

How has the respondent in Books 1 and 2 been brought to such a point of unconcern? Cicero emphasizes at the outset that philosophy in its fully finished form (*perfecta philosophia*) must be able to deploy 'abundant and embellished' speech (*copiose* […] *ornateque dicere*), and presents the lectures of the *Tusculans* as illustrative of philosophy so conceived: the declamations of his old age, as he puts it (*senilis* […] *declamatio*: *Tusc.* 1.7). There has certainly been plenty of rhetoric in Book 1, initially rhetoric in the service of a philosophical argument, mostly designed to present the case for the immortality of the soul and its ultimate freedom from the limitations of the body, as articulated above all by Plato. Then, in the last thirty or so increasingly anecdotal paragraphs, its deployment is intensified and serves chiefly to stiffen our resolve.

The same is even more emphatically true of Book 2. Here the philosopher most prominent in Cicero's discussion is Epicurus, credited with the view (subjected to mocking refutation: *Tusc.* 2.44–45) that pain is 'the only bad thing and the worst of all bad things' (*Tusc.* 2.17). Otherwise, apart from giving short shrift to the Stoic view that pain is not something bad at all (*Tusc.* 2.29–30, 42), he says remarkably little about philosophy and philosophers (except for the moral heroism of a minority among them: *Tusc.* 2.52, 61). The direction of his thinking is pithily expressed as follows (*Tusc.* 2.28, just before he attacks the Stoics' *ratiunculae*, 'mini-ratiocinations'; *cf. Tusc.* 2.42): 'The right question is not so much whether pain is bad, but how the soul is to be strengthened for the endurance of pain'. The focus throughout Book 2 is accordingly virtue and its development, as what we need if we are to make a proper evaluation of pain and cope with it in practice.

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[20] See the discussion above, section II, pp. 133–37..

[21] My observations in this section are much indebted to the ample and reflective discussion of the work in Woolf 2015, and they are largely congruent with the subtle treatment of *Tusculans* in Görler 1996 [= Görler 2004: 212–39]. In making the final revision of section IV, I hope I have profited from the discussions of the *Tusculans* conducted at the Symposium Hellenisticum held in Cambridge in July 2019.

Cicero does expound a philosophical basis for the recipe he provides. Having dealt with Epicureanism and Stoicism, he sketches an account of self-mastery that draws on Platonic and Aristotelian thought (without mentioning any names) as what is needed for the purpose. The soul has two parts, and it is for reason to prompt or direct or restrain the part that lacks reason into conformity with its grasp of what is honourable (*Tusc.* 2.47–53). But convincing someone to take to heart self-mastery so understood calls not for cool and precise philosophical argumentation (that is not how he dispenses with either Epicurean or Stoic positions) but for a sustained and varied flow of rhetoric. The rhetoric depends heavily on appeal to historical examples of courage and endurance, seldom represented as the fruit of philosophy. Nor indeed would it have been in the least plausible to construe them in that light. Their message in a nutshell is: 'pull yourself together'.

Cicero had in Book 1 achieved a sort of consensus about 'making light of death' among philosophers who otherwise hold sharply opposed views on the fate of the soul. Either Plato is right that it is immortal or, if it perishes with the body, as Epicurus and others held, it follows that death is no evil. But in Book 2 the only philosophers he really engages with are convicted of propounding nothing but false doctrines and palpably inadequate arguments, which make the right attitude to pain harder to achieve.

Books 3 and 4, however, supply a much more challenging philosophical diet. These two books—although not devoid of characteristic Ciceronian tropes—are almost wholly preoccupied with Greek philosophical debates about distress (in Book 3) and other mental disturbances (in Book 4), the pros and cons of the various positions taken, and the extent of agreement or otherwise between the different schools, both concerning the phenomena themselves and with regard to appropriate therapies.[22] One way in which Cicero marks the shift in register is by a different handling of the function of interlocutor. He had written the concluding words of Book 2 (*Tusc.* 2.67) as though the next dialogue would be conducted with the same interlocutor as in the first two books. But at the end of the preface to Book 3 he represents himself simply as calling upon 'one of those present' for a topic to discuss (*Tusc.* 3.7; similarly in Book 4: *Tusc.* 4.8). Cicero restricts the roles these volunteers play simply to stating the views that he will go on to refute at length, and allowing them none of the interventions in the subsequent discussion or the concluding responses made by the interlocutor of Books 1 and 2, nor indeed anything resembling the particularly active engagement of the discussant in the final Book 5. The extended passages of stirring rhetoric that fill the final sections of the other three books are also notable by their absence in Books 3 and 4. Cicero treats his audience (or better, his readership) more like fellow therapists needing a practitioner's handbook than as patients potentially in need of therapy themselves.

A. E. Douglas found so little that was distinctively Ciceronian in these books that he suggested that their subject matter must have been regarded by the author as 'less important than the conquest of the fear of death and the endurance of physical pain', death and pain certainly being treated as the subjects of our greatest fears (*Tusc.* 4.64).[23] Such an inference, however, would conflict with Cicero's own words at the end of Book 1, where, of the discussions he projects for the following books, he singles out as especially important those that are to deal with 'the alleviation of distress, fears, lusts: the most abundant fruit produced by all of philosophy' (*Tusc.* 1.119). And, as Stephen White points out, of all the mental disturbances to which humans are subject, Cicero defends the decision to make distress the single topic of Book 3 as ‘the worst thing a person can feel’, and ‘the very wellspring of misery’ (*Tusc.* 4.82–83).[24] In the last sentence of the entire work he refers to its writing as providing alleviation from ‘the bitter sorrows and the host of troubles that beset me on every side’ (*Tusc.* 5.121).

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[22] See the translation and commentary by Graver 2002.

[23] Douglas 1990: 77.

Moreover, it was not many months since, in grief over the death of his daughter Tullia, Cicero had composed a *Consolation*, to which he refers here (*Tusc.* 3.76, 4.63; *cf.* 1.65, 76); and consolation for grief (*dolor*, *maeror*) is what figures most prominently in the therapeutic section of Book 3 (*Tusc.* 3.71–79), as often earlier too. Cicero was himself, of course, no securely imperturbable sage (as he observes in commenting on the composition of the *Consolation*: *Tusc.* 4.63; *cf.* 3.76, 5.3–4). So when he observes that the enquiry of Book 4 (the same would be true of Book 3: *cf. Tusc.* 3.80) is proposed not so much with the wise (*i.e.* perfectly rational) person in mind, but for the benefit of the enquirer (*Tusc.* 4.58–59), we might not unreasonably read his remark as effectively relating to himself as much as to the interlocutor.

The main body of Book 3, however, is full of technical philosophy. Cicero puts painstaking care into explaining and weighing the merits and demerits of a wide range of views—Stoic, Peripatetic, Epicurean, but also those of the Cyrenaics and Carneades (and among the Stoics the positions of Cleanthes and Chrysippus get separate attention). Scholars often treat Books 3 and 4 as basically Stoic. So they are, in their basic contentions that the cause of all emotional disturbances is a belief and that belief is always voluntary (*Tusc.* 3.24, 82–83, 4.65, 83). But if the voluntariness of belief is certainly something on which the Stoics differed from the Peripatetics, the treatment of emotion as or involving belief turns out not to be anything on which the leading schools disagree. It is simply that the Stoics offer much the most throrough, precise, and convincing account of the kinds of belief that emotions consist in. So the discussion in each of the two books begins with the presentation of Stoic syllogisms (*Tusc.* 3.13–21) or classifications and distinctions (*Tusc.* 4.11–33, where however the extensive detail of the analogy Stoics draw with physical sickness receives criticism: *Tusc.* 4.23, 27). In both books Cicero reverts in due course to his preferred expansive, ‘freer’ mode of argument in more Peripatetic style (*Tusc.* 3.22, 4.9, 4.33), even though specific Peripatetic doctrine on these topics is rejected as inferior to what the Stoics taught (*Tusc.* 3.22, 74, 4.38–46). Moreover, as usual he flags his own general stance as Academic, not ‘tied to the tenets of a single school’, but looking for ‘the most persuasive answer on each topic’ (*Tusc.* 4.7, 47).

Cicero takes distinctly differing approaches to appropriate therapies for emotional disturbances in Book 3 and in Book 4. Book 3’s review of the teachings of Epicurus, the Cyrenaics, and Carneades is much preoccupied with the stances they take on therapy, and on pointing out what he sees as their inadequacies, without suggesting that they are entirely without merit. At the end of the book (*Tusc.* 3.75–79) he structures the job of those who are offering consolation as an ordered hierarchy of options: removing distress altogether, getting it to subside or diminish, keeping it within limits, diverting it elsewhere. He sums up the techniques favoured by the major schools of philosophy, itemizes the chief considerations worth advancing in consolation, and comments that ‘different methods work for different people’ (he had used them all in his own *Consolation*; *cf.* also *Tusc.* 4.59). He does endorse Chrysippus’ view that the core of the problem is that someone who is grieving, or in some other distressed state of mind, believes that their reaction to what has happened to them is appropriate. Therefore convincing them that it is not appropriate, and that they can stop thinking that it is, should be the real key. But at the same time he recognizes that this is a counsel of perfection: its application to the occasion of distress is 'difficult' (*Tusc.* 3.79; *cf.* 82–83).

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[24] White 1995: 226.

In Book 4, discussion of therapy is largely confined to the final section, which is dedicated to the topic and includes sub-sections on a number of individual emotions, notably erotic love (the Stoics' position on the topic is, interestingly, treated as implausibly idealistic: *Tusc.* 4.72). However, little is otherwise said here about the views associated with particular schools. Cicero is much more intent than in Book 3 on distilling a single basic method, on which all schools ought to be able to agree, and presenting this as the voice of reason (echoing his eloquent account, earlier in the book, of virtue as right reason: *Tusc.* 4.34). Such a method should concentrate on teaching that 'emotional disturbances are wrong in and of themselves and have nothing natural or necessary about them' (*Tusc.* 4.60; *cf.* 61–62). We need 'to show that they are a matter of belief and are voluntary, and that we experience them because we think it appropriate to do so: it is this error which philosophy promises to eradicate' as 'the root of all evils' (*Tusc.* 4.83).

The main tendency of Book 3, then, is to suggest rather pragmatically that, whatever limitations may be found in their theorizing, most philosophical schools have something therapeutically useful to offer, especially since 'different methods work for different people'. Book 4, on the other hand, as Raphael Woolf points out, more ambitiously extracts from philosophical debate the possibility of a consensus on one single most important task for philosophy: the eradication of error (*Tusc.* 4.61).[25] Its evident idealism foreshadows the theme of the final book: that virtue is sufficient for happiness.

Book 5 is composed on a larger scale. In length it exceeds any of the three preceding books, and bids to rival Book 1. The retrospect in *De Divinatione* singles out its subject matter as shedding 'more light than any other on the whole of philosophy' (*Div.* 2.2). Book 5's preface soon launches into an extraordinary prose hymn to philosophy as 'guide to living a life', couched in rhetoric of an extravagance that is unparalleled in Cicero's other surviving theoretical writing (*Tusc.* 5.5). His unidentified interlocutor is written as livelier, sharper, and harder to convince than any other in the sequence. He maintains his role through to the book's watershed (*Tusc.* 5.83), when Cicero exploits an opportunity to develop an extended final exhibition of philosophical rhetoric, surpassing in ambition any other stretch of argument in the entire sequence of the *Tusculans*. But philosophical discussion has begun with subtle debate on the pros and cons of the Stoic and Peripatetic conceptions of happiness and the good. In short, Book 5 more than any other of the five dialogues is a *tour de force*, designed to display the varied argumentative repertoire Cicero could command in writing philosophy for Romans as he thought it should be written.

Its basic structure consists in a simple bipartition. After indicating as usual his own Academic stance in the preface (*Tusc.* 5.11), the first main section sees Cicero arguing the Stoic case that, provided what is morally admirable is the only good, virtue is all we need to guarantee a life of happiness (*Tusc.* 5.15–82). In the second section, he undertakes the job of showing how not only the Peripatetics, who recognize goods of the body and of fortune as well, but virtually all philosophical schools whose views on what is good and bad still merit attention, and above all Epicurus, can argue for the sufficiency of virtue or reason and wisdom for happiness, despite their acknowledgement of things good and bad other than virtue (*Tusc.* 5.82–118).[26] Much of the keenest debate in Book 5, however, is prompted by the questions the interlocutor puts at various junctures during Cicero's development of the Stoic position (*Tusc.* 5.13, 17–18, 21, 32, 73, 82). These constitute a device for creating two levels of Ciceronian discourse. At the main level, we increasingly get Ciceronian philosophical eloquence, with recourse to episodes from Roman and then Greek history (the story of the sword of Damocles, followed by that of Cicero's own discovery of the crumbling tomb of Archimedes, is compellingly told: *Tusc.* 5.57–66). The subsidiary level consists of responses to those questions framed by the interlocutor, which are very much focused on divergences between different philosophical schools on key points, and, more particularly, on how far their positions are self-consistent.

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[25] Woolf 2015: 240–41. As he points out, however, Stoics and Peripatetics would not agree on what counts as 'error' or irrational emotional disturbance.

Cicero expressly endorses the Stoic theory, which he commends both for its courage and—'unless you can produce something better'—its truth (*Tusc.* 5.82). At this point one might suppose that the dialogue has established what it set out to establish—and that it could, therefore, be drawn fairly swiftly to a conclusion. Had that happened, however, the force of the promise that *philosophy* is the guide to happiness would have been severely weakened. It would leave Book 5, and indeed the whole work, ending up with a narrower view of philosophy than it looked as though Cicero wanted to embrace when he hymned its history and achievements in the preface (*Tusc.* 5.5–11). And many readers would, of course, be likely (like the Antiochean Brutus, dedicatee of this and all the *Tusculans*) to have found deeply unattractive the suggestion that it is, in truth, only on the basis of Stoic premises that happiness for the virtuous is assured. This is where Cicero makes the interlocutor launch one last sally on his theme of consistency. Is there not a way, the discussant in effect asks, in which the Peripatetic position can be made to equate with the Stoic without losing its self-consistency (*Tusc.* 5.82)?

In response, Cicero devotes only a paragraph or two to a reconsideration of the views of the Peripatetics. Within a few paragraphs he has instead launched himself into a powerfully eloquent exposition, sustained with all the devices of rhetoric at his disposal, of how and why even Epicurus thinks that the wise person will remain happy whatever happens to him, and however many of the five senses he comes to lose (*Tusc.* 5.89–118). Even Epicurus is to be brought under the umbrella of true philosophy, and of what it can teach us about the way to achieve happiness, although virtue of course holds no interest in and of itself at all for a hedonist such as he is. That the Stoic case is in effect counterbalanced in the end by a sympathetic account of Epicureanism represents an extraordinary outcome for Book 5 and for the sequence of dialogues as a group.

Philosophical readers of Book 5 are apt to find Cicero's exposition of views alternative to the Stoic position—that nothing else counts for happiness but virtue—puzzling and unsatisfactory. He makes no attempt to mount a defence of the Peripatetic stance that could compare in detail and rigour with the basic case he develops for the Stoic theory (*Tusc.* 5.21–31, 40–54). Much of the dissatisfaction may be due, however, to a misunderstanding of the way in which Cicero wants his endorsement of the Stoic view (as quoted above: *Tusc.* 5.82) to be taken. He was emphatic early on that he sees the Stoic position as essentially no different from Plato's in the *Gorgias* and *Menexenus* (*Tusc.* 5.34–36). Moreover, having initially invoked Plato's *auctoritas* (much greater, he insinuates, than the Stoic Zeno's), he concludes with the promise that 'my whole speech will flow from what might be described as the sacred and revered spring that is Plato's'. A little later he will ascribe the same view to Aristotle and all the leading figures in the Old Academy (*Tusc.* 5.39). So, as he represents it, the position he endorses as Stoic is not unique to Stoicism. It is the shared property of all the major schools (including here the Stoics) in the broadly Platonic tradition.

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[26] At *Tusc.* 5.28 Cicero makes the programmatic statement: 'It is clear who are the persons I am calling good. People who are equipped and adorned with all the virtues we call sometimes wise, sometimes good'. From *Tusc.* 5.68 onwards, talk of the wise person predominates.

Where he thinks the Peripatetics and Old Academy (at any rate as represented by Antiochus) have gone astray is in holding that, unless someone possesses goods of the body and of fortune as well as virtue, happiness in its fullness (being not just *beatus* but *beatissimus*) is not possible (*Tusc.* 5.22–23, 40, 51, 75–76). At the beginning of the second main section of Book 5, the interlocutor challenges him to show how they might consistently take that stance (*Tusc.* 5.82). Understandably, Cicero has no interest in doing that. Instead he takes the line that, provided they maintain that the virtuous person will despise pain however extreme (and any other ills of the body or of fortune), they may perfectly reasonably claim that happiness will not be affected (*Tusc.* 5.85). In effect, they would be embracing the view that he earlier associates with Carneades' Peripatetic contemporary Critolaus (*Tusc.* 5.51). Although Cicero does not say as much, their position will then be just the same as that of the Stoics, with purely verbal differences between them being all that remains. This was Carneades' verdict, as we are explicitly reminded at the end of Book 5 (*Tusc.* 5.119–20).[27]

So it is true that Cicero does not mount much of a defence of the Peripatetic position on happiness in the second main section of Book 5. He might reasonably have thought, however, that citing and then expatiating upon the view shared by them and (more usefully for therapeutic rhetoric) Epicurus, that the virtuous or wise person is indifferent to ills of body and fortune, was more to the point. It is piquant, to say the least, that Epicurus and Carneades, whom *De Legibus* did not allow to speak at all, are left the final say at the end of the *Tusculans.*

One implication might be that philosophy gets obsessed with minor distinctions and with the interlocutor's problem of consistency—a problem of logic. From one point of view, consistency, and debates turning upon it, matters hugely. And Cicero duly rehearses the debates with appropriate vigour and ingenuity. But in the end Book 5 suggests that they are in danger of diverting us from philosophy's primary task: the guidance that we look to philosophy to supply. For such guidance philosophical rhetoric (harnessed to Academic judiciousness) will need to be called into service: *perfecta philosophia.* It can build upon the consensus that most powerful philosophers, despite their differences, do manage to achieve on all the questions debated in the *Tusculans*, from realizing that death holds no terrors to registering the sufficiency of virtue for the good life.

V. Coda

It is not only when developing the basis for a practicable legislative project for the *res publica* that Cicero thinks it is best to eschew debate. Philosophical debate is for the most part and of set purpose excluded in *De Officiis*, the last of his philosophical writings on ethics, or indeed on any topic: a book of advice (*praeceptio*, *Off.* 1.6) on our principal moral obligations, not a dialogue but expounded in the literary form of an extended letter to his son Marcus.[28] Guidance, untrammelled by any promise to engage with the disagreements between the philosophical schools over its subject matter (*cf. Off.* 1.6), is uncomplicatedly what it is. We might ask: is there then anything that marks it out as a work of *Academic* philosophy—for which debate is the best way to get at the truth or the best approximation to it—in any sense at all?

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[27] I discuss Carneades' 'neutralizing' argument in Schofield 2012.

[28] See Gibson and Morrison 2007: 9–13.

To this question the answer is an unequivocal 'Yes'. Here the preface to the whole work is a key text. For while it does not launch any debate between the schools about the questions Cicero will be engaging with, he sets the scene by *recalling* his own staging of such debates elsewhere (he means principally *De Finibus* and the *Tusculan Disputations*). He dismisses the views of the Epicureans and similar schools out of hand, although in the last pages of the work he will judge it prudent to line up some arguments against them, presumably just in case Marcus might feel tempted to waver from the instruction with which he has now been supplied (*Off.* 1.5, 3.116–19). He then proposes that the business of giving advice is best regarded as the territory of the Stoics, Academics (here he means the Old Academy of Speusippus, Xenocrates, and Polemo: *Leg.* 1.38), and the Peripatetics, ruling out Ariston, Pyrrho, and Erillus, whose views simply leave no scope for that kind of philosophizing (*cf. Fin.* 2.43, 5.73). In the event, he will be presenting in what follows a Stoic treatment of the issues—as it quickly transpires, largely in Panaetius' version. But he will do so not slavishly as a translator, but 'as I am used to doing, drawing on those sources according to my own judgment and decision (*iudicio arbitrioque nostro*), to the extent and in the manner that will seem best' (*Off.* 1.6; *cf.* 1.7–10).

These last remarks indicate to the reader that this *is* to be a work by Cicero the Academic sceptic. He refers to his usual practice in terms that recapitulate elements of the classic statements of Academic methodology in the dialogues (*Nat. D.* 1.11–12, *Div.* 2.150). That he should find a Stoic presentation of the subject most appealing will not surprise readers of his ethical dialogues, nor that he likes Panaetius' version best, while allowing that either a Peripatetic or a Stoic basis for the business in hand would suffice (*Off.* 3.33). Book 4 of *De Finibus* had concluded with praise of Panaetius as a Stoic who in style and doctrine alike was close to the Old Academy and the Peripatetics (*Fin.* 4.79). The way Cicero puts the point, however, makes it clear that he himself is by no means to be perceived *as* a Stoic now, a message reinforced in the prefatory sections of Books 2 and 3.

That is, in effect, the kind of reply he makes explicitly at the beginning of Book 2 to the objection we noted him registering in the introductory section of this chapter. Contrary to the objection, he says, Academic sceptics are not left with no views, or no practical options for living. Academics say that some things are persuasive (*probabilia*), some not, even if certainty is unavailable. And there is no reason why he should not go for what seems persuasive to him, while avoiding the arrogance of flatly asserting or denying things. At this point he refers for a fuller discussion to his *Academic books* (*Off.* 2.7–8). What is more important for now is that the kind of philosophical guidance attempted in *De Officiis* can best proceed having given just a few mentions of debate, now recollected in tranquillity, a very different approach that taken in the *Tusculans.*

The *Tusculans*, however, share with *De Officiis*, and with *De Legibus* as well, the conviction that, in the practical sphere, it is important to achieve as much consensus as possible if philosophy as such is to speak with authority. Our examination of these writings suggests that Cicero would have wholeheartedly agreed with Jonathan Wolff: 'Philosophers find it hard to compromise. [...] Without pure philosophical reflection, and the dogged pursuit of what may seem to others crazy ideas, intellectual discussion would be flat and static'. But he would also have agreed with Wolff's assessment of philosophy's best strategy for moving the development of policy forward in matters of applied moral and political theory: ‘to draw more people into a consensus view, so that policy can be more widely endorsed, even if different people’s reasons for the policy differ’. Kantians and utilitarians can ‘agree that it is wrong to murder innocents when no good could come of it’ (although presumably a Kantian would not, out of preference, choose to put the point that way).[29]

Cicero’s social and intellectual world was very different from our own. His ideal of *perfecta philosophia*, in particular, strikes few contemporary resonances, even if the importance of good and well-written philosophy by public intellectuals and others that can speak to readers beyond the academy has often been recognized. Yet his pioneering attempts to tackle a fundamental problem about the reconciliation of debate and guidance in the practical application of ethical and political philosophy, particularly in the *Tusculan Disputations*, should earn him philosophical respect.[30]

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[29] Wolff 2011: 4–5.

[30] This chapter is a revised and expanded version of a Keeling Lecture delivered in 2011: my thanks to Fiona Leigh for the honour of the invitation. Some of its material has also been presented to audiences in Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, Princeton, Athens, and Toronto. I am grateful for comments made on all these occasions. The essay mostly retains its original lecture style, and is lightly annotated accordingly.

FREGE PLAGIARIZED THE STOICS

SUSANNE BOBZIEN

> *Plagiarism*: 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own.'[1]

I. Introduction

It is my proposal that Frege plagiarized the Stoics on a large scale in his work on the philosophy of logic and language as written mainly between 1890 and his death in 1925 (much of which was only published posthumously), and possibly earlier. I use 'plagiarize' merely as a descriptive term. I am not concerned with finger pointing or casting moral judgement. This is left to those who feel so inclined. The point is rather to demonstrate that there are numerous and extensive parallels in both formulation and content between the Stoics and Frege, so plentiful that one would be hard pressed to brush them off as coincidence. These parallels include several that appear to occur in no other modern works that were published before Frege's own and were accessible to him. Additionally, a cluster of corroborating historical data is adduced to support the suggestion.

Once it is understood that Frege draws from the Stoics, and where in his work and by which channels he does so, some elements of his philosophy of language can be given new readings in the light of his—unacknowledged—contemplation and absorption of Stoic logic. Conversely, the comparison with Frege's philosophy makes it possible to shed new light on some issues in Stoic logic and philosophy of language. In this way, what I offer also contributes on a small scale to the philosophical interpretation of Frege's work and of Stoic philosophy, and, as such, is not merely of historical interest. (Such issues include the logical structure of commands and questions, emotional elements in assertion-like contents, the treatment of what Frege calls mock thoughts, the logical status of indexicals, the reduction of causal statements, language regimentation, including Frege's 'Hilfssprache', and more.) In addition, I seek to provide a wider philosophical audience with the groundbreaking, original, but widely neglected philosophical and logical work of the Stoics. I thus simultaneously offer an introduction to Stoic philosophy of logic and language. For those acquainted with Stoic philosophy but not Frege's, on the other hand, I provide a glimpse into Frege's work on logic and language.

No knowledge of Greek, Latin, or German is required of the reader. Some terms and phrases in these languages are given in brackets and footnotes as evidence, but they are inessential for the understanding of any major point. Greek expressions in the main text are transliterated. Translations are my own, except where noted otherwise. For the texts and editions used and cited in brackets by and of Frege, the Stoics, and some others, sigla and abbreviations are introduced at their first occurrence. At the end of the paper, an alphabetical list of the sigla is added for ease of reference. It is in the nature of the project that there are copious comparisons. I hope to have succeeded in staying away from the terribly tedious by leading the reader through a number of philosophically fascinating issues that are still of contemporary relevance and providing a fresh perspective on various philosophical questions.

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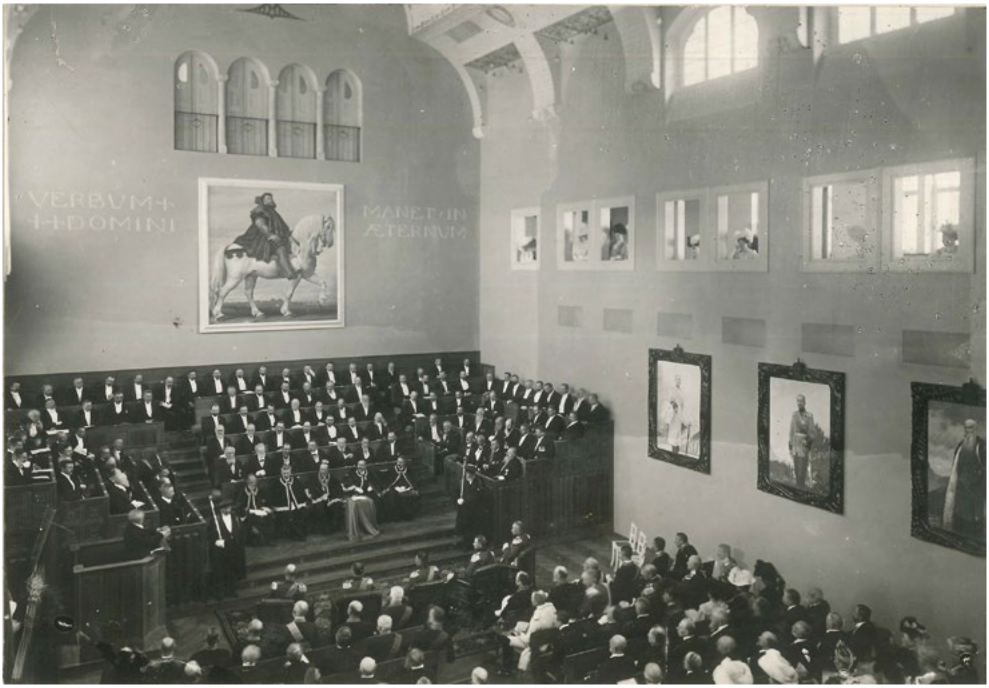
[1] *The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (Knowles 2006).

II. Historical background

I begin, however, with a light-hearted look at the historical background and at how this paper took shape. When I wrote my 2006 *Stanford Encyclopaedia* entry on ancient logic, I had just co-taught a graduate class on Frege's philosophy of logic and language, and noticed so many parallels to the Stoics that I recklessly included the sentence, 'The many close similarities between [the Stoic] Chrysippus' philosophical logic and that of Gottlob Frege are especially striking', planning to follow this lead at a later point. But I got side-tracked. Still, it seems, my sentence did not go unnoticed. In 2009, a German article appeared in which three German professors—a classicist and two historians of philosophy—contend that Frege had been influenced in his work by his knowledge of Stoic logic. These three men pooled their resources and embarked on some detective work that led them to fascinating revelations: revelations of a kind that had never crossed my mind.[2] Their article culminates with two photographic images. The first is a photo of the 350th anniversary celebration at the University of Jena in 1908 (from the Universitätsarchiv Jena).



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[2] Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009. A useful little summary is available in English in *The Bulletin of Symbolic Logic* (Wille 2010).

And this is a magnification of a tiny part of that photo.

You see here on the right the famous logician Gottlob Frege and on the left the famous classicist Rudolf Hirzel—although, as the authors hasten to mention, with an aisle between them. ‘So what?’ you may say, ‘I have sat next to a famous classicist, and still do not know much about Stoic logic’. But there is more in the German article. Hirzel is not just *any* famous classicist. He was a specialist on various aspects of Stoic philosophy who published, in 1879, an article entitled *De logica Stoicorum* (‘On the logic of the Stoics’). And there is even more: For *twenty-four* years (1889 to 1913), Hirzel lived in Frege’s house, renting the upper floor. *And* they shared an acquaintance, the philologically trained philosopher Rudolf Christoph Eucken, Professor at Jena from 1874–1920, who, believe it or not, lived across the street from Frege. Moreover, both Hirzel and Frege were introverts. Therefore, the three German professors conclude, Hirzel and Frege must have talked to each other. And I agree that even two introverts, if they live floor to ceiling for twenty-four years, are likely to have exchanged a word or two. (‘The tap is leaking.’ ‘Oh. I’ll see to it.’) Not so clear is *how* the three German professors imagine that elements of Stoic philosophy entered Frege’s mind via Hirzel. No decisive evidence, in the form of, say, letters or diary entries, has yet surfaced, so we have here an open question.

The discursive **argument of the three professors** is in large part based on conjecture and it is not entirely compelling. Here is a brief summary of their reasoning, with my assessment in brackets. Details will be provided elsewhere.

(i) Frege knew the classicist Hirzel. (This is correct.)
    (a) They talked to each other. (This is almost certainly correct.)
    (b) Frege got a sentence from Plato’s *Hippias Major* from Hirzel. (This is possible, if irrelevant.)
(ii) Frege was impacted by Stoic logic. (This is correct.)
(iii) The points of impact happened after 1889. (This is possible.)
(iv) The points of impact that happened after 1889 are the following:
    (a) Stoic *lekta* led to Frege’s ‘Gedanken’ (this is incorrect as it stands);
    (b) The Stoic notion of predicate impacted Frege’s notion of predicates as function (this is likely incorrect).

(v) Frege learned about the elements of Stoic logic mentioned in (iv) from the 'middleman' Hirzel. (There is no evidence.)

(vi) Hirzel was qualified in matters of Stoic logic. (This is incorrect. Hirzel was somewhat qualified in matters of Stoic epistemology, which the Stoics classified as *logikē*, yes. For qualifications in Stoic logic proper, or *dialektikē*, there is no evidence. His *De logica Stoicorum* is not about logic in the sense in which Frege would have understood the word.)

(vii) Frege learnt about the Stoics from Hirzel in a busy discussion circle which also included Eucken. (There is no evidence of such a discussion circle.)[3]

The *authors produce no evidence* that Hirzel ever talked to Frege about Stoic logic, or that he talked to him at all about philosophical issues, beyond *perhaps* alerting him to a passage in Plato's *Hippias Major*. Unless and until written evidence is unearthed that confirms conversations between Frege and Hirzel about Stoic logic, in Frege's understanding of the word, I take it as unproven that Hirzel was a 'qualified middle man' ('qualifizierter Mittelsmann')[4] between the Stoics and Frege.

The alternative I suggest contends that Stoic logic had a much wider-ranging impact on Frege. Imagine Frege had a choice between conversing with an introverted classicist who had, as far as we know, no understanding of logic in the sense in which Frege takes it ('logic proper'), and conversing with a group of brilliant logicians, logicians who could not talk back, at that. My guess is that he would have preferred the logicians. The assumption that Frege conversed with the Stoics (more) directly is, I suggest, a more promising assumption than that he conversed with them via discussion with Hirzel. In other words, if Stoic logic had an impact on Frege's logic, then this impact would have come primarily from books containing Stoic logic that Frege himself read—in his study, as is apt for an introvert.

Here is my hypothesis: Frege helped himself generously to elements of Stoic logic as they were presented in the first volume of Carl Prantl's monumental four-volume *Geschichte der Logik im Abendland* (*History of Western Logic*), published in 1855.[5] This volume contains a very long chapter on Stoic logic proper (401–96). More than half of the chapter consists of tightly printed footnotes that present a major part of the—then known—extant Stoic testimony on logic in the original Greek and Latin sources. The main text offers a relentlessly deprecating summary-cum-paraphrase of Stoic logic, based on the texts quoted in the footnotes. These ninety-five pages remained for almost a century and a half the best comprehensive source for Stoic logic in any language (and the only one in a work on the history of logic), despite the fact that Prantl tells us on every other page how idiotic ('blödsinnig') and piffling ('läppisch') the Stoic theory was. Some details will establish the *historical* plausibility of this assumption.

Hirzel's intercession would not have been required for Frege to learn about the existence and importance of Prantl's work. It was generally well known.[6] Sigwart for example, in his preface (p. VI) to the first edition of the 1873 first volume of his widely known *Logik*, acknowledges 'Prantl's terrific work' ('grossartiges Werk') in a breath with Trendelenburg, Ueberweg, and Mill, and no others, fifteen years before Hirzel moved into Frege's house.

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[3] Dathe 1995 suggests repeatedly that Frege and Eucken must have had philosophical conversations. He does not adduce any piece of evidence for this hypothesis.

[4] Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 383.

[5] *Geschichte der Logik im Abendland* (München 1855–70, 4 vols, vol. I, published in 1855).

[6] See *e.g.* Zeller 1865–68, as noted by Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 381; Trendelenburg 1862: (I) 33, 311; Ueberweg 1871: 19.

Sigwart also mentions Prantl at least five times in that volume. We know that at some point Frege took notes or excerpts from that very work.[7] One also needs to remember that the number of German books on logic to appear per year was relatively small, and that Frege seems to have read widely on logic—he even read Wilhelm Wundt's *Logik*.[8] Note further that Frege's colleague Eucken draws attention to Prantl's work in his lectures on logic in Jena in 1880–82 (Kreiser 2001: 290).

Frege would have had easy access to Prantl's work. Besides a bookstore and the Jena University Library, there would have been Hirzel's library as a possible source. Not only was Hirzel's father, Solomon Hirzel, the publisher of the work, but Hirzel himself refers to Prantl's section on the Stoics in his 1879 paper, and there are at least nine references to Prantl's first volume in his 1882 Cicero tome. So we can assume Hirzel read parts of it and most probably owned a copy.[9] Presumably, Hirzel would have understood very little of Prantl, who, although he loathed the Stoics, had at least the good sense to represent their views in many parts correctly, before labelling them inane.

Frege, on the other hand, was *in the best possible position of perhaps all German philosophers and logicians* at the time to comprehend and appreciate the extraordinary treasure trove Prantl lays bare. First, Frege knew and could read both Greek and Latin. Kreiser 2001: 38–43, especially the figure on p. 42, suggests that at school Frege had ten years of intensive Latin courses and eight years of intensive Greek courses. Generally, this would have been part of the education at a German 'Gymnasium' in the mid-nineteenth century and the norm for any professor in the humanities. For ancient Greek, compare for example Sigwart's above-mentioned *Logik*, which amply quotes Greek in footnotes without translation. For Latin, consider that publications in Latin were not unusual in the mid-nineteenth century. (Recall that Hirzel's *De logica Stoicorum* is written in Latin.) Frege's own writings show frequent sprinkles of Latin, many examples of and allusions to Classics, as well as a verse from Homer quoted in Greek, just so, as an example of onomatopoeia, and casual reference to the Greek *spiritus lenis*.[10] Frege's work also shows that he was acquainted with many aspects of Aristotelian logic.[11] Second, as those versed in Stoic logic know, it was in the first instance a propositional logic, a kind of logic barely understood by anyone in the nineteenth century before Frege's *Begriffsschrift*.

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[7] *Cf.* Scholz's catalogue of Frege's 'Nachlass' as published at the end of Veraart 1976.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Despite the title, in his 1879 paper Hirzel is not concerned with any questions of logic, but with the question of whether it was the Stoics who introduced the word 'logic' (*logikē*) for a philosophical discipline—an application with a vastly wider range than that of the 'logic' that Frege was interested in, which would correspond more closely to what the Stoic called dialectic (*dialektikē*). In his 1882 volume, he also does not cite Prantl in any context of logic proper.

[10] Latin: See SB, CP 164 for a Latin quote from Leibniz; and the footnote OCN, PW 79: '“*Omnia una sunt*”, a Latinist would say, if not deterred by his feeling for the language […]'. BLC, PW 9–10 strongly suggest Frege read Leibniz in Latin, with several lines quoted in Latin, plus three work titles. He uses classical Latin examples as well: Cicero, Cato, *etc.* Greek: Frege quotes Greek expressions in Greek letters: PWLB, PW 139 he writes: 'man vergleiche dazu den homerischen Vers (*Odyss*. IX,71): τριχθά τε καὶ τετραχθὰ διέσχισεν ἲς ἀνέμοιο'. He quotes the entire verse in Greek and seems to assume that the reader, too, knows Homer in Greek. *Cf.* also the Greek πρῶτον ψεῦδος in DPE, PW 62, 64. There are references to Homer in *e.g. SB* (Odysseus), and in PWLB, PW 129 ('Scylla has six heads'). Further, we find in GG IX 45 a casual reference to the ancient Greek accent *spiritus lenis*: 'the smooth breathing, designating the value-range of a function, and a sign to play the role of the definite article in language' ('der Spiritus lenis zur Bezeichnung des Werthverlaufs einer Function und ein Zeichen, das den bestimmten Artikel der Sprache vertreten soll', GG IX 9).

[11] *E.g.* in BS.

So it would be astounding if Frege (i) had not known of Prantl's work, (ii) had not had access to it, and (iii) did not have what it takes to understand Prantl's long chapter on Stoic logic with its many primary sources. Moreover (iv), even a cursory reading of parts of that chapter would have been bound to pique his interest.[12] Any perusing of that chapter would also have directed Frege to book 7 of Diogenes Laertius' *Vitae Philosophorum* (*Lives of the Philosophers*, composed *c.* the second century CE), which, in forty paragraphs (D.L. 7.43–83), contains perhaps our most valuable continuous source of Stoic logic, a detailed, historically reliable, summary of all its main aspects, hereafter referred to as the *Summary*. Much of it is found in Prantl's footnotes, but one should not rule out the possibility that Frege had independent knowledge of this work. At the time, it was well-known and widely available, including in two German translations.[13]

In brief, my hypothesis then is this: Frege learned about Stoic logic from Prantl's *History of Western Logic*, which he may or may not have borrowed from Hirzel, but is likely to have known (of) before the Hirzels became his lodgers. Additionally, Frege may have read the *Summary* on Stoic logic in Diogenes Laertius, possibly in one of its widely available German translations. At this point, I deliberately leave several questions open. Why am I so certain that Frege drew on Prantl, rather than primary texts or some other source? How, more specifically, did the content of Prantl's chapter on Stoic logic become incorporated into Frege's work? Was it intentional? Would it really be plagiarism? Naturally, these questions can only be considered after the textual evidence has been unrolled, which is what comes next.

III. Textual evidence

The text-based argument in section III is strictly accumulative. No single textual parallel validates the thesis of plagiarism. It is by accruing passage by passage, sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase, the Stoic elements in Frege's oeuvre, organizing them by (Stoic) topic, and considering their philosophical significance (and adding to this the historical data provided above) that a compelling case is built.[14] Taking in the result requires patience on the part of the reader. Those who are less interested in the philosophical implications of the parallels can directly consult the tables with synopses added for each topic in order to facilitate absorption of the semblances at a glance.

In view of the various historical data given above, the investigation is almost entirely restricted to Stoic passages and Stoic doctrine on logic and language as found in Prantl and in the *Summary*. Here I add three further reasons, based on the assumption—to be corroborated below—that Frege had knowledge of Stoic logic. *First*, it is vastly more likely that Frege obtained his knowledge of Stoic logic from one text, rather than from browsing through the dozens of Greek and Latin works with testimonies on Stoic logic that Prantl brings together. (Of the hundreds of Stoic logical works, not one has survived in its entirety and we are almost completely dependent on later ancient sources.) *Second*, virtually all parallels between Stoics and Frege are present in Prantl, and some important elements of Stoic logic without parallels in Frege are missing in Prantl. The main examples are: the important fragmentary papyrus of Chrysippus' *Logical Investigations* (PHerc 307), which was first published in 1873; the long passage in Alexander's *Prior Analytics* commentary on negation (*An. Pr.* 402–05), and a number of further passages in the Aristotle commentators, in some grammarians, and in scholia. *Third*, there are *several* misunderstandings or distortions of Stoic logic in Prantl which *do* have parallels in Frege.[15]

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[12] Even without further textual evidence, we can assume that Frege would have had an interest in Prantl's work. Philosophy was far more interwoven with its history than it is in Anglo-Saxon analytical philosophy nowadays.

[13] Snell and Snell 1806 and Borheck 1807.

[14] In the end, in order to get the full picture the reader would have to read Prantl, including the Greek and Latin footnotes, followed by all of Frege's later *philosophical* (as opposed to mathematical and purely logical) works. What becomes apparent when doing so is that—other than epistemic arguments, comments, and observations on psychological matters, remarks on post-medieval logic, contrasts with Aristotle, and academic disputes with contemporaries—there is very little in Frege that does not have an analogue of some sort in the Stoics as reported by Prantl.

III.1. Content

The following agreement between Frege and the Stoics lies at the very bottom of the many similarities: that the *contents* of our thinking and communicating are imperceptible, incorporeal entities that we can all share, and which we express in language. The Stoic term for their contents was *lekta*, customarily translated as 'sayables' (what can be said), but also allowing the translation 'thinkables' (what can be thought). Most of what Frege considered content, he called 'sense' ('Sinn'). I disregard all metaphysical issues concerning these contents, beyond mentioning the following well-known facts: both the Stoics and Frege distinguished between (i) the things in the external world, (ii) our presentations or impressions based on these things, (iii) linguistic expressions, including sentences, as a special subclass of the things in the external world, (iv) the incorporeal content, including assertoric content, and (v) our mentally entertaining such content.[16] For both, content is most closely connected with linguistic expressions: with the linguistic expressions we say or express the content.[17] In what follows, I concentrate on how either party treats the fundamental philosophical issue of *how meaning or content is related to linguistic expressions*. The Stoics and Frege each distinguish many different kinds of contents. As a rough structuring guide, I follow the detailed Stoic classification of contents as it is found in Diogenes Laertius' report of Stoic logic and largely followed by Prantl.

III.1.1. Incomplete content

For both Frege and the Stoics, a fundamental distinction is that between complete contents and incomplete contents.[18] Incomplete contents require completion. It appears that incomplete contents are not contents in the true sense: 'incomplete' produces a *contradictio in adjecto*.

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[15] It is my view that in the later works by Frege, in particular the latest publications and the unpublished work on logic and language, we often find in different texts slightly different views on individual issues, presumably due to Frege trying out various ways of developing and expressing his theory. It seems wrong to me to try to provide in all such cases complex and contorted textual interpretations for no reason but to show that all things Frege wrote in his later years are mutually consistent.

[16] **Stoics**: (i) *tugchanonta*, (ii) *phantasiai*, (iii) *logoi*, *ekphorai*, (iv) *ta sēmainonta*, *lekta*, with *axiōmata* as subclass, (v) *logikai phantasiai* (*cf.* D.L. 7.56, 57, 67; S.E. *M.* 8.11, 12, 70; *Epist.* 117.13; Prantl 415–21) **Frege**: (i) 'Dinge in der Aussenwelt' (T69), (ii) 'Vorstellungen' (*Thoughts*, passim), (iii) 'Sätze', 'sprachliche Ausdrücke' (T60), (iv) 'Sinn', with 'Gedanken' as subclass (SB, *Thoughts*, *Logik*), (v) 'Denken', 'Fassen der Gedanken' (T74–75). Historians of logic have remarked on these parallels (Mates 1961: 19–26, esp. 20, if not entirely accurately; Bochenski 1956: 127; Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 375–77). A close comparison of Prantl 1855: 416–17 with Frege's *Gedanke* or *Logik* may be interesting, but is not my topic here.

[17] *Cf.* Frege: *Logik* NS 142–43, PW 131, 'Das eigentliche Ausdrucksmittel für den Gedanken ist der Satz'; T61, 'der Satz drücke einen Gedanken aus'. **Stoics**: D.L. 7.57, λόγος ἀεί σημαντικός (a linguistic expressions always signifies), προφέρονται αἱ φωναί λέγεται δέ τά πράγματα, ἁ δή καὶ λεκτά τυγχάνει (what is said are the things, which are also called sayables (*lekta*)); see also the rest of section III.

[18] This similarity is pointed out by Kneale and Kneale 1962: 500 and repeated by Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 384–85.

Frege says about (simple or basic) thoughts that, 'The sentence expressing such a thought is composed of a proper name […] and a predicative part, which corresponds to the unsaturated part of the thought' (*Introduction to Logic* (IL) PW 187).[19] By contrast, a 'thought […] needs no completion' (CT 37, CP 391).[20]

The **Stoics** call the incomplete contents *ellipē* (incomplete, lacking). The Greek *ellipē* and—to a lesser degree—Prantl's German translation ('mangelhaft' = 'deficient') match Frege's terms for incompleteness ('unvollständig', 'ergänzungsbedürftig'). The Stoics, too, consider one-place-predicates as the paradigm case of incomplete content—'predicates are classified as incomplete *lekta*' (D.L. 7.63)—and they define their most common simple assertibles (*katēgorikon axiōma*) as 'composed from a *ptōsis* [roughly, the content of a proper name or noun] and a predicate'. The incomplete contents are said to have an unfinished (*anapartiston*) expression (*ekphora*). The Stoic example is 'writes', expression of which (on its own) is said to elicit the question 'who?' (D.L. 7.63, Prantl 438–39, n. 111). (We see later that this points to a difference in understanding between Frege and the Stoics of the kind of incompleteness.)[21]

INCOMPLETE CONTENTS	
Stoic incomplete (*ellipē*) (D.L. 7.43, S.E. *M*. 8.70, Prantl 418, n. 55).	**Fregean** unsaturated ('ungesättigt') (EidL, NS 203, PW 192), incomplete ('unvollständig') (FC 6, CP 140).
Requires completion (D.L. 7.63, Prantl 439).	Requires supplementation (*e.g.* CT 37, CP 390, implied).
Unary predicate (*katēgorēma*) as main example of incomplete content (D.L. 7.63, Prantl 439).	Unary predicate as main example of incomplete content (EidL, NS 203, PW 187).
Predicate as function (suggested by D.L. 7.69–70, see Bobzien and Shogry 2020; Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009).	Predicate as function (Begr 15–19).
Doubly unsaturated or binary predicates (see Bobzien and Shogry 2020).	Doubly unsaturated or binary predicates (EidL, NS 209, CO, CP 193).

My focus in section III will be almost entirely on complete or saturated contents, and it is with these that I start.

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[19] 'Der Satz, der einen solchen Gedanken ausdrückt, besteht aus einem Eigennamen […] und einem prädikativen Teile, der dem ungesättigten Teile des Gedankens entspricht' ('Einleitung in die Logik' [Einleitung] NS 203). *Cf.* NS 129 Ausführungen über Sinn und Bedeutung: *ungesättigt*, *ergänzungsbedürftig*; *prädikativer Teil eines Gedankens*, *Einleitung in die Logik* (EidL), NS 203, PW 187; in *Begriff und Funktion* (FC 6, CP 140): 'eine Funktion "unvollständig, ergänzungsbedürftig oder ungesättigt zu nennen"'. In *Concept and Object*—CO 197, CP 187, n. 11: unsaturated; CO 205, CP 193: doubly unsaturated.

[20] 'Gedanke […] bedarf […] keiner Ergänzung' (CT 37, LU 73).

[21] Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009 claim (384–85) that Frege's notions of unsaturatedness and the incompleteness of predicates (as opposed to Frege's understanding of predicates as functions in Begr) goes back to Stoic logic, and that (378) Chrysippus considered some predicates 'almost as Fregean functions'.

III.1.2. Complete contents

The first noteworthy similarity with regard to complete contents is that both Frege and the Stoics maintain that there are multiple kinds of complete contents that *are on a par*. For Frege, not every sentence that has a sense is a thought (T 61, CP 61). A thought is *at the same level* as commands, requests, *etc.* (SB 38, CP 167, '*auf derselben Stufe*', my italics). Prantl writes about the Stoics that they '[…] distinguish besides the proper *axiōma* a number of sentences as *co-ordinated* kinds, namely […]' (Prantl 441, my italics).[22] This co-ordination is confirmed both by the relevant *Summary* passages (D.L. 7.63, 65–68, Prantl 441, n. 115) and by the other two sources for Stoic complete contents that Prantl quotes, *i.e.* a list of accounts in Sextus and a comparison with Aristotle in Ammonius (S.E. *M.* 8.70–73; Ammon. *Int.* 2.9–6.3, FDS 897; Prantl 441 ns 115, 117).

Such a coordination of different complete contents is remarkable, since the customary view is—and was at Frege's time—that there is one kind of complete content, something like a common propositional content, that can be combined with *all* different kinds of *force*, or that is part of *all* different kinds of *speech acts*.[23] A multiplication of complete contents is generally considered to be an unnecessary multiplication of entities, and both Frege and the Stoics have been admonished for their lavish ontology.[24]

In several of his works, **Frege** mentions a plurality of complete contents, leaving their exact number unspecified. He itemizes explicitly Thoughts ('Gedanken'), two kinds of questions, commands, wishes (via 'Wunschsätze'), requests, apparent thoughts, and some that are more-than-thoughts.[25] To all the specified complete contents that we find in Frege, the **Stoics** have corresponding kinds, and, additionally, a few more (see D.L. 7.65–68; S.E. *M.* 8.70–74; Ammon. *Int.* 2.9–6.3, FDS 897; Prantl 442–43, with the mentioned texts in footnotes 115–117). We do not know their exact number. In the following, I compare each of the individual kinds of complete contents that Frege mentions with their Stoic counterparts.

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[22] 'indem [die Stoiker] von dem eigentlichen *axiōma* […] noch eine Mehrzahl von Sätzen als coordinierte Arten unterscheiden, nemlich […]'. The Aristotelian Prantl does not distinguish between complete *lekta* and the sentences that express these.

[23] *E.g.* for Bolzano 1837: (I) 88, propositions ('Sätze an sich') include commands. (The issue of whether command sentences, interrogative sentences, *etc.* have truth-values had been mentioned in a number of logic texts between Aristotle's time and that of Frege. The issue here concerns complete contents, not sentences.)

[24] *Cf.* for example, Dummett, 1981a: 307: 'In "Ueber Sinn und Bedeutung" [Frege] […] regards the difference between assertoric, interrogative, imperative and optative sentences as a difference in their sense rather than in the force attaching to them. Thus he says that, just as assertoric sentences express thoughts, so interrogatives express questions, imperatives commands, and optatives wishes (SB 38–39, FBB 53–54). This view we may regard as *definitely wrong* […]'; FPL 308: 'Frege makes a certain modification of this view in his "Der Gedanke" […]. There he still thinks that an imperative expresses a command, considered as something parallel to a thought; but he now thinks that a sentential interrogative expresses the same thought as the corresponding assertoric sentence, and differs from it only in the force attached to it (T 62, CP 355; N 143–44, CP 373–74). This parallel is thus in itself significant'. There are parallels to both these views in Prantl and his Stoic sources (see below). Bronowski 2019: 394–97 argues that *all* Stoic complete contents contain an *axiōma*. This does not sit well with their definition of command contents and their acceptance of addresses as complete contents. It may well be true that some kinds of Stoic command contents in some sense contain complete contents.

[25] SB 38–39: '*Command*, *request* […] stand on the same level as thoughts; […] the case is similar for […] *questions*. ('Befehl, Bitte: stehen […] mit Gedanken auf derselben Stufe; ähnlich Frage'); T 62: command [sentences] ('Befehlssätze'), wish-expressing sentences ('Wunschsätze') and request-expressing sentences ('Bittsätze') have sense ('Sinn'); N 145–46: the sense of an interrogative sentence ('Sinn eines Fragesatzes') is a thought ('Gedanke'); *Logik* NS 140 = PWLB PW129: 'sentences expressing wishes, questions, requests, and commands […] assertoric sentences' ('Wunsch-, Frage-, Aufforderungs-, Befehlssätze […] Behauptungssätze'), 'truth is only ascribed to the sense ('Sinn') of assertoric sentences'.

Here we have one of the reasons why Prantl (rather than Hirzel or individual Stoic texts) is more likely to be Frege's source: Prantl considers the Stoic quasi-*axiōmata* and the Stoic more-than-*axiōmata* to be two *different* kinds of complete content (Prantl 442–43: *homoion axiōma* 442, *pleonazein* 443), although closer reading of the texts (D.L. 7.65–68; S.E. *M.* 8.70–74; Ammon. *Int.* 2.9–6.3) makes it clear that they were the same Stoic kind of complete content.

COMPLETE CONTENTS	
Stoic complete assertible (*autoteles axiōma*, D.L. 7.73; 'vollständig', Prantl 438, 440).	**Fregean** saturated, complete ('gesättigt', 'vollständig').
——— as co-ordinated kinds ('co-ordinirte Arten', Prantl 441).	——— at the same level (SB 38–39, CP 167).
——— include primarily *axiōmata*/ assertibles, sentence questions, word questions, commands, wishes or requests (*euktikon*), quasi-*axiōmata*, more-than-*axiōmata*, and a few others (Prantl 441–43).	——— include thoughts ('Gedanken'), sentence questions, word questions, commands, wishes (via a 'Wunschsätze'), requests ('Bitten'), apparent thoughts, and some that are more-than-thoughts (SB 38–39, CP 38–39) (T 61–62, CP 355) (N 145–46, CP 375) (*Logik* NS 140–41 = PWLB PW129, not a good translation).
Assertibles are contrasted with other non-assertible complete sayables in order to bring out the nature of the assertibles (in particular their being true or false) (D.L. 7.66, 68; *cf.* S.E. *M.* 8.70–74; Prantl 442–43).	'In order to bring out more precisely what I mean by "a thought" I shall distinguish various kinds of sentences' ('Um das, was ich einen Gedanken nennen will, schärfer herauszuarbeiten, unterscheide ich Arten von Sätzen') (T62).

III.1.2.1. Assertoric content: Stoic assertibles and Fregean thoughts

One of Frege's main logical achievements is the distinction between expressing and asserting a thought. The Stoic contents that are closest to Frege's thoughts ('Gedanken') are their assertibles (*axiōmata*). As a generic term for both I use 'assertoric content'. Both Stoics and Frege have as their primary interest their *assertoric* complete contents.[26] Both the Stoics and Frege struggle somewhat with explaining exactly what assertoric contents are.

Stoic assertibles are listed as being on a par with the other Stoic complete contents (Prantl 441; D.L. 7.66–68; S.E. *M.* 8.70–74). For *all* complete contents, the Stoics held that we do three different things simultaneously when we perform the corresponding speech act. First, we *utter* (*propherein*) or express/articulate (*ekpherein*) a meaningful or 'content-ful' sound, the sentence or complete phrase (*logos*) (D.L. 7.59; *cf.* S.E. *PH* 1.73; Prantl 415, n. 46; 416, n. 47). This is a physical entity. Second, we *say* the incorporeal content (*legein*, D.L. 7.59).

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[26] Frege in (T62, CP 355), see above. The vast majority of Chrysippus' logical works are about assertibles of one kind or another (D.L. 7.190–98, Prantl 405–08). In the *Summary*, three sections are about non-assertoric complete contents (D.L. 7.66–68), fifteen about assertoric complete contents (65, 68–82). The Sextus passage also uses the non-assertoric complete contents as a foil for the assertoric ones (S.E. *M.* 8.70–74).

Third, we *assert*, or *command*, or *ask*, *etc.*, the content—depending on what sort of content it is (D.L. 7.66, 67, 68; Prantl 441, n. 115). So, in the case of the Stoic *assertibles*, we *utter* or *formulate* an assertoric sentence (*apophantikos logos*, *axiōmatikē ekphora*, D.L. 7.67, Prantl n. 115);[27] we *say* the assertible, that is, we express the assertoric content (D.L. 7.66, Prantl n. 115); and we *assert* the assertible, that is, we make an assertion (D.L. 7.66, Prantl n. 115).[28] We can then distinguish the following five distinct elements in the Stoic theory of assertibles: (i) the incorporeal assertible (*axiōma*); (ii) the assertoric sentence with which it is standardly expressed (*logos apophantikē*); (iii) the uttering (*proferein*) of the meaningful sound and the formulation (*ekphora*) of that sentence/speech; and concomitant with the utterance, (iv) the saying (*legein*) of the assertible; and (v) the asserting (*apophainometha*) of the assertible.

The Stoics offered two accounts of 'assertible'. First, an assertible is defined as a complete content that can be asserted in itself (D.L. 7.65; Gell. 16.8.4; Prantl 438, 'vollständig' for 'complete').[29] Second, assertibles are said to be that which is either true or false (D.L. 7.65; Prantl 441, 442), *i.e.* that which satisfies bivalence (and the semantic *tertium non datur*, assuming that the 'or' is exclusive).[30] A variant of this second account reads that assertibles are the complete contents by saying which we say something true or something false (S.E. *M.* 8.73; Prantl 441). Either way, the bearers of truth-value are the incorporeal assertibles, *not* the assertoric sentences by which they are expressed ('The True (*to alēthes*) lies in the *lekton* (context shows this is the assertible *lekton*) and is incorporeal', Prantl 417, *cf.* 421; S.E. *PH* 2.81). Finally, the Stoics explain the choice of the Greek term for assertibles (*axiōma*) as originating from our acknowledgement of [the truth of] what we say: 'Someone who says 'it is day' is believed to acknowledge [as true] that it is day, and when it is day, that assertible is true, if not, it is false' (D.L. 7.65, *axiousthai*; Prantl 442, n. 116). So the fact that we give acknowledgement to an assertible when we say it is a feature that characterizes assertibles. The Stoics distinguish between having a logical presentation (*logikē phantasia*) of an *axiōma* (S.E. *M.* 8.70; Prantl 418, 419) and the giving of assent or assenting (*sugkatathesis*, D.L. 7.49, 51; Prantl 418, 419; Zeller 1852, 1883) to that presentation (of an *axiōma*) (D.L. 7.49). They also have the epistemic notion of the grasping (*katalepsis*, D.L. 7.49, 52) of a reliably true (logical) presentation (*kataleptikē phantasia*), *i.e.* one that presents a true *axiōma*.

Compare all this with **Frege**'s various attempts at defining and explaining what a *thought* ('Gedanke') is. He maintains that not every sentence that has a sense is a thought (T61, CP 354) and that a thought is at the same level as commands, request, *etc.* (SB38, CP 167, 'auf derselben Stufe'). Thoughts are expressed in assertoric sentences, and, as Frege puts it, 'the imperceptible thought is dressed in the perceptible garb of the sentence' (T61, CP 354).[31] It is the thought, not the sentence, that is the bearer of truth-value, or that which is either true or false (T60, 61, CP 353–54; CT37: ‘[…] ein Gedanke […], nämlich etwas von dem gilt: es ist entweder wahr oder falsch, ein Drittes gibt es nicht’; also 38, *tertium non datur*, EidL, NS 202). Frege writes ‘We express acknowledgement (‘Anerkennung’) of truth [of the thought] in the form of an assertoric sentence’ (T63, CP 356).[32] He emphasizes that an assertoric sentence—when spoken sincerely[33]—contains (a) its content (‘Inhalt’), which is the thought (‘Gedanke’) and (b) the assertion (of the thought) (‘Behauptung’) (T62, CP 355). He explicates that it is with the *saying* of the assertoric sentence that we both *convey* (‘mitteilen’) or express (‘ausdrücken’) the thought and *assert* (‘behaupten’) (as true) the thought (T62, CP 355). Finally, in *Negation*, we read that the thought does not require a supplementation in order to obtain, but is complete in itself (‘in sich vollständig’, N155, CP 386).[34] Frege also makes the *epistemological* distinction between the ‘grasping of the thought’ (‘Fassen des Gedankens’) and the ‘acknowledgement of the truth’ (‘Anerkennung der Wahrheit eines Gedankens’) (T62, CP 356). This may correspond to the Stoic distinction between rational presentations (D.L. 7.49, 7.51, *phantasiai logikai*) and assenting (*sugkatathesis*, Prantl 419), or the acknowledgement mentioned in D.L. 7.65.[35]

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[27] This is the standard case. The Stoics did *not* claim that there is a one-to-one correspondence between assertoric sentences and assertibles. See below.

[28] It appears that *which one we do doing which* (whether we assert by saying or say by asserting) is immaterial. The *Summary* has 'saying the assertible we assert it' (D.L. 7.66; similar S.E. *M.* 8.73); Sextus once has 'asserting the assertible we say it' (S.E. *M.* 8.71).

[29] The exact force of 'in itself' is debated (Frede 1974, Bobzien 1986), but this need not concern us here. *Cf.* also Borheck's translation, 'Ein Axiom aber ist […] eine an sich vollkommene Sache' ('the *axiōma* is a thing complete in itself').

[30] Barnes 2007: 4–5 argues that this was not a definition of *axiōma*. D.L. 7.65 (Prantl 442, n. 116) presents it in the manner of a definition. For our present purposes, it suffices that it provides a necessary and sufficient condition for *axiōmata*.

[31] 'Der an sich unsinnliche Gedanke kleidet sich in das sinnliche Gewand des Satzes' (T61, LU 33).

ASSERTORIC CONTENTS	
Stoics: Assertibles (*axiōmata*) …	**Frege**: Thoughts (‘Gedanken’) …
… are on a par with other complete contents like commands and questions (D.L. 7.65–68; Prantl 441).	… are on a par with other complete contents like commands and questions (SB38, CP 167).
… are expressed in assertoric sentences (or have an assertoric formulation) (*ekphora axiōmatikē*) (D.L. 7.67).	… are expressed in assertoric sentences (T61, CP 354).
When we *utter* an assertoric sentence we *say the assertible* (express assertoric content) and we *assert the assertible* (make an assertion) (D.L. 7.57; D.L. 7.66; S.E. *M.* 8.71; Prantl 441).	It is with the *uttering* (‘aussprechen’) of the assertoric sentence that we both *express (‘ausdrücken’) the thought* and *assert it* (as true) or *make an assertion* (T62, CP 355–56).[36] An assertoric sentence *contains the thought* (T62, CP 355). An assertoric sentence *contains the assertion* of the thought (T62, CP 355).

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[32] ‘In der Form des Behauptungssatzes sprechen wir die Anerkennung der Wahrheit aus’ (T63, LU 35).

[33] ‘An assertoric sentence contains both thought and assertion [only] when we speak sincerely’ (T62).

[34] ‘Ein Gedanke ist nämlich vollständig und gesättigt, bedarf um bestehen zu können keiner Ergänzung’ (CT, CP 391).

[35] Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 382–83 argue that there is a parallel between, on the one hand, Frege’s ‘Fassen des Gedankens’ and ‘Akt der Zustimmung’, and, on the other, the Stoic *katalēptikē phantasia* and *katalēpsis*. However, this is mistaken. A *katalēptikē phantasia* is veridical. Frege’s ‘Akt der Zustimmung’, even though described as an act by which the thought is acknowledged as true, is not veridical. (At least this is the general view. For a dissenting interpretation of Frege see Kremer 2000).

[36] T62, CP 356: ‘die Anerkennung der Wahrheit eines Gedankens—[ist] das Urteilen’. (T62, CP 356): ‘In der Form des Behauptungssatzes sprechen wir die Anerkennung der Wahrheit aus’.

An assertible is a *complete* content that can be asserted *in itself* (D.L. 7.65).	A thought does not require a supplementation in order to obtain, but is *complete in itself* (N69).
… are that which is *either true or false* (D.L. 7.65) … are the complete contents by saying which we say something true or something false (S.E. *M.* 8.73; Prantl 441–42).	'I call a thought something for which the question of truth can arise at all. So I count what is false among thoughts no less than what is true' (T60–61, CP 353–54). Every thought is *either true or false, tertium non datur* (CT37, 38, CP 391, 392 IL = EidL, NS 202 = PW 186; FGII398, CP 329; IL, PW 186; LM, PW 198).
The Greek term for assertibles (*axiōma*) originates from our acknowledgement of [the truth of] what we say (D.L. 7.65).	We express acknowledgement of truth [of the thought] in the form of an assertoric sentence (T63, CP 356).
Grasping a complete content (in a rational presentation, *phantasia logikē*, D.L. 7.49, 51) versus acknowledgement of the content (*sugkatathesis* or *axiousthai*)	Grasping a thought ('Fassen eines Gedankens') versus acknowledgement of the truth of a thought ('Anerkennung der Wahrheit eines Gedankens') (T62, CP 355–56).

Of these parallels, philosophically the most noteworthy are (i) the distinction between *saying or conveying* an assertoric content, on the one hand, and *asserting* it, on the other; and (ii) the account of an assertoric content as that which is (precisely) either true or false, that is, as something that has built in both bivalence and the semantic *tertium non datur*.[37] (There is an important difference between Stoic assertoric contents and those of Frege: Stoic assertions can change their truth-value over time—thus time of utterance is a contextual factor. When it is day, 'it is day' is true, when it is night, 'it is day' is false. Important though it is, this point is not obvious in the *Summary*, nor is it emphasized in Prantl.[38])

III.1.2.2. Commands

The second significant complete contents are the *command-contents*. **The Stoics** introduced the rudiments of a logic of commands and of hybrids that combine assertibles with command-contents. Chrysippus, for instance, in the *Logical Investigations* (his only, and only partially, surviving work),[39] considered whether sentences of the form 'do x, since q!' express a conditional command, or whether the whole sentence expresses a complex command. This important papyrus fragment is not mentioned in Prantl. There is little in Frege that suggests he considered a logic of commands. He did however give commands *some* thought, and what we find has parallels in Stoic logic as it is reported by Prantl and the *Summary*.

The *Summary* has this: 'A command (*prostaktikon*) is a [complete] content by *saying*

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[37] The principle of bivalence is the semantic principle that every proposition is either true or false. By the semantic tertium non datur I mean the principle that no proposition is neither true nor false.

[38] For a thorough treatment of the question how Stoic axiōmata differ from propositions as understood in Frege and much of 20th century logic, see Bobzien 1986, pp 11–39.

[39] See *e.g.* Barnes 1986.

which we command'. It follows an imperative sentence that is meant to provide an example (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441). Sextus has 'They say that some [of the complete contents] are commands, [namely] those with which we are commanding when we say them' (S.E. *M*. 8.71; Prantl 441). Shortly after in Sextus' list, we read that of the complete contents only the assertibles are either true or false, *i.e.* have a truth-value (S.E. *M*. 8.73; Prantl 441). Since what we say, we say using a sentence (*logos*) (D.L. 7.59, see above), it is implied that the content of an imperative sentence is that saying which we (make a) command. This is confirmed by a passage from Plutarch (not in Prantl) which makes explicit how imperative sentences and commands relate to each other in the Stoic view: the content of the imperative sentence 'do not steal' is 'not to steal' (Plut. *St. Rep*. 1037D–E). The Stoic choice of the expression *prostaktikon* emphasizes that they thought of commands as a *content* that is available to us to command (*prostassō*/*prostattō*) with.[40]

In both SB and his later work, **Frege** maintains that commands are on a par with thoughts and do not contain thoughts. In SB he states that an imperative (*i.e.* imperative sentence) does not have a 'Bedeutung' but only a 'Sinn'. This 'Sinn' of an imperative sentence is said to be a command ('Befehl').[41] In (T 62, CP 355), Frege states that an imperative sentence has a 'Sinn', but that the 'Sinn' is not of the kind that could have a truth-value. This is presented as the reason why the 'Sinne' of imperative sentences are not called thoughts[42]—which is in line with Frege's definition of thought (see above). In sum, for Frege imperative sentences have a 'Sinn' but no 'Bedeutung'. The 'Sinn' is a command. It cannot have a truth-value and hence it is not a thought. (Frege uses 'command' ('Befehl') both for the 'Sinn' of an imperatival sentence and for the 'Bedeutung' (SB 38, CP 167) and/or act of commanding—an ambiguity he is aware of for the parallel case of the thought (*Logic* PW 137: 'It would be just as wrong to identify a thought with an act of thinking';[43] *cf.* T 62, n. 3).) Note that the above-quoted passages are virtually all Frege seems ever to have written about commands (all that is in print), which makes the parallels (see table below) the more striking.[44]

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[40] The Stoics indicate the status of a complete content by the use of neuter adjectival noun expressions formed from a verb and ending with *-tikon* (-τικόν). Probably *lekton* is understood.

[41] SB 38–39: 'A subordinate clause with "that" after "command", "ask", "forbid", would appear in direct speech as an imperative [*i.e.* imperative sentence]. Such a sentence has no meaning but only a sense. […] The meaning of such a clause is therefore not a truth-value but a command, a request, and so forth'. ('Der Nebensatz mit "dass" nach "befehlen", "bitten", "verbieten" würde in gerader Rede als Imperativ [*i.e.* Imperativsatz] erscheinen. Ein solcher hat keine Bedeutung, sondern nur einen Sinn. […] Die Bedeutung eines solchen Satzes ist also nicht ein Wahrheitswert, sondern ein Befehl, eine Bitte, u.dgl.')

[42] T 62, CP 355, LU 34: 'We should not wish to deny sense to a command, but this sense is not such that the question of truth could arise for it. Therefore I shall not call the sense of a command a thought'. ('Einem Befehlssatze wird man einen Sinn nicht absprechen wollen; aber dieser Sinn ist nicht derart, dass Wahrheit bei ihm in Frage kommen könnte. Darum werde ich den Sinn eines Befehlssatzes nicht Gedanken nennen.')

[43] *Logik* NS 148: 'Ebensowenig ist der Gedanke eine Denktat'.

[44] Frege's view that logic unfolds the meaning of 'true' combined with his view of commands entails that for him there can be no logic of commands. Stoic logic, as that (at the level of *lekta*) which is either true or false or neither is not bound by such a constraint.

COMMANDS	
Stoic commandable (*prostaktikon*).	**Fregean** command ('Befehl').
The content (*lekton*) of a command sentence is a command-content (D.L. 7.67, implied; Plut. *St. Rep*. 1037D–E, implied).	The content ('Sinn') of a command sentence is a command-content (T62, CP 355).
Command-contents are complete contents that are on a par with assertibles (D.L. 7.65–66).	Command-contents are complete contents that are on a par with thoughts (SB38, CP 167).
Command-contents cannot be true or false and therefore are not assertibles (D.L. 7.68; Plut. *St. Rep*. 1037D–E, implied).	The sense of a command sentence (*i.e.* the command-content) cannot be true or false and therefore is not a thought (SB38, CP 167) (T62, CP 355).
By saying a command-content (which we do by uttering a command-sentence), we give a command (D.L. 7.67).	We have a parallel for *assertions* in T62–63, CP 355–56: By means of (uttering) an assertoric sentence, we enunciate/pronounce ('sprechen aus') the recognition of truth (= the assertion) of the thought that we express with the sentence.

Today, the view that commands do not have propositional content is a view that is taken quite seriously by philosophers. In particular, Jennifer Hornsby's work shows the lasting significance of the Stoic and Fregean non-propositionalism (Hornsby 2016). (The difference between commands and utterances with propositional content may also be supported by the fact that some animals appear to understand commands, but it may be doubtful whether they understand propositions.)

III.1.2.3. Sentence questions

Both parties distinguish between what Frege calls word-questions and sentence-questions (D.L. 7.66; Frege: T62, CP 355; SB39, CP 167; PWLB, PW 138–39; N143–45, CP 373–75). **Frege** considers *sentence-questions* in SB, T, PWLB, and N. Between SB and the three later works, his view appears to have changed somewhat.

In (SB39, CP 167), in his consideration of subordinate sentences or clauses (SB 36 'Betrachtung der Nebensätze') regarding his 'Sinn'/'Bedeutung' distinction, Frege writes 'The case is similar for the dependent question in phrases such as "doubt whether", "not to know what". It is easy to see that here also the words are to be taken to have their indirect meaning. Dependent clauses expressing questions […]'.[45] And a little later: '*i.e.* not a truth-value but a thought, a command, a request, *a question*' (SB 39, italics mine).[46] This passage, taken along with its immediate context, implies several things. (i) Frege distinguishes interrogative sentences ('Fragesätze') and questions. (ii) Questions are the sense ('Sinn') of interrogative sentences. More precisely, as can be seen from the context, sentence-questions are the sense ('Sinn'), or complete content, of sentence-question interrogative sentences.[47] (iii) Questions are on a par with thoughts, but are not thoughts. (iv) It is implied that by saying an interrogative sentence we ask a question. The most pertinent passage is in *Thoughts* (T62, CP 355–56, emphasis mine).

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[45] (Writing 'expressing' for 'expression' in CP.) SB39: 'Ähnlich ist es bei der abhängigen Frage in Wendungen wie "zweifeln, ob", "nicht wissen, was". Dass auch hier die Wörter in ihrer ungeraden Bedeutung zu nehmen sind, ist leicht zu sehen. Die abhängigen Fragesätze […]'.

[46] 'd.h. nicht ein Wahrheitswert, sondern ein Gedanke, ein Befehl, eine Bitte, *eine Frage*' (italics mine).

> In order to bring out more precisely what I mean by 'a thought', I shall distinguish various kinds of sentences. […] Propositional questions are a different matter. We expect to hear 'yes' or 'no'. The answer 'yes' means the same as an assertoric sentence, for *in saying 'yes' the speaker presents as true the thought that was already completely contained in the interrogative sentence*. This is how a propositional question can be formed from any assertoric sentence. […] An interrogative sentence and an assertoric one contain the same thought; but the assertoric sentence contains something else as well, namely assertion. *The interrogative sentence contains something more too, namely a request [i.e. to respond].* […] We have already performed the first act [*i.e.* the grasp of a thought] when we form a propositional question.[48]

Logic (PW 129, emphasis mine): *Truth* is *only ascribed to the 'Sinn' of 'Behauptungssätzen'.*

> No one would deny that our predicate [*i.e.* 'true'] is, for the most part, ascribed to sentences. We are not, however, concerned with *sentences* expressing wishes, *questions*, requests and commands, but only with assertoric sentences […] In the cases which alone concern logic the *sense of an assertoric sentence* is either true or false, and then we have what we call a *thought proper*.[49]

And later in the same text (*Logic* PW 138–39, emphasis mine):

> We express the *same thought* in the question 'Is oxygen condensable?' and in the sentence 'Oxygen is condensable', *joining it in the one case with a request and in the other with an assertion.*[50]

In these two passages, the content of a sentence-question sentence ('interrogative sentence' henceforth, for brevity) contains two connected things: a thought (or assertoric content) joined with a request for an answer. The expected answer is 'yes' or 'no'. Thus the thought that is put forward in a question is not put forward as true or as false. This is only done with the answer 'yes' or 'no' (T62, CP 355). In fact, Frege introduces interrogative sentences and assertoric sentences together *in order to* bring out by means of an assertoric sentence the combination of thought and assertion of the thought. So also in (N144–45, CP 373–75), for example:

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[47] Frege seems not to be completely consistent in his use of 'question' ('Frage') and 'interrogative sentence' ('Fragesatz'), but the context leaves no doubt that he distinguishes between them as indicated.

[48] 'Um das, was ich einen Gedanken nennen will, schärfer herauszuarbeiten, unterscheide ich Arten von Sätzen. […] Anders ist es bei den Satzfragen. Wir erwarten "ja" zu hören oder "nein". Die Antwort "ja" besagt dasselbe wie ein Behauptungssatz; denn *durch sie wird der Gedanke als wahr hingestellt, der im Fragesatz schon vollständig enthalten ist*. So kann man zu jedem Behauptungssatz eine Satzfrage bilden. […] Fragesatz und Behauptungssatz enthalten denselben Gedanken; aber der Behauptungssatz enthält noch etwas mehr, nämlich eben die Behauptung. *Auch der Fragesatz enthält etwas mehr, nämlich eine Aufforderung [i.e. zu antworten].* […] Indem wir eine Satzfrage bilden, haben wir die erste Tat [*i.e.* das Fassen des Gedankens] schon vollbracht' (T62, LU 34–35, emphasis mine). Cf. also PW 7-8 = NG 8.

[49] 'Am meisten legt man wohl unser Prädikat [*i.e.* 'wahr'] Sätzen bei; jedoch sind die Wunsch-, *Frage-*, Aufforderungs-, Befehls*sätze* auszuschliessen und nur die Behauptungssätze kommen in Betracht […] In den für die Logik allein in Betracht kommenden Fällen ist der *Sinn eines Behauptungssatzes* entweder wahr oder falsch, und wir nennen ihn dann einen *eigentlichen Gedanken*' (*Logik* NS 140–41, emphasis mine).

[50] 'In der Frage "ist Sauerstoffgas kondensierbar?" und in dem Satze "Sauerstoffgas ist kondensierbar" haben wir *denselben Gedanken* ausgedrückt, *einmal mit einer Aufforderung [i.e. zu antworten], das andere Mal mit einer Behauptung verbunden*' (*Logik* NS 150, emphasis mine).

> […] since the sense of an *interrogative sentence* is always also inherent in the assertoric sentence that gives an answer to *the question* […] In any case, we need a short term for what can be the *sense of an interrogative sentence*. I call this a *thought.* (N145, CP 374–75, emphasis mine)[51]

The key difference between SB, on the one hand, and the later T, PWLB, and N, on the other, is as follows: the distinction between the sense of an assertion-sentence as the thought and the sense of a question-sentence as a question has been replaced in *Thoughts* by the distinction between, in the interrogative sentence, the combination of a thought as its sense with a request for an answer as its force ('Kraft'), and, in the assertoric sentence, the combination of a thought as its sense with an assertion as its force ('Kraft'). The word 'question' is now avoided for the *content* of an interrogative sentence. The distinction between interrogative sentence and (sentence) question is still made (in N144, CP 373–74), possibly for the combination of the sense with the force of an interrogative sentence. The precise details of the change from SB and how it occurred may well be more complex, but for present purposes this representation of the difference suffices.

The Stoics describe sentence questions thus: 'an assertible […] (quoted above); a sentence question (*erōtēma*) is a complete sayable like an assertible but demands an answer, for example 'is it day?' (literally '? It is day', with '?' for the question particle '*ara g*''). This is neither true nor false, hence 'it is day' is an assertible, but 'is it day?' is a sentence question' (D.L. 7.66; Prantl 441, n. 115; *cf.* D.L. 7.68; S.E. *M.* 8.66).[52] They contrast assertoric content and sentence questions with each other in order to bring out the nature of assertoric content (D.L. 7.66, 68). The juxtaposition with *axiōmata* implies that the Stoics distinguish between *interrogative sentence* and *question*. By direct analogy with what the Stoics say about the other complete content (D.L. 7.66), we expect 'the interrogative sentences express the (sentence) question' and 'saying the interrogative sentence we ask the question'.

SENTENCE QUESTIONS	
Stoic question (*erōtēma*).	**Fregean** sentence question ('Satzfrage') or question ('Frage').
Interrogative sentence and sentence-question are different things (implied D.L. 7.66–68).	Interogative sentence ('Fragesatz', interrogative sentence) and question are different things (S39B, CP 167; N144, CP 374[53]).
The sentence-question is a complete content (sayable) (D.L. 7.65–66).	The sense (content) of an interrogative sentence is complete (T62, CP 355).

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[51] '[...] da der Sinn eines *Fragesatzes* immer auch in dem Behauptungssatze steckt, in dem die Antwort auf *die Frage* gegeben wird […] Jedenfalls bedarf man einer kurzen Bezeichnung dessen, was *Sinn eines Fragesatzes* sein kann. Ich nenne es *Gedanken*' (N 145, LU 55–56, emphasis mine).

[52] That sentence questions are neither true nor false is implied also in D.L. 7.68. That an answer of yes or no is requested is also implied by S.E. *M.* 8.66.

[53] 'Irgendeinen Sinn muss der Fragesatz doch wohl haben, wenn er überhaupt eine Frage enthalten soll'.

The content (sayable) of an interrogative sentence is a sentence-question (D.L. 7.66, implied by context).	The sense (content) of an interrogative sentence is a (sentence-)question (SB39, CP 167, implied).
A sentence-question is like an assertible, but requests an answer (D.L. 7.66).	An interrogative sentence contains a thought joined with the request for an answer (T62, CP 355); (*Logik* NS 150, *Logic* PW 138–39 'joined').
The answer requested is 'yes' or 'no' (D.L. 7.66; S.E. *M.* 8.66, implied).	The expected answer is 'yes' or 'no' (T62).[54]
Sentence questions are neither true nor false (D.L. 7.66; expressly D.L. 7.68).	'A thought put forward in a question is not put forward as true or as false' (PWLB and T62, CP 355 implied).
Sentence questions and assertibles are contrasted with each other in order to bring out the nature of the assertibles (in particular their being true or false) (D.L. 7.66, 68).	Sentence questions and thought (or thought plus assertoric force) are contrasted in order to bring out the nature of assertions: *i.e.* the putting forward of the thoughts as true or false (T62, CP 355, N143–45, CP 373–75).
Sentence questions are on a par with assertibles, but are not assertibles (D.L. 7.66, implied).	Sentence questions are on a par with thoughts but are not thoughts (SB 38–39, CP 167, implied).

The table shows that the overlap is extensive. The only clear difference appears to be that, in his later work, **Frege** holds (i) that sentence-questions have a thought as *content* ('Inhalt'), but that in the question the thought is without the element of truth-value (N144–47, CP 373–75); [55] and (ii) that interrogative sentences *contain* (*enthalten*) a thought (T62, CP 355); and (iii) that the same thought is expressed in a question or interrogative sentence ('Frage') and in the corresponding assertoric sentence, but without the force of assertion ('[…] in der Frage kann man denselben Gedanken ausdrücken wie im Behauptungssatze, aber ohne Behauptung […] behauptender Kraft', CT38, CP 391, *cf. Logik* NS 150 = *Logic* PW 138–39). Since a Fregean thought is either true or false, it follows that for Frege now a question (as that which is expressed with an interrogative sentence) stands in *some* relation to the thought's truth-value, except that, since neither the thought nor its negation is asserted, that truth-value is not acknowledged.

Stoic questions are never said to *contain* an assertible (nor are the corresponding interrogative sentences). But recall here my central hypothesis that Frege acquainted himself with Stoic logic via Prantl. The difference then becomes far less obvious: Prantl writes that at least some Stoics intended a reduction of all non-assertoric complete contents—and this includes sentence questions—to assertibles (Prantl 442–43). This is in parallel with the later Frege. Prantl then adds that—like assertibles—these non-assertoric contents are capable of *containing* ('enthalten') the element of the true and false (Prantl 443, *cf.* n. 117). This may be in line with Frege in CT38, CP 391; it differs from T62, CP 355; N145–6, CP 374–75; Logic, NS 150 = PW138–39. Prantl bases his claims on Ammonius (Ammon. *Int.* 2.26–3.6), whom he quotes in n. 117. Ammonius lists five Aristotelian kinds of sentence or speech (*logos*) and adds that the Stoics had five more, which he also lists. Then he adds that 'all these can take falsehood and truth *and can be subsumed under the assertoric*'. Prantl states that the quoted sentence can only be Stoic (Prantl 443, n. 117). He misses that the context strongly suggests the opposite, namely that this is Ammonius' addition, since it is Ammonius' objective to show that the Stoic ten kinds reduce to the Aristotelian five. Prantl then generalizes this point to all Stoic non-assertoric complete contents.[56] The table on sentence questions can thus be supplemented.

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[54] Implied by what Sextus says about word questions (*pusma*), S.E. *M.* 8.66. Implied by 'expected', (T62, CP 355).

[55] In *Negation*, Frege explicitly and repeatedly distinguishes between the sentence-question ('Frage'), whose *content* the thought is and the interrogative sentence ('Fragesatz'), which *expresses* that thought (N144-147).

Prantl: The Stoic non-assertoric complete contents can be reduced to the assertibles. They are capable of containing ('enthalten') the elements of the true and the false (Prantl 443, with n. 117).	**Frege**: A sentence question has a thought as content (N144–47); an interrogative sentence (sentence that expresses a sentence question) contains ('enthält') a thought (T62, CP 355). Implied: the thought expressed with an interrogative sentence has a truth-value.

So, virtually everything we find in Prantl and in the *Summary* about sentence questions has parallels in some of Frege's work.

Again, the positions of the Stoics and Frege that a question does *not* contain an assertoric content, or alternatively that there are questions that contain an assertoric content but without having an alethic status, may have a philosophical advantage. On such a view, one can *meaningfully* ask questions, even if there is no assertible, nothing that is precisely either true or false, that fully corresponds to one's question. These kinds of position are taken up in some recent research on questions, and have applications in, for example, theories of vagueness. One can meaningfully ask, 'Is Sam tall?', even if one holds the view that (it is possible that), in that—non-fictional—context, 'Sam is tall' has no settled (or definite or determinate) truth-value, and hence is not an assertoric content (*axiōma*, thought). Of course, since in Frege's radical view on vagueness, vague predicates have no *Bedeutung*, he would have had neither need nor use for this kind of deliberation.

III.1.2.4. Quasi-assertibles, the expression of emotion, and apparent or mock thoughts

For comparison with Frege, perhaps the most fascinating of Stoic complete contents are the so-called similar-to-assertibles or, as they are often translated, quasi-assertibles (*homoion axiōmati*, Prantl 442; D.L. 7.67 = Prantl 441, n. 115; Ammon. *Int.* 2.26–3.6 = Prantl 442, n. 117) and those that are *more than assertibles* (*pleiona ē axiōmata*, S.E. *M.* 8.73). 'Quasi-assertibles' and 'more-than-assertibles' are in fact two Stoic ways of referring to the same kind of complete assertible. Prantl, however, presents them separately (Prantl 441, 443).

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[56] '[…] einige Stoiker wenigstens eine Zurückführung der übrigen Sätze auf das axiōma beabsichtigt zu haben, insoferne nemlich erstere ebenfalls fähig seien, das Moment des Wahren und Falschen in sich zu enthalten […]' (Prantl 442–43). The Stoics may have held that an oath contains an assertible, but is neither true nor false because of the additional element of swearing. This would come close to Frege's view that sentences with an emotive particle contain ('uneigentliche') thoughts, that is thoughts without a truth-value (see *Ecl.* 1.28.17–19 with Barnes 1999: 201). There is no reason to think that Frege knew the Stobaeus passage.

This is relevant, since Frege discusses two kinds of complete contents that, each in their own way, show remarkable similarities to Prantl's report from, and representation of, the Stoic position.

(i) Emotivism:

The **Stoic** definition in the *Summary* reads: 'a quasi-assertible is linguistically expressed in the way assertibles are (*tēn ekphoran ekēon axiōmatikēn*), but it falls outside the genus of assertibles due to the addition of some particle or some emotion' (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115). The examples are '(Gee), the Parthenon is beautiful'[57] and '*How* the cowherd resembles Priam's sons'. Another source mentions that the additional particle for a quasi-assertible is '*how*' (*ōs*) (Ammon. *Int.* 2.26–3.6; Prantl 441, n. 115, 443, n. 117). This suggests that the Stoics use the particle *how* deliberately as a linguistic *indicator* that an assertoric sentence expresses a quasi-assertible, in line with their general method of language regimentation.[58] (In Greek, the grammatical mood of a sentence does not guarantee that the sentence is used to express a Stoic complete content of a particular kind.)[59] So, the Stoic quasi-assertibles have the grammatical form of an assertoric sentence, either exactly or with an additional particle (*ge* or *hōs*). They are very similar to assertibles, more so than any other complete content. The emotive element either has a lexical correlate in the sentence expressing the quasi-assertible or it has a correlate in how the sentence is expressed, presumably the intonation used. We seem to have examples of both.

The distinction the Stoics are after is philosophically significant. It is between assertible contents and contents that are expressed in sentences of very similar, or identical, form, but that are considered not assertible because they contain an additional element of emotion. They are, in *some* sense, *more than an assertible*. The emotive element is additional. This emotive element is *part of the content*, and, or so the Stoics believe, someone who says such an emotion-infused content does not make an assertion. Moreover, *qua* being part of the content, this element of emotion is something all humans can, in principle, share in. When we *say* such quasi-assertibles, we do something other than asserting. Some later sources suggest, for example, that what we do is marvel or admire (Prantl 442; Simpl. *in Cat.* 406.20–26; Prantl 443, n. 117).[60] Compare an assertion that 'She is strong' with 'How strong she is!', or 'Wow, she is strong' or 'She is *strong*' (with an intonation of wonder or similar). When we marvel, the content of our assertoric sentence is not truth-evaluable. Unlike an assertible, a quasi-assertible is neither true nor false (D.L. 7.67–68). In Sextus, the quasi-assertibles are described as 'more-than-assertibles' (S.E. *M.* 8.73; Prantl 441, n. 115) and are explicitly said not to be assertibles. Context implies that they have no truth-value. It is not an asserting (of a content that indicates recognition of the truth of what we say), but a marvelling—an expression of an emotional perspective on an aspect of the world. Perhaps something surpasses our expectation to a point that motivates us to express our surprise—to marvel out loud, as it were. So what I say when I say ‘Wow, she is strong’ is not truth-evaluable, although it is *similar to* the truth-evaluable ‘She is strong’. The Stoics did *not* think of quasi-assertibles as a *combination* of an assertible with an emotive element, such that by saying them we would (i) assert them and (ii) express an emotion. The Stoics thus maintain an *emotivist* position, not specifically for moral statements but for the content of declarative sentences with which, by means of the content that elicits an emotion, that emotion is expressed.

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[57] ὅμοιον δ᾽ἐστὶν ἀξιώματι ὃ τὴν ἐκφορὰν ἔχον ἀξιωματικὴν παρά τινος μορίου πλεονασμὸν ἢ πάθος ἔξω πίπτει τοῦ γένους τῶν ἀξιωμάτων with the examples καλός γ᾽ὁ παρθενών. ὡς Πριαμίδῃσιν ἐμφερὴς ὁ βουκόλος (D.L. 7.67). It is not clear whether the *ge* counts as such a particle, and hence whether and how to translate the *ge*. Is this LSJ *s.v.* II.4? If so, maybe as 'gee', 'gosh', or 'golly'.

[58] The regimentation requires putting particles, as far as is grammatically felicitous, towards the beginning of sentences that express complete contents. See Bobzien and Shogry 2020, Atherton and Blank 2003: 314–16, and Barnes, Bobzien, and Mignucci 1999: 96–97; also Frede 1974.

[59] Barnes 1999: 200; Bobzien and Shogry 2020; also Prantl 442, in a woolly way.

[60] *E.g.* Simpl. *in Cat.* 406.20–26, cited in Prantl 443, n. 117. Further sources, which are hard to access, have been collected as 899, 900, 900A, 900B in Hülser 1987, frgs FDS 1118–22.

Frege, too, considers assertoric sentences that express an element of emotion.[61] In the *Gedanke* he writes:

> An assertoric sentence often contains over and above a thought and assertion, a third component […] meant to act on the feeling and mood of the listener. Words like ‘alas’ and ‘luckily’ belong here.
>
> (T63, CP 356)

And a little later,

> Thus the content of a sentence often goes beyond the thought expressed by it.
>
> (T64, CP 357)[62]

Neither adverbial expressions like ‘alas’ nor exclamative particles like ‘oh’ are *necessary*. In his posthumous *Logik*, Frege writes:

> We can substitute words like ‘oh’ and ‘unfortunately’ for [an emotional] tone of voice without altering the thought.
>
> (PWLB, PW 140)[63]

Just like the Stoics, Frege suggests that the *content* of such sentences goes beyond that of an assertoric content (a thought, for Frege), and that what goes beyond ‘does not belong to the thought’ (T 63, CP 357). And just like the Stoics, Frege suggests that that which goes beyond can be expressed either by intonation alone, or by certain linguistic indicators of emotion such as ‘oh’.

Frege and the Stoics *differ* on the issue of whether what is expressed by such ‘emotive’ sentences is truth-evaluable. The Stoics are clear that the answer is ‘no’ (see above). Frege (in T, N, and PWLB) thinks of the content expressed as a *composite*, including a thought, an assertion, and something extra (T62–63, CP 357). And by way of the thought, what is expressed is truth-evaluable and the truth-value is independent of the emotive element (PWLB, PW 140) (‘If someone announces the news of a death in a sad tone of voice without actually being sad, the thought expressed is still true’).[64] (Note the difference to Fregean sentence questions. For Frege, the sentence ‘Is she strong?’ contains a thought but not an assertion. In contrast, ‘Wow, she is strong’ contains both a thought and an assertion.) The difference between Frege and the Stoics concerning truth-evaluability does not conflict with the hypothesis that Frege draws on Prantl for Stoic thought. For, once more, Frege and *Prantl’s* Stoics are in agreement. Prantl misreads Ammonius’ testimony on Stoic complete contents (see previous section on questions) and writes that Stoic complete contents that are not assertibles are still ‘able to contain in themselves the True and the False’.[65] This is very much like what Frege writes.

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[61] This parallel is also mentioned by Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009: 385.

[62] ‘Ein Behauptungssatz enthält außer einem Gedanken und der Behauptung oft noch ein Drittes […]. Das soll nicht selten auf das Gefühl, die Stimmung des Hörers wirken oder seine Einbildungskraft anregen. Wörter wie “leider”, “gottlob” gehören hierher’ (T63). ‘So überragt der Inhalt eines Satzes nicht selten den in ihm ausgedrückten Gedanken’ (T64).

[63] ‘Diesen Klang der Stimme kann man auch durch Wörter wie “ach”, “leider” ersetzen, ohne am Gedanken etwas zu ändern’ (*Logik* NS 152).

[64] ‘Wenn jemand eine wahre Todesnachricht mit einer traurigen Stimme ausspricht, ohne wirklich traurig zu sein, so ist der ausgedrückte Gedanke dennoch wahr’ (*Logik* NS 152). Frege’s *test* for truth evaluability is epistemic (Logic 152, PW 140); the Stoics would presumably reject the test.

EMOTIONAL CONTENT IN ASSERTORIC SENTENCES	
Stoic ‘more-than-assertibles’ (*pleiona ē axiōmata*) (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115).	**Fregean** assertoric sentences containing more than thought and assertion (T63, CP 356).
Emotional element expressed either by additional particle or by tone of voice (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115).	Emotion-eliciting element expressed either by additional particle or adverb, or by intonation or emphasis (T63, CP 356; PWLB, PW 140).
Go beyond assertibles by an emotional element (are not assertibles) (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115).	Go beyond the thought cum assertion by an emotional (emotion-eliciting) element (T63, CP 356).
Stoics: are neither true nor false (emotivism) (implied D.L. 7.67; S.E. *M.* 8.73; Prantl 441, n. 115).	(See below.)
Prantl: contain (‘enthalten’) in them the True and the False (Prantl 443, based on Ammon. *Int.* 2.26–3.6; Prantl 443, n. 117).	Contain a thought and assertion, and hence are true or false (T62, CP 356–57 implied—perhaps unclear; PWLB, PW 140 unclear).

There is a difference between the Stoics and Frege regarding the emotive element. For the Stoics, it regards the emotion that the speaker (has or pretends to have and) expresses. For Frege, it regards the emotions the speaker intends to elicit in the listeners. Emotive language of course fulfils both functions.

(ii) Mock thoughts:

Interestingly, Frege also discusses cases of complete contents that are very similar to thoughts, and of which he says in at least *some* of his writings that they are neither true nor false. These are Frege’s infamous ‘Scheingedanken’: apparent thoughts or mock thoughts.[66] These mock thoughts display the feature of the Stoic quasi-assertibles which Frege’s emotion-laden thoughts lack, *i.e.* the absence of alethic values.

In his PWLB, Frege suggests that mock thoughts (i) are expressed by/in assertoric sentences; (ii) are neither true nor false (*cf.* Prantl 443 ‘because of the less simple form only similar to the true, but not themselves true');[67] and (iii) are not thoughts, but (iv) only apparent thoughts. He also says (v) that when we express a mock thought in an assertoric sentence, we do not have an *assertion* but, rather, an *apparent assertion*. The similarity of Frege's apparent thoughts to Stoic quasi-assertibles is evident (all in *Logik* NS 141–42 = PWLB, PW 130). In some other places, Frege propounds the view that contents such as those he discusses in *Logik* (NS 141–42 = PWLB, PW 130) are thoughts but have no 'Bedeutung', and, when expressed, we do not have assertions but only pseudo/mock-assertions (*e.g.* Letter to Russell, 28.12.1902, PMC 152; 13.11.1904, PMC 165). (Generally, Frege situates mock thought mostly in fiction. The Stoics employ examples from literature for their quasi-assertibles, but they have non-fictional uses in mind. However, this is not obvious from Prantl.)

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[65] ‘[…] fähig seien, das Moment des Wahren und Falschen in sich zu enthalten’ (443, read together with n. 117, ‘δεκτικά ὄντα ψεύδους τε καὶ ἀλήθειας […] aus dem Munde stoischer Anschauungen’.

[66] PWLB, PW 130: ‘the writer […] has his eye on appearances (‘Schein’)’. A ‘Schein’ *x* is what looks like an *x* but is not an *x*.

APPARENT ASSERTORIC CONTENT	
Stoic quasi-assertibles (*homoion axiōmati*) (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115; Ammon. *Int.* 2.9–6.3; Prantl 441, n. 117).	**Fregean** mock thought ('Scheingedanke') (*Logik* NS 141–42 = PWLB, PW 130).
Said by using assertoric sentences (D.L. 7.67; Prantl 441, n. 115).	Expressed in/by assertoric sentences (*Logik* NS 141 = PWLB, PW 130).
Neither true nor false (Implied D.L. 7.67; S.E. *M.* 8.73; Prantl 441, n. 115).	Neither true nor false (*Logik* NS 141–42 = PWLB, PW 130, implied Letters to Russell from 28.12.1902, PMC 152; 13.11.1904, PMC 165).
Not assertibles and do not contain assertibles (D.L. 7.65–68, implied by context).	Not ('eigentliche') thoughts, do not contain thoughts (implied, *Logik* NS 142 = PWLB, PW 130).
Similar to assertibles (D.L. 7.67, implied by name).	Apparent thoughts and apparent assertions (*Logik* NS 141–42 = PWLB, PW 130).

Frege's two cases do not fully correspond to Prantl's two mentions of Stoic quasi-assertibles and more-than-assertibles. Rather, there are two Fregean kinds of complete contents, each of which exemplifies several features of the Stoic quasi-assertibles and similar-to-assertibles, as Prantl reports them. Frege's mock thoughts have more in common with Prantl's quasi-assertibles (443) and Frege's more-than-thoughts with Prantl's more-than-assertibles (441).

III.1.2.5. Word questions: two kinds of completeness of content

The Stoics and Frege agree that, like sentence questions, word questions request an answer. **Stoics**: inquiries (*pusmata*) are that by saying which we inquire (*punthanometha*), *e.g.* 'where does Dion live?' (D.L. 7.66; S.E. *M.* 8.71–72; Prantl 441). **Frege**: 'In a word-question we utter an incomplete sentence, which is meant to be given a true sense just by means of the completion for which we are asking' (T 62, CP 355).[68] The texts on word questions do, however, reveal a difference in how the two parties look at complete contents. For the **Stoics**, word questions express a complete content (D.L. 7.65–66). For **Frege**, word-questions do not express a genuine complete sense (T62, CP 355). Nor do exclamations, since one cannot form a corresponding sentence question (T62, CP 355). This exemplifies the use of different criteria by the Stoics and Frege for what counts as complete. For Frege, 'who has the key?' has no corresponding (complete) 'Sinn', even if the context of utterance is taken into account. All there is is the *'Sinn' fragment*, or function, '[…] has the key'. By contrast, for Frege a command such as 'close the door!' provides the addressee in its context, which presumably is relevant for making it express a Fregean complete sense. For a word question, the context of utterance does not provide the answer and thus leaves the thought incomplete. For **The Stoics**, we may assume that a word question is *a complete move in the language game*. There is nothing missing. A second Stoic kind of complete sayable that confirms this are addresses (*prosagoreutika*, D.L. 7.66–67). An example is 'most magnificent son of Atreus, leader of men, Agamemnon' (D.L. 7.67). Addresses are explicitly counted among the complete sayables. The criteria for completeness of Frege and Stoics are thus *de facto* quite different. Both these notions of completeness are critical in philosophy of language.

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[67] '[…] wegen der weniger einfachen Form dem Wahren bloss ähnlich, nicht aber selbst wahr'.

[68] 'In einer Wortfrage sprechen wir einen unvollständigen Satz aus, der erst durch die Ergänzung, zu der wir auffordern, einen wahren [= genuine] Sinn erhalten soll' (LU 34–35).

III.1.2.6. Complete contents expressed with indexicals

So both Frege and the Stoics expressly consider the case in which the content of an *assertoric sentence* goes beyond that of an *assertoric content* (T64, CP 357–58; *Logik* NS 150 = PWLB, PW 139; S.E. *M.* 8.70–73; Prantl n. 115; Prantl 443). Both comment on the fact that the opposite can also happen: 'that the mere wording does not suffice for the expression of the' assertoric content, to borrow Frege's formulation (T64, CP 358; *Logik* NS 150–51 = PWLB, PW 139**)**. Examples are sentences such as 'I am cold ('ich friere')' (*Logik* NS 146, PW 134) or 'this one is walking' (D.L. 7.70). More specifically, both had to show how their theory of incorporeal content can cope with the fact that such sentences alone are insufficient to express a complete content. It is for this purpose, it seems, that each introduced a basic theory of indexicals and context sensitivity.

Sentences like the examples above immediately raise a number of philosophical questions. They can be used to express different content in different contexts. Still, speakers uttering them usually succeed in unambiguously expressing a complete content. What is this content? How do they succeed in using such sentences? What are the truth-conditions for such content? How do we mention such contents? How is the content of, for example, 'I am cold' when Sam says it related to the content of 'Sam is cold'? Do the contents have the same semantic value? Are they the same assertoric contents? Both the Stoics and Frege appear to have considered most of these questions.

The Stoics' main emphasis is on sentences with *demonstratives*, like 'this one'. They are aware that a sentence like 'this one is walking' expresses different things in different contexts. They called such sentences *deictic sentences* (S.E. *M.* 8.96, *ta kata deixin ekpheromena*; Prantl 444, n. 119) and held that, in order for them to express anything, they must be accompanied by an act of pointing. A (simple) deictic assertible is said to be composed of a predicate and a deictic referent (*deiktikē ptōsis*, D.L. 7.70; Prantl 444). They called the assertibles expressed in this way *deictic assertibles* (*katagoreutikon*, *ibid.*). The deictic referent is what is at the receiving end of the pointing. The pointing need not be done with a finger or hand, but apparently can be a nodding with the chin, when saying 'I' (*egō*) (Gal. *PHP* 2.2). A successful assertion of a deictic assertible requires that the speaker combines the deictic sentence with a pointing at the deictic referent. The standard way of *mentioning* a deictic assertible was: 'this one, pointing at Dion, is asleep' (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65: 'wenn bei dem Aussprechen des Satzes "wenn Dion gestorben ist, ist dieser gestorben" zugleich mit dem

Finger auf Dion hingezeigt werde').[69]

The most noteworthy aspect of the Stoic theory of indexicals is that they are very clear that pairs of sentences like the following express two different contents:

(1) Dio walks.

(2) This one (with a pointing at Dio) walks.

These express two different assertibles. First, their truth-values can differ. 'Dio walks' is true when Dio walks. By contrast, 'this one walks', with a pointing at Dio, is true when that which is pointed at walks (S.E. *M.* 8.100; *cf.* Prantl 465). Its truth-conditions are expressed without use of a proper name. Second, the assertibles expressed by (1) and (2) have different existence conditions. For (2), pointing at Dio, to exist, the non-verbally indicated object must exist, so that it can be pointed at. By contrast, since in (1) a proper name refers to an object, we can say something about the object even when it no longer exists (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65, n. 166). The deictic assertibles have stricter requirements for assertibility than those with proper names. For their assertion, it must be possible to point at the deictic referent. In (1), by contrast, the proper name has some content (the *orthos ptōsis*) that warrants assertibility, even when the referent of the proper name has ceased to exist. When Dion is dead, (1) is false and cannot be true (*ibid.*). Our texts imply that, for the Stoics, even when Dio is alive, 'this one is dead' (with 'this one' for Dio) cannot be asserted without Dio being in pointing distance.

Frege tackles the very same problem as the Stoics in his T, when he says that often 'the sentence alone is not enough for the expression of a thought', and this is particularly so when the sentence contains an indexical. We learn that 'the complete expression of the thought' may require 'finger pointing, hand gestures, and glances'. This is just what the Stoics suggest. Frege also remarks that sentences with indexicals express different thoughts when used by different people, in which case one thought can be true, the other false (all in T64, CP 358). The case Frege investigates in detail is a sentence that involves the first person pronoun 'I' rather than a demonstrative. Frege considers the question whether the sentence

(3) Dr Gustav Lauben was wounded

expresses the same thought as the sentence

(4) I was wounded (when said by Dr Gustav Lauben) (T64– 65, CP 358).

His verdict is 'no': (3) and (4) express different thoughts. The similarity to the Stoics is striking. Where the Stoic argument is primarily metaphysical, Frege's is epistemic: someone who doesn't know that the person uttering (4) was Gustav Lauben cannot know that (3) and (4) concern the same person (T65, CP 358–59). We can safely assume that the thought expressed by (4) cannot be expressed when Dr Lauben is not present. [70]

Frege is silent on the question of whether there can be situations in which what is expressed with (3) and what is expressed with (4) do not share a truth-value. He expressly states that, as long as the referent of different *proper names* is the same, thoughts that differ only with regard to those *names* will have the same truth-value (T66, CP 359). He is also clear that different sentences can express the thought expressed by (4). For example, he writes that Gustav Lauben may say

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[69] The details of the Stoic theory of *deixis* are controversial. Luckily, they are not required here. I also disregard any irrelevant metaphysical details.

[70] In some of his earlier work, Frege writes that one can obtain the same thought if a third person uses a name instead of the first person using 'I' (*Logic* PW 134–35). It is quite possible that in this passage Frege has the specific circumstances in mind in which a third person is present. If this is so, there is no significant difference to Frege's view as expressed in *Thoughts*.

(5) The one who is now speaking to you was wounded

('by doing this he makes the conditions accompanying his utterance serve toward the expression of a thought', T66, CP 360[71]).[72] Perhaps the same thought is *still* expressed if someone else present says 'the one who just spoke was wounded'.

Another question on which Frege is silent is whether there can be situations in which the thought expressed by (3) can be asserted but the thought expressed by (4) cannot. Unlike Stoic assertibles, Fregean thoughts are defined as being eternal. So the Stoic view cannot be Frege's. However, the fact that a thought is eternal does not entail that it can be *expressed* or *asserted* at all times. In fact, it is compatible with what we know of the later Frege that he then believed that sentences of type (4) cannot be expressed by using a proper name or definite description in its subject place: the Lauben example strongly suggests this. It seems then that for the late Frege there are situations in which the thought that corresponds to an indexical sentence cannot be expressed. (Suggested by T65–66, CP 358–60 and by (4) and (5) above in particular.) Compare also Key Sentences on Logic 9 (PW 174): 'the sentence "this table is round" is the expression of a thought only if the words "this table" are not empty sounds but designate something specific for me' (Kernsätze zur Logik 10 (NS 189)).[73] This suggests that, eternity notwithstanding, when it is not possible to indicate the subject of the thought via indexical expressions (plus gesture, where required), the thought cannot be asserted. The eternity of thoughts would also be compatible with the assumption that indexical thoughts are, as it were, silenced for good when the possibility no longer exists of expressing them via indexical expressions (plus gesture, where required). Metaphysical considerations aside, this would come close to what the Stoics suggested.

ASSERTORIC CONTEXTS THAT ARE EXPRESSED WITH INDEXICALS	
Stoics: There are assertoric sentences that are, on their own, insufficient to express an *axiōma* and need to be supplemented by *deixis*, gesture (D.L. 7.70; Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65).	**Frege**: There are assertoric sentences that are, on their own, insufficient to express a thought and need to be supplemented by finger pointings ('Fingerzeige'), gestures, glances (T64, T65, CP 358).

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[71] 'wobei er die sein Sprechen begleitenden Umstände dem Gedankenausdrucke dienstbar macht' (LU 40).

[72] This fact suggests that Frege's mysterious unconveyable 'I'-thoughts are not those expressed by (4) and (5), but are a third kind of thoughts that are of minor interest for logic.

[73] '[…] ist der Satz "dieser Tisch ist rund" nur dann Ausdruck eines Gedankens, wenn die Worte "dieser Tisch" mir etwas Bestimmtes bezeichnen, nicht leere Worte sind'.

We *mention* such sentences by supplementing them with a phrase, 'pointing at *x*' where *x* is the referent of the demonstrative (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65). Such pointings are not restricted to finger pointings, but also include *e.g.* gesturing with one's chin.	We *mention* such sentences by supplementing them with a phrase (T66, CP 360), 'by doing this he makes the conditions accompanying his utterance serve toward the expression of a thought' (T64, CP 358): Such 'Umstände' can include '*Pointing the finger, hand gestures, glances*' ('Fingerzeige, Handbewegungen, Blicke').
The truth-conditions for such assertoric content require that the predicate holds of that which is pointed at (S.E. *M.* 8.100; implied Prantl 464–65).	(The truth-conditions for such assertoric content are not given. Context implies that they have a truth-value.)
Discuss two sentences that differ only in that their subject expression is once a name or definite description, once an indexical expressed together with *deixis* and which *express different axiōmata* (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65).	Discusses two sentences that differ only in that their subject expression is once a name or definite description, once an indexical expressed together with *deixis* and which *express different thoughts* (T64–66, CP 358–59).
Argue that these express different assertibles (*ibid.*).	Argues that these express different thoughts (T64–66, CP 358–59).
In the normal cases, *i.e.* when they can both be expressed, these have the same truth-value (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65, implied).	In normal cases, *i.e.* when they can both be expressed, these have the same truth-value (T65–66, CP 358–59, implied).
There are situations in which the assertible that corresponds to an indexical sentence with *deixis* cannot be expressed (Alex. *An. Pr.* 177.25–178.1; Prantl 464–65).	Conjecture: There are situations in which the thought that corresponds to an indexical sentence cannot be expressed. (Suggested by T64–66, CP 358–60 and by (4) and (5) above in particular and Kernsätze zur Logik 10.)

III.1.3. Propositional logic and (more) language regimentation

The second main subject area in which parallels between Frege and the Stoics abound is that of the elements of propositional logic. As with our first area, some of these parallels have been noted before, in particular the definition of material implication. However, nobody has yet exposed the vast extent to which there is overlap in terminology, choice of topics, and theory. This section is structured by the different kinds of molecular assertoric contents (propositions from here on, for brevity) and any closely related notions.

Unlike the predominant contemporary classification of atomic and molecular propositions, **The Stoics** distinguished *simple and non-simple assertibles*. The simple ones are atomic assertibles, their negations (*literals*, in contemporary jargon), and any negations of simple assertibles. In his late published essay triad, Frege deals with negation in one essay and with what he calls compound thoughts, which are analogous to Stoic non-simple assertibles, in another. Simple negations are not compound thoughts. For comparison, on the one hand, Russell introduces negation in his *Principles of Mathematics* in terms of the conditional ('implication', Russell 1903, 16–17) and in 'Mathematical Logic as Based on the Theory of Types' he introduces negation and disjunction in one breath, and then defines the conditional in terms of negation and disjunction (Russell 1908, 244–45). On the other hand, standard logic texts, all in the Aristotelian tradition, tend to introduce affirmation/negation or assertion/denial in term-logical form and then, after presenting Aristotelian syllogistic, briefly mention hypothetical and disjunctive syllogisms, also generally in term-logical garb (if A is B, then C is D; *a* is either F or G).[74] So what the Stoics and Frege have in common is the combination of non-term-logically defined assertoric contents with the introduction and treatment of simple negations independently of their compound propositions.

III.1.3.1.1. Negation

Frege's *Negation* (N) and Prantl's discussion of Stoic negation both show clearly that the notion of negation that classical propositional logic takes for granted was not at all intuitive at a time when Aristotelian logic set the standard (Arist. *De Int.*, esp. chapters 5–6). While Aristotle distinguishes between assertion and denial,[75] Stoic and Fregean negations have the same assertoric force as Stoic and Fregean affirmations (*e.g.* D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444, n. 120; Frege: N154, CP 384; *Logik* NS 164 = PW 152; EidL, NS 201 = PW 185; *Kurze Übersicht*, NS 214=PW 197). Both Prantl's criticism of the Stoics (Prantl 444–45, 449–50) and Frege's defence of his negation (N152–55, CP 382–86) have to be read in this wider context.

A **Stoic** negation (*apophatikon*) is an assertible (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444). It is syntactically defined iteratively as formed from an assertible and a negation part 'not' (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 445, n. 121). An example for a negation is 'not: it is day' (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444, n. 119; Prantl has the Apuleius passage, 445, n. 121). Stoic language regimentation requires the use of the negation particle *ouchi* ('not:' or 'it is not the case that') as an indicator of scope to be placed at the beginning of the sentence that expresses the negation (Apul. *Herm.* 191.6–11, *cui negativa particula praeponitur*; Prantl 445; also S.E. *M.* 8.90).

The **negation part** is sometimes called 'negative' (*apophasis*, S.E. *M.* 8.89, 103), sometimes 'negation' or 'negative [part]' (*apophatikon*, Alex. *An. Pr.* 402; *FDS* 921, *apophatikon* [*morion*]). The term 'apophatikon' is also used for the whole negative assertible. Presumably in one case 'assertible' (*axiōma*) is understood, in the other 'part(icle)' ('morion') (see Apuleius' *negativa particula* at *Herm.* 191.6–11; Prantl 445, n. 121). **Stoic negations can be of** simple or **non-simple assertibles**. A Stoic example of the negation of a non-simple assertible is: 'Not [both] Plato is dead and Plato is alive'. These were called *negation* of a conjunction (D.L. 7.80 plus context, S.E. *PH* 2.182 plus context, 226 plus context, all in Prantl 473–74, n. 182). This contrasts with the Peripatetic term 'negative conjunction'.[76] The **truth-conditions** of the negation can be gauged from a passage that tells us that 'when "it is day" is true, "not: it is day" is false, and vice versa' (S.E. *M.* 8.103; *cf.* Prantl 449–450). So, Stoic negation is truth-functional. There is no difference in **'force'** between Stoic affirmations and negations. They are each assertoric contents that can be asserted (are *apophantikos*): the Stoic definition of *axiōma* as assertible covers negations.

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[74] *Cf. e.g.* Ulrici 1852, who goes on to deny the existence of hypothetical propositions.

[75] This is a position that has regained some popularity with Ian Rumfitt's contemporary uptake of Aristotle's view in Rumfitt 2000.

[76] *Cf.* Bobzien 2014, section 2.1.

Frege discusses negations in detail in his *Negation* (*Die Verneinung*) (N), and in shorter form in *Logik* (NS 161–62, PW 149–50), EidL (NS 201, PW 185), Kurze Übersicht (NS 214, PW 198), and at the beginning of CT. Negations are assertoric contents formed from an assertoric content and a negation [function] (N155, CP 386): the negation of a thought is a thought (N156, CP 387) and the negation [function] requires supplementation with a thought (N155, CP 386; CT37 CP 391). The account of negation is thus iterative. In *Negation*, Frege introduces and uses the operator 'die Verneinung von …' (N155–57, CP 385–89). In CT, Frege frequently expresses a negation by 'not *A*' (so explained at *e.g.* CT40, CP 394 and used *passim* in CT for sentence schemata: CT40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51 CP 394, 395, 396, 398, 399, 400, 401, 403, 404, 405, 406). Either way, the negator stands at the beginning of the negation—just as the negation stroke ('Verneinungsstrich') in Begr. Frege uses the term negation ('Verneinung') both for the negation function and for the complete negative thought (*e.g.* N155, 157, CP 386, 388–89). Frege offers 'not [A and B]' as an example of a **negation of a composite assertoric content**. He calls such composite contents negations (CT40, CP 393) and *not* negative conjunctions; the latter is common in nineteenth-century logic.

Regarding **truth-conditions**, he writes that of two assertoric contents *A* and the negation of *A*, one is true and one is false: Of the two thoughts *A* and the negation of *A*, always one and only one is true (N157, CP 389).

Negation belongs to the content, not to the force of a judgement ('Urtheil'): a negation is asserted, not an affirmative content denied (Begr 4, §4: 'Verneinung haftet am Inhalte', Begr 10 §7: assertion of negation (not denial) 10; N153–55, CP 383–86). There is no difference in **'force'** between affirmations and negations. They are each assertoric contents that can be asserted ('behauptet') (*Logik* NS 161 = PWLB, PW 149; EidL NS 201 = PW 185; N154, CP 384–85).

Both Frege and Stoics have the negator at the level of content (Frege N155, CT37; S.E. *M.* 8.89, 90). Frege explicitly distinguishes from this the word that expresses the negator at the linguistic level (N155, CT37). In ancient non-Stoic sources that do not distinguish between linguistic expressions and their content, the distinction can be blurred (Apul. *Herm.* 191.6–11). Frege uses 'Verneinung' (for the negation function) and 'Verneinungswort' for the part of the sentence that expresses the 'Verneinung' (N67).

NEGATION	
Stoic negation (*apophatikon*).	**Fregean** negation ('Verneinung').
The word *apophatikon* is used both for the negation particle and for the negative assertible (D.L. 7.69 (assertible); Plut. *Quaest. Convivales* 8.9.3 (assertible); Prantl 449 ('Verneinung': used for both); S.E. *M.* 8.90 (assertible); Alex *An. Pr.* 402 (negator)).	The word *Verneinung* is used both for the negation function and for the negative thought (N155, 157, CP 386, 388–89).
The negation is an assertible (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444).	The negation of a thought is a thought (N156, CP 387).

It is formed from an assertible and a negation part ‘not’ (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 445 n. 121).	The negation [function] requires supplementation with a thought (N155, CP 386; CT37, CP 391).
The linguistic expression of the negation part is prefixed to the assertion it negates (Apul. *Herm*. 191.6–11; Prantl 445, n. 121).	The linguistic expression of the negation is at the front of the sentence expressing the negation. (N155–57, CP 385–89, ‘die Verneinung von’; ‘Nicht( )’. So announced (CT40, CP 394) and used *passim* in CT for sentence schemata.
The definition of negation is iterative.	The definition of negation is iterative.
A Stoic example for the negation of a non-simple assertible is ‘Not [both] Plato is dead and Plato is alive’. Such assertibles were called *negation* of a conjunction (D.L. 7.80; S.E. *PH* 2.182; Prantl 473–74, n. 182).	Frege’s example of the negation of a compound thought is ‘not[A and B]’. This is called ‘*negation* of a compound thought (of the first kind)’ (CT40, CP 393, italics mine).
When ‘it is day’ is true, ‘not: it is day’ is false, and vice versa (S.E. *M.* 8.103; *cf.* Prantl 449–50).	Of the two thoughts *A* and the negation of *A*, always one and only one is true (N157, CP 389).
The force of negations is assertoric (entailed by the definition of *axiōma*) (D.L. 7.68–70 with 65).	The force of negations is assertoric (Begr 4, 10, *Logik* NS 161 = PWLB, PW 149; EidL, NS 201 = PW 185; N154, CP 384–85).

III.1.3.1.2. Contradictories

One essential role of the negation is in the definition of contradictories (*antikeimenon*). For **The Stoics**, the notion of contradictoriness (or of pairs of complementary literals) is central to their propositional logic (Bobzien 2019). Syntactically, they define contradictory assertibles as ‘those in which the one surpasses the other by a negation [particle]’ (S.E. *M.* 8.89; Prantl 449). Semantically, they say that ‘two assertibles are contradictories (*antikeimena*) with respect to truth and falsehood when one is the negation of the other (D.L. 7.73; Prantl 450 ‘that of two contradictory opposites only one can be true’ (‘dass von zwei contradictorischen Gegentheilen nur das eine wahr sein […] könne’). Prantl translates the Stoic *antikeimenon* also as ‘sprachlicher Widerspruch’ (Prantl 460)—again, he ignores the fact that Stoic assertibles are not linguistic entities.

Like the Stoics, **Frege** maintains that the contradictory of a thought is composed of that thought and the negation [function] (N155, CP 386), and holds that of contradictories one is true, the other false: ‘For every thought there is a contradictory thought so that a thought is declared false by the acknowledgement of its contrary as true’ (N154, CP 385). ‘The sentence that expresses the contradictory thought is formed by means of a negation word from the expression of the original thought’ (N67).[77]

At first blush, the Stoic formulation appears logically neater, in that it captures the symmetry of contradictoriness. It has, however, the less neat consequence that every negation has two contradictories (see below).[78] Once again, **Prantl's**—*inaccurate—representation of the Stoics* parallels Frege. Overinterpreting a passage in Simplicius (Simpl. *in Cat.* 403.32–33; Prantl 449, n. 134), he claims that '[…] the Stoics teach expressly that exclusively only the affirmative and the negative [assertible] stand mutually in the relation of contradictoriness' (Prantl 449).[79] Frege expresses the symmetry more explicitly:

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[77] ‘Der den widersprechenden Gedanken ausdrückende Satz wird mittels eines Verneinungswortes aus dem Ausdrucke des ursprünglichen Gedankens gebildet’ (N154).

> the only difference is that we have the opposite thought. So to each thought there corresponds an opposite. Here we have a symmetrical relation: If the first thought is the opposite of the second, then the second is the opposite of the first.[80]
>
> (*Logic* PW 149)

The Stoics would agree.

CONTRADICTORIES	
Stoic contradictories (*antikeimena*, D.L. 7.73; S.E. *M.* 8.89; Prantl 449 'das Contradictorische'; Prantl 460 'sprachlicher Widerspruch').	**Fregean** contradictories ('widersprüchliche Gedanken') ('widersprechende Gedanken', N154).
[The Stoics] say that contradictory [assertibles] are those in which the one surpasses the other by a negation/negator (S.E. *M.* 8.89; Prantl 449, n. 133).	The thought that is contradictory to another thought seems composed of that [thought] and the negation [function] (N155, CP 386).
The relation between contradictories is 'umkehrbar'/symmetric—follows from definition.	The relation between contradictories is 'umkehrbar'/symmetric (*Logik NS* 161 = PWLB, PW 149).
Stoics: For every affirmation there is precisely one contradictory. Prantl, reporting the Stoics incorrectly: For every *axiōma* there is precisely one contradictory (Prantl 449).	For every thought there is a contradictory (*Logik* NS 161 = PWLB, PW 149).
Two assertibles are contradictories with respect to truth and falsehood when one is the negation (*apophatikon*) of the other (D.L. 7.73; Prantl 449, n. 133).	For every thought there is a contradictory thought so that a thought is declared false by the acknowledgement of its contrary as true (N154, CP 385).

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[78] Not-p had both p and not-not-p as contradictories. See below on double negation.

[79] '[…] die Stoiker ausdrücklich lehren, dass ausschliesslich nur das bejahende und das verneinende Urtheil gegenseitig in diesem [*i.e.* contradictorischen] Verhältnisse stehen' (Prantl 449). Simplicius says that 'the Stoics believe that only the negations are contradictories to the affirmations', which from an Aristotelian perspective suggests—to Simplicius and Prantl—that *e.g.* 'Mieze is a non-horse' is not the contradictory to 'Mieze is a horse'. Alex. *An. Pr.* 402 and Apul. *Herm.* 191.6–11 suggest that the Stoic distinction was between a negation, which does not presuppose the existence of the referent of the subject expression, and an affirmation of the form 'a is *not* F', which presupposes the existence of the referent. Nothing follows about the question whether negations can have negations as contradictories.

[80] 'nur der Gedanke ist der entgegengesetzte. So gibt es zu jedem Gedanken einen entgegengesetzten. Wir haben hier eine umkehrbare Beziehung: Wenn der erste Gedanke dem zweiten entgegengesetzt ist, so ist auch der zweite dem ersten entgegengesetzt' (*Logik* NS 161).

III.1.3.1.3. Double negation

Double negation was anything but intuitive in antiquity, as well as at Prantl's and Frege's time, as is exemplified by both Lucian's and Prantl's ridiculing of Stoic double negation (Lucian, *Gallus* 11; FDS 930; Prantl 444, 'a truly insurmountable nonsense') and in Frege's long paragraph in which he desperately searches for metaphors (N157, CP 388–89).

Both the Stoic and the Fregean definition of negation allow the formation of a negation by 'prefixing' a negator (negation part, negation functor) to a negation. Both spell this option out explicitly.

The Stoics have a special term for the negation of a negation, the übernegation (*huperapophatikon*) (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444, n. 120). They define it as 'the negation of a negation' (*ibid.*) and say that it is a kind of negation. The übernegation is thus itself a negation, and by implication an assertible. Semantically, we learn by example that the assertible '"not: not: it is day" posits [the assertible] "it is day"' (D.L. 7.69, following emendation; Prantl 444, n. 120; Lucian, *Gallus*).[81] Prantl writes: 'in which two negations cancel each other out and bring about an affirmation' ('in welchem zwei Negationen sich aufheben und eine Affirmation bewirken', Prantl 444). Thus, by the Stoic definition of contradictories as well as by the Stoic truth conditions for negation (above), if an übernegation is true, the negation from which it was formed is false and vice versa.

Frege introduces the double negation ('doppelte Verneinung') in his *Negation*, describing it as the negation of the negation (N156–57, CP 388–89). In CT he writes: 'But since 'not (not B)' has the same sense as 'B' […] ' ('Da aber 'nicht (nicht B)' denselben Sinn hat wie 'B' […]', CT44, CP 399). He states that of a negation and the negation of that negation, one and only one is true (N157, CP 389). Already in BS156 §18 we read, '*Duplex negatio affirmat*. The denial of denial is affirmation' (emphasis omitted).[82] '*Duplex negatio affirmat*' can be found in logic texts of Frege's era, and thus does not imply a Stoic impact. Rather, the relevant points here are Frege's specific view and wording. Shortly after introducing the symmetry of contradictories, Frege writes 'We could declare it false by inserting a second "not" […] And from this it follows *that two negatives cancel one another out*' (*Logic* PW 149, emphasis mine).[83]

The combination of incorporeal assertoric content and their definitions of negation and contradictories leave both Frege and the Stoics facing the following awkwardness. On the one hand, it is a property of an assertoric content that it is a negation or that it is an affirmation, and a double negation is a negation of a negation, and hence itself a negation. If one adds to this the syntactic definitions of contradictories (above), including the symmetry relation of contradictories, it oddly results that affirmations have one contradictory, and negations have two. On the other hand, a double negation $\neg\neg A$ and the corresponding affirmation A seem to be considered logically equivalent. So if the relation of contradictoriness is considered to hold between the equivalence classes that result from the *duplex negatio affirmat*, then each such class has one contradictory. But neither Frege nor the Stoics say this. (Frege's treatment of double negation is also in tension with his claim that thoughts have 'building blocks' which somehow mirror the words that compose the sentences which express them.)

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[81] Confirmed by Lucian, *Gallus* 11: αἱ δύο ἀπόφασεις μίαν καταφάσιν ἀποτελοῦσιν.

[82] Begr44 §18: '*duplex negatio affirmat*. Die Verneinung der Verneinung ist Bejahung' (emphasis omitted).

[83] 'Man könnte das Fürfalscherklären mit einem zweiten eingeschobenen "nicht" bewirken […] Und es ergibt sich so, *dass die doppelte Verneinung sich aufhebt*' (*Logik* NS 161, emphasis mine).

DOUBLE NEGATION	
Stoic übernegation (*huperapophanti-kon*).	**Fregean** double negation (‘doppelte Verneinung’).
An übernegation is the negation of a negation (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444). It is a negation (*ibid*. entailed by context, *eidos de toutou*). Entailed by its definition and by context: an übernegation is an assertible (*ibid*.).	One can call the negation of the negation of … double negation (N157, CP 388–89). *The negation of a thought* … can serve as supplement of the negation [function] … . So I obtain the negation of the negation [of the thought] … which again, *is a thought* (N156, CP 387).
[The assertible] ‘not: not: it is day’ posits ‘it is day’ (D.L. 7.69; Prantl 444, n.120). ‘[I]n welchem zwei Negationen sich aufheben und eine Affirmation bewirken’ (Prantl 444). (Entailed by the truth-conditions of negation and by the semantic account of contradictories: either the negation or the negation of the negation is true.)	But since ‘not (not B)’ has the same sense as ‘B’, […] (CT44, CP 399). The denial of denial is affirmation (Begr 44 §18). Always one and only one is true … of the negation and the negation of the negation. (N157, CP 389). The double negation that dresses a thought does not change the truth-value of the thought (N157, CP 389).
It appears that negations have two contradictories.	It appears that negations have two contradictories.

III.1.3.1.4. Other negative assertoric contents

Beyond negations (*apophatikon*), **The Stoics** and Prantl each mention, one after the other, in the same sentence, two other kinds of negative assertibles. One is the *eliminating assertible* (*arnētikon* [*axiōma*]),[84] defined as constituted from an eliminating part (*morion*) and a predicate, with ‘nobody walks’ as illustration (D.L. 7.70; Prantl 444). The other is a *privative assertible* (*sterētikon*), defined as constituted from a privative part (*morion*) and what is potentially an assertible, with ‘Unkind is this one’ as illustration. Prantl writes ‘that which negates seems solely to be classified according to the respective negative linguistic expression, […] or a universally negating word, *e.g.* “nobody” (*arnētikon*), or a word that is composed with the *α privativum* (*sterētikon*) […]’ (Prantl 444).[85]

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[84] A common translation is ‘denying’, but this has the wrong connotations, since it can be seen as a force indicator, which it is not. LSJ has ἀρνητικός, ή, όν, denying, negative, μόριον ἀξιώματος Chrysipp. *Stoic*. 2.66, *cf.* Alex. Aphr. *in Metaph.* 333.26; φαντασίαι Numen. *ap. Eus*. PE 14.8; ἐπίρρημα Eust. 211.37. *Adv*. ἀρνητικῶς Porph. *in Cat.*136.27, Simp. *Phys.* 812.17, *Sch. Ar. Ra.* 1455. None of those passages forces a translation of the word family of denial rather than negation.

[85] ‘[…] erscheint das verneinende bloss nach den jeweiligen negativen Sprach-Ausdrücken eingetheilt, […] oder ein allgemein verneinendes Wort, z.B. “Niemand” (*arnētikon*), oder ein mit dem α privativum zusammengesetztes Wort (*sterētikon*) […]’.

In his PWLB, **Frege** mentions analogues to precisely these two kinds of negative content, and like the Stoics and Prantl, in the same sentence and in the same order: ‘We have other signs for negation like “no”, and we often use the prefix “un” as, for example, in “unsatisfactory”’ (PWLP, PW 150).[86] As the Stoics think that privative sentences express assertibles but do not think they express negations (entailed by the definitions D.L. 7.69–70), so Frege does not think that the sense (‘Sinn’) that is expressed by sentences with privatives, like ‘This man is *un*happy’ are negations:[87] we do have a thought, but it is not a negation.

OTHER NEGATIVE ASSERTORIC CONTENTS	
The Stoics have two further negative assertoric contents, mentioned (in the *Summary* D.L. 7.70 and in Prantl 444) in one sentence: first *eliminating* (*i.e.* universal negative) contents, second *privative* contents.	**Frege** mentions two further negative assertoric contents in one sentence, first (universal negative) contents, second privative contents.
These are complete contents and assertibles (implied by context in D.L. and Prantl).	These are thoughts (*Logik* NS 162, PW 150).
Stoic eliminating assertibles (*arnētikon* [*axiōma*]) are defined as constituted from an eliminating part and a predicate (D.L. 7.70). The eliminating part is *oudeis* (nobody, no-), *i.e.* universal. Prantl 444: ‘allgemein verneinendes Wort’.	Frege: ‘We have other signs for negation like “no” […]’ (PWLP, PW 150).
Privative assertibles (*sterētikon*) are defined as constituted from a privative part and what is potentially an assertible. As an example we get ‘Unkind is this one’ (D.L. 7.70). Context implies that these are not negations.	‘[…] the prefix “un” as, for example, in “unsatisfactory”’ (PWLP, PW 150). Implied: ‘This man is *un*happy’ is not a negation (PWLP, PW 150, emphasis mine).

III.1.3.2. Assertoric contents with binary connectives (compound propositions)

Partly for its entertainment value, partly because it shows what Aristotelian prejudice Frege would have encountered as the norm, here is a quote from Prantl ranting about the semantics of the Stoic non-simple assertibles:

> This unscientific and inane treatment emerges even more clearly where for the ‘non-simple’ judgments, too, principles are established for what is true and what is false; and there could hardly be anything that has come about in the field of humanities or

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[86] ‘Wir haben für die Verneinung auch andere Zeichen wie “kein” und die Vorsatzsilbe “un” in manchen Fällen, wie z.B. in “ungenügend”’ (*Logik* NS 162).

[87] ‘For this reason the sentences “This man is not unhappy” and “This man is happy” do not have the same *sense*’ (*Logic* PW 150, emphasis mine, ‘Daher haben denn auch die Sätze “Dieses Haus ist nicht unschön”, “Dieses Haus ist schön” nicht denselben *Sinn*’, *Logik* NS 162, emphasis mine; the translator changed the example since ‘unbeautiful’ is rare in English.). By contrast, for Frege, ‘This man is not not happy’ and ‘This man is happy’ would have the same sense.

> human thought in general, that could even approximate in worthlessness and arrogant twaddle this Stoic drivel about the conditional, disjunctive, causal and similar judgements.[88] (Prantl 453)

Now to the comparison with Frege: I start with some similarity factors that cut across different kinds of molecular propositions.

(i) The definitions:
Stoic non-simple assertibles are assertibles which consist of two or more assertibles or of the same assertible taken twice (or more often) (D.L. 7.68; Prantl 445). Stoic examples of non-simple assertibles of the latter kind are 'if it is day, it is day' (S.E. *M.* 8.95; Prantl 445) and 'if A then A' ('wenn A, dann A') in Prantl (Prantl 456). **Frege**, in his 'Compound thoughts' ('Gedankengefüge', CT), systematically introduces different kinds of *compositions-of-thoughts (thought compounds)*, or as the title is usually translated, of *compound thoughts*. He makes the same sort of distinction as the Stoics. Compound thoughts are thoughts in which two or more thoughts are composed into one—new—thought, or in which one thought is compounded with itself (CT37, CP 390: two; CT50–51, CP 406: more than two; CT 49–50, CP 404–05: one with itself). In EidL PW 188 (NS 204) Frege chooses a careful formulation that allows for the thoughts in a compound thought to be identical: 'each of which expresses a thought' ('von denen jeder einen Gedanken ausdrückt'). Frege's examples for the latter include 'A or A', [(not A) and A]. (Frege CT37, CP 391: any compound thought is itself a thought. CT49–50, CP 404–05: 'cases where a thought is compounded with itself rather than with some different thought […] 'A or A' […] '(not A) and A''.[89] (He also has if A, A, see below.) This kind of connection of a proposition with itself is not common in the Aristotelian traditions in which the Stoics and Frege find themselves: Alexander of Aphrodisias ridicules it; Frege feels the need to justify it (CT50, CP 405).)

(ii) The definitions are iterative:
All **Stoic** non-simple definitions are defined in such a way that their components can themselves be simple or non-simple or mixed (*i.e.* one is simple, the other non-simple) (see definitions below). This fact is stated explicitly (S.E. *M.* 8.124). Prantl's example is 'When the first is and also the second, the third is' ('Wenn das Erste und zugleich das Zweite ist, ist das Dritte', Prantl 480, with n. 190, S.E. *M.* 8.234–36). **Frege** also provides an explicit informal iterative account: every composite thought (thought compound) is a thought *and can be used in further composite thoughts* (thought compounds), *e.g.* '(A and B) and C' (CT50, CP 405–06), not [not A and [B and C]] (CT51, CP 406). So, **both** the Stoics and Frege choose accounts that permit molecular propositions as elements of molecular propositions, and put no limit on the complexity and length of propositions (*e.g.* S.E. *M.* 8.124), and both provide examples. Frege (in CT51, CP 406) uses the same form of example that we find for the Stoics in Prantl (Prantl 480): 'if [A and B] then C'.

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[88] 'Noch stärker nun tritt diese unwissenschaftliche und verstandlose Behandlungsweise da hervor, wo auch für die "nicht einfachen" Urtheile Grundsätze aufgestellt werden, was wahr und was falsch sei; und es dürfte wohl kaum je irgend im Gebiete der Litteratur oder der menschlichen Geistesthätigkeit überhaupt Etwas aufgetreten sein, was an Nichtswürdigkeit und arrogantem Blödsinne diesem stoischen Geschwätze über die hypothetischen, disjunctiven, causalen und dergleichen Urtheile auch nur gleichkäme'.

[89] 'Fälle […] in denen nicht verschiedene Gedanken, sondern ein Gedanke mit sich selbst gefügt ist […] "A oder A" […] "[(nicht A) und A]"' (CT49–50, LU 88).

(iii) Kinds of non-simple propositions:

The exact number of *kinds of non-simple assertibles* likely varied among the Stoics. Among a few others, they discuss conjunction, exclusive and inclusive disjunction, the material conditional and a stronger conditional, and a causal proposition, but no biconditional (D.L. 7.71–74 Prantl 447–48, ns 125–128, 461, n. 160). Prantl lists conditional ('hypothetisch'), copulative, disjunctive, causal, and comparing judgements (Prantl 462). Frege, too, discusses or mentions conjunction, exclusive and inclusive disjunction, the material conditional, and a causal proposition, but no biconditional.[90]

(iv) Connectives at the level of content

As in the case of the negator, in both Stoic logic and that of Frege there is a *tension with regard to the connectives*. Are logical binary connectives linguistic items or are they something at the level of thought that is expressed by corresponding linguistic items? For both Frege and the Stoics, there is evidence for the second option. **Frege** says that there is something in the realm of sense that corresponds to the (linguistic) 'and' and which is doubly unsaturated ('und was dem "und" im Gebiete des Sinnes entspricht, muss zwiefach ungesättigt sein' CT39, CP 393). The term he uses is 'the compounding' ('das Fügende'), CT40, 41, 42, 43 (as in 'compound thought', 'Gedankengefüge'). The Stoics say throughout that the connectives (*sundesmoi*, Prantl 445: 'Conjunctionen') connect *axiōmata* (D.L. 7.71–74; S.E. *M.* 8.95; Prantl 445, n. 122). Where the *Summary* lists parts of speech (*merē logou*), *sundesmos* is also defined as a part of *speech* that connects parts of speech (D.L. 7.58); this is attributed to Diogenes of Babylon and probably comes from his work on (spoken) language that had been mentioned just before.

(v) Terminology

For the component assertibles of a non-simple assertible, the Stoics use 'the first', 'the second', 'the third' (*etc.*) or 'A'', 'B'', 'Γ'' (*etc.*), which are the Greek ordinal numerals. In CT *passim* (and in EidL, NS 202 = PW 186), Frege uses 'the first' (or 'the first thought'), 'the second', 'the third' (*etc.*), and schematically 'A', 'B', 'C' (*etc.*). The use of 'the first', 'the second' seems to be absent in his earlier works.

COMPOSITE ASSERTORIC CONTENT (COMPOSITE PROPOSITIONS)	
Stoic non-simple assertibles (*ouch hapla axiōmata*).	**Fregean** compound thoughts (literally thought compound, *Gedankengefüge*).
Non-simple assertibles are those which consist of two (or more) assertibles or of the same assertible taken twice (or more times) (D.L. 7.68).	Compound thoughts are those where two (CT37, CP 390) [or more (CT51, CP 406)] thoughts [or the same thought taken twice (CT50, CP 404–05)] are composed into one [new] thought.

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[90] Russell, for instance has a biconditional (Russell 1908: 245; *cf.* Russell and Whitehead 1910: 120, definition *4.01).

Can be combined from simple, non-simple, or mixed (*i.e.* one simple one non-simple) assertible (S.E. *M.* 8.124; *cf.* Prantl 480, n. 190).	‘In this way compound thoughts containing three thoughts can originate. […] So too it will be possible to find examples of compound thoughts containing four, five, or more thoughts’ (CT51, CP 406).[91]
Non-simple assertibles include conjunction, inclusive and exclusive disjunction, conditional (D.L. 7.71–74).	Compound thoughts include conjunction, inclusive and exclusive disjunction, conditional (CT *passim*).
Also discussed: causal conditionals (D.L. 7.71, 74; Prantl 447, 457).	Also discussed: causal conditional (SB48, CP 175).
As schematic letters for component assertibles, the Stoics and Prantl use ‘the first’, ‘the second’, ‘the third’, or ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ (D.L. 7.80–81; Prantl 471-74 with notes).	Frege in CT uses ‘the first [thought]’, ‘the second [thought]’ and ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ for component thoughts (CT *passim*).
The same assertible can be taken twice. (D.L. 7.68) Example: if A, then A (‘wenn A, dann A’, Prantl 456).	The same thought can be taken twice (CT50, CP 404–05). Example, among others: if A, then A (‘wenn A, so A’, CT50, CP 404–05).
Prantl’s example from Sextus of a combination of a simple and a non-simple assertible: If the first and the second, then also the third (Prantl 480, S.E. *M.* 8.23–25).	Frege’s examples of a combination of simple and compound thoughts: if [B and C] then A, not [not A and [B and C]] (CT51, CP 406).
Connectives are variably said to connect propositions (D.L. 7.71–72; S.E. *M.* 8.95) and (in a work on language by Diogenes of Babylon) to connect parts of speech, D.L. 7.58). The Stoic term is ‘those which connect’ (*sundesmoi*).	Connective expressions have analogues at the level of thought, which, like predicates, are unsaturated, but doubly so (CT37, 39, CP 391, 393). Frege’s term is ‘the compounding’, ‘*das Fügende*’, CT40, 41, 42, 43 (as in ‘*Gedankengefüge*’).

III.1.3.2.1. Conjunction

Stoic conjunctive assertibles (*sumpeplegmena*) are syntactically defined as non-simple assertibles that are constructed by conjunctive connectives. An example is ‘both it is day and it is light’ (D.L. 7.72).[92] From the definition of non-simple assertibles we know that the connectives conjoin two *axiōmata*. (Prantl 447 writes ‘The copulative judgment, *to*

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[91] ‘So können Gedankengefüge entstehen, die drei Gedanken enthalten […] So wird man auch Beispiele von Gedankengefügen finden können, die vier, fünf oder mehr Gedanken enthalten’ (CT51, LU 90).

[92] συμπεπλεγμένον δέ ἐστιν ἀξίωμα ὃ ὑπό τινων συμπλεκτικῶν συνδέσμων συμπέπλεκται, οἷον ‘καὶ ἡμέρα ἐστὶ καὶ φῶς ἐστι’ (D.L. 7.72).

sumpeplegmenon, is the one brought about by 'and' or 'both—and' (*kai*, *kai—kai*)'.)[93] The thus connected assertibles are called 'those [*axiōmata*] in the conjunction' (*e.g.* S.E. *PH* 2.58, Galen, *Inst. Log*. 6.6). The truth-conditions are truth-functional. A conjunction is true when all its conjuncts are true, and otherwise false (S.E. *M.* 8.125; Prantl 459, n. 155). (Prantl 459, 'In fact, as regards the copulative judgment, *the sumpeplegmenon*, it has come down to us that it was true (*hugies*) if all the components connected by 'both' or 'both—and' correspond to the truth, but false if only one among them is false'.)[94] Some sources have been interpreted as suggesting that conjunctions could have more than two conjuncts but all reliable Stoic sources can be read as suggesting that Stoic conjunctions had precisely two conjuncts (so also Prantl 447).[95] Of these, one, of course, could be non-simple (S.E. *M.* 8.124) and so itself a conjunction. **Frege**, in his *Einleitung in die Logik*, writes this about his conjunction ('Kondukt, Verein'):

> If a whole is composed of two sentences connected by 'and', each of which expresses a thought, then the sense of the whole is also to be construed as a thought, for this sense is either true or false; it is true if each component thought is true, and false in every other case—hence when at least one of the two component thoughts is false.[96] If we call the thought of the whole the conjunction of the two component thoughts, […] (EidL, PW 188)[97]

A conjunction thus contains several thoughts (itself and component conjunct(s)) and is truth-functional. Elsewhere Frege emphasizes that the conjoining word ('Bindewort')[98] 'and' combines whole sentences that express thoughts (CT74, CP 392) and that what corresponds to the word 'and' in the realm of sense is doubly unsaturated.[99]

Both in ancient Greek and in German (as in English) the conjunctive connective can combine what is expressed by noun phrases or by predicate phrases, and in Aristotle and Peripatetic texts we find it used in that way in the context of logic. Both the Stoics and Frege choose the use that combines complete contents.

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[93] 'Das copulative Urtheil, to sumpeplegmenon, ist das durch "Und" oder "Sowohl—als auch" (*kai*, *kai—kai*) bewirkte'.

[94] 'Und zwar ist uns in Betreff des copulativen Urtheiles, des sumpeplegmenon, überliefert, dass dasselbe als richtig (hugies) galt, wenn sämmtliche durch "sowohl-als auch" verbundenen Glieder desselben der Wahrheit entsprechen, als falsch aber, wenn auch nur Eines unter jenen falsch ist'.

[95] That the early Stoics had only conjunctions with two conjuncts is confirmed also by S.E. *M.* 8.124, and by the fact that their syllogistic did not require conjunctions with more than two conjuncts, and that Plutarch's riddle can be solved more easily on this assumption (Bobzien 2019; Bobzien 2011).

[96] This sentence is very close to Prantl 459.

[97] 'Wenn ein Ganzes aus zwei durch 'und' verbundenen Sätzen besteht, von denen jeder einen Gedanken ausdrückt, so ist auch der Sinn des Ganzen als ein Gedanke aufzufassen, denn dieser Sinn ist entweder wahr oder falsch; wahr nämlich, wenn jeder der beiden Teil-Gedanken wahr ist, falsch in jedem anderen Falle -, also wenn mindestens einer der beiden Teilgedanken falsch ist. Nennen wir diesen Gedanken des Ganzen das Kondukt von den beiden Teilgedanken […]' (EidL NS 204–05).

[98] 'Bindewort' in Borheck 1807: 304–05, translating *sundesmos* for all Stoic non-simple assertibles in the *Summary*. Prantl has 'Conjunction'. Both are standard grammatical terms.

[99] '[…] "und". Dieses Wort wird hier in besonderer Weise gebraucht. Es kommt hier nur in Betracht als Bindewort zwischen *eigentlichen Sätzen*. Eigentlich nenne ich einen Satz welcher einen Gedanken ausdrückt' (CT74, CP 392); 'und was dem "und" im Gebiete des Sinnes entspricht, muss zwiefach ungesättigt sein' (CT75, CP 393).

The early Stoics appear to have regimented the use of the conjunctive connective so that either sentence that expresses a component assertible has ‘and’ prefixed to it (*kai* […] *kai* ---). This, together with similar choices for the other non-simple assertibles, gave the Stoics the means for a simple bracketing system similar to Polish notation. It appears that Prantl did not pick up on this point. Since this use is grammatical but not that frequent in ancient Greek, we can assume that the first ‘and’ (*kai*) was dropped by those not aware of the *logical* function of the first ‘and’. Frege does suggest such a use of ‘und’ (or ‘sowohl, als auch’), but uses brackets in CT *passim*.

CONJUNCTION	
Stoic conjunction or conjunctive assertible (*to sumpeplegmenon*).	**Fregean** conjunction (*Kondukt*, EidL, NS 204 = PW 188).
A conjunction connects assertibles, which are called ‘those in a conjunction’. (There is no term for conjuncts.)	In a *Kondukt*, thoughts, called part-thoughts, are connected. (EidL, NS 204 = PW 188. There is no term for conjuncts.)
The conjuncts are conjoined by conjunctive connectives (*sumpeplegmena sundesma*) ‘and’ or ‘both—and’ (*kai*, *kai*—*kai*) (Prantl 447, S.E. *M.* 8.124, D.L. 7.72).	The part-thoughts are connected with that which corresponds to the word ‘and’ (EidL, NS 204–05 = PW 188, CT74–75, CP 392–93).
The connective ‘and’ (*kai*) connects assertibles, and that is, connects what is expressed by whole assertoric sentences.	The connective ‘and’ (‘und’) combines whole sentences that express thoughts (CT74, CP 392).
Truth-conditions: a conjunction is true when all its conjuncts are true, otherwise false, *i.e.* when at least one of those [conjuncts] is false (S.E. *M.* 8.125; Prantl 459).	Truth-conditions: a ‘Kondukt’ is true when both its part-thoughts are true, in any other case false, *i.e.* when at least one of the two part-thoughts is false (EidL, NS 204, PW 188).
Some formulations imply that the connectives (*sundesma*) are not linguistic items, but are at the level of assertibles.	There exists something in the realm of sense that corresponds to the word ‘and’. It is doubly unsaturated (*e.g.* CT75, CP 393).
The early Stoic canonical view appears to restrict the conjuncts in a conjunction to two (D.L. 7.72; Prantl 447, n. 127).	Conjunctions have two conjuncts (CT *passim*).

III.1.3.2.2. Disjunction

Both the Stoics and Frege distinguish between inclusive and exclusive disjunction. The **Stoic** primary disjunction, the *diezeugmenon*, is exclusive (D.L. 7.72; Galen, *Inst. Log.* 3.3; Prantl 447–48, 460). It is formed with the disjunctive connectives (D.L. 7.72) ‘either […] or […]’. These connectives indicate that one of the component assertibles is false (S.E. *PH* 2.191, Prantl 460).[100] Prantl writes: ‘[…] is effected by the conjunction ‘or’ or ‘either—or’, and the inner sense of this composition is the relation of *a mutual exclusion*’ (447–48, emphasis mine) and 'a disjunctive judgment is true, if between the two disjunctive constituents a complete opposite obtains that effects mutual elimination' (Prantl 460 with Prantl's reference to Prantl p. 604, in particular to what Prantl says about Galen *Inst. Log.* on that page, *i.e.* p. 604; *cf.* also Gellius 5.11.8).[101] Stoic exclusive disjunction is non-truth-functional. However, the way in which Prantl presents it, this can easily escape notice. The inclusive disjunction (*paradiezeugmenon*) plays no role in early Stoic syllogistic. Its truth conditions are truth-functional. They require only that not all disjuncts are true (Prantl 521–22, 604; Gellius 16.8.14). There is not enough evidence to determine what the—regimented—syntax of Stoic inclusive disjunction was.

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[100] The word rendered ‘indicate’, literally ‘announces’ (ἐπαγγέλλεται), is commonly used by the Stoics to express the semantics of an expression.

Frege explains the truth-functional inclusive and exclusive 'or' in his *Begriffsschrift*. He writes,

> Now the words 'or' and 'either—or' are used in two ways […] Of the two uses for the expression 'A or B', the first, in which the coexistence of A and B is not excluded, is the more important; and we shall use the word 'or' with this meaning. Perhaps it is appropriate to make this distinction between 'or' and 'either—or' that only the latter shall have the secondary meaning *of mutual exclusion*.[102]
>
> (Begr 11§7 = BS 121–22, emphasis mine)

Frege's use of 'the non-exclusive "oder"' ('das nicht ausschliessende "oder"', CT42, CP 396) suggests that the distinction was still relevant in the 1920s and the exclusive 'or' still the norm. The suggestion of using a two-part connective for the exclusive disjunction matches the Stoics.

DISJUNCTION	
Stoics distinguish exclusive and inclusive disjunction (*to diezeugmenon*, *to paradiezeugmenon*, D.L. 7.72; Gellius 16.8.11–14; Prantl 447–48 and 521, n. 21).	**Frege** distinguishes exclusive and inclusive disjunction (Begr 11 §7 = BS 121–22).
The disjunctions are formed with the disjunctive connective 'either […] or' or 'or' (D.L. 7.72, Gellius 5.11.8, Gal. *Inst. Log*. 3.3, Prantl 448).	The 'or' and 'either […] or' are used for inclusive and exclusive disjunction. Frege recommends language regimentation (Begr 11 = BS 121–22).
The inclusive 'or' is truth-functional.	The inclusive 'or' is truth-functional (also CT42, CP 396).

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[101] '[…] ist durch die Conjunction 'oder' oder 'entweder-oder' […] bedingt, und der innere Sinn dieser Zusammensetzung ist das Verhältnis *einer wechselseitigen Ausschliessung*' (447–48); 'ein disjunctives Urtheil sei wahr, wenn zwischen den in ihm disjungirten Gliedern ein vollständiger, gegenseitige Vernichtung bewirkender Gegensatz […] bestehe' (460, emphasis mine).

[102] 'Die Wörter "oder" und "entweder—oder" werden nun in zweifacher Weise gebraucht […] Von den beiden Gebrauchsweisen des Ausdruckes "A oder B" ist die erstere, bei der das Zusammenbestehen von A und B nicht ausgeschlossen ist, die wichtigere, und wir werden das Wort "oder" in dieser Bedeutung gebrauchen. Vielleicht ist es angemessen zwischen "oder" und "entweder—oder" den Unterschied zu machen, dass nur das Letztere die Nebenbedeutung *des sich gegenseitig Ausschliessens* hat' (BS 11 §7, emphasis mine).

The exclusive disjunction requires mutual exclusion (*mache*) of the disjuncts, and one disjunct being false (S.E. *PH* 2.191, Prantl 460). Prantl's presentation: 'mutual exclusion' ('Wechselseitige Ausschliessung', Prantl 447–48) compatible with truth-functional reading.	Exclusive disjunction is regarded as truth-functional. Mutual exclusion ('[Das] sich gegenseitige Ausschliessen', Begr 11).
Exclusive disjunction is primary and more important.	Inclusive disjunction is primary and more important.

Here we have another case in which Prantl's presentation of Stoic logic is closer to Frege than to Stoic logic itself. However, Frege's disjunction need not have been impacted by the Stoic one via Prantl. The distinction between inclusive and exclusive disjunctions was a commonplace at Frege's time. However, again, we often find the Peripatetic syntax that (does not have the 'either' and) combines the predicates rather than entire sentences (Mill, Sigwart, Ulrici, *etc.*). So disjunction is added here only because we cannot rule out the possibility that Frege was inspired by the Stoics here as well.

III.1.3.2.3. Conditional

It is generally known that Fregeo-Russellian classical logic includes virtually the same truth-functional definition for the material conditional as that which Philo and some Stoics adopted for their assertibles, and the Stoic discussion of conditionals and their truth-conditions has been connected with Frege's logic in the past.[103] My focus will be on parallels between Frege and the Stoic view as presented in Prantl and the *Summary*. I juxtapose the most substantial similarites case by case.

(i) The definition and syntax of conditionals:

The Stoics define the conditional assertible (*to sunēmmenon*) syntactically as a non-simple *axiōma* in which two *axiōmata* are connected with the connective 'if' (*ei*). The component *axiōma* after the 'if' is called antecedent (*ēgoumenon*) or 'the first'; the other component *axiōma* is called the consequent (*lēgon*) or 'the second' (D.L. 7.71; S.E. *M.* 8.109ff; Prantl 446-47). For 'the first' and 'the second' we also find 'A', 'B' in some manuscripts.[104] So each conditional consists of at least two assertibles, and at least three if the component assertibles differ.[105] A conditional indicates a relation of consequence (*akolouthia*, D.L. 7.71, *akolouthein*; 'Verhältniss einer Folge', Prantl 447);[106] that is, it indicates that the second (assertible) follows from the first. Standard examples are 'if it is day, it is light' and 'if it is day, it is day' (D.L. 7.71; S.E. *M.* 8.109ff; Prantl n. 125).

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[103] Łukasiewicz 1935: 125, Mates 1962: 46–47, Kneale 1962: 531.

[104] 'First' and 'second' and 'A' and 'B' are used in inference schemata where reference to the (schematic) component assertibles has not yet been made with other letters. Some later texts have A′, B′, *etc.* for A, B, *etc.*

[105] Prantl 446–47: 'Das hypothetische Urtheil […] ist jenes nicht einfache Urtheil, in welchem die Verknüpfung durch "Wenn" (ei) bewerkstelligt ist, mag hiebei Ein [*sic*] einfaches Urtheil zweimal oder zwei verschiedene einfache Urtheile gesetzt sein; der grammatische Vordersatz heisst hgoumenon, der grammatische Nachsatz lhgon' (reference in n. 125 to D.L. 7.71, S.E. *M.* 8.109ff.).

[106] '[…] der innere Sinn dieser Verknüpfung ist das Verhältniss einer Folge, einer *akolouthia*'.

In the posthumous *Einleitung in die Logik* (EidL), **Frege** calls conditionals 'hypothetische Gedanken' (EidL, NS 205 = PW 188–89). In *Compound Thoughts* (CT45, CP 400) he calls them 'hypothetische Gedankengefüge', announces that he will use the linguistic form 'If B, then A' ('Wenn B, so A'), and says that its consequent ('Folge') is the sense (or thought content) of 'A', and its antecedent or condition ('Bedingung') the sense of 'B'.[107] In addition to the schematic 'A' and 'B', he also uses the metalinguistic 'the first [thought]' and 'the second [thought]' to refer to these (*ibid.*). A little later (CT47, CP 402), he writes that 'in a hypothetical compound thought we can distinguish three thoughts, namely the antecedent, the consequent, and the thought composed from the two'. In the *Einleitung in die Logik*, Frege distinguishes between hypothetical sentence, consequent sentence, and antecedent sentence, on the one hand, and hypothetical thought, consequent, and antecedent expressed by these, on the other (EidL, NS 203, 205 = PW 187, 188–89).[108] His use of 'Bedingung' and 'Folge' corresponds to Prantl's 'Folgeverhältnis' and to the Stoic *akolouthia*. Both Frege (EidL, NS 201 = PW 185) and Prantl (453) use 'hypothetical judgement' ('hypothetisches Urtheil'). This was the common expression for conditionals at the time, and need not indicate any influence. Note also the *terminological similarities* for the component contents. In CT44–45, CP 398–400 Frege uses throughout the expressions 'the first thought' and 'the second (thought)' for the two atomic thoughts in the composite thought. This corresponds to the Stoic use of 'the first (*i.e. axiōma*)' and 'the second (*i.e. axiōma*)'. And where in Stoic sources we sometimes find 'the first' and sometimes alpha ('A') (where this is a way of saying the first), Frege says (CT43, CP 398) about the fifth kind of composite thought, 'Given that 'A' expresses the first thought and 'B' expresses the second' (CT43, LU 80, 'Wenn 'A' den ersten Gedanken, 'B' den zweiten Gedanken ausdrückt'. *Cf.* also EidL, NS 205 = PW 189, 'erster Gedanke, zweiter Gedanke, hypothetischer Gedanke').

(ii) The truth conditions:

The Stoic account of the conditional introduced by Philo, which Prantl discusses at length since he finds it most abhorrent, is analogous to the one that Frege considers to be correct but persistently misunderstood. Where **Prantl** bemoans 'the merely formal relationship of the combination of the True and the False' (454, also 455, *i.e.* the truth-functionality), and 'that it is two judgements that are put side by side' (453), which leaves only the 'Debris of the hypothetical judgment' (*ibid.*),[109] **Frege** (in EidL, NS 201–03 = PW 185–87) emphasizes that

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[107] 'Statt "Gedankengefüge sechster Art" sage ich auch "hypothetisches Gedankengefüge" und nenne den *ersten Gedanken* "Folge", den *zweiten* "Bedingung" im hypothetischen Gedankengefüge' (CT45, CP 400).

[108] '[…] können wir den *hypothetischen Satz* nennen, dessen Folgesatz der Ausdruck des ersten Gedankens, und dessen Bedingungssatz der Ausdruck des zweiten Gedankens ist' (EidL NS 205, PW 188, emphasis mine); '[…] den *hypothetischen Gedanken* […], dessen Folge der erste Gedanke, und dessen Bedingung der zweite Gedanke ist' (EidL NS 205, PW 188, emphasis mine).

'[…] das Entgegengesetzte eines Kondukts von dem Entgegengesetzten eines ersten Gedankens und von einem zweiten Gedanken ist […] das was ich mit dem Bedingungsstriche ausdrücke. Der Satz des ersten Gedankens ist wieder der Folgesatz, der des zweiten der Bedingungssatz. *Den ganzen Satz aber, der ausdrückt das Entgegengesetzte eines Kondukts von dem Entgegengesetzten eines ersten Gedankens und von einem zweiten Gedanken, können wir den hypothetischen Satz nennen, dessen Folgesatz der Ausdruck des ersten Gedankens, und dessen Bedingungssatz der Ausdruck des zweiten Gedankens ist*' (EidL NS 205, PW 188, emphasis mine).

'Kondukt von dem Entgegengesetzten des ersten Gedankens und von dem zweiten Gedanken […] Entgegengesetztes des Konduktes von dem Entgegengesetzten des ersten Gedankens und von dem zweiten Gedanken: […] Dies ist der *hypothetische Gedanke*, dessen Folge der erste Gedanke und dessen Bedingung der zweite Gedanke ist' (EidL NS 205, PW 189, emphasis mine).

[109] 'das bloss formale Verhältniss der Combination von Wahr und Falsch' (Prantl 454); 'dass eben "*zwei*" *Urtheile* es sind, welche nebeneinandergestellt werden' (Prantl 453); 'Trümmer des hypothetischen Urtheiles übrig' (*ibid.*).

two thoughts are connected in the hypothetical thought. Compare Frege's EidL, PW 186–87: 'People probably feel the lack of an inner connection between the thoughts: we find it hard to accept that it is only the truth or falsity of the thoughts that is to be taken into account, that their content doesn't really come into it all'.[110] Prantl's complaint that the Philonian-type conditional disregards the causal relation, genus and species relations, and the like (Prantl 455) exemplifies the kind of criticism to which Frege responds in CT when stating that his (Philonian or material) conditional is a useful tool for logic (CT 45, 46). Here are the passages about the truth-conditions from Prantl and Frege. They speak for themselves.

Prantl writes:

> And thus first the merely formal relationship of the combination of the True and the False was explained, resulting in
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | antecedent true, consequent true, *e.g.* | 'When it is day, the sun shines' |
> | antecedent false, consequent false, *e.g.* | 'When the earth flies, the earth has wings' |
> | antecedent false, consequent true, *e.g.* | 'When the earth flies, the earth exists' |
> | antecedent true, consequent false, *e.g.* | 'When the earth exists, the earth flies'
or 'When it is day, it is night' |
>
> of these four combinations, only the fourth was called incorrect (*mochtēron*), and it was in particular Philo (see above fn. 8) who maintained this view of the hypothetical judgment, and hence also defined the correct hypothetical judgment—*to hugies sunēmmenon*—as the one which does not transition from a true antecedent to a false consequent.[111]
>
> (Prantl 454, *cf.* S.E. *PH* 2.105; D.L. 7.81)

This passage is essentially a free translation of S.E. *PH* 2.105, which is Prantl 454, n. 141. Prantl's n. 142 has the continuation of the text—'Of these only that with a true antecedent and a false consequent is false (incorrect), they say, but/and the others are true (sound)'—as well as the parallel in S.E. *M.* 8.449. N. 143 adds: 'Philo says that correct is the conditional which does not have a true antecedent and a false consequent' (S.E. *PH* 2.110).

Frege, PW 186, writes:

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[110] 'Man vermisst wahrscheinlich eine innere Verbindung zwischen den Gedanken; es will nicht recht einleuchten, dass von dem Gedanken nur in Betracht kommen soll, ob er wahr oder falsch ist, gar nicht eigentlich der Gedankeninhalt selbst' (EidL NS 202–03).

[111] 'Und so wurde denn nun auch zunächst das bloss formale Verhältniss der Combination von Wahr und Falsch […] auseinandergesetzt, und es ergab sich:[141])

Vordersatz	wahr,	Nachsatz	wahr,	z.B.	"Wenn es Tag ist, scheint die Sonne"
"	falsch,	"	falsch,	"	"Wenn die Erde fliegt, hat die Erde Flügel"
"	falsch,	"	wahr,	"	"Wenn die Erde fliegt, existirt die Erde"
"	wahr,	"	falsch,	"	"Wenn die Erde existirt, fliegt die Erde"
				oder	"Wenn es Tag ist, ist es Nacht".

Von diesen vier Combinationen nun wurde bloss die vierte als eine unrichtige (mochthēron) bezeichnet[142]), und zwar war es besonders Philo (s. oben Anm.8), welcher diese Auffassung des hypothetischen Urtheiles vertrat und daher auch das richtige hypothetische Urtheil—to hygies sunēmmenon—als dasjenige definirte, welches nicht von einem wahren Vordersatze zu einem falschen Nachsatze übergehe[143])' (Prantl 454).

> with two thoughts, only four cases are possible:
>
> 1. the first is true and likewise the second.
> 2. the first is true, the second false.
> 3. the first is false, the second is true.
> 4. both are false.
>
> Now, when the third of these cases does not obtain, then the connection which I have signified with the 'Bedingungsstrich' exists. The sentence that expresses the first thought is the consequent sentence; the sentence which expresses the second thought is the antecedent sentence.[112]
>
> (EidL, NS 202 = PW 186, my translation)

In Begr 5 §5 (BS 115) we have the almost identical:

> If A and B stand for assertible contents […], there are the following four possibilities: (1) A is affirmed and B is affirmed; (2) A is affirmed and B is denied […] [The 'Bedingungsstrich'] stands for the judgment that the third of these possibilities does not occur, but one of the other three does.[113] (emphasis omitted)

Note the following differences which are in line with Frege's later philosophy: in EidL (i) the antecedent gets first place, the consequent second place; (ii) Frege uses 'der erste', 'der zweite' for 'B', 'A', and 'der erste (Gedanke), der zweite (Gedanke)' throughout; [114] (iii) 'wahr' and 'falsch' for 'bejaht' and 'verneint'; and (iv) he adds the names for antecedent and consequent. All four changes have parallels in Prantl and the Stoics. In (CT, CP 399), finally, we find a sentence very similar to the one Prantl adds after the four truth-functional possibilities (Prantl 454), where Frege introduces the truth conditions for hypothetical composite thought: they are '[…] false if and only if the [consequent, 'Folge'] is false, but the [antecedent, 'Bedingung'] is true'.[115]

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[112] Frege EidL NS 202: 'Wenn man zwei Gedanken hat, so sind nur vier Fälle möglich:

1. der erste ist wahr und desgleichen der zweite;
2. der erste ist wahr, der zweite falsch;
3. der erste ist falsch, der zweite ist wahr;
4. beide sind falsch.

Wenn nun der *dritte* dieser Fälle *nicht* stattfindet, so besteht die Beziehung, die ich durch den *Bedingungsstrich* bezeichnet habe. Der Satz, der den ersten Gedanken ausdrückt, ist der Folgesatz; der Satz, der den zweiten Gedanken ausdrückt, ist der Bedingungssatz'.

[113] 'Wenn A und B beurtheilbare Inhalte bedeuten, so giebt es folgende vier Möglichkeiten: 1) A wird bejaht und B wird bejaht; 2) A wird bejaht und B wird verneint; […] [Der Bedingungsstrich] bedeutet nun das Urtheil, dass die dritte dieser Möglichkeiten nicht stattfinde, sondern eine der drei andern' (Begr 5 §5) .

[114] CT 44, CP 399: Frege's use of 'der erste Gedanke', 'der zweite Gedanke': 'Daraus folgt, dass ein Gefüge sechster Art eines *ersten Gedankens* mit *einem zweiten* dann und nur dann falsch ist, wenn der *erste Gedanke* falsch, der zweite aber wahr ist. Ein solches Gedankengefüge ist also wahr, wenn der *erste Gedanke* wahr ist, einerlei, ob der *zweite Gedanke* wahr oder falsch ist. Ein solches Gedankengefüge ist auch wahr, wenn *der zweite Gedanke* falsch ist, einerlei, ob *der erste Gedanke* wahr oder falsch ist. […]' (emphasis mine).

[115] '[…] dann und nur dann falsch ist, wenn der erste Gedanke falsch, der zweite aber wahr ist'. The text continues '[…] true when the consequent is true, and true when the antecedent is false, whether the consequent is true or false' (CT44, CP 399).

(iii) The interdefinability of the conditional in terms of negation and conjunction:

The Stoics are aware of the interdefinability of the Philonian conditional in terms of negation and conjunction. Evidence shows that they rephrase the Philonian conditional as the negation of a conjunction with the antecedent as first conjunct and the negation of the consequent as second conjunct (Cic. *Fat.* 15–16). It is likely that they used this alternative formulation in order to retain both Chrysippus' and Philo's conditional in their logic. The Cicero passage suggests that if the Chrysippean conditional 'if A, $\neg$B' is true then $\neg(A\wedge B)$ is true, but not vice versa (*ibid.*), and that in certain specific cases only the 'Philonian conditional' comes out true, and is hence appropriate to use.[116] Interestingly, the *Summary* sports a version of the Sorites paradox in the form $A_1, \neg(A_1\wedge\neg A_2), \neg(A_2\wedge\neg A_3), [\ldots]\ \neg(A_{n-1}\wedge\neg A_n), A_n$ (D.L. 7.82, Prantl 54, n. 94, referred to in ns 210, 213, 216).

Similarly, **Frege** regards a hypothetical thought as interdefinable with a negation of a conjunction of the antecedent with the negation of the consequent. He treats 'if B, then A' and 'not ((not A) and B)' as two ways of expressing the same hypothetical thought (CT45, CP 400), after having just on the previous page said that 'B and (not A)' expresses the same thought as '(not A) and B' (CT44, CP 399). He produces truth-conditions for the expression with negation and conjunction: a hypothetical thought-compound 'not ((not A) and B)' is false if and only if the first thought is false, but the second true; true when the first is true, whether the second is true or false; and true when the second thought is false, whether or not the first is true or false (CT44, CP 399).[117] And eerily close to the Stoic and Prantl's description of the Philonian conditional: the hypothetical connective of A and B is the contradictory of the conjunction of A and the contradictory of B (NS 216, *Kurze Übersicht* = PW 200).[118]

(iv) Conditionals of the form 'if A, A':

As an example of a non-simple assertible in which the same assertible is taken twice, **The Stoics** offer 'if it is day, it is day' (*e.g.* D.L. 7.69; S.E. *PH* 2.112; Prantl 456, n. 148). Prantl implies that, for the Stoics, conditionals of the form 'Si A est, A est' are true (456).[119] Prantl provides further Greek Stoic examples, including one case that adds that the conditional is true (447, n. 125). Generally, the Stoics consider all conditionals of the form 'if A, A' true (S.E. *M.* 8.281, 8.466; Prantl 447, n. 125). This is also remarked on by Prantl (461).

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[116] *Cf. e.g.* Bobzien 1998: 156–67. The passage of Cicero's *De Fato* is not in Prantl (I believe), but several other passages of that work with substantial logical content are. So it would be evident for someone reading Prantl that *De Fato* deals with various logical questions. Might Frege have read Cicero's text as a result of studying Prantl? Without independent evidence, we have no compelling reason to assume he did.

[117] (CT45, CP 400) 'Statt "Gedankengefüge sechster Art" sage ich auch "hypothetisches Gedankengefüge" und nenne den *ersten Gedanken* "Folge", den zweiten "Bedingung" im hypothetischen Gedankengefüge [nicht ((nicht A) und B)]. Demnach ist ein hypothetisches Gedankengefüge wahr, wenn die Folge wahr ist. Auch ist ein hypothetisches Gedankengefüge wahr, wenn die Bedingung falsch ist, einerlei, ob die Folge wahr oder falsch ist. -- Wir können dafür auch schreiben "Wenn B, so A"'.

[118] NS 216 (Kurze Übersicht): 'Nun ist die hypothetische Verbindung von A und B das Entgegengesetzte des Vereins von A und vom Entgegengesetzten von B'. The terms are all Frege's own, rather than coming from the logical tradition. The only difference to the Stoics description is that, instead of 'negation of the conjunction of', Frege has 'the contradictory of the conjunction of'. (*Cf.* also 'Den ganzen Satz aber, der ausdrückt das Entgegengesetzte eines Kondukts von dem Entgegengesetzten eines ersten Gedankens und von einem zweiten Gedanken, können wir den hypothetischen Satz nennen, dessen Folgesatz der Ausdruck des ersten Gedankens, und dessen Bedingungssatz der Ausdruck des zweiten Gedankens ist' (EidL NS 205, PW 188).)

[119] Un-Stoically, perhaps inspired by the 'is' (*estin*) in 'day is' (*hēmera estin*), Prantl seems to use A as a term variable here, similar to above.

In particular, Prantl argues that all such assertibles (*diphoroumena*) are analytically true, because they satisfy the Stoic criterion that a conditional is true if the contradictory of the consequent is in opposition to the antecedent.[120]

Frege states that a compound thought in which a thought A is compounded with itself and which is expressed by ‘if A, then A’ (‘wenn A, so A’) is true. As reason for the truth, he adduces that compound thoughts that are the contradictory/opposite/negation of these, *i.e.* those expressed by ‘[(not A) and A]’, are false, since of two thoughts of which one is the negation of the other, one is always false, and, hence, so is the compound thought (CT50–51, CP 405). This reason is closely related to that of Prantl just mentioned.

CONDITIONAL ASSERTORIC CONTENTS	
Stoics: conditional assertible (*sunēmmenon axiōma*) (D.L. 7.71; S.E. *M. 8.*109; Prantl 447). **Prantl**: hypothetical judgement (‘hypothetisches Urtheil’) (447, 453).	**Frege**: hypothetical thought (‘hypothetischer Gedanke’) (EidL, NS 205 = PW 189), hypothetical thought compound (‘hypothetisches Gedankengefüge’) (CT45, CP 400).
Terminology: If …, --- (*ei*, *eiper*) (Prantl ‘*wenn*’, ‘*wenn/dann*’). Antecedent (*ēgoumenon*), consequent (*lēgon*) (Prantl, ‘Vordersatz’, ‘Nachsatz’). Relation of consequence (*akolouthia*, ‘Verhältniss einer Folge’, ‘Folgeverhältnis’, Prantl 447).	**Terminology:** If …, then --- (‘*Wenn* …, *so* ---’). Antecedent (‘Bedingung’), consequent (‘Folge’). Relation of antecedent (‘Bedingung’) and consequent (‘Folge’) (CT45, CP 400, EidL, NS 205 = PW 188).
Truth-functionality ‘the merely formal relation of the combination of true and false’ (‘das bloss formale Verhältniss der Combination von Wahr und Falsch’) (Prantl 454, also 455). Not a causal relation (Prantl 455).	**Truth-functionality** ‘that it is only the truth or falsity of the thoughts that is to be taken into account’ (EidL, PW 187) (EidL, NS 202–03, ‘dass von dem Gedanken nur in Betracht kommen soll, ob er wahr oder falsch ist’). Not a causal relation (Begr 5–6).
Truth-functionality of the (Philonian) conditional *axiōma* (S.E. *PH* 2.105; Prantl 454). List of four combinations: true/true, false/false, false/true, true/false (Prantl 454). The correct/true conditional is the one that does not have a true antecedent and a false consequent (S.E. *PH* 2.110; Prantl 454, n. 143).	Truth-functionality of the hypothetical thought (Begr 5–6; EidL, NS 202–03 = PW 186–87; CT44, CP 399). List of four combinations: true/true, true/false, false/true, false/false (EidL, NS 202 = PW 186; Begr 5–6; CT44 CP 399). ‘false iff the consequent is false, but the antecedent is true’ (CT45, CP 399).

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[120] ‘fällt theilweise dem Sprachlichen anheim, da es ja dann wahr ist, wenn das contradictorische (d.h. sprachliche) Gegentheil des Nachsatzes einen Gegensatz zum Vordersatze bildet’ (Prantl 461).

Of these four combinations, only the fourth was called incorrect (*mochtēron*) (Prantl 454).	'false if and only if the [consequent, 'Folge'] is false, the [antecedent, 'Bedingung'] false (CT44, CP 399).
Interdefinability The Philonian conditional *axiōma* can (and should) be rephrased as a negated conjunction with the antecedent and the negation of the consequent as conjuncts (Cic. *Fat.* 15–17, with D.L. 7.82 for example).	**Interdefinability** Frege considers the hypothetical thought compound expressible both in hypothetical form, and as the negation of a conjunction in which the antecedent and the negation of the consequent are the conjuncts (CT44–45, CP 399–400); or the contradictory of a conjunction with the antecedent and contradictory of the consequent as conjuncts (*Kurze Übersicht*, NS 216 = PW 200).
Logical truth of 'If A, A' Conditionals of the form 'If A, A' are said to be true (S.E. *M.* 8.281, 8.466; Prantl 456). They are analytically true, since the contradictory of the consequent is incompatible with the antecedent (Prantl 461).	**Logical truth of 'If A, A'** Conditionals of the form 'If A, then A' are said to be true (CT50–51, CP 405). Such a compound thought is (analytically) true, because the conjunctive thought that is its contradictory is always false, since it has a thought (the antecedent) and its negation (the consequent) as conjuncts (CT50–51, CP 405).

III.1.3.2.4. Assertoric contents expressed by sentences with 'because'

Finally, there is the unusual parsing of the content of sentences with 'because' clauses, or *causal content*.

Among their non-simple assertibles, **The Stoics** list para-conditionals (*parasunnēmena*). These are assertibles that are *para-connected*[121] by the because-connective and that have an assertible as antecedent and another as consequent. The example is 'because it is day, it is light'. The truth-conditions are reductive. They combine the truth-conditions of the corresponding conditional with the truth of the first assertible in the para-conditional: 'The connective indicates that the second assertible follows from the first and that the first holds' (D.L. 7.71) (*cf.* Prantl 447; Simpl. *in Cael.*, Prantl 386; 'the older Peripatetics'; 'follows from', *akolouthein* is the—generic—truth-condition for conditionals).[122]

> A para-conditional is true if its antecedent is true and the consequent follows from it, for example "if it is day, the sun is above the earth". It is false when it either has a false

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[121] It is unclear how *para* should be translated. There was also a para-disjunction, the inclusive truth-functional disjunction (see above). This suggests that *para* did not indicate a logical property, but rather a non-simple content of secondary importance (presumably for Stoic logic).

[122] D.L. 7.71: παρασυνημμένον μέν ἐστιν […] ἀξίωμα ὃ ὑπὸ τοῦ 'ἐπεί' συνδέσμου παρασυνῆπται ἀρχόμενον ἀπ' ἀξιώματος καὶ λῆγον εἰς ἀξίωμα, οἷον 'ἐπεὶ ἡμέρα ἐστί, φῶς ἐστιν'. ἐπαγγέλλεται δ' ὁ σύνδεσμος ἀκολουθεῖν τε τὸ δεύτερον τῷ πρώτῳ καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ὑφεστάναι. As mentioned earlier, the word translated as 'indicate' is commonly used by the Stoics to express the semantics of an expression.

> antecedent or the consequent does not follow from it, for example "since it is night, Dio is walking" when said while it is day.
>
> (D.L. 7.74; *cf.* Prantl 457).

The non-truth-functional (Chrysippean) truth-criterion for the Stoic conditional immediately precedes that for the para-conditional. This non-truth-functionality would thus likely have been inherited by the para-conditional.

Compare this with what **Frege** writes in *Sense and Reference* (SB):

> [In] the sentence 'because ice is less dense than water, it floats on water' we have [the thoughts]: 1. Ice is less dense than water; 2. If anything is less dense than water, it floats on water; 3. Ice floats on water. The third thought, however, need not be explicitly introduced, since it is contained in the remaining two.
>
> (SB48, CP 175)

Frege adds that, as a result, the 'because'-clause cannot be substituted *salva veritate* by one expressing a different content with the same truth-value (*ibid*.).

This is not exactly the same as the Stoic account, but the underlying principle seems to be. In both cases, we have the *reduction* of the content of a sentence with a causal clause to two sentences and, resulting from this, the truth-conditions of that content. First, in either case, the content of the 'because'-sentence is constructed from three assertoric contents: a conditional and the antecedent and the consequent of the causal clause, and thus three assertoric contents from which the causal content is constructed. (In the Stoic case this is implied.) The key difference is that in his 2. Frege uses a—universal—conditional of the form 'if something is *F*, it is *G*'. Second, in either case the content of the sentence is taken to be reducible to the conjunction of a related conditional and the antecedent of the causal clause. Third, since in both cases the relevant conditional is not truth-functional—if for different reasons—in neither case can we substitute the antecedent *salva veritate*, and the content of 'because'-sentences is not truth-functional. Fourth, in each case, we can surmise, the motivation for the analysis of the 'because'-sentences is to reduce the complex sentences to simpler elements of the author's logical system, to make them logically treatable.

CAUSAL ASSERTORIC CONTENTS	
Stoic para-conditional (*parasunnēmenon*) (D.L. 7.71, 73–74; Prantl 447).	**Fregean** compound sentence with 'because' ('Satzgefüge mit "weil"') (SB48, CP 175).
Expression that identifies the kind of content: 'because' (*epei*) (D.L. 7.71; Prantl 447, n. 126).	Expression that identifies the kind of content: 'because' ('weil') (SB48, CP 175).
Examples: '*because* it is day it is light' (D.L. 7.71; Prantl 447, n. 126), '*because* it is day, the sun is above the earth' (D.L. 7.74; Prantl 457, n. 150).	Example: '*because* ice is less dense than water, it floats on water' (SB48, CP 175).

Constructed from three assertibles: one related conditional and antecedent and consequent of the para-conditional (D.L. 7.71; Prantl 447). The context, a classification of assertibles, entails that the conditional is an assertible.	Contains three thoughts: one related conditional and the thoughts expressed by the antecedent and consequent sentences of the because-sentence ‘[In] the sentence “because ice is less dense than water, it floats on water” we have [the thoughts] 1. Ice is less dense than water; 2. If anything is less dense than water, it floats on water 3. Ice floats on water’ (SB48, CP 175).
The content is reducible to the (conjunction of) related conditional and antecedent of the para-conditional (D.L. 7.71; Prantl 447).	The content is reducible to (the conjunction of) the related conditional and the thought expressed by the antecedent of the because-sentence (SB48, CP 175).
Since the related conditional is not truth-functional, the because-sentence is not truth-functional (D.L. 7.73–74, implied).	Since the related conditional is not truth-functional, the because-sentence is not truth-functional (SB48, CP 175).

The next section investigates how, considered comparatively, the Stoics and Frege dealt with quantified or universal conditionals of the form ‘if something is *F*, it is *G*’.

III.1.4. First-order logic: universality and language regimentation

Frege: The last comparison concerns Frege’s posthumously published remarks on Logical Generality (LG),[123] which may have been intended as a fourth part of his logical investigations. In this short piece, Frege moves from propositional logic to elements of first-order logic. Here Frege provides another case in which we have ‘different expressions for the same […] thought’, this time three ways of expressing a universal thought. Here are his three sentences:[124]

(6) All men are mortal.

(7) Every man is mortal.

(8) If something a man is, is it mortal.[125] (German word-order retained.)

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[123] *Logische Allgemeinheit*, LA, NS 278–81, written 1923 or later; English trans. *Logical Generality*, LG, PW 258–62.

[124] Frege’s double quotation marks indicate the linguistic expressions of thoughts.

[125] LA, NS 279 = LG, PW 259. The example ‘all men are mortal’ is a standard example in logic. For parallels *cf.* Frege’s ‘Ausführungen über Sinn und Bedeutung’ (NS 130), ‘“Alle gleichseitigen Dreiecke sind gleichwinklig” d.h.: “Wenn etwas gleichseitiges Dreieck ist, so ist es gleichwinkliges Dreieck” (*sic*)’. ‘ “All equilateral triangles are equiangular”, *i.e.* “If anything is an equilateral triangle, then it is an equiangular triangle” ’ (CSB, PW 119). Also CO197–98, CP 186–87: ‘“all mammals have red blood”, “what is mammal has red blood”, “if something is a mammal, then it has red blood” can all be said to say the same thing.’ *Cf.* also CT46–47, CP 402: ‘In dem Satzgefüge “Wenn jemand ein Mörder ist, so ist er ein Verbrecher” drückt weder der Bedingungssatz noch der Folgesatz für sich genommen einen Gedanken aus. […] weil das Wort “er” […] in dem aus dem Zusammenhange gelösten Satze ohne hinzukommnden Wink nichts bezeichnet […] Es ist sehr wesentlich, die beiden Fälle zu unterscheiden, die bei einem Satzgefüge von der Form “Wenn B, so A” vorkommen’. *Einleitung* NS 203–05 (PW 187–89), esp. 205 (PW 188–89) has another close parallel.

(Note that Frege's claim that (6) and (7) express the same thought as (8) does not reflect the logic of his time. In his *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), Russell treats (6) and (8) as logically different. 'All men' is considered to have a special reference (*cf.* §59), whereas (8) is used as an example for his *formal implication*, which he discusses in ch. 3, and which appears to have nothing to do with the universal statement (6).)

The syntactically infelicitous (8) is a literal rendering from the German. The relevance of the choice of literal translation becomes evident below. Frege advocates (8) over (6) and (7) as best suited to expressing universality: 'In [(8)] we have the form of a conditional *sentence* and the *indefinitely signifying* sentence parts "something" and "it". These contain the expression of universality' (LA NS 280, LG, PW 259). They express only *one* thought (CT46–47, CP 402–03).

Frege adds that we can make a logical transition from this mode of expression to the particular ('Besonderem') by substituting the same proper name for the two indefinitely signifying sentence parts.[126]

(9) If Napoleon a man is, is Napoleon mortal.[127] (German word-order retained.)

Frege then introduces the idea of a 'Hilfssprache' or 'helping language', which 'is meant to serve as a bridge from the perceptible (*i.e.* language) to the imperceptible (*i.e.* thought)'. He applies this idea of a helping language to (9). Even after using 'Napoleon' instead of 'he' in (the consequent of) (9), (this repetition is thus part of the 'Hilfssprache')[128] one still cannot read off that the sentence expresses a thought composed of the two thoughts 'Napoleon is a man' and 'Napoleon is mortal', and 'in this deviation from what is language-related to what is thought-related, there is still a defect in the helping language' (LA NS 281 = LG, PW 261). To remove this defect, he replaces (9) by

(10) If Napoleon is a man, Napoleon is mortal. (In German (10) is *in*felicitous.)

The Stoics[129] maintained that the following two sentences each have a different linguistic expression but mean the same, since both cover all individual cases.

(11) Man is a rational mortal living being.

(12) If something is a man, it is a rational mortal living being.

(S.E. *M.* 11.8–11, *cf.* Epictetus *Diss*. 2.20.2–3)[130]

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[126] This produces a hypothetical compound thought (PW 261, 'hypothetisches Gedankengefüge', NS 281). A hypothetical compound in which the same name occurs in the antecedent and consequent can be considered as a singular hypothetical thought ('singuläre[r] hypothetische[r] Gedanke'), EidL NS 205 = PW 188.

[127] LA NS 281 = PW 261; Also LA NS 280 = PW 260: 'If *a* a human being is, is *a* mortal' (German word-order retained).

[128] The repetition of the noun that has argument place in both sentences that express the component thoughts recurs in several Fregean passages (*e.g.* LM, NS 231 = PW 213–14: 'Wenn Cato ein Mensch ist, so ist Cato sterblich', derived from 'Wenn etwas ein Mensch ist, ist es sterblich').

[129] We can assume that this is Stoic since it makes a Stoic claim and uses Stoic terminology, and, more importantly, since later in the same passage Chrysippus' view is represented as maintaining a relation like that between (11) and (12) but with a disjunctive sentence as the consequent sentence (S.E. *M.* 11.11).

[130] 'for the one saying "Man is a mortal rational animal" says the same thing in meaning, though different in expression, as the one saying "if something is a man, it is a mortal rational animal"' (ὁ γὰρ εἰπὼν 'ἄνθρωπός ἐστι ζῷον λογικὸν θνητόν' τῷ εἰπόντι 'εἴ τί ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος, ἐκεῖνο ζῷόν ἐστι λογικὸν θνητόν' τῇ μὲν δυνάμει τὸ αὐτὸ λέγει, τῇ δὲ φωνῇ διάφορον) (S.E. *M.* 11.8). The following sentence (S.E. *M.* 11.9) leaves no doubt that the

(12) was said to be 'universal' (*katholikon*), since it encompasses all cases given in the antecedent. And since only conditionals with an indefinite pronoun and an anaphoric pronoun were called universal, one can infer that the universality was taken to be signified by these pronouns. This is confirmed by the fact that the Stoics named conditionals like (12) indefinite conditionals (Cic. *Fat*. 15).[131]

The Stoics indicated that from an indefinite conditional such as

(13) If someone is born in the sign of the dogstar, then he won't die at sea.

a legitimate logical transition can be made to

(14) If Fabius is born in the sign of the dogstar, then Fabius won't die at sea.[132]

(*Cf.* Prantl 456, 'It is distinctly clear from a passage in Cicero that this conception of the hypothetical judgment, which agrees with the doctrine of the categorical judgment, ensued precisely from Chrysippus'.[133] And in the footnote with the text passage: 'For if what is connected as follows is true "If someone is born in the sign of the Dog Star, he will not die at sea", then the following is also true "if Fabius is born in the sign of the Dog Star, Fabius will not die at sea"'.)

Like Frege, the Stoics introduced a helping language, a language that was meant to build a bridge from the corporeal linguistic expressions to the incorporeal contents—and thus a language that reflects the structure of the assertibles and of content generally. We have dozens of cases as evidence that this is what the Stoics did.[134] One relevant case here is that, in conditional sentences such as (14) which express instantiations of indefinite conditionals, the Stoics standardly used the same proper name *both* in the antecedent sentence *and* in the consequent sentence, although this is *not* standard Greek but, rather, atypical Greek.[135] Note how Frege does the very same thing with Napoleon—and this is not standard in German *either*. Note also that in Greek you can put the words in a clause in almost any order, since the syntax is determined largely by case markings. Hence, the Stoics were generally able to choose formulations in which the antecedent and consequent sentences are each syntactically identical to the standard formulations for the atomic assertibles that are the component of the conditional. So we see that Frege has the same sentence in *his* helping language that the

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singular noun 'man' without an article is understood universally, as covering every man (*i.e.* human being). For *katholikon* for an indefinite conditional, see S.E. *M.* 1.86; *cf.* Epictetus *Diss.* 2.20.2–3; Plutarch *Comm. Not.* 1080c. The equivalence between the universal 'man' and 'all men' should have been familiar to Frege. For example Bolzano states this in his 1837: (I) 250.

[131] For the Stoic treatment of logical generality, see Bobzien and Shogry 2020.

[132] Cic. *Fat.* 15; Prantl 456, n. 147. At least part of the example is Roman, possibly provided by Cicero in order to illustrate Chrysippus' view. But there can be no doubt that the Stoics accepted logical transitions of this kind. *Cf.* the sophism discussed by the Stoics: 'If someone is in Athens, he is not in Megara. If (a) man is in Athens, (a) man is not in Megara (Prantl 492, n. 213). (The 'a' is in brackets, since Greek has no indefinite articule and 'man' is thus syntactically ambiguous). This argument is *paradoxical* only if the general scheme of inference is accepted as valid with proper names, demonstratives, or descriptions. Hence, in line with *Fat.* 15, we assume that the step from (13) to (14) was accepted as valid.

[133] 'Dass aber diese mit der Lehre vom kategorischen Urtheile übereinstimmende Auffassung des Hypothetischen gerade von Chrysippus ausging, erhellt deutlich aus einer Stelle Ciceros'.

[134] *Cf. e.g.* Atherton and Blank 2003: 314–16, and Barnes, Bobzien, and Mignucci 1999: 96–97; Frede 1974.

[135] *Cf.* D.L. 7.77, 78, 80; S.E. *M.* 8. 246, 252, 254, 305, 308, 423; S.E. *PH* 2.105, 106, 141; Gellius 16.8.9; *Inst. Log.* 4.1; Simp. *Phys.* 1300; Alex. *An. Pr.* 345; Cic. *Fat.* 12. In Prantl, *e.g.* 454, 'die Erde […] die Erde' three times; 456, n. 147 'Fabio […] Fabio'; 466, n. 168: 'Dion […] Dion', and thus accessible to those familiar with Prantl.

Stoics use in their regimented language—except that the German is ungrammatical, whereas the Greek is grammatical. (The German needs a little more help.) If the language does not suitably reflect content, the language needs adjusting.

The more significant example of language regimentation is that from Frege's (6) and (7) to (8); and from the Stoic (11) to (12): from the expression of universality in a simple sentence to the expression in an indefinite conditional. The formulation with an indefinite conditional is a natural language analogue to the formalization with a universal quantifier in symbolic logic, 'For all *x*, if *x* is F, *x* is G'.[136] Both the Stoics and Frege advocate this natural language sentence form to express universality against an Aristotelian tradition. The goal is likely the same both times: the form retains the assumed correspondence between linguistic expression and content, and thus *reflects more accurately the structure of the imperceptible* assertibles *or* thoughts. *In particular, it reflects valid inference patterns that permit detachment* and allows them to be performed semi-automatically.

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The Stoics: that which is universal (*to katholikon*).	**Frege**: Universality/Generality (*Allgemeinheit*).
The following two sentences have different linguistic expression, but have the same meaning (S.E. *M.* 11.8–11). (11) Man is a rational mortal living being. (12) If something is a man, it is a rational mortal living being.	Three 'different expressions for the same […] thought' (LA NS 279, PW 259). (6) All men are mortal. (7) Every man is mortal. (8) If something a man is, is it mortal. (German word-order is retained in (8)).
(12) and (13) were called indefinite conditionals. They contain an indefinite pronoun ('something') and an anaphoric pronoun ('it'/'he'/'she') (Cic. *Fat.* 15).	In (8) we have the form of a conditional *sentence* and the indefinitely signifying sentence parts 'something' and 'it'.
They were said to be universal (*katholikon*).	These contain the expression of universality.
The Stoics generally used (12) instead of (11).	(8) is the one we should use (LA NS 280, PW 259–60).

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[136] This does not mean that the Stoics and Frege unpacked these sentences in the same way. Quantifiers that range over variables were Frege's, not Stoic. *Cf.* Bobzien and Shogry 2020.

One can make a legitimate logical transition from indefinite conditionals like (12) and (13) to conditionals that are non-simple assertibles like (14) by substituting the same proper name for the indefinitely signifying sentence parts. (13) If someone is born in the sign of the dogstar, then he won't die at sea. (14) If Fabius is born in the sign of the dogstar, then Fabius won't die at sea. (Cic. *Fat.* 15)	One can make a legitimate transition from the mode of expression (8) to the particular, by substituting the same proper name for the indefinitely signifying sentence parts (LA NS 281, PW 261). (8) If something a man is, is it mortal. (9) If Napoleon a man is, is Napoleon mortal.
Stoic logic provides ample evidence for language regimentation intended to bridge the gap between linguistic expression and the structured content expressed. The regimentation recommends formulations in which the antecedent sentence and consequent sentence do not differ from the sentences that express the simple assertibles used as antecedent and consequent in the conditional. (i) It requires the use of the same subject expression in the antecedent and consequent sentence. (Standard in Stoic logic and argumentation.) Nothing further is required, since (14) is already in the regimented language.	As a bridge from language to thought, a 'helping language' ('Hilfssprache') is used. The helping language offers formulations in which the antecedent sentence and consequent sentence do not differ from the sentences that express the 'Teilgedanken' of the conditional. (i) It requires the use of the same subject expression in the antecedent and consequent sentences. (ii) Additionally, it removes the defect of (9) by replacing it with (10) If Napoleon is a man, Napoleon is mortal. (The sentence structure of (10) is infelicitous in German.)

Comparison with the Stoics here aids us in understanding Frege's helping language. It is not unusual that 'Hilfssprache' is translated and interpreted as 'meta-language', as opposed to the object language—presumably 'If Napoleon a man is, is he mortal' ('Wenn Napoleon ein Mensch ist, ist er sterblich'). But there is nothing meta-linguistic in Frege's 'Hilfssprache'. It is a regimented object language. Its purpose is to bring out the logical structure of the—incorporeal—thought in the medium of language (this being the only medium we have). It is intrinsically connected with Frege's logico-ontology, just as in the Stoic cases of language regimentation.

IV. Conclusion

The historical data strongly suggest that Frege knew Prantl's *History of Western Logic*. A textual comparison that results in well over a hundred parallels (I count 120, and this is without the parallels in epistemology and on inference) strongly suggests that Stoic logic had an impact on Frege. Common sense suggests that, if this is so, it is more likely that the impact of Stoic logic came via Prantl than from the dozens of individual Greek and Latin sources that Prantl amasses in his footnotes.[137] This is supported by the fact that in at least three or four cases (depending on how one individuates them), Frege's view corresponds to Prantl's representation or interpretation of the Stoics more closely than to the Stoic view itself (or to a different, more plausible interpretation). These include: Stoic non-assertible complete contents, in particular questions, contain the element of truth and falsehood; the treatment of more-than-assertibles and quasi-assertibles as two different kinds; complete contents that include emotional elements contain truth and falsehood; the presentation of the truth-conditions of the Philonian conditionals. Moreover, this view is supported by the fact that several important testimonies of Stoic logic that are not in Prantl have no parallels in Frege: *e.g.* elements from the *Logical Investigations*, about Stoic analysis, and about hypothetical arguments. If Stoic logic had an impact on Frege, Prantl is thus the likeliest source.

Where does this leave us with respect to plagiarism, which I so bumptiously included in the title? Did Frege take the work or ideas of the Stoics and pass them off as his own?[138] None of the similarities presented taken by itself is proof that he did. The sheer magnitude of the similarities makes it extremely unlikely that he did not.

What would be our alternatives? I see two. First, Frege could have come up with all these points himself, without any external influence. Second, Frege could have drawn on non-Stoic sources. Evidently, given the quantity of parallels proffered, the three options allow for all sorts of combination. There will be no way to prove for any specific point that Frege came up with it by himself, independently of Prantl's Stoics. (We would need proof that he could not have had access to Prantl, and, given our historical data, that would be extremely hard to come by.) In principle, there will be ways of showing that Frege drew on more recent non-Stoic sources. For some of the parallels I adduce there are similarities and overlap in nineteenth-century logic books with which Frege was familiar. One recurrent significant feature is that other sources may touch on the same topic but only Frege and the Stoics end up adopting effectively the same view on the topic, or views very close to each other. Other logicians talk at length about negation. But they do not use 'not' ('nicht') as an informal prefix in the schematic expression of negations. Other logicians may talk about sentences with 'no' ('kein') and 'un', but they do not do so in the same sentence, in the same order, and directly after defining negations proper. Other logicians talk about generality, but do they introduce examples of instances in which the subject term is the same in antecedent and consequent? And so forth. This is the pattern I found in many of the cases of Frege's contemporaries that I have examined: overlap in topic, yes, but only rarely in the position taken. A text that combines both the topic that Frege considers and the position he adopts, compared to one that does not take, and possibly explicitly dismisses, Frege's position, seems more likely to have been an influence. For a good number of the parallels there seems to be no source other than Stoic logic available at the time when Frege writes.

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[137] I, for one, cannot see that Frege read his way through the edition of PHerc307 and the Greek volumes of the Aristotle commentators, and Galen (although S.E. is another possibility) to pick up the various fragmentary testimonies of Stoic logic sprinkled throughout, which we now have collected in SVF II and, in particular, in FDS.

[138] *Cf.* the epigram of this paper.

Even if it were possible to show that sixty percent of the parallels I have adduced have equally close parallels in other works on logic that Frege knew (something I doubt can be shown), this would leave sufficient parallels for a claim of plagiarism of sorts (see below). Moreover, there is a further probabilistic factor. Prantl's chapter on the Stoics offers *in one chapter of one book* a possible source for a hundred or so parallels. We can assume that with such a number of parallels the likelihood is greater that the instances in Frege, or in any case many of them, come from one source rather than a broad scattering of sources.

We know that Frege read many works in which were discussed psychological, epistemological, and mathematical themes which he takes up in his own philosophical writings. There is an ample literature devoted to establishing individual examples of such connections, albeit not always successfully in my view (*e.g.* in the cases of Eucken and Hirzel). My focus in section III has been exclusively on topics that fall within the category of philosophical logic, broadly understood. Nineteenth century discussions of these topics are rare. The best sources are logic texts of the time: Sigwart 1873, Mill 1843, Ulrici 1852, Bolzano 1837, Boole 1854. De Morgan 1847, Ueberweg 1857, and Trendelenburg 1840, 1870.[3] So unless and until someone provides a study which sets out the required evidence, we may maintain that the proposed thesis of Stoic influence on Frege via Prantl stands.

We still need an answer to the question of how Prantl's Stoic logic became incorporated into Frege's work. Was it intentional? Was it really plagiarism? To start with, we can with certainty rule out one kind of plagiarism: that of the ignorant student or career-obsessed academic who lifts entire sentences or passages without understanding what they copy. Even though we often witness Frege battling with details of his theory, he only writes what he has thought through, understands, and approves of. We can also rule out a related kind of plagiarism, in which someone does understand what they take from their source, but nonetheless copies mechanically and verbatim. Whatever Frege took (assuming he did) is reproduced neither mindlessly nor mechanically. This leaves us with several somewhat more benign options.

(i) He incorporated elements of what he had read and studied from Prantl (and possibly from the *Summary*) when writing his own work. However, he did not do so deliberately but, rather, considered what he wrote as his own ideas. This is a familiar psychological phenomenon. In this case we would have a process of the—illegitimate—appropriation or assimilation of Stoic thought rather than *intentional* plagiarism.

(ii) He thought of the ideas of the ancients as being freely available to anyone to help themselves to and not subject to any copyright, and for this reason did not refer to the source on which he relied. We know that Frege was influenced by later philosophers in some of his thought and frequently felt no need to reference them (*e.g.* Dummett 1981b, Lotze; Schlotter 2006, Bruno Bauch; Dathe 1995, Eucken).

(iii) He incorporated elements of what he had read and studied from Prantl when writing his own work, and he knowingly omitted any mention of this fact for reasons other than those in (ii).

The reality could be any combination of (i), (ii), and (iii), and details could be spun out in many ways. It is neither in my interest to adjudicate between the three options or to spin out possible details. Nor—as I said at the beginning—is my interest in questions of accountability or culpability. If Dummett is correct that Frege's 'Kernsätze' 'form a series of comments by Frege upon Lotze's Introduction [to his *Logik*], or, more exactly, of remarks prompted by reflection upon it',[139] we have here one illustration of how Frege makes notes and interacts with the texts of other philosophers, when forming or rethinking his own ideas. This is consistent with all combinations of (i)–(iii). (Of course the *Kernsätze* were just an unpublished fragment.) The purpose of this paper has been accomplished if it establishes that there are similarities to such a colossal extent, in terminological distinctions, choice of topics, and content, that the probability that Frege did not substantially draw on Stoic logic is minute.

Yet what if, *against all odds*, Frege did, in fact, not draw on Stoic logic? Then we have the following immensely fascinating situation. Separated by over two millennia, we witness logicians who started (a) with the same general idea of content that—in some sense at least—exists independently of our saying or thinking it, and (b) with the same general conception of a propositional logic. These logicians were then confronted by the same set of problems: problems regarding how linguistic expressions can serve us to express and communicate that imperceptible content and can explain the complexity of content (especially as it is required for reasoning); how for this purpose natural language expressions may fall short in several ways: in particular how they may contain *too much* or *too little* or *the wrong expressions*, and how they may not provide the means to unambiguously express *content of potentially unlimited complexity*. In this case, independently of each other, both the Stoics and Frege would have thoroughly considered all four issues, and in doing so would have followed staggeringly similar pathways.[140]

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WORKS OF FREGE

German texts

FBB	*Funktion, Begriff, Bedeutung: fünf logische Studien*
LU	*Logische Untersuchunten*
NS	*Nachgelassene Schriften*
Begr	*Begriffsschrift, eine der arithmetischen nachgebildete Formelsprache des reinen Denkens*
BG	Über Begriff und Gegenstand, reprinted in [FBB], 66-80.
Gedanke	Der Gedanke. Eine Logische Untersuchung, reprinted in [LU], 30-53.
Gedankengefüge	Logische Untersuchungen. Dritter Teil: Gedankengefüge, reprinted in [LU] 72-91.
Grundlagen	*Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik: eine logisch mathematische Untersuchung über den Begriff der Zahl*

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[139] Dummett 1981b: 440, 1991: 66.

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Funktion und Begriff	Funktion und Begriff, reprinted in [FBB], 17-39.
SB	Ueber Sinn und Bedeutung, reprinted in [FBB], 40-65.
Verneinung	Die Verneinung. Eine Logische Untersuchung reprinted in [LU] 54-71.

English texts

CN	Conceptual Notation and Other Works
CP	Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy
GG	Basic Laws of Arithmetic
PMC	Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence
PW	Posthumous Writings

BLC	*Boole's Logical Calculus and the Concept-script* (in PW)
BS	*Begriffsschrift* (in CN)
CN	*Conceptual Notation and Other Works*
CO	*On Concept and Object* (in CP)
CP	*Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy*
CSB	*Comments on Sense and Meaning* (in PW)
CT	*Compound Thoughts* (in CP)
DPE	*Dialogue with Pünjer on Existence* (in PW)
FC	*Function and Concept* (in CP)
FGII	*On the Foundations of Geometry: Second Series* (in CP)
GG	*Basic Laws of Arithmetic*
IL	*Introduction to Logic* (in PW)
LG	*Logical Generality* (in PW)
LM	*Logic in Mathematics* (in PW)
N	*Negation* (in CP)
OCN	*On the Concept of Number* (in PW)
PMC	*Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence*
PW	*Posthumous Writings*
PWLB	*Logic* in *Posthumous Writings*
SB	*On Sense and Meaning* (in CP)
T	*Thoughts* (in CP)

SIGLA, Ancient authors

Alex. *An. Pr.*	Alexander of Aphrodisias, *In Aristotelis Analyticorum priorum librum I commentarium*
Ammon. *Int.*	Ammonius, *In Aristotelis De interpretatione commentarius*
Apul. *Herm.*	Apuleius, *Peri Hermeneias*

Arist. *De Int*.	Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*
Cic. *Fat.*	Cicero, *De Fato*
Comm. Not.	Plutarch, *Against the Stoics on Common Notions*
Diss.	Epictetus, *Dissertationes*
D.L.	Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*
Ecl.	Stobaeus, *Anthologii libri duo priores qui inscribi solent Eclogae physicae et ethicae*
Epist.	Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*
Gal. *Inst. Log.*	Galen, *Institutio logica*
Gal. *PHP*	Galen, *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*
Gellius	Gellius, *Attic Nights*
Log. Inv.	Chrysippus, *Logical Investigations*
Plut. *St. Rep.*	Plutarch, *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis*
Plut. *Quaest.*	Plutarch, *Quaestiones Convivales*
S.E. *M.*	Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*
S.E. *PH*	Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrroneion hypotyposeon*
Simpl. *in Cat.*	Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*
Simpl. *in Cael.*	Simplicius, *In Aristotelis De Caelo commentaria*

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