

EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS IN PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

by

CHRISTOPHER EMMICK

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Dr. Peter Warnek, Chair of the Examining Committee

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Committee in Charge: Dr. Peter Warnek, Chair

Accepted by:

Dean of the Graduate School

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CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Christopher Emmick

PLACE OF BIRTH: St. Maries, ID

DATE OF BIRTH: March 29, 1980

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon
Pacific University

DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Arts, 2007 University of Oregon
Bachelor of Arts, 2004, University of Oregon

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Philosophy of Education
Ancient Philosophy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Instructor, Department of English, University of Oregon, 2005

Graduate Teaching Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of Oregon
2007

GRANTS, AWARDS AND HONORS:

Robert C. Terwilliger Scholarship, Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, 2004

Outstanding Physics Project, Lakeview High School, 1998

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

American education today is governed by an outcome-based paradigm. Teachers and students alike are evaluated and determined by their scores on standardized tests, which articulate how the assessment of skills and information have overwhelmingly become the sole basis for an educated person. Students are treated like receptacles for knowledge that they only find outside of themselves, in the teacher or class material. They are not given a free orientation towards the development of their own learning if their educative environment already requires that regurgitating answers is the only worthwhile educative measure. Likewise, teachers are expected to put skills and information inside of students without granting them access towards their own pedagogical or curricular prejudices, something that may become the most important “outcome” of a healthy education.

In other words, in an outcome basedⁱ learning environment, both students and teachers alike tend to develop an inability to investigate the presuppositions involved in their own learning. They will not be capable of the kind of first order thinkingⁱⁱ fundamental to human growth and flourishing, because they have fixed their gaze towards learning with an unhealthy orientation towards improper goals and standards.

The un-educated are those who have not been given a free orientation towards their own self-development by being forced into an education that accepts only pre-authorizes answers or certain and determinate outcomes. However, if we really want to reform this paradigm, then our inquiry might be well served by a critique of this technical prejudice which itself does not fall prey to a technical interpretive mode.

More specifically, public education in the United States is currently based on a model of outcome that Paulo Freire has articulated as “the banking model”ⁱⁱⁱ. This model of education dominates the pedagogy and curriculum of America’s public school system with the idea that the process of deposit and withdrawal is the only way to articulate the skills and information of schooling. In this kind of educational climate, students are often treated as receptacles for the knowledge that comes from the instructor, and are therefore not given a free orientation to their own ideas. This articulation of education stifles critical thinking, because students are taught to disassociate their educational improvement from their experience. The fundamental solution to this problem involves the responsibility of teachers^{iv} to adequately shape the understanding of students and articulate an educational philosophy in a way that matches the most effective style of classroom pedagogy.

This thesis project champions Freire’s notion of educational *praxis* by looking to the philosophy of the Ancient Greeks, most notably Plato and Aristotle, whose philosophic claims seek to rehabilitate education from the banking model. However, the

focus of this project is not about how Plato and Aristotle define *praxis* and how it can be contrasted to Freire's educational philosophy. Rather, I think that each figure provides a lesson to teachers that can be an example of what Freire wants from the idea of educational *praxis*. In this regard, my reading of Plato's Republic provides teachers with the insight that understanding student learning is intimately connected to their character. The notion of character that will be esteemed from this encounter with Platonic dialogue will give a rich understanding of how the teacher/student relation is founded on healthy dialogue, and how such dialogue may provide the possibility for the improvement of character. Such improvement is one way that teachers can think about what education entails in a way that eliminates the banking model of education.

The second insight of this project is that teachers can avoid and eliminate the banking model of education by being attentive to the methodology of Aristotle's philosophy, most notably in his analysis of ψύχη or "soul". Indeed, it is the inquiry into the soul that most of all shows educators a language that cannot be collapsed within the banking model of education, because it involves a relation to impasses of our ordinary experience that cannot, and should not, be resolved. These impasses should be respected and articulated well by teachers who seek a self-reflective attitude towards education that is based on humility. Furthermore, by understanding Aristotle's insistence that any method should always be in agreement with its subject matter, and that inquiry involves relative precision, teachers can learn to be careful facilitators of student learning in a way that fosters Freire's notion of educational *praxis*.

Before we can understand how these two Ancient Greek insights can help teachers eliminate the banking model of education, this model should be carefully articulated and its motivation explained in the way that Freire does in his text, Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Here, Freire begins his analysis by articulating how a liberating pedagogy can help to destroy the forces of de-humanization that are institutionalized by a certain mode of educational practice. He sees this process of de-humanization to be largely operative through forces of oppression, forces that require revolutionary transformation. Freire explains the central concern of his pedagogy by saying the following about the identity of oppressed peoples, which for our purposes will be students in the public education system of the United States:

As long as they live in the duality in which to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible. The pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument for their critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization.
(POE, 33)

In this passage, Freire illustrates the inner-conflict of the oppressed, yet also describes how the oppressed and the oppressor articulate a higher dichotomy between each other. Students are oppressed, because they have been systematically educated that the only basis for their identity can be found in the likeness and comparison to those who seek to dominate and de-humanize them.

On the other hand, Freire's pedagogy seeks to address how both the oppressed and the oppressor contribute to the environment of oppression. Understanding education in this way would mean that, more often than not, teachers take the role of the oppressor

when they teach with the banking model. In other words, the pedagogy of the oppressed offers people the realization that the process of replacement or reversal does nothing to change the situation of de-humanization, because such processes fail to motivate the power that oppressed peoples have in restoring their humanity and the humanity of their oppressors. Liberation through pedagogy will not simply re-inscribe the environment of oppression itself, but rather seeks to transform it.

Now that we have a better grasp of how liberation motivates Freire's pedagogy, we can examine the two models of education he articulates with a more holistic perspective. Freire begins his second chapter with the claim that, "education is suffering from narration sickness" (POE, 57). In other words, the sickness that the pedagogy of the oppressed seeks to remedy involves a teaching environment where students only re-articulate or memorize instruction thereby learning to disconnect knowledge from their lived experience. Under the grip of this sickness, students are taught that knowledge is static and therefore can be memorized without question, as a predictable, organized series of facts. Freire will say that the banking model champions the concept that "the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing and storing deposits" (POE, 64). By teaching students that knowledge and learning are only acts of deposit and withdrawal, students will be not allowed to analyze and critique aspects of their lived reality. Under the banking model the processes of liberation cannot occur, because students are oppressed by being convinced that they hold no stake in their own learning.

Conversely, Freire articulates an alternative model of education which he proposes can effectively alleviate the sicknesses created by the banking model of education by connecting students to knowledge by way of their actual experiences. This kind of pedagogy abandons the deposit-making process which characterizes the banking model of education and replaces it with the posing of problems that are contextualized in the lived experience of human reality. He says that this kind of education is, “responding to the essence of consciousness – intentionality- rejects communiqués and embodies communication” (POE, 66). In other words, by posing problems that occur in the daily lives of students, the teacher actively demonstrates libratory communication that authenticates the consciousness of students in a humane manner. This model of education rejects communiqués because it does not proceed by speaking *to* students, but rather speaks *with* students.

In conclusion, I would like to address a way that I will embrace the problem posing method of education and work to eliminate aspects of the banking model. In my experience, however, public schools in the U.S. are seemingly dominated by the banking approach to education and many educators seem skeptical of any alternative model of education. Perhaps one more textual example may help to encourage teachers who wish to employ such an alternative. Freire thinks that the place of an instructor in the process of liberation is pivotal, but he also expresses caution about how the relationship between teacher and student is typically defined. Freire offers a very subtle way of thinking about the place of the educator by saying, “they talk about the people, but do not trust them; and trusting the people is the indispensable precondition for revolutionary change” (POE,

46). Here, Freire assumes that social reconstruction is a philosophy that teachers should champion, which means that they seek societal transformation on the basis of justice and equity. Specifically, Freire's claim is that many teachers do not hesitate to offer detailed explanations about their students or their performance in a class and have much to say *about* them. However, Freire seeks to remind them that if trust is not a part of an instructor's pedagogy than any type of educative transformation cannot occur.

Teachers need to spend more time finding ways to trust in their student's success and value the diversity of their experiences by spending less time talking *about* them or *to* them. Teachers can learn to trust their students by involving them in classroom decisions, allowing them to take leadership positions in class, and finding ways to learn about them personally. By trusting my students, I hope to convince them that knowledge can be relevant to their everyday experiences and interests, which is something that allows them an opportunity to liberate themselves from a system that, more often than not, only rewards narration and deposit-making.

Being educated is about knowing the relative precision of different modes of inquiry and developing a healthy inertia aimed at self-reflective experience. This is a praxis that can be cultivated as a form of raised awareness when teachers deem student attention towards their own philosophical presuppositions regarding the presentation of skills or information as important as the curriculum. In other words, teachers who think that their own views or orientations towards the class material should be thought about in the classroom by the students are also those who encourage critical thought. Socrates encounters figures in The Republic, who hold opinions about justice that are revealed in

dialouge in ways that indicate who they are in terms of their charater. In other words, Socrates encounters different people who each embody a particular characterization of justice, yet who also fail to follow with Socrates in the enabling conditions of their own understanding. Here, teachers are left with the insight that following conversation involves a person's character and that some people may not be capable of such a following on the basis of their character. Aristotle's account of ψύχη demonstrates how the innermost movements, activities and potencies of students are mysterious, and require a careful methodological inquiry that provides a language for how they stay the same through educative change. Teachers should learn Aristotle's account in order to foster a reflective attitude towards their pedagogy, which is inherently antithetical to the banking model of education.

Education is in crisis because critical thinking or first order thinking that is fundamental to human experience we fail to cultivate its importance to the skills and information demonstrated in a classroom. Education based on the idea of fundamental thinking gets in the way of outcome based paradigms, which dominate how we understand education and its role in being fully human. Outcome based understandings of education often ignore the importance of critical thought, because students who do question the paradigms' presuppositions only discover the triviality and boredom of "knowing the answer", they of course can show just how bad this paradigm is. Teaching philosophy to teachers may bring about awareness regarding how skills and information are presented and open students towards their own character as they respond and contribute to future situations. In this way, teaching is inherently risky, but ethically

founded. Learning involves inner-movements of students towards their own self-understanding in ways that cannot be determined in advance as outcomes. In this way, Aristotle's account of "the soul" will provide a language to discuss these inner-movements.

Endnotes

ⁱ An outcome based paradigm of education does not necessarily promote the assessment of students to a degree that higher order problem solving skills are diminished or ignored or establish the epistemological authority of teacher responsibility. The history of this educational movement has always understood itself to offer an entire reshaping of every aspect of American education predicated on tailoring student's teachers as life-long learners. "The full potential of outcome-based education will only be achieved if the emphasis is on the learning process and not the 'outcome'."

Brogan, Bernard and Brogan, Walter. "Defining and Debating the Issues: Is Outcome-Based Education the Answer?" In *17th Annual Conference of the Eastern Educational Research Association*, Sarasota, FL, February, 1994, p.13.

ⁱⁱ This kind of thinking is about praxis and its priority in shaping educational pedagogy that leads to effective teaching. The Brogan Brothers research on educational philosophy stands alone in the scholarship by linking effective pedagogy to the insights of the Ancient Greeks in a way that challenges the banking model of education. "It is important to differentiate first-order thinking from the acquisition of skills, becoming skilled in thinking so that we can use thinking to achieve other goals. Here thinking is not affirmed as worthy in itself; it is not pursued for its own sake as an essential element of human self-experience."

Brogan, Bernard and Brogan, Walter. "The Socratic Questioner: Teaching and Learning in the Dialogical Classroom" In *The Educational Forum*, Vol. 59, Spring 1995, p.293.

ⁱⁱⁱ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Continuum, 1970, p.53.

^{iv} "The single most dominate factor affecting student academic gain is the teacher effect."

Liesveld, Rosanne and Miller Jo Ann. *Teaching with Your Strengths*. The Gallup Organization, Gallup Press: New York, 2005, p.42.

CHAPTER II

THE TWOFOLD CHARACTER OF ΨΥΧΗ

Methodological Concerns and Introduction

Aristotle's text ΠΕΡΙ ΨΥΧΗΣ , On the Soul, is divided into three books, which each build upon one another as well as share central concerns and impasses that are pivotal for philosophy of education. In the first book Aristotle articulates very important methodological caveats as well as demonstrates his remarkable ability to engage thinkers who have already spoken about ψύχη. The second book greatly intensifies many concerns of the first, especially in regard to aisthēsis. The third book explores potencies of ψύχη as well as a notion of whole-soul, or world-soul, which holds together life as living. Although I will not be able to discuss much of the specific content of each book here, my goal is to show continuity between all three books in a way that both demonstrates the insight of Aristotle's remarks for the possibility of giving teachers a language for the improvement of their teaching, but also champions the possible research opportunities that Joe Sachs' new translation¹ provides. We will see that, for Aristotle, being-at-work names how we stay the same throughout educative change and can experience kinship with others who are in their own process of learning.

Another primary focus in this study involves delimiting a central concern related to first philosophy out of the array of those brought to light by Aristotle's thinking. I

mean first philosophy here in two ways. One is in terms of a study into how our common sense harbors non-superficial impasses and presuppositions in the way endoxa always harbors aporia. Education names the process of becoming aware of such impasses and learning to appreciate and tarry with the existence of such difficulties. First philosophy can also be thought of as an inquiry that looks towards the singular while carefully holding a vision of the whole to which it belongs intact. This relates to how educational philosophy should foster recognition between teachers and students in a way that exposes the impasse Aristotle calls, “like is known by like”. Aristotle’s study “first philosophy” as translated by Sachs shows how one could cautiously think Aristotle as a deeply potent and careful thinker of impasses taken for granted by our common sense and should be endured by careful inquiry.

We can further develop what first philosophy entails, and how it relates to education, by turning to the first book of the Physics when Aristotle gives an account regarding how the right road (hodos) into nature (phusis) comes from nature itself. “The natural road is from what is more familiar and clearer to us to what is clearer and better known by nature; for it is not the same things that are known to us and well known simplyⁱⁱ”. In other words, inquiry into nature, as that which most of all is, is least clear from our vantage point, yet not utterly unknowable. This impasse involves how the division between inquiry and what it knows may be surpassed with the concurrence account of ψύχη. However, according to the outcome based model of education, this distinction is ignored, because it cannot think concurrence with the depth and scope that Aristotle can. As the nature that we are as creature capable of learning, we require a

preliminary awareness regarding how nature always is showing itself to us in a particular manner and that the best way to study nature (or even ψύχη) takes this aspect of inquiry seriously. Thinking of inquiry seriously is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching.

I think that there are at least two impasses of first philosophy in ΠΕΡΙ ΨΥΧΗΣ: a notion of concurrence exemplified by the phrase “like is known by like”, and impasses of motion involving the dialectic of poein (to make or do) and paschein (to suffer or have done to one). Each of these difficulties need to be elaborated, as they are for Aristotle absolutely vital in speaking about ψύχη, but they also show a good way towards Aristotle’s interest and insights specific to the inquiry having ψύχη as its matter. I will touch on the first of these concerns in detail with special reference to all three books of ΠΕΡΙ ΨΥΧΗΣ and conclude with some brief remarks on the relevance of the second.

Aristotle begins his inquiry into ψύχη in what may seem to be a rather strange way. He opens his discussion by saying the following:

Since we consider knowledge to be something beautiful and honored, and one sort more so than another either on account of its precision or because it is about better and more wondrous things, on both these accounts we should rank the inquiry of the soul among the primary studies. (OTS, 47)

It is remarkable that Aristotle does not begin this inquiry with a claim about ψύχη, but rather a claim about knowledge (την εἶδω). He is making an important assumption about his audience regarding whether or not they hold knowledge to be worth of beauty (kalos) and honor. In other words, if a reader does not consider knowledge to be both beautiful and honorable then they will not be able to receive the inquiry into the soul in the right way. Aristotle is convincing us that knowledge is something worthy of our

esteem, which is a fundamental aspect of teaching in general. In looking towards the topic at hand, Aristotle is wondering what kinds of assumptions are being held in the “souls” of his readers by stressing the function of familiarity in inquiry.

If this seems like a foreign or contentious thought, consider the role of arche in Aristotelian philosophy and its implications for philosophy of education. Arche means ruling origin, and Aristotle is always thinking in a way of setting down a proper and determinate beginning that houses still unrealized trajectories. Yet, we still always begin our study with what is known to us and not what is known simply. He admits that since knowledge is in one way a kind of ruling origin, speaking of psychē is among the most primary of inquiries (ἐν πρώτοις τιθείμεν). This account proceeds on the assumption that all investigators hold inquiry into ψύχη with the highest esteem.

Aristotle is not concerned with providing static definitions that are deduced from a table of categoriesⁱⁱⁱ or are simply made up through the abuse of philosophic skolē^{iv}. Rather, he is a dialectical thinker who thinks through accounts that have already been given about psychē (endoxic ruling origins) in order to arrive at better ones. The effect of such a methodology is that our common understandings or opinions about ψύχη are not going to be simply dismissed, but returned to with new awareness regarding what the matter is with ψύχη. In this way he shares the Socratic concern about hubris by agreeing that “it is better to finish a little bit well than a lot inadequately^v”. In other words, Aristotle inquires into ψύχη in a modest manner that leads careful readers to an appreciation for the difficulty of the inquiry itself. In this way he is interested in seeing his audience improve their learning by proceeding through an ongoing shared line of

thought. Aristotle will often claim in this text, as well as in many others, that the inquiry should “stand as marking off and sketching in outline” its proper subject matter. (OTS, 413a 10)

A proper philosophical study should yoke its principle matter to its proper manner. It should do so in a way that avoids hubris to achieve appreciation for inherent difficulties and paradoxes within thinking. In our case, the idea that logos philosophy is able to safely provide a determinate mastery of clear and distinct first principles from which deductions can be made about ψύχη will be warned against by Aristotle. Instead, he stresses again and again that any insights made possible by the outcome of this study will be only aimed toward a preliminary awareness or trace of ψύχη. In a way, Aristotle is suggesting an arche for this inquiry, one that understands itself already aimed at a chosen purpose (telos) yet still tentative and preliminary. In an early lecture course on Aristotle, Heidegger articulates a similar methodological point as “formale Anzeige” or preliminary indication. By engaging the concrete problematic inherently raised by asking the question as to what philosophy itself is, Heidegger says the following:

Those who wish to acquaint themselves for the first time with such a problematic need a preliminary rough indication of the direction the investigation will take, just in order to carry out the first step in a definite, even if unsteady, light^{vi}.

In other words, the very task of philosophy involves those who orient their insight towards inquiry in a way that still preserves their prior familiarity with questioning. This is a kind of clue that the investigators will already need to possess in order to help sort out which direction the questioning shall lead. Heidegger is saying that if an original

exposure with philosophy's self-questioning can occur, it will already have the requirement of having a "formale Anzeige".

It is important for our purposes to mention that this methodological point of Heidegger's mirrors Aristotle's prerequisite that all inquiry into ψύχη be preceded by an appreciation for the highest, most beautiful, and most honorable of things known. In other words, both thinkers recognize that familiarity & insight is prior and necessary to knowing in general. Indeed, many scholars have shown that it is nous and its divergence from logos that serves as both Aristotle's innovation over the Platonic account of truth and dialectic and Heidegger's link to Aristotle^{vii}. Our study simply needs to link how insight is the preceding appreciation for the soul.

Not unlike Heidegger, Aristotle does not simply mark off this methodological point. Rather, he interrogates it further in the following manner:

But first, perhaps, it is necessary to decide in which general class it is, and what it is – I mean whether it is an independent thing and a this, or a quality or quantity or some other one of the distinct ways of attributing being to anything, or further whether it belongs among things having being in potency or is rather some sort of being-at-work-staying-itself; for this makes no small difference. (OTS, 402 b)

This passage is not just repeating a caveat to the audience regarding how their aesthetic attunement towards understanding psychē is necessary, but makes a claim about a fundamental aspect for effective teaching. They should recognize that even though a given being can be articulated in a multifarious manner, a choice is required as to which type of questioning is most appropriate to it. What is of particular interest here is that the equivocation of ousia (thinghood) and tode ti (a this) shows the impossibility of

distinguishing ψύχη in terms of either one. Rather, the claim is that both are only one way of seeking ψύχη well.

Tode ti can be translated as “a this”, but it can also be understood as “a certain something”, naming a particularity that stands out from the background of other things by way of perception. It demonstrates how something at hand shows itself. Sachs speaks of the tode ti as, “that which comes forth to meet perception as a ready-made independent whole” (OTS, 202). Sachs is speaking of the way a this comes to show itself as the thing that it is without being cut into a sum of parts, without being a mere heap. Aristotle yokes thinghood with a-certain-something here because he wants to think ψύχη in terms of how its enduring presence shows itself as the thing it is. Yet if the appearance of ψύχη is its thinghood, this look is itself always inherently linked to the body, σωμα (soma), which is certainly a this capable of yielding to many different forms of predication. Difficult still since ousia cannot be understood categorically in terms of attributes^{viii}. In other words, every particular living body has unique attributes that are not solely predicated on its being alive, or alive-ness that keeps it being the being that it is. Aristotle is curious as to how this character of ψύχη, as en-souled, points towards the richness of its givenness, even when the desire for a logos of this singular in its finitude and uniqueness seems much too difficult to attain.

What is interesting is that by yoking thinghood and “a this” together, Aristotle is able to distinguish ψύχη in terms of its nature (τήν τε φύσιν) and well as from its attributes (ἴδια πάθη) (OTS, 402A 8-9). Aristotle wants to ask how the attributes of the ψύχη properly belong to it and what the character of this distinction is. Even if we ignore

the confusion of thinking how nature or thinghood could be predicates or things ψύχη could have, we could still ask what the difference is between addressing ψύχη as in terms of its nature or its thinghood. What is the shared ground of the attributes, nature and thinghood of the soul in terms of a shared ground (ύπαρχειν)? An answer could be that Aristotle sees this inquiry as absolutely tied to first philosophy insofar as that study is always aimed at the understanding the manifold character of being that nevertheless still points towards a shared ground, or pros hen^{ix} The worry over the infinite regress of logos points it way to the support of independent thinghood as the grounding moment of articulation.

In this way Aristotle issues a warning to his students early on in this first book by saying:

But if there is not some one common method for pursuing what something is, the work we have taken in hand becomes still more difficult, since it will require that we get hold of some way of approaching each particular thing. (OTS, 402a 17)

In other words, Aristotle intensifies these methodological difficulties by warning that our inquiry can easily lead to an infinite regress. We are not being barred from seeking a single method for the knowledge of everything, but Aristotle certainly seems to suggest that this way of proceeding is mostly out of reach and improper for an inquiry into psychē. If we agree that the world we inhabit is not reducible to a unity without differentiation, a mere blob, then we are then forced to turn to a way of proceeding that can get a hold of each particular on the way towards this whole, as a ground for our inquiry that is strangely withheld. Of course, we cannot gain insight into each particular

thing either, especially if we seek an account of ψύχη that stays on track in accordance with philosophical skole. This inquiry demands a certain kind of urgency that will not tolerate speaking of every thing that there is in order to gain clarity about ψύχη. Aristotle is wondering how we could be already treating ψύχη as if it were a being among many, at the expense of remaining ignorant of its singular presence in life.

Concurrence as a Non-Tautological Impasse

In fact, the tendency to treat ψύχη as a kind of body becomes a central focus of Aristotle's account and opens up the first "metaphysical concern" for our discussion, the impasse of concurrence. We mentioned that he is interesting in thinking the arche of ψύχη by going through the accounts of previous thinkers. The first book of ΠΕΡΙ ΨΥΧΗΣ is devoted to this task, exploring these opinions and addressing what is common among all of them.

He says that all of these thinkers claim that while ψύχη can be understood either as a motion, a mode of sense perception, or like embodiment, and that all three can be traced back to a more primary source (arche). This commonality is concurrence, because all Aristotle's predecessors say that psychē is proper to what it contacts. Concurrence is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching, because concurrence helps us understand and articulate how contact between souls, teachers and students, is possible. Aristotle articulates concurrence as a form of unity and contact between the soul and what it knows, but not in the sense of a pure identity. He says, "For they all say like is known by like, and since the soul knows all things, they compose it out of all the sources" (OTS, 405b 17). Here, the statement "like is known by like" is both helpful and deeply

misleading. It is helpful because it re-enforces the way ψύχη affined with all things, it has a prior familiarity with everything, and in the way Socrates discusses recollection of psychē^x. Many times in this inquiry Aristotle shows how thinkers of the elemental, the contraries, or other sources, see a self-same identity with ψύχη and the things it encounters or knows^{xi} However, if we conclude that our discussion has reached a terminal point, that we have said all that we need to say, psychē could be articulated as any random thing, since it is the things that it perceives. We could find ourselves deeply entrenched within the infinite regress of beings that Aristotle previously warned us against.

These methodological warnings intensify and collide when we reach the third book and realize that Aristotle thinks that they themselves actually constitute a vital concern for our topic, the necessity of error in ψύχη. He wants us to program a capacity for making mistakes into our account of ψύχη, which is another fundamental aspect for effective teaching. The virtue of humility can involve first philosophy when we recognize that we can be unknowingly in a state of error during the course of inquiry. The question becomes, how does the admission of being in error help stop the infinite regress involved with logos addressed earlier? Aristotle is most clear about this claim when he says:

[Previous thinkers] all assume that thinking is something bodily like perceiving, and that perceiving and understanding are of like by like, as we described in the chapters at the beginning and they ought to have spoken at the same time about making mistakes as well, for this is more native to living things and the soul goes on for more time in this condition. (OTS, 427b)

In other words, Aristotle thinks that while previous thinkers thought the phrase “like by like” could tautologically ground predications and discussions of how thinking is an aspect of ψύχη, they did not establish a more proper arche for this inquiry. If we simply maintain that statement, like is know by like, without inquiry into how it shows impasses of first philosophy, our discussion is not allowing us to learn more than we already do. “Like by like” is a good starting point for this investigation, because previous thinkers have espoused it, but is only an arche if we can supplement it with further inquiry by way of speech. By building in a capacity for mistakes into his account of ψύχη, Aristotle is able to account for an impasse in thinking that is often overlooked. If we can agree that ψύχη can be mistaken, then we can reach for an explanation of human error that does not require an account of human failure. Learning that being mistaken can have a progressive function enables an account of ψύχη that carefully unfolds on the level of first philosophy.

Impasses Regarding Poiein & Paschein

Aristotle explores how ψύχη might be a kind of motion in order to show why concurrence is enigmatic and not tautological. He shows the paradox of attributing the phrase “like is known by like” to ψύχη by articulating impasses involved in speaking of ψύχη as a source of motion. How does ψύχη move the body? Does this mean that ψύχη itself is always in motion and thus no logos can be given about it? Is this very severability between body and “soul” the very thing that is most deserving of our attention? These questions come into focus when Aristotle reminds us that many types of motion (kinesis) exist, whether as change of place, alteration, wasting away or growth

(OTS, 406a 14). This fourfold is articulated due to thinking motion as something that may have nothing to do with ψύχη, since he previous reminds us “that it is not necessary for what moves other things to be in motion itself” (OTS, 406a 4). But even if we settle on a kind of motion that seems to suit our topic, like the common experience of witnessing the growth of a living being, or how the un-educated become educated, he still worries that we may not see the central impasse that remains available. He says,

But surely even if the soul itself moves itself, then at any rate it would be moved, so that, if every motion is a stepping outside itself of the thing moved insofar as it is moved, the soul would step outside its own thinghood. (OTS, 406b 12)

This difficult passage shows the struggles philosophy has in discussing how a thing can be a source of motion in another without being in motion itself. Not unlike the notion of concurrence, this pair is enigmatic and not tautological. Fundamental aspects of teaching all involve the application for difficulties and impasses, like this pair illustrate. What is strange about ψύχη is that it is not independent of the body, such that interiority, exteriority and contrariety become deeply misleading terms. Reducing ψύχη to a motion involves inherent impasses that undermine thinking ψύχη as united in its self-sameness. If we want to say that ψύχη is the ruling origin of motion in the body, then nothing else can be behind ψύχη as its source. If it is capable of moving itself then it would certainly be moving and yet as moved it would be outside of itself, even outside of its own ground as the thing that it is.

Thinghood always marks the enduring presence that keeps a being be and this logos of locomotion seems to be incompatible with it. In other words, can ψύχη stay still

as the thing that it is even when it moves? Does this require a different kind of thinking regarding motion as not just something changing its location? Aristotle loves analogies and offers one of sailor in a boat to illustrate these confusions regarding motion as the ousia of ψύχη.

Aristotle employs the analogy of sailors in a boat many times during this study to show what lies beyond the thinking of his predecessors. This occurs most notably when he says that,

And it comes to the same thing with all those who say that the soul is what moves itself, for they all assume that motion is the thing that is most proper to the soul, this is moved by itself, because they do not see anything cause motion that is not also itself in motion. (OTS, 404 a 25)

The analogy of sailors in a boat is at play in this passage, though it is mentioned explicitly earlier in the chapter, due to the fact that the sailors are within something else that is moving which incidentally allows them to be in a state of movement. We understand that the sailors are not moving in the same way that the boat is over the water. According to Aristotle, his tradition cannot think of a kind of motion that stays the same, something that is a source of movement that is not in movement itself. Aristotle will call this kind of sustaining inner movement that makes a thing be what it is, being-at-work-staying-itself, a guiding term of his entire thinking about how ψύχη has concurrence with the body in a non-tautological way.

We have seen that discussions of ψύχη typically involve giving an account of how it is an arche. More specifically, ψύχη is already thought and articulated by the wise to be an arche of movement within the body. Aristotle wants to elicit wonder as to how we ought to think of this within. The fact that Aristotle wants his students to wonder about these difficulties shows how a fundamental aspect of teaching involves bringing students towards a respectful encounter with inquiry as a form of wonder. Here, the question is, what does it mean for something to be in something else as the being that it is? What is that of the student we perceive that endures, as what it is as a certain something, when the student is in the motion called learning? In order to heighten these questions Aristotle says the following:

For all things are moved by a process of pushing and pulling, for which reason it is necessary, as in a wheel, for something to stay still and for the motion to start from there. (OTS, 433b25)

In other words, we articulate how a whole being could move according to thinking the body as divided in terms of one part that does the moving and one part that suffers the action, the ruling origin of movement is not in motion itself. Aristotle sees the structure of poein & paschein at work in the logos of ψύχη even if we worry that it may allow ψύχη to step outside of its own thinghood as the thing it is. If the soul is divided in itself between a part that suffers and a part that moves, how is it that we can yoke ousia and tode ti in the first place? Indeed, he concludes the first book asking us to consider how the soul can be a unity. “But then what in the world holds the soul together, if it is by nature divided up? For it is surely not the body, for it seems rather that the soul on the

contrary that holds the body together” (OTS, 411b 8). He thinks that the body cannot hold ψύχη together because we typically address a moving body when we perceive a living creature. Yet if we treat the soul as the unmoved mover, then how can it be an arche of movement in the body?

In order to unite these different perplexities together we should advance upon the second and final concern proper to this essay, especially since it has been in play throughout our discussion. Aristotle investigates the question as to how ψύχη can have a share in motion in its own right by looking toward a way to ground the notion of concurrence in the most primary kind of inward activity belonging to living beings, aisthesis. Sachs discusses aisthesis as sense perception by saying that it is “always the reception of organized wholes never just sensation or isolated sense data” (OTS, 199). In other words, sense-perception always involves the active receiving of how a *tode ti* shows its way towards wholeness as the thing that it is. This is an example of how first philosophy involves an articulation of how the singular and the whole to which it belongs hang together. Let us explore how this account of sense-perception deepens our previous difficulties.

Aristotle intensifies the account of ψύχη by unfolding a notion of sense-perception that is common to all life, on his view, even plants have this potency of ψύχη (OTS, 434a 30). What is interesting for our purposes is how he explains why aisthesis is not to be understood in terms of a motion, but rather as a form of being-at-work. This is of absolute importance, because if Aristotle can show that the most common activity of ψύχη is not a motion, then perhaps he can reach a way through the impasses involved in

speaking of ψύχη as the arche of motion in the body involving pushing and pulling. Being-at-work is Sachs' careful translation of *energeia*, (ἐνέργεια). "The primary sense of the word belongs to activities that are not motions; examples of these are seeing, knowing, and happiness, each understood as an ongoing state that is complete at every instant" (OTS, 189). Sachs often compares being-at-work to an orbit, the way the object moving from point to point in a closed path does not fully reveal how it is actively staying still as the thing that it is.

Sense-perception is a being-at-work and is unfolded in speech the impasse of concurrence and grounds the immediacy, richness, and union of sense and sensed, doing and suffering. The commonality of thinking "like is known by like" breaks down when Aristotle says that while "the being-at-work of the perceptible thing and of the sense that perceives it are one and the same, though the being of them is not the same" (OTS, 425 b 26).

This formulation is better than a simple tautology, because perceptions are exactly what they are when they are fully present in our active lives when we are perceptive. This open quality to Aristotle's account of what involves perception is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching, because teachers need to get access to the student as a receptive whole.

Another aspect of Aristotle's formulation of sense-perception involves the impasse of truth, and how the sense and the things sensed are akin. He says that they are always true in a very precise sense, "for sense perception when directed at its proper objects is always truthful, and is present in all animals, but it is not possible to think

things through falsely, and this is present in no animal in which there is not also speech” (OTS, 427 b 12). In other words aisthesis is able to ground the way sensing and sensed affine in a way that does not establish a rigorous relation of identity between them. We would be seriously misled if we articulated Aristotle as proto correspondence theorist of truth or understanding truth as a form of correctness. In other words, the way sight always sees and hearing always hears demonstrates concurrence as an aspect of ψύχη that is exactly what it is when it is involved in acts of sense-perception. Teachers need to know this account of sense-perception so that they can know about the student as a whole and yet still have the possibility of making mistakes regarding student assessment.

A philosophical inquiry into ψύχη by way of speech should recognize certain modes of disclosure, which are the foundations of assuming the starting points for inquiry at all. The way that logos seems to open up an infinite regress that must be grounded in ousia is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching, because teachers need to know how to limit their accounts of knowledge. Aristotle thinks philosophers should inquire into psychē by tracing all of its origins, potencies, forms of being-at-work, attributes, and incidental relationships towards the wealth^{xii} of ousia, which serves as both the grounding of the possibility for predication and the maintenance of the horizontal categorization^{xiii} of being. Aristotle wants this attunement with ousia to help the inquiry of psychē, since asking about “the soul” can have to do both with its thinghood or “whatness” as well as how it is already present as the life we see all around us, as singularly perceived living bodies.

Aristotle is able to find the assumptions behind his predecessors' accounts of psychē by interrogating their claims and finding that they all agree that psychē is either the origin of motion in the body or the modes of thinking and discernment, like sense-perception. However, claims such as these all must assume that "like is known by like" and Aristotle extracts and surpasses this phrase from their accounts. For the purposes of articulating philosophy of education that is worthwhile to teachers, this point about the dialogical structure of knowledge is important, because teachers need proper access into education as a tradition. This is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching.

Furthermore, Aristotle shows the tendency of treating ψύχη as a kind of body, a this, a ready made whole that stands out from the background that surrounds it. Yet, this certain something of ψύχη is only available in life; "soul" is what it is only insofar as it is en-souled. Aristotle is able to expose the impasses of previous thinkers which were all grounded in more fundamental and more difficult impasses, one of which is the thought of radical interiority, a "within" that must be possible for thinking the soul's place in the body. In other words, Aristotle's account of ψύχη transforms both materialist and overly ephemeral notions of "soul" into how all life is affined and internally active as modes of being-at-work.

In other words, a well-articulated account of "the soul" is an essential component of human self-experience and therefore can function as a fundamental aspect of effective teaching. In general, our experience holds the capacity for growth in the way ψύχη undergoes its own inwards revolutions as being-at-work. For Aristotle, being-at-work names how we stay the same throughout educative change and can experience kinship

with others who are in their own process of learning. This concurrence between “souls” is something we share in and a proper inquiry into our shared experience allows us to recognize that the varieties of all life forms are similar, as living and enduring throughout change.

Endnotes

ⁱ In this richly translated text with insightful introduction, commentary, and glossary sections, Sachs makes a philosophic justification for the caution involved in translated ψύχη as “soul”. As he says, “When Aristotle sets out to define the soul, he is not saying ‘let us agree to use this word in this way,’ but making a step towards understanding our common experience of an aspect of the world. The inquiry can go nowhere if we do not have in common the thing inquired about” (On the Soul 2). In other words, a philosophic inquiry into ψύχη requires a prior familiarity with things alive, something not abstract or static like the emptiness of a vague definition.

ⁱⁱ Aristotle. Physics, trans. Joe Sachs. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995. p.33.

ⁱⁱⁱ As Walter Brogan reminds us of Owens who claims “The notion of abstracting a ‘universal’ or ‘essence’ from singulars does not occur in Aristotle”.
Brogan, Walter. “Is Aristotle a Metaphysician?” In Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology Vol. 15, No.3, Oct. 1984. p.14.

In other words, Aristotle’s logoi regarding ψύχη cannot be reduced to a kind of empty formalism. If Aristotle was guilty of manipulating symbols and signs without regard to their meaning he would be both a linguistic and conceptual dogmatist, betraying his insistence that philosophy returns and fulfills endoxa instead of simply doing away with it.

^{iv} From the Greek word σκολή meaning leisure in the sense of urgency or even necessity.
Warnek, Peter. Descent of Socrates, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005; pp. 166-165.

^v Plato. Theatetus, trans. Joe Sachs. Newburyport: Focus Publishing/R Pullins Company, 2004, 187 E.

^{vi} Heidegger, Martin. Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle, trans. Richard Rojcewicz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. p.11.

^{vii} As demonstrated by Brogan’s point in his text Heidegger and Aristotle in the following manner: “In contrast, Aristotle does not see *logos* as the ultimate source of truth, though most of the various kinds of truth that are humanly possible are *meta logou*, accompanied by *logos*. The exception for Aristotle is *nous*.”

Brogan, Walter. Heidegger and Aristotle. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005, p.161.

^{viii} As he says in the Metaphysics of those who study the attributes as though they were ruling origins or the most primary things, “And those who do examine these topics go wrong not in the sense that they are not philosophic, but because thinghood, to which they pay no attention, is prior”
Aristotle. Metaphysics, trans. Joe Sachs. Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 1999, 1104b 10.

^{ix} Aristotle says, “Being is meant in more than one way, but pointing toward one meaning and some one nature rather than ambiguously” The inquiry of ψύχη occurs alongside first philosophy insofar as it is gathered together as a single governing one regardless of its manifold character.
Aristotle. Metaphysics, trans. Joe Sachs. Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 1999, 1003a31.

^x Plato. Phaedo, trans. Eva Braun, Peter Kalkavage, Eric Salem. Newburyport: Focus Publishing/R. Pullins Company, 1998, 73 A.

^{xi} For example, see how Aristotle critiques Empedocles (OTS, 404b 12).

^{xii} Wealth is a fine translation of *ousia*, as opposed to “substance”, and is unfolded brilliantly by Derrida as the division between a general and restricted economy. Restricted economies are made possible by limiting the wealth of a given “tode ti” within the linear advance of a given independent science or epistemology in general. The term general economy is borrowed from Bataille’s reading of Hegel and references *ousia* as the grounded overflow of a given singular that always anticipates or diverges from meaning or knowledge in general. As he writes,

To relate the major form of writing to the sovereign operation is to institute a relation in the form of a non-relation, to inscribe rupture in the text, to place the chain of discursive knowledge in relation to an unknowledge which is not the moment of knowledge: an absolute unknowledge from whose nonbasis is launched chance, or the wages of meaning...

Derrida, Jacques. Writing & Difference, trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, p.268.

In this case, we can understand the singular in question as a work of aesthetic experience, a given text. The sovereign operation involves a hermeneutic insight that meaning must be caught up with non-meaning, or as he says “not a reduction to meaning, but a reduction of meaning”(Derrida, 268). All episteme is a reduction in the direction or trajectory of meaning, but this sovereign operation (first philosophy) shows how meaning is reduced as such. For example, the text holds an over-abundance of content that anticipates all ways of how it could appear to us or offer inter-sections of meaning, in the way a re-read completely changes the first reading. Thinking *ousia* as the ground of discursive or demonstrative modes of articulation gives us a way to appreciate the richness of a given “certain something”.

^{xiii} See copy of Martin Heidegger’s chalkboard schematic of the equation or the differentiation of beings and being. Being as one in Parmenides.

Heidegger, Martin. Aristotle’s Metaphysics ① 1-3, trans. Walter Brogan and Peter Warnek. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, p14.

CHAPTER III

SOCRATIC PERSUASION IN PLATO'S REPUBLIC

When people articulate opinions of great concern they reveal their character through dialogue. Yet, sometimes a person rigidifies their relationship towards their opinions in a way that prevents them from engaging in speech with others in a manner conducive to the improvement of their character. They may hold towards reached conclusions too tightly at the cost of conversation or simply abandon their trust in speech altogether if their opinions are shown to contain contradictions. On the other hand, some seek personal advantage by exploiting certain rhetorical aspects of speech in order to manipulate and control others, because they believe that speech is power. In a community involving this degradation of human self-development, where could we find friends who would mutually desire to be persuaded towards a life of justice? Can we expect that even those who lack a debased relation to speech would receive an adequate presentation of justice on the basis of human conduct in the right way? Indeed, within Platonic dialogue, Socrates encounters these characterizations and questions in Book 1 of the Republic and spends the remainder of that dialogue trying to persuade others of their importance.

Fundamentally, this essay seeks to provide an inter-textual reading of the cave image, articulated in the seventh book of the Republic, so that we can understand its content with respect for its proper context. The different models of education described

by Socrates in the Cave, putting knowledge in the soul vs. turning the soul around, cannot be understood without recognizing their relation to the rest of the dialogue as a whole, especially to how various characters configure justice. In other words, I will not discuss the famous “Platonic account of education” as it relates to the human “soul” and its self-knowledge, until we understand how our character shows itself in dialogue. I will refer to our relation to dialogue as a way to talk about how we find ourselves at stake in Platonic dialogue by following Socrates¹. Our capacity for educational growth is directly, but not primarily, related to speech in dialogue with others. Our character that forms and is formed by us holds the potency for self-transformation most powerfully in dialogue with others and even ourselves. Discussing our “relation to speech” is a great way to indicate the paradox that we become who we are. Our character is revealed in how we relate to matters of dialogue, especially if following speech leads to both abandoning and fulfilling our deepest opinions and assumptions about ourselves through inquiry. The two educational “models,” which Socrates contrasts by articulating the Cave image, each involve different ways of understanding the human and its community, especially in terms of how Socrates articulates the relation between persuasive speech and the life of justice.

These two educational models will be compared by investigating how the question of justice becomes transformed, as it is re-articulated by several characters in the Republic. We will open this discussion by tracking how justice is framed and defended in various ways as the first book of the Republic transitions towards the second.

Specifically, by understanding why Polemarchus offers an interpretation of the poetry of

Simonides' only to later abandon its consequences, we will be able to see that thinking justice is intimately connected to myth and its tradition. We will attempt to make the same conclusion by marking how Thrasymachus transforms Polemarchus' account of the just into what is set down towards the advantage of the ruler and how, as lord and master, this one relates to a life of injustice toward the ruled. Finally we will see how Glaucon's desire for a "truly persuasive" Socratic account of the just life involves another shift in the discussion, from what the just is, to how justice is articulated alongside the good and lived life of justice.

In all three of these moments I attempt to not only show how the *logos* of the just becomes re-articulated, but also that the corresponding Socratic refutations of them are not negative. On the contrary, they are ways of intensifying and sustaining the question of justice in a way that demonstrates how Socrates is a profoundly powerful educator. As a manifestation of his character, we see Socrates' relation to following the *logos* as a fundamental aspect for effective teaching. He is an educator due to how he embodies wonder, the most important philosophic term for education. We will see that as an educator in this dialogue, Socrates encounters characters that are unwilling to partake in the learning process while others share the Socratic *desire* involving the assent towards the ascent out of the Cave.

The thesis of this investigation is that the Cave image does not only offer two different accounts of human nature in its desire for education, but it is an image that ultimately involves the question of justice. Justice names the condition for the very possibility of improving ones character, which is a fundamental way to think of

education. Justice is articulated in a way that is directly indicative of the character of the one espousing it. Insofar as these characters show who they are by articulating justice in the manner that they do, they indicate whether or not they are capable of learning or have a desire to become more learned than they are.

Polemarchus' Disloyal Loyalty

In the first book of the Republic, as Socrates begins his ascent towards Athens from the festival in Piraeus, he encounters a group of playful thugs spoken for by Polemarchus, who makes the following claim: “Either prove stronger than these men or stay here” (REP, 327 C)ⁱⁱ. To which Socrates responds, “Isn’t there another possibility, our persuading you that you must let us go”. To this other alternative, Polemarchus responds rather strangely, “Could you really persuade if we don’t listen?” (REP, 327 C). In this first exchange of dialogue we should make the following conclusions about the characters, Socrates and Polemarchus. Polemarchus frames his relation to the *logos* in terms of strength, especially the strength one feels from being in a large group. He implicitly asserts that strength in numbers outweighs the strength of any one individual by speaking on behalf of the gang. By initially stating that being arrested is the only alternative to becoming stronger than the group, Polemarchus shows how strength determines his relation to speech.

More importantly for our discussion, Polemarchus does not see strength to be a component of words or arguments, since he counters Socrates’ alternative involving persuasion with a claim about force. The force to ignore is a refusal to listen in a certain

way, and is a typical student reaction to problems posed in dialogue. This most primarily marks how we are to understand Polemarchus as a polemic. Polemarchus' name means warlord and so far his words match this characterization. He wishes to force Socrates to remain in Piraeus by refusing to listen and thus seeming to remain immune to the transformative character of persuasion in speech. His question dislodges the power of persuasion only insofar as he steadfastly refuses to listen. Given the content of the question, it seems impossible that the questioner would not listen to any words elicited by the question. In other words, how can his question be asked as a genuine question, as something that demands a response?

It is worth noting that it is Glaucon who agrees to stay and accompany the group to Cephalus' house, where the rest of the Republic will unfold. We will return to the way in which Glaucon is a character who mirrors the Socratic desire for persuasive *logoi* later. After talking to Cephalus about how he is dealing with "the threshold of old age", Socrates addresses Polemarchus by saying, "'Tell me you, the heir of the argument, what was it Simonides said about justice that you assert he said correctly?'" (REP, 331 e). To which Polemarchus answers, on behalf of the poet Simonides, "That it is to give to each what is owed" (REP, 331 e). Here, Socrates frames his question to Polemarchus in an interesting way, since he affirms Polemarchus as an heir. He recognizes Polemarchus as an inheritor, not only as an expectant son of a grand inheritance, but by doing so also already anticipates the way in which Polemarchus will articulate justice. Indeed, Socrates' judge of character is verified as soon as Polemarchus speaks. He reveals that

he understands education to be primarily about inheriting citations from the wise by the fact that he quickly spouts off a memorized saying of a famous poet.

Socrates inhabits a strange place in this conversation by assuming that Simonides was wise, while at the same time professing ignorance about the content of his *logos* regarding justice. “He is a wise and divine man. However, you, Polemarchus, perhaps know what on earth he means, but I don’t understand” (REP, 331 e). This statement is an example of a Socratic double gesture. While Socrates asserts that Simonides’ saying could be incoherent, somehow it still maintains his wise reputation. The readiness by which Socrates employs a counter example, saying that it would be unjust to return a weapon if the owner demands it back to commit a crime, suggests that Simonides’ *logos* is in need of supplement and is an enactment of how justice is configured as what is owed (REP, 332 a). It is strange to think of how one would go about supplementing the wise and how our relation to “common sense” is involved in such a project. Socrates concludes by suggesting that Simonides “made a riddle, after the fashion of poets, when he said what the just is” (REP, 332 b). In other words, Socrates deepens Simonides’ phrase by allowing its content to admit of a strangeness that is proper to it. For Socrates, enigma as such belongs to our most common opinions and assumptions. By claiming that the saying is a riddle, Socrates shows that all wisdom involves impasse (*aporia*). Polemarchus will show that he cannot think of a riddle as a riddle. Doing so would mean that something about the enigmatic quality of the riddle might be worth lingering upon instead of simply abandoning its difficulty. This is a component of effective teaching,

because educators should comport themselves towards enigmas and impasses with humility and seriousness.

Polemarchus revises his account of justice, by way of a qualification, in order to negate any positive power that the enigmatic aspects of Simonides' *logos* may entail. Justice becomes giving harm to enemies and loyalty to friends (REP, 332 d). However, this revision responds to Socrates' question regarding how justice can be thought of as a kind of art (*techne*) of dispensation, and does not address whether or not justice is like an art at all when he says that harm to enemies and loyalty to friends function as apportions. His revision dodges Socrates' initial question, yet we are not sure if Polemarchus intends to simply evade the question because he does not have an answer or if he is completely unaware of the question itself. Socrates has not asked whether or not art is an appropriate way to discuss what justice is, he simply asks *which* art is concerned with "giving what to which things" (REP, 332 d). This distinction becomes absolutely crucial for Socrates' refutation of Polemarchus' account, as we will soon discover.

Socrates continues to dialogue with Polemarchus about justice in terms of the usefulness of justice during times of conflict and its seemingly uselessness in times of peaceⁱⁱⁱ. When Polemarchus answers that justice is useful in peacetime for conditioning contracts and partnerships, Socrates asks "Then, when gold or silver must be used in partnerships, in what case is the just man more useful than the others?" (REP, 333 c). Polemarchus thinks he can easily answer this question by saying "When they must be deposited and kept safe Socrates" (REP, 333 c). Polemarchus does not question whether or not the language of utility is proper to discussing justice and further reveals his

inability to question craft (*techne*). He sees that the just person is only useful in financial dealings by acting as a kind of safety deposit box. The just person is safe and steadfast, compared to the unjust person, who might be unable to restrain themselves from a collection of funds, but still inactive and seemingly inept in the establishment of social contract. Polemarchus' unwillingness to worry about speaking of justice in terms of the distinction between usefulness & uselessness allows Socrates to continue to follow out the trajectory of this line of reasoning by saying: "And with respect to everything else as well, is justice useless in the use of each and useful in its uselessness?" Upon Polemarchus' reluctant agreement to this question Socrates concludes "Then justice, my friend, wouldn't be anything very serious, if it is useful for useless things" (REP, 333 e).

In other words, Socrates assumes from the onset that giving an account of justice is not only important, but by default, among the most serious of matters. He has already shown that this task involves persuasion. Here he tests his dialogue partner with the language of *techne* because he knows that it may unsettle the grave concern involved in speaking of justice well. Socrates worries how justice is already in play, forming the contracts and partnerships between people, yet also stands by idle in order for these contracts to be safely insured. Socrates connects this impasse about justice as use to the previous conversation about the wise in order to dislodge how Polemarchus thinks of himself as educated.

Socrates does not hesitate to allow the conclusions from a given argument unsettle the premises of that argument. Socrates wants to trace how justice cannot be collapsed into a discussion about wealth and utility, nor can an account of justice be taken from the

wise and understood without violating their authority. The following exchange between Socrates and Polemarchus demonstrates this point:

Justice, then, seems, according to you & Homer & Simonides, to be a certain art of stealing, for the benefit to be sure, of friends & the harm of others. Isn't that what you meant?

No, by Zeus, he said. But I no longer know what I did mean. However, it is still my opinion that justice is helping friends and harming enemies. (REP 334 b)

It is interesting that Socrates groups Polemarchus with the wise poets. By doing so he plays to Polemarchus' pride, because of how Polemarchus' previous understanding of learning is reliant upon the unproblematic memorization and reiteration of authoritative sayings. In this conclusion, Socrates combines the impasse of thinking justice as a beneficial art with the claim that justice is distributive. Yet, Socrates says that if justice were like an art then it would be most like stealing, since the just person would be configured in at least two ways. The clever guard, over money that is not being put to use in partnership, is a just person as a guarantee for the possibility of partnership, but also agreed to be the most apt thief of the money by being the most proximate to it.

If we agree that the best guard could make the best thief, then we are forced to consider that the just person does not inhabit a single function in human community. The power of an artist lies in the correspondence between their arts in regards to its product. Every art has a particular end that is appropriate to it as the activity that it is. Yet, even as an art of safekeeping contracts, justice is not an art. It does not seem to have a single product or even be understood as a kind of single activity. In the example above,

Polemarchus' speech about justice as the giving of what is owed cannot be maintained, because the just person cannot withhold or lack anything on account of being just. It is revealed through speech that justice is not configured by any one activity or function in relation to a single product. Justice does not seem to produce anything, but is still assumed to be "most serious".

Socrates makes two claims that finally conclude everything that has been said about justice in his dialogue with Polemarchus. First, he focuses on the role of trust in articulating justice as a kind of dispensation. While questioning Polemarchus' assertion that justice is the portion we give to friends and enemies, Socrates asks if it is possible to make mistakes between those who merely seem just and who truly are (REP, 334 c). Polemarchus agrees, but does not seem to let this question affect his opinion, which may have allowed him to think of *himself* as mistaken. Justice involves a prior kind of relationship to our opinions about who we think our friends and enemies are which does not seem to be fully understood by Polemarchus. In other words, justice enables the conditions for the possibility of dialogic interaction, even when we may be unaware of what has been dispensed.

Later in this conversation Socrates sums up by claiming, "Then, according to your argument, it's just to treat badly men who have done nothing unjust?" (REP, 334 d). In other words, if we mistake who seems and is just, the act of treating others by giving them what is owed can fail to correspond to a clean distinction between friends and enemies. Polemarchus' response is a refusal to agree to this claim and shows most potently why he does not have a relationship to speech conducive of learning. He says,

“Not at all Socrates, for the argument seems to be bad” (REP, 334 d). To Polemarchus, if problematic conclusions follow from a given claim, then the claim is simply false. In this specific case, while Polemarchus admits that the argument has been shown to be bad, he is not willing to adjust his opinions according to what his dialogue with Socrates has revealed to him. He has shown by virtue of his words that he cannot learn.

With this evidence in hand, Socrates continues to investigate the claim made by Simonides on behalf of Polemarchus. Socrates does so by asking, “Isn’t justice human virtue?” (REP, 335 c). Upon Polemarchus’ swift agreement to the equivalence of the terms in this question, Socrates is able to conclude “Then my friend, human beings who have been harmed necessarily become more unjust” (REP, 335 c). In other words, if justice was virtue, in the sense of human character, then justice would allow us to account for how human beings become who they are. People are either more or less just as a result of being helped or hindered in various ways by the community of friends and enemies.

However, Socrates goes one step further, by way of conclusion, before having his conversation with Polemarchus violently interrupted. His account connects everything said thus far about justice back to the wisdom of Simonides, by saying:

Then if someone asserts that it’s just to give what is owed to each man-and he understands by this that harm is owed to enemies by the just man and help to friends-the man who said it was not wise. For he wasn’t telling the truth. For it has become apparent to us that it is never just to harm anyone. (REP 335 e)

In other words, the wise necessarily speak on behalf of truth, which has a negative relation to harm. They would not maintain an account of justice as a kind of

apportionment, since it would not preclude the harming of others, which is held as a prerequisite of being just. Upon Polemarchus' agreement to these claims, Socrates shows that the just person, in general, must withhold as much, if not more, than they dispense. Simply accounting for justice in terms of what is owed is shown to be problematic. Furthermore, we see that justice is discussed alongside deep affinities with human character. Through dialogue we are shown that the distinction between our enemies and friends is not superficial and cannot exhaust what justice is, in terms of how our character is co-determined by how others relate to us in speech.

Polemarchus articulates justice in a way that prevents him from thinking deeper about community relations. How do we know who are friends and enemies are beforehand, such that we can dispense with what is owed to each? Polemarchus thinks of Socrates as a kind of friend, but only in terms of his loyalty to Socrates in conflict. Since this loyalty unfolds within a context of dialogic conflict, it is not a loyalty that will sustain healthy inquiry into justice. Indeed, Socrates assumes that Polemarchus will return to his primary articulation of friendship as blind loyalty in terms of strife and battle. By maintaining the wisdom of the wise, Socrates would view Polemarchus as an ally in battle against those who would attribute paradox to the poets. He is a polemic who engages in polemic speech when he agrees to do battle with Socrates (REP, 336 a). Polemarchus is shown to be unreceptive to dialogue in a certain way that prevents him from investigating what justice is in a way conducive to learning. Being able to decipher whether a student is prevented from improving their character on the basis of what they think they know is another important aspect of effective teaching. It is unclear if Socrates

still thinks he can persuade Polemarchus and if persuasion is a viable alternative to a show of strength. The notion of conflict as it relates to human dialogue anticipates Thrasymachus' interruption of the conversation, since it is Thrasymachus whose character is most violent and rhetorically combative.

Thrasymachus' Sophistical Relation to Speech

Socrates discovers that Thrasymachus has a more sophisticated relationship to speech and justice than Polemarchus when Thrasymachus decides to interrupt the discussion between Polemarchus and Socrates regarding justice. He is described as "hunched up like wild beast", before he exclaims, "'If you truly want to know what the just is, don't only ask and gratify your love of honor by refuting whatever someone answers, you know that it is easier to ask than to answer'" (REP, 336 e). Here, Thrasymachus not only illustrates his impatience with how the dialogue about justice has occurred so far, but also reveals his character, insofar as it shows itself in what he says. For Thrasymachus, speech should make its way towards clear and precise answers without the relentless questioning of interlocutors. This sophistic relation to speech is directly indicative of Thrasymachus' ethical character as one who wishes to rule in dialogue with brute strength in a way that limits the excessive movement of *logos*.

Socrates expresses fear in regards to this account of Thrasymachus' and his beastlike appearance. Necessarily, he also displays courage^{iv} in terms of a steadfast pursuit of speaking about justice in the face of the wild danger that Thrasymachus embodies. While he offers an apology about his unwillingness to make mistakes in

regards to the dialogue about justice, he still claims that justice is most serious and “a thing more precious than a great deal of gold” (REP 336 e). Here, Socrates reminds us that we are all at stake in accomplishing the agreement that justice is the most serious of inquiries, and should be considered for its own sake. In this way, Socrates shows that a proper seriousness towards difficulties shown in the *logos* is an important aspect of effective teaching. He echoes how Polemarchus articulates justice as a kind of craft, which is only useful for useless things. If we thought that giving a true account of justice would be likened to finding great deal of riches, we would not understand why Socrates thinks the dialogic inquiry of justice is most serious. Socrates avoids purposely making mistakes which may add more obscurity to the inquiry of justice than is needed.

After hearing this Socratic apology, Thrasymachus laughs scornfully and says, “Heracles! Here is that habitual irony of Socrates. I knew it, and I predicted to these fellows that you wouldn’t be willing to answer, that you would be ironic and do anything rather than answer if someone asked you something” (REP 337a). In other words, Thrasymachus offers both a criticism and a confession by virtue of his speech. His criticism lies in his distrust for Socrates as a just dialogue partner. He also displays distrust towards any notion of dialogical progress and shows that he cannot learn in dialogue by virtue of his focus on fulfilling predictions. For Thrasymachus, irony is merely a pretended ignorance in discussion, which, for Socrates, is habitual and therefore unavoidable on the basis of his character. On the other hand, he confesses previous assumptions about how Socrates would conduct himself in conversation, assumptions which he openly predicted to the others before this discussion with Polemarchus began.

It is Thrasymachus that sets down claims about Socrates' character and how that character is directly revealed through a relation to the *logos*.

Socrates is not unaware of how he appears to Thrasymachus, therefore he responds enigmatically for a purpose. He responds to these claims about irony in a way that offers a defense of his character, precisely as ironic^v, by saying, "That's because you are wise, Thrasymachus" (REP 337 a). By referring to Thrasymachus as a wise person, Socrates seeks to pacify his beastlike appearance, by simply embellishing his pride. Socrates also makes this compliment explicit to reiterate the discussion on the *logos* of the wise that has already transpired with Polemarchus. Socrates continues to inquire how predictions could work in human dialogue to prevent learning, as persuasive speech, by saying:

Hence you knew quite well that if you asked someone how much twelve is and in asking told him beforehand, 'See to it you don't tell me, you human being, that it is two times six, or three times four, or six times two, or four times three; I won't accept such nonsense from you'-it was plain to you, I suppose, that one would answer a man who asks in this way (REP 337 b).

Here, Socrates further explores what it means to control the momentum of a dialogue that seeks inquiry. He offers a contrast between Thrasymachus' predictions about his own ironic engagements in speech, and a situation where someone is prevented to answer, in a certain way, the question about how much twelve is. By commanding beforehand that one is not to say what twelve is in terms of its multiples, the interlocutor is prevented from dealing with their confusion regarding how any single number can be articulated in a manifold manner. Thrasymachus seems wise to Socrates because he at least knows that reckoning a single number may involve a gathering together of many. We should recall

that this discussion has been framed by accounting for justice in terms of what Simonides says. It is unclear why Socrates does not blame him more forcefully that this *logos* is used un-justly, because something remains withheld, since, by doing so he could redeem Simonides' status as wise while not simply returning to his *logos* in a superficial way.

Socrates seeks to investigate, in friendly dialogue, what Thrasymachus could possibly say about the contrast between this situation involving counting and his own dialogical practice, which has been charged as ironic. Interestingly, Thrasymachus does not give an answer, but simply cedes by saying: "as if this case were similar to the other" (REP 337 c). In other words, Thrasymachus is unwilling to offer a translation between these two situations, even though he seems to have familiarity with each case in order to discover the differences between them. His unwillingness to see an analogy here is demonstrative of his inability to see himself at stake in the account of the *logos* that he has given. This unwillingness demonstrates how Thrasymachus has self-imposed limits to the improvement of his character.

Socrates thinks that analogy is a powerful way to think of irony. In this case, Thrasymachus thinks that his earlier prediction about Socrates has nothing to do with someone forbidding another to answer a question in a certain way. Thrasymachus thinks that predictions, especially ones that we are forbidden to access before engaging in dialogue, do not affect the dialogue or its partners. Socrates will assert that Thrasymachus is someone worthy of learning from, given the fact that he seems to know what justice is and is unwilling to pursue the *logos* of the just given by Polemarchus. He sees himself as a strong ruler that will "set down" a more praiseworthy account. However, Socrates

could be further articulating irony, when he claims that we have finally found a character worth learning about justice from, because Thrasymachus' un-receptive attitude toward how logos can encourage improvement prevents him from being an effective teacher.

Socrates subtly defends himself against Thrasymachus' claim that it is easier to ask questions rather than answer, in a manner which preserves his status as a true and just educator. He says that he "deserves to suffer," or learn, from one who knows (REP 337 d). He says this because he, upon consideration, takes the responsibility of answering what Thrasymachus has forbidden. By doing so, Socrates shows an important aspect of teaching, by showing why teachers should take risks in dialogue. In this case, he admits that it is appropriate for someone who does not know to suffer and learn from someone with knowledge and admit of their own ignorance regarding justice. However, Thrasymachus is not satisfied that simply "suffering" the learning from the teacher is an adequate way to demonstrate submission to the authority of the teacher. He demonstrates this by claiming, "But in addition to learning, pay a fine in money too" (REP 337 d). In other words, Thrasymachus articulates learning alongside monetary transactions and payments that are substantial. He shows a relation towards teaching and learning that echoes the discussion of justice as a form of craft, and how as a craft, justice concerns itself with money.

At this point in the dialogue, Socrates has been ordered to pay a monetary fine in order to receive teachings from Thrasymachus regarding what justice truly is. When Socrates admits that this learning will have to take place in the future, when he obtains the wealth necessary to pay the fine, the dialogue seems to have become terminated.

Since, if he cannot pay, Thrasymachus will simply not engage in dialogue. Yet, Glaucon comes to Socrates' aid by the contribution of funds, with help from all the others in the conversation, for Thrasymachus to discuss justice in a way that demonstrates his learned knowledge on the matter (REP 337 d).

Thrasymachus says that he is not surprised that Socrates' friends offer financial aid for the discussion of justice to continue and does not want to fulfill the habit of Socratic irony by occupying the questioner in the dialogue. He wants to answer, in a way that sets down a *logos* that asserts his strength, without need for the process of questioning. Socrates refuses to answer about justice, since he maintains ignorance as to what it is, and commands Thrasymachus to gratify all by answering about what justice truly is (REP 338 a). Upon conceding to partake in this task, Thrasymachus says, "Here is the wisdom of Socrates; unwilling himself to teach, he goes around learning from others, and does not even give thanks to them" (REP 338 b). Here, Thrasymachus further develops his sophistical relation to the *logos*, since he thinks praise, in the form of gratitude, constitutes the student's relation to the teacher. According to Thrasymachus, teaching occurs on the basis of knowledge that is, without question, certain of being transmitted to students by teachers. He thinks that Socrates' wisdom is a mere disguise, because it enables the gathering of knowledge without payment, in the form of fines or by suffering the process of learning dictated by the learned. On this account, Socrates is a cheater and wise only in the sense of avoiding payment for discursive knowledge.

However, Thrasymachus does have an account of justice, and now that the payment for dispensing it has been secured, it can be unfolded. Upon his first articulation

of what justice *truly is*, he says, “Now listen, I say that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger. Well, why don’t you praise me? But you won’t be willing” (REP 338 c). Again, we see the circularity involved in improving our character through dialogue, since how one speaks about justice cannot be divorced from the claims one makes about justice. Thrasymachus has already shown himself to have a violent relationship to speech based on strength, both physical and rhetorical. His anger and impatience are clearly shown in his words, which will prove incompatible with a teacher involved with justice.

Upon setting this definition of justice down, Thrasymachus thinks that his job, as a ruler of this conversation, is completed insofar as his definition seems self-sufficient upon the authority of his strength. Justice does not seem to be given a comprehensive definitive account, since it is simply the self-assertion of the stronger. Yet, Thrasymachus would disagree, by arguing that justice has been given a definite meaning, in that it is embodied in the strength of the ruler and set down as law in a way that benefits their direct advantage. Justice is only involved in Thrasymachus’ *logos* by virtue of its articulation by the ruler, who is just by default and self-declaration.

Socrates responds to this account of justice by saying that he must first learn what this definition of justice could mean or entail (REP 338 c). Here, he shows further evidence as to why he previously claimed Thrasymachus was wise. In making a claim about wisdom, Socrates thinks Thrasymachus’ speech is in need of supplementation or, at least, re-iteration, because the sayings of the wise are never divorced from the dialogic aspects of philosophizing. This conversational unfolding of wisdom occurs despite

dialogue which may demonstrate that wise sayings are never un-problematic. In this way, Socrates questions how this traditional aspect of *logos* is to be interpreted, and careful interpretation of prior knowledge is a fundamental aspect for effective teaching. To Thrasymachus justice as the advantage of the strong regardless of what our predecessors have said, while Socrates disagrees with the idea that arguments can be set down about justice without need for elaboration in discussion.

Later, Socrates elevates an aspect of what Thrasymachus says about justice by admitting that justice has something to do *with advantage*, particularly in regards to the advantage of just laws for any ruling group. Yet, he remains perplexed and wonders about what it is to be the stronger. While he will argue that justice is connected to our advantage, he does so in order to remind us that he and Polemarchus already granted and demanded that justice be the most serious kind of dialogic inquiry (REP 333 e). But this concern presents itself as a kind of humility in the face of the daunting challenges presented in the dialogue about justice. The Socratic response to the threats of Thrasymachus' *logos* may seem tame or ineffective, but they are appropriate reactions to Thrasymachus' character.

Socrates furthers Thrasymachus' account of justice by persuading Thrasymachus that the rulers of the city, as the strong, are still capable of making mistakes, even when they set down laws to govern the city in a just manner (REP 339 c). Yet, Thrasymachus does not want this argument to upset the authority of the ruler, insofar as the ruler is the most strong by asserting their strength by setting down laws in an unmissaken way. He says that in regard to *precise* speech, the just ruler is like a craftsman and therefore is

incapable of making mistakes when they rule. “So no craftsman, wise man, or ruler makes mistakes at the moment when he is ruling” (REP 340 e). Thrasymachus, like Polemarchus, does not question the language of craft in discussing justice. He differs from Polemarchus though, because he is the one who makes this assertion, while it is Socrates who links justice to craft in the conversation with Polemarchus. Thrasymachus recognizes the connection between justice and craft, since his argument regarding the stronger is reliant upon the art of ruling as what *produces* justice.

Socrates is interested in how the ruler is allied with justice itself, not simply productive of justice in the city externally. In order to show how justice is productive of just people, I must remark about how Socrates will offer a refutation of Thrasymachus’ account of justice in a way that shifts the discussion of justice as an external “setting down” on behalf of the strong to an internal relation in a single individual. I will do this in order to show why Thrasymachus has mistaken himself as a just educator, and how his account of justice prevents him from being persuaded to this fact. Socrates’ argument to show how justice cannot solely be the advantage of the stronger occurs as he critiques the homogeneous account of human community that Thrasymachus’ account of justice presupposes. By declaring justice as the advantage the stronger, Thrasymachus establishes at least two different communities, the strong and the weak, where the later does not benefit from the justice in terms of advantage.

Socrates puts this account into relief by claiming that even thieves have a kind of honor that keeps them bound to the community in which they belong (REP 351 c). He asserts this more fully by asking the following question:

Do you believe that either a city, or an army, or pirates, or robbers, or any other tribe which has some common unjust enterprise would be able to accomplish anything, if its members acted unjustly to one another? (REP 351 c)

When Thrasymachus agrees that justice must condition how such groups function, his account of justice as the advantage of the stronger must transform. This transformation is necessitated, because a unified honor among thieves shows justice in a way that is mutually beneficial to all members of the group, not just those who are most strong. In other words, justice occurs to unify members of a group in a way that is friendly and mutually conducive for each member's advantage *and* the advantage of the whole, not merely the advantage of the ruling member of such a group.

Socrates does not allow this claim to support solipsism or a debased kind of gang mentality, because he articulates justice as fulfilling friendship within individuals as well as among communities. He says that even the ruler must not allow injustice to come into being within himself, because "it will make him unable to act, because he is at faction and not at mind with himself" (REP 352 a). In other words, Socrates shows Thrasymachus, by virtue of a inquiry into justice by way of the *logos*, that his account of justice as the advantage of the stronger must be mistaken. No ruler could seek their own advantage without being internally constituted with coherence and integrity, which shows that justice must *always already* be present in a certain way before the ruler sets down any account of what justice entails. Thrasymachus cannot maintain his self-understanding as any kind of teacher if he dogmatically adheres to his considered advantage.

The conflict between Socrates and Thrasymachus does not simply illustrate two opposing arguments regarding justice, but shows different ways of settling what is at stake in speech. What they say about justice is connected to how they engage with one another. We have seen that Socratic irony is about investigating how we ground our questions, a power of discernment which sustains questioning as a progressive dialogic practice. Yet, to Thrasymachus, Socratic irony is simply a form of lying or betrayal. He insists that the inquiry into justice cannot proceed on the basis of Socratic irony, since he sets down his account like a ruler sets down the law. He understands that the *logos* has a technical quality, insofar as it can be likened to a process of production, and that one should simply surrender their engagement if problematic results follow from what has been said. We are shown this when Thrasymachus cedes to the analogy Socrates offers (REP 337 c).

Yet, for Socrates utter abandonment of the inquiry, or the *logos* in general, is not an option, even when what is set down is still undecided, questionable and in need of interpretation. He does not defend the *logos* dogmatically, but allows it to interrogate itself in lived conversation. Furthermore, Socrates does not account for the *logos* in terms of a weapon, but in terms of another measure, a level of engagement with the most serious of topics that occurs on the level of friendship and mutual understanding. In this way, Socrates illustrates aspects of effective teaching, while Thrasymachus does not.

Concluding Remarks Alongside Glaucon's Desire

I have shown that Polemarchus and Thrasymachus reveal their characters in how they discuss justice, and that this revelation determines their status as learners.

Polemarchus cannot be a worthy student, because he lacks the capacity for following Socrates in the movement of the *logos*. His insistence on fulfilling his own opinions regarding justice, regardless of what is shown in conversation, makes him unable to stretch himself out toward learning. His opinions remain unquestionable foundations for his self-understanding instead of tentative springboards for mutual inquiry.

Thrasymachus, on the other hand, despite how he relates to himself, is not a good instructor, because of his false expectations regarding the clarity and precision of the *logos* when it is set down by one who is stronger. He should not be followed by those who desire to learn, because he lacks a notion of learning as mutually beneficial to both student and teacher and refuses to witness the destructive power that predictive assumptions may have in conversation. He refuses to see himself as a student and only understands himself as a teacher in terms of the recipient of payment for knowledge imparted to students on an unquestioned basis.

However, the thesis of this essay does not occur solely by way of negation. I will show that the conversation between Glaucon and Socrates regarding justice, as the lived life of the just, shows a proper relation between teacher and student that is positively expressed in contrast to Polemarchus' and Thrasymachus' conversations with Socrates. One of the main differences between all three characters is that Glaucon explicitly asserts

his desire for Socratic persuasion (REP 357 b). Earlier in this essay, I showed that Polemarchus does not even think that persuasion is a viable option to force, both rhetorical and physical. It is also clear that Thrasymachus does not become persuaded by Socrates' *logos*, since he remains unchanged with regard to his self-image as a ruling, strong, teacher.

On the other hand, Glaucon does not have an account of justice that he wishes to express, he only admits that he is an open listener to an account that has so far remained unsaid. Specifically, Glaucon admits his desire by asking Socrates the following question, "Do you want to seem to have persuaded us, or truly persuade us, that it is in every way better to be just than unjust" (REP 357 b). Glaucon asks a question that relies on a distinction between seeming and being, something that requires analysis beyond the scope of this essay. What is relevant for our discussion, however, is that Glaucon demands a Socratic task that involves inverting the common opinion that the unjust life is more worthy of choice than the just life. In his question, we see a shift in how the question of justice is framed, from being an account about dispensation or advantage to the betterment of being just in lived experience. The Socratic *logos* that Glaucon desires does indeed involve a revolutionary inversion of what has been said about justice previously, and shows a way to think of Glaucon as someone worthy of being called a student.

Glaucon cannot thoroughly explain his desire for an account of the just life. He says, "I've been talked to deaf by Thrasymachus and countless others, while the argument on behalf of justice – that it is better than injustice – I've yet to hear from

anyone as I want it” (REP 358 d). In other words, Glaucon’s educative upbringing has conditioned his understanding of justice and injustice with countless accounts which show the superiority of injustice over and against justice. His claim is ironic, in a way that mirrors Socratic irony, since he claims to be deafened by the talk of injustice, while still desiring to hear otherwise. He knows that the talk about the life of injustice is unsatisfactory, which means that he, in some way, knows what he wants to hear, even though he remains ignorant as to how such a speech would occur. His ability to admit of his own lack of understanding and his desire for it to become transformed further illustrates why he has the character of a student. Glaucon is willing to admit of being ignorant of his ignorance, which precisely marks what a student is.

Glaucon continues this account regarding how his own education shows the profitability of injustice over justice in the following way, “They say that doing injustice is naturally good, and suffering injustice bad, but that the bad in suffering injustice far exceeds the good in doing it” (REP 358 e). This statement is extremely enigmatic, but not in regards to how common opinion asserts itself as unproblematic. In other words, common assertions about injustice are praises that are spoken without hesitation or need for clarification. Glaucon is able to speak on behalf of the unjust and just person with such agility and swiftness that Socrates becomes aghast and complements his speaking ability as a kind of polishing (REP 361 d). The disadvantageous consequences of suffering unjust acts pale in comparison to the rewards which unjust deeds may produce. Glaucon continues to speak on behalf of the greater profits of the unjust life and is

assisted in this task by Adeimantus' speeches, which seek to establish the same goal. We should mark how Socrates will respond in a way that shows why he is a good teacher.

Socrates responds to these speeches about the life of injustice in a way that is directly indicative of his character, as a receptive and friendly conversationalist or teacher. He says:

That, my friends, in my opinion is good. For something quite divine must certainly have happened to you, if you are remaining un-persuaded that injustice is better than justice when you are able to speak that way on its behalf. Now you truly don't seem to me to be being persuaded. I infer it from the rest of your character, since, on the basis of the arguments themselves, I would distrust you. And the more I trust you, the more I'm at a loss as to what I should do (REP 368 b).

In other words, Socrates agrees with Glaucon that a straight forward, casual account of Glaucon's character is either unavailable or impossible. He says that if Glaucon and Adeimantus remain un-persuaded about a life of injustice, even though they are able to speak in such a polished way on its behalf, then the divine must have a role in forming their characters. I would like to suggest that we need not have faith in the divine in order to follow this Socratic response, because the function of the divine here is simply a further instantiation of the wonder felt by Socrates caused by Glaucon's character. Socrates also agrees that their education has been ineffective in persuading them, since he knows that they each have a character that is aligned with the just. Socrates' claims about the *logos* redeem his dialogic practice as progressively ironic, since he maintains trust in the power of the *logos* as a profound kind of disclosure into the deepest impasses, even when the unjust life becomes affirmed through speech. Even though he could lose

faith in the power of the *logos* to explain what is at stake in living justly, he says he would not lose trust in his familiarity with who Glaucon is.

As our discussion comes to a close, I would like to briefly mention something about the cave image. I mentioned at the onset of this essay that Socrates articulates two different accounts of education in the cave image and we have not explored either one of them directly. The first account of education, one that we will not discuss or champion, articulates education as the direct placement of knowledge into the “soul”^{vi} of the students in a way reminiscent of Thrasymachus’ sophistical attitude. Socrates elaborates the other mode of education by saying,

There would therefore be an art of this turning around, concerned with the way in which this power can most efficiently be turned around, not an art of producing sight in it. Rather, this art takes as given that sight is there, but not rightly turned nor looking at what it ought to look at. (REP, 518 d)

In other words, this mode of education does not assert that knowledge is placed into the “soul” of the student, that the learning of the student can be measured in terms of the production of knowledge as linked to the production of a certain kind of sight in the student. Rather, this mode of education treats students as ends in themselves, complete in their capacities and potencies. Students do not lack knowledge, or the means to acquire it, but simply need help in empowering themselves in certain ways towards their own transformations. This type of education favors the inward movement of students, and is still considered a form of craft, even if nothing is produced externally between the student or the teacher. This account of teaching assumes that the power of sight, or of

inquiry in general, is already present in the student, but might not be turned to gaze in an appropriate manner, or may not have been appropriated by the student as their own.

This model of education is operative in the conversation between Socrates and Glaucon. He describes their progress together as a kind of “the stupid state” which becomes more obscure as more is said (REP, 432 d). The kind of learning that is happening here has to do with being attentive to how the *logos* conceals in its movement towards clarity. Learning has as much with being humble as it does with knowledge. Socrates wants us to reflect upon the paradoxical character of discursive inquiry and how this can affect us by changing how we relate to ourselves and each other, something that both Polemarchus and Thrasymachus ignore and negate in the analysis above. Neither Polemarchus nor Thrasymachus attends to the nearness of justice, which is precisely what Glaucon can see.

One of the most dramatic scenes of the dialogue between Glaucon and Socrates occurs in Book IV during a discussion about linking justice to three different virtues: wisdom, courage and moderation. When the latter is held up as being the virtue which can unite both city and human by the fact that it “stretches throughout the whole, from top to bottom of the entire scale”, we are invited to think that the relation of these virtues to the city and citizen has to do with the relation between parts and whole (REP, 432 a). Socrates tells Glaucon that they have arrived at a decisive proximity to the topic of their conversation, which is justice. He says, “We must, like hunters, now station ourselves in a circle around the thicket and pay attention so that justice doesn’t slip through somewhere and disappear into obscurity” (REP, 432 c). In other words, Socrates thinks

that the closeness to justice, which has been granted by the *logos*, necessitates a particular danger of obscurity, since this closeness is the very thing that allows justice get away from being seen or understood. Here, Socrates points to how their inquiry is constantly withdrawing within the intimacy that the dialogue provides. We should recall that Glaucon's name means owl-eyes^{vii} and that this Socratic warning has to do with teamwork in the form of mutual discernment.

He continues by saying, "Look to it and make every effort to catch sight of it; you might somehow be able to see it before me and could tell me" (REP, 432 c). In other words, Socrates desires Glaucon's companionship as an active participant in this inquiry. Socrates seeks a student who already holds a particularly powerful potency of sight, which he himself lacks. By addressing Glaucon as one who can see, Socrates admits that he cannot inquire into justice all by himself. Socrates continues to illustrate this cave-like situation by saying that, "The place really appears to be hard going and steeped in shadows...At least its dark and hard to search out" (REP, 432 c). For our purposes, giving an inter-textual reading of the cave image, the language of this passage is interesting. Here, Socrates says that each member of the conversation has entered a cave by virtue of following what is revealed in speech. His claim further articulates why the inquiry into justice is most serious, because it is most difficult and hard going.

This also connects to our previous discussion involving how Thrasymachus relates to the *logos* and Socratic irony, since this passage shows that while Socrates can discern problematic insights which result from attentively following the movement of speech, he still thinks that these consequences should not render discursive inquiry

irrelevant. Indirectly, Socrates says that the work achieved by the *logos* so far has only given clarity regarding what is obscure, and this obscurity is a direct result from the proximity towards justice that the *logos* has provided. In other words, Socrates is attentive to how speech obscures in its movement towards clarity. Both Glaucon and Socrates urge each other to go on and even when Socrates becomes excited at the sight of the just he immediately reverses himself when praised by Glaucon at reporting such good news. Much to Glaucon's amazement, he states that they have remained in a very stupid state throughout this conversation (REP, 432 d). This mistaken condition constitutes the very character of both the student and teacher, while also demonstrates that learning entails an awareness of our own ignorance.

Proper education is about learning that we are mostly ignorant of our ignorance. This learning occurs most potently in conversational dialogue with others regarding serious matters, which in this case has been the discussion of justice. We have seen that asking what justice is occurs at the level of who we think we are. We reveal our character, as capable of learning or not, when discussions occur in an open manner. We can be guided towards our inward revolutions only if we remain receptive to the fact that speech can conceal as much as it can reveal about a topic. The mark of an educated person lies in the ability to learn what is worthy of discussion, finding the serious matters of dialogue, and being able to speak about the difficulties inherent in them well

Endnotes

ⁱ Many scholars, most notably Jacob Klein and Drew Hyland articulate the importance of the reader's participation in Platonic dialogue. In *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, Klein asserts the following about the role of the reader as participant in the dialogue itself, "A dialogue, then, presupposes people listening to the conversation, not as casual & indifferent spectators, but as silent participants."

Klein, Jacob. *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965, p.5.

While Hyland's work has done a great deal to undermine the tradition of Platonism by articulating the role of the reader and the dramatic quality of the dialogues. "Nothing in the dialogues advocates that we take these positions as ones actually espoused by Plato, and everything about the dialogues suggests that they are presented for our thoughtful consideration and evaluation".

Hyland, Drew. *Questioning Platonism*, Albany: State University of New York, 2004, p.6.

ⁱⁱ All Platonic text will be referred to by Stephenus numeration in the future.

ⁱⁱⁱ It is interesting to note that the notion of war forms a central part of the just city, since only when a city is at war can we see it most alive and in motion (REP, 374 a).

^{iv} By doing so, Socrates embodies Aristotle's account of the virtue of courage in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. As he says "courage lies in the ability to endure pain well, in the face of life-threatening fear"

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Joe Sachs. Newburyport: Focus Publishing/R Pullins Company, 2002, 1002 b.

^v Here we see another instance of the necessity of the reader's participation in the dialogue. Irony is an invitation to the reader to think about how Socratic speech is connected to Socratic practice. As Klein suggests, "Everything about Socrates' irony depends on the presence of other people who are capable of catching the irony, of hearing what is not said"

Klein, Jacob. *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965, p.6.

^{vi} See Chapter 2 on a detailed analysis of Aristotle's discussion of "soul", why it is placed in scare quotes here, and how Aristotle's language is beneficial to a rich notion of learning.

^{vii} Sallis, John. *Being and Logos*, Atlantic Hights: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1986, p. 319.

APPENDIX

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- OTS Aristotle. *On the Soul*, trans. Joe Sachs. Santa Fe: Green Lion Press, 2001.
- PO Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Continuum, 1970.
- REP Plato. *Republic*, trans. Alan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1968.

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