Sophistic Threat and Socratic Shield: Education, Inequality, and Influence in Athenian Democracy

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This dissertation looks at the way that educational systems affect the legal and political realms. The context in this dissertation is the ancient Greek practice of sophistry and its effect on the nascent Athenian democracy. A sophistical education in persuasive speaking could only be afforded by the wealthy, and Athenians would send their sons to a sophist in order to learn how to be persuasive in the Assembly and influence the decision of the democratic body in their favor. My inquiry surrounds whether or not that inequality in education serves to undermine democracy or if it in fact strengthens the Athenian state – on the one hand, there exists an inequality based on wealth, but on the other hand, education in virtue (what the sophists claim to teach, it remains to be seen whether or not they succeed in delivering an education in virtue) cannot be a detriment to the *polis*. I conclude that while a sophistical education is premised on wealth inequality, and as such cannot serve the *polis* properly, there does exist a way to improve the *polis* by means of virtue that does not rely on wealth inequality: Socratic education. Socrates fully embodies the democratic value of equality and the virtuous improvement of the Athenians in his 1) commitment to beginning in ignorance rather than an assumed knowledge of the truth, 2) his refusal to flatter his conversation partners which can serve to disguise the truth, and 3) his adherence to dialectic in which two (or more) interlocutors converse as equals, with the aim of uncovering the truth together

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INTRODUCTION: THE VIRTUOUS AND THE USEFUL: HOW TO EDUCATE

What can philosophy offer the πόλις? Human excellence is achieved in the political arena, in community with others. The political arena determines the fate of goodness of the community, and by extension, the individuals in the πόλις. In this dissertation, I propose that the philosopher's paramount contribution to the πόλις is παιδεία. The relationship between the philosopher and his or her πόλις is one of mutual benefit and also guardianship. I argue that this relationship is founded primarily on education. In fifth century Athens, the education of the youth becomes a deciding factor in the fate of the πόλις. Democracy has been restored from the grasp of tyranny, and the ability to participate in the democracy, to make one's voice heard, is now of utmost importance. Political power is given over to the δῆμος; it is no longer concentrated in the hands of the few. As a result, citizens need to learn quickly how to be persuasive, how to argue and defend their opinions in public, and most importantly, how to determine *for themselves* the good and just course of action for the πόλις. No longer can one rely on the wisdom of the monarch or the aristocracy to decide how to govern and improve the πόλις. No longer can one simply go about one's private business and leave the role of governance to the regime. In a monarchy or aristocracy, citizens might offer prayers to the gods in hopes that their rulers will exercise their power benevolently and with the best interests of the populace in mind, but one's individual influence ended there. In a democracy, in contrast, the decision-making power is in the hands of the δῆμος itself. That is to say, equal representation in the governance of one's πόλις is accompanied by the *responsibility* to make wise decisions that improve the πόλις. Thus, in a democracy, persuasive speaking is of paramount importance: the more citizens that one can gather to one's cause, the more likely one will be able to influence policy in one's favor. As a result, a demand arose, almost overnight, for teachers.

It is against this political backdrop that a sophistical education became popular in Athens. The sophists focused their attention on rhetorical, moral, and political philosophy, rather than technical skills that might benefit one's private business. Instead, the sophists promised the swift delivery of practical and relevant skills for self-governance. A citizen with a sophistical education, who previously could not articulate his political needs, could now effectively command the attention of the Assembly (ἐκκλησία). Thus, this type of education is a uniquely *democratic* problem. It is problematic, since there are many ways to educate, and not all teachers are committed to virtue, the good, and the truth. But types of moral education in Athens seem to fall into one of two categories: those that teach what is virtuous (the philosopher) and those that teach what is merely useful or expedient (the sophist). Will a speaker in the Assembly use his power to benefit the community as a whole or merely one's own selfish ends?

This dissertation comprises an exploration of education within the ancient Greek context as well as an analysis of the proper (and by implication improper) way to educate. I argue that Socrates embodies the proper way to educate in contrast to the sophists, and this claim can best be developed through a discussion of Plato's *Protagoras, Euthydemus*, and *Apology*. In the *Protagoras*, Socrates confronts the sophist *par excellence,* namely, Protagoras, and the topic of conversation is the following: is virtue teachable? The consequences of the teachability of virtue are vast. According to Kerferd, there are "shattering implications of the doctrine that virtue can be taught, which is only a way of expressing in language no longer fashionable what we mean if we say that people in their proper position in society can be changed by education."[1] If society can indeed be changed by education, then the education of the youth is of paramount importance for the πόλις.

[1] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 2.

The *Protagoras* takes place in the Piraeus at Callias' house, and it is dramatically set at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War.[2] Callias is playing host to a crowd of sophists, most notably, Protagoras, Hippias, and Prodicus. Socrates accompanies the young and eager Hippocrates to see the sophists and hopefully learn from them. When the pair arrives, Socrates asks Protagoras what it is that he claims to teach, and Protagoras answers that he teaches the political art (πολιτικὴ τέχνη), which he says is a part of virtue (ἀρετή). Socrates is confused because he thought that ἀρετή is available to all, so there would be no need to teach it. At the outset, Socrates claims that ἀρετή is not teachable, but Protagoras insists that it is, for if ἀρετή were not teachable, Protagoras would have no reason to collect a tuition from his pupils. After long speeches, dialogue, a myth, poetic exegesis, and interruptions from the audience, Socrates determines that ἀρετή is in fact teachable because ἀρετή at root is knowledge, and the implications of Protagoras' position is that ἀρετή is not teachable. Protagoras is unwilling to change his mind and admit he was wrong. Instead, he breaks off the discussion prematurely. In contrast, Socrates willingly changes his mind in order to accommodate new information gained in the discussion itself. That is to say, Socrates is not an educator in the sense of the superior professing to the inferior.

Thus, the question I will raise in this dissertation is the following: How *should* the philosopher educate? It is presumably not as a way of teaching a rhetorical skill-set like the sophists or bettering our understanding of difficult and complicated matters that are too abstract and removed from experience (ἐμπειρία) to make a difference. As I shall make clear, without a concern for the πόλις, neither a philosophical education nor a sophistic education can be of value. Even when the philosopher goes beyond the limits of the πόλις, s/he remains an active member of it. According to Brill, "Plato is compelled to take a sharply political turn and focus on the demands

[2] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 19.

that the soul's malleability places upon the city as the arena wherein human flourishing is won or lost."[3] How does the philosopher occupy this in-between position, at the limit? For Brill, "the political life of the human is precisely the site wherein biological and cognitive concerns are inextricably *intertwined*, and [one must] interrogate moments when this perplexing intertwinement erupts into the field of human experience."[4] This intertwinement between the biological and the cognitive, I argue, takes the form of ethical παιδεία. The philosopher is called to serve the πόλις through παιδεία as an integrated member of the πόλις.

And yet the philosopher also concurrently stands apart from the πόλις. According to Sallis,

> Socrates belongs to the city: he was born, nurtured, and educated in the city […] He is, nevertheless, always beyond the city by virtue of the fact that his very relation to the city is prescribed primarily by something which transcends the city. Socrates' way of being in the city (as a gadfly), his specific mode of comportment to the men in the city (questioning), is not determined by the city nor by Socrates' 'genetic' bond to the city; it is determined, rather, by something which transcends the walls of Athens and of every particular city.[5]

Socrates belongs to the city and yet is separate from the city at the same time. He stands apart from the city in order to aid the δῆμος in the act of self-governance. In this sense, Socrates appears like a sophist. Both stand apart from the πόλις with the aim of aiding the πόλις. And yet here their similarities end. For Baracchi, "the paradox should be underscored: not only do the sophists thrive in the city, but, when the city reacts against the outrageous practices of sophistry, the target of this outcry is the philosopher."[6] Socrates' goal in the *Protagoras* and also the *Euthydemus*, however, is to improve the members of the πόλις and to show how the sophists do harm to the πόλις. According to McCoy, "Plato distinguishes Socrates from the sophists by differences in character and moral intention."[7] I argue that Socrates exemplifies a method of appropriate education, in

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[3] Brill, *Plato on the Limits,* 4.
[4] Brill, *Plato on the Limits*, 4.
[5] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 58.
[6] Baracchi, "The 'Inconceivable Happiness,'" 272.
[7] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, 1.

contrast to the sophists, through humility, dialogue, and his claims to ignorance. His λόγος is directed outward for the sake of others.

The context of this dissertation is the ancient Greek practice of sophistry and its effect on the fledgling Athenian democracy. A sophistical education in persuasive speaking could only be afforded by the wealthy, and citizens would send their sons to a sophist so they can learn how to be persuasive in the Assembly and influence the decision of the democratic body in their favor. I aim to determine whether or not that inequality in education serves to undermine democracy or if it in fact strengthens the Athenian πόλις. On the one hand, there exists an inequality based on wealth, but on the other hand, education in ἀρετή, which is what the sophists claim to teach, and while it remains to be seen whether or not they succeed in delivering an education in ἀρετή, cannot be a detriment to the πόλις. I conclude that there does exist a way to improve the πόλις by means of ἀρετή that does not rely on wealth inequality: Socratic philosophy. Socrates fully embodies the democratic value of equality and the virtuous improvement of the Athenians in 1) his refusal to flatter his interlocutors which can serve to disguise the truth, 2) his adherence to dialectic in which interlocutors converse as equals with the aim of uncovering the truth together, and 3) his commitment to beginning in ignorance rather than an assumed knowledge of the truth.

Chapter One will paint a backdrop of education in the ancient Greek world as well as the newly restored democratic government in fifth century Athens. I will argue that democracy and a moral education are inextricably linked. Democracy makes teaching ἀρετή necessary for the welfare of the πόλις as a whole, not just for one's individual private matters. In essence, the δῆμος has a certain *responsibility* to learn the skill of self-governance. In a democracy, laws, not the monarch, rule. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of Pericles' Funeral Oration recorded by Thucydides to articulate these points. Ancient Athenians valued education beyond a mere

learning of a τέχνη from an expert because they wanted themselves and their sons to be successful speakers in the ἐκκλησία. This is precisely what the sophists claimed to be able to provide. Sophistry was an emerging profession in Athens in which typically foreign teachers would wander around Greece offering to teach the youth how to make the weaker λόγος the stronger and defend their positions in the Assembly.[8] Those who study with a sophist become the most persuasive and thus the most powerful in the Assembly.

Before turning to the *Protagoras,* Chapter Two is a discussion of some truly remarkable sophistical λόγοι in Plato's *Euthydemus.* The dialogue opens with Crito confiding in Socrates that he is unsure how to educate his son, Critobulus. Socrates has just come back from his get-together with two brothers, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who have the ability to refute either side of any point, and they learned this skill very quickly. Socrates feigns enchantment and awe at the pair, and he tries to convince Crito to accompany him to learn from the brothers and to bring along the young Critobulus. I will argue that Socrates wants Crito and Critobulus to attend lessons with the sophist brothers in order to expose the youth to sophistry so that he can show them an example of what *not* to do and also how to recognize sophistical λόγοι later on in the Assembly. Socrates calls on the Athenian youth to be on their guard against such tricks, particularly when the stakes are much higher than simply meeting casually with a pair of sophists in the Lyceum. Sophistry is dangerous to those who cannot recognize the λόγοι for what they are: mere tricks designed to deceive.

Next I will determine what skill it is that the brothers, and sophists in general, possess. Chapter Three will outline what is meant by persuasive speech and rhetoric, as discussed in the *Protagoras*. Sophists teach ῥητορική: persuasive λόγος. Rhetoric can most truthfully be

[8] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 101.

understood as a skill that all human beings have the capability to develop. This is precisely Socrates' first λόγος for the unteachability of virtue in the *Protagoras* (319b-e). Some people cultivate this rhetorical ability more fully than others. Those that are "skilled" or "talented" in rhetoric have focused their learning and attention on the craft of speaking persuasively from a sophist. They manifest the skill in ἔργον. Learning rhetoric becomes problematic because only those who can afford the sophists' tuition can learn rhetoric. This inequality in education, I argue, serves to undermine democracy. Those who can afford the highest level of education will be the most persuasive and influence the democratic body in their own favor, even if it is not in the interest of the common good. Thus, wealth inequality leads to education inequality, which in turn further exacerbates wealth inequality. The conclusion I will draw in this chapter is that rhetoric cannot be judged to be noble or base in itself. Since it is merely a skill, a power, which everyone has a natural propensity for, it is only the τέλος of rhetoric that has value, not the actual power of rhetoric itself.

The question then becomes, in what way *should* one transform the skill into ἔργον? In Chapter Four, I discuss a concrete example, namely, Plato's *Apology*, to see exactly what influence sophistry and Socratic philosophy can have on the πόλις. Socrates is concerned for τό ἀγαθόν. If he improves the Athenian youth, they will in turn improve Athens as a whole, which consequently improves Socrates' own life as a citizen of Athens. And yet we cannot ignore that it seems as though Socrates sometimes did actually corrupt the youth. Plato is presumably the success story, but some of Socrates' followers, like Alcibiades, Critias, and Charmides, sustained controversial political careers. Why were some of Socrates' followers able to see the import of virtue but others were not?

Lastly, in order to understand exactly the supposed threat that Socrates poses to Athens, that is, the reason he is brought to trial, I will offer an analysis of the older and the newer charges brought against Socrates. On the surface, one could argue that they are the same charges: ὕβρις and teaching that ὕβρις to others. I argue, however, that there is a crucial distinction between them. The older charges, that Socrates is passing judgment on things in the heavens and below the earth, that he makes the weaker λόγος the stronger, and that he teaches these things to others, address the effect Socrates has on the accusers themselves – the νομοί of the established citizenry. I claim that Socrates is charged with teaching the Athenians to question their own way of life and motivations. In sum, the older charges look at the effect that Socrates had on those who uphold and benefit from the conventional hierarchy of power in the πόλις, which Socrates calls into question. Socrates is accused of teaching the Athenians to question the virtue of their own way of living and convincing them that the truth of their beliefs is unfounded.

The newer official charges, corruption of the youth and not believing in the gods, however, concern the effect that Socrates had on the accusers' sons. That is to say, Socrates is accused of changing the attitude of the *successors* of Athenian noblemen from a regard for what is expedient and useful to a regard for what is good and right. Socrates calls for the youth to question the ἀρετή of their fathers. The motivation behind the accusations has shifted. The older accusations are concerned with what is χρήσιμον (Socrates is questioning their emphasis on wealth and power), whereas the newer charges focus on what is ἀγαθόν (Socrates is actively trying to corrupt the ἀρετή of the youth).

In Chapter Five, I will then return to the *Protagoras* to reveal the effects of sophistical teaching on the individual. I argue that sophistry is prevalent in Athens because the sophists satisfy the Athenians' desire for political power and persuasiveness in the Assembly. In a democracy,

everyone has an equal voice; everyone is allowed to speak, regardless of birth, wealth, or stature. Furthermore, each Athenian wants to persuade the rest of the δῆμος that they should act in his own personal self-interest. The consequences of citizens wishing to persuade their peers is that there is the potential that they are willing to learn the unjust λόγος for their own benefit. That which is useful, not that which is true, could potentially guide one's decisions. Λόγος can be persuasive even when used selfishly and viciously, if one has been taught how to do so.

My interpretation of *Protagoras* entails that rhetoric, as a δύναμις, can be used for a virtuous or a vicious τέλος by way of its being put into ἔργον. The sophists teach the ability to cultivate both the κρείττων λόγος and ἥττων λόγος, and it is up to the student to decide which to use in the Assembly. To put it in Protagoras' own words, sophists teach "good counsel concerning one's own affairs—how he might best manage his own household—and, concerning the affairs of the city, how he might be the most powerful (δυνατώτατος) in carrying out and speaking about the city's affairs" (318e-319a). Sophistry can be regarded as teaching a set of rhetorical tricks that can take the form of any λόγος, regardless of ἀλήθεια. The sophist has no concern for the pupil's excellence (ἀρετή), only his success in the ἐκκλησία.

Finally, I will outline what I argue is true philosophical παιδεία – Socratic elenchus that is directed outward, toward the improvement of others. Socrates exemplifies exactly this type of education in the *Protagoras* through three distinct moments: 1) his refusal to flatter the audience, 2) his adherence to question and answer, and 3) his claims to ignorance. The difference between philosophical and sophistical παιδεία concerns the attitude and intention of the teacher. I argue that we see philosophical and Socratic education on display in the *Protagoras*. Socrates speaks to Protagoras, in front of an audience, but his initial goal in visiting Callias' house was to educate Hippocrates. Furthermore, the topic of the dialogue itself is the teachability of virtue.

In the *Protagoras*, Socrates refuses to flatter Protagoras but instead rebukes him for not speaking well. Additionally, the interlude at 336b-338e comprises this very theme of flattery. Moreover, by the end of the conversation, Socrates has been accused multiple times of only being a lover of victory. Socrates is not going to spare the feelings of his interlocutor for the sake of comfort. Secondly, Socrates has a strict adherence to elenchus. The above-mentioned interlude occurs as a result of Socrates threatening to leave the discussion because Protagoras keeps trying to make long speeches instead of short questions and answers. Protagoras' rhetorical skill is put on display in long monologues, but Socrates refuses to accept this method.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, I argue that philosophical education must begin from a position of ignorance, rather than presumed knowledge of the conclusion before the λόγος even gets underway. According to McCoy, "philosophy is not the art of discovering the truth, to be followed by a distinct art of rhetorical persuasion. For Socrates, the philosopher by his nature is always incomplete in knowledge and continues to learn about the truth through conversation. The philosopher's soul is drawn closer to the truth through speeches, particularly through speeches between friends."[9] Rather than assuming knowledge, the philosopher begins in ignorance.

In this respect, the *Protagoras* takes a curious and unique stance. First, even before Socrates meets Protagoras, he already has an idea of what sophistry is, and he warns Hippocrates to be wary of the sophists. Of course, Socrates does ask Protagoras to define sophistry in his typical fashion, but Socrates arrived at Callias' house already with an idea of what sophists claim to be able to teach. Additionally, Socrates makes an assertion early in the dialogue that ἀρετή is not teachable before investigating what ἀρετή is, what teaching means, and so forth. This does not

[9] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric,* 175.

seem like the behavior of someone who claims, even if ironically, to have no wisdom – Socrates has already made judgments before investigating the matter thoroughly.

And yet the *Protagoras* involves another unusual Socratic moment as well: Socrates changes his mind and reverses his position. By the end of the dialogue, ἀρετή is reduced to a type of knowledge, and knowledge is determined to be teachable. I argue that this reversal of position highlights Socratic ignorance most explicitly. Socrates is actively willing and able to change his mind. He rejoices in being refuted. Protagoras, on the other hand, is so embarrassed and upset that he is unable to complete the λόγος; Socrates has to finish the conversation for him. These three moments, refusal to flatter, dialogue, and beginning in ignorance, define the philosophical rhetoric that Socrates embodies, and it is a truthful rhetoric that is directed outward – toward the betterment of others. Educators must be turned toward the good in order for rhetoric to be truthful. Otherwise, one might just as well be a sophist.

1.0 CHAPTER 1 DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION IN FIFTH CENTURY ATHENS

In the *Protagoras*, Socrates develops a λόγος to corroborate the assumption that wisdom is required for governance. Socrates concludes that the person who possesses πολιτικὴ τέχνη is the wisest. That is to say, the person with the political art should govern. Drawing from these assumptions about governance in the *Protagoras,* a few basic principles can be distilled into the following claims. First, those who are best should govern. To say that someone who is the best should be governed by someone who is worse would not make sense. This assumption becomes controversial in the way one determines value: what makes someone the best? Thus, I want to make a second assumption: in terms of governance, the wisest is the best. This assertion borders on a tautology. The difficulty arises in how one defines the political art and determines who possesses this wisdom.

This chapter will serve as a backdrop for the rest of this dissertation because it will orient us within the ancient Greek political and educational context. Democracy makes teaching ἀρετή necessary for the πόλις as a whole, not just for the private matters of individual citizens. Every citizen has an equal voice in determining the affairs of the πόλις, and as a result, every citizen should be educated in πολιτικὴ τέχνη. No longer are citizens only responsible for their own households, but additionally they are responsible for the wellbeing of the πόλις as a whole – citizens must be concerned with individual success and also the common good. In contrast, in a monarchy or aristocracy, select individuals have the decision-making power, so an education in πολιτικὴ τέχνη is only necessary for the ruling few. Thus, in this chapter, I argue that democracy was the catalyst for sophistry, which claims to teach πολιτικὴ τέχνη to everyone who is willing to learn.

In this chapter I will first give an outline of fifth century Athenian democracy. Then I will turn to a discussion of the nature of education and sophistry in Athens, and I will end this chapter with Pericles' Funeral Oration in order to make sense of this great responsibility that has been placed on Athenian citizens, namely, the responsibility to create and uphold just and excellent laws. I will argue that implicit in this responsibility is a sense of community or togetherness that is also unique to democracy. Every citizen shares the responsibility for the excellence of the πόλις; each shares in the *responsibility of self-governance*.

1.1 DEMOCRACY: A RESPONSIBILITY AND A CURSE

The central principle guiding democracy is that every citizen has an equal say in the governance of the land. The Greek δημοκρατία expresses exactly this: the power (κρατός) belongs to the citizens (δῆμος). If the best should rule, and if we determine that the best are the wisest, then in a democracy, it is assumed that every citizen, if he or she is civic-minded and cares to take part in the process of democratic self-governance, is equally wise with respect to governance. Every citizen is given an equal opportunity to speak, to be heard, and to persuade the rest of the δῆμος in the Assembly. The majority opinion becomes legislation, and the minority agrees to follow the legislation.

In contrast, in a monarchy, ideally the monarch is deemed the best, but even if s/he is not, the subjects still have no say in the matter; the subjects must follow the ruling of the monarch. Theoretically, the monarch is the wisest and that justifies his or her rule. While Brill phrases this in terms of the tyrant in the *Republic*, I think the point can still be made about monarchs in general: "the tyrant treats the world as containing only objects for his potential consumption."[1] The

[1] Brill, *Plato on the Limits*, 133.

monarch's role is to use his or her subjects as tokens in order to make the πόλις function well. The subjects are to obey and not question their place within the πόλις as followers, as extensions of the monarch's will. Ideally, the monarch would rule benevolently, but since there are no checks on the monarch's power, s/he, paradoxically the majority of one, could put into effect policy that would benefit him or herself, potentially at the expense of the subjects.

Additionally, in an aristocracy, the minority of the few elite rule over the many. Aristocracy was perhaps the most familiar form of government in fifth century Athens, and it was not easy for the nobility and the wealthy elite to transition to democratic rule. According to Yunis,

> On the simplest level, members of the wealthy, landowning class of noble ancestry often found democracy intolerable, if not actually threatening. Before the consolidation of the democracy in the late sixth and early fifth centuries, this class had enjoyed a monopoly on political power. For several generations after the democracy was fully established, they still found it unacceptable that common people—those without distinction in wealth, status, or lineage—should have a significant, let alone a preponderant share of political power. For some, it was scarcely conceivable that anyone outside the traditional ruling class *could* govern at all.[2]

To Yunis' list of attributes that the common people go without: wealth, status, or lineage, I would add *education.* One cannot change one's lineage or status, but wealth and education are potentially, or at least theoretically, within one's control. The problem arises with how and to whom education is delivered. I will focus on precisely this problem: the interdependence of wealth, education, and political power in fifth century Athens. This interdependence breeds inequality, and I will show exactly how they are related and how they foster an atmosphere of inequality and anti-democratic sentiment, all within the guise of democratic activism.

1.2 ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

Democracy was by no means solidified as the reigning political system in fifth century Athens. When the First Peloponnesian War ended in 451, Pericles established a democratic

[2] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 38.

citizenship law, ushering in the Thirty Years Peace with Sparta. But upon the death of Pericles from the plague in 429, the path was left open for the Four Hundred Oligarchs to reign in 411. They ruled antidemocratically, concentrating the power in the hands of the Four Hundred. This rule did not last long, as democracy was restored in 410, but political strife was rampant in Athens. Partially as a result, Athens was defeated by Sparta and the Thirty Tyrants took over rule in 404, and again democracy was abolished for the sake of Thirty tyrannical rulers. Only one year later, Athenian democracy again was restored in 403. All these changes in regime cultivate an atmosphere of hesitancy, suspicion, and political weariness among the Athenians. When Socrates was put on trial in 399, there was no guarantee that democracy was going to survive. Thus, democratic values could not and were not taken for granted among the Athenians. Additionally, anti-democratic opinion was rampant, since it was the democratic government, championed by Pericles, that led Athens into the Peloponnesian war in the first place.[3]

Yunis names two decisive moments that facilitated democratic rule in Athens: 1) the expansion of Athenian naval power in the mid-fifth century allowed for lower class citizens to contribute to the common good by manning the fleet, and 2) institutional changes in 462 put the political and legal power in the hands of the citizens themselves on an equal and democratic basis.[4] Policy and legal interpretation were put in the hands of the δῆμος. The lower classes were able to work toward the improvement of the common good; they were included in the political community. Previously, all civic duties were relegated to the upper classes through appointed positions, rather than by lot. Additionally, strict term limits for positions on the council and magisterial positions caused a wide distribution of service among the citizens, so the poor were

[3] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 59.
[4] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 3.

able/forced to participate in the democratic process.[5] The underlying implication of letting the lower classes participate in the governance of the πόλις is that they are wise enough to govern properly. That is, given their new level of involvement, every citizen is now assumed to be potentially able to contribute whatever wisdom he might possess, and at the very least, all citizens are being recognized as deserving of a say in the life of the πόλις. This is precisely Socrates' first λόγος in the *Protagoras* to show that virtue is not teachable (319b-319e). Socrates begins with the claim that all Greeks already assume that Athenians are wise, at least in a loose sense. For, the Assembly listens to the advice of experts on matters that pertain to technical skills, such as ship building or construction projects. If a layperson were to advise the Assembly about such a skill, instead of the expert, that person would be ridiculed. However, everyone is free to offer advice on city management; no one is ridiculed but instead treated with respect when the Assembly debates city management. The implication is that there are no experts or laypeople of city management. Therefore, city management, which the Athenians establish is a part of virtue, is not teachable, since everyone already possesses it. Everyone is equally best at ruling.

Socrates offers this λόγος as a justification for the fact that everyone could enter into debate in the Assembly. That is to say, every citizen could mount the platform, start speaking, and become a ῥήτορ.[6] Yunis associates rhetoric with debate in the Assembly. Democracy requires equal listeners, and every citizen's voice is given *equal* respect. That is to say, the debate floor is open to every citizen. According to Yunis, "A herald signaled the start of deliberation by proclaiming 'Who wishes to speak?' Any citizen could volunteer to mount the speaker's platform and from there to move a proposal or address the audience on any proposal under consideration."[7] Anyone

[5] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 6.
[6] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 9.
[7] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 8.

and everyone, provided one is a property-owning male, is free to speak *and to be heard* in the Assembly. While traditional social and economic divisions did not disappear, full legal and political citizenship was held by all Athenian men, regardless of familial nobility or wealth.[8] Since power was held by every citizen in common, Yunis concludes that there was no ruling elite of any kind in Athens.[9] And yet Yunis adds a caveat immediately after making this grand statement of equality. He admits that "through much of the fifth century the leading *rhētores* mainly came from noble Athenian families. Toward the end of the fifth century and through the fourth, noble birth ceased to distinguish this group, but they were still predominantly wealthy, having either inherited wealth or made it themselves."[10] Yunis gives no explanation for this phenomenon, namely, the shift first from truly equal political opportunity, to the noble and wealthy acting as rhetors, to only the wealthy holding the position of persuasive power. I will explore the reasoning behind the gap between the theory: everyone is treated equally in a democracy, and reality: the wealthy and nobility *do* indeed rule, and they do so *through* the democratic process. Rather than attempting to subvert the democratic process, something that is supposed to be fair and free, they use it to their own advantage. The reality is that some citizens are more powerful than others. Wealthy citizens realized they could become more powerful if they manipulated their peers through persuasive and eloquent rhetoric. As a result, instead of the wisest policy receiving the majority vote, the most persuasive policy garnered the support of the majority.

1.3 EDUCATION IN DEMOCRATIC ATHENS

[8] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 4.
[9] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 4.
[10] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 10-11.

Democracy made political education necessary. Political decisions must be made from clear judgment, deliberation, and intelligence.[11] The δῆμος must be informed about the state of affairs regarding the policy they are deliberating, if they are to choose the correct option. For Yunis, "since the *dēmos* make the decisions in a democracy, the ability of the *dēmos* to make the right decisions, and thereby serve their own interests, is completely dependent on the extent to which *they* acquire or at least gain access to political expertise."[12] In other words, the δῆμος must learn the political art. They need to learn how to govern. The problem arises when persuasive speech becomes operative. In addition to the δῆμος needing an education, the rhetors also need to be able to persuade the δῆμος and make the policy clear.[13] Now, instead of the expert, those that know how to speak persuasively became the most powerful. Citizens could learn how to speak persuasively from a sophist.

In the fifth century, the sophistical profession was nascent and thus was difficult to define. Perhaps Plato simply invented the terminology himself in order to separate rhetoric, sophistry, and philosophy.[14] According to Kerferd, the term sophist was applied to poets, musicians, rhapsodes, Presocratic philosophers, and traveling teachers of ἀρετή.[15] The term sophist could apply to anyone who is wise. McCoy defines the sophists in the following way: "more narrowly, teachers of excellence who took fees for their services as they traveled; and, more widely, intellectuals who put a priority on the value of speeches for living well; or, most broadly of all, a 'wise person.'"[16] Sophists are concerned with ἀρετή, with wisdom, and with speaking well. Here we see the true blending of the private and the public that is integral to democracy. One must learn to live well for

[11] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 40.
[12] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 128.
[13] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 55.
[14] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 7.
[15] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 24.
[16] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 7-8.

the sake of one's private affairs, but one must learn to speak well about ἀρετή in order to have an excellent democratic society. Ideally, sophists would make the city more democratic – they offered this education to all.

Whether or not the sophists actually taught ἀρετή still remains to be seen, and this question also hinges on how we define ἀρετή. According to Kerferd, ἀρετή "comprised all those qualities in a man which made for success in Greek society and which could confidently be expected to secure the admiration of a man's fellow-citizens, followed in many cases by substantial material rewards."[17] This definition is couched entirely within the context of the political realm. While I am not convinced that Kerferd's definition of ἀρετή is wholly correct, this is likely the definition of ἀρετή that the sophists themselves held. They claimed to teach their students how to be excellent political citizens.

Kerferd asserts that without Athens, the sophistic movement would not have taken place at all.[18] I argue that the sophistic movement would not have taken place at all without the existence of Athenian *democracy*. Democracy meant that one needs to concern oneself with governance, and the sophists were the ones that claimed to make this possible. The sophists contributed to the education of the masses: "they offered an expensive product invaluable to those seeking a career in politics and public life generally, namely a kind of selective secondary education, intended to follow on after the basic instruction received at school."[19] Young Athenian boys would attend school in language, literature, arithmetic, and athletics, and this education would be completed at about the age of fourteen. Primary school systems were widely established, and while attendance was common, there is no evidence that attendance was mandatory for all young boys.[20] Thus, a

[17] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 131.
[18] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 15.
[19] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 17.
[20] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 37.

sophistical education, if one so desired further higher-level education, would be appropriate for someone around the age of fourteen or older. It was meant as a secondary education, after one has learned the core intellectual pursuits of math and literature. Instead, the sophists claimed to teach the Athenians how to be successful political actors. The sophists taught and discussed linguistics, moral and political doctrine, theological and natural philosophy, literary analysis, and poetic exegesis.[21] Most significantly, however, the sophists taught others how to cultivate the rhetorical skill of speaking persuasively. The type of person who would send his son to a sophist would be someone who is looking to become more influential in political society, someone looking for political prestige, or someone looking to either become or remain a member of the Athenian elite. Kerferd even goes so far as to assert that the widening of even primary school education was not popular with the aristocratic class.[22]

According to Yunis, the implications of the rhetorical skill being made public are that "rhetoric enables the uneducated nonexpert (the *rhētōr*) to appear to the uneducated nonexpert (the *dēmos*) to be more authoritative than the educated expert."[23] Rhetoric serves the πόλις by allowing nonexperts to speak persuasively to the δῆμος in order to bring about policy change. This is a useful service, but like any skill, it can be used for both good and bad ends. Kerferd articulates the traditional charges against the sophists in the following way: either the sophists are not serious intellectual thinkers with no place in the history of philosophy, or their teachings were thoroughly immoral.[24] Either the sophists do not care at all about what they teach and have nothing of interest to offer, or what they do care about teaching is immoral and not fit to be learned. And yet it was popular to send one's son to a sophist. Athenians held an ambivalent attitude toward the sophists

[21] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 174.
[22] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 37.
[23] Yunis*, Taming Democracy*, 128.
[24] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 6.

that is not easy to understand. The sophists were at the forefront of both social and political change.[25] They were both responding to political and social change in Athens and also at the forefront of bringing about that change. It makes sense that Athenians would be ambivalent toward these agents of change and at the same time reactionaries to change.

1.4 PERICLES

In order to understand the role that democracy played in bringing about the need for an education in self-governance, I will now turn to the role that Pericles played in establishing democracy in Athens. My reasons for doing so are the following. First, Pericles is the orator *par excellence* in classical Athens. He brokered the peace with Sparta, spearheaded the efforts to build and establish public services in Athens as well as places of worship, meeting buildings, public monuments, and so forth. He was an early leader in Athens' newly founded democracy, and he is known perhaps most for his Funeral Oration, recounted by Thucydides. He was at the forefront of Athens' shift to democratic rule. Of course, Pericles did not invent democracy, nor was he the first democrat in Athens; democracy did not simply appear overnight. Rather, it was a gradual shift. Pericles was central to the effort of leading the democracy, which could easily fall into anarchy without careful guidance. Thucydides even goes so far as to admit, famously, that Athens was a democracy only nominally, but it was in fact governed by the first citizen (2.65). That is to say, Pericles held the executive power in Athens, despite the democratic body. He rebuilt Athens in the aftermath of the Persian destruction, and the focus was on *public* buildings, temples, meeting places, and so forth. His main efforts were to establish an Athenian *community* of political equals, rather than individual estates. Even Pericles' temporary political exile points to his trust in

[25] Kerferd, *The Sophistical Movement,* 22.

democracy. He accepted the will of the people as law, over and above his own personal interests. Pericles was put on trial in 429 by angry citizens who accused him of mismanaging naval expeditions and also bringing plague to Athenian shores. Only a year later, in 429, Pericles was forgiven and re-elected to a military position. Athenian citizens did not treat Pericles worse at the end of his career than they did at the beginning of his career, despite his political exile.[26] Pericles was still held in high regard by the populace, despite the fiasco of the Peloponnesian War.

Furthermore, Pericles and Protagoras were contemporaries and likely friends.[27] They each respected each other's craft. Pericles is given a unique stance with respect to Plato's dialogue *Protagoras* as well. The dialogue takes place at Callias' house in the Piraeus, and Callias is Pericles' sons' half-brother. These sons, Paralus and Xanthippus, are also present for the conversations in the *Protagoras*. Even Alcibiades, Pericles' ward, is present. He is mentioned in the first line of the *Protagoras* in the context of growing up and becoming a man and citizen in his own right. Lastly, Pericles is used as an example in the λόγοι of the dialogue itself: if virtue is in fact teachable, then why was noble Pericles, who had mastered πολιτικὴ τέχνη, unable to teach his own base sons πολιτικὴ τέχνη?

The problem hinges on the democratic ideal of democracy and the inequality in education opportunity that is based on wealth inequality. A sophistical education is not cheap. For Yunis, "Pericles advocated a democratic meritocracy that would submerge the dichotomy of many and few."[28] I wish to question Yunis on this point. A meritocracy only stands if everyone has an equal opportunity to enjoy the advantages put forth in a democracy. When education is delivered in an unequal way, a meritocracy is simply not present.

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[26] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 148.
[27] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 18.
[28] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 113, 133.

In addition to Pericles, it is also necessary to consider the true author of Pericles' Funeral Oration: Thucydides. The only record we have of the speech is recorded by Thucydides, so it is impossible to know how much Thucydides added or subtracted from Pericles' speech. According to Yunis, "Thucydides concerned himself with rhetoric and the deliberative institutions of the *polis* because that is where the power in the *polis* lay."[29] Thucydides himself is also addressing the Athenian δῆμος, so it is in his best interest as well to champion democracy, through the mouth of Pericles. Tyranny is a threat to Athenian stability and prosperity, so Thucydides must act as a force for promoting the efficacy of the democratic procedure. But the point still stands that the Funeral Oration is an extraordinary mixture of political instruction and mass persuasion.[30] In holding Pericles up as a hero championing Athenian democracy and freedom, Thucydides too is hoping to persuade the Athenians to maintain their democracy.

1.5 THE FUNERAL ORATION

In this speech, Pericles addresses the Athenian public in 431/430 to mourn and eulogize those who lost their lives in the first year of the Peloponnesian war. This is a public oration, and in it he begins to establish a democratic tone that Athenians have come to embrace. The first key element of this speech is that it was a legal requirement to offer words of honor on behalf of the dead. In essence, it is communal mourning necessitated by law. Values shared by the community are integrated into the legal realm. I argue that this is at heart a democratic quality. The leader, Pericles, legally must eulogize the citizens because Pericles too is a citizen; he (qua leader) is not above the law. This law is not new, but it is telling that Pericles addresses the law at the outset of

[29] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 120.
[30] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 81.

his speech. He does so in a puzzling manner, however. Instead of welcoming the opportunity to speak honorably of the dead, Pericles remarks about how awkward he feels:

> For myself, I should have thought that the worth which had displayed itself in deeds would be sufficiently rewarded by honors also shown by deeds; such as you now see in this funeral prepared at the people's cost. And I could have wished that the reputations of many brave men were not to be imperiled in the mouth of a single individual, to stand or fall according as he spoke well or ill (2.35).

Pericles feels uncomfortable that the honorable nature of the deeds of war heroes should be subject to whether or not he speaks well or badly. Instead, good deeds should be honored by further good actions. Furthermore, the funeral is held at the expense of the people themselves. Of course, a monarch also collects taxes, but s/he has sole control over how those funds are used. In a democracy, the citizens themselves debate how to spend the funds. As a result, the people themselves should be the ones to eulogize the Athenian heroes, not one specific person. Here Pericles walks a fine line – he is "one of the people," and yet he is also the leader of the people.

The main theme of the speech is revealed in these opening lines: power is no longer concentrated in the hands of a few. Rather, every citizen enjoys equal rights before the law and is free. And yet Pericles also acknowledges that his words have true power. He reverts to a certain modesty – his words should not have the power to determine the fate of anyone's soul. And yet he uses the opportunity to speak to the public for the sake of determining the fate of democratic values. As such, Pericles, courageously, is deferring to the established law and by extension, deferring to his fellow equal citizens, rather than flaunting his singular authority: "however, since our ancestors have stamped this custom [public eulogy] with their approval, it becomes my duty to obey the law and to try to satisfy your several wishes and opinions as best I may" (2.35). Thucydides asserts that Pericles knows that the people would not simply follow orders but what they thought would be best for them. This is why they were persuaded by Pericles' speech – not because he is an authority figure *per se*, but because he persuaded them that he could foresee the better from the

worse when things were very unclear.[31] Pericles was a calm and convincing orator, and as a result, the public respected him. Pericles does not rely on his position of authority but rather the content of his words. Here we begin to see the link between democracy and rhetoric that I believe is crucial for understanding the importance of sophistry in Athens and any democratic community. One must convince the Assembly with words, not sheer authority. As I shall show below, this is the main point of Pericles' Funeral Oration. For Yunis,

> The grandeur of the funeral oration, through which the Athenian utopia is indelibly associated with Pericles, completes the picture of Periclean authority Thucydides has been constructing: his leadership made Athens great and his eloquence fittingly described that greatness. […] Pericles is highly esteemed by his *polis*; he, his *polis*, and his policy are wise; and he is truly devoted to the welfare of the *polis*.[32]

The Funeral Oration blurs the lines between political power garnered as a result of wise policy and a result of persuasive speech.

After establishing his position in giving the eulogy – that he does not feel adequate but yet the law demands that he eulogize – Pericles invokes the ancestors: "I shall begin with our ancestors: it is both just and proper that they should have the honor of the first mention on an occasion like the present [Ἄρξομαι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν προγόνων πρῶτον· δίκαιον γὰρ αὐτοῖς καὶ πρέπον δὲ ἅμα ἐν τῷ τοιῷδε τὴν τιμὴν ταύτην τῆς μνήμης δίδοσθαι]" (2.36). He begins with *our* ancestors. Pericles invokes the common ancestors of those present, not his personal ancestors, who would be descendants of great men, perhaps even gods. He praises both the distant ancestors and the immediate forefathers of the Athenians present for their role in handing down "the empire which we now possess, and spared no pains to be able to leave their acquisitions to us of the present generation" (2.36). In doing so, Pericles cultivates a sense of commonality – he, the leader, and the citizens share a common ancestry. In praising the common ancestors, Pericles brings to the

[31] Tracy, *Pericles: A Sourcebook*, 57.
[32] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 72.

fore the democratic values of togetherness and shared responsibility. The democratic citizens are now responsible for their own fate. In this sense, the stakes for democracy are very high – the δῆμος unilaterally controls its own fate; there is no superior authority tasked with creating and upholding laws.

Pericles then addresses the demographic of the audience – they are mostly younger Athenians in the prime of life who are active in both the public and private realms. That is, these are citizens who have directly benefitted from their ancestors, but they also experience a certain removal from them, due to age. Pericles says "there are few parts of our dominions that have not been augmented by those of us here, who are still more or less in the vigor of life; while the mother country has been furnished by us with everything that can enable her to depend on her own resources whether for war or for peace" (2.36). Here Pericles ties together the past and the present with the aim of persuading the audience to maintain and revive their efforts at improving public life. Athens has been furnished by the efforts of those past and those present. He urges those present not to lose hope and not to become dejected. Athens, as a motherland, has provided for the people, but only because of what the people themselves put into it, not because of some wise monarch. Pericles is appealing to the citizens' sense of accomplishment and pride in order to persuade them to continue their democratic efforts. Furthermore, Pericles also invokes the shared land – all Athenians share a common motherland. In doing so, Pericles instills a further sense of community on the Athenian citizens – each must care for Athens as siblings caring for their mother.

Pericles then outlines the specifics of civic engagement: "what the form of government under which our greatness grew, what the national habits out of which it sprang; these are questions which I may try to solve before I proceed to my eulogy upon these men; since I think this to be a subject upon which on the present occasion a speaker may properly dwell, and to which the whole

assemblage, whether citizens or foreigners, may listen with advantage" (2.36). Of course, those being eulogized are extolled for their valor in battle. Pericles does not dispute this point, but he does shift the focus of the eulogy slightly from individual military success to the conditions upon which that courageous valor is made possible, namely, the "government under which our greatness grew." It seems odd for Pericles to discuss forms of government in a eulogy for those who lost their lives in the war. Pericles is purposefully extolling democracy above individual honor in order to persuade the Athenians to put their trust in democracy and, by extension, Pericles himself. His speech is persuasive because he places the emphasis on the communal aspect of civic life rather than the success of any individual. The superficial reason for doing so, and Pericles does address this slightly in the next few lines of his speech, is that those standing before him listening to the eulogy may suffer from survivor's guilt. Pericles is speaking on behalf of those who died valiantly in the war, and those who did survive, those listening to the speech, may feel as though they are cowards and unworthy of praise. By emphasizing their contribution to Athenian greatness, Pericles is able to relieve some of the guilt the survivors may feel. I argue, however, that his reasons lie deeper. Pericles has a vested interest in democracy succeeding, so it is imperative that he not alienate those present and also praise them for their contribution to Athenian flourishing.

Pericles continues: "our constitution does not copy the laws of neighboring states; we are rather a pattern to others than imitators ourselves" (2.37). Democracy is a social-political experiment. The democratic body was made up of about 50,000 citizens, and Yunis calls the task of establishing and maintaining a democracy with such a large body audacious and merely an experiment.[33] Pericles is complimenting the Athenians on their ingenuity and inventiveness. All

[33] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 1, 3.

this praise aids in his attempt to persuade the Athenians that they should continue to work towards an established democracy. Pericles specifies what is so unique about the Athenian constitution:

> Its administration favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences; if to social standing, advancement in public life falls to reputation for capacity, class considerations not being allowed to interfere with merit; nor again does poverty bar the way, if a man is able to serve the state he is not hindered by the obscurity of his condition (2.37).

Here Pericles outlines what democracy means in its essence. The government favors the many, not the few, or single, in the case of a monarchy. Everyone is equal under the law. Social standing, class, or wealth, ideally speaking, should hold no sway in a democracy. Thus, everyone is free to participate in the construction and upholding of the laws.

An important caveat needs to be made at this point. Roughly eighty-five percent of the population was excluded from the benefits of democracy, so we have to accept these democratic values of freedom and equality with reservations. By limiting citizenship so starkly, I argue that we can still call Athens a democracy if we keep in mind the narrowmindedness of the Athenian δῆμος. This narrowmindedness, however, is integral to the main premise of Athenian democracy: meritocracy. Pericles makes clear that merit is the deciding factor for political success, not class, wealth, and the like. How the Athenians determined merit, such that women and enslaved people were excluded, should be investigated.

Pericles then addresses the freedom that citizens can enjoy in democracy, particularly in contrast to a monarchy, and also distrust of neighbors: “The freedom which we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life. There, far from exercising a jealous surveillance over each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbor for doing what he likes […] But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens” (2.27). Citizens in a democracy are free to act without restraint, as long as it is lawful and does not hinder the freedom of others. The political implications for this tenet are vast. Since the δῆμος has responsibility for

determining and maintaining what is lawful, individual citizens merely had to persuade the δῆμος that their actions are not harmful, and individual desires of citizens could become the law of the land. Thus, it is in each citizen's best interests to learn how to be persuasive. No longer can citizens rely on a strong central governmental force to control their household. Rather, a democratic citizen is free to run his household however he sees fit. Pericles extolls this as a freedom, but with that freedom belongs a responsibility that is unique to democracy – self-governance. Self-governance requires knowledge of the political art. The sophists claimed to teach this particular skill. Thus, democracy makes sophistry possible, and widespread education in ἀρετή is a uniquely democratic phenomenon.

Pericles continues his speech by praising Athenian public leisure, such as festivals, games, public sacrifices, and the like, which serves to further build a sense of community among the δῆμος. He then asserts that Athenian military success is due to the nature of the citizens, not special training: "if we turn to our military policy, […] trusting less in system and policy than to the native spirit of our citizens; while in education, where our rivals from their very cradles by a painful discipline seek after manliness [ἀνδρεῖον], at Athens we live exactly as we please, and yet are just as ready to encounter every legitimate danger" (2.39). Pericles credits Athens' military success with the natural capacity of the citizens, not special training in manliness, in opposition to the Spartan regimen of vigorous training. It is crucial that Pericles mention that Athenians are naturally excellent so that he can defend democracy as the proper mode of governance, since Athenians enjoy "habits not of labor but of ease, and courage not of art but of nature" (2.39). If Athenian citizens were not all naturally excellent, then they would not be the best rulers. Instead, the chosen one or few should govern. In order for democracy to be tenable, this assumption cannot be questioned. Pericles is aware of this, so he defends that position in his funeral oration. It is natural

that Athenians are courageous, virtuous, and wise. Pericles is offering a justification for democratic rule.

The consequences of this natural ability, I argue, surround the crux of Pericles' speech.

> Our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters; for, unlike any other nation, we regard the citizen who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless, and we are able to judge proposals even if we cannot originate them; instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all (2.40).

Pericles asserts that the pride of Athens is her ordinary citizens, who, with both private and public interests, are the fair judges. Furthermore, anyone who ignores public life is useless, according to Pericles. He is in a sense shaming the citizens into public service. And more importantly, he causes pride in the citizens for their duty to the city, namely, the duty to participate in democratic debate and public services. Deliberation and reflection are positive attributes of democracy; they are not hindrances. This starkly contrasts political reality under a monarchy – the monarch's hesitance belies his or her wavering or unsureness. This is why Pericles is so insistent on this point – debate and differing opinions are to be encouraged, not done away with. It is not a sign of Athenian weakness but rather is its greatest strength.

In the following lines, Pericles' proves his earlier points about Athens' superiority by citing military victories, Athens' mercy and justice with respect to enemies, and shrewd business dealings (2.40-2.41). He then proceeds to explain why he takes such pride in his πόλις: "the admiration of the present and succeeding ages will be ours, […] and far from needing a Homer for our eulogist, or other of this craft […] we have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our daring, and everywhere, whether for evil or for good, have left imperishable monuments behind us" (2.41). The fame of Athenian greatness is a result of prosperity, military conquest, and excellence. This is the Athens for which the men Pericles is eulogizing died. There is no need for someone like Homer to extol the virtues of Athens; one simply needs to look around. Pericles built public

monuments with public funds. The time of his rule is known as the "Golden Age" of Athens. He is using this funeral oration as a way to justify the fledgling democracy that he has shaped.

Specifically, he is using rhetoric to strengthen in the Athenian citizens a sense of shame and victory, not on the backs of an aristocracy or elite few, but rather as a creation of their own making. In particular, those present should recognize the effort of those who died in the first year of the war: "none of these [the eulogized] allowed either wealth with its prospect of future enjoyment to unnerve his spirit, or poverty with its hope of a day of freedom and riches to tempt him to shrink from danger" (2.42). A democracy is effective only if the citizens are selfless and put the πόλις before their own personal interest. Pericles wants to instill in the Athenian citizens pride in democratic values, and he does so by heroizing the fallen soldiers. They died for Athens, for an Athens that they themselves built. Pericles invites the Athenians to take pride in their own self-made success. "You must yourselves realize the power of Athens, and feed your eyes upon her from day to day, till love of her fills your hearts; and then when all her greatness shall break upon you, you must reflect that it was by courage, sense of duty, and a keen feeling of honor in action that men were enabled to win all this" (2.43). To give one's life in battle for the sake of the common good is the most glorious contribution that one can offer for Athens. This is the chief difference that Pericles wants to impart onto the Athenians: the sacrifice is not made for the sake of an impersonal monarch who need not take into consideration the needs of the people; rather, it is for the sake of the δῆμος. It does not behoove the citizens to pay taxes to a government in which they have no say. Rather, these sacrifices of personal wealth, time, and perhaps even life, are only worthwhile when the decisions that led to those sacrifices were made by the ones offering the sacrifice.

Furthermore, Pericles encourages the citizens to make the sacrifice freely. Pericles offers an example: "these take as your model, and judging happiness to be the fruit of freedom and freedom of valor, never decline the dangers of war" (2.43). Pericles is championing democracy and freedom. Rather than fighting because a monarch demands it, Pericles calls the Athenian citizens to fight because them themselves have *created* what they are defending. Citizens in a democracy, not a monarch, share a certain responsibility for the wellbeing of the city. In his funeral oration, Pericles displays for the citizens how much they have gained through democracy. The reward of freedom is worth the sacrifice and responsibility of self-governance. Thucydides asserts that the people would not follow orders blindly but rather what they thought would be best for them, and for this reason, they were persuaded by Pericles' speech. Pericles' wisdom lies in his ability to foresee the better from the worse when things were still very unclear, and he can communicate his foresight to others.[34] Pericles is able to persuade the people because he appeals to their intellectual prowess. Athenians are not unthinking, and they pride themselves on the ability to think for themselves, rather than just blindly following a leader. They appreciate who has the best λόγος, or perhaps merely the most persuasive λόγος.

Thus, the desire to be able to speak persuasively is a uniquely democratic phenomenon. There is no need for the subjects of a monarchy or aristocracy to be persuasive, since the decisions are made without consulting the people. The risk is that the ruling elite will not make decisions in the interest of the common good of the people but rather decisions that benefit only the ruling elite. Yunis asserts that "if the right to decide policy were restricted to the wealthy, noble class, then that class would benefit themselves and harm the masses."[35] In other words, the ruling class would make laws that benefit the ruling class. The people have no choice but to follow the laws, and they

[34] Tracy, *Pericles: A Sourcebook and Reader*, 57.
[35] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 48.

have no ability to influence the ruling elite. Thus, an education in persuasive rhetoric would be useless without the opportunity provided by democracy to affect policy change. This is precisely what the sophists claimed to teach – πολιτικὴ τέχνη. Sophists claimed to teach their students the political art and also how to persuade others that they indeed possess the political art. If the wisest citizen cannot articulate to his fellow citizens that he is wise, his wisdom is useless. Thus, I argue that persuasive speech is a uniquely democratic phenomenon.

Our task now is to determine what precisely this skill, πολιτικὴ τέχνη and ῥητορική, that the sophists claim to teach amounts to. Also, how did they impart these skills onto their pupils? In theory, an education in πολιτικὴ τέχνη and ῥητορική will result in a positive outcome: the wise *should* persuade others of their wisdom. Unfortunately, it is both easy and tempting to let go of one's commitment to the truth and the common good and instead make the weaker and unjust λόγος appear to be the stronger. This is precisely the ethical dilemma that Socrates encounters. In contrast, the sophists pay this ethical dilemma no mind. They have no qualms about making the unjust λόγος appear just and also teaching that ability to others. The standard of excellence for the sophists is simply persuasion. According to Baracchi, "a certain superficiality or abstractness is associated with their [the sophists] restless, extensive mobility. Precisely because lacking an intimate understanding of place, of a place in its uniqueness, the sophists are said to be a *genos astokhon*, a class inadequate vis-à-vis those who are at once [*hama*] philosophers and statesmen."[36] It is not that the sophists are foreigners *per se* that is problematic. Rather, it is that they are out of place, they are not at home. But that does not mean that their teaching is not attractive and indeed effective. To see just how effective it can be, I will turn to Plato's *Euthydemus*. This dialogue gives us a clear picture of how sophistry works, the role it plays in a democracy, and Socrates' reaction

[36] Baracchi, "The 'Inconceivable Happiness,'" 275.

to it. After looking at the *Euthydemus*, then we will be prepared to turn to the *Protagoras* to fully understand what is so problematic about sophistry for democracy and also what Socrates does differently in order to improve the wellbeing of Athens.

2.0 CHAPTER 2 THE HYDRA'S GAME: AT THE INTERSECTION OF SOPHISTRY AND DEMOCRACY

2.1 MOTIVATION FOR STUDYING WITH SOPHISTS

In Roochnik's words, the *Euthydemus* is strange.[1] It is strange because Socrates acts like a sophist in the dialogue. I am turning to the *Euthydemus* to show exactly what the danger is for democracy that arises with sophistry. Specifically, in this chapter I will answer the following question: why does Socrates converse with the sophists himself, and why does he encourage the Athenian youth to converse with sophists as well? According to McCoy, "Socrates often uses sophistry (and sometimes 'rhetoric') as a kind of foil for philosophy in order to explore the value of philosophy."[2] I will make the case that Socrates considers this foil for two reasons: first, he wants the youth to gain exposure to sophistical λόγοι so that they will be able to recognize such λόγοι in the Assembly, and second, so that the youth can learn in a negative way what *not* to do. I argue that Socrates believes that exposure to and ἐμπειρία with the sophists is crucial for the wellbeing of the πόλις, for it is necessary to be able to recognize sophistical λόγος in court or the Assembly and not fall prey to its traps. Sophistry is only dangerous to those who cannot recognize it for what it is. Socrates wants Athenians, particularly the Athenian youth, to be on their guard against such untruthful λόγοι.

The *Euthydemus* is the perfect dialogue to make sense of sophistry in the context of Athenian life because of the setting in which the conversation takes place. Socrates meets Crito the day after the recorded conversation took place with the sophist brothers, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. Crito was present for the aforementioned conversation, but he was at the edge of

[1] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 155.
[2] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 12.

the crowd and could not hear. As a result, Crito wants Socrates to recount the conversation that he missed. From Crito's perspective, the conversation *appeared* to be worthy of repetition, but he will need to determine whether or not it was actually worthy of being recounted.

Socrates informs Crito that he was talking to a pair of brothers, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, and Crito mentions that Euthydemus appeared "well filled-out, beautiful and good [καλὸς κἀγαθός] in his looks," whereas his son Critobulus is skinny, though they are the same age (271b). Crito is feeling inadequate in the education of his son; he's still "skinny," both physically and mentally. Socrates will either chastise Crito for neglecting his son's education or to reassure him that Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are not to be trusted with his son's soul.

Crito explains to Socrates that he is not familiar with the pair of brothers, but he assumes that they are new sophists (271b). He wants to know where they are from and what their wisdom is. Socrates responds that they are from Chios but are currently in exile. The brothers' exile and Crito's exclusion from the conversation place the theme of belonging and separation at center stage of the dialogue. This is a crucial theme for a dialogue about sophistry, specifically within the context of democracy, in which everyone is technically included in the governing body, and yet many are decidedly more influential than others. The brothers were war generals previously, but they have given up that profession for the practice of sophistry. Socrates describes the pair as all-round formidable competitors in both matters of the mind and body:

> This pair is, in the first place, most formidable in body and in battle, where it's formidable enough to dominate everyone – since it's thoroughly wise at fighting in arms itself, and also capable of making anyone else who pays a fee the same – and then too, it's utterly dominant both at fighting the battle in the lawcourts and at teaching anyone else both how to speak and how to get speeches suitable for lawcourts written (271d-272a).

The pair of brothers are the perfect image of power, according to Socrates. They are superior, both physically and mentally, to anyone else they meet. Additionally, they have the useful ability to teach others to be superior as well.

The pair of brothers is so successful not because they are wise, shrewd, or insightful, but rather because they are able to refute everything that is said, whether it is false or true (272b).[3] By placing the skill in negative terms, Socrates need not assert that the pair of brothers are wise, only that they are able to refute any claim, *regardless of the truth.* That is precisely what the brothers do in the conversation that follows: neither one offers to make any positive assertion about the state of affairs, but they are able to refute any claim made by another.

Socrates maintains that he is infatuated with this skill, and he is resolved to learn from the brothers. Crito is appalled and tells Socrates that he is too old to be learning this new skill, but Socrates is bold and has confidence in his abilities, since the brothers themselves had a previous career, so they were older as well when they started this "art of debating [τῆς ἐριστικῆς]" (272b). The brothers, as we will learn later on in the dialogue, claim that they teach ἀρετή. But here Socrates says it is the art of debating that the brothers can teach. For now, we will proceed as though we are in Crito's shoes – ignorant about what gift the brothers truly possess, so we must take Socrates at his word. Furthermore, Socrates states that the brothers learned this skill very quickly, as they were not wise a year or two ago (272c). It seems unlikely that one could become an expert at teaching ἀρετή, or the art of debating, in merely a year or two. Already at the outset of the dialogue, Socrates is highlighting the dubious quality of the wisdom of the pair of brothers.

Although Crito was the one who initially engaged Socrates in conversation with a request (to recount yesterday's events), Socrates in turn asks Crito for help as well. Socrates wants to learn from the pair of brothers, but he is embarrassed that he will bring disgrace on them since he is elderly. Socrates mentions that he is currently taking harp lessons too, and he is the only adult pupil. Everyone else in the class laughs at both him and Connus, the harp teacher. Socrates' fear

[3] (οὕτω δεινὼ γεγόνατον ἐν τοῖς λόγοις μάχεσθαί τε καὶ ἐξελέγχειν τὸ ἀεὶ λεγόμενον, ὁμοίως ἐάν τε ψεῦδος ἐάν τε ἀληθὲς)

is not that *he* will be embarrassed but rather than Euthydemus and Dionysodorus will be shamed: "I'm afraid [φοβοῦμαι] that somebody might revile these two strangers this same way, and in all probability, they could be afraid of this very thing and be unwilling to accept me" (272c). Socrates often takes up a cavalier attitude regarding his own reputation, but usually he is not afraid to challenge the reputation of others too. As Ewegen comically and succinctly puts it, Socrates is going fishing and is using the young Critobulus as bait.[4] Here we catch a glimpse of Socrates' motive. Socrates asks Crito, "why don't you come along too? And we'll bring your sons as bait; I know they'll give *us* an education too, because they'll want *them* [καὶ σὺ τί οὐ συμφοιτᾷς; ὡς δὲ δέλεαρ αὐτοῖς ἄξομεν τοὺς σοὺς υἱεῖς· ἐφιέμενοι γὰρ ἐκείνων οἶδ᾽ ὅτι καὶ ἡμᾶς παιδεύσουσιν]" (272d). Crito is reluctant to send his son to the pair, and he desires first to know in what their wisdom consists. Socrates has been enthusiastic about the pair, and Crito trusts Socrates that he will have his son's best interest at heart, since he initially confided in Socrates that he is not sure how to educate Critobulus. And yet Socrates has implicitly given Crito good reason to be wary. Socrates has not suggested that Crito send Critobulus to the brothers alone. Instead, Socrates wants them all to go *together* to learn from the pair of brothers. I argue that Socrates wants this learning experience for Critobulus to be, in a sense, an instructional event. He wants Critobulus to witness how the pair interacts with Crito and himself. Ewegen argues that Socrates' protreptic speeches in the dialogue, rather than being aimed at Cleinias, who is ostensibly the main interlocutor in the dialogue, are in fact aimed at Crito – rather than trying to turn Cleinias toward philosophy, Socrates is instead trying to turn Crito away from those who call themselves philosophers.[5] I agree with Ewegen that Socrates addresses the dialogue, which is a recollection, to Crito and Critobulus. But I do not think that Socrates is merely attempting to persuade Crito to turn away from false

[4] Ewegen, "Comic Turns," 19.
[5] Ewegen, "Comic Turns," 16-17.

philosophers. Rather, Socrates attempts to convince Crito instead to expose his soul directly to these false philosophers. Socrates' motive in the *Euthydemus* is to show by way of example the immense power of the brothers. It is imperative that the δῆμος be able to *recognize* sophistical λόγοι in the Assembly, and they will not be able to recognize it without first seeing it in action. Socrates is calling for Crito and Critobulus to witness the power of the pair of brothers so that they can be on the guard against it. Otherwise, why would he want to bring Critobulus, a youth who is skinny and not yet educated, to learn from the slippery pair?

2.2 THE CONTEXT: OPENING EXCHANGE OF WISDOM

The *Euthydemus* would not have taken place were it not for divine intervention. Socrates' δαίμων advised him to remain in the undressing area (ἀποδυτήριον) of the Lyceum. Euthydemus and Dionysodorus enter, accompanied by an entourage, and they start walking around the room in the walkway (δρόμος) (273a). They're walking around in a circular, divine, pattern, but are halted in their tracks once Cleinias arrives with his lovers, the most notable of which is Ctesippus. Socrates remarks to Crito how much Cleinias has grown and that Ctesippus is beautiful and good (καλὸς κἀγαθός), except that he is hubristic on account of his youth (273a). Unlike the pair of sophist brothers, Cleinias immediately spots Socrates, who is sitting alone, and comes straight over to him and sits on his right side. Roochnik observes that Cleinias' name implies that he is already "leaning," he is *inclined,* in the direction of virtue and philosophy.[6] One can imagine how Ctesippus and the other lovers must feel – the beautiful Cleinias chooses old and ugly Socrates to sit next to, not them.

[6] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom,* 157.

When the pair of brothers notices that Cleinias is sitting next to Socrates, they do not immediately approach them. Rather, they stood whispering to each other, glancing over at Socrates and Cleinias, and then finally decided to settle down next to them. Socrates mentions that he had his full attention on the pair of brothers, not on Cleinias and his lovers. One must wonder why this is the case. Surely someone sitting right next to Socrates would be more distracting than a pair of sophists pacing around the walkway, especially a youth as beautiful as Cleinias. Also, Socrates mentions that Cleinias and Ctesippus arrive from the entryway. It is not clear if they arrive from outdoors or from the gymnasium proper. The conversation takes place in the undressing area, in between the gymnasium and the street. The conversation is in motion, that is, the participants have not yet arrived at their destination.

Socrates opens the conversation with an error. He had previously known Euthydemus and Dionysodorus as wise, not just in small matters but great ones too (τὰ μεγάλα): "the pair knows everything that has to do with war, all that anyone needs who's going to be a good general, formations and leadership and how to fight in heavy armor; and the pair also has the ability to make someone be powerful at coming to his own aid in the lawcourts, if anyone does him an injustice" (273c). The pair of brothers can protect the body through generalship and the soul through legal debate. And yet after such fine praise, Socrates is met with contempt from the brothers: they laugh at Socrates and remark that they no longer take these things seriously. Now, they occupy themselves with something much more beautiful: ἀρετή. "We believe the pair of us are able to impart it [ἀρετή] to human beings in the most beautiful form and in the quickest way" (273d). Socrates is shocked and elated at this assertion.

The brothers previously put their attention to battle and the law courts, the two realms where justice takes center stage. These old arts that fight injustice are honorable and noble. But by

saying that they no longer put their attention here but rather in virtue, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus no longer assume that justice is virtuous. Instead they now believe that justice is outdated, antiquated, and obsolete. The "virtue" that they now teach turns out to be the ability to refute even the simplest fact. Thus, the pair of brothers appears to be operating under a different definition of virtue than what one would assume. For Roochnik, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus work under the assumption that "human beings are free agents whose actions are motivated by some conception of what is good, for example, attaining political power in the Assembly. Without this assumption, their sophistry would become meaningless."[7] Without the assumed τέλος, namely, political power and influence, there would be no need to attend lessons with the pair of brothers.

Socrates admits his mistake and begs forgiveness: "but if the pair of you truly has got this knowledge now [ἀρετή], be merciful – for I am literally addressing you as a pair of gods, begging you to have forgiveness toward me for the things I said before" (274a). One might assume that Socrates means ἀρετή is godlike: if the brothers are virtuous, then they are godlike. But this interpretation does not take into account how Euthydemus and Dionysodorus claim they devote their time: imparting virtue "to human beings in the most beautiful form and in the quickest way" (273d). It is the *communicability* of virtue that Socrates finds godlike, not just the *possession* of virtue. The pair of brothers never claimed to be virtuous themselves; they only claim to have the ability to make others virtuous beautifully and quickly. If the pair of brothers has the ability to make the δῆμος virtuous, this will lead to a strong and prosperous democratic state. For Socrates, that would be a divine feat indeed.

And yet, in his next breath, Socrates casts doubt upon the brothers: "given the magnitude of your proclamation, being skeptical is nothing to be wondered at" (274a). Socrates is not naive.

[7] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 164.

He wants proof that the brothers are in fact godlike, as they claim. Luckily, the brothers do not take offense at Socrates' skepticism. Euthydemus, the younger of the pair of brothers, agrees to "give a display and to teach it, if anyone wants to learn [ὡς ἐπιδείξοντε καὶ διδάξοντε, ἐάν τις ἐθέλῃ μανθάνειν]' (274b). Socrates in turn promises that everyone who does not already possess ἀρετή would want to learn it. Socrates takes for granted that the Athenians want to learn virtue.

At this point Socrates pauses the narrative to give some puzzling dramatic context. Socrates mentions that Ctesippus happened to be standing at a distance from his beloved Cleinias, the brothers, and Socrates, and that Euthydemus was likely blocking his view of Cleinias. Socrates says that "wanting to look at his darling, and being at the same time a passionate listener, Ctesippus was the first to jump up and stand near us, just opposite," and the other lovers of Cleinias as well as the brothers' entourage followed suit (274c). Everyone, led by Ctesippus, urges the pair of brothers on. Socrates relays these details so that both we as reader and also Euthydemus and Dionysodorus can catch a glimpse of Ctesippus' temperament. First we learn that his view of his beloved was blocked by someone else (Euthydemus). Cleinias is sitting in between Socrates and Euthydemus, but Ctesippus is caught in the back of the room. If Ctesippus is a keen of a listener of λόγοι and lover of Cleinias, how did he get relegated to the fringe? Secondly, we also learn how eager and bold Ctesippus is – he leads the group of followers in their excitement to hear from the pair. These two traits seem to be contradictory, for if he is so audacious, why did he not push his way to the front of action at first? This contradictory temperament of Ctesippus will eventually be the way the pair of brothers is unable to undo him in the λόγος, as we shall see later on.

The brothers agree to give a display in order to gratify those around them, but Socrates says that a full display will be difficult given the constraints of the situation, so Socrates asks directly whether or not the pair of brothers has the ability to make someone good (ἀγαθὸν) only 1) if s/he

is already convinced that s/he is in need of education or 2) even someone that is not yet convinced (274d-e). In other words, can the pair of brothers do two things: 1) teach ἀρετή, and 2) convince the skeptic that ἀρετή is important? Socrates says that there are multiple reasons for not thinking it is worthwhile to learn from the pair of brothers: either virtue is teachable at all (this is the key question in the *Protagoras*), or the brothers are virtuous, but they cannot teach it. This seems like an odd thing for Socrates to say, since in the previous breath he took it for granted that everyone wants to be virtuous. Socrates seems to be contradicting himself here. At the outset of the conversation, Socrates is casting doubt upon what is usually taken for granted: everyone desires ἀρετή. The pair of brothers agrees that they can both convince others that virtue is a worthwhile pursuit and make others virtuous. Socrates assumes this mean they the pair can "give the most beautiful exhortation to philosophy and a care for virtue [τῶν νῦν ἀνθρώπων κάλλιστ᾽ ἂν προτρέψαιτε εἰς φιλοσοφίαν καὶ ἀρετῆς ἐπιμέλειαν]" (275a). The brothers now must accomplish three things: 1) teach virtue, 2) convince the skeptic that virtue is worthwhile, and 3) defend philosophy. In their (over)confidence, the brothers boast that they can do just that.

Socrates' interest is certainly piqued, so he asks the pair of brothers to abandon the display and instead "persuade this youngster here that he needs to engage in philosophy and care about virtue [ἀρετῆς], and gratify both me and all these people here […] both I and all these people happen to be eager for him to become as excellent as possible. He's the son of Axiochus, who's the son of old Alcibiades, and he's a first cousin of the Alcibiades now living; his name is Cleinias" (275a-b). Socrates raises the stakes even higher. Those present for the conversation have a vested interest in Cleinias becoming as good as possible, for the sake of Athens. Socrates continues: "he's young, and we're worried about him, fearing that, as is likely with a young person, someone might get in ahead of us and turn his thoughts to some other pursuit and corrupt him. The pair of you

have arrived here with beautiful timing" (275b). Since Cleinias is set to become a prominent public figure in Athenian government, it is imperative that he learns how to be virtuous himself and also how to persuade others that virtue is worth pursuing, not just for his own individual sake but for the sake of Athens as a whole. Thus, Socrates rejoices that the pair of brothers have arrived: they claim to be able to do just what Cleinias needs.

Euthydemus agrees to persuade Cleinias to place his care in ἀρετή, so long as Cleinias is willing to answer questions. Socrates responds for Cleinias by saying that he is used to this sort of treatment, so Cleinias is confident about answering questions (275c). Here Socrates pauses his recounting again and the frame returns to the focus. Socrates invokes the Muses and Memory to aid in his recitation of the events: "it's no small task to have the power to recapture such inconceivably great wisdom in recounting it, so I, just like the poets, need to begin my narrative by invoking the Muses [Μούσας] and Memory [Μνήμην]" (275c-d). Ewegen argues that Socrates' invocation of the Muses implies that he is going to tell a beautiful (καλος) story, but not necessarily a true, that is, factual, story.[8] I interpret Socrates' invocation slightly differently. Socrates admits his limitations: he does not have the power to recapture the wisdom. He does not, however, specify what wisdom he is referring to, either the pair of brothers', his own, or even the wisdom that might arise out of the conversation itself. Rather, he invokes the same divine powers as the poets to aid in his task. The poets serve Athens by recounting the great deeds (ἐργα) of the heroes so that we can learn from them. The heroes do not always act with ἀρετή, but the poets still believe their deeds are worth singing about, so that we can use them as an example both in how to conduct ourselves and also so we can learn from their mistakes, particularly mistakes in ὕβρις. Socrates believes his task will be similar.

[8] Ewegen, "Comic Turns," 24.

2.3 THE CORYBANTIC RITES

Finally, after some lengthy introductory matter, Socrates begins to recount the actual conversation itself. And immediately the brothers display their prowess, though perhaps not for wisdom but rather for confusion. Euthydemus begins with a seemingly innocuous question: "which sort of human beings are those who learn, the wise or the ignorant? [πότεροί εἰσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἱ μανθάνοντες, οἱ σοφοὶ ἢ οἱ ἀμαθεῖς]" (275d). This is part of the pair of brothers' method: start with something mundane and commonplace. They make it seem as though the whole λόγος will be the same way, and as a result, they are able to trick their interlocutor into making a mistake without knowing it.

I argue, in asking this first question, the pair of brothers can gauge the type of person Cleinias is and use his disposition to undo him in λόγος. Cleinias, unfortunately, is too flustered to answer. He blushes and casts a glance at Socrates (275d). Yet Socrates does not absolve Cleinias of responsibility and instead encourages him to answer "whichever way it appears to you in a manly [ἀνδρείως] way, since there's a chance it will be of great benefit" (275e). Euthydemus here learns about both Cleinias' and Socrates' natures. First, Cleinias is unsure of himself and in need of encouragement. Secondly, many would be willing to come to Cleinias' aid. Throughout the dialogue, as we shall see, Cleinias is constantly getting tripped up by the pair of brothers due to his confusion and unwillingness to answer. Likewise, Euthydemus realizes that Socrates is not going to coddle Cleinias. Additionally, they also learn that Socrates is genuinely interested to learn the wisdom that they have. Socrates is earnest, and often in the dialogue, Socrates cannot tell if the brothers are earnest or jesting. Socrates genuinely is concerned for the education of Cleinias, since

it will have an effect on the governance of his beloved Athens, and the pair of brothers exploit this concern for the sake of putting on a sophistical display.

While Cleinias is recovering from shock at the initial question, Dionysodorus, with a grin, whispers to Socrates that either way Cleinias answers, he will be refuted. Socrates laments that "while Dionysodorus was in the midst of saying that, […] there was no chance for me even to advise the young man *to be on his guard* [εὐλαβηθῆναι]; he said that those who learn would be the wise" (275e, emphasis mine). Socrates wants to warn Cleinias to be on his guard, as if fighting a battle, and yet he is unable to do so. I think that Socrates begins to get an idea of what is going to happen with the pair of brothers, but poor Cleinias is entering the discussion blindly.

Yet Socrates does not call an end the discussion. He seems to know that the pair of brothers do not actually possess virtue or the ability to teach it to others; they only possess rhetorical maneuvers. I argue that Socrates still finds value in the conversation because Cleinias will learn more from failure than not to try at all. Specifically, Cleinias will learn to be always on his guard (εὐλαβηθῆναι). Socrates wants to *show* Cleinias an instance of persuasive rhetoric so that he can recognize it in the future. Additionally, Socrates is showing Crito the same thing for the sake of Critobulus. In this sense, Socrates allows for experiential instruction to unfold. This is Socrates' method of teaching through ἔργον and ἐμπειρία. Cleinias will only gain the confidence and speaking ability he needs if he first experiences failure before Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. That is, both Socrates and the pair of brothers make use of Cleinias' weaknesses, the pair for Cleinias' undoing, and Socrates for Cleinias' benefit.

The pair of brothers' λόγοι all take the same form of the paradox of learning. As a result, they are easily able to refute whichever way the interlocutor answers. Cleinias answers that the learners are wise. So, predictably, Euthydemus points out that the teachers are in fact the wise

ones, for the learners have to begin in ignorance, if they are going to be able to learn anything. When Euthydemus reaches this conclusion, the pair of brother's entourage begins to laugh and cheer together. Before Cleinias "could well and truly catch his breath," Dionysodorus shows exactly how the learner cannot be ignorant: when receiving a dictation, the student needs to be wise in order to learn from the dictation, not ignorant of language (276c). The brothers' entourage cheers, but Socrates and the "rest of us" were dumbfounded (276d). Their panic does not escape Euthydemus' notice, but he does not lessen his hold on Cleinias. Socrates assumes that Euthydemus did so "in order to put him still more in wonder [θαυμάζοιμεν] at him," and he likens Euthydemus to a good dancer (276d). Euthydemus is twirling about in λόγος, dazzling and causing wonder in the listeners. Euthydemus rephrases the paradox of learning in a new way, and Dionysodorus whispers again to Socrates: "everything we ask is like that […] there's no way out" (276e). Yet Socrates does not halt the pair and save Cleinias. Instead, he remains and remarks to Dionysodorus that he understands now why "you seem to me to be well thought of by your pupils" (276e). Socrates knows that it is important for Cleinias to undergo this questioning for his own sake. Only by experiencing first-hand what the powerful brothers can do will Cleinias be able to defend himself against such λόγοι in the future. The sophistical λόγος may not be able to instruct Cleinias, and by extension Critobulus, in ἀρετή, but the ἐμπειρία itself does the educative work.

Socrates finally takes pity on Cleinias, and he steps in to give him a rest to "build up his courage" (277d). Socrates does not want Cleinias to get discouraged and give up. Socrates remarks that the pair of brothers are "doing the same thing people do in the Corybantic rites when they perform the enthronement of the person they're about to initiate. For there too, there is some dancing and playfulness—maybe you've also been initiated" (277d). Socrates likens what the pair of brothers are doing to the Corybantic rites. Plato mentions the Corybantic rites only a handful of

times.[9] The Corybantic rites were used as a cure against madness, and they involved three distinct parts: the chairing, the sacrifice, and the curative art. The chairing involves the one being initiated sitting, and the revelers dance around him. The chairing is noisy, like a rhythmic buzz, and the revelers hallucinate flute music. The experience is maddening and disorienting for the one being initiated. After this initial stage of chairing, the sacrifice and cure occur. The cure involves divine frenzy, movement, motion; it is not a restful cure.[10] Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are certainly dancing around Cleinias, the one undergoing the chairing, in a disorienting and playful way. Next, they will need to cure Cleinias. According to Wasmouth, Socrates mentions the Corybantic rites to show how philosophy is a remedy for the unhealthy soul – just as the rites involve motion and confusion, in order to relieve madness, so too philosophy involves argumentation in order to cure an unhealthy soul.[11] Philosophy begins unsettlingly in wonder, and then one is cured with wisdom. For Wasmouth, Socrates uses this analogy to the Corybantic rites as a way to persuade Cleinias to persevere in λόγος, not to make him scared or suspicious of the brothers.[12] This interpretation must conclude that Socrates is being ironic or insincere – the brothers will not be able to cure Cleinias, only confound him, since they are not philosophers.

I argue, to the contrary, that Socrates uses this analogy sincerely. To be sure, the pair of brothers are emulating the initial chairing stage of the rites. But Socrates also believes that they will be able to cure Cleinias too; however, not in the manner that the brothers assume. Their λόγοι will not cure Cleinias but rather the ἐμπειρία itself will act as the cure. Socrates trusts that with his guidance, the truth of the pair of brothers' art will be revealed to Cleinias: sophistical tricks. Cleinias will be cured of his naivete and be able to recognize similar λόγοι in the future, when he

[9] *Crito, Laws, Symposium, Phaedrus, Ion,* and *Euthydemus.*
[10] Wasmouth, "The Corybantic Rites," 75.
[11] Wasmouth, "The Corybantic Rites," 75.
[12] Wasmouth, "The Corybantic Rites," 76.

encounters them in the Assembly or court. Cleinias will indeed be cured of his madness and ignorance and no longer be fooled by the pair of brothers and others like them. This is why Socrates is so keen on studying with the pair of brothers: the cure is in the ἐμπειρία and exposure, not the λόγοι themselves.

Socrates says that perhaps the pair of brothers are performing "the first stages of the sophistical mysteries" rather than the Corybantic mysteries (277e). After all, says Socrates, Prodicus preaches that precision in language is necessary, and that is what is causing Cleinias to get tripped up: learning can mean the change from ignorance to knowledge and also when one "has knowledge and with this knowledge examines this same matter when it's involved in action or speech" (278a). The imprecision in language regarding learning (μανθάνειν) and understanding (ἐπιστήμη) causes the confusion. As a result, the pair of brothers is able to dance circles around Cleinias. Socrates calls these sorts of matters "playthings" (παιδιή) and assumes that the brothers are not being serious: "that even if one were to learn many things of this sort, or even all of them, one would not know a bit more about how things are with the matters concerned, but only be able to play with human beings by the use of differences among words, tripping them up and toppling them over, like people who enjoy pulling chairs out from under those who are starting to sit down" (278b). I argue that Socrates implores the brothers to speak seriously because he knows that they cannot do so. All they know are these playthings (which, as Socrates reminds us, is the profession of Prodicus). By explicitly asking for seriousness, Socrates has caught the pair of brothers in their own trap: they claim to teach ἀρετή, but they cannot do so seriously. Socrates plans to reveal the truth of their λόγοι by causing them to fail in their display.

2.4 THE SERIOUS AND THE PLAYFUL

At this point in the dialogue, Socrates offers to show Euthydemus and Dionysodorus what he means by a serious protreptic λόγος that will convince "the young man about how he ought to care for wisdom [σοφίας] and virtue [ἀρετῆς]" (278d). Socrates leads the dialogue with Cleinias, and they conclude that without wisdom, all other virtues are useless (278e-280b). Good things are only good insofar as they are being handled by wise people. Therefore, one should place one's care in wisdom in order to become good. Socrates calls his own λόγος amateurish and also lengthy, but he hopes that the pair of brothers, since they are professionals, can reach the same conclusions but by art (τέχνη) (282d).

Here Socrates breaks off the narrative to tell Crito explicitly that he "paid very close attention to what was going to come after that, and pondered in what sort of way they would approach the discussion and on what basis they would begin encouraging the youngster to devote himself to wisdom and virtue" (283a). Socrates assumes that he can anticipate the brothers' λόγος right from the opening words. Dionysodorus opens the conversation, and Socrates tells Crito that the λόγος "was a thing to be wondered at and well worth your hearing, as it was a speech to encourage one toward virtue" (283b). Socrates does indeed find the λόγος to be protreptic, but perhaps not in the way that Dionysodorus intends. The λόγος that follows involves more trickery, confusion, and anger, but this is precisely what Socrates finds wonderful about it. The pair of brothers will encourage others toward wisdom and virtue; however, they will not do so through their own λόγος. Instead, the encouragement will come through Socrates' guidance, through the ἐμπειρία of studying with the brothers.

Specifically, I argue that emerging from a discussion will the pair of brothers will teach the Athenian youth two things: first, what *not* to do in λόγος. That is, it will teach Athenian youth how λόγος can be harnessed for the sake of mere trickery, flattery, confusion, and mystification, at the

expense of ἀλήθεια. Second, it will teach them to be wary of those who do make use of this kind of λόγος. This conversation in the undressing room is a meeting among friends, and no harm is done if Cleinias gets flustered or Ctesippus gets angry. However, if it were to happen in the Assembly or court, this would be very detrimental and even downright dangerous. Socrates, in the undressing room of the gymnasium, is using the pair of brothers as a sparring partner for the Athenian youth. The conversation takes place in between the gymnasium and the ἀγορά. That is to say, the conversation has a foot both inside the sparring ring of playfulness and the serious abode of Athenian public life. The pair of brothers come upon the Athenian youth as a godsend; Socrates does find value in the pair's sophistical λόγοι. For Roochnik, "even if the sophists in the *Euthydemus* are comical figures, the position they occupy is a serious counterpoint of Socratic philosophy."[13] I agree with Roochnik's sentiment, but he does not draw the conclusion that I wish to make. It is worthwhile to undergo the chairing of the "sophistical mysteries" for the sake of the cure, ἐμπειρία, that will be very useful in the political sphere. Thus, Socrates should not take Cleinias and Ctesippus and the others away from the harmful sophists. Instead, he is there with them and encouraging them to keep up their guard. Socrates is not in favor of simply throwing the youth over to the sophists without some sort of guide or protection.

2.5 IDENTIFICATION AND EXPLOITATION OF CHARACTER-FLAWS: ANGER, HUBRIS, AND HYPOCRISY

Dionysodorus then proceeds not only to question Cleinias but also to question Socrates. But the conversation takes the same turn as earlier: Cleinias should *become* wise, but he is not currently ignorant either. Dionysodorus immediately goes for the outrageous option: "since you

[13] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 161.

want him no longer to be what he now is, is that any different from wanting him to be dead? That's how it seems. A lot friends and lovers like you would be worth, who'd entertain any thought of having their darling struck dead!" (283d). According to Dionysodorus, wanting Cleinias to be wise is the same as wanting him to be dead, since we want Cleinias to be *different* than he currently is. Before Socrates can respond, however, Ctesippus stands up and defends Cleinias, but the former's ὕβρις and youth are exploited by Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who stir up so much anger in Ctesippus that that he resorts to ad hominem name-calling, rather than defending his position calmly and effectively (238e). I argue that they were *depending* on Ctesippus' outrage and defense of his beloved. Yet Socrates allows this behavior to continue, even though no wisdom will be learned from the brothers. He even asks Dionysodorus to kill those present, Socrates proposes himself as the first victim: "let this pair kill me, or boil me if they want to, or whatever they want, let them do it; just let them bring me forth with good character [χρηστός]" (285c). Socrates wants to be the victim and let the pair murder and resurrect him, despite the pair giving no evidence that they are able to resurrect people in virtue and goodness. They have simply proven they can refute anything one says, no matter how mundane or obvious. By undergoing murder and resurrection, no matter how miserable of a failure it will be, Socrates exposes Cleinias, Ctesippus, and the others to the kind of speaking that is possible when one disregards the truth for the sake of producing outrage. Socrates himself will kill the naivete of the Athenian youth in order to resurrect them as full-bodied citizens. After undergoing the questioning of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, the Athenian youth present will be wise to these sorts of rhetorical tricks in the future.

Ctesippus agrees to turn himself over to the pair, so that he too can be reborn in ἀρετή (285d). He assures Dionysodorus that he is not wrathful, he is just "speaking up against things said against me that seem to me not exactly said beautifully" (285d). The conversation proceeds, as

Dionysodorus catches Ctesippus in an impossible conclusion: contradictions do not exist. In response, Ctesippus is silent (286b). This speaks to his temperament: he is embarrassed by his failure. Ctesippus is hubristic, proud, and youthful, and Dionysodorus exploits it. On account of his hubris, Ctesippus is unable to control his rage when the pair says something outrageous, and he cannot help but take the pair seriously and at their word. Ctesippus assumes that truth will only be found in λόγος, not in ἐμπειρία or ἔργον. The wisdom that Socrates hopes will emerge in Ctesippus is the ability to look beyond the surface of the words and instead interpret the intentions behind the words. That is the useful skill that Ctesippus will need to learn before entering public, democratic, life. This is what Socrates finds so troublesome about the sophists in general, but specifically the sophists who claim to teach virtue to young and prominent men: the onus is on the respondent to be able to reveal the facetious λόγος, which is much more difficult than simply telling the truth. When the sophists teach the youth not only how to fall for these λόγοι but also *reproduce* them themselves, the fate of the πόλις as a whole is in jeopardy. Socrates is afraid these λόγοι will infiltrate the democratic process. Thus, Socrates is undergoing this torture for the sake of the youth present. They need to see how these false λόγοι work in order to be on their guard against them in the future. This is the merit that Socrates still finds in conversing with the pair of brothers.

Ctesippus and Cleinias first need to undergo their respective chairings, Ctesippus in his outrage, Cleinias in his dumfoundedness. In the retelling of the events, Crito will also see the merit in experiential learning. Socrates still implores the pair of brothers to speak seriously, and to give another example of what he means, Socrates and Cleinias resume their protreptic discussion. They conclude that “the sort of knowledge we need is one in which knowing how to produce something and how to use that which it produces coincide at one and the same time” (289b). In other words,

ἀρετή requires φρόνησις. It is not necessary to know every single piece of knowledge (like lyre-making, flute-making, and the like) in order to be happy (εὐδαιμονία). Socrates then asks Cleinias if, in addition to lyre and flute making, they also do not need to learn the art of speechmaking in order to be happy. Cleinias answers in the negative: "I see *some* speechwriters [λογοποιούς] who don't know how to use their own arguments, even though they compose them themselves […] just like the lyre-makers with their lyres; but there are others here too who have the power to use the work done by those people, but are powerless to do their own speechwriting. So it's clear that with speeches too, the art of making and that of using are separate" (289d). Speechmaking, just like all the other arts, can be used by those with skill and those without.

Socrates' response to Cleinias here is telling. He offers the following counterpoint to Cleinias: "the men themselves who are speechwriters, whenever I'm around them, *seem to me* to be superlatively wise, Cleinias, and the art itself that they possess is something divinely inspired and sublime. And surely that's nothing to be wondered at, since it's a branch of the art of enchantments [τῶν ἐπῳδῶν τέχνης], and little short of that in prestige" (289e-290a, emphasis mine). In Socrates' *experience*, speechmaking amounts to divine enchantments, so speechwriters *seem* to be wise. Enchantments charm the object, and Socrates says that is exactly what speechmaking is – charming one's audience in a divine way, which requires wisdom. Thus, speechwriting is necessary for happiness. Socrates and Cleinias then move on to the next τέχνη of generalship. Again, Cleinias offers a response that is quite intelligent and wise: generalship is nothing more than "a particular art of hunting, directed at human beings" (290b). Cleinias describes generalship as hunting, but the real use of generalship comes later, when "they must turn them over to people skilled at dialectic" (290c). Socrates praises Cleinias as beautiful and wise for his answers (290c).

Crito, at this point, has become skeptical that this λόγος truly came from Cleinias, and he questions Socrates' memory. Socrates is certainly not "enchanting" Crito as a speechmaker in recounting these events. Socrates never confirms that he is telling a lie, but he is certain that "it wasn't Euthydemus or Dionysodorus who said them. But, my spooky Crito [ὦ δαιμόνιε Κρίτων], might it not have been one of the higher powers present there that uttered them? Because I heard them, anyway; I know that very well" (291a). Socrates is willing attribute these λόγοι to the youngsters Cleinias or Ctesippus, but certainly not Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, nor himself. Socrates would rather lie to Crito than admit that he spoke these words. Additionally, Socrates does not seem surprised in the least that Crito does not believe him. I argue that Socrates is so unwilling to say that neither he, Euthydemus, nor Dionysodorus were the author of these words because if they had, they would be wise and in no need of instruction. When Socrates questions Crito about whether or not he believes him, Crito responds: "if he did say them, he'd have no need for an education from Euthydemus or from any other human being either" (290e). Socrates' point is that Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are the ones that are in need of education, in addition to the youths and himself. Everyone present is in need of an education. As such, Socrates does not assign the wise words to any *human* present in the undressing room.

Instead, Socrates says that it might have been the words of some higher power, and he calls Crito "spooky." Socrates is adamant that he heard the words, but he does not know from whom they were uttered. The only positive assignment he makes is to the higher powers that were present (291a). Roochnik finds no precedent for such mysteries in the Platonic dialogues.[14] Roochnik asserts that "what Cleinias really wants is extraordinary, that is, non-technical, knowledge possessed (perhaps) by 'one of the higher beings' (or 'a great man' or 'a god')."[15] Cleinias and

[14] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 168.
[15] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom,* 174.

Ctesippus are in need of an education, to be sure. Thus, Socrates does not seriously ascribe the words to the youths. Unfortunately, both Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are in need of an education as well, in Socrates' opinion, so they could not have spoken these wise words either. Lastly, Socrates himself did not speak them, since Socrates is ignorant as well. The only option left is that the words were spoken by something, or someone, divine. Socrates' point is that everyone is in need of education, only the gods have perfect wisdom and ἀρετή.

2.6 THE HYDRA AND THE CRAB: DANCING WITH THE SOPHISTS

Crito then asks Socrates if they did indeed make any progress toward determining why Cleinias and the others should put their attention in ἀρετή, and Socrates responds as follows: "we were complete jokes. Just like children on a wild goose chase, we were always imagining we were about to catch each piece of knowledge, while they were always slipping through our fingers. So why should I tell you the long version?" (291b). Socrates and Cleinias have gone through each τέχνη in order to determine which is the most beneficial. According to Socrates, all that he, Cleinias, the brothers, and Ctesippus were able to accomplish was playfulness. Euthydemus then takes up the conversation and continues on the same playful way. He promises to display to Socrates that he already possesses the knowledge that he seeks; in fact, he proves that there is not anything that Socrates himself does not already know, but at the same time, he also knows nothing at all (293c-d). Socrates is amazed, and he finally believes that the pair of brothers is being serious: "'before the gods, Dionysodorus,' I said,' it's clear to me that the pair of you is being serious now, and I had a hard time challenging you folks to get serious" (294b). The pair of brothers know how to mend shoes, they know how many grains of sand are on the beach, and so on. Ctesippus asks

for evidence (ἐπιδείξατον), and certainly not without reason. If the pair can state how many teeth the other has, Ctesippus will be satisfied.

While Ctesippus has asked directly for evidence, the pair does not answer directly, and Ctesippus learns a lesson in persuasive speech. Socrates describes the encounter:

> But since the pair of them thought they were being made fun of, they weren't willing to say, but they were in agreement about having a knowledge of all matters as they were asked about each thing, one by one, by Ctesippus. For there was nothing Ctesippus didn't end up, in a totally uninhibited way, asking whether the pair of them knew, even the most shameful things, while the two of them met the questions head-on most courageously, agreeing that they knew them, like wild boars rushing toward the spear-thrust, until finally I too, for my part, was forced by disbelief to ask whether Dionysodorus knew how to dance (294d-e).

Ctesippus has been too blunt, which allows for Euthydemus and Dionysodorus to interpret Ctesippus as mocking them. Ctesippus has learned that bluntness in such a situation will not result in the desired outcome. I argue that Socrates let Ctesippus speak in this way, rather than restraining him, in order to show Ctesippus that his method is not effective. Socrates allows Ctesippus to *experience* this failure first hand so that he will not fail to conduct himself properly in the future. He is willing to forego the apparent "truth" of the sophistical λόγος for the sake of the truth that will be revealed by the conversation itself: the ἐμπειρία that Cleinias, Ctesippus, and the others will gain from being refuted by the pair of brothers. That is more valuable to Socrates than the pair's display proving they know everything.

Socrates then agrees to answer the pair of brothers' questions himself (295b-297a) to the best of his ability, although he does have to make some caveats and qualifications (for example, he will not commit to using the qualifier "always" for fear it will get them into trouble later). Socrates is not following the script, and as a result, the λόγος becomes muddled. As soon as Socrates strays from the script that Dionysodorus and Euthydemus set out for themselves, their rhetorical prowess begins to wane. Dionysodorus adds a comment that he should not have made, Euthydemus chides him, and Dionysodorus blushes (297a). They accuse Socrates of "running

away" (φεύγεις) from the λόγος, and Socrates responds with what I argue is the crux of the dialogue as a whole:

> Because I'm a lesser man than either one of you; far be it from me, then, *not* to run away from the two of you. For surely I'm much inferior to Heracles, who was incapable of doing battle with *both* the Hydra and the crab, the former a female sophist who, if anyone cuts off one head of her argument, has the wisdom to send up many in place of the one, and the latter a certain other sophist who comes from the sea, and has, it seems to me, lately arrived on our shores; and when the latter was pestering him so much by yapping and snapping at him from the left, Heracles called in the help of his nephew Iolaus, who gave him plenty of help. But my Iolaus, if he were to come, would do more harm than good (297b-d).

First, rarely does Socrates ever run away from λόγος. He will do so when he thinks that the interlocutor is not working toward the truth, or everyone gets too upset (the *Protagoras* is one such example, as we shall see). But here Socrates is purposefully making the λόγος difficult for Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. Socrates' motive is to *show* those present what happens to sophistical λόγοι when just one word is said out of place. By being purposefully difficult, Socrates is able to show Cleinias, Ctesippus, Crito, and by extension Critobulus, both 1) how effortlessly Euthydemus and Dionysodorus kept the λόγος on track, that is to say, how quickly others fall into the trap, and 2) how devastating it is when a sophistical λόγος is met with resistance. One merely needs to know the best way to fight the Hydra and the crab.

Furthermore, Socrates likens himself to Heracles, or at least a lesser version of Heracles. Socrates likens himself to the great Heracles when confronted with sophists in the *Protagoras* as well – sophists are the obstacles that Socrates/Heracles must overcome. Yet in the *Euthydemus* Socrates does not refer to Heracles' victories but rather his failure to defeat the Hydra and the crab. These are two images of sophistry, and I will treat each individually and then both together. Euthydemus and Dionysodorus resemble the Hydra and her many heads. They take each other's place in such a way that they can never be defeated together. As soon as one brother is refuted, the other asserts the opposite position, and the pair survives. Socrates claims that the Hydra sophist is wise and knows when to send up another head to take the place of the other. Heracles and Iolaus

defeated the Hydra by cauterizing the wound caused by each severed head so that another could not take its place. Socrates must effectively silence each brother in turn in order to defeat their sophistical λόγος. Presumably, Ctesippus is likened to Iolaus, or perhaps Crito in the future, and just as Socrates predicted, Ctesippus/Iolaus accomplishes more harm than good.

The second monster that Socrates mentions is the crab, who is the ally of the Hydra. Seemingly, Socrates resembles the crab more than the pair of brothers: he pesters Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, refuses to answer plainly, and keeps questioning what the brothers mean before answering their questions. But Socrates likens the crab to sophistry, not himself. This crab has only lately arrived, and most importantly, the crab was what caused Heracles to call in the help of Iolaus. The sophist pesters and snaps, and in so doing, the sophist reveals him or herself as a threat. Heracles was able to come to the realization that he was in trouble, that he needed help. Without the crab's pestering and pinching, if he were only fighting the Hydra, Heracles would not be aware of the trouble that he is in. By analogy, the sophist *shows* the threat behind the smooth words, such that Athenians can tell they are in need of help in order to free themselves from the pestering danger of the sophist. Additionally, the crab, the revealer of the problem, arrives too late. Socrates' point is that sophistry has already infiltrated the δῆμος. Sophistry became a part of the democratic process before it has been revealed as a threat.

Taken together, the Hydra and the crab can only be defeated when Heracles calls for help. He cannot hope to defeat them alone. Likewise, Socrates needs help in order to defeat Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. Unfortunately, Socrates does not think that his help is going to arrive, and even if it did, it would do more harm than good; aid will only make Euthydemus and Dionysodorus stronger. Perhaps at this point Plato is foreshadowing the fate that Socrates will meet at the hands of the Athenians. The Athenian δῆμος, rather than coming to the aid of philosophy the way Iolaus

aids Heracles, silences philosophy. Perhaps Plato means to liken himself to Iolaus. He has come to Socrates' aid, but he did not arrive quickly enough to save Socrates. Or perhaps Socrates is signaling to Crito that he must act as Iolaus. Crito must take care to educate Critobulus properly so that he can govern Athens well.

Of course, Dionysodorus and Euthydemus take no pity on Socrates/Heracles and continue their multi-headed λόγος. They argue that everyone is everyone's father, and at the same time everyone is fatherless, and other such λόγοι that all take the same form. Right on cue, Ctesippus chimes in, outraged. The brothers are indeed speaking shamefully, but a lack of shame is useful for Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. Ctesippus is blinded by his outrage, and the pair of brothers use that blindness to their advantage. The pair dances circles around Ctesippus in λόγος. Finally, at 299b, Ctesippus *learns* – he is able to control his outrage because he looks beneath the surface of the words. When asked if he thinks that it is good for the sick to drink medicine and for soldiers to be armed, Ctesippus responds that "it seems good to me […] but something tells me you're about to come out with one of your beauties [τῶν καλῶν]" (299b). Sure enough, they catch Ctesippus in an impossible conclusion: if medicine is good, the sick should drink as much as humanly possible, and soldiers should carry as many spears and shields as they can. But Ctesippus has learned and refuses to play the fool. When they agree that one shield and one spear is best, Ctesippus brings up the examples of Geryon and Briareus, who possess multiple sets of hands and thus can wield multiple weapons. Amazingly, Euthydemus is reduced to silence (299d). And like the Hydra's many heads, Dionysodorus takes his place in the λόγος. But Ctesippus has successfully scored a hit: Dionysodorus does not take up the λόγος from where Euthydemus left it but rather, says Socrates, started questioning Ctesippus on his earlier answers (299d). Here we see the result of the real growth from Ctesippus. No longer does he take every shameful thing that the brothers

say seriously. This will be a useful skill in the political realm, where often many aim to insult and outrage. And as a result, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus have lost their weapon: Ctesippus' outrage. Socrates, presumably, is quite proud of Ctesippus here.

Indeed, Ctesippus begins nip at the heels of the pair of brothers! He successfully silences the outrageous conclusion that the pair of brothers was aiming toward: it is impossible to speak about inanimate things because they are silent, and it is impossible to speak about silence (for then it would not be silent) (299e). At this point, Socrates notes parenthetically that "Ctesippus was feeling excessively competitive because his darling [Cleinias] was there" (300c). Ctesippus is feeling competitive because he finally sees the way through the Hydra's sophistical λόγος: partner with the Hydra in the dance, rather than resist. If Ctesippus can keep his cool and continue dancing, then Euthydemus and Dionysodorus will not be able to get the best of him. He can cauterize and silence one of the brothers so he can take the other head-on. Socrates, I argue, is hopeful that this is exactly what will occur. Sure enough, Ctesippus catches the pair of brothers at their own game: they do not give Ctesippus a direct answer to his question (if everything is not silent than everything must speak). Instead, Euthydemus answers that only the things that speak, speak. At this, according to Socrates, Ctesippus said:

> 'Euthydemus, your brother has left his argument exposed on both sides and he's undone and defeated.' And Cleinias was totally delighted and laughed, so much so that Ctesippus was puffed up more than tenfold. But it seemed to me, because he's so unscrupulous, that Ctesippus had picked up these very words from these very men, for there is no such wisdom to be found from any other human beings these days (300d).

Ctesippus is using the pair of brothers' λόγος against them quite successfully. For Ewegen, Ctesippus is only able to defeat the pair of brothers in speech because he has *learned* from them their sophistical art.[16] But Socrates, of course, is wary. He does not want Ctesippus, who we already established is hubristic, to become overconfident. This is only one small victory, after all.

[16] Ewegen, "Comic Turns," 22.

But to tame Ctesippus, clever Socrates does not address him directly. Instead, he asks Cleinias why he laughs at "serious and beautiful" things (ἐπὶ σπουδαίοις οὕτω πράγμασι καὶ καλοῖς) (300e).

2.7 DANCING WILLINGLY, NOT COMBATIVELY

Before Cleinias can answer, Dionysodorus asks Socrates a rather abstract and theoretical question: were the beautiful things that you have seen before "different from the beautiful, or the same as the beautiful? [Ἆρα ἕτερα ὄντα τοῦ καλοῦ, ἔφη, ἢ ταὐτὰ τῷ καλῷ;]" (301a). We know that Socrates has embellished the words of Cleinias before, so perhaps we should not be so quick to assume that Dionysodorus really did ask this question, for it seems out of character for someone who has only asked trick questions before. Perhaps Dionysodorus believes a question about the beautiful itself might also be a trick question. Socrates, however, is perplexed: "And I was totally stumped and regarded it as just punishment for putting in my two cents; nevertheless, I said they [beautiful things] were different from the beautiful itself, even though there's a certain beauty present with each of them" (301a). This turn in the conversation is quite puzzling. Perhaps Socrates is getting sick of the pair of brothers and is trying to engage them in a more theoretical discussion, in order to show Cleinias what philosophy is *actually* about. According to Socrates, he "was already trying to mimic the wisdom of the pair of men, since [he] yearned to have it" (301b). Socrates mimics the pair of brothers to teach through ἔργον and ἐμπειρία. The youth need to experience first-hand the power of skillful sophistical λόγος.

After more ridiculous and outrageous λόγοι, Socrates truly praises the pair of brothers. He swears an oath to Poseidon and calls this the "crowning touch on your wisdom [ἤδη κολοφῶνα ἐπιτίθης τῇ σοφίᾳ]" (301e). Socrates wants this wisdom for his own, but Dionysodorus asks Socrates a curious question: "would you recognize it […] if it became your very own? [Ἐπιγνοίης

ἂν αὐτήν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἔφη, οἰκείαν γενομένην;]" (301e). This question betrays Dionysodorus' initial claim and his τέλος, namely, to teach others how to speak the way he can. Dionysodorus presumably would be eager at the prospect of Socrates wanting to learn this art. Socrates has just admitted that this is the crown jewel of wisdom; he has given Dionysodorus the highest praise. Perhaps Dionysodorus is just being playful – the brothers have not spoken seriously throughout the conversation.

Dionysodorus merely uses this pause as a way into yet another sophistical λόγος, but Socrates is prepared. He notes that Dionysodorus pauses for dramatic effect, "as though he were reflecting on some great matter," before asking if Socrates has an ancestral Zeus (302b). At this point, Socrates tells Crito that he anticipated the λόγος and so tried to stall and flop around, "as though already trapped in a net" (302b). The λόγος concludes that the Athenian gods are nothing more than animals, since all things that have soul are animals, a point that they agreed to earlier. What a preposterous, hubristic, outrageous, and downright insulting conclusion! Yet Socrates suffers the insult to his ancestral gods and the pantheon at large for the sake of those present. They need to see how quickly an innocuous question about agreeing to having ancestral gods can result in such an insult. If these brothers can insult Socrates so quickly and so easily, one can imagine what their skill could accomplish in the Assembly against someone with a turbulent personality like Ctesippus. That thought, I believe, is terrifying to Socrates.

Socrates tells Crito that he was totally knocked out by Euthydemus, and Ctesippus does contribute, but he is beginning to learn. Instead of expressing his outrage, he almost congratulates Euthydemus and Dionysodorus: "'Bully! Heracles! What a beautiful argument [καλοῦ λόγου]!' And Dionysodorus said, 'Well, which is it? Is Heracles a bully or is a bully Heracles?' and Ctesippus said, 'Poseidon, what formidable arguments! I give up; this pair of men is unbeatable'"

(303a). Ctesippus finally arrives at the truth: the brothers are both beautiful and bullies, both formidable and worthy of praise. Everyone present claps and cheers for the pair. Socrates tells Crito that "on the previous occasions, in each and every case, there were resounding and utterly beautiful cheers, but only from Euthydemus's lovers, but at that point even the pillars of the Lyceum virtually reverberated with pleasure at the pair of men […] never before had I laid eyes on anyone so wise; I was absolutely enthralled by the pair's wisdom" (303b-c). This sudden change in praise at the pair of brothers is not a result of the brothers themselves. Rather, the only change has come from Ctesippus. The person with hubris has accepted defeat, and he has done so in a noble and humble way. Ctesippus has come to realize that the outrage was misguided.

2.8 SOCRATES' FINAL ΛΌΓΟΣ

At the end of the conversation, Socrates speaks honestly in his final λόγος. He addresses Euthydemus and Dionysodorus directly, and here I will breakdown the speech, quoting it in its entirety. He says that the pair's greatest achievement is that:

> You don't care one bit about the general run of human beings or even about those pompous ones who have the reputation of being really something, but only about people like you. For I know very well that there are very few human beings like you who would appreciate these arguments; everyone else is so ignorant about them that I know very well they'd be more ashamed to refute other people by arguments of that sort than to be refuted themselves (303d).

Socrates has a very high opinion of his fellow Athenians, that they would be more willing to be refuted than to actually use λόγοι like these. According to Socrates, the brothers' greatest triumph is that they do not care about the δῆμος. They are unashamed if their λόγοι are received poorly. As a result, Socrates claims that there are very few people who would also appreciate these types of λόγοι. Most would rather be refuted by these λόγοι than actually use them themselves because they are ignorant and do not understand these sophistical λόγοι of the brothers. I argue that by the end of the conversation, Socrates himself does understand the pedagogical benefit of allowing the

brothers to make this display. Socrates does not find the actual skill of the brothers beneficial but rather the teachable moment that the brothers make possible.

Socrates continues his final speech:

> And there is this other thing too that makes your arguments *democratic* [δημοτικόν] *and easygoing*: whenever you fellows claim that no single thing is beautiful or good or white or anything else like that, and nothing is any different at all from anything else, you just really and truly sew the mouths of human beings shut, as you even say. The fact that you not only sew up the mouths of others, but would seem even to sew up your own, is a very gracious thing, and takes the sting out of your arguments (303e, emphasis mine).

Sewing up the mouths of others is not very democratic. Perhaps Socrates means that since everyone's mouth is sewn up, including the brothers' themselves, everyone is equal. Or perhaps Socrates implies a more pejorative meaning – democracy has devolved into sewed up mouths, rather than the ideal, which would be an equal share of opinions. If no one can "win" these λόγοι, everyone is on an equal playing field. To defeat the Hydra, one must cauterize the wounds and sew up her heads. This is how Ctesippus defeated Euthydemus and Dionysodorus: he sewed up their mouths by taking away their weapon, namely, his outrage. Additionally, Socrates silences the brothers by taking away the script and straying from the path that the pair needs to follow.

Socrates is not finished yet. He continues: "but the greatest thing is that these methods of yours are of such a kind and have been so artfully devised that in a very short time any human being whatsoever can learn them. I realized this by paying attention to the way Ctesippus was able so quickly to imitate you fellows on the spot. So this wise aspect of your occupation that has to do with imparting it quickly is a beautiful thing" (303e-304a). I think that Socrates is congratulating Ctesippus here on his growth. At first Ctesippus was angry and insulted, but by the end of the conversation, he is able to recognize the brothers' game, and he was even able to play his own version of the game. His hubris has been tamed; he no longer takes every word as a personal afront. And Ctesippus learned this life-lesson very quickly, which is precisely what the pair of brothers claimed to be able to do. Under the guidance of Socrates, the brothers are skilled at imparting life-

lessons when they do not mean to. I do not think that we are to assume that Ctesippus then went on to recreate these sophistical λόγοι in the Assembly. Ctesippus did not learn that he could refute any λόγος; rather, he learned that 1) sophistical λόγοι are shameful, and 2) how to recognize such λόγοι and control his anger.

Socrates next offers a warning to the pair of brothers regarding being able to impart this "beautiful thing" quickly.

> It's not suitable for discussing things in front of human beings, and if you'll take my word for it, you should be wary about speaking in front of large groups, because they might not give you credit when they learn it quickly. The best thing would be for the pair of you to have discussions alone between yourselves, of failing that, if it is in front of anyone else, for that to be only someone who's giving you cash. And if you're sensible about it, you'll give this same advice to your pupils, never to have discussions with any human being other than you fellows and themselves. For what is scarce is held in honor, Euthydemus, while water is the cheapest thing there is, even though as Pindar says, it's the best (304a-b).

This final warning is the last words that Socrates speaks to the pair of brothers. He wants them not to speak in front of or share their skill with large groups of people. I believe that Socrates is speaking about the Athenian Assembly here. If Euthydemus and Dionysodorus begin to influence the democratic procedure directly, the consequences would be disastrous. Socrates then asks the pair to take him and Cleinias on as students, thus concluding the recounted conversation.

The last few Stephanus pages concern Crito's reaction to the events that Socrates has relayed. He opens his response by saying that he is certainly "a lover of listening" and would be glad to learn, (φιλήκοος μὲν ἔγωγε καὶ ἡδέως ἄν τι μανθάνοιμι) but he does not seem to approve of the λόγος of the pair of brothers (304c-d). Specifically, Crito says he is one that would rather be refuted by such λόγοι than do the refuting. Crito is not convinced by the brothers, unlike Socrates. Crito admits it would be ludicrous for him to give Socrates advice, yet he feels he must raise an objection because he has an outsider's perspective. Crito was present for the meeting in the Lyceum, but he was simply too far away in the crowd to hear. We learn from this statement

that there is a large crowd, and the Lyceum would have attracted all sorts of patrons. Anyone could have heard this conversation.

Crito has the privilege of being on the outside of this particular conversation, and he engages in some chatter after the discussion with a man "who imagines himself to be very wise, one of those who are formidable where speeches in the lawcourts are concerned" (304d). Crito distances himself from the assertion that this man is wise. Rather, Crito tells Socrates that this man believes himself to be wise. This man is a speechwriter for the lawcourts, and his assessment of the pair of brothers is that their dialectic is "the very sort of stuff one always hears from people who spout such drivel and put an unworthy seriousness into worthless business" (304e). Crito retorts that surely philosophy (φιλοσοφία) is charming, but the man responds: "it is not worth anything. And if you'd been there just now, I can well imagine you'd have been ashamed of your companion. He was so ridiculous, the way he was willing to submit himself to human beings who don't care what they say, but snatch at every phrase. And these [Euthydemus and Dionysodorus], as I was just saying, are the most powerful of those of the present day" (305a). Presumably a speechwriter would be most impressed by the pair of brothers, since this kind of λόγος is what he makes use of in court – twisting words, making misleading claims, and the like. And yet he disparages it. I argue that he does so because Euthydemus and Dionysodorus pose a threat to his profession: if everyone knew how to write persuasive speeches, then everyone would have his skill, and he would never be hired. This man fashions himself wise because he knows how to confuse and deceive the public. Yunis calls the speechwriters, who do not themselves appear in court or the Assembly, mercenaries of a prime political skill, namely, rhetoric.[17] Euthydemus and Dionysodorus offer that skill to anyone, and quickly, too. In this way, they are almost democratic:

[17] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 174.

they offer to distribute the power of persuasive speech to everyone, albeit in a way that disregards the truth.

Ought we readers to be ashamed of Socrates? Perhaps we should not act like Ctesippus and immediately believe Socrates' words that honor and revere the λόγος of these brothers. I argue that Socrates is willing to submit himself to these brothers for the sake of allowing the youth to experience these λόγοι first-hand. The brothers make visible, in a seemingly democratic way, the tools that the experts have used to keep themselves in the position of power in the Assembly. The ultimate tool of power in a democracy is persuasiveness and convincibility. If that power were available to everyone, the livelihood of professionals for hire like this "wise" man talking to Crito would be in jeopardy. In this sense, the skill that the brothers claim to teach is not shameful at all.

Socrates does not immediately dismiss this man's objections. Instead, Socrates asks Crito for clarification about who exactly he is and what he does. Crito responds that he is "anything but a rhetorician, by Zeus, and I don't believe he's ever mounted the podium in a lawcourt, but they say he understands the business, by Zeus, and that he's a formidable man and puts together formidable speeches" (305c). Crito offers two swears in one sentence. Socrates learns that this man does not deliver speeches, he merely writes them for others. As Socrates will characterize these types of people later on, "they are moderately good at philosophy and moderately good at politics—since they take part in both as far as one has any need to, in order to reap the fruits of wisdom while keeping themselves outside of the risks and competitions" (305d-e). He merely sells his persuasive skill to the highest bidder. As such, he has no need to concern himself with the truth of his words or how his persuasive skills will be used. In other words, he will face no consequences if someone else delivers his speech and it results in unjust legislation. Thus, these expert speechwriters undermine democracy.

Socrates tells Crito he knows exactly what sort of man he is. These sorts of people are the ones "who Prodicus says are the borderline between a philosophic man and a political one, and they believe they're the wisest human beings of all, and that they not only *are* but seem that way too to very many people" (305c). It is interesting that Socrates references Prodicus. Prodicus was known for attaching precise, often etymologically based, meanings to words. Socrates admits that these folks believe that they are wisest, and that everyone else believes so too. Socrates continues: "Because they think that while the truth is they're the wisest ones, when they get trapped into private discussions, they're diminished in stature by those in Euthydemus's circle" (305d). What does Euthydemus have that he does not?

Thus far, I have been making the argument that this man disparages Euthydemus because he is threatened by the potential outcome of his teaching, namely, a more educated public. I am not claiming that Euthydemus and Dionysodorus can offer any wisdom to their students; their λόγοι are sophistical and merely entertaining, at best. Their manner of speaking, however, would indeed be effective in the Assembly and law courts because it is persuasive and efficient. Ctesippus and Cleinias both were beaten by the pair of brothers, even though their λόγοι were far from truthful. For Socrates, their λόγος has "*more plausibility than truth* [εὐπρέπειαν μᾶλλον ἢ ἀλήθειαν]*"* (306a, emphasis mine). Sophistical λόγος is not truthful, but it need only *seem* to be convincing. The more citizens that can recognize this fact, the better off the democracy is. We see Ctesippus making this realization in real time during the dialogue.

This is precisely the reason Socrates wants to learn from the pair of brothers and bring along Cleinias, Critobulus, or any other young and powerful Athenians. Socrates does not want them to learn the skill but rather to learn the valuable lesson that these men like Crito's companion who have been controlling the democracy have more plausibility than truth. Socrates is willing to

embarrass himself in front of the large crowd in the undressing room of the Lyceum for the sake of causing others to learn it. In chapter one, I made the case that democracy caused the birth of sophistry and persuasive speech, and in this chapter, I argue that education is the very tool needed to save democracy. In this sense, the education that the pair of brothers offers is in fact useful and good. Under the guidance and guardianship of someone like Socrates, it makes the democratic process fairer – no longer will Ctesippus be duped by λόγοι that merely outrage him. No longer will Cleinias be too flummoxed to speak his opinion. Athenian youth must learn how to defend themselves against sophistical λόγοι.

Socrates and Crito begin at this point to discuss philosophy and politics more generally, with respect to the good. According to Socrates, "if philosophy is a good thing and political action is too, each in relation to a different end, and those who take part in both are the middle ground between them, there's nothing in what they say—since they're inferior to both" (306b). If both philosophy and political action are good, then the middle position between them is inferior, since one would be a dilettante in both but an expert in neither. This middle position is precisely what Crito's companion fashions himself to be. Socrates continues that these folks are, *in truth* (ἀλήθεια), inferior to both philosophers and devoted politicians. But *they seek to be thought of* as both (306c). These men who are afraid of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus' democratization of their λόγος are not wise but they must be perceived as wise. They are threatened, not only by Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, but also by philosophers like Socrates who do not charge a fee, because both sophistry and philosophy claim to democratize thinking, truth, and education. A wise δῆμος is a threat to the Athenian elite.

Crito then returns to the initial *raison d'être* of the dialogue: how should he educate his sons, especially the older Critobulus (306d)? Crito is disappointed in himself because he took great

pains to make sure Critobulus has every advantage: good marriage, wealth, noble birth, and yet he has neglected his education. He defends his decision because the educators that he has interviewed seem to be utterly preposterous and unworthy. Here Socrates offers a very curious response: "Crito my friend, don't you know that in every pursuit, inferior people are numerous and worth nothing while those of serious stature are few and worth everything?" (307a). In essence, for every expert, there are many more amateurs. This point sounds utterly undemocratic: the majority is worth nothing, only the few experts should be trusted. Democracy should not be implemented, by this account. I argue, to the contrary, that Socrates is making a different point. Rather, Socrates is reassuring Crito that even though there are many mediocre educators, one ought not neglect the task altogether. Even though many people are terrible at gymnastics, moneymaking, rhetoric, and generalship does not mean that Crito should forbid his sons from engaging in these pursuits (307b). This, I argue, is indeed a democratic idea. Through debate and dialogue, democracy *works toward* the good. Deliberation is integral to the democratic process. It is that through which – the proving ground so to speak – the experts and the dilettantes will be revealed if the citizens are careful, on their guard, and attentive to both the λόγος and the truth.

Socrates concludes:

> Then don't do something you shouldn't Crito; just let those who pursue philosophy go their merry way, whether they're wholesome or corrupt people, and test the soundness of the thing itself beautifully and well, and if it reveals itself to you as something worthless, then warn *every* man away from it and not just your sons. But if it reveals itself to be the sort of thing *I* believe it is, then pursue it and practice it boldly, exactly as that saying goes, yourself and your children too (307c).

Crito has been neglecting his sons' education because he is indecisive and ambivalent about education and philosophy in general. And Socrates admonishes him for that. Socrates implores Crito to trust his own opinion of what is good or bad. And most importantly, Crito should trust that others, like Iolaus, will help him and his sons along the way.

3.0 CHAPTER 3 INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION: UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY

In this chapter, I will analyze precisely *how* inequality in access to education serves to undermine democracy. In ancient Athens, the more prosperous families could afford the most expensive sophistical education, and this education leads to further wealth inequality, since the wealthy have been taught how to speak persuasively in the Assembly, so they can advocate for their interests more effectively than someone who does not have an education in persuasive λόγος. In this sense, sophistry is a direct threat to democracy. Those with the most education, that is, the wealthiest, will be the most powerful in the political realm. Thus, inequality in education is undemocratic. It behooves the sophists to teach others to cultivate wisdom, or at least develop the appearance of wisdom, for those that can afford to learn to how to do so. The more exclusive their clientele, the more they can charge for tuition. There is a way, however, for education instead to foster a healthy environment for democracy to flourish. While Socrates never claims to be a teacher, he devotes his life to fostering this environment for the sake of the πόλις, and he does so by guiding the Athenian youth to place their care in the excellence of their souls. According to Sallis, "Socrates both belongs to the city in a radical sense and yet transcends the city in a sense no less radical."[1] Socrates belongs to the city most radically and also most integrally, and yet he also transcends the city as well – he serves to make the city better by transcending the traditionally accepted values of the city.

We will see this come to light in the *Protagoras* because this dialogue concerns the un/teachability of virtue. In the *Protagoras*, Socrates claims that while everyone has the potential for wisdom, some are better able to cultivate that wisdom than others (this is what he will call the

[1] Sallis, *Being and Logos,* 11.

art of measuring [μετρητικὴ τέχνη]). Those that have learned how to properly measure their pleasures and pains will be the most virtuous. This μετρητικὴ τέχνη, Socrates concludes, is a form of knowledge that can be learned, and as a result, virtue is teachable. Socrates actively works to democratize the art of measuring so that every citizen has the potential to become virtuous and wise. The more effectively all Athenians learn to cultivate the art of measuring, the more equally democratic Athens will become. Since virtue amounts to the art of measuring, Socrates can then serve the πόλις democratically by showing all Athenians how to cultivate the art of measuring, not merely the wealthy elite.

3.1 WHAT IS ῥHTORIKḤ? ΛΌΓΟΣ AND ἔΡΓΟΝ

Sophists offered a political education primarily in rhetoric (ῥητορική). Yunis offers a rather restrictive definition of rhetoric. For him, rhetoric is simply the deliberative setting of political debate and advising. Rhetors advise members of the δῆμος and debate positions in the Assembly, and the Assembly deliberates on policy that the rhetors put forward on the public floor. [2] Yunis also asserts that rhetoric occurs within the realm of freedom. Whereas a tyrant uses force as his or her mode of control, for a democratic rhetor, speech is used to sway the opinions of free people – both parties, the speaker and audience, partake in a kind of freedom, for Yunis.[3] Furthermore, he argues that the true rhetor loves his or her auditor and has the best interests of the auditor (the δῆμος) in mind.[4] Ideally, Yunis would be right, but it is naive to assume that all rhetors have pure means and the desire to preserve the freedom of the δῆμος.

[2] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 13, McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 4.
[3] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 69.
[4] Yunis, *Taming Democracy*, 189.

This definition of rhetoric fits the democratic setting of public governance, but I wish to define ῥητορική more broadly. Schiappa makes the assertion that Plato himself coined the term ῥητορική.[5] Roochnik defines rhetoric, in the broadest sense, as "the ability, perhaps the techne, of speaking well in the public, political, or practical arena. […] Rhetoric is able to make good use of language, of logos, which aims to achieve some practical purpose for a specific audience."[6] In other words, a rhetor must have a good sense of καιρός -- s/he must know the particular way to respond and at the particular time.[7] Rhetoric is concerned with the practical: the public, open, political sphere. Roochnik will ultimately argue that rhetoric is not a techne, and I agree with Roochnik on this point, albeit for different reasons. For Roochnik, rhetoric is a type of non-technical wisdom, like ἀρετή, that Socrates and Plato are concerned with. I argue instead that rhetoric is a δύναμις. In this sense, everyone has the power, the ability to be persuasive.

Rhetoric is simply an ἔργον by way of λόγος. That is to say, rhetoric is *enacted.* The content of the ἔργον is itself λόγος. Rhetoric is the way we bring λόγος to the surface, the way we communicate λόγος, not only to others but also to ourselves. All language is rhetorical, including philosophical language. I follow McCoy's definition of rhetoric: "the means used to persuade through words."[8] This definition is broad, because rhetoric takes many forms, depending on how and who one is attempting to persuade. Under this definition, Socratic philosophy also is rhetorical. For McCoy, "Socrates' rhetorical practice, and his very concept of philosophy, relies more on φρόνησις and καιρός than upon a technical approach to philosophical method."[9] Socrates is

[5] Schiappa, "Did Plato Coin Rhetorike." He bases this argument on two points. First, the word ῥητορική has not been found in any texts written before Plato, specifically, the *Gorgias.* There are instances of ῥήτορ and other forms, but not ῥητορική. Second, Plato has invented other -ική words, so the claim is not unprecedented. Schiappa cannot prove this claim conclusively, but he does cite some convincing evidence.
[6] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 65.
[7] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 181.
[8] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 3.
[9] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 4.

rhetorical because he takes into account the character of his interlocutor and the context of the conversation, in addition to the content of the λόγοι themselves. According to McCoy, "Socrates does not reject sophistic rhetoric altogether but instead takes up elements of it to be used in service of a higher moral purpose."[10] It is the τέλος that determines the worth of the λόγος, not the rhetorical devices. McCoy frames her arguments regarding philosophical rhetoric in terms of love of the ideas. In addition to his higher τέλος of Socrates' use of rhetoric, I also see an underlying concern for democracy itself as well. Yunis also sees the connection between rhetoric and democracy: "the activities and expectations of the *dēmos*, the requirements and goals of political life—*as these were understood by political thinkers*—contributed to the creation of a systematic approach to linguistic persuasion."[11] The political atmosphere of democracy makes the problem of rhetoric a practical and urgent concern. It has real-world effects that must be confronted by the πόλις. Specifically, the δῆμος listens to the ῥήτορες, and the δῆμος must determine whether or not the ῥήτορ is speaking truthfully and virtuously or with the aim to deceive. Thus, the δῆμος must be virtuous themselves, if they are to recognize the virtue of the wisdom of the ῥήτορες.

While the sophists claim to teach ἀρετή to the citizens who either are or will become ῥήτορες, they only need to concern themselves with teaching the *appearance* of ἀρετή. In this sense, Kerferd even speaks of a "widening gulf" between rhetoric and reality.[12] Sophists teach, instead of moral excellence, the art of speaking persuasively. If one can be persuasive, one can make what is unvirtuous appear virtuous. According to Bartlett, the question of virtue is both an epistemological and a political one.[13] In this sense, we see the muddling and confusion of rhetoric, virtue, politics, and philosophy. Someone who is virtuous but unable to speak well about virtue

[10] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 40.
[11] Yunis, *Taming Democracy,* 281.
[12] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement,* 78.
[13] Bartlett, "Socratic Political Philosophy," 526.

would be less convincing in the Assembly than someone who is unvirtuous but is able to give the appearance of virtue through persuasion. Thus, an education in persuasive speaking is both potentially dangerous for the πόλις and coveted by those with the potential and desire for political power.

While anyone has this *ability* to speak persuasively, that is, has the appearance of virtue and the political art, implicit in the *Protagoras* is the assumption that only a select few are taught how to cultivate that ability. Only those who can *afford* to study with a sophist in actuality have the ability to cultivate rhetorical skill. The wealthy become more persuasive in the Assembly because they can afford an education. One could argue, however, that this same objection could be raised against Socrates as well. Of course, Socrates famously never takes payment for his teaching, but leisure (σχολή) is a necessary prerequisite for studying with Socrates. Only the leisure class can afford the *time* to follow Socrates around the ἀγορά. I argue that this claim is short sighted, however, due to the motivation behind Socratic philosophy.

3.2 ENTERING THE INSTRUCTION OF THE SOPHIST

In order to show how an inequality of education serves to undermine democracy, one must first determine what sort of education will one receive if one were to study with a sophist. I am going to begin, not at the beginning of the *Protagoras* in which Socrates happens by chance upon an unnamed comrade on the road back to Athens proper, for the dialogue takes place in the Piraeus, but at Socrates' initial conversation with Protagoras in which he announces his arrival and reason for his presence. When Protagoras asks Socrates to state his purpose, Socrates response that "Hippocrates here is a native; a son of Apollodorus, of a great and prosperous house" (316b). Socrates claims that Hippocrates is from a prosperous house, and he mentions his father by name.

Presumably Socrates does so to entice Protagoras into taking him on as a student – Hippocrates will be able to afford the fee, and he will have the leisure time to devote to learning the political art. And yet Socrates' claim does not coincide with what we learn about Hippocrates earlier in the dialogue, when Socrates and Hippocrates meet at Socrates' home. According to Debra Nails, very little is known about Hippocrates and his family. This character could refer to the nephew of Pericles, but Nails admits that it is hard to justify Socrates' claim that Hippocrates comes from a prosperous family.[14] We do know that Hippocrates himself owned at least one enslaved person, but he is not very good at managing his household, since he came straight to Socrates' house from recapturing this person who has run away. For this reason, perhaps, Socrates tells Protagoras that Hippocrates "desires to be held in high regard in the city, and he supposes that this will come to pass for him above all if he should associate with you" (316b-c). Hippocrates is not yet held in high regard, but he hopes to become well respected.

Hippocrates wants to learn the necessary skills such that he will be held in high regard by his fellow Athenians, and he wants to learn these skills from Protagoras, who is a foreigner. The implication is that Hippocrates has not learned these skills from his own family. Protagoras appreciates Socrates' forethought (προμηθής) in bringing Hippocrates to him and responds that for a foreigner "who goes into great cities and there persuades the best of the young to forsake the company of others—both kin and others, older and younger—and to associate with him, on the grounds that they will become the best possible through their associating with him […] must take precautions. For no little envy arises over these things, and other ill will and hostile plots as well" (316c-d). Protagoras is aware of these political dynamics at play. On the surface, it is not conceivable that education in ἀρετή could engender envious and hostile designs. The reason

[14] Nails, *People of Plato,* 169-170.

becomes clear when we take into consideration the fact that sophists are teaching the sons of prominent families how to either be virtuous or manipulate others into thinking that they are being virtuous. They are teaching Athenians how to garner political power, without a necessary concern for truth or justice.

Yet despite the potential threat of hostility, Protagoras embraces the title of sophist, while others are ashamed of this label. According to Protagoras, every teacher is a sophist, even physical education teachers, yet he omits naming politicians as sophists (316e). Instead, the other teachers cloak their true identity (sophists) *for the sake of* the politicians: "they didn't escape the notice of those among humans with the power to act [δυναμένους] in the cities, for whose sake these cloaks exist" (317a). Protagoras is aware of the political situation that he is in and also that he puts his students in. And yet he boldly carries on anyway: "I grant that I am a sophist and that I educate human beings, and I think this is a better precautionary measure than theirs, namely granting it rather than denying it" (317b). Protagoras freely admits that he is an educator, a sophist, and believes that this is his protection.

For proof, Protagoras mentions his old age – he has not yet faced any harm, yet he is old enough to be the father of anyone present (317c).[15] The idea of fatherhood will play a crucial role in this dialogue. For if virtue is teachable, then the interlocutors must account for the fact that virtuous fathers, especially Pericles, were unable to cause their own sons to be virtuous as well. It may be said that Protagoras takes on the role of a father to a certain extent, in a more important way than his old age. Instead, he claims to be the intellectual father of those present. Perhaps

[15] There is an interesting counterpoint to Socrates in the *Apology* and Protagoras. Socrates, too, is old in the *Apology*, yet he is still put to death while making the case that he is not a sophist. In terms of self-preservation, there is some practical wisdom in Protagoras' approach. He is up front about who he is and what he claims to teach, so he does not fall into the trap that Socrates does of being confused with anyone else or being perceived as trying to hide his profession.

Protagoras is making this allusion to his own fatherhood too hastily: virtuous fathers can beget unvirtuous children. As the father-sophist, is Protagoras subject to this fate? If he thinks of himself as the virtuous father, it is not guaranteed that his "sons" will turn out to be virtuous as well. This is precisely the worry with education in general, but specifically a sophistical education. Thus, before continuing in the conversation with Protagoras, we must look at how Socrates initially characterizes the sophists earlier at his home when Hippocrates first interrupts his sleep.

3.3 JUDGEMENT BEFORE INVESTIGATION: SOCRATES' CHARACTERIZATION OF SOPHISTRY

The *Protagoras* opens with Socrates meeting, by chance, a comrade of his along the road, and this friend remains nameless. Socrates has just come back from his get-together with Protagoras at Callias' house, who lives in the Piraeus, and Socrates is returning home to Athens proper. The comrade asks to hear the events at Callias' house, and his entourage makes room for Socrates to sit beside him and relay the conversation. The frame does not come back into focus for the remainder of the dialogue. The *Protagoras* is narrated by Socrates on the side of the road, in between the Piraeus and the Athenian city.

The *Protagoras* is perhaps unique as a Platonic dialogue for two reasons: first, Socrates passes judgment on a matter before he investigates it fully, and second, perhaps for the only time in a Platonic dialogue, at the beginning of the *Protagoras* we see a depiction of Socrates at home, in his private space. Often Socrates will chastise his interlocutors for wanting to judge certain behaviors or concepts before properly defining them. This frustrates the interlocutors immensely, since it seems obvious that it is good (ἀγαθόν) to be pious, just, courageous, and so forth. Yet in the *Protagoras*, Socrates himself passes judgment on sophistry before he even meets Protagoras.

He tells Hippocrates that sophists sell a dubious education in virtue and that they are not to be trusted (314b). Yet the first question Socrates asks Protagoras is to determine what is it that Protagoras, a self-proclaimed sophist, claims to teach (318d). Clearly Socrates deems it worthwhile to take the time to find out what a sophist is, so how can we account for this oddly "anti-Socratic" behavior?

Additionally, the drama of the dialogue opens in the middle of the night, before dawn had broken while Socrates is at home, asleep (310a). Hippocrates raps on Socrates' door with his walking stick, someone opens the door for him, and he asks Socrates if he is awake or asleep (310b). Socrates had indeed been sleeping, in the comfort of his own home. Socrates is surrounded by his kin, and it is only in this setting that Socrates feels comfortable enough to pass judgment on sophistry prior to investigation. Socrates narrates that the young Hippocrates woke him up before dawn to alert him that Protagoras has arrived three days ago. Hippocrates was unaware of Protagoras' arrival in Athens because he was preoccupied with re-enslaving a member of his household who ran away. Roochnik offers an interpretation that, albeit speculative, reveals Hippocrates' character: "Hippocrates recounts his late night in Oenoe, an Attic deme. He was searching for his lost slave Satyros. 'Oenoe' is derived from *oinos*, 'wine,' and Satyros is related to 'satyr,' the companion of Dionysus. In other words, Hippocrates has been on a binge in 'wineville.'"[16] Hippocrates is in need of guidance, restraint, and σωφροσύνη.

Perhaps this is why Socrates immediately assumes that Hippocrates is so interested in Protagoras because he feels slighted at some injustice (310d). After all, Hippocrates arrived in the small hours of the morning, which is hardly an appropriate time to make a house call. Socrates fears that Hippocrates is in trouble at the hands of Protagoras. Hippocrates agrees that Protagoras

[16] Roochnik, *Of the Art of Wisdom,* 230.

has wronged him: Protagoras is wise and does not make him wise too. Socrates suggests that Hippocrates "give him money and persuade him [πείθῃς]" (310d). Hippocrates desires exactly this, but he is unable to accomplish this goal by himself. Thus, Hippocrates has come to Socrates not for money, for Socrates has none, but rather for Socrates' ability to persuade Protagoras. Essentially, Hippocrates is going to use Socrates as a persuasion tool against Protagoras. Furthermore, Hippocrates does not ask Socrates to accompany him; he more or less demands it. Socrates must calm Hippocrates down and persuade him to wait, since dawn has not yet broken. They pass the time by strolling in Socrates' courtyard. In doing so, they mirror the courtyard strolling that Protagoras takes up at Callias' house, as we will see (314e). Protagoras and his entourage are strolling about the portico in an orderly and beautiful manner (315b). As they wait for the appropriate hour, Socrates examines Hippocrates about who Protagoras is and what he claims to teach. Hippocrates agrees that it would be appropriate to pay money to Protagoras on the ground that he is a sophist (311e). Socrates then asks Hippocrates if he wants to learn from Protagoras how to be a sophist himself, and Hippocrates blushes. The sun has risen, and Hippocrates has become visible to Socrates. Hippocrates knows there is something shameful about sophistry, and yet he is still eager to get to Callias' house.

Socrates accuses Hippocrates of not knowing what it is that he wants: "that you are about to entrust your own soul to the care of a man who is, as you assert, a sophist. But I'd be filled with wonder if you know what in the world a sophist is. Yet if you are ignorant about this, you know neither to whom you are handing over your soul, nor whether you do so to something good or bad" (312c). These are not small matters; Protagoras could affect the virtue or baseness of Hippocrates' soul. Socrates beings to sow doubt in Hippocrates' mind by admonishing him for not thinking this through beforehand and merely assuming that Protagoras will be a positive influence.

The question that Socrates asks Hippocrates actually has to do with the content of his discussion with Protagoras, too: how is the soul reared? Socrates then answers his own question: the soul is reared by learning (μάθημα) (313c). This question can be rephrased, as indeed Socrates and Protagoras do rephrase it latter – is ἀρετή teachable? Socrates likens the sophists to a wholesaler or retailer who would be perfectly willing to "deceive us as do those who sell the nourishment of the body […] they praise everything they have for sale" (313c-d). Since sophists have wares for sale, they need engage in marketing, just like merchants who claim a certain food they have for sale is "healthy." Only a nutritionist or physician would be able to tell what is truthfully healthy and what is merely tasty. Likewise, only an expert in ἀρετή could tell if what the sophists have to sell is beneficial or harmful, but any instruction would be superfluous for the expert. Socrates continues:

> So too those who hawk learning from city to city, selling and retailing it to anyone who desires it at any given moment; they praise all the things they sell. But perhaps some of these as well, best one, are ignorant of what among the things they sell is useful or worthless to the soul. And so too are those who buy from them, unless one happens to be a physician expert in what pertains to the soul (313d-e).

Socrates makes all these judgments about sophistry before he even meets Protagoras.

Dramatically, this conversation occurs at Socrates' residence. Only within the confines of his own home, outside of the public eye, does Socrates find it appropriate to make judgments before thorough investigation. Obviously, Socrates has some idea about the truth of the practice of sophistry, since he is able to speak intelligently about it, but he has not yet investigated the matter with Protagoras, the sophist *par excellence.* But when it is at home, Socrates is able to speak about such matters. Socrates assumes not only that the sophists' students will not be able to tell what is harmful and what is beneficial, but perhaps the sophists themselves do not know either. I argue that they simply do not care – they teach both the weaker λόγος, that is, the untruthful, merely persuasive λόγος and the stronger λόγος, namely, the truth. Essentially, Socrates is saying that if

one is able to tell the difference between what is useful or worthless for the soul, one will not be harmed by the sophists. But if this is the case, one would not need to study with a sophist.

Furthermore, the risk of an improper education harming the soul is great. Socrates loosens his grip on the analogy of food and sophistry: it is possible to buy food and not eat it, or at least wait until a health expert has examined it, therefore avoiding harm to the body if the food is discovered to be unhealthy (314a). In contrast, for the education of the soul, "for one who has paid the tuition and taken the instruction into the soul itself through having learned it, he necessarily goes off having already been harmed or benefited thereby" (314b). In other words, the effects of learning are immediately felt. This is precisely what is potentially so harmful (and also beneficial) about learning: it cannot easily be reversed or delayed. The harm has been done, but also one might potentially be benefitted immediately as well. Socrates assumes that Hippocrates will be harmed by the sophists at Callias' house, but he agrees to take Hippocrates to see Protagoras nonetheless. Socrates is willing to bring Hippocrates to Callias' house for the same reason he let Euthydemus and Dionysodorus interrogate Cleinias and Ctesippus in the *Euthydemus*: so that they can bear witness to sophistry in a low-stakes environment in order that they might be on their guard in the Assembly.

3.4 VIRTUE IS UNTEACHABLE

The discussion between Protagoras, Socrates, and Hippocrates, in front of the crowd, opens with an assertion about what Hippocrates will learn from Protagoras. As we saw above, Socrates already seems to know that Hippocrates will not learn anything beneficial, but he wants to hear it from Protagoras himself. According to Protagoras, "the subject in question is good counsel concerning one's own affairs—how he might best manage his own household—and, concerning

the affairs of the city, how he might be the most powerful in carrying out and speaking about the city's affairs [τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περί τε τῶν οἰκείων ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὑτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικοῖ, καὶ περὶ 319τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν]" (318e-319a). Protagoras claims to teach good counsel about two items: private and public affairs. Clearly Hippocrates needs the first, as we learn earlier that he does not manage his household well. Furthermore, the difference between private and public affairs is uniquely democratic because in a democracy, citizens must care for both their private interest and the common good. Without a democracy, one only has jurisdiction over one's private affairs. Thus, in terms of education, one only needed to learn how to manage one's own household; the monarch or aristocracy took charge of managing the city's affairs.

The second item that Protagoras claims to teach (good counsel about public matters) is twofold: making others powerful (δυνατώτατος) in *carrying out* the city's affairs and also powerful in *speaking about* the city's affairs. This, not surprisingly, will be the focus of the rest of the dialogue. Socrates responds to Protagoras: "in my opinion you mean the political art [πολιτικὴν τέχνην] and you claim to make men good citizens [ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας]" (319a). Socrates is the one that mentions πολιτικὴ τέχνη and paraphrases that Protagoras will make his pupils into good citizens. McCoy articulates this shift as Socrates turning the discussion toward moral education and away from strict political management.[17] Indeed, Protagoras does not deny Socrates' rephrasing, but he never fully asserts it himself. Socrates does not ask Protagoras for clarification

[17] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 64. Additionally, according to McCoy, ἀρετή "does not have a single, obvious meaning before it is discussed [in the *Protagoras*]. It is not clear that social-cultural explanations will suffice to explain its nature; readers can see that Protagoras' definition of what he teaches as *euboulia* and Socrates' restatement of this as the art of being a 'good-citizen' are both likely parts of the larger cultural understanding of excellence and yet not necessarily consistent with one another" *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 76.

about what πολιτικὴ τέχνη means, whether or not it can truly be said to be a τέχνη, or what sort of good counsel he can offer.

Furthermore, Socrates paraphrases and adds claims of his own that Protagoras did not himself make. This is unusual; typically, Socrates proceeds very slowly, making sure neither he nor his fellow interlocutors make the slightest leaps in the λόγος. Readers of the Platonic dialogues can generally anticipate when Socrates will restrain his interlocutors and prohibit them getting ahead of themselves and making a judgement on the matter being investigated before defining it. Instead, here Socrates immediately challenges Protagoras' profession by asserting that πολιτικὴ τέχνη is not even teachable at all, or more specifically, not "something that humans can bestow on other humans" (319b). Socrates then explains in the following λόγος what he means by this statement and how he reached this conclusion. The following λόγος sets the tone for the rest of the conversation, because the onus is now on Protagoras to disprove Socrates' initial assumption that the political art is not teachable. Protagoras must defend the efficacy and existence of his own profession. In essence, as I will show, Protagoras must convince Socrates that he can teach the political art, even though everyone already possesses the political art. In what follows, Socrates offers Protagoras a challenge. He must defend his profession, maintain the legitimacy of Athenian democracy, and show how it is that virtuous fathers cannot always make their sons virtuous as well.

Socrates' λόγος that supports the claim that virtue is not teachable, and that Protagoras thus cannot be a teacher of virtue, proceeds as follows:

> Why I don't hold it [ἀρετή] to be something teachable, nor something that humans can bestow on other humans, it's just for me to explain. For I assert that Athenians are wise [σοφία], as do the other Greeks. Now I see, when we gather together in the assembly, that whenever the city must carry out some matter pertaining to construction, the builders are sent for as advisors concerning the construction projects, and whenever concerning the building of ships, the shipwrights, and so on with all the other matters they hold to be subject to instruction and teachable. But if someone else attempts to advise them whom they do not suppose to be a skilled practitioner, then, even if he is very beautiful and wealthy and from well-born stock, they are not at all receptive to him but ridicule

> him and make an uproar until either the one attempting to speak is shouted down and steps aside himself or the city police drag or carry him off at the bidding of the prytanes. This, then, is how they act concerning those matters they suppose to be subject to an art. But whenever they must deliberate about something pertaining to the city's management [τῆς πόλεως διοικήσεως], a craftsman who stands up may advise them concerning these things, every bit as much as a blacksmith or cobbler, merchant or captain, rich man or poor, well- or low-born; and no one rebukes them for this, as in the previous cases, because one of them hasn't learned this anywhere or had any teacher but nonetheless attempts to give advice. For it's clear that they don't hold this to be something teachable (319b-319d).

Socrates begins with an assumption that he says all Greeks hold: Athenians are wise. For evidence that everyone assumes that the Athenians are wise, Socrates cites that if a project must be completed, the Athenian Assembly calls forth experts to advise the δῆμος. Socrates uses the examples of construction and ship building to illustrate his point: Athenians trust experts and do not trust non-experts regarded technical knowledge, and noble birth, wealth, or stature are immaterial regarding expertise in a τέχνη. Socrates seems to be equating τέχνη with expertise: if a field has experts and laypeople, that field is a τέχνη. Expertise garners the respect of the δῆμος, not wealth or nobility of birth, because wealth and nobility are not technical skills. Furthermore, Socrates contrasts τέχνη with city management, even though previously, he asserted that Protagoras teaches πολιτικὴ τέχνη. Either Socrates is contradicting himself or πολιτικὴ τέχνη is not concerned with city management. Neither conclusion is favorable. Socrates states that city management is not a τέχνη because every citizen, not merely the experts, may advise the Assembly. Therefore, city management is not teachable because there is no such thing as an expert and a nonexpert in city management. If it were a τέχνη, then it would be teachable, but since it is not, it therefore cannot be taught.

The λόγος can be summarized as thus: the Assembly listens to advice from experts on certain projects that are technical, and if someone were to attempt to advise the δῆμος about a τέχνη in which s/he is not an expert, that person will be ridiculed, and for good reason. In contrast, any citizen is free to offer advice on city management, and that advice is taken under consideration

by the Assembly. Therefore, city management cannot be teachable, since every citizen's opinion is treated equally, in contrast to technical skills. Since there are no experts and laypeople of city management, therefore, it is not teachable – no one is more skilled at city management than anyone else. Thus, Socrates concludes that Athenians are wise, since every citizen's opinion is respected on matters of city governance. I argue that Socrates is confirming the legitimacy of Athenian democracy. As we established in chapter one, the best person should rule the πόλις, and in a democracy, every citizen is deemed equally best at ruling the πόλις, that is, every citizen is wise in matters pertaining to city governance.

The repercussions for Protagoras, who claims to teach city management to the highest bidder, are vast. Not only must he defend his profession, but he also cannot undermine this democratic premise. If Protagoras asserts that not every citizen should be trusted in city management, he would be arguing against the legitimacy of Athenian democracy. This assertion would result in a loss of his own customer base, namely, the Athenian citizens who want to be persuasive in the Assembly. Protagoras' livelihood hangs in the balance if he cannot defend democracy. There is a caveat to be made: Socrates' and Athens' idea of free and equal representation in governance is in fact severely limited. Only male property owners are considered to be wise enough in city management, and everyone else does not share this "universal" wisdom. Protagoras *could* respond to Socrates that indeed, male property owners are wise, so he teaches everyone else how to be wise in city management as well. Unfortunately, this claim would not benefit Protagoras, since his customers are not these marginalized groups but the very Athenian elite themselves who have the means to pay a large sum for his instruction.

Socrates next offers "proof" that he is correct that city management, which he asserts is a part of ἀρετή, is not teachable (319e). Socrates claims that not only is ἀρετή not teachable in the

public realm, but also in private the most virtuous citizens cannot bestow virtue on their own children. For evidence, Socrates points to the epitome of honor and nobility: “Pericles, the father of these young fellows here, educated them nobly and well in those matters that depend on teachers, but as for those things in regard to which he himself is wise, he neither educates them himself nor gives them over to anyone else. Rather, they go around grazing unrestrained, in the hopes that they might on their own stumble across virtue somewhere” (319e-320a). Pericles’ sons and other relatives are present for the conversation: Callias’ maternal half-brother is Pericles’ son Paralus, Pericles’ other son Xanthippus, and Alcibiades, Pericles’ ward, are all present at Callias’ house. Pericles has many defenders at Callias’ house, but Socrates essentially tells the group that while Pericles himself is wise and virtuous, his sons (and Alcibiades) go around unrestrained and uneducated in ἀρετή. For Socrates, Pericles *would have* educated his sons if he were able. If anyone could educate his sons, it would be Pericles, since he is supremely wise, virtuous, and has the political art.

These two λόγοι, every citizen’s opinion is equal in the Assembly regarding city management, and virtuous fathers can fail to make their sons virtuous as well, make up Socrates’ initial assumption that virtue is in fact not teachable. Socrates has offered Protagoras a challenge. Protagoras must defend 1) his profession, 2) maintain the democratic values of Athens, and 3) explain why Pericles’ sons and wards are not virtuous. To meet the challenge, Protagoras delivers what is known as his Great Speech, which is comprised first of a μῦθος and then of a λόγος.

3.5 PROTAGORAS’ GREAT SPEECH

The myth that Protagoras tells (320d-322d) serves to uphold the legitimacy of democracy. It proceeds as follows. When the gods decided to create mortal beings, they mixed together earth

and fire to create life, and they employed Prometheus and Epimetheus (forethought and afterthought) to distribute the powers (δυνάμεις) to the different mixtures. Epimetheus begged Prometheus to let him make the distributions and told Prometheus he was free to examine the distributions afterwards. Epimetheus gave speed to some creatures, strength to others, large numbers to the weak, small numbers to the strong, weapons (talons, teeth) to some, and defenses (shells, scales) to others. Epimetheus guaranteed that each species was clothed (fur, blubber), had the means to sustain their nourishment and shelter, and reproduce effectively. In essence, he provided for the preservation of each species, as the Greeks had no conception of extinction. Unfortunately, Epimetheus lacked forethought, so he used up all the powers on nonrational beings (τὰ ἄλογα). In his myth, Protagoras does not say where humans gained λόγος; humans already had command of λόγος before Epimetheus and Prometheus began their distributions. One would assume that Epimetheus would simply give humans λόγος in order to overcome our natural weakness – we have no natural weapons, we are unclothed, not very strong, and so forth.

Prometheus responded to Epimetheus' mistake by stealing from Hephaestus and Athena technical wisdom and fire (κλέπτει Ἡφαίστου καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς τὴν ἔντεχνον σοφίαν σὺν πυρί) and bestowed them on humankind as a gift (δῶρον) (321d). With these godly gifts, humans were then able to have the wisdom needed to survive. Humans could care for the preservation of their own individual lives.

Thus, human technical wisdom and our manipulation of fire is a godly gift that is the result of Epimetheus' lack of forethought. We were never meant to possess these gifts. The human way of life is the product of a crime – we were never meant to have anything godlike about us. Our technical wisdom and manipulation of fire are unnatural – we have a share of the divine allotment. According to Protagoras' myth, λόγος is natural and not the godlike part of us. Since we have a

share of the divine, humans began to believe that we were kin to the gods, so we began to worship the gods. Additionally, we quickly formed speech and were able to provide for our food, shelter, and water.

Unfortunately, humans could not care for the preservation of the species because political wisdom still remained with Zeus. In other words, humans were not democratic. They still relied on Zeus for governance – he alone held the political art. Since we did not possess the political art, humans lived as solitary nomads. We were easily overrun by animals that are larger and stronger than humans, thanks to Epimetheus' distributions. The human race was in peril. For the sake of self-preservation, humans began to form cities and communities. Unfortunately, since humans did not have the political art, we committed injustices against each other, the cities swiftly broke up, and humans lived nomadically once again. Our species was threatened with extinction at the hands of stronger animals. Zeus cannot simply let the human race die out, since humans are religious. That is, our stolen gift had an unintended consequence: since humans share in the divine, that is, we have something divine in us, we were able to recognize the divine and thus worshiped the gods. Zeus did not want to renounce the sacrifices and adoration of the humans, so, fearing that the human race might be destroyed altogether, Zeus dispatched Hermes to bring αἰδώς and δίκη to humans so that we might be able to form communities and friendship. Hermes asks Zeus for clarification on the distribution of shame and justice—should it be given to only a few or to all? Should shame and justice be given out to only some, who will then be considered "experts?" Zeus decides to distribute them to everyone equally. Zeus then decrees the following law: anyone who is incapable of shame and justice shall be killed as an illness in a city (νόσον πόλεως).

There does not seem to be any impediment to receptivity of shame and justice in some humans rather than others, according to the myth. Protagoras' myth does not make sense of why

some people are unreceptive to Zeus' gift of shame and justice, as shameless and unjust people do exist. Thus, the fault must lie with the humans, not with Zeus' equal distribution. That is, one can turn away from the divine gift of justice and shame. One has the ability to turn one's back on the gods, to reject the gift. Justice and shame are freely *given* to all, but it is up to the individual to *receive* the gift. And those that refuse to receive the gift are deemed an illness to the city. Secondly, Protagoras says that anyone who does turn away from Zeus' gift should be killed as though s/he were an illness (νόσος) in the πόλις. One cannot help but think of Socrates' death here. This is precisely the charge that is brought against Socrates, namely, that he is an illness to the city and a source of corruption. Perhaps humans can be mistaken about who is receptive of shame and justice. Zeus sets down the law, so it must be just, but it is up to humans to uphold and interpret that divine law.

After telling the story, Protagoras then explains the impact that the myth has. Because of the way Zeus distributed shame and justice, while there are experts in certain fields, "whenever they proceed to advice having to do with political virtue [πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς], which must as a whole follow the path of justice [δικαιοσύνης] and moderation [σωφροσύνης], they reasonably tolerate it from *every* man on the grounds that it is proper for everyone to have a share in this virtue, at any rate, or else there won't be cities. That, Socrates, is the cause [αἰτία] of this" (322e-323a). Since Zeus bestowed justice and shame on all humans so that he can continue to receive his worship, (except for those who turn away from the gift), in order that we might be able to form cities and friendship, that is why every citizen has an equal say in the Assembly. Democracy is still upheld as a valid form of government, but there is room for improvement, as some must be taught not to reject the divine gift. Roochnik summarizes Protagoras' conclusion thus: "all human beings have some capacity for and so can be taught some measure, however small, of arete. Since aptitude is

naturally various, some, like Protagoras, learn better than others and can become teachers."[18] Everyone has the δύναμις for excellence, but some are naturally better able to cultivate that δύναμις than others. Protagoras himself claims to be superior in ἀρετή, so he is justified in teaching ἀρετή to others. Protagoras has met Socrates' challenge on two counts: he has upheld democracy as a viable form of government, but an education in virtue is still both possible and necessary.

Next, Protagoras has to determine what it is he claims to teach in order to truly defend his profession against Socrates' challenge. One could object that if justice and shame came directly from Zeus, it would be hubristic for Protagoras to claim that he can improve upon that divine allotment. In order to show how this is not the case, Protagoras gives a λόγος instead of a μῦθος. Protagoras showed how it is that everyone is potentially wise, but now he needs to show how it is still a skill that one can cultivate. To do so, Protagoras raises the example of someone who openly admits that s/he is unjust. We react to that person by assuming that s/he is mad (323b). Protagoras elaborates: "all must *say* they are just, whether they are or not, and […] anyone who doesn't pretend to possess justice is mad. […] Everyone should somehow or other share in it [justice] or cease to be among human beings" (323b-c). As we will see, Protagoras is explaining the Greek sentiment that no one does the bad thing willingly – no one would willingly act contrary to his or her wellbeing or self-interest. If someone were to willingly act contrary to one's self interest, we would assume that person is insane. Put differently, if someone claims that they do not possess justice, we assume that person is mad.

Of course, humans act unjustly all too frequently. Protagoras accounts for these instances by claiming that when we act contrary to self-interest, we are simply mistaken about what is best. There are really two points to be made here. 1) When we make a choice that is not in our favor,

[18] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 223.

we are mistaken about what our best interest is. When faced with a choice, we deliberate about which option to choose. We could be mistaken and make the wrong choice, but no one would willingly pick the option that s/he believes is worse. We might choose the wrong option if we do not know all the facts of the case, or if it is simply a guess. Additionally, one might choose the wrong option if one is overwhelmed or overcome by pleasure. It seems as though s/he is willingly choosing the wrong option. But in that moment of making the choice, the benefits of the immediate pleasure outweigh the future consequences. In the moment, one makes the choice that s/he *thinks* is in his or her best interest. Of course, one would be mistaken, but in the moment, the benefits of pleasure outweigh the potential harm. Curzer phrases this as self-deception: "an inferior option seems to be the best option. If this is the agents' only perspective because the agents have pernicious beliefs about values, or because they are blamelessly mistaken about important facts about the situation, then their acts are vicious or involuntary."[19] In other words, denial and rationalization are active choices that we make.

2) This idea that no one does the bad willingly also explains injustice. For example, in the *Republic,* Thrasymachus admits that injustice is better and more profitable than justice; he believes that it is more beneficial to one's self-interest to act unjustly than it is to act justly (344a). Thrasymachus is simply mistaken about what is beneficial. It seems as though all injustice can be explained by a lack of judgment – a mistake. The one making the decision *thinks* that s/he is acting justly. This is Protagoras' point – if someone says that s/he is not acting with justice or with their own benefit, then that person must be mad. Thrasymachus is not arguing that it is better to do the wrong thing than the right thing. Rather, he is arguing that injustice is better than justice. If, for

[19] Curzer, "Akrasia and Courage in the *Protagoras,*" 280.

the moment, we agree with Thrasymachus that injustice is better than justice, it would be mad to claim that one should be just.

Protagoras uses this assumption that no one does the bad willingly as the premise for his λόγος defending the teachability of ἀρετή. According to Protagoras, we believe that possessing a sense of justice is not "by nature or spontaneous, but rather something teachable and present in those in whom it is present as a result of diligence" (323c). Justice is something teachable. Protagoras proves that this is the case because "no one becomes angry or admonishes or teaches or punishes those who possess any of the bad things that human beings believe their fellows possess by nature or through chance, in order that they not be such as they are. Rather, they pity them [ἐλεοῦσιν]" (323c-d). In other words, any deficiency due to nature or chance is pitied, it is not ridiculed or taught how to change. For example, no one would admonish or shame someone who only has one arm, either from birth or from an accident, since having two arms is not more virtuous than having one arm. Likewise, it would not make sense to teach that person how to have two arms. Rather, we take pity on that person and make accommodations. In sum, it is impossible to change behavior, either through instruction or punishment, for bad things that happen by chance or by nature, because such behavior is out of one's control.

In contrast, "as for all the goods that they suppose belong to human beings as a result of diligence and practice and teaching, if someone does not possess these but rather the bad things opposed to them, then it is against these, presumably, that anger and punishments and admonition arise" (323d-e). For deficiencies that are within someone's control, it would be appropriate to punish or teach that person. It is appropriate to reward good behavior that is within one's control, just as it is appropriate to punish or reform bad behavior that is within one's control. For example, we can congratulate someone for succeeding in his or her career, but we do not congratulate folks

for having two functioning arms. Protagoras then answers the question about what exactly these controllable actions/possessions are that we praise/punish/teach: "one among these is injustice and impiety and, in a word, all that is opposed to political virtue [τῆς πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς] Then indeed everyone becomes angry at and admonishes anyone of this sort, clearly on the grounds that it can be acquired through diligence and learning" (324a). Since we blame those who do not possess virtue, therefore it must be possible to acquire it through trying. Protagoras says that anything that is opposite of virtue is worthy of punishment.

Protagoras next explains what he means by punishment. We do not punish someone in order to change the past wrong s/he has committed. Instead, "one who attempts to punish in accord with λόγος seeks retribution not for the sake of the past act of injustice—that would not undo what has already been done—but for the sake of the future one, so that neither the criminal himself nor anyone else who sees him punished may commit injustice again" (324b). Protagoras shows that Athenians punish people for being unjust, and the punishment is not merely futile but actually serves the purpose of either changing the criminal's mind or deterring future crime. If injustice is punishable, then by implication, justice must be teachable. That is to say, justice is subject to outside influence: "virtue can be gained by education [παιδεία]; at any rate it is for the sake of deterrence that he punishes. All those, then, who seek retribution, both privately and publicly, have this opinion" (324b-c). Punishing and teaching are both related to ἀρετή. Protagoras phrases his λόγος in the language of the many – anyone who seeks retribution thinks in this way. By doing so, Protagoras is showing the Athenians present that they already hold the assumption that ἀρετή is teachable. If unvirtuous behavior should be punished, then virtuous behavior can be taught.

Protagoras then addresses the objection that if ἀρετή were teachable, virtuous parents would teach their children to be virtuous as well, without fail. Protagoras asserts that if the πόλις

is going to be successful, all citizens must share in ἀρετή (justice, moderation, piety, wisdom) (325a). Whoever does not share in ἀρετή must be punished/taught, and if that fails, that person should be exiled/killed because that person must then be incurable. Protagoras uses the context of young children: where coaxing and teaching do not work, parents resort to punishment to change behavior, or even sending their children away to schools that will be more strict. Protagoras admits that those who can afford to send their sons to school have the greatest benefit:

> Those who are especially powerful [δύναμαι] do this, and the wealthiest are especially powerful: their sons begin to frequent the teachers at the earliest age and are released from them the latest. And once they are released from the teachers, the city in turn compels them both to learn the laws and to live in accordance with these as paradigms so that they may not act haphazardly according to their own inclinations (326c-d).

Here Protagoras gives us a glimpse into the true interaction between inequality in education and democracy: the wealthy can afford a better education, so they have a better understanding of the laws, and will thus abide by the laws more effectively. Those who cannot afford such an extensive education do not have this luxury. Laws, according to Protagoras, serve to constrain behavior where education fails or leaves off. If someone is unteachable in ἀρετή, then we have laws that work to constrain behavior, but those who can afford an education will be more likely not to be tempted to break the law (and be punished), according to Protagoras, because they have been taught ἀρετή by professionals. For Protagoras, there is a direct link between education and law: the more educated one is, the less likely one will be to break the law. The implication then would be that those with higher education deserve to lead others in public life. Here we begin to run up against the limits of democracy: education implies one is a better citizen. Of course, if one cannot afford an education, one can still abide by the law and act virtuously because it is law to do so. Education in virtue, however, is the gold standard for creating virtuous citizens, according to Protagoras.

Protagoras, to be sure, believes that he is equitable in his distribution of education.

> I aid someone's becoming noble and good better than do other human beings and that I am worthy of the fee I charge and still more, as is the opinion even of the student himself. For these reasons too I have fashioned a certain way of charging my fee: whenever someone studies with me, he pays me the money I charge if he wants to; but if he doesn't want to he goes into a temple, swears how much he asserts the teachings to be worth, and puts down that much (328b-c).

Protagoras vows that he only charges his pupils what they themselves think the education is worth. We should not trust that Protagoras is doing so equitably, however. He makes his living on these tuitions, so it seems unlikely that he does not guide these students into suggesting the price that he wants. Furthermore, according to McCoy, "the motivation for teaching one's children to be virtuous is not that virtue is intrinsically pleasurable or good in itself but rather that one might lose other goods if one lacks virtue."[20] One might want to learn ἀρετή not in order to make better laws but rather so that one's own private affairs and wealth will not be harmed. This practice, I argue, is undemocratic because one would be using the democratic process of policy-making in the Assembly for one's own benefit, not for the benefit of the common good. Protagoras has essentially claimed that education makes one a better citizen than those who are uneducated in virtue, and that the wealthy are able to afford a better education that those less fortunate. Protagoras has offered his defense against Socrates' second challenge that sophistry is a viable profession. He must next explain how it is that some virtuous fathers fail to teach their sons to be virtuous.

Protagoras closes his λόγος by claiming that the young men present in the dialogue, the ones that are related to Pericles (either by blood or not), should not be discounted as being unvirtuous because they are still young and may improve. Socrates tells his unnamed comrade that he is bewitched (κεκηλημένος) and that with difficulty he somehow gathered himself together to respond (328d). He accuses Protagoras of simply reciting a rehearsed speech, but if anyone were to press Protagoras, or any like him, on what he has said, there would be no reply (329a). In parallel to the *Euthydemus*, this is precisely how Socrates and Ctesippus are able to fight off the Hydra of

[20] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 65.

the pair of brothers: they force the pair of brothers to deviate from their script. Socrates here believes Protagoras would meet the same fate, if someone were to push him too.

3.6 THE ART OF MEASURING (ΜΕΤΡΗΤΙΚὴ ΤΈΧΝΗ)

Kerferd summarizes Protagoras' λόγοι in the following way: "all men share in virtue *because* they are all taught it, and the difference between parents and sons is due to differences in natural aptitudes for learning."[21] Protagoras does make some good points: some people do seem to be wiser than others, and Athenians do use punishment and teaching as a way to shape behavior. Perhaps ἀρετή is in fact teachable. Socrates then wants to consider whether or not all the virtues go together or if they are separate, as Protagoras has been loose with his terminology in the Great Speech. In essence, Socrates wants to know if some folks can be courageous but not just, or pious but not wise, and so forth. Protagoras agrees that the virtues are separate, but they are like parts of the face: together, they make up the whole face, but each is a separate feature.

Protagoras believes that courage underlies all the virtues, but in what follows, Socrates shows how knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) is the root of ἀρετή. If knowledge, which is something teachable, is the root of ἀρετή, then it must be teachable as well. If this is the case, then education makes one wiser and more virtuous. Thus, those who can afford a better education would be more virtuous. This claim is the key to inequality in education and civic leadership in Athens. While every member of the δῆμος has a chance, in theory, to become wise and well educated, in reality only some can afford that education.

In order to determine how the virtues are related to each other, Socrates and Protagoras make a crucial turn in the λόγος. They shift the discussion to the question about what is good or

[21] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 135. McCoy (2017) proposes a similar view.

bad. No longer are they simply making a distinction between the virtues, but now they are making a judgment about them. Protagoras, however, does not take this change in conversation well. Socrates tells his comrade that Protagoras was "riled up for a fight and contentious, and he stood prepared, as for battle, to answer me" (333e). Protagoras is in the mode of combat, and Socrates must exercise caution. The question then becomes: *why* is Protagoras so upset? What has gotten him so angry that Socrates likens him to someone going to war? Socrates simply asked if good things are advantageous to humans (333d). Protagoras says that the good is too complicated to pin it down. I argue that it is not the complicated nature of the good that angers Protagoras but rather the fact that his sophistical λόγος is not concerned with goodness. What appears like a small change for Socrates is in fact a giant leap for Protagoras.

After an interlude in which Socrates threatens to leave and long speeches of poetic exegesis, Socrates finally gets Protagoras to return to the discussion of ἀρετή that they had put aside. Now Protagoras makes a further assertion that he did not make earlier. Justice, moderation, piety, wisdom, and courage "are parts of virtue and that four of them are reasonably comparable to one another, but courage is very different from them all" (349d). Protagoras gives courage a privileged position because it is possible to be unjust, impious, licentious, and unlearned but also be courageous. Socrates raises an objection: the courageous are bold, to be sure, but it also requires some knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). According to Socrates, "the knowers are bolder than the non-knowers, and they themselves are more so once they've learned something than prior to it" (350a). In other words, those who are skilled and have knowledge are more virtuous than those who are unskilled and are ignorant. In this sense, virtue seems to be teachable. Protagoras quibbles on some small points, that while power (δύναμις) comes from knowledge, strength (ἰσχύς) does not, and that it is something natural (351a). In order to show Protagoras what he means, Socrates phrases

his λόγος in a different manner. He shifts the discussion to pleasures and pains: pleasure is good, and pain is bad. Protagoras adds the caveat that pleasurable things are only good if they are also noble, thereby arresting the hedonistic λόγος that Socrates seems to be putting forward (351d).

At root, Socrates attempts to determine what drives human behavior: is it pleasure and pain, or is it knowledge (ἐπιστήμη)? Socrates says that the many (πολλοί) think that knowledge "isn't a strong thing characterized by either leadership or rule […] often when knowledge is present in a human being, they think that it is not the knowledge that rules him but something else—now spirited anger, now pleasure, now pain, sometimes erotic love, many times fear. They simply think about knowledge as they do about a slave, that it is dragged around by all else" (352b). In other words, it seems as though knowledge takes a backseat to other drives that might be more pressing on human behavior, such a pain, fear, or love. While knowledge is certainly capable of ruling human behavior, often we are *overpowered* by something else (352c).

Socrates investigates the phenomenon of being overcome by pleasure or fear of pain, as that seems to be the driving factor when λόγος is overpowered. Socrates says it is the opinion of the many that they can be overcome by pleasure. Socrates and Protagoras agree that when we are overcome by pleasure, often it is by base pleasures. The one being overcome *knows* the pleasures are base, but that knowledge is not enough to sway behavior, even though the short-term pleasure will cause distress, such as illness or poverty, in the long run. On the other hand, certain actions may cause distress in the short term but produce pleasurable results, such as exercise, medical treatments, restricted diets, and so forth (354a). We call them good because they produce long-term pleasures, even though there is immediate pain associated with them. I argue that sophistical education is one of those immediate pleasures that may result in harm later on; Protagoras claims to improve his students on just the first day of education, after all. Socrates must be careful here,

as this could potentially be very insulting to Protagoras, if he shows that students are harmed by Protagoras. In contrast, Socrates has the opposite effect on his students. In the short term, associating with Socrates is painful, but after a while, one begins to experience the benefits from a Socratic education.

Thus, one should endure pain as long as the end result is good, and one should avoid pleasures that might bring harm later on. The problem is that determining which actions will bring pleasure and which will bring pain requires knowledge. If no one does the bad willingly, and if someone chooses an option that will be harmful in the long run, how can we account for that action? In other words, "although a human being knows that the bad things are bad, he does them nonetheless. If then someone asks us, 'On account of what?' we will say, 'Because he's overcome.' 'By what?' he will ask us. And it's no longer possible for us to say, 'By pleasure,' for it has taken on another name—'the good' instead of 'the pleasant.'" (355c). When someone chooses the wrong option, we can no longer say that person is overcome with pleasure, if pleasure and the good are equated, as Socrates and Protagoras agreed earlier. This would amount to saying that someone did not do the good thing because s/he was overcome by the good. Of course, that does not make any sense at all.

This is essentially Socrates' counterpoint to hedonism: if all pleasures are good, then when someone follows his or her desires and it results in a bad outcome, one would have to say that that person did not do the good thing because s/he was overcome by the good (pleasure). Instead, we have to say that by "being overcome" we mean that there is a greater number of bad things taking the place of a fewer number of good things (355e). Thus, pleasure and goodness cannot be equated, the way Protagoras was so quick to do earlier, or we must give up the assumption that no one does the bad willingly, for this would mean that someone is willingly choosing the bad option – s/he

was overcome by the bad. Bad things cause distress, and it would not make sense to say that we are overcome by distressing things because it causes pleasure either (355e-356a). How are we to make sense of this phenomenon? How do we know when the pleasures are going to outweigh the pains? "Like a human being good at weighing, adding up the pleasures and adding up the pains, putting the nearness and farness in the balance as well, say which of the two is greater. […] if the pleasures are outstripped by the distressing things, you mustn't carry out that action" (356b-c). According to Socrates, we decide which action is good and which is harmful based on how we *weigh* the potential pleasures and pains that will be gained from the action. If the pleasures, both immediate and distant, outweigh the pains, then that action is desirable. This balancing act is what Socrates calls the *art of measuring* (μετρητικὴ τέχνη) (356d). We decide how to act by applying the art of measuring to the potential pleasures and pains. This art of measuring saves us (ἔσωσεν ἂν τὸν βίον), according to Socrates (356e). I believe Socrates means it literally when he says that this art of measuring saves us: acting well or badly could very well cause our lives to hang in the balance, especially in a democracy where public policy is in the hands of the δῆμος. A δῆμος that does not have the art of measuring could lead the πόλις into an unjust war.

To explain what he means by the art of measuring, Socrates draws an analogy to counting: suppose "our life depended on our choosing odd and even, when we had to choose correctly the greater and the lesser, taking either in relation to itself or the one in relation to the other, whether up close or at a distance? What would save our life? Would it not be knowledge [ἐπιστήμη]? And would this not be a certain art of measuring, since in fact the art pertains to excess and deficiency?" (356e-357a). Virtuous action is brought about by art (τέχνη) and knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). That is to say, that which determines what actions are good and bad is a matter of knowledge and ignorance. Those with knowledge will act well, and those in ignorance will act poorly. Thus, ἀρετή can be

taught because when we act unvirtuously, we are acting out of ignorance. Likewise, when we act virtuously, we are acting because we have knowledge. Socrates summarizes:

> And you yourselves know, surely, that an erring action without knowledge is done through ignorance, with the result that this is what being overcome by pleasure is: the greatest ignorance, for which Protagoras here claims he is a physician, as do Prodicus and Hippias. But on account of supposing that it is something other than ignorance, neither you yourselves [go] to these sophists here as the teachers of these things, nor do you send your sons to them, on the grounds that it isn't something teachable. Instead, because you're concerned about your money and so don't give it to them, you act badly both privately and publicly (357e).

Being overcome simply means we are overcome by ignorance – we did not do the virtuous action because we did not *know* what the virtuous action was. This explanation upholds the assumption that no one does the bad willingly. Education stops one from acting out of ignorance. This is precisely what Protagoras, and all the other sophists, for that matter, teach: the art of measuring. In this sense, Socrates is making a point about education in general, even a technical education. One seeks the instruction of a teacher in order to remove ignorance in one's soul. Thus, a failure to educate oneself or one's children implies that one is acting badly both privately, and in a democracy, publicly as well. The wellbeing of the πόλις as a whole is at stake.

Socrates has effectively changed his position. Earlier, he upheld ἀρετή as unteachable, but now, since ἀρετή is at root knowledge (the art of measuring), it is teachable. The educator's role is to teach his or her pupils this art of measuring. If everyone had this knowledge, the πόλις would be virtuous. These two λόγοι appear contradictory, but I argue that they can be taken in conjunction, rather than in opposition. Throughout the dialogue, Socrates maintains the initial premise that everyone has the potential to be virtuous, that is, to learn the art of measuring. In practice, however, not everyone *is* taught the art of measuring. Socrates' goal is to improve the democratic body of the Athenian πόλις, and for this reason, he questions everyone in the ἀγορά, free of charge. Sophistical rhetoric, however, closes off that potential for wisdom, both in private

and also in public debate in the Assembly. Socrates works toward realizing the potential of the whole δῆμος, without bias for wealth, nobility, or birth.

We see evidence that this is Socrates' motive at the outset of the dialogue: Socrates agrees to bring Hippocrates to Protagoras, not so that he will be convinced to pay money to learn from Protagoras, but rather to show Hippocrates that he must learn to measure properly. The crucial difference between Socrates and the sophists is that Socrates does not claim to teach anything. The sophists *do* claim to teach, and the wealthy Athenians are willing to pay a large sum of money to learn from a sophist. For Kerferd, both Socrates and Protagoras both agree that education is the key to solving all social and political problems, but the content of the education differs. But both agree that if only people could come to see the wrongness of their actions, they would simply not act that way.[22] Perhaps Kerferd is right, but even if the sophists do actually teach this art of measuring, then the problem that wealth inequality is directly linked to ἀρετή still remains. Those who can afford to be taught the art of measuring will be experts in ἀρετή. Those that cannot afford the tuition will not know how to measure well and will thus be unvirtuous. One must conclude that the wealthy should rule because they are the ones who have been taught the art of measuring. The sophists are doing a grave disservice to the πόλις in that they are undermining the democratic process. Thus, I argue that there exists a direct link between wealth inequality, education inequality, and ἀρετή.

Surely there must be a better way! In what is to follow, I will show how Socrates' method of education is in fact democratic and equitable, in contrast to the sophists. Both Socrates and the sophists educate, even if Socrates does not claim to do so, but they do so in very different ways and for different ends. Protagoras' τέλος is clear: to turn a profit. He uses education for selfish

[22] Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 138.

ends. Sophists teach how to make each side of a λόγος equally persuasive, regardless of ἀλήθεια. This in itself undermines democracy – without the necessity of adherence to the truth on the part of the rhetors, the δῆμος will be unable to properly measure the proposals put before them. I maintain that rhetoric itself is not the problem, as philosophers use rhetoric as well. Socrates uses rhetoric for a virtuous τέλος, namely for the benefit of the community. Rhetoric is not noble or base in itself; rather, it is a skill that everyone can cultivate if one chooses and also has the means to do so. The problem occurs when one considers what those means are: wealth, leisure time, and also, I argue, democracy.

Thus, we run up against a normative question – how *should* we persuade others? For McCoy, "the purpose of λόγος is not simply to persuade, but instead to lead a soul to what is good, i.e., the forms."[23] How should we ensure that rhetoric is not used unjustly? Democracy allows for the ability to effect policy change based on one's λόγος, but wealthy Athenian democrats are being taught to make the untruthful λόγος appear to be truthful. Words *have value.*

[23] McCoy, "Alcidamas, Isocrates, and Plato," 60.

4.0 CHAPTER 4 SOPHISTRY'S EFFECT ON DEMOCRACY: PLATO'S *APOLOGY* AND THE PERCEIVED THREAT OF SOCRATES

In order to reveal the differences between Socratic philosophy and sophistry, I will turn to the *Apology* to see how Socrates himself sets his own way of life apart from that of the sophists. Socrates persuades (πείθειν) the youth to continue to champion democratic values and become wise members of the δῆμος. In contrast, Socrates' accusers are directly threatened by the strengthening democracy. Thus, what appears as corrupting of the youth is in fact Socrates' attempt to make Athens more democratic. This chapter will proceed as follows. First, I will offer an account of how Socrates transforms his rhetorical skill into ἔργον. The *Apology* is where we get Socrates' own account of why he practices philosophy and the political aspect of Socratic philosophy. According to Sallis, "the *Apology* is the dialogue which most explicitly has to do with the question 'Who is Socrates?'"[1] Socrates must defend himself to the many – the men of Athens. His goal is to make the Athenian youth more virtuous so that Athens will improve, so that Socrates' own life will improve in turn. This, I argue, is the main distinction between sophistical rhetoric and philosophical rhetoric: Socrates has the ability to instruct through ἔργον, even though he has no wisdom to teach to others. According to Sallis, "the dialogues present philosophy as deed."[2] That is to say, the Platonic dialogues present philosophy as something done or enacted. Philosophy is taken up as an action, for Socrates. The ἔργον of philosophy is λόγος. That is to say, where the λόγος is no longer beneficial, as is the case with the sophists, ἔργον can still be philosophical. As we have seen already, Socrates continues the conversations with Euthydemus and Protagoras, respectively, not because he expects to get the truth from them, but rather because going through

[1] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 26.
[2] Sallis, *Being and Logos,* 6.

the sophists' λόγοι is itself instructive. It causes the listener, and Socrates himself, to be guarded against such λόγοι in the future. Socrates uses sophistical λόγος as an educative tool in its own right, for the sake of the listener, not through sophistical λόγος, but through philosophical ἔργον.

Next, I will offer an analysis of a moment that should not be ignored in a discussion about philosophical education. That is, some of Socrates' loyal followers, like Alcibiades and Critias, both of whom are present in the *Protagoras,* pursued controversial political careers that did seem to harm the πόλις. To account for Socrates' apparent failure to morally educate the Athenian youth properly, I will draw two conclusions. First, to think about the failure on the side of the student is flawed. This is the attitude that Protagoras takes, as I will show, but Socrates takes up a different attitude toward teaching in which the learner is not to be blamed but instead the environment. Unequal access to education in Athens fostered an atmosphere such that someone like Alcibiades could flourish, at least temporarily. If a flourishing democracy is predicated on the wisdom of each citizen, then an unequal access to education, which brings about wisdom, leaves the δῆμος in a position of susceptibility to corruption and deception. Second, the question itself, namely, the question about Socrates' failure, is itself flawed. Socrates' goal is to improve the common good of Athens, and in this respect, as I will show, he does not fail at all.

I will conclude this chapter by taking a closer look at Socrates' defense of the two sets of charges brought against him in the *Apology,* because these charges accurately embody the way Socrates approaches civic engagement for the sake of improving the δῆμος. The older charges encompass the accusation against Socrates of challenging the Athenian νομοί. Socrates challenges the established order and organization of Athens. Socrates is *democratizing* Athens by democratizing education, and that is threatening to the aristocracy. The aristocracy is afraid of democracy because the Athenian Aristocracy will lose their political influence. Secondly, the

newer charges accuse Socrates of changing the values of the Athenian youth. Socrates encourages the youth to care about ἀρετή, what is *good* (ἀγαθόν), rather than simply what is *useful*. That is, the youth should place their care in ἀρετή, not persuasive speaking.

4.1 PHILOSOPHY AND THE CONCERN FOR THE ΠΌΛΙΣ

Socrates is on trial because he has apparently harmed the πόλις. He is accused of corrupting the youth and blasphemy against the Pantheon. Socrates is accused of being an illness to the city, so, as Zeus decrees in the myth in Protagoras' Great Speech, he must no longer participate in the city's affairs. If he is guilty, he should be exiled or killed, for the sake of the πόλις itself, because he does not share in αἰδώς and δίκη (322c). This accusation is so hurtful for Socrates because he devotes his entire life in improving the πόλις. According to Sallis, "the problem with Socrates has to do with limits, with the limits prescribed by traditional piety, with the transgression of those limits. Socrates' speech does not resolve the problem for the 'men of Athens.'"[3] Socrates goes beyond the limits of the Athenian νόμος. And yet, according to Brill, "the desire to be beyond the city is itself a political gesture."[4] In going beyond the limits of the human, of the πόλις, Socrates is still oriented toward the πόλις. That is to say, for Brill, the "beyond" includes the πόλις as well as the κόσμος.[5] Two questions must be asked: why do the Athenians think Socrates is going beyond the limits and harming the πόλις? And second, is he guilty of this charge? In order to answer these questions, I will examine the way in which Socrates explains his motives and the truth about what he is doing.

[3] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, xiv.
[4] Brill, *Plato on the Limits*, 6.
[5] Brill, *Plato on the Limits,* 5.

In the first few lines of his defense speech, Socrates guarantees his adherence to the truth (ἀλήθεια) (17b). In order to take seriously Socrates' defense of himself, we have to assume that he is indeed being truthful and not lying. And yet, Socrates begins his defense speech by claiming that he does not know (17a). Before he even promises to tell the truth, Socrates makes a claim to ignorance: "I do not know, men of Athens, how my accusers affected you" (17a). Socrates does not say that he is ignorant, except for the fact that he is truthful. Rather, no caveats are made to the claim to ignorance. By stating first that he does not know, Socrates, in a sense, adds a disclaimer for the rest of his defense speech. That is to say, I believe that Socrates cannot honestly claim to tell the truth simply because, in a sense, he does not know the truth. Thus, Socrates does not claim to be a teacher – he has no positive wisdom to give to others. By first making a claim to ignorance, and only after this initial claim does Socrates promise to tell the truth, Socrates is alluding to the limits of human wisdom. According to Sallis, "the question of limit is throughout a question of ignorance and of one's relation to one's own ignorance, of the philosopher's relation to ignorance. It is a matter of an enactment in speech by which the limit constituted by one's ignorance would become manifest."[6] Socrates will tell the truth of the facts to the best of his ability, how it *seems* truthful *to him* in his human limitation, but Socrates cannot tell the jury the absolute truth. He cannot do so because Socrates is careful to stay within the proper limitations of the human; full knowledge of the truth is reserved for the gods. To this end, Socrates asserts a third item: he will only speak plainly (17c). At 17a Socrates opens the defense with saying "I do not know," at 17b he promises that "from me you will hear the whole truth," and at 17c he states that his λόγος will not be "expressed in embroidered and stylized phrase like theirs [the accusers], but things spoken at random and expressed in the first words that come to mind, for I put my trust in the justice of

[6] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, xiv.

what I say." Socrates will not actively cover over the truth; he will not try to purposefully trick the jury. First, Socrates admits his ignorance, then he promises to tell the truth, and last he pledges to speak plainly. I argue that this order to statements is crucial to Socrates' defense of himself and philosophy. As we will see in the next chapter, they also correspond to the three moments of Socratic rhetoric: beginning in ignorance, removal of flattery and ingratiation, and dialogue.

To show how the *Apology* is Socrates' defense against the accusation of sophistry, I will divide Socrates' defense speech into a negative and a positive component. In this way, Socrates defends himself *against* the accusations brought against him, but he also defends his actions in a positive way. He gives a defense *for* himself. This way of dividing the λόγοι into two categories, a positive and a negative, captures Socrates' differentiation from sophistry: he shows how he is *not* guilty of doing what the sophists do, and he also shows how he is actively, positively, working toward a different kind of education for the Athenians. I address the positive defense in this section and the negative defense at the end of this chapter.

Socrates rhetorically asks himself what his profession is, and he responds: "a certain kind of wisdom […] human wisdom [ἄνθρωπον σοφίαν σοφοὶ]" (20d). Socrates does not claim that he possesses human wisdom; he merely asserts that his profession concerns human wisdom. To explain what he means, Socrates tells the story of Chaerephon at the Oracle of Delphi, the conclusion of which, famously, is Socrates' claim to ignorance: "it is likely that neither of us knows anything worthwhile, but he thinks he knows something when he does not, whereas when I do not know, neither do I think I know; so I am likely to be wiser than he to this small extent, that I do not think I know what I do not know" (21d). Socrates is wisest because he knows that he does not know, whereas everyone else holds the falsehood of thinking s/he has knowledge. For McCoy, "Delphi is a place in which the human being was supposed to be aware of his limitations as a

human being in the face of the divine."[7] Socrates' wisdom is divine because he openly embraces his human limitations, rather than attempting to cover over them. That is, Socrates' occupation involves first a care for his own human limitations, and second, he must help his fellow Athenians realize their human limitations as well. By occupying the position at the limit, Socrates' aim is to reveal the limits to both himself and others. Thus, ignorance is the appropriate stance of Socratic philosophy, not wisdom. While the sophists claim to *possess* wisdom, Socrates does the opposite: he claims an initial position of ignorance so that he might be filled with wisdom.

Furthermore, Socrates uses his "profession" as a justification for neglecting civic and personal affairs: "because of this occupation, I do not have the leisure [σχολή] to engage in public affairs [τῆς πόλεως πρᾶξαί] to any extent, nor indeed to look after my own, but I live in great poverty because of my service to the god" (23b). Socrates' justification for being a poor member of the δῆμος is that he is doing god's work. One could argue that this is enough to bring Socrates to trial. He is not upholding his end of the democratic bargain – Socrates enjoys all the benefits that Athenian citizenship has to offer, but he does not work to support and bolster democracy. In his Funeral Oration, Pericles implores the Athenians to take charge of their own political fate. Socrates seems to be doing the opposite: he neglects his civic duty. That is to say, Socrates claims that this role of following the god's plan for him is what forbids him from having the leisure to act democratically. If he had the time, he would participate in self-governance, but he must forgo this privilege and instead devote his time to his divine calling.

And yet Socrates reverses the role for the youths that follow him around: while Socrates does not have the leisure for political activism due to his occupation of philosophy, the Athenian youth do not share Socrates occupation; instead, *philosophy* is the leisure activity for them.

[7] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 45.

Socrates does not say that these youths, in their effort to follow the god's prophesy, do not have the leisure to engage in public life. Rather, Socrates says that "the young men who follow me around of their own free will, those who have the most leisure [σχολή], the sons of the very rich, take pleasure in hearing people questioned; they themselves often imitate me and try to questions others" (23c). The youths who are privileged with leisure time are able to follow Socrates on his divine journey. Socrates is not at leisure; this is his occupation. In contrast, the Athenian youth are only able to take up Socrates' task with him if they are at leisure, presumably, from civic leadership and also their private affairs: the youth of the very wealthy. Socrates does not have the leisure to care for his private and public matters, but the youth of the very wealthy do have the leisure to follow Socrates around as he works in his occupation. But, in my interpretation, they follow him around, they use their leisure time, in order to make themselves more virtuous so that they can be better democrats. For this reason, Socrates does not admonish his followers from using their leisure to engage in philosophy – they are doing so for the sake of Athens. That is, the youth are making good use of their leisure – they are learning how to become better members of the δῆμος.

In following the god's calling, Socrates knows that he has made Athenians angry by insulting them, and he has turned the youth against them. It is no small wonder that they condemn Socrates. The threat of death, however, is not a strong enough detractor for Socrates to quit his occupation: "you are wrong, sir, if you think that a man who is any good at all should take into account the risk of life or death; he should look to this only in his actions, whether what he does is right or wrong, whether he is acting like a good or a bad man [ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ ἔργα ἢ κακοῦ]" (28b). Socrates emphasizes ἔργον, he must work toward an interpretation of the Oracle's words. And yet he admits at the outset of the *Apology* that he has solved the riddle of the Oracle: Socrates is the wisest because he knows that he does not know anything. What further need of investigation

does he have? At the time he has been put on trial, Socrates' motives have changed. When he first took up his occupation, his goal was to interpret the Oracle. Now Socrates places his care in the wellbeing of the πόλις.[8] That is why Socrates allows the youth to use their leisure to learn philosophy. It is for the sake of the πόλις, not for individual gain.

These two motives are certainly not unrelated. Socrates lives as the god has ordered, "as I thought and believed, to live the life of a philosopher, to examine myself and others" (28e). Socrates has interpreted the Oracle as a call to become a philosopher. Thus, he should continue even after he has already interpreted the Oracle to his satisfaction (Socratic ignorance). Perhaps this is why Socrates offers that qualification "as I thought and believed." Socrates cannot be certain that this is the correct interpretation of the Oracle. This is why in his defense speech Socrates first claims that he does not know, then claims that he will tell the truth. Socrates is unsure of himself, unsure of his occupation. He merely believes that this is the right thing to do. But even in all this uncertainty, Socrates would rather obey the gods at the expense of human laws. According to Sallis, "the delivery of the god's pronouncement to Socrates placed him in the position of being able to restrain himself within the properly human limits *only* by means of an activity which, at least from a sort of distance that separates the 'men of Athens' from Socrates, appears to trespass beyond those limits."[9] And, so Socrates believes, the gods have called him to practice philosophy.

Socrates manifests this love of wisdom in ἔργον by convincing others to place their care in virtue. In this sense, philosophy is something that stands in need of rhetoric and persuasion. Socrates states that

> As long as I draw breath and am able, I shall not cease to practice philosophy, to exhort you and in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom I happen to meet: 'Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest reputation for both wisdom and [strength] [σοφίαν καὶ ἰσχύν]; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation, and honors as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul?' (29d-e).

[8] Sallis, *Being and Logos,* 55.
[9] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 49.

Socrates praises the Athenians for both being the best and also having the reputation for being the best, and it is the role of the philosopher to make sure Athenians live up to that reputation. Socrates defines philosophy as persuading others to care for wisdom, truth, and the state of one's soul.

He continues in what I take to be the key passage in the *Apology*: "For I go around doing nothing but persuading [πείθειν] both young and old among you not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to or as strongly as for the best possible state of your soul, as I say to you: Wealth does not bring about excellence [ἀρετή], but excellence makes wealth and everything else good for men, both individually and collectively" (30a-b). Here we see Socratic democratic values of equality and equal access to education in virtue clearly on display. Everyone, young and old, wealthy and poor, should place his or her care in making the soul as best as it possibly can be, because ἀρετή is the root of wealth and everything else that is good. If one is virtuous, according to Socrates, then one will become wealthy, good, just, honorable, well respected, and so forth. And yet this statement involves a certain irony as well, for Socrates himself does not have these goods or wealth and respect. The fact that he is on trial at all undermines the very persuasiveness of his λόγοι. That is, Socrates is merely on the way to wisdom and goodness, he does not possess these divine gifts fully. Finally, in this passage, Socrates says that this will be the case both individually and also collectively. Socrates always has the health of the community at the forefront of his motivations. For Baracchi, "the philosopher emerges as a factor of unrest, agitation, motility—as a dynamic, if not one-sidedly subversive, element within the community. He dwells—but in the mode of motion. He emerges, in other words, as a critical voice, as a source of institutional and political criticism."[10] Socrates' reason for pursuing philosophy, at least in part, is to convince Athenians to be virtuous citizens both in their own private lives and also so that they can make

[10] Baracchi, "The 'Inconceivable Happiness,'" 277.

Athens virtuous too. Virtuous people will make and uphold virtuous laws, which will in turn benefits Socrates because he is a beneficiary of the Athenian πόλις.

Socrates' motives are not selfish. He does not care if he lives or dies, but he cares about the wellbeing of Athens.

> Be sure that if you kill the sort of man I say I am, you will not harm me more than yourselves. […] I think he is doing himself much greater harm doing what he is doing now, attempting to have a man executed unjustly. Indeed, men of Athens, I am far from making a defense now on my own behalf, as might be thought, but on yours, to prevent you from wrongdoing by mistreating the god's gift to you by condemning me (30c-d).

Socrates even goes so far as to assert that Athens will be harmed more than he will, if they were to condemn him to death. "I was attached to this city by the god" (30e). Socrates insists on his Athenian identity. He proves to the jury that he is not acting selfishly but rather that he cares more for the πόλις than for his own person. His task in his defense is to prove that he is not corrupting the youth and also that he believes in the gods, and yet Socrates feels he must insist upon the point that he is an Athenian. Socrates is so insistent upon his Athenian identity because he essentially "corrupts" the youth to become even more democratic than Athens already is. He is imploring the Athenian youth to continue to bolster democracy. Unfortunately, the Athenians who have accused him, I argue, are directly threatened by democracy. What appears as corrupting the youth is Socrates actually making the youth more democratic.

Socrates is aware that it seems as though his pursuit of philosophy acts against his self-interest. He neglects his private interests and his family for the sake of "philosophy." Socrates even asserts that it seems as though he is acting against human nature: "it does not seem like human nature for me to have neglected all my own affairs and to have tolerated this neglect now for so many years while I was always concerned with you, approaching each one of you like a father or an elder brother to persuade [πείθειν] you to care for virtue. Now if I profited from this by charging a fee for my advice, there would be some sense to it" (31b). Socrates' way of life does carry some

shock value to it – he is poor and unshod, even though he has a wife and children for whom he must provide. Additionally, Socrates says this behavior seems to go against human nature, which would certainly be hubristic. Has Socrates made an error in executing the art measuring (μετρητικὴ τέχνη), which in the *Protagoras* was established as the way to learn to act virtuously? Those who properly measure pleasures and pains will act virtuously, but those who have not learned the art of measuring will act viciously. I argue, to the contrary, that Socrates motives are indeed within his self-interest. He thinks of himself as a father or older brother to the Athenians, so his duty is to care for them like a father. By advising Athenians to place their care in ἀρετή, Socrates works to ensure that the democratic legislative body is also acting virtuously. A virtuous δῆμος will create virtuous laws, which will in turn improve the life of Socrates and his family. If Athens is a stable and just political state, then Socrates himself will benefit also.

Surely, an easier way to benefit Athenian democracy would be for Socrates to hold public office himself. Why not cut the Gordian knot, so to speak, and affect policy change directly? "It may seem strange that while I go around and give this advice privately and interfere in private affairs, I do not venture to go to the assembly and there advise the city. You have heard me give the reason for this in many places. I have a divine or spiritual sign [δαίμων] which Meletus has ridiculed in his deposition" (31c-d). The δαίμων prohibits Socrates from action when the δαίμων thinks it is appropriate, and Socrates has had this δαίμων with him since he was a child. The δαίμων stopped him from holding public office because he would have died long ago, benefitting neither himself nor the rest of the Athenians, because he would be forced to break the law (31e). Socrates believes the existing Athenian laws are unjust. "Do not be angry with me for speaking the truth; no man will survive who genuinely opposes you or any other crowd and prevents the occurrence of many unjust and illegal happenings in the city. A man who really fights for justice must lead a

private, not a public, life if he is to survive for even a short time" (31e-32a). Either Socrates believes that the laws are unjust and thus he cannot follow the law, or else he believes that the laws are just but those upholding the laws are willing to break the law. If he did not, he would not need to break the law or uphold the law against the opinion of the majority; he would not be in danger of death if he were to hold public office. Furthermore, in the example Socrates gives of the singular time he did hold public office, he actively breaks with the group in order to uphold the law and is lucky that he is not charged with a crime. When the Thirty tried to bring Socrates to justice for his crime, Socrates says that he does not fear the consequences but instead showed them "not in words but in action [οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλ' ἔργῳ] […] that my whole concern is not to do anything unjust or impious" (32d). Socrates shows through ἔργον where λόγος must leave off. He acted in the interest of Athens by upholding the law even when it meant his life was potentially in danger. Thus, in an effort to preserve his own life, Socrates waives his right to participate directly in the governance of the πόλις.

Instead, I argue, Socrates serves the πόλις through παιδεία. Socrates is adamant that he is not a teacher because he has no wisdom to impart on students: "I have never come to an agreement with anyone to act unjustly, neither with anyone else nor with any one of those who they slanderously say are my pupils. I have never been anyone's teacher" (33a). While he has no wisdom himself, Socrates still has value that he can give to Athens. Specifically, Socrates teaches through ἔργον, as we saw in the *Euthydemus* and *Protagoras.* Socrates' role, in both λόγος and ἔργον, is to reveal to the Athenians when they are not acting virtuously. "I cannot justly be hold responsible for the good or bad conduct of these people, as I never promised to teach them anything and have not done so. If anyone says he has learned anything from me, or that he heard anything privately that the others did not hear, be assured that he is not telling the truth" (33b). Ostensibly,

Socrates insists that he is not a teacher in order to avoid being held responsible for the poor behavior of folks who listen to him speak. But this itself can be understood as a kind of teaching, that is, a uniquely Socratic mode of teaching. While Socrates is not a teacher in the traditional sense of "imparting wisdom" on pupils via λόγος, he does still have something to give the πόλις that results in a more virtuous δῆμος.

I argue that Socrates does not want to be categorized as a teacher because his motives are different from that of a teacher. A teacher, particularly a sophist in ancient Athens, must sustain his or her living by charging tuition. Thus, teachers ought to teach the wealthiest pupils, since they can afford the highest tuition. Socrates, on the other hand, cares about the wellbeing of the democratic πόλις as a whole, and thus it is vital that he be equitable. He converses with the young and old, poor and rich, expert and layperson. Socrates actively fights against inequality in education, and in doing so, he is fighting against wealth inequality too. Corey puts forward the position that an inequality in education would not be problematic for the Athenians, citing the fact that Socrates himself converses with the wealthy elite, those with leisure to follow him around.[11] I disagree with Corey, however. Since democracy was in such a volatile state in the fifth century, it is imperative for everyone to learn how to advocate for their best individual interests and the common interests of the πόλις. Only if everyone is able to speak well in the Assembly, not only persuasively but also virtuously, will democracy survive and flourish. Just laws are made by a just δῆμος who have cultivated the "art of measuring" properly. If the δῆμος is virtuous, all Athenians will prosper. Thus, unequal access to education is directly contradictory to democracy, and for this reason, Socrates refuses to take a fee or even claim to teach at all. The gift that Socrates gives the πόλις is equal access to learning the "art of measuring."

[11] Corey, "The Case Against Teaching Virtue," 198.

Socrates does not teach, but also he is not content to simply act privately and not affect any change in Athens.

> I did not follow that path that would have made me of no use either to you or to myself, but I went to each of you privately and conferred upon him what I say is the greatest benefit, by trying to persuade him not to care for any of his belongings before caring that he himself should be as good and as wise as possible, not to care for the city's possessions more than for the city itself, and to care for other things in the same way (36c).

This statement, I argue, is the crux of Socratic ἀρετή. Socrates believes he has the greatest benefit to give the δῆμος, namely, persuading the δῆμος to care for the excellence of the soul in order to become as wise and good as possible. Wealth and other goods will follow from wisdom and goodness. Furthermore, Socrates says that he persuades others to care about the πόλις itself, not the city's possessions, because a prosperous πόλις will follow integrally from a virtuous πόλις. Wealth should not be attained unless one knows how to take care of that wealth. For example, as we saw at the outset of the *Protagoras,* Hippocrates is the prime example of someone who has adequate wealth but cannot even manage his own household, let alone the well-being of his own soul. Is this the future of Athenian democracy? Socrates is able to see how education in ἀρετή and public policy are related, and it is a frightening outcome if that relationship is ignored.

Thus, Socrates has a duty to persuade the δῆμος to care for ἀρετή, not just the most influential, powerful, and wealthy, for as Socrates famously says, "the unexamined life is not worth living" (38a). Often this phrase is interpreted to mean that one's private life will be boring, one will just "go through the motions" if one does not examine one's life. I argue that Socrates' claim is more poignant. For Socrates, the unexamined life, the unvirtuous life, is not worth living for the πόλις as a whole because an ignorant and unvirtuous member of the democratic body is a detriment to the entire democracy. With democracy comes a radical responsibility of ἀρετή. In a democracy, one is not limited to jurisdiction over one's private affairs; rather, one's private affairs *affect* the rest of the δῆμος as well. Thus, Socrates is following the example and taking up the demands of

Pericles that we saw in chapter one. Socrates takes up the call of democratic activism in his own way, through philosophy and his mode of "teaching."

In a democracy, the lines between private and public are blurred, and this is potentially dangerous because one could create policy that benefits the individual at the expense of the communal. As we saw, this was something that Pericles himself was acutely aware of in laying the groundwork for Athenian democracy. Only a virtuous democratic body will be able to stop this from happening, for an educated δῆμος will recognize the truth. For this reason, Socrates engages with the sophists. Specifically, he does so to show the youth how easy it is for them to be deceived though λόγος. Socrates must allow the sophists to put on their performance, and he will reveal the truth to the youth through ἔργον, through letting the performance occur. For example, Ctesippus would never have been able to recognize that he was susceptible to anger and indignation if Socrates had not let Euthydemus and Dionysodorus reveal Ctesippus' character. After undergoing the sophists' treatment, when someone tries to outrage Ctesippus in the Assembly in the future, Ctesippus will be on his guard against it and will not be fooled. The sophists, through Socrates' guidance, have unwittingly taught Ctesippus self-knowledge. Additionally, Socrates seems to have successfully impressed this lesson on Crito and Critobulus, as Socrates mentions them by name as members of the πόλις willing to pay a fine as his punishment (38b). Crito approached Socrates about the education of his son, Critobulus, at the outset of the *Euthydemus,* and it seems as though Socrates has been successful in guiding Crito in the education of Critobulus.

According to Hyland, self-knowledge takes courage.[12] After the second vote that sentences him to death, Socrates says as much to his official accusers and men of Athens who condemned

[12] Hyland, "Socratic Self-Knowledge," 51.

him to death. Socrates believes that he was, ultimately, put on trial so that Athenians would not need to engage in self-reflection:

> You did this in the belief that you would avoid giving a [λόγος] of your life, but I maintain that quite the opposite will happen to you. There will be more people to test you, whom I now held back, but you did not notice it. They will be more difficult to deal with as they will be younger and you will resent them more. You are wrong if you believe that by killing people you will prevent anyone from reproaching you for not living in the right way (39c-d).

These people that will take Socrates' place, the ones who will force the Athenians to give an account of their lives, are the children of the accusers themselves. As we will see, this is precisely the accusers' worry: Socrates is "corrupting" the youth by convincing them that ἀρετή is a worthwhile pursuit, over and against the interests of their fathers. Socrates predicts that the Athenian youth are already changing their values, and he urges their fathers to engage in self-reflection so that they will not be left behind. He urges them to "prepare oneself to be as good as possible [βέλτιστος]" (39d). With the democratization of education, Athenian power structures are changing.

We see evidence that this is truly Socrates' aim at the end of his defense speech when he makes a request of the jurors that found him innocent. Socrates requests that they treat his sons in the same manner that they have treated him:

> When my sons grow up, avenge yourselves by causing them the same kind of grief that I caused you, if you think they care for money or anything else more than they care for virtue, or if they think they are somebody when they are nobody. Reproach them as I reproach you, that they do not care for the right things and think they are worthy when they are not worthy of anything. If you do this, I shall have been justly treated by you, and my sons also (41e).

Socrates asks the true jurors to take up his place, to be vigilant in their watch over the πόλις. If anyone, least of all Socrates' own sons, act such that they care more for external goods than ἀρετή, which I argue amounts to a care for democracy, treat them as Socrates would: reproach them, chastise them, and rebuke them. A democracy must be *maintained,* it cannot simply be put into

motion and then let go. Active nurturing is necessary to uphold a democracy. And that is Socrates' advice to the Athenians: nurture and maintain the ἀρετή of your πόλις and yourselves.

4.2 SOCRATES' APPARENT FAILURE: A VINDICATION THAT DOES NOT NEED TO VINDICATE

Socrates' motives may be pure, but we cannot ignore the fact that Socrates seems to fail in some instances. In this section, I will show how this apparent failure to make others virtuous is a false accusation. Socrates is on trial for corrupting the Athenian youth, but not all of his followers are virtuous. Socrates *claims* to be equitable in his distribution of advice, but the majority of the folks who listen to him, at least in the conversations recorded by Plato, are almost all wealthy property-owning citizens. While Socrates does not charge a monetary fee, it does require a certain amount of leisure (σχολή) to be able to drop one's affairs and listen to Socrates philosophize. In this sense, leisure is predicated on financial security and political stability. The youth do not need to spend their time fighting in wars; rather, they have the leisure to follow Socrates around and imitate his questioning style.

The issue I wish to raise here is the following: how can we account for Socrates' apparent failure as a teacher such that he may have caused harm to the Athenian πόλις? Some of Socrates' loyal followers led unvirtuous political careers. I am not claiming that the moral failure of Alcibiades and others is entirely Socrates' fault. Socrates was not the sole educator of these men. Alcibiades, for example, is Pericles' ward, who is the epitome of a democratic supporter, eloquent speaker, and virtuous and noble Athenian. Indeed, the *Protagoras* opens with Socrates talking with a friend on his way back from Callias' house, and the very first question the friend asks Socrates is if he has just been with Alcibiades (309a). The friend did not simply make a lucky guess that

Socrates just happened to be with Alcibiades. Rather, Socrates and Alcibiades have a positive relationship, for Socrates tells the unnamed friend that he has indeed just seen Alcibiades, who "said much on my behalf and came to my aid" (309b). And yet Alcibiades did not arrive at Callias' house with Socrates; he did not rely on Socrates' introduction the way Hippocrates did.

Furthermore, one of the main moments in the discussion in the *Protagoras* surrounds how virtuous fathers can beget unvirtuous children. More generally, we must account for the phenomenon that virtuous teachers do not always make their students virtuous as well. In the *Protagoras,* Socrates uses this lack of parallel as evidence that virtue is not teachable. For if virtue were teachable, then Socrates would teach the Athenians how to be virtuous, and Pericles would teach his sons and wards how to be virtuous as well. Protagoras agrees that a virtuous citizenry is the premise for democracy: "in virtue—no one should be an unskilled layman if there is to be a city" (326e-327a). Democracy would not prosper if the entire δῆμος were not virtuous. Protagoras says this is the case because "reciprocal justice and virtue are profitable for you" (327b). This is very similar to Socrates' λόγος in the *Apology*: justice and virtue benefit the individual because they benefit the πόλις. As a result, everyone speaks to everyone about justice and what is lawful (327b). In order to make his point, Protagoras uses an analogy to aulos playing: two things contribute to making a great aulos player: learning the skill and natural talent. The person with both learning and talent will be a great aulos player, but the person who does not possess natural talent but does have training will still be a better aulos player than the one who does not have any training (327c). Protagoras draws the analogy between aulos training and just laws:

> Whatever human being appears to you the must unjust among those reared under laws and amidst human beings, he is himself just and a skilled practitioner of this matter, should it be necessary to judge him in comparison with human beings who are without education or courts or laws or, in addition, any necessity always compelling them to be diligent about virtue. Rather, these latter would be like those savages whom Pherecrates the poet presented [in his comic play] (327c-d).

Just laws, that is, a just political environment, is necessary for one to be just in one's private affairs. Protagoras says that Socrates is spoiled (τρυφή) and takes for granted that the Athenian laws are just, for not everyone has this privilege. (327e). The question here that Protagoras is raising is whether or not ἀρετή is a τέχνη or the result of natural talent. If virtue amounts to technical knowledge, then it is teachable, at least to a degree. Put differently, do students fail to learn ἀρετή from a lack of practice or a lack of natural ability?

I argue that Protagoras and Socrates view a failed education from different perspectives: Protagoras thinks the failure resides on the side of the student, and Socrates on the side of the teacher. For Protagoras, if virtuous fathers do not properly teach their sons to be virtuous, the fault lies with the son – he did not do a good enough job receiving the instruction. If, instead, we follow Socrates' λόγος of the art of measuring, then we can conclude that virtuous fathers do not always make their sons virtuous because they do not properly teach them the art of measuring. The student did not receive a good education.

We also have to take into account the other analogy that Protagoras makes to aulos playing: the laws. For Protagoras, virtuous laws will beget virtuous citizens. Athens is a democracy, presumably with just laws, but it is by no means a stable democracy. Alcibiades, particularly, did not receive the full benefits of a stable political state. That is, he did not have the laws to constrain him in the proper way, given the air of suspicion and corruption present in fifth century Athenian democracy. Socrates works so hard to improve Athens because he knows the risks that an unstable political state can bring, and indeed he was forced to witness Alcibiades, Critias, and the others fall prey to the unstable state and renounce democracy and equality. For Protagoras, laws constrain behavior (326c). However, if we cannot even rely on the laws, then what recourse do we have? If education is not allowed for everyone, there is no hope for just laws. Thus, at least in part, we can

account for the failure of Alcibiades through the lack of equitable access to education. That is, the instability if this environment provided Alcibiades with the opportunity to falter in his moral education – he went through cycles of praise and blame by the Athenians, which belies the instability in the Athenian πόλις such that it gave rise to someone like Alcibiades, encouraged his behavior, and allowed him to flourish – at least for a time.

Additionally, one ought to challenge the very question of Socratic failure itself. Socrates never willingly committed injustice, and he did successfully persuade thousands to place their care in ἀρετή, with the help of Plato's dialogues. In the *Apology*, Socrates even invites any of his followers that think they have been harmed by him to come forward:

> If I corrupt some young men and have corrupted others, then surely some of them who have grown older and realized that I gave them bad advice when they were young should now themselves come up here and accuse me and avenge themselves. If they were unwilling to do so themselves, then some of their kindred, their fathers or brothers or other relations should recall it now if their family had been harmed by me. I see many of these present here (33d).

Socrates is already on trial; they can easily come forward and accuse Socrates and seek retribution. Of course, they do not do so. Socrates' actual associates do not wish to accuse him, only the ones who are rebuked by Socrates.

Thus, I question what we, as readers of the Platonic dialogues, mean when we ask why Socrates has failed. One could make the argument that Socrates has failed Athens because he has not secured a stable political state. This accusation attacks Socrates' own motives: improve Athens. This accusation does not hold for two reasons. First, the democracy is unstable to begin with, and second, Socrates has fought directly against what I argue is the biggest threat to Athens: the sophists. Socrates courageously confronts sophistry in order to reveal its essence: a disregard for the truth for the sake of persuasion. Thus, one ought to reassess how one defines failure and move away from individuals and more toward the common good, the way Socrates does. Socrates does not undermine the common good of Athens, and in this sense, he does not fail at all.

4.3 OLDER AND NEWER CHARGES

Finally, I will address the actual charges brought against Socrates, as the charges can help us to understand what exactly Socrates is accused of, why he was accused, and why he was seen as such a threat to Athens. That is, for what purpose would Athenians *want* to silence someone who is, ostensibly, making the Athenian πόλις wiser and more virtuous. I believe that the older and the newer charges brought against Socrates represent two distinct threats to Athens. First, the older charges accuse Socrates of challenging the established and traditional νόμος of the Athenian πόλις. Second, the newer charges make the case that Socrates is changing the values of the Athenian youth from what is merely useful (ὠφέλιμον) to what is good (ἀγαθόν). Recall Protagoras' anger in the *Protagoras* at Socrates' slight change of topic to the good. What seems like a small point to Socrates is indeed a very large paradigm shift for Protagoras and all those who benefit from the established inequality in political power. Socrates calls the Athenian youth to care about virtue, not simply in persuasive speaking or oration. The old regime is afraid of democracy – they will no longer hold sway in the Assembly. If everyone's opinion is treated equally, and if everyone is able to speak for himself, then the need for orators, speechwriters, rhetoricians, perhaps even the lawyers, diminishes. Real equality in the Assembly threatens the livelihoods of those who rely on inequality to make a living. A more educated δῆμος implies a more self-sufficient δῆμος.

The charges in general are the following: "there is a man called Socrates, [1] a wise man, [2] a student of all things in the sky and below the earth, who [3] makes the worse argument the stronger. Those who spread that rumor, gentlemen, are my dangerous accusers, for their hearers believe that those who study these things do not even believe in the gods" (18b-c). Socrates summarizes the charges in this way before breaking down each set individually. According to

Sallis, "without mentioning explicitly the two 'later accusations' (impiety and corrupting the youth), he connects them in significant ways with the 'first false accusations.'"[13] That is, the first accusations are the basis for the later accusations, so he must defend against the earlier accusations first in order to address the official, later accusations. In a general sense, Socrates is accused of three things: 1) being a wise man, 2) learning about things in the sky and below the earth, and 3) making the worse λόγος stronger. This is the general scope of Socrates' alleged wrongdoing. First, Socrates is accused of being a man who is wise. The second charge explains what kind of wisdom Socrates has that is threatening to his accusers: wisdom about the things below the earth and in the heavens. In essence, Socrates is accused of studying *nonhuman* things that do not pertain to human affairs, which occur on the surface of the earth. The third charge is that Socrates is able to fool others into confusing falsity for truth. This charge should be familiar, since it is precisely what Socrates accuses the sophists of doing. And yet Euthydemus, Dionysodorus, and Protagoras are not on trial. Somehow when they do it, it is acceptable, but it is threatening when Socrates, allegedly, does it.

In order to make sense of why this is the case, I will show how the older and newer charges differ in the way they are leveled against Socrates and also the folks who are accusing him. The first thing Socrates says in his defense speech about the charges is that he is much more fearful (φοβεῖσθαι) about older set of charges than the newer (18b). These older charges have become part of the Athenian culture. Furthermore, previously these charges have gone undefended: "these accusers are numerous, and have been at it a long time; also, they spoke to you at an age when you would most readily believe them, some of you being children and adolescents, and they won their case by default, as there was no defense" (18c). Socrates says that these old accusations are so

[13] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 33.

widely believed because most folks learned them at an age when they were young and impressionable, yet Socrates did not defend himself against the charges previously. According to Baracchi, these older charges remain

> Below the threshold of appearance, they altogether withdraw from the order of questioning. Such is the in-forming, con-forming, ultimately normative power of habituation, and most notably of upbringing, of instruction received 'from childhood,' shaping the *psukhe* precisely when most plastic, adaptable, and defenseless, at the age when one is 'most trusting' (believing, receptive).[14]

Perhaps Socrates tried to defend himself, especially since Socrates' motive initially was simply to understand why the Oracle said no Athenian was wiser than he. But since these accusations did not come from any specific citizen, he could not defend himself in court: "one cannot bring one of them into court or refute him; one must simply fight with shadows, as it were, in making one's defense, and cross-examine when no one answers" (18d). It is an impossible task to defend oneself against a rumor so interred in the νόμος that the accusers become nameless and faceless. Thus Socrates had to wait for official charges to be brought against him, if he had any hope of defending himself.

Socrates articulates the older charges as follows: "Socrates is guilty of wrongdoing in that he busies himself studying things in the sky and below the earth; he makes the worse into the stronger argument, and he teaches these same things to others [Σωκράτης ἀδικεῖ καὶ περιεργάζεται ζητῶν τά τε ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ οὐράνια καὶ τὸν cἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιῶν καὶ ἄλλους ταὐτὰ ταῦτα διδάσκων]" (19b-c). The accusation of wisdom has dropped away. These older charges, as Socrates says at 19c, would be better leveled against Aristophanes' portrayal of Socrates in *Clouds*. In the play, Socrates and his students are actively looking up into the heavens, and some students have their heads physically buried in the ground [lines 185-195]. Furthermore, Strepsiades decided

[14] Baracchi, "The 'Inconceivable Happiness,'" 271.

to become Socrates' student specifically so that he can learn how to make the weaker λόγος into the stronger and evade his debts dishonestly.

Socrates could simply defend himself against the charge of studying inhuman things by claiming that such knowledge is hubristic, since such matters concern the gods, not humans. It is hubristic to attempt to attain knowledge that is reserved for the gods. Instead, Socrates states that he does not speak "in contempt of such knowledge [καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἀτιμάζων λέγω τὴν τοιαύτην ἐπιστήμην], if someone is wise in these things […] but, gentlemen, I have no part in it" (19c). Socrates does think that these matters are worthy of pursuit, but he does not personally have that knowledge. He cannot be teaching it to others because he does not have this knowledge himself. Socrates' proof that he is not guilty of this charge is simple: the accusers have no evidence. They, nor anyone else for that matter, have never actually heard Socrates talking about these things: "I think it right that all those of you who have heard me conversing, and many of you have, should tell each other if any one of you has ever heard me discussing such subjects to any extent at all" (19d). Never has anyone ever heard Socrates discuss things in the heavens or below the earth, other than in μῦθος. In contrast, Socrates discusses human, earthly matters. According to Sallis, "Socrates was seen as the one who brought philosophy down from the heavens and into the cities of men, that is, as one who brought a basic shift away from 'natural' and especially 'cosmological' inquiry towards a concern with human things, with the questions or good and evil, justice and injustice, with all those things that pertain to man in the city."[15] He concerns himself with virtue, goodness, honor, and nobility.

Secondly, Socrates' proof that he does not teach these things to others follows a similar path: the prosecutors can produce no witness that took a fee from Socrates, so he cannot be accused

[15] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 36.

of being a teacher (19e). Like the folks who know the truth about matters below the earth or in the heavens, Socrates does not denounce sophistry as useless or wrong. Rather, he calls it a fine (κάλος) thing "to be able to teach people as Gorgias of Leontini does, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis. Each of these men can go to any city and persuade [πείθειν] the young, who can keep company with any one of their own fellow citizens they want without paying, to leave the company of these, to join with themselves, pay them a fee, and be grateful to them besides" (19e-20a). Socrates knows that he cannot afford to alienate the Athenian people any more than he already has, and sending one's son to a sophist and paying tuition was a common practice. According to Corey, "It is clear, after all, that the sophists were teaching something when they claimed to be teaching *aretê*. For there was a sizable demand for it, and while it is always possible to cite complaints about the content of sophistic instruction, it is also evident that many who received it were downright grateful."[16] Thus, we can assume that the Athenians adopted an ambivalent attitude toward the sophists: on the one hand, in the *Protagoras,* Hippocrates blushes at the thought that he might want to become a sophist himself, and on the other hand, there was a demand for sophistry in Athens.

Socrates *wishes* he had the ability to teach people and persuade the young. He wants to be a σοφιστής, a possessor of wisdom able to influence the youth. But he has no wisdom; all he can do is go around questioning the experts in order that he might learn. According to Sallis, rather than giving wisdom to others, "Socrates takes away something from those with whom he converses, namely, the presumption that they know."[17] Socrates cannot be a teacher, for he is merely a student. For proof of this fact, he proceeds to tell the jury about the Oracle at Delphi and his human wisdom (ἄνθρωπον σοφίαν): "what is probable, gentlemen, is that in fact the god is

[16] Corey, "The Case Against Teaching Virtue," 193-194.
[17] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 45.

wise and that his oracular response meant that human wisdom is worth little or nothing, […] as if he said: 'This man among you, mortals, is wisest who, like Socrates, understands that his wisdom is worthless' [Οὗτος ὑμῶν, ὦ ἄνθρωποι, σοφώτατός ἐστιν, ὅστις ὥσπερ Σωκράτης ἔγνωκεν ὅτι οὐδενὸς ἄξιός ἐστι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πρὸς σοφίαν]" (23a-b). Socratic wisdom is not godlike; instead, it is worthless. Socrates does not know about what occurs in the heavens or under the earth; rather, it is constrained by the limits of the human. According to Sallis, it is a wisdom that remains within the proper human limits, rather than a wisdom that goes beyond those limits.[18] And yet, human wisdom is most appropriate, for it would be hubristic the know about things that are beyond the human realm. Thus, Socrates' human wisdom is the most appropriate because it concerns ἀρετή. Rather than a disregard for human limits, Socratic wisdom works within the human limitations in order to uncover the truth as it is in the here and now. Sallis characterizes this as Socrates' "relation to a certain properly human limit, his observance of that limit in deed."[19] This decidedly human limit bring together λόγος and ἔργον. Socrates' famous way of questioning (What is justice? What is noble? What is love?) concerns decidedly human affairs. Of course, his questioning points to the divine, but in a pious way, not in a hubristic way.

Lastly, Socrates has been accused of making the weaker λόγος the stronger. His refutation of this charge takes the form of an insistence on plain speech, meaning Socrates will always speak clearly, truthfully, without rhetorical tricks. This is why Socrates says he is not an accomplished speaker. In his very first lines in his defense, he alludes to the fact that his accusers have said that he will speak in such a way that is deceptive, like an accomplished speaker (17b-c). His accusers set the stage for the jurors to be prepared to be on their guard against tricks and turns in the λόγος. It is ironic because such behavior is precisely what, as we saw earlier, Socrates tries to help others

[18] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 46.
[19] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, xiv.

be on their guard against. Socrates says this is an outright lie: “I show myself not to be an accomplished speaker at all, that I thought was most shameless on their part—unless indeed they call an accomplished speaker the man who speaks the truth. If they mean that, I would agree that I am an orator, but not after their manner, for indeed, as I say, practically nothing they said was true” (17b). Socrates calls into question how we define being an accomplished speaker. An “accomplished speaker” could mean someone who can make a lie convincingly sound like the truth, or it could mean telling the truth, no matter the consequences. Obviously, Socrates believes it is the latter, but he accuses his accusers of believing it to be the former.

Furthermore, Socrates will tell the truth plainly, for it is indeed possible to tell the truth while also using rhetorical trickery. Socrates asserts that “from me you will hear the whole truth, though not, by Zeus, gentlemen, expressed in embroidered and stylized phrases like theirs, but things spoken at random and expressed in the first words that come to mind, for I put my trust in the justice of what I say, and let none of you expect anything else. It would not be fitting at my age, as it might be for a young man, to toy with words when I appear before you” (17b-c). I will make two points here. First, Socrates places *trust* in the justice of his words. Socrates does not disparage grandiose language; rather he believes he has no need of it. Secondly, Socrates seems to allude to the fact that fanciful language would be appropriate in a courtroom if he were younger. He says it is not fitting at his age, which leads the audience to assume that it would be fitting at a younger age. The Greeks deemed that philosophy was appropriate for the youth but not for adults, but Socrates is talking about fanciful language, not philosophy. I argue that Socrates says fanciful language would be appropriate if he were younger and *uneducated*. Those who are uneducated in virtue need to use sophistical tricks because they distract from the fact that they in fact do not know the truth. Socrates, in contrast, has no need to conceal the truth of his words.

For further evidence that Socrates is not guilty of making the weaker λόγος the stronger, he also presents as evidence to the jury the fact that he always speaks in this manner; he is not simply putting on airs for the sake of the trial. Socrates says that "if you hear me making my defense in the same kind of language as I am accustomed to use in the marketplace by the bankers' tables, where many of you have heard me, and elsewhere, do not be surprised or create a disturbance on that account" (17c-d). Socrates always speaks plainly, not merely in court. According to Sallis, "in his defense speech he will continue precisely that kind of speech which defines his practice, which is to say that his defense speech will itself constitute an exemplification of that very practice against which the accusations have been brought."[20] Never once has Socrates attempted to make the weaker λόγος the stronger. Such λόγοι are antithetical to Socratic ἀρετή because concealing the truth, or even telling an outright lie, would not improve the πόλις because it is untruthful. Only the truth is excellent. One could argue that some lies are necessary, especially in the political realm. One might tell a white lie for the sake of some greater benefit. One never does the bad willingly, after all, and perhaps telling a lie through rhetorical trickery might be to one's benefit. Socrates might respond by saying that if this is the best the course of action, then one has not properly practiced the art of measuring. Either one made a mistake in one's measuring along the way, or one is choosing the wrong option now. Socrates, who has learned the art of measuring, never needs to make the weaker λόγος appear stronger.

To summarize, Socrates is accused of 1) busying himself with things in the heavens and below the earth, 2) making the weaker λόγος the stronger, and 3) teaching these things to others. He has refuted the charges by saying 1) there is no proof, he only speaks on human matters, 2) he always speaks plainly and truthfully, both in court and in the ἀγορά, and 3) he takes no payment

[20] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 30.

from those who follow him around. Furthermore, Socrates has no wisdom himself, so he has nothing to give any potential pupils. These charges articulate the accusation against Socrates of challenging the Athenian νόμος. In his refutation of the charges, Socrates attempts to show the jury that he is indeed an Athenian and would himself be harmed by upending Athenian democracy. According to McCoy, regarding Socrates' defense against these older charges, "his ultimate aim is to defend his way of living against the conventional way of life represented by Meletus."[21] Socrates has been charged with living in a different way from what Athenians deem conventional and valuable. He is charged with revealing the inherent contradictions and vice in Athenian life.

These accusations have been leveled against Socrates for years and by so many people that it seems an impossible task to even name the folks who make these accusations. And yet before turning to the official, newer, charges, Socrates does name a few who are the main proposers of these charges. And here I believe we can learn a lot about the nature of these older charges: Meletus, Anytus, and Lycon: "Meletus being vexed on behalf of the poets, Anytus on behalf of the craftsmen and the politicians, Lycon on behalf of the orators" (23e-24a). The people who are specifically threatened by Socrates' actions are the poets, the craftspeople, the politicians, and the orators. According to Sallis, "Socrates delivers the saying of the oracle to others by distinguishing in deed between seeming and being, by showing that what *seems* to be a more than human wisdom *is not* such."[22] Socrates will take each group in turn to show how his seeming impiety is in fact drawn out of a love for the earthly, namely, the πόλις.

The poets, championed by Meletus, are threatened particularly by Socrates' supposed impiety and hubris. It is unclear if Meletus himself is a poet.[23] The poets keep the Athenians in the

[21] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 52.
[22] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 54.
[23] Nails, *People of Plato,* 200-201.

gods' favor. They instruct the Athenians to fear the gods and to be on their guard against any threat to the gods. They teach the Athenians how to be respectful of the gods and avoid the wrath of the gods. They also teach others how to revere the gods in the proper way, for the work of the gods is a mystery, and it should remain so. Investigating the nature of the gods is hubristic. In this sense, Socrates' alleged impiety is a direct political threat.[24] Socrates was on trial for investigating things in the heavens and below the earth. One could interpret this accusation to mean that Socrates is accused of doing science instead of piously letting the gods reveal themselves in the mysterious ways that they work. This is threatening to the established Athenian order because the Athenian elite maintain their superiority by convincing others that they were blessed by the gods. The poets are upset because Socrates, in questioning them in his manner, discovered that they do not have any religious wisdom at all. According to Socrates, "I soon realized that poets do not compose their poems with knowledge, but by some inborn talent and by inspiration, like seers and prophets who also say many fine things without any understanding of what they say" (22c). Socrates has uncovered the poets as frauds, unless they truly are divinely inspired, which luckily for the poets, no one would be able to investigate. But if the rest of the Athenian δῆμος begins asking questions of the poets as well, they will lose their influence. In this sense, Socrates is threatening the poets' very livelihood. They want to silence Socrates since he reveals the truth that the poets have kept hidden: they have no wisdom.

Secondly, the craftspeople, championed by Anytus, are threatened because Socrates challenges consumerism. [25] Socrates persuades the Athenians to care for the virtue of their souls, not the amount of wealth and possessions they can accrue. One's value is determined by one's

[24] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 48.
[25] Anytus inherited from his father a successful tannery, but other reports also accuse Anytus' father of being a drunkard. Nails, *People of Plato*, 37-38.

excellence, not one's property. Socrates is poor, and he is not trying to get himself out of poverty. If Socrates successfully persuades Athenians to challenge consumerism as well, then the craftspeople will be directly harmed. Socrates says that the craftspeople indeed do have certain knowledge (σοφώτατος) that he does not have, that is, technical knowledge, but the problem is that "the good craftsmen seemed to have the same fault as the poets: each of them, because of his success at his craft, thought himself very wise in other more important pursuits, and this error of theirs overshadowed the wisdom they had" (22d). The craftspeople, according to Socrates, believe that because they are expert in a craft, they have wisdom more generally. Recall Socrates' λόγος in the *Protagoras* that claims everyone is wise, so everyone should have a say in how the πόλις is run, even the craftspeople. Thus, we can conclude that the wisdom that the craftspeople falsely have is not political wisdom but rather something else. Socrates does not tell us what this wisdom is. But we can conclude that Socrates threatens the livelihood of the craftspeople as well as the poets. By persuading Athenians to place their care in the excellence of their souls rather than material possessions, he is implying that material possessions are worth much less than the excellence of one's soul. This attitude is a threat to consumerism.

Thirdly, the politicians, also championed by Anytus, are threatened because Socrates is democratizing education. Self-governance is the result of education, and self-governance threatens the paid lawmakers. Recall Protagoras' λόγος that laws act to restrain behavior where education ceases. Socrates does not mention the false wisdom that he learned the politicians have in the *Apology*, only that he questions the politicians after the wisest men and before the poets. It is puzzling that Socrates would not say more about the politicians, as they are, arguably, the most important. I argue that Socrates uses his trial as evidence that the politicians do not have wisdom. Socrates is going let the truth of the lack of wisdom of the politicians come to light in the trial

itself. According to Sallis, "Socrates' questioning is then aimed at verifying what *seems* to him, i.e., at making manifest in the politician the divergence between what he seems to be and what he is, i.e., at distinguishing between seeming and being in the sense that through the deed of questioning they are set apart and each disclosed as itself."[26] Through this event, this ἔργον, the Athenians will learn the truth of the politicians and why change is necessary. Socrates threatens the livelihood of the politicians because once the political art is learned by all, the politicians will no longer be able to persuade the Assembly so easily. They will need to rely on facts and the truth, rather than rhetoric. The politicians will no longer be able to act in their own self-interest at the expense of the public.

Lastly, the livelihood of the orators, championed by Lycon, is threatened by Socrates.[27] If he continues to democratize the education of the δῆμος, no one will be fooled anymore by the orators. Like the man that Crito was talking to at the end of the *Euthydemus,* they would lose their livelihoods. Socrates is a threat to the old Athenian establishment. The Athenian elite are, in a sense, afraid of democracy because their hold on the public will be loosened. They will lose power, status, and reputation. Socrates does not tell us the lack of wisdom that he witnessed from the orators. Perhaps, like the politicians, Socrates is going to let his trial itself speak for him. While his accusers do end up winning in the end, it is not due to their oratory skills.

4.4 NEWER CHARGES: THREAT TO THE YOUTH OVER AGAINST THE ELDERS

The second set of charges brought against Socrates, I argue, approach the perceived threat of Socrates to Athens in a different way from the older charges, which accuse Socrates of

[26] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 50.
[27] It is likely but not entirely certain that the Lycon named here is angry with Socrates because Lycon's son was executed by the Thirty, and he blamed Socrates for his involvement with the men that supported the Thirty. Nails, *People of Plato*, 188-189.

threatening the Athenian νόμος. He threatens to change the established order of power and influence. In contrast, the second, newer, charges accuse Socrates of influencing the Athenian youth such that they themselves will turn against their fathers and the established order. In this sense, the older charges try to secure the present and past νόμος at the expense of the future, which is the aim of the newer charges. This is precisely Socrates' worry, and it is also the threat the established hierarchy perceives in Socrates. Socrates calls on the Athenian youth to care about the goodness of their souls (ἀρετή), regardless of what is useful (persuasive speaking). Socrates reveals to the Athenian youth another way to act. For Roochnik, studying ἀρετή requires that one call into question established authorities because it requires the student to determine what is excellent for him/herself, rather than relying on established νομοί.[28] Socrates is showing the Athenian youth that they do not need an aristocracy in order to be wealthy and prosperous.

Socrates opens up the opportunity for the youth to laugh at and ridicule the old and established aristocracy: "why then do some people enjoy spending considerable time in my company? You have heard why, men of Athens; I have told you the whole truth. They enjoy hearing those being questioned who think they are wise, but are not. And this is not unpleasant [ἔστι γὰρ οὐκ ἀηδές]" (33c). Furthermore, the youth try to imitate Socrates and question the wise and powerful themselves (23c). And yet no one punishes the youth who are imitating Socrates' method but rather Socrates himself; they are angry not with themselves or the youth but rather with Socrates, as though Socrates is responsible for the actions of the youth.

The newer charges, the sworn deposition, brought against Socrates are the following: "Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young and of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other new spiritual things [Σωκράτη φησὶν ἀδικεῖν τούς τε νέους διαφθείροντα καὶ

[28] Roochnik, *Of Art and Wisdom*, 158.

θεοὺς οὓς ἡ πόλις νομίζει οὐ νομίζοντα, ἕτερα δὲ δαιμόνια καινά]" (24b). Socrates corrupts the youth, and he does not believe in the Athenian gods but rather some other, separate gods. Socrates is not accused of atheism but rather as being a traitor to the gods of his πόλις, and by extension, to Athens herself.

Specifically, Socrates is accused of corrupting the future of the πόλις by introducing new ideas into Athens. This would not be a crime in and of itself, but the problem is that these new ideas directly contradict the current ideas. I believe that Socrates may in fact be guilty as charged, but not in the way that Meletus assumes. Socrates does change the values of Athenians, but not with the aim to destroy the πόλις but rather to make it stronger. Rather than corrupting the youth, Socrates merely makes apparent to the youth the corrupt values already present in Athens. Athens is democratic, and yet, it is not entirely democratically run. This is the truth that Socrates makes apparent to the youth, both rich and poor. Rather than caring about what is useful, expedient, and convenient, Socrates calls on the youth to instead care about what is τό ἀγαθόν and what is virtuous.

Socrates defense against these accusations is effective. He refutes the charges beyond a doubt, but of course it has minimal effect on the jury, as he still does not garner enough votes to acquit. Socrates shows how he does not corrupt the youth by explaining just how unlikely it is. In doing so, he engages in dialogue with Meletus. He employs his usual manner of speaking in order to prove his innocence. The first question he asks Meletus is telling: "surely you consider it of the greatest importance that our young men be as good as possible? – Indeed I do" (24d). Socrates starts with something obvious that Meletus cannot possibly deny: the youth should be good. He does not ask Meletus to qualify what he means by good, or how Meletus defines goodness. Does

Socrates mean virtuous, persuasive, noble, beautiful, or perhaps all of the above? We cannot assume there is no miscommunication between Socrates and Meletus here.

Socrates then asks Meletus what improves (ἀμείνων) the youth, and Meletus answers, after some hesitation, that the laws (νομοί) improve the youth (24e). The Athenian laws are just, so it stands to reason that the laws improve the youth, according to Meletus. Socrates is not satisfied with this answer, so he presses Meletus to answer what sort of *people* improve the youth, and Meletus answers that the jury, audience, members of the Council, Assembly, and all other Athenians improve the youth (24e-25b). Meletus names specifically everyone involved in the political sphere except for the rhetoricians and orators. They are lumped in with the rest of the Athenians. Meletus does not call attention to the Athenians on behalf of which Meletus and company are accusing Socrates: the poets, craftspeople, politicians, and orators. Instead, Meletus simply follows Socrates' λόγος and agrees with the specific occupations that Socrates mentions. Socrates is skeptical that every single Athenian benefits the youth except for one person: himself (25b).

Socrates then infers from Meletus' answers that he has "never had any concern for our youth [οὐδεπώποτε ἐφρόντισας τῶν νέων]; you show your indifference clearly; that you have given no thought to the subjects about which you bring me to trial (25c). Socrates says Meletus does not care for *our* youth. Socrates indicates to the jury that he is indeed an Athenian; Socrates depends on the future Athenian generation as much as everyone else in the courtroom. For it is better to live among good citizens, not wicked citizens; one will be benefitted by good citizens (25d). And yet Meletus accuses Socrates of deliberately corrupting the youth, of deliberately doing harm to his own situation. This is absurd, for no one would do the wrong thing willingly: "if I make one of my associates wicked I run the risk of being harmed by him so that I do such a great evil

deliberately" (25e). Perhaps Socrates is harming the youth deliberately, but he made a miscalculation in his measuring, thinking that harming the youth will result in a better outcome for him. This seems very unlikely, given what Socrates has said about both himself and Athens in his defense speech.

The second option is that Socrates has not enacted the art of measuring (μετρητικὴ τέχνη) correctly and harms the youth, not because it is beneficial to harm the youth but rather because he thinks he is benefiting the youth but is in fact harming them. Socrates thinks that he is in fact benefiting the youth, but due to a mistake in his measuring of pleasures and pains, he calculates incorrectly and instead harms the youth. This λόγος is directly mirroring Protagoras' Great Speech. For if Socrates is making a mistake and is harming the youth when he did not mean to, then, according to Socrates, it would be more effective for Meletus to teach Socrates to do better, rather than to punish him for accidental wrongdoing. "If I corrupt them unwillingly, the law does not require you to bring people to court for such unwilling wrongdoings, but to get hold of them privately, to instruct them and exhort them; for clearly, if I learn better, I shall cease to do what I am doing unwillingly" (26a). This would certainly be a reasonable course of action for Meletus. The youth would stop being corrupted, Socrates would finally see the error in his ways, and the Athenian youth would benefit. There would be no maliciousness on behalf of Socrates, and none on behalf of Meletus either, since he would be willing to help Socrates when he needed it the most. Unfortunately for Meletus, Socrates dismisses this option: "you, however, have avoided my company and were unwilling to instruct me [μάθησις], but you bring me here, where the law requires one to bring those who are in need of punishment, not of instruction" (26a). Meletus has previously made no effort to teach Socrates; he only endeavors to punish Socrates. Again, we see Socrates operating under the same

principle that Protagoras set forth: teaching and punishing are two sides of the same coin – they pertain to the same sort of behavior, namely, behavior that is within our control.

Meletus has made no effort to help Socrates because Socrates is on trial for something else. Meletus is so outraged at Socrates' actions that he does not think it is necessary to teach Socrates, he simply wants to punish him. I argue that Meletus has gotten so incensed because of the direct threat that Meletus perceives Socrates posing: the Athenian youth are not in fact harmed by Socrates; rather, Meletus himself and his values are harmed by Socrates. Athens as a whole will be more virtuous, but Meletus will lose influence and political power if Socrates invites the youth to change their focus from what is useful to what is good. Meletus' motives are not pure. He does not want to further democratize Athens. This is precisely the problem: Meletus and his fellow accusers are actively working against the best interest of Athens in order to act in their own private self-interest. To this end, they use Socrates as a scapegoat. And yet in his defense, Socrates is able to show not only that he does not willingly corrupt the young and instead that he cares deeply for the youth, but in addition he shows how Meletus does not care about the youth at all.

The second official charge brought against Socrates is that he does not believe in the Athenian gods but instead some other, extraneous, gods. This is precisely, according to Meletus, *how* Socrates corrupts the youth: "it is by teaching them not to believe in the gods in whom the city believes but in other new spiritual things" (26b). Socrates does not merely corrupt the young in a general sense, but his corruption is specifically impiety. Not only is Socrates himself accused of impiety, but he is also accused for making the youth impious too. When Socrates asks Meletus to clarify what he means, Meletus changes his opinion from the sworn deposition. Now he accuses Socrates of being an atheist outright (26c). Meletus claims that Socrates essentially believes in science over faith: the sun and moon are not gods but instead stone and earth (26d). Socrates is

accused of finding natural answers to the mysteries of the gods. Meletus changes his position here and strays from the official, sworn deposition. Socrates is able to refute the charge of atheism quite easily with his δαίμων: if Socrates believes in spirits which are the children of the gods, then surely, he must believe in the gods themselves. This refutation would not be as effective against the claim that he believes in non-Athenian gods.

After refuting the official charges, Socrates accuses Meletus in turn of being "highly insolent and uncontrolled [ὕβρει τινὶ καὶ ἀκολασίᾳ]. He seems to have made this deposition out of insolence, violence, and youthful zeal" (26e). This is perhaps the crux of Socrates' defense. The motivation for Meletus' accusations is wholly other than the sworn deposition. Socrates claims that Meletus must have made this deposition "either to test us or because you were at a loss to find any true wrongdoing of which to accuse me" (27e). If Socrates is right, the jury should arrest and charge Meletus with slander and perjury, rather than Socrates. According to Sallis, "perhaps most of all what Socrates exposes is Meletus' ignorance of his own ignorance, his ignorance of himself."[29] Socrates has exposed Meletus as a fraud.

This is why Socrates is able to end his refutation of the official charges so briefly. He knows that Meletus' true motivations are now on display, and the official charges will be considered moot. Will it be enough? Socrates tells the jury: "I do not think men of Athens, that it requires a prolonged defense to prove that I am not guilty of the charges in Meletus' deposition, but this is sufficient. On the other hand, you know that what I said earlier is true, that I am very unpopular with many people. This will be my undoing, if I am undone, not Meletus or Anytus but the slanders and envy [διαβολή] of many people" (28a). The Athenians are envious of Socrates because he sees the truth of the present and also the future, and they cannot. These are the true accusations against

[29] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 57.

Socrates. He plans and hopes for a future that is contradictory to the benefits of the aristocracy. He is persuading the youth to care about the goodness of their souls, not in external goods such as wealth or political power, for the benefit of the democracy.

McCoy points out the similarity between Plato's *Apology* and also Pericles' Funeral Oration. For McCoy, "in essence, Socrates offers us a kind of miniature funeral oration for himself in advance of his own death. As Pericles argues that the citizens of Athens must sacrifice themselves for the sake of the city's excellence and freedom […], Socrates sacrificed himself for Athens' sake."[30] I would amend McCoy's statement to the following: Pericles argues that Athenians must sacrifice themselves for the sake of *democracy,* and Socrates does just this. He sacrifices his own private affairs in order to make the Athenian youth better democrats and politicians.

In this chapter, I make the case that sophistry directly affects democracy in the *Apology*. Socrates has a vested interest in making the Athenian youth as good as he possibly can. For if he improves the youth, Athens will improve, and then Socrates' own wellbeing will improve as well. And yet Socrates' followers often did not improve. They got into political trouble, and we as readers of Plato need to think about the extent to which Socrates was directly responsible. But Socrates is not placed on trial because of his students' failings. Rather, I argue, he is placed on trial and ultimately convicted because he is questioning the established Athenian νόμος in a way that is not of benefit to the rich and powerful. Socrates democratizes education in such a way that the youth are beginning to see how goodness is more important than what is expedient. In turn, the old aristocracy fears that they will lose their livelihoods and their hold on Athens. The more democratic Athens becomes, the less power the few wealthy elite will have. They have no choice but to silence

[30] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 54.

Socrates. It remains to be seen, however, exactly what Socrates does positively. How does he educate democratically, with the aim to make Athenian democracy stronger? Socrates tries to improve the πόλις, to be sure, but also the sophists directly harm the πόλις. So we have to ask: how does Socratic education differ from a sophistical education? What does Socrates do differently?

5.0 CHAPTER 5 FLATTERY, DIALOGUE, AND IGNORANCE

Accurately characterizing the difference between Socrates and the sophists is a difficult, if not impossible, task. According to McCoy, we cannot simply characterize the philosopher as logical, rational, successful at speaking, ethical, and interested in knowledge, or the sophists as illogical, rhetorical, lacking success, morally corrupt, and disinterested in knowledge.[1] These claims are reductive and simply not true. We can, however, make a distinction between Socrates and the sophists in their approach to ἀρετή of the soul: "Socrates' questioning is guided by his love of and his desire to care for the souls of those to whom he speaks."[2] Socrates is oriented to the moral improvement of his interlocutors. He is turned toward the good, toward the ideas, and this affords Socrates the space to care for others as well. While I do not disagree with McCoy, I argue that we can characterize the difference between Socrates and the sophists in relation to democracy. Socrates' concern for the moral improvement of his interlocutor implies a concern for the moral improvement of the democratic Athenian body. Thus, Protagoras educates undemocratically, and Socrates has a democratic approach.

I define democratic education as one that educates all members of the πόλις, rather than the wealthy elite. It is truthful, directed toward the virtue of the πόλις, engages in honest debate with interlocutors that are treated equally, and does not rely on prior assumptions. Democratic education allows for the truth to be revealed in dialogue among interlocutors, rather than the superior professing to the inferior a previously held belief. Socrates engages in this kind of democratic education in the *Protagoras.* Socrates' aim in the *Protagoras* is to *show* how it is that he improves the πόλις by directing his λόγος outward toward the interlocutor. Socrates' goal in the

[1] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 3.
[2] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric,* 5.

Protagoras is to guide Hippocrates. That is, Hippocrates wants to learn from Protagoras, but the onus is on Socrates to make sure he leaves Callias' house having learned *something*, whether or not it is what Protagoras intended for him to learn. To this end, Socrates uses rhetoric to benefit others, not to deceive others. Socrates is open to the truth; he is open to genuine deliberation about the best outcome for the πόλις. Socratic rhetoric involves both speaking and hearing, which I argue is an inherently democratic comportment to dialogue.

In contrast, Protagoras, as a sophist, is undemocratic. The sophistical attitude is to keep the student paying the tuition, as that is how the sophists earn their living. Sophists gratify their students by offering encouragement and words of flattery, even if it is at the expense of the wellbeing of the student or even the truth itself. Protagoras' goal is to improve the rhetorical skills of his *individual* students so that they can either persuade the Assembly to act in their own self-interest, often over against the common good, or to silence dissenting opinions. The goal for Protagoras is to help individuals to ensure that his or her own singular interest prevails. The common good is not a deciding factor, for Protagoras.

In this chapter, I will show exactly how it is that Socrates is able to benefit the Athenian δῆμος through his public and private conversations. I argue that Socratic rhetoric has three distinct moments: 1) a refusal to flatter one's audience, 2) an adherence to dialogue, and 3) Socrates' claim to ignorance. Each moment involves truth and equality. First, 1) Socrates never seeks to gratify his interlocutor or flatter him or her. We learn in the *Apology* that Socrates refused to ingratiate himself, even when his own life was at stake. In contrast, Socratic questioning can be miserable to undergo, and as a result, he garnered negative reputation. He does not discriminate who was subject to the Socratic treatment. Secondly, 2) the interlude in the *Protagoras* reveals the reasoning behind Socrates' insistence on dialogue, over against rehearsed speeches. In the interlude, the

conversation with Protagoras reaches a standstill, for Protagoras has make a lengthy speech (μακρὸς λόγος) and refuses to submit to question and answer. It is puzzling that Socrates threatens to leave when Protagoras will not moderate the length of his speeches when, in fact, the longest speech in the dialogue is uttered by Socrates, not Protagoras. I argue that Socrates defines length differently than just long-windedness or brevity. Instead, the speeches that Socrates characterizes as long are ones that are rehearsed and memorized beforehand. Truth in λόγος, for Socrates, is uncovered during the actual conversation itself, not beforehand. For Socrates, truth is disclosed in the philosophical conversation itself, together, democratically. It is democratic because it involves deliberation and debate together, where each participant in the conversation is treated equally.

Lastly, 3) Socrates famously claims that he has no wisdom, and this claim is integral to philosophy. In this sense, the *Protagoras* is unique: Socrates has already passed judgement on sophistry before he even reaches Callias' doorstep. It seems as though Socrates is bringing to the conversation with Protagoras his preconceived ideas of what sophistry is and what sophists claim to be able to teach. Furthermore, Socrates asserts at the outset that ἀρετή is not teachable, before he and Protagoras investigate it thoroughly. Yet the crux of the dialogue rests on the moment that Socrates changes his mind, within the dialogue itself. First he claims that virtue is not teachable, but by the end of the dialogue, Socrates says that virtue is nothing other than the art of measuring, which is a kind of knowledge, so it is indeed teachable. While Socrates openly admits that he was wrong at first, when Protagoras is forced to renege on his initial assumption, he is too embarrassed to finish the λόγος. As I will show, we witness Socrates actively arriving at this conclusion about virtue in his exegesis of Simonides' poem.

5.1 SHOW, DON'T TELL: SOCRATIC REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING AND EDUCATION

I have argued that rhetoric is a skill that anyone has the ability to cultivate, and one can cultivate one's rhetorical skill either for good or bad ends. Rhetoric is simply the way we speak such that we can persuade others, and as such, it is not *inherently* unvirtuous. Indeed, if one wants to affect any change in democratic society, one ought to learn how to speak persuasively. Both sophists and philosophers make use of rhetoric; the difference lies in the *way* that each uses rhetoric in order to be convincing. While sophistry has no concern for the truth, only for what is expedient, philosophers can use rhetoric for the sake of leading others to the truth. Philosophical λόγος is directed outward, toward the moral improvement of one's interlocutor and also the common good. According to McCoy, "Socrates' use of rhetoric is distinctive precisely in its subjugation to the demands of virtue. His character and his unwavering commitments to justice and care for the soul are always the centerpiece of his use of these rhetorical devices."[3] Socrates uses rhetoric in order to improve the πόλις. To this end, democratic society raises the stakes for persuasive speaking. The threat of sophistical education is revealed in the Athenian Assembly; thus, it is imperative for Socrates to do all he can to make sure that Athenian democracy is not in fact undermined by the sophists, who care not for the truth or virtue of their words.

In order to make sense of Socrates' use of rhetoric, one must keep in mind that Socrates does not intend to be anyone's teacher. He has no *positive* wisdom to offer anyone who might consider themselves his pupils, but Socrates can convince others to be on their guard *against* sophistry. Socrates' aim in the *Protagoras* and also the *Euthydemus* is to *show* exactly how Hippocrates and Critobulus respectively will not gain positive wisdom from the sophists. Rather,

[3] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 39.

Socrates hopes that they learn 1) what *not* to do in λόγος, and 2) how to recognize sophistry in action.

To illustrate this claim, I will turn to the initial conversation between Hippocrates and Socrates in the *Protagoras.* In the early morning, when Hippocrates visits Socrates at his home, the two discuss the nature of education in general and the effects that an education can have. Socrates here reveals what he truly believes about education and why he never claims to teach. Socrates and Hippocrates agree that the soul is reared by learning (μάθημα), but it is unclear what can they possibly learn from Protagoras (313c). Surely Hippocrates should stay far away from Callias' house, especially when he is young and impressionable. Furthermore, the effects of an education, either a good or a bad one, are not easy to undo or overcome. According to Socrates, "for one who has paid the tuition and taken the instruction into the soul itself through having learned it, he necessarily goes off having already been harmed or benefited thereby [μαθήματα δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἄλλῳ ἀγγείῳ ἀπενεγκεῖν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀνάγκη, καταθέντα τὴν τιμήν, τὸ μάθημα ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ λαβόντα καὶ μαθόντα ἀπιέναι ἢ βεβλαμμένον ἢ ὠφελημένον]" (314b). One takes learning into one's soul immediately and almost irreversibly. Once one has learned something, it takes a lot of work to reverse that which has been learned, whether it be the truth itself or merely an opinion. Is Socrates not taking a great risk, then, in agreeing to take Hippocrates to Callias' house? Socrates does not think so. He *trusts* that the Athenian youth, such as Hippocrates, Critobulus, Cleinias, Ctesippus, and perhaps even Alcibiades, with his guidance, will see through the sophists' words. With respect to the sophists, Socrates hopes to educate the youth not through λόγος but rather through actions, through ἔργον.

When Socrates and Hippocrates finally depart for Callias' house, he tells Hippocrates that they should "also examine these things together with our elders, for we are still young to decide

so great a matter. But now, since we're already under way [ὡρμήσαμεν], let's go and listen to the man and then, after we've listened, let's consort also with the others [Prodicus and Hippias]" (314b). Socrates and Hippocrates are *already under way*. They have begun the journey before they have even left the comfort and safety of Socrates' home. They have not physically left yet, but they have already begun their investigation of sophistry and the political art. They have already begun the learning, the result of which will either benefit or harm them, and they cannot stop half way through. Socrates is determined to see the matter through to the end. It seems as though in this moment we see contradictory behavior from Socrates. At first, Socrates insists that he finish the λόγος, but in the middle of the *Protagoras* he threatens to leave the discussion early, as we will see, and the dialogue ends in ἀπορία. I argue, to the contrary, that the *Protagoras* does not in fact end aporetically because Hippocrates has successfully been exposed to sophistry. He had indeed learned from the sophists, only in a negative way.

Furthermore, Socrates mentions a curious detail once he and Hippocrates have departed for Callias' house: another matter came up along the way that warranted discussion. Socrates does not mention the topic, but it takes a long time to discuss, for they have to stand on the threshold for a while: "but when we got to the porch, we stood there and continued to discuss a certain argument that had come up between us along the way. So as not to leave it incomplete, but to bring it to a conclusion and then enter, we stood on the porch conversing until we came to agreement with each other [δόξαν ἡμῖν ταῦτα ἐπορευόμεθα· ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐν τῷ προθύρῳ ἐγενόμεθα, ἐπιστάντες περί τινος λόγου διελεγόμεθα, ὃς ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνέπεσεν· ἵν᾽ οὖν μὴ ἀτελὴς γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ διαπερανάμενοι οὕτως ἐσίοιμεν, στάντες ἐν τῷ προθύρῳ διελεγόμεθα, ἕως συνωμολογήσαμεν ἀλλήλοις]" (314c). While we cannot know the content of the discussion, we do learn that Plato found it important to insert this detail and that it takes place in the in between. This is the sort of

conversation that would be appropriate to begin on the journey and finish on the threshold because it has to do with movement, with being in transit from one condition to another. Lastly, we learn that Socrates deems it is necessary to finish that discussion before entering the house.

Socrates and Hippocrates converse until they came to agreement with each other. Earlier at Socrates' house, Hippocrates does not disagree with Socrates' λόγος at all: as soon as Socrates points out to Hippocrates that he is confused about sophistry, Hippocrates agrees immediately and does not challenge Socrates' λόγος. Yet on the threshold, Hippocrates disagrees with Socrates to such an extent that they have to pause to reach agreement. Furthermore, Callias' doorman overheard the conversation, and it caused him to slam the door in their faces because he thought they were more sophists (314c-d). This conversation must not have been merely trivial, since it angered the doorman so much.

Rather than attempting to speculate about the topic of conversation, I want to focus on the details we do have. I believe that Plato is alerting us to the fact that Socrates is preparing Hippocrates, and the reader, for the spectacle that will take place at Callias' house. The reader is meant not to hear Socrates' λόγος, but rather, witness Socrates' actions when he remains outside, in the in between. Socrates is not at home, but he is not at his destination either; he remains in the process of the journey. Moreover, Socrates wants to reach a conclusion with Hippocrates before meeting the sophists. The point of the *Protagoras*, and also the *Euthydemus*, is to show, not to tell. This, I argue, is Socratic experiential learning. Socrates allows Protagoras to engage in sophistry, for the sake of the learner. The youth will not learn from Protagoras' λόγος, but they will learn through ἐμπειρία by observing him in action. For Roochnik, "sophistry is shameful. It is an admission that there is no secure ground on which to base the citizens' loyalty to the set of values

that the polis represents."[4] I argue, to the contrary, that there is secure ground upon which to base one's values in sophistry, only in a negative way.

I have focused thus far on ἔργον, but perhaps there is a way in which Socrates educations through λόγος as well. In the remainder of this chapter, I will define Socratic rhetoric as the positive way in which Socrates uses λόγος to educate and improve the Athenian δῆμος. Essential to an honest, truthful, and beneficial philosophical rhetoric are three moments: 1) a refusal to engage in flattery (κολακεία), 2) an adherence to dialogue, to question and answer, and 3) beginning from a position of ignorance. Without these three items, one's λόγος will not be philosophical; it will instead be mere sophistry. Socratic rhetoric will improve the πόλις by persuading the Athenian youth to place their care in virtue, rather than what is simply useful or expedient. In contrast, the sophists teach their students how to use rhetoric in a way that disregards the truth. Sophistry is based on the opposite of these three moments of philosophical rhetoric: 1) flattery, 2) speechmaking, and 3) clinging to one's prior assumptions such that one can prove them right, potentially at the expense of the truth. The final conclusion that I will draw is that Socratic, philosophical, rhetoric is wholeheartedly democratic. The three moments that I bring out all serve to democratize education and improve the πόλις for the sake of all, not only for the sake of individuals. Philosophical rhetoric is set apart from mere persuasive speaking because it involves an openness to the truth and genuine deliberation. Only in this way can ἀλήθεια prevail over sophistry. If the Athenian δῆμος does not have equal access to the truth, or even an equal access to deliberation about the truth, then democracy will fail.

5.2 FLATTERY IS THE CLOAK OF TRUTH: ORPHEUS AND THE GADFLY

[4] Roochnik, *The Tragedy of Reason*, 51.

An essential element for philosophical rhetoric is the removal of all flattery (κολακεία) from one's speech, for flattery, while it does appease the interlocutor, will either detract from the truth of the λόγος or cloak a lying λόγος. Flattery is pleasant, it is deceptive, and it can easily trick the listener into thinking that the speaker is being truthful when s/he attempts to conceal the truth. Like the cook that aims for pleasant taste at the expense of nutrition, the rhetorician who uses adulating speech does not care about the health of the audience but merely aims to please and gratify. Flattery is a useful tool for the rhetorician, for one is much more likely to be persuaded when one is being praised. Flattery potentially is undemocratic because it closes off the potential to reach a truthful conclusion. In the Assembly, a rhetor who flatters the δῆμος will be much more successful than one who does not ingratiate his audience. Flattery is an effective rhetorical tool because it makes the one being flattered amenable to overlooking the truth for the sake of praise. Unfortunately, the implications in a democracy can be very dangerous. The δῆμος may believe the rhetor who flatters and reassures over the rhetor who speaks truthfully and alerts the δῆμος to a potential threat. The safety and wellbeing of the πόλις may be at risk.

Flattery is shameful because it is potentially a lie. It either tricks the audience, rather than offering truthful and good λόγοι, or the rhetorician simply disregards the necessity of truth altogether. In contrast, Socratic rhetoric seeks to *unnerve* the interlocutor, not make him or her more comfortable and charmed. According to McCoy, in the context of the *Apology,* "Socrates does not attempt to please or to flatter his jury but instead does the opposite. He deliberately angers and upsets them but for the purpose of awakening them to the importance of caring for virtue and knowledge above other goods."[5] The goal of Socratic rhetoric is to make interlocutors realize that they do not know what they first thought. This often leads to anger and pain, rather than pleasant

[5] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 40.

and comforting flattery, but it will ultimately result in moral and philosophical improvement.

Protagoras and Socrates hold starkly opposite positions regarding flattery. This difference is revealed most clearly in the way Socrates describes the scene that he and Hippocrates walk into when they arrive at Callias' house. When they are finally allowed to enter by the doorman, Protagoras walking in the portico (314e). Protagoras, too, is occupying an in between space: he is in the portico, and he is in motion. Protagoras is walking along, and right alongside him (συμπεριεπάτουν) are Callias, Paralus, Charmides, Xanthippus, Philippides, and Antimoerus (315a). The latter, Socrates says, is Protagoras' prize student and studying to become a sophist himself. These men are all walking alongside Protagoras, who is in the middle, presumably all vying for the closest spot to the great teacher. Many are related, either by blood or by friendship, to Pericles, who was likely Protagoras' friend. They might be bragging about their closeness with Pericles to entice Protagoras to take them on as students.

Additionally, there are listeners walking behind Protagoras. No wonder the doorman was annoyed at all the guests; Callias' house is crowded. Socrates must have recognized these followers as common members of Protagoras' entourage, for he says that "these [men] Protagoras brings from each of the cities he passes through, *bewitching* [κηλεῖν] *them with his voice like Orpheus*, and they in their bewitched state follow his voice. There were also some natives in the chorus" (315b, emphasis mine). First, Socrates likens Protagoras to bewitching Orpheus. The crowd follows Protagoras around, as though in a trance. They are completely blinded and fooled by Protagoras' enchanting λόγος. They are victims of Protagoras' lies, and they do not know what they are doing. Additionally, we learn that Protagoras picks up these followers as he travels from city to city; the list of bewitched followers grows after each stop.

Socrates mentions that in addition to these foreigners, some Athenians have become

enraptured by Protagoras already, after only three days. Protagoras states explicitly how he is able to gather followers so quickly, when talking to Hippocrates directly. This is one of the few moments in the dialogue where Protagoras and young Hippocrates speak to each other instead of through Socrates. Protagoras tells Hippocrates that "it will be possible for you, if you associate with me, on the day you do get together with me, to go home in a better state, and the same holds for the next day as well. In fact, every day you will continually take steps toward improvement [ἔσται τοίνυν σοι, ἐὰν ἐμοὶ συνῇς, ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐμοὶ συγγένῃ, ἀπιέναι οἴκαδε βελτίονι γεγονότι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ταὐτὰ ταῦτα· καὶ ἑκάστης ἡμέρας ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἐπιδιδόναι. καὶ ἐγὼ ἀκούσας εἶπον]" (318a). Protagoras promises improvement after only one day of association with him. It seems as though he delivers on this promise, for there are Athenians in his entourage now too. These Athenians have been persuaded that personal interest is more important than the common good.

The key, however, is that Protagoras does not need to *actually, truthfully*, improve his students. He merely needs to make them feel as though they are improved, and then they will be willing to pay the tuition. This is how Protagoras makes his living: flattering and complimenting his students so that he can collect the tuition and leave town as quickly as possible so that he can ensnare new followers and turn an even larger profit. His aim is to ensnare his students, it is not to make virtuous, and this is undemocratic behavior. It is undemocratic because the goal for Protagoras is to foster a sense of inequality in the πόλις, and he does so by promoting his own students at the expense of the rest of the δῆμος. Protagoras flatters his own students, and he also teaches them how to speak in an ingratiating way in the Assembly as well. In essence, Protagoras teaches his students how to take advantage of the δῆμος within the democratic setting.

All Protagoras has to do is flatter his followers and bolster up their confidence, regardless

of whether or not it is warranted. If he seriously challenged his students, if the work he asked of them were difficult and worthwhile, then his students would get discouraged. Instead, Protagoras boasts that it only takes one day to be improved by him. Protagoras needs to make this claim, if he is going to be able to make a living as a sophist. All that Protagoras can truthfully promise his students is that they will *believe* that they have been improved after just one day.

Socrates likens Protagoras' followers to a chorus: "I was especially delighted at seeing this chorus because they were taking noble precautions never to be in Protagoras' way by getting in front of him," they would turn around and snake behind Protagoras when he made a turn in the portico (315b). This orderly and poetic chorus is taking precautions not to disrupt Protagoras' λόγος; they do not *want* to break the spell that Protagoras/Orpheus has over them. Socrates does not report the content of Protagoras' λόγος, only his movements and the followers next to and behind him. I argue that the content is irrelevant. Like Orpheus, Protagoras merely bewitches, and the listeners do not wish to engage in meaningful discourse; they do not want to be conversation partners where the goal is to arrive at the truth. Protagoras, in turn, wants followers, not equal conversation partners. Protagoras makes his living on the inequality in wealth of the Athenians and other Greeks. That is, he sells his education to those who can afford the highest tuition. Additionally, he teaches his students the way to use flattering speech in order to take advantage of the rest of the δῆμος in the Assembly. He teaches them how to persuade others to effect policy change for their own benefit, not how to work together toward the common good of the πόλις. These anti-democratic sentiments are a threat to the Athenian πόλις, as it can result in policy that is not in the best interest of the entire δῆμος but rather the wealthy few.

Whereas Protagoras flatters his students so that they will continue to pay him for his services, Socrates does the complete opposite. Only by revealing one's previously falsely high

self-image can one begin to be humble and virtuous. For example, at the outset of the *Protagoras*, Socrates embarrasses Hippocrates, causing him to blush (312a). Before they even get underway, Socrates has made Hippocrates feel uncomfortable. Thus, Socrates refuses to flatter others due to his adherence to truth. According to Sallis, "in speaking the truth Socrates speaks in such a way as to avoid letting what he speaks about be hidden."[6] Socrates discloses the truth to the best of his ability; he never attempts to conceal the truth. Flattery can mislead, so by refusing the flatter his interlocutors, Socrates can guarantee his conversation partner that he is not trying to disguise the truth. When Socrates questions the person with the reputation for being the wisest to see if he has any wisdom and discovers he has none, Socrates describes the result in the *Apology* in the following way: "I then tried to show him that he thought himself wise, but that he was not. As a result he came to dislike me, and so did many of the bystanders. So I withdrew" (21d). This refusal to flatter drives the Athenians to establish a negative reputation for Socrates, because instead of admitting their errors, they instead respond to Socrates with anger.

One could argue that Socrates would be able to serve the πόλις more effectively if he were not so irritating because instead of turning away from Socrates, Athenians would be more susceptible to the truth and remove their false opinions of themselves. I argue, to the contrary, that this would be impossible, for then Socrates would betray the truth: "I realized, to my sorrow and alarm, that I was getting unpopular, but I thought that I must attach the greatest importance to the god's oracle" (21e). Socrates places his trust in Apollo and also in truth, over and against his reputation. According to McCoy, "Socrates is interested neither in taming nor in flattering but instead in enlightening his jurors about the values of wisdom and the virtues. He says that he will not please or obey the jurors and will instead obey the god of Delphi alone."[7] Socrates would rather

[6] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 31.
[7] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 42.

anger his fellow citizens and turn them against him than disobey the command of the god, for the sake of revealing the truth. If the Athenian δῆμος cannot see the truth, they will not be able to govern with an eye toward the truth either.

Socrates tells the jury why people were so angry: "many slanders came from these people and a reputation for wisdom, for in each case the bystanders thought that I myself possessed the wisdom that I proved that my interlocutor did not have" (23a). The Athenians assumed that Socrates was telling them they are not wise, mocking them, and in turn refusing to tell them what the truth is. Anger is a rational response to such behavior, to be sure, but Socrates insists: "I have hidden or disguised nothing [ἀποκρυψάμενος]. I know well enough that this very conduct makes me unpopular, and this is proof [τεκμήριον] that what I say is true" (24a-b). Socrates' unpopularity, which is the result of the rebukes he gives, is proof that he is telling the truth. For if Socrates actually does mean to improve the δῆμος, he would have no other motivation for angering the Athenians in such a dangerous way. According to Sallis, this is precisely the way that Socrates, in his love for the πόλις, moves beyond the πόλις as well: "the way begins in the city, but it is granted by something beyond the city. It leads through the threat of confrontation with the city, with those men of the city who, ignorant of their ignorance, are oblivious to the issue of questioning and thus capable only of suspicion and hatred in the face of genuine questioning."[8] Socrates moves beyond the limits of the πόλις so that he can work toward the improvement of the πόλις, even in the face of personal anger and hatred. He works to improve the Athenian democracy through his adherence to the truth and the removal of falsity.

Furthermore, Socrates admonishes the Athenians because he wants them to realize their potential as virtuous members of the δῆμος. According to McCoy, Socrates "attempt[s] to promote

[8] Sallis, *Being and Logos,* 533.

a kind of intellectual and emotional disequilibrium in the souls of those to whom he speaks, with the hope that his audience will emerge from this disequilibrium with a commitment to seek the truth."[9] False wisdom becomes a serious threat when the δῆμος makes laws and policy based on that false wisdom. Both Socrates and the rest of the Athenians do indeed share certain democratic values of virtue and self-governance, but Socrates' standards are higher:

> Then, if one of you disputes this and says he does care [about virtue and the state of one's soul], I shall not let him go at once or leave him, but I shall question him, examine him, and test him, and if I do not think he has attained the goodness that he says he has, I shall reproach him because he attaches little importance to the most important things and greater importance to inferior things (29e-30a).

Socrates is meddlesome, and he is insistent that the δῆμος lives up to the high opinion that they and others have of Athenians. If someone thinks that s/he is wise, Socrates will investigate that claim, but when it inevitably is revealed that person does not have any wisdom, Socrates believes it is his god-given duty to tell that person so. According to Sallis, "Socrates appears concretely engaged in that exposing of ignorance that constitutes his service to the city."[10] Socrates does not constrain himself, for it is much worse to hold onto a false opinion than to have no wisdom at all. That, in Socrates' view, is the greatest threat to Athens: its citizens are holding onto false belief. False opinion must be cast aside in order to reach a positive truth so that the δῆμος can indeed govern the πόλις democratically. Without the ability to discern the truth for oneself, the δῆμος is susceptible to being fooled by sophistical λόγοι.

Being questioned by Socrates is decidedly unpleasant. Socrates chastises and outwits his conversation partners. No one wants to be rebuked and told that their expert knowledge is worthless. Socrates is not doing this from out of a sense of cruelty, however. Rather, he is doing so for the benefit of Athens. He is only trying to help Athenians because he believes that everyone

[9] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 24.
[10] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 11.

is capable of doing philosophy and of being a philosophical interlocutor. The Athenians either do not understand or refuse to believe this, but Socrates is adamant that he is not doing this just to be meddlesome but rather for the sake of others: Athens is like a sluggish horse that needs to be stirred up by a gadfly (30e). The gadfly bothers the horse, and the owner of the horse allows the gadfly to bother it because what is unpleasant for the horse is for the benefit of the person trying to accomplish the task with the horse. By analogy, Socrates pesters the Athenian δῆμος for the sake of a good, just, and prosperous πόλις. The δῆμος *should* tolerate the gadfly-like Socrates, for it is in their best interest to do so. Democracy allows for the possibility of the questioning gadfly to examine the laws and change them when necessary. Socrates aims to make other Athenians into gadflies too – citizens who do not accept the laws blindly but instead actively work to improve them. Unfortunately, the Athenians are too shortsighted, but this does not deter Socrates: "I never cease to rouse each and every one of you, to persuade and reproach you all day long and everywhere I find myself in your company. Another such man will not easily come to be among you, gentlemen, and if you believe me you will spare me" (30e-31a). Socrates is unwilling to give up because the πόλις hangs in the balance between virtue and vice. Socrates has the duty and ability to effect the change that is necessary and perhaps persuade others to take up this duty as well.

Unfortunately, the horse is unable to understand that it must endure the gadfly for the sake of the task. The horse is great (μέγας) and noble (γενναῖος), according to Socrates, and it was only sluggish and in need of the gadfly because of its size (30e). By analogy, the Athenian δῆμος is noble and beautiful. The problem lies with the size of the democratic body in Athens. The δῆμος has the potential to be virtuous and good, according to Socrates, but certain changes must be made, and Socrates believes the only way to make the changes is through reproach, not through flattery. He is not an Orpheus that bewitches and enchants like Protagoras; instead, Socrates is a gadfly

who pokes and prods: “you might easily be annoyed with me as people are when they are aroused from a doze, and strike out at me; if convinced by Anytus you could easily kill me, and then you could sleep on for the rest of your days, unless the god, in his care for you, sent you someone else [εἰ μή τινα ἄλλον ὁ θεὸς ὑμῖν ἐπιπέμψειεν κηδόμενος ὑμῶν]” (31a). The god has given Socrates to the Athenians in order to raise the alarm, and if they do put him to death, they will be able to sleep, but they will not produce a just πόλις. Socrates is hopeful that the gods will give the Athenians another gadfly, for their own sake. Unfortunately, instead, they are given the sophists whose goal is to bewitch, calm, and flatter. The sophists, in this sense, actively work to undermine the Athenian democracy.

For further evidence that Socrates refuses to flatter his audience for the sake of covering over the truth, Socrates refuses to ingratiate himself to the jury by lamenting his fate and pleading for his life to be spared. He will not give the jury the satisfaction of watching him beg: “perhaps one of you might be angry as he recalls that when he himself stood trial on a less dangerous charge, he begged and implored the jurymen with many tears, that he brought his children and many of his friends and family into court to arouse as much pity as he could, but that I do none of these things, even though I may seem to be running the ultimate risk” (34c). Socrates will not parade his family out of arrogance or a lack of respect for the jury but rather for the sake of his reputation, not as an individual, but as a member of the Athenian democracy. Socrates refuses to bring shame on the πόλις, and he implores the jury members to act similarly so that they will not bring shame on the πόλις either (35a).

This refusal to flatter, I argue, was the ultimate reason that Socrates’ defense failed. If he had been more ingratiating, the jury would not have condemned him to death, but had Socrates ingratiated himself, he would have betrayed his own *raison d’être*. That is, he would have betrayed

not only himself but the gods as well, all for the sake of saving himself: "I was convicted because I lacked not words but boldness [τόλμα] and shamelessness [ἀναισχυντία] and the willingness to say to you what you would most gladly have heard from me, lamentations and tears and my saying and doing many things that I say are unworthy of me but that you are accustomed to hear from others" (38d-e). Socrates was convicted not because he failed to disprove the charges but because he refused to flatter the men of Athens.[11] One could argue that Socrates is merely making excuses for his failed defense. Yet Socrates has lived his entire life as a gadfly that pesters, not as Orpheus who bewitches and placates. By speaking plainly and without flattery, Socrates can be certain that he does not cover over the truth for the sake of either making matters easier for himself or also for the sake of the feelings of the δῆμος. Socrates' honor remains intact because he has spent his life working to uphold the Athenian democracy, at the expense of his own personal self-interest.

5.3 DIALOGUE: EQUALITY IN ΛΌΓΟΣ

The second essential moment of Socratic rhetoric is the question and answer format of conversation. The premise that truth will potentially be reached through dialogue is democratic, as opposed to the Protagorean model which seems to be thoroughly unequal and undemocratic: dialogue occurs between equals. In the *Protagoras*, Socrates is faced with precisely this distinction: a demonstration by Protagoras in which he explains to the audience the truth of which he already has knowledge, or a dialogue in which the truth is uncovered in the conversation itself. Socrates initial request to Protagoras was not for a demonstration, of which Protagoras is famous, but for a discussion. He will not hear the truth from Protagoras as long as the latter is making a speech. If Protagoras were to make a speech, then he would be the superior professing his wisdom

[11] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 29.

to the inferior. Dialogue, rather, takes place among equals. The interlocutors are on the same level, conversing together about the same topic, and one does not claim to be wiser or more intelligent than the other. McCoy characterizes this question and answer format as a form of philosophical rhetoric.[12] She argues that for Socrates, "the discovery of truth and its expression in language takes place between two people whose ideas inform how that truth is articulated and understood."[13] While I agree with McCoy here, I will push the argument even further to argue that truth is in fact *discovered* in the conversation itself, rather than merely articulated. For McCoy, the question and answer format reveals the limits of human knowledge and wisdom, but it can also reveal the highest point to which the philosopher can reach, namely, truth.[14]

Equality is crucial for proper philosophical dialogue because persuasion and truth- seeking occur together; that is, truth is discovered during the actual conversation itself. In a display like the kind that the sophists use, in contrast, the speaker decides the truth that s/he is going to tell the audience beforehand, and then, subsequently imparts this wisdom onto others. One does not philosophize for the sake of oneself but rather for the sake of making others better and more virtuous. Truth is reached together, in a dialogue between equals. For McCoy, "Plato acknowledges that the only way in which to approach the truth is through conversation with others; all human discourse about the truth is closely tied to the character and concrete needs of the persons engaged in the search."[15] Socrates' insistence on dialogue is central to his approach to philosophy as such, as everyone is potentially able to do philosophy. Socrates' hope is that question and answer will result in the truth, but whether the interlocutor is actually able to converse philosophically develops out of the conversation itself; the truth is revealed in the conversation itself.

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[12] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 59.
[13] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 60.
[14] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 71.
[15] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric,* 19.

Socrates, in adhering to question and answer, hopes that every interlocutor will be a worthy philosopher. According to Sallis, "spoken *logoi* also, though intrinsically more capable of allowing dialogue, by no means guarantee it."[16] While there is only the *potential* that truth will be revealed, in contrast, sophistical rhetoric actively closes off that potential. The emphasis is placed entirely on the saying, not the listening. According to McCoy, "for Socrates, question and answer promote the possibility that some positive discovery will take place; he suggests that philosophical discovery is a social process, emphasizing the ultimately cooperative nature of their debate over autonomy."[17] While I agree with McCoy here, I believe that further explanation is necessary. I argue that the social process of philosophical discovery is necessary because of the necessity of *equality* among conversation partners. It is not merely the social aspect that is crucial for truth, but rather the fact that this social quality requires each interlocutor to be on an even playing field, an equal footing. Dialogue only makes sense if the interlocutors are equal. Otherwise, a display by the wisest professing to the ignorant would be most appropriate. If the interlocutors are both equal in virtue and wisdom, then it is appropriate to engage in dialogue in order to arrive at the truth together. In contrast, if one person does have wisdom to impart to someone else, a display would be most appropriate, so that the ignorant can learn from the wise. Furthermore, dialogue is also central to the democratic process. That is, question and answer is democratic: in a democracy, every citizen is given an equal opportunity to be *heard*. This is precisely what dialogue is: listening (ἀποδέχομαι) and speaking. Both philosophical rhetoric and the democratic process involve both a saying and a hearing. In contrast, making a display is anti-democratic because it implies that one is superior in wisdom to another. Dialogue is communal, and each interlocutor must agree to the conclusion together in order for the dialogue to be successful.

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[16] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 19-20.
[17] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 73.

Thus, Socrates defends dialogue as the proper format for philosophy. He does so most explicitly in the *Protagoras* when he threatens to leave the conversation at Callias' house unless Protagoras agrees to engage in dialogue, instead of long speeches. In order to make sense Socrates' desire to leave, I will consider three things. First, Socrates' reaction to Protagoras' Great Speech, second, what exactly Socrates means by length of speech (Socrates, not Protagoras, offers the longest speech in the dialogue, in terms of sheer volume of words), and third, the actual scene in which Socrates threatens to leave: the interlude in the *Protagoras*.

After Protagoras' Great Speech, Socrates says he was bewitched, enthralled in Protagoras' λόγος, and he assumed Protagoras was going to continue: "I was bewitched and was still looking over at him for a long time because I thought he was going to say something else, which I wanted to hear. But when I perceived that he really had stopped, with difficulty I somehow gathered myself together, so to speak" (328d). Protagoras has just given a λόγος and a μῦθος that comprises eight Stephanus pages. This is quite a long speech, and yet Socrates wants to hear more. Socrates does not narrate to his comrade what he was hoping to hear from Protagoras, or why he is so angry that Protagoras did not say the thing that he was hoping for. Perhaps Socrates was hoping for a definition of the political art (πολιτικὴ τέχνη). Moreover, Socrates' longest speech in the dialogue (about poetic exegesis) takes up a similar amount of space and time. Thus, we cannot assume that Socrates is averse to speeches because they take a long time, despite his claims to forgetfulness. I argue that Socrates dislikes a long speech (μακρὸς λόγος) because it must be rehearsed beforehand. If a speech is rehearsed, then that means the speaker has thought about and perfected it. Unless the speaker is wise, then s/he has no business professing to others what the truth is. Rehearsed speeches as assumed to be truthful.

Furthermore, at the end of the Great Speech, Socrates likens speeches to books, in that they "have nothing to say in reply or to offer as a question themselves" (329a). A book remains silent when questioned. So too, according to Socrates, with rehearsed speeches. If "someone asks [the speechmaker] even something small concerning what they've said, then like struck bronze that rings for a long time and continues to do so unless someone touches it, so also the orators, though they've been asked about small points, stretch out their speech to a very great length" (329a). The speechmaker, like the book, cannot properly defend him or herself after the speech is over. If someone is unclear about the meaning, or requests further interpretation, the speechmaker cannot respond in a clear and concise way, according to Socrates. Instead, like a piece of bronze that has been struck, the speechmaker drones on in a single tone, unable to rephrase his or her meaning, even on small matters, because the speech, in a sense, is artificial. It is not organic, and unless the speechmaker is wise, it could be false. A long speech (μακρὸς λόγος) may be beautiful and enthralling, but it is not truthful, according to Socrates. Furthermore, for McCoy, "written speeches can be composed apart from other people, while the spoken word frequently takes place in the presence of others and so immediately links the speaker to his community."[18] The communal, democratic, aspect of dialogue is crucial, for Socrates.

Socrates assumes that Protagoras is able to engage in dialogue. Protagoras "is capable of making long and beautiful speeches, as is clear, but he is capable also of replying briefly when asked something and, when he asks a question, to wait for and accept the answer" (329b). Socrates does not question Protagoras' ability for question and answer; he simply asserts that Protagoras is capable of it. In this passage, Socrates names two distinct parts of question and answer. First, replying briefly when asked a question, and second, waiting for and accepting the answer to one's

[18] McCoy, "Alcidamas, Isocrates, and Plato," 48.

own question. In order to engage in dialogue as equals, each interlocutor must be able to reply briefly. Long speeches in the style of Protagoras are anti-democratic because the assumption is that the superior professing to the inferior; the interlocutors are not treated equally. For McCoy, "Protagoras' speech relies upon an asymmetry between the speaker and his audience, while Socrates' question and answer is potentially more symmetrical (especially if both parties are willing to take turns as questioner and answerer)."[19] This symmetry is important for Socrates because it is democratic. Only in this way could *both* parties be improved, not just the inferior.

Secondly, each interlocutor must be willing to wait for an answer and accept that answer before answering the question oneself. It seems as though this method may be ineffective in bringing about truth. If an interlocutor states a falsehood, one should not be obliged to accept that answer. Indeed, Socrates himself almost never accepts a false answer. Socrates does not mean one must accept the truth of the answer but rather one must accept the *honesty* of the answer as an attempt to approximate the truth. McCoy phrases this as being sympathetic to the position of the other.[20] If truth is going to be reached in the conversation, each interlocutor must be willing to answer as truthfully and honestly as one can. Goodwill must be shared. Indeed, at the end of the Great Speech, Socrates is convinced by Protagoras' conclusion that it is through human diligence that the good become good (328e). Socrates has changed his mind; he was convinced, at least for now, of Protagoras' λόγος.

The question then becomes: how exactly does Socrates define a lengthy speech (μακρὸς λόγος)? I argue that Socrates defines a lengthy speech as one in which the speaker has already assumed knowledge of the truth. Instead, for Socrates, truth is *uncovered,* is *revealed,* in dialogue. Philosophical dialogue does not aim to convince someone that his or her ideas are truthful. Rather,

[19] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 83.
[20] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 77.

dialogue involves the interlocutors arriving at the truth together, by way of question and answer. Short speeches do not have the presumption of truth in them; they are merely inquiries, but long speeches imply that one has rehearsed what one is saying beforehand. This would make the dialogue portion superfluous: why would one need to engage in philosophical conversation if one already knew the truth?

One can turn, for evidence that this is indeed how Socrates defines lengthy speeches, to the interlude in the *Protagoras* when Socrates stands up and threatens to leave Callias' house because Protagoras will not abide by the proper length of speech. Socrates stands up (ἀνίστημι) at the exact midpoint of the dialogue (335c). Socrates and Protagoras have been discussing the unity of the virtues, but Protagoras becomes annoyed and angry; he himself stands up, as though prepared for battle (333e). Socrates knows to be on his guard – Protagoras is angry. He gives a λόγος about what is beneficial for humans versus other animals, and at the end of the speech, those present burst into applause. Socrates, however, is not impressed. He tells Protagoras that he is a "a forgetful fellow [ἐπιλήσμων], and if somebody speaks to me at length, I forget what the speech is about" (334d). Socrates implores Protagoras to speak more briefly, since he is forgetful, and long speeches can be confusing. Protagoras asks if he should speak more briefly than is appropriate, but Socrates assures him that he is free to speak as briefly as is appropriate, not to be overly concise. Protagoras then appeals to his experience and expertise in debate (335a), and he tells Socrates that if he always spoke in the way that his debate partners asked, he would not have the stellar reputation that he does now. He feels he must remain steadfast and not give in to the whims of his interlocutors (335a). Surely Protagoras is so great because he does not need to rely on only one method; he can speak about any topic in any way, so his stubbornness does not seem to fit with his reputation.

Socrates narrates to his unnamed comrade that "I knew he himself was not satisfied with his own previous answers and that he would not be willing of his own accord to conduct the conversation by supplying answers—I came to the belief that it was no longer my task to remain at the get-together [ἡγησάμενος οὐκέτι ἐμὸν ἔργον εἶναι παρεῖναι ἐν ταῖς συνουσίαις]" (335b). There are a few potential reasons for Socrates' desire to leave. First, Protagoras is angry, as though ready to fight, which might deter Socrates. But Socrates does not often give in to the intimidation of others in λόγος. Second, perhaps the topic of conversation, namely, the nature of ἀρετή and whether or not it is teachable, is unsuitable. Yet these are decidedly human matters, not things in the heavens or below the earth, so Socrates would certainly find the topic appropriate. Third, perhaps Protagoras is lying to or deceiving Socrates, which would not result in the truth. Yet Socrates' decision does not stem from Protagoras' deception – they are speaking in the voice of "the many," rather than their own voices. The only option left is Protagoras' resistance to question-and-answer:

> I'm not comfortable either with our get-together coming to pass in a way contrary to what seems best to you. But when you want to converse in a way that I'm capable of keeping up with, then I'll converse with you. For even you yourself assert, as is said about you, that you're able to conduct get-togethers with both long and short speeches—for you are wise. But I am incapable of these long ones, though I'd like to be so able. You who are capable of both ought to have yielded to us, so that the get-together might have come to pass (335b-c).

Ostensibly, Protagoras is wise, and Socrates is not. Thus, Protagoras is able to make long speeches because he has some wisdom to impart on others. Additionally, Protagoras should be able to make short speeches too, since short speeches do not require any wisdom.

As it turns out, Protagoras does not in fact demonstrate that he has any wisdom, but for now Socrates is willing to give Protagoras the benefit of the doubt. That is, Socrates does not refuse to engage in long speeches because he does not believe Protagoras to be wise but rather because he himself cannot keep up. This is not a conversation taking place among equals. As a result, Socrates decides that this conversation is no longer worth his time: "But now I'm off, since you're

unwilling and I have some business to attend to and wouldn't be able to stay while you draw out your long speeches—there's somewhere I have to go" (335c). As he says these words, he "began to get up as if to leave [ἀνίστημι]" (335c). Socrates has somewhere to be, but the appointment could not have been important, since he meets with the comrade on the road home from Callias' house, and Socrates has the time to recount this entire conversation. The comrade even explicitly asks Socrates if anything is preventing him from sitting down and relaying the conversation with Protagoras, and Socrates raises no objection (310a).

One could argue that Socrates is not in fact insistent on the question and answer format, since he is relaying this entire conversation to the comrade as a monologue. But this fact belies two points. First, Socrates' memory is indeed intact; he is not nearly as forgetful as he claims to be. Second, a long speech (μακρὸς λόγος) is appropriate for a recounting of events but not for determining whether or not ἀρετή is teachable, or what πολιτικὴ τέχνη is. The τέλος of these two different kinds of λόγος is different. The purpose of recounting a conversation is not to uncover the truth, it is merely to relay a series of events. The rhetorical practice of question and answer would not be appropriate for a recitation of events. In this case, Socrates does have something to tell his comrade. Rhetorically, a long speech is more appropriate than question and answer. That is, Socrates does not take issue with long speeches *per se*, but rather, he thinks that certain rhetoric is appropriate for certain times. And elenchus is most appropriate for discovering philosophical truth, according to Socrates.

As Socrates stands up to leave Callias house, he is physically restrained. Callias "held my hand in his right and got hold of my simple cloak here with his left hand and said, 'we won't let you go, Socrates, for if you do leave, our conversations won't be the same. So I ask you to stay with us; there's no one to whom I would listen with greater pleasure than you and Protagoras in

conversation. Just gratify us all in this'" (335d). Callias physically restrains Socrates, with two hands, and he also attempts to use λόγος to persuade Socrates to stay. Callias attempts to persuade Socrates to remain by telling Socrates that he gives him pleasure, and he asks Socrates to gratify him and everyone else there. Callias is flattering Socrates!

After Callias, many more present in the audience all take turns in an attempt to persuade Socrates to remain. Indeed, everyone who tries to persuade Socrates to remain all attempt to flatter Socrates, especially Alcibiades, who speaks up immediately after Callias. Alcibiades believes Socrates when he says that he cannot make lengthy speeches but is capable of conversing, and that in this endeavor, Socrates is the greatest person at conversing (336c). Alcibiades betrays Socrates claim that he is forgetful, however: "I guarantee Socrates won't forget anything—not but that he jokes and says he is forgetful. In my opinion, then, what Socrates says is more equitable—for each must make manifest his own judgment" (336d). Alcibiades accuses Socrates of joking that he is forgetful. I think we should take Socrates at his word, however. Socrates certainly is not forgetful about what occurred: Socrates is recounting the entire conversation to the comrade in great detail. Instead, I argue that Socrates, when listening to a long speech (μακρὸς λόγος), is forgetful of the truth. After the Great Speech, Socrates says that he is bewildered and bewitched by Protagoras' persuasive λόγος. Lengthy speeches are convincing, they have been rehearsed, and they appear beautiful. A long speech, if it attempts to cover over the truth, can make one forget what is truthful and what is the lie. For further evidence that Socrates is averse to long speeches because they make him forgetful of the truth, I want to turn very briefly back to the *Apology*. After Meletus and Anytus have presented their case, and Socrates remarks that he was "almost carried away in spite of myself, so persuasively did they speak" (17a). These speeches were so persuasive that Socrates

almost forgot who he was.[21] Socrates has almost forgotten the truth of his own self, as a result of persuasive speech.

Socrates likens his inability to exchange long speeches with Protagoras to trying to run a race against Crison of Himera, an Olympic athlete (335e). Crison can run both middle- and long-distance, and if Socrates were to race against Crison, it would not be very entertaining or pleasant to watch Crison leave Socrates in the dust. Instead, Socrates says that Crison, and by analogy Protagoras, should make concessions: "I'm unable to run quickly, but he can run slowly. So if you want to listen to me and Protagoras, ask him to answer just as he was answering me at first, briefly and with regard to the questions themselves. Otherwise, what will be the manner of the conversation? For my part, I supposed that getting together to converse with one another was different from making a public harangue [δημηγορεῖν]" (336a-b). Protagoras should slow down for the forgetful and ignorant Socrates. Socrates is calling for equality. Protagoras should converse with Socrates as his equal, not as the superior professing to the inferior. Yet Socrates readily admits that Protagoras is wise, so why should Protagoras not give a long speech? To answer this question, I propose a third essential moment of Socratic rhetoric: beginning in ignorance.

5.4 CLAIMS TO IGNORANCE: AN OPENING UP OF TRUTH

Socrates begins his philosophical inquiry from a position of ignorance; he notoriously admits that he has no wisdom. Philosophy, for Socrates, is not a matter of confirming an already held true belief but discovering the truth for oneself. That is, Socrates knows that he does not know, whereas everyone else thinks they know. Protagoras claims to be able to speak about anything and answer any questions, yet by the end of the dialogue, he is unable to defend his initial position that

[21] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 28.

ἀρετή is teachable and that courage is the virtue that underlies all the others, and so he is reduced to failure. Socrates, on the other hand, is actually able to speak about any topic because he begins with a lack and hopes to be filled (with knowledge). For McCoy, "knowledge of one's own ignorance is an epistemic virtue that allows one to progress in inquiry."[22] The goal of the conversation is always truth, and all presuppositions or previously held beliefs should be suspended before engaging in philosophical rhetoric, since they might be false. According to McCoy, "it is the philosopher's very desire for the truth that requires him to keep revisiting foundational questions in light of new experiences, in particular in the face of challenges to it from non-philosophers."[23]

Removing one's presuppositions also is a necessary component of democratic speech. If one is to make just laws democratically, one must be willing to hear dissenting opinions, and one can only actively listen if one suspends judgment until the end of the discussion. An already closed-off attitude is undemocratic because there would be no potential for the democratic process to occur. If democracy is premised on the assumption that public debate on policy and law will result in better laws, then a δῆμος that has already formed its opinions before entering the Assembly will not be productive. In contrast, if one begins in ignorance, then one will not be weighed down with biases and presuppositions that would mar the truthfulness of the path of the λόγος. Socrates would rather reject a false idea than be uncertain about the truth, because clinging to a false belief is much more dangerous than not being sure one has true belief. For McCoy, the philosopher embodies a "simultaneous commitment to the truth and his openness to questioning his own status in relation to that truth."[24] Thus, beginning in ignorance is necessary for attaining the truth. So too in a

[22] McCoy, "Why is Knowledge of Ignorance Good?," 169.
[23] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 19.
[24] McCoy *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 19.

democracy, laws aim at the good, and rejecting unjust laws can only occur if one is open to all the evidence before making a decision.

According to Sallis, "what is required is an awakening to an ignorance intrinsic to oneself – an ignorance which is not an ignorance with regard to this or that but which, rather, is a constituent in man's comportment to everything, an ignorance which, as a result, holds man at a distance from total and immediate revelation of beings, a distance which he can ignore only at great peril."[25] Socratic ignorance is an attitude that is to be taken up by the philosopher. It is a way of self-comportment that allows one to be open to the disclosure of truth. Thus, to answer the question at the end of the previous section, Protagoras still should not give a long speech (μακρὸς λόγος), even though he may be wise. Protagoras, Socrates, and the others are working under the *assumption* that Protagoras is wise; he has yet to actually reveal his wisdom. While Socrates would like to trust Protagoras, he still insists they converse together as equals.

One could object, however, that knowledge is necessary for doing philosophy. Someone who knows the truth will speak about it better than someone who does not. This would be an odd thing to deny, and Socrates certainly does not deny it. Thus, it seems as though knowledge of the truth and the good are necessary in order to speak philosophically, and beginning in ignorance is detrimental for philosophical rhetoric. McCoy argues that Socrates "takes a middle position between relying on his own current self-knowledge as the basis for unraveling the riddle and exploring the possibility that how he understands himself and his own state is not yet adequate. In other words, Socrates takes a middle way between assuming the adequacy of his self-understanding and total skepticism about it."[26] Socrates occupies a middle position between wisdom and ignorance. His self-knowledge of his own limitations allows him to learn about

[25] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 42.
[26] McCoy, "Why is Knowledge of Ignorance Good?," 177.

himself. In this vein, philosophical rhetoric *aims* at the truth, it does not *possess* the truth. This is precisely the difference between a σοφιστής and a φιλόσοφος: a sophist claims to possess wisdom, while the philosopher loves wisdom.

Yet this definition of Socratic ignorance does not account for a curious moment in the *Protagoras:* Socrates already passes judgment on sophistry before he even meets Protagoras. When Hippocrates arrives at Socrates' house in the early morning, we find Socrates, unusually, in his private abode, where perhaps he feels more comfortable passing judgment on matters than he would outside of his home. Socrates tells Hippocrates in no uncertain terms that sophists hawk their learning from city to city in the attempt to make money (313d). They sell everything they have, no matter who the audience is. Socrates, seemingly, does not need to investigate the nature of sophistry, since he already has knowledge of it. This seems to be the opposite of removing one's presuppositions before the conversation begins. Yet, even if he is certain sophistry is detrimental to Hippocrates' soul, Socrates still brings Hippocrates to Protagoras. This decision on Socrates' part is puzzling, to say the least.

To make sense of it, I argue that there are two distinct moments in the *Protagoras* that are crucial for understanding Socrates' ignorance and also his reasons for bringing Hippocrates to Callias' house. First, Socrates changes his mind in the dialogue. He actively changes his position; his previously held belief, that ἀρετή is not teachable, is shown to be false, so Socrates willingly changes his opinion without shame. In contrast, when Protagoras is shown to be wrong, he is embarrassed and unable to finish the λόγος himself. Second, the exact way Socrates changes his mind is revealed through his exegesis of Simonides' poem and the unity of the virtues, and it has to do with the assumption that no one does the bad willingly and that error is due to a lack of learning. In showing exactly how Socrates changes his mind about the teachability of ἀρετή, I

believe we can finally understand why Socrates still thinks there is something to be learned from the sophists, despite his initial, unexamined claim that sophistry is harmful for the soul.

Protagoras asks Socrates about a poem of Simonides' that involves an apparent contradiction: at one point Simonides says that it is difficult to become good, but in another stanza says Pittacus is wrong when he says it is difficult to be noble (339b-c). Protagoras turns to poetry because he believes poetry is "the greatest part of a man's education [ἀνδρὶ παιδείας μέγιστον μέρος]" (338e). He says that the only difference in this new λόγος is that the realm will now be poetry, but the topic is the same: ἀρετή. Protagoras think that poetic exegesis would be the greatest part of one's education because poetry is open to interpretation, and one must be able to interpret both political laws and one's own interests.

Socrates is stumped, for these two phrases appear to be contradictory: either it is difficult to become good or it is not difficult to be noble. Eventually, after Socrates has brought Prodicus, the linguist, into the conversation, Socrates is able to conclude that apparent contradiction surrounds the difference between being and becoming. For it is indeed difficult to *become* noble, but once one has acquired the habit, then it is not difficult to *be*, that is, to remain, noble: "to become a good man is truly difficult, and yet it is possible for a certain time, at least, but for one who has become such to remain in that state and to be a good man […] is impossible and not human, but god alone would have this prize" (344b-c). It is impossible to be noble without qualification because humans are fallible. Only gods can be perfectly, truly, noble. For McCoy, "this lack [Socratic ignorance] is a genuine needfulness: the human being longs for and strives for the divine, even as he is incapable of becoming divine."[27] Perfect wisdom is divine; it is not human.

[27] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 82.

Humans should attempt to *become* noble, however. According to Socrates, humans become noble and improve through learning (μάθησις) (345a). In this sense, learning is the necessary prerequisite for truth. If one refuses to learn, one will be unable to attain truth. Socrates likens learning to any other skill, and he uses the examples of writing and medicine. A doctor first learns the skill of being a physician, then the doctor can become a *good* physician, but the doctor can also become a *bad* physician too. That is, the doctor can use the learned skill of medicine for both good and bad purposes.

Since no one does the bad thing willingly, it takes learning in order to be good. According to Socrates, "none of the wise men holds that any human being willingly errs or willingly carries out any shameful and bad deeds. Rather, they well know that all those who do the shameful and bad things do them unwillingly" (345e). If no one does the bad willingly, then bad actions come about, for Socrates, because someone made a mistake in his or her reasoning. A mistake is caused by a lack of learning. Thus, learning makes us act well, and ignorance makes us act badly. Socrates is beginning to work through here how learning affects ἀρετή. If a lack of learning causes unvirtuous actions, then an increase of learning causes us to act virtuously. In order to learn, however, one needs to be open. One needs to open oneself up to the possibility of learning, which is unfeasible if one is closed off by prejudices and preconceptions of the truth. Thus, beginning in ignorance is necessary in order to reach the truth. I do not mean that Socrates thinks that philosophy begins as a completely blank slate. Rather, philosophy, the pursuit of the truth, must begin in a way that suspends judgment until the end.

The problem with judgment before investigation is that without the art of measuring (μετρητικὴ τέχνη), one can end up praising and blaming the wrong things. For Socrates, "'I praise and love all willingly, whoever does nothing shameful,' though there are some whom I praise and

love unwillingly [ἀλλ᾽ εὖ ἴσασιν ὅτι πάντες οἱ τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ τὰ κακὰ ποιοῦντες ἄκοντες ποιοῦσι]" (346e). We can praise the noble willingly if we are clear about what is noble and what is base. But if we are unsure, then we may praise the base unwillingly, that is, without all the proper information to make a judgement. Judgement should only come after investigation, after we can be certain that we have mastered the art of measuring. Here we see how the interdependence between philosophical dialogue and beginning in ignorance are both necessary in order to attain the truth.

This concludes the exegesis of Simonides' poem, and Socrates is eager to return to the previous discussion of ἀρετή, so he states that conversing about poetry is appropriate for the drinking parties of uneducated people, those who would rather listen to flute girls than make speeches (347c-348a). Socrates says poetic exegesis is for the uneducated, whereas Protagoras says it is the highest form of education. At this point in the dialogue, too, Protagoras is unwilling to continue, but Alcibiades and Callias essentially shame Protagoras into continuing, so he agrees to answer Socrates' questions. Socrates assures Protagoras that he only wants to learn the truth about these matters, he not trying to insult Protagoras. And specifically, he wants to discuss these matters with Protagoras himself, more than anyone else:

> You both are good yourself and can make others good, and you have had such faith in yourself that while others hide this art, you have had yourself openly heralded among all the Greeks, have called yourself a sophist, and make yourself known as a teacher of education and virtue [ἀρετῆς διδάσκαλον], the first to think himself deserving of pay for this. How then could I not summon you to the inquiry into these things and ask you questions and consort with you? It couldn't be otherwise (349a).

Protagoras himself boasted earlier that he is wise and is able to make others wise, to the extent that he believes he is deserving of pay. If anyone should understand ἀρετή, it would be Protagoras. Furthermore, Socrates does not assert anything about Protagoras' wisdom beyond what he claims for himself.

Socrates is clear in his discussion with Protagoras that he is only after the truth; he is not trying to prove Protagoras wrong or make a show of outwitting Protagoras in λόγος. Instead,

Socrates tells Protagoras explicitly: "don't suppose that I am conversing with you because I want anything other than to investigate thoroughly the things that I myself am continually perplexed by [μὴ οἷου διαλέγεσθαί μέ σοι ἄλλο τι βουλόμενον ἢ ἃ αὐτὸς ἀπορῶ ἑκάστοτε, ταῦτα διασκέψασθαι]" (348c). Protagoras is very unwilling to continue the conversation, but it is not clear explicitly why he is unwilling to engage in question and answer. Socrates tries to mollify Protagoras by assuring that he is not attacking his reputation or wealth; he simply wants to know whether or not ἀρετή is teachable. He wants to examine the ἀπορία in his soul, and for Socrates, two people are more effective than one in uncovering the truth.[28] If Protagoras and he can reach an agreement together, then the get-together will be successful. The point is not to prove each other wrong, or to prove themselves right, for Socrates. Rather, it is simply to uncover the truth about the teachability of ἀρετή.

Protagoras' aim in the get-together, however, is decidedly different. While Protagoras claims he is there to teach ἀρετή, we have seen how he is actually taking on the role of Orpheus, so he is present at Callias' house in order to fulfill his Orphic legacy: bewitch the Athenians into joining his chorus. His aim is also to show that ἀρετή is teachable, since that is what he claims to teach. Protagoras already assumes the conclusion before he has begun: ἀρετή is teachable. Thus, it is devastating for Protagoras to be proven wrong by the λόγος. Regarding the teachability of ἀρετή, the *Protagoras* does end aporetically, but we do see a curious moment in this dialogue: Socrates actively changes his mind. At first, he thought ἀρετή was not teachable, but by the end of the dialogue, as we saw earlier, Socrates claims that ἀρετή is nothing more than the art of measuring (μετρητικὴ τέχνη), which is a part of knowledge, and knowledge is indeed teachable. Socrates welcomes the opportunity to change his mind, to be rid of a false belief. Beginning in

[28] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 72.

ignorance does not mean one knows nothing; rather, one must suspend all previously held assumptions in order to reach the truth. Socrates welcomes the opportunity to change his mind: his previously held belief, before examination, was wrong.

On the one hand, while Socrates is free to change his mind for the sake of the truth because he does not claim to have any wisdom at all, Protagoras, on the other hand, is unwilling to let go of his preconceptions for the sake of the truth because he must necessarily claim that he has been right from the beginning. Protagoras' τέλος is to prove that he is worthy of followers because he is wise, not because he is willing to chase after the truth. He is a sophist, a possessor of wisdom, not a philosopher, a lover of wisdom. In this sense, sophistry is decidedly undemocratic. Sophists must defend their initial claim, even when evidence is revealed to the contrary. Protagoras thereby closes himself off to the potential disclosure of truth that may only be arrived at through genuine dialogue.

Protagoras and Socrates finally return to the discussion of the unity of the virtues. Protagoras believes that courage is the root of all virtue, since it is possible to be courageous and not have the other virtues, but it is impossible to be just, pious, and so forth. without also being courageous (359b). In other words, ἀρετή takes courage. The courageous are eager, not fearful, but the cowardly are also eager for the opposite of what the courageous are eager for. Socrates then asks Protagoras what these opposite things are: "the cowards advance toward things they feel bold about, the courageous toward terrible things?" (359c). Protagoras answers in the voice of the many. Up until now, Socrates has been willing to accept answers from Protagoras that are in this manner: speaking on behalf of what is usually assumed by most people. But now Socrates finally pushes back on this sort of answer and asks Protagoras instead to answer in his own voice. According to McCoy, Socrates believes that "it is the person rather than the thesis that is being

examined. Socrates' main concern is with the person being asked rather than with theses abstracted from persons."[29] To question the person and to question the thesis are one in the same act. Before, Socrates was interested in discussing what "the many" believe, but now he wants to question the beliefs of Protagoras directly. And in doing so, he catches Protagoras in a contradiction. For if the courageous advance toward and are eager for what is terrible, then they are willingly choosing the worse action, and earlier it was agreed that no one who is sane does the bad thing willingly. Alternatively, the courageous might be eager for things that are not terrible, but then they would be no different from the cowards (359d). Protagoras knows he is in trouble, but he is unwilling to admit that he made a mistake in his previous λόγος (359d). Protagoras is beginning to see that there will be no way out for him, and he has a decision to make: double down on the λόγος he committed himself to earlier and try to save his pride or admit that he does not have the wisdom that he first thought he had and proceed in a positive way.

Socrates explains the contradiction: "if this was correctly demonstrated, no one advances toward things he believes to be terrible, since being overcome by oneself was discovered to be ignorance" (359d). When we are overcome, we are ignorant about what is best for us, and we do not engage in the art of measuring properly. That is to say, it is impossible to advance toward what is terrible, unless one is ignorant about what is terrible. The implication is that one would be unwillingly be advancing toward what is terrible, since one is in ignorance. And yet we cannot deny that the courageous nobly advance toward war (presumably, when it is a just war), and the cowards do not. Not going to war is shameful (359e). The problem is that they previously agreed that what is noble and good is also pleasant, but the coward advances toward what is pleasant, not what is terrible. At this point, Protagoras is distancing himself from the λόγος as much as possible

[29] McCoy, *Plato on the Rhetoric*, 80.

with responses like “That was agreed to, at any rate,” and “it is necessary […] to agree” (360a). Protagoras realizes that courage cannot be the root of all virtue.

Socrates concludes that the courageous have noble fears and boldness, while the cowards have shameful fear and boldness. The quintessential question, then, is the following: how do we judge which fears and boldness are noble and which are shameful? It cannot be through courage, the way Protagoras initially claimed. Instead, Socrates shows how it is through ignorance: “‘so then the cowards and the rash and the madmen, by contrast [to the courageous] have both shameful fears and shameful boldness?’ He agreed. ‘And do they feel boldness when it comes to shameful and bad things on account of anything other than lack of knowledge and ignorance [Θαρροῦσι δὲ τὰ αἰσχρὰ καὶ κακὰ δι᾽ ἄλλο τι ἢ δι᾽ ἄγνοιαν καὶ ἀμαθίαν]?’ ‘That’s so,’ he said” (360b). The cowards are ignorant about what is terrible. They are ignorant about what are the noble things to fear, and which are the shameful things to fear. Thus, cowardice is nothing other than ignorance, and courage is nothing other than wisdom (360d). Socrates has shown how μετρητικὴ τέχνη, which is *learned*, is the root of all virtue, not courage.

Socrates was willing to change his mind about ἀρετή being teachable, despite giving his opinion at the outset before investigating. In contrast, Protagoras resorts to anger and embarrassment. At this point, Protagoras is no longer answering but just nodding (360d). Then, Socrates tells his comrade, he no longer is even nodding but is merely silent, and he finally tells Socrates to “finish it off yourself [Αὐτός, ἔφη, πέρανον]” (360d). Protagoras can no longer claim that certain people can be courageous and unlearned at the same time, since virtue simply amounts to the art of measuring pleasures and pains. Protagoras is wrong, and Socrates too was wrong and first, but then he *learned*.

Protagoras accuses Socrates of being a "lover of victory [φιλονικεῖν]" (360e), and he agrees to gratify Socrates and conclude the rest of the λόγος. But Socrates denies this charge of being a lover of victory and in need of gratification because he simply wants to uncover the truth (360e). Socrates then summarizes the entire conversation that they have had in a way that makes apparent this need to begin in ignorance.

> For I know that, once this becomes manifest, that about which each of us, you and I, has drawn out a long speech [μακρὸν λόγον] would become especially clear—I saying that virtue isn't something teachable, you that it is something teachable. And in my opinion the recent outcome of our speeches is, like a human being, accusing and ridiculing us; and should it attain a voice, it would say: 'You two are strange, Socrates and Protagoras [εἰπεῖν ἂν ὅτι ἄτοποί γ' ἐστέ, ὦ Σώκρατές τε καὶ Πρωταγόρα]. For you, on the one hand, were saying in what came before that virtue isn't something teachable, but now you are urging things that contradict yourself [νῦν σεαυτῷ τἀναντία σπεύδεις] by attempting to demonstrate that all things are knowable—justice and moderation and courage—in which manner virtue would most of all appear to be something teachable. For if virtue were something other than knowledge, as Protagoras was attempting to say, it clearly wouldn't be something teachable. But now, if it will appear to be entirely knowledge, as you are urging, Socrates, it'll be a wonder if it isn't teachable. But Protagoras, on the other hand, set it down previously as something teachable, but now by contrast he resembles someone urging that it appear to be almost anything other than knowledge. And in this way it would least of all be something teachable (361a-c).

Protagoras accuses Socrates of being a lover of victory because the λόγος has proven Protagoras wrong. Socrates assures Protagoras that this is not the case, and that Protagoras is simply thinking about matters in the wrong way: Socrates is not a lover of victory; he merely wants to learn the truth about the teachability of ἀρετή. And the only reason he was able to get farther than Protagoras is because he either suspended judgement at the beginning or he was willing to change his mind openly and without shame. Socrates even concludes that ἀρετή is teachable, so if Protagoras' goal were to determine the teachability of ἀρετή, he should be rejoicing. Socrates is willing to return to the beginning and go through the investigation together again, but Protagoras, however, is unwilling to begin again, but he does praise Socrates for his eagerness (προθυμία) (361e). Perhaps by the end, Protagoras has shown some growth. Perhaps he will be willing, in the future, to suspend his judgment, shake off the mantle of wisdom, and begin from a position of ignorance.

5.5 CONCLUSION: WE DEPARTED (ἀΠῆMEN)

We have seen the way that educational systems affect the legal and political realms, specifically within the context of the ancient Greek practice of sophistry and its effect on Athenian democracy. A sophistical education in persuasive speaking could only be afforded by the wealthy, and Athenians would send their sons to a sophist in order to learn how to be persuasive in the Assembly and influence the decision of the democratic body in their favor. We investigated whether or not that inequality in education serves to undermine democracy or if it in fact strengthens the Athenian state – on the one hand, there exists an inequality based on wealth, but on the other hand, education in ἀρετή (what the sophists claim to teach) cannot be a detriment to the πόλις. In conclusion, there does exist a way to improve the πόλις by means of virtue that does not rely on wealth inequality: Socratic rhetoric. Socrates fully embodies the democratic value of equality and the virtuous improvement of the Athenians in his 1) his refusal to flatter his conversation partners which can serve to disguise the truth, 2) his adherence to dialectic in which two (or more) interlocutors converse as equals, with the aim of uncovering the truth together, and 3) commitment to beginning in ignorance rather than an assumed knowledge of the truth. Only by taking these three essential moments together can one hope at arriving at the truth. Furthermore, this is the only way that education will remain equitable, which I argue is necessary for democracy.

By way of conclusion, I want to offer a discussion of the final moment in the *Protagoras*. According to Sallis, "a dialogue is a discourse in and through which something is done, a discourse in and through which certain deeds are accomplished by certain speakers and with respect to other participants in the dialogue."[30] What has been done in the *Protagoras*? What has been accomplished, by whom, and for the sake of whom? The conversation with Protagoras has ended,

[30] Sallis, *Being and Logos*, 18.

and while Socrates is willing to attempt to relieve the ἀπορία and begin again, Protagoras refuses: "now it's already time to turn to something else [νῦν δ' ὥρα ἤδη καὶ ἐπ' ἄλλο τι τρέπεσθαι]" (361e). Protagoras does he not feel the need to defend himself further against Socrates' conclusions. Perhaps he is simply tired out, or perhaps he knows that doing so will only embarrass him again. Yet he does not ask Socrates to leave, he simply wants to move on to another topic.

Protagoras praises Socrates' eagerness and also the λόγοι, and he mentions that he speaks highly of Socrates often, especially given Socrates' young age (361e). He then predicts Socrates' success: "I say too that I wouldn't wonder if you should take your place among the men held in high regard for wisdom [εἰ τῶν ἐλλογίμων γένοιο ἀνδρῶν ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ]" (361e). Does Socrates fulfill this prediction? I argue that it depends on the state of the youth who are influenced by the wisdom that Socrates has: human wisdom, and the wisdom to know that he does not have any wisdom.

Socrates agrees to let the matter lie and reminds the group that he has to leave, as he has a prior engagement. He only stayed "to gratify the noble Callias" (362a). Perhaps Socrates' attention has shifted. At first, he agreed to take Hippocrates to see Protagoras, but after the interlude in which he threatens to leave, now Socrates remains to gratify Callias. Socrates shifts his focus because Hippocrates is no longer in need of guidance. In this sense, the dialogue does not end aporetically. Hippocrates has learned, with Socrates' guidance, the true nature of sophistry. Socrates has been able to reveal to Hippocrates precisely why he should be wary of the sophists, not only for his own soul but also for the soul of the Athenian δῆμος. Yet Hippocrates is not the only youth present at Callias' house; Alcibiades is there too. In the opening frame, Socrates admits that he was in the company of Alcibiades, but he completely forgot Alcibiades was there because he was in the company of someone more noble and beautiful: Protagoras. Why does Socrates

forget about Alcibiades? Or perhaps a better question is the following: *does* Socrates actually forget about Alcibiades?

Socrates approaches Alcibiades and Hippocrates differently in the *Protagoras*. That is, Hippocrates asked for Socrates' guidance before visiting the (potentially) dangerous Protagoras. Hippocrates is aware that he needs guidance, and Socrates willingly offers that guidance. In contrast, Alcibiades simply shows up at Callias' house with Critias in tow. They arrive after Socrates and Hippocrates, and Socrates describes what happened when he spotted Alcibiades: "And we had just come in when Alcibiades the beautiful—as you say and as I am persuaded—came in behind us, as well as Critias son of Callaeschrus. So once we were inside, we again passed time on a few small matters and, with them disposed of, we went over to Protagoras [ἔτι σμίκρ' ἄττα διατρίψαντες καὶ ταῦτα διαθεασάμενοι προσῆμεν τὸν Πρωταγόραν]" (316a). To the Athenians, Socrates was associated with Alcibiades and Critias and should be held culpable for their actions. But as we see in the *Protagoras*, perhaps their failure as Athenians citizens is due to the fact that they do not seek Socrates out in the way that Hippocrates does. They did not seek Socrates' guidance, but rather they acted of their own accord. In contrast, Hippocrates, while nothing is known about him historically, does not stray from his proper bounds as a youth. Furthermore, Socrates does not narrate what these "small matters" are that they discuss. I believe that Alcibiades was probably shocked to see Socrates at Callias' house, as this was probably the last place he expected to see his philosophy teacher. Perhaps Socrates admonished Alcibiades for his ὕβρις in coming to Callias' house without guidance. While Socrates does not tell his comrade what they discussed, we can conclude that Alcibiades does not have the forethought to ask for an introduction from Socrates, unlike Hippocrates.

The final line of the dialogue, spoken by Socrates to his comrade, is the following: "Having said and heard these things, we departed [ταῦτ᾽ εἰπόντες καὶ ἀκούσαντες ἀπῆμεν]" (362a). First, Socrates acknowledges that he has both said and heard things, which is a testament to Socrates' emphasis on dialogue. That is, philosophy involves both listening and speaking. Secondly, the final word in the dialogue is the plural ἀπῆμεν. Socrates did not leave alone. He does not mention anyone along with him when he meets the comrade on the way home, and we can assume that Alcibiades was not with Socrates, as he and the comrade talk about Alcibiades as though he were not present. Perhaps Hippocrates is with Socrates, and they parted before meeting, by chance, the comrade. Perhaps Protagoras left with Socrates, as Protagoras seems to have lost his competitive edge by the end; perhaps Protagoras has been able to put aside his assumption, namely, that he possesses wisdom, for the sake of learning the truth.

These questions are certainly speculative in nature, so I will instead focus on what we do know: Socrates does not leave Callias' house alone. I interpret this moment as Socrates' insistence on the communal nature of learning and ἀρετή. Philosophy is not done in a vacuum; rather, it is a communal ἔργον by way of λόγος. Truth is reached *together*, particularly the truth about ἀρετή, because the virtuousness of each person has an effect on the virtue of the πόλις as a whole. And if ἀρετή amounts to the art of measuring (μετρητικὴ τέχνη), then those who measure best are the most virtuous. The art of measuring is something taught, so those with the best education will be the most virtuous. Thus, I conclude that there is a moral imperative to strive for the best education for everyone. Of course, not every student succeeds. According to McCoy, "Plato's dialogues do not always present a clear and decisive victory for philosophy over rhetoric or sophistry. […] [often interlocutors] walk away from conversation with Socrates not at all persuaded that the life

he advocates is better than their own."[31] Not everyone is persuaded, and not everyone holds the democratic values that Socrates proposes. Thus, I conclude that at the end of the *Protagoras,* the true democrats left with Socrates. These are the ones who have learned the lesson, namely, that sophistry is undemocratic and a threat to Athens. The rest have remained, that is, they have successfully been bewitched and shall join Protagoras' growing chorus. But the democrats, the ones committed to equality, leave with Socrates. One must always be on one's guard against harmful λόγοι and work to uphold truthful λόγοι to the greatest extent possible. The stakes for philosophy, and democracy, are simply too high.

[31] McCoy, *On the Rhetoric*, 6.

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