Erotikós Lógos
A Revaluation of Poetry in Plato's Philosophy

Master's Thesis submitted for the
Research Master's Philosophy
Utrecht University
Jan 23, 2024

Julia Rey-Conde Jiménez
Student Number: 7435150

Supervisor: Dr. Sarah Virgi
Second Reader: Prof. Dr. Mauro Bonazzi

Abstract

Poetry is a problem in Plato's philosophy. It is three times removed from the truth (*Rep.* 597e7), deprived of skill or craft (*Ion* 533d2), even a damage to human rationality (*Laws* 719c). The problem becomes poignant enough so as for Plato to devote the last pages of the *Republic*, his most famous dialogue, to expel all poets from the ideal city. But the expulsion is not unconditional (Rep. 607c-608a). What is, then, what qualifies Socrates' banishment? Why is Socrates, like the lover waiting for his improbable love to regret (607e4-608a1), willing to have poetry back?

This thesis argues that Plato had good reasons, in his *paedeutic* and erotic theories, to readmit poetry. Poetry can educate the appetitive part of the soul to love the beautiful. As a moral likeness endorsed with sensual charms, "imitation to the hearing" (*Rep.* 603b8), poetry can grasp and educate beauty. As appearance-responsive and erotically driven, appetite can undergo poetic education. A reassessment of both poetry and the appetitive part of the soul is endeavored in this thesis, allowed by Plato's erotic *paideia*. Consequently, in Platonic *eros* poetry ceases to be a philosophical problem.

“The third kind of possession and madness comes from the Muses, seizing a delicate, virginal soul, rousing an exciting it to Bacchic frenzy in lyric and other forms of poetry, and by embellishing countless deeds of men of old it educates their successors.”
(*Phaedr*. 245a1-5)

“The same irresistible sensual charm, called *peitho* in Greek, is the mechanism of seduction in love and of persuasion in words; the same goddess (*Peitho*) attends upon seducer and poet. It is an analogy that makes perfect sense in the context of oral poetics, where Eros and the Muses clearly share an apparatus of sensual assault.”
(Carson, Eros the bittersweet 1986, 50)

Contents

Introduction **5**

- A new quarrel between philosophy and poetry 5
- Platonic *eros*: a vanishing point 6
- A methodological remark 7

1. The problem of poetry **9**

- 1.1 The dominant reading 9
  - 1.1.1 The problem: Socrates' banishment of poetry 10
  - 1.1.2 Poetry is rational impairment 11
  - 1.1.3 Mimesis is deceptive: impersonation and counterfeit 12
  - 1.1.4 Ethical side to the principle of opposites: decent man and child-like behaviour 16
  - 1.1.5 Philosophy against poetry 18
- 1.2 The new debate 19
- 1.3 Dominant / New: ambivalence and opposition 22

2. Love of poetry **24**

- 2.1 Poetry is μουσική 26
- 2.2 Musical παιδεία 28
  - 2.2.1. Music transforms moral character through habituation in virtue 29
  - 2.2.2. Music is directed toward the non-rational part of the soul 31

3. Poetry and the appetitive part of the soul **34**

- 3.1 Poetry does not appeal to reason 34
  - 3.1.1Proof one: imitation 34
  - 3.1.2 Proof two: morality 36
- 3.2 Nehamas' challenge 37
- 3.3 ἐπιθυμητικόν: the appetitive part of the soul 38
  - 3.3.1 Outer determination 39
  - 3.3.2 Sensual gratification 39
  - 3.3.3 Insatiability 40
  - 3.3.4 Appearance 41
- 3.4 The cognitive theory: Moss' solution to Nehamas' challenge 41
  - 3.4.1 Emotions and appearances 43
- 3.5 Remarks on the rule of appearance 44
  - 3.5.1 The multiplicity of appetitive objects 44
  - 3.5.2 The nature of appetitive satisfaction 45
- 3.6 "What we shall gain": moral education of appetite 46
  - 3.6.1 Cognitive solution to the moral education of appetite 48

4. Love of the beautiful **50**
4.1 What is beauty? A moral and aesthetic account 51
  4.1.1 A moral account of beauty 52
  4.1.2 Beautiful appearances 53
4.2 Poetry's hotline to beauty 56
4.3 Appetite's response to beauty: the fundamental erotic experience 58
4.4. Poetry as erotic education 60
5. Erotic ascent: from (appetitive) love of beautiful (appearances) to loving the Form of Beauty **63**
5.1 The case of Cephalus 63
5.2 Eros in the *Republic*: ascending toward Beauty 65
5.3 The "idealizing problem": gap between appetite and reason's responses to beauty ... 67
5.4 Developmental erotic psychology: sublimation of desire 69
5.5 Why eros? An appraisal of human finitude 71
  5.5.1 Finitude as a reactive cause 72
  5.5.2 An appraisal of finitude 73
5.6 Platonic erotic poetry 74
Conclusions: when poetry becomes philosophical and philosophy, poetical **77**
Acknowledgments **79**
Bibliography **80**

Introduction

Plato's attack on poetry deeply disturbed me the first time I read book 10 of the *Republic*. I had to walk myself the path so many others have before me: why does philosophy oppose poetry? Whenever confronted with doubts about originality in research, I recalled Heidegger's remarks in his phenomenological interpretations of Aristotle: philosophy is not the kind of enterprise that denies the future the possibility of appropriating the past (Heidegger 2002, 31). Maybe also the other way around: philosophical past remains open to the future, granted with the possibility of inspiring it.

A new quarrel between philosophy and poetry

To defend himself of expelling poets from the ideal state, Socrates invokes "an old quarrel between philosophy and poetry" (607b6). The old quarrel supports Socrates' banishment of poetry, absolving him from accusations of "a certain harness and rusticity" (607b4). Why would the philosopher be disapproved for partaking in a well-known quarrel?

There is a tension between affirming a contest as an ancient truth and defending oneself from participation. Socrates provides evidence for the quarrel in quoting poetic attacks against philosophers. Little attention has been paid in the literature to these quotations. Albeit attempts at explaining the contest through textual verification, there is consensus that the explanation for the quarrel between philosophy and poetry is to be found elsewhere.[1] Contextual explanations agree in attributing to Plato the invention of the enmity between poetry and philosophy for the sake of establishing philosophy as an independent genre of discourse (Nightingale 2009, 3-10, Racionero 1991, Miller 2012, 1034).

To account for the quarrel, contextual approaches look for an explanation at the origin. They want to see the contest emerging; therefore they recreate the conditions of its emergence (Racionero 1991, 10, Colli 1975). Before the advent of Platonic dialogues philosophy was not a consecrated genre of discourse. Poetry and rhetoric were the main "institutionalized discourses": they provided respective languages and modes of understanding with widespread currency (Nightingale 2009, 5). In disputing poets and rhetoricians, Plato demarcates the boundaries of philosophy and configures it as an alternative *Logos*.[2]

---

[1] For an attempt at textual verification: (Most 2011)

[2] "the *Logos* or Word, comprising both senses of Thought [also reason] and Word" *Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. Tufts University. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu (accessed January 16, 2024). For this account of philosophy's birth as an alternative, not the original, *Logos*: (Colli 1975, 91-99, Zubía 2004, 239, Dettiene 1983). No need to say, this account is implicit in the proposed understanding of the quarrel between philosophy and poetry as a Platonic invention.

Clear-cut demarcations between genres of discourse had been questioned for decades (Todorov 1990, 13). Such questioning abandons canonical hierarchies between literary genres and calls for blending. In doing so, it does not have to ignore that the canon is filled with examples of mixed discourses. Platonic scholarship had recently started to participate in re-discovering this aspect of Plato's dialogues. Although Plato established philosophy as another *Logos*, the dialogues are dramatic compositions where poetry and rhetoric also occur (Nightingale 2009, 3).

The encounter between poetry and philosophy is the concern of this thesis. Why is poetry, like a dubious love (*Rep*. 607e4-608a1), better to have than to not? In responding to this question I aim to compound a Platonic revaluation of poetry. With "Platonic" I mean a revaluation that occurs in the dialogues, through Plato's vocabulary and within his theories. Although Platonic wording, metaphors, and myths will be discussed, this thesis does not pursue the encounter between philosophy and poetry at the level of language. I begin considering ideal *paideia*, as it reserves a place to poetry. As a paedeutic tool, I shall argue poetry is revaluated. This revaluation is psychological: poetry can educate the soul. Educating the human soul involves reason, spirit, and appetite. Poetry's power to address the *locus* of desires is the reason for its introduction in *paideia*. What is this education about? To further specify a revaluation of poetry, I turn to Plato's erotica.[3] The benefit of poetry to the soul, I conclude, is erotic. *Eros* brings together poetry and philosophy.

Platonic *eros*: a vanishing point

This thesis carries out a revaluation of poetry in five chapters. Chapter one, "The problem of poetry", provides a critical review of the dominant approach to Socrates' expulsion of poets. The dominant approach, I shall argue, aims at justifying the philosophical problem of poetry and concludes by reifying the opposition between the two. As a moral alternative to the dominant reading I introduce the new debate. The new debate does not reckon philosophy to be the only *Logos*. It investigates the intertwinement between philosophy and poetry in Plato's dialogues and broadens the conceptual apparatus of the inquiry.

The second chapter frames the revaluation of poetry in ideal *paideia*, as developed through books II and III of the *Republic*. As a species of music, poetry is a paedeutic tool. Conducive to the moral education of the soul, poetry achieves a positive role that would begin to explain why, after all, it would be better to have it back in the ideal city.

---

[3] Because the love of beauty is the end of moral education (*Rep*. 403c6-7). Throughout this thesis it will become clear why, in the end, the revaluation of poetry is erotic.

The psychology of *paideia* is explored in the third chapter. Unlike technical education, through which the student acquires certain know-how to develop a skill, *paideia* endeavours to cultivate the soul. As a paedeutic tool, poetry serves this role concerning appetite. Chapter three upholds a cognitive approach to the appetitive part of the soul to define it as appearance ridden. In doing so, it challenges received understandings of appetite as blind. Sensitivity toward appearances grounds the possibility of educating appetite via poetry.

Chapter four moves on to unravel the erotic significance of *paideia*. Socrates' program of musical education ends in the love of beauty (*Rep*. 403c6-7). *Via* music children learn to love the beautiful. A moral and aesthetic understanding of beauty, poetry, and *eros* will be endeavoured to explain how poetry accommodates appetite to beautiful appearances. Within erotic *paideia*, both poetry and appetite acquire a positive value.

The possibility of this revaluation is attributed, in the fifth chapter, to Platonic *eros*. As sublimation of sexual desire, Platonic *eros* encompasses an appraisal of finitude. Contrary to what is commonly believed, Plato does not dismiss but integrate human finitude in his account of love. Appetite and poetry, psychological and discursive manifestations of this finitude, are revaluated in their erotic significance. This erotic significance presupposes a responsiveness to beauty that aligns appetite with reason and poetry with philosophy.

This alignment, I shall conclude, attunes appetite to reason, poetry to philosophy, human finitude to what is divine. But in doing so, the contrary takes place: reason accommodates to appetite, philosophy to poetry, and the divine to the finite. Allowing for this ambivalence and intertwinement between philosophy and poetry, Platonic *eros* becomes a vanishing point for the doctrine of the original *Logos*.

A methodological remark

This thesis stems from a sense of discomfort with having to recognize poetry as a problem for philosophy. However, it aims to delve into the quarrel, with an aim to uncover a blind spot in the conflicting relationship. To be sure, this aim nurtures in philosophy's literary expression, particularly delightful in the *corpus* of Plato, the philosopher who raised the issue.

The contextual explanation of the quarrel as a philosophical necessity does not dissolve it. Much literature is still written to uphold poetry's claim for wisdom, a topic that became poignant in the last century.[4] In parallel, philosophy's monopoly of *Logos* is disputed and logocentrism has been severally questioned.[5] The contextual explanation, rather than a solution, offers a direction. In pursuing the opposition between philosophy and poetry, we reify philosophy's status as the original *Logos*. And we may not want to do so anymore.

But philosophy is, nevertheless, an alternative mode of discourse deserving the attention. This thesis commits to philosophical standards of writing and argumentation, attempts to render the problem of poetry intelligible, and investigates Plato's theorizing about education, the soul, and love. It is beyond my scope to tackle the debate between doctrinal and heuristic approaches to Platonic philosophy (Werner 2012, 18).[6] On the one hand, I do not expect what I deliver here about poetry to amount to a Platonic theory of poetry. On the other hand, I do not restrict myself to commenting on the *Republic*. Although this thesis develops as a reading of the *Republic*, I appeal to other dialogues, particularly the *Phaedrus*, when needed to further pursue my inquiry. I am aware that this move is controversial and the compatibility between Platonic doctrines in different dialogues is always disputed. A shared tripartition of the soul is what allows me to connect the *Republic* with the *Phaedrus*. But I also believe that different valuations of concepts in both dialogues, as occurs with madness and moderation, may not hinder, but stimulate a double reading.

I hope stimuli is also provided by this thesis to encourage the reading of Plato. In the process of arguing for the role of *eros* to reassess poetry, I have surveyed Plato's philosophy with great relish. With Platonic argumentation, character-construction, dialogical conversations, I have felt at ease. By his vocabulary, reference to forgotten doctrines, or inexplicable insights I have been bewildered. Both in what is familiar and foreign, Plato causes a strong impression. May this thesis, in arguing for its claim, serve as a herald between the philosopher and the readers.

---

[4] Just to name a few examples from philosophers: Heidegger's paper "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry" (1959, OUP); Walter Benjamin's essay "On some motifs in Baudelaire" (1939), and Zambrano's "Philosophy and poetry" (1939).

[5] *Of grammatology*, Derrida (1967).

[6] In brief: the doctrinal approach presupposes a unitary philosophical system in Plato's dialogues and aims at unfolding it. Alternatively, the heuristic approach isolates each dialogue as if it was a "unique conversation", to use Werner's words.

Chapter 1: The problem of poetry

Poetry is a widespread topic in Plato's dialogues that has received a lot of scholarly attention. Plato famously banished poets from the ideal state (*Republic* 605b3), and his resolution has raised many controversies. Plato's expulsion of poetry captivated modern scholarship. Inquiries about poetry in the *Platonic* corpus have been led by a concern with the expulsion. I shall refer to these inquiries as the dominant reading, considering a reading dominant if the explanation for poetry's expulsion is rational impairment. In other words: the dominant reading argues poetry is banished because it damages reason.

An alternative to the dominant reading achieves protagonism in the current century. New approaches to poetry refuse to frame the inquiry in Plato's banishment. I will refer to readings that decline the problem of poetry's expulsion as the new debate. Rather than a unifying problem, the new debate shares an aim to conceive poetry positively. Readings belonging to the new debate prove that Plato's account of poetry does not amount to rational impairment.

In this chapter I reconstruct both the dominant and new readings as alternatives. They are "value-alternatives", for poetry is detrimental in the dominant reading and beneficial for the new debate. But they are also theoretically ambivalent, in their respective views of reason, the soul, and knowledge. Whereas the dominant reading opposes poetry and philosophy, the new debate argues for their compatibility. This thesis is an attempt to contribute to the new debate by arguing for an erotic potential in *Platonic* poetry.

The dominant reading

> "Anyone who, reading Plato's writings, has felt even a breath of that divine naïvete and certainty in the direction of Socrates' life will also have felt that the enormous drive-wheel of logical Socratism is in motion behind Socrates, as it were, and that in order to see it one must look through Socrates as if through a shadow." (Nietzsche, BT 13)

Why did Plato banish the poets from the ideal state? To resolve the puzzle, the dominant reading reassembles Socrates' argumentation against poetry in the *Republic*. It follows from Socratic rationale, they argue, that poets must be expelled. Dominant readings endorse Plato's critique of poetry in attempting to clarify it and conclude opposing philosophy to poetry. To prove such a claim I devote the upcoming sections.

The problem: Socrates' banishment of poetry

Socrates' resolutions regarding poetry in the *Republic* are striking. Already in book III the "imitative poet" is sent to exile:

> "Now, as it seems, if a man who is able by wisdom to become every sort of thing and to imitate all things should come to our city, wishing to make a display of himself and his poems, we would fall on our knees before him as a man sacred, wonderful, and pleasing; *but we would say that there is no such man among us in the city, nor is it lawful for such a man to be born there. We would send him to another city* (…)." (398a1-6)[7]

The poet is expelled on account of being an imitator of various moral dispositions. In book III Socrates' banishment is restricted to a moral criterion of good character. Poets that imitate the virtuous character would be permitted to stay in the ideal city (397a8-b3). But in book X the expulsion becomes unconditional. Poetry's appeal to the irrational part of the soul leads Socrates' to banish *every* poet from the ideal state (604d-605b3).

The dominant reading is concerned with the latter. Socrates' unconditional banishment of poetry would display his final verdict. To explain this expulsion, the dominant reading takes Socrates' arguments at face value. Havelock's *Preface to Plato* presents the dominant outlook as a response to "defensive criticism" (1963, 8). By defensive criticism Havelock designates readings defending poetry from Socrates' attack. He considers these readings to constitute "evasions of Plato's argument" (Ibid, 7). Defensive criticism, he argues, dissolves Socrates' banishment by means of a spurious pruning procedure. In doing so, they misconceive "the whole spirit and tenor of the argument" (Ibid., 9). Departing from defensive criticism, Havelock reassembles Plato's banishment of poetry so as to make it historically necessary.[8] Without taking his effort thus far, Nehamas' work is likewise presented to support the poets' expulsion. Socrates' banishment is neither ironical nor exaggerated, but understandable when placed in its concrete social and historical context, and commendable regarding current mass media (Nehamas 1988, 214). Ferrari's account of the platonic problem of poetry begins by identifying the "great challenge" of the inquiry with explaining Plato's hostility to poetry. He suggests his research aims at *appreciating* the reasons for Plato's hostility (G. Ferrari 1989, 92). Literal readings of Socrates' arguments against poetry are conducted by these dominant sources.

---

[7] In every quoted passage of this thesis, it is always my italics.

[8] (Havelock 1963, 46-47). I introduce the quote in this chapter, section "Philosophy against poetry."

Poetry is rational impairment

> "Plato states his position on poetry in the preamble to *Republic* 10 (595a1-c5). This is that "in no way are we admitting [in our city] as much of it as is imitative" (595a5). *His reason for holding this position*, which he also states in the preamble, is that tragedy and all such imitation
>
> > *are hazardous to the reason (dianoia) of their listeners* -of those at least who do not possess as an antidote the knowledge of what these things really are (595b5-7)." (Nehamas 1982, 48)

Urmson quoted the very same passage when introducing the so-called "basic objection" to poetry, namely that "poetry is destructive of the intelligence of those of its hearers" (Urmson 1982, 129). Socrates' expulsion would be justified by poetry's impairment of reason. The undermining of reason seems to be the wrong making feature of poetry. For both Nehamas and Urmson, poetry's rational impairment is likened to imitation, μίμησις. In the *Republic* poetry is mainly an imitative craft.

The connection between imitation and rational impairment will be explored in the upcoming sections. I do not believe, however, that the dominant reading is restricted to imitation. I take to be dominant every reading that defines poetry as rational impairment. If Socrates' argument is subordinated to the psychological rebuttal of poetry, as a build up to the claim that poetry damages reason, then the reading is dominant.

Inspiration in the *Ion* has been approached from a dominant outlook. The *Ion* introduces inspiration (ἐνθουσιασμός) as opposed to both scientific knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and art, skill, or craft (τέχνη) (532c-533e). Poetry is discredited for being inspired, not requiring any knowledge or know-how. Rather than concentrating on the emotional pleasure and vividness inspiration carries along, as depicted by Ion (535c), Socrates focuses on irrationality. The Muse's power of attraction, inspiration, is guilty of putting the poet out of his mind (534a). The inspired poet, rhapsode or audience forgets of his surroundings (535d) and believes to be engaged in the recited actions (535b). Socrates summarizes the behaviour of the rhapsode performing in the following manner:

> "(…) There he is, at a sacrifice or festival, got up in holiday attire, adorned with golden chaplets, and he weeps, though he has lost nothing of his finery. Or he recoils with fear, standing in the presence of more than twenty thousand friendly people,

> though nobody is stripping him or doing him damage. Shall we say that the man is in his senses?" (535d)

Crying when nothing is lost, fearing in the absence of threat: the rhapsode chanting behaves outrageously. The connection between inspiration and irrationality is carried along by the dominant reading. Upholding the opposition amid inspiration and reason, Moravcsik investigated Plato's concept of "artistic inspiration" in contrast with "noetic aspiration." He claimed that inspiration would never constitute a special kind of insight because "the inspired poet still lacks what Plato would regard as genuine knowledge or understanding." (Moravcsik 1982, 35). The intellectual debunk of inspiration is likewise conducted by Ferrari. His performative reading of the *Ion* conceives "the values of performance" to undermine "the values of understanding" (G. Ferrari 1989, 95). As a performance through talk, poetry contradicts understanding because it concentrates on what to say rather than on what is said.[9] To explain poetry's dismissal in the *Ion*, inspiration is presented as harmful to the intellect (Partee 1970, 213). All these readings agree that inspiration is a disablement of reason, intellect, or understanding. They endorse Socrates' outlook: poetry, being inspired, is psychologically harmful. In the *Republic*, poetry's intellectual damage depends, according to the dominant reading, on imitation.

Mimesis is deceptive: impersonation and counterfeit

Imitation is key to Socrates' discussion of poetry in the *Republic*. Book II and III present poetry as imitative, and such an account is preserved in Book X. However, two seemingly different understandings of imitation are displayed: counterfeit and impersonation. Albeit concerns with lack of coherence between both notions (Urmson 1982, 128, Nehamas 1982, 48-49, Murray 2008, 5); the dominant debate, I shall argue, neutralizes their difference. In both accounts deceptiveness is the wrong-making feature of imitation.[10]

Impersonation

In *Republic III*, μίμησις is a form of poetic style or diction (λέξις) that portrays moral character by likening oneself to someone else.[11] Imitative poetry occurs when poetic characters speak in the first person singular. Imitation is attributed to the poet (393c8-9), who speaks as if he were the character. This role play has led the scholarly community to conceive imitation as impersonation or emulation[12] (G. Ferrari 1989, 116). Murray summarizes the reasons for such equation:

---

[9] "The point, then, is that Ion's lectures are not so different from his acting after all. In both cases he is not talking about something, but merely performing through talk" (G. Ferrari, Plato and Poetry 1989, 96)

[10] For a compatible account of book III and X notions of mimesis, see (G. R. Lear 2011)

[11] "Isn't likening oneself to someone else, either in voice or in looks, the same as imitating the man he likens himself to?" 393c5-6

> "For when someone speaks in the voice of another (whether poet or reciter) he makes himself like that person *not just in voice, but also in character*: he adopts his looks, his gestures and even his thoughts, so that in a sense *he almost becomes that person* (see on 393c5—6, 395c7—d3)." (Murray 2008, 4)

"He almost becomes that person", but he does not. Impersonating his characters, the imitative poet seems to be someone he is not. Socrates describes imitation as a hiding procedure: "if the poet nowhere hid (ἀποκρύπτω) himself, his poetic work and narrative as a whole would have taken place without imitation." (393c11-d1). The poet conceals himself under the name of the character and puts words in her mouth as if they were her words, not his. Drawing attention on impersonation, the dominant reading surpasses the stylistic account of imitation and stresses poetry's deceptiveness:

> "For although our key term, 'imitation', is here made the focus of attention (and this is the first time in the *Republic* that it has come to the fore) in what may seem a rather specialised, almost syntactic application - to denote narrative couched in direct rather than indirect speech - nevertheless we swiftly discover that far more important distinctions than the merely syntactic are at issue. *The desire to speak in a voice other than one's own becomes fraught with unwelcome implications*." (G. Ferrari 1989, 115).

As Ferrari explains, the stylistic, syntactic, or technical account of imitation as narrative in direct speech is not thorough. The dominant reading stresses imitation's ethical dimension: the imitative poet assumes a moral character (ἦθος) other than his own. Imitation's danger is ethical: the words of morally reprovable characters are directly spoken by the poet. The audience would be induced to emulate them and develop reprehensible dispositions (395d-e). However, the poet is allowed to conceal himself behind characters who portray the decent man (397d1-4; 398b1-2). Imitation is permitted if it is akin to exemplary moral character.

Counterfeit

Book X offers an uncompromised rebuttal of imitation: all imitative poets are expelled from the ideal state (605b). With the introduction of the Theory of the Forms, μίμησις is defined as third generation from nature (597e3-4). Imitation follows sensible reality (craftsmanship) that, in turn, follows intelligible being, the Forms (596b6-9; 597b-e). Imitating is like carrying a mirror in which all sensible things can be reflected (596d-e).

---

[12] "to pretend to be (what one is not) in appearance or behavior." "Impersonate." Merriam-Webster.com Thesaurus, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/impersonate. Accessed 16 Sep. 2023.

Imitation's detachment from intelligible reality impacts both the making (ποίησις) and the outcome of poetry. First, it is a practice directed towards the looking and not the being of sensible objects (598a1-b4). As imitators, poets do not even resemble sensible reality, but its appearance. In addition, the outcome of imitation has the status of the appearances imitated (597a). Imitation "lays hold of a phantom" (598b8) and produces one (599d3-4).

To account for the coincidence between the object and the product of imitation, Nehamas introduced the theory of transparency or heteronomy of μίμησις. Imitation is heteronomous for both its object and its product do not have an entity on their own but are only appearances of sensible entities (Nehamas 1982, 62-63). If poetry imitates appearances, then the making of poetry (ποίησις) does not require real knowledge and is not real practice:

> "Imitators, for Plato, lack a craft of their own (…). They therefore do not know the nature of what they imitate, and simply transcribe the appearance of various things and actions by means of colours and words." (Nehamas 1988, 220)

Correspondingly, if poetry is imitative then the outcome of poetry (the poem) is a counterfeit of reality. Counterfeit is the preferred term in the dominant account of imitation:

> "The aspect of *mimesis* that Plato now [in *Republic X*] goes on to ascribe to fiction no doubt includes its representational character; but the important aspect (…) *is its being a counterfeit of reality* (...)" (Urmson 1982, 136)
>
> "There [in *Republic III*] mimesis involved a deep identification on the part of the imitator with the object of his imitation, whereas *now* [in *Republic X*] *mimesis involves the notion of a counterfeit copy*." (Murray 2008, 6)
>
> "It is clear that the term [mimesis] and its cognates were more often used in connection with speaking and acting rather than with painting, and it is also clear that even in the latter half of the fifth century they did not go hand in hand with *the Platonic notions of the counterfeit, the merely apparent, the deceitful, and the fake*." (Nehamas 1982, 57)

The term counterfeit entails an intention to deceive. A copy or image constitutes an instance of counterfeit when it is aimed at deception.[13] Even when the term counterfeit is not employed, the dominant reading underscores the deceptiveness in imitation. Havelock's account of poetic mimesis in *Republic X* focused on distortion: the poetic medium, he claimed, "forms a kind of refracting screen which disguises and distorts reality" (Havelock 1963, 25-26). He clearly had in mind the mirror argument previously referred to (596d-e). Murdoch found the wrong-making feature of imitative poetry in that it "naively or wilfully accepts appearances instead of questioning them." (Murdoch 1976, 15-16). In his analysis of Platonic poetics, Ferrari conceived poetry as a performance through words instead of real talk because poets do not speak of reality, but appearances (G. Ferrari 1989, 97-98).

---

[13] "Counterfeit." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/counterfeit. Accessed 18 Oct. 2023.

Deceptiveness is stressed by the dominant reading. Either with impersonation or counterfeit, the attribution is in place. The content of deception remains, however, unclear. Moral character seems to constitute the object of poetry in *Book III*, but in *Book X* appearances come to the fore. Is it concerning moral character or sensible reality that the poet deceives his audience? I will argue that there is not a dichotomy: poetic appearances are moral. Before arriving at this claim, I will first consider imitation's psychological damage.

Poetry is harmful to the soul

In stressing the deceptiveness of μίμησις, the dominant reading builds up to the psychological refutation of poetry. Plato's former discussion of imitation, both as impersonation and counterfeit, "are only parts of the single argument against poetry", namely that "it harms the soul of the listeners." (Nehamas 1982, 48). In Socrates' words:

> "And thus we should at least be justified *in not admitting him [the poet] into a city* that is going to be under good laws, because he awakens this part of the soul and nourishes it, and, by making it strong, *destroys the calculating part* (…)" (605b2-4)

Poetry harms the listener's soul by nourishing the soul's appetitive part and, accordingly, destroying the soul's calculating part.[14] Poetry's psychological damage depends on (i) the antagonism between the rational and the irrational parts of the soul and (ii) imitation's appeal to the latter. The antagonism in the soul is argued for through the principle of opposites.[15] The argument begins with the following evidence: opposite opinions are held in the soul. Socrates says that "the same magnitude surely doesn't look equal to our sight from near and from far" (602c7-9), and also "the same things look bent and straight when seen in water and out of it, and also both concave and convex" (602c10-13). To account for this difference he divides the soul: there is a part that measures and calculates, perceives the magnitude right and the stick straight; there is another part that, mislead by appearances, opines contrary to reason (602d-603a). The division is not gratuitous: it concords with the principle of opposites. The principle states the following: "(…) it is impossible for the same thing to opine contraries at the same time about the same things." (602e8-9).

---

[14] The psychological theory of *Republic IV* is implied in this distinction. I will turn to it later, for now I will stick to the material presented in *Book X*.

[15] I use opposites, instead of contraries, because both terms not only contradict but conflict with each other (Ferrari 2007, 168).

Recall that poets imitate and produce appearances, a counterfeit of reality. According to the principle of opposites, these appearances do not fool the part of our soul that calculates, measures, and weighs (602e8-9). To explain poetry's appeal, an irrational part of the soul is required. Contrary to reason, this part of the soul is misled by appearances: it confounds the perception of a stick bent underwater with a real stick (602c10-11).

The appeal of poetry to the irrational part of the soul is explicitly asserted by Socrates:

> "We shall say *the imitative poet* produces a bad regime in the soul of each private men *by making phantoms* that are very far removed from the truth and by *gratifying the soul's foolish part* (…)." (605b1-9)

Poetry is harmful because, in addressing the nonrational part of the soul, it damages reason. Imitation is the key-term through which Plato connects poetry with the irrational part of the soul. In stressing imitation's deceptiveness, the dominant reading explains the connection and concludes that poetry is rational impairment.

An ethical side to the principle of opposites: decent man and child-like behaviour

The application of the principle of opposites proved that imitation appeals to the nonrational part of the soul. The demonstration applies to both imitation connected with the sight, painting, and imitation connected with the hearing, poetry (603b6-8). But Socrates wants to find an independent demonstration for the latter. He wishes to claim that poetry is directed toward the non-rational soul in other grounds (603b11-c2). The final argument is the following: poetry satisfies the irrational part of the soul because the irrational dispositions (ἦθος) are easily imitated (605a4; 605b1). As Nehamas explained:

> "This feature on which Plato's argument against poetry crucially depends is that poetry (…) is as a medium inherently suited to the representation, or imitation, of vulgar subject and shameful behavior:
>
> > *The irritable part of the soul gives many opportunities for all sorts of imitations, while the wise and quiet character which always remains the same is neither easy to imitate* nor easy

> to understand when imitated, especially for a festival crowd, people of all sorts gathered in the theatres. (604e1-5)" (Nehamas 1988, 216)

Irrational dispositions suit poetry because they are easier to imitate (605a2-5).[16] They constitute a type of moral dispositions Socrates opposes to the wise and quiet character (φρόνιμόν τε καί ησύχιον ἦθος). The wise and quiet character is embodied by the decent man (603e3). The decent man is said to bear a loss easier than other men (603e3-5) grieving less, fighting the pain, and holding out against it (604a9-b1). He manages to do so through law and argument, λόγος (604a9). Socrates is attributing the right moral behaviour to the rational part of the soul, λογιστικόν. He keeps insisting that "to keep as quiet as possible in misfortunes and not to be irritated" is the reasonable course of action (604b4-5).

In a contrasting fashion, Socrates introduced the irrational disposition as a child-like behaviour:

> "One must accept the fall of the dice and settle one's affairs accordingly -in whatever way argument (λόγος) declares would be best. *One must not behave like children who have stumbled and who hold on to the hurt place and spend their time in crying out*; rather one must always habituate the soul to turn as quickly as possible to curing and setting aright what has fallen and is sick, doing away with lament by medicine." (604c5-11)

The childlike behaviour, corresponding to the irritable character, has been depicted in the second and third books of the *Republic*. Socrates described it through instances of heroic behaviour in poetry. The decent man is contrasted with the laments and wailings poets attributed to important heroes (387d1-2). Unlike Achilles, who asserted to choose serfage over the Hades[17], the decent man does not fear nor lament death (387d6-10). He would not grieve in despair for the loss of a friend either, as Achilles does when Patroclus is killed (388a5-12), because the decent man cherishes self-sufficiency (387d12-14). The decent man bears misfortunes without moaning (387e6-7) or losing his temper; contrary to Priam's behaviour when Hector died (388b3-5).

These heroes behave in a child-like manner. Socrates accuses poets of making false tales (377d4-5) by misrepresenting how gods and heroes are like (377e1-2). In *Book III*, Socrates pleads for ceasing these poetic tales, "for fear that they sow a strong proclivity for madness in our young." (392a1). What the poets fail to represent is the rational moral character.

---

[16] The quoted fragment is difficult, and Nehamas' translation is blurry. The "opportunities for imitation" given by the "irritable part of the soul" are moral dispositions. Bloom translation clarifies it: "the irritable disposition affords much and varied imitation, while the prudent and quite character (…)."

[17] Plato quotes the following verses (386c5-7):

> I would rather be on the soil, a serf to another,
> To a man without lot whose means of life are not great,
> Than rule over all the dead who have perished (Odyssey XI, 489-491)

Socrates' discussion of the decent man's traits is not exhaustive, neither his attack on poetic heroes' emotional responses. However, it is informative enough about what Nussbaum described, quoting from *Rep. X* 612a, as "the Platonic conception of a self-sufficient and purely rational being, cleansed of the 'barnacles' and the 'seaweed' of passion, 'the many stony and wild things that have been encrusted all over it', freed from contingent limitations on its power." (Nussbaum 1986, 5).

This conception, embodied by Socrates' in the *Republic*, allows the banishment of poetry from the ideal city. Poetry's psychological damage, the impairment of reason, has ethical yielding. It is due to an affinity between imitation and irrational character (604e1-2). Poetic imitation appeals to the irrational part of the soul because it introduces a special kind of appearances: false ethical beliefs, i.e., that human affairs are to be treated with great seriousness, that loss is to be grieved, that death is to be feared, that the just life is unhappy, and in everything opine contrary to reason. Following the principle of opposites, holding such beliefs is equivalent to confounding the perception of a stick bent underwater with the real stick. Poetry is the opponent of philosophy as appetite is to reason. And this reason is normative: the decent man's ἦθος belongs to it. In explaining Socrates' refutation of poetry through rational impairment, the dominant reading endorses an ethical stance.

Philosophy against poetry

Amid the readings I have classified as dominant, Ferrari is the only one to exhibit awareness of endorsing an ethical position when defending Socrates' attack to poetry. He opposes Socrates' viewpoint to poetry's pessimistic image of human nature, debunking the latter as a "self-fulfilling prophecy of ethical doom." (G. Ferrari 1989, 111). Claiming for mankind's frailty to uphold their characters' moral mistakes, poets would be indulging in what could otherwise be prevented from happening. Like Ferrari did with poetry, I am now drawing attention to Socrates' own ethical agenda. Socrates notion of reason, I shall argue, is not morally impartial.

The antagonism between philosophy and poetry in the *Republic* presupposes certain understanding of reason and appetite involving an ethical dimension. A value system is displayed in the equation of the decent man with reason and that of the so-called "child-like behaviour" with irrationality. However, the dominant reading ratifies such equations without appraising Socrates' value system. The opposition between philosophy and poetry is carried on in the attempt to justify Socrates' banishment of poetry. Havelock elaborated on the opposition in modern terms, introducing philosophy as the scientific progress brought about by the abandonment of tradition, poetry:

> "Our business here is not with literary criticism but with the origins of that abstract intellectualism styled by the Greeks 'philosophy'. We must realise that works of genius, composed within the semi-oral tradition, though a source of magnificent pleasure to the modern reader of ancient Greek, constituted or represented a total state of mind which is not our mind and which was not Plato's mind; and that just as *poetry itself, as long as it reigned supreme, constituted the chief obstacle to the achievement of effective prose*, so there was a state of mind which we shall conveniently *label the 'poetic' or 'Homeric' or 'oral' state of mind, which constituted the chief obstacle to scientific rationalism, to the use of analysis, to the classification of experience, to its rearrangement in sequence of cause and effect.* That is why the poetic state of mind is for Plato the archenemy and it is easy to see why he considered this enemy so formidable." (Havelock 1963, 46-47)

Havelock endorses Socrates' stance as if Socratic-scientific reason was purely descriptive and had the monopoly of rationality. He ignores the normative dimension of Socratic reason, as if unaware of Nietzche's warning in the *Birth of Tragedy*: "the drive-wheel of logical Socratism is in motion behind Socrates." (Nietzsche, BT). Socratic rationality is not purely descriptive: it hides an ethical stance. Unfolding this ethical stance requires looking through Socrates to uncover Platonic morals. Most dominant readings do not go this fur, and reify Socratic reason as if it was exclusive and non-normative.

This rationalist moral code is acknowledged and abandoned by the new debate. In refusing to explain Plato's banishment of poetry, the new debate transforms the problem of poetry into an open field. Socrates' arguments are left aside for the sake of a more complex picture (Asmis 2022, 329). Other approaches to poetry in the Platonic corpus are investigated. Rather than pursuing explanations for the antagonism between poetry and philosophy, the new debate challenges the opposition between the two.

The new debate

In recent accounts of Plato's approach to poetry, the relationship between philosophy and poetry is no longer a conflict in which poetry is defeated. The new debate treats both philosophy and poetry as genres of discourse (Most 2011, 2, Nightingale 2009, 3), distinct moments of thought (Asmis 2022, 354) or modes of thinking (Sushytska 2012, 56), and comprehensive worldviews (Griswold 2020). How does the new debate arrive at this understanding of the relationship between philosophy and poetry in the Platonic corpus?

On the one hand, the new debate introduces concepts left unattended by the dominant reading. Drawing on the *Symposium*, Amis invokes creativity to approach both poetry and philosophy as intellectual crafts. She argues for poetic creativity to be the paradigm of philosophic creation: "all speeches spoken at the banquet (…) may be understood as prose versions of Diotima's analysis of poetic creativity." (Asmis 2022, 338). In his paper on Plato's threesome account of poetic creativity, Scott turns to the *Symposium* to find a complex understanding of poetic creation. He argues that Diotima's description of *poiesis* reconfigures the dichotomy between poetry and philosophy (Scott 2011, 144). Creativity is likewise adduced to reassess the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry by Sushytska. Arguing for the non-rivalry between both practices, Sushytska appeals to creativity to provide an ironic reading[18] of the *Republic* (2012, 66).

"Dialogue", "dramatic dialogue" and "platonic fiction" are recurrent terms in the new debate employed to emphasize the literary dimension of Plato's philosophy.[19] Nightingale's *Genres in dialogue* calls for reconsidering the traditional oppositions between philosophy, poetry, and rhetoric by focusing on Plato's way of writing:

> "In fact, the dialectical conversations of the interlocutors (which have been the focus of the great majority of Platonic scholars) are only one aspect of the Platonic dialogue. For many of Plato's texts are also constituted by the dialogues they conduct with other genres of discourse." (Nightingale 2009, 3)

These other genres of discourse, namely poetry and rhetoric, are studied within the Platonic *corpus*. Attention is drawn outside of the argument to vindicate that Plato "also pleads, denounces and cajoles" (Sushytska 2012, 61), and that "his works also narrate a number of myths, and sparkle with imagery, simile, allegory, and snatches of meter and rhyme" (Griswold 2020).

Language's "power of enchantment"[20] provides another shortcut to the problem of poetry. Introduced by Socrates as the object of rhetoric (*Grg.* 453a), the new debate features persuasion (πειθώ) to broaden the Platonic account of poetry (Herrmann 2011, 21). From the acknowledgement that Socrates adopts Gorgias' statements on the power of logos (*íbid.* 38) to the claim that the philosopher "borrows the rhetoricians' tool of persuasion" (Reydams-Schils 2011, 360), the new debate questions the identification of Plato's philosophy with manifest argumentation.[21] Awareness and recreation in the power of language are attributed to Socrates (Asmis 2022, 338), endorsing the philosopher with supposedly rhetorical and poetic qualities.

---

[18] "(…) the *Republic* cannot be understood literally but says the opposite of what it seems to say." (Sushytska 2012, 62)

[19] For the use of "dramatic dialogue": (Griswold 2020); for the stress on fictionality also consult (Herrmann 2011, 21)

[20] (Asmis 2022, 338) Recall Socrates reference to the charms of words in *Republic* X (601b)

Not only by the usage of unexplored concepts is the new debate challenging the dominant opposition between philosophy and poetry. Imitation and inspiration are still investigated to elucidate the Platonic puzzle. Both notions are, however, reconceptualized.

Inspiration is not a psychological flaw. "The merit that some poems have" (Pappas 2012, 675), poets' acuteness in ethical matters (Büttner 2011, 127), the truths poetry displays (Collobert 2011, 41) are all traced back to inspiration. By revaluating inspiration the new debate not only provides a positive account of poetry but also reconciles it with philosophy. Pappas argues that inspiration is not the opposite of technical knowledge or know-how (τέχνη), but a sort of complement that is "adding fire to the dry wood of knowledge rather than compensating for its absence." (Pappas 2012, 676). Bütnner draws on the *Phaedrus* to introduce the notion of a "philosophical poet" who is attributed both inspiration and the capacity to account for the Muses' wisdom (2011, 128). F. González emphasises Socrates' characterization of the philosopher as mad and inspired to argue against the irrationality of inspiration (2011, 93). He considers the lack of technical knowledge to build a bridge between poetry and philosophy.

Abandoning deceptiveness, the new debate inquiries about mimesis with an aim to understand poetry. Mimesis is not transparent, heteronomous, or mere appearance, but a practice on its own. Either a techne consisting of situating people oppositely to one another (Pappas 2012, 667), a way of doing something by imitating something else (Marušič 2011, 217), even a beneficial practice that "will prepare the child's non-rational predilections to allow for the blossoming of right reason" (G. R. Lear 2011, 196). Lear's reassessment of impersonation proves imitation is not deceitful itself, and *Republic* III examination of the topic cannot be encapsulated as a step toward the expulsion of poets form the ideal state. The dominant reading of imitation is challenged. Notice Marušič comment about mimesis:

---

[21] "But if there is one point that marks progress in Anglo-American scholarship on Plato over the last half-century, it is the gradual realisation that overt argument does not exhaust the content of Platonic dialogue." (Herrmann 2011, 25)

> “Moreover, and importantly, while the mimêsis attributed to Homer in Book III was treated as such neutrally, now [in Book X] the characterisation of the activity by Homer and other poets as mimêsis is discrediting: for this characterisation, as we shall see, relies on the premise that poets lack knowledge of the matters they speak about” (Marušič 2011, 218)

In her recount of mimesis the lack of knowledge is presupposed, rather than inferred. There is more to mimesis than the role it serves to argue for poetry’s banishment in *Republic* X. Consequently, there is more to poetry than psychological damage of reason.

Dominant/New: ambivalence and opposition

The new debate disrupts the rigid opposition between philosophy and poetry not only by proposing innovative conceptual pathways towards poetry but mainly by abandoning Socrates’ stance. With “Socrates’ stance” I mean the “decent man” discourse as it has been explored in the former section of this chapter. It follows from the material belonging to the new debate that Socrates is not equivalent to the “decent man” discourse. An explicit assessment of this abandonment is to be found in Halliwell:

> “There is, to put it concisely, the seemingly Platonic attitude (and, consequently, the Platonism) which criticises, censors and even ‘banishes’ poets, and which speaks in terms of unmasking the false pretensions and the damaging influences of poetry. But there is also the Platonic stance which never ceases to allow the voices of poetry to be heard in Plato’s own writing, which presupposes not only extensive knowledge but also ‘love’ of poetry on the part of Plato’s readers (…)” (Halliwell 2011, 241)

The new debate explores this latter stance. Halliwell draws an ambivalence, rather than an opposition, between the dominant and new readings. Certain ambivalence is expressed in new sources regarding dominant conceptualizations. In complexifying the Platonic notions of inspiration or imitation, for instance, many authors of the new debate do not mean to deny the dominant critiques.[22] The same ambivalence is upheld by Kokkiu’s take on the controversy:

---

[22] The new debate acknowledges the limitations of the Platonic ἐνθουσιασμός: it is responsible for the poet’s lack of skill (González 2011, 93), it explains the poet’s inability to account for the things he chants about (Büttner 2011, 127) Also, the new debate carries on the dominant preoccupation with coherence between different meanings of imitation in the *Republic* (G. R. Lear 2011, 196, Marušič 2011, 217). Socrates’ argumentation against poetry is not denied, but imitation is inquired independently of Socrates’ attack.

> "However, the constant emphasis on Plato's attack to poetry and the problem of *mimesis*, as it is discussed mainly in the *Ion*, the *Republic*, and the *Symposium*, has left other equally important aspects pertaining to the major themes of song and philosophy in Plato's work unaddressed or under-explored: for example, the conceptualization of eros, the responsiveness to beauty, the identity of the Platonic philosophical Muse, and the broader theme of 'cultural memory.'" (Kokkiou 2020, 1)

I would like to conclude by arguing that this ambivalence does not exhaust the quarrel. There is a moral opposition between the two. In this regard I consider them to represent alternatives: it must be either that only philosophy is good, or that other *logos*, here poetry, are also beneficial. A contribution to the new debate will be endeavoured to in this thesis by taking love (ἔρως) as a viewpoint to approach the relationship between philosophy and poetry.

Chapter 2. Love of poetry

After banishing the poets from the ideal city, Socrates allows them to compound an apology. He claims that having poetry is better than not having it (608a1) and appeals to an uncertain gain that would result from poets' readmission (607e1). Why give poetry the chance to return? What is there to win?

"We should be delighted to receive them [poets] back from exile", Socrates asserts, "since we are aware that we ourselves are charmed by them." (607c3-5). To account for conceding poets the opportunity to apologize, Socrates introduced the love of poetry.[23] The phrase springs from a comparison between the damaged lover, who suffers from a love not beneficial to himself, and the listeners of poetry, exemplified by Glaucon and Socrates.[24] Inasmuch as the lover would be eager to reconcile with the love he had suffered from, granting that is no longer unprofitable, Socrates and Glaucon would be glad if poetry proves to be salutary:

> "But if not, my dear comrade, just like the men who have once fallen in love with someone, and don't believe the love is beneficial, keep away from it even if they have to do violence to themselves; so we too -due to the inborn love of such poetry [ἐϱώτα ποιήσεως] we owe to our rearing in these fine regimes- we'll be glad if it turns out that it is best and truest." (Rep. 607e4-608a)

Socrates seems to provide an explanation for the readmission of poetry: the rearing in "these fine regimes." Socrates and Glaucon would be glad to have poetry back because they have grown up in a city where poets are the educators of the people. Educated in poetry, they have come to love it. Poetry served an educational role in classical Athens (Murray and Wilson 2004, 202, Robb 1994, 166). But not for the good, according to Plato. Indeed, the *Republic* has been interpreted as an educational reformation program (Havelock 1963). With regard to poetry, Socrates questions whether or not including it in the guardians' education at the ideal state (376e8). In Book X poetry is completely banished, and the puzzle seems to be solved (607b1-3).

---

[23] I use the word love following Bloom's translation of eros. But I will refer to eros with both love and erotic desire throughout this thesis. The meaning of eros will be investigated in chapters 4 and 5.

[24] Plato treated love and literature together in the *Phaedrus*. Carson argued for an analogy between love and writing in that they procure the same damage: an attempt to control time (Carson, Eros the bittersweet 1986, 174).

If “the rearing in these fine regimes” is the explanation for conceding poetry the opportunity to apologize, then Socrates’ readmission is ironic. If there is really something to win in having poets back, some other explanation is missing. Poetry cannot turn out to be profitable being solely the means to educate in deprived cities. What else is there to poetry, then, capable of explaining Socrates’ appeal to an apology?

> “He [the poet] seems to do so [to speak very well] when he speaks using meter, rhythm, and harmony, no matter whether the subject is shoemaking, general-ship, or anything else. *So great is the charm that these things by nature possess.*” (Rep. 601a)

Meter, rhythm, and harmony account for the appeal of poetry. This appeal remains objective insofar as meter, rhythm, and harmony are charming *by nature.* By objective I mean it cannot be reduced to the listener’s ignorance. The poet seems to understand not only to the listener who, due to his ignorance, is unable to discern truth from falsity (600e8-601a). The decent man, who does not observe only speeches but knowledge, is also charmed by poetry. “The greatest accusation against imitation” is that “the best of us” take joy in hearing Homer and any other tragic poet (605d).

How does this seduction come about? At least two reasons are given. First, poetry can mock the rational character (605c6). Second, poetry “keeps company with the part in us that is far from prudence”, the soul’s foolish part (603b1;605c2). Even when poetry conforms to reason, imitating the decent character, it is directed toward the nonrational part of the soul. Lear refers to it when talking of “our psychology”:

> “Given our psychology, there are two features of poetry which make it an especially potent drug, First, the music and rhythms with which poetry is expressed pour directly into our psyches. Second, poetry tends to be expressed in imitative style (…).” (J. Lear, Inside and outside the "Republic" 1992, 208)

Both imitation and “meter, rhythm, and harmony” constitute poetry’s allures. I will delve into both concepts to explain Socrates call for an apology of poetry. I will begin by discussing books II and III, where poetry is presented as part of musical education for the guardians. This account will lead me to tackle poetry’s psychological examination in book X. My aim is to establish that what “we shall gain if it [poetry] turn out to be not only pleasant but also beneficial” (607e1) is an education for the appetitive part of the soul.

Poetry is μουσική

Music is the English term most frequently employed to translate μουσική, but "art" is preferred by some scholars.[25] The choice is conditioned by the lack of equivalence between μουσική and modern understandings of music. "Any art over which the Muses presided, esp. poetry sung to music" is the first entry of μουσική in the *LSJ* lexicon.[26]

Music was any art or craft (τέχνη) performed under the guidance of the Muses (Bloom 2016, 449, Murray and Wilson 2004, 1). It included "not only the art of rhythms and harmonies, but also that of discourses" (Woerther 2008, 90). Attempts to provide a unified account of μουσική define it as "a union of song, dance, and word." (Murray and Wilson 2004, 1) Poetry was part of music and poets were the first invokers and protégées of the daughters of Memory (Murray 2004, 365).

Music is the first target of Plato's discussion about the guardians' rearing in the ideal city (376e2-4). Poetic speeches or tales constitute the earliest musical item to be analysed (377b10). Poetry undergoes a two-fold scrutiny, concerning both its content and form. With content (λόγος) Socrates names the representation of gods, heroes, mankind, the Hades, and other poetic topics (392a3-6). With form (λέξις) he classifies what we name literary genres: he draws a distinction between descriptive, imitative, and mixed narration corresponding to dithyramb, tragedy, and epics (394c1-5).

So far poetry is only about tales. When Socrates turns to rhythm and harmony, he stops referring to poetry. He moves on to discuss "what concerns the manner of song and melody" once "we [Socrates himself and Glaucon] are completely finished with that part of music that concerns speeches and tales." (397b6-c2). It seems like his account of melodies does not concern poetry because the latter is about speeches and tales. The separate treatment of poetry and music is frequent in the scholarly literature. Socrates' stance on poetry in the *Republic* is reconstructed independently of rhythm and harmony.[27] In addition, rhythm and harmony are studied as the specialized subject of Socrates' musical theory. Socrates' independent analysis of text and melodies is accommodated by current literature to fit the difference between poetry and music. But conceiving poetry and music independently constitutes an anachronism. The poetry Socrates is discussing includes melodies: rhythm, harmony, and text happen simultaneously. If Socrates analyses discourses and melodies separately is not for the sake of a split between poetry and music. The connection between text and melodies is thoroughly present in his discussion (398d10-11;400d1-4; 400e). In *Republic* X, rhythm and harmony constitute poetry's allures (601a8-9). Meter, rhythm, and harmony are to the poet what colours are to the painter: the tools of her craft. Beside playing a crucial role in the making of poetry, they remain important in the resulting poem: they explain why Homer's discourse is charming, but Socrates prosaic rephrasing is not (393d-394b). Socrates analysis of rhythm and harmony is not aimed at establishing the field we know as music.

---

[25] As in the last translation of the *Republic* by the Loeb Classical Library

[26] *Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. Tufts University. https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mousikh&la=greek#lexicon (accessed September 21, 2023).

[27] Recall, for instance, the dominant reading

There is, however, an important objection to conceiving poetry as *μουσική* in scholarly literature. Music is distinguished from poetry on account of the Damonic principle of homoeopathy, assimilation, or similarity (Woerther 2008, 93, Moreau 2017, 212, Pelosi 2010, 29).The principle is preserved as follows:

> "Damon's school showed that among children and those who are advanced in age the sounds of a continuous *melody fashion through resemblance [ὁμοιότητος] a character* which they don't have, *or bring out a character* which is latent. With regard to the harmonies that he transmitted, it is possible to discover among the sounds that are carried both masculine and feminine ones that dominate, that are in the minority, and that are lacking altogether. So it is clear that for the character of each soul there is also a useful harmony."[28]

Music resembles the soul. It can "bring out a character which is latent" because there is a correspondence, resemblance, or sameness (ὁμοιότης) between music and the soul (Halliwell 2002, 238). What is the object of this correspondence? In what do music and the soul coincide? It is argued that music and soul share their structure, up to the claim that the *Republic* displays a musical account of the soul (Moreau 2017, 203-204). However, the shared object remains unclear.

Textual evidence is hardly an aid because Socrates' does not recount Damon's principle. He only refers to it in his discussion of rhythm (400b1-3). The philosopher invokes the musician as an authority to discern moral qualities in rhythm. If Socrates' "damonic" solicitation is to commit him with a mysterious resemblance between music and the soul, it does so regarding rhythm and harmony. This resemblance would, therefore, encompass poetry. As said, both components of melodies, rhythm and harmony, are present in the part of μουσική involving tales.

---

[28] Damon, DK B7 = Aristides Quintilianus, *De Musica*, 2.14. Accesed via (Woerther 2008, 93). My italics.

In addition, Socrates' censorship of poetry in *Rep.* II and III stems from the attribution, to poetry, of the capacity for shaping moral dispositions. Tales, like harmonies and rhythms, impact the audience's characters. This impact is what intrigues Socrates, who endeavours to interfere in it for the sake of education. In the R*epublic,* music crops up as an educative means in the ideal state.

Musical παιδεία

> "What is the education [παιδεία]? Isn't it difficult to find a better one than that discovered over a great expense of time? It is, of course, gymnastics for bodies and music [μουσική] for the soul." (376e2-4)

Guardians' education in the ideal city is Socrates' concern in the above quoted text. He introduces the word παιδεία commonly translated either as education, teaching, training, or rearing –insofar etymologically related to παιδὸς, child.[29] Albeit current controversies regarding canonical understandings of *paideia,* the term is employed meaning "the education through which *arete* [virtue] was fostered." (Paxson 1985, 67).[30]

Plato's ideal education matches shared understandings of *paideia* in that it aims at enhancing moral character through the acquisition of virtues. Recall Socrates' first comment on gymnastics in *Rep.* III: "a good soul by its own virtue [ἀρετή] makes the body as good as it can be." (403d3-4). Fostering virtues is the aim to both components of *paideia*: music and gymnastics. Socrates introduced them as traditional parts of education. The paedeutic role of music is reckoned as such in the scholarly literature:

> "Music shaped the way individual and communities lived and sought to reproduce themselves. It was a medium through which ideals of behaviour were developed and enforced (…)" (Murray and Wilson 2004, 2)

---

[29] *Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. Tufts University.
http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=paideia&la=greek#lexicon
(accessed September 22, 2023).

[30] These controversies are an attack on Jaeger's and Marrou's monumental works (Elsner 2013). For the current focus on the educative dimension of *paideia*, see also (Elsner 2013, 137).

The Arkadians are referred to as one of these communities, but the claim applies to ancient Greek culture more broadly. Leaving aside the intriguing question about Plato's debt and contribution to traditional *paideia*, I will concentrate on his account of the role of music in the education of the soul. Platonic musical *paideia* consists in habituation in virtue and is directed toward the non-rational parts of the soul. I will consider in turn both statements.

Music transforms moral character through habituation in virtue.

"The wailing modes" (398e1), "the modes suitable for symposia" (398e10), the violent and voluntary modes (399c2) are the groups Socrates' specifies within harmonies. They are morally qualified: the former category encompasses those harmonies fostering wailing and lamenting; the subsequent, harmonies promoting drunkenness, softness, and idleness. Both are excluded for leading astray the character of the children who will become guardians. The violent and voluntary modes are encouraged insofar as containing harmonies *akin to* courage and moderation. The word μίμησις is introduced to account for the relationship between modes and moral dispositions: "just leave that mode which would appropriately *imitate* the sounds and accents of a man who is courageous" (399a399a4-6) is Socrates' guideline to Glaucon. A few lines further, in Glaucon's response to Socrates' request for the rhythms of "an orderly and courageous life", the subject of their inquiry is specified: "which sort [of rhythms] are *imitation* of which sort of life." (400a)

Music moulds and imitates ἦθος. Both notions are intertwined in Platonic *paideia*. There seems to be a reciprocity in the relationship between music and moral character: "It isn't simply that music actualizes the conditions of the soul, but also, that the soul instantiates the conditions of music" (Moreau 2017, 204). To explain such reciprocity, the main strategy displayed in the scholarly literature is to expand, again, on Socrates' reference to Damon:

> "By virtue of *resemblance, ὁμοιότης*, music imitates certain qualities, and thus succeeds in imparting those same qualities to the soul (…)" (Woerther 2008, 94)

The principle of homoeopathy or assimilation would explain music's power to transform character:

> "(…) the suggestion here is thus that music can instil from without an ethos previously absent, and it can bring out a latent ethos from within, *because of its similarity* to the structure and movement of the soul itself." (Moreau 2017, 202)

> "(…) the idea that music ('the sounds, including those of a continuous melody') produces, *'through similarity'*, the double effect, in youths and adults, of 'forming a character' that did not exist and of bringing out a hidden one." (Pelosi 2010, 29)

This strategy prompts two notorious complications: (i) the principle of assimilation does not present the relationship between music and the soul in mimetic terms, as Plato did; (ii) Socrates does not discuss the principle of assimilation. Indeed, Woerther's use of homoeopathy is introduced by the remark that "is not made explicit by Plato" but that it is worth considering "to clarify and complete the philosopher's account" (Woerther 2008, 93).

Yet another strategy is to be found. Drawing on Socrates' theory of μίμησις, Bourgault explains music's power to transform moral character:

> "For Plato, there is little doubt that children repeatedly exposed to rhythms and harmonies that exude a certain moral quality will almost necessarily come to assimilate it:
>
> > "*Imitations* practiced from youth become part of nature and settle into habits of gesture, voice and thought"." (Bourgault 2012, 62)

The text quoted by Bourgault belongs to Socrates' analysis of imitative poetry (395d1-3). He is deciding whether to accept or refuse imitative narration (διήγησις) in the ideal city (394d2-3). Imitation is introduced as a style of narration consisting of likening oneself to someone else (393c5-6). But μίμησις is not merely role play: imitating is forming oneself according to someone else's character (396d6). Assimilation, to use Bourgault's chosen word, stems from imitation. For this reason Socrates censors imitative poetry, narrowing its scope down to the decent character (395c3-5). When imitating indecent behaviours, as those listed between 395d6-e2, poetry fosters the development of reprovable dispositions.

The argument holds for rhythm and harmony because they also stand in a mimetic relation with moral character. Socrates describes them as images or copies of virtue in the "reading metaphor" (402b). Rhythm and harmony are compared to images of writing in water or in mirrors, but instead of imitating real writing what they imitate is real virtue or vice. Socrates enlarges the censorship to cover rhythm and harmony. Only one harmonic mode and one rhythm are required for the imitation of decent character (397b6-c5). "The style of decent man" that the good poet imitates (397b2) involves, presumably, the voluntary and the violent modes (399c2-4), as well as certain rhythms yet to be determined. All others are to be expelled from the ideal city.

To explain assimilation, or how imitation becomes part of nature, Socrates refers to habit: "imitations (…) settle into habits of gesture, voice and thought" (395d1-3). In *Republic* VII, the philosopher claims that musical education is habituation: "It [music] educated the guardians through habits, transmitting by harmony a certain harmoniousness, not knowledge (…)." (522a4-5). Habituating someone to certain moral dispositions constitutes an education different from teaching or learning knowledge (ἐπιστήμη). Bourgault accounts for this claim by appealing to the distinction between habitual and complete virtues. She argues that imitative music instils "habitual virtues", which, unlike "complete virtues", do not rest on knowledge of the good (2012, 62). Habituation to virtue does not require knowledge. In consequence, someone can be virtuous by habit without being able to account for her virtue. Musical education, as habituation in virtue, is unreflective.

Music is directed toward the non-rational part of the soul

> "So, Glaucon," I said, "isn't this why the rearing in music is most sovereign? Because rhythm and harmony most of all insinuate themselves into *the inmost part of the soul* (…)" (401d5-7)

The power of musical education is due to music's appeal to the inmost part of the soul. Elaborating on this claim, Socrates asserts that the child musically reared will become a man who *takes delight in* reason (402a3-4). Pleasure and displeasure are trained by music: the musical man develops "the right kind of dislikes" and takes pleasure in the fine things (401e5-7). Taste, the capacity we reckon to be the source of our likes and dislikes (G. R. Lear 2006, 104), is educated via music. Children exposed to tales, rhythms, and harmonies imitative of the decent moral character become habituated to virtue and develop adequate taste.

Pleasure has been mentioned before in Socrates' account of musical education. Poetry was described as "sweet for the many to hear" (397b3). The pleasant quality of poetry is stressed in Socrates' expulsion of the mixed imitator (398a6). The mixed imitator is the poet who imitates all sorts of characters and noises (397a) and employs all rhythms and harmonies (397c3-5). He is presented as "the most pleasing" (397d5; 398a4). The austere poet that would remain in the ideal city, who imitates the decent character through one melody and one rhythm, remains pleasant (398a8). The pleasing dimension of platonic musical *paideia* is stressed in the scholarly literature (Wohl 2004, 338, Bourgault 2012, 60).

Because music appeals to the source of our likes and dislikes, both by being pleasant and by educating pleasure, the "inmost part of the soul" is argued to be irrational (Woerther 2008, 96, Pelosi 2010, 25).

To support the assimilation between the inmost and the non-rational soul, Pelosi argued for the passivity of the soul (Pelosi 2010, 20). He unfolds such passivity in Socrates' descriptions of musical education. Musical *paideia* is introduced as a process of shaping children's souls as if moulding bodies with hands (377c2-4). Music is something the child undergoes before being able to judge the content of the tales he listens to (378d8-e). The passivity of the learning process is stressed by the dying metaphor. Socrates compares musical education to dying a white cloth, previously prepared and carefully selected, so as to dye it in indelible purple (429d4-430a). The educated child is related to the white piece of wool where the colour is imprinted. The cloth's passivity translates into the child's unawareness. The lack of reflectiveness is mentioned in the comparison of musical education with "a breeze bringing health from good places." (401d1-3). This breeze strikes children's vision and hearing: reason is not involved. Ideal musical education develops in the child pleasure for the good without instilling knowledge. Musical children would be unable to account for the good but will find pleasure in it, and pain in the bad (Bourgault 2012, 62).

It seems arguable that education of taste, the source of our likes and dislikes, is irrational. The contrast between pleasure and reason is significantly Platonic. If all pleasures were rational then knowledge of the good would be a prerequisite for taking pleasure. But knowledge of the good, as said, is not acquired through neither required for development of good taste. Pleasure's independence of reason is key to music's sovereignty. Music is not reflective education, and this is, paradoxically, its' strength. There is an ambivalence in the Platonic account of music: its main flaw and virtue overlap.[31] This ambivalence has been pinpointed by commentators and expressed through the term φάϱμακον. Translated as drug, *phármakon* means something that can both kill and cure (Derrida 1975, 102-103). *Mousike* would constitute a kind of *phármakon* (Murdoch 1976, 43). On the one hand, for being independent of reason, music can corrupt the soul. On the other hand, precisely for appealing to what is not rational in the soul, music reaches further than education for knowledge-acquisition. It can make the child able to "welcome reason when it comes" (402a3-4). Furthermore, without music reason cannot develop:

---

[31] How is this coincidence possible? I will argue that music's appeal to the non-rational soul acquires a positive value when examined from an erotic perspective.

> "But what about when he [the guardian] does nothing else and never communes with a Muse? Even if there was some kind of love of learning in his soul, because it never tastes of any kind of learning or investigation nor partakes in speech or the rest of music, doesn't it become weak, deaf, and blind because it isn't awakened or trained, and its perceptions aren't purified?" (411d1-5)

Music does not involve reason but is needed for reason to flourish. The main difficulty for the assimilation between music and the irrational part of the soul is that the parts of the soul are not yet differentiated. Only in *Rep. IV* is the soul divided between rational and irrational components. "It cannot be assumed", warned Pelosi in his inquiry concerning musical impact on the soul, "that it is possible to clearly individuate the involvement of each psychic element" (2010, 22). Nevertheless he argued that musical education appeals to the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul. I agree musical *paideia* profits from introducing the psychological theory developed in book IV. This examination was carried out by Socrates himself regarding the part of music we reckon as poetry. Socrates argued that poetry addresses the appetitive part of the soul. In the upcoming chapter, I endeavour to prove that music addresses what is non rational in the human soul by concentrating on poetry's appeal to appetite.

Chapter 3. Poetry and the appetitive part of the soul

Poetry's effect on the soul is a main issue in book ten of the *Republic* (603b11-c2). The psychic part opposing reason is poetry's addressee (603a11-b2; 605a8-b2). In the first section of this chapter I reconstruct Socrates' argumentation to bridge poetry with non-rationality. He utilizes the principle of opposites to divide the soul between a rational and non-rational part. The same principle was utilized in book IV to distinguish the rational and appetitive parts of the soul. But the relationship between soul's divisions is controversial. In section two I introduce "Nehamas challenge", namely that book IV and X divisions of the soul do not match. If Nehamas is right, then poetry does not appeal to appetite. In the third section I provide a brief presentation of the appetitive part of the soul. This presentation is not meant to be thorough, but informative enough so as to provide a background for the following debate. The *epityhmetikon* will be defined as appearance-ridden in the fourth section. Such is Moss's solution to Nehamas' challenge, that I reconstruct and endorse. I close the chapter with a discussion about the educational implications of connecting poetry with appetite. I argue that musical *paideia*, as developed in *Republic* II and III, includes the appetitive part of the soul.[32]

Poetry does not appeal to reason

> "For he [the poet] is like the painter in making things that are ordinary by the standard of truth; and he is also similar in keeping company with a part of the soul that is not on the same level and not with the best part." (605a8-b3).

The poet keeps company with a part of the soul other than what is best in us. Socrates detaches poetry from the rational part of the soul through a two-fold demonstration.

Proof one: imitation

The first proof separates poetry from reason on account of imitation. Imitation is the pivotal wrong-making feature of poetry in *Republic* X. The book opens with the remark that imitative poetry must not be admitted in the ideal state (595a5-6). To explain imitation's malaise Socrates employs the Theory of Forms. Imitation is dismissed for being two times removed from the truth (602c1-2). The object of imitation are not the Forms, but sensible reality. Imitating is like carrying a mirror around. Once concluded with the metaphysical debunk,

---

[32] Not only – I do not mean to deny the role of spirit, but only to involve appetite in musical rearing.

Socrates turns to the soul.[33] He wonders what part of the human soul the addressee of imitation is (602c4-5). He adduces the principle of opposites to argue that imitation appeals to a non-rational part of the soul. "Didn't we say", he reminds Glaucon, "that it is impossible for the same thing to opine contraries at the same time about the same things?" (602e8-9).

He is invoking the principle introduced in book IV to divide the soul into a part "with which it calculates, the rational" and a part "with which it loves, hungers, thirsts and is agitated by the other desires, the irrational" (439d5-6). The principle of opposites establishes that "the same thing wouldn't perform opposed actions concerning the same thing with the same part of itself at the same time." (439b6-8). Opposed actions about the same thing occur in someone thirsty when she desires and rejects drink simultaneously. The desire for drink opposes the rejection like the archer's arm thrusting the bow away opposes the other arm, that draws it near (439b10-12). Both actions not only contradict but conflict with each other (Ferrari 2007, 168). "Acceptance to refusal, longing to take something to rejecting it, embracing to thrusting away": such are the opposites Socrates' has in mind (437b2-3). The principle demands for independent sources to explain the simultaneous occurrence of opposing actions, like desiring and rejecting a drink. The desire for drink exhibits a part of the soul where appetites are set, whereas the rejection shows there is a part that, independent of appetite, calculates. The principle of opposites divides the soul into a rational and an appetitive part (439d5-6).

Instead of desiring and rejecting, book X opposes accurate beliefs or opinions and beliefs based on appearance. The former provide a representation of a magnitude as being equal to itself. It "indicates some things being contrary or smaller than others, or equal" (602e3-4). It provides a measure or number for the magnitude that remains the same. But beliefs based on appearance represent a magnitude as being unequal to itself. The magnitude is bigger if seen from near but smaller if seen from far, bent if seen under water but straight if seen outside, both concave and convex depending on the colours, etc. (602c7-12). Appearances often contradict each other.[34] Moreover, an appearance often contradicts a rational belief at the same time that is held (602e4-6). If two opposing beliefs are deemed about the same thing at the same time, then the soul must have two parts. Here again, the principle of opposites divides the soul: the source of rational beliefs is distinct than the source of beliefs based on appearance. Since Socrates is now opposing opinions (δόξα), the division in the soul is cognitive (Singpurwalla 2011, 283, Moss 2008, 35, Moss 2006, 518). There is a part of the soul that forms belief by "measuring, counting, and weighing" (602d5): the rational part of the soul, λογιστικός (602e1-2). The other part of the soul opines according to appearance. While the former provides knowledge, the latter does not. Imitation, twice removed from the truth, keeps company with the appearance-ridden part of the soul. Imitative poetry is detached from reason (603b7-10).

---

[33] The psychological impact of imitation is determined by the metaphysical critique. Because imitation imitates and produces appearances, it appeals to the appearance-ridden part of the soul. The connection is made possible by the cognitive theory.

[34] As Lorenz argued: whereas rational belief provides a measure always equal to itself (the tree has always the same size), non-rational belief are sensory appearances that often contradict each other (Lorenz 2006, 68-69). Consider Socrates description of the non-rational part of the soul as that "which doesn't distinguish big from little, but believes the same things are at one time big and at another little." (605c2-3).

Proof two: morality

This first demonstration is not specific to imitative poetry. It was accommodated to painting, "imitation connected with the sight". (603b7). Sight is the "affection in our nature" making us believe in appearances (602c11-d). The appearances referred to are particular to sight, namely optical illusions (Moss 2008, 39). The argument applies also to poetry because poetry, like painting, is an imitative craft. Instead of related to sight, poetry is "imitation connected with the hearing" (603b8). Socrates demands a proof specific to imitation likened to hearing (603b10-c2). He concludes that poetry appeals to the irrational part of the soul because it imitates irrational moral dispositions (605a2-6). The dialectics of the argument are shared with the above mentioned cases: a fact is introduced, and the principle of opposites is invoked (604b3-5) to account for the fact by dividing the soul. Now the case is that of a man undergoing a loss. He holds out against the pain because he knows is the rational behaviour, but when left alone he indulges in lamenting. The case provides evidence to the claim that a human being battles with himself about moral behaviour. Not even concerning actions, Socrates warns, are human beings of one mind (603c10-d2). Rejecting the pain and grieving are opposite courses of action. They divide the soul into a part that follows "argument and law" (604b1), and a part that "leads to reminiscences of the sufferings and complaints and can't get enough of them" (604d7-9). The rational part of the soul grounds the decent man's behaviour, who "is always nearly equal to himself." (604e2-3). But the non-rational part gives rise to a multiplicity of moral characters. These non-rational dispositions "afford much and varied imitation." (604e1-2). Poetry is consequently directed to the non-rational part of the soul (605a2-5; 605b1).

The part of the soul poetry keeps company with is reason's opposite. It forms belief based on appearance and yields to emotions. In book IV, the part of the soul opposed to reason is called appetitive, ἐπιθυμητικόν (439d8; 439e7; 440e9).[35] Whether or not the irrational part in book X is appetite constitutes a matter of controversy. Nehamas famously denied the equivalence arguing that there is no obvious connection between appetitive desire and the formation of irrational beliefs (Nehamas 1982, 265). In what follows, I will review Nehamas' challenge and argue that the appetitive part of the soul is poetry's addressee.

Nehamas' challenge

"Why should our desire tell us that the immerse stick is bent?" – such is Nehamas' challenge to identifying book X non-rational part of the soul and book IV appetite (Nehamas 1982, 65). He queried the attribution of belief to the appetitive part of the soul. "Desire is blind to any considerations beyond getting what it wants" was Annas' summary of the matter (Annas 1981, 130). She allowed the appetitive part of the soul the ability for instrumental reasoning but denied the formation of belief. Irwin went further in characterizing appetite as "entirely non-inferential": a desire involving means-end calculation would not be appetitive. He famously described appetites as good-independent desires to reconstruct Plato's account of the *epithymetikon* as an abandonment of moral intellectualism.[36] (Irwin 1977, 193)

Appetite's irrationality is key to all three accounts. The appetitive part of the soul is presented in book IV in opposition with reason and explicitly defined as irrational, ἀλόγιστον (439d7). Nehamas's challenge stems from such attribution: how can appetite tell us anything if it is incapable of reasoning?

Precisely for being incapable of reasoning, the appetitive part of the soul is argued to be poetry's addressee (Murdoch 1976, J. Lear 1992, 209, Annas 1981, 131). Book X introduces the part of the soul poetry keeps company with as irrational (604d9). "The part in us that is far from prudence" (603b1), "the soul's foolish part" (605c2) describe it in opposition with reason. Since book IV named the part opposing reason appetitive, it seems like the appetitive part of the soul is poetry's addressee. But this inference, broadly accepted in the literature (Pettersson 2013, 129, Lorenz 2006, 62, J. Lear 1992, 209, Murdoch 1976), does not solve

---

[35] As it is well known, Plato divided the soul in three parts in the *Republic*: reason, spirit, and appetite. There are two non-rational parts: spirit and appetite. But the principle of opposites is introduced in book IV to divide appetite from reason, not spirit.

[36] "Moral intellectualism" means that every desire, as a desire for the good, presupposes knowledge of the good.

Nehamas' challenge. It may well be the case, as argued by Annas, that appetites and optical illusions are independent features of a "reason-resisting part":

> "Plato presumably failed to see that his argument will not work, that desire has nothing to do with optical illusions, because he thinks of the lower part of the soul as being merely the trashy and reason-resisting part." (Annas 1981, 339)

Appetite seems to be a "trashy part" insofar curtailed to reason's *nemesis*. Focus on reason prevented some scholarly literature from delving into the appetitive part of the soul. Instead of accounting for appetite, these sources end the inquiry in the definition of appetite as non-rational. They provide a heteronomous approach to appetite, judging it from reason's standards. But Plato's agenda "should not blind us" to appetite's complexity (Lorenz 2006, 72). An account surpassing this agenda would provide an autonomous approach to appetite. In what follows I will attempt an autonomous introduction to the appetitive part of the soul. I will present four notions that I take to apply for every appetite: outer determination, sensual gratification, insatiability, and appearance. From the connection between appetite and appearance I will reconstruct the cognitive theory, and its solution to Nehamas' challenge. In addition, the cognitive definition of appetite elucidates the controversies I mention in the upcoming introduction. These cognitive solutions will be presented by the end of the chapter, right before drawing the implications of the autonomous approach to Platonic *paideia*.

ἐπιθυμητικόν: the appetitive part of the soul

> "One part, we say, was that with which a human being learns, and another that with which he becomes spirited; as for the third, because of its many forms, we had no peculiar name to call it, but we named it by what was bigger and stronger in it." (580d12-e1)

Appetites, ἐπιθυμίας, are what is bigger and stronger in this third part of the soul. In book IV it was presented as that part where the appetites are set, named ἐπιθυμητικόν after them (439d7). The appetitive part of the soul "has many forms": it is compared to a multi-headed beast (588b7). The image correlates appetites with "a ring of heads of tame and savage beasts" (588c8). Both tame and savage, necessary and unnecessary (558d8), appetites can assume a variety of objects. Thirst, hunger, and sexual desire, reckon to be the most vivid cases, correspond separately to drink, food, and human bodies (439d6-8). Leontius is attributed a desire to look at corpses (439e8-440a3). Money is another object of appetite, for it constitutes the means to afford drink and food (581a1-2). The democratic man, an appetitive character, desires to eat well, to listen to the flute, to exercise, to participate in politics and even to do philosophy (561c6—d7). And the list would not presumably end there. In addition, oneiric desires are included among appetites. Murder and incest are instances of the most unlawful desires that occur to us while dreaming (571d1-3). How can this multiplicity be arrayed? –such concern is shared in the scholarly literature (Cooper 1984, 9).[37]

Outer determination

Independently of how to arrange the multiplicity, appetites seem to be determined or qualified by external objects (439a1-7). Water turns thirst into a desire for water, meat turns hunger into a desire for barbecue. External objects are additions to the desiring activity of the appetitive part of the soul. This desiring activity is not entirely undetermined: Plato distinguishes hunger, thirst, sex, and many other appetites.[38] But external objects are required to specify these appetites.[39]

The analogy between appetite and a winged drone describes how this "outer determination" feels. Unnecessary appetites are like drones with stingers that pierce the soul (559d7-9; 572e6). *Epithymia* feels extrinsic and prejudicial. Desire as an "external force acting upon the soul" was an affection, πάθος**,** in two ways. First, in that it happens to the desirer –the desirer does not make it happen. Second, in that it is bad: it undermines moderation or self-control (Dover 1974, 208). The word unnecessary, employed by Socrates to distinguish certain appetites, is interchangeable with bad. He draws the distinction concerning hunger: whereas the desire for eating to nurture is good or necessary, the desire for eating to enjoy is bad or unnecessary (559b1-c2). The poison of appetite is licentiousness or lack of moderation (559c1), the vice of the *epithymetikon* according to book IV (444b3-8).

Sensual gratification

Appetitive desire is also characterized by its gratification. The body, including all senses, is the repository of appetitive satisfaction according to book IV. On the one hand, thirst, hunger, and the desire for sex aim at the satisfaction of bodily needs. The need for drink, the need for food, and the need for sex respectively. On the other hand, Leontius' desire to look at some corpses lying by the public executioner is connected with sight. While he was keeping his appetite under control, he was covering his face (439e10-12). When the appetite overcomes moderation, he unveils his eyes and yell at them with anger: "Look, you damned wretches, take your fill of the fair sight!" (440a1-2). The bodily sense of vision is here the object of appetitive satisfaction.

---

[37] As said, I will come back to the difficulties raised in this section after considering Moss's definition of appetite as appearance ridden.

[38] *Contra* the comparison with Freud's libido (Kahn 1987, 97)

[39] This reading of the thirst argument was developed by (Carone 2001). There is one exception to outer determination: tyrannic eros. Tyrannic eros, the leader of all appetites (573e6-7), is undetermined. Plato does not mention any object specific to this love and it remains unclear what does the leader of appetite want. I believe Halperin's account solves the contradiction. According to Halperin, tyrannic eros is not an appetite but the pathology suffered when appetitive satisfaction is postponed (Halperin 1985, 72).

The connection between appetite and sensual satisfaction is questioned on the grounds that it does not apply for some desires. Recall that the democratic man sometimes wants to partake in politics and other times in philosophy. Appetite toward politics or philosophy seems unconnected with the body, senses included. In addition, it is argued that the sight of a corpse cannot be visually satisfying. Despite what Plato says, there must be something more to this appetite, something beyond the body (Cooper 1984, 11).[40]

Insatiability

Instability is key to the appetitive desiring activity. It is for the sake of this quality that a variety of desires are attributed to the democrat in book VIII. Socrates is making the point that the democrat "lives along day by day, gratifying the desire that occurs to him" (561c6-7). He turns from one desire to another regardless even of their being contradictory: "at one time drinking and listening to the flute, at another downing water and reducing" (561c8-d1). What for the democrat seems like a free life, Socrates concludes, is a life without order and necessity (561d6-7).

Appetites vary and their instability is crucial to the Platonic approach. In the *Phaedrus*, a dialogue sharing *Republic's* theory of the soul, the transient quality of appetite grounds Lysias' dismissal of erotic desire.[41] The rhetorician's speech aimed at convincing Phaedrus, the beloved, to bestow his favours to the non-lover rather than to the lover. The main reason for such unnatural behaviour would be desire's ephemerality (G. Ferrari 1990, 88, Carson 1986, 167). Lysias argues that the lover is unworthy of trust because his desire does not hold together (*Phaedr.* 232b6). The lover can only grant pleasure in the present because he will forget about his beloved in the future (231a1-3; 233b8-c2). The fact that desires change grounds Lysias' accusations and makes them seem convincing, at least to Phaedrus.

---

[40] I will tackle this rejoint after presenting the cognitive theory.

[41] The erotic desire Lysias has in mind is an appetite for sex (Halperin 1985, 73)

Appetites concatenate each other's even when they concern the same object. After one sexual intercourse, the lover will look for more. Lysias' remark on desire's ephemerality is connected with insatiability. "Pleasure in the present" that is what the lover can grant, and nothing else (*Phaedr*. 233b8-c2). His current satisfaction of desire will not prevail tomorrow. Desire is ephemeral because it is insatiable.

Appetite's insatiability is explained in the *Republic* through a detailed discussion on pleasure. Socrates' argues that appetites, when satisfied, are not filling (*Rep*. 586b1-4). I can eat now but that won't prevent me from being hungry by dinner, I had drunk yesterday but now I feel thirsty. Appetitive insatiability is experienced as some sort of emptiness by the desiring subject, who feels she is continually dissatisfied. To account for such central feature of *epithymia*, Socrates introduces a distinction between real and apparent pleasures. Appetites are insatiable because they are filled with pleasures as unreal as shadow paintings (*Rep*. 583b4-5).

Appearance

Pleasure-seeking is not specific to appetite insofar as each part of the soul has its own pleasures (480d7-8). The appetitive part of the soul is a companion of apparent pleasure. Appearance instead of pleasure comes to the fore as peculiar to *epithymia*. Recent approaches to the appetitive part of the soul focus on appearance to provide a coherent account of appetite. They develop an understanding of the *epithymetikon* as appearance ridden that solves the difficulties I have hinted at. The multiplicity of desired-objects and the sensuous satisfaction of appetite, when understood from the concept of appearance, are resolved.[42] Furthermore, the understanding of the appetitive part of the soul as appearance-ridden was developed to figure out a solution for Nehamas' challenge.

The cognitive theory: Moss' solution to Nehamas' challenge

The notion of appearance was introduced by the cognitive approach to Plato's psychology. The cognitive approach begins by the following principle: cognition is required for the parts of the soul to be sources of motivation. The cognitive account of the tripartition is argued to be more fundamental than the motivational (Singpurwalla 2011, 283, Moss 2008, 39, Moss 2006, 505).

The motivational account defines the psychic parts in correspondence with the ends or goals they set to behaviour (Cooper 1984, 5, Kahn 1987, 80). According to the motivational reading, the appetitive part of the soul guides behaviour toward pleasure, while the spirited part of the soul toward victory and honour, and reason toward knowledge. These goals are set by the desires specific to each part (*Rep.* 581a4-c-5). The motivational account develops from the acknowledgment that not only the *epithymetikon* desires. As sources of motivation, all psychic parts have desires capable of guiding human action. The cognitive account accepts the motivational description but argues that desires must recognize their objects to guide human actions. Thirst, the desire to drink, entails the reckoning of an object as drinkable. The appetitive part of the soul must have a cognitive grasp of its object. *Contra* Annas, it is not blind.[43]

---

[42] See the section "remarks on the rule of appearance."

Republic X makes room for non-rational cognition. Whereas reason calculates, measures, and weighs, the part of the soul opposed to reason forms beliefs based on appearances (602ac10-d2; 603a1-3). In arguing for imitation's appeal to that in us opposing reason, Plato introduced non-rational belief (δόξα). The content of such belief has been described, in Platonic fashion, as the unreflective acceptance of appearance (Moss 2008, 39). Lorenz argued that appearances are the outcome of the interaction between the world and the bodily senses. Sensory-perception is one crucial component of appearance-apprehension (Lorenz 2006, 68; 71-73). Recall that book X cognitive division of the soul opposes rational belief to belief conditioned by sight. Non-rational belief contradicts itself (the stick is straight and bent, convex and concave) because sight is misled by colours, sizes, and other sensible properties. Sight is not the cause for all non-rational belief, because the instance suggests that the bodily senses are the source of appetitive cognition.

The cognitive theory argues that the *epithymetikon* must hold beliefs to move the agent towards pleasure (Moss 2008, 40, Singpurwalla 2011, 294). For the appetitive part of the soul to desire drink and set it down as the end of behaviour, the recognition of an object as drinkable is required. Insofar as appetite opposes reason, this recognition cannot rely on calculation. Sensory perception is the available means for appetite to acknowledge its objects (Lorenz 2006, 71). Book X resolves what cannot be explained through book IV, namely how appetite isa source of motivation. The attribution of belief to appetite presents a second advantage. It explains why appetitive pleasures are apparent (583b5): the *epithymetikon* fails to attribute value to real pleasures because it is constraint to sensory perception. Appetitive attribution of value misses the point because it is appearance-ridden, thus foreign to knowledge.[44]

---

[43] Readings of the thirst argument developed by Annas and Irwin are contested by the cognitive theory. Both Irwin and Annas argued that thirst is a desire for drink without addition because appetite is irrational. But even for appetite to desire drink alone, it must recognize drinks. For the same reason already Kahn attributed cognition to appetite (Kahn 1987, 85). Also Lorenz developed an account of non-rational cognition in the *Republic* (Lorenz 2006, 59-73). The cognitive theory does not argue against the motivational approach, but rather against classic understandings of appetite as blind.

"Appearance ridden" is the definition of appetite provided by the cognitive theory. The *epithymetikon* is ruled by appearances in forming the beliefs that motivate appetitive behaviour. *Contra* Annas, desire and optical illusions are not unrelated descriptions of a "reason-resisting" part of the soul. Appetitive desires rely on belief based on illusion or appearance (Pettersson 2013, 13, Singpurwalla 2011, 294, Moss 2008, 65). The appetitive part of the soul tells me the stick is bent for the same reason it makes me desire sexual intercourse with a beautiful body: because it is ruled by appearances. Would it not be so, it could not be the seat of appetites. Such is Moss's reply to Nehamas:

> "To say that (for example) the appetitive part sees the stick as bent does not, then, mean that we see the stick as bent because doing so satisfies some craving; it means rather that one and the same susceptibility to appearances explains both our perception of the stick and our appetites for pleasure." (Moss 2008, 40)

The rule of appearance, in accounting for non-rational beliefs and appetites, connects book IV and X of the *Republic*. The part of the soul opposing reason in book X is appetite because it is appearance responsive.[45] In book X, this part of the soul is poetry's addressee. Yet another proof is required by Socrates exclusive to poetry, imitation connected to hearing (603b12-c1). One last soul division displays a third description of the psychic part opposing reason. It is "the part that yield to reminiscences of the suffering and to complains." (604d8-9)

Emotions and appearances

Emotional behaviour was attributed to the *epithymetikon* in book IX. Complaining, sighing, lamenting, and suffering are recurrent in the soul governed by appetite (578a7-12). Presumably because appetites are insatiable, the *epithymetikon* is the source of emotional disturbances. Would appetites be filled with real pleasure, complaining and lamenting would not occur. The connection between emotion and appetite points back to appearance once more. Apparent pleasure does not fill appetite, that becomes insatiable, and the soul suffers.

---

[44] *Contra* Irwin, Moss argued that the appetitive part of the soul can only desire the objects it judges to be good (Moss 2008, 61) The issue then is not that appetite forgets about the good, but that appetitive good is not the real good. Because it judges according to appearances, then the appetitive part of the soul is not concerned with the good but only with what appears good.

[45] Notice that I am deliberately omitting spirit, but not for the sake of denying it may also be appearance ridden. Moss argues it is (Moss 2008, 36). My concern is restricted to appetite, for the use of Socrates' principle of opposites in book four applies to appetite only. Further demonstrations are required to include spirit.

Socrates draws the connection between emotions and irrational belief in book X. The part of the soul yielding to suffering is incapable of distinguishing “greater things from lesser but thinks that the same things are at one time large and small.” (605c2-3). Appetitive emotional responses stem from appearance-apprehension. When a man is facing a loss, the part opposing reason moves the soul toward grieving and lamentation. Would a man witness a joke, the non-rational part of the soul would presumably yield to laughter. Socrates describes this part as excitable and multiform (605a5). Compare such responses to rational behaviour. The decent man, when facing a loss, holds out against the pain and remains calm (604a9-b1; 604b4). Reason is always equal to itself. Would a man witness a joke, reason would also opine to remain calm. “One must accept the fall of the dice and settle one’s affairs accordingly” is Socrates principle of rational behaviour (604c5-6). The excitable part of the soul is overridden by appearances, while reason remains the same. Varying appearances provoke varying emotional responses. Like non-rational beliefs (“the same things are at one time large and small”), such emotions contradict each other’s. The rule of appearance explains appetite’s emotional variability (Moss 2008, 51).

The rule of appearance is a criterion able to provide a coherent account of the *epithymetikon* (Singpurwalla 2011, 294, Moss 2008, 65). The seat of appetitive desires, non-rational beliefs, and certain emotions is appearance ridden. By demonstrating the coincidence of all three descriptions, the cognitive theory allows the claim that appetite is poetry’s addressee.

Remarks on the rule of appearance

Before turning to discuss the consequences of connecting poetry with appetite, I shall address the difficulties raised while introducing the *epithymetikon*. Two main problems were mentioned: the multiplicity of appetitive objects and the sensuality of appetitive satisfaction.

The multiplicity of appetitive objects

Food, drink, a human body, a corpse lying in the ground, but also intellectual activities, such as politics and philosophy, and oneiric desires, are objects of appetite. According to the cognitive theory, appetitive recognition of objects is overridden by appearances. In modern fashion, as Lorenz argues, appearances can be said to constitute the content of sensory perception (Lorenz 2006, 71). Objects of appetite are desired to the extent they are apprehended by the senses. No doubt this is the case for food, drink, a human body and also the corpse, insofar as sight is attracted to it. It seems rather unfeasible for intellectual activities. But Socrates introduced the following nuance: the democrat does not do philosophy but acts as if he were doing philosophy (561d1-2). His desire for philosophy cannot belong to reason because he does not engage in philosophy. He only pretends, for a short period of time, to be doing philosophy. The part in his soul that is satisfied by this pretension must be that connected with appearances, namely appetite.[46]

Oneiric desires are crucially connected to appearances insofar as they occur in dreams. But while sleeping, the senses are not awake. It may seem like Lorenz rendering of appearance-apprehension as sensory-perception fails. I believe a solution can be found in Cooper's account of appetite. He argued that imagination may be the source of certain appetites because it is "linked essentially to the world as it *appears*" (Cooper 1984, 11). According to Cooper, imagination is to some extent "a brute fact about the way of being affected by the physical world." (Cooper 1984, 11). Plato's imagination, *eikasia*, is responsive to appearances and crucially involves physical interaction with the world (Hamlyn 1958, 19; 24). The capacities included in dreaming seem to derive from our way of being affected by the physical world. Images are the content of dreams: they refer to sight despite the eyes being asleep. Sensory-perception remains crucial to appearance-apprehension even whilst dreaming.

The notion of appearance arrays the multiplicity of appetitive objects. This multiplicity cannot be dissolved: an appetite for drink and an appetite for politics depend on different beliefs and are distinct.[47] But they can be grouped together insofar appetite is, in both cases, respondent to appearances.

The nature of appetitive satisfaction

What about appetitive satisfaction? Food, drink, and sex satisfy bodily needs. In Leontius' desire to see the corpses, no bodily need is present. However, sight is satisfied by Leontius' appetite (440a1-3). Cooper counter-argued Plato: it cannot be sight's physical constitution, he argued, but some imagining of Leontius' what explains his appetite (Cooper 1984, 11). Imagination was also invoked by Cooper to account for the democrat's appetites. The democrat pretends to do philosophy but does not really do it because his desire for philosophy is due to images, not to reason. The inclusion of imagination does not challenge sensual satisfaction. Insofar as imagination stems from our physical interaction with the world, it is crucially connected with the bodily senses. In virtue of this dependence, satisfaction of imagination is to some extent sensual satisfaction.

---

[46] Lear also argued that what unifies the democrat's desires is delight in appearances (G. R. Lear 2011, 198). Also Lorenz: "his [the democrat's] desire to philosophize, then, counts as an appetite because he attends only to the superficial, "visible" aspects of philosophy." (Cooper 1984, 11)

[47] Contra Lear's reading of the "channelling metaphor" in *Rep*. 485d6-9 (J. Lear 1992, 193). Unlike Freud's *libido*, Plato's appetites are not one stream of energy that is always the same but assumes different objects.

Certain coherence is found in appetite as appearance-ridden desire. The cognitive approach benefits an investigation of the *epithymetikon* because it delves into non-rational cognition. It begins the inquiry where heteronomous approaches finished: in the recognition of appetite as non-rational. In doing so, it does not undermine Plato's project. The cognitive approach does not deny appetite is opposed to reason. Rather, it delves into this opposition to understand what it means for appetite to be non-rational. The attribution of certain cognition does not allow for a confusion between appetite and reason. Reason forms true belief, while appetite forms belief according to appearance. The cognitive theory disputes standard understandings of appetite as blind. As such, it is complementary to the motivational theory: reason has desires and appetite beliefs. Here again, rational desire for knowledge is by no means confoundable with appetitive desire.

The clear-cut opposition between reason and desire may stem from a modern prejudice. The modern understanding of rationality as instrumental and motivation as irrational is not appropriate for Plato's theory of the soul (Kahn 1987, 78-79). An opposition between reason and appetite stands, but the *logistikon* desires and the *epithymetikon* apprehends.

What "we shall gain": moral education of appetite

> "The arts, and particularly poetry, are important because the education Plato stresses is character education, not academic training." (Annas 1981, 340)

Poetry's appeal to the appetitive part of the soul bears relevant implications for Platonic *paideia*. If poetry is a means of paideia and poetry addresses appetite; then appetite (i) can be educated, (ii) is an addressee of ideal moral education. Both predicaments are undecided. Appetite is said to be incapable of rational persuasion, therefore reason cannot educate appetite but only enslave it (442a4-b3; 444b4-5). The moral education program in book II and III is addressed to reason and spirit, but not to appetite (411e4-7; 441e4-442a2). Rejoints against poetic education of appetite can be made on the ground of textual evidence. Is there an incoherence, for Plato both introduced poetry in *paideia* and argued poetry's addressee is the *epithymetikon*?

Despite the standard denial of appetite's educability, attempts have been made to put it down.[48] The noble lie is invoked to argue that appetite can be educated, because it relies in appetitive responsiveness to persuasion (Wilberding 2012, 131). Another line of argument to prove appetite's sensibility to education is provided by Plato's distinction between appetitive personalities. *Republic* VIII and IX display different moral characters with one common feature, that of having an appetitive soul. Thus, Lear argues, "culture can permeate and inform the lower elements of the psyche" (J. Lear 1992, 199).

Different strategies are also developed to argue that appetite is included in ideal *paideia*. Lear's account of moral education as internalization would explain differences in appetitive configurations of character. He argued that *paideia* is a process of internalization of cultural contents (J. Lear 1992, 187-190). Different *polis* would inform education differently, endorsing it with a variety of values. In transferring these values to the soul, moral education configures the soul in different ways. In a regime that values money, *paideia* will produce oligarchic characters; whereas in a regime that values freedom, it will produce democratic characters. Appetite must be an addressee of moral education for different appetitive *ethos* to exist.

Recall that Pelosi recounted metaphorical descriptions of moral education to argue *paideia* involves the *epithymetikon* (Pelosi 2010, 20). The dying and breeze metaphors describe *paideia* as a non-rational process. The breeze metaphor in particular compares moral education with a healthy breeze affecting the senses. The connection between senses and appetite, as proved by the cognitive theory, reinforces Pelosi's argument.

Wilberding followed a different strategy by referring to moderation. Moral education aims at instilling moderation as it is one of the main virtues (411a1). It is the virtue of the *epithymetikon* (430e5-9) and also a kind of harmony that occurs when reason and the non-rational parts are of the same opinion (431d9-e1; 442c10-14). Without addressing appetite, moral education would be incomplete (Wilberding 2012, 138).

Against Socrates oblivion of appetite in summarizing *paideia*, Wilberding argued the philosopher was tendentious. His rational agenda puts the emphasis on the rational value of moral education. In a way, Socrates would not be interested in rearing the non-rational parts of the soul. Only to the extent such rearing is beneficial to the latter development of reason, does the philosopher care about it (Wilberding 2012, 148).

---

[48] For a summary of the standard denial, consult (Wilberding 2012, 128)

However, Wilberding's attempt to elucidate the moral education of appetite misses the point. He argues gymnastics educate appetite because they involve a program of moral prescriptions about diet and bodily well-being (Wilberding 2012, 144). Insofar as the *epithymetikon* is the source of bodily desires, these prescriptions aim at educating appetite. They would, for instance, tame hunger to be directed toward nutrition instead of pleasure (404c6-d3).

Regardless of whether gymnastics addresses appetite, musical education addresses the *epithymetikon*. Both Wilberding and Pelosi fail to recognize the connection between poetry and the appetitive part of the soul. Such connection is openly acknowledged by Lear (J. Lear 1992, 209-215). However, he took it for granted without delving into the relationship between appetite, emotion, and non-rational belief. In proving that book X and IV's non-rational part of the soul coincide, the cognitive approach yields important conclusions. It proves that musical education, insofar as encompassing poetry, appeals to appetite.[49]

Cognitive solution to the moral education of appetite

In defining appetite as appearance ridden, the cognitive theory makes appetite responsive to poetry. Poetry appeals to the appearance ridden part of the soul because it is an imitative craft. Plato makes poetry and music paedeutic tools, the sources of habituation in virtue, through the concept of *mimesis*. Poetry and music do not teach virtue and vice, they instil them in their listeners. Myths, rhythms, and harmonies stand in a reciprocal relationship with moral character. They imitate moral character (399a4-6; 400a4-7) and for this reason acquire moral properties. Harmonies are said to be prone to lamentation and wailing, to be courageous or virtuous (398e1; 398e10; 399c2). These moral qualities are apprehended by the audience. The mode of this apprehension is *mimesis*: the child develops certain moral dispositions by imitating. He imitates the moral attributes present in the myths and melodies he repeatedly enjoys. Imitation draws a line from moral character to the audience, having poetry in between. And imitation, insofar as imitation of appearances, appeals to the appearance ridden part of the soul. Moral education addresses appetite insofar as it involves imitation.[50]

---

[49] Appetite, of course, belonging to the guardian's souls. The inclusion of appetite does not mean to deny that guardians are the subject of ideal *paideia*.

[50] The cognitive theory's impact on moral education does not end here. Lear reconstructed the Platonic theory of imitation and *paideia* in the *Republic* through the notion of appearance (G. R. Lear 2011).

To sum up: Platonic *paideia* is developed in the *Republic* for the sake of guardians (376c8-9). According to book IV psychological theory, it aims at taming spirit so as to make it reason's ally (441e4-442a2). But in books II and III not only spirited virtues are discussed. Moral education must instil all virtues, moderation included. Some of the emotions attributed to the myths and melodies are appetitive: wailing, lamenting, suffering, laughing. By instilling these emotions in the audience, *mousike* addresses appetite. Many moral actions performed by poetic characters are motivated by the *epithymetikon*: sexual intercourse, feasts. Overall, imitation, they key-term in the Platonic account of *paideia*, addresses the appetitive part of the soul.

The connection between poetry and appetite explains something more: poetry's paedeutic role. *Paideia* is habituation in virtue, not knowledge-acquisition. Precisely because "it has a hotline to the appetites" (J. Lear 1992, 209) poetry belongs to *paideia*. Poetry instils moral dispositions. Character-development is previous to the formation of reason. If poetry would appeal to the *logistikon*, it would not be included in *paideia*. It is better to have poetry than not to have it because poetry shapes moral character. The psychological impact of poetry is dangerous not because poetry does not appeal to reason but because it may be in conflict with reason. If poetry conforms to virtue, it educates appetite in a way beneficial to reason's latter development. If poetry imitates immoral dispositions, it hinders posterior rational education. What we shall gain with poetry (607e1) is the adequation of desire to reason's standards. The role of desire in poetic education is the topic of the upcoming chapter. Eros is the specific term Plato introduces as the end (τέλος) of music-poetic education.

Chapter 4. Love of the beautiful

“δεῖ δέ που τελευτᾶν τὰ μουσικὰ εἰς *τὰ τοῦ καλοῦ ἐρωτικά*” (403c4)

The discussion concerning *mousike* should end in the love of the beautiful: such is Socrates’ closing statement about musical rearing. The love of the beautiful is the end and fulfilment of musical education (403c6-7).

The sentence is odd for both historical and contextual reasons. First, since when is the beautiful an object of love? In modern aesthetics, disinterested satisfaction rather than love describes the apprehension of beauty (Crawford 2005, 52). Something is judged beautiful instead of loved. Aesthetic education develops taste or the capacity to distinguish the beautiful from the ugly. To distinguish is a cognitive activity. Love and hate are emotions, in principle foreign to beauty in modern aesthetics.

Second, the beautiful has not been relevant so far in musical education. *Mousike* can habituate children to virtue, making them courageous, moderate, etc. before they know the virtues. *Mousike* educates when it imitates the good moral character. Socrates employs a moral criterion to determine what myths, rhythms and harmonies deserve to be preserved. He censored music and poetry imitating lamentations, emotional instability, or fear of death. All of them manifest bad moral character, the so-called child-like behaviour. Alternatively, *mousike* that imitates the “decent man” is promoted. In imitating the good *ethos*, myths and melodies habituate children to virtue. The *telos* of *mousike* seems to be the good character rather than the love of beauty.

In this chapter I will take Socrates’ final claim about ideal *paideia* to mean that the musically reared man loves beauty. Although the claim strikes the reader as a novelty, Socrates hinted at it once:

> “(…) the man properly reared on rhythm and harmony would have the sharpest sense for what’s been left out and what isn’t a beautiful product of craft or what isn’t a beautiful product of nature. And, due to this having the right kind of dislikes, he would praise the beautiful things; and, taking pleasure in them and receiving them into his soul, he would be reared on them and become a gentleman [καλός τε κἀγαθός]. He would blame and hate the ugly in the right way while he’s still young, before he’s able to grasp reasonable speech.” (401e2-402a3).

Socrates talks about a sharp sense for beauty, but there is no notion of "taste" in Plato's dialogues. The musical man praises the beautiful things because he takes pleasure in beauty. The part of his soul delighting in beauty is not reason. The musical man will hate the ugly, Socrates asserts by the end of the quote, before he can understand. This is because *mousike* does not address reason. Poetic tales and melodies appeal to what is non rational in the soul.

I will endeavour to explicate Socrates' final remark about musical education with a focus on poetry and the appetitive part of the soul. I will argue that the poetically reared man loves beauty. The argument begins by defining beauty as a moral and aesthetic notion, connecting virtue with appearance. For this reason poetry, insofar as it is moral imitation, has a hotline to beauty: I develop this claim in a second subsection. Poetry's addressee, appetite, is naturally responsive to beauty. In a third subsection I hold that the fundamental erotic experience is appetite's unlearned response to the beautiful. This unlearned quality of appetitive *eros* is what poetry can educate, so as to make it virtuous.

This explanation of Socrates' reference to the love of beauty as a paedeutic goal is not thorough, for *mousike* is more than poetry. Also the non-rational soul may be more than appetite, encompassing spirit.[51] But the interpretation I will afford relies on the content I have so far developed in this thesis. My focus on poetry and appetite should contribute to enlighten the erotic meaning of musical education.[52]

What is beauty? A moral and aesthetic account

Something is beautiful when its virtue is apparent. In most secondary sources dealing with the topic, Platonic beauty means virtuous appearance (G. R. Lear 2020, 25, Gammel 2015, Kosman 2010, 355). Repeatedly quoted, the *Phaedrus* is the main source of textual evidence for this account. Scholars discuss the *Phaedrus* to argue that the Form of Beauty, unlike all the rest, is manifest to the senses (Reeve 2011, 145-146, G. R. Lear 2020, Gammel 2015).

I will begin by recounting Socrates' mentions to beauty amidst his program of ideal *paideia* (*Republic* II and III). A moral meaning of beauty is common to all his uses. However, this moral meaning of beauty is not exhaustive: καλὸς (beauty) does not amount to ἀγαθὸς (good). Platonic beauty is tightly connected to the good and to the realm of appearances. I will argue for an aesthetic dimension of beauty by turning, first, to the *Phaedrus*. In the fashion of many secondary sources, I will recount those parts of the palinode when Socrates identifies beauty by its radiance. The argument concludes with a discussion of some passages of the *Republic* where beauty is likewise attributed an aesthetic meaning.

---

[51] For readings connecting Socrates' reference to the love of beauty in Rep. III with spirit, take a look at (G. R. Lear 2006, 115-19, Hobbs 2000, ch.1). Sources on this topic are rare: such has been one of the main difficulties for composing this chapter.

[52] *Contra* Sheffield, who claimed that the reference to the love of beauty in *Platonic paideia* is only of historical, not philosophical, importance (Sheffield 2017, 125)

A moral account of beauty

Socrates' seldom alludes to the beautiful in his discussion of *mousike*, He attributes beauty to poetic tales (378e) arguing for educating the youth in beautiful lessons of virtue. He is concerned with the impact of poetic representation of misbehaviour in children. The misbehaviour Socrates has in mind is gods making war on each other It contradicts the moral principle of "being gentle to their own" (375c) that ideal education inculcates on budding souls. Because what a child "takes into his opinions at that age has a tendency to become hard to eradicate and unchangeable" (378e), educators must ensure that only beautiful lessons of virtue reach the young ears. Beauty crops up in a moral scrutiny of poetry and is attributed to virtuous tales.

The next use of beauty is to be found in Socrates' analysis of rhythm and harmony. He argues that good *mousike*, including all elements (speeches, harmonies, rhythms) follows the good and beautiful disposition of the soul, *ethos* (400e3). The attribution of beauty to moral character is repeated after a few exchanges. Socrates uses the idiomatic expression "καλός τε κἀγαθός", beautiful and good, to describe the decent man. He recounts the becoming of a decent man as a process of musical education leading to pleasure in the beautiful things (401e1-402a1).

Beauty is also ascribed to products of art and nature (401e3-4), and craftsmanship is expected to follow the beautiful (401c5-7). Beautiful products of art are not artworks, or not exclusively. Socrates is thinking of the products of *mousike* in the first place, but he adds other *techne* as painting, weaving, embroidery, and housebuilding (401a1-2).

There is one last use of beauty within musical education. It occurs at the end when Socrates invokes the love of the beautiful. The beloved is a beautiful boy. Although he is beautiful to the lover's eyes, his beauty stems from his moral character. Socrates says that ·the most beautiful sight" is the man in whom "the beautiful dispositions that are in the soul and those that agree and accord with them in the bodily form" (402d1-4).

In all uses of *kalós* throughout musical education, moral character is the source of beauty. Plato's moral account of beauty is familiar to his time. Currently "the beautiful" is not associated with actions, intentions, and other moral attributes. These can be either good or bad, rather than beautiful or ugly. But the idiomatic expression "καλὸς τε κἀγαθὸς" shows it was different in Classical Greece.[53] Plato's moral use of beauty encompasses products of art (τἐχνη) as well. According to Socrates, every art product is either good or bad depending on whether it imitates a good or bad moral character (401a4-8).

Beautiful appearances

Plato's moral use of beauty has led the scholarly community to translate καλὸς as fine rather than beautiful.[54] Some scholars disagree with such rendering because, as they argue, beauty and good are not the same. "Virtuous appearance" is proposed as a definition for Plato's use of καλὸς (Kosman 2010, 355, G. R. Lear 2020, Sheffield 2017). It associates the beautiful with the way how things appear or become manifest to the senses. When this appearance unfolds virtue, beauty occurs: "something is beautiful when its goodness is apparent." (G. R. Lear 2020). Beauty is "the good that shows forth" (Sheffield 2017, 126). Beauty is to the good what appearance is to being (Kosman 2010, 355). With the notion of virtuous appearance, the scholarly community reckons the moral use of beauty and explains why, on the other hand, beauty is not interchangeable with goodness. A sensible dimension is ascribed to the beautiful.[55]

Is the introduction of appearance appropriate to tackle the Platonic use of καλὸς? Connecting beauty with how things look seems to entail a cosmetic prejudice[56] that may not fit Plato's moral employment. To argue that *kalós* carries an aesthetic meaning, the scholarly literature refers to the *Phaedrus* (G. R. Lear 2020, Gammel 2015, 83-87). In Socrates' palinode, all human souls had once travelled beyond the heavens and known the Forms. Unfortunately human beings on earth had forgotten about them. Remembering the Forms is a difficult task because, as Socrates explains, they are not recognizable in their earthly manifestations:

> "Justice and self-control do not shine out through their images down here, and neither do the other objects of the soul's admiration; the senses are so murky that

---

[53] (Kosman, Beauty and the Good: Situating the Kalon 2010, 346)

[54] (Bloom 2016). Also in Perseus translation to the *Republic*.

[55] Although dominant, the aesthetic approach is not exclusive in understanding Platonic *kalós*. Moss developed a hedonistic account of beauty: what tells the beautiful apart from the good, she argued, is that the beautiful feels pleasant (Moss 2011). For another account emphasizing pleasure in Platonic "aesthetics", see (Destrée 2011).

[56] The prejudice that beauty is about how something looks.

> only a few people are able to make out, with difficulty, the original of the likenesses they encounter here." (250b3-8)

All Forms, including Justice and Moderation, were shining when the soul saw them beyond the heavens. However now, in Earth, human beings struggle to remind them. This is because manifestations of the Forms (think of a just act, or a moderate person) do not shine. There is only one form, the Form of Beauty, that shines both in itself and through its manifestations:

> "Now beauty, as I said, was radiant among the other objects; and *now that we have come down here we grasp it sparkling through the clearest of our senses*. Vision, of course, is the sharpest of our bodily senses, although it does not see wisdom. It would awaken a terribly powerful love if an image of wisdom came through our sight as clearly as beauty does, and the same goes for the other objects of inspired love. *But now beauty alone has this privilege, to be the most clearly visible and the most loved*." (250d-e)

In human's earthly existence, the senses perceive appearances but not the Forms. With one exception: beauty. The Form of Beauty is present in beautiful appearances. Just or wise things do not shine, beautiful things do. The beautiful face of a young boy displays beauty in a way a wise theory cannot display wisdom, or a good deed cannot display goodness. Neither the theory nor the deed *look* wise or good. Their goodness or wisdom is not present in their appearance. The young boy, instead, *looks* beautiful. Beauty "is a quality of appearance, manifesting or showing" (G. R. Lear 2020).

The aesthetic meaning of beauty is not restricted to the *Phaedrus*. Lear argued that it applies to all Platonic uses of beauty because it follows from the moral meaning. "We should not distinguish goodness and shinning appearance as distinct elements of being *kalon*", Lear claims, because "shinning appearance is rather a dimension of or effect of goodness" (G. R. Lear 2020).[57] She draws on Socrates' metaphorical reference to goodness as the sun in the myth of the cave (*Republic* VII). Beauty's radiance would stem from the sun's sparkle. This interpretation carries an issue: the lack of radiance of good deeds. As said, something does not look good like it looks beautiful. Beauty is the only Form whose manifestations shine.

---

[57] The problem of how to connect both meanings of Platonic beauty, the moral and the aesthetic, is still discussed in the literature. Both moral and aesthetic beauty are regarded as "deeply intertwined" in most sources.

I will endeavour a different line of argument to support the claim that aesthetic beauty is not exclusive to the *Phaedrus*. I believe beauty is also a quality of manifesting in the *Republic*. Although the *Republic* seems to emphasize the moral meaning of *kalós*, beauty does not overlap with the good. In *Republic* VI, Socrates explicitly distinguishes beautiful things from good deeds. Whoever seeks beauty will be satisfied with what looks beautiful, but to whom chases the good, appearances will provide nothing (505d4-9). Reeve explained the distinction through the reputation-reality connection: beauty is reputation-reality indifferent while the good is not (Reeve 2011, 142-143). With reputation he refers to the realm of appearances, what seems to or looks like.

The aesthetic meaning of beauty is manifest in some of Socrates uses of *kalós*. First, beauty is something the musical man *sees*. The *sight* of a beautiful boy triggers the attention of the musical man (402d4). He sees beauty both allegorically and literally. Regarding the boy's beautiful soul, Socrates' reference to sight conveys a metaphysical meaning. The musical man is able to recognize a beautiful soul because he knows the Forms of virtues. Just like only she who knows how to write can identify the images of writings under water or in mirrors, the musical man sees beauty in the soul because he knows the forms of moderation, virtue, courage, and justice (402b). This use of sight is allegorical and recurrent in Platonic metaphysics (Nightingale 2015, 57). Regarding the beloved's beautiful soul, the musical man's eyes are his knowledge.

But the allegorical use of sight is not exclusive. The musical man literally sees beauty because it is manifest in the boy's body. The attribution of beauty to the beloved's body is somehow subordinated to the soul, but in no way superfluous or accessory.[58] The beautiful body is not a copy or an image of the beautiful soul, rather both "partake in the same model" (402d3), the decent man character. No hierarchy is yet implicit in this subordination of both psychological and physical beauty to virtue. It is true, however, that in the upcoming discussion of gymnastics the body follows the soul.[59] Socrates begins his account of physical education, gymnastics, making the claim that what is beneficial to the soul is beneficial to the body, but not vice versa (403d4). He then sketches a program of ideal gymnastics in the fashion of *mousike*, censoring what contradicts the virtues. Gymnastics are for the sake of the soul (410c5). Whereas music aims at developing in the soul the desire for learning, gymnastics is intended at tuning spiritedness into courage (410d-e). This difference is relevant enough to allow for two distinct educative programs. Gymnastic prescriptions, unlike musical standards, are bodily prescriptions. An examination of alimentary habits is undertaken so as to include in gymnastics the prohibition of sweets and alcohol (403e4; 404c6-8). The body is the subject of this second part of *paideia*. Music cannot replace gymnastics because physical beauty is not an illusion or the epiphenomenon of psychological beauty. A specific rearing is devoted to the accomplishment of the beautiful body. In the beautiful body, virtue becomes apparent.

---

[58] The account of bodily beauty I provide in this paragraph is inspired by Nehamas. He argued that bodily beauty is not an illusion and is not irrelevant in Plato's *Symposium* (Nehamas 2007, 112). Interpreting the *Symposium*, Gammel argued for the autonomy of bodily beauty: "the slight debasement of the body [in Diotimas' love ladder] should not be carried to the excess that one should praise a beautiful soul in an ugly body." (Gammel 2015, 73).

[59] Also in Book IV 591d1-6

There is at least one more time, in the *Republic*, where *kalós* displays an aesthetic meaning. I am thinking of Socrates' distinction between the lovers of learning and the lovers of spectacles (476a9-b1). Socrates endeavours to define the philosopher as a lover of learning. Glaucon replies that, if the love of learning is going to be the distinctive feature of the philosopher, then the people who love spectacles (those who "run around to every chorus at the Dionysia") are philosophers (475d1-e1). They are like philosophers, Socrates points out, but they are not philosophers. The reason for this nuance is the distinction between the Form of beauty and the manifestations of beauty. The people who love spectacles love beautiful sights and sounds. They are fond of manifestations of beauty, but their interest ends there: the lovers of spectacles cannot go further than the realm of appearances (476b3-6). The philosopher, on the contrary, inquiries about the Form of Beauty.

In making the non-philosophers capable of grasping beauty in sounds and images, Socrates shows that knowledge of the Form is not a prerequisite for sensibility to beauty. Beauty is apparent in its manifestations.

Poetry's hotline to beauty

Manifestations of beauty can be grasped and imitated by poetry. The realm of appearances is what poetry imitates. Poetry is twice removed from the truth because it does not imitate the Forms, but sensible reality (597e). Furthermore, poetry is imitation of moral appearances. In what follows, I will argue that poetry, insofar it imitates and produces moral appearances, has a hotline to beauty.

1. Poetry is imitation of moral appearances.

Imitation was introduced in *Republic* X to account for poetry. Poetry imitates appearances (597e3-6). This is a feature poetry shares with painting, the other imitative art discussed in

Republic's last book (597d11-e4). Unlike painting, the appearances poetry imitates are not visual appearances.[60] Poetry is imitation of moral appearances.

Books II and III openly claim that poetry is moral imitation. Good poetic tales imitate good moral character, whereas bad poetry imitates bad *ethos*. The same goes for melodies and harmonies. However, poetry seems to be more closely attached to morality. Consider Socrates' claims that melodies and harmonies must concord with the text that must concord with the decent man character (398c1-6; 398d9-10; 399e9-400a; 400d3-7). Textual imitation of character, that occurs in poetry only, seems to be of first order; while melodic imitation seems to be of second order.

Book X stresses the connection between poetry and morality in various ways. Homer and the tragic poets talk about "all things human that have to do with virtue and vice" (598e2). Human deeds belong to this category. The poet is described as "the one who lauds" the deeds of other human beings (599b3-7). Socrates does not equate poetry with odes. A poet sings about different things, but moral deeds (wars, governances of cities, moral education) are the most important (599c7-d1). Poets are "imitators of phantoms [appearances] of virtue" (600e6).

Morality is key to poetic imitation. Poetry imitates "human beings performing forced or voluntary actions and, as a result of the action, supposing themselves to have done well or badly, and in all of this experiencing pain or enjoyment." (603c4-9). Poetry imitates manifestations of virtue and vice, moral appearances. Beauty occurs in poetry inasmuch as poetry imitates, and produces, the appearances of virtue. [61]

2. Good poetry is imitation of appearances of virtue.

> "We need poetry in order to impersonate the right values and to develop the best moral attitudes and habits." (Destrée 2011, 125)

Even in *Republic* X, where poetry is banished from the ideal state, the poet is not denied the possibility of imitating good behaviour. Socrates asserts that the greatest accusation against the poets is that they can succeed in miming even the best of us (605c5-7). Imitation of the decent character is more difficult than imitation of the child-like behaviour (604e1-3). However, the door is left open.

---

[60] Notice that painting is alien to ethics. This may be why Plato does not include painting in *paideia*.

[61] There is no distinction between imitating and producing in poetry, for the heteronomy of *mimesis* (Nehamas 1982).

Books II and III are more charitable with good poetry. As it is well known, poetry is not banished from the ideal state. On the contrary, it is included in ideal *paideia* (376e2-8). Socrates attributes to poetry the power of habituating children to virtue (377b10-c4). This power presupposes the capacity of imitating virtuous moral behaviour.

3. Good poetry grasps beauty.

"Virtuous appearance" is Plato's account of beauty. Beauty is the good that shows forth in sensible reality. Poetry not always, or not only, imitates what seems good. Poetic imitation of appearances of vice is not beautiful. Socrates argues that poetry imitates the bad *ethos* more than the decent (605a2-5). It follows that, most generally, poetry is alien to beauty. But poetry can grasp beauty. If poets imitate the appearances of virtue, they capture the beautiful. Insofar as it is imitative of moral appearances, poetry has a hotline to beauty. This hotline is specific to *mousike*. Rhythm and harmony are included but maybe, as *Republic* II and III suggest, in a subordinate manner.

Appetite's response to beauty: the fundamental erotic experience

> "The core experience of beauty, the "first" and most fundamental, especially for the experience of philosophy, will be the experience of human beauty in the person of the beloved." (Hyland 2008, 65)

Appetite is sensitive to beautiful appearances. In the *Phaedrus*, the desire for sex is appetite's response to the apprehension of manifest beauty (254a1-b1). The vision of a beautiful man awakens a desire for sexual intercourse in the appetitive part of the soul.

In the *Republic*, the musical man falls in love with a beautiful boy, because "the most beautiful is the most lovable" (402d6-7). The idea that beauty provokes love is present in many Platonic dialogues.[62] Such an idea is not exclusively Platonic: sources agree that ancient Greek love, ἔρως, was the natural response to beauty. Perception of beauty provoked *eros* (Konstan 2013, 13; 20, Dover 1974, 69-70, Halperin 1985, 69). But what is the love Socrates refers to?

In what follows I will argue that the fundamental erotic experience takes place in the appetitive part of the soul, because it is a desire for sex. I do not mean to confound Plato's account of *eros* and *epithymia*. With fundamental I mean that the desire for sex is the primitive or "unlearned" response to beauty.[63] Not all responses to beauty, hence not all *eros*, is appetitive. My interpretation implies, however, that *eros* is not restricted to reason and the non-rational parts of the soul are erotic as well.[64] Insofar as it is appearance-ridden, appetite is responsive to beauty. Although manifestations of beauty, rather than the Form of beauty, is available to appetite; this sensibility grants it is an erotic drive.

---

[62] "This is indeed why it was Aphrodite whose attendant and follower Love [ἔρως] became, having been conceived on her birthday, and also because *he is naturally a lover in relation to beauty*." (*Symp*. 203c1-4). "(…) and love is love in relation to the beautiful" (204b4-5). For an account emphasizing this idea in the *Symposium* (Nehamas 2007). In the *Phaedrus* (G. R. Lear 2020).

Notice that a distinction between a learned and an unlearned response to beauty is proposed in the *Phaedrus*. The learned man, "the initiate", has a reverential response to the sight of a beautiful body. He awes and feels fear, he is also tempted to perform a sacrifice in the name of his beloved, as if the beloved was a deity (251a1-5). The unlearned man, uninitiated or "initiated long ago", responds to beauty through a desire for sex:

> "Of course a man who was initiated long ago or who has become defiled is not to be moved abruptly from here to a vision of Beauty itself when he sees what we call beauty here; so instead of gazing at the latter reverently, he surrenders to pleasure and sets out in the manner of a four-footed beast, eager to make babies (…)" (250e2-6).[65]

The unlearned response to beauty is dismissed by Socrates. His comparison of the unlearned man with a "four-footed beast" is telling about his view on sexual desire. This unlearned response is attributed to the black horse, that corresponds with the appetitive part of the soul (G. Ferrari 1990, 125):

> "(…) but the other [horse] is no longer compliant with the charioteer's goads or whip, but leaping, it surges violently ahead, and giving its yoke fellow and charioteer every

---

[63] The same claim, but argued for differently, can be found in (G. R. Lear 2006, 115). Also bodily beauty is reckoned to be the fundamental experience of beauty (Sheffield 2017, 126, Hyland 2008, 64).

There is a second reason why I believe the desire for sex to be the fundamental erotic experience. It provides an explanation for the historical puzzle I referred to at the beginning of this chapter. This puzzle was the following: beauty is not something we desire or love but judge. It is not obvious, as it seems to be in Plato's dialogues, that love is the response to beauty. Love does not seem to follow the perception of beauty in, say, landscapes or songs. Even if I say "this is a song I love" I do not mean it literally. Love is not what we feel toward beautiful things save when talking of human beauty. The desire for sex is a common response to bodily beauty. Making sense of Platonic eros requires, I argue, of keeping in mind that beautiful bodies arouse a desire for sex. This is why I call it the fundamental erotic experience: the love of beauty derives from a desire for sexual intercourse with a beautiful body.

[64] Notice that Ancient erôs was crucially connected with sensory perception, *aesthesis* (Konstan 2013, 20).

[65] Both references, to sensual pleasure and a beast, remind of the *Republic's* account of the appetitive part of the soul.

> kind of difficulty, forces them to go toward his loved one and give a remainder of the pleasure of sex." (254a4-8).

Socrates does not believe sex is the proper response to beauty. He is likewise hesitant in the *Republic*. In Book III, Socrates clearly wants to sublimate the musical man's love from sex. He argues that sex is not adequate love because, whereas the former is excessive pleasure, the latter is moderate and orderly (403a). Love is moderate and orderly because it is the response to beauty, virtuous appearance. Socrates reasons as follows: if beauty is akin to virtue and sex is vice, then sex cannot be the final response to the beautiful. If the musical man attempts to have sexual intercourse with his beloved, "he'll be subject to blame as unmusical and inexperienced in beautiful things" (403c2). Sex is not fitting for love (403b1) when beauty is moral. Socrates describes the love that would be a fitting response for the beautiful in saying that the musical lover "may kiss, be with, and touch his boy as though he were a son, for fair purposes, if he persuades him" (403b5-c2).

The appetitive response to beauty ought to become moderate. Physical contact is allowed, but not for the sake of sexual pleasure. A paternal-educational role is reserved for the musical man. Insofar as they are musically reared, the lover desires' have been tamed. *Mousike* is the means of habituating to virtue the non-rational parts of the soul. When it comes to erotic desire, musical education moulds the non-rational response to beauty.

I believe this role is played by poetry regarding the appetitive desire for sex. Poetry appeals to the appetitive part of the soul. Good poetry, in imitating the appearances of virtue, can tame appetite's response to beauty.[66] Instilling virtue in the appetitive part of the soul, poetry moderates *epithymia*. In doing so, it accommodates the fundamental erotic response to virtuous appearance.

Poetry as erotic education

"(…) being well educated musically is primarily a matter of taking pleasure in the *kalon*."

(Moss 2011, 214)

In the description provided above it seems that poetic education of appetitive eros is a collateral effect of *paideia*. I have argued the following: good poetry instils virtue in the appetitive part of the soul. Poetry's erotic education is making the appetitive part of the soul moderate concerning one specific appetite, namely the desire for sex.[67] It seems like Socrates description of ideal *paideia* as erotic education adds nothing new to the standard description of ideal *paideia* as moral education. In the end, ideal *paideia* amounts to habituation in virtue.

---

[66] This idea that appetitive eros should be tamed, rather than repressed, is present in the *Phaedrus*. I will delve into it during chapter 5.

This suspicion is present in the secondary literature. Both Lear (2006) and Moss (2011) regard the love of beauty as one vantage point from where to reconstruct ideal *paideia*. Like any other vantage point, the love of beauty yields to an account of ideal *paideia* as moral education of the non-rational soul. The erotic description is irrelevant in that education to love the beautiful amounts to habituation in virtue. Maybe this is the reason for the oblivion of the love of beauty in most secondary sources about Platonic *paideia*. Some scholars have gone further in arguing that "the role of eros in education is not of philosophical importance but only a historical fact ("the pederastic-cum-educational context")" (Sheffield 2017, 125) According to Sheffield, the erotic description of education is not part of Platonic philosophy. It is a historical fashion, dependant on a context where homosexual love served a purpose in educating the youth (Halperin 1990).

In what follows I will argue that there is some additional value of philosophical importance in invoking *eros*. My argument relies on a distinction between the moral description of ideal *paideia* (habituation in virtue) and the erotic description (education to love the beautiful). The erotic description of ideal *paideia* revaluates both parties involved in education, *mousike* and the non-rational soul.

Notice that the moral description of ideal *paideia* underscores the limited cognitive abilities of the non-rational soul. Because appetite cannot be taught virtue, it is habituated to virtue. The erotic description depends on responsiveness to beauty. By attributing appetite a sensitivity towards the beautiful, the erotic description reassesses the *epithymetikon*. Appetite is not only the cause of "defective" cognition, as it seemed from the point of view of habituation; it is also the cause of *eros*. Being an erotic drive, it is responsive to manifestations of beauty, where the beautiful is displayed.[68]

The erotic description of *mousike* is also informative. The moral description of ideal *paideia* defines poetry and music as means to instil virtue. It focuses on imitation: poetry and music can provide moral education because, unlike other arts, they are moral imitations. The erotic description shows that their educative role is not only that of being moral tools. *Mousike* can mould *eros* because it is pleasant. The child takes pleasure in hearing rhapsodes reciting verse and musicians playing. This is not an intellectual pleasure: it does not gratify reason, but the non-rational soul. It is a sensual pleasure: *mousike* satisfies the ear. Recall that Socrates defines poetry as imitation to the hearing. The second predicate, "to the hearing", is frequently ignored in the literature. It is however key to understand the poetry Plato had in mind. In Classical Greece, a semi-literate society, poetry was orally delivered. Although poets wrote, their audience was not literate: they were hearers, not readers of poetry.[69]

---

[67] Moderation is "a certain kind of order and mastery of certain kind of pleasures and desires [ἐπιθυμία]." (430e6-7). Moderate desires are found, according to Socrates, in educated men (431c4-7).

[68] I will delve into this revaluation in chapter 5.

The appetitive part of the soul delights in poetry because poetry is sensually gratifying.[70] Poetry, imitation of virtuous appearance connected to hearing, is both pleasant and beautiful. The appetitive part of the soul educated via poetry loves virtuous appearances. How is this profitable to reason will be the topic of the upcoming chapter.

---

[69] Analysing *eros* in archaic lyric poetry, Carson speaks of a context of oral poetics. "The listener listening to an oral recitation is, as Herman Fränkel puts it, "an open force field" (1973, 524) into whom sounds are being breathed in a continuous stream from the poet's mouth." (Carson, Eros the bittersweet 1986, 50). Also Havelock's *Preface to Plato* emphasizes orality. Referring to tragic poets in Plato's time, Havelock makes the following remark: "It is certain that all his [Homer] poet successors were writers. But it is equally certain that they always wrote for recitation and for listeners." (Havelock 1963, 46)

[70] Recall that sensual gratification defines appetite (chapter 3). *Contra* Petterson, who argued that appetitive desire for discourses demonstrates that appetite is detached from sensual gratification (Pettersson 2013, 13). The discourses he refers to were pronounced by sophists: they were *uttered* words.

Chapter 5. Erotic ascent: from (appetitive) love of beautiful (appearances) to loving the Form of Beauty

Musical education is required for the latter development of reason. "When reasonable speech comes", Socrates asserts, "the man who's reared in this way [through *mousike*] would take most delight in it." (402a3-4). The musical man will delight in reason because he has been habituated to virtue. Recall that the virtuous character, the so-called decent man, is rational. His moral disposition, *ethos*, agrees with reason. Music, in making the decent man take pleasure in what is good, profits the development of reason.

But how exactly does music contribute to rational development? Rational development, insofar knowledge-acquisition, seems quite independent of habituation. According to Moss, this is Plato's take in the *Laws*. Musical education facilitates intellectual education, but it is perfectly possible for a man to be knowledgeable and to find pleasure in what is wrong (Moss 2011, 213-214).

I believe Moss' interpretation does not hold for the *Republic*. In the *Republic*, *mousike* is not only beneficial to reason. It is required:

> "But what about when he does nothing else and never communes with a Muse? Even if there was some love of learning in his soul because it never tastes of any kind of learning or investigation nor partakes in speech or the rest of music, doesn't it become weak, deaf, and blind?" (411c9-d4)

Socrates is talking about the guardian, whose education in the ideal city has just been enacted. If the guardian lacks musical education, he argues, then he becomes a μισόλογος, a hater of reason (411d7). *Mousike* is required to love learning and become rational. The language of love and hatred to describe the relationship with reason is not accessory. The philosopher is the lover of learning: he is passionate about learning.[71] Someone who does not love the whole of learning is not a philosopher (475b8-10; 475c2; 475c6-8). The development of reason depends on a passion for learning: without this love, reason cannot flourish.

The case of Cephalus

Apatheia, lack of desires, is the problem of Cephalus in Book 1 of the *Republic*. Cephalus does not engage in philosophy because he is not passionate about anything. He abandons the conversation with Socrates right when it becomes philosophical. In arguing for the benefits of wealth for virtue, Cephalus presupposes that justice is giving back to someone what has been withdrawn. Socrates challenges Cephalus' definition, and the old man, instead of further pursuing the inquiry, leaves Socrates for a sacrifice.

---

[71] "(…) for Plato the love implied by *-philo* was real. At *Republic* 475b he describes the philosopher as one with a passion for wisdom." (Osborne 1994, 1).

Why does Cephalus refuse the pursuit of knowledge? Cephalus is full of fear and piety: he comes from a sacrifice and leaves to another one (328c2-3; 331d6-7). But he lacks desires. He describes himself as free from desires and considers this freedom good. To Socrates question (is old age a hard time of life?), Cephalus answers negatively: old age is not hard because aging kills desires. He uses the words peace (εἰρήνη) and freedom (ἐλευθερία) to describe the state of *apatheia* (329c4-5). The desires are "many mad masters" the old man is freed from (329d1).

Cephalus' *apatheia* explains, I believe, why he refuses to philosophize. Philosophy requires of love for learning. How can someone immune to passions love learning? Cephalus is wrong in thinking that the withering away of bodily desires strengthens reason's desires (328d2-3). After all, he does not engage in the discussion.

This interpretation of Cephalus' refusal presupposes a connection between the love of learning and other erotic desires. This connection is implied by Socrates when claiming that *mousike* is required to love learning.[72] It is also suggested in Socrates' metaphorical depiction of the philosopher in Book V. After famously defining the philosopher as a lover of learning, Socrates argues further that the philosopher is a lover of all learning. Someone who is not passionate for all learning cannot be a philosopher, just like someone not interested in every food is not hungry (475c1-4). Socrates pursues this comparison to the extent of metaphorically describing the love of learning as an appetite:

> "But the one who is willing to taste every kind of learning with gusto, and who approaches learning with delight, and is insatiable, we shall justly assert to be a philosopher, won't we?" (475c6-8)

However, some other textual evidence in the *Republic* denies the connection between the love of learning and other erotic desires. The so-called "channelling metaphor" is employed to argue that, when desires turn to learning, they forsake bodily pleasures (485d10-14).[73]

---

[72] Recall that *mousike* addresses the non-rational soul to turn it toward beauty.

[73] "(...) when someone desires incline strongly to some one thing, they are therefore weaker with respect to the reast, like a stream that has been channelled off in that other direction." (485d6-8). Also in the *Phaedrus* desires are once described like a torrent of water that some object channels (251e4-5).

The relationship between rational and non-rational eros is the topic of this chapter. The inquiry concerns erotic psychology, the role of the soul in *Platonic* love. Recall that erotic motivation is elicited by manifestations of beauty. From earthly manifestations of beauty, Platonic *eros* escalates towards the Forms. The psychology of this erotic ascent is the issue at hand. According to some sources, the erotic response to beauty is always rational.[74] The fundamental experience of eros, desire awakened by the perception of physical beauty, happens to reason. It follows from this interpretation that *eros* was rational even before ascending towards the Forms.

The other reading I will be discussing is developmental. It argues that Platonic *eros* was not always rational, rather it becomes rational. *Eros* is a metaphysical pursuit that originates in an appetitive response to the beautiful body. I believe this interpretation is required to account for erotic education, at least as described in the *Republic*. In addition, I believe this interpretation is better at explaining "why *eros?"*Platonic love, unlike other metaphysical pursuits, emphasizes human finitude.

Before turning to the debate, I will provide a brief introduction to Plato's account of eros in the *Republic*.

***Eros* in the *Republic*: ascending toward Beauty**

In this thesis' chapter 4 eros was the response to the beautiful. This is the meaning of love in *Republic* III, when introduced as the end of *mousike*. But such meaning is minor both in the *Republic* and in the secondary literature. On the one hand, Plato developed a notion of eros as a tyrant in *Republic* IX (573b7-8). Eros enslaves the soul to all unlawful appetites (572e4-6). Evil influences instil Eros in the soul, making love both exogen and prejudicial. It seeks for unnecessary pleasures, evil pleasures connected with the body. This way it gives the lead to the worst part of the soul, appetite (577d1-5). Constrained to appetitive pleasures, that are phantoms of real pleasures, Eros is never satisfied (578a1-2). The tyrannic man, enslaved by Eros, is the less free and most unhappy of all (580b7-c4). This account of love as a tyrant has been prioritized in the scholarly debate around Platonic Eros in the *Republic*, including the sources that tackle eros in poetry (McNeill 2001, Arruzza 2019, J. Lear 1992, 211).

I believe there is no contradiction between tyrannic eros and the love of beauty. Tyrannic eros is not the response to the beautiful. The fact that the same term, eros, is used for both does not entail that they must be reconcilable meanings of the same phenomena. The problem in concentrating on *eros* as the response to beauty is not that it differs from tyrannic eros. Rather, the problem is the lack of resources present in the *Republic* to reconstruct this notion. Socrates does not, in this dialogue, elaborate on the love of the beautiful.

---

[74] These sources will be discussed in the following section.

Education may provide an adequate framework to endeavour this reconstruction. Eros, as presented in *Republic* III, is the end of musical education. *Mousike* educates the non-rational soul to love the beautiful. It moderates the non-rational response to beauty so as to make it profitable to the love of learning. The key word I propose to account for erotic education is ascent.

An ascent describes eros in both the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. In the *Symposium*, Diotima recounts the process of learning to love as gradual. She distinguishes five stages in the lover's rearing.[75] Commencing with the love of one beautiful boy, the lover escalates until he reaches the love of wisdom (210a5-d7). This gradual ascent goes from loving a part of beauty to loving the whole: the lover's attention is "fix on beauty in one thing" (the young boy), to turn "to the great ocean of beauty" (210d17).[76] Scholarship underscores ascent by referring to Diotima's account as the erotic ladder (Nehamas 2007, 108). It has been described as a path "advancing from the concrete to the abstract and from the particular to the general." (Gammel 2015, 73)

In the *Phaedrus*, the sight of a beautiful boy grows wings in the soul (249d7-8; 251b1-3). The image of the wings entails an intellectual ascent. It is the ascent from the sight of beauty to the Form of Beauty. The rational part of the soul remembers the Form of Beauty due to the vision of the beautiful beloved (254b5-7).[77] Out of remembrance of the Forms, the lover feels awe and fear. The learned response to beauty, that of the initiated, is the outcome of ascent:

> "But the newly initiated, who observes much of what he saw before, whenever he sees a godlike face or some image of the body that has imitated Beauty well, first shudders and something of the fears he had before comes over him; then, looking at it, reveres it like a god (...)" (251a1-5)

---

[75] The love of one beautiful boy, the love of all beautiful bodies, the love of beauty in the soul, the love of beauty in laws and pursuits, and the love of wisdom (210a5-d7).

[76] Notice that this expansion matches with Socrates' insistence in the *Republic* that love is not of one part of its object, but of all of it (474c8-11)

[77] The Forms are visible only to the mind, "the governor of the soul" (247c3-8). The sight of the Forms nurtures the best part of the soul (248b8-9). Socrates is referring to the charioteer, the rational part of the soul.

Unlike the unlearned response to beauty, that pursues the pleasure of sex, the learned response is reverential. This response is due to the remembrance of the form of Beauty. On remembering Beauty, the lover "is afraid and falls on his back in awe" (254b5-8).

The ascent from an earthly manifestation of beauty towards Beauty presupposes knowledge of the Forms.[78] In the *Phaedrus*, the soul contemplated the Forms before falling down to Earth and becoming embodied (247c-248b). Only the initiated soul has a memory of this vision, although it is a latent memory until the sight of a beautiful boy awakens it (250a7-11). Also in the *Republic*, knowledge is required to love. The musical man falls in love with the boy whose soul and body agree with the good character (402d1-4). Knowledge of the virtues is presupposed in the musical man's love. Platonic love is a learned passion, for it entails some sort of knowledge.[79] It is, at the same time, a learning process. The lover ascends from the concrete, the beautiful boy, to the intelligible, the Forms. Love is an epistemic ascent in the *Symposium*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Republic.*[80] The lover ascends from appearances to knowledge in the sight of beauty.

Scholarly definitions of *Platonic* eros focus on epistemology. Eros is an epistemic motivation that triggers an ascent from appearances to the intelligible realm (Obdrzalek 2022, 203; 223, Sheffield 2017, 125-126, Barney 2008, 2). But what in the lover's soul performs this ascent? In what follows, I will direct my attention to the ascending soul. What parts of the soul engage in the ascent? I will frame the problem of erotic psychology within the *Republic's* tripartition of the soul. Against the literature arguing for reason to be the only subject of erotic psychology, I will claim that the non-rational soul is included. Erotic ascent is thus not only epistemic but also psychological.

The "idealizing" problem: gap between appetite and reason's responses to beauty

Halperin's outstanding paper on Platonic *eros* introduced a break between rational and non-rational responses to beauty. According to Halperin, Plato detached *eros* from sexual desire (Halperin 1985, 77-78). The philosopher surpassed Homer's understanding of *eros* as an appetite for sex by inflicting *eros* with knowledge of the good. Although both appetite and *eros* are desires, the pursuit of something lacking, appetite is blind and *eros* involves knowledge (Halperin 1985, 67-69). Something is erotically desired because it is judged valuable. In turn, the judgment of value presupposes knowledge of the good. Halperin argues that Platonic *eros* entails a value judgment and it is aimed at the good. This aim prevails regardless of the objects. Even when the object of *eros* is a beautiful body, eros is aimed at the good. The beautiful body would incarnate a value, and for this reason provoke *eros*. Relying on the object-aim difference, Halperin restricts Platonic *eros* to reason. The appetitive response to beauty, that is blind and pleasure-seeking, is never *eros* (Halperin 1985, 77).

---

[78] The man who loves beauty is the one who got the best grasp of the Forms (248d3-5)

[79] Aryeh Kosman introduced this nuance in his account of Platonic love. Discussing the *Symposium*, he argued that love is something you learn, so that "is thus a virtue, not merely a passion." (Kosman 2014, 40). David Kostan argued further that Greek *eros* is a passion that entails some understanding (Konstan 2013, 20).

[80] The same claim is argued by Barney (Barney 2008, 1). She describes the erotic ascent as a process "in which an individual responsiveness to Beauty serves as a trigger for reorientation to the intelligible realm." (Barney 2008, 12). Also Obdrzalek argued that the erotic ascent is common to the middle dialogues (Obdrzalek 2022, 204)

Halperin's account of *Platonic* eros is endorsed by current scholarship (Obdrzalek 2022, Sheffield 2017). I believe it entails, both in Halperin and other sources, two main controversial claims. First, that bodily beauty is a phantom:

> "Every passionate longing for sexual union with a particular human being qualifies as a genuine instance of desire [*eros*], in Plato's view because the very intensity, exclusivity, and ultimate futility of such a passion point to the presence, in the beloved, of a cherished value (…)" (Halperin 1985, 77)

The vision of a beautiful body arouses, in the viewer, a desire for sexual union. According to Halperin, the beloved is beautiful because he embodies a value cherished by the lover.[81] In attributing a value of judgment to the desire for sex Halperin intellectualizes the fundamental response to beauty. It is a rational response, for it presupposes knowledge. Other sources refer to this operation as idealization. Platonic eros is idealizing, they argue, because it apprehends a value in the perception of beauty (Obdrzalek 2022, 215; 223, Sheffield 2017, 132). As a consequence, bodily beauty is illusory or unreal.

The idealizing reading appeals to knowledge to explain erotic desire for physical beauty. In doing so it fails to account for the ascending and educative dimension of *eros*. Why would someone who knows the good love a beautiful individual instead of the good itself?

In addition, it follows from the idealizing reading that bodily beauty is illusory. I have already attempted to counterargue such claim from Socratic gymnastics.[82] The gymnastic body, paradigm of beauty, is moderate. Moderation and the other virtues are instilled in the body through specific prescriptions, i.e., do not eat sweets (403e4; 404c6-8). Socrates' prescriptions in his program of ideal gymnastics pursue the virtues but address the body. Moral education of the soul alone will not make the body beautiful. There is a need for gymnastics, education specific to the body. The beautiful body expresses virtue, but physical beauty is not a phantom of moral beauty. Would it be so, then *mousike* would suffice to make a beautiful body.

---

[81] *Eros* is thus a relationship encompassing three terms: lover, beloved, and value/ideal. Halperin argued that an explanation of erotic desire requires triangulation: the value or idea that the beloved finds in the lover is part of *eros* (Halperin 1985, 82). Also Carson's interpretation of eros in archaic lyric poetry appeals to triangulation (Carson 1986).

[82] In the section "Beautiful appearances", belonging to chapter 4.

Second, the idealizing reading claims that the appetitive response to beauty is blind. The desire for sex is a necessity of human nature, like hunger or thirst, that can be fulfilled by possessing the desired object. The object satisfies the appetite when it provides pleasure. *Epithymia* is pleasure-driven and uncapable of cognition (Halperin 1985, 79-80).

However, as appearance-ridden, the *epithymetikon* is not blind: such is the main claim of this thesis' chapter three. Appetitive desires depend on the recognition of appearances. Hunger, the desire for food, implies the capacity to identify something as food. Appetite is not blind, but the cognition it involves is limited to the realm of appearances. As appearance-driven, appetite can be socially inflected. In *Republic* VIII and IX, appetitive desires vary according to the political regime. The oligarch has an appetite for money, the democrat has an appetite for philosophy. Appetite is thus responsive to the environment. Finally, appetites can be raised to find pleasure in what is good. Of course appetitive pleasure in the good does not amount to reason's knowledge of the Good. Appetitive desire cannot be metaphysically informed because the appetitive part of the soul cannot know the Forms. But it can be educated to delight in the good and to become moderate in its response to beauty.[83]

The last objection I want to pose against the idealizing reading appertains to education. As already mentioned, the idealizing reading cannot explain erotic education. If eros presupposes knowledge of the good, the soul that feels love is already knowledgeable. Erotic education requires, I shall argue, of an alternative to the idealizing account.

Developmental erotic psychology: sublimation of desire

In the *Republic*, *mousike* provides an erotic education to the non-rational soul. Poetry moderates appetite's response to beauty, a desire for sex, so as to make it profitable to reason. Without music there is no love of learning (*Rep.* 411d1-5). Socrates claim bears psychological implications. Music educates the non-rational parts of the soul. Thus, erotic education, conducive to reason's love of learning, begins with the non-rational response to beauty. Eros entails a psychological ascent.

---

[83] Appetite's responsiveness to beauty has been invoked to argue that the *epithymetikon* is not blind (Nussbaum 1982, 101).

Rational eros develops from the non-rational responses to beauty. A developmental psychology of eros is spread in the scholarly literature. Some sources attempt to demonstrate psychological development with a focus on spirit. They claim that the spirited response to beautiful appearances is profitable to the love of the Forms (Renaut 2013, 96, G. R. Lear 2006, 116-117, Hobbs 2000, 229-230). On the other hand, developmental erotic psychology is implied in the current debate about *mousike*. In making the non-rational parts of the soul the addresses of musical education, current scholarship traces a continuity between non-rational and rational upbringing (Pelosi 2010, 22-24, Bourgault 2012, 63, Moreau 2017, 96-97, Woerther 2008, 93). From the outlook of eros, this continuity means that the love of reason develops from non-rational responses to beauty. Some scholarship on the *Phaedrus* explicitly endorses the developmental view. Approaching eros from the tripartite psychology, Werner connected the "physical stimulus of sensual beauty" with appetite and spirit. In addition, he argued that this physical stimulus "initiates the entire process of an erotic ascent towards philosophy." (Werner 2012, 61-62). Here again, the non-rational response to beauty develops into the love of reason.

In the framework of *mousike*, eros is a desire that sublimates. Sublimation is Halperin's preferred term to explain the developmental account of eros:

> "Those who consider sexuality a basic and irreducible element in human life treat philosophical eros as a redirected, sublimated form of sexual energy." (Halperin 1985, 98).

Halperin's employment of sublimation is psychological: sublimation describes the process of redirecting the object of desire.[84] Philosophical or rational eros is sublimated appetitive desire. Sublimation is produced by educating appetite's response to beauty.

In the *Republic*, the need for sublimation is moral. The desire for sex, excessive and mad, cannot be the adequate response to beauty, that is moderate and orderly (*Rep.* 402e3-403b4). To arrive at this conclusion, Socrates attributes a moral significance to beauty. Sex is dismissed as a response toward beauty because sex is vice, whereas beauty is the appearance of virtue. Socrates' puritan critique of appetitive eros does not propose repression. The philosopher acknowledges the desire for sex and argues it must be educated, not ignored. The lover may kiss, touch and be by the side of his beloved (403b6). Love of learning does not require of supressing appetitive eros, but of providing it with musical education (411c9-d4).

---

[84] This is the meaning of sublimation as coined by Freud. Sublimation is one of the possible vicissitudes of instincts. A sexual instinct or drive is sublimated when its satisfaction changes the object to a non-sexual one (Freud 1963, 91). The influence of culture or civilization is entailed in sublimation. The new means of satisfaction are socially or culturally valued. Thus, sublimation is frequently characterized as a process of ennoblement or embellishment of an instinct (Mijolla 2005, 1678-1679, Civitarese 2016, 1370-1371).

Likewise in the *Phaedrus,* rational eros calls for moderating the appetitive response to beauty. When the desire for sex is excessive, the lover forgets about the Forms. Reason's longing to ascend is counterweighted by appetite's sexual drive (253e6-254a9).[85] Erotic conflict occurs in the soul as a battle between reason and appetite in their responses to beauty (253e6-254e). The solution to the conflict is agreement (Werner 2012, 62, G. Ferrari 1990, 127, Nussbaum 1982, 105). Educated appetite switches the sexual response into a reverential attitude. When appetite concords with reason, the erotic ascent can take place: the soul remembers the Forms.

It may be argued that reason does not tame but repress appetite. This seems to be the case at some point in Socrates' palinode. The charioteer, corresponding to reason, pulls the bridle back making the black horse, appetite, bleed (255e3-6). However, the charioteer's harm to the black horse is incidental. It is a side-effect of the charioteer falling back in awe at the beloved's sight. The black horse is bleeding because the charioteer keeps longing the ascend in seeing the beloved: he cannot help experiencing the same feelings each time (254a1; 254e1-4). A subtle distinction stands between repression and sublimation.[86] Platonic eros does not repress but mould sexual desire, appetite's response to beauty. Erotic desire is not supressed but redirected, from physical beauty towards intelligible reality. The reorientation is erotic: reason desires the Forms.

Why eros? An appraisal of human finitude

So far, I have defended a developmental account of eros. In this reading, *Platonic* eros is the sublimation of non-rational responses to beautiful appearances. Love depends on the kind of composite soul existing in human beings only.[87] The non-rational soul, insofar appearance-ridden, is responsive to manifest beauty. When properly educated, its love of manifestations of beauty develops into the love of reason.

---

[85] This conflict is also described in the comparison between the uninitiated and initiated responses to beauty. The uninitiated, driven by a desire for sex, does not remember Beauty (250e1-4).

[86] In origin, both name distinct psychological phenomena. Repression and sublimation are different instinctual vicissitudes (Freud 1963, 91). Repressed instinct is unknown or unconscious to the subject. When repression is successful, the subject resists the instinct. The instinct, however, does not disappear. It remains unacknowledged, unconscious, and it grows "like a fungus", building different connections (Freud 1963, 104-115). Recall that sublimation entails a transformation, a reorientation of the instinct. The subject is conscious of the sublimated instinct and seeks for satisfaction.

There is an implication of the developmental reading I aim to unfold before turning to the means of erotic education. In this section I will argue that the developmental account finds an explanation for *Platonic* eros in human finitude. With human finitude I refer to embodied existence and the non-rational parts of the soul. The term finitude provides a description of humans as non-divine creatures. In doing so, it recounts *Platonic* eros as an exclusively human phenomenon. And it provides a satisfactory solution, I believe, to the problem of the need for eros.

"Why eros?" is a question that figures prominently in *Platonic* scholarship. The quest is sustained in two premises: (i) Platonic eros is, primarily, an epistemic orientation; (ii) Plato envisaged other ways of orientation toward wisdom. Is there anything specific to eros in comparison with these other epistemic summonses? (Obdrzalek 2022, 204, Sheffield 2017, 126)

Finitude as a reactive cause

Obdrzalek mentions two forms of epistemic orientation alternative to eros. What they both have in common, I shall argue, is their dependency on reason. One of them is the apparent denial of the principle of opposites. In *Republic* VII, Socrates explains to Glaucon how contradictory appearances lead reason to philosophy. When we perceive something to be at the same time big and small, or hard and soft, the intellect inquiries. If sense-perception denies the principle of opposites, then reason initiates a quest for knowledge (Rep. 523b1-524b5). The other instance appertains to the *Phaedo*. Socrates argues that reason recollects the Form of equality out of the sight of two equal sticks (74c-d). This recollection would serve as an orientation towards the pursuit of knowledge (Obdrzalek 2022, 204).

In both cases epistemic orientation begins in reason. Rational activity is incited by a perception, but in a negative manner. Because the perception is wrong, or uncomplete, reason is moved to inquiry, or to remembrance. Perception is counteracted by reason.

---

[87] Gods also have composite souls according to the *Phaedrus*: the winged chariot is the image to describe both divine and mortal souls. However, they do not coincide. The horses in the divine chariot are not the same as the ones in the human chariot (246a7-b1).

Psychologically speaking, the idealizing reading cannot tell eros apart from other orientations discussed. Reason is always the source. Finitude is not involved but dismissed. Finitude is reactive: it moves reason to refuse it.

The negative take on finitude is upheld by Obdrzalek in her response to "why eros?". She argued that human mortality is one of the reasons why eros differs from other epistemic orientations. Human mortality is "a deficiency" and imperfection (Obdrzalek 2022, 205; 207; 209). Likewise for Ferrari, human contingency is the explanation for *Platonic* eros.[88] But eros is as a means to cope, not to cherish, contingency (G. Ferrari 1990, 132; 137). The philosopher quarrels with contingency, because it hinders reason.[89] Overall, finitude is a privation that arouses eros (Werner 2012, 79-80).

There is plenty of textual evidence for the connection between desire and privation in *Platonic* erotica. In general, every desire entails a lack; to desire something, the object of desire must miss (*Rep*. 437c2-3; *Symp*. 202d1-3; 204a6-8). Reason's incompleteness is manifest in the desire for wisdom. This desire is what distinguishes the philosopher from the gods. Whereas the latter are already wise, the philosopher lacks wisdom (*Symp*. 204a1-3; b1-3). The gods inhabit intelligible reality, the philosopher only sometimes remembers the grasp he had of it (*Phaedr*.247c-248b). The desiring subject carries a lack. Although eros is good, it would have been better for mankind not to be deprived in the first place.

An appraisal of finitude

The negative value of finitude as a reactive cause is challenged by the developmental reading. Eros is an orientation that begins in the non-rational soul. Appetite and presumably spirit are responsive to physical beauty, thanks to what there is erotic ascent. Non-rational desire for the beautiful can develop into reason's love of wisdom. In eros, the non-rational soul plays a positive role as motivational centre. Insofar as it is responsive to beauty, appetite is conducive to epistemic and moral development: "we advance toward recollection and understanding by attending and pursuing our complex bodily/appetitive/emotional responses to the beautiful" (Nussbaum 1982, 100).[90] Erotic ascent incorporates non-rationality. Unlike other forms of orientation, love has the ability to integrate, rather than refuse, finitude.

---

[88] With contingency he mainly referred to human embodiment, including the non-rational soul, but also to materiality, encompassing physical beauty (G. Ferrari 1990, 123; 128).

[89] Contingency provokes epistemic limitations, like Socrates' use of myth, instead of logos, to explain the soul in the *Phaedrus* (G. Ferrari 1990, 125).

[90] Nussbaum includes spirit. I omit it not because I disagree with this inclusion, but because so far I have focused on appetite alone.

For this integration to happen an additional element is required. Appetitive sensitivity to beauty, when uneducated, produces a response unprofitable to reason. Excessive desire for sex, Socrates insists in different dialogues, does not develop into the love of wisdom (*Rep.* 402e1-403c2; *Phaedr.* 250e1-251a). Both desires stand in open contradiction, until the former is educated. In the *Republic*, the means to educate the non-rational response to beauty is *mousike*. To conclude, I shall argue that poetry provides an erotic education to appetite and, in doing so, becomes aligned with philosophy.

Platonic **erotic poetry**

> "Mustn't we, rather, *look for those craftsmen* [τοὺς δημιουϱγοὺς] whose good natural endowments make them *able to track down the nature of what is beautiful and graceful*, so that the young, dwelling as it were in a healthy place, will be benefited by everything; and from that place something of the beautiful works will strike their vision and their hearing, like a breeze bringing health from good places, and beginning in childhood, it will, without their awareness, with the beautiful speech [τῷ ϰαλῷ λόγῳ] bring them to likeness and friendship as well as accord?" (401c4-d3).

"Those craftsmen" encompass, primarily, poets (401b1-3). Socrates explains Glaucon that *mousike*, in order to provide moral education and contribute to reason's development, must imitate beauty. Good *Mousike* educates the "inmost part of the soul" (401d7) to love beauty. In loving beauty, the musical man becomes akin to "reasonable speech" (402a4). The philosopher grows out of the musical man. Socrates' reference to *eros* explains the psychological transition from non-rationality to reason. According to the developmental reading, Platonic *eros* begins by the perception of physical beauty. Epistemic ascent is accompanied by psychological ascent: from appearances to knowledge, and from appetite to reason.

Mousike is the means for erotic ascend (403c4-8). However, in his discussion of concrete poetry, Plato examines counterexamples. The parts of poetry quoted by Socrates are imitations of vice and corrupt the non-rational parts of the soul. Socrates' quotation ends in censorship. The reader of the *Republic* is thus left with a question unanswered: how would good poetry look like? The question can be rephrased in erotic terms. Insofar as good poetry educates appetite to love beauty, then the reader of the *Republic* misses an instance of erotic poetry. What is *Platonic* erotic poetry? I believe the answer to the question was provided by Plato himself. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates' palinode restored the value of love by a praise of madness in mythical form.[91]

The myth of the winged chariot is Socrates means, in the *Phaedrus*, to argue for the value of love. The winged chariot is an image Socrates employs to describe the soul. The soul is like a winged chariot that, in the case of human beings, lost its wings. This loss made humans fall from the heavens, where they were dwelling with the gods, to Earth, where they assume an embodied existence. Here on Earth, humans can recover their wings through eros. In the sight of the beloved, the lover regrows his wings:

> "(…) for on receiving the emanation of beauty through his eyes he [the lover] grows warm at the point at which the wing is naturally moistened, and on heating up it melts around its growth point, which, being long since closed up by hardening, prevented it from growing." (251b1-c1)

The value of love to the beloved is also psychological:

> "(…) so the stream of beauty passes back to the beautiful one through his eyes and having arrived at the natural inlet to the soul and arousing him, it waters the pathways of the feathers and both stimulates the growth of the wings and fills the soul of the loved one in his turn with love." (255c5-d2)

The psychological benefit of love is madness (Carson 1986, 202, Nussbaum 1982, 96-106). When the lover sees earthly beauty and his wings begin to grow, he "looks upward like a bird, and with no regard of what is below, is accused of being in a state of madness" (249d8-10). Madness is the average translation for the Greek μανία.[92] In Plato, μανία is the antonym of σωφροσύνη, translated as moderation, prudence, and self-control (241a2-a9). Madness is a form of excess, a loss of control. Human beings can be mad because they can lose control: as finite beings, they are subject to change (Carson 1986, 193-196). Madness depends on the non-rational parts of the soul (Nussbaum 1982, 99). Symptomatic of madness are excitement and excess, reactions typically attributed to spirit and appetite. The value of love, madness, incorporates non-rationality.

---

[91] This claim is inspired by Carson (Carson 1986, 202), and Nussbaum (Nussbaum 1982, 116-118)

[92] *Perseus Digital Library*. Ed. Gregory R. Crane. Tufts University. http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=mani%2Fas&la=greek&can=mani%2Fas0&prior=teta/rths&d=Perseus:text:1999.01.0173:text=Phaedrus:section=249d&i=1#lexicon (accessed January 12, 2023).

In using myth to praise eros as a species of mania, Socrates is accommodating content and form. Myth is speech in the form of image, or likeness. The myth of the winged chariot does not tell the soul as it is, but as it is like (*Phaedr.* 246a2-7). Why not just saying what the soul is? Because that is beyond human power, it would constitute a superhuman explanation (246a2). Saying what something is depends on acquaintance with the Forms. Saying what something is like depends on sense-perception and imagination. In their finite existence on Earth, human beings are alien to the Forms. For this reason they cannot say what something is, but they can say what something is like. Myth is the finite mode of discourse.

Notice that in Plato's account, myth is not stylistically defined. Rather than being a concrete form of recounting -e.g., in prose instead of verse; myth is an imitation. The connection with the realm of appearances is what matters in Plato's account of myth. As a likeness, or image of reality myth does not presuppose knowledge of the Forms. Although Socrates' palinode lacks the use of verse, it counts as poetry. Dependency on appearance and the use of stylistic resources to "colour each of the arts" are the defining features of poetry in the *Republic* (601a4-b1). Both occur in Socrates's erotic myth. The palinode puts appearance and rhetoric resources in the service of philosophy. It tells the story of a soul that regrows its wings through love and, in the companion of its beloved, ascends towards the Forms. The palinode is a colourful image addressing the non-rational parts of the soul.[93] It softens their response to beauty in alignment with reason. Through the palinode, poetry becomes philosophical.

---

[93] This claim has been argued for, but differently, by both Werner (2012) and Nussbaum (1982).

Conclusions: when poetry becomes philosophical, and philosophy becomes poetical

> "When one genre enters into the text of another genre, it both acts and is acted upon." (Nightingale 2009, 5)

A revaluation of poetry occurs in Platonic erotica. Poetry, an image or likeness of the sensible world coloured by rhythm and harmony, is *logos* when *eros* is concerned. Socrates' banished poets from the ideal state in the name of reason; he calls them back to educate *eros*. Poetry's paedeutic role, as envisioned in the *Republic*'s discussion of *mousike,* accommodates the appetitive erotic drive to beauty. The *Phaedrus* shows how through Socrates' palinode.

This thesis began in the strife between philosophy and poetry. Departing from the dominant reading, it does not aim to carry on the opposition amidst both *logos* but to find an agreement. Instead of asking why poetry is a philosophical problem, it wonders how poetry is reconcilable with philosophy. Why does Socrates want poets to return to the ideal city? Because poetry can serve as a paedeutic tool for the appetitive part of the soul. Poetic education of appetite attunes the erotic drive to the Form of Beauty.

To develop this argument, I have proposed an inquiry through Plato's *paideia*, psychology, and *erotica* mostly in the *Republic*, eventually referring to the *Phaedrus*. Conceiving poetry as part of *mousike* has been the first step toward a reassessment. In pursuing this musical account, I have argued that poetry supplies an education for appetite. An education ending in the love of beauty (*Rep*. 403c6-7): Socrates' claim is the concern of the last two chapters. The revaluation concludes in an erotic description of poetry as a means to direct appetite toward beauty. Platonic *eros* reassesses poetry, becoming a vanishing point for the strife with philosophy. In Socrates' palinode, both *logos* concur.

❖

Is Plato's revaluation of poetry tendentious? In the palinode, Socrates utilizes poetry[94] for a philosophical purpose; to guide love toward wisdom. Plato's revaluation seems to instrumentalize poetry for the benefit of philosophy.[95]

In the process of appropriating poetry, however, Plato transforms philosophy. Instead of arguing for the value of *eros*, Socrates tells a myth. The lover grows wings in his soul when seeing his beloved. A sudden warmth melts the wax and with painful pleasure the feathers begin to show. The charioteer battles the black horse, pulling the bridle back to ascend towards the Forms, prompting blood in the horse's teeth. Above, divine chariots ride around the sphere that lies beyond the heavens, each god followed by their fellow human souls. On Earth, a rushing stream of water flows into the beloved's gaze, causing him to correspond his lover's passion. The vividness of Socrates' images puts the reader in a state of *enthousiasmos*. Charmed by the written words, the reader turns the page with a conviction to seek out for wisdom, and a feeling of delight in having found something already. Without delight in the text there would not be a desire for wisdom.

---

[94] I mean poetry in the sense adduced, namely an image or likeness of the sensible world coloured by rhythm and harmony. Socrates' palinode is not in verse, but that is not relevant to the Platonic account.

[95] The argument can be found in Werner's reading of the *Phaedrus*. Plato would have instrumentalised poetry to legitimize philosophy (Werner 2012, 262).

Plato was a poet before becoming a philosopher (D.L. III, 5). In the *Phaedrus*, the progression is disrupted: the philosopher remembers how to make poetry. I take this alternance of *logos* to indicate a path. It is not a new path: the plea for multiple truths, multiple reasons and multiple speeches has been carried out for some time now. The history of western philosophy is not regarded as the place to find this multiplicity. It is rather perceived, and dismissed, as a continuing enterprise to monopolize *Logos*. I have stumbled upon this suspicion myself many times in persevering to understand the history of western philosophy. In the end, the inquiry has paid the effort. Plato's *Phaedrus,* an alternative speech where speeches alternate, is happily my point of arrival. Ought not to be incidentally a dialogue about love.

"Eros the melter of limbs (now again) stirs me—
sweetbitter unmanageable creature who steals in." (Fr. 130)[96]

---

[96] Translated by Anne Carson (Carson 2002, 264-265).

Bibliography

Annas, Julia. 1981. *An Introduction to Plato's Republic.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Arruzza, Cinzia. 2019. "The tyranny of Eros and the Tyrannical Man's Appetites." In *A wolf in the city: Tyranny and the Tyrant in Plato's Republic*, 139-184. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Asmis, Elizabeth. 2022. "Plato on Poetic Creativity: A Revision." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, edited by David Ebrey and Richard Kraut, 328-358. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barney, Rachel. 2008. "Eros and Necessity in the Ascent from the Cave." *Ancient Philosophy 28* 1-16.

Bloom, Allan. 2016. *The Republic of Plato* . New York: Basic Books.

Bourgault, Sophie. 2012. "Music and pedagogy in the platonic city ." *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 59-72.

Büttner, Stefan. 2011. "Inspiration and Inspired Poets in Plato's Dialogues." In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 111-131. Leiden: BRILL.

Carone, Gabriela Roxana. 2001. "Akrasia in the Republic: Does Plato Change his Mind?" *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* XX: 107-148.

Carson, Anne. 1986. *Eros the bittersweet.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

—. 2002. *If not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho.* New York: Random House.

Civitarese, Giuseppe. 2016. "On Sublimation." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 1369-1392.

Colli, Giorgo. 1975. *El nacimiento de la filosofía.* Barcelona: Tusquets Editor.

Collobert, Catherine. 2011. "Poetry as flawed reproduction: possession and mimesis." In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 41-63. Leiden: BRILL.

Cooper. 1984. "Plato's Theory of Human Motivation ." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 3-21.

Crawford, Donald. 2005. "Kant." In *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, by Berys Gaut & Dominic Mclver Lopes, 51-65. London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis .

Derrida, Jacques. 1975. "La Farmacia de Platón." In *La diseminación.* Madrid: Fundamentos.

Destrée, Pierre. 2011. "Plato on Tragic and Comic Pleasures." In *Plato on Art and Beauty* , by Dunham.

Dettiene, Marcel. 1983. *Los Maestros de la Verdad en la Grecia Arcaica.* Barcelona: Taurus.

Dover, Kenneth. 1974. "Oneself and Others." In *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle.*

Elsner, Jás. 2013. "Paideia: Ancient Concept and Modern Reception ." *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 136-152.

Ferrari. 2007. "The Three-Part Soul." In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*, 165-201. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferrari, G.R.F. 1990. *Listening to the Cicadas. A study of Plato's Phaedrus.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferrari, G.R.F. 1989. *Plato and Poetry.* Vol. 1, in *The Cambridge HIstory of Literary Criticism*, edited by George A. Kennedy, 92-149. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Freud, Sigmund. 1963. *General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology.* Macmillan Publishing Company: New York.

Gammel, Inga R. 2015. "The Beautiful, the Good, and the True: Plato's Philosophy of Beauty." In *The Power of Beauty: On the Aesthetics of Homer, Plato, and Cicero*, 67-107. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.

González, Francisco J. 2011. "The hermeneutics of madness: poet and philosopher in Plato's Ion and Phaedrus." In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 93-111. Leiden: BRILL.

Griswold, Charles L. 2020. "Plato on Rhetoric and Poetry." In *The Standford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/plato-rhetoric/.

Halliwell, Stephen. 2011. "Antidotes and Incantations: Is There a Cure for Poetry in Plato's Republic?" In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 241-267. Leiden: BRILL.

—. 2002. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Halperin, David. 1990. *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love.* London: Routledge.

Halperin, David. 1985. "Platonic Eros and What Men Call Love." *Ancient Philosophy 5* 161-204.

Hamlyn. 1958. "Eikasia in Plato's Republic." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 14-23.

Havelock, Eric A. 1963. *Preface to Plato.* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Heidegger, Martin. 2002. *Interpretaciones Fenomenólgicas sobre Aristóteles.* Madrid: Trotta.

Herrmann, Fritz-Gregor. 2011. "Poetry in Plato's Gorgias." In *Plato and the poets*, edited by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 21-41. Leiden: Brill.

Hobbs, Angela. 2000. *Plato and the Hero.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2008. «The Question of Beauty in the Phaedrus.» En *Plato and the Question of Beauty* , de Drew Hyland. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Irwin, Terence. 1977. *Plato's Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kahn, Charles. 1987. "Plato's Theory of Desire." *The Review of Metaphysics* 77-103.

Kokkiou, Chara. 2020. *Erôs, Song, and Philosophy in Plato.* London: Lexington Books.

Konstan, David. 2013. "Between Appetite and Emotion, or Why Can't Animals Have Erôs?" In *Erôs in Ancient Greece*, by Ed Sanders, Chiara Thumiger, Christopher Carey and Nick Lowe. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kosman, Aryeh. 2010. “Beauty and the Good: Situating the Kalon.” *Classical Philology 105* 341-362.

Kosman, Aryeh. 2014. “Platonic Love.” In *Virtues of Thought: Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, 27-42. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Laercio, Diógenes. 2013. *Vida y opiniones de los filósofos ilustres.* Translated by Carlos García Gual. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Lear, Gabriel Richardson. 2011. “Mimesis and the Psychological Change in Republic III.” In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Hermann, 195-217. Leiden: BRILL.

Lear, Gabriel Richardson. 2006. “Plato on Learning to Love Beauty .” In *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, 104-125. Blackwell Publishing.

Lear, Gabriel Richardson. 2020. “Plato on Why Human Beauty is Good for the Soul.” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 57: 25-64.

Lear, Jonathan. 1992. “Inside and outside the "Republic".” *Phronesis* 184-215.

Lorenz, Hendrik. 2006. *The Brute Within* . Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marušič, Jera. 2011. “Poets and Mimesis in the Republic.” In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Frietz-Gregor Herrmann, 217-241. Leiden: BRILL.

McNeill, David N. 2001. “Human Discourse, Eros, and Madness in Plato's Republic.” *The Review of Metaphysics* 235-268.

Mijolla, Alain de. 2005. *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis.*

2012. “Philosophy and Poetry.” In *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, by Miller. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Moravcsik, Julius. 1982. “Noetic Aspiration and Artistic Inspiration.” In *Plato on beauty, wisdom, and the arts*, by Julius Moravcsik and Philip Temko, 29-46. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld.

Moreau, Nina Valiquette. 2017. “Musical mimesis and political ethos in Plato's Republic.” *Political Theory* 192-215.

Moss, Jessica. 2008. “Appearances and calculations: Plato's division of the soul .” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy XXXIV* 35-68.

Moss, Jessica. 2011. “Art and Ethical Perspective: Notes on the Kalon in Plato's Laws.” In *Plato on Art and Beauty*, by Allison Denham, 205-220.

Moss, Jessica. 2006. “Pleasure and illusion in Plato .” *Philosophy and Phenomenlogical Research* 503-535.

Most, Glenn W. 2011. “What Ancient Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry?” In *Plato and the Poets*, edited by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 1-21. Leiden: Brill.

Murdoch, Iris. 1976. *The fire and the sun* . Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Murray and Wilson. 2004. “Introduction: Mousike, not Music.” In *Music and the Muses: the Culture of Moursike in the Classical Athenian City*, by Penelope Murray and Peter Wilson, 1-9. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Murray, Penelope. 2008. *Plato on Poetry* . Cambridge: Cambirdge University Press.

Murray, Penelope. 2004. “The Muses and their Arts.” In *The Culture of Mousike in the Classical Athenian City*, by Murray and Wilson, 365-390. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nehamas, Alexander. 2007. “Beauty of Body, Nobility of Soul: The Pursuit of Love in Plato's Symposium.” In *Maieusis: Essays in Ancient Philosophy in Honor of Myles Burnyeat*, by D. Scott, 97-134. Oxford.

Nehamas, Alexander. 1988. “Plato and the Mass Media.” *The Monist* 71 (2): 214-234.

Nehamas, Alexander. 1982. “Plato on imitation and poetry in Republic 10.” In *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom and the Arts*, edited by Julius Moravcsik and Philip Temko, 47-79. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1999. *The birth of tragedy* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nightingale, Andrea. 2009. *Genres in dialogue. Plato and the construct of philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nightingale, Andrea. 2015. “Sight and the Philosophy of Vision in Classical Greece.” In *Sight and the Ancient Senses*, by Michael Squire, 54-68. London: Routledge University Press.

Noel-Baker, Irene. 2008. *From Plato's Phaedrus: of Love and Knowledge.* Aldeburgh: The Aldeburgh Bookshop.

Nussbaum, Martha. 1982. “"This story isn't true": Poetry, Goodness, and Understanding in Plato's Phaedrus.” In *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*, 79-121. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld.

—. 1986. *The fragility of goodness.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Obdrzalek, Suzanne. 2022. “Why Eros?” In *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, edited by David Ebrey and Richard Kraut, 202-232. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Osborne, Catherine. 1994. *The bow in the clouds.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Pappas, Nickolas. 2012. “Plato on Poetry: Imitation or Inspiration?” *Philosophy Compass* 669-678.

Partee, Morriss Henry. 1970. “Plato's Banishment of Poetry.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 29 (2): 209-222.

Paxson, Thomas. 1985. “Art and Paideia.” *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 67-78.

Pelosi, Francesco. 2010. “Musical education of sensibility .” In *Plato on Music, Soul and Body*, by Francesco Pelosi, 14-68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pettersson, Olof. 2013. *A Multiform Desire.* Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet.

Plato. 1975. *Ion.* Translated by W.R.M. Lamb. Vol. VIII. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press: Loeb Classical Library.

—. 2022. *Lysis, Symposium, Phaedrus.* Translated by William Preddy Chris Emlyn-Jones. Vol. III. Massachussets: Harvard University Press: Loeb Classical Library.

—. 1995. *Phaedrus.* Translated by Alexander Nehamas & Paul Woodruff. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publising Company.

—. 2005. *Republic X.* Translated by S. Halliwell. Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Platón. 2020. *Diálogos III. Fedón, Banquete, Fedro.* Translated by Marcos Martínez Hernández, Emilio Lledó Carlos García Gual. Barcelona: Gredos.

—. 2020. *Diálogos IV. La República* . Translated by Conrado Eggers Lan. Barcelona: Gredos.

Racionero, Quintin. 1991. *El Discurso de los Reyes.* Madrid: Ediciones Complutense.

Reeve. 2011. "Plato on Begetting in Beauty." In *Plato on Art and Beauty*, by Denham.

Renaut, Olivier. 2013. "Challenging Platonic Eros: The Role of Thumos and Philotimia in Love." In *Eros in Ancient Greece*, 95-110. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reydams-Schils, Gretchen. 2011. "Myth and Poetry in the Timaeus." In *Plato and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 349-361. Leiden: BRILL.

Robb, Kevin. 1994. *Literacy & Paideia in Ancient Greece.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scott, Dominic. 2011. "Plato, poetry and creativity ." In *Planto and the Poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann, 131-155. Leiden: BRILL.

Sheffield. 2017. "Eros and the pursuit of Form." In *Plato's Symposium: A Critical Guide*, by Pierre Destrée and Zina Giannopoulou, 125-141. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Singpurwalla, Rachel. 2011. "Soul Division and Mimesis in Republic X." In *Plato and the poets*, by Pierre Destrée and Fritz-Gregor Hermann, 283-298. Leiden: BRILL.

Sushytska, Julia. 2012. "On the Non-Rivalry Between Poetry and Philosophy: Plato's Republic." *Mosaic* 45 (1): 55-70.

Todorov, Tzvetan. 1990. *Genres in Discourse.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Urmson, James O. 1982. "Plato and the poets." In *Plato on beauty, wisdom and the arts*, edited by Julius Moravcsik and Philip Temko, 125-137. Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld.

Werner, Daniel S. 2012. *Myth and Philosophy in Plato's Phaedrus.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilberding, James. 2012. "Curbing one's appetite in Plato's Republic." In *Plato and the Divided Self*, by Rachel Barney, Ted Brennan and Charles Brittain, 128-150. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Woerther, Frédérique. 2008. "Music and the education of the soul in Plato and Aristotle: homoeopathy and the formation of character." *The Classical Quarterly* 89-103.

Wohl, Victoria. 2004. "Dirty Dancing: Xenophon's Symposium." In *Music and the Muses: The Culture of Mousike in the Classical Athenian City*, by Penelope Murray and Peter Wilson, 337-365. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2004. “Tercer Libro de Viaje.” In *El Nacimiento de la Filosofía en Grecia*, by Teresa Oñate y Zubía. Madrid: DYKINSON.