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The Rhetoric of Authenticity in Plato's *Hippias Major*

Jacques Antoine Duvoisin

Bakhtin's remarks on the generic proximity of the Socratic dialogues to the novel are a reminder of the fact that the Platonic dialogues are philosophical *narratives*. [1] The significance of this fact is not diminished by Parmenides' earlier exploration of the possibility of a philosophical narrative in the epic register. With Plato, philosophy moves into a new narrative register, working through a domestic landscape that would become characteristic of Middle and New Comedy. We leave behind the standard imagery of epic heroism: the chariot, the journey, and the mysterious warning of the goddess. Plato's Socrates introduces us to the world of the pot and the ladle, the craftsman and the merchant, but also the maiden of ambiguous circumstances, the wayward son, and the negligent father. The serio-comic [*spoudogeloion*] affiliation is not an accidental feature of Platonic philosophizing that can be attributed to a passing fashion or restricted to a "Socratic" period in Plato's early development. Above all, it is not merely a literary accident in an otherwise theoretically organized text. As Bakhtin points out, the recognizable generic conventions of comedy, the popularizing effect of vulgar speech and, above all, laughter, are precisely what make the sober scientific posture of philosophical theory possible (25):

> Socratic laughter (reduced to irony) and Socratic degradations (an entire system of metaphors and comparisons borrowed from the lower spheres of life--from tradespeople, from everyday life, etc.) bring the world closer **[End Page 363]** and familiarize it in order to investigate it fearlessly and freely.

The comic element of the narrative told by the dialogues decisively shapes what we take to be philosophically significant in them. The dialectical method itself, with its insistence on analogizing "the lower spheres of life," constantly returns philosophical reflection to the recognizable motifs of comedy. Nor is it merely the content of the analogies which links dialectic to comedy. The assumption that a system of metaphors can be dialectically constructed, that an apparently limitless series of analogical substitutions is always available to test the validity of philosophical reflection, is itself comic. More precisely, when we run up against the limits of the dialectical series--as so often happens in the aporetic dialogues--and the failure of this assumption becomes apparent, the project of philosophical reflection shows itself to be essentially comic.

Philosophical narrative forces philosophy to confront all that is inauthentic in it. The very fact that the Platonic dialogues tell a story at all calls into question the traditional emphasis on the results of philosophical reflection by focusing attention on the approach to such insights, on the context in which reflection is undertaken, and on all the scenery along the way. But the dialectical impetus toward comedy ensures that the narrative emphasis of the dialogues highlights the failures of theoretical reflection rather than its successes. The act of telling the story anticipates the failure of the event it is intended to narrate. For generic reasons, we might say, philosophy cannot tell the tale in which the authority of knowledge is achieved. However, it is able to devote considerable attention to describing the predicament of knowledge in its inauthentic moments, when someone is shown not to know what he was presumed to know. Inauthenticity is central to philosophical comedy in linguistic terms as well, since dialectic employs "inauthentic" language, i.e., metaphor, but also because the larger narrative is organized around specific metaphors and other assorted figures of speech. The intrusion of metaphor and related forms of inauthenticity--whether understood in linguistic, epistemological, or ultimately in philological terms--into these philosophical texts responds to a strictly generic necessity.

But if the comic structure of the dialogues draws the action away from "heroic" depictions of achieved philosophical knowledge and toward the ignoble failure of reflection, comedy also requires that there be a happy ending. In true comic form, the dialogues must show that even though we **[End Page 364]** are denied the knowledge we thought crucial, what we end up with is somehow better and more useful. In a typical plot of New Comedy, a father and son are at odds over whom the son should marry, the daughter of a family of desirable social position or the apparently lowborn woman the son actually happens to love. Although the conflict threatens to force a reflection that would challenge the social values governing each choice, both sides are spared the effort when the son's beloved is revealed at the last minute to be the long lost daughter of a suitably placed family. The desire of each side is satisfied, but only after it has been converted into its opposite. The dialogues often tell a similar story, usually as an allegory for a dilemma in the attempt to employ philosophical insight in practical terms. These stories usually concern a father figure, one who is characteristically absent, and depict the struggle to appropriate the father's authority. We can recognize this as the explicit narrative content of the *Euthyphro*, the *Hippias Minor,* and the *Protagoras*, and as the implicit content of the *Republic*. In each text, the authority of a father figure has been challenged and Socrates is invited to adjudicate, only to find that the father's authority remains elusive. In this way, each dialogue reveals the limits of theoretical discourse, whether in the form of an aporia concerning piety, or a paradox concerning the *polutropos*, or in the acknowledged inaccessibility of the idea of the good, which remains somehow "beyond being." It is a happy ending, however, when the exposition of the figurative elusiveness of paternal authority turns out to be more useful in practical terms than the actual possession of the authority itself would have been. To know that one cannot know is a useful antidote to the dangerous assumption that one already knows.

Though the rhetorical organization of the problem of authenticity in the Platonic dialogues is recognizably comic in form, the investigation of that organization is not simply a literary matter. This thematic inauthenticity is philosophically significant, and thereby embroils philosophical interpretation in the problem of interpreting inauthentic discourse in all its forms, i.e., as metaphor, or narrative, or allegory, or finally as text. It is a distinctly comic irony that the dialogues must be read as comedies to be understood as philosophy, while they must be read philosophically to be appreciated as comedy. With this irony in mind, I propose to examine a specific dialogue in terms of the rhetorical structure of authoritative insight and its failure. This will produce a rhetoric of authenticity (or inauthenticity, since rhetoric always concerns the inauthentic). The *Hippias Major* enjoys a certain privilege as a specimen of the comic tendency of the Platonic dialogues, not **[End Page 365]** least because its authenticity, understood in the narrow sense of authorship, has occasionally been disputed. The debate over the origins of the *Hippias Major* has included considerations of stylistic consistency, as well as the compatibility of its account of the beautiful with what is known of the mature theory of ideas. But it will not escape our notice that the dialogue has also been called into question precisely because it is comic. [2] The authenticity debate has died down in recent years, especially following Paul Woodruff's forceful argument for its inclusion in the Platonic corpus, although also in part because the stylistic and content-based evidence against it is not sufficiently compelling to merit an absolute rejection. [3] No decisive resolution has been achieved, nor is the sort of evidence that might make such a resolution possible ever likely to emerge. Like the "bastard" writing Socrates decries in the *Phaedrus*, the *Hippias Major* is unable either to establish its lineage decisively or to escape the question of its birth. As a rhetorical observation, it is worth noting that textual authenticity, like intellectual authority, typically finds expression in a figure of the father. To ask about the origin of a text is, in many ways, to ask about the validity of its claim to the name of its putative father.

We know from the subtitle that the *Hippias Major* is about the beautiful: it asks the question "what is the beautiful?" and works through several possible answers, none of which is found to be satisfactory, although one of them--the beneficial--is compatible with conclusions found elsewhere among the mature dialogues. [4] As a treatise on the beautiful, there is nothing in the text to discourage us from asking whether Plato in fact wrote it. But if we put aside the testimony of the subtitle and consider the narrative movement of the text, it soon becomes clear that the *Hippias Major* is not about the beautiful, or at least it is not a treatise about the beautiful. The text relates a conversation in which Socrates attempts to undermine a certain reputation for educational authority claimed by Hippias. The seemingly innocent question concerning the beautiful is only one of several devices Socrates uses to attack Hippias and, as we shall see, it is one he is apparently reluctant to use. For his part, Hippias understands the stakes in this struggle and responds in kind by trivializing the question of the beautiful and ridiculing dialectical hair-splitting. Just as Socrates is anxious to discredit Hippias as an educator, Hippias is anxious to show that **[End Page 366]** there is an easy answer to Socrates' seemingly profound aporia. The sophist

literally cannot afford to allow any such profound difficulties to stand or to admit that he is unable to answer any question.

From a rhetorical perspective, the problem of authenticity reveals its full significance once it becomes clear that the authority at stake in the dialogue is primarily figurative. Hippias' success as a sophist depends in part on his ability to manipulate the figure of paternal authority, to present himself as a suitable substitute for the traditionally sanctioned figure of educational authority. Thus, in the display speech he uses to showcase his talents, Hippias imagines himself *figuratively* as a father on an epic scale, both to his students and to the city that would leave the education of its children to men like him, in order to seize that authority *literally* in the form of wealth and reputation. Socrates attempts to ridicule Hippias' pretensions in this direction and to suggest subtly the inappropriateness of that figure as an image of sophistic education. When Hippias emerges unscathed from the initial attack, Socrates lures him into a dialectical investigation of the beautiful designed to expose his inability to provide truly educational answers. This investigation also details, on a figurative level, the literal inaccessibility of paternal authority to any educational project, including that implied by dialectic. The irony of the text is that in order to undermine Hippias' paternalistic pretensions, Socrates must carry out a more decisive critique of his own dialectical method than Hippias himself could ever have imagined.

I

In the *Hippias Major*, the question "what is the beautiful" arises from, and terminates in, an aporia concerning the possibility of praise. But the fact of this aporia suggests a paradox: if Socrates is perplexed about the beautiful, how are we to interpret the praise heaped on Hippias at the outset? The extravagant greeting, "Hippias, beautiful and wise," [5] initiates a complex movement of criticism that is not resolved until the revelation that Hippias has made no money at all in Sparta. Socrates' greeting is meant to suggest that Hippias has achieved a new synthesis. He is the embodiment of "what it is to be a truly wise and perfect man" (281b 5). Socrates goes so far as to suggest that Hippias' wisdom represents an advance over the ancient wise men, like Pittacus, Bias, Thales, and Anaxagoras, because unlike **[End Page 367]** them, his wisdom is useful in both the private and the public spheres. As Hippias himself is quick to point out, it has made him rich--richer "than any other two sophists together" (282e 8). This wisdom, and no doubt his facility with words, has also led to his being selected as an envoy for Elis. According to Hippias, his city chooses him because he is thought to be "the ablest judge and messenger of the words that are spoken by the several cities" (281b 1). In this way, he overcomes the image of practical foolishness stereotypically associated with the "wise."

The irony of these remarks is signalled by the invocation of Pittacus, Bias, and Thales as examples of useless wisdom, men who would have been remembered by a contemporary audience as much for their versatility in political or economic matters as for their "wisdom." A different sort of irony attends the name of Anaxagoras, whose trial on charges of impiety might suggest the political naiveté Socrates and Hippias have in mind. But since in all likelihood the trial was a political intrigue directed at Anaxagoras' close friend Pericles, it also serves as a reminder of his proximity to the reality of Athenian political power. The irony is reinforced later when Socrates recalls the old story that Anaxagoras had lost a large inherited fortune, and then invites Hippias to interpret this as a sign that his wisdom must have been particularly *anoêta* (283a). The pun suggests how little Hippias actually knows about the ancients he claims to have surpassed so decisively.

This treacherous invocation of a superseded tradition of wisdom is a satire directed at Hippias for failing to notice anything amiss in the comparison. But more than this, the comparison itself is of interest precisely because it links Hippias to the figure of a commonly recognized tradition, "those men of old whose names are called great in respect to wisdom" (281c). The image of a tradition introduces the related notions of history and genealogy as part of the project of measuring oneself against one's origins. The sophist is unable to take part in a traditional line of inheritance, since anything received from the past would restrict his ability to manipulate current opinion. At the same time, however, Hippias is anxious to wear the mantle of tradition, to assume its authority, even as he relegates its real achievements to the distant past. [6] **[End Page 368]**

To bring out the peculiarity of Hippias' relation to tradition, Socrates immediately expands the comparison by an analogy to sculpture which purports to show that the famous men of the past will always appear ridiculous in relation to their modern counterparts (282a 1-4):

> Then, Hippias, if Bias were to come to life again now, he would be a laughingstock in comparison with you, just as the sculptors say that Daedalus, if he were to be born now and were to create such works as those from which he got his reputation, would be ridiculous.

The overall tenor of this remark parodies the presumption that the mere passage of time, apart from any consideration of specific advances in the art, generates progress, as though by some coercive, natural law. But its most striking feature is the intrusion of the legendary figure of Daedalus into an otherwise historically organized analogy (Bias : Hippias :: Daedalus : modern sculptors). On the surface, this peculiar analogy suggests Hippias' willingness to accept any praise, no matter what absurdity it may entail. He is not deterred by the historical inaccuracies concerning the ancient wise men, or even the apparent categorical anomaly involved in comparing a legendary figure to actual historical individuals. But it also suggests that, for Socrates, the activity of praise has been pushed beyond some limit. It has become transgressive because it no longer recognizes the difference between history and myth, or between animate and inanimate. The invocation of Daedalus is indeed a transgression, although not for that reason a logical fallacy: this intrusion disrupts the rhetorical as opposed to the logical register of the conversation, and therefore must be analyzed in rhetorical terms. Daedalus is more than just a figure for ingenuity or creativity. He is also the crafty father and the inventive trickster and, as such, a figure for what is elusive in paternal authority. But most of all, in this context, he is a figure for the very intrusion itself of figure into literal discourse, as we shall see in what follows.

The boast Socrates attributes to the sculptors in this remark invites a comparison to the works of Daedalus assigned to him by legend. These seem to be of three sorts. First, as a traditional figure for superhuman skill, Daedalus is often credited with the invention of various arts, including sculpture. Second, it was not unusual to attribute archaic works of forgotten origin to him. This occurs so commonly that he might easily be taken for a generic symbol of past art. Finally, he is credited with the creation of **[End Page 369]** "living statues." [7] Socrates' remark plays on all three of these associations. In the emptiest sense, Daedalus is a sign for the history of art, a past left behind by the achievement of the present. At the same time, the attempt to formulate a history indicates a desire for an account of an origin, especially one conceived on a grand scale so as to suggest the greatness of the subsequent tradition. Thus Socrates' sculptors flatter themselves with the bravura of having surpassed the skill of their legendary progenitor, the inventor of the art itself. Finally, the remark may allude to the growing interest in sculpture of monumental proportions in this period. To the extent that it limits statues to more or less life size, the ideal of the living statue would be unsuitable for sculptors interested in building colossal images of the gods and heroes.

This complex set of allusions reproduces figuratively the rhetorical structure of Hippias' dismissal of traditional wisdom by comparing it to a similar gesture on the part of the modern sculptors. The choice of sculpture as the vehicle of this comparison is by no means accidental. Like other arts, sculpture represents one object by another, a gesture akin to metaphorical substitution: a statue is a figure of sorts for the god or hero represented by it. But the traditional attribution of the invention of sculpture to Daedalus has in mind the substitution of an inanimate object for an animate one as the typical figural gesture of sculpture. On the surface, the legend of the living statue is a way of magnifying the genius of the original sculptor. But in this context, the image of the living statue describes what we might call the rhetorical organization of the art of sculpture, its tendency toward a certain kind of substitution. In rhetorical terms, crossing over the distinction between animate and inanimate is known as *prosopopoeia*. The etymology of this word suggests the making of faces or masks (perhaps theatrical masks). It refers to the poetic gesture of giving a voice to the absent, the inanimate, or the dead, and is often a way of letting the past speak in the present. Sculpture is prosopopoetic since, even though its statues are silent, as "masks" they give presence and a kind of voice to the gods and heroes.

In the original comparison, the intrusion of Daedalus recapitulates the rhetorical gesture of sculpture, but with disturbing results. To invoke Daedalus as the inventor of sculpture is to offer a legendary figure in place of the unknown origin, or to provide a human face to fill the place of the **[End Page 370]** absent origin. But as a *prosopopoeia* for the origin of sculpture, the legend of Daedalus is also an account of the figurative organization of the art, rather than a literal chronicle of its development or history. It purports to explain the prosopopoetic structure of sculpture by ascribing to the originator of the art a propensity for producing so-called living statues. In this respect, Daedalus is a prosopopoetic figure for the impossibility of a literal history of sculpture, since his trademark creation is the statue that dissimulates its own origin. The imaginary sculptors discover, in their attempt to locate a past by which

to measure their own achievements, that the origin recedes from them into more and more tantalizingly complex figural constructions. Daedalus is not just a figure for the origin of sculpture. He is also a figure for the inevitability of the withdrawal of that origin into figure. The attempt to present themselves as the culmination of a history founders because their history cannot avoid turning into a myth, and a myth that itself memorializes this very tendency.

We might wonder if this result is typical of invocations of paternal figures, especially when they are used to establish one's own authority. Daedalus is also a notable father figure, perhaps even a figure for paternity itself. Although his only son, Icarus, is killed during the winged escape from Crete, he is a figurative father in more than one sense. As the traditional father of sculpture, his position is secured not by the destiny of specific individual sons, but by the continuity and prestige of sculpture itself, generation through generation. He is also the father of the paradoxical living statues attributed to him, although this is a decidedly transgressive figure of paternity which threatens to confuse figurative and literal modes of speech. Finally, and most importantly for the purposes of this discussion, we learn in the *Euthyphro* that he is the father, in an extended sense, of Socrates, the ancestor from whom Socrates claims to inherit his peculiar conversational habits. In that dialogue, Socrates claims Daedalus as an ancestor to account for the propensity of the statements of others to change their meaning in the course of conversation with him: speeches uttered in his presence are like the statues that run away if they are not tied down. [8] This fanciful genealogy recalls the story that Socrates' father, **[End Page 371]** Sophroniscus, was a sculptor or stonemason and plays on the habit of attributing anything related to sculpture to an ultimate origin in Daedalus. But it also re-enacts the connection made in the analogy above in a way that suggests a general correlation between dialectic and the transgressive figure of the living statue, that is, the figure of *prosopopoeia*. As we shall see below, crossing the boundary between literal and figurative discourse is an inevitable characteristic of dialectic.

As a figure for dialectic, Daedalus suggests the peculiar rhetorical suspension of that procedure. Like the sculptors, Socrates engages in dialectic in order to attain a firm footing, in this case the intellectual footing of a definition. Later in the *Hippias Major*, he will seek that by which (by the presence or the addition of which) all beautiful things are beautiful. Dialectic appeals to a generalized procedure, recognizable in a more or less similar form in all the dialogues. But the inexorable result of dialectic in this dialogue is that Socrates only finds that the account he seeks retreats before him into ever more complex rhetorical configurations, each of which expresses the inevitability of the retreat itself. The theory of ideas emerges as a figure for the tendency of theoretical explanation to retreat into figurative accounts of this sort. Neither a specifically literal discourse, nor precisely figural, dialectic is somehow suspended between the two, just as Daedalus himself is a sign for the commingling of past and present, animate and inanimate, historical and legendary.

II

The figure of the father epitomizes the kind of authority at issue in questions of education. Hippias is aware of the importance of paternal imagery for his profession, since it involves literally taking over the educational duties traditionally assigned to the father. But even in more general terms, paternal imagery plays a special role in the professional activities of the sophist. The sophist's claim to intellectual authority depends upon his reputation for wisdom. For Hippias, that reputation is an **[End Page 372]** important tool for his technique, which consists in converting the existing content of public opinion, no matter how banal, into an authoritative pronouncement. But since public opinion is extremely unstable, this repackaging of opinion must be supplemented by another kind of reputation. It is efficacious only to the extent that it can be identified with a figure of unquestionable authority. As we shall see, the figure Hippias attempts to appropriate is that of the father. Socrates is also aware of the importance of this figure for Hippias and challenges his use of it.

In a contentious moment, Hippias boasts that he knows "the state of mind of all who are concerned with speeches" (301d 1, translation modified). Hippias' wisdom depends upon a special insight into the state of mind of his audience, an insight into the opinions they already hold. The sophist makes a business of recycling the content of that opinion under the aegis of his own reputation for wisdom. He transforms existing opinion into wisdom by a kind of consensus, and then enforces compliance by the threat of public ridicule. Since opposition will automatically take the form of heterodoxy, it can always be made to look ridiculous. The central precept of Hippias' insight into public opinion is the recognition that "money is of the greatest value" (282d 2). This is what the ancients failed to grasp and, according to Socrates' ironic praise, it is the chief advance of the new wisdom.

But it would be incorrect to say that Hippias is simply greedy. The possession of wealth, and the reputation it brings, is one of the tools of his profession. In order to retail to his audience what he knows it already believes, Hippias must be able to give it a stamp of authority. He takes advantage of the common association of wealth and wisdom to establish an atmosphere of authoritative discourse, and maintains it by constantly referring to how much money he has earned in various cities. The technique is circular, although by no means logically invalid. The circularity describes a closed economy of self-aggrandizement which ceaselessly trades the reputation of wealth for the reputation of wisdom and vice versa.

Hippias seems to recognize that the common association of wealth and wisdom is not a stable foundation for his authoritative reputation. Common opinion is fickle and has a short memory; it is in need of a supplement which Hippias is ready to provide. He sees that the wealthy, wise educator must in some sense also be a father to his students. Common opinion holds that the education of the son is the province of the father. If Hippias is going to supplant the natural father in this role, he must present himself as a credible replacement. He must appear "paternal." When **[End Page 373]** Socrates praises the other sophists, Protagoras, Gorgias, and Prodicus, Hippias insists that he has surpassed these traditional progenitors (282d 8-e 8):

> . . . once, when I went to Sicily, although Protagoras was staying there and had a great reputation and was the older, I, who was much younger, made in a very short time more than one hundred and fifty minas, and in one very small place, Inycus, more than twenty minas; and when I came home, I took this and gave it to my father, so that he and the other citizens were overwhelmed with amazement. And I pretty well think that I have made more money than any other two sophists together.

He has earned more money than his sophistic predecessors, but the comparison with the venerable Protagoras requires something more. To show that he is really wiser than his older colleague, and not merely more energetic, he must show that he is an equal as a father figure. He must stake a claim to the paternal position of authority within the sophistic tradition. It is not surprising, then, that when he returns home from Inycus the first thing he does is to bestow his earnings upon his own father. His father and the other citizens of Elis are "overwhelmed with amazement." But this is not the thoughtful gift of a dutiful son. It is intended precisely to overwhelm and amaze, to gain a reputation for filial beneficence, ultimately to usurp the traditional place of the father. With this endowment, Hippias reverses the normal direction of inheritance in order to invert the normal relationship between father and son. He becomes a "father" not by begetting a son, but by converting his father into his son.

Socrates recognizes the professional importance of paternal imagery to Hippias and makes it a target of his critique. Upon hearing how Hippias overwhelmed his father, and the citizens of Elis generally, with his generosity, Socrates quickly turns the conversation to Hippias' activities in Sparta (283b 6-8):

> But tell me this: at which of the cities that you go to did you make the most money? Or are we to take it that it was at Lacedaemon, where your visits have been most frequent?

[End Page 374]

The question is explicitly designed to attack Hippias' conflation of wealth and wisdom. But it is also intended to undermine his claim to paternal authority by juxtaposing it to the well-known Spartan revision of paternity. The Spartan reputation for *eunomia* counters the common association between wealth and wisdom: the well-governed city has no use for private education. Of course, Socrates knows full well that Hippias cannot have made any money there because the Spartan constitution is based upon its own unique program of public education. But if Sparta is truly well governed, its injunction against private education would be a powerful argument against Hippias, especially among the upper-class Athenians who would normally be his primary audience.

We should bear in mind that Socrates' depiction of Sparta as a well-governed city is, at best, a politically loaded proposition. *Eunomia* suggests the possession of good laws and customs, all leading to orderliness and discipline. But by the fifth century, it had also come to signify aristocratic rule, and was typically opposed to the *isonomia* of democratic rule. As such, it was a common marker for distinguishing between Sparta and Athens. [9] Many seemingly innocuous moral terms of this sort conceal

an ideological significance, in this case expressing an upper-class longing for the aristocratic past of Athens. When Socrates subsequently foists a surprisingly counterintuitive discussion of law upon Hippias, it plays upon his eagerness for praise, but also places him in an ideological bind. For if Hippias accepts the way out offered by Socrates, that the Spartans are "lawbreakers [*paranomous*]" (285b 5) in not allowing him to teach there, he places himself in ideological opposition to the aristocratic segment of Athenian society from which he would normally draw most of his students. [10] Hippias accepts this suspicious bit of reasoning only because it seems to conclude in his favor, although he does express some misgivings. [11]

But Socrates' question also aims at a critique of Hippias' figurative appropriation of the place of the father. Spartan society is organized around **[End Page 375]** a unique image of paternal influence and authority which would have been immediately recognizable to the Athenian aristocracy. We catch a glimpse of this second critique in Hippias' response, which attempts to deflect the force of the attack on his use of paternal imagery, as well as his earning power. He attributes the Spartan refusal to pay for his educational services to an unthinking acceptance of traditional laws and customs (284b 6-8):

> . . . it is not the inherited usage [*patrion*] of the Lacedae-monians to change their laws or to educate their children differently from what is customary.

The "inherited usage" indicates the troublesome influence of a patrimony which Hippias cannot appropriate. His remark attempts to conceal the force of Socrates' implied objection under the image of arbitrary usage: the law dictating public education is not the expression of an insight into the good of the city, but rather a holdover from the past with no particular bearing on current political reality. It is merely "customary." Hippias' ascription of an inherited intransigence regarding education is also meant to suggest that the figurative place of the father in Spartan society is vacant, that it has been abandoned. The arbitrary patrimony is a sign that the traditional father no longer concerns himself with these children. Paternal authority is no longer being exercised and, as a result, the society is at the mercy of anachronistic customs. The fondness of the Spartans for hearing about "genealogies of heroes and men . . . and, in short, about antiquity in general" (285d) might be taken to indicate a longing for paternal authority, or a feeling that something is lacking. In any event, this is precisely the situation Hippias proposes to fill, presenting himself to the Spartans as a figurative surrogate father.

In addition to highlighting the absurdity of Hippias' dismissal of Spartan educational practice as an arbitrary customary usage, Socrates' insistence on examining the nature of law and of the process of lawmaking [*nomon tithenai*] draws attention to another kind of figure associated with Spartan *eunomia*, namely that of the lawgiver [*nomothetês*]. The image of the well-ordered city is closely linked in Greek political thought to the figure of the lawgiver, who imposes new institutions all at once in order to bring a factious society to order. The Spartan Lycurgus is an example of such a figure. Although it is scarcely possible that the constitution of Sparta as it existed in the fifth and fourth centuries could have been the product of a single lawgiver, or even a single epoch, Lycurgus was commonly credited **[End Page 376]** with its institution. But even if the lawgiver represents a compression into legendary terms of a complex historical sequence of events, this figure is primarily of interest to us in rhetorical terms, as a permutation of the figure of the father. Of course, the lawgiver is a figurative father of the new political order, but he is also more than just a father figure. Often he is also a figure for the dissolution of the rights and responsibilities of paternity, for the transfer of paternal authority to the city. This aspect of the figure is especially prominent in the traditional attribution of Spartan political institutions to Lycurgus, since he is not simply a father figure for the Spartans, but rather a *surrogate* father figure. [12] He is a figure for the dissolution of natural paternity and its replacement by a system of civic paternal surrogacy embodied in the educational program he is supposed to have instituted. Although Spartan youth receive little actual instruction beyond physical training, they soon learn the meaning of discipline in a city full of surrogate fathers all equally willing to punish them. This system of communal surrogacy borrows authority from the actual, biological father and redistributes it across the city at large. The legend of Lycurgus suggests that the essence of the lawgiver's authority is that of a surrogate, and this is confirmed by the fact that his institutions are in themselves codified, systematic versions of the same surrogacy.

The arrival of the sophist in Sparta threatens to redistribute this educational authority literally and figuratively. This becomes apparent when Hippias describes a particularly well-received speech given as a demonstration during his last visit there, since it offers an alternative organization of the figure of paternal surrogacy. In the speech, Hippias imagines the handing down of ethical wisdom and recognizes

in it a version of the relationship of father to son, here represented by a grandfatherly sage and a fatherless orphan (286a-b).

> And the plan of the discourse, and its beginning, is something like this: after the fall of Troy, the story goes that Neoptolemus asked Nestor what the beautiful pursuits were by following which a young man would become most famous. So after that we have Nestor **[End Page 377]** speaking and suggesting to him very many lawful and most beautiful pursuits.

The speech depicts Nestor giving fatherly advice to the now fatherless Neoptolemus, thus permitting Hippias to display his wares for the Spartans. It invokes the content of epic heroism by casting Hippias as the surrogate for Achilles, a gesture bound to catch the attention of a warrior culture like Sparta. [13] In this way, the speech allows him to achieve what Spartan law prevents, namely the reputation of wisdom achievable elsewhere through the acquisition of wealth. At the same time, by placing him in the position of the father and educator, it puts him in direct competition with the established communal surrogacy of the Spartan constitution. It invites the Spartans to imagine an alternative form of education organized by Hippias under an epic aegis of surrogate paternity. In the speech, Hippias *figuratively* seizes paternal authority under the guise of the now legitimated figure of the surrogate.

When Hippias invites Socrates to hear the speech at an exhibition in Athens two days later, Socrates clearly finds the prospect disturbing. The figurative seizure of paternal authority will quickly translate into literal authority among the sons of an aristocratic class increasingly infatuated with all things Spartan. Thus Socrates is shrewdly and conveniently "reminded" of his aporia; the attempt to remedy it will take up the remainder of the conversation. The speech is no doubt also disturbing because it envisions sophistic educational ideals grafted onto a literary tradition which is itself already a questionable source of educational precepts for Socrates. It may also be significant that the rhetorical organization of Hippias' speech resembles educational projects outlined elsewhere in the Platonic corpus. The image of the surrogate father as teacher recalls the account in the *Seventh Letter* of Plato's failed attempt to educate Dionysius II, the young tyrant of Syracuse. In that case, Plato and Dion **[End Page 378]** function as surrogate father figures. Related sets of figures occur in discussions of education elsewhere in the dialogues, most notably in the communal redistribution of paternal rights envisioned in the *Republic*.

The aporia, and the discussion it introduces, is designed to undermine Hippias' claim to wisdom, as well as to paternal authority. Both claims depend upon the sophist's ability to represent his wisdom as a seamless whole, with easy answers for any question. Since the technique of recycling existing public opinion seeks only a visceral acceptance, it must discourage any profound examination of its own methods. To this end, it must present ready answers to all problems and suppress any lingering doubts. In short, it must resolve or conceal any aporia. By contrast, Socrates dwells upon his aporia, examining in detail the significance of his own seemingly intransigent ignorance. He is always prepared to admit his failure to achieve the decisive answers towards which he explicitly directs every conversation. At the same time, the dialectic uncovers a rhetorical structure in the failure of *both* Hippias' *and* Socrates' proposals similar to that of Socrates' invocation of the figure of Daedalus.

III

Socrates' invocation of an aporia is part of a strategy specifically designed to counter the threat posed by Hippias' new wisdom. But the aporia is a double-edged sword: although it conveniently serves to introduce a new style of discourse in which Hippias will be brought up short, it also reflects a genuine problem for Socrates' own thinking. In order to demonstrate what is wrong with the sophist's new wisdom, Socrates must reveal limitations built into the rhetorical structure of the dialectical method itself. Bakhtin argues that dialectic "familiarizes" the world through "an entire system of metaphors and comparisons" in order to make it into an object of investigation. [14] But because it manipulates logical alternatives on the basis of a *tropological* principle of substitution, dialectic proves incapable of formulating ultimate theoretical principles in non-metaphorical language. Dialectic can only discover the very rhetorical figures in terms of which it originally delimited its field of inquiry. But unlike other theoretical methods, it is able to discover the fact of this limitation. As a result, Socrates' aporia shows itself to be not a transitional phase, but a **[End Page 379]** permanent feature of the rhetorical structure of dialectic. It represents the intransigence of a metaphor which cannot be logically transcended.

Consider the terms in which Socrates announces his aporia

(286c-d):

> . . . you reminded me of the beautiful at just the right moment [*eis kalon*]. For recently, my most excellent friend, as I was finding fault with some things in certain speeches as ugly and praising other things as beautiful, a man threw me into confusion by questioning me very insolently somewhat after this fashion: "How, if you please, do you know, Socrates," said he, "what sort of things are beautiful and ugly? For, come now, could you tell me what the beautiful is?" And I, being of no account, was at a loss and could not answer him properly.

This aporia is unique among the "aporetic" dialogues primarily because it describes a past event. Socrates admits that he is currently in the grip of a recently incurred aporia concerning the beautiful. Usually the moment of confusion is itself an event within the action of the dialogue, even a tangible result of the conversation. In this case, however, the moment of aporia has already occurred, although it is not clear when. But once it becomes clear that the person who has caused this aporia is Socrates himself, no temporal limit can be specified for this aporia. Whether it is an expression of an inner conflict, or some other entirely imaginary event, it has in some sense always been the case. Moreover, despite the seriousness with which Socrates takes matters of ignorance and knowledge, this ignorance does *not* have as a consequence *any* hesitation on his part to speak about things with reference to the beautiful, to praise or to blame. His speech throughout the dialogue is peppered with expressions involving the word *kalos*, as it must be.

The practical truth about aporia seems to be that even though one is unable to answer questions like "what is the beautiful," this does not impinge upon everyday practice. It may have seemed at first that everyday praising and blaming depended upon some knowledge of the beautiful. But Socrates' account of his having been thrown into aporia ironically suggests the real independence of the human behavior of praising and blaming from theoretical questions like this one. Praise is possible, both correct and incorrect praise, without regard to knowledge of the beautiful. The same holds for false or ironic praise, as well as acted out praise. We recognize all **[End Page 380]** of these and more as examples of the behavior of praise. The same would apply to blame. The possibilities of human speech far exceed the regulatory capacity of genuine knowledge: they cannot be delimited in terms of the authority of knowledge. Woodruff correctly points out that Socrates "does not make definition prior to correct usage. . . . Socrates does not say or imply that a person cannot use [beautiful] correctly . . . without knowing what the [beautiful] is." [15] It is perfectly possible to have a "correct" opinion about what things are beautiful without in fact knowing in any scientific or systematic manner what makes them beautiful. Woodruff no doubt has in mind the objection that would attribute to Socrates the fallacy of making correct usage dependent upon prior knowledge, while refusing to recognize the ability to identify instances as evidence of such knowledge. [16]

At the same time, Woodruff is guarding against any reading that would suggest that Socrates is seeking, or concealing, a specific scientific insight into the beautiful, something that would imply a theory about the existence of things like the beautiful. There is good reason to refrain from attributing to Socrates, or Plato, the claim that correct usage depends upon knowledge in the strong sense. Within specific contexts, where certain knowledge would make a decisive difference, the establishment of a criterion for judgement would seem to be indispensable. [17] But in everyday usage, in the conversation of fellow citizens concerning the important issues of the day, a rough and ready understanding of the meaning of this word is both possible and even inevitable. In the case of someone who professes expertise or who regularly decides controversial cases, something more is required. The scenarios of the early dialogues typically play upon this sentiment. It is shocking to find out that generals do not know what courage is, that a divine does not know what piety is, to imagine that a **[End Page 381]** future tyrant had no idea what temperance is, or that a future turncoat did not know what virtue is, and so on. In a similar vein, it should be equally striking that Socrates does not know what the beautiful is.

In this respect, it is not enough to point out that Socrates does not claim that correct usage depends upon prior knowledge, or that he thinks knowledge of the form only a sufficient condition for attaining certainty concerning specific evaluative judgements, but not a necessary condition for merely correct judgement. [18] This is technically true of the early dialogues in general, but it does not take into account the full significance of this passage. If we look more closely at Socrates' account, especially at the occasion on which he says he sustained this aporia, a different picture emerges. Socrates says: ". . . as I was finding fault with some things in certain speeches as ugly and praising other things as beautiful, a

man threw me into confusion. . . ." What Socrates describes here is nothing other than his own everyday activity, the criticism of arguments. He has been thrown into aporia in relation to the very thing he is most known for, dialectic.

In other cases in which someone cannot define some specific virtue, justice for example, one might wonder about the ground of judgements about just actions. Socrates, we imagine, might say that we cannot *know* that a specific action is just. But that would not directly raise questions about the possibility of a dialectical inquiry into justice itself. It would not inhibit anyone from expressing opinions on the subject, and Socrates would still be in a position to praise and blame speeches about justice and just actions. In the case of the beautiful, however, the very possibility of carrying on an elenchus, or dialectic in any form, is put in question. Socrates cannot pretend to any casual detachment here since the beautiful lies in the closest proximity to the only activity he would recognize as peculiarly his own, namely public conversation. The fact that Socrates still praises and blames speeches--and anything else for that matter, including especially Hippias himself--presents a problem that is not resolved simply by pointing to the fact that knowledge is not necessary for correct usage. Correct usage of the predicate beautiful is indeed possible without scientific knowledge of the beautiful. But it is another question **[End Page 382]** altogether whether *dialectic* is possible on the basis of a merely correct opinion about the beautiful. The ambient aporia of this dialogue is thus different in kind from the aporia typically incurred at the end of the other early dialogues. It involves an unprecedented degree of self-reflection and criticism.

We can trace this same critical self-reflection in the latter part of the dialogue. There Socrates orchestrates a series of recognizably dialectical proposals, all formulated as neuter substantive phrases: the appropriate, the useful, the powerful, the beneficial. Each one envisions a simple, straightforward substitution for the object sought, the beautiful, and the failure of each proposal is supplemented by the subsequent member of the series. Thus the appropriate proves unable to account for the reality of beauty, explaining instead only its appearance. But the failure points directly to its own solution, in the guise of the useful, which promises to explain what causes things to be beautiful rather than merely to seem so. Similarly, the useful, understood as power, is unable to distinguish between power for good and power for evil. Again, the failure itself indicates the supplement needed to overcome this difficulty (296d-e):

> But was this, Hippias, what our soul wished to say, that the useful and the powerful for doing something good is the beautiful? . . . But surely this is the beneficial.

The dialectical method, as it appears in this text, imagines a continuous series of substitutions whereby one proposal is supplemented by a successor. There does not at first glance seem to be any natural limit to this process, other than what would be posed by a final resolution to the question. In the case of the beautiful, however, the dialectical process reaches a limit in the beneficial, but not an adequate answer to the original question.

Socrates' final proposal, the beneficial [*to ôphelimon*], turns out to fail in a way that allows for no further supplementation. The dialectical line of inquiry cannot go beyond the beneficial, since this proposal is finally just another way of naming the dialectical method itself. It is, in effect, a metaphor for the dialectical process of supplementary substitution and, as we shall see, a metaphor that Socrates readily translates into a familiar paternal image. We recall that the beneficial supplements the previous proposal as the useful or the powerful *for doing something good*. But, in this sense, the beneficial is the precise equivalent of a cause of good and this **[End Page 383]** suggests to Socrates that it is therefore not itself good. In characteristic fashion, Socrates' explanation of this complicated point passes through a metaphorical account of paternity (297b 1-7, my emphasis):

> If, then, the beautiful is the cause of good, the good would come into being through the beautiful; and this is why we are eager for wisdom and all other beautiful things, because their offspring, the good, is worthy of eagerness and, from what we are finding, it looks as if the beautiful were *a sort of father of the good*.

It is not surprising that the relationship of cause and effect is figured here by an image of paternity. But the real significance of this relationship is concealed in Fowler's translation, which renders the striking phrase *en patros tinos ideai* blandly as "a sort of father" and omits any mention of the presence of the *idea*. This might be rendered more literally to read: "the beautiful is *in form* a kind of father of the good." [19] This suggests that from the point of view of the forms, or formal explanation in general, the beautiful

inevitably takes on a paternal relationship toward the good. Although Socrates has given no indication that a systematic evaluation of the forms is about to take place, the figurative association of paternity and the forms is unmistakable. As we shall see, however, it is a troubled relationship.

If the beautiful is "in form" a father of the good, Socrates is quick to point out that it is characterized by all of the distinctiveness of that relationship and none of the similarity (297b 9-c 1).

> Soc: Then is this well said, too, that the father is not the son, and the son is not father?
> Hip: To be sure it is well said.

This is, in effect, a paternal relationship without family resemblance. The father, as father, is not a son and in no way resembles one, and the son, as son, is not a father. Nothing in his paternity gives him any basis for identification with his son. In logical terms, this means that the cause, *as cause*, is not the effect and vice versa (297c). **[End Page 384]**

> Soc: And neither is the cause that which comes into being, nor is that which comes into being the cause.
> Hip: True.
> Soc: By Zeus, my good friend, then neither is the beautiful good, nor the good beautiful; or does it seem to you possible, after what has been said?

Woodruff glosses this paradoxical passage by reference to what he calls "logical causation." Thus to be *productive* of the good is not the same thing as to *be* good. Such productive causes may *also* be good in their own right, but their goodness is not explained by the fact of their own productivity. If they are good, it is not by reason of the fact that they are productive of the good, and so not by reason of what makes them beautiful. [20] This leaves the following crux: we can define the beautiful in terms of its productivity of the good, but only at the expense of denying any essential relation between the beautiful and the good. We are not able to assert that *being* beautiful entails *being* good, and vice versa. The proposed definition fails because it is preposterous, according to Socrates, to deny in any sense that the beautiful is good. More importantly, however, it fails precisely because it cannot avoid casting the definition in terms of an image of paternity, specifically an image designed to emphasize all that stands between parent and child. Dialectic is driven to conceive the beautiful as an estranged or absent father.

But even though the beneficial fails as a definition of the beautiful, that does not necessarily mean that Socrates thinks the beautiful is *not* beneficial. Woodruff is undoubtedly correct when he suggests that the statement "the beautiful is a cause of the good" is *true* for Socrates, but only "if it is not taken as part of the definition of the [beautiful]." [21] The same can be said about the good, that it is beneficial, and that too will fail as a definition. Similarly, it is possible to identify an underlying biconditional thesis, that the beautiful is good, the good beautiful, and each is productive of the other. As Woodruff points out, in order even to understand the sense **[End Page 385]** in which Socrates' argument functions as a *reductio ad absurdum*, it is necessary to supply the hidden premise, "to be [beautiful] is to be good." [22] But however strongly we may hold this conviction along with Socrates, this gets us no closer to a theoretical explanation of what the beautiful is. The unmistakable result of the argument of the *Hippias Major* is the acknowledged failure of the dialectic to generate an answer to Socrates' question. But rather than lament this failure, or look for its supplementation from elsewhere, we should see in it an account of the essential shape of human theoretical possibilities. And this is precisely what the figurative movement of the text suggests as well.

The fact that the father in no way resembles the son is a striking commentary on the fate of paternal figures for theoretical explanation. The offspring of the beautiful are ungrateful children who will not share of themselves and their wealth with their father, except in the most accidental fashion. The father can be a son in his own right, but not in the same sense as he is a father. He owes his filiality to another father, who in turn owes his to another, and so on. The sequence of generational differences does not allow for a coherent *logical* account of the likeness of father and son, except in the form of a family history. But, as we know, family histories among the Greeks quickly turn into legendary accounts of derivation from the gods or heroes. Like Socrates' account of his own descent from the shifting figure of Daedalus in the *Euthyphro*, the descent of the good from the beautiful as from a father transforms a potentially theoretical account of the basis of evaluative judgement into an endless retreat into an ever distant family origin. There is, to be sure, a family resemblance between the beautiful and the good, but in theoretical terms this resemblance is strictly *accidental*. The beautiful is good, but not because it

causes the good or, in other words, not because it is beautiful.

This proposal is, according to Socrates, "more ridiculous than those first ones" (297d 6-7), namely, Hippias' suggestion that a virgin, or gold, or a beautiful burial might be the beautiful. This invocation of the sophistic style of refutation by ridicule suggests the parallel noted above between Hippias' challenge to the meaningfulness of Socrates' question and Socrates' own aporetic self-critique. The failure of the dialectical inquiry is, ironically, more ridiculous than anything Hippias could have heaped upon Socrates. It is a more telling critique of dialectic, but also a **[End Page 386]** more accurate description of the kind of answers available to it. At the same time, it is an effective rejoinder to Hippias' claim to paternal authority in educational matters. A question has been raised for which the sophist has no answer, and the embarrassment is acute when it becomes clear that the question is not merely an abstract inquiry into what we might today classify as aesthetic principles, but concerns the very nature of intellectual authority. That is, like most Socratic questions, it concerns the possibility of the authentic insight called knowledge and the limitations on its availability for use in the formation of a reputation for authority in all its forms.

For Hippias, education represents the essential possibility of seizing literal authority through the manipulation of certain figures of authority, especially that of the father, while his sophistic technique consists of manipulating the content of popular opinion so as to conceal any discrepancy between the figurative basis of his claim to authority and the real reputation he gains through it. For Socrates, however, there can be no lasting replacement for the father who is missing from the human educational scene, because his absence is too profound ever to be adequately supplemented. All substitutes inevitably fail, although their failure is itself instructive. Education does not consist of giving easy answers from a position of traditionally sanctioned authority, but rather of facing the disturbing fact that the foundations of our everyday judgements do not stand up under scrutiny. The search for rational principles only discovers the withdrawal of those principles into figurative accounts of the necessity of the withdrawal. Dialectic differs decisively from sophistry in that it is able to recognize the tropological structure of the inevitable withdrawal of principles into figure--that is, it recognizes in the figurative regress to which rational explanation ultimately gives way the very metaphors that went into the construction of its own methodology.

If the conclusion is that Hippias errs by passing off figurative authority for literal, while Socrates reluctantly exhibits the figurative self-distantiation of the hoped for authoritative insight, it should not be surprising that the text in which this rhetorical dilemma is worked out itself occupies the limbo between authenticity and inauthenticity. The *Hippias Major* is explicitly "inauthentic" in that it explores the limits of intellectual and moral authority, discovering in those limits an inauthenticity haunting the very project of philosophy itself. To expect a decisive pronouncement about the authenticity of this text (in either direction) would be to mistake the figurative for the literal, a gesture akin to Hippias' attempt to trade figurative for literal authority. The result of the dialogue is comic to the **[End Page 387]** extent that we are dialectically reconciled to the inauthenticity that inhabits our theoretical pretensions, just as we might be reconciled to the other forms of inauthenticity inhabiting this text.

Babson College

Notes

1. See "Epic and Novel," Bakhtin 1981.22-24.

2. See Tarrant 1928 (also 1927.82-87 and 1938.167-73); also Moreau 1941.19-42; for a response, see Grube 1929.

3. See Woodruff's commentary in Woodruff 1982.

4. See *Meno* 87e; *Gorgias* 474d-e, 499d; *Protagoras* 358a.

5. *Hippias Major* 281a 1; I refer to Fowler's 1926 translation; any alterations in the trans-lation of specific passages will be noted.

6. Thus, in a moment of odd candor, Hippias admits his duplicity regarding the tradition (282a 4-8): "I, however, am in the habit of praising the ancients and our predecessors rather than the men of the

present day, and more greatly, as a precaution against the envy of the living and through fear of the wrath of those who are dead."

7. See Pindar *Ol*. 7.52; also Euripides *Hec*. 836.

8. See *Euthyphro* 11: "I think that your statements, Euthyphro, are worthy of my ancestor Daedalus. If they had been mine and I had set them down, I dare say you would have made fun of me and said that it was the consequence of my descent from Daedalus that the statements which I construct run away, as his statues used to, and will not stay where they are put." Socrates turns out to be an even more skillful artist than Daedalus. For when Euthyphro accuses him of "being the Daedalus" behind the movement of his statements, Socrates replies that Daedalus "only used to make his own works move, while I, you see, can make other people's works move, too" (Church 1956). Daedalus is also invoked at *Meno* 97d-e, where his statues are said to run away if they are not fastened down. There they are a figure for the instability of opinion as opposed to knowledge.

9. See Tigerstedt 1965.113 (especially n. 53 and n. 55); also 128.

10. For an account of Athenian "Laconism," see Tigerstedt 1965.148-59; also Ollier 1948.

11. As Woodruff correctly points out (1982.41, n. 35), an Athenian audience would have been struck by the absurdity of suggesting that Spartans are lawbreakers, and Hippias' willingness to overlook such a palpable absurdity would seem ridiculous to them.

12. The same element of surrogacy is visible in the stories told of Lycurgus' own life. Never himself king, he served as regent for his nephew, Charilaus. The accusation brought by Charilaus' uncle that Lycurgus was plotting to usurp the throne suggests as well the natural tension of the surrogate's role; see "Lycurgus" in Talbert 1988.10-11.

13. The choice of Nestor as the mask for Hippias may also have a strategic significance if, as Woodruff suggests, the dialogue is set during the peace of Nicias (421-416 b.c.; see Woodruff 1982.93-94). Elis switched allegiances and sided with Athens in 420 when Sparta supported the independence of Lepreum, an Elean tributary, and was later punished by Sparta in 399 with the loss of another tributary, Triphylia. Hippias' public business in Sparta, then, presumably concerned the question of Leprean independence or even the question of Elean allegiance to Sparta. Thus Hippias appears to make a politically self-deprecatory gesture in the choice of Nestor whose longest speech in the *Iliad* (11.671-770) tells of his military exploits in a cattle raid against the Eleans.

14. Bakhtin 1981.25.

15. Woodruff 1982.140; I have modified his wording slightly: he translates *to kalon* as "the fine" rather than "the beautiful."

16. See Geach 1966.369-82; also Robinson 1953 (esp. p. 53); for an argument against Geach, see Santas 1972.127-41; also his later treatment of the same issue in 1979.115-22, esp. n. 26.

17. Thus Santas concludes that, in the *Euthyphro*, one must recognize from the context that Socrates does not suggest that *all* usage depends upon definitional knowledge, but only that controversial usages seem to demand it: "Socrates describes the diagnostic use in the context of an ethical controversy. . . . Euthyphro has already stated that he and his relatives disagree as to whether his action is holy. . . . Socrates is dubious about the holiness of Euthyphro's action, but he is not sure one way or the other. . . . This is the context in which Socrates tells us why he wants a definition of holiness" (1979.117).

18. See Santas 1979.116 (also 119-22); Santas is correct to distinguish a diagnostic from an aitiological use. Unlike the diagnostic problem of the *Euthyphro*, here it is not simply a matter of determining whether a certain controversial case is an example of piety. Socrates says that he was asked to *defend* his judgements by showing that he has the appropriate knowledge. Thus, according to Santas, he must show that he knows the *aitia* of beauty in each case.

19. See Woodruff 1982.76, n. 146.

20. Ibid. 71-74; also 76-77 and 188. Woodruff's logical causation owes much to Vlastos' account of *aitia* in "Reasons and Causes" (1981.90-96 and 102-10). Thus, *what it is to be* a father is not the same as *what it is to be* a son. Fathers are typically also sons, but not by reason of the same relationship.

21. Woodruff 1982.74.

22. Ibid.

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