

ELENCHUS, EPODE, AND MAGIC: SOCRATES AS SILENUS

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PLATO often uses the vocabulary of magic (for example, *goes*, *goeteia*, *kelesis*, and their cognates), spells (*epodai*), and drugs (*pharmaka*) to condemn an enemy. Thus, the sophist is called a deceitful magician at *Sophist* 234c, 235a, 241b, and in the *Republic* the imitator is called a magician (598d, 602d) who enchants (601b, 607c-d). Physical pleasure is condemned as mere magic at *Phaedo* 81b, *Philebus* 44c, and *Republic* 584a. Yet Socrates himself is compared with a magician (*Meno* 80b) who enchants people (*Symposium* 215c-d); the myth at the end of the *Phaedo* is said to be an *epode* (114d); knowledge is called a *pharmakon* at *Republic* 595b and an *epode* at *Republic* 608a.¹ These applications of the terminology of magic to Socrates and philosophy are more comprehensible if we realize that Plato is sometimes deliberately opposing philosophy to deceitful magic, establishing a sort of "counter-magic." As Jacqueline de Romilly puts it: "Whereas the magic of the sophists aimed at producing illusion, Socrates' magic rests on the obstinate destruction of all illusions. It is the magic of implacable truth. . . . It is therefore one magic against another, the one taking the former's place, but with opposite aims and means."² Philosophy opposes and disarms deceitful magic in a number of very clearly defined areas, and is in this sense a kind of "counter-magic." A comparison of the definition of deceptive magic in *Republic* III with Plato's statements about the "magic" of philosophy can help us to attain a better understanding of how detailed and deliberate this opposition is.

Socrates defines magic, *goeteia*, in the course of describing some tests

¹For further references and discussion of these topics I have found the following studies most helpful: A. Diès, "La Transposition Platonicienne," in *Autour de Platon* (Paris 1927); P. Boyancé, *Le Culte des Muses chez les Philosophes Grecs* (Paris 1936): hereafter Boyancé; L. Edelstein, "The Function of the Myth in Plato's Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 10 (1949) 463-481: hereafter Edelstein; E. R. Dodds, "Plato, the Irrational Soul and the Inherited Conglomerate," in *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951): hereafter Dodds; W. Burkert, "Goes. Zum griechischen 'Schamanismus'," *RhMus* 105 (1962) 36-55; J. Derrida, "La Pharmacie de Platon," *Tel Quel* 32 (1968) 3-48, 33 (1968) 18-58: hereafter Derrida I and II; P. Laín Entralgo, "The Platonic Rationalization of the Charm," in L. J. Rather and J. M. Sharp, eds. and trans., *The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity* (New Haven 1970), also published separately in German: *Hermes* 86 (1958) 298-323, and in Spanish: *Archivo Iberoamericano de Historia de la Medicina* 10 (1958) 133-160: hereafter Laín Entralgo; J. de Romilly, *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, Mass. 1975): hereafter Romilly. See also D. Hitchcock, "The Role of the Myth and Its Relation to Rational Argument in Plato's Dialogues," Diss. Claremont Graduate School, 1973.

²Romilly 36-37. A similar point is made by Edelstein (475) and Derrida (II.21).

to determine which of the young people of the ideal city are least likely to cast out and forget the opinion that one should do what is best for the city (412e). He explains that we cast opinion out of our minds either willingly (*hekousios*), when we learn better and get rid of false opinion, or unwillingly (*akousios*), when we lose true opinion. This is because we are deprived of evils willingly and of good things unwillingly. But to have a false opinion is evil and to have a true opinion is good (413a). We should note that *akousios* is used here in the peculiarly Platonic sense, according to which we are deprived of good things unwillingly even if we *want* to be deprived of them, not knowing them to be good.³ After this explanation, Socrates describes three ways in which people are deprived unwillingly of the truth (413b–c): robbery (*klope*), force (*bia*), and magic (*goeteia*). Those robbed are those whom time makes forget or argument (*logos*) persuades, and those forced are those made to change their opinions by pain (*δδύνη, ἀλγηδών*). Finally, Socrates says that “those bewitched, as I think, you also would say are those who change their opinion either because they are enchanted by pleasure or because they are terrified by some fear” (413c1–3): *Τοὺς μὲν γοητευθέντας, ὡς ἐγὼ μαι, καὶ σὺ φαίης εἶναι οἱ ἂν μεταδοξάσωσιν ἢ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς κηληθέντες ἢ ὑπὸ φόβου τι δέισαντες*.⁴

This passage gives us a definition of magic: (1) The aim of magic is to change our opinions, driving out true opinion and giving us false opinion. (2) Magic affects us by means of the *emotions* of pleasure (*hedone*) and fear (*phobos*). (3) Because magic drives out true opinion it compels its victims, that is, makes them act unwillingly (*akousios*).

The passage also tells us that the man who is best able to resist magic (*dysgoeteutos*) is most harmonious and the best guard of himself, and that he is most useful to himself and to the city (413e). Since we later learn that this guardian is a philosopher, we see that Plato is deliberately setting out to oppose the aims and means of philosophy to those of magic.

Plato does not say in this passage what kind of magic he has in mind. However, it is reasonable to suppose that he is not directing such a serious attack against the cruder forms of magic, such as placing wax figures in crossroads,⁵ but against the magic of the sophists and poets he condemns later in the *Republic*. Throughout the *Republic*, Plato attacks as the opponents of philosophy those who persuade the multitude by appealing to the emotions and appetites rather than to reason and truth. In *Republic* VI he attacks the “educators and sophists” (492d6), among

³See Adam on *Republic* 412e and 382a, and below, 136 and note 22.

⁴Adam, on *Republic* 413c, gives some examples in the *Laws* of tests for resistance to force and magic. However, the distinction in *Republic* III between *force* as causing *pain*, and *magic* as causing *fear* is probably more rhetorical than philosophical. At least, it is clear in *Republic* X that pain falls within the province of the magic of poetry (below, 130), and many passages, e.g., *Laws* 633c9–d1, link pain with fear.

⁵Mentioned at *Laws* 933b.

whom he includes politicians, painters, musicians, and poets (493d), who know nothing about the truth but instead have learned the passions and desires of the multitude and how to please or anger it (493a-c). These sophists who want to please the crowd necessarily blame philosophy (494a). In *Republic* VIII tragedy is blamed for praising the tyrant and for drawing regimes towards democracies and tyrannies (568a-d), and in *Republic* IX the tyrant is associated with the desires and appetites. The "terrible magicians (*magoi*) and tyrant makers" produce a tyrant by implanting *eros* in him (572e-573a). The tyrant is ruled by *eros*, physical pleasures, thus enjoying only a *phantasma* of true pleasure, a sort of magic (584a) which Plato compares with shadow-painting (586b-c).

The attack on the opponent of philosophy culminates in *Republic* X, where Plato condemns the poet as a magician (598d, 602d) who makes pleasure and pain rule in the city instead of law and the best argument (607a-b) and tries to please the multitude (604e-605a).⁶ Plato explains that poetry imitates those who display excessive grief (605c-606c), excessive laughter (606c), or lust, anger, and "all the desires and pains and pleasures in the soul" (606d) and that it produces and increases these emotional excesses in us (605b, 606d). It is significant that the love of poetry is called *eros* at 607e5. Plato explicitly contrasts these emotional excesses with the restrained grief or pleasure of the "reasonable man" who feels emotions but nevertheless uses reason to control them (603e-604d). In him rule "reason and law," which bid us resist pain, instead of that "drawing" (*helkon*, a word often used of magical spells) us towards pain (604a10-b1).⁷ The pleasure and pain by means of which the poet-magician affects us are excessive emotions which are not merely non-rational, as are all emotions, but *anti*-rational, having the power to make reason "let down its guard" (606a8). The poet-magician of *Republic* X, like the magician of *Republic* III, drives out true opinion, making us take the illusion for the reality (598c, 602b, 602c, 603b, and *passim*). In *Republic* X Plato also contrasts the magician's emotional means with simple argument. He compares meter, rhythm, and harmony with the colors of painting (*chromata*), and says that without these the mere words of poetry cannot enchant us (601a-b).⁸

⁶Gerald Else, "The Structure and Date of Book 10 of Plato's *Republic*," *AbhHeidelberg* 1972, argues convincingly that we should connect the poet and painter of *Republic* X with the painter and sophist of the *Sophist*, all of whom are called magicians. In both dialogues, Plato is attacking the same enemy: the deceitful magic of rhetoric.

⁷I wish to thank the anonymous referee of *Phoenix* for calling my attention to this passage. See also *Phdr.* 238a for a similar use of *helko*.

⁸This passage should be compared with *Gorgias* 465b-c, where "cosmetology" is said to give a veneer of alien beauty, partly by means of color. Though Plato does not use the word *pharmakon* in these passages, it is commonly used of the colors used by painters (for example in *Cratylus* 424e and 434b, *Republic* 420c). See P. M. Schuhl, *Platon et L'Art de son temps* (Paris 1952) 22 and Derrida II.34-35.

A comparison of Plato's description of magic in *Republic* III and X with Gorgias' description of the magic of rhetoric and poetry in the *Encomium of Helen*⁹ also gives much support to the view that Plato is attacking the sophists and poets in our passage in *Republic* III. Gorgias calls speech, *logos*, a form of magic which compels people to change their opinions by means of pleasure and pain. Divine spells (*epodai*) charm and persuade by means of magic, *goeteia* (10), and speech can drug and bewitch the soul (14). The person who persuades, says Gorgias, exercises compulsion, while the person persuaded is compelled (12). Speech comes together with the opinion and changes it by means of magic (10). It can take away pain and bring pleasure (10) but it can also cause "fearful shuddering and much-weeping pity" (9)¹⁰ or pain and fear (14). Gorgias gives an account of pleasure and pain very much like Plato's. Poetry, a form of speech, produces pleasure which helps to change the opinions, producing errors and deceptions of the soul (10), and pleasure is associated with *eros* (18-19). Gorgias compares the pain and fear caused by the *logos* with fearful sights which cause men to flee in panic before there is actual danger, and so to "neglect that which is judged to be noble by the law and the good which comes from victory" (16). Fear is anti-rational, for it "extinguishes and drives out law" (17). Gorgias' account of the magic of the *logos* is thus substantially the same as Plato's account of the aims and means of magic in the *Republic*.¹¹

Plato's enemy the magician, then, is a serious and dangerous adversary. The philosopher attacks him in the very three areas covered by the definition in *Republic* III. Philosophy (1) drives out false opinion, attacking the aim of magic, and (2) it enables us to resist the power of pleasure and fear, preventing the means of magic from being effective. In this way, (3) it does not compel, but on the contrary enables us to act without compulsion.

Philosophy drives out false opinion very often by means of the *elenchus*, which does not teach any positive doctrines or impart any actual information, but instead purifies the soul of the worst kind of ignorance, the belief that one knows what one doesn't know. These points are discussed in the *Sophist* (229b ff.) where the *elenchus* is defined as a kind of educa-

⁹Diels-Kranz, *Vorsokr.*⁷ B11.

¹⁰For a discussion of pity and fear (*phobos* and *eleos*) in Gorgias, Plato, and Aristotle see H. Flashar, "Die Medizinischen Grundlagen der Lehre von der Wirkung der Dichtung in der Griechischen Poetik," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 12-48; W. Schadewaldt, "Furcht und Mitleid?," *Hermes* 83 (1955) 129-171; M. Pohlenz, "Furcht und Mitleid? Ein Nachwort," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 49-74.

¹¹For a good account of Gorgias' psychological theories see C. P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the *Logos*," *HSCP* 66 (1962) 99-155. On Gorgias' ideas about rhetoric as magic see Romilly 3-22 and also her article "Gorgias et le pouvoir de la poésie," *JHS* 93 (1973) 155-162.

tion. Those who practice the *elenchus* question people about things they claim to know until they contradict themselves. This instruction, or purification, makes those who undergo it angry with themselves and gentle towards others. The Eleatic Stranger compares those who practice it with doctors: "Doctors of the body believe that the body cannot benefit from the nourishment brought to it until one casts out the obstructions within it. These others believe the same thing about the soul, that it will never profit from the learning brought to it until by cross-examining (*elenchon*) one shames the person cross-examined, thus removing the opinions which are obstructions to learning and rendering him pure, thinking that he knows only those things he does know and not more."¹²

The *elenchus*, then, affects the reason, though it does not impart information or offer counter-arguments. It is instruction in the negative sense of removal of false belief. Nevertheless, it has the very positive effect of preparing the soul to receive learning. The comparison with medicine is interesting. True medicine, Plato again tells us at *Republic* 426a-b, consists in the removal of the obstacles to health, such as over-indulgences of all sorts, while drugs and spells are useless until these obstacles are removed. Health is not something put into the body by a drug alien to it. This is exactly how Plato describes the healthy condition of the rational part of the soul (*phronesis*) in *Republic* VII. The other virtues are not in the soul until they are put there by practice and habit, but the power of exercising *phronesis* is always in the soul. The true teacher does not put knowledge into the soul like sight into blind eyes, but instead removes the obstacles to the proper functioning of *phronesis*, "turning it around" to the light.¹³ Similarly, in the *Sophist* passage quoted above, the *elenchus* restores the reason to its natural, healthy condition rather than giving it a "drug" for wisdom.

But the *elenchus* does not affect the reason alone. Our *Sophist* passage says that it makes people ashamed and angry with themselves. It thus arouses certain emotions which are the allies of reason.¹⁴ According to

¹²*Sophist* 230c-d, Cf. *Theaetetus* 210c. The *Sophist* passage is usually taken to be a description of the method of Socrates and his followers. See, for example, F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge* (London 1935) 177-183; V. Goldschmidt, *Les Dialogues de Platon* (Paris 1963) 29-31; G. M. A. Grube, *Plato's Thought* (London 1935) 241-242. For other views see A. E. Taylor, *Plato, the Man and His Work*⁶ (New York 1952) 380-381; J. Burnet, *Greek Philosophy, Thales to Plato* (London 1914) 224; G. B. Kerferd, "Plato's Noble Art of Sophistry," *CQ* n.s. 4 (1954). I agree with F. Oscanyan that the passage is "a perfect description of Socratic dialectics:" "On Six Definitions of the *Sophist*: *Sophist* 221c-231e," *Philosophical Forum* 4 (1972-1973) 254.

¹³*Republic* 518b-519a. Cf. *Timaeus* 89a-d and Derrida II.32 ff. on artificial remedies (*pharmaka*) as opposed to natural methods of curing.

¹⁴P. W. Gooch, "'Vice is Ignorance': The Interpretation of *Sophist* 226a-231b," *Phoenix* 25 (1971) 130, makes the point that cross-examination deals with the "irrational aspects of the soul" at least indirectly, by "bringing the irrational parts into a right relationship by pointing out inconsistencies to the rational part."

the account given in the *Republic*, anger with oneself is situated in the *thumos*, which sometimes makes war against the desires when these try to force someone contrary to reason, but which never becomes the ally of the desires against the reason (440b). We find a similar distinction between emotion allied with reason and emotion that works against reason at *Laws* 646e ff. There are, says the Athenian, two kinds of fear. One is the fear of evil when we expect it to befall us; the other is fear of a deserved evil reputation, i.e., shame, *aischune*. This latter kind of fear actually opposes our other pains and fears and our greatest pleasures. It contributes to fearlessness of the enemy and to a fear of disgrace before friends.¹⁵ The shame and anger with oneself that the *elenchus* stirs up are thus the opposite of the fear produced by the deceitful magician, which opposes and overcomes the reason.

The *elenchus* is the opposite of magic in still another way. The deceitful magician works by affecting only his victims, while Socrates' "magic" affects himself as well. Thus, after Meno compares Socrates with the electric ray of the sea, Socrates replies that he is a ray that stings itself as well as others (*Meno* 80c). And in the *Euthyphro* Socrates says that he makes both his own and others' arguments move around, but that he has this skill against his own will (*ἄκων εἰμὶ σοφός*, 11d). While the magician deliberately uses his skill to make his victims act against their will, Socrates uses his skill against his own will and makes his "victims" able to act willingly.

We can now better understand the serious intention behind the irony in those passages in which the people who experience the Socratic *elenchus* compare it with magic. Plato is at once attacking his enemy and showing how philosophy is a kind of "counter-magic." Meno says to Socrates, "You are bewitching and drugging and simply spellbinding me" (*γοητεύεις με καὶ φαρμάττεις καὶ ἀτεχνῶς κατεπᾶδεις*, 80a). This is because he is now unable to speak: "I have often made many speeches about virtue before many people, and I spoke very well, as it seemed to me. But now I am not at all able to say even what it is." Anywhere but in Athens, he concludes, Socrates might be arrested as a magician (80b). Meno is comparing the *elenchus* with a definite kind of magic, spellbinding (*katadesis*), in which a victim against his will is rendered unable to speak, often because he knows a truth that will harm the spellbinder. In this case, however, Meno is able but unwilling to speak because he realizes that he doesn't know the truth.¹⁶

¹⁵Cf. *Republic* 465a-b and *Euthyphro* 12b-c for a similar distinction between *deos* fear of some evil such as bodily harm, and *aidōs*, shame of wrongdoing.

¹⁶Cf. *Gorgias* 482e, where Callicles accuses Socrates of binding and gagging Polus; *Laches* 194b, where Laches says he is not able to say what he knows; *Republic* 350d and 358b-c, where Thrasymachus blushes and is said to have been charmed like a snake. W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (London 1950) 270-274, gives some exam-

In another well-known passage, Alcibiades compares Socrates with the satyr Marsyas, whose flute tunes enchanted people. We who hear Socrates, says Alcibiades, are "amazed and possessed." Alcibiades' heart leaps and tears flow from his eyes more than if he were a participant in the Corybantic rites. His soul is troubled and cries out as though he were a slave, and, moreover, Socrates is the only man who can make him feel shame. He admits, just as Meno did, that he does not know the right way to live. He has to escape from Socrates holding his ears as though from a Siren, yet as soon as he is out of earshot he returns to his former opinions (*Symposium* 215a-216c). In this passage, as I. M. Linforth has correctly shown, Socrates is being compared not with a deceitful magician who produces fear but with an officiator in a cathartic rite who uses spells to cast out the fear which is already present as a disease. The first stage of this cure consists in allowing the fear to be consciously perceived so that those who suffer from it will realize that they need a cure.¹⁷ These cathartic rites are thus in many ways similar to the Socratic *elenchus*. Socrates first makes someone with false beliefs realize his condition. This realization is accompanied by strong emotion: shame and anger with oneself (or with Socrates if the process backfires). The "disease" can then be expelled. As we shall see next, Plato often shows Socrates helping people to cast out fear as well as false belief.

When the vocabulary of magic is used for this second purpose, it is often associated with the *epode*, which differs in several ways from the *elenchus*. When they are associated with magic, the *elenchus*, a catharsis of the reason, is usually seen as directed against magic's aim of driving out true opinion, while the philosophical *epode* is most often conceived as blocking the means by which magic works: the use of the emotions to overcome reason. In many passages, whether the vocabulary of magic is used or not, the *epode* differs radically from the *elenchus*, for it has an emotional appeal, as explicitly opposed to a rational appeal. For example, at *Laws* 903a10-b2 a distinction is made between the arguments (*logoi*) that attempt to convince the atheist and the *epode* he will need in addition. In contrast to the *elenchus* which is dangerous for young people (*Republic* 538d-539d), the *epode* is useful in the training of children who cannot yet reason. In the second book of the *Laws* the musical training of young people is said to provide an *epode* for the soul so that it will feel pleasure, pain, love, and hate in concord with reason and law, before it is able to reason (653b, 659d-e). In the *Republic*, musical training of the

ples of *katadesis* that allow us to connect Meno's description of the effects of the *elenchus* with this particular kind of magic. A typical *katadesis* says, for example, "may his tongue and his soul become lead that he may not be able to speak or act, and pierce thou his tongue and his soul" (272).

¹⁷The *Corybantic Rites in Plato* (Berkeley 1946) 140-144.

young is described in much the same way: music seeps into the inner part of the soul and makes it love and praise the good and hate evil, before the young person is able to reason (401d–402a). The myth at the end of the *Phaedo* is also said to be an *epode* that adults can use to inspire themselves with the courage to despise bodily pleasure (114d–e). Here again, it is distinguished from rational argument, for Socrates says that no reasonable man would affirm that the myth is the literal truth. At other times, argument itself may be called an *epode*, but in these passages the emotional effect of argument is what is stressed. Thus, in a passage in the *Phaedo* that uses the vocabulary of magic, Socrates says that though the existence of the soul after death has already been proved, Cebes and Simmias are afraid like children who fear that the wind will scatter the soul when someone dies. Cebes agrees: “Perhaps there is in us also a child who fears such things. Try to persuade him not to fear death as though it were a bogey-man.” Socrates replies, “You must say a spell (*epaidein*) over him every day until you charm away his fears.” He suggests that dialectic¹⁸ will provide this charm (*Phaedo* 77d–78a). Here it would seem that the emotional effect of *repetition* is the effective ingredient of the charm. Again, at the end of the *Crito* (54d), Socrates says that the words of the Laws ring in his ears, like the flutes Corybantes think they hear, and actually prevent him from listening to the other side.¹⁹ It is true that in the *Charmides* (157a–c) “noble words” are called an *epode*, and no particular emphasis is placed on the emotional, as opposed to the rational, effects. This is, however, unusual.²⁰ Most often Plato has two distinct weapons that may be used against the deceitful magician: one that purifies the rational element, driving out false belief (the *elenchus* or a process similar to it that will “turn around” the reason to its proper objects, as *Republic* 518e describes it) and another procedure that will actively train and strengthen the emotions so that they will be in harmony with the reason (the *epode*, the myth, musical education).²¹

If philosophy succeeds in driving out false belief and in enabling us to resist the anti-rational emotions of pleasure and fear, it succeeds in freeing

¹⁸R. S. Bluck, *Plato's Phaedo* (London 1955) *ad loc.* gives this interpretation of the passage.

¹⁹This passage was called to my attention by Charles Young.

²⁰Dodds (226, note 20) says that in the *Charmides* the *epode* is a Socratic cross-examination. The best account of this unusual passage is that given by T. M. Robinson, *Plato's Psychology* (Toronto 1970 [*Phoenix* Supp. Vol. 3]) 4–10. Robinson says that the “noble words” have both an intellectual and a moral effect (7), and that in the *Charmides* “the self is . . . the whole man (156e7–8), of which body is an integral and inalienable part” (8). The psychological theories of the *Charmides* thus differ radically from those of the *Phaedo* and *Republic*.

²¹For some good discussions of the emotional effects of the *epode* and the myth in Plato see Boyancé 155 ff., Dodds 212 and note 20, Edelstein 473 ff., Laín Entralgo 118 ff.

us from compulsion, not, of course in the usual sense of allowing us to do what seems good to us, but in the Platonic sense of allowing us to do what is actually for our good.²² The philosopher who can do this has greater skill than the deceitful magician whom he overcomes. And he may appear to be a sort of "counter-magician" in that he has the *technē* falsely claimed by Gorgias: power over the opinions and the emotions.²³

The contrast between the deceitful magician and Socrates the "counter-magician" is brought out most clearly in a little parable in the *Symposium*. Immediately following his description of the magical effects Socrates has on his hearers (215–216) Alcibiades tells how, under the influence of Socrates' spells, the "*mania* and Bacchic frenzy of the philosopher" (218b), he tried to seduce Socrates (216–222). Alcibiades reports that Socrates told him jokingly that in trying to exchange his own beauty for Socrates' he might be trying to exchange mere opinion (*doxa*) for truth, bronze for gold (218e). Just as the deceitful magician uses our emotions to get us to take the illusion for the reality, Alcibiades uses pleasure, *eros*, to try to make Socrates trade gold for bronze. But this sort of magic has no effect on the philosopher. Not only does Alcibiades fail to seduce Socrates, though he spends the night in his bed, Socrates "seduces" Alcibiades into love of virtue, so that he ends by "admiring (*agamenon*) this man's nature and self-control and courage" (219d4–5). It is significant that *agamenos* is the very word used of the philosopher's love of truth at *Republic* 500c6.

The story shows clearly how philosophy opposes a rational love of the good to the enslaving and anti-rational *eros* associated with magic. It also shows how Socrates ultimately leads us beyond magic of any kind. Throughout this section of the *Symposium*, Alcibiades compares Socrates with a little statue of a Silenus with a flute in its hand, which can be opened up to reveal figures of the gods inside (215a–b, 216c–217a, 221d–222a). Socrates' words, as we have seen, enchant and possess people like the flute tunes of the satyr Marsyas (215b–c). But the flute is only part of the outer casing; Socrates' words only appear to be like magic, since they are equally powerful and appear to the ignorant to have similar effects. Inside, if one takes the trouble to look, are the "divine images of

²²See *Gorgias* 468d–e.

²³An interesting parallel to our contrast between the philosopher and the magician is that drawn by Morton Smith between the "divine man," who works "miracles by his indwelling divine power and therefore does not need rituals or spells," and the "magician," who merely gives orders to a spirit: *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco 1978) 74. See also the distinction drawn between the "hero," who works by his own power, and the "saint," who is the vehicle of divine will, in M. Hadas and M. Smith, *Heroes and Gods* (New York 1965) 12. Hadas and Smith see Plato's Socrates as the model for a particular kind of benevolent hero (17–18, 49–56) but do not explicitly contrast him with the magician.

virtue" (216e–217a, 222a). If one sees these, one realizes, as Alcibiades does, that Socrates' outer casing of magician-seducer is only a deception, that Socrates only appears to be a magician and seducer until we open up his arguments. Then we understand that he is not the seducer but the beloved, whom the lover of virtue follows of his own free will (222a–b). And here we reach the limits of a metaphor.²⁴

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²⁴I wish to thank the anonymous referees of *Phoenix* and Professor Charles Young for their valuable criticisms of an earlier version of this paper.