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Plato's *Phaedo* and "the Art of Glaucus": Transcending the Distortions of Developmentalism

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Abstract: In a 1985 article, Diskin Clay offered a modern solution to an ancient problem: instead of choosing between the scholiast's two different explanations of "the art of Glaucus," he offered a more textual explanation based on Socrates' image of the distorted appearance of the embodied soul in Republic X. This paper's thesis is that we should reconsider the way we read Socrates' last dis-course

by privileging its dramatic and didactic aspects in a manner that allows us to give Clay's insights the weight they deserve. This is preferable to regarding *Phaedo* as an outgrown stage of Plato's development rather than the dramatic culmination of the dialogues as a whole, and the hegemonic hermeneutic based on chronological order of composition has made this great dialogue's original form as unrecognizable as the ocean has made Glaucus.

Keywords: Plato; *Phaedo*; developmentalism.

The doubled reference to “the art of Glaucus” at the beginning of the final myth in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 108d4 and 108d6)¹ has puzzled readers since antiquity (Greene, 1938, 15 and Eusebius, *Contra Marcellum*, 15.5-21), but Diskin Clay broke new ground with the claim that the allusion was not to some lost proverb (Burnet, 1911, 150), but rather to Plato's *Republic* (Clay, 1985). In retrospect, the connection seems obvious: in *Republic* 10, Glaucus is mentioned not only in the context of the soul's “true” or even “truest nature” (*R.* 611b1 and 612a3) but of its immortality (*R.* 610e10-611b10), whilst the first part of the myth that follows the allusion to “the art of Glaucus” in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 108e4-110a8) repeatedly echoes the imagery Socrates had used to describe the submerged and thus unrecognizable Glaucus (Burger, 1984, 268 n. 17). Drawing attention to a further connection between the geographical myth in *Phaedo* and *Republic* based on the Allegory of the Cave (Clay, 1985, 235; cf. Green, 2014, 71-74), Clay also connected its imagery to the great speech of Socrates in *Phaedrus* (cf. *Phd.* 109d2 and *Phdr.* 249c3-4) (Clay, 1985, 235 n. 111; Burger, 1984, 195 and 268 n. 18; Green, 2014, 72), and here again, the connection seems obvious in retrospect, not least of all because a hermeneutic circle is completed when the reader considers the way Plato connects *Phaedrus* to *Republic* 10 (cf. *R.* 611d3 and *Phdr.* 250c6). Even more curious than the failure of the ancients to consider

¹ References are to Burnet, 1901, Duke, 1995, and Slings, 2003. Abbreviations for the dialogues are based on the Greek-English Lexicon (LSJ), xxxiii.

“the art of Glaucus” in the context of Plato’s only other reference to someone of that name (Clay, 1985, 234; Green, 2014, 70), is the lack of attention that Clay’s brief but brilliant article has received from modern readers (but see Green, 2014, 70 and Sedley, 2010, 105 n. 59). My purpose here is to explain that lack of attention by comparing Plato’s *Phaedo* itself to the submerged and distorted Glaucus of *Republic* 10, and then to argue that we need a new “art of Glaucus” to catch sight of its true or original nature (*R.* 611c7-d1). Applying this new art requires a thorough-going critique of developmentalism.

It is true that great progress has been made in advancing this critique in the last thirty years. Important work by Jacob Howland and Catherine Zuckert, both working in the Straussian tradition (Howland 1991; Zuckert 2009), by Debra Nails under the influence of Holger Thesleff (Nails, 1994), and arguably even the reference to “an ideal reading order” in Charles H. Kahn (Kahn, 1996, 48; cf. Cooper and Hutchinson, 1997, xii-xviii and xxiv), have shaken developmentalism’s absolute hegemony. But Plato’s *Phaedo* remains peculiarly susceptible to being construed as representing an outgrown stage of “Plato’s development” (Jorgenson, 2018), and therefore a re-interpretation of that dialogue, taking its start from Clay’s breakthrough—and using a number of “late” dialogues, including *Parmenides*, to do so—will tend to advance and perhaps begin to complete a project ably initiated by others.

A re-interpretation of *Phaedo* must begin with challenging the traditional dichotomy between “developmentalism” and “unitarianism,” both of which alternatives depend on either asserting or denying Plato’s intellectual development over time. In the developmentalist alternative, *Phaedo* is a paradigmatically “middle period” work, and thus ripe for being outgrown in an intellectual sense. The alternative to this distinction on offer here is to separate Plato’s philosophical position—let’s call that “Platonism”—from the intellectual development of *the student*. With Plato understood as a teacher, and *Phaedo* understood as a pedagogically “late dialogue,” it is possible to combine the student’s development with the teacher’s unitarian purpose, i.e., to teach Platonism.

One of Clay's most illuminating insights arises from dividing explanations of "the art of Glaucus" into two kinds: those that indicate the presence of the philosopher Paul Friedländer called "Plato the geographer" (Friedländer, 1958, 261-85) and those, like his own, that depend on recognizing "Plato the transcendentalist" (Clay, 1985, 233). The former is on display when Reginald Hackforth translated or glossed ἡ Γλαύκου τέχνη as "a scientific genius" and "a great scientist" (Hackforth, 1955, 169 n. 2): he was assuming that this art would yield empirical exactitude about the visible world. The latter, by contrast, emerges when the geological myth is read not as an advertisement for, e.g., the atmosphere-transcending Hubble space station or the clear skies of Egypt (cf. *Epin.* 986e9-987a6), but rather as a kind of anti-cosmology (cf. *Phd.* 114d8-115a3), in which our vision of the heavens is just as distorted as is the perception of Glaucus, and thus of our own souls, in *Republic* (note ἐαυτῶν at *R.* 515a6). Consider the following observation by Catherine Zuckert (Zuckert, 2009, 834):

In contrast to the Athenian (and Timaeus), however, Socrates does not base his belief in the existence of gods on observations of the regular, hence intelligible, movements of the heavens. On the contrary, in the *Phaedo* we hear him remind his close associates that human beings cannot directly, accurately, or completely observe the intelligible order of the heavens, so long as their minds are dulled and confused by their senses.

Although our vision is turned outwards toward the heavens in the *Phaedo* myth, and inwards toward the soul in the Glaucus image of *Republic* 10, Clay makes the crucial observation (Clay, 1985, 234):

To understand Plato's allusion to the seagod Glaukos in the *Phaedo*, we must turn with Glaukon to the perspectives of the *Republic*, where the human eye is raised up from 'the sea in which it now dwells' (*R.* 611e5). Here Glaukos is seen in barely recognizable form from a world above; in the *Phaedo* the perspective is reversed.

In both cases, we are confronted with a defect of vision, and connecting the two suggests that the ἡ Γλαύκου τέχνη is less likely to be the empirical art of “Plato the geographer”—an art that would allow him or some other “scientific genius” to see physical things more accurately—than an indication that “Plato the transcendentalist” believes our embodied state precludes the possibility of seeing the true form of Glaucus, our own souls, or the *caelestia*. Read as an anti-cosmology, the geological myth in *Phaedo* thus confirms Cicero’s famous description of Socrates (*Tusculan Disputations* 5.10-11), thanks to whom philosophy abandoned its Presocratic pretensions and returned to the city, and ultimately to the prison-house, where Socrates will take his final leave of us.

I would like to suggest that Γλαύκου in the phrase ἡ Γλαύκου τέχνη should be interpreted as an objective genitive, i.e., not as a reference to some desiderated art *possessed* by Glaucus but rather as the art of *seeing* Glaucus’ true nature despite the distortion created by his submarine appearance or rather on our soul-blinding reliance on sense-perception in general (*Phd.* 99d4-e4). But my purpose is not to show how an account based on the Glaucus of *Republic* 10 can be squared with the geographical myth in *Phaedo* but rather to illuminate the lingering power of developmentalism as the principal obstacle blocking the path to *any* account of this kind. Despite the fact that Plato chose to interweave late dialogues like *Sophist* and *Statesman* into the series of early or middle ones that begins with *Euthyphro* and ends with *Phaedo*, a still-powerful orthodoxy not only prevents us from reading the latter as Plato’s Socratic response to the cosmological aspirations already voiced by other characters in *Timaeus* and *Laws*, but also precludes Clay’s application of passages from *Phaedrus* and *Republic* to the interpretation of *Phaedo* on the grounds that it was written earlier than either (cf. Ross, 1951, 2).

Here, then, is where a pedagogical or student-oriented sense of “developmentalism” enters the picture: instead of placing *Phaedo* in the middle of *Plato’s* intellectual development, the re-interpretation attempted here places it *at the end of the student’s*. In order to rescue *Phaedo* from the distortions wrought by “Plato’s development”—i.e.,

by “developmentalism” as conventionally opposed to “unitarianism”—my re-interpretation depends on the claim that whenever Plato may have *written* his immortal *Phaedo*, he expected his readers to have already read not only *Republic* and *Phaedrus* but *Parmenides* as well. As a result, I am not party to the following description based on the conception of “developmentalism” that I reject (Prior, 1985, 168):

All parties to the dispute over the nature of Plato’s development would agree that the *Euthyphro* is an early dialogue; that the *Phaedo* and *Republic* are dialogues dating to Plato’s middle period, and that the *Phaedo* is the earlier of the two; that the *Parmenides* post-dates the *Republic*.

In short, my paper’s thesis is that we should reconsider the way we read Socrates’ last discourse in the light of the student’s intellectual development *and* Plato’s unitarian purpose, privileging its dramatic and didactic aspects in a manner that will allow us to give Clay’s insights the weight they deserve. By contrast, a hermeneutic that regards *Phaedo* as an outgrown stage of Plato’s development, and not as the dramatic culmination of the dialogues as a whole, has made this great dialogue’s original form as unrecognizable as the ocean brine has made the sea-god Glaucus.

As the quotation from Prior indicates, we are all familiar with the broad outlines of the current εἰκὼς μῦθος (*Ti.* 29d2) based on Order of Composition (see Gerson, 2000, 201), and thus with its relevant consequences. Although the discussion of Recollection in *Phaedo* is allowed to refer back to *Meno* (Gallop, 1975, 115),² the reference to other arguments for immortality in *Republic* 10 (*R.* 611b9-10) is considered a retrospective reference to *Phaedo* (see Bostock, 1986, 3) and thus an attempt like Clay’s to reverse this order—i.e., to elucidate *Phaedo* on the basis of passages from *Republic* or

² I will be using the terminology of Gallop, 1975 as follows: as follows: “the Cyclical Argument” (69e6-72e1), 103-13; “the Recollection Argument” (72e3-78b3), 113-37; “the Affinity Argument” (78b4-84b8), 137-46; and “the Final Argument” (102a10-107b10), 192-222.

Phaedrus—becomes suspect in principle (see Hackforth, 1955, 11). Of even greater philosophical substance is the alleged relationship between *Phaedo* and *Parmenides*: having introduced the Theory of Forms in the earlier dialogue, Plato is presented as having abandoned it, in its *Phaedo*-form at least, in the later one (Bostock, 1986, 206-207; cf. Ryle, 1966, 8-17). Especially among Anglophone scholars, it remains almost impossible to read *Phaedo* without this story in already mind, and it is therefore no accident that David Bostock's commentary begins with a section on chronology of composition (Bostock, 1986, 1-5). The obvious dramatic incongruities entailed by this story—Socrates' repeated insistence in *Phaedo* that the Theory has frequently been his theme (*Phd.* 76d7-9 and 100b1-7), as well as the more general circumstance that Plato depicts a young Socrates being exposed to a critique of this theory in *Parmenides*—are generally overlooked (but see Dorter, 1989, 183-84), and few scholars are willing to consider the possibility that no matter when Plato may have written *Phaedo*, he intended it to be read by those who were already familiar with *Parmenides*. Taught to imagine the octogenarian Plato striving, perhaps unsuccessfully, to finish the ponderous *Laws* (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 3.37), we generally overlook the possibility that he might just as plausibly have devoted his advanced years—what Cicero described as his *placida et lenis senectus* (*De senectute* 13)—to revising and beautifying his dialogues as a whole (as per Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De compositione verborum*, 3.16).

The result is that Plato is presently caught in a hermeneutic cross-fire: reading *Phaedo* with the knowledge that its own author will eventually revise or abandon the Theory of Forms that undergirds the Final Argument, we nevertheless assume that Plato himself regarded that argument as adequate whilst writing it. We need not embrace this divisive conception, however, and—to recur to the metaphor at the center of this paper—whenever we do so uncritically, we subject “the true nature” of Socrates' last discourse to the distortions of developmentalism (as conventionally understood), encrusting it with disfiguring barnacles, seaweed, and rocks (*R.* 611d3-4). Consider a parallel case of dividing author from reader by Dorothea Frede

(Frede, 1999): in her discussion of *Phaedo* 65d9-e6, she first points out, accurately, that Socrates' "assumption of separate Forms of health, strength and tallness must seem quite suspicious" (Frede, 1999, 194), and then continues:

In the *Phaedo* Socrates asserts time and again that the mind will be better able to pursue such questions after death when it is free from all earthly encumbrances. But this result seems to take us full circle. It brings us right back to the dubiousness of the doubtful cases. How can there be health when there is no body, or strength or tallness? What sense does it make to say that the mind will have better understanding of them in a life after death? (Frede, 1999, 197).

These are excellent questions, and the relevant difference between my position and Frede's turns only on the degree of Plato's awareness of the resulting incongruities: she claims that "Plato seems to be totally unaware of the absurdity of assuming Health or Strength or Tallness as such, without any bodies whose health, strength, or tallness are thereby explained" (Frede, 1999, 195). Of particular consequence is the fact that the word μέγεθος, which Frede translates here as "tallness," figures prominently in both "the Third Man" of *Parmenides* (*Prm.* 132a1-b2) and the Final Argument of *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 100e5-6). My claim is that we need not divide ourselves from Plato, or Plato from himself, but rather admit the possibility that Plato intended his readers to see the same problem Frede saw, and likewise to be familiar with further problems associated with μέγεθος in *Parmenides* before meeting the Final Argument in *Phaedo*. And as Clay's discussion of "the art of Glaucus" suggests, Plato also expects that dialogue's readers to have already read his *Republic*.

This claim becomes more plausible when we consider the fact that Socrates introduces the Theory of Forms in the Final Argument in a manner that—to borrow Frede's words again—"must seem quite suspicious" to a reader already familiar with *Parmenides* and *Republic*:

I will go back to those much-spoken-of things and begin from them, having hypothesized [ὑποθέμενοι]

something to be beautiful in and of itself and good [ἀγαθόν] and big [μέγα] and all the others. (*Phd.* 100b4-7; translation mine).

In addition to the hammered insistence that Socrates is discussing matters that he has often discussed before, two other things deserve comment. The first is that joining good and beautiful to “big” is significant not only because of the decisive role the latter plays in “the Third Man” (*Prm.* 132a3 and 132a7; cf. 132a10-11), but also in relation to the doubled reference in *Parmenides* to the beautiful, the good, and the just (*Prm.* 129b7-9 and 135c9), a triad that emerges in *Gorgias* (*Grg.* 459c6-460a2), flourishes in *Republic* 7 (*R.* 520c5) and *Phaedrus* (*Phdr.* 278a3-4), and has already appeared in *Phaedo* itself (*Phd.* 65d4-8). And the use of ὑποθέμενοι in the context of the word ἀγαθόν creates a second, and even more important contrast, this time with *Republic* 6: there, the Idea of the Good is the un-hypothetical principle of the First and highest part of the Divided Line (cf. 509b6-8, 511b2-c2, and 532a1-b3) whilst the word ὑποθέμενοι has already appeared in the preceding speech in *Phaedo* (*Phd.* 100a3-4) in close proximity to the word for images (ἐν εἰκόσι at *Phd.* 100a2), the other distinguishing methodological feature of the Second Part of the Divided Line (cf. *R.* 509b4-6 and 509b9-511b1).³

A reading of *Phaedo* that precludes interpreting “the art of Glaucus” on the basis of *Republic* 10 likewise forecloses an interpretation of its Final Argument based on the Divided Line. These two foreclosures are both linked to the image of Glaucus by the true nature of the soul, or at least they would be so linked if it were acknowledged that the Shorter Way, which Socrates is following in *Republic* 4 (*R.* 435c9-d4), is based on the methods of the Second Part of the Divided Line.⁴ There Socrates uses the City as an image (*R.*

³ It is a failure to connect Socrates’ introduction to the Final Argument in *Phd.* (99d4-100c2) with the dianoetic or Second Part of the Divided Line—and not with the First, which is the only method suitable for reaching the Ideas—that vitiates the argument of Almeida, 2019, an otherwise substantial article; see especially 212-17.

⁴ For the connection between the Second Part of the Divided Line and the Shorter Way, see Gutiérrez, 2017; the crucial step is to take seriously the first and non-mathematical description of the Line’s Second Part at *R.* 510b4-8.

368c8-d7), and by hypothesizing the Law of Non-Contradiction (*R.* 437a5; see Gutiérrez, 2017, 89-94), generates an account of the tripartite soul that renders justice choice-worthy even if there are no post-mortem consequences to be considered (*R.* 366d5-367a5), while in *Phaedo*, he proves to another pair of matched interlocutors, and by means of yet another triad, that post-mortem continuance accrues to the soul regardless of its practice of justice. Given these parallels, perhaps the greatest non-ironic contrast between the two arguments is their location in their respective dialogues: in *Republic*, the Longer Way follows the Shorter, whereas in *Phaedo*, the Affinity Argument—which requires the philosopher to master the practice of death (*Phd.* 64a4-6, 67e5-7, and 80e2-81a3), emancipate herself from the body (*Phd.* 67c5-e4 and 80d5-81a11), and overcome the desire that leads to repeated incarnations (*Phd.* 81b1-e2) —precedes the Final Argument. It is this arrangement that explains Socrates' reference to Penelope at the loom (*Phd.* 84a2-b7): in using her as a negative example, he tells his audience that once philosophy has managed to loosen (λύειν at 84a4) our soul's attachment to the body, it would be senseless to give it back over to pleasures and pains (84a2-7). With respect to the Affinity Argument, the Final Argument reweaves what Socrates himself has just loosened.

The dubious claim that there is any meaningful sense in which the number Three can really be One is a particularly important link between the Shorter Way in *Republic* and the Final Argument of *Phaedo*. In *Republic* 4, the description of the just soul reaches its climax when Socrates describes it as “a one out of many” (*R.* 443e1-2), a claim that precedes the discussion of arithmetic in *Republic* 7, where the infinitely repeatable but also part-less and indivisible One (*R.* 525d8-526a7), reappearing as the philosopher's monad in *Philebus* (*Phlb.* 56d4-e6), becomes the basis of every number, even and odd (see Denyer, 2008, 192), and more importantly is identified as an indispensable propaedeutic for emancipating the soul from the sensible realm of Becoming (*R.* 524d1-525a8). Despite the Problem of the One and the Many (*Phlb.* 14c8-10; cf. Waterfield, 1980, 304 n. 69 with *Scheinproblem* at Frede, 1997, 115), another unitary Triad reappears in the Final Argument of *Phaedo*—much as Glaucus will

reappear after it is concluded—and does so in order that, having “occupied” three things, it can bring along in its wake an even-excluding oddness that Socrates then uses to prove that soul brings a death-excluding life to the things it occupies (Bae, 1996). Glaucus appears in *Republic* 10 to remind the reader that Socrates described only the soul’s present appearance in *Republic* 4, not its original nature (*R.* 611a10-b8). Glaucus *reappears* in *Phaedo* not only because “Plato the transcendentalist” wants to hammer home the inadequacy of Presocratic physics with the geological myth that follows, but also in order to remind us that without being mindful of the Divided Line in *Republic* 6, we are apt to take both the Shorter Way and the Final Argument as adequate, ignoring the fact that both depend on the methods associated with its Second Part, and thus depend on images and rely on hypotheses (Altman, 2012, 141). My claim, by contrast, is not only that Plato didn’t regard its Final Argument as adequate but that he expects his students, coming to *Phaedo* “late,” to recognize for themselves why they shouldn’t do so. But we cannot recognize any of this unless we interpret *Phaedo* in the light of *Republic*, *Parmenides*, and *Philebus*, something that the conventional understanding of “developmentalism” has made it impossible to do. It is this conventional understanding that must be rethought, and as an alternative, I am arguing for a student-centered conception of “developmentalism” that reveals Plato’s “unitarian” purpose.

Although the Final Argument has persuaded few readers that the soul is immortal (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, 1.24), it has managed to persuade a great many scholars that Plato embraced what Aristotle calls ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί (Wilson, 1904), also known as “eidetic” (as opposed to “monadic”) numbers (see Klein, 1985, 45-48). Despite the elementary arithmetic lesson of *Republic* 7, the philosopher’s monads of *Philebus*, and Aristotle’s monad-based critique of ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί in *Metaphysics* M-N (see Annas, 1976, 162-76), many have followed the path John Cook Wilson laid out in 1904 (Cherniss, 1944, 513-24), maintaining that Plato’s numbers were exclusively eidetic, and thus that each “one” of them was a unitary Form (Shorey, 1903, 83). Taking this position on “Plato’s philosophy

of mathematics” (see Wedberg, 1955 and Pritchard, 1995) has led most of those who embrace it to reject Aristotle’s frequently repeated claim that Plato regarded mathematical objects (τὰ μαθηματικά) as “intermediate [μετάξυ]” (see Ross, 1925, 1.166; cf. Morrow, 1952, 148) between Forms and sensible objects. Since the unitary Triad that brings oddness in its wake in the Final Argument is the best evidence for Plato’s embrace of eidetic number in the dialogues (Wedberg, 1955, 120-22 and 131-35; Pritchard, 1995, 73-78 and 153-54; Ross, 1951, 180-81; Annas, 1975, 150), *Phaedo* has played a prominent role in the ongoing and still unresolved debate about “intermediates” in Plato (see Gerson, 2013, 21 n. 39; cf. Adam, 1902, 2.115), aptly called “the longest running show in town” (Shiner, 1983, 173 n. 5).⁵ Increasing the importance of *Phaedo* in this debate is the fact that some prominent scholars have also found evidence for Plato’s embrace of the “intermediates” in the famous words αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα (*Phd.* 74c1) in the Recollection Argument (Burnet, 1911, 56; Cornford, 1939, 71; Hackforth, 1955, 69 n. 2; Bluck, 1955, 67 n. 3).⁶ This mixed message should be regarded as both deliberate on Plato’s part and instructive, on which see Rist, 1964, 37 (emphasis mine):

we may conclude not only that αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα can not be intermediates, but that, despite difficulties in his conception of mathematical Forms, *which a separation of ‘mathematicals’ from Ideas would have dispelled*, Plato cannot be shown to have made such a separation in the dialogues.

An old debate about Plato’s so-called “philosophy of mathematics” has but little connection to what most of us currently find interesting in *Phaedo*, but it really goes to the heart of the matter: the true purpose of Plato’s immortal dialogue on immortality. My claim is that Plato’s *Phaedo* is not designed to *prove* that our souls are

⁵ For more up-to-date bibliography than Shiner, 1983, 180-183, see Arsen, 2012, 200-23.

⁶ As pointed out in Ackrill, 1953, 553-54, the case of Ross, 1951 is complicated: cf. 25 and 60. Up-to-date on the controversy is Lee, 2012, but since the heyday of the debate was in the middle of the last century, see also Apolloni, 1989, 127-28, and especially Löhr, 1990, 42-64.

immortal regardless of how we live our mortal lives, but rather to persuade us to *acquire* immortality by following Socrates back down into the Cave in full knowledge—thanks to the art of Glaucus—that the sensible world is nothing more (Green, 2014, 72; note the references to Clay, 1985), and that our soul, no longer imaged as tripartite, can only become itself among the Ideas (*Phd.* 81a4-11). When *Phaedo* is read as the culmination of the Platonic dialogues as a whole, its Final Argument can be recognized as *deliberately inadequate* not simply because it fails to prove that the soul will survive multiple incarnations, but more importantly because the dialogue's true purpose is to persuade us to overcome the desire that leads to its reincarnation (*Phd.* 81b1-e2), and thus to emancipate ourselves from the submerged semi-vision imposed by the body—a semi-vision responsible for both the tripartition of the soul and for the somatic concerns of “Plato the geographer” (cf. *Phd.* 81b4-5)—by becoming immortal through philosophy, revealed in *Phaedo* as the practice of death. It is only the Affinity Argument that reminds us of how this is to be accomplished, and to accomplish it we must rise up to the fully transcendent Ideas—the un-hypothetical Idea of the Good in particular—by breaching the aquatic surface of the merely sensible. Although useful for reaching that surface from below, the logically archaic monad,⁷ cause of Number in general and not merely of the odd numbers alone (*Phd.* 105c4-6), is no closer to the intelligible and transcendent than to the visible and physical. It is only by acquiring the capacity to recognize where to draw the dividing line between the Ideas and merely hypothesized images like “the One,” “equality” (Geach, 1956, 76), “bigness,” (Frede, 1999) and “the triad” that the soul will only recover *its* archaic nature.

The ἀκμή of deliberate inadequacy in the Final Argument is reached at *Phd.* 105c4-6, where Socrates claims, in accordance with “the subtler [κομψότερον] theory,” that the monad is the cause of oddness. Plato had ensured almost from the start (*Alc.2* 140a7-9) that every neophyte would reject the preceding claim (*Phd.* 105c2-4) that it is

⁷ For the equation of the Idea of the Good and the One, see Krämer, 1966, 41; for a response, likewise based on R. 534b8-d1, see Altman, 2016, p.251, n.176.

not by disease that we are diseased, but rather by fever, and therefore that his very next claim requires the closest possible scrutiny, served up by Eunshil Bae:

before he launches on the Final argument Socrates criticizes other causal explanations given by scientists or materialists [100e8-101c2]. The criticism revealed that he tacitly endorses the following principle of causation: ‘If something is responsible for making others F, it is itself to be characterized as F.’ This was clear, for instance, in his objection to citing a small head as the cause of something’s being large [101b1]. (Bae, 1996, 181-82).

It is by construing “the monad as the cause of oddness” (Hackforth, 1955, 158 n. 2) that Plato points again to the inadequacy of the Final Argument: it does so by (1) falsely configuring “one” as odd, (2) creating an equivocation on μόνας (cf. Gallop, 1975, 209 and 210), and (3) doing both simultaneously. Since “one” is not a number, it cannot be odd; since “three” is a number, it cannot be one.

It is the singular “equality” (ἡ ἰσότης) and the oft-repeated “the equal itself” (αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον beginning at 74a12) that causes the trouble, not αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα, and it was the great service of P. T. Geach to point out that the latter was a preferable formulation (Geach, 1956, 76). Conversely, it is loyalty to a unified plurality like αὐτὸ τὸ ἴσον that bedevils Gregory Vlastos’s reply: “But that the expression [sc. αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα] does refer to the Form, Equality, is proved by the sequel in the text” (Vlastos, 1965, 287-88). Equality—like both likeness and difference in this respect—exists only in relation to two or more things, and therefore a perfectly monadic “equality” without any parts is every bit as self-contradictory as an “atomic line” and for exactly the same reason: just as a line is intermediate between two points, so too is the equal either intermediate between “the greater and the less” (as at *Phlb.* 24e7-25b4 and *Prm.* 164e3-165a5) or—and this is the true Platonic solution—it is the very thing that led Aristotle to distinguish τὰ μαθηματικά from the Ideas: all of *them* were equal. And once we grasp that the paradigmatic equals (αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα) are uniquely the philosopher’s monads out of which “the Odd and the

Even" (Denyer, 2008, 192) are composed, we can then add a third deliberate self-contradiction to ἡ ἰσότης and "the atomic line," likewise testing our grasp of the difference between Ideas and τὰ μαθηματικά: what Aristotle called ἀσύμβλητοι ἀριθμοί. And all three of these self-contradictions attracted Aristotle's critical attention, and he refuted all three as if he were refuting Plato without fully realizing why it was so easy for him to do so.

Consider in this context Bostock's argument that the reference to αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα in the Recollection Argument cannot refer to the so-called "intermediates."

So far in the *Phaedo* [sc. up to *Phd.* 74c1] Plato has spoken of sensible things, such as equal sticks and stones, and of forms, such as the form of equality. But we have been given no suggestion that there is also some third kind of entity intermediate between the two. If Plato meant to introduce a third kind of entity, he could not have imagined that the bare phrase 'the equals themselves' would reveal what he had in mind. Therefore, he did not mean to introduce a third kind of entity. The phrase must be intended to refer to something we have had before, and in that case it can only be an alternative expression for the form. (Bostock, 1986, 80).

Here then is another example of how developmentalism has led to distortion. On my account, Plato is not *introducing* "a third kind of entity" in *Phaedo*; he has already done so in *Republic* 6-7, and has then built on that foundation in *Phaedrus* (*Phdr.* 249b6-c5), *Parmenides*, and *Philebus*. It is on the basis of *Philebus*, for example, that we can recognize why it is only the philosopher's monads that are the necessarily plural basis for the enigmatic αὐτὰ τὰ ἴσα since all of them are the same (*Phlb.* 56e2-3). But even more importantly, it is only in *Parmenides* that "the One," at once the ἀρχή of τὰ μαθηματικά and Plato's solution to the Problem of the One and the Many, is explicitly connected to διάνοια (*Prm.* 143a6-9), already identified with the Second Part of the Divided Line (cf. Smith, 1996). By echoing the language of the Line's Second Part in the prelude to the Final Argument (*Phd.* 99d4-100b9), Plato is not only indicating

why that argument must prove to be inadequate, but is challenging us to remember the only truly Platonic path to immortality: the Longer Way, lit by the Idea of the Good, that has led Socrates, in accordance with Justice, back down to the shadows and the hemlock.

In both dialogues, of course, there is an obvious alternative to this Longer Way, and the emergence of Glaucus at the end of *Republic* has the purpose of destabilizing what Plato must have recognized as the reader's natural inclination to regard the tripartite soul of the Shorter Way, despite *R.* 435c9-d4, as his last word on the subject. But the problem became particularly acute beginning in nineteenth century: by placing *Phaedo* before *Republic*, the Order of Composition paradigm justifies an ongoing fascination with "Plato's Moral Psychology" (Barney, Brennan, and Brittain, 2012) and when *Phaedo* is reduced to the status of outgrown stage of "Plato's development," the revisionist significance of Glaucus in *Republic* 10 can be contested (see Burnyeat, 2000; Woolf, 2012). If tripartition were not taken as Plato's "mature doctrine" (Ruprecht, 1999, 29), the links between *Phaedo* and the Glaucus image could at last be given their due.

In *Republic*, the image of Glaucus emerges in the context of the soul's immortality; in *Phaedo*, a dialogue dedicated to that subject, it reappears in anticipation of the similarly submerged state Socrates goes on to describe in the geological myth. In *Republic* 10, Socrates remarks that it is only by looking to the soul's φιλοσοφία (*R.* 611d6-612a7) that we can catch sight of Glaucus' original form, and thus see the soul as something other than "how it appears at present" (*R.* 611c5 and 612a4-6), but it is only in *Phaedo*, where φιλοσοφία is finally revealed as the body- and sense-transcending "practice of death" (*Phd.* 81a2), that Plato teaches us—by precept, example, and by pedagogical challenge—how to accomplish this life-altering result (*Grg.* 481c3-4). Deftly enfolding the earlier Cyclical and Recollection Arguments into the dialogue's Final Argument (Gallop, 1982), Plato restates the lesson of the Glaucus passage only in the Affinity Argument, climaxing as it does with the prophetic Swan Song (Gallop, 2003, 229-31). There, the undistorted soul is once

again revealed by its kinship with the divine, the deathless, and the eternal (R. 611e1-2), and it is this Apollonian Song that reveals Plato's unitarian and characteristically Platonist position, while Plato's Socrates, who sings it to us, is immortalized there as an emulation-inspiring example.

But thanks to its deliberate inadequacies with respect to proof, *Phaedo* is also a pedagogical *challenge* in the form of a final examination, and Plato forces us to look beyond the outward appearance of its Final Argument to the substance of our own souls and the merely aqueous world in which we temporarily find ourselves. Better than anyone else, he knows that most of his readers do not recognize that we are living in such a world, and as a generous teacher, he has valuable and salutary lessons even for those of us who don't; hence the Shorter Way of *Republic* and the Final Argument of *Phaedo*. He allows us, for example, to consider the problem of participation in the theoretical and ultimately physical context of "the big in us" and "the triad," and not only in the considerably simpler context—at once practical and exemplified—of the kind of causes that Socrates uses to explain his presence in the prison-house (*Phd.* 98d6-99a5; see Aristotle, *Metaph.* 1.9 991b3-4, based on *Phd.* 100b3-e7), those that make him our emulation-inspiring example. Plato has prepared us in *Phaedo* itself to deconstruct "the triad" with "the equals themselves" (Rist, 1964, 29-30), and to see through "the beautiful itself, the good, and the big" by means not only of the earlier passage that Frede astutely identified as "quite suspicious" but also by the reference to the just, beautiful, and good right before it (*Phd.* 65d4-8). But he leaves the final decision to us, and is more intent on making philosophy immortal—even in the deceptive form of a bee's stinger (*Phd.* 91b7-c6) —than on proving Platonism to be immortality's gateway. On the other hand, "Plato the transcendentalist" knows that the more we ponder what he meant by "the art of Glaucus," i.e., the more we read him as Clay did, the closer will we come to seeing the geometrical line that divides the sensible from the transcendent for what it really is: intermediate between the two. Plato has been teaching us *this* art of seeing, and in a form specifically geared to his culminating *Phaedo*, at least since *Republic*

6, and if we have acquired it, we will recognize that Plato's last dialogue may have more to do with the purification of our souls than with proving them immortal. By emphasizing "the art of Glaucus," the problem of $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\ \acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha$, and the only One that is not Many, I have tried to show that regardless of Order of Composition, Plato intended us to read *Phaedo* after both *Republic* and *Parmenides*, and that only when we do so does it become possible to release the still imprisoned Socrates from the shackles of developmentalism.

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