The Classical Quarterly 68.1 53–68 © The Classical Association (2018)
doi:10.1017/S0009838818000150

REPUBLIC 585B–D: ARGUMENT AND TEXT

§1 THE PROBLEM WITH 585B–D

The so-called 'Olympian' proof in Plato's *Republic* contains one of the first explicit distinctions between the nature of intellectual and bodily pleasures. The argument for the superiority of the former rests on a) identifying pleasure and pain with certain kinds of filling and emptying (583b1–585a7), and b) differentiating between bodily and intellectual pleasures according to the kind of filling:

(i) Bodily depletions differ from depletions of the soul in the kind of lack and, accordingly, in the kind of thing that fills the lack: hunger and thirst are bodily lacks which food and drink can cure, whereas ignorance and folly are cured by intelligence (585a8–b8).

Thus, (ii), the kind of lack (belonging to the soul vs belonging to the body), together with the kind of filler ('food' for the soul vs food for the body), and derivatively the method of filling (eating vs learning) determine the kind of filling.

(iii) Kinds of filling differ in truth: filling A is truer than filling B if and only if the kind of fillers used in A *are* more than the kind of fillers used in B and the kind of thing filled via A *is* more than the kind of thing filled via B (cf. 585d7–10).

(iv) Fillers of the soul *are* more than bodily fillers (585b11–d4).

(v) The soul *is* more than the body (585d5–6).

Therefore, (vi), filling of the soul is truer than bodily filling, that is, filling of the soul is more really a filling (585d7–10).

From (vi), we can establish the superiority of intellectual pleasures: they *are* more (that is, are more real and true) (585d11–e6):

'If being filled with what is by nature appropriate is pleasant, [then] that which is more really filled with things that are more would make for enjoying more really and more truly a true pleasure, but what partakes in things that are less is filled less truly and stably and partakes in a less trustworthy and less true pleasure.' 'Absolutely right', said he.[1]

εἰ ἄρα τὸ πληροῦσθαι τῶν φύσει προσηκόντων ἡδύ ἐστι, τὸ τῷ ὄντι καὶ τῶν ὄντων πληρούμενον μᾶλλον μᾶλλον ὄντως τε καὶ ἀληθεστέρως χαίρειν ἂν ποιοῖ ἡδονῇ ἀληθεῖ, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἧττον ὄντων μεταλαμβάνον ἧττόν τε ἂν ἀληθῶς καὶ βεβαίως πληροῖτο καὶ ἀπιστοτέρας ἂν ἡδονῆς καὶ ἧττον ἀληθοῦς μεταλαμβάνοι. — ἀναγκαιότατα, ἔφη.

Unfortunately, a textual problem hinders our understanding of premise (iv). Slings's OCT marks line 585c8 as *locus desperatus*—not because the Greek as transmitted defies translation but rather because the Greek makes no sense as part of the argument to which it belongs. The interlocutors take the superiority of the soul over the body simply for

[1] All translations are mine unless stated otherwise. The line numbers correspond to the text in S.R. Slings, *Platonis Rempublicam* (Oxford Classical Texts) (Oxford, 2003).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

granted at this stage in the *Republic*, which puts pressure on premise (iv). While the distinction itself between bodily and psychic fillings is clear enough, the further point that psychic fillings are more true than bodily fillings invites many questions. An important question is what notion of 'truth' Socrates employs—a question that I do not pursue here.[2] Instead, I seek to reconstruct the argument underlying premise (iv).[3] My goal is to establish a plausible text that makes for an intelligible argument and thus puts doubts about Plato's text at rest.

The problem with the text emerges clearly when we try to follow the argument for (iv). To establish psychic filling as truer, Socrates asks which of the kinds of fillers partakes more in *being*, that is, which of the kinds *is* more, those 'of bread, drink, relish and in general food, *or* the kind of true belief, knowledge, understanding and again in sum all virtue' (585b11–c2). In parallel to the bodily fillers, we should understand the psychic fillers as items of knowledge or true belief, not capacities of the soul (as in Book 5). Socrates does not ask whether our nutritive apparatus *is* more than our cognitive apparatus—that would be a question about what is being filled—but about the objects with which we fill them.[4]

Next, Socrates asks Glaucon to judge the question which kind of filler partakes more in pure *being* by considering an abstract point: 'do you think that which is connected with what is always the same, with what is immortal, and with truth, and is so itself, and comes about in such a thing, *is* more or that which is connected with what is never the same, mortal, and is so itself, and comes about in such a thing?' (585c2–6).[5] We could ask many questions about the status and meaning of these criteria: Where do they come from? Does Socrates covertly rely on the connection between being and the forms established earlier? Or does he look for a less contentious framework? If so, what does *being* have to do with unchangeability, immortality and truth?[6] If Glaucon has any second thoughts about the criteria, he does not show it, but answers without hesitating 'that which is connected with what is always the same excels by far' (585c7)—which merely confirms that, if X has certain characteristics, X *is* more. Glaucon reacts to Socrates' abstract consideration, but does not say anything about the two kinds of fillers.[7]

[2] For a recent attempt to answer the question, see D. Wolfsdorf, 'Pleasure and truth in *Republic* 9', *CQ* 63 (2013), 110–38.

[3] I do not, primarily, concern myself with assessing the overall plausibility of the Olympian proof. M. Erginel, 'Inconsistency and ambiguity in *Republic* IX', *CQ* 61 (2011), 493–520 valiantly defends it against the charges of inconsistency (levelled by D. Frede, 'Rumpelstiltskin's pleasures: true and false pleasures in Plato's *Philebus*', *Phronesis* 30 [1985], 151–80) and ambiguity (J.C.B. Gosling and C.C.W. Taylor, *The Greeks on Pleasure* [Oxford, 1982], 122–6). J. Warren, 'Plato on the pleasures and pains of knowing', *OSAPh* 39 (2010), 1–32 also tackles the latter point.

[4] The allegory of the Cave makes clear that filling it with knowledge requires the soul to have the right configuration (esp. 518b7–c3: we cannot simply put knowledge into souls that lack it). Therefore, 585b3–7, which does speak of the soul's configuration, does not undermine the proposed interpretation. Erginel (n. 3), 510–13 notes that the distinction between body and soul is too broad to capture e.g. the pleasures of the spirit. I agree, but follow Plato in casting the argument here in terms of bodily vs psychic pleasures.

[5] τὸ τοῦ ἀεὶ ὁμοίου ἐχόμενον καὶ ἀθανάτου καὶ ἀληθείας, καὶ αὐτὸ τοιοῦτον ὂν καὶ ἐν τοιούτῳ γιγνόμενον, μᾶλλον εἶναί σοι δοκεῖ, ἢ τὸ μηδέποτε ὁμοίου καὶ θνητοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸ τοιοῦτον καὶ ἐν τοιούτῳ γιγνόμενον;

[6] I shall leave the questions unanswered because the argument's reconstruction—my main goal—does not require the answers. I plan to return to the interpretation and evaluation of Plato's account of pleasure in the *Republic* in future work.

[7] *Pace* Erginel (n. 3), 501 and 504–8, who takes Socrates in 585c2–6 to refer to the best-fitting psychic filler under a different description.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Now, we would expect the interlocutors to apply the agreed framework to the kinds of fillers in question to conclude, as they do, that, 'in general, the kinds [of filler] concerned with the care of the body partake less in truth and being than in turn those kinds concerned with the care of the soul' (585d1–3). But the text transmitted by the best MSS at 585c8–14 thwarts our expectation:

ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμης μετέχει;
οὐδαμῶς.
τί δ'; ἀληθείας;
οὐδὲ τοῦτο.
εἰ δὲ ἀληθείας ἧττον, οὐ καὶ οὐσίας;
ἀνάγκη.

And does the being of what is always the same participate more in being than in knowledge?
Not at all.
Or more than in truth?
Not that either.
And if less in truth, then less in being also?
Necessarily.[8]

While an unexpected turn of argument hardly suffices to suspect the text—Plato's dialogues brim with surprises—the real problem concerns how the transmitted text could possibly yield the conclusion that psychic fillers *are* more. Instead of explicitly relating the different fillers to Socrates' points about being, the text has Socrates and Glaucon continue to talk about the being of what is always the same, and how *it* relates to knowledge, truth and being, but *not* how knowledge relates to being and truth. The move baffles interpreters: 'the traditional text takes what is always the same as its topic, and asks, pointlessly, after its share of being, knowledge and truth.'[9] The many attempts at emending the text evince the main problem with the passage. While the Greek is perfectly translatable, no one could make sense of it in the context: '[i]t seems quite plain what ought to occupy the position in this argument currently occupied by the sentence at 585c; but the transmitted text does not do the job—does not even come close to doing the job.'[10]

If we assume that i) the transmitted text does not make sense, and that ii) the argument Plato wrote does make sense, we must hazard an emendation to restore Plato's text and thought. Since we aim to reconstruct *Plato's* argument, and the manuscripts are in this case all we have to go by, the fewer changes to the transmitted text, the better. I shall attempt to defend a text that differs from the transmitted text only in one letter, the Via Positiva: ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει; Scholars have objected to the Via Positiva, alleging it to founder on insuperable difficulties, or accusing it of not doing the job. I argue that the more extensive emendations proposed instead of the Via Positiva do not result in better or more suitable arguments. If suitably interpreted, the Via Positiva does the job well. Because we should stay as close as possible to the transmitted text, we do not need to opt for either the Via Negativa, reading

[8] Trans. G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve, in J.M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson (edd.), *Plato Complete Works* (Indianapolis, 1997).
[9] G.R.F. Ferrari, 'Plato, *Republic* 9.585c–d', *CQ* 52 (2002), 383–8, at 383. He provides a list of emendations at 383 n. 1 and 388 nn. 10–13.
[10] Ferrari (n. 9), 384.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ἀνομοίου οὐσία οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει,[11] or the Via Nova, which has ἦ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει.[12]

Could we be even closer to the transmitted text? I propose to reconsider the first assumption, that the transmitted text does not make sense. The interpretative work to make the Via Positiva viable opens up a new vista on a long-abandoned path. Transferring the key features of the Via Positiva to the transmitted text results in an argument that gets to the conclusion: the Via Tradita (as I shall call it) does the job after all. Therefore, we do not need to change the text at all. After comparing their relative merits, I close by showing how well both Viae fit the larger context of the Olympian proof. I see my main contribution as offering an interpretation that renders the Via Positiva and the Via Tradita possible and indeed plausible readings of the argument at 585b–d. As far as I know, neither of them has received similar support in print.

§2 CHANGING THE SUBJECT

It is hard to see how the transmitted text at 585c8–9 can contribute to concluding that psychic fillers *are* more, because the text does not appear to relate the fillers to the abstract criteria for what is more real. An argument which explicitly connects the fillers with the more abstract considerations at 585c2–6 requires emending the text at 585c8. Since we are constrained by the transmitted text, I shall propose to change one letter only. I defend the change against alleged difficulties, which more extensive emendations promise to circumvent.

§2.1 Via Positiva, introduced

If the argument follows the expected strategy of relating items of knowledge as specific fillers directly to the abstract criteria for being, then knowledge should not be anything in which the being of something else partakes (as per transmitted text). Hence, grammatically, knowledge should not be the object of μετέχει, but should be its subject, that is, something which itself partakes in being. Thus, the crucial change in the text must concern ἢ ἐπιστήμης μετέχει. Two small changes would do the trick: if we change the text to ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης μετέχει, the question would be whether the being of what is always the same partakes any more in being than does the being of knowledge. If we change the text to ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει, the question would be whether the being of what is always the same partakes any more in being than does knowledge.[13] Either emendation would allow us to read the argument in the way we expect: Socrates would be asking to what extent knowledge shares in *being*.

The emendation is driven by considering the content of the exchange between Socrates and Glaucon. Now we must assure ourselves of the plausibility of the proposed changes. As parallels attest, Plato *can* write ἢ ἡ,[14] and any scribe may suppress the second H to correct a suspected dittography—which is especially likely when we

[11] J. Adam, *The Republic of Plato: Books VI–X* (Cambridge, 1902), 382–3 briefly considers and dismisses the Via Positiva in favour of the Via Negativa.

[12] Ferrari (n. 9), 385–7 proposes and defends this emendation.

[13] Cf. Adam (n. 11), 382.

[14] e.g. *Phd.* 74c1 and 100d5, *Cra.* 430c9, *La.* 192e1 and 193b2, *Prt.* 356d4, *Grg.* 505b11, *Meno* 76e4 and 78e7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

remember that accents and marks of aspiration were not always part of the text. The corruption from ἐπιστήμη to ἐπιστήμης is textually also very likely. 'Partake' (μετέχει) requires an object in the genitive, which usually stands very near the verb: Plato uses μετέχειν 28 times in the *Republic*, and barring our current passage, the genitive object is within two words of μετέχειν 24 out of 27 times,[15] including two occasions where the subject in the nominative stands right next to μετέχειν, as here.[16] A scribe, having copied the *Republic* up to this point, may therefore add the sigma without much thinking: it is like correcting a greengrocer's apostrophe.

While I do not think that we can determine which of the proposals, if any, *must* be the right one, I think that we should favour ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει over ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης. First, the scribe will have written ἢ ἡ while copying the *Republic*, albeit in much more straightforward constructions (433c6–8; 583a9), whereas he will not have encountered the combination of a distant genitive and a nominative right next to μετέχειν. Second, ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει straightforwardly pertains to the task of establishing the (relative) extent to which any kind of filler *is*, whereas ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης does so less elegantly. When Socrates asks to what extent the being of knowledge partakes in being—what would Glaucon's answer tell us about the filler knowledge? a) If 'the being of X' meant 'the nature of X', they would establish that it is in the nature of knowledge, and therefore true of every object or item of knowledge, to participate in *being*. But since the interpretation rests on taking the meaning of 'being' in the two expressions 'the being of X' and 'Y participates in being' to differ significantly, it should be adopted only with great caution. More plausibly, b), Socrates asks for 'the being of X' mainly to highlight the topic. In our case, Socrates and Glaucon would establish that the being of an item of knowledge shares in being, and thereby establish that knowledge shares in being. While ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης preserves the parallel to its *comparandum*, the being of what is always like, ἢ ἐπιστήμη attributes a more direct and less baroque line of thought to Glaucon and Socrates. On the whole, I think, we should adopt ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει.[17]

In either case, they make the point that knowledge participates in *being*. What does 'A participates in B' mean? While μετέχειν can mean more loosely 'has to do with' (for instance at *Phd.* 64e1), the interlocutors apparently regard 'participating more in [pure] being' (585b11) and 'being more' (585c4) as equivalent. They also answer the questions which filling is truer by establishing that psychic fillers participate more in truth and being (585d1–3). In both cases, the object's participating in F attributes F to the object. If we keep in mind that knowledge plays the role of a filler, something which 'fills' the soul's capacity of knowledge, the claim means that the objects of knowledge participate in being, that is, that they *are*, a claim resonant with Book 5.

The textual change helps our understanding of the argument, because it connects the initial exchange at 585b11–c6 with the rest of the argument. Socrates reminds Glaucon to compare the being of the different kinds of fillers with a view to the link between *being* more and being connected to what is always the same, to what is immortal and to truth on the one hand, and between *being* less and being connected to what is never the same and mortal (585c1–6). While the transmitted text had them expand on

[15] The exceptions are 476d1 (a substantivized participle), 503d7 and 539c6—none of which presents any difficulty in identifying the object of μετέχειν.

[16] 396e5 and 432b4–5.

[17] It is not my central task to decide between these options: the rest of my argument works equally well with either. I will stick to my preference and invite the reader, should her preference differ from mine, to substitute ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης when I write of ἢ ἐπιστήμη in 585c8.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the being of what is always the same in 585c8–14, the emended text puts connecting knowledge with what is always the same centre-stage. Unlike the transmitted text, the emended text does what we expect.

§2.2 Does the Via Positiva end in a cul-de-sac?

The proposed emendation comes under strain when we consider how the text contributes to reaching the conclusion at 585d1–4. First, how does the point about knowledge relate to the bodily and the other psychic fillers mentioned in the conclusion? Second, how does the argument even reach the more restricted conclusion that knowledge partakes more in truth and *being* than bodily fillers? For now, I shall follow the interlocutors in concentrating on knowledge, leaving the answer to the first question for the next section.

The Via Positiva is not a well-trodden path—owing perhaps to an influential line of criticism: without further emendation the Via Positiva allegedly ends in a cul-de-sac at 585c13–14. Reading ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει; the text addresses the question whether psychic or bodily fillers have more being by focussing on knowledge and the being of what is always like. The argument effectively proceeds by asking whether and affirming that knowledge partakes in being and truth as much as does the being of what is always the same. 'What is always like' in 585c8 stands for 'that which is connected with what is always the like' in 585c7, which, in turn, is short for 'that which is connected with what is always like, immortal and truth' in 585c2–3. Since Glaucon attributes more being to it than to what is connected with what is never like, the *comparans* of knowledge in 585c8–9 has two attributes: it *is* more and it is connected to truth. Now since the being of what is always like does not have either attribute any more (τι μᾶλλον) than does knowledge, affirmed at 585c10 and 585c12 respectively, we must conclude that knowledge partakes at least as much in truth and in being.

Why, then, would Socrates ask at 585c13 'and if [the being of what is always like partakes] less in truth, then also less in being'? Answers one critic: 'But the words εἰ δὲ ἀληθείας ἧττον, οὐ καὶ οὐσίας; present an insuperable difficulty. They cannot be made to suit with this interpretation [*sc.* the Via Positiva] unless we make the Subject of ἧττον [*sc.* μετέχει] either (a) ἐπιστήμη (or ἡ ἐπιστήμης οὐσία), or else (b) τὸ μηδέποτε ὁμοίου; and the only possible grammatical subject, so far as I can see, is ἡ ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία.'[18] It looks as if the minimal change the Via Positiva suggests does not, after all, suffice to do the job.

§2.3 A rival: the Via Negativa

In response to the objection to the Via Positiva, scholars have proposed further changes to the text, because they could not make sense of the argument unless they also change the first subject of μετέχει.[19] In particular, instead of ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία οὐσίας … one may read ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ἀνομοίου οὐσία οὐσίας …, picking up on 585c3–4 τὸ

[18] Adam (n. 11), 382. Wolfsdorf (n. 2), 124 and n. 24, taking the Via Positiva, seems to opt for the change of subject at 585c13.

[19] Often they propose much more wide-ranging changes. See in particular R.G. Bury, 'On Plato, *Republic* IX. 585 C–D', *CR* 13 (1899), 289–90; B.M. Vermehren, *Platonische Studien* (Leipzig, 1870), 114–17; and most recently (and subtly) Ferrari (n. 9).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

μηδέποτε ὁμοίου ….[20] Unlike the Via Positiva, the Via Negativa does not have Glaucon and Socrates set about favourably comparing knowledge to the being of what is always like, but rather has them contrast knowledge with the being of what is always unlike. The Via Positiva shows that knowledge is connected to, or at least very close to, what is always the same, whereas the Via Negativa shows that knowledge is not connected to, or otherwise very far away from, what is never the same.

VIA NEGATIVA: TRANSLATION
Now, does the being of what is always unlike partake any bit more in being than does knowledge?
Not at all.
What about truth? Does it partake any bit more in truth than does knowledge?
Not that either.
And if [it partakes] less in truth, then also less in being?
Necessarily.
And don't, then, in general the kinds [of fillers] concerned with the care of the body partake less in truth and being than those kinds again concerned with the care of the soul?
Yes, much less.

The Via Negativa works well on both ends: it connects well to the abstract consideration, and it yields the conclusion. Reading ἀνομοίου instead of ὁμοίου in 585c8, the text would address the question which fillers have more being, psychic or bodily fillers, by comparing knowledge to the being of what is always unlike. What is always unlike has *no greater* share in *being* (585c8–10) or in truth (585c11–12) than does knowledge. Socrates and Glaucon evidently take what is always unlike to have a *lesser* share of *being* and truth than knowledge, an assumption they make explicit in 585c13–14: if the being of what is always unlike has a lesser share in truth, then it also has a lesser share in being. The last step seems a little redundant, but makes the point of coordinating being and truth, as anticipated in the set-up of the argument and repeated in the conclusion (585d1–3): attending to the fillers is part of answering the question which filling is truer, the filling with what *is* more or the filling with what *is* less (585b9–11). While the argument falls short of establishing the superiority of all psychic fillers over bodily fillers explicitly, it nevertheless makes a good case for psychic fillers by dissociating a specific filler, knowledge, from what is less, the being of is always unlike. So, emending the transmitted text in two places yields a passable argument which would serve the purpose at hand: it does the job.

§2.4 Staying on the Via Positiva

The Via Negativa appears to do the job: it moves the argument along in just the right way. But do we have to take it? The main criticism of the Via Positiva so far was that it either requires a grammatically impossible change of subject or else ends at 585c13–14. However, I do not think the difficulty 'insuperable'. In fact, the problem vanishes if we take the thought underlying 585c13–14 to be counterfactual: if anything were to partake less in truth, then it would also partake less in being—which would highlight the important correlation between being and truth. So understood, we can keep the being of what is always like as subject to serve the general point that being and truth stand and fall together: if it were to partake less in truth than does knowledge,

[20] Adam (n. 11), 382–3. Erginel (n. 3) defends this reading most recently.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

it would also partake less in being (585c13–14)—but it does not; it partakes in them to the same extent as does knowledge. Accordingly, we can translate the passage as follows:

VIA POSITIVA: TRANSLATION
Now, does the being of what is always like partake any bit more in being than does knowledge?
Not at all.
What about truth? Does it partake any bit more in truth than does knowledge?
Not that either.
And if [it were to partake] less in truth, then also less in being?
Necessarily.
And don't, then, in general the kinds [of fillers] concerned with the care of the body partake less in truth and being than those kinds again concerned with the care of the soul?
Yes, much less.

The conclusion follows because knowledge does not fall short in either respect of being or truth: classing it with the other psychic fillers, Glaucon and Socrates conclude that it *is* more, giving it the edge over bodily fillers. Again, a passable argument. Therefore, we do not need to take the Via Negativa, but can opt for the minimal change the Via Positiva requires.

The transmitted MSS are our only access to Plato's word in 585b–d—no excerpt or usefully detailed ancient commentary survives.[21] By having re-established the Via Positiva as a genuine way of reading the text, I have established a presumption in its favour over readings that require more extensive changes. Unlike the Via Positiva, the Via Negativa must explain how the text could have become corrupted from ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ἀνομοίου οὐσία … to ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία …, that is, it must explain how the negation implicit in ἀνομοίου was dropped. While the ἀεὶ ὁμοίου in 585c6 may influence a scribe to write ὁμοίου instead of ἀνομοίου a line later,[22] the explanation fails to convince. ἡ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσία must be regarded as the *lectio difficilior*: scholars struggle to make sense of it—which explains the obvious conjecture in one of the secondary MSS, *q*, reading τοῦ μηδέποτε ὁμοίου.[23] But since changes from the *lectio facilior* to the *lectio difficilior* are less likely to occur than the other way round, this tells against a corruption in the direction of the Via Positiva. So, in default of a compelling story of textual corruption, we should, other things equal, opt for the Via Positiva.

§3 HOW TO REACH THE CONCLUSION?

Changing the subject of μετέχει in 585c8 from the being of what is always like to knowledge results in an argument that appears to do the job. But does it do the job well enough? We might be tempted to say 'no', because the Via Positiva concerns only knowledge, making explicit how *it* fares in relation to what is always like or unlike. The argument appears to contain two gaps: the Via Positiva says nothing i) about bodily fillers or ii) about the other psychic fillers and how *they* relate to what is always like or unlike. Each point alone may vitiate the conclusion at 585d1–3 which a) ranks psychic

[21] Proclus' commentary does not help the interpretation of our passage.
[22] Adam (n. 11), 383.
[23] Cf. Adam (n. 11), 381.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

fillers higher than bodily fillers, and b) speaks about psychic fillers in general (not just knowledge). To stay on the Via Positiva, we must explain how we get from knowledge to the other fillers and the comparative claim.

§3.1 A brief excursion to the Via Nova

The Via Nova ingeniously bridges the first gap. If we emend the text to ἦ οὖν ἀεὶ ὁμοίου οὐσίας τι μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει; at 585c8–9 and translate 'Well, does anything have a greater share in the being of what is always the same than knowledge does?', the answer to it and the next question—'Does anything have a greater share in truth than knowledge does?'—would establish that nothing has a greater share in truth and the being of what is always like, that is, nothing is more associated with what is always like than knowledge. Carrying on with τι as subject, the exchange at 585c13–14 would be appropriately general: if anything has a lesser share in truth, it also has a lesser share in being—which makes the thought the Via Positiva has in view explicit. So, since nothing has a greater share in truth and being than knowledge, that is, since knowledge has the greatest share in truth and *being*, bodily fillers will have a lesser share—if we understand 'has the greatest share' exclusively.[24]

Unfortunately, the route the Via Nova takes to bridge the first gap prevents it from bridging the second gap. The problem becomes apparent through examining more closely the kinds of fillers mentioned before the passage at 585b12–c2 and the kinds of fillers appearing in the conclusion. The conclusion clearly concerns more than just one kind of psychic filler: the plural at 585d2 (τῶν γενῶν αὖ τῶν περὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς θεραπείαν) picks up on the plurality of psychic fillers mentioned at 585c1–2 (τὸ δόξης τε ἀληθοῦς εἶδος καὶ ἐπιστήμης καὶ νοῦ καὶ συλλήβδην αὖ πάσης ἀρετῆς).[25] The Via Nova heads for trouble by creating a gap between knowledge and the other kinds of psychic fillers. For the conclusion—'the kinds of fillers concerned with the care of the body partake less in truth and being than those kinds concerned with the care of the soul' (585d1–3)—does not follow from showing knowledge to partake more than anything else in being and truth. It does not entail that any other kind of psychic filler partakes more in being or truth than does any bodily filler: for all the argument says, psychic fillers would be on a par with bodily fillers—neither of them shares as much in being and truth as does knowledge. To bring the other psychic fillers back into the conclusion, we must not understand 'has the greatest share' exclusively: other kinds may also have the greatest share in being and truth. But thus understood, the first gap reopens: attributing the greatest share of *being* and truth to knowledge no longer entails that knowledge has a greater share than anything else. In particular, it does not follow that knowledge has a greater share in *being* and truth than the kinds of bodily fillers.

To prefer the Via Nova over the Via Positiva, one would have to complete two tasks. First, one would have to a) tell a longer and still persuasive story of the text's corruption,

[24] Ferrari (n. 9) proposes and defends this emendation.

[25] We can account for the plural in two ways: either a) each genitive introduces a new kind ('the kind of true belief, [the kind] of knowledge …') or b) τὸ δόξης τε ἀληθοῦς εἶδος καὶ ἐπιστήμης καὶ νοῦ belong together as truth-related kinds of mental states, whereas virtue is its own class of psychic filler—a break indicated by the αὖ in καὶ συλλήβδην αὖ πάσης ἀρετῆς. (I thank Charles Brittain for suggesting this option to me.) I prefer a) because b) leaves unclear how one would show virtue to excel in *being* and truth—if virtue as kind of psychic filler differs from the kind that aims at truth.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and b) explain away the extreme rarity of the construction of the Greek required for the interpretation.[26] Second, the greater textual changes postulated by the Via Nova compared to the Via Positiva would have to be justified by fitting the argument of our passage better than its rival. The Via Nova can address only the problem of ranking knowledge more highly than bodily fillers, at the cost of obscuring how the other psychic fillers fare in comparison. We should therefore not accept the Via Nova unless the Via Positiva (or alternatively the Via Negativa) fails to bridge both gaps.

§3.2 Bridging the gaps: the Via Positiva expanded

Let us now turn to the second gap in the argument, that the Via Positiva says nothing about the other psychic fillers and how *they* relate to what is always like or unlike. As first stab at the objection, we might postulate a hidden argument. The only argument that would not seem entirely *ad hoc* would be to rerun the same question-and-answer sequence at 585c8–14 for the different kinds of fillers. But on this strategy the Via Positiva would have to compare each filler to the being of what is always like—and the question whether it has any more being than true belief does not receive an obvious answer.[27] So, the Via Positiva seems to have difficulties yielding the conclusion that all kinds of psychic fillers excel over the kinds of bodily fillers. This way of spelling out the argument works much better for the Via Negativa. Asking, seriatim, whether the being of what is never like partakes more in being and truth than true belief, knowledge, understanding or virtue would no doubt receive the same answer each time: no.[28]

Tied in with this reading of the argument appears another alleged linguistic advantage of the Via Negativa over the Via Positiva. According to the Via Negativa, the argument requires Socrates and Glaucon to agree that knowledge participates more in being than does the being of what is always unlike, and likewise with truth (585c10, 585c12); the being of what is always unlike therefore partakes less in truth and being (585c14). The Via Negativa can take the comparatives for what they are: comparatives. The Via Positiva, by contrast, must etiolate the comparative's force: we have no ground for attributing more being and truth to knowledge than to the being of what is always the same, nor does the argument require any difference between the two. The comparatives, therefore, do no real work and might even be misleading—which, so it is assumed, tells against the Via Positiva.[29]

Should we abandon the Via Positiva for the Via Negativa? No, because the ground for the preference is shaky: why should we expect to find a (hidden) deductively valid argument here, an argument the Via Negativa delivers more readily than the Via Positiva? The language used to introduce the conclusion at 585d1–3, οὐκοῦν ὅλως,

[26] Ferrari (n. 9), 387–8 undertakes both a) and b). The reading splits up τι μᾶλλον, which invariably forms an adverbial phrase—with one, possibly two, exceptions. As precedent for splitting τι μᾶλλον, he cites *Phdr*. 278d3–7 and *Tht*. 182e3, the latter of which he acknowledges to be ambiguous. I do not think that the former counts as precedent. Plato writes τὸ μὲν σοφόν, ὦ Φαῖδρε, καλεῖν ἔμοιγε μέγα εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ θεῷ μόνῳ πρέπειν· τὸ δὲ ἢ φιλόσοφον ἢ τοιοῦτόν τι μᾶλλόν τε ἂν αὐτῷ καὶ ἁρμόττοι καὶ ἐμμελεστέρως ἔχοι. — καὶ οὐδέν γε ἀπὸ τρόπου. Here the enclitic τε leaves no doubt that we read the familiar phrase τοιοῦτόν τι. Our passage has no similar markers. It is very unlikely that Plato wrote τι μᾶλλον and expected the reader to split it.

[27] For instance, Frede (n. 3), 160 thinks that only knowledge can be a real filler.

[28] Cf. Erginel (n. 3), 504–5. He notes that the Via Negativa allows for differences in the degrees of being between the kinds of psychic fillers. For his ranking, see Erginel (n. 3), 505–8.

[29] So Erginel (n. 3), 519.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

does not need to conclude a formally valid argument. Judging from the only two other occurrences of the phrase in Plato, we would expect the οὐκοῦν ὅλως sentence to be part of an argument, stating an interim conclusion which generalizes from a more specific instance. The *Phaedo* provides a close parallel:[30] having asked about the philosopher's attitude to the pleasures of food and drink, Socrates asks about 'the other pleasures concerned with the service of the body'. Simmias surmises that the philosopher despises the 'acquisition of distinguished clothes and shoes and the other bodily ornaments' (64d9–11). Without attempting to exhaust the list of bodily pleasures, they draw the conclusion 'that in general such a man's concern is not with the body but that, as far as he can, he turns away from the body towards the soul?' (64e4–6).[31] Thus, agreeing on the philosopher's behaviour towards a few kinds of bodily pleasures suffices to reach a general conclusion about his attitude to the body.

According to the Via Positiva, the *Republic* passage functions similarly: at 585b12–c2 Socrates and Glaucon mention the kinds of things that fall under bodily or psychic fillers respectively—without pretending to provide an exhaustive list. Then, running through the question-and-answer sequence at 585c8–14, they conclude that knowledge partakes as much in being and truth as does the being of what is always like. Just as the *Phaedo* jumps to a conclusion about the things concerned with the body, so the *Republic* jumps to the conclusion about the kind of 'psychic fillers'—not by (hidden) deductively valid argument but by association in kind. Accordingly, any other psychic filler mentioned after the argument, such as 'wisdom' (φρονήσεως) in 586a1, needs no further explanation (such as subsuming it under one of the psychic fillers on the list), but can appear in its own right. Thus, if the list of psychic fillers at 585c1–2 only illustrates what a psychic filler is, the conclusion at 585d1–3 need not strictly follow: if one kind of psychic filler has *being* and truth in virtue of what makes it a psychic filler, then the other kinds of psychic fillers will also have *being*. The phrase οὐκοῦν ὅλως announces the conclusion of an argument by association.

Having rejected the Via Negativa's way of spelling out a deductive argument helps to see why the linguistic consideration tells in fact in favour of the Via Positiva. The phrase τι μᾶλλον at 585c8 and implicitly at 585c11 need not mislead Glaucon or the reader. We find the use of τι μᾶλλον characteristic of later sceptical argument foreshadowed at *Resp*. 479b6–8: are objects people call 'heavy' any more (τι μᾶλλον) heavy than light?[32] The answer 'no' does not mean that they are rather light than heavy; they are rather equally heavy and light. So, a negative answer to a τι μᾶλλον question need not and generally does not imply any difference between the objects compared. It can, instead, evoke the indistinguishability between the two *comparanda* in the relevant respect—just as the Via Positiva requires.

Read as an argument by association, the Via Positiva bridges not only the second gap but also the first one. True, the Via Positiva does not explicitly bar the bodily fillers from association with what is always like, but it does not have to. The bodily and psychic fillers

[30] The other occurrence is at *Prt*. 360a8.

[31] τί δὲ τὰς ἄλλας τὰς περὶ τὸ σῶμα θεραπείας; δοκεῖ σοι ἐντίμους ἡγεῖσθαι ὁ τοιοῦτος; οἷον ἱματίων διαφερόντων κτήσεις καὶ ὑποδημάτων καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους καλλωπισμοὺς τοὺς περὶ τὸ σῶμα πότερον τιμᾶν δοκεῖ σοι ἢ ἀτιμάζειν, καθ' ὅσον μὴ πολλὴ ἀνάγκη μετέχειν αὐτῶν; — ἀτιμάζειν ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, ἔφη, ὅ γε ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόσοφος. — οὐκοῦν ὅλως δοκεῖ σοι, ἔφη, ἡ τοῦ τοιούτου πραγματεία οὐ περὶ τὸ σῶμα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ καθ' ὅσον δύναται ἀφεστάναι αὐτοῦ, πρὸς δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν τετράφθαι; — ἔμοιγε. (*Phd*. 64d8–e7; translation from Cooper and Hutchinson, n. 8).

[32] καὶ μεγάλα δὴ καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ κοῦφα καὶ βαρέα μή τι μᾶλλον ἃ ἂν φήσωμεν, ταῦτα προσρηθήσεται ἢ τἀναντία; — οὔκ, ἀλλ' ἀεί, ἔφη, ἕκαστον ἀμφοτέρων ἕξεται.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

were introduced as fillers for different kinds of lack (cf. 585a8–b8), a difference which corresponds to a difference in the nature of the fillers. The characteristics in virtue of which psychic fillers belong together are not shared by bodily fillers. Hence, the argument does not risk that bodily fillers also partake in what is always like by this argument. But could not a different argument reach that conclusion? Perhaps. But the argument in Plato's text has a different logic: we have two kinds of competitors for the title of a filler that shares more in pure being (585b11–c2). Socrates and Glaucon show that the one kind of filler is associated with being. Therefore, in the absence of any argument to the contrary, this kind of filler wins. Psychic fillers are closer to *being* and truth, just as the conclusion states.

The Via Positiva is sufficiently strong to bridge the two gaps which the exposition so far had left open. Although it indeed says nothing explicitly about any other fillers until the conclusion, we need not fault the argument on this score. The conclusion indicates that the argument works by association. The association suffices to cluster together all kinds of psychic fillers, while keeping the bodily fillers at bay. The Via Positiva not only does the job, it does the job well. We do not need to settle for more extensive changes to the text.

§4 CHANGING THE TOPIC WITHOUT CHANGING THE SUBJECT: REVIVING THE VIA TRADITA

I have started my enquiry with a statement of the general perplexity interpreters experience when trying to make sense of the traditional text. I have proposed to change the text in just one sigma: for ἢ ἐπιστήμης μετέχει read ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει at 585c8. I have explained why more extensive changes—the Viae Negativa and Nova—do not suit our passage better than the Via Positiva. The Via Positiva leads safely to the conclusion if we i) take the psychic fillers to be objects or items of knowledge, ii) read 585c13–14 counterfactually, and iii) regard the argument as an argument by association. Could the main features of the interpretation help to revive the traditional text? Changing nothing at all is ever better than changing one sigma! The transmitted text, I hope to show, does the job of contributing to the supplementary argument—if it follows the interpretation given for the Via Positiva.

Unlike the Via Positiva, the transmitted text (the Via Tradita) does not seem to apply the points from the abstract consideration (585c2–6) to the fillers at 585c8. Instead, Socrates and Glaucon spin out further the nature of what is always the same (until 585c14), an expansion which need not be 'pointless', but may relevantly contribute to Glaucon's verdict: having a better grasp of what it is for X to *be* more than Y, Glaucon can now judge, and for the right reasons, that the kinds of psychic fillers partake more in being and truth than do the kinds of bodily fillers (585d1–3). In fact, features i) to iii) of the Via Positiva help to develop a reading of the traditional text which follow the path of the Via Positiva very closely.

§4.1 Developing the Via Tradita

The key to making sense of the text lies in the interpretation of participation. The being of what is always the same, Glaucon and Socrates agree, participates no more in being than in knowledge, and since it participates in being (cf. 585c1–3), it also participates in

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

knowledge. The only attempt at defending the traditional text I found proposes to understand participation as a reciprocal relation.[33] If so, the participation of what is always the same in knowledge would entail the participation of knowledge in the being of what is always the same and would thereby attribute more being to knowledge. But participation is not usually reciprocal: particulars participate in forms, but not vice versa.

A much more promising interpretation highlights the equivalence between 'participating more in [pure] being' (585b11) and '*being* more (585c4)', so that an object's participating in F attributes F to the object.[34] Thus, when Glaucon agrees that the being of what is always the same participates in knowledge, he agrees that it is knowledge! As before, we must take knowledge to be an object but not a subject of knowledge: the being of what is always the same is knowable, not knowledgeable. The further claim that it is true and again that it has *being* supports this: what is knowable must both be true and have *being*. The connection between truth and *being* comes out, again, through reading 585c13–14 counterfactually—which aligns truth, knowability and *being*: the being of what is always like is as knowable as it is true, and both to the degree that it *is* (585c6–14). Attributing knowability to the being of what is always the same serves the argument in so far as what is always the same functions as the object or content of a psychic filling. To claim that the being of what is always the same partakes in knowledge, that is, that it is knowable, is to claim that it is a specific psychic filler: knowledge (understood as object of knowledge). Thus, while Socrates and Glaucon continue to talk about the being of what is always the same, they nevertheless relate that consideration relevantly to the psychic filler of knowledge.

Next, the Via Tradita should follow the Via Positiva in reading the argument as an argument by association to avoid the criticism, levelled by defenders of the Viae Negativa and Nova, that it cannot reach the conclusion. The Via Positiva establishes that knowledge shares as much in being as does the being of what is always like. The other psychic fillers also share in being (at any rate more than bodily fillers) because of their similarity to knowledge: they are associated as a kind. By contrast the Via Tradita establishes that the being of what is always like *is* as much as it is knowledge. Since 'that which is connected with what is always the same excels by far' in *being* (585c7), we can conclude that at least one psychic filler, knowledge, excels in terms of *being*. The conclusion at 585d1–3 is introduced by οὐκοῦν ὅλως, a phrase which serves to generalize from one or several examples. Generalizing to the other psychic fillers, Socrates and Glaucon can conclude that psychic fillers *are* more than bodily fillers. Thus, the transmitted text, properly understood, *can* yield the conclusion and should therefore not be dismissed as producing a pointless argument.

§4.2 Evaluating the Via Tradita vis-à-vis *the Via Positiva*

To develop the Via Tradita, I suggested three crucial moves. Following the Via Positiva, we must i) take the psychic fillers to be objects or items of knowledge, ii) read 585c13–14 counterfactually, and iii) regard the argument as an argument by association. Since the Via Positiva does not have a monopoly on i) to iii)—we may have developed them equally for the Via Tradita—we can now consider which of the two we should adopt, that is, which text is more likely.

[33] Adam (n. 11), 382.
[34] For a little more detail, see §2.1, penultimate paragraph.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The two interpretations share the basic argumentative structure. They differ only in one point. According to the Via Positiva, Socrates asks at 585c8–9 whether the being of what is always like partakes any bit more in being than does knowledge. The negative answer suggests that the being of what is always like and knowledge partake in being to the same degree. According to the Via Tradita, he asks whether the being of what is always like partakes any bit more in being than in knowledge. Glaucon's negative answer affirms that it partakes equally in both, that is, that the being of what is always like *is* and is an object of knowledge. Because of the similarity, and because both Viae reach the conclusion equally well, we must turn to other criteria for evaluating them.

Let us begin with the language. The Greek underlying both Viae is unusual—which may explain why neither of them has yet been defended sufficiently. There are no direct parallels for the Via Positiva's claim that knowledge partakes in being, nor for the Via Tradita's claim that the being of what is always like partakes in knowledge, nor for the more relaxed claim that the being of anything partakes in knowledge.[35] In a way, both express the same thought, that knowledge, that is, an object of knowledge, *is* (and is true)—a claim anticipated by Book 5: the faculty of knowledge is set over what *is* (477a), which entails that the objects of knowledge *are*.[36] However, the Via Positiva expresses the thought more straightforwardly, because it says that knowledge (understood as object of knowledge) partakes in *being*. The Via Tradita takes one more step to reach the point: a) the being of what is always like partakes in knowledge, and b) what is always like *is* (or *is* more than what is never like, 585c2–7). So, the Via Positiva expresses a reasonably familiar thought in unfamiliar language, whereas the Via Tradita expresses the same thought at one remove, also in unfamiliar language. This, I think, explains why scholars have considered the Via Positiva as an option (though one they dismissed), but not the more elusive Via Tradita.

Other things equal, we should prefer the Via Positiva, because the argument it produces begins on a more intelligible note. However, other things are not equal. Unlike the Via Positiva, the Via Tradita does not change the transmitted text and should therefore be preferred on this score. However, the proposed emendation hardly changes anything: unlike the Via Negativa, the Via Positiva does not smuggle in a negation, or drops a whole word, like the Via Nova. The Via Positiva changes only one letter, and the reasons for the corruption are very plausible: 'correcting' dittography if we read ἢ ἡ ἐπιστήμης μετέχει or, preferably, 'correcting' a dropped sigma if we read ἢ ἐπιστήμη μετέχει (cf. §2.1).

I find it hard to adjudicate between the Via Positiva and the Via Tradita owing to their similarity. They hardly differ in the argument attributed to Socrates and Glaucon. They do differ in the way in which the guiding thought is expressed—and here the Via Positiva works slightly better. I would think that both texts are almost equally plausible, but since we should go by the text that has actually been transmitted, and since the transmitted text is possible, we should adopt the transmitted text.

§5 PUTTING THE VIA POSITIVA AND THE VIA TRADITA ON THE MAP

I have reached my goal of laying out and examining the different ways of interpretation, which the difficult text at 585b–d invites us to take. I have developed an interpretation by

[35] The claim that people partake in knowledge does have a precedent. At *Plt*. 260a2 the master-builder partakes in knowledge. Cf. *Prm*. 134b12.

[36] Cf. *Resp*. 534a2–4.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

defending a text that minimally changes the transmitted text. However, the interpretation need not be tied to the emended text: we can apply it also, and equally well, to the transmitted text. Although we should in principle prefer the transmitted text to the emended text, I think that both texts are almost equally plausible. Since the Via Tradita and the Via Positiva do not differ philosophically, I shall close by locating both of them on the map by showing how well this line of interpretation works with the broader context, both the wider goal of extolling the philosophical life in *Republic* Book 9 and the narrower goal of distinguishing between kinds of pleasures in terms of truth and being.

The Olympian proof, to which our passage belongs, argues for a second time that the philosopher's life is most pleasant and the tyrant's least pleasant (587b9–11). Its first part (583b1–585a7) diagnoses a mistake committed by many: they falsely judge the ceasing of distress to be most pleasant (583c–d), a diagnosis possible only if pleasure is not purely subjective. Our lines belong to the second part of the proof (585a8–586d3), in which Glaucon and Socrates explore inexperience of what is truly pleasant as the cause of the mistake (584e6–585a7). If the filling of a depletion functions as the objective aspect of a person's pleasure (585a8–b8), then the person may be ignorant of that aspect of her pleasure. In particular, those inexperienced of what is most truly a filling will nevertheless think that they are most truly filled. Both the Via Positiva and the Via Tradita give a good argument: the former shows that knowledge *is* as much as what is always like, whereas the latter shows that what is always like is knowledge. Having established the crucial premise that psychic filling is truer than bodily filling, that is, psychic filling is more really a filling (585d7–10), they can conclude that those inexperienced of what *is* more will not experience pleasures that *are* more—a result which feeds well into the goal of comparing the tyrant's pleasures with the philosopher's.

Let us consider in more detail how Plato links the first and the second part of the Olympian proof. In the first part, Socrates illustrates the difference between those experienced and those inexperienced in real pleasure with the metaphor of up, middle and down—objective notions (by nature, 584d3; truly and really, 584e4): if you do not know the real up, you will mistake the middle for up if you have just been moved there from below (584d).[37] Having cast the bulk of the second part of the proof in terms of filling, Socrates at the end aligns the spatial metaphor with filling: the gain-lovers 'are moved both down and then again up to the middle and wander on this way throughout their life, never going beyond this towards what is truly up' (586a2–4), whereas the philosopher's soul, not confined to the pleasures of gain or honour, attains its own pleasure (587a4–7). Thus, the fillings (and depletions) which partake less in being and truth correspond to moving between down and middle, whereas a filling which partakes more in being and truth corresponds to moving truly up.

The reconstruction of the argument explains well how Socrates can align real filling with moving really up. The difficulty is to derive the non-comparative notions of 'up', 'middle' and 'down' from the comparative notions 'truer' and 'being more' at 585c8–d10.[38] Both the Via Positiva and the Via Tradita can take the step—provided we

[37] For further elaboration, see J. Warren, 'Socrates and the patients: *Republic* IX, 583c–585a', *Phronesis* 56 (2011), 113–37, with whose interpretation of the metaphor and of its role in the argument I largely agree.

[38] If we take the comparatives to be real comparatives, as the Via Negativa does, then the argument can only show the philosopher's pleasures to be more real, and therefore higher up, than the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press

reconsider the status of the abstract consideration about being (585c2–6). While Socrates undoubtedly asks Glaucon a comparative question, the options he presents are paradigms. The difficulty to imagine anything more characteristic of being than being connected with what is always the same, with what is immortal and with truth fuels the complaint discussed in §3.2 that the Via Positiva cannot make sense of the comparatives from 585c8–14. Knowledge surely does not partake any more in being than what is always like, the paradigm. So, if we take what is always like as paradigm for *being*—what *being* most of all is—and what is always unlike as paradigm for *being* least of all, we can start aligning the two parts of the proof: what *is* most of all corresponds to what is truly up; what *is* least of all corresponds to what is truly down. The Via Positiva and the Via Tradita can then line up the psychic fillers and knowledge in particular with what is truly up. Since the knowledge partakes as much in being and truth as what is always like, or since what is always like is (an object of) knowledge, knowledge, and by association the other fillers, would also be really up. If so, the philosopher's life will not be confined to moving between what is truly down and the middle.

To conclude: we should steer clear of the Via Negativa and the Via Nova or other extensive emendations. The changes to the text they propose in addition the Via Positiva are not merited, philosophically. They do not give a better argument, or fit the context better, or produce a Greek text that reads more naturally. Changing only one letter (as has the Via Positiva) produces an intelligible argument. Even better, if interpreted along the same lines, the text as transmitted also yields an intelligible argument that does the job. By defending the Via Positiva and in particular the Via Tradita, I hope to have put the doubts about the Plato's text at rest.*

King's College London JOACHIM AUFDERHEIDE
joachim.aufderheide@kcl.ac.uk

non-philosopher's, but falls short of establishing that the philosopher has true pleasures, i.e. that the philosopher moves to the truly up.

* The ideas for this paper were first presented at the King's–Yale *Republic* workshop. I learned much from the discussion, especially thanks to Tad Brennan, Charles Brittain, Fiona Leigh and M.M. McCabe. I would also like to thank James Warren for giving me the helpful opportunity to present my thoughts at the B Club. I thank Harold Tarrant for sharing his take on the passage with me. I am especially grateful to Verity Harte and the anonymous reader for *CQ* for their keen insights and suggestions.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838818000150 Published online by Cambridge University Press