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NOTES ON THE ETYMOLOGIES IN PLATO'S *CRATYLUS**

Recent scholarship on Plato's *Cratylus* (= *Cra.*) has yielded interpretations that assign various functions of philosophical importance to the dialogue's lengthy etymological section.[1] Barney (2001)[2] considers the section an 'agonistic display' (69–73) in which Socrates beats contemporary practitioners of etymology at their own game[3] while, at the same time, offering a cosmological theory intended for serious intellectual competition. In this context, Barney emphasizes the importance of Parmenides, a charioteer who journeys towards Truth, as a literary point of reference for Socrates' own etymological quest after the true meaning of names which, from Cratylus' naturalist perspective on language, are considered indicative of their referents' essential nature. The contents of the etymologies may be a 'rational reconstruction' (52–7) of Cratylus' linguistic naturalism. Sedley (2003)[4] stresses the encyclopedic character of Socrates' lexical interpretations[5] and argues that these are 'exegetically correct' (28) in representing the opinions of the name-givers of old who subscribed to a Heraclitean view of a world in flux, as is reflected in the original form of the names they devised. Ademollo (2011) stresses that Socrates' etymologies display the evolution of Greek intellectual thought, shown to be heavily reliant on the assumption of a universe in flux, and serve to exhibit the weaknesses in Cratylus' naturalist view of language.[6]

Despite the significance of the Cratylean etymologies for the dialogue as a whole, it is not controversial to observe that Socrates' interpretations must not be taken to yield an exhaustive and reliable explanatory account of being of the sort Plato would have endorsed.[7] Thus Plato appears to undermine the credibility of Socrates' performance

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[1] Against a primarily satirical reading, as suggested already by F. Schleiermacher, *Platons Werke. Teil II* (Berlin, 1875), 5–6; further, G. Stallbaum, *Platonis Dialogos Selectos. Vol. V / II: Continens Cratylum* (Gotha and Erfurt, 1835). More recently, T.M.S. Baxter, The Cratylus. *Plato's Critique of Naming* (Leiden – New York – Cologne, 1992) has argued that Plato presents a 'parody of Greek etymological practices' (96) aimed at various Greek intellectuals. For selective reviews of earlier studies on the issue of seriousness vs parody, see K. Gaiser, *Name und Sache in Platons 'Kratylos'* (Heidelberg, 1974), 45–9; J. Derbolav, *Platons Sprachphilosophie im Kratylos und in den Späteren Schriften* (Darmstadt, 1972), 228–31.

[2] R. Barney, *Names and Nature in Plato's* Cratylus (New York and London, 2001).

[3] Thus already J.C. Rijlaarsdam, *Platon über die Sprache. Ein Kommentar zum Kratylos* (Utrecht, 1978), 143.

[4] D. Sedley, *Plato's* Cratylus (Cambridge, 2003); see also id., 'The etymologies in Plato's *Cratylus*', *JHS* 118 (1998), 140–54.

[5] First noted by V. Goldschmidt, *Essay sur le "Cratyle" (*Paris, 1940), 93.

[6] F. Ademollo, *The* Cratylus *of Plato* (New York, 2011), 251–2. Further proponents of the 'serious' reading are, for example, Rijlaarsdam (n. 3); C. Dalimier, *Platon Cratyle* (Paris, 1998).

[7] According to Sedley (n. 4 [2003]), 108–9, Plato would presumably have accepted etymologies which claim to reveal the nature of our physical world, but rejected the name-givers' erroneous assumptions concerning moral and intellectual virtues; cf. Barney (n. 2), 73. This view is criticized

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as an etymologist by ensuring that Socrates ostensibly relies not on his own skill and knowledge but on the inspiration (ἐπίπνοια, 399a1–3) of Euthyphro. This Euthyphro is usually assumed to be the same person as in Plato's eponymous dialogue, a religious devotee who claims privileged knowledge of the divine.[8] Euthyphro's influence is taken by the majority of interpreters as a negative pointer; at best, it may distance Socrates from the contents and practice of his own exegetical performance.[9]

My aim in the present contribution is to draw attention to three passages in the dialogue the implications of which have, thus far, not been appreciated to the full, but corroborate specific interpretative views on the dialogue's etymological section. The first passage I propose for discussion, *Cra.* 407d8–9, substantiates the view that Euthyphro's inspiration is deceptive and aimed at distancing Socrates from his own performance. The second passage, *Cra.* 417d10–418a3, suggests that the contents of Socrates' etymologies are 'laughable' and that his claim to divine authority for his undertaking may constitute an act of *hubris*. Finally, a third passage, *Cra*. 420b7–421c4, lends further evidence to the view that Socrates' etymological explanations do not reliably lead us to the truth concerning the nature of 'things that are', with reference to Parmenides as the paradigmatic charioteer on an intellectual quest. While none of these views is particularly controversial, a renewed examination of the passages listed above will allow us to arrive at a more complete appraisal of Socrates' performance as an etymologist and of its impact on our reading of the *Cratylus*.

EUTHYPHRO'S HORSES (*CRA.* 407D8–9)

At the outset of the dialogue Plato introduces the motif of Socrates as a prophet and interpreter of names whose skill and insight appears to be sanctioned by divine inspiration. The original set-up for the dialogue had been Hermogenes' invitation to Socrates to interpret the 'oracle' issued by Cratylus (384a5), that is, Cratylus' suggestion that 'Hermogenes', 'son of Hermes', cannot be the correct name for Hermogenes the interlocutor. Cratylus' oracle is subsequently interpreted by Socrates to imply that the assumption that Hermes, divine spokesman for trade and thieves, was Hermogenes' ancestor flies in the face of Hermogenes' chronic financial ineptness. The dialogue's opening thus plants the recurring theme of Socrates in the service of interpreting divine messages, a familiar picture that evokes his portrayal in the *Apology* and might, at face value, suggest that we are to associate his new undertaking with a similarly noble

by Ademollo (n. 6), 207–8, who argues that Plato portrays the name-givers in an unqualifiedly negative light, not merely in the context of their opinions on abstract values.

[8] A. Steiner, 'Die Etymologien in Platons Kratylos', *AGPh* 22 (1916), 109–32; K. Barwick, 'Probleme der Stoischen Sprachlehre und Rhetorik', in: *Abh. sächs. Akad. Wiss. zu Leipzig, phil.-hist. Kl.* 49/3 (1957); and most fervently P. Boyancé, 'La "doctrine d'Euthyphron" dans le Cratyle', *REG* 54 (1941), 141–75 argued that the motif of Euthyphro's influence on Socrates goes beyond exemplifying the dangers of uncritical acceptance of religious authority, assuming that Euthyphro provided the doctrinal raw material for Socrates' etymologies of divine names.

[9] Sedley (n. 4 [2003]), 40–1 offers a less negative evaluation of Euthyphro's influence, arguing that he might, indeed, have held authority in the field of etymology. The fact that Socrates' etymologies, owing to Euthyphro's inspiration, cannot be held to be his own distances Socrates from the practice without signalling disapproval. Ademollo (n. 6), 241–6 offers a more cautious appraisal of Euthyphro's influence; Barney (n. 2), 57–60 notes the parallels with Socrates' divine inspiration in the first speech on Eros in the *Phaedrus* and stresses its effect of distancing Socrates from the contents. Similarly, E. Heitsch, *Willkür und Problembewußtsein in Platons* Kratylos (Mainz, 1984), 44–6 speaks of an 'ironische Distanzierung' (at 46).

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cause.[10] Early in the ensuing performance of etymologies, however, Socrates transcends his familiar role. He finds himself in the grasp of a sudden inspiration that allows him to excel at explaining the meaning of names (396c6–d1; χρησμῳδεῖν 396d3) and thus to act as a mouthpiece for divine wisdom. As noted above, Socrates attributes this inspiration, in which he and Hermogenes profess to lay their trust (πιστεύειν), to his earlier dealings with Euthyphro. The figure of Euthyphro rings alarm bells for the present-day reader,[11] and it appears that his contemporaries' verdict was similarly unfavourable. At *Euthphr.* 3b9–c2, Euthyphro tells Socrates that people in the assembly laugh at him whenever he talks about the gods or foretells the future, 'as if [he] were a crazy person' (ὡς μαινομένου). While the contents of Socrates' ensuing etymologies, at face value, are taken by himself and his interlocutor as divinely inspired and would thus claim respect and credibility, his wish to have himself purified from Euthyphro's influence either 'with the help of a priest or of a sophist' (396e3–97a1) once his mission ends appears to counter his professed confidence,[12] and the readers have reason to remain on their guard.

We subsequently find Socrates inviting Hermogenes, at 407d8–9, to test 'the [strength] of Euthyphro's horses'. This invitation is an allusion to *Il.* 5.221–8, where Aeneas invites the Lycian commander Pandarus to join his fight against the Achaean Diomedes.[13] Aeneas urges Pandarus to 'see of what sort are the horses of Tros, how they understand their plain and how to traverse it in rapid pursuit and withdrawal' (*Il.* 5.221–3).[14] While Socrates' reference to Aeneas' invitation is often noted, its full implications have thus far gone unexplored. First, Aeneas' invitation to Pandarus to join him is prompted by Pandarus' complaint that he himself is without horses and chariot: 'There are no horses nor chariot I could mount […] I left them and made my way on foot to Ilion, trusting a bow, a thing that was to profit me nothing.'[15] Similarly Socrates, without the wisdom required for etymological interpretation, must rely on Euthyphro's aid to 'traverse the plain' of etymology, a terrain with which he is unfamiliar,[16] 'in rapid pursuit'[17] and by means that are not his own. What is more, Socrates' audience would likely have recalled that Aeneas' horses had been a gift to

[10] Cf. e.g. *Apol.* 21b.

[11] Cf. Baxter (n. 1), 90: 'The leitmotif of Euthyphronic inspiration is not such as to inspire confidence in the results of the etymologies.'

[12] For a fuller discussion on the implications of this remark, see Ademollo (n. 6), 243–6. See also Gaiser (n. 1), 49–53; G.J. De Vries, 'Notes on some passages of the *Cratylus*', *Mnemosyne* 8 (1955), 290–7, at 294.

[13] Barney (n. 2), 61 points out that a further significant horse-race takes place at *Il.* 23.362–532, which she terms the 'primal scene of Greek epistemology'. In this race, staged on the occasion of the funeral games in honour of Patroclus, Nestor appeals to ingenuity (μῆτις) as the quality that will see his son Antilochus win second prize despite the fact that his are the slowest horses (23.309–10). Barney, moreover, points to literary echoes of this race in Parmenides (75).

[14] ἀλλ' ἄγ' ἐμῶν ὀχέων ἐπιβήσεο, ὄφρα ἴδηαι, οἷοι Τρώϊοι ἵπποι ἐπιστάμενοι πεδίοιο κραιπνὰ μάλ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα διωκέμεν ἠδὲ φέβεσθαι (transl. Lattimore, with minor modifications).

[15] ἵπποι δ' οὐ παρέασι καὶ ἅρματα τῶν κ' ἐπιβαίην· […] ὣς λίπον, αὐτὰρ πεζὸς ἐς Ἴλιον εἰλήλουθα τόξοισιν πίσυνος· τὰ δέ μ' οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλον ὀνήσειν (*Il.* 5.192; 204–5; transl. Lattimore, with minor modifications).

[16] Socrates feigns regret about not having attended Prodicus' 'fifty-drachma lecture' (384b3) on etymological interpretation, thus professing himself unable to expound the sophist's teachings. At *Euthyd.* 277c Prodicus is associated with learning about the 'correctness of names'. W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1962–81), 3.222–3 discusses Socrates' relationship with Prodicus. See also Baxter (n. 1), 151–6; Ademollo (n. 6), 28; and Pl. *Prt.* 341a and *Meno* 96d. In the *Iliad*, Pandarus at 5.230–8 turns down Aeneas' invitation to take over the reins, arguing that they will fare better if Aeneas remains in control of his own domain.

[17] At 414b2–4 Socrates is making such speed in his interpretations 'as to get hurled off his race course' (ὥσπερ ἐκτὸς δρόμου φερόμενον ἐπειδὰν λείου ἐπιλάβωμαι). See below, pages 564–565.

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his ancestor Tros by Zeus himself (*Il.* 5.265–6), in compensation for kidnapping Tros's son Ganymede.[18] Along with Socrates' interlocutors, the reader is thus about to witness an undertaking that lays a daring claim to supernatural validation. Just as Tros's horses, in use by Aeneas and Pandarus, were sent by Zeus, Euthyphro's inspiration, intended to bestow on Socrates the skill and knowledge necessary for interpreting names, ostensibly issued from a divine origin. The most noticeable flag planted by the Homeric reference, however, is the fact that Pandarus, who had joined Aeneas and his Trojan horses, is killed by Diomedes at *Il.* 5.294–6:

> He fell off the chariot and his armour, glistening and radiant, clattered about him, and the swift-footed horses were startled aside from fear; and there his spirit and his might dissolved.[19]

Tros's startled horses are then stolen by the Achaean Sthenelus, at Diomedes'[20] command (*Il.* 5.319–24):

> [Sthenelus] did not forget the commands Diomedes of the good war-cry had given him […] he rushed at the fine-maned horses of Aeneas and drove them from the Trojans towards the well-greaved Achaeans.[21]

It is not unreasonable to assume that, to an audience contemporary with Socrates, awareness of Pandarus' use of another man's resources, along with the violently unsuccessful outcome of this decision, would have signalled a warning. Socrates' use of Euthyphro's divine inspiration, which grants him the ability to traverse the plain of etymological interpretation, is as deceptively promising as the horses that had been gifted to Tros by Zeus and are put to use by Pandarus and Aeneas, with fatal consequences.

SOCRATES THE PIPER (*CRA.* 417D10–418A3)

A second, thus far neglected, episode in the dialogue serves to expose as ill-advised Socrates' claim to divine authority behind his lexical interpretations, which are, moreover, shown to invite ridicule. At 417d10 he interprets the adjective βλαβερόν, 'harmful', as deriving from βουλόμενον ἅπτειν ῥοῦν ('wishing to grasp the flow', with 'grasp' in the sense of 'restrain, hinder'). Really, the word ought to be not βλαβερόν but βουλ-απτε-ροῦν, he observes, a term that would display all three lexical nuances contained in it: **βουλ**όμενον, **ἅπτε**ιν, **ῥοῦν**. Hermogenes mockingly comments on Socrates' facial expression as the latter pronounces this concoction of syllables: 'You seemed to me as if you were mimicking a pipe with your lips and playing the prelude to Athena's hymn when you pronounced "βουλαπτεροῦν"' (καὶ γὰρ νῦν μοι ἔδοξας ὥσπερ τοῦ τῆς Ἀθηνάας νόμου προαύλιον στομαυλῆσαι, τοῦτο τὸ ὄνομα προειπὼν τὸ βουλαπτεροῦν, 417e7–418a1). Hermogenes may be alluding here to a mythical anecdote involving Athena, the satyr Marsyas and Apollo. According to this anecdote, Athena began to play the pipe but, shocked that her beauty was diminished by the facial

[18] τῆς γάρ τοι γενεῆς ἧς Τρωΐ περ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς δῶχ' υἱος ποινὴν Γανυμήδεος …

[19] ἤριπε δ' ἐξ ὀχέων, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ αἰόλα παμφανόωντα, παρέτρεσσαν δέ οἱ ἵπποι ὠκύποδες· τοῦ δ' αὖθι λύθη ψυχή τε μένος τε.

[20] Incidentally, Diomedes' stolen horses win first prize in the race in *Iliad* Book 23, putting him before Antilochus and his μῆτις. Cf. n. 13 above.

[21] οὐδ' υἱὸς Καπανῆος ἐλήθετο συνθεσιάων τάων ἃς ἐπέτελλε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης (…) Αἰνείαο δ' ἐπαΐξας καλλίτριχας ἵππους ἐξέλασε Τρώων μετ' ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιούς.

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expression required for her playing, threw away the instrument. It was subsequently picked up by Marsyas who believed his musical skill to rival that of Apollo himself and challenged the god to a contest. The story ends with Apollo flaying Marsyas alive for his arrogant challenge. On the most innocent reading of this passage in the *Cratylus*, Hermogenes somewhat irreverently pokes fun at the distorted face of Socrates who, by all accounts, is rendering a divine service by divulging his superhuman wisdom. If, however, Hermogenes is indeed alluding to the Marsyas anecdote, the passage carries more significant implications. Like Marsyas, Socrates is setting himself up as the mouthpiece for a performance of, supposedly, divine expertise. In other words, Socrates, like Marsyas, is displaying the hubristic desire to, as it were, whistle divine tunes[22] in an act of transgression that is, moreover, potentially 'harmful'. His attempt to decode oracular utterances,[23] that is, to explain the meaning of names, is thus rather similar to Marsyas' attempt to match the sounds of Apollo himself.

The story of Marsyas' challenge to Apollo is well attested in the Greek and Latin traditions,[24] and Plato himself betrays his knowledge of it elsewhere in his dialogues. At *Euthyd.* 285c7–d1 Cleinias' admirer Ctesippus jokingly allows the sophists Euthydemus and Dionysidorus to 'destroy' his current unvirtuous self with the goal of turning him into a virtuous man: 'I myself, Socrates, am ready to offer myself to the strangers to be flayed by them even more than now, if they wish, if my skin does not end up [being turned into] a wine-skin, like that of Marsyas, but into virtue.'[25] For our present purpose, Marsyas makes a rather more interesting appearance at *Symp*. 215, where the drunken party-crasher Alcibiades[26] likens Socrates to the satyr himself: 'Indeed, I say that [Socrates] most resembles these Sileni that are displayed in the statuary shops, those the craftsmen produce as holding pipes or flutes. Once

[22] See Baxter (n. 1), 113: 'What [Euthyphro] passes on is […] the hubristic desire for divine knowledge through inspiration'.

[23] We recall the description of his activity as χρησμῳδεῖν at *Cra.* 396d3, 396c6–d1, which implies a connection to Apollo's oracle; see pp. 558–559 above.

[24] In the course of his appropriation by Hellenistic authors, the Phrygian figure of Marsyas was likened to both a satyr and a Silenus without apparent distinction. Greek sources commonly cited for the anecdote include Hdt. 7.26.3; Xen. *An.* 1.2.8; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.24; Paus. 1.24.1; Diod. Sic. 3.59.2–5 (see also 3.58.2); Plut. *De cohibenda ira* 456b4–c7 and Ath. *Deipn.* 14.7.4–20. Athena's displeasure about her distorted face is noted in fr. 805(*a*) *PMG* (ed. D.L. Page, 1967, first edn corr.) of the early fifth-century B.C.E. poet Telestes: 'I do not believe in my heart that the clever one, divine Athena, took the clever instrument in the mountain thickets and then in fear of eye-offending ugliness (δυσόφθαλμον αἶσχος) threw it from her hands to be the glory of the nymph-born beast Marsyas who claps his hands. For why should a keen yearning for lovely beauty distress her, to whom Clotho had dealt out virginity without marriage and child' (transl. D.A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric*, vol. 5 [London, 1982], with minor modifications). Athena's distorted face may be referenced also on an Apulian bell-krater (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 00.348) attributed to the Boston Painter, dated by A.D. Trendall and A. Cambitoglou (*RAVp* vol. 1, 267 no. 48 pl. 89.2) to *c*.370–360 B.C.E. The vase depicts Athena who is sitting by a tree and playing the double-flute, while a young man holds a mirror to her face. Marsyas appears to Athena's right. The anecdote is common also in the Latin tradition: e.g. Ov. *Fast.* 6.697–708, *Met.* 6.382, *Ars am*. 3.505–6; Gell. *NA* 15.17; Hyg. *Fab.* 165; Stat. *Silv.* 5.3; Fulg. *Myth.* 3.9.87. For surveys of variations on the anecdote, see A. Weis, 'Marsyas', *LIMC* VI.1 (1992), 366–78 and Roscher, *Lex.* 2440–59.

[25] ἐγὼ μέν, ἔφη, καὶ αὐτός, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἕτοιμός εἰμι παρέχειν ἐμαυτὸν τοῖς ξένοις, καὶ ἐὰν βούλωνται δέρειν ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ νῦν δέρουσιν, εἴ μοι ἡ δορὰ μὴ εἰς ἀσκὸν τελευτήσει, ὥσπερ ἡ τοῦ Μαρσύου, ἀλλ' εἰς ἀρετήν. See also Pl. *Leg*. 3.677d4, *Resp*. 3.399e1–2, where Maryas appears in the context of musical education.

[26] According to Plut. *Alc*. 2.4–6, Alcibiades so despised flute-playing and its distorting effect on the player's facial expression (2.5.5–2.6.1) that it was eventually removed from the liberal arts curriculum (2.7.5–6).

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their halves are separated, they are revealed to contain images of gods inside them. And in addition, I say that [Socrates] resembles the satyr Marsyas.'[27] Alcibiades elucidates his comparison by drawing attention to the physical resemblance between Socrates and the satyr, and calls Socrates 'hubristic' (ὑβριστής, 215b7) and a 'piper' (αὐλητής, 215b8), both manifest attributes of Marsyas. The act of *hubris* usually associated with satyrs is that of committing sexual assault, but Alcibiades in the *Symposium* ironically inverts the term and applies it to the injury Socrates inflicted on him by *rejecting* his sexual favours.[28] The comparison of Socrates with Marsyas appears particularly apt, given that Marsyas' own *hubris*, uncharacteristically for a satyr, was not of a sexual nature but is expressed, instead, by his putting himself on a par with divine authority: he plays the pipe in defiance of Athena's wishes and believes himself sufficiently skilled to challenge Apollo.[29] Similarly, Socrates the piper in Plato's *Cratylus* displays *hubris* by claiming to speak with divinely inspired skill when decoding the meaning of names, just as if he were able to correctly interpret Apollo's oracles.[30] He shows himself aware of the potentially dangerous consequences of his undertaking at 399a1–5: 'It seems you have faith in Euthyphro's inspiration.' – Hermogenes: 'Clearly.' – 'And you are right to have faith. Just now I seem to have received such a genius revelation that, if I do not watch out, I will run the risk of becoming even too clever for my own good before the day is over.'[31]

Further points of comparison emerge. In the *Symposium* Alcibiades' likening of Socrates to Apollo's challenger Marsyas invites the reader to consider Socrates himself as a challenger to the gods,[32] a contest from which Socrates, in Alcibiades' portrayal, emerges in a rather favourable light. In a play on the theme of Marsyas' flaying,[33] Alcibiades suggests that, once Socrates is 'opened in two halves' like the Sileni statues in the shops, he reveals himself to be filled with virtue underneath his outward shell of

[27] *Symp.* 215a5–b4: φημὶ γὰρ δὴ ὁμοιότατον αὐτὸν εἶναι τοῖς σιληνοῖς τούτοις τοῖς ἐν τοῖς ἑρμογλυφείοις καθημένοις, οὕστινας ἐργάζονται οἱ δημιουργοὶ σύριγγας ἢ αὐλοὺς ἔχοντας, οἳ διχάδε διοιχθέντες φαίνονται ἔνδοθεν ἀγάλματα ἔχοντες θεῶν. καὶ φημὶ αὖ ἐοικέναι αὐτὸν τῷ σατύρῳ τῷ Μαρσύᾳ.

[28] *Symp.* 217e–219e. See H.F. North, '"Opening Socrates": the eikon of Alcibiades', *ICS* 19 (1994), 89–98, especially 93–5; F.C.C. Sheffield, 'Alcibiades' speech. A satyric drama', *G&R* 48 (2001), 193–209, at 202 with references. Sheffield assesses Alcibiades' entry in the *Symposium* as a satyric play.

[29] M. Gagarin, '"Hybris" and Alcibiades' failure', *Phoenix* 31 (1977), 22–37, at 31–3 with n. 39. See also the portrayal of Marsyas by Diodorus Siculus, who says that Marsyas was 'admired for his sagacity and moderation' (θαυμαζόμενον ἐπὶ συνέσει καὶ σωφροσύνῃ, 3.58.3, 3.58.6–7).

[30] Note Socrates' interpretation of the name 'Apollo' itself as indicative of the 'four powers' (405a1, 406a1–2) of the god, music, prophecy, medicine and archery. A specific domain of the god is that of purification, both in the field of medicine and in the field of prophecy (see 405a8–b2, b6–7)—we recall Socrates' call for purification after his own 'prophetic' performance of interpreting names (396e3–397a1; cf. p. 559 above; see B. Anceschi, *Die Götternamen in Platons Kratylos* (Frankfurt, 2007), 116–18. Apollo's connection with prophecy is accounted for by Socrates with the etymological link between the god's name and the term τὸ ἁπλοῦν, 'the simple', which he declares to be identical in meaning with τὸ ἀληθές, 'the truthful' (405c2).

[31] See Stallbaum (n. 1), 89 and Ademollo (n. 6), 248: '"Becoming wiser than he should" probably amounts to transgressing some boundary he should not transgress.'

[32] At *Symp.* 214d2–4 Alcibiades anticipates a comparison between Socrates and the gods with his ironic accusation that Socrates would be jealous if he praised Eros, like the other symposiasts had done before him: 'It is he who won't keep his hands off me if I praise any god or man other than himself in his presence.'

[33] North (n. 28), 96 comments: '[…] the comical surface of Socrates' *logoi* is compared to the skin of a hubristic satyr (221e3–5). The "opening" of the silenus-statues is substituted for the flaying'.

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ignorance.[34] In what follows, Alcibiades further expands his comparison. In using 'bare speech' (ψιλοῖς λόγοις, 215c7) instead of a musical instrument, Socrates is, in fact, a 'more wondrous' (θαυμασιώτερος, 215b8 and see 215d3–6) piper than Marsyas, able to enchant his listeners far more than the former. Indeed, much like Socrates himself, his speeches (λόγοι) seem, at face value, rather ridiculous (πάνυ γελοῖοι, 221e2), 'dressed up on the outside with words and phrases, the gift of an insolent satyr' (καὶ ὀνόματα καὶ ῥήματα ἔξωθεν περιαμπέχονται, σατύρου δή τινα ὑβριστοῦ δοράν, 221e2–4). 'But if one looks at the [speeches] as they are opened up and gets inside them, first of all one will find them to be the only speeches that have intelligence in them. Next [one will find] that they are most divine, having in them the most detailed images of virtue, and covering an abundance of, or rather all, subjects that are fit to be studied by him who is to acquire what is good and noble.'[35]

In the exchange between Hermogenes and Socrates at *Cra.* 417d10–418a1, Hermogenes too likens Socrates to a piper (ἔδοξας στομαυλῆσαι, 417d9), as he pronounces the reconstructed name βουλαπτεροῦν. Despite Hermogenes' apparent praise of this laboured expression (ποικίλα τὰ ὀνόματα, 417e6) the comparison of Socrates to a piper in this dialogue, unlike in the *Symposium*, is evidently intended to mock him in his current pursuit. What is more, while Socrates' 'bare speeches' in the *Symposium* carry a deceptively ridiculous outer shell, but are found to be 'most divine' once opened or unfolded, the 'unfolded' original form of the adjective βλαβερόν, βουλαπτεροῦν, invites Hermogenes' ridicule instead of appearing to him 'most divine'. Given that this original form, translated as 'wishing to restrain the flow', reflects the underlying doctrine of flux subscribed to by the name-givers of old, Plato may be signalling, with the mocking image of Socrates the piper, that this name displays content which ought to be judged as laughable[36] rather than divinely inspired. In what may be a further indication that the wisdom which fuels Socrates' explanations is not a credible source, Socrates duly points out that it is not he himself who is 'responsible' for the term βουλαπτεροῦν but the name-givers: οὐκ ἐγώ, ὦ Ἑρμόγενες, αἴτιος, ἀλλ' οἱ θέμενοι τὸ ὄνομα (418a2–3).

ΔΟΞΑ AND ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ (*CRA*. 420B7–421C4)

The allusion to Euthyphro's horses early in the dialogue had initiated the motif of a chariot quest for Socrates' performance as an interpreter of names.[37] This motif has been recognized as an overt parallel to the intellectual quest of Parmenides the charioteer,

[34] At *Symp.* 216d4–7 Socrates wears his outer shell (τὸ σχῆμα αὐτοῦ) of ignorance like a Silenus statue, 'but once his surface is removed, can you imagine how full to the brim he is with moderation?' (ἔνδοθεν δὲ ἀνοιχθεὶς πόσης οἴεσθε γέμει, ὦ ἄνδρες συμπόται, σωφροσύνης).

[35] *Symp.* 222a1–6; see Sheffield (n. 28), 199–200.

[36] Socrates himself had previously, at 402a1, described as 'laughable' the sudden 'swarm of wisdom' (σμῆνος σοφίας, 401e6) that overcomes him. See, however, M. Mader, 'Das Problem des Lachens und der Komödie bei Platon' (Diss., Tübingen, 1973), who points out that Plato may portray as ridiculous views that may contain truth. Cf. Ademollo (n. 6), 302–6, 315. Gagarin (n. 29), 24 n. 11 notes that Socrates also describes his analysis of mimetically formed first names as 'hybristic and ridiculous' (ὑβριστικὰ εἶναι καὶ γελοῖα, 426b6); see similar remarks at 425d1, 426b6, 432d5. On the relation between the first and the secondary names in the etymological section, see Ademollo (n. 6), 257–67.

[37] The parallels between Parmenides' poem and the *Cratylus* are emphasized by Barney (n. 2), 73–80. Baxter (n. 1), 90 and Goldschmidt (n. 5), 108–9 downplay the race motif; see Barney (n. 2), 61.

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who, guided by the 'daughters of the Sun' (fr. 1.9), encounters a goddess who offers to her visitor knowledge of the Truth—an altogether promising literary paradigm for Socrates' quest to arrive, via the interpretation of names, at the true nature of their referents. Initially, at 410e3 Socrates notes that he is 'already well on the way towards wisdom' with his etymologies (πόρρω ἤδη οἶμαι φαίνομαι σοφίας ἐλαύνειν, ἐλαύνειν = 'to ride a chariot').[38] At 420d1–3 Hermogenes takes note of the pace of Socrates' etymologizing, which is now coming thick and fast since Socrates is approaching the end of the journey (τέλος γὰρ ἤδη θέω).[39] In the course of the discussion, however, Plato appears to make use of the same imagery to indicate that all is not well. Socrates' swiftness is accompanied by stumbles along the way that reflect the varying success of his etymological enquiry. At 414b2–4 he is speeding so fast 'as to get hurled off his race course', so fast as to get distracted from his intended agenda whenever he was 'hitting smooth ground'.[40] While this remark may be taken simply as confirming Socrates' ability as a performer, it is possible to read it as echoing his description of the original name-givers, whose zeal for the flux theory, according to which all things are in flow and whirled about (ῥεῖν καὶ φέρεσθαι, 411c4), left them dizzy and confused.[41]

Does Socrates' journey take him to his intended destination, the knowledge of the true nature of things that are? This question leads me to the final passage I propose for discussion. At 421a1–c4 Hermogenes' appreciation of Socrates' bravery in demonstrating the ὀρθότης of the 'noblest', most important names strengthens the impression that the journey has come to a close. As noted above, Hermogenes at 420d1–3 had commented on Socrates' increasing speed, which Socrates explained by the fact that he was approaching the end of the journey, τέλος γὰρ ἤδη θέω. The group of etymologies that had prompted Hermogenes' comment contained the cognitive terms δόξα, 'opinion', οἴησις, 'opinion/notion', and βουλή, 'will/design'. δ**όξ**α is linked to the shooting of a bow (τ**όξ**ον). Capturing the image of bow and arrow, δόξα and the other cognitive terms are associated with 'aiming at something', 'trying to hit some target' (τὸ ἐφίεσθαι, 420e4). Following this group of etymologies, with the end of the journey now in sight, Socrates himself is propelled by his adopted δόξα,[42] the flux theory, and is aiming for the perceived τέλος, the interpretation of the 'noblest' of names: 'truth' (ἀλήθεια), 'falsehood' (ψεῦδος), 'being' (ὄν) and—we note the perceived etymological link—'name', **ὄν**ομα, itself. Socrates explains these terms by

[38] See Barney (n. 2), 60–1.

[39] Following an emendation by Adam that seems preferable to Méridier's θεῷ, which yields 'there is an end to the god's [inspiration]' (a reading chosen by Schleiermacher). With the acute accent, θέω, 'I run', along with τέλος, may form an accusative of spatial extent: 'running over the finish line'; alternatively, a terminal accusative omitting a preposition: 'running to the finish line'. The latter option is preferable, since Socrates subsequently indicates that he has not yet crossed the finish line: 'I still (ἔτι) want to examine further words', vowing to continue while his strength lasts (420e3–4). Alternatively, τέλος may be taken as an adverbial accusative: '*At last*, I am running'—an unlikely option, given that Socrates comments on his speed at 414b2–4. Cf. Goldschmidt (n. 5), 108 with n. 2.

[40] ὥσπερ ἐκτὸς δρόμου φερόμενον ἐπειδὰν λείου ἐπιλάβωμαι. Etymologies are coming to Socrates with such ease as to distract him from words of philosophical significance: see Barney (n. 2), 61; Sedley (n. 4), 157.

[41] Socrates' speed is in contrast to Nestor's counsel at *Il.* 23.318–25 (see n. 14 above), where he explains that 'he who has put all his trust (πεποιθώς, 23.319) in his horses and chariot and recklessly makes a turn that is loose, one way or another, finds his horses drifting out of the course (ἀνὰ δρόμον, 23.321) and does not control them. But the man, though he drive the slower horses, who takes his advantage, keeps his eye always on the post and turns tight, ever watchful …' (transl. Lattimore with minor modifications).

[42] 401a4–5.

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repeating the association of 'being', ὄν, with motion, pointing to the participle ἰ-όν, 'going'. His understanding of 'truth', 'falsehood', 'being' and, by consequence, 'name', the very denominator indicative of a thing's essential being, remains dependent upon the scientific δόξα that motivates his intellectual quest and determines whether or not he will hit his target. Accordingly, he explains 'truth' (ἀλήθεια) as θεία ἄλη, 'divine wandering' (421b3).

Initially, the etymological link between δόξα and τόξον at 420b9 brings to mind other bows that may be of importance in the present context. First, given that Socrates' adopted δόξα is the theory of flux, Heraclitus' bow (DK 51) may not be far from Plato's mind. Second, we recall that Pandarus, Aeneas' ill-fated passenger in Book 5 of the *Iliad*, has to rely on Aeneas' chariot since he had left his own behind, bringing only his 'bow, a thing that was to profit me nothing' (420b6)—in hindsight, a fair assessment that might be suggestive also of the lack of usefulness of Socrates' 'bow', the δόξα of flux.[43]

Furthermore, in view of the overt parallels between Socrates' and Parmenides' intellectual quests, the passage presents a fascinating undercurrent. In Parmenides' poem, the Way of δόξα, the opinion of mortals (δόξας δ' ἀπὸ τοῦδε βροτείας, beginning at fr. 8.51, and see 1.28b–32) concerning the phenomenal world stands in contrast to an alternative manner of enquiry which assumes 'that it is' and that 'not being' is impossible (ἡ μὲν [δίζησις] ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι, fr. 2.8–9). This is the Way of Conviction (πειθώ) which 'attends upon Truth' (Ἀληθείηι γὰρ ὀπηδεῖ, fr. 2.10). The fact that Socrates, for his chariot quest, leans on δόξα—a δόξα, moreover, that presupposes an οὐσία in flux, which inevitably invites change from being to not being—all with the final τέλος of explaining the nature of ἀλήθεια, 'truth', signals to the reader that Socrates' route has diverged sharply from the route towards Truth taken by his literary predecessor.[44]

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[43] Note, moreover, that one of Apollo's domains is archery, with his name signifying 'ever-darting' (τὸ ἀεὶ βολῶν, *Cra.* 405c5–6; see n. 31 above and Anceschi [n. 30], 115, 121). Socrates' own attempt at archery with the help of the flux-δόξα may be yet another unsuccessful attempt to match the god's skill—we recall that 'Apollo' at 405c2 is connected with τὸ ἀληθές, 'the truthful'.

[44] Barney (n. 2), 73–7 considers the Cratylean etymologies and Parmenides' δόξα agonistic displays of cosmological theories intended for serious intellectual competition. The danger to which both Plato and Parmenides point, however, is that both Parmenides' δόξα and the etymologies' underlying intellectual framework of flux are deceptive and may be mistaken for the truth (Barney [n. 2], 76–80).

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