A MORE SOCRATIC *MENO*

R. WEISS: *Virtue in the Cave. Moral Inquiry in Plato's* Meno. Pp. x + 229. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Cased, £35. ISBN: 0-19-514076-1.

Virtue in the Cave is a fascinating book, which challenges its readers to reconsider long-standing interpretations of Plato's *Meno*. The *Meno* has traditionally been regarded as a transitional dialogue, combining features of Socratic moral inquiry familiar from such works as the *Apology* and the *Euthyphro* with Platonic metaphysical doctrines expounded especially in the *Phaedo*, that the soul is immortal and that learning is recollection of innate knowledge. Absent from the *Meno* is a theory of transcendent Forms, which the *Phaedo* presupposes in its main arguments for the immortality of the soul, including the argument based on the doctrine of recollection. Weiss argues convincingly that without Forms to support recollection and the immortality of the soul in the *Meno*, these two doctrines may function very differently in the two dialogues. According to W., Socrates' claims for the immortality of the soul and his demonstration of recollection in the *Meno* are put forward not as theses to which he is seriously committed, but merely to provoke Meno to continue the inquiry into the nature of virtue. Socrates' aim is to help Meno, and he will use any ploy needed to achieve that end. This is a bold and deeply interesting thesis, which deserves serious consideration.

For W., the *Meno* should be grouped with the Socratic dialogues and not with the transitional dialogues, as usually assumed. She regards the *Meno* as an apology for the Socratic enterprise—his open-ended investigation into moral questions. This enterprise will not yield moral knowledge. The best humans can achieve is true opinion, which has withstood Socratic cross-examination. Using the image of the Cave from Plato's *Republic*, W. argues that Socrates' vision of our human condition is life in the Cave. There is no way out of the Cave: our best hope is to keep searching for moral truths by examining ourselves and our moral beliefs. W. argues vigorously for her positions. Not only does the book give a comprehensive interpretation of the *Meno*, it also contains two valuable appendices in which she contrasts the treatment of recollection in the *Phaedo* with that in the *Meno* and argues that the *Republic* abandons moral inquiry, replacing it with the possibility of moral knowledge.

A brief review cannot do justice to this rich and provocative book. I will focus on W.'s treatment of Socrates' interview with Meno's slave. After an inconclusive discussion of virtue in the first part of the dialogue, Meno in exasperation raises an objection (80d). According to W., Meno in fact makes two objections, only the first of which—the paradox of inquiry—Socrates explicitly restates: (1) How can we inquire into what we do not know? Either we know what we are looking for, in which case there is no need to search; or we do not know, in which case we will not recognize it even if we find it. Socrates dismisses this paradox as an eristic quibble (80d–e). Of course we can inquire into what we do not know, if we know the question (have a description of what we are looking for), but do not know the answer (what satisfies that description). But Meno also states a second objection, which W. calls the paradox of knowing: (2) How can we *know* that we have discovered what we were looking for, even if we have found it? How are new discoveries verified as true? Socrates ignores this second puzzle in his restatement of Meno's objection, because he recognizes that in virtue inquiry he cannot refute it: the elenchus cannot yield knowledge, only true opinions.

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Since Socrates cannot refute Meno's second paradox, his task is to motivate Meno to continue the elenctic inquiry into virtue, while masking the fact that the inquiry will not yield what Meno seeks: knowledge about virtue. Socrates first recounts a myth that the soul is immortal and has learned all things both here and in Hades, and so can recollect what it previously knew (81a–e). When Meno balks at the idea that learning is recollection, Socrates gives a demonstration—the famous interview with Meno's slave. According to W., this demonstration does not show what Socrates claims it shows. The slave boy does not recollect the correct answer to the geometrical question (namely, on what line is based a square double the size of an original square?). Instead, Socrates teaches him a lesson in geometry. On W.'s stunning reconstruction of Socrates' diagram, Socrates draws the diagonal across the original square at the very start of the demonstration (82c). Throughout the interview the boy observes the line that will solve his problem, yet it fails to jog his memory (contrast the *Phaedo*, where the sight of equal sticks and stones stimulates recollection of the Form of Equality). Only when Socrates points to the line at the end of the demonstration does the boy realize that this is the correct answer. Socrates teaches the boy; no recollection occurs.

According to W., the interview pretends to be an elenchus but is not. It is not an elenchus, because geometry is a subject in which one can reach the truth and know that the answer is true (by verifying the answer). Socrates not only leads the boy to the correct answer, he also verifies the answer by having the boy count the four half-squares that compose the square based on the diagonal of the original square. But verification is not possible in virtue inquiry. The demonstration is simply an elaborate ruse to lure Meno back to the investigation into virtue. Strong support for W.'s interpretation is Socrates' disclaimer at the end of the demonstration. He says that he would not insist that his argument is right in all respects but would contend at all costs that we will be better, braver, and less idle if we believe we must search for the things we do not know (86b).

W.'s interpretation makes sense of many anomalies in the text and is attractive in its own right, but it prompts some questions. For instance, why, at the end of the interview with Meno's slave, does Socrates say that the boy now has true opinion about the geometrical problem, but if someone were to ask him about the same problem many times and in many ways, he would know these things no less accurately than anyone (85c9–d1)? On W.'s interpretation, the boy already knows the answer to the geometrical problem at the end of the interview. What more would further questioning achieve? W. thinks that Socrates' comments are intended for Meno and aim to provoke him to continue the elenctic inquiry into virtue. But if the claim is meant for Meno, why does he not still say that the boy has knowledge, since knowledge is what Meno hopes to gain? If, on the contrary, Socrates is finally telling the truth about what elenctic inquiry can achieve, then he should say that the boy has true opinion and withhold the promise that further questioning will lead to knowledge. To be sure, W. is aware of the difficulty. She suggests that to 'know no less accurately than anyone' is not really knowledge (p. 112), but simply the epistemic state of someone who has withstood the Socratic elenchus. However, I suspect that Socrates is telling the truth: the boy has only true opinion. Further questioning (into geometry or into virtue) can transform true belief into knowledge.

I have raised a doubt about W.'s interpretation of the *Meno*. But even readers unpersuaded by her overall view will profit enormously from working through her arguments and their implications, and from rethinking their own reasons for maintaining an alternative position. *Virtue in the Cave* is a groundbreaking book

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that deserves careful reading and reflection, and will stimulate much fruitful discussion.

Brown University MARY LOUISE GILL

DEMOSTHENES' *FOURTH PHILIPPIC*

I. HAJDÚ: *Kommentar zur 4. Philippischen Rede des Demosthenes.* Pp. viii + 475. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002. Cased, DM 148. ISBN: 3-11-016930-4.

Demosthenes' *Fourth Philippic* (Oration 10) continues to be a controversial text. Even in ancient times, some pundits (Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* 6.253.22–4) thought it spurious, because they did not believe that Demosthenes would have compared the Athenians to drug addicts (10.6), although better critics such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Hermogenes express no doubt about its authenticity. The earlier modern scholars seem all to have accepted it, but in the nineteenth century it came under vigorous attack. By 1900 the general view was that it had been compiled by some unknown rhetorician incorporating fragments of genuine Demosthenic material. Early in the twentieth century the tables were turned by the discovery of parts of Didymus' commentary on the speech, which seemed to many readers to prove its genuineness, but there have continued to be some dissentients.

Perhaps the most serious problem is the duplicated passages: certain parts of the *Fourth Philippic* are much the same as parts of *On Affairs in the Chersonese* (Oration 8), with minor variations of wording. But this problem has been well discussed by C. D. Adams, *Class. Phil.* 33 (1938), 129–44, and by S. G. Daitz, *Class. Phil.* 52 (1957), 145–62. Their work leads to the conclusion that the text of Oration 8 which we now have is a conflation, made by Demosthenes himself for 'publication' or distribution, from two speeches which he had delivered orally, one being the *Fourth Philippic*, which we also have as Oration 10, the other being a speech on the Chersonese which is not preserved. This explanation has been accepted by many, including Ian Worthington, *Mnemosyne* 44 (1991), 425–8, who uses it to draw a contrast between a text written for oral delivery and one intended for readers, though Jeremy Trevett, *Hermes* 124 (1996), 438–9, thinks it possible that both texts were delivered. The attempt by L. Canfora, *Per la cronologia di Demostene* (Bari, 1968), to analyse the *Fourth Philippic* into a number of disconnected passages of various dates, collected after Demosthenes' death, is less convincing. A stronger argument against the authenticity of the speech has been mounted by R. D. Milns in an article in *Filologia e forme letterarie: studi offerti a Francesco della Corte* (Urbino, 1987), 1.287–302; he criticizes various historical and linguistic elements in the passage about the King of Persia and Hermeias of Atarneus (10.31–4), and suggests that the text has been put together by a compiler drawing not only on Oration 8 but also on Theopompus.

Now István Hajdú has produced the longest and most thorough study of the speech. He has no doubt that it is a genuine work of Demosthenes, and he provides a substantial introduction, including a detailed study of the principal manuscripts, and an extraordinarily full commentary on both linguistic and historical matters. He does not provide a Greek text, but uses Fuhr's Teubner text as his basis, and gives a list of

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