

MARYLOU SENA *

**Plato is not Platonism:
Musings on the Derivative De-eroticized Nature of the Modern Subject¹**

Anyone interested in reading Plato with Nietzsche's genealogical account of metaphysics in mind will have to consider the distinction Nietzsche sees within the history of metaphysics between Plato and Platonism. While related genealogically, the two are never to be equated given the professed wisdom of each. In truth, Kantian Platonism (when historically unmasked) knows, on the bases of its own professed wisdom and "probity", that it stands in opposition to Plato when claiming that nonsensuous being is «altogether unattainable for cognition»² And it is certain that such an effacement of nonsensuous being (of its luminous nature and knowledge) is an affront to Plato and in particular to the wisdom of the Delphic god Apollo (the «god of light») that philosophy is to serve. Plato, then, is no more Platonism than Platonism is Plato. But while Plato and Platonism are not to be equated, Nietzsche's own relationship to this distinction within the history of metaphysics, first and foremost, stresses that *Plato is not Platonism*; for above all else, Nietzsche is determined to «save» luminous being and its knowledge as he passes through and overcomes the history of metaphysics that ends in the atheism of positivism³.

Of course, the statement "that Plato is not Platonism" has taken on a life of its own given the general soundness of its claim and its historical life at play within the history of metaphysics itself. But in Nietzsche, the claim has an exact meaning that captures at once the full magnitude and significance of his genealogical account of the complex origin and history of metaphysics. That Plato is not Platonism means, first and foremost, that Plato's ontological view of the world in a particular way is what is most proper to metaphysics. And here, as Plato insists, only the «outward look» of the soul in the form of *sophrosyne* is able to see the true world (the world as it is) where «true being» is structurally set apart from the mimetic realm of «nonbeing», of sensuous appearances, of sensuousness as such⁴. And while Plato, as we know, thinks of these

* Seattle University

¹ At the onset of this paper I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. J. Patrick Burke and Dr. Arthur Fisher for their sublime collegiality and friendship. As Nietzsche has it, such friends are «pure air», «solitude», and without a doubt «bread and wine».

² Heidegger (1979), p. 206.

³ In this spirit we have Nietzsche's Zarathustra who seeks a way beyond the words of the soothsayer that «all is empty, all is the same, all has been» with the aid of his Apollinian dream (Nietzsche, 1954, pp. 245-246).

⁴ Heidegger, I believe, is right to stress that for Nietzsche Plato's view of the world, while divided ontologically, is *structurally* a whole since the mimetic nature of sensuousness is understood in terms of «true being» (Heidegger, 1979, p. 201). True being (luminous being) sets the standard. What's more, whether recognized or not, it is the «primal referent» in terms of which sensuous mimetic likenesses are first known and judged as such (as likenesses, appearances, images). On the bases of true being and the ascertainable of it as «being there», the very nature of sensuousness is defined mimetically as deficient in being. In this spirit, Plato tells us in his *Phaedrus* at 249c that «such things are not beings; they are only such things (*ha nyn einai phamen*) of which we now say that they are» (Heidegger's translation, 1979, p.194). However, Plato immediately tells us at the same location in the text that the value of mimetic appearances lies in being the «means of remembrance» (Plato, 1989, p, 496, 249b4-249d2). In six

two regions of being together as a structural whole, only the nonsensuous (luminous) being of the “Ideas” and of the gods are said to have true being. Plato then *is* metaphysics; the *metaphysical* origin of his *metaphysical* view of the world, as Nietzsche deeply recognizes, is based in the «outward look» of the soul’s form named *sophrosyne*⁵.

At the same time Nietzsche’s claim (that Plato is not Platonism) means that Plato is responsible for an ensuing history of metaphysics that has proven to be derived from and ontologically inferior to the metaphysical view of the world that Plato holds to be objectively true. Plato’s view of the world (where nonsensuous being is structurally set apart from sensuous nonbeing) determines in advance the derivative views of the world that make up the history of metaphysics as “Platonism”. To be clear, the history of metaphysics after Plato, as Nietzsche sees it, is directly «derived from» and «ontologically inferior to» Plato’s metaphysical view of the world. In this spirit, Nietzsche speaks of Christianity as Platonism, of Kantian modernity as Platonism, of science as Platonism, and so on. Broadly speaking, the authors of these epochs, in striking contrast to Plato, take pride in what they believe to be the radical limits of human reason and therefore of the radical unknowability of true being’s *nonsensuous* luminous nature. And since the history of metaphysics is directly derived from and at the same time inferior to Plato’s metaphysics, the former bears Plato’s name but in its derivative form of “Platonism”. What’s more, due to the derivative nature of Platonism, Plato must be distinguished from it. With this final distinction, we have a brief outline of Nietzsche’s formal conception of metaphysics: while metaphysics is both Plato and Platonism, Plato is not Platonism⁶.

But what exactly is the real foundation (*fundamentum in re*) for Nietzsche’s distinction within metaphysics between Plato and Platonism? What exactly for Plato is most proper to the Real that Platonism is not able to see and that therefore defines its derivative deficient nature? What *in particular* does Heidegger maintain that Nietzsche wants to «preserve» in Plato as he «twists free» from the history of metaphysics of Plato and Platonism? Without a doubt, «luminous

consecutive paragraphs (249c5-251a), Plato repeatedly tries to make his point: that it is not easy for the soul «to be put in mind *thereof* by things *here* (*my emphases*, 250a). Only the few (the lovers of beauty) «behold that which is imaged» (250b); «Such a one, as soon as he beholds the beauty of this world, is reminded of true beauty» (249e). Everything, then, in the sensuous realm of «earthly likenesses» (images), when seen as such (as images), aids us in recollecting what is (although forgotten) paradoxically *there now* (true luminous being). See Plato (1989), pp. 496-497, 249c-251a.

⁵ Nietzsche (1967), p. 71.

⁶ The whole of this paper takes seriously Nietzsche’s claim at the core of his account of metaphysics. As Heidegger understand Nietzsche’s claim, Plato’s initial separation of nonsensuous essences from sensuousness (which leaves the latter with the denigrated status of «appearances» without «true being») leads to the strength of the Kantian claim of Modern Platonism that the former (nonsensuous essences) cannot be known (Heidegger, 1979, pp. 205-206). At the same time, Heidegger recognizes that Nietzsche’s distinction between Plato and Platonism also allows one to make a case for Plato who has it that nonsensuous essences (luminous being) can be known insofar as the soul is in the form of *sophrosyne*. In his *Nietzsche*, as I hope to show, Heidegger makes such a case and argues from Plato’s eroticized conception of the *logos* that «nonsensuous eidetic seeing» is possible. But while Nietzsche has it that a case can be made *within* the history of metaphysics for either Plato or Kantian Platonism, Heidegger also knows that Nietzsche’s new conception of metaphysics (based as it is in his new concept of the soul) is neither Ancient nor Modern. In this respect Heidegger recognizes that Nietzsche thinks he ultimately overcomes the Kantian claim of Modern Platonism when seeing from the perspective of a different form of the soul *another way* in which to «preserve» a relationship to luminous being (Heidegger, 1961, p. 234). For rather than *unconditionally* denying the knowability or the existence of luminous being and its sublime, omnipotent nature, Nietzsche sets luminous being *back into* sensuous nature. Here we have one of Heidegger’s most important insights into Nietzsche’s thought: «that the sensuous corporeal, in itself possesses this being-beyond itself». that sensuousness «surpasses itself» in scintillating shining as «transfiguration» See Heidegger (1979), pp. 212, 217. See also Sena (2004), pp. 139-159.

being» is most proper to the Real (and therefore to any conception of metaphysics). Above all else, its knowledge is to be «preserved» even if Nietzsche calls into question the nonsensuous and posited nature that Plato assigns to it⁷. But how is it possible to «preserve» a relationship to luminous being, and what's more, to more than one conception of it? What «foundation» lets us see the respective value of each conception without having to deny one at the cost of the other?⁸ Here, I believe Nietzsche knows (better than anyone before or after him) that Plato accomplishes this task when establishing the complex nature of the soul as the critical foundation for philosophy; the strength of Plato as a thinker, the magnitude and significance that Plato has for Nietzsche, is based in Plato's nuanced insistence that the complex nature of the soul (given the plurality of its possible forms) is the starting point for a concept of philosophy that is able to see, at least in principle, the respective value of more than one metaphysical view of the world⁹.

Plato then, in striking contrast to Platonism, secures *from within the complex nature of the soul* a form of the soul that is able to take hold of the luminous nature of true being. As Plato has it, only the outward regard of this particular form of the soul (*sophrosyne*) is able to see true being and, in turn, bear the full weight of its aesthetic and poetic task: of bringing-forth the «true in the beautiful». Platonism, on the other hand, coincides with the *break* from the aesthetic, from what Plato characterizes as having true being (the Ideas and the gods) that everywhere informs Plato's mobile living thoughts and his measured luminous prose. What's more, instructed by Nietzsche, Heidegger advances a reading of Plato that suggests that Platonism's break from the aesthetic and its overall agnostic view of the world (religious or scientific) is based in a de-

⁷ Here I should stress that Heidegger tells us that for the sake of his «own inquiry» he wants to trace the history of metaphysics so as to «see how Nietzsche, in spite of his will to subvert, preserved a luminous knowledge concerning what had occurred prior to him» (Heidegger, 1979, p. 203). For both Plato and Nietzsche, there is no doubt that in order for «luminous knowledge to be preserved» (*bewahrte*, Heidegger, 1961, p. 234) the soul must be in a form that has access to it.

⁸ My focus in this paper is on the distinction Nietzsche makes *within* the history of metaphysics and not on his foundational critique of it as based in Plato's privileged form of the soul named *sophrosyne*. Heidegger, I believe, is right to make much of this all-important distinction (Heidegger, 1979, pp. 200-220) and right in recognizing that the distinction occurs within the history of metaphysics. In other words, the distinction between Plato and Platonism is not meant to suggest that Plato somehow for Nietzsche is outside of the history of metaphysics that evolves out of him as Platonism. Without a doubt, metaphysics for Nietzsche is based in Plato's conception of the soul named *sophrosyne* (Nietzsche, 1978, §15, p. 71) given the modern «tendency» (*Tendenz*) of its form (Nietzsche, 1978, §13, p. 64) and its view of the world. But Plato, as Nietzsche knows, constantly refers back to the complex nature of the soul as the starting point (the foundation) for any other competing or different conception of being even when deciding upon *sophrosyne* as the only form of the soul that is able to catch sight of «luminous being». The full significance of Plato for Nietzsche (Plato's strength as a thinker) lies in the fact that Plato establishes the complex nature of the soul as the starting point for his own or for any other competing conception of being. For this reason, Plato above all others would be open to Nietzsche's claim that there is another form of the soul that is able to access «luminous being». In other words, even if Nietzsche sets himself apart from a history of metaphysics of Plato and Platonism, Nietzsche nevertheless «preserves a relationship» (Heidegger, 1979, p. 203) to luminous being when claiming that it is definitive of his «new interpretation of sensuousness». In so far as Nietzsche's postmodern view of the world cannot be traced back to the soul in the form of *sophrosyne*, he stands outside the metaphysics of Plato and Platonism and marks the inception of a new branch of metaphysics that owes its origin to a different form of the soul. Be that as it may, my intention here is not to privilege one form of the soul and its respective view of the world (be it Ancient, Modern or Postmodern) over the others. Rather, I want to establish at the onset of this paper an orientation to *a history of philosophy* that (in keeping with both Plato and Nietzsche) starts with the complex nature of the soul and therefore recognizes that each form of the soul and its view of the world (be it Ancient, Modern or Postmodern) is to be valued in its own right.

⁹ In fact, Plato never tires of reminding us that all of the soul's possible forms are to be dialectically held open for on-going critical investigation even after deciding upon *sophrosyne* as the form of the soul that is able to catch sight of luminous being.

eroticized conception of the rational capacity of the soul that in one way or another attempts to function on its own without the influence of *eros*¹⁰. For this reason, Heidegger insists that Nietzsche sets Plato's aesthetic view of the world apart from the unaesthetic protracted history of Platonism and its modern agnostic (religious or scientific) views of the world.

In light of these initial opening remarks on Nietzsche's formal distinction between Plato and Platonism, *I now would like to advance a reading of Plato's Phaedrus that isn't based in Platonism*, that takes seriously the luminous, aesthetic nature of Plato's prose and the difficulty of accessing them in light of a history of Platonism that from Nietzsche's perspective is blind to the aesthetic¹¹. Towards this end, I will begin (in the first section one of this paper) by advancing Heidegger's own efforts here that lead him to Nietzsche (1936-37) and to his reading of Plato's *Phaedrus* with Nietzsche's all-important distinction in mind between Plato and Platonism. In his *reading*, Heidegger connects Platonism to a de-eroticized conception of the *logos*. However, Heidegger never gives us an analysis of the *form* of this de-eroticized soul that is responsible for the derivative function of its *logos* and its limited secular «ontic» view of the world¹². What's more, Heidegger fails to see that Plato does. Indeed, in his *Phaedrus*, Plato gives us a sustained account of this new *form* of the soul that first takes shape in the one who argues for the «benefits» of being a «non-lover»; it alone is responsible for a derivative function of the *logos* and its agnostic view of the world.

In the second section of this paper (before directly advancing my own reading of Plato), I want to address the *basic form* and *essence* of the soul that belongs to *sophrosyne* since it is from its perspective that Plato sees the derivative form of the non-lover's soul (defined by a derivative form of *sophrosyne*) and the limits of its rational capacity and function. Towards this end, I want to consider the way in which Plato's radical critique and re-appropriation of the Apollinian and of the Dionysian tradition (one of the subtexts of his *Phaedrus*) informs his conception of the soul's most basic form and all of its «measured» and «dithyrambic» prose¹³. Here I will suggest that the *form* of *Sophrosyne* is Apollinian, and what's more, that it is the only form of the soul that for Plato secures the soul's unified essence in its «manic» (and dithyrambic) state of being.

With these preliminary and preparatory reflections in mind, I will advance in the third and final section of this paper a reading of *Phaedrus* that places at the center of its dramatic setting Plato's own sustained account of the nature and origin of this new non-lover's de-eroticized conception of the *logos* as based in a «derivative» form of *sophrosyne*. Thankfully, both Hackforth and Griswold draw attention to Plato's distinction here between his own «immortal»

¹⁰ See Gonzalez's (2015) thoughtful account of Heidegger's recently published 1932 seminar notes on *Phaedrus* (along with the student protocols). Gonzalez focuses on the distinction that Heidegger sees between an «ontic» nonerotic conception of the *logos* (definitive of Platonism) and Plato's «ontological» erotic conception of it (*logos erōtikos*). The latter secures the soul's being (its *ousia/physis*) but only insofar as *eros* does not take the form of «possession» and «sink into a mere lust for the sensible» (Gonzalez, 2015, p.236). See also Heidegger where he directly connects *eros* to the soul's active state of recollection. In this state man is «cast beyond himself, so that he is stretched, as it were, between himself and Being and is outside himself. Such elevation beyond oneself and such being drawn towards Being itself is *erōs*» (Heidegger 1979, p. 194).

¹¹ What's more, so certain of the limits of human reason, the history of metaphysics fails to look to the complex nature of the soul for why this is the case.

¹² See Gonzalez (2015) who shows us that Heidegger connects the derivative «ontic» character of Platonism to a de-eroticized conception of the *logos*.

¹³ While the philosophical tradition and the scholarly works on Plato largely pass over Plato's on-going critique and re-appropriation of the Apollinian and the Dionysian, Derrida (no doubt, informed by Nietzsche) takes seriously this «original structure of the Dionysian and of the Apollinian» and Plato's own relationship to it (Derrida, 1978, p.28). Of course for Nietzsche, this «original structure» lies at the core of Greek religion and myth.

conception of *sophrosyne* and the «mortal» derivative form of it that takes shape in the non-lover's soul¹⁴. It is this very distinction that Plato sees that in fact set him apart from Platonism. My final reflections, however, will not end here; for it is not the case that Plato forces us to choose between his own conception of *sophrosyne* and what he sees as a derivative form of it. Instead, Plato has us «observe from within ourselves» how all of the diverse and opposing ways of seeing the world are based *in us*, in the complex nature of the soul. With this knowledge of the soul's complex nature in mind, Plato, no doubt, believes he *ends* the ensuing historical conflict between this new mortal *sophrosyne* and immortal *sophrosyne*. Since both forms of *sophrosyne* belong to the complex nature of the soul, their separate respective views of the world (the one agnostic, the other divine) must be recognized as legitimate¹⁵, even if the value of the former is to the latter as «lit lanterns are to» the bright morning light¹⁶.

I.

“Plato is not Platonism”, and yet we know Platonism's break from the «luminous knowledge» (*helles Wissen*) of Plato's text persists and is readily apparent in the «unaesthetic» accounts of Plato's prose¹⁷. It is as if the luminous character of Plato's prose, in keeping with the luminous knowledge that informs them and gives them their immortal shape, remains in the shadows, «gleamed in darkness unseen» and unknown (Sappho). Platonism, as Nietzsche has it, is the history of this break from the aesthetic where the luminous knowledge of nonsensuous being that enters Plato's thought and that shapes his prose becomes forgotten. As Heidegger reads Nietzsche's account of its protracted birth, Platonism finally finds the strength and the means to confront its own secret discontent (harbored in the souls of its authors so to speak) and breaks free from what it suspects are the mere phantoms and ghosts of Plato's thought called its Ideas; Platonism finds the strength to be itself through Kant when denying the paradoxical *nonsensuous visionary* capacity of the soul. If eidetic «nonsensuous seeing» is theoretically impossible for human cognition, what then can be said of the truly aesthetic? What can be said of the luminous light of nonsensuous being? And too, what of the sacred mysteries of old and of their rites of initiation and imitation that Plato esteems so highly and re-appropriates as his own? Like death itself, «nothing can be known about [nonsensuous being]». Worst of all, «nothing can be decided for or against it» (that it is or that it is not)¹⁸. For if the sublime referent of nonsensuous being is lost to sight, how then can it be recollected? And too, how does sensuous being now *appear* in the absence of (in this break from) the aesthetic? If Heidegger is right in his reading of Nietzsche, sensuousness now *appears* in Platonism as merely «earthly, as what it is not»¹⁹. Void of spirit, sensuousness is no longer seen as mimetic (in its capacity to point beyond itself) and reminiscent at all times of its own sublime origin that we too, as Plato has it, recollect, whether

¹⁴ See Griswold (1986), p. 75 and Hackforth's translation of Plato's *Phaedrus* in Plato (1989), pp. 491-492, 244d2-5.

¹⁵ Here, of course, everything depends upon recognizing the «inward» reflective capacity of the soul, of the «turning of its gaze back upon itself». Thanks to this «inward regard» (an astonishing capacity of the soul in its own right) we are able to «observe» from within «ourselves» (Plato, 1989, p. 485-237d) how it is that our soul's «outward regard» and view of the world shifts when we move (as we are able to do) from one form of the soul to another.

¹⁶ Nietzsche (1954), p. 95.

¹⁷ Heidegger (1961), p. 234.

¹⁸ Heidegger (1979), p. 206.

¹⁹ *Ivi*, p. 204.

we recognize this or not, in the referential play of difference that is already underway and alive in every simple perceptual act of identity.

But Plato is not Platonism, and the “limits” of human cognition is not a given that can’t be overcome. But what path leads to a reading of Plato that isn’t tarnished by Platonism? How exactly is Plato to be distinguished from a history of thought (of Platonism) that grows out of him and that relegates the region of luminous being to the unknowable? For Heidegger, and for those who follow him in the wake of his thought, the only assured path lies in identifying the origin of metaphysics. But with Nietzsche’s distinction between Plato and Platonism, this matter of the origin becomes complicated and complex. How exactly is Plato to be distinguished from a history of thought that grows out of him and that relegates the region of luminous being to the unknowable? Compelled by Nietzsche’s distinction between Plato and Platonism, Heidegger returns to Plato after *Being and Time* in search of Plato’s own account of an *origin* that historically divides and separates him from Platonism. If we for a moment consider how Heidegger advances beyond his own initial account of the origin of metaphysics in *Being and Time* when returning to Plato in 1936-37, the *complex* nature of this origin, so essential to my own reading of Plato in what follows, will become clearer.

Already in *Being and Time* (before pondering Nietzsche’s radical distinction between Plato and Platonism in 1936-37), Heidegger we know attempts to overcome a history of metaphysics when identifying its place of origin in the *being* of Dasein that paradoxically passes over itself, over its ontological ecstatic state of being (its Da-sein). The origin of metaphysics lies in this enigma of man, in Dasein’s ontological distance from itself: that Dasein is «ontically closest» but «ontologically farthest» from itself²⁰. Dasein’s ontic state of being, a state of being that passes over itself, is responsible for the history of metaphysics characterized by a *vorhanden* understanding of *Sein*. In its derivative ontic state of being, Dasein «*merely looks (eidos) at beings*». In this derivative ontic state of holding back from any involvement, *of merely looking (eidos) at beings* «the *vorhanden* perception of the world is consummated»²¹. What’s more, in terms of this ontic *vorhanden* understanding of *Sein*, Dasein, in turn, understands itself (as *vorhanden*). But the recognition of Dasein’s eclipse of itself (of its ontological distance from itself) as the onset of metaphysics is not the overcoming of it as Heidegger warns on the last page of *Being and Time* and so persists in the question:

It has long been known that ancient ontology works with ‘Thing-concepts’ and that there is a danger of ‘reifying consciousness’. But what does this «reifying» signify? Where does it arise? Why does Being get ‘conceived’ ‘proximally’ in terms of the present-at-hand (*vorhanden*) and not in terms of the ready-to-hand (*zuhanden*), which indeed lies *closer* to us? Why does this reifying always keep coming back to exercise its dominion?²²

Heidegger advances an answer to his own complex question, and, what’s more, sees something, no doubt, of a *vorhanden* «tendency» in his own account of the primordial meaning of the *logos* as «*legein*» (“letting be seen”) when returning again to Plato after *Being and Time*, but this time, as I have stressed, with Nietzsche’s distinction between Plato and Platonism in mind²³. Here Heidegger follows Plato who has us observe «from within ourselves» how *nous* cannot reach the height of its aesthetic aim of inquiry «where true being dwells» without the aid of tempered

²⁰ Heidegger (1962), p. 69.

²¹ *Ivi*, pp. 88-89.

²² *Ivi*, p. 487.

²³ See Heidegger (1979), pp. 200-210.

desire. If *nous* is to go *beyond* «acquired opinion» (*doxa*) to the subject itself of a given inquiry (so as to then judge the opinion in terms of the subject itself) it needs desire. But desire must serve the aim of *nous* and in this way become aesthetically transformed²⁴. For when *nous* and desire are together in this *form* of *sophrosyne*, the soul first secures its ecstatic *essence* (its *ousia*). And now, in reaching out beyond itself, it has for the first time the sublime referent of its shared aim in sight²⁵.

If we are willing to take Nietzsche's distinction seriously (that Plato is not Platonism), we have then Plato's text in striking contrast to a history of Platonism and its readers who de-historicize its sublime prose. What's more, we have *Phaedrus* where Plato gives his own historical account of this break from the luminous knowledge of nonsensuous being and locates the origin of it in the nonlover's soul. Put different, Plato, stands at a witness to the birth of what Nietzsche in fact identifies as modern Platonism and its break from the realm of luminous being where too the gods dwell²⁶. Appropriately named, this new form of the nonlover's soul, derivative in its kind of *sophrosyne*, takes shape in ignorance of its own soul's complex nature. For the nonlover, in passing over its own soul, fails to see that *its* profession of wisdom (so contrary to Plato's own) is but a form of hubristic pride that overlooks desire (*epithumia*) as one of the soul's ruling and guiding «principles» («ideas» 237d7). Worst of all, a wisdom (agnostic in character) that prides itself in what *it knows* through its «own intelligence» (244c9) and at the same time prides itself in knowing that what it knows in principle falls short of «true being» «sanctions the complete neglect» of the gods²⁷. The initial connection is clear: In passing over itself, the nonlover cannot see the light of luminous being nor hear the «unbidden» voice of its sublime prose.

No doubt, Plato's acute awareness of this historical break from «true being», from a *living mythos*, brings new significance to what he sees as the soul's paradoxical task of first having to recollect itself in order to recollect in turn its own sublime origin. The luminous light of nonsensuous being is what is closest and present to the soul (and at times, becomes more exceedingly so) and yet it is unseen and forgotten. In the process of giving us his dialectically account of the soul's complex nature, Plato identifies not two but three forms of the soul: *sophrosyne* (rational desire), derivative (mortal) rational *sophrosyne*, and irrational desire. *Sophrosyne* (rational desire) is to be set apart from the latter two hubristic forms of the soul (that take shape in the absence of self-knowledge) since it is the only form of the soul that is non-hubristic, that does not pass over itself, and that in recollection of itself secures its unified essence. Now the hubristic form of irrational desire is readily recognized throughout the history of metaphysics and throughout Platonic scholarship, while the hubristic form of rationality, of mortal derivative *sophrosyne*, clearly is not. In fact, in his *Phaedrus*, Plato's set his privileged form of *sophrosyne* (rational desire) dialectically apart from the two hubristic forms of the soul, of irrational desire, and rational *sophrosyne*²⁸. Employing the use of dialectics, Plato reminds us that the soul of *sophrosyne* (rational desire) alone is modeled after the gods it serves and in this

²⁴ Plato (1989), p. 485, 237c-238e. Also see Gonzalez (2015).

²⁵ In other words, when *nous* and desire (*epithumia*) are defined on their own and attempt to function on their own, they each fall far short of securing the soul's unified essence (its *ousia*) and its aesthetic aim.

²⁶ In this spirit, Plato is the first in the history of philosophy to recognize the enigma in man: that his soul foolishly investigates things outside of itself before investigating itself. See Plato (1989), p. 478, 230a. Without a doubt, this historical reality continues on as our own.

²⁷ Plato (1989), p. 491, 244c9.

²⁸ From the perspective of immortal *sophrosyne*, Plato sees the limits of both the nonlover's soul in its derivative form of *sophrosyne* and the soul's form of hubristic, irrational desire.

way has access to the luminous light of nonsensuous being. As Plato would have us see, the voice of his text, properly speaking, is historicized from out of a luminous ground. Unlike the hubristic forms of the soul, the soul of immortal *sophrosyne* (rational desire) has as its immediate horizon the gods it serves; at the same time, it has the more expansive horizon of luminous being, where all of the gods are said to dwell, and above all else, where «the idea of the Good» reigns supreme²⁹. Before advancing a reading of Plato's *Phaedrus* that magnifies Plato dialectically distinction between his own conception of *sophrosyne* (of rational desire) and the new derivative form of it (of rational *sophrosyne*), I want to briefly consider the nature of the Apollinian and the Dionysian (a subtext of the *Phaedrus*) that Plato, no doubt, takes into consideration when establishing the *basic form* (Apollinian) and essence (Dionysian) of the soul that bears the name *sophrosyne*.

2.

The value of the Socratic soul of *sophrosyne* cannot be stressed enough if we keep in mind that Plato's radical confrontation and appropriation of the sublime structure of the Apollinian and the Dionysian takes place in Plato's conception of the soul that takes the form of *sophrosyne*. Plato, I believe, has his mind set on establishing the form of the soul that best reflects this sublime structure of the Apollinian and the Dionysian so as to have access to the realm of untarnished beauty where «true being» dwells. The soul's form that best reflects this structure is named *sophrosyne*; its name is to be repeated daily as the charm³⁰. Above all else, we know the form of *sophrosyne* is modeled after the god Apollo and accordingly has access to aspects of his sublime being. What's more, it is only by virtue of its Apollinian *form* (purged of hubristic desire) that the soul, in turn, secures its Dionysian ecstatic *essence* of self-movement. Who can doubt the sublime repose of the Apollinian that defines and delimits, cloaks and sustains, all of Plato's sophronic (measured/Apollinian) prose? And what of the transformative quality and effects of this immortal voice that takes shape when, in true measure, Socrates, the «aesthetic listener», effaces and displaces his own voice (as the author of any of its discourses and prose) in deference to it? We really do not need the prophetic report from Alcibiades of how the voice of the Apollinian that resonates in the Socratic soul («without any instrument at all», *Symposium*, 215c) casts its sublime seductive lure and transformative spell on mankind as a whole³¹. In Plato's art of «writing speech», of «writing sound» (not to be confused with the «pompous» writing of the mantic «speech writers», *Phaedrus*, 257c6), we too are brought under the charm of its spell. Here we encounter what Plato knows: That in this wondrous art (of «writing speech» of «writing sound») no prearrangements of words are to be had in advance³². There is only Parmenides' divine dictum of listening from a given subject and the ensuing art in which «the first words that occur» (*Apology*, 17c) from it are left to speak and take form on their own. As Alcibiades remarks, the simplicity of the Socratic style and choice of words (notwithstanding their often ironic tone) only seems to increase the effects alive in the sublime ordering and configuration of them.

²⁹ Plato (1989), p.744, 508e.

³⁰ See Plato's *Charmides* (Plato, 1989, pp. 102, 155e, 113, 167a9, 121-122, 75d-176b).

³¹ All quotations from Plato's dialogues (unless otherwise indicated) come from *The collected Dialogues of Plato* (Plato, 1989).

³² Plato's way of «writing speech» so to speak, of «writing sound», is not to be confused with the mantic «speech writer» (Plato, 1989, p. 503-257c, 258a) whose mortal prose are derived primarily from the rational capacity of the mind. This new mantic way of writing and speaking belongs to and is based in the nonlover's soul of derivative moral *sophrosyne*.

On the other hand, Plato's confrontation and appropriation of the Dionysian (the other half of this sublime structure) is always more complex since it entails his initial critique of what he sees as the historically misguided conception and enactment of it. In *Phaedrus*, Plato carries out his revaluation of the Dionysian (his critique and re-appropriation of it) at the pivotal place of desire where a judgment must be made about its complex nature so as to decide upon the form of the soul that is truly dithyrambic³³. And so we have Plato's nuanced critique in the *Phaedrus* of what he takes as a misinterpretation of the Dionysian soul: To say that the soul's structure of irrational desire is truly dithyrambic is to sin against the great god Pan. *Sophrosyne* (tempered desire) is the only form of the soul (where desire turns away from the body and serves the aim of *nous*) that secures the soul's unified essence, its truly dithyrambic manic state; it is alone the form of soul that follows after its god; it alone is the form of soul in whom the god mimetically appears, even if remaining more often than not unnamed and unknown. *Sophrosyne*, Apollinian in form, is the medium (the instrument) of the Dionysian sublime rhythmic overflow. Contrary to Aristotle, Plato knows that the «phenomenon called the Dionysian» identified in the «Dithyramb»³⁴ songs of old, remains the «hidden verse» in all prose³⁵. This remains the case even if we grant Nietzsche his case: that the outward look of Plato's soul of *sophrosyne* (in the turning of desire away from the body towards *nous*) is responsible for something of the displacement of the Dionysian from itself, from its own sensuous being and rhythmic ground³⁶. But again, Plato is acutely aware of this interpretation of the Dionysian as definitive of sensuousness and too of instinctual life. But this, as Plato insists, is a misinterpretation and a view of the Dionysian that comes from the soul whose form (irrational desire) and aim signifies the «compulsion» and «anarchy» of the instincts and not the liberation from them³⁷. Be that as it may, one encounters Plato's re-appropriation of the all-beguiling aspect of the Dionysian in the ecstatic state of being that defines the soul of *sophrosyne* (of rational desire), in the mimetic and ecstatic character of sensuous appearances and in the free bestowing and movement of all thought (*dianoia*). In seeing the sublime mimetic character of sensuous appearances and of ascending nonsensuous thought, in making proper «use of such means of remembrance» (*hypomnemasin*, *Phaedrus*, 249e7-8), the *nonsensuous* ground/origin of our being is historicized *once again*. Derrida puts it well: This «original structure» of the Dionysian and the Apollinian is not in history; it is rather «in an unexpected sense», «the opening of history, historicity itself»³⁸. Plato's sublime soul of *sophrosyne*, equally Apollinian and Dionysian, is then the standard and the perspective from which Plato sees the *limits* of the soul in the new form of the nonlover. Without a doubt, the significance of this historical change in the nonlover's soul to a derivative mantic state of *sophrosyne* (of rational sanity) is alive and represented in the temporal movement of Plato's *Phaedrus* and captured in its dramatic setting³⁹.

³³ See Plato's *Phaedrus* at 238c8-238d8 (Plato, 1989, p.486).

³⁴ Aristotle (2006), p. 24.

³⁵ See Calasso (2001) who convincingly argues for the sublime rhythmic ground of all prose. I am grateful to the whole of this work on the nature of «absolute literature» (Calasso, 2006, p.24).

³⁶ The displacement means that the Dionysian is no longer seen as definitive of sensuousness as such. As Nietzsche has it, the displacement of the Dionysian is based in the Platonic soul of *sophrosyne* where the nature of desire is set apart from the body.

³⁷ See Plato's *Phaedrus* at 241e (Plato, 1989, p. 489).

³⁸ Derrida (1978), p.28.

³⁹ Without a doubt, Plato tries to capture the irony of these first «sane poets», of their derivative state of madness and of their derivative mantic works of sanity throughout the *Phaedrus*. See for example, Plato (1989), 229c-230b, 244a-245c3.

3.

Plato's "unaesthetic" readers (those who read him through the lens of Platonism) have not taken seriously enough the dramatic setting of the myth of Boreas and Oreithyia in Plato's *Phaedrus* as signifying the lived, historical currents in which Plato knowingly positions his philosophy. One current, as Plato's Socrates would have it, reaches back in memory to the timeless origin of myth and its manic forms of art. The other current, forgetful of this timeless origin, marks the birth of the earliest seeds of what we today know as characteristic of modernity and with it the further decline of myth. Plato's Socrates, the opposing spirit to the latter, locates the birth and the nature of this new modern, «hubristic» *rational* spirit and its new *agnostic* way of knowing in the crafting of a new soul⁴⁰. This new soul of the «nonlover» when seen from the perspective of the Socratic soul of divine *sophrosyne*, is a soul of limited capacity, *derivative* in its form of *sophrosyne*, defined and characterized in its limited, agnostic, capacity of knowing as giving rise to a derivative mantic state of madness and form of art⁴¹. This new state of soul and art of the nonlover is derivative and named mantic (and not manic) since the source of its knowing no longer originates from divine dispensation—from a state of soul open to divine manic madness—but rather from what Plato ironically calls the man-made madness of rational sanity (based in the soul of mortal rational *sophrosyne*) where knowing originates from mere human intelligence (244c-244d5). We know this change in the soul's basic state, in the «outward look» of its being, of its «ideas» (237d7), is dramatized in the *Phaedrus* in the figure of Lysias, «son of Cephalus» and as we know, it is already alive in Plato's *Republic*, in the Father of its discourse and in the two heirs of his prose. In striking contrast to this genealogy, we have the sublime voice of Plato's text that takes aesthetic shape in the original writing of its discourses and in all of its prose. Far from being erased in the writing of his text, this sublime voice is the ever-living spirit of its sculptured prose. And so we are led in the *Republic*, as Plato's Socrates is led, to a confrontation with Cephalus' foolish and wretched idea of piety where the business of the possession of worldly goods in the service of what is «beneficial» to self-interest holds sway⁴². At the same time, threatening this calculus of the sane, and equally alive in the Polis, is the unaesthetic ravings of «agitated wantonness» of hubristic desire, at the base of the soul in its most unwelcomed form.

Under the shade of the *agnos* tree (230b3-4) then, alongside the Platon tree, so we are told, near the site of the Altar of Bores, Plato's Socrates takes hold of this momentous historical change in the soul's basic state and new agnostic way of knowing⁴³. With astonishing insight, he tells us that this new soul of rational *sophrosyne*, what Hackforth long ago thoughtfully translated as «rational sanity», is derivative in soul, defined by a hubristic, agnostic form of reason where the rational function of the soul is defined alone (244c7-9) on its own without desire so as to redefine and restrict the whole of the soul to only its rational principle (idea, 237d7). Plato's Socrates is clear: The *outward look* of the soul's rational principle (idea, 237d7) undergoes a radical change in its nature and capacity when left to function on its own without

⁴⁰ Plato (1989), p. 491, 244c.

⁴¹ See Griswold (1996), p.75. Griswold calls attention to the nonlover's derivative form of *sophrosyne* and to its reductionistic view of the world. My own reflections attempt to continue the work he has done here by pondering the *necessary* relationship between the soul in the derivative form of *sophrosyne* and its secular view of the world.

⁴² Plato (1989), p. 479, 230e4-231c.

⁴³ *Ivi.*, p. 478-479, 230b.

«innate desire», the other «leading and guiding» principle (idea, 237d7) of the soul. In its shrunken state, bereft of desire, the rational principle of the soul becomes limited in its view of the world and capacity of knowing. What's more, this «one-eyed principle of soul», limited in its «outward look» to a secular view of the world, in principle cannot change or broaden its scope of knowing by the power of its own rational gaze no matter how refined or advanced its technological instruments might become. As Plato would have us see, the nature of its rationality is radically determined in advance given the limits of its soul's singular form. This new soul's lack of reflective inward regard towards itself is readily apparent to the Socratic soul given the folly of its claim of being a nonlover. And yet, no matter how foolish the claim may be, the very attempt to hold true to it gives rise to a derivative rational form of the soul that is «more puffed up with pride than Typhon» (230a). Restricted then to the use of only its rational principle, the soul fails to secure the celebrated unity of aim and its essence of self-motion/movement (of moving from within itself out beyond itself)⁴⁴.

Now by way of contrast we know that Socratic divine *sophrosyne* (237e-238a) is not wholly rational. Instead, *sophrosyne*, in the form of «rational desire», refers to the celebrated unity of the soul; *sophrosyne* names the essential structural whole of the lover's soul in the unity of its essence and capacity as ever-existing out beyond itself in the manic state of self-movement. Unlike the soul of rational mortal *sophrosyne* and its state of sanity, the Socratic soul of divine *sophrosyne* brings along with it a «comprehensive view of the world» and the hope of the soul's experience of immortality. Defined by its Apollinian structure and form, Socratic *sophrosyne* is unified in its outward look and aim. For when desire turns away from the unaesthetic want of «bodily pleasure» and follows the council and blissful aim of *nous*, the soul becomes of one mind (*homonoieiton*, 237d9) and is at the height of its aesthetic *objective* capacity. At the same time, by virtue of its Apollinian form, it secures the height of its Dionysian ecstatic state of self-movement. As ecstatic, the intermediary dwelling place of the soul (being in the body but not of the body) lies in memory (249c6-249e6), in drawing ever near, in «drawing nigh to the divine» (249d). Steadfast and at rest in its primordial ecstatic (truly dithyrambic) state of being «in itself» and «out beyond itself», a way lies open to the being of the things that are; but most notably a way lies open to the gods and the gifts of the manic arts that come from them.

Plato's Socrates stands at the crossroad of this momentous change in the soul's basic form to a derivative mantic state of rational *sophrosyne* without however participating in it. For those who do participate in this new form of the soul characteristic of the nonlover and its new mantic way of knowing, go over to it, at least in part, out of a fear of *eros*. Ironically, the sane (those with a soul of rational *sophrosyne*) fail to see that what they fear and flee in the face of is themselves. In striking contrast to the «cleverness» and «folly» of the sane, Socrates knows that *eros*, as a desire, is based in the soul and, therefore, cannot be dismissed. True to the dictate of Apollo, he knows that *eros* in all of its competing and opposite forms is and remains a desire (*epithumia*) defining one of the soul's ruling and guiding principles («ideas» 237de). Desire together with *nous* determines us in our being and therefore is operative in every human engagement⁴⁵. Cloaked then in his Apollinian inward regard, seeking at all times «precision in

⁴⁴ Its essence lies in being the source of its own motion. See Plato's *Phaedrus* (Plato, 1989, p. 493, 245e). Also: See Gonzalez's (2015) on Heidegger's treatment of the soul's form and essence (*ousia*).

⁴⁵ Plato's Diotima tells us «we all make the same mistake» of limiting our conception of love to one activity; we call the one thing we are «devoted to» by the name «love». We fail to see that every activity is a desire of the beautiful/good and therefore should be called love, even though we give different proper names to each activity (Plato, 1989, p. 557, 204b3-204d7).

matters of soul» Socrates instructs the youth not to be won over «by an argument that seeks to scare us into preferring the friendship of the sane» (245b) over a lover. As Socrates has us see, «the friendship of the sane» is the derivative manic form of love based in the nonlover's soul of rational *sophrosyne*: «False is the tale that when a lover is at hand favor ought rather to be accorded to one who does not love, on the ground that the former is mad, and the latter sound of mind. That would be right if it were an invariable truth that madness is an evil, but in reality, the greatest blessings come by way of madness, indeed of madness that is heaven-sent» (244a). The soul of winged desire, open as it is to heaven-sent madness, is not to be confused with its opposite, what Plato's Socrates calls hubristic desire, based in the soul's form of «irrational (*alogos*) desire» (238b8), where desire gains mastery over reason's rule, dragging the whole of the soul downward towards the aim of the pleasures of bodily beauty. The latter is well known as an abomination of soul for Plato's Socrates (aborted in its truly Dionysian dithyrambic movement towards its most proper spiritual aim) and is named *hubris* (237d-238c)⁴⁶. And while the nonlover's hubristic soul of rational *sophrosyne* and its friendship of sanity are deeply preferred (244a) to the hubris of the «agitation» and «compulsion of irrational (*alogos*) desire», both are *opposites* of the truly wise dithyrambic soul of divine immortal Socratic *sophrosyne* where desire follows reason's rule and in the celebrated unity of its primordial essence as accenting self-motion/movement, the soul of the lover, moving from within itself, reaches out in mania beyond itself in imitation (*mimesis*) of a god. Now, it is obvious that the hubristic soul of «irrational desire» is the opposite of the manic soul of «rational desire», of divine/immortal *sophrosyne*. It takes, however, more than one reading of the *Phaedrus* to see that for Plato's Socrates, the nonlover's soul in the derivative form of manic «rational sanity» (mortal/*sophrosyne*) is also the opposite of the soul of rational desire and its *sophrosyne*⁴⁷. Socrates tells us that it is when stressing that the *whole* of his second speech in the *Phaedrus* attempts to show «that love is not a thing sent from heaven for the *advantage* (my emphasis) both of lover and beloved» (245b), in the crude derivative manic form of the «friendship of the sane». Socrates continues, «What we have to prove is the *opposite*, namely that the madness of love is a gift of the gods, fraught with the highest *bliss*. And our proof assuredly will prevail with the *wise*, though not with the *learned* (my emphases)»⁴⁸. The soul of rational desire, «praised for its wisdom» dialectically stands then alone on the right side of wisdom in opposition to the two hubristic forms of the soul defined by hubristic desire and hubristic rationality. And while the «learned» soul of rational sanity (of derivative *sophrosyne*) is to the right of irrational desire, both are dialectically «censured» and placed on the left «side of folly»⁴⁹.

Fleeing then in the face of the seductive lure of hubristic irrational desire (a form of *eros* for Plato's Socrates all too human), the sane seek refuge in the «clever» and «foolish» claim of being able to eradicate *desire* from their engagements and of «regulating their services by the scale of their own means, with an eye to their own personal interest» (231a). In fact, Lysias insists that the sane (in contrast to lovers) are never reproached «on the score of behaving to the

⁴⁶ Socrates' first speech paradoxically tells the truth about what *eros* is *not*.

⁴⁷ See Griswold (1996, pp. 74-76) who contrasts «mortal *sophrosyne*» with «divine *sophrosyne*».

⁴⁸ Plato (1989), p. 492, 245c. The «learned» (defined as the manic form of the soul, of derivative *sophrosyne*) use reason to regulate their own affairs in advance with the aim of personal «advantage», the «wise» (defined by the temperate form of the soul, immortal *sophrosyne*) are open to the «bliss» and «wisdom» bestowed upon them from the gods.

⁴⁹ Ignorant of themselves, the sane fail to see the folly of their claim of being nonlovers. Since desire is one of the leading principles (ideas, 237d7) of the soul «that we follow», that determines us at all times in our being (237d-e), it is foolish to think it can be eradicated.

detriment of their own interest» (231a, 234b)⁵⁰. This new soul's ability to regulate its own affairs *in advance*, in accord with its own personal interest and advantage, is celebrated, ad nauseam by the "I" of the nonlover and accordingly stands at the beginning of his discourse, setting the stage for all that is to follow: «You know how *I* am situated and *I* have told you that *I* think it to our advantage that this should happen. Now *I* claim that *I* should not be refused what *I* ask simply because *I* am not your lover» (my emphases, 230e-231a). Lysias, who mimetically stands in for this nonlover, crudely argues for the advantage and benefit of friends over lovers since friends in contrast to lovers never «reproach» each other when placing their own self-interest above each other, while nevertheless agreeing to sexual gratification between friends. Never, perhaps, is Socrates more ironic than when answering to this «crude» arrangement; indeed intending the opposite, he asserts, «splendid!» and «what an attractive democratic theory that would be!» (227d).

Of course, the mimetic character of Socrates' irony, intended here to mirror back the face of «folly» and of the «ridiculous», is grounded and sustained in its mimetic value by the real character and knowledge that Socrates has of his own soul and of its competing forms. Instructed by his own soul's inward regard, Plato's Socrates knows that this celebrated, self-serving, «I» of the nonlover, oblivious to its own soul, does not see the hubristic shift in its soul's rational function and its aim that takes place when, in the censuring of desire, its soul's rational capacity is thrown back upon itself and functions in the derivative form of mantic knowing. To catch sight of the origin and nature of mantic knowing, «we must observe from within ourselves» the relationship between the birth of this new form of the soul and the derivative capacity of its rational nature that comes from it. The relationship is clear: The very attempt to reduce the soul to the use of only its rational principle (idea) means that the locus of knowing is displaced. Knowing is no longer recognized as based in the being of the things that are extraneous to the soul. Restricted to the use of only its rational principle, diminished in its ecstatic state, the rational capacity of the soul is *thrown back upon itself* and takes on a derivative nature where it functions as the primary cause and ground of its own knowing. Thrown back upon itself, limited in its ecstatic capacity with no true aim in sight, the "I", («more puffed up with pride than Typhon», 230a) becomes conspicuously present to itself and to the nature of its own rationality. But without the referent of the complex nature of the soul, the "I" cannot see that the form of its *own* soul determines in advance the radical limits of its rational nature. *Thrown back upon itself*, the "I" becomes «posited» and conspicuously present to itself as the primary cause of its own knowing, *but*, again, of a knowing that falls short of the Real, that at all times is restricted to the «inventive», contrived (σοφίζομενος, 229c) realm of what is plausible and therefore probable⁵¹. And while this new rational subject is right in seeing that *its* rationality in principle falls short of the Real (for whom then the truth of any subject is not attainable), it fails to see that this is because of its soul's limited form and diminished ecstatic outward look. Finally, if we keep in mind that this new way of knowing is based in the soul as such, we can understand the full scope of its historical significance and application: The change in the non-lover's soul to the state of rational sanity means that *all* of the manic arts become derivative and mantic (man-

⁵⁰ Socrates as we know, in stark contrast to the nonlover, regulates his affairs in service of the god Apollo.

⁵¹ See Sallis (1974, p. 114) who has it that the word σοφίζομενος at 229c means both «devise» and «contrive». It appears that Hackforth wants to interpret Plato word σοφίζομενος as «inventive» where he then uses it at 229d, line 4. In other words, Plato's word σοφίζομενος appears only at 229c and not at 229d.

made)⁵². Its «unaesthetic» outward regard applies to nothing less than the whole of the world. In place of the divinely inspired manic arts, this new soul constructs for itself a method based in the limits of its rationality that nothing can withstand: Probability (*εἰκὸς*, 229e). With truth no longer in sight, this new rational subject at best is relegated to the practical aim of service to humanity in the interest of what Plato calls a «worldly wisdom» and a «[meagerly] measure of worldly goods» (256e). Its rationality is servile, and Platonism begins.

But Plato is not Platonism. In 1951-52 Heidegger again returns to Plato and reaffirms once again Nietzsche's important distinction between Plato and Platonism. And once again Heidegger speaks of the «necessity» of thinking together *legein* and *noein* («the letting-lie-before and the taking-to-heart») as a way of answering to the derivative understanding of the *logos* and of its break from *mythos*. But this time, Heidegger is somewhat dismissive of the distinction between Plato and Platonism in light of what he calls the «withdrawal of the gods». To make matters worse, Heidegger has it that this «withdrawal» is inherent to the gods and therefore without a historical beginning that can be overcome:

Mythos and *logos* become separated and opposed only at the point where neither *mythos* nor *logos* can keep to its original nature. In Plato's work, this separation has already taken place. Historians and philologists, by virtue of a prejudice which modern rationalism adopted from Platonism, imagine that *mythos* was destroyed by *logos*. But nothing religious is ever destroyed by logic; it is destroyed only by the God's withdrawal.⁵³

But Heidegger's remarks here are less than helpful and turn away from the very problem that Plato sees and confronts when identifying in the soul of the nonlover a rational form of *hubris*. Plato is clear: The break from *mythos* (from the luminous light of nonsensuous being) is coincident with the hubristic rational form of the nonlover's (nonerotic) soul⁵⁴. Any attestation to the timeless origin of *mythos* is impossible given the restricted form and outward look of its gaze. In an effort to remedy this break, Plato's Socrates speaks of the soul's paradoxical need to first recollect itself⁵⁵. Towards this end, Plato's Socrates dialectically distinguishes three forms of the soul. Immortal *sophrosyne* is «praised for its wisdom» and placed on the «right». Hubristic desire and hubristic rationality are «censured for their folly» and placed on the «left». But Plato must have known that the tension between the forms of the soul increases with the historical birth of the third form of the nonlover's soul. Plato leaves it to us to ponder if hubris is «two» in kind or if in fact it is «one»; Plato must have known, if hubris is one, then the question must be raised: Is the erotic conflict at the core of the soul centered around hubristic desire and its aim of bodily pleasure (irrational desire) or is it in the typhonic "I" that in fact becomes hubristic when it denies *eros*? If we add Nietzsche to these final reflections (for Nietzsche above all others

⁵² Accordingly, the manic lover's art of recollection and «procreation in beauty» becomes the mantic «friendship of the sane» with the aim of self-interest and sexual gratification. The manic art of divine purification becomes man-made purification with the aim of what is beneficial to human health. The manic art of the Muses becomes man-made poetry with no «instructive» aim in sight: For those who «come to the gates of poetry without the madness of the Muses, persuaded that skill alone will make him a good poet, then shall he and his works of sanity with him be brought to nought» (245a). And finally, the manic art of prophecy becomes man-made prophecy. Here, nature is taken as a sign *indicative* of approaching physical events. In divine prophecy, the whole of nature takes on the phenomenal structure of a sign in which a divine presence might make itself known.

⁵³ Heidegger (1968), p. 10.

⁵⁴ It is not the case that the gods turn away from us, but rather that we have turned away from them.

⁵⁵ Socrates is insistent: Before the soul can know the truth of *anything* «extraneous to itself», it must secure its Apollinian, sophronic form. See Plato (1989), p. 478, 230a3.

follows Plato's musings on the soul) it is clear that his judgment is not against *eros* as tied to the body but rather against the hubristic "I" that denies *eros* (as based in the body). In this spirit Nietzsche has it that the Socratic soul of *sophrosyne*, while manic, nevertheless has modern «tendencies» that are, in fact, in keeping with what Plato wants to say about the *logos* of the nonlover⁵⁶. But there is no Nietzsche without Plato, and there is no Plato (nor the burden of philosophy as Plato understood it) without Apollo's call for self-examination. The fact that Plato has the strength and the courage to see (along with the form of hubristic desire) a rational hubristic form of the soul shows us that he is supremely worthy of being called a «thinker of the unthought», who stands «at the gates of poetry», who in true piety thinks ahead by thinking back in Memory (*Mnemosyne*)⁵⁷.

Bibliography

- Aristotle (2006), *Poetics*, trans. J. Sachs, Focus Publishing/R. Pullins Company, Newburyport.
- Calasso, R. (2001), *Literature and the Gods*, trans. T. Parks, Vintage International/Random House Inc., New York.
- Derrida, J. (1978), *Writing and Difference*, trans. A. Bass, University of Chicago Press.
- Gonzalez, F. (2015), "I Have to Live in Eros": Heidegger's 1932 Seminar on Plato's *Phaedrus*", in *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy*, vol. 19, n. 2.
- Griswold, C. (1996), *Self-Knowledge in Plato's Phaedrus*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park.
- Heidegger, M. (1979), *Nietzsche, The Will to Power as Art*, Volume 1, trans. D.F. Krell, Harper and Row Publishers, San Francisco.
- Heidegger, M. (1961), *Nietzsche I*, Günther Neska Verlag, Pfullingen.
- Heidegger, M. (1962), *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Harper & Row, New York.
- Heidegger, M. (1968), *What is Called Thinking*, Harper & Row, New York.
- Nietzsche, F. (1954), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, trans. W. Kaufmann, Viking Penguin Inc., New York.
- Nietzsche, F. (1967), *Werke in Zwei Bänden. Die Geburt Der Tragödie*, Band 1, Carl Hanser Verlag, München.
- Nietzsche, F. (1972), *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. W. Kaufmann, Random House, New York.
- Plato (1989), *The Collected Dialogues (including the Letter)*, edited by E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Sena, M. (2004), "Nietzsche's New Grounding of the Metaphysical: Sensuousness and the Subversion of Plato and Platonism", *Research in Phenomenology*, Brill Academic Publishers, volume 34, pp. 139-159.

⁵⁶ Nietzsche (1967), pp. 82, 87, 91. See also *Zarathustra Prologue* §3 (Nietzsche, 1954, pp. 125-126) where Nietzsche maintains that the basic structure of the Platonic soul is defined by contempt and contentment. For insofar as the Platonic soul of *sophrosyne* has *contempt* for the body (believing this to be the virtue of the soul and therefore leaving the body «meager, ghastly and starved»), its own soul's rational capacity is thrown back upon itself; unable to receive the sense and meaning of things, its rational capacity is restricted to a life of *contentment* that is man-made and limited to «the invention of happiness». Such is the «tendency», as Nietzsche has it, of the Platonic soul.

⁵⁷ Heidegger (1968), pp.10-11.

Abstract

One of the enduring problems of phenomenology concerns the dispute over the nature of the modern subject (subjectivity) that is responsible for its own agnostic and atheistic views of the world. In an effort to understand the “obscurity” around the nature of the modern subject, Heidegger turns to Plato (1936-37) bearing in mind Nietzsche’s distinction between Plato and Modern Platonism. From the perspective of Plato’s *eroticized* conception of the *logos*, based as it is in the soul’s form of *sophrosyne*, Heidegger draws the following conclusion: the Kantian claim of Modern Platonism that the *nonsensuous* being of Plato’s Ideas and of the gods cannot in principle be known is based on a *de-eroticized*, derivative, conception of the *logos*. But Heidegger fails to see Plato’s own astonishing account of how this new *logos* of the “non-lover” is based in a derivative form of *sophrosyne*.

Keywords: Heidegger, Plato, Soul, *Logos*, *Sophrosyne*