

Pharmakon

Plato, Drug Culture, and Identity in
Ancient Athens

Michael A. Rinella



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To my mother and father, for always believing in me.

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Introduction

The *Pharmakon*, Ecstasy, and Identity

In an interview shortly before his death in 1984 the French philosopher Michel Foucault described the possibility of creating, in contrast to the history of *ideas* that has preoccupied much of Western philosophy, a history of *thought* based on the study of “what one could call the element of problems, or more exactly, problemizations.”¹ At the center of such a history would be an investigation of how certain human behaviors became the subject of a sustained critical reflection, a *general form* of problemization to which diverse solutions were then proposed. Over time a *domain of action* previously accepted as given evolved into something deemed worthy of sustained critical commentary, often in association with particular social, economic, or political processes. A history of thought would not only try to see how these *diverse solutions* to a problem were constructed, but also to “see how these different solutions result from a specific form of problemization.”² Over time new solutions might be formulated, arising from difficulties contemporary to their time and place, “modifying only several of the postulates or principles on which one bases the response that one gives” but *not* the general form of problemization itself.³

The Use of Pleasure, the second volume of Foucault’s history of sexuality, mentions in passing that the connections between ancient Greek sexual ethics and what he calls *alimentary ethics*—the use of food and intoxicants like wine—only gradually became disengaged or uncoupled, believing it would be interesting to trace “the evolution of their respective importance” and the “gradual differentiation of their specific structure.”⁴ This work will trace the history of thought with regard to what may be considered *drug ethics* more generally and *the ethics of drug intoxication* in particular, with a focus on ancient Greece (ca. 750–146 BCE), particularly the Classical Period (ca. 500 to 336 BCE) and especially the dialogues of the Athenian philosopher Plato (427–347 BCE). Plato merits this level of attention due to both the “extraordinary modernity of some

of [his] thought"⁵ as well as the enormous impact of his writing on much of the subsequent history of Western thought, an influence that extends to include how the "drug problem" has been viewed and the solutions that have at various times been proposed to solve difficulties seen as arising from that problem.⁶

Plato, Foucault believed, was among those in ancient Greece who occasionally saw the victory of self-control over pleasure as "characterized by the complete extirpation or expulsion of desire. But much more often, it was identified by the setting up of a solid and stable rule of the self over the self: the intensity of the desires did not disappear, but the moderate subject controlled it" in an act of self-domination.⁷ Foucault did not deny that "a complex ethical discourse surrounded all [the] appetites."⁸ At the same time he excuses himself from examining these alimentary ethics because he believed that "in the reflection of the Greeks of the Classical Period, it does seem that the moral problemization of food, drink, and sexual activity were carried out in the same manner."⁹ And it is true: Plato's proposed solutions to deal with the problem of *aphrodisia*, the sexual pleasures, have similarities and parallels with his attitudes toward the problems of food (*edodai*) and drink (*potoi*, including drinks that bring the pleasures of *methe*, intoxication). All three "brought forces into play that were natural, but that always tended to be excessive; and they all raised the same question: how could one, how must one 'make use' (*chresthai*) of this dynamics of pleasures, desires, and acts? A question of right use."¹⁰

The question would seem to be begged: what forces, excessive how? I would agree with philosopher Martha Nussbaum when she writes that Foucault's "assimilation of sex to eating and drinking can mislead us," but for very different reasons. Nussbaum accepts without question Foucault's preoccupation with the *aphrodisia*, writing that "the ethical questions" posed by sex, because they "involve not only one's own self-mastery, but the well-being, happiness, and ethical goodness of another," are "far more complicated than the ethical questions posed by food and drink," her reason being "the glutton does no harm to food, nor the drunkard to wine."¹¹ However true that may be, the question begged remains begged. The issue, as I shall argue, is not just ethical but also deeply psychological. The three appetites are not Plato's real concern *per se*. They are not the cause and as such the *source* of the difficulty in need of being moderated. There is a common quality behind or beneath each of them, an indication of which lurks within Foucault's regular use of terms describing the psychology of these desires and their pleasures as *strong*, *imperative*, *violent* and *intense*. The concern with controlling appetites such as lust, gluttony, and intoxication that appears in ancient thought in general and the Platonic dialogues in particular are indications of a growing difficulty with *something else*. The continuing preoccupation with ancient sexuality at the expense of the alimentary appetites leads, I believe, to an obscuration of the general form of problemization that was occurring in ancient Greece. Sexuality and *aphrodisia* were but one locus of a number of suspect behaviors that a growing set of solutions was being proposed to deal with. That something else may be identified as psychological states of ecstasy, and their threat to identity.

The Problem of Ecstasy

Ecstasy may be thought of as a softening, diminishment, blurring or loss of the psychological boundaries or barriers that in a "normal" context define, sustain and preserve a singular, self-contained subjective identity. In this sense ecstasy may be said to involve an alteration of human cognitive capacity, the act or process of knowing, including both awareness and judgment.¹² As a form of human experience the ecstatic is commonly described as being intensely pleasurable, but it is more than simply a type of pleasure. Ecstasy can be, alternately or simultaneously, a sense of wonder, sublimity, terror, hilarity, uncanniness and still other conditionalities. Part of its essence is precisely this nondefinability along any seemingly consistent set of descriptive parameters.

Although often misunderstood or misrepresented in contemporary discourse as a relinquishing of *all* reasoning capacity, ecstasy is not, in the strictest sense, reducible to such a loss. It is rather a temporary reduction, of variable intensity and duration, of the reasoning mind's ability to patrol and defend the borders of identity from intrusions of otherness. Ecstasy "sensitizes us to the contingency of identity and the in-dependence of the Other. It is a recognition that one's state, however personal or collective, is never an authentic or stable condition but a product of strange, contradictory and ever-changing forces. From this perspective, *ekstasis* liquidates the 'positivist' boundaries of meaning, brings forth 'the experience of an extra dimension, an expansion of the human condition' that entices the *logos* of the Other."¹³

Intoxication is one manifestation of ecstasy and is the primary focus of this book.¹⁴ There are of course a myriad of other forms ecstasy may take, many of which have been viewed as being in some way suspect and a difficulty to be grappled with at one time or another, including ancient Greece, such as the frenzy inspired by particular forms of dance, many forms of music, the rapture of the lover for the beloved, the enthusiasm of a crowd "carried away" by a speaker's rhetoric, and so on.¹⁵ Contrary to Karl Popper's claim in *The Open Society and its Enemies* that Plato represents a deep-seated longing to arrest or even reverse what Popper calls "the breakdown of Greek tribalism," something he equates with a kind of collective group identity that fails to distinguish individual from individual, or individual from nature, this work shall argue that Plato's dialogues in fact root out and cast the cold water of rational reflection on all claims of knowledge based on forms of psychological ecstasy.¹⁶ Popper misunderstands Plato, conflating the Platonic yearning for amiable *homonoia* in the politics of the *polis* with a proto-totalitarian anti-rational retreat or return to forms of tribal ecstasy. Quite the contrary: the valuation of identitarian thinking in Plato's idealistic philosophy is virtually if not entirely absolute.

Methodology

Foucault's excavation of ancient Greek sexual ethics in *The Use of Pleasure* consists of a sophisticated yet relatively straightforward analysis of a number of prescriptive documents, most of them philosophical and medical. Very little effort is made on his part to engage the secondary literature written by specialists in Hellenistic and Roman philosophy and medicine or, more importantly, situate those texts in any sort of unfolding historical context.¹⁷ And certainly that lack of context has come under fire, for example in classicist James Davidson's *Courtesans and Fishcakes*.¹⁸ In fairness to Foucault this was never his intention. He "does not intend to work as an historian. He produces genealogy: 'Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present.'" ¹⁹ Moving "back and forth between original texts and general reading principles," Foucault draws out "transversal sections" in Hellenistic and Roman philosophy, fashioning an "ethical reading in terms of practices of the self."²⁰

While I see myself as on a certain level engaging in a similar "ethical reading" I have also endeavored to develop, in the manner of historian G. E. R. Lloyd in his many examinations of ancient science and medicine, what I call the *dense background* behind Greek social institutions where alcohol and drug use took place, such as the *symposion*. Lloyd has argued, and I agree, that while students of ancient Greece cannot be ethnographers in the strict sense, since the society in question no longer exists, this should not serve as an excuse from "emulating, as far as our materials permit, the kind of dense . . . account that considers the data concerning a belief system against the whole background of the geographical, economic, technological, social and political situation of the society under investigation."²¹ A similar approach, applied to ancient Greek magic, is utilized by classicist Matthew W. Dickie. Ancient Greece must be understood in its own terms; "by paying careful attention" we can "recreate" some of that world as it understood itself and while we cannot completely free ourselves from our own cultural presuppositions that does not mean the effort "is by definition impossible," only that "it is a difficult enterprise."²²

I am similarly indebted to the work of Patrick E. McGovern whose pioneering research in the field of molecular archaeology has helped to revolutionize our understanding of ancient oenology. Until recently just about anyone in the humanities, such as classicist Carl A. P. Ruck, or in the social sciences, such as a political scientist like myself, bold enough to argue that ancient wine included many drugs, and not simply alcohol, was met with a sort of indifferent hostility, and that was from the few within our disciplines who even took the time to notice.²³ Since the early 1980s our ability to detect ancient organic compounds such as lipids, resins, dyes, perfume ingredients, and drugs has advanced at an ever accelerating rate thanks to a host of new, highly sensitive, analytic tools.²⁴ McGovern's work is not "merely" innovative archaeology however and traverses the physical sciences, archaeology and the humanities. As he notes, whole new chapters are being opened "in human and environmental history, including

ethnicity and genetic development, diet, disease, cuisine, and materials processing."²⁵ And, it goes without saying, pharmacology. A complete account of the practices of ancient peoples, including the ancient Greeks, incorporates but *no longer solely relies upon* the "complicated skein" of mythology and other "literary evidence."²⁶ To arrive at "the kernel of historical reality" requires a heuristic "delving into the available archeological resources" as well as "linguistic, botanical, and other scientific data."²⁷

The Use of Pleasure fails to recognize ecstasy as the general form of problemization in ancient thought because, I would argue, in the case of ancient Greece Foucault does not generate any sustained discussion of the social, economic or political processes he believed accompanied the initial problemization of a domain of behavior. Yet he was certainly capable of generating this sort of discussion as he did with great rhetorical effect in, for example, his discussion of the birth of modern penology in *Discipline and Punish*. In this earlier work Foucault argued that delinquency, i.e. controlled illegality, was "an agent for the illegality of dominant groups," representing a "diversion of illegality for the illicit circuits of profit and power of the dominant class." This delinquent milieu existed "in complicity with a self-interested Puritanism" and included, in addition to prostitution, "arms trafficking, the illegal sale of alcohol in prohibition countries, [and] more recently drug trafficking."²⁸

Nor was Foucault uninterested in the subject of drug intoxication. As early as 1967 he defended the use of drugs "as a means of entering into 'a state of nonreason'" in which the experience of madness is outside the distinction between the normal and the pathological.²⁹ In interviews given during the 1970s and early 1980s he was frequently critical of that era's crusade against recreational drugs. For example in 1971, in the French magazine *Actuel*, Foucault is quoted as saying: "the campaign against drugs is a pretext for the reinforcement of social repression; not only through police raids, but also through the indirect exaltation of the normal, rational, conscientious, and well-adjusted individual."³⁰ And by 1982 he was even raising the possibility of writing "a study of the culture of drugs or drugs as culture in the West from the beginning of the nineteenth century. No doubt it started much earlier, but it would come up to the present, it's so closely tied to the artistic life in the West."³¹ Of course Nietzsche had raised virtually the same possibility exactly a century earlier in section 86 of *The Gay Science*: "Who will ever relate the whole history of narcotica? . . . It is almost the history of 'culture,' our so-called higher culture."³²

Clearly, then, the subject of drugs was of great interest to Foucault. "The figure of the addict walks silently through the corridors of his hospitals, asylums, and prisons. Drugs are implicit in all of his works, bound up with his studies of medicine, psychiatry, and the penal code, his studies of the shifting definitions and treatments of sickness, insanity, and crime. And if all his stories deal with the uses and deployments of the body, drugs are the point at which they all converge."³³ If not for his premature death I suspect that had he pursued the subject of drugs and Western culture Foucault would have taken an approach similar to the one I employ here, beginning not with the nineteenth century but much

earlier, with the Greeks, for the "exaltation" he wrote of did not spring autochthonously from, to give just one example, the literature of the mental hygiene movement that contributed to the theory of addiction that underlies so much of today's disease model of recreational drug use.³⁴ The process as I shall argue is already underway even as myth gives way to enlightenment, in the temptations of Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, and rapidly accelerates in the philosophy of Plato, which means the exaltation of the normal, rational, conscientious, and well-adjusted individual is almost as old as Western civilization itself.³⁵

My discussion of the problem of ecstasy, the difficulties with intoxication, and the solutions proposed in the ancient Greek context does not proceed in a neat, step-by-step progression. The complexity and density of the issues being explored, and the nature of the source materials themselves, does not permit a single, sufficient presentation. The mosaic of everyday life, the overwhelming "medley of sights, smells and noises that would have assailed us, had we walked through the *agora*" has only made its way to us in a skewed and sanitized form; only "stray scraps of information" occasionally "betray something of the reality."³⁶ Genealogy, as Foucault noted, "operates on a field of tangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times."³⁷ The source materials for this work, coming from ancient documents as diverse as literature, philosophy, medicine, botany, pharmacology, religion, magic and law, certainly fit this description. A topic or topics in a chapter may appear to be discussed to the point of exhaustion, only to reappear in additional chapters where, usually in a different context, further dimensions are investigated. In this sense my approach bears some similarity to that of political theorist William E. Connolly in *The Augustinian Imperative*.³⁸

An important assumption of this work is that Plato's dialogues have more than a mere historical significance. On the one hand the thoughts that the dialogues express and the difficulties they address are heavily bound up in the time and circumstances Plato lived and wrote in, and need to be examined as such. The internecine struggles between pro-democratic and anti-democratic segments of the Athenian aristocracy in the late fifth and early fourth centuries, for example, form the foundation of many of Plato's observations including—even especially—his views on intoxication. At the same time two things would seem equally apparent. First, Plato also addresses himself to posterity, to an audience that will come to his words *after* he has passed from the scene and is no longer able to defend and elaborate upon them himself. He harbors the hope, for example in the *Republic* (499c–d), that if his thoughts are too untimely, later generations in a time and place "far outside" his "range of vision" will see their wisdom and adopt them. Second, we cannot ignore the possible existence of larger cultural developments that each Platonic text may have partially contributed to, whatever else *he* may have intended.

One such development, I argue, involved (a) the difficulties revolving around the subject of intoxication, especially as they were related to, or were rooted in, (b) the broader problemization of loss of identity due to psychological states of ecstasy. To speak of intoxication in ancient Greece we must, naturally

and of necessity, examine the word for drug, *pharmakon* (plural *pharmaka*). This word is commonly translated as "remedy" or "poison" but was in fact a signifier for many other things that do not easily fit that binary, and that invoke in one way or another the perception-altering powers of *intoxication*, such as "perfume," "pigment," "magical charm, philter, or talisman," and "recreational drug." While previous articles and books have discussed the place of the word *pharmakon* in one or two Platonic dialogues, or one or two meanings of the word, few if any have discussed the importance of the term in all its multifaceted meanings within the full Platonic corpus. Just as importantly few if any works have situated Plato's deployment of this term in the rich detail of the ancient Greek historical context, where doctors, midwives, magicians, painters, rhetoricians and still others all laid claim to their powers being derived from, connected with, or likened to a *pharmakon*.

The sources that have survived make it difficult to easily capture the many occupations that, as part of the goods and services they had to offer in ancient Greece, would have utilized some form of *pharmakon*, even in Classical Athens. Quite simply, there are "large areas of human existence" that these documents "ignore or that were in some sense invisible to them."³⁹ Plato clearly is an example of this tendency. He does not appear entirely unaware of either (a) or (b) but at the same time their presence in his dialogues continually advances and retreats, at one moment occupying center stage and speaking directly to the reader, at another standing off to one side, visible yet mute, at still another quietly skulking deep in the recesses of the background scenery, invisible until that scenery is peeled back and their presence revealed. Their importance continually oscillates, not only between different dialogues but frequently within a single dialogue and even within a single passage. While more direct than either mythopoetic thought or the contemplation of most of his contemporaries, Plato's cognizance of these issues is still only partial. The ambiguities present in the ancient Greek, in the meaning of *pharmakon* most of all, possess a *limited* autonomy, manipulating Plato even as he is manipulating those ambiguities for his own purposes. Thus while I believe recovering historical context and authorial intention is important, it is all the same insufficient because we can at the same time—thanks to the methods used in this work—identify the supra-intentional thematic developments of a partially autonomous text.

Part One

How did the ancient world view drug and alcohol intoxication? Was intoxicated behavior truly a *problem*? How so? To whom? Why? The entire matter is without doubt multisided, multilayered, and complicated. We are, first of all, constrained by the surviving documentary record, which is almost entirely limited to the viewpoint of men whose class status provided them with sufficient leisure to record their thoughts in writing. The perspectives of women and non-leisured

classes we are almost always left to infer using other sources and methods. I also do not claim to be providing an exhaustive answer to any of these questions. I merely hope to (a) establish the outlines of the *ordinary* perspective on each of these questions, (b) demonstrate the *extraordinary* response to that perspective in the thought of Plato and a few of his contemporaries and (c) reveal to what extent they felt *politics* ought (or ought not) to be concerned with the matter of intoxication, and, if it should be concerned, *how* politics ought to respond.

In chapter 1 I begin by briefly exploring the technology of wine making in the ancient world, starting with the known origins of wine and continuing up to wine production as it existed in the Classical Period of Greece. I then examine the pharmacology of that wine. Ancient wines, I shall demonstrate, were infused with a wide variety of alcohol-soluble substances, many of which had their own intoxicating effects. The ancient Greek practice of diluting wine with water, as for example within the ancient *symposion*, on many occasions may have had less to do with moderation on the part of ancient drinkers and more to do with the dangers posed by drinking beverages so potent that consumption of even small quantities in an unmixed state could lead to dire health consequences, including permanent brain damage and even death. Even in the question of drinking wine the analyst quickly finds himself or herself immersed in questions of a wide variety of *drugs*, their uses, their effects on the body, and ancient difficulties with them.

For the remainder of the first chapter I discuss the ethics of wine intoxication in the specific context of the *symposion* of the Greek city-states, primarily Athens. The decision to pursue this line of argument was necessitated in part by the sources that have managed to survive on the one hand, and on the other because it is the drinking ethics of the *symposion* that Plato addresses most directly, and in the most detail. Understanding the Greek drinking *symposion* is crucial to understanding Plato, yet the subject rarely received the treatment it deserved until the 1970s, beginning with the writings of L. E. Rossi, Massimo Vetta, and Enzo Pellizer, and then the works of, for example, Francios Lissarrague and Oswyn Murray. In contrast to this work, these authors for the most part treat Plato as one ancient source among many permitting us to fashion as detailed a reconstruction of the *symposion* as a social institution as the gulf of time can permit. What they largely do not consider is how intoxication within the *symposion* may have been intertwined with such matters as Plato's depiction of Socrates, his defense of the philosophic life, his program for reforming moral education, and his vision of the ideal *polis*.

In chapter 2 I begin by examining what may be called the ordinary ethics of intoxication in ancient Greece, especially that of the *symposion*. One reason I do so is to demonstrate what many writers seem to suspect, or tend to assert without further explanation: the "literary" versions of symposia given to us by Plato and Xenophon may not be wholly representative of what occurred in a typical fifth- or fourth-century aristocratic *symposion*. The *symposion* was a private setting that aspired to a nominally regulated intoxication and a group exploration of ecstasy, but on many occasions this merely ethical superstructure collapsed, the

celebrants spilling out and confronting the larger community in what was known as the *komos*, a public procession of wildly drunken aristocratic revelers who flouted their contempt for prevailing norms, insulting and frequently assaulting those of lesser social standing. The intoxicated *komos* was a primary source of the crime known as *hubris*, behavior that was believed to lead to animosity and conflict between social classes, i.e. *stasis*.

In chapter 3 I examine the institution of the *symposion* as it appears in a number of Plato's dialogues. When read carefully, I argue, the portrait of sympotic practice is, virtually without exception, thoroughly dismissive and negative. I then proceed to a detailed juxtaposition of the character of Socrates with a number of other characters in the Platonic dialogue named the *Symposium*, where I believe Plato utilized the figure of Socrates as an idealized model of what sympotic behavior ought to look like. After examining the *Symposium* I turn to Plato's final dialogue, the *Laws*, frequently regarded as a last-minute reversal of his views on the institution of the *symposion* and the value of wine drinking, a concession to the needs and frailty of human beings and the limitations of reason as a basis of knowledge. Looking at the first and second books of the dialogue closely, and in the context of the preceding discussions, I conclude that in the *Laws* Plato seals off the experience of intoxication as emphatically as ever, and as far as the ancient Greek context would allow.

Part Two

In the *Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche repeatedly emphasizes that the ecstatic is in essence a *natural* psychological state. It is "an overwhelming sense of unity that goes back to the very heart of nature" (section 7). This natural state was "unaffected by knowledge," entirely pre-cognitive, more authentic, and more truthful than the mendacious "lie of culture masquerading as the sole reality" (section 8) and when the "rigid law of individuation," with its demands for self-knowledge and moderation, imposed itself upon "the true magic of nature itself," the product was "a monstrous crime against nature" (section 9).⁴⁰ Ancient morality, I shall argue, viewed states of ecstasy, on the whole, as an essential and natural human condition. In other words, for most ancient Greeks ecstasy was no problem.

Plato in contrast regarded most of these same experiences as forming the core of what he termed the unnecessary pleasures, and any desire for said pleasures must be removed from a political regime in the name of preempting the emergence of *stasis* both within the individual soul and the *polis* as a whole. Ecstasy, far from being in any way rational or healthy, or a legitimate source of knowledge or path to wisdom was, as Plato describes it, an epithymetic compulsion, a disease condition that imprisoned and deranged human beings in an amoral bestial existence they would be helpless to either effectively manage or

escape from. One such development—and a central theme of this book—was the difficulties revolving around the cultural presence of the drug, the *pharmakon*.

In chapter 4 I begin to examine more fully the importance of drugs, drug use, and drug intoxication in ancient Greek life. I begin with arguably the most important pedagogical source of education for the literate Greek, Homer's epic poetry, particularly the *Odyssey*. One finds in the *Odyssey*, especially the temptations of Odysseus, a persistent unease with, and growing cordoning off of, the powers of *pharmaka*. From there I examine two ancient Greek religions where the use of drugs is either largely confirmed or very strongly suspected: the cult of Dionysus and the Eleusinian Mysteries. As classicist Georg Luck has observed, the "idea that drugs played a role in the great religions of antiquity as they do in tribal societies in Africa and South America is still abhorrent to many scholars," and that especially extends to the study of ancient Greece.⁴¹ Evidence from the field of cultural anthropology, more specifically ethnobotany and ethnopharmacology, is drawn upon to demonstrate the knowledge and use of often powerful intoxicating drugs in Greek religious life. In the course of my analysis Dionysus emerges as the god not only of wine but of all intoxicating drugs. Furthermore, like many examples of religions revelation in the ancient world, there is evidence that the sublime vision of the Eleusinian Mysteries (where Dionysus was also present in the guise of Triptolemus), called the *epopteia*, was also drug-induced, brought about through the drinking of a potion called the *kykeon*.

The death of Socrates in 399 BCE at the hands of the Athenian democracy exerted enormous influence on the development of Plato's arguments, and because of this has rippled through the history of political philosophy as a whole. Plato began his philosophic career with the *Apology*, a work that purports to be Socrates' defense at his trial for what the Greeks called *asebeia*. While perhaps Plato's most accurate depiction of the views of the "historical" Socrates, the argument within the *Apology* is still, first and foremost, Plato's defense of Socrates and the life of the philosopher against numerous influential detractors. In chapter 5 I will argue that Plato's ongoing polemic against those who felt that the practice of philosophy was impious lasted well beyond the *Apology* and was always more than a refutation of charges that philosophy promoted atheism. In this chapter I present evidence that in the final quarter of the fifth century Socrates was viewed as a profaner of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Philosophy was more-over perceived as an illicit form of ecstasy, influencing the *demos* in the manner of the spells and *pharmaka* of black magic, a form of impiety encompassed within the crime known as *asebeia*. To demonstrate this three separate arguments are needed. First, I consider what a number of ancient sources have to say about Socrates' accusers, both who they were and their possible motivations for bringing charges against him. Second, and more importantly, I then examine in detail the scandals of 415 BCE, where members of Athens' aristocracy, many of whom circulated in the same social circles as Socrates, were implicated in two acts of impiety: the mutilation of the city's Herms and profanations of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Finally I will discuss the evidence in favor of viewing Socrates

as having a public image, before and at the time of his trial, as a practitioner of black magic, a *goes* or *pharmakeus*, using several of Aristophanes' comedies.

Many of Plato's early and middle dialogues may be read as more or less thinly disguised continuations of the same project as the *Apology*. In chapter 6 I turn to the place of the *pharmakon* in the *Phaedrus*, the dialogue that in a certain sense rehabilitates Socrates of having profaned the Eleusinian Mysteries. In Platonic philosophy Socrates, safely distanced from his oligarchic associates implicated in the politically disastrous scandals of 415 BCE, introduces a rationalized ecstasy to supplant the many non-rational forms available during Plato's lifetime, especially the Eleusinian Mysteries. The Eleusinian Mysteries, I argue in this chapter and in agreement with Carl A. P. Ruck and others, revolved around the use of a *pharmakon*, one found in the potion initiates drank called the *kykeon*.⁴² With Plato a very different sort of ecstasy begins to emerge, one that was internally derived and based on contemplation of the Forms, accessed not via some *pharmakon* but solely through the exercise of reason. In these initial moments, with the charge of impiety an ever present danger, philosophy strategically aligned itself with, and appropriated from, the language of religious ecstasy, including and most significantly the *epopteia* of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

Part Three

Regimen (*diaita*) figures heavily in the set of solutions that Plato advances to deal with the problem of ecstasy (the difficulties of intoxication being one subset of this larger problem). Regimen clearly has a bodily component, what I call somatic regimen. It also has a mental or psychological component, what I call noetic regimen. Finally it has a spoken or verbal component, what I call discursive regimen. In the first three chapters of Part Three I will demonstrate that Plato recognized a need for philosophy to investigate and address the importance of each type of regimen. For example, in the *Republic*, inappropriate imitations are prohibited because they "become established as habits and nature, in body and sounds and in thought" (395c-d). If a person is allowed to imitate "slavish" and "shameful" behavior, the same passage continues, they get "a taste for the being from its imitation," i.e. they slip across the borders of identity, into the ecstatic wilderness of the Other. Through either malformation or malfunction regimen constitutes the basis of ecstasy's poisonous threat, but at the same time regimen as administered by the philosopher is the basis of the neutralization of that threat. Plato constructs the foundations of a new social order or what may be termed a *moral economy* that, I shall argue, will provide for ecstasy's permanent (dis)solution.⁴³

How prominent a place do medicine (including food preparation, diet, and physical training), magic, and (political) rhetoric occupy in Plato's dialogues? To the modern observer these occupations would not appear to have all that much in common with each other, but within the context of the ancient Greek

interpretive framework, including and especially Plato's, they most certainly did. One of the elements uniting them—the most important common denominator I would argue—is the power of the *pharmakon*, no longer understood simply as “drug” as it largely was in Part One and Part Two but in a broader sense now encompassing all the variability the word possessed in the Greek. A *pharmakon* could be a remedy used in medicine or an ointment applied as part of bodily training, but it could also be the basis of a spell, charm, or talisman used in sorcery or divination, and it could be an analogue to the power of the spoken word and its ability to place an audience under the influence of the speaker. What is more, in the ancient worldview understanding of these activities was deeply interwoven.

In chapter 7 I look at (a) the state of medical theory and practice up to and including Plato's lifetime, particularly its methods for diagnosing disease; (b) the place of drug treatment within ancient Greek medicine; (c) Plato's relationship to these developments, the degree to which he accepted the aetiology of his contemporaries or modified it for his own purposes; and finally (d) his concern to go beyond contemporary medical diagnosis and treatment of somatic ill health in favor of what he calls the disease of the soul. Early Greek medicine, like healing practices in other parts of the world, has shamanic roots and shamans the world over “use plants in order to travel to another reality.”⁴⁴ Along with philosopher John P. Anton I would agree that “there is a deep relationship between the art of medicine, the moral quest, philosophical ethics and the art of statesmanship” in Plato's writings.⁴⁵ Plato often appeals to Greek medical practice, in part because it was generally if not universally held in high repute.⁴⁶ The degree of this “borrowing from the field of medicine,” Anton points out, is “quite conspicuous.”⁴⁷

Classicist Walter Jaeger long ago noted it is “really astonishing to read the medical texts and discover how much they prefigure the method of Socrates' as described by Plato.”⁴⁸ More recently classicist Trevor J. Saunders has matter-of-factly observed that the use of “medical language is pervasive” in Plato's writings.⁴⁹ Plato's discussion of “both medicine and public justice,” medical historian Fridolf Kudlien writes, occurs “in the closest connection,” usually suggesting “that chronic internal diseases are in some way immoral,” and for that reason “of the greatest political and social importance.”⁵⁰ While a necessary part of *polis* life, strictly somatic medicine and gymnastic training are incapable of producing psychic health on their own due to their inability to diagnose or remedy immoral behavior. They merely treat the diseased soul *ex post facto* and even then only to address the physical symptoms of that illness, not the true causes. Somatic health, for Plato, is predicated upon noetic and discursive health, the latter two forms of health belonging to the field of ethics, not medicine. Before real healing of the body can take place a *moral physician*—the philosopher—must bring purification to the soul.

In chapter 8 I turn to philosophy's role in the production of noetic health. Socrates' manner of conversation is often depicted by Plato as having an impact on the thought of those exposed to it similar to a kind of nefarious magic, even a

kind of drugging. Ancient Greek magic, like philosophy, was concerned with the power to control human thought, and the art of magic was practiced on a scale ranging from the individual sorcerer (known as a *goes*, *pharmakeus* and other names) to entire communities. I begin the chapter by (a) discussing the development of a concept of magic among the ancient Greeks. Classical scholarship has for the most part traditionally accepted without criticism “the nineteenth century notion that magic is either ‘bad’ religion or ‘bad’ science—that ‘magic’ represents a ‘primitive’ worldview that has not evolved.”⁵¹ The use of “Judeo-Christian and modern scientific models for, respectively, religion and science to identify phenomena that do not conform as [being merely] magical” tells us little about ancient magical practices.⁵² It is a “modern day prejudice” that ought not to be allowed to “obscure the importance in ancient societies of therapies based on ritual and religion.”⁵³

I then proceed by (b) discussing the sorts of men and women whose activities would fall under the heading of magic as well as (c) the prevalence of *pharmaka* in much of their practices. As Georg Luck notes, drugs were used in magic “probably more regularly and consistently” than in religion, because magic was a business transaction “between the practitioner and the client” with the latter expecting results “here and now.”⁵⁴ Next, (d) the problematic nature of sorcery, including the record of instances of legal prosecution, is examined. I then proceed to argue that (e) the practice of magic is referred to with too great a frequency in Plato's dialogues to simply pass over it as a rationalist's condemnation of superstitious beliefs and (f) it is quite clear, both in Plato's dialogues and other ancient texts, that the presence of the *pharmakon* in ancient times was as pervasive in magic as it often was in religion. Finally, I show (g) how Plato attempts to distance the practice of philosophy from magic, but at the same time the powers of the spell and the charm are incorporated into a two-tier system of ethical pedagogy intended to produce an orderly noetic regimen within each individual.

In chapter 9 I turn from medicine and magic to forms of speech (*logos*), such as those found in tragedy, comedy, and especially a *techne* whose emergence was roughly contemporary with that of philosophy: training in public rhetoric as taught by the Sophist school of educators. The practice of sophistic instruction and the use of rhetoric in politics, the courts, and elsewhere were dangerous threats to any claim made by philosophy to be the superior means of instilling healthy thought and speech on a mass level. I examine Plato's response to this tradition, starting with the literary figure of Gorgias as presented in Plato's *Gorgias* and the surviving fragments of the historical Gorgias. In both cases *logos* is seen as a *pharmakon* with a magical power to sway an audience in virtually any direction. Rhetoric appears as the apex of the sort of false technical arts (*technai*) that unduly influence noetic and discursive formation, a form of pandering that is more concerned with overcoming emotional stability, rather than instilling any sort of sound-minded virtue. Polus and Callicles emerge as two case studies of the disordered, contradictory, and amoral noetic patterns that students form from prolonged exposure to an art like that taught by Gorgias.

Rhetoric is not entirely worthless but like medicine it was for Plato an art based on a haphazard acquisition of empirical knack, lacking any truly scientific or theoretical underpinning. Rhetoric is the guardian of what he calls the *unwritten law*, ideally a set of linguistic valuations of right and wrong that shape thought and behavior and act as the foundation of any written legislation. Discursive regimen, as we see in Plato's final dialogue, the *Laws*, is important (a) in and of itself and (b) because it serves as the foundation of noetic and somatic moderation and order. This rhetoric is in rare circumstances similar to a free physician explaining "almost like a philosopher" both diagnosis and treatment to a free patient. Usually, however, it more closely resembles the speech of a slave's physician, a one-way conversation more closely resembling a "tyrannical prescription" that demands mute obedience. Language must be continually overseen, shaped, molded, and controlled from the beginning of life. Once a useful discursive regimen is established the members of the *polis* must forever speak with a single voice on ethical matters just as their law code, once set in place and modified for a period of ten years, becomes forever unchangeable. The problem of the ceaseless ebb and flow of identity is solved by Plato by freezing it in one moment of historical time.

Ultimately Plato attempts to lead philosophy beyond any kind of magic, charm, or *pharmakon*, except it would appear the sort of *pharmakon* that a philosopher might possess. In chapter 10, building on philosopher Jacques Derrida's study of the *pharmakon* in the *Phaedrus*, I argue that Plato continues to refine the relationship between *logos* and *pharmakon*, for example the description of the philosopher in the *Theatetus* as a midwife, singing charms and administering simple *pharmaka*. The deep ambiguity of the *logos-pharmakon* dynamic was something that Plato attempted "to master, to dominate by inserting [that dynamic] into simple, clear-cut oppositions: good and evil, inside and outside, true and false, essence and appearance."⁵⁵ The word-prescription of the moral physician becomes the supplement that both adds to and replaces all other *pharmaka*. For non-philosophers moderation is only possible through the administration of a *pharmakon* reserved to philosophers. That *pharmakon*, while embracing many of the ambiguities present in the Greek, is as philosopher Carl Page has observed, knowledge of an *art of lying*, albeit in a *well-born* fashion to a *demos* having no more say in the matter than a slave might when conversing with a slave's physician.⁵⁶ Solving the problem of ecstasy, when we come full circle, becomes the art of administering the nobly deceitful *pharmakon* of philosophy.

Between Exegesis and Eisegesis

The line between exegesis and eisegesis is thin and easily crossed. When it comes to classical scholarship, political philosophy and issues pertaining to the ancients, ecstasy, drugs, and intoxication errors arising out of presentism—

"retrojecting distinctive characteristics of the modern world into an interpretation of the past"⁵⁷—occur on an all too regular basis. Sometimes this is done accidentally and unconsciously, arising from an incomplete understanding of the texts and other evidence, sometimes it is done deliberately and consciously, arising out of prejudicial and selective misreading of the texts and the deliberate marginalizing, dismissal and outright exclusion of other evidence. In these errors it is easy to see reflected the fears and hostilities the general issue of drugs and intoxication have evoked in contemporary market economies, and indeed has evoked in the West since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.⁵⁸

At the same time, to write about drugs outside the narrow boundaries of the "treat-the-addict" and "incarcerate-the-criminal" paradigms is potentially dangerous, i.e. if the author does not reflexively condemn the recreational consumption of these substances he himself must be a practicing member of the subculture in question.⁵⁹ Such accusations are naturally sterile rhetoric to maintain its hegemonic authority. There is, however, the possibility that even a broad-minded treatment of the subject of intoxication in antiquity might succumb to presentism. I am not a Hellenist but I have taken care to familiarize myself with the Greek, and to have the Greek double-checked by classicists, insofar as it pertains to the themes of ecstasy, drugs, intoxication and other matters under consideration here. One can disagree with the interpretation of particular details and certainly the source materials are on a number of occasions pushed to their limit. I am confident all the same that *Pharmakon* advances a theoretically informed and evidentially supported argument about the form and content of ancient works and about the external evidence for their meaning that is new and worthy of consideration.⁶⁰

Notes

1. Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 388. The interview, titled "Polemics, Politics, and Problemizations," was conducted in May. Foucault died on June 25.
2. Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, 389.
3. Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, 389.
4. Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure—The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), 51.
5. Giovanni Reale "According to Plato, The Evils of the Body Cannot be Cured without also Curing the Evils of the Soul," in *Person, Society, and Value: Towards a Personalist Concept of Health*, ed. Paulina Taboada, Kateryna F. Cuddeback, and Patricia Donohue-White (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishing, 2002), 27.
6. The influence of Plato's thought on, and the confluences of Plato's thought with, contemporary drug issues and the solutions offered to solve them are discussed briefly in the afterword, below.
7. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 69. The appearance of this "care of the self" or *epimeleia heautou* in Greek culture, which Foucault calls the "Socratic/Platonic Mo-

ment," is discussed in the context of a reading of the *Alcibiades I*. See Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject—Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982* (New York: Picador, 2005), 30–79.

8. Martha C. Nussbaum, "Eros and Ethical Norms: Philosophers Respond to a Social Dilemma," in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece*, ed. Martha C. Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 57.

9. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 51.

10. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 51–52. A discussion of the ethics of food in ancient Greece may be found in David Coveny, *Food, Morals, and Meaning: The Pleasures and Anxiety of Eating* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 30–55. See also Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

11. Nussbaum, "Eros and Ethical Norms," 58. The assertion might appear a little odd to anyone familiar with obesity statistics and the health costs of obesity, or drug arrests and the costs of incarcerating recreational drug users.

12. David Allison, "Nietzsche's Dionysian High: Morphine with Endorphins," in *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity*, ed. Anna Alexander and Mark S. Roberts (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003) 45–46. See also Zvi Lothane, "Schreber's Ecstasies, or Who Ever Listened to Daniel Paul?" in *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 254.

13. Costas M. Constantinou, *States of Political Discourse: Words, Regimes, Seditions*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 10.

14. Nietzsche describes *rausch* or *intoxication* as indispensable for "any sort of aesthetic activity or perception to exist" and gives several examples in section 8 of "Expeditions of an Untimely Man" in *Twilight of the Idols*; the context however makes clear that he is talking about psychological states of *ecstasy*. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ: Or how to Philosophize with a Hammer* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 82–83. *Rausch* is in fact translated by some writers as "ecstasy." Others use "inebriation" or "rapture" but these do not truly fit Nietzsche's use or the ancient Greek psychology he was attempting to investigate.

15. On the subject of dance and psychological displacement in ancient Greece, including Plato, see Stephen H. Lonsdale, *Dance and Ritual Play in Greek Religion* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). On the subject of music and psychological displacement in ancient Greece, including Plato, see Gilbert Rouget, *Music and Trance—A Theory of the Relationship between Music and Trance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 187–226.

16. Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies, Volume I: The Spell of Plato* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 169–201, especially 171–75, 182–83, 188–89, 195–97, and 199.

17. Nussbaum makes both these points while reviewing *The Use of Pleasure* shortly after its publication. See Martha C. Nussbaum, "Review of Michel Foucault's *The Use of Pleasure. The History of Sexuality* Volume 2 ['Affections of the Greeks']," *New York Times*, November 10, 1985, 13–14. Similar criticisms of Foucault may be found in Giulia Sissa, *Sex and Sexuality in the Ancient World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008). Gros points out that in the early 1980s scholarly secondary literature on ancient sexuality was "still slight" and Foucault cannot be taken to task because he "did not refer to a critical literature that did not yet exist: he was, rather, a pioneer in these studies." See Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Self*, 519–20.

18. James Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999).

19. Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Self*, 521.

20. See the long discussion provided by Gros in Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Self*, 507–21. It is important to point out, as Gros does, that "Foucault does not abandon politics to dedicate himself to ethics, but complicates the study of governmentalities through the exploration of the care of the self."

21. G. E. R. Lloyd, *Demystifying Mentalities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 30. Lloyd's approach is further developed and extended by Robert Hahn, *Anaximander and the Architects—The Contributions of Egyptian and Greek Architectural Technologies to the Origins of Greek Philosophy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), Couprie et al., *Anaximander in Context: New Studies on the Origins of Greek Philosophy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003) and Gerrard Naddaf, *The Greek Concept of Nature* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005).

22. Matthew W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 19. In terms reminiscent of Lloyd, Dickie continues on the same page "There is no overwhelming reason, accordingly, to abandon the attempt to see the world through the eyes of the members of the society studied, even though our own preconceptions and prejudices may from time to time affect our judgment and understanding. That is to say, the emic approach to the study of culture should not be abandoned in favor of the etic."

23. R. Gordon Wasson, et al., *The Road to Eleusis: Unveiling the Secrets of the Mysteries* (Los Angeles: William Daly Rare Books, 1998), 11–12. In this twentieth anniversary edition co-author Carl A. P. Ruck indicated the book received only two reviews, neither particularly welcoming, at the time of its initial publication in 1978. The summary dismissal of the book in classicist Walter Burkert's *Ancient Mystery Cults*, published a decade later, ended the matter, at least as far as mainstream classical studies was concerned.

24. Patrick E. McGovern, *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 48–49. "In the last 20 years. . . [a] range of highly sensitive analytic tools—gas and liquid chromatographs, mass spectrometers, nuclear magnetic resonance instruments, DNA sequencers—has become standard laboratory equipment. Refinements in other techniques, such as infrared spectrometry, have also occurred. The upshot is that the modern archaeological scientist now has tools that can measure milli-, even microgram, quantities of ancient organics."

25. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 49.

26. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 241–42.

27. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 242, 244, and 301. A similar method is advocated by Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, 1–11.

28. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 279–80. There appear to be echoes of Althusser's structuralism in passages such as this. See Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001) especially his essay on the state "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Towards an Investigation." Foucault's arguments also recall those made by the Italian Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci regarding American Prohibition in passages of "Americanism and Fordism," one of the essays in Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

29. Quoted in Brian Taylor, *Responding to Men in Crisis: Masculinities, Distress and the Postmodern Political Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 229 n. 37. See also David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 94. Halperin writes, "It was to intensify experiences of pleasure 'at the limit of the subject' that Foucault advocated the use of what he called 'good drugs.'"

30. Quoted in William Connolly "Beyond Good and Evil—The Ethical Sensibility of Michel Foucault," *Political Theory* 21, no. 3. Connolly does not mention the source of the quotation. See Michele Barrett, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991), 148 and Jeremy Moss, *The Later Foucault: Politics and Philosophy*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 109 who both identify the quote as originating in the *Actuel* interview.

31. Quoted in Sadie Plant, "Writing on Drugs," in *Culture and Power: Challenging Discourses*, ed. Maria Jose Coperias Aguilar (Valencia, Spain: Servei de Publicacions, 2000), 5. Plant writes on the same page "A book on drugs would have made the perfect compliment to [Foucault's] existing portfolio of research on madness, disease, crime and sexuality, and it is easy to imagine the enthusiasm with which he would have embarked on this research. The tangled and evasive history of drugs . . . would have allowed him to explore many of his favorite philosophical and historical issues. One can only imagine that Foucault would have been looking for some evidence or possibility of a counter-discourse on drugs." I will address the possibility of just such a counter-discourse in the afterword.

32. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 142. The quote is reproduced, fittingly enough, on the opening page of Alexander and Roberts, *High Culture*, 1.

33. Plant, "Writing on Drugs," 6. See also Jon Simons, *Foucault and the Political* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 95–96.

34. A collection of essays that takes the nineteenth century problemization of drug use as its starting point is Janet Farrell Brodie and Marc Redfield, eds., *High Anxieties—Cultural Studies in Addiction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

35. A point first raised by Adorno and Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* albeit in a speculative manner without any detail, documentation, or historical context. All the same the importance of their arguments for a discussion of the drug problem in modernity has been recognized, for example, in Jacques Derrida, "The Rhetoric of Drugs," in *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity* ed. Anna Alexander and Mark S. Roberts (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), 31.

36. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 76–77.

37. Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader*, 76.

38. William E. Connolly, *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Modernity* (London: Sage, 1993).

39. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 76.

40. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music* (New York: Penguin, 1993), 39, 41. Nietzsche's continually evolving notion of the ecstatic is discussed in Robert Luyster, "Nietzsche/Dionysus: Ecstasy, Heroism and the Monstrous," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 21, No. 1 (Spring 2001): 1–26.

41. Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi—Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds. A Collection of Ancient Texts* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 479.

42. Wasson, et al., *The Road to Eleusis* remains in most ways the definitive text.

43. On "moral economy" see Connolly, *The Augustinian Imperative*, 132. A similar concept is expressed in Barrett, *The Politics of Truth*, 148.

44. Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, 481.

45. John P. Anton, "Dialectic and Health in Plato's *Gorgias*: Presuppositions and Implications," *Ancient Philosophy* 1, No. 1 (1980): 51.

46. D. S. Hutchinson, "Doctrines of the Mean and the Debate Concerning Skills in Fourth Century Medicine, Rhetoric and Ethics," *Apeiron* 21, No. 2 (1988): 18.

47. Anton, "Dialectic and Health in Plato's *Gorgias*," 49.

48. Werner W. Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 389 n. 3.

49. Trevor J. Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code—Tradition, Controversy, and Reform in Greek Penology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 164.

50. Fridolf Kudlien, "Early Greek Primitive Medicine," *Clio Medica* 3 (1968): 318.

51. C. R. Phillips, "Nullum Crimen sine Lege: Socioreligious Sanctions on Magic," in *Magika Hiera—Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, ed. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 260.

52. C. R. Phillips, "Nullum Crimen sine Lege," 262.

53. Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influences on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 41. It is ironic that Burkert would write this, given his distinctly modern aversion to serious discussion of the use of drugs in ancient societies.

54. Luck, *Arcana Mundi*, 479.

55. Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 103.

56. Carl Page, "The Truth about Lies in Plato's *Republic*," *Ancient Philosophy* 11, No. 1 (1991): 1–33. A more in-depth discussion may be found in Randall Baldwin Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best—Medical Argument and Magical Rhetoric in Plato's Laws* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003).

57. Robert Sallares, *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 13–14.

58. See my discussion of the future of drugs and intoxication in a post-industrial setting in the afterword, below.

59. A point raised, among other places, in both Plant, "Writing on Drugs," 3 and in David Boothroyd, *Culture on Drugs: Narco-cultural Studies of High Modernity* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007).

60. John G. Gunnell, *Political Philosophy and Time* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), xi–xiv. Gunnell discusses the rarity of this approach within the field of political theory.

Part One

Plato and the Politics of Intoxication

Chapter One

Wine and the *Symposion*

It is vitally important to establish the composition of alcoholic beverages in the ancient world and the settings where they were consumed before discussing such subjects as the ethics of wine drinking and intoxication in Classical Greece and Plato's response to those ethics. This is so for three reasons. First, there is abundant evidence that wine was but one mind-altering drug among several available in Classical Greece.¹ Second, these drugs were added to wine with such regularity in the ancient world that it becomes difficult, bordering on impossible, to speak of wine intoxication as something separate and distinct from drug intoxication more generally. Third, wine consumption could be imbued with both recreational and religious meaning, and could be experienced in both public and private settings, and furthermore these four aspects were far more extensively intertwined than is the case for contemporary readers.²

Ancient Wine—Production

The wild grapes found on the Eurasian grapevine *Vitis vinifera sylvestris* are not particularly suited for making wine.³ Even so it has been hypothesized that wine may have been produced in the Paleolithic/Old Stone Age period using, for example, "baskets, leather bags, or wooden containers," but the chances of archaeology "ever finding a preserved container with intact ancient organics or microorganisms that can be identified as exclusively due to wine" are remote.⁴ On a technological level the intentional human production of fermented beverages such as wine requires knowledge of fire, pottery, and organized agriculture.⁵ These have existed since the Neolithic/New Stone Age period in the Near East.⁶ The origins of wine made from the grapes of the domesticated grapevine *Vitis vinifera vinifera* continue to be pushed backward in time by emerging disci-

plines such as molecular archaeology, a field that has taken advantage of ever-accelerating advances in a number of technologies.⁷

Archeological, chemical, and DNA analysis of wine-related artifacts and grape remains found in the Neolithic village of Hajji Firuz (ca. 5,400–5,000 BCE) located in the Zagros Mountains of northwestern Iran, for example, pre-date the next oldest evidence by two millennia.⁸ Neolithic sites in the Taurus Mountains of what is now eastern Turkey may be hundreds of years older. The generally accepted scenario is that grape domestication and wine production began in these transcaucasian highlands and then fanned out to Lower Mesopotamia and Egypt (ca. 3,500–3,000 BCE), and then Crete (ca. 2,200 BCE).⁹ The origins of both viticulture and wine production in mainland Greece similarly continue to be pushed backwards. There is on the one hand evidence that viticulture may have made its way to Greece “from western Anatolia or the Balkans, whether by land through Macedonia or by sea,” yet on the other the sophistication and sheer magnitude of wine production in Minoan Crete, and similar *pithoi* found at “Aghios Kosmas in Attica, about 20 kilometers south of Athens near the coast,” points at the very least to “a shared technology and sophisticated winemaking in Crete and on the mainland.”¹⁰

In ancient Greece fermenting wine was stored underground in vessels known as *pithoi*, storage vats that could be as large as ten feet high with a mouth three feet across.¹¹ Fermentation took place over a six-month period with the vats being opened during the festival of the “opening of the vats” or *pithoigia*, roughly our month of February. Prior to sale the wine would be transferred to skins or containers called *amphoreus*, better known according to the Latin *amphorae*. Along with the export of commodities such as olive oil and pottery the export of wine had become, by the Classical Period, a cornerstone of the ancient Greek economy.¹² By the fifth century BCE Greek wine was being transported from vineyards on “the islands and coasts of the Aegean” to “Sicily, south and central Italy, Gaul, the Iberians of Spain, the Illyrians and Thracians on the Adriatic coast, the Danube and the Balkans, the Scythians of southern Russia, Asia minor, Cyprus and the Syrian coast, and Egypt.”¹³

Fermentation cannot yield a wine more potent than about 14 percent alcohol, since above this level “natural fermentation . . . is limited . . . by the pickling effect of the alcohol itself upon the growing yeast which produces it as a by-product of the fungal activity upon the sugars of the juice.”¹⁴ Most wine in ancient Greece would not, however, have had an alcohol content exceeding eight percent.¹⁵ One finds many references to the wine/water ratios used during the *symposion*’s mixing ceremony in *The Sophists at Dinner (The Deipnosophists)* by Athenaeus (ca. 170–ca. 230 CE).¹⁶ Typical ratios were: 1:1; 1:2; 2:3; 2:5; etc. with 1:3 seemingly the most frequent (10.425–26). A drinker at a *symposion*, in other words, would have been lucky if he managed to imbibe a wine with more than a four percent alcohol content.

Water as an additive to wine simply blunts the beverage’s “sensory, medicinal, and psychoactive effects.”¹⁷ A long history of scholarship, going back to the nineteenth century and extending right up to the present, has viewed this

copious addition of water to wine as simply an indication the ancient Greeks were an essentially *temperate* people.¹⁸ This literature has argued “it would not have been easy to get drunk on such a mixture.”¹⁹ Even recent studies have described the alcohol drunk in the *symposion* as a weak concoction “roughly equal in alcoholic strength to modern beer.”²⁰ Others have attempted to explain the custom of blending water with wine as being “certainly due to its high alcohol content, which in turn was due to a late harvest, after the leaves have fallen.”²¹ Similarly, it has been argued that the drug most commonly associated with the god Dionysus, wine, “is not sufficient to induce true *bakcheia* (frenzy).”²² These positions, taken by writers who are otherwise well-versed in the customs and practices of the *symposion*, betray a fundamental misunderstanding of ancient oenology. Regrettably within their own disciplines, these misunderstandings have unfortunately also filtered into our study of Greek philosophers such as Plato.²³

Ancient Wine—Pharmacology

There are many possible explanations as to why ancient peoples would have modified their alcohol, particularly wine, during both manufacture and consumption. It is difficult to determine the intentional from the merely accidental; for example it is doubtful ancient winemakers made a distinction between “those substances which were meant to ferment and those simply added to, or macerated in, a fermented beverage for flavor.”²⁴ Diluting wine with water would have made the wine more palatable in situations where quenching thirst rather than intoxication was the primary consideration. There would also have been occasions where there would have been a desire for (a) the addition of attractive tastes; (b) the addition of attractive odors; (c) modifying wines with more or less accidental impurities (an overabundance of methyl alcohol or other aldehydes in addition to ethyl alcohol); and (d) adding additional substances known to the ancient Greeks to have psychoactive properties. The concern here is chiefly with (d) although (a), (b) and (c) are also important.

On at least some occasions ancient wines were diluted with water because it was necessary to make them *safe* to consume. The texts continually refer to the physiological dangers of unmixed wine, especially when drunk habitually and in large quantities. These wines were capable of damaging eyesight, for example Dionysius the Younger whom Plato tried to provide an education in philosophy (Athenaeus 10.435d–e), and causing blindness (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1114a). This may have been a result of ancient wines having dangerous levels of aldehydes.²⁵ Methanol can occur with ethanol and breaks down into formic acid and formaldehyde within the body, which causes damage to the nervous system, especially the optic nerve.²⁶ Drinking of undiluted wine was believed to cause permanent brain damage and even death (Herodotus, *History* 6.75–84, Pseudo-Aristotle *Problems* 3.23 and 3.26, Athenaeus 10.436–37).²⁷ Small amounts of

wine were used to commit suicide or as a means to hasten death by several philosophers (Hermippus frg. 44, Diogenes Laertius *Lives*, 2.120; 4.44; 4.61; 4.65; 7.184; 10.15–16). Distillation technology cannot be reliably dated prior to twelfth century Italy.²⁸ How, then, could ancient wine have been so dangerous to consume?

The answer to this question is relatively straightforward: ancient wines were not at all like our modern mass-produced vintages. Like other ancient wine-makers the Greeks were faced with several distinctly non-modern problems. One such problem was that the *pithoi* used to ferment and store wine were porous.²⁹ To combat oxygen leaking in they were smeared both within and without with pitch or resin, such as that of the Aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis*).³⁰ Any such wine produced in this manner would have smelled and tasted strongly of these substances.³¹ To counteract this Greek wine was suffused with various herbs, spices, and unguents in the process of manufacture, and/or further modified by adding additional substances during the *symposion's* mixing ceremony.³² Another indication of this practice may be found in a wine's strength being called its *anthos* or "flower" (Xenophon, *Hellenica* 6.2.6), and to be "deficient in flower" meant a wine was lacking in inebriating qualities (Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1150).³³

A second major issue faced by all ancient winemakers was spoilage. Lacking methods to stop the fermentation process such as cork stoppers, wood barrels, or impermeable glass bottles, Greek wine had to be consumed in three or four years, otherwise acidity would render the wine undrinkable, turning it into vinegar.³⁴ Pliny the Elder (ca. 23–79 CE) discusses this "wine disease" at length in book 14 of his *Natural History* (*Historia naturalis*). At higher elevations in the Near East the wild grapevine "actually grows on and is supported by" the terebinth tree (*Pistacia atlantica*), a source of resin.³⁵ Resins such as terebinth, pine, and cedar impede the reproduction of "bacteria that convert ethanol into to acetic acid or vinegar."³⁶ Resins were already in use as a medicinal before they began to be mixed with wine, either accidentally or intentionally.³⁷ Resinated wine is very old, nearly as old as the production of wine itself: large scale production may date as far back as the Neolithic period.³⁸ In modern Greece resin is still added to wine to produce retsina, one of a handful of reminders of a time when a wide variety of substances could have been found in any given mixing bowl (*krater*).³⁹

In addition to tree resins the Greeks added a number of other substances to improve the taste of wine, including chalk, lime prepared from marble or shells, and sea water.⁴⁰ These would have had the effect of "binding up the acids and accentuating the sugar," producing a sweet tasting wine that in the ancient world was regarded as "the ultimate indulgence."⁴¹ Indeed a wine in antiquity was valued according to both its strength and sweetness and the two were mutually intertwined, with the term *glykys* meaning "sweet" as in "sugary" and the term *hedus* meaning "sweet" as in "delightful."⁴² Honey was the supreme sweetener but it was expensive.⁴³ Wine is described as *melieides*, meaning "honey-sweet,"

and *meliphron*, meaning "honey-hearted," throughout Homer's epic poems the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.⁴⁴

Finally, to improve the smell and taste of the wine on the one hand, and to increase its intoxicating properties on the other, the ancients added plant matter, aromatic herbs and spices. A surviving fragment written by the pre-Socratic philosopher Xenophanes (ca. 570–480 BCE) reads: "Now clean is the floor, and clean the hands of all and the vessels: one person places on our heads the woven garlands, another offers sweet-scented myrrh in a flask. The mixing bowl stands full of delight (*euphrosyne*); more wine is ready, and claims it will never give out, sweet in its jars, flower-scented" (Athenaeus 11.462d). Among the many fragrant substances added to wine, Dioscorides (ca. 40–ca. 90 CE) tells us in his treatise on medical botany *On Medical Materials* (*De materia medica*), were oil of crocus (*krokos* 1.64), oil of marjoram (*amarakon* 1.68), myrrh (*smyrna* 1.77), and frankincense (*libanotes*)(1.82). Taken internally myrrh is an analgesic.⁴⁵ Frankincense "probably contains tetrahydrocannabinol, like hashish, and can act in the same way."⁴⁶ Other additives included cinnamon, "pepper, wormwood (*Artemisia absinthum*), capers, saffron, and many other herbs and spices."⁴⁷ Pliny the Elder writes of a plant from Bactria (current Turkestan) and the shores of Borysthene (the Dnepr) called *gelotophyllis* ("grass which gives a drunken melee mad laughter")—most likely hemp (*Cannabis sativa*)—that when mixed with wine and myrrh produced intense mental excitement and laughter lacking in moderation (*Natural History* 24.164).

Besides the archeological evidence, including both molecular analysis of pottery residue and vases whose exterior art depicts herbs and plants being mixed into wine, the literary evidence for this practice is profuse. In Homer's *Odyssey* (4.220–26) Helen adds a drug to the wine, a substance many commentators identify as opium.⁴⁸ Mixed with wine it causes one to forget the ills of the world, even the death of a loved one, "when it's mixed in the wine bowl."⁴⁹ Another wine additive based on opium was *mekonion*, made by boiling the poppy's leaves and capsules, "and which was less potent than opium."⁵⁰ Aristotle (384–322 BCE) in his *Sense and Sensabilia*—during a discussion of the sense of smell, specifically odors that are pleasant as their primary attribute such as flowers (whereas the pleasant smell of foods is secondary, being meant to stimulate the appetite)—quotes approvingly from Strattis' ridicule of Euripides: "'Use not perfumery to flavor soup'" and goes on to say that "those who nowadays introduce such flavors into beverages deforce our sense of pleasure by habituating us to them" (443b–444a).

Theophrastus (ca. 370–287 BCE) in his botanical work *History of Plants* (*Historia plantarum*) indicates that the root of oleander (*Nerium oleander*), *onotheras* in the Greek, when administered in wine, "makes a man's temper more gentle and cheerful (*praoteron kai hilaroteron*)" (9.19.1).⁵¹ The plant, he continues, "has a leaf like the almond, but smaller, and the flower is red like the rose. It is a large bush; the root is red and large, and exudes a fragrance like wine; it loves mountainous places."⁵² The overall context of his description of oleander is a discussion of plants that have "powers as drugs" (*pharmakodeis* . . . du-

nameis).⁵³ Pliny the Elder cites cyclamen (25.67) as well as oleander (21.45) being added to wine, in both cases the purpose being to increase the wine's inebriating properties. According to the *Natural History* oleander root added to wine was soporific, while the sap produced madness (21.45). While Theophrastus expressed his concern, describing the belief "that both effects should be caused by one and the same nature" as "absurd" (*History of Plants* 9.18.4), ancient pharmacology frequently held to the belief that "opposing effects could be produced by the same or similar substances."⁵⁴

Wine-like Drugs

Intoxicating plants were frequently described as having the power of wine, *dynamis oinodes*. The immediate context of Theophrastus' discussion of plants added to wine is "drugs that affect the mind" (*pharmaka pros de ten psychen*), including those substances that cause "mental derangement" (*ekstatikas*).⁵⁵ Mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) and henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) were all understood as having wine-like effects in the ancient world. Each contains the tropane alkaloid scopolamine, a substance that produces "intoxication followed by narcosis in which hallucinations occur during the transition state between consciousness and sleep."⁵⁶ In the *Republic* Plato exhibits an awareness of mandrake's intoxicating powers while describing the danger of "the noble ship owner" being overpowered with mandrake, wine or other drugs by a mutinous crew only interested in "drinking and feasting" (488c). Xenophon's Socrates compares *Mandragora* and wine as having a similar effect on the mind (*Symposium* 2.24). Theophrastus compares the appearance and effect of the round bluish black berries of nightshade with wine (*History of Plants* 6.2.9). Dioscorides compares henbane's "frenzies" with the inebriation of drunkenness (*On Medical Matters* 4.68 and 6.15). Pliny the Elder describes henbane's effects as being "like wine" (*Natural History* 25.35–37).

There is then an abundance of evidence compelling us to resist viewing ancient wines, including those found in Classical Greece, as being similar to wine manufactured using contemporary methods.⁵⁷ The knowledge of all these substances points to ancient wines being more akin to chemically complex tinctures—and almost certainly more intoxicating.⁵⁸ Two surviving fragments of Aristotle's *On Drunkenness* give further credence to this complexity. Rhodian cups, Aristotle writes, are used at drinking parties because of their pleasant taste, and their tendency to arrest intoxication to such an extent that even erotic desires are cast out (Athenaeus 11.464c–d). The drink was made by adding "myrrh, aromatic rush, anise, saffron, costmary, cardamom and cinnamon" to boiling water, and later adding this to the wine (whether before sale or during the mixing ceremony of the *symposion* is not clear). While few recipes as complete as Aristotle's Rhodian cups have survived, it is fair to suppose that many such concoctions would have resulted in a more rather than less intense intoxication. Ar-

istotle was said to have been aware of a certain Samagorean wine of which only three half-pints, mixed with water, were capable of making forty men drunk (Athenaeus 10.429f).

During a discussion of the drinking cup (*kylix*), Athenaeus mentions Polemon's *On Morychus*, which describes a Syracusian custom of taking a cup aboard a ship when it puts out to sea.⁵⁹ When the temple of Athena was lost from sight the cup, *sans* wine but otherwise filled with "flowers, honeycomb, frankincense in lumps, and some other spices, would be dropped into the sea" (11.462b–c). The phrase "the wine-dark sea" was a metaphor used extensively from Homer onward, and points to the Syracusian practice having connotations of an actual wine mixing ritual, where any of those substances (or indeed more than one of them) might be added to the wine before consumption. Greek culture drew "multiple analogies . . . among wine, the sea, navigation, and the *symposion*."⁶⁰ For example Xenarchos says "I'm starting to nod off; that cup I drank to Zeus the Savior has completely wrecked me, the sailor, and sent me to the bottom, as you can see" (Athenaeus 15.693b, and cf. Plato's *Symposium* 176b).

Other Fermented Intoxicants

The ancient world had virtually no understanding of the fermentation process, which consists of yeast converting sugar into ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide. Xenophon describes large numbers of Greek soldiers who had eaten honey looted from a district full of beehives as behaving foolishly and unable to stand up; "those who had eaten a little bit seemed as if they were extremely drunk, while those who had eaten a lot seemed as if they were crazy or even dying" (*Anabasis* 4.8.20–1). At the same time the ancients were quite talented at producing intoxicating drinks from not only fruits and honey (fructose and glucose), but also from sugar cane (sucrose), milk (lactose), and cereals (maltose). Fermented fruit juices, such as that made from the fruit and sap of the date palm, appear to have been an early popular alcoholic beverage in the ancient Near East. Dates were combined with honey during the fermentation process to produce a date-wine with a high alcohol content, perhaps the strongest alcohol-based intoxicant of pre-classical antiquity.⁶¹ Xenophon refers to date-wine as "a pleasant drink causing headaches" (*Anabasis* 2.5.14).

Along with wine, mead and beer were the most popular alcoholic beverages of the ancient world.⁶² Mead made from honey is arguably the ancestor of all fermented intoxicants, predating both wine and beer.⁶³ In contrast to wine, mead requires neither fire nor pottery to produce.⁶⁴ Many variations of mead were apparently available for consumption in ancient Greece, including but not limited to *hydromel* (honey and water), *metheglin* (honey, water, and spices), and *oinomeli* or *mulsum* (wine mixed with honey and water). In Plato's *Symposium* Diotima recounts how Poros became drunk with nectar in the Garden of Zeus, "for wine was not yet known" (203b).⁶⁵

Many different varieties of beer were produced in the ancient Near East, being mentioned in "early Sumerian and Akkadian texts, and from the Protoliterate period of Mesopotamia (ca. 3,200 [BCE]).⁶⁶ Beer was known to the ancient Greeks under several names, including *pinion* and *bryton*. It was identified as "a drink of Thracians, Paeonians, and Phrygians . . . in the seventh century [BCE] while in the fifth century [BCE] it was further also known as a drink of Egyptians."⁶⁷ The first opponent of beer appears to have been the playwright Aeschylus (ca. 525–456 BCE). His "attack on beer . . . became, it seems, common in later dramatists also writing plays performed yearly at the great festival of the god Dionysus, and perhaps due to his influence."⁶⁸ Some beers were despised by the Greeks as only fit for barbarians, as for example in Sophocles' *Triptolemus* (Athenaeus 10.447b). Others, such as the sweet and spicy beer of Egypt were praised by Diodorus Siculus for having "a smell and sweetness . . . not much inferior to wine" (*Library of World History* 1.3). In one Greek tradition the god Dionysus emigrated from Mesopotamia to Thrace due to the popularity of beer among the inhabitants, who are denigrated as "froth blowers."⁶⁹ While it is true that "later Greek writers and gourmards dismissed beer as a barbarian drink" we should not summarily dismiss "evidence for its production there."⁷⁰

Wine and Intoxication

The original Greek word signifying "to be drunk" was *methyein*. This term was derived from *methy* (intoxicating drink), whose origins suggest connotations of honey/mead and other intoxicants in a wide spectrum of ancient Indo-European-Finno-Ugric languages.⁷¹ *Methe* is usually translated as "intoxication." In contrast *oinion* (to intoxicate with wine), from *oinos* (wine), arrived on the scene later and was at first less common. Eventually *oinos* itself would become a generic term for any intoxicant, regardless of the drug (*pharmakon*) being referred to. It has been suggested that *oinos* may have been "derived from a very ancient Indo-European word, ultimately related to the Latin word for 'grape vine' (*vitis*) and the Greek *itys*, 'circular rim,' as of a wheel supported by spokes."⁷² A circular rim in the fashion of a wheel supported by spokes is "a common ideogram for the mushroom cap viewed from its gilled underside."⁷³ It is possible, then, that *oinos* referred originally to some intoxicant other than wine, perhaps one more aptly described with the metaphor of *itys*.⁷⁴

Experiencing Alcohol: The *Symposion*

If one were to draw up a short list of the definitive elements of ancient Greek culture and society one would have to include the *symposion*. Like any organic social institution the *symposion* was in a state of continual evolution, with characteristics of older and newer forms existing side by side and even intermin-

gling. The written descriptions that we possess of the *symposion* are drawn from the symposia of tyrants and the aristocracy, so inevitably they reflect an elite social perspective. There is reason to believe that by the fifth century BCE Greece's mercantile, artisan, and peasant hoplite classes held their own symposia, but as these social groups lacked the leisure time necessary for writing, we know little of their practices.⁷⁵ The documentary record that has survived, moreover, for the most part dates from the fourth century BCE onwards, with Athenaeus' *Deipnosophists*, written centuries later in the third century CE, being the single largest source of quotations.⁷⁶ The discussion here, unless noted otherwise, will pertain to the symposia of the Athenian elite during Socrates' and Plato's lifetime.

The aristocratic *symposion* was a festive "psychological and cultural microverse" cordoned off from public life.⁷⁷ On the surface the aim of the *symposion* was the celebration of certain specific occasions, most especially those marking exceptional moments in the lives of either one or more of those present, or the symposiasts as a group. But beneath this surface the *symposion* was also the primary setting "for the transmission of cultural ideals and the forging of political and interpersonal relationships."⁷⁸ Spatially a typical *symposion* would take place in a small room, the *andron* or "men's room."⁷⁹ Couches on raised platforms, usually seven to fifteen in number, would be arranged in a circle, against the walls, to ensure that nothing occurred behind the participants. Organized in this manner the entire *symposion* was fashioned so as to create converging lines of sight and establish the communicative reciprocity among the guests.⁸⁰ The *andron* would not contain more than between fourteen and thirty adult male guests.⁸¹ If the number of celebrants was very large the number of rooms, rather than the number of individuals within the same room, would be increased.

Qualitatively the event was a male gathering, having origins in the "feast of merit" practiced by the Homeric warrior elite.⁸² This earlier incarnation of the *symposion* took place in the *megaron*, or banqueting hall.⁸³ The feast of merit was a ritualized display of generosity: a leading warrior (*basileus*) would use his agricultural surplus to entertain other elite male companions (*hetairoi*), producing ties of loyalty and serving "in general to enhance the status of the *basileus* within the community," while at the same time providing him with a "band of *hetairoi* obligated to follow him in military and naval exploits, from petty cattle raiding and piracy to accepting his leadership in more formal warfare."⁸⁴ Formal warfare, such as the Trojan War, was in contrast to private ventures a public affair that ordinary men participated in. It was expected of the warrior elite to subsidize public feasting in such circumstances, for possession of surplus wine and food was a major determinant of status within the community.⁸⁵ Changes in military equipment, tactics, and organization, such as the emergence of the hoplite army organized by the *polis*, wherein the aristocrats tended to be generals or members of the cavalry, eroded the more strictly martial purposes found in the pre-classical *symposion*.⁸⁶

The *symposion* of the Classical Period of ancient Greek history became a refuge, a retreat from the world, including the world of politics, where aristo-

cratic influence was on the wane.⁸⁷ Increasingly its aim became the pleasure/delight (*euphrosyne*) of the participants.⁸⁸ Influences from the Near East began to appear, one of the more important being the custom of reclining on a *kline* or banquet couch.⁸⁹ Only men normally reclined in this fashion; women and youth, if present at all, would typically sit nearby (Xenophon *Symposium* 1.8). Wives and other "respectable" women never or almost never attended symposia (Plato *Symposium* 176e).⁹⁰ Female participants consisted of musicians, dancers and acrobats, *hetairai* (courtesans) and slaves. Or in other words "the only women who participated [in the *symposion*] were those with no reputation to lose."⁹¹ The intoxication of *hetairai* was "according to Athenaeus, a commonplace of the comic tradition (10.587b)."⁹² On many painted vases prostitutes and courtesans are visible joining in the pleasures of the *krater*.⁹³ This is not to imply that other Greek women, even elite women, were forbidden to drink wine, as at least some Roman women apparently were.⁹⁴ Greek women regularly drank wine for recreational, ritual and medicinal purposes.⁹⁵ The drunken old woman with an unquenchable thirst for wine was a commonplace of Old, Middle and New Comedy and there is reason to believe "the figure of the drunken sorceress was a standard one" in comedy as well.⁹⁶ The Athenian Stranger in Plato's *Laws* (637c), in response to Megillus' negative comment about the Dionysia celebrated in Athens—where women and slaves were allowed to celebrate with citizen men—seems to imply that among other vices Spartan women would get drunk. In any event, according to Athenaeus, the fondness of women for wine was common knowledge (10.440e).⁹⁷

Temporally the *symposion*, when the recreational drinking took place, was the second half of the *deipnon*, a dinner party.⁹⁸ A meal generally without wine would first be eaten. After the meal it was customary to make offerings, accompanied by prayer, of unmixed wine to the Good Spirit (*Agathos Daimon*), followed by three offerings of wine to Olympian Zeus and Hera, the heroes, and Zeus the Savior (Aristophanes *Wasps* 525 and 1217, and cf. Plato *Philebus* 66d and *Symposium* 176a). According to Theophrastus in a surviving fragment of his *On Drunkenness*, this unmixed wine was drunk "only in small quantity" as a lawful acknowledgement of the powers being invoked, "as a reminder, through a mere taste, of the strength of the god's gift" (Athenaeus 15.693d). Wine was a substance that could only be consumed cautiously, being "a *pharmakon* [drug] which sends men mad if they do not control its consumption as regards strength and quality."⁹⁹ Only after this offering of unmixed wine would the recreational drinking commence.

A female *aulos* player was normally expected at a well-to-do *symposion*.¹⁰⁰ As skilled labor they were expensive to hire.¹⁰¹ The usual drinking and entertainment would typically commence when the *auletris* began to play. In Aristophanes' *Wasps* the music of the *aulos* is identified as the instigator of the party-songs Bdelycleon expects Philocleon to be prepared for at the *symposion* they are attending (1219–1222).¹⁰² In Xenophon's *Symposium* the evening's entertainment consists of "a fine [*auletris*], a dancing girl—one of those skilled in acrobatic tricks—and a very handsome boy, who was expert at playing the cither

and at dancing" (2.1). As the evening's drinking intensified there would appear to have been many occasions when the sexual satisfaction of the male participants became a priority.¹⁰³ A female *auletris* was, it appears, customarily the subject of mock auctions "most certainly not for [their] musical services."¹⁰⁴ Practices of this sort were commonplace for other female entertainers as well.¹⁰⁵

The *symposion*'s rules were intended to establish "a setting of shared pleasure," pleasures arranged with the psychic and physical satisfaction of the participants in mind.¹⁰⁶ Drinking, music, dance, and the erotic, all mixed with conversation. At the center of the *symposion* was the mixing bowl, a large *krater*. The *krater* was the starting point for the distribution of wine.¹⁰⁷ As a container holding mixed wine the *krater* was a symbol of civilization, whereas the goat-skin, for example, held pure wine. This is mirrored in the drinking vessels: the *skyphos* was for mixed wine, the Scythian drinking horn, the *rhyton*, for pure wine.¹⁰⁸ Water from the *hydria* or water jug would typically be placed into the *krater* with a ladle called the *kyanthos*, and the prepared libation served in a bowl-like drinking cup (*kylix*, *kantharos*, or *kotyle*). Symposiasts would generally pass the cup around, from left to right. *Kraters* would be emptied one after another in this fashion. Light foods, called *tragemata* (things to chew with wine), would be served as a compliment to the recreational drinking.¹⁰⁹

Numerous drinking games would be played at symposia. Several were based on balance, using for example an inflated greased wine-skin (*askos*), the player trying to stay upright (*orthos*). This game of the wine-skin, or *askoliasmos*, generated a kind of displacement, only it was the container itself, rather than the wine, that disoriented and dizzied the drinker.¹¹⁰ The Greek word for headache/dizziness, *karos*, appears to be related to the Akkadian *karu* (to be dizzy) and the Aramaic *karah* (to be ill), hence "one can imagine that the term came to the Greeks from the eastern banqueting fashions."¹¹¹ According to the Greek historian Philochoros (fl. third century BCE), Dionysus taught Amphictyon, ruler of Athens, the fineries of mixing wine; the king "erected an altar to Dionysus the upstanding (*orthos*)" in honor of this art that allowed "men . . . to stay upright while drinking" (Athenaeus 2.38c–d). On many vases one finds, in the depiction of the *komos*, "a series of juggling tricks played with items of drinking equipment," a virtuosity that is one of the *komos*' defining elements, since wine, dancing and music frequently merged, often in a context that expressed aristocratic contempt for democratic authority.¹¹²

Other games involved aim and judgment, such as the oft-depicted game known as *kottabos*, wherein contestants flicked wine at various kinds of targets. Before letting the wine fly a declaration was made, frequently to a lover, and if the target lost its equilibrium it indicated both "the uncertainty that takes hold of a lover in the presence of the beloved" and a divinatory indication of "amorous success."¹¹³ Wine, both when drunk and when played with, had the power to reveal *truth*. Riddles, word games, and jokes would also be told in the course of the *symposion* (e.g. see Athenaeus 10.457c–f, and Plato *Republic* 479b–480a). Evidently winners might receive "kisses which were loathsome to men of independent feelings, while the penalty imposed upon those who are beaten is to

drink unmixed wine, which they do more gladly than they would the cup of health" (Athenaeus 10.475d). One of the drinking songs of the *symposion*, the *skolion*, in which the singers strove to outdo each other, was frequently political or moral in nature (Aristophanes *Wasps* 1220–28, Plato *Gorgias* 451e).¹¹⁴ Guests would lampoon each other as well (Aristophanes *Wasps* 1299–1321, Plato *Symposium* 215a–b).

Drinking Ethics

Within the *symposion* the social norms that governed ordinary public life could, for a time, be ignored or disobeyed. Despite the outrageous behavior of some symposiasts, however, this should not be understood as an indication of a complete absence of restraint or a condition where anything and everything was permitted. The sympotic celebration usually occurred within the structure of a "series of ritual acts regulated by a very precise set of norms."¹¹⁵ It was a social ritual in the broadest sense, comprising a "series of acts that [were] strictly codified and ordered prior to their accomplishment."¹¹⁶ Within this unwritten codification any written laws of the *polis* that may have existed were secondary to what may be termed an *ethical-aesthetic sensibility* that each gathering consensually imposed upon itself, and might vary significantly depending on the particular locality and the individual gathering.¹¹⁷ This sensibility had four defining elements.

First, the *symposion* was a medium for the orchestration of a regulated intoxication, an "elaborate *ars bibendi* [art of drinking]."¹¹⁸ An ad hoc "ruler" or "king" would act as a moderator of the drinking. Plato refers to this individual as *archon* in both the *Symposium* (213e) and *Laws* (640d), although *basileus*, *symposiarchos*, and other terms were also used in the Classical Period. The *symposiarchos*, as overseer of the festivities, would define the rules for the mixing of the drinks, the number of *kraters* to be drunk, and other rules for drinking, striving for a successful balance between the dull rationality of the sober man, the extreme of complete abstinence (*nephein*) on the one hand, and wild Dionysiac irrationality or harmful drunkenness (*methyesthai*, *paroinein*, *kraipalan*) on the other.¹¹⁹

The Greeks proudly defined themselves by this at least nominally regulated intoxication, contrasting it to the behavior of various barbarian races, as the lyric poet Anacreon (570–488 BCE) apparently did: "Let's not fall into drunken disorder with our wine, like the Scythians, but let us drink in moderation listening to the lovely hymns" (Athenaeus 10.427a–b). One can see the same sentiment expressed in Plato's *Laws* (637d–e), where the Athenian visitor compares the extreme policy of complete abstinence from drunkenness practiced by the Spartans, and smugly lauded by Megillus, to such belligerent races as the Persians, Carthaginians, Celts (of Gaul), Iberians, and especially the Scythians and Thracians who "drink wine completely undiluted, women as well as men, and

pour it over their cloaks, believing that they're engaging in a fine and happy practice."¹²⁰ Xenophon in his *Anabasis* speaks of the Armenians' strange drinking habits, which include "slurping (*rhophounta*) like an ox" (4.5.32). People such as these were regarded as being incapable of making appropriate use of wine, traditionally the last of the drugs Dionysus gave as a gift to man (Aristophanes *Archanians* 77–79). The same difficulty existed among many Greeks as well. In Plato's *Minos*, in contrast to the lawgiver Minos who was a confidant of Zeus and who instituted laws "not to drink together to the point of drunkenness," there are others who take confidant to mean "drinking companion and playfellow of Zeus" (319e–320b). They say nothing, Socrates says, for among the "many human beings both Greek and barbarian" only the Cretans and the Lacedaemonians (who learned from the Cretans) "refrain from drinking parties and from the play that takes place where there is wine" and drunkenness (320a).

Second, the *symposion* may be seen as a space within which ancient Greek society provided for the controlled disruption of identity, a careful invocation of ecstasy. The drinking of wine and the ritual around it allowed for "experience at another level," a brief sojourn "outside normal boundaries."¹²¹ Symposia granted the "extraordinary but necessary experience of the Other" in a society where the exclusion of women, slaves, and foreigners from citizenship formed the basis of the entire political structure.¹²² Reflecting on this exclusion, the natural philosopher Thales (ca. 640–546 BCE) was reputed to have given three reasons for being grateful to the gods: "First, because by birth I am human and not a beast; second, because I am a man and not a woman; and finally because I am a Greek and not a foreigner" (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 1.33).

One finds a number of ancient Greek drinking containers in the shape of a human head (or two heads joined back to back). These vessels depict "only women, male and female blacks, Asians, and satyrs."¹²³ The Greek male is never found, as though these vases were "meant to define the opposite of the Greek drinker and to hold up to him all the things that he was not."¹²⁴ Mixing bowls also depict male symposiasts dressed in the garb of the Other: as women, barbarians like the Scythians, and most especially as satyrs, the half-man, half-animal creatures who comprised Dionysus's male retinue. In sum the experience of wine in the regulated atmosphere of the *symposion* allowed for "an interference in the axiological articulation of the social microcosm concerned," an intentional provocation of the negative forces, dysphoric and/or aggressive, that intoxication is capable of generating and which constitute an ever present danger.¹²⁵

Third, within the social setting of the *symposion* there can be found an elaborate system of communication, what has been called a *logos sympotikos*. The *symposion* was "a deliberate, controlled, collective exploration of the universe of the passions, not without anxieties about elements of contravention which can reveal themselves once passions have been unleashed by drunkenness."¹²⁶ This anxiety stemmed from the understanding that unlike the god Dionysus, who could drink any amount of unmixed wine, human beings could "only approach this drug by controlling . . . the proper use of wine within the frame-

work of a regulated conviviality.¹²⁷ That framework was almost entirely ethical and discursive in nature.¹²⁸

Poetry of virtually any form might be read in the course of the *symposion* including: "light verse, love poems, and admonitory or political verse," improvised by the talented, prepared beforehand by the less gifted.¹²⁹ Songs would be sung, either solo or choral (Plato *Symposium* 180e). The result was a verbal confrontation of the symposiasts, a contest, and an exhibition of their individual abilities, exposed to the scrutiny of the group. Beneath the pursuit of the group's collective pleasure and gratification (*euphrosyne*) each participant risked the "self-representation . . . constructed as part of their participation in social life," exposing this delicate mask to each others scrutiny.¹³⁰ In this agonistic interplay both positive and negative models of ethical and aesthetic behavior were established: sympotic discourse was often "*determinative and normative*."¹³¹

Fourth, a favorite topic of discussion at the *symposion* was the subject of *eros* and the pleasures of love. Contemporary philosophical discussion seems practically addicted to this particular aspect of the *symposion*, perhaps influenced by the sanitizing tendencies of Plato's and Xenophon's works. In these discussions one reads a relatively straightforward investigation that takes as its starting point that the subject of a work like Plato's *Symposium* is *eros*, a term conveying sexual desire, affection broadly speaking, or a powerful preference of some sort.¹³² It is not my intention to dispute such a reading. The discussion of *eros* was certainly an important element of the *symposion*, one that functioned as a release for "a complex series of emotional pressures," and could find expression in a variety of forms, from the sort of elevated discourse found in Plato's *Symposium* to light-hearted banter between enthusiasts of hetero and homosexual love, to "the most unregulated orgiastic . . . practices."¹³³ In contrast to the conventional approach, my own is that the first three features of the *symposion* deserve equally close scrutiny. Plato does not have much to say about the pleasures of the food that could be found at the *symposion* and, in all truth, says little about that institution's tangible sexual practices.¹³⁴ The praise or admonishment of these pleasures were manifestly important to many ancient writers, as any reader of Athenaeus could attest. Concerning the ecstatic pleasures of intoxication within the *symposion*, however, Plato says considerably more.

Notes

1. In addition to alcohol this work will discuss and present evidence for the existence of several other mind-altering drugs in Classical Greece. These include opium (*Papaver somniferum*), wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*), ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*), frankincense or oblibanum (*Boswell carteri*), hemp (*Cannabis sativa*), henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*), mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), myrrh (*Commiphora myrrha*), and certain psychotropic mushrooms.

2. The Anthesteria, a festival of the new wine, may be characterized as a religious-public intoxication. The City Dionysia, where wine drinking and sacrifices took place

prior to theatrical performances, may be thought of as primarily recreational-public, although the high priest of Dionysus was seated in the front row during performances. The intoxication of the *symposion* was recreational-private, while the ritual libations poured to commence the drinking at the *symposion* were religious-private.

3. The wild grape is dioecious; the male flowers rarely produce fruit. The fruit that is produced has many seeds, a tough skin, is high in acid and low in the sugar that is essential to the fermentation process.

4. Patrick E. McGovern, *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 8–11. Even if wine was known during this period, McGovern writes, "Paleolithic humans would have had little control over the fermentation process."

5. R. J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technology, Vol. 3* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1965), 61 and McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 65–68. Humans may have learned how to control fire as much as 1.7 million years ago. Cereal agriculture, something that made possible year-round food reserves, dates back to at least 9,500 BCE. Pottery has been in use since about 6,000 BCE.

6. See McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 64–84.

7. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 48–49, 300–301. See also my Introduction, above.

8. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 64–68, 72–73.

9. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 14.

10. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 247–59.

11. When the destruction of war led to homelessness these oversized *pithoi* were used as a form of emergency housing. Aristophanes' *Knights* (795) refers to these "vat-sleepers" or *pithaknai*.

12. Tim Unwin, *Wine and the Vine* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 94–133. Plato mentions "Sarambus the [wine] dealer" in the *Gorgias* (518b).

13. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 112. Forbes goes on to say that "Greek colonization and the introduction of Greek wine" were practically identical. See also Plato, *Laws* 637d–e.

14. Carl A. P. Ruck, "The Wild and the Cultivated: Wine in Euripides' *Bacchae*," in R. Gordon Wasson, Stella Kramrisch, Carl A. P. Ruck, and Jonathan Ott, *Persephone's Quest: Entheogens and the Origin of Religion*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 197. Cf. Herbert G. Baker, *Plants and Civilization* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1970), 120, and R. Gordon Wasson, Albert Hofmann and Carl A. P. Ruck, *The Road to Eleusis* (Los Angeles: William Dailey Rare Books, 1998), 99.

15. Arthur P. McKinlay, "Attic Temperance," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 12, no. 1 (1951): 84.

16. Unless otherwise noted quotes from Athenaeus' *The Deipnosophists* (hereafter simply Athenaeus) are from Charles Burton Gulick, trans., *Athenaeus—The Deipnosophists* [7 Volumes] (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1951).

17. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 308–309.

18. See for example Benjamin Parsons, *Anti-Bacchus* (London: John Snow, 1840), 74–93. Unlike many twentieth-century scholars Parsons recognizes that ancient wines were frequently drugged. Contemporary Christian texts emphasize, like Parsons, the creation and drinking of a non-alcoholic beverage based on grapes boiled down to a thick syrup, to which water could later be added, confusing it with wine more generally, arguing in essence that in contrast to we "decadent moderns" the ancients were fundamentally grape-juice drinking teetotalers. See for example Robert Stein, "Wine-Drinking in New Testament Times," *Christianity Today*, June 20, 1975, 9–11.

19. McKinlay, "Attic Temperance," 84.

20. Oswyn Murray, *Early Greece*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 208.

21. François Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 6.

22. Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 112.

23. See for example Elizabeth Belfiore, "Wine and Catharsis of the Emotions in Plato's *Laws*," *Classical Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1986): 430. While almost reluctantly agreeing that "the Greeks got, if anything, even more drunk than do modern imbibers," Belfiore resists conceding that the wine the Greeks drank contained anything more potent than alcohol. She mischaracterizes the "intriguing but controversial" arguments made by Carl A. P. Ruck in *The Road to Eleusis* as only arguing that "Greek wine was mixed with hallucinogens as well as water." In truth Ruck's position has always been that "Greek wines . . . in some cases were actually more hallucinogens than alcoholic beverages." Ruck, "The Wild and the Cultivated," 197, emphasis mine. Belfiore refers her reader to the work of Walter Burkert. Burkert does not even concede that the Greeks got more drunk than modern imbibers, still less that they possessed any drug other than wine, and misunderstands or grotesquely misrepresents (depending on one's level of generosity) the arguments made by Ruck in *The Road to Eleusis*.

24. Max Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage: A History of Beer in Ancient Europe*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 2.

25. Regarding the oxidation of ethanol to acetaldehyde by direct chemical reaction with air, see H. L. Wildenradt and V. L. Singleton, "The Production of Aldehydes as a Result of Oxidation of Polyphenolic Compounds and its Relation to Wine Aging," *American Journal of Enology and Viticulture* 25, no. 2 (1974) and Andrew L. Waterhouse and V. Felipe Laurie, "Oxidation of Wine Phenolics: A Critical Evaluation and Hypothesis," *American Journal of Enology and Viticulture* 57, no. 3 (2006).

26. A mere four ounces of methanol is usually fatal. Initial symptoms include headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion and drowsiness, and progress to a second stage that includes blurred or complete loss of vision, and may progress to death by respiratory failure.

27. See Agnes Carr Vaughan, *Madness in Greek Thought and Custom* (Baltimore, MD: J. H. Furst Company, 1919), 51. Vaughn notes that "when madness was caused by drinking certain wines, the *Lapis Topazontes* hung about the neck was believed to be of curative value." A healing talisman, like a medicinal remedy, could be called a *pharmakon*. See chapter 8, below.

28. See Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 141 and Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. 1* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 241-42. The introduction of distillation in Western and Southern Europe is discussed in the afterword, below.

29. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 77, and McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 309.

30. A pine native to the Mediterranean whose range extends from Morocco to the Levant.

31. Carl A. P. Ruck, "On the Sacred Name of Iamos and Ion," *The Classical Journal* 71, no. 3 (1976): 241.

32. The practice was widespread in the ancient world. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 73, mentions Mesopotamia and Palestine. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 95-209 includes both these locations as well several others, such as Egypt and several Near East cultures.

33. Today, we still speak of a wine's "bouquet," an echo and perhaps a surviving trace vestige of these ancient practices.

34. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 80. The traditional view is that wood barrels were not used until the third century CE by the Romans, who borrowed the practice from the Gauls. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 262-63 suspects that, given how sophisticated ancient shipbuilding technology was, including "a knowledge of toasting oak staves to bend them" the "tradition of ageing wine in oak barrels might have a much earlier pedigree." This however remains simply speculation. The cork stopper was not incorporated into the manufacture of wine until well into the seventeenth century.

35. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 71-72.

36. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 309. The Greek for turpentine, *terebinthine*, derives from the terebinth tree. See Robert K. Barnhart, *The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995).

37. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 69-72.

38. The evidence from the Neolithic village of Hajji Firuz located in what is now northwestern Iran is strong, while Minoan *pihoi* dating to 2,200 BCE "represent the earliest chemical evidence for resinated wine from ancient Greece." See McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 250.

39. See McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 311-312. The sangria of southern Spain would be another example.

40. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 117-18, and McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 309-310.

41. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 309.

42. Harold Tarrant, "Wine in Ancient Greece—Some Platonist Ponderings," in *Wine and Philosophy*, ed. Fritz Allhoff (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 15.

43. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 310.

44. All references from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in this chapter are from the translations by Robert Fagles, and refer to the line numbers of his translation, not the line numbers of the original Greek text. Robert Fagles, trans., *Homer—The Iliad* (New York: Penguin Press, 1990) and Robert Fagles, trans., *Homer—The Odyssey* (New York: Penguin, 1996). Wine is referred to as *meliteides* in the *Iliad* at 4.401, 6.307, 8.586, 10.670, 12.371, and 18.634, and in the *Odyssey* at 3.46, 9.208, 14.78, and 16.52. Wine is referred to as *meliphron* in the *Iliad* at 8.586, 8.634, and 24.336, and in the *Odyssey* at 7.216, 10.394, 13.61, and 15.163. Additional references to wine in Homer's epic poetry are mentioned in chapter 2, below.

45. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 71 and 133.

46. Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi—Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 485.

47. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 309. Absinthe, a highly alcoholic liqueur containing wormwood, anise and other botanicals, is reemerging as a legal product after a century of widespread prohibition.

48. P. G. Kritikos and S. P. Papadaki, "The History of the Poppy and of Opium and their Expansion in Antiquity in the Eastern Mediterranean Area," *Bulletin on Narcotics* 19, no. 3 (1967), 8-9, and John Scarborough, "The Opium Poppy in Hellenistic and Roman Medicine," in *Drugs and Narcotics in History*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 4 for example. On the Greek word for "drug," *pharmakon*, see chapter 4, below.

49. Helen's *pharmakon* as well as several other drugs found in the *Odyssey* are discussed in chapter 4, below.

50. Kritikos and Papadaki, "The History of the Poppy," 22.

51. Christopher A. Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 126.

52. Additional references to oleander in ancient sources may be found in Wilhelmina Mary Feemster Jashemski and Frederick G. Meyer, *The Natural History of Pompeii* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 133.

53. Oleander contains several potent toxins including oleandrin and nerioside, which are very similar to foxglove. The sap can cause skin irritations, severe eye inflammation and irritation, and allergy reactions characterized by dermatitis. In addition to gastrointestinal and cardiac effects the plant can also affect the central nervous system, with symptoms including drowsiness, tremors, shaking of the muscles, seizures, collapse, and even coma that can lead to death.

54. Randall B. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best: Medical Argument and Magical Rhetoric in Plato's Laws* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 45 n. 16.

55. Anthony Preus, "Drugs and Psychic States in Theophrastus' *History of Plants* 9.8–20," in *Theophrastean Studies*, ed. William W. Fortenbaugh and Robert W. Sharples (New Brunswick, NJ and Oxford, UK: Transaction Books, 1988), 87. See my discussion of *ekstasis* in chapter 2, below.

56. Richard Evans Schultes and Albert Hofmann, *Plants of the Gods—Their Sacred, Healing and Hallucinogenic Powers* (Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 1992), 86, and see also 49, 87–90. Additional discussions may be found in John Scarborough, "The Pharmacology of Sacred Plants, Herbs, and Roots," in *Magika Hiera—Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, ed. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 158, and Richard Rudgley, *The Alchemy of Culture—Intoxicants in Society* (London: British Museum Press, 1993), 93–95.

57. As Nelson points out the alcohol consumed by ancient Europeans was quite different than ours. Lacking our rigid categories of what constituted "wine" or "beer" or "mead," they thought nothing of blending together "various fruits, or fruits and honey, fruits and cereals, honey and cereals, or even fruits, honey, and cereals. Furthermore, numerous types of plants, spices, and other substances (including narcotic drugs) could be added to the beverage before or after fermentation." Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage*, 2. McGovern calls this blending of wine, barley beer, and mead "grog" and discusses the creation of such mixtures by the Greeks. See McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 239–78. He takes no firm position on Greek wines containing the "other substances" Nelson mentions, often implying the likelihood of "narcotic substances" having been mixed into wine but then gingerly sidestepping the matter.

58. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 308–312.

59. Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536 CE), a Christian theologian and classical scholar, writes "Zenodotus tells us that in Sicily Morychus was a nickname for Bacchus." Quoted in Roger Aubrey Baskerville Mynors, *Collected Works of Erasmus (Volume 34) Adages Iviil to IIIiii100* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 89.

60. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 107–22, and cf. M. Davies, "Sailing, Rowing and Sporting in One's Cup on the Wine Dark Sea," in *Athens Comes of Age: From Solon to Salamis*, ed. William A. P. Childs (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 72–92.

61. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 63.

62. Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage*, 1.

63. Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat, *History of Food* (Boston: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 34–38 and Eva Crane, *The World History of Beekeeping and Honey Hunting* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 513–14.

64. A detailed recipe for preparing mead may be found in *On Agriculture (De Re Rustica)* by the Roman writer Columella (ca. 4–70 CE).

65. On Poros see Arlene W. Saxonhouse, *Fear of Diversity: The Birth of Political Science in Ancient Greek Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 174–75 as well as Kevin Corrigan and Elena Glazov-Corrigan, *Plato's Dialectic at Play: Argument, Structure and Myth in the Symposium* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2004), 121–22.

66. Rudgley, *The Alchemy of Culture*, 31. A more detailed discussion of beer's origins may be found in Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage*, 9–24.

67. Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage*, 25.

68. Nelson, *A Barbarian's Beverage*, 32.

69. Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 73. See also R. J. Forbes, "Food and Drink," in *A History of Technology, Volume 2—The Mediterranean Civilizations to the Middle Ages c. 700 BC—c. AD 1500*, ed. Charles Singer, E. J. Holmyard, A. R. Hall and Trevor I. Williams (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 128–29, and McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 149.

70. McGovern, *Ancient Wine*, 296.

71. Carl Kerényi, *Dionysus—Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life* (Princeton, NJ: Pantheon Books, 1976), 35–36, and Rudgley, *The Alchemy of Culture*, 39.

72. Ruck, "The Wild and the Cultivated," 208.

73. Carl A. P. Ruck, *Sacred Mushrooms of the Goddess and the Secrets of Eleusis*, (Berkeley, CA: Ronin Publishing, 2006): 165.

74. See my discussion of the cult of Dionysus in chapter 4, below.

75. Oswyn Murray, *Early Greece*, 1st Edition (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 265; Pellizer 1990: 181.

76. Using Athenaeus to bring to life aspects of the symposium in the Classical Greece must of course be done with some caution. Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 74 wryly observes that if Athenaeus were our only source for Plato's *Republic* "we would possess only a minor part of an intriguing exchange [372a] between Glaucon and Socrates, in the course of which Socrates presents two dietary regimes for his new citizens, one frugal ... one luxurious."

77. Ezio Pellizer, "Outlines of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," in *Symptotica—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 177.

78. Joseph M. Bryant, *Moral Codes and Social Structure in Ancient Greece: A Sociology of Greek Ethics from Homer to the Epicureans and Stoic* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 83.

79. Oswyn Murray, *Early Greece*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 208, see also O. Murray, *Early Greece* [1st Edition], 264, and Von Blackenhagen 1992: 54–55).

80. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 14, and cf. O. Murray, *Early Greece*, 2nd Edition, 208.

81. Oswyn Murray, "Forms of Sociability," in *The Greeks*, ed. Jean-Pierre Vernant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 224.

82. O. Murray, *Early Greece*, 2nd Edition, 207, and cf. O. Murray "Forms of Sociability," 221, Bryant, *Moral Codes and Social Structure in Ancient Greece*, 83, and Garnsey, *Food in Classical Antiquity*, 130.

83. O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 221.

84. O. Murray, *Early Greece*, 1st Edition, 259–60. See for example *Odyssey* 9.5–10 and 14.228–290.

85. O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 222.

86. O. Murray, *Early Greece*, 1st Edition, 263.

87. Barry S. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403–386 BC* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 11–12.

88. O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 229.

89. O. Murray, *Early Greece*, 1st Edition, 263, Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution—Near Eastern Influences on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 79. O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 224 writes that "Reclining as part of an established set of social customs is first attested by the prophet Amos in Samaria in the eighth century (Amos 6.3–7), and it may well have been a custom adopted by the Greeks from contact with Phoenician culture."

90. Women remained in the spaces within the home specifically designated for them, such as the *gynaecium*. O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 230 writes that citizen women "were never present at Greek symposia; there is no evidence that they even attended wedding feasts and funeral feasts, two areas with which women are traditionally closely connected." Women may have had their own forms of feasting and commensality, but virtually no evidence survives to indicate what it may have consisted of or looked like.

91. Bryant, *Moral Codes and Social Structure in Ancient Greece*, 109.

92. Laura McClure, *Courtesans at Table: Gender and Greek Literary Culture in Athenaeus* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 73. Athenaeus even indicates the nickname of one courtesan was *Paroinos*, a word than McClure translates as "drunken" although most other sources translate this word along the lines of "fond of sitting beside wine" and the same word can also mean "quarrelsome" and "violent" leaving the meaning of the nickname ambiguous.

93. Matthew W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 90.

94. During the time of the Greek historian Polybius (ca. 203–120 BCE). See Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 184–87 who in addition to Polybius mentions Fabius Pictor, Cato the Elder, Cicero, and others. Denied wine, Roman women were reported to have drunk a raisin-based alcohol called *passum*. See for example Athenaeus 10.440e. The attitude of the Romans toward female intoxication is discussed in Arthur P. McKinlay, "The Roman Attitude Towards Women Drinking," in *Drinking and Intoxication: Selected Readings in Social Attitudes and Controls*, ed. R. G. McCarthy (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1959), 58–61 and E. M. Jellinek, Carole D. Yawney, and Robert E. Popham, "Drinkers and Alcoholics in Ancient Rome," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 37, no. 11 (1976): 1729–30.

95. Lisa Marie Elliot, *Gendering the Production and Consumption of Wine and Olive Oil in Ancient Greece* (M.A. thesis, Miami University, 2006), 29–37.

96. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 89–91. The significance of these depictions lies not in their accuracy but rather their appeal to the expectations of their audience; drunkenness is an expected behavior of aging *hetairai*.

97. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 185 writes that the epithets given to old women in the *Greek Anthology* (6.291, 7.353, 7.455, 7.456, 7.457, 11.409) reflect their fondness for wine.

98. Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, 129. See also O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 224–25.

99. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 202.

100. Different instruments went by the name *aulos* (plural *auloi*), including a single piped instrument called the *monaulos*, and a single piped instrument held horizontally, as the modern flute, called the *plagioulos*, both of which were reedless, but the most common variety was a double-reeded instrument like an oboe. The word "aulos" (meaning

"tube" or "duct") is often translated as "flute" though this is technically accurate only when referring to the *plagioulos* when in fact what is meant is the double-reeded instrument. I have retained the Greek in most instances to avoid any confusion. Greater detail on the *aulos* may be found in Sheramy D. Bundrick, *Music and Image in Classical Athens* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 34.

101. Chester G. Starr, "An Evening with the Flute Girls," *La Parola del Passato* 33, no. 183 (1978): 406–7. The music of the *aulos* is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3, below.

102. One of the most popular games at symposia consisted of one guest singing a line or two from a song, while holding a myrtle-branch. He would then pass the branch to another reveler, who would then have the choice of continuing the song faithfully, ad-libbing new lyrics, or singing the lines from yet another song with a related theme. See Alan H. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes, Vol. 4* (Warminster, Wilts, England: Aris and Phillips, 1983), 228, and Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 129.

103. Starr, "An Evening with the Flute Girls," 408, O. Murray, *Early Greece, 2nd Edition*, 210, 214.

104. Pellizer, "Outlines of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 181. See also T. B. L. Webster, *Athenian Culture and Society* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 53–54, Sheramy Bundrick, *Music and Image in Classical Athens*, 39 (figure 24) and cf. Athenaeus 13.607d–e.

105. See McClure, *Courtesans at the Table*, 21–22.

106. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 19.

107. Once mixed the wine would be cooled in a vessel known as the *psykter*. See O. Murray, "Forms of Sociability," 225.

108. François Lissarrague, "Around the Krater: An Aspect of Banquet Imagery," in *Sympotica—A Symposium on the Symposion*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 202, and Lissarrague, *Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 90–91.

109. Kathy K. Kaufman, *Cooking in Ancient Civilizations* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 79. These included "fruits, often dried, and sweet pastries as well as savory items, such as fresh beans, tiny birds, nuts, and cheeses." See also Elizabeth Craik, "Diet, *Diata* and Dietetics," in *The Greek World*, ed. Anton Powell (London: Routledge, 1995), 391, who discusses Plato's use of *trupemata* in *Republic* 372c–d.

110. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 72.

111. Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution—Near Eastern Influences on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 79.

112. See chapter 2, below.

113. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 80–85.

114. See O. Murray, *Early Greece, 2nd Edition*, 210, 274, 280 and Webster, *Athenian Culture and Society*, 166.

115. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 178.

116. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 25.

117. The term "ethical-aesthetic sensibility" is borrowed from William E. Connolly, *The Augustinian Imperative: A Reflection on the Politics of Morality* (London: Sage, 1993), 138–45.

118. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 178.

119. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 178 and Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 8.

120. On this passage see Forbes, *Studies Vol. 3*, 112.

121. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 10–11.
122. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 11. On the exclusion of women see Nancy H. Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).
123. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 57–58.
124. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 58.
125. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 179.
126. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 179.
127. Jean-Louis Durand, Francoise Frontisis-Ducroux and Francois Lissarrague, "Wine: Human and Divine," in *A City of Images—Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece* ed. Claude Bérard, Christiane Bron, Jean-Louis Durand, Francoise Frontisis-Ducroux, François Lissarrague, Alain Schnapp, and Jean-Paul Vernant (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 121.
128. Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in *The Foucault Reader* ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984) discusses this.
129. Daniel B. Levine, "Symposium and Polis," in *Theognis of Megara—Poetry and the Polis*, ed. Thomas J. Figueira and Gregory Nagy, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 176. See also Bruno Gentili, *Poetry and Its Public in Ancient Greece* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 89–103.
130. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 183.
131. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 180, emphasis Pellizer's. This helps to explain Plato's deep concern with drinking ethics, from his detailed juxtapositioning of the intoxication of Alcibiades with the sobriety of Socrates in the *Symposium*, to his thorough interweaving of his discussion of drinking parties with a system of education and the importance of ethical foundations in the *Laws*.
132. See for example K. J. Dover, "Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's *Symposium*," in K. J. Dover, *The Greeks and their Legacy: Collected Papers Volume II: Prose Literature, History, Society, Transmission, Influence* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1988), 112–13, Peter H. Von Blanckenhagen, "Stage and Actors in Plato's *Symposium*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 33, no. 1 (1992): 64–65, and Robin A. Waterfield, *Plato—Symposium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), xi.
133. Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Symptotic Entertainment," 182.
134. Plato was certainly concerned with dietary ethics, but he more often than not situates those ethics as part of an overall concern with luxury (*truphe*) and does not appear to single out the food of the *symposion* as worthy of sustained commentary; Isocrates, Xenophon, and writers in the Hellenistic period are of a similar mind. It is worth noting Plato does mention the *tragemata* of symposia at *Republic* 372c. One of the more famous works on the subject of food and luxury was *Life of Luxury* by the poet Arches-tratus (fl. 330 BCE) of which sixty-one fragments are preserved in Athenaeus. See Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*, 72–77.

Chapter Two

The Symposium and the Question of Stasis

In Plato's *Symposium* the character Pausanias says at one point during his speech on love that it is generally true of "any activity that, simply of itself, it is neither good nor bad. Take what we're doing now, for example, that is to say drinking, or singing, or talking. None of these is good or bad in itself, but each becomes so depending on the way it is done. Well and rightly done, it is good; wrongly done, it is bad" (180e–181a). His perspective is not idiosyncratic and encapsulates quite well how ancient Greece, to the very limited extent it did so, problematized the difficulties encountered with behaviors arising out of intoxication.¹ They are not so much a matter for religious morality to censure through fear, or a legal apparatus to regulate through codification and punitive sanction, nor are they a disease condition to be subjected to a medico-therapeutic intervention, but an *ethics of right use*.²

Intoxication: Good and Bad

References to "honey-sweet" and "honey-hearted" wine, as we saw in chapter 1, occur frequently in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.³ The expression of a "difficulty" with intoxication in these works, however, is largely embryonic.⁴ Most of these depictions of wine and wine-drinking are examples of the prestige elite individuals sought to gain through giving gifts of wine and hosting "special wine-drinking ceremonies."⁵ There are however exceptions. In the *Iliad* Hector meets his mother Hecuba in the palace of Troy after battle and, seeing how weary he is, she offers to refresh him with "honeyed, mellow wine" telling him that when "a man's exhausted, wine will build his strength" (6.307–311). Hector rejects her suggestion saying "Don't offer me mellow wine, mother, not now—you'd sap my limbs, I'd lose my nerve for war. And I'd be ashamed to pour a glisten-

ing cup [of wine] to Zeus [as a libation before drinking] with unwashed hands. I'm splattered with blood and filth—how could I pray to the lord of storm and lightning?" (6.313–317). The consumption of wine, especially excessive consumption, had by the Greek Dark Ages (ca. 1,100–800 BCE) been connotatively linked to gender.⁶ Drinking wine to the point of intoxication feminized the warrior. Homer values as *agathos* (good) men who are brave and skilled at the art of war, while the goodness of women resides in their skills in household management and motherhood. Men are *kakos* (bad) when they are fearful or cowardly. Intoxication brought about illogical thought and uncontrolled emotions, qualities that were associated with women.⁷

In the *Odyssey* the deleterious effects of wine on thought and speech are somewhat more clearly articulated. As the suitors feast and drink into the night, Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, volunteers to keep the fires burning so that the maids may cheer the queen in her room. The women laugh at him in wonder, the beautiful Melanthe asking "Wine's got your wits?—Or do you always play the fool and babble nonsense?" (18.375–76). Antinous later rebukes the still-disguised Odysseus when the latter, attending the suitors' banquet as a guest, suggests that he be given the chance to string the bow that will win the hand of Queen Penelope, saying that the wine must be overpowering him, as it does all who drink immoderately (21.327–29). Antinous then compares what he sees as the outrageous banquet behavior of Odysseus to that of the Centaur Eurytion. Invited to the wedding of Peirithoos, Eurytion became drunk on wine and brought destructive violence upon himself and his Centaur kin; drink destroyed the Centaur's mind and made him wild with outrageous desire for the bride. Antinous cites this wine-induced Centauromachy as an example of the evil a man brings "on himself by drowning in his cups" (21.330–342).⁸

In the collection of writings gathered around the name of the poet Theognis of Megara (fl. ca. 550–490 BCE), the *Elegies*, wine is an object of both praise and blame, hate and love, good and bad (873–76).⁹ While virtually every aspect of the historical Theognis is uncertain, the author of the work "displays the attitudes of the typical sixth century aristocrat" and all his poems are written in "the elegiac metre, which was normally accompanied by the flute," and the purpose of several of the poems was to use them as "drinking songs" at symposia.¹⁰ In these poems the poet, much like the character of Pausanias in Plato's *Symposium*, continually recommends a middle course, for example:

To drink too much is bad, but if you would
Drink wisely, you'd find wine not bad, but good (509–510)

The reason for the poet's caution: wine makes the mind, the *noos*, evaporate whenever it is drunk beyond moderation (497–498). Drunk in an immoderate fashion wine is a drug that can put even the wise (*sophos*) man to shame (499–502). Overpowered by a head heavy with wine one is no longer in control of one's good judgment, one's *gnome* (503–508). Despite these difficulties Theognis continually extols the pleasures of "drinking well" and "singing to the notes

of the flute" while attending the *symposion* (533–534).¹¹ The alternative to drinking wine, abstinence, is summarily rejected: attempts to persuade the poet "not to drink" will be no more effective than persuasion to "get too drunk" (837–40).

We find on one drinking cup that has survived the phrase *Khaire kai piei eu*, "Be of good cheer and drink well," the Greek adverb *eu* simultaneously encompassing the sense of "have an enjoyable drink," and "drink with reservation."¹² The Greek has a distinctly moral connotation, one aimed at a *regulated* intoxication.¹³ Any notion of the typical symposiast drinking with reservation, however, must be viewed against the apparent popularity of drinking wine neat, indicated by such phrases as "make it Scythian," a reference to one of a number of non-Greek peoples who drank their wine undiluted with water. The word for stronger, *akratesteron*, means "unmixed [wine]" (Athenaeus 10.427c–d). Theopompus of Chios (378–ca. 320 BCE) describes the eating and drinking practices of the Ardiaeans as so *akratesteron* that the Celts were able to trick them with bread filled with a drug that powerfully upset their stomachs (*Fragments of the Greek Historians* 115 F 40).

A *symposion's* opening libation consisted of unmixed wine, and this alone appears to have been capable of producing a deep intoxication (Athenaeus 15.693b). There are many indications that drinking unmixed wine or only minimally mixed wine was a popular practice. In Meander's *Tinker's Holiday* we read: "That's the custom nowadays, as you know: they bawled 'Unmixed wine!' 'The big cup!'" (Athenaeus 11.502e). The practice of mixing water with wine was by no means universally popular. Diphilus says "Make it stronger; everything watery has an evil soul" (Athenaeus 10.423f) and in a fragment of a comedy by Pherecrates, the *Corianno*, a character vociferously complains that with a ratio of two parts water to four of wine, the servant who has prepared the drinks ought be serving them to frogs (Athenaeus 10.430d–e).

There are, however, several traces of a concern, of a growing difficulty, not with the sympotic drinking *per se*, but with disorder arising out of the intoxication occurring within the *symposion*. Anacreon (570–488 BCE) warns against drinking to excess since it leads to a *symposion* filled with uproar and shouting in the manner of the barbarous Scythians (fr. 356b). Xenophanes (570–480 BCE) writes that there is no "outrage in drinking as much as you can hold" but at the same time we should "praise that man of men who when he has drunk [heavily] brings worthy things to light"—he does not speak of "the fictions of earlier men or of violent civil discord; in such things there is nothing useful" (fr. 1).¹⁴ Theognis questions the worth of winning a drinking contest, the reason being a bad man can often best a good one (971–972). Lines 467–496 of Theognis are traditionally attributed to Evenos of Paros, a poet and rhetorician who apparently was a contemporary of Socrates.¹⁵ The poet warns that the man who exceeds the bounds of judicious drinking is "no longer master of his own tongue or his mind" and talks recklessly, saying things that embarrass his sober friends and feeling no shame himself.¹⁶ Critias (ca. 460–403 BCE), Plato's uncle, who like his nephew appears to have been influenced by Theognis on matters pertain-

ing to wine, describes intoxication as a "dark mist" settling upon the eyes, the melting of memory "into oblivion" and the complete loss of reason (Athenaeus 10.432e).¹⁷

"Why do drunkards tremble, especially if they drink unmixed wine?" is one of the many questions concerning intoxication raised in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems*, where one also finds indications that wine consumption could lead to health problems, including double vision (3.30.875b); and if drunk in large enough quantities, the death of the consumer (3.2.871a, 3.5.871b). Side by side with these physical matters one finds concern that wine could lead to troublesome disorder (3.27.875a). Theophrastus, in his *On Dizziness* (11–12), includes "alcoholic drinks . . . and administerings of drugs" as the sorts of things that "weigh upon and separate the rotations in the head."¹⁸ An Athenian physician named Mnesitheus (fl. 350 BCE) was, if we are to believe Athenaeus, concerned enough with intoxication to compose a letter titled *On Hard Drinking*, evidently concluding that while the practice of drinking unmixed wine was on occasion medicinally beneficial, owing to the purgative effect, the general "result of people drinking unmixed wine at social gatherings is considerable injury done to body and mind" (11.483f–484a). He also praises wine mixed with drugs as being medicinally useful. Mixing wine and water in equal parts, Mnesitheus believed, led to madness while drinking unmixed wine led to bodily collapse (Athenaeus 2.36a–b).

Further indications of the health effects resulting from the drinking of unmixed wine may be found in Nicander's *Alexipharmaka* where the effects of aconite (*Aconitum napellus*) are described as producing a "grievous weight" in the head, followed by throbbing in the temples and double vision "like a man at night overcome with unmixed wine" (12–30).¹⁹ Frankincense (*libanotes*) and wine, Dioscorides writes, has medicinal value, but only if drunk by those really in need of a cure; otherwise it brought madness and, in large enough quantities, death (*On Medical Materials* 1.82). The practice must have been common enough among the healthy for Dioscorides to have considered it worthy of inserting a precautionary remark. Among the Western Locrians, or Ozoli, it was said that "if anyone drank unmixed wine without a physician's prescription to effect a cure, the penalty was death under the code instituted by Zaleucus" (Athenaeus 10.429a). Establishing a code was one thing, enforcing it quite another. Clearly, however, wine was understood as being capable of producing permanent noetic degradation, and the ancients were casting about for effective answers to the difficulties it generated.

The New Testament contains the Greek word *paroinos*, a term that means, roughly, "at, or beside, wine" or in other words a person who sits beside the drinking cup, the *kylix*, for an extended period of time.²⁰ Plato uses the word *philoinos* (wine-lover, ever ready for a drink) with negative connotations in the *Republic* (475a). We find in late antiquity words including *philopotes* (a lover of drinking bouts), and *kothonist* (habituated to the cup).²¹ Even so, on close examination one finds that the ancient Greeks almost never considered the matter one of saying yes or no to wine or any other *pharmakon*, as would be the case in

subsequent recastings of the ethics of intoxication. The main concerns of the Archaic and Classical Greek periods center around (a) who might or might not be allowed to drink wine, (b) when they ought to be allowed to drink it, (c) how much should be drunk, (d) in what fashion should drinking occur, (e) to what purpose, and so on.

Intoxication: A Gendered Experience

These concerns applied to drinking by women as much as they did drinking by men.²² The challenge that wine presented the male head of the household (*oikos*) was evidently one of "keeping it away from those members of his household likely to use it against his interests, including women and slaves whom he needed to perform regular tasks in an efficient fashion."²³ The intoxication of women, to judge by Greek comedy at least, was the concern of every adult male with wine at his disposal. Young women in comedy "are consistently portrayed as flighty, weak, manipulative, and unable to control their passions."²⁴ In the "honor/shame orientation" present in ancient Greece even "the slightest hint of impropriety" by a woman might lead to a legal attack by rivals or enemies of that particular *oikos*.²⁵ In his *Oeconomicus* Xenophon's Ischomachus comments with approval that his wife had been taught to control her appetites before her marriage (7.6), and had spent the first fifteen years of her life "under careful supervision so that she might see and hear and speak as little as possible" (7.5).²⁶ Certainly this control would have extended to wine as well as food.²⁷ In the Demosthenic speech *Against Neaera*, as part of their charge that Stephanus "lived with Neaera as his wife contrary to the law since she was a noncitizen" the case brought by his accusers consists primarily of evidence meant to slur her "behavior and reputation; for example, her presence at dinner parties with men was repeatedly put forward as evidence she was a prostitute."²⁸

The figure of the old woman in Greek comedy—or at least old women of humble birth—was regularly one of an avid thirst for unmixed wine, heavy drinking, and lechery.²⁹ These depictions may have been a reflection of "the greater freedom allowed old women in contrast to the strict controls imposed on young unmarried women or married women of child-bearing age."³⁰ But on the other hand well-born women are not depicted thus, leaving the impression that the criterion was not so much age as it was the place a woman occupied in society.³¹ Prostitutes and courtesans—most of whom it is fairly safe to assume would still have been very young or at least young enough to still be capable of bearing children—are "regularly depicted drinking on Attic vases."³² Playwrights cater to their audience's expectations, and in works such as Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (463–66), *Thesmophoriazousae* (347–48, 730–37), and *Wealth* (435–36), Pherecrates' *Corianno*, and Epicrates' *Antilais*, aging courtesans are depicted as heavy drinkers.³³

We might go so far as to say that the consumption of wine “in the Classical and Hellenistic periods became increasingly gendered, or regulated based primarily on the consumer’s sex.”³⁴ The question of women and intoxication in antiquity is certainly significant. My discussion in the remainder of this chapter will however be confined to the thoughts of men concerning the use of wine and the presence of intoxication within the *symposion*, which as we saw in chapter 1 was an explicitly male space. It is this drinking and its accompanying intoxicated disruption of identity, not the drinking of wine by women, which was viewed as having consequences for the politics of the *polis* as a whole, rather than particular *oikoi*.

Intoxication and Politics: The *Komos*

Komos is the root of the verb *komazein*, to stage a feast, and the noun *komastes*, a reveler. At the end of the *symposion* the participants would often leave the privacy of the *andron* and display their intoxication to the wider community.³⁵ In a strictly literal sense *komos* denotes a procession of inebriated revelers, the “movement of a group with dancing, music and wine.”³⁶ The literal meaning glosses over the frequent political overtones present in the *komos*, which often resembled a drunken public riot intended to demonstrate “the power and lawlessness of the drinking group.”³⁷ Theognis exhorts those attending a banquet to stick by men who are good (*agathoi*), for they will teach what is genuine and noble; to associate with the wicked, eating and drinking with them, will in contrast cause a person to “lose what mind [*noos*]” he now has (27–38). When proper order, the *kosmos*, what is above (*kathuperthen*), is supplanted by what is below (*hupenerthe*), by the earthy and riotous drunken revel, the *komos*, “then it is time for us to stop drinking and go home” (841–844, and cf. 475–480).

In one legal document, *Against Konon* (Oration 54), the Athenian statesman and orator Demosthenes (384–322 BCE) points out that Konon, his son, and his friends were thoroughly drunk when they assaulted Ariston, his client.³⁸ They were regular drinking companions, with a tendency to commit violent assault and stage obscene mock-initiation rites when intoxicated.³⁹ This amounted to *hubris* against the citizens of less refined social standing. Demosthenes contends that “there are many people in the city, sons of gentlemen, who in jest like young men have given themselves nicknames such as *lthyphalloi* [the Erections] and *Autolekythoi* [the Wankers], and who often come to blows over *hetairai*.” Demosthenes simultaneously evokes the jury’s pity and outrage, pointing out the sufferings, both physical and emotional, of the victim, while also counseling them “it is in their own interests to check the anti-social careers, the random, drunken thuggery, of Konon and his wealthy co-symposiasts.”⁴⁰ The speech begins from what appears to have been a general acceptance of hubristic behavior at the symposia of young men (*epheboi*) before proceeding to the question of the permissible limits of that behavior, while apparently anticipating the re-

sponse of the defense will be founded upon “the naturalness of young men engaging in such drunken escapades.”⁴¹ Similar legal cases are discussed in Aeschines’ *Against Timarchus* (96), and Lysias’ *Against Alcibiades* (1.25) and *For Mantitheus* (11).

A comedic depiction of this sympotic violence may be found in Aristophanes’ *Wasps* where the old man Philocleon outstrips the younger men in drunkenness and disorderly conduct, behaving outrageously at a *symposion* he and his son attend, beating his slave Xanthais while crying out “*pai, pai*” and then assaulting everyone he meets on his way home (1291–1325). The word *pai* was used to address both slaves and young boys. Neither were viewed as possessing much *time* (honor, standing, etc.) and both it appears were frequently beaten.⁴² Completely drunk, with a stolen flute-girl in tow, Philocleon is pursued by outraged citizens claiming damages for assault.⁴³ Catching up to Philocleon one accuser says “Old man, I summon you on a charge of wanton outrage [*hubris*]” (1418). His son Bdelycleon expresses a level of alarm in keeping with the seriousness of the charge, and offers to pay any amount necessary to keep the matter out of court. The amusing element lies in the reversal of roles; it must have been far more common for fathers to have to answer to charges of *hubris*, or some other offense, made against their drunken sons, or rather than answering the charges kicking the son and his drinking companions out of the house, a practice Plato appears to allude to in the *Republic* (569a).

Earlier in the *Wasps* Philocleon tells his son, as a typical father might, that drinking “was a bad thing” and that “door-breaking, striking and stoning” came from wine, forcing one to pay reparations “while the hangover’s on you” (1253–55). Apparently the perpetrator of such misdeeds would try to avoid a court date with a profuse apology or “some witty story” he had learned at a *symposion*, so as to “turn the whole thing into a laughing matter” and thereby get the offended party to leave without pressing charges (1256–61). This is exactly what the intoxicated Philocleon tries to do in order to mollify the man who has accused him of *hubris*, but in the comedy his responses only manage to fan the flames of the accuser’s outrage to an even greater extent. Abandoning his attempt to make peace with the man Philocleon ends up striking him again, this time in front of the witness he has brought along.

Besides violence minor acts of sacrilege were also a staple of the *komos*, including “urinating on wayside shrines or stealing and eating the gods’ share of sacrificial meat.”⁴⁴ In the legal records one finds for example a drinking group named *Triballoi* being accused of such offenses as “defecating at the shrines of Hecate,” and stealing and eating both “the portions of victims which had been used for purifications and laid out at shrines of Hecate,” as well as the “pig’s testicles from assembly sacrifices.”⁴⁵ This last offense may have been particularly reprehensible. According to a scholium on Aeschines’ *Speech against Timarchus*, every Athenian assembly (*ekklesia*) was preceded by a two-part ritual, with a pig slaughtered “to purify the space and chase away the ‘unclean daemons that often obstruct the thoughts of people’” followed by the burning of fragrant incenses “to attract benevolent spirits, to make sure that, through their

presence (*parousia*), the Athenians would reach good decisions."⁴⁶ These drunken affronts to public *time* "would seem a natural and normal type, characteristic of the upper class, and hence was especially what the laws [against *hubris*] were designed to stop."⁴⁷ In a passage from the sixth century we find the poet Theognis admonishing "Boy, do not indulge in a *komos*, but obey your elder. It is not proper for a young man to indulge in a *komos*" (1351–52). In Classical Athens there evidently were some drinking regulations including fines for insulting language toward, and violent behaviors against, fellow guests but these appear ineffectual given the instances of repeat offenders, and oftentimes the master of the feast would apparently overlook such transgressions.⁴⁸

Intoxication as *Hubris*

Unlike literary works whose setting was the *symposion*, such as those written by Plato and Xenophon, the many pictures of sympotic behavior we find on the vases and cups of the Classical Period generally lack any exemplary purpose, any deep philosophical or moral message. Theirs is merely a reflective function as for example their depiction of drunken behavior.⁴⁹ This is not to imply greater objectivity on the part of vase painters. What the painter chooses to depict mirrors the "social imagination, that is to say the code, the system of values, through which a society sees itself in a particular moment in history."⁵⁰ What is significant about these painted vases is that in stark contrast to the sedate celebrations we find in the symposia depicted by writers such as Plato or Xenophon, one finds symposiasts—typically young men—reeling, staggering, vomiting, staging the *komos*, and even in the middle of rowdy brawls where all the traditional instruments of the *symposion* are violently misused.⁵¹

What exactly was the offense known as *hubris*?⁵² The definition of the term remains disputed.⁵³ Two things, however, are largely agreed on. First, *hubris* was a concept fundamental to the social and political life of both Archaic and Classical Athens.⁵⁴ The moral lesson of Hesiod's *Works and Days* may be found in line 213 when the poet writes "Observe justice, *dike*, do not allow immoderation, *hubris*, to grow."⁵⁵ The poems of Athenian statesman and lawmaker Solon (ca. 640–561 BCE) identify the cause of social unrest in *hubris* and *koros* (insolence). Different social classes were believed to have differing amounts of honor (*geras*) and *time*. *Time* was the value, honor, and respect an individual enjoyed, or believed he ought to enjoy. To be deprived of *time* subjected a man to *atimia*, a partial or complete deprivation of his rights as a citizen.⁵⁶ Honor and its potential loss through dishonor were, in ancient Greece, "closely related to social and political status with their attendant rights and duties" while *hubris* "in Solon's poetry, as well as in the later legal texts, designates behavior intended to have an effect on the social fabric, by depriving those of whatever class of their due *time*."⁵⁷ In the Classical Period laws against *hubris* were seen as a cornerstone of the democratic legal system. It is significant, then, that the intoxicated profana-

tions of the Eleusinian Mysteries in 415 BCE, with their far-reaching legal and political consequences, took place at aristocratic symposia, and were described by Thucydides in his *History* as having occurred in a spirit of *hubris* (6.28.1).⁵⁸

Second, the recreational intoxication of the *symposion* lies at the heart of the problem of *hubris*.⁵⁹ Solon implies that there is not only disorder within the private confines of the *symposion*—the same chaos spills out into the public realm. *Hubris*, typified by the drunken violence that expressed itself in the *komos*, the riotous public procession that typically brought the aristocratic *symposion* to conclusion, was "part of a pattern of behavior intended to assert the supremacy of an aristocracy over its rivals," a "deliberate dishonoring of those who are not members of the group in order to reduce their *time* in the community."⁶⁰ The typical persons who were accused of being *hubristai* (those who commit *hubris*), Aristotle tells us, were young and rich, thinking "that they thereby show their superiority" (*Rhetoric* 1378b). In the *Constitution of Naxos* Aristotle mentions a *komos* by drunken youths as precipitating a civil war (Athenaeus 8.248).

Solon complains that the wealthy

are willing to destroy the *polis* with their mindlessness, and the mind [*noos*] of the leaders of the *demos* is without *dike*. They will soon suffer many pains as a result of their great *hubris*. For they do not know how to withstand *koros*, nor how to put in order [*kosmein*] their present *euphrosune* [the delights of the *symposion*] in the quietude of the banquet [*dais*]" (fragment 4.9–10).⁶¹

Despite these concerns Solon's strongest legislative action appears to have been the introduction of several regulations requiring wine to be sold in a prediluted condition, the intention being to control access to unmixed wine and thereby promote moderation (Athenaeus 10.431d–e). Given that we find the mixing bowl present on so many occasions it is safe to conclude "Solon's plan came to naught."⁶²

Solon also reputedly made drunkenness by a magistrate an act punishable by death (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 1.57). This is not surprising since magistrates often acted as overseers at public functions, many of which might include a great deal of wine drinking. According to Athenaeus public banquets were attended by three state-appointed wine inspectors, derogatorily referred to as "Eyes" (*Ophthalmoi*), whose purpose was to supply lamps and wicks and see that no individual guest drank an unequal share of the wine (10.425a–b). These magistrates appear to have been widely reviled, as can be gleaned from a fragment of *The Thousand Islandtowns* by Eupolis (ca. 446–411 BCE), who says "Men whom you wouldn't have chosen to be your wine inspectors in the old days, we now have for leaders of the army" (Athenaeus 10.425a–b). Even the *Ophthalmoi* cannot really be viewed as guardians of temperance: part of their duty was to tell those who refused to drink "to depart in accordance with that celebrated law 'drink or begone.'"⁶³ Solon's unsuccessful attempt to restrict the sale of unmixed wine and the prosecutions concerning drunken *hubris* may be viewed as indirect measures, operating at the fringes of the drinking party, rather

than a redefinition of any of the four essential features of the *symposion* outlined in chapter 1. It would remain for Plato to begin to fashion such an advocacy.

External Stasis

Stasis is usually understood as a word meaning "civil strife" or "political revolution." By Plato's lifetime the original meaning of *stasis* as "standing" and thus "a way or place of standing," a posture or position, had come to mean political strife, mostly likely after being used to refer to a position in politics taken by a political faction.⁶⁴ While this is the most common interpretation and at least partially captures the meaning of *stasis*, it appears to fall short of how the ancient Greeks themselves understood the term.⁶⁵ The Greek understanding, it should be emphasized, was deeply rooted in the medical view of *stasis* understood as a disease, a *nosos*,⁶⁶ in the sense of a "halt" or "arrest" of normal functioning.⁶⁷ Through *stasis* the unity of the community, viewed in the sense of political friendship or *homonoia*—literally "together-mindedness"—was fractured.⁶⁸ The citizen turned away "from institutions perceived to be dysfunctional or unresponsive" and sought justice through the expression of the "discordant passions of anger and hatred."⁶⁹ Regardless of who was addressing *stasis*—the poets, the historians, the medical literature, or philosophy—in each case it is agreed that (a) *stasis* is a disease, a plague, and worst of all evil, (b) *stasis* has no redeeming value, as for example might be found in concepts such as "political faction" or "sedition" or "revolution"⁷⁰ and (c) *stasis* constitutes a public threat or menace to the well-being of the *polis*.

Even before appearing in the works of Greek medicine and philosophy the subject of *stasis* was a frequent theme of Greek poetry, even where the word itself does not appear. Examples include Aristophanes' *Knights*, Sophocles' *Ajax*, *Oedipus Colonnus*, and *Antigone*, and Euripides' *Orestes*.⁷¹ Other works are more explicit. Theognis in the *Elegies* prays to Apollo (773–82) to protect the city from "the mindless lack of unity" i.e. the *stasis* that weakens the Greek people. In Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (976–83) the chorus says "I pray that *stasis*, greedy for evil, may never clamor in this city, and may the dust not drink the black blood of its people, and through passion cause ruinous murder for vengeance to the destruction of the state."⁷² For the pre-Socratic philosopher Democritus (ca. 460–ca. 370 BCE) the starting point of *stasis* was envy.⁷³

The historian Thucydides, like his predecessors, identified *stasis* as a defective form of politics "that had accompanying psychological consequences."⁷⁴ The general traits of *stasis* included (a) *stasis* as a deviant process, the product of the noetic decline of individuals; (b) *stasis* being preceded by the inversion of the values that previously constituted acceptable public behavior and speech (*logos*); (c) the dissolution of the traditional familial and community bonds of friendship (*philia*) and piety (*eusebia*), and the limitations on action these imposed; (d) the breakdown of law and the abandonment of restraint in both what

constituted acceptable means in politics and the exchange of distinct, limited ends, in favor of far more open-ended goals with unspecified spoils of victory, and finally (e) the legitimating and unleashing of uncontrollable passion, particularly wrath (*ogre*) that, like a wildfire, was capable of consuming everything in its path.⁷⁵

In contrast to previous reflections on *stasis*, which lacked systematic presentation, even in the case of Thucydides, Plato created a theoretical underpinning for these traits.⁷⁶ In addition to the *polis*, *stasis* may arise in many complex entities characterized by multiple and interdependent parts, whether it is the human body, friendships, a ship's crew, or an army camp (*Republic*, 351c). He reworked the idea of *stasis* as disease to argue that what *stasis* consisted of was the ability to disrupt the right working, or *ergon*, of such entities. In the *Republic* (351d) Socrates puts to Thrasymachus the proposition that factions (*staseis*), like hatreds and quarrels, "are the outcome of injustice," while justice "brings oneness of mind (*homonoia*) and love (*philia*)." Injustice causes individuals to "hate and be at strife (*stasiazein*) with one another" and prevents them effectively acting as a whole and in common (351d–e, and cf. *Laws* 694b).⁷⁷ Plato's view of *stasis* and disease sees them as effects and outcomes, rather than causes. The cause of *stasis* is an unnatural order within the organism. The statesman must look to prevent the changes that disturb the order, the right working, on which health depends.

The older view such as that held by Solon (quoted above) saw justice, *dike*, as passive quietude, as *hesuchia*, with its opposite being disturbance, *tarache*. Injustice was the result of *hubris*, meddling, *polupragmosune*. The *Republic* too indicates that to "do one's own business and to not be a busy body is justice" (433a). Plato places rational self-possession, *sophrosyne*, in opposition to *hubris*, and it would appear within the *Republic*, at the very least, justice and moderation function in ways that make them virtually indistinct. Although it is translated in a variety of ways the literal meaning of the noun *sophrosyne* is "to keep the mind safe."⁷⁸ Plato saw the essence of justice not in *hesuchia* but instead in *homonoia*, and this common-minded community was produced by expert knowledge, *episteme*. In Plato *homonoia* becomes defined in terms of *epimeleia heautou*, a "taking care of the self."⁷⁹ The dialogues construct a new *paideia*, a new system of educative enculturation that rejects the mythopoetic predecessors of philosophy and their reliance on ecstatic psychological states within the performer, audience, or both.

Internal Stasis

The social condition of *stasis* as the ancient Greeks understood it contained the idea of a noetic unraveling of the minds of individuals. Intertwined with the danger of *stasis* is another problem, what Plato's *Republic* calls *stasiizonta*, or "stasis within" (352a, 444b, and 554d). Whereas justice is characterized by

bonds of *homonoia*, literally "together-mindedness," *stasiizonta* is characterized by the absence of those bonds, *dichonoia* or "apart-mindedness." The unbinding and destruction of the harmonious unity of an organism was known as *lusis*.⁸⁰ Plato as well as others incorporated *lusis* into the political realm, where it came to mean the end product of injustice.⁸¹ One aspect of this poisonous danger of noetic unraveling, unbinding, unbonding, etc., of *dichonoia*, is the danger of ecstasy.⁸²

The term *ekstasis* is most literally translated as a flight of the soul from the body, deriving from *ek* (out of, away from, beyond) and *stasis* (here understood as a position, where one stood).⁸³ An earlier word used to connote a similar condition appears to have been *existanai*, "to derange," from *ex* (out) and *histanai* (to cause to stand motionless). Most importantly *ekstasis*, for the ancient world in general and ancient Greece in particular, did not consist of possessing a knowledge that allowed for "controlling or mastering the Other," but was rather "a cosmological knowledge, a means of knowing the Other in order to know oneself anew."⁸⁴ It is easy to confuse or conflate descriptions of *ekstasis* with *enthousiasmos* (rapturous enthusiasm) and similar words.⁸⁵ The two terms *ekstasis* and *enthousiasmos*, for example, refer to kindred states, often indistinguishable, but "*enthousiasmos* was from the first mainly a theological conception, while *ekstasis*, on the other hand, comes from the domain of medical terminology."⁸⁶

Plato, who was certainly no stranger to medical terminology, exhibits a very keen awareness of ecstatic psychological states even if he is not consistent with the words he chooses to describe them, lacking a single precise term to describe *stasiizonta* in such a manner that it is clearly distinguished from *stasis*.⁸⁷ The Greek word for ecstasy, *ekstasis*, does not appear in any of his dialogues.⁸⁸ In the *Ion* Plato speaks of both *entheoi* (inspired, as by the gods) and *enthousiazontes* (gripped by enthusiasm), closely related terms that suggest "the notion of 'a god within.'"⁸⁹ In the *Philebus* he describes the intense pleasures as being overwhelming, frenzied, and "unbalanced to the point of insanity" (45d-e, 47a-b). The general classical term for madness or insanity, *mania*, occurs thirty times in Plato, while *paranoia* is used to denote mental derangement several times, most notably at *Laws* 929d-e in the discussion of how a son ought to proceed if he believes his father has become mentally unstable.⁹⁰ "All the Platonic *manias* are characterized by *ekstasis*, an alienation of the mind as it is thrown out of its normal state, whether by organic madness, by 'daemonic' possession, by love, by awestruck wonder (the 'ecstasy of admiration') or by the higher forms of rapture."⁹¹

While it is true the word *ekstasis* does not appear in Plato, it appears in the writings of both Aristotle and Theophrastus. In a curious passage from his *Parts of Animals* Aristotle describes bulls as mentally deranged, *ekstatikoi*, because they are among those animals having "thick and abundant fibers in their blood," making them "of a more earthly temperament, and liable to bursts of passion."⁹² There is a remote possibility this may be a faded remembrance of a plant either associated with bulls, such as the coprophilic *Stropharia cubensis* mushroom, or

that bulls were known to eat, much as Siberian reindeer are known to become intoxicated eating the *Amanita muscaria* mushroom.⁹³ Aristotle even indicates in his *History of Animals* that, just as human beings do, animals seek out herbal remedies (611b-612b).⁹⁴ *Ekstasis* appears in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* (30.1). Heracles betrayed his melancholy "by his *ekstasis* [frenzy] towards his children." While it is generally agreed that Aristotle did not write the *Problems* he was known to have authored a similar book on similar topics (possibly even with the same title), elements of which may have been incorporated into the *Problems*, a work that was probably written by a member of the Peripatetic School. Book 30, which refers to *ekstasis*, is vouched for as Aristotelian by both Plutarch and Cicero.⁹⁵

Theophrastus' *History of Plants* describes the misuse of mind-altering drugs by a sculptor named Pandeios: "Of those [roots] that are sweet there are some that cause mental derangement [*ekstatikai*], as the plant like the 'golden thistle' [*Skolymus hispanicus*] which grows near Tegea: of this Pandeios the sculptor ate, and went mad [*exeste*] while he was working in the temple" (9.13.4).⁹⁶ The immediate context of Theophrastus' discussion of plants added to wine in his *History of Plants* are drugs that affect the mind (*pharmaka pros de ten psychen*), including those substances that cause mental derangement (*ekstatikas*).⁹⁷ Given that Aristotle was Plato's student and later his colleague, and Theophrastus was a student and later a colleague of Aristotle, it does not seem impossible that a medical term like *ekstasis* could have appeared during a conversation or lecture at the Academy attended by Plato during his final years.⁹⁸ That a person chooses not to use a word when expressing himself in writing does not prove beyond doubt that the term was not a part of their spoken or known vocabulary.

Be that as it may, the problem of the psychological condition of ecstasy is at the core of Plato's thought even if the word *ekstasis* does not appear in his writings. Drinking, drugs, and intoxication were a primary manifestation of that condition. Plato's teaching of the soul taking flight and leaving the body after death in the *Phaedo* "became closely linked with similar doctrines in the *Phaedrus* about good and bad madness."⁹⁹ Aristotle disagreed with Plato on many issues, but not "where melancholy madness was concerned" and when he "explained these frenzies and inspired madness" he did so "by analogy with men drunk with wine."¹⁰⁰ Aristotle points out in *Problems* 30 that "persons sometimes take on 'melancholic moods' when they drink large quantities of wine, or become 'merciful' or 'savage' or 'silent' or 'affectionate,' even to kiss on the mouth 'someone whom no one would ever kiss if he were sober'" (953a-b).¹⁰¹ The analogy was a "classical commonplace; it became a Stoic one, then a Christian one. Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Gregory of Nyssa, Erasmus or Montaigne pass just as easily . . . from questions of drink to questions of ecstasy and melancholy madness."¹⁰²

Intoxication as Internal Tyranny

When Plato's guardian class is forbidden the experience of intoxication (*methe*) in the *Republic* (398e), the prohibition is not something unique to that particular dialogue, nor is it a trivial or marginal part of the *Republic's* discussion of the just regime. Plato continually discusses the unnecessary pleasures in a manner alluding to the feasting, drinking, and sex that so often occurred within the Greek *symposion*. The oligarchic city, divided into competing poor and rich, is mirrored in a man like his own city, never "free from *stasis* within himself . . . in some sense twofold" rather than a single, simple, unity. It is only out of fear, not reasoned self-persuasion arising out of the right sort of moral education, that the oligarchic man forcibly holds down his "bad desires," his "worse desires," these desires "that are akin to the drone," with some more decent part of himself (554d). The typical citizen of the democratic city in contrast lives capriciously, each day "gratifying the desire that occurs to him, at one time drinking and listening to the flute [at symposia], at another downing water and reducing; now practicing gymnastic, and again idling and neglecting everything; and sometimes spending his time as though he were occupied with philosophy" (561c-d).¹⁰³ The offspring of democratic leaders are consumed by desire for "feasts, revels, parties, prostitutes," and live lives "overflowing with incense, myrrh, crowns, wines and all the pleasures" democratic cities are known to be rife with. Clearly this is all happening in a *symptotic* world.¹⁰⁴ Plato repeatedly uses the image of intoxication (*methe*) to describe the strongest desires unleashed by the part of the soul fixated on satisfying the appetites of the body, the *epithymetikon*.¹⁰⁵ He uses *methe* in this manner not only in the *Republic* (398e and 403e) but also in the *Critias* (121a), *Phaedo* (79c), *Phaedrus* (238b and 256b-c) and *Laws* (639b, 839a).

The youth of the democratic city, exposed to the many and subtle pleasures found, for example, at the *symposion*, become "too soft to resist pleasures and pains, and too idle" and so enamored of change and spending they fail to act when the poor form alliances with powers outside the *polis* in order to overthrow it (555d-556b). The tyrant is the epitome of desire unleashed, willing to do anything to maintain his unchecked power and voracious—distinctly *symptotic*—lifestyle. Should the populace, realizing its mistake, attempt to remove him from power "like a father driving a son along with his troublesome drinking fellows out of the house," they will discover just "what sort of beast they have begotten, welcomed and made great" (*Republic* 569a-b). This passage must draw its inspiration from behavior that was common enough, at least in aristocratic households, to have been recognizable by Plato's readers.

The psychological portrait of the tyrant in Plato's *Republic* is that of a creature of wild internal *stasis*, an unrestrained *symposiarch*, such as when Socrates asks "doesn't a drunken man have something of a tyrannic turn of mind," and isn't it a fact that "a man becomes tyrannic in the precise sense when, either by nature or by his practices or both, he has become drunken, erotic, and melan-

cholic?" (573c, and cf. 568e and *Timaeus* 86e-87b). One is reminded here of the heavily intoxicated, unmistakably Dionysian Alcibiades intruding upon Agathon's celebration in Plato's *Symposium*, demanding in the manner of an over-indulging and unrestrained *komastes* to be made master of the banquet and given the power to dictate the course of the drinking.¹⁰⁶

Stasis, Ekstasis, Being, and Time

The life of the tyrant is most like being "bound in . . . a prison" which, far from being the most free and happy is the most "perfectly wretched" (579b, 579d). Like the city he rules over, the tyrant's soul is comprised of all the better elements enslaved to "the most depraved and maddest"; his spirit is "necessarily . . . poverty ridden and insatiable"; emotionally he is always "full of fear," surrounded by nothing but enemies, constantly "complaining, sighing, lamenting and suffering" (577d-578a, 579b). Such is the "harvest . . . of a man who has a bad regime in himself" (579c). To expect a man "not having control over himself" to adequately rule over others is like expecting "a body which is sick and without control over itself" to be able to spend its time publicly "contesting and fighting other bodies" (579c-d).

The Athenian aristocracy had suffered a loss of power in the half century before the death of Socrates in 399 BCE. It is "characteristic of ruling elites (and particularly those whose grip on power has been loosened) to regard the political realm not as an area for the adjudication of legitimate conflicts, but as a state or condition of health-disease, order-anarchy."¹⁰⁷ Plato's language depicts the rise of *stasis* as a sickness or disease, a disorderly lack of internal self-control, with the soul of the tyrant as the imprisonment or enslavement of the soul's better elements, particularly reason and wisdom. As a member of the Athenian social elite, one whose reflection was so strongly centered on the notion of *sophrosyne*, *stasis* and what would soon become known as *ekstasis*—including the ecstasy of intoxication—were two sides of the same problem; both are forms of anarchy, *ad captandum vulgus*.¹⁰⁸ In the *Republic*, for example, he says that on the one hand the philosopher, by keeping company with the "divine and orderly . . . becomes orderly and divine, to the extent that it is possible for a human being" (500c-d), while the blame for the many being "harshly disposed towards philosophy" rests with outsiders who have, in the fashion of the *komos*, "burst in like drunken revelers, abusing one another and indulging a taste for quarreling" or in other words "doing what is least seemly in philosophy" (500b).

The nature of the difficulty with intoxication runs something like this, although no single author in the Classical Greek world including Plato appears to state it quite so systematically: recreational intoxication occurring within the *symposion* can be problematic because it gives rise to the *komos*; the *komos*, wherein the mind or *noos* is placed in a condition of discordant mental derangement or *ekstasis*, in turn frequently leads to acts of *hubris*; acts of *hubris*

are in turn predominantly committed by the aristocracy and aimed at members of lower social classes and/or individuals with lesser *time*, generating enmity and class friction, and ultimately disrupting the healthy autonomic functioning of the *polis*, a condition known as *stasis*. It is *stasis* that, like a disease, destroys *dike* and it was within this context that writers such as Plato appear to have problematized intoxication.

With Plato political corruption becomes noetic corruption. His remedy lies in what has been termed "'therapeutic' philosophy."¹⁰⁹ For Plato *therapeia* for the *psyche* was analogous to what the *Republic* (518e) calls bodily "habits and exercises" and what ancient Greek medicine characterized as regimen, *diaita*.¹¹⁰ The problems of the *komos*, *hubris*, and *stasis* are not solely, or even primarily, cured through the fusion of philosophy with political power, a strategy the *Republic* appears to advocate only to ultimately reject most notably at the end of Book IX (592a–b, and cf. *Laws* 709e–712b). The *Republic's* true aim is to lay "a pattern . . . down for the man who wants to found a city within himself" (592b), something that is not all that different from the program of the *Alcibiades*.¹¹¹ The well-founded *internal* regime is the best bulwark against the *nosos* of what Plato calls *stasiizonta*. A key aspect of this "pattern," as we will discover below, is the formulation of a new and substantially different set of ethics governing the use of drugs, in two senses. First, with regard to the recreational intoxication of the *symposion* in particular, and second, with regard to all the meanings of the word for drug, *pharmakon*, more generally.

Notes

1. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1154a. What makes a man bad is not experiencing bodily pleasures but rather pursuing them to excess. "Everyone," he writes, "enjoys tasty food and wine and sex in some degree, but not everyone to the right degree."

2. Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure—The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), 52. See Harold Tarrant, "Wine in Ancient Greece—Some Platonist Ponderings," in *Wine and Philosophy: A Symposium on Thinking and Drinking*, ed. Fritz Allhoff (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 18–21, for a parallel, though somewhat different, view about Greek drinking ethics. Tarrant's interpretation of the details of these ethics is, however, needlessly speculative.

3. Tim Unwin, *Wine and the Vine* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 86. A few of the many additional references to wine in the *Iliad* include 1.559–62, 11.754–58, and 23.249–53, in the *Odyssey* include 2.376–79, 4.698–701, 9.385–89 (discussed further in chapter 4, below), and 13.56–62. All line number references from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in this chapter are from the translations by Robert Fagles, and refer to his translation, not the line numbers of the original Greek text. Robert Fagles, trans., *Homer—The Iliad* (New York: Penguin Press, 1990) and Robert Fagles, trans., *Homer—The Odyssey* (New York: Penguin, 1996).

4. Arthur P. McKinlay, "New Light on the Question of Homeric Temperance," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 14, no. 1 (1953): 78–93 makes this point with

regards to epic poetry and alcohol. I do the same for epic poetry and intoxicating drugs more generally in chapter 4, below.

5. Patrick E. McGovern, *Ancient Wine: The Search for the Origins of Viniculture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 258. As McGovern observes, in Greece "this phenomenon is best exemplified by the classical Greek *symposion*, but its roots can be traced back to Middle Minoan times and Mycenaean palace life."

6. Lisa Marie Elliot, *Gendering the Production and Consumption of Wine and Olive Oil in Ancient Greece* (M.A. thesis, Miami University, 2006), 25.

7. Hesiod views women much more dimly than Homer, criticizing them as idle and scheming in addition to other defects.

8. Quoted in Martin Heidegger, *Sojourns—The Journey to Greece* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 68 n. 12.

9. Unless otherwise indicated, quotes of Theognis in this chapter are from Dorthea Wender, trans. *Hesiod: Theogny, Works and Days* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973).

10. See Wender, *Hesiod*, 89–95. Each of these is significant for understanding Plato and the *symposion*: Plato's views are also aristocratic; he however expresses serious difficulties with music—that of the flute in particular—and he also expresses difficulty with the drinking songs sung at the *symposion*. See chapter 3, below.

11. The translation of this quote and the one in the sentence to follow are taken from Thomas Figueira and Gregory Nagy, *Theognis of Megara—Poetry and the Polis* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985).

12. François Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet—Images of Wine and Ritual* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 63–4.

13. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 65. In modern advertising wine users are urged to "enjoy responsibly" in a manner that recalls ancient ethics, but under the weight of addiction theory, enjoyment and intoxication have become far more dichotomous, i.e. "right" enjoyment of a legal recreational drug such as wine is defined in terms of a *lack* of intoxication, and responsibility is often defined in terms of refusing recreational drugs altogether. John J. Rumbarger, *Profits, Power, and Prohibition: American Alcohol Reform and the Industrializing of America, 1800–1930* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989) is instructive, in the case of alcohol. Late nineteenth century prohibition activists utilized a discourse that viewed any form of intoxication as a threat, couching that threat in terms that were founded on traditional Judeo-Christian concepts of sin while simultaneously blending that discourse with ethnic prejudices and newly emerging concepts of industrial efficiency.

14. Translation by Andrew M. Miller, *Greek Lyric: An Anthology in Translation* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1996), 107–8.

15. Evenos is said to be an acquaintance of Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo* 61c.

16. This quote from Theognis is from the translation by Miller, *Greek Lyric*, 88.

17. Critias was known to have composed tragedies, elegies, and prose works, but his name survives largely because he was a leading member of the Thirty Tyrants, a pro-Spartan oligarchy that was installed after Athens was defeated by Sparta in the Peloponnesian War. His lost work *Constitution of Sparta* praised moderation in drinking and argued against "intoxicating the body with unmeasured drinking." See Matthew Dillon and Lynda Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates, Second Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 189.

18. William W. Fortenbaugh, Robert W. Sharples, and Michael G. Sollenberger, eds., *Theophrastus of Eresus. On Sweat, On Dizziness and On Fatigue* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2003), 195. See also 199, 230–31.

19. Nicander continues the passage on aconite by saying that just as "the Silens, the nurses of the horned Dionysus, crushed the wild grapes, and having for the first time fortified their spirits with the foaming drink, were confused in their sight and on reeling feet rushed madly about the hill of Nysa, even so is the sight of these men [who drink aconite] darkened beneath the weight of an evil doom" (30–35).

20. 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7. The word also could mean "quarrelsome" or "violent." As discussed in chapter 1, above, *paroinein* was one of the Greek terms for violently irrational or harmful drunkenness.

21. *Kothonist* is often mistranslated as "addicted to the cup" as if the ancients understood such behavior in pejorative terms approximating the modern meaning of the term addiction. This is but a single example of the presentism that continues to plague studies of drug use in the ancient world.

22. Elliot, *Gendering the Production and Consumption of Wine and Olive Oil in Ancient Greece*, 29 for example writes that women's consumption of wine differed from that of men "in the location in which it was consumed. Why women were restricted from consuming wine in certain environments, such as a symposium, is probably less a question about concern for health and more a statement about social roles."

23. Harold Tarrant, "Wine in Ancient Greece—Some Platonist Ponderings," in *Wine and Philosophy: A Symposium on Thinking and Drinking*, ed. Fritz Allhoff (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 17.

24. Nancy Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 27.

25. Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, 147.

26. Sarah B. Pomeroy, trans., *Xenophon—Oeconomicus—A Social and Historical Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Women's self-control or restraint (one of the several meanings of *sophrosyne*) was largely defined by their silence: "for instance at *Ajax* 586 'Ask me no questions/Possess yourself in patience [*sophrosyne*]', *Herakleidae* 476–77 and *Andromache* 465." See Barbara E. Goff, *The Noose of Words—Readings of Desire, Violence and Language in Euripides' Hippolytos* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 39.

27. Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, 8–9 places these passages in the context of "evidence that growing girls were fed less than boys" but the context is clearly broader and is meant to encompass all the appetites and this control is cited as being equally desirable for men as well as women.

28. Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, 148–49. The women whose presence at the *symposion* was considered unproblematic are discussed in chapter 1, above.

29. Jeffrey Henderson, "Older Women in Attic Old Comedy," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 117 (1987): 119–20. Dickie adds loquacity to the other characteristics. See Matthew W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 185.

30. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 89. Additional details regarding the rights of the older woman may be found in Demand, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, 27–29.

31. This extends to the view of women and intoxication in ancient Rome. "Had the Romans [such as Cicero and Polybius] who condemn drinking in women had in mind women of every class and condition, they would not have justified their condemnation by appealing to the power that wine has to incite the female sex to adultery. What concerns them are the morals of respectable Roman women." Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 186–87.

32. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 90.

33. On this theme see Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World*, 89–91.

34. Elliot, *Gendering the Production and Consumption of Wine and Olive Oil in Ancient Greece*, 31.

35. Oswyn Murray, "Forms of Sociality," in *The Greeks*, ed. Jean-Pierre Vernant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995): 232.

36. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 29–31.

37. Oswyn Murray, "The Affair of the Mysteries: Democracy and Drinking Group," in *Sympotica—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 150.

38. Murray, "The Affair of the Mysteries," 157 describes the case as "our most revealing source for the less reputable side of sympotic behavior."

39. The plaintiff in the case against Konon also suggests, in a language that Murray describes as "curiously religious," that "these groups practice unspeakable forms of sexual initiation." See Murray, "The Affair of the Mysteries," 157. I return to the matter of mock-initiation rites held during the *symposion* in chapter 5, below.

40. Oswyn Murray, "The Solonian Law on *Hubris*," in *Nomos—Essays in Athenian Law, Politics, and Society*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett and Stephen Todd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 131–32.

41. Murray, "The Solonian Law on *Hubris*," 139–40.

42. Alan H. Sommerstein, trans., *The Comedies of Aristophanes. Volume 4—Wasps* (Warminster, Wilts, UK: Aris and Philips, 1983), 235. On the issue of slaves and *hubris* see Nick Fisher, "Hybris, Status, and Slavery," in *The Greek World*, ed. Anton Powell (London: Routledge, 1995).

43. A. M. Bowie, *Aristophanes—Myth, Ritual, and Comedy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 96 writes that this loss of identity is "surely the antithesis of the adult Philocleon, serving in courts and phalanx, with his violence checked (nominally, at least) by convention and law, and enjoying the pleasures of family life due to an old man."

44. Murray, "Forms of Sociality," 240.

45. Murray, "The Affair of the Mysteries," 157.

46. Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi—Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds. A Collection of Ancient Texts*, 2nd Edition (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006): 482.

47. Nick Fisher, "The Law of *Hubris* in Athens," *Nomos—Essays in Athenian Law, Politics, and Society*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett and Stephen Todd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 128–29.

48. McKinlay, "New Light on the Question of Homeric Temperance," 70.

49. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 28.

50. François Lissarrague, "Around the Krater: An Aspect of Banquet Imagery," in *Sympotica—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 196.

51. Jean-Louis Durand, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, and François Lissarrague, "Wine: Human and Divine," in *A City of Images—Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, ed. Claude Bérard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 125–26; Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*; 28–31, 96; Ezio Pellizer, "Outline of a Morphology of Sympotic Entertainment," in *Sympotica—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 181–82. See also François Lissarrague, *The Greek Vases—The Athenians and their Images* (New York: Riverside

Book Company, 2001) and David Walsh, *Distorted Ideals in Greek Vase Painting: The World of Mythological Burlesque* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

52. Also spelled *hybris* by some writers.

53. Fisher, "Hybris, Status, and Slavery," 45–46 and cf. M. Gagarin, "The Athenian Law against Hybris," in *Arktouros: Hellenic Studies Presented to Bernard M. W. Knox*, ed. Glen W. Bowersock (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1979).

54. Murray, "The Solonian Law of *Hubris*," 141, and Fisher, "Hybris, Status, and Slavery," 46.

55. Quoted in Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Thought Among the Greeks* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 3.

56. See the glossary in Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Stephen Todd, eds. *Nomos: Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 218–19 and 239.

57. Murray, "The Solonian Law of *Hubris*," 142.

58. See chapter 5, below.

59. Nick Fisher, "Drink, *Hybris*, and the Promotion of Harmony in Sparta," in *Classical Sparta—Techniques Behind Her Success*, ed. Anton Powell (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 29 writes that "*hybris* was a common danger of the *symposion* which got out of control, and was a major element in Solon's poetic analysis of the problems in Athens, perhaps producing from him a law to restrain it." He does not appear to be aware of the legislation Athenaeus attributes to Solon. Instead he conjectures that Solon's legislation consisted of "double penalties for drunken assaults," referring to a lawmaker named Pittacus, ruler of Mytilene, in the early sixth century. Although he does not cite a primary source, the Pittacus he mentions is almost certainly the one discussed by Aristotle. Aristotle, however, merely says that Pittacus implemented a law "that if drunken men commit an offense they should pay a larger fine than sober men," so as to set an example for others (*Politics* 1274b). Saunders interprets this difficult passage correctly. See Trevor J. Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code—Tradition, Controversy and Reform in Greek Penology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 111.

60. Murray, "The Solonian Law of *Hubris*," 144, and cf. Fisher, "Hybris, Status, and Slavery," 46.

61. Hundreds of years later Athenaeus voices concern with his contemporaries in Alexandria, writing of individuals who "shout, bawl, and oburgate the wine-pourer, the waiter and the chef; the slaves are in tears, being buffeted by knuckles right and left. To say nothing of the guests, who dine in complete embarrassment" (10.420e). The drinking party allowed to go on for days on end gives rise to derision among the guests, then abuse and counter-abuse, followed by "blows . . . and drunken brawling" (10.421a–b).

62. Arthur P. McKinlay, "Attic Temperance," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 11, no. 1 (1951): 84. Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 83 writes "Greco-Roman societies . . . were relatively free from taboos and restrictive regulations regarding food."

63. William L. Brown, *An Address on Inebriety amongst the Ancients and How they "Cured" It* (London: Aberdeen University Press, 1898): 15. Francoise Frontisi-Ducroux, "In the Mirror of the Mask," in *A City of Images—Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, ed. Claude Bérard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 154, 156, while correct in noting the importance the Greeks placed on a measure of order at the *symposion*, insinuates the Ophthalmoi contributed to this order by monitoring the drinking and the drinkers. This would appear to be a misunderstanding of their basic function.

64. Andrew Lintott, *Violence, Civil Strife and Revolution in the Classical City—750–330 B.C.* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 34. The ar-

gument being that *stasis* arose from *histasthai*, usually translated as "to stand or be standing."

65. Kostas Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease—An Inquiry into Stasis* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), xiv, 18–19. Kalimtzis indicates that at their worst, contemporary definitions approach tautology, "in which *stasis*, a state of conflict, is said to be caused by a standing of conflicting parties."

66. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 8 writes that the *nosos-stasis* pairing appears and reappears in the works of "Aeschylus, Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Lysias, and others. The concept of *stasis* as a *nosos* will serve Aristotle as an unstated first principle, which he will not refer to in any special way because it was so commonplace in his culture."

67. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 18. Oddly, this "connotation of bringing or coming to standstill, or stopping" is virtually absent from the literature on *stasis*, even though it is "one of the meanings of [*istemi*] and its passive intransitive form, [*istamai*], from which the noun *stasis* is derived."

68. See the discussion by Kalimtzis in *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 196–97 n. 16, and cf. 197 n. 21.

69. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, xv. On the emphasis given to controlling anger and rage in antiquity see William V. Harris, *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) and Susanna Braund and Glenn W. Most, *Ancient Anger: Perspectives from Homer to Galen* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

70. An unbroken tradition from Plato to Hobbes viewed *stasis* negatively; modernity on the other hand reconstructed the concept into a positive value. On this reconstruction see Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

71. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 2.

72. Quoted in Herbert W. Smyth, trans., *Aeschylus—Agamemnon, Libation-Bearers, Eumenides, Fragments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960). The grammatical relation of the words in this passage is difficult to convey. The imagery being conjured here runs along the lines that *stasis* is like a ravenous carnivore, who greedily seizes upon vengeance against the *polis*, producing calamity where the reprisal for blood shed is yet more blood.

73. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 191 n. 3.

74. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 9.

75. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 8–13.

76. This discussion of Plato and *stasis* relies heavily on Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 15–31 and Costas M. Constantinou, *States of Political Discourse: Words, Regimes, Seditions* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1–14.

77. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 23–24.

78. Froma I. Zeitlin, "Figuring Fidelity in Homer's *Odyssey*," in *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's Odyssey*, ed. Beth Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 151 n. 57.

79. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 26. See also Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 31–79 who discusses this at length.

80. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 196 n. 13.

81. Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease*, 23.

82. See my Introduction, above.

83. E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 70–71 writes that "*ekstasis* and its cognates have in fact a

very wide range of application. In classical Greek they are used to describe any departure from the normal condition, any abrupt change of mind or mood, and out of this usage various more specialized senses developed."

84. Constantinou, *States of Political Discourse*, 10.

85. Rohde, for example, writes that *ekstasis* "is a 'brief madness,' just as madness is a prolonged *ekstasis*. But the *ekstasis*, the temporary *alienatio mentis* of the Dionysiac cult was not thought of as a vain purposeless wandering in a region of pure delusion, but as a *heiromania*, a sacred madness in which the soul, leaving the body, winged its way to union with the god. It is now with and in the god, in the condition of *enthousiasmos*; those who are possessed . . . *entheoi* live and have their being in the god." Erwin Rohde, *Psyche—The Cult of Souls and the Belief in Immortality among the Greeks* (New York and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1925), 259.

86. Samuel Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity* (New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1975), 101, 104.

87. Plato's extensive use of medical terminology is discussed in chapter 7, below.

88. Gilbert Rouget, *Music and Trance—A Theory of the Relations between Music and Possession* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 7. See also Leonard Brandwood, *Word Index to Plato* (Leeds, UK: W. S. Maney and Son, 1976).

89. Alan Bloom, "Ion," in *The Roots of Political Philosophy—Ten Forgotten Socratic Dialogues*, ed. Thomas L. Pangle (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 361.

90. Gerald C. Moss, "Mental Disorders in Antiquity," in *Diseases in Antiquity—A Survey of the Diseases, Injuries and Surgery of Early Populations*, ed. Don Brothwell and A. T. Sandison (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1967), 714 n. 30.

91. Theodore W. Brown, "Descartes, Dualism, and Psychosomatic Medicine," in *The Anatomy of Madness: Essays in the History of Psychiatry. Volume 1: People and Ideas*, ed. W. F. Bynum, Roy Porter, and Michael Shepard (New York: Routledge, 1985), 29–30.

92. Anthony J. Preus, "Drugs and Psychic States in Theophrastus' *Historia plantarum* 9.8–20," in *Theophrastean Studies*, ed. William W. Fortenbaugh and Robert W. Sharples (New Brunswick and Oxford: Transaction Books, 1988), 97 n. 29.

93. The bull figures prominently in the worship of Dionysus, something that would be another reason to associate them with intoxicating mushrooms and ecstasy. See chapter 4, below.

94. Preus "Drugs and Psychic States in Theophrastus' *Historia plantarum* 9.8–20," 83. Aristotle's *On Divination in Sleep* (464a) also mentions *ekstatikoi*.

95. W. S. Hett, *Aristotle—Problems (Vols. 1 and 2)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), vii.

96. Quoted in Randall B. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best: Medical Argument and Magical Rhetoric in Plato's Laws* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 30.

97. Preus "Drugs and Psychic States in Theophrastus' *Historia plantarum* 9.8–20," 87.

98. Angus, *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, 104 states that *ekstasis* "was not applied till long after Plato's day to the rapturous state of a soul delivered from earthly conditions" but this does not appear tenable to me, given its appearance and usage in both Aristotle and Theophrastus.

99. M. A. Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy: The Wisdom of the Essays* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 30. On the *Phaedrus* and ecstasy see chapter 6, below.

100. Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy*, 31.

101. Jeffrey Walker, "Pathos and *Katharsis* in 'Aristotelian' Rhetoric: Some Implications," in *Rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric*, ed. Alan G. Gross and Arthur E. Walzer (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 78.

102. Screech, *Montaigne and Melancholy*, 31–2. Worth consulting is Montaigne's own essay "On Drunkenness" in M. A. Screech, trans., *Michel de Montaigne. The Essays: A Selection* (New York: Penguin, 1993), 132–42. The topic of this short essay is as much ecstasy as it is wine intoxication.

103. The "life of the many" is likened to that of cattle "always looking down and with their heads bent to earth," feeding and "fattening themselves, and copulating," when they are not killing each other for more of the same (586a–b, and cf. 430e–431e, 442c–d, 493a–b, 496c–d). It is a position maintained right up until the very end in the *Laws*, where "excessive freedom and liberty" for "the multitude" is drawn out in a similar manner. As Joseph M. Bryant, "Enlightenment Psychology and Political Reaction in Plato's Social Philosophy: An Ideological Contradiction?" *History of Political Thought* 11, no. 3 (1990): 391 points out, "surely all this bears the impress of a reactionary class ideology rather than any philosophical insight."

104. Manuela Tecusan, "*Logos Symptomikos*: Patterns of the Irrational and Philosophical Drinking—Plato Outside the *Symposium*," in *Symptomika—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 239. At the same time Plato's text appears to repeat passages from Euripides' *Bacchae* such as: "Dionysus, son of Zeus, delights in banquets"; "Dionysus will not compel women to control their lusts"; "the air is thick with Syrian myrrh"; "so [let] us wear the ivy-wreath and join the dancing"; "wine [is] his gift that charms all grief away . . . [and] soothes the sore regret. . . . Men have to but take their fill [of it] and the sufferings of an unhappy race are banished . . . this is our only cure for the weariness of life."

105. On the *epithymetikon* see chapter 7, below.

106. See chapter 3, below, for further discussion of Alcibiades.

107. Bryant, "Enlightenment Psychology and Political Reaction in Plato's Social Philosophy: An Ideological Contradiction?" 391.

108. Bryant, "Enlightenment Psychology and Political Reaction in Plato's Social Philosophy: An Ideological Contradiction?" 393, n. 49 argues, and I agree, "the decisive elements in Plato's 'exclusionary politics' are not internally derived from his core philosophical principles—least of all from his 'enlightenment psychology'—but constitute ideological residue reflective of the sociopolitical struggles of classical Polis society," i.e. between *demos* and aristocratic *kaloikagathoi*. Yet while he is well aware that this ideological residue might "bear the impress of various social and existential factors" he does not consider how ecstatic religion and drinking within the *symposion*, with their emphasis on the disruption of the participant's identity, might have impinged on Plato's assessment of desire, pleasure, and human character in the democratic regime.

109. J. Peter Euben, *The Tragedy of Political Theory: The Road Not Taken* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 240. See also, for example, Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best*.

110. The importance of *diata* in ancient Greek medicine is discussed in chapter 7, below.

111. Foucault, for example, mentions that "the approach taken by the *Alcibiades* is in some way the same [as the *Republic*] but turned around; that is to say, in trying to find out what it is to govern well and the nature of good harmony and just government in the city, the interlocutors of the *Alcibiades* inquire about the nature of the soul and look for the *analogon* and model of the city in the individual soul." See Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Self*, 54.

Chapter Three

Plato's Reformulation of the *Symposion*

At the very beginning of the *Republic* the elderly Cephalus testifies to the tranquility and freedom he now enjoys very late in life, contrasting it to most of his associates who continue to lament and reminiscence about the sex, "drinking bouts and feasts" they all enjoyed in their youth (329a).¹ To be free of the desire for these pleasures, he assures Socrates, is "to be rid of very many mad masters" (329d).² The lamentations of these unnamed companions of Cephalus are almost certainly a reflection of traditional sympotic ethics such as those found in the writings of the poet Theognis who advocates giving "our hearts to banqueting" and, while it is still possible, to "find pleasure in delightful things" because "glorious youth goes by as fast as thought" (983–988). The poet recommends drinking to forget both poverty and enemies, mourning "lovely Youth, which goes from men"—each of us should "weep that painful Age is coming fast" (1129–1132). The analogue between *symposion* and *polis* is evident in the writing of Theognis, who makes the poet the paradigm model of moderate behavior.³ Plato fashions a model of moderate behavior as well, only with the paradigmatic philosopher, i.e. Socrates.⁴ Plato's ethics of intoxication are however remarkably different than that of predecessors such as Theognis. Plato's Socrates regularly opposes or acts in ways contrary to ordinary sympotic ethics.⁵

The *Symposion* in Plato's Dialogues

Many of Plato's dialogues contain references or allusions to sympotic practice or are themselves pervaded by a sympotic atmosphere.⁶ In the *Apology* Socrates claims that in contrast to others he did not care for such things as money-making, the management of a household, generalships, public oratory, "and the other offices and conspiracies and the factions that come to be in the city," the

latter being another reference to the political cliques (*hetaireiai*) formed through sympotic associations (36b-c).⁷ In the *Crito* Socrates likens the kind of life he would lead were he to escape prison and avoid his death sentence to the life of a slave or a vile banqueter in the Thessalian revelries (53e).⁸ To flee from the laws of Athens is to move closer to the intoxicated mindlessness of a sympotic lifestyle, a choice Socrates clearly rejects. In the *Phaedo*, as the moment to drink the poison (*pharmakon*) draws near, Socrates rejects the same Crito's offer to give himself up one last time to the pleasures of food, drink, and sex as other condemned men evidently did prior to the execution of their sentence. Earlier in the same dialogue, as he is describing the sort of wicked soul that is compelled to wander graveyards as a shadowy phantom, Socrates names the cultivators of gluttony, lechery, and drunkenness as the sorts of souls likely to be reincarnated as an ass in their next life (81e, and cf. Aristophanes' *Wasps* 1310). When he is at last handed the *pharmakon* that will shortly put an end to his life, the Socrates of the *Phaedo* asks (117b) whether he may pour some of the liquid out as a libation, presumably to the gods, as would be done at a typical *symposion* to commence the drinking (e.g. see Plato *Symposium* 176a and Xenophon *Symposium* 2.1).⁹ The request is refused.

The *Theatetus* also finds the philosopher contrasted to the man of worldly affairs in a manner that is distinctly opposed to the traditional aristocratic-sympotic lifestyle. The philosopher, Socrates explains, remains relatively ignorant of such matters as the way to the marketplace (*agora*), where the law-courts (*dikasterion*), council chamber (*bouleuterion*), and other places of public assembly are, nor does he become involved in the "scrambling of political cliques (*hetaireiai*) for office; social functions, dinners, parties with flute girls—such things never enter his head even in a dream" (173d). While other men indulge in such diversions as "drinking parties and the other things that go along with these," the *Phaedrus* informs us that the really knowledgeable man finds his amusement in a more sedate pastime consisting of writing down his thoughts (276d). Unwilling to fall in with the men of politics who like savage "wild beasts" are bent on perpetrating injustice, or join "the madness of the many," the rare human being who keeps company with philosophy, we are told in the *Republic*, "keeps quiet and minds his own business—as a man in a storm, when dust and rain are blown about by the wind" (496c-d). He retreats into an isolated private life, content if he can manage to live his own life free and pure of "injustice and unholy deeds" (496d-e).

The *Protagoras* exhibits "a cautious wavering between a friendly *synousia* [word feast] and a more sophisticated *symposion*."¹⁰ For example, as the conversation between Socrates and Protagoras is about to get underway it is suggested that the benches and couches be rearranged in a circle; some of the discussants appear to sit while others recline in a sympotic manner (317d). Socrates expresses displeasure with both the form (long speeches) and the content (Simonides' lyric poetry) of the conversation and threatens to leave the group (335b). In doing this he would be attacking two central elements of the classical *symposion*. Simonides (ca. 556–468 BCE) was reputed to have placed first in fifty-six

dithyrambic competitions.¹¹ Of the poetry sung at symposia, much of which was frequently political in character, that of Alkaios, Stesichorus, Anakeon and Simonides were the most popular.¹²

Socrates complains that poetry, either its recitation or the critical discussion of it, belongs to "the wine parties of second rate and commonplace people" (347c). This appears to be another indication that, by the Classical Period at least, drinking symposia occurred outside the circle of the "sons of the old families of Athens."¹³ At any rate, poetry accompanied by music was a defining feature of the *symposion*. The *aulos* "was the instrument . . . of elegiac poetry in particular," while stringed instruments such as the *barbiton* were the instruments of lyric poetry.¹⁴ Men of "worth and culture," Socrates argues in the *Protagoras*, can find enjoyment without such "frivolous nonsense" as girls "piping or dancing or harping" (347d). He then describes a different sympotic program based on reciprocal speeches, consisting of "sober discussion" that tests the mettle of each participant, something he says remains possible "even if the drinking is really heavy" (347d-e).¹⁵

When neither Socrates nor Protagoras is willing to compromise by altering his manner of speaking, Hippias responds by advocating, much like a speaker in a democratic assembly, the appointment of an "arbitrator, referee or president" to moderate the discussion, something that in itself is also distinctly sympotic, and prevent either man from becoming offensive to the other (337a–338b). Hippias' proposal wins "general consent and a round of applause" from the group and would appear to reinforce the collaborative atmosphere at this moment. Socrates, however, refuses to abide by the group's wishes, escaping their decision with some clever rhetoric (it would be offensive to Protagoras to try to appoint anyone his overseer; he is surely the wisest), and comes up with an alternative more to his own liking: since Protagoras' answers are too long and he will not shorten them, he may ask the questions and Socrates will demonstrate how a respondent *should* answer (338c–e).

In the *Philebus* Socrates calls upon Dionysus and Hephaestus to guide the discussion of the good life as one of "mixed" pleasures (61b). Dionysus is "invoked in his function as wine-blender, Hephaestus as the maker of metal alloys (or perhaps as wine-server to the gods)."¹⁶ The joining of the act of mixing with prayer again recalls sympotic practice, as does the later reference to Zeus the Deliverer (66d). Reflecting a growing pessimism over the capacity of most people to live their lives guided by reason alone, the *Philebus* adopts a position that it is appropriate to human nature to create a mixture of *hedone* and *phronesis*, the work of two wine-pourers, who blend the sweet honey of desire with the harsh water of wisdom (61b–c).

The mix, however, isn't quite that simple. Pure reason is mixed in, as are less pure types (62c–d). Ultimately *all* types of reason are allowed into the Good Life (62c–d). As for the pleasures, all *necessary* pleasures are allowed into the mixture (62e–63a). The unnecessary pleasures, the sympotic or drone-like pleasures mentioned in the *Republic*, are not part of the Good Life.¹⁷ See table 1 at the end of this chapter. These pleasures endlessly create "trouble" for a person, ow-

ing to their “frenzied irrationality,” something that disturbs the soul; they prevent the formation of intellect and reason for the most part, and if such capacities do come into being they “spoil a man utterly by making him lazy and hence forgetful” (63c–d). It would be illogical, Socrates says, to create a mixture of pleasure and intellect that includes those pleasures that “accompany self-indulgence and other forms of vice” (63e–64a).

Where the effort at mixture fails, leading to a lack of moderation and proportion, the mix fails, ruining both the components and itself, leaving only an “unmixed confusion” (64d–e). The point of Plato’s discussion is clear enough: “one drop of wine in a glass of water is disproportionate; the mixture ‘does away with its components’ in that the wine can no longer be said to exist, ‘and with itself’ in that it cannot be said to be a real mixture.”¹⁸ The passage could be read as saying the exact opposite: if too little water, in other words reason as intellect, is added to the honey/wine, i.e. the pleasures, what remains would still be unmixed wine and, were the context a *symposion*, this invites the disordered confusion of the *komos*. Plato regularly uses the word for intoxication, *methe*, to describe the influential pull that desires can exert upon the soul (*Phaedo* 79c, *Republic* 403e, *Phaedrus* 238b and 256b, and *Laws* 639b and 839a). Desires compel most individuals like a mad, frenzied, savage master.¹⁹ They are an *epithymetic compulsion* that must be subjected to philosophy’s reordering intervention.²⁰

Intoxication in Plato’s *Symposium*

The *Symposium* is another vivid, and arguably the most sustained, indicator of Plato’s hostile attitudes towards a number of sympotic motifs, including what appear to be prevailing Greek drinking ethics.²¹ The dialogue, believed to have been written between 385–370 BCE, critiques the specific ethics structuring the drinking party and the pedagogical function that structure served in the formation of ethical discourse generally. Plato, in other words, is no friend of that defining feature of the *symposion*, the *logos sympotikos*, discussed above in chapter 1. On the one hand the dialogue is an important commentary on the perception of others that Socrates was a man of *hubris*.²² On the other the dialogue is also at the same time a commentary on one of the most guilty profaners of the Eleusinian Mysteries, Alcibiades, and the man who accused Socrates of the same, Aristophanes. It is a dialogue that seeks to revise the reader’s understanding of the relationship between “Socrates, Alcibiades, philosophy, *eros* and Eleusis . . . against the background of the profanations of the summer of 415.”²³ Put another way, the *Symposium* should be understood as yet another *apology* of Socrates.²⁴

The story of the *Symposium* is narrated by a follower of Socrates named Apollodorus, who is recalling what he was told by yet another follower named Aristodemus. It was a good thing, the poet Theognis wrote, to “be invited to a

banquet and sit by a good [*esthlos*] man who knows all sorts of wisdom [*sophie*] (563–64). This is precisely what will happen within the dialogue, with Aristodemus being fortunate enough to sit next to Socrates. When he first meets Socrates at the beginning of the *Symposium*, Aristodemus notices that not only is Socrates clean and his hair brushed, he is wearing shoes (174a). Socrates apparently owns a pair of shoes, even if he rarely wears them (*Phaedrus* 229a), and he has decent standards of personal hygiene, at least in contrast to the unwashed and shoeless Socrates of Aristophanes’ *Clouds* and *Birds*. It is not clear how unusual Socrates’ lack of bathing might have been.²⁵ At the end of the dialogue Socrates goes to the Lyceum, a public bath and gymnasium, for a wash (223d).

Socrates tells Aristodemus that he avoided the first night of Agathon’s celebration altogether, offering the seemingly weak excuse that he “couldn’t face the crowd” (174a). Although Aristodemus has no formal invitation to Agathon’s celebration, Socrates lags behind, “absorbed in his own thoughts,” letting his associate suffer the mild embarrassment of arriving uninvited (174d–e). The uninvited guest, the buffoon or *akletos*, was a standard device of sympotic literature.²⁶ Socrates doesn’t appear until the banquet meal is half completed (175c). He finishes eating with the others, and we are very briefly told that offerings are poured, hymns sung, and “all the usual things” that go on at symposia (176a). By “usual things” Plato means the end of the *deipnon* and the commencement of the *symposion*, with its recreational drinking and other entertainment such as the *skolion* or drinking song (cf. *Gorgias* 451e).²⁷ The offerings of wine marked an important moment in the ritual order of a typical sympotic celebration. Plato however skips over this religious aspect of the *symposion* with scarcely a word.²⁸

At this point, Aristodemus recalls, “our thoughts turned to drinking.” Another guest, Pausanias, makes a somewhat curious suggestion. He asks how the drinking can be made “as painless as possible” because he is still feeling “rather frail” after the previous day’s intoxication. Aristophanes too begs off “another evening of hard drinking,” since he was among those who “sank without trace” during the first night’s festivities (176b). This is a clear indication the drinking had been quite heavy. Eryximachus, a physician, speaking for himself, Aristodemus, and Phaedrus, says it would be fortunate indeed for them, being inexperienced drinkers, “if you hard drinkers are prepared to take an evening off” (176c). Since Socrates is neutral on the subject, at least according to Eryximachus, everyone agrees to drink whatever they are comfortable with, instead of treating the situation as a *compulsory* command to become drunk (176e).

Within the ethical-aesthetic structure of the typical fifth- or fourth-century *symposion*, there must have frequently been a group expectation of drinking well past the point of light inebriation, albeit in an often ritualized manner more or less casually guided by a leader referred to, as we saw above in chapter 1, as a *symposiarch*, *archon*, etc. Xenophon, writing of conditions in Sparta in his *Constitution of Sparta* (5.5), lauds the Spartan common meal, the *sysitia*, as something that gave little opportunity for insolence, drunken uproar, immodest acts, and unseemly talk, the inference being that in other cities, like Athens, such be-

havior was the norm at private banquets. Lycurgus, Xenophon writes, did away with compulsory drinking, a practice he believed was ruinous of both body and mind (5.4). In contrast the imperative *pithi* (drink!) appears to have been common at Athenian symposia (e.g. Athenaeus 10.445f–446c). In the Athenian *symposion* one found such customs as *examystizein*, or drinking an entire cup “in one breath,” something that was done even with unmixed wine (11.783d); using music to speed the tempo of the drinking (11.783e); requiring those who failed to answer a riddle correctly to drink (10.448e); proposing toasts and declarations of love and then passing the cup from left to right for everyone to drink (10.432d–e). Acts of overindulgence are further confirmed by vases and drinking cups that, for example, depict acts of vomiting, sometimes from the bottom of the drinking vessels themselves.²⁹

Shortly after the guests within Plato’s *Symposium* have agreed to drink as they like, not as others might wish, Eryximachus then suggests (176e)—from all appearances successfully—that they send the female *auletris* away, again surely not the usual sort of behavior one would expect at an Athenian *symposion* circa 416 BCE. While atypical, his suggestion is, however, in keeping with nearly identical hostility expressed by Socrates in several other Platonic dialogues. The philosopher, it is said in the *Theaetetus*, wouldn’t even dream of going to a party with flute girls (173d). In the *Protagoras* Socrates complains that only uneducated men “put up the price of female musicians,” and find entertainment in their “piping or dancing or harping” (374c–d). The *aulos* is called an unnecessary “extraneous voice” that a mannered *symposion* can do without (374d). In the *Republic* certain Ionian and Lydian harmonic modes that would have often been found at symposia are rejected as effeminate (398e), the *aulos* being the example *par excellence* of the “drunkenness, softness, and idleness,” such music fosters (398e, 399d, and cf. 573d).³⁰

Plato’s hostility to heavy drinking and the music of the *aulos* in the *symposion* is not a product of reticence or merely a personal eccentricity: because of their role in launching the *komos* there were important ethical and political ramifications.³¹ The *aulos* “arouses dance and inspires trance” and can “also be the instrument of delirium, madness and the cries of possession.”³² The *aulos* possessed the capacity of creating “an opening to alterity,” a “sudden eruption of otherness.”³³ On one drinking cup (*kylix*) we can plainly observe a young man holding both a lyre and a *krater*; he is walking forward, head thrown back in a recognizably ecstatic fashion, with the open-mouthed deportment of a singer. Issuing from his lips is a string of letters which read “I go making the *komos* to the sound of the flute.”³⁴ Ecstatic *methe* and the enjoyment of the *aulos* within the *symposion* were, for the philosopher at any rate, largely one and the same.³⁵

In a manner that recalls the behavior of Socrates in the *Protagoras* (347d, 348a), Eryximachus in the *Symposium* suggests that a better sort of *symposion* ought to “stick to conversation” (176e). He then introduces the topic that the dialogue is conventionally said to revolve around, a series of speeches in praise of the god Eros. The eulogistic speech competition was frequently enjoyed at symposia. Yet Plato’s Socrates denigrates the activity as “a question of hyper-

bole and rhetoric, regardless of truth and falsehood,” and instead of giving his own speech to compete with the others begs their indulgence, asking (rhetorically it would seem) “Do you want to hear *the truth* about Eros? And may I use whatever language and forms of speech come naturally?” (198d–199b, emphasis mine). Plato is extremely careful to indicate that while Socrates may have been an occasional, if reluctant, participant at aristocratic symposia he was not a willing party either overtly or, as in this case, covertly, to most of its traditional practices. All notions of a “word feast” aside, philosophy and the discourse of the *symposion*, the *logos sympotikos*, border on the mutually exclusive.³⁶

Eryximachus’ speech has traditionally been denigrated by scholars as being of little more than “historical interest” and the subject of “unkind parody” on Plato’s part.³⁷ The physician is, however, a key figure in many of Plato’s works, including the *Symposium*.³⁸ The traditional assessment of Eryximachus as a peripheral figure might be accepted if *eros* was the only subject to be found in Plato’s *Symposium* but, tradition notwithstanding, it is *eros* that ought to be viewed as the peripheral matter. In all truth the *Symposium*’s speeches, both their praise for a deity long inert, and the relations between an older “lover” (*erastes*) and younger, passive “beloved” (*eromeonus* or *baidika*), are the matters with little or nothing more than historical interest. Plato cannot tell us what he intended when he wrote the *Symposium*, but a complex panoply of concerns are visibly arranged beneath or behind the putative theme of *eros*, subjects an intelligent fourth-century reader would have been capable of recognizing.

The physician of the *Symposium* is not a caricature but a historically accurate depiction of a man of medicine in the Classical Period of ancient Greece, one that is both realistic and whose depiction is not without sympathy.³⁹ Socrates singles out the speech of Eryximachus for special praise (194a). Alcibiades speaks well of both Eryximachus and his father (Acumenus, also a well-known physician) and avers to his authority (214b–c). In both the *Protagoras* (315c) and *Phaedrus* (268a–b) Eryximachus is spoken of in a respectful manner and while speaking to Phaedrus in the latter dialogue Socrates refers to Acumenus as “our common friend” (227a). Yet while the importance of Eryximachus has been recognized, the role of the physician in the *Symposium* is confined to his place within “the framework of the dialogue” or, to put it differently, his literary function.⁴⁰ Eryximachus introduces the topic; along with Phaedrus, his lover, he is the person to whom the speeches would have been formally addressed; he and Phaedrus keep the conversation moving when it begins to stray; he manages to convince the party-crashing Alcibiades to give a speech like everyone else (214a–c) rather than simply lead the symposiasts into the depths of intoxication they had previously agreed upon to avoid. Toward the very end of the dialogue (223b) when yet another “crowd of people on their way home from a party” intrudes upon the conversation, bringing the noise, disorder, and finally the sort of heavy drinking that was normally found within the *symposion*, Eryximachus, Phaedrus and some of the original discussants choose to go home.

There is much more to the importance of Eryximachus than the way he functions in supporting the dialogue’s architecture. The physician speaks with “a

degree of systematic exposition and intellectual rigor . . . that is incompatible with sheer parody."⁴¹ The doctrines of harmony in Eryximachus' speech "are a condensed but accurate expression of current medical theory," and appear to derive from the Hippocratic work *On Regimen*.⁴² This background can be discerned through such positions as (a) the "doctrine of opposites in harmony," (b) "the interdependence of human and cosmic systems," and (c) "the analysis of crafts as productive of harmonious structure."⁴³ As Diotima will do later on in the dialogue, more explicitly and often utilizing the language of the Eleusinian Mysteries (207a, 208e–209a, 210d), Eryximachus essentially proposes to Socrates a portrait of Socrates.⁴⁴ While Diotima's portrait is metaphysical and concerned with philosophical themes, Eryximachus' is ethical and concerned with practical matters. As befits the setting of the dialogue, a *symposion*, the matter most at hand in the physician's discourse is *methe* (intoxication).

What the traditional physician proposes to all those present at Agathon's *symposion*, including Socrates, is an ethics of drinking that parallels Socrates' own behavior in the dialogue. Observing that the after-effects of the previous night's drinking still hang over both the host and several of his guests, Eryximachus puts forth the suggestion he be allowed to tell "the truth about getting drunk," taking pains to stress his desire not to cause excessive offense and carefully indicating his opinions are based on his personal experience as a practitioner of his healing art (176c–d, emphasis mine). He stresses that he neither drinks to a state of *methe* himself, nor would he advise anyone else to, all the more so if their minds are still clouded by previous excesses. The physician's final verdict is unequivocal: there is "no doubt that *getting drunk is bad for you*" (176d, emphasis mine). When he leaves Agathon's *symposion* there is no reason to believe he has through his own behavior violated this judgment. One is reminded of Euboulus' stricture that after the wine of the third *krater* is consumed "those who are deemed judicious go home."

The Aristophanes of the *Symposium* is said to have only two interests in life: Dionysus and Aphrodite (177e). We find in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* that "wine makes men inclined to love [*aphrodisiastikous*], and Dionysus and Aphrodite are rightly associated with each other [because of this]" (30.1). The poet was rumored to have composed while drunk (Atheneaus 10.429a) and was purported to have said "Wine, Aphrodite's milk, is a pleasant drink" (10.444d).⁴⁵ His *Knights* has many sympotic themes, pays tribute to the "inventive powers" of wine and indicates that when men drink wine they "grow rich, do business, win lawsuits, prosper, and help their friends" (85–9).⁴⁶ His *Acharnians* "treats the peaceful *polis* as though it were a banquet."⁴⁷ The play's main character, Dikaiopolis or "Just City," celebrates a peace treaty with a variety of foods (975). Peace, a central theme of the play, is presented as a *deipnon*, a feast (987–1002). Late in the play (1198–1234) Dikaiopolis brags he has poured out a wineskin full of unmixed wine and drained it in one breath. His deed is proclaimed noble and he is given a huge wineskin as a prize. Supported by prostitutes he is led offstage, while behind him the chorus sing "in praise of wisdom mixed with wine" (1232–34).

When his turn to speak in Plato's *Symposium* occurs, Aristophanes finds he cannot, because he has the hiccups "from eating too much, or for some other reason" (185c).⁴⁸ Whatever the reason for the comic poet's hiccups, their severity is evident, as only the "sneezing cure" Eryximachus prescribes manages to put an end to them. Aristophanes seems to suggest (189a) that what he calls the "well-ordered" part of his body, his *logistikon* we might say, demanded this treatment as a result of, perhaps, his previous excess. Eryximachus finds him unable to concentrate satisfactorily, and threatens to censor him if he continues to fool around (189b–c). Aristophanes' speech on the origins of the two sexes, it has been suggested, has the air of ignorant folklore.⁴⁹ At one point, when Zeus is contemplating whether or not to weaken humanity by halving the original sexes, he tells the other gods that if mankind remains unable to behave while walking upright on two legs he will "cut them in half again and they can go hopping along on one leg" (190d). This may be an oblique reference to Aristophanes' depiction of Socrates as a practitioner of black magic in the company of the one-legged Sciapodes in the *Birds*.⁵⁰ Shortly thereafter the host Agathon does indeed jest "*Pharmattein boulei me, o Socrates*," indicating that the philosopher is using "a little black magic" (with perhaps connotations of drugging) to unnerve him before he gives his speech (194a).⁵¹

As Socrates concludes his own lecture on Eros, and before Aristophanes can voice some difference or disagreement he wishes to express, there is a violent banging on the door, "followed by the notes of the flute and the sound of festive brawling in the street" (212c). In the courtyard are several people, including a thoroughly intoxicated Alcibiades, apparently on their way home from another *symposion* in what may be seen as a typical *komos*. Along with Aristophanes, who may have eaten too much, Alcibiades embodies the ordinary ethics of the fourth century, in this case its drinking ethics. With his head adorned with ribbons, ivy and violets (212e), he is Dionysus and democratic Athens personified.⁵² Alcibiades is described as roaring like a bull (*boontos*, 212d), appropriate enough seeing as Dionysus could be known as Brimios, the "thunderer" or "roarer." The dramatic setting of the *Symposium*, we might recall, was the celebration of Agathon's victory at the Lenaia, a festival of Dionysus Lenaias, for the Maenads of Dionysus.⁵³

Alcibiades is the unmistakable antithesis to Eryximachus' verbal prescriptions about drinking and Socrates' actual behavior. His intoxication is repeatedly emphasized: "very drunk" (212d); "it's grossly unfair to ask me, drunk, to compete with you sober" (214c); "when you're as drunk as I am" (215a); "I'm drunk" (217e). Moreover, he is supported by the very sort of flute girl Eryximachus has previously convinced the group to send away (212d). Seeing that everyone is still "pretty sober," a condition he finds unacceptable, he demands—again in keeping with sympotic custom—that everyone *must* drink, and tries to appoint himself overseer (*archon*) of the entire proceedings (213e, and cf. *Laws* 671b where this exact behavior is explicitly criticized). While Plato uses *archon* at 213e, the overall context reminds one of the term *komarchos*, the "master of

the revels," and Alcibiades has the unmistakable temperament of a *komastes*, a reveler, one who enjoys the drunken disorder of the *komos*.⁵⁴

Alcibiades utters the Greek equivalent of the Latin *in vino veritas*, saying "truth comes from wine (as the saying goes), whether or not I take children into account" (217e).⁵⁵ He embodies the unquenchable democratic thirst for freedom, and is one of the *Republic's* "bad winebearers" whose leadership gets a city "more drunk than it should" (562c–d). Alcibiades was said to have introduced Athens to the disreputable practice of drinking in the daytime.⁵⁶ Daylight drinking was considered emblematic of the hubristic excess found in Athens during the city's glory. Horace (ca. 18 BCE), in his *Art of Poetry*, wrote that the Athenians began to "appease their genius on festal days by drinking without restraint and in the daytime" (209–10). A fragment of the lyric poet Alcaeus (fl. seventh–sixth century BCE) preserved in Atheneus (10.430c–d) expresses an impatience that may have been common:

Let us drink. Why wait for the lighting of the lamps?
Night is but the briefest moment away.
Boy, take down the large painted cups from the shelf;
For the son of Semele and Zeus [i.e. Dionysus] gave us wine to forget our
cares.
Pour it out, mixing one and two, full to the brim;
and let us begin to empty them—urgently.

Socrates is, quite clearly, the diametric opposite of Alcibiades, both ethically and behaviorally. Alcibiades refers to him as "a model of restraint" who merely appears to be like other men, when in truth he has an "astonishing contempt" for all the pleasures that normally concern men in human society (216d–e). Alcibiades, in a manner that is obvious even to himself, pursues these pleasures with reckless enthusiasm (216b). Socrates, in contrast, goes without food longer than anyone (220a) and his ability to rebuff even the most brazen sexual advances, as divulged by a shameless and still desiring Alcibiades, is absolute. Before making this confession he hints that he is revealing something reserved for those already initiated into "this wild passion for philosophy," begs their forgiveness, and warns "the servants, and anyone else who's easily shocked, or doesn't know what I'm talking about [i.e. anyone who has not been initiated], they'll just have to put something over their ears" (218b). What he is about to tell, like the secrets of the Eleusinian Mysteries he will sacrilegiously reveal a few months later, cannot be divulged outside the circle of initiates.⁵⁷ The story is unspeakable, *arrheta*.⁵⁸

After Alcibiades drains a large container—one said to hold eight *kotylai*, roughly two quarts—of unmixed wine, it is refilled and passed straight to Socrates, who also empties it. Alcibiades attests that "it doesn't matter how much you give him to drink, he'll drink it and be none the worse for wear" (214a). Socrates, he goes on to say, never chooses to drink, but when compelled to by the insistence of others, such as in the present circumstances, he can drink any man

under the table. Most astounding of all, Socrates, although he can drink as much as or more than anyone, *never* becomes intoxicated. Alcibiades makes it clear: "no man has ever seen Socrates drunk" (220a).⁵⁹ This is a portrait of an ascetic, and an impossible one at that, in the sense that *his drinking behavior is such that no human being would be capable of emulating it*. "One can see the interruption of the flute girl [by Eryximachus] and of Alcibiades, drunk, ready for pleasure, hungry to tell his story of thwarted desire for Socrates' body, as Plato's own argument for sobriety and hatred of the body, except as a temporary vehicle of the soul."⁶⁰

Intoxication in Plato's *Laws*

The subject of intoxication occupies the better part of the first two books of Plato's final dialogue, the *Laws*. Despite the importance suggested by its sheer length, the argument has been largely "scorned and neglected" by scholars, who for many years viewed the dialogue as a whole as one of senescence if not senility,⁶¹ with the little analysis that has emerged being characterized by extensive "puzzlement and inaccuracy."⁶² Little wonder. The conversation with the Cretan Kleinias and the Spartan Megillus begins acrimoniously, with the Stranger from Athens, after gaining permission to criticize Dorian laws, suggesting "the law should inure its subjects to pleasure as well as pain," otherwise the result will be "lack of restraint with regard to pleasure" such as found in Cretan sexual practices (636c).⁶³ After some initial resistance he secures their permission to "speak at greater length about the whole subject of intoxication" (637d).

The Athenian Stranger sweeps aside the "sober necessity" of "ancestral law" advocated at the start of the dialogue by Kleinias and Megillus with "talk of getting drunk and bedding boys," certainly not the sort of subject matter one would expect from "three august old men traveling to Crete's holiest sanctuary."⁶⁴ The Stranger has more serious objectives in mind, however, involving "the opposition between virtuous and improper drinking. Correctly used . . . wine should inspire courage rather than merely fueling pleasure."⁶⁵ This playful, even perverse "discussion of illicit pleasures" serves to distract Kleinias and Megillus long enough to demonstrate the shortsightedness of their "failure to allow their subjects the enjoyment, among many other pleasures, of the communal drinking of wine."⁶⁶

Plato's *Laws*—so a certain line of argument goes—indicates a willingness to allow drinking parties, so long as they are *rightly regulated*. In sum "the Stranger takes some base Dorian practice and reforms it in accordance with the idealism of Socratic philosophy, thereby demonstrating to the dialogue's philosophical on-lookers that even [the recreational intoxication of the Athenian *symposion*], if rightly reordered, can nourish the highest virtues of the human soul."⁶⁷ But is this true? To establish his authority in an admittedly controversial matter the mysterious and nameless "Athenian Stranger" claims to have an ex-

ceptionally sound knowledge of sympotic custom, based in part on direct experience (639d), hints he has examined the sympotic customs of thousands of different cities (638e), and at any rate the number is "a great many"—so many in fact that he feels confident enough to say he has "investigated pretty nearly all of them" (639d). His dissatisfaction with actual and real symposia is evident. With the exception of "a few insignificant details" he makes the claim that *all* symposia, everywhere, have been mismanaged (639e).

The Athenian is in agreement with the Spartan Megillus, who in his defense of laws in his homeland aiming at the complete elimination of drunken *hubris* (636e–637b) reminds everyone of the riotous intoxication he observed at the festival of Dionysus in both Athens and the Spartan colony of Tarentum, where on both occasions he "saw the entire city drunk." The ways of Sparta are in his opinion "the finest to be found among human kind," and this sort of intoxicated "insolence and mindlessness" just doesn't exist among his people.⁶⁸ Later in the dialogue Plato writes (775b) that drinking to the point of *methe* is "nowhere seemly except at the feasts of the God, the Giver of wine," a passage that has been interpreted as evidence that "during the Dionysian festival the Athenians customarily drank wine before the theatrical performances."⁶⁹ Both passages hint at the extent to which intoxication was not only tolerated by, but actually integrated within, the everyday functioning of, at the very least, the Athenian *polis*.

What follows in the first two books of the *Laws* is for the most part pleading for the *potential* educative value of the *symposion*. The drinking party the Athenian goes on to describe is a fictional construct the author clearly believes cannot be found anywhere on earth. It is fully in keeping with his general endorsement of "any fiction for the sake of the good effect on the young" (663d–e).⁷⁰ There "should always be someone in control" of the drinking party (640a), utilizing "the proper surveillance" (641b).⁷¹ This overseer "must lay down laws" for the banquet (671c). He himself should remain "sober and sagacious" and be older than the other celebrants, so that no "grave disaster"—like the *komos*, presumably—occurs (640d). Without the authority of this "unperturbed and sober" officer the "battle with intoxication [*methe*] is more hazardous than a battle against an enemy in the field without unperturbed commanders" (671d). Plato's overseer resembles an idealized, inverted image of the state-appointed wine inspectors, the *Ophthalmoi*, who attended public banquets. While the *Ophthalmoi* might expel a person for failing to drink, Plato's *archon* expels anyone who drinks to excess and becomes disorderly.

Moving past an initial stage of convivial intoxication there will be, inevitably, increasing noise and disorder as "the drinking goes further and further" (671a). In the heat of this linguistic confusion the soul of the drinker becomes soft and malleable, like heated iron, and psychologically his mind is like a child's (671b–c, and cf. 645e "the mental condition . . . of remote infancy"). Pleasures and pains at this stage of the drinking party become intensified, while "perceptions, memories, beliefs [and] knowledge . . . desert a man altogether" (645d–e). The drinker becomes "swollen with the conceit of his own wisdom to the pitch of complete license of speech and action" (649a–b). Within this second

stage of the *symposion* each soul becomes tyrannical, and each person thinks at that moment they are competent to give orders not only to themselves but all around them (671b, and cf. 645e "self-command is at its lowest").

The danger that the *symposion*, that miniature *polis*, will break apart in discordant enmity and threaten to spread infectiously to the larger body politic, is now at its greatest. The intoxicated are at this moment puppets, pulled by the leaden strings of desire (644d–645c). It is at this moment, as *methe* takes over and identity blurs and verges on the precipice of erasure, that the *archon* steps in. His task is to ensure that the symposiasts will remain "guided by laws in all their intercourse" (671e). He moulds and adjudicates their discourse so as to control any who have become "confident and bold and unduly shameless, and unwilling to submit to the proper limits of silence and speech, of drinking and music, making him consent to do in all ways the opposite" (671c–d). They must "listen to the directions" given to them by the sober *archon*, and obey without question (671e–672a). What is perhaps most remarkable is that the Plato of the *Laws* does not intend this sort of discursive control for merely those attending private drinking parties, but for everyone in the community, "at all times and throughout the entirety of their lives" (664a).⁷²

The Athenian appears to anticipate there would be considerable difficulties in establishing what is, for him, largely a test of character, stating that if the state cannot make "an orderly use" of drinking within the *symposion*, taking the matter seriously (as he has) and using it with the aim of instilling habits of moderation, and instead allows "anyone whatsoever to drink whatever he likes, with anyone he likes," then a total prohibition of *methe* is justified: "I would not vote for the use of drunkenness *at any time* by this city or this man. Indeed I would go beyond the Cretan and the Lacedaimonian usage, and advocate the Carthaginian law which forbids anyone to taste of this drink while out on campaign and requires that only water be drunk for all at that time" (674a, emphasis mine). Excluded outright from participation in wine drinking are those under eighteen years of age (666a); slaves, both male and female; magistrates in office; steersman and juryman on duty; any councilor intending to take part in an important discussion; men and women intending to procreate; everyone during the day, save those needing wine for the purposes of training or health; and "a great many other situations" that the Athenian does not explicitly spell out but which any sensible, law-respecting person would be capable of recognizing (674b–c and 775c–d).⁷³

The institution of "regulated drinking" in the *Laws* is as utopian a construct as anything found in the ideal state of the *Republic*, or the sanitized account of the *symposion* in the *Symposium*. There simply isn't evidence, in the discussion of drinking and the *symposion* in the *Laws*, of a last minute reversal of Plato's valuation of either the *symposion* or the pleasures of *methe*.⁷⁴ His hostility towards both, as we have just seen, extends through his entire *oeuvre*. It is possible to situate Plato in a tradition "mostly from the more or less committedly Lacedaimonian sections of Athenian society," one that saw intoxication, particularly that arising in the aristocratic *symposion*, as a threatening loss of identity and a

primary source of *hubris*; this tradition looked longingly at the success of the Spartan *sysstia* "in avoiding social tensions, disruptions, and *stasis*."⁷⁵ Plato's hostility to the popular valorization of wine seems on the whole consistent with these other writers.

Yet at the same time Plato's arguments go considerably beyond his contemporaries. He does not accept the idea of a simple substitution of Spartan institutions for Athenian ones, as he is as critical of the former as he is of the latter.⁷⁶ Instead he utilizes *methe* as part of his effort to reorder the Athenian *symposion* into a counterfactual vehicle whose aim, as we shall see in Part Three, is the creation of a *moral economy*, including a regimen for a reflexively reproduced normative discourse, that provides the foundation for the orderly rule of both unwritten ethics and legislatively written laws that remain more or less unchanged over time.⁷⁷ Plato subsumes the language, ritual, and ecstatic experience of intoxication (*methe*) found in the *symposion* within his plans for a new system of enculturation (*paideia*), in much the same way that he subsumes the language, ritual and ecstatic experience of the Eleusinian Mysteries.⁷⁸

Driving the argument home with his elderly companions, the Stranger declares at the end of Book II they should not "simply blame any more the gift of Dionysus, as if it were evil and unacceptable in a city" (672a). Wine is a divinely granted *pharmakon*. "As a man approaches forty," Plato writes, "he is to share in the enjoyment of the common meals, invoking the presence of the other gods, and especially Dionysus, at this mystery-rite and play of older men, which he has bestowed on human beings as a drug [*pharmakon*] that heals the austerity of old age" (666b). Wine is not something bestowed on humanity "out of revenge" in order to "drive us mad," Plato writes, it is instead "a medicine [*pharmakon*]" with opposite intention, namely "to put awe in the soul and health as well as strength in the body" (672d). The viewpoint on intoxication in the *Laws* is, then, not as far from the *Symposium* as might be thought. The experience of ecstasy is rationalized and wine becomes a kind of remedy for mental rigidity.

We might ask ourselves as we conclude this discussion of the politics of intoxication whether the saying of the poet Theognis (510) that if someone "drinks expertly, it is not an evil (*kakon*) thing but a good (*agathon*) thing" remains true for the philosopher, for Plato, or are there the beginnings of Greek tradition being replaced by a new valuation? The first two books of Plato's *Laws* are hardly eccentric or the product of a declining mind. Both Aristotle and Theophrastus were also apparently concerned enough about *methe* to write works titled *On Drunkenness*. Unfortunately, other than a few fragments, neither work has survived. The fourth head of Plato's Academy, Polemo (314–270 BCE), was reputed to have drunk nothing but water after the age of thirty (Athenaeus 2.44e). What should we make of all this? Has nothing of importance happened here? The impossible asceticism of the Platonic Socrates in the *Symposium* has given way to true asceticism in the space of a century. There is already, in Plato's dialogues, "the birth and development of a certain number of ascetic themes" that will be carried through antiquity and directly borrowed by early Christian ethics.⁷⁹

The *Laws* cannot quite conceive of a set of prohibitory regulations to restrict popular access to society's many *pharmaka* and hence emphatically deny all *methe* to the citizens of the *polis*—believing it impossible to enforce, even were it to be legislated—other than perhaps restricting the number of vineyards and hence the supply of wine in circulation (675c). It is all the same clear that outside of his counterfactual construct, the stranger from Athens, if for different reasons and with different goals in mind, has as little and perhaps even less tolerance for intoxication than either of his two compatriots.⁸⁰ In Plato's philosophy the experience of *methe* is rendered almost unrecognizable, dismissed even while it is, however cautiously, praised. The Platonic world is "a world where one is only apparently intoxicated, in which reason acts the drunkard and sings a Dionysian tune while none the less remaining 'pure' reason."⁸¹ Wherever *methe* conflicts with the goals of philosophic *paideia* there can be little doubt that the former will be sacrificed at the slightest indication that it threatens to hinder the smooth functioning of the latter.

Notes

1. Plato's dialogue on the nature of the just launches itself when Cephalus says that the cause of his peaceful condition is not simply the result of his advanced age. What he enjoys is the result of something else, a quality that resides in "the character of human beings [*anthropos*]" (329d). Old age will turn out to be as hard to endure as the mad passions of youth for those who are not "orderly and content with themselves" (329d).

2. While Manuela Tecusan, "*Logos Symptikos*: Patterns of the Irrational in Philosophical Drinking—Plato Outside the *Symposium*," in *Symptika—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) recognizes that Cephalus is referring to the *symposion*, she passes over what I believe is the other significant element of his speech: that the pleasures one might find within the *symposion* are accompanied by desires that compel like a mad, frenzied, savage master. It is this *epithymetic compulsion* that is the subject of Plato's reordering intervention.

3. Daniel B. Levine, "Symposium and *Polis*," in *Theognis of Megara—Poetry and the Polis*, ed. Thomas J. Figueira and Gregory Nagy (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 180, referring to Theognis 475–78. Wender's translation, however, indicates this particular part of the *Theognida* is widely believed to have been written by Euenos, a sophist contemporary of Plato. See Dorthea Wender, *Hesiod: Theogny, Works and Days. Theognis: Elegies* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973), 161.

4. Theognis is mentioned during the discussion of wine-drinking in what is usually regarded as Plato's last work, the *Laws* (630a).

5. Tecusan, "*Logos Symptikos*," 239.

6. Tecusan, "*Logos Symptikos*," 239.

7. See George Miller Calhoun, *Athenian Clubs in Politics and Litigation* (Austin, TX: The University of Texas Bulletin, 1913), 1–9, 23–25, 35–38.

8. Thessaly was a wealthy region of northeastern Greece, situated between Doris to the south and Macedon to the north. According to Thucydides' *History* it was governed by a few noble families (4.73.3), and among other aspects of its wealth it was known for exporting horses to Athens and other portions of Greece.

9. Making such a request at just this moment shows a deeply ironic, near impious contempt for traditional drinking ritual and those who practice it.

10. Tecusan, "Logos Symptikos," 242.

11. Alan H. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes. Vol. 2—Clouds* (Warminster, Wilts, England: Aris and Phillips, 1983), 241.

12. T. B. L. Webster, *Athenian Culture and Society* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 166.

13. Arthur P. McKinlay, "Attic Temperance," *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 12, no. 1 (1951): 73.

14. Oswyn Murray, "Forms of Sociality," in *The Greeks*, ed. Jean-Pierre Vernant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 225–26.

15. This is another sign of the wavering Tecusan points to in "Logos Symptikos."

16. Robin A. Waterfield, trans., *Plato—Philebus* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 139 n. 1.

17. The figure of the drone in Plato's *Republic* is discussed in chapter 2, above.

18. Robin A. Waterfield, trans., *Plato—Symposium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 145 n. 1.

19. As was just pointed out at the beginning of the chapter, Cephalus, in the *Republic* (329a–d), testifies to the tranquility and freedom he now enjoys in extreme old age, as opposed to the desires of youth, which he likens to a mad master.

20. The parallels with our contemporary "rhetoric of drugs" will be drawn out in the afterword, below.

21. Harold Tarrant, "Wine in Ancient Greece—Some Platonist Ponderings," in *Wine and Philosophy: A Symposium on Thinking and Drinking*, ed. Fritz Allhoff (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 22–5 would have us believe the opposite. It is commendable to claim the dialogue is an important statement about ancient drinking ethics; surprisingly few have done so. Yet Tarrant makes no real distinction between ancient and modern wine, provides no historical context to the dialogue, wrongly attributes the views of Eryximachus on wine to Socrates at one point, and would have the reader believe that because the Socrates of the *Charmides* admits to feeling strong sexual desire the Socrates of the *Symposium* might admit to feeling the same way about wine. The *Symposium* is no more a "celebration of wine" than any of the other dialogues Plato wrote.

22. William S. Cobb, trans. *The Symposium and Phaedrus: Plato's Erotic Dialogues* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), 180 n. 14. Specifically 175e, 215b, 219c, 221e, and 222a.

23. Michael L. Morgan, *Platonic Piety: Philosophy and Ritual in Fourth Century Athens* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 81. The scandal of 415 BCE is discussed in detail in chapter 5, below. Phaedrus and Eryximachus, who both appear in the *Symposium*, would be sent into exile as a result of the scandal. See also Peter H. Von Blackenhagen, "Stage and Actors in Plato's *Symposium*," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 33, no. 1 (1992): 58. Von Blackenhagen argues that Agathon's *symposion* is a reunion of many of the participants who had gathered together in a sympotic atmosphere roughly fifteen years before in Plato's *Protagoras*.

24. I shall argue the *Phaedrus* is as well. See chapter 6, below.

25. In his translation notes to *Symposium* 174a, Waterfield, *Plato—Symposium*, 74 writes "an Athenian might have his body oiled and then all the sweat and dirt scrapped off with a strigil, and once in a while he might take a full bath; but bathing only became a common occurrence in the Western world in the last hundred years or so." There is reason to doubt this however. M. L. Werner, *Life in Greece in Ancient Times* (Barcelona: Liber, 1977), 60–1 indicates that while baths were unusual in Homeric times it gradually

became customary in Athens and elsewhere "for people to take baths every day, in mid-afternoon," with some people bathing twice or even three times a day. Archeological evidence indicates that many private households had their own baths.

26. Oswyn Murray, "Forms of Sociality," 229.

27. Regarding *Gorgias* 451e and the *skolion*, see Albin Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1996), 173. On drinking songs generally see chapter 1, above.

28. The reason, most likely, is that Plato would have expected anyone reading the dialogue to know the details of sympotic custom; there would no need for him to describe the well-known. There is also the possibility that he would have been sensitive to any appearance of impiety.

29. See Werner, *Life in Greece in Ancient Times*, 72. See also Jean-Louis Durand, Francoise Frontisi-Ducroux and François Lissarrague, "Wine: Human and Divine," in *A City of Images—Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, ed. Claude Bérard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 126, and François Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet: Images of Wine and Ritual* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 21–2.

30. One is reminded again of Aristophanes' *Wasps* (1335–81) where a drunk and disorderly Philocleon arrives home with a nude *auletris* he has stolen from the *symposion* he has just attended; she escapes when the man is confronted by his mortified son.

31. Aristotle, in the *Politics* (1341a), condemns the *aulos* as an impediment to education, writing that it was "not a moral instrument but one that excites the emotions," and ought to be limited to "circumstances where the spectacle offers more potential for *katharsis* than for learning." Quoted in Sheramy D. Bundrick, *Music and Image in Classical Athens* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 35.

32. Francoise Frontisi-Ducroux, "In the Mirror of the Mask," in *A City of Images—Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, ed. Claude Bérard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 159.

33. Frontisi-Ducroux, "In the Mirror of the Mask," 163.

34. François Lissarrague, "Around the Krater: An Aspect of Banquet Imagery," in *Symptica—A Symposium on the Symposium*, ed. Oswyn Murray (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 198–99. See also Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 131–32, 139, where the god Dionysus himself is depicted in a similar posture.

35. Bundrick, *Music and Image in Classical Athens*, 39–41 points out that many vases depict more sedate use of the *aulos*. The views of Plato and Aristotle, he argues, were most likely outliers not shared by many of their contemporaries. "In short, fifth-century Athenian imagery does not suggest a wholesale rejection of the *aulos*, or even a consistent picture of immorality and immoderation. Like so many things in Greek culture—including wine, for example, the *aulos* was evidently considered best in moderation and in appropriate settings."

36. The opposition of philosophic discourse and rhetorical discourse in Plato is discussed in chapter 9, below.

37. K. J. Dover, "Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's *Symposium*," in *The Greeks and their Legacy: Collected Papers Volume II: Prose Literature, History, Society, Transmission, Influence* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 113 n. 44.

38. Here I am in agreement with Ludwig Edelstein, who views Eryximachus as "a prominent figure" and even the most important in the *Symposium* other than Socrates. See Ludwig Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 162–64. Plato's overall respect for

physicians, and his casting of the philosopher as a moral physician, is discussed throughout Part Three, below.

39. Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine*, 159 and 162. Edelstein demonstrates quite well that the *Symposium's* physician is not overly pedantic, showy, or conceited, nor any more dogmatic about his speech than any of the other guests who give a speech on *eros*.

40. Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine*, 162 and 164. This perspective continues to receive play. See Von Blackenhagen, "Stage and Actors in Plato's *Symposium*," 56–8.

41. David Konstan (with Elizabeth Young-Bruehl), "Eryximachus' Speech in the *Symposium*," *Apeiron* 16 (1982), 45 n. 1.

42. Konstan, "Eryximachus' Speech in the *Symposium*," 42–4. See also my discussion of Greek medicine in chapter 7, below.

43. Konstan, "Eryximachus' Speech in the *Symposium*," 42–3. While pointing out the medical theory that underpins Eryximachus' views, Konstan and Young-Bruehl deliberately avoid situating his speech "in the wider meaning of the *Symposium* as a whole." It would seem, however, that once we have established his importance in the dialogue this is precisely what must be done.

44. Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 117, who concurs.

45. On the tradition of comics composing while drunk see the excellent discussion in John Wilkins, *The Boastful Chef—The Discourse of Food in Ancient Comedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 202–256.

46. A. M. Bowie, "Thinking with Drinking: Wine and the Symposium in Aristophanes," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 117 (1997): 1–21 examines the sympotic themes found in the *Knights*.

47. Levine, "Symposium and Polis," 195.

48. The hiccups are discussed in Steven Lowenstam, "Aristophanes' Hiccups," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 27, no. 1 (1986): 43–56.

49. Dover, "Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's *Symposium*," 107.

50. See chapter 5, below.

51. Drugs were clearly a large part of ancient Greek magic. See chapter 8, below.

52. Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness—Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 193–95, Kevin Corrigan and Elena Glazov-Corrigan, *Plato's Dialectic at Play: Argument, Structure, and Myth in the Symposium* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2004), 164, and Waterfield, *Plato—Symposium*, 90–3.

53. Sir Arthur Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, Second Edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 30, Erika Simon, *Festivals of Attika: An Archaeological Commentary* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 100–1, Michael Morgan, *Platonic Piety: Philosophy and Ritual in Fourth Century Athens* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 94.

54. Lissarrgue, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet*, 31–32.

55. The proverb in Greek was "Truth comes from wine and children" but the words for children and slaves, *paides*, were identical, so it is unclear which of the two he may be referring to. Given the proverb and his heavily intoxicated condition it is more likely the former.

56. McKinlay, "Attic Temperance," 67.

57. On the profanation scandal see chapter 5, below. On the evidence suggesting use of drugs in the Eleusinian Mysteries see chapter 4 and chapter 6, below.

58. "It is explicit in Aristotle, Proclus, and Plutarch that the mysteries were experienced, not explained. In fact, they were considered *arrheta*, unspeakable, not just because

it was illegal to disclose what transpired in the sanctuary, but because the transcendent nature of the experience defied attempts to communicate it in language." See David Fiedler, *Alexandria 2: The Journal of Western Cosmological Traditions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press, 1993), 77. See also Silvia Montiglio, *Silence in the Land of Logos* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 37 who observes the "ancient sources . . . label the mysteries both as *aporrheta* (forbidden), and as *arrheta* (unspeakable)."

59. This portrait may have had some basis in historical fact. In Aristophanes' *Clouds* (412–19) Socrates and his followers appear to abstain from wine as part of their intellectual training; in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (2.6.1) he warns against expecting to find good friends among those enslaved to the drinking cup; in Plutarch's *Rules for the Preservation of Health* (6) he advises against habit-inducing drinks, and in the same author's *On Talkativeness* (22) the advice is to resist those drinks that tempt even when one is not thirsty. The Socrates of Xenophon's *Symposium* (2.24–26) does not appear to wholly disapprove of wine, however, so no final conclusions may be drawn about the attitude of historical Socrates towards intoxication.

60. Page DuBois, *Sappho Is Burning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 95.

61. Elizabeth Belfiore, "Wine and Catharsis of the Emotions in Plato's *Laws*," *Classical Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1986), 241. Leo Strauss, *The Argument and Action of Plato's Laws* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) does little more than recapitulate Plato's argument.

62. Nick Fisher, "Drink, *Hybris*, and the Promotion of Harmony in Sparta," in *Classical Sparta—Techniques Behind Her Success*, ed. Anton Powell (New York: Routledge, 1988), 27–29. Fisher indicates this problem may be found even among such distinguished interpreters of Plato as Guthrie, Morrow, and Saunders. These writers downplay Plato's discussion in the first two books of the *Laws* as tedious and downright odd (Guthrie), best seen as tongue-in-cheek, and hence not truly in earnest (Saunders), and fail to deal with the topic in a sustained and critical manner, misreading the Athenian's comrades as endorsing some form of prohibition (Guthrie and Morrow). An important exception is Randall B. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best: Medical Argument and Magical Rhetoric in Plato's Laws* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), although Clark's focus is not so much on intoxication as the magical and medical discourses that permeate the *Laws*. Clark also does not discuss the Greek *symposion* in the detail presented here, nor discuss the theme of intoxication throughout the dialogues. He also does not discuss intoxication as a political problem, yet it certainly appears that there were difficulties being expressed on just that subject in ancient Greece, and Plato was a significant contributor to that discussion.

63. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best*, 109.

64. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best*, 140.

65. John W. I. Lee, *A Greek Army on the March: Soldiers and Survival in Xenophon's Anabasis* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 228–29.

66. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best*, 140. Clark humorously observes that the Stranger from Athens "could scarcely have done better had he begun the pilgrimage with a goatskin full of Odysseus's strong Ismarian wine hidden under his cloak."

67. Clark, *The Law Most Beautiful and Best*, 140.

68. The political ramifications of this, in the ancient Greek context, would have been considerable. See chapter 2, above.

69. W. B. Stanford, *Greek Tragedy and the Emotions—An Introductory Study* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), 12–13.

70. I discuss the art of political lying as its own *pharmakon* in chapter 10, below.

71. Compare this need for close surveillance and control of appetitive behavior with Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (7.5–7.6).

72. See chapter 9, below.

73. In the *Republic* the guardian class is expressly forbidden the experience of *methe* at 398e.

74. Belfiore argues that "a serious and important psychological study" may be found in these books, and points to their containing "considerable philosophical importance." See Belfiore, "Wine and the Catharsis of the Emotions in Plato's *Laws*," 421. In sum "a radically different psychological theory, with important aesthetic implications, appears in the discussion of wine drinking." I am not convinced of the difference, at least where the intoxicated disruption of identity is concerned. Tecusan similarly writes that in the first two books of the *Laws* "people are called to truth and virtue mainly by irrational means" and that wine "in certain circumstances can make them love *paideia*, become masters of themselves, or obey the rules." See Tecusan, "*Logos Symposiikos*," 250. I see little evidence of a profound difference or turn in Plato's attitude toward *methe* in the discussion of wine in the *Laws*. The "circumstances" are a fictional construct, and within this construct the use of wine is so heavily controlled precisely because Plato sees intoxication as impeding *paideia*, overthrowing self-mastery, and undermining obedience to society's rules.

75. Fisher "Drink, *Hybris*, and the Promotion of Harmony in Sparta," 30. An example of this pro-Spartan leaning in matters pertaining to drink would be Plato's own uncle, Critias, who praises Spartan wine-drinking as "evenly disposed" and one that avoids "drinking healths in wine-cups beyond measure" because it both "delights yet causes pain for all time." See Matthew Dillon and Lynda Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates, Second Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 189.

76. See, for example, *Republic* 547d–548c.

77. See chapter 9, below.

78. See my discussion of the *Phaedrus* in chapter 6, below.

79. Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 361.

80. Plato pushes the argument against *methe* as far as his interpretive framework will allow. It is tempting to speculate what Plato might have written had he access to, for example, a Judeo-Christian or other monotheistic concept of "sin" or a modern medical concept such as "addiction." Thus informed the *Laws* would have been quite comfortable defending prohibitionist laws concerning intoxication against any and all detractors. On the other hand it is doubtful Plato would have appreciated *The Symposium: A Treatise on Chastity* by the early Christian St. Methodius of Olympus (died ca. 311 CE), a work that "despite the great wealth of Platonic quotation and allusion," leaves one with "the definite impression that even where Methodius has not positively misunderstood Plato and failed to comprehend the complexities of his system, he was not really interested in his doctrine." Quoted in Herbert Musurillo, trans. *St. Methodius—The Symposium: A Treatise on Chastity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1958), 17.

81. Gilles Deleuze and Paul Patton, *Difference and Repetition* (New York and London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1994), 332.

Table 1

JUST AND INTENSE PLEASURES
IN THE *PHILEBUS*

JUST PLEASURES	INTENSE PLEASURES
1. Are temperate (44d–e)	1. Are "intemperate, unrestrained" (45b) and "exceed all bounds" (45e)
2. Are healthy (45a–b)	2. Are sick, degenerate and "forms of illness" (45b–46a)
3. Are true (40c)	3. Are illusory, false, and "apparent but not real" (44a, 51a)
4. Are orderly (52c)	4. Are "unbalanced to the point of insanity," possessed, ecstatic, and frenzied (45d–e, 47a–b)
5. Are unmixed, pure (52b)	5. Are mixed, adulterated (46b–47a)

EXAMPLES OF JUST PLEASURES	EXAMPLES OF INTENSE PLEASURES
1. Smells (51e) Cf. <i>Republic</i> (584c) <i>Timaeus</i> (66e–67a)	1. Itching (46a) and tickling (46d) Cf. <i>Gorgias</i> (494c)
2. Color (51b) Cf. <i>Gorgias</i> (474d)	2. Crying (48a) Cf. <i>Symposium</i> (215d–216c)
3. Pure tones (51d) Cf. <i>Gorgias</i> (474d)	3. Laughter (48a) Cf. <i>Gorgias</i> (473e) <i>Republic</i> (388e–389a) <i>Laws</i> (672b, 815c–d)
4. Geometric symmetry (51c) Cf. <i>Timaeus</i> (88c–d)	4. Dancing Cf. <i>Ion</i> (533e–534a) <i>Laws</i> (672b, 815c–d)
5. Learning (51e–52b) Cf. <i>Republic</i> (441a–b)	5. Alcohol intoxication Cf. <i>Symposium</i> (212c–223b) <i>Laws</i> 645d–646a.