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PHILOSOPHY AS RIGOROUS SCIENCE AND
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY*

LEO STRAUSS

Whoever is concerned with political philosophy must face the fact that in the last two generations political philosophy has lost its credibility. Political philosophy has lost its credibility in proportion as politics itself has become more philosophic than ever in a sense. Almost throughout its whole history political philosophy was universal while politics was particular. Political philosophy was concerned with the best or just order of society which is by nature best or just everywhere or always, while politics is concerned with the being and well-being of this or that particular society (a polis, a nation, an empire) that is in being at a given place for some time. Not a few men have dreamt of rule over all human beings by themselves or others but they were dreamers or at least regarded as such by the philosophers. In our age on the other hand politics has in fact become universal. Unrest in what is loosely, not to say demagogically, called the ghetto of an American city has repercussions in Moscow, Peking, Johannesburg, Hanoi, London, and other far away places and is linked with them; whether the linkage is admitted or not makes no difference. Simultaneously political philosophy has disappeared. This is quite obvious in the East where the Communists themselves call their doctrine their ideology. As for the contemporary West, the intellectual powers peculiar to it are neo-positivism and existentialism. Positivism surpasses existentialism by far in academic influence and existentialism surpasses positivism by far in popular influence. Positivism may be described as the view according to which only scientific knowledge is genuine knowledge; since scientific knowledge is unable to validate or invalidate any value judgments, and political philosophy most certainly is concerned with the validation of sound value judgments and the invalidation of unsound ones, positivism must reject political philosophy as radically unscientific. Existentialism appears in a great variety of guises but one will not be far wide of the mark if one defines it in contradistinction to positivism as the view according to which all principles of understanding and of action are historical, i.e. have no other ground than groundless human decision or fateful dispensation: science, far from being the only kind of genuine knowledge, is ultimately not more than one form among many of viewing the world, all these forms having the same dignity. Since according to existentialism all human thought is historical in the sense indicated, existentialism must reject political philosophy as radically unhistorical.

* This essay was originally written as a contribution to the Festschrift in honor of Shlomo Pines (Hebrew University) in which it was published in a Hebrew translation.
Existentialism is a "movement" which like all such movements has a flabby periphery and a hard center. That center is the thought of Heidegger. To that thought alone existentialism owes its importance or intellectual respectability. There is no room for political philosophy in Heidegger's work, and this may well be due to the fact that the room in question is occupied by gods or the gods. This does not mean that Heidegger is wholly alien to politics: he welcomed Hitler's revolution in 1933 and he, who had never praised any other contemporary political effort, still praised national socialism long after Hitler had been muted and Heil Hitler had been transformed into Heil Unheil. We cannot help holding these facts against Heidegger. Moreover, one is bound to misunderstand Heidegger's thought radically if one does not see their intimate connection with the core of his philosophic thought. Nevertheless, they afford too small a basis for the proper understanding of his thought. As far as I can see, he is of the opinion that none of his critics and none of his followers has understood him adequately. I believe that he is right, for is the same not also true, more or less, of all outstanding thinkers? This does not dispense us, however, from taking a stand toward him, for we do this at any rate implicitly; in doing it explicitly, we run no greater risk than exposing ourselves to ridicule and perhaps receiving some needed instruction.

Among the many things that make Heidegger's thought so appealing to so many contemporaries is his accepting the premise that while human life and thought is radically historical, History is not a rational process. As a consequence, he denies that one can understand a thinker better than he understood himself and even as he understood himself: a great thinker will understand an earlier thinker of rank creatively, i.e. by transforming his thought, and hence by understanding him differently than he understood himself. One could hardly observe this transformation if one could not see the original form. Above all, according to Heidegger all thinkers prior to him have been oblivious of the true ground of all grounds, the fundamental abyss. This assertion implies the claim that in the decisive respect Heidegger understands his great predecessors better than they understood themselves.

In order to understand Heidegger's thought and therefore in particular his posture toward politics and political philosophy, one must not neglect the work of his teacher Husserl. The access to Husserl is not rendered difficult by any false step like those taken by Heidegger in 1933 and 1953. I have heard it said though that the Husserlian equivalent was his conversion, not proceeding from conviction, to Christianity. If this were proven to be the case, it would become a task for a casuist of exceptional gifts to consider the dissimilarities and similarities of the two kinds of acts and to weigh their respective merits and demerits.

When I was still almost a boy, Husserl explained to me who at that time was a doubting and dubious adherent of the Marburg school of neo-Kantianism, the characteristic of his own work in about these terms: "the Marburg school begins with the roof, while I begin with the foun-
dation.” This meant that for the school of Marburg the sole task of the fundamental part of philosophy was the theory of scientific experience, the analysis of scientific thought. Husserl however had realized more profoundly than anybody else that the scientific understanding of the world, far from being the perfection of our natural understanding, is derivative from the latter in such a way as to make us oblivious of the very foundations of the scientific understanding: all philosophic understanding must start from our common understanding of the world, from our understanding of the world as sensibly perceived prior to all theorizing. Heidegger went much further than Husserl in the same direction: the primary theme is not the object of perception but the full thing as experienced as part of the individual human context, the individual world to which it belongs.¹ The full thing is what it is not only in virtue of the primary and secondary qualities as well as the value qualities in the ordinary meaning of that term but also of qualities like sacred or profane: the full phenomenon of a cow is for a Hindu constituted much more by the sacredness of the cow than by any other quality or aspect. This implies that one can no longer speak of our “natural” understanding of the world; every understanding of the world is “historical.” Correspondingly, one must go back behind the one human reason to the multiplicity of historical, “grown” not “made,” languages. Accordingly there arises the philosophic task of understanding the universal structure common to all historical worlds.² Yet if the insight into the historicity of all thought is to be preserved, the understanding of the universal or essential structure of all historical worlds must be accompanied and in a way guided by that insight. This means that the understanding of the essential structure of all historical worlds must be understood as essentially belonging to a specific historical context, to a specific historical period. The character of the historicist insight must correspond to the character of the period to which it belongs. The historicist insight is the final insight in the sense that it reveals all earlier thought as radically defective in the decisive respect and that there is no possibility of another legitimate change in the future which would render obsolete or as it were mediatisé the historicist insight. As the absolute insight it must belong to the absolute moment in history. In a word, the difficulty indicated compels Heidegger to elaborate, sketch or suggest what in the case of any other man would be called his philosophy of history.

The absolute moment may be the absolute moment simply or the absolute moment of all previous history. That it is the absolute moment simply had been the contention of Hegel. His system of philosophy, the final philosophy, the perfect solution of all philosophic problems belongs to the moment when mankind has solved in principle its political problem by

¹ Cf. Sein und Zeit sect. 21 (pp. 98-99).
² For this and what follows see H. G. Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, 233-34; cf. 339-40; pp. XIX and 505 of the second edition.
establishing the post-revolutionary state, the first state to recognize the equal dignity of every human being as such. This absolute peak of history, being the end of history, is at the same time the beginning of the final decline. In this respect Spengler has merely brought out the ultimate conclusion of Hegel's thought. No wonder therefore that almost everyone rebelled against Hegel. No one did this more effectively than Marx. Marx claimed to have laid bare with finality the mystery of all history, including the present and the imminent future, but also the outline of the order which was bound to come and in which and through which men would be able or compelled for the first time to lead truly human lives. More precisely, for Marx human history, so far from having been completed, has not even begun; what we call history is only the pre-history of humanity. Questioning the settlement which Hegel had regarded as rational, he followed the vision of a world society which presupposes and establishes forever the complete victory of the town over the country, of the mobile over the deeply rooted, of the spirit of the Occident over the spirit of the Orient; the members of the world society which is no longer a political society are free and equal, and are so in the last analysis because all specialization, all division of labor, has given way to the full development of everyone.

Regardless of whether or not Nietzsche knew of Marx' writings, he questioned the communist vision more radically than anyone else. He identified the man of the communist world society as the last man, as man in his utmost degradation: without "specialization," without the harshness of limitation, human nobility and greatness are impossible. In accordance with this he denied that the future of the human race is predetermined. The alternative to the last man is the over-man, a type of man surpassing and overcoming all previous human types in greatness and nobility; the over-men of the future will be ruled invisibly by the philosophers of the future. Owing to its radical anti-egalitarianism Nietzsche's vision of a possible future is in a sense more profoundly political than Marx' vision. Like the typical Continental European conservative Nietzsche saw in communism only the completion of democratic egalitarianism and of the liberalistic demand for freedom which is not a "freedom for" but only a "freedom from." But in contradistinction to those conservatives he held that conservatism as such is doomed, since all merely defensive positions, all merely backward looking endeavors are doomed. The future seemed to be with democracy and nationalism. Both were regarded by Nietzsche as incompatible with what he held to be the task of the twentieth century. He saw the twentieth century as an age of world wars leading up to planetary rule. If man were to have a future, that rule would have to be exercised by a united Europe. The enormous tasks of this unprecedented iron age could not possibly be discharged by weak and unstable governments depending upon public opinion. The new situation called for the emergence of a new nobility — a nobility formed by a new ideal: the nobility of the over-men. Nietzsche claimed to have discovered with finali-
ty the mystery of all history, including the present, i.e. the alternative which now confronts man, of the utmost degradation and the highest exaltation. The possibility of surpassing and overcoming all previous human types reveals itself to the present, less because the present is superior to all past ages than because it is the moment of the greatest danger and chiefly for this reason of the greatest hope.

Heidegger’s philosophy of history has the same structure as Marx’ and Nietzsche’s: the moment in which the final insight is arriving opens the eschatological prospect. But Heidegger is much closer to Nietzsche than to Marx. Both thinkers regard as decisive the nihilism which according to them began in Plato (or before) – Christianity being only Platonism for the people – and whose ultimate consequence is the present decay. Hitherto every great age of humanity grew out of Bodenstaendigkeit (rootedness in the soil). Yet the great age of classical Greece gave birth to a way of thinking which in principle endangered Bodenstaendigkeit from the beginning and in its ultimate contemporary consequences is about to destroy the last relics of that condition of human greatness. Heidegger’s philosophy belongs to the infinitely dangerous moment when man is in a greater danger than ever before of losing his humanity and therefore – danger and salvation belonging together – philosophy can have the task of contributing toward the recovery or return of Bodenstaendigkeit or rather of preparing an entirely novel kind of Bodenstaendigkeit: a Bodenstaendigkeit beyond the most extreme Bodenlosigkeit, a being at home beyond the most extreme homelessness. Nay, there are reasons for thinking that according to Heidegger the world has never yet been in order, or thought has never yet been simply human. A dialogue between the most profound thinkers of the Occident and the most profound thinkers of the Orient and in particular East Asia may lead to the consummation prepared, accompanied or followed by a return of the gods. That dialogue and everything that it entails, but surely not political action of any kind, is perhaps the way. Heidegger severs the connection of the vision with politics more radically than either Marx or Nietzsche. One is inclined to say that Heidegger has learned the lesson of 1933 more thoroughly than any other man. Surely he leaves no place whatever for political philosophy.

Let us turn from these fantastic hopes, more to be expected from visionaries than from philosophers, to Husserl. Let us see whether a place for political philosophy is left in Husserl’s philosophy.

What I am going to say is based on a re-reading, after many years of neglect, of Husserl’s programmatic essay “Philosophy as Rigorous Science.” The essay was first published in 1911, and Husserl’s thought underwent many important changes afterward. Yet it is his most important utterance on the question with which we are concerned.

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8 *Was heisst Denken?* 31, 153-54; *Der Satz vom Grund* 101; *Einführung in die Metaphysik* 28; *Wegmarken* 250-52; *Gelassenheit* 16-26.
No one in our century has raised the call for philosophy as a rigorous science with such clarity, purity, vigor, and breadth as Husserl. "From its first beginnings philosophy has raised the claim to be a rigorous science; more precisely, it has raised the claim to be the science that would satisfy the highest theoretical needs and in regard to ethics and religion render possible a life regulated by pure rational norms. This claim . . . has never been completely abandoned. [Yet] in no epoch of its development has philosophy been capable of satisfying the claim to be a rigorous science . . . Philosophy as science has not yet begun . . . In philosophy [in contradistinction to the sciences] everything is controversial."

Husserl found the most important example of the contrast between claim and achievement in "the reigning naturalism." (In the present context the difference between naturalism and positivism is unimportant.) In that way of thinking the intention toward a new foundation of philosophy in the spirit of rigorous science is fully alive. This constitutes its merit and at the same time a great deal of its force. Perhaps the idea of science is altogether the most powerful idea in modern life. Surely nothing can stop the victorious course of science which in its ideal completion is Reason itself that cannot tolerate any authority at its side or above it. Husserl respects naturalism especially for keeping alive the notion of a "philosophy from the ground up" in opposition to the traditional notion of philosophy as "system." At the same time he holds that naturalism necessarily destroys all objectivity.\(^5\)

By naturalism Husserl understands the view according to which everything that is forms part of nature, "nature" being understood as the object of (modern) natural science. This means that everything that is is either itself "physical" or if it is "psychic" it is a mere dependent variable of the physical, "in the best case a secondary parallel accompaniment." As a consequence, naturalism "naturalizes" both the consciousness and all norms (logical, ethical and so on). That form of naturalism which called for Husserl's special attention was experimental psychology as meant to supply the scientific foundation of logic, theory of knowledge, esthetics, ethics, and pedagogic. That psychology claimed to be the science of the phenomena themselves, or of "the psychic phenomena," i.e. of that which physics in principle excludes in order to look for "the true, objective, physically-exact nature," or for the nature which presents itself in the phenomena. Stated in very imprecise language, psychology deals with the secondary qualities as such which physics, solely concerned with the primary qualities, excludes. In more precise language, one would have to

\(^4\) Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft ed. W. Szilasi, sects. 1, 2, 4 and 5. I have made use of the English translation by Lauer in Husserl, Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy, Harper Torch Books pp. 71-147.

\(^5\) Sects. 7-8, 11, 13, 14, 17, 65.
say that the psychic phenomena precisely because they are phenomena are not nature.6

As theory of knowledge naturalism must give an account of natural science, of its truth or validity. But every natural science accepts nature in the sense in which nature is intended by natural science, as given, as "being in itself." The same is of course true of psychology which is based on the science of physical nature. Hence naturalism is completely blind to the riddles inherent in the "givenness" of nature. It is constitutionally incapable of a radical critique of experience as such. The scientific positing or taking for granted of nature is preceded by and based upon the pre-scientific one, and the latter is as much in need of radical clarification as the first. Hence an adequate theory of knowledge cannot be based on the naive acceptance of nature in any sense of nature. The adequate theory of knowledge must be based on scientific knowledge of the consciousness as such, for which nature and being are correlates or intended objects that constitute themselves in and through consciousness alone, in pure "immanence"; "nature" or "being" must be made "completely intelligible." Such a radical clarification of every possible object of consciousness can be the task only of a phenomenology of the consciousness in contradiction to the naturalistic science of psychic phenomena. Only phenomenology can supply that fundamental clarification of the consciousness and its acts the lack of which makes so-called exact psychology radically unscientific, for the latter constantly makes use of concepts which stem from every-day experience without having examined them as to their adequacy.7

According to Husserl it is absurd to ascribe to phenomena a nature: phenomena appear in an "absolute flux," an "eternal flux," while "nature is eternal." Yet precisely because phenomena have no natures, they have essences. Phenomenology is essentially the study of essences and in no way of existence. In accordance with this the study of the life of the mind as practiced by the thoughtful historians offers to the philosopher a more original and therefore more fundamental material of inquiry than the study of nature.8 If this is so, the study of men's religious life must be of greater philosophic relevance than the study of nature.

Philosophy as rigorous science was threatened in the second place by a way of thinking which under the influence of historicism was about to turn into mere Weltanschauungsphilosophie. Weltanschauung is life-experience of a high order. It includes not only experience of the world but also religious, esthetic, ethical, political, practical-technical etc. experience. The man who possesses such experience on a very high level is called wise and is said to possess a Weltanschauung. Husserl can therefore speak of

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7 sects. 20-27, 29, 30, 32-42.
8 sects. 49-50, 54, 56, 57, 59, 72.
"wisdom or Weltanschauung." According to him wisdom or Weltanschauung is an essential ingredient of that still more valuable habitus which we mean by the idea of perfect virtue or by the idea of humanity. Weltanschauungphilosophie comes into being when the attempt is made to conceptualize wisdom or to give it a logical elaboration or, more simply, to give it the form of science; this ordinarily goes together with the attempt to use the results of the special sciences as materials. This kind of philosophy, when taking on the form of one or the other of the great systems, presents the relatively most perfect solution of the riddles of life and the world. The traditional philosophies were at the same time Weltanschauungsphilosophien and scientific philosophies since the objectives of wisdom on the one hand and of rigorous science on the other had not yet been clearly separated from one another. But for the modern consciousness the separation of the ideas of wisdom and of rigorous science has become a fact and they remain henceforth separated for all eternity. The idea of Weltanschauung differs from epoch to epoch while the idea of science is supra-temporal. One might think that the realizations of the two ideas would approach each other asymptotically in the infinite. Yet "we cannot wait"; we need "exaltation and consolation" now; we need some kind of system to live by; only Weltanschauung or Weltanschauungphilosophie can satisfy these justified demands. Surely philosophy as rigorous science cannot satisfy them: it has barely begun, it will need centuries, if not millennia, until it "renders possible in regard to ethics and religion a life regulated by pure rational norms," if it is not at all times essentially incomplete and in need of radical revisions. Hence the temptation to forsake it in favor of Weltanschauungphilosophie is very great. From Husserl's point of view one would have to say that Heidegger proved unable to resist that temptation.

The reflection on the relation of the two kinds of philosophy obviously belongs to the sphere of philosophy as rigorous science. It comes closest to being Husserl's contribution to political philosophy. He did not go on to wonder whether the single-minded pursuit of philosophy as rigorous science would not have an adverse effect on Weltanschauungphilosophie which most men need to live by and hence on the actualization of the ideas which that kind of philosophy serves, in the first place in the practitioners of philosophy as rigorous science but secondarily also in all those who are impressed by those practitioners. He seems to have taken it for granted that there will always be a variety of Weltanschauungphilosophien that peacefully coexist within one and the same society. He did not pay attention to societies that impose a single Weltanschauung or Weltanschauungphilosophie on all their members and for this reason will not tolerate philosophy as rigorous science. Nor did he consider that even a

sects. 13, 67, 75-79, 81, 82, 90, 91.
society that tolerates indefinitely many Weltanschauungen does this by virtue of one particular Weltanschauung.

Husserl in a manner continued, he surely modified the reflection we have been speaking about, under the impact of events which could not be overlooked or overheard. In a lecture delivered in Prague in 1935 he said: "Those who are conservatively contented with the tradition and the circle of philosophic human beings will fight one another, and surely the fight will take place in the sphere of political power. Already in the beginnings of philosophy persecution sets in. The men who live toward those ideas [of philosophy] are outlawed. And yet: ideas are stronger than all empirical powers." In order to see the relation between philosophy as rigorous science and the alternative to it clearly, one must look at the political conflict between the two antagonists, i.e. at the essential character of that conflict. If one fails to do so, one cannot reach clarity on the essential character of what Husserl calls "philosophy as rigorous science."

\[10\] Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die tranzendentale Phaenomenologie, second edition, Haag 1962, 335.
THE MYTH OF VIRGIL'S AENEID*

JACOB KLEIN

It is impossible to read the Aeneid without being constantly reminded of the Iliad and the Odyssey. Nor can one read the Aeneid without becoming aware that the poem intends to glorify Rome and Rome's imperial and pacifying power under Caesar Octavian Augustus. All of you, I think, and also all Virgil commentators agree on these points. Let me quote two ancient ones.

Servius, 4th century A.D., has this to say: "This is Virgil's purpose: to imitate Homer and to praise Augustus in the light of his ancestors" (Intention Vergili haec est, Homerus imitari et Augustum laudare a parentibus).

Macrobius, 5th century, explains: Virgil

held his eyes intently upon Homer in order to emulate not only Homer's greatness but also the simplicity and power of his diction and its quiet majesty. Hence the multifarious magnificence of the various personages among his heroes; hence the intervention of the gods; hence the weight of mythical details; hence the natural way of expressing passions; hence the tracing back of the origin of monuments; hence the elevation of his metaphors; hence the ringing sound of his rolling diction; hence the climactic splendor of single incidents.

This "sweet imitation," says Macrobius, leads Virgil to the point of even imitating Homer's vices.

We have to note that these ancient commentators attribute to Virgil a double purpose: not only is it his intention to praise Augustus, his imitation of Homer is, according to them, also an end in itself.

Let me give you a series of examples of what these commentators call Virgil's imitation of Homer. I shall quote, in an English version, lines from the Iliad and the Odyssey and corresponding lines, again in an English version, from the Aeneid.

*Odyssey* XII, 403: "But when we left that island and no other land appeared, but only sky and sea, then verily the son of Kronos set a black cloud above the hollow ship, and the sea grew dark beneath it." *Aeneid* III, 192: "After our ships gained the deep, and now no longer any land is seen, but sky on all sides and on all sides sea, then a murky rain-cloud loomed overhead, bringing night and tempest, while the wave shuddered darkling." This is repeated in *Aeneid* V. 8. (Note that Virgil does not mention Zeus, the son of Kronos.)

*Iliad* VIII, 16: "Tartaros... as far beneath Hades as heaven is high above the earth." *Aeneid* VI, 578: "While Tartarus' self gapes with abrupt descent and stretches twice as far, down through the shades, as the heaven-

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* A lecture given at St. John's College in Annapolis, Md., on February 25, 1966.
ward gazing eye looks up to Olympus and the firmament.” (Note the change from a one to one ratio to a two to one ratio.)

_Iliad_ VI, 305: Theano, wife of Antenor, priestess of Athene in Troy, prays: “Lady Athene, that dost guard our city, fairest among goddesses, break now the spear of Diomedes, and grant furthermore that himself may fall headlong before the Scaean gates.” _Aen._ XI, 483: The Latin matrons implore Juno: “O mighty in arms, mistress in war, Tritonian maid, break with thine hand the spear of the Phrygian pirate [that is, of Aeneas], hurl him prone to earth and stretch him prostrate beneath our lofty gates.”

_Iliad_ I, 234: Achilles swears, in _enmity_ towards Agamemnon: “verily by this staff, that shall no more put forth leaves or shoots since at the first it left its stump among the mountains, neither shall it again grow green . . .” _Aen._ XII, 206: Latinus swears, in _friendship_ towards Aeneas: “even as this scepter shall never again be dressed in light foliage and put forth branch and shade, since once in the forest it was hewn from the nether stem . . . .”

_Iliad_ XVI, 249: “So spake he [Achilles] in prayer, and Zeus, the counsellor, heard him, and a part the Father granted him, and a part denied.” _Aen._ XI, 794: “Phoebus heard [the prayer of Arruns about Camilla], and in thought vouchsafed that part of his vow should prosper; the other part he scattered to the flying breezes.”

_Iliad_ IV, 122: “And he [Pandarum] drew the bow, clutching at once the notched arrow and the string of ox’s sinew: the string he brought to his breast and to the bow the iron arrow-head. But when he had drawn the great bow into a round, the bow twanged and the string sang aloud, and the keen arrow leapt” (namely towards Menelaus who is _not_ killed). _Aen._ XI, 858: The goddess Opis, sent by Diana, “drew the fleet arrow from the golden quiver, stretched the bow with grim intent, and drew it afar, till the curving ends met each with other, and at length, with levelled hands, she touched the pointed steel with her left, her breast with her right and with the bow-string.” (She aims at Arruns who is _killed_.)

_Odysse._ XI, 206: “Thrice I [Odysseus] sprang towards her [his mother], and my heart bade me clasp her, and thrice she flitted from my arms like a shadow or a dream, and pain grew ever sharper at my heart.” _Aen._ VI, 699: “Thrice, where he [Aeneas] stood, he assayed to throw his arms round his neck [his father’s neck]: thrice the phantom fled through the hands that clutched in vain, light as the winds and fleet as the pinions of sleep.” But we can also read in the second book of the _Aeneid_, verse 792: “Thrice, then I [Aeneas] strove to throw my arms round her neck [the neck of Aeneas’ wife’s shadow]: thrice the form, that I clasped in vain, fled through my hands, light as the winds and fleet as the pinions of sleep.”

_Odysse._ XIX, 562: “For two are the gates of shadowy dreams, and one is fashioned of horn and one of ivory. Those dreams that pass through the gate of sawn ivory deceive men, bringing words that find no fulfilment. But those that come forth through the gate of polished horn bring true
issues to pass, when any mortal sees them.” (Penelope is saying these words.) *Aen.* VI, 892: “There are two gates of Sleep:-of horn, fame tells, the one, through which the spirits of truth find an easy passage; the other, wrought smooth-gleaming with sheen of ivory, but false the dreams that the nether powers speed therefrom to the heaven above.” (Virgil, the author, is saying this.)

These examples can be multiplied many, many times. There would be no point for me to continue quoting. But let us take notice of the fact that there is almost always some weighty difference embedded in the otherwise completely analogous phrasing and imagery.

However the similarity between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* on the one hand and the *Aeneid* on the other goes far beyond phrasing and imagery. Let me give you another series of examples of what is called Virgil’s imitation of Homer.

When Odysseus arrives in Ithaca, Pallas Athene fills the countryside with mist so that Odysseus cannot recognize it. When Aeneas arrives in Carthage, Venus conveys him in a cloud so that nobody can see him. Before meeting with Penelope Odysseus is beautified by Pallas Athene. Before meeting Dido Aeneas is beautified by Venus. A young man, Elpenor, falls from the roof of Circe’s house; Odysseus sees his shade in Hades and buries the corpse when he returns to the light of day. The pilot of Aeneas’ fleet, Palinurus, falls from his ship and is subsequently killed by a barbarous tribe; his shade is seen by Aeneas in the nether world and his corpse buried later on. Diomedes and Odysseus, two seasoned warriors, engage in a spying mission at night, kill a quantity of Trojans and bring their enterprise to a successful and glorious end. Nisus and Euryalus, two young men, try to break through the enemy lines at night, kill a quantity of Latins and die gloriously but unsuccessfully at the end. The shade of Ajax keeps a contemptuous silence when facing Odysseus in Hades. So does the shade of Dido when confronted by Aeneas in the nether world. In point of fact, innumerable episodes in the *Aeneid* have their analogues in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. There are exceptions, as, for instance, the diverse prophecies addressed to Aeneas, the transformation of the Trojan ships into mermaids in Book IX and the rôle of the warrior maid Camilla. Camilla has her analogue, however, in Penthesilea who, although not to be found in Homer, appears in many classical Greek texts and is mentioned by Virgil himself (I, 491). There is parallelism between Menelaus, Paris, and Helen on the one hand, and Turnus, Aeneas and Lavinia on the other, whatever the difference between these personages and their relationships. There is parallelism between Achilles and Patroklos on the one hand, and Aeneas and Pallas on the other, again whatever the difference between these pairs. To the catalogue of ships in the second book of the *Iliad* corresponds the catalogue of the Latin armies in the seventh book of the *Aeneid*. To the funeral games in honor of Patroklos correspond the games in honor of Anchises. Three times does Achilles circle the city of Priam in hot pursuit of Hector, while Aeneas covers five circles on the plain around the
city of Latinus in hot pursuit of Turnus. To the shield of Achilles fashioned 
by Hephaistos upon the insistence of Achilles's mother corresponds the 
shield of Aeneas fashioned by Vulcan upon the insistence of Aeneas's 
mother. But the difference here is great: on Achilles's shield are moulded 
Heaven and Earth, Peace and War, Marriage and Litigation, Work and 
Leisure, and all the bounties of the earth; on Aeneas's shield are shown the 
glorious deeds of the Romans culminating in Octavian's victory at Actium.

What is the significance of this persistent and detailed, yet unfaithful 
"imitation"? In other poems, written before the Aeneid, especially in the 
Bucolics, Virgil also imitated his Greek predecessors, especially Theocritus. 
But this imitation involved only the general pattern, the general mood 
and style of the poems and hardly any of their details. The tradition tells 
us that Virgil, in his younger years, conceived the plan to write an epic 
poem devoted to the glory of Rome but that he gave up that plan because 
he found the task too difficult. In his later years he took it up again, prod-
ded by Augustus, perhaps, and worked on the Aeneid for eleven years — 
until his death. It is in this period that what is called his imitation of 
Homer flourished supremely. The question we face is just this: why was it 
necessary for Virgil to imitate Homer to the extent he did? The ancient 
commentators I quoted in the beginning were late commentators. Their 
opinion that one of the purposes of the poem was the imitation of Homer 
and their implied opinion that such an undertaking was in itself praise-
worthy were not shared by Virgil's contemporaries, we are told. His con-
temporaries reproached him for borrowing too much from Homer. Virgil is 
reported to have answered them, proudly and enigmatically, that it was 
easier to steal from Neptune his trident and from Hercules his club than to 
steal a verse from Homer. What did he mean by that?

Let us go back to the unquestionable purpose of the Aeneid. It is the 
praise of Augustus and the projection of an exalted vision of the Roman 
world. What is the background of this praise and this projection? The 
answer is: a century of civil disorders and wars, beginning in 133 B.C, 
after the end of the Punic and Spanish wars, and a passionate and wide-
spread desire for peace. Peace is finally restored by Octavian in the year 
31. Let me quote from a modern critic, Edward Kennard Rand: "To 
Virgil's contemporaries, hardly any religious or political event could have 
had a more spectacular importance than the closing of Janus' temple 
[which act signified peace] twice in the reign of Augustus, once after the 
victory of Actium [over Antony] and once in the year 25... Only once 
before in all Roman history had this happy event occurred, namely, at 
the completion of the First Punic War."

This peace is based on Roman rule under Cæsar Augustus. And the 
origin of this Roman rule is the great subject of Virgil's epic endeavor.

But how to attack so vast a subject? Let us understand Virgil's predicament. 
We, today, have an easy way of dealing with such a subject. To 
praise deeds or events, we call them "historical." We say: an historical 
meeting or an historical battle took place on such or such a day. In saying
this we mean to pay tribute to the importance of that meeting or that battle. The adjective "historical" is used as a superlative which confers to an event a transcendent rank and the laurel of undying glory. But to Virgil – and not to him alone – the medium of praise is not History but Myth. For only the glowing light of a myth is able to illuminate the intrinsic unintelligibility of human deeds and sufferings. To write an epic poem on the grandeur of Rome means, therefore, to construct a myth. To use a Greek word familiar to Virgil, it means to μυθοποιέω.

Most myths are anonymous. They are there, filling, mirror-like, the horizon of human lives with splendid or dark or sometimes terrifying figures that bring to pass wondrous and awesome events. But there are also myths attached to names, to names of "mythmakers," as, for example, to Homer, to Hesiod, to Plato. Can one compete with these mythmakers? Can one invent "new" myths? In fact, did those mythmakers I have just mentioned invent theirs? Did they not merely imitate or modify or transpose myths in existence long before them, just as the Greek tragedians did? How, then, shall Virgil go about it? Virgil has before him a plethora of legends related to various sites and monuments in Rome and Italy. The legend of Aeneas himself, of Aeneas the Trojan, the source of Roman stock, is well known in Roman lands. Can these legends lend themselves to form the nucleus of the myth Virgil is after? Must not other myths be taken into consideration? Virgil himself seems to have cherished the myth of the succession of the ages of mankind. Let us consider this myth briefly.

Hesiod tells it in his Works and Days. Five generations of men have so far succeeded each other: first the golden one, in Kronos's time, when men lived as if they were gods, abundantly, without hard work or pain, without suffering from old age; then the gods created the second generation, of silver, far worse than the first, shortlived, troublesome, lacking plenty; then came the age of bronze, when men were terrible and strong, destroying each other; then Zeus created the fourth generation of hero-men, who are also called half-gods; they besieged seven-gated Thebes and fought before Troy for the sake of lovely-haired Helen; those who did not perish in carnage and war were settled by Zeus in the islands of the blessed, at the extreme end of the world, with Kronos, freed from bondage, as their king; finally came the age of iron, in which we live now, in which the sense of right and wrong has been almost entirely lost, in which force reigns and vengeance and weariness; but Zeus will destroy this generation of mortals also. This story of the ages of men can also be found in the Book of Daniel, supposedly written some hundred years before Virgil and in all probability unknown to him, but still symptomatic for the myth's universality and influence. In the second chapter of this book Daniel interprets a dream King Nebuchadnezzar had had. According to this interpretation the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar is the kingdom of gold, of power and strength and glory; it will be succeeded by another, presumably of silver, which in turn will be followed by a kingdom of brass; then will come a fourth kingdom, that of iron and clay, in which kingdom men "shall not
The Myth of Virgil's Aeneid

The trader shall quit the sea, ... every land shall bear all fruits. ... The earth shall not feel the harrow, nor the vine the pruning hook; the sturdy ploughman, too,
shall now loose his oxen from the yoke. Wools shall no more learn to counterfeit varied hues, but of himself the ram in the meadows shall change his fleece, now to sweetly blushing purple, now to saffron yellow; of its own will shall scarlet clothe the grazing lambs.

This prophetic poem is written in a dark and oracular vein, imitating, perhaps, the Sibylline songs. The identity of the child has remained a controversial subject among scholars. The preponderant opinion tends to recognize in the child a son of Asinius Pollio. Christian interpreters considered the fourth Eclogue as a prophecy of the Messiah, saw in the child Jesus, the Christ, and in Virgil a pagan Isaiah. Not by chance does Virgil play the role of Dante’s guide and mentor in Hell and Purgatory. It is conceivable that the Sibylline oracles, re-assembled after the genuine ones had burned with the Capitol in the year 83, might have contained some Jewish oracles reflecting the spirit and the substance of Isaiah’s prophecy and that Virgil might have experienced their spell. What seems indubitable is that the fourth Eclogue expresses the overwhelming longing for a New Beginning, a new age of Peace. The mythical idea of the completion of a cosmic cycle and of a return to the happy days of Kronos, the days of Saturn, seems ever-present to Virgil’s mind.

We thus perceive the factors which determine the composition of the Aeneid devoted to the glories of Rome and to the bounties of Peace under the aegis of Caesar Augustus. The legend of the Trojan hero Aeneas, the ancestor of Roman power, would become part and parcel of the myth of rebirth which tells of the return of the days of Saturn, of the golden age, after completion of a cosmic cycle and the beginning of a new αἰών.

Aeneas will land on Saturnian soil, in Latium. King Latinus, who rules “over lands and towns in the calm of a long peace” and himself descends from Saturn, will tell Aeneas, an offspring of Jupiter: “be not unaware that the Latins are Saturn’s race, righteous not by bond or laws, but self-controlled of their own free will and by the custom of their ancient god.” Evander, the “good man,” king of the Arcadians, who is going to ally himself with Aeneas at precisely the spot where Rome shall stand, will recount to Aeneas the origins of Saturnian rule:

In these woodlands the native Fauns and Nymphs once dwelt, and a race of men sprung from trunks of trees and hardy oak, who had no rule or art of life, and knew not how to yoke the ox or to lay up stores, or to busband their gains; but tree branches nurtured them and the huntsman’s savage fare. First from heavenly Olympus came Saturn, fleeing from the weapons of Jove and exiled from his lost realm. He gathered together the unruly race, scattered over mountain heights, and gave them laws, and chose that the land be called Latium, since in these borders he had found a safe hiding-place [from the Latin verb laterē]. Under his reign were the golden ages men tell of: in such perfect peace he ruled the nations; till little by little then crept in a race of worse sort and duller hue, the frenzy of war, and the passion for gain.
And before the final triumph of Aeneas, Juno, Aeneas's implacable enemy, will yield to destiny, but will request this from Jove: "command not the native Latins to change their ancient name, nor to become Trojans and be called Teucrians, nor to change their tongue and alter their attire: let Latium be, let Alban kings endure through ages, let be a Roman stock, strong in Italian valour: fallen is Troy, and fallen let her be, together with her name." Jove will grant Juno's wish, and Rome's future will be secure. Under Caesar Augustus the reign of peace will begin anew.

But is all this sufficient to account for the composition of the great Roman epic poem? Is this the myth of the Aeneid? Have we not overlooked a crucial point in the very conception of the poem, to wit, that the epic poem itself, while embodying a myth, cannot help reflecting the age it belongs to? But are not the great cosmic cycles, the \( \alpha\bar{\omega}v\bar{e}c \), identical? Do not in each of them the Argo, and Troy, and Caesar reappear? It is with respect to this point that a Platonic myth becomes of utmost importance to Virgil. It can be found in Plato's dialogue The Statesman.

The interlocutors in this dialogue are the Stranger from Elea and a young man, a namesake of Socrates. The Stranger tells a myth:

During a certain epoch god himself goes with the universe as guide in its revolving course, but at another epoch, when the cycles have at length reached the measure of the allotted time, he lets it go, and of its own accord it turns backwards in the opposite direction, since it is a living being and is endowed with intelligence by him who fashioned it in the beginning.

Thus, we read further, "the universe is guided at one time by an extrinsic divine cause, acquiring the power of living again and receiving renewed immortality from the divine artisan, and at another time it is left to itself and then moves by its own motion ... ." Young Socrates asks: "But was the life in the reign of Kronos ... in that previous period of revolution or in ours?" The Stranger answers:

No, the life about which you ask, when all the fruits of the earth sprang up of their own accord for men, did not belong at all to the present period of revolution, but this also belonged to the previous one. For them, in the beginning, god ruled and supervised the whole revolution, and so again, in the same way, all the parts of the universe were divided by regions among gods who ruled them, and, moreover, the animals were distributed by species and flocks among inferior deities as divine shepherds, each of whom was in all respect the independent guardian of the creatures under his own care, so that no creature was wild, nor did they eat one another, and there was no war among them, nor any strife whatsoever.

The Stranger goes on to describe how god himself was the shepherd of man in that age.

And under his care there were no states, nor did men possess wives or children; for they all came to life again out of the earth, with no recollection of their
former lives. So there were no states or families, but they had fruits in plenty from the trees and other plants, which the earth furnished them of its own accord, without help from agriculture. And they lived for the most part in the open air, without clothing or bedding; for the climate was tempered for their comfort, and the abundant grass that grew up out of the earth furnished them soft couches. That, Socrates, was the life of men in the reign of Kronos: but the life of the present age, which is said to be the age of Zeus, you know by your own experience.

The Stranger summarizes his tale in the following way:

Now as long as the world was nurturing the animals within itself under the guidance of the Pilot, it produced little evil and great good; but in becoming separated from him it always got on most excellently during the time immediately after it was let go, but as time went on and it grew forgetful, the ancient condition of disorder prevailed more and more and towards the end of the time reached its height, and the universe, mingling but little good with much of the opposite sort, was in danger of destruction for itself and those within it. Therefore at that moment the god, who made the order of the universe, perceived that it was in dire trouble, and fearing that it might founder in the tempest of confusion and sink in the boundless sea of diversity, he took again his place as its helmsman, reversed whatever had become unsound and unsettled in the previous period when the world was left to itself, set the world in order, restored it and made it immortal and ageless.

This is the myth of the Stranger in Plato's Statesman, of which I have read to you only a small part. It changes the old myth of the cosmic cycles, which repeat themselves and remain identical, in a significant way. Diagrammatically this can be shown as follows:

Old pattern:  

Platonic pattern:  

The identity of the cycles in the Platonic pattern is, as it were, intermittent. And the reversal of the direction can be best seen at the beginnings of two consecutive cycles. What is important for us to see is this: to be able to accomplish his work, Virgil has to adopt this Platonic myth and to disregard its highly comical and self-refuting context. This adoption determines the composition of the Aeneid and, by implication, Virgil's true relation to Homer. The age of Homer is the age of Zeus, an age characterized by calamitous expeditions, disastrous wars, anarchical diversity. Its beginning is reflected in the Iliad and the Odyssey, its climax reached in the Punic wars. The content of the Homeric poems has to be understood as a derived one. What underlies this content is the reversal of the preceding age of Kronos. Virgil's epic of Rome will have to reverse this reversal. It cannot avoid reproducing the main features and the single episodes of the Greek work, but it will reverse their order, shift the
emphasis in them, exchange the nature and the rôle of the leading persons; for the age of Jove is but a mirror-image of the age of Saturn. Does that mean that Virgil is bound to imitate Homer? No, on the contrary, it is Homer who cannot help imitating Virgil or, if you please, cannot help imitating the epic poet of the preceding Saturnian age, who is identical with Virgil. That is why there has to be so much unfaithful resemblance between the Aeneid and Homer's work. Virgil's own relation to the epic poem of the preceding age constitutes, it seems to me, Virgil's myth of the Aeneid. This is what he must have meant when he declared that it was easier to steal the club of Hercules and the trident of Neptune than to steal a verse from Homer. A poet of the god-led Saturnian age is incapable of stealing verses from a Jovian poet, however excellent this Jovian poet may be.

It might be objected that the Platonic myth, as a Greek myth, adopted by Virgil, is itself a product of the Jovian age. I venture to think that Virgil considered words of sages, words of philosophers as not subjugated to the dominion of the age in which these words were uttered, just as Tartarus and Elysium are outside the sway of the ages. It may be worth while to report to you what an unknown hand has inscribed into a manuscript of Donatus's Life of Virgil (Donatus himself wrote in the fourth century A.D.): "... although he [Virgil] seems to have put the opinions of diverse philosophers into his writings with most serious intent, he himself was a devotee of the Academy; for he preferred Plato's views to all the others."

Let me sketch briefly the way the reversal of the Jovian order is accomplished in Virgil's poem. First of all, the Odyssey precedes the Iliad here, as every commentator since Servius has remarked. But, as we shall see in a moment, the first six books, which correspond to the Odyssey, still belong to the old Homeric age. When Aeneas and his men arrive in Carthage, they face a bas-relief on the temple of Juno which depicts the Trojan war and all the events described in the Iliad. Their past is before them. But this past also casts a shadow on Aeneas' sojourn in Carthage. Aeneas falls in love with Dido, who corresponds to both Calypso and Circe and resembles both Medea and Cleopatra. Aeneas' passion for this woman shows his lingering affinity to the Jovian age, to which Carthage itself, Rome's eternal foe, belongs. A violent separation from Dido becomes necessary, a separation consummated only in Elysium, when the golden bough, the gift to Proserpine, is planted by Aeneas on the threshold of the land of joy, the abode of the blest in the nether world. There, in Elysium, Aeneas sees the shade of his father, while Odysseus, in Hades, meets the shade of his mother. There Aeneas is shown by Anchises the future of Rome, while Odysseus, in Hades, is told of the past and the present, except for the prophecy of the seer Teiresias. When Aeneas is leaving Elysium, a decisive event occurs, challenging our imagination. I quoted earlier the passage in the 19th book of the Odyssey and the corresponding passage at the end of the 6th book of the Aeneid about the two gates of sleep, one of horn through which true dreams pass and one of ivory through which false
visions and shades issue forth. Anchises dismisses the Sibyl and Aeneas by
the ivory gate (portaque emittit eburna). How shall we understand these
words? Is Aeneas, the pious Aeneas, led on by divine power, a false
dream? Is the grandeur of Rome, Aeneas's treasure and burden, a melan-
choly illusion? Or do not these words, uttered at the very center of the
poem, rather symbolize a cosmic reversal in the structure of the universe,
marking the transition from the age of Jove to the reign of Saturn? In
Greek, the words for "horn" and for "ivory" are attuned to the meaning
of "fulfilment" and of "deception." Not so in Latin. Aeneas emerges from
the nether world a changed man. A re-birth has taken place. His passing
through the gate of ivory transmutes its function. From now on the poem
changes its character, too. As the poet himself says: "Greater is the order
of things that opens before me; greater is the task I essay."

The task is greater indeed. The poem has to describe the beginning of
the golden age. This beginning is marred by the inherited features of the
preceding one, the iron one. Violence and fury will display themselves.
Under Turnus's leadership, Amata's predilections and Juno's help, the
Latins and their allies will oppose the Trojans, aided by the Arcadians and
Etruscans. A new Trojan war will rage in a reversed order. This time it
will end with the victory of Aeneas, the new Hector, over Turnus, the new
Achilles. After this victory there will be reconciliation between the Trojans
and the Latins according to the terms agreed on by Jove and Juno. There
will be reconciliation between Jove and Saturn, too. From then on Rome
will begin its tumultuous ascent, until she reaches the height of Augustan
peace.

The tradition has it that Virgil, when he had finished (or almost finish-
ed) writing the Aeneid, wanted to burn all he had written. Augustus him-
self is said to have prevented this from happening. We may surmise that
Virgil knew this much about his myth: its truth depended on the actual
destiny of Rome. And, prophet that he was, he foresaw the future pax
romana, the future Roman peace, more often than not immersed in a sea
of corruption, of monstrous crimes and dismal anarchy. We should be
grateful to Augustus, though. For even if the gate of ivory may have pre-
served its Homeric character, the nobility of Virgil's attempt and the bold-
ness of his mythical vision make us bow our heads and raise our minds.
ON PLATO'S TIMAEUS AND TIMAEUS' SCIENCE FICTION

Seth Benardete

(17a1-b4). Socrates counts out loud. He makes himself out to be somewhat ridiculous (cf. Rep. 522c5-d9). He does not say, "There are three of you; there should be four." Nor does he say, "We are all here except so-and-so. Where is he, Timaeus?" (cf. Epin. 973a1-2, Legs. 654d6). Socrates discovers the missing fourth by a counting, as though he knew that there should be four but did not know which one of them was missing. He speaks as if his only acquaintance with Timaeus, Hermocrates, and Critias were with anonymous ones. "Fourth" is an ordinal number, a number that completes and makes whole a series. Each of the others is indifferently any other, whereas the absent fourth is because of his absence different. He is the completer only because he is absent. Although he belongs to yesterday's guests and today's hosts (cf. Rep. 345c5, 421b3), he belongs along with Socrates to "us." He, therefore, in decreasing the number of today's hosts, makes Socrates the fourth party-member. Socrates does not count himself because he is not counting the members of the party. He is a one unlike the others, but in light of which the others are related to one another. He counts without being counted. Political philosophy, it seems, is a part of philosophy while still being apart from cosmology.

Justice requires that three complete by themselves the task which Socrates had assigned the day before to four. They cannot wait until the absent fourth recovers from his illness. Whatever strain this may put on their ability to carry out Socrates' injunction it does not excuse them (cf. 20c5-6). A change in circumstances does not lessen their duty to give back what they owe. There are four possibilities. The absent fourth makes no difference, no difference worth mentioning, a difference that prevents them from doing perfectly what they promised to do, or all the difference in the world. He cannot make all the difference without Socrates being unjust and Timaeus stupid, blind as he then would be to the incapacity of himself and the other two; and if he makes no difference or no difference worth mentioning, Socrates in turn must be charged with stupidity for asking a question which, if the answer had been, "He will come a little later, Socrates, and we should wait for him," would not have affected the way in which Socrates' hosts would perform their collective task. Timaeus, then, and the other two will not perform perfectly (cf. 27b7). Their justice comes to light in the element of deficiency. It first comes to light in a somewhat ridiculous speech which distinguishes between multiplicity — one, two, three — and rank; but rank itself only appears because of absence (and then it is an accidental and low rank).

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1 Cf. E. Benveniste, Noms d'agent et noms d'action en I-E, 144-168.
Interpretation

(17b5-6). Socrates' injunction, which turns out to be limited to their setting the best city into motion, is not exactly complied with. The others expand it to include the visible whole and the generation of man. Apparently what Socrates expected was a conversation among the four which would have told him of the deeds and embassies his city would carry out in wartime. They had agreed to this. But how would an imaginary city in motion differ from an imaginary city at rest? Once in motion the city would be subject to decay, and therefore, unless imaginary motion were possible, it would no longer be imaginary. Is imaginary motion possible? Is not imaginary motion precisely the subject matter of the science Socrates makes the third and then the fourth mathematical discipline in the \textit{Republic}? And is not such a science impossible as long as the mathematics of solids has not yet been worked out (\textit{Rep.} 528b4-5)? One begins to wonder, then, whether the non-availability of these two sciences does not make Timaeus' speech and, to a less extent, Critias' a necessity.

(17b7-c5). Timaeus talks as if the speech he will deliver is not entirely prepared; or at least that he can correct it as he goes along so that it will more exactly conform to Socrates' instructions. He talks at first as if Socrates would later have the chance to remind them of anything they have forgotten. Socrates' instructions, however, were not very complicated. What part of them could Timaeus have forgotten? Timaeus perhaps is looking for a way to inform Socrates that there has been a change of plans; but this change is ultimately due to the character of the \textit{Republic}. If the best city is literally impossible, the best city in motion is equally impossible; and the discussion among Timaeus and the others must have been as to how they were to understand Socrates' request. Since Critias' story satisfies the request imperfectly, they now need Socrates' approval of their interpretation; and his approval can only come after he has retold the \textit{Republic} so as to confirm whether or not they have understood him correctly. Socrates' summary, then, would be intended to give them a city in speech that can be set in motion. His summary, at any rate, omits the rule of the philosopher-kings and the still-undiscovered sciences needed to educate them.

Three pre-Socratic philosophers, for whom there is no political philosophy, found Socrates' account of the best regime to their taste. To what extent did they understand the best regime as a tool of understanding, which would remain a tool of understanding even when set in motion? Did they understand its "idealism" as Socrates or as Glaucon understood it? The speeches of Timaeus and Critias answer these questions.

(17c6-19b2). Socrates' summary is in seven parts: 1) the separation of the city's future warriors from all others; 2) the nature and nurture of the warriors; 3) the communism of property; 4) the equality of the sexes; 5) the communism of women and children; 6) the marriage regulations; 7) the regulations that determine class changes. Socrates' summary is
masterly, for he alludes in it to every major difficulty that the *Republic* presents. Far from easing the task of Timaeus and the others, Socrates puts the same obstacles in their way that they had before. Although they are now three, he does not make it any easier for them to be just. He leaves it unclear, for example, whether the warriors have an art; for whereas in the artisan class the art assigned to each is in accordance with his nature, in the case of the warriors, their nature is one thing and their nurture another; for their nurture includes three arts, gymnastics for harshness, music for gentleness, and polemics as their proper craft. Socrates thus indicates the fundamental difficulty of the *Republic*: the structure of the city based on the arts does not coincide with its structure based on the soul. He simultaneously indicates the nobility and the falseness of the noble lie: the warriors are gentle to their subjects who are by nature their friends, but they are harsh in battle to their enemies who are not by nature their enemies. Socrates is silent about the barbarians, who are by nature enemies of the Greeks (*Rep.* 470c5-d2). He thereby indicates that he had made concessions to Glaucón in order to satisfy Glaucón's martial temper. In assigning to the guardians' philosophic nature the cause of their gentleness, Socrates corrects his former account, in which the philosophic nature would equally be the cause of their gentleness and harshness (*Rep.* 376a5-b1). And yet even then Socrates left it open whether or not spiritedness had to supplement their philosophic nature (*Rep.* 376b11-c5). But if "philosophy" can produce a twofold temper, philosophic spiritedness would be possible; and however playful Socrates might have been in suggesting such a possibility, Timaeus seems to take it literally (87e6-88a7). He seems to take Thrasymachus' initial anger against Socrates and Polemarchus as genuine anger (cf. *Phdr.* 267c7-d1). Timaeus, for all his talk of images and imitation, seems to know nothing of feigning.

The guardians are to believe, regardless of its truth, that they have no private possessions, nothing that can be called, even if it is, their own. Communism rests on a series of "as ifs"; it rests on the pretense that "to be" is the same as "to be like" (cf. *Rep.* 463c5-7). To put in motion the terms of such an equation would entail that "to become" is the same as "to become like"; and such an equation seems to be in accord with the doctrine of the "ideas": whatever becomes something only becomes like each something in which it participates. The ground, then, on which the best city rests is false philosophically however effective it may be politically; and this ground when set in motion is possibly true philosophically without its becoming any the more effective politically. Socrates' city in motion does not become through its motion grounded in the truth. His city in motion does not illustrate his "metaphysics."

The guardians receive as if they were mercenaries the pay suitable for moderate men. They seem not to belong wholly to the city, for Socrates is silent as to who their masters are, and their exclusive care for virtue — their minding their own business — would leave them no time to care for the city (cf. *Ap. S.* 30a7-b4). The city is communized in such a way as to
communize the guardians' concern for virtue to the exclusion of the city. To participate in virtue is to cease to participate in the city, for the city, though the indispensable ground for the guardians' participation in virtue, does not itself as the indispensable ground participate in virtue. To the extent that the city is the image of virtue it is not the city; and to the extent that the city is the city it is not the image of virtue. Socrates' city seems to be the model for Timaeus' understanding of the visible whole.

Timaeus seems to diverge most sharply from Socrates with regard to the equality of the sexes, for Timaeus makes man as superior to woman as the father-demiurge is to the mother-space. And yet Socrates speaks in such a way as to leave it dark as to how women are the equal of men. He speaks of women's natures as resembling men and not the natures of men; and if women's natures are found in their souls, and soul is the same as mind, Socrates would be saying something as true as it is trivial: "The male physician and the female physician have with respect to their soul the same nature" (Rep. 454d2-3). Timaeus, however, while compelled to agree with this, denies that the woman's soul is like the man's even after sexual generation has been provided for. He apparently ascribes *eros* only to the male, and the male's *eros* is of generation simply and not, as is the *epithumia* of women, of the procreation of children (91b2-d5). The male desires to have his seed flow out, but he does not naturally desire to have it fertilize the female. Through his manic desires he tries to dominate everything; and everything includes not only other men but the highest and lowest things as well. Socrates does not deal in the *Republic* with such differences (unless the tyrant as the embodiment of *eros* can only be a man): and Timaeus may well be, in seemingly departing from the literal teaching of the *Republic*, in agreement with Socrates. Timaeus, at any rate, has the gods make a man who is originally as much without the need for procreation and the art to satisfy it as Socrates' "true city" admits, on the basis of needs satisfiable by the arts, no women.

Neither here nor in the *Republic* does Socrates explain how parents cannot fail to recognize their own offspring by their resemblance to themselves. Such conjectures could only be suppressed if the citizens live together without light and have their necks chained in such a way as to be unable to look at or touch one another, or are bred so true to a single bodily type that no difference could arise or no perceptible difference could ever be the basis for identification. The "cave", then, literally understood, would be one solution, and the "nuptial number," again literally understood, would be another. An image no longer understood as an image would yield the same results as a non-existent science. Timaeus, for his part, speaks of generation as a bringing into the light (91d4); but he never speaks of variations in the human, as opposed to the non-human, face (91e8-92a1); indeed, he never discusses the face as a whole but presents the making of the first skull in such a way as to suggest that the skull's present shape is due to a degeneration, and as if he did not know that it too must have had eye-sockets as well as other apertures:
Timaeus gives the spherical skull a single aperture for the attachment of the spine (73e6-74a1). He does not deign to describe the making of the nose (cf. 75d5-c2).

Socrates speaks as if the number of places in each class were fixed, and there could only be descent from a higher to a lower place if someone at the same time ascended from a lower to a higher place. This perfect balance between motion and order seems to be equally true of Timaeus' first account of the interchange among the four bodies, in which there is no waste— the whole feeds on its own wastes— and the whole acts and is acted on by art (33c6-d1); but this is before Timaeus introduces the making of the soul, which upsets that balance, and before he excludes earth from undergoing any transformation except into itself. The whole would be perfect if it only consisted of bodies of the same type, just as Socrates' first city is likewise perfect because it ignores the needs of the human soul that are not satisfied by bodies. Timaeus' demiurge upsets his own making when he tries to put together his making the kosmos like its paradigm and his making it like himself. In making a place for himself in the kosmos he resembles Glaucon in his disgust at finding no place for himself in Socrates' "true city."

Socrates stops his summary before he introduced the philosopher-king; he stops, more precisely, just before he had returned to the question of whether communism were as possible among human beings as among other animals, a question he had in turn postponed in order to explain to Glaucon — what was obvious to himself — how his city would engage in warfare (Rep. 466e1-471c3). It is unclear whether Socrates now wishes to repudiate the concessions he had then made to Glaucon in order to hear from others a purer typology of war, less infected with Glaucon's private interests, or whether in the company of non-Athenians he wishes to present himself as the true "son" of the war-loving and wisdom-loving Athena (24c7-d1). But Socrates did not just botch his city in order to appease Glaucon; such strains are inherent in the city itself, for the requirements of warfare cannot consist with the equality and communism of women. Since women are more valuable than men in the perspective of the city's future, one would always be reluctant to send any able-bodied woman to the front, to say nothing of those pregnant, especially since one would expect, if the marriage regulations work, that the best breeders would be at any time pregnant. Everything would break down if the best female warriors were not the same as the best breeders, for then two classes of women would have to be maintained; and in that case there would be no need for the class of women warriors: even Socrates admits that women would be on the whole weaker than men. These obstacles to setting the best city in motion are independent of Glaucon's request that the hero on the battlefield be awarded sexual favors, for that would be fatal to the city's marriage arrangements unless the brave warrior were always the good ruler. To set the best city in motion, then, is to purify Socrates' account of his interlocutors' biases; but to purify it of these biases does not leave the city
pure. Socrates had set Timaeus and the others a problem that does not admit of a solution. His city cannot go to war without betraying its principles. It is merely a question of which principles one chooses to betray; and Socrates suspects that other betrayals would be worth hearing about.

(19b3-20c3). Socrates almost erases three distinctions: that between animate and inanimate, that between three dimensions and two, and that between "reality" and imitation. The desire to see a living animal move does not differ from the desire to see a picture of an animal move. Motion in the plane suggests the possibility of a science that Socrates had omitted in the Republic. The clearest example of two-dimensional kinematics is geometrical construction, which as an action in speech Socrates had called both laughable and indispensable (Rep. 527a6-b1). The necessity of mathematical construction lies in the need to make evident to ourselves what is evident by nature; and its ridiculousness lies in the unresolved tension it reveals between theory (gnosis) and practice (cf. Arist. Met. 1051a21-33). Is Plato's Republic like that? Is the construction in speech of the best city at odds with the contemplation of the best city in itself? Is Socrates' summary here of its regime, which resembles a theorem without the proof, at odds with the constructive proof that the Republic imperfectly supplies (cf. 435c9-d5, 484a5-b1)? Do Socrates and the others found the city for the sake of practice or theory? If for practice, then its impossibility, as shown in the construction, does away with the theorem; and if for theory, the theorem turns out to be the impossibility of such a theorem.

Socrates speaks in his comparison of beautiful animals. If the plural is taken as strictly applicable to what Socrates wants to hear about, then the best city surrounded by other cities equally good eliminates the very thing Socrates wants to hear about. Beautiful cities together would never be in motion. And if one again takes the comparison literally, would one ever want to see beautiful animals fighting with each other or other uglier animals? But if one modifies the comparison and takes it to mean that one might desire to see beautiful animals doing their own work, would one then want to see them generating? If no animal however beautiful is complete by itself, it does not follow that in its attempt to complete itself it would be equally beautiful, let alone more beautiful, to behold (cf. Hipp. Mai. 299a1-b2). If motion necessarily enhances the beauty of anything, the objects of the non-existent science of solids in motion would be more beautiful than the objects of solid geometry. Only if closer approximation to "reality" is the criterion for determining the degree of beauty in things, could Socrates' desire to see the best city in motion be explicable in terms of his desire to see the best city made more beautiful. Only if the guardians' highest virtue is the art of fighting, would they become more beautiful when covered with blood (cf. Xen. Cyrop. 4.4.3).

If Socrates' alternative between a "truly living" animal and a painted animal is applied to his account of the best city, then Socrates would be saying that he either made an imitation of the "real" city or made the
"real" city. Either the "reality" of the best city would be in speech, or the beauty of the best city in speech might be due to its being in speech, from which one could not infer that it would retain that beauty if it were in deed (cf. Rep. 472d4-473a4). Socrates seems to exclude a third possibility: the best city in speech, precisely because it came to be in speech, is inferior to the best city as "idea"; and this best city is far from being idle but rather through its participation in eidetic motion is more "real" than either the city in deed or the city in both its being in speech and its coming-to-be through speech. Socrates had implied in the Republic that the best city was not an idea (592b2), though he had not excluded the possibility that justice was an idea (472b7-d3). His alternative here, in any case, points to the paradox of the ideas: the truly living animal in the strict sense is not the animal in deed but the "real" animal's idea, which more resembles a painting than it does any animal in deed. This paradox haunts Timaeus' entire account of the demiurge's making the visible and living whole in imitation of the eidetic and non-living whole.

Socrates almost erases in his speech a fourth distinction: that between seeing and hearing. The visible in speech does not differ from the audible; but the visible in deed is not as such audible and perhaps not even capable of being put into speech. Socrates cannot expect his hosts to transport him to a place where he can see the best city at war — would the paradigm laid up in heaven be at war? — though Critias does his best in the Critias to point to visible features of Attica. Timaeus, on the other hand, cannot simply point to the visible world as it now is, for his kosmos in speech includes a kind of man that ceased to exist after the first generation (90e6-91a1). The coming-to-be of the kosmos in speech leads to a kosmos that only is in speech: Timaeus himself asserts that speech is systematically misleading with regard to both being and becoming (37e3-38b5, 49b2-e4). What Socrates hears from Timaeus bears no more or less relation to either what "truly" is at rest or what "really" is in motion than Socrates' own speech bears. The visible kosmos is as refractory to speech as the best city in speech is refractory to becoming visible.

Socrates knows that he is incapable of praising adequately the best city and its men; and to praise them adequately is the same as to report what they did and said before and during a war. Socrates denies that he can do for the best city what he can do for Eros: to tell the truth about the best city in wartime, and with this as a foundation select the most beautiful parts of the truth and arrange them in the most suitable manner (Symp. 198d3-6). He cannot do for the best city what he does not have to do for the "true city." On the basis of Republic 607a one would be inclined to say that what Socrates wants is to hear from a chaste Homer, a Homer bred in the best city and himself living during such a war or learning about it exactly by hearsay. No poet of this kind is known to Socrates; and since he cannot exist before the best city exists, and the best city cannot exist unless one of its founders is at least as competent a poet as Homer was, in order to nourish his fellow citizens on the proper stories,
and since no poet can imitate well what he has not been bred to, there seems to be no possibility of there ever being such a poet, unless one assumes that the best city does not begin as the best city but becomes best in time. If its first citizens are children under ten who are fortunate enough not to have to face war before they in turn have had children, perhaps in the second generation a poet could arise who would satisfy Socrates. But even this is not enough, for it would take several generations to obtain the kinds of natures which one would want to fight a war that deserved to be celebrated; and even if one could have peace for so long a time, the city could not dispense with the original act of war that gave it enough extra land to support the education of its future guardians. To say nothing of the fact that this assumes a mature population, that war would certainly not be the war which Socrates would think the city entered upon in a suitable manner. The problem of war for the best city is as inextricably bound up with the problem of poetry as it is with the problem of the equality and communism of women. The Iliad cannot be and yet seems necessarily to be the model for the poem Socrates has in mind.

It is easier, according to Socrates, to be a good imitator in deed than in speech of what one has not been bred to. It is easier to be a just man than a good poet of the just in a bad city. Socrates can practice in his fatherland the deeds that belong to the best city (cf. Rep. 592a7-b6); but the poet cannot easily represent in his fatherland the deeds of the best city. The closer an imitation in deed comes to what it imitates, the less one can or should distinguish between it and the "real" thing; but the perfectly made illusion would deceive everyone and still would not be the less an illusion. And yet, though the painted grapes of Zeuxis deceived the birds, the boy who held the grapes did not deceive them (Pliny NH 35.66). No made illusion can be perfect unless its maker forgets himself as he beholds his own making. Self-knowledge is the only barrier to the perfect illusion; and the sophists, who pretend that they are the masters of illusion, are only partly aware of their own self-delusion. It is what makes them, according to the Eleatic Stranger, ironic (Sph. 268a1-8). The poets can imitate what is their own without being able to go beyond their own; and the sophists can make up beautiful speeches about everything except about what is their own, for there is nothing that is their own if they have no grasp of either philosophers or politicians, of all the things that each would severally do and say in wartime. The sophists understand nothing of war (and hence of the city) because, in the belief that there need not be compulsion, they subordinate politics to rhetoric (cf. Arist. EN 1180b35-1181a23). The poets are too rooted in the local, the sophists not rooted enough; Socrates the philosopher has his roots in heaven (90a6-7), and the politicians are not articulate enough. Self-knowledge without universality is the failing of the poet, universality without self-knowledge the failing of the sophist; to be without either self-knowledge or universality is the failing of the politician, and to be equipped with both the failing of Socrates. The proper but seemingly impossible combination of Socrates' failing with the politician's failing is, in the ab-
sence of the best city's poet, the only available way to fulfill Socrates’ request.

Socrates presents Timaeus as the complete opposite of himself. He belongs to a most law-abiding city, Socrates to an almost lawless democracy. He is as rich as the richest man; Socrates lives in ten-thousandfold poverty. He is as nobly born as the noblest; Socrates comes from an undistinguished family. He has handled the highest offices of Locris; Socrates will hold office only once. He is most competent in astronomy and cosmology (27a3-5); Socrates now devotes his entire study to the human things. And he has reached the peak of philosophy; Socrates knows nothing except his own ignorance. Timaeus seems to be the perfect gentleman in both the lowest and the highest sense (88b5-6). The gap between appearance and reality, truth and opinion, is in his case closed. He would therefore be just the man to set in motion a city in speech.

(20d7-21a3). Socrates’ summary was preceded by the Republic; the Critias is preceded by Critias' summary; and Timaeus’ full account, or “law” as Socrates calls it, is preceded by what Socrates calls its prooemion (27d4-6). Neither Critias nor Timaeus can proceed without Socrates’ approval; they have to give him a taste of what he will hear; and perhaps Socrates too gave them Book I of the Republic as a foretaste of his account of the best regime; indeed, he called it the prooemion (357a2). There would be, then, seven parts to the three dialogues: Book I of the Republic; Republic II-X; summary of Republic II-V; summary of Critias; Timaeus’ prooemion; Timaeus’ “law”; Critias. If one treats Critias’ summary too as a prooemion, the three prooemia concern respectively the problem of justice, the problem of “historical” truth, and the problem of cosmology; and since Polemarchus dropped his father’s definition of justice as truth-telling, and Timaeus avows that his own account will lack total truthfulness and will be beside self-contradictory, one could say that the bond among the three dialogues is truth: from justice without truth-telling to first a “truthful tale” (26e4-5) and then a “likely tale.” Between the impossible and the probable stands the Mother of the Muses (Critias 108d2), who will allow Critias to eulogize Athens “justly and truly.”

(21a4-6). Socrates understands the deed to be retold by Critias as something not recorded but really done. He thereby suggests three other possibilities: a deed recorded and really done, a deed neither recorded nor really done, or a deed recorded but not really done. Thucydides' history would exemplify the first, Timaeus’ account the second, and Greek mythology the third. The closest Socrates had ever come to speaking of what was neither recorded nor really done was in describing the degeneration of the best regime into timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny, where he had asked the Muses to instruct him in the “nuptial number,” its later forgetting, and the generation of stasis in the various regimes. If the best regime is allowed to have once existed, Socrates shows himself to be per-
fectly able to describe the worse regimes at war within themselves and their corresponding soul-types. Socrates can blame in a suitable manner the internal motions of cities, but he cannot so praise the external motion of the best city. His Muses know nothing of such praise. He seems to know more about bad souls in motion than about good bodies in motion.

(21a7-26e1). Solon found himself in somewhat the same position as Socrates: he was forced to abandon a national epic and devote himself to stasis, about which he also found time to write poems. If compulsion had not intervened, Socrates would not have had to make his request of Timaeus and the others; he would already have had, according to Critias, just the poem he wants; or if he had traveled as widely as Solon, he could have perhaps learnt the Egyptian story at first hand. Socrates does know an Egyptian story about the discovery of letters; but since that story told him only about the disadvantages of writing, he would never have asked as Solon did about the Egyptians’ sacred writings, nor accepted their sophistic interpretation of the Phaethon-story, for without complete self-knowledge he could not know whether such a story referred to a “meteorological,” divine, or psychic phenomenon. Socrates would seem to be, like all the Greeks, young in soul. But the short memory of the Greeks does not truly make them young, for the Egyptians declare that their longer memory reveals the eternal. Progress within a short interval conceals lack of progress in the large. It is the Greeks, then, who are old, for they are devoted to their own remembered past as if it were the unique past. They are ignorant of the eternal return of the same. Their ignorance, however, does make them children in another respect: they are forever fearful of universal destruction. Their fear, however, is groundless: not only have there always been and always will be men, but there have always been Athenians, Egyptians, and every other race everywhere on the inhabitable earth; and the Egyptians were always saved from destruction in order to record everything noble, great, or exceptional that has ever been done anywhere. National types seem to be the Egyptian equivalent to Platonic soul-types. Patriotism is rooted in the eternal and the written records of the eternal. And yet the Egyptians do not offer an easy comfort: their records are safe from cataclysmic rains and fires but not from earthquakes; and the citizens of Atlantis have disappeared without a trace. A people’s semipermanity ultimately depends on their continued piety and not on the nature of their land. Egyptian piety, however, has nothing to do with happiness but only with survival: the earthquake that sank Atlantis swallowed up the whole Athenian army. The best in deed is always precarious and only survives in speech.

(27a2-27b6). Athena chose Attica as her own because she observed that its moderate climate would yield the most intelligent men; but it was because she was war-loving that the Athenians became like her in that respect as well: she discovered weaponry. Critias all but says that the love
of wisdom is due to nature and the love of war to the gods. Such a distinction resembles that between the visible whole made on the model of the ideas and the visible whole made like the demiurge. Does the demiurge, then, import war into the visible whole? Cannot Socrates' hosts honor his request before they have shown that war is of cosmic significance? Heraclitus' War and Empedocles' Strife would suggest a pre-Socratic background to the program of Socrates' hosts.

Critias thinks that he cannot merely take over Socrates' superbly educated men; they must first come into being in Timaeus' speech; and then, though their education has preceded their birth, he can, "according to the speech and law of Solon," present them to his fellow judges and have them "made" citizens of the old Athens, "as if they were the Athenians of that time." To set the best city in motion is to put it in time; and time, though it only comes to light in speech, is neither as illusory as the best city in speech nor as "real" as what is neither in time nor just in speech. The temporally correct sequence, however — Timaeus' speech, Socrates' and then Critias' — was impossible, for Socrates' speech of yesterday was indispensable for reminding Critias of the story he had heard when he was ten. Only Socrates can link Timaeus with Critias. Only the city that belongs neither to what is nor to what becomes can link what was at the beginning of time with what was nine thousand years ago. Socrates' speech in the Athens of today presented an outline of an education that was missing in the story the Egyptian priests told; and neither Timaeus nor Critias could supply it (cf. 89d7-e1). One can make one's way toward the beginning but one can begin neither at the beginning nor with the ancestral (cf. 29b2-3, Phdr. 237b7-c2). The beginning is not first for us and the ancestral as such forbids the search for the beginning (cf. Plt. 299b2-d1). Socrates' temporally rooted speech about the eternal truth of political life is the means for bringing together that which is the eternally moving image of eternity with the temporally rooted deed of the best city in motion. The truth of time cannot fit with the human understanding of time without political philosophy.

(27d5-28b2). Since that which is and that which becomes both share equally in "always," Timaeus cannot distinguish them apart from an epistemic criterion: if it is comprehended by intellect with speech, it is; if it is opined by opinion with irrational perception, it becomes. Becoming, however, comprehends both coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be. All that comes to be ceases to be. Is it true, then, that becoming itself never perishes? Or is becoming merely a class-name in just the way that being apparently is? Timaeus' account of becoming pays no attention at first to cause, for if there is knowledge of its cause or causes, it is noetically comprehensible, unless what is causally accountable in becoming is not becoming itself. Becoming itself would then be as causeless as being; only when becoming is made to become something and then cease to be that something, would there be need for cause. This is a necessity. Timaeus does not speak of
necessity in relation to being: why there are these beings and not others cannot be known. Since becoming is indifferent to what it becomes, and being never becomes, there must be someone or something that chooses what is to become. It is, however, unclear whether it is becoming or being that becomes through a cause. Either being needs a cause in order to become, since in itself it is without becoming; or becoming needs a cause in order to be, since in itself it is without being.

What is the necessity that, if the model is always, the copy be beautiful? Is to be always the same as to be beautiful? Or rather is it the case that the beautiful is as such the copy of the eternal? It could be a copy in one or more of three ways: the beautiful embodies the eternal; the beautiful reminds one of the eternal; the beautiful approaches the eternal. If the craftsman does a perfect job, he would make not a copy but a second model; but if he does his job less than perfectly, there is room for improvement, even though in a sense his botched making would still be beautiful. If the copy is beautiful it is lovable; and if it is lovable, one wants it to be one's own forever. Does the craftsman make the copy in order that he can have it? Since the eternal allows for its contemplation but not for its possession, the demiurge would have turned away from contemplation in order to have something that was exclusively his own. The visible whole would thus have been made out of his resentment at noetic being. The demiurge would have given up the noetic for something he can call his own. "Haven't you too, Socrates," Timaeus seems to be saying, "given up the endless quest for the ideas in order that you could have your own city?"

The craftsman does not directly use what he contemplates for his model; his model is only in a sense such as what is always (to intend ti paradigma). The eternal cannot be the model because the eternal gives no clue as to how it is put together; and since there are no prior ingredients out of which it is constituted, the craftsman must first translate the noetic into the realizable noetic. Only mathematics can effect such a translation, for only in mathematics do there seem to be noetic parts that enter into the construction of the noetic: points, lines, planes, and ones. The model is a blueprint and not an idea. It is a logos; but the craftsman as craftsman cannot be content with this speech, for the blueprint is neither beautiful nor lovable. Only the visible in the strict sense of visible can be both; but then the best city in speech fails to be either beautiful or lovable; and Socrates did not sacrifice the quest for the ideas in speaking of the best city, for he began by looking at becoming and not being. The "true city" was founded on the need to satisfy by art the needs of the body; and although Timaeus too begins with body, he cannot say that such a whole is the true whole. Soul "really" comes first.

(28b2-29d3). At this point Timaeus introduces an ambiguity that he never completely resolves anywhere in his speech. Critias had said that Timaeus would speak about the genesis of the kosmos; Timaeus began
with a question about "the whole" and speaks of "the whole heaven (ouranos), or kosmos, or whatever name one would most accept." If ouranos means the sky it is visible and a part; but if it means kosmos it is neither, for the distinction between heaven and earth is perceptible, but their unity as a kosmos can only be thought (cf. 40e5, 52b5; Phlb. 28c6-8). Timaeus cannot therefore conclude in the way he does that the kosmos is generated, for if one says with Proclus that to be generated means no more than not to be one's own principle, then any number more than two would be equally generated. In any ordinary sense, moreover, the ouranos is no less untouchable than the kosmos in principle is neither touchable nor visible. Timaeus, however, is well aware of this; indeed, his whole speech can be viewed as an attempt to correct his faulty preemion (cf. 91d6-e1). Its faultiness becomes obvious when Timaeus asserts that the kosmos within which all of becoming occurs shares as much in becoming as any part of becoming does. The fact that every change needs a cause means that that which comprehends all changes also needs a cause; but this only follows if that which comprehends is perceived in the same way as everything it comprehends is perceived. Timaeus' later introduction of "space," which is "grasped by a bastard kind of reasoning without perception," corrects this "error." And yet the indifferent use of ouranos and kosmos, which occasions this error, allows Timaeus to lay down an important truth: the principles of what is first for us and of what is first by nature must be the same. The celestial does not differ in principle from the terrestrial: mortal animal belongs as much as immortal animal to the noetic animal. How this truth can consist with that error is the theme of Timaeus' "law."

The three terms "visible," "touchable," and "somatic" are not on the same level, for that something has body is an inference from its being visible and touchable. Something, moreover, might be bodily without being visible, a smell for example. There is thus no necessity that the whole be visible because it must be bodily; it could even be merely potentially visible without ever becoming visible, for light can either be an essential ingredient of body or an addition to body. If the whole were made of pleasant smells, one would take delight in it, but one would not love it or find it beautiful, for it would not awaken in us the recognition of a lack; we would not be turned toward it (cf. Phlb. 51e1-2). The whole was made visibly beautiful in order to make us aware of our need for something of which we should otherwise have been unaware.

The demiurge is maker (poet) and father of "this whole" (cf. Rep. 330c3-4). As father he would not need to know the paradigm according to which the whole came into being; but he would need someone to be the mother; and she in turn would have to be akin to himself. Timaeus says nothing here about the mother, and he later suggests that "father" cannot perhaps be strictly understood (50d2-3). The demiurge, however, is to be strictly understood as a maker. He is a good craftsman of a beautiful kosmos, or more emphatically, the best of causes of the most beautiful
of what has become. The distinction between beautiful and good seems to be based on the way we talk about a certain kind of maker: we call Homer a good poet of a beautiful poem.\footnote{Cornford in his translation is fairly consistent in blurring throughout this distinction (his justification rests on an appeal to LXX Greek, p. 22, note 2); but he cannot remain so when he comes to translating 87c4-5.} We love the poem and not the poet. The poet, Timaeus says, can be understood though it is difficult; the poem cannot be understood, though the man of the meanest capacity and demiurge himself both agree that it is beautiful (cf. 80b5-8). Since the bodily whole comprehends all bodies it is on the highest of the lowest steps of Diotima's ladder of love. But why should not the whole be just good without being beautiful? It would then be, for example, like medicine, something one would need but otherwise hold in revulsion. It would likewise not have to be visible except in speech. Something can be an image of something else only if it is itself and another (cf. Arist. \textit{de memoria} 450b 20-27). The whole, then, insofar as it is itself would not be beautiful; and insofar as it is another, it would be beautiful but not "be." Its beauty is not and cannot be coextensive with its being. But this lack of being would seem to deprive it of its being good, for something is not good if it merely has the show of goodness. No one wants illusory happiness.

The abiding has its explanation in abiding speeches; but its image has speeches that are themselves images and in proportion to the abiding speeches. These image-speeches are and are not about the image. To the extent that they are speeches about the image not as image they are as far from being beautiful as the image is; and to the extent that they are speeches about the image as image they are beautiful, but they are not about it but about the paradigm. The more faithfully the image-speech reflects the doubleness of the image, the less it tells where its truthfulness lies. One is reminded of Hesiod's Muses, who told lies like the truth and, whenever they wished, told the truth. Only to the extent perhaps that the copy wants to be the paradigm is the image-speech true; but one can never know, according to Timaeus, the boundaries of that want. A universal teleology is impossible. Timaeus replaces opinion with trust in Socrates' proportion of the day before because if the image were wholly an image, one could read off from it the speeches that constitute its paradigm; but since as image it is not wholly an image, there is trust in it as "the reality," but in terms of which it does not admit of being accounted for. Timaeus' speech, therefore, will be imprecise and self-contradictory, for he will speak both from within and without the cave, but he will not tell us, partly because he cannot, when he is in one place or the other.

The contemporary translation of image-speech would be "science fiction"; but whereas modern science fiction deals with the future and rests on the proposition that human knowledge is power for the conquest of nature, Timaeus' deals with the past and rests on the proposition that
divine knowledge is "know-how" for the persuasion of necessity. The demiurge's know-how is no more contemplative wisdom - Timaeus never calls him wise - than its modern equivalent; but Timaeus must deny that we could ever have access to such know-how, for the made whole remains eternal only through the demiurge's will. We must be content with image-speeches that fall short of the paradigm not only because they are speeches about an image but because they do not tell us how to make or unmake the image. We are made like the image and prove to be indispensable for the coming to be of the image; we are not made to the same degree like the image-maker.

(29d7-30c1). The visible whole was originally lifeless and its paradigm was becoming; it became an image of being and an intelligent kosmos through the demiurge, whose goodness solely consisted in his making it like himself and not like being. The presence of intelligence only makes naturally visible things more beautiful, and not ideas, pictures, statues, or Socrates' city in speech. The demiurge, moreover, must understand intelligence as his own kind of intelligence, the intelligence of making. The whole, in becoming intelligent, becomes good; but it becomes beautiful not through any likeness to the demiurge but through the necessity that as an image of the eternal it has to be beautiful. Its becoming good was a matter of the demiurge's will; but its becoming alive was a necessity, though it was not the same necessity that compelled it to become beautiful. It had to have soul in order for it to have intelligence, but the demiurge neither wanted it to be alive nor did its life as such add to either its beauty or its goodness. The demiurge "figured out" that intelligence without soul was impossible. Neither his contemplation of the ideas nor his own desire told him that. Its discovery was more a result of reasoning than was his belief that to bring order into disordered motion was better. Timaeus does not now say whether the order the demiurge brought was ordered motion or ordered rest. If it was ordered rest, he would have made the whole like the picture of beautiful animals to which Socrates compared the best city in speech. Disordered rest, on the other hand, seems to be excluded, though Timaeus later admits that disordered rest, or rather ordered rest without kosmos, as well as disordered motion, are both indispensable for kosmos. The difficulty now, however, is whether ordered motion is possible. If the kosmos is to be as close as possible to the paradigm, the demiurge, one might suppose, would do the best he can and then stop it forever; but the necessity to introduce soul eliminates such a possibility at the same time that it reveals that the best city in speech, despite its class-structure being modelled on the soul, is closer to body than to soul, and hence that, in the reasoning of Timaeus' demiurge, Socrates' desire to see it in motion is to see it alive - two-dimensional kinematics is impossible. This conclusion, however, is valid only if the best city in speech is both naturally visible and intelligent; and Socrates was silent in his summary about the philosopher-king and never proved that
the city was possible by nature. Be this as it may, the demiurge, once he
had made the whole an intelligent animal, could have left it to itself to
move as near as it could to the paradigm; he could have, in short, made
it like a baby to work its own way toward the ideas. But if the demiurge
simultaneously made it with intellect as close to the paradigm as he could,
he made the kosmos purposelessly alive; for it would be forever moving
in frustrated awareness of the impossibility of ever getting any closer to the
paradigm. The kosmos, under these circumstances, could not help but re-
sent its maker; it could not be, like its maker, as ungrudgingly good toward
man as the demiurge was toward it. Man, however, was not deprived
individually of ever moving closer to the ideas, for he was made mortal.
If the kosmos had not been made unique but like man, a kind with in-
finitely many individuals reproducing each other over time, the demiurge
could have dispensed with man and had the kosmos take on the task of
becoming by itself happy (cf. 34b8). There were several obstacles to such
a plan, but the chief among them was the fact that the intelligence of the
kosmos was made like the demiurge's so that the activity of its intellect
necessarily consisted in a kind of making, inferior to the demiurge's but no
more directed to its own improvement as a whole than the demiurge's
making of the kosmos enhanced his understanding of the ideas.

(30c2-31b3). The demiurge must now try to fit together soul with para-
digm, for once he realized that it was impossible to make every noetic being
visibly beautiful, he was forced to look to himself, in whom he found life
and intelligence; and thus equipped he turned back to the ideas with the
question: Which of them lends itself to life and intelligence? The paradoxi-
cal answer is animal: the noetic animal has neither life nor intelligence, for
there is no idea of either soul or mind. Timaeus, however, never faces
this paradox; instead, he introduces a new criterion of beauty. To be beau-
tiful means to be perfect and complete; and perfect completeness requires
that that which completes be of higher rank than, though of the same kind
as, the things which it completes. The comprehensive must be the same as
the perfect, for otherwise, if perfection alone defined beauty, everything
except the highest kind would be dispensable; but if comprehensiveness
alone defined beauty, the collection of kinds by themselves regardless of
their rank would suffice. The visible kosmos, then, unlike any other ani-
mal, is not in need of another kosmos in order to find its completeness in
the unceasing generation of kosmoi. It can be unique; but that it is unique
requires a proof, which Timaeus does not supply, that this kosmos is visi-
ble. The equivalence of kosmos and ouranos is now fatal to such a proof,
for if the visible kosmos could be shown to be the same as the inferred
kosmos, a part of the kosmos would be the whole kosmos and everything
but this highest part would be dispensable. And yet this is not the only
objection to such an equivalence. The visible kosmos does not look as if it
were perfect (cf. 30c5), for the stars are so unevenly distributed in it that
they give the appearance of their being its complex ornaments (*kosmoi*) and not part of a *kosmos* (cf. 48a 6-7).

If the parts of the complete and perfect *kosmos* are four, the *kosmos* is the fifth; and there would have to be a sixth to comprehend these five; but if the *kosmos* is nothing but its four parts, it is not alive. The *kosmos*, then, must be one of the four despite what we have said. The problem is like that of the relation of the four parts of virtue to virtue, which Plato's Athenian Stranger left to a nocturnal council to solve. In the case of the virtues, however, each of its parts seems to be, when strictly understood, the whole of virtue; but if virtue is wisdom, and justice, moderation, and courage are each in their turn wisdom, there would only be three virtues with wisdom the fourth as their togetherness. If, then, *ouranos* is the cosmic equivalent to wisdom (cf. *Epin.* 976e4-977a4), one would have to distinguish between *ouranos* in the weak sense from *ouranos* in the strong sense, on the one hand, and *ouranos* in the precise sense from *ouranos* in the imprecises sense, on the other. In the weak sense, *ouranos* would be the same as *kosmos*; but in the precise sense it would be the same as soul; and again in the strong sense *ouranos* would be heaven as opposed to earth; but in the imprecise sense it would be the same as the three other kinds that in their togetherness constitute the *kosmos*. In this light, one can see why Timaeus asserts that, on the one hand, man belongs to the earthly kind but is still a heavenly plant, and, on the other, the stars are the dwelling-place for man's soul but all other animals are his degenerate offspring.

(31b4-32c4). The cause of being seen cannot be beautifully brought together with the cause of being solid except by a bond that makes them coextensive; but in order that the bond too be as beautiful as possible, it cannot be a catalyst; it must not only make the cause of being seen the cause of being solid, it must make the becoming of the visible solid the same as the becoming of itself as a bond. Now if Timaeus' mathematical translation of this assumes that the squaring of a magnitude resembles becoming (sexual generation, at least, is one by one), and if we generalize from Timaeus' making earth the necessary condition for solidity, and hence assign the necessary condition for heat to fire, for gaseousness to air, and for liquidity to water, then the proportions — fire : air :: air : water: earth — can be viewed as stating that the application of heat to a liquid generates a gas, and the application of a gas to a liquid generates a liquid, for a liquid seems to be a solid gas. This "haptic" sequence, however, does not quite agree with the "optic" sequence, where air and water are alternative means for fire as light to make earth visible. The reason for this difference lies in the fact that we never see a solid as a solid but only as a set of surfaces. Timaeus, therefore, in later denying the possibility of earth being transformed into the other three elements, abandons the assertion that the bonds of perception are the same as the bonds of becoming.

He thereby allows the demiurge to make solids out of surfaces; but the price he pays is high: the somatic kosmos, in a non-mathematical sense, can no longer be beautifully put together. Timaeus' sacrifice of Empedocles for Pythagoras is not pure gain. He can only now pretend that perfect harmony can exist between them because he has not yet considered the consequences of the twin priority of soul and "space" to body.

(32c5-34a7). That the demiurge completely uses up each of the primary bodies in the composition of the visible whole is parallel to the completeness and uniqueness of the noetic animal; but that this makes the visible whole ageless and healthy has no parallel in the noetic animal, for it is eternal but not alive. The spherical shape, moreover, which the demiurge assigns to the visible whole, is not supplied by the noetic animal, for the sphere comprehends all other figures without any of them being a part of it. The demiurge is thus forced to sacrifice wholeness for the sake of comprehensiveness in the ordinary sense; and even when he replaces the sphere with the dodecahedron, he is no better off, for the triangle out of which its pentagonal face is made cannot be similar to the triangle out of which the pyramid, the octahedron, and eikosahedron are made.

The kosmos retains three functions of the human animal: it thinks, it moves, it feeds. The bond between its thinking and its nutrition is its rotation: the circulation of its bodies in itself is like the self-completeness of thought. But where does the likeness leave off and the difference between body and non-body begin? If the likeness extends to the homogeneity of the sphere, being would be, as for Parmenides; one; but if the likeness does not point to the oneness of being, the model for the somatic kosmos would not be the noetic animal but that which is beyond being — "the good" or "the idea of the good." Only to the extent that the noetic animal too participates in the good, would the sphericity of the kosmos be akin to it. The noetic seems not to be privileged just because it is noetic over against the somatic just because it is somatic when it comes to the good. Without the noetic the kosmos would not be beautiful; and without the demiurge's willingness to hold back nothing of himself the kosmos would not be a thinking animal; but the shape of the kosmos is independent of either model. Its goodness, in this respect at least, would seem not to be illusory. And yet, if the soul envelops the kosmos, the kosmos is not only invisible but shapeless, and its sphericity is just an illusion.

(34b10-36d7). The priority of soul to body does not entail its priority to that of which body is the copy; and Timaeus' beginning with body is as much due to his beginning with being and its image (eikon) as his own participation in the random (eikei). To have begun with soul would have meant not to begin with paradigm and image, for soul is made out of other things but not copied from anything. Body was first because Timaeus began with a what-is question; he began with a Socratic question; but his account of soul is entirely pre-Socratic, in which he assumes that to know what soul consists of explains what soul is. This assumption, however,
undercuts the soul's priority, for it is essentially posterior to the double being of noetic being and somatic becoming out of which it is composed. Timaeus finds himself in somewhat the same situation Socrates got into in the Republic. Socrates had to account for justice in the individual; but he began with the city in its bodily aspect and then, through the imposition of a class-structure on it, came to the soul, with the result that he bypassed the individual. Timaeus likewise begins with the body of the kosmos and then has the demiurge make its soul; but he then cannot return to the kosmos with which he began, the clearest sign of which being his inability to assert later with the same assurance as he had at first that there is only one kosmos.

The soul consists of three parts blended together, only one of which has any being in it; and since each part consists in turn of the blending of two parts, being in the strictest sense comprises only one-sixth of soul, while the rest of it is not noetic in any way. Soul, therefore, cannot be known by either intellect with speech or opinion with irrational perception. Is soul, then, like "space," "grasped with imperception by a bastard kind of reasoning?" Timaeus, in any case, does not explain what meaning one should assign to indivisible sameness and otherness, on the one hand, and partial sameness and otherness, on the other. All one can safely say is that if noetic wholes are blended with somatic parts, i.e., if the paradigm is blended with its image, the ideas in the soul cease to be ideas, for they are no longer separate from everything that participates in them. The soul thus partly seems to be its own model and therefore not beautiful. It would be Timaeus' way of saying that the soul is that which moves itself (cf. Phdr. 255d3-6). But even if this correctly explains the blending of being and becoming (to which Timaeus casually assigns being even before it is blended), it does not account for the double blending in sameness and otherness. The only possible guide to it lies so far in the fourfold characterization of the ouranos. The ouranos as kosmos would be indivisible sameness (non-body), but as heaven in opposition to earth it would be divisible otherness (body); as soul it would be indivisible otherness (non-body) and as all the kinds of animals it would be divisible sameness (body). What has to be forced together, according to Timaeus, would thus be the blending of heaven-soul with kosmos-animals. The weak and precise senses of ouranos would not beautifully fit with its strong and imprecise senses, any more than man whose soul lives on the stars and who is an earthly kind beautifully fits with man as a heavenly plant who is the source of all other animals. Neither soul nor man is as beautifully bound together as body by itself can be.

The difference between the first and second parts of Timaeus' speech seems to be expressable as the difference between arithmetic and geometry: the soul is articulated into pure-number ratios while the elementary triangles out of which the primary bodies are composed contain irrational magnitudes. But the difference is not so absolute, for the soul is understood as a continuous magnitude and not as a unity of discrete numbers.
The second part, then, is indispensable for the first and should have preceded it; but Timaeus never revises all of it in light of the second part. He revises his account of body but not of soul. What then compelled Timaeus to begin not with a likely speech but with a false speech? Was the false speech about soul unrevisable? However one answers this question - the answer wholly determines one's interpretation of the Timaeus - Timaeus most plainly indicates the greater truthfulness of the second part by speaking more than once there of saying what is "really" (ontos) so, something that he never does in the first part (48a6, 55d1, cf. 48d3, 49a6-7, 55e3).

The circle of the same does not differ in itself from the circle of the other in itself. Other and same when applied to identical things are merely names (36c4-5). They do differ, however, in the way they are placed in relation to one another and the motions they are given. That the translation of soul into soul of the kosmos - a translation that resembles that of an idea into a blueprint - requires that the demiurge do to only one part of soul what he could have done to both parts, explains why the eternity of the kosmos depends on the demiurge's will. No inner necessity keeps the circle of the same unsplit; and when its motion combines with the motion of the other (the ecliptic), which alone makes life possible, the helical motion that results is no longer simple rotation (39a5-b2), the motion appropriate to the corporeal kosmos and most closely related to thinking (34a1-5). Soul though necessary for thinking interferes with thinking (cf. 40a7-b2), and, though perhaps not equally necessary for body, prevents body from doing its job perfectly.

(36d8-39e2). Aristotle did not raise all possible objections to Timaeus' account of the soul's cognition. Timaeus does not ascribe eternally uniform motion to the soul until he introduces time, for the soul cannot have different cognitions unless it can stop, turn its attention to something else, and then start up again; but the soul in doing this would necessarily begin to separate out the being from the becoming of which it is composed, and hence cease to be capable of coexisting with kosmos. The demiurge therefore is compelled to restore to the kosmos in some way its eidetic character, which the introduction of thinking soul had upset. He now has to make the kosmos in its motion an image; but time, in more nearly assimilating the kosmos to its paradigm (i.e., conferring coherence on what otherwise would tend to separate), puts an end to cognition, for true speech cannot arise in an image. Time unifies the corporeal kosmos as it destroys the thinking kosmos. It is an imperfect bond between soul and paradigm. The kosmos, it seems, can no more than the city satisfy the needs of the mind.

Time seems to be open-ended, its character like that of the infinite - another and another; but Timaeus says that infinite time is closed at both ends, for it is an image of the abiding one. Number apart from magnitude comes to light in what soul counts; but the numbers of time,
though all images of one, never come to light for us without the past, present, or future. Time so temporalizes all being that the abiding one looks like the one of the instantaneous now. We are rescued, however, by the “parts of time” from taking our bearings exclusively by the “forms of time” (37e3-4). Cosmological or uranian time corrects soul-time. The permanent markers of time – sun, moon, planets, and stars – turn us toward the truth that to be means to be always. Only the coextensiveness of heaven and time can overcome the inbred delusion of soul that it is the whole (cf. 40c9-d2, 41d4-7). Timaeus, however, admits that few men understand what the planets are for, which the demiurge apparently set as a problem for us. The kosmos as ouranos does not look like a kosmos. Not everyone can “see” that the demiurge looked to being in making it. Cosmology must begin by appealing to sight, even as it must end with it (cf. 40d2-3), but what links its beginning to its end is not aesthetic. Timaeus’ image-speech is not on the same level as either the visible kosmos or its visible imitations.

(41a7-42d2). The demiurge makes two speeches, one in direct, the other in indirect discourse. The one in direct discourse is spoken to the cosmic gods, the other to human souls. The demiurge shows them the nature of the whole but tells them about the laws of their own fate. He tells them that to live justly consists in the conquest of their passions; he does not tell them that they must willingly follow the lesser gods, about whom they never hear. He tells them of the doubleness of human nature but not that the gods will build into the better part what will be needed by the worse (76d3-e4). He tells them about their possible bestialization but not that the whole would be incomplete unless they become bestial. He warns them against sin but not against the necessity for sin – that not all can achieve happiness without destroying the beauty of the kosmos. He tells them that they must acquire bodies but not that they are now also incomplete in their souls. The indirect discourse of the demiurge is a noble lie, but it is not the same as Socrates’, for the equality with which all the souls start out, as well as the possibility that they all could equally lose their best condition, Socrates leaves as one of the darkest secrets of the city. And yet the advantage does not all lie with the demiurge. He has to suppress the truth in Socrates’ lie that some will have to occupy inferior stations in order for the whole to be in order. The politically noble lie is closer to the cosmic truth than the noble lie of the demiurge. The necessity for the

*One should in this way begin to understand how time only comes to be with the becoming of the kosmos, and yet there was chaotic motion of visible bodies before the making of the kosmos. Before cosmological time there was “relativistic time”, the time which Aristotle defines as the number of motion according to before and after. This time solely depends on whatever moving body one observes; it does not allow one to equate or harmonize the numbers counted off from it with the numbers someone else counts off from another moving body; that could only be done if there were a uniformly moving body that comprehended all bodies.*
city to have a class-structure in order to allow for the realization of man's higher potentialities, bears some relation to the necessity for the kosmos to be beautiful through evil; but what end that evil serves, apart from making the kosmos happy, Timaeus does not explain. The stars would still think even if no man ever sinned. The good seems not to come to light except in human things.

(42e5-47e2). The theme of the transition between the first and second parts of Timaeus' speech is man's orientation in the world, of which the two most striking illustrations are Timaeus' comparison of the disoriented human brain to the imaginings of a man when standing on his head (43e4-8), and Timaeus' seemingly gratuitous explanation of mirror-images (46a2-c6). When one stands on one's head while facing someone else, one's own right appears opposite the other's right without correcting for one's own position. In the topsy-turvy position one does not need to reflect; one speaks the truth while remaining wholly ignorant of its ground. One is Oedipus. Timaeus' illustration remains singular but insignificant until he implies toward the end that we are by nature upside down (90a5-b1). We always remain unaware of our own place in the whole, for trust is not as eradicable as opinion. What happens if one fails to observe the difference between trust and opinion Timaeus' account of mirror images shows. His account is as inadequate as everything that has gone before, for it ignores the nature of the mirror itself. Timaeus correctly does not distinguish between the reversal of one's own right and left in a mirror and the reversal of another's whom one faces. As reversals they are the same, but that the mirror makes oneself into another is left out of account. In one case it is an image and in the other not an image that one sees. Timaeus' correct reasoning does not differ from the correct speech of the upside-down man. Both are due to a self-forgetting — the excessive absorption by contemplation into what it contemplates — the correction of which is the burden of Timaeus' second speech. His speech about necessity is a speech about self-knowledge, for self-knowledge can only come to light in a discussion of body. In the first part, soul was presented as indispensable for thinking while being itself neither good nor beautiful; but soul now becomes the model for the investigation of causes. The capacity of soul to acquire intelligence leads to a consideration of what things were made in order to actualize that capacity; and this teleological investigation depends on the fact that the investigator is himself a lover of science and intelligence. It is through his conscious lack of mind and intelligence that he is in a position to know what he needs to have them. Only an end-directed being with self-knowledge can discover ends and, in discovering ends, become ordered. Body, on the other hand, cannot by itself acquire intelligence; it can never be wholly ordered. It is recalcitrant to rule because it does not rule itself. Order is impossible without self-knowledge, the knowledge of one's own good; but body must be capable of following orders; it must be, as the demiurge made it, part of soul.
(47e3-48b3). Timaeus opposes the crafted works of mind to the becomings of necessity. He opposes a perfect (dedemiiourgema) to a present (gignomena) participle. The most obvious sign of the presence of mind in anything is its completed state; and the most obvious sign of the presence of necessity in anything is its incompleteness. The mixture of completeness and incompleteness is this kosmos. What leads, however, becomings to the best is necessity, once it has been persuaded by mind; mind cannot do it by itself, for it seems to be incapable of devising any irrational co-workers for itself. The nature of necessity is to carry (pherein); she is persuaded to drive (again). Pherein and agein characterize when put together the total destruction of a country by an enemy, where pherein refers to inanimate things and agein to men and cattle. Necessity, then, is persuaded to drive living beings toward the best, which from the point of view of the driven is still a compulsion; it is compulsion itself that has been directed to the good. Necessity thus partly ceases to wander but it never ceases to compel.

(48b3-52d1). The mistake of the “pre-Timaeans” was to speak as if we knew what air, earth, fire, and water were; the mistake of Timaeus was to believe that paradigm and image were enough, as if we knew what an image was. The discovery of necessity is merely the discovery of what was there all along, that which has the capacity to be an image because it never is wholly what it images. “The image-speech with necessity”, in terms of which Timaeus constructs body (53d5), is his way of describing the doubleness of any image. That an image is peculiarly difficult to understand is revealed by Timaeus’ constant use of images to describe necessity even though necessity is precisely that part of an image that never becomes an image of anything. The image-speech about necessity is and is not an image of necessity.

Timaeus has to tackle another difficulty before he can explain how necessity is the receptacle of becoming. Can there be a science of body? Such a science would have to be about what is here and now, and yet as a science could not be about what is here and now. A science of corporeal being cannot be about corporeal becoming. This is what the “pre-Timaeans” did not understand. They took the principles of body to be the same as perceptible body; but perceptible body, then, “is”, even though they started by asserting that it “is not,” for they saw that it becomes. That which we call water and see becoming something else cannot be the principle of both what is and what becomes. Phenomenal water\(^5\) cannot have a higher rank than anything else it becomes phenomenally, for phenomenal water

\(^5\) I use “phenomenal” to translate phantazomenon, and not phainomenon, for “imaginary”, though more accurate would be confusing, since it is precisely the character of the imaginary not to appear imaginary that Timaeus wants to explain.
has become just as much as everything which comes from it. Once one establishes its cycle of *genesis*, phenomenal water cannot be the being which has ice and steam as its manifestations. The greater amount of phenomenal water does not give it the privilege of being, for all of it can in principle become something else. If, however, the ground of phenomena's becomings is a real water, then everything would have a twofold noetic structure. Phenomenal man, for example, would be the combination of eidetic man with eidetic body. Timaeus asserts the existence of eidetic bodies; but he does not give an account of them but of the mathematical shapes they assume; but the principles of these mathematical shapes, which Timaeus does not describe, are not the principles of the eidetic bodies; and yet the science of body is the science of these mathematical shapes. The science of body can only exist if one accepts the hypotheses of the mathematicians non-hypothetically. It can only exist if one inserts between phenomenal body and eidetic body something that is neither but shares in both: the quasi-eidetic, quasi-fantastic "bodies" of mathematics. Unless phenomenal body is not real body there can be no science of body; but unless the science of body is not really about real body, there can be no science of body.

Timaeus expresses the difference between his solution to the problem of body and his solution to the problem of image by labelling his account of body "what is safest by far to say hypothetically" (49d3-4) and his account of image (in his example of gold) "what is safest by far to say in light of truth" (50b1-2). The account of body is more daring than the account of image because it involves the assertion, contrary to speech, of body apart from phenomenal body (cf. 53c1), whereas to assert the existence of triangle apart from the triangular is in accordance with speech (cf. 51c5). In order for Timaeus' hypothesis to be as safe as his non-hypothetical statement, the difference between real body and phenomenal body would have to be just like the difference between thought triangle and phenomenal triangle. The science of body, however, as Timaeus develops it, implies that this is not the case, for the triangles out of which body is composed are not the same as the triangles of mathematics (cf. 73b5-8). The relation between water and the watery is far more complex than that between triangle and the triangular. Shape is closer than body to idea (cf. 50c2-3, e2).

If body as idea does not mix with man as idea (52a1-4), there must be something else that allows the noetic beings out of which things are made to mix with noetic beings which answer the question "What is?". Space was first introduced to explain how an image is other than the imaged, but it ends up explaining how two different kinds of noetic beings which cannot combine noetically, can be combined aesthetically. An image is an image because it combines phenomenally what cannot be otherwise combined. A statue can be used to illustrate the difference between form and matter, and it can be used insofar as it is an image to illustrate "essence;" but the way in which it illustrates essence is not the same as the way it illustrates
form and matter. It is not as form that it is essence but rather its own essence is its matter as opposed to its form. Timaeus, however, says that though noetically they are different aesthetically they are the same. The tenuous hold an image has on being is due to contradiction. The combination of being and non-being in an image makes its being look like its body and its non-being look like what it is an image of; but the truth is that its being is its non-being as an image while its non-being is its being as body. This inversion is the effect of space. That this inversion, however, does not complicate Timaeus’ speech past all comprehension is primarily due to the demiurge; for as a maker the difference between his fashioning something out of body and his fashioning something to be an image of something seems not to be as great a difference as it is.

Timaeus’ solution to the problem of body leads him to say that that which one points to whenever one points at what is misnamed “something” is the receptacle; and that that which one talks of whenever one talks of anything one points at is again the receptacle. And yet we cannot talk of it, i.e., give an account of it. The triangle, for example, one is talking about is always other than the triangle one is pointing at, for one’s speech is always pointing to being. If, however, one speaks accurately and makes the “this” point at the receptacle, one is not pointing at being, for it hardly “is.” If the “this” is triangle, one speaks of being but does not point; if the “this” is receptacle, one points but does not speak of being. There is no science of space. The permanently present “this,” of which we are entirely unaware even after it is “explained” to us, is parallel and not parallel to our incorrect speech about time (cf. 52b3-5). Space is to time as kosmos as itself is to kosmos as image. We insert “is” into the series, past, present, and future, as if being were in time; but “once,” “now,” and “at a later time” (eis authis), though they do not apply to being strictly understood, imitate being strictly understood. Our temporalized speech imitates being without our being aware either of what it imitates or that it imitates; but our speech about anything does not imitate the “this” of the receptacle, which nonetheless underlies our speech about anything. The manifold of spatial differences, as they are spoken of, refer to one and the same thing; but the manifold of temporal differences, as they are spoken of, do not refer to one and the same thing but to another and another. What is the same (space) always manifests itself as different (bodies), but what is different (time) always manifests itself as same because it is an image of what is the same (being), and what is same (space) manifests itself as different because any image that appears in it looks like it. The indivisible same is space, for that which looks other than it is the same as it; and the indivisible other is time, for that which looks the same as it is other than it; but the divisible same is body, which looks like what is other than time; and the divisible other is image, which looks like the same of space. The two indivisibles (space and time) look as if they belong together but do not while the divisibles (image and body) do not look as if they belong together but do. For this reason the demiurge had to use
force to fit them together in soul.

The ambiguity in the word necessity exactly expresses the puzzling character of the receptable: the ground of all accidents is not itself an accident. It therefore has more in common with being than with becoming (51a7-b2). It is the ground of our dreaming while being itself no dream. Without it, being would be in becoming and becoming would no longer be an image, "since that very thing (e.g., the idea man) on which condition it (i.e., phenomenal man) has come to be (viz., to be an image) does not even belong to itself, and for this reason it is proper that it be in something other," for only its being in another allows it to be not of itself but the image of another (52c2-d1). The receptable, which can be pointed at (tode), turns out to be when spoken of (tauto) a toiouton, something like what one is speaking of. What is in the sphere of the speaker as a "here" (tode) proves to be, when it is put in the sphere of the one spoken to (tuito), no longer capable of being exactly spoken of. "Here" in being universalized into "everywhere" and "anywhere" loses its very character, even though what it is universally is the ground for its being locally precise. The "water here," universalized, becomes "the watery"; the "here" drops out, even though it is the indispensable ground for "the watery"; but when this indispensable ground is brought to light, it cannot be any longer "the watery" or anything else. The receptacle thus bears a certain resemblance to the reason that Socrates gave for poets being incapable of imitating well in speech that which they have not been bred to. The poets' inability to universalize is ultimately due to their rootedness in necessity or space; so Timaeus' account of space can be regarded as an attempt to explain the universal ground of poetry. Socrates had then contrasted the tribe of poets with the sophists, a wandering (planeton) class, who are not rooted anywhere. Necessity looks like the wandering cause, but its effect is just the opposite; reason is the cause of order, but in its effects it looks as if it does the opposite, for reason arranged the seemingly wandering planets to be the markers and guardians of time (38c5-6). The difference, then, between sophists and poets — the contrary ways in which the cause of each looks like the cause of its opposite — is the human counterpart to the difference in Timaeus' two speeches about the kosmos. And to reconcile his two speeches would show the way to overcome the failings of both poets and sophists. Timaeus thus holds out the hope that some future Socrates may live to hear a poet praise the best city in motion.

Timaeus seems to assume that if the mold of space were not capable of perfect impressions it would not be a receiver of being's impressions, but appearances would be all there are. He seems to attribute to space the character of mind, which has to be characterless if it is to understand everything. Timaeus would therefore have to show that the possible range of body occurs phenomenally in order to exclude the possibility that space lies outside the phenomenal range of body (cf. 50e5-8). If space always contributed the same something of itself to everything that entered into it ("gravity", for example), any phenomenal body would undergo the same kind
of distortion as any other, and one could never be certain as to what belonged to space and what to real body. If, moreover, space were as characterless as Timaeus says it is, one of the main arguments for the existence of the ideas would be undercut. Their existence is partly inferred from the fact that everything appears to be a bad impression of itself. Every being is self-evidently incomplete. Timaeus, however, has the demiurge make the first man complete; and one wonders whether his insistence on the purity of space does not arise from his infecting mind with the capacity to make. His implicit denial to mind of the purity of contemplation seems to force him to attribute mind's purity to space. This misattribution resembles his former confusion between soul and mind. Once Timaeus had the demiurge realize that he could not give mind to body without giving it soul, he never plainly distinguishes them until he comes to the making of the human soul. Is mind just ordered soul (cf. 44a8)? If there is order in the visible kosmos can one conclude that mind is there at work? Anaxagoras seems to have thought so; but Socrates objected that only the presence of good along with order points to the working of the mind. The first part of Timaeus' speech is Anaxagorean, for he cannot there show the goodness of the whole while he shows the necessity for the whole to be the way it is (cf. Maimonides, Guide, II.19). The thinking, in any case, which Timaeus assigns to the soul of the whole has nothing to do with reasoning about causes (cf. Rep. 516b4-c2). Its cognition of same and other never leads it to put two and two together. The paradox, then, of Timaeus' whole speech would be that in the first part he demotes mind to soul in order to have the kosmos beautiful, and in the second part he elevates space to mind in order to make it good.

(52d2-53c3). Space is like a mother to the paternal ideas; but it is not a mother, for her offspring never get separated from her; they never come fully into the light. If they could come fully into the light, space would not be part of the kosmos but as much apart from it as the paternal ideas are, and Timaeus' speech about the works of mind would not have to be revised. Space would be a catalyst for but not a bond of the kosmos. As a bond, moreover, it is not as neutral to what it receives as Timaeus had said it is. It shakes up and thus sorts out, like a winnowing-basket, fire, water, earth and air while still unshaped and non-arithmeticized. That it must contribute something besides room to what it contains follows indeed from its being like a mold, for a perfectly elastic smoothness would make it like a liquid, which would in turn prevent it from retaining any impression. Permanence, no matter how fleeting, requires, as Socrates in the Theaetetus says, a certain hardness. If the kosmos were two-dimensional, and everything were visible but not touchable, space could be like a mirror, to which, however, Timaeus never compares it. Three-dimensionality requires that space be less like mind than Timaeus pretends it to be. Its seismic motion has nothing in common with rotation.
The distinction Timaeus draws between noetic body and noetic non-body seems to depend on the necessity that noetic body be put in order before it can become itself phenomenally, whereas noetic non-body does not first have to assume a shape and number before entering into the kosmos. This distinction, however, could be illusory, for noetic animal lacks soul just as much as noetic body lacks shape; and it would take much subtlety of thought to distinguish the paradox of animal without soul from the paradox of body without shape. One cannot even oppose the separateness of animal species to the transmutability of bodies into one another. There is a cycle of animal from man to fish no less than a cycle of body from fire to water. Their difference seems to lie elsewhere — in the capacity of space to give order to body, which is never apart from space, without the interference of the demiurge, and its incapacity to allow for even traces of non-body to appear in it before the whole has become a kosmos. In order to understand Timaeus' account of body one has to distinguish three coexisting states of the whole, two of which are not in the kosmos what they would be apart from the kosmos. The first is the kosmos insofar as it is a living image of noetic animal; the second is the non-cosmic order the whole would have if space were allowed its full power to shake out the four bodies into their several regions; but to put the two together into the kosmos requires a third ingredient: the original disordered motion of the whole which found all bodies together. Bodies must have been at first so tightly packed together that the imposition of order by space would compel the interpenetration of the various bodies, so that reason in turn could, in persuading the various bodies to assume their several shapes, bring about the change of one body into another before each could join its own (58a4-c4). Chaos is an indispensable condition for order. Not only can chaos not be overcome, but there would be, if it were, a whole of parts without unity. There can only be kosmos if the limits of persuasion coincide with the goodness of necessity.

Were there no chaos, and the demiurge had contrived to give to the various bodies the most beautiful of surfaces, the whole would come to rest as soon as the now-beautiful bodies had occupied their own territory. The whole would then consist of four kinds minding their own business. Each would be at rest. It would be as if four cities were on the earth and had no business with one another. In order for these "just" bodies to form a kosmos they must go to war against each other; but they cannot go to war unless they are superimposed on one another and occupy the same place. One body does not fight another in order to occupy the other's proper region but in order to get to its own proper region; and yet, through the persuasion of necessity, their mutual warfare results in their changing into one another. If, on the other hand, there was chaos at first but the demiurge had not made the bodies alike enough to change into one another, the whole, which would be without unity, would not even consist of beautiful bodies each in its own place. The persuasion of body is precisely this: the willingness of each body when weaker to let itself be overcome by a
stronger body (57b2). Fire, air, and water do not fight to the death in order to maintain themselves. They prefer to acquire a shape not their own even at the cost of losing their own being. The only body which prefers suicide to surrender is earth. Timaeus' model for body is political. He distinguishes, as it were, between the city as regime and the city as fatherland. Fire, air, and water have each been persuaded to be more attached to any form whatsoever than to what they are in themselves. They have been persuaded to forget their own past and acknowledge the "justice" of the stronger. They are under the rule of law. When one is stronger in a collision with another, the form it has perfectly agrees with the being it is, and it does not then respect the rights of any other form or body to exist but tries to change every other body into itself. There are, however, two limits to this imperialism. Earth has only been persuaded to take on a cubic shape; she has not been persuaded when confronted with another stronger body to lose her being at the price of retaining a shape; she never forgets her past; and when she is stronger she does not force the weaker body to become part of herself. The love of her own keeps herself just even as it limits the injustice of others. The second limitation must be that the strength of each body in the original chaos is neither exactly the same, for otherwise the cycle of change would come to a standstill, nor incorrectly equal, for otherwise the bodies would neither dominate nor be dominated in the proper sequence. The cause of this limitation is space, which through its shaking keeps the whole unbalanced and draws off if the occasion warrants any excessive amount of body to its own region. Space is the constant purifier of the *kosmos*.

Timaeus' apparent confusion between body in the ordinary sense and geometric body is not only an attempt to distinguish between the mathematicizable and the non-mathematicizable properties of body but to point out that if fire were body earth could not be body too. If a body changes, it cannot be that the "essence" of that body changes; rather, body must be that which the four "bodies" have in common; and what they have in common they have in common with imaginary body — surface. It is surface that makes us think that different kinds of beings are all bodies and change into one another. Timaeus' elementary triangles are his way of stating the problem of potentiality: how that which will become something is not yet that something but still must be like it. The elementary triangles represent the non-being of becoming; from which it follows that the non-being of becoming is dianoetic and therefore has more being than becoming itself. One has to distinguish, then, the essences of fire, water, air, and earth, which it is incorrect but convenient to call noetic bodies, from both the ground of becoming (space) and the non-being of becoming (triangles). The science of body is thus the study of the non-being of becoming in its interaction with the essence of "body" and the ground of becoming. This science confronts two major difficulties when it tries to become a cosmology. The possibility of image is due to space; but the possibility of image as a stable and ordered whole (kosmos) is due to image apart from the ground
of its possibility. There is a tension between the image-speech by itself, which is false, but which alone allows for the reality of kosmos, and the image-speech with necessity that allows for the possibility of image but by itself destroys the possibility of the reality of kosmos. The science of body cannot explain why heaven is exempt from change: "Earth is the first and oldest of all the gods who have become within the ouranos" (40c2-3). The second difficulty Timaeus himself raises. If the science of body must assume that fire and the other bodies have essences, and a being is partly defined as that which has no need of another, then one cannot prove that there is only one kosmos. If no noetic body is essentially related to any other, each of them could be in a kosmos by itself; and these four together with this kosmos in which they are accidentally together would constitute the five kosmoi that, Timaeus admits, could exist. The difficulty their possible existence causes cosmology is that it undercuts the necessity that the kosmos be perfect and complete. If there were a kosmos of fire, the stars and planets above the moon could exist but no men or beasts; and if there were a kosmos of earth, men and beasts could exist but there would be nothing for man to look up to and so correct his belief that to be means to be in place and in time. The science of body, then, is the obstacle to proving either the eternity or the uniqueness of the kosmos.

(59c5-d2). Cosmology, which is nothing but a mythology, comes to be as a result of our relaxing from the serious study of the beings; and yet, according to Timaeus, the playful and pleasurable investigation of necessity is indispensable for our happiness, which consists in the understanding of the divine (68e6-c9a5). Dialectics depends on a pseudo-physics. In the Statesman, the Eleatic Stranger suggests that every Platonic dialogue, which gives pleasure because of its apparent completeness, is a compromise between the primary goal of discovering the beings and whatever discovery is the ostensible goal of the dialogue (286d4-287a6, cf. 302b5-9). There are more direct ways than the one the Stranger chose to discover the political scientist; but there is no direct way to discover the philosopher (cf. Sph. 216c2-d2). He therefore had to put political science in a certain light in order to make use of it for dialectics, even though his procedure distorted the nature of both dialectics and political science. This double distortion, however, led to the Statesman, a pseudo-whole that gives us pleasure. The mythical character of Timaeus' speech is likewise due to its apparent attainment of wholeness – its apparent independence from the noetic whole while necessarily being dependent on it. Its pseudo-wholeness is analogous and perhaps more than analogous to the pseudo-wholes that characterize political and human life. The pseudo-wholeness of political life is manifest in the variety of regimes, each of which claims to satisfy completely the nature of man. These conventional pseudo-wholes, moreover, have their counterpart in Socrates' second speech of the Phaedrus, where the false completeness of each human soul is due to its following its own god and thus turning away from the ideas. The human soul, though
informed by the ideas, does not, even in the best case, go directly back to the ideas; it is always directed by eros away from the ideas and toward its own god even though without eros it could not go to the ideas. Timaeus' speech is an attempt to give the cosmological equivalent to the Phaedrus myth. The core of this cosmology, however, is a psychology, not only because the kosmos is alive but because reason persuades necessity. The science of body is a rhetoric that knows the limitations of rhetoric. It therefore ultimately depends on Socrates' discovery of political philosophy. The Republic must precede the Timaeus.

(61c3-65b3). The science of body does not only deal with simple and compound bodies but also with their perceptible qualities. The perceptible, however, requires an account of perception, which only arises when body and soul are combined. The priority Timaeus now gives to the perceptible over against perception seems to reverse the priority he had formerly given to soul over against body after he had wrongly begun with body. He acknowledges that perception must be presupposed but not that it has priority. The relation between them is one of mutual interdependence; but the perceptible has priority in his account because it arises from simple and compound bodies, which do have an absolute priority over the composite of body and soul (cf. Arist. de anima 402b10-16). The false beginning with body in the first part becomes the true beginning with body in the second. The body of the kosmos precedes the making of the mortal soul (69b8-c3). Timaeus begins with touch.

Our perception of the keenness of fire is a non-distorted reflection of its pyramidal nature. In the case of heat, perception, in the most literal sense, is knowledge; indeed, since Greeks originally spoke of heat as a cutting-up (thermon from a non-extant kermon), such knowledge is the same as language. Timaeus had denied that fire should be regarded as either a letter or a syllable of the whole; but he left it open whether it should not be regarded as a word. The "pre-Timaeans" erred when they likened corporeal principles to letters because they did not take the likeness literally enough. They should have realized that letters form words in a particular human language; and so, if the likeness held, the "elements" of body could only refer at best to qualities within the range of human perception, and to make a dictionary of such words would not automatically make a logos. It would be a very partial dictionary. Not even heat's opposite, the cold, could be an entry. Heat and cold are in the same ratio to one another as fire to water; but the solidification from the cold, though the opposite of the cutting-up done by heat, is not experienced as a solidification but as a trembling. To experience freezing is to experience the counter-attack by one's body as it attempts to return to its natural state, for life is hot rather than cold. Perception here plays us false, for while we feel the heat passively and hence, like space, take a perfect impression of it, we feel cold in fighting against it, and hence our engagement with it alters our perception of its cause. Cold is the name for both agent and patient.
The science of the perceptible, then, contains at least two different layers: one justifies the equation of perception with knowledge, the other denies it and examines those perceptions our nature gives rise to when confronted with what threatens it.

Our experience of heavy and light reveals a third layer in the science of the perceptible. They are our experience of the difference between the whole as kosmos and the whole as space. Timaeus does not want to make heavy and light “subjective”: whatever is up to you is light and whatever is down to you is heavy. As long as we are on the earth this will suffice; but the sphericity of the kosmos does not allow us to determine weight by direction everywhere. If, moreover, we were transported to the region where fire has its natural home and there weighed in a balance two lumps of earth, the larger lump would be up and seem lighter, for it would be more capable of overcoming fire and returning to its natural home. If we weighed, however, two pieces of fire while still in the region of fire, their weights would vary directly with their volumes, for the larger volume would more resist our forcing it outside its natural place. Heavy and light, then, are like hard and soft insofar as they are both measured according to their capacity to resist us; but their more important trait is that they belong to the unnatural. Heavy and light are the result of our acting contrary to nature. The resistance which something puts up to our lifting it arises from our attempt to force it out of its place; but what we do merely reflects the making of the kosmos. There could be no ordered whole unless there were in it unnatural forces, the constraints both chaos and the demiurge put upon the four bodies to remain apart from their natural homes. Nature had first to be forced before it could be persuaded. If the whole were entirely natural, i.e., the result of the mutual shaking of bodies and space, weight would vary directly with volume for each of the four bodies; and weight would measure the degree of force applied to an otherwise stable system. But once nature was reformed in order to become kosmos, weight no longer could always vary directly with volume, for unnatural constraints and motions had already been built in; and our weighing of anything became the application of unnatural constraint to what was already under unnatural constraint. The study of weight, then, as the study of force, is the study of the unnatural within the natural, in which the tension between the reason of kosmos and the necessity of space consists. There is, however, a curious harmony between them. The spherical kosmos by itself does away with a natural up and down; and space by itself cannot give the ratios of weight among the four bodies, for in any other region but its own, each body, no matter its size, would prove light when balanced against a body of the same volume that belonged to that region. Space grants us a locally correct up and down that we cannot translate; kosmos grants us a universally correct center that we cannot perceive. Space, for all its naturalness, does not admit of universality; and kosmos, for all its unnaturalness, is the ground of universality, even though the universality it establishes cannot be fitted with our perceptions. Nature
cannot dispense with either.

(64a2-67a6). Timaeus' account of pleasure and pain is at first glance simple. Pleasure arises when we are aware of the restoration of our nature, pain in any conscious departure from it. Taste and smell, however, complicate his account. The sweet is what smooths the roughened tongue and returns it to its nature (cf. 60a8-b3), for the present condition of the tongue is not its nature. Before the fall, in the first generation of men, the tongue was smooth, and taste was never pleasant; after the fall, a pleasant taste serves to remind us of what it was like when we were perfect and the kosmos was incomplete. Not only was the most intense pleasure absent from the beginning, for there were no women, but the sweetest of tastes was also missing, for there were no bees. The imaginary friendliness salt has for us again recalls us to the beginning, for the tongue must first get dirty before salt can gently cleanse it; but since it cannot stay clean, we have only glimpses of our past, when salt was not "a body dear to the gods according to the speech of law" (60e1-2). Our present nature, then, is a condition that gives to the whole its nature. To return to our own nature would destroy the kosmos as an image of noetic animal, just as the complete return of bodies to their natural places would, in freeing them from the constraint within which persuasion is alone possible, destroy its body. We ourselves experience the annihilation of kosmos through our nose. Our nose never smells anything apart from pleasure and pain; it is the perceptual instrument, for all its sensitivity to degree, least connected with kinds (eide). The greatest pleasures, as Timaeus calls them (65a1-6), are ours in the half-genus (hemigenes) world of irregular solids, when neither air nor water has the shape assigned it, and a pleasant smell, which we neither desire when we do not have it nor regret when we lose it, suggests what the whole was like when space shook out the primary bodies with but faint traces of themselves into their natural places. "If all the beings were smoke," Heraclitus says, "the nose would discriminate" (fr. 87, cf. fr. 98). A shapeless world without force pleases us but does not awaken in us any longing for it. Kosmos is too much a part of us for nature without necessity to enchant us; but it is not surprising that less intelligent animals have a keener sense of smell.

(67c4-68d7). Timaeus' account of color is Empedoclean; it is, according to Socrates, tragic (Meno 76e3). Timaeus acknowledges that no man could ever know the measures or the causes of measures that make up the various colors. Measure belongs to neither necessity nor mind, for the sizes of things, unlike the proportions among things, cannot be traced to either the pure-number ratios of soul or to the operations of necessity which, ever after it has been persuaded, cannot contribute anything more than the ratios the sides of right-angled triangles have to one another. Timaeus never mentions any absolute size. Dimensional numbers, as physicists call them, are a wholly baffling ingredient in the translation of the one into
the many, even as is their disappearance when the many mix in the one. They resemble the prescriptions of sacred law, in which the gods had to specify how many victims one must sacrifice; but whatever Pythagorean reason we should give for the number they chose would collapse if the gods had chosen another number (cf. Arist. *EN* 1134b18-24; Maimonides, *Guide*, III. 2b). There is an arbitrariness about the way things are that looks like the enactments of positive law. It is what prompted Socrates perhaps to label *Timaeus* speech a law, and *Timaeus* himself when speaking of disease to invoke "the laws of nature" (83e4-5). The Platonic dialogue closest to the *Timaeus* is the *Laws*, not just because it too presents a cosmology but because, given Plato's choice to examine legislation, he was compelled to delve into all sorts of details that are not in themselves of the highest importance but are still indispensable for a legal code; and again, given his choice to consider the problems of cosmology, he was compelled to treat of things that fall into its province regardless of whether they throw any light on the highest principles (cf. 62a5-6). Indeed, *Timaeus* remark on the lack of seriousness in his speech reminds one of the Athenian Stranger's denigration of the human race, which hardly deserves the seriousness a dialogue on legislation necessarily extends to it (*Lgs.* 803e2-804c1). Socrates can ask the question, "What is law?", but he cannot bring himself to draw up legislation; and he always asks the question, "What is?", but he never presents a physics. The closest he ever comes is in the *Philebus*, where the contest between the goods of mind and of pleasure cannot be decided without cosmology. And yet, even there, Socrates merely raises the issue of cosmology, which Aristotle agrees is the problem of the infinite (*de caelo* 271b1-6), but does not settle it: the *Philebus* has no beginning and no end. That Socrates always begins with man and *Timaeus* now will end with man necessarily affects the way in which they understand the highest principles. *Timaeus* explains change in the light of solid geometric bodies in motion; but according to Socrates the science of solid body has not yet been perfected — *Timaeus* never mentions either the necessity that there be only five regular bodies or their capacity to be inscribed in a sphere — and the true science of motion has not even been dreamed. *Timaeus* perhaps takes the visible *kosmos* too seriously not to be at times too playful about it.

(69a6-70a2). *Timaeus* ended his account of the perceptible with an insoluble problem; he now turns, in somewhat the same way the young Socrates had turned away from Anaxagoras, to man. In terms of ordinary speech, what remains is the head to the tale; but in terms of *Timaeus* own speech, what remains is the body of man. Necessity has inverted for us and therefore concealed from us the true relation between our body and our head. We think of the body as the container for the soul; but the body is primarily a conveyance for the head (cf. 44d8-45a3), and whatever life it has is meant to serve the circuits of the brain. The "heart" of man is in his head. The highest part of man both literally and metaphorically is
the same. What we find most lovable in the body of an individual contains what is truly most lovable in him, for the head as skull imitates the bodily shape of the kosmos even as it holds what imitates the soul of the kosmos. To love a human individual is to be already on one's way to loving the whole. The humanly beautiful entirely agrees with the divinely beautiful (cf. 88b5-d1). Virtue cannot be for Timaeus what it is for Socrates, a problem.

It would seem that the mortal kind of soul has eight things mixed in it, and that it has two different parts only because the same mixture has been made to occupy different places in the body. Were it not for body, spiritedness and desire would be the same: spiritedness only listens to reason because it is nearer the head. To the extent that this is true, the cosmic gods would have imitated the demiurge, who in making the soul mixed everything together before he split it into two, gave them different places, and labelled one the same and one the other. Timaeus, however, separates two of the eight ingredients of soul from the other six. All six – pleasure, pain, confidence, fear, spiritedness, and hope – are mixed with perception and eros; but not all perception and eros, he implies, are mixed with them. Passion does not always follow perception, and eros is something more than the love of victory. There would be an eros of daring that was neither the pleasure which leads us to evil nor the pain that makes us escape from good; there would be an eros that did not give us unreasonable grounds for either confidence or fear; and there would be an eros that can never be either dissuaded or easily led astray (cf. 88a8-b2). Within the context of denigrating the mortal soul of man Timaeus covertly compliments the philosophical eros of Socrates. He limits himself here to the necessities in mortal soul and not to its graces (cf. 42a3-b1).

(70a2-73a8). Spiritedness has the character of almost being by nature the virtue of courage. It wants to win and therefore win over the desires, not because they are bad but because it wants to be first; it wants recognition at any price and therefore obeys, for its obedience is rewarded and it fears punishment. The content of its ambition, however, is entirely undetermined by itself. It acts in concert with logos in order to restrain by force the desires; but it has nothing to do in itself with what is outside the body. It just wants to punish desire; it is not concerned with saving the body. It is through the heart, which is the source of all the blood coursing through the body, that the boiling of thymos, which a speech about an injustice to the body has caused, makes every perceptive part of the body obey and let logos rule. The heart attaches thymos to the body, to which thymos itself is indifferent. It is the source of self-sacrifice and self-forgetting. The logos it obeys, as the metaphor of the akropolis suggests, does not necessarily belong to the body it occupies.

The language with which Timaeus describes thymos is highly metaphoric and poetic; the language that describes desire is free of metaphors, though the liver that controls it controls it through images. The difference
between them seems to be related to the difference between a metaphor and a simile. *Thylos*, in wanting to be first, transfers itself without being aware of it to what is other than itself, of which our animation in anger of inanimate things is the clearest example; but the desire for food and drink, precisely because it is directed to what is other than itself, recognizes the distance between itself and the other even while it attempts to close this gap and assimilate the other. To speak in the language of the demiurge's making of the cosmic soul, *thylos* is sameness in otherness (falsely), desire otherness in sameness (truly). Desire is connected with the needs that the nature of body has; nothing was said about nature when Timaeus spoke of *thylos*, for desire is needed in order that the mortal race of men be immortal. Their relation to mind, moreover, is also different. Mind reveals itself to *thylos* as a command accompanied by a report — a "reason" is given; and mind reveals itself to desire as a threat or as a revealer — a soothsayer — in the form of images, and no "reason" is given. *Thylos* has reverence and awe of something that never shows itself to it except in exhortatory or threatening speeches: Timaeus only uses *logos* and never *nous* when speaking of *thylos*. *Thylos* is in no way connected with knowledge; it allows the best to rule, but it does not like desire allow the best to deliberate about the good unless it has a hand in it (70d5). Mind has a natural gentleness that it brings out in the liver; mind has nothing in common with *thylos*. It controls the liver directly when desire is good; but since mind is incapable of moving or touching what is contrary to its own nature, it needs *thylos* to threaten desire when it is bad. The liver in pain receives angry colors; but, according to Timaeus, we can never know whether or not colors are images of anything. The liver seems not to have a good nature; it seems to be neutral with regard to whether it is bitter and rough or sweet or smooth. When it becomes smooth through the operation of mind and therefore capable like a mirror of receiving images, it attains its true looks (*idea*). This tension between the neutrality of the liver and its good nature that alone allows it to be neutral reproduces the tension between space as the neutral ground of all accidents (images) and space as part of the order of the *kosmos*, which alone makes it possible for the *kosmos* to image the noetic. Between *thylos*, which imitates in its obedience the willingness of fire, air, and water to sacrifice themselves in becoming one another, and desire, which in the liver imitates the duality of space, the lesser gods have succeeded in copying the *kosmos* in the mortal soul. The copy, however, is not beautiful, for the lesser gods looked at what has come into being. They were too obedient to the commands of the demiurge to imitate what he had imitated.

The liver needs the spleen to do for it what space does for itself: to keep clean its mirror-surface (cf. 50c2). But not even liver and spleen together suffice to regulate our desires. The wild beast the gods tethered at the trough of the belly would never have let us turn to philosophy if they had not besides given us a lower belly and spiralled the intestines. The
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gods seem not to have done their work well. If they knew that we were fated to be insatiate, they should have so regulated our desire for food and drink that we would only desire the indispensable. Even then the intestines would have had to have been spiralled if we were ever to be satisfied; but the lower belly corrects an error in desire itself that is beyond the liver’s capabilities. The lower belly marks the limit for the power of mind over necessity in soul: what had to be accommodated because it could never be overcome. It is, like necessity itself, called a receptacle; it is at the opposite pole from the intestines whose spiral shape imitates the motion of same and other in the whole (39a6). The intestines are the contribution of mind; the contribution of space is split among three organs: as necessity it is the lower belly, as receiver of images the liver, and as wiper the spleen. Timaeus later says that the greatest human beauty consists in a symmetry between body and soul (87c4-d3); he never speaks of a symmetry between either thymos and desire or mortal and immortal soul. The contradiction between noetic “bodies” and noetic “whats” reappears in that between thymos, which willingly obeys but does not grasp the truth, and desire, which can only be enchanted but points to completeness and even when we are asleep images the truth.

(73b1-76e6). If one thinks of Aristophanes’ spherical men, the shape we have below the head would not seem to be explicable as the result of a making by cosmic gods. Everything in the kosmos has so far been made either round and visible or one of the five regular solids and invisible. Timaeus himself seems to acknowledge the difficulty in now speaking of “the god” and only returning to the plural when he discusses the reason for our life-span being the length it is (75b8). The marrow, moreover, inside the skull does not differ from the marrow inside the rest of our bones; they only differ by name: spherical marrow the demiurge calls brain, cylindrical marrow he calls marrow. This nominal difference but essential sameness recalls the sameness in composition of the circles of same and other to which different names were given; indeed, Timaeus uses the same word (epephémisen) in both cases (36c4). The brain and skull imitate the shape of the kosmos; but the spine imitates the shape of the soul before its ends were joined together into world-soul. The soul was then just a strip, which if rotated lengthwise would produce a cylinder.6 Timaeus, unlike Aristophanes, does not need the Olympian gods to explain the human shape. We are in our head a copy of the kosmos and in our upright posture a copy of soul. In our sphericity we are beautiful, in our straightness we are good (cf. 90a7-b1). We need our mortal soul, which is

6 Timaeus speaks mysteriously of the power of the other when he describes the making of the vertebrae; and if Proclus is right, that there are thirty-four terms in the articulation of soul (and hence thirty-three intervals), the number would agree with the number of vertebrae in the spine of a child.
anchored on the spine, to put the circuits of our brain in order. Timaeus succeeds, where Socrates fails in the *Phaedrus*, in linking our soul's shape to our bodily shape; but sphere and cylinder in being closer to one another than charioteer and horses, cannot account for the divine madness in philosophy. *Eros* in his account, as in Aristophanes', is due to our fall.

The maker of our flesh has succeeded in doing what art has not yet done: to make a year-round covering that combined the advantages of felt to protect us against falls with the advantages of wool for winter cold and of linen for summer heat. The god does not anticipate the invention of clothing; for if he had flesh could have been thinner where now it interferes with our sensibility, and we should have needed no hair. The expression "this fire" (74c3) must be understood, as the commentators remark, in contrast with the fire we ourselves can make. Man's future use of fire is also ignored; indeed, apart from the quasi-natural arts of farming, gymnastics, and medicine (cf. *Lgs.* 889d4-6), Timaeus never mentions any art as a supplement to the works of reason and necessity. He has an explanation for toenails and fingernails; but he is silent about the hands, except to say that hands and arms (*cheires*) were made along with legs and feet (*skêle*) for locomotion (45a2-3). Man is intelligent, according to Anaxagoras, because he has hands; but according to Aristotle he has hands because he is intelligent; and one would expect in so detailed a teleology as Timaeus' some indication of how the hands illustrate mind, especially since the makers of both immortal and mortal parts of the *kosmos* are nothing but craftsmen, who belong according to Socrates to the lowest class of the best city. Timaeus' speech looks like the revenge the artisans would take if they could on the lowly position Socrates seemed to assign them (cf. *Rep.* 496b5-6; 522b4-7); so now, free from political necessity, they rise up to claim the highest gods as their models. Timaeus, however, concentrates all making in the gods only so that they can make us like the *kosmos* but not like themselves (cf. 69a6). And what makes Timaeus' abstraction from human art all the stranger is that he imitates Socrates' abstraction from *eros* in the *Republic*, the major reason for which was to make it possible to understand the "true city" as wholly a city of arts. How, then, can Timaeus deny both *eros* and art to man? What kind of man does he have the gods produce, who without art is unfit for the "true city" and without *eros* unfit for philosophy? Only reflection on Plato's *Statesman* could supply an adequate answer.

Skin, hair, and nails are each explained in a double way, according to necessity and according to mind. Skin, however, is the first part of the body that the gods do not make; it is the first time that Timaeus indicates the difference between natural becoming and artful making (cf. 53b1). Skin grows and joins together with itself by itself; and once it has enveloped the skull it allows for "the divine" to produce hair and nails. Nails were given to man in anticipation of his degeneration into women and other beasts. Timaeus, the commentators believe, refers to women fighting with nails; but it is hard to see how that serves a divine end. If, however, one
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thinks of skin, hair, and nails together, one comes to think of the ritual of mourning, in which men and women cut their hair and women rake their cheeks. Death would thus come to light along with natural becoming; and the unwritten law of burial would have its source in nature. That hair and nails both grow after death would also make Timaeus ascribe their becoming to necessity. Timaeus, moreover, first mentions death in his description of flesh, which the god used to “bury from above” the rest of the body (74e1; see Cornford ad loc.). Flesh is an unwelcome necessity, for its incompatibility with bone and sensitivity forced the gods to choose for us the shorter though better life. Since flesh, unlike marrow, bone, and sinew, lacks air as an ingredient, Timaeus seems to identify, as far as the body goes, breathing with life (78e5); and since air is also needed for hearing, it would be the impossibility for flesh to allow us to hear that compelled the gods to keep our head relatively unprotected. Timaeus, at any rate, almost identifies the insensitivity we should have if much flesh covered the skull with lack of hearing (74e9, 75b2, e7). The gods thus made it possible for us not only to speak to one another but to obey. Law both human and divine would be as much benefited as reasoning. On account of his lifeless flesh man experiences pain and becomes aware of his mortality; but through his skin, hair, and nails he is instructed to cope with them. Learning by suffering (pathei mathos) is indispensable for wisdom. Necessity seems to be altogether good.

(76e7-77c5). As a Pythagorean, Timaeus could not have allowed meat to be part of man’s original diet; and since there were no other animals in the beginning, he had to provide for plant-food if he was to prevent man’s first necessary crime from being cannibalism (cf. Epin. 975a5-7). Lawful food must have been from the start naturally available. And yet Timaeus’ account of plants seems to square badly with either part of his “law”. Plants are animals; but it is unclear whether they belong to the noetic animal of which the kosmos is an image or belong to the idea of earth and in no way participate in noetic animal. Plants are “a different kind of animal” but “not different from animal”. The kosmos would be impossible without them; but if they belong to noetic animal, cannibalism is a necessity. If, on the other hand, they are part of earth’s being, animal has a double character (perhaps a necessity if there is to be chorismos), one of which is suitable for the kosmos’ paradigm, while the other is compatible with noetic “body” Plants seem to be those beings in which noetic “bodies” and noetic “whats” are hardest to distinguish. No man ever degenerates so much as to become a plant, even though its nature must be akin to man’s nature if it can be the source of his survival. Flesh, moreover, is least connected with soul; and if no living thing must be killed, carnivorousness would be the only way to avoid killing and eating one’s own kin; but if the kinship of all life is not the ground of vegetarianism but rather the opposite – that lifeless flesh should not support us since it interferes as such with our higher faculties, then man must be herbivorous.
In the perspective of natural kinship, then, vegetarianism should be prohibited and cannibalism encouraged; in the perspective of mind, i.e., the lack of kinship between flesh and mind, cannibalism should be prohibited. The second unwritten law Timaeus has built into man thus rests on his reversing the usual interpretation of it. True and good cannibalism is vegetarianism, false and bad cannibalism is carnivorousness. Hunting, moreover, could only have unleashed the original wildness of man's desires and made him savage; but farming, in domesticating plants, all of which were originally wild, forced man to imitate their rest at the same time as it forced him to attend to the motions of heaven. Man's "education" of plants is man's self-education. It would seem, however, that only because this kosmos is more complete than its paradigm that men can imitate the soul of the kosmos and complete his own nature. The gods were more generous than the demiurge, nature more beneficent than the ideas (cf. 73c7 with 77c8).

(77e7-81e5). One misunderstands Timaeus' account of eating and breathing if one thinks its complexities are primarily due to the absence of diagrams. The double-funnelled weil of air and fire the gods make must be literally understood. They first make the being-at-work (energeia) of breathing before they fit it to the body. As a constant activity, it is not at any moment in potentiality. We, however, are inclined to regard our body apart from its functioning; what is outside the skin seems not to be ours, even though we could not live a minute if we were as enclosed as we believe. The gods do not make this error. The bodily conditions for breathing are less significant to them than breathing itself. Not the flesh that surrounds the air determines its circulation, but its circulation determines the openings in the flesh. Timaeus so much abstracts from everything bodily not indispensable for understanding — rib-cage, heart, lungs, and muscle — that the life we live is hardly our own: holding our breath cannot prevent transpiration through the body. He thereby combines an illustration of being-at-work as closely as possible with the divine prohibition against suicide. The gods, however, can only make the weil's web complete because, in abstracting from the body, they abstract as well from time. A single movement of air into and out of the mouth, followed by another movement of air into and out of the body — this double movement assures the unwilled continuity of life — cannot be complete in itself; for the air transpired through the body must then return to the mouth in order to repeat the same pattern; and only in time can this repetition occur. The weil, then, only gets completely woven at the moment of our natural death. The being-at-work of breathing thus proves to be our dying, and the pleasure of life partly the pleasure of dying (cf. 81d4-e2).7

7 There is no need for our purposes to examine in detail how human life as breathing and digestion imitates the way in which the whole was ordered, but
Timaeus seems to deal at too great length with disease. Not only should its causes be "plain by now to everyone" (cf. 53c5), but though "it is more just to hold greater discourse about the good things than about the bad" (87c3-4), Timaeus himself is far briefer about the treatment of diseases than about the causes of diseases. Timaeus, moreover, in classifying diseases, almost imitates the disorder that diseases represent (see Taylor, p. 599). Diseases are not altogether unnatural; "they somehow look like the nature of animals" (89b5-6), however much they go against the "laws of nature" (83e4-5). Only if "that which is the same as the same increases and diminishes in the same way and in proportion can that which is the same as itself remain healthy and sound". The body cannot meet this condition for two reasons. 1) Since we were made herbivorous and not carnivorous, the body grows through the additions of bodies like it but not the same as it (81c4-6); and 2) the lower belly was made to take care of the soul’s excessive desire, and the intestines were spiralled in order to check us from constant desire; but only if we ate all the time and at the same rate as we lost bodies to the environment, i.e., only if the body had not been accommodated to the necessity of soul, could we be perfectly healthy. The health of the soul is incompatible with the health of the body (cf. Lgs. 728d3-c5); but that our makers looked first to the soul reveals the working of mind. Disease is a necessary part of a teleological design (cf. 85a5-b1; Arist. de somno 475a9-10).

Three of the primary bodies were persuaded to change into one another; but they were not persuaded to change in any sequence. Whichever of them happened to be stronger in any encounter succeeded in transforming the others. In the human body, however, the secondary bodies of marrow, bone, sinew, and flesh have to change into one another in a definite sequence if there is not to be disease. Plato’s Eleatic Stranger suggests in the Statesman that the whole was essentially indifferent to the order of becoming; and he connects the order of genesis we know with the absence of the rule by gods and its reversal with their rule. Timaeus seems to propose something similar, for the order in which the demiurge made the secondary bodies is the reverse of the order in which they come to be by nature. The demiurge did not begin with food, out of which the blood is formed (82c3-4), and from which come sinew, flesh, bone, and marrow, but with just the opposite and almost in order of rank (marrow, bone, flesh, and sinew), for the gods made the fire network, which corporeally is the blood stream, in its being-at-work and thereby abstracted from the material cause of its being-at-work. Teleologically, this makes good sense; but since plants do not belong to the animals which get transformed into one another, Timaeus must make the essential priority of being-at-

merely to state that Timaeus assigns to chaos, space, and kosmos the same roles to each in both cases. The chief proportion is this: kosmos: space (plokanon): animal : network (plokanon) of air and fire.
work into a temporal priority as well. Being-at-work must therefore be an artifact; and to its priority over natural becoming, which puts us under the strain of living according to both at once, Timaeus ascribes the second cause of disease. As an artifact, marrow is marrow, and what it consists of does not relate it to anything else, any more than a soup ladle is cognate with a chair because it too is made of wood; but as the product of becoming, marrow necessarily becomes bound with its corporeal origins; and these origins can no longer be expressly constituted for it, for they also serve at the same time as the source of sinew, bone, and flesh. The god made marrow out of the most perfect solids; but he thereby made it inevitable that marrow, in being repaired by less perfect solids, would never be again what it was at first (82d2-e2; cf. 77a6 with 86e2). Neither sweat nor tears has any place in the order of making; but in the order of becoming they purify daily the body and therefore easily become the instruments of disease, for they too are a kind of phlegm. The natural body is always in a morbid state (cf. Rep. 344e-2-8); what partly saves it is its artful origin, when each of its secondary bodies minded its own business perfectly and contributed directly to the whole animal without contributing anything to one another. Timaeus refers to what glues flesh to bone when he discusses disease; in the making of them he is silent about their bond.8

(86b1-92c3). Timaeus discusses the diseases of body that come from body (81e6-86a8), the diseases of soul that come from body (86b1-87b9), the diseases of body that come from soul (87e6-88a7), and he presents the diseases of soul that come from soul as women and the other animals (90e6-92c3). Mindlessness of various degrees is indispensable for the beauty of the kosmos; but since mindlessness is a disease, disease too necessarily belongs to its beauty. To cure the kosmos of this disease would be to destroy the kosmos; but the disease is incurable. The best one can do is to harmonize body and soul with one another in imitation of the kosmos; one cannot harmonize soul with itself. Disease in each kind of animal as in the whole does not preclude beauty: a dog with a soul appropriate to its body is beautiful. And yet a dog like every other beast must

8 The difference between the second and third kinds of diseases largely consists in the difference between, for example, head and bone as parts of the body. Diseases of the second kind affect the homogeneous parts of the body (marrow, bones, sinew, and flesh); diseases of the third kind affect particular places in the body, and most of them, unlike the second kind, become manifest externally; and again unlike the second kind they are mixtures. The confusion in Timaeus' classification arises accordingly from the fact that the heterogeneous parts of body are entirely composed of the homogeneous parts, each of which has its own function that is not wholly the same as any dissimilar part's which it corporeally constitutes. One cannot help but be reminded of the difference between the "true city" founded on the artful satisfaction of the needs of the body and the best city ordered into classes according to the parts of the soul.
cease to be beautiful if it is to reverse the cycle of degeneration from which it came. Socrates is necessarily ugly. To atrophy the two lower parts of the soul would be best; but since they are inseparably linked with them to rest is to invite one's own death. Mindlessness always follows beauty, war and death always follow mind. The need to imitate the motion the body, and the body cannot be at rest without being destroyed, to bring of space in order to imitate the motions of the ouranos precludes the perfect imitation of the ouranos. The best human life consists in a return to our ancestral nature, before generation had corrupted the highest part of ourselves; it is best not to be born (cf. 90d5-6 with Lgs. 801e7-8). The price Timaeus pays for his accounting entirely for man in cosmological terms is despair: the beautiful is the standard for the good (87c4-5). Without political philosophy cosmology always runs the risk of taking its bearings by the political.
NOTE ON THE INTENTION OF JAMES HARRINGTON'S POLITICAL ART

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James Harrington begins his major work, *The Commonwealth of Oceana,* by describing the natural resources of the empire of Oceana (England) as they stand in 1656. That is, Harrington describes the character of the land and of the peoples of Oceana, Marpesia (Scotland), and Panopaea (Ireland). This description is the "Introduction, or Order of the Work." The main body of the *Oceana* presents the fundamental laws for the ordering of these resources. These laws, Harrington claims, "make a perfect, and (for aught that in human prudence can be foreseen) an immortal commonwealth." Oceana's political order is perfect because by it no one having the power to subvert can have the interest and no one with the interest can have the power; thus, in Oceana no gentleman "ought to own a shade for preferring his own interest before that of a whole nation". Oceana is free from the fear of internal subversion. She can only be destroyed from without, by earthquake, flood, plague or by a better armed nation. Since there would not be better armed nations in the world, the *Oceana* ends by holding out the hope of a gloriously ordered republic which holds the whole world in her empire. Quite literally, the *Oceana* ends with praise for the sole legislator of this empire, "Who setting the Kingdomes of the *Earth* at Liberty, Tooke the Kingdome of the *Heav'ns* by Violence."3

Our author's practical intention seems clear. He writes in order to gain conviction for the view that England's old monarchic orders must be replaced with wholly new republican orders. A second and derivative practical intention becomes clear well before the end of the *Oceana*. Harrington wishes to gain conviction for the view that a republican England will conquer all the corrupt continental monarchies - and even the Asian ones. At first holding these conquests provincially, perhaps as Rome held Sicily at first, Oceana would then institute wholly republican forms in each province which could bear them.


1 *Works*, p. 278.


3 *Oceana*, p. 226. The structure of the *Oceana* may imitate that of the *Histories* of Polybius. If one does not count Harrington's introduction, the *Oceana* has two preparatory chapters, a main body divided into thirty, and a corollary.
Whom does Harrington wish to convince? Everyone. He says, "There is nothing I so much desire, next the favor of God, as to be popularly understood." But for Harrington the voice of God is the voice of the people. Harrington argues that the people is more powerful, not to say more authoritative, than God. For example, "God or Moses" proposed the "ten commandments" so that they might be "voted by the people of Israel." In the wilderness, the people passed them. In case they had not been passed, they would not be laws. Our author proposes in his Oceana. The orders proposed would create perfect republics. Such orders go wholly upon the interest of the whole people and are opposed to the interest and rule of any one or few or some of few. If, as Harrington claims, interest is the cause of all willing and therefore of all actions, there is good reason for him to hope that his orders will be instituted as soon as they are popularly understood.

In order to propagate his proposal for England's future, Harrington first wrote The Commonwealth of Oceana. All of his other works — including his most occasional tracts and leaflets and his posthumously published systematic work — are apologies for, restatements of, or elaborations on the Oceana. Some of these works are answers to his critics; some are commentaries on the laws for Oceana; there is one dialogue. We refer to his political writings, not to his writings on and translations of Vergil. As far as I can tell, Harrington never changed any of his proposals during the time he was speaking and writing about politics in public, during the Interregnum. What Harrington may have said, done, or proposed against Charles II, if indeed he did enter into a conspiracy after the Restoration, cannot be judged. As far as I can tell, all of Harrington's political writings, except perhaps the posthumously published System of Politics, Delineated in short and easy Aphorisms, were written during the rule of the Cromwells.

The Oceana is a modern utopia. Accordingly, it was written to present a perfect nation. This nation is not presented as in any way an "imagined republic." Modern utopias are meant to be effectual. The Oceana is meant to effect hope in every reader — and even in many non-readers — for a known (or knowable) future. In order to indicate how effectual the Oceana is meant to be, its author claims that it was written about 1715 or fifty years after it was published. This book is meant to appear as, not a proposal for England's future, but a history, i.e., a record, of England's future and her past insofar as it is relevant to the acceptance of the Harringtonian orders. The point of view of the Oceana is "looking backward;" Harrington does not wish Oceana to appear as a projection or prediction.4 Harrington's reluctance to place much hope in the future is hardly the characteristic disposition of a modern utopian. In order to understand the problem of

Oceana's utopian appearance, we briefly compare it with Bacon's New Atlantis.\(^5\)

Although this comparison is not directly suggested by the text, nevertheless it may be warranted if only because Bacon is the founder of modern utopianism. In addition, we have the testimony of Harrington's biographer, admirer, and editor; John Toland remarks that the Oceana, like New Atlantis, was written "in imitation of Plato's Atlantic story." Moreover, Harrington himself seems to suggest such a comparison in his apologetic restratement of Oceana, The Art of Lawgiving.\(^6\) Indeed, the very titles of the two works suggest this comparison.

Both Bensalem, Bacon's utopia, and Oceana are islands. But to reach Bacon's feigned commonwealth a long, dangerous, or at any rate difficult voyage through as yet uncharted waters is necessary. Oceana is here. It is England; only the name has been changed. For Oceana, there is no need for a future triumph of science, like the triumph of the science of navigation necessary for return voyages to Bensalem; "...the growth of Oceana gives law to the sea."\(^7\) The uncertainties represented by the sea, the uncertainties of chance and nature, cannot prevent the actualization of Oceana. By faking the publication date, by making his book so plainly a history of England, by presenting the actual written constitution of the perfect and immortal commonwealth, and by certain other devices, Harrington indicates that the actualization of Oceana depends not at all on the passage of time, on the future or the further conquest of nature/chance. Oceana is not remote. Thus the Oceana is a completed work; nothing is lacking as is the case with the New Atlantis.

We see that in Bensalem science of technology is pervasive. The very names of things refer to the "goals and tools of scientific power."\(^8\) Science and scientists rule Bensalem. Inventors are the most honored men there. New Atlantis ends with a speech by the head scientist, the Father of Solomon's House, in which the wonders of her technology are described. Especially, the scientists may be able to overcome plagues, earthquakes, floods and such like acts of nature. Indeed it seems that men themselves have been transformed by the rule of science and scientists; in Bensalem there may be neither war nor commerce.

In Oceana, not science but the law is pervasive. The names here conjure up the character of those to whom they are given. The Virgin Queen now is called "Parthenia." The two universities are renamed after the muses of history and poetry. The most honored man in Oceana is Olphaus Megaletor who founded her republican Orders. The Oceana ends with an elaborate

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\(^5\) The comparison was inspired by Howard B. White, Peace Among the Willows: The Political Philosophy of Francis Bacon (The Hague, 1968), pp. 93-166.

\(^6\) Works, p. 436.

\(^7\) Oceana, p. 11.

\(^8\) White, p. 102.
praise of him. Oceana is ruled by law, not by men or scientists. We see that men are not greatly changed; Oceana is built for war and expansion. Oceana is probably as wealthy as Bensalem, but she is not free from plague. The laws for Oceana may make men good, for "good laws make good men;" the laws do not provide for the advancement of experimental science, nor for the end to natural catastrophe.

This comparison might lead the reader to conclude that The Common-wealth of Oceana is not a part of the modern utopian tradition. The commonwealth presented by Harrington is not primarily the peaceful, prosperous, healthful society, nor the society made possible by technology, which is usually associated with modern utopian writings. In his Seven Models of a Commonwealth, Harrington argues that Oceana is as much one of those "chimaeras or utopias" as any description of the laws and orders of an historical nation; Oceana is no more an utopia than Livy's Rome. Compared to Bensalem and all other modern utopias, the proposal of the Oceana does indeed appear very moderate. In Oceana men will still work, go to war, make profits and take losses, get sick, and die. So the Oceana holds out the moderate (but - from the point of view of the ancient utopians - extravagant) hope for a glorious England whose empire shall have no limits and which shall exist forever.

Harrington seems to use the utopian form for Machiavellian reasons, for purposes of propagation. Harrington judged that his utopian form would be especially attractive to the intellectuals of his day. There is evidence that this judgment was correct.9 And when some complained that Oceana was too learned, Harrington wrote Valerius and Publicola. This dialogue is distinguished by its lack of learned quotations, Latin phrases, and historical examples. Rather the interlocutors mean to "begin upon some known principle," namely "All power is in the people," and to proceed to extract the perfect commonwealth "ex puris naturalibus." The dialogue form was selected because, if it is well managed, this form "is the clearest and most effectual for conveying a man's sense into the understanding of his reader." The Seven Models, which epitomizes seven or eight republics including Oceana, is meant to show that "the whole, and the highest mysteries" of republican government may be brought "to the lowest capacity of vulgar debate." Harrington did not think, then, that the utopian form was especially necessary to his practical plan; but the utopian form is essential to Bacon's intention because the society predicted or sought by New Atlantis cannot be presented - even today - as a distinct possibility. Harrington's Oceana is presented as a distinct present possi-

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bility. If the principles of government presented early in the *Oceana* are sound, then the civil order presented by *Oceana* may be instituted here, now, and today. No further developments of science — including political science — are necessary for the Oceanic order, nor are they encouraged by the *Oceana*.

If Harrington uses the utopian form merely as a device, if there is no necessary connection between Harrington's immediate practical proposal and its utopian expression, then whatever does our author mean by *The Commonwealth of Oceana*? That is, why "Oceana"? Why not "England," since it is obvious to every reader that Oceana is England and since the *Oceana* is nothing if it is not a proposal for England? Harrington calls our attention to these questions. On the first title page of *Oceana*, the one without Harrington's name on it and without the dedication to the Lord Protector, is the work's motto: "Tantalus a labris, fugientia captat Fluminia: Quid rides? mutato nomine, de te Fabula narratur." Why does Harrington change names?

Name-changing is the most obvious literary device of the *Oceana*. This device is only used in *Oceana*; it is not even alluded to in his other works, save one. In contrasting himself with his adversary, Harrington notes that he does not libel anyone in *Oceana* because he does not use names. But this remark occurs in a work which Harrington calls comic. Besides, more than the names of living men are changed. It is not the case that the changed names protect the innocent. It is manifest that "Oceana" is England. Who could be "Leviathan" but Hobbes? What better name for the king who ruled the lull before the storm of civil war than "Morpheus"? Should not the king who attempted to consolidate the monarchy be named "Panurgus" (Henry VII)? The changed names do not seem to conceal anything. On the contrary, the changed names consistently reveal something of the author's judgment on their owner's character. Yet Harrington does not change all names; some men, even some Englishmen, and some countries keep their names. Therefore, we must account for the name changes as they are. We turn now to the passage in the *Oceana* where Harrington writes of name-changing.

First, consider the context of that passage. Consider the broad outline of *Oceana*. This book consists of an introduction and four "Parts" or chapters. The passage in question occurs in the first chapter which is entitled "The Preliminaries, shewing the principles of government." Harrington explicitly divides this chapter into two sections. The first section treats the principles of government according to the ancients and the principles of

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10 I believe that Harrington meant to publish *Oceana* anonymously, but Cromwell's interference with the presses caused him to decide to reveal authorship and to dedicate to Cromwell. No other works are dedicated. The motto does not appear on the second title page. See *Works*, pp. xvi-xvii, 547.

11 *Works*, p. 547.
government in general or according to Harrington's "own way." The second section of the first chapter treats the late governments of Oceana and in treating them reveals the modern principles of government. Because Harrington claims to side with the ancients against the moderns, we may conclude – using Harrington's terms – that the first section of the "Preliminaries" treats "Ancient Prudence" and the second "Modern Prudence."

The passage on name-changing is in the second section. At the beginning of the second section Harrington discusses the "Rise, Progress, and Declination of Modern Prudence." The beginning of modern prudence was the end of the Roman Empire. However much the "Arms of Caesar" may have weakened Rome by bringing on the rule of emperors, still it was the victory of the barbarians that founded modern prudence. Those "inundations of Goths, Vandals, Huns, and Lombards"\(^{12}\) finally and totally removed ancient prudence from the world. But because "Nemo nocetur nisi ex se," Harrington briefly discusses the ways in which the Empire weakened itself so that it could be so easily ruined by the vigorous, but coarse, northerners. In conquering the whole Empire, the Vandals, Huns, Saxons, Lombards, and Franks overwhelmed also "ancient Languages, Learning, Prudence, Manners, Cities . . . ." Almost as though the barbarians were not content to wipe out the vestiges of the ancient world, Harrington adds that the conquerors also changed "the Names of Rivers, Countries, Seas, Mountains, and Men." Harrington gives an example: the names "Camillus, Caesar, and Pompey" came to be "Edmund, Richard, and Geoffrey." This mention and example of name-changing comes immediately before the author's own practice of changing names becomes especially noticeable. What is its significance?

According to Harrington, those who put an end to ancient prudence also ended ancient names. The new names are a sign of a new prudence. Yet we still know some of the ancient names. Harrington uses them. In fact, we note that Harrington does not change any ancient names. For example, he discusses the rise, progress, and destruction of the governments of Oceana by considering the changes brought about by the various conquests of the Romans, the "Teutons" (Saxons), the "Scandians" (Danes), and the "Neustrians" (Normans). Harrington changes the names of the modern conquerors only. The Romans keep their name. The case is the same in other matters. Hobbes, called a modern by Harrington, has his name altered. But Machiavelli, not called a modern, keeps his name. So do Aristotle, Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, and all other ancient writers. Bacon's name is only partially changed – we might say "ancientized" – to "Verula-

\(^{12}\) Oceana, p. 42. In the same context, our author remarks that the reordering of the Empire's arms during the rule of Constantine was decisive. This reordering took place when the well-armed and dangerous Praetorians were removed from their "strong Garrison" in Rome "and distributed into divers Provinces" which they held hereditarily. These guards were, so to speak, replaced by barbarians.
mius.” All the rulers of England mentioned in the *Oceana*, save only Ethelred who lived in “ancient times,” have their names changed. Only when Harrington cites a modern or contemporary author in support of his position (for examples, Selden, Hooker, Bracton, Coke) does he leave the name the same, except in the case of Bacon. Harrington does refer to Hobbes once by name, but this is in the margin and also in support of the position of *Oceana*. From this pattern of name-changing we conclude that Harrington with his major work aims to do something like what the barbarians did. But what did they do?

The barbarians ended the Roman Empire and at the same time ended the already weakened ancient prudence. They did not simply and by themselves destroy Rome and ancient prudence. Republican Rome, that “Paragon” of ancient prudence, had been greatly weakened long before the barbarian flood. But above all, the Caesars — especially Julius, Augustus, and Constantine — “interposed” “something of necessity” so that, even though “there is no appearance in the bulk or constitution of Modern Prudence, that she should ever have been able to come up and Grapple with the Ancient,” still the barbarians were able to strike the death blow. Ancient prudence did not show itself in the world for over a thousand years thereafter, so powerful was that necessity.

Harrington imitates the barbarians. He is the vigorous opponent of modern prudence, which he says has already been greatly weakened by Henry VII and Henry VIII and Richelieu. But the full imitation of the barbarians requires also the giving of new names; this Harrington does also. Can it be, then, that Harrington means to restore ancient prudence? Yet ancient prudence has been utterly wrecked, hardly a vestige remains. What the arms of Caesar and the barbarians have ruined can James Harrington, armed only with a pen, restore? If both ancient and modern prudence have been erased, what will be the character of politics? Our author means to eradicate modern prudence from the face of the earth as the barbarians did to ancient prudence. But the giving of new names suggests some further politically theoretic intention. Reflection on a single literary device would suggest that Harrington intends either to restore ancient prudence, or to establish some new non-ancient, non-modern prudence, or to put forth some non-prudential understanding of politics. Restored prudence, new prudence, no prudence, whatever fulfills Harrington’s politically theoretic intention, that intention must be consistent with his more practical intention to establish the Oceanic order in England. A sign of this consistency is, then, that Harrington changes only modern *English* names.15

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13 *Oceana*, p. 42.

14 *Oceana*, p. 207.

15 But consider *Oceana*, p. 197. Here it is threatened that if the orders are not adopted quickly some other nation, probably France, will do so first. Whichever nation adopts first holds the world in its empire.
A perfect and immortal commonwealth cannot be established by modern prudence.

To expose Harrington's politically theoretic intention, we must begin by explaining what he means by prudence, ancient and modern.

Ancient prudence is not prudence as understood by the ancients. That is, Harrington does not wish to restore the understanding of prudence presented by the tradition of classical political philosophy. He does not long for the prudent man described by Aristotle. Harrington defines prudence in the second section of the first chapter. Having recounted the political history of England up to the time of Oceana, Harrington says that the nation is ready for a republican government; a republic is "already in the nature of the [population]." All that is lacking to bring about a republic (the author uses "republic" and "commonwealth" interchangeably) is either "time (which is slow and dangerous) or art (which would be more quick and secure)." Art is to be preferred. "But... this Art is Prudence; and that part of Prudence, which regards the present work [scil. the founding of a commonwealth], is nothing else but the skill of raising" the institutions natural to the character of the population. The character of the population can be known with almost mathematical precision. Prudence is an art, a skill, part of which produces the proper form of government for a nation. The other parts are the skill of leading armies and the skill in conducting the day-to-day affairs of civil government. "Time" may also produce governments, even as it produced a population naturally fit for a republic in England.

Now not Aristotle, nor the tradition of classical political philosophy, taught that prudence was art. The ancients sharply distinguished prudence from art, because the prudent man (including the founder), but not necessarily the artist, is also the morally virtuous man. But the traditional classic position also identified prudence and art insofar as both were concerned with contingencies. Harrington understands prudence to be an art; it does not presuppose moral virtue. Thus Harrington says that the prudent man "contemplates" moral virtue and that good laws are not necessarily the product of good men, in fact, "Give us good men, and they will make us good laws, is the maxim of a demagog." Nor does the art of prudence deal with contingencies. It is not an excellence of deliberation. Harrington shows his reader all too clearly how little contingency concerns the prudent by showing how a decision to wage aggressive war is taken under the Orders of Oceana:

About the one and fortieth year of the Commonwealth, the Censors according to their Annuall Customs, reported the Pillar of Nilus [the census count], by which it was found that the People increased very near one third, Whereupon the Council of War was appointed by the Senate to bring in a State of War... .

16 For purposes of this paper, I have identified Aristotle's classic defense of prudence with the position of the tradition of classical political philosophy.
Harrington’s political art does not presuppose moral virtue and it does not deal with contingencies. Rather, it proceeds according to principles as certain as those of any science. Prudence is called an art to indicate that it is a practical science, but it is demonstrable “as if it were mathematical.”'17 Thus, “... he that demonstrates by this art, demonstrates by nature, and is not to be contradicted by fancy, but by demonstration out of nature.”'18

Harrington’s understanding of prudence appears very much like that of Machiavelli. (It is good to remember at this point that our author calls the Florentine an ancient.) From Machiavelli’s point of view, “Aristotle did not see that the relation of the founder to his human matter is not fundamentally different from the relation of the smith to his iron or his inanimate matter: Aristotle did not realize to what extent man is malleable, and in particular malleable by man.”'19 Harrington would agree with this ancient criticism of an ancient, this Machiavellian criticism of Aristotle. He follows the ancients, but he also goes his own way.20 Harrington follows Machiavelli, but at the same time he goes beyond him. From Harrington’s point of view, not even Machiavelli understood the extent to which man is malleable by man. Machiavelli did not realize how much more unchanging is the animate matter of the foundar than the inanimate matter of the smith: Iron rusts; men reproduce.21

What is ancient prudence and modern prudence? Harrington does not define and distinguish these terms in his Oceana. We only assert in this paper that he avoids such definition in his major work because he wishes to make use of the ordinary understanding of the ancient as the authoritatively traditional. In his most important apologetic work, The Prerogative of Popular Government, he flatly declares his definition:

By antient prudence I understand the policy of a commonwealth, and by modern prudence that of king, lords, and commons, which was introduced by the Goths and Vandals upon the ruin of the Roman empire, and has since reign'd in these western countries . . . 22

Ancient prudence is republican prudence, skill in founding and governing republics and leading their armies. Modern prudence in monarchical prudence, skill in founding and maintaining monarchies, and especially mixed or “regulated” monarchies. In order that a reader have no doubts about his definition, Harrington explains that the government established by Joseph in ancient Egypt was of the same form as that preferred by modern prudence.23

17 Works, p. 559.
18 Works, p. 560.
21 Consider Oceana, pp. 64, 53, 133-139; Works, pp. 466-470.
22 Works, p. 221.
Does Harrington wish to restore prudence? He does not wish to restore the ancient understanding of politics or ancient politics as understood by the ancients. He does wish to restore the form of government which dominated the ancient period of history in its vigorous youth and in its maturity, as opposed to its infancy and old age. He wishes to restore republican government. Harrington’s intention is identical with Machiavelli’s in this respect. He regrets the fact that the West, which has “ever had such a Relish of liberty,” has continued in the grips of “Gothic” monarchy for over a thousand years. The publication and propagation of *Oceana* and the establishment of its orders will end forever modern prudence and its characteristic policies. But to attempt to end forever any order and to establish another which will last forever -- free from all internal tumult, no less -- would be a laughable or unsuccessful project from Machiavelli’s point of view. Still Harrington hopes to bring forth an immortal commonwealth, a republic free from all “intestine disorder,” because he believes that he has discovered the true principles of government. More precisely, Harrington means to teach an exact, non-controversial practical science of politics. In this respect, his intention is the same as Hobbes’s. Yet Hobbes’s exact, non-controversial science of politics culminated in the demand for monarchy, certainly not for a republic ruled “by laws, not men.” Harrington’s theoretical-political intention seems clear: the propagation of an exact, non-controversial art of politics capable of effecting the reintroduction of the whole world eternally to the republican form of government. But this intention presupposes the fulfillment of still another. The *Oceana* is meant to overcome, to improve upon the doctrines of Harrington’s two great teachers, Hobbes and Machiavelli.

Harrington’s admiration for Machiavelli can hardly go unnoticed. Machiavelli is called “the Prince of Polititians,” “the greatest Artist in the modern World,” “the onely Polititian of later Ages,” the “incomparable Patron of the People.” Harrington appears to have known very well the *Prince*, the *Discourses* (admirning the second book more than anything he had studied), the *Art of War*, and the *Florentine Histories*. In the *Oceana*, Machiavelli is mentioned by name more often than any man or author. As I count, Machiavelli is quoted more often in that book also. It is difficult to know whether or not Harrington was aware of Machiavelli’s rhetoric. In the *Oceana*, Machiavelli is presented as a sober republican, a devoted student of the political practice of the ancient world, a ponderer of old books; Harrington barely reminds the reader of “all those black maxims set down by som politicians, particularly Machiavel in his prince.”


25 *Works*, p. 482.
pearance of Hobbes in *Oceana* is quite different from that of Machiavelli. If Machiavelli is the hero of *Oceana*, if he is ancient prudence incarnate, then Hobbes is the villain. Hobbes "goes about to destroy" ancient prudence by justifying monarchy. Hobbes is mentioned relatively few times in the body of the *Oceana* and these mentions are in the first chapter. Every mention appears to be polemical. But are not appearances sometimes deceiving? The last mention of Hobbes in *Oceana* is toward its end in the margin, where Harrington does not change his name. After the whole of the Orders for Oceana have been set down, Harrington allows the reader to conclude that the order which those fundamental laws brought out of the chaos of civil war would be judged "beautiful" from the point of view of Thomas Hobbes and God as described by Plato. Harrington's opposition to Hobbes is not simple. This is how he explains it:

I have opposed the politics of Mr. Hobbes, to show him what he taught me, ... for his treatises of human nature, and of liberty and necessity, they are the greatest of new lights, and those which I have follow'd, and shall follow.  

The appearance of Machiavelli is likewise deceiving. Well before *Oceana* ends, Harrington has disputed — perhaps disproved — Machiavelli's analysis of the many and the few, his doctrine that solid civil orders have criminal beginnings, his representations of Sparta, Rome, Athens, and other historical regimes, his teaching that a defensive foreign policy is the result of "imagination" and many other Machiavellian essentials. A consideration of these disputes would involve us too deeply in Harrington's teaching, as opposed to his intention.

From the point of view of the *Oceana*, Machiavelli is the peak of ancient prudence; Harrington admires him because he made republican government again a choiceworthy form. Thus our author says that Machiavelli "has gon about to retrieve" ancient prudence. Hobbes represents the peak of modern prudence; he presents the best defense of monarchy. In fact, Hobbes is the only writer, as opposed to ruler, whom Harrington calls a modern.

It is especially Hobbes's "politics" that Harrington opposes. In order to explain this opposition we must mention a certain Harringtonian teaching. Imitating Machiavelli, our author teaches and shows that all states are either monarchic or republican. In teaching this, Harrington shows that the few cannot possibly rule in their own right or by themselves, but always set up a (regulated) king. These monarchies by nobles, as Harrington calls them, are inherently unstable; they tend to become either wars among the nobles or absolute monarchies. But, according to Harrington, the creation of a third estate — the landed clergy or lords spiritual — has

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27 This is most clearly seen by *Works*, pp. 467, 481.
made possible a regulated monarchy which is relatively stable. The third estate is the result of the "something of necessity" introduced and fostered by the Caesars (see above). The barbarians' creation of the third estate, which stands somehow between the many and the few or between the subjects and the lords temporal, ensures the continued existence of the naturally unstable regulated monarchy. Such monarchies, called "Gothic" by Harrington, are the worst possible form of government because they depend more than any other form on the fear of death for their stability. But as the authority of the Church has declined so has the authority and power of the third estate; this is especially true in England since Henry VII and in France since Richelieu. Without the third estate, no monarchy by nobles can stand long. Therefore, the end of modern prudence would come of its own accord were it not for the fact that "certain expedients and intrusions" were discovered which made regulated monarchy "to appear or be call'd absolute." Certain politicians, including Hobbes, have discovered means to maintain the regulated monarchy even without the landed clergy. So Hobbes and the Hobbesians may make the claim that the traditional modern monarchy can be the most stable, the most commodious, of all governments, even more stable than the monarchy of the Turk. An important part of Harrington's teaching is meant to show that no monarchy can be as stable as a well-ordered republic.

In order to show this, Harrington must oppose Machiavelli, who did not praise republics for their lack of tumults but rather taught that republican commotions were a sign of political health. As the Oceana puts it, Machiavelli "makes us believe, that the people in [republics] are so enraged against them, that where they meet a Gentleman they kill him." Now Harrington begins at the same point that Machiavelli did in his consideration of republics:

There is not a more noble, or useful question in the Politics, then that which is started by Machiavil, Whether means were to be found whereby the Enmity that was between the Senate and the people of Rome, might have been removed.

Harrington's answer may be said to be much more useful than Machiavelli's, even if it is not so noble. The enmity could have been ended; what is more, it could have been ended with republican forms or without resorting to a defensive foreign policy with its characteristically oppressive domestic policy. Nevertheless Machiavelli's greatness is secure. He started this question: Not that Machiavelli was the first to wonder at the commotions in Rome, rather Machiavelli was the first to undertake a class analysis of (Roman)

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28 The subjects fear death not only at the hands of the king, but also at the hands of the lords temporal and by the authority of the lords spiritual.

29 See Works, pp. 472 and especially 481. See also Works, pp. 248-264. Harrington himself develops some "expedients" and is thanked for it by Hobbesians.

30 Oceana, p. 133.
politics in preference to a regime analysis. Harrington accepts the class analysis. The regime analysis of the classics barely appears as a rejected alternative in his works. But having accepted the Machiavellian starting point – to accept the regime analysis would be ineffectual because that analysis necessarily comes to an end in the presentation of an imagined republic or principality – Harrington draws very different conclusions from it. By showing that the dispute between the many and the few could be ended, or (using Harrington’s expression) by showing that the few can be included in the many, Harrington is able to show that a republic is at least as stable a form as a monarchy.

We have now come altogether too close to Harrington’s teaching. But we may say that Harrington is able to resolve the many-few class conflict by showing that the difference between princes and peoples is not natural, even as Machiavelli had suggested that the differences between princes, between the one and the few, were not natural or qualitative. Instead Harrington traces the difference to a quantitative difference among men in the ability to, and success at acquiring land or servants. The doctrine for which Harrington is best known, the doctrine of the balance of domestic empire, teaches that the form of government naturally follows or is determined by the proportion of land (or servants) held among the one, the few, and the people. The one and the few are the “gentlemen” who having acquired more servants live off the sweat of others’ brows. The people live off the sweat of their own.

In coming to a conclusion, we may say that our author begins with Machiavelli’s understanding. That is, he accepts Machiavelli’s typology of governments, the analysis of the many and the few presupposed by that typology, and especially the resulting definition of republican government – “so ordered that rule should not fall into the hands of a prince or a small number of nobles.” On the basis of the Machiavellian evidence alone, we suggest, Harrington would have proposed a republic for England, so much did he admire republican Rome and detest the Christian monarchy. But Machiavelli’s was not the only evidence. Hobbes raised especially two objections against the republicans of Harrington’s day.

First, the republican preference is not scientific. That is, the exact, non-controversial political science justified monarchy, even Christian monarchy. According to Hobbes, the republican preference was dictated by prudence; prudence compared to science is little better than superstition or raw animal cunning. Prudence is only experience, and “we are not to account as any part [of true knowledge] . . . that original knowledge called

31 I wish to thank Professor Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. for teaching me this.
32 Works, p. 286 suggests that he did consider the classical alternative when it is compared with other passages on the same subject.
33 See Oceana, p. 139. In addition, Harrington prefers even oriental depotism to Gothic monarchy.
experience, in which consisteth prudence: because it is not attained by reasoning." And further, the experience of the English republicans is very defective. They are

an exceeding great number of men of the better sort, that had been so educated, as that in their youth having read books written by famous men of the ancient Grecian and Roman commonwealths concerning their polity and great actions; in which books the popular government was extolled by that glorious name liberty, and monarchy disgraced by the name tyranny [and even though “no tyrant was ever so cruel as a popular assembly”] . . . became thereby in love with their form of government.

Second, Hobbes objected that republics are inherently unstable. He thought that no bearer of sovereignty could be expected to prefer the public interest to his own interest or that of his family. He concluded that one man rule could best unify public and private interest. But in republics every citizen has some part of sovereignty; this part is invariably given over so that republics are always led by one or a few demagogues; even as Machiavelli confessed, republics are constantly plagued by the factious spirit and threatened by civil war.

Harrington presents his teaching against these two objections. He argues that prudence, the practical science or art of politics, is demonstrable. That is, Harrington attempts to show that demonstration from experience – concluding from what is or was to what ought to be – is possible. Such a demonstration requires an hoti and a dioti, a “that” and a “for the reason that.” Harrington reasons as follows: What has been so and not otherwise and is so and not otherwise will be so and not otherwise, “except a man can give a reason why it may be otherwise.” The Oceana presents an unexampled example, a perfectly stable republic free of the factious spirit. The presentation of Harrington’s general teaching in the “Preliminaries” is, therefore, a presentation of reasons why republics may be other than they have always been.

Harrington’s doxines are meant to show that the fault with all previous republics (including the “Commonwealth of Israel” founded by “Moses or God”) has been with man as he is the maker of them, rather than the matter. But the fault with monarchies is inherent, in its very matter, for the balance – the proportion of land or servants held by lords as against the people – of monarchy is defective. The balance is the matter, the foundation, of all governments. By erecting proper republican orders on a republican foundation, the few may be permanently dissolved into the

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36 Works, p. 559.
many. What Harrington had shown against Machiavelli allows him to confidently assert the quiet of republics against Hobbes. If the few (including the one) all come to have precisely the same interest as the people, and if interest is the cause of all willing, then how can anyone have the interest or the power (if some deviant happens to have the interest) to overthrow the government of the people?

Harrington’s practical intention, his desire for a republican England and for an end to the type of politics that had dominated the West for a millennium, led him to study and then to oppose the teachings of Hobbes and Machiavelli. From Harrington’s point of view, both Hobbes and Machiavelli, both ancients and moderns, have this in common: Both think that in every nation one part necessarily rules some other part. That is, both think that in every nation one, few, or some of few necessarily prevail over the others. Harrington, on the other hand, claims to ally himself with the position of the tradition of classical political philosophy: Harrington teaches that the law, not men, rules in the best ordered nations. But for Machiavelli, no less than Hobbes or even the classics, the question is, What part of the population makes the law? The Orders of Oceana are designed to prevent the interest or will of any part – one, few, some of few, or many – from making law. In Oceana, no one, no few, no many rule. No part of the nation works its will on any other part. True enough, the spirit of the people dominates the whole of Oceana, but the spirit of the people considered in itself may be said to be, “What care I for him? I can live without him.”

Certain difficulties remain for my interpretation. Nevertheless, I believe that James Harrington’s political art aims to put an end to rule.

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37 Oceana, p. 33. This is, then, another reason for the book’s utopian character.
38 Works, pp. 466-467.
39 We abstract here from the question of whether will, not reason, is the source of law.