

DOWNLOAD PDF MYTH, PUNISHMENT, AND POLITICS IN THE GORGIAS

DAVID SEDLEY

Chapter 1 : Plato's myths - literatura obcojÄ™yczna | KsiÄ™garnia BookMaster

a soutu is the more it can be expected to suffer in the afterlife are a projection 68 Plato's myths Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias 69 into a mythical figure of the reasons for avoiding vice already operative One way to interpret the Gorgias' message is as the kind of paradoxical within an incarnate life.

Who was his readership? A very good survey of this topic is Yunis from which I would like to quote the following illuminating passage: Other scholars, such as Morgan, have also argued that Plato addressed in his writings both philosophical and non-philosophical audiences. It is true that in the Republic Plato has the following advice for philosophers: This interpretation is too extreme. For him philosophy has a civic dimension. The one who makes it outside the cave should not forget about those who are still down there and believe that the shadows they see there are real beings. The philosopher should try to transmit his knowledge and his wisdom to the others, and he knows that he has a difficult mission. But Plato was not willing to go as far as Socrates did. He preferred to address the public at large through his written dialogues rather than conducting dialogues in the agora. He did not write abstruse philosophical treatises but engaging philosophical dialogues meant to appeal to a less philosophically inclined audience. The participants are historical and fictional characters. Plato wanted his dialogues to look like genuine, spontaneous dialogues accurately preserved. How much of these stories and dialogues is fictional? It is hard to tell, but he surely invented a great deal of them. References to traditional myths and mythical characters occur throughout the dialogues. His myths are meant, among other things, to make philosophy more accessible. Sometimes he modifies them, to a greater or lesser extent, while other times he combines them—this is the case, for instance, of the Noble Lie Republic 380d, which is a combination of the Cadmeian myth of autochthony and the Hesiodic myth of ages. There are also in Plato myths that are his own, such as the myth of Er Republic 1087 or the myth of Atlantis Timaeus 26e4. Many of the myths Plato invented feature characters and motifs taken from traditional mythology such as the Isles of the Blessed or the judgment after death, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish his own mythological motifs from the traditional ones. The majority of the myths he invents preface or follow a philosophical argument: Plato refers sometimes to the myths he uses, whether traditional or his own, as *muthoi* for an overview of all the loci where the word *muthos* occurs in Plato see Brisson ff. However, *muthos* is not an exclusive label. The myths Plato invents, as well as the traditional myths he uses, are narratives that are non-falsifiable, for they depict particular beings, deeds, places or events that are beyond our experience: Myths are also fantastical, but they are not inherently irrational and they are not targeted at the irrational parts of the soul. Strictly speaking, the Cave is an analogy, not a myth. Most argues that there are eight main features of the Platonic myth. Most acknowledges that these eight features are not completely uncontroversial, and that there are occasional exceptions; but applied flexibly, they allow us to establish a corpus of at least fourteen Platonic myths in the Phaedo, Gorgias, Protagoras, Meno, Phaedrus, Symposium, Republic X, Statesman, Timaeus, Critias and Laws IV. Dorion concludes that the Oracle story is not only a Platonic fiction, but also a Platonic myth, more specifically: Who invented the examination of the opinions of others by the means of *elenchos*? We have a comprehensive book about the people of Plato: Nails; now we also have one about the animals of Plato: Bell and Naas. Anyone interested in myth, metaphor, and on how people and animals are intertwined in Plato would be rewarded by consulting it. They are used to portray not just Socrates [compared to a gadfly, horse, swan, snake, stork, fawn, and torpedo ray] but many other characters in the dialogues, from the wolfish Thrasymachus of the Republic to the venerable racehorse Parmenides of the Parmenides. Myth as a means of persuasion For Plato we should live according to what reason is able to deduce from what we regard as reliable evidence. This is what real philosophers, like Socrates, do. But the non-philosophers are reluctant to ground their lives on logic and arguments. They have to be persuaded. One means of persuasion is myth. It is efficient in making the less philosophically inclined, as well as children cf. In the Republic the Noble Lie is supposed to make the citizens of Callipolis care more for

their city. Philosophy, claims Schofield, provides the guards with knowledge, not with love and devotion for their city. There is some truth in them. But Simmias confesses that he still retains some doubt *a* , and then Socrates tells them an eschatological myth. The myth does not provide evidence that the soul is immortal. It assumes that the soul is immortal and so it may be said that it is not entirely false. The myth also claims that there is justice in the afterlife and Socrates hopes that the myth will convince one to believe that the soul is immortal and that there is justice in the afterlife. Myth represents a sort of back-up: The myth blurs the boundary between this world and the other. To believe that soul is immortal and that we should practice justice in all circumstances, Gonzales argues, we have to be persuaded by what Socrates says, not by the myth of Er. Myth as a teaching tool The philosopher should share his philosophy with others. But since others may sometimes not follow his arguments, Plato is ready to provide whatever it takes *an* image, a simile, or a myth *that* will help them grasp what the argument failed to tell them. The myth *just* like an image, or analogy *may* be a good teaching tool. Myth can embody in its narrative an abstract philosophical doctrine. In the *Phaedo*, Plato develops the so-called theory of recollection *72e* *78b*. The theory is there expounded in rather abstract terms. The *Phaedrus* myth of the winged soul, however, does. In it we are told how the soul travels in the heavens before reincarnation, attempts to gaze on true reality, forgets what it saw in the heavens once reincarnated, and then recalls the eternal forms it saw in the heavens when looking at their perceptible embodiments. The *Phaedrus* myth does not provide any proofs or evidence to support the theory of recollection. Since this theory the myth embodies is, for Plato, true, the myth has pace Plato a measure of truth in it, although its many fantastical details may lead one astray if taken literally. Myth in the *Timaeus* The cosmology of the *Timaeus* is a complex and ample construction, involving a divine maker assisted by a group of less powerful gods , who creates the cosmos out of a given material dominated by an inner impulse towards disorder and according to an intelligible model. The standard interpretation is promoted by, among others, Cornford , 31ff. The *Timaeus* cosmology, Cornford argues, is a *muthos* because it is cast in the form of a narration, not as a piece-by-piece analysis. But also, and mainly, because its object, namely the universe, is always in a process of becoming and cannot be really known. The cosmology, Brisson argues, is a non-verifiable discourse about the perceptible universe before and during its creation. The standard alternative is to say that the problem lies in the cosmologist, not in the object of his cosmology. It is not that the universe is so unstable so that it cannot be really known. It is that we fail to provide an exact and consistent description of it. A proponent of this view is Taylor , The Demiurge, Burnyeat claims, works with given materials, and when he creates the cosmos, he does not have a free choice, but has to adjust his plans to them. Although we know that the Demiurge is supremely benevolent towards his creation, none of us could be certain of his practical reasons for framing the cosmos the way he did. But why does Plato call it a *muthos*? No cosmologist can deduce these reasons from various premises commonly accepted. He has to imagine them, but they are neither fantastical, nor sophistic. The cosmologist exercises his imagination under some constraints. He has to come up with reasonable and coherent conjectures. And in good Socratic and Platonic tradition, he has to test them with others. This is what *Timaeus* does. They are highly skilled and experienced philosophers: The judges, however, says Plato, have to be tolerant, for in this field one cannot provide more than conjectures. It may be argued that its creationist scenario was meant to make the difficult topic of the genesis of the realm of becoming more accessible. In the *Philebus*, in a tight dialectical conversation, the genesis of the realm of becoming is explained in abstract terms the unlimited, limit, being that is mixed and generated out of those two; and the cause of this mixture and generation, *27b* *c*. But the *Timaeus* aims at encompassing more than the *Philebus*. It aims not only at revealing the ultimate ontological principles accessible to human reason, cf. These reasons are to be imagined because imagination has to fill in the gaps that reason leaves in this attempt to disclose the reasons for which the cosmos was created the way it is. Myth and philosophy In the *Protagoras* a distinction is made between *muthos* and *logos*, where *muthos* appears to refer to a story and *logos* to an argument. This distinction seems to be echoed in the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist*. And later on, at *c4*, Socrates calls a *muthos* the teaching according to which active and passive motions generate perception and perceived

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objects. By calling all those philosophical doctrines *muthoi* Plato does not claim that they are myths proper, but that they are, or appear to be, non-argumentative. In many dialogues he condemns the use of images in knowing things and claims that true philosophical knowledge should avoid images. He would have had strong reasons for avoiding the use of myths: The eschatological myths of the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*, for instance, are tightly bound with the philosophical arguments of those dialogues cf. Some other times he uses myth as a supplement to philosophical discourse cf. One time, in the *Timaeus*, Plato appears to overcome the opposition between *muthos* and *logos*: It is difficult to say which one of these two readings is a better approximation of what Plato thought about the interplay between myth and philosophy. The interpreter seems bound to furnish only probable accounts about this matter. Fowler surveys the *muthos*–*logos* dichotomy from Herodotus and the pre-Socratic philosophers to Plato, the Sophists, and the Hellenistic and Imperial writers, and provides many valuable references to works dealing with the notion of *muthos*, the Archaic uses of *mythos* words, and ancient Greek mythology; for the *muthos*–*logos* dichotomy in Plato see also Miller, 76 He might have used a myth or two in his early dialogues, now lost.

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DAVID SEDLEY

Chapter 2 : David Sedley, Myth, punishment, and politics in the "Gorgias" - PhilPapers

Myth, punishment, and politics in the "Gorgias" About us. Editorial team.

Bryn Mawr Classical Review Cambridge University Press, Reviewed by Emily A. Austin, Wake Forest University austinea wfu. Some myths occur at the end of the dialogue, others quite early. Some are creation stories, while others include an eschatology. Though a few seem to be for entertainment purposes only, many illustrate philosophical content and may serve as arguments in their own right. His map of the intellectual terrain is quite helpful, though the reader might note two assumptions that seem to guide his survey. First, he assumes that Plato only aims the myths at the philosophically unsophisticated; neither Socrates nor Plato require myths. Second, he claims that, with the possible exception of the cosmological myth of the Timaeus, Plato knows the matter at hand. The myths, then, do not signal any self-avowed psychological or epistemic limitations of their author. Both of these claims can be defended, but Partenie devotes little or no space to their consideration. Rather than addressing the role of one myth within the context of the single dialogue in which it occurs, Inwood raises a series of puzzles about moral responsibility and punishment that arise from the eschatological myths that close the Gorgias and the Republic. He aims to discover, in short, whether Plato has any moral justification for postmortem punishment. These include recollection, reincarnation, personal identity, and the nature of the soul in the Phaedrus, Phaedo, Meno, Timaeus, and Laws. Since these concepts do not cut across the two eschatological myths upon which Inwood focuses, much less across the other myths and dialogues he references, things get increasingly muddy. One might get the impression that this very clever paper tries to do too much. Sedley argues that the closing myth, like the earlier allegory of the jars dff , illustrates "moral truths about this life" The solution itself--the judgment and punishment of the naked souls--shows how Socratic dialectic reveals the true state of the soul through painful refutation. Sedley concludes by considering two disjuncts. In the Republic, Sedley notes, Plato opts for the latter, but the Gorgias leaves the question open. Plato does not offer this complete account until the Timaeus. The first part should convince the rulers to care [kedesthai] for the city. The use of Hesiodic metals, Schofield argues, serves to theologially justify and preserve the social hierarchy. This is surely right. For, Schofield claims, her knowledge of the Good will prove insufficient and even distract her from civil service. Ferrari argues that the closing myth of the Republic is tailored specifically for Glaucon, who cannot help but desire rewards and honors for choosing justice. The myth rewards those who act justly with what is "owed" to them--a debt for just action is repaid. Ferrari also contends, though, that the myth is decidedly tragic, even for the philosopher. The philosopher knows that from the perspective of divinity, even the best of human lives is ugly, and choosing another life requires descending once again into imperfection. The choice is required, however, as repayment for a debt incurred by being human rather than divine. Worse, it might not even turn out terribly well for the philosopher. Her philosophical life enables her to choose the best life available when her lot comes up, but her options might not include another philosophical life. Ferrari rightly notes that the Phaedo and Phaedrus express more optimism, since Plato suggests that the philosopher may eventually escape reincarnation and join the divine. He might make a strong case for a broader claim, though, that Plato thinks renewed embodiment should never be relished, even for the best of humans. In "The charioteer and his horses: Instead, Plato uses myth as a substitute for argument, a substitute which can be usefully employed for audiences with less philosophical talent and interest. The more sophisticated the audience, the more rigorous the arguments; an audience with a "variegated" poikilos soul requires a mix of argument and story. Even in this latter case, though, the target of the method is not the irrational parts of the soul, as, Rowe notes, he himself once argued. It is not the sort of thing with which one can reason, even if one should want to do so. Rowe notes that some of his arguments are promissory notes for a longer defense, and the further development of this last claim will be of interest to many scholars working on the capacities of the lower parts of the soul among the most recent, Hendrick Lorenz, Jessica Moss, and their critics. In "The myth of the Statesman,"

Charles Kahn wonders why the dialogue begins with a failed definition of the statesman as shepherd of the "human herd," which is summarily refuted by means of a myth. Since a shepherd is superior to his sheep, only something superior to humans could shepherd the human herd. The divine shepherd, the myth tells us, ruled the human herd before there was strife, labor, and laws. Since the statesman the discussants seek is human rather than divine, and humans now need laws and suffer strife, the statesman cannot be a shepherd of the human herd. Kahn argues that Plato introduces and abandons the divine shepherd in order to signal that he has left behind the ideal city of the Republic and its philosopher-rulers. Plato recognizes that he must instead construct a second-best city and describe its fallible rulers. Since the inferiority of Magnesia has been recently contested by Chris Bobonich, Kahn spends the final part of his paper offering textual evidence in support of this second claim. If Kahn is right that the myth of the Statesman refers to Kallipolis, then it suggests that Kallipolis is not a city at all, that there were actually no technai in Kallipolis, no farmers, and no army since humans would not war with one another. The political element of the comparison, then, must be somewhat loose. Timaeus, the namesake of the dialogue in which he appears, consistently refers to his cosmology as an "eikos muthos," the Greek phrase from which M. Instead, Burnyeat claims that Timaeus hopes to offer an "appropriate myth," which piously befits the divinity of the Demiurge and the perfect practical reason that guided his creation of the best world given the limitations of his starting material. Far from denigrating the sensory world, Timaeus challenges his audience to see the divine order surrounding them. Since something divine crafted the world, the end-product must have some genuine value. Burnyeat seems to complicate matters, though, by subsequently embracing the standard translation of "eikos"--probable. There need be nothing particularly tricky about this, though, since he thinks that any account which satisfies the "appropriate" criterion will also be "probable. However, Timaeus aims to explain a current state of affairs, while Socrates, one might argue, prefers to construct a city that exceeds the limitations of the political starting material. The myth is directed at a young man who has renounced his childhood religious beliefs in favor of materialism. After a series of theological arguments to the effect that gods exist and care for humans, the Athenian adds a myth for good measure, as a "charm" [Laws b]. Boredom seems to be a general point of comparison between the Laws and other dialogues. Stalley argues quite rightly that there is nothing terribly new about punishment as moral improvement and notes some differences between the myths of the Timaeus and Laws. In the earlier myths, Plato aims to convince a select group of elite young men to become philosophers. However, one might note that Plato offers similar "charms" to Cebes and Simmias in the Phaedo 77e, d, both of whom are philosophically talented and under the spell of materialists. Adeimantus asks Socrates to prove that the gods exist and benefit the just [Republic db], and he is also offered a myth for good measure. Among the popular topics for representation were the Phaedrus myth of the charioteer and his horses, the androgynes from the Symposium, and the Allegory of the Cave. Though she devotes some attention to a discussion of Renaissance thought about the philosophical role of the myths, McGrath notes that any claim must be highly speculative due to a substantial lack of primary evidence. All of the articles are of high-quality, and many of them are truly excellent. The book itself is attractive and well-edited. I found only two errors. In the introduction, Partenie twice refers to "the Demiurge" without his definite article 15, 16, while otherwise affording it to him. Table of Contents 1. Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias, David Sedley 3. Tale, theology, and teleology in the Phaedo, Gabor Betegh 4. The charioteer and his horses: The myth of the Statesman, Charles Kahn 8. Myth and eschatology in the Laws, Richard Stalley There are, of course, exceptions. Partenie offers a useful list of recent work on the myths in the "Suggested Further Reading" section at the end of the text My only additional recommendation is: Edmonds, Myths of the Underworld Journey. Not only is it difficult to determine what the myths do, it is difficult to determine which instances are myths.

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by David N Sedley. Location: in G Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias more. by David N Sedley. Location: in C. Partenie (ed.), Plato's myths (Cambridge).

Cambridge University Press, Reviewed by Emily A. Austin, Wake Forest University [Authors and titles are listed at the end of the review. Some myths occur at the end of the dialogue, others quite early. Some are creation stories, while others include an eschatology. Though a few seem to be for entertainment purposes only, many illustrate philosophical content and may serve as arguments in their own right. His map of the intellectual terrain is quite helpful, though the reader might note two assumptions that seem to guide his survey. First, he assumes that Plato only aims the myths at the philosophically unsophisticated; neither Socrates nor Plato require myths. Second, he claims that, with the possible exception of the cosmological myth of the Timaeus, Plato knows the matter at hand. The myths, then, do not signal any self-avowed psychological or epistemic limitations of their author. Both of these claims can be defended, but Partenie devotes little or no space to their consideration. Rather than addressing the role of one myth within the context of the single dialogue in which it occurs, Inwood raises a series of puzzles about moral responsibility and punishment that arise from the eschatological myths that close the Gorgias and the Republic. He aims to discover, in short, whether Plato has any moral justification for postmortem punishment. These include recollection, reincarnation, personal identity, and the nature of the soul in the Phaedrus, Phaedo, Meno, Timaeus, and Laws. Since these concepts do not cut across the two eschatological myths upon which Inwood focuses, much less across the other myths and dialogues he references, things get increasingly muddy. One might get the impression that this very clever paper tries to do too much. Sedley argues that the closing myth, like the earlier allegory of the jars, illustrates "moral truths about this life" The solution itself--the judgment and punishment of the naked souls--shows how Socratic dialectic reveals the true state of the soul through painful refutation. Sedley concludes by considering two disjuncts. In the Republic, Sedley notes, Plato opts for the latter, but the Gorgias leaves the question open. Plato does not offer this complete account until the Timaeus. The first part should convince the rulers to care [kēdesthai] for the city. The use of Hesiodic metals, Schofield argues, serves to theologically justify and preserve the social hierarchy. This is surely right. For, Schofield claims, her knowledge of the Good will prove insufficient and even distract her from civil service. Ferrari argues that the closing myth of the Republic is tailored specifically for Glaucon, who cannot help but desire rewards and honors for choosing justice. The myth rewards those who act justly with what is "owed" to them--a debt for just action is repaid. Ferrari also contends, though, that the myth is decidedly tragic, even for the philosopher. The philosopher knows that from the perspective of divinity, even the best of human lives is ugly, and choosing another life requires descending once again into imperfection. The choice is required, however, as repayment for a debt incurred by being human rather than divine. Worse, it might not even turn out terribly well for the philosopher. Her philosophical life enables her to choose the best life available when her lot comes up, but her options might not include another philosophical life. Ferrari rightly notes that the Phaedo and Phaedrus express more optimism, since Plato suggests that the philosopher may eventually escape reincarnation and join the divine. He might make a strong case for a broader claim, though, that Plato thinks renewed embodiment should never be relished, even for the best of humans. In "The charioteer and his horses: Instead, Plato uses myth as a substitute for argument, a substitute which can be usefully employed for audiences with less philosophical talent and interest. The more sophisticated the audience, the more rigorous the arguments; an audience with a "variegated" poikilos soul requires a mix of argument and story. Even in this latter case, though, the target of the method is not the irrational parts of the soul, as, Rowe notes, he himself once argued. It is not the sort of thing with which one can reason, even if one should want to do so. Rowe notes that some of his arguments are promissory notes for a longer defense, and the further development of this last claim will be of interest to many scholars working on the capacities of the

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DAVID SEDLEY

Chapter 4 : Plato's Myths // Reviews // Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews // University of Notre Dame

In "Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias", David Sedley proposes to read the myth about the workings of the necromantic penal system under Zeus as a symbol or allusion to the fact that Socratic refutation can function as a particularly efficient form of punishment.

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Chapter 5 : Plato's Myths, Catalin Partenie (Edited) - Shop Online for Books in Australia

PLATO'S MYTHS In archaic societies myths were believed to tell true stories - stories punishment and politics in the Gorgias David Sedley 51 3. Tale, theology.

Reverse of medal of Passed, from I. Tomasinus, *Illustrium virorum elogia*, Padua, photo: Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press. First published Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library isbn hardback Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Contents List of illustrations page vii List of contributors be Preface xiii Acknowledgements xv List of abbreviations xvi Introduction Catalin Partenie i 1. Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias David Sedley 51 3. Tale, theology and teleology in the Phaedo Gdbor Betegh 77 4. Fraternali, inegaliti, la parole de Dieu: The charioteer and his horses: The myth of the Statesman Charles H. For it is shameful for us, in what seems to be our current condition, to go ahead and give ourselves airs as if we amounted to anything, when our views never stay the same about the same things - things which are, moreover, of the greatest importance, so profound is our lack of education. Let us then follow, as our leader, the account which has now been made evident to us, and which indicates to us that this is the best way of life, practising both justice and the rest of virtue in life and death alike. Let us follow it, and invite everyone else to do so. The myth of Theseus slaying the Minotaur and saving the seven youths and seven maidens already indicates the power of such legendary stories, and how they can affect the life and death of individuals - including that of Socrates. But the mythos I shall focus on in this chapter is the seemingly much less remarkable little tale Socrates casually mentions at the very beginning of his discussion with his friends; this is the fable, told in one sentence, that Socrates thinks Aesop would have told had he thought about a particular subject matter. I thank my audiences at all these occasions. One reason for it is that in the cases we shall consider it is an important fact about the narrative that it was created by the artistic imagination of an individual known to the audience, even when he may use elements taken from other, possibly traditional, sources. As opposed to this, standard definitions of myth by, e. That myths are traditional stories is reaffirmed also in Burkert ? The eschatological myth of the Phaedo, by contrast, is a description of the structure of the cosmos and the earth, and that of the passages of the souls, without involvings story-line. I shall argue that this narrative pattern approved by Socrates assumes, among other things, certain theological conceptions in the presentation of divine characters. He has just been freed from his fetters, and now enjoys the feeling of life coming back to his limbs. This experience leads him to a brief analysis of the relationship between pleasure and pain: What a curious thing, my friends, he said, what people call pleasant seems to be; what an amazing relationship it has to what is considered to be its opposite, pain. They are unwilling both to come to us at the same time, but if we pursue one of them and catch it, we are pretty much compelled to catch the other as well, as if these two were joined at a single tip. It is sometimes thought to be a first approximation of the theory of opposites expounded more fully in the cyclical and final arguments. Others have maintained that the necessary conjunction of pleasure and pain characterizes the earthly human condition Socrates is about to leave behind. And it seems to me, he [Socrates] said, that if Aesop had thought of it, he would have told a fable that the god wanted to reconcile their dispute, but when he could not, he attached the tip of their heads together, and this is why if one of them comes to someone, the other as well will later visit the same person. The juxtaposition of the two versions indicates, first, that an imaginative fable can express an idea Translations in this paper, unless otherwise indicated, are mine. J For a concise statement of this interpretation, see D. Problematic aspects of the account of the relationship between pleasure and pain are well expounded by Gallop 13 75, Tale, theology and teleology in the Phaedo 79 that is approved of, and is indeed formulated by,

Socrates. More importantly, it also points to what Socrates expects from a creative fable - i. The passage furthermore can give us an idea about the way such a fable can connect to a more literal exposition of the same idea. Socrates says that pleasure and pain are connected as if hands their extremities were attached to each other, by which he apparently means that where the feeling of pleasure ends, pain starts, and vice versa. The fable unwraps this image and creates a little narrative around it. Thus far there is no rupture between the two formulations, but the one seamlessly connects to the other. The most conspicuous formal difference between the two versions is that Socrates in his version gives a descriptive analysis of the relationship between pleasure and pain, whereas the tale introduces the temporal dimension and concentrates on the events that led to this state of affairs. The tale posits an initial stage by negating that feature of the current situation on which the descriptive account focuses: In the figure of the unnamed god the fable identifies the causal origin of the emergence of the current state of affairs from the initial situation. The unnamed divinity realized the shortcomings of the initial situation, i. For a recent paper, see Chvatfk For another recent study, see Schauer and Merkle More generally, see Desclos and Yet even a divinity has to confront certain limiting conditions; even he is unable to alter the fact that pleasure and pain are, by their very natures, opposites. This is why the divinity must find an alternative solution. The skeletal formulation of the fable does not state explicitly the advantages of the solution the god ultimately opts for. It is not altogether clear whether it is a form of punishment or is an alternative means to stop the war, or a mixture of the two - the presentation, however, unambiguously suggests that it is considered to be the second best overall solution, which is the best practicable solution. The present situation is thus explained as the result of the purposeful activity of the divine agent in order to find a solution to a problem inherent in the assumed initial situation. This is the way someone talented in creating stories would conceive a narrative. This assumption is confirmed when we examine the narrative structure of a representative group of mythical stories, or fables, told in the dialogues which, on a conservative chronology, were written relatively close to the composition of the *Phaedo*. Take, for example, the myth Aristophanes tells in the *Symposium* 189d-193d. The first part of the story 189d-191d recounts the events that lead to the current state of affairs. At the first stage Eros, the central topic of the speech, has no function as yet. This assumed initial situation is moreover defective in so far as the then existing three-gendered spherical humans are so strong and arrogant that they jeopardize the rule of gods and the order of the world. Zeus then enters the scene, analyzes the situation, calculates the available means and comes up with the plan of halving the whole-natured humans. As this first operation does not issue in optimal results, in so far as the halved human beings prove to be unfit for life, Zeus introduces some additional fine-tuning by slightly reorganizing human anatomy. It explains how we can understand the behaviour of people and the differences in their sexual orientations from the events that led to this state of affairs. Zeus, whose decisions and actions brought about the current state of affairs, does not appear in this descriptive account at all. At one point of her conversation with Socrates, Diotima refers to what the participants of the feast heard from Aristophanes and formulates some objections to it. It may be asked whether what Diotima had in mind is the whole fable told by Aristophanes. His profession, the way he tells the story and the reaction of the other participants make such a scenario quite improbable. This point does not of course rule out the possibility that in conceiving the story, Aristophanes was creatively combining and rearranging elements he took from elsewhere. Empedocles B62 DK , that they were split into halves by divine agency, that we are symbols of the original complete humans Smp. Empedocles B20 DK or reunification Smp. 192d3-e4; reunification will be the natural outcome of the return of Love in Empedocles may follow in the future. Much more important, I believe, are the differences in the roles and characterizations of the respective divine agents responsible for the splitting. In Empedocles, the halving of the whole-natured humans is done by Strife, one of the pair of cosmic forces. When he splits humans, Strife acts quasi-mechanically, and does what he does with anything else created by the unifying activity of the opposite cosmic force, Love. Zeus then analyzes the situation and comes up with a plan. And when he finds that this solution creates major difficulties for humans, he takes pity on them, does some further thinking and planning,

and comes up with another contrivance. We encounter the theme of the parallelism and complementarity of a fable and a descriptive account *logos* in the Protagoras as well. When Protagoras is asked to demonstrate that virtue is teachable, he says that he can fulfil this task by telling either a *logos* or a fable. We can presume that, even if the fable and the *logos* were not thematically co-extensive and equivalent in their presuppositions and implications, both would express in two different expository modes the same overall view that Protagoras holds on the matter. We then learn that the human species was still in danger, because people were unable to co-operate with each other. For a question concerning a state of affairs - whether or not virtue is teachable - the first answer is thus given in the form of a fanciful narrative that relates the way this state of affairs came about. In construing the story, Protagoras starts with an initial stage, when human beings were still in the making, and they did not possess virtues and arts as yet. He then explains how the current state of affairs emerged through a series of events in which divine agents had to face and solve a series of problems in order to come up with a balanced and maintainable situation. This discourse is continuous with the fable in so far as it takes for granted and builds on the outcome of the narrative. Yet, even if it clearly assumes the fable, the *logos* does not mention either the events recounted in the narrative or the divine agents who are responsible for the ensuing state of affairs. When he comes up with the skeleton of a fable about pleasure and pain, he says that this is what someone like Aesop would have composed had he thought about the matter. One may suspect here a touch of irony, for the sketch of the fable is his, and one can be fairly sure that Socrates would be able to fill it in with some colourful details. Yet the fact remains that Socrates claims himself completely unable to invent such narratives. What strongly suggests that he indeed means it is that he does not attempt to invent a fable even when he assumes that he might be under a sacred obligation to do so. There is no place for irony in such a context. Considering himself unable to compose a fable, the most he can do is to work on and put into verse a story that he takes from the mythologist Aesop. That he uses a story by Aesop for such purposes is, by the way, further evidence on the relationship between the fable and the *logos*, see the detailed and instructive analysis in Morgan, with which I am in broad agreement. The myth could have had alternatives. The topic of what kind of accounts Socrates produces himself and what he receives from others turns up explicitly in the eschatological myth of the Gorgias as well. In the final passages of that dialogue, Socrates wraps up his frustrating discussion with Callicles by telling a story. The story told by Socrates falls into two parts. For the first part Socrates does not claim any credit: We first hear about the previous system under the reign of Cronos that involved living judges passing judgements on people still living. Then we learn how Zeus realized the shortcomings of that regime and replaced it with the current, improved system in which both the judges and the judged are naked souls of the dead. The second part of the account, which Socrates explicitly claims to be his own addition, is complementary to the first part. It does not say anything about the origins, the cause and the events that led to the current system, but simply takes over the end product of the genetic account, and analyzes its functioning. In harmony with what he says in the Phaedo about his incapacity to create fables, Socrates in the Gorgias takes the narrative about the origins of the present system from an unnamed source; but because he believes the narrative to be true, he takes its end product and develops it into a descriptive account about the way the current system of post-mortem judgements works. At this stage the explanation is not as yet present, and the situation is in some ways defective. Tale, theology and teleology in the Phaedo 85 In the Phaedo the problem to be solved is the war between pleasure and pain, in the Gorgias it is the unjust regime of judgements under the reign of Cronos.

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Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias David Sedley; 3. *Tale, theology and teleology in the Phaedo* Gábor Betegh; 4. *Fraternalité, inégalité, la parole de Dieu: Plato's authoritarian myth of political legitimation* Malcolm Schofield; 5.

The volume also contains a helpful introductory essay by the editor surveying and discussing different interpretative approaches to Platonic myth. The introductory essay announces that the papers contained in the volume all treat myth and philosophy as tightly bound together. This however, should not be taken to indicate that the various contributors share a common view as to the nature of this connection. The papers contained in the volume display a wide variety of approaches to their chosen myths. This fact will be viewed as a shortcoming of the volume only by readers who approach it with the intention of discovering a unified account of what Platonic myth is. Those, on the other hand, who read it in the hope of acquiring a new perspective on the arguments of particular dialogues will be richly rewarded, as the majority of the papers are highly successful in using the myths to shed new and sometimes surprising light on these arguments. The paper does not consist of a sustained single argument but is rather composed of a collection of inquiries and observations concerning its proposed topic. The ethical side of the paper is concerned with discovering what notions of justice and fairness underlie the mechanisms of reward, punishment, and reincarnation introduced in the myths. In particular, it seeks to deal with the apparent incongruity of the fact that souls are rewarded and punished for their previous incarnated lives with the fact that part of that punishment and reward consists in the determination of their next incarnation, which seems to limit their accountability for actions performed while they are incarnated. In "Myth, punishment and politics in the Gorgias", David Sedley proposes to read the myth about the workings of the necromantic penal system under Zeus as a symbol or allusion to the fact that Socratic refutation can function as a particularly efficient form of punishment. Accordingly, the superiority of the justice administered under Zeus to that which prevailed under Cronos, Sedley claims, should be read as a symbol of the superiority of the Socratic corrective procedure to contemporary Athenian judicial practices. Sedley argues that Plato takes the infliction of pain to be a useful corrective measure due to its ability to produce long term moderation of the appetites by temporarily depriving them of their objects. Socratic refutation when performed in ethical contexts achieves something akin to this by demonstrating to an interlocutor such as Callicles that his avowed practice of giving the appetites free rein is not in fact conducive to the happiness he pursues. Even by itself, that demonstration should already prove painful to Callicles. But it should also launch him down a path of a necessarily painful voluntary deprivation of the appetites in order to facilitate his self-improvement. This mechanism of corrective punishment is superior to the more familiar institutionalized version, Sedley argues, in containing an integral aspect of intellectual guidance. Whereas civic punishment is merely a form of habituation by pain, Socratic punishment cannot take effect without at least some level of recognition by the offender of the nature of and reasons for his error. Sedley concludes by asking the reader to reflect on whether Socrates sees himself as offering ways of improving civic penal institutions or whether his methods and claims for example, about the need for an improved breed of rhetoric are a critique of the effectiveness of any possible form of institutionalized punishment. Betegh shows that the structure of the tale suggested by Socrates conforms, or seeks to conform, to a pattern that is common to the majority of Platonic myths, and that also contains the germ of what Plato takes to be a proper scientific explanation. The basic narrative form that is common to both Platonic myth and the ideal of Platonic science, Betegh claims, is based on four basic principles. First there is a description of a preliminary, deficient, state of affairs that predates the explanandum. Second, a divine benevolent agent possessing a desire and ability to remedy the situation is introduced. Fourth, there is a detailed description of the functional features of his solution that corresponds to the current state of affairs the explanandum. The paper discusses the separate function of the two traditional themes combined in the myth, namely the Phoenician or Cadmean motif that the

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citizens are originally earthborn, and the Hesiodic motif regarding the distinct metallic constitution of their souls. Schofield takes the Cadmean aspect of the myth to function as a necessary means for instilling in the hearts of the citizens patriotic love and devotion to the state. This kind of love, he claims, is at odds with the basic, rational self-interest that motivates the citizens to participate in the state, and must therefore be inculcated by non-rational means. As part of the noble lie it is meant to justify the basic inequalities on which the state is structured and help preserve them by stipulating the destructive consequence of any deviation from them. But the reappearance of the Hesiodic motif in book VIII, as part of the explanation for why the best state will ultimately fall into a process of degeneration, Schofield claims, is intended mainly for the readers of the Republic, not for the citizens of the state it describes. It is a useful ancillary to the reasoned account for the collapse of proper civic order, since it picks up the inevitable element of contingency in such breakdowns which falls outside the scope of scientific explanations. Schofield concludes by arguing that, according to Plato, knowledge of reality, including familiarity with the Good, cannot function as an alternative to the noble lie as a means for securing the necessary degree of devotion to the well being of the state. But for the philosopher the justice manifested in subduing his baser inclinations, as well as the justice that calls him to perform his civic duty and govern the state, are merely unwanted obligations which he has incurred due to his incarnated state. This strategy consists in using the familiar sense of ordinary concepts as starting points in a discussion which gradually transforms them and imbues them with a more specialized philosophical content. The end result is a new appreciation for the real meaning or ideal denotation of these terms. After being lured into the discussion by the first speech, and having accepted that the subject under discussion is the experience of erotic love, the reader is now made to realize that this notion has a content of which he was previously unaware but which he now finds no way of denying. In "The myth of the Statesman" Charles Kahn seeks an explanation for why Plato intentionally veers the search for the statesman off course by having the discussants confound him with the divine shepherd, a mistake which is then exposed by the introduction of the myth about the age of Cronus. The rule of law, although superior to unlawful constitutions, is said to be inferior to the rule of the ideal statesman; the latter possesses the requisite knowledge of normative Forms, according to Kahn for ruling, whereas written law is merely an imitation of such knowledge. Kahn claims that in making the distinction between the rule of law and the rule of knowledge, the visitor seems to be distinguishing between the best constitution available for our world and a divine ideal which that world cannot realize. This, Kahn claims, is the point where the myth should resonate and help set up a parallel between Cronus and the ideal statesman. In this, Kahn claims, the myth serves to bridge an apparent gap between the Statesman and the later, more legalistically oriented Laws. Both dialogues recognize the ideal of knowledge-based rule, but are nonetheless committed to the de facto superiority of the rule of law over all other alternatives. Burnyeat takes a new look at each of the two terms Timaeus uses to characterize his account of the formation of the cosmos, and at the sense of their combination in a single phrase. As for the term *muthos*, Burnyeat claims that since Timaeus describes the created cosmos as a god, the story of its birth is a proper theogony and is hence the province of myth. Much of the paper is devoted to arguing that the Laws is compatible with the details of earlier myths and that there is no warrant for the claim that by the time he wrote it Plato came to be dissatisfied with several aspects of his earlier penology. In order to avoid the impression that this divine care excludes properly rewarding the virtuous and chastising the vicious, the legislator extends the scope of their fortunes beyond their present incarnation. This, Stalley claims, calls for the use of myth. But since the target of the tale is a religiously skeptical young man, the legislator must play down as many of the traditional aspects of mythical narrative such as divine personal agency, and leave only the skeleton of cosmic equilibrium.

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