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SOCRATES AND LOVE

by Ole Thomsen

Summary: New interpretations are offered of Xenophon's *Symposion* in its entirety, Xenophon's *Apomnemonemata* 1.3.5-15, 1.6.11-14 and 3.11, passages from Plato's *Symposion*, *Theaitetos* and *Politeia*, Aiskhines the Socratic, fragment 53, and Cicero's *Tusculanae Disputationes* 4.70-76. To the themes mentioned in the table of contents below might be added: new light on the antecedents of Cynicism (Antisthenes) and of Stoic sexual ethics, and particularly on Socrates' *paideutikós eros* in relation to his irony (Kierkegaard's interpretations are included here), on Socratic midwifery, and on the dietetic and the ecstatic poles of Socrates' erotico-ethic philosophy. In the Socratic doctrine of eros there is a tension between medical science (dietetic) and mystery religion (ecstatic) similar to the tension observable in the Aristotelian doctrine of katharsis. The philological method followed in this article is outlined in its last paragraph.

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1. TO LOVE AND TO LEARN

I wish to argue here that Socrates' erotic doctrine is philosophically more coherent and psychologically more challenging and at the same time less extremist, less anti-hedonistic and less divergent from classical Greek religion and morality than has been assumed by modern students of Greek sexuality,¹

* This article is dedicated to Professor Aikaterini Kamaretta, University of Athens.

1 E.g. Dover. See section 9 below.

of Socrates,² and of the Socratics' writings. Also, I hope to elucidate Socrates' doctrine of a tripartite eros, incl. the fascinating idea of a *desire* for mutual love, and to demonstrate that Socrates did not 'forbid' homosexual copulation. All this affects our picture of Socrates the teacher.

Socrates was 'continuously in love with somebody'.³ He moulded his erotic practice in a consistently coquettish⁴ manner, whereby he (a) expressed his own individual history,⁵ (b) taunted the ideas of manly behaviour prevalent among his contemporaries, and (c) obtained that element of 'erotic deceit'⁶ without which his kind of teaching would not work.

Erotics was the only field in which Socrates claimed to have specialist knowledge (according to Plato). He thought that by having eros, he was able to teach without having knowledge (according to Aiskhines the Socratic). I refer to these two utterances because they are famous and fundamental and because, taken together,⁷ they have enough in common to raise the question of the degree of coherence in Socrates' erotic philosophy as presented by the several Socratics. Must we operate with three or four doctrines, or should we attempt to arrive at one?

The problem with the title – 'Socrates and Love' – is that there is no single Greek word designating 'love'. We have to operate within a semantic field consisting mainly of the words *eros*, *epithymia*, *philia* and *aphrodisia*.⁸ Too often *eros* is still automatically translated 'love', and *philia* 'friendship'; usually the following practice is safer, albeit still approximative: to render *eros* 'desire', and *philia* 'affection' or 'love'. But *philia* is a *mutual* feeling, even when it is translated 'love'. Thus this unidirectional formula which might well be called *die Grundschiablone* of modern research in Greek homosexuality: '*eros* in the *erastés*, *philia* in the *erómenos*', is gravely misleading. This formula for the two 'partners' in a pederastic relationship ('partners' in quotation-marks because aggressive emotions are seen as answered by affection,

2 E.g. Vlastos. See sections 9 and 10 below.

3 Cf. Xen. *Smp.* 8.2 with Huß 1999.

4 In Greek: *θρυπτόμενος*, Xen. *Smp.* 8.4, below section 4, cf. Xen. *Smp.* 8.8. See also n. 47 below.

5 See section 5 below.

6 Cf. Pl. *Smp.* 222b3. See section 4 below, cf. p. 156.

7 Socrates' (feigned) passion for beautiful youths and his (feigned) ignorance are brought together by Alkibiades, Pl. *Smp.* 216d1-5.

8 On *aphrodisia* see Halperin 1989: 67 f.

and vice versa) is, on the emotional level, what people have in mind when they talk about ‘the asymmetry’, ‘la dissymétrie’ of the relationships between Greek males. The formula has been given world-wide currency by Michel Foucault and his hagiographer David Halperin,⁹ on the basis of Dover 1978, especially the section ‘Eros and Love’ (Dover 1978: 49-54) which contains several extremely doubtful interpretations, e.g. of Pl. *Ly.* 221b and Pl. *Phdr.* 255d-256a, not to mention the last sentence of Xen. *Smp.* 8.21,¹⁰ which forms part of a highly specific argument starting at 8.19, and designed to convince the reader of the soundness of the ideal presented in 8.15-18. With his usual haste, Dover made the mistake of reading these 21 words from Socrates’ great speech on *eros* (Xen. *Smp.* 8.1-41) in isolation from their context. The resulting vignette – an exploited and joyless sex-object, alias the Typical Athenian Boy – has been with us ever since. In reality, the passage in question envisages the possibility that a boy, on the basis of shared enjoyment of sex, might come to love his lover.¹¹

Through close attention to the interaction, within the above-mentioned semantic field, of the terms *eros*, *epithymia*, *philia*, and *aphrodisia*, I hope to show that the now prevailing Foucauldian orthodoxy is in need of revision, both with regard to *die Grundschiablone* and to several other points deduced

9 See Halperin’s *Saint-Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography*.

10 Pace Dover 1978: 52, Halperin 1989: 130, 134, Vlastos 1991: 39, Fisher 2001: 43, and numerous others, Xen. *Smp.* 8.21, last sentence (notice that the negative used is οὐδέ, not οὐ) does not depict a typical man-boy-relationship with *philia* in the boy and *eros* (and *philia*!) in the senior partner. In the *hymnus in amorem virilem* contained in 8.15-18 (see below section 7) Socrates presents a relationship with a maximum of reciprocity (κοινὸν τὸ φιλεῖσθαι, 8.18): mutual *philia* and mutual *eros* (the Triple Eros). As a contrast to this, Socrates proceeds to depict a ‘relationship’ with *philia*, i.e. love/affection, neither in the man nor in the youth (on the latter see 19 ἀντιφιλήσειεν, 21 σπέρξει, φιλήσει). To prove that these two males have nothing at all in common, he mentions, in this last sentence of 8.21, that the boy does not even feel *sexual* pleasure (*aphrodisia*) – which will come as no surprise to those who have taken the trouble to read 8.15-18, where Socrates sets out to prove that the kind of love recommended by him gives more *pleasure* (see below p. 150 on *epaphrōditos*). My comments on this last sentence of 8.21 would be the following three: (1) οὐδὲ γὰρ: the possibility is envisaged, after the preceding exclusion of various other possibilities (see οὐ-δέ), that common pleasure might form the basis of *philia*. (2) τῶι ἀνδρὶ, sc. τῶι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος κρεμαμένῳ (8.19, cf. 8.23). (3) νήφων ... θεᾶται: contrast Autolykos in 8.42.

11 Cf. Pl. *Phdr.* 233c-d.

thereof. As for Dover's role in all this,¹² it is only fair to mention that in 1978 the area 'Greek homosexuality' was really in need of description and classification, even simplification, and that Dover, in the very first paragraph of his book, warned his readers against treating it as definitive:

This book has a modest and limited aim: to describe those phenomena of homosexual behaviour and sentiment which are to be found in Greek art and literature between the eighth and second centuries B.C., and so to provide a basis for more detailed and specialised exploration (which I leave to others) of the sexual aspects of Greek art, society and morality.

Dover gives no full justification of the lower terminus (2nd century BC), but his choice entails offering nothing substantial with regard to immensely informative documents such as Straton's epigrams, Plutarch's *Erotikós*, and the dialogue *Erotes*, ascribed to Lucian (possibly correctly).

One might add to this that *Greek Homosexuality* is a lopsided book: fresh from the triumphant discoveries made in his *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (1974) Dover raises a forensic speech,¹³ Aiskhines' *Prosecution of Timarkhos*, to the status of key-text, which – nota bene – is done at the expense of Socrates and Plato. Few readers of *Greek Homosexuality* would suspect that the book was written by a commentator on Plato, or on Theokritos, for that matter.¹⁴

Thus we are in the rather extraordinary situation that the authoritative modern book on Greek love is written by a scholar who is fundamentally and expressly out of sympathy with Plato¹⁵ and Socrates.¹⁶

12 Paglia 1991: 141 ('it [Dover 1978] contains few surprises') obviously has no qualified idea of the state of the study of Greek love before Dover. The insight presented in Dover 1978: 48 f., 82 f. alone has revolutionized these studies.

13 See Dover 1978: 14. Readers of *Marginal Comment*, Dover's autobiography, will be aware of the author's fondness for *Greek Popular Morality*.

14 Xenophon, too, is far from fully exploited in Dover; thus there is nothing on Xen. *Mem.* 3.11, Socrates and Theodote. Likewise *Mem.* 1.3 (see below section 9) is ignored. – Morrison 1994 offers a detailed interpretation of Xen. *Mem.* 4.2.1-40, the story of Euthydemus, also ignored by Dover. Morrison has several observations on agreements between Xenophon and Plato; I find what he has to say (p. 204) about Aiskhines fragment 53 less helpful.

15 See Dover 1978: 43, end of note 11! Compare, among others, Hindley 1999: 74: 'the recognition that Plato's discussions of pederasty are quite unrepresentative of Athenian society as a whole.'

16 See Dover 1978: 156 n. 7.

2. BODILY BEAUTY IN MALES AS A PROBLEM

A classic formulation of this problem, part and parcel of our theme, ‘Socrates and Love’, is offered by Cicero. In the fourth book of *Tusculanae Disputationes*, Cicero rejects the Stoic defence, against Epicurus, of *amor* (ἔρως). The Stoics claimed that (true) *amor* (ἔρως) has as its object, not *stuprum* (i.e. illicit sexual intercourse, *stuprum* being a moralist’s rendering of the more objective ἀφροδίσια, intercourse), but *amicitia* (φιλία). Against this Stoic idea of ἔρως φιλίας, *eros philias*, Cicero writes, after having dealt with the theme ‘Love in the poets’ (*Tusc.* 4.70):¹⁷

Sed poëtas ludere sinamus, quorum fabulis in hoc flagitio versari ipsum videmus Iovem: ad magistros virtutis philosophos veniamus, qui amorem negant stupri esse et in eo litigant cum Epicuro non multum, ut opinio mea fert, mentiente. quis est enim iste amor amicitiae? cur neque deformem adolescentem quisquam amat neque formosum senem?

But let us allow the poets to make merry, whose stories let us see Jupiter himself implicated in this shame. Let us have recourse to the teachers of virtue, the philosophers – who say that love has no part in debauchery and on that point are at daggers drawn with Epicurus, who in my belief is not in what he says much of a liar. For what is the so-called love of friendship? Why is it no one is in love with either an ugly youngster or a beautiful old man?

A quite unusual alliance is seen here: Cicero almost (*non multum ...*) sides with Epicurus’ definition of *eros* as an ‘intense appetite-for-intercourse with unbridled lust and anguish of the soul’, σύντονος ὄρεξις ἀφροδισίων μετὰ οἴστρου καὶ ἀδημονίας (fragment 483 Usener; Brown 1987: 113) in his polemic against the Stoic idea that the object of *eros* is not intercourse, ἀφροδίσια or συνουσία, but friendship/love, φιλία, *philia*. The Stoic view is presented by Diogenes Laërtius 7.130 in these words:

εἶναι δὲ τὸν ἔρωτα ἐπιβολὴν φιλοποιίας διὰ κάλλος ἐμφαινόμενον· καὶ μὴ εἶναι συνουσίας ἀλλὰ φιλίας.

¹⁷ As a rule, Loeb translations are used in this article (with occasional modifications).

Eros is a whole-hearted effort toward friend-making [*philo-poita*], due to the appearance of visible beauty, its end being friendship/love, not intercourse.

One of the main objects of this article is to reinstate *love of friendship* or (better) *desire for mutual love* as an, not only Stoic,¹⁸ but Socratic idea.¹⁹ Although ἔρωσ φιλίας is a central concept in Socrates' speech in chapter 8 of Xenophon's *Symposion* – it might even be called an integral part of the central concept of the speech, see Xen. *Smp.* 8.10, 8.18, and 8.25 – it is not mentioned by Bernhard Huß in his 1999 Teubner commentary (493 pages) on Xen. *Smp.*

Concerning the passage from Cic. *Tusc.* 4.70, Dougan & Henry's standard commentary, 1905-1934 – still cited as such by Long & Sedley *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (1987-) – offers the following comment on this Socratic-Stoic concept, to which Cicero refers as familiar (notice the polemical quotation-marks achieved by Cicero's *iste*): '*amor amicitiae*, i.e. φιλία; the genitive is like that in [...] *virtus continentiae* and similar phrases, Madv. *Gr.* § 286.' Actually, the genitive after *amor* is, as usual after this noun, objectivus (cf. Diogenes Laërtius 7.130 cited above and ἐρῶντες τῆς φιλίας and τῆς φιλίας ἐφιέμενος in Xen. *Smp.* 8.18 and 8.25), not definitivus; the same holds for the preceding *stupri* (interpreted by Henry neither as a genitivus objectivus nor as a definitivus, but as a genitivus characteristicus, with reference to Madvig § 282: 'say that love is not a matter of sensuality'). All this explaining away – literally, *amor* is made to disappear, since *amor amicitiae* is taken to mean *amicitia*²⁰ – is reproduced in various modern translations, e.g. the 1971 Danish translation by Otto Foss ('kærlighedens venskabsfølelse').

Let this suffice to show that scholars in general are unwilling or unable to

18 *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* 3.180/718. Cf. Ole Thomsen 1992: 50.

19 Williams 1999: 63, with reference to *Tusc.* 4.70: Cicero 'speaks of relationships to which he gives the curious label 'love of friendship' (*amor amicitiae*).' That is all. In his section 'Contra Naturam' (234-44) Williams ignores the fact that canonical, i.e. Chrysippean, Stoicism cherished this homo-erotic doctrine, just as he fails to mention that Cic. *Tusc.* 4.70 ff. is explicitly anti-Stoic. Williams' remarks on what is philosophical and what is 'mainstream Roman understanding of what constitutes normative and natural sexual behavior for boys and men' – and Williams' entire section 'Contra Naturam' is based on this opposition – should be viewed in the light of the existence of these omissions and misunderstandings.

20 Huß 1999: 371 makes exactly the same mistake in dealing with Socrates.

even recognize the idea of *eros philias*. Later (in sections 7 and 10) I shall attempt to elucidate how the concept of *eros philias* forms an integral part of a wide-ranging erotic theory.

Cicero's objections to the idea of *eros philias* include an argument that discusses the Stoic view 'from within', in contrast to the wry question *cur neque deformem* etc. which, coming 'from without', confronted the Stoics with something like a charge of hypocrisy: according to the Stoics, eros is 'due to visible beauty appearing' (cf. *Tusc.* 4.72), but at the same time sex is said to be shunned! The argument 'from within' claims that this erotic practice would be detrimental to the very *telos* of Stoic philosophy, i.e. tranquillity of the mind. To the words quoted above Cicero adds a couple of lines about 'the gymnasia of the Greeks', to be dealt with below, and then he continues (*Tusc.* 4.70 f.):

Qui [sc. isti amores] ut sint, quod fieri posse video, pudici, solliciti tamen et anxii sunt, eoque magis, quod se ipsi continent et coërcent. atque, ut muliebris amores omittam, quibus maiorem licentiam natura concessit, quis aut de Ganymedi raptu dubitat, quid poëtae velint [...]?²¹

Even supposing that such loves are chaste, as I see is possible, yet they bring anxiety and trouble and all the more because they restrict and restrain themselves. And, not to speak of sex with women, to which nature has granted wider freedom-to-act-as-one-pleases, who has either any doubt of the meaning of the poets in the tale of the abduction of Ganymede [...]?²¹

This argument against sublimation,²¹ here forming part of a fundamentally anti-sexual argumentation (see Cic. *Tusc.* 4.75), is also used by modern pro-sex theorists, who would say 'neurotic' instead of *solliciti et anxii*. Socrates, as represented in Xen. *Smp.* 8, would answer this objection by pointing out that his is a triple eros, incl. eros towards noble *acts*, therefore *pudici amores* in his view do not at all 'restrict and restrain themselves' – quite the contrary. See below, section 7, on the activity-releasing effects of love according to Socrates.

As for male beauty as a philosophical problem, consider the following words about Socrates (Dover 1978: 160):

21 On this term see below, section 9.

Xenophon's Socrates lacks the sensibility and urbanity of the Platonic Socrates, but there is no doubt that both of them condemn homosexual copulation.

Why then does Socrates attach such importance to the combination of bodily beauty with good qualities of mind and character (Pl. *Chrm.* 153d, 154e, 158b, *Smp.* 209b), instead of saying outright that bodily beauty is irrelevant? Why, indeed, does he speak so often (cf. p. 155) as if his own heart were almost continuously thumping at the sight of beautiful youths and boys?

In other words, why does Socrates take this *synamphóteron*-attitude to body and soul, evidenced both in Plato's *Kharmides* (i.a. 153d: young people 'excelling either in wisdom, *sophía*, or in beauty, *kálllos*, or in both, *amphótera*') and in his *Symposion* (209b: Diotima: *to syn-amphóteron*, i.e. 'the complex of both', as regards *sōma* and *psykhê*) as well as in *Politeia* (402d, an important passage about correspondence, *homología* and *symphōnia*, between *psykhê* and *eidos*) and elsewhere? And yet this attitude is less striking than the fact that the Xenophontic Socrates distances himself from the *synamphóteron*-attitude (Xen. *Smp.* 8.14, reading *ἀμφότερα*, W. Lange's emendation of the *ἀμφότεροι* of the manuscripts, an emendation adopted by all subsequent editors).²² Xenophon's Socrates distances himself from 'both soul and body', but this is done without giving up pleasure, and that is where the originality of the Xenophontic Socrates lies according to our findings (see below, section 7; the results are not affected by the choice of reading in 8.14). But back to the less innovative – mainly Platonic – Socrates.

Why does he not simply discard the aristocratic idea of 'beautiful-and-good', *kalós kai agathós* (e.g. *Chrm.* 154e), and why is he exploiting the ambiguity of physical ('well-grown') and mental ('naturally suited to ...') praise contained in a word such as *εὖ-φυής*, *eu-phyés* (see Pl. *Smp.* 209b, cf. Pl. *Chrm.* 154e1) which remained of central importance to the Stoics in their endeavour to make beauty transparent to virtue and thereby philosophically relevant?²³

22 Huß ad locum calls it 'eine unglückliche Konjektur'; but he leaves the real problem, i.e. *στέργειν* without an object, with no comment.

23 Zenon in his *Republic* (acc. to Diogenes Laërtios 7.129): 'the wise man will desire (*ἐρασθήσεσθαι*) the youths (*τῶν νέων*) who through (*διά* + genitive) their appearance/physique/beauty (*εἶδος*, cf. Xen. *Smp.* 8.25, Pl. *R.* 402d) clearly show the natural endow-

One might well find it justified that a philosopher be blamed for considering bodily beauty²⁴ morally and pedagogically relevant – on condition that the blame covers a high evaluation of both male *and* female beauty and youth. Cicero at least glances at this point (Cic. *Tusc.* 4.71):

Atque, ut muliebris amores omittam, quibus maiorem licentiam natura concessit, quis aut de Ganymedi raptu dubitat quid poëtae velint [...].?

And, not to speak of sex with women, to which nature has granted wider freedom-to-act-as-one-pleases, who has either any doubt of the meaning of the poets in the tale of the abduction of Ganymede [...].?

‘The meaning of the poets’ is that Zeus wanted to have the Trojan boy as his *concubinus*, his bed-fellow (Festus 18.44); there is no way of denying that *amor* here was *amor stupri*. As for the introductory *praeteritio* (‘not to speak of ...’) Cicero at least mentions the fact that in his view Nature leaves wider scope for sensualism in heterosexual affairs. He does not add ‘than in affairs with boys’; for these Nature has ordained no permissiveness at all since they are against Nature. Pederasty is against Nature; this is the point of Cicero’s characterizing it as a *consuetudo* (i.e. *nomos* versus *physis*), a habit which ‘has its origin in the gymnasia of the Greeks, where such love-affairs are freely allowed’; if pederasty were natural, it would always have been in existence.²⁵ Compare also the remarks in 4.72 (*in rerum natura*) and 4.76 (*naturalis*); there, however, the distinction between pederastic and heterosexual has become obliterated – which is clever strategy: in this way the anti-*amor* moral-

ment for virtue (τὴν πρὸς ἀρετὴν εὐφύϊαν).’ Physiognomical theories had made significant advances between Socrates and Zenon. See Gleason 1995 for a discussion of masculinity and physiognomy.

24 ‘Bodily beauty’: On the relative importance of face and body see Dover 1978: 68-73.

25 Cf. Cic. *Rep.* 3.33. Williams 1999:241-44 has failed to grasp the implication of *consuetudo* (*consuetudo* versus *natura*) and therefore wrongly paraphrases: ‘Nature has granted ‘greater’ – not ‘exclusive’ – license to affairs with women than to affairs with boys.’ Williams defends the thesis that Cicero and Seneca are wary of condemning homosexual acts as being *contra naturam* (241, 243). But Cic. *Tusc.* 4.71 is not about Nature granting men greater *licentia* ‘to have sexual relations with women’; it is about *Nature* granting to *muliebris amores*, i.e. to women and men engaging in a sexual encounter, greater *licentia* during the intercourse. – Two of the relevant Senecan documents, *Ep.* 122 and *Nat.* 1.16, are interpreted in Ole Thomsen 1980.

ist is able to make the antipathy aroused against *amor*-of-boys slide into an antipathy against all *amor*. Whether *puḍicus* or not *puḍicus*, *amor* is *furor*!

Considering the homophobic bias with which the problem of male bodily beauty is raised through the centuries by opponents of Socrates and/or the Stoics, it is interesting to find the problem reformulated by a homosexual scholar as late as 1998, in the era of political correctness. I have in mind a passage from the chapter 'Spirit versus Physique' in Gregory Woods' learned and eloquent *A History of Gay Literature: The Male Tradition* (pp. 188 f.):

In his book on *Gay Men's Literature in the Twentieth Century* [1993] Mark Lilly has complained – I think, rather oddly – that 'The overriding importance of physical beauty in Cavafy's celebrations of the erotic is a problematic one for modern readers.' Lilly criticises Cavafy for his tendency 'to exalt beauty to such an extent, that it is represented as an indispensable attribute for a successful human life' [p. 49]. He never mentions that this is true of virtually every gay writer his book deals with. (Why criticise Cavafy for this, and not Tennessee Williams?) Besides, should he not also be complaining about ageism? The ages of Cavafy's desired men are usually specified in the poems: they range from twenty to twenty-nine. The point is not at all that the ugly, or the thirty-year-olds, are lacking in the attributes necessary for 'a successful human life' – nowhere, of course, does Cavafy say any such thing – but that desire, which does indeed, for better or worse, impose its own standards on him who desires, creates its own standards of beauty. You might say it is the desire for the beautiful young man that creates him – there, where he is most needed, among the contingencies of modern, urban life.

I would argue that, as I have already suggested, this insistence on physical beauty is far more problematic in the work of poets like Stefan George – and perhaps even in that of Plato himself – who lay such claims on spirituality. Why should a spiritual relationship be so heavily dependent on physicality, when a good brain and pleasant personality ought to do the trick? Cavafy, on the other hand, is so explicitly writing about sexual desire that his insistence on visual beauty is entirely consistent with every level of his thought. This is not to say that he ever actually defines the types of male beauty he desires (other than by age) or that he has a *Vogue* picture-editor's narrow view of bodily perfection. It may be that Lilly's retrospective imposition of narrowness on Cavafy's use of the word

beauty – which, after all, notoriously takes unconventional shapes in the desires of the individual – is itself far more problematical.

Once again, the problem of physical beauty in Socrates' erotic philosophy – as seen in Plato and the Platonist tradition, incl. Oscar Wilde, Stefan George and many other classical revivalists²⁶ – is *used*. Gregory Woods uses it with an anti-spiritualist edge: *contra* Plato and Stefan George, *pro* Kavafis. One notices that the beauty problem is seen together with the problem inherent in the cult of youth ('ageism'), just as Cicero did in his well-turned question about the ugly *adolescens* and the beautiful *senex*.²⁷

I find it doubtful whether Woods' presentation of Kavafis as a perfect monist ('... entirely consistent with every level of his thought') will stand up to scrutiny, and I find it surprising that Woods here seems to believe that the subjective attitude to beauty (ad modum Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*) is the only one existing (none of the other speakers in the *Symposium* endorse the subjective view of beauty).²⁸ All in all, there is nothing 'odd' in Mark Lilly's 'complaint'. The problem is still unsolved, and it is difficult to see how it can be solved in a *morally* defensible way.

I believe that what unites Socrates, Plato, Wilde, George, Tennessee Williams *and* Kavafis is the fact that bodily perfection strikes them as a *marvel* of beauty, as *eine Offenbarung*. Stefan George's pederastic piety as displayed in his poetry is viewed as a kind of masturbatory visualisation technique in these memorable lines by Gregory Woods on the subject of George's celebrated poem 'The Dancer' (Woods 1998: 187):

This move from the fragmented physical to the integrated abstract is typical of George. It shows how his mind moves from the enchanting effects of a few observed details of boyish beauty – fragments then reassembled as if in the purposive concentration of a masturbator – to the rationalised harmony of an abstraction, in this case 'youth' ['die ganze jugend'] – which represents far more than just 'young people'.

The religious dimension of beauty within Socrates' philosophy will be pre-

26 Cf. Woods 1998: 167.

27 Cf. Zenon on *hoi neoi* in note 23 above. See Dover 1978: 203, cp. 135.

28 Dover 1980: 113.

sented in section 10 below; there we will hear Socrates explain the blessings of erotic madness, passion's power to heal the ailing mind.

3. AISKHINES: PAIDEUTIKOS EROS. THE STUDY OF XENOPHON'S SYMPOSION, ITS PRESENT STATE

According to Diogenes Laërtios 2.60, Socrates made the following complimentary remark about Aiskhines, alias Aeschines Socraticus, alias Aeschines Sphettius (i.e. from the deme Sphettos – to be distinguished from the orator), 'Only the sausage-maker's son knows how to honour me, *μόνος ἡμᾶς οἶδε τιμᾶν ὁ τοῦ ἀλλαντοποιοῦ*.' In order to appreciate this compliment, we should bear in mind that the malodorous profession of sausage-making was universally despised, witness the coarse proletarian of this occupation in Aristophanes' *Knights*,²⁹ the hero and victor of this cynical drama. Thus, the compliment points to the more or less honour-less as Socrates' sole source of honour. The Socrates who speaks here resembles the Xenophontic Socrates who is proud of the 'ignoble profession' of being a pimp (Xen. *Smp.* 4.56, cf. 3.10 on the money to be made in this manner).

Aiskhines was interested in Socrates' ideas about eros and philia, about paideia – paideia viewed as a process of *Selbstentfaltung* within the family and state³⁰ – and about the interaction between eros and paideia: *paideutikós eros*.

Via the fragments of especially two of Aiskhines' (at least seven) dialogues, *Alkibiades* and *Aspasia*, we are presented with *Eine vorplatonische Deutung des sokratischen Eros* – to borrow the title of Barbara Ehlers' 1966 monograph on the dialogue *Aspasia*. In the new commentary by Bernhard Huß, Aiskhines' influence on Xen. *Smp.* is taken to have been fundamental (Huß 1999: 18,22, passim). This idea was apparently first put forward by Kurt von Fritz in

29 See Ar. *Eq.* 178-93, 211-19.

30 As to 'state', more below. As to 'family' see Aiskhines in vol. II of SSR (= *Socratis et Socraticorum reliquiae*, ed. Giannantoni 1990) VI A 70 with Ehlers 1966: 85-95. The term *Selbstentfaltung* will be justified below, section 7; cf. Pl. *Thr.* 150d6-8, and see Ar. *Nu.* 385, 695, 737 and 842, four important (comic) testimonies on Socrates' respect for his pupils' own creativity; cf. my interpretation of *σύ* and *αὐτή* in Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.15, on p. 132 below.

1935;³¹ the first to elaborate it was Barbara Ehlers in 1966, and Huß 1999 is in the main dependent on Ehlers. This means that ‘Modern Interpretation of Xenophon’s *Symposion*’ was founded in 1966. Ehlers misses Socrates’ doctrine of the Triple Eros, and so does Huß; likewise they both ignore that part of the Triple Eros which was to become of central importance in Stoic sexual ethics, the *eros philias*.

From this failure to appreciate the philosophical and psychological core of Socrates’ speech in Xen. *Smp.* 8, it follows that Ehlers feels justified in distinguishing between ‘purely spiritual’ and ‘physical’ in the most un-Socratic manner. Just a few examples from her interpretation of Xen. *Smp.* (Ehlers 1966: 110-23):

- On Xen. *Smp.* 5.62-63 Ehlers 1966: 113 f.: ‘Die genannten Männer gehören zu den hervorragendsten Geistesgrößen ihrer Zeit. Ihr Interesse aneinander ist rein geistiger Art, und in diesem Sinne sind auch ἔρως [*eros*] und ἐπιθυμία [*epithymia*], die sie verbinden, zu verstehen (63).’
– Cf. Huß: ‘sokratisch-metaphorisch’ (p. 310, saepius), ‘seine gesamte Erosrede [... ..] im Sinne des geistigen Eros, der “Freundschaft”’ (p. 371), ‘Äußerungen der seelischen Liebe (ἐπαφρόδιτα [*epaphródita*])’ (p. 390).
- Ehlers had been reminded by her *Doktorvater* Harald Patzer of the ideas to be found in Plato’s *Theaitetos* 149d about the midwives/the match-makers. But: ‘ἔρως oder gar ἐπιθυμία spielen [...] hier gar keine Rolle [...].’ I disagree, see below, section 5.
- On Xen. *Smp.* 8 the end: ‘Sokrates steht als Unbeteiligter einem Paar [Kallias-Autolykos] gegenüber, und das entspricht genau der Situation der Aspasia im aischineischen Xenophongespräch [where the couple is Xenophon and his wife, see above note 30].’ To refute the words ‘als Unbeteiligter’ a reference to 8.41 ought to suffice. Socrates is never ‘unbeteiligt’ in matters erotic!
- Ehlers 1966: 117 f.: Through the rejection of ‘desire of the body’ we find ‘weithin alles Erotische überhaupt abgelehnt. Eine positive Begründung des Phänomens Eros gelingt Xenophon damit aber keineswegs.’

31 Kurt von Fritz points to the ‘Überlegenheit des Sokrates – nicht in der Philosophie, sondern in der Menschenbehandlung’ as characteristic of Xen. *Smp.* The term *Menschenbehandlung* is a fruitful one. – As for Xenophon’s ‘Mischung von Scherz und Ernst’ in the presentation of Socrates-Antisthenes see below, section 4.

- Huß 1999: 24-25: ‘Will er [Xenophon] über Sokrates schreiben, so kann er das nicht als ‘sokratischer Philosoph’, sondern nur als ‘sokratischer Literat’ tun.’

So much for the failure to appreciate Socrates’ key-concept, i.e. the Triple Eros, incl. *eros philias*, and his (at least to us) novel attempt at fusing anti-orgasmic³² and sensual into an original doctrine of sublimation. Any assessment of the humour – ‘humour’ here understood as the combined workings of the irony, the more or less aggressive urbanity, and the well-known ‘Mischung von Scherz und Ernst’³³ – to be found in Xen. *Smp.* stands or falls with the proper interpretation of the erotic philosophy.

How detrimental such mechanic labelling into ‘purely spiritual’ ↔ ‘physical’, into ‘literal’ ↔ ‘figurative’, and into ‘serious’ ↔ ‘jocular’ really is, may become even more clear through the analysis offered in section 9 below of Dover 1978: 156 f.

4. SOCRATIC MENSCHENBEHANDLUNG. SOCRATES AS MIDWIFE, MATCHMAKER, PIMP, PROSTITUTE, LOVER, BOY. SOCRATES’ EROTIC DECEIT

Socrates – as depicted in Xen. *Smp.* 4.56-64, cf. 3.10 – is proud of being a pimp, a *mastropós*, and he praises Antisthenes for being both a *mastropós* and a *proagōgós*; and in the end Antisthenes even becomes fond (4.64, ctr. 4.61) of this picture of himself as an architect of concord.³⁴ We will return to the (slight) difference between *mastropós* and *proagōgós*.

In his conversation with Theodote the courtesan – Xen. *Mem.* 3.11 – Socrates demonstrates what an accomplished teacher of the art of friend-making he is; his mastery of the art (*tékhnē*, 3.11.7) is so convincing that Theodote proposes that Socrates put the theory into practice and immediately (see the aorist!) become her *syn-thērátēs tōn philōn*, her ‘fellow-hunter after (the)

³² But see the discussion in section 9 below.

³³ See von Fritz 1935, Gaiser 1969: 207, Huß 1999: 34-37 “Ernst” (*spoudē*) und “Scherz” (*paidiá*).

³⁴ Perhaps a reflection of the fact that *homónoia* was a central theme in Antisthenes’ philosophy, cf. SSR V A 69, 100, 108, 125, 208. Cf. Huß ad Xen. *Smp.* 6.64.

friends' (Xen. *Mem.* 3.II.15). What exactly is it that convinces the courtesan of Socrates' mastery? It is his demonstration that coquetry – the art of creating sexual hunger, *limós*, by postponing the consummation – is in accordance with nature (*katá physin*, 3.II.II–14). This art of making and keeping friends 'through good services and pleasure' is according to nature because it follows the very same dietetic principles that form the core of Socratic hedonism (see note 75 and section 9 below). It is extremely important to notice that Socrates does not distinguish the courtesan's way of making and keeping friends from everybody else's. This is what makes the Theodote chapter unique: here Socrates is in favour of making money and he is in favour of using one's body for commercial purposes (see 3.II.9–10), and on this ironically twisted basis he manages to present his dietetic message – elsewhere, e.g. in Xen. *Smp.* 8, strictly opposed to body and money – and to convert Theodote to it. This kind of ironical twist is typical of Socrates' teaching method (more in section 8 below).

From Xenophon and Plato, from Maximus Tyrios and Libanios, we are familiar with Socrates as being continuously engaged in friend-hunting, *Freundesjagd*, on his own behalf,³⁵ we may even recall Socrates' revelation of the *sexual* dimension in this process of acquiring friends (Pl. *Lj.* 211e, see below, page 151); but that is Socrates acting on his own behalf, and has apparently little to do with hunting friends on someone else's behalf, 'friends', moreover, meaning paying sex-partners (see 3.II.4 and 3.II.12). It was Socrates himself who (in 3.II.9) had suggested to Theodote that she ought to get herself a pimp – 'instead of a hound'³⁶ somebody who [*ὄστις*; the Loeb transl.: 'an agent who'] will track and find rich men with an eye for beauty'. But this creature would only be a 'hunter after friends'; thus the *syn-*, the *fellow-*, is Theodote's clever addition: You, Socrates, must immediately become my fellow-pimp (she is acting as her own pimp, see presently) *and my fellow-courtesan!*

Pimps and courtesans are united, both being superb masters in the art of pleasing. This art is reciprocal, not only in the sense that you want to please the person who pleases you (cf. *ἀρέσαι τῶι ἀρέσκοντί μοι*, *Mem.* 2.6.29), but

35 See Huß on Xen. *Smp.* 4.63: 'das typisch sokratische Motiv der "Freundesjagd"'.
 36 Cf. *Κυν-αλόπεξ*, *Fuchshund*, the nickname – in the feminine – of a pimp and dandy (*pornoboskós kai kallōpistés*, acc. to the scholiast on Ar. *Eq.* 1069) in Aristophanes' *Lysistrate* 957.

also in the sense that you wish to please the other person into believing that he pleases you, i.e. into believing that he is lovable (Socrates to Theodote, 3.11.10, sub finem).

Theodote's intelligent addition is far from unique in suggesting that *pimp and prostitute/lover/beloved* are two sides of the same coin:³⁷ see Ar. *Nu.* 980 (of a boy) *αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν προαγωγεύων*, see Xen. *Smp.* 8.5 (below) where Antisthenes addresses this vocative to Socrates the coquettish, flirtatious 'boy': 'You, your own pimp, *σὺ μαστροπὲ σαυτοῦ!*', and, finally, see the triangle in the concluding paragraphs of Xen. *Smp.* chapter eight, 8.39 and 8.42: Socrates the *mastropós* (8.39: Socrates to Kallias: 'if you really want to please him [Autolykos, Kallias' *erómenos/beloved*]?'), 8.41: Socrates the lover/the *erastés* (of Kallias, the same person to whom he acts as a pimp, cf. 8.42). Here in *Mem.* 3.11 Socrates convinces Theodote that art (*tékhne*) and method (*mēkhané*, 3.11.5, 6, 9, 10, 15) are preferable to chance (*tykhē*, 3.11.5), and that art and method are in accordance with nature (see above). In other words, Theodote is convinced that the principles of philosophical rationalism will maximize her profits. But ... on his way out Socrates gives her to understand that he will never become Theodote's fellow-hunter unless she *herself* finds a method of making Socrates her friend (3.11.15-18, cf. Ar. *Nu.* 737 in note 30 above).

With these demonstrations of his perfect *Hetären- und Kupplerkunst* and the concomitant excursions into the ignoble, *ádoxon* (cf. Xen. *Smp.* 4.56: *οὕτως ἀδόξωι οὔσῃι τέχνῃι*), Socrates mirrors Aspasia as she had been depicted – by Socrates – in Aiskhines' dialogue *Aspasia*; on this there has been general agreement since the appearance of Ehlers' monograph in 1966. As regards this link between Aspasia and Socrates, we should also refer to Xen. *Mem.* 2.6.36 where Socrates tells Kritoboulos that Aspasia has taught him about honest match-making, *promnēstiké* (the *tékhne* in which Socrates' mother, qua midwife, was unsurpassed). And let us not forget that in Plato's *Menexenos* Socrates claims Aspasia as his instructor in rhetoric (Pl. *Mx.* 235e; see Halperin 1989: 122 f.). These points of contact, and others, are mentioned by Ehlers. However, Ehlers' view of the implications of Socrates' *Hetären- und Kupplerkunst* differs vastly from the interpretation outlined above.

In Aiskhines' dialogue, Kallias is in search of a teacher for his son – a typi-

37 Cf. Morrison 1994: 199, second paragraph. Dover 1978: 27-28.

cal situation in Socratic dialogues³⁸ –; he consults Socrates on the matter and is referred to Aspasia as the best possible teacher in political excellence, *areté* – an exclusively masculine science, one would have thought. The highly astonished Kallias is told that the Milesian courtesan has taught her husband the art of pleasing the *polis* (cf. Xen. *Smp.* 4.60 on the *mastropós* teaching to please the whole *polis*, cf. 4.64 on the *proagōgós*), and after Perikles' death she has also taught the sheep-dealer Lysikles how to become an influential politician in Athens (SSR VI A 66, as 'supplemented' by Dittmar 1912 and Ehlers 1966).

What is the connection between the pimp teaching to please *many* and the pimp teaching to please *the whole city* (*polloi* → *hólē hē polis*, Xen. *Smp.* 4.59-60)? In other words, what is the point of introducing a *political* pimp – except for the fact that Aspasia may have been just such a political pimp? The answer is that according to Socrates, as presented by Xenophon and possibly by Aiskhines before him, there is a *necessary* connection between eros and philia, on the one hand, and the optimum realization of a young man's political love-of-honour, on the other hand.³⁹

I am afraid we still have some way to go before we can arrive at a satisfactory analysis of the phenomenon of the political pimp, not unlike the spin-doctors of our day and age. See section 8, below.

Let us resume the theme of matchmaking (without, for the moment, distinguishing between *mastropeia* and *proagōgeia*).⁴⁰ Socratic matchmaking understood as the art of bringing a – usually – young person together with the right teacher (in Aiskhines' *Aspasia*, Socrates – the procurer – recommends a procuress as the perfect teacher) is a well-known theme both in Xenophon and in Plato.⁴¹ According to Ehlers 1966: 35, all these passages 'zeugen davon, daß die Knabenerziehung in Attika eine vornehme und schwere

38 Cf. Plato's *Lakhes* 180b7-d3 (the expression used is *προξενεῖν διδάσκαλον*) and 200c7-201b5.

39 Cf. below, p. 157. I believe that the well-known 'all politicians are bumsuckers (*kólakes*)' – see Plato *Gorgias*, esp. 502d-503d – should be left out of consideration here; see Xen. *Smp.* 8.43: the *polis* wants *real aretē*.

40 Morrison 1994 renders *mastropós*: procurer and *proagōgós*: go-between. Thus we have at least five English terms: procurer, go-between, pimp, matchmaker – and pander. Who will provide us with a taxonomy?

41 *Mem.* 1.6.14, 4.7.1, *Oec.* 2.16, 3.14, 3.16. Cf. the *Lakhes* passage above and, below, *Theaitetos* 151b.

Pflicht war.’⁴² The word ‘vornehm’ is really a problematic choice.

This ignoble (*ádoxos*) activity, smelling of sex and money, is connected with the noble phenomenon of Socratic midwifery in a passage from Plato’s *Theaitetos*, already referred to above. The passage from the *Theaitetos* runs as follows (149d5-150a7 plus 151b2-6):

SOC. Well, have you noticed this also about them [the midwives, the *maiai*], that they are the most skilful of matchmakers [*promnéstriaí*], since they are very wise in knowing what union of man and woman will produce the best possible children?

THEAET. I do not know that at all.

SOC. But be assured that they are prouder of this than of their skill in cutting the umbilical cord. Just consider. Do you think the knowledge of what soil is best for each plant or seed belongs to the same art as the tending and harvesting of the fruits of the earth, or to another?

THEAET. To the same art.

SOC. And in the case of a woman, do you think, my friend, that there is one art for the sowing and another for the harvesting?

THEAET. It is not likely.

SOC. No; but because there is a wrongful [*á-dikos*] and unscientific [*á-tekhnos*] way of bringing men and women together, which is called pandering [*proagōgía*], the midwives, since they are women of dignity and worth [they are *semnai*], avoid match-making [*promnéstikê*], through fear of falling under the charge of pandering. And yet the true midwife is the only proper matchmaker.

THEAET. It seems so.

Socrates near the end of this description of the workings of his *maieutiké tékhnē* (151b2-6):

But in some cases, Theaetetus, when they [my young companions] do not seem to me to be exactly pregnant, since I see that they have no need of me, I act with perfect goodwill as matchmaker and, under God, I guess very successfully with whom they can associate profitably, and I have

⁴² The verbs commonly used are ‘introduce’ (*συνιστάναι*, e.g. *Oec.* 3.14, *Mem.* 1.6.14, *Xen. Smp.* 4.63, *Pl. La.* 200d2) and ‘recommend’ (*ἐπαινείν*, see *Xen. Smp.* 4.63 with *Huß*).

handed over many of them to Prodicus, and many other wise and inspired men.

With great confidence Huß (1999: 15-18: 'Endgültige [!] Spätdatierung⁴³ von X. *Symp.*') considers the distinction between *mastropeia* and *proagōgeia* in Xen. *Smp.* 4 to be an echo of the differentiation between *promnēstikē*⁴⁴ and *proagōgeia* in Pl. *Tht.*, and he calls the distinction in Xenophon, which is secondary and derivative according to him, 'etwas unklar' (p. 16) and 'etwas verwaschen' (p. 310). I, for my part, find Socrates' explanation in Xenophon of the relation between these two *tékhnai* quite clear: *mastropeia*, according to Socrates, consists in making people *pleasant*⁴⁵ (see Xen. *Smp.* 4.57, 4.59, 4.60 and Kallias in 8.42), whereas *proagōgeia* consists in (a) finding out who is *useful* to whom (*ōphélimos*, 4.64) and (b) making the mutually useful mutually *pleasant*, meaning: sexually attractive (4.63). The *proagōgós* sees that (the rich) Kallias is in love with philosophy, and that there is a philosopher – Prodikos – who is in need of money (4.62). So a liaison will be useful to both. There was eros in Kallias from the beginning (it had only to be transferred from philosophy to the philosopher). – As for the liaison with Hippias (also 4.62), it serves to increase the amount of Kallias' eros (because of his improved memory). The *proagōgós*' erotic art serves the mnemonic art that enters into the service of eros! It was with reference to this section and the following that Barbara Ehlers wrote (see above): 'Ihr Interesse aneinander ist rein geistiger Art [...].'

In the above interpretation, *proagōgeia* as a *tékhnē* may really be characterized as 'following on/correspondent with' (*akólouthos*, 4.61) *mastropeia*. The conceptual couple pleasant-useful was widely used among Sophists and Socratics.⁴⁶

Thus *mastropeia* can be said to form part of *proagōgeia*, i.e. the part that

43 Cf. Andreas Patzer (quoted apud Huß 1999: 26): 'Xenophon nimmt unter den Sokratikern eine Sonderstellung ein: er bietet eine Sokratik aus zweiter Hand, die sich im wesentlichen an literarisch vorgeprägten Mustern und Vorbildern orientiert.'

44 See Dover's commentary (Oxford 1968) on Aristophanes' *Clouds* line 41.

45 See above, section 4, p. 132, on reciprocity; with this cp. Xen. *Smp.* 4.58 *πρὸς φιλίαν ἄγρουσι*.

46 See Xen. *Smp.* 3.2, 4.39 and the commentators on Pl. *R.* 607d-e and Arist. *Po.* 1450a33. See section 10 below.

has to do with the art of pleasing, incl. coquetry.⁴⁷ Sociological considerations are sometimes adduced to explain Socrates' distinction,⁴⁸ but this is not in accordance with his actual words.

In the passage from the *Theaitetos* we find the factor of utility mentioned in 151b in relation to Socrates the matchmaker, and implied in 149d5-8 about the midwives/matchmakers. But: (1) the factor of pleasure and sexual attraction is not made explicit, and (2) the entire argument in 149d-150a is heterosexual, and (3) *proagōgeia* is viewed as a non-*tékhnē* (150a1) with no extenuating circumstances whatsoever, and (4) no conceptual distinction between the midwives' *promnēstiké* on the one hand and *proagōgeia* on the other is needed, since it is taken for granted that we have to do with a noble *tékhnē* (d6, e2) and an ignoble non-*tékhnē* respectively, whereby (5) *proagōgeia* in Plato and in Xenophon become exact opposites. In view of these five points the confidence expressed by some scholars that the relationship between the *Theaitetos* and Xen. *Smp.* has been securely established should be considered unfounded. Anti-conventional, playful, lucid subtlety is found in Xenophon here, not in Plato (this distribution of roles is not exactly the rule). You may recall Dover's words (above, page 124) about the (relative) lack of sensibility and urbanity in Xenophon's Socrates, and feel tempted to problematize them.

The fact remains, however, that Socrates declares (a) that he practises 'the same art, *tékhnē*' as Phainarete, his midwife mother (Pl. *Tht.* 149a) and (b) that matchmaking is (149d6) and should be (cf. *ὁρθῶς* 150a6) an integral part of any midwife's *tékhnē* (149e, cf. *ἅπαν* in 149b4).

We have now heard midwifery linked to matchmaking; later we will recognize a parallelism between midwifery and ecstatic eros.⁴⁹ This is less surprising if we recall (cf. p. 132) the occurrence in one person of (x) loving and (y) matching lovers. Socrates is not only constantly in love; he is constantly and by nature/heredity matching teacher with pupil or lover with beloved. Compare the remarks made above on the useful and the pleasant, i.e. education and desire, as covered by the art of *proagōgeia*.

47 Cf. Huß on the 'Elemente der Koketterie' in 4.57 and 4.58. – The theory and practice of coquetry was a *comic* speciality, see Ar. *Lys.* 887 f., Plautus *Asinaria* 746 ff., Leo 1912: 140-57.

48 Thus Huß p. 312, cf. p. 16.

49 On the divine element in Socratic midwifery see Pl. *Tht.* 150c7-8, d8-9, 151a3-5, c8-d2, 210c6-7.

Socrates is his own pimp, *mastropós*, according to Antisthenes, the proto-Cynic. The passage, Xen. *Smp.* 8.4-6, that shows Socrates putting on – in Dover's words – 'a delightful act as a conceited and coquettish boy' runs like this (the translation in Dover 1978: 85):

σὺ δὲ μόνος, ὦ Ἀντίσθενης, οὐδενὸς ἐρᾷς;

Ναὶ μὰ τοὺς θεοὺς, εἶπεν ἐκεῖνος, καὶ σφόδρα γε σοῦ.

Καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης ἐπισκώψας ὡς δὴ θρυπτόμενος εἶπε· Μὴ νῦν μοι ἐν τῷ παρόντι ὄχλον πάρεχε· ὡς γὰρ ὄρᾳς, ἄλλα πράττω.

Καὶ ὁ Ἀντισθένης ἔλεξεν· Ὡς σαφῶς μέντοι σύ, μαστροπὲ σαυτοῦ, ἀεὶ τοιαῦτα ποιεῖς· τότε μὲν τὸ δαιμόνιον προφασισζόμενος οὐ διαλέγῃ μοι, τότε δ' ἄλλου του ἐφίεμενος.

Καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης ἔφη· Πρὸς τῶν θεῶν, ὦ Ἀντίσθενης, μόνον μὴ συγκόψῃς με· τὴν δ' ἄλλην χαλεπότητα ἐγὼ σου καὶ φέρω καὶ οἴσω φιλικῶς. ἀλλὰ γάρ, ἔφη, τὸν μὲν σὸν ἔρωτα κρύπτωμεν, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἔστιν οὐ ψυχῆς ἀλλ' εὐμορφίας τῆς ἐμῆς.

'Are you the only one, Antisthenes, who isn't in love with anyone?'

'By God I am!' said Antisthenes, 'I'm in love with you!'

Socrates, making fun of him, as if putting on airs, said 'Now, don't bother me now! Can't you see I'm busy?'

Antisthenes replied 'You – your own pimp! – always behave like that. Sometimes you make your 'sign from a god' the excuse and don't talk to me, and sometimes you're after somebody else [Dover has: something else]'.

'O, I beg you, Antisthenes,' said Socrates, 'please don't beat me up! Any other bad temper I put up with from you, and I'll go on putting up with it, because I'm fond of you. But look, let's keep your [Dover has 'our'] eros quiet, because it isn't my soul you're in love with, but my good looks.'

If Antisthenes loves, ἐρᾷ, Socrates, Socrates becomes his *erómenos*,⁵⁰ his *pais*, his *beautiful* boy (see the final words; Socrates' ugliness was the theme in Xen. *Smp.* ch. 5, the beauty-contest). Antisthenes' eros of Socrates' 'good looks', *eumorphia*, must be hidden (κρύπτωμεν, 'let us hide your desire'),

⁵⁰ See also Pl. *Smp.* 173b3 (contrast Pl. *Prt.* 317c7) and Xen. *Mem.* 3.II.17. The important passage Xen. *Mem.* I.6.13 is interpreted in section 9 below; cf. the end of section 4.

since otherwise Antisthenes' praise of the soul in Xen. *Smp.* ch. 4 (esp. 4.34, cf. 4.38) and of *philia* in his own philosophy (cf. Huß on 4.43) might appear to be hypocrisy.

Of course Antisthenes, the fervent disciple of Socrates (4.44, *Mem.* 3.11.17), is to be believed when he declares Socrates his eros. Since the object of this eros is evidently philosophy/the philosopher (on this see Xen. *Smp.* 4.62 from *προαγωγεύσαντα* to *ἐρώντα*), Antisthenes' eros may well be said to exemplify the kind of eros that Socrates will praise three sections further along: eros *philias* (8.10); compare the fact that Antisthenes was presented as Socrates' 'colleague' in 4.61.

Here I want to point to Kierkegaard's analysis of Socrates' power to seduce through his 'apparent indifference to the young men', which Kierkegaard connects with Socratic midwifery (*The Concept of Irony with Continual Reference to Socrates* [1841], transl. by Howard H. Hong [Princeton 1992] 189-91; comments by the translator):

Thus, in an intellectual sense, we can say of Socrates' relation to the youths that he looked at them with desire. But just as his desire did not aim to possess the youths, neither was his course of action so designed. He did not set out with fine words, with long oratorical effusions, with huckstering trumpeting of his own wisdom. On the contrary, he went about quietly. He was seemingly indifferent to the young men; his questions did not pertain to his relation to the youths. He discussed some subject that was personally important to them, but he himself remained completely objective; and yet underneath this indifference to them they felt, more than they saw, the piercing sidelong glance that instantly pierced their souls like a dagger. It seemed as if he had secretly listened to the most intimate conversations of their souls, as if he constrained them to speak aloud about them in his presence. He became their confidant without their quite knowing how it had happened, and while throughout all this they were completely changed, he remained unbudgingly the same. And then, when all the bonds of their prejudices were loosened, when all their intellectual sclerosis was softened, when his questions had straightened everything out and made the transformation possible, then the relation culminated in the meaningful moment, in the brief silvery gleam [*Sølvblink*] that instantly illuminated the world of their consciousness, when he turned everything upside down for them at once, as quickly

as a glance of the eye [*Øieblik*] and for as long as a blink of the eye, when everything is changed for them *ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ* [in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye].

[...]

He did not give more, and while the young man now felt inseparably bound to Socrates, the relation changed so that, as Alcibiades aptly describes it, Socrates became the beloved rather than the lover. If we understand his relation in this way, we are vividly reminded of the art he himself claimed to possess – the art of midwifery. He helped the individual to an intellectual delivery; he cut the umbilical cord of substantiality. As an *accoucheur* [obstetrician], he was unrivaled, but more than that he was not. Nor did he assume any real responsibility for the later lives of his students, and here again Alcibiades provides us with an example *instar omnium*.

Apparently Kierkegaard was unaware of the linking of matchmaking and midwifery expounded in the *Theaitetos*. All the more reason to admire the introduction here of Socratic midwifery by the young *Hegelianer* Søren Aabye Kierkegaard.

Antisthenes' dissection, above, of Socrates' inaccessibility is twofold: either you use your *daimonion* as a pretext (on Socrates' use of the *daimonion* in his dealings with his disciples/admirers see Pl. *Tht.* 151a) or 'you are desiring somebody else'; *ἄλλου του* taken as neuter is lame, it must be masculine,⁵¹ see (a) Socrates' words ... *συγκόψημις* (to be taken literally) ... *χαλεπότητα* and (b) the strikingly similar *Mem.* 3.11.16 'For I have much business to occupy me [...]; and I have the dear girls [...]'. In his un-serious play with his deadly serious follower, Socrates either instrumentalizes the divine sign, or he has a more desirable interlocutor in mind.⁵² Thus Antisthenes – who comes close to saying that Socrates manipulates the emotions of his disciples, and does say that he hurts them.

Even quite un-philosophical Athenians were familiar with the workings of

51 Cf. e.g. Xen. *Mem.* 4.1.2. The neutral *ἄλλα* at *Smp.* 8.4 casts no light on the gender of *ἄλλου του*. Huß ad locum is silent.

52 See Socrates' last words to Theodote (*Mem.* 3.11.18): 'unless there is a dearer girl with me', a phrase used by crafty prostitutes (see Luc. *DMeretr.* 12.1: '*endon heteros*'). As for 'desiring somebody else', cf. Pl. *Prt.* 309c2-10, where one may notice that Socrates takes no exception to having this motive ascribed to himself.

coquetry and the effects of coyness. In Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* 887 f., Kinesias offers the following analysis of Myrrhine's 'swaggering' behaviour and its effects on his *pothos*: 'And as for her ill-tempered and high-handed behaviour toward me, it is exactly this that afflicts me with longing!' (transl. Henderson). The fact that this is uttered by a fairly unsophisticated Aristophanic character should make scholars less confident in rejecting Kierkegaard's analyses of Socrates the seducer as Romantic fancy.

In Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.15-18, during his exit from Theodote's boudoir, Socrates points out to Theodote that he is surrounded by (male!) girl-friends, who will probably keep him outside her reach for ever, and in *Smp.* 8.4-6, taken as a whole, Socrates is acting like a boy, a *pais kalós*, and this was, according to Alkibiades, basically his strategy: ἐξαπατῶν ὡς ἐραστής. The passage, *Pl. Smp.* 222a8-b7, to which Kierkegaard repeatedly refers, runs like this:

Ταῦτ' ἐστίν, ὦ ἄνδρες, ἃ ἐγὼ Σωκράτη ἐπαινῶ· καὶ αὖ ἃ μέμφομαι συμμείξας ὑμῖν εἶπον ἃ με ὕβρισεν. καὶ μέντοι οὐκ ἐμὲ μόνον ταῦτα πεποίηκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Χαρμίδην τὸν Γλαύκωνος καὶ Εὐθύδημον τὸν Διοκλέους καὶ ἄλλους πάνυ πολλούς, οὓς οὗτος ἐξαπατῶν ὡς ἐραστής παιδικὰ μᾶλλον αὐτὸς καθίσταται ἀντ' ἐραστοῦ. ἃ δὴ καὶ σοὶ λέγω, ὦ Ἀγάθων, μὴ ἐξαπατᾶσθαι ὑπὸ τούτου, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἡμετέρων παθημάτων γρόντα εὐλαβηθῆναι, καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν ὥσπερ νήπιον παθόντα γῶναι.

This, gentlemen, is the praise I give to Socrates: at the same time, I have seasoned it with fault-finding, and I have told you his rude behaviour towards me. However, I am not the only person he has treated thus: there are Charmides, son of Glaucon, Euthydemus [above n. 14], son of Diocles, and any number of others who have found his way of loving so deceitful that he might rather be their favourite [*paidiká* = *erómenos*] than their lover. I tell you this, Agathon, to save you from his deceit, that by laying our sad experiences to heart you may be on your guard and escape learning by your own pain, like the loon in the adage.

Kierkegaard (*The Concept of Irony*, 188):

He deceived them all just as he deceived Alcibiades, who himself says, as was mentioned earlier, that instead of being the lover Socrates was the beloved. And what does this mean other than that he attracted youth to

himself, but when they looked up to him, wanted to find a point of rest in him, wanted, forgetting all else, to seek reassurance in his love, wanted themselves to cease to be and to be only in being loved by him – then he was gone, the spell was broken. Then they felt the deep pain of unhappy love, then they felt that they were deceived, that it was not Socrates who loved them but they who loved Socrates and yet were not able to tear themselves away from him.

[...]

Thus his relation to his pupils was certainly stimulating, but by no means personal in the positive sense. What stood in the way here was once again his irony.

By generally getting his followers – not only Antisthenes and Alkibiades – on thin ice with regard to old and young, strong and weak, masculine and feminine in his erotic-educative dealings with them, in other words by challenging the ingrained Athenian gender-roles, these youngsters' props in life, Socrates acted as 'his own pimp', as a seducer and as a cheat: *ἔξαπατῶν ὡς ἐραστής*, 'cheating in his capacity as lover'. He, the lover, performed an act of ironic pseudo-identification with his erotic and educative opponent, the boy, whereby he reduced the boy's feeling of security and enhanced his own (cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.14 in section 9 below). Coquetry was his nature, not just one feature among others, not just observable in a playful passage or two.⁵³ Quite logically a follower of Socrates might be called a 'desirer' of Socrates (*epithymētēs*, Xen. *Ap.* 28, *Mem.* 1.2.60, cf. 3.11.17).

5. THE MIDWIFE'S FEAR

Female desire and orgasm were considered necessary for conception and therefore in accordance with Nature,⁵⁴ and there was general (male) agreement that female desire was, according to Nature, *much* stronger than

53 Alkibiades *had* taken Socrates' evasiveness into account, see Pl. *Smp.* 217c7-8 ἀπεχνῶς ὡσπερ ἐραστής παιδικοῖς ἐπιβουλεύων. He also offers him money (218c10)!

54 Ole Thomsen 1992: 149.

male.⁵⁵ This is at least part of what Cicero had in mind when he wrote the *praeteritio* in *Tusc.* 4.71 (above, section 2), and useful for us to recall.

By now we are aware that conduct, feminine in the sense of unmanly, played a major role in the Socratic doctrine of *paideutikós eros*: it is fundamentally unmanly to dedicate one's life to eros, i.e. to pleasure,⁵⁶ it is unmanly to profess expertise in the art of pleasing, incl. the use of cosmetics and the practice of flirting (Xen. *Smp.* 4.57-58), and it is unmanly to shirk one's obligations as lover, friend and teacher and have recourse to the evasive manoeuvres typical of a Beautiful Boy. Socrates may even take the opposite, but no less risqué step of presenting his followers as *philai*, 'the dear girls, who won't leave me day or night', and that in the presence of at least one of them.⁵⁷ On top of all this, he had this network of female role-models: midwives and match-makers, procuresses and courtesans; such a 'man' – *Freiwerber* and *Lustdirne* in one – is the right kind of person to do business with Theodote, Alkibiades' *grand amour*.⁵⁸

Of course there is a certain degree of similarity between Aiskhines' Aspasia and Diotima⁵⁹ in Plato's *Symposium*, i.e. between the Milesian demimonde recommended by Socrates as a teacher in the masculine activity of politics and the prophetess from Mantinea who teaches men 'the right way to love boys' (τὸ ὀρθῶς παιδεραστέειν, Pl. *Smp.* 211b), just as there is a connection of sorts between Aspasia and Phainarete, Socrates' mother (see above p. 132 on *promnēstikē*). We should also include the phenomenon of male pregnancy here.⁶⁰ The comic, even grotesque possibilities in much of this are obvious, and are part of its *adoxia*.

Making feminine means making more libidinous. Still, one might consider distinguishing between disreputable and noble women here, between Aspasia and Theodote on the one side and Phainarete and Diotima on the other. Dis-

55 Idem 1992: 75; cp. Xen. *Smp.* 8.21. See also Halperin 1989: 139, Davidson 1997:176.

56 On *andreaia* = the ability to resist any temptation to pleasure see Dover 1974: 208 f., Dover 1978: 154, 158.

57 See Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.16-18, notice τόνδε. Ludwig Breitenbach 1889 ad 3.11.16: 'Mit φίλαι bezeichnet Sokrates hier scherzhafterweise seine Freunde [...].'

58 On this see Athenaios 13.574 f. and cf. Cornelius Nepos *Alcibiades* 10.6.

59 Cf. Halperin 1989: 124.

60 Elucidated by Frisbee Sheffield in her recent article 'Psychic Pregnancy and Platonic Epistemology', Sheffield 2001: 1-33, esp. 13-16 about the two 'puzzles'.

regarding the very special case of Diotima, who has been well described as ‘suavely impersonal and provocatively business-like’,⁶¹ we are, on the noble side, left with the midwife.

True, midwives are presented by Socrates as serious and august (*semnai*, Pl. *Tht.* 150a3, cf. 149c3), and procuresses like Aspasia are the opposite of august,⁶² but if a midwife should allow herself to exercise the full scope of her art – i.e. to do what she is good, or rather what she is best at (149d6, 150a5) – she would be subjected to social pressure – and Socrates suggests that this pressure is both unfair and unscientific – and stand compromised socially, perhaps even incurring the death penalty.⁶³ In fact, Plato is making Socrates embellish his mother’s circumstances, since a matchmaker per definition is involved in disreputable business. Our oldest occurrence of non-metaphorical *promnēstriai* – notice the use of this word, not *proagōgós* – ascribes to these ladies the activity of *stimulating* the future husband.⁶⁴ It is a fair guess, then, that Socrates’ attempt at differentiation between *promnēstria* and *proagōgós* will have seemed futile, at least to more conventionally minded readers. Today it does not take much psychoanalysis to discern that one of little, ugly Sokratidion’s fantasies will have been this: ‘Mother is a whore.’

Socrates was mad for women (cf. n. 100 on Kallias). Aristoxenos, whose father Spintharos had known Socrates personally, reported a tradition that Socrates was ‘rather⁶⁵ impetuous [*sphodróteros*] with regard to the usage of *ta aphrodisia*’ (fragment 54a, referring to sex with women), to which should be added the evidence that Paul Friedländer presents as follows (31964: 47 f.):

Es ist gar nicht daran zu zweifeln, daß Sokrates diesen Eros [the *paidikós*

61 Halperin 1989: 122.

62 Plu. *Per.* 24.5 about Aspasia: *καίπερ οὐ κοσμίῳ προεστῶσαν ἐργασίας οὐδὲ σεμνῆς, ἀλλὰ παιδίσκας ἑταιρούσας τρέφουσας*, ‘bien qu’elle fit un métier qui n’était ni honnête ni respectable: elle formait de jeunes courtisanes.’ (The Budé ed., 1964).

On Socrates’ playing with *to semnon* in his ‘humoristische Scheinheiligkeit’ (Huß on Xen. *Smp.* 2.17) cf. Xen. *Smp.* 3.10, exactly at the point where he introduces his pride in being a *mastropós*. On feigned respectability, *kosmiotes*, in a coquette, see Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.14.

63 Aiskhines the orator *Against Timarkhos* 14 and 184. Fisher 2001: 138, 338.

64 Ar. *Nu.* 41-42: *ἡ προμνήστρι* [...] *ἤτις με γῆμ’ ἐπήρε τὴν σὴν μητέρα*. The verb *ἐπαίρειν* (with or without an infinitive to follow it) is much stronger than ‘persuade’; it means ‘excite’, ‘stir up’, here and in Ar. *Lys.* 937 (twice) with reference to sexual arousal; cf. Xen. *Smp.* 8.24.

65 Or: too, see Kühner-Gerth 2.305 A.7

eros] ganz ursprünglich miterlebte. Wir haben die Erzählung von jenem Zopyros, dem Erfinder der Physiognomik, der in Sokrates' Gesichtszügen Sinnlichkeit und Weibergier ausgedrückt fand. Die Geschichte ist gut bezeugt, sie stand wahrscheinlich in einem Dialog aus dem Kreise des Sokrates selbst [Friedländer refers to *Scriptores physiognomici* ed. Foerster I, VII ss.; see also SSR I C 49]. Daß man sie erzählen konnte, sagt mehr als alles andere über die Urwüchsigkeit seines Liebesbegehrens. Und wie stark dieses nach Trieb und Sitte vor allem auf den Jüngling gewandte Verlangen sich aussprach, darüber lassen die vereinten Aussagen der Sokratischer nicht den mindesten Zweifel.

It is far from clear, however, how Friedländer can turn Sokrates' 'Weibergier' into a pederastic preference 'according to *instinct* and custom'.

Burnyeat's 1977 article 'Socratic Midwifery', a dense and courageous essay on creativity as understood by Sokrates and Plato (cf. n. 30 above), answers no to 'the question whether the midwife comparison is to be attributed to the historical Sokrates.' In his note 4 he states, 'Neither Aristophanes [Ar. *Nu.* 135-40] nor Xenophon offer anything that could reasonably be thought to outweigh Plato's own dramatic indications that the midwife figure is not historical.' According to Burnyeat, the fact that young Theaitetos is presented as unaware of certain important points (Pl. *Tht.* 149a5, 149d9) constitutes an 'abundantly clear' indication that the historical Sokrates did *not* compare himself to a midwife. But this is not the most natural, let alone the only, way of understanding Theaitetos' answers; and it might be legitimately objected to Burnyeat's interpretation that it relies far too heavily on the yeses and noes of a Socratic interlocutor (no parallels are offered). And *Clouds* 135-40 does amount to strong testimony (from the year 423). Besides, Burnyeat does not seem aware of the full import of Sokrates the Pimp in Xenophon's *Symposion*.

Burnyeat has a reason for ascribing the midwife imagery to Plato: '[...] it does seem significant that Plato should return time and again [*Smp.*, *Phdr.* 276-78, *Tht.*] to sexual imagery for mental creativity without ever raising the question whether a conception does not need to be brought about by a metaphorical intercourse within the mind.' What is lacking according to Burnyeat is '[...] a marriage or intercourse between masculine and feminine aspects of the self.' In 1977 essentialism and psychology had not yet been challenged by Foucault's social constructionism, so it was unproblematic for Burnyeat to operate with Homosexuality and relate the aforementioned pe-

cularity, the lack of (metaphorical) intercourse, to 'a dark corner of Plato's personality' – repressed 'homosexual feelings'. As far as Socrates' eroticism is concerned, Burnyeat appears to share Vlastos' view that it was 'obstinately sane' (section 9 below).

Although his attempt at differentiating Plato from Socrates is less convincing, Burnyeat's observation concerning the lack of intercourse between masculine and feminine remains relevant (cf. Sheffield 2001). It is a difficult question whether this feature is compatible with the profile of Socrates that has emerged from the above investigations:

Socrates was mad for women, he was *mulierosus* (Cicero *De fato* 5.10). In the company of men (a) he exercised the art of making couples out of them, thereby perfecting his mother's profession, without being inhibited by the midwife's fear of doing exactly this: using her powers to the full, and (b) he was in the habit of falling back on the role of the Beautiful Boy, thereby shirking the duties of mature manliness.

6. RECIPROCITY IN GREEK LOVE

Bearing in mind the role of women and femininity in Socratic homoeroticism, it is interesting to hear Socrates' proof that *all* the symposiasts in Xenophon are worshippers, *thiasôtai*, of Eros, Xen. *Smp.* 8.2-3 (after this comes the question to Antisthenes, above p. 137):

As for me, I cannot name a time when I was not in love with some one, and I know that Charmides here has gained many lovers [*erastai*] and has in some instances felt the passion himself [*epithymēsanta*]; and Critobulus, though even yet the object of love [*erómenos*], is already beginning to feel this passion [*epithymet*] for others. Nay, Niceratus too, so I am told, is in love with his wife and finds his love reciprocated. And as for Hermogenes, who of us does not know that he is pining away with love for nobility of character, whatever that may be? Do you not observe how serious his brows are, how calm his gaze, how modest his words, how gentle his voice, how genial his demeanour? That though he enjoys the friendship of the most august gods, yet he does not disdain us mortals.

The following four points deserve mention:

- a. That they are all worshippers of Eros is clear *especially* because such a high percentage of the symposiasts are at the same time in love and being loved: eros *from* and eros *to* each of them; merely being either erastés or erómenos would be less impressive;
- b. One could be erastés and erómenos at the same stage of one's life, but not both in relation to the same person⁶⁶ (as for Socrates as tendentially an exception to this rule, see Alkibiades on p. 140 above). This is an aspect of the well-known *dissymétrie* of Greek homosexual relations (above section 1); as will become clear in the following section (7), Socrates has something to add to this (which has not earlier been noticed);
- c. A matrimonial relationship between a man and a woman was fundamentally different from these homosexual relations, according to modern scholarship; in this relationship *reciprocity* might reign as was the case between Nikeratos and his wife (*ant-erátai*, 8.3). According to David Halperin's study 'Why is Diotima a Woman?'⁶⁷ it was because Plato wanted to remodel the prevalent homoerotic ethos away from unidirectional/asymmetric/hierarchic into reciprocal and creative that he made Socrates' teacher in the *Symposion* a woman.⁶⁸ Since, however, mutual *philia* was not at all rare in pederastic relationships (see below) and mutual *eros* not so very common in heterosexual relationships,⁶⁹ I cannot consider Halperin's thesis striking. Notice also the extensive correspondence between the homoerotic *ars amatoria* in Xen. *Smp.* 8.15-18 and the heterosexual one in the conversation with Theodote, Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.10 ff. (see section 4 above and note 77 below). – As for Xenophon, he was, according to Halperin, a typical exponent of the conventional hierarchic attitude;⁷⁰

66 Cf. Dover 1978: 87. But it is not only a matter of Kritoboulos, but also of Kharmides and Kallias (see below) and of – heterosexual – Nikeratos. This two-directional eros is indeed the basis of the proof, and the point of the passage.

67 Halperin 1989: 113-51 plus 190-211.

68 In accordance with his overall thesis about Greek love Halperin 1989: 131 subjects Aristotle *EN* 8.4 to grave misinterpretation (Aristotle is said to refuse to consider the erotic relationship between man and boy a species of friendship because of its lack of reciprocity – both points are unfounded) and the support for this reading he claims from Harald Patzer (1982: 121 f.) is non-existent.

69 Cf. Huß on Xen. *Smp.* 8.3. Passages such as Xen. *Smp.* 8.21, last sentence, and Cic. *Tusc.* 4.71 (above n. 25) should not be ignored, however. Cf. above section 5, beginning.

70 Halperin twice (130, 134) adduces Xen. *Smp.* 8.21 as evidence of the prevailing hierarchy, the 'aggressively phallic norm of sexual conduct' (133), but see note 10 above.

- d. With no reservation, Socrates passes to and from the heterosexual relationship between Nikeratos and his wife, who are mentioned after Kritoboulos and before Hermogenes. This is truly remarkable if the structural differences between heterosexual and pederastic relationships were really as deep as maintained by modern scholarship.

The problem of reciprocity in Greek love ought to be examined in a wider social context (the hierarchies of the *polis*) and on the basis of both philosophical and non-philosophical sources (written as well as pictorial), but perhaps the following observations will suffice for the moment.

First mutual *philia*, then mutual *eros*:

Strongly pressured (esp. by Keith DeVries) David Halperin now admits that it is demonstrated 'beyond a shadow of a doubt that both the language and the culture of male love in all periods of Greek civilization teemed with expressions of reciprocal affection.' (1997: 49). Then, would it not be honest to concede that the Foucauldian formulation of *le principe d'isomorphisme* is not at all 'well put'? A central passage in Halperin's *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality* runs like this (Halperin 1989: 165):

Foucault (1985), 215, puts it very well: 'sexual relations – always conceived in terms of the model act of penetration, assuming a polarity that opposed activity and passivity – were seen as being of the same type as the relationship between a superior and a subordinate, an individual who dominates and on who is dominated, one who commands and one who complies, one who vanquishes and one who is vanquished.'

These are Foucault's words in context (Foucault 1984: 237):

Pour comprendre de quelle façon l'usage des *aphrodisia* est problématisé dans la réflexion sur l'amour des garçons, il faut se rappeler un principe qui n'est pas propre sans doute à la culture grecque, mais qui y a pris une importance considérable et a exercé, dans les appréciations morales, un pouvoir déterminant. Il s'agit du principe d'isomorphisme entre relation sexuelle et rapport social. Par là, il faut entendre que le rapport sexuel – toujours pensé à partir de l'acte-modèle de la pénétration et d'une polarité qui oppose activité et passivité – est perçu comme de même type que le rapport entre le supérieur et l'inférieur, celui qui domine et celui qui est

dominé, celui qui soumet et celui qui est soumis, celui qui l'emporte et celui qui est vaincu.

If this brutally generalizing passage is *not* 'very well put', then most post-1984 work on Greek love is in need of revision.⁷¹

As for reciprocity, compare the remarks on *philia* above p. 118, on the art of pleasing p. 132, and below section 8 on 'granting favours' and 'being grateful' (the key-concept is *kharis*). All these aspects of reciprocal *philia* should never have been forgotten or suppressed (which they definitely were, cf. above n. 68). The conclusion to be drawn from a reassessment of the relevant material is that there was mutual *love* in (many) Greek pederastic relationships. Considering the vast chasm that separates this result from Foucault's above description of the socio-sexual relationship as a war, it may be appropriate to recall Camille Paglia's *epigramma* on Foucault (Paglia 1991: 142): 'His hostility to psychology made him incompetent to deal with sexuality, his own or anybody else's.'

Now for mutual desire, reciprocal *eros* or mutual sexual passion. In the words of Halperin 1997: 49 f.: 'No extant source from the classical period of Greek civilization assigns the junior partner in a pederastic relationship a share of *eros* or *anteros* [counter-passion] – with the sole exception of Plato, in a highly tendentious philosophical passage [Pl. *Phdr.* 255c-e].'

It is an open question how 'tendentious' and solitary the *Phaidros*-passage really is (cf. n. 15). What about Xen. *Smp.* 4.63 (sub finem) and 8.18 and 8.42, not to mention 8.21 (interpreted in section 1 above)? Let us see.

7. THE TRIPLE EROS: TOWARDS SOUL, MUTUAL LOVE, AND NOBLE DEEDS

Usually the message of Xenophon's *Symposion* is said to be this: 'eros of the soul is *much* better than eros of the body', *καὶ πολὺ κρείττων ἐστὶν ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ ὁ τοῦ σώματος ἔρως* (Xen. *Smp.* 8.12). This is what Socrates says, before beginning the speech, that he is going to prove (*μαρτυρῆσαι*) to Kal-

⁷¹ Reasons for questioning the rigid dichotomy between passive and active were adduced ten years ago in my book *Ritual and Desire* (1992: 67-71). A useful survey of non-hierarchic scenes on vases is found in Fisher 2001: 33, cf. 26 n. 86, 43 f.

lias, the host of the symposion, whose ecstatic eros of young Autolykos was described at the beginning of Xenophon's work (1.8-10, see below); and this is, according to most interpreters, the anti-sexual or non-intercourse message of Xenophon's *Symposion*. German scholars speak of the work as praising 'seelische Liebe' (e.g. Huß 1999: 390).

First, eros is not 'Liebe', but 'leidenschaftliche Liebe', sexual passion; and both before and after the words quoted above from 8.12, Socrates offers a much more telling account of what he is aiming at. This leads us back to ἔρωσ φιλίας, the *amor amicitiae* which made Cicero's commentators take refuge in quite far-fetched syntactica and led Rudolf Hirzel to declare outright that the Stoics turned eros upside-down (Hirzel 1882: 387 ff.):

In einen besonders scharfen Gegensatz zum Sprachgebrauch des Volkes traten die Stoiker durch ihre Auffassung des ἔρωσ; denn dieses Wort, mit dem der Grieche sonst die leidenschaftliche Liebe bezeichnete, sollte nach ihnen gerade die leidenschaftslose ausdrücken. Die Definitionen lassen darüber keinen Zweifel [...].

Hirzel overlooks the fact that the idea can be traced back to Socrates in Xenophon (and Plato, see on *Lysis* 211e below), just as Huß, on his part, ignores the fact that Socrates' concept is taken up by the Stoics. Neither Dover 1978 nor Halperin 1989 nor Huß 1999 mentions either the concept *eros philias*⁷² or the idea of a triple eros, chiefly, I suppose, because it has not been realized that there is a long and rich explication of these ideas in Xen. *Smp.* 8.15-18.

First I shall quote and comment upon 8.10, and then 8.15-18 which, according to my interpretation, explicate 8.10. After having introduced in 8.9, with some scepticism as to the foundation and relevance of this distinction, Aphrodite Urania and Aphrodite Pandemos, Socrates continues in 8.10:

One might conjecture, also, that different types of love come from the different sources, carnal [*tōn sōmátōn*] love from the 'Vulgar' Aphrodite, and from the 'Heavenly' spiritual [*tēs psychēs*] love, love of friendship and of noble conduct. That is the sort of love, Callias, that seems to have you in its grip [*katékhesthai*, cf. 1.10 on the god-possessed].

72 Foucault 1984: 257 does offer some remarks on *erōntes tēs philias*, 8.18.

I have quoted the Loeb translation without any modifications, in order to make clear what is at stake here. I should translate instead: ‘– and from the Heavenly Aphrodite desire for the soul, for mutual love, and for noble acts.’

In order to clear the ground for one of my main-points, viz. that Socrates’ doctrine here in ch. 8 is one of non-intercourse, yet pro-pleasure eros, let us recall that Pausanias in Plato’s *Symposion*, where he distinguishes between Pandemos and Urania, does *not* make Eros Uranios non-intercourse,⁷³ let alone non-pleasure (Pl. *Smp.* 184d, 185b); Pausanias is an idealist-cum-sensualist. This is overlooked by many, as is the fact that Pandemos covers both heterosexual *and* (vulgar) pederastic relationships.

So, if we hold the ‘Plato before Xenophon’ view about the relative chronology of the two *Symposia*,⁷⁴ it must be emphasized that Xenophon did not find the Heavenly Eros/Aphrodite depicted (by Plato) as devoid of sex, let alone pleasure.

In the long passage soon to be interpreted we will find that much of the argument hinges on the adjective *ep-aphróditos*, literally ‘with Aphrodite on it’ (cf. *epí-kharis*, i.a. Xen. *Smp.* 7.5); actually the whole of sections 15–18 is kept together by the question of whether the relationship depicted is *ep-aphróditos* or not (see below the development from line 4 to the final question in line 20). Socrates is quite explicit about his project of re-interpreting the concept of pleasure, as is clear from his argument: ‘chaste’ does not, ‘as one might suppose’, mean ‘less *epaphróditos*’, i.e. ‘less pleasurable’ (8.15). And he presents the goddess as siding with this purified – and *intensified*,⁷⁵ see the argument about satiety in lines 1–3 – pleasure. This reference in 8.15 to

73 Pace Huß 1999: 371.

74 Huß 1999: 374 finds ‘logische Stringenz’ in Pausanias’ speech, which has, however, been notorious for its non-sequiturs, at least since Jowett (cf. R.G. Bury’s commentary [Cambridge 1932] xxvi f. and Dover 1980 on 182b4–6 and on 180d). But Huß is unshakably convinced of the priority of Plato’s *Symposion*.

75 As part of an account of the ‘amazing’ resemblances between Antisthenes and Socrates, Huß offers the following remark (1999: 28): ‘Und daß das Ertragen so vieler Entbehrenen letztlich hedonistischen Profit abwerfe, ist für ‘Sokrates’ (*Mem.*) und ‘Kyros’ (*Cyr.*) ebenso eine Maxime wie für den Antisthenes des *Symp.* (Komm. zu 4.39).’ One should add the Socrates of the *Symposion*, which is to say that (at least in this respect, which is central) the Socrates of *Smp.* does not differ from the Socrates of *Mem.* – Thanks to notes like the one on 4.39 on ‘hedonistischer Profit’ Huß’s commentary is a true storehouse of information. But too much of the necessary critical and interpretative work is left to Huß’s readers to do.

Aphrodite undivided ties into Socrates' uncommitted stance in 8.9-10 as to whether Aphrodite is one (*mia*) or two (*dittai*). There is really no dualism in his view of Aphrodite.

Before quoting 8.15-18, I would like to make two more points about erotic themes shared by Xenophon and Plato (in doing so one always bears in mind Dover's total isolation of Plato the erotic philosopher, cf. n. 94 below). My first remark concerns the concept of *eros philias*, to which I consider Socrates' words in *Lysis* 211d-e parallel; in this passage Socrates declares that since he was a boy he has always 'had a strongly erotic disposition with regard to the acquisition of friends', πρὸς [...] τὴν τῶν φίλων κτήσιν πάνυ ἐρωτικῶς [sc. ἔχω]. Seeing that Socrates neither here in Xen. *Smp.* nor in the *Lysis* passage speaks of eros towards friends but of eros towards something related-to-friends, it becomes clear that the *Lysis* passage, in spite of (1) the 'with regard to' instead of an objective genitive and (2) 'the acquisition of friends' instead of 'friendship', is parallel to *eros philias*. In both cases the relationship between two (mutually, see below) loving persons is sexualised, or to put it properly: *mit Libido besetzt*. Since this concerns another aspect of that fatal barrier that has been raised between *eros* and *philia*, I regard this parallel from a Platonic *Jugenddialog* as important.

My second remark pertains to the durability of the pederastic relationship, a central point in Plato,⁷⁶ and also in Socrates' speech here; see the final words in 8.18 εἰς γῆρας διατελοῦσι, 'down to old age they continue'. Socrates' very project of re-thinking Aphrodite and re-interpreting the concept of pleasure may be seen as an attempt at solving exactly the problem of the lack of durability of male homoerotic relationships. The Triple Eros he presents simply cannot *help* becoming permanent! The word 'necessity' in line 14 is indicative of this overall scope.

These are Socrates' words, his *hymnus in amorem virilem*, Xen. *Smp.* 8.15-18:

[8.15] καὶ μὴν ἐν μὲν τῇ τῆς μορφῆς χρήσει ἔνεστί τις καὶ κόρος, ὥστε ἄπερ καὶ πρὸς τὰ σιτία διὰ πλησμονήν, ταῦτα ἀνάγκη καὶ πρὸς τὰ παιδικὰ πάσχειν. ἡ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς φιλία διὰ τὸ ἀγνή εἶναι καὶ ἀκορεστοτέρα ἐστίν, οὐ μέντοι, ὡς γ' ἂν τις οἰηθείη, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἀνεπαφροδιτοτέρα, ἀλλὰ σαφῶς

76 See Pl. *Smp.* 181d, 183e, 209c and *Phdr.* 234a, 256d, a variety of voices: Pausanias, Diotima, 'Lysias', Socrates.

5 καὶ ἀποτελεῖται ἡ εὐχὴ ἐν ἧι αἰτούμεθα τὴν θεὸν ἐπαφρόδιτα καὶ ἔπη καὶ ἔργα διδόναι. [8.16] ὡς μὲν γὰρ ἄγαταί τε καὶ φιλεῖ τὸν ἐρώμενον θάλλουσα μορφῇ τε ἐλευθερίαι καὶ ἦθει αἰδήμονι τε καὶ γενναίῳ ψυχῇ εὐθύς ἐν τοῖς ἡλιξιν ἡγεμονικὴ τε ἅμα καὶ φιλόφρων οὖσα οὐδὲν ἐπιδεῖται λόγου· ὅτι δὲ εἰκὸς καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν παιδικῶν τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐραστὴν ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι, καὶ τοῦτο
 10 διδάξω. [8.17] πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ τίς μισεῖν δύναιτ' ἂν ὑφ' οὗ εἰδείη καλὸς τε κἀγαθὸς νομιζόμενος, ἔπειτα δὲ ὀρώμῃ αὐτὸν τὰ τοῦ παιδὸς καλὰ μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ ἠδέα σπουδάξοντα, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις πιστεύοι μὴτ' ἂν παρανήσῃ μὴτ' ἂν καμῶν ἀμορφότερος γένηται, μειωθῆναι ἂν τὴν φιλίαν; [8.18] οἷς γε μὴν κοινὸν τὸ φιλεῖσθαι, πῶς οὐκ ἀνάγκη τούτους ἠδέως μὲν προσορᾶν
 15 ἀλλήλους, εὐνοικῶς δὲ διαλέγεσθαι, πιστεύειν δὲ καὶ πιστεύεσθαι, καὶ προνοεῖν μὲν ἀλλήλων, συνήδεσθαι δὲ ἐπὶ ταῖς καλαῖς πράξεσι, συνάχθεσθαι δὲ ἣν τι σφάλμα προσπίπτῃ, τότε δ' εὐφραينوμένους διατελεῖν ὅταν ὑγιαίνοντες συνῶσιν, ἣν δὲ κάμῃ ὀποτεροσοῦν, πολὺ συνεχεστέραν τὴν συνουσίαν ἔχειν, καὶ ἀπόντων ἔτι μᾶλλον ἢ παρόντων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι; οὐ
 20 ταῦτα πάντα ἐπαφρόδιτα; διὰ γέ τοι τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔργα ἅμα ἐρώντες τῆς φιλίας καὶ χρώμενοι αὐτῇ εἰς γῆρας διατελοῦσι.

[8.15] Besides, in the enjoyment of physical beauty there is a point of surfeit, so that one cannot help feeling toward his beloved the same effect that he gets toward food by gratification of the appetite. But affection for the soul, being pure, is also less liable to satiety, though it does not follow, as one might suppose, that it is also less rich in the graces of Aphrodite; on the contrary, our prayer that the goddess will bestow her grace on our words and deeds is manifestly answered. [8.16] Now, no further argument is necessary to show that a soul verdant with the beauty of freeborn men and with a disposition that is reverent and noble, a soul that from the very first displays its leadership among its own fellows and is kindly withal, feels an admiration and an affection for the object of its love; but I will go on to prove the reasonableness of the position that such a lover will have his affection returned. [8.17] First, who could feel dislike for one by whom he knew himself to be regarded as the pattern of nobleness, and, in the next place, saw that he made the honour of his beloved of more account than his own pleasure, and beside this felt assured that this affection would not be lessened under any circumstances, no matter whether he lost his bloom of youth or lost his comeliness through the ravages of illness? [8.18] Moreover, must not those who enjoy a mutual affection, un-

avoidably take pleasure in looking into each other's faces, converse in amity, and trust and be trusted, and not only take thought each for the other but also take a common joy in prosperity and feel a common distress if some ill fortune befall, and live in happiness when their society [interaction, *synousia*] is attended by sound health, but be much more constantly together if one or the other become ill, and be even more solicitous, each for the other, when absent than when present? Are not all these things marked by Aphrodite's grace? It is by conducting themselves thus that men continue mutually to love friendship and enjoy it clear down to old age.

His reflections on the lack of durability centre upon *surfeit*⁷⁷ (in the relationships based on bodily beauty) versus *insatiability* (in the relationships characterized by the Triple Eros); here he turns the usually negative idea 'insatiable'⁷⁸ (*á-plēstos, a-kórētos, a-kórestos*), which is often used as an attribute to tyrannical greed, lust etc.,⁷⁹ around 180 degrees, and makes it characterize the never-ending and self-intensifying pleasure he aims at. Here, the word *epaphróditos* is introduced ... and then at the end: 'All these things, are they not really *epaphrodita*?' In lines 4-5 (*σαφῶς καὶ ἀποτελεῖται ἡ εὐχή*, 'manifestly our prayer is also fulfilled') a religious and psychological *experience* is described. Cp. below in section 10 Aiskhines on divine dispensation, *theia moira*.

In his reflections in Plato's *Symposium* (see above n. 76) about the lasting relationship Pausanias warns against excessive attention to bodily beauty and mentions the dangers of too great an age difference between lover and beloved. This latter point is not explicitly thematized here, but the first point – connected, of course, with the problem of great age difference – is spelt out from the very beginning.

More light can be shed on the workings of the Triple Eros, especially the third part, viz. the beautiful deeds, in Socrates' vision. Again, look at the ending: 'thanks to such deeds' (line 20), i.e., due to the activity between the two that has just been described in all its monumental reciprocity (see lines

77 The word is *kóros*; cf. Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.13-14 and 1.3.6-7, discussed in section 9 below.

78 See Gosling and Taylor 1982: general index under 'insatiability, of bodily desire'.

79 Exemplum instar omnium: Pl. *R.* 571a-576b; i.a. 573a, 573d-574a, 575a. See also Karin Blomqvist 1998, and esp. Davidson 1997: chapter 9, 'Tyranny and Revolution', the final chapter of Davidson's survey of 'the political history of Athenian appetites'.

13-20). See also line 5 on the words and deeds as blessed by Aphrodite, i.e., pleasure itself has been transferred from beauty and bed to their mutual love as this manifests itself in words and deeds – with a view to steady development and improvement (see lines 11 and 16, and 8.25: *Selbstentfaltung*). This ‘transfer’ of pleasure also becomes evident if we follow the concept ‘use’ from the beginning (‘use of bodily beauty’) to the end (‘using their *philia*’):

use of body → use of mutual love
 eros of body → eros of mutual love

Notice also that ‘physical shape, beauty’ (*morphê*) is ‘transposed’ from the body (of the *erômenos*) to the soul (of the *erastês*), lines 1 and 7 respectively.⁸⁰ The *erastês*’ soul is said to be ‘verdant with ... *morphê*’ – i.e., the senior partner’s soul is referred to in the language usually applied to the junior partner’s body⁸¹ – and to be full of both *philia* and *eros* (*φιλεῖ τὸν ἐρώμενον*).⁸² All this amounts to a great metamorphosis, so after all, Socrates had *not* forgotten the problem of the difference of age: the senior partner is rejuvenated.

And now to mutual passion. Just before the words ‘using their *philia*’ we have ἅμα ἐρῶντες τῆς φιλίας, ‘together (or simultaneously, perhaps even ‘mutually’ as the Loeb translation has it) desiring their mutual love’. There we are: ‘desiring together’, *háma erôntes*; this is pure, undiluted symmetry of desire. By transferring *eros* from the beautiful boy to the love relationship that lives itself out in beautiful words and deeds, Socrates was able to introduce symmetrical desire into a pederastic relationship. This was already prepared in 4.63 (even stronger than 8.18) where Socrates describes how Antisthenes the *proagôgôs*, by recommending them to each other, has made Aiskhylos from Phleioús (whoever that is) desire (*erân*) Socrates and vice versa: διὰ τοὺς σοὺς [Antisthenes’] λόγους ἐρῶντες ἐκυνοδρομοῦμεν ἀλλήλους ζητοῦντες, ‘in mutual yearning, excited by your words, we went coursing like hounds to find each other’. – More on passionate *boys* is to follow (see below on 8.42).

80 There is no ‘leichte Inkonzinnität’ (Huß 1999: 386) here!

81 On *thálllein*, cf. *thalerós*, *eu-thalês*, used in *eroticis* see the song quoted in Plu. *Erot.* 761b (Page *Poetae melici Graeci* fr. 873, cf. Dover 1978: 188) and Pl. *Smp.* 203e. Cf. the flower metaphors in 8.14 and 8.17.

82 On the basis of lines 6 f. ... *φιλεῖ* ... *ψυχῆ* I take the genitive in ἡ ... τῆς *ψυχῆς φιλία* in line 3 as subjectivus. See also 8.28.

8. THE PEDAGOGICAL SECRET OF THE
PIMP-AND-LOVER.
THE DESIROUS GAZE.
SOCRATES AND THE CITY

The verb *χαρίζεσθαι*, *kharizesthai*, occupies a central position within Greek erotic and sexual terminology; it means ‘to gratify somebody, to yield to somebody’; cf. Pl. *Smp.* 184c4-185b5, where this *verbum eroticum* is used six times, each time with reference to the *erómenos* gratifying the *erastés*.⁸³ In Xen. *Smp.* 8.12 Hermogenes uses *χαρίζεσθαι* with reference, not to the boy, but to the third party – the match-maker or pimp – gratifying the *erastés*’ desire for the boy.⁸⁴ The verb is used in the same way in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriázousai* 1194 f., where the policeman entreats the procuress named Euripides to *kharizesthai* him by giving him instant access to *to Eláphion*, la Bichette (the context is heavily heterosexual).

Hermogenes, the austere and pious (4.46-49) lover of *kalokagathía* (8.3), puts with mordant irony (‘I admire’) his finger on Socrates’ duplicity: at the same time, *ἄμα* (1) to let Kallias have his way and (2) to educate him ‘to conform to the ideal’, *οἶόνπερ χρὴ εἶναι*. Hermogenes is talking about the actual and the ideal *lover* Kallias, and this is also how Socrates understands his interruption, as is clear from Socrates’ words (final *ὅπως* *ἔρωτος*). Socrates sticks to his declaration on Kallias’ morally sane *physis* (8.8), not allowing himself to be trapped by the insults inherent in Hermogenes’ *kharizómenos* and his *khrē*, ‘ought to’, but, on the contrary, embracing the insult⁸⁵ *kharizómenos*: ‘and to *add to* the pleasure’, sc. the pleasure I have given him⁸⁶

...

This is what goes on between the two gentlemen: Provoked by Socrates’ teasing in 8.3 (sub finem), Hermogenes resumes and varies the theme from 4.23-24: Socrates is the wrong person to be the ward of love-sick young Kri-

83 On *kharis* and reciprocity, see MacLachlan 1993 sub hac voce. On *kharis* in a political context, see Ober 1989: 226 ff.

84 Huß ad locum: ‘hier im Sinne von “Komplimente machen”’, without offering any parallel to this (trivial) ‘special meaning’. There is nothing ‘tantenhaft-betulich’ in Hermogenes’ remark.

85 Compare Socrates’ reaction in 4.28.

86 On *kharis* and pleasure/joy see MacLachlan 1993: 4-7 and her general index under ‘pleasure’. A neat example may be found at Xen. *Mem.* 3.II.IO.

toboulos (with περιιδεῖν Κριτόβουλον ... ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔρωτος ἐκπλαγέντα there cp. χαριζόμενος Καλλίαι here). Taken together, 4.23-24 and 8.12 contribute decisively to characterizing Socrates eroticus by contrasting him with a real anti-eroticus. In 8.12 Socrates parries Hermogenes' blow; in 4.23 he was less elegant, see his question to Hermogenes: 'Do you suppose that he [Kritoboulos] has become subject to this passion since he began associating with me?' That is not what Hermogenes has *said!*

In Xen. *Mem.* 3.5.24 Socrates' pleasant pedagogy – which consists in representing as already existent in the learner what *ought* to come into existence during the process of teaching/learning – is revealed by the learner himself (Perikles junior), not by an astute spectator like Hermogenes here. In the *Mem.* passage, Socrates' pedagogical method of representing-the-ideal-as-actual serves a lesson in strategy, whereas here it has to do with sex; thus one may find the learner's silence here understandable.

Hermogenes' teasing words in 8.12 contain Socrates' method in nuce. They should be held together with the first point in 8.17 about generating affection in an *erómenos*⁸⁷ by letting him know that he is regarded by the *erastés* as *kalós kai agathós*, 'the ideal of nobleness'. But in 8.17 there is no third party, no pimp as in 8.12, only the *erastés* and the *erómenos*.

Given that the essence of irony is *Pseudo-Identifikation*,⁸⁸ Socrates' method, which he defends in 8.12 with so much elegant irony, is ironic. Compare the way in which Socrates, in his conversation with Theodote, chose to share her professional views on profit and sex (section 4 above).

'Calliam Socrates spectat', 'It is Kallias that Socrates has in mind.' Thus Thalheim on Xen. *Smp.* 8.16 in his 1910 edition of *Xenophontis scripta minora*. Thalheim's words serve to reject a specific conjecture (Mehler's *θάλλοντα*), but they really apply to Socrates' speech in its entirety: *Calliam Socrates spectat – et Autolycum*, I would add.⁸⁹ Please consider

8.7-8: the enumeration that started at 8.2 with Socrates culminates with
Kallias and Autolykos;

8.12: see above;

87 Cf. above, section 4 on the art of pleasing.

88 See Stempel's study. Cf. Kierkegaard on ironic conversation as extremely (extremely!) cordial; thus Kierkegaard *passim*, e.g. *The Concept of Irony*, second part, 'Orienterende Betragtning'.

89 In itself there is nothing new in this. 'Der xenophontische Sokrates verbindet also theoretischen Erospreis mit persönlicher Paränese' (Ehlers 1966: 117).

- 8.16: the affection of the erastés ‘needs no further comment’ (οὐδὲν ἐπιδειῖται λόγου); it is the affection of the boy that occupies the focus of the teaching. Considering that the words about ‘the soul verdant with the beauty of freeborn men [...]’ are easily transparent to Kallias, we must conclude that the following passage, viz. the ‘instruction’ (cf. διδάξω) in 8.17⁹⁰ about the affection of the boy, is designed to prove to Kallias that it is to be expected (cf. εἰκόσ) that his affection will be reciprocated by Autolykos;
- 8.28, addressed to Kallias;
- 8.37 may be paraphrased thus: Kallias, you should be grateful to the gods for inspiring you with eros of Autolykos, since he is ambitious, *philótimos* [...];
- 8.42: not only philía, but eros has been aroused in the boy; compare κατεθεᾶτο, ‘he kept his eyes fixed on Kallias’, with 1.8-10: the symposiasts gazing at Autolykos. *The desirous gaze* – it should be impossible to overlook the implications of the gaze in Xenophon’s *Symposion*: see also 4.12, 4.22, 4.24.⁹¹ Thus, eros has been aroused in the boy. This means that Socrates’ match-making has succeeded,⁹² even to the point of endangering a fundamental rule in Greek pederasty: no initiative taken and no desire shown by boys. Undoubtedly, Socrates’ words in 8.38 about Kallias being the best *syn-ergós* in the boy’s political designs have, with their strong appeal to his *philotimia*, been a decisive factor in arousing the feelings which are now revealed by his continuous (the imperfect tense!) gazing at Kallias, who returns the boy’s gaze (in a way that is definitely impolite to Socrates). All this takes place in the presence of the boy’s father, who leaves the symposium, together with the boy, with these words: ‘So help me Hera, Socrates, you seem to me to have a truly noble character (again [cf. 8.11] *kalós kai agathós*, 9.1).’⁹³

90 On the reading παρανήσησι (Hornstein’s emendation of the papyrus’ παρανοήσησι) see Huß ad locum.

91 Cf. note 10 above. Cp. Pl. *R.* 402d on the harmony between the soul and the body (*syn-amphóteron!*) as being κάλλιστον θέαμα τῶι δυναμένῳ θεᾶσθαι.

92 Cf. above section 7 about Antisthenes in Xen. *Smp.* 4.63. This parallel is significant.

93 The speaker is Lykon, one of Socrates’ accusers. See Huß 1999: 41, 46 f., 49; this part of Huß’s ‘Einleitung’ (38-49), ‘Heitere Fiktion statt düsterer Historie: Xenophons *aurea aetas Socratica*’, is very valuable. The identification, in the scholium on Pl. *Ap.* 23e, of Lykon

By considering 8.7-8, 8.12, 8.16, 8.37, and 8.42 together, we were able to recognize the passionate consequences of Socrates' speech on *eros philias*. The consequences mirror the message of the speech.

The preceding sentence contains the basic point of my interpretation of Xenophon's *Symposion* as a work of art. For at least two centuries the vast majority of scholars have agreed that Xen. *Smp.* 'quite plainly condemns pederasty', and many scholars have convinced themselves that Xenophon's *Symposion* should be characterized as an anti-pederastic/anti-platonic polemic.⁹⁴ In doing so they have overlooked Socrates the pimp, or spiritualised him away.

In section 4 above, we were introduced to Socrates the political pimp, who teaches people how to please the *polis*. The political theme, explicitly mentioned in 8.38, was prepared in 8.31 on the 'beautiful deeds' wrought by the heroes – Akhilleus and Patroklos, among others – and the demi-gods, 'not because they slept together,⁹⁵ but because of their mutual admiration and respect'. And from 8.31 there is a link back to the *eros* of the beautiful deeds in 8.18 and 8.10. This means that *public* grows out of *personal*. And we see that the Triple Eros is still Socrates' overall idea: *eros* towards the soul ('not because they slept together'), *eros* towards *philia* (on *philia* and admiration cf. 8.16), and *eros* towards beautiful deeds; in 8.31 it is stressed that mutual admiration is the *source* of the glorious deeds.

Socrates' speech culminates in a depiction of the pederastic relationship between Kallias and Autolykos, externally competitive and internally cooperative,⁹⁶ as serving the interests of Athenian grandeur (8.38 'to make his fatherland greater').

Autolykos' father and Lykon the accuser has been doubted by some (Burnet in his 1924 ed. of *Plato's Euthyphro, Apology of Socrates and Crito* on *Pl. Ap.* 36a8, and Mogens Herman Hansen 1995: 33 f.); but see Huß 41 n. 46. – It is interesting to contrast Lykon's compliment to Socrates at Xen. *Smp.* 9.1 with Anytos' famous threat to him at Plato's *Menon* 94e-95a.

94 Influential proponents of this majority view are Ivo Bruns and Karl Steinhart, the Platonist. For more names see Huß 1999, and cf. Kelsen 1942: 33. – Dover's view of Plato (cf. n. 15 above) has some of its roots here.

95 Directed against Xen. *Smp.* 4.15-16.

96 8.38: *συνεργὸν ... κρᾶτιστον*, 'the best helper and partner'. In 404/3 Autolykos was killed by the brutal junta of the Thirty, of which Kharmides was a member, Huß 1999: 41.

Socrates is both pimp and lover vis-à-vis the couple to whom he addresses his speech. As for his being a pimp, see the beginning of 8.39. Socrates the lover is met with in the last sentence of the speech: Socrates is ‘fellow-erastés with the Athenian city’; thus, by having Kallias as his *erómenos*, Socrates becomes a rival of the Athenian people,⁹⁷ which may prove doubly complicated and dangerous once Kallias asks him to act as his pimp vis-à-vis the city – the city being Socrates’ rival (8.42)! Indeed, there are *three* frontlines: Kallias pleases Socrates (8.41), Kallias is taught how to please Autolykos (8.39), and Kallias wishes to be taught how to please the city (8.42).

In his *protreptikós logos* with its constant appeal to eros of *soul* etc., Socrates mentions the fact that Kallias has the most impressive *body* in all Athens, *σῶμα ἀξιοπρεπέστατον ... ἰδεῖν τῆς πόλεως ἔχεις* (8.40). Is Xenophon nodding there? Hardly! Kallias’ *σῶμα* is seen with the eyes of the Athenian public, and the unrivalled *axioprépeia* (not exactly beauty, but rather stateliness) of his body is adduced as one of his great assets as a future politician, i.e. as the *erómenos* of the demos.⁹⁸ This point appears to have been difficult to understand in 1966,⁹⁹ whereas nowadays the role of the aesthetic, even erotic factor in politics has become generally recognized.

The rest of this section is about Xenophontic irony.

Confronted with the couple Kallias-Autolykos, whose ‘zweilichtige Affäre’ was ‘stadtbekannt’,¹⁰⁰ Socrates really put his method of presenting-the-ideal-as-actual to the test! And the demands put on the symposiasts’ sense of humour will have been enormous (this is the light in which the well-known ‘Mischung von Scherz und Ernst’ should be seen). Pedagogy and humour

97 Notice that Kallias, too, now has become both *erastés* and *erómenos*, see above n. 66.

98 Contrast the common phrase ‘*erastés* of the demos’, used about politicians, on which see Plato *Gorgias* 481d4-5, the commentators on Aristophanes *Knights* 732, and cf. the commentators on Thucydides 2.43.1; but they fail to draw attention to the opposite idea in Xen. *Smp.* 8.41: the *state* as lover; cf. *Mem.* 2.6.13 on *philia* on the part of the state for Themistokles and Perikles. It is interesting to compare *Gorgias* loc. laud. (Kallikles the *erastés*) and *Gorgias* 494e4 (Kallikles the *kínaidos*), see Ober 1998: 197-206, esp. 205, and 208 on *Gorgias* 513a-c. See also Wohl 1999: 355.

99 Cf. Ehlers 1966: 120, the paragraph leading up to note 48.

100 See Huß 1999: 39 f. The fragments of Eupolis’ *Autolykos* are to be found in Kassel-Austin *Poetae Comici Graeci* vol. V; the date of *Autolykos* I: 420/1 (Autolykos’ Panathenaic victory: summer 422); see Huß on Xen. *Smp.* 1.2. On Kallias’ profligacy see Davidson 1997: 184-86, on his womanizing 162 f., 194.

both require a generous attitude to realities, in other words: willingness for pretence and deception. This means that for Socrates, with his teaching method, there is an insurmountable difficulty in following Aspasia's recommendations as quoted in Xen. *Mem.* 2.6.36¹⁰¹ where Socrates says to Kritoboulos:

She [Aspasia] once told me that good match-makers [*promnēstrides*] are successful in making marriages only when the good reports they carry to and fro are true; false reports she would not recommend, for the victims of deception hate both one another and the match-maker too.¹⁰²

Similar warnings against deceiving and lying are uttered here: see 8.42-43. Risky it is, but who can recommend ('praise', *epaineîn*, see n. 42) without embellishing just a little from time to time (see Xen. *Smp.* 8.7-8!)?

In assessing the Xenophontic *Symposion* as a whole, these highly *precarious* elements should be borne in mind: the pimp-and-lover using a pedagogical method which is untenable in the long run, and is shown to have the dubious effect of arousing desire in a boy (whereby a chink is opened to the *stadtbekannte* realities).¹⁰³ However, this effect should not come as a surprise after the opening of this *Symposion* (see below the section 'The God, The Beautiful Boy'), and the precariousness of the entire Socratic *Protrepitik und Paränese* will have been obvious to those who knew from the streets of Athens what a *mastropós* was really like.¹⁰⁴

One passage in Xen. *Smp.* was impossible for Barbara Ehlers to 'spiritualise', and one is grateful for her honesty in admitting this. I refer to 4.27-28, where Socrates is told – by Kharmides – that he is hardly the right person to 'frighten his friends away from the beautiful boys', since he had been seen with his naked shoulder pressing against the naked shoulder of Kritoboulos.

101 See Ehlers 1966: 101 ff.

102 The wording ἄμα ... τε καὶ ... again points to the 'triangle'; the match-maker is not 'unbeteiligt'.

103 See Xen. *Smp.* 8.7. The reason adduced is 'durchaus ungenau' (Huß 1999: 40)! Autolykos' mother too was *stadtbekannt*, see Ar. *Lys.* 270, with Henderson; cf. n. 93 above.

104 A *pornoboskós/leno* is proverbially *impurus* and in comedy the pimp is often obscenely named: Sannio, Ballio. See *Pseudolus* 1080-83, *Rudens* 1284-85, the endings of *Persa* and *Poenulus* and Herodas 2. See above n. 36 and Davidson 1997: ch. 3, 'Women and Boys', esp. p. 94. Socrates the pimp is ignored by James Davidson.

From Ehlers' perspective this is: 'das befremdliche, seiner übrigen Ablehnung des sinnlichen Eros widersprechende Verhalten des Sokrates' (Ehlers 1966: III).¹⁰⁵ But all the other passages on carnal, commercial and cynical aspects of Socrates are overlooked by Ehlers, although some of them are considerably more 'befremdlich' than the flirtation depicted in 4.27-28.

In the year 399 the 'rival of Athens' had been sentenced to death by Athens. This should be seen as having determined all that Xenophon writes here about Socrates and the city.¹⁰⁶

9. SOCRATIC SUBLIMATION.

SOCRATES 'LOVER OF ALKIBIADES AND PHILOSOPHY'. SOCRATIC EROS ACCORDING TO VLASTOS AND DOVER

With all this in mind – Socrates generating desire with words, Socrates combining seduction and instruction, Socrates contrasted with Hermogenes' anti-eroticism, and in addition to this, intensification of pleasure raised to the status of a decisive criterion,¹⁰⁷ and finally, the very idea of *desire* for mutual love – one is tempted to look up the famous passage in Plato's *Republic* (403a4-c3) about the 'right eros' (*orthós eros*) in the ideal city: the lover is allowed not only to touch his beloved, but to 'kiss (*φιλεῖν*) and be together with (*συνεῖναι*) and touch (*ἄπτεσθαι*) him like a son.' A very common meaning of *συνεῖναι* is, of course, 'to have intercourse with'; though this is not the only meaning of this verb, I am sure that *Republic* 403b5 would be the only passage in the entire Greek literature where *συνεῖναι* with kissing on one side and touching on the other would be totally devoid of even the slightest suggestion of genital tension. Since this is highly improbable, the passage should be understood as describing an intensely sensual desire as 'the right eros'. Notice the reason adduced: this eros is allowed 'for the sake of what-is-beautiful (*ta kalá*), τῶν καλῶν χάριν', notice also the immediately following words 'if he manages to *persuade* him', which is, in numerous passages,

105 Vlastos 1991: 38 puts *Smp.* 4.27 f. (see Huß ad loc.) on a line with *Mem.* 1.3.8-15. But the emphasis is on *καλόν* in *Mem.* 1.3.11; see note 115 below.

106 See 8.43, with n. 39 above. Compare also notes 93 and 96 above. See Xen. *Mem.* 1.6.15; in his comment on that passage Gigon characterizes Pl. *Ap.* 31c4-32e1 as a 'Verlegenheitsauskunft Platons'.

107 Cf. on *epaphréditos* in section 7.

highly technical erotic terminology (Pl. *Phdr.* 233b6, Xen. *Smp.* 8.20, *passim*). As for *syneinai*, Xen. *Mem.* 1.6.11-12 should be compared, with the noun *synousia*, 'das sowohl einen sokratisch-philosophischen wie einen erotischen Sinn hat' (Gigon ad locum; cp. *Mem.* 1.2.60).

Although this one passage from Plato does not prove that Xenophon and Plato are in total agreement with regard to Socrates' doctrine of sublimation, it should be kept in mind by anyone interested in finding his way through the variety of opinions on the subject of Socrates and sex. It seems to me that the thrust of these Socratic ideas was well grasped by the *George-Kreis*, whose sublimatory practice is described by Hans Brasch *apud* Robert Boehringer (1951: 147) in the following way:

Oft sass ich auf einem harten Stuhl oder einem Divan, und George ging lebhaft sprechend durchs Zimmer, oder wir sassen neben einander, und durch die sanfte körperliche Lenkung, die von einer ergriffenen Hand oder umfassten Schulter ausging, erhöhte er die völlige Aufgeschlossenheit und den Willen der Seele, ihm zu folgen. Der 'gottgegebene Glanz' Pindars lag über allem, was er mit seiner liebenden Nähe erfüllte, und 'leuchtend Licht war bei den Männern und liebliches Leben' [*Pythians* 8.96 f., transl. Hölderlin].

On this background I consider these two (interconnected) statements by Gregory Vlastos concerning Xenophon's presentation of Socrates as misguided, both as psychology and as *Quellenkritik* (Vlastos 1991: 38 note 65, 40 note 73):

In Xenophon, Socrates' fear of physical contact with an attractive youth is obsessive (to kiss a pretty face is 'to become forthwith [*αὐτίκα μάλα*] a slave instead of a free man,' *Mem.* 1.3.11; a momentary contact of his nude shoulder with that of the beautiful Critobulus affects Socrates like 'the bite of a wild beast': his shoulder stings for days, Xen. *Smp.* 4.27-8). In Plato Socrates shows no terror of skin-contact with a beautiful boy: wrestling in the nude with Alcibiades happens 'often,' though only on the latter's initiative (*Smp.* 217c) and there is nothing in Plato to suggest that Socrates would encourage [discourage?] physical endearment with any of the youths he 'loves'.

But: in *Mem.* 1.3.11 Socrates is not referring to himself (see 1.3.14-15) and *Smp.* 4.28 is a reply to Kharmides' highly embarrassing revelation in 4.27 (on which see the end of section 8 above).

Let us listen to the other observation by Vlastos: There is in Socratic eros no (Foucauldian) *inquiétude*, according to what we learn from Plato. And as a footnote to the words 'from Plato':

Though not from Xenophon: that obsessive fear of physical contact (cf. n. 64 above [meaning 65]) would certainly be symptomatic of anxiety. On this, as on other points, when Xenophon's testimony conflicts with Plato's we would be wiser to prefer the latter's: there is good reason to believe that his personal acquaintance with Socrates had been far more intimate than Xenophon's.

The reason why Vlastos has to introduce the theme of eros into his chapter 1 with its overall endeavour to free Socratic *eirōneia* from the charge of deceit, *apátē*, becomes clear from the following quotation from his p. 41; notice the consecutive particle 'So' near the end:

Once we take this into account [that Socratic eros as depicted by Plato 'is even-keeled, light-hearted, jocular, cheerfully and obstinately sane', having in it 'no *inquiétude* at all'] it becomes arbitrary to read deceit or pretence into Socrates' dalliance with youthful 'bloom'. We can understand Socratic *erōs* as a complex irony of the same sort Alcibiades allows him in part [b] of T15 above [Pl. *Smp.* 216d2-5] – that of 'knowing nothing and being ignorant of everything.' Just as when maintaining 'he knows nothing' Socrates does and does not mean what he says, so too when he says he is erotically attracted to beautiful young men he both does and does not mean what he says. In the currently understood sense of pederastic love Socrates does *not* love Alcibiades [Vlastos refers in a footnote to the beginning of Pl. *Prt.*] or any of the other youths he pursues. But in the other sense which *eran* has in the doctrine and practice of Socratic *erōs*, he does love them: their physical beauty gives special relish to his affectionate encounters with their mind. So there is no pretence and no deceit in saying to others that he is Alcibiades' lover (*G.* 581d [meaning *Grg.* 481 d]) and saying the same thing, as he no doubt did, to Alcibiades himself.

Vlastos has to clear Socrates of *real* love in order to free Socrates the lover and Socrates the ironist from deceit and pretence.¹⁰⁸ To this end Vlastos introduces a distinction between love according to the world ('in the currently understood sense') and love according to Socrates. This distinction, however, is wide of the mark, both with regard to Socrates' erotic theory (*eros philias* etc.) and practice ('his heart almost continuously thumping'); the analogy with the phenomenon of Socratic ignorance, introduced in the quotation above, carries no great weight. – It is easy to understand why Vlastos (40 note 74: 'romantic fancy') is not in harmony with Kierkegaard on the subject of Socratic love-irony-deceit (cf. above section 4).

Vlastos' attempt at clearing Socrates of love 'in the currently understood sense' involves him in two more statements, one concerning Aiskhines Sokratikós fragment 53 (more on this below) and one concerning Greek pederasty. On p. 39 Vlastos claims that Socrates was against pederastic coupling for moral reasons: he wanted to protect boys from anal penetration. The problem is that nowhere does Socrates say so – at least not in any of the passages adduced by Vlastos.¹⁰⁹

In his additional note '1.3 ἔρωσ καλός: Its Hazards for the Boy', Vlastos insists that anal penetration of these teen-agers really was 'the normal mode of gratification' (otherwise, Vlastos' idea of Socrates' reason for opposing pederastic coupling would, of course, be meaningless). Vlastos tries to prove this against the greatest authority in the field, Dover. This is what the Germans call *offene Türen einrennen*, since Dover's book presents ample evidence for the prevalence of anal intercourse in Greek pederasty (*Greek Homosexuality* 99, 100 n.; Halperin 1989: 55 with n. 12 on p. 171).

Now let us analyse two passages, one short and one long, from the book that has, most deservedly, shaped the view of its epoch on Greek love more than any other, viz. Dover's *Greek Homosexuality*.

This passage from p. 159, following upon a quotation from the opening of Plato's *Protagoras*, has sublimation as its subject:

Eros for wisdom is more powerful, and more important to Socrates, than

108 Xen. *Mem.* 4.2.15-19: Socrates on *apátē* and *pseudos* towards one's *philoí* – justifiable if it is for their benefit.

109 The 'lion' in Pl. *Chrm.* 155d-e is the boy, not the lover!

eros for a beautiful youth; in Xen. *Smp.* 8.12 he treats it as better to be in love with the qualities of a person's soul than with the attributes of the body. It does not follow logically from this that homosexual copulation should be avoided, unless one also believes that any investment of energy and emotion in the pursuit of an inferior end vitiates the soul's capacity to pursue a superior end. Socrates does believe this, and therefore forbids homosexual copulation, as is clear from his own conduct with Alkibiades [Pl. *Smp.* 215a4-219d2] and from *Rep.* 403b, where 'right eros' in the ideal city permits the erastes to touch his paidika 'as a son' but to go no further than that.

Dover's first sentence may be said to be refuted by Plato *Gorgias* 481c5-482b2 (Socrates as 'lover of Alkibiades and philosophy'), whereas Xen. *Smp.* 8.12, the passage adduced by Dover, states nothing about wisdom or philosophy. Secondly, we notice that Dover paraphrases Pl. *R.* 403b in such a way that the remarkable triptykhon 'kiss, *syneinai*, touch' has lost no less than two of its three 'folds' and with these the element of vibrant sensuality and (if this is to be viewed in the light of the results obtained in sections 7 and 10) of moral productivity. Apparently Dover does not suspect that there is more than just interdiction of 'homosexual copulation' in the passage from *The Republic*. Since he has overlooked the concept of the Triple Eros in Xen. *Smp.* 8, Dover has extracted from Socrates' speech there only the quite trivial opposition soul vs. body; once again he has reduced three pillars – this time: soul, mutual love, noble deeds – into one. On this rather poor foundation he has built this – much-quoted – passage about the 'logic' of Socrates' interdiction of copulation and orgasm, and about 'belief' lying at the bottom of Socrates' erotic doctrine (thus Dover repeatedly, e.g. Dover 1980: 8).

Once we realize that Socrates' overall concern in his reflections upon the ideal relationship is *durability* and *progress* (see above section 7) and granting that bodily beauty is bound to decay¹¹⁰ whereas the soul may progress toward wisdom (Xen. *Smp.* 8.14) the view that 'homosexual copulation should be avoided' becomes understandable enough.

But obviously the point in Dover's representation of Socrates' 'belief' lies in the word 'any' ('any investment of energy and emotion'). Why this *total*

¹¹⁰ Kritoboulos' protests against this view are found in Xen. *Smp.* 4.17, where see Huß. To most Greeks beauty is something objective, see above, section 2 near the end.

interdiction? Why not allow just a few copulations and an occasional orgasm? Why this *absolute* stance, rejected by Dover 1978: 156 ‘in its entirety’, i.e. absolutely?

First, the two Platonic passages adduced by Dover do not amount to a proof that Socrates simply forbade homosexual coupling.^{III} Actually, an important chapter in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (1.3, esp. 5-15, Socrates’ interlocutor is no less than Xenophon, which is unique) may be taken as demonstrating that Socrates did *not* go to such extremes. Apart from various jocular exaggerations and the playfully condescending pathetic vocatives ὦ τλήμων (1.3.11) and ὦ μῶρε (1.3.13) addressed to ... Xenophon, let me point to the concluding reflections (Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.14-15; the context is exclusively homosexual):

[1.3.14] οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἀφροδισιάζειν τοὺς μὴ ἀσφαλῶς ἔχοντας πρὸς ἀφροδισία ὤιετο χρῆναι πρὸς τοιαῦτα, οἷα μὴ πάνυ μὲν δεομένου τοῦ σώματος οὐκ ἂν προσδέξαιτο ἢ ψυχῇ, δεομένου δὲ οὐκ ἂν πράγματα παρέχοι. αὐτὸς δὲ πρὸς ταῦτα φανερὸς ἦν οὕτω παρεσκευασμένος, ὥστε ῥᾶϊον ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν καλλίστων καὶ ὠραισιτάτων ἢ οἱ ἄλλοι τῶν αἰσχίστων καὶ ἄωροτάτων.
[1.3.15] περὶ μὲν δὴ βρώσεως καὶ πόσεως καὶ ἀφροδισίων οὕτω κατεσκευασμένος ἦν, καὶ ὤιετο οὐδὲν ἂν ἤττον ἀρκούντως ἡδῆσθαι τῶν πολλὰ ἐπὶ τούτοις πραγματευομένων, λυπεῖσθαι δὲ πολὺ ἔλαττον.

Thus, also in the matter of sexual appetite, he held that those whose passions were not under complete control should limit themselves to such indulgence as the soul would not welcome unless the need of the body were really pressing, and such as would cause no trouble when the need was there. As for his own conduct in this matter, it was evident that he had trained himself to avoid the fairest and most attractive more easily than others avoid the ugliest and most repulsive. Concerning eating and drinking then and sexual indulgence such were his views, and he thought that a due portion of pleasure would be no more lacking to him than to those who busy themselves with sex, and that much less pain would fall to his lot.

III In his commentary (Oxford 1959) on *Gorgias* 481d3 Dodds takes the *Symposion* passage as proof that Socrates’ erotic relationship with Alkibiades was a ‘joke’.

The perspective is strictly dietetic,¹¹² see 1.3.15: eating and drinking on a line with sex, and see the first word of this passage: *δαιίτηι* – *diáita* viewed as a kind of *paideia* of *psykhé* and *sōma* (1.3.5). The particle *καί* at the beginning of the quotation above links the section on sex (1.3.8-14) back to the section on avoiding *kóros* (surfeit and disgust) in eating and drinking. The erotic-ethic goal is *ἀρκούντως ἥδεσθαι*, ‘having *sufficient* pleasure’ (1.3.15); cf. 1.3.14 on the soul *welcoming* sexual enjoyment, i.e., welcoming it without disgust. This can be reached only by the person who, through his *diáita*, is sufficiently prepared (*παρεσκευασμένος* 1.3.5, cf. 1.3.14) physically and mentally; Socrates as presented by Xenophon has two such persons in mind: Odysseus (1.3.7) and Socrates.

The point of the passage quoted above is not at all to forbid homosexual intercourse, but to direct the sexual impulse¹¹³ to the objects that cause a minimum of trouble;¹¹⁴ the trouble-makers being the poisonous insects called ‘the beautiful and fair’ (1.3.13), in other words the very same conceited pin-ups that Socrates impersonated with such talent. Thus, the advice that runs through the entire passage is not to avoid *aphrodisia* (which is just as impossible as avoiding hunger and thirst), but to avoid pursuing sex with the beautiful,¹¹⁵ and concentrate on the beautiful-*and-good* (1.3.11) or even on the ugly.¹¹⁶ Cf. 1.3.5 on *ópson* (non-farinaceous food/anything eaten with bread) coming out of the blue to the person who consumes his bread with the right kind of desire (*epithymia*) and with hunger (*Cyr.* 1.5.12, *Cic. Fin.* 2.90).

As for the three passages (a) Pl. *R.* 403a4-c3, (b) Pl. *Smp.* 215a4-219d2, (c) Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.5-15 the right interpretative course is probably to make a gradation:

- (a) is about the ideal state (*νομοθετήσεις ἐν τῇ οἰκισομένῃ πόλει*)
- (b) is about Socrates and his ‘quite extraordinary feat’, his *ergon hyperéphanon* (217e5)
- (c) is about ordinary men, incl. Kritoboulos and Xenophon – and Socrates.

112 Foucault 1984: chapter 2 ‘Diététique’ contains much material of interest.

113 In 1.3.14 *ἀφροδισιάζειν* belongs together with *πρὸς τοιαῦτα οἶα ...*

114 Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.33 *ἡδεῖα καὶ ἀπράγμων ἀπόλαυσις*.

115 See 1.3.8 *τῶν καλῶν, καλὸν ὄντα*, 1.3.10 *ὄντα εὐπροσωπώτατον καὶ ὠραιότατον*, 1.3.11 *καλόν*, 1.3.13 *τοὺς καλοὺς, καλὸν καὶ ὠραῖον, τινὰ καλόν*.

116 Cf. Socrates to Kritoboulos at *Mem.* 2.6.32 and Antisthenes in Xen. *Smp.* 4.38 (women) and compare *Mem.* 1.3.14.

The outcome of this is that the doctrine, taken for granted by Dover, Vlastos and many others,¹¹⁷ that Socrates 'forbade homosexual coupling' should be abandoned. Xen. *Mem.* 1.6.13 points into the same direction (see presently).

The difficulty remains of uniting the *dietetic* point of view, hostile to boyish beauty and the ensuing *mania* in the lover (*Mem.* 1.3.11 and 13), at one end of Socrates' erotic doctrine with the *ecstatic* at the other end. The attempt, in Socrates' second speech in the *Phaidros*, at thinking *mania* and *sophrosyne* together may be seen as one way out of this difficulty. In this connection the Xenophontic passage just referred to, *Mem.* 1.6.13, is significant for several reasons:

- (a) *sophrosyne* is presented as inherent in the right, i.e. the non-commercial, kind of pederastic practice,
- (b) in 1.6.13 the perspective is not dietetic,
- (c) Socrates does and does not associate himself with the prevailing *nomos* ('we', 'they', 'we', 'they', 'we'),
- (d) *Mem.* 1.6.13 makes the teacher, i.e. the senior partner, correspond to a boy prostitute, and the learner to his customer, which may be regarded as a Socratic peculiarity (see note 50 above on Socrates the boy).

The second passage from *Greek Homosexuality* that I propose to analyse is this (Dover 1978: 156 f.):

There is nothing in these utterances of Socrates [...] at variance with the language and sentiments of males who desired and sought orgasm in bodily contact with younger males. But Socrates does not go on to disguise copulation under layers of metaphysical flannel; from the experience
 5 which he shares with his contemporaries he draws different conclusions, and he is so far from calling eros by other names that he calls many other things by the name of eros. It was never difficult in Greek to use 'eros' and cognate words figuratively when their object was not an individual human; one may, for instance, *erān* victory, power, money, one's homeland,
 10 or a homecoming. Socrates uses 'erastes' figuratively (e.g. *Rep.* 501d), but sometimes couples this with literal usage, as in *Gorgias* 481d, where he calls himself 'erastes of Alkibiades and of philosophy' and his interlocutor

¹¹⁷ See Huß on 8.21, Hindley 1999: 79-80, 82.

Kallikles erastes of 'two (*sc. dêmoi*), the Athenian *dêmos* ('people', 'assembly') and (*sc. Demos*, son) of Pylilampes' (cf. p. 111); he compares Kallikles' inability to contradict or thwart the Athenian people with his inability to oppose Demos, and he finds philosophy, 'my paidika', much less capricious and unstable than his human paidika [*paidiká = erómenos*], Alkibiades (481d-482a). Again, when he says (Xen. *Smp.* 8.41) that he is consistently 'fellow-erastes with the city' of those who are 'of good quality by nature and zealous in the pursuit of virtue' he so blends personal eros with the public's affection and admiration for the brave and wise and upright as to call in question the extent to which sensual response to bodily beauty plays any part in his own eros. He does not hesitate, in fact, to use 'erastes' of a devoted admirer of an older person's wisdom or skill; hence an aristocratic family of Thessaly are 'erastai' of the sophist Gorgias (*Meno* 70b), the 'fans' of the sophists Euthydemos and Dionysodoros are their 'erastai' (*Euthd.* 276d), and when he introduces Hippokrates to the eminent Protagoras (*Prt.* 317cd):

30 Suspecting that Protagoras wanted to show off to Prodikos and Hippias that erastai of his had come to the house, I said, 'Well, why don't we invite Prodikos and Hippias and those with them to come and listen to our discussion?'

These passages may be jocular, in a way familiar to us throughout the literary presentation of Socrates (cf. Pl. *Smp.* 216e and the joke about 'procuring' pupils for philosophers in Xen. *Smp.* 4.62), but when a certain Aristodemos is described in the opening scene of Plato's *Symposium* (173b) as 'erastes of Socrates more than anyone at that time' we may feel that 'erastes' is so freely used in the Socratic circle that the boundary between the serious and the playful or between the literal and the figurative is overrun. This is possible if, and only if, it is very well understood within that circle that eros is not a desire for bodily contact but a love of moral and intellectual excellence.

Dover's point is grasped if we move from 'nothing' (line 1) to 'But' (3) to 'any' (23) to 'if, and only if' (40) to 'not ... but' (41).

Should it not have been explicitly mentioned that the eroticising jargon so 'freely used in the Socratic circle' (line 38) is merely an extension of a com-

mon Greek tendency (see lines 7 ff.)? This being so, the Socratics' erotic discourse is, here again, less outlandish than suggested by Dover, and it is less esoteric, i.e. less of a joke. That is to say that Dover's concluding sentence with its 'if, and only if' and its *either* body *or* morality/intellect may be less firmly founded than it appears to be. Are we really to imagine *le cercle des Socratiques* as having agreed once and for all on a code according to which one of their favourite words – eros – was deprived of any suggestion of 'desire for bodily contact' and washed down to the level of figurative, i.e. (see line 39) playful and jocular use? All this 'jocularity' would allow very little laughter indeed.¹¹⁸ Around the words 'couples' (line 11) and 'blends' (line 20) there are glimpses of a less heavy-handedly dualist interpretation of this linguistically and psychologically complicated phenomenon.

Speaking of jokes: both Xen. *Smp.* 8.41 on Socrates being 'fellow-erastes with the city' (above p. 159) and Xen. *Smp.* 4.62-64¹¹⁹ about Antisthenes (not Socrates) 'procuring' pupils for sophists (above p. 130) form part of a comprehensive, more or less provocative system, rooted in typically Greek assumptions about female desire, in erotic triangles, and in Socrates' personal *Familienroman* (to introduce a relevant Freudian concept). The sexual components of this system are anything but *clearly* figurative and jocular (in the sense of *scherzhaft*). For instance, in Xen. *Smp.* 8.41 Socrates presents himself as a rival of, i.e. on a par with, the Athenians in whose eros 'sensual response to bodily beauty' (line 22) did indeed play a part (see above section 8 on Kallias' *soma*).

10. THE GOD, THE BEAUTIFUL BOY. SOCRATES' ECSTATIC EROS. WHOLESOME DESIRE

We recall from section 6 above Socrates' proof that all the symposiasts are *thiasōtai* of Eros; the proof was found in the eroticised psychological state of each of the symposiasts (cf. note 66; cf. 8.1 *ψυχῆι ἀνθρώπου ἐνιδρυμένου*, 'en-

118 Dover 1978: 45: 'let us not, here or elsewhere, underrate the Greeks' sense of humour' (speaking about Xen. *Hiero* 11.11). But Dover is a *miso-platon* and a *contemptor philoplatonōn* (just follow the word 'Platonist' throughout Dover's works, e.g. 1980: 5).

119 Dover 1978: 44: 'a jocular figurative passage'.

throned in the human heart'). We may also recall, from section 7, how we detected a description of a religious experience in 8.15: our prayer is *manifestly* (σαφῶς) fulfilled, yielding results exactly opposite to the ones 'one might reasonably expect' (ὥς γ' ἂν τις οἰηθείη) with regard to the compatibility of sexual purity and sensual pleasure. These were the observations made above concerning devotion to Eros and prayer to Aphrodite. Besides, we noticed, in sections 4 and 7, the workings of the opposition, so essential to Greek rationalism, between *tékhnē* (incl. *diaitētiké tékhnē*) and *tykhē*: erotic pleasure that is regulated by intelligent art (*tékhnē*) is inexhaustible ('insatiable'), it is according to nature (thus in the secularized version adopted in Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.11-14) and it is immune to the whims of chance (*tykhē*) and change. According to Socrates the erotic philosopher.

But what is the basis on which Socrates, at the beginning of his speech in Xen. *Smp.*, feels entitled to state that Eros is *present* (παρόντος δαίμονος μεγάλου, 'in the presence of a mighty *daimon*')?

Young Autolykos is a marvel of beauty, eine *Schönheitsoffenbarung*. The minute this Athenian boy entered the room, a *divine* epiphany took place;¹²⁰ from that point on, Eros the god was present at the symposion. Typical elements in Greek epiphanies are the following, among others: (a) overwhelming beauty, (b) dazzling light, and (c) among the human spectators reactions such as admiration and astonishment, sometimes loud cries, sometimes complete silence.¹²¹

In 1.10 Xenophon passes from the description of the epiphany to general reflections on the interesting appearance of people who are possessed by gods. The last words in 1.10 are synonymous with οἱ μύσται τούτου τοῦ θεοῦ, 'this god's *mystai*/initiates' (cf. οἱ θιασῶται in 8.1), i.e. the passage is about the mysteries of Eros. The authorial comment and its general reflections in 1.10 lend an interesting dimension of detached observation to this depiction of erotic mysteries,¹²² cf. the generalizing and anonymous wording in 1.8 ἐννοήσας τις τὰ γιγνόμενα, 'a person who took note ...'.

At first we are left with the impression that there are two parties to the mysteries: Autolykos and all his spectators. But having reached the end of

120 Anakreon: 'boys are our gods'; see the scholium on Pindar's *Isthmian Odes* 2.1b.

121 These elements are well pointed out in Huß's notes on Xen. *Smp.* 1.8-10.

122 See Huß on παραγενόμενος 1.1 (Xenophon claiming to be present at a party taking place in the year 422, in which year he will have been 8-10 years old!).

1.10, we realize that one spectator, viz. Kallias, is more of a spectator of Autolykos than the rest – who are simultaneously spectators of Autolykos and of Kallias, and who have the second of these two activities, the observation of Kallias, in common with the detached author. Thus, all the symposiasts – apart from Kallias and, one would suppose, Lykon, Autolykos' father – both are and are not participants in the erotic mysteries caused by the epiphany of the boy and of Eros – who is present *in* at least one of the spectators, viz. Kallias, who is *éntheos*. This is what may be learnt from a point of view analysis of 1.8-10. But in 8.1-7 Socrates treats Kallias the lover in line with all the other loving (and loved, cf. n. 66) symposiasts – and Eros as present. Thus, they are all *mystai* of Eros (*sōphrōn* Eros that is, 1.10).

The passage from the dialogue *Alkibiades* by Aiskhines the Socratic (SSR VI A 53) to which we alluded already in section 1 is translated and interpreted by Vlastos in the following manner¹²³ (1991: 247 f.):

[a] (Socrates speaking) 'If I thought I could benefit him through some art, I would stand convicted of great folly. But in fact I thought that in the case of Alcibiades this [*sc.* to benefit him] was given me by divine dispensation (*θεία μοίρα*), which is nothing to be wondered at.'

[b] 'For of those who are sick many are made whole [*ὑγιαίνει*] by human art, but others through divine dispensation. Those cured by human art are healed by doctors, while in the case of those cured by divine dispensation it is desire [*ἐπιθυμία*] that drives them to improve [*more correctly: to what-will-be-beneficial, ἐπὶ τὸ ὀνησον*]: they desire to vomit when this would be good for them, and they desire to go hunting when strenuous exercise would be good for them.'

[c] 'As for me, because of the love [*διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα*] I had for Alcibiades, my experience was no different than that of the bacchantes. For the bacchantes, when they are god-possessed, draw milk and honey from wells where others cannot even draw water. And so I too, though I had no knowledge through which I could benefit him [*more correctly: a human being, ἄνθρωπον*] by teaching it to him, nonetheless I thought that by associating [*ξυνών*] with him I could make him better through [*more correctly: because of*] my love.'

123 My insertions are marked by: [] .

Vlastos continues:

It is hard to resist reading into part [c] of this fragment what we know of the ‘mad lover’ of the *Phaedrus* and assuming that what we are being told is that Socrates’ love for Alcibiades is a state of *ἐνθουσιασμός* like that of the bacchantes. [[A detailed critique of interpretations offered by A.E. Taylor and Barbara Ehlers now follows.]] If we read the text more strictly, this is all we can get from it: At [a] it is said that the longed-for result (moral improvement of Alcibiades) will [[would; Socrates speaks in the past tense]] *not* be achieved by means of art but ‘by divine dispensation’ (the stress falling on the negation: it would be ‘great folly’ to think otherwise); at [b], that in the treatment of the sick a wonderful result (the patient gets well) may be reached *not* by art but ‘by divine dispensation’ – just by letting the patient do pretty much what he feels like doing; at [c] that Socrates will [[would]] bring about for Alcibiades the longed-for result *not* through art, but through love, as in the case of the bacchantes who, when possessed, get *their* wonderful result without art. There is nothing in [c] to support Taylor or Ehlers in taking the point of the comparison with the bacchantes to be that in his love for Alcibiades he too is [[was]], like them, god-possessed.

Taylor and Ehlers are not the only scholars, however, to have read this as a document about Socratic erotic *enthousiasmós* (see e.g. Dittmar 1912: 118).¹²⁴ Readers through the centuries will have taken this reading as *luce clarior*: see in [c] *διὰ τὸν ἔρωτα* at the beginning and *διὰ τὸ ἐρᾶν* near the end, see *καὶ γὰρ αἱ Βάκχαι ἐπειδὴν ἐνθεοὶ γέγονται*, ‘For the bacchantes, too, when they get god-possessed’, and see *καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐγὼ ...*, ‘And so I too ...’. Is this not as clear as clear can be? The word designating the religious-psychological experience is *πάσχω*, *páskhō* (*ἐπεπόνθειν*), cf. e.g. Xen. *Smp.* 1.9 (Autolykos’ epiphany).

In addition to this, what do we have to say to Vlastos’ three-phased reduction, according to which the outcome of [a] is ‘*not* by means of art’, of [b] ‘*not* by art’, and of [c] ‘*not* through art’? We should insist on the *positive*

124 Sometimes Alcibiades’ words in Pl. *Smp.* 215b-216c (215e: ‘filled with Korybantic frenzy’) about Socrates making all his listeners divinely possessed are compared. Cf. 218b.

statement about *theia moira*: an *epithymia* drives the sick to what-will-be-beneficial (*to onēson*).¹²⁵ Usually the object of *epithymia* is what is pleasant, the opposite of what is beneficial, and time and again we hear of ‘wicked desires’ (*ponēraí epithymíai*, Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.64) and ‘harmful pleasures’ (*blabēraí hēdonai*, *Mem.* 1.3.11). Here, however, the gods put a constructive and wholesome desire to work, a desire directed to that which restores physical and mental health. The parallel to the ‘desire for soul, mutual love and noble acts’ in Socrates’ speech in Xen. *Smp.* 8 is striking. And with *theia moira* here, compare, there, the role of the goddess in making the ‘words and deeds’ that are exchanged between the chaste (*hagnói*, cf. 8.15) full of sensual pleasure (*ep-aphródita*, 8.15). – This comparison between Aiskhines fragment 53 and the central message of Xen. *Smp.* 8, which has not previously been made, establishes a considerable degree of unity in Socrates’ erotic doctrine. Through our findings Socratic Optimism has acquired a libidinal foundation.

Just as Alkibiades, by divine dispensation, feels a desire (*epithymia*) to improve, so Socrates feels a desire (*eros*)¹²⁶ to improve him; and Socrates experiences the miracle of having his emptiness turned into abundance and fertility.¹²⁷

To revert to the cult of male bodily beauty, raised as a moral problem from Cicero to Lilly and Woods (p. 126 above). This is simply how the god Eros makes his epiphany – through the iconic boy. No invocations, no cletic hymns are needed, the beautiful boy suffices (cf. also Xen. *Smp.* 3.13). He is all that is needed. But he is needed.

So much for Socrates’ erotico-ethic philosophy and his sexualised view of teaching.¹²⁸ If anything has been achieved in this article, it has been achieved, I think, through attention to patterns of thought and behaviour, to syntactical usus, to literal meaning, and to technical terminology.¹²⁹ As for the prob-

125 See also *συνοίσειν*, ‘would be good for’, twice in [b]. And in [c] *ὠφελήσομαι ἄν*, ‘I could benefit’.

126 In [c]: *ἔρωτα*, *ἐρῶν*, *ἐρᾶν*. On *eros* and *epithymia* as synonymous see, among numerous instances, Xen. *Smp.* 4.62–64, 8.2–8.

127 The bacchantes draw honey and milk. As for the chastity of their rites see E. *Ba.* 685–88 with Dodds’ commentary (Oxford 1960) on 222–23.

128 Cf. on *epithymētēs* p. 141, on *synousia* p. 162, and on the importance of non-payment p. 168.

129 Compare sections 3 and 9 above.

lem of sources, it may be briefly stated that kindly disposed authors such as Aiskhines, Plato and Xenophon would tend to suppress less appropriate features – such as Socrates' frivolity, with its aura of comedy¹³⁰ – rather than inventing them.¹³¹

130 See notes 47, 62, 104 above. One of the most remarkable things about Aristophanes' Socratic comedy is that it ignores these comic features; *The Clouds* has nothing about Socrates' sexual appetites and – *pace* Zanker 1995: 38-45 and numerous other scholars – nothing specific about his ugliness.

131 I consider the above section 8 – on Socrates and Athens and Xenophon's irony – particularly interesting as far as *der historische Sokrates* is concerned (note 93 alone shows the complexities of the matter). Attempts at differentiating between Socrates and Plato and between Plato and Xenophon are presented at p. 145 and p. 162 respectively; cf. pp. 135 f. and p. 150. See also notes 14, 75 and 122.

As for *art* and *nature* among lovers (cf. section 4 above) and heterosexual symmetry (cf. section 6) see also Andreas Fountoulakis' contribution to this volume of *C&M* (pp. 179-92).

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