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Mary P. Nichols

Socratic Self-Examination

Cosmopolitanism, Imperialism, or Citizenship?

In contrast to traditional readings of classical political thought that focus on virtuous political communities and inegalitarian social orders, recent scholars have found in ancient thought philosophic resources for more open societies, liberal polities, democratic self-government, and even global perspectives. In a recent review essay, Patrick Deneen identifies a new democratic school of Platonic interpretation that holds that Plato "favored the open more dialogic possibilities of democracy" over any "closed systemization of either philosophy or politics."[1] Socrates, the ceaseless questioner or skeptic, takes a central place in this view. J. Peter Euben, for example, argues that Socrates appropriates for his "philosophical-political vocation" the democratic practices of Athens—such as "the tradition of democratic self-critique found in drama" and the Athenian practice of holding magistrates publicly accountable for their deeds while in office.[2] Similarly, Dana Villa emphasizes Socrates' service to his city as a gadfly, his "philosophical, dissident citizenship" that can serve as a model for liberal democracies.[3] Whereas Villa emphasizes the alienating and critical stance of the "Socratic citizen" as he questions his own traditions and beliefs,[4] Martha Nussbaum points out that it is precisely our own traditions that separate us from our fellow humanity. By "awakening each and every person to self-scrutiny," her democratic or egalitarian Socrates reveals what we have in common with others.[5] In place of the "absolute negativity" that for Villa accompanies Socratic questioning, she finds in Socratic self-examination the basis of "world citizenship."[6] For Nussbaum "cultivating humanity" requires "an ability to see [our]selves not simply as citizens of some local region or group, but also, and above all, as human beings bound to all other human

beings by ties of recognition and concern."[7] When Nussbaum writes, "You can either package your humanity in your politics or your politics in your humanity," she suggests that one must make one or the other prior, and her advocacy of world citizenship makes clear what her priority is.[8]

Two years after Nussbaum published *Cultivating Humanity,* Thomas L. Pangle and Peter J. Ahrensdorf contributed a monumental volume on the history of international relations theory, from the classical idealism of the Greek philosophers to various twentieth-century schools of thought. In their discussion of classical idealism, they also recognize the "cosmopolitan" character of Socratic philosophizing, noting that "the philosophers' hearts leap across familial, national, cultural, and temporal boundaries," and quote Cicero's statement that "Socrates judged himself to be a native and citizen of the world."[9] Pangle and Ahrensdorf, to be sure, cannot be included in the democratic school of Platonic interpretation, since they insist that from the original Socratic perspective, "a truly cosmopolitan spirit" was "likely to flourish only among a few noble souls dispersed through the various cities and nations."[10] They nevertheless conclude that Socratic philosophers could "reasonably hope that those few may have some appreciable influence upon their respective cities, mitigating patriotic xenophobia, imperialism, cruelty, and punitive moral fanaticism." In other words, even though the emphasis is more on hope than on likelihood, those few might "cultivate humanity,"[11] making their political communities more cosmopolitan and hence like themselves.

My own reading accepts the critical character and openness of Socratic philosophy, but also its democratic thrust. If one understands the extent to which one does not know the truth about the whole, or one's knowledge of ignorance, as Socrates describes his human wisdom (*Apology* 23b), one must remain open to others and what they may contribute to one's pursuit of knowledge. Socrates is nevertheless better understood, I argue, contra Nussbaum as well as Pangle and Ahrensdorf, as a citizen-philosopher than as a world citizen.[12] Nor is Socrates' citizenship, in my view, merely that of a dissenting questioner. Plato's Socrates, after all, maintained his loyalty to Athens throughout his life. Unlike the sophists, who wandered from city to city in the Greek world, Socrates rarely left the confines of Athens, unless serving in the Athenian army (*Crito* 52b; see also *Phaedrus* 230c–d). Several times in the *Crito* Socrates has the Laws refer to Athens as his "fatherland," and he refers to the piety and respect he owes the Laws as he would a father (*Crito* 51a–c, 54c).

It is possible, of course, that Socrates' loyalty to Athens stemmed merely from his physical needs and his recognition of his dependence on his city for preservation and hence for his philosophizing. In this case, should historical development allow a more universal cosmopolitan order to provide for a philosopher's physical needs, nothing in Socratic philosophizing would prevent the philosopher's transferring his loyalties from his particular community to the world. So, too, if a greater tolerance of questioning in Athens compared to other Greek cities were the source of Socrates' allegiance—after all, Socrates was not prosecuted in Athens until he was seventy—he would owe even greater allegiance to a globalized world in which philosophy was tolerated along with every other way of life, and where he would not be prosecuted at all. And if that globalized world were characterized not simply by a toleration of difference, but by a recognition of humans' common humanity, there would be a greater harmony between the universal truth sought by the philosopher and the world in which he sought it, or even between the truth he attained and the world in which he attained it.

Hegel's discussion of Socrates provides support for such a position. Because Socrates' "Ideas," of the good, the noble, and the just, were abstract, indeterminate universals, as Hegel explains, they could not provide guidance to concrete life. Socratic philosophizing thus left a void, one filled by his "daimon," a sort of personal oracle, which guided him in the contingent affairs of his life. Only when the universal Idea became concrete in actual human life, according to Hegel, specifically, in the modern state, would human beings no longer need daimonic guidance of one sort or another concerning their particular lives.[13] According to Hegel, citizens of the modern state are Socratics without need of personal oracles like a daimonic voice. They are Socrates in fully developed form; as citizens of the modern state, they are world citizens in Nussbaum's sense.

Is there anything in Socratic philosophizing, then, that prevents a movement toward "world citizenship"? I address this question by examining Socrates' understanding of philosophy, as he presents it in the speech he gives about Love in Plato's *Symposium*. The *Symposium* presents a direct confrontation between Socrates and a host of Athenians whose encomia to Love offer more cosmopolitan perspectives than does Socrates' own. Socrates' view of Love and philosophy, in contrast to theirs, defends our attachment to particular communities. In-between ignorance and wisdom, and being both needy and resourceful, human beings (including philoso-

phers) find access to the Idea of beauty only by loving particular human beings, institutions, laws, and studies, and then by giving birth and nurturing their own offspring as a result of love. The incomplete character of our search, our imperfect wisdom, thus connects us to generation, nurturing, and political life. Socratic philosophizing does not lead to world citizenship, then, not because Socrates recognizes the need for a political community merely for the sake of self-preservation,[14] but because for him humanity and politics, universal and particular, are inseparably linked. Tragedy lies not simply in the necessary connection between our potential for transcendence and our limitations; it occurs when our attempt to overcome the latter impedes the former. Socrates therefore packages neither his humanity in his politics, as Nussbaum criticizes, nor his politics in his humanity, as Nussbaum recommends. The Socratic "package" gives neither the one nor the other priority. When Socrates claims to the Athenian jury that if they made his ceasing to philosophize the condition of his acquittal, he would not be able to accept (*Apology* 29c–d), he was not prioritizing philosophy over his city but refusing to prioritize his city over philosophy. And, contra Hegel, something like Socrates' "daimonic" guidance will always be necessary for human beings.

A more "cosmopolitan" understanding of philosophy, I also argue, is one that Plato attributes to Alcibiades, an Athenian politician once associated with Socrates, one who became famous as a betrayer of his city. Appearing late in the evening in Plato's *Symposium,* and insisting that he will speak not about Love, as the other guests at the party have done, but about Socrates, Alcibiades describes Socrates as unconnected to time and place, a wise man whose wisdom frees him from connections to his city—and to any particular human beings, such as Alcibiades himself. While Alcibiades resents Socrates' distance from himself, I argue, he admires what he thinks is Socrates' freedom, self-sufficiency, and independence. If the questioning practiced by Socrates frees Alcibiades from the conventions and opinions of his city, his is a freedom that finds its fulfillment in a betrayal of his city and imperialism, rather than one conducive to world citizenship. Universal perspectives, paradoxically, are more political than philosophic. Plato therefore has two related objections, I argue, to world citizenship. In the first place, it impedes our fulfillment as human beings, as both philosophers and citizens, as illustrated by the lessons on Love, philosophy, and generation that Socrates recounts in the *Symposium.* In the second place, in its misunderstanding of the philosopher's allegiance to the truth as a

transcendence of one's own, it nurtures the tyrannical ambitions of a man like Alcibiades.

Finally, I conclude with reflections on the poetic function of Plato's Socratic dialogues. Whereas Nussbaum understands the task of the narrative imagination as revealing our common humanity and thereby fostering world citizenship,[15] Plato understands his narratives of Socrates as preserving the different and the alien as well as the familiar. Seeing something strange in what is familiar and something familiar in what is strange keeps both philosophy and politics alive. For Plato, cultivating humanity requires cultivating our lives in our particular communities, including political ones.

The Intellectual Elite of Plato's *Symposium* and Their New World Orders

The occasion of Plato's *Symposium* is a party at the home of the young tragedian Agathon, who is celebrating the success of one of his tragic plays.[16] The pastime of the evening stems from an observation that one of the company, Phaedrus, made to his lover Eryximachus, also present, that although Love is a great god, "no poet has yet composed an encomium" for him as poets have for other gods (177a–b). Agathon and his guests, which include his own lover Pausanias, as well as the comic poet Aristophanes and Socrates himself, agree to correct the omission of the poets by offering in turn encomia to Love (177e). The poets, however, did sing of love, if not in simple praise. The chorus in Euripides' *Hippolytus,* for example, speaks of Love as a "tyrant over men," who leads them to disaster (*Hippolytus* 538–41). So, too, in Sophocles' *Antigone,* the chorus addresses Love, noting that "who has you within is mad" and "you twist the minds of the just" and destroy them (*Antigone* 790–93). The warnings of the chorus are borne out by the actions of those plays, both tragedies. The very enterprise of the evening aims not simply at supplying an omission on the part of such traditional poets by praising a neglected god, but at correcting their view of the prospects for human life. Phaedrus, from whom the proposal to praise Love originates and who delivers the first speech, sets the tone: Love causes the greatest goods for human beings (178c). The acme of his praise, however, goes not to one consumed by love for a beloved, but to one who can without such inspiration sacrifice himself because of his own self-sufficient virtue. It is a virtue to which even the gods must bow (180a). Phaedrus in his own way seeks transcendence.[17]

Agathon's lover Pausanias speaks next and might seem to take a more political perspective, since he argues for the superiority of Athens to other cities in its customs and laws about Love. But to do so, he engages in a subtle reinterpretation of those customs and laws, in order to justify his own pederasty. He is in fact free from what he regards as the prejudices of fathers against this custom, and his effort to present pederasty as a form of noble education would free others from censure as well. His speech is followed by that of the even more radical Eryximachus, a doctor by profession, who appeals to his scientific knowledge of the natural world and the power of arts such as medicine to exert control by instilling love and removing strife (186b–e). His knowledge situates him in the cosmos as a whole, and it is one without political boundaries. There is no reference to laws or to the city in his speech. His knowledge and skill enable him to serve all humanity. In Plato's *Protagoras,* set around fifteen years prior to the dramatic date of the party in the *Symposium,* we meet Eryximachus and his beloved Phaedrus listening to the discourses of the sophists, as well as Pausanias and his beloved Agathon. Plato thus suggests the influence of the sophists on these Athenians (see *Protagoras* 315c–e). They and those whom they influenced were cosmopolitans all, in one way or another. The sophists were itinerant teachers who claimed to be able to teach anyone, anywhere, the truth and skills they had to offer (see also *Euthydemus* 271c).

The only speaker at the Symposium absent from the gathering of sophists in the *Protagoras* is the comic poet Aristophanes, and his mockery of the sophistic hubris of the previous speakers recalls his mockery in the *Clouds* of what he saw as Socrates' intellectual pretensions, which he associates with the sophists (*Clouds* 331, 1111, 1309). Our earliest ancestors, the comic poet reports, assaulted the gods in the heavens, who forestalled their plot and punished them by cutting them in half—weakening them by giving them the human shape we know today. Love moves us to seek our lost half and to recover an original unity that no longer exists. We are saved only when the gods in their pity give us some relief through sex and allow us to get on with the ordinary deeds of life, including politics (190b–c; and 192a). Agreeing with cosmopolitans of today that politics is a distraction from the unity that would really fulfill us, Aristophanes warns of the impossibility of unity. But neither of the next speakers, Agathon and Socrates, finds his description of our needy and unhappy condition a satisfactory account of human life.

Agathon is only momentarily daunted when his turn to praise Love follows Aristophanes' turn. After all, his party celebrates the success of his tragedy on the Athenian stage, and he is the rising star of the day. Not surprisingly, his is the only speech that prompts the uproarious applause of all present when they hear the youth speak (198a). Agathon's work seems to have a universal appeal, meeting the enthusiastic approval both of the elite gathering at his home and also of the thirty thousand Greeks (not just Athenians) who have recently acclaimed his tragedy (175e, 194b). He delights the whole civilized world. Indeed, the ascendance of Love, as he proceeds to describe it, defies political boundaries and signals a new era for human beings, bringing "friendship and peace" in the place of force and necessity (195c). Plato thus appears to agree with Friedrich Nietzsche, who observed many centuries later that Agathon followed in the footsteps of a reformed tragedy, which reconstructed the art form on the basis of an optimistic worldview.[18] To be sure, the narrative imagination of Plato's Agathon encourages a transcendence of traditional virtues and traditional values, which have led to difference and enmity. What Eryximachus seeks to accomplish through knowledge and the art of medicine, Agathon seeks to accomplish through poetry (see 196d–e).

Agathon's account of Love's virtues demonstrates his reconstruction of poetry along the lines Nietzsche identifies. For example, Agathon says that Love is the most courageous of all, for he conquers even the god of war, Ares, who falls in love with Aphrodite (196c–d). Agathon thus alludes with approval to Homer's story of their adulterous affair (*Od* 8.265–368). And since all consent to the sway of Love, Agathon continues, he is perfectly just, for where there is consent there is justice (196b–c). And Love is moderate because moderation is the conquest of desire, and Love conquers all other desires. Ares and Aphrodite, like the other Olympian gods, were involved in supporting one side or the other in the Trojan War. But all such matters are forgotten at the door of Aphrodite's bedchamber. We are all alike. And we are like the gods if we are ruled by Love. Finally, Love's wisdom is clear, according to Agathon, inasmuch as he inspires poets with wisdom, for what one does not have one cannot give to another (197a). The god Love and the inspired poet, such as Agathon himself, are also one. He does not need any further unity such as that to which Aristophanes' maimed human beings aspire. He is whole. Not surprisingly, Agathon does not allude to his lover Pausanias at any point in the dialogue.

Nietzsche not only claimed that Agathon's perspective represented the decline of tragedy, and hence of Greece; he also attributed that decline to the influence of Socratic dialectic on the poets.[19] Plato, however, shows Socrates objecting to Agathon's optimistic view that love is beautiful and good, by practicing that very dialectic on Agathon himself. "Is Love of something or of nothing?" Socrates asks Agathon (199b–d). For Agathon, Love is, in a way, of nothing, as it is not directed to an object outside itself. The inspired poet is one with the god, and creates out of his own self-sufficiency. Like Love who possesses him, he is beautiful and good. When Socrates asks whether Love is of something, he calls attention to the hubris in Agathon's speech and tries to correct it by reminding him of love's dependence. Socrates illustrates how something might be understood only in relation to something other than itself by appealing to family relations: a father is a father of someone, and a mother is a mother of someone, of a son or a daughter. Socrates' examples call attention to mutual dependence, in particular in the relationship between parents and their offspring (199d–e). What one generates is both one's own and also other. Agathon's speech about poetic creation leaves no room for what is other or separate from himself. His poetry comes simply from himself—and of course the god within him.

Following the pattern of Socrates' examples, Agathon concedes that Love is "of something," of that which it desires or loves, of what it does not have and of which it is in need. If Love is love of beauty, Love lacks and is in need of beautiful things, as well as good ones, inasmuch as the good are beautiful. Love, then, is neither beautiful nor good (200a–201b). We do not know whether Socrates' questioning will be more effective in distancing Agathon from his optimistic vision of a world order of peace and love than Aristophanes' narrative of needy and unfulfilled beings was. In any case, Socrates does not rely only on questioning but proceeds to give a narrative of his own, about his own encounter as a young man with a priestess, Diotima, who teaches him about love. While preserving the conclusion of his dialectic engagement with Agathon—that love is directed to what it needs or lacks—his lessons teach that lovers do have access to the beautiful and the good through love. At the same time that Socrates corrects Agathon's optimistic view of the world, Socrates does not leave lovers in such a sad state as Aristophanes recounts. His correction of Agathon is thus also a correction of Aristophanes. His is an understanding of love that differs from any thus far expressed in the *Symposium*.

Socrates' Defense of Politics

When he was a young man, Socrates explains, he held Agathon's view of love's beauty and goodness, and he was similarly questioned by a priestess from Mantinea named Diotima. Her argument was this: That Love is not itself beautiful and good does not mean that it is ugly and bad. Rather, it is between god and mortal, and a great daimon, for the daimonic, which includes all divination and prophecy, serves as a link between the mortals and gods, carrying messages and prayers in both directions, because "god does not mix with human" (201–203a). Contra Agathon, lovers strive for something higher, outside themselves. While Socrates' account does not sever our connection to the divine—since Love links human and divine—it is much less immediate than Agathon's conception of the inspired poet suggests.

It is also more problematic, at least in one sense. If god and human do not mix, what is Love itself? Can it be a mixed being, and if it is not, how can it link divine and human? The same difficulty emerges when Socrates asks Diotima, "Who are Love's father and mother?"[20] Since god and mortal do not mix—indeed, that is why there must be some third to join them (203a)—Love's parents must both be one or the other to mate. But if they are one or the other, how could they generate an in-between?[21] Diotima responds to Socrates' question with a myth about Love's birth. As we might expect, if god and mortal do not mate, Love's mother, Poverty, and his father, Resource, are more alike than their names at first suggest. Poverty, in the myth, is very resourceful. And Resource himself is in need of her to bring forth his offspring; a resource is a resource not in itself, but only for the sake of some purpose. The common translation of the Greek word for "resource" as "means," or "way" indicates that it must be understood in terms of a relation, just as, to use Socrates' earlier illustration, a mother or a father is a parent of someone. But if Poverty and Resource are mixed beings, who are *their* parents? Diotima's myth simply reflects the question: how can one account for something between mortal and divine?

When Socrates inquires about Love's parents, he questions the intelligibility of an intermediate, which could exist as a link between human and divine only if it were not needed as a link, only if human and divine could mix. Socrates' question thus demonstrates that he knows that he does not understand, and in fact that he understands the problem. It is therefore Socrates himself who provides the model for an intermediate: in seeking wisdom, as Diotima explains, the philosopher is not yet wise, nor is he

so ignorant that he doesn't know that he doesn't know (204a–b; see also *Apology* 22dff.).[22]

Just as ignorance alone cannot explain philosophizing, lack alone cannot explain love of the beautiful. If Love is neither beautiful nor ugly, and desires what it lacks, it would desire the ugly as much as the beautiful. The offspring of Poverty and Resource appears to favor Resource. Moreover, human complexity is manifest not only in our seeking knowledge, in Diotima's account, but in our generating or giving birth. As resourceful and needy beings, lovers give birth, the former attribute making generation possible, the latter making it necessary. Simple emptiness could not give birth, for it would have nothing to give. Nor would anything sufficient unto itself require generation for its fulfillment. It is when the (needy) lover meets someone with a beautiful soul, Diotima says, that he is "resourceful" (*euporei*) in speaking to him about virtue, and about what a good man should be and pursue (209b–c). Need finds resources within itself, and resources generate speeches about what is good. Therefore, Diotima's further revelations about Love as creative, generative, poetic, and even about lovers as pregnant build on her earlier statements about Love as in-between.

Diotima reaches the generative character of Love in response to another of Socrates' questions, "Of what use is Love to humans?" Socrates is unable to say what the lover of the beautiful derives from beautiful things. Only when Diotima substitutes good things for beautiful ones, does Socrates understand that Love is useful, because when we love good things and possess them, we are happy (204c–205a). But since everyone desires to be happy, and hence to possess good things, everyone is a lover. Socrates wonders at this result. Diotima attempts to explain through an analogy between lover and poet, whose literal meaning in Greek is "maker." We give one sort of maker, the poet, the name of poet, whereas the term should apply to artisans of all kinds, just as we apply the term lover to only one sort of lover (205b–c). But even if our way of speaking obscures the similarities between things, it is also based on a perception of their differences. We single out poets from other craftsmen and lovers from other human beings for good reason.[23] The beautiful cannot be reduced to the good.

To love the good—which is to love that the good be ours and that we thereby be happy—is to love ourselves. But this does not exhaust the experience of Love, as indicated by Socrates' question about Love's use. If Love merely led us to our good, its use would be unquestionable. Earlier in the evening, Phaedrus had given examples of lovers who gave their lives

for those whom they loved (179b–c). Whereas to love the good is to love ourselves, to love the beautiful brings us outside of ourselves. Without a love of the beautiful, love of the good merges into love of one's own. Diotima therefore does not explain Love simply in terms of the good, as opposed to the beautiful. Although she demonstrates the use of Love by reference to the good, she reintroduces the beautiful, arguing that the lover desires to give birth in the presence of the beautiful. Lovers are pregnant, she claims,[24] and only the beautiful can act as midwife, providing relief from the pains of labor. By generation, by leaving behind something new in the place of the old, mortal beings partake of immortality. Even the beautiful itself may seem useful in Diotima's account, but the generation that it makes possible leads us beyond ourselves. Parents are willing to do anything to preserve and nurture their young, "to fight to the finish . . . for the sake of those they have generated, and to die on their behalf; and they are willingly racked by starvation and stop at nothing to nourish their offspring" (207a–b). Diotima does not stop Socrates from wondering, but gives him more cause to wonder (205a, 206b, 207d, and 208b–c). Our love cannot be reduced to our love of ourselves and of our own good.

It is fitting that Socrates should invent a woman to answer some of the previous speakers, whose downplaying of generation, offspring, and children is consistent with their homosexuality (178b, 179c, 180d, 186e). Of the previous speakers, Aristophanes alone describes the generation of offspring by men and women, and in his story generation arises not from a need or a desire of the parents, but merely as a by-product of their longing for a lost unity (191c).[25] And although Agathon focuses on the poet's productions (196e–197a), they come solely from the inspired poet. No other human being inspires or contributes to his creations in any way. His love of what he generates is only self-love. Unlike the love of parents for their offspring that Diotima describes, it could evoke no wonder by summoning sacrifice. Agathon does not even raise the question of Love's parents, unlike Socrates and some of the other symposiasts (cf. 195b with 178b, 180d, and, of course, 203a). Socrates invents someone other to address these men—a prophetess, whose inspiration distinguishes her from other human beings; a foreigner, who is a stranger in Athens; and a woman who points dramatically to what is missing from the previous speeches by presenting all human beings, men as well as women, as pregnant.

Diotima moves from the generation of children to the ways in which the desire for immortality is satisfied through fame. The "immortal memory"

that Alcestis and Achilles sought for themselves, Diotima explains, is one "that we *now* hold" (208d, emphasis mine). They are dependent on future generations, even on poets. Diotima's examples include a legendary king of Athens, who dies "on behalf of the kingdom of his children" (208d). Diotima's emphasis on generation and offspring also allows for noble deeds for the sake of one's city. Diotima next refers to the virtue of prudence as an offspring of the love for immortality, as well as a range of activities that sustain and flourish in political communities.

The offspring most worthy of memory, "prudence and the rest of virtue" (209a), includes the productions of poets, craftsmen, and statesmen. An image of Plato's Socrates appears again, when Diotima refers to those pregnant in soul who seek someone beautiful and attempt to educate him by speaking to him about virtue and what his pursuits should be (209b–c).[26] Just as nurturing completes generation, so does teaching complete Love. The element of nurturing remains for Diotima even at the highest level, when she describes the ascent of the lover from a beautiful beloved, to beauty in souls, practices, and laws, then to knowledge of beauty itself, permanent and unchanging, unmixed with anything ugly—"the perfect end" of the lover's labors. The lover then gives birth to and nurtures, she says, not phantoms of virtue but true virtue. Only then, Diotima concludes, does he become "dear to the gods and immortal, if it is possible for any human being" (212a).

When Socrates responds to Agathon that Love lacks what it desires, or desires beyond itself, he reminds him of human insufficiency, dependence, and relationship. And when he presents Diotima's teaching that Love generates, and that generation—and nurturing—is a mortal's way to immortality, he reminds Agathon of death in a way that links mortals to their offspring, to future generations, and to their communities more generally. His emphasis on limitation, in contrast to Agathon's on self-sufficiency, places human beings in political communities. Because our political communities, like the children born to their parents, are our own, we are able to give ourselves to the task of nurturing them; and because they are not simply our own but have a life beyond ourselves, just as do the children of parents, our care involves some sacrifice or risk of ourselves. And because we love our own only insofar as it is good (205e), Socrates makes room for a politics that strives to ensure that one's own is good, a politics that goes beyond mere necessity or preservation as human beings seek to lead good and noble or beautiful lives. Insofar as the beautiful cannot be reduced to

the good, self-interested political action might be mediated by the beautiful. To Agathon, Socrates insists that Resource is wedded to Poverty, while to Aristophanes he insists that Poverty is wedded to Resource. It is Socrates' intermediate position between lack and possession, and not that of either of these poets, that leaves open this possibility.

The lovers whom Diotima describes generate and nurture not only children, but also inventions of arts or crafts, poetic productions, laws of political communities, speeches about virtue, and even virtue itself in the souls of others (208e–212a). Lovers begin with a particular beloved in their ascent to the beautiful and end in generating and nurturing particular offspring that are shared with others. They may at first seem like the philosopher in Plato's *Republic* who ascends to the beings outside the cave of political life and is forced to return to pay his debts (*Republic* 519c–520c). This philosopher's priority is clear, but he does what is necessary. But the lover described here does not have to be forced to return to human and political life, because he never really leaves it. His attaining a vision of beauty coincides with his generating true virtue. Philosophic life so understood contributes to political life and serves as a model for it. That is, the state between poverty and resource that accounts for the pursuit of wisdom and its self-generation through questioning others also accounts for the ongoing human activities that keep political communities alive and flourishing.

Socrates'—or Diotima's—words that link mortal human beings to others are supported by his deeds. In concluding his speech in the *Symposium,* Socrates claims that he is persuaded by Diotima and that he tries to persuade others (212b). Of the speeches delivered at the *Symposium,* Socrates' alone culminates in an attempt to perpetuate itself in this manner (cf. 193a–b). And Socrates well knew the risk he ran by speaking to others, even if he did not engage in politics in the ordinary sense (see *Gorgias* 486a–b and 511a–b). After Socrates stops speaking, Aristophanes objects to an allusion in Socrates' speech to his own speech about love (212c). At his trial, years later, Socrates again alludes to Aristophanes and his portrayal of Socrates in the *Clouds* when he refers to a comic poet as one of the sources of long-standing prejudices against him (*Apology* 22b–e). For now, it looks as if there will be further conversation, this time a dialogue between Socrates and the comic poet himself. Once again, Socrates' speech alone of those delivered that evening provokes such an outcome. It is a brewing conversation interrupted, however, by the flamboyant entrance of

Alcibiades, who has come to honor Agathon for the success of his tragedy on the Greek stage (212d–e).

Alcibiades' Cosmopolitan Vision

The intoxicated Alcibiades bursts into the gathering supported by a flute girl and others of his company. He is crowned with a wreath of ivy and violets and thus resembles the god Dionysus (e.g., Euripides, *Bacchae* 81–82).[27] As a youth, he was pursued by Socrates, who claimed to be his lover, as Alcibiades will soon recount, and he was familiar with Socrates' questioning of himself and others (see *Alcibiades I* and *Protagoras*). Along with his freedom from received opinion and conventional behavior came his tyrannical ambitions (Thucydides 6.53 and 60–61). Indeed, in Plato's *Alcibiades I,* the young man confesses his desire to acquire power over the whole world (*Alcibiades I* 105a–e). Only one year after Agathon's party, Alcibiades led the disastrous Sicilian invasion and soon thereafter betrayed Athens and advised Sparta in its war against his city, and then he intrigued against both Greek cities with the king of Persia (Thucydides 6.88.9–6.93.2; 8.46.1–47.1). Dashing, daring, and unscrupulous, this talented Athenian contributed to his city's final defeat in the Peloponnesian War and its subsequent decline.

Xenophon recounts that when Socrates was accused of impiety and of corrupting the young, Alcibiades was one of the names most frequently mentioned (*Memorabilia* I.ii.12). Scholars as well speculate about the connection between Socratic dialectic and Alcibiades' freedom from the conventions and laws of his city. Allan Bloom, for example, suggests that Socrates' questions "liberate[d] Alcibiades from loyalty to his own city," and Lutz questions whether Socrates undermined Alcibiades' law-abidingness (see also *Republic* 538d–539a).[28] The freedom from accepted opinions and the conventions of the day produced by philosophic questioning might liberate an individual from political restraints. Alcibiades' lack of good citizenship, from this perspective, is a reflection of Socrates' independence from the city. Moreover, one might connect Alcibiades' "universal ambitions" with the universal ambitions of philosophy in its pursuit of the truth. Not simply the liberating character of philosophy but its goals and aspirations might find tyrannical expression in a politics of empire. Bloom points us to this possibility as well in his interpretation of the *Symposium*. In contrast to the more typical interpretations that contrast the purity of Socrates' love of the Ideas with Alcibiades' passion for the world, Bloom writes that the "Alcibi-

adean vision of politics seems like a political version" of the "vision of the Ideas and the beautiful."[29] This argument attributes to both a universality of outlook, whether it be the imperialistic drive that finds no impediment in the laws and customs of particular peoples or the love of the truth that leads a philosopher beyond the opinions of his time and place. Although Alcibiades was able to imagine new possibilities for himself beyond Athens, he was hardly a good citizen of the world in Nussbaum's sense. Transcending the political has political implications, as Nussbaum argues, but Plato's portrayal of Alcibiades suggests that, if one understands philosophy as "cosmopolitanism," nothing prevents imperialism.[30]

As I have argued, however, a cosmopolitan vision is more characteristic of Agathon than of Socrates, whose response to Agathon that love is in-between human and divine and completed by generation and nurturing understands human life as necessarily political. What is essential to Socratic philosophizing is therefore missed both by those who warn against applying Socrates' transcendent philosophic vision to politics, as Bloom does in his interpretation of Alcibiades,[31] and those who, like Nussbaum, urge that we do this on a world scale in the interest of our common humanity. Plato alerts us to all such partial interpretations of Socrates when he contrasts his portrayal of Socrates with that of Alcibiades.

When Alcibiades arrives at the symposium, he changes the terms of the agreed-upon entertainment and insists on praising Socrates rather than Love (214b–d). He first compares Socrates to the statues of Silenus, an old man in Greek myth with the ears of a horse. Both Socrates and Silenus have ugly exteriors. And when the statues of Silenus are "split open into two," there are images of gods within. So too does Socrates, Alcibiades says, hide within himself images "divine and golden, altogether beautiful and wondrous" (216d–217a; 222a). Although Socrates disguises himself as a lover of beautiful young men, he is really "full of moderation" within and contemns all the things most people pursue (216d–e). And when Socrates claims he is "ignorant and knows nothing" (221d–e; 216d), he conceals his wisdom, for when opened like the Silenus statues, his speeches are intelligent and contain "everything proper to examine for one who would be noble and good" (222a). Socrates' irony is only deception (218d). Alcibiades understands nothing in-between emptiness and fullness, ignorance and wisdom (see *Alcibiades II* 139a–b).

Alcibiades compares Socrates as well to the satyr Marsyas, who charms and possesses human beings by means of his flute. So too, Alcibiades con-

fesses, does Socrates ravish those who hear him by means of his speeches. Indeed, when he hears Socrates, his "heart leaps and tears pour out." Alcibiades even insists that, like Marsyas's tunes, Socrates' speeches can be reproduced by anyone with the same effect, "even if he be a poor speaker," and regardless of "whether the hearer be a woman, man, or lad." All are "struck out [of their minds] and possessed" (215b–e). He assumes that Socrates' conversations can be simply conveyed from one speaker to another, as if the individual whom Socrates addresses makes no contribution of his own to the dialogue. He misses the dialogic character of Socrates' conversations, which address particular individuals, who therefore have a part to play (see *Phaedrus* 271b and 275e). It is therefore not surprising that he fears that engaging Socrates means a life of idleness or passivity, "sitting beside him until he grows old." He consequently "stops his ears as if from Sirens and runs away" (215b–216b).

Alcibiades' Socrates resembles Aristophanes' Socrates from the *Clouds* in his self-sufficiency—his asceticism and disdain for ordinary human life (cf. 220a–b with *Clouds* 415–17, 439–42, and 737, and cf. 219c and 221b with *Clouds* 223). When Alcibiades describes Socrates' virtues, he thus emphasizes his endurance and indifference to anything outside himself (wearing the same clothes in summer and winter, for example, or unaffected by drink). He captures Socrates' philosophic life with a story from the time they served in the Athenian army together. Having "gotten a thought, Socrates stood on the same spot from dawn on, considering it, and making no progress would not let up," not moving until the following dawn (220c). Although Socrates is on a military expedition, he is oblivious of his fellow soldiers, who, Alcibiades recounts, after they finish their dinner, bring out their bedding—for it was summer—and sleep outside to find out if Socrates will stand all night. Socrates is as oblivious of the military and political concerns of his city, at least in Alcibiades' story, as were the disciples of Aristophanes' Socrates in the *Clouds* who made maps unaware that Athens and Sparta were at war (*Clouds* 206–14). His philosophizing, as Alcibiades presents it, separates him from his city—even when he is serving in its army. His thinking could occur anywhere. He converses with no one, as Alcibiades tells the tale, and no one knows what he is thinking. Alcibiades' image of Socrates rivals Aristophanes' image of him as suspended in a basket investigating the heavens (*Clouds* 218–32). Although Alcibiades' mockery is mixed with some admiration, his blame with praise (222a), he seems to be among those who view Socrates through the lens of Aristo-

phanes' momentous play (see *Apology* 22b–e).[32] Socrates' lessons about Love respond not merely to the two poets in the *Symposium,* the one who thinks that self-sufficiency is possible, the other who mocks its pretensions, but also to the latter's portrayal of the philosopher himself in the *Clouds.*

When Alcibiades proposed to yield sexual favors to Socrates in return for his wisdom (217a), he recounts, Socrates showed no interest in sex and denied that he had any such wisdom as Alcibiades supposed. When Socrates offers him a different sort of relationship—that they "will in the future, after deliberating, do whatever seems best to us two about these and other things" (219a–b), Alcibiades hears only a rejection. Just as he sees nothing in-between ignorance and wisdom, he understands love in terms of ruling and being ruled, referring to Socrates' "wondrous power" and his own "abject slavery" to Socrates (215e, 216c, and 219e). When he begins to pursue Socrates, he imagines that the roles of beloved and lover have been merely reversed (217a–219c, 222b, and 213c; *Alcibiades* I 135d); he has no conception of the reciprocal relation Socrates proposed.[33] If there is no middle between emptiness and fullness, love can be only domination and subjection. There is no space for reciprocity. Only in-betweens can both love and be loved (see *Lysis* 40d–e). When Socrates proposes that he and Alcibiades deliberate together about what is best for the two of them, he is offering Alcibiades a part in a conversation. But just as the dialogic character of Socratic speech eludes him, so too does Socrates' care for him. Moreover, he is not satisfied by any mere part (see, e.g., 213e and 214c–d; *Alcibiades I* 104e–105c). After proposing the exchange of Socrates' wisdom for his sexual favors, Alcibiades asked Socrates to consider what was best for the two of them, but Alcibiades' proposition indicated that he himself had already decided for them (cf. 219a and 218c). When Socrates responded that after deliberating they would do whatever looked best to them both (219b), he was not only offering a part to Alcibiades but claiming one for himself.

Throughout his "praise" of Socrates, then, Alcibiades presents Socrates as if he were self-sufficient, without particular needs and cares or attachment to ordinary human life. His wisdom renders him godlike and powerful, as indicated by his comparison of him to the Silenus statues and of his speeches to those of Marsyas's flute music, while his eroticism and knowledge of ignorance are only part of his exoteric presentation. Although Alcibiades disdains what he sees as the idleness of the philosophic life, he admires Socrates' freedom from and transcendence of ordinary

human concerns. Socrates did not succeed in conveying to Alcibiades any alternative understanding of philosophy, or of Socrates himself. Of course, in terms of the dramatic action of this dialogue, Alcibiades arrives too late to hear Socrates' account of the lessons he learned from Diotima about Love and philosophy—its state between ignorance and wisdom, the connection between poverty and resource, and both to generation, and how this understanding of love supported philosophy and politics. By timing Alcibiades' arrival after Socrates' speech, Plato suggests more generally that Alcibiades did not hear what Socrates had to say about philosophy (216a–c). Indeed, he seems to have learned more about Socrates from the *Clouds* than from Socrates himself. Like Agathon, whom he honors for his poetic success, and whose view of the world leaves no room for Resource's mate, he understands only the resourceful side of Socrates. He imitates the poets by his recourse to "images" or "likenesses" in order to describe Socrates. Of course, the most famous images of Socrates are those left to us by Plato's dialogues. Whereas Socrates competes in the *Symposium* with poets, Alcibiades competes with Plato himself. Plato does not present him as an authority on Socratic philosophy, but rather as evidence of the dangers of misunderstanding it.

Plato's Narrative Imagination

In the *Republic,* Socrates criticizes poetry as unphilosophic. For example, poetry such as Greek epic or tragedy depicts the precariousness of human existence and the terror of death, as in its tales of the fall of heroes and of the various sufferings of human beings and of those whom they love. Far from making us sympathetic with others or leading us to deliberation or to a larger view of things, poetry from this perspective strengthens our attachments to what is peculiarly our own (e.g., *Republic* 387d–388e; and 605cff.). There have, of course, been many defenses of poetry against Socrates' critique, beginning with Aristotle's *Poetics,* in his argument that poetry is more philosophic than history. While the latter narrates particulars, events that have happened, poetry narrates events that might happen, revealing their underlying causes or truths and thus making universal truths or principles manifest in the particular actions and lives it portrays (*Poetics* 1451b3–10). Consistent with Aristotle's observation, Euben and Monoson implicitly defend poetry against the critique that it fosters an unreflective attachment to one's own when they point to the critical aspects

of Athenian drama itself. Just as Euben refers to the "self-critique" found in Athenian drama, Monoson argues that the "strong and discerning mind" of the active spectator of the Athenian drama was a useful image for Plato in representing philosophy.[34]

Also consistent with Aristotle's distinction between poetry and history, Nussbaum contends that the narrative imagination can make us aware of our common humanity underlying different political orders and cultures. This is why she associates the "narrative imagination" with Socratic self-examination as essential components for cultivating humanity. While Socratic self-examination frees us from the opinions of our own time and place, it is by identifying with those alien or different from ourselves, as poetry helps us to do, that we come to understand the other "not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us."[35] It is not primarily a toleration of difference that the narrative imagination makes possible, but a transcendence of difference. Far from strengthening our attachment to our own, as Socrates contends in the *Republic,* poetry for Nussbaum frees us from that very attachment.

I agree about the philosophic potential of poetry, and I would not contest the affinities between poetic narrative and the self-critical aspects of Socratic philosophizing as Plato presents it. After all, as Aristotle himself pointed out, the dialogues of Plato are themselves forms of poetry (*Poetics* 447b12). Plato gave an implicit defense of poetry when he chose to depict Socratic philosophizing in dramatic dialogues rather than to give a systematic account of it. But while Plato's narratives of Socrates are not as narrowly parochial and limiting as Socrates depicts poetry in the *Republic,* I argue, they defend both the familiar and the alien or different in a way that questions the human benefit of cosmopolitanism. My case turns on Plato's presentation of the relation of philosophy to wonder.

For Plato, philosophy begins in and is sustained by wonder (*Theaetetus* 155d). If the familiar were never unfamiliar, we would not question; we would see nothing beyond what we already know or think we know. We would rest self-satisfied with received opinion. In the *Theaetetus,* where Socrates traces philosophy to wonder, he asks the young mathematician *Theaetetus* to define knowledge. Nothing would be more familiar to the young man, who can demonstrate all he knows about mathematics to others (*Theaetetus* 147c–148b), but it turns out that he cannot say what knowledge itself is. If he has knowledge but does not know what knowing is, he does not know himself. There seems to be a discrepancy between what he

knows and self-knowledge. Similarly, Socrates recounts in the *Phaedo* that when he was a young man, he sought in the work of natural philosophy ways of explaining the problems that puzzled him, but natural philosophy could not explain himself or his relation to Athens (*Phaedo* 97b–c and 98e). Natural philosophy, like mathematics, yields knowledge but not self-knowledge. And when Diotima describes philosophers as neither ignorant nor wise, her description is so puzzling to Socrates that he must ask who these could be (*Symposium* 204a–b). He cannot recognize himself in her account. He must invent a character quite different from himself, a foreigner and a woman, in order to have her explain philosophy to him. She in turn invents the mythical characters Poverty and Resource to answer his question about the generation of Love (203bff.). Philosophy is so strange even to the philosopher that it requires a series of projections or images, and then as a result it becomes even stranger. Who, after all, are Love's parents, and how could they generate someone between human and divine? Through Diotima's questioning Socrates about why human beings love, she makes Socrates strange to himself, as Socrates later makes Theaetetus when he questions him about knowledge. As teachers, both Diotima and Socrates keep questioning alive by showing what is strange and inexplicable in what is most familiar.

If the unfamiliar were in no way familiar, however, would we ever become aware of it? And if somehow we did, what hope would we have of answering our questions about it? We would have no cause to trust that we could ever come to know what we do not. And questioning would cease just as surely as if questions had not been raised in the first place. Meno, in the dialogue bearing his name, questions whether we can ever come to know what we do not know, inasmuch as not knowing it we would not know what to seek, nor would we know it when and if we discovered it (*Meno* 80d). Meno puts forward a "pugnacious proposition," Socrates says, that would end inquiry, for we would inquire neither about what we knew—since we knew it—nor about what we did not know—since we could not know it (*Meno* 80e). Therefore he will "trust" the stories told of old about how "all nature is akin" and how all things were known to us before birth so that by recollecting (or learning) one thing we can recollect (or learn) others (*Meno* 81c–d). The unfamiliar that we seek is connected to the familiar that we know, and it can be recollected because we once knew it. And so Socrates appeals to what Theaetetus knows about math for him to understand what he is trying to understand about knowledge (*Theaetetus*

185c–e and 195e–196c). Theaetetus must see the familiar in the unfamiliar in order to make progress.

The strange and the familiar are therefore both necessary for philosophy. If the former collapsed into the latter, there would be no questioning; we would be puzzled by nothing because everything would be familiar. If the latter collapsed into the former, there could be no basis for answering questions, Meno's pugnacious proposition would hold, and we would, as Socrates says, be idle (*Meno* 81d). Platonic dialogues are narrative imaginations that attempt to preserve both the familiar and the unfamiliar, in order to keep philosophy alive. Socrates' recourse to a stranger as his teacher about Love (201e, 204c, 211d) is not simply for the sake of his fellow symposiasts, but for his own as well.

Although Plato's Socrates may have become a household word, easily associated, as we have seen, with world citizenship, Plato made it difficult for his readers to view Socrates as just like everyone else. Although his dialogues attempt to make Socrates familiar, even beyond the confines of Athens, as a model of the philosophic life (see *Phaedo* 57aff.), they also preserve his strangeness. Plato's presentation of Socrates has this in common with Socrates' description of Diotima. One important way, but not the only way,[36] in which Plato highlights Socrates' strangeness is by attributing to him "a daimonic voice," which Socrates claimed came to him in childhood, always preventing him from doing something he should not do. His "voice" did not provide him with reasons for its negative commands, nor was it heard by anyone but Socrates himself. As Plato presents it, it was a puzzle even to Socrates. But its commands did not make Socrates a completely private man. Because it did not oppose his coming to court to face trial, Socrates says (*Apology* 40a–b), it indirectly supported the judicial processes of the city. And while it kept Socrates from engaging directly in politics, it did not prevent him from conversing with others, even about his daimonic voice itself (*Apology* 31c–d; see also *Phaedrus* 242b–c; and *Euthydemus* 272e). In his portrayal of Socrates, Plato makes the strange familiar while keeping its strangeness before us.

When Nussbaum recommends the study of other cultures, she too warns against making the strange too familiar and the familiar too strange. She exemplifies the first with "descriptive chauvinism," the second with "descriptive romanticism." The first "recreat[es] the other in the image of oneself, reading the strange as exactly like what is familiar."[37] Blind to the unfamiliar and strange, the descriptive chauvinist would not undergo the

"expansion of sympathies" that characterizes Nussbaum's world citizen. He sees nothing strange or unfamiliar when he looks at cultures other than his own, but only his own ways of acting and thinking. Far from transcending received opinion, the chauvinist imposes his self-understanding on his views of others. Descriptive romanticism, on the other hand, "view[s] another culture as excessively alien and virtually incomparable with one's own, ignoring elements of similarity and highlighting elements that seem mysterious and odd." It is driven "by a romantic longing for exotic experiences that our own familiar lives seem to deny us."[38] We do not see what is familiar in the strange. This "vice" too is incompatible with world citizenship from Nussbaum's perspective, for romanticizing otherness will make it inaccessible to us.

Whereas Socrates would correct descriptive chauvinism by insisting on what is strange in what is familiar (Theaetetus's mathematical knowledge is not enough to explain knowledge) and descriptive romanticism by insisting on what is familiar in what we are trying to understand (the meaning of knowledge cannot exclude Theaetetus's knowledge), Nussbaum would correct both by "cultivating humanity." Familiar and strange both yield to what is common or universal. World citizens identify with others, neither imposing themselves upon them (descriptive chauvinism) nor celebrating their character as alien (descriptive romanticism). Understanding that different individuals and cultures all face common problems, albeit in different ways, will help us to recognize our "shared humanity."[39] It is the task of the narrative imagination, as Nussbaum conceives it, to support such an endeavor. It succeeds in educating us when it shows what is universal both in our own and in the other or foreign. In this light, differences become less important than what is shared, less threatening and less dangerous. They also become less defensible. The world citizen ends up with nothing that is simply his own, and at the same time he does not allow others to maintain the dignity of distance. Indeed, he resembles Alcibiades. No allegiance to his own city prevented him from betraying it, and his love of the world was so great that he seemed eager to possess it (see Thucydides 6.92.4).

Plato's narratives, in contrast, seek to give us enough distance from the familiar that we may question it and enough familiarity with the elusive so that we trust our pursuit of it. But although the familiar becomes questionable in Platonic dialogues, it remains our own, while the strange remains too elusive to become so. However much philosophy comes into conflict with traditional politics, then, the former does not ultimately undermine

the latter, because it preserves the distinction between citizen and stranger. By doing so, it supports the citizen's defense of his own, while moderating tyrannical impulses that find no limits in what is strange or foreign. Philosophy and politics flourish or wane together. Nussbaum's world citizen, freed from his own through questioning and open to all things human through poetry, neither defends the familiar nor finds anything strange or wondrous in what is foreign.[40] Even if he travels the wide world, he is less a world citizen than Socrates the Athenian, who can appreciate the foreign because he knows he cannot assimilate it to his own. After all, he is only a philosopher, a lover of wisdom. Wise is a name we can give only to the gods (*Phaedrus* 278d).

Notes

1. Patrick Deneen, "Chasing Plato," *Political Theory* (June 2000): 424. In this school he includes Josiah Ober and Arlene Saxonhouse, as well as the three scholars whose books he reviews—J. Peter Euben, Gerald M. Mara, and Christopher Rocco. One might also include in this democratic school of Platonic interpretation S. Sara Monoson, who, like Euben, tracks the affinities between the democratic practices of Plato's Athens and Plato's understanding of philosophical activity (*Plato's Democratic Entanglements* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000]) and John R. Wallach, who finds in Plato's concept of leadership a political art for channeling democratic energies in virtuous directions and therefore one that can be redeployed in our own contemporary postliberal democracy (*The Platonic Political Art: A Study of Critical Reason and Democracy* [University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2001]). Deneen offers a perceptive and fair-minded account of the strengths and weaknesses of this school of interpretation as illustrated by the work of the authors he reviews.

2. J. Peter Euben, *Corrupting Youth: Political Education, Democratic Culture, and Political Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1997), 208.

3. Dana Villa, *Socratic Citizenship* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001), for example, 3 and 28.

4. Villa, *Socratic Citizenship,* 3 and 15.

5. Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997), 26. Here Nussbaum distinguishes the democratic outlook of Socrates from Plato, who "was certainly an elitist about reason, and openly hostile to democracy" (25–26). Thus the "tradition" of Socratic questioning to which she appeals stems from "the historical Socrates," not Plato, even though in some of his works, she says, Plato "represents Socrates as he was" rather than as a mouthpiece for his own views (26). Earlier, in her monumental work on Greek thought, *The Fragility of Goodness,* Nussbaum did side with Plato against Socrates, even arguing that

it was Plato, in contrast to Socrates, who was able to understand the unique individuality of the human person. *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986), 166–67, 173–74, 197, 199, and 218. Thus it might seem that it would be Plato who is the more promising source for "cultivating humanity." But here, because Socrates is commonly associated with a tradition of questioning beliefs, a democratic Socrates better serves her purposes.

6. Nussbaum claims to draw not only from Socrates' concept of "the examined life," but on "Aristotle's notions of self-reflective citizenship and above all on Greek and Roman Stoic notions of an education that is 'liberal' in that it liberates the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world." Nussbaum traces the term *world citizen* to Diogenes the Cynic, who pronounced, "I am a citizen of the world." *Cultivating Humanity,* 8 and 50. See also Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," in *For Love of Country?* by Nussbaum et al., ed. Joseph Cohen (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996). In addition to Nussbaum's essay "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," this book contains the responses of numerous critics.

7. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity,* 10, emphasis mine.

8. Ibid., 4. Nussbaum distinguishes between a "sterner, more exigent version" of the world citizen, whose *primary* loyalty is to all human beings, and "a more relaxed version." The latter leaves open "how we order our various loyalties" but requires us to "recognize the worth of human life wherever it occurs and see ourselves as bound by common human abilities and problems to people who lie at a great distance from us." She claims that it is the more relaxed version "that will concern me here." Her rhetoric throughout, however, veers back toward the first, with which she admits at the outset she sympathizes. Ibid., 9. Thus, in her essay "Patriotism and Cosmopolitan," she insists that the Stoic view of world citizenship she proposes does not require that we "give up local identifications, which can be a source of great richness in life." But "our first allegiance" should be to "the moral community made up of all human beings" (7–9). And her description of the "loneliness" of the world citizen, who lives in exile "from comfort in local truths, from the warm, nestling feeling of patriotism, from the absorbing pride in oneself and one's own" (15) throws into doubt the "great richness" from local connections that she allows the world citizen.

9. Thomas L. Pangle and Peter J. Ahrensdorf, *Justice among Nations: On the Moral Basis of Power and Peace* (Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1999), 47. Cicero's statement can be found in *Tusculan Disputations* 5.108.

10. As they say, the teaching of Socratic philosophers, in which group they include Aristotle and Xenophon as well as Plato, "is intended for the liberation of select wise, or potentially wise, individuals." Pangle and Ahrensdorf, *Justice among Nations,* 50.

11. Ibid.

12. For a different criticism of Nussbaum's view of Socrates and of Nussbaum's position on world citizenship more generally, but one I believe compatible with my own, see Michael Beaty and Anne-Marie Bowery, "Cultivating Christian Citizenship: Martha Nussbaum's Socrates, Augustine's Confessions, and the Modern University," *Christian Scholar* 33, no. 1 (Fall 2003): 23–34.

13. See Richard L. Velkley, "On Possessed Individualism: Hegel, Socrates' Daimon, and the Modern State," *Review of Metaphysics* 59, no. 3 (March 2006): 279–301 (reprinted in this volume). For Hegel's discussion of the connection between the Ideas and freedom, see Georg Wilhelm Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy,* trans. E.S. Haldane and Francis H. Simson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 1:385–88, 406–7.

14. Nor, of course, because Socrates was a parochial Greek, subject to the prejudices or limitations of his time and place even when he attempted to transcend them.

15. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity,* for example, 85. See chapter 3, "The Narrative Imagination," 85–112.

16. My analysis of Socrates' defense of politics in the *Symposium* is adapted from my "Socrates' Contest with the Poets in Plato's *Symposium,*" *Political Theory* 32, no. 2 (April 2004): 186–206. Translations from the Greek are my own, although for the *Symposium* I have relied on Seth Benardete's translation in *Plato's "Symposium,"* trans. Seth Benardete and with commentaries by Allan Bloom and Seth Benardete (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2001). Citations of Greek texts in parentheses, unless otherwise noted, are to the *Symposium.*

17. It is not surprising that when Plato dramatizes a later encounter between Socrates and Phaedrus, in a dialogue named for the latter, Phaedrus leads Socrates outside the walls of the city into the countryside, in order to hear a speech. This is the only time dramatized by Plato when Socrates leaves Athens, although there is reference to his service in the army during the war. Socrates, in contrast to Phaedrus, is ready to return to the city, even before the dialogue is over and even when the noonday heat presses (Phaedrus 242a).

18. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy, in The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner,* trans. and with commentary by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1976), 81.

19. Ibid., 92.

20. There existed various accounts of Love's parents, none authoritative, given their variety. See R.G. Bury, *The Symposium of Plato* (Cambridge: W. Heffner, 1969), 22, note on 178b.

21. This difficulty explains why one might assume that Poverty is mortal and Resource divine, as scholars, not surprisingly, tend to do. See Bury, *The Symposium of Plato,* xl. And see Mark J. Lutz, *Socrates' Education to Virtue: Learning the Love of the Noble* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1998), 87.

22. As has often been noted, Diotima's description recalls Socrates in many of its details. As the offspring of Poverty and Resource, Love is, like his mother,

"always poor" and, like his father, "a plotter after the beautiful and the good" (203d–e).

23. As Allan Bloom observes, by pointing out that only certain individuals are called poets, Diotima "alerts us to the mysterious fact that poetry is privileged because it caters to the longing for the beautiful." "The Ladder of Love," in *Plato's "Symposium,"* 136.

24. Diotima's striking statement does not merge male and female roles in reproduction, begetting (*gennaō*) and giving birth (*tiktō*), but acknowledges the complexity necessary for generation. In other words, Love has a father and a mother.

25. Lutz, *Socrates' Education to Virtue,* 69; Waller R. Newell, *Ruling Passion: The Erotics of Statecraft in Platonic Political Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 74; and Bloom, "The Ladder of Love," 142.

26. Although Socrates claims in the *Theaetetus* that as midwife he does not generate but questions others, he also admits that he is in part the "cause" when those whom he questions "give birth to many beautiful things" (150 c–d). As to Socrates' practice of midwifery in that very dialogue, at the end Theaetetus declares that in his conversation with Socrates, "I for one have said even more on account of you than all I used to have in myself" (210b). For a different interpretation of this issue, and its relevance to the *Symposium,* see Harry Neumann, "Diotima's Concept of Love," *American Journal of Philology* 86 (1965): 57.

27. For a more developed account of Alcibiades' role in the *Symposium,* see my "Philosophy and Empire: On Socrates and Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium,*" *Polity* 39, no. 4 (October 2007): 502–21.

28. Bloom, "The Ladder of Love," 166; and Lutz, *Socrates' Education to Virtue,* 127. Seth Benardete speculates that had Alcibiades not exposed Athens to disaster in Sicily, which ultimately led to the city's defeat in the war with Sparta, Socrates might not have been brought to trial, found guilty, and executed. "On Plato's *Symposium,*" in *Plato's "Symposium,"* 192.

29. Bloom, "The Ladder of Love," 166.

30. While Alcibiades' tyrannical and imperialistic ambitions seem antithetical to Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism, her world citizen is superior to most human beings, whom she recognizes will not so easily place "reason and the love of humanity" above their local attachments. This is why she finds world citizenship "a lonely business." "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," 15. Several of Nussbaum's critics have expressed reservations along this line. Michael W. McConell observes that the "moralistic cosmopolitan" is "not one who everywhere feels comfortable but who everywhere feels superior." "Don't Neglect the Little Platoons," in Nussbaum et al., *For Love of Country?* 82. And Sissela Bok observes, "Children deprived of a culturally rooted education too often find it difficult to experience any allegiances whatsoever, whether to the world or their community and family," and in their "exile" experience "responsibilities to none save themselves." "From Part to Whole," in Nussbaum et al., *For Love of Country?* 43.

See also J. Peter Euben's criticism of Nussbaum in *Platonic Noise* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2003), 128–31.

31. See also Pangle and Ahrensdorf, *Justice among Nations,* 33–50.

32. Not surprisingly, Alcibiades quotes a line from the *Clouds* to illustrate Socrates' hubris (228; *Clouds* 362). The only other time Plato quotes from the play is when he has Socrates in the *Apology* use a line from the *Clouds* to show the sort of mockery he was subjected to by his old accusers (*Apology* 19c; *Clouds* 225 and 1503).

33. See Gary Alan Scott's excellent analysis in *Plato's Socrates as Educator* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 2000), 121–34.

34. Euben, *Corrupting Youth,* 208. Monoson argues that Plato conceptualizes the philosopher as modeled on the *theatēs*—the audience member at the theater—whose experience watching plays "develops valuable mental and moral sensibilities, even sharpens [his] awareness that things are not always as they seem." *Plato's Democratic Entanglements,* 209–10.

35. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity,* 9–11 and 85.

36. Other characters, for example, often call attention to how "odd" (*atopos*) they find Socrates (see, e.g., *Symposium* 175b; *Phaedrus* 230c; *Gorgias* 473a, 480e, and 481e; and *Euthydemus* 305a).

37. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity,* 118.

38. Ibid., 124.

39. Ibid., 138.

40. See Nussbaum's slightly different formulation, "Reply," in Nussbaum et al., *For Love of Country?* 140.