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# PLATO'S STATESMAN

*A Philosophical Discussion*



PLATO DIALOGUE PROJECT

*edited by*

Panos Dimas • Melissa Lane • Susan Sauvé Meyer

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## **Plato's *Philebus***

Edited by Panos Dimas, Russell E. Jones, and Gabriel R. Lear

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# Preface

The *Plato Dialogue Project* (PDP) was born in January 2014 at a meeting in the Norwegian Institute at Athens. Its goal was to foster studies of Plato that brought to bear on whole dialogues of Plato the highest standards of scholarly and philosophical engagement. Triennial meetings, each devoted to a different Platonic dialogue, would be convened at research institutions around the world and an international team of scholars, each assigned a different section of the dialogue, would be invited to present papers on their assigned passages. Subsequent to the meeting, the papers would be revised for publication in a single volume that would not be a commentary in the traditional sense but would engage with the dialogue in its entirety.

The first fruit of this project was the volume *Plato's Philebus: A Philosophical Discussion*, edited by Panos Dimas, Russell Jones, and Gabriel Lear (Oxford University Press, 2019). The present volume is the project's second fruit. The contributors, along with Francesco Ademollo, Joseph Bjelde, Eyjólfur Kjalar Emilsson, Hallvard Fossheim, and Hendrik Lorenz, met at the University of Oslo in August 2018, where we were hosted by Panos Dimas, and spent four glorious days working our way through Plato's *Statesman* and debating matters of doctrine and interpretation. We thank the University of Oslo for its generous support and excellent hospitality. The papers discussed on that occasion went through several rounds of revision to become the chapters in the present volume, with both the editors and the authors offering feedback on the developing chapters. While disagreements remain between contributors on a range of issues, our aspiration was not to agree on a unitary line of interpretation, but to be comprehensive in our scope while developing options for our readers to consider in their own philosophical exploration of the dialogue.

The editors are grateful to Henry Hung for assistance in preparing the manuscript for publication, to Jiseob Yoon for preparing the indices, and to Panagiotis Pavlos for help with proof reading.

The PDP board:

Francesco Ademollo, Pierre Destrée, Panos Dimas, Christoph Horn,  
Gabriel R. Lear, Susan Sauvé Meyer, Marco Zingano.

On behalf of the board,

*Susan Sauvé Meyer*, August 2020





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# 1

## Introduction

### The Significance of Plato's *Statesman*

by Panos Dimas

#### 1.1 The Term *politikos*, in Context

'Statesman' renders the Greek term '*politikos*', an adjective that in this context is substantivized to stand in for '*politikos anēr*', the exact rendering of which is 'political man'.<sup>1</sup>

'*Politikos*' in the present dialogue does not denote what we would call a 'politician', and it is unclear that the term was ever used in this sense, or indeed much used, in daily Greek. Plato himself uses it rarely. We find it in the *Apology* in the plural (21c4), and G. M. A. Grube wisely renders it there as 'public men'. It is then mentioned again in the *Sophist* (217a4), where it is said to have a reference that is distinct from that of the 'sophist' and the 'philosopher' (217b1-4). We need to get a more precise, if only a preliminary, sense of the reference of Plato's '*politikos*'.

It is safe to assume that to the ordinary Greek person the term '*politikos*' would have brought to mind an individual who has at heart the affairs of state, and consequently also the best interest of his fellow citizens. The term as it is used in the present dialogue captures this sense, and so rendering '*politikos*' as 'statesman' is, in this respect, fully apt. Furthermore, by 'statesman' in ordinary English we understand someone who masters the art of politics and manages as a matter of fact to promote the well-being of the polity and its citizens. '*Politikos*' is intended here in a similar, though considerably more specific sense. Plato uses it to denote someone who is an expert in a precisely delineated area of knowledge, namely that of ruling a state,<sup>2</sup> and which knowledge is such that by possessing it one is

<sup>1</sup> Because *politikos* – as well as *basileus* (king), with which it is paired regularly throughout the dialogue – are masculine terms in Greek, this volume typically refers to 'the statesman' as conceived in the dialogue as male. In contrast to the *Republic*, Plato does not in this dialogue address the question of whether women could be political rulers. Citations of the *Statesman* in this volume use the traditional abbreviation of its Greek title (*Plt.*) and will refer to the OCT edition of the Greek text (Duke et al. 1995). Abbreviations for all ancient titles will be those listed in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> The name of this knowledge or expertise, *politikē*, is difficult to translate into English. The contributors to this volume render it either 'statesmanship' or 'statecraft', neither of which is a perfect translation, but both of which are superior to 'politics', which in contemporary usage often marks a contrast with statesmanship.

supremely qualified and fully capable to do precisely that, as well as this may be done.

At the same time, it should be noted that ‘statesman’ as a rendering of Plato’s ‘*politikos*’ is inaccurate in an important sense. As we use the term, it picks out individuals who have served or serve as leaders of state. Not so with ‘*politikos*’. Plato is doubtful that any leader of Athens or any other Greek city, past or present, is a proper *politikos*. He implies that when he has the Eleatic Visitor say at 292d2-8 that he and Young Socrates seek to demarcate the specific scientific domain, expertise in which would make one be *politikos*, and use it also for determining whether any of those claiming to be *politikoi* are indeed such as a matter of fact. For, as he says immediately after, a proper *politikos* is extremely difficult to find, if indeed there is one.

A further important difference between a *politikos* and what we would call a statesman is that one cannot be the latter without ever having held office. Not so with the *politikos*. One can be a *politikos* even if one never holds office, for all that is needed is simply that one possess the requisite knowledge. And there is no suggestion in the dialogue that anything beyond that knowledge is required for being successful in office, should one who has it ever come to hold office. This knowledge makes its possessor as good a leader of state as it is possible for any human to be.

Not only may there be a human who is a proper *politikos* without ever being a leader of state, but also ‘*politikos*’ according to Plato does name something regardless of whether there has been or will ever be a human worthy of being called that. For one thing, the term serves to mark out a specific domain of knowledge. But that does not exhaust its reference. Plato at 285d10-286b1 distinguishes between two classes of beings (*onta*). One of them comprises (1) beings the Visitor calls sensible likenesses (*homoiotētes*), and the other class comprises (2) original beings. The latter are said to be of two types: (a) originals that have sensible likenesses, namely the beings that make up class (1) as this is described here, and (b) originals that are said to be the greatest and most noble beings. The type (b) originals do not have sensible likenesses and may not even have any likenesses at all.<sup>3</sup> The term ‘*politikos*’ names a being that belongs to this type. Now notice that by thus distinguishing between two classes of beings, one of which comprises originals and the other likenesses of them, Plato commits himself to assigning to the class of the original beings ontological independence as well as priority relative to their likenesses. And by marking out a type of original beings, those greatest and most noble, the members of which needn’t have any likenesses, Plato can speak of the *politikos* as something that *is* and at the same time express doubts

<sup>3</sup> We should expect there to be also two types of likenesses, with the second type, not mentioned here, comprising likenesses of the greatest and most noble originals, when these do get to have likenesses. The Visitor needn’t mention this type here.

that there has ever been a human worthy of the name. The term '*politikos*' names a being anyway, namely an original that belongs to the type of which there might not in fact be a likeness. But if there is ever to be a likeness of the original *politikos*, it too is to be called by the name '*politikos*'.

Such are the contours of reference of the term '*politikos*' as Plato uses it in this dialogue and of the term 'statesman' as it is used in this volume.

## 1.2 The Unity of the Dialogue

As well as being a vitally important dialogue, the *Statesman* is incredibly perplexing. It is admitted to be perplexing even by its main character. More than once, the Eleatic Visitor concedes that parts of his discussion with Young Socrates may appear to the reader to be lengthy detours, unrelated to the question that the dialogue raises. Hence, at 286b6-c4, the Visitor acknowledges that he and Young Socrates feel discomfort at the longwindedness of the account of the art of weaving, or of the myth of the reversal of rotation of the Universe. Concerning the latter, he had remarked already at 277b4-8 that their discussion had forced them to embark on the narration of a myth that in the end was both too long and never really completed.<sup>4</sup>

The Visitor's worries are echoed in the way that the dialogue has been treated by commentators. For the most part, the scholarly focus has been on some of the dialogue's issues while neglecting others. Issues that have principally attracted attention are the definition of the statesman, the method of collection and division, the myth of the times of Kronos and Zeus, and Plato's identification of the king, the slave master, and the head of the household, the latter thanks to Aristotle's criticism of it.<sup>5</sup>

Though the Visitor concedes that the discussions of some of the dialogue's themes may appear to be longwinded, he insists that they in fact are not. In his view, they are all equally important, no longer than they need to be, and integral parts of a unitary philosophical treatment. In support of this claim, he offers at 273b-287b an exposition of the notions of excess and deficiency where he distinguishes between calling something big on account of its being bigger than something smaller (and, correspondingly, calling something small in the sense of being smaller than something bigger), and on the other hand something's being big or small relative to the norm as put down by what he calls the right measure (*to metrion*). On this basis, the Visitor can say that though parts of the discussion

<sup>4</sup> A point that he made also while giving the account of the myth (274b1-5).

<sup>5</sup> Early in the *Politics*, Book I, Aristotle says that those who think that the statesman, the king, the householder, and the master are one and the same thing and that they differ only in the number of the subjects that each rules over are mistaken (1252a7-9). It is unclear whether the plural is actually intended to identify several thinkers or just Plato.

may be called longwinded, and do seem so to some, this is so only relative to other shorter ones, or, alternatively, if they are judged on the basis of considerations (such as pleasantness) that are irrelevant to the point at issue (286d4-6). And he points out that, seen in the light of the proper norm and right measure, what appears to be longwinded is actually just the right length (286d8-e1).

The Visitor's implicit claim is that every part of the dialogue is as essential as any other and as long or short as it must be, if the inquirers are to identify the competence one must possess to be a proper statesman. The present volume takes the Visitor at his word. It offers a detailed philosophical discussion of all the issues that are discussed in the dialogue. At the same time, it abstains from making an overarching claim on the dialogue as a whole, other than the one implied by the notion that all its parts are equally important philosophically, and together constitute a unified whole. The aim is to bring to the forefront each one of the themes that the dialogue takes up and devote to it the attention that will permit it to stake its claim to be part of a unified philosophical work. In this respect, the present volume challenges the reader to come to their own view on how the dialogue hangs together as a whole, but only after having gone through a comprehensive philosophical discussion of and reflection on its constitutive parts.

We shall soon see that there is a further, at least equally important, reason to have an in-depth investigation of the *Statesman* of the sort we propose here.

### 1.3 Relation to the *Republic*

In the *Sophist*, a dialogue dedicated to identifying the kind that 'sophist' names, the Eleatic Visitor, who also leads the discussion in the *Statesman*, asserts that the sophist, the statesman, and the philosopher are three different kinds (*Soph.* 217a). This may suggest that in the *Statesman* we witness a radical change of view from that of the *Republic*, where Plato identifies the King with the Philosopher (*Resp.* 5. 473b-474a). It is not clear that there is any truth in this suggestion. On the contrary, there are clear signs of an affinity between the overall theoretical posture of these two dialogues. True, in the *Republic* we are not told much about whether a true ruler ever existed or will exist, and we are left to assume that both questions may be answered in the negative. But in the *Statesman* too it is left unclear whether there has ever been a true statesman or, in fact, whether there will ever be one (*Plt.* 292e1-293a4).

As the philosopher is King in the *Republic*, so is the statesman King in the *Statesman*. Now, it is true that the *Statesman* refrains from explicitly identifying the King with the philosopher. But it is equally true and arguably more important that both the philosopher of the *Republic* and the statesman of the *Statesman* are

Kings *because* they possess scientific knowledge.<sup>6</sup> What kind of knowledge must the King of the *Statesman* possess? Indeed, the greatest and most difficult kind, says the Visitor (292d2-4), the kind that must truly be scientific knowledge.<sup>7</sup> It is the knowledge required to recognize at any time what is right to do for the state, and recognize it without even the help of laws. Assuming a radical divide between the King of the *Republic* and that of the *Statesman* implies that in the latter dialogue Plato holds the view that one can be truly a possessor of scientific knowledge without being a philosopher. There is no firm evidence Plato ever held such a view. Indeed, the fact that the King of the *Statesman* must at any time recognize what is good for the state, without the help of laws, implies that the King must have a clear view of what it is for something to be a state (*polis*) and for someone to be a citizen, what the good for the state is and what is that for its citizen, whether these are one and the same good or they are different, if the latter whether they are related, and if so how. A necessary condition for that is that the King has insight into the Good. To come to possess the knowledge this achievement requires one must be a competent dialectician. Mastering dialectic, then, is a minimally necessary condition for being King in both the *Republic* and the *Statesman*, and we might well think that being a competent dialectician *is* the trademark of being a true philosopher, according to Plato.

Still, the fact remains that the Visitor in the *Sophist* suggests that the sophist, the statesman and the philosopher belong to three distinct kinds. But if this is a problem, it is one also for the view that the *Statesman's* position on this issue marks a departure from that of the *Republic*. For, on this view, we will need to explain why it is that in the *Statesman* Plato implies that the King is a master dialectician. A more promising thought is that the specific skill that the statesman applies in exercising statecraft differs from the broad theoretical skills exercised by the philosopher while philosophizing. Noticeably, the *Republic* makes the point that philosophers will only reluctantly put aside their philosophical study to perform their duty of running the city. It is unclear why that should be the case, if while being Kings the philosophers were carrying on doing what they were doing previously. This shows that philosophizing and ruling are different tasks and are therefore based on exercising different skills. But this does not preclude the possibility that these two skills are grounded in the same theoretical fundament. In the *Statesman*, the Visitor does say that one cannot be King by being merely a spectator of truth (260c1-4), implying that the King is also a spectator of truth. Still, the specific knowledge the King must apply while being King is also directive (*epitaktikē*, 260c). While managing the affairs of state, the King exercises Kingship, but doing this well presupposes having a clear insight into truth.

<sup>6</sup> But see Schofield (2006, chapter 4), for a different view.

<sup>7</sup> ἀληθῶς ἐπιστήμων (293c7).



On this approach, the *Statesman* treads the path carved out by the *Republic*. This is to identify the precise area of competence that bestows upon its possessor the skill necessary for actually ruling the state well. Since doing philosophy and running a city are different tasks (*erga*), it is reasonable that the *Sophist* implies that the statesman and the philosopher are two different kinds. But the *Statesman* provides ample evidence that being a philosopher is, minimally, a necessary condition for being King.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.4 Relative Date of Composition

The actual date of composition of the *Statesman*<sup>9</sup> is extremely difficult to pinpoint and we need to have a clear view of the reasons for that. The *Theaetetus* is central to making any claim about what such a date might be. It opens with a conversation between two students of Socrates, Euclides and Terpsion, in which Euclides tells Terpsion that he has just met Theaetetus as the latter was returning from a battle in Corinth. Theaetetus had been badly wounded in that battle and was moreover suffering from the disease that had struck the army. He died not long after that meeting with Euclides.

At the end of the *Theaetetus*, Socrates tells Theodorus that he will meet with him again the next day. The *Sophist* begins with Theodorus and Socrates confirming that they are meeting exactly as the two had agreed to do at the conclusion of the *Theaetetus*. Theodorus arrives with two students, Theaetetus and Young Socrates, but also a Visitor who will lead two conversations, placed dramatically on that same day, with the second conversation following immediately after the first. Theaetetus is the Visitor's interlocutor in the first conversation, the *Sophist*, and Young Socrates is his interlocutor in the second, the *Statesman*.

Any attempt to pinpoint the date of composition of the *Statesman* takes as its point of departure the battle that Euclides mentions in the *Theaetetus*. It may be thought that establishing its date could give us an approximate date for Theaetetus' death, and therefore also an idea of the date of composition of the dialogue named after him. That could then also establish that the *Statesman* was written not far from that date. But it can hardly establish anything of the sort. Any claim to the effect that the *Statesman* was written in the temporal vicinity of the *Theaetetus* confuses the dramatic date with the date of composition. There is no independent evidence to support such a supposition, and what independent evidence there is makes it questionable. While stylometric studies do indeed put the *Theaetetus* before the *Statesman*, they put it close in time to the *Parmenides*, which they then

<sup>8</sup> See Lane (2005), arguing being a statesman is a job that a philosopher might undertake.

<sup>9</sup> Firm claims to that effect have actually been made, for example by Ostwald (Skemp and Ostwald 1992, pp. vii-xi).

put close to the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*. The same studies place the two latter dialogues in the so-called middle period. The *Sophist* and the *Statesman*, on the other hand, they put in the temporal vicinity of the *Laws*, the so-called late period, and hence at some temporal distance from the *Theaetetus*.<sup>10</sup>

Even if we decide to disregard the stylometric studies, the claim that the *Statesman* is actually written after the *Theaetetus* rests on the supposition that Plato finished every one of his dialogues completely before starting to write another. It rests on the further supposition that, once he finished a dialogue, Plato never again revised it. Against this, there is evidence from antiquity that Plato continued editing his dialogues long after they were written.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the battle referred to in the *Theaetetus* could be one of two that we know about: the first took place around 391 BCE, and the second around 396. There is no way, so far as we can now tell, of establishing which of the two battles Euclides refers to here, if, indeed, the reference is to one of them. In any case, this is irrelevant to the question about the date of composition, for no one claims that the *Theaetetus* was written as early as a date between 396 and 391. More generally, the dramatic dates of Plato's dialogues say next to nothing about the dates of composition apart from providing a *terminus post quem*.

Establishing the actual date of composition of the dialogue with any precision seems hard,<sup>12</sup> if not impossible. More importantly for present purposes, it is likely to be of little exegetical value.

### 1.5 Relation to *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and the Unwritten *Philosophos*

More pressing for the study of the *Statesman* is a question regarding a dialogue that Plato allegedly left unwritten, namely the *Philosopher*. Raising it here is particularly relevant because the *Statesman* is one of two dialogues invoked as evidence that the *Philosopher* was planned in the first place. The *Sophist* is the other.

First we need to examine whether the dramatic order and temporal proximity of the *Theaetetus*, the *Sophist*, and the *Statesman* may be of relevance to this question.<sup>13</sup> In his summation at the end of the *Theaetetus*, Socrates says to Theaetetus that the discussion they have just completed will stand him in a good stead should he ever decide to investigate anew the question they considered;

<sup>10</sup> See Young (1994, especially p. 240), which presents the results of different stylometric analyses.

<sup>11</sup> See Anon. Comm. *Tht.* Col. III 28–32 (Bastianini and Sedley 1995).

<sup>12</sup> As is the case with all Platonic dialogues, apart from maybe the *Laws* that, according to Olympiodorus, was left on wax tablets (therefore presumably still unfinished) at his death. See Hermann (1892, 218). See also Diogenes Laertius II, 37.

<sup>13</sup> Gill (2012, 2–13) makes the *Theaetetus* part of the argument for the thesis that Plato did plan the *Philosopher*, but left it unexecuted.

even if he never again raises this question, he will still have profited in that he will be humbler and kinder in his meetings with others, not thinking that he knows what he does not. Then Socrates makes a confession: 'this is as much as my art is capable of accomplishing, nothing more than that'.<sup>14</sup> Much can be said about this remark, but we need only note the two claims Socrates makes with it. First, he admits that he failed to hit the philosophical target he had set himself in the *Theaetetus*, namely to account for what knowledge is, and, second, that his philosophical skill can only take the discussions he leads as far as disabusing his interlocutors, in this instance Theaetetus, of his false conceit of knowledge. After that comment Socrates announces that he must go to the King's Porch, and that, we know, starts a process that will ultimately result in his death.

Against this background, the *Sophist* marks a fresh start. Theodorus meets Socrates the next morning, precisely as the two had agreed the previous day at the conclusion of the *Theaetetus*. He is accompanied by two students, Theaetetus and Young Socrates, but also by a man whom he introduces as a philosopher from Elea, a Greek town in Southern Italy, the home of the revered philosopher Parmenides and his student the dialectician Zeno. Socrates has had first-hand experience of both Zeno and Parmenides when he held a philosophical conversation with them as a young man in the *Parmenides*. In fact, Theodorus introduces the Visitor from Elea as a follower of Parmenides and Zeno, and praises him as 'very much a philosophical man' (*mala de andra philosophon*) (*Soph.* 216a1-4). Theodorus is not a philosopher, and the somewhat vague manner in which he phrases his praise may be taken as a sign that his judgement on the philosophical ability of the Visitor can be questioned. And Socrates expresses poorly concealed doubts about the Visitor's competence, saying that philosophers are strange creatures, presenting themselves as sophists or statesmen, and sometimes even appearing to be completely mad (216a1-d2).

As if in order to test the Visitor, Socrates asks him if he believes that the terms 'philosopher', 'sophist' and 'statesman' name one or three distinct kinds (217a3). There can hardly be any doubt that the question is tricky. Whatever doubts Socrates may have about whether 'statesman' and 'philosopher' name two kinds or one, he certainly holds the view that the sophist is something entirely different. More importantly, he would hardly believe that anyone who answers that they are the same is a philosopher. Unfazed, and doing justice to his philosophical lineage, the Visitor answers confidently that these terms name three kinds, thus suggesting that the statesman is other than the philosopher, which would appear to conflict with what Socrates himself says in the *Republic*. By the conclusion of the *Sophist*, he has managed to account for one of those three kinds, the sophist, in expert fashion. No one present questions the Visitor's account, not even Socrates,

<sup>14</sup> τοσοῦτον γὰρ μόνον ἢ ἐμὴ τέχνη δύναται, πλεον δὲ οὐδέν (*Tht.* 210c4-5). Here and elsewhere in the Introduction, translations are by the editors.

even though less than a day earlier (*Tht.* 210c) he had emphasized that the key feature of his art is to expose the ignorance of those who falsely believe they know what they do not. What we have before us is the Visitor who, in contrast to what Socrates did the day before, manages to complete the philosophical task he had set for himself, and to do so successfully even by Socrates' implicit admission.

While expanding on the art of dialectic in the *Sophist*, the Visitor says, and everyone present in the discussion agrees, that the sophist is hard to find because he dwells in the dark region of non-being. But *he* found him. He says further that the philosopher too can be easily missed, because the brightness of the light in the region of being where the philosopher dwells is dazzling (254a8-b1). This is an admonition to those present, and to the reader, not to miss the philosopher, should they happen to have one before them. Shortly after, the Visitor says that they will make the nature of the philosopher clearer (*saphesteron*), but only 'if we still want to'.<sup>15</sup> We should notice both the comparative *saphesteron* and the conditional that concludes this statement. Saying that they may want to make the nature of the philosopher *clearer* implies that, on the Visitor's view, they have made it somewhat clear already at the point that he makes this remark. And to say that they will make it clearer only if they *still* want to implies that they may not want to by the time they are done with their discussion.

Now, in the opening lines of the *Statesman*, Theodorus and Socrates express a keen interest to come to know the natures of both the statesman and the philosopher. Is this decisive evidence of a plan for a third dialogue in the series? Even before expressing this interest they had agreed to the Visitor's implicit claim, on the previous day, that the philosopher's nature had become somewhat clear (*Soph.* 254a). Notably, they say nothing at the conclusion of the *Statesman* to indicate that they still want to make the nature of the philosopher clearer, thus inviting the reader to infer that it has been made sufficiently clear to them. If so, the matter is closed. As significantly, the *Statesman*, set immediately after the *Sophist*, opens with Socrates expressing gratitude to Theodorus for introducing him to the Eleatic Visitor, about whose philosophical competence he had previously expressed scepticism. This is further evidence that Socrates had found the Visitor's dialectical performance in the *Sophist* convincing.

Let us now take a closer look at the three texts invoked as evidence that Plato planned for a further dialogue, which would define the philosopher, just as the *Sophist* and the *Statesman* define the sophist and the statesman respectively. That third dialogue, the *Philosopher*, the claim is, was left unexecuted.<sup>16</sup> The first piece of evidence is the Visitor's remark in the *Sophist* that 'sophist', 'statesman', and 'philosopher', name three kinds (217b2). But to be evidence for anything of the sort, this statement must imply that the statesman can be worked out

<sup>15</sup> ἀν' ἔτι βουλομένοις ἡμῶν ἦ (*Soph.* 254b4).

<sup>16</sup> This view, shared by most, is defended in detail by Gill (2012).

independently of the philosopher, which, as argued in section 1.3, above, it does not, and there is reason to think that the case is rather the opposite. A second and better piece of evidence is Theodorus' opening remarks in the *Statesman*, where he asks the Visitor to go through (*diexelthe*) the statesman or the philosopher, whichever one he wants to do first (*Plt.* 257c2). That is taken as proof of a plan for the Visitor to define both the statesman and the philosopher. The thinking is that since one dialogue is devoted to the definition of the sophist and another to the definition of the statesman, a further dialogue should be dedicated to the definition of the philosopher. The third and most compelling piece of evidence is supposedly found in Theodorus' response to Socrates' expression of gratitude for being introduced to the Visitor. Theodorus says that Socrates will be three times as grateful when they (the Visitor and his interlocutor) have worked out (*apergasōntai*) the statesman *and* the philosopher (257a3-5). One might take this to mean that Theodorus expects two more inquiries, one into the statesman and one into the philosopher, with a dialogue devoted to each. But even if this is Theodorus' expectation, Socrates immediately pushes back with the remark that the sophist, statesman, and philosopher are too far apart in value for their worth to be captured by such simple math. Socrates would be immensely more grateful than just three times, were the Visitor to perform such a feat, thus putting aside any suggestion that completing of the task of working out the statesman and the philosopher should be expected to require two further dialogues.

With respect to the second piece of evidence, we notice that the Visitor responds to Theodorus' request to go through the statesman and the philosopher with an unequivocal commitment to complete *all* the tasks before him:

This Theodorus we must do, for we set ourselves to the task once, and we must not stop before we get to the end of *all* the tasks to which we set ourselves.<sup>17</sup>  
(*Plt.* 257c2-5)

Unlike Socrates who failed to complete the task he set himself in the *Theaetetus*, the Visitor pledges at the beginning of the *Statesman* to do as he did with the sophist and carry out the task for both the statesman and the philosopher. We should take him at his word. Even if Theodorus should think that the Visitor is now committed to leading two more dialogues, which we do not know that Theodorus does, the fact is that he is in no position to dictate proceedings. To conclude that a third dialogue was planned one must hold that Plato would need to write a dialogue if he were to give an account of the philosopher.

There is a promising alternative possibility. The pledge Plato has the Visitor make invites the reader to look for and find the philosopher in the *Statesman* and

<sup>17</sup> Ταῦτ', ὃ Θεόδωρε, ποιητέον· ἐπείπερ ἅπαξ γε ἐγκεχειρήκαμεν, καὶ οὐκ ἀποστατέον πρὶν ἂν αὐτῶν πρὸς τὸ τέλος ἔλθωμεν.

the *Sophist*. Symbolically, it must be pertinent that the discussion of the *Theaetetus* is placed immediately before, where Socrates tersely states that his art goes only as far as to improve his interlocutors by disabusing them of their false conceit of knowledge. The next morning Theodorus arrives fresh to the party with a philosopher of Eleatic lineage, and Socrates watches in silence as the newcomer leads and completes successfully two consecutive philosophical discussions. Furthermore, it is semiologically significant that Theodorus brings with him two and not three students, and that the Visitor confidently asserts that he will complete all the tasks before him. Theaetetus needed a rest after the *Sophist*, and we should expect Young Socrates to need one after the *Statesman*. Were we to need a triad of dialogues in order to produce accounts of the sophist, the statesman and the philosopher, we should expect the third dialogue to take place the same day, which would leave us short one interlocutor.

Accounting for the sophist in the *Sophist* is a trying task, conditioned as it is on revealing the 'essence of not-being'.<sup>18</sup> Success is predicated on having a firm grasp of the region of being. Therefore, the Visitor's success is proof that he is able to 'use reasoning to stay close to the idea of being,' which he says is what the philosopher does.<sup>19</sup> Not explicitly, but strikingly, the Visitor calls himself a philosopher, and no one contests his claim. He did the exact same thing previously at *Soph.* 253b-c when he said that some genera (*genē*) commingle with others, but not with all others, while still other genera extend through others to hold them together, and then stated that to be able to discern these ontological facts and explain them (which is what he does) one needs to master a science (*epistēmēs dei*, 253c4). 'Perhaps the greatest of them all' approves the mathematician Theaetetus.<sup>20</sup> The Visitor specifies further what kind of science this is when he asks if we would call the person who can discern some one idea (*mian idean*) running through many individuals or one idea holding together many different ones, a 'dialectician and truly philosophizing'.<sup>21</sup> He expects an answer in the affirmative and Theaetetus offers it in awe. The skill that the Visitor here describes is the one he applies in both dialogues. And Socrates gives no sign of having detected any false conceit of knowledge.

The *Statesman* confirms further the Visitor's intellectual skill in performing divisions, at identifying classes that commingle with others, and classes that pervade to unite other classes. If anything, he does so more assuredly than he did in the *Sophist*, unsurprisingly since his quest this time is confined in the region of being. He offers a brief though precise synopsis of this method at 285b1-c2, while in fact applying it. He exhibits a capacity to detect mistakes and the integrity to

<sup>18</sup> τῆς τοῦ μὴ ὄντος οὐσίας (*Plt.* 286b10).

<sup>19</sup> Ὁ δέ γε φιλόσοφος, τῇ τοῦ ὄντος αἰεὶ διὰ λογισμῶν προσκείμενος ἰδέα (*Soph.* 254a8-9).

<sup>20</sup> καὶ σχεδὸν γε ἴσως τῆς μεγίστης (*Soph.* 253c4-5).

<sup>21</sup> διαλεκτικὸν τε καὶ δικαίως φιλοσοφοῦντι (*Soph.* 253e4-6).

admit that he made them. As importantly, he identifies and applies measures to correct them, as he does when he introduces the myth of the rotation of the universe after the first attempt at defining the statesman hits a snag. He knows when there is a need for clarificatory examples, which examples are relevant and how to use them to untie knots, or when to engage in subsidiary collections and divisions that will assist his search. All this he is confident that he does to the right measure, as he explains to whoever might think that his elaborations are longwinded.

What the Visitor did in the *Sophist*, and does manifestly in the *Statesman*, is use reasoning to stay close to the idea of being; this is the trademark of the true philosopher, as he told us earlier that day in the *Sophist*. And he has us observe him execute the tasks he was assigned while explaining and justifying what he does. In that way he takes us with him to 'such a region where we shall discover the philosopher, both *now* and *later*, if we look for him'.<sup>22</sup> The 'now' identifies the *Sophist* where the Visitor throws light on what was hiding in non-being, and the 'later' points to the *Statesman* where he discovers the statesman. To succeed in either task one must have one's feet firmly planted in the region of being. It is unclear that Plato should think that a definition would be better at capturing, or revealing his philosopher to us, if we are unable to recognize and identify the philosopher at work in the *Sophist* and in the *Statesman*. It is equally unclear what a definition of the philosopher should look like.

Plato never committed to defining the philosopher. He only committed to revealing his idea of what it is to be one. He delivers on this by having a philosopher exhibit his skill in the art of dialectic, apply it to account for the sophist and the statesman, and mark a clear boundary between the two. He does so while giving an erudite account of each step that needs be gone through to complete these tasks. If a necessary condition for being a statesman is being a philosopher, then a good case can be made that, by the end of the *Statesman*, Plato has done all that is necessary to reveal his idea of what it is to be the philosopher. Even the slightest possibility that this be true constitutes decisive reason to conduct a punctilious study of the *Statesman*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Τὸν μὲν δὲ φιλόσοφον ἐν τοιούτῳ τινὶ τόπῳ καὶ νῦν καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνευρήσομεν, εἰς ζητῶμεν (*Soph.* 253e8-9).

<sup>23</sup> I am grateful to Melissa Lane and Susan Sauvé Meyer for their most helpful comments and suggestions.

# Structure and Methods of the Dialogue

by Susan Sauvé Meyer

Plato's dialogue interweaves substantive inquiry into the nature of the statesman with sustained reflection on the range of methods to be employed in such an inquiry, and periodic assessment of the interlocutors' proficiency at those methods. The inquiry as a whole belongs to the discipline of 'dialectic', whose goal is to 'display things in a formula' – (*tēs tōn ontōn logō dēlōseōs*, 287a3). The primary method employed is that of collection and division. The statesman is to be 'displayed' in a taxonomy of kinds (*eidē*) that collects each kind with kindred kinds, but also divides it off from those kindred (286d9-e1). Via the iterated sequence of divisions pursued in the dialogue, statecraft is to be located in a taxonomy of the kinds of knowledge or expertise (*epistēmai*, 258b). But how are we to make the appropriate collections and divisions? The interlocutors, who are still only developing proficiency at dialectic (287a), make a number of incorrect moves, and have to retrace their steps and redo the division at various junctures. In order to identify problematic collections or divisions, or to point the way to solutions, they employ a number of subordinate methods. One is the telling of myth – a practice familiar from other Platonic dialogues, but used here for the first time as an auxiliary to dialectic.<sup>24</sup> Another method is to apply a model (*paradeigma*),<sup>25</sup> which is not identified explicitly as a method in any other dialogue of Plato.<sup>26</sup> The Visitor characterizes the use of models as indispensable for those seeking to 'reveal' the 'most important' things (277d1-2) – that is, to achieve the dialectician's goal of displaying each kind of being in the appropriate taxonomy of kinds.

Over the course of the opening sequence of divisions (258c-268d), the Visitor provides a meta-commentary on the proper practice of this dialectical technique. For example, one must divide each kind 'in the middle' and not omit intermediate cuts (262d-263a). After these divisions yield the provisional formulation (*logos*) that the statecraft is 'the collective rearing (*koinotrophikē*) of humans' (267d12), and the statesman a herder (*nomeus*) of humans (267e9), the Visitor turns to the method of myth to elucidate the inadequacy of this formula. Only a superior being, such as the gods in the time of Kronos, could properly be described as

<sup>24</sup> Betegh (in Chapter 4 of this volume) explores the limitations of myth as an auxiliary to dialectic. See also Duffy (forthcoming).

<sup>25</sup> *Paradeigma* may also be translated 'example' (defended in Lane 1998) or 'paradigm'; Gill 2006 provides a persuasive defence for the translation 'model'. Contributors to the volume vary in their preference among these translations.

<sup>26</sup> Although it is arguably employed in the analogy between city and soul in the *Republic*. Aristotle invokes *paradeigma* as a form of proof in *Rhetoric* I.2 and II.20.



rearing (*trephein*) humans, whereas statecraft is exercised by humans ruling over their own kind (275c). What a statesman has in common with a herdsman is the task of caring (*epimeleisthai*, *therapeuein*) for those over whom he rules (275e). But the revised formula that statecraft is the ‘care of the human community’ (276b8) or ‘caring for cities’ (279a2) still faces an objection, originally raised at 267e, that many other human practices – from farming to shoemaking to medicine – could lay claim to the title ‘caring for cities’ (279a2). Until the formula is further clarified to distinguish the statesman from these other practitioners of human-care, it will be incomplete and unclear (275a, 277c).

To remedy this defect in the account of the statesman, the Visitor proposes to employ a model. He first illustrates how models are helpful to those learning their letters, where the goal (as in dialectic) is to reveal how each kind of letter is ‘both different, in that it is distinct from all the others, and the same, in that it called [such] always with respect to the same things’ (278b6-c1). For the dialectician, it is not the letters of the alphabet, but the elements of reality – both called *stoicheia* – that are to be displayed in a system of sameness-revealing collections and difference-revealing divisions. The problem faced by the dialecticians in the dialogue is that even their revised formula – that statecraft is the collective care (*epimeleia*), rather than rearing (*trephein*), of humans (276b) – faces the difficulty that in herd-rearing the herdsman himself provides all the care for his flock (feeding, watering, midwifery, even entertainment), whereas care for humans in cities is distributed among many different practitioners: farmers, millers, bakers, doctors, and so on, all of whom may claim to participate in the collective care for humans (267e). If the dialectical formula for statecraft is to be clarified, it must be shown that, among all these enterprises involved in caring for humans, statecraft has the best claim to that title.

Weaving is a good model for this purpose because it too is a kind of *epimeleia* or care (in this case, of woollen clothing), but to characterize it as such fails to distinguish it from other practices – carding, spinning, shuttle working, and even fulling (washing and mending) (281a-b) – that will ‘dispute’ (*amphisbētousin*) with weaving the title ‘care’ (*therapeia*) and production (*genesis*) of clothing’ (281b7-8). The Visitor evidently construes care (*epimeleia*) of clothing broadly enough to encompass not only the preservation and upkeep of clothing, but also its production.<sup>27</sup> This expansive conception of ‘clothes-care’ corresponds roughly with the characterization of weaving, in the sequence of divisions at 279c-280e, as the practice that provides humans with protection in the form of woollen clothing. The weaver, the carder, and the fuller may all claim to be participants in the business of keeping humans clothed.

The first use to which the Visitor puts the weaving model is not to resolve the dispute between the weaver, the carder, and the fuller,<sup>28</sup> but to endorse all these

<sup>27</sup> On the point see also Bronstein (Chapter 5, p. 95 n5, in this volume).

<sup>28</sup> As El Murr (in Chapter 12 of this volume, pp. 240, 243–4) notes, the resolution of this dispute relies on the status of weaving as *prescribing* to the spinner, the carder, and the shuttleworker (308d-e).

practices as viable contenders for the title ‘provider of clothing’. What the weaver has in common with the carder, spinner, and fuller is that each may legitimately claim to be a direct cause (*aitia*) in the enterprise of clothing humans. This direct causal role distinguishes them from a subordinate set of practices, which produce tools such as spindles and looms (281c-e). Such tool makers, even if indispensable for the provision of clothing, are only auxiliary causes (*sunaitia*) in that enterprise, and so it is not among them that one will find the legitimate contenders to the title ‘care of clothing’. It is this distinction between direct and auxiliary causes that serves to rebut the claims one might make on behalf of the farmer, miller, doctor, and entertainer that they too, along with the statesman, are engaged in caring for humans in cities (267e-268c).<sup>29</sup> As in the domain of weaving, where it is only among the practices that are *causes* that one finds the rival claimants to the title ‘providers of clothing,’ so too in the affairs of state, the distinction between direct causes (*aitiai*) and auxiliary causes (*sunaitia*) can be used to clear the field of all enterprises that are not serious contenders for the title ‘care of cities’.

Accordingly, the Visitor sets about to identify and set aside all the auxiliary causes involved in the care of the city (287b). These are the producers of all the tools, containers, conveyances, clothing, defences, and entertainments in the city (287d-288c), along with those who produce or acquire the materials out of which these items are made (288d-e), or who feed or otherwise care for the body (288e-289a). All such auxiliary causes of the civic enterprise can be set aside as non-serious claimants to be practicing statecraft (289c8-d2). This clearing of the field has removed from contention all the original ‘rivals’ invoked at 267e-268a.

The serious contenders to the title of statesman will be direct causes (*aitiai*) of the civic enterprise, and will be found among the civic occupations that remain (289c4-d2). After the Visitor dismisses slaves (289e), merchants (290a), and all who serve (*diakonein*) or are subordinates (*hupēretai*) to the producers already ruled out of contention (290a-c),<sup>30</sup> those who remain as rival claimants to the statesman’s craft are the ‘chorus of those engaged in public affairs’ (*ton peri ta tōn*

However, it is striking that the Visitor never mentions the prescriptive status of weaving until much later. ‘Le texte du *Politique* confirmera ce point, mais seulement en 308d4-e2’ (Dixsaut, El Murr, et al. 2018, 406). In the immediate context, weaving is distinguished from the other woolworking arts by a formula – ‘intertwining warp and weft’ (283a) – from which the prescriptive element is conspicuously absent.

<sup>29</sup> A strategy perhaps anticipated in the *syn-*prefix in the rivals’ original claim to be ‘jointly pasturing’ the human herd with the statesman (τοὺς...τῆς συννομῆς αὐτῷ ἀντιποιούμενους 268c8-9).

<sup>30</sup> Whether they are dismissed because they too are *sunaitia* is unclear in the text – on which see Lane (Chapter 10, p. 199 n10 in this volume). Carpenter (Chapter 7, p. 148–9 in this volume) argues that they are *aitiai*. However, the Visitor emphasizes that these are subordinate (*hupēretai*) to the producers already dismissed as *sunaitia*, and it would be odd for the visitor to rank *aitiai* as subordinate to *sunaitiai*. The Visitor may simply be working with two distinct ranking tools: one of them the *sunaitia/aitia* distinction, which he uses to dismiss the original set of rivals; and the other the notion of a subordinate (*hupēretēs*), which will later play a crucial role in distinguishing the statesman from the later set of kindred rivals (e.g. at 304e1, 305a8, b8), and which here plays a preliminary role in further clearing the field of non-serious rivals.

*poleōn...choron*, 291c1). In conducting the business of the city, they are *aitiai*, rather than mere *sunaitia*, of the civic enterprise.

These remaining rival claimants fall into two groups. In the first are generals, orators, and judges, all actively engaged in public affairs and likely to be referred to as '*politikoi*' in the Greek of Plato's day.<sup>31</sup> Their practices are 'kindred' to statecraft in that they actually address or conduct affairs of state and they, like it, are 'precious' or honourable (*timia*, 303e1). Nonetheless, the Visitor argues (304a-305d), these disciplines are not only distinct from statecraft, but subordinate to it (*hupēretikē*, 305a8). Statecraft rules or oversees (*epitropeuousan archein*, 304c1-2) the orator and the general, in the sense that it determines when persuasion rather than force is called for, and when it is appropriate to go to war rather than make friendly concessions (304c-305a); and it rules judges by establishing the laws for them to enforce (305b-c). Thus the statesman is not only distinguished from these kindred practitioners of public business, but vindicated as practicing the 'finest and greatest' expertise (281d1) concerned with the city's affairs.

The dialectical task that the Visitor performs by 'separating off' the statesman from these kindred rivals might appear to be an instance of division,<sup>32</sup> but some caution is in order here. While the ruling relation of statecraft to these subordinate disciplines may be displayed visually as a hierarchy, it is not a taxonomical hierarchy. Otherwise, the Visitor would be claiming that rhetoric and military science are kinds of statecraft (in the way elms and oaks are kinds of trees). But this is quite the opposite of what he means by insisting, of both rhetoric and military expertise, that it is different (*heteron*) from statecraft (304e11). In separating out statecraft from these subordinate disciplines, the Visitor is guarding against or correcting a dialectical mistake that we might describe as an incorrect collection. In the taxonomy that reveals the statesman, there is no kind (*eidos*, *genos*) consisting of the statesman together with these rivals, from which further divisions separate out the statesman by identifying what kind of care of cities he performs.<sup>33</sup> The series of divisions has reached the point at which the statesman is been divided off from a higher genus (collective caring) via the specification that cities are the objects of its care, but this does not imply that all disciplines that are correctly classified as 'care over cities' are collected together at this node in the

<sup>31</sup> For example, *Ap.* 21c4, *Meno* 99c1, d2, *Grg.* 484e1.

<sup>32</sup> Thus, for example, (Miller 1980/2004, 75) and Trivigno (in this volume, Chapter 8, p. 158, n4). I follow Lane (this volume, Chapter 10, pp. 196, 198–9), who argues that the 'smelting' operation to distinguish the statesman from these precious rivals is a different method than division.

<sup>33</sup> As independent confirmation that there cannot be, note that very early in the sequence of divisions, statecraft has been located in the genus of 'epitactic' disciplines, whose activity consists in giving directions that are carried out by others (260b-c). While the general's expertise may belong in this genus, this is not the case for the orator or the judge. Thus while one might divide the genus 'carer for cities' into the species statesman, general, orator, and judge, there is no such genus in the taxonomical schema that reveals the statesman.

taxonomical hierarchy (any more than the classification a vixen as a female fox entails that all females are foxes). Indeed the task of refinement – whereby the formula of statecraft as ‘care of cities’ is rendered clearer (*enargesteron*, 275b4) or given precision (*akribeia*, 268c7-8) – may be construed as guarding against precisely this misconstrual of the dialectical formula. The task of refining out the statesman from these other practitioners of ‘care of cities’ is an ancillary task to dialectic, neither a collection nor a division, but a clarification of what the collections and divisions have ‘revealed’ the statesman to be.

Before undertaking this refining task, however, the Visitor devotes a long digression (291a-303d) to addressing the claims of a different group of rivals, whom he describes as only coming into focus once the field has been cleared of the subordinate enterprises in the city (291a). Alternately described as shape-shifters and adepts at sophistry (291b-c), these rivals are engaged in practices that are ‘alien’ and ‘hostile’ to statecraft, in contrast to the ‘precious’ and ‘kindred’ practices of the orator, general, and judge (303e). While separating out the kindred practices from statecraft is a matter of showing how the former are subordinate to and ruled by the latter, refuting the claims of the alien rivals will involve separating out the statesman from those who only pretend (or appear) to have such a ruling expertise.

Once again this ‘separating off’ of the statesman from his rivals is not a case of division. Rather, it defends the initial step in the dialectic, which posits that statecraft is a kind of expertise (258b). That first step is an instance of collection, whereby statecraft is ‘collected together’ with all the kinds of expertise. The ensuing steps seek to make successive divisions within the genus expertise, with the goal of establishing what kind of expertise statecraft is. In the present digression (291a-303d), the Visitor supports the initial posit that statecraft is an expertise by resisting the alternative views that a city is properly governed only when its affairs are conducted according to law, or with the consent of the population.<sup>34</sup> Neither of these alternatives requires that those directing affairs of state have knowledge about how best to care for the city, or indeed that there is anything to be known in this domain.<sup>35</sup> On the contrary, the Visitor famously insists, those who take part in affairs of state without knowledge are practicing not statecraft but partisanship (*stasiastikoi*, 303c2). Furthermore, the Visitor insists, statecraft can only be captured imperfectly in legislation. Even though an expert statesman will generally make use of laws, he will also be in a position to recognize cases where it would be better to make an exception. Thus absolute adherence of the rule of law would

<sup>34</sup> Trivigno (Chapter 8 in this volume) examines these two provocative claims by the Visitor.

<sup>35</sup> Non-cognitivism about the proper conduct of public affairs is first mentioned at 276b, and is a motif in the vivid parody of rule of law at 298a-299e.

impede the statesman's expert care for the city. Nonetheless, the Visitor insists, for any state that lacks an expert statesman, rule of law is supremely important.<sup>36</sup>

Having defended the initial assumption that collects statecraft under the general kind, knowledge (291a-303d), and clarified (via the refining process of 303d-305e) the dialectical formula that reveals statecraft to be expertise in the care of cities, the interlocutors might seem to have completed their dialectical task. But it is not until six Stephanus pages later that the older Socrates declares the Visitor's portrait of the statesman to be complete (*apetelesas...ton politikon*, 311c9-10). It turns out that weaving is not only a model for clarifying the way in which a statesman cares for cities, but it is also an essential activity of statecraft. In addition to 'weaving together' all the elements of the city (305e, 311c), one of the statesman's primary tasks (harking back to the rearing function of the herdsman) is to raise citizens of good character, and this will involve weaving together, in due measure, the warp and weft of virtue. The Visitor devotes the closing pages of the dialogue (305e-311c) to developing this picture of the statesman's function: a citizen's character must involve toughness and ferocity (the warp) as well as flexibility and responsiveness (the weft), each of these in due measure, and as articulated in the law.

With this description of the statesman's goal as a weaver, the Visitor manages to 'weave in' another strand in the dialogue: the doctrine of due measure that is introduced with considerable fanfare at 283b-287b, where it is invoked to address the worry that the divisions, the myth, and the model of weaving have made the conversation excessively long. The conversation may have been longer than is pleasant to the interlocutors, the Visitor concedes, but the only relevant question for the dialectician was whether it was too long (or too short) for the purposes of cultivating skill in dialectic. A general feature of any ruling expertise – whether it be weaving or statecraft – is the ability to discern and delimit what is excessive and deficient in the enterprises that it rules over (284a). We readers of the dialogue are evidently meant to understand that the same goes for dialectic. Dialectic is an expertise (278e10) that employs the kindred practices of collection and division, myth, and modelling at the appropriate times, and at appropriate length. It is thus not simply the formula for the statesman, but the extended episode of dialectical inquiry, that is marked as complete in the dialogue's closing lines.

<sup>36</sup> Horn (Chapter 9 in this volume) discusses the meaning and scope of this principle.

## An Overview of This Volume

by Melissa Lane

Gavin Lawrence (Chapter 2) opens the volume's explorations by considering the dialogue's overall 'non-elenctic method', including collection and division but also the central roles of paradigm (*paradeigma*, translated also in this volume as 'model') and in particular of weaving as model of not only politics but also method and ontology, the latter a role that it plays in other related Platonic dialogues. Lawrence surveys the early divisions (257a1-259d6, Chapter 2), noting that they rely on expertise already being collected under a 'genuine principle of unity' which must in turn apply in the cuts made at every stage. Yet, as he observes, this 'demarcatory, or locational, account, aimed at isolating, or mapping, the target' will not in itself suffice to explain and define the nature of that target, a point which is picked up in the account of the method used in the final definition of statecraft considered later in the volume by Melissa Lane (and anticipated earlier in this Introduction, p. 16). Precisation of names also plays a role, including in the Visitor's notorious assertion of the 'unity' of the *technai*, and so of the names, of 'statesman' (*politikos*), 'king' (*basileus*), 'master' (*despotēs*), and 'head of household' (*oikonomos*), a claim which Lawrence considers in relation to Aristotle's rejection of it in *Politics* I (1252a7-18) and in relation to recent editors and commentators on the *Statesman* passage as it unfolds. Ultimately, while contending that the text would need emendation to make the argument work, he identifies in it the general (and successful) project of 'arguing against common linguistic tendencies that distinguish the four figures on criteria irrelevant to differentiating their *epistēmē*'.

Like Lawrence, Fabián Mié (Chapter 3) considers the overall working of collection and division, particularly at 259d7-268d4 but also in the wider context of the dialogue and linked dialogues overall. He identifies the conditions for this procedure to work well as follows: 'a division must begin with a true opinion about the kind sought, which helps us collect its genus; afterwards, we must divide that genus by following its ordered structure of kinds and sub-kinds; further, we must be exhaustive in holding the distinguished parts together; and finally, we can give an account'. Division need not be dichotomous, but it should work only with what is a genuine *eidos* (kind) rather than a mere *meros* (part), such that every name used will refer to what is a genuine kind. While the myth will, as Mié anticipates, reveal that the early divisions of the dialogue, resulting in the identification of statecraft as 'expertise concerned with the rearing of the two-footed herd', are in need of revision involving both expansion and precisification especially in

replacing 'rearing' by 'caring', nevertheless the methodological insights as well as aspects of the political claims made in the early divisions remain valuable.

Turning to the myth itself, Gábor Betegh (268d5-277c6, Chapter 4) contends that it 'remains subservient to dialectic'. Woven together out of the Visitor's interpretation of three existing legends, the myth centrally contrasts two revolving cosmic epochs. One is the age of Kronos, in which that god steers the rotational direction of the *kosmos* while a set of secondary *daimones* rear and nurture each spontaneously earth-generated and backwards-ageing species of living beings, including humans and other animals. The other epoch includes the present age, in which humans must rule over themselves, imitating the self-steering reverse direction of the *kosmos*. While the morals drawn include statecraft being a form of caring (broader and distinct from animal rearing), and the statesman being of the same species as his subjects, contrasting with the role of the 'divine herdsman', Betegh dwells on the Visitor's acknowledgement that the myth has also been both excessive and inadequate to the overall task of the inquiry. Why then has it been told – a question the more pressing given that it fails to deliver on the promising pedagogical role accorded to myth in Plato's *Laws*? Betegh gives both a methodological and a substantive answer. Methodologically, that 'it requires a distinct skill to be able to tell an entertaining political myth', this being 'a lesson that both the dialectician and the statesman have to learn'. And substantively, that even if the Visitor himself fails to do so, his myth does bespeak a 'natural kinship' shared by all humans (though not with the gods) on the basis of which the bonds recommended at the end of the dialogue for the statesman to forge (discussed at the end of this volume in Chapter 12, by Dimitri El Murr) can be built.

In reflecting on the mistakes made in telling the myth, the Visitor highlights the assumption that *megala paradeigmata* (great or grand models) were believed to be appropriate to the king (277b3-4). This remark anticipates his subsequent turn to present a *paradeigma* of *paradeigma* – a model of the distinct kind of model which he suggests is needed in order to adequately clarify the nature of statecraft. David Bronstein (277c7-283a9, Chapter 5) explicates the sense in which a *paradeigma* can, as claimed, help inquirers to move from dreaming knowledge (which upon waking proves ignorance) to waking knowledge, considering it, like myth, to be a method that is supplemental to that of division. Whereas in the lessons drawn directly from the myth, the statesman was resituated as a practitioner of caring for the city, now, through the *paradeigma* of weaving chosen for statecraft, the specific shared activity through which that caring is characteristically executed is identified as intertwining. Bronstein argues that the method rests upon a 'holistic theory of knowledge' and defends the view advanced by Melissa Lane (1998) that it can be properly zetetic rather than didactic, that is, appropriate to the pursuit of inquiry as opposed to being the tool of a teacher who must already have completed the inquiry.

But did the discussion of the model of weaving in its own terms go on too long? To answer this question, but also to introduce an expertise which will be