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Is Virtue an Expertise? The Epistemology of Virtue in Plato's *Meno* and *Republic*

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Philosophy

by

Darby Cameron Vickers

Dissertation Committee:
Associate Professor Casey Perin, Chair
Professor Sven Bernecker
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2021

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Dedication

For my parents

who, for as long as I remember,
always encouraged my curiosity
& treated my ideas like they mattered

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Acknowledgements

There are so many incredible people that I would like to thank. Although dissertations are solo-authored in philosophy, I relied upon an incredible community while I completed this work. Given that I spent the final 16 months of graduate school in a pandemic, I relied particularly heavily on the goodwill of those who support me. I cannot thank them enough.

Thank you to my amazing advisor, Professor Casey Perin. Casey listened to my ideas and challenged me to improve them with infinite patience, over my six years in the PhD program. Over the past six month of the process, he met with me almost every week to provide feedback on my writing. Although we often disagreed on interpretations of Plato's texts, his feedback has been invaluable throughout and made this dissertation possible. In addition, I was able to explore my ideas in his wonderful ancient philosophy seminars, which are some of the most highly regarded graduate classes in the department. It has been an incredible privilege to work with him and I am so grateful to have an advisor who always had my back.

Professor Sven Bernecker has been an incredible supporter of mine since before I joined the philosophy program. He was one of two professors that convinced me that I should switch from classics to philosophy. I am grateful for that every day. He also engaged with me and prompted me to rearticulate my ideas verbally to help me think through them. I always appreciated his incredible intellectual generosity.

Professor Duncan Pritchard has encouraged me since we first met at UCI. I have always felt that he had my back, even when we disagreed on points in epistemology. I grately appreciated having someone I could turn to when I needed guidance throughout my graduate career.

Professor Eric Brown provided extremely useful critical feedback at my candidacy defense. I would not have been able to write this dissertation without it. It took me 18 months to try to figure out how to address the objections he posed, and the document is stronger for it.

The vast majority of the thinking behind this dissertation happened during sessions of RED (writing together with Emily and Rena). Although little of the actual writing from those sessions remains in the dissertation document, it was only through those 100+ pages of writing that I came to the ideas that appear in this dissertation. Perhaps more importantly, this dissertation could never have been finished without RED. The support and advice that I received from Emily Rena during RED sessions was the only way I managed to get through the fourth and fifth years of my doctoral program. Moreover, the outline for this dissertation came about during a discussion with Rena during a RED session.

Emily Sumner has been an incredible friend to me throughout my PhD. When I started to suffer from fatigue and poor work habits while writing my candidacy chapter, Emily noticed and convinced me to join a writing group. Without that writing group, I never would have finished my PhD and I am grateful every day. She and I traded various documents throughout the PhD process for editing and she helped me think through the comments I received from others. Emily also started a fabulous and supportive virtual writing group of graduate students and postdocs during the pandemic, which helped keep me going through

my toughest times. She also planned an incredible writing retreat for my 31st birthday, where we made pizza, drank wine, took morning walks on the beach, and swam in the ocean. I can't wait to have more fun when the pandemic is over!

Rena B. Goldstein has been an amazing friend and colleague ever since she joined the philosophy PhD at UCI. I was so delighted that she was willing to join the Barbara's writing workshop with me. She has been an incredible partner in running writing workshops since Summer 2018 and I am so grateful that she championed starting one based in the Humanities Center in Winter 2020. That group has supported me more than I can say. Rena displays incredible generosity and has been willing to join me in taking intellectual risks. She challenges my thinking when I become myopic and pushes me forward when I get stuck. One morning, sitting in Peet's she convinced me to rethink my dissertation project, after I had been stuck for more than six months. This document is the result of that re-thinking. She also read multiple drafts of the first chapter of my dissertation. I am delighted that we will keep running our writing workshop this coming year and excited for our future collaborations.

Professor Barbara Sarnecka (Cognitive Sciences, UCI) served as an incredible mentor to me. Although I was a humanities student and not a quantitative social scientist, she welcomed me into her writing group. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the manuscript of her book, which served as the textbook for the writing workshop, reoriented my approach to writing and to my graduate career. Simultaneously, the writing workshop pulled me out of isolation into a supportive and dynamic community. Moreover, she embraced my ideas and encouraged me to adapt the principles of the writing workshop to my own discipline. I cannot thank her enough.

Samuel Kelso helped foster the idea behind this dissertation through a series of conversations over the course of 2017-2018. In particular, he inspired the connection I draw between the *Meno* and *Republic*.

Due to a shortness of time, I have missed many people who deeply deserve my gratitude. Even if I was unable to explicitly thank you here, I appreciate your support more than I can say. In particular, the writing groups with whom I wrote the vast majority of this dissertation deserve my everlasting gratitude.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Is Virtue an Expertise? The Epistemology of Virtue in Plato's *Meno* and *Republic*

By

Darby Cameron Vickers

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

University of California, Irvine, 2021

Associate Professor Casey Perin, Chair

Plato's *Meno* opens with the fundamental question, 'can one be taught to be virtuous'? I argue that the dialogue demonstrates that there are two distinct cognitive states commonly referred to as '*arete*' (virtue) and guide one to perform the right actions. One cognitive state called '*arete*' is genuine virtue; it is a form of ethical expertise and it can be taught. The other cognitive state referred to in this way is a sort of pseudo-virtue; it is a knack for doing the right thing. Although Socrates and his interlocutors agree that there are no living ethical experts, in the final lines of the *Meno*, Socrates imagines a statesman with this expertise who could successfully teach virtue to statesmen of the next generation. I argue that in the *Republic*, Plato takes up this project and creates a *polis*, for which the primary aim is to create a succession of statesmen with ethical expertise.

My first chapters outlines the epistemology of expertise. Plato's *Meno* draws a contrast between two epistemic states: *episteme* and *doxa*. Although the two epistemic states guide their possessors equally well, *episteme* is more valuable than correct *doxa*. Typically, scholars interpret this puzzle about the relative value of the epistemic states—sometimes called The Meno Problem—in the following way: why is propositional knowledge more valuable than propositional true belief?. I argue that part of the intractability of the puzzle stems from the fact that, in the *Meno*, '*episteme*' does not refer to propositional knowledge. Over the

past few decades, many ancient philosophers have voiced their discomfort with interpreting *episteme* as propositional knowledge in the *Meno*. My contribution is that, in the *Meno*, *episteme* is expertise, while *doxa* refers to a wide-spectrum of epistemic states ranging from propositional beliefs to knacks that produce equivalent results to expertise.

I marshal textual evidence from the *Meno* to demonstrate that *episteme* refers to expertise, as opposed to some less demanding epistemic state. *Episteme* is more valuable than the corresponding correct *doxa* because of its stability (*Meno* 98a). I argue that *episteme* is stable in two senses. First, it is stable within the individual. Second, it is intergenerationally stable because it can be taught. Although correct *doxa* can be transmitted from one individual to another, but only *episteme* can be taught taught. For Plato, teaching ('διδαχή') is a technical term that refers to a specific type of transmission and is synonymous with recollection ('ἀνάμνησις'). Through this process, *episteme* can be losslessly transmitted between one generation and the next.

I then demonstrate that, in the *Meno*, genuine virtue is a type of expertise. I employ the epistemology, described in the first chapter, to explain the implications: if virtue is a sort of expertise, it is teachable. I argue that Plato believed virtue was teachable, genuine virtue expertise was only possible under the correct sort of constitution. This constitution is the constitution of the *Kallipolis* described in the *Republic*.

In my third chapter, I articulate a novel explanation of the censorship program described in *Republic* 2 and 3. I argue that the censorship program is necessary for ensuring that the teaching of virtue is possible. Ethical expertise requires an extremely long education (the philosopher-kings continued their education until they turn 50). In order to prepare the soul for this, they must minimize the guardians' exposure to anything that might shape their souls in the wrong way. Preparation begins even before their rational faculties have fully developed. The *Kallipolis* brings to fruition the desires Socrates expresses in the *Meno* for a society where a statesman could create another statesman.

Introduction

Near the end of Plato's *Meno*, Meno asks Socrates why, if two epistemic states result in the same action, one of those epistemic states (*episteme*) is more valuable than the other (*doxa*). This famous question is often referred to as 'The Meno Problem'. Today, contemporary epistemologists grapple with a series of problems related to The Meno Problem,[1] most prominently: why is propositional knowledge more valuable than propositional belief? Although debates in contemporary epistemology about The Meno Problem are largely divorced from Plato's work, scholars with a proclivity toward ancient philosophy sometimes return to the *Meno* itself seeking an answer. I argue that the contemporary Meno Problem is a different problem than the one posed in the *Meno*. However, the problem about the relative value of *episteme* and *doxa* in the *Meno* is a philosophically gripping and important one. In this dissertation, I provide an interpreation about the puzzle of relative value in the *Meno* and its implications for other puzzles in the *Meno* and *Republic*.

I argue that the puzzle in the *Meno* differs from the contemporary Meno Problem because '*episteme*' in the *Meno* does not denote propositional knowledge, but a more demanding epistemic state.[2] A common thread in the recent scholarship interpreting the *Meno* is a growing discomfort that the preponderance of Plato's use of *episteme* in the *Meno* refers to *episteme* (e.g. Bjelde 2021, Ebrey 2013, Hyman 2010, Schwab 2015). In response, a few

[1] For a review of related problems, see Pritchard 1990

[2] This is not the only difference; *doxa* also corresponds to a much wider range of epistemic states than propositional belief.

scholars have overreacted and claimed that '*episteme*' never means anything except propositional knowledge.[3] Despite the promulgation of this view by prominent scholars, any cursory examination of of the use of '*episteme*' both in Greek literature in general and in the Platonic dialogues in particular, demonstrate the absurdity of the claim that *episteme* always, only, and everywhere refers to propositional knowledge (Barnes 1980; Fine 2004, 75). There are, of course, cases in Plato where '*episteme*' refers to propositional knowledge.[4] Yet, in the *Meno*, *episteme* appears to mean something akin to 'expertise'.

In purely abstract terms, this interpretation might not seem plausible; contemporary analytic philosophy does not categorize epistemic states by teachability. However, if we eschew our preconceived notions about epistemic states and do not try to impose our own views upon Plato, this interpretation is indeed a charitable—and plausible—way for Plato to view the epistemic landscape. I relate a few scenarios in concrete terms that demonstrate the relative value that Socrates describes.

An example that specifically pinpoints the difference between *doxa* and *episteme* is a musician who learns primarily by ear. A musician who learns by ear possesses a knack as opposed to an *episteme*; the by-ear musician might not be able to transmit her musical ability to a child who struggles with auditory memory or one who learns more effectively through visual cues. The by-ear musician lacks these resources to be able to transmit *doxa*.

A second example I call the 'intuitive baker.' The intuitive baker learned to bake intuitively (without measuring), not through a process of rigorous training but rather through experience (with perhaps some guidance from others). Only those who possess an acute ability to visualize and estimate three-dimensional space can bake intuitively. The best intuitive baker in the world could not losslessly transmit her skill to someone, unless that person had, among other attributes, a decent innate ability to estimate three-dimensional space. In the case of the by-ear musician and the intuitive baker, transmission requires that the transmittee possess an ability. Even if the by-ear musician and the intuitive baker

[3]Barnes 1980; Fine 2004, 75

[4]e.g. Vlastos 1957 provides convincing cases.

produce products indistinguishable from true experts and their students have the requisite abilities to make transmission possible, those students are unlikely to produce products indistinguishable from those of experts because those with knack-*doxa* lack the full array of resources the expert possesses (most commonly, those with knack *doxa* lack full explanatory resources. In the case of the by-ear musician, it is not just explanatory resources that are lacking, but representational tools (e.g. musical scores).

Consider the example of violin making. If someone possesses *episteme* of violin making, then she is, under favorable circumstances, able to replicate her expertise in her students or apprentices and then those students can replicate their expertise in their students, given sufficiently amenable circumstances. She will teach a set of processes for choosing wood, among other aspeks of her crats, breadking down the process and setting up practice exercises for her apprentice. Through this lengthy process—teaching—her students rise to master her level of expertise, and they will teach their students, and so on (q.v. 89d-94e, 100a). Each subsequent generation will benefit from violins of the same excellent quality. Conversely, if she have *doxa* of violin making, it means that even under the most favorable conditions, she may make violins for the generation to which she belong only. Instead of having well-articulated rules for choosing the wood, this violin maker might feel the wood speakes to her and she cannot fully explain her rationale to her students. Those who might attempt to imitate me may or may not be able to make violins of the same quality (and probably will make violins of a lower quality).[5] Thus, future generations may not be able to benefit from the continued production of excellent violins. In short, *episteme* guarantees that under favorable conditions, *episteme* will remain for the next generation, while *doxa* can make no such guarantee and there is always the possibility of a failure of the reproduction of expertise.

If *episteme* indeed does refer to expertise in the *Meno*, then Plato's version of The Meno Problem differs significantly from its contemporary counterpart. I argue in my first

[5]For example, I have *doxa* about bread-baking. Those whom I have taught to bake bread are not as skilled at breadmaking as I am, because I lack the explanatory and other resources necessary to fully transmit the *doxa* I possess.

chapter that the question posed by The Meno Problem is not a question about the relative value of propositional knowledge and propositional true belief, but instead one about the relative value of expertise and a knack that yields the same resulting actions or products as that expertise (97c). If both epistemic states have the same products, we might wonder, along with Meno (97c-d), why one epistemic state should be more valuable than other. Socrates answers that the difference in value stems from a difference in stability. Not only is *episteme* stable within the individual who possesses it, whereas a knack may disappear, *episteme* is stable across generations. The reason behind this is that an *episteme* has established methods and procedures for its transmission that can ensure that a qualified candidate under favorable circumstances can acquire it. After this acquisition process, the learner can produce identically good results or products to the possessor of the *episteme* and becomes a possessor of *episteme* in her own right.

Methodology, Dialogues, and Names

Methodology

Generally, analytic philosophers do not describe their methodology. We act as though we all read texts in essentially the same way. However, I think at least in history of philosophy, it is worth characterizing the style of interpretation in broad strokes. In this dissertation, I attempt to provide the most charitable reading possible of a straightforward interpretation of the text. By straightforward, I mean that I try to avoid esoteric interpretations, which assume Plato embedded hidden doctrines in the text.

My method of determining the meaning of Plato's terms stems from looking at the context clues in which the terms are deployed, and only afterward looking at the definitions Plato himself provides. This approach is unusual; those who study Plato often focus on his definitions and deform their readings of other parts of the dialogue to fit what Plato

stipulates in those definitions.[6]

When something Plato says is abstract or seems puzzling, I often emulate the methods of his character, Socrates, and try to find examples from everyday life. When examining Plato's views on epistemic states and their transmission, I often drew inspiration from recent work in cognitive science and education that seemed to describe similar or the same phenomena that Plato describes. There may be cases in which my interpretations give Plato too much credit; a reader may feel I border upon anachronism. However, my attempt is to put forward the most charitable picture that Plato could plausibly describe (without denaturing the text or rendering it inconsistent). I have found contemporary research helpful for trying to understand Plato's ideas myself and explaining them to those outside ancient philosophy.

Dialogues

In this dissertation, I primarily discuss the *Meno* and the *Republic*. In general, I try to interpret Plato's dialogues separately from one another since there are many tensions between ideas voiced in various dialogues. It is difficult to know which views are Plato's or whether his views change over time. For that reason, I only draw out connections when I feel that they are important and I can clearly argue for them. In this dissertation, I argue for connections between the epistemology described in the *Meno*, *Republic*, and *Gorgias*. However, since there are inconsistencies in vocabulary and perspective, I try to distill that which is relevantly similar out of the dialogues.

Names

While I am writing about Plato's texts, I often refer to what Socrates says or asserts. This is because tracing the argument requires me to consider what the character Socrates

[6] q.v. Lyons 1972: 139-140. Lyons is a linguist; his methods are more rigorous and less philosophical than my own. However, we are unified in our approach of privileging contextual use of terms over stated definitions and that there might be more than one sense of a term that is operative in an author's vocabulary, even if the author endeavors to create a technical definition of that term.

says; what Plato means by the interactions between Socrates and his interlocutors is a different level of interpretation. When I refer to Socrates, I always mean the character in Plato's dialogues—as opposed to the historical Socrates—unless I explicitly state that I refer to the historical Socrates. Although I usually attribute ideas to Socrates (the character), I sometimes invoke 'Plato' at various points. Most commonly, I invoke Plato because either (1) that the point I'm distilling is related but not directly in line with what the character of Socrates says at a given point in the text or (2) the point I'm distilling seems to be a feature across the Platonic dialogues and may not always be spoken by the character of Socrates.[7]

Epistemic Vocabulary in Plato

Plato uses language in surprising ways, at time very carefully redefining terms and at other times deploying loose and colloquial language. There are passages where Socrates seems to go out of his way to vary locution. This renders his epistemology somewhat obscure. In this dissertation, I reexamines *episteme*, *doxa*, and the relationship between these two epistemic states in the *Meno*. I argue that *episteme* is the epistemic state of experts in relation to their expertise, while *doxa* encompasses a wide spectrum of epistemic states from propositional beliefs to a knack that can produce a product similar or even equivalent to that produced by an expert. here are also some cases where '*episteme*' means the expertise itself (which might more commonly be referred to as '*techne*'). In this respect, the Greek functions similarly to some English epistemic vocabulary: 'knowledge' can refer to either the epistemic state or to an item of knowledge.

Indeed, the reason it is both so challenging to pin down anything like necessary and sufficient conditions to describe how *episteme*—and other epistemic vocabulary—works in Plato and why it is so tempting to impose our contemporary notions upon it in Plato is because the epistemic vocabulary seems to be fluid. In some places, *episteme* and *episasthai*

[7]There may also be places in the text where I am inadvertently imprecise in my language.

seem to be used to describe an epistemic state corresponding to expertise, in some places they describe something that seems much closer to propositional knowledge. In some places, this epistemic state seems demanding, in some places it does not. This should not surprise us; in English, we use the word knowledge to describe a massive range of states, from the epistemic state that the most eminent expert has in relation to her expertise to the epistemic state of a dog who 'knows' not to jump on the couch.

Throughout, I employ the transliterated Greek terms *episteme* and *doxa*. The standard translations of these terms, *episteme* (knowledge) and *doxa* (belief/opinion), can be misleading. Using English terms, since they are frequently employed in today's philosophical texts, invite us to import our own assumptions about knowledge, belief, and opinions into our interpretation of Plato's texts. Whether those assumptions conform to the mainstream in analytic philosophy or our own more idiosyncratic views, importing assumptions onto the text is anachronistic and may blind us to how Plato uses them in the text. We are less likely to import our own views onto terminology when the terms are not those which we use in everyday conversation–in this case, by transliterating, rather than translating, them. This, I hope, will encourage readers to view the terms as are contextually defined in the dialogue.

The characterizations of *episteme* and *doxa* that I put forward in my first chapter are not universalizable to all of Plato's works and certainly do not delimit the range of meanings that these terms pick out in Greek texts more broadly. A wide-ranging analysis of classical Greek epistemic vocabulary is outside the scope of the current project. Additionally, Plato uses epistemic terms in somewhat different ways in different dialogues, fitting the conversations that occur in those dialogues. Moreover, Socrates and Meno stipulate specific things about how these terms are used in this context; other dialogues contain other stipulations. Recently, an increasing number of scholars consider the standard epistemic terms that we use in English—including both 'knowledge' and 'understanding'—seem to map poorly onto *episteme* in the *Meno* (Bjelde 2021: 17-18, etc). However, in the *Meno*, I argue that *episteme* has a specific meaning (the epistemic state corresponding to expertise) and that it has

a limited number of synonyms (see the subsection on objections).

Chapter Summaries

In this dissertation, I demonstrate a relationship between the epistemology described in the *Meno* and the ethics laid out in both the *Meno* and *Republic*. I argue that in these two dialogues, virtue is a form of expertise. As an expertise, it can be transmitted from one generation to the other, but only through a carefully controlled process. The *Republic* designs a state, the *Kallipolis*, to maintain a virtuous class of ruler throughout successive generations.

In **Chapter 1**, I argue that *episteme* in the *Meno* is the epistemic state corresponding to expertise, i.e the epistemic state of experts with respect to their expertise. I contrast this with the more typical association of *episteme* as propositional knowledge and *doxa* as propositional belief. I argue that the evidence indicates that *episteme* is the epistemic state that experts achieve with respect to their expertise. *Episteme* is not merely a body of knowledge; but the combination of knowledge and skills required for any form of expertise. *Doxa* refers to a wide range of epistemic states, from propositional belief to a knack. The epistemology I describe in the *Meno* shares similarities with that in the *Gorgias*: *episteme* in the *Meno* corresponds with *techne* in the *Gorgias* and *doxa* in the *Meno* represents a spectrum that includes *pistis* and *empeiria* (in the language of the *Gorgias*).

We should take Socrates and Meno's claim seriously, when they say that something is teachable if and only if it is *episteme* (87b-c). I interpret this claim to mean that, under favorable conditions, *episteme* can be losslessly transmitted to another person, while *doxa* cannot. *Episteme* ensures that the expert (i.e. the possessor of *episteme*) can both produce the products (physical or intellectual) of that expertise and reproduce that expertise in others (i.e. create a new generation of experts through teaching). Socrates states that *episteme* is the only epistemic state that is teachable and that 'teaching' ('διδαχή') and

'recollection' ('ἀνάμνησις') are two words for the same concept (87b6-c2). I argue that this passage renders 'teaching' (and its cognates) a technical term from this point in the dialogue that refers to the specific process by which expertise is transferred.[8] In addition, recollection, given my interpretation of *episteme*, is the process by which expertise is acquired; at the end of recollection, the learner has *episteme*.[9] One only achieves *episteme* upon completing the process of recollecting; one cannot say that a person recollecting has recollected (or achieved *episteme*), until the process is complete.[10] Incomplete recollection results in, at best, results in true *doxa*.[11]

Thus, *episteme* is not only stable within the individual, but also intergenerationally stable, because it can be (losslessly) taught. This interpretation explains why *episteme* is more valuable than *doxa* despite the fact that they result in the same actions or products (97a-c): *episteme* can produce the actions or products stably within and across generations, while *doxa* cannot.

In **Chapter 2**, I use the epistemology presented in Chapter 1 to explain the ethics in the *Meno*. For Plato, possession of a particular epistemic state is equivalent to possessing virtue (or a virtue). Socrates and Meno, however, are unsure what sort of an epistemic state virtue is, so they are initially unable to answer Meno's question (is virtue teachable?). Socrates suggests they hypothesize that virtue is a type of *episteme* and then create an

[8] I discuss this in detail in Section 2.

[9] This interpretation of recollection is a radical departure from that which is standard. I derive this unusual interpretation from the context of the *Meno* and the equivalency that Socrates draws at 87b6-c2. I want to emphasize that under this interpretation, recollection is a process that often involves both metal and embodied practices. In cases where the expertise has a physical component (e.g. cobblery), there may be a certain amount of physical practice required to facilitate recollection. While there is little in the *Meno* to suggest this (perhaps the discussion with of *epistamai* with Anytus (93c6*ff.*), but there is textual evidence in the *Laws* that learning how to dance or perform in a chorus is a prerequisite to other sorts of learning (e.g. *Laws* 664e-665a) and in the *Republic* that physical training is necessary for developing the right character (*Resp.* 403c8*ff.*), it seems that these have physical skills as prerequisites to learning philosophy, at least indirectly. I see no reason that physical experience could not enable *episteme* in other ways, especially because Socrates clearly expresses the idea that expert practitioners of physical skills have *episteme* in the *Meno* (e.g. 90c-d, 93d, 94b-c).

[10] However, the process itself, even if stopped short, might be termed 'recollecting' and the result may be *doxa*, either true or false (q.v. Schwab 2019).

[11] Although perhaps *doxa* achieved in this way might remain for longer than *doxa* acquired by other means. .

argument to justify that hypothesis. After constructing they argument, they discover that it has a flaw; they assumed that only *episteme* could yield beneficial results, but Socrates shows that true *doxa* can also yield beneficial (and sometimes identical) results to *episteme*. They conclude that that the epistemic state praised in eminent Athenian citizens is a type of true *doxa*. In the last few lines of the dialogue, Socrates posits that there might be another type of virtue, one that is *episteme* and is indeed teachable, but that is not seen in Athens of their day. *Episteme*-virtue would be particularly powerful because unlike *doxa*, *episteme* can be taught. Due to its teachability, *episteme*-virtue could endure through time as it is passed between generations. While *doxa*-virtue often dies with its possessor or yields only incomplete copies. Thus, in this chapter, I provide a unique interpretation of the ethics in the *Meno* and demonstrate that this interpretation provides a satisfying integration of the *Meno*'s epistemology and ethics. This underscores the unity of the *Meno*. I also argue that my interpretation of the dialogue provides a useful insight about the connection between the *Meno* and the *Republic*. At the end of the *Meno*, Socrates mentions the possibility of a *polis* in which a statesman has *episteme*-virtue and can thus teach another statesman. I argue that the goal of the *Kallipolis* in the *Republic* is to create a class of statesmen with *episteme*-virtue that can ensure, through teaching, that subsequent generations of statesmen also possess *episteme*-virtue.

In **Chapter 3**, I turn to the *Republic*. In Books 2 and 3 of the *Republic*, the character Socrates famously proposes a draconian censorship program; Book 10 bans poetry outright (*Resp.* 595a*ff.*, 607a). While many readers of the *Republic* have accused Plato of being a philistine, the recent scholarly trend in philosophy is that the *Republic* is ambivalent toward poetry; Socrates both acknowledges and demonstrates the aesthetic value of poetry, but ejects most poetry from the *Kallipolis* on ethical grounds. I argue this is because Plato sees poetry as in conflict with the central value of the *Republic*: the ability to consistently produce virtuous individuals (and, in particular, political leaders) in successive generations.

Plato's critique of poetry and his censorship program demonstrates that stable in-

tergenerational virtue transmission can only occur under carefully regulated circumstances. The *Republic* demonstrates that poetry challenges the ability for a society to ensure stable virtue transmission for two interconnected reasons. First, the audiences were inclined to treat poets as ethical experts because of the emotional power of poetry, but Plato argued that poets are not ethical experts and so their ethical guidance can be counterproductive or dangerous. Second, in order to ensure the ability to consistently train virtuous citizens, children must have the sorts of *doxai* that dispose them to become virtuous before they are able to understand the reasoning behind those *doxai*.

Since the rational part of the soul develops throughout childhood but only fully emerges late in this development, it is important that children have the right sort of inclinations so that the emerging rational capacity can grow strong enough to harness and direct the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul and not be overwhelmed by them. The *doxai* and values that will set children on the right course cannot be transferred through reason alone, but through a combination of reason,emotion, and habit that forms character. Poetry possesses emotive power, but that emotive power has equal power to educate or corrupt. Without careful regulation, it is easy for such *doxa* transmission to fail; when it fails, children become unsuitable candidates for virtue. I argue that Plato saw transmitting correct *doxai* as a necessary step in creating virtuous individuals, but a challenging one because *doxa* and value transmission is inherently unstable. It can only happen consistently in a carefully regulated environment, where fine *doxai* are familiar and corrupting or harmful *doxai* remain unfamiliar.

In the **Conclusion**, I discuss implications of the epistemology of the *Meno* for those in the rest of the *Republic*. I describe how the epistemology and educational system described in Books 6 and 7 correpsonds to that described in the *Meno*. I also demonstrate, in brief, that the epistemology laid out in the *Meno* provides a solution to the puzzle about Socrates' virtue in the *Apology*.

Textual Notes

In this brief section, I make a few remarks on textual conventions used throughout the dissertation.

Greek, Transliteration, and Translation

As this dissertation analyzes Plato's works, I frequently refer to terms in Classical Attic Greek. Since my intended audience extends beyond those who have a facility with Greek, I regularly employ transliterated Greek terms. Throughout, I employ the transliterated Greek terms for epistemic states—e.g. *episteme* and *doxa*—instead of English translations. The standard translations of these terms, '*episteme*' ('knowledge') and '*doxa*' ('belief' or 'opinion'), can be misleading. Using English terms, since they are frequently employed in today's philosophical texts, invite us to import our own assumptions about knowledge, belief, and opinions into our interpretation of Plato's texts. Whether those assumptions conform to the mainstream in analytic philosophy or our own more idiosyncratic views, importing assumptions onto the text is anachronistic and may blind us to how Plato uses them in the text. We are less likely to import our own views onto terminology when the terms are not those which we use in everyday conversation—in this case, by transliterating, rather than translating, them. This, I hope, will encourage readers to view the terms as are contextually defined in the dialogue.

Quoted translations are my own unless otherwise noted. The Greek texts are taken from the most recent Oxford Classical Text editions of Plato's works and citations to the Greek are all to those Oxford Classical Texts.

Citations

Citations from primary sources, mostly Platonic dialogues, follow the conventions set forth in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary.* Traditionally, Platonic dialogues are cited paren-

thetically, e.g. (Pl. *Resp.* 465d3), where 'Pl.' stands for Plato, followed by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* abbreviation for the text (*Resp.* stands for *Res Publica*, the Latin name for the *Republic*), and the Stephanus number corresponding to the passage in question. Stephanus numbers are a standard system employed in almost all editions of the Platonic dialogues, and the number and letter combination refers to the section Henri Estienne's (a.k.a. Henricus Stephanus) edition of the Platonic dialogues. The final number in the sequence refers to the line number, but refers to the modern Oxford Classical Text line number. Line numbers (the number following the letter) differ between editions and do not reflect the original line numbers in Stephanus edition.

All citations of classical works refer to the most recent Oxford Classical Text of the dialogue in question (and the line numbers refer to the line numbers from that edition).

Pronouns

Philosophy has a tendency toward abstraction, idealization, and thought experiments. By convention, I find myself referring to 'an individual' or 'a statesman' or some similarly abstract person. This convention often requires the use of pronouns; as there is currently no gender neutral pronoun in widespread use in academic English, I tend toward the feminine pronoun (she/her/hers) when referring to abstract individuals. There are a few selected cases where I opt instead for the masculine pronoun (he/him/his), either to differentiate two abstract individuals from one another or to mirror Plato's tendency toward using the masculine for such abstractions. I hope the text makes these apparent to the reader.

American English is in the midst of a transition toward accepting a non-gendered singular pronoun they/them/their. Academic writing has not yet fully embraced this convention, although I believe such a change is on the horizon. While I am fully in favor of such a change, especially because of its political implications for recognizing the gender spectrum, I do not employ they/them/their in this document; I do this for the sake of clarity. Currently, many of us can recognize the singular they/them/their pronouns in spoken English,

but sometimes stumble over it in writing, because we are used to they/them/their referring to plural nouns and serving as the subject of plural verbs; using myself as an example, sometimes, I need to read a sentence multiple times to understand it when it employs singular they/them/their. Given that philosophical writing is complex and often requires one to read a sentence multiple times, I hesitated to add another potential barrier to comprehension. I hope that we will soon embrace this convention to the point where a singular 'they' is as usual and comprehensible as the singular 'you'.

Chapter 1

Why is *Episteme* More Valuable than *Doxa*? The Epistemology of Plato's *Meno*

In this chapter, I offer an original systematic understanding of the epistemology that appears in the *Meno*. In particular, my contribution reexamines *episteme*, *doxa*, and the relationship between these two epistemic states. I argue that the textual evidence indicates that *episteme* is the epistemic state that experts achieve with respect to their expertise, while *doxa* encompasses a wide spectrum of epistemic states from propositional beliefs to a knack that can produce a product similar or even equivalent to that produced by an expert. I lay out the evidence for my interpretation in Sections 1-3. In section 4, I explore the characterizations of *episteme* in the *Meno*. I reconsdier *Meno* 98a, arguing it is a characterization of *episteme* that indicates that *episteme* is *doxa* transformed into something stable (and teachable) by a process of 'being tied down.'[1] The metaphor of 'being tied down' refers to the process which

[1]The quote in full, for reference (98a):

> πολὺν δὲ χρόνον οὐκ ἐθέλουσι παραμένειν, ἀλλὰ δραπετεύουσιν ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὥστε οὐ πολλοῦ ἄξιαί εἰσιν, ἕως ἄν τις αὐτὰς δήσῃ αἰτίας λογισμῷ. τοῦτο δ' ἐστίν, ὦ Μένων ἑταῖρε, ἀνάμνησις, ὡς ἐν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἡμῖν ὡμολόγηται. ἐπειδὰν δὲ δεθῶσιν, πρῶτον μὲν ἐπιστῆμαι γίγνονται, ἔπειτα μόνιμοι· καὶ διὰ ταῦτα δὴ τιμιώτερον ἐπιστήμη ὀρθῆς δόξης ἐστίν, καὶ διαφέρει δεσμῷ ἐπιστήμη ὀρθῆς δόξης'
>
> But they do not desire to remain for much time, but flee from the human soul, with the result

allows *episteme* to persist in the individual and remain a stable epistemic state over time. In the third section, I highlight the role of both stability and teaching in the distinction between *episteme* and *doxa* and in the relative value of these two epistemic states.

My interpretation of Plato's epistemic framework in the *Meno* stems from the biconditional which Socrates proposes at 87b-c: x is teachable if and only if x is a type of *episteme*. I argue that we should take this biconditional at face value; *episteme* is an epistemic state ultimately distinguished by its teachability. In the *Meno* (at 87b6-8), Socrates recasts 'teaching' ('διδαχή' and its cognates) as a technical term, synonymous with 'recollection' ('ἀνάμησις'). I argue (with textual evidence) that Plato uses both of these terms in an unusual way in the *Meno*. 'Teaching', in the strict sense used in the *Meno*, refers to the process of acquiring expertise from another expert, which is a process that includes not only explanation by a teacher but the scaffolded practice necessary to achieve it.[2] Since Socrates stipulates that recollection and teaching are synonymous, I claim that 'recollection' refers to this same process.[3] For an epistemic state to be teachable in this specialized sense, it must be stable

> that they are not worth much, unless they are tied down by *aitias logismos*. But when they are tied down, they become *episteme*, and then they remain. And it is on account of these things that *episteme* is more honored than correct *doxa*, and *episteme* is superior to (ἐ) correct *doxa* by being tied down.

Traditionally, translators have interpreted 'διαφέρει' as 'differs from.' 'Διαφέρειν' can, of course, mean 'differ from'. However, I think that this is misleading because it seemingly constrains this as the single differentiating factor between *episteme* and *doxa*. *episteme* and *doxa* differ by more than that one is 'tied down' and the other is not; one is also teachable and the other is not (87b-c). Stability confers an advantage to *episteme* because it allows for *episteme* to persist diachronically, both within a single individual and over the course of generations (as passed from individual to individual). Hence, I translate 'διαφέρει' as 'be superior to.'

[2] I do not want to belabor the point here; I return to this in detail in Section 2. Scaffolded practice is a pedagogical technique that refers to guided practice. As the student progresses, the teacher removes the scaffolding or guidance until the student is able to do the task or answer questions on her own.

[3] This is a radical departure from traditional accounts of recollection and I am only claiming this description fits recollection in the *Meno*. Schwab (2019) gives a somewhat similar account of recollection in the *Meno*, although he considers recollection to be the acquisition of knowledge or understanding as opposed to expertise. I derive this unusual interpretation from the context of the *Meno* and the equivalency that Socrates draws at 87b6-c2. I want to emphasize that under this interpretation, recollection is a process that often involves both metal and embodied practices. In cases where the expertise has a physical component (e.g. cobblery), there may be a certain amount of physical practice required to facilitate recollection. While there is little in the *Meno* to suggest this (perhaps the discussion with of *epistamai* with Anytus (93c6*ff.*), but there is textual evidence in the *Laws* that learning how to dance or perform in a chorus is a prerequisite to other sorts of learning (e.g. *Laws* 664e-665a) and in the *Republic* that physical training is necessary for developing the right character (*Resp.* 403c8*ff.*), it seems that these have physical skills as prerequisites to

within the individual; the acquisition of expertise is a long process, as Socrates describes it, requiring a teacher to have stable *episteme*.

Additionally, since *episteme* is teachable, it can be transmitted stably between generations. Thus *episteme* is stable in two ways: within an individual and within a *polis* (over multiple generations). I argue that teaching, in this technical sense, is the lossless[4] transmission of expertise; as teaching is only synonymous with recollection, something is only taught when the expertise is acquired by the student. Moreover, teaching only occurs when its corollary action, learning, also takes place. *doxa* lacks the stability of *episteme* (98a) and cannot be transmitted in the same way that *episteme* can (i.e. through teaching). In other words, *episteme* can be successfully and transmitted across generations without any loss of skill, while *doxa* cannot.

Overall, I argue in this chapter that we can make sense of the distinction between *episteme* and *doxa* not as a distinction between knowledge and belief, but as a distinction between teachable expertise (*episteme*) and a range of epistemic states that may be transmitted but are not teachable (*doxa*). I structure the argument into seven sections. In Sections 1 and 2, I show how '*episteme*' and '*doxa*' are employed within the *Meno*. In Section 3, I consider an objection to my view. In light of those definitions, in Section 4, I explain why an epistemic state distinguished by teachability is plausible and explain how Plato makes this argument. I argue that Plato formulates 'teachable' (διδακτόν) as a technical term as equivalent to 'recollectable' ('ἀναμνηστόν'). Recollection is the method by which expertise is acquired and completed recollection always results in *episteme*.[5] Teaching, then, encompasses a wide range of techniques that must include a combination of explanation, practice, demonstration, and training the learner in the reflective processes necessary to evaluate, rec-

learning philosophy, at least indirectly. I see no reason that physical experience could not enable *episteme* in other ways, especially because Socrates clearly expresses the idea that expert practitioners of physical skills have *episteme* in the *Meno* (e.g. 90c-d, 93d, 94b-c). I discuss this account more fully in Section 2.

[4]That is, lossless with respect epistemic status. After being taught, the student will have *episteme* and will be an expert. This entails that there is no loss of either information or skills.

[5]This is a different interpretation of recollection than those common in the literature. Among recent interpretations, mine is closest to Schwab's (2019).

ognize mistakes, and improve. Teaching, on this view, is not merely the guidance a teacher provides but describes the full scope of components to a highly specialized learning process. I show that *episteme* distinguished by teachability. Although *doxa* is not teachable, it may be transmissible in a way that does not constitute teaching, such as transmission through testimony, imitation, by trial and error, etc. or a combination thereof. *doxa* may also be the result of an incomplete process of teaching. Subsequently, I draw parallels between the epistemic frameworks described in the *Meno* and the *Gorgias*. This comparison is philosophically interesting in its own right and also underscores the plausibility of my account of the epistemic framework at play in the *Meno*. In Section 6, I show how teachability in this technical sense is a guarantor of stability (in reasonably favorable conditions), and can use it to explain the rather enigmatic differentiation of *episteme* and *doxa* at 98a. Teachability guarantees intergenerational stability; and makes *episteme* valuable because the products of that *episteme* and the lossless teaching of it can be maintained over the course of multiple generations. In other words, *episteme* is a diachronic social good, while *doxa* is not.

1.1 *Episteme* Based on Textual Evidence

1.1.1 *Episteme* is Expertise

Frequently, scholars assume that '*episteme*' usually or always denotes propositional knowledge in the Platonic dialogues, but there is little textual support for this interpretation of the *Meno*. Indeed, all of the instances of '*episteme*' (or the verb, '*epistasthai*') in the *Meno* represent the exercise of an expertise. Expertise is an epistemic state that has multiple components, including the mastery of a particular skill or set of skills (whether intellectual, physical, or both) along with the body of knowledge that underpins with that skill. Expertise also includes certain strategies for learning, self-evaluation and improvement. In other words, *episteme* is the epistemic state of experts. An expert must have propositional knowledge at

her disposal, but she also have the skills to employ that propositional knowledge correctly. Moreover, the majority of the instances of '*episteme*' in the *Meno* refer to embodied skills. The best unifying mechanism to understand how all of these might be manifestations of the same sort of epistemic state is to equate *episteme* with expertise.

Expertise is mastery of not just a body of knowledge but the complex skill set that is required to apply that body of knowledge under the right circumstances[6]. Under this characterization of expertise, master surfers, musicians, bakers, and mathematicians are all experts. Although the intellectual skills of a master mathematician might seem different from the physical skills of a master surfer, both types of expertise require complex skills and a body of knowledge. She must have some propositional knowledge about the tides, where to stand on the board, etc. The surfer must have the skills to read the waves as well to make a variety of determinations before choosing which waves to catch and ride. Thus, expertise is not merely skills or collections of facts, but an integrated whole. In the case of intellectual mastery, a master mathematician knows a vast array of propositional knowledge, including the various properties of numbers, various methods of combining them as well as axioms, theorems, etc. The master mathematician also has complex skills at her disposal, including the ability to develop proofs, break down larger steps into their component parts, how and when to deploy mathematical induction, etc. While the complex skills and body of knowledge differs, these two experts, both are masters of their respective fields and their mastery involves both a body of knowledge and a complex skill set. *Episteme* is the kind of epistemic state that corresponds with mastery; in other words, it is the epistemic state that an expert has with respect to her expertise.

'*Episteme*' as employed in the *Meno* picks out a highly complex and demanding epistemic state.[7] *Episteme* is complex with respect to its content; there are many things an expert knows and can do in virtue of having an expertise. Even expertise in a very limited

[6]i.e. it is more than a body of knowledge

[7]For example: physician's art (90c), flute-playing (90d-e), standing upright on horseback (93d), shooting javelins from horseback (93d), horsemanship (94b), and wrestling (94c).

domain, e.g. expertise of how to make a single type of bread or do a specific type of math problem, requires a combination of propositional knowledge and skill. Any expertise is, in some sense, practical, even if the expertise itself is highly intellectual. This is because an expertise is not just a body of knowledge but involves complex skills that can be applied in different circumstances resulting not in the rote application of exactly the same thing but rather a dynamic response to the circumstances (Annas 2011: 17). Moreover, there is certain coherence of the types of knowledge and skills involved in an expertise. The expert is one that grasps this coherence and can utilize the grasp of the coherence to effectively explain or teach (Annas 2011: 19).

Additionally, an expert needs the ability to acquire and maintain mastery. This requires a set of additional skills, which allows the expert to assess her own learning, correct mistakes, and improve anything that is lacking. I call this suite of skills 'reflective control.'[8] It is this reflective control that allows her to teach the material; someone who cannot assess and think about her own thinking similarly cannot adequately provide guidance for her students to improve their own skill set to the point where they can gain mastery of the area of expertise.

I argue that all of the instances of *episteme* in the *Meno*[9] are cases of expertise. To be clear, expertise does not require that the subject upon which one is an expert is broad (e.g. geometry); expertise in this context can be extremely narrow (e.g. expertise in solving a specific type of geometry problem or baking a specific type of bread). This is a reasonable

[8]In Annas's account of expertise, she has a similar condition she calls "the drive to aspire," which seems to be a disposition that at first causes the student to chase understanding and then continue to drive her to improve and acquire the skill (Annas 2011: 17). I think that Plato's account, at least in the *Meno*, is more concerned with what I've called reflective control. reflective control is something of a meta-skill: a skill used in skill acquisition. Annas's 'drive to aspire' focuses on the motivation to employ such reflective control rather than on the skill itself.

[9]I deal with cases where words other than *episteme* are used below (in Section 1.2.1). The one case where *episteme* seems to mean something possibly different from this skill knowledge is Socrates' somewhat perplexing statement at 85d: ἆρ' οὖν οὐ τὴν ἐπιστήμην, ἣν νῦν οὗτος ἔχει, ἤτοι ἔλαβέν ποτε ἢ ἀεὶ εἶχεν 'therefore the knowledge which he now has, surely he either acquired it at some time or have always had it' (85d9-10). This seems particularly strange because in the previous section, Socrates speaks as though the slave has true *doxa* but could gain *episteme* and at 85d he seems to claim that the slave currently (νῦν) has knowledge. I follow Bronstein and Schwab 2019 in their content innatist reading of this passage. See below.

assumption for the paradigm cases of *episteme* that arise in the dialogue: finding the double of a square (82b-86c, esp. 85c-d), the way Larissa (97a-d), being virtuous (i.e. doing good actions), art of shoe-making (90c-d), throwing a javelin on horseback (93d). However, making one good loaf of bread, being able to solve a token math problem, or knowing a proposition do not constitute an expertise. I explain each of the cases of *episteme* from the *Meno*, briefly, below. They appear in the order that they appear in the text (and are listed above). I begin with the discussion of expertise after Socrates questions the slave[10] about doubling the square, then the road to Larissa, and finally the list of *epistemai* that appear in the discussion with Anytus.

Episteme in the Discussion with the Slave

The slave comes to the correct answers he generates in discussion with Socrates. The discussion begins at *Meno* 85b-c:

> **Socrates**: What do you think, Meno? Has he, in his answers, expressed any *doxa* that was not his own?
>
> **Meno**: No, they were all his own.
>
> **Socrates**: And yet, as we said a short time ago, he did not know (*eidenai*)?[11]
>
> **Meno**: That is true.
>
> **Socrates**: So these *doxai* were in him, were they not?
>
> **Meno**: Yes.

[10] Throughout, I refer to Meno's slave as such or as 'the slave' rather than the more traditional 'slave boy.' Despite the use of the word 'παῖς' ('child') to refer to Meno's slave, this is not evidence that Meno's slave is a child. 'Παῖς' was a traditional words used for slaves, irrespective of age (somewhat like the use of 'garçon' for a waiter of any age in French, although this is no longer traditional since it is seen as slightly derogatory). I eschew the term 'boy', since there is no way to determine the age of Meno's slave. An argument for this nomenclature is made in Benitez 2016.

[11] The word '*eidenai*' and its cognates can be used both to mean 'know' and to mean 'see'. *Eidenai* is perhaps the most common word for 'know' in Greek and is often employed in introductory phrases such as 'you know that…'. There are places where authors make a point of the dual meaning of 'see' and 'know'. Pritchard suggests that Aristotle does so and, at least in some cases, that Aristotle means to denote a specific type of knowledge which involves 'seeing for oneself' (Pirtchard 2016: 29-30). However, I do not believe that Plato puts any weight on possible technical or metaphorical meanings of this word in the *Meno*.

Socrates: So the man who does not know (*eidenai*) has within himself true *doxai* about the things that he does not know (*eidenai*)[12]

In this passage, Socrates describes the slave as producing true *doxai* at the end of the conversation. He contrasts these *doxai* not with *epistemai*, but with things one knows (eidenai) One important thing to note is the use of the word *eidenai*. I am ambivalent as to whether '*eidenai*' is being used to refer to expertise at 85b-c (i.e. as a synonym to '*epistasthai*'). Certainly, *eidenai* is not synonymous with *episteme* in every instance in the *Meno*: there are several places where various grammatical forms of *eidenai* are used colloquially in cases of expressions like 'you know well...' or appear to refer to knowledge in a loose or undemanding sense. There are also places where '*eidenai*' seems to be used interchangeably with '*nous*' (e.g. 99c, 99d). I would argue that like *doxa*, *eidenai* seems to capture a wide spectrum of epistemic states and we can only glean from context to which sort of epistemic state it refers. In this case, I think what is important is that the slave generates *doxai* as opposed to the products associated with a more demanding epistemic state than knowledge. Since the slave is in an epistemic state short of *eidenai* by the end of the conversation, he is surely not an expert.

Before Socrates' questioning, the slave was ignorant of what base to use to double the area of a square (shown by the fact that the slave gives two wrong answers to the question, 82e, 83e). By the end of the elenchus (Socratic questioning), the slave can be said to have true *doxa* that the diagonal of a square the base of a square with double the area of the original. While the slave comes away with *doxa*, this *doxa* is not merely a propositional attitude about the length of the base of the doubled square in the example. Instead, the true *doxa* gives him a procedure for determining the base of a double sized square for any original. While Socrates uses as an example of a square with a base of two, instead of providing the answer outright, Socrates shows him the diagonal on a diagram, graphically demonstrating that the procedure would work for any square. Socrates is obligated to provide a procedure

[12]The phrase here is 'οὐκ οἶδα'. 'οὐκ Οἶδα' and '*eidenai*' are generally classified as parts of the same verb (although that somewhat oversimplifies matters).

rather than a number, since the base of a square of double the size is an irrational number ($2\sqrt{2}$); Plato's contemporaries had not yet come up with easy and straightforward language to express irrational numbers. Also, Socrates provides the slave with a way of estimating the length of a diagonal. If the slave paid close attention to the conversation, he should realize that the base of the original square (2) and the slave's second guess (3) bracket the value of the length of the side of the doubled square ($2\sqrt{2}$).[13]

Although the conversation provides the slave with the tools to create a fairly robust true *doxa* about the length of the base of a square of double the area, Socrates states that the slave has not achieved *episteme* by the end of the conversation (85c). The reason appears to be that the slave has not practiced, and through that practice acquired the skill of finding the base of a square double the size of the one he's given:

> **Socrates**: These *doxai* have now just been stirred up like a dream, but if he were repeatedly asked about the same things in various ways, you know (*eidenai*)[14] that in the end he would *epistesetai* as accurately as anyone.
>
> **Meno**: It is likely.
>
> **Socrates**: And he will *epistasthai* it without having been taught[15] but only questioned, and find the *episteme* within himself?
>
> **Meno**: Yes.
>
> **Socrates**: and is not finding *episteme* within oneself recollection?
>
> **Meno**: Certainly.

In order to acquire *episteme*,[16] he needs to be asked repeatedly about the same type of

[13] i.e. the slave can tell that the number ($2\sqrt{2}$) must fall between 2 (the original side length) and 3 (the slave's second guess, which gives an area of 9).

[14] I provide the Greek here to demonstrate that *eidenai* is being used casually and colloquially, in opposition to the more technical meaning of *epistasthai*.

[15] The type of teaching invoked here is not the technical meaning of teaching employed later, but rather the colloquial meaning of teaching. Rather, the technical meaning of teaching, which is the type of teaching discussed in the biconditional with *episteme* (87b-c), includes both the preliminary questioning (ἐρωτήσαντος) that Socrates has conducted thus far in addition to the practice that would be required for the slave to fully acquire *episteme*. I will discuss the two types of teaching in depth in Section 2.

[16] It is clear that '*episteme*', here, refers to the content of the expertise, not the expertise itself. The verb, '*epistasthai*', does not have an easy English equivalent; it appears to mean both having an expertise and perhaps also practicing such an expertise.

geometrical problems with different examples—i.e. he needs to practice the skill of doing this geometric operation until it he becomes an expert.

The implication is that *episteme* is a highly demanding cognitive achievement and that it is one which requires not just the grasp of a single example, but the ability to answer questions based on multiple examples of the same sort.[17] In other words, a specific type of practice is required to convert the true *doxa* with which the slave leaves the conversation with Socrates, into *episteme*. It is important to note that this practice must involve different problems that use the same principle, or, as Socrates puts it, "the same sort of things in a variety of ways" (τὰ αὐτὰ ταῦτα πολλαχῇ, 85c). The slave would obtain *episteme* of the style or type of problem– not the token problem– were he to practice in the way Socrates suggests. I argue, based on this passage, that there is some minimum threshold for how narrow an expertise may be; one cannot have expertise of a particular problem or proposition, but only problems of a particular style (*vel sim.*).

The next stretch of text (85d-86a) challenges the interpretation that the slave has not yet acquired *episteme* at the end of the conversation. Socrates seems to claim, in contradiction to the statement at 85c-d that the slave has indeed acquired *episteme* by the end of this conversation. The snippet of conversation proceeds as follows (85d):

Socrates: And is not finding *episteme* within oneself recollection?

Meno: Certainly.

Socrates: Must he not either have at some time acquired the *episteme* he now (νῦν) possesses, or else have always possessed it?

Meno: Yes.

[17] q.v. Schwab, who believes that *episteme* in the *Meno* refers to something approaching contemporary models of understanding like that of Hills 2015. Schwab glosses understanding as 'synoptic grasp' (Schwab 2015). However, for Schwab, understanding seems to be a propositional attitude, rather than an epistemic state that takes a subject as its object. While he does not define 'synoptic grasp' in the paper, he seems to be arguing that *episteme* is a propositional attitude that includes enough background information such that the person who possesses such a propositional attitude not only has a grasp of the proposition itself but also is able to make correct assessments about propositions which are relevantly similar. I would like to note here that I disagree with Schwab (and Fine, among others) who believe that *episteme* is solely a propositional attitude. I believe that *episteme* is also the cognitive achievement of expertise.

Socrates appears to contradict his earlier statement, since he contends that the slave currently (νῦν) possesses *episteme* as a result of the conversation that he just had with Socrates. This might seem to undermine the argument, made above, that *episteme* requires time and practice to acquire because it is expertise; 'νῦν' indicates temporal immediacy. However, the assertion that the slave has *episteme* νῦν (i.e. in the present moment that Socrates is speaking the words) seems highly unlikely given that, just a few lines ago, Socrates confirmed that the slave came away with true *doxa* that had the potential to develop *episteme* (85d-e):

> **Socrates**: If he always had it, he would always have *epistasthai*. If he acquired it, he cannot have done so in his present life. Or has someone taught him geometry? For he will perform in the same way about all geometry, and all other *mathematon* (learning). Has someone taught him everything, you should know (*eidenai*), especially as he has been born and brought up in your house.
>
> **Meno**: but I know that no one has taught him.
>
> Socrates: Yet he has these *doxai*, doesn't he?
>
> **Meno**: That seems indisputable, Socrates.
>
> Socrates: If he has not acquired them in his present life, is it not clear that he had them and had learned them at some other time?
>
> **Meno**: it seems so.

A content-innatist reading of the text provides a solution to this problem.[18]

Content innatism is the position that human beings are born with the truths that are a necessary basis for knowledge (or other demanding epistemic states) in them (although not accessible), but not born with the epistemic states that take these truths as (part of) their contents. In other words, these truths, which may take the form of general principles

[18] Along the lines given by Bronstein and Schwab (2019). Bronstein and Schwab demonstrate the benefits of this reading above the other standard interpretations: condition innatism (human souls possess latent knowledge; recollection makes this knowledge accessible) and prenatalism (in a disembodied state, human souls possess knowledge that they lose upon becoming embodied; recollection recovers that knowledge). My version of the content innatist reading differs from Bronstein and Schwab's (2019). Bronstein and Schwab are thinking of these cognitive states as propositional attitudes, or perhaps collections of propositional attitudes, because they think that *episteme* is something akin to understanding (of a proposition or subject matter).

or formulae, are not cognized within the soul; they are the "possible contents of the soul's future occurrent cognitive states" (Bronstein and Schwab 2019). In this case, it is clear that Socrates is referring not to some specific skill within geometry, but that the slave has within himself the truths and the capacity to acquire skills that underlie the *episteme* of finding the base of a square with double the volume, the content-innatist reading shows how Socrates is not suggesting that the slave acquired *episteme* from the conversation (Bronstein and Schwab 2019). '*doxa*' and '*episteme*' can be used to pick out either the cognitive state or the contents of that cognitive state (Bronstein and Schwab 2019: 13).[19] This provides us with an easy way to make sense of this passage: the slave now has access to the content of what he would need for expertise in this sort of problem. He has a way of determining the length of the base of a square of double the volume of the original (use the diagonal), but he does not possess expertise in this area. In order for the slave to be able to *episasthai* (i.e. exercise expertise) he must go through the process of securing the *episteme* (content of the cognitive state) which he just stirred up. In other words, the cognitive state is *doxa*, but it is true *doxa* of a principle he can apply in a range of settings, and so the principle that he has *doxa* of could be turned into *episteme* through the process of practice in the way that Socrates suggests.

Episteme and the Road to Larissa

The famous passage about the way to Larissa (96e-97c) provides a useful example to think through the vast epistemic difference between two practically equivalent epistemic states: *episteme* and *doxa*. In this passage, Socrates starts by arguing that he and Meno made an incorrect assumption when they assumed that *episteme* alone gave good guidance. In other words, they assumed correct direction could only be given by an expert. Socrates

[19] As with much of the epistemic vocabulary in Greek, *episteme* can be used for the epistemic state or for the content of that epistemic state (i.e. the expertise itself). While Plato might generally refer to the content of the epistemic state (in other words, the expertise itself) as *techne*, *episteme* can sometimes be used as either a synonym for *techne* or the epistemic state that characterizes an expert's relationship to her *techne* (Parry 2020).

uses the example of how to get to Larissa. The person with *episteme*—presumably someone who has travelled to Larissa many times (and perhaps serves as a guide or merchant between the two cities) is just as competent a guide to Larissa as someone who has only been there once but remembers the way or someone who has seen a map and has a good visual memory. Even someone with a hazy idea or intuition of the direction might be able to serve as a good guide so long as that idea or intuition is correct and there are no difficulties on the journey that would throw off their intuition. Indeed, the example of trying to get directions to location is the perfect analogy to show why *episteme* is not necessary for giving correct direction (of any kind); when we're lost, we don't go to specialized direction-experts or insist on finding someone who has lived in the area all their lives to ensure we find the right path, instead we usually ask the first person we see or pull over at the nearest gas station. Moreover, following the directions given to us by a passer-by usually provides the equivalent result (i.e. it is practically equivalent) to asking directions from someone who is an expert on the geography of the area. Giving correct directions is not teaching; while *doxa* can be the basis for correct direction (and thus transmitting *doxa*), it cannot be the basis for transmitting *episteme* (the cognitive state, not its contents) from one person to another.

Episteme **in the Discussion with Anytus: Standard** ***Epistamai***

The clearest evidence that *episteme* is expertise appears in the argument with Anytus. When the conversation begins, Socrates and Meno have agreed that if something is *episteme* it is teachable and there are teachers and learners of it (89d-90e). Before Anytus arrives, Socrates gives the following examples of *episteme*: medicine (90c-d), and flute-playing (90d-e). When Anytus joins the conversation, Socrates initially gives the examples of sculpting (91d), mending sandals (91e), repairing clothing (91e), horsemanship (94b), the arts (94b), gymnastics (94b), wrestling (94c). Indeed all of these occupations are forms of expertise (often those associated with a particular profession). Each of these examples is far more than a propositional attitude; indeed, these are each more than a collection of propositional

attitudes. These areas also require more than one skill because they are complex areas. Since Socrates is specifically talking about professions and top-level practitioners, he clearly invokes expertise. Expertise, as is clear by each of these examples, requires a complex skill set in addition to a body of propositional attitudes.

1.1.2 Only and All *Episteme* is Teachable (87b-c)

Meno convinces Socrates to investigate whether virtue is teachable before determining what virtue is (86c-d). Socrates begins the investigation by stating a principle that will help them attack the problem (87b-c):

> **Socrates**: So let us speak about virtue also, since we do not know either what it is or what qualities it possesses, and let us investigate whether it is teachable or not by means of a hypothesis, and say this: Among the things existing in the soul, of what sort is virtue, that it should be teachable or not? First, if it is another sort than *episteme*, is it teachable or not, or, as we were just saying, recollectable? Let it make no difference to us which term we use: Is it teachable? Or is it plain to anyone that men cannot be taught anything but *episteme*?
>
> **Meno**: I think so.
>
> **Socrates**: But, if virtue is a kind of *episteme*, it is clear that it could be taught.
>
> **Meno**: Of course.
>
> **Socrates**: We have dealt with that question quickly, that if it is of one kind it can be taught; if it is of a different kind, it cannot.
>
> Meno: We have indeed.

I follow the general reading and interpret this as a biconditional: a biconditional: x is a type of *episteme* if and only if x is teachable (87b-c).[20] This parallels the biconditional in the geometry problem Socrates describes that directly precedes this argument (86e-87b).[21]

[20] See Ebrey 2013 (83-87).

[21] I agree with Ebrey 2013 on the interpretation of the geometrical hypothesis.

I believe that we should take this biconditional at face value: *episteme* must be teachable and the only thing that is teachable is *episteme*. Scholars are often tempted to try to deflate the biconditional, because most of us have the intuition that there are a wide variety of epistemic states (including false beliefs) that might be teachable. Socrates indicates that he recasts teaching in a technical sense: it is more than mere transmission of belief, knowledge, skills, etc. it refers to the process which enables the lossless transmission of expertise between generations. Rather, teaching is recollection (87b7), a complex and multi-step process which, when complete, gives rise to expertise in the learner.[22] In other words, in the *Meno*, Socrates creates a technical vocabulary out of everyday terms to demarcate these epistemic states. This interpretation of the biconditional requires that *episteme* refers to a *sui generis* cognitive state.[23] *episteme* is not understanding or general knowledge-how, but something that is distinctly teachable.

1.1.3 *Episteme* is Explainable (98a*ff.*)

episteme is teachable at least in part because it is explainable and possessors of *episteme* can explain that *episteme*. This, in particular, involves the ability to answer questions about it; Socrates tests Meno about his supposed knowledge of virtue in this way (72a-79e). The usual locus for explanation in this dialogue appears in the characterization of *episteme* at 97e-98a:

> true *doxai*,[24] for whatever time they remain, are a fine thing and they do only good; but they are not willing to remain for long, but run away from a human soul, with the result that they are not worth much, unless someone ties them down by αἰτίας λογισμός. And that is recollection, Meno, my friend, as we previously

[22] I recognize that this is not the standard interpretation of recollection.

[23] In other words, none of the traditionally-recognized cognitive states in analytic epistemology have a distinctive form of transmission. Bjelde 2021 argues, similar to me, that the biconditional must be read strongly. While I came up with the idea independently, as it converges with Bjelde; I borrow some of his language and arguments woven in with my own (and cited). Although we agree that teachability distinguishes *episteme*, we see the implications of the biconditional differently.

[24] Plural of *doxa*.

> agreed. After true *doxai* are tied down, first, they become *episteme*, then they remain. That is why *episteme* is more highly rewarded than correct *doxa* and *episteme* is superior to correct *doxa* by being tied down.

Socrates describes *doxai* as analogous to Daedalus' statues. Daedalus was a mythical Greek crafstman known for the creation of the labyrinth that held the minotaur. According to the myth, he created statues so lifelike that they would escape from their plinths and run away if they were not tied down. Socrates compares true *doxai* to these statues. Instead of ropes tying a statue to a plinth, true *doxai* are tied down by foreignlanguagegreekἰί μό.

Recent scholars and translators generally translate 'αἰτίας λογισμός' as some form of explanation. Three examples[25] are Grube (revised by Reeve), who translates the phrase as 'an account of the reason why' (97e-98a); Perin, who translates it as 'explanatory reasoning' (Perin 2012: 16), and Schwab translates it as 'a working out of the explanation' (Schwab 2015: 1). 'Αἰτίας λογισμός' might loosely correspond to 'explanation,' but it signals something less specific than a verbal explanation and more akin to ability to think systematically about the skill in question. If Meno were to possess *episteme* of virtue, for example, he would be able to answer Socrates' questions and potential counter-examples about what virtue is. Since αἰτίας λογισμός makes *episteme* stable, a possessor of *episteme* be 'numbed' thought questioning in the way the Socrates' questions numbs Meno.[26] Thus, αἰτίας λογισμός includes, but is not limited to, articulating an explanation verbally (or in writing).

'Αἰτίας λογισμός' is an unusual phrase—so unusual that Plato was the first author to use it and no other author uses it again in extant literature until three centuries later.[27] However, it is not really a technical term, but rather a hand-wavy phrase. The way to

[25]These are three of many examples. I picked the Grube rev. Reeve translation because it is one of the most commonly read. The others I chose because they are works with which I engage in the body. Manyof those who argue that *episteme* in the *Meno* is closer to understanding than to knowledge lean on this reading of αἰτίας λογισμός as some form of explanation as opposed to justification (Scott 2006, 185; Burnyeat 1980: 187; Nehamas 1985: 25).

[26]Meno describes Socrates as a torpedo fish, which is a sort of stingray that can numb its victims. Meno suggests that Socrates has not shown that Meno does not know what virtue is, but instead has numbed him from being able to speak about virtue coherently (80a-b).

[27]Results of a proximity lemma search in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

capture this is to think of αἰτίας λογισμός as the foundational explanations of concepts or techniques that ground the skill or subject matter of which one has an *episteme*.[28]

Since *episteme* must be teachable, *episteme* entails that possessors have the ability to explain the skill or subject matter to a student. As such, αἰτίας λογισμός must go beyond mere explanation. Consider the case of the person who learns to use a javelin on horseback (93d). Explanation alone could never suffice to teach someone this highly athletic skill. The acquisition of this expertise requires explanation along with practice, physical conditioning, learning how to estimate the trajectory of a moving target, among other things.

'Λογισμός'often refers to calculation as well, both in a literal and in a metaphorical sense.[29] The metaphorical sense of 'calculation' refers to a systematic way of understanding the subject matter as a whole that characterizes an expert. This includes explanation as well as the ability to understand how to set up the learning environment such that a student or apprentice can pick up the skill. For most technai, mastery requires a certain amount of skill that is not purely intellectual.[30] The master artisan bread maker can knead or shape wet dough without getting dough stuck all over her hands, while her student cannot. She must guide the student in order for the student to learn, and a verbal explanation is insufficient. Instead, the master bread baker understands the various factors that allow her to work with wet dough: she knows the principle that wet dough does not stick to wet hands, but also uses a variety of now-unconscious adjustments on the part of the master of a *techne*, like the tiny muscle movements or twitches that gets dough to release from a master baker's hand more easily or the nerve sensation which tells her that she has just enough water on her hands to prevent the dough from sticking without adding hydration to the dough. She

[28]The sorts of explanations that a master practitioner of a skill would have and for which Socrates is examining various professionals in Athens to determine if any know what virtue is (*Ap.* 21b-22e).

[29]e.g. literal sense of mathematical calculation (*Hipp. I* 285c5; *Hipp. II* 366c6, 367a1, 9, b7, c2, 3, 5; 369a1; *Prot.* 318e2; *Pol.* 257a7, b7; *Prot.* 318e2; *Pol.* 257a7, b7; *Tht.* 145d2; *Resp.* I 340d4, IV 431c6, 440b1, VI 510c3, VII 522c7, 524b4, 526d8, 536d5, IX 587e5 X 603a4, 604d; *Phil.* 57a1; *Phdr.* 274c8; *Laws* VII 809c4, 817e6, 819b4, X 896c9); in the metaphorical sense of rational thinking done by the soul (*Resp.* IV 431c6, 439d1, 440b1, 441a9, VII 524b4, IX 586d2, 587e5; *Tim.* 86c3; *Crit.* 121a7; *Laws* I 645a1, 5)

[30]It is possible that Plato conceived of a *techne* as merely a set of propositions, but my hunch is that this is unlikely. I will explore this further.

can communicate this necessary information to the student in a variety of ways, including demonstration, employing metaphors or similes to describe how to work with the dough by feel, creating scaffolding to facilitate the students learning (e.g. starting the student with drier types of dough and slowly allowing the students to work with wetter types of dough as she begins to master the skill). I would argue that it is αἰτίας λογισμός—this kind of systematic grasp of bread baking—which guides her ability to teach the student.

foreignlanguagegreekἱί μό, systematic understanding, is what ties *episteme* down so that it cannot escape. Part of what is involved in 'tying down" is clearly' about securing something in one's one mind. An expert cannot forget how to do the tasks that make up his/her expertise and remain an expert. Expertise is a network of related skills information; practice in deploying that information correctly secures that information and the other components of the expertise in the mind (85c-d). Looking back at the discussion about the slave, Socrates suggests that the tying down process—recollection—would require the slave to practice answering questions. Practice builds synaptic connections in the brain. In a pithy statement taught to cognitive science undergrads: 'neurons that fire together wire together.' The phrase is an explanation of how brain plasticity works; our brains prioritize shoring up neural connections that are frequently used and tend to prune those connections which are unused. Plato, of course, lacked access to today's brain research, but he describes the phenomenon beautifully in pre-theoretic terms with the metaphor of *episteme* being tied down.

1.1.4 Objections to *Episteme* as Expertise and Replies

In this section, I deal with some potential objections to my view of *episteme* in the *Meno*. The first objection concerns whether there is sufficient license to translate *episteme* as a technical term for an epistemic state, as opposed to a term merely interchangeable with some of the other epistemic vocabulary. The following two objections present alternative interpretations of *episteme*.

There are Other Epistemic Terms that Plato's Characters Use without Specialized Meaning; Some Seem to be Used Interchangeably with *Episteme*

One potential objection to the argument that *episteme* is expertise is that there are places where other epistemic terms to be synonyms used interchangeably with *episteme*. These terms do not obviously have the specialized meaning which I assign to *episteme*. Some might argue that all of these terms appear to be synonymous. The epistemic terms in question are *eidenai*, *gignoskein*, *nous*, and *phronesis*. Indeed, one might go so far as to argue that we can translate all of these epistemic terms as 'knowledge'. While some of these do serve as synonyms to *episteme qua* expertise, some do not. Unlike in analytic philosophy where we strive to use the same terms and only exact synonyms when we go through an argument, Plato depicts Socrates using his epistemic vocabulary both colloquially and technically, often within a few paragraphs. Given the dialogue format of Plato's work this makes sense; these are not treatises, but the philosophy is displayed through depictions of conversations between Socrates and ordinary citizens who have no formal training in critical thinking, rigorous argumentation, or philosophy. For this reason, it makes perfect sense that terms fluctuate and change throughout the dialogue, and it is only by the careful examination of context that a reader can interpret whether the term is being used in a technical sense or in a more idiomatic sense. I go through each of the possible synonyms for *episteme* in this section.

I argue that eidenai is a colloquial, but not technical, synonym of *episteme* as used in the *Meno*. Often in the *Meno*, phrases containing forms of 'eidenai' are simply used to ask Meno to confirm that something is the case or that he agrees with the statement. The case where one might argue that eidenai is used in a particularly rigorous way is when it is used to describe an epistemic state in which someone can provide a definition of the concept in question, e.g. when Socrates asks Meno if he knows what virtue is. This, of course, is not a kind of expertise. Although expertise certainly requires some knowledge of definitions, knowledge of definitions is only one of many components. There are other cases where eidenai seems to refer to some sort of pre-theoretical propositional knowledge

(or perhaps something slightly more demanding), e.g. when Meno wants Socrates to provide an answer about what shape is without employing the concept <color> (GREEK) (75c5). For the most part, eidenai refers to knowledge in a casual and colloquial way, not in any sort of rigorous sense, in phrases like 'I don't know what you mean' (e.g. 75a3) or 'I know that' (e.g. 80c3). The biconditional about teachability clearly does not apply to eidenai, even in its most rigorous form: it would be nonsense to say that something is teachable if and only if it is eidenai (even if that means knowing a definition).

There are two places where the argument that *eidenai* is a synonym for *episteme* is slightly stronger: instances in the argument with the slave (87d) and when Socrates discusses the poets (99c). I think both of these are cases of casual verbal slippage that occurs in conversation, where it would be more standard Greek usage to use *eidenai* than to use *episteme*, and so *eidenai* is used in *episteme*'s place, keeping the technical meaning.

Gignoskein only appears in the first portion of the dialogue (the first use is 71b5 and the last use is at 80c1). It seems to refer to acquaintance knowledge or perhaps, more loosely, awareness. Socrates employs it when he refers to knowing Meno (71b5) and being aware that Meno is handsome and has lovers (76b4) and subsequently it is used throughout the section where Socrates asks Meno is the people who desire bad things are aware that those things are bad (77c4-e7).

'*Phronesis*' is being used as an exact synonym for '*episteme*' and, for that reason, should be read as having the same requirements I describe for *episteme*. '*Phronesis*' occurs in the dialogue only from 88b4 onward. Also, phronesis only appears in places where Socrates is talking about the kind of *episteme* that guides correct (ethical or practical) action, as opposed to guiding action within the context of a profession.[31]

'*Nous*' is used in two distinct ways within the dialogue: in colloquial expressions and in a specialized sense where it refers to a specific epistemic state.[32] It is possible that the specialized sense is merely a synonym of *episteme* and phronesis. However, I speculate that

[31]I discuss '*phronesis*' in detail in Chapter 2.
[32]I discuss 'nous' briefly in Chapter 2.

nous, when it is used in a specialized sense in the *Meno* (87c-88c), represents a component of *episteme*. In this case, 'nous' (understanding, intellect) is described as the directing force that ensures that qualities of the soul or external resources (e.g. wealth) are used in the correct way. Nous, in this case, seems to be the type of judgement an expert needs, but not the expertise as a whole. In the case of an expertise like bread making, nous would include the ability to determine whether dough is sufficiently aerated to shape it and the ability to judge how fast dough will rise given the temperature and humidity of its environment. However, a bread baker needs not only this ability to gauge and judge, but also the skill and muscle memory to shape the dough. In some areas of expertise, like swimming or gymnastics, a person may also need particular physical characteristics that nous allows the expert to use to her advantage. Nous, indeed, seems to be the distinguishing factor between the expert and non-expert; the person with knack-*doxa* for politics of virtue may still act in the correct way and bring about good outcomes, but lacks nous and is thus unable to teach (99c8).

Episteme is Propositional Knowledge

While assuming '*episteme*' refers to propositional knowledge may be standard interpretation of the text, it runs into an immediate problem: none of the types of *episteme* described in the dialogue are examples of propositional knowledge. All of the examples are skill knowledge, such as finding the base of a square of double the size of the original (85d), practicing medicine (90c), throwing javelins on horseback (93d), and knowing how to get to Larissa (97a). Skills, even intellectual skills, cannot be taught through testimony alone. I discuss each of these instances in Section 1 in detail.

Traditionally, '*episteme*' is translated as 'knowledge.' While this translation is a fair approximation much of the time in Greek literature, it lacks nuance. This lack of nuance may lead one to import a contemporary philosophical understanding of propositional knowledge onto the Greeks. This may be particularly harmful when translating Plato. Scholars sometimes assume that there is a one-to-one correlation between propositional knowledge and

episteme.[33] Based on this assumption, articles in contemporary epistemology often ascribe the origins of the model of knowledge as justified true belief (henceforth JTB) to either the *Meno* or the *Theaetetus*.[34] Some ancient scholars, who read Plato's dialogues similarly to those epistemologists, have assumed that Plato's *episteme* is indeed propositional knowledge defined as JTB.

The reason we usually translate '*episteme*' as 'knowledge' is that, in Greek, '*episteme*' encompasses some of the meanings that knowledge encompasses in English. Any first-year Classical Attic Greek textbook will define '*episteme*' as 'knowledge' (and 'epistasthai' as 'to know'). Yet, we should not assume that the English word 'knowledge' covers the same semantic range as '*episteme*'. Classicists are not analytic philosophers and rarely associate 'knowledge' solely with propositional knowledge. This means that the guidance created by standard classics sources should not be equated with a rigorous assessment that '*episteme*' is equivalent to standard propositional knowledge.

Most analytic philosophers, on the other hand, associate 'propositional knowledge' with 'knowledge'. However, the earliest traces of the '*episteme*' rarely represent propositional knowledge; these, instead, are instances of skill knowledge. The verb form, 'epistasthai' has been around at least since the time of Homer. Indeed, the definition in Cunliffe's *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect*, the standard Homeric dictionary, is not propositional knowledge (or even 'know' *simpliciter*), but is the compound of "epistasthai' + infinitive' meaning 'to know how to do, have skill, be skilled in doing.'. In Cunliffe, 'know' (in our general sense that includes propositional knowledge) is only the fourth (and last) meaning of 'epistasthai'.[35] This early use of the word is a useful guide to the way in which it continues to be used in many authors. In short, the history of the use of epistamai and its cognates do not limit the options for the epistemic states to which it might refer. In order to decide whether *episteme* is

[33]Barnes 1980: 204; **fine_knowledge_2004**: 70n75.

[34]Gettier 1963. Epistemologists also cite the *Meno* as the first place where the value problem for knowledge arises (Kvanvig 2003). Fine provides a useful list of the history of this and related debates (**fine_knowledge_2004**:41-42).

[35]e.g. *Il.* Book 2, line 611 (Cunliffe: epistamai)

knowledge or understanding or some other epistemic state entirely, it is necessary to discover each characteristic of *episteme* in the *Meno* and then determine whether those characteristics match up with characteristics of knowledge, understanding, or neither of the two. In order to do so, it is necessary to draw characteristics from the comments that Socrates and Meno make about *episteme*. The instances of *episteme* in Platonic dialogues are similarly skill knowledge, rather than propositional knowledge.[36]

Episteme is Understanding

In opposition to those who interpret *episteme* as propositional knowledge, some scholars have proposed the alternative that *episteme* is understanding.[37] Schwab (2015) argues that the connection between explanation and *episteme* in the *Meno* makes it clear that *episteme* is closer to the cluster of views in contemporary analytic epistemology for understanding than the cluster of views for knowledge. For Schwab, *episteme* of some fact requires 'coming to see how it is grounded in facts about the natures of fundamental entities of the domain to which it belongs' (Schwab 2015: 4). His reference to 'fact' here implies that

[36]Barnes 1980 and Fine 2004, two influential articles in the contemporary debate over the meaning of '*episteme*' indicate that the references of '*episteme*' and 'knowledge' were entirely coextensive (*mutatis mudandis* '*epistasthai*' and 'know'). Barnes asserts that in Greek texts from Homer onward, 'epistasthai' and its cognates "are there correctly translated by 'know' and its cognates. At all events, I have found no text which invites the translation 'understand')" (Barnes 1980: 204). The literal meaning of this statement– that episasthai and it's cognates can be treated as "know" in all cases–are obviously and demonstrably false. There is a wide selection of cases to back this up, but three cases where 'epistasthai' and its cognates are not correctly translated as 'know' (and its cognates), each from a different era of Greek literature, include: Hom. *Il.* Book 2, line 611, Thuc. 7.21.3, Isoc. *Antidosis* 201.4 (see Schwab 2015:5-7). A charitable reading of Barnes's statement would put emphasis on the parenthetical—that 'epistasthai' does not mean 'understand—and remove all emphasis from the erroneous claim that the Greek texts in this time span always use 'epistasthai' and its cognates correctly translate as 'know' and its cognates. While Barnes may be correct that Greek literature between Homer and Plato does not use 'epistamai' to refer to 'understand' (although this seems unlikely) does not mean that it always means "know." Moreover, just because something is a commonly used word with a set of pre-theoric meanings does not mean that a philosopher will not re-purpose it to pick out some specialized usage. Indeed, this is part of the reason we warn philosophy undergraduates not to use a standard dictionary when defining terms in philosophy papers. If philosophers had to invent a neologism every time they wanted to talk about something more specialized than folk usage, reading philosophy would be nearly impossible.

[37]Scholars that argue that '*episteme*' in the *Meno* refers to understanding: Nehamas 1985, Schwab (2015). Some recent scholarship in contemporary epistemology has endorsed this view (e.g. Grimm *et al.* 2017). There are also some scholars who argue that *episteme* refers to understanding elsewhere in the Platonic corpus, e.g. Burnyeat 1980, Schwab 2016.

understanding is a set of interrelated propositions, some of which ground others. Schwab argues that what the slave is missing is some grasp of the explanatory nature of various geometric shapes (squares and triangles) (Schwab 2015: 13). Schwab's story about what the slave lacks—an explanation grounded in the fundamental nature of geometric shapes, Schwab 2015: 12-13—is not consistent with Socrates' earlier claim about how to remedy that lack, namely that the slave needs to be asked the same questions in various ways (85c). In other words, the text implies that the slave needs to practice in order to achieve *episteme*. Moreover, Schwab argues that Socrates not making the explanatory relations perspicuous to the slave is what prevents the slave from acquiring *episteme*. Schwab's argument seems implausible; Socrates could easily have given a testimonial account (in the form of a lecture) that would make such explanatory relations perspicuous if that was all that was required; the key seems to be not only explanatory relations, which might still allow for mistakes or low-quality products, but additionally a facility in a variety of contexts and the ability to answer questions (which requires practice).

Using 'understanding' in place of 'knowledge' to translate '*episteme*' has the benefit of demonstrating that *episteme* is a more demanding epistemic state than knowledge. Moreover, understanding is often connected to explanation,[38] which seems to be important for *episteme* (e.g. 98a). However, 'understanding' only captures marginally more of the nuances of *episteme* (at least in the *Meno*) than does 'knowledge.' Moreover, there is at least as much disagreement about what understanding is in contemporary philosophy as there is about knowledge, so this translation would invite at least as many alternative assumptions for different readers as does 'knowledge' (and possibly more).

[38]Some do not connect understanding to explanation, e.g. Stephen Grimm (2014).

1.2 Textual Evidence for Interpreting *Doxa*'s Semantic Range in the *Meno*

The standard translation of '*doxa*' is 'belief' or 'opinion', but, in the *Meno*, '*doxa*' seems to have a semantic range beyond the boundaries of English uses of 'belief' or 'opinion'. Plato uses the term in a variety of ways throughout the dialogues– often setting it in opposition to terms for other epistemic states (like *episteme*).[39] The term is useful, but Plato bends it to work in different ways in different arguments or examples.[40] I show two sides of the spectrum of how Plato uses this term, before moving on to demonstrating the range of meanings in the *Meno* specifically. The spectrum ranges from flimsy false notions that barely qualify as opinions (Moss and Schwab 2019) to something that is extremely close to *episteme* but falls short (which I call knack-*doxa*).[41]

The uses of *doxa* in the *Meno* mainly refer to two parts of this spectrum. *doxai* can be individual propositional opinions (e.g. the slave's incorrect guesses about the length of the side of the square are called *doxai*, 82e and 83e), or a knack or an intuitive grasp of something (like the grasp that a musician who learns by ear has of music). I discuss each of these two main types of *doxai* below. In between these two types of *doxai*, there are a wide range of possible epistemic states, all of which can be expressed as degrees or types of *doxai*.

One side of the spectrum in the *Meno* is that *doxa* can represent guesses or flimsy notions (e.g. Moss and Schwab 2019). These notions, like the guesses that the slave makes about the base of double the square (82e and 83e), are often incorrect like both of the slave's guesses. These *doxai* are most often propositional attitudes and '*doxa*' used in this sense might be translated as 'opinion.' This sort of *doxa* might also represent attitudes that are not easily put into a propositional form, such as the hazy notion that a nearby city is in a

[39] As I have argued in brief above, and more extensively in the introduction of the dissertation.

[40] The fact that the usage of *doxa* has a broad semantic range in Plato is reminiscent of Kuhn's broad range of uses of 'paradigm' in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*; Kuhn used term in 21 different ways (Masterman 1970, 61-65).

[41] Not all knack-*doxa* creates identical products to *episteme*. Most knack-*doxa* produces results that fall far short of *episteme*. Knack-*doxa* is the extreme case.

particular direction that one might indicate with a hand gesture.

The other side of the spectrum of *doxa*, knack-*doxa*, provides the possessor with the ability to create consistently good-quality products. This seems to be the case of poetic inspiration, according to Plato (99c-d).[42]. Those with knack-like *doxai* must have a network of propositions (in addition to any necessary abilities, skills, etc.) that guide their correct actions, but that network fails to form some coherent understanding (and some of those propositions may be false). The ability to consistently produce good products seems to be the result of intuition, inspiration, luck. Additionally, the person with may lack the ability to explain or may explain aspects of the knack incorrectly.

A case that potentially confounds this distinction between propositional and knack-like *doxa* is the case of *doxa* about the way to Larissa. This could be propositional *doxa*: either 'Larissa is north of Athens' or 'this road is the road that leads to Larissa' or, more specifically, a set of directions received by testimony. Alternatively, the person with *doxa* about the way to Larissa might have travelled along the road, but only once, and therefore have to follow guesses or hunches about landmarks that seem to have changed since the original journey. A third possibility is that the person with *doxa* about the way to Larissa might have a keen sense of direction and a knack for finding places, even based on vague descriptions of others. Any of these forms of *doxa* about the way to Larissa stand in contrast to *episteme* of the way to Larissa, which presumably involves multiple instances of first hand experience as well as a good sense of direction, a memory for landmarks, and anything else we might expect from an expert.

The most salient case of true *doxa* that seems to be knack-*doxa* is the case of the eminent Athenians (99b-c). Assuming that Plato is serious in attributing good actions to the eminent Athenian politicians, they have a form of true *doxa* that guides them to such actions.[43] In the case of the eminent Athenians who consistently act well but cannot teach

[42]Poets have a consistent ability (but lack some essential element that would allow them to explain what they say or how they say it, 99c)

[43]Given the textual evidence in the *Meno* itself, I am ambivalent as to whether we should take this assertion seriously. Evidence from the *Gorgias* (*Gorg.* 515e-519d) and elsewhere in the dialogues might incline us

anyone to be virtuous, their true *doxa* appears to be a natural inclination to act well (or perhaps divine intervention). It is instructive that Socrates compares the politicians who act well to poets or prophets; these two groups cannot give explanatory reasoning for the things that they do and for that reason cannot consistently teach another person to act as they do.

doxa as this sort of knack perhaps makes more sense in the context of an example. The first bread baking class that I attended was informal and hosted by an intuitive baker—someone who possessed *doxa* of bread baking. He measured his ingredients in handfuls or by approximating portions of a large scoop. When asked for clarification, he merely repeated his terms. If students showed him their ingredients and asked him if they had used enough, he would help them correct what they had, but none of his terminology was precise. The bread he made was delicious, but his explanation of the process lacked sufficient detail (even when we asked questions) for his audience to copy his technique or approach his success. Consequently, no one there gained a knack for bread baking (and certainly no one gained *episteme* of bread baking).[44]

The same example shows the plausibility of true *doxa* as an epistemic state that produces consistently good products, but is not teachable. The reason that the bread was good, I found out after much research, was that this intuitive baker had developed some set of cues to tell him the ratios of ingredients and how to time the various stages of his bread to achieve the desired results. Yet, those cues were opaque to him and he could not pass them along. So where did he get these cues if he was not taught (since teaching would imply a replication of expertise)? It could have been that he gleaned them from some original recipe or which he learned or from watching and imitating someone who also had an intuitive grasp of bread baking. Either way, he would need an exceptional ability to visualize things in

not to take this supposition seriously. The point in the *Meno* is not to assess the virtuous actions or lack thereof of a set of historical politicians; rather it is to pose a timeless philosophical puzzle. The puzzle is this: there seem to be some people who consistently act well, but cannot teach others to do the same. What is going wrong with the transmission process that they people they interact with fail to acquire their ability to perform consistently virtuous actions.

[44]Unsurprisingly, the bread I produced during this workshop was mediocre and I came away from this workshop with both false *doxai* about breadmaking (I believed that bread required a sweetener to get the yeast to leaven the bread) and was unable to replicate even the mediocre loaf I had made.

3-D to bake in such a manner. Although this intuitive baker produced consistently good results, his knack-*doxa* about bread baking did not rival that of an expert (although it is possible to imagine an intuitive baker who could rival an expert). Irrespective of his bread baking acumen, his ability to visualize in 3-D was extremely impressive; I lack the ability to visualize my ingredients such that I can determine the proper ratios merely by eye even now, although these days I am far more skilled than the intuitive baker. In other words, the intuitive baker seemed to have something that gave him an advantage in bread baking, but was not learned– in the terms of the *Meno*, we might call his bread baking divinely inspired.

1.3 The Relationship of *Episteme* and *Doxa* in the *Meno*: an Objection and Reply

Thus far, I have demonstrated that *doxa* and *episteme* can produce the same results when faced with the same or similar circumstances. This does not mean that any possessor of *doxa* can produce results that rival that of a possessor of *episteme*, because '*doxa*' refers to a wide spectrum of epistemic states. Rather, it is possible that some possessor of *doxa* could produce the same results as someone with *episteme*.

My interpretation of the epistemic terminology in the *Meno* confounds one of the traditional questions about Plato's epistemology. In particular, many scholars question whether *doxa* and *episteme* take the same objects. Usually, the 'objects' in question here are propositions. However, one potential objection to my view is that many scholars argue that Plato thinks that *episteme* and *doxa* cannot overlap. This viewpoint is known as the Two-Worlds Theory and stems from a particular interpretation of *Republic* 5-7. I would argue that a straightforward reading of the *Meno* makes clear that true *doxa* and *episteme* can 'take the same object', i.e. one can have either *episteme* or *doxa* with respect to the same thing.[45]

[45]However, such a straightforward reading is somewhat contentious in Plato scholarship. The epistemology presented by the *Meno* is incomplete. One of the ways that scholars try to reconstruct incomplete theories from the Platonic dialogues is to borrow premises from other dialogues. The obvious dialogue from which to borrow would be the Republic, because the Republic and the *Meno* are thematically similar.

For example, Socrates states explicitly that one can have either *doxa* or *episteme* of the road to Larissa (97a-d), one can have *doxa* or *episteme* of the style of geometrical problem that Socrates poses to the slave (85c-86c), and that there is a possibility that a *doxa* and a person with *episteme* can both produce the same good actions (97a-c, 98e-99d). In the Road of Larissa passage, it is clear that there are two people, one with *doxa* of the way to Larissa and one with *episteme* of the way to Larissa. Both epistemic states provide correct directions. Thus, not only do the two epistemic states take the same object, but they are "practically equivalent" (i.e. they have the same outcome). It is clear from the doubling the area of the square that the slave ends the conversation with a *doxa* about how to find the base of a square of double the area of the original, but would only achieve *episteme* with more practice (85c-d). This means that the slave only has *doxa* of the diagonal providing the base of a square of double the area, not *episteme*. Yet, the slave could have *episteme* of how to double the area of the square were he to finish learning from a teacher (85d).

On my interpretation, one can have *episteme* and *doxa* of the same thing and the possessors of either can guide the correct action, and produce equivalent results, but that only the person with *episteme* can guide another person to acquire *episteme*. In addition to demonstrating that the question of whether *episteme* and *doxa* can take the same "objects" is irrelevant to the *Meno*, my interpretation provides a compelling and charitable way to resolve the scholarly debate over the teachability of virtue. Namely, there are two distinctive types of states of the soul identified as virtuous: *episteme*-virtue (a full form of virtue which

Additionally, scholars who subscribe to the evolutionary hypothesis—the hypothesis that Plato changed his views over time and that some stylistic and philosophical markers indicate the order in which he wrote the dialogues—argue that the *Meno* and the Republic are closely related temporally and thus philosophically. Those argue that the *Meno* is a dialogue written in between early dialogues (e.g. *Apology*) and the middle dialogues (e.g. Phaedrus). The Republic is a middle dialogue and is often supposed to define the quintessential metaphysics and epistemology of Plato's middle period. Scholars who subscribe to the evolutionary hypothesis usually argue that the metaphysics and epistemology of the *Meno* is on the way to that of the Republic, but not exactly the same. Many scholars argue that Plato, at least in the Republic, did not think that true belief and *episteme* could take the same object. The evidence which scholars draw on comes primarily from Books 5-7 of the Republic. The locus classicus for this view is the end of book 5. In the literature on the subject, the view that belief and *episteme* take different objects is often called the Two Worlds Doctrine. Fine is a major opponent of this view (e.g. Fine 2003: 66-116, which includes revised versions of two of Fine's famous articles: Fine 1978 and Fine 1990). I discuss my views on *episteme* in the *Republic* briefly in the Conclusion.

can be stably taught from one generation to the next) and shadow-virtue (a pseudo-virtue– the *doxa* equivalent of virtue– which cannot be taught or stably passed from one generation or one person to the next). The best evidence for this comes at the end of the dialogue, when Socrates compares the eminent Athenains discussed (99b-c) to shades, whereas the person who could teach virtue is compared to Tireseas (99e-100a).[46] I discuss the case of virtue at length in the following chapter.

1.4 *Episteme* is Teachable

episteme in the *Meno* is the epistemic state that characterizes experts' relationship to their expertise. In the *Meno*, there are two places in the text where Socrates characterizes important features of *episteme*. At 87b-c, Socrates and Meno stipulate that something is *episteme* if and only if it is teachable and at 97d-98a, Socrates asserts that a difference between *episteme* and *doxa* that makes *episteme* more valuable than *doxa* is that *episteme* is stable. These characterizations help illuminate a coherent picture of what expertise looks like. Since *episteme* can be characterized thus, it is clear that *episteme* is the epistemic state that is required to consistently and stably produce expert-quality products and that it is a state which comes about through teaching, as opposed to by nature or through some other form of transmission. These two claims are deeply interrelated.

A person with *episteme* is a master creator of the product(s)[47] of that expertise and creates high quality products consistently over time.[48] It is important that this ability to produce products is consistent over time and experts maintain their reputation as experts

[46]This image comes from the *Odyssey*: Odysseus goes down to the underworld to find Tireseas. In his lifetime, Tireseas was a seer and he still retains some of his memories and foresight in the underworld, whereas the rest of the dead are merely shades who flit about without sense or memory and unable to see anything going on in the world.

[47]'Product' is a loose term, because not all expertises have physical product (e.g. Plato might say that health is the product of medical expertise or the resulting calculations are the product of arithmetic expertise).

[48]This can only happen under favorable circumstances, i.e. assuming that the expert maintains access to the materials and tools necessary for creation of the products and is physically or mentally well enough to continue making such products.

by consistently producing good products (91d-e). These products can be anything from producing good shoes (90c, 91d-e), to producing health in a patient (90b-c), to producing consistently good actions (100a). A possessor of *episteme* has both the skill(s) and the body of knowledge necessary to produce the products over time (stably). Moreover, since the way to consistently produce good products is not natural talent but rather skill(s) and a body of knowledge, expertise can be transferred from one person to another through teaching.[49]

In the *Meno*, the interlocutors envision teaching as apprentice-style learning. This learning involves not only the transfer of information, but also guided practice of the necessary skill(s) required for that expertise. This has three implications. First, teaching takes time because it is far more involved than the mere transmission of information.[50] In this way, teachability and stability are inherently intertwined. Second, learning (the corollary of teaching) involves not merely following rules, imitating procedures, or memorization, but instead requires a complex array of techniques that includes all three of the aforementioned strategies as well as explanation, asking of questions, and correcting errors. Third, Socrates and his interlocutors agree that if one wants one's children to become experts in some craft or profession, the person from whom their children should learn is an expert (90b-e). Indeed, Meno comes to Socrates to learn if virtue is teachable because Socrates has a reputation for wisdom (70a-71b). The first of these two principles is straightforward, but the second and third require additional explanation.

This second principle, the idea that teaching requires explanation, questions and an-

[49]The typical interpretation of teaching in the *Meno* is something along the lines of what Barnes articulates: "if x teaches y that p, then x brings about that y knows that p" (Barnes 1980: 196). Barnes thinks that Meno 87c states this claim in "lax" terms: "it is clear to everyone that a man is not taught anything but knowledge" (Barnes 1980: 196) means this claim. I would interpret this claim differently; I argue Plato believes that *episteme* is the only thing which can be taught; anything else—false information, belief, *doxa*—must be transmitted by some other means than through teaching. In other words, 'teaching' ('διδαχή') is a technical term in the *Meno*.

[50]The typical interpretation of teaching in the *Meno* is something along the lines of what Barnes articulates: 'if x teaches y that p, then x brings about that y knows that p' (Barnes 1980: 196). Barnes thinks that this statement about teaching is equivalent to *Meno* 87c, which Barnes translates as 'it is clear to everyone that a man is not taught anything but knowledge' (Barnes 1980: 196). I would interpret this claim differently; I argue Plato believes that *episteme* is the only thing which can be taught; anything else– false information, belief, *doxa*– must be transmitted by some other means than through teaching. In other words, 'teaching' (ή) is a technical term in the *Meno*.

swers, and the correction of errors, is widely accepted in psychology and cognitive science as a necessary part of complex skill acquisition. Indeed, some scholars argue that it is these elements of our teaching that separate humans from our closest ape relatives.[51] These are also three of the most important elements in acquiring expertise. Explanation and the ability to answer questions are the parts of teaching where the sophists whom both Socrates and Anytus critique come up short. Socrates claims he has never met anyone who knew what virtue is (71c). We can assume, given the way Socrates questions Meno (71e-79e), that Socrates tested those who claimed to know what virtue was through his usual process of elenchus and found them to be wanting.[52]

Consider the examples I presented in the introduction: 'by ear' musical ability, and intuitive baking. The examples of musicians and bakers are striking because the very same students of music of baking may be able to learn from someone with *episteme* even though they cannot learn from someone with true *doxa*. A student of music without a great auditory memory can still become a world-class musician by learning to read music; moreover, a teacher with *episteme* could help the student with the poor memory learn to read music and leverage that to help the student improve her auditory memory. The teacher with *episteme* could also train the student's auditory memory through other forms of practice. Thus, the same student can stably receive *episteme* (or true *doxa*, if the learning process is never completed) from an expert, but be unable to gain *doxa* from a non-expert.

I begin this section by considering the relationship between three aspects of *episteme*: teachability, explanability, and stability. I argue that *episteme* has a special relationship with explanation: explanation 'ties down' *episteme*. While 'tied down' is used to describe Then, I consider an objection and two other arguments related to the nature of teaching in the *Meno*. In 2.1, I respond to the objection that there are places in the *Meno* where teaching seems to imply something other than the process of transferring expertise I described above. I argue that these instances of 'teach' (διδάσκειν) all appear in the first part of the

[51] e.g. The Secret of Our Success by Joseph Henrich (2018); *The Evolved Apprentice* by Kim Sterelny (2012).
[52] Corroboration can be found in the *Apology* (*Ap.* 21b-23b).

Meno, before Socrates equates teaching with recollection. In 2.2, I address the relationship between teaching and expertise as it appears in the *Meno*. Finally, in 2.3, I show that the discussion of teaching in the *Gorgias*—and the epistemology more generally that appears in the *Gorgias*—shows striking similarities to my interpretation of the *Meno*. This lends credence to my interpretation.

1.4.1 The Relationship Between Explanation and Teachability

Explanation is more valuable than merely helping to secure something in an individual's mind; explanation is necessary for the transmission of expertise. Socrates and his interlocutors discuss this facet of explanation in the latter half of the dialogue; it is something that poets (99d) and prophets (99c-d) lack. Yet, the metaphor of the statues does not emphasize the importance of transmission, but rather stability. Yet, stability and transmission are related. Teaching, in the sense of developing another person into an expert is a long process; this requires that the teacher must have stable *episteme*.

To stretch the metaphor to its breaking point, tying one of Daedalus' statues down would prevent it from running away not only from the current owner, but also that owner's descendants. To understand what 'tying down' might express beyond stability of expertise in the individual, consider another example. Imagine a master musician as opposed to someone who can play music well by ear. Let us stipulate that these two musicians give identical performances of a specific piece of music. In this case, the simile of Daedalus' statues is not supposed to communicate that the musician who learned the piece by ear is more likely to forget the piece of music than the master musician. There are cases of flimsier true *doxa* which surely are susceptible to being lost through forgetting (or persuasion otherwise), but the case of the musician who learned the piece by ear may not be able to teach another musician this piece of music. A musician who learns by ear can likely only train another musician who learns by ear, and so might only be able to pass on the musical skill to a small group of potential musicians who have the capacity to learn by ear. Moreover, a musician

who learns by ear might not be able to explain her process; this makes transmission much more difficult, even if the musician can play as beautifully as the musician with *episteme*. The statues of Daedalus were highly prized for their aesthetic qualities and extremely valuable. An owner would surely want to tie down a statue of Daedalus to ensure it does not run away from her, but perhaps equally pressing is that she would like to leave the statue to her descendants as part of their inheritance. To bend the metaphor somewhat, tying down ensures the process of transmission. It is this process of transmission that is valuable because it ensures that the expertise is available to each subsequent generation. Socrates makes this clear at the very end of the dialogue, where the distinguishing feature of the statesman with *episteme* is that the statesman can create another statesman (100a). Thus, perils of a statue of Daedalus running away is not only that it would deprive the owner, but also the owner's heirs.

An example of *doxa* transmission follows: I tried at first to learn baking from an intuitive baker who made incredible bread. I do not have a great ability to estimate three dimensional shapes and I failed miserably at achieving the correct ratios between flour, water, and salt in my bread, even with guidance from the intuitive baker. However, when I started learning from a variety of books written by expert bakers and then reach out to baking communities online for troubleshooting, I learned how to bake fabulous bread by employing a baking scale and learning to deftly manipulate baker's percentages (the ratios that allow you to adjust the taste and properties of bread through changing the amounts of water, salt, flour, and other ingredients). I've used a variety of techniques suggested by experts to radically improve my bread baking skills. I am far from possessing *episteme* of bread baking; I have gained my techniques through a combination of expert testimony and trial and error, rather than through an apprenticeship model. Indeed, I have found that some of the techniques that I've learned through expert testimony don't work for me and I've had to modify them. A baker with *episteme* would surely be able to improve my efforts, explain why the principles are correct and why my method of employing them has been wrong (and

why my modifications or others work instead). Without this kind of guidance, I doubt it will ever be possible for me to acquire *episteme* of bread baking, even if I continue to work hard to improve with the tools I have. Moreover, when I transmit my bread baking true *doxa* to others (which I have done many times), even over a long period of time, I have been unable to communicate the entirety of my true *doxa* to them; the only person I have trained that bakes better bread than I do subsequently spent time apprenticing with someone with far more baking skill than I possess. Everyone else I've trained has been at least marginally less successful in their bread baking than I have been in mine. One reason for the difference in success between transmitting knack *doxa* and transmitting *episteme* is that *episteme* allows its possessor to explain accurately and answer questions while *doxa* does not. *doxa* does not preclude the ability to explain, but the instances that Plato gives of true *doxa* are those where the person with the *doxa* is unable to explain: e.g. poets (99d) and prophets (99c).[53]

1.4.2 Stability is both Stability within the Individual and Intergenerational Stability

episteme is an epistemic state distinguished by being teachable (as opposed to transmissible in some other way). Teaching entails far more than that the knowledge can be passed on; teaching entails that but expertise can be preserved over multiple generations. At the very end of the dialogue, Socrates gives us a mythical analogy for what this would look like: 99e-100b

> **Socrates**: if we were right in the way in which we spoke and investigated in this whole discussion, virtue would be neither an inborn quality nor taught, but comes to those who possess it as a gift from the gods which is not accompanied by nous, unless there is someone among our statesmen who can make another into a statesman. If there were one, he could be said to be among the living as Homer said Tiresias was among the dead, namely, that "he alone retained his

[53]In the *Ion*, Ion is a rhapsode (a performer of Homer) and seems also to have *doxa* rather than *episteme*.

wits while the others flitted about like shadows." In the same manner such a man would, as far as virtue is concerned, here also be the only true reality compared, as it were, with shadows.

Meno: I think that is an excellent way to put it, Socrates.

Socrates: It follows from this reasoning, Meno, that virtue appears to be present in those of us who may possess it as a gift from the gods. We shall know (εἰσόμεθα) this clearly when, before we investigate how it comes to be present in men, we first try to find out what virtue in itself is.

According to Socrates, the statesman does not merely transmit ideas about statecraft; he makes another statesman. The consequence is that the entire polis can benefit from the wisdom of the virtuous person not for one generation but indefinitely because the virtuous person can create another expert. This differentiates the statesman with *episteme* from the statesman who has *doxa*. Statesmen who have true *doxa*– Pericles, Themistocles, Aristides– were all unable to pass on virtue to the next generation. When they died, the good actions they brought about died with them. Even if we think that the invocation of these particular eminent Athenians is ironic or in jest, the point still stands: no one without *episteme* can ensure that their expertise is passed on to the next generation. When a statesman with true *doxa* of virtue dies, that statesman likely (or perhaps inevitably) lacks a successor with true *doxa* of virtue. However, the statesman with *episteme* is able to see clearly from beyond the grave, like Tiresias, insofar as he/she can create a new statesman that will take his/her place after death and continue to lead the polis with expertise. *episteme* is more valuable than *doxa* since it produces not just stability within the individual but additionally intergenerational stability. While there may be some lucky people who are able to retain true *doxa* so that it remains stable within them (thus they have persistent true *doxa*), they lack the ability to pass that persistent true *doxa* down through generations without loss. *episteme* can, under ideal circumstances, be losslessly stable throughout time. *episteme* is diachronically stable (i.e. stable through time) because it self-replicates; a person who has *episteme* has the power

to teach and by doing so create another person with *episteme*.

1.4.3 Objection: There are Places in the *Meno* Where the Word 'Teach' (διδάσκειν) Does Not Refer to the Transfer of Expertise

Before proceeding, I pause to deal with an objection, formulated as follows: 'there are certain places in the dialogue where teaching does not seem to denote the transfer of expertise (81e, 82a, 82e, 85d, 85e).[54] This would seem to undermine the connection between *episteme* and teaching.' I respond that in each of these instances in question, teaching and recollection are not equivalent (81e, 82a, 82e, 85d, 85e). I argue that there are two different notions of teaching that appear in the *Meno*:[55] (1) teaching as the transfer of true belief or knowledge[56] through testimony or (2) teaching as a method of guiding someone who is in the process of acquiring expertise (guiding someone through the process of recollection).[57] In other words, for this second type of teaching, teaching is a successful process of acquiring expertise through a combination of testimony and guided practice (whether that practice involves the acquisition of physical or intellectual skills), at least part of which takes place through the learner answering questions or challenges posed by the teacher. The description of the first type of teaching comes from textual clues. Meno, a student of Gorgias, is thinking of Gorgias' methods of teaching when he uses the word 'διδάξαι' at 81e. Socrates, in answering Meno and throughout the interaction with the slave, follows Meno's lead in his use of the term. Socrates contrasts this sort of teaching with recollection explicitly at 82a (and he contrasts learning with recollection 82b).

[54]Careful readers will notice that there is ambiguity in some of these places; it is plausible to read some of these instances in the mouth of Socrates as conforming more closely to Socrates' technical form of teaching that is equivalent to recollection.

[55]Devereux 1978: 119-120 also argues that there are two notions of teaching in the *Meno*, which he calls Socratic Teaching and Sophistical teaching. While Devereux and I divide the instances of teaching into species in the same way, we define those species differently. Thus, I use different names for the two types of teaching, to minimize confusions.

[56]I use the English word here because I think Meno's conception of *episteme* is less demanding than Socrates' (and more like the currently typical Anglo-American philosophical use of 'knowledge').

[57]Schwab 2019

The description of the first type of teaching comes from textual clues. Meno, a student of Gorgias, is thinking of Gorgias' methods of teaching when he uses the word 'διδάξαι' at 81e. Socrates, in answering Meno and throughout the interaction with the slave, follows Meno's lead in his use of the term. Socrates contrasts this sort of teaching with recollection explicitly at 82a (and he contrasts learning with recollection 82b).

Moreover, the cases of teaching that clearly do not refer to teaching qua recollection do not occur before Socrates stipulates that teaching and recollection are the same; these instances correspond to this colloquial idea of teaching. In these instances, Meno is thinking of Gorgias' teaching style—lecture and demonstration of rhetorical skill—when he discusses teaching and Socrates follows his lead up until. At that point, Socrates redefines 'teaching', giving it a technical meaning as equivalent to the process of recollection he demonstrates with the slave. Subsequent to making teaching equivalent to recollection, all references to teaching by Socrates are to the technical meaning of 'teaching'.[58] I distinguish the two going forward as 'transmission' (colloquial) and 'teaching' (technical).

1.4.4 People with *Episteme* are the Appropriate Teachers of Their *Episteme*

Thus far, when I refer to the biconditional I have described *episteme* as being teachable, but not discussed in depth who might be capable of teaching *episteme*.

It does not follow from the claim that *episteme* is teachable that every expert will be able to teach it nor does it follow logically that it will be taught at all. Socrates says that if something can be taught, it necessarily has teachers and learners (89d). He also alleges the contrapositive: if there are no teachers and learners of it, then it cannot be taught (the articulation here says that it can be inferred). This is puzzling. There are plenty of expertises that either (1) have gone through long stretches of time where they are not taught or (2)

[58]The schema that I have devised here slightly simplifies the matter. Socrates seems to generally use teach to describe Socratic teaching, while Meno uses it to consider lecturing. There are a few moments where Socrates seems to use teaching in Meno's sense (e.g. 82a, 82e, 84b-d, 85d-e).

are no longer taught. One example of the first kind is the case of linen armor. We have descriptions of lightweight but effective linen armor in Herodotus. The expertise to produce linen armor was passed on from one generation to another for a long time, until at some point teaching ceased (for whatever reason). Recently, a faculty-student research project reconstructed the process for fashioning such armor (Aldrete *et al.* 2013). An example of the second type is the expertise employed by the Neolithic builders who managed to get enormous slabs of stone the 25 km from West Woods to Stonehenge.[59] Yet, it was clearly something that was passed down from one generation to the next over a long period of time.

Socrates and his interlocutors seem to take for granted that experts are the appropriate teachers of their expertise and that one important function of experts is that they ensure that their expertise passes to the next generation. Indeed, Socrates and Meno agree that if something is an *episteme*, there should be teachers and learners of it (89d). Socrates and Anytus agree, the proper teacher of a skill is an expert.[60]

Today, with formalized education, experts do not always (or often) teach and teachers are not always experts. For example, doctors spend most of their education training at large institutions. It is only at the end of their course of study, during residency and training for specialization that they work closely with experts in their particular field. In the ancient Greek world, the possessor of the *episteme*, the expert, was often also the teacher of the subject to whom one must apprentice in order to learn. Teaching of anything beyond a basic education was most frequently conducted through the apprenticeship model (Mintz 2011). During Socrates and Plato's lifetimes, there was a proliferation of itinerant teachers and new teaching methods (beyond the traditional apprenticeship model) in Greece. Some of these teachers were sophists, who provided rhetorical training (among other things). The sophists often taught through demonstrations of their rhetorical power. Gorgias, a preem-

[59]The sarsen megaliths have recently been sourced to West Woods, Wiltshire (Nash *et al.* 2020). The 'bluestones', although smaller, came much farther; these stones were sourced from quarries about 230 km distant from Stonehenge (Pearson *et al.* 2019). There is no consensus about how the stones were moved.

[60]t is unclear whether Meno would agree that teachers must be experts, since, as I discuss below, Meno considers sophists like Gorigas to be teachers. I discuss this further below.

inent sophist, taught through a combination of demonstration and providing copies of his speeches for his students to study.[61] The sophists were some of the first professional teachers (other than slave tutors who sometimes taught wealthy children).[62] Sophists Meno is set. Those surrounding the sophists were more like acolytes than students, and, at least in Plato's portrayal of them, lack the expertise of sophists (e.g. Meno, who "learned" from Gorgias).We see in other dialogues Socrates tests sophists and other supposed experts by challenging them to explain their expertise. Those surrounding the sophists were more like acolytes than students, and, at least in Plato's portrayal of them, lack the expertise of sophists (e.g. Meno, who studies with Gorgias, but did not learn (in the technical sense)).We see in other dialogues Socrates tests sophists and other supposed experts by challenging them to explain their expertise.[63] Although some of these new teachers and new forms of teaching appear in the *Meno*, when Socrates discusses how teaching should be conducted, he points to the apprenticeship model where a student learns from an expert. When Socrates deals with teaching specifically, Socrates' interlocutor switches from Meno to Anytus. While Meno sought out Gorgias (one of the new itinerant teachers) to gain rhetorical skills, Anytus actively shuns the sophists.[64] It is the apprenticeship-style teaching by which expertise is transferred.[65]

Socrates and Meno also make the assumption that, at least for certain types of expertise, having that expertise impels the expert to preserve that expertise by passing it down to the next generation; the example that Socrates gives is virtue. It is possible that virtue is the only example of an expertise that impels passing it on, but perhaps any expertise that requires a community of practice for the expertise to be viable (e.g. speaking a language) might similarly impel one to teach. Socrates contends that a virtuous person, since they

[61] q.v. Scott 2006, 12-13. Plato's Protagoras, which is more concerned with the sophists than the *Meno*, showcases the various types of instruction available from a variety of itinerant instructors.

[62] For a discussion of the different types of teacher that appeared in Greece in this period, see Mintz 2011.

[63] e.g. *Apology*, *Hippias Major*, *Hippias Minor*, and *Ion*.

[64] Gorgias is usually classed as a sophist. However, authors both ancient and modern use the word 'sophist' in a variety of ways, both broad and narrow. I use the term 'sophist' in a fairly broad sense, for the sake of convenience.

[65] This remains true today, where the final stage of learning occurs through an apprenticeship model: e.g. clerking for judges for law students, residencies for medical doctors, and working with an advisor or principal investigator in graduate school.

are virtuous, would desire to make others virtuous, especially their own children.[66] The expert in virtue wants others to be virtuous because becoming an expert in virtue shapes one's character in a way that one desires that others act virtuously. Moreover, what is characteristic of the virtuous statesman is that she can make another statesman (100a). For Socrates, the social purpose of experts is not just producing top quality products but also preserving expertise for future generations. This comes out most clearly in the Republic, where the entire constitution is designed to create virtuous statesmen for each subsequent generation.[67]

In the *Gorgias*, Socrates is more explicit that experts are the appropriate teachers of their expertise. He argues that one of the tests of an expert is that an expert can replicate herself, i.e. teach another expert (*Gorg.* 458e). Socrates does not argue this in the *Meno*, but this seems compatible with the epistemology that appears in the *Meno*. Indeed, it is easy to slip between the idea that something is *episteme* if and only if it is teachable and the idea that *episteme* comes with the ability to teach.[68] This seems fairly plausible in an apprentice-style learning environment. Moreover, the reflective control that allows one to gain expertise and improve skills and knowledge in the first place provides the basis for teaching.

1.5 The Similar Epistemology and Philosophy of Education in Plato's *Gorgias*

It is illuminating to look to the *Gorgias* to understand the epistemology of the *Meno*. The reason is that the *Gorgias* provides an epistemology that is extraordinarily similar to the *Meno*, but in a more comprehensible form. The reason, perhaps, that the Gorgias is more comprehensible is that they are evaluating whether or not oratory (as opposed to virtue) is an

[66] I discuss this argument in depth in Chapter 2.
[67] I discuss this aspect of the Republic in greater depth in Chapter 3.
[68] Bjelde posits what he calls the "strong" reading of the biconditional: *episteme* always comes with an ability to teach and only *episteme* does (Bjelde 2021: 1).

expertise. Since oratory is far more familiar, it makes *techne* (expertise) easier to picture. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates and Gorgias have a conversation about what oratory is (453d-455a). In this process, they characterize an expert as someone who can consistently create high quality products and can create another expert. Additionally, the *Gorgias* illustrates the idea of a knack (*empeiria*), the ability to consistently produce good products, but through some other method than *techne*.

The *Gorgias* employs a different set of terms than the *Meno*, but the two dialogues exist within the same framework of epistemic states, and pick out some of the same relationships between those epistemic states. Two factors account for the difference between the way the two dialogues portray this epistemology. The first factor is the different focus and perspective of the two systems. Two examples demonstrate that the systems are the same, but that the focus is different in the two texts. One example of a concept that is almost the same in the two systems is *episteme* in the *Meno* and *techne* in the Gorgias. Like *episteme*, *techne* (a) allows its possessor to consistently produce high quality products (of that *techne*) and (b) it is teachable. *techne* focuses on the expertise itself: the body of knowledge and the skill set required to apply that body of knowledge appropriately. In the *Meno*, the focus is on the epistemic state that the expert has in relation to her expertise (*episteme*) and the characteristics of that epistemic state. Somewhat confusingly, '*techne*' and '*episteme*' can be synonymous and both can refer to either the expertise itself or the epistemic state of the expert (Perry 2020), but in general, the choice of vocabulary hints at the choice of focus. In short, these two texts look at the concept of expertise through different lenses—the *Meno* focuses the cognition that enables expertise whereas the Gorgias focuses on expertise itself, but these are clearly analogues within the same epistemic system. Another match up in the epistemology is slightly less exact. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates juxtaposes *techne* with *empeiria* (knack, or the ability to produce a product as a result of a trial and error process). *empeiria* does not have the same wide range of meanings as *doxa* has, but *empeiria* might be considered a species of true *doxa*: what I call knack-*doxa*, the possessed by the musician

who learns by ear or the intuitive bread baker.

The second factor is that the *Gorgias* goes into more depth in the distinctions between the different types of epistemic states that fall short of *episteme*, while the *Meno* is only interested in carving the world into what is teachable (*episteme*) and what is not teachable (anything aside from *episteme*). This means that the distinctions in the *Gorgias* are more fine-grained, because the focus is on exploring what rhetoric is, rather than whether or not rhetoric is teachable. Since Socrates alleges early in the dialogue that rhetoric is an *empeiria*, it is important to distinguish *empeiria* from other types of epistemic states that fall short of *techne* (*episteme*)—e.g. something like *pistis*, which seems to represent a propositional belief. While *empeiria* consists of a body of *pistis* in part, since it is a knack it requires not only a proposition but also a collection of instincts, physical cues, etc. that might be required for the knack in question. For example, a barista with a knack for making good coffee has a set of *pisteis* (plural of *pistis*) likely has some set of cues that tell her, for example, how tightly to pack espresso (by feel) and if a shot has pulled too quickly (by sound or sight). Fundamentally, however, *pistis* and *empeiria* are not teachable. In the *Meno*, this distinction between *pistis* and *empeiria* is not important; Meno constrains the conversation so that it concerns only whether something is teachable, rather than considering more fine-grained distinctions among epistemic states that are not teachable.

In particular, in the *Gorgias*, Socrates and Gorgias create a type of distinction between two types of persuasion. The first type of persuasion—which is the type that corresponds with teaching—when it produces results, results in learning (μμέ, 454c) and the second type results in believing (πεπιστευκέναι, 454c). Both of these are clearly types of transmission, but one comes through teaching (and it's corollary for the person who is being taught, learning) and the other comes through convincing (and it's corollary for the person who is being convinced, believing). Another factor that differentiates the two is that convincing can produce both true and false belief (ί, 454d), but there is no such thing as false *episteme* (454d). Here, Socrates actually uses the word *episteme* as the result of the learning process

(454d-e), showing once again the link between *episteme* and teaching. He then makes the results of these two processes explicit: convincing produces belief without knowing (εἰδέναι),[69] the other one provides *episteme* (454e). In the *Gorgias*, the focus is on the person who is receiving what is transmitted rather than on the person doing the transmitting, but the distinction seems to be the same.

Additionally, Socrates places more explicit and fine-grained requirements upon teaching in the Gorgias (which are more developed than those in the *Meno*). For example, Socrates argues that teaching cannot happen in large groups, only convincing (455a). One way to interpret this is that teaching cannot occur through testimony alone, but it requires some additional types of intervention: practice and guidance. Practice takes time, and a speaker before a large crowd will not be able to provide the requisite time and guidance for teaching itself to occur. Teaching and learning also seems to require a joint undertaking between the participants and require a genuine desire to investigate, rather than some sort of competition (457c-d). Teaching and learning requires the attitude that it is better to be refuted when saying something untrue than to believe in or convince someone of a false belief (458a). Moreover, the process of learning, recast in a similar technical sense to that which appears in the *Meno*, results in expertise. Someone who has learned carpentry is not just someone who can build something, but is a carpenter, someone who has learned music is a musician, and someone who has learned medicine is a doctor (460b). Someone who has learned justice is a just person (460b). In other words, learning requires success and not just success but mastery so that one becomes an expert or master by learning.

There is a particularly interesting outcome of this discussion: it is often easier to convince than to teach. If teaching and learning entails that the learner successfully acquires expertise, then it is a long and arduous process. Convincing is faster and does not require all participants to genuinely be seeking truth (458e-459b). For these reasons (among others,

[69] Although commentators and translators generally take ἰέ and *episteme* to be synonymous here, I don't think they are. It seems like belief (πίστις) is a much more flimsy notion than *doxa* and you might be considered to know (εἰδέναι) something if you had a justified propositional belief about it, while it would still fall short of *episteme*.

perhaps), convincing is more effective on those who are not trained in the subject (459b) than teaching, which requires that the learner genuinely be willing to put her own thoughts aside and join in a genuine inquiry.

The *Gorgias* provides a plausible way of understanding the claim that *doxa* can be transmitted but cannot be taught. *doxa* is transmitted through convincing, rather than teaching. What is special about teaching is that it is high-fidelity transmission: it transfers a stable epistemic state, *episteme* from one person to another. Indeed, under favorable conditions, expertise can be losslessly transmitted from one generation to the next. *doxa* is transmitted through conviction rather than teaching, so it cannot ensure lossless transmission, even under favorable circumstances.

1.6 The Value Problem for *Episteme*

Intergenerational stability has powerful implications for another famous puzzle in the *Meno*: why is *episteme* more valuable than true *doxa* if the two are 'practically equivalent'? By 'practically equivalent' I mean the person who possesses either does the same actions and produces the same products under the same circumstances, so long as that person retains the epistemic state.[70] This problem has turned into the contemporary Meno Problem and the Value Problem for Knowledge (although in both cases, *episteme* is understood as knowledge, not expertise). Yet, even for expertise, the problem continues to be salient. Why is a barista who is an expert coffee maker any better than a barista who consistently makes good coffee, but is not an expert? I still get the same great cup of coffee when I order from either of them. The idea is the following: the expert barista can train the barista who replaces her, when she gets promoted to manager or finds a better paying job. The barista who lacks expertise may similarly be able to show her replacement around and provide some tips, but she lacks the ability to losslessly transmit expertise to the next barista. To continue with the barista

[70] I borrow the terminology of practical equivalence from Bjelde (2021).

example, the difference between the two baristas can be stated thus: if an expert barista is on staff in my favorite coffee shop, then the coffee should be consistently good over the years, irrespective to the turnover rates for baristas. If my favorite coffee shot has a barista that lacks *episteme*, the coffee will only be good until she leaves or, if I'm very lucky, until those who think in the way she does (and can understand her explanations and training) leave. After that, I may have to make do with substandard coffee.

I employ the example of the coffee shop, but a more serious example might come from medicine. Imagine that a neurosurgeon devises a new method to excise brain tumors that works in 85 percent of cases, no matter where the tumors are in the brain. That would be an incredible step forward in medicine that would save many lives. If that neurosurgeon developed *episteme* of her new procedure, she could train a new crop of neurosurgeons who could learn from her and then establish themselves at hospitals and universities around the world. Each of them could become experts in the new procedure and train more experts, and lives would not be saved only in the original hospital or during the neurosurgeon's career, but everywhere throughout time (until perhaps an even better procedure could be devised). On the other hand, it is possible that the neurosurgeon is not an expert. In this case, she cannot fully explain the process or has some method of using a scalpel that she cannot seem to replicate in her students. At that point, while her procedure might work in 85 percent of cases, her students might only be able to perform the procedure with a 70 percent (or lower) success rate or may not be able to perform it at all. While the neurosurgeon may be able to do great good in the world, her incredible innovation may be lost forever when she retires or dies. In other words, her true *doxa* means that her innovation may die with her, while if she had *episteme*, generations to come could benefit.

This answer to the problem shows that *episteme* is significantly more valuable than *doxa* practically (at least in a diachronic sense), epistemically, and ethically. Socrates stipulates that *episteme* and true *doxa* can be practically equivalent, but this practical equivalency only manifests synchronically, i.e. while the person maintains the true *doxa* (by both holding

onto it and remaining alive). Death ends the practical value of true *doxa*, but it does not end the practical value of *episteme*. *episteme* lives on, at least in reasonably favorable conditions. Let's return to the case of the two virtuoso musicians. The virtuoso musician who has *episteme* can fully explain her repertoire of techniques and will be able to provide guided practice to a musician who comes to learn from her. The virtuoso musician who learns by ear, however, can only train another musician who can learn by ear. And the by-ear musician might not be able to fully articulate her techniques. Thus, *doxa* cannot guarantee lossless transmission, even under favorable circumstances. This means while *episteme* and *doxa* are synchronically practically equivalent, *episteme* is far more practically valuable diachronically.

Episteme is also more valuable than true *doxa* epistemically, precisely because it can replicate itself throughout generations. *episteme* is characterized by it's teachability, which gives it the power to persist stably through time. While epistemic value is hard to define, its defining feature seems to be that it is the value that attaches to cognitive achievements. It seems that an achievement which can losslessly self-replicate should be more epistemically valuable than an achievement which cannot. While *doxa* may be able to self-replicate, the mechanism (convincing, to borrow an idea from the Gorgias) is much less stable.

Finally, I argue that intergenerational stability makes *episteme* more ethically valuable than true *doxa*. Ethics, broadly speaking, concerns how to live. Experts are valuable, at least for Socrates, because of their social contribution; they provide good quality products that we cannot provide for ourselves. In other words, expertise provides us with the tools to live better lives, both as individuals and as a community. Expertise is particularly valuable, more valuable than practically equivalent *doxa*, because expertise ensures that as long as circumstances are reasonably favorable, that expertise will continue to exist in the *polis* throughout generations. This is the reason that it would be so valuable to find an expert (and teacher) of virtue. Virtue can guide the life of the possessor, but provides the ability to guide not just an individual but a *polis*. If virtue were teachable, it would also be able to create an endless string of virtuous leaders for the *polis*, which could make a *polis* great not

just for a while, but for all time. I discuss the ethical implications in more detail in Chapter 2.

Plato's answer to the value problem, as I interpret it, might be disappointing to contemporary epistemologists, because it is so far removed from the *Meno* problem as employed in contemporary epistemology.[71] Plato likely has few insights to offer for the contemporary Meno Problem, given that he was far less interested in propositional knowledge than contemporary epistemologists are.[72] However, Plato's version of the problem sheds an interesting light on some potential ways that one epistemic state can be more valuable than another. Epistemic value can be generated not just by some difference between two epistemic states in a given moment, but also the duration of their persistence and the ease or accuracy with which they are transmitted.

For Plato, one important component that makes an epistemic state valuable is that is the fidelity with which it can be passed on to the next generation. He makes this clear in a striking passage at the end of the *Meno* (99e-100a):

> If we investigated and spoke well now throughout this argument, virtue neither comes about by nature nor is teachable but is present in those for whom it is present without nous as a dispensation from the gods, unless some such person among the statesman is fit to make another statesman. If there were [a statesman who could make another statesman] one, he would be said to be among the living of which sort Homer said Tiresias was among those who had died, when [Homer] said about [Tiresias] that [Tiresias] he alone was fully conscious among those in the underworld, while the shades flit about. In the same way, here, such a man [a statesman who could make another statesman], just like among the shadows,

[71] In a forthcoming paper, Bjelde argues for an interpretation of the *Meno* that provides insights that might be more conducive to solving the contemporary Meno Problem (Bjelde 2020). Bjelde argues that possessing knowledge, as opposed to true belief, makes us more likely to retain the true belief in the future. I think his argument is interesting and illuminating, although I think his interpretation of the epistemology of the *Meno* is incorrect.

[72] I was asked, when I presented this chapter at UCSB, how the contemporary Meno problem strayed so far from the problem that I argue Plato poses in the *Meno*. That question is an interesting one, but would require a paper all of its own.

would be the real thing regarding virtue.

In this passage, Socrates leaves open the possibility that there might be a statesman who possessed *episteme* virtue, and thus could teach it to the next generation. By comparison to other statesman, who, at best, possess *doxa* virtue, this statesman would like someone gifted with wisdom and foresight (like Tiresias). I contend that this is true, even if the true statesman and the shadow statesman produced equally good results. The reason is that the ability to losslessly pass on expertise in virtue would be incalculably valuable to a *polis*, because it would last not just during the statesman's lifetime but for all time.

I argue in Chapters 2 and 3 that the *Republic* is designed to educate such a statesman: one who could create other statesmen. The great project undertaken in the *Republic* is to develop a *polis* where the leaders are experts in virtue and can pass that expertise on to the next generation of leaders.

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued for some specific definitions of the epistemic vocabulary within Plato's *Meno*. *doxa* is a spectrum of epistemic states ranging from propositions to a knack which produces products that are equal to those of an expert. *doxa* is an epistemic state that can be transmitted between people, but cannot be taught. *episteme*, by contrast, is the epistemic state which an expert has in relation to her expertise. *episteme* is teachable; the fact that it is explicable partially underlies its teachability. Another component of *episteme* that underlies it's teachability is reflective control. The same process of self-assessment and improvement which was required for an expert to acquire expertise undergirds the ability for an expert to train another. I provided textual evidence and answered several possible objections to my interpretation. Following that, I explained the two uses of teaching within the dialogue: what I term 'colloquial teaching' and 'technical teaching'. I argue that we should give a strong reading of the biconditional that states that something is teachable if

and only if it is *episteme*. *episteme* is distinguished from *doxa* because it can be losslessly transmitted to the next generation. I concluded by demonstrating that the value problem for *episteme* is unrelated to the contemporary Meno Problem: *episteme* is more valuable than *doxa*, even when it produces equivalent results, because it can persist diachronically through teaching.

In the next chapter, I use the epistemology developed here to explain the rather puzzling conclusion of the dialogue: that virtue cannot be taught. I argue that this explicit conclusion of the second half of the dialogue is misleading. The passage about the two types of statesman, reviewed at the end of the last section, provides the reasoning. *doxa*-virtue, the sort of virtue that a statesman who governed well possesses, cannot be taught, as any kind of knack-*doxa* cannot be taught. True virtue– *episteme*-virtue– like any other type of *episteme* can indeed be taught. The term "arete" (virtue) is misleading because it is used to pick out people who produce good results, rather than distinguishing them by their epistemic state.

Chapter 2

Tiresias Among the Shades: Teaching Virtue in Plato's *Meno*

In the previous chapter, I presented an interpretation of the epistemology of the *Meno*. For Plato, virtue is an epistemic state that guides behavior; thus Plato's epistemology underlies his ethics. In this chapter, I use the epistemology laid out in the previous chapter to explain how it influences Plato's ethics (or how it answers the ethical question posed in the opening of the *Meno*). I begin by explaining my interpretation of the epistemic state that constitutes virtue. The dialogue explicitly states that virtue is a form of true *doxa* (99c). Despite this explicit answer, I argue that there is textual evidence that suggests that genuine virtue is actually a type of *episteme*, although it might be a type of *episteme* that is impossible to achieve.[1] I argue that what we call '*arete*' (virtue)—the authors and origins of the good actions that manifest in the world—is actually a kind of knack-*doxa* for doing the right thing. I am not the first to argue that the *Meno* constructs an ethics that has two epistemic states called 'virtue.'[2] How I define the two epistemic states and draw out the

[1]The text of the *Meno* fails to provide a clear answer about whether *episteme*-virtue is achievable; given that the explicit answer in the dialogue is that there is that *episteme*-virtue does not exist, it the *Meno* hints that *episteme*-virtue is not achievable. The *Republic* appears to answer this question more directly; I discuss that in Section 5.

[2]Scott (2006, 186-187) is the closest in recent scholarship to my view. Some other related views include Iascou (2007, 136-153) and Kraut (1984, 229-231).

implications of this ethics—both for interpreting the *Republic* and for considering the unity of the *Meno*—is original.

My interpretation of Plato's epistemic framework in the *Meno* relies upon biconditional which Socrates proposes at 87b-c: x is teachable if and only if x is a type of *episteme*. I argued that we should take this biconditional at face value; *episteme* is an epistemic state distinguished by its stability within the individual and its teachability between generations. I argued further that, in the *Meno*, Socrates recasts 'teaching' (διδαχή) as a technical term, synonymous with 'recollection' (ἀνάμνησις)[3] and refers to a special type of transmission (the acquisition of expertise from an expert). Teaching is ultimately an offshoot of stability within the individual, since the acquisition of expertise is a long process. I argue that teaching, in this technical sense, is the lossless transmission of expertise; as 'teaching' is synonymous with 'recollection', something is only taught when the expertise is acquired by the student. Moreover, teaching only occurs when its corollary action, learning, also takes place. For this reason, teaching encompasses far more than what a teacher might do when interacting with a student; it includes elements such as practice which the student must undertake on her own. *doxa* lacks the stability of *episteme* (98a) and cannot be transmitted in the same way that *episteme* can (i.e. through teaching). In other words, *episteme* can be successfully and transmitted across generations without any loss of skill, while *doxa* cannot. *episteme*, thus, is beneficial not only to the current generation but to the *polis* throughout time.

In this chapter, consider how this epistemic framework might be applied to help describe and flesh out in more concrete terms this so-called virtue (*doxa*-virtue) and genuine virtue (*episteme*-virtue). Then, in the first three sections, I provide the textual evidence that demonstrates that my interpretation is well-grounded in the text of the *Meno*. In this account, I highlight the role of teaching as a distinguishing feature between *episteme*-virtue

[3]I view recollection, consequently, as a process that differs somewhat from how it is traditionally cast in the literature. Recollection, on my view, encompasses the process of learning an expertise, including building the necessary mental connections, acquiring any necessary physical skills, practicing, and creating the necessary reflective control to evaluate and improve performance of the expertise. My view of recollection is similar to that described by Schwab (2019); we agree that *episteme* is the end result of a completed process of recollection, but we disagree on the epistemic state that '*episteme*' represents.

and *doxa*-virtue. Socrates indicates that *episteme*-virtue is superior to *doxa*-virtue because it is stable and teachable while *doxa*-virtue is not (99e-100a). Possessors of *doxa* may be able to produce identically good results and transmit some of their practices to others through imitation or trial and error, but they cannot guarantee lossless transmission because they cannot teach (in the technical sense). This would mean that if someone acquired *episteme*-virtue, they could ensure that they taught others, perpetuating *episteme*-virtue and it's benefits to the possessor and the *polis* throughout time.

Something particular to *episteme*-virtue, as opposed to other types of *episteme*, is that possessors of *episteme*-virtue want those around them to also possess *episteme*-virtue (93b-e). Socrates does not explain this desire in the *Meno*, but one can infer at least two reasons that one who is virtuous would want others around her to be virtuous. One is that the virtuous person wishes to associate with other virtuous people, as those people are likely to benefit rather than harm her (q.v. *Ap.* 24d-25d). Additionally, a virtuous person should wish good things for those around her; since virtue and acting well is the path toward *eudaimonia*, it seems that the virtuous person would want others around her to thrive.

In the first four sections, I examine the second half of the dialogue in some detail and in the order in which it appears. The reason for this is twofold. First, the text seems to cohere into a unified whole with a clear purpose, when read in light of my interpretation and the most effective way to demonstrate that is to demonstrate it by close readings of the relevant arguments. Second, a textual examination provides some useful evidence for the unity of the *Meno* as a whole, which I discuss in Section 6.

In section 5, I argue that the rather enigmatic simile about Tiresias among the dead souls in the underworld anticipates the educational system devised in the Republic. I argue that the Republic creates as a city-in-speech a *polis* in which *episteme* could not only exist, but persist throughout generations. Indeed, I argue that stable virtue transmission among the ruling class is the primary purpose of the *Kallipolis*. I provide some textual evidence for this position, specifically incorporating evidence from the educational program described

in *Republic* 2-4 and in the discussion of philosopher kings and constitutions that appears in book 6. I provide a detailed discussion of how these ideas provide an explanation for the censorship program in books 2-3 in Chapter 3.

2.1 The Argument that Virtue is *episteme* (87c-89c)

I argue in this chapter that there are two distinct epistemic states referred to as '*arete*' and that genuine virtue is indeed a set of *episteme*. While there is plenty of textual evidence to bolster this interpretation, Socrates never explicitly argues that there are two distinct epistemic states in the *Meno*. Instead, he makes an argument that shows that virtue is a type of *episteme* that includes a flawed premise–the premise that *episteme* is the only good and the only epistemic state that guides correctly– and then demonstrates that the premise is flawed. In order to show the flaw, he argues that true *doxa*, along with *episteme*, can produce beneficial results. Since there are alternative interpretations of the flaw in the argument that virtue is *episteme*, I lay out the textual evidence for my position in detail over the course of three sections. In this first section, I tackle the argument that virtue is *episteme* (87b-89d), in the second section I examine the Athenian Case Study (89c-96c), and in the third section I discuss the objection to the claim that *episteme* is the only good (96e-100b). In the fourth section, I sum this up and show how the interpretation prevented in these three sections accords with the enigmatic comparison of the person with *episteme*-virtue to Tiresias and discuss the two epistemic states called '*arete*'.

When Socrates and *Meno* return to the original question (is virtue teachable?) in the second half of the dialogue, they address it indirectly. Instead of first pursuing what virtue is and deriving its characteristics from that definition, they go through a procedure that employs hypotheses and biconditionals to determine whether virtue is teachable based. Socrates provides an obscure mathematical analogy to explain the procedure he is going to use. There is long-standing debate over the interpretation of both the mathematical analogy

and the argument itself. The interpretation that I provide of how the argument works accords with the mathematical analogy (without committing to a specific way of interpreting it) and provides an interpretation of the subsequent argument that is vulnerable to the objection that Socrates levels at the argument (at 96e).

The math is challenging to reconstruct because the language is so vague and the referents for particular phrases so obscure. Given this, I only reconstruct one possible interpretation to make a point in order to show how the mathematical problem might be analogous to the argument that succeeds it.[4] I make these comments on the math because I feel that any attempt to reconstruct it without at least a cursory look at the mathematics is incomplete, since Socrates explicitly invokes it as an analogy for the argument that follows. However, I agree with Scott (2006, 137) that the mathematical example is so obscure and complicated that it must have been either a commonly cited example that Meno would recognize, but is now lost to us, or that it is only supposed to provide a rough analogy. If it was meant to provide a detailed analogy for the argument that followed, it shows a breakdown of the dramatics of the dialogue, since vapid Meno surely would not have understood it, even if the more mathematically inclined in an audience of Plato's contemporaries or students might have (Scott 2006, 137).

My choice of among the many reconstructions of the mathematical argument is essentially arbitrary[5]; all I need is a version that is comprehensible to demonstrate how the argument model fits together. Socrates presents the math purely as a way for Meno to understand how a rigorous argument can proceed from a hypothesis; he borrows the technique from geometry. The question given to the geometer in the mathematical analogy seems to be whether some area (x) could be inscribed as a triangle into some circle (where the area of the circle $= y$).[6] The biconditional states that an area can be inscribed into a circle if

[4]I borrow the explanation of the mathematics from Scott, who borrows it from Heath (2006: 133-137). The appendix to Bluck's commentary on the *Meno* provides a useful survey (Bluck 1961, 441-461.

[5]I do not believe that the particulars of the reconstruction matter for the ethics. The point is that there is a specific type of two-stage argument that takes place that includes hypotheses and biconditional

[6]Even the question is somewhat uncertain; the description is obscure (e.g. Bluck 1961, 75-76).

and only if that area can also be represented as a rectangle with specific proportions. In short, the biconditional says that if the area has a particular property, it can be inscribed as a triangle within a specific circle, and if the area lacks that property it cannot.

In one way of rendering the mathematical example, the height of the triangle inscribed in the circle is some portion of the diameter, while the base is a chord in the circle. A rectangle with equal area to the triangle just described will, obviously, have a height of the length the height of the triangle (which is equivalent to the portion of the diameter) and a base equal to half of the length of the chord. For any triangle that is inscribed in the circle in question, the remaining length of the diameter that is not part of the height of the triangle, if connected by lines to the two points of the chord that intersect with the circumference of the circle will form a triangle similar to the original triangle.[7] If the ratio of the remaining part of the diameter of the circle to the base of the rectangle is not the same as the ratio between the height and the base of the rectangle, then it is not possible to inscribe a triangle of the area of that rectangle into the circle. If this principle is true, then it would also be true that the base of the ratio of the height of the rectangle to its base would be the same as the ratio of the base to the leftover piece of diameter; thus the area of the original rectangle would be similar to the area of a rectangle with a height equal to the base of the original rectangle and the base equal to the leftover segment of diameter.

The point is that the heuristic can be rendered, more succinctly, as a biconditional, perhaps like this: an area x can be as a triangle into a circle of area y if and only if that x can be represented as a rectangle such that $h{:}b = b{:}(d\text{-}h)$ (where h is the height of the rectangle, b is it's base (or ½ the base of the triangle), and d is the diameter of the circle). Assuming this is correct, then the argument would go as follows:

1. Area a can be represented as a rectangle such that, for circle c with diameter e, $h{:}b = b{:}\ (e\text{-}h)$ (hypothesis)
2. An area x can be as a triangle into a circle of area y if and only if that x can be repre-

[7] i.e. A triangle with the same angles and the same ratio of sides to one another.

sented as a rectangle such that h:b = b:(d-h) (where h is the height of the rectangle, b is it's base (or ½ the base of the triangle), and d is the diameter of the circle)

3. Thus, a can be represented as a triangle inscribed in circle c.

The hypothesis itself is unstated when Socrates gives the argument, if I have gotten the form of the argument correct. This, to be sure, is strange, but since Socrates gives so few details of the mathematical problem it is unsurprising. My best guess is that Socrates would have drawn some figures on the ground and gestured to them—as he may have done with the slave—to aid Meno's understanding.

It is important to note that premise 1 is a hypothesis; the geometer has not shown this yet. Although the conclusion is categorical, that a can be represented as a triangle inscribed in c, the geometer remains unsure of the truth of premise 1. Ultimately, then, the argument amounts to the conditional claim, 'if area a can be represented as a rectangle such that, for circle c with diameter e, h:b = b: (e-h), then a can be represented as a triangle inscribed in circle c.'

After this argument, the geometer must show that the hypothesis is true in a subsequent argument. I assume that it would take the form of creating a new hypothesis, probably stipulating the length of either h or b and then using that to do the various calculations to show that it would (or would not) fit the paradigm that h:b = b:(e-h). If it did fit this paradigm, then it seems that it would vindicate the original hypothesis, namely that 'Area a can be represented as a rectangle such that, for circle c with diameter e, h:b = b:(e-h).' Irrespective of whether any of the preceding mathematical interpretation is correct, this is the form that the two-stage argument presented in the subsequent passage takes.

The point of the geometric example seems to be that he can use a hypothesis in conjunction with a biconditional to partition logical space: given the hypothesis, if the area in question is of one type it has that property and if it is not of that type, then it does not have that property (87a-b). The argument seems to break into two sub-arguments that loosely follow the format of the geometrical analogy: the first sub-argument comes to a conclusion

and the second sub-argument justifies that conclusion. The second sub-argument is followed by addendum, which fails to fit the format of the mathematical analog. This addendum appears to answer some heretofore ignored components of Meno's question that opens the dialogue at 71a, namely, whether if virtue is not teachable, if it is is instead something that comes about by nature (φύσει).[8]

While the general form of the argument becomes clear from the reconstruction of the mathematics I provide above, the details of the argument remain murky. Part of the reason for the murkiness is the slippage in vocabulary. Socrates and Meno begin talking about *episteme*, but slip into the use of '*phronesis*' and '*nous*' as apparent synonyms or similar terms. I take *phronesis* as a direct synonym for *episteme*, as used here. The use may be particularly fitting because *phronesis* generally refers to the type of good judgement that would be necessary for ethical expertise. Nous is more ambiguous. It could be a direct synonym of *episteme* and *phronesis* or it could represent something that is necessary to *episteme* and *phronesis*; the text is insufficiently clear. Additional murkiness comes from the conversational nature of this argument. Parts of the argument (discussed below) appear to be superfluous to the point Socrates and Meno attempt to establish. This may be simply an artifact of conversation, or there may be an underlying reason.

The argument takes place in two distinct sub-arguments, like the geometric example would, if carried to fruition. In the first sub-argument, Socrates shows that if virtue is of one sort—i.e. *episteme*—it can be taught, but if it is of some other sort than it cannot be taught (argument 87b-c, summary 87c). Socrates labels this as the first point in the argument:

1. Virtue is a type of *episteme* (hypothesis)
2. Something is teachable if and only if it is *episteme* (87b-c)
3. Therefore, virtue is teachable

Just like in the geometric example, we then have to prove the hypothesis. In both cases, the hypothesis is, strangely, unstated. My only explanation for this is that the hypothesis

[8]Meno's question asks whether virtue is acquired by teaching (lit. is virtue teachable), or by practice or experience (lit. ἀσκητόν), or by nature (φύσει), or in some other way (ἄλλῳ τινὶ τρόπῳ).

is supposed to be so obvious to the audience that it does not need to be stated. Scholars agree that these must be the hypotheses missing from the argument (e.g. Bluck 1961, 76; Scott 2006, 136), despite the fact that they are unstated. The next stage of the argument is to prove the hypothesis.

In the following few paragraphs, I'm going to provide two reconstructions of the argument that differ in their reconstruction of the second sub-argument. One version is simpler and the other is more complex. Neither provides a completely satisfactory interpretation of the argument. I provide the two different versions because I think each one provides a possible interpretation of how Plato sees virtue working in the soul. The text is too ambiguous to settle the question, but the two possibilities can provide insights into the epistemology and metaphysics of virtue in other dialogues.

In the case of the ethical argument, the second sub-argument must show that virtue is indeed a type of *episteme*, thereby justifying the hypothesis from the first sub -argument. The the second sub -argument argument is more complicated, because, unlike in the first sub -argument or the geometrical example, Socrates must also justify the biconditional. By contrast, in the first sub -argument and the geometrical example, Socrates and Meno assume the biconditional is true. I provide just the main structure in argument form and reconstruct the justification of the biconditional in prose of the argument in prose. I begin with a simple reconstruction of the argument. Then, I pose two challenges to the simple reconstruction. Subsequently, I propose a more complicated form of reconstruction. Those who are satisfied by the simple reconstruction irrespective of the challenges I pose for it may continue onto Section 2 and skip over the more complicated reconstruction.

The Simple Reconstruction

The simple reconstruction of the second sub-argument that virtue is teachable I reconstruct as follows:

1. Virtue itself is something (unconditionally) good (87d) (hypothesis)

2. Something is (unconditionally) good if and only if is a type of *episteme* (87d)[9]

3. Therefore, virtue is (a type of) *episteme*.

On this reconstruction of the argument, *episteme* is the only thing that is good in itself, i.e. unconditionally good. Anything else that is good is guided by *episteme* and is merely conditionally good. Socrates opens the argument for the justification of the biconditional by equating what is good with what is beneficial. Virtue, then, being good, is something beneficial. All human activities are beneficial only when they are directed by *episteme*. This is true in the case of individual virtues; individual virtues (e.g. courage, moderation) are particular qualities (e.g. the tendency to act in the face of fear, the tendency to forgo bodily pleasures) of the soul directed by *phronesis*. When these are directed by *phronesis* they produce benefits, but when they are directed by a lack of *phronesis*, then they produce harm.[10] The same thing is true of external factors. Wealth, strength, and other external factors are only beneficial when directed by *phonesis*; the same external factors are harmful when directed by the opposite.

This simple reconstruction of the argument is adequate for the purposes of this paper; the Athenian Case Study and the objection can both be cast as targeting the biconditional when formed in this way. However, I remain unsatisfied with this reconstruction. There are two reasons I remain unsatisfied.

First, if Socrates thinks that external factors and qualities of the soul are both good only when directed by *episteme*, then Socrates can conclude the argument at 88d. Let me map out the argument to illustrate. At 88a, Socrates shows that anything is beneficial when

[9]I choose to render the phrasing with the word 'unconditional' because it shows that *episteme* might not be the only good (e.g. wealth can be good), but is the only thing that is good irrespective of context (e.g. wealth is only good when used in the right way). Under this reading, *episteme* is good irrespective of context and seems to be immune to misuse. I consider why *episeme* might be immune to misuse below. In the *Republic*, Socrates implies that *episteme* is immune to misue (*Resp.* 345c-d). Related to this, he also claims that when a practitioner fails, they lack *episteme* (340c) and that those with *episteme* strive only to do what is appropriate for that *episteme* (350a-c).

[10]Keep in mind that the rhetoric here is somewhat confusing; Socrates refers to courage and moderation as though they are qualities of the soul, which can be either beneficial or harmful. However, earlier in the dialogue, Socrates and Meno agree that these are individual virtues (79a). Perhaps the most likely explanation is that courage and moderation are standing for the neutral qualities of the soul, which, when directed well, result in the individual virtues.

directed correctly (harmed when directed incorrectly). Then, Socrates shows that this is true of the qualities of the soul as well (88b). He continues to say that it is *phronesis* (or *nous*) that directs correctly and lack of *phronesis* or *nous* directs incorrectly (88b). Following this, he argues that anything the soul undertakes or endures is beneficial. if directed by *phronesis*, but is harmful if directed by the opposite state ('ἀφρούνη') (88c).[11] This is true of the qualities of the soul (88c-d). Therefore, virtue, since it is beneficial, must be a type of *phronesis*. Since we have seen already that *phronesis* and *episteme* are equivalent in this dialogue, it is clear that Socrates has shown that virtue is *episteme*, concluding the second sub -argument of the argument at 88d.[12]

However, Socrates continues with the argument even after he has made his point. After establishing that action is only good when directed by *episteme*, he goes on to show that external factors like health and strength follow this same pattern; it is *phronesis* that directs them correctly and ἀφρούνη that directs them incorrectly. Instead, he shows how external factors, just like qualities of the soul, are beneficial when directed by *phronesis* and harmful when directed by the opposite. The simple reconstruction relies on the idea that these two types of things– qualities of the soul and external factors– are both conditionally good; *episteme*, that which directs them is the only unconditional good. Under the simple reconstruction, qualities of the soul and external factors function exactly the same way, so there is no reason to return to external factors and that demonstrate the force that directs them correctly is *phronesis*. In short, under the simple reconstruction, the argument from 88d-89a seems entirely superfluous. Conversations, to be sure, have superfluous moments; e.g. 89a-c (Stage 3) is not needed for the argument, either. However, Stage 3 plays a dramatic role in the dialogue because it brings the audience back to Meno's original question (71a) and rules out nature as a possible source of virtue. Since 88d-89a appears to lack the dramatic significance of Stage 3, I find it somewhat surprising that 88d-89a would be there if it was

[11]lit. ends in the opposite: 'ἀφροσύνης δ'εἰς τοὐναντίον.'(88c3)

[12]The word slippage here is more pronounced than in other places in the *Meno*. At 88e, Socrates switches over to the adjectives 'ἔμφρων' ('prudent') and 'ἄφρων' ('foolish').

argumentatively inert.

Second, the reconstruction of the biconditional under the simple reconstruction, true belief must be an unconditional. The most plausible way to understand this is to say that true belief is unconditionally good so long as it remains.[13] However, it seems clear that true belief could be misused, while it is fairly clear from other dialogues that Plato believes *episteme* cannot be misused. Someone with true beliefs about drugs (both poisons and medicines) can just as easily poison her patients as cure them. Both the pharmacological expert and the person with a set of true beliefs or pharmacological knack seem to have the correct background knowledge to heal or poison. In order for *episteme* to be an unconditional good in that it cannot produce harm, it seems that expertise needs to have a component beyond merely the ability to consistently produce high quality projects and be something that can be losslessly transmitted: it also requires having an ethical component that means that experts will have the ability to tell when it is appropriate to use their expertise and when it is inappropriate. Although this does not come up in the *Meno*, there are hints that an expertise requires this ethical knowledge elsewhere in the Platonic corpus (e.g. *Resp.* 345c). Even if *episteme* and *doxa* produce the same results in all other ways, it seems hard to imagine that knack-*doxa* has such ethical knowledge built-in. This means that true *doxa*, even if produces consistent, high-quality results, can. However, it is possible– even if I find it somewhat unconvincing– that both true *doxa* and *episteme* are unconditional goods and that it is indeed wrong to say that *episteme* is the only unconditional good.

The Complex Reconstruction

Now, I present a somewhat more complicated reconstruction of the second sub-argument, which I think solves the two challenges to the simple reconstruction. Like this simple reconstruction, this reconstruction is imperfect. However, I think it better accounts for 88d-89a

[13] At first this might seem like a contradiction: true belief is unconditionally good under particular conditions. However, it seems that both true belief and knowledge are only unconditionally good so long as they persist to direct action.

and also means that *epistme* is still the only unconditional good.

Before beginning the first sub-argument, Socrates establishes that virtue is something that exists in the soul, by which he seems to mean it's something like a character trait or epistemic state (in opposition to, for example, an external factor like wealth).

1∗ Virtue is a quality of the soul (87b)

2∗ Virtue itself is something good (87d) (hypothesis)

3∗ Something is good if and only if it is a type of (or is directed by) *episteme*[14]

a∗ Qualities of the soul are good when they are types of *episteme*

b∗ External factors are good when they are directed by *episteme*

4∗ Therefore, virtue is (a type of) *episteme*

Under this reconstruction, the biconditional is disjunctive: 'something is good if and only if it is a type of (or is directed by) *episteme*'. What Socrates actually says is that if there is anything that is good that is separate from *episteme* ('ἀλλο χωριζόμενον ἐπιστήμης,' 87d), then perhaps virtue is not a type of *episteme*, but if there is nothing that is good in which *episteme* is not involved,[15] then virtue must be a type of *episteme*.[16] The reason that I represent this as a disjunctive is that the argument that follows seems to show that there are two alternative ways in which *episteme* can be good (at least as concerns human affairs): (1) things of the soul are good if they are types of *episteme* or (2) external factors are good if they are directed by *episteme*. In other words, things other than types of *episteme* can be good, but only under the influence of *episteme* are they actually good. Socrates and Meno assume that virtue is something in the soul I (premise 1*), rather than an external factor, which Socrates makes explicit as he starts the argument: 'If virtue is of what sort among the things existing in the soul, would it be something teachable or not teachable' ('Εἰ ποῖόν

[14]I choose to render it this way because these seem to be the two options that Socrates considers.

[15]The verb here is περιέχειν, which literally means 'to encompass' or 'to contain.' It can be used spatially (the atmosphere encompasses the earth) or more figuratively (in logic, the derived noun, ὸ έ refers to the universal, as opposed to the particular) (*LSJ*, 'περιέχω'). The idea is that *episteme* is a sort of governing force in all that is good and caused by human action.

[16]In reality, this last part says 'then suspecting it [virtue] to be a type of *episteme*, we would suspect correctly' ('ἐπιστήμην ἄν τιν' αὐτὸ ὑποπτεύοντες εἶναι ὀρθῶς ὑποπτεύοιμε' 87d7-8).

τί ἐστιν τῶν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ὄντων ἀρετή, διδακτὸν ἂν εἴη ἢ οὐ διδακτόν,' 87b5-6). The point is, virtue is definitely not an external factor, but rather something in the soul. Although virtue being a quality of the soul seems to be implicit in the argument rather than explicit, it would have been obvious to Plato's audience and Socrates states explicitly that virtue is a type of thing in the soul.

Socrates opens the argument for the justification of the biconditional by equating what is good with what is beneficial. Virtue, then, being good, is something beneficial. All human activities depend on the soul, either directly, because they are manifestations of qualities of the soul (e.g. virtue, 87b), or indirectly because they are the combination of the manifestation of qualities of the soul directing external factors (e.g. wealth) (88e-89a). Socrates goes about justifying the biconditional by demonstrating that both are good only when they are influenced by *episteme*: qualities of the soul are good when they are *episteme* and external factors are good when they are directed by *episteme*. [17]

Qualities of the soul can be either beneficial or harmful, depending upon whether they are *episteme* or different from *episteme*. For example, a tendency to act in the face of fear is courage when it is *phronesis*, but recklessness when it's not *phronesis* (e.g. when an action is undertaken irrespective of the circumstances).[18] Other examples of quality of the soul include mental quickness and the ability to abstain from bodily pleasures (88b). If virtue is something in the soul (they established it was at 87b), and if it is beneficial (given the hypothesis that it is good and the premise that the good is beneficial), then it must be

[17] In some places in this argument, Socrates uses *phronesis* in place of *episteme*, but they seem to be synonyms (at least as used in the *Meno*).

[18] In an example, a friend who was a horse trainer was cautious and worked incrementally to approach with a very wild stallion she was attempting to train. Since she was guided by understanding of horse training, her caution in response to fear of the course was the courageous approach. Her boyfriend, who knew little of horses, tried to impress her by overcoming his fear and approaching the horse directly. This was reckless; the horse almost immediately kicked him in the spine and it took surgery and over a year of physical therapy before he fully recovered. He was lucky that he survived and was not permanently disabled. In this case, both people were afraid of the stallion, but understanding made the horse trainer had *episteme* and thus acted appropriately (courage), and lack of *episteme* caused her boyfriend to act foolishly (recklessness).

phronesis (88d).[19] Despite this assertion that virtue must be *episteme* appearing at 88d,[20] the argument is not finished. In order to justify the biconditional, Socrates must show not that qualities of the soul are good if and only if they are *episteme*, but that all good requires a relationship to *episteme*– both qualities of the soul and external factors directed by the soul. As such, Socrates must continue the argument to prove this other side of the disjunction. Only then, once the biconditional is fully justified, can Socrates use the biconditional to justify. 88d-89a completes the justification of the disjunction.

Like qualities of the soul, external factors (e.g. wealth, strength), only benefit us when used correctly, but can harm when used incorrectly. The correct use of them requires *nous*, and therefore the soul that used them correctly has *phronesis* whereas the soul that does not use them correctly lacks *phronesis* (88d).[21] In this case, the soul that possesses *phronesis* uses that *phronesis* to direct the use of the external factors, resulting in benefit (87d-e). Socrates has now addressed all possible actions that the soul undertakes or endures (either direct or indirect), he concludes that in each case it is *phronesis* that causes the actions to turn out correctly (and beneficially) and lack thereof that has them turn out incorrectly (and harmfully) (88c-89a). Thus, Socrates has finally established the justification for the biconditional.

On this interpretation, only now that the biconditional has been fully justified (both with qualities of the soul and external factors) can Socrates conclude that virtue is indeed a type of *episteme*. This seems plausible: one might assume that virtue is the kind of expertise that directs one how to distinguish good from bad (and act accordingly). Given that Socrates

[19]This entails that virtue is *phronesis*, since virtue is *episteme*.

[20]'Εὶ ἄρα ἀρετὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τί ἐστιν καὶ ἀναγκαῖον αὐτῷ ὠφελίμῳ εἶναι, φρόνησιν αὐτὸ δεῖ εἶναι, ἐπειδήπερ πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτὰ μὲν καθ' αὑτὰ οὔτε ὠφέλιμα οὔτε βλαβερά ἐστιν, προσγενομένης δὲ φρονήσεως ἢ ἀφροσύνης βλαβερά τε καὶ ὠφέλιμα γίγνεται. κατὰ δὴ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ὠφελιμόν γε οὖσαν τὴν ἀρετὴν φρόνησιν δεῖ τιν' εἶναι,''if virtue is something in the soul and it is necessary for it to be beneficial, it must be *phronesis*, if indeed all things in the soul are neither beneficial nor harmful themselves in themselves, then they become harmful or beneficial when they come to be together with *phronesis* or folly (ἀφροσύνης)' (88c-d).

[21]The relationship between the various epistemic terms used here is unclear. My best guess is that *nous* is a component of *episteme* or *phronesis* (and that '*episteme*' and '*phronesis*' refer to the same epistemic state). However, this is speculation.

and Meno began the argument assuming that something can be taught if and only if it is a type of *episteme*, Socrates and Meno's argument (87c-89c).[22] Thus, they can conclude that virtue is teachable from what they have argued.

After Socrates completes the second sub -argument, he goes on to show that virtue cannot come about by nature. This seems to be superrogetory; as I showed above, Socrates has already the question of whether is teachable given the narrowed hypothesis that all *episteme* is teachable and only *episteme* is. The addendum to the argument, which shows that virtue does not come about by nature, recalls Meno's question at the beginning of the dialogue, where he asks whether virtue is teachable, comes about through practice, or comes about by nature (70a). It strikes me that Socrates returns to this part of Meno's question not in order to shore up the argument that he has just constructed, but rather to demonstrate to Meno that one must test all assumptions, even in a rigorous argument, and to convince Meno to seek the truth instead of facile answers.

The Addendum

The addendum about whether virtue comes about by nature (89b), sets up the objection that follows. Socrates argues that virtuous individuals cannot be so by nature, because if they were, those would be picked out as early as possible and sequestered until they could become the leaders of their *polis*. The argument itself seems weak and requires several assumptions, such as that it is possible to to distinguish those who are good by nature from those that are not. The argument is so quick and so flimsy, that it seems that it exists merely to provide Socrates a platform to ask his next question: 'since the good are not good by nature, does learning make them so?' (89c). Meno answers in the affirmative, and feels the argument is completed. Indeed, he seems to ignore this final portion of the argument, because he assumes that since they have shown that virtue is *episteme* and agreed that all and only *episteme* is teachable, then virtue must indeed be teachable (89c). Socrates uses

[22]There are, of course, some problems with the argument. Giving it a charitable reading, it seems to move toward the conclusion that Meno seeks.

this opportunity to show Meno that he should not accept an argument so easily. Socrates tells Meno that they seek something not just that seemed correct at the time (which is how Meno defends their previous conclusion) (89c).

By the end of this argument, Socrates has set up the persuasive claim that types of *episteme* provide beneficial results; since virtue is good (and therefore beneficial) it makes sense that it is a type of *episteme*. Meno seems ready to accept this argument without really understanding it; when he concludes the argument for Socrates, he seems to be congratulating them for returning to their hypothesis rather than thinking carefully through how the justification proceeded (85c). While Meno's acceptance of this argument is insufficiently critical, more critical and rigorous readers of the dialogue should find it plausible that *episteme* provides particularly good guidance because it provides the possessor with special control over results. The next two sections demonstrates that while *episteme* may provide particularly good guidance, there are cases in which good guidance may stem from sources other than *episteme*. As Socrates will allude to later on, prophets can provide good guidance as well, although they clearly lack *episteme*. The next section helps to sever the link through a different sort of example: politicians. There are some politicians who have saved Athens from disaster, but they cannot have *episteme* since they cannot teach.

2.2 The Athenian Case Study and the Transmission of Virtue Problem

In this section, I discuss what I have termed the 'Athenian case study' (89d-96d), Socrates calls the argument that he and Meno have constructed (89c*ff.*) into question. The Athenian Case Study, indicates that there is at least one false premise in the argument (or that it is invalid), because it indicates that virtue may not be teachable (and, if so, cannot be a type of *episteme*). In particular, in the Athenian Case Study, Socrates demonstrates that there are individuals who bring about beneficial results that do not appear to possess

episteme, which suggests that there is something amiss with the posited relationship between *episteme* and benefit. While Socrates likely does not think the politicians he employs in his example are virtuous (likely he even thinks they lack *doxa*-virtue),[23]. It is clear, in the *Meno*, that whatever faults these politicians may have, they brought about some beneficial results. Themistocles' strategies (particularly evacuating Athens) helped the Athenians win the Persian Wars, for example. Thus, even if Themistocles and the other eminent Athenians possessed nothing so robust as persistent knack-*doxa* that brought about beneficial results, they had fleeting *doxa* that produced beneficial results. Since the Athenian Case Study describes a group of people who, at least purportedly, engage in good actions and achieve good results, but are unable to pass on their ability to others, it suggests that the false premise is the premise in second sub-argument that says that only *episteme* is good and beneficial. This opens up the possibility that something other than *episteme* might lead to good actions. I deal with the objection proper (96e), in Section 3.

I begin by mapping out the structure Athenian case study, which, itself, is made up of a series of smaller case studies. Then I move on to discuss the two diagnostic case studies within the larger framework of the Athenian case study (the sophists and the eminent Athenians). I then discuss an additional case study implicit (but not explicit) in the text: Socrates.

To call the second sub-argument's conclusion into question, Socrates attempts to demonstrate that there are indications that virtue is not a type of *episteme*, by showing that virtue cannot be taught (independent of their previous line of argumentation). Socrates suggests that if something can be taught, then there should be teachers and learners of that subject (89d-e).[24] He begins with the contrapositive: if there are no teachers and learners

[23]In the *Gorgias*, Socrates argues that Pericles was not virtuous because instead of making the Athenian people virtuous under his leadership, they convicted him of embezzlement (*mutatis mutandis* for other politicians like Cimon). Socrates argues that just as animal trainers who make their animals more wild are bad animal trainers, politicians who foment ill-will among their people, are bad politicians. He goes on to say that what these politicians have done is merely to learn how to read the emotions of the populace and choose to do that which the people will approve (*Gorg.* 515e-519d)

[24]Socrates weirdly says that this is necessary ('ἀναγκαῖον' 89d7). It seems that it is hardly necessary; some types of expertise die out because no one is interested in learning from experts (who eventually die

of a subject, then it is safe to assume the subject cannot be taught (89e1-3). Socrates proceeds to demonstrate through a series of case studies that, in Socrates' Athens, there are no teachers or learners of virtue (89e-94e); he cross-examines Anytus to demonstrate that none of those eminent Athenians who are called virtuous were able to teach virtue to their own children (I discuss these case studies below). Thus, he concludes, virtue cannot be taught (94e). After a discussion about *episteme*, they conclude that virtue must not be type of *episteme* (98d-e), relying on the biconditional from the the first sub -argument argument.

In order to appreciate the force of the Athenian Case Study, it is important to review two premises implicit that Socrates draws upon: (1) experts are the proper teachers of their expertise and (2) teaching is not merely the process of transmitting knowledge, but is the successful process of acquiring expertise, which is a long process that requires work from both teachers and learners. I explain each of these implicit premises in turn, below.

First, experts are the proper teachers of their expertise. According to Socrates and Anytus, in order for a parent to ensure that a child acquires a particular expertise, that parent must send the child to an expert. Indications that someone may be an expert include practicing the expertise, being paid for that expertise, and being a teacher of that expertise (90d). When Socrates and Anytus examine the two case studies, the question of whether the groups are virtuous is at play. This, perhaps, is the reason that Anytus is so offended when Socrates eliminates the eminent Athenians as virtue teachers; implicitly, in Anytus' view, Socrates is questioning whether they are virtuous. Also, implicitly, Anytus might feel that Socrates' comments are personally insulting. While Antyus is not one of the eminent Athenians mentioned, he thinks of himself as an upstanding Athenian citizen. If the eminent Athenians might not be virtuous, it makes it far less likely that Anytus himself is virtuous.[25].

Second, teaching is not merely the process of transmitting knowledge, but is the successful process of acquiring expertise. Socrates makes it clear when he and Meno agree to

themselves) or the last experts die before they are able to pass their expertise onward.

[25]Socrates says that Anytus believes himself to be virtuous, since, in his own view, he is among the καλοὶ κ'ἀγαθοὶ

the biconditional that something is teachable if and only if it is *episteme* (87c-d). Teaching is the corollary of learning; it is not a one-sided activity conducted by the teacher, but is rather a system that includes the transmission of propositional knowledge and explanations from the teacher as well as practice by the learner. Depending upon the expertise in question, there are a variety of other methods that might be employed in teaching and learning, such as practical demonstration, epistemic engineering (organizing the environment in such a way as to facilitate information processing by the learner).

The general structure of the Athenian Case Study is as follows. Socrates starts with the premise that if something can be taught, then there should be teachers and learners of that subject (89d). He then invokes the contrapositive of that premise: if there are no teachers and no learners, the subject cannot be taught (89e). In order to determine whether there are indeed teachers or learners of virtue, then they must consider who are the possible candidates for teachers of virtue and whether those virtue teacher candidates have students who have learned virtue from them. Socrates and his interlocutors examine Athens. In this search, they consider two groups of virtue teacher candidates: the sophists and Athenian citizens. Socrates chooses the sophists as candidates because some of them claim to teach virtue. Anytus chooses Athenian citizens because he sees them as virtuous and therefore being the proper teachers of their expertise. Considering all Athenian citizens is too broad, so Socrates narrows the test by focusing on specific eminent Athenians who were widely considered to be virtuous. If there are no learners of virtue for either of these groups, then we must assume that virtue cannot be taught.

Socrates and Anytus examine the sophists first. Given that the sophists claim to teach virtue and exact fees for teaching virtue, they are candidates for virtue expertise. Socrates and Anytus examine whether the sophists are experts in virtue (91c-92e). Anytus detests the sophists, but has little knowledge of them; he lacks the resources to argue convincingly that they are not experts in virtue. However, as Socrates is seeking Anytus' perspective on candidate teachers of virtue, not trying to seek out all potential ethical experts (as

Socrates describes himself doing in the *Apology*, *Ap.* 21b-23b), this is sufficient to rule out the sophists.[26]

The next group that they examine are the eminent Athenians.[27] Anytus claims that any Athenian citizen[28] is an expert in virtue and, therefore a candidate teacher of virtue. By this statement, Anytus seems to have a less demanding notion of virtue than Socrates; for Anytus, having virtue seems to mean possessing the sort of skills to comport oneself properly as an Athenian citizen. The implicit idea is that an expert should be able to teach her expertise. Indeed, Anytus does not only claim that they are candidate teachers, but that Athenians citizens learned to be virtuous from the Athenian citizens before them (93a). In order to examine Anytus' claim that any Athenian citizen is a candidate teacher of virtue, Socrates selects a subset of these citizens who were particularly renowned for their political prowess (hereafter, the 'eminent Athenians'). In theory, the motivation behind Socrates' choice is that he is selecting the most virtuous citizens in order to test the most likely virtue candidates. Of course, as a result, Socrates also selects a group of Athenians whose children notably lack virtue.

This testing of the eminent Athenians, who were widely acknowledged as virtuous, serves as the primary case that undermines the idea that virtue is a type of *episteme*. The eminent Athenians include Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles (a famous general and politician). I describe the general argument. I follow Perin (2012) in referring to this as the Transmission of Virtue problem. The most important part of this argument is establishing

[26]Socrates does return to the question of whether the sophists are teachers of virtues following Anytus' rather abrupt exit (95b-c). The issue remains unresolved, because Meno gives a non-committal answer: 'I cannot say, Socrates. For I myself feel just like the many [about the sophists]; sometimes they seem [to be teachers to me], sometimes they do not' (95c).

[27]I borrow the locution 'eminent Athenians' from Perin (2012).

[28]The Greek is 'καλὸς κ'ἀγαθός', which literally translates as 'fine and good man.' This phrase usually refers to the aristocracy, although it need not refer to a hereditary aristocracy per se. It is frequently translated as 'gentleman,' but that term conjures up a picture of 18th and 19th century Britain, which is not an accurate comparison. The point is that these are the kind of upstanding citizens who are supposed to be the leaders of the *polis*. Anytus, as a radical democrat, is unlikely to use the phrase 'καλὸς κ'ἀγαθός' to refer to a noble subset of Athenian citizens, so I translate the phrase somewhat loosely as 'Athenian citizens.' Citizens made up a small subset of the populace of Athens, because women, slaves, and resident foreigners (metics) did not qualify as citizens.

that the eminent Athenians failed to pass virtue on to their children. Socrates and his interlocutors agree that the eminent Athenians are virtuous (93b-94e). Given that virtue is a type of *episteme* (87d) *Episteme* can be taught (87b-c) (and the proper teachers of that *episteme* are its possessors (implicit)). According to Socrates, being virtuous entails wanting those around to be virtuous, especially one's children (93c-94e). Those who are virtuous teach their children to be virtuous (94d-e). The children of those who are virtuous are virtuous (because 'teaching', in this technical sense, entails learning) (implied by 93c-94e). The eminent Athenians have children who are not virtuous (93b-94e). Since their sons are not virtuous, the eminent Athenians cannot teach virtue (94d-e) and, therefore, virtue cannot be taught (94e).

With each of the cases of the eminent Athenians, Socrates shows that the eminent Athenians taught some expertise to their children (either personally or by hiring tutors or trainers), including complicated martial and athletic forms of expertise (93c-94c), but failed to teach virtue to their children (93c-94e). This means the children are candidates for virtue, but fail to become virtuous. However, the fact that the eminent do not transmit virtue, means that virtue must not be teachable, because otherwise their children would be virtuous. The transmission of virtue problem hinges on two assumptions: (a) 'teach' is a success word (i.e. if I teach, you learn and that teaching and learning process includes both instruction and practice) and (b) those who are virtuous would want their close associates to be virtuous.

Meno and Socrates agree, shortly after Anytus storms off, that the sophists and the Athenian citizens are the only two possible virtue candidates (96b). From there, they agree that there are no teachers and no pupils (96c) and that if a subject has neither teachers nor learners, it is not teachable (96c).

2.2.1 The Implicit Case Study: Socrates

Socrates, Anytus, and Meno explicitly explore groups of virtue candidates: the sophists and the eminent Athenians. I argue that the text presents a third virtue candidate: Socrates. In the argument, Socrates argues that virtue is a type of *episteme*. This argument, in conjunction with the presence of Anytus, echoes the *Apology*. Anytus was one of Socrates' three prosecutors in his trial and in the *Apology* Socrates makes a similar argument about the relationship between virtue and *episteme*. Moreover, Anytus' argument has echoes in the *Apology*, where Meletus (the one of Socrates' accusers whom Socrates questions) argues that Athenian citizens improve the youth while Socrates alone corrupts them (*Ap.* 24e-25a). Indeed, Anytus ominously warns Socrates of speaking so flippantly about the eminent Athenians and advises him to be more careful in future (*Meno* 94e). More directly, the last line of dialogue Anytus utters is that 'it is easier to injure people than to benefit them' (94e), which, oddly enough, resonates with the argument that Socrates makes against Meletus; Socrates says that it is experts who improve animals and people, while those who are not experts corrupt them (*Ap.* 25b). All of these textual echoes serves to call to mind a question also presented in the *Apology*: is Socrates a virtue candidate or a candidate teacher of virtue?

In the *Meno*, Meno seeks out Socrates' wisdom about whether virtue is teachable. This shows that, despite the fact that Socrates claims he does not know what virtue is (71b-c), he is considered to be something of an expert on virtue.[29] Indeed, Meno is shocked that Socrates denies that he knows what virtue is (71b-c). Moreover, far from corrupting Meno, Socrates seems to be attempting to push Meno onto the right path. Socrates attempts to get Meno to spend more time in Athens, in hopes that Meno's time in Athens will help him to understand virtue more deeply (76e-77a). Socrates also tries to persuade Meno that Meno will become better if he genuinely seeks what virtue is (86b-c). Additionally, Socrates attempts to persuade Meno of the value of rigorous argument (86a-c).[30]

[29]In the *Apology*, Socrates relates that the Delphic oracle claimed that Socrates was the wisest human (*Ap.* 21a).

[30]I discuss Socrates' attempts to persuade Meno to accept argument in Section 6.

The *Meno* sets up Socrates as a virtue candidate, but ultimately demonstrates that he is not a teacher of virtue (he cannot persuade Meno to seek virtue, for instance). The Transmission of Virtue Problem seems to apply to Socrates and the eminent Athenians equally. Socrates, too, did not have virtuous children, at least so far as we can tell from extant information. The only child who appears by name in any contemporary (to Plato) source material is Lamprocles. The only story we have that involves him is one from Xenophon in which Socrates discusses filial piety with him (Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.1-4). Of course, Socrates' children are not notable for their lack of virtue—in contrast to some of the children of the eminent Athenians—but they are also not notable for their virtue. Since Socrates clearly did not pass along vitue to his children, he can only be a candidate, like the eminent Athenians, for *doxa*-virtue.

Additionally, the rhetoric with which Socrates speaks of himself (and his divine sign) at the end of the *Apology* mimics the rhetoric with which he speaks of virtuous people in the *Meno*. In the *Meno*, Socrates claims that those who are called virtuous, but do not have *episteme* (i.e. they are unable to teach) have virtue bestowed upon them by the gods; those with god-gifted virtue are like prophets and soothsayers (*Meno* 99c-100a).[31]

2.3 The Objection (96d-100b)

In the Athenian Case Study, Socrates illustrates that those who are widely acknowledged as virtuous fail to teach virtue; in the following section, Socrates explains why they fail to teach it. After Socrates and his interlocutors have eliminated all the candidate teachers of virtue, Meno wonders whether or not there are any virtuous people at all and, if there are any, how they arise (if not through teaching) (96d). In response, Socrates directly attacks the biconditional from the second sub -argument, arguing that *episteme* is not the only beneficial epistemic state after all; *doxa*, too, can provide beneficial results (96e-97b). To

[31]The word Socrates uses to describe them is 'ἐνθυσιῶντες'. which means divinely inspired or possessed.

illustrate the power of true *doxa* in achieving beneficial results, he employs the example of someone who has *episteme* of the way to Larisa and who has true *doxa* about the way to Larisa. Both people can equally get to Larisa themselves, or guide someone else how to get there (97a). Socrates concludes that true *doxa* and *episteme* can both produce correct action (96b). One way of stating this is that *episteme* and true *doxa* are "practically equivalent" (i.e. equivalent in terms of the results they produce).

Thus, 96eff. objects to the argument that virtue is a type of *episteme*. If you remember, in either of the reconstructions of the argument, a premise of the second sub-argument asserts that *episteme* was the only good (87d). If true *doxa*, too, can yield beneficial results, then the argument was unsound because it relied upon the biconditional in the second sub-argument.

Although the objection attacks the argument that virtue is a type of *episteme* directly, unlike the Athenian Case Study, the Athenian Case Study plays an important role in the argumentative structure at the end of the dialogue. While the Athenian Case Study did not directly challenge the soundness of the argument, it offers evidence for the objection that Socrates levels at 96e-97b. The eminent Athenians,[32] in the Athenian Case Study, demonstrate that some people who produce genuinely beneficial results can only possess true *doxa*, and not *episteme*. While we might be skeptical that actions can be ethically beneficial when they arise from true *doxa*, Socrates provides a clear example in which true *doxa* can provide beneficial results: finding the way to Larisa. In the case of the way to Larisa, it is clear the true *doxa* is enough to achieve beneficial results. From there, Socrates expands to some examples that might be less obvious: prophets and poets. Prophets and poets provide true and useful information or create works of great beauty, but they lack the ability to explain the beneficial results that they produce or describe the process by which they produce them (99b-c). Like the prophets and poets, Socrates argues, those politicians who guide the polis with beneficial results also provide benefits through true *doxa* (as opposed to *episteme*).

[32]Putting aside, for a moment, that they are likely labeled as "*agathon*" (good) in jest.

At this point, Socrates has shown that, at least in Athens at this time, virtue is not teachable because the virtue available is not *episteme*-virtue. It is unclear, of course, whether the eminent Athenians even have genuinely beneficial *doxa* in Socrates' eyes or whether he is merely mocking them (as Anytus seems to think). Irrespective of the epistemic states of the eminent Athenians, I argue in the next section that Socrates seriously thinks that there is the possibility that there are people who act correctly and benefit their cities and fellow citizens through true-*doxa*. Socrates, who denies that he has *episteme* of virtue, may indeed be one of those who has true *doxa* in this respect.

2.4 *Episteme*-virtue and *Doxa*-virtue

The *Meno* ends by positing two possible epistemic states commonly referred to as '*arete*': *doxa*-virtue and *episteme*-virtue. *doxa*-virtue is a sort of pseudo-virtue that consists of taking correct and beneficial action. Those with *doxa*-virtue, like poets and prophets, are unable to explain what they do (99c-d). This inability to explain is at least part of what prevents them from teaching it. *doxa*-virtue presumably fleeting in most individuals, since *doxa* is not stable. As I discussed in the previous chapter, it is unclear precisely what confers the stability to *episteme* (the text is somewhat obscure). Socrates employs the metaphor of a statue:

> true *doxai*, for whatever time they remain, are a fine thing and they do only good; but they are not willing to remain for long, but run away from a human soul, with the result that they are not worth much, unless someone ties them down by αἰτίας λογισμός. And that (τοῦτο) is recollection, Meno, my friend, as we previously agreed. After true *doxai* are tied down, first, they become *epistemai*, then they remain. That is why *episteme* is more highly rewarded than correct *doxa* and *episteme* is superior to correct *doxa* by being tied down. (97e-98a)

The process of binding true *doxai* by αἰτίας λογισμός is recollection ('τοῦτο' is neuter, referring

to the whole preceding clause). Recollection represents teaching/learning in the technical sense, the acquisition of expertise. The Meno does not showcase this part of the recollection process (the slave ends his interaction with Socrates with true *doxa*, not *episteme*, 85c-d). The recollection process includes practice, responsiveness to feedback, guidance, explanation, and a wide variety of other techniques that allow the expertise to come into being ('ἐπιστῆμαι γίγνεσθαι'). Given that there is a process by which *doxai* become *epistemai*, my inclination is to read the process of acquiring expertise as transformative; *epistemai* is not merely knack-*doxa* + αἰτίας λογισμός. *episteme*-virtue is genuine virtue; virtue that consistently and throughout time allows the possessor to undertake correct actions and achieve good results.

It remains unclear whether *episteme*-virtue is possible in the actual world, but Plato is clear it is theoretically possible. In chapter 1, I suggested that there are some domains in which no expertise is possible. Astrology is an example; it is not a science, but there might be some people who happened to have *doxa* that allowed them to accurately predict with astrology. In the dialogue itself, Socrates claims that soothsaying and prophecy are forms of true *doxa* gifted from the gods;[33] there is no corresponding *episteme* for either soothsaying or prophecy. Socrates views soothsayers and prophets as having access to truth when inspired by the gods, but unable to explain those truths or how they acquire them (99b-e). Socrates compares those who consistently act well, but are unable to teach, to soothsayers and prophets. From 96e-99e, it appears the virtue is like prophecy or chicken sexing; it is a *doxa* without a corresponding *episteme*. However, Socrates reintroduces the idea of *episteme*-virtue in the last lines of the dialogue as, at least, theoretically possible. No one living has *episteme*-virtue, but someone were to acquire it, then, because it is teachable, the polis could achieve a continuous chain of virtuous statesmen. I will argue in section 6 that the dialogue provides hints about how someone might go about seeking *episteme*-virtue.

Let us turn to the hypothetical in more detail. Socrates reopens the possibility that

[33]Both Aristotle and Plato talk about divine gifts as a separate way of learning from human-to-human teaching.

virtue is indeed teachable, contrasting hypothetical to the status quo (99e-100a):

> I do not mind that; we shall talk to him again, but if we were right in the way in which we spoke and investigated in this whole discussion, virtue would be neither an inborn quality nor taught, but comes to those who possess it as a gift from the gods which is not accompanied by nous, unless there is someone among our statesmen who can make another into a statesman. If there were one, he could be said to be among the living as Homer said Tiresias was among the dead, namely, that "he alone retained his wits while the others flitted about like shadows." In the same manner such a man would, as far as virtue is concerned, here also be the only true reality compared, as it were, with shadows.

Although Socrates employs allusions and metaphor, he hypothesizes that there might be two sorts of epistemic state called '*arete*': one that can be passed on through teaching and one that cannot. Let us call the one that can be passed on through teaching "*episteme*-virtue" and the one that cannot '*doxa*-virtue.' Here, Socrates says something surprising: in comparison to the statesman with *episteme*-virtue, the statesman with *episteme*-virtue is like Tiresias among the shades. Tiresias, a famous prophet from Greek mythology, retained his prophetic abilities even after his death. This put Tiresias in sharp contrast with the other dead in Greek mythology, who appear as shades or shadows, stuck only with the memories from their own lifetime.[34]

The hypothetical here implies that a statesman with *episteme*-virtue, would be significantly more valuable than a statesman with *doxa*-virtue, because a statesman with *episteme*-virtue is self-replicating. Tiresias, who represents the statesman with *episteme*-virtue in this simile, is significantly more valuable than the other shades because he retains his ability to acquire new information from the outside world eternally, while the other shades cannot and remain mere shadows of their former selves.[35] The simile brings out that it is

[34]In general, in Greek mythology, the dead lose all memory and personality. However, when they are given the blood of a sacrificed animal to drink, they are able to access their own memories, but cannot acquire new information about the world, unless someone brings them news.

[35]According to Homer (*Od.* 10.494-495), both must drink the blood of a sacrifice to speak and exhibit

the longevity of the ability that is important; Tiresias, even after his own death, can still see into the future and give Odysseus the necessary information to return home safely. Similarly, *episteme*-virtue, through teaching, can transcend death because the expertise can be passed down through the generations. Socrates and Meno have already established that *episteme*-virtue produces equivalent results to *doxa*-virtue; it is the stability of *episteme*-virtue both within the individual (highlighted by the statues of Daedalus simile) and across generations (which is the type of stability highlighted by the Tiresias simile) that confers added value to *episteme*.

While Socrates poses his hypothetical statesman merely as a possibility, it gives us a reason to revisit the possibility that virtue can indeed be taught. Socrates does not commit himself to argue for the existence—or even the possibility—of virtuous people who can teach virtue. However, he leaves open the option that virtue could be teachable, and in the next few lines reiterates that in order to confirm such a hypothesis, one would have to determine what virtue itself is before considering whether or not it is teachable.[36]

This story about two different epistemic states both called 'virtue' may seem unintuitive at first. Aristotle's distinction between natural and full virtue provide a familiar framework with some similar elements (Arist. *EN* 1144b2-17). Natural virtue and *doxa*-virtue are not exactly the same nor is the *Meno* is a precursor to Aristotle's division in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Rather, this picture is useful for understanding what Plato might have envisioned. I will then show how this vision accords with the evidence from other parts of the text (the conversations about the Road to Larissa and Daedalus' Statues). Yet, Aristotle demonstrates that two different epistemic states (i.e. states of the soul) might be called 'virtue' colloquially. Natural virtue also resembles *doxa*-virtue insofar as it is a state of the soul that comes about through some other means than teaching.

For Aristotle, natural and full virtue are two different states of the soul (1144b14?).

personality traits (although Tiresias seems more cognizant than the shades).

[36]This is a return to the priority of definition and the method which Socrates advocated at the beginning of the dialogue.

Natural virtue, like *doxa*-virtue, does not come about through a completed process of teaching or habituation (1144b3-10), although *doxa*-virtue may be the result of an incomplete process of teaching. If the more complicated interpretation of the argument in Section 1 is correct, than Aristotle's vision Aristotle's natural virtue is fairly similar to at least some sort of *doxa*-virtue in the *Meno*. For Aristotle, even the tendencies that the naturally virtuous person exercises may cause harm to the person or to others, when not guided by understanding (1144b10-13). It is only when someone acquires understanding to supplement their natural tendencies that they achieve full virtue (1144b13-15). Aristotle even attributes this view to Socrates: 'That is why some say that all the virtues are [instances of] *phronesis*, and why the inquiries that Socrates used to undertake were in one way correct and in another way in error. For insofar as he thought the virtues are [instances of] *phronesis*, he was in error; but insofar as he thought they all require *phronesis*, what he used to say was right' (1144b17-20).[37] He continues to argue that Socrates thought the virtues are all types of knowledge (1144b23). In other words, Aristotle sees Socrates as holding a view very similar to that which the character Socrates appears to hold in the *Meno*.

I argue that this passage provides us with a satisfying way to show that the visions of virtue in the *Meno* and *Republic* are not only compatible, but extremely similar. Indeed, I argue that the educational system in the *Republic* is designed to produce a statesman who could make another statesman.

[37] Aristotle continues: 'Here is a sign of this: whenever people now define virtue they all say what state it is and what it is related to, and then add that it is the state in accord with the correct reason. Now the correct reason is the reason in accord with *phronesis*; it would seem, then, that they all in a way intuitively believe that the state with *phronesis* is virtue. But we must make a slight change. For it is not merely the state in accord with correct reason, but the state involving the correct reason that is virtue. And it is *phronesis* that is the correct reason in this area. Socrates, then, used to the the virtues are [instances of] reason because he thought they are all [instances of knowledge, whereas we think they involve reason' (*EN* 1144b22-25, with modifications from Irwin 1999).

2.5 Replicating Tiresias: The *Republic* as a Thought Experiment about Stable Virtue Transmission

At the end of the *Meno*, Plato argues that a statesman who can create another would be like Tireseas among the shades– the statesman would seem to be wise beyond all those surrounding her. We see the world of Tiresias-like statesmen that Plato envisions in Book 7 of the Republic; the philosopher kings and queens free themselves to walk around the cave and go up the steep slope into the outside world whereas everyone else remain chained to the cave wall and unable to move or look around. Socrates argues that such statesman can arise only when reared in a *polis* with the appropriate constitution and with a rigidly controlled educational system. Particularly important for this educational system is the draconian censorship program described in Books 2 and 3 of the Republic. I argue that Plato thought that the influence, temptations, and possibility of acquiring incorrect beliefs was rampant in a city. I discuss this in depth in Chapter 3. Book 8 shows clearly that even the child of virtuous parents can easily stray from a virtuous path when exposed to bad influences. Socrates claims that those who have the natural gifts that would make them appropriate candidates for virtue, but who do not pursue the virtuous path, become worse than those without those gifts; those with the gifts who do not develop them properly can use their natural abilities toward harm instead of good. For this reason, Plato ensures that the educational system trains those who need to guard the city from outside threats against the temptations that might warp their souls or shift the power-balance among the three portions. This is not because any individual is too likely to succumb to temptation, but rather because for virtue transmission to be stable the rulers must be able to ensure that each generation raises a sufficient number of philosopher kings.

2.6 The Unity of the *Meno*

In this final section, I step back to provide an account of the structure of the *Meno*. The structure of the *Meno* calls for an account because it spends a surprising amount of time establishing an argument for a claim we expect Plato to agree with (that virtue is teachable), only to undermine (89c96d) and object to that claim (96d-99a); the dialogue seemingly concludes that virtue is not teachable (99a-100b). Moreover, the *Meno* contains a variety of different topics—virtue, the theory of recollection, expertise—in the same dialogue. This mosaic of topics has generated scholarly interest in how the dialogue fits together (Blossner 2011; Bluck 1961, 43-47; Scott 2006 214-215). One of the benefits of the interpretation I propose is that, the second half of the dialogue forms a cohesive whole (as this chapter has demonstrated). In this section, I aim to show what I see as the overarching theme of the dialogue. In doing so, I demonstrate how the first half of the *Meno* fits with the cohesive whole of the second half and tease out some implications of the second half. My account here is somewhat speculative; it considers the argument in conjunction with the dramatic and literary qualities of the *Meno*. With this account, I aim to provide some justification as to why I think the *Meno* is not just an important text in Plato's epistemology, but is also vital to understanding his ethics and philosophy of education.

The *Meno*, I argue, is protreptic. Usually, scholars use the word 'protreptic' to describe texts that exhort or persuade the reader toward education or engagement wtih philosophy. I argue that the *Meno* is designed not merely to persuade the reader that the pursuit of philosophy is worthwhile, but to provide techniques for how to do so. In the dialogue itself, Socrates fails conspicuously to persuade Meno that pursuing philosophy is worthwhile. Yet, the recalcitrant Meno provides a useful philosophical foil (q.v. Scott 2006) for Plato's audience. I argue that the *Meno* lays out the beginnings of a path for those who wish to seek the answers for philosophical questions, and specifically, ethical questions. The truly virtuous person, it seems, must be someone who seeks to acquire ethical *episteme*. The *Meno* does no more than point the reader toward this path; only in other dialogues, such as the

Republic, does it become clear that the philosopher is such an ethical expert.

However, the *Meno* also hints that there are no ethical experts, since it rules out all of the virtue candidates that appear explicitly or implicitly. Yet, Socrates instructs Meno, and the the audience, how to proceed to aspire to expertise when one cannot simply apprentice oneself to an acknowledged ethical expert (since there are no widely acknowledged ethical experts). What the Socrates urges Meno to do is to seek the answers to questions such as 'what is virtue?' and not to be satisfied with the first answer that seems reasonable. Instead, it is important to carefully examine each assumption that appears in an argument. Although it is unlikely such expertise is achievable in a society not designed to create and foster it (see Section 5), Socrates asserts that we will be better off if we seek such expertise than if we do not (86b-c). Whether or not virtue is achievable in a *polis* like Athens, a person makes herself better by seeking it (100a-b); presumably it is through the process of seeking virtue that Socrates acquired his *doxa*-virtue.

The *Meno* showcases a variety of techniques that would help someone in acquiring expertise in a field without an acknowledged expert, including, finding a conversational partner who can help move things forward (Socrates); providing counter examples or other sorts of confounding examples to indicated where an argument might have gone wrong; and using the method of hypothesis in conjunction with investigating the assumptions made in those arguments. For subjects about which there is no pre-established expertise, one must proceed through bricolage: investigating in one way until getting stuck and then investigating in another. The *Meno* depicts this vividly as Socrates employs a variety of techniques to move them toward answering Meno's question. In order to demonstrate the *Meno*'s protreptic potential, I go through the dialogue and explain each protreptic element.

Plato's *Meno* begins, rather abruptly, with the question 'is virtue teachable'? (70a). Socrates insists that, in order to answer Meno's question, they must determine what virtue is (and only subsequently evaluate whether or not it is teachable). Both in the first half of the *Meno* and in other dialogues, Socrates takes the position that one cannot know the

characteristics or qualities something has, without knowing what it is (71b). This principle, that one must know a definition before discussing characteristics or qualities, is often termed 'the priority principle' or 'the priority of definition' or 'priority of knowledge what.' In this section, Meno makes a series of attempts to describe what virtue is, but he fails each time to provide the sort of account that Socrates finds satisfactory. Meno acknowledges that his definitions of virtue is insufficient to confront the charges Socrates levels against them, despite the fact that he has given speeches on this very topic before (with which he was satisfied at the time). This part of the dialogue is protreptic in the same way that most of the aporeic dialogues are protreptic; the first half of the Meno aims to spur us into seeking what virtue is, when our preliminary assumptions turn out to be incorrect. While Socrates' interlocutors are often discouraged rather than spurred on to seek out answers (e.g. *Euthyphro*), the audience of the dialogues are supposed to be encouraged to do better than the interlocutors whom Socrates questions. Socrates explicitly states that this gadfly tendency should spur people into action, rather than the opposite (*Meno* 86b-c *Ap* 30e). Anyone who teaches these dialogues to undergraduate students knows that the dialogues often spur new readers to do a better job than Socrates' interlocutors in answering Socrates' questions.

Meno's motivation for discussing this question with Socrates is clearly to gain an understanding of virtue from an expert to aid in his political career. In ancient Greece, the right sort of politician—one we might call a statesman or stateswoman– was expected to be virtuous. Meno's interest in virtue seems to primarily be in service of his aspiration to become an influential politician. Meno's question that opens the dialogue– to discover how virtue is acquired—presumably is aimed at what he sees as acquiring a prerequisite for the career he wishes: a political career. However, Meno seems unsure about whether or not virtue is teachable; he questions Socrates, who has a reputation for wisdom, to discover the answer to this question. One possibility is that Meno thinks that virtue is teachable and Socrates can point him to the right sort of expert from whom to learn virtue. Meno's previous teacher, Gorgias famously claimed not to teach virtue (*Meno* 95c), but rhetoric,

and expected that those who learned rhetoric from him, should already be virtuous (*Gorg.* 459d-e). It is unclear whether Meno realizes he lacks virtue and is trying to seek how to acquire it or if he is merely seeking this information for future speeches. Either way, Meno seems to assume that the way to gain what he seeks is by questioning someone he takes to be an expert on the topic about the answer he seeks.

The traditional method of advanced learning (i.e. learning a craft or profession) in the ancient Greek world was to apprentice oneself to an expert in a particular field (q.v. *Meno* 89e*ff.*); aspiring politicians like Meno often became lovers to older statesman to learn how to skillfully maneuver in politics.[38] Apprenticeship is generally a long process and experts can take on only a limited number of apprentices at any given time. It also requires that one who wishes to learn has access to the right sort of expert. If virtue, then, were to be a type of expertise, it would be important to pinpoint the appropriate expert from whom to learn. Meno seems impatient with long processes and more interested in the pedagogy of the sophists who tend to utilize lectures. However, learning from the sophists was at least purportedly a method of learning from experts. Meno expresses the concern that seeking for virtue without an appropriate guide is fruitless, since even if the seekers were to discover virtue they may not recognize it (80d). Socrates is intent upon demonstrating to Meno that the pursuit of virtue is not fruitless, even lacking expert guidance, but it does require significant time and effort. Throughout the dialogue, Socrates asserts that he is not an expert; additionally, when he and his interlocutors seek expertise in virtue, they find no virtue experts. It is unclear whether this amounts to no one being virtuous, at least in the sense of *doxa*-virtue. However, it hints, although does not explicitly state, that no one has true virtue (which is teachable).

In the first half of the dialogue, not only are Meno's failed attempts at defining virtue on display, but Socrates specifies and provides examples of what he looks for in a definition. Socrates emphasizes multiple times that a definition must be unitary: e.g. a definition of

[38]The Sophists upended this tradition and tended to teach through demonstrations and lectures to larger groups as opposed to the longer and more intimate process of apprentice learning (Mintz 2011).

justice must apply to the justice exhibited both a free person and a slave (72c). Additionally, the definition must be sufficiently general so that it can cover all cases. In this case, since they are attempting to determine what virtue is, they need to determine not any individual virtue, but something which applies to all virtues (74a-e). Following this, Socrates gives three possible definitions: two of shape (75b, 75e-76a), one of color (76c-d). The merits of these definitions are a matter of scholarly debate, but they demonstrate what unified and general definitions should look like as well as a variety of approaches to providing a unitary definition.[39] After the first definition of shape, where Socrates contends that 'shape is that which alone of existing things always follows color' (75b), to which Meno objects (75c), Socrates says that he would be content ('ἀγαπώην') if Meno were to define virtue in this way. Indeed, all three definitions that Socrates gives provide a level of generality in order to encompass all cases in which the term is used and none of them are disjunctive.[40] This suggests that virtue might provide an equally unitary and general definition, such as virtue is the ability to differentiate good from bad or that virtue is the *episteme* that allows one to choose the correct course of action in a given circumstance.

Socrates wants Meno to discover the answer to the question of whether virtue is teachable by seeking first what virtue is and then deriving the characteristics from the definition. Given that Socrates denies possessing any knowledge of what virtue is (71a-c) and Meno has proven himself unable to characterize virtue satisfactorily (71e-80b), Meno claims that they are at an impasse. Meno argues that even if they were to find what they sought, they would not recognize it (80d). Meno's challenge is useful because it forces Socrates to

[39]It is unclear whether Socrates is satisfied with the definition of color, given in terms of 'effluvia'; Socrates says that the other definitions are better (76e).

[40]This is true at least in a limited sense. It is unclear whether Socrates narrows the referent of 'shape' ('σχῆμα') between the two definitions. In the first definition he gives, he seems to have both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes in mind (75b). However, when he redefines shape based on agreed upon terms (75c-d), it is unclear whether he speaks of both two-dimensional and three dimensional shapes. Upon first reading, he seems to be considering only three dimensional shapes because he says that shape is the limit of a solid (76a). However, since he mentions a plane above (76a), it is possible that when he says 'limits a solid' he may also to mean to consider two-dimensional shapes that limit one particular face of a solid. He cannot create a disjunctive definition, like shape is that which limits a solid or a plane, because he needs unity as well as generality in the definition (he bars Meno from disjunctive definitions at 72b).

demonstrate that his methodology is useful not only for determining what something is not, but seeking out what it is. The generation of new information from elenchus during the conversation with the slave shows a marked difference from many of Socrates' other cross-examinations of interlocutors, where Socrates primarily discredits the movements of others.[41] Socrates demonstrates this through the conversation with the slave, where the slave gains new information, primarily through questioning. However, this questioning is guided by an expert (Socrates may not be a geometry expert, but he is an expert in the limited capacity of at least the problem of doubling the area of a square). Unlike geometry, virtue has no experts, which limits the possibility of scaffolded questioning about ethics from which the slave benefits in geometry. As I have described in Section 2, Socrates may potentially serve as a guiding conversation partner in ethical pursuits (although he is not an expert), at least insofar as he has extensive experience questioning others and himself about virtue. Taking the most charitable reading of Socrates' actions in other dialogues, Socrates tends to leave his interlocutors in *aporia* because he thinks that it will spur them to seek answers (*Ap.* 30e).[42] Irrespective of Socrates' motivations, most charitable readers of Plato's dialogues would argue that the *aporia* of the characters is supposed to spur the audience into seeking answers. However, Meno has already forcefully asserted that he would not seek the answer if left in *aporia*. This both pushes Socrates to use new methods and potentially provides an

[41]The difference from other aporeic is so striking that scholars consider 80d-e to represent a significant methodological shift. Gregory Vlastos argues that this is the moment where we see Plato shift from representing the historical Socrates to using Socrates as a mouthpiece (1991). Claims about the historical Socrates seem somewhat fanciful, but more moderate version of the claim for a methodological change in Plato appear in Brickhouse and Smith (1994), Irwin (1995), and Nehamas (1999), Benson (2003). I agree that there is a methodological shift, but I do not believe it has any basis in historical development or a change on Plato's part. Rather, this part of the *Meno* merely serves to showcase that elenchus is not merely a destructive but also a constructive exercise. Or, if one prefers to see 'elenchus' as representing something merely destructive, that elenchus is only a single part of recollection, which requires both destruction and construction (q.v. Schwab 2019). It is not clear, of course, that Vlastos' notion is accurate. There are other dialogues which have constructive elements in them. Since the order of the dialogues is unclear, the disruption that Vlastos imagines might not be as clear as he thinks.

[42]I don't mean charitably reading Plato's philosophy, but rather assuming that Socrates has genuinely good and protreptic intentions. It is unclear that Socrates always does have good intentions. Some cases where Socrates actions should make us doubt whether his intentions are good include his interactions with Ion (*Ion*), Hippias, and Callicles (*Gorgias*). However, the text of the *Meno* does not seems to give a clear answer as to Socrates' intentions. I am somewhat optimistic about Socrates' intentions, so I am inclined to think he is attempting to help Meno; others may not be so sanguine.

audience skeptical of their ability to make progress from *aporia* with the tools to progress with seeking virtue.

As such, the dialogue changes course and Socrates and Meno pursue his original question through argument from hypothesis. Meno is not interested in seeking what virtue is; he has, after all, given speeches on the subject (80b) and he thinks Socrates has induced some temporary state to make him forget (80a-b). After some disagreement, Meno eventually coerces Socrates into bypassing this thorny issue of what virtue is and returning to the original question about the teachability of virtue. Socrates is somewhat unenthusiastic about abandoning the search for virtue and instead focusing on the question of virtue's teachability (or lack thereof). While Socrates might be unenthusiastic, Plato obviously had a purpose in following Meno's original line of inquiry. Given what occurs in the second half of the dialogue, we can infer Plato's reasoning. In cases of acquiring *episteme*, the usual course of action is to seek out an expert from whom to learn. In the case of virtue-*episteme*, no such expert exists and there are few like Socrates who can guide one on a quest to learn virtue straightforwardly.

The method of hypothesis provides a way of seeking new insights without determining what virtue is. However, the method of hypothesis is also dangerous; if the hypotheses are left uninvestigated, it may provide false as opposed to true *doxa*. However, Meno does not have the patience to investigate the hypotheses, and Socrates realized this. So, Socrates does something rather unusual: he leads Meno through the construction of a rigorous argument, and then shows how that argument has a false premise and is therefore unsound. This is a useful teaching tool for Plato's audience because it demonstrates the perils of the method of hypothesis. If, instead, Meno and Socrates pursued the definition of virtue more directly, the argument would take much longer, but each individual step would be secure, because it would be justified in the process of the argument. Conversely, in the method of hypothesis, one goes through the argument and then subsequently checks each of the claims not justified in the process of making that argument.

In short, the *Meno* is a demonstration of the importance of rigorous argument for investigating virtue. It also shows that inquiry, even without an expert, may be fruitful. Recollection is the method of the acquisition of expertise, but the metaphysical ideas about recollection– that we may have something innate in our souls that can help guide us in our quest– serves to encourage us to continue the inquiry. And ultimately, since we cannot achieve *episteme*-virtue without the correct sort of constitution, all we can do is inquire into virtue and strive to achieve the best approximation we can with *doxa*-virtue.

The interpretation of the text I present in this chapter has bearing on a long-standing debate about Socrates and Meno's conclusion that virtue cannot be taught. I spend little time on this debate because I think that my interpretation of the text side steps it by differentiating two different epistemic states that are both frequently labeled as '*arete*' ('virtue'). However, it would be remiss to not acknowledge the debate at all, so I give a brief account. A straightforward, and perhaps even flat-footed, reading of the *Meno* would suggest that virtue is a type of *doxa* that cannot be taught. I say flatfooted because few if any scholars take this position since it lacks nuance. Even scholars who think that Plato 'obviously' endorsed the explicit conclusion (e.g. Bluck 1961, Kraut 1984) cast doubts on how seriously readers should take some of the arguments that bring the dialogue to this conclusion. In addition, there are a variety of scholars who seem to think that the argument in the latter half of the *Meno* has a different false premise, and the conclusion cannot be taken seriously. One example is Nehamas (1985), who argues that the biconditional– that something is teachable if and only if it is *episteme*—is fundamentally flawed. He argues that *episteme* involves explanation and that understanding is unteachable. In other words, he agrees with the conclusion of the dialogue, but not for the reasons that Plato states.

Many recent scholars tend toward the other extreme, arguing that Plato believes virtue can be taught and that textual contraindications should be reframed (as ironic, obviously false, about political acumen etc). Some scholars think that the ending is insincere or ironic, given the examples of virtuous people Socrates employs in developing his objection (*Meno*

89c-96d). This is an important camp among those who challenge the ending to the dialogue, according to Scott (2006: 189). Scott devotes an entire chapter to countering this argument (Scott 2006: 194-208). The reason that many are skeptical that the objection is genuine is because the same statesmen (e.g. Themistocles, Pericles) whom he cites as virtuous in the *Meno* (89d-96d), he denigrates in the *Gorgias* (*Gorg.* 515e-519d)). Many scholars who argue along this line are people who subscribe to a chronology of composition which places the *Gorgias* before the *Meno* and additionally assume that Plato did not change his views in between the two dialogues (Scott 2006: 189). Perin (2012), who does not subscribe to the traditional chronology, argues that the statesmen are not virtuous at all but merely good at politics.A more recent example is Iwata (2016), who argues that the argument should not be taken seriously because it assumes a controversial thesis (that virtue is good), which Plato is not ready to grant without substantial justification. He concludes that the argument is, rather, a protreptic device to encourage Meno to see knowledge. I agree that it is a protreptic device, but not that it is solely a protreptic device (I discuss this in Section 6).

A few scholars, including myself, opt for an interpretation that sits comfortably in neither of these two camps: just as there are two epistemic states– correct *doxa* and *episteme*– which can guide one to Larissa, surely, there must also be two such states which can guide one to engage in correct action (e.g. Scott 2006). However, scholars who evince this view rarely if ever spin out the implications; perhaps this is because the implications seem rather uninteresting if one conceives of *episteme* and *doxa* as propositional knowledge and propositional belief, respectively. On that view, virtue might look like having an opinion or knowing that one should save one's friend in battle (under conditions where such an action would have a certain chance of success and a low probability of causing additional casualties). However, I reject this understanding of the epistemology in the *Meno*.

My argument, building upon the epistemology established in my first chapter, is that there are two epistemic states that are commonly called '*arete*' (virtue) in the text: actual virtue (henceforth,'*episteme*-virtue') that can be taught and a sort of pseudo-virtue (hence-

forth, '*doxa*-virtue') that cannot be taught. I argue that '*doxa*-virtue' is a kind of knack-*doxa* such that the person with *doxa*-virtue makes the same decisions, acts in the same way as, and produces identical results to the person with *episteme*-virtue, but lacks the expertise that the person with *episteme*-virtue possesses.[43] This expertise is characterized by not only making good choices that yield good results, but also a cognitive grasp of and metacognitive control of the various components of the expertise, such that the person can explain or teach it to others. Under this interpretation, the implications are much more interesting for two reasons. First, virtue is unique among types of *episteme* in that it comes with a compulsion to teach the next generation; being *episteme*-virtue impels one to pass that *episteme* on to one's children and associates (93c-d). Second, the Republic aims to create a class of philosopher kings who are fit to rule because they have *episteme*-virtue. They provide an illustration of how difficult it would be to maintain the kind of favorable circumstances necessary to foster *episteme*-virtue among the leaders of a *polis*. The *Republic* also demonstrates that Plato thought *episteme*-virtue was theoretically (if not practically) possible, which serves to counter arguments that virtue is not a type of *episteme* (Bluck 1961, Kraut 1984, 229-231). I discuss some of the potential difficulties of teaching *episteme*-virtue in the next chapter.

[43]Some philosophers have made a similar distinction (Fine 2004; Scott 2006: 186-192, esp. 186-187). My version of this argument is unique and tied to a unique interpretation of the epistemology of the *Meno*. Moreover, I utilize this third option to provide an interpretation of the ethics in the *Meno*, while neither Fine 2004 nor Scott 2006 tease out the implications of their versions of the view.

Chapter 3

Poetry and Character Development in the *Republic*

In the previous two chapters, I discussed the epistemology of the *Meno* and the corresponding ethics. I argued that the *Meno* shows that there are two different epistemic states that Socrates and his interlocutors colloquially refer to as '*arete*' (virtue): *doxa*-virtue and *episteme*-virtue. *Doxa*-virtue is a sort of pseudo-virtue that can guide a person to act correctly, but is liable to being lost or to manifest only under specific conditions.[1] *Episteme*-virtue, genuine virtue, is expertise in acting virtuously; it guides one correctly, is stable within the individual, and can be transmitted intergenerationally through teaching. These two epistemic states are synchronically practically equivalent, i.e. both of these result in ethically correct actions for the circumstances in which the possessors find themselves. However, a possessor *doxa*-virtue may not retain *doxa*-virtue for the long term; one can lose *doxa*-virtue through lack of use or lack of conviction (*Meno* 97d-98a). By contrast, in

[1] An example of the pitfalls of *doxa*-virtue might the eminent Athenians (if Socrates is genuinely ascribing *doxa*-virtue to them), since figures like Pericles did make mistakes (which would demonstrate that their *doxa*-virtue failed to guide them in certain cases). Another example might be the musician who learns by ear. A musician who learns by ear might demonstrate incredible virtuosity in playing certain pieces, but might have trouble figuring out more complex combinations of notes or harmonic interactions.

the case of *episteme*-virtue, ethically correct actions can be ensured diachronically;[2] both because *episteme*-virtue is stable within the individual and because teaching renders it intergenerationally stable, under favorable circumstances.

In Chapter 2, Section 5, I discussed how the metaphor of Tiresias among the shades (99e-100a) provides a brief thought experiment that the *Republic* expands upon and enriches: a city lead by virtuous people who can teach virtue to the next generation of leaders. In the closing scene of the *Meno*, Socrates offers a simile: the *episteme*-virtuous statesman as Tiresias (a prophet) among the shades (the mindless dead of the underworld). In the simile, Socrates demonstrates the power of a person with *episteme*-virtue—a single leader with *episteme*-virtue could create a long line of virtuous leadership. Socrates hints that it is difficult, if not impossible, for leaders to achieve *episteme*-virtue under the current circumstances, but that *episteme*-virtue is theoretically possible. I argued that the design of the constitution in the *Republic* is to create a *polis* with *episteme*-virtue is nurtured and passed down through the generations. The acquisition of *episteme*-virtue is a long-term pursuit and requires dedication and a constitution that encourages and fosters such dedication among citizens. Indeed, the *Republic* suggests that *episteme*-virtue is only possible under a constitution that properly cultivates philosophy (*Resp.* 489e-500c) and that is ruled by philosophers (500d-506a). Under the constitution of any existing *polis* at the time depicted in the conversation, *episteme*-virtue is impossible because those with the proper nature for philosophers are either cranks or useless (487c-500c). I argue that the entire constitution of the *Kallipolis* s designed to foster *episteme*-virtue among the rulers.

In this chapter, I examine how the system for early education established in *Republic* 2 and 3 creates candidates for *episteme*-virtue. I use the term 'virtue candidates' because

[2]We may be naturally inclined to question the link between the transmission of an expertise and the practice of that expertise. However, in many Platonic dialogues, Socrates asserts that having the correct epistemic state is not merely necessary, but sufficient for taking the right action. While most tody are more sympathetic with Aristotle's portrait of *akrasia* than Plato's intellectualist model of acting correctly, I think that conceiving of *episteme* as expertise might make Plato's view more plausible. It is easy to imagine someone overruling some propositional knowledge (by emotion or appetite) and acting contrary to such knowledge; it is hard to imagine someone with expertise acting against their expert judgement because of some emotion or appetite.

not all of those educated in this system will grow up to achieve *episteme*-virtue; however, the education is necessary for them to become virtue candidates.[3] Although the education system to teach the future philosopher-kings *episteme*-virtue continues through *Republic* 7, in this chapter, I focus on the early education of the guardians (which includes both future auxiliaries and philosopher-kings). Specifically, I argue that the acquisition of *episteme*-virtue requires that the learner shape her character in the proper way embarking upon the recollection process for acquiring *episteme*-virtue. This character-shaping process must begin before children have fully developed reason (377a-b, 378d-e), since Plato believes that there is some point at which character is fixed (378d-e). Early in life, character development stems from a combination of beliefs and the development of knack-*doxa*; children must be trained to take certain actions before they can explain them or the reasons behind them. These beliefs and knack-*doxa* shield children from engaging in harmful action. Socrates argues that when we engage in actions that cause harm, we harm our souls (353d-354b).

In particular, the correct sort of *doxai* (including beliefs, imitation of good actions,[4] and knack-*doxa*) cannot be cultivated without sequestering children from bad influences and temptations to act badly.[5] In order to insulate children from anything which might

[3]Socrates hints in Book 6 that there is a small possibility for some with a philosophical nature to become virtue candidates, but instead of becoming legitimate rules, they turn into crackpot philosophers like him (487c-489e). Although these crackpots are virtue candidates, it is not possible for them to acquire *episteme*-virtue because they live under constitutions that fail to foster their natures. Instead, like Socrates, the best they can do is to acquire high-fidelity and long-lasting *doxa*-virtue that produces results close to *episteme*-virtue.

[4]Imitation of good actions can be a type of *doxa* in cases where someone is imitating the action of others either without knowing the reason or for the wrong reason. For Aristotle, imitation of good actions is an essential step in inculcating virtue (Arist. *EN* 1103a32-b2). Children learn to imitate good actions before understanding the reasons that the actions are good. There may also be circumstances under which someone who undertakes a just action habitually for the sake of reputation, rather than for the sake of justice, may shape her character through the action and gradually come to do the action for the sake of justice instead of for the sake of reputation.

[5]We see a hint of this in the *Meno*, where Socrates briefly argues that if there were some children who were good by nature, society would protect them from all outside influences (*Meno* 89b). In the *Republic*, some individuals have the natural potential to be virtuous (those with philosophical natures), but they will only become virtuous with proper education and under the correct sort of constitution. The character and values necessary to make expertise in virtue possible cannot be cultivated through reason alone, but through a combination of reason, emotion, and habit that forms character. Poetry possesses emotive power that is useful for shaping values and character, but that emotive power has equal power to form or corrupt. Without careful regulation, it is easy for such belief transmission to fail; when it fails, children become unsuitable candidates for virtue. I argue that Plato saw transmitting *doxa* as a necessary step in creating

remove them as virtue candidates, Socrates proposes a draconian censorship program. The censorship program serves the purpose of insulating the population from corrupting influences in several ways. First, the censorship program eliminates passages in Homer and the other poets that might cultivate false beliefs in children who hear the poems. Second, censorship discourages children from imitating bad models and encourages them to imitate good models. It does this by reducing the number of bad models available by expurgating some bad models wholesale from poetry, limiting the characterization of those that remain (e.g. talking about them in narration rather than allowing them to speak), and ensuring that bad models are embodied in ways that renders them unappealing to imitate (e.g. by making them cowards). Third, it restricts meter and musical accompaniment of poetry, so as to shape children's emotions properly. Finally, censorship places the content of poetry under the supervision of actual ethical experts—those who arranged the constitution for the city and the philosopher kings—rather than the poets, who are not ethical experts.

While many readers of the *Republic* have accused Plato of being a philistine citing the censorship program,[6] the recent scholarly trend in philosophy is that the *Republic* is ambivalent toward poetry (e.g. Ferrari 1990, Janaway 1995). Socrates both acknowledges and demonstrates the aesthetic value of poetry, but ejects most poetry from the *Kallipolis* on ethical grounds (Janaway 1995). In Plato's view, uncensored poetry conflicts with the central value of the *Republic*: the ability to consistently produce virtuous individuals (and, in particular, political leaders) over successive generations. The *Republic* demonstrates that poetry, unless carefully regulated, challenges the ability for a society to ensure stable virtue transmission. The reason is that poetry is powerfully character-shaping, but ethically ambivalent; since poets are not ethical experts, poetry can equally serve as a force that educates

virtuous individuals; yet, this is challenging because *doxa* transmission is inherently unstable. It can only happen consistently in a carefully regulated environment, where fine beliefs are familiar and corrupting or harmful beliefs remain unfamiliar. Plato's critique of poetry and his censorship program demonstrates that stable intergenerational virtue transmission can only occur under carefully regulated circumstances. In a metaphorical sense, the children of the *Republic* are insulated from temptation in the way that those in the *Meno* are sequestered at the Acropolis (89b).

[6] Janaway 1995, vii

or corrupts individual souls and society.

The creation and training of a statesman with *episteme*-virtue requires an educational system that shields the student from influences that might harm character formation. In the *Republic*, the whole society—not just the virtue-candidates[7]—are sequestered from the corrupting influences. The constitution sequesters citizens of the *Kallipolis* through the censorship program outlined in Books 2 and 3. The draconian purge of poetry purges not only content and models that might lead the reader astray, but also the metrical and musical qualities of poetry that affect emotion. In this chapter, I begin by explaining the basics of Plato's moral psychology and theory of character development as depicted in the *Republic* (Section 1). Then, I build upon this by showing the various ways in which poetry affects character formation (Sections 2-3). I argue that the censorship program exists because poets cannot be trusted to evaluate influences correctly. Only ethical experts[8] have the necessary abilities to evaluate and curate the poetry of the *polis* (Section 4). Ethical experts can wield the power of poetry (and the mythology delivered through poetry) as an effective delivery mechanism for the habits and beliefs that provide the basis for the civic virtues that the *Kallipolis* exhibits as well as the building blocks of virtue that the educational system will employ to create the next generation of virtuous leaders (Section 5).

3.1 Preliminaries: a Review of Plato's Moral Psychology

One must understand Plato's moral psychology, as presented in the *Republic*, in order to understand the motivation of the draconian censorship program of the *Kallipolis*. As Socrates explains it, poetry has a direct effect the moral psychology of its audience, at least

[7]In the *Meno*, Socrates provides a thought experiment about virtue-candidates sequestered in the Parthenon. He says if virtue came to those who have it by nature, then there would be people who could recognize virtue-candidates. The *polis* would sequester virtue-candidates on the Acropolis to keep them safe from corrupting influences (*Meno* 89b).

[8]FIX The lawmakers for the *Kallipolis* and philosopher kings.

when children comprise the audience of the poetry.[9] Plato describes the moral psychology after he describes the process of early education, but it is retrospectively clear how poetry would affect the moral psychology of individuals who were exposed to it.[10] Poetry affects and strengthens the spirited part of the soul, the seat of our emotions. This is useful because the spirited part of the soul serves to help protect us from external threats and can ally with the rational part of the soul to keep the appetitive part in check. However, if the spirited part of the soul becomes too strong or is conditioned in the wrong way, it can lead to problems of emotional regulation.

In this section, I describe Plato's moral psychology briefly. In the next two sections, I discuss poetry's effect on character formation, in light of that moral psychology. In section 2, I explain how soul-parts are strengthened and weakened under poetry's influence. In Section 3, I dive deeper into the nuances of the program of early education to aid in creating virtue candidates.

The way that Socrates describes the moral psychology is somewhat oblique. When Glaucon first asks about justice, Socrates makes the famous city-soul analogy to argue that they should go about designing the model city and find justice there. Socrates uses the rather odd optical analogy, arguing that trying to find justice in the individual is like trying to read the fine print, when, instead, they should look at a city where justice is writ large, just as if the fine print had been expanded (368c-369b). The analogy seems fallacious; cities are not merely individuals on a large scale. However, Socrates' point is that if the word 'justice' ('δικαιοσύνη') picks out the same phenomenon in all cases to which it applies, than whatever makes the city just should also make the individual just. The justice-making-factor should be the same between the two cases. If Socrates is right (and his interlocutors seem to agree that he is and ask him to carry out the thought experiment (369b), then they can examine either the city or the individual and get the same result (434d-444a). They begin

[9]The effect of poetry on the moral psychology of adults is less important, but the ban of tragedy (a form of art aimed at adults) in Book 10 suggests that poetry can have an effect on adults as well.

[10]Socrates gives us a preview of how the moral psychology will work at the end of Book 1 (*Resp.* 351b-352a), so it's clear that he has this in mind before he describes it in Book 4.

by examining the city.

The *Kallipolis* consists of three separate classes of citizens: the producers (who farm and produce material goods), the auxiliaries (who police the city and protect it from exterior threats), and the philosopher-kings (who make up the legislature and magistrates). Citizens are classed based on their merits, not on their lineage and everyone matched up to the task that best suits her (433a-b). The city is just when each of these three classes stay within their traditional boundaries and fulfill their various jobs well (433a-434c). Within the classes, each individual takes on a role that best suits her (433a).[11] Justice consists in every citizen (and each class) being engaged in just what they are suited and not infringing upon the realm of anyone else (433d-e). It requires an appropriate balance and collaboration between the three classes of the city, in which each class—and each citizen that makes up that class—fulfills their vocation and refrains from meddling with anything not under their purview. Having discovered justice as well as wisdom (428a-429a), and courage (429a-430c), and moderation (430d-432b) within the city, Socrates and his interlocutors move on to examine whether they can find the virtues in individuals.

When Socrates looks for the virtues in the city, he builds the city component by component and then considers the characteristics and properties the city exhibits. With the individual, Socrates starts with the assumption that the individual is unitary (perhaps because an individual has a single soul). In order to determine whether the individual has parts, Socrates suggests they employ a principle which he dubs the 'principle of opposites'. The Principle of Opposites states that a soul cannot exist in two opposite states at once unless two states happen with respect to two different things or the soul has at least two parts, one to instantiate each opposite.[12] The difference between respect and time can be illustrated through the following two examples. If we say that a spinning top is both spinning and staying still, we can account for the opposite states it instantiates by saying that it is

[11] By corollary, those who take up other occupations than those which best suit them causes injustice and 'brings the city to ruin' (434a-c).

[12] A unitary soul can manifest two states at different times.

spinning with respect to its circumference, but still with respect to its vertical axis. On the other hand, if we say that a man is both moving and staying still, he has two parts (e.g. an arm and a torso) one of which moves while the other stays still. In order to show that the city and soul are parallel, Socrates must show that the soul has parts, just like the city; justice can similarly be that the parts do not interfere with one another and perform their jobs well. Thus, Socrates attempts to divide the soul into three, like the city, by means of the principle of opposites.[13]

Instead of merely describing the various parts of the soul, I want to discuss the division that Socrates undertakes. Cases of mental conflict demonstrate that the soul must have three parts. I highlight the cases of conflict that can arise between the three parts of the soul. As I will discuss in the next section, what causes the strengthening of the parts of the soul is when a person acts on and satisfies the desires of that part of the soul. For the same reason, in cases of mental conflict, the winning soul-part gains strength, because the person chooses to accede to the desire of one soul part over the other with which it is in conflict.

Socrates divides the soul into parts by employing a set of case studies of mental conflict, which demonstrate that particular situations cause a person to be in two opposite states at the same time and with respect to the same thing. In other words, these are cases of mental conflict within a single individual. Due to the Principle of Opposites, if two opposite states occur in respect to the same thing and at the same time, the only way to account for those two opposite states is that the subject of those states has two parts. The three case studies, each of which shows a case of mental conflict, cleaves each of the three parts from one another: the thirsty man (439c-d), Leontius (439e-440e), and Odysseus (441b-c). I briefly

[13]While justice merely requires parts in a particular relation, it is the broader case for civic virtue that requires the soul to be tripartite. The four virtues that Socrates and his interlocutors seek through the building of the city-in-speech are wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice. It is the combination of these four virtues that require that the human soul be tripartite and that each part resembles that of the city. Wisdom, which is the virtue of the ruling class of the city and the reasoning part of the soul, specifies that these ruling parts be relevantly similar. Courage, specifies that there is a spirited part, both of the city and of the soul. In the city it is the auxiliaries and the soul it is the emotions. I discuss courage at greater length below. These two specify that both the city and the soul must have at least two parts and they must serve the same function in each case. Moderation consists in harmony between the various parts.

demonstrate how each of these works below and then explain the implication of the tripartion of the soul.

The first of the three cases, the thirsty man, severs the rational part from the appetitive part of the soul. Socrates, in the sketchiest terms, asks Glaucon and Adeimantus if there is sometimes a case where a thirsty man both wants to drink (because he is thirsty) and does not want to drink (no reason specified). Two opposite states of the soul at the same time and in relation to the same thing (drinking) requires that there are two soul parts, one to instantiate each soul state. They decide that the two parts are a irrational part of the soul (later the 'appetitive' part) that wants to drink and a rational part of the sou, which does not want to drink. Glaucon readily agrees.

There are several possibilities to flesh out this case study, which might make it more comprehensible.[14] If one were on life raft in the middle of the ocean and very thirsty, one might simultaneously want to drink (being thirsty) and not want to drink if the only option was sea water; drinking sea water is toxic. Another option would be to consider the scenario of a hiker. For example, if I am on a ten mile hike without access to safe water sources, I would want to conserve my water so it lasts throughout the hike. For that reason, if I have only hiked four miles but have already consumed half of my water supplies, I might reasonably want to drink, but also want to conserve sufficient water for the rest of the hike. In either the case of the castaway stranded at sea or of me on a hike, there is a mental conflict between appetite (thirst) and the rational part (knowing that sea water is toxic or carefully rationing water). Thus, due to the Principle of Opposites, these must be two distinct parts of the soul: an appetitive part and a rational part.

The second case shows that appetite is not the only irrational part of the soul: we also have emotions. Socrates demonstrates emotions in conflict with appetite (439e-440e). To do so, Socrates describes the rather strange case of a necrophiliac to demonstrate how mental

[14]The case as presented in the text is so loose that, in fact, it could illustrate a conflict between the appetitive part and the spirited part as well. A scenario which would illustrate this conflict is someone on a hike or doing a serious workout who is thirsty, but does not want to drink because she wants to appear tough. In this case, emotions, rather than reasoning, drive the person in question to refrain from slaking her thirst.

conflict might arise between the two parts. According to Socrates, a man named Leontius once walked past an executioner who was surrounded by a set of dead bodies. Leontius, since he had a sexual attraction to dead bodies, had an appetite to look at them. However, his emotions urged him not to look at them (439e-440a). Thus, he both wanted to look and not look at the bodied; these two conflicting desires are about the same object and occur at the same time, so they must stem from two separate parts of the soul.

There has been some discussion in the literature about which emotion urges Leontius (unsuccessfully) to refrain from looking at the bodies. The text identifies the the emotion as 'ὀργή'. 'Ὀργή' is most commonly translated as 'anger,' and scholars tend to take this to mean that he was angry at himself for desiring to look at them, and therefore his emotions urged him to refrain. This is one possibility. However, 'ὀργή' can refer to any strong emotion. Another explanation is that he was ashamed to look at the bodies, because Leontius knew that his appetites were not socially acceptable. The conflict between appetite and shame is something that occurs regularly in our day to day lives. A more common example might be the following: the case of wanting to eat something, but knowing it would be socially unacceptable to do so. In this case, the appetite pushes one toward eating the food– whether it is a third doughnut at a morning meeting or a second slice of cake at a holiday party. However, some emotion, usually shame, urges us away from eating it; we don't want to be judged by others as being overindulging, being greedy, or breaking a diet. Irrespective of the emotion in question, in these cases, our appetite and our emotions come into conflict.The principle of opposites concludes that emotions must be something distinct from appetite, to account for the mental conflict.

The third and final case must demonstrate that the spirited and the rational parts of the soul are genuinely different from one another and not merely aspects of the same thing. Before Socrates provides the final case, Glaucon explains that they must be two distinct parts because children have a spirited capacity without a developed rational capacity (441a). Following this, Socrates uses a quotation from Homer to illustrate the mental conflict

between the spirited and rational parts of the soul that completes the case study. In this famous scene from the *Odyssey*, Odysseus, disguised as a beggar is sleeping on a bed made up in the hallway of the palace. As he lays down to sleep, he sees the slave women of the household go off to sleep with the suitors of his wife Penelope. Odysseus is conflicted: on the one hand, he is angry and wants to kill the women for their treachery to the household, on the other hand, he knows that his plan to kill the suitors and take back his island kingdom will fail if he reveals his true identity by killing the slaves. In other words, he wishes to kill the suitors (out of anger), and wishes not to kill them (for the sake of strategy). These conflicting desires stem from two parts of the soul; one (to kill the suitors), the emotions, the other (not to kill the suitors), from reasoning. Earlier in this Homeric passage, the narrator describes Odysseus as debating between mind and spirit (Hom. *Od.* 20.9-13). The Principle of Opposites shows that there must be two distinct parts of the soul, the spirited and the rational, in conflict with one another. Odysseus, in the quoted line (20.17), strikes his chest and speaks to his heart, urging it to overcome the desire to kill the slaves (20.1-24). Speaking to his heart physicalizes the conflict illustrates here: the chest is the seat of the emotions[15], and the head, the agent which is speaking, is the seat of rationality. This image of Odysseus, thus, beautifully illustrates the mental conflict between emotions and reason.[16]

Mental conflicts of the sort described in the case studies inevitably have a winning and a losing side. While we hear nothing about the outcome in the case of the Thirsty Man, Leontius case and the Odysseus case both provide the audience with the outcome. Leontius accedes to his appetitive side and looks at the corpses (440a) and Odysseus' rational part triumphs over his emotional part (Hom. *Od.* 20.18-24). The different parts battle it out in case of mental conflict and each win strengthens the part that wins. In other words, character (which has to do with the power relationships between the parts in our soul) is

[15]For us, the heart is the seat of the emotions; for the Greeks it was the lungs ('θυμός' denotes both breath and spirit.

[16]The conflict occurs regularly in any hierarchical office context. When a boss or manager is overly critical or difficult, an employee might want to retaliate against her boss, but know that it would not be prudent to do so.

shaped through the desires we satisfy and which soul-part wins in the case of mental conflict.

Childhood and adolescence are the periods in which the order of the soul is shaped. For this reason, it is important to create an environment that encourages children to accede to the correct sorts of desires and make the correct decisions in mental conflict, to establish the order of their souls.

3.2 Preferentially Irrigating the Soul: Strengthening and Weakening Soul-Parts through Desire Fulfillment

Socrates describes the process of strengthening of the individual parts of the soul with a metaphor of a stream of water (485d). He says that when someone's desires (from whichever part of the soul) become more strongly inclined in one direction (through enjoying the satisfaction of those desires), they become more weekly inclined in another. In the metaphor, the water is pleasure from desire fulfillment; it nourishes the part of the soul to which the characteristic pleasure corresponds. The stream metaphor shows that desire fulfillment is 'zero-sum': a person only has the energy and resources to fulfill a certain amount of desire. The more of one sort of desires are fulfilled (i.e. the more of the stream diverted to that particular soul part), the fewer desires of the other parts can be fulfilled. Thus, the stream represents a preferential irrigation of the soul, which allow the parts of the soul given more pleasure to grow and strengthen.

The metaphysics of pleasure in the *Republic* makes it clear that each soul part has its own distinctive pleasure; each soul part has desires and pleasure is the satisfaction of desires. Some readers find this distribution of pleasure unintuitive; we might think that pleasure is pleasure and so should belong to the domain of a single soul part (perhaps, the appetitive part of the soul).[17] Despite that intuition, most of us would acknowledge a pleasure that is

[17] A sophisticated example of this tendency to see pleasure as associated with specific parts of the soul comes from Dan Russell. Russell believes that there are only two types of pleasure: bodily pleasure and emotional pleasure (**russell_plato_2005**). He believes that intellectual pleasure is a type of emotional pleasure. However, his interpretation conflicts with the stream metaphor and with a passage he himself quotes that

purely emotional (like pride) from bodily pleasure (like the pleasure of eating). Socrates goes on to distinguish an additional type of pleasure, that pleasure characteristic of the rational part of the soul. This pleasure, sometimes called 'intellectual pleasure,' is a pleasure that the soul experiences 'just by itself' (485d) and that by indulging this part of the soul, the person will be insulated against both bodily temptation (486a) and the temptation to give in to negative emotions (486a-b).

Thus, there are three distinctive sorts of pleasure; satisfying the desire for a type of pleasure strengthens the corresponding soul part. Intellectual pleasure nourishes the rational part, emotional pleasure nourishes the spirited part, and bodily pleasure nourishes the appetitive part. As we divide up our time and energy, choosing one pleasure over another, we strengthen the part of the soul that corresponds to the fulfilled desire. For that reason, the intellectually curious child who spends her energy on fulfilling her intellectual desires strengthens the rational part of her soul, while the child who spends her energy on fulfilling her emotional desire strengthens the spirited part of her soul. In conflicts between desires of various soul-parts, the parts of the soul that regularly win those conflicts strengthen.

The stronger an individual part becomes relative to the other parts of the soul, the more easily that part can bend the other parts to its will. This poses a potential problem. The rational part is supposed to rule, but if the appetitive or spirited parts of the soul become excessively strong, they can effectively rule and use the rational part to do their bidding. Someone with a strong appetitive part might use the rational part of the soul to help calculate the best way to continue to fill appetitive desires, while someone with a strong emotional part might use the rational part of the soul to win arguments in order to gain glory from the listeners. The best and happiest person, in Socrates' view, is the person who has her soul arranged in the proper way: the rational part is strongest and keeps the appetitive and spirited parts in line. Just as justice in the city has to do with proper order (none of the classes interfering in the works of the others), similarly justice in the individual has to

mentions three types of pleasure (580d, **russell_plato_2005**, 113).

do with proper order; each of the soul parts must do its assigned task and not interfere with the tasks of the others.

For Socrates, justice comes about when the soul is in proper order: the rational part of the soul serves as the ruler, the spirited part of the soul aids and protects the ruler, and the appetitive part of the soul serves primarily as a reminder to pay attention to the needs of the body.[18] The rational part is supposed to be the strongest and to rule the other parts of the soul. The spirited part, which in the city serves to protect the city from hostile entities outside the city as well as keeping peace within the city, similarly serves to protect us from both external and internal threats. Emotions like anger and fear help us confront or flee from threats (primarily external), whereas emotions like shame and pride inspire us to constrain our base desires and strive to do better (primarily internal). The appetitive part of the soul is something characteristic of embodied beings.

In order to maintain this proper order between the various parts of the soul, an individual must strengthen the parts that should be in control and weaken those parts which must be kept under control. This requires that the sole focus on intellectual pleasures as opposed to emotional and bodily pleasures to ensure that the rational part of the soul is sufficiently strong to keep the other parts in line. Moreover, since the stream in a zero-sum fashion, nourishing the rational part of the soul through intellectual pleasure renders the other parts are relatively weak, this allows for the soul to be not only just (in proper order) (443d), but also moderate (in harmony) (443d-e, 485e).

Let us turn to the way that poetry influences the soul. Poetry—and perhaps especially tragedy—provides emotional pleasures; indulgence in poetry strengthens the spirited part of the soul. In book 3, we see that Socrates worries about citizens imitating the excessive emotional displays of the heroic figures; in particular, he is concerned about children who have souls which are not yet ordered. Children do not have a set hierarchy of parts of the

[18]However, it is not merely the bodily functions, like Aristotle's nutritive part of the soul. Unlike Aristotle's nutritive part, the appetitive part of the soul is responsive to reason; the appetitive part of the soul is the conscious desires that arise from our bodies' needs.

soul; it is through the indulgence in pleasures in childhood that this hierarchy takes shape. Moreover, children start off without a rational part of the soul; the rational part develops over time. Socrates prescribes that most of early childhood education should be shaping the individual to prepare to enjoy the pleasures of the rational part of the soul, such that the rational part will strengthen and develop as it grows (536d-537a). It is emotion that Socrates argues that we should use as a tool for this shaping. Poetry and other sources of emotional stimulation must be carefully controlled so that emotion can direct the growth of the soul appropriately.

Poetry, although extremely useful, has the capacity to dangerously over-strengthen the spirited portion of the soul. The spirited part of the soul is the seat of the emotions; over-strengthening the emotional part can allow emotions to override both the appetites and reason. Emotional regulation is important, because it allows the spirited and reasoning portions of the soul to work together. The spirited part of the soul is supposed to protect and defend the person from external threats as well as team up with the rational part of the soul to suppress the desires of the appetitive part of the soul (440a-e). Of course, the rational part of the soul is supposed to be in charge in the hierarchy of soul-parts, but it is also the smallest part of the soul, so it is easy for the spirit to become strong enough to overpower the rational part. Socrates is particularly fierce about censoring places in poetry where figures who might be role models (e.g. gods, heroes) yield to their emotions, because children might imitate those models. For Socrates, the spirited part of the soul can be a useful ally to the reasoning part of the soul, e.g. anger serves to protect ourselves and others from harm and exploitation (440a-d).

In childhood is the point, the relative strengths of the various parts of the soul are developed; this is character development. There are two forces at work to create the delicate balance that ensures that that the children develop good character: (1) enticing them toward the right sorts of pleasures to strengthen the soul appropriately and (2) to slowly strengthen the rational part as it develops. Not only are children still in the process of forming their

character, they also start off without a rational part of the soul (441a). The rational part grows with the child and so some character formation must come without being able to appeal to the rational part of the soul (since it does not yet exist). It seems like the way to do this is to make certain spirited and more particularly rational activities desirable to children through play (536d-537a), as well as inculcating children with beliefs which, while not strictly true, will point them in the right direction (377b-c).

3.3 Beyond Mere Strength: The Nuances of Educating the Soul

While poetry can strengthen the spirited part of the soul, it also has other more complex effects on character and education. The education of the soul is more complex than the the stream metaphor might suggest. There are three additional components that influence character development. The first two are content-based: beliefs that arise from stories and depictions of character. The stories and songs we teach to young children serve as a means by which they encounter the world and aid in forming beliefs about the way the world works. The characters from those stories also serve as models that children imitate or avoid. Poetry also trains a person to be musical and graceful, which is necessary for being drawn to the correct sorts of aesthetic qualities (486d). The third component is formal: meter and mode. Socrates argue that meter and mode both directly and indirectly shape character. Directly, exposure modes and meters encourage particular character traits associated with those modes and meters (398b-400d). Indirectly, Socrates believes that training in μουσική—the category which includes poetry and music—hones aesthetic sensibility and is vital to render truth appealing to young citizens. Someone who rules the city must appreciate truth and beauty in and of themselves (486d-487a).[19]

In the following subsections, I discuss the content Socrates aims to remove from poetry,

[19]He expands upon this idea at length in book 5.

explain the careful management of imitable characters, and explore the restriction the use of meter and music. Socrates believes that the only way to effectively use poetry's character-shaping power to create virtuous citizens is to create and maintain an effective censorship program. Under this program ethical experts, rather than poets, ensure that poetry's good influence is preserved, while any potential bad influences are suppressed through narrative techniques or deleted.

3.3.1 Poetry and *Doxa* Formation

At the most basic level, the μουσική that young children encounter form some of their earliest *doxai* about the world. Philosophers traditionally interpret the *doxai* that Socrates mentions here as propositional beliefs that poetry imparts to children; I think *doxai* are more expansive. Children not only pick up propositional beliefs (like rules for how to act) from poetry and myth, but also modes of behavior (e.g. a general sense of how a hero is supposed to act).[20] Children are still in the process of developing the rational part of their souls (441a), so they lack some of the tools that adults engage with and learn about the world. We simplify the world for children through stories; as they age, they encounter stories of increasing complexity and extract more meaning from those stories they heard as young children. The purpose of this earliest part of the education is to ensure that children have access to *doxai* that nurture their souls in the appropriate way; when the rational part emerges, it takes charge easily and leads the other soul parts in the right way.

The first demonstration of the power of the *doxai* that we gather from poetry come not from Socrates, but from Glaucon and Adeimantus. Both Adeimantus and Glaucon utilize poetry to create their defense of injustice.[21] Adeimantus quotes poetry at length in

[20] It may be possible to give an account of the way children internalize modes of behavior from poetry as internalizing propositional beliefs. My point is modest; I argue that when a poem says that the path of justice is difficult, children do not merely acquire the propositional belief 'the path of justice is difficult', but also may do things like attach more significance to the misfortunes a just person suffers or be more inclined to try to figure out ways to gain a good reputation without engaging in the hard work of trying to be virtuous.

[21] Glaucon does not directly employ poetry to bolster his position. Instead, he invokes a quote from Aeschylus

support of the idea that the unjust life is better than the just one. Adeimantus' argument has two main points. Poets make virtue seem praiseworthy, but practically unattainable and requiring unrelenting hard work (362e-367e). At the same time, the poets paint a life of vice likely to bring pleasure (364a-b).[22] Given these widespread depictions, Adeimantus assumes that it is purely for the instrumental value of justice that parents encourage their children to act justly (363a). Second, poets depict the gods as beings that can be persuaded or bribed to soften their attitude toward those who commit unjust acts (363a-366b). These poetic influence discourage citizens from seeking virtue and assure them that if they engage in vicious action, they can use the fruits of their deeds to appease the gods. The implication is that the poets are a powerful source of ethical *doxai* and that the poetic ideas about justice that Adeimantus cites influence the young to turn away from virtue and toward vice. Adeimantus renders the implication explicit near the ends of his speech (367a1-5):

> For if this were said by all of you from the beginning and from youth you persuaded us, we would not guard one another from injustice, but each would be his own best guard, fearing that by committing injustice, he would cohabit with the greatest vice.

Adeimantus argues that if we raise children to believe that justice is important and desirable, then they will strive toward justice. The stories that the poets tell and others repeat serve as a corrosive influence that turns children away from justice. Socrates, in concordance with Adeimantus, designs an educational system that attempts to make each citizen her own best guard against injustice.

The educational system that Socrates creates in the *Kallipolis* attempts to protect citizens, especially the young, from bad influence. Education in μουσική.[23] Children begin hearing simplified stories, myths, and legends. Socrates describes these as false stories contain

and says that although Aeschylus describes the benefits of a just action, it would be more appropriate to say such words about an unjust person who appears to be just (362a7-b1).

[22]q.v. Ferrari 1990, 111.

[23]In childhood, students also begin physical training, although physical education begins after education through stories (376e).

a kernel of truth (377a). Those governing the city must curate the stories carefully so that children draw appropriate lessons from them (377d-e). At this young age, children's minds are most malleable and the stories they hear shape their character (377b-c).

Since children are young and impressionable, the curation of these stories is a crucial task for the *Kallipolis* to thrive and succeed. Poets present and create stories, but poets, on the whole, to devote themselves to entertainment and emotional impact rather than to what stories will strengthen the *polis* by nurturing its citizens. Their stories powerfully shape character (377c), but they are not equipped to wield that power. Thus, the important task of curation cannot be left to the discretion of the poets.[24] Instead, those who design the *Kallipolis*'s constitution (and later the philosopher-kings who govern the *Kallipolis*) must purge the poetic cannon to remove those passages which could corrupt the youth (377c-d, 378e7-379a4).

The passages *doxai* that Socrates marks for censorship fall into several categories. Most of the passages are on one of three topics: the nature of the gods and divine behavior (377d-383c, 388c-389b), courage and the actions of heroes (386a-391e), and virtue and the behavior of ordinary individuals (392a-403c). Throughout Book 2 and the beginning of Book 3 Socrates and his interlocutors cull famous passages from Homer and Hesiod that represent bad models of behavior. Socrates augments the censored cannon with poetry that promulgates some myths of Plato's own devising (e.g. 414d-415c). These new stories provide the basis for some of the beliefs necessary to uphold the *Kallipolis*, such as the Myths of the Metals.[25]

Socrates eliminates many passages from Homer describing the bad behavior of the gods

[24] I discuss this further in Section 4.

[25] The Myth of the Metals (414d-415c) encourages the people to defend the land, since the earth is the mother of all people, weapons, and craftsmen's tools. The myth further claims that all of the people within the city are related. The god who fashioned them put metal of a particular sort in each soul to mark its character: gold for rulers, silver for auxiliaries, and iron and bronze for those who farm and produce goods. While, in general, parents of each type give birth to children of the same type, there are times when parents may have children of a different metal. These anomalous children, instead of staying with their parents, are raised among the people of their own metal type. There is an oracle that says that the city will fall if ruled by someone who is iron or bronze, so it is important that those of each metal types stick to their appropriate duties.

including any sort of deception as well as inflicting harms upon humans so that they may not serve as bad models for the guardians. In the case of deception, both in word and deed, a god would render herself different than how she is. Since gods are, by nature, excellent in every way ('πάντῃ ἄριστα' 381b4), any deception that a god could produce would portray the god as worse than she is because it would require her to alter her nature that is excellent in every way (381c2-4). Thus, not only would a god choose not to deceive, but the desire could never arise (381c6-8). She also has no reason to lie, since none of the typical reasons that humans lie apply to the gods (381d-383a), such as lying because of ignorance or fear. In each case of deception and bad behavior, Socrates quotes passages from Homer or Hesiod, in which the poet depicts gods misbehaving and expurgates those instances. Policing images of the gods in this way and rendering the gods excellent in every way removes one of the temptations to injustice that Adeimantus invokes. Adeimantus argued that citizens were tempted to do injustice and use their gains to placate the gods; the gods portrayed in the *Kallipolis* lack the human flaws typically ascribed to the Greek gods and cannot be bribed.

In book 3, Socrates and his interlocutors turn from divine behavior to human behavior.[26] Socrates purges a variety of poetic passages that he fears might increase the fear of death or encourage listeners to indulge their emotions when someone dies. He starts by expurgating a series of passages describing the horrors of the underworld, saying 'although perhaps it is fine in another circumstance, we fear on behalf of the guardians that from these shudderings they may become too soft and malleable for our needs' (387c3-c6). In the *Republic*, courage involves having the appropriate fear response to dangerous circumstances and then acting in response to that fear (429b-e). The problem with these descriptions of the underworld is that they make it seem too fearful, and thus train those who hear them to fear death more than is appropriate. In particular, Socrates wants those who fight for the city to fear slavery more than death (386a-387b). The courage of the auxiliary class is the first line of protection for the city against those who would threaten it from the outside, so

[26]The topic switches at 386a6. Initially, the interlocutors speak of heroic behavior before embarking upon examining behavior of non-heroic humans.

it is particularly vital to educate the citizens to be courageous.[27]

Along with depictions of the underworld, Socrates believes that the depictions of the displays of lamentation in response to death undermines the development of both courage and moderation in the guardians of the *Kallipolis*. The expurgation of lament is important because lament was both an expression of emotions that relate to disaster (387c-388e). If lamentation is an appropriate response to death, Socrates reasons, then death must be terrible for the person dying (387d-e). Moreover, lament is an extreme emotional response for the person lamenting. Socrates does not remove lament entirely,[28] but limits those who are permitted to lament in poetry to non-exemplary women and cowards (387e-388a). This should further reinforce the notion that lamentation is excessive indulgence in grief over death and dissuade citizens from indulging in this practice.

Although these rules about poetic depictions fear of death and emotional regulation are meant to inspire human behavior, the examples that Socrates uses up to this point concern the actions of gods, δαίμονες,[29] and heroes. In the final section on education through μουσική (starting 392a8), Socrates transitions to discussing the depiction of the rest of humankind in poetry. In this case, Socrates argues that they must censor all of the poetry that Adeimantus used to bolster his claim that injustice is profitable and justice does not lead its possessor to happiness (392a12-b6). However, the interlocutors cannot specify all of the passages that must be censored without first discovering what justice is, since they need to use justice to determine what actions should be preserved within poetry (392c).

[27] In book 4, the interlocutors agree that courage is the virtue of the auxiliary class and, by corollary, the spirited part of the soul (429a-b).

[28] Lament was an important element of the response to death in Greek culture. It was also politically and socially potent and could fuel cycles of vengeance between factions or families. For this reason, in classical Greece, politicians began to restrict lamentation practices in a variety of *poleis*, including Athens. My undergraduate thesis looked at how Plato's restrictions on lament in the *Kallipolis* and the city-in-speech described in the *Laws* reflected and modified restrictions on lament in Athens and elsewhere in Greece.

[29] Δαίμονες (singular: δαίμων) refer to a somewhat amorphous class of divine beings. The best translation might be 'spirits.' This group includes Socrates' famous divine sign (literally δαίμων) that instructs him to refrain from engaging in certain actions (*Ap.* 31d)

3.3.2 The *Kallipolis*'s Complex Relationship with Imitation

Poetry is imitative in two senses: poets imitate life when they create stories and, consequently, poetry provides characters and behaviors that audience members may imitate. Socrates discusses both types in Books 2 and 3. Imitation itself is value neutral: the value stems from the specific actions or characters imitated. If the person and actions that someone is imitating are good, then imitation has value; if the person and actions are ethically bad, engaging in imitation can harm the imitator. Imitation of good models and behaviors is essential to educating the citizens of the *Kallipolis*; it is necessary to have poets who imitate life and character in their poems and provide models, through poetry, for young citizens to imitate and learn from. Despite this, imitation require careful scrutiny to ensure it benefits the *polis*.

Poetic composition is dangerous for the *Kallipolis*, although it is necessary. Poets must have enough understanding of various characters—both good and bad—who inhabit their poetry in order to render their poetry compelling. Yet, in order to achieve compelling portrayal, poets imitate these bad characters seriously; this loosens the poets' grasp on the good life (Ferrari 2010 117). In books 2 and 3, Socrates seems to feel that poets can be constrained sufficiently by the censorship program; if poetry is under the direction of the guardians[30], it can protect both poets and other citizens who engage with poetry.[31] The particular problem with uncensored poets, like Homer, is that in their poetry, these poets imitate models indiscriminately irrespective of ethical considerations (397ca2-4).

Poetry is a story medium through which young children learn about mythology and their society. If poetry is not carefully censored, children may imitate bad models while acting

[30]Socrates has not yet split the classes into auxiliaries and philosopher-kings at this point in the *Republic*, but presumably the arbitration is under the directions of the philosopher kings.

[31]In book 10, Socrates tightens these constraints. He expels the tragedians from the *Kallipolis* and allows only mediocre poets to show their work. I would argue that the implication is that the best poets are those who can understand both good and bad characters and portray both equally well, something undesirable in the *Kallipolis* because only the imitation of that which is good is praiseworthy (and all bad influences must be expelled).

in theatrical performances[32] or imitating characters they encounter in poetry (401b-402a). The actions we undertake habitually shape us and acting badly harms our soul (444c). It is thus important to be careful what we imitate and whom characters are appealing to imitate (395b-396e). The case of heroes acting badly is particularly troubling for those designing an educational system, since children tend to be more tempted to play heroic characters than cowardly characters. The guardians must avoid ethical engagement with the characters they imitate when the models are bad (Ferrari 118). Guardians must only be allowed to identify with a bad character when that character is doing something good (Ferrari 119). This ensures that they do not unintentionally acquire a vicious habit through imitation. For this reason, all stories that present possible models for imitation must be under the direction of the law-makers and philosopher-kings of the *Kallipolis*.

Children's television today uses a somewhat similar approach to regulation. For example, networks restrict depictions of behavior that it would be imprudent or dangerous for children to imitate.[33] Children are more likely to imitate behavior of those whom society reveres (e.g. heroes), than those whom society denigrates (e.g. cowards). Greek heroes, however, were rarely paragons of virtue. Achilles was vengeful and arrogant (391a-c). He also engaged in excessive expressions of grief at the death of his friend, Patroclus (338a).[34] Socrates worries that children might imitate a hero, like Achilles, without realizing that Achilles' actions are harmful. Socrates is conscious that heroes are an object of imitation, so he declares that only those classes of characters which no one wishes to imitate–slaves, cowards, and women[35]—can act badly.

[32] Although pretending to harm someone in a play does not damage a soul to the same extent that it would to harm someone in life, what we embody influences character formation (even when we do not do so seriously).

[33] TV executives refer to this as 'imitable behavior.' In common parlance, 'imitable behavior' is behavior we would like children to imitate; however, in the world of children's television, it refers to behavior that children might imitate that is problematic or dangerous. Today's cartoons, unlike those from earlier decades, cannot depict someone sticking their hand in an electrical socket, resulting in electrocution, because children might be inclined to imitate such behavior.

[34] There are many other vices that one could ascribe to Achilles; these are merely the instances of bad behavior that Socrates discusses.

[35] At this point in the *Republic*, Socrates has not yet proposed that both men and women are guardians (451c*ff.*). For this reason, his interlocutors, might assume only men are educated through the system

Imitating someone who is acting badly is an obvious problem for Socrates, but there is also a subtler problem that arises from imitation. In the opening discussion of the design of the various cities in Book 2, Socrates and his interlocutors agree that it is ideal for each person in a city to have one specific job that they can focus on. In book 4, we will see that this single job per person (and specific job per class) is what makes the city just. Specialization requires not imitating the jobs of others (394e-396c). In particular, because, according to Socrates, 'imitations, if they are practiced much past youth, get established in the habits and nature of body, tones of voice, and mind' (395b-395d1). In other words, those governing the city need to keep citizens not only from imitating genuinely bad actions, but also from imitating actions beyond the scope of their vocation (395b4-396b8).

While unregulated imitation can have negative impacts, imitation is actually an important aspect of education; children learn through imitating exemplars how to behave. Socrates in the *Republic* recognizes that children learn through imitation. Only by ensuring the best models appear in poetry can we ensure that children benefit from the finest way for them to be brought up (400e-401c). Of course, the *Kallipolis* cannot shelter children entirely from the evils of the world, but children must be aware of those evils rather than enticed to imitate them (395e-396a). Socrates is concerned with two aspects of imitation: (1) what children imitate (395b-396e) and (2) whether or not they imitate it seriously ('σπουδῇ') or in play ('παιδιᾶς χάριν'). What seems to be at stake in terms of the seriousness with which it is imitated is whether those engaging in the imitation try to channel the character of that which is imitated and ethically engage with it.[36]

proposed in *Republic* 2-4. However, one might wonder why female guardians should have bad models that exist in the poetry of the *Kallipolis*, while their male counterparts lack bad models to imitate. There are at least three charitable explanations for this seeming tension. (1) As things stand before the gender equality created by the *Kallipolis*, it might be that women are unappealing to imitate, but women in the *Kallipolis* would be appealing to imitate. (2) A related possibility is that female guardians were somehow sufficiently different from women in poetry that they would not take the women in poetry as models. This seems reasonable because he says 'and not even good women' (387e). (3) It is also possible problematic female characters in poetry were expunged in the modified censorship program described in *Republic* 10, which some scholars argues is different from that proposed in *Republic* 2-3.

[36]The rhetoric of ethical engagement I borrow from Ferrari (1990, 118).

3.3.3 Meter, Modes, and Aestheic Judgements that Pave the way for Virtue

In the previous section, I argued that the censorship program aims to cultivate only appropriate sorts of imitation. Each of the levels of imitation I discussed concerned the imitation of content (character, behavior, etc.). Following this, Socrates moves on to discuss imitative forms in poetry. Socrates divides poetry into three styles: the purely narrative style (third-person narrative description), the imitative style (characters speak in their own voice), and mixed (a combination of the two). Socrates and his interlocutors agree that while the imitative style is the most engaging, the *Kallipolis* must permit only the narrative and mixed style. Moreover, in the mixed style, only good characters can speak for themselves. The poets must ensure that they narrate bad behaviors and bad characters. Socrates provides an example of this sort of change: he narrates the opening scene of the *Iliad*, wherein Chryses confronts Agamemnon (393e-394b). While Socrates' narrative treatment renders the passage aesthetically dull, he demonstrates the power of those in control of the censorship program to decrease engagement with bad actions and characters by confining them to third-person narration.

The concern with the power of poetic form went beyond imitation to regulate poetic meter and musical accompaniment, because Socrates and his interlocutors believed these aspects of poetry.[37] Today, we rarely concern ourselves with meter outside of analyzing poetry or music for a class or for intellectual stimulation. However, meter was a matter of great social concern in Plato's day. Music helped soldiers march and rowers row in unison and workers make it through long days in the fields, particularly by creating a steady meter which would allow them to keep time and synchronize movement. Meter also provides an aid to memory, which was particularly important when literacy was limited and texts were expensive to copy and disseminate.

[37]'Musical accompaniment' is perhaps imperfect phrasing. Poetry was often sung or tonally chanted; the music was an integral part of poetry. The Greek word 'μουσική' is more expansive than either 'poetry' or 'music.'

In addition, musical aspects of poetry provided some of poetry's power and influence. While we generally think of poetry as a written—or sometimes spoken—form of art, for the Greeks of Plato's time, poetry was most often performed and sung to or accompanied by music. Music increased the emotional power of poetry. Additionally, music in Plato's time, just as today, was an essential component of education. Today, we know that music correlates with a variety of neurological and developmental benefits; the ancient Greeks exploited such benefits, although they understood them differently than we do today. They tended to associate learning music with character formation. 'Μουσική', the term Socrates uses, is broader than both poetry and music but deals with any art over which the Muses presided. For Plato, both the appropriate amount of musical education the appropriate type of musical exposure had impact on the character of the one educated (398d-399c). Socrates claims that musical modes have specific impacts on the character of those hearing or singing songs in those modes.[38] For example, Mixolydian and Syntonolydian modes are modes of mourning, which overstimulate the emotions (398d-e). There are also modes that encourage giving into both bodily and emotional desires, those which Glaucon states are good for parties, such as Ionian and Lydian modes. These soften the character of the one who engages with them, and are counterproductive for guardians who must undergo military service (389e).

Socrates and his interlocutors discuss the meters and modes of the μουσική allowed within the *Kallipolis* briefly.[39]. Meter, according to Socrates, influences the formation of character (399e-400a, 400d-e), at least in broad strokes by influencing the listener to be attracted to grace and disgusted by that which is clumsy. This is supposedly because rhythm and harmony permeate the soul before the soul can grasp reason (401e-402a). Recognizing the right characteristics in music prepares the guardians for seeking the same sort of harmony in the soul. These influence the sorts of aesthetic judgements which underlie the philosophical judgements they will need to make later in life (402a-d).

[38]Glaucon is the one that associates particular musical modes with the actions or dispositions that Socrates mentions.

[39]They claim that none of them are musical experts and therefore cannot make detailed decisions about the appropriate meters and modes (400a-c)

According to Socrates, rhythm and concord penetrate deeper inside the soul than anything else (401d). The person who has been brought up with the best kind of music will be the right sort of person; such a person is trained to recognize fine things in music, and therefore develops a taste to love what is beautiful and to hate what is shameful (401d-e). Children can develop this before the rational part of the soul fully develops (402a) because aesthetic values appeal to the spirited part of the soul instead of to the rational part of the soul. However, the aesthetic inclinations develop the desire for harmony and fineness that the rational part of the soul will identify with the various virtues, particularly moderation. This means that the recognition of aesthetic beauty serves to prepare the soul for the intellectual pleasure which will serve as a guide to virtue later on (402a-d).

3.4 Wielding the Power of Poetry: The Purpose of the Censorship Program

Given the power that poets wielded through their ability to depict and manipulate emotions, audiences were inclined to treat poets as ethical experts. We see this clearly reflected in the opening speeches in Book 2 by Glaucon and Adeimantus. Both quote the poets as ethical authorities.[40] For Plato, ability to create beautiful and moving pieces of art should not be confused with genuine ethical expertise. However, when individuals mistake poets for ethical experts and follow their guidance, they are not following someone with *episteme*, but merely those who are able to imitate life in a way that is aesthetically pleasing and emotionally engaging; thus poetry can be ethically counterproductive or dangerous.

Moreover, the emotional power of poets mean that the content of the poetry is reinforced by the form in which it occurs. In other words, *doxai* can be accepted more readily, given greater credence, or embraced more enthusiastically if they come through poetry. This happens both with propositional beliefs and with knacks or habits picked up by children. In

[40] Glaucon, of course, is challenging Aeschylus' authority. However, using Aeschylus as a foil for his speech shows the influence of the poets on ethical discourse.

order to ensure the ability to consistently train virtuous citizens, children must have the sorts of *doxai* that dispose them to act virtuously before they are able to understand explanations about why particular *doxai* are beneficial. Since the rational part of the soul develops throughout childhood but only fully emerges late in this development, it is important that children have the right sort of *doxai* (both beliefs that predispose them to act in a certain way and knacks for certain types of action) so that the emerging rational capacity can grow strong enough to harness and direct the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul as opposed to be overwhelmed by them.

Ultimately, poetry wields power over the emotions in all individuals, but especially in the young. Poetry has the ability to shape our emotions, which develop before intellectual capacity and are strong enough to sway the rational part of the soul if not adequately kept in check. The poets have the ability, also, to make the best life and what is truly fine seem appealing (401c6-d3, Ferrari 112). If the tales entice listeners to act well, then the guardians will take pleasure in appropriate actions and harmonious aesthetics (414b1-6, 415d3-5).

While poetry has the power to serve as a force to shape good character, poets lack the ability to discriminate the good from the bad; poets specialize in imitation, not virtue. In order to tell a story in an emotionally gripping fashion, a poet imitates the good person and the bad with equal seriousness. It provides a realistic and moving picture of how both sorts of characters interact in real life. Thus, what Socrates imagines traditional poetry to encourage is 'certain weaknesses of character to which we are all prone, and which are, so to speak, only a movement of the soul away' (Ferrari 1990: 111). This, of course, encourages people to give into the desires of other parts of our character and commit injustice or intemperance. This hurts our soul, just as indulging in the wrong foods or exercising in the wrong way hurts our bodies.

Instead, the *Kallipolis* must create a class of people who are not tempted by these faults to rule the *polis*. Part of this is providing an education primarily in what is fine and only allowing them to imitate fine actions.For Plato, society functions better in cases where

labor is divided between people and the division of labor is not determined by family or some other arbitrary reasoning, but rather is determined by personality and inclination of the individual. For him, expertise is incredibly highly prized, because we rely on experts to make our lives easier, provide specific products or services, and to teach the next generation of experts, so that the expertise gets passed down from generation to generation. In the case of the rulers, the experts must be experts in virtue to ensure that the city remains virtuous.

3.5 How the Early Education Provides a Foundation for the Later Education

Rulers of the *Kallipolis* must make sure that children have the right kernels and that they begin to develop their souls in the right way. This is extremely important for maintaining a system that cultivates virtuous citizens. Without the right sort of preparation early on, children do not have the stamina, the intellectual capacity, or the attraction toward fineness that underlies the character of the philosopher-king. In societies which lack the rigorous educational system of the *Kallipolis*, those with a philosophical nature fail to achieve their potential. In these societies, those with philosophical nature become either corrupted or useless. The censorship program serves as the first line of defense to protect those with a philosophical nature from corruption.

According to Socrates, those with a philosophical nature have the potential to become either great or terrible. He uses the metaphor of plants:[41] a plant thrives and grows strong in the appropriate climate and habitat, but more completely fails to develop its potential in an adverse environment (491d). He claims that, in an adverse environment, the best natures will become the most corrupt; more corrupt than an inferior nature (491d). He claims that souls with the greatest potential (those with philosophical natures) become particularly bad through bad education. The greatest crimes stem from a good nature corrupted by

[41]He also says that the same applies to animals and other living beings (491d).

upbringing (491e). Socrates argues that political systems aside from the *Kallipolis*, and especially democratic systems, are adverse environments for those with philosophical natures (492a-493a). Socrates describes the corrupting power of a mass of citizens stirred up by speakers (492b-c, trans. Grube rev. Reeve 1992):[42]

> When many of them are sitting together in assemblies, courts, theatres, army camps, or in some other public gathering of the crowd, they object very loudly and excessively to some of the things that are said or done and approve others in the same way, shouting and clapping so that the very rocks and surroundings echo in the din of their praise or blame and double it. In circumstances like that, what is the effect, as they say, on a young person's heart? What private training can hold out and not be swept away by that kind of praise or blame and be carried by the flood wherever it goes, so that he'll say that the same things are beautiful or ugly as the crowd does, follow the same way of life as they do, and be the same sort of person as they are?

Democratic societies entail a certain amount of peer-pressure; and given that the majority is empowered to enforce their opinions, even if those opinions are ill-informed. For example, in democratic *poleis*, citizens punish those who fail to conform to their will through loss of rights, fines, and the death penalty (492d). Socrates' trial and death illustrates this point poignantly for Plato's audience.

Despite the adverse environment, a few of those with philosophical natures, like Socrates,[43] resist corruption (490e). Socrates discusses these unusual individuals when Adeimantus challenges him to defend the contention that philosophers ought to rule.[44] Socrates argues that

[42]This is not limited to sophists, Socrates claims. It is not that any particular group is corrupting the citizens, but the power of mass praise or blame that corrupts the soul. It provides an intense emotional reward if the crowd praises or blames an individual's speech or actions. Since the praise and blame of the crowd do not follow reason or any pattern, the young person will tend to expend their effort following the opinions of the crowd instead of seeking virtue or truth (492b

[43]Socrates cites himself as an example (496c). He claims that his δαίμων kept him on the path of philosophy.

[44]Adeimantus' challenge (487b-d) is that most of those who study philosophy become thoroughly bad and the best of the philosophers are useless. Socrates responds with the image of the *polis* as a ship, where the philosopher is analogized to the captain of a ship despised by the mutinous sailors (488b-489a). Socrates analogizes the ship's captain, who is conversant in weather patters and navigation, to the philosopher.

those who learn philosophy and remain uncorrupted are misunderstood by the *polis*; in other words, they are not useless but unused. Since average citizens fail to understand philosophical expertise, they cannot provide useful employment for the philosophers (489b-c). Moreover, as Socrates later explains, genuine philosophers tend to be awkward and fit poorly into the conventional *polis*; in other words, 'it is inevitable that they find fault with the philosophers' (494a5).

The citizens of the *Kallipolis*, unlike citizens of ordinary *poleis*, are content to defer to their philosopher-kings. The *Kallipolis* ensures harmony of the classes through the educational system that Socrates and his interlocutors constructed in books 2-3.[45] The *doxai* instilled by poetry are important in creating this harmony. One myth that children in the *Kallipolis* would hear from very young, presumably in poetic form, was the Myth of the Metals (414d-415c). In the myth, the god who fashioned the citizens of the *Kallipolis* infused metal into each soul to designate the soul's place within the *polis*: gold for rulers, silver for auxiliaries, and iron and bronze for those who farm and produce goods. While, in general, parents of each metal give birth to children of the same metal, sometimes parents may birth children infused with a different sort of metal. These anomalous children, instead of remaining with their parents, transfer to grow up with those of their own metal. There is an oracle that says that the city will fall if ruled by someone who is iron or bronze, so it is important that those of each metal type stick to their appropriate duties. The oracle in the myth helps reinforce the importance of keeping to one's own task, being at peace with one's position, and maintaining the harmony by which the *polis* flourishes.

Two other aspects of education in μουσική reinforce the *doxai* children acquire through poetry: providing only good models for imitation and permitting only the sorts of music that promote the right sort of citizen and actions. These constraints on what poets and musicians

Both the captain and the philosopher have specialized expertise (or at least a body of knowledge and set of skills) that those who lack it fail to understand. In both cases, others around them consider them to be useless.

[45]This harmony is the civic form of moderation; Socrates defines moderation as the harmony between the parts, 431e-432a

can produce and disseminate throughout the city aid in maintaining the harmony of the city, because they promote moderation and emulation of virtue within individuals.[46]

The most important aspect of the educational program of the *Kallipolis* is the creation of the philosopher-kings who possess *episteme*-virtue. As I argued above, only with a draconian censorship program is the creation of a philosopher-king possible. Without strict censorship of the *doxai* with which those with philosophical natures interact, it would be impossible to cultivate those who have the intellectual fortitude and properly balanced character to acquire *episteme*-virtue. Without this sort of education, Socrates is perhaps the best result of a philosophical nature: he appears to have *doxa*-virtue that is close (or at least closer than anyone else) to *episteme*-virtue. It is clear, then, why philosophers in current *poleis* cannot develop the necessary capacities to reach *episteme*-virtue: there is no adequate educational system such that they could study with proper direction as well as no education system that inculcates the desire in the rest of the populous to obey one who is genuinely wise. In order to surpass *doxa*-virtue, the philosopher kings' undergo many years of education; they continue until the age of 50, at which point they finally grasp the form of the good (540a). The process is extraordinarily stringent because it is extremely difficult to train the philosopher-kings to access the forms and become truly virtuous. They need more that *doxa*-virtue, they need *episteme*-virtue to ensure that the next generation receives the same quality of rule and ensures the peace and harmony of the *Kallipolis*. Since the education process must begin before children develop the rational part of their soul, it is necessary for the constitution to provide a system of training. Once the philosopher-kings grasp the form of the good, they possess *episteme*-virtue.

Book 5 explains that the class of philosopher-kings must rule so that the city can embody justice and the other virtues. The censorship program exists not only to foster philosopher-kings, but also to ensure that all of the citizens of the *Kallipolis* fulfill their

[46]There is a controversy over whether virtue is only cultivated in the guardian classes (the auxiliaries and the philosopher kings), or whether virtue is cultivated in all three classes. I remain ambivalent in this paper. Either way, there must be some character cultivation in the producer class in order to maintain civic harmony, and the censorship program in the *Kallipolis* aims to aid the creation of such harmony.

role. It is only with the early training which makes education fun and encourages the young guardians to indulge in intellectual pleasure, above all other sorts of pleasure, allows the young guardians to sustain the necessary learning process. It also ensures that citizens other than the guardians are content to live in harmony under the rule of the philosopher kings.

I have thus far argued that the educational system of the *Kallipolis* is necessary for the *episteme*-virtue, but I have not provided textual evidence to demonstrate that this is the goal of the philosopher-kings' education. In the conclusion, I provide a rough sketch of this argument. To defend the position in full would require another chapter that carefully examines books 6-7.[47]

[47]I plan to write a full manuscript defending the view that the educational system of the philosopher-kings aims at turning *doxa*-virtue into *episteme*-virtue.

Conclusion

Plato's *Meno* opens with the fundamental question, 'can one be taught to be virtuous?' The answer to this questions is not straightforward, but I argue in this dissertation that Plato thought genuine virtue could be taught, but only under the strictly controlled conditions of the *Kallipolis*. The *Meno* demonstrates that there are two distinct cognitive states commonly referred to as '*arete*' (virtue) that guide one to perform the right actions. One of the cognitive states colloquially called '*arete*' is genuine virtue; it is a form of ethical expertise and it can be taught. The other cognitive state referred to in this way is a sort of pseudo-virtue; it is a knack for doing the right thing. Unlike *episteme*-virtue, *doxa*-virtue cannot be taught (87b-c). Socrates and his interlocutors fail to discover living ethical experts (88d*ff.*) who might serve to teach virtue to the next generation. However, in the final lines of the *Meno*, Socrates imagines a statesman with this expertise who could successfully teach virtue to statesmen of the next generation. I argue that in the *Republic*, Plato takes up this project and creates a society where the main aim is to create a succession of statesmen with ethical expertise. The censorship program is a vital to nurturing the sort the sort of citizens who can acquire *episteme*-virtue under the correct constitution.

The argument that I put forward in the dissertation lays out this epistemology and ethics from the *Meno* and show the connection between the *Meno* and *Republic*. I want to extend this analysis to show that the completion of the philosopher-king's educational program is intended to create ethical experts. These ethical experts must rule the city to maintain justice and the other virtues as well as teaching the next generation of ethical

experts. In the first section, I provide a brief outline of how I would demonstrate that the educational goals of the *Kallipolis* are to create a self-replicating class of ethical experts, where ethical expertise is losslessly passed from one generation to the next. In the second section, I use insights from the *Meno* and *Republic* to propose a novel way to resolve a tension in the *Apology.* In the *Apology*, Socrates hints several times that he is virtuous, but claims that he lacks the specialized sort of episteme that constitutes virtue. In the *Republic*, Socrates claims that he properly nurtured his philosophical nature (aided by his *daimon*, but since he failed to grow up under the correct sort of constitution, he is useless to the *polis*. I argue that he managed to acquire *doxa*-virtue, but fell short of acquiring *episteme*-virtue. Thus, Socrates often engages in virtuous actions, but *doxa*—rather than *episteme*—guides those actions.

Educating the Philosopher-Kings in *Episteme*-virtue

I argued in Chapter 3 that the aim of the *Kallipolis* is to create a *polis* perpetually governed by virtuous individuals The discussion of the early education of candidates for *episteme*-virtue occurs in Books 2-3 of the *Republic*. The later education that turns these candidates for *episteme*-virtue into those who possess *episteme*-virtue occurs in books 6-7. The challenging nature of the later education necessitates careful training.

Doxa-virtue, a prerequisite for the training in *episteme*-virtue, is the result of the early education described in Books 2-4. Books 6 and 7 of the Republic discuss the final step in the educational system—dialectic—that ultimately produces *episteme*. He demonstrates the rigorous process that one has to go through if one wants *episteme* rather than just *doxa*.

The careful cultivation of *episteme*-virtue is the final goal of the *Republic*'s educational system. *doxa*-virtue, for the ruling class of the *Kallipolis*, is an insufficient basis upon which to rule the city consistently and to train the next generation, although *doxa*-virtue is sufficient to carry a citizen through youth and military service. Acquiring *episteme*-virtue is

a much longer process only attempted after a guardian has finished military service (498b-c). Someone who wishes to possess *episteme*-virtue must study the Form of the Good (505a-b).

Glaucon asks Socrates for an account of the Good. Socrates declines, but offers to provide an explanation, instead, of what he claims appears to be the offspring (τόκος or ἔκγονος) of the Good (507a): *episteme*. He layws out a famous account of his epistemology. Socrates and Glaucon do not equate *episteme* with the Child of the Good explicitly, but Socrates uses a metaphor which makes this clear. Socrates says that the Good is like the sun and knowledge is like sight (506d). The sun is 'the cause of sight and can be seen by sight' (508b); essentially, the sun provides light which allows the eyes to exercise their capacity to see (i.e. causing sight). Similarly, the Good is the cause of the capacity to know and can be known by the capacity to know.[48]

Socrates seems to claim that there are two ways to gain information about the world: through sight and through reason.[49] Each of these ways of acquiring information has a designated object: seen things and conceived things. One is about the world of appearance and the other is about the intelligible world. Each of the two unequal sections of the line, the 'δοξαστόν' (*doxa*-able) and 'the γνωστόν' (*episteme*-able),[50] are divided into two unequal sections, leaving four sections total. Socrates begins by discussing visual sections; he starts from the more obscure, images (which includes shadows, reflections, and other images of objects), and moving to the clearer, things (the visual objects of everyday life like animals, plants, and artifacts) (510a). Socrates employs the same analogy that he had utilized previously to explicate the relationship of the conceived to the seen, when he explains the relationship between the subsections of the seen: the thing which a likeness resembles and the likeness.

While Socrates appears to be hearkening back to the earlier division (509d-e), he

[48]Or the cause of what enables the exercise of that capacity.

[49]There are obviously more than two senses, because earlier he mentions hearing, but sight is the one upon which the analogy is based.

[50]The Greek does not make this position clear, but I argue that the link can be made despite the difference in vocabulary.

employs radically different terminology at 510a. Instead of using 'the conceived' and 'the seen' from the earlier analogy (509d-e), Socrates makes a switch to 'δοξαστόν' and 'the γνωστόν'. If Socrates is utilizing the analogy that he was earlier, and he must be given that Glaucon so readily agrees to these terms, he has casually swapped the concepts he was using——the seen and the conceived——for 'δοξαστόν' and 'the γνωστόν'. The analogy is no longer about perception (mental and visual) but about apprehension.

Socrates divides the knowable into two parts: understanding νόησις) and thought (διάνοια). Socrates differentiates the two: 'for in the one case, the soul, using as images those things which were imitated, is forced to examine from hypotheses, proceeding not to a first principle but to a conclusion, and for the other—which proceeds to a first principle unconditionally—[the soul investigates] going from the hypotheses and, without the images concerning this things, making an investigation with the forms through themselves.' So, the soul proceeds to both thought and understanding by starting with hypotheses and making an investigation. However, it seems that two things which differentiate these two processes are (1) the types of aids they use and (2) the endpoint of the investigations. Investigation starts with a hypothesis. Socrates differentiates a posteriori reasoning from reasoning which leads to first principles. Instead of using geometric methodology, the inquirer uses dialectic to reach the first principle.

It is clear from the *Republic*, that *episteme* is used in a narrower sense than in the *Meno*. In the *Meno*, *episteme* refers to a bread range of expertise, including thos in the physical world It seems, in *Republic* 6 and 7 that Socrates limits *episteme* to *a priori* subject matter. Socrates additionally argues that those who possess *episteme* of the intelligibles it a privileged ability to make good decisions in the physical world (484d*ff.*).[51] The question left hanging at the end of Book 6 is how one can achieve *episteme*, if the type of reasoning used in geometry falls short. It seems that in Book 6, geometry does not fall short of *episteme*, but it is a lesser form than that achieved by dialectic (510a-511e).

[51]Scwab does an excellent job of explaining this argument and why it is convincing (Scwab 2017).

In Book 7, Socrates focuses on dialectic and the particular type of *episteme* it produces. Dialectic, just as in its earlier description at 511b, is the only process by which an inquirer can truly grasp that which is. Although the vocabulary differs in almost every respect (even the word for grasp is αἱρέω at 511b and λαμβάνω at 533b), the conceptual framework is the same between the two passages. I think the reason for this change is that Socrates in the second instance, narrows the range *episteme* further so that it only refers to the highest section of the line, rather than the top two. A reason may come in the critique of geometry. The critique of geometry at 533b-c directly follows the description of dialectic. The Greek here is particularly difficult and requires significant interpretation. I think, however, Socrates is illustrating the point about hypotheses that he makes all along. His question amounts to this: if you start with a hypothesis that remains a hypothesis, is not connected to the first principles and not met the stardards for this narrow sort of ethical expertise, how can your conclusions, or the deductions you make yield *episteme*? Since the premises are not secured by reference to the Forms—or perhaps the Form of the Good—then how can the conclusion provide an answer that is any more than a hypothesis itself? Mathematics cannot take one all the way to the first principle, since it begin with something that is not stably rooted in the first principle (533c). Socrates thus claims that *episteme* is a product of dialectic and that it makes up the topmost part of the divided line (533e). He thus replaces the original term, 'νόησις', with '*episteme*' at the top of the line, and he changes the term for the top two portions from 'νόητον' to 'νόησις'. Returning to the phrasing from 510a, Socrates names the bottom two portions of the line '*doxa*'.[52]

Socrates concludes his excursus on dialectic in Book 7 by arguing that dialectic produces *episteme*. It is this rigorous process that provides one the intellectual tools to consistently make correct ethical decisions as a statesman. Only at 534b-c does Socrates explain what this entails. At 533c, Socrates argues dialectic proceeds to the Form of the Good so as to be secure. ό, the world meaning 'to be secure,' according to the LSJ has a specialized

[52]The statement in the Republic that math is a proper object of *episteme* fits with Socrates' use of geometry with the slave boy to demonstrate how one can acquire true beliefs (and eventually arrive at *episteme*).

meaning 'to secure one's ground in an argument' and I think this is the specific usage that Socrates employs, because Socrates explains that a person with *episteme* can hold his own against any argument (534b-d). Once again, Socrates returns to the idea of an explanation being necessary for *episteme*; as the geometers are unable to provide an account of their hypotheses, they cannot produce *episteme* and similarly only someone who can provide an account (logos) of the Good can know the Good (534b). The reason that the geometers cannot provide a complete account is that they allow certain assumptions to remain uninvestigated in their argument (510b).[53] I think this further builds on the requirement of being able to answer challenges that appears in the *Meno*, but for dialectic, a person must be able to answer challenges on any premise in the argument and be able to ground their answer in the Form of the Good.

Beyond the *Meno* and *Republic*: Resolving a Puzzle about Virtue in the *Apology*

In the *Meno*, Socrates and Anytus only consider two candidates for virtue: the sophists and the καλοὶ κἀγαθοί (in the sense of citizens who exhibit moral excellence). In the *Meno*, there are hints that Socrates is an unexplored candidate for virtue; in the *Republic*, Socrates claims that he is one of the few people with a philosophical nature who studied philosophy and did not become a crank. This confirms that Socrates is a virtue candidate, although the *Republic* seems to argue that, without a constitution which fosters virtue first and foremost, obtaining *episteme*-virtue may be impossible (CITE). In short, while Socrates is a virtue candidate, he falls short of being genuinely virtuous; instead of possessing *episteme*-virtue, Socrates seems to possess *doxa*-virtue. I further explore the reasons behind Socrates' ability

[53]It is worthwhile to note that in the Republic, Plato uses logos rather than *logismos*. It may be that *logismos* would be confusing in this context because of its close proximity to a discussion about mathematics. However, there may be other reasons. For example, the Form of the Good seems to function differently than the other forms (it serves as the sun that illuminates the other forms in the sun analogy), so perhaps the use of the word logos here is supposed to indicate something to the reader.

to acquire *doxa*-virtue in Chapter 3. In Chapter 3, I argue that Socrates explains how he achieved this, despite living under a constitution not built to foster virtue. The interpretation that I offer provides a possible solution to a long-standing problem in the *Apology*.

In the *Apology*, Socrates both implies that he is virtuous and explicitly argues that he is not virtuous. The tension might be represented in the following way:

1. Virtue is a special kind of *episteme* (20a-c)
2. Socrates is virtuous (20d-23b, 30c-d)
3. Socrates lacks this special kind of *episteme* (20c-d, 29b-c)

If virtue is a kind of *episteme* and Socrates is virtuous, he must have that sort of *episteme*, despite denying that he has it. However, if I am correct that there are two epistemic states colloquially referred to as '*arete*', then we might be able to solve this puzzle.'*Arete*' refers to two epistemic states: (1) *episteme*-virtue, which is genuine virtue and a special kind of *episteme* (20a-c) and (2) *doxa*-virtue, which is a sort of pseudo-virtue that is a special kind of *doxa*, rather than a special kind of *episteme*. Socrates lacks this special kind of *episteme* (20c-d, 29b-c). Instead, he has what he calls 'human wisdom', which is a sort of *doxa*-virtue. Given this, we can interpret passages that imply that Socrates has virtue (20d-23b, 30c-d) as implications of *doxa*-virtue that closely approximates the results of *episteme*-virtue.

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