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## **Sappho and Anacreon in Plato's *Phaedrus***

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ABSTRACT: Plato's praise of the poets Sappho and Anacreon at *Phaedrus* 235c is a sincere tribute to their vivid presentations of the shock of love. Allusions to the lyric poets in the prologue and Socrates' narrative of soul support Plato's exploration of the relationship between *mania* and self-control. Plato analyses the power-dynamic within a soul experiencing erotic desire and in response to the poets creates an intricate picture of how the force and energy of *eros* is absorbed, transferred and redirected.

### **1. Introduction**

At *Phaedrus* 235c Plato names the poets Sappho and Anacreon. Various interpretations of this naming have been offered over the past fifty years and the question of its relation to the rest of the *Phaedrus* has been judged 'difficult and controversial'.<sup>1</sup> I would like to contribute to this on-going discussion by defending the thesis that Plato names and praises Sappho and Anacreon at 235c in order to acknowledge their influence on his thought on love.<sup>2</sup> While respecting the distinction between philosophical and other discourse, I shall argue that the poetry of Sappho and Anacreon provided distinctive and valuable insights that helped to shape Plato's views and treatment of love. On this reading 235c offers an opaque but nevertheless sincere praise of the poets in order to highlight the influence of their insights. I therefore regard 235c as part of a technique evident in the dialogues at large: Plato's use of popular or familiar ideas as the departure point for explorations that lead to the production of his own philosophy.

Within the lyric vision the lover experiences the god Eros as a powerful external force. *Phaedrus* responds to this vision and reconfigures the nature of love. The reason why Plato pays tribute to Sappho and Anacreon is that they have captured and expressed so vividly the shock of love. In *Phaedrus* Plato details the power-dynamic within a soul experiencing erotic desire. By analysing the soul and how it functions Plato creates an intricate picture of how the force and energy of *eros* is absorbed, transferred and redirected. But throughout this alternative account Plato alludes to the lyric poets, recalling and reshaping their verses in line with his own views on the correct way to love. I shall demonstrate how poetic insights on the force of love are integral to Plato's exploration of how *mania* and reason can be mutually supportive. Indeed, Plato's allusions to Sappho and Anacreon create an intriguing intertextuality between the dialogue and lyric which challenges the well-established view of Plato as hostile to poetry.

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<sup>1</sup> Foley (1998), 41.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank J.T. Wolfenden for astute comments on a previous version of this paper and M. Heath for expert editing. I am also grateful to the Faculty of Arts at Leeds and Professor A.S. Thompson for making possible my teaching relief and research leave during 2006-7.

While a number of other poets and writers are named and referenced in *Phaedrus*,<sup>3</sup> I shall deal only with the lyric poets, since the engagement with poetry of different types in this text is too widespread for effective treatment in a single paper.<sup>4</sup> Whatever is said here about the lyric poetry of Sappho and Anacreon may have a bearing on Plato's references to epic and dramatic poetry, or indeed other forms of Greek poetry and literature at large, but I wish to avoid hasty claims about those other genres or authors. While my study does indeed open up the broader question of Plato's response to Greek poetry and his philosophical use of the literary tradition, it seems worthwhile to try to isolate and deal with the specifics of one particular case.<sup>5</sup> Since Sappho and Anacreon also serve in the text as representatives of the lyric tradition as a whole, I shall compare Platonic passages not only with the verses of Sappho and Anacreon but also with those of Stesichorus and Ibycus, both also named in *Phaedrus*,<sup>6</sup> and those of Alcaeus and Theognis, who are not named but who can provide further examples of the lyric poetry and motifs known both to Plato and his fourth-century audience. Since an exclusive focus on Sappho and Anacreon could distort understanding of the *Phaedrus*' relationship with love lyric, widening the sample to a set of six poets is an attempt to place the Sapphic and Anacreontic material more carefully in its context. The fragmentary nature of the lyric corpus makes it difficult to judge what may or may not be identified as distinctively Sapphic or Anacreontic. But a review of the six poets, while it cannot determine what was specific to any individual, can at least better indicate which themes or motifs were shared among them. My aim, then, is to consider, against the background of the lyric tradition at large, Plato's engagement in *Phaedrus* with the two specific poets named and praised at 235c.

Various Sapphic and Anacreontic influences have been identified in the dialogue. Through a close analysis of the texts and tracing both shared vocabulary and broader motifs, I shall offer my own reading of Plato's allusions to Sappho and Anacreon. My approach in tracing the allusions will be to follow the compositional structure of the dialogue. After beginning with the prologue (my §2) and moving ahead to the naming of the poets at 235c (§3), I shall then take the speeches themselves in sequence. Addressing Lysias' speech and Socrates' first speech together, I shall consider the dialogue's early treatment of the theme of force (§4). Finally, after a brief overview of Socrates' second speech (§5), I shall

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<sup>3</sup> Homer at 243a-b and 278c2; Sophocles at 268c5 and 269a1; Euripides at 268c5; Solon at 258c1 and 278c3; Anaxagoras 270a4-6; and Hippocrates 270c-d. In addition to Lysias and Isocrates (227a etc, 278e-279b), various rhetoricians, e.g. Gorgias, Thrasymachus, Theodorus, Prodicus, Hippias, and Tisias, are named (see 261c, 266c, 266e-267c, and 273a-e). The text is explicit throughout on its engagement with the Greek literary and rhetorical tradition. On the use of Stesichorus at 243a-b, see Demos (1999), 65-86.

<sup>4</sup> On the scale of the topic across the dialogues at large, Halliwell (2000), 94 comments: 'In the case of Plato, an engagement with the culturally powerful texts and voices of poetry is so evident, so persistent, and so intense as to constitute a major thread running through the entire fabric of his writing and thinking.'

<sup>5</sup> This is to take a different approach from Halliwell, who considers the 'larger issues of evaluation and influence which inform so many of the strategies of citation dramatized by Plato' (2000, 111).

<sup>6</sup> Ibycus at 242c8; Stesichorus at 243a5 and 244a2.

identify four main episodes in the narrative of the soul in love: Horses, wings and chariots (§5.1); Memory (§5.2); Regrowth (§5.3); and Self-control (§5.4).

## 2. The prologue: an encounter with lyric

The journey of Socrates and Phaedrus along the Ilissus dramatises the dialogue's encounter with lyric poetry and contextualises the specific allusions to Sappho and Anacreon that will follow in the speeches on love. The Ilissus serves as a situational allusion to the genre of lyric by recalling the eroticised meadows of love poetry.<sup>7</sup> My reading of the prologue follows Calame's identification of Plato's Boreas and Oreithuia meadow as a seduction scene of the type familiar in Greek myth and poetry (1999, 154-7). Calame marks out this scene as a 'prelude meadow', cites examples of similar abductions elsewhere in Greek poetry, and explains how these lush landscapes represent sexual initiation, especially for young girls at play (1999, 163-7).<sup>8</sup>

As Socrates and Phaedrus begin their walk along the stream, it is Phaedrus who first points up the sensuous landscape. He notes that the stream beneath their feet will be 'not unpleasant' (οὐκ ἀηδές), especially given the season and time of day, and then signals the attractions of the spot to which he is guiding them (229a8-b2):

ὄρας οὖν ἐκείνην τὴν ὑψηλοτάτην πλάτανον; ... ἐκεῖ σκιά τ' ἐστὶν καὶ πνεῦμα μέτριον, καὶ πόα καθίζεσθαι ἢ ἂν βουλώμεθα κατακλινῆναι.

Well then, you see that very tall plane-tree? ... There's shade and a moderate breeze there, and grass to sit on, or lie on, if we like. (tr. Rowe)

When Socrates bids him to lead on, Phaedrus asks Socrates whether they are now on the very site of the rape of Oreithuia (229b4-6):

ΦΑΙ. εἰπέ μοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, οὐκ ἐνθένδε μέντοι ποθὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰλισσοῦ λέγεται ὁ Βορέας τὴν Ὠρείθυϊαν ἀρπάσσει;

ΣΩ. λέγεται γάρ.

Phdr: Tell me, Socrates, wasn't it from somewhere just here that Boreas is said to have seized Oreithuia from the Ilissus?

Soc: Yes, so it's said. (tr. Rowe)

It is difficult to catch the tone of Socrates' two-word response but when Phaedrus presses, it is evident that he is trying to elicit more of a reaction from his friend (229b7-9):

ἄρ' οὖν ἐνθένδε; χαρίεντα γοῦν καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ διαφανῆ τὰ ὑδάτια φαίνεται, καὶ ἐπιτήδεια κόραις παίζειν παρ' αὐτά.

<sup>7</sup> In Pender (2007), 66-72 I present a fuller discussion of Plato's use of the Ilissus meadow as a situational allusion to the lyric genre. The term 'situational allusion' is taken from Hinds (1998, 136).

<sup>8</sup> Calame (1999), 153-4 identifies the prelude meadow as a specific type of *locus amoenus* and observes that the 'mythological and theological paradigm' of an eroticised meadow occurs at Homer's *Iliad* 14.312-51. He also compares Hesiod *Theogony* 276-9. On the Ilissus meadow as *locus amoenus*, see Foley (1998), 45; Rowe (1986), 141; and de Vries (1969), 56.

Well, was it from here? The water of the stream certainly looks attractively pure and clear and just right for young girls to play beside it. (tr. Rowe)

Phaedrus is directing attention to the charms of the scene (χαρίεντα)<sup>9</sup> and to the innocent play that precedes a seduction.<sup>10</sup> The slight innuendo seems to be brushed aside by Socrates and the conversation takes a different turn.

But soon Socrates breaks off his new theme and, with evident gamesmanship, delivers his knowing reaction to Phaedrus' provocative suggestion (230a6-c5):

ἀτάρ, ὦ ἑταῖρε, μεταξὺ τῶν λόγων, ἄρ' οὐ τόδε ἦν τὸ δένδρον ἐφ' ὅπερ ἦγες ἡμᾶς; ... νῆ τὴν Ἑραν, καλὴ γε ἡ καταγωγὴ. ἢ τε γὰρ πλάτανος αὕτη μάλ' ἀμιλαφῆς τε καὶ ὑψηλῆ, τοῦ τε ἄγνου τὸ ὕψος καὶ τὸ σύσκιον πάγκαλον, καὶ ὡς ἀκμὴν ἔχει τῆς ἀνθῆς ὡς ἂν εὐωδέστατον παρέχοι τὸν τόπον· ἢ τε αὖ πηγὴ χαριεστάτη ὑπὸ τῆς πλατάνου ρεῖ μάλα ψυχροῦ ὕδατος, ὥστε γε τῷ ποδὶ τεκμήρασθαι. Νυμφῶν τέ τινων καὶ Ἀχελῷου ἱερὸν ἀπὸ τῶν κορῶν τε καὶ ἀγαλμάτων ἔοικεν εἶναι. εἰ δ' αὖ βούλει, τὸ εὔπνοον τοῦ τόπου ὡς ἀγαπητὸν καὶ σφόδρα ἠδύ· θερινόν τε καὶ λιγυρὸν ὑπὸ τῷ τῶν τεττίγων χορῷ. πάντων δὲ κομψότατον τὸ τῆς πόας, ὅτι ἐν ἡρέμα προσάντει ἱκανὴ πέφυκε κατακλινέντι τὴν κεφαλὴν παγκάλας ἔχειν.

But, my friend, to interrupt our conversation, wasn't this the tree you were taking us to? ... By Hera, a fine stopping place! This plane-tree is very spreading and tall, and the tallness and shadiness of the agnus are quite lovely; and being in full flower it seems to make the place smell as sweetly as it could. The stream, too, flows very attractively under the plane, with the coolest water, to judge by my foot. From the figurines and statuettes, the spot seems to be sacred to some Nymphs and to Achelous. Then again, if you like, how welcome it is, the freshness of the place, and very pleasant; it echoes with a summery shrillness to the cicadas' song. Most delightful of all is the matter of the grass, growing on a gentle slope and thick enough to be just right to rest one's head upon. (tr. Rowe)

In this way Socrates makes clear that he was perfectly alert to the literary *topos* to which Phaedrus was alluding—namely the description of an idyllic meadow that functions as the prelude to seduction.<sup>11</sup> Here at 230 Socrates deliberately intensifies each of the features highlighted by Phaedrus at 229. For as he expresses his own approval and delight the landscape and its sensuous effects become more vivid. The water (ὕδατιον) now flows (ρεῖ) as 'a most delightful stream' (πηγὴ χαριεστάτη)<sup>12</sup> and while merely implicitly cool earlier is now described explicitly as 'very cold' (μάλα ψυχροῦ). The bare feet reappear as Socrates refers to his own foot as giving proof of this now very cold temperature.

<sup>9</sup> For χάρις vocabulary as a signature of lyric, see e.g. Anacreon 402a-c (χαρίεν; χαρίεντα... χαρίεντα) or 394 (χαριεσσα); and Sappho 2.2 (χαρίεν). The familiar presence of the Graces (Χάριτες) is a further distinctive element of the genre, see e.g. Stesichorus 212; Alcaeus 386; Sappho 44b, 53, 81, 103, and 128; Theognis 15-18; Ibycus 282c fr.1, 288; and Anacreon 346 fr. 3.

<sup>10</sup> That Oreithuia was 'playing' prior to the abduction is stressed again at 229c8 (παίζουσαν). In the conclusion to the work Plato draws attention again to the setting (278b) and again highlights the element of play (278b7): 'So now we have had due amusement (πεπαίσθω μετρίως) from the subject of speaking' (tr. Rowe).

<sup>11</sup> Foley (1998), 46 makes the point that since Hera is the goddess of marriage, Socrates' oath picks up the theme of seduction and sexual initiation.

<sup>12</sup> At 242a1 the stream is 'this river' (τὸν ποταμὸν τοῦτον).

Socrates identifies the high summer chorus of the cicadas, and the tree, both 'very spreading (μάλ' ἀμφιλαφής) and tall', is joined by an agnus, equally tall and shady; indeed, the shade is now described as 'quite lovely' (τὸ σύσκιον πάγκαλον). The moderate breeze has become the 'fresh breeze' (τὸ εὖπνουν) of the place, which is both 'welcome' and 'very pleasant' (ἀγαπητὸν καὶ σφόδρα ἡδύ), and Socrates' positive judgement on the landscape, 'exceedingly pleasant' (σφόδρα ἡδύ), replaces Phaedrus' litotes 'not unpleasant' (οὐκ ἀηδές). At 230 the sensuous charms of the place culminate in the grass which slopes and is thick enough to provide a comfortable head-rest. Here the laying down of the head (κατακλινέντι) completes the physical delights for the whole body, from feet upwards. Further, resting the head involves lying down rather than sitting, a suggestion borne out by Socrates' further proclamation at 230e3 that he does indeed intend to 'lie down' (κατακεῖσθαι). Finally, the Ilissus meadow turns out to have figurines and statuettes, indicating that it is in fact sacred (ιερόν)—to 'some Nymphs' and Achelous, the river-god.<sup>13</sup> This intensification is part of the elevating motif used throughout the first part of the dialogue, whereby as the conversation proceeds Socrates' discourse becomes more and more animated, if not actually inspired.<sup>14</sup> But within the immediate drama Socrates signals to Phaedrus that he is equally aware of the erotic and seductive potential of their surroundings. Whereas in a lyric meadow the seduction is overtly sexual, here the 'game' with similar attendant force and persuasion is engagement in conversation. The repetition of the verb παίζειν at 234d indicates that Socrates and Phaedrus have now assumed the roles of participants within the prelude meadow by playing their own conversational 'games'. A further hint at the characters' awareness of the erotic implications of their pastoral surroundings is given by Phaedrus at 236c8-d1 where he notes that they are alone 'in a deserted place' and that he is stronger and younger than Socrates. Foley is right to read this passage as a playful link with the story of Oreithuia's abduction.<sup>15</sup> Through this teasing play Socrates and Phaedrus pose as participants within an erotic meadow. Calame spells out the connection between their role-play and the dialectic (1999, 186-7):

It should be remembered that... the role that the philosopher adopts towards his interlocutor... is that of an *erastês* seeking to seduce his *erômenos*.<sup>16</sup>

To support Calame's identification of the Ilissus as a prelude meadow, I would like to review the distinguishing features of the motif as used within lyric poetry and compare the *Phaedrus* scene with a wider range of lyric material. Calame notes (1999, 165-9) prelude meadows at Anacreon 346 and Ibycus 286 and their close affinity with Sappho's grove of Aphrodite in poem 2. He summarises Sappho's erotic scene (167):

<sup>13</sup> See Rowe (1986), 142, citing de Vries.

<sup>14</sup> 235c5; 237a7; 238c5-8; 238d1-3; 241e1-5; 244a2-3; 257a3-6; 263d2.

<sup>15</sup> Foley (1998), 45-6: 'Nevertheless, the playful link with the Oreithuia myth lingers, as Socrates is more or less abducted by Phaedrus into these environs, seduced into a speech against his will (see 236d), and finally inspired with erotic madness.'

<sup>16</sup> On this view of role-play and philosophical seduction in the text, see duBois (1985), 95-6 and Nussbaum (1986), esp. 211-2.

This was a sacred precinct that comprised an orchard (*alsos*) of apple trees watered by a cool stream, altars that emitted the fragrant fumes of incense, and shady rose bushes beneath which one could slip into a deathly slumber. It was lapped by the gentlest of breezes and also included a meadow (*leimôn*), where horses grazed and flowers bloomed in the springtime.<sup>17</sup>

In Anacreon 346 fr. 1 there are fields of hyacinth and horses freed from the yoke and in Ibycus 286.1-6 there are streams, apple trees, shade provided by vines, and the season is springtime. To these can be added further erotic meadows in lyric. Alcaeus 115a presents a spring-time scene with water, flowers, plants and grazing animals, and at 296b.1-8 the 'lovely olive trees' serve as the backdrop for the erotic encounters of boys 'garlanded with hyacinth', where again the season is spring. In Theognis 1249-52 the boy is likened to a horse, which now desires 'a fair meadow, a cool stream, and a shady grove', and similarly in Anacreon 417 the Thracian filly 'plays' (παίζεις) in the 'meadows'.<sup>18</sup> The connection between the lush landscapes and the presence of divinity is notable. The grove in Sappho 2 is designed to tempt Aphrodite and is described as 'a holy temple'. At Theognis 1275-8 the spring landscape is the setting for the arrival of the god of Love. At Ibycus 282c fr. 1 Charis nurtured a boy 'among lovely buds of roses... about the temple (of Aphrodite)' (ὦ Χά-/ρις, ρόδων ἔθρεψας αὐτὸν κάλυξιν / Ἀφροδίτας] ἀμφὶ ναόν) and the same motif is used at 288 where a boy is loved and nursed by love goddesses amongst blossoms. Such a graceful setting is again associated with divinity at Ibycus 286.3-4, where 'the Maidens', who are likely to be divine Nymphs or Graces, have their 'inviolable garden' in the spring meadow of quince trees, shady vines and streams (ἵνα Παρθένων / κήπος ἀκήρατος). In Anacreon 346 fr. 1 the goddess Aphrodite herself appears in 'fields of hyacinth' where a beautiful boy arrives for what is evidently erotic play.

In comparing the seduction meadows of lyric with Plato's Ilissus scene, seven main points of correspondence emerge: 1) stream; 2) plants and flowers; 3) shade; 4) breeze; 5) erotic play; 6) presence of divinity; and 7) sleep. Indeed, Plato's allusion to lyric poetry lies in the cumulative effect of these interlinking motifs rather than in any single feature.

First there is the stream: Plato's cold water (ρεῖ μάλα ψυχροῦ ὕδατος), which flows directly under the plane, recalls Alcaeus' ψυχρον ὕδωρ (115a); Sappho's cold water running through the apple branches (2.5 ὕδωρ ψυχρον); Theognis' κρήνην τε ψυχρήν (1252) and Ibycus' streams that water the quince trees (286.2-3 ἀρδόμεναι ῥοῶν / ἐκ ποταμῶν). Second there are the plants and flowers, in this case primarily the trees—the plane and the agnus with its scented flowers—but also the grass. The lush growth and scents of Plato's text (e.g. ὡς ἀκμήν ἔχει τῆς ἄνθης ὡς ἂν εὐωδέστατον παρέχοι τὸν τόπον) recall the plants and blossoms of various lyrics: Alcaeus 115a (λεξάνθιδος... εὐωδεσ[ι]) and 296b (ἐλάαις ἐροέσσα[ις]); Sappho 2 (τέθαλεν ἠρίνοισιν ἄνθεσιν); Ibycus 286 (αἶ τ' οἰνανθίδες αὐξόμεναι); and Anacreon 346 fr. 1 (τὰς ὑακινθίνας

<sup>17</sup> Calame then notes (1999, 168) the parallel with the flower-filled meadows of Sappho 96.11 (πολυανθέμοις ἀρούραις). A further parallel is Sappho 122 where a 'tender girl' is 'picking flowers' (ἄνθε' ἀμέργοισαν παῖδ'... ἀπάλαν).

<sup>18</sup> Slings (1978).



ἀρλοῦρας). Third, Plato notes the shade provided by the height and spreading growth of the trees (229 σκία; 230 τὸ σύσκιον), which recalls the ample shade of Sappho's roses (2.7 ἐσκίαστ'), Theognis' 'shady grove' (1252 ἄλσεά τε σκιερά) and Ibycus' 'shady vine branches' (286.5 σκιεροῖσιν ὕφ' ἔρνεσιν). Fourth, there is the breeze: the gentle winds of Sappho 2 (ἄηται μέλλιχα πνέοισιν), become for Plato the 'the freshness of the breeze', with πνέοισιν echoed in τὸ εὐπνοῦν (230c1). Fifth is the erotic play evident in lyric in lines such as Theognis 1249 (σκιρτῶν), Anacreon 357 (συμπαίζουσιν), 358 (συμπαίζειν) and 417 (σκιρτῶσα παίζεις), and knowingly signalled by Phaedrus at 229b8 (παίζειν).

The sixth feature of Plato's meadow that aligns it closely with lyric meadows is the sacredness of the place and the presence of divinity. First at 229c when Socrates answers Phaedrus' question about the location of Oreithuia's abduction, he mentions an 'altar of Boreas' nearby (229c2 βωμὸς... Βορέου). Then at 230b-c Plato establishes the divine quality of their actual resting place. He echoes Sappho's adjective ἄγνον (2.1-2 ἐπὶ τόνδ'ε ναῦον / ἄγνον)<sup>19</sup> with the noun ἄγνου—the plane tree (230b3). The two words are closely connected, since the name of the tree referred to, the *Vitex Agnus-castus*, is derived from the adjective ἄγνος, as LSJ note with their translation 'chaste tree'. The connection is then strengthened when Plato points out that his spot too 'seems to be sacred' (ἱερόν), as indicated by the presence of holy statues, here of the Nymphs and Achelous, the river god. The divinity of the place is further stressed at 236d10-e1, as the plane tree itself is identified as a 'god' (τίνα θεῶν; ἢ βούλει τὴν πλάτανον ταυτηνί), and at 238c9-d1 where the whole place is regarded as 'divine' (θεῖος... ὁ τόπος). In the dialogue's conclusion at 278b9 the Ilissus meadow is further referenced as 'the spring of the Nymphs and the sacred place of the Muses' (τὸ Νυμφῶν νᾶμά τε καὶ μουσεῖον).<sup>20</sup>

Finally, on sleep: in Sappho 2 an erotic κῶμα, or 'deathly slumber', is said to 'flow down from the shimmering leaves' (αἰθυσσομένων δὲ φύλλων / κῶμα κατέρρει). Calame explains this erotic *koma* as he observes that in Greek literary culture Aphrodite's divine power 'can create a fusion of sexual fulfilment, sleep and death' (1999, 6).<sup>21</sup> While such a sleep does not feature directly at *Phaedrus* 230, its influence is still felt in the scene. At 230c there is a suggestion of sleep as Socrates notes how the gentle slope with lush grass is just right for 'resting one's head', at 230e he declares that he will 'lie down' (κατακείσεσθαι), and later, as he again draws attention to their retreat beneath the tree, Socrates speaks directly of the usual activity of those at leisure in the noonday sun, i.e. 'nodding off' (νυστάζοντας... εὔδειν 259a3-6; καθευδητέον 259d8). In this passage the sleep is also attributed to a magical effect—that of the singing of the cicadas above, where the verb used is 'charmed' (κηλουμένους 259a3).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> On 'Holy Sappho', as love's priestess, see Gentili (1988), 216-22.

<sup>20</sup> Plato's Nymphs as the goddesses of the place are thus the counterpart to the Graces and love divinities that fill with their presence the lyric seduction meadows.

<sup>21</sup> See also Calame (1999, 36-8) and 167, where he discusses 'the slumber and death that the Greeks equated with the state of erotic love'.

<sup>22</sup> For other references to the midday heat, see 242a (τὸ καῶμα, μεσημβρία, ἀποψυχή) and 279b4-5 (τὸ πνίγος ἠπιώτερον γέγονεν).

In these comparisons between the meadow of the Ilissus and those of lyric poetry two differences stand out, both of which can be explained in the light of Plato's composition. First, in contrast to the dominant motif of spring in the poetic meadows,<sup>23</sup> Plato chooses summer for his own scene, as is clear at 230c with the adjective *θερινόν*: the meadow even sounds attractive because it echoes to the 'summery' and 'clear' song of the cicadas. The association between summer and the cicadas' song is already established in the lyric tradition, as can be seen in Alcaeus' verses (347a and b):

the cicada sings sweetly from the leaves... and it pours incessantly its clear song  
from under its wings, when flaming summer... (tr. Campbell)

One ready answer to account for Plato's change of season is that the summer setting is needed to prepare the way for the important myth of the cicadas at 258e-259d. The second difference in Plato is the absence of horses. The lyric poets often place horses, or other grazing animals, within the eroticised meadow. Alcaeus' fragmentary poem 115a mentions a 'horse' (*ἵππ[...]*) and portrays a scene 'grazed by goats' (*αἰγιβότ[...]*), and Sappho's meadow in 2.9 is 'grazed by a horse' (*λείμων ἵππόβοτος*). In his equestrian imagery Theognis also locates the horses within the erotic meadows (e.g. 1249-52: *ἵππ[...]* *λείμωνά τε καλόν*). At 346 fr. 1.9 Anacreon speaks of Aphrodite 'tethering her horses' in the meadow and at 417.5 the 'Thracian filly' is addressed as 'grazing' and 'playing' in the meadows (*νῦν δὲ λειμῶνάς τε βόσκειαι κοῦφά τε σκιρτῶσα παίζεις*). The reason why there are no horses in Plato's prologue again relates to the composition of the dialogue as a whole: by omitting the grazing horses the motif is reserved, for maximum impact, until the stunning simile of the horses and charioteer of soul at 246a. The connection between the horses of Plato's myth and the meadows of lyric will be discussed below (§5.1).

Plato appropriates the lyric motif of the prelude meadow to set the scene for a conversation on love between characters who are evidently aware of the literary *topos* and ready to tease each other with its implications for their own relationship as participants within dialectic. The importance of the literary background to this conversation is again highlighted when Socrates responds to the speech of Lysias by claiming that he has heard better from other writers. It is at this point that Sappho and Anacreon are named.

### 3. The naming

After Phaedrus performs Lysias' speech, he invites Socrates to join him in commending it (234c). When Socrates demurs, Phaedrus asserts that no other speaker could match Lysias' achievement (235b). Socrates then explains why he cannot agree with this assessment (235b7-d3):

ΣΩ. παλαιοὶ γὰρ καὶ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναῖκες περὶ αὐτῶν εἰρηκότεες  
καὶ γεγραφότεες ἐξελέγξουσί με, ἐάν σοι χαριζόμενος συγχωρῶ.

ΦΑΙ. τίνες οὗτοι; καὶ ποῦ σὺ βελτίω τούτων ἀκήκοας;

<sup>23</sup> Alcaeus 115a ἥρινον and 296b.3 ἔαρος πύλαι; Sappho 2.10 ἥρινοισιν ἄνθεσιν; Theognis 1276 ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖς θάλλει ἀεζομένη; and Ibycus 286.1-2 ἦρι μὲν αἶ τε Κυδώνια / μηλίδες.

ΣΩ. νῦν μὲν οὕτως οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν· δῆλον δὲ ὅτι τινῶν ἀκήκοα, ἢ που Σαπφοῦς τῆς καλῆς ἢ Ἀνακρέοντος τοῦ σοφοῦ ἢ καὶ συγγραφέων τινῶν. πόθεν δὴ τεκμαιρόμενος λέγω; πλήρες πῶς, ὦ δαιμόνιε, τὸ στήθος ἔχων αἰσθάνομαι παρὰ ταῦτα ἂν ἔχειν εἰπεῖν ἕτερα μὴ χεῖρω. ὅτι μὲν οὖν παρὰ γε ἑμαυτοῦ οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ἐννεόηκα, εἶ οἶδα, συνειδῶς ἑμαυτῷ ἀμαθίαν· λείπεται δὴ οἶμαι ἐξ ἀλλοτρίων ποθὲν ναμάτων διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς πεπληρωσθῆναι με δίκην ἀγγείου. ὑπὸ δὲ νοθείας αἶ καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐπιλέλησμαι, ὅπως τε καὶ ὄντινων ἤκουσα.

Soc: For ancient and wise men and women who have spoken and written about these subjects will refute me, if I agree simply to please you.

Phdr: Who are these people? Where have you heard anything better than this?

Soc: Right now, I can't tell you straight off. But I'm sure I've heard something better from someone—perhaps from the fine Sappho or the wise Anacreon or indeed from some prose writers. What am I basing my judgement on as I say this? Well, my fine friend, it is because my breast is somehow full that I feel that I might have other words, no worse, to say beyond these of Lysias. And that I've developed none of these from my own ideas I know very well, since I am fully aware of my own ignorance. So what remains, I think, is that I have been filled up, just like a vessel, from streams from elsewhere, through my ears. But again because of my stupidity I have forgotten this very point: how and from whom I heard it.<sup>24</sup>

Thus Socrates is sure that he has heard 'something better' and indicates at the start of his response that he is aware of the reaction of 'ancient and wise men and women' who have discussed this subject of love. But when pressed as to who these people are, his answer is vague—he has heard something better 'from someone' (τινῶν). He then ventures the two names but prefaced by 'perhaps' (που) and set against the alternative: 'or indeed some prose writers.' The effect is that of a person trying to remember something they can only vaguely recall and offering possible identifications. Finally his statement ends with the point that he has simply forgotten his source.

Thus Sappho and Anacreon are referenced apparently casually as Socrates is rather airy about which earlier speakers and writers might have influenced him. In the midst of such vagueness the terms of approbation (Σαπφοῦς τῆς καλῆς ἢ Ἀνακρέοντος τοῦ σοφοῦ) seem formulaic and insincere: maybe it was Sappho, maybe Anacreon, maybe even one of the prose-writers. On this reading one question that arises is why Sappho and Anacreon are singled out at all and why Socrates does not, to balance his mention of prose-writers, simply refer to poets at large. Ferrari suggests that Sappho and Anacreon are to be seen as 'emblems' of love-poetry (1987, 106), a suggestion supported by a point made by Foley (1998, 42): 'Sappho and Anacreon were consistently paired in antiquity as the originators and quintessential practitioners of the tradition of erotic poetry.' While Foley does not offer any actual evidence, various testimonies collected by Campbell in his volumes of *Greek Lyric* do support the claim, with Sappho and Anacreon paired or

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<sup>24</sup> This translation of this passage is based on that of Rowe (1986) but is made more literal, at the expense of fluency, in an attempt to secure the most neutral reading possible.

linked a number of times.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, Sappho is also paired with Alcaeus<sup>26</sup> and with Alcman.<sup>27</sup> If one accepts that the pairing of Sappho and Anacreon was standard in Plato's time, then the naming of these two could be read simply as emblematic of lyric poetry as it is balanced against prose-writing. This reading would suggest, then, that the terms of praise are formulaic and not particularly significant or sincere. But Socrates' reference to the poets has also to be judged against his next comment where a clear note of irony is sounded.

As Socrates presents himself as someone influenced by earlier speakers and writers, he speaks of receiving into himself 'streams from elsewhere'. The flowing streams of the Muses are an established image for poetic inspiration, which Plato himself probes in other discussions on poetry.<sup>28</sup> Such a pointed poetic image, full of irony from a character readily identifiable as determinedly prosaic, punctures the sense that the reference to the poets is casual. Instead the passage now seems like a challenge, offering a suggestion that the speaker himself finds patently ludicrous—that he has been somehow inspired by the poets. Forgetting the identity of the source would be consistent with the poet's stance of being distracted at the time of being inspired. Thus the passage might even suggest, alongside stock Socratic ignorance, mockery of the poetic tradition. If so, the terms of praise would become not merely formulaic but more of a jibe. Hackforth (1952, 36) maintains that the suggestion of inspiration from the poets is indeed 'not to be taken seriously', and the view is given fuller development by Rowe who probes further into the particular dramatic context.

For Rowe, this praise cannot be sincere, since 'Plato's Socrates normally displays a thoroughgoing hostility towards poets of all descriptions' (1986, 151). He argues rather that Socrates' mention of Sappho and Anacreon is consistent with 'Plato's general attitude towards poets' (151), since Socrates' actual point is that the irrational desire graphically presented by the poets provides far stronger arguments *against* love even than those of Lysias. He therefore concludes: 'The tone of the expressions "the excellent... Sappho" and the "the wise... Anacreon" is thoroughly ironical.' Rowe's reading of the passage as Socratic irony provides one explanation of why the lyric poets are mentioned: they depict the madness of the lover so graphically that any sane person would wish to avoid this state.<sup>29</sup> The idea that the poets present an unenlightened account of love is consistent with the ranking of the poet as sixth in the hierarchy of lives (*Phaedrus* 248d-e). This unflattering view of the poet cannot be explained away: he is ranked beneath the

<sup>25</sup> For example, in testimonies from Athenaeus (vol. I, 11, 37; II, 127), Seneca (I, 23), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I, 39), Menander Rhetor (I, 41), Themistius (I, 45), Aulus Gellius (I, 45), Plutarch (I, 47), Gregory of Corinth (I, 165; II, 133), Pausanias (II, 31), and Caesius Bassus (II, 139).

<sup>26</sup> Eusebius (vol. I, 9), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I, 35), Strabo (I, 37) and Porphyry (I, 179).

<sup>27</sup> Menander Rhetor (vol. I, 41).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Plato's *Ion* 534a with the 'rivers' (τῶν ποταμῶν) where the poet gathers his melodies; and *Laws* 719c where the poet inspired by the Muses is like a fountain (οἶον δὲ κρήνη τις) gushing forth. In *Phaedrus* see also 238c7 for the pun on inspiration and running water in εὐποια (lit. 'good flow').

<sup>29</sup> The argument of this section has benefited from critical discussion at the Classics Research Seminar, University of Durham (May 2007). I am grateful for the challenges and suggestions from colleagues, in particular Christopher Rowe.

physical trainer and doctor, beneath even the seer, and a mere three steps away from the tyrant. As someone concerned with 'imitation' (μίμησις) rather than reality, the poet cannot claim knowledge. And if poets do not have knowledge, then how is the praise of two of them as 'fine' and indeed 'wise' to be understood? Reading the praise as ironic seems a valid response, especially since the same strategy of praising before undercutting is also used elsewhere with poets, for example when Simonides in *Republic* is hailed as *sophos* before his view on justice is comprehensively discredited (*Rep.* 331e6 σοφὸς καὶ θεῖος).<sup>30</sup> I will not try to downplay the evidence of 248d-e. The passage is important and stands as one firm position consistent with views elsewhere in the corpus on the status of the poets' wisdom. The difficulty, however, is that of taking this as the dominant view of *Phaedrus* when the use of poetic discourse around it is so pronounced. Put simply: if the poets are completely ignorant about reality, then why does the text spend so much time recreating poetic discourse on love? Annas (1982, 12) has identified within Plato 'a split attitude' to poetry and sees this conflict between positions as 'lasting' and 'not easily resolved'. There are no easy answers and I acknowledge that the later ranking of the poet's life does challenge the reading of the praise at 235c as straightforwardly sincere. But the evidence of the text itself seems to force a situation where this cannot be the final word on the matter.

Nightingale is but one of a number of critics who have noted that the narrative of Socrates' second speech is 'replete with the discourse of lyric love poetry' (1995, 158). That lyric poetry is present in the text is not in itself a contentious point, even though surprisingly few studies are concerned with the details of the allusions themselves: what is at stake rather is how to interpret that presence. In 1950 Robin argued that the praise at 235c is sincere since Socrates is referring to the love poets as the source of ideas that will feature in his later second speech. Fortenbaugh (1966, 108) takes the view further:

The proper names 'Sappho' and 'Anacreon' have a particular significance and are not a general reference to lyric love poets. These two names are introduced to alert the reader that the poems of Sappho and Anacreon will play a role in Socrates' subsequent speeches. Indeed the primary and so far unnoticed purpose for naming these poets is to anticipate poetic reminiscences occurring in Socrates' two speeches.

De Vries agrees, noting (1969, 74-5) that although the positive terms *kalos* and *sophos* can convey irony, they are used here 'in a pregnant sense', foreshadowing the allusions to come. De Vries indeed holds that the authority of the poets is fully acknowledged and, moreover, that the naming of Sappho is 'spontaneous homage to the poetess who knew love' (75).<sup>31</sup> Foley (1998, 40) similarly reads the praise of Sappho as 'pointed' in view of the poetess' influence on Socrates' later argument on love.<sup>32</sup> Before we consider the relationship between the naming and

<sup>30</sup> Halliwell (2000), 106-7 discusses this reference to Simonides as wise, and notes uses of the parallel praise 'godlike' for the poets in other dialogues.

<sup>31</sup> Demos (1999), 68 also regards Socrates' comment as a sincere point about poetic tradition and authority.

<sup>32</sup> The views of Foley (1998) and duBois (1985), (1995) on Sappho's presence in *Phaedrus* will be discussed below (§5.2, on memory and beauty).

the influence of these two poets on the text itself, let us observe how the passage at 235c may point to another level of meaning.

The reference to 'streams from elsewhere' at 235c raises the issue of lyric inspiration directly before a pair of speeches which will themselves draw increasingly heavily on lyric discourse. By directing attention to the lyric voices that will follow in the text, the reference seems ironic and self-reflexive, pointing up Plato's own authorship. The image itself seems to be humorous, since inspiration is evidently more than a matter of being mechanically and passively 'filled up' with ideas.<sup>33</sup> Following these hints, I read this passage as operating within one of the chief games<sup>34</sup> of the *Phaedrus*: the attribution of speeches to various authors as part of an exploration of originality and influence. Waterfield notes that, while Phaedrus recites Lysias, Socrates not only cites Sappho and Anacreon but also identifies as the authors of his speeches Phaedrus, the Muses, the Nymphs and even Stesichorus.<sup>35</sup> Through this multiple attribution Plato is ultimately prompting us to consider his own role as author and at 235c, as well as wryly hinting at his character's reliance on him,<sup>36</sup> seems also be making, through the subtext, a serious point about his own intellectual debts. Since the praise of Sappho and Anacreon is indeed supported by positive reminiscences of their poetry elsewhere in the dialogue, then surely this must force a reading of 235c that is non-ironic in relation to Plato himself? The point would seem to be that Plato by having Socrates mock the idea that he might have learnt anything useful from the poets is actually raising the possibility—in a playful manner<sup>37</sup>—that he, as author, has.

This approach to the matter of how to read 235c requires the acceptance of a gap between author and character. While for some interpreters this is not a valid move, for others watching and tracing the moments of apparent self-reflexivity in the dialogues is a useful strategy of interpretation. In her powerful and illuminating account of Plato as author, Blondell analyses Plato's various techniques for distancing himself from the views and voices of his characters.<sup>38</sup> She notes (2002, 37-48) both the formal absence of Plato from the text and his omnipresence as 'author behind the scene' (43), as 'puppeteer' (45) and

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<sup>33</sup> See duBois (1995), 85-6 on the image of the vessel at 235d: 'This little joke both recapitulates Socrates' critique of poetry in the *Ion*, that poets know nothing but are simply conduits of divine inspiration, and takes a gentle swipe at Phaedrus himself, who has only Lysias' discourse, nothing of his own to say about love.' Foley (1998), 44 expresses the same view: 'here he may in part be mocking not only traditional representations of poetic inspiration but Phaedrus' eagerness to absorb the words of others rather than think for himself.' On the humorous aspects of the image, see Pender (2007), 73.

<sup>34</sup> On the playful elements, see Mackenzie (1982), 64-76.

<sup>35</sup> Waterfield (2002), 84 on 242d.

<sup>36</sup> Although Rowe's reading is quite different from mine, he too notes a possible self-reflexive gesture at 235c in the idea that Socrates may have got his ideas from one of the prose-writers: 'Where else would 'Socrates' get his ideas from, if not from a prose-writer (i.e. Plato)? A deliberate wink at the reader?' (1986, 151).

<sup>37</sup> The piquancy of the lines accords with Hinds' view on allusive methods, since he regards allusions as involving 'teasing play between revelation and concealment' (1998, 23).

<sup>38</sup> Blondell (2002), ch.1-2, esp. 20 and 110-11.

'superspeaker' (43).<sup>39</sup> This approach seems to me reasonable: other passages that seem to hint at Plato's own authorial role include Cebes' plaintive cry to Socrates at *Phaedo* 78a (where will they find another such charmer for their fears?) and *Symposium* 223d (could the same man write both tragedy and comedy?). Another critic who defends such an approach is Halliwell (2000, 101):

The practices of citation and criticism that Plato's text presents, and to some extent arguably endorses, cannot plausibly be taken as merely unreflective. In particular, the possibility of distinguishing between authorial voice and the voices of characters is one that Plato can hardly have overlooked, since it is the very basis of the analysis of mimetic modes put forward at *Rep.* 3.392c ff., and is acknowledged in other ways elsewhere, even, on occasion, in the act of citation.

I believe that in his praise of the poets at 235c Plato is opening up a gap between Socrates as character and himself as author in order to highlight that the two figures have a very different situation in relation to the Greek poetic tradition. Blondell (2002, 110) observes on Plato that 'it is the decision to write that distinguishes him most sharply not only from Sokrates, but from those Socratics who imitated him by writing nothing down'. Her point seems important: once Plato becomes a writer, his relationship to literary tradition does change markedly from that of the historical Socrates. And while I accept the fact that the Platonic Socrates (speaking within the pages of the text) does not converge with the historical Socrates, I do not think it is unreasonable that the text of the *Phaedrus*, which is so concerned with writing, should draw attention to the location of both character and author in relation to the Greek literary tradition.

On this reading, the author, in a moment of Platonic irony, uses his principal character's reactions to the poets as a means of highlighting his own position as inheritor of a poetic as well as philosophical tradition. And while Socrates has pointedly forgotten his source, Plato explicitly recalls two of those who have influenced him.<sup>40</sup> Further, the unusual inclusiveness of the mention at the start of the passage of wise 'men *and women*' of antiquity (παλαιοὶ γὰρ καὶ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναικες) seems a careful preparation for the naming of Sappho alongside Anacreon.<sup>41</sup> The text is stressing that females as well as males have contributed to ancient discourses on love. So if the praise is ironic, then the text is highlighting that Sappho is as unwise as the other male authors. The question then becomes whether this view of Sappho is consistent with evidence from the text of *Phaedrus*. Since my reading of the dialogue finds positive allusions to the poets and particularly to Sappho, my conclusion on 235c is that the praise of Sappho and Anacreon is both ironic, from Socrates, and non-ironic, from Plato. It is my

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<sup>39</sup> Blondell (2002), 43 notes that her adoption of the term 'superspeaker' is from Maranhão (1990).

<sup>40</sup> The apparently minor detail of Socrates' memory failure is a further little joke from the author, since one of the particular debts that Plato is paying to Sappho will concern her thoughts on memory itself, as will be discussed in §5.2. On the usual strengths of Socrates' recall of poetry, see Halliwell (2000), 96: 'Across the *oeuvre*... it is often taken for granted that the parties to discussion... are sufficiently immersed in poetry... to be able either to quote or to recognize quotation. This is true, not least, of Socrates himself, who is shown as possessing a particularly well-endowed memory for poetic texts.'

<sup>41</sup> Foley (1998), 54 comments: 'the mention of women (see also *Meno* 81a) is initially striking in a Greek context.'

thesis that Plato's tribute to the lyric poets is due to their vivid presentations of the force of *eros*, presentations that he will utilise in his own exploration of the relationship between *mania* and self-control. In the main body of my paper I shall now trace how Plato develops, in the first three speeches of *Phaedrus*, his central theme of power and force.

#### 4. Power and force

A shared and fundamental theme runs through the three speeches on love in *Phaedrus*: love's power. In exploring this theme Plato draws on the language of love shaped by the Greek poetic tradition whereby love holds and exercises a dangerous power upon the lover. The lyric poets in particular offered distinctive portrayals of the overwhelming power of Eros, not only in the pain of unfulfilled desire but also in the erotic experience *per se*. Love is a threatening external force, whose onslaught leaves the lover weakened and disorientated. Within this lyric conception of desire there is a further established view of love as madness—which becomes a dominant motif in Socrates' second speech. In Lysias' speech familiar prose terminology presents the lover as unable to exercise proper judgement and so act in his own best interest. But even here there is language that points to *eros* as an independent force. The vocabulary for the power of love then becomes more abstract in Socrates' first speech with the passage on inner rulers and control (237d-238c) and finally more poetic and highly-coloured in Socrates' second speech.<sup>42</sup>

Let us begin by reviewing lyric language for love's power. In poem 1 Sappho entreats the goddess of love not to 'overpower' her heart (3-4 μή μ'... δάμνα, / πότνια, θῦμον) and uses the same verb (δαμνάω) for Aphrodite's power at 102 (πόθω δάμνισα). Theognis at 1388-9 speaks of Aphrodite as 'overpowering' the minds of men (δαμνῶς ἀνθρώπων πυκινὰς φρένας) and adds that no one is strong or wise enough to 'escape' (φυγεῖν) her. Anacreon similarly hails Eros as the 'subduer' (357 δαμάλης Ἔρωσ) and again speaks of the lover seeking an escape (346 fr. 4.3-6 ἐκφυγῶν Ἔρωτα; 400 Ἔρωτα φεύγων). At 505d Anacreon hails Eros' power over gods and men (ὄδε καὶ θεῶν δυναστής, / ὄδε καὶ βροτοῦς δαμάζει). Often the poets image love as a hostile, attacking force that invades and through its physical impact destroys the lover. Alcaeus presents himself as felled by Aphrodite's hand (380 ἔπετον Κυπρογενήας παλάμαισιν); while Ibycus 287.1-5 likens the rush of love to a martial attack, where the lover exclaims: ἦ μὲν τρομέω νιν ἐπερχόμενον ('How I tremble at his onset!'). Anacreon uses a Homeric battle term, κυδοιμοί (literally, 'the roar of battle'),<sup>43</sup> to describe the turmoil that Love causes (398 ἀστραγάλοι δ' Ἔρωτός εἰσιν / μανία τε καὶ κυδοιμοί). Sappho 47 likens Eros to a violent wind that falls upon trees (Ἔρος δ' ἐτίναξέ μοι / φρένας, ὡς ἄνεμος κατ' ὄρος δρύσιν ἐμπέτων). Ibycus develops this image in 286.6-13, where the love that comes from Aphrodite is likened to the 'Thracian Boreas', so powerful is its effect through all

<sup>42</sup> The progression from more neutral to highly lyrical language is similar to that between 229c and 230a in their respective observations on the river and plane tree.

<sup>43</sup> See e.g. *Iliad* 10.523.



the heart (ἐγκρατέως πεδόθεν... φρένας). Sappho speaks of love 'shaking' her heart (130 Ἔρος δηῖτέ μ' ὁ λυσιμέλης δόνει), and Anacreon depicts love as a smith's mighty hammer blow (413 μεγάλῳ δηῖτέ μ' Ἔρωσ ἔκοπεν ὥστε χαλκεὺς πελέκει). The madness caused by love is a familiar theme in lyric. Alcaeus tells of Helen's madness in her love for Paris (283.5 ἐκμάνεισα) and refers to the 'maddened infatuations' of *eros* at 10b.6-7 (μ]αινόμενον [...]ἀυάταισ'). Sappho 1.18 speaks more intimately of her own 'maddened heart' (μαινόλα θύμῳ). Theognis associates Eros with madness as he portrays him as 'nursed by frenzies' (1231-2 μανίαι σ' ἐτιθηθήσαντο λαβοῦσαι). For Ibycus Aphrodite sends a storm-wind that blazes with lightning and 'parching fits of madness' (286.10-11 ἀζαλέαις μανί-/αισιν); while Anacreon 359 gives succinct expression to the lover's plight:

Κλεοβούλου μὲν ἔγωγ' ἐρέω,  
Κλεοβούλῳ δ' ἐπιμαίνομαι,  
Κλεόβουλον δὲ διοσκέω.

I love Cleobulus, I am mad about Cleobulus, I gaze at Cleobulus. (tr. Campbell)

Let us now consider how this established lyric language forms the background to the terminology for love used by Lysias and Socrates. Lysias' speech considers the behaviour of lovers and for the most part speaks directly of the participants, the lovers and beloveds, rather than love itself. The problem that concerns Lysias is that lovers lose their self-control. Lysias establishes the familiar idea that the lack of self-control in love is allied with the failure to think properly (231d3-4 κακῶς φρονοῦσιν / εἶ φρονήσαντες) and pays particular attention to the change occasioned when the lover's desire ceases and he returns to his usual ways of thinking and behaving (232e6 ἐπειδὴν τῆς ἐπιθυμίας παύσωνται; 234a7 παυόμενοι τῆς ἐπιθυμίας). The difference between lovers and non-lovers is that while the first act 'under compulsion' (ὑπ' ἀνάγκης), the second act out of 'their own choosing' (ἐκόντες), in line with their self-interest (231a4-5). This representation of the lovers' plight is summed up at 231d2-3:

καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ὁμολογοῦσι νοσεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ σωφρονεῖν, καὶ εἰδέναι ὅτι κακῶς φρονοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ δύνασθαι αὐτῶν κρατεῖν.

Lovers agree that they are 'sick' and not 'sound of mind'. They accept that their thinking is impaired and that they are no longer 'masters of themselves'. Note how the phraseology is shifting subtly: if a lover is not master of himself then who or what is his master? Plato is probing the standard prose vocabulary of self-control in order to lead on to the conception of love as an independent force. And the move is completed at 233b-c. First the noun *eros* is used in the nominative as the subject of three verbs (233b2-4): ἐπιδείκνυται, ποιεῖ and, most significantly, ἀναγκάζει. Love here *compels* the lover to make inappropriate judgements. Second, the power of the self is contrasted explicitly with the power of love at 233c1-2, as the non-lover proudly declares his advantage: οὐχ ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἠττώμενος ἀλλ' ἑμαυτοῦ κρατῶν ('I am not overcome by love, but master of myself'). The prose verb ἠττώμενος ('be defeated, beaten, overcome') can be read as a neutral term and the expression seems standard in the context. But the phrase also recalls the martial attack of *eros* in poetry and looks forward to the

conception of love as an independent force, a conception that will be held up for much closer scrutiny by Socrates.

In his first speech Socrates follows Lysias' concern with the lover's poor judgement and decision-making. He employs much of the same standard prose terminology for the experience of being in love. But he begins to press this terminology, nudging familiar formulations towards a more analytical and abstract perspective in order to consider the nature of the process whereby a person is 'overcome' by *eros*. Socrates begins his first speech with an invocation to the Muses which, although ironic, nevertheless gives notice of the direction that his performances will take (237a7): ἄγετε δῆ, ὦ Μοῦσαι, εἴτε δι' ὀδῆς εἶδος λίγειαι. The invocation imitates the familiar poetic formulations and the closest parallel in extant lyric seems to be Stesichorus 240: δεῦρ' ἄγε, Καλλιόπεια λίγειαι. This brief allusion thus anticipates the mention of Stesichorus in the interlude at 243a, and of Calliope, who as the eldest of her sisters is given prominence in the myth of the cicadas as the Muse of philosophy (259d). The formal introduction to this speech also slyly heralds the continuing theme of force when Socrates insists that his story will be one that Phaedrus 'compels' him to tell (237a9 ἀναγκάζει).

Socrates addresses his subject in characteristic style—by seeking a definition of love itself (237c-d). There is thus a clear shift of attention from the lovers' behaviour to the force that drives them. The relevant aspect of the definiendum is stated within the very question that leads the search: 'let us establish an agreed definition of love, about what sort of thing it is and what *power* it possesses' (237c8-d1 οἷόν τ' ἔστι καὶ ἣν ἔχει δύναμιν). The chosen angle of love's *dunamis* soon leads to the idea of inner rulers and forces (237d6-9):

We must next observe that in each of us there are two kinds of thing which rule and lead us (δύο τινέ ἐστων ἰδέα ἄρχοντε καὶ ἄγοντε) which we follow wherever they may lead (οἷν ἐπόμεθα ἢ ἂν ἄγητον), the one an inborn desire for pleasures, another an acquired judgement which aims at the best. (tr. Rowe)

The passage then offers in very quick succession an array of different terms for love's exercise of power and control (237d-238c). The analysis culminates in the definition of *eros* as an irrational impulse that has 'gained control' (κρατήσασα) over 'right judgement' and takes its name from its 'force' (*rhome*), a playful etymology backed up by the wordplay of ἐρρωμένως ῥωσθεῖσα... ῥώμης... ἔρωσ (238c2-4). The Greek vocabulary of inner powers and forces in this passage includes 'ruling' and 'holding sway' (ἄρχοντε; ἀρξάσης; τῇ ἀρχῇ; κρατεῖ; κρατούσης; τῷ κράτει; κρατοῦσα; κρατήσασα; τυραννεύσασα; δυναστευούσης);<sup>44</sup> 'conquering' (νικήσασα); 'having physical strength' (ἐρρωμένως ῥωσθεῖσα; ῥώμης) and the exertion of physical force in 'dragging' (ἐλκούσης) and 'pushing on' (ὀρμώσης). The political language for *eros* here recalls Sappho's πότνια and Anacreon's δυνάστης and is reinforced towards the end of the dialogue at 265c2 where Socrates speaks directly of Eros as δεσπότης.

<sup>44</sup> At 238e the ruling metaphor is joined by that of slavery (ἀρχομένῳ δουλεύοντί τε) and 241a it appears alongside another military/political term for 'chief, ruler, leader', προστάτης (ἄλλον ἄρχοντα ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ προστάτην... τῆς προτέρας ἀνοήτου ἀρχῆς).

The idea of *eros* as a conquering force also recalls various lyrics where love is imaged as attacking and defeating the lover, while the physical strength of *eros* that can here 'drag' or 'push' objects echoes the lyric conception of love as an external force that can physically impact on objects.

After delivering this more abstract analysis of love Socrates notes that something 'divine' (238c6 θεῖον) seems to have happened to him and speaks of the possibility that he may become 'possessed by nymphs' as his speech proceeds (238d1 νυμφόληπτος... γένωμαι).<sup>45</sup> With a nod back to his invocation of the Muses, Socrates seems to wonder where all this high-flown talk will lead. But what actually happens is that he returns to a prosaic mode of discourse more closely matched to that of Lysias, with attention focused mainly on the outward behaviour of the lovers. Nevertheless, the analysis of love's *dunamis* at 237d-238c is not lost, since the speech now maintains a dual perspective, noting both the lover's actions and his inner condition. The most significant reference to the earlier analysis of love's *dunamis* comes at 241a.

When Socrates resumes his speech at 238d8, he speaks of the lover as 'ruled by desire' (238e3 τῷ δὴ ὑπὸ ἐπιθυμίας ἀρχομένῳ) and tells how in his selfishness the lover seeks to make his beloved weaker and inferior to him. So the lover's 'inner ruler' leads him to try to exert his own rule over the beloved in their relationship. As the speech proceeds, the lover is then spoken of as 'compelled to seek pleasure instead of good', where the verb is ἠνάγκασται (239c5). Socrates gradually probes further into the various restrictions and lack of choices afflicting both the wretched lover and his beloved, with the vocabulary of 'compulsion' becoming persistent in the concluding section.<sup>46</sup> With the lover thus 'ruled by desire' and 'compelled to seek pleasure', he has lost self-control. Socrates sums up this unhappy condition as he speaks of the lover as 'driven by compulsion and frenzy' (240c7-d1 ὑπ' ἀνάγκης τε καὶ οἴστρου ἐλάυνεται). The language of 'frenzy' now applied directly to the love experience recalls Socrates' presentation of himself in the prologue as 'sick' and 'frenzied with passion' for hearing speeches (228b6-7 νοσοῦντι, συγκοροβαντιῶντα). Clearly the familiar theme of love-as-madness is sounding but it is interesting to note that the *mania* vocabulary so pronounced in the lyric poems above is thus far absent from the text.<sup>47</sup> The madness vocabulary that will be so prevalent in Socrates' second speech first appears here in a phrase that refers directly to the *eros-as-dunamis* passage. Socrates describes the lover's loss of passion as a situation where he actively 'changes the ruler within' (241a2):

μεταβαλὼν ἄλλον ἄρχοντα ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ προστάτην, νοῦν καὶ σωφροσύνην  
ἀντ' ἔρωτος καὶ μανίας, ἄλλος γεγωνὼς λέληθεν τὰ παιδικά.

<sup>45</sup> The theme of divine possession continues at 241e3-5 (ὑπὸ τῶν Νυμφῶν... ἐνθουσιάζω). The suggestion is that, were Socrates to continue, his discourse would be like an innocent girl overtaken by the force of lyric poetry.

<sup>46</sup> 240c4 ἀναγκαῖον; 240e1 ἀνάγκης; 241b4-7 ὑπ' ἀνάγκης... ἀναγκάζεται... ὑπ' ἀνάγκης; and 241c2 ἀναγκαῖον. Socrates sets out the indignities forced upon the lovers by their own behavioural 'compulsions' and the 'necessities' of the situation.

<sup>47</sup> The closest negative term used for the condition of love by Lysias was νοσεῖν (231d and 236b.)

he changes in himself and adopts a different ruler and master, sense and sanity in place of love and madness, and has become a different person without his beloved's realising it. (tr. Rowe)

The terms ἄρχοντα and προστάτην clearly recall the political vocabulary of 237d-238c and the passage thus presents the lover's change of heart as the establishment of a new inner government—with a changeover in power from *eros* and *mania* to good sense and *sophrosune*. By thus setting the contrast between rational self-control and the madness of love, Socrates draws out the polarity that was implicit in Lysias' speech. The key term *mania* would thus seem to have been kept in reserve both to add particular weight at this point and to signal developments to come. Through this switch in inner ruler (μεταβαλῶν) the lover changes his very identity, a fact not realised by the beloved until the change starts to affect his behaviour, with μεταβαλῶν repeated at 241b5 to show how the internal switch causes external turnarounds.<sup>48</sup> The main achievement of Socrates' first speech is to explain that the external behaviour of the lover is caused by his own internal experience. What will follow in his second speech is a much closer analysis of the internal changes themselves.

As Plato's account of *eros* builds gradually through the three speeches, there is a concomitant development at the level of discourse. Plato begins in Lysias' speech with standard prose formulations for the lover's 'sickness' and poor judgement. In the first part of Socrates' response to Lysias there is a shift to more abstract terminology as *eros* itself, rather than the person of the lover, becomes the main focus of attention. Love emerges more clearly as an independent, active force and by the end of this speech the individual's rational self-control is set squarely against the potential dominance of love as *mania*.<sup>49</sup> The language of this account moves beyond standard formulations but it is in Socrates' second speech that the terminology for love's power will become more heightened and indeed poetic. As Plato explores what happens inside a soul experiencing love, the allusions to lyric poetry increase and reminiscences of particular poems can be more clearly heard. In the narrative of soul Plato will not only incorporate into his prose a number of poetic metaphors for love but will also re-animate them within the novel context of tripartition. Such a movement from established to novel usage is intrinsic to Plato's style. Ricoeur (1975, 370) has noted that Plato is adept at re-animating established metaphors and is fond of using false etymology as part of this process. This point is borne out by Socrates' etymology at 238c. For the derivation of *eros* from ῥώμη ('force') anticipates the second speech and its transformations of lyric language for love's power and force.

<sup>48</sup> Fortenbaugh (1966), 108-9 regards *Phaedrus* 241a-b as a particular allusion to Sappho 1, noting the common elements as 'madness, gifts, flight, unwilling chase'. While it is true that Sappho 1 gives a striking portrayal of these themes, they are also well-established in lyrics other than Sappho's. In addition to the familiar madness motif, flight and pursuit are equally pronounced, for example, at Theognis 1299-1304 (προφεύξεαι, διώκων, φεύγεις). Ferrari (1987), 107 sees no specific allusion and notes more generally the adoption throughout this speech of the 'traditional erotic themes of dominance, pursuit, and manipulation'.

<sup>49</sup> At the outset of his second speech Socrates uses this critical distinction between the lover as mad and the non-lover as sane (244a5 ὁ μὲν μάνιεται, ὁ δὲ σωφρονεῖ) to summarise the main thesis shared by the first two speeches.

## 5. The lyric poets in Socrates' second speech

In Socrates' second speech the theme of love-as-madness is foregrounded and given full expression.<sup>50</sup> The account of love as a divine madness challenges the preference for sanity and self-control that has so far been taken for granted. Plato draws on established poetic language for the force of love in the context of his discussion of the benefits of *mania*. In Socrates' myth a vision of the lover's experience is presented where the power of love is matched by the moving power of the soul itself. The discussion of soul begins with the argument on self-motion at 245c and develops into an account of tripartition founded on images of moving forces. Various critics have offered illuminating accounts of the motive power of soul in Plato. In Cornford's words (1971, 128), the 'moving force of the soul' is 'the energy of life itself', while Moline (1981) identifies this energy with desire. Commenting on the hydraulic simile for tripartition at *Republic* 485d-e, Moline observes how a person's desires are driven by the essential energy of soul (1981, 78): 'The parts of the *psyche* are one *psyche* in that they are but different ways of channeling one finite, personal stream of energy or desire.' On the active nature of the desires, Price (1995, 53) has discussed how each part of the soul is 'the home of a family of desires' and how each family continually strives for its own individual ends. Plato's vision of the dynamic soul is manifest at *Phaedrus* 245c when movement (κίνησις) is identified as the very essence of soul. Given the definition of soul as self-mover, it follows that images of moving forces will be a prominent feature of the portrayal of the soul in this speech.

Where the poets consider the power of love as an external force, Plato, in a distinctive and far-reaching move, focuses on the internal struggle of competing desires within the erotic experience and so establishes soul as the *locus* of significant action. In scrutinising the ideas of motion and force embedded within the lyric vision of love,<sup>51</sup> Plato considers the idea that the lover is nevertheless capable of an active response and thus he reconfigures the familiar experience of the shock of love. In this way Plato transforms the lyrical conception of love as he considers how erotic stimulation impacts on the forces already present and active within the soul and how the lover can and indeed ought to respond to the stimulus of desire. Nevertheless, as he transforms traditional views of love in this way, Plato in this remarkable portrayal draws freely on the erotic language of the lyric poets themselves. In my treatment of Socrates' second speech the influences of Sappho and Anacreon will be assessed alongside those of Stesichorus, Alcaeus, Theognis and Ibycus to show how the poetic language of the force of love is transformed to express and support the theories of Forms and tripartition. The

<sup>50</sup> The vocabulary of *mania* increases and continues throughout the speech: 244a5 μαινεται; 244a6 μανίαν; 244a7 διὰ μανίας; 244b7 μανίαν; 245a5 μανίας; 245a8 τῶν μαινομένων; 245c1 μανία; 249d5 μανίας; 249d8 μανικῶς; 249e3 τῆς μανίας; 251a6 μανίας; 251d8 ἐμμανής; 253c5 μανέντος; 256b6 θεία μανία; 256d6 τῆς ἐρωτικῆς μανίας. Other madness vocabulary in the speech is 'disturbed' (245b4 τοῦ κεκνημένου); 'in Bacchic frenzy' (245a2 ἐκβακχεύουσα); 'stung to madness' (251d6 οἰστρῶ); and 'raving' (251d8 λυττῶ).

<sup>51</sup> Calame (1999), 16, on *eros* in lyric poetry: 'Eros is thus characterized by the same dynamism as that conveyed by our own conception of aspiration, aims, desire.' On the connection in *Phaedrus* between motion and emotion, see Lebeck (1972), 269-71, 280-2 and 284-7.

allusions to lyric will be traced through four major episodes within the myth: how the soul loses its wings (§5.1 'Horses, wings and chariots', 246a6-248e5); how it regains its wings through memory of beauty (§5.2 'Memory', 248e5-250e1); how, under the stimulus of beauty, the wings regrow (§5.3 'Regrowth', 250e1-253c6); and how the charioteer seeks to control his team when all are excited by beauty (§5.4 'Self-control', 253c7-256e2).

### 5.1 Horses, wings and chariots (246a6-248e5)

The power of the soul is conveyed at 246a in the striking image of the winged team of charioteer and horses:

εοικέτω δὴ συμφύτῳ δυνάμει ὑποπτέρου ζεύγους τε καὶ ἡνιόχου.

Let it then resemble the combined power of a winged team of horses and their charioteer. (tr. Rowe)

The abstract noun δύναμις recalls Socrates' earlier question on the nature of love: 'what sort of *dunamis* does it have?' (237c-d). This short sentence introduces at once a number of motifs and yet keeps them discrete. First there is συμφύτῳ δυνάμει ('a naturally conjoined power'), a phrase that in itself indicates a unity achieved from distinct elements. This is a literal formulation for the power of soul. Second there are the images: the wing, the pair of horses and the charioteer. The three elements of the tripartite soul are set out separately in the horses and charioteer, while the wing image works to maintain unity, since it relates to both horses and driver through its constant application in the myth to the soul as a whole.<sup>52</sup> The two motifs of wing and team will interact very closely in the subsequent account but will also function at times independently.

The first motif of the soul image at 246a is the wing. Plato uses the image of the wing, introduced by the adjective ὑποπτέρου ('winged'), to represent perfection.<sup>53</sup> Socrates tells how the nature of mortal and immortal souls is closely related and tells how 'all soul' (246b6 ψυχὴ πᾶσα) 'ranges about the whole universe' (246b7 πάντα δὲ οὐρανὸν περιπολεῖ). This is a literal, albeit unusual, formulation: since the essence of soul is self-motion it is appropriate that its natural activity should be to move. In the next sentence the verb περιπολεῖ ('traverses') is picked up by μετεωροπορεῖ ('travels above the earth') as the soul continues its movement around the universe. The metaphor of the wing is introduced alongside this movement to denote the perfect condition of soul in this state (246b7-c1): τελέα... οὐσα καὶ ἐπτερωμένη μετεωροπορεῖ. Conversely, the loss of perfection is represented by the soul's loss of wings (246c2 πτερορρυήσασα; 246d4 τῆς τῶν πτερῶν ἀποβολῆς, ἀπορρεῖ), which in the logic of the imagery necessitates a fall to earth. The use of the image of the wing to represent perfection is explained at 246d6-7, as the wing is viewed as having its own natural 'power', that of carrying 'heavy' objects heavenwards: πέφυκεν ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις τὸ ἐμβριθὲς ἄγειν ἄνω μετεωρίζουσα ἢ τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος οἰκεῖ. The wing-as-perfection motif draws on the familiar spatial metaphor

<sup>52</sup> On the specific location of the soul's 'wings', see Price (1992), 245.

<sup>53</sup> On Plato's wing image, see Pender (2000), 155-62.

whereby that which is close to the upper divine realm is superior in quality to that which is below. There follows the note that the wings of the soul have their own 'plumage' (τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πτέρωμα), which like other natural phenomena can grow stronger and weaker (e1-4) depending on nourishment (τρέφεται). At this point the focus of the text pans outwards again to the universal scene where the mythological king of the gods is engaged in the task of divine management. The wings of his perfection are located specifically on the chariot he drives (246e4-5):

ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεὺς, ἐλαύνων πτηνὸν ἄρμα, πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελούμενος:

First in the heavens travels Zeus, the great leader, driving a winged chariot, putting all things in order and caring for all. (tr. Rowe)

The mention of Zeus' winged chariot directly recalls 246a and the image of soul as charioteer and horses, as it re-combines the two motifs of wings and horses. In this episode the final uses of the wing image build on the picture established so far: the idea that the wing is 'nourished' reappears at 248c2 as its elevating function is again noted (κουφίζεται / τρέφεται). Now the food for the soul's wing is identified as the celestial vision of the Forms, while the loss of perfection imaged in the loss of wings (πτερορρυήση 248c8) is now specifically attributed to the soul's inability to maintain sight of this vision.

At this point of Plato's narrative there is as yet no erotic application of the wing image: the emphasis is solely on the motifs of elevation and proximity to the divine as expressions of perfection. However, there are two particular passages from love lyric which may have provided inspiration for Plato's use of the wing as a mediator between divine and human realms: Sappho 1 and Anacreon 378. In Sappho 1, a cletic hymn, the goddess Aphrodite responds to Sappho's prayer for a visitation. The moment of epiphany is described in striking terms (8-13):

ἦλθες

ἄρμ' ὑπασδεύξαισα· κάλοι δέ σ' ἄγον  
ὄκεες στρουθοὶ περι γᾶς μελαίνας  
πύκνα δίννεντες πτέρ' ἀπ' ὠράνωϊθε-  
ρος διὰ μέσσω,  
αἶψα δ' ἐξίκοντο·

(You) came with chariot yoked: beautiful swift sparrows whirring fast-beating wings brought you above the dark earth down from heaven through the mid-air, and soon [suddenly] they arrived. (tr. Campbell)

Aphrodite's chariot is drawn by sparrows and the verses draw attention to both the rapid movement of the wings (πύκνα δίννεντες πτέρ')<sup>54</sup> and the distance crossed through the space between immortal and mortal worlds (ἀπ' ὠράνωϊθερος διὰ μέσσω). In Anacreon's poem the journey is from earth to heaven as a frustrated lover is driven to seek out Eros in his heavenly abode (378):

ἀναπέτομαι δὴ πρὸς Ὀλυμπον πτερύγεσσι κούφης  
διὰ τὸν Ἔρωτ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ <...> θέλει συνηβᾶν.

<sup>54</sup> Stanley (1976) sees Sappho's phrase as a deliberate echo of *Iliad* 11.454.

See, I fly up on light wings to Olympus in search of Love; for (the boy) does not wish to enjoy the fun of youth with me. (tr. Campbell)

Both the winged chariot in Sappho and the lover's ability to fly in Anacreon draw on the established literary and iconographical tradition of Eros as a winged god, which will be explored below in relation to Plato's development of the erotic applications of the wing image (§5.2 Memory).

The second motif of the soul image at 246a is that of the team of horses and charioteer. As the image is introduced the emphasis is on the power of the team (συμφύτῳ δυνάμει) and this is soon joined by its corollary—the issue of control. The need for control is raised first through ἄρχων (literally, 'ruler') as an alternative term for the charioteer. This control recalls the vocabulary of inner rule used in Socrates' first speech (237d7 ἄρχοντε; 238a1 ἀρξάσης; 238e3 ἀρχομένῳ; 241a3 ἄρχοντα) and thus works as a structuring theme. The particular focus on control is then maintained through the abstract noun ἡνιόχησις for the act of charioteering, and through the adjective εὐήνια (247b2), which draws attention to the reins that are part of the charioteer's apparatus of command and steering. Later the level of skill of the charioteer is the determining factor in controlling the power of the horses (248a4-6 θορυβουμένη ὑπὸ τῶν ἵππων; βιάζομένων δὲ τῶν ἵππων) and in counter-balancing—or not—their downward pull (247b4-5 μὴ καλῶς ἦν τεθραμμένος τῶν ἡνιόχων; 248b2 κακίᾳ ἡνιόχων). Critics have commented on the poetic influences on this image of horses and chariot. As Slaveva-Griffin has rightly observed, the chariot ride is an allusion to Zeus' chariot ride in Homer's *Iliad*.<sup>55</sup> But she has further argued that the more important allusion here is to the chariot of Parmenides' prologue (2003, 227):

I argue that the *Phaedrus*' myth of the soul as a charioteer exemplifies Plato's literary and philosophic appropriation of the charioteer allegory in Parmenides' poem...

For Slaveva-Griffin the main parallel between this image in Parmenides and Plato is that (230):

in both authors the charioteer's journey represents travel beyond the beaten paths of human perception in a search for what true being is.

This suggestion of an echo of Parmenides, anticipated by duBois in 1985,<sup>56</sup> is interesting since it opens up the question of how far Plato in this text is placing himself also within a tradition of *philosophical* poetry. But for my purpose in assessing the impact of lyric poetry, it is notable how much *more* useful to Plato in this speech are various lyric images of horses. Plato's image of the chariot is 'lyricised' when it is developed to direct attention to the processes involved in

<sup>55</sup> Slaveva-Griffin (2003), 232: 'The poetic tradition most important for Parmenides' (and later Plato's) allegory of the soul as charioteer is that of Homer, specifically Zeus' chariot ride at *Il.* 8.41-52, the gates of heaven through which Hera's chariot passes at *Il.* 5.748-52, and Telemachus' journey from Pylos to Sparta in Book 3 of the *Odyssey*.' In the case of Plato's depiction of soul in *Phaedrus* only the first parallel here seems relevant.

<sup>56</sup> DuBois (1985), 98, on *Phdr.* 246a: 'The image of the chariot probably alludes to Parmenides (28B1).' DuBois also compares Plato's image of horses with the dream of Atossa in Aeschylus *Persae* 181-99.



actually controlling the horses. The key difference between the equestrian imagery of lyric and Parmenides' chariot is that the lyric images have a much closer focus on the action of charioteering itself and therefore on how one force can overcome another, which is the chief concern of tripartition.

The equestrian imagery for sexual desire and activity is used by various lyric poets, including Anacreon.<sup>57</sup> Theognis compares the boy to a horse and the lover to his driver<sup>58</sup> in two similar poems (1249-52, 1267-70):

παῖ, σὺ μὲν αὐτως ἵππῳ, ...  
αὐθις ἐπὶ σταθμοῦς ἤλυθες ἡμετέρους  
ἠνίοχόν τε ποθῶν ἀγαθόν...

Boy, you are like a horse,... you have come again to my stable desiring a good driver.<sup>59</sup>

παῖς τε καὶ ἵππος ὅμοιον ἔχει νόον· οὔτε γὰρ ἵππος  
ἠνίοχον κλαίει κείμενον ἐν κονίῃ,  
ἀλλὰ τὸν ὕστερον ἄνδρα φέρει κριθαῖσι κορεσθεῖς·  
ὡς δ' αὐτως καὶ παῖς τὸν παρεόντα φιλεῖ.

Boy and horse have a similar mind; for the horse doesn't weep as his driver lies in the dust, but has his fill of barley and carries another later; in the same way a boy loves the one he's with at the time.

Ibycus also uses the image of horse and chariot for a lover unwilling but compelled to re-enter the erotic arena (287):<sup>60</sup>

Ἔρος αὐτέ με κυανέοισιν ὑπὸ  
βλεφάροις τακέρ' ὄμμασι δερκόμενος  
κηλήμασι παντοδαποῖς ἐς ἀπει-  
ρα δίκτυα Κύπριδος ἐσβάλλει·  
ἦ μὰν τρομέω νιν ἐπερχόμενον,  
ὥστε φερέζυγος ἵππος ἀεθλοφόρος ποτὶ γήρα  
ἀέκων σὺν ὄχεσφι θοοῖς ἐς ἀμιλλαν ἔβα.

Again Love, looking at me meltingly from under his dark eyelids, hurls me with his manifold enchantments into the boundless nets of the Cyprian. How I fear his onset, as a prize-winning horse still bearing the yoke in his old age goes unwillingly with swift chariot to the race. (tr. Campbell)

Anacreon echoes this equestrian imagery of Theognis and Ibycus. His famous 'Thracian filly' poem (417) follows Theognis' directly sexual use of the image of horse and rider:

πῶλε Θρηκίη, τί δή με  
λοξὸν ὄμμασι βλέπουσα  
νηλέως φεύγεις, δοκεῖς δέ  
μ' οὐδὲν εἰδέναι σοφόν;  
ἴσθι τοι, καλῶς μὲν ἄν τοι

<sup>57</sup> On this imagery in Anacreon and Theognis, see Calame (1999), 27 and 165-6.

<sup>58</sup> In a third poem, 1357-8, it is the lover who is compared to an animal on whose neck lies a heavy yoke: αἰεὶ παιδοφίλησιν ἐπὶ ζυγὸν ἀχένη κείται / δύσλοφον, ἀργαλέον μνήμα φιλοξενίης.

<sup>59</sup> These translations are my own.

<sup>60</sup> Rowe (1986), 166 notes the similarity between Socrates' second speech and this poem of Ibycus, adding that 'Plato himself knew the poem well, since he paraphrases it at *Parmenides* 137a'.

τὸν χαλινὸν ἐμβάλοισι,  
ἠνίας δ' ἔχων στρέφοιμί  
σ' ἀμφὶ τέρματα δρόμου·  
νῦν δὲ λειμῶνάς τε βόσκειαι  
κοῦφά τε σκιρτώσα παίζεις,  
δεξιὸν γὰρ ἵπποπείρην  
οὐκ ἔχεις ἐπεμβάτην.

Thracian filly, why do you look at me from the corner of your eye and flee stubbornly from me, supposing that I have no skill? Let me tell you, I could neatly put the bridle on you and with the reins in my hand wheel you round the turnpost of the racecourse; instead, you graze in the meadows and frisk and frolic lightly, since you have no skilled horseman to ride you. (tr. Campbell)

Anacreon uses a less directly sexual, but nevertheless erotic, image of controlling horses in 346.8-9, which highlights Aphrodite's λέπαδνον, the broad leather strap that fastens the yoke to the neck, legs and frame of the horse:

ἴνα Κύπρις ἐκ λεπάδνων  
... α[ς κ]ατέδησεν ἵππους·

where Cyprian Aphrodite tied her... horses freed from the yoke. (tr. Campbell)

But the most striking parallel with Plato's use of the charioteering image for soul at *Phaedrus* 246a is found in Anacreon's haunting poem 360:

ὦ παῖ παρθένιον βλέπων  
δίζημαί σε, σὺ δ' οὐ κοεῖς,  
οὐκ εἰδὼς ὅτι τῆς ἐμῆς  
ψυχῆς ἠνιοχεύεις.

Boy with the girlish glance, I seek you, but you do not notice, not knowing that you hold the reins of my soul. (tr. Campbell)

On the striking phrase τῆς ἐμῆς / ψυχῆς ἠνιοχεύεις Calame explains (1999, 19): 'love holds the reins that control the vital breath called *psukhê* by the Greeks.' Although it is more correct to say that it is the boy who holds the reins, the point stands that the control is exerted over the lover's very life-force. Since the more common site of the impact of *eros* in lyric poetry is the *phrenes* or *thumos*,<sup>61</sup> Anacreon's image stands out as unusual. While the noun *ψυχή* in Plato undoubtedly has a different range of meanings, it still retains its links with the standard Greek usage of life-force. Thus Anacreon's formulation of equestrian imagery for the control over the lover's very *ψυχή* seems to me an important influence on Plato's vocabulary and image-making for the tripartite soul.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, Plato's echo of this poem at 246a seems to represent the clearest instance of Anacreontic influence in *Phaedrus*.

<sup>61</sup> For *phrenes*, see e.g. Stesichorus 222b; Alcaeus 5; Sappho 3, 47 and 48; Theognis 66, 87, 122, 593, and 657; Ibycus 282c fr.1, fr. 29, and 286; and Anacreon 346. For *thumos*, see e.g. Stesichorus S11 and S148; Alcaeus 34 and 129; Sappho 1, 4, 5 and 60; Theognis 213, 630-1, 645, 695 and 877; and Ibycus 317b.

<sup>62</sup> Hackforth (1952), 77 notes that this poem of Anacreon is an 'early and apposite example' of 'the common metaphorical use of ἠνιοχεύειν and its cognates' for ruling.

Other critics have duly noted these parallels between Plato and the horses of lyric. Fortenbaugh (1966, 109) identifies Plato's image of charioteer and horses as an allusion to Anacreon's 'Thracian filly' poem (417) noting 'Plato uses a metaphor of driving horses to illustrate the phenomenon of conflicting desires'. DuBois (1985, 44) also notes the parallel with the Thracian filly and further compares Anacreon 346:

In a fragmentary pederastic poem, Anacreon (346) describes Aphrodite tethering her horses in a field of hyacinths. Horses often connote the exciting of desire, the will to tame an unbroken filly (Anacreon 84 [417]), or the indomitable will itself, as in Plato's representation of the charioteer of the *Phaedrus* (246a).

DuBois' comments on the erotic horses are helpful. It is true that horses in lyric poetry connote the 'exciting of desire' and the wish to 'mount' and impose control. For the significance of the grazing horses in the seduction meadows lies in the fact that they represent quiescent power and thereby the latent sexuality of the girls at play. As duBois observes, Anacreon's would-be lover in 417 imagines 'taming the unbroken filly' and this sexual image can indeed be broadened to apply to the human will itself, as exemplified in Plato's account of tripartition (246a-248e). Ferrari is the first critic to observe, albeit in passing, Plato's allusion to Anacreon 360. Comparing echoes of Sappho, he comments (1986, 265 n.21):

Socrates seems to make similar use of snatches from his other named source, Anacreon. Where the latter declares a beautiful boy to be the 'charioteer' of his soul (Anacreon 360, Page), Socrates describes the effects of the boy's beauty *within* the lover's soul in terms of an allegorical charioteer (253c7 sq).<sup>63</sup>

In *Genres in Dialogue* Nightingale takes a similar line and further connects Anacreon's charioteer with Plato's tripartite psychology (1995, 158 n.51):

Note, too, that Plato's depiction of the tripartite soul echoes Anacreon's address to a boy whom he calls the 'charioteer of my heart' (τῆς ἐμῆς / ψυχῆς ἡνιοχέυεις, fr. 360 *PMG*); Sappho's declaration in fr 51 *PLF*—'I do not know what I should do; my thoughts go in two directions' (οὐκ οἶδ' ὅττι θέω· δίχρα μοι τὰ νοήματα) may also anticipate Plato's psychology... Anacreon's mention of the charioteer invites us to posit a direct influence.

Nightingale (133) shows how *Phaedrus* 'repeatedly signals its rapprochement with "unphilosophical" language' and judges (149) that Plato in this work allows lyric 'a relatively autonomous role'.<sup>64</sup> I support Nightingale's assessment that Anacreon's charioteer is a 'direct influence' on Plato's text and accept the suggestion that the lyric poets' conception of inner division, caused by *eros*, is also echoing in the account of tripartition. In the extant fragments of the six poets in this study, Sappho and Anacreon alone offer similar reflections on the contradictory effects of *eros*. Thus the echoes in inner division can be seen as

<sup>63</sup> Ferrari (1986), 107 also contrasts Anacreon 360 with 417 to support his point that in love poetry the beloved is not necessarily passive.

<sup>64</sup> Using a distinction between 'active and passive double-voiced discourse', Nightingale (148-62) considers Plato's engagement with lyric poetry and judges that in *Phaedrus* Plato refuses 'parody' (which would involve 'domination') in favour of 'passive double-voiced discourse', where the author allows 'the alien genre to play an active and relatively autonomous role in his text' (149).

allusions to Sappho and Anacreon in particular, since for both poets the erotic experience is so perplexing that it results in contradictory impulses and feelings. Thus Sappho's 'I am in two minds' would seem to be echoed in Anacreon's statement (428):

ἐρέω τε δηῶτε κοῦκ ἐρέω  
καὶ μαίνομαι κοῦ μαίνομαι.

Once again I love and I do not love, I am mad and I am not mad. (tr. Campbell)<sup>65</sup>

I am not claiming that either Sappho or Anacreon is the inspiration for Plato's theory of tripartition. The Socratic paradoxes and Plato's own reasoning on human motivation are necessary and sufficient causes for the development of this theory. However, for this exploration into why Plato at 235c names and praises Sappho and Anacreon in particular, these poems on conflicting experience and judgements seem to provide useful comparanda, offering as they do a vision of human experience that is in line with Plato's own account. These comparable poems offer a relevant and familiar poetic view in the light of which the novel theory of tripartition can be more easily explained. While the poets have given expression to the inner conflict caused by love, Plato will explain how this conflict is not due simply to the extremes of erotic experience but is rather a constant factor in all human behaviour.

My final point on the imagery of horses at 246a concerns the relationship of this section of the dialogue with the prologue. The poetic motif of the eroticised landscape would seem to be recalled through vocabulary that suggests the grazing horses of the prelude meadows. The distinctive terms are νομή and λειμών at 248b7-c1. The uppermost image at this point is that of the nourishment of the soul. Whereas the 'mind of a god' is nourished (τρεφομένη) on insight and knowledge (247d1-2) and whereas the divine souls in the extracelestial circuit 'feast upon' truth (ἔστιαθεῖσα 247e3), the horses of the divine souls are fed 'at their manger' (247e5 φάτνην) on ambrosia and nectar. This humorous aside establishes the superiority of the Forms over other mythological divinities: in this new vision of perfect reality the mythological food of the gods is merely the food given to horses. A similar food metaphor is used for the experience of the non-divine souls. Despite the aim of these souls to achieve truth, often they must make do with the inferior 'food of appearance' (τροφή δοξαστή 248b5). The key 'meadow' vocabulary comes in the assertion (248b5-c2):

οὗ δ' ἔνεχ' ἡ πολλή σπουδὴ τὸ ἀληθείας ἰδεῖν πεδίον οὗ ἐστίν, ἣ τε δὴ προσήκουσα ψυχῆς τῷ ἀρίστῳ νομῇ ἐκ τοῦ ἐκεῖ λειμῶνος τυγχάνει οὖσα, ἣ τε τοῦ πτεροῦ φύσις, ᾧ ψυχὴ κουφίζεται, τούτῳ τρέφεται.

The cause of their great eagerness to see the plain of truth where it lies is that the pasturage which is fitting for the best part of the soul comes from the meadow

<sup>65</sup> Commenting on Anacreon 428, Calame (1999), 18 observes the connection with Sappho 51: 'the poet can experience erotic desire in its pure state, simultaneously sensitive to both the madness that it induces and its absence... Reduced to a simple condition for the duration of the present tense, the contrasts in the nature of Eros become so strong that the poet uses contradictory terms rather than merely contrary or contrasting ones: now Eros is not simply both sweet and stinging, but is both active and absent, all at once. In similar fashion Sappho... seems... to be feeling two desires at once.'

there, and that the nature of the wing which lifts up the soul is nourished by this.  
(tr. Rowe)

Thus the realm of the Forms is now identified as a 'meadow' offering 'pasturage' for reason. Given the familiar idea of horses grazing in lush pastures, it is ironic that the best part of the soul that seeks its proper 'pasturage' is not the horses but their charioteer. But the horses within both the divine and non-divine souls are not fitted to receive this pasturage simply because they are not rational enough. The pasturage and meadow vocabulary would therefore seem to function similarly to that of the ambrosia and nectar: namely, there is a transposition where what is superior in mythology is determinedly supplanted by the perfection of the Forms. In this case the Forms provide a meadow that surpasses even the most idyllic of lush landscapes in poetry. While the eroticised meadows of poetry and myth are the scenes of divine epiphany, these traditional divinities are merely the Olympians, and for a full encounter with divine truth, the only suitable location is the erotic meadow of the Forms. Thus Plato sets out how the best part of us, reason, is strengthened by the most sublime nourishment possible, available only from the most perfect setting possible. Read in this way the equestrian imagery of 246a interacts with the λειμών of 248c to furnish the final missing motif of the erotic meadow: the grazing horses.

To conclude, this episode of the myth contains various allusions to lyric poetry. The motif of wings suggests the particular influence of Sappho and Anacreon, as does the connection between tripartition and the inner division. The horses of the myth draw on the established use of equestrian imagery in lyric and also recall the seduction meadow motif. It is within this episode that Plato makes, in my opinion, his clearest allusion to Anacreon—with his own horses and charioteer borrowing directly from the scenario and vocabulary of Anacreon 360.

## 5.2 Memory (248e5-250e1)

The second episode of the myth tells how the soul regains its wings, and introduces the theme of recollection.<sup>66</sup> I will analyse Plato's debts to lyric here by two approaches: first by considering his use of particular lyric motifs and vocabulary and second by showing how the account of recollection in *Phaedrus* is shaped under the influence of Sappho's insights on the power of memory.

Let us begin, then, with the particular poetic motifs that feature in this episode. Recollection is an intellectual re-discovery of the Forms and is presented as both a journey back to origins (e.g. 248e6 ἀφικνεῖται; 249a5 ἀπέρχονται; 249a7 ἐλθοῦσαι; 249b2 ἀφικνούμεναι; b4 ἀφικνεῖται; b6 ἤξει) and an erotic encounter with a beloved. Four further motifs are used to help to explain how recollection changes the nature of the soul. These motifs can all be traced back to portrayals of *eros* in lyric poetry: wings, contact with divinity, madness and the radiance of beauty. As elsewhere in the text, the particular influences of Sappho and Anacreon can be discerned in the use of these motifs.

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<sup>66</sup> On the theory itself, see Scott (1995), section 1. Everson (1990) provides useful discussion and bibliography.

At 248e5 the narrative of the myth turns from why the soul loses its wings to how it regains them. The change of direction mirrors that of the soul away from a progressive descent into worse lives (248c) and back towards its point of origin (248e6 εἰς μὲν γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅθεν ἦκει).

Wings are used at 249a1 (περοῦται) in conjunction with the soul's return to its origin. If the philosophical life is chosen three times in succession, the souls become winged (περωθεῖσαι) and are able to 'depart'. The upward impulse caused by such virtuous lives is also formulated as the soul being 'uplifted by Justice' (ὑπὸ τῆς Δίκης κουφισθεῖσαι).<sup>67</sup> Rationality is presented specifically as the ability to organise perceptions 'from many into one' (249b7-c1) and this collecting together is identified as (c2-3):

ἀνάμνησις ἐκείνων ἃ ποτ' εἶδεν ἡμῶν ἢ ψυχὴ συμπορευθεῖσα θεῷ

a recollection of those things which our soul once saw when it travelled in company with a god. (tr. Rowe)

The journey alongside a god functions as the guarantor of the soul's rational capacities, with proximity to the divine serving as a spatial image for superior rational prowess. The text spells out the interconnectedness of reason, wings and divinity (249c4-6):

διὸ δὴ δικαίως μόνη περοῦται ἢ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια· πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις ἀεὶ ἐστὶν μνήμη κατὰ δύναμιν, πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεῖός ἐστιν.

Hence it is with justice that only the mind of the philosopher becomes winged: for so far as it can it is [always] close, through memory, to those things his closeness to which gives god his divinity. (tr. Rowe)

The wings indicate rationality since their motion upwards allows proximity to the 'very things which' (πρὸς ἐκείνοις... πρὸς οἷσπερ) bestow divinity on any divine being. In this remarkable statement Plato establishes the Forms as the most perfect and superior entities that stand as the fixed point for all souls to move towards and so gain access to the secure knowledge that is the basis for the proper exercise of rationality. The (human and imperfect) philosopher achieves 'closeness' to the Forms through memory (μνήμη) and making the 'right use of such reminders' (τοιούτοις... ὑπομνήμασιν ὀρθῶς χρώμενος). By remembering the Forms the human soul is able to make correct judgements about reality. Memory is required since soul has been estranged, since its 'fall', from its divine origins close to truth. By recalling its former existence and level of knowing the human soul becomes close again to it. Through memory the human soul re-activates its rational powers and in this process improves its nature, thereby making it more akin to the 'divine company' of which it was once part.

The intellectual event of recollection is spoken of in the traditional language of religious initiation (249c7-8 τελέους... τελετὰς τελούμενος, τέλος), for in initiation rituals the participants are likewise understood as coming into contact with god. In this myth the divine realm consists of both the immortal souls (the traditional 'gods') and the Forms in the region above the heavens (247c3

<sup>67</sup> The association between the terms is familiar from Anacreon 378: περύγεσσι κούφης.

ὑπερουράνιον). Although it is notable that the Forms are not directly described as 'divine' in the myth,<sup>68</sup> various formulations point to this interpretation: they are 'holy' (250a4 ἱερῶν; cf. ἐν ἀγνῶ βάρῳ at 254b7); the Form of beauty is 'blessed' (250b6 μακαρίαν); the revelations of the Forms are 'blissful' (250c3 εὐδαίμονα); and at 249d1 they must be included in the generic category of 'the divine' (τῷ θείῳ),<sup>69</sup> since it is through the closeness to 'the divine' that 'nourishment' is gained and since at 248b6 the nourishment comes from the 'plain of Truth' which is an appellation for the Forms.

The madness theme re-enters as the process of 'coming close' to the divine is at 249c8-d1 viewed alternatively as the 'standing aside' from human concerns (ἐξιστάμενος / καὶ πρὸς... γιγνόμενος). This change in values causes the philosopher to be regarded by ordinary people as mad (παρακινῶν 249d2). Socrates is keen to correct this unenlightened perception and renames the state as divine possession (ἐνθουσιάζων). In a deft touch the ignorance of the masses is attributed to their 'not noticing/forgetting' (λέληθεν) what is actually the case. Therefore as the philosopher recollects, he separates himself from those who forget and Socrates' two competing terms for the philosopher's experience—παρακινῶν and ἐνθουσιάζων—relate to themes in lyric poetry. While the idea of 'divine possession' will be reframed in the next episode of the myth (250e1-253c6: see §5.3), the various ideas involved in the notion of παρακινέω can be explored here.

The verb παρακινέω has a number of relevant senses for this passage. In its most literal usage it means 'move aside' and in this sense works together with ἐξιστάμενος (249c8) to denote the positive choice of the philosopher to turn aside from the human and towards the divine. Second it means 'be disturbed' or 'out of one's senses', which aligns it with the general madness vocabulary of the text. But in this second sense it is also used to mean 'be highly excited'. This is important since the account of recollecting truth will now be described increasingly in terms of erotic arousal. In support of this notion of arousal the wing image is deployed so that its primary connotation is no longer that of elevation and perfection but of rapid movement indicating excitement. The fourth kind of madness is identified specifically as love and this experience is now reformulated as (249d5-e1):

the madness of the man who on seeing beauty (κάλλος) here on earth and being reminded (ἀναμνησκόμενος) of true beauty becomes winged and fluttering with eagerness to fly upwards (περῶταί τε καὶ ἀναπτερούμενος προθυμούμενος ἀναπέσθαι) but unable to leave the ground... causes him to be regarded as mad (μανικῶς διακείμενος). (tr. Rowe)

The animation of the philosopher remembering the Forms is now identified as erotic arousal. First the madness is caused by a memory triggered specifically by beauty. Second, the philosopher experiencing this madness is described as 'the

<sup>68</sup> In contrast, for example, with *Symposium* 211e3: αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλόν.

<sup>69</sup> The relationship between the Forms and 'the divine' in the myth is not entirely straightforward. For example, the definition of the 'divine' (τὸ δὲ θεῖον) at 246d8-e1 includes the attribute σοφόν, and it is far from clear how a static Form might be 'wise'. This, however, is a question strictly extraneous to the present discussion.

man who loves the beautiful' (249e3-4 ὁ ἐρῶν τῶν καλῶν), who is therefore 'called a lover' (ἐραστῆς καλεῖται). This careful reconfiguring of the memory of truth as a lover's response stirs the root of the word φιλοσοφία ('love of wisdom') through its redefinition as the erotic response to truth. The transition between the intellectual endeavour of reasoning and the desire of the lover is eased through the feelings of eagerness and excitement generated in both cases. The image of the mad lover's internal fluttering recalls the impact of *eros* in lyric poetry and adopts its image of Eros as a winged figure.

The traditional iconography of Eros as a winged figure is reviewed by Calame (1999, 31, 65-6, 81, 156). Evidence for Eros as a winged, or indeed flying, adolescent boy and associated imagery is adduced from myth, art and poetry, including Sappho 22.11-13 (ὡς σε δηῦτε πόθος τ[ ] / ἀμφιπόταται / τὰν κάλαν: Calame 1999, 31). To this evidence can be added Sappho 21.8 (πέταται) and Anacreon 379b (περύγων... παραπετέσθω), where in each case the context suggests that the subject is Eros. By extension the poets transfer the wings of Love to the lover's own heart so that the fluttering within serves as an image of their erotic excitement and arousal. In Sappho 31.5-6 the fluttering response is caused particularly by the sight of the beloved (τό μ' ἦ μάν / καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν). The same motif and verb are used by Alcaeus and Anacreon. As Alcaeus in 283.3-5 presents Helen's erotic madness (ἐκμάνεισα), he says that love has 'excited her heart' ([ἐ]πτ[ό]αισε θυμόν). In Anacreon 346 fr. 1.11-12 the appearance of the beautiful boy in the seduction meadow excites the desires of the onlookers (δι' ἄσσα πολλοὶ / πολυητέων φρένας ἐπτοέαται) and in 363 the poet asks a lover preparing for seduction: τί μὲν πέταται; ('why are you all of a flutter?'). The connection between madness and this excited state is also made by Theognis (1053-4 τῶν γὰρ μαινομένων πέταται θυμός τε νόος τε). Similarly, in Sappho 1 the fast-beating wings of the sparrows drawing the goddess' chariot give expression to the animated feelings of the lover at the approach of Aphrodite.<sup>70</sup> Calame reads the wing image in Anacreon 378 as an expression of the lover's elation (1999, 22-3): '... Anacreon, who, as a result of the impact of Eros, claims to be as if borne up to Olympus on airy wings.' Plato's winged soul is similarly borne up to the realm of the Forms by the impact of love, through the feelings of excitement generated by the memory of truth and through the attendant regrowth of the soul's wings (to be discussed below in §5.3).

After the identification of the lover's madness at 249d-e the narrative continues with its account of recollection (250a1 ἀναμνησθεσθαι; 250a4 λήθην; a5 τῆς μνήμης; 250c7 μνήμη) and the love story of rediscovering the Forms is further developed, again drawing on lyric vocabulary. Following the lover's fluttering madness at 249d-e there is, again as in lyric, an attendant loss of self-control. For the souls still able to remember the Forms are stunned by the recognition of their earthly likenesses (250a6-7): ἐκπλήττονται καὶ οὐκέτ' <ἐν>

<sup>70</sup> Such a connection between the rapid movement of wings and the onset of desire, in contrast to the slowing of wings and cooling of desire, may also be present in Sappho 42, where a scholion to Pindar *Pyth.* 1.10 reports that 'Sappho says of the pigeons, "And their heart has grown cold, and they slacken their wings"' (tr. Campbell): ταῖσι <δὲ> ψῶχος μὲν ἔγεντ' ὁ θυμός, / πὰρ δ' ἴεισι τὰ πτέρω.



αὐτῶν γίνονται ('are driven out of their wits with amazement and lose control of themselves'). The issue of 'madness vs self-control' connects this passage with Socrates' first speech, as is reinforced by the pointed use of the noun *sophrosune* (250b2; cf. 241a3-4 and 241b1).

The account of recollection is also supported by a further motif from lyric poetry: that of beauty as a radiant light. The love story of recollection advances at 250b5-6 through the portrayal of the Form of beauty as a radiant, shining light: κάλλος δὲ τότ' ἦν ἰδεῖν λαμπρόν. In contrast to the likenesses of other Forms in which 'there is no illumination' (φέγγος), beauty not only 'shone out' (250d1 ἔλαμπεν) in the divine realm but also on earth appears 'gleaming most clearly through the clearest of our senses' (250d2-3 διὰ τῆς ἐναργεστάτης αἰσθήσεως τῶν ἡμετέρων στίλβον ἐναργέστατα). That the sight of beauty causes erotic arousal for the soul is confirmed in significant vocabulary in 250c-e. At 250c7 Socrates draws attention to his own experience as narrator and philosopher. In the act of speaking about the memory of the Forms he has reminded himself of their beauty and so has stirred his own 'longing' for this past life:

ταῦτα μὲν οὖν μνήμη κεχαρίσθω, δι' ἣν πόθω τῶν τότε νῦν μακρότερα εἴρηται.

Let this be our concession to memory, which has made me speak now at some length out of longing for what was before. (tr. Rowe)

He then confirms that the soul's response to beauty is erotic by comparing how the sight of wisdom itself would cause an even greater erotic charge. Wisdom would indeed evoke 'terrible feelings of desire' (250d4-5 δεινοῦς... ἔρωτας). The Forms are referred to as 'the other objects of love' (ἑραστά) and finally the Form of beauty is identified as 'the most evident and the most loved' (250d7-8 ἐκφανέστατον... καὶ ἐρασμιώτατον). The 'lover of wisdom' is thus revealed as a manic lover of true Beauty, which is in turn characterised as his 'most lovable' beloved. This erotic scenario<sup>71</sup> while unusual is nevertheless consonant with the portrayal of intellectual contact with the Forms in other dialogues. As Price observes (1989, 36-8 and 50-4), erotic vocabulary is similarly used at *Symposium* 212a; *Phaedo* 79d; *Timaeus* 90b-d; *Laws* 904d6; and *Republic* 490b.<sup>72</sup> Contact with truth therefore becomes a form of union with a beloved, where the *telos* of union is achieved through the lover's intimate knowledge of, and emotional engagement with, the object of his desire.<sup>73</sup>

In presenting the Form of Beauty as 'shining' Plato uses the motif of the radiance of love familiar in lyric poetry. The sparkling or gleaming appearance of lover and beloved is used by both Sappho and Anacreon. In Sappho 16.18 the lover remembers 'the bright sparkle' of Anactoria's face (κάμάρυγμα λάμπρον... ἴδην προσώπω) and in 96.8-10 the beauty of a girl is compared to the moon

<sup>71</sup> Nussbaum (1986), 217-20 discusses the erotic quality of this and later passages of the myth. On the link between sexual and intellectual desire here, see also Lebeck (1972), 273 and Foley (1998), 58.

<sup>72</sup> On this sexual and procreative imagery, see Pender (1992).

<sup>73</sup> For discussions on the complex relationship between the lovers and the Forms, see Price (1981) and (1989), chs. 2 and 3; Vlastos (1981); and Kahn (1987).

shedding its light (ἄ βροδοδάκτυλος σελάννα / πάντα περρέχοισ' ἄστρα· φάος δ' ἐπί-/σχει), with 34 offering a similar comparison of a girl to the 'lovely' shining moon (κάλαν σελάνναν / ... ὅπποτα πλήθοισα μάλιστα λάμπη / γᾶν).<sup>74</sup> Closely associated with the beauty of the beloved as shining light is a more general connection between love and brightness to express the joy that can attend the experience. Sappho interlaces love, beauty and brightness when she declares in 58.25-7: καί μοι / τὸ λάμπρον ἔρος τῶελίω καὶ τὸ κάλον / λέ[λ]ογχε ('love has obtained for me the brightness and beauty of the sun', tr. Campbell). Anacreon also uses this motif in his fragmentary but still striking lines (444): πόθῳ στίλβων... / γεγανωμένος ('glistening with desire... gleaming').<sup>75</sup> As de Vries and Rowe have noted (*ad loc.*) Plato at 234d3 seems to be punning on Phaedrus' name (φαιδρός, 'bright, beaming') through the use of the poetic verb γάνυσθαι for the glowing appearance of the excited speech-lover.<sup>76</sup> This, I would suggest, is a direct allusion to Anacreon's line, and I find support in the further parallel of the unusual term στίλβον at 250d2. The poetic adjective<sup>77</sup> serves to align the 'shining' Phaedrus with the glistening quality of the Form of Beauty, since in that which 'glistens' here at 250d2 is revealed the true source of the 'gleaming' at 234d3. The lyric echoes are momentary but highly effective. The account of recollection at 248e5-250e1 as a love story is thus supported by motifs familiar from lyric poetry: the wings of *eros*; contact with divinity; love as madness; and the radiance of the beloved.

The second approach I would like to take to Plato's presentation of recollection is to show how the account is influenced by Sappho's insights on the power of memory to transform the lover's experience. This second episode of the myth in which the soul regains its wings balances the previous one where the soul lost its wings. Through journeying upwards again through the exercise of reason the soul of the philosopher is presented as a lover remembering his true beloved. In this way the lover's attention is redirected from earthly incarnations of beauty (such as a beautiful boy) to the actual source of beauty itself. Recollection therefore becomes an erotic pursuit and success is conveyed in various terms suggesting happiness and wholeness. In the earlier story of the extracelestial procession (248b-c) the souls that are maimed through the incompetent driving of their charioteer depart from the vision ἀτελεῖς (248b4), i.e. unfulfilled, their purpose not accomplished. Any soul able to maintain the vision would remain ἀπήμονα ('unharmful, free from sorrow') but failure results in 'forgetfulness' (c7 λήθης) and the attendant fall to earth (c8). Conversely, here in episode two where the souls are able to 'remember' the Forms (249c5-7 μνήμη, ὑπομνήμασιν), the process of recollection is spoken of as initiation rites through which the

<sup>74</sup> The more fragmentary poem 4 also uses shining within what seems to be a description of a beloved's face (ἀντιλάμπην... πρόσωπον).

<sup>75</sup> Although not certain, the association between beauty, love and brightness would also seem to be at work in Anacreon 380 (χαίρε φίλον φῶς χαριεντι μειδιῶν προσώπῳ) and 451 (ἦλιε κάλλιλαμπέτη).

<sup>76</sup> Nussbaum (1986), 229 explains the pun and regards it as extended through the formulation Διὸς δῖόν at 252e, which she reads as a hidden allusion to Plato's own beloved, since: 'the name "Phaidros" has the same meaning as the name "Dion". Both mean "brilliant" or "sparkling."'

<sup>77</sup> See e.g. *Iliad* 3.392, where it is used of Paris: κάλλει... στίλβων.

philosopher becomes 'perfect, complete'. The repetition of the key term is striking (249c7-8): τελέους ἀεὶ τελετὰς τελούμενος, τέλεος ὄντως ὁ μόνος γίγνεται. Recollection therefore is a completing of the soul's purpose which allows it to be 'fulfilled'. The eagerness of the souls in heaven to view the Forms (249d6-7 ἡ πολλὴ σπουδὴ) is mirrored in the incarnate soul's 'eagerness to fly upwards' (249d6-7 ἀναπτερούμενος προθυμούμενος ἀναπτέσθαι). At 250b6 the original vision is further characterised as 'blessed' (μακαρίαν) and the souls able to view the Forms as a 'happy company' (εὐδαίμονι χορῶ). This is the bliss that the incarnate soul has lost and the regaining of it is duly termed a 'most blessed' initiation (250b8-c1): ἐτελοῦντο τῶν τελετῶν ἣν θέμις λέγειν μακαριωτάτην. Being 'initiated' into this rite makes the souls 'whole' (250c1 ὁλόκληροι). In this vision of wholeness and completion, the loss and regaining of the wings functions also as an image of the soul's loss and regaining of happiness and fulfilment.

Read in this way the love story of *Phaedrus* follows the deficiency model of love, as set out in *Symposium*, whereby what drives the desires of soul is lack.<sup>78</sup> Socrates explains (*Symposium* 200a):

Don't you think that any case of desire is *necessarily* desire for something which is lacking? If it isn't lacking, you can't desire it, surely? (tr. Waterfield)

The lover of beauty becomes aware of the lack of true beauty in the earthly likenesses (250b3) and is thus stimulated into seeking the Form through active memory. In this way memory provides for the soul a powerful means of overcoming its loss, especially since recollection becomes itself the *actual* journey back to the beloved in the divine realm and thus offers a reunion. In intellectual terms such reunion can be understood as sustained contact and closeness with the standards of truth. By this means indeed the absent beloved, the Form of Beauty and the other Forms, actually becomes present again to the lover, the philosopher striving to remember truth. On this reading the myth echoes the speech of Aristophanes in *Symposium* as a 'plea for a return, through Eros, to an original unity' (Calame 1999, 183).<sup>79</sup>

Both duBois and Foley have maintained that Sappho is an influence on Plato's account of love and memory. I support this claim since the narrative of incarnation in *Phaedrus* follows the structure of the love stories in Sappho. But what is less clear is the relationship one can therefore posit between the accounts of the philosopher and the poet. As will become clear in this discussion, my own reading remains distinct from those of both critics. The central importance of memory in Sappho's thoughts on desire is well established. Anne Burnett presented the case persuasively in her influential readings of Sappho in 1979 and 1983.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Price (1989), 12 finds this idea as early as the *Lysis* (221d7-e3): 'Desire presupposes need, and the origin of need is loss.' See also his comments on *Symp.* 200a (1989, 18-21).

<sup>79</sup> Plato's account of a return to wholeness through memory is paralleled in Freud's work. See Price (1990), esp. 255-7. Relevant texts include 'Remembering, repeating and working-through' and 'Moses and monotheism', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey (London 1953-74), 12:147-56 and 23:7-137 (esp. 66-124), respectively. On the latter work, Caruth (1996), 13 observes the insistent focus on 'the return to origins in memory'.

<sup>80</sup> Burnett (1979), 16-27; and (1983), 277-313, Part Three: Sappho, section iii 'Memory'.

Commenting particularly on the three memory poems (16, 94 and 96), Burnett elucidated Sappho's insights on how the distress of love can be assuaged through the activity of memory. For Sappho love is a ritual devoted to the goddess Aphrodite and the erotic experience can allow the human lover contact with the divine (1983, 277):

Desire is Aphrodite's gift, and so is its fulfilment, which means that love achieved is like an initiation that brings momentary contact with a divine principle.

For Sappho, Aphrodite if 'rightly approached' (277):

will offer an antidote to the sharp brevity of sensual experience, and to Sappho at least this mysterious and enduring benefaction comes in the form of memory—a disciplined memory that renders the transience of beauty incorruptible.

For Burnett Sapphic memory is an 'organising and classifying' process (299-300) which demands rigour and self-control. Indeed, Sappho's poetry instructs the lovers in how to understand their experience (313):

the lesson is that tangible beauty is to be desired because it is an aspect of a perfect and unattainable beauty that is known only through memory, yet present always in the worship of Aphrodite.

Gentili follows this approach when he observes that in Sappho the lovers' memory (1988, 84):

reactualizes shared experiences in a paradigmatic fashion and offers assurance that the life lived together exists as an absolute reality beyond space and time.

DuBois (1995) and Foley (1998) build upon these accounts of Sapphic memory and further suggest that this aspect of Sappho's poetry was an important influence on Plato's account of recollection. DuBois and Foley share important common ground: both observe the close relationship between desire and lack in both Sappho and Plato;<sup>81</sup> recognise that Sappho shares with Plato a vision whereby yearning for what is absent can be transmuted by the consolations of remembering;<sup>82</sup> regard Sappho's poetry as 'proto-philosophical' through its concern with abstractions;<sup>83</sup> note the mockery of the poetic tradition evidenced in Socrates' 'vessel image' at 235c-d;<sup>84</sup> and, most importantly, explore how the naming of Sappho at 235c relates to the allusion to Sapphic poetry within the text.

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<sup>81</sup> DuBois (1995), 9-10, 29, 33; Foley (1998), 56. See also Snyder on Sappho (1997), 45-6: 'Whether the absence is impending..., permanent..., or temporary..., lack of the beloved is an inevitable component of desire. Recollection, constructed in the present moment of lack, makes acute the awareness of what is gone, thereby heightening the sense of desire for the absent beloved.'

<sup>82</sup> DuBois (1995), 29, 104, 140-4; Foley (1998), 54-6

<sup>83</sup> DuBois (1995), 114; Foley (1998), 58. Calame (2005), 62-6. discusses Sappho's use of beauty and memory in her portrayals of love, noting (64) that Anactoria's beauty (in poem 16) 'has a Platonic flavor even if the path down which Sappho's poem leads us is exactly the inverse of that which Diotima lays out for us in the *Symposium*'. Like Foley, he also in this book cites Gentili and Burnett on Sapphic memory (2005, 64 n.21) and, like duBois, discusses Sappho's abstract meanings and strategies of argument (2005, 66-9).

<sup>84</sup> DuBois (1995), 85-6; Foley (1998), 42, 44. Both are quoted above in §3, 'The naming', n.33.

The two critics diverge, however, on the actual nature of the relationship and my own position on Plato's transformation of Sappho coheres in part with both readings while not fully agreeing with either one.

In her 1985 treatment duBois links the mention of Sappho's name at 235c with the subsequent allusion to poem 31 at 251a (1985, 99-100):

[Socrates'] mention of the poets Sappho and Anacreon (235c) prepares the way for a later assumption of her lyric voice. [251b]... Sappho's was perhaps the canonical description of desire, with its brilliant evocation of heat, cold, trembling. To echo her response so deftly is to be possessed by her, to become the lyric poet possessed by the lyric poetess.

However, by the 1995 discussion duBois has re-considered and now berates Sappho's 'expulsion and exclusion from the scene of philosophy' at Plato's hands (1995, 79). She now regards the naming of Sappho at 235c and the use of Sapphic material in the text as a means of denying Sapphic views (87):

Plato echoes and appropriates the female position, and then uses the occasion to deny the body and to sublimate erotic desire into philosophy.

On this view Plato's quest for universal, abstract truth stands in stark conflict with Sappho's concerns with 'specificity' and 'materiality' (1995, 87) and thus their approaches to memory differ (1995, 81):

The woman poet and the man philosopher share the writerly project of recreating the beloved, of marking through writing the absence of the loved one... But Plato aspires to a denial of corporeal desire, and seeks to sublimate it into another memory, that sight of the ideas that keeps men hunting for truth and beauty, that prevents them from being trapped in the tomb of the body, while Sappho only wants more of the body, only regrets being denied it through absence and distance... She exhibits no desire to transcend the body, no desire to escape from flesh.

For duBois their difference in outlook leads to Plato ultimately silencing the poet (1995, 87-8):

The two renderings of desire differ radically. In Plato's hands the Sapphic model is appropriated and then disembodied, amputated. Sappho cannot remain in the philosophical text; even the disembodied Sappho, invoked allusively, like other women is exorcised from the Platonic dialogue. If the woman can be subordinated, dominated, and incorporated into the Platonic project of transcendence of corporeality, she may be represented, present, but silent.

On the 1985 reading Plato is 'possessed' by Sappho and 'echoes her response'; yet on the 1995 reading Plato is 'silencing' the poetess. While it is easy to dismiss the 1995 view of the 'amputation' of Sappho as unnecessarily extreme, it nevertheless has the merit of allowing a consistent negativity to emerge from *Phaedrus* on the lack of knowledge displayed by the poets. The difficulty, however, comes in explaining why Plato then uses Sapphic motifs to the extent that he does.

Foley is, like duBois, alert to the allusions to Sappho in *Phaedrus* but reaches a different conclusion on them. Foley regards Sappho as serving 'in some critical respects' as the inspiration for Socrates' argument in his second speech on love (1998, 40-1), through her account of memory within erotic relations (54-68).

Foley draws usefully on evidence from Maximus of Tyre, who speaks of Sappho as the 'mother' of Socrates' argument, to show that this view of Sappho's influence on Plato was already held in antiquity.<sup>85</sup> She rejects the view of duBois, and other recent commentators on Sappho, that Sappho's poetry celebrates corporeality (55-7) and instead sees a closer relationship between the erotics of Plato and Sappho. For Foley what allows Plato to transform rather than silence Sappho is a shared outlook on love. While she accepts (62) that 'Sapphic generalization does not deliberately anticipate the Platonic abstraction of the incorporeal from the corporeal', she nevertheless maintains that 'it takes a step in that direction by moving the listener beyond beauty in the visual world to beauty in the world of the imagination and to potential poetic permanence'. She therefore concludes (68):

for both Plato and Sappho erotics involves far more than the body. The erotic discourses of Plato and Sappho can lead their interlocutors beyond the specific to the paradigmatic, and beyond bodily pleasure and possessing in Sappho to memory, song, and religious festivity and in Plato to a pursuit of philosophical knowledge and truth where memory (*anamnesis*) and beauty play a catalytic role.<sup>86</sup>

I agree with Foley that Plato echoes Sappho's account of desire, loss and the transformative power of memory. For in the myth of the soul the underlying narrative of incarnation follows the structure of the love stories in Sappho: lover departs unwillingly from beloved but through the power of memory can achieve reunion and satisfy desire. But I think that duBois' emphasis on a significant gap between Sappho and Plato is still worth upholding, since the actual type of 'paradigmatic' experience of the lovers in each case remains fundamentally different. Foley reduces the distance between poet and philosopher by noting a shared approach to erotics that goes far beyond bodily experience. This is a worthwhile observation but it needs to be balanced with a much fuller account of the serious divisions that remain between the two—for example, in the type of 'permanence' each is concerned with, in the level of effort and discipline demanded and, most of all, in the consequences of failure. However, against duBois' view that Plato 'exorcises' and 'silences' Sappho, I agree with Foley and others<sup>87</sup> that Plato's appropriation of Sapphic memory represents rather a *transformation* in line with his psychology and metaphysics.

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<sup>85</sup> Maximus of Tyre uses the phrase the 'mother of the *logos*' in his essay on Socratic Love, in which he argues that Socrates' erotic *logoi* were not original to him but far older (*Oratio* 18.7): 'But whether the mother of the theory [ἡ τοῦ λόγου μήτηρ] was a Mantinean or a Lesbian, it is at any rate quite clear that Socrates' discussions of Love are not unique to him [οὐκ ἴδιαι] and do not begin with him either [οὐδὲ πρώτου]' (tr. Trapp, 1997, 165-6).

<sup>86</sup> Foley also advances the thesis that Plato adopts from Sappho a 'less hierarchical and more reciprocal mode of homoerotic relations'. But the evidence from lyric poetry in general seems to present no consistent hierarchical model, as Ferrari has noted (1987, 107-8). Foley also suggests that Sappho's use of dialogue may have influenced Plato but this too seems unconvincing. First, the influence of Socrates in this respect would seem to preclude the need to look for any further models; and secondly, the case is diluted by the fact that other lyric poets (for example, Archilochus and Theognis) make similar use of dialogue. On this technique in Archilochus, with notes on Theognis, see Burnett (1983), 68-72.

<sup>87</sup> See e.g. Nightingale (1995), 158-62, esp. 159 n.53.

In this current episode the myth has introduced the soul of the philosopher as a lover and the Form of Beauty as its beloved. This revelation of shining Beauty creates the basis for the two final episodes, since both take up the story of the lover's reaction to the Form. The soul's responses to Beauty are now viewed through two different lenses: first the changes in the nature of the soul's wings (episode three) and second the contrasting behaviours of the soul's horses and charioteer (episode four). Although the next two episodes are successive in the text, they describe the lover's simultaneous reactions to the sight of Beauty.

### 5.3 Regrowth (250e1-253c6)

In the final two episodes of the myth the narrative turns from the nature of Beauty itself to its impact on the human soul. Throughout these episodes a key moment is replayed: the soul's act of seeing beauty. This event is spoken of by means of different viewing subjects (the philosopher, the soul, and the charioteer and horses of soul) and different objects of vision (the Form of Beauty itself, the beautiful boy and his beautiful face) but is consistently portrayed as a lover's visual encounter with the beloved. The eyes of the lover and beloved are the most significant points of contact, as Plato again follows an established tradition of love lyric. As Calame explains (1999, 20), the 'favorite medium' of Eros is the gaze, which 'operates as a vector of amorous feeling'.<sup>88</sup> But Plato reshapes the tradition to allow the eyes to serve also as the conduit between the non-physical Form of beauty and the lovers' very soul. Both episodes are structured around the sightings of beauty since this is the critical moment when beauty and love exert their maximum power on the lover. The two episodes are closely integrated in that each maintains a dual perspective on the external experiences of the lover and the internal experiences of his soul. But the emphasis differs: episode three on the regrowth of soul's wings looks more at the impact of beauty on the soul, while episode four on control focuses more on the reactions within the soul. In both episodes Plato continues to draw on the motifs and vocabulary of lyric poetry and in episode three, as the actual impact of beauty is analysed, the clearest of all his allusions to Sappho can be heard.

Episode three opens with the contrast between the viewing experience of the non-philosophical man (250e1-251a1) as against that of the newly-initiated and hence philosophical man (251a1-253c6). When the non-philosophical man (μη νεοτελής) sees beauty (250e3 θεώμενος), his lack of reaction is set out in four negatives: he does *not* get transported (οὐκ... φέρεται) to the Forms; he does *not* revere the sight (οὐ σέβεται); and he does *not* fear or feel ashamed before it (οὐ δέδοικεν οὐδ' αἰσχύνεται). In direct contrast when the recent initiate (ἀρτιτελής) sees beauty (251a3 ἴδη), he undergoes a series of changes described as applying first to his whole self and then to his soul. First he is afraid, 'he *shudders* and experiences something of the *fears* he had before' (251a4 ἔφριξε...

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<sup>88</sup> See Calame (1999), 20-2, on the association between Eros and the gaze in various Greek poets. Plato again follows this tradition in his use of the phrase ἰδὼν τὸ ἐρωτικὸν ὄμμα ('catching sight of the eye/light of his love') at 253e5.

δειμάτων).<sup>89</sup> The verb φρίσσω denotes the sensation experienced in 'goosebumps'—i.e. both the effect of cold ('to shiver') and the effect of fear ('to shudder'). Then there is a sudden and extreme change (μεταβολή) as the chill gives way to a fever (251a7-b1):

ιδόντα δ' αὐτὸν οἶον ἐκ τῆς φρίκης μεταβολή τε καὶ ἰδρὸς καὶ θερμότης  
ἀήθης λαμβάνει·

After he has seen him, the expected change comes over him following the shuddering—sweating and a high fever. (tr. Rowe)

This passage constitutes the strongest verbal allusion to Sappho in *Phaedrus*. For the dramatic situation of the sighting of the beloved and the internal reactions triggered closely echo Sappho's famous poem 31, as critics have noted. DuBois' discussion (1995, 66, 85-7) speaks of the 'remarkable similarities between descriptions of erotic suffering in Plato's prose and Sappho's verse'. DuBois rightly notes four points of correspondence between 251a-b and Sappho 31: trembling; cold sweat; the gaze; and the 'flame beneath the flesh' (1985, 100). Ferrari observes that the experience of Plato's lover 'has been compared to that of the feverish lover who speaks Sappho's famous poem' (1987, 153-4) and that the comparison is 'more readily made' because of the naming of Sappho and Anacreon at 235c (154).<sup>90</sup> Price notes the parallel in passing (1989, 36), and Nightingale in her more extended treatment sees this poem as the 'most obvious incursion' of lyric into *Phaedrus* (1995, 158). I accept Nightingale's judgement that this allusion is 'just the beginning', since Plato's narrative of lover and beloved is indeed 'replete with the discourse of lyric love poetry' (158). Foley (1998, 46) discusses the allusion briefly and adds that Plato's audience was likely to have been alert to the 'initial similarity' between the two texts. I would like to explore more fully how Plato uses and transforms Sappho's poetic vision of *eros*. First, this particular allusion is interwoven with many others, as Plato creates in this episode an exuberant and thrilling depiction which in its language and pace is as delirious as the soul it portrays. Second, using elements from this poetic vision of *eros*, particularly the image of streams, Plato reframes its very notions of contact with divinity and divine possession. In both of these ways Plato responds to Sappho's depiction of the lover in poem 31 by considering what *follows* the initial impact caused by the sighting of beauty.

In his extraordinary depiction of the lover's soul at 251a-252a Plato draws freely on lyric motifs for the erotic experience. Images and ideas familiar from lyric proliferate and in the speed and excitement of the passage various motifs are run together. These include: the *metabole* between pleasure and pain; fear, melting and madness. When the philosophical man sees beauty, the sighting sets in motion

<sup>89</sup> This love effect is experienced only by a soul that has recently viewed the Forms or is not corrupted (250e-251a). The reference to τότε (before) is to the soul's existence before incarnation and its viewing of the Forms.

<sup>90</sup> When Ferrari (1987), 154 n.19 notes on this allusion 'as seen by Fortenbaugh 1966', he is confused, since Fortenbaugh is concerned only with Sapphic influence on Socrates' first speech. But the allusion had indeed been seen by duBois in 1985. For Ferrari the main significance of the comparison lies in Plato's displacement of the symptoms of the lover from body to soul.



a series of reactions. The *metabole*<sup>91</sup> at 251a-b from chill to fever recalls Sappho's stricken lover in 31, but the sudden shift in temperature also echoes Sappho 48 with its image of the beloved who is able through her presence alone to 'cool' (ἔψυξας) the 'burning' (καιομέναν) of desire. The same sudden shift from hot to cold appears in Anacreon's forged metal image in poem 413.<sup>92</sup> The 'trembling' and 'fears' of 251a recall Ibycus 287 where the narrator 'fears the onset' of Love (τρομέω νιν ἐπερχόμενον) and indeed the general apprehension at the approach of Love that can be heard elsewhere in lyric, as discussed above. The poetic depiction of *metabole* continues as the experience of regrowing wings causes sudden shifts between pleasure and pain.

The dominant image in this section of the narrative is the stream of beauty. Plato builds upon the notion of erotic heat familiar in Sappho and lyric by identifying an actual source for the shift in temperature. For the change comes from the entry of the stream of beauty flowing into the lover's soul through his eyes (251b1-2):

δεξάμενος γὰρ τοῦ κάλλους τὴν ἀπορροὴν διὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων ἐθερμάνθη<sup>93</sup>

he is warmed by the reception of the effluence of beauty through his eyes. (tr. Rowe)

This warming stream of beauty causes parts of the soul to melt (251b3 θερμανθέντος δὲ ἐτάκη), an erotic motif familiar in lyric. Anacreon 459 speaks of 'melting Love' (τακερὸς δ' Ἔρωος), while Ibycus locates the source of the effect in the gaze of Love (287.1-2):

Ἔρος αὐτὲ με κυανέοισιν ὑπὸ / βλεφάροις τακέρ' ὄμμασι δερκόμενος

Again Love, looking at me meltingly from under his dark eyelids. (tr. Campbell)

The motif is also used by Ibycus at 282c (fr. 29.3-5) for Eros' own desire:

πά]μπαν ἀνεχ[ρίσθη]<sup>94</sup> τακεράι φρεν[ι / ματ]ρὸς ἐπιστ[α]μέννας πά[ρ]α δῶρο[ν ἐ-/φίμ]ερον·

he... had his melting heart completely tinged [coloured/pricked] by his skilled mother with her gift of desire. (tr. Campbell)

While the warming stream of beauty at 251b might suggest a pleasant warming, the change in state within the soul also clearly involves irritation and discomfort (251c1-5). Further verbs also reinforcing the image of water serve unequivocally to convey disruption: the whole soul 'boils' (251c1, c4 ζεῖ) and 'gushes forth,

<sup>91</sup> Compare the experience of the lover in Socrates' first speech at 241a2 and 241b5: μεταβαλόν.

<sup>92</sup> Anacreon's image of forging red-hot metal is used by Plato at *Republic* 387c and 411a-b (see Naddaff (2002), 44 and 105 on the motif of melting iron). Calame (1999), 20 notes a similar image at Pindar fr. 123: 'has a black heart forged of adamant or iron / in an icy flame.'

<sup>93</sup> See also 251c8 θερμαίνηται and 253e6 διαθερμήνας τὴν ψυχὴν.

<sup>94</sup> The verb ἀναχρίω is a compound of χρίω which means 'to touch on the surface', 'to anoint', 'to rub over with colour' but also 'to wound on the surface, prick, sting' (LSJ). The latter sense is consonant with the irritation of love expressed elsewhere by Ibycus in terms of 'biting' and 'stinging': 282a fr. 4 (S169): δακεθυμ[...]ας παιδῶν; and 282c fr. 1 col. ii: μαινο[...]δῶγμα. The root verb χρίω is used in a similar erotic context at Ibycus 282c fr. 1 col. i.10, where Charis is nurturing, flattering and bestowing beauty on a beloved boy.

bubbles up' (251c1 ἀνακηκίει). Here Plato's lover 'boils' in the beloved's presence but at 251c8-d1 it is paradoxically this boiling and irritation that is said to relieve the soul, as it experiences relief from its anguish (ὀδύνης) and is filled with joy (γέγηθεν). The changes of state are rapid as this joy is immediately contrasted with the distress caused correspondingly by the beloved's absence (251d1): when separated the soul 'becomes parched' (ἀρχμήση) while parts of it 'throb' (πηδῶσα) 'like pulsing arteries' and 'prick' (ἐγχριεί) the surface. The result of this inner tumult is that (251d5-6):

πᾶσα κεντουμένη κύκλω ἢ ψυχῇ οἰστρῶ καὶ ὀδυνᾶται

the entire soul, stung all over, goes mad with pain. (tr. Rowe)

The pain of separation imaged here as 'being parched' (ἀρχμήση) recalls the 'parching madness' (ἄζαλέαις μανίαισιν) of Ibycus 286, where the adverse effects of love are felt as the blasts of a lightning storm. The painful irritations of love also echo Ibycus' verse: where Plato speaks of the sharpness of 'stings and goads' (251d5 κεντουμένη; 251e4 κέντρων; 254a1 κέντρων), Ibycus used terms of 'biting' and 'stinging'. Plato's ἐγχριεί (251d5, 'pricking') used for the surface of the soul is the same root verb that Ibycus employs for the surface of Eros' own heart at 282c. The next *metabole*, back to joy, is achieved through the lover's memory of the absent beloved's beauty (μνήμην δ' αὖ ἔχουσα τοῦ καλοῦ γέγηθεν). Plato follows the lyric poets in linking these sudden shifts with madness and confusion, as the soul in turmoil tries to make sense of its confusing and contradictory experiences (251d7-8):

ἐκ δὲ ἀμφοτέρων μεμειγμένων ἀδημονεῖ τε τῇ ἀτοπία τοῦ πάθους καὶ ἀποροῦσα λυττᾶ, καὶ ἐμμανῆς οὔσα...

The mixture of both these states makes it despair at the strangeness of its condition, raging in its perplexity, and in its madness... (tr. Rowe)

The soul's madness makes it unable to settle and its longing now causes it to 'run' (θεῖ δὲ ποθοῦσα) in pursuit of 'the possessor of beauty' (251e2-3). The disturbed state and indeed panic of the soul is mirrored in the rapid narrative with its build-up of subordinate clauses.<sup>95</sup> The headlong pursuit brings another sighting of the beloved which allows the lover's soul again to 'channel desire' into itself through the stream of beauty: ἰδοῦσα δε καὶ ἐποχετευσσάμενη ἴμερον. This welcome sight brings not only relief but also pleasure (251e3-252a1):

it releases what was pent up before, and finding a breathing space (ἀναπνοήν) it ceases from its stinging birth-pains (κέντρων τε καὶ ὠδίνων ἔληξεν), once more enjoying this for the moment as the sweetest pleasure (ἡδονὴν δ' αὖ ταύτην γλυκυτάτην... καρποῦται). (tr. Rowe)

The superlative γλυκυτάτην (251e5) amidst the sudden swings between pleasure and pain seems designed to recall Sappho's depiction of *eros* as γλυκύπικρον

<sup>95</sup> The account of the intense inner experience of *eros* which covers 37 lines of text—from 251a7 (μεταβολή) to 252b1—is divided into merely five full sentences.

(130).<sup>96</sup> Plato thus echoes the lyric poets' portrayals of the bittersweet and bewildering nature of the erotic experience.<sup>97</sup>

The image of the stream of beauty is central to Plato's depiction of the soul in love. Beauty is linked directly with the regaining of the soul's wings since it is by this stream that the plumage of the lover's soul is 'watered' (251b2-3 ἢ ἢ τοῦ πτεροῦ φύσις ἄρδεται) and thus able to 'regrow'. The language of natural growth is used as the feathers of the soul's wings are spoken of as plants shooting up from their roots (251b5-6 βλαστάνειν; ἀπὸ τῆς ῥίζης). Lebeck and others have explained very well the interaction of plant and other physiological imagery in this rich depiction of the inner soul.<sup>98</sup> The stream image provides a distinct image for the perception of beauty.<sup>99</sup> Earlier in the myth at 250b5-6 another mode of perception was used as the Form of beauty was presented as a shining light, a motif familiar from the poets. In considering the impact of lyric on the passage at 251a-252a, it is worth asking whether the poets provide any presentation of beauty as a stream or water, and there is evidence that they do. Sappho 96 presents an image of beauty as moonlight but as the poem goes on the image changes so that the moon provides water for the earth (6-14):

νῦν δὲ Λύδαισιν ἐμπρέπεται γυναι-  
 κεσσιν ὡς ποτ' ἀελίῳ  
 δύντος ἃ βροδοδάκτυλος σελάννα  
  
 πάντα περρέχοισ' ἄστρα· φάος δ' ἐπί-  
 σχει θάλασσαν ἐπ' ἀλμύραν  
 ἴσως καὶ πολυανθέμοις ἀρούραις·  
  
 ἃ δ' ἐέρσα κάλα κέχυται, τεθά-  
 λαισι δὲ βρόδα κάπαλ' ἄν-  
 θρυσκα καὶ μελίλωτος ἀνθεμώδης·

Now she stands out among Lydian women like the rosy-fingered moon after sunset, surpassing all the stars, and its light spreads alike over the salt sea and the flowery fields; the dew is shed in beauty, and roses bloom and tender chervil and flowery melilot. (tr. Campbell)

The moonlight thus sends dew 'which is shed in beauty' (12 κάλα κέχυται), and this in turn allows the flowers to bloom (12-14). Burnett comments on this poem (1983, 307):

<sup>96</sup> The influence of Sappho's famous compound is evident in other love lyrics, notably Theognis 1353-6: πικρὸς καὶ γλυκὺς ἐστὶ καὶ ἀρπαλέος καὶ ἀπηνῆς, / ὄφρα τέλειος ἔη, Κύρνε, νέοισιν ἔρωσ. / ἦν γάρ τις τελέση, γλυκὺ γίνεται ἦν δὲ διώκων μὴ τελέση, πάντων τοῦτ' ἀνηρότατον.

<sup>97</sup> DuBois (1995), 87 discusses the alternating experiences of the soul in this passage. See also Calame (1999), 188-9. Ferrari (1987), 107 n.25 compares Plato's idea that the beloved can cure the lover's sickness (252b1 ἰατρὸν... πόνων) with the alleviation of suffering in Sappho 31.

<sup>98</sup> Lebeck (1972), esp. 273-5. Further, Lebeck (1972), 273, Nussbaum (1986), 217, Ferrari (1987), 154-7 and Nightingale (1995), 160 are all alert to the sexual connotations of various aspects of the plant images. Note also that in lyric the beloved's beauty is often conveyed through the beauty of the natural world: Sappho fr. 94, 96 and 132; Archilochus 25; Anacreon 414.

<sup>99</sup> Empedoclean theory of vision is active in this image of the stream. Although my concern is with lyric, the text is to be located within a broader critical framework of not only philosophical poetry but also, for example, epic and epinician, as well as a whole host of prose genres.

This moon of absent beauty, as Sappho presents it, reaches the earth (and Atthis) in two forms—first with its spreading and general light, and secondly with its dripping and tangible dew.

Thus in poem 96, as at *Phaedrus* 251b, beauty stimulates natural growth and in both there is a direct interaction between images of light, water and vegetation.<sup>100</sup> Further, in Sappho 112 love itself is also imaged as a stream 'poured' over the lover's face (ἔρος δ' ἐπ' ἡμέρῳ κέχυται προσώπῳ), an image which will resonate in the next section of the myth as Plato addresses the concept of divine possession.

The final sighting of beauty in this episode of the regrowth of wings is the 'intense' gazing on the 'god' which is the philosophical lovers' determined act of recollection (253a2). Here Plato reframes the poetic notion of divine possession where the erotic experience is regarded as establishing a direct contact between the earthly lover and the gods, Aphrodite and Eros. As the non-philosophical man remains unmoved at the sight of beauty (250e), one of the negatives used for his non-reaction is that he does not 'revere it as he looks upon it' (οὐ σέβεται προσορῶν). In contrast the newly-initiated philosopher in his lover's madness 'pays reverence to the possessor of beauty' (252a7-b1 σέβεσθαι τὸν τὸ κάλλος ἔχοντα). The language of religious veneration is developed in a rich passage at 252c-253c where a complex relationship is drawn between lover, beloved and the gods of the extracelestial procession. The key idea of this passage is that the erotic experience furnishes the lover and the beloved with a means of establishing direct contact with divinity, an idea that develops the earlier language of viewing the Forms as a religious initiation (249c-d; 250b-d). At 249d Socrates presented two competing terms for the lover's arousal at the sight of beauty: παρακινῶν ('being disturbed') and ἐνθουσιάζων ('being possessed'). This religious language is now employed to show how the lover is 'possessed' by both the Form of beauty and the gods in heaven, in the sense that both types of divinity become actually present inside his soul. The passage seems to explore what it means to say that a person is 'possessed' by divinity and two types of 'possession' seem to be offered. The Forms are static entities but in the presence of beauty a 'stream' is created that passes from the Form of Beauty through the appearance of the beautiful boy and then directly (through his eyes) into the lover's soul. In this way the lover now has *inside* himself the divinity of the Form in a medium that is active and actively changes him (the moving stream stimulates the growth of the soul's wings). The implication that by this means the soul itself will share in the beauty is supported by Socrates' prayer to Pan at the end of the dialogue (279b8-9): 'grant me that I may become beautiful within.'

But a second type of 'possession' is presented whereby the soul of the lover receives into itself the force of the *particular* active divine soul that he followed in the celestial procession. This type of possession consists in the lover's devotion to a specific god and imitation of him. At 252d1-2 the myth tells that 'each man lives after the pattern of the god in whose chorus he was, honouring him by imitating

<sup>100</sup> For Nussbaum (1986), 230-3 these images form part of Plato's positive depiction of the lovers' interdependency and 'receptivity'.

him so far as he can' (tr. Rowe): καὶ οὕτω καθ' ἕκαστον θεόν, οὐδ' ἕκαστος ἦν χορευτής, ἐκεῖνον τιμῶν τε καὶ μιμούμενος εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ζῆ.<sup>101</sup> Part of this honouring and imitation is the seeking out of appropriate associations and so the lover chooses as his beloved another from same god's heavenly 'chorus'. Once he has chosen a suitable boy, he treats him as a substitute for their original divine leader (252d6-e1):

καὶ ὡς θεὸν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνον ὄντα ἑαυτῷ οἶον ἄγαλμα τεκταίνεται τε καὶ κατακοσμεῖ, ὡς τιμήσων τε καὶ ὀργιάσων.

And fashions and adorns him like a statue, as if he were himself his god, in order to honour him and celebrate his mystic rites. (tr. Rowe)

Thus the beloved receives religious veneration that is ultimately directed to the god himself, in the same way as a statue serves as a substitute for the god's presence.<sup>102</sup> But Plato is presenting a more intricate picture in this religious language and veneration. For the lover seeks to shape the beloved into being a better image of the god through the development of his potential as a philosopher (252e1-5). It must be remembered here that the lover is himself already at heart a philosopher, as this whole experience is that of the newly initiated (251a). But it seems he may have forgotten his philosophical ways until reminded by his recent contact with beauty. The text switches to the plural for the philosophers as it explains the triangular relationship between the nature of the god in heaven and the potentially divine nature of both the philosopher and his beloved. The possibility that the philosophers had lapsed from their philosophical activity is raised and their path back to divinity set out (252e5-253a5):

ἐὰν οὖν μὴ πρότερον ἐμβεβῶσι τῷ ἐπιτηδεύματι, τότε ἐπιχειρήσαντες μανθάνουσί τε ὅθεν ἂν τι δύνωνται καὶ αὐτοὶ μετέρχονται, ἰχνεύοντες δὲ παρ' ἑαυτῶν ἀνευρίσκουσιν τὴν τοῦ σφετέρου θεοῦ φύσιν εὐποροῦσι διὰ τὸ συντόμως ἠναγκάσθαι πρὸς τὸν θεὸν βλέπειν, καὶ ἐφαπτόμενοι αὐτοῦ τῆ μνήμῃ ἐνθουσιῶντες ἐξ ἐκείνου λαμβάνουσι τὰ ἔθη καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα, καθ' ὅσον δυνατὸν θεοῦ ἀνθρώπῳ μετασχεῖν.

So if they have not previously set foot on this way, they undertake it now, both learning from wherever they can and finding out for themselves; and as they follow the scent *from within themselves* to the discovery of the nature of their own god, they find the means to it through the compulsion on them to gaze intensely on the god, and grasping him through memory, and possessed by him, they take their habits and ways from him, to the extent that it is possible for man to share in god. (tr. Rowe)

The state of 'possession' (ἐνθουσιῶντες) is thus attributed to the lover's devotion to imitating the divine (253a-b): he models his character and habits on his original leader (253a3-4 ἐξ ἐκείνου λαμβάνουσι τὰ ἔθη καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα), so far as it is possible for a man to 'share in god' (θεοῦ... μετασχεῖν). In this way the lover aims to make his own soul more divine. But this goal is also achieved through venerating the beloved and seeking to shape his soul in line with their

<sup>101</sup> See also μιμούμενοι 253b5.

<sup>102</sup> Calame (1999), 189 explains: 'the social and pedagogical relationship between an *erômenos*... and an *erastês*... is *transfigured*... By dint of an effort of memory, the loved one becomes for the lover a kind of visual representation (*agalma*) of the god to whom the soul has gained access.'

shared divine model (253a-b). The lovers deriving from Zeus' chorus are likened to Bacchantes and imagined as 'drawing' from their god and 'pouring the draught over the soul of their loved one' (tr. Rowe): ἀρύτωσιν, ὡσπερ αἱ βάκχαι, ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ ἐρωμένου ψυχὴν ἐπαντλοῦντες (253a6-7). This 'pouring', reminiscent of Sappho 96 and 112, seems to represent a transfer of qualities as part of the lovers' attempts to make their beloved 'as like their god as possible': ὡς δυνατὸν ὁμοιώτατον τῷ σφετέρῳ θεῷ (253a7-b1).<sup>103</sup> If the beloved does become more like their god, then the philosopher through association with him gains another route for attaining contact with divinity. The philosophical lovers are able to discover the nature of their own god, and what leads them to this discovery is 'following the track *from within themselves*'. This inner track is their own erotic longing for truth. For it is the act of being 'forced' to 'gaze on the god' (which seems to refer both to the beloved as transmitter of beauty and to the god of the original procession) that leads to the 'grasping' of the god 'through memory'.<sup>104</sup> And what forces this gazing is erotic desire, initially for the boy. This longing for contact with the divine is *already present* within the philosophers but they have forgotten it. The sight of beauty thus sparks the memory of the Forms and therefore the active reasoning of the philosophers, and it is through the exercise of this internal power that the philosophers can in one sense become closer (in mythical terms) to the gods they once followed and (in non-mythical terms) to the state of full rationality they once enjoyed through intimate knowledge of the Forms.<sup>105</sup> Thus Plato here reformulates the notion of divine possession: the philosophers are 'possessed' (ἐνθουσιῶντες)<sup>106</sup> by their god in the sense that they become obsessed with achieving a clearer vision of the divinity they followed in procession, which in turn leads them to recognise their own divine origins and potential,<sup>107</sup> as souls that shared in the vision of the Forms (249c6).

In this reframing of the concept of contact with divinity under the influence of *eros*, Plato again uses motifs from the lyric discourse on love. The idea that erotic experience can bring the lover into contact with the divine is present in lyric

<sup>103</sup> Lebeck (1972), 278 observes the parallel within the *Phaedrus* myth between the lovers as Bacchantes and the stream of beauty.

<sup>104</sup> The referent of the term 'god' here is deliberately ambiguous: it must refer to both the beloved boy as the incarnation of beauty and the immortal soul in heaven in whose procession the philosophers followed. For it is the sight of beauty in the boy that sparks the erotic longing that 'compels' the lover to go on 'gazing' at him. The language of erotic compulsion (ἠναγκάσθαι) continues the theme begun in Lysias' speech (see e.g. 233b4 ἀναγκάζει).

<sup>105</sup> In the metaphor of the lovers 'grasping' their original god (253a2 ἐφαπτόμενοι), the verb is the same as that used elsewhere in the dialogues for making contact with the Forms: *Rep.* 490b3-4 (ἄψασθαι... ἐφάπτεσθαι); *Rep.* 611e1 (ἄπτεται); *Symp.* 209c2 (ἀπτόμενος); *Symp.* 212a4-5 (ἐφαπτομένῳ... ἐφαπτομένῳ); and *Soph.* 259d6 (ἐφαπτομένου).

<sup>106</sup> Plato's analysis of possession can be seen as the reanimation of the metaphor *enthousiasmos*—literally, 'having a god within'. Since the stream of beauty is twice identified, via etymologies, as 'desire' itself (251c7 and 255c1-2), Ricoeur's point (see above, §4), that Plato's use of false etymology features particularly in the context of his reanimation of established metaphors, is again borne out. Foley (1998), 44 n.18 explains the etymology: 'The passage here evokes as well the love of Zeus for Ganymede, his cup-bearer and wine-pourer. Beauty emits an effluence called *himeros* (derived from *mere* + *epionta* + *reonta*, 'particles coming in a flood', 251c6-7).'

<sup>107</sup> See also 255a1 ὡς ἰσόθεος and 255b6 τὸν ἔνθεον φίλον.

poetry in various ways. First is the idea of epiphany. In poem 1 Sappho prays to Aphrodite to 'come' to her (1.25), asking the goddess not just to intervene in her situation but actually to come down directly into her own presence. Since Sappho is already experiencing Aphrodite through being in love,<sup>108</sup> there is a sense in which Aphrodite is all too present as it is. But Sappho needs a further direct experience with Aphrodite in order to make her attractive to the beloved.<sup>109</sup> As with the figures of the Graces, the idea at work is that the goddesses who are themselves beautiful can through direct contact bestow beauty and elegance on their favourites, thus helping in the seductive quest.<sup>110</sup> This transfer of beauty from the divine to the human figures has similarities with Plato's transfer of beauty from the Form to the beautiful boy and from there into the lover's soul through the moving stream of beauty. A second relevant poetic motif is that the beloved's beauty makes them *like* the immortals. In Sappho 96.4-5 the beloved is 'like a goddess for all to see' (θέαι σ' ἰκέλαν ἀριγνώται);<sup>111</sup> for Stesichorus Hermione is 'like the immortal goddesses' (S104); and Ibycus tells of a beloved who is 'the most handsome of earth-dwellers, like the immortals in form' (282a fr. 1.25-6 κάλλιστον ἐπιχθ[ονίων / ἀθανάτοις ἐναλίγκιον εἶδος). Finally, there is the related view that the beloved becomes a divinity in his lover's eyes. Foley (1998, 47 n.32) cites a remark attributed to Anacreon which claims that boys 'are our gods':<sup>112</sup>

Ἀνακρέοντα γοῦν ἐρωτηθέντα, φασί, διατί οὐκ εἰς θεοὺς ἀλλ' εἰς παῖδας  
γράφεις τοὺς ὕμνους; εἰπεῖν, ὅτι οὗτοι ἡμῶν θεοὶ εἰσιν.

They say that when Anacreon was asked why he did not write hymns to gods but to boys, he replied, 'Because they are my [our] gods'. (tr. Campbell)

The 'divinity' of the boys for Anacreon and Plato rests on the feelings of devotion and veneration they stir in the lover. For Plato this feeling of veneration is appropriate because through *eros* for the boy the lovers are set on the path of re-establishing contact with divinity. The lovers achieve this contact by modelling their own and their beloveds' souls on the 'gods within' themselves, namely the gods they followed and viewed in the extracelestial procession, gods who still reside 'in' them through their memory of and desire for truth.

In this episode the soul is shown as able, under the influence of beauty, to regain the wings that symbolise its perfection. In order to convey the impact of beauty on the philosophical man's soul Plato reveals the marked changes in its nature that follow the sighting of the beloved. In this account Plato uses a wealth of images and motifs from lyric poetry, including pleasure and pain, melting, madness, sudden shifts in experience, flowing water and organic growth. The final

<sup>108</sup> See Sappho 102, where Aphrodite is the active force of desire: πόθῳ δάμεισα παῖδος βραδίναν δι' Ἀφροδίταν.

<sup>109</sup> In *Iliad* 3 the beauty of Paris and Helen is linked with their closeness to Aphrodite (see e.g. 392 and 415).

<sup>110</sup> See e.g. Sappho 81.3-8; also Ibycus 282c fr. 1. col. i.11-12: τέρεν δὲ / κάλλος ὠπάσαν θεαί.

<sup>111</sup> Similarly, see Calame (2005), 63-4 on Helen as the 'mythic incarnation' and Anactoria as the 'earthly representative' of the *kalliston* (Sappho 16).

<sup>112</sup> Sch. Pindar *Isth.* 2.1b = Anacreon, test. 7 in Campbell (vol. II, 29).

episode tells what happens after this initial impact of beauty and Plato delivers an emphatic response to the lyric vision.

#### 5.4 Self-control (253c7-256e2)

The final episode of the myth concludes the previous sections of the narrative on soul and the previous speeches on love by unifying the themes of the power of love and the need for self-control. The episode, in response to Lysias' speech and following on from the 'inner rulers' of Socrates' first speech, provides a new understanding of self-control. The central narrative of this episode is the training of the bad horse, a process which is Plato's redefinition of self-control (σωφροσύνη). In these culminating scenes of the power-struggle within the lover's soul, the violent terms evoke the earlier description of the carnage in the heavenly procession (episode 1, 247b5; 248a4-b4) and the anguish of the soul stung and maddened with pain (episode 3, 251d5-6). The threatening image of *eros* portrayed in love poetry is recalled but is also given a distinctly un-poetic development. The poetic motif of charioteer and horses<sup>113</sup> receives extended treatment as it is used to offer new perspectives on the dominating power of *eros* and on the lover's own powers to respond. It is in this episode that the aspects of control implicit in the image of charioteer and horses are explored most fully.

As in the previous episode sightings of beauty structure the narrative, since this key moment is shown as triggering a set of responses in the soul. Whereas earlier the soul responded to the influence of beauty through the regrowth of its wings, here three different agents respond, since the episode begins with a restatement of the tripartite image of charioteer and two horses (253c-d). The sightings of beauty involve the three parts of the soul 'seeing' and responding to the beautiful boy: at 253e5 the charioteer (ἰδών); at 254b4 all three parts (εἶδον); and at 254e8 the bad horse (ἴδη). In addition sightings are implied in the general terms of being in contact with the boy, as the three parts are 'near' the boy at 254d6 (ἐγγὺς ἦσαν) and as the beloved is in close association with the lover at 255b7 (πλησιάζη). The reactions and counter-reactions of the team are events simultaneous with the sprouting of the wing-feathers in episode three, while the differentiation of the soul's parts affords a closer view of the dynamics of tripartition.

The myth again draws on motifs from the lyric poets but here also diverges most markedly from the poetic visions of *eros*. Indeed in this final episode Plato radically rewrites the terms of the love-story he has created, setting his own vision in opposition to that of the poets. In the new love story of recollection self-control and *mania* are shown to be equally necessary and mutually supportive, with *mania* linked with passivity, and with self-control linked with purposive

<sup>113</sup> The image of charioteer and horses is unusual amongst developed soul images in the corpus in that it is used only in this dialogue. Other developed images, e.g. soul as a state or the health, vision or nourishment of soul, occur in various contexts in different dialogues. The idea of the soul having wings, however, does also appear, albeit briefly, at *Tim.* 81e1 (ἐξέπτωτο). Cf. *Theaet.* 173e3-5: δίανοια... πέτεται. For a listing of soul metaphors across the dialogues, see Pender (2000), 241-57.



activity.<sup>114</sup> When Plato's lover is stimulated by the sight of the beautiful boy, two events are happening: the stream of beauty is entering his soul and he is recalling the Forms. He is thus both passive and active at once. Nightingale (1995, 158-60) observes how the philosophic lover's experience follows the poetic tradition. On his passivity (158): 'Like the lover of lyric poetry, Plato's philosopher is subject to a massive assault both in body and in soul.'<sup>115</sup> On his activity: Nightingale notes that in lyric poetry the lover is not only passively 'invaded' by Love but is also active himself, in that he pursues his beloved. And so it is with Plato's lover (160):

A similar combination of passivity and activity is found in Plato's scenario, where the lover is passive to the extent that he is invaded by beauty, yet is active in his pursuit of both the boy and of the Forms.

While this duality of experience has been analysed usefully from various angles, I would like to offer a new perspective on the tension and transfer of forces involved. Plato's central theme in the myth is the power-dynamic within a soul experiencing erotic desire. In lyric poetry the lover is shown to be at the mercy of a greater power than himself: the god Eros. Plato reconfigures this experience through his own understanding of the soul and how it functions. Since the soul for Plato is a highly active and mobile being, the result of the impact of *eros* is an intricate picture of how energy is absorbed, transferred and redirected.

In lyric poetry, *eros* is an external force. But for Plato *eros* exists within the soul, as each part of the soul can be regarded as a set of desires. Nevertheless, Plato follows the poetic vision by setting up a scenario whereby a lover feels the shock of love not simply as a result of an encounter with another person but also as a result of the impact of a divine force. Whereas in love poetry it is Eros or Aphrodite that transmits the feeling of desire to the lover, for Plato the stimulus of the soul's desire is the stream of beauty. The stream of beauty is also identified as the stream called 'desire' (251c7; 255c1-2) but this is a periphrasis, since desire—i.e. the activity of desiring something—is an internal activity of the soul, not something that can enter into it from outside. An external stimulus, however, remains necessary. For when a person falls in love, the change is not the result of their own will: one cannot make oneself feel erotic desire. And when an external stimulus stirs the lover, it is appropriate to view him as passive in the transaction. Thus the metaphor of beauty as a mobile stream provides a means for the static Form to be represented as actively impacting upon the soul, with the relationship modelled on poetic Eros and his passive victims. As the three parts of the soul react to the sight of beauty, some familiar passive motifs are continued as before: the radiance of the beloved (253e5 τὸ ἐρωτικὸν ὄμμα);<sup>116</sup> erotic heat (253e6

<sup>114</sup> I follow Nussbaum's view (1986, 213-33) that in *Phaedrus* both *mania* and reason are needed for the best human life, a life which is thereby 'unstable' (221) and 'risky' (232). Nussbaum's influential reading shows how *mania* is linked with passivity and receptivity.

<sup>115</sup> Nightingale (1995), 160 notes that the lover is subject to forces that he cannot control, speaking of the philosophic lover as 'permeable' (159) and 'penetrated by a variety of liquid influxes'. Foley (1998), 47 draws the same parallel: 'In archaic love poetry, the lover is typically maddened by the forces of *eros* from without; streams of beauty from the beloved similarly flow into and arouse to madness the soul of Plato's philosophical lover.'

<sup>116</sup> On this poetic phrase, see n. 88 above and Hackforth, Rowe and de Vries *ad loc.*

διαθερμήνας); the stream of beauty (255c1 ἡ τοῦ ρεύματος ἐκείνου πηγῆ; 255d1 ἄρδει); and confusion (255b4 ἐκπλήττει; 255d3 ἀπορεῖ; 256a2 ἀπορῶν). Two further motifs connect the passage with lyric and provide a bridge between the passive reception of beauty and the soul's more deliberate responses to it. The first of these is contact with divinity (255a1 ἰσόθεος; 255b6 ἔνθεον) and the second the movement of wings to express excitement and perfection (255c7-d2 ἀναπτερῶσαν, τὰς διόδους τῶν πτερῶν... πτεροφνεῖν; 256b4 ὑπόπτεροι; 256d4 ἄπτεροι... πτεροῦσθαι; 256e1 ὁμοπτέρους). These various motifs form an important element of continuity both within the narrative itself and between the myth and the Greek literary tradition.

When Plato turns to the subsequent *reactions* to beauty within the soul, the soul's experiences are depicted in terms of energy and power. Whereas the soul was passive as it was watered and warmed by the stream of beauty, now the focus shifts to the animation and activity within the soul during the erotic experience. The established idea of the wings of the soul lies between these passive and active depictions, since on the one hand the wings are stimulated automatically by the entry of beauty, with their fluttering representing an unbidden response, but on the other they now furnish the soul with a form of energy that it can choose to utilise. Plato presents the philosophical lover as both passive and active and as he develops his account of the active responses he returns to the presentation of soul with which Socrates' second speech began. There the tripartite soul was introduced as a 'combined power' (246a6-7 συμφύτῳ δυνάμει), with its three different energies represented in the individual powers of the charioteer and two horses. In this later section of the myth Plato resumes this image in order to explore more fully how the energies of soul are affected by love. Here the dynamics established by the chariot image are scrutinised and closer attention paid to the force and resistance between the competing powers of driver and team. For this account the equestrian imagery of lyric poetry provides an established language for the power-relations present in the experience of *eros*.

Embedded in the tripartite image itself is a judgement on which power ought to be dominant: the charioteer, as the leader of the team, is expected to use his reason, physical strength and apparatus to steer the raw energy of the animals. The animals supply the greater physical power but are not capable of making judgements about how that power is best utilised.<sup>117</sup> The horses' physical power is expressed in their pushing and dragging against the charioteer and one another as they seek to gallop forwards or pull backwards: ὑπέικων; κατέχει; ἐντρέπεται; ἀναγκάζει; ἀντιτείνεται; πορεύεσθον; βιαζόμενος; ἔλκων; ἠνάγκασεν; ἔλκει; and ἔπεται (253e4-255a1). The charioteer's power is conveyed through terms for his own movements, both voluntary and involuntary, in tension with those of the horses (254a7-e2): ἀντιτείνεται; εἴξαντε; ἀνέπεσεν ὑπτία; ἠναγκάσθη; ἐπὶ τὰ ἰσχία... καθίσαι; ἀναπεσῶν. In addition the charioteer uses the apparatus of steering: the 'whip' and 'goad' are mentioned twice (253e4 μᾶστιγι μετὰ κέντρων; 254a3-4 οὔτε κέντρων ἠνιοχικῶν οὔτε μᾶστιγος), the reins are

<sup>117</sup> Ferrari (1987), 185-203 gives a useful account of the interaction between the three parts. Nightingale (1995), 144-5 discusses how the forces represent 'different kinds of *logoi*'.

highlighted at 254c1 (τὰς ἡνίας) and the bit or bridle three times (254c6 τοῦ χαλινοῦ; 254d7 τὸν χαλινόν; 254e3 τὸν χαλινόν).

The force of the charioteer employed effectively in conjunction with the bridle is most apparent in the final subjection of the bad horse. In this critical moment Plato alludes to Anacreon as he draws attention to the natural power of the horse. But the lightness of Anacreon's verse is destroyed as the philosopher parts company with the poets in showing what is really at stake in erotic encounters and their contest of powers. As the lover once again approaches the beloved, the outcome for the excited horse is grim (254d7-e5):

ὁ δ' ἡνίοχος ἔτι μᾶλλον ταῦτόν πάθος παθών, ὥσπερ ἀπὸ ὑσπληγος ἀναπεσών, ἔτι μᾶλλον τοῦ ὑβριστοῦ ἵππου ἐκ τῶν ὀδόντων βία ὀπίσω σπάσας τὸν χαλινόν, τὴν τε κακηγόρον γλῶτταν καὶ τὰς γνάθους καθήμαξεν καὶ τὰ σκέλη τε καὶ τὰ ἰσχία πρὸς τὴν γῆν ἐρείσας ὀδύνας ἔδωκεν.

But the same happens to the charioteer as before, only still more violently, as he falls back as if from a *husplex*; still more violently he wrenches the bit back, and forces it from the teeth of the unruly horse, spattering its evil-speaking tongue and its jaws with blood, and thrusting its legs and haunches to the ground delivers it over to pains. (tr. Rowe)

This graphic picture is clearly far removed from the poetic vision of *eros* but through poetic allusions seems to stand as a deliberate response to it. In Anacreon 417, a power-struggle is implicit as the lover observes the natural force of the Thracian filly and responds with his claim that his own expertise in charioteering would be enough to impose control on the animal (3-10):

ἴσθι τοι, καλῶς μὲν ἄν τοι  
τὸν χαλινὸν ἐμβάλοιμι,  
ἡνίας δ' ἔχων στρέφοιμί  
σ' ἀμφὶ τέρματα δρόμου·  
νῦν δὲ λειμῶνάς τε βόσκειαι  
κοῦφά τε σκιρτῶσα παίζεις,  
δεξιὸν γὰρ ἵπποπείρην  
οὐκ ἔχεις ἐπεμβάτην.

Let me tell you, I could neatly put the bridle on you and with the reins in my hand wheel you round the turnpost of the racecourse; instead, you graze in the meadows and frisk and frolic lightly, since you have no skilled horseman to ride you. (tr. Campbell)

As a 'skilled horseman', in command of the 'bridle' and 'reins' the would-be lover is confident of his ability to exert control. The natural energy of the horse, along with the beloved's sexual innocence, is evident in its playful 'frisking' or 'bounding' in the meadow: σκιρτῶσα. Fortenbaugh has noted Plato's use of the same term—σκιρτῶν—in describing the movement of the bad horse at 254a4 and concludes (1966, 109):

The uncommon word σκιρτάω, which occurs in both authors, suggests borrowing. Plato is the only prose writer cited by LSJ to use the word, so that we may suspect a conscious lifting from Anacreon's vocabulary.

I think Fortenbaugh is correct here and believe that this echo of Anacreon is also to be judged in conjunction with the poet's direct image of charioteering in poem 360, used for the beloved's power over the lover: οὐκ εἰδὼς ὅτι τῆς ἐμῆς / ψυχῆς ἠνιοχεύεις ('... not knowing that you hold the reins of my soul', tr. Campbell). Plato adopts Anacreon's striking poetic images of bridling and the natural power of horses but takes them to an extreme as the horse's brute power is conveyed in such terms as his 'whinnying' (χρημετίζων) and 'champing at the bit' (ἐνδακῶν τὸν χαλινόν), and as the charioteer has to resort to bloody violence and pain to exert his control (254e3-4 τὴν τε... γλῶτταν καὶ τὰς γνάθους καθήμαξεν). Thus the light sexual frisson and the skittishness of Anacreon's horse in 417 is pushed to an ugly conclusion.

In sum, Plato's relationship to the lyric tradition must be viewed as one of both continuity and discontinuity. While Plato remains close to the poets by following their depictions of the shock of love, he achieves distance from them by analysing this effect on the soul's decision-making capacities. One of the key differences that results is that the moment of love's impact becomes but one crisis in an on-going struggle. Plato adopts the lyric motif of the 'force of *eros*' to express the impact of the Form of Beauty but then shows how this is merely the *first* step in a transfer of energies that constitutes the experience of philosophical love. The clash between madness and reason is productive but unstable, requiring the equal force of self-control to enable improvement.

At the close of the myth, as in the previous episode, Beauty again replaces poetic Eros and the 'invasion' is reinterpreted as a transmission of energy involving both passive and active responses. To express this transmission of energy, Plato uses a particularly distinctive lyric image for the power of *eros*: the lightning flash. As a result of drawing close to the boy at 254b, all parts of the soul see his face: εἶδον τὴν ὄψιν τὴν τῶν παιδικῶν ἀστράπτουσαν (b4-5). His face 'flashing like lightning' recalls Ibycus 286.8, where the lightning flashes (στεροπῶς φλέγων)<sup>118</sup> are caused by Eros appearing as Boreas, the Thracian storm wind.<sup>119</sup> For Plato the lightning flash is a more threatening manifestation of the light of Beauty introduced in episode two at 250b. Again Plato sets his Form in the place of poetic Eros with the same effects: for Ibycus the lover's heart feels the force of this 'fearless' (ἄθαμβῆς) power; for Plato the charioteer is similarly vulnerable as he is terrified at the sight. 'Seeing' the boy makes him 'see again' Beauty, since it strikes up his memory of the awe-inspiring Form. The alliterative effect captures the simultaneity of seeing and fearing (254b5-7): ἰδόντος... εἶδεν... ἰδοῦσα δὲ ἔδεισε.

Plato now presents his unique vision by depicting what follows the lightning bolt. The charioteer's first reaction to the flash is simply one of shock as he falls back in reverence (254b8 σεφθεῖσα ἀνέπεσεν ὑπτία). But by this very action he is then 'compelled' to exert force over the horses (254b8-c3):

<sup>118</sup> LSJ on στεροπή: 'like ἀστεροπή, ἀστραπή, *flash of lightning*.'

<sup>119</sup> It is interesting to note how Ibycus' 'Eros as Boreas stormwind' can be seen as a link between Plato's erotic lightning flash and the mention of Boreas' abduction of Oreithuia in the prologue.

καὶ ἅμα ἠναγκάσθη εἰς τοῦπίσω ἐλκύσαι τὰς ἠνίας οὕτω σφόδρα, ὥστ' ἐπὶ τὰ ἰσχία ἄμφω καθίσει τὸ ἵππῳ, τὸν μὲν ἐκόντα διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀντιτείνειν, τὸν δὲ ὑβριστὴν μάλ' ἄκοντα.

... and is forced at the same time to pull back the reins so violently as to bring both horses down on their haunches, the one willingly, because of its lack of resistance to him, but the unruly horse much against its will. (tr. Rowe)

The same reaction to the sight of the beloved occurs again at 254e1-2 and so the episode shows how the impetus is gained for the final bloody subjection. Ferrari's insight on the charioteer's loss of balance is most useful (1987, 189-90):

The gesture of mastery seems more like a compulsive reaction of aversion. It is as if the charioteer pulls on the reins only because he is still holding them as he gets thrown backwards.

Ferrari (195-7) interprets this event in terms of how the philosopher is 'both captivated and yet free' (197), since 'by being so compelled, he is doing what he most wants' (195). For my own purposes the involuntary reaction of the charioteer is the crucial moment at which the memory of the Form is exerting the maximum impact on the whole soul. Stunned at the memory the charioteer is thrown backwards by the force of the lightning flash. This energy is then immediately channelled through the reins to the horses with the result that it brings both of them down on their haunches. The whole team is thus felled and their combined power (συμφύτῳ δυνάμει) capable of such speed and grace is now reduced to an immobile tangle of frustrated force and counter-force. Thus Plato conveys the shock of love on our decision-making processes. The initial energy transfer expressed in the lightning-flash paradoxically immobilises the moving soul but the crash is temporary.<sup>120</sup> The team retreats (254c3-4) and the bad horse, once it gets its breath back (ἐξαναπνεύσας),<sup>121</sup> soon resumes its pursuit. The good horse meanwhile experiences an aftershock, with an outbreak of sweat expressive of his trauma (254c4-5): ὑπ' αἰσχύνης τε καὶ θάμβους ἰδρῶτι πᾶσαν ἔβρεξε τὴν ψυχὴν. The noun θάμβος means 'shock, fear', and recalls Ibycus' ἄθαμβής for 'fearless' Eros, but attention is turned from the external and fearless god of lyric to the internal and fearful reaction of the soul. After the retreat the confrontation with Beauty is repeated with yet greater intensity (254e1-2 ἔτι μᾶλλον... ἔτι μᾶλλον). The charioteer again falls back violently and his automatic pull on the reins again brings the team crashing down to the ground (πρὸς τὴν γῆν). The single word πολλάκις (254e6) indicates, chillingly, that this traumatic event is a routine part of the philosopher's training. Once the bad horse has been 'humbled' (254e7), it shares one part of the reaction of the good horse's aftershock (254e7-8): ὅταν ἴδῃ τὸν καλόν, φόβῳ διόλλυται ('when it sees the boy in his beauty it nearly dies with fright', tr. Rowe).<sup>122</sup> The verb διόλλυται ('perish utterly') recalls the lover's stunned reaction to the sight of the beloved in Sappho 31.15: τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω.

<sup>120</sup> The crash of the team here at 254c parallels their θόρυβος at 248b, with the first event signalling the crisis of forgetting (248c7 λήθης) and this event the crisis of remembering. In the parallel story of the wings, these are the moments of loss and regrowth—the most significant *metabolai* in the narrative.

<sup>121</sup> Compare ἀναπνοήν (251e4).

<sup>122</sup> It cannot share the other part, the feeling of shame, since that is the province of the good horse.

The difference here is that the disabling effect is positive, since it allows the charioteer to control the horse. Plato is rewriting the love experience from the point of view of the tripartite soul where the power dynamics are of a uniquely different order.

Here lies the crux of the transfer of energy from the impact of Beauty: the charioteer must allow himself to succumb passively to this force since he requires the upsurge in power for the effort of training his horses and himself. Thus self-control, a concept in view since the very early speeches of the dialogue, turns out to be a highly complex unbalancing and re-balancing of forces. For it is the charioteer's job to channel the god-given charge and redirect it to the lower parts of the soul so that the soul as a whole can benefit from it not only as a catalyst but as a sustaining stimulus for change.<sup>123</sup> At the critical moment of the memory flash, the charioteer is passive but thereafter he has to take active decisions to invite the replay of this event and so draw from it. Thus his own decision-making comes into effect and his actions in directing further approaches to beauty are at one level controlled, deliberate and as conscious as possible of the *mania* that will ensue.

So Plato stresses the need for self-control: physical desire must be resisted in order for the soul to be reunited with its true beloved. Within this wider framework and perspective the disabling effect of the sighting of beauty is positive, since it allows the charioteer to establish control over the bad horse. So it is made clear that the harmony and wholeness (256b1 ὁμονοητικόν) of the soul ultimately rests on reason's dominance (*sophrosune*), since a soul where the three parts are experiencing their own *mania* cannot be in harmony and cannot hope to be effective.

But this is an understanding of self-control that recognises a significant need for *mania*. For the *mania* inspired by physical desire is a necessary part of the resistance to it, which means that the opportunities for the stirring of physical desire must still be courted. Since reason's dominance is paradoxically strongest when it submits to the divine force of madness in the experience of desire, the energy of *mania* must be received and transformed by reason in order to create an equal force of self-control. In this way the charioteer requires the 'upsurge' in energy caused by love and *mania* as a stimulus for development. This paradox of Platonic love is foreshadowed in the prologue itself as the trees of chastity are positioned at the very focal point of the seduction meadow.<sup>124</sup> Madness and self-

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<sup>123</sup> Similarly, when the charioteer first receives the force of the 'goad', caused by the sight of Beauty (253e6-254a1), he is passive. When he then actively inflicts his own goad on the bad horse (254a3-4), he is part of a chain through which a current of energy is transmitted. As Ferrari has rightly commented (1987, 187), the charioteer's action 'directly transfers the force of the goading he receives from the boy'. The stream of Beauty works similarly: deriving ultimately from the Form, it 'flows' into the boy (passive) and from there into the lover's soul (through his eyes). Once in the soul the charioteer (active) then transmits the energy to the bad horse (passive) through his driving, but the horse is simultaneously experiencing its own reactions to the erotic effects of beauty (active).

<sup>124</sup> Foley (1998), 45: 'Phaedrus' *locus amoenus* takes on a distinctly philosophical cast by being overshadowed by a plane tree (the name *platanos* may suggest Plato's name) and the *agnus castus* (a willow-like plant associated with chastity).' See 45 n.24: 'Due to its supposed anti-aphrodisiac

control have to be balanced in the effort of recollection. The unlikely synergy between the two is one of the ways that Plato seeks to explain the benefits of love. Recollection is an effort. For it is only through controlling the irrational parts of the self that reason is able to find the space to concentrate undisturbed on recalling its dim memories of truth. The madness of erotic desire creates a crisis moment for the soul but through the disciplined and sober reaction of the charioteer the energy can be translated to produce lasting effects.

What is most important for Plato is that disciplined effort should follow the *mania*, allowing the best inner ruler to prevail. Thus at the close of the myth the language of victory is used (in a direct appeal to the spirited part of the soul) in the simile of the Olympic games (256a7-b5):

ἐὰν μὲν δὴ οἷν εἰς τεταγμένην τε δίαιταν καὶ φιλοσοφίαν νικήσῃ τὰ βελτίω τῆς διανοίας ἀγαγόντα... ἐγκρατεῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κόσμιοι ὄντες, δουλωσάμενοι... ἐλευθερώσαντες... τῶν τριῶν παλαισμάτων τῶν ὡς ἀληθῶς Ὀλυμπιακῶν ἐν νενικήκασιν...

Well then, if the better elements of their minds get the upper hand by drawing them to a well-ordered life, and to philosophy, ... [they pass their life] masters of themselves and orderly in their behaviour, having enslaved that part... and freed that part... and have won the first of their three submissions in these, the true Olympic games... (tr. Rowe).

The vocabulary here recalls that of Socrates' first speech (237d7 ἄγοντε; 237e1 ὁμονοεῖτον; 238c3 νικήσασα ἀγωγῆ; 238e3 ἀρχομένῳ δουλεύοντί τε) and indeed of Lysias' speech with its concern with 'self-mastery' (231a4-5 οὐ γὰρ ὑπ' ἀνάγκης ἀλλ' ἐκόντες; 231d4 οὐ δύνασθαι αὐτῶν κρατεῖν; 232a4-5 κρείττους αὐτῶν; 233c1-2 οὐχ ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἠττώμενος ἀλλ' ἑμαυτοῦ κρατῶν).<sup>125</sup> So the myth concludes on the idea of the inner rulers after two very different episodes have together set out an array of different actions and reactions within the soul under the influence of beauty.

The story of the wings and of the charioteer combine to show that recollection requires not simply the 'uplift' of remembering beauty or inspiration but also the more mundane development and application of reason's control—which is why this episode comes last. In the imagery that Plato uses for recollection, the force that inspires the wings of the soul to grow must also, simultaneously, be directed at controlling the bad horse. For without this 'harnessing' of the energy through bit and bridle, the upsurge in energy caused by the flashing of the Form of Beauty will ultimately be dissipated. The *mania* of desire and the discipline of self-control

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properties, women sat on beds of *agnus castus* in their celebration of the religious festival for Demeter, the Thesmophoria.'

<sup>125</sup> These concluding reflections on self-control can also be regarded as foreshadowed by the dramatic interplay between Socrates and Phaedrus at the start of the dialogue—where each invites the other to 'lead on' (227c1 πρόαγε δή; 229a7 πρόαγε δή; 229b3 προάγοις ἄν; cf. 228c1) and where each accuses the other of using force or manipulation (228c3 βία; 228c7 σὺ οὐδαμῶς με ἀφήσειν; 228e4 ἐγγυμνασόμενος; 230d6-e1 ὥσπερ... ἄγουσιν... φαῖνη περιάξειν; 236b9-d3 εἰς τὰς ὁμοίας λαβὰς ἐλήλυθας... εὐλαβήθητι... μὴ... ἀναγκάσαι... πρὸς βίαν; 236d7 ἀναγκάσω; 236e4 τὴν ἀνάγκην). In this way, as the dialogue progresses, the topic of control by external forces gives way to that of self-control and internal forces.

are shown as mutually supportive since the narrative unfolds to show how the regrowth of the wing relies not only on erotic stimulation but also on the training of the three parts of the soul. Thus recollection requires both a concentration of energy and insight (imaged in elevation and outwardly directed towards the Forms) and at the same time an increase in control (imaged in bridle and goad and inwardly directed within the soul). In this way the concept of inner rule is shown to be an unexpected balance of forces and energies in which deliberate unbalancing plays a necessary part.

## 6. Conclusion

As Plato sets out his account of the soul in love he draws directly on the poetic language of the lyric poets. But he sets *against* them a need for self-control to redirect the soul's energy from physical beauty to the Forms. Anacreon's lover (417) would like to engage in sex with the filly and so impose a form of control on its natural energy. While the bad horse feels the same urge for sex, as a result of training he accepts restraint and thus all three figures unite in holding back from physical sex. The energy of the horses is thus used to assist the charioteer in remembering the Forms. Although the horses cannot remember the Forms, since they have not seen them, they can serve the needs of reason by helping the whole soul adopt the right attitude towards the beloved—i.e. treating him with reverence and awe—and so supporting the effort of recollection. Plato offers a graphic picture of the subjugation of the bad horse that is far removed from the poetic vision of *eros* and stands as a deliberate response to it. But allusions to the poets are integral to this response.

Plato shows *eros* from the differing points of view of black horse and charioteer and so inverts the subjection: a Platonic lover would not subject the Thracian filly to control because the 'bad horse' in the lover's soul would already be subjected. Anacreon's lover in 360 has lost his self-control since the boy is now the charioteer of his soul. But for Plato the lover is either free or subjected as a result only of the forces within his *own* soul. Plato equally uses Sapphic allusions but again for very different purposes. The lover's soul is as dumbstruck at the sight of beauty as Sappho's lover is at the sight of her beloved in poem 31. But Plato tells what has to happen *after* Sappho 31—allowing the moment but signalling what subsequent action is needed to achieve recollection. While the text does seem to draw on Sappho's insight into memory as a means of overcoming distance and loss, in *Phaedrus* memory does not serve as a consolation but as a spur to further effort—it is merely the beginning of an arduous task. Burnett stresses that memory in Sappho is a 'disciplined mental process' (1983, 290) but still its ultimate aim is consolation.<sup>126</sup> In contrast, recollection in *Phaedrus* leads to a situation where the bad horse is subjected to severe physical pain; the good horse is terrified, and the charioteer can only enforce his will through the violent jolt he himself receives at the lightning bolt of beauty. Although the results of

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<sup>126</sup> See duBois (1995), 138-40 and Foley (1998), 54: 'Sappho's fragmentary poems like 94 or 96 gently lead her interlocutors to a new perspective on the pain of erotic loss that aims both to re-envision and to assuage it.'



success will be pleasant—the blessed vision is viewed by a ‘happy company’ (250b6 εὐδαίμονι χορῶ)—even then diligence, effort and sweat are necessary, sweat brought on not by an outside stimulus but by inner exertion.

To conclude, Plato's picture of the soul in love in *Phaedrus* is ultimately at odds with the *charis* of lyric poetry. For Plato rewrites the love experience from the point of view of the tripartite soul, offering a new and unique vision of the power-dynamics involved when a soul responds to the beloved's beauty. But nevertheless Plato pays tribute to the lyric poets not only at 235c but also, and indeed more directly, in his allusions to their verses. His tribute is to acknowledge that Sappho and Anacreon have powerfully captured and expressed the moment of being ‘love-struck’. However, his necessary distance from the poets becomes evident since this crucial moment, important as it is, is merely a single crisis in a long-term struggle. Thus through his love story of recollection Plato challenges the lyric tradition by placing *eros* within a much larger framework of experience and understanding. In this way the destabilising force of love is revealed as surprisingly central in the contest of powers that defines human life.

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