

A Defence of the Life of Philosophy

An Interpretation of Plato's *Apology*

by

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# ABSTRACT

## A DEFENCE OF THE LIFE OF PHILOSOPHY AN INTERPRETATIONN OF PLATO'S *APOLOGY*

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Plato's *Apology* differs and stands out from the other dialogues in his corpus in regard to its style, structure and content. Socrates's manner of speech, although inspired by examination and philosophizing, is monological and lacks the dialogical structure that other dialogues showcase. In this thesis I argue that Socrates's manner of speech demonstrates a weakness of the nature of speech itself. An analysis of diction, expressions, tone, arguments, and topoi in Plato's *Apology* will demonstrate that telling the truth is, on its own, not enough to convince or persuade someone.

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# A Defence of the Life of Philosophy

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Table of Contents	ii–iii
Introduction	1-8
Chapter 1: Defence Proper (17a-35d)	9-48
A. Exordium (17a-18a)	9
B. The Statement (18a-19a)	13
C. The Refutation (19a-28a)	18
i. Refutation of the Old Accusers (19a-24b)	19
ii. Refutation of the New Accusers (24b-28a)	31
D. The Digression (28a-34b)	39
E. The Peroration (34b-35d)	46
Chapter 2: Counter-Assessment (35e-38c)	49-58
Chapter 3: Last Words (38c-42a)	59-69
A. Address to the condemning jurors (38c-39e)	59
B. Address to the acquitting jurors (39e-42a)	62
Chapter 4: Reflections on Plato's <i>Apology</i>	70-83
A. Introduction	70
B. Narration	73
C. Examination and Philosophizing	77
D. Closing remarks	81
Bibliography	84

# Introduction

Plato's *Apology* differs and stands out from the other dialogues in his corpus in regard to its style, structure and content. Although considered a dialogue, it consists mainly of a monologue, while other works are wholly dialogical in structure. Not only this, but in the *Apology* Socrates addresses an Athenian jury of approximately 500 men, while in other dialogues, such as the *Phaedo*, there are up to 13 men present. Also, the subject of the work is a defence against accusations, but other works, such as the *Republic* and the *Phaedo*, are comprised of discussions about such particular subjects as justice, desire, reason, spiritedness, the soul, knowledge, and recollection, among others.<sup>1</sup> Given these differences, the *Apology* is clearly a unique literary and philosophical work that warrants our attention and interpretation.

The purpose of Socrates's speech is to defend against accusations of impiety and immorality, but in order to do this, Socrates must explain and defend his life of philosophy. Throughout his defence speech, he emphasizes the need to tell the truth, and stresses that he has supplied the entire, unadulterated truth; but in spite of this, he fails to secure his acquittal. In the end of the dialogue, Socrates is convicted and sentenced to death by drinking hemlock. In this commentary on the *Apology*, I will argue that Socrates demonstrates a weakness of the nature of speech itself. An analysis of diction, expressions, tone, arguments, and *topoi* in the *Apology* will demonstrate that telling the

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the differences that I point out, Russon (2009, p. 192) points out that in other dialogues "Socrates deals with the specific prejudices held by particular individuals, [whereas] here the subject of these prejudices is not an individual [but rather an 'an anonymous collective identity']."

truth is, on its own, not enough to convince or persuade someone.<sup>2</sup> Although he briefly examines Meletus and he presses on to tell the truth, Socrates is at a disadvantage because he cannot or does not philosophize in his defence. In other words, philosophizing would be sufficient to convince or persuade another person.<sup>3</sup>

In this thesis, on the one hand, I assume that many features of the dialogue are inventions of Plato, on the other hand, I also assume that Plato has preserved some historically accurate aspects of the trial of Socrates. I do not grant that Plato's *Apology* is wholly factual nor wholly fictional. Which elements are fact and which are fiction is outside the scope of this thesis. Commentators suggest that the *Apology* is probably among the dialogues that best represents Socrates's character,<sup>4</sup> and in any case, whatever divergences may exist would not undermine the fact that we have an important

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<sup>2</sup> Russon (2009, p.199) states,

Education—indeed philosophy itself—cannot simply be a matter of rational argumentation and information transfer. Philosophy, because it must address our childish beliefs (because those are the deep prejudices that most need examining) and address them so as to transform them, is a matter of pedagogy, of “leading the child.” Philosophy then, has a clandestine side, going around one's back to make one change. It is the “art of turning around,” This means it is about leading another to change his or her life. This means that, rather than simply passing on information or argument, it is fundamentally a matter of *getting someone* to see something, *getting someone* to make a change: it is a matter of inducing action in another; philosophy then, is fundamentally *persuasive*, that is whatever scientific or cognitive content it has is subtended by a fundamentally practical and psychological/rhetorical orientation.

I agree that philosophy is “more than simply passing on information or argument.” We will see that Socrates, in the *Apology*, is narrating and disclosing the truth, but not philosophizing and changing the minds of the jurors.

<sup>3</sup> Philosophizing and philosophy, here, are interchangeable, but I use “philosophizing,” which Socrates uses at 23d and which I explain later in this chapter, in order to convey that philosophy is an activity.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Hackforth (1933, 6), and Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 70), state in their introductions that, in spite of the uncertainty of the details and its historical unreliability, the *Apology* illustrates Socrates as a wise man devoted to a life of philosophy.

philosophical lesson to learn about the persuasive powers of examination and the shortcomings of truth alone.

The commentaries that I have chosen address the historicity of the dialogue, that is, whether Plato's *Apology* is an accurate report of the defence speech of Socrates, and the character of Socrates, that is, the portrait the *Apology* paints of Socrates. Throughout this commentary I will refer to the work of other commentators: Blakeney (1929), Brickhouse and Smith (2004), Burnet (1924), Guardini (1948), Hackforth (1933), Miller and Platter (2010), Riddell (1974), Stock (1887), and de Strycker and Slings (1994).<sup>5</sup> Commentators differ according to the lens through which they present their commentaries. For example, Riddell and Stock give introductory remarks on the themes and topoi, and then give a translation. Blakeney, Burnet, Miller and Platter, and de Strycker and Slings offer their own translation and a line-by-line commentary, meaning that they highlight the Greek word, phrase or sentence, and remark on its significance. This is what is called a linear or formal commentary. Guardini, Hackforth, Brickhouse and Smith, and de Strycker and Slings provide a non-linear, informal commentary by discussing themes and topoi, such as the charges, the oracle, and Socrates's Sign or *daimon*. Notice that the commentary of de Strycker and Slings falls under two categories. Of these nine commentaries, they give a translation, line-by-line commentary and topographic commentary. Their work is by far the most extensive of all the commentaries used in this thesis, and I refer to their work often because of their multi-faceted interpretation which is unparalleled by other commentaries. This selection of nine commentaries allows me to engage in discussion with commentators who are already in

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<sup>5</sup> In addition to this core group of commentaries, I will also refer to the work of Goldman (2009), Nails (2002), Russon (2009), and Scott (2002), less often but where appropriate.

discussion with each other. The earliest commentator in this selection, Burnet, published in 1924, while the most recent, Miller and Platter, published in 2010. This (almost) 90-year range yields a survey of literature that is contemporary yet broad.

Furthermore, this thesis is structured differently than other commentaries. I have already stated that the commentaries that I have incorporated into this thesis are mainly formal and linear, with a couple of exceptions. Their focus is to analyze the text through a micro lens. This thesis will be structured linearly but informally. In other words, I will address the text sequentially section by section, as opposed to line-by-line. I will explain my chapter divisions shortly. Investigating the text on a larger, macro scale will allow me to analyze the entire text in a holistic manner.

I will briefly discuss the structure of the Athenian legal court, and the accusers of Socrates and their accusations, in order to contextualize the dialogue. The central subject of the *Apology* is Socrates's defence against the charges laid by Meletus,<sup>6</sup> the primary plaintiff, and Anytus<sup>7</sup> and Lycon.<sup>8</sup> The three men have laid two charges, *kategoroi*

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<sup>6</sup> Nails (2002, p.202) states that "it is probable that Meletus' father was a poet, but not that Meletus was himself," and it is said that Meletus brought the charges on behalf of the poets. In the *Euthyphro*, Socrates describes Meletus as "young and unknown," "belonging to the Pithean deme," and as having "long hair, not much of a beard and an aquiline nose." (2b)

<sup>7</sup> Anytus was a rich Athenian and democratic leader, best known as a prosecutor of Socrates. As a general in 409, he failed to prevent the loss of Pylos; at his trial he reportedly bribed the entire jury. He was perhaps the first man to bribe an Athenian jury. After 403 he was a respected, moderate leader of the restored democracy. Plato (*Meno* 91) presents him as high in popular esteem and as a passionate enemy of the sophists. His prosecution of Socrates for impiety was probably motivated less by religious concerns than by anger at Socrates's disdain of democratic politicians. Riddell notes that Anytus was the most influential accuser, so there is reason to think that he was the most inflamed against Socrates, not to mention that he had lost a fortune through his fidelity to the cause of freedom. He had spearheaded the attack to take back the state from the Thirty. See Riddell (p.ii, xxviii), *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*; and Nails (2002, 37-8) for more biographical notes. Riddell, Miller and Platter (2010, 60) argue that Anytus was "by far the most considerable of the three accusers."

<sup>8</sup> Although mentioned only a couple of times in the *Apology*, Lycon plays an important role in the indictment against Socrates. Lycon's son was executed by the Thirty, and Nails (2002, 189) states



[κατήγοροι], against Socrates: corrupting the youth, and denying the gods of Athens. Customarily, the prosecution delivered the *kategoria* and the defendant replied with an *apologia* [κατήγοροι]. “*Apologia*” does not mean “apology” but “defence”, a formal speech explaining and rebutting the *kategoria*, and it does not resemble the dialogical nature of Plato’s other works, save the short exchange with Meletus, which resembles the discussions recounted in other dialogues. Is Socrates guilty of the charges, and does he show that they are unwarranted? In other words, is he aiming to deny what Meletus and the others say he has done, or does he deny that those actions are illegal? Socrates denies (19b-20e) the truth of the old accusations, that have led to the new accusations of impiety and immorality, but he argues that the new accusations are unreasonable and unwarranted, because Meletus is thoughtless and careless. So, Socrates acknowledges having behaved in controversial ways, but that he is innocent of the charges brought against him.

The customary legal defence of the era is typically divided into three parts.<sup>9</sup> The first part consists of the prosecutors’ speeches, and the second is occupied by the defence of the accused and the pleadings of his advocates, if he has any. After the speeches of each party have been heard, then the jury announces its verdict, which is conducted by secret ballot. The third part is devoted to determining the appropriate penalty. The prosecutor can speak again in favour of the penalty he has suggested, and then the convicted man can plea bargain. Once the jurors decide on the appropriate penalty, the

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that he “may have believed that Socrates had been aligned with the oligarchy responsible for his son’s death.” She claims further that “his and Anytus’ participation in the indictment of Socrates was all that prevented Meletus from being fined for bringing frivolous accusation (*Apology* 36a).” (189)

<sup>9</sup> Riddell (p.vi) notes that each part was equal in length, which was measured by a water clock, *klepsydra*. It is a clock that used the flow of water to measure time.

legal proceedings are over. At this point the convicted man is led away by the officers of the court. Sometimes the convicted man may continue to address the court, but this allowance would be by an act of grace.<sup>10</sup>

The chapter divisions of this thesis will correspond to the three divisions in the trial. All commentators except for Hackforth and Brickhouse and Smith organize their commentaries according to divisions in the text as opposed to themes. I have adopted the same organization as the majority of commentators because addressing the text in sequential order allows the reader to follow along and understand the commentary without having to refer constantly to the text of the *Apology*.

In Chapter 1, I will discuss the Defence Proper, that is, the section of the dialogue consisting of Stephanus pages 17a-35d, where Socrates directly addresses and defends himself against the charges. In order to defend against the charges of Meletus, et al., Socrates must explain how they came about. Here we will see that Socrates discloses the truth about his personal past in order to show that the new accusations are unjustified despite his controversial and contentious behaviour. The first chapter is subdivided into five sections, corresponding to A. the Exordium (17a-18a), B. the Statement (18a-19a), C. the Refutation (19a-28a), D. the Digression (28a-34b), and lastly, E. the Peroration (34b-35d). Also, because it lasts nine Stephanus pages (which is considerable length), the third section, the Refutation, is subdivided into a defence against the old accusers (19a-24b) and a defence against the new accusers (24b-28a).

In Chapter 2, the Counter-Assessment (35e-38c), Socrates has been found guilty and is allowed to propose a reasonable punishment for himself. Here we find Socrates

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<sup>10</sup> See Stock (1887, pp. 18-23) and Brickhouse and Smith (2004, pp.72-76) for a further details pertaining to Socrates legal proceedings, and the charges.

presenting a brief defence of the examined life. Socrates cannot fully conduct the same kind of examination for which he argues; he offers instead a condensed, archetypal examination. The short examination of Meletus is insufficient to secure acquittal because the examination is only aimed at Meletus, and not the jurors. Meletus shows signs of discomfiture upon being refuted, suggesting that examination has persuaded him to believe that he is wrong. However, successful examination requires one to participate directly so as to render oneself vulnerable. Passive, vicarious participation is not enough to change one's mind because one is not in the metaphorical hot seat and one's beliefs are not under scrutiny. Because Socrates cannot examine the beliefs of each juror, he cannot change the minds of the jurors and thereby secure acquittal. As a result, he is forced to fall back on mere truth throughout majority of the Defence Proper.

In Chapter 3, the Last Words (38c-42a), Socrates reminds the jurors who voted for conviction of their responsibility to identify the truth. He points out that although he will die shortly, others will continue to philosophize. Then, to the jurors who voted for acquittal, Socrates states his view of death, and that his Divine Sign has not warned him otherwise, so events have panned out exactly as they should have.

Chapter 4, Reflections on Plato's *Apology*, concludes this commentary. Here I explain that Socrates does his best to communicate and convey the importance of philosophy, but ultimately fails, despite the short examination, because veracity must be accompanied by discussion and examination in order to successfully convince another person. The way in which Socrates speaks is not the way that Socrates himself advocates; there is a discrepancy between what he says and how he says it. His speech, although truthful, is not the way in which one ought to philosophize. Ideally Socrates would

examine each juror for the soundness of his beliefs. One might interpret this as an instance of the expression, “Do as I say, not as I do,” but we know that Socrates votes with his feet. Not only does he exhort Athenians to discuss and examine the important things but he also does so himself, as we see in other Socratic dialogues. Unfortunately, in this dialogue Socrates is restricted to one instance of examination.

# Chapter 1:

## The Defence Proper (17a-35d)

At the outset of the *Apology*, we assume that the prosecutors have already given their speeches as per court procedures. The main part of the *Apology* depicts Socrates standing in front of the jury and defending himself against the charges of immorality and impiety.

### A. Exordium, 17a-18a

The way in which Plato opens his dialogues often suggests leitmotifs that will run throughout the dialogue. For example, at the beginning of the *Republic*, Socrates states, “I went down to the Piraeus.” (327a) Dorter (2006, p.23) argues that Socrates’ descent to the port represents his descent to the cave. Similarly, the exordium in the *Apology* introduces the theme of oratory and veracity.<sup>11</sup> At the outset of the *Apology* Socrates stands alone in front of 501<sup>12</sup> Athenian citizens, and states:

I do not know, men of Athens, how my accusers affected you; as for me, I was almost carried away in spite of myself, so persuasively did they speak. And yet, hardly anything of what they said is true. (17a)<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Note that Socrates does not immediately begin to address the charges laid against him by Meletus, Anytus, and Lycon. Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 83) also remark on the peculiarity of Socrates’ exordium. The way in which Socrates begins is indicative of the way he will continue his speech, that is, the literary devices and strategies present throughout the dialogue will reveal the meaning of the text.

<sup>12</sup> The number of jurors on any jury typically ranged from 200 to 2500. It is commonly agreed by commentators that it was likely that 501 jurors were present at Socrates’ trial. This large number of audience members is unlike the usual number of interlocutors in Plato’s other dialogues.

<sup>13</sup> I am relying on G.M.A. Grube’s translation found in the Cooper edition of Plato’s Complete Works (1997).

Here we see for the first time Socrates's strategy of addressing the jury in order to emphasize the succeeding point that he makes. He will address them in this manner no fewer than 39 times.<sup>14</sup> Blakeney (1927, 94) states that "Socrates is addressing his fellow-citizens generally, rather than the crowds who have come out of curiosity, to hear his defence." Miller and Platter (2010) indicate that Socrates's addresses are much more charged than one might believe, stating that addressing his jurors as "Athenian men" instead of "O, judges"[ ὦ ἄνδρες δικάσται], which would have been more respectful, is one way in which Socrates antagonizes the jury. Furthermore, the *Apology* is punctuated with Socrates' addresses to the men, *O andres* (ὦ ἄνδρες), or as Grube translates it, "gentlemen," a total of seven times.<sup>15</sup> This locution highlights important points to which we should pay attention and give extra consideration. Whenever an instance of this locution occurs, the audience and the reader should slow down and take note of the point that Socrates is making.

The first thing to which Socrates draws our attention is his manner of speech. Socrates contrasts the artful eloquence of his accusers and his own artless manner of speech. He is trying to distinguish himself from others with whom he might be confused because the rhetorical eloquence is deceitful and aims only at persuasion, while his manner is simple and aims at the truth. The orator that appears to be artful and eloquent is not necessarily an excellent orator, for he does not aim at the truth. Socrates claims (17a) that he is not a clever speaker, but I think that he means to say that he is not clever in the

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<sup>14</sup> See *Apology* 17a, 17b, 18a, 18c, 18e, 19c, 20c, 20d, 20e, 21c, 22a, 26a, 26e, 28a, 28d, 28e, 30b, 30c, 30d, 31d, 32a, 32e, 33b, 33c, 34b, 34d, 34e, 35d, 35c, 35d, 35e, 36b, 36d, 36d, 37c, 37d, 38b, 37c and 38d.

<sup>15</sup> See *Apology* 17c, 18b, 29e, 31a, 34a, 39a and 39e.

superficial sense of the word.<sup>16</sup> When the others spoke, Socrates claims that he almost fell under their spell; that is to say, he was compelled by empty language. Their manner of speech cannot be successfully persuasive because it is not founded in truth and does not aim to convey the truth. In short, the wrong value motivates their speech. In section C of this chapter, we will see how Socrates shows how incompetent and thoughtless Meletus is.

In any trial, the objective of the defendant is to weaken the statements against himself.<sup>17</sup> Socrates announces that, unlike his accusers, he will aim to communicate the truth in the same manner of speech as he uses in the marketplace. We can turn to other dialogues, such as the *Euthyphro*, and the *Phaedo* as examples of Socratic locution and dialectic. We will see later in the *Apology* that, although what Socrates says in his speech is true, it is not enough to secure an acquittal. Does Socrates genuinely want to secure his acquittal? Throughout the dialogue, Socrates's diction, tone, and locution suggest that an acquittal is nearly impossible. When he begins to explicitly address the charges and the origins of said charges at 19a, we will learn about Socrates's doubts.

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<sup>16</sup> Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 84), Burnet (1924, 66), Riddell (xiii) and de Strycker and Slings (1994, 36) point to *topoi* that are common between the *Apology* and the Orators. They state that the exordium may be completely paralleled, piece by piece, from the Orators. The imputation of conjoint falsity and plausibility, the denial of being a strange speaker, the asking of pardon, the plea of unfamiliarity with law-courts, the begging for an impartial hearing, the deprecation of uproar, and the disclaiming a style unbecoming an old man. So, it is ironic, or perhaps dishonest, that Socrates claims he is not an eloquent speaker, for he uses these rhetorical techniques. Although he opens with these techniques, he certainly does not rely on them throughout his speech, instead he resorts to his own style of speech as much as he can. I say "as much as he can," because, as we will see, ideally Socrates would prefer to examine a person and scrutinize her beliefs. Under his present circumstances, Socrates cannot open and close with examination, but he will examine Meletus in his typical, Socratic way (24b-28a) and adopt features of his method of examination.

<sup>17</sup> In contemporary trials, the plaintiff must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty; according to commentators, there is no such legal principle in place. The onus was on the defendant to weaken the charges against himself.

We must not forget about the role of the jurors in this trial. The jurors' responsibility, according to Socrates, is to identify the truth. Socrates says at the end of the exordium, "concentrate your attention on whether what I say is just or not, for the excellence of a judge lies in this, as that of a speaker lies in telling the truth." (18a) The jurors must be reminded of the collaborative relationship toward the truth, for they, too, might have forgotten themselves when the accusers spoke.

In addition to identifying the truth and judging Socrates in accordance with the truth, the role of a juror is not akin to that of an interlocutor in examination. Their role is passive, removed, and non-participatory. Like I said in the introduction, Socrates is giving a speech in the *Apology*, while in such dialogues as *Crito* and *Euthyphro*, he is typically engaged in a discussion with and cross examination of one person. There is very little discussion and examination in the *Apology*. But, Socrates commits to speaking in the same fashion. Given this commitment and the lack of direct interlocutor, we may expect that Socrates will adopt strategies to mimic the dialogical structure, for example, he will introduce a hypothetical speaker who asks questions; these questions will guide Socrates's speech, and help Socrates to transition from one topic to another.

From the outset, Socrates calls to our attention the way in which he has and will express himself. What does Socrates mean when he says that he will tell the truth? Is it enough to retell the facts of the matter? Is the truth that which is coherent? Is the truth popular opinion? Socrates gives such priority to truth that it makes one suspicious. We will see that Socrates's intentions are good, but he fails to convince his jury and secure his acquittal. His everyday language and the truth fall short of persuasion. This exordium



introduces the leitmotif of oratory and veracity that will be predominant throughout the speech.

## B. The Statement, 18a-19a

In this section, Socrates contrasts his manner of speech with the manner of his accusers; he is not a clever speaker in the same sense as the others are clever. The truth can be conveyed simply in everyday language, to which Socrates is accustomed.

At 18d, Socrates makes clear that he wants the jury to realize that there are actually two sets of accusations. In the introduction, I listed the *kategoria*, which are the new accusations. These will be stated by Socrates at 24b (discussed in Section C ii below). The old accusers say that “that there is a man called Socrates, a wise man, a student of all things in the sky and below the earth, who makes the worse argument stronger.” (18b-c) At 18a Socrates outlines that he will first refute the old accusations before he will refute Meletus’s accusations, which are the new accusations, because these old ones have been around longer and have negatively impacted Athenians.

Socrates describes the nature of the accusations and the accusers. The old accusations are not like the new accusations insofar as they are not legal charges. The old accusations take the form of slander and rumour. Those who spread these rumours and perpetuated the slander for many years cannot be named, “unless one of them is a writer of comedies.”<sup>18</sup> (18d) If Socrates were to try to defend himself against these accusations,

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<sup>18</sup> Grube’s translation of the *Apology* notes that it is Aristophanes to whom Socrates refers, but Mitscherling (2003, 71) argues that, although Aristophanes had a negative effect on the reputation of Socrates, he was not the only comic poet to have swayed popular opinion against Socrates. Eupolis, Amepsias, and Telecleides equally ridiculed Socrates. So, to say that Socrates is referring to Aristophanes at 18d is to overestimate the damaging effect that he had on Socrates’ reputation.

it would be impossible. In order to defend himself against the slander, Socrates would have to examine the accusers, but since they cannot be identified, Socrates would end up boxing with shadows or with himself (18d). As a result, these accusations are more dangerous than those brought forth by Meletus, Anytus and Lycon because of its long duration, the great number of accusers, the impressionability of those listening to the accusers, the gravity of the suspicions which have arisen as a consequence, the absence of anybody who would speak for the defence of Socrates, and the impossibility of identifying the accusers after all this time and of refuting them individually.

If Socrates were to attempt to examine and refute the old accusations, he would end up “fighting with shadows” *skiamachein* [σκιαμαχεῖν]. Blakeney (p.99) understands this locution as “striking at an imaginary adversary,” but it is clear that Socrates is not “imagining” these calumniators, for they exist but are unidentifiable. If we understand *skiamachein* as “fight with shadows,” then those shadows are elusive and intangible. Either way, Socrates’s defence against the informal accusations is futile, and as a result he does not try to refute these accusations. At 18d, he says “all those are difficult to deal with: one cannot bring one of them into court or refute him; one must simply flight with shadows, as it were, in making one’s defence, and cross-examine when no one answers.” And so, the old accusers “won their case by default as there was no defence.” (18c)

The nature of the old accusers is similar to the nature of the jurors. Both groups are nameless and unidentifiable, and filled with slanderous thoughts. The jurors have assembled in the courtroom having heard Socrates speak in the marketplace (17c), having heard the slander, and having seen Socrates’s character represented in an unflattering

light in the comedy of Aristophanes (19c). They continue to be the faceless, unidentifiable accusers and believers of these accusations.

In describing the difficulty of the faceless accusers at 18d, Socrates describes the way in which he would refute them, that is, he would cross-examine each accuser one by one and prove them wrong. Here Socrates is alluding to his method of examination, which consists of extracting a belief from his interlocutor based on a question, and, by means of a series of questions, demonstrates that his interlocutor holds contradictory or fallacious beliefs. Should the juror believe in the slander, there is no way that Socrates can systematically cross-examine each juror, and refute them just as there is no way to examine and refute the old accusers and believers of slander. However, as we shall see, Socrates can and will examine the one of the new accusers, Meletus, who has formally laid charges against Socrates.

Now, due to the fact that Socrates cannot examine the accusers in his customary way, he must resort to his ordinary manner of speech, which he uses during the course of his examinations. Although the clear and identifiable interlocutor is absent, he may still speak in his idiosyncratic and ironic manner. As I stated at the beginning of this section, Socrates uses his everyday language to narrate an account that connects the old accusations to the new accusations. By proceeding from old to new, Socrates can effectively retell a story fairly chronologically, in hopes to explain away the new accusations, and to disambiguate his life of philosophy.

I have alluded to the Socrates' method of examination, and I will take this opportunity to expound his method in anticipation of Socrates' references and the

instances of examination in the refutation of the old and new accusations, which I explore in section C below.

The dialogical exchanges illustrated in the so-called early dialogues is called the Socratic method or elenchus.<sup>19</sup> This is not the kind of project that warrants an exhaustive discussion of the Socratic elenchus. Therefore, I will discuss a few essential traits, problems in the secondary literature, and the application of elenchus in the *Apology*. Elenchus in the wider sense of the word means examining a person with regard to a statement he has made, by putting to him questions calling for further statements, in the hope that they will determine the meaning and the truth-value of his first statement.<sup>20</sup> In the narrow sense, elenchus is a method of refutation.

The early dialogues represent Socrates as the main character who interrogates other characters. The general fashion in which these features proceed is as follows:

1. Socrates asks, “What is F-ness?”
2. The interlocutor asserts his own belief that  $p$  (giving examples of F-ness)
3. Socrates says he does not want examples and considers  $p$  to be an unsatisfactory answer, but wants to know what makes the examples to be examples of F-ness.
4. The interlocutor says  $q$  is  $r$  (F-ness is G)

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<sup>19</sup> Elenchus derives from the Greek verb *elenchein*, meaning to refute, disprove or test.

<sup>20</sup> Gary Alan Scott (2002, pp.4-5) argues that it is fundamentally unclear whether the elenchus is supposed to refer to a process. He raises the following questions: What exactly instigates elenchus: the use of the work *elenchein* or one of its cognate verbs? What is the purpose of examination: refutation or the putting of beliefs to the test? How does elenchus essentially end: with *aporia*, or an admission of ignorance and perplexity? If it is a refutation, can Socrates successfully refute by means of another method, such as myth or story? How particular is elenchus? Does it include any question and answer style of conversation? Since there is disagreement about elenchus, there is no agreement about its application in the dialogues.

5. Socrates demonstrates by means of *epagoge* (general inference from a set of examples) that there is a genuine counterexample.
6. The interlocutor agrees that *q* and *r* entail *not-p*.
7. Socrates claims that *p* is false; *not-p*, true.

This is the typical course of events; the essential features are: the primary question is the initial question that Socrates asks, the secondary questioning (*epagoge*) and the *aporia*.

The primary question revolves around a topic in which Socrates' interlocutor reputedly has expertise or knowledge, such as "What is piety?" In examining his interlocutor's beliefs, Socrates uses *epagoge* (or induction) in order to arrive at a negative conclusion as opposed to a positive one that would adequately answer the primary question. The Socratic method characteristically ends in an impasse, or *aporia*,<sup>21</sup> wherein Socrates demonstrates that the interlocutor holds two conflicting beliefs and cannot support his initial statement. This philosophical impasse is an irresolvable internal contradiction. As a result of questioning and the negative conclusion, the interlocutor is left discomfited because Socrates has demonstrated that he holds contradictory or fallacious beliefs. Silence almost always indicates *aporia*. Upon approaching a philosophical impasse, interlocutors resist responding and ultimately have nothing left to

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<sup>21</sup> "Aporia" derives from the Greek word *poros* [πορεία] meaning path or passage. The prefix *a-* denotes the negation of the lack of the root word. So, *aporia* literally means "without passage"—impassable or an impasse. It has been interpreted to mean "difficulty," "puzzle," or "at a loss," which hints at the rich etymology of the word.

say. Showing that the interlocutor's initial statement is inadequate in some way or conflicts with other beliefs is well suited to reveal ignorance.<sup>22</sup>

Elenchus often causes frustration and anger to its victims, for Socrates brings up what seem to be irrelevant and trivial topics that bear no relation to the main issue, and then they are left to salvage what is left of their ship-wrecked beliefs.<sup>23</sup> Elenchus and its corresponding *aporia* incurred much unpopularity and enmity, and this is what brings Socrates to court. Socrates would say that his method of examination yields a way of life, which is the one that people should live.

### C. The Refutation (19a-28a)

After having outlined that he will begin with a defence against old accusations, Socrates remarks that it will be difficult to uproot the slander that has been engrained in the minds of the jurors. (19a) He “wishes” that he may remove the slander, but is fully aware of how difficult it is. (19a) Nonetheless, he acknowledges that he must give his defence anyway. (19a)

In this section of the thesis, I will point out that this defence against the old accusation is inspired by examination, and it borrows features of examination typical in

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<sup>22</sup> I agree with de Strycker and Slings (103) that as the technique of questioning is applied to ideas, it becomes an effective instrument to expose an opponent's ignorance, as we learn from many Platonic dialogues.

<sup>23</sup> Although the result is negative, there is evidence in the *Meno* (82b-84a) that elenchus could have a positive product. In order to determine whether one recollects or learns, Socrates asks Meno's slave boy a series of geometry questions. At the end of the questioning of the boy, Meno agrees that questioning is harmless and beneficial.

dialogical exchanges. Despite this inspiration and these characteristics, Socrates's defence falls short of the examination.

## ii. Refutation of the Old Accusers (19a-24b)

Having prefaced his defence with his concern regarding the difficulty of giving a successful and persuasive defence, he wastes no more time and jumps in at the deep end. His defence is rather long; it lasts from 19b to 24b and consists of: (1) an introduction and denial of the accusations (19b-20c); (2) an account of the origin of the slander, that is, the oracle at Delphi (20c-21b); (3) Socrates's reaction to the oracle at Delphi, and his subsequent investigations (20b-23b); (4) the result of these investigations. Socrates concludes his defence against the old accusations with a declaration that he has told the whole truth (24a).

Let us begin with the first section of this defence: the introduction to and denial of the accusations (19b-20e). Socrates initiates this metaphorical jump into deep end by asking the question: "What is the accusation from which arose the slander in which Meletus trusted when he wrote out the charge against me? What did he say when they slandered me?" (19a-b) He replies with a recapitulation of the accusations: "Socrates is guilty of wrongdoing in that he busies himself studying things in the sky and below the earth; he makes the worse into the stronger argument, and he teaches these same things to others." (19b-c) This recapitulation consists of three elements, which Socrates addresses one by one: (1) studies of sciences; (2) making the weaker argument stronger; and (3) teaching the science and how to make the weaker argument stronger. Socrates flatly

denies element (1) that he studies and has knowledge of these things mentioned in the recapitulation, and he calls upon the jurors as witnesses of this. (19c)

In response to the accusations, Socrates simply denies them; he says, “none of them is true.” (19d) He does not explicitly deny “making the weather argument stronger;” but the statement, “none of them is true,” is a blanket denial of all three components of the old accusations. However, it is not enough to deny statements; denial will not convince someone, for there must be reasons to support the contradictory statement. So Socrates continues recounting the story of the oracle at Delphi, his reaction to oracle and his subsequent investigations, and the result of these investigations. Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 90) also note that Socrates fails to address the remark directly; they claim that Socrates denies this accusation in the exordium at 17b, saying, “That they were not ashamed to be immediately proved wrong by the facts, when I show myself not to be an accomplished speaker.” When Socrates says “accomplished speaker,” Brickhouse and Smith take this to mean, “making the weaker argument stronger.”

Next, he denies element (3) that he teaches, because he does not collect a fee. If he were to teach, then he would collect a fee, but he does not collect a fee, so he does not teach. However, he does not condemn teaching or teachers such as Gorgias of Leontini, Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis (19e), and he thinks that teaching is a fine thing (19d). Socrates recounts a conversation he had with Callias,<sup>24</sup> the son of Hipponicus, who has spent an exorbitant amount of money on teachers. From 20a-c Socrates says:

‘Callias,’ I said, ‘if your sons were colts or calves, we could find and

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<sup>24</sup> Callias was Socrates’s fellow demesman, son of the wealthiest man in Athens. See Miller and Platter (2010, 36).



engage a supervisor for them who would make them excel in their proper qualities, some horse breeder or farmer. Now since they are men, whom do you have in mind to supervise them? Who is an expert in this kind of excellence, the human and social kind?” I think you must have given thought to this since you have sons. Is there such a person,’ I asked, ‘or is there not?’ ‘Certainly there is,’ he said. ‘Who is he?’ I asked, “What is his name, where is he from? And what is his fee?’ ‘His name, Socrates, is Evenus, he comes from Paros, and his fee is five minas.’

The discussion between Callias and Socrates that is recounted is a perfect, terse example of the kind of examination that Socrates conducts. The topic is apropos, the locution is characteristic, and the examination is Socratic, but it lacks other features of Socratic *elenchus*, such as *epagoge* and *aporia*. Two commentators, de Strycker and Slings (1994) and Miller and Platter (2010), comment on the stylistic significance and structure of this passage, agreeing that it is the epitome of Socratic method. Based on my understanding of Socratic method, which I explain in section A, however, it falls short. Miller and Platter (2010, 36) state:

[This exchange between Socrates and Callias] is the first specimen in the *Apology* of the style of conversation for which Socrates is known. It has several features paralleled frequently elsewhere in the dialogues: examination of someone who claims a certain expertise; argument from analogy; and the use of humble metaphors to discuss lofty ideas.

De Strycker and Slings (1994, 55) claim that “this is the perfect jewel of Socratic dialectic in the whole of Plato’s written work, because of its spontaneity, the fluency of language, the character drawing, and above all because it gives us in a surprisingly short space a clear view of Socrates’ method and of his most fundamental tenets.”

I agree that this exchange is similar to the dialogical exchanges found in other dialogues, but it also lacks a couple of characteristic features. The purpose of recounting this exchange is to gradually introduce Socratic examination to the jurors, before unleashing the method on Meletus. This question, “Whom do you have in mind to supervise them? Who is an expert in this kind of excellence, the human and social kind?” is typical of Socrates insofar it is on the subject of excellence and wisdom. The Platonic corpus spans a numbers of subjects, mostly relating to virtue. Furthermore, we often find Socrates asking his interlocutor for clear and distinct answers. For example, at 5d of the *Euthyphro*, Socrates asks, “Tell me then, what is the pious, and what the impious, do you say?” At 47a of the *Crito*, Socrates asks, “Consider then, do you not think it a sound statement that one must not value all the opinions of men, but some and not others, nor the opinions of all men, but those of some and not of others?” Socrates typically discusses the nature of virtue and examines others’ knowledge of virtue and wisdom. The topic and locution is characteristic of Socrates’s inquiries.

The way in which Socrates typically carries out his examination is illustrated in the exchange between him and Callias. Socrates often employs analogies to draw a comparison between two objects. Here, he uses the familiar example of hiring someone to train colts and extends it to human beings. Later in the *Apology*, at 25d, in an examination of Meletus, he uses the relationship between horse breeders and horses to

demonstrate that one person alone cannot harm the youth. (I will say more on this analogy in section C, ii, of this first chapter.) In other dialogues Socrates also frequently employs analogies to illustrate and clarify the relationship between two objects. For example, at 47b of the *Crito*, Socrates uses the analogy of an athlete and his trainer to demonstrate that only the wise can improve another man, while others who are adequately skilled may harm the athlete.

Although this exchange between Callias and Socrates incorporates features that are characteristic of Socratic examination, it lacks *epagoge* and *aporia*. As I stated in Section A of this chapter, *epagoge* is the secondary questioning that follows from the interlocutor's first answer. Essentially, examination begins when the interlocutor supplies a belief in response to the first question. The object of examination is to show that the interlocutor holds a fallacious belief. It is obvious that this exchange does not exhibit secondary questioning, seeing as Socrates asks one question (comprised of three elements: who is he, from where does he come, and how much does he charge?), and once Callias replies, Socrates does not recount the discussion any further. This exchange starts off like any other examination: the interlocutor supplies Socrates with the ammunition he needs to shoot him down. Given that he does not continue to question Callias relentlessly, Socrates does not have the opportunity to refute Callias's belief. As a result, we assume that Callias escapes unscathed by Socrates's probing.

As I said, according to Miller and Platter (p.36), the exchange between Callias and Socrates "has a few features paralleled frequently elsewhere in the dialogues." From 24c-27d Socrates examines Meletus, and there we will see the Socratic method in full effect. Furthermore, I have discussed characteristics of Socrates' method of examination

in section A of this chapter. The point of mentioning this discussion between Socrates and Callias is to illustrate that Socrates gradually introduces examination to the jury, but, more importantly, the defence speech is inspired by a life of philosophy and examination. He will not only explicitly describe the examination (38a) but he will also give examples of examination. From these instances of examination we can understand what it means to examine and to be examined, and what examination is not. The dialogue with Callias, in addition to Socrates's wish to examine old accusers, strengthens the juxtaposition of examination and mere truth telling.<sup>25</sup>

As I stated earlier, the second section of the defence against the old accusations is the account of the origin of the slander, that is, the oracle at Delphi (20c-21b). Socrates began the first section, the introduction and denial of the old accusations, with the question, "What is the accusation from which arose the slander in which Meletus trusted when he wrote out the charge against me? What did he say when they slandered me?" (19a-b) At the beginning of this second section (20c), Socrates segues with a question:

One of you might perhaps interrupt me and say: "But Socrates, what is your occupation? From where have these slanders come? For surely if you did not busy yourself with something out of the common, all these rumors and talk would not have arisen unless you did something other than most people...."

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<sup>25</sup> Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 91) do not remark on the significance of the reference to Callias and his sons. They only say that Socrates refers to him in order to make the point that if Evenus did have such desirable wisdom and charged only five minas, then his fee would be moderate compared to the wisdom he would impart to his students.

The origin of the slander is an alleged wisdom—a human wisdom (20e), which originates not with Socrates but with a “trustworthy source.” (20e) In other words, this source alleged that Socrates had a kind of wisdom; Socrates did not himself claim that he had this wisdom. This trustworthy source is Chaerephon, who, as Socrates describes him, is a friend from youth, a friend to most of the jurors, and impulsive. (21a) Due to his death, he cannot testify, but Socrates suggests that his brother, Chaerecrates,<sup>26</sup> would testify on his behalf. Anyway, Socrates summarizes Chaerephon’s inquiry: “he asked if any man was wiser than I, and the Pythian<sup>27</sup> replied that no one was wiser.” (21a)<sup>28</sup>

Here, as Socrates accounts for the origin of the slander, he refers to Chaerephon’s inquiry to the oracle and his brother as a witness. Because his account is a second-hand account, it is appropriate for Socrates to refer the jurors to the original source, but as he mentions, the original source has since passed away, so the next of kin would be the next best option. However, the account of Chaerephon’s brother, Chaerecrates, would still be second hand. Socrates’s objective to disclose the truth would be advanced if others would come forward in his defence. A second testimony would support Socrates’s account, but as far as we know, Chaerecrates does not testify; Socrates merely attests that he would. It is most striking that at 20e Socrates calls upon the god at Delphi as a witness. Although Socrates refers to two witnesses, it is important to note that no witnesses do actually come forward to speak on his behalf. Would it really make a difference if witnesses

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<sup>26</sup> According to Nails (2002, 85) Chaerecrates was the younger brother of Chaerephon, and a member of the Socratic circle in which Plato collaborated.

<sup>27</sup> A Pythia was a priestess at the Temple of Apollo who was inspired by the god and transmitted oracles and prophecies. It was expected that the oracles were ambiguous and obscure.

<sup>28</sup> Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 98-9) argue “Socrates must have engaged in philosophical activity of some sort with a circle of friends before Chaerephon’s journey. Otherwise, Chaerephon would never have gotten the idea that Socrates really was extraordinarily wise.”

testified that Delphi said no one was wiser than Socrates? Probably, not, but this raises the question, why does Socrates refer to witnesses at all? Is this appeal to witnesses part of the song and dance of the typical defendant? It is unlikely that he is following the strategies of typical defendant, because, during his address to the jurors who voted for conviction (38c-39b), Socrates states that he does not act and speak in the same manner as other defendants do in during trial, that is, lament, cry and shamelessly bring in his family in order to appeal to the jurors' sense of pity. It is precisely during his defence speech that he is allowed witnesses to speak on his behalf. It would not cost him any extra time on the water-clock, as water clocks would be stopped in order to accommodate a witness's testimony. This referral to witnesses suggests that what Socrates is saying will not be sufficient for an acquittal and that he is placating the jurors.<sup>29</sup>

This brings us to the end of the second section of the defence against the old accusations. We next see Socrates's reaction to the oracle at Delphi. (20b-23b)

In response to this oracle, Socrates was bemused and mystified, and wondered what the god's oracle meant. (20b)

Whatever does the god mean? What is his riddle? I am very conscious that I am not wise at all; what then does he mean by saying that I am the wisest? For surely he does not lie; it is not legitimate for him to do so. (21b)

After a long time of contemplating, Socrates reluctantly turned to investigate the meaning of the oracle. He investigated three groups of reputed wise men: politicians, poets and

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<sup>29</sup> At 17a and at 21a, Socrates begs the jury not to make a disturbance. Whether they are making a disturbance or are about to, Socrates detects that what he is saying is disconcerting and discomfiting, and, as a result, appeals to the truth (22a and 22b) and refers to witnesses (20a and 21a) to appease the jury and support his case.

craftsmen, examining what it was that they are reputed to know.<sup>30</sup> He concluded that each man who he examined thought that he was wise when in fact he was not; “those who had the highest reputation were nearly the most deficient, while those who were thought to be inferior were more knowledgeable.” (22a) These investigations were hard to deal with, a heavy burden on him (23a), and brought about his unpopularity.

As a result of these investigations, Socrates continues “this investigation as the god bade me—and I go around seeking out anyone, citizen or stranger, whom I think wise. Then if I do not think he is, I come to the assistance of the god and show him that he is not wise.” (23b) This is Socrates’s mission and a description of his investigations and examinations.

As Socrates investigated the oracle, he scrutinized reputed wise men. In this dialogue, we will see that Meletus is the reputed wise man for, in indicting Socrates, he appears to care about the youth and to know about the gods and other divine things. We will see in the next section of this thesis that Socrates refutes him by demonstrating that Meletus misunderstands the way that people can be harmed and the nature of gods and other divine things.

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<sup>30</sup> First, the politicians appeared to be wise to many people; the poets appeared to understand the meaning of their poems and the craftsmen appeared to have knowledge of their fine crafts; however, Socrates realized that the politicians were not wise, the poets did not understand their poems, and the craftsmen claimed to be wise in areas outside their craft. Socrates arrives at the same conclusion, that they thought themselves wise when they were not. Socrates draws three conclusions: (1) that he is wiser than the politician, because “it is likely that neither of us knows anything worthwhile, but he thinks he knows something when he does not, whereas when I do not know neither do I think I know; so I am likely to be wiser than he to this small extent, that I do not think I know what I do not know” (21c); (2) that “poets do not compose their poems with knowledge, but by some inborn talent and by inspiration, like seers and prophets who also say many fine times without any understanding of what they say” (22b-c) ; and (3) that the craftsmen, “because of the success at his craft, thought himself wise in other most important pursuits, and this error overshadowed the wisdom they had.” (22d-e) The investigations culminate in three groups of men, three accounts, three sets of impressions, but only one realization.

Socrates narrates and describes his investigations, and of his investigations we know that: (1) the men were reputed to be wise; (2) Socrates asked each man questions regarding his craft; (3) the man could not answer satisfactorily; (4) Socrates concludes that what the man thought he knew he did not in fact know; and (5) The man and other witnesses were discomfited and annoyed by Socrates's probing.

Socrates's description of investigations and conversations corresponds to those which he carries out in other dialogues as well as the examination that Meletus will undergo from 24b-28a, which I will discuss in section C, ii. Thus far, we know that these examinations gave rise to the old accusations, and that Socrates would have examined the old accusers had there not been so many nameless ones.

Recall that in Section B I likened the old accusers to the jurors insofar as they are like nameless shadows which Socrates cannot examine. However, if Socrates were able to examine them, they would resemble the reputed men. Jurors, in order to carry out their proper role, must be familiar with the law; they are the supposed experts who determine the innocence of the indicted person; they represent the law. The role of the juror is not to be taken lightly, however, many jurors in contemporary Athens were members of the (less sophisticated) working class, volunteering themselves in order to receive the nominal amount for their time.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, a judge did not preside over the cases, but there was an official who kept watch over the water clock. Given the lack of judge to inform the jury of their role, the law, precedent, and procedure, the jury was likely misinformed and biased. This is why at 18a Socrates reminds the jury that the excellence of a juror is to "concentrate on what is just." A juror's craft is his ability to identify and

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<sup>31</sup> According to Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 76), "jury duty was voluntary, and from those who volunteered, 6,000 were randomly selected and assigned to various courts." Jurors would be monetarily compensated in order to ensure that the jury was democratic.



judge the truth. Unfortunately, many of the jurors assemble in the court-house having heard rumours and slanders, and so begin their weighty task with a biased perspective. If Socrates were able to examine the jurors one by one, he would be able to secure his acquittal because each juror who believed that Socrates was guilty of unreasonable charges would be refuted. Not interacting with the jury significantly impedes Socrates's defence.

The defence against the old accusations ends with section (4), the result of investigations. Socrates reflects and concludes upon his investigations and shares these thoughts with the jurors. Given that oracles are notoriously ambiguous and obscure, Socrates offers his interpretation of the oracle. (23a-b) As he goes around examining and scrutinizing reputed wise men, young men follow and watch Socrates poke and prod these wise men, and they are amused at the expense of these men. These youth then attempt to imitate Socrates, who end up getting angry not at the youth but with Socrates. (23c) If one were to ask these folk, who claim that Socrates corrupts the youth, "what he does and what he teaches to corrupt them?", they would not know what to say—"but so as not to appear at a loss, they mention those accusations that are available against all philosophers about "things in the sky and things below the earth," about "not believing in the gods" and "making the worse the stronger argument"." (23d)

Now we have an understanding of what Socrates means when he philosophizes. Miller and Platter (2010, 59) note that this is "the first time any form of the word *philosophia* is found in the *Apology*, and it appears as a verb." De Strycker and Slings (1994, 293) add that "Plato does not use the word *philosophoi* [φιλοσοφοῖ], but the much vaguer the *oi philosophountes* [φιλοσοφοῦντες]." The participle, *hoi philosophountes*, is

best translated as “those who philosophize. The idea that philosophy is something that you do and pursue is repeated in his current manner of speech. As Socrates reveals aspects of philosophical activity and examination, we realize that he is merely narrating his way through the old accusations. This is hypothetical questioning of the angered individuals is another example of Socrates referring to Socratic method, more specifically, the *aporia* of Socratic method. He hypothetically asks these individuals why they are angry, and they cannot answer adequately. Instead they refer to the accusations laid against the sophists and orators. This is the kind of reaction that most interlocutors have in response to Socrates’s relentless questioning: they would pretend to know the answer when actually they did not.

Socrates concludes his defence of the old accusations by saying:

That, men of Athens, is the truth for you. I have hidden or disguised nothing. I know well enough that this very conduct makes me unpopular, and this is proof that what I say is true, that such is the slander against me, and that such are its causes. If you look into this either now or later, this is what you will find. (24a)

He exhorts others to examine his statements as he examines the statements of others, but why doesn’t Socrates “look” or examine this fact together with the jurors and accusers?

This would be an appropriate time to examine at least one of the jurors for his belief,<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Would this be allowed by the Athenian court? Examining the jurors would be highly unorthodox and unconventional in an actual Athenian court of law, It was not uncommon for the defendant to ask the jury to cease heckling and causing a disturbance, as jury members, at the time, played the role of modern judge and modern juror, presiding over the trial and voting for acquittal or conviction, so there was no judge to drop his gavel to silence the jury. Given that Plato has creative liberty and that the *Apology* is neither wholly factual nor fictional, adding a

instead Socrates promises that this will stand scrutiny regardless of the time of scrutiny. In a way, Socrates is dismissing the need to examine this belief. Whether this fact is examined now or later, it will be the case. Socrates is implying that there is not urgency to examine what he has said. Later in the *Apology*, at 38a, Socrates will say that discussing and examining virtue and other things is the greatest good for man, so why does he not take the opportunity to examine what he has just said? As I have argued earlier, I think it is the anonymous nature of the jury and the onerous danger of the slander that dissuades Socrates from engaging the jury in philosophical activity. In other words, Socrates's narration and account of the old accusations falls short of successful persuasion.

Socrates devotes some time on the old accusations; he allocates a length of 5 Stephanus pages, (19a-24b) to them. Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 104) suggest that someone might think that Socrates is not taking this defence seriously, but, as Socrates states at 18b, these accusations are more dangerous than the new ones. Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 105) argue that the refutation against the old accusations is necessary to support his refutation against the new ones. I agree that a defence against the old accusations is necessary, because not only are they “more dangerous” but also because they cannot be refuted in Socrates's typical manner, so these slanders would remain rampant even were he acquitted of the new accusations. In order to address the new accusations, Socrates must address the root of the problem—the nature of the

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short exchange with a jury member to his plea of silence may not be unreasonable. From 38c to 42a, Socrates addresses the jurors who voted for acquittal and for conviction, respectively. This speech, as I will explain in chapter 3, is also historically questionable, which leads me to believe that going one step further than a mere address and actually examining a juror may have been an option.

accusations. Socrates's quest to disclose the truth is not complete without a narration of the past, so nothing must be left unsaid.

Socrates has chosen to use narration up to this point (17a-24a). The style has its strengths and weaknesses, but it does not compare with dialogue. Narration has allowed Socrates to give biographical information in a straightforward, linear, chronological way, focusing on past events. Dialogue, we will see, focuses on the present, and exposition (at least Socrates's exposition) focuses on the future. Narration in the first-person allows the narrator, Socrates, to communicate feelings and opinions from his perspective. From this perspective, we understand the world of Socrates and his view of other characters. Narration renders its audience passive; there is no room for interaction and engagement with the speaker. This style simply transmits information from the narrator to the audience, so the audience must accept it as is. For all the audience knows, the narrator might be speaking out of ignorance, which happens to be the case with the politicians, poets, and craftsmen.

Narration is a powerful tool in conveying information and first-person (even third-person) points of view, but it is not as persuasive as the Socratic method. The Socratic method is argumentative rather than narrative or expository. We will see in the next section that Socrates has a goal, that is, to demonstrate that Meletus is thoughtless and careless in the affairs about which he brings Socrates to trial. The narration up to 24a does not have such a clear goal (unless we consider the description of the origin of the slanders to be a goal). So, due to its non-augmentative, non-participatory nature, narration falls short of examination, which is what Socrates advocates from 28a to 42a.

I am not dismissing the value of narration, for we know that stories and myths carry great cultural importance. I am simply arguing that narration and exposition, compared to examination and philosophy, are weaker forms of communication insofar as statements are taken for granted, and the audience is acquiescent. In his refutation of the old accusations, Socrates appeals to the truth, refers to witnesses, suggests examination, employs questions to transition through his speech, and recounts a terse examination of Callias.

## ii. Refutation of the New Accusers (24b-28a)

Socrates's refutation against Meletus is the climax of the entire speech, and is, by far, the strongest and most insightful section. The refutation of Meletus is a momentous point in the *Apology* because Socrates's tone changes; he goes from speaking *at* the jury to speaking *with* Meletus. There is a strong contrast between the tone of the examination and the expositions that flank the examination. Also, we have heard Socrates express his wish to examine the old accusers, and describe a brief instance of examination, but now we see a full-fledged, developed instance of examination.

Socrates abruptly turns to a defence against the new accusations (24b); his defence is structured like examinations in other dialogues. Unlike the old accusations, the new ones have been laid by three men: Meletus, Anytus and Lycon. Socrates's interlocutor is Meletus, and not Anytus or Lycon, although without Anytus and Lycon,

Meletus would have no success in this indictment. The accusers here are identifiable, present, and apt to be examined.<sup>33</sup>

Guardini (1948, 38) states “Meletus is quite ready for an argument, but one which would turn on concrete cases, discuss alleged statements, seek to weaken the impression produced by the prosecution—in a word, he is prepared for the arts of advocate.” But Meletus is in for a surprise. Up to 24a, Socrates has spoken in his usual manner, but he has only narrated in his everyday language. From 24a to 28b, Socrates speaks in his everyday language while questioning Meletus relentlessly. At 27b, Socrates tells the jury, “not to create a disturbance if I proceed in my usual manner.” Meletus agrees to Socrates’s questions, but hesitates.<sup>34</sup>

Let us begin with a summary of the examination. In other dialogues, the primary question is clearer and explicit, but in this instance of examination, we must presume the primary question: Of What is Socrates guilty? The answer is: Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young and of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes. (24b) In order for Meletus to be refuted, he must believe that these charges are true; in other words, he must assert this statement, so Socrates takes the indictment to be an expression of Meletus’s beliefs.<sup>35</sup> In response to the charges, Socrates lays countercharges against Meletus (24c): “Meletus is guilty of dealing frivolously with serious matters, of irresponsibly bringing people into court, and of professing to be seriously concerned with

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<sup>33</sup> Questioning was allowed by the Athenian court, and the individuals questioned were required to respond, although Meletus does so reluctantly.

<sup>34</sup> Meletus hesitates at 24d, 25d, and 27c.

<sup>35</sup> Note that due to a lack of judge and other legal formalities in contemporary Athens, it was necessary to obtain clarification from the prosecutor.

things about none of which he has ever cared.” These are Socrates’s conclusions, and by questioning Meletus, Socrates will reveal that Meletus is thoughtless and careless.

Meletus concedes to several statements: (1) the greatest importance is that young men are as good as possible (24d); (2) all Athenians improve young men (25a); (3) like horses, one man alone can improve the youth, but many people can harm (25b); (4) men prefer to live among the just and be unharmed (25c); Socrates does not believe in gods at all (26c); believing in spiritual things is the same as believing in spirits (27c); and, if Socrates believes in spiritual things, then he believes in spirits and gods (27c). Socrates concludes that Meletus has “no knowledge of the subjects about which he brings Socrates to trial,” (25c) and he “contradicts himself.” (27a)

Commentators that I have enlisted in this thesis do not address the structure of this examination, but I do not think that commentators would disagree that this is an example of examination that is similar to other dialogues.<sup>36</sup> Guardini (1948, 37) states that Socrates speaks:

in such a way as to continue the very activity with which the prosecution has charged him: he treats the speaker Meletus as one of the long line of those who pretend to know without really knowing, and carry out responsible undertakings without proving themselves fit for them by adequate insight and information of character.

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<sup>36</sup> Miller and Platter (2010) and Blakeney (1929) do not comment on the structure and style of this passage, nor do they contribute to the discussion regarding examination and a life of philosophy. However, de Strycker and Slings (1994), and Brickhouse and Smith (2004) focus on interpreting the laws and the charges that have been allegedly broken and pressed, respectively, and they evaluate the success of the refutation.

It is typical and representative of the examination that Socrates carries out in other dialogues, and the sort of examination to which he refers throughout the *Apology*. The importance of discussing this exchange is not to argue that it is a case of examination, for that is undisputed, but rather to highlight the importance of an instance of examination in a speech inspired by philosophy and examination. So, what makes this exchange the highlight of the entire speech? Note that I am not arguing that this is Socrates's actual defence against the new accusation. De Strycker and Slings (1994, 123) and Burnet (1924), in his introductory remarks, argue that the real defence is not what we have identified as the refutation of the new accusations but rather in the next section (D), the Digression. Instead they ask why Plato includes an examination of Meletus in the defence of Socrates. Someone may say that a Socratic dialogue would not be a Socratic dialogue without Socrates examining someone. But this undermines Plato's literary and philosophical mastery. If the *Apology* is meant as a portrait of the character of Socrates, then the portrait must incorporate that for which Socrates is best known—the Socratic method. But I argue that, although it may not be the actual defence and although it is not commemorative, Socrates's examination of Meletus makes good on Socrates's promise to tell the truth and exemplifies that which Socrates has been explaining in the Defence Proper and about which Socrates will exhort the Athenians.

Socrates's locution exemplifies truth and dialectic, demonstrating what it means to carry out an examined life. Recall that at 18a he reminds the jury to carry out their responsibility and to identify whether what he says is just. Socrates's responsibility, on the other hand, is to tell the truth. We will see Socrates give an exposition of a life of philosophy from 28a on, but until 28a, Socrates has focused on narrating particular facts



in support of his defence. He tells the truth, does not speak outside of his knowledge or out of ignorance. He speaks from memory and relies on himself to give a defence, and he does what a defendant ought to do, namely, tell the truth. His defence is just insofar as he completes what he ought to do.

In the exchange with Meletus, Socrates continues to disclose the truth, or rather what is not the case, by demonstrating that Meletus does not understand what education entails and is reckless when charging Socrates. The upshot of almost all instances of examination is negative knowledge, but the objective of examination is to uncover the truth, and to bring to light the essence of important things, such as justice, virtue, courage and friendship. By means of questioning, Socrates reveals his interlocutor's ignorance.

Socrates's speech, except for the examination, relies on narration of the truth. It lacks a direct interlocutor and the crucial *aporia* when the interlocutor realizes that he is at a loss because he has been shown to be wrong. The examination best supports Socrates's life of philosophy and examination because the jurors witness Socrates's actual manner of examination as opposed to a second-hand instance conducted by a young and immature witness.

As I explained earlier, the conversation between Socrates and Callias lacks essential features of Socratic examination, that is, secondary questioning and *aporia*. But the conversation between Socrates and Meletus does not. I agree with de Strycker and Slings (1994, 126) that "the only developed piece of dialectic in the *Apology* is not truly serious and does not reach the depth of, for example, Socrates's discussion with Polus and Callicles in the *Gorgias*." They argue that Plato could not have omitted an instance of Socratic method in a portrait of Socrates. They make it seem like this invention was half-

heartedly composed and inserted. They think that others who attribute meaning to the examination have failed to understand Plato's intentions. They are wrong to overlook the significance of the examination for it reveals more about the nature of philosophy and a life of examination. This is what one should take from a reading of the *Apology*. It is meant as an exoteric piece of literature illustrating Socratic philosophy and the weaknesses of narration and exposition.

Dialogue (the Socratic method) is a powerful tool able to convert one's character. The one examined has rendered oneself vulnerable and is at risk of exposing one's ignorance. In this precarious situation, one supplies a belief, and by means of questioning, the questioner demonstrates a flaw in the belief. These beliefs are in regard to fundamental and consequential matters, which guide one's behaviour and way of life. When the examiner demonstrates that the belief is flawed, the one examined has no choice but to change one's way of life. In the case of the politicians, they must cease to claim that they are wise. Dialogue and examination are stronger than narration and exposition because the interlocutor's character is under attack.

The placement of the refutation of Meletus renders the exchange literarily significant. We find it in the middle of the dialogue flanked by a narration and an exposition. I am not arguing that the refutation of Meletus is Socrates's actual defence against the new accusations. What I am trying to say is that the examination of Meletus is a pedagogical tool inserted to strengthen the narration found from 17a to 24b, and the exposition from 28a to 42a which otherwise would not suffice in explaining Socrates's philosophical activities.

## D. The Digression, 28a-34b

After examining Meletus in his everyday language and by means of his typical method, Socrates resumes his narrative style to continue his defence. We will see that his narration from 17a-24a is similar in this Digression insofar as he recounts stories of his past, emphasizes the truth, hypothetically questions himself, uses analogies, and expounds the nature of examination and a life of philosophy. This style of the Digression is similar to the style of speech prior to the refutation of Meletus, however, we will see that this section adds further information regarding Socrates's past, and the nature and strength of examination.

At 28b, he hypothetically asks himself, "Are you not ashamed, Socrates, to have followed the kind of occupation that has led to you being now in danger of death?" To this Socrates replies, "You are wrong, sir, if you think that a man who is any good at all should take into account the risk of life or death; he should look to this only in his actions, whether what he does is right or wrong, whether he is acting like a good or a bad man." (28b) Socrates's mission to the god, that is, his duty to examine men who think that they are wise, is akin to a soldier obeying commands from his superior. (28e) If a soldier were to disobey, he would be cowardly and unvirtuous. To fear death is to think that one knows the nature of death, but death is unknown, so it is unwise to fear it for it could be the greatest good. (29a) To illustrate his point about courage, Socrates recounts his experience as a soldier at Potidaea, Amphipolis, and Delium, where he did not abandon his post. (29a)

Socrates's locution is consistent with that characterizing in the refutation of the old accusations. He questions himself, argues from analogy, and recounts personal

experience. Note that Socrates continues to use a hypothetical interlocutor to transition from topic to topic. In order to make good on Socrates's promise to speak in his everyday language and to tell the truth, his speech has to resemble a dialogue. Furthermore, his use of analogy is a feature often found in his examinations. Recall in the refutation of Meletus, Socrates likened the education of youth to the improving of horses. Also, in the defence against the old accusations, Socrates, in his conversation with Callias, also used an analogy to animals. We have seen these features in refutations of both the old and new accusations, and we will continue to see them.

Again, at 29c, Socrates says to himself, "Socrates, we do not believe Anytus now; we acquit you, but only on condition that you spend no more time on this investigation and do not practice philosophy, and if you are caught doing so you will die;" To this Socrates replies:

Gentlemen, I am grateful and I am your friend, but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I draw breath and am able, I shall not cease to practice philosophy, to exhort you in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom I happen to meet: Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest reputation for both wisdom and power; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation and honors as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul? (29d-e)

In other words, in the case that Socrates is acquitted conditionally, he would not stop questioning, examining, testing and reproaching men for caring about the wrongs things.

He and his philosophical activities are a “blessing” (30a) from the god. His examinations are similar to the bite of a gadfly (30e) and his care for his fellow Athenians is similar to a father’s or elder’s care. Being such a gift and blessing, Socrates’s voice kept him from entering politics, for “a man who really fights for justice must lead a private life if he is to survive for even a short time.” (32a) The fact that he has always been a private and just man is evidenced by the fact that the government did not frighten him into killing Leon. (32e) It is precisely his deeds and not his words that support his defence, and there are numerous witnesses who will attest to this.

The Digression is similar to Socrates’s speech from 17a to 24a in five ways: he recounts stories of being a soldier at Potidaea, Amphipolis, and Delium, and of disobeying the order to kill Leon; he uses an imaginary interlocutor<sup>37</sup> to segue from topic to topic five times;<sup>38</sup> he uses everyday language; he uses the analogy of a soldier’s duty to describe his own duty to the god; and he affirms that he tells the truth. Socrates must interact with himself, as opposed to with an interlocutor, by asking questions and supposing possible objections to his defence.

Socrates’s analogy of a gadfly<sup>39</sup> reveals essential aspects of examination. We saw in the examination at 24a-28b how Socrates personifies a gadfly, and he pokes and prods his interlocutor with questions, annoying him but eventually stirring his spirit. Miller and Platter (2010, 93) state that “the image of a stinging fly and the lazy horse subtly slides

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<sup>37</sup> De Strycker and Slings (1994, 128) also note the use of the imaginary interlocutor. However, they claim that, “through this literary device, Plato avoids putting long rhetorical and self asserting speeches into Socrates’s mouth.”

<sup>38</sup> 28b, 29c, 30b, 32e, 33c,

<sup>39</sup> Similarly at the *Meno* 80, we find Socrates compared to a stingray. In addition, Miller and Platter (2010, 93) remark on the popularity of Socrates’s comparison of himself to a gadfly. They also note a link between this comparison and the genre of the Aesop fable.

between the literal and the metaphorical.” The interlocutor is heavy, lethargic and lifeless, but with the help of some coaxing, he is persuaded to be more active and lively. The problem with a population that is lethargic, lifeless, and unreflective is that it is complacent. Non-reflection and non-participation are not helped by narration. Stories and myths may be lively, but the act of story telling lacks engagement and interaction. The audience is left to their own devices when it comes to accepting or rejecting a story. Is Socrates’s truth-telling even making a difference? Someone might say that the jury is outraged and annoyed on account of the cries and disturbances, but employing these oratorical devices will not affect the core of the problem, that is, the slander (and Socrates very well knows this). It may be the case that Socrates’s trial is a show trial intended simply to make an example out of Socrates. What we learn from the juxtaposition of narration and examination is that examination is collaborative, cooperative relationship in which the interlocutor commits himself and his character.

Arguing that narration is weak and examination stronger, means that Socrates’s examination of Meletus is the true defense. Commentators argue that certain sections of the *Apology* are more direct defences against the charges than others; they assume that the entire dialogue is not a direct refutation and so they argue as to which section better refutes, if at all, the charges against Socrates. Brickhouse and Smith (2004) and de Strycker and Slings (1994) argue that the actual defence is found in the Digression. I argue, however, that, seeing as the examination of Meletus demonstrates the strength of philosophy and examination, the Digression, which is a narrative, cannot be the actual defence.<sup>40</sup> Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 120) argue that the Digression is the actual

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<sup>40</sup> Riddell (1974, xvi) states that the answer to the indictment itself is placed in the middle of the speech, where least attention naturally falls upon it.

defence against new accusations because here we find Socrates claiming that the activities that have brought him to court, are in fact valuable and salutary. In other words, it is in the city's best interest not to condemn and sentence him to death. They assume that the fact that Socrates deals with the new accusations directly in this section of his speech does not mean that this is Socrates's intended defence of his life of philosophy. It is typical of Socrates to give straight answers; his usual way is ironic, elusive and implicit. We have no reason to believe Socrates would change his style in his defence. He even says, in the exordium at 17c, that he will continue to use his usual manner of speech, the manner in which he speaks in the marketplace. I assume that the rest of the speech is ironic, elusive and implicit as well.

Someone might say that it would be inappropriate to conduct his entire speech as an examination; there are some things that simply need not be examined. Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 147) state:

Socrates never says that one must scrutinize *every* one of his beliefs in order to lead a thoroughly 'examined life.' Socrates sees no reason to scrutinize the non-moral beliefs that he and everyone else take to be commonsensical.

This suggests that narration is welcome and at times necessary. Not everything can be up for debate; we do not need to engage, discuss and test every fact. This is true, but in Socrates's case, when it is vital to persuade people of your innocence, narration is a less than optimal stratagem. Furthermore, Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 147) note that we never see Socrates questioning his perceptions or his memory, but the validity and

accuracy of his memories are not at stake, and if they were, then witnesses would be called upon. The core of the problem is the slander that is so engrained in the minds of the jurors. As Socrates says, he is trying to “uproot from [their] minds in so short a time the slander that has resided there so long.” (19a) The problem is not Socrates’s philosophical activities, for this, as he says, are a blessed thing, but the wrong beliefs that have come about as a result of a misunderstanding. The Athenians have misunderstood what Socrates is doing; they have been subjected to incorrect examination by Socrates’s followers and witnesses. Athenians think that Socrates is corrupting the youth, and denying the gods of Athens, but their belief is out of ignorance. So, given that the task is to uproot a false belief, Socratic method seems the apt strategy to change the minds of the jury.

De Strycker and Slings (1994, 127) argue that the examination “does not contain the true defense of Socrates nor does it constitute the core of the work.” The Digression is usually inserted as an addendum in a defendant’s speech wherever circumstances require. However, the Digression in the *Apology* is not viewed as a Digression per se. De Strycker and Slings (1994, 133) argue that the refutations were negative, and so require a Digression to positively reformulate and defend Socrates’s philosophical activities. In other words, first Socrates denied that which the accusers thought he was doing, and then he states positively the nature of his examinations and philosophizing. (1994, 133) Why? That is not characteristic of Socrates.

As I stated earlier, Socrates is typically elusive, implicit and ironic in the Platonic dialogues. Dramatically, there are a few facets that we need to consider as readers: literal, dramatic, and philosophical. Socrates claims that deeds speak louder than words, and this



is what the jury wants to know. And so, he gives two examples as proof of his just and pious acts, that is, the trial of the ten generals (32a-c) and his defiance of the thirty (32c-e). This, commentators will say, is evidence of his piety and courage. I do not think that Socrates is feeding the jurors what they want; I think Socrates would also agree that what one thinks and believes will inspire how one acts. If Socrates wants to persuade the jury of the value of examination and philosophy, then it would make sense to show them examination. Since he does examine Meletus, it is possible that the jury members are pleased, but they might also be overwhelmed, and too hot-headed to realize what they are seeing. The real proof is in the pudding, so to speak. If the jury is persuaded by acts and not words, then an instance of examination is apt to demonstrate that a life of examination is worth living (38a), and that Socrates is a blessing to the city. The Digression is not the actual defence against the accusations. Socrates's examination of Meletus demonstrates that he is thoughtless and careless, and by extension, or vicariously, the jurors, if they believe in the accusations, should also be refuted.

Furthermore, narration in the Digression is similar to the narration found at 17a-24a, but the narration here accumulates pathos, which may be construed as persuasive but is problematic. Guardini (19, 47) remarks on the "marvelous pathos" of the Digression: The emotion increases as he describes his mission and activities as a blessing and a gift from the god to the city. The evoking of emotion is uncharacteristic of Socrates. At 30d to 31a, we find a very earnest warning:

Indeed, men of Athens, I am far from making a defence now on my own behalf, as might be thought, but on yours, to prevent you from wrongdoing by mistreating the god's gift to you by condemning me.

(...) It is to fulfill some such function that I believe the god has placed me in the city. I never cease to rouse each and every one of you, to persuade and reproach you all day long and everywhere I find myself in your company.

It is worth emphasizing this urgent warning because this would be an appropriate point in the defence to examine a jury member and convince them that Socrates's examinations are salutary. In the *Crito*, Socrates says, "I'm not just now but in fact I've always been the sort of person who's persuaded by nothing but the reason that appears to me to be best when I've considered it." Is Socrates speaking "reasonably" to his audience, that is, in the same way that would persuade him? Socrates attempts to speak reasonably throughout the Digression insofar as he tries to emulate some of the features of examination, but ultimately he does not succeed in demonstrating the value of philosophy by narrating two proofs of his piety. So the actual defence of Socrates takes the form of dialectic and not of digression, that is, if we assume, as other commentators do, that sections which directly address the charges are better refutations.

## E. The Peroration, 34b-35d

Socrates's refutation of the accusation has come to an end; he says, "This is what I have to say in my defence." (34b) This conclusion to his defence is not a summary but rather a synthesis. In other words, there are no particular points that have been repeated throughout the speech that need to be recapitulated in the Peroration. Rather, his life and the defence speech as whole must be integrated into a few remarks. Here he explains that he has not defended himself in the same way that other defendants have defended

themselves, because those tactics are not fitting for a man of Socrates's age. In other words, it is disgraceful. "I do not think it right to supplicate the jury and to be acquitted because of this, but to teach and persuade them." (35c)

Has Socrates taught and persuaded the jury as he set out to do? For starters, if by teaching and persuading Socrates means using his usual dialectical method, then the answer is no. By means of examination, Socrates has discredited Meletus; he has been taught and persuaded of his ignorance, carelessness, and thoughtlessness. In this peroration, Socrates opts not to use the literary devices that he has been using thus far: no imaginary interlocutor, no declaration of truth, no appeal to witnesses, no biographical information, nor do we learn anything else about philosophy and examination. Socrates's defence seems to fizzle at the end, unlike his examinations, which end with a provocative impasse. *Aporia* is crucial to Socrates's dialectical method, and although the result of examination is negative, it is invaluable because of its protreptic and converting effect. It's difficult to say if the jurors experienced a moment of discomfiture and internal irresolution.

Throughout the defence, Socrates discloses the truth, and he relies on these true statements to uproot the engrained slander from the minds of the jurors. At 35e, we learn that Socrates has been convicted of the charges regardless of his sincerity, honesty and veracity. What went wrong? Socrates chose a style of oratory that was inspired by examination and philosophy but did not fully employ it. It simply was not possible given the circumstances.

At this point 25e, there is a pause so that the jurors can cast their vote to determine whether Socrates is innocent or guilty. In the next chapter, I will discuss how

Socrates is allowed to suggest an appropriate punishment for his crimes. I will continue analyze passage 35e to 38c according to the style in which Socrates speaks, highlighting the locution, diction and topoi that fail to be effective and persuasive and pale in comparison to examination.

## Chapter 2:

### The Counter-Assessment, 35e-38c

Socrates has completed his Defence Proper, and the jurors have cast their votes. The verdict is guilty, but, to Socrates's surprise, the ratio between guilty and innocent votes is unexpectedly close. "A switch of only thirty votes would have acquitted me." (36a) Meletus has proposed the penalty of death, but Socrates is given the opportunity, as per Athenian court procedures, to propose an alternative, appropriate punishment. Socrates suggests meals at the Prytaneum (36d-e),<sup>41</sup> because neither exile nor a fine would be apt.

In this chapter, I will summarize what Socrates discusses, compare Socrates's manner of speech to his manner in his Defence Proper from 17a to 35d, discuss other commentaries on the counter-assessment as they relate to my own, and demonstrate that Socrates's expository speech is argumentative, but essentially lacks the persuasive advantage that examination bolsters. In this Counter-Assessment, Socrates refers to the life of examination, and, given this information, we are able to juxtapose dialectic with narration and exposition.

Having had the verdict announced, Socrates admits that he is not angry (35e), but he is surprised that the votes cast on each side were almost equal. (36a) In order to transition to his proposition, Socrates asks: What would be an appropriate penalty? He formulates this question in four different ways:

1. What counter assessment should I propose to you, men of Athens? (36b)
2. What do I deserve to suffer or to pay because I have deliberately not led a quiet

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<sup>41</sup> Blakeney (1929, 150) states "to suggest a genuine counter-penalty was impossible for him, for that would be equivalent to an admission of guilt."

life but have neglected what occupies most people: wealth, household affairs, the position of general, of public orator or the other offices, the political clubs and factions that exist in the city? (36b)

3. What do I deserve for being such a man? (36d)

4. What is suitable for a poor benefactor who needs leisure to exhort you? (36d)

Guardini (1948, 57) notes that the phrase “what I deserve” is ambiguous. Socrates should propose that which is adequate and equal to his guilt; the punishment should fit the crime. Instead, Socrates recapitulates his behaviour as he sees it, that is, dutiful, and then, clearly and succinctly proposes maintenance in the Prytaneum at the expense of the *polis*<sup>42</sup> as an appropriate “punishment.” Ironically, this is not an appropriate punishment at all. The Prytaneum was a religious and political centre where a sacred fire burned continuously. It was often used to host and entertain Olympic victors. Needless to say, Socrates is not a victor by any stretch of the imagination, but Socrates genuinely does not believe that he has harmed anyone, rather that he is a benefactor. As a result he should be rewarded for his service.

Socrates preempts disagreement from his audience, “When I say this you may think, as when I spoke of appeals to pity and entreaties, that I speak arrogantly, but that is not the case, men of Athens” (37a), because most trials of this nature last more than a day (37b), and it is difficult to uproot the slander in so short a time. (37b) Since Socrates does not believe that he has done wrong, what evil should he propose? “What should I fear?” (37b) First, he does not fear death for the fear of death is irrational; second, if he proposes imprisonment then he would subject himself to the tyranny of the thirty; third, a fine is

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<sup>42</sup> I use the Greek word meaning city-state here to preserve the nuance that Greek cities were self-regulating.

unviable because he does not have money (38b); fourth, exile is unviable because he would just be driven from *polis* to *polis* as he continues to discuss, question, and test other people.

Exile appears to be the most viable in terms of the appropriateness of the penalty—death is overly cruel, but meals at the Prytaneum would be ridiculous. Exile seems to be the mean between two extremes. “But Socrates,” he says to himself, “if you leave us will you not be able to live quietly, without talking?” (37e) Socrates explains that this is not possible because, one, he would be disobeying the god, which he has explaining in the Defence Proper already, and, two, “it is the greatest good for a man to discuss virtue every day and those other things about which you hear me conversing and testing myself and others, for the unexamined life is not worth living for men, you will believe me even less.” (38a)<sup>43</sup>

This passage regarding the examined life is one of the most popular passages in the Platonic corpus. Socrates’s defence of his philosophical activities and examinations boil down to this one sentence: “The unexamined life is not worth living,” [ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ]. Let us etymologically analyze (this is one of many ways) this statement so that we can better understand Socrates’s inspiration and reasons for examination and philosophy. As de Strycker and Slings (1994, 197) state, “[this passage is] powerful because Plato uses the plainest and most straightforward language. Just as Socrates used everyday language in the Defence Proper so he uses everyday language again in the Counter-Assessment. This passage reveals essential notes

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<sup>43</sup> Blakeney (1929, 156) translated this line as “ a life without those discussions in which the intellect is exercised in the quest for truth.” His translation makes explicit the elements of discourse and verity. Philosophical activity is geared toward truth, as is Socrates’s defence, but it lacks discourse demonstrating the need to engage and interact with another person or persons.

regarding the dynamic and reciprocal nature of examination.

The word, ἀνεξέταστος, a singular masculine adjective in the nominative modifying βίος, which means “life” or “way of life”, begins the subordinate clause that is under scrutiny. The prefix “an-“ negates the root word εξέταστος, indicating an absence or a lack thereof. So, “the life that lacks examination” as opposed to “the unexamined life” is a more accurate way of translating ἀνεξέταστος because it conveys the idea of implementing examination as well as undergoing examination. This idea is key to the reciprocal good that examination provides to each party involved in the activity of examination.<sup>44</sup>

Commentators have balked at the usual translation of this passage. “The unexamined life is not worth living” is a mistranslation, according to de Strycker and Slings, who claim that this excerpt deserves better than to be constantly mistranslated. (1994, 197, n22) I gather that it deserves a better translation because the usual one does not aptly convey the power and the significance of what Socrates is trying to convey. So what would do this excerpt justice? De Strycker and Slings (1994, 196) suggest, “a life without investigation or examination is declared to be unendurable for man.” Blakeney

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<sup>44</sup> The word ἀνεξέταστος originates from the Greek word ἐξετάζω, which appears quite infrequently in Plato’s dialogues. English translations generally translate ἐξετάζω with the verb “to examine,” yet there are other Greek words that are translated as “examine,” for example σκοπέω. The word ἐξετάζω derives primarily from the language of fifth- and fourth-century military activity and service, from the notion of a review, examination, or mustering of troops, and it continues to carry this meaning and performative weight in the *Apology*. According to Goldman (2009, 465), ἐξετάζω is the more common form of ετάζω, originally meaning to pass in (military) review or muster, scrutinize, then examine carefully or thoroughly. Burnet remarks, in a note to *Apology* 22e6, that ἐξετάζω must certainly be seen to mean “muster,” review,” “scrutiny.” There are many military things that may be reviewed in this manner, and of them is the order of battle, to see that every soldier is at his “post” or “station,” or τάξις. The verb ἐξετάζω was also used to mean “to post” or “to station” someone in a position or place. So, the Socratic notion of “examination” in the *Apology* draws its significance from the citizens’ experience of military service, preparation and war.



(1929, 156) translate it as, “a life without those discussions in which intellect is exercised in the quest for truth.” Both commentators make explicit essential notions of the life of examination and philosophizing that Socrates leads. However, Blakeney does not translate οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ in his commentary. And the translation of de Strycker and Slings denotes insufferability or pain, which I do not think Socrates means to say. By οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ I think Socrates means to denote “lifestyle.” So, I would reformulate this as the following: A life, which does not examine and is not examined, is not a life that a man should lead.

Recall that on page 32 in Chapter 1, section C, ii, on the refutation against the new accusers, I first mentioned that Socrates’s manner of speech in the Defence Proper is narrative, and that it focused on the past. The retrospective element ceases in the Counter-Assessment, and a prospective element begins. Furthermore, we do not find any narration or story-telling in the Counter-Assessment. Socrates’s objective is no longer to tell the truth vis-à-vis the past, but rather to entertain the possibility of a variety of punishments. In order to accommodate this task, Socrates’s manner of speech changes from narrative to argumentative. For example, he has a clear and concise conclusion: he deserves free meals in the Prytaneum. Although Socrates’s objective is not to recount the truth, he still reiterates that he tells the truth. For example, at 38b he says, “What I say is true, gentlemen, but it is not easy to convince you.” There is one declaration of truth here compared to the Defence Proper, where the declarations are numerous. This reflects the prospective and argumentative exposition. So Socrates’s counter proposition does not

amount to an admission of guilt.<sup>45</sup>

One feature of his manner of speech that remains consistent is his use of questions. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Socrates asks himself, what does he deserve (36b-d), what evil he would impose on himself (37b) and why he would not be able to stop examining and philosophizing (37e)? These questions are inspired by the life of examination, but do not amount to examination qua Socratic method, for an interlocutor is missing. As I stated in my etymological analysis of 38a, ἀνεξέταστος is in the passive and active voice, and not the middle:<sup>46</sup> one must examine and be examined.

If Socrates had engaged with an interlocutor, an exciting dialogue would have ensued, and he may have successfully persuaded them to vote for free meals at the Prytaneum. Socrates would examine Meletus again, because it is he who proposed the penalty of death in the first place. It is Meletus's statement that must be examined for its feasibility and refuted in order to advance Socrates's proposition. A possible examination may have transpired as the following:

What punishment do I deserve? The interlocutor replies, "Exile or a fine." Let us examine this bit by bit. First, is exile a viable option? Should I be exiled? Do you think that other men would tolerate my company and conversation when the Athenian people have been unable to endure them?—No.

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<sup>45</sup> Brickhouse and Smith (2004, 163), and de Strycker and Slings (1994, 198) all agree that Socrates does not suggest exile or imprisonment as an alternative to death because he would implicitly admit guilt. It is crucial that Socrates remains consistent, cogent, and fallacy-free.

<sup>46</sup> A problem arises with this analysis: if the term is in the active and passive, and it excludes the middle, then it may imply that it is not necessary to conduct self-examination. By means of this analysis I mean to highlight the reciprocal nature of examination. I do not think that Plato deliberately means to exclude self-examination, in fact, self-examination is necessary to a life of examination. Self-examination is conveyed through other notions, such as "know thyself," throughout the Platonic corpus.

Is a soldier's duty to obey his commander, or is it not?—It is.

Is it virtuous for a soldier to conduct himself courageously and piously, and obey the instructions of his commander?—Yes.

Should a soldier conduct himself courageously and piously every day, and not just sometimes?—Of course.

It follows then, that if it is my duty to serve the god, and to discuss virtue and test myself and others, would it not be virtuous to do it always? To this, his interlocutor would undoubtedly hesitate to reply, for to acquiesce to this would mean that Socrates's examinations are virtuous and that he ought to continue to do it every day.

An examination typically incorporates an analogy in order to draw a relationship between what is already known to Meletus and what is debatable, that is, the subject in question. We do not find an analogy in Socrates's Counter-Assessment, but I have taken the liberty of drawing on the analogy of a soldier's duties in order to expound the nature of Socrates's mission and philosophical activities.

Next, in order to examine whether a fine is a viable punishment, Socrates might say something like the following:

Now, then, since exile is not a viable option, is a fine an appropriate punishment? Is not punishment sometimes negative, and sometimes positive? Sometimes, something is taken away from the convict, and sometimes something is given to the convict? In the case of the negative punishment, something valuable, such as money, is taken away?—Yes, that is the case.

Would it make sense to demand something that the convict does not have? Would

the convict feel regret, if he does not surrender something that he values and holds dear? Would there be retribution for his offense?—No, certainly not, Socrates.

I have exhorted you to care for your soul and not for wealth and reputation. I have explained that I live in poverty, and my poverty is proof of my service to the god. So, since I do not have money, nor do I value money, would it be fitting to demand a fine in retribution for my behaviour?

These hypothetical examinations both have aporetic conclusions, for Meletus would be forced to admit something contradictory to what he said to the initial question. Only by means of secondary, relentless questions would we uncover that Meletus cannot support his initial statement. The *aporia* at which Socrates and Meletus arrive is a crucial protreptic moment where the interlocutor is discomfited, confused and encouraged to change his initial answer. As the Counter-Assessment stands it is directed at the jury,<sup>47</sup> but the jury is not committed to engaging with Socrates on a dialectical level. Socrates talks at the jury rather than with them. Recall that the only instance of Socrates's talking with someone throughout his trial is with Meletus at 24a-28b. So, although Socrates succinctly argues that he deserves to receive free meals, his conclusion would be better communicated if he examined someone directly, and Meletus would be the appropriate person who should be examined. So an interlocutor who engages and interacts with Socrates would overcome the shortcoming of Socrates's manner of speech.

Moreover, examination and philosophizing would be apt here, because examination produces a negative result while philosophizing produces a positive result.

Examination would be appropriate in order to refute Meletus's initial proposition of

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<sup>47</sup> Given Socrates's use of the vocative case, we know that he addresses the audience. Throughout the *Apology* he addresses the jury as "Athenian men," "men," or "jurors."

penalty of death, while philosophizing would be aimed at arguing for free meals at the Prytaneum.

I stated in Chapter 1, section D, the Digression, that it would be fascinating to have seen Socrates defend a life of examination and philosophizing by examining the notion of examination and philosophizing itself. That said, recall that Socrates supplies an expository defence instead. A life of philosophy and examination is, I think, important enough to warrant everyday discussion, as we have seen at 38a. Socrates should be examining his life in his customary way during his trial, but he only narrates and gives an exposition. If discussion and examination are the greatest good, then Socrates's trial would be the ideal place in which to use examination to show that examination is worthwhile.

Now I will turn to Socrates's manner of speech vis-à-vis examination. Miller and Platter (2010, 126) note the prophetic aspect of passage 485a to 486c in the *Gorgias*, where Socrates's interlocutor, Callicles, urges him to abandon philosophy, which he admits is good in moderation but irritating and childish when continued into adulthood. As we have seen in the *Apology*, Socrates examined in his usual way only once, at 24a-28b. De Strycker and Slings (1994, 126) claim that this examination is too short compared to examinations in other dialogues such as the *Gorgias*. Is Socrates's defence an instance of philosophizing moderately? I doubt it. There is no other *polis* in which Socrates can discuss, examine and test more freely. De Strycker and Slings (1994, 194) argue "No city but Athens [can provide] for better conditions. Nowhere in Greece was the curiosity for disinterested debate so keen, and so free, because Athens was the democratic city *par excellence*." Socrates should have opened up the throttle on

examinations during his trial. Accordingly, as I have been arguing, Socrates should have toned down the narration and instead employed examination and philosophizing during his defence. Although annoyed, there is a chance that Athenians may be persuaded enough to acquit him. Note that Socrates has managed to stay alive and out of the courts this long already.

To sum up, the Counter-Assessment continues to support my conclusion that merely dictating and declaring the truth falls short of examination and philosophizing. Socrates's argument falls short of persuasion because a bona fide interlocutor is not present. If an interlocutor is missing and aporia is not reached, then persuasion and philosophizing does not occur. Similar to the Defense Proper, Socrates uses an imaginary interlocutor to connect with the jurors and sympathize with possible concerns and reactions, but the accusers and the jurors remain non-participatory and passive. Meletus is the one who proposes the penalty, but he is figuratively removed and unavailable for discourse. As I argued, this Counter-Assessment is another apt opportunity in which Socrates examines and refutes Meletus. In spite of Socrates's manner of speech, we do discover more about Socrates's life of examination and philosophizing, namely, examination is something that we perform and something that is performed on us.<sup>48</sup>

At this point 38c of the *Apology*, there is another pause so that the jury can cast their vote to determine the punishment. In the next Chapter, I examine Socrates's last address to the jury. First, he addresses those jurors who voted against him, then he addresses the jurors who voted in his favour. This third and final speech may be Plato's invention, as a third speech is not customary in the Athenian court.

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<sup>48</sup> Again, this is not to say that self-examination is not an important Socratic doctrine, rather I aim to highlight the equally important reciprocal examination.

## Chapter 3:

### The Last Words, 38c-42a

Socrates gives his final address to the jury disclosing his feelings and thoughts regarding the jury members, and his impending death. His last words demonstrate virtuosity, steadfastness and audacity.

#### A. Address to the condemning jurors, 38c-39e

At 38d-38e, Socrates says to the jurors who have condemned him:

Perhaps you think that I was convicted for lack of such words as might have convinced you, if I thought I should say or do all I could to avoid my sentence. Far from it. I was convicted because I lacked not words but boldness and shamelessness and the willingness to say to you what you would most gladly have heard from me, lamentations and tears and my saying and doing many things that I say are unworthy of me but that you are accustomed to hear from others. I did not think then that the danger I ran should make me do anything mean, nor do I now regret the nature of my defence. I would much rather die after this kind of defence than live after making the other kind.

This address to the condemning jurors is audacious and proud, for Socrates explains the reasons for condemnation as if he were a voting juror. He does not regret his manner of speech and he is glad that he did not stoop down to the level of other defendants in order

to secure acquittal. So, by means of this address, Socrates communicates his steadfast character that does not flinch in the face of danger. Through his audaciousness, Socrates suggests the actual reason that he was not acquitted was because he did not conform to the expectations of the jurors: he did not lament and cry.

Socrates admits that he is proud of his speech for he has not compromised or jeopardized his character and his life of examination, but I think that his speech was subpar. Sure he did not beg for mercy, appeal to his young family, or propose exile so that he may continue to live, but he also did not give direct evidence for the value of examination and philosophizing. He would have optimized his speech if he had employed examination more frequently and more in depth. His examination of Meletus was the *pièce de résistance* of the Defence Proper, and the Counter-Assessment could have been transformed into an examination. Nevertheless, his speech continues to aim at the truth, and is merely inspired by examination and philosophizing.

After he gives reasons for the conviction and penalty of death, Socrates prophesizes that the condemning jurors will be avenged.

I say gentlemen, to those who voted to kill me, that vengeance will come upon you immediately after my death, a vengeance much harder to bear than that which you took in killing me. You did this in the belief that you would avoid giving an account of your life, but I maintain that quite the opposite will happen to you. There will be more people to test you, whom I now held back, but you did not notice it. They will be more difficult to deal with as they will be younger and you will resent them more. (39c-d)



Furthermore, unlike the narration of the Defence Proper, Socrates does not refer to witnesses in support of his account, does not declare that what he says is the truth, does not employ his imaginary interlocutor, and does not recount stories. Socrates's manner of speech is quickly disintegrating. The two things that remain are his prospective exposition, and his address to the jury (although even this changes significantly). He foresees that Athenians have temporarily solved the relentless and annoying examinations of Socrates, but what they do not realize is that Socrates has a small army of imitators who will carry on with philosophical activities.

I surmise that Socrates's examinations and aporias have mustered quite a following. Examination has successfully convinced and persuaded others to examine and philosophize. Some people have resented Socrates's imitators and followers (who do not examine correctly, hence the trial), but others (who have been examined) have realized their ignorance, and changed their minds (and lifestyles) for the better. Engagement and aporia are crucial to persuasion and a life of examination. Those who have converted have undergone examination; I doubt that Socrates narrated his way through to conversion. When one is examined, one goes out on a limb. As we see in the dialogues and investigations in the refutation of the old accusers, those limbs cannot withstand the weight of examination. Socrates's speech conveys his feelings and thoughts, and his steadfastness to the truth and justice, but this does not amount to examination and philosophizing. Truth and justice would be better served by implementing examination and philosophizing.

Why does Socrates address the jurors who voted for his conviction?<sup>49</sup> Is there anything left to say or to refute? Socrates warns the jurors of their injustice (39c) and that there are many others who will continue to examine and philosophize on Socrates's behalf. This address is Socrates's last chance to get through to condemning, slander-believing jurors. Socrates is hopeful but speaks in vain. At least in earlier passages, the jurors would cause a disturbance and show signs of animation, but they do not even stir when Socrates prophesizes vengeance.<sup>50</sup>

## B. Address to the acquitting jurors, 39e-42a

Addressing the jurors who have acquitted him, Socrates says at 39e, "So, Gentlemen, stay with me awhile, for nothing prevents us from talking to each other while it is allowed."

When Socrates invites these jurors to talk with him, does Socrates intend to discuss the

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<sup>49</sup> Why address the jurors who condemned him anyway? De Strycker and Slings (1994, 203) argue "something, not everything, is fictitious in the Third Speech of the *Apology* as it is published." It is not likely that the jurors stayed in the courtroom after the penalty was announced; it is especially unlikely that the jurors who condemned Socrates returned to their seats. There are no other extant records of trial when defendants give a speech after the penalty has been presented. On the other hand, Blakeney (1929, 157) argues that these addresses from 38c to 42a are historically accurate because later writers such as Aristotle and Plutarch do not contest its presence, in spite of the fact that third speeches, that is, a speech after the punishment is announced, were not customary. I will not discuss of the historicity of the addresses to the jurors who voted for conviction and acquittal, for that is outside the scope of this thesis; however, I will note that it is important to discuss how it reflects a life of examination and what significance the denouement holds.

<sup>50</sup> Up until the Last Words, Socrates's tone has been sympathetic, but for the first time in the *Apology*, Socrates's tone in this address conveys enmity. These jurors who voted for conviction did not fulfill their responsibility of determining the truth. Clearly, these particular jurors have acting wrongly and unjustly, and as a result, Socrates has every reason to reproach them for their poor behaviour by means of investigation and examination, but he does not. Instead, he explains that he is more afraid of committing injustice than he is of dying, and that he will be avenged by his followers. This enmity that Socrates conveys is uncharacteristic; he has not demonstrated such emotion throughout the entire *Apology*. In the address to jurors who voted for acquittal (Chapter 3, ii) Socrates's tone changes once more: from hostile and ominous to calm and encouraging.

important things about which he has been arguing? Yes, but this passage is solely Socrates speaking; no one else is engaged in conversation. Given the manner of Socrates's speech, and his exhortations, one would expect that Plato would end the speech in discussion and examination.

Socrates comforts his friends, reassuring them that his divine sign has not warned him against something unjust; he is not angry with the condemning jurors either. (40a) He invites them to "reflect in this way too that there is good hope that death is a blessing." Death could either mean nothing at all, and that we fall into a deep endless sleep, in which case nothing bad happens, or it is a relocation where Socrates can continue to examine heroes and gods alike. (40d) Either way, Socrates does not fear death but welcomes it. He exhorts his friends of the truth that "a man cannot be harmed either in life or in death." The *Apology* ends with Socrates's request that his children, when grown up, will be questioned and scrutinized just as he questioned and scrutinized reputed wise men. After this, he bids the jury goodbye.

Socrates's diction in this last address has come full circle since the exordium. Socrates refers to the jury members as "Athenian men" or "gentlemen," never as "jurors" or "jurymen." In Socrates's address to the acquitting jurors from 39e to 42a, he refers to them as "jurors," implying that they have justly completed their job as juror. Recall that in the Exordium, Socrates reminds the jurors that their responsibility and their virtue is to identify the truth and to judge accordingly, just as it is the speakers' responsibility to speak the truth. Note that in the Defence Proper, the Counter-Assessment, and the Address to the Condemning Jurors, Socrates does not refer to the jurors as "jurymen," which would have been respectful. Miller and Platter (2010, 19) note that this is

Socrates's way of antagonizing the jury, but it would have been unjust to call them jurymen before they accomplished their role as identifiers of truth. Blakeney (1929, 94) states "Socrates is addressing his fellow-citizens generally, rather than the crowds who have come, out of curiosity, to hear his defence." It appears that commentators have failed to notice the significance of referring to the jurors as "Athenian men" or "gentlemen." The reason for Socrates's diction is made clear at 40a, when he refers to them as "jurymen" for the first time. Socrates states, "A surprising thing has happened to me, jurymen—you I would rightly call jurymen." Socrates implicitly applauds these acquitting jurors for upholding the truth and appreciating all the truthful statements he has made throughout the *Apology*. Note that in his address to the jurors who voted for conviction, Socrates aggressively warns the jurors that immediately after Socrates dies, vengeance will come upon them. (39c) Socrates does not reproach the convicting jurors as he reproaches the reputed wise men. In these addresses, however, Socrates implicitly conveys praise and blame through subtle word choice as opposed to examination.

As I have already stated, Socrates does not refer to the jurors as "jurors," but we must not forget that Socrates's global mission (as opposed to his mission in the *Apology*) is to examine and test reputed wise men. The jurors who have voted for his acquittal have demonstrated their justice and wisdom in their choice of vote, but the other jurors have demonstrated that they think they understand the role and responsibility of a juror. This reiterates my point that it would be apropos for Socrates to examine one or more of the jurors at any point in the *Apology*. The jurors are supposed to have the wisdom to judge justly, yet (according to Socrates) they do not.

Furthermore, Socrates does not refer to the need for truth or declare that what he has said is true, as he frequently did in the Defence Proper. By referring to the jurors as “jurymen” Socrates implies their truthful and just actions. He does not emphasize and repeat that he is telling the truth as in the Defence Proper. All statements of veracity and mention of truth are in reference to what others have said. He does not claim that he tells the truth; he does not commit to these statements. For example, at 40e he says, “if, on the other hand, what we are told is true and all who have died are there [in the afterlife], what greater blessing could there be, gentlemen of the jury.” And at 41c, Socrates says, “They are happier there than we are here in other respect and for the rest of time they are deathless, if indeed what we are told is true.” Notice that Socrates does not announce that what he says is true, and he does not reveal that he believes what he is told. Socrates’s manner of speech has gone from narrative to speculative.

At 39e, before he begins to reflect on death as a possible blessing, Socrates says, “So, gentlemen, stay with me awhile, for nothing prevents us from talking to each other while it is allowed.” The word that Plato uses for “talking to each other” is *διαμυθολογήσαι*, which is a rare word in the Platonic corpus. As Miller and Platter (2010, 138) note, “it appears only in two other times, both in a explicitly speculative context, once at the beginning of the *Laws* (632e4) and once in the *Phaedo* (70b6) in a discussion of proofs of the immortality of the soul.” Speculation is the exploration of an idea, its possibilities, and the repercussions and entailments of said idea. It requires that one entertain an idea without accepting it. In Socrates’s address to the jurors who voted for acquittal, he invites them to speculate on the nature of death with him, but Socrates speculates alone; he does not speculate with said jurors. We are left with a one-sided

instance of speculation that does not qualify as the kind of speculation that Socrates advocates, because Socrates lectures the jurors instead of engaging in dialogue with them. By engaging with another person, one is able to explore repercussions and entailments that may not be explored otherwise. Some notions are not obvious to one, and one is oblivious to them, so an interlocutor would be able to bring them out. An interlocutor and someone who examines serve as a mirror so as to show one what one does not see.

As we have seen, at 17a Socrates's speech starts off strong by asserting the truth, referring to witnesses, disclosing and stressing the truth, and adopting features of examination, that is, questions, in order defend himself against accusations and propose an alternative penalty for his philosophical activities, but now Socrates has discontinued his tactics. One might suppose that the nature of the addresses does not require examination or investigation, except that at 39e Socrates states, "I should be glad to discuss what has happened with those who voted for my acquittal." As Miller and Platter (2010, 137) state, "it is fitting that Socrates concludes with a reference to *dialogue*, that characteristic feature of his life and philosophical practice." I grant that this is a reference to that life, but Socrates does not make good on that promise. He does briefly speculate on what is important, namely, the nature of death, but this discussion lacks examination per Socratic method, or at the very least a participant, for the jurors continue to be passive and non-participatory. This address resembles the speculative tone that we see in the *Phaedo*, but is it enough to discuss matters of this nature unilaterally? Throughout the

*Apology*, Socrates's one-sided discussions, explanations, and narrations have not corroborated with his exhortations to discuss and examine one's way of life and beliefs.<sup>51</sup>

At 40c, Socrates invites the jurors who have voted for his acquittal to "reflect (...) that there is good hope that death is a blessing." What does Socrates mean by "reflect"? Is he inviting them to reflect on that fact? Does he mean that they should examine whether death is a blessing or that they should sit back quietly and listen to Socrates explore the idea? It appears that Socrates is exhorting them to do both, but at this moment in the *Apology* he is inviting them to reflect on the fact with him. Recall that at 24c, during Socrates's refutation against the new accusers, Socrates says "let us examine it point by point," referring to Meletus's indictment. The statement at 40c resembles 24c but does not entail examination. This is a false start on Socrates's part; a very exciting and insightful discussion could have followed, one similar to the discussion of the immortality of the soul and nature of death in the *Phaedo*.

The last thing I would like to point out is the fact that Socrates resuscitates his imaginary interlocutor one last time in order to better explain his attitude toward his predicament vis-à-vis his divine sign. At 40d Socrates says, "Yet in other talks [the divine sign] often held me back in the middle of my speaking, but now it has opposed no word or deed of mine. What do I think is the reason for this? I will tell you." This instance is different than other instances of the imaginary speaker, in that other questions were hypothetical: "if someone were to ask..." Perhaps someone in the jury uttered this question, or perhaps Socrates is examining his reasons for believing in the honesty of the sign. There is no reason to believe that a juror member made a disturbance and said this.

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<sup>51</sup> There is a subtle difference between examination and speculation: the former producing a negative result, and the later producing a positive result. I will discuss this difference in further detail in Chapter 4.

The jury made disturbances, for example at 17d, and 20e, but Socrates does not ask them to calm down. Moreover, there is no evidence for examination either; neither “examine” nor any of its cognates or synonyms is used, there is no secondary questioning, and there is no evidence of an impasse. Either way, it stands out as peculiar. The only other semblance of a question is Socrates’s series of three rhetorical questions at 41a:

If, on the other hand, death is a change from here to another place, and what we are told is true and all who have died are there, what greater blessing could there be, gentlemen of the jury? If anyone arriving in Hades will have escaped from those who call themselves jurymen here, and will find those true jurymen who are said to sit in judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus and the other demi-gods who have been upright in their own life, would that be a poor kind of change? Again, what would one of you give to keep company with Orpheus and Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer?

Earlier in the *Apology*, Socrates used questions to segue from subject to subject, anticipating the questions and concerns of his audience, and also to refute Meletus directly, but now he takes the answers for granted. He assumes that the jurors who have acquitted him would agree that meeting and speaking with these individuals in Hades would be a “blessing.” (41a)

The end of the *Apology* is anticlimactic and non-aporetic, as examination would have been. Socrates suggests discussing, and speculating with the jurors who voted for acquittal, but curiously does not actually engage with them, further suggesting the



shortcoming of the narrative speech and the importance of an interlocutor. Socrates continues the unilateral discussion similar to the narrative of the Defence Proper. Also, Socrates's prophesizes and warns the jurors who voted for conviction in a hostile manner but does not reproach them for their unjust behaviour. In my discussion of the Defence Proper and the Counter-Assessment, I argued that Socrates's speech did not amount to examination (except for the actual examination of Meletus) because Socrates did not engage and interact with jurors. Similarly in the Last Words, Socrates begins a reproach and speculation but does not make good on in it. Instead, Socrates unilaterally narrates, expounds and discusses the truth regarding his life and a life of examination. His manner of speech conflicts with the content of his speech demonstrating the need for an interlocutor.

## Chapter 4:

# Reflections on Plato's *Apology*

### A. Introduction

My reader might have noticed that I engaged with the other commentaries only minimally. Guardini, Miller and Platter, Brickhouse and Smith, and Blakeney tend to focus on the content of Socrates's speech on a micro level. For example, the subjects of their commentaries include *daimonion*, the charges, the Delphic oracle, and piety, among others. Only de Strycker and Slings address and explain the way in which Socrates speaks on a macro level. For example, in their commentary on the *Apology* they argue (1994, 180) that Socrates's Defence Proper resembles oratory of contemporary Athenians:

The Exordium of the *Apology* is full of topoi which were commonly used in contemporary forensic oratory. However, Socrates was not prepared to employ all of them and those he did use, he used for different purposes than normal litigants. In this way, Plato gave the *Apology* from the very outset the outward appearance of a law court speech, but he wanted the reader (or rather the hearer) to be continually surprised and puzzled by ideas and intentions that did not seem to conform to the literary form chosen by him.

My commentary most closely aligns with that of de Strycker and Slings. However, the main difference is that de Strycker and Slings refer to a number of other classical literature in support of their thesis. I, on the other hand, do not. I have considered the

*Apology* in and of itself, with some reference to the rest of the Platonic corpus (as well as commentaries). The payoff of this thesis is not that it overlooks classical literature, rather it provides a commentary of the *Apology* as a self-standing work, nor requiring a full engagement with the history of Platonic scholarship. It therefore offers an entry point into a discussion that seems to sorely lack such entry points.

Thus far I have been discussing the *Apology* in a sequential order: starting with the Defence Proper (the Exordium, the Statement, the Refutation, Digression, and Peroration) Counter-Assessment, and the Last Words (Address to the Condemning and Acquitting Jurors). As I guided the reader through the *Apology*, summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing the significance of the text, I have argued that Socrates's speech illustrates a shortcoming of examination and philosophy; in other words, that disclosing, discussing and speculating on the truth does not amount to examination or philosophizing (according to Socrates). So, when one cannot examine and philosophize, one fails. In the Defence Proper there are numerous instances of references to witnesses for support, declarations that what he says is true, allusions to the difficulty of removing slanders from the minds of the jurors, and references to examination. Socrates is a virtuous speaker by doing the aforementioned things, but his speech lacks persuasive force. From 24a-28b Socrates even examines Meletus, and we see examination in all its aporetic glory. Furthermore, as I proceeded from section to section in the *Apology*, I noted where Socrates could have employed examination instead of narration or argumentation. When discussing with one who commits and invests his beliefs for examination, aporia is just a few questions away.

The consequences of the lack of an interlocutor and examination as per Socratic method draw our attention to its importance. An interlocutor is crucial to the *Apology* because Socrates and his philosophical activities have been vilified. Socrates's task is to demonstrate examination and philosophizing in a different, positive light. It is not as antagonistic, belligerent, and inimical as some may think. The best way of demonstrating that examination is salutary is by conducting examination, and not merely giving a report. The value of examination and philosophizing can be demonstrated the same way that the reputed wise men were shown to be ignorant: by examining examination itself. A meta-examination would scrutinize someone's belief regarding examination. The jurors would have been suitable individuals to examine for two reasons: one, they hold false beliefs, that is, they believe in the slanders; and two, they have been conferred the responsibility of juror, and so it is assumed that they maintain the wisdom and prudence to distinguish the truth from the fiction. They fit the bill according to Socrates's criteria for investigation and examination. But, as I have been arguing throughout this commentary, Socrates's speech falls short of philosophy because of a lack of an interlocutor.

Someone might argue that Socrates's defence speech is supposed to be monological; after all, it is an *apologia*. Athenian court requires certain established procedures and protocol in order to maintain consistency and due process. Although Athenian court procedures differ significantly from contemporary western court procedures, the essence remains the same: to determine the innocence or guilt of the defendant vis-à-vis charges laid by another individual or the state. The significance of the structure of Socrates's trial has been questioned, but only with regard to its historical accuracy; the literary significance, on the other hand, has not. The inherent monological

structure of Socrates's speech carries significance, for no other Platonic dialogue is monological.

## B. Narration

Throughout the *Apology*, Socrates's defence focuses on telling the truth (Defence Proper) and speculating about the truth (the nature of death). As Socrates stands on a platform surrounded by at least 501 Athenians, Socrates speaks unilaterally. Instead of refuting the charges by means of cross-examination, Socrates mainly narrates. His narrative is homodiegetic, aesthetic and purposeful.

Narration is an account of connected events, presented to a reader or listener in a sequence of written or spoken words. Human beings are inveterate story-tellers, using narratives to explain the creation of the world, physical phenomena, and personal experience, and to convey morals or simply to entertain. Narration is an important aspect of culture and of human communication by which we produce meaning. In the case of the *Apology*, Socrates speaks in front of over 501 Athenians, trying to communicate his personal experience in order to explain away the slander that has been amassing. Socrates homodiegetic speech reveals to us his point of view, experiences, thoughts, and feelings, to which we would not otherwise be privy due to Socratic irony<sup>52</sup> and examination. A homodiegetic narrator describes his own experiences while a heterodiegetic narrator describes the experiences of other characters. Typically, the former is written or told in the first person point of view, while the later is written or told in the third person.

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<sup>52</sup> Socrates usually puts on a veil of ignorance in order to extract answers from his interlocutor.

Narratives are a highly aesthetic enterprise. For example, the structure includes identifiable beginnings, middles, and ends; or development, climax and denouement. First, the *Apology* is structured into three parts: Defence Proper (17a-35d), Counter-Assessment (35e-38c) and Last Words (38c-42a). These parts aptly overlap with the structure of Athenian trials, but the structure also has literary and aesthetic significance. The beginning, middle and end are segregated by the jury's verdict and judgment regarding Socrates's punishment. Furthermore, the beginning, middle and end do not map onto the development, climax and denouement neatly. If the segments corresponded neatly then the Counter-Assessment would be considered the Climax; but it is not because the Refutation Against the New Accusers (24a-28b) is the point of highest development. The examination of Meletus is a momentous section of the *Apology* in that Socrates directly interacts with a member of the audience, and exemplifies the method of examination that is in question. As I argued in my discussion of the Defence Proper (17a-35d), some commentators have argued that the Digression is the actual defence against the new accusations; I have argued that the refutation against Meletus is the actual defence. The aporetic conclusion to the examination is portentous, not only in refuting Meletus, but also demonstrating first-hand the essence and value of examination. The jury is more likely to learn the importance of examination by example than by means of narration and exposition, for, as a result of the slander, they misunderstand what it is that Socrates has been doing.

In the Defence Proper, Socrates's defence against the old accusations (19a-24b) bears semblance to the *Bildungsroman*. In this genre of literature we typically find a narrative recounting the growth and development of a protagonist from youth to

adulthood. His intellectual, psychological or moral education is instigated by a loss or similar impetus. The narrative describes the formative education which the protagonist experiences. Socrates's narrative may not depict his development from youth to adulthood, but it does depict intellectual growth insofar as he realizes the blameworthy ignorance of reputed wise men. His narrative, like a *Bildungsroman*, is set into motion by the Delphic oracle—the impetus for Socrates's journey. As he investigates the meaning of the oracle, Socrates accepts a life-altering mission from the god. There are similarities between the narration of Socrates's refutation of the old accusations and the narration typical of the *Bildungsroman*.

Throughout my discussion of the Defence Proper (17a-35b) I highlighted numerous points in the text when Socrates declares that he will tell the truth, or that he has told the truth. Socrates's speech is saturated with these instances that attempt to make good on the promise to speak as a speaker *par excellence*. The strength of this manner of speech is biographical information that emerges from the narration. We learn that Socrates lives in poverty, that he has been investigating and examining reputed wise men for many years, and, among other things, that the Delphic oracle launched Socrates into unpopularity. None of this information is mentioned in other dialogues, which makes it particularly valuable. For example, the *daimonia* is rarely mentioned outside of the *Apology*.<sup>53</sup> Overall, Socrates's task to tell the truth is not an utter disadvantage. As

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<sup>53</sup> According to Brandwood (1976, pp.192-3), "*daimonia*" only appears (quite frequently at that) in the *Apology* at 24c, 26b, 27c, 27c, 27c, 27c, and 27e. Other cognates such as "*daimomion*" appear at 31d of the *Apology*, but also in the *Euthyphro* at 35b, *Euthydemus* 272e, *Symposium* 202d, *Republic* II 382e, VI 496c, VII 531c, *Theaetetus* 151a, *Phaedrus* 242b, *Critias* 117b, *Alcibiades* I 103a, and *Theages* 128d and 129b.

readers we learn many aspects of his lifestyle and his past, which are not made explicit in other dialogues.

The downfall of this task to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, is that it is non-dialectical and non-aporetic, which means that Socrates fails to refute the old accusations by means of examination (his method of choice) and secure acquittal. Someone might argue that Socrates does not genuinely want to secure acquittal.<sup>54</sup> This might be the case, but the goal of disclosing the truth is not to get off scot-free, for Socrates is well aware that it is near impossible to uproot the slander that has taken hold of Athenians.

But speaking justly, on its own, does not yield examination or philosophizing. Throughout my discussion of the *Apology* in Chapters 1 through 3, I highlighted excerpts and points in which Socrates mimics, alludes to or mentions examination and philosophizing in order to show that Socrates's speech is inspired by examination and philosophizing. There is juxtaposition between Socrates's truth-telling strategy and his exhortations to live a life of examination. He exhorts his fellow Athenians to discuss, question and test each other's beliefs, but he himself avers from doing so. When we compare his manner of speech to the activity that he exhorts, there is clearly a discrepancy. His monological and unilateral speech of his defence is in need of an interlocutor. Without a direct and committed interlocutor, statements are likely to be

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<sup>54</sup> The *Apology* is more or less a show-trial—a judicial trial conducted with the intention of placating the masses instead of ensuring justice—as Socrates was aware. Without a doubt Socrates's trial was a highly public trial, and it is very likely that the jurors determined the guilt of the defendant prior to the trial. The purpose of charging Socrates and bringing him to court, then, is to make an example of Socrates and to warn other transgressors. Miller and Platter (2010, 110) state that “Fifth-century Athens was a highly litigious society. Inheritance disputes were common, as were those involving business contracts. Perceived religious offenses too, could land a citizen in court. The courts were also used as a tool of political warfare, as in the present case.”



taken for granted and go unchallenged. For example, from 39e to 42a Socrates speculates about the truth regarding the nature of death. Socrates does not argue that death is a good or bad thing; he explores what the possibilities are. In this discussion Socrates argues that it would be unwise to arbitrarily pick one or the other. Recall that he says, “if what they say is true.” (40e; 41c) Someone might argue that Socrates’s speculations are indeed philosophical, but, again, he invites the jurors to discuss with him; yet Socrates alone does the speculating: no one joins him. There is a lack of an interlocutor throughout the entire defence speech except the defence against the new accusers.

### C. Examination and Philosophizing

The *Apology* is a unique dialogue in that Socrates speaks about examination explicitly in addition to employing it. In other dialogues, such as the *Euthyphro* and *Crito*, Socrates examines the beliefs of his interlocutors without explaining what he is doing or why. The *Apology* teaches its reader the strengths and weaknesses of monological and dialogical speech. I have already discussed monological speech in section B, and I will now discuss examination and philosophizing.

Socrates’s method of examination, commonly referred to as *elenchus* or the Socratic Method, is a method of refutation used throughout the Platonic corpus in order to explore beliefs and to determine their implications. We learn in the *Apology* that it is not just a method of refutation, rather that it is particular life style. This lifestyle entails that one prioritizes more important things (that is, one’s soul) over wealth and reputation. In the *Apology* we learn that Socrates himself lives a life of examination. So, if we take a page from his life, then we can understand a life of examination.

Socrates's examination of Meletus is an instance of this examination which he exhorts Athenians to take on. This instance is comprised of all the essential features which are present in other instances throughout Plato's Socratic dialogues. As I have argued, the length of examination is variable, so instances of examination can be either long or short, and its length will not affect its status as examination.

The essential features include primary question, statement of belief, secondary questioning, and aporia. The primary question, which is no trivial matter, instigates the exploration of an idea, for an idea must be supplied. But a primary question is not always explicit; just because it is implied does not render the examination any less of an instance of examination. In the only instance of examination in the *Apology*, Socrates asks a question relating to virtue, courage, friendship, and the like. In the *Republic* Socrates asks, "What is justice?" but in the *Crito* Socrates does not ask. Instead, a belief is supplied by Crito by dint of his plea for Socrates to escape. In other words, his reasons that Socrates should escape from prison are the beliefs that Socrates examines. In the *Apology*, the belief that is examined during the examination of Meletus is the belief that Socrates is guilty of denying the gods of Athens and corrupting the youth. (24b) In other words, the charge against Socrates is what Meletus believes to be true.

Given that the question is not inconsequential, the belief which is supplied reflects the interlocutor's character. If the belief is undermined then, like a domino effect, other things are affected. For example, one's definition of courage will dictate whether one spinelessly flees from danger or foolishly assails the enemy.<sup>55</sup> If that belief is refuted or undermined, then this will affect the way that one acts and reacts in moments of risk and

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<sup>55</sup> In Plato's *Laches*, we find a discussion and examination of the definition of courage.

danger. So, in supplying an idea, the interlocutor offers a token of one's character—a belief that underlies one's character and thereby influences one's actions.

Upon hearing a problematic belief, Socrates indicates that he will examine the belief. At 24c of the *Apology*, Socrates states, "Let us examine this point by point." Often Socrates heralds examination by using the verb *elenchein*, or a cognate or a synonym of the word *elenchein*. Secondary questioning is comprised of all the questions that lead to aporia. In the *Apology* there are two sets of questioning that lead to aporia: one regarding the first charge, and the other regarding the second charge. Secondary questioning may appear to be trivial and unrelated, but each premise to which the interlocutor agrees supports the conclusion, which is a negation of the belief that was initially supplied. This relentless and unremitting questioning leaves the interlocutor discomfited because he has been discredited and refuted. To be refuted by means of examination is to take a major blow to one's self-esteem.

Aporia is simply the moment at which the interlocutor cannot support both his initial belief and the belief that is inferred from the premises to which he agrees during the course of examination. Examination does not yield any positive answers; instead it demonstrates that the aforementioned belief is untenable, and it leaves us not knowing what to believe. The interlocutor is shipwrecked, and left to salvage whatever shred of dignity he can. Examination often causes pain, anger and frustration to its victims; it comes off as hostile, hypocritical, insincere, and ironic in its negative and destructive spirit. Interlocutors have such a strong and negative reaction to questioning and to aporia because it cuts them down to size—they feel as if they have been injured. Aporia is a bitter yet humbling experience.

The examination of Meletus exemplifies the aforementioned features of examination. We learn that examination does not have to be long and rigorous, and the primary question can be implicit. This instance of examination in the *Apology* is enough to demonstrate what Socrates means by examination. Let us turn to what he actually says about examination and philosophizing.

There are three things in the *Apology* that Socrates claims as indicative of examination and philosophizing. First, Socrates refers to philosophy as “philosophizing.” (23d) To engage in philosophy is to engage in an intellectual and meaningful activity as opposed to trivial bickering or gossip. Second, “the life of examination” (38a) is one that examines others and is examined by others. Third, to speculate and reflect (40d) is to consider the possible options and the implications of the options. Speculation, according to Socrates, is a method of utilizing hypothetical conditional statements in order to surmise the truth. Examination produces a negative result—refuting an inadequate or wrong belief—and philosophizing is the pursuit of truth. So, one of the things that is apparent in the instance of examination and from what Socrates says in regard to examination is that examination and philosophizing are geared towards the truth. Now, this may seem trivial and unoriginal, but in this turning towards the truth, an interlocutor is crucial—speculating or disclosing facts without an interlocutor is unilateral and problematic. Throughout my discussion of the *Apology* in Chapters 1 through 3, Socrates’s monological speech bore some semblance to examination and philosophizing, but it fell short of examination and philosophizing. Why? Because of the general lack of an interlocutor.

Earlier in this section I discussed the role of the interlocutor, aporia and the affect of aporia on the interlocutor. The important thing to note is the role of interlocutor in examination and the lack of one in the *Apology*. This is not for naught. The lack of the interlocutor in the *Apology* demonstrates that the participation of an interlocutor is crucial to examination and philosophizing. By means of interacting and engaging, one invests oneself and renders oneself vulnerable. Recall that the beliefs supplied are not inconsequential, so it is important to the interlocutor that his beliefs withstand and survive examination, otherwise examination will insidiously undermine the character of the interlocutor. If these beliefs are not scrutinized and examined by another person for their veracity and validity, individuals end up believing that they are wise when they are merely rearranging their prejudices. Recall the reputed wise men that Socrates examined. Before examination these men disseminated their knowledge thinking that their knowledge was of a divine nature. Their lessons and lectures were likely to be unchallenged and taken for granted, had Socrates not refuted their ideas through examination, which is by nature dialogical and participatory.

#### D. Concluding Remarks

Socrates's defence speech illustrates the fallibility of monological, truth-focused speech. In my discussion of the Defence Proper (17a-35d) in Chapter 1, I noted that Socrates's manner of speech would not successfully uproot the slander and convince the jurors of his innocence because they maintained a non-participatory and removed stance.

Socrates's speech is rational and convincing, and we assume (in the day-to-day) that rational, monological and unilateral argumentation is superior to other types of discourse,

but there are instances when one fails to be persuaded by such rational arguments. For example, we find ourselves in moments of *akrasia* when we think and act against our better judgment. Such may have been the case with the jurors who voted for Socrates's conviction. They understood and appreciated Socrates's defence speech, but could not bring themselves to vote for acquittal because they did not engage and cathect in the defence process. When one engages in examination and philosophizing one consents, invests oneself and cooperates towards a mutual goal. There is so much more to argumentation than just retelling or reciting an argument. Russon says it well when he says (2009, 199), "Philosophy is not an affair of the ivory tower but is fundamentally a matter of interpersonal engagement." The engagement of an interlocutor allows one to expel a wrong and fallacious belief, and the negative conclusion of examination makes room for a just and infallible belief.

In the *Apology*, Socrates denies that he teaches and that he collects a fee, but his examinations tacitly teaches the interlocutor; examinations are undoubtedly didactic. Examinations are intended to teach the person being examined an important moral lesson. Furthermore, Socrates's defence speech itself is didactic in nature. His manner of speech, although not elenctic (for the most part), serves an ulterior purpose. The monological speech (and its failure to bring about the desired outcome) demonstrates the shortcoming of truth-telling speeches, and the need for and importance of an engaged and participating interlocutor.

Commentators to which I refer throughout this thesis focus on either the portrait that Plato paints of Socrates's character, or the historicity of the dialogue. They focus on nuances of the text and try to make sense of style and locution vis-à-vis other writers of

antiquity. This commentary, by contrast, focuses on the life of examination and the way in which Socrates defends that life. What I have portrayed here is what a reader should learn and take away from a reading of the *Apology*. There is no doubt that this text is rich, multifaceted, deep and inspirational; what I hope to have revealed is that Socrates's manner of speech and the lack of an interlocutor are not matters of coincidence or mere technicalities of the Athenian court system. There is meaning and insight to be found in this small detail. This detail corroborates what Socrates states and that to which he alludes, namely, the importance of an interlocutor. Not one of the commentaries to which I refer treat the *Apology* in the same way as I do: as an example of philosophy.

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