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Plato's Styles and Characters

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To Samuel Scolnicov[†] (1941–2014)

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Mauro Tulli

Plato and the Catalogue Form in Ion

Socrates states in *Ion* that the master of τέχνη, in arithmetic or medicine for instance, may be a judge of both a negative and positive speech¹. This certainly affects π οιητική (531d4–532b7). But, for the recitation or the interpretation, the text of Homer inspires Ion, while that of Hesiod and Archilocus makes him dull (532b8–c4). Socrates indicates why: Ion reacts to the text Homer and not to that of Hesiod and Archilocus because he is does not own τέχνη. In a well-defined field, τέχνη offers a model both for a positive and negative speech, it is a ὅλον that encompasses every type of opposition². This is the result of research, σκέψις (532c5–d3). Ion believes it to be on the basis of knowledge, but Socrates emphasises it as an ἰδιώτης. Research, σκέψις, advances alongside common sense, τάληθῆ λέγω (532d4–e4)³. This gives rise to a systematic development in terms of painting, sculpture and music, in particular the τέχνη of the flute, the τέχνη of the cithara, the τέχνη of song accompanied by the cithara and the τέχνη of rhapsodists (532e4–533c3).

A systematic development that has nourished more than a few doubts among scholars. Certainly, it is not rigorous, confusing as it does the judge with the author⁴. In a well-defined field, the judge of both a positive and negative speech is the author. The $\tau \acute{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ by which the judge has the function of judge is but the indispensable $\tau \acute{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ for painting, sculpture and music. But prior to the *Republic*, this is the concept of $\tau \acute{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$. The necessity of establishing the boundary that separats $\tau \acute{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ from $\tau \acute{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ leads to a concrete flattening of the individual figures that Plato refers to. With regard to painting, sculpture and music, the author is indeed the judge or the judge is indeed the author.

In *Gorgias*, Plato immediately points out the central issue (449c9–450c2). Does rhetoric own a well-defined field, περὶ τί τῶν ὄντων τυγχάνει οὖσα? It makes little sense, however, to distinguish the judge: in *Laches*, the judge advances thanks to τέχνη, rather than following the majority's opinion (184d5–185b8). Unmasking the false, ἐξετάσαι, for medicine, politics and music, is a difficult task. In *Charmides* the judge of both a positive and negative speech is the author

¹ See Heitsch (1992, pp. 88-101).

² For the translation of ὅλον, Rijksbaron (2007, pp. 152–153).

³ Giannantoni (2005, pp. 89–140) points out the essential role of τάληθῆ λέγω for the portrait of Socrates in the *Apology*.

⁴ See Janaway (1992, pp. 1–23): according to Capuccino (2005, pp. 171–206), the author possesses only a τέχνη, while the judge has ἐπιστήμη.

that possesses τέχνη, for the ἰατρός, the ἰατρός is the judge (169c3 – 171c10): the attempt to identify τέχνη for excellence in σωφροσύνη does not ensure a result, because it is sterile by means of σωφροσύνη to isolate the δίκαιον⁵. From this derives a concept of τέχνη lacking in nuance, tied to the concrete problem. And in *Ion* the concrete problem indicates $\tau \dot{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ as $\ddot{\delta} \lambda o \nu$, that is, knowledge that encompasses every type of opposition: for the author or the judge⁶. A refusal of Hesiod and Archilocus is not plausible. Plato suggests a well-defined field both for the text of Homer and for that of Hesiod and Archilocus, a ὅλον for which the τέχνη, the ποιητική, for the author or the judge is unique⁷.

A systematic development: painting, sculpture and music, τέχνη after τέχνη, with the τέχνη of the rhapsodists that Ion, who manages to re-experience the text of Homer and not that of Hesiod or Archilocus, does not own. Book II of the Republic offers a very similar passage (372c3-373d3): Plato suggests painting for τέχνη and, with the scheme in *Ion*, music, in particular the τέχνη of rhapsodists⁸. But a problem arises. The mode of articulation here lies in the framework of μίμησις. For painting, sculpture and music, a link with the μίμησις in *Ion* is missing9.

The analytical solution is not convincing: Plato discovers the function of μίμησις in Republic, after the investigation in Ion. Certainly, by the end of Ion he arrives at πρέπον, that is, the appropriate speech for the slave and for the master, for the βουκόλος and for the κυβερνήτης, while passing over μίμησις $(539d5-540d3)^{10}$. But the debate on $\mu i \mu \eta \sigma i \varsigma$ is already widespread before *Repub*lic and Ion, in the intellectual climate dominated by dramatic production. In Thesmophoriazusae Aristophanes' comic vein blossoms through μίμησις towards the effeminate Agathon (146 – 170), from μίμησις descends Damon's prompt support for music, with the canon of excellence, $\dot{\eta}\theta o \varsigma$ (16 Lasserre)¹¹.

Criticism has mostly perceived an argumentative device. A link with μίμησις in *Ion* is missing because the function of μίμησις is not reconcilable with the friction between ἐνθουσιασμός and τέχνη¹². Ion indicates the magnetic force of Homer, which comes down to us link by link from a god, and whose final victim

⁵ On the ἰατρός in Plato, Vegetti (1995, pp. 3–48).

⁶ See Cambiano (1966, pp. 284–305).

⁷ In Timaeus, Socrates takes the role of the judge, thanks to the knowledge displayed in Repub*lic*: Regali (2012, pp. 43 – 56).

⁸ On μίμησις and τέχνη in Book II of the *Republic*, Cerri (1996², pp. 35–66).

⁹ See Diller (1971, pp. 201–219).

¹⁰ Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1969⁴, pp. 32–46) advances here with his biographical approach.

¹¹ On μίμησις before Plato and its echoes in Book III of the *Republic*, Tulli (2013, pp. 314 – 318).

¹² See Flashar (1958, pp. 36-54) and Halliwell (2002, pp. 37–71).

is the dreamy listener (533c4–535a5). But integrating the function of μ i μ η σ ι c into the function of ἐνθουσιασμός is not plausible. Plato underlines the condition of τέχνη for μίμησις in Book X of the *Republic* (600c3 – 602b11). Above and beyond Ion, Plato separates the τέχνη of creation, the τέχνη of usage and the τέχνη of μίμησις, leading to an ever-increasing discrepancy with the ideal¹³. Certainly, for the recitation or the interpretation of Homer the contribution of μίμησις is indispensable. The text of Homer for Book III of the *Republic* has its foundations in μίμησις, in particular in the μίμησις of the figures of the myth, Chryses or Agamemnon (392c7–393b3). The investigation of μίμησις which, on account of the fleeting material order of things, arises with the text of Homer, is similar in Book X of the *Republic*, following the pages on κλίνη, the triple bed (598d8– $600c2)^{14}$. And Ion? He goes on, struck by ἐνθουσιασμός and lacking in τέχνη. But the result achieved in the recitation or the interpretation of Homer is positive. As far as μίμησις is concerned, a manageable field is lacking¹⁵.

An argumentative device always occurs in relation to the overall literary setup. What argument may be put forward on the μίμησις compared to the $\dot{\eta}\theta$ og that Ion has? Criticism indicates in the *corpus* the importance of the individual figures that Socrates attracts in his research. Gorgias, Charmides, Protagoras or Timaeus: the plot that Plato offers depends on the individual figures¹⁶. The conflict between ἐνθουσιασμός and τέχνη, between blind, ineluctable adherence to the text of Homer and knowledge, fertile both for the text of Homer and that of Hesiod and Archilocus, is the code that animates Ion, which makes his $\dot{\eta}\theta o \varsigma$ so concrete.

Painting, sculpture and music: the style gains pace, which, steady for painting, upbeat for sculpture, suffocates articulation for music: a vortex for the τέχνη of the flute, the τέχνη of the cithara and the τέχνη of rhapsodists. Studies here see a link with Democritus. The style has quickened in pace because Plato offers a resumé of an already widespread text, the Mikros Diakosmos¹⁷. Plutarch recalls for Democritus, with De Sollertia, a passage on song that does not omit the function of μίμησις: the τέχνη of song for the μίμησις of swan and nightingale (974a – d). With the support of Lucretius (V 1379 – 1435), the passage is mostly accredited to Mikros Diakosmos (68B154 DK)¹⁸. And a link with Democritus emerges in Ion, with unclear nuances, for ἐνθουσιασμός (68B18 DK). From this arises the

¹³ On the Sophist (218b6-221c5), Balansard (2001, pp. 118-139).

¹⁴ On the role of the $\kappa\lambda$ ίνη, Palumbo (2008, pp. 488–543).

¹⁵ See Pöhlmann (1976, pp. 191–208).

¹⁶ On the characterization of Socrates and the individual figures, Blondell (2002, pp. 1–112).

¹⁷ See Schweitzer (1932, pp. 20 – 31).

¹⁸ See Reinhardt (1960, pp. 114–132).

model: Plato proceeds with Mikros Diakosmos and stays silent in Ion on μίμησις, in Book II of the *Republic* on ἐνθουσιασμός, with a fertile selection. But the basis is weak. Plato in *Ion* certainly does not observe the result of ἐνθουσιασμός for painting, sculpture and music. It makes no sense to meditate in Book II of the Republic on the μίμησις that Plutarch claims for Democritus, on the μίμησις of swan and nightingale.

However, there is one problem: the author that Socrates indicates for painting, sculpture and music. For painting, Polygnotus, following the apprenticeship with his father, invited to Athens by Cimon, active in Delphi and, at the time of *Ion*, enjoying great fame for the psychological examination, the $\dot{\eta}\theta$ oc, of the individual figures¹⁹. But, for sculpture, the systematic use of antedating emerges: before Theodorus of Samos, the εὑρητής for iron and bronze, Daedalus, celebrated in the *Iliad* for Knossos and Ariadne, for the χορός of dance (XVIII 590 – 606), and Epeius, praised in the Odyssey for the Trojan horse, deceitful wood (VIII 492-495, XI 523-532). Not Fidia, not Polykleitus, in *Protagoras* not forgotten (311a8 – 312b6)²⁰. And finally, for music, the selection surprises: Olympus is the paradigm for the τέχνη of the flute, Socrates recalls Thamyris for the τέχνη of the cithara, in the *Iliad* mutilated for $\mathring{\nu}$ βρις (II 591–602), Orpheus is the paradigm for the τέχνη of song, Socrates recalls Phemius for the τέχνη of rhapsodists, a symposium in the Odyssey between Telemachus and Penelope, with violence or sorrow (I 153–162, I 325–359). Why not Damon or Timotheos? A panorama mostly anchored to the text of Homer and to the time that the text of Homer suggests. By all means, Polygnotus. But for sculpture and music, the focus is on the origin, without the least consideration for the time, which does actually involve Socrates, for the classical production. The systematic use of antedating has an indisputable result: it collocates Ion among the figures of a glorious past, Daedalus and Thamyris or Epeius and Orpheus. It is not difficult to notice the shadows of the cultural climate that Ion offers²¹. Socrates underlines this. For painting, sculpture and music, the panorama, elaborated in the 4th century, established in the 5th, is dominated by archaic production, because Ion here possesses a paradigm for the recitation or the interpretation: the text of Homer.

The link with archaic production emerges immediately through form. Plato proceeds by means of parallel structures, with the repetition of more than one segment. It is a catalogue: the concept of τέχνη possesses a phonic strength and it is not difficult to notice, for painting, sculpture and music, a concrete

¹⁹ For the references of Plato, Keuls (1978, pp. 88–109).

²⁰ See Tobin (1975, pp. 307–321).

²¹ According to Murray (1996, pp. 104–112), "more than a little irony" shines here.

entry²². For painting, Plato recalls the result that he indicates for ποιητική. The sequence is very similar: ποιητική γὰρ πού ἐστὶν τὸ ὅλον (532c6 – 7) before γραφική γάρ τίς ἐστι τέχνη τὸ ὅλον (532e4–5). Has Ion met a good and capable judge of painting, sculpture and music? Soon the flurry of questions on painting becomes more pressing, for painting ἤδη οὖν τινα εἶδες ὅστις (532e7), for sculpture with ἤδη τιν' εἶδες ὅστις (533a7), for music, and in particular for the τέχνη of rhapsodists, οὐδεπώποτ' εἶδες ἄνδρα ὅστις (533b7)²³. Ion states that the text of Hesiod and Archilocus induces torpor: οὔτε προσέχω τὸν νοῦν ἀδυνατῶ τε καὶ ότιοῦν συμβαλέσθαι λόγου ἄξιον, ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς νυστάζω (532b9 - c1). The sequence is a paradigm for the judge that Ion certainly has not met. Plato recalls it for painting, νυστάζει τε καὶ ἀπορεῖ καὶ οὐκ ἔχει ὅτι συμβάληται (533a2-3), for sculpture with ἀπορεῖ τε καὶ νυστάζει, οὐκ ἔχων ὅτι εἴπῃ (533b4), for music, in particular for the τέχνη of rhapsodists, ἀπορεῖ καὶ οὐκ ἔχει συμβαλέσθαι (533c2-3). But for the recitation or the interpretation, the text of Homer kindles Ion: from εὐθύς τε ἐγρήγορα καὶ προσέχω τὸν νοῦν καὶ εὐπορῶ ὅτι λέγω (532c3 – 4) arises ἐγρήγορέν τε καὶ προσέχει τὸν νοῦν καὶ εὐπορεῖ ὅτι εἴπῃ (533a5) for painting. The model is polarized, marked by parallel structures: the crucial point here is δεινός, a term that Plato offers for painting, δεινός έστιν άποφαίνειν (532e8 – 9), for sculpture with δεινός ἐστιν ἐξηγεῖσθαι (533b2), for music, in particular after the mention of Olympus, with δεινός ἐστιν ἐξηγεῖσθαι (533b8)²⁴. Form pervades explanation after explanation. It is plausible at this stage to postulate a good capable judge only with regard to Polygnotus and Daedalus, Epeius and Theodorus? With emphatic force for painting, ἑνὸς μόνου (533a4): for sculpture a more balanced ἑνὸς πέρι (533b2).

But one may progress. In the frame of archaic production, the *incipit*, the exhortative λάβωμεν (532e4), recalls the invocation: for example the invocation that, in the *Iliad*, opens the catalogue of the ships (II 484-493) or that, at the end of the Theogony of Hesiod, makes the catalogue of women natural (1019 -1022). And the *incipit* reaches us interwoven with the quantitative problem, $\dot{\alpha}\pi\alpha$ σῶν, with the result of research, σκέψις $(532c5-d3)^{25}$. The catalogue indicates the style achieved through paratactic accumulation. With η Plato separates the Daedalus, Epeius, Theodorus sequence (533a7-b2) and the Olympus, Thamyris, Orpheus, Phemius sequence (533b7-c1), with o $\dot{v}\delta\dot{\varepsilon}$ he underlines the result for music, in particular the $\tau \dot{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ of the flute, the $\tau \dot{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$ of the cithara, the $\tau \dot{\epsilon} \chi \nu \eta$

²² On the function of item, entry and rubric in a catalogue, Sammons (2010, pp. 3–22).

²³ For similar questions in the text of Homer, Edwards (1980, pp. 81–105).

²⁴ On δεινὸς ἐπαινέτης as adequate adulation of Ion, Lowenstam (1993, pp. 19 – 32).

²⁵ For the quantitative problem in the invocation which opens the catalogue, Minton (1962, pp. 188-212) and De Sanctis (2006, pp. 11-33).

of song with the cithara and the τέχνη of rhapsodists (533b6-7): ἤ after ἤ, step by step, οὐδέ after οὐδέ, the discourse that Plato offers on ἐνθουσιασμός reaches us with plasitc force.

This discourse is rendered concrete by the systematic use of antedating. With the frame of $\dot{\epsilon}\nu\theta$ ovo $\alpha\alpha\mu\dot{\alpha}\varsigma$, Plato wishes to project Ion onto archaic production, connected with the god and the origin of inspiration. In the *Iliad*, knowledge, a knowledge of the past that the author does not own, reaches us from the abode of the god (I 1–7, II 484–493, II 760–762, XI 218–220, XIV 508–510). With the invocation, the author obtains knowledge, which is indispensable for the narration. Certainly, in the *Odyssey*, the direction is mostly similar (I 1–10, VIII 72–78, VIII 471–498, XVII 518–521). A knowledge that flows through invocation, which is a concrete favour by the god.

It is not difficult, however, to observe a sign of a rather important dynamic. Phemius is guided by νόος (I 345 – 349), Demodocus by θυμός (VIII 40 – 45). The implacable massacre descends on the μνηστῆρες and does not involve Phemius who in the song, even if constrained by the μνηστῆρες, is αὐτοδίδακτος: he possesses knowledge and does not neglect research (XXII 344 – 353)²⁶. In the proem to the *Theogony*, the knowledge arrives unexpectedly to Hesiod (22-34). But it nevertheless arises from a selection, because the shepherd destined for song is not common on the barren slopes of Helicon. Criticism has perceived here an 'I' that, in the proem to the Erga, indicates in Zeus not just knowledge, but an ally for the rebuilding of a pact on the basis of $\delta i \kappa \eta (1-10)^{27}$. Tradition no longer has any sense. Soon, with the πανάριστος, the conscience of Hesiod goes beyond Zeus (293 – 297)²⁸. But Parmenides brings it to the zenith. He transfers νόος, Phemius, and θυμός, Demodocus, to the proem, and indeed with the image of the ὁδός, collocates the πανάριστος of Hesiod there (28B1, 1–5 DK)²⁹. In the proem, which in the code of archaic production contained the invocation. Parmenides passes beyond the shadows guided by θυμός: tradition offers the code to ensheath in solemn elegance the knowledge gained through research³⁰.

With the frame of ἐνθουσιασμός, Plato conceals a slow development. Ion indicates the magnetic force of Homer, which reaches down link by link from the god and eventually lights on the dreamy listener as victim. Plato certainly recalls the condition of the Iliad, through the invocation of the god for song, and the condition of the Odyssey, through the inspiration that the author without merit

²⁶ On the peculiar combination with the support of Zeus, Danek (1998, pp. 435 – 438).

²⁷ See Thalmann (1984, pp. 33–77).

²⁸ See Arrighetti (2006, pp. 3–27).

²⁹ For the relevance of this choice, Giuliano (2005, pp. 137-218).

³⁰ See Tulli (2000, pp. 65–81).

asks for. Daedalus and Thamyris or Epeius and Orpheus: a glorious past that Ion suggests because he is lacking in τέχνη and in thrall to the god. And the glorious past emerges through the form for excellence of archaic production: the catalogue. Phemius, αὐτοδίδακτος, is not reconcilable with the frame of ἐνθουσιασμός. Plato collocates Ion before Hesiod: Socrates is the πανάριστος of Hesiod, whose purpose is philosophy.

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