La subtilite de Platon tient surtout au fait, nous semble-t-il, que sa defense de Socrate est toujours indirecte.

(L.-A. Dorion, 2000, LXVII)

# Introduction

Scholars now recognize that Plato's aims are wider and more diverse than we have usually assumed. Rather than focusing solely on what Plato is trying to say, we may now ask, "What is the set of functions that can be attributed to the corpus? And why should various ones be attributes to individual dialogues?" In order to appreciate these functions we are compelled to go beyond the simplistic philosophy/literature debate, and envision the role that the Platonic dialogues played in life. Were they performed? In what circumstances? Were they "used" in some way, "as dialectic exercises, as a philosophic training, as advertising for the Academy"?

These questions raise challenges for the traditional literary and philosophical modes of interpretation which aim to solve difficulties in the

<sup>1.</sup> G. Press, 1996, repr., 316. An essential survey of interpretive approaches to Plato is E. N. Tigerstedt, 1977.

<sup>2.</sup> G. Press, 1996, repr., 313.

arguments and to provide satisfying and consistent portraits of Socratic techniques, methods and doctrines, and coherent interpretations of individual dialogues. When we find difficulties in the text, we can no longer assume that the explanation is to be found in a better appreciation of Plato's literary or philosophic art. In some cases, explanations must be sought outside of the text, in the circumstances under which they were written and published.

Such explanations have sometimes been offered to explain contradictions and divergences between dialogues. The hypothesis that Plato's ideas developed over time is a reasonable one, and likely to explain at least some divergences between earlier and later dialogues. But despite the identification of a late group of dialogues (Sophist, Statesman, Philebus, Timaeus, Critias and Laws) and possibly another group of "middle dialogues" (Republic, Phaedrus, Parmenides and Theaetetus) no consensus has emerged concerning the relative order of individual dialogues.<sup>3</sup> Even if we could reach consensus on this issue, it would not provide a full solution to the problem of contradictions. For although it is more than likely that Plato's views changed over the years, such changes are not necessarily the causes or the only cause of contradictions between dialogues. It is quite possible to produce contradictions for reasons other than intellectual development. Moreover, it seems obvious that a developmental approach could say little about incongruities, weaknesses or contradictions within a single dialogue. And yet, if Plato was capable of producing individual dialogues with internal weaknesses and contradictions, why should he have been incapable of producing distinct dialogues that contradict each other? Before resorting to development as a means of solving this problem, then, we need to resolve the problem of contradictions and weaknesses in the individual dialogue.4

This problem has been brought to our attention recently by J. Beversluis' *Cross-examining Socrates*. While subtitled *A Defense of the Interlocutors in Plato's Early Dialogues*, the book could be described equally well as a review of the faults in Socrates' argumentation in the early dialogues.<sup>5</sup> Not all of

<sup>3.</sup> See H. Thesleff, 1978, D. Nails, 1995, C. Kahn, 1996, chapter two.

<sup>4.</sup> To anticipate, rather than attributing contradictions between the dialogues to the inner development of Plato's thought, I explore the possibility that they result from the different aims that they each serve in relation to their audiences.

<sup>5.</sup> The author acknowledges this in his introduction when he comments "Instead of focusing

the faults that Beversluis notes are his own discoveries; but whereas most scholars make an instinctive rush to Socrates' defense, Beversluis leaves the weaknesses as problems. Maybe Socrates is just wrong. Certainly, he makes arguments that are not persuasive to a modern reader. The question, which Beversluis does not try to answer, is Why would Plato have portrayed him so?

Simplest perhaps is to postulate that Plato was a poor philosopher by contemporary standards. Although this was at one time a widely accepted conclusion, it is today rightly seen as the option of last resort. Another possibility is that Plato wished to offer a subtle critique of Socrates. But a critique so subtle that it has eluded generations of readers is hardly a successful one. Indeed, most readers emerge from the dialogues with admiration for Socrates. Even when a Platonic critique of Socrates has been detected, it was not based on weaknesses in Socrates' arguments. Moreover, such a view would contradict the testimony of the author of the second letter who speaks of a "Socrates made beautiful and young (or new)" (*Epistle* 2, 314c).

Another way of dealing with the weaknesses in some of Socrates' arguments has been to locate the problem in the peculiar character of the interlocutor. C. Kahn offered one of the earliest and most persuasive applications of this approach. M. C. Stokes has shown how this approach can explain many oddities in *Crito*. These and similar studies have shown convincingly that in many of the dialogues what appear to us as weaknesses in the argument can be traced to Socrates' effort to address particular interlocutors with individual views and assumptions. Why have I not followed this promising path?

The chief reason is that it does not offer a complete solution to the problem. While the character of an interlocutor may provide an explanation for Socrates' use of weak or *ad hominem* arguments, it cannot provide an explanation for Plato's portrayal of them. Take the case of Socrates'

on the interlocutors' resistance to Socrates' arguments and accounting for it in psychological terms, I will focus on the quality of the arguments resisted . . . Socrates' arguments are not only criticized by interlocutors; they often *warrant* criticism and are criticized for exactly the right reasons." (5-6)

<sup>6.</sup> See Al-Farabi.

<sup>7.</sup> C. Kahn, 1983.

<sup>8.</sup> M. C. Stokes, 2005. See also R. B. Rutherford's comments, 28.

great speech in the name of the Laws in *Crito*. This speech is undoubtedly a response to a challenge issued by Crito, and if Crito and his challenge were historical facts we would need no further explanation for its existence. But *Crito* is a work of literature. From a dramatic point of view, the entire composition leads up to Socrates' great peroration, and clearly it is this speech which will leave the most lasting impression on the audience. Given this, we have to consider not only Socrates' aims in enunciating it to Crito, but more importantly Plato's aims in writing and publishing it for an audience. *Crito* was not written for Crito. While Crito's questions and character may provide the literary *justification* for the speech of the Laws, they do not provide the authorial *purpose*. From the author's point of view, Crito is not the cause of the speech, he is its excuse. And the crucial question is not, Does the speech provide a good answer to Crito's but Why was Plato interested in publishing this speech?

In order to answer this question, we need to focus more on Plato and his audience and less on Socrates and his interlocutors. We need to explore the nature of his intended audience and uncover his aims with respect to them. The best guide we have in these matters is of course the text itself. In some respects this is the best guide we could ever hope to have. Even if Plato had left an authentic letter describing his intended audience and the effects he hoped to have on them, we would not be able to rely on it implicitly, but would still have to wonder whether Plato remembered his aims accurately and whether perhaps he misrepresented them deliberately. In the end, the dialogues have to speak for themselves and external evidence can only play a secondary role. Although I do make use of some external evidence, primarily from Xenophon, for helping to identify Plato's aims, I use this only as a source of hypotheses to be tested against the dialogues themselves.

In order to determine the orientation of a dialogue the most important question is, What focus provides unity to its various components? To take the case of *Crito* again, the most pressing question I had to answer was, Why does Plato spend so much time telling Crito not to pay atten-

<sup>9.</sup> One could answer that Plato wished to portray Socrates offering a weak answer to Crito for some reason, but one needs a plausible account of why he might have wanted to do that. I treat this dialogue in detail in chapter two.

<sup>10.</sup> I do not mention the popular observation that an author is never fully aware of his or her own real aims because I intend to treat only Plato's conscious aims.

tion to popular opinion (41b-d; 46c-48d)? The discussion is perfectly well motivated by the dramatic circumstances as described; but why did Plato create circumstances which would lead to this discussion? What connection does it bear to the central theme of the work as a whole? In effect I had to ask, What could the central theme be such that this discussion is relevant to it? While some readers have proven capable of skipping over this section without worrying about it too much, for me seemingly peripheral elements such as this, when they occupy a relatively large part of the dialogue, hold the key to understanding the intention of the whole. In order to connect this section with the over-all aim of the composition, I was willing to consider interpretations of the remaining sections of the text which otherwise might seem paradoxical. In the end, I drew the conclusion that this section, and all other sections, would be relevant if the aim of the composition as a whole were to combat slander against Socrates and his former friends in the period following his execution.

## XENOPHON'S CONTRIBUTION

No text can be fully revelatory of its aims in the absence of its context, much less an ambiguous text like Plato's. At the very least, one needs a set of possible contexts in which to place the text hypothetically. Since Xenophon makes use of a narrator, he is able to offer information concerning contemporary events and controversies that is not found clearly in Plato. One cannot always trust Xenophon, of course; but it is hard to imagine that he could grossly misrepresent certain public issues such as the opinions of members of his own audience. So for example when he says that Socrates seemed to have behaved foolishly by his arrogant speech in court (Ap. 1), he must be reflecting some genuine contemporary sentiment. Since Xenophon attacks Plato on at least one occasion (Symp. 8), it seems clear that the two authors are addressing some of the same people. Given this, it is reasonable to ask whether or not a Platonic dialogue responds to one of the contemporary issues mentioned in Xenophon's writing. This hypothesis becomes plausible to the extent that it helps explain features of the text which are difficult to explain otherwise.

The use of historical hypotheses to explain obscurities in the text enables us to avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of Platonic studies. Those who conclude that Plato simply failed to achieve coherence and clarity take an easy

route, and one which seems contradicted by the observable qualities of his works. Those who resort to overly subtle literary and philosophical explanations, on the other hand, run the risk of esotericism, even if they do not invoke specifically Straussian hypotheses. Both of these extremes may be avoided if we rely on the simple hypothesis that some matters would have been clearer to a contemporary audience better aware than we of the range of contemporary issues Plato was addressing. The fact that Plato's aim often seems obscure today need not be attributed either to an effort to conceal or to an inability of expression on his part, but merely to the historical distance that separates us from his contemporary circumstances.

The most obvious and prominent contemporary circumstance we know that influenced the Socratic writers was the public controversy surrounding Socrates' life, trial and death. For understanding this controversy, Xenophon's writings are a resource of unique value. Unlike Plato, Xenophon made use of a narrator's voice in his Socratic writings, and he used it in great part to address this controversy directly, defending and praising Socrates. All of his Socratic works, including even his seemingly innocent *Oeconomicus*, are fundamentally apologetic works, and even his non-Socratic works contain apologetic references to the Socratic controversy. When one returns to Plato after reading Xenophon, it is not difficult to see that Plato also is engaged in apologetics on behalf of Socrates, even if his methods are more indirect.

Apologetic writing is often dismissed today as an inferior form of literature, despite the fact that we know quite well that a very large part of our literature, including our religious literature, contains apologetic and polemic elements. Perhaps the fault lies more in our own peculiar expectations—our dreams of a world devoid of contentions, of associates who are more saintly than the ones we commonly encounter—than in the writings whose apologetic elements we try to ignore. Perhaps we have lost the ability to enjoy the insults and strife that brought smiles to the lips of our ancestors in part because our own manners of contention are often so tasteless. In any case, whether we appreciate it or not, the Greeks engaged in vigorous forms of defense, boasting and attack, and these are reflected

<sup>11.</sup> I refer to these as apologetic aims. The term *protreptic* could be applied to some of the same phenomena, but only if used in the broadest possible sense to include all kinds of indirect efforts at recruitment to the life of philosophy.

in their literature. Socrates in particular was a man given to sometimes outrageous boasting, particularly in his Xenophontic guise. His defense speech as recorded in Xenophon's Apology was one great act of megalēgoria. Before his trial, Socrates claimed that he had never had to acknowledge that another lived a better life than he did (Ap. 5). He said that he lived a life of justice and piety, and that as a result he admired himself highly and noted that his companions did so as well (5). During the trial he boasts of his prophetic abilities (12-13) and of the high praise he received from the god of Delphi (14-19). After the trial he says that he has no reason to hold a lower opinion of himself than he held before (24). This boastfulness is part of the enduring charm of the Greeks, and of Socrates in particular. While Apology may show Socrates at his boasting best, he is not the least bit humble in Memorabilia, Symposium, or even Oeconomicus either. The Socrates of Plato's Apology is not much different: although he presents a facade of humility, most readers have discerned an arrogance in him that in some ways even exceeds that of Xenophon's Socrates. If these portraits reflect anything of the historical Socrates, if the historical Socrates did spend time singing his own praises, there will be no surprise if his students and defenders, by whom I mean Xenophon and Plato, employed themselves in defending and praising their master, and in attacking his enemies, each in his own way.

We can glimpse the difference between Xenophon's and Plato's literary manners by contrasting the forms of boastfulness they portray in their two Symposia. Undisguised boasting is a central motif in Xenophon's Symposium, where the participants take turns praising themselves in so many words. Socrates suggests that each participant describe "the most valuable thing he possesses" (3.3), which Callias interprets as an invitation for each to name "what he is most proud of" (3.4). Accordingly, each guest in turn praises one of his own attributes, one praising his own beauty, the other his own wealth, another praising his own poverty, and so on. There is nothing rank about this boasting, however, for it almost always contains a mixture of seriousness and playful irony. After boasting vociferously about the virtues of his poverty, for example, Charmides readily admits that he is willing to face the dangers of wealth if he could only find an opportunity to do so (4.33). This is the good taste of Xenophon: he does not disguise the boasting of his characters, but he shows them doing so ironically and with good humor. In this they display a tact that Plato never equals.

Plato's characters take an opposite path. On the surface none of them boasts: their speeches are not devoted to self-praise, but instead to praise of the god *eros*. Despite this, virtually all of the speakers wind up offering self-serving speeches: Phaedrus praises the young beloved over the older lover; Pausanias praises the mature, educated and sincere lover; Eryximachus praises those who possess the medical art; Agathon praises the beautiful and poetically inspired. Even Socrates himself does not refrain from describing *eros* as a barefoot and poverty-stricken lover of resource (203b-d). In Plato's *Symposium*, self-praise is more indirect than it is in Xenophon's, but it is no less serious. Indeed, there is no hint of irony or good humor in the indirect self-praise offered by any of the speakers, Socrates included. At the same time, there is no hint of criticism of Socrates or anyone else for displaying bad manners in using a speech about the god to praise himself.

The same contrasting pattern characterizes the apologetic strategies that Plato and Xenophon adopt in defending Socrates. While Xenophon is undeniably and openly engaged in defending Socrates, he also displays a certain degree of irony and good humor which enables him to undercut his own defense at times without harming the overall effect. Plato's apologetics, on the other hand, are always indirect and always completely serious. It is certainly not by chance that readers of the Platonic dialogues emerge with an overwhelmingly positive impression. Even seemingly unrelated dialogues, nominally devoted to themes such as courage, piety, sōphrosunē, of the acquisition of virtue, are made to contribute indirectly to the project of defending and praising Socrates.

#### **PUBLICATION**

We would be better able to understand the functions that the dialogues played in their local context if we knew more about the circumstances in which they were read. We know from Plato that sophists like Prodicus offered two kinds of lectures, inexpensive public lectures and more expensive advanced lectures (*Cratylus* 384b). D. Sansone has argued that the story of Hercules recorded for us by Xenophon in *Memorabilia* 2.1 was most likely based on his popular lectures. <sup>12</sup> Could the dialogues have played an analogous role?

<sup>12.</sup> D. Sansone, 2004.

This idea seems consistent with current conceptions about the publication of the dialogues. Gilbert Ryle's once-provocative notion that the dialogues were performed or read in groups is no longer dismissed, although his argument that they were read at very public occasions such as the Olympic or Athenian games has not gained much ground. 13 Holger Thesleff has argued that the majority of the dialogues could not have been designed primarily for private reading, in part because most of them would have been difficult to read without guidance since they would not have included indications of the change of speakers. 14 But he also argues against an unrestricted public audience such as that suggested by Ryle. The long dialogues would place special difficulties before such an audience. And even certain short dialogues, such as Charmides or Menexenus, seem unfit for widespread consumption in democratic Athens: both of them display Plato's anti-democratic sentiments too boldly, and *Charmides* contains argumentation on points that seem far-removed from any public concern. 15 Thesleff notes further that Plato's writings had little influence on fourth century literature before Aristotle (295), which suggests that they were not widely distributed. Similarly, he points out that there are many "passages or sections which are simply not comprehensible without background knowledge of Socratic/Platonic philosophy" (291). This again suggests something less than the unrestricted public that Ryle postulated.

At the same time, Thesleff acknowledges that the fine literary form of the dialogues implies that "Plato had in mind something more than a single occasion for dialectic reasoning" (297). It is hard to imagine that Plato created these literary masterpieces merely for the consumption of a few choice students, and more plausible to postulate that he did have a wide audience in mind. Taken together, these considerations suggest that the dialogues were intended for a broad range of venues, or for a semi-public venue which included students, colleagues and potential students of various levels of ability. The presence of esoteric references, understood fully only by those with some training, would not be incompatible with

<sup>13.</sup> G. Ryle, 1966. See the generally positive review of R. Demos, 1967.

<sup>14.</sup> H. Thesleff, 2002a. This does not apply to *Apology* which consists essentially of three Socratic speeches, or to works like *Republic* or *Symposium* where changes of speakers are made very clear in the text itself.

<sup>15.</sup> H. Thesleff, 2002a, 290-291. It is possible as Thesleff implies that *Charmides* was intended only for a small group of intellectuals who remained sympathetic to Critias, but it is also possible, as I plan to argue elsewhere, that Plato hoped for a wider audience.

presentation to a mixed audience. On the contrary, such references would remind the uninitiated that there are secrets to be learned and would attract them to the studies offered in the Platonic circle. Similarly, the fact that some of the dialogues address public concerns would not conflict with this account, since both students and potential students might be concerned with such issues as well as with more abstract questions. In short, the balance between accessibility and esotericism fits a situation in which initiates and novices are both present at a restricted but public reading.

The likelihood that the dialogues were read publicly suggests another way to account for some kinds of inconsistencies within them. Classicists have long recognized that vividness of presentation often trumps consistency in Greek drama;<sup>16</sup> but this awareness has barely entered the consciousness of those who interpret the Platonic dialogues in literary terms. If Greek audiences were not overly concerned with consistency in tragedy, it is unlikely that they would have been any more concerned with it in philosophical drama, if they even noticed it. Most of the contradictions considered by Platonic scholars have come to light only as a result of hours of quiet contemplation on the part of professional students of philosophy. Such contradictions would not necessarily have been apparent to a first time reader, much less to an inexperienced member of an audience at a public reading. This observation is no consolation to those who insist on finding a fully-worked out philosophical position or argument in any given dialogue. But inconsistencies which fail to mar the dramatic effect of the dialogues are no blemishes if the works are considered first and foremost as performances.

#### A PLATONIC MOVEMENT?

A public reading would necessarily serve a variety of aims simultaneously. Obviously, the main attraction would be the philosophical ideas and methods that Plato has to offer. Together with this, there is nothing surprising if Plato responds to public attitudes concerning himself and his associates. Both of these aims can be found in Xenophon as well. But unlike

<sup>16.</sup> The fundamental work on this is T. von Willamowitz, 1917; see also A. J. A. Waldock, 1951, J. Jones, 1962.

Xenophon, Plato was also a founder of a "school" and this implies the aim of recruiting or even "converting" some members of the audience. This aim can be observed in a great number of dialogues, far more than those ordinarily considered *protreptic*, but it is clearest perhaps in *Symposium*, which begins with an almost explicit appeal for membership in a latter-day Socratic community of sorts. The dialogue is narrated by Apollodorus to an unnamed individual who is involved in business (173c) but who is also curious enough about Socrates to have made more than one inquiry about him. Apollodorus is a member of a second generation of admirers who had not been with Socrates in the early days (172b-173a). He is perpetually involved in persuading others to abandon their business pursuits and join the cult of Socrates' admirers (173d-e) and he clearly wishes to persuade his unnamed listener as well.

This dramatic setting tells us something about the intentions of the dialogue as a whole. Like the unnamed listener, Plato's audience must have some interest in hearing about the famous symposium or it would not be present at a reading. Like the unnamed listener, the intended audience must be composed, in part at least, of those who are not professional philosophers but individuals involved in business with an interest in philosophy, or at least in Socrates.

As the listener reminds us of the audience, so does the narrator remind us of the author. Like Apollodorus, Plato did not attend the symposium he describes and can only be relying on reports of others, at best, for whatever he knows of it. Again, like Apollodorus, Plato became a fan of Socrates only in Socrates' later years. By one further step we may postulate that the fictional narrator's aims tell us something about those of Plato: like Apollodorus, he aims to convert his audience from curious listeners to active members of the Socratic-Platonic circle. We cannot expect to find clues this obvious in every dialogue. *Symposium* may be especially broad in its aim and appeal. But it would be odd if no other dialogue functioned in a similar way.

A well-known story tells of a Corinthian farmer who dropped his work and rushed to join the Platonic school after hearing Plato's *Gorgias*. <sup>17</sup> Apocryphal or not, this story expresses something about the character of

<sup>17.</sup> Reported by Themistius. See G. Grote, 1875, vol. 2, 317 or fragment 53 in V. Rose, 1886. If this late story reflects a late perspective on the role of literature in missionary work, it is nevertheless significant that the story was attached to a Platonic dialogue.

the dialogue. It does not aim simply at defining rhetoric, but uses the discussion of rhetoric to raise questions about human nature and the road to its perfection. In doing so, Socrates pushes the discussion in a direction which, as Callicles remarks, turns the world upside down (481b-c). In general terms, Plato's dialogues aim not merely at raising questions, but also at promoting definite views. As R. B. Rutherford has noted, the view that Socrates is an open-minded questioner "ignores or at least neglects the frequency with which certain themes recur and the commitment with which they seem to be expressed." As G. R. Ferrari has pointed out, authorial anonymity does not guarantee neutrality: literature is often "committed" to particular views, and Plato's dialogues seem to be a case in point. 19

The importance of caring for the soul and the development of the intellect are central themes in almost every dialogue. Quite aside from any solutions to theoretical conundrums that Plato may have achieved, the activity of intellectual study is itself offered as a solution to some of the most pressing difficulties of human life. The philosopher is the only truly virtuous man (*Phaedo* 68c-69c) and the only reliable ruler of the political community (*Republic* 484b-487a) because his devotion to the intellect insures his moral virtue. It is hard to doubt that these views are Plato's or at least that they are views he wishes to spread. On issues like these, one senses a "missionary" aim in some of the dialogues which distinguishes Plato from many modern philosophers.

The effort to spread ideas that could unite men in philosophical friendship is, in the ancient world, a form of political activity. If Plato was involved in "missionary" or proto-missionary activity, he was involved, albeit indirectly, in politics. Those who believe that usually assume that at least some of the letters are faithful to at least the character of his activities. Those who don't believe it often object that the scheming ambitions related in the letters are in conflict with the high-minded aims presented in the dialogues. Some have argued on other grounds that

<sup>18. 1995, 26.</sup> 

<sup>19. 2000.</sup> 

<sup>20.</sup> So P. Friedländer. See also C. Kahn (1996, 51) who speaks of philosophy for Plato as "the continuation of politics by other means." By this he presumably refers only to the examination of moral and political principles in the dialogues, and not, as I do, to the publication of the dialogues as a political activity.

<sup>21.</sup> See L. Edelstein, 1966.

Plato and his students were not involved in political life at all, or at least that such a charge cannot be proved despite the existence of considerable circumstantial evidence.<sup>22</sup> But if it could be shown that in addition to their obvious literary and philosophic brilliance, some of the dialogues are literary *deeds* which played a political role in the community for which they were composed, a continuity could be restored between the letters and the dialogues. It is not the *teaching* of the dialogues but their *aims* or *functions* which demonstrates this continuity. The teachings could be interpreted as contributing to the political aims rather than as describing them. If our account of the function of some of the dialogues is correct, then even when he is expressing his indifference to politics—or perhaps especially then—Plato is pursuing a political goal.

#### **XENOPHON AGAIN**

I have spoken mostly about Plato in this introduction and will continue to speak mostly about him in the rest of the book. I have mentioned Xenophon primarily insofar as his writings shed light on those of Plato. But while this is certainly an important and legitimate use for Xenophon's writings, they also possess an intrinsic interest that is greater than first meets the eye. The final chapter of this book provides an interpretation of Xenophon's Oeconomicus as a philosophic-apologetic work dealing with genuine Socratic issues. The fourth chapter has expanded from what was originally a brief account of Xenophon's portrait of Socratic seduction, intended for contrast with Plato's treatment, into a lengthy treatment of the subject in its own right. These two Xenophontic chapters create a certain imbalance in the book as a whole: they are too slight for a book claiming equal treatment of Plato and Xenophon and too substantial for a book focused on Plato. The reader will also note that chapter four diverges from the other chapters in character: while the other chapters focus primarily on the interpretation of a single composition this chapter ranges among several chapters and statements found scattered in Xenophon's Memorabilia and other works. For these and other weaknesses I beg the reader's indulgence.

<sup>22.</sup> P. A. Brunt, 1993, 282-342.

### A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION OF GREEK:

Commonly known Greek words have generally been transliterated. Less common words, words which are the subject of discussion, words not in the nominative case, single words that appear within a translated passage, and longer passages of Greek have been reproduced in the Greek alphabet.

# THIS BOOK CONTAINS REVISED VERSIONS OF SEVERAL ARTICLES:

Chapter one is a revised version of "Apologizing for Socrates: Plato and Xenophon on Socrates' Behavior in Court," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 2003, 281-321. Chapter two is a substantially revised version of "Crito and the Socratic Controversy," *Polis*, 2006, 21-45. Some material in chapter four appeared in "Apologetic Elements in Xenophon's *Symposium*," *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 55, 2005, 17-48. Chapter six is a revised version of "Why Socrates was not a Farmer: The *Oeconomicus* of Xenophon as a Philosophical Dialogue," *Greece and Rome*, 2003, 57-76. I wish to thank the publishers for the kind permission to reprint this material.

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My interest in the relationship between philosophic literature and the communities for whose consumption it is published goes back to my studies with the late Arthur Adkins at the University of Chicago. His formulation of the problem of the relationship between competitive and cooperative values has been subject of considerable controversy, but his work has certainly focused attention on the abiding importance of the former from Homer to Plato and after. Long after I had left the University, I was particularly struck in rereading his *Merit and Responsibility* by the following description of Socrates:

Socrates, having been poor, and hence a failure, all his life, had proved unable to defend himself in court as an *agathos* should and by his death had left his family unprotected . . . Nothing could be more *aischron* than Socrates' life and death . . . Socrates must be shown to have exhibited in his life *when properly considered* those qualities as a result of which men are termed *agathos* and *phronimos* to a greater extent than his opponents. (259; italics in the original)

Its influence on my research requires no comment.

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16 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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