La Nouvelle Vague: The Liquid Feminine in Plato's *Republic*

Irene Han
New York University
ih472@nyu.edu

Introduction

In this paper, I am interested by Plato's three waves in *Republic* Book V, in which Socrates makes three daring proposals for his ideal city: first, inclusion of women in the guardian class and their education (Pl. *Resp*. 453e-454e); second, abolition of private property and family (Pl. *Resp*. 457b-c); lastly, that philosophers should be kings and kings, philosophers (Pl. *Resp*. 472c-e). I explore the unexploited potential and probe the significance of the liquid imagery by applying Deleuzian paradigms to Book V of Plato's *Republic*, in order to shed new light on the ancient text, and, thereby, understand these waves to be truly sensuous and material. My reading recognizes and builds on a highly developed set of traditional readings of the text in Classics, Philosophy and Political Theory, a comprehensive review of which is beyond the scope of my discussion[1].

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1 — In general, Classicists have moved beyond philosophical approaches to the text (see e.g. Vlastos 1969 and 1995) by reevaluating the question of genre, exploring the relationship between myth and philosophy and treating the dialogue as a literary piece (see e.g. Morgan and Nightingale), while Political Theorists are interested in what the dialogue reveals about fifth and fourth centuries

Particularly, I revisit the subject of the forms and what their relationship is to the phenomenal domain: the position that I take does not entail the denial of the existence of the forms altogether in Plato's thought nor their significance, but, rather, is interested in illustrating the vital interaction between what constitute two ontological domains, being and becoming, or the world of flux, which Plato attributes to the Pre-Socratic thinker Heraclitus[2]. My examination will contribute to the complexity of the participation relationship, that relation between sensible objects and forms, by understanding images, semblances, the εἴδωλον (reflection) precisely as reflections and true participants expressing the intelligible world[3]. I agree with Frank, who, in her recent study *Poetic Justice: Rereading Plato's* Republic, reevaluates Plato's stance towards μίμησις (representation) and underscores and represents "...the importance of perspective and partiality to the truth of *mimēsis*" (67).

In order to meet this target, I take an approach that fundamentally works in the spirit of Deleuze, who, in *What Is Philosophy?*, promotes reinvigorating past philosophical concepts with the forces they need to return to life: "If one can still be a Platonist, Cartesian, or Kantian today it is because one is justified in thinking that their concepts can be reactivated in our problems and inspire those concepts that need to be created. What is the best way to follow the great philosophers? Is it to repeat what they said or *to do what they did*, that is, create concepts for problems that necessarily change?" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 28). The Deleuzian approach to Plato will not consist in repeating or criticizing what the ancient philosopher says but will, rather, give ideas new life and take them in different directions. It is my belief that Deleuze's "critical concepts" will shed light on and maximize the revolutionary potential of Plato, by enhancing the becoming-feminine-action of the dialogue, with which the ancient philosopher assembles and disassembles his

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BCE Athenian politics and democratic institutions (see e.g. Ober).

2 — A vitalist ontology, and by "ontology", I mean the study of essence or existence, infuses being with a living force or energy, so that being's fundamental nature is found in *becoming*. The vital principle is the moving principle of evolution, and in Deleuze's thought, "[v]italism is a way of connecting with, of being in the *presence* of, this pre-individual world of flux and becoming" (Marks 31). In both the *Theaetetus* and the *Cratylus*, Plato actively engages with this pre-individual world of flux and becoming and would seem to position his thought in opposition to that of Heraclitus when Socrates states that being is incommensurable "in every way with flux or indeed motion" (ῥοῇ οὐδὲν οὐδὲ φορᾷ) (Pl. *Cra*. 440b-c). Mason, however, has recently pushed back against the opposition between the transcendent, unchanging Forms and sensible flux by distinguishing "flux" from a notion of "flow", which is unbroken and ongoing: "It can relate to the eternal circular motion both of intelligent *soul* and of the *bodies* driven by intelligent soul, and because of this can, as flux cannot, be linked with being" (19).

3 — For a discussion of whether Platonic forms are universals, perfect paradigms or predications, see Fine. Alican and Thesleff provide a classification of three different understanding of the forms: 1) Ideal forms; 2) Conceptual forms; 3) Relational forms.

metaphysical project. The close readings that I provide of *Republic* Book V will push back against a fixed, static notion of the Platonic form and illustrate the ideal political state as a more fluid entity that Plato codes as feminine. My reading is useful for feminist philosophers because it reveals and elucidates a blind spot in feminist critical literature, namely, in the works of Irigaray, Cixous and Cavarero, all of whom critique Plato for his phallologocentrism, a philosophical discourse that displaces woman in a subordinate position to the masculine by primarily and inherently devaluing the feminine in favor of the masculine[4]. I intervene in this strain and anti-Platonic tendency and portray a fluid mechanics, what Irigaray associates with the figure of Woman, "flowing, fluctuating" (1989: 112)[5], at work in Book V in order to suggest that Plato is not an enemy to but a forerunner of feminist thought[6].

I turn to Deleuze's aesthetic works and, particularly, to his theory of cinema in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, where we notice that the conception of art forms that is advanced also refutes the Western philosophical pedigree of Platonic debates of μίμησις (representation) (Colman 142). More generally, we come to the realization that cinema, as an art form, gives rise to a philosophy: according to Deleuze, it provides passageways of thought, showing itself to be a profound and sometimes rigorous surface that covers the visible world (Colman 141). In *Cinema* 1, Deleuze treats a specific type of image that is imbued with movement, a defining characteristic among the four fundamental interrelational concepts (movement, image, recognition and time) that he uses to chart a philosophy of cinema: "Movement is a translation in space", he notes (1986: 8). The movement-image consists of three types, the perception-image, action-image and affection-image: these are realized as montage, which is the cutting and editing of a series of movements, or the linking of images within shots, and interassemblage. IMAGE = MOVEMENT: "The image exists in itself, on this

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4 — In *Speculum*, Irigaray performs a feminist reading of the Myth of the Cave and unearths the repressed feminine, the maternal womb and matrix (1974: 243-364).

5 — Bianchi makes the fluidity/feminine connection, inspired by the thought of Irigaray, in her reading of the *Timaeus* (128). Lorraine has also provided an important study, where she puts Irigaray and Deleuze in dialogue with each other in order to show their complementarity:

> Irigaray's sea, like the being of becoming, is not a fusional abyss but an elemental differentiating movement which flows according to cosmic rhythms rather than adhering to any logic of the same. Although this feminine sea is powerfully creative and affirming, we also saw that it is problematic from the perspective of feminine subjectivity. At the same time that appealing to its differentiating movement presents hints of an alternative model of subjectivity, it also reveals some of the problems with playing the affirming role of feminine other...Like Deleuze, Irigaray believes that active becoming is crucial to vital living (1999: 161).

6 — For a recent and very rich treatment of the influence of Plato's thought on feminist intellectual life in post-modern France and even on Anglo-American thought, see Miller: "The ancient world, in general, and Plato, in particular, function as our theoretical unconscious" (viii).

plane. This in-itself of the image is matter: not something hidden behind the image, but on the contrary the absolute identity of the image and movement. The identity of the image and movement leads us to conclude immediately that the movement-image and matter are identical" (Deleuze 1986: 59). If image is defined as the set of what appears, then there is no distinct moving thing from movement itself. All things are images, in the sense that the movements of all matter can be understood best from the perspective of imagery. The universe is thus conceived of as a network of flowing matter, which constitutes one immense picture machine.

Deleuze's works on cinema will have a profound influence on my readings: just as I argue that a "cinematic narrative" is at work in the Platonic dialogue – an imagistic, motive and vital narrative – so too, in my view, is Deleuze Platonic in his description of the cinematic[7]. I apply Deleuze's philosophical term, "movement-image", to Plato in order to shed light on an affinity between the two thinkers and to demonstrate that Deleuze fails to escape the genealogy that Plato originates. I will show that the concept already exists in Plato's thought and, at the same time, enhances what is suggested by the original ancient text. In this examination, I focus on the presence of the sea, which sets the movement-image into motion. One of the three levels of the perception-image, "liquid perception", where images flow together in a fluid dynamic, will illuminate the pivotal role that the sea plays in creating the utopian aesthetic: proximity to the sea mediates the "utopian experience" and, by extension, a cinematic existence. To continue unpacking this last statement, I mean that the liquid medium, being that it completes and refines the political paradigm, puts into question normative ideas about cities as being discretely bounded and closed and, rather, demonstrates the fluidity of the Platonic model, as systems of flows.

The application of the movement-image, then, intensifies the sensuousness of the sea, and I will argue that it is also a feminine space of mobility, change and becoming and one working component among

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7 — On the Platonic image, Brill has probed his ambivalent posture, "…both his pervasive use of vivid imagery and his forceful and sustained critique of the image" and argued, "Plato took the work of image-making to be a vital and risky part of what it means to do philosophy" (2016: 6). See also Pender, Brock and Destrée and Edmonds. Finally, Porter elegantly articulates this tension between the immaterial and material:

Why are these tensions relevant? The answer has to do with what makes Plato's images sublime and not merely beautiful. In a word, the greater the distance between the two poles of a given analogy, the more magnificent and powerful – the more sublime – the image will be. What is more, as we have begun to see, Plato knows how to work the levels of his imagery in an ever-ascending series, such that what appears invisible on one level becomes visible on another, which in turn leads to another, even more refined succession of levels, and so on to a dizzying degree of sublimations. At each level, we are led on by a heightened problem, and an equally heightened desire to know its answer. This is the *seduction* of knowledge in Plato (90).

other forces: namely, male and female bodies, which establish the "political relation", between self and world, in a proto-Deleuzian assemblage[8]. In terms of the *Republic*, the political relation is that relation necessitated by utopian conditions and the framework, in which women are incorporated into the public sphere and the desire, which they bring, is severely managed and harnessed. In other words, the city is ideal precisely because it assembles masses of movement, speeds and flows to meet harmonious proportions and manages that dangerous element of instability posed by the female body in order to compose a common sensibility and to achieve a beautiful political aesthetic. Thus by exposing the feminine principle in this dialogue, we can make out vitalist notions of porous bodies and discover that the concept of the disappearing subject, formulated by various theorists as a departure from Platonic norms and ontology, is already operative in the Platonic dialogue. To illustrate these points, I contextualize Plato's three waves in *Republic* V, where Socrates presents his arguments for the creation of philosopher-queens. In my examination of the text, I also adopt a methodology, whereby grammatical gender is very significant, in the belief that in some sense it embodies the feminine[9].

μετὰ ἀνδρεῖον δρᾶμα *(After the manly drama)*

I focus on Socrates' three controversial proposals that we find in *Republic* Book V and argue that, in the mobile process of constituting and assembling the utopian assemblage, Plato portrays a cinematic sequence. This specific book delves into the living conditions of the guardians in the ideal city, and the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city) is a perfect embodiment of justice, for the *Republic* centers on this very question, "What is justice?" (Pl. *Resp*. 331c). I will argue that the big central "digression" of the *Republic*, developed in Book V, is a kind of close-up and that it is demonstrative of cinematic cycles. All of the preliminary steps, in the

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8 — In simple terms, an assemblage could be understood as a network of relations, fragmentary whole or an uneven and shifting collection of disparate parts. Lorraine provides a nice explanation of the concept:

> ...human subjects enter into polyvocal and multiple relations with their world. A child is always making assemblages – pushing an ant along with a stick, jumping in a puddle to see the water splash, blowing bubbles in the milk to see them cascade over the sides. These assemblages unfold not as expressions of the secret desires of a personal self, but through body parts becoming the working parts of assemblages that connect with the world in terms of their capacities to affect and be affected (air plus throat plus milk in glass make bubbles that spill over) (2008: 62).

9 — There was considerable discussion among the sophists about the significance of grammatical gender, particularly Protagoras. Aristotle says that Protagoras classified grammatical genders (Arist. *Rh*. 1407b6-7) and believed that gender should be modified to fit the sense, so that "wrath" (μῆνις) in the same line of Homer, which is a grammatical feminine, should be masculine, since wrath is characteristic of males rather than females (Arist. *Soph. el*. 173b19-20).

philosophical dialectic[10], set the stage for Book V, which will complete the process of perfecting this exemplary political form, by developing the "female drama" (Pl. *Resp*. 451c) of the performance. It follows from the conclusion of the male one (Pl. *Resp*. 451c), which refers to the argument presented in Books II-Book IV, namely, to the education of males as guardians and their cultivation of excellence, and, at this time, Socrates will expand on a previous comment that he makes about the common possession of wives and children (Pl. *Resp*. 423e-424a). In fact, he is pulled into this discussion, though he resists, prepared to take the conversation in another direction, towards a closer examination of another political constitution (Pl. *Resp*. 449d). The moment captures the spontaneity and liveliness of what Rosen calls a "living conversation" or speech, a discussion in "real-time" or "happening", to which the dialogue format gives rise and illustrates the significance of contingency inherent to the narrative dynamic.

Book V of the *Republic*, which unfolds in three waves, presents a series of the movement-image. The movement-image, developed by Deleuze in *Cinema 1*, which serves the plot and hurries the narrative's resolution, will enhance the movements of the dialectical discussion and the fluid process whereby Socrates builds the utopian paradigm[11]. κῦμα (wave) works as a signpost that marks the transition from one image to the next; Plato divides the narrative into three waves when Socrates makes the following proposals: 1. Same education for men and women (Pl. *Resp*. 453e-454e). 2. Community of women and children (Pl. *Resp*. 457b-c). 3. The philosopher-king (Pl. *Resp*. 472c-e). Encountering a sea of argument, Socrates and his interlocutor Glaucon, also one of Plato's brothers, come face to face with the deep:

> τοιαῦτα, ἃ ἐγὼ πάλαι προορῶν ἐφοβούμην τε καὶ ὤκνουν ἅπτεσθαι τοῦ νόμου τοῦ περὶ τὴν τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ παίδων κτῆσιν καὶ τροφήν.
> Οὐ μὰ τὸν Δία, ἔφη· οὐ γὰρ εὐκόλῳ ἔοικεν.
> Οὐ γάρ, εἶπον. ἀλλὰ δὴ ὧδ' ἔχει· ἄντε τις εἰς κολυμ-βήθραν μικρὰν ἐμπέσῃ ἄντε εἰς τὸ μέγιστον πέλαγος μέσον, ὅμως γε νεῖ οὐδὲν ἧττον.
> Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.
> Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἡμῖν νευστέον καὶ πειρατέον σῴζεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ λόγου, ἤτοι δελφῖνά τινα ἐλπίζοντας ἡμᾶς ὑπολαβεῖν ἂν ἤ τινα ἄλλην ἄπορον σωτηρίαν (Pl. *Resp*. 453d).

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10 — The Socratic method is based on elenchus, cross-examination and a question and answer format, and it thrives on a clash between two opposing points of view. The dynamics of this tension define the dialectical process, which usually results in moments of embarrassment, inconclusion, in other words, ἀπορία.

11 — Whereas the movement-image of *Cinema 1*, which defines bourgeois pre-World War II cinema, subordinates time to movement, the time-image of *Cinema 2*, in post World War II cinema, expresses pure time and places the identity of the plot into crisis.

[Soc: 'Such things, which I foresaw earlier, were what I was fearing, and I hesitated to touch the law concerning the possession and upbringing of women and children'.

Gl.: 'By god", he said. 'It does not seem easy'.

Soc: 'It isn't', I said. 'But the fact is that whether someone falls into a small diving pool or into the middle of the biggest ocean, he must swim all the same'.

Gl.: 'He certainly must'.

Soc.: 'Then we must swim too and try to save ourselves from the argument, hoping that a dolphin will pick us up or that we'll be rescued by some other desperate means']12.

The "womanly" drama (τὸ γυναικεῖον) (Pl. *Resp*. 451c) introduces difference and produces ἀπορία (inconclusion) in the λόγος (argument) or dialectical process13; the law concerning the possession and upbringing of women and children confuses Socrates and his interlocutor and casts them into an ocean. These two men are shipwrecked sailors; fallen into some kind of expanse, whether into a small diving pool or into the middle of the biggest sea, they must swim. Their only hope for an exit or "way out" (τὴν ἔξοδον) is a dolphin that might take them up or some other difficult means of safety. The feminine component complicates what has been accomplished in the "male" or "manly drama" (ἀνδρεῖον δρᾶμα) (Pl. *Resp*. 451c), in which the nature of justice, education and duties of the guardians have already been discussed, and Socrates describes the quality of courage they are to have.

The juxtaposition of these two dramas, male and female, demonstrates the motions of the narrative arc, and each section comprises an image, which connects and is connected by a series. The liquid metaphor that Plato initiates in this section intensifies and personifies the alternation of the dialectical conversation: the posing of a thesis, the bringing of a thesis, the bringing of objections, the answering of objections. These features of the dialogue format produce a cinematic narrative because Socrates and his interlocutors participate in a live and evolving conversation, which is imbued with movement and unravels the plot. That is, Plato creates a scenario that actually moves in waves and strives towards resolution, the moment of aporia. Discontinuities present in the book also contribute to the narrative's cinema: the dissonance between Socratic discourse and Platonic metaphysics. As the author, Plato is combining

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12 — I follow Grube's translations, occasionally adapted.

13 — In "Tragedy, Women and the Family in Plato's *Republic*", Penelope Murray suggests Plato's proposals for the musical and literary education of his guardians, the abolition of the family and the appointment of females to the highest office of the state, that "...these themes are intimately connected" (193).

and consolidating various strains of philosophical thought: Socratic ἔλεγχος (cross-examination), the thought of the Eleatics, Parmenides, who divides reality into two ontological spheres, the Way of Truth and the Way of Appearance. In this way, Plato works in the manner of a photo or film editor, who also imposes stylistic discontinuities on the dialogue's form: he splices together the *Republic* from a much shorter "proto"- Socratic dialogue lampooned in Aristophanes' Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*), from sections added later by Plato, including the one on philosopher-kings at the end of Book V (Nails 117)[14], and perhaps material added by later associates of Plato. Such discontinuity in both content and form, from one frame to another, draws attention to movement and, with movement, to time and articulates a cinematic aesthetic, which is on display in Book V.

Book V also depicts moving content. What takes place in this scene, in particular, is essentially the perception-image deployed by Rohmer in the prologue of the film *La collectionneuse*[15]: the "I" that initially speaks and represents the distinct center, Socrates in this case who "foresees" and "fears" (προορῶν ἐφοβούμην), evolves into an impersonal "someone" (τις) and, after falling (ἐμπέσῃ), is dis-centered, by dissipating into and fusing, or entering into a relation, with what surrounds him, his environment: it is necessary "for us" to swim (ἡμῖν νευστέον) and to try "to be saved" (πειρατέον σῴζεσθαι). In this way, Plato creates a sequence that portrays the transition from the subjective point of view of Socrates to the external world of his metaphorical surroundings: a little swimming-bath or the biggest ocean, in which he would hope to find a passing dolphin. By making these kinds of abrupt shifts, from the masculine section to the feminine one, and from inner to outer, Plato, in effect, deploys a cinematic technique: such gaps that are produced between two scenes or "shots" comprise what Deleuze calls the movement-image in *Cinema 1* or the "image of movement" that links up with others. This theoretical concept is both relevant and useful because it brings into focus a certain animation at play and elucidates how different elements and things in the world assemble or disassemble and create territories or deterritorialize.

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14 — Nails believes that an earlier version of the *Republic* existed and was disseminated and that it was later revised, written and rewritten from the 390s to the 350s: "...there is *no* hard evidence – neither from plays, nor speeches, nor any other literary production contemporary with Plato – that refers to those parts of the *Republic* postulated as additions to the original proto-*Republic*. No one mentions the philosopher-ruler, the sun, line, cave, or the corruption of the ideal-city, for example, although elements of the proto-*Republic* are mentioned contemporaneously with Plato" (117).

15 — The prologue of the film perfectly illustrates Deleuze's movement-image and one of its subsets, the perception-image, when the "Collector", Haydée, is shown walking alone on the beach. The camera fixes on her as she walks and shows how various parts of her body – her legs, back and abdomen – and her bikini seem to merge with the serene yet immense background: the vast expanse of the turquoise colored sea.

In addition, the application of Deleuze's perception-image sheds light on the kind of subjectivity that is portrayed in the *Republic*, first by Socrates and, subsequently, by his description of guardian women in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city). Once we locate the cinematic sequence in Plato, disparate elements represented by each image start to appear together and to combine into a flow. Socrates, as he falls into a pool of loss and searches for an outlet from the impasse, moves into the external environment: boundaries between self and other, within and without, collapse, and the small (man-made) pool and the ocean (of nature), in effect, merge in this passage, as he looks for some desperate means of safety. While the position of the subject gets diminished, and the mind perceives and configures the borders and limits of the mimetic structure of the text, this fading out accentuates the presence of the simulacrum, a copy of a copy whose relation to the model has become so attenuated that it loses its origin[16]. That is, the dematerialization of Socrates makes us realize his phantom status, inherent to the images or pseudo-photographs with which Plato composes his dialogue, and, consequently, the phantom Socrates himself turns out to be merely a material copy in the Platonic assemblage. The simulacrum and movement-image are thus variations of each other because they both reduce the world to subjective images and the perception of objects.

Deleuze's simulacrum will give insight into the radical idea that Socrates introduces in Book V, that men and women must follow the same way of life (τὰ αὐτά...δεῖν ἐπιτηδεῦσαι) (Pl. *Resp*. 453e); it lends a new angle and provides another avenue for approaching the scholarly debate known as "Plato's feminism". The paradigm for the body seems always to be male and its inferior replica, female, a model of imperfection. All the more surprising, then, is Socrates' controversial proposal when he suggests that male and female guardians must share their entire way of life in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city). "Plato's feminism" started gaining attention with the feminist scholarship of the 1970's. Some scholars have located the origins of "feminism" in his thought. Wender, for example, tries to reconcile his misogyny, on the one hand, and "scattered feminist seed", on the other (86). She concludes in "Plato: Misogynist, Paedophile, and Feminist", "He did not like or admire us [women]. But he felt it would be just and expedient to give us a chance" (90). Scholars

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16 — Following Nietzsche, Deleuze presents his philosophy as an "inverted Platonism" and develops the problem of the simulacrum to maintain this stance. The simulacrum is an imitation or copy and, in the Platonic sense, an appearance, which differs from the original form, model or its essence. In "Plato and the Simulacrum", Deleuze raises the status of these reproductions or phantoms: "The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbors a positive power which denies *the original and the copy, the model and the reproduction*" (1990: 262). Instead of dividing the world between an actual reality and its unreal virtual copy, Deleuze argues for a world of simulacra.

(Fortenbaugh, Brown and Lesser) have continued to defend his "feminist" stance, while still yet others (Annas, Vlastos 1994 and Okin) have denied that Plato has a feminist stance[17].

First Wave

In the first wave, Socrates sets out to square the view that different natures must follow different ways of life and that the natures of men and women are different with a contradictory position, that those different natures must follow the same way of life (Pl. *Resp*. 453e). He resolves the tension by admitting that they did not introduce every form of difference and sameness in nature, but focused on the one form of sameness and difference that was relevant to the particular ways of life themselves (Pl. *Resp*. 454c), that is, physical difference. In his consideration of sex roles, Socrates turns to an argument from nature – for one has to consider every form of difference and sameness in nature (πάντως τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ τὴν ἑτέραν φύσιν) (Pl. *Resp*. 454c) – and reaches the following conclusion:

> Οὐκοῦν, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τὸ τῶν γυναικῶν γένος, ἐὰν μὲν πρὸς τέχνην τινὰ ἢ ἄλλο ἐπιτήδευμα διαφέρον φαίνηται, τοῦτο δὴ φήσομεν ἑκατέρῳ δεῖν ἀποδιδόναι· ἐὰν δ᾽ αὐτῷ τούτῳ φαίνηται διαφέρειν, τῷ τὸ μὲν θῆλυ τίκτειν, τὸ δὲ ἄρρεν ὀχεύειν, οὐδέν τί πω φήσομεν μᾶλλον ἀποδεδεῖχθαι ὡς πρὸς ὃ ἡμεῖς λέγομεν διαφέρει γυνὴ ἀνδρός, ἀλλ᾽ ἔτι οἰησόμεθα δεῖν τὰ αὐτὰ ἐπιτηδεύειν τούς τε φύλακας ἡμῖν καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας αὐτῶν (Pl. *Resp*. 454d-e).

> [Soc.: 'Therefore', I said, 'if the male sex is seen to be different from the female with regard to a particular craft or any other pursuit, we will say that the relevant one must be assigned to it. But if it is clear that they differ in this very respect, that the female bears children while the male begets them, we will say that no kind of proof has been shown that women are different from men with respect to what we discuss, but we will believe that our guardians and their wives must have the same way of life'].

1) The female bears children while the male begets them; 2) guardians and their wives must have the same way of life. With this concession, Socrates points out that the relation between physical difference and pursuit is more complex than one to one. Physical difference must be "relevant" to the pursuit in question, he argues, and there is no proof that the physical difference between women and men – having different repro-

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17 — A significant survey of the debate and Plato's treatment of women, in the full spectrum of his philosophy, is provided by Tuana's collection, *Feminist Interpretations of Plato*, which opens with Vlastos' article.

ductive organs and, therefore, different reproductive functions of giving birth or inseminating – is relevant to the pursuit of political leadership. What is more important, argues Socrates, is ψυχή, an innate quality, character, and state of mind, which is partly the result of innate aptitude and temperament but, more importantly, of education and upbringing. In this sense, he says, the ψυχή (innate quality) of a female doctor is the same as that of a male doctor, whereas the ψυχή (innate quality) of a male doctor is different from that of a male carpenter (Pl. *Resp.* 454c-456a).

Although Socrates' arguments might appear on the surface forward thinking, and, to a certain extent, they are contemporary, I tend to agree with Saxonhouse, who has pointed out that guardian women, in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), are "de-sexed females": "The women who enter the rank of the guardian class in Book V of the *Republic* are almost without body and, more important, free from eros. They are neither the desired nor the desiring" (68). The female's reproductive role – her individual φύσις (nature) – is minimized, and she is destroyed as woman in order to participate in politics (Saxonhouse 75)[18]. It is my view that Socrates' arguments about guardian women are forced and constrained: he turns women into men and minimizes sex in order to maintain the unity of the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city). As guardians, male and female groups, indistinguishable, overlap into one category. In depth, intrinsically, the two are grounded in difference: they differ in this very respect, that the female bears children, while the male begets them and "mounts" (τὸ δὲ ἄρρεν ὀχεύειν). The principle of gendered difference, "becoming-other", and the desire with which it is associated will continue to play a significant role in Socrates' discussion, for both of these elements pose a serious threat to the permanence of the ideal city.

It follows from the way that guardian women are portrayed that they are made into replicas of their male counterparts and work like carbon copies. At the same time, we know that they are doubles, which introduce sexual difference into the city. Socrates wavers between two views: on the one hand, philosopher kings and queens share the same nature, yet, on the other, females, he admits, are weaker:

> Οὐδὲν ἄρα ἐστίν, ὦ φίλε, ἐπιτήδευμα τῶν πόλιν διοικούντων γυναικὸς διότι γυνή, οὐδ᾽ ἀνδρὸς διότι ἀνήρ, ἀλλ᾽ ὁμοίως διεσπαρμέναι αἱ φύσεις ἐν ἀμφοῖν τοῖν ζῴοιν, καὶ πάντων μὲν μετέχει γυνὴ ἐπιτηδευμάτων κατὰ φύσιν, πάντων δὲ ἀνήρ, ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ ἀσθενέστερον γυνὴ ἀνδρός (Pl. *Resp.* 455d-e).

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18 — See also McCoy: "Women must become like men, somehow able to coexist with them in the gym and on the battlefield without either group being overpowered by *eros*, even though the city is dependent on *eros* for its growth" (157).

> [Soc.: 'Then there is no way of life, dear one, concerned with the management of the city that belongs to a woman because she's a woman or to a man because he's a man, but the various natures are distributed in the same way in both creatures, and women share by nature in every way of life just as men do, but in all of them women are weaker than men'].

The statement betrays a loose end in Plato's argument: women share by nature in every way of life just as men do, yet they are still weaker (ἀσθενεστέραις). Socrates makes the same move when he considers their philosophical nature: men and women are by nature the same with respect to guarding the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), except to the extent that one is weaker and the other stronger (Pl. *Resp*. 456a). Ἀσθενής may refer either to physical weakness, i.e. muscular strength, or frailty of mind, but, in both cases, the line of argumentation fails to remain completely coherent: given this description, guardian men and women share more than the one significant difference, and it might even consist in a superior/inferior quality of the soul[19]. As Brill suggests, the attempt at coherency results, instead, in and magnifies a field of differences: "When Socrates observes that not all differences of nature are relevant to the work of the city, he seems less so to be overlooking or ignoring difference than to be marking its proliferation and the differing meanings differences with respect to nature can have within particular political environments" (2013: 240). Though, it would seem, then, that, at first blush, Plato expresses a feminist sentiment when he allocates equal tasks for both sexes, but, because they stand in a certain relation, which is defined by masked difference and differences, he cannot be an advocate for women, in and of themselves. Stylized, weaker and less talented, these guardian women are counterfeit, false copies of the male and share the status of Deleuze's simulacra: as philosopher-queens, they simulate philosopher-kings but ultimately fail to imitate and to replicate perfectly. As bad copies, they reinforce μίμησις (representation) and affirm difference: precisely the recognition of sexual and gendered difference, that one is stronger and the other, weaker, attests to Plato's "non-feminism".

In this way, Plato builds a world with simulacra, and what we start to witness is a method of construction and an operation of assembling the ideal blueprint, which would promote a certain kind of subjectivity. In this model, a counter-example to the organization of Greek society (Ernoult 173), because it is an inversion, Socrates emphasizes nature and what is "natural" in order to incorporate women into the public sphere:

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19 — I agree with Sissa, who notices the limitations of Socrates' position, in his invention of the ideal state: "The reflection of male self-praise through the disparagement of women is so effortless and pervasive, as a manner of speaking, that even Socrates, we have seen, yields to its inviting simplicity: women do everything less well. Men are saved. There is a limit to Socratic *eirōneia*" (2009: 114).

Καὶ γυναῖκες ἄρα αἱ τοιαῦται τοῖς τοιούτοις ἀνδράσιν ἐκλεκτέαι συνοικεῖν τε καὶ συμφυλάττειν, ἐπείπερ εἰσὶν ἱκαναὶ καὶ συγγενεῖς αὐτοῖς τὴν φύσιν.

Πάνυ γε.

Τὰ δ' ἐπιτηδεύματα οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ ἀποδοτέα ταῖς αὐταῖς φύσεσιν;

Τὰ αὐτά.

Ἥκομεν ἄρα εἰς τὰ πρότερα περιφερόμενοι, καὶ ὁμολογοῦμεν μὴ παρὰ φύσιν εἶναι ταῖς τῶν φυλάκων γυναιξὶ μουσικήν τε καὶ γυμναστικὴν ἀποδιδόναι.

Παντάπασιν μὲν οὖν.

Οὐκ ἄρα ἀδύνατά γε οὐδὲ εὐχαῖς ὅμοια ἐνομοθετοῦμεν, ἐπείπερ κατὰ φύσιν ἐτίθεμεν τὸν νόμον· ἀλλὰ τὰ νῦν παρὰ ταῦτα γιγνόμενα παρὰ φύσιν μᾶλλον, ὡς ἔοικε, γίγνεται.

Ἔοικεν (Pl. *Resp.* 456a-c).

[Soc.: 'Then women of this sort must be chosen along with men of the same sort to live with them and share their guardianship, since they are adequate for the task and akin to the men in nature'.

Gl.: 'Certainly'.

Soc.: 'And mustn't we assign the same way of life to the same natures?'.

Gl.: 'The same'.

Soc.: 'We've come round, then, to what we said before and have agreed that it isn't against nature to assign an education in music, poetry, and physical training to the wives of the guardians'.

Gl.: 'Absolutely'.

Soc.: 'Then we're not legislating impossibilities or indulging in mere wishful thinking, since the law we established is in accord with nature. But it's rather the way things are at present that seems to be against nature'.

Gl.: 'So it seems'].

In the first wave, Socrates basically engages in an exercise of producing woman, and she is the utopian woman: herself an assemblage of impersonal and political intensities informed by an education in music, poetry and physical training and based on a specific way of life, which includes military training and the cultivation of virtue, namely, courage. Thus by having women enter into politics, Plato, redefines femininity in terms of masculinity and reshapes or sculpts the female body: becoming other than itself, it copies and offers a doubled image of the male body, and they live together and share their guardianship (συνοικεῖν τε καὶ συμφυλάττειν). In a place of cohabitation, male and female bodies, which constitute individual blocks of becoming, with their flowing sensations and perceptions, then merge to form a collection of bodies and to organize themselves into a network of political experience.

That it has this capacity to combine and to harmonize various components suggests that the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city) is a Deleuzian assemblage. This term allows us to perceive what is at stake in Plato's utopian project: the vital processes at play in this ideal political form, which has integrated the female body into its network, and how these material forces meet in a series of experiences. Socrates describes what this world would look like when he rounds off the first wave with an image of guardian women exercising in the nude:

> Ἀποδυτέον δὴ ταῖς τῶν φυλάκων γυναιξίν, ἐπείπερ ἀρετὴν ἀντὶ ἱματίων ἀμφιέσονται, καὶ κοινωνητέον πολέμου τε καὶ τῆς ἄλλης φυλακῆς τῆς περὶ τὴν πόλιν, καὶ οὐκ ἄλλα πρακτέον· τούτων δ' αὐτῶν τὰ ἐλαφρότερα ταῖς γυναιξὶν ἢ τοῖς ἀνδράσι δοτέον διὰ τὴν τοῦ γένους ἀσθένειαν. ὁ δὲ γελῶν ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ γυμναῖς γυναιξί, τοῦ βελτίστου ἕνεκα γυμναζομέναις, ἀτελῆ τοῦ γελοίου σοφίας δρέπων καρπόν, οὐδὲν οἶδεν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐφ' ᾧ γελᾷ οὐδ' ὅτι πράττει· κάλλιστα γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο καὶ λέγεται καὶ λελέξεται, ὅτι τὸ μὲν ὠφέλιμον καλόν, τὸ δὲ βλαβερὸν αἰσχρόν (Pl. *Resp.* 457a-b).

> [Soc.: 'Then the guardian women must strip for physical training, since they will wear virtue instead of clothes. They must share in war and the other guardians' duties in the city and do nothing else. But in these very duties the lighter parts must be assigned to women rather than to men because of the weakness of their sex. And the man, who laughs at naked women during physical training for the sake of what is best is 'plucking the unripe fruit' of laughter and does not know, it seems, what he's laughing at or what he's doing. For it is and always will be the finest saying that the beneficial is beautiful, while the harmful is ugly'].

This is a telling moment for evaluating "Plato's feminism": guardian women are implicated in this model, but the impersonal passive structure (Ἀποδυτέον... ταῖς τῶν φυλάκων γυναιξίν) and verbal adjectives, κοινωνητέον and πρακτέον, imply that they lose their agency. They exercise, train and shape their bodies in order to prepare for war, yet, at the same time, Socrates admits that their duties should be "lighter" (τὰ ἐλαφρότερα), due to their frailty "as a class" (διὰ τὴν τοῦ γένους ἀσθένειαν). He thus lays out the structure of an intensive, inclusive system, which makes concessions for human physiology, but it will continue to place limitations on the female body; a theory of gender does not necessarily support a feminist stance.

Such provocative proposals concerning guardian women are made in waves, what comprise a cinematic movement, a gendered movement. Liquid imagery heightens the various material phenomena that work in concert with one another to compose what will be a multiplicity of heterogeneous objects, that is, the utopian assemblage. More exactly, the

principle of vibrant liquidity functions together with the feminine space of the earth, most often assimilated with the female in Greek thought[20], as it is in Plato, explicitly in the Noble Lie (Pl. *Resp*. 414c-415c), where "mother earth" delivers her children, who are first-born male citizens (Pl. *Resp*. 414e). The combination of these separate parts creates fluid and dynamic systems, and there is a specific effect that results from the interaction between these two landscapes: the wave, as it passes, refines the matter of the earth and land, and this is another way in which binary oppositions and distinctions, between sea and land collapse, in the category of the feminine. In fact, these boundaries dissipate for the very reason that they always turn other. By tracing the movements of the feminine principle in the dialogue, we make out the borders and delineations of the vital framework and simultaneously perceive how these discrete entities collaborate with one another and unite.

Second Wave

Republic Book V puts the liquid clarifying procedure on display – the principle of becoming, the process of transforming and feminine flow – where we start to notice a correspondence between women and waves. In the second wave, Socrates describes the community of women and children and illustrates how this fluid and flexible mass will reformulate constructions of the land and human relationships:

> Τοῦτο μὲν τοίνυν ἓν ὥσπερ κῦμα φῶμεν διαφεύγειν τοῦ γυναικείου πέρι νόμου λέγοντες, ὥστε μὴ παντάπασι κατακλυσθῆναι τιθέντας ὡς δεῖ κοινῇ πάντα ἐπιτηδεύειν τούς τε φύλακας ἡμῖν καὶ τὰς φυλακίδας, ἀλλά πῃ τὸν λόγον αὐτὸν αὑτῷ ὁμολογεῖσθαι ὡς δυνατά τε καὶ ὠφέλιμα λέγει;
>
> Καὶ μάλα, ἔφη, οὐ σμικρὸν κῦμα διαφεύγεις.
>
> Φήσεις γε, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, οὐ μέγα αὐτὸ εἶναι, ὅταν τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο ἴδῃς.
>
> Λέγε δή, ἴδω, ἔφη.
>
> Τούτῳ, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ἕπεται νόμος καὶ τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν τοῖς ἄλλοις, ὡς ἐγᾦμαι, ὅδε.
>
> Τίς;
>
> Τὰς γυναῖκας ταύτας τῶν ἀνδρῶν τούτων πάντων πάσας εἶναι κοινάς, ἰδίᾳ δὲ μηδενὶ μηδεμίαν συνοικεῖν· καὶ τοὺς παῖδας αὖ κοινούς, καὶ μήτε γονέα ἔκγονον εἰδέναι τὸν αὑτοῦ μήτε παῖδα γονέα.
>
> Πολύ, ἔφη, τοῦτο ἐκείνου μεῖζον πρὸς ἀπιστίαν καὶ τοῦ δυνατοῦ πέρι καὶ τοῦ ὠφελίμου.
>
> Οὐκ οἶμαι, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, περί γε τοῦ ὠφελίμου ἀμφισβητεῖσθαι ἄν, ὡς οὐ μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν κοινὰς μὲν τὰς γυναῖκας εἶναι, κοινοὺς δὲ τοὺς

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20 — See Bergren.

παῖδας, εἴπερ οἷόν τε· ἀλλ᾽ οἶμαι περὶ τοῦ εἰ δυνατὸν ἢ μὴ πλείστην ἂν ἀμφισβήτησιν γενέσθαι (Pl. *Resp.* 457b-d).

[Soc.: 'Can we say, then, that we've escaped one wave of criticism in our discussion of the law about women, that we haven't been altogether overwhelmed by laying it down that our male and female guardians must share their entire way of life, and that our argument is consistent when it states that this is both possible and beneficial?'.

Gl.: 'And it's certainly no small wave', he said, 'that you've escaped'.

Soc.: 'You won't think that it's so big', I replied, 'when you get a look at the next one'.

Gl.: 'Tell me about it, and I'll decide'.

Soc.: 'I suppose that the following law goes along with the last one and the others that preceded it'.

Gl.: 'Which one?'.

Soc.: 'That all these women are to belong in common to all the men, that none are to live privately with any man, and that the children, too, are to be possessed in common, so that no parent will know his own offspring or any child his parent'.

Gl.: 'This wave is far bigger than the other, for there's doubt both about its possibility and about whether or not it's beneficial'.

Soc.: 'I don't think that its being beneficial would be disputed or that it would be denied that the common possession of women and children would be the greatest good, if indeed it is possible. But I think that there would be the greatest disagreement about whether or not it is possible'].

As it washes over the previous discourse, the κῦμα (wave) in this second section works as a close-up because Plato moves from depicting φύσις (nature) to a very specific κοινωνία (society), and this frame, as it were, gives insight into the lifestyle of the guardians – their ἐπιτηδεύματα (pursuits). In other words, it provides a zoom and signals the transition from the perception-image to the affection-image: "*[t]he affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face...*" (Deleuze 1986: 87). I apply the concept of the affection-image because it allows us to make sense of these waves, which drive the narrative development, while they simultaneously generate confusion: Socrates suggests all these women are to belong in common to all the men, that none are to live privately with any man, and that children, too, are to be possessed in common. After making this claim, Socrates anticipates the birth of a very large dispute: he imagines that the greatest disagreement about whether such a city is possible or not would subsequently "come into being" (γενέσθαι). This is the product of a wave far bigger than the last (Πολύ...τοῦτο ἐκείνου μεῖζον).

A sheer mass of material, the wave represents an intense reflective surface and takes on a force of its own. First of all, the surf is not gentle, so that Socrates and his interlocutor must flee these surges of water in order

to avoid being washed away, though they are not altogether inundated nor defeated by the first. The second is even greater than the previous one, and Glaucon will see this for himself in the encounter; Socrates simply explains, "You will see" (ἴδης). With this gesture, Socrates invites him to look into a face and, by entering, to come into contact with the raw contents of sensation, the genesis of the greatest dispute born from this portrayal of the community of women and children. What makes the affection-image applicable to this moment is the idea of the zoom, for Socrates will provide a more detailed account of how arrangements are laid out in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), the sensations and perceptions that are found here. The zoom, furthermore, closes the gap between subjective and objective points of view: the face of the wave, an object of perception, in turn offers a reflection of the observer's own facial expression, which is one of disbelief or doubt (ἀπιστίαν), and, in this way, embodies both positions, as a third type or category.

This theoretical concept is useful because it carries the capacity to elide binary poles and illuminates the process of lyrical altering that is taking place in Book V. Namely, the affection-image brings out and helps us notice the aesthetic function of these waves: more than just another literary trope, they exert a cathartic presence because they move and purify, at the same time that they create a disturbance, and contribute to the city's refinement. They refine, in fact, by upsetting, in other words, by way of flux or "becoming" (γενέσθαι). Finally, what the wave as an affection-image permits us to realize is an inner experience of the subject, the change that is taking place in the philosopher as he builds the ideal city: it is a reflection of his own imagination, a product of the mind, which, in turn, will have some kind of internal, external impact on his own self. These waves, as they give birth, then open up into further space and seem to delineate the boundaries of a female body, by having the same role as a maternal womb.

Third Wave

The media of these waves extend and display material reflective surfaces, and they are sensual, aesthetic waves of emotion. The last wave is the greatest, and it opens up into a sea of laughter. The expression of laughter mimics the rise and fall of this wave, which might drown Socrates in ridicule and contempt:

> Ἐπ' αὐτῷ δή, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, εἰμὶ ὃ τῷ μεγίστῳ προσηκάζομεν κύματι. εἰρήσεται δ' οὖν, εἰ καὶ μέλλει γέλωτί τε ἀτεχνῶς ὥσπερ κῦμα ἐκγελῶν καὶ ἀδοξίᾳ κατακλύσειν. σκόπει δὲ ὃ μέλλω λέγειν.
> Λέγε, ἔφη.

Ἐὰν μή, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ἢ οἱ φιλόσοφοι βασιλεύσωσιν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν ἢ οἱ βασιλῆς τε νῦν λεγόμενοι καὶ δυνάσται φιλοσοφήσωσι γνησίως τε καὶ ἱκανῶς, καὶ τοῦτο εἰς ταὐτὸν συμπέσῃ, δύναμίς τε πολιτικὴ καὶ φιλοσοφία, τῶν δὲ νῦν πορευομένων χωρὶς ἐφ᾽ ἑκάτερον αἱ πολλαὶ φύσεις ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀποκλεισθῶσιν, οὐκ ἔστι κακῶν παῦλα, ὦ φίλε Γλαύκων, ταῖς πόλεσι, δοκῶ δ᾽ οὐδὲ τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ γένει, οὐδὲ αὕτη ἡ πολιτεία μή ποτε πρότερον φυῇ τε εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν καὶ φῶς ἡλίου ἴδῃ, ἣν νῦν λόγῳ διεληλύθαμεν. ἀλλὰ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὃ ἐμοὶ πάλαι ὄκνον ἐντίθησι λέγειν, ὁρῶντι ὡς πολὺ παρὰ δόξαν ῥηθήσεται· χαλεπὸν γὰρ ἰδεῖν ὅτι οὐκ ἂν ἄλλη τις εὐδαιμονήσειεν οὔτε ἰδίᾳ οὔτε δημοσίᾳ (Pl. *Resp.* 473c-e).

[Soc.: 'Well, I've now come', I said, 'to what we likened to the greatest wave. But I shall say what I have to say, even if the wave is a wave of laughter that will simply drown me in ridicule and contempt. So listen to what I'm going to say".

Gl.: 'Speak on'.

Soc.: 'Until philosophers rule as kings in cities or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils, dear Glaucon, nor, I think, will the human race. And, until this happens, the constitution we've been describing in theory will never be born to the fullest extent possible or see the light of the sun. It's because I saw how very paradoxical this statement would be that I hesitated to make it for so long, for it's hard to face up to the fact that there can be no happiness, either public or private, in any other city'].

The repeated references to laughter (Pl. *Resp.* 452a-e) resonate with Aristophanes' Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*), and the organization of the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), with Praxagora's gynocracy, in which women will institute a common fund and practice sexual equality. Providing an extensive list of the ideological parallels in Socrates and Praxagora's plans for their respective cities, Nails has argued for the existence of the "proto-*Republic*", an earlier version of the dialogue (Books II, III, V, and VII) that was circulating among Athenian intellectuals (117-119). The circulation of a half-baked version, as it were, would suggest that an exchange was taking place and that Aristophanes and Plato were responding to each other in their works. It is very true that both of these authors are interested in a gendered line of thinking and launch into a "female drama"; in the play, the protagonist Praxagora turns the πόλις (city) into one big οἶκος (home). When Blepyrus asks her what kind of life she proposes to set up, she responds: Pr.: 'The life in common. For I say that I will make the city into a single house, by dashing together all

things into one, so that everybody will be able to go from one house to the other' (Ar. *Eccl.* 673-675). Praxagora enacts a "constructive undoing" of the city: "Once the *ecclesia*, packed by the disguised women, votes in Praxagora's new regime, Athens becomes, in effect, a naked female body (in Greek thought, as in many cultures, the earth is understood as female) stripped of all fetishes, all the pseudo-phallic supports of the father-ruled *polis*: private property, marriage, political and judicial institutions, along with the oppositions and hierarchies upon which they stand" (Bergren 330).

The correspondences between Praxagora's city of women and Plato's are far too similar to be merely coincidental, and they transcend the superficial. He is clearly giving a nod to his comic friend as he mentions laughter, ridicule, and jokes (Pl. *Resp.* 452b), and Socrates, of course, makes arguments for the abolition of the private family and property (Pl. *Resp.* 458c-d), advanced by the previous wave[21]. The Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*), then, as an intertext allows us to recognize Socrates' own "constructive undoing" of the city and the way that he turns the πόλις (city) into an οἶκος (home), as he builds the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), where the possibility of having a private life and even private emotions is eliminated. Because everything is public, no private space exists. But it also places us in the context of the theater and comedy. We should be thinking about this play in a reading of *Republic* V because Plato has Socrates make "dramatic" proposals, in the sense that they most literally pertain to the body; the Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*) exemplifies ancient comedy as a genre, for it emphasizes bodily processes and sensations such as pleasure.

A discussion of the Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*) in this context also proves illuminating because this is exactly the "womanly drama", upon which Plato expands, in these three waves. While the first two proposals directly concern women, their lifestyles and roles in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), in the third wave, the philosopher-king assumes the feminine position; Plato suggests that this figure experiences the pangs of pregnancy for the sake of delivering truth into the world. First of all, the framework of the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city) promotes the interchangeability between philosopher and king; philosophy and political power entirely coincide, and the coupling of identities, "philosopher-king", moreover, is understood in terms of the feminine grammatical gender, "philosophy" (φιλοσοφία) and "political power" (δύναμίς τε πολιτικὴ). Again, Plato pushes back against the conventional norm when he separates out natures of the many (αἱ πολλαὶ φύσεις) from those of

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21 — For a further discussion of parallels with Aristophanes' Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι (*Assemblywomen*), see Halliwell 9-16, 224-225, Adam 350-351, Tordoff 261, Thesleff and Parker.

philosopher-kings; the "many natures", who pursue either activity to the exclusion of the other, as they do in the present, ought to stand aside. Therefore, the utopian model is achieved after it makes foundational revisions, and it finds itself in a state of flux, during this process, while it is being founded: it facilitates the migration of suitable natures to the center of political life, which includes women (Pl. *Resp*. 456b), and the emigration of the unqualified to the peripheral outskirts.

Finally, in this way, as rulers "philosophize" (φιλοσοφήσωσι), the constitution is "born" (φυῇ) into the light of the sun (φῶς ἡλίου). In other words, as they practice maieutics, philosopher-kings assist parturition and bring theory into light. ἣν νῦν λόγῳ διεληλύθαμεν, additionally, is working as a metapoetic statement, for Plato, the "philosopher", has elucidated the πολιτεία (constitution) in speech. These are the various levels on which change occurs: channels of movement in the city represent vital streams, and as expressions play themselves out over the surface of a body, everyone exists in a state of alteration. By the third-wave, we see the different ways in which the affection-image applies, for it emphasizes this process of being altered. This concept is helpful for pinning down and contextualizing affections at play in the text, laughter, for instance, their impact on the body and, ultimately, boundaries, which eventually vanish; in the figure of the philosopher-king, male and female combine, and, representing a constituent part of the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), he is the person that gives form to the city and realizes it with his soul.

Couvade

Plato uses and relies on metaphors of male pregnancy: whereas Irigaray would argue that the metaphor of male mimetic pregnancy serves as a prime example of patriarchal appropriation (1974: 305-307)[22], I suggest that the description we find in the *Republic* serves as a metalinguistic moment. The metaphor of spiritual pregnancy captures the difficulty of knowledge, and I agree with Leitao "...that reproductive imagery helps Plato to characterize the metaphysical instability of perception in a world characterized by total flux" (251). The experience of the philosopher contributes to a state of flux in the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city), as he himself becomes; the philosopher carries a pregnant soul, afflicted by the pangs of delivery[23]. After the purging forces of the waves take effect in Book V, they continue to fill fluid spaces of variation and oscillation and destabilize, for intellectual clarification disconcerts and, more often than

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22 — For an expansion on this view, see duBois' piece, "The Platonic Appropriation of Reproduction".

23 — In the *Theaetetus*, Socrates is portrayed as a midwife, who, with the maieutic art, tends to the souls of young men and helps them give birth to their theories and ideas (Pl. *Tht*. 150a-c).

not, results in further confusion. The feminized philosopher, who is also a lover, engages in a laborious process in order to acquire knowledge:

> Ἆρ' οὖν δὴ οὐ μετρίως ἀπολογησόμεθα ὅτι πρὸς τὸ ὂν πεφυκὼς εἴη ἁμιλλᾶσθαι ὅ γε ὄντως φιλομαθής, καὶ οὐκ ἐπιμένοι ἐπὶ τοῖς δοξαζομένοις εἶναι πολλοῖς ἑκάστοις, ἀλλ' ἴοι καὶ οὐκ ἀμβλύνοιτο οὐδ' ἀπολήγοι τοῦ ἔρωτος, πρὶν αὐτοῦ ὃ ἔστιν ἑκάστου τῆς φύσεως ἅψασθαι ᾧ προσήκει ψυχῆς ἐφάπτεσθαι τοῦ τοιούτου – προσήκει δὲ συγγενεῖ – ᾧ πλησιάσας καὶ μιγεὶς τῷ ὄντι ὄντως, γεννήσας νοῦν καὶ ἀλήθειαν, γνοίη τε καὶ ἀληθῶς ζῴη καὶ τρέφοιτο καὶ οὕτω λήγοι ὠδῖνος, πρὶν δ' οὔ; (Pl. *Resp.* 490a-b).

> [Soc.: 'Then, won't it be reasonable for us to plead in his defense that it is the nature of the real lover of learning to struggle toward what is, not to remain with any of the many things that are believed to be, that, as he moves on, he neither loses nor leaves off his erotic love, until he grasps the being of each nature itself with the part of his soul that is fitted to grasp it – because of its kinship with it – and that, once getting near what really is and having intercourse with it and having begotten understanding and truth, he knows, truly lives, is nourished, and, at that point, but not before, is relieved from the pains of giving birth?'].

The lover of learning is born to struggle toward what is (πεφυκὼς εἴη ἁμιλλᾶσθαι ὅ γε ὄντως φιλομαθής). His nature, while receptive to the practice, at the same time requires constant upkeep; dissatisfied with the many things believed to be, he moves on (ἴοι) and holds fast to love (τοῦ ἔρωτος). His soul touches the being of each nature itself (αὐτοῦ ὃ ἔστιν ἑκάστου τῆς φύσεως), for the two share an affinity (συγγενεῖ), and this union produces children. The philosopher has intercourse with what really is (μιγεὶς τῷ ὄντι ὄντως) and begets (γεννήσας) offspring, reason and truth (ἀλήθειαν). The soul is a pregnant womb: « Déplacer la fonction génératrice de *soma* à *psyché* signifie donc féminiser le désir de savoir d'une manière cohérente et concrète. Le corps féminin est à l'âme comme l'accouchement est à la production de *logoi*, comme l'allaitement est à la réflexion qui les nourrit » (Sissa 2000 : 95). By knowing and truly living, he is nourished (τρέφοιτο) and relieved from the throes of child-birth (ὠδῖνος).

The pregnancy of the philosopher suggests that he turns into a woman, where this transformation makes it more difficult to distinguish the model from the copy and the copy from another copy. In other words, by taking on feminine qualities and roles, the philosopher simulates and confuses the male/female distinction. He constitutes another simula-crum, which functions in a dynamic system; this type of person "hastens eagerly" (ἁμιλλᾶσθαι), "moves forward" (ἴοι), "does not cease from desire" (ἀπολήγοι τοῦ ἔρωτος), grasps (ἅψασθαι) and touches (ἐφάπτεσθαι).

While distinctions between masculine and feminine elide, so does the opposition between the soul (microcosm) and body (macrocosm); the soul behaves like a female body. These gendered metaphors express a desire to remap the use of any feminine connotation, and, by gendering the philosophic pursuit, Plato illustrates the capacity of language to divide and to bridge divisions.

What we ultimately see here is the attempt to rearrange language, where the dialogue uses language as a means to gesture towards what truly is. There is an awareness on the part of Plato of the importance of using terms and vocabulary in such a way as to facilitate truth, beauty and the good; the utopian blueprint superimposes new categories onto conventional ones: Soc.: 'Then, is the best-governed city the one in which most people say 'mine' and 'not mine' about the same things in the same way?' (Pl. *Resp*. 462c). Language, intimately bound to the senses because it is produced by bodies and has the potential to affect another, and affects, in general, are rechanneled in this model to perfect human nature and to refashion a new kind of human being. Deleuze's notion of the simulacrum is then pertinent because it shows us how the Καλλίπολις (beautiful city) is composed of disparate images and draws attention to the various components that are involved in the collective process of becoming, from where intelligible being emerges. That is, oppositions between male/female, inner/outer and subject/object collapse to form a collective assemblage, the city, which is itself a product of mimetic reproduction. The opening and potential for a vitalist reading of the *Republic* are offered up by Plato himself, for the text is a production, a constant work of midwivery, for the sake of generating truth. Since language is not pure – it is structured and manipulated, put under great stress since it expresses the world of appearance, and produces gendered bridges and divisions – Plato has to revert to fiction, noble lies and bodily metaphors to describe any reality, phenomenal or ideal.

Conclusion

I suggest that the whole question of the feminine in the *Republic* has to be rethought beyond the κοινωνία (society) of women and children, that is, the city in which we find the existence of philosopher-queens, and identify the feminine as an abstract force, the liquid feminine in Book V. What I hope to have illuminated in my discussion is a double dichotomy at work in Plato's thought: on the one hand, Plato is not a feminist, because the arguments for women as agents in the political theory are tenuous, and he expresses a misogynist sentiment at times[24], yet, he depends

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24 — See also Pl. *Resp*. 557c.

on and reverts to the feminine principle of flux and flow, exemplified by the fluid and cathartic presence of the waves. In my reading, I want to keep both streams of discourse alive – ironic blame *and* paradoxical praise of the feminine – and believe that the theoretical model enhances material strands and processes of Platonic philosophy, namely, the becoming-feminine-action of the dialogue, which sits in tension with its argument. It is my view that Plato anticipates Deleuzian theories about the assemblage, subjectivity, cinematic aesthetics and becoming and, furthermore, that the feminine maps itself onto the phenomenal domain, associated with vitalist themes such as movement, generation and materiality. Therefore, I have suggested that, even though Plato strives towards the realm of the forms, being itself and permanence, and a distinction exists between being and becoming, he, nonetheless, builds his philosophical project with feminine blocks of becoming. Plato is always embedded in the phenomenal domain as long as he adheres to the practice of writing, which is "[j]ust like painting...like optical illusions and the techniques of *mimēsis* in general" (Derrida 97).

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