1.

Платон и платоноведение

Miquel Solans Blasco

The Power of Philosophy: On the Role of δύναμις in Plato's *Gorgias*[*]

Miquel Solans Blasco

The Power of Philosophy: On the Role of δύναμις in Plato's *Gorgias*

Abstract. This article focuses on the concept of δύναμις ('power, capacity') in Plato's *Gorgias* and highlights its contribution to the author's argumentative strategy. While previous studies have explored aspects of δύναμις in the dialogue, its role in developing the contrast between Rhetoric and Philosophy has been largely overlooked. The author argues for the centrality of δύναμις in the *Gorgias* by analysing Socrates' understanding of the nature of Rhetoric as well as his critique of the practical value of rhetorical power. The paper is divided into five sections. The first section examines the significance of δύναμις in Gorgias' refutation, which initiates the central controversy between two modes of power in communal speech. The second section analyzes Socrates' understanding of the δύναμις of Rhetoric, focusing on the psychological effects of rhetorical power. Sections three and four explore Socrates' critique of the practical value of Rhetoric through his discussions with Polus and Callicles, respectively. The final section argues that Socratic dialectics are portrayed throughout the dialogue as embodying a superior form of δύναμις.

Keywords: power, rhetoric, philosophy, Socratic dialectics, the *Gorgias*, Plato.

In his classic commentary on Plato's *Gorgias*, Dodds succinctly identified δύναμις (power, capacity) as "one of the keywords of the dia-

© M. Solans Blasco (Pamplona). msolans@unav.es. University of Navarra.

Платоновские исследования / Platonic Investigations 19.2 (2023) DOI: 10.25985/PI.19.2.01

[*] I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Frisbee C.C. Sheffield, Alejandro G. Vigo, Marco Zingano, and Emma Cohen de Lara for their valuable feedback on drafts versions of this article. I am particularly thankful to Anna-Maria Moubayed for her meticulous English language editing. Her contributions have not only enhanced the article's clarity but have also enabled me to uncover dramatic elements within Plato's *Gorgias* that had previously eluded my notice.

logue".[1] Although various studies have approached some aspects of the treatment of δύναμις in this Platonic dialogue,[2] little attention has been paid to how this notion contributes to the development of the author's overall argumentative strategy in the *Gorgias*.[3] The present article exposes the centrality of the notion of δύναμις in the *Gorgias* by elucidating the role it plays in portraying the differences between Rhetoric and Philosophy, which constitutes a recurring issue throughout the dialogue. I defend the thesis that in the *Gorgias*, Plato argues that Philosophy is superior to Rhetoric as a form of δύναμις.

The paper is divided into five sections. Section 1 examines the significance of the notion of δύναμις in launching the central controversy of the dialogue between two modes of conceiving power and exercising it in communal speech. Section 2 appraises Socrates' understanding of the δύναμις of Rhetoric and provides an analysis of the psychological effects of rhetorical power. On this basis, sections 3 and 4 discuss the Socratic critique of the practical value of Rhetoric. In section 5, I conclude with some remarks on Plato's characterization of Socratic dialectics as a superior form of δύναμις.

1. Gorgias' (lack of) δύναμις

The Ancient Greek words δύναμις and its related verb δύναμαι were commonly employed to refer to a whole range of capacities that could be ascribed both to animate and inanimate entities and were usually connected with a particular set of activities, either intentional or not.[4] This usage of δύναμις-language pervades the *Gorgias*, where it is widely employed to refer to the capacity embedded in a specific craft or skill

[1] Dodds 1959: *ad* 455d7.

[2] See, for instance, Doyle 2007, Murray 2001, Wardy 1996: 57–62, and Penner 1991.

[3] One remarkable exception can be found in Haden 1992. While Haden's article focuses on the sociological as well as existential implications of the dialogue, the present paper reconstructs the psychological and dialogical elements by means of which Plato distinguishes the powers of Philosophy and Rhetoric. By doing so, it highlights significant aspects of Plato's argument in the *Gorgias* that are missing in Haden's discussion.

[4] Cf. Cleary 2013, and Benson 1997: 80–81. See also Lodge 1928: 362. For other usages of these terms see *LSJ*, s.v. δύναμις and δύναμαι.

(447bc, 456a, 460a), as well as to the power that the said capacity confers to its possessors within the political life of the city (452de, 466bc). The craft of Rhetoric is thus said to be able (δύνασθαι) to produce persuasion (πειθὼ… ποιεῖν) in the soul of the auditors (453a).[5] In this context, it is also employed to refer to an agent's certain state or condition that renders him able (δυνατός) to act in a specific way that allows him to achieve certain intended results (452e, see also 449b, d and e); Gorgias asserts that if Socrates were a skilful rhetorician, he would be able (δυναμένως) to speak in a persuasive manner to a public audience, thus winning their favour and playing a leading role in public decisions (452de, 458e). The underlying assumption throughout these usages is that the expert (ἐπιστήμων) of each craft — in this case, Rhetoric — is the one able (δυνατός) to accomplish the set of results that the δύναμις specific to that craft makes him able to accomplish (see 450a, 452de and also 456a–457a).

In a typically Platonic anticipation, the meaning of δύναμις as capacity just discussed significantly governs the opening scene of the *Gorgias*.[6] Callicles receives Socrates in his house, where, according to the host, Gorgias has just offered a 'refined' (ἀστεῖος) rhetorical feast (447a). The philosopher is willing to meet Gorgias, but not to listen to another of his rhetorical discourses, as Callicles wrongly assumes; instead, Socrates wishes to engage in dialogue (διαλέγεσθαι) with the master of Rhetoric to inquire about *the power* (ἡ δύναμις) of this craft (447c). Joining the discussion, Polus then attempts to answer Socrates by stating that Gorgias' craft is the finest (καλλίστη) (448c); however, Socrates clarifies that he is not (yet) posing a value-question, for he is not asking *how* (ποία) rhetoric is, but rather *what* (τίς) it is (448e). The philosopher is accordingly asking Gorgias to specify the δύναμις that constitutes his craft and according to which he distinguishes it from other activities (see 449e, and especially the cross-questioning at 450b–

[5] The Greek text is taken from Burnet's edition of *Platonis Opera*. Unless otherwise indicated, the extended quotes of the *Gorgias* are taken from Nichols's translation (Nichols 1998), with my italics added occasionally.

[6] For the standard use of this literary strategy in various Platonic dialogues, see Burnyeat 1997.

452d).[7] To achieve this, the master of Rhetoric should define the specific subject matter and use of his craft (449c, 451d), and thus say what is it that Rhetoric makes its bearers capable (δυναμένως, δυνατὸς) of doing (452e, 455d, 456b, 457a–c)

According to Gorgias, the rhetorical craft makes its practitioners able (οἷόν τ' εἶναι) to persuade (πείθειν) a public assembly with discourses (λόγοις) (452e). Once they have undergone proper training, well-educated rhetoricians will be able (δυνάμενος) to persuade the multitude more successfully than any expert in the field, in any given subject matter (452e, cf. also 456a–c). By using his ability to persuade the masses (458e), the rhetorician will thus outperform anyone else when it comes to controlling the decisions of the public assembly (452e).[8] It is within this framework that Gorgias is prepared to claim that Rhetoric brings about the greatest good (μέγιστον ἀγαθόν), which he identifies with being free (ἐλευθερία) and able to rule (ἄρχειν) over the city (452de).[9] Employed in a social context where political life is governed by public decisions taken by assemblies and courts under conditions where free speech prevails,[10] the δύναμις to persuade multitudes can be understood as an equivalent to the δύναμις to exert control over other citizens.[11] Under this view, rhetorical δύναμις naturally appears as a suitable means to secure one's own autonomy and immunity when facing external forces and possible threats within the city.[12] As defined by Gorgias here, the connection between rhetorical and political δύναμις (see also 455d–456c) will prove to be a crucial argumentative *topos* within the dialogue.[13] Indeed, the Gorgianic

[7] See a similar use of δύναμις to discuss the specific nature of courage (ἀνδρεία) in *Laches* 192b.

[8] Cf. Euben 2018: 204–205.

[9] A more detailed defence of the view I endorse here can be found in Nichols 1998: 133–135, Murray 2001: 357–359, and Irani 2017: 41, n. 23.

[10] Cf. Monoson 2018: 174, and Sheffield 2023b.

[11] Cf. Murray 2001: 357–358.

[12] Cf. Irwin 1979: *ad* 452d. See also Dalfen 2004: *ad* 452d, and Kamtekar 2017: 81. For Gorgias' account of virtue as the power to rule over others, see *Meno* 71e and especially 77b.

[13] Cf. Dodds 1959: *ad loc.*

portrayal of rhetorical power provides the grounding motivation for Gorgias' disciples, Polus and Callicles, to admire and covet Rhetoric;[14] simultaneously, it also constitutes the main focus of Socrates' critical discourse on Rhetoric (cf. sections 3 and 4).

Yet, as Socrates points out, to fully disclose the nature of the δύναμις of Rhetoric, the type of effect it produces on public audiences needs to be defined more precisely and distinguished from the one produced by other forms of persuasive speech (453a and ff.). According to Gorgias, what is distinctive of Rhetoric is that it generates, in the crowd gathered in assemblies and courts, a particular kind of mental state: conviction (πίστις) without knowledge (454e–455a, cf. 455e). Consequently, the rhetorical speakers possess the capacity to speak (τὸ εἰπεῖν δυνατόν) more persuasively about any given subject than any expert because they are capable of eliciting their audience's assent to the content of their speech and because they do so without having to *teach* the audience about the subject; they need neither to possess nor to communicate actual knowledge about it (456bc). Such is the extent and nature — according to Gorgias — of the power (δύναμις) of this craft (456c). When addressing large crowds, the well-trained rhetorician will be able (δυνατός) to be more persuasive with his speech than anyone else, on anything he wants (457ab). Therefore, Gorgias promises that those who possess the δύναμις of the craft he teaches will become the most powerful in the city.[15]

To this praise of Rhetoric as bringing the highest position of power in the city, Gorgias adds a caveat: the fact that he is able to (δύναιτο ἂν τοῦτο ποιῆσαι) does not make it right for the rhetorician to use his capacity (τῇ δυνάμει) to commit injustice (457b). Furthermore, it is unfair to blame the teacher of Rhetoric for the wrongdoings committed by his disciples when they exploit their rhetorical power to bring injustice, for the teacher of Rhetoric teaches his craft to be used justly

[14] Cf. Irani 2017: 46–47, Penner 1991: 147–148, and Dodds 1959: 10. Murray 2001: 358 interestingly stresses the motivational force of the desire for power in the pursuit of Rhetoric.

[15] Cf. Kamtekar 2017: 81, Irani 2017: 41, and Dalfen 2004: *ad* 452d.

(457bc). Now, the fact that the teacher of Rhetoric is genuinely committed to justice in his teaching implies, as Socrates highlights, that he is knowledgeable about justice. Hence, if his pupils happen to lack proper education in justice, Gorgias agrees, he will provide them with proper teaching in justice (460a). The philosopher then concludes by stating that, given the adequate education in justice provided by his teacher, the well-educated rhetorician would be just (δίκαιος) and would, therefore, act justly (δίκαιά… πράττει) and be willing to be just (βούλεσθαι δίκαια πράττειν) (460bc).

Both interlocutors concur with this conclusion, which Socrates sees as implying that "it is *impossible* (ἀδύνατον) for the rhetorician to use Rhetoric in an unjust way or to be willing to act unjustly" (461a).[16] This statement, however, contradicts Gorgias' previous assertion that it is possible for a well-educated Rhetorician, since he has become able to, to use his craft unjustly without blaming the teacher for the wrongdoings of his former apprentice.[17] At this point, Socrates calls attention to the fact that Gorgias endorses two incompatible "non-concordant" (οὐ συνᾴδειν) claims (461a). On the one hand, the claim that Rhetoric makes rhetoricians *able* to do whatever they want, including unjust actions; on the other hand, the claim that Rhetoric makes them *unable* to commit injustice.[18] In other words, while Gorgias states that Rhetoric *cannot* be used as indiscriminate power to commit injustice,[19] his account of rhetorical power necessarily entails that it *can* be used like that (452d, 452e, 456a–c).

Gorgias' refutation plays a decisive role in the dialogue, as it elicits a defensive response of his disciples, Polus and Callicles, that ar-

[16] Not surprisingly, this passage has been traditionally read as a paradigmatic assertion of Socrates' so-called intellectualist thesis that knowledge is sufficient for virtue (cf. Lodge 1896: 73, n. 34, Irwin 1979: *ad* 460b and 460e–461a, Wardy 1996: 72, Tarnopolsky 2010: 62). However, it should be noticed that the argument is constructed by appealing to beliefs that Gorgias *is prepared to accept*, intentionally leaving aside the question of their epistemological implications (Dodds 1959: *ad* 460c7–461b, Kahn 1996: 79–80, Kamtekar 2017: 217, n. 18).

[17] Cf. Dodds 1959: *ad* 460c7–461b2.

[18] Cf. Irani 2017: 43–44.

[19] Cf. Irani 2017: 44.

ticulates the rest of the discussion.[20] It is worth noticing, first, that the refutation motivates them to engage in discussion because it directly impacts their shared expectations on the dialectical superiority of rhetorical power. At the beginning of the exchange, Callicles confidently announced that one of the features of Gorgias' rhetorical power was that of answering questions from others (447c). Soon after, Gorgias repeatedly professed to be able to answer any question addressed to him (449bc and 458de, see also 462a), and Polus declares to share the same view (462a). Within the context provided by the public nature and the agonistic tone of the conversation[21] (447a, 455cd), these statements clearly suggest that Gorgias' disciples perceive the initial conversation as a public and competitive display of Gorgias' rhetorical δύναμις against Socrates'. By revealing Gorgias as being *unable* to offer a *persuasive* portrayal of his own craft, then, the refutation overtly called into question the expectations of his disciples regarding the power of Rhetoric that their teacher was supposed to embody.[22] The rhetorician's failure to provide a consistent answer to the philosopher's questions as well as an adequate definition of Rhetoric makes him appear in the eyes of his followers and the audience as *unable* to do what he claims to be *most capable* of doing: he fails to *persuade* others of the nature and value of the craft of *persuasion* he claims to be able to teach (457e, 460e–461b). Being publicly exposed as unable to speak persuasively about Rhetoric when it comes to define it, Gorgias himself appears before his disciples as lacking the very δύναμις he claims to possess and be able to transmit to others (449ab)[23].

Polus and Callicles respond that his master's defeat is not due to a weakness in his rhetorical power, but rather to his declared concern

[20] Gorgias' own reaction to the refutational process appears to substantially differ from that of his disciples (463a and e, 497b, 506bc) and seems to be in line with Socrates' own account of the benefits produced by refutation (cf. 460d). Cf. Gish 2006: 66, and Vigo 2001: 24–25 and 27.

[21] On the presence of an audience, see Dodds 1959: 188, and Jenks 2007: 202, n. 2. On the agonistic context of the *Gorgias*, see Gouldner 1969: ch. 2, Haden 1992: 319, and Stauffer 2006: 26–27.

[22] Cf. Irani 2017: 44.

[23] A similar way of interpreting these passages can be found in Wardy 1996: 72.

for justice, which they both consider completely irrelevant and unrelated to the real issue at stake: the power of Rhetoric (461bc, 470c, 482c–483a).[24] Socrates, they protest, has wickedly exploited Gorgias' shame to force him to declare that he is concerned with justice, thus rendering him unable to fully disclose the true δύναμις of his craft (461bc, 482cd).[25] Polus asserts that Socrates loves to look for inconsistencies between his interlocutor's answers (461bc), while Callicles denounces that Socrates twists (κακουργεῖς) the arguments (483a) and sees the philosopher's self-proclaimed commitment to the search for truth as nothing but a dialectical device employed to lead the discussion towards more favourable grounds for him to win (482e). For Callicles, Socrates speaks as a true demagogue (ὡς ἀληθῶς δημηγόρος, 482c).

All this lead us to assume, then, that Polus and Callicles reject Socrates' view of his own exchange with Gorgias as a conversation oriented towards providing a sufficient account of the nature and value of the δύναμις of Rhetoric (458ab).[26] Moreover, their reaction to Socratic dialectics reveals that they both are deeply influenced by and committed to an agonistic conception of public speech (cf. 515b), as they evaluate Socrates' way of questioning under this conception and refuse to accept the Socratic characterization of its potential benefits (cf. 460d). Their reaction to the effects that Socratic dialectics have over their teacher thus vividly reflects the evaluative assumptions and motivations behind their own engagement with Rhetoric and, in more general terms, behind their practice of communal speech, as it will become manifest throughout the dialogue. Specifically, their reaction reveals that they both approach the capacity of speech as a means to gain power over others in the context of the city and that they consequently see the dynamics of public discourse as embodying a conflict between self-asserting, competitive powers (see sections 3 and 4). In the upcoming stages of the dialogue, Socrates will thoroughly challenge this

[24] Cf. Penner 1991: 148, and Irani 2017: 44.

[25] On the refutational role of αἰσχύνη ('shame') in Plato's *Gorgias*, see Kobusch 1978. See also Race 1979, Kahn 1983: 115–116, McKim 1988, and, more recently, Futter 2009, and further the monographic study by Tarnopolsky 2010.

[26] Significantly, their reaction contrasts with that of their teacher (cf. Vigo 2001: 20).

view of public speech and political power that characterises Gorgianic Rhetoric by attempting to engage with Polus and Callicles in cooperative *dialogue* about the nature and value of rhetorical, competitive δύναμις. The reflection on the δύναμις of speech, as well as on the competitive or cooperative ideals embedded in its practice, will accordingly govern not only the content, but also the form of the discussion in the following parts of the *Gorgias*.[27]

2. Socrates on the δύναμις of rhetoric

After the refutation, Socrates replaces Gorgias, accepting Polus' request, and assumes the role of providing a sufficient definition of Rhetoric (462b). The philosopher thus takes over the task of completing his first interlocutor's characterisation of the rhetorical δύναμις. In the next pages of the dialogue, Socrates will accomplish what Gorgias proved to be unable to do, namely, *to reveal the power* (ἡ δύναμίς) of Rhetoric (460a). This section is devoted to clarifying the Socratic account of the internal structure and psychological functioning of the rhetorical power by means of which the philosopher will finally disclose what (τίς) Rhetoric is. By doing this, Socrates supplies the grounds for uncovering the value (ποία) of Rhetoric (to be discussed in sections 3 and 4) (cf. 448e).

Gorgias' initial characterization stipulated that the rhetorical craft enables the speaker to appear before an ignorant audience (τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι) as knowing more than any expert (μᾶλλον εἰδέναι τῶν εἰδότων) in any subject matter submitted to public discussion, when, in fact, he does not possess knowledge of it (οὐκ εἰδὼς) (459bc and de, see also 457ab, the same is implied at 456bc). This description of the effect

[27] As far as I know, Kobusch 1978: 88 has been the first to call the attention to the performative dimension of Plato's *Gorgias*, treating it as a crucial interpretative element to understand its meaning as a whole. For a thorough analysis of the *Gorgias* as both a dramatic presentation and a philosophical discussion of two contrasting attitudes or modes of speech, see Vigo 2001: 20–30. More recently, Sheffield 2023a has proposed a reading of the *Gorgias* in which dialogue is taken as "a normative practice, which exemplifies the very virtues that constitute its subject matter". See also Cooper 1998: 74, and Kauffman 1979. My own approach to Socratic dialectics in this paper finds its inspiration in Kobusch's, Vigo's, and Sheffield's readings.

Rhetoric produces in the mind of the audience opens the door to the inquiry into the psychological mechanisms whereby the said form of persuasion can be brought about. For, if the persuasion-produced appearance of knowledge is not generated through knowledge-producing discourses, then — as Socrates points out — rhetorical persuasion must be produced by means of some sort of contrivance or stratagem (μηχανὴ… τίς πειθοῦς) (459bc).[28] To be taken as the expert he is not, the rhetorician needs to find some strategy to furtively lead his audience to *believe* that he is such an expert.

Though the dialogue does not provide further explicit references to the above-mentioned μηχανή, the same motif resurfaces later on, when Socrates affirms to Polus that Rhetoric — being a form of flattery — disguises itself as a noble craft by ensnaring and deceiving the *ignorant* (θηρεύεται τὴν ἄνοιαν καὶ ἐξαπατᾷ) "*with the pleasure of the moment*" (τῷ δὲ ἀεὶ ἡδίστῳ) (464cd). The mechanism behind rhetorical contrivance is now revealed: it is through the production of pleasure and gratification that the rhetorician manages to appear before his audience as knowing what is best to do, when he does not (464de, 462c). In addition, we are also told that the condition required for the rhetorician's stratagem to be successful is that his audience is ignorant. Socrates' exchange with Polus, however, contains no further remark on the specific nature of the connection between pleasure and ignorance that is exploited by the rhetorical δύναμις. For a more specific account of the way the persuasive process involved in Rhetoric produces knowledge-appearance by pleasing and gratifying an ignorant audience, we should turn to the final conversation with Callicles.

After agreeing with Callicles that the pleasant and the good are different features thus involving different activities for their pursuit (500de), Socrates reintroduces the claim that Rhetoric operates by procuring pleasure to the soul (ἡδονὴ…. τῆς ψυχῆς) (501bc). He now clarifies that the rhetorician's way of producing pleasure is akin to that of musicians (501e), writers of dithyrambic poetry (502a), and tragic poets (502b), for all of them possess a power akin to that of the rhetorician;

[28] For this translation, see *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*, s.v. μηχανή, 4.

they are all capable of gratifying a collective of individuals at the same time (ἀθρόαις ἅμα χαρίζεσθαι) (501d).[29] Socrates more specifically parallels Rhetoric with tragic poetry (502cd), which consists in saying and singing (λέγειν καὶ ἀείδειν) what pleases the audience, while avoiding what is unpleasant to them, regardless of whether it is beneficial or not for them (502b). Similarly, Rhetoric is the shaping of discourses aimed to gratify (χαρίζεσθαι) the audience rather than to what is best for them (502d, see also 521a–d). The rhetorician's task is thus to *anticipate* what his audience will find pleasant to hear and *compose* speeches conforming to this anticipation.

Comparing Rhetoric with Athenian theatrical activities Socrates also illustrates the most dangerous effect that the rhetorical δύναμις is able to produce in the minds of its audience: the (mistaken) appearance that the rhetorical speaker is a valuable source of knowledge. In the same vein as tragic poetry, Rhetoric is an ἄλογον πρᾶγμα (465a), for it is not concerned with finding the best explanation for the matter discussed and, therefore, the *content* of its discourse is not determined by knowledge of its subject matter. Nonetheless, Rhetoric uses λόγοι, thus allowing a *logical form*, which, in turn, *gives the impression* of conveying knowledge.[30] Similarly, Dodds argues that Rhetoric is akin to tragic poetry because "owing to its charm and prestige is mistaken by some for wisdom".[31]

Further insight into how Rhetoric creates the illusion of embodying proper knowledge of what is best can be extracted from Socrates' criticism of the city leaders who Callicles admires (517ab, 518e). To Socrates, these public figures are personified examples of the flattery — he earlier identified with Rhetoric (465de) — that pretends to impersonate the genuine care of the soul (517cd, 518ab). To the philosopher, these leaders

[29] Dodds 1959: *ad* 501d1–502d8 interestingly points out that Socrates is not thinking here of "the necessary characteristics of dramatic art as such, but of the special conditions of Athenian theatre, with its unselected mass audience and its *competitive system*" (the italics are mine). Cf. Dalfen 2004: *ad* 502c. See also Aristotle's *Poetics* 1453a35.

[30] Cf. Ariza 2020: 55.

[31] Dodds 1959: *ad* 501d1–502d8 (111): "The poet, in fact, is dangerous because he is liable to be taken for a philosopher". Cf. *Lg.* 810e.

proved to be "*more capable* (μᾶλλον οἷοί τε) of supplying the city with the things it desired", regardless of the good or the bad (517b).[32]. Their activity in the city instantiated the same sort of practical principle that governs rhetorical activity; their political actions were performed to satisfy the citizens' desires (ἐπιθυμιῶν παρασκευαστὰς ἀνθρώπους), without knowing nor caring about whether these actions were truly beneficial for them (518c–e, see also 517e). In this context, Socrates explains more precisely how activities aimed at gratification are able to produce the appearance that the speaker is a reliable source of knowledge about what is best (517c–518a):

> **T 1** Socrates: So I think, at any rate, you have many times agreed and understood that this occupation concerned both with the body and with the soul is indeed a certain double one, and that the one is skilled in *service* (διακονική), by which it is possible to supply food if our bodies are hungry, drink if they are thirsty, clothing, bedding, and shoes if they are cold, and other things for which bodies come into a state of desire. And I speak to you on purpose through the same *likenesses* (εἰκόνων), so that you may thoroughly understand more easily (ῥᾷον). For the one skilled at supplying these things is either the retailer or importer or craftsman of some one of these same things — baker, cook, weaver, cobbler, or leather dresser. Being of such a sort, it is nothing amazing (θαυμαστόν) that he seems, to himself and to the others (δόξαι καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις), to be the caretaker of the body (θεραπευτὴν… σώματος), and thus to everyone who does not know (τῷ μὴ εἰδότι) that besides all these there is a certain gymnastic and medical art, which *is really* the care for the body (τῷ ὄντι γε ἐστὶν σώματος θεραπεία) and which *fittingly rules* (προσήκει τούτων ἄρχειν) all these arts and uses their works, *because of its knowing* (διὰ τὸ εἰδέναι) what is useful and base among foods or drinks *for the body's virtue* (χρηστὸν καὶ πονηρὸν… ἐστιν εἰς ἀρετὴν), while all these others are ignorant. It

[32] Dalfen 2004: *ad* 502de points out that both the characterization of the politicians as rhetoricians and the charge to political discourses of serving particular interests and being manipulative were common before and after Plato, as it can be seen in the following references (provided by Dalfen): Aristophanes, *Eq.* 1350 ff., *Pax* 632 ff., *Pl.* 30 f. and 567 ff.; Euripides, *Hec.* 251 ff.; Andocides, *On His Return*, 2.17–20 and 3.1–2, 10–11; Thucydides, 3.40.2–3; Lysias, *On the Confiscation of the Property of the Brother of Nicias*, 18.16; Demosthenes, *Olynthiac*, 3.3.21.

> is for this reason that these other arts are *slavish, servile, and illiberal* (δουλοπρεπεῖς τε καὶ διακονικὰς καὶ ἀνελευθέρους) as regards their occupation with the body, and the gymnastic art and medical art are, in accordance with what is just, *mistresses* (δεσποίνας) of these. Well then, at one time you seem to me to understand that these same things in fact obtain *for the soul* (περὶ ψυχήν) as well, when I am saying so, and you agree as if you know what I mean. (517c–518a)

In this crucial passage, Socrates draws Callicles' attention to implicit normative patterns that structure ordinary epistemic hierarchies so as to lead him to understand how pleasure-aimed activities are mistaken by some people for good-aimed ones and to identify, on these grounds, the mechanisms by means of which a speaker appears to possess knowledge of what is good when, in reality, he does not know. As he does in other passages, Socrates brings in the example of body-related crafts to illustrate how he understands the nature of Rhetoric and why he considers it a form of flattery (490b–e, 500e and ff.). The leading purpose of the example is to introduce a hardly disputable, common sense-based account of a hierarchy between crafts that have the right to direct other crafts and crafts that do not and thus that should be put at the service of other crafts. The difference is drawn appealing to the nature of the object of each type of craft. Crafts like medicine and gymnastics that are concerned with the restoration and preservation of the best possible condition of the object they deal with (in medicine and gymnastics, the health of the body) belong in the first class. To the non-directive, servile class pertain practices, such as bakery and cookery, that are not aimed at the promotion of the good condition of the object they deal with, but instead at the satisfaction of specific bodily desires. The ruling position of the first type of activities over the second derives from the fact that the crafts belonging to the first group know how and when, if at all, satisfying a *particular* desire will promote or hinder the good condition (ἀρετή) of the body as a *whole*.[33]

Keeping this in mind, we can now turn to how the emergence of the false appearance of knowledge is illustrated in this passage with the cor-

[33] See Irwin 1979: *ad* 517d–518a, and especially Wieland 1991: 271.

responding parallel in the hierarchy of crafts just discussed. Socrates states that, to those who *ignore the existence* (μὴ εἰδότι ὅτι ἔστιν) of genuine therapeutic crafts, and therefore to those who *know nothing* (ἐπαΐεις οὐδὲν) about the care and good condition of the body, the activities belonging to the servile, non-therapeutic class *will appear as* belonging to the directive, therapeutic class (518c). The false appearance of cookery as knowing about what is best, then, is mistaken as a true one by those who are ignorant of how satisfaction of bodily desires fosters or hinders bodily health (518cd).[34] As Socrates suggests, this sort of ignorance is the one found in those who take pleasure and pain as the ruling criteria in the practical choices concerning their bodies (as implied in 518d and more clearly stated at 479bc).

The previous considerations deal with likenesses (εἰκόνων) referred to the body. As Socrates stresses at the end of the passage just quoted, what is relevant here is that these images are meant to facilitate the understanding of Socrates' definition of Rhetoric as an activity essentially concerned with the production of pleasure for the soul (περὶ ψυχήν). Applying what we have learnt from the likenesses, it can be said that Rhetoric produces the appearance of knowledge regarding what is best by saying pleasurable words to the soul of an audience who, neglecting the very existence of any form of knowledgeable access to what is good for the soul, assumes pleasure and pain as the ruling criteria of their assent[35] (500b, 513c, see also 465c).

The δύναμις of Rhetoric, then, is finally disclosed by Socrates as consisting in the ability to shape speeches with an anticipatory view to the non-cognitive response of the audience. This allows the rhetorical speaker to secure assent to the content of his speeches and makes him appear before an uncritical audience as possessing cognitive authority regarding what is best (517d). Thus, Socrates has finally provided

[34] A parallel case was already mentioned by Socrates when he explains to Polus that cosmetics, by producing merely external aspects of beauty — shape, color, smoothness and fine clothing —, deceives (ἀπατῶσα) and thus makes people neglect the beauty that *belongs* (τοῦ οἰκείου) per se to a well-functioning, healthy body in the efforts to attain a merely *external* beauty (ἀλλότριον κάλλος) (465b).

[35] Cf. Schofield 2017: 23.

a sufficient account of the effects attributed to the power of Rhetoric by Gorgias and his disciples. In doing this, he has revealed something rather unexpected about Rhetoric; Socrates' account of the psychological functioning of the effects and internal structure of the rhetorical δύναμις shows that it is *essentially dependant* from the audience's desire for pleasure and gratification (cf. 513bc).[36]

3. Socrates' critique of the tyrannical ideal of δύναμις

Socrates' characterisation of Rhetoric is far from being innocent. The Socratic account discussed in the previous section has major implications for assessing the practical value of Rhetoric. From an external, social perspective, it renders its practitioners as flatterers and panderers of the audience and thus ascribes to them a position that is clearly at odds, as Polus promptly complains, with the alleged grandiosity of the political power that Rhetoric is meant to confer. As we are about to see in this section, Socrates will exploit Polus's complaints to further develop and specify his own criticism of Rhetoric in terms of power.

T 2 Polus: Then do you think that good rhetors (οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ῥήτορες) count as worthless (φαῦλοι)[37] in the cities, as flatterers (ὡς κόλακες)?
〈…〉
Socrates: I think they don't count at all.
Polus: What do you mean, they don't count? Don't they have *the greatest power* (μέγιστον δύνανται) in the cities?
Socrates: No, not if you say that having power *is a good to the man with the power* (ἀγαθόν τι εἶναι τῷ δυναμένῳ).
Polus: Well, I do say so (μὴν λέγω γε). (466bc)

Polus here reintroduces his teacher's main claim that the good rhetorician possesses the greatest power in the city, contending that it is *because of the power* it brings to its possessor that Rhetoric is seen

[36] The asymmetrical distribution of power between the rhetorician and his audience is one of the main ideas behind the historical Gorgias' portrayal of Rhetoric in his *Encomium of Helen*, 8–15 (cf. Kamtekar 2017: 77).

[37] φαῦλοι as predicative is well argued for in Serrano, Díaz de Cerio 2000: 64, n. 274.

as involving something good *for the one who practises it.* The personal emphasis in Polus' last reply corroborates that he is one of those who admire and value Rhetoric as the finest among the crafts (448c) — as he advanced at the beginning of the dialogue — due to the unusual and great power it confers to its practitioners.[38] Devoid of Gorgias' scruples (cf. 462a), now Polus further characterises the power that defines the value of Rhetoric as a form of tyrannical power, a power that is most admired and desired by him and "by everyone else" (468e, 471de, 473e):[39]

> **T 3** Socrates: Then [following the previous conditional clause: if having power is a good to the man with the power] I think the rhetors have the least power of anyone in the city.
> Polus: What? Aren't they *like the tyrants* (ὥσπερ οἱ τύραννοι)? Don't they kill whoever they want to (ἂν βούλωνται), and expropriate and expel from the cities whoever they think fit (ἂν δοκῇ αὐτοῖς)? (466c)

In response to Socrates' insistence on his criticism of the power of Rhetoric, Polus reinforces his position by specifying that the greatness of Rhetoric is to be found in its property to enable its possessor to achieve his practical aims in a competitive political context. For Polus, it is clear that the finest and thus most desirable power for a citizen is the ability to do *whatever actions he resolves to accomplish* in the city, and to do them, as the reference to the tyrants makes it clear, *under no one else's constraint*, neither citizen's nor legislator's.[40] Thus, Polus takes the *unrestricted/tyrannical* character of rhetorical power as an obviously sufficient reason for seeing it as something good and desirable.

In the following pages of the dialogue, Socrates thoroughly challenges Polus' ideal of tyrannical power, on the contention that it does not provide by itself sufficient ground to consider rhetorical power as something good and worth pursuing. It is not enough to define rhetorical power as the tyrannical/unrestricted δύναμις to do *whatever* action one *believes to be best* (δόξῃ βέλτιστον εἶναι) in order to prove Rhetoric

[38] Cf. Stauffer 2006: 50.

[39] Cf. Kahn 1983: 94–95.

[40] Cf. Irwin 1979: *ad* 466bc. On this ideal of power, see Gouldner 1969: 101–102. See also 469c.

good, since doing what one thinks is best *without having intelligence* (ἄνευ νοῦ), i.e., not possessing sufficient knowledge on what the best is in each case, is perceptibly harmful (κακός) for the agent who performs the action (466e–467a). Hence, the unrestricted ability to do x does not, *per se*, instantiate a good worth possessing power, for if I have the ability to do x, but the evaluative belief that motivates my action ("doing x benefits me") is wrong (doing x turns out to harm me), then it is bad for me to possess the power to do x (cf. 467a). It seems fair to assume, then, that the capacity to succeed in identifying the goodness of the actions that I am able to perform is a necessary condition for the power of performing them to be considered good for me to possess. Therefore, if Polus genuinely intends to demonstrate that Rhetoric is a power worth pursuing, he must prove that rhetorical competence provides its practitioners not only with the capacity of performing actions, but also, and mainly, with the capacity of procuring something beneficial for themselves by performing those actions (467a).[41] If this is not shown to be the case, Socrates remarks, rhetoricians can be said to have the power to do what they think is best (ἃ δοκεῖ αὐτοῖς βέλτιστα εἶναι), but not the power to do what they want (ἃ βούλονται) (*ibidem*), as Polus initially claimed (see 466c, quoted in T 3).

Gorgias' disciple fails to see the difference Socrates draws between doing what an agent thinks is best (DATB) and doing what an agent wants (DAW) (cf. 467bc). The philosopher further explains that the distinction relies on the experiential evidence of actions in which the agent's *assumption* that performing them would result in something good does not coincide with the value that, *de facto*, the said actions actually entail for him (οἰόμενος ἄμεινον εἶναι αὐτῷ, τυγχάνει δὲ ὂν κάκιον) (468d). Accordingly, the root of the distinction lies in the fact that it is possible for an agent to perform actions guided by deficient knowledge of how these actions impact on his own good and so that it is possible for him to act under the wrong assumption that a given action will benefit him, when it actually won't. Socrates claims that when this is the case, then the agent performs the action *under the assumption that*

[41] Cf. Kamtekar 2017: 82 and Vigo 2001: 34.

he wants to perform it (DATB), while, in reality, he *does not really want* to perform it (DAW). Strange as it may sound for a modern reader, the existence of unwanted actions that are performed by an agent can be reasonably drawn from the retrospective description of practical mistakes.[42] If we accept that (1) the tyrant *was wrong in believing* that doing x was good for him, and that (2) knowing (1) would have prevented him from *wanting* to do x, then we can affirm that it was the *mistaken appearance* of the goodness of performing x *what made him think that he wanted* to perform x, but he *actually*, as an agent that always wants the real good as opposed to its mere appearance, did not wanted it (cf. 470d). When performing x the tyrannical agent is "being subject to an *appearance of good*", a condition that operates as "a 'counterfeit' of wanting",[43] as Doyle puts it. On this account, what an agent *actually wants* is what is *really good* for him, as opposed to *merely apparently*, whatever that might be;[44] in order for an agent to *really want* to do or not do x, then, *choosing* to do or not do it is not enough; it is required that his choice of doing or not doing x results from a properly functioning power in him to *discern* whether or not doing x *is good* for him.[45]

As said, Socrates' argument here is designed to challenge Polus' (apparently self-evident) claim that the rhetorician's possession of unrestricted power of action within the city is good *because* that power enables him to do whatever he *wants* to do (cf. 466c). If the rhetorician lacks sufficient knowledge about when doing x is beneficial for him, then he is *unable* to do what he really wants, and he therefore possesses no great power. Relying on this reasoning, both interlocutors agree on a more accurate criterion to assess the real value of the δύναμις of Rhetoric:

[42] Cf. Vigo 2007: 190–191.

[43] Doyle 2007: 29.

[44] As Wieland 1999: 271 argues, "was man *eigentlich will*, ist nicht die konkrete Handlung selbst oder ihr unmittelbares Resultat, sondern der mit ihr erstrebte Zweck. Das ist aber immer *das Gute* im Sinne dessen, was *einem wirklich nützt*" (italics are mine). For a more detailed analysis of Socrates' argument developed in these passages, see Kamtekar 2017: 81–91. See also Vigo 2007: 185, and Doyle 2007: 27.

[45] Cf. Doyle 2007: 29–30.

> **T 4** Socrates: So then, you amazing man, it comes back again to light for you that if acting beneficially (τὸ ὠφελίμως πράττειν) follows for someone who does what seems good (πράττοντι ἃ δοκεῖ), it's a good thing (ἀγαθόν), and this, as it seems, is having *great power* (τὸ μέγα δύνασθαι); but if not, it's a bad thing (κακὸν), and having *small power* (σμικρὸν δύνασθαι).[46] (470ab)

The natural result of this principle is that if Polus wants to defend his praise of Rhetoric as a great, good power — and therefore justify his own pursuit — and not just on the basis of what he thinks is best to do (DATB), but rather on what he really wants to do (DAW), he must prove himself able to offer a *criterion to discern* (εἰπὲ τίνα ὅρον ὁρίζῃ) when (πότε) killing, expelling and expropriating would be better (ἄμεινον) than doing otherwise (470bc),[47] since to him the performance of these actions supplied the proof of the greatness and goodness of the rhetorical-tyrannical power (466c, quoted above). To evaluate whether the rhetorician has great, good power — and so whether he has the power to do what he really wants —, then, we need to elucidate first if rhetorical power enables him to *successfully differentiate* when doing something is good for him and when it has the opposite value. Although, as Gorgias, Polus presented himself as an expert in providing answers (ὡς ἐπιστάμενος ἀποκρίνεσθαι) (462a), he now falls back, once again, onto the same strategy he used at the beginning of the exchange (462b) and refuses to answer (470ab).

4. Socrates' critique of the δύναμις of rhetoric

The question of the power of Rhetoric resurfaces in the first steps of Socrates' final and most personal confrontation with the young Callicles (481c ff.). In his first words to his new interlocutor, the philosopher accuses him of being "*unable* to contradict" (οὐ δυναμένου ἀντιλέγειν) what the δῆμος of Athens wants to hear, however absurd that may be, because he is in love with it, and thus is completely dependent on its

[46] I slightly modify Nichols's translation.

[47] Dodds 1959: *ad* 470c2 also reads this passage as referring to a "criterion", and links it to *Crito* 48cd. Cf. Doyle 2007: 27, n. 12.

wishes (481e).[48] Socrates claims that if his young interlocutor were to tell the truth (εἰ βούλοιο τἀληθῆ λέγειν), he would recognize that he is not really concerned with the truth of the content of what he says and that he only cares, instead, about whether what he says satisfies the desires of his beloved δῆμος and so whether what he says is what the people of Athens *wants* him to *say* (λέγεις ἃ ἐκεῖνος βούλεται) (481e).[49]

Socrates' opening words are of no minor importance. He is telling Callicles that his capacity of speech, the very means he uses to gain power in the city applying his Gorgianic training in Rhetoric, is in fact governed by the wishes of the Athenian people. The personal import of the critique is clear: Callicles is *powerless* to oppose the opinion of the δῆμος, a condition thus closely connected with the way he speaks, i.e., with the rhetorical search for what the audience would find pleasant to hear (482ab). Instead of trying to conform to the desires of the many, Socrates exhorts Callicles to seek conformity with himself. To do so, he needs to remove his focus from what his audience think to instead examine himself whether or not injustice *actually is* the worst of evils (482bc). Socrates is thus encouraging his interlocutor to abandon the rhetorical way of speaking so as to prove himself *powerful* before the many by submitting himself to philosophical examination of the issue at hand (cf. 482a).

Callicles' response shares the same personal tone, as he defends himself from Socrates' charges by attacking his interlocutor's use of discursive power in the city. First, Callicles responds to the philosopher's challenge and confronts the many. He does so in the form of a speech about justice that dares to contradict the conventional view. He claims that the many have imposed restrictions on the most powerful, thus establishing a morality according to which it is unjust to seek to have more than the others (483b); according to nature, however, it is just (δίκαιον) for those who are better to have more than those who are worse, for natural justice takes place when those who are *more power-*

[48] On Callicles as a lover of the δῆμος, see Kamtekar 2005. Irani 2017: ch. 3 compares Socrates and Callicles as different kinds of *lovers*.

[49] Cf. Dodds 1959: *ad* 481e. Dalfen 2004: *ad* 481 suggests that Socrates' accusation here responds to a cultural stereotype.

ful (τὸν δυνατώτερον) possess more than those who are less powerful (τοῦ ἀδυνατωτέρου) (483cd). Following the last claim, and supported by a genealogical deconstruction of conventional morality (cf. 483a–484a), Callicles unabashedly reintroduces the tyrannical ideal of power to substantiate his own pursuit of Rhetoric and criticise Socrates' dedication to philosophy (see esp. 483de):

> **T 5** Callicles: But, I think, if a man having a powerful enough nature (φύσιν ἱκανὴν)[50] comes into being, he shakes off and breaks through all these things and gets away, trampling underfoot our writings, spells, charms, and the laws that are all against nature, and the slave rises up to be revealed as our *master* (δεσπότης); and there the justice of nature shines forth. (484a)

Callicles argues that Socrates would be able to perceive the truth of this thesis if he were to leave the practice of philosophy and use his natural capacities to become himself powerful in the city, as Callicles himself does (484c). If he wants to be the δεσπότης that, according to nature, a real man should be, Socrates must devote himself in seeking the capacity required to succeed in the public square (485d), namely, Rhetoric, which is the power to speak persuasively, daringly, and convincingly in the council of justice and in the assembly (486ab). On the contrary, the pursuit of philosophy beyond childhood is "unmanly" (ἄνανδρος) (485d), as the philosopher would spend his life engaged in *useless* refutational conversations[51] similar to the one in which Socrates wants Callicles to engage (482b). Indeed, even when he possesses a good nature, anyone who partakes in these refutational exercises will necessarily become inexperienced (ἄπειρον) in the matters that a good and noble man has to cope with in order to succeed in the city. This includes laws, public and private speeches, human pleasures and desires and, more generally, the "customs and characters" (Nichols) or "the ways of men" (Irwin) (τῶν ἠθῶν) one needs to deal with to become and remain successful in the political sphere (484cd).[52] Therefore,

[50] I modify Nichols's translation of ἱκανός as "sufficient". See *LSJ* s.v. ἱκανός. Irwin and Sachs translate it as "strong enough".

[51] See 486c.

[52] Cf. *Theaetetus* 173cd. See Irani 2017: 82.

it is shameful (αἰσχρός) to become an expert in the philosophical use of speech, because this type of person is *incapable* (δυνάμενον) of defending nor protecting (βοηθεῖν μηδ' ἐκσῶσαι) himself or anyone else he cares about from the greatest dangers (486ab). This ultimately reveals, according to Callicles, the philosopher's lack of all relevant power in the city; contrary to the rhetorician, the philosopher is unable to pronounce words "fit for a free man, great and powerful"[53] (ἐλεύθερον δὲ καὶ μέγα καὶ ἱκανὸν) (485e).

The question of power seems to fade in the following pages of the dialogue, where Socrates tirelessly argues that Callicles' pleonastic view of natural justice involves several inconsistencies and advances an alternative, moral view of justice, focused on self-restraint and limitation. As the conversation proceeds, it becomes clear that the young rhetorician is impermeable to his interlocutor's arguments for moral justice. Indeed, Callicles apparently remains unshaken in his view on natural justice and committed to his pleonastic ideal of life; the young rhetorician nowhere retracts his claim that the inability to secure one's own life is always worse than committing moral injustice.[54]. This fact, together with the vivid portrayal of Callicles in various passages of the dialogue as vehemently attached to the pleonastic desire for dialectical victory (506ab, 511a–c, 512de), has led many scholars to read the exchange between Socrates and Callicles as highlighting the inner limitations of Socratic dialectics to overcome the power of emotions and desires to reform moral convictions.[55]

[53] Irwin's translation.

[54] Cf. Schofield 2017: 20. Whether or not Callicles *actually* remains untouched by Socrates' arguments for justice is a question that Plato leaves deliberately open in the *Gorgias*, as the young rhetorician keeps significatively silent in the last pages of the dialogue (523a–527e) For suggestive implications of Callicles' silence, see Altman 2018: 235–237. A less positive account of Callicles' silence is proposed in Cooper 1998: 74.

[55] See Dodds 1959: *ad* 513c5, Dalfen 2004: *ad* 513c, Cooper 1998: 74, Scott 1999: 19–22, Woolf 2002: 30–31, Moss 2007: 229–30, Trivigno 2009: 94–99. According to Klosko 1993: 593, "Socrates is unable to convince Callicles of anything". For more optimistic interpretations, see Carone 2004, Kamtekar 2005, esp. 337, n. 36, Schofield 2017, Irani 2021, and, most notably, Sheffield 2023a and 2023b.

The examination of δύναμις as a central element in the *Gorgias*, however, helps to see things under a different light; there are textual reasons related to the use of power in the argument to prefer a more positive reading of the influence of Socrates' dialectics over Callicles throughout their exchange. Although it is plausible to assume that Callicles' convictions *regarding justice* remain untouched by argument, there is evidence in the text to support that near the end of the conversation he experiences a significant change of mind *regarding the value he attributes to rhetorical δύναμις as well as his own relation to it*, a change that is explicitly connected with Socrates' use of argument. As Schofield has already pointed out, in the last part of the conversation, the philosopher redirects the discussion to focus on the *kind of power* the rhetorician has in the city (509d and ff.),[56] actively attempting to make his interlocutor aware of the condition in which he is putting himself through his pursuit of Rhetoric (511a). With this recalibration of the argumentative strategy, Socrates finally achieves genuine progress with Callicles (513c, 521a). As we are about to see next, the discussion on the δύναμις of Rhetoric not only re-emerges in the subsequent parts of the dialogue, but it does so to play a fundamental role in Socrates' dialectical strategy.[57]

Once the Socratic arguments for justice have proven to be unpersuasive to Callicles, Socrates retakes and develops the claims on the servile character of Rhetoric implied in his characterization of it as a flattering activity before Polus (463a and ff.). Firstly, he calls attention to the fact that if, as his interlocutor affirms, Rhetoric is admirable because of its power to secure one's own life and properties in the city (δύναται σῴζειν), then the same must be said about activities, such as swimming, navigation, engine making, and others alike, which are equally necessary to preserve one's own life and properties (512c). Callicles agrees

[56] Cf. Schofield 2017: 20–21.

[57] Cf. Schofield 2017, and Sheffield 2023a. Both authors offer detailed discussions of the philosophical significance of the last part of Socrates' and Callicles' exchange (509–522), which is often neglected (see, e.g., Kahn 1983, Klosko 1993, Cooper 1998, Jenks 2007). In addition to Schofield and Sheffield (2023a and 2023b), Kamtekar (2005) and Irani (2021) are notable exceptions.

that none of the experts in these activities is entitled to proclaim his craft as being the greatest and most valuable (512b). Hence, Socrates observes, these activities cannot be deemed inferior to Rhetoric, nor Rhetoric superior to them, because they enable their participant to achieve the same effect, namely, the protection of one's life and possessions; rhetorical power is of no greater use, which makes the craft deserving of no greater admiration and praise, than the power provided by common *auxiliary* activities (512cd).

Later in the dialogue, Socrates further develops the assimilation of Rhetoric into auxiliary activities to argue that it embodies a servile (διακονική) position in relation to the citizens, in a similar manner as life-preserving activities do. To illustrate his argument, Socrates turns to the actions and projects undertaken in the city by early historical leaders, such as Pericles, Cimon, Miltiades and Themistocles, who, according to Callicles, are admirable examples of good political leadership (503c, 515d). Socrates challenges his interlocutor's assumption by pointing out to the fact that these figures were successful not in taking a leading position regarding the desires of the citizens, but instead in effectively *complying* with them (515cd, 518c). Therefore, according to Socrates, Callicles' admired leaders should be perceived as *servants* (διάκονοι) of the citizens (517b, cf. 518c), rather than as great rulers.[58] The philosopher's characterization of Rhetoric as flattering speech, then, serves to demonstrate that rhetorical power puts its practitioners in an analogous position to that of those who supply the needs and desires of the city, making the rhetorician not a powerful leader through his mastery of the ability to gratify the citizens, but, instead, a *servant* of the citizens whose words and policies are completely determined by the citizens' requirements. At this point of the dialogue, and despite the critical implications of these assertions, Callicles surprisingly agrees to Socrates' deflationary picture of Rhetoric in the following terms:

> **T 6** Socrates: Define for me, then, to which manner of caring (θεραπεία) for the city you are urging me on. Is it that of fighting with the

[58] See Irwin 1979: *ad* 517c.

> Athenians so that they will be as good as possible, as a doctor would do, or *as one who will serve* (ὡς διακονήσοντα) and associate with them with a view to gratification (πρὸς χάριν)? Tell me the truth, Callicles; for, just as you began being outspoken with me, you are just to end up saying what *you* think. Now too, speak well and in a nobly born manner.
> Callicles: Well then, I say as one who will serve (ὡς διακονήσοντα).
> Socrates: You are therefore urging me on to engage in flattery (κολακεύσοντα), you most nobly born man.
> Callicles: If it's more pleasant for you to call it Mysian, Socrates. ⟨…⟩ (521ab)

Socrates suggests in this passage that Callicles finally chooses to tell the truth, stating what he thinks.[59] With his answer, the young rhetorician now recognizes that, by its nature, the rhetorical "power" enables its possessor to be at the service, and therefore under the rule, of the citizens. This position, however, is blatantly at odds with the supposed greatness of Rhetoric in the context of the city as it has been tenaciously proclaimed by its rhetorical advocates throughout the dialogue, including Callicles himself.

Despite its hardly deniable salience, Callicles' agreement to Socrates' view of Rhetoric in the passage quoted above has failed to attract scholarly attention.[60] Only recently, Frisbee C.C. Sheffield (2023a) has underscored its significance in the context of Socrates' overall strategy, identifying it as a crucial argumentative achievement. Indeed, Callicles' agreement to the servile nature of Rhetoric is not incidental; as Sheffield points out, the young rhetorician is assenting to Socrates' leading claim that his young interlocutor is completely *dependant* on the δῆμος of Athens.[61] Even further, the characterisation of Rhetoric as servile flattery that Callicles now grudgingly yet genuinely accepts is also the crucial position Socrates argued for against Polus' (463a–c)[62]

[59] Remember Socrates' initial claim, mentioned above, about what would happen *if* Callicles *wanted* to tell what *he* thinks (481e).

[60] Dodds, Irwin, and Dalfen do not refer to it in their commentaries.

[61] Schofield 2017: 66.

[62] Cf. Sheffield 2023a.

and represents the very antithesis of Gorgias' view on the practical value of the rhetorical δύναμις as the best and greatest power in the city. The decisive role that Callicles' admission of Socrates' demeaning characterisation of Rhetoric plays within the argumentative context of the dialogue, as well as the fact that, in this case, the rhetorician chooses not to make a rhetorical move, as he did before in various parallel occasions, to avoid being defeated by Socratic dialectics (cf. 495a, 497ab, 499b, 501c), makes it worth inquiring why, at this particular point of the dialogue, he *does agree and comply with the argument*. What has led the young rhetorician to distance himself from his own views on Rhetoric — which he has so passionately defended up to now — to become permeable, at least up to a certain degree, to Socrates' use of speech, namely, argumentation?

I propose that the source of Callicles' subtle, yet decisive transformation from victory-directed to argument-susceptible could be traced back to a previous stage of the conversation. More precisely, my thesis is that the remarkable "triumph of argument"[63] marked by Callicles' concession in 521a is made possible through Socrates' earlier success, in the context of his assimilation of Rhetoric into auxiliary crafts (509c and ff.), in making Callicles aware of the *personally problematic* condition that the rhetorician puts himself into through the exercise of his tyrant-like *power* (διὰ τὴν μίμησιν τοῦ δεσπότου καὶ δύναμιν) (511a).

The preparation for Callicles' agreement at 521a begins at 509c, where Socrates manages to pull him back into the dialogical engagement by redirecting the focus of the conversation to what appears to be his interlocutor's most genuine concern: to secure *power* (δύναμις) to protect himself (509c, cf. 483b, 484d–485c, 486ab, 511a–c, 521bc).[64] Although he disagrees with Socrates' identification of injustice as the worst of evils, Callicles nonetheless *agrees*, considering it something "clear" (δῆλον), that the best way to prepare against evil is to obtain *power* (509cd). This agreement on the necessity of power significantly emerges as the first genuine common ground between both interlocu-

[63] Sheffield 2023a.

[64] Cf. Schofield 2017: 12, and Sheffield 2023a. See also Austin 2013: 33–34.

tors.[65] Elaborating on it, Socrates now shows Callicles that his desire for power, as determined by the rhetorical ideal of it, entails a fundamental problem:

> **T 7** Socrates: But, you blessed man, see if the noble and the good are not something other than saving and being saved. For the true man, at any rate, must reject living any amount of time whatsoever, and must not be a lover of life. Rather, turning over what concerns these things to the god and believing the women's saying that no man may escape his destiny, he must investigate what comes after this: In what way may he who is going to live for a time live best? Is it by making himself like that regime in which he lives, and should you therefore now *become as much as possible* (ὡς ὁμοιότατον γίγνεσθαι) like the Athenian people, if you are to be dear friend to it and to have *great power* (μέγα δύνασθαι) in the city? See if this is profitable for you and for me, you demonic man, so that we shall not suffer what they say the Thessalian women who draw down the moon suffer: *our choice of this power* (ἡ αἵρεσις… ταύτης τῆς δυνάμεως) in the city will be at the cost of the things dearest to us. (512d–513a)

The problem that Callicles' choice of the power of Rhetoric involves is his servile assimilation to the δῆμος. The philosopher claims that to attain rhetorical power, the rhetorician needs to be treated by the citizens as a friend (ὡς πρὸς φίλον) (510c), for this is the only way to guarantee that the rhetorician would receive no harm from the citizens (513b).[66] If the rhetorician wishes to obtain the citizens' friendship, then he must not appear to them as someone inferior, to avoid their despise, nor as someone superior, for they will fear him; instead, the rhetorician must appear as genuinely being one of the *same kind* of them (510b). He should censure and approve the same things as them (ταὐτὰ ψέγων καὶ ἐπαινῶν) and be willing to obey and become subjected to them (ἐθέλῃ ἄρχεσθαι καὶ ὑποκεῖσθαι), as he would do with any other source of absolute power established in the city (510bc). The rhetorician must become of the *same character* (ὁμοήθης) as the citizens (510c, 513ab);

[65] Cf. Kamtekar 2005.
[66] Cf. Irani 2021: 362.

he must be "like them in [his] own nature" (αὐτοφυῶς ὅμοιον τούτοις) (513b). In fact, the rhetorician would be able to address the citizens with speeches delivered in their own character (ἦθος) only if he *is* of the same character as them (513bc).[67] To succeed in attaining what *Callicles himself* identifies as the greatest power in the city, then, the rhetorician must not only conform his words to the citizen's *ethos*; he must also conform *his own ethos* to theirs.[68] The *ad hominem* nature of Socrates' argument is clear, for it is meant to show Callicles that his desire to become a powerful rhetorician necessarily implies *becoming* a servant of the many (513bc).[69] With this, Socrates allows Callicles to see himself as one of the citizens mentioned before in the dialogue who, following their desire for power, have since their youth aligned their own character (ἐκ νέου ἐθίζειν αὑτὸν) to the same likes and dislikes as the despot to secure their power in the city (510d). In doing this, as Irwin notices, Socrates is making Callicles realise that his condition as rhetorician in relation to the δῆμος is as "self-destructive" and "humiliating" as the one of the friend of the tyrant (cf. 511a).[70]

Socrates' *ad hominem* charge of assimilation to the Athenian δῆμος is also construed with recourse to Callicles' education and to the teacher who is willing to make of him a politically successful rhetorician as the one he aspires (ὡς ἐπιθυμεῖς) to become, the educator responsible for rendering Callicles the most like the citizens he so vehemently despises[71] (513b). Although Gorgias' name is conveniently silenced, the focus of the accusation seems clear: with the competitive model of power it embraces, the Gorgianic education in Rhetoric has essentially contributed to the development of a servile character in Callicles.[72] Indeed, rhetorical training as the one provided by Gorgias va-

[67] Cf. Schofield 2017: 23, Kamtekar 2005: 330–334, and Lodge 1896: 229, n. 39.

[68] Cf. Schofield 2017: 22.

[69] Cf. Kahn 1983. Altman (2018: 243) calls attention to the six uses of the second-person singular in the short stretch 512cd. See also Dalfen 2004: *ad* 513b.

[70] Irwin 1979: *ad* 513a.

[71] Dodds 1959: *ad* 513a2 already remarked this point.

[72] Cf. Dodds 1959: 15. See also Kahn 1983: 84, Kamtekar 2005: 335–36, and especially the precise examination of this issue in Sheffield 2023a.

lidates and reinforces its learner's uncritical desires towards (alleged) goods, such as security and immunity, which, to achieve, he would need to gratify and comply with the citizens' desires.[73]

Significantly, this servile position has been vehemently deprecated by Callicles in his opening speech as shameful and unworthy of a real, i.e., powerful, man (cf. 484bc).[74] The condition here attributed to the rhetorician directly clashes with Callicles' keystone statement in his initial vindication of natural justice and the despotic nature of the "real man": the many should serve the powerful, not vice versa (483e–484a),[75] a principle deeply rooted in Callicles' personal conviction that dependency and servitude are essential signs of disgrace, for "how would a human being become happy (εὐδαίμων) while *being a slave* (δουλεύων) to anyone at all?" (491e). By making Callicles aware of the personal implications of his *choice of power* then, Socrates is allowing him to see that the *actual* position he is putting himself in by pursuing the said power contravenes his own most fundamental evaluative standards and, thus, to question the validity of the *beliefs* under which he values that power. By making Callicles reflect on his own beliefs, Socrates' arguments are thus clearly intended to conduce the young rhetorician to distance himself from the motivations conforming his attachment to Rhetoric.[76]

That Socrates' words actually attain this sort of influence over Callicles seems to be attested by the unexpectedly self-conscious character of his response to the Socratic argument:

> **T 8** Callicles: In some way, I don't *know* what (οὐκ οἶδ' ὅντινά), what you say *seems* good *to me* (μοι… δοκεῖς εὖ λέγειν), Socrates; but I suffer the experience *of the many* (πέπονθα δὲ τὸ τῶν πολλῶν πάθος) — I am not altogether persuaded by you (οὐ πάνυ σοι πείθομαι).[77] (513c)

[73] Cf. Austin 2013: 34–35, and Altman 2018: 243, n. 89.

[74] Cf. Sheffield 2023a, and Tarnopolsky 2010: 111.

[75] Cf. Dalfen 2004: 474, and Schofield 2017: 15, 21–23 and especially 27.

[76] See Sheffield 2023a for a psychological analysis of this process.

[77] οὐ πάνυ can also be translated as "not at all" (cf. Serrano, Díaz de Cerio 2000: 221). Nichols's translation — "not altogether" — better fits Callicles' preceding con-

This excerpt marks a turning point in the dialogue. For the first time in the whole exchange, the young rhetorician openly recognizes[78] that he finds himself in a state of puzzlement; he acknowledges that he does not know (οὐκ οἶδα). More precisely, Callicles makes explicit that he *wavers*, as he finds himself *unable* to decide whether or not Rhetoric provides a great power.[79] Furthermore, as Gonzalez Lodge observed, the rhetorician's "candour" in this passage stands in remarkable contrast with his earlier "obstinacy".[80] Indeed, the 'Callicles' that surfaces here is not the fierce interlocutor unreluctantly dominated by the desire to outreach Socrates; his use of speech and so his dialogical agency seem to have changed; while he initially opposed with vehemence to Socrates' remark regarding his servile identification with the people of Athens (482c and e), he now *admits* that he experiences the same *pathos* as the many (οἱ πολλοί). But Callicles does not only align himself with the many and recognise his problematic position concerning the epistemic foundations of what he believes he wants; most notably, he also *shares* his condition with Socrates and, in so doing, embodies for the very first time in the dialogue an embryonic, yet effective, dialogical-cooperative attitude, as opposed to a rhetorical-competitive one.

Socrates' response confirms this reading, as he sees in Callicles' answer the opportunity to *explain* to him the *cause* of his resistance to be

cession where he states that Socrates "speaks well". Cf. Kamtekar 2005: 337–338, Schofield 2017: 24, n. 18, and especially Austin 2013: 42, n. 16. The same translation is preferred in Irwin 1979: 92, Sachs 2009: 106, Altman 2018: 241, and Irani 2021: 362.

[78] Kamtekar 2005: 337 sees this passage as a "moment of self-recognition".

[79] Lodge 1896: 230 reads this passage as follows: "they [most people] listen gladly only to that which harmonizes with their opinions, and are very loath to offer on the altar of more perfect knowledge the views they have come to cherish; hence they remain *undecided*" (the italics are mine). See also Kamtekar 2005: 338, n. 37, and Sheffield 2023a. Both Lodge 1896: *ad* 513c and Dodds 1959: *ad* 513c5 refer to the parallel in *Meno* 95c, a passage where the state of indecision between two possible judgements is explicitly linked to having the same experience as the many. When Socrates asks Meno whether he thinks that the sophists are teachers, he answers that he cannot say, for he experiences the same as the many (αὐτὸς ὅπερ οἱ πολλοὶ πέπονθα): "sometimes I think they are (τοτὲ μέν μοι δοκοῦσιν), and sometimes that they aren't (τοτὲ δὲ οὔ)" (the translation comes from Waterfield 2009, *Meno*).

[80] Lodge 1896: 230.

persuaded by argument: it is due to the love for the δῆμος that prevails in his soul (ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ) (513c). According to Socrates, Callicles' (newly acknowledged) condition results from his profound dependency from the values of the many[81] and, therefore, substantiates the claim that by pursuing the power of Rhetoric, he has become a servile friend of the citizens. To Socrates' eyes, however, Callicles' *self-realisation* not only qualifies him to understand the *diagnosis*, but also to receive the *treatment* for his enslaving condition: it can be overcome if they examine together (διασκοπώμεθα) the same issues *many times* (πολλάκις) and *better* (βέλτιον) (513d). Accordingly, the inclination towards cooperative use of speech that Socrates spots in Callicles' answer motivates the philosopher to try to engage his interlocutor, in the last steps of the dialogue, in a deeper (i.e., better) re-examination (i.e., once again) of the previous arguments regarding the nature and value of Rhetoric, in an attempt to persuade him of the *merely apparent* character of the goodness he ascribes to rhetorical power (see esp. 513de, 515a, 517ab, 518a).[82]

The re-examination process undertaken after Callicles' answer is surely not a fully cooperative exchange and its success is far from complete. However, it provides important signs showing that Socrates' young interlocutor finds himself *in the process of developing* a dialogical-cooperative attitude. In the first steps of the new exchange, Callicles' way of assenting is predominantly distant and condescendent: "Let it be so for you, if you wish" (ἔστω, εἰ βούλει, σοὶ οὕτως, 513e), "Certainly, if it's more pleasant for you" (πάνυ γε, εἴ σοι ἥδιον, 514a, see also the whole stretch from 516b to d), although the conversation is scattered with few apparently more genuine answers: "I do [believe so]" (ἔμοιγε, 514e and again in 515d). Socrates *repeatedly* insists to him that his assent must be based on what has been agreed (515d, 516bc, 517cd, 520b), so that Callicles' beliefs regarding the matter discussed follow from the argument (ἐκ τούτου τοῦ λόγου) (516d, see also ἀνάγκη ἐκ τῶν ὡμολογημένων in 515d). As the philosopher already pointed out at the beginning of the exchange, Callicles must be *consistent* if he wants

[81] Cf. Kamtekar 2005: 237.

[82] Cf. Kamtekar 2005: 337, n. 36, and Schofield 2017.

to reach a proper understanding of the matter discussed (482bc). It is not accidental, therefore, that, at this point, the philosopher devotes a long speech to denounce Callicles' inconsistency in the previous conversation (518ab), paralleling it with that of politicians and sophists who claim that they have made others just, while at the same time complain that those same others treat them unjustly (519d). If Callicles is not consistent, Socrates implies, he will be incurring in the same notorious absurdity (ἄτοπος) (519c and again in d) as they are (cf. 520ab). Notably, at this point, Callicles censures Socrates for making a long speech (519d) and begins to answer, consecutively and invariably, with genuine expressions of assent to the argument: "In my opinion, at least" (ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, 519e), "I do [hear them]" (520a), "Certainly" (πάνυ γε, 520c and similarly in d), "It would appear so, at any rate" (ἔοικέ γε, 520e), "It is" (ἔστιν, 521a). Callicles' last answers reveal that he has finally submitted his use of speech to the constraints (of consistency) imposed by the argumentative process and is thus prepared to comply with the argument, even if this entails accepting at 521a, as we have seen, the critical claim that Rhetoric embodies a shameful form of servitude and, therefore, the complete opposite of a great δύναμις.

5. Plato on the δύναμις of philosophy (concluding remarks)

Callicles' final admission, however, does not close the debate on the practical value of Rhetoric as a form of δύναμις. Although he concedes that Rhetoric is not the great power he assumed it was, he nonetheless keeps tight to the conviction that rhetorical power is the best means to avoid the greatest evil, namely, being killed by others (521bc). Significantly, Callicles' last proactive intervention is a genuine questioning of this very conviction: "In your opinion, then, Socrates, is a human being in a fine state (καλῶς ἔχειν), when he's in such a condition in the city, *powerless* (ἀδύνατος) to help himself (ἑαυτῷ βοηθεῖν)?" (522c). Socrates answers by stressing, once again, the requirements of consistency with the argumentative process: relying on what Callicles has agreed himself (ὃ σὺ… ὡμολόγησας), the *incapacity* (ἀδυναμία) one must be ashamed (αἰσχύνω) of having is the one that makes him *un-*

able (ἀδύνατος) to avoid being unjust (ἄδικος) either in speech or action (μήτε εἰρηκὼς μήτε εἰργασμένος) (522b). Conversely, he recalls, they both have agreed that the capacity to avoid injustice is the *most powerful* (κρατίστη) form of self-protection (522d).

Socrates further illustrates and supports the consequences that their agreements entail for deciding the most convenient type of power with a "true account" (cf. 522e–523a) of the future existence of the soul after death. Socrates explicitly links the state of the soul in the afterlife with the way in which it has exercised its power in life (524e–525a). If it has not been informed by truth (ἄνευ ἀληθείας) and has thus been used to commit injustice, then it engenders a sick, disproportionate, ugly soul (525a and 525d). Health, on the contrary, is found in the soul that has lived a pious life, characterised by its living with truth (μετ' ἀληθείας). Persuaded by this account and therefore willing to present himself to the judge with his soul in the healthiest possible condition (ὡς ὑγιεστάτην), Socrates declares that he will not pay attention to what most people find worth pursuing and that he will instead devote himself to the "practise of truth" (τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀσκῶν), in the attempt to become really the best he is *able* to (δύνωμαι) or, as Irwin puts it, "the best that is in [his] power" (526de). Precisely relying on the exercise of this power (καθ' ὅσον δύναμαι), Socrates assures that he dedicates his present existence to engage all others to this kind of life, competing with them in this uniquely superior form of contest (ἀγῶνα) to improve one's own soul as much as possible through the practice of truth (526e). According to Socrates, this kind of life paradigmatically — though not exclusively (526a–c) — corresponds to the philosopher (φιλόσοφος), the one who devotes his life to the search for knowledge (526cd) like he does.

Philosophy, then, as the exercise of the agent's capacity to direct himself to the truth through the consistent use of speech, is presented here as the power to protect the soul from injustice. Socrates himself, in speaking as he does in the dialogue, *displays* the functioning and effects of the philosophical δύναμις. This is corroborated by the text at different points and in different ways. First, the philosopher

explicitly presents his activity of common search for the truth of the matter discussed as having a healing influence over its participants (475de, 505c, 513e–514a, 521d). Furthermore, when earlier in the conversation, Callicles refuses to accept that his account of what counts as good has been refuted in the argumentative process, and harshly refuses to continue the conversation (505bc), Socrates responds that Callicles "won't abide *being benefited* (ὠφελούμενος) and *undergoing himself* (αὐτὸς… πάσχων) the very thing our discussion is about: *being moderated* (κολαζόμενος)" (505c). By connecting the content of the discussion with the effect that his participating in it is meant to produce in his interlocutor, Socrates is making it clear that the use of discourse he is trying to involve him in constitutes *in itself* a benefiting, virtue-producing activity explicitly linked with moderation and so with the application of certain limits over its participants' desires, as these are embodied and operative in the action of speaking to each other. By speaking to Callicles in the way he does and trying to engage him in the philosophical use of speech, then, Socrates is not only *proving* him wrong, but he is also *leading*, *persuading* and *compelling* his interlocutor (cf. 517b) by dialogical means to submit himself to the bindings of a truth-seeking process, thus moderating his self-imposing desire for dialectical victory.

Seen from this perspective, Callicles' cooperative reaction at 513c and the subsequent change in his dialogical attitude seem suitably designed by Plato as evidence of the proper effects of the δύναμις of Philosophy. Through his conversation with Socrates, Callicles becomes progressively more able both to evaluate the utility of Rhetoric more appropriately as well as to feel more attracted by the persuasive effect of an evaluation resulting from an argumentative process. Thus, his incipient dialogical attitude and significant concession reveal that the young rhetorician has become more inclined to act under the guidance of reasoning and, thus, a more philosophical agent. This also seems to be implied by Socrates when he claims that the proper way to take care of the citizens is to improve their intellectual power (διάνοια), making it noble and good (καλὴ κἀγαθὴ), thus resulting in truly beneficial guid-

ing of their practical lives (513e–514a). If this reading is correct, then the practice of Socratic dialectics is represented by Plato in the *Gorgias* as contributing not only to improve the epistemic quality of the evaluative beliefs of those who practise it, but also to the creation of harmony between their thoughts, desires, and actions. This harmony thus appears as the proper effect of philosophical δύναμις; contrary to the effects attributed to Rhetoric, Philosophy enables those who exercise it *to know and do what they really want*, that is, what is truly beneficial and good, instead of what they merely think is best. This picture of Socratic dialectics reveals that the Socrates of the *Gorgias* not only provides a critical account of the rhetorical δύναμις, but also exemplifies, in doing so, an alternative type of δύναμις that enables its practitioner to *realise* effectively the good that Rhetoric grandly promises but is unable to deliver.

References

Altman, W. (2018), *Ascent to the Good. The Reading Order of Plato's Dialogues from* Symposium *to* Republic. Lanham, MD, etc.: Lexington Books.

Ariza, S. (2020), "La diferenciación de *empeiria* y *technê* en el *Gorgias* de Platón", *Méthexis* 32.1: 45–62.

Austin, E.A. (2013), "Corpses, Self-Defense, and Immortality: Callicles' Fear of Death in the *Gorgias*", *Ancient Philosophy* 33.1: 33–52.

Benson, H.H. (1997), "Socratic Dynamic Theory: A Sketch", *Apeiron* 30.4: 79–94.

Burnyeat, M.F. (1997), "First Words: A Valedictory Lecture", *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 43: 1–20.

Carone, G.R. (2004), "Calculating Machines or Leaky Jars? The Moral Psychology of Plato's *Gorgias*", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26: 55–96.

Cleary, J.J. (2013), "'Powers That Be': The Concept of Potency in Plato and Aristotle", in John M. Dillon, Brendan O'Byrne, and Fran O'Rourke (eds.), *Studies on Plato, Aristotle and Proclus*, 251–297. Leiden: Brill.

Cooper, J.M. (1998), *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory*. Princeton University Press.

Dalfen, J., tr. (2004), *Platon. Werke. Übersetzung und Kommentar*. Bd. 6.3: *Gorgias*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Dodds, E.R., ed. (1959), *Plato. Gorgias*. A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Doyle, J. (2007), "Desire, Power and the Good in Plato's *Gorgias*", in Sergio Tenenbaum (ed.), *Moral Psychology*, 15–36. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Emlyn-Jones, C.; Hamilton, W., eds. (2004), *Plato. Gorgias*. Penguin Books.

Euben, J.P. (2018), "Democracy and Political Theory: A Reading of Plato's *Gorgias*", in J. Peter Euben, John R. Wallach and Josiah Ober (eds.), *Athenian Political Thought and the Reconstitution of American Democracy*, 198–226. Cornell University Press.

Gish, D.A. (2006), "Rivals in Persuasion: Gorgianic Sophistic *versus* Socratic Rhetoric", *Polis: The Journal for Greek Political Thought* 23.1: 46–73.

Gouldner, A.W. (1969), *The Hellenic World: A Sociological Analysis*. New York: Harper & Row.

Futter, D.B. (2009), "Shame as a Tool for Persuasion in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 47.3: 451–461.

Haden, J. (1992), "Two Types of Power in Plato's *Gorgias*", *The Classical Journal* 87.4: 313–326.

Irani, T. (2017), *Plato on the Value of Philosophy: The Art of Argument in the Gorgias and Phaedrus*. Cambridge University Press.

Irani, T. (2021), "Socrates's Great Speech: The Defense of Philosophy in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 59.3: 349–369.
Irwin, T., tr. (1979), *Plato. Gorgias.* Translated with Notes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
Irwin, T. (1995), "Plato's Objections to the Sophists", in Anton Powell (ed.), *The Greek World*, 568–590. Routledge.
Jenks, R. (2007), "The Sounds of Silence: Rhetoric and Dialectic in the Refutation of Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 40.2: 201–215.
Kahn, C.H. (1983), "Drama and Dialectic in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 1: 75–121.
Kamtekar, R. (2005), "The Profession of Friendship", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 25.2: 319–339.
Kamtekar, R. (2017), *Plato's Moral Psychology: Intellectualism, the Divided Soul, and the Desire for Good.* Oxford University Press.
Kastely, J.L. (1991), "In Defense of Plato's *Gorgias*", *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 106.1: 96–109.
Kauffman, C. (1979), "Enactment as Argument in the *Gorgias*", *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 12.2: 114–129.
Klosko, G. (1993), "Persuasion and Moral Reform in Plato and Aristotle", *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 47.184.1: 31–49.
Kobusch, T. (1978), "Sprechen und Moral. Überlegungen zum platonischen *Gorgias*", *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 85.1: 87–10.
Lodge, G., ed. (1896), *Plato. Gorgias.* Boston; London: Ginn & Company.
Lodge, R.C. (1928), *Plato's Theory of Ethics: The Moral Criterion and the Highest Good.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
McKim, R. (1988), "Shame and Truth in Plato's *Gorgias*", in Charles L. Griswold (ed.), *Platonic Writings/Platonic Readings*, 34–49. Routledge.
Monoson, S. (2018), "Frank Speech, Democracy, and Philosophy: Plato's Debt to a Democratic Strategy of Civic Discourse", in J. Peter Euben, John R. Wallach and Josiah Ober (eds.), *Athenian Political Thought and the Reconstitution of American Democracy*, 198–226. Cornell University Press.
Moss, J. (2007), "The Doctor and the Pastry Chef: Pleasure and Persuasion in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Ancient Philosophy* 27.2: 229–249.
Murray, J.S. (2001), "Plato on Power, Moral Responsibility and the Alleged Neutrality of Gorgias' Art of Rhetoric (*Gorgias* 456c–457b)", *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 34.4: 355–363.
Nichols Jr., J.H., tr. (1998), Gorgias *and* Phaedrus. Cornell University Press.
Penner, T. (1991), "Desire and Power in Socrates: The Argument of *Gorgias* 466a–468e that Orators and Tyrants Have No Power in the City", *Apeiron* 24.3: 147–202.

Race, W.H. (1979), "Shame in Plato's *Gorgias*", *The Classical Journal* 74.3: 197–202.

Rankin, D. (2014), *Sophists, Socratics and Cynics.* Routledge.

Romilly, J. de (2002), *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens.* Translated by Janet Lloyd. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sachs, J., ed. (2009), *Plato.* Gorgias. *Aristotle.* Rhetoric. Translation, Glossary, and Introductory Essay. Focus Publishing Company.

Schofield, M. (2017), "Callicles's Return: *Gorgias* 509–522 Reconsidered", *Philosophie antique* 17: 7–30.

Scott, D. (1999), "Platonic Pessimism and Moral Education", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 17: 15–36.

Serrano, R,; Díaz de Cerio, M. (eds.) (2000), *Platón. Gorgias.* Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas.

Shaw, J.C. (2015), "Punishment and Psychology in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Polis* 32.1: 75–95.

Sheffield, F.C.C. (2023a), "Desire and Argument in Plato's *Gorgias*", in J. Clerk Shaw (ed.), *The Cambridge Critical Guide to Plato's* Gorgias. Cambridge University Press. (Forthcoming.)

Sheffield, F.C.C. (2023b), "The Politics of Collaboration: Dialogue, Community Building and Justice", in Nelson Leventhal (ed.), *Collaboration in Ancient Literature.* (Forthcoming.)

Stauffer, D. (2006), *The Unity of Plato's* Gorgias*: Rhetoric, Justice, and the Philosophic Life.* Cambridge University Press.

Tarnopolsky, C.H. (2010), *Prudes, Perverts, and Tyrants: Plato's* Gorgias *and the Politics of Shame.* Princeton University Press.

Trivigno, F.V. (2009), "Paratragedy in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 36: 73–105.

Vigo, A.G. (2001), "Platón, en torno a las condiciones y la función del diálogo cooperativo", *Tópicos* 8/9: 5–38.

Vigo, A.G. (2007), "Medios y fines en el *Gorgias* de Platón (466a–468e)", *Méthexis* 20.1: 181–201.

Wardy, R. (1996), *The Birth of Rhetoric: Gorgias, Plato and their Successors.* Routledge.

Waterfield, R., ed. (2009), Meno *and Other Dialogues.* Oxford University Press.

Weiss, R. (2003), "Oh, Brother!: The Fraternity of Rhetoric and Philosophy in Plato's *Gorgias*", *Interpretation* 30.2: 195–206.

Wieland, W. (1999), *Platon und die Formen des Wissens.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Woolf, R.G. (2002), "Callicles and Socrates: Psychic (Dis)harmony in the *Gorgias*", *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 18: 1–40.