other places) 'in the implicit encouragement to readers to contemplate the value of the virtues' (p. 202). B. proceeds to show how virtues important to Xenophon's Socrates, such as self-control (*enkrateia*), self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) and piety, are exemplified in the figure of 'Xenophon' in the *Anabasis*. I agree that such virtues, even if they are not named or discussed, are on display in the *Anabasis* and that readers are invited to contemplate their value. However, given the importance of this section for B.'s argument, I would have liked to see more analysis of the virtues themselves in the Socratic works and of their applicability to a martial context. For example, if the army's self-sufficiency (which B. discusses on pp. 224–6) relies on plundering, would Socrates still endorse this as virtuous behaviour? In terms of argumentation, B. claims that features such as the *elenchus*, analytical thinking and the use of analogy in speeches made by 'Xenophon' further add to the Socratic nature of the *Anabasis*. Here, too, consideration of the gulf between the purposes of Socratic conversation and military speech-making could prove fruitful. I also wonder to what extent these are necessarily Socratic features, given the presence of similar modes of argumentation in, for instance, Thucydides and Isocrates.

Ultimately, I would agree with B. that Socrates influenced the way in which Xenophon thought about topics such as leadership and virtue, and this is reflected in the *Anabasis*' explorations of these topics. If, in my opinion, B. pushes the Socratic thesis too far, the book is nevertheless a thoughtful example of how we might read across Xenophon's corpus.

Harrisonburg, VA ALEX LEE
alee@millerschool.org

PLATO AND WRITING

ESPOSITO (M.) *The Realm of* Mimesis *in Plato. Orality, Writing, and the Ontology of the Image*. (Brill's Plato Studies Series 13.) Pp. xii + 173. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2023. Cased, €119. ISBN: 978-90-04-53311-0.

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E. has offered students of both ancient philosophy and Classics, as well as all readers interested in the interrelation of cognitive and aesthetic values, a new take on a very old object of vexation, which she describes in her introduction as 'the inherent contradiction in the Platonic philosophical method' (p. 1): the embeddedness of a critique of writing within Plato's very much written dialogues. As she notes and is well known, strategies for coping with the performative contradiction involved in reading the dialogues as Plato's philosophy often involve trying to locate the critique of writing in either the character of Socrates, in order to inoculate both author and reader from the critique of textuality these texts communicate to us in *Plato's* writing, or in Plato as the author, as conjuring Socrates to make arguments orally that it is Plato's authorial intent to distance himself from, ironically, in key respects.

E. wishes instead to argue that 'the true opposition may be located not simply between orality and writing, but rather between deceptive speeches (historically performed by poets and sophists) and true discourse (the speciality of the philosopher), which are present both in oral and written transmission' (p. 2). The rest of the introduction is devoted to making

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the case for this shift of emphasis from orality/textuality as modes of discourse to deceit/truth as modalities in which to communicate about, and through, images. The faculty that allows us to judge regarding truth and deceit is not sense or intellect alone, but the soul itself in its complex tripartite structure. In this way, the alignment of the beautiful and the good as forms serves as the measure of the deceptive/true distinction, in which the aesthetic object (beauty) is perceived in fullness (good) through the ontologisation of both (eidetic truth). Thus, the 'realm of *mimesis*' foregrounded in the title of the work is the space of mimetic representation, which – whether in speech or text – will be on the right side of the divide that matters whenever its object is eidetically motivated and on the wrong side when it is not. And this is so for Plato, as E. understands him, whether the eidetic representation is conveyed orally or textually; the latter concern somewhat melts away, once we shift from the apparent contradiction to the underlying opposition.

The first and second chapters are devoted to reconstructing the scholarly debates about Plato's critiques of writing and his critiques of orality (as pursued by the poets, but also by the rhapsodes and the rhetoricians) and to articulating E.'s position in respect to these debates. There are some aspects of her engagement with the scholarly literature that seem somewhat idiosyncratic – chiefly, the amount of deference and space in such a thin volume shown to the so-called Tübingen (or here, Tübingen-Milan) school of esotericism, given that E. believes this interpretative approach mistaken. Relatedly, insofar as it is crucial to E.'s attempt to resolve the seeming contradiction in the critique of writing through a displacement of the textual/oral split towards the standard of deceit and truth, Plato's use of myth as a clearly legitimate tool of mimetic representation that cannot be said to be to simply directed towards the truth gets surprisingly little attention. Given that E. takes the view not only that 'Plato can be considered the first author to explicitly set out the opposition between myth and philosophy, identifying myth with the contents of the oral tradition, such that he appears to consider the poet himself a myth-maker' (p. 65), but also that 'the transition from orality to literacy did not reflect a mere change in the technology of communication, but a deeper shift in value system from myth to philosophy' (p. 68), this is troublesome. Especially since E. acknowledges the importance of myth to Platonic dialectic – attending to the myth of Theuth (pp. 9–16), the allegory of the cave (considered as a myth on p. 97), the myth of Proteus discussed in *Ion*, for instance –, it seems to me that readers have reason to expect more of a demonstration to the effect that Plato is, as E. argues (pp. 69–70), not engaging in philosophy through myth but rather inducing readers to move with him from myth into philosophy. That may well be what is happening in Platonic dialogue, but a number of readers have understood it otherwise, and I was looking for more of an argument as to why they are mistaken.

The third chapter, which is a joy to read and with which I have no quarrel, begins with the distinction between *eidos* and *eidolon*, following the reading of J.-P. Vernant in order to establish the ontological difference between the forms in which all material participates and the *eidola* which 'spring out with any creative act, not only in the *poiesis* of human beings, but also in the *demiourgia* of the gods'; as E. notes, Plato's unpacking of this relation in *Sophist* shows that he 'is the aware and intentional bearer of a cultural revolution which shook the roots of archaic Greek thought and posited the basis of our western conception of the ontology of the image and co-extensively of ontology itself' (p. 118). E. uses this distinction from *Sophist* to make sense of the intent behind the allegory of the cave as she understands it, concluding that 'in the realm of *mimesis* human beings are not abandoned to the *eidola* only; the *eide* are accessible and create the conditions for the visibility of the *eidola*, even though the eyes cannot stare constantly at them. What matters the most for the philosopher is that he is always able to distinguish the *eidolon* from the *eidos* and that he is always on the path towards something truer using

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the dialectical method' (p. 121). This last sentence offers the clearest version of what E. believes we have to gain by leaving aside the textuality/orality distinction, focusing instead on deceit and truth.

I very much appreciate the discipline of focus motivating E.'s work, which manages to take within its synoptic vision no fewer than two-thirds of the dialogues and say something quite substantial about a handful of them. That said, and notwithstanding the plausibility of the central argument in Chapter 2 ('The Critique of Orality in Plato's Works'), I wonder if it is possible to describe her claim about the ontology of the image in Plato's use of the dialogue form as, literally, a medium for disarming the inner contradiction of transmitting a critique of textuality textually absent more robustly via engagement with work that has been done in the past two generations of scholarship on 'Plato and the Poets', specifically a line of thinking that explores the textual/oral entanglement through a consideration of the performative dimension of poetry and philosophy in the cultural mode of rhapsody. For example, the pioneering work of G. Nagy gets only one mention (p. 57), and this is to note his 1996 work on 'Homeric Questions', rather than work he and others following in his wake have been doing on Plato and/as rhapsody, which seems germane to E.'s argument. There is not time for everything, but an opportunity to hear how and why E. would differ from this reading tradition, as I imagine she does, would have been fitting as part of this otherwise engaging monograph.

Indiana University Bloomington MICHAEL WEINMAN
mweinma@iu.edu

ARISTOTLE ON PLATO

FERRO (A.) *Aristotle on Self-Motion. The Criticism of Plato in* De Anima *and* Physics *VIII*. (Philosophical Studies in Ancient Thought 1.) Pp. 463. Basel: Schwabe, 2022. Cased, CHF78. ISBN: 978-3-7965-4163-6.

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F.'s book is an in-depth treatment of a classic but still topical issue. The question of the status of self-movers became a *topos* in Aristotelian studies with D. Furley's famous 1978 article, 'Self-Movers' (in: G.E.R. Lloyd and G.E.L. Owens [edd.], *Aristotle on Mind and the Senses*), which attempted to restore the coherence of the doctrine by articulating two theses: on the one hand, the autonomy of the agents that animals constitute; on the other, their irreducible dependence on the prime mover of the cosmos, on the external conditions of existence and on the objects of representations and desire – such as the perception of prey or a predator –, objects that precisely determine the orientation of animal movement. The question is all the more sensitive in that it concerns not only animal ethology, but extends to human behaviour, human agents being both autonomous by virtue of their own capacity for deliberation and dependent on what they represent to themselves as being the good, and which does not depend on them. In the meantime other approaches – notably the volume edited by M.L. Gill and J. Lennox, *Self-Motion from Aristotle to Newton* (1994) – have enriched the debate. The question remains, however,

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