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Divine Madness in Plato's *Phaedrus*

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Abstract: Critics often suggest that Socrates' portrait of the philosopher's inspired madness in his second speech in Plato's *Phaedrus* is incompatible with the other types of divine madness outlined in the same speech, namely poetic, prophetic, and purificatory madness. This incompatibility is frequently taken to show that Socrates' characterisation of philosophers as mad is disingenuous or misleading in some way. While philosophical madness and the other types of divine madness *are* distinguished by the non-philosophical crowd's different interpretations of them, I aim to show that they are not, in fact, presented as incompatible. Socrates' pair of speeches demonstrates that madness can be divided into harmful and beneficial kinds, and in Socrates' key discussion of philosophical madness (249c4-e4), I argue that the crowd correctly recognises that the philosopher is mad on the basis of his eccentricity, but wrongly assumes that the philosopher's madness is of the harmful type because it fails to realise that the philosopher is enthused. Socrates' second speech provides information about human souls and gods which shows that philosophical madness belongs to the beneficial type and so falls under the heading of divine enthusiasm after all. Importantly, human souls and gods are shown in the speech to be roughly isomorphic. Both philosophical and other kinds of divine madness involve having something divine inside a human body (*entheos*): in the former a human soul has become godlike; in the latter a human soul has been displaced by a god. Because of this, I propose that philosophy is presented as a genuine form of divine madness alongside the other more conventional examples.

Keywords: Plato; madness; enthusiasm; possession; inspiration

Plato's *Phaedrus* features three speeches in the first half of the dialogue. The first two of these speeches put forward the argument that a boy should yield to the non-lover in preference to the lover. First, Phaedrus recites a speech supposedly authored by the Athenian orator Lysias which makes the case that the lover is sick and lacks

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self-control and so will not have the boy's best interests at heart. The second speech is composed by Socrates and is designed to be an improvement on Lysias' attempt. Towards the end of this speech, Socrates explains that when the lover stops being in love he is recovering from madness ($\mu\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$, 241a).¹ Socrates ends the speech abruptly, realising that he has offended the gods because love ($\xi\rho\omega\varsigma$) is divine. Socrates then makes another speech (also referred to as the palinode or recantation) which responds to whatever mistake was responsible for his impiety. In this second speech, Socrates explains that madness is not altogether negative and that there are positive forms of madness; positive madness comes from the gods and includes the apparently conventional madness of prophecy, purification, and poetic inspiration (244b-245a). A fourth kind of divine madness is added to these: the madness of love, which Socrates sets out to prove results from divine benefaction (245b). After this introduction, Socrates delivers an elaborate and complex description of the human soul and its pre-bodily movement through the heavens. Socrates explains that for would-be philosophers, particular earthly beauty is a reminder of the 'true' beauty (i.e., the Form of beauty) which their disembodied souls had previously experienced. The process of recognition and recollection of true beauty causes the soul of the philosopher to grow wings and become like a god. For Socrates, this means that the philosopher is divinely possessed and mad (249c4-e4).

Many critics identify both Socrates' claim in the recantation that the greatest happiness comes from madness (245b7-c1, cf. 266b1) and the implied association of $\mu\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ and philosophy as problematic or paradoxical.² It is true that the association of madness and philosophy represents a departure from the moral psychology of other dialogues, such as the *Republic*, where there is no room for madness in the good life,³ but the main source of criticism is that these two phenomena, madness and philosophy, are often taken to refer to irrationality and rationality respectively and assumed to be irreconcilably opposed.⁴

Another problem is that Socrates' account of the fourth type of divine madness (i.e., philosophical $\xi\rho\omega\varsigma$) has frequently been seen as distinct from the other three types which are presented as more established or traditional.⁵ This is because

1 For the text and line numbers of the dialogues I refer to their OCT editions.

2 Notably Vlastos 1973, 27 n. 80. See also e.g., Scott 2011, 169–71 esp. 170; Werner 2011, 47–8; Griswold 1996, 75–6; Price 1989, 64–5.

3 For discussion, see McNeill 2001, 235–68 and Nussbaum 1986, 204.

4 See esp. Scott 2011, 170–1 and Werner 2011, 47–8.

5 Of course, their *presentation* as traditional does not mean that they really are traditional. The idea that poets are mad is likely a Platonic innovation, see Tigerstedt 1970 (cf. Tigerstedt 1969); Murray 1992. Cicero (*Div.* 1.80) suggests that Plato's characterisation of poets as divinely inspired in the *Phaedrus* (e.g., 245a; cf. *Ion* 534b-c) has a precedent in Democritus (cf. Cic. *De or.* 2.194). For an overview of the testimony, see Wardle 2006, 303–4. However, there is no clear concept of poetic

Socrates' classification of philosophy as divine madness depends on it being included alongside the other types as a kind of enthusiasm (e.g., ἐνθουσιάζων, 249d2), but it is not immediately clear how philosophy meets the criteria for enthusiasm: it does not appear to involve the expected seizure by a god or the loss of agency usually associated with the phenomenon, at least not in a straightforward or literal sense.⁶ This is sometimes taken to demonstrate the incompatibility of philosophical madness with the established model and thereby to expose how Socrates' classification of philosophy as enthusiasm alongside the other apparently more conventional types is misleading or sophistical.⁷ I think, however, that Socrates' presentation of philosophy as enthusiasm is not supposed to be disingenuous or controversial, even if, as I will argue, it depends on a nuanced interpretation of what it means to be enthused.

Philosophy is not an obvious or clear case of enthusiasm; this much is shown by the crowd's inability to recognise it as such in Socrates' key discussion of philosophical madness (249c4-e4). However, the inclusion of the crowd's perspective allows Socrates to distinguish between non-specialised and expert views of the philosopher's madness, and I propose that this distinction helps to resolve some of the problems outlined above. The crowd picks out the philosopher's eccentricity, and Socrates draws his portrait of the mad philosopher from a popular stereotype. The key point is that philosophers are an awkward fit in society, and I argue that the crowd correctly recognises that the philosopher is mad on the basis of his eccentricity. However, the crowd fails to realise that the philosopher is enthused and so rebukes him, wrongly assuming that his madness is of the harmful or blameworthy type. This is because the crowd lacks the specialised moral and psychological insights which are needed to see the benefits of madness. Socrates' second speech reveals that human souls and gods are similar and roughly isomorphic. Both philosophical and other kinds of divine madness involve having something divine inside a human body (*entheos*): in the former a human soul has become godlike; in the latter human reason has been displaced by a god. By focussing on enthusiasm as divine inhabitation

madness in Democritus nor is there evidence of the poet as a passive or unconscious mouthpiece before Plato; see Tigerstedt 1970. Clement's formulation (fr. B18 DK) is possibly a paraphrase of the text quoted by Dio (fr. B21 DK); if this is right, the term ἐνθουσιασμοῦ (fr. B18 DK) is likely a Platonising innovation; see Mansfeld 2004. The fact that Plato is innovative in the portrait of inspiration which he allows Socrates to develop does not mean that Socrates is less than sincere in his presentation of the concept as traditional, and Socrates does not seem to discuss the categories of divine inspiration with any great irony. On the difficulties of sincerity and irony in discussions of inspiration in Plato see Tigerstedt 1969; Murray 1992, 37.

⁶ See e.g., Scott 2011, 177–8; Werner 2011, 61; Morgan 2010, 52–6.

⁷ See e.g., Scott 2011, 180–1 (deliberately misleading); Werner 2011, 61–2 (transvaluation/assimilation); Morgan 2010, 53 (incompatibility/rhetorical).

(i.e., having something divine inside a human body) and dispensing with some other aspects of enthusiasm, such as divine invasion (i.e., displacement or seizure of human reason by a god) or loss of agency, Socrates can show that philosophy really does belong alongside the other divine types. Because philosophy meets the relevant social and psychological criteria, I propose that it can be included as a genuine kind of beneficial and divine madness. An important upshot of my argument is that the philosopher's madness does not come at the expense of his ability to reason.

1 Enthusiasm and Philosophical Madness

Enthusiasm is broadly taken by scholars to mean that the enthused person is inhabited by a god, and, more specifically, the concept evokes a model of divine possession (familiar from other dialogues such as the *Ion*) in which the agent's reason is displaced by a divine entity, resulting in a loss of agency on the part of the human.⁸ The conventional interpretation of enthusiasm, then, is that it is interchangeable with κατοκωχή (i.e., possession) which is used for the Muses' seizure of the poet's ψυχή (245a2; cf. 244e) and ἐπίπνοια (i.e., inspiration) which is used indiscriminately for all the forms of divine madness in Socrates' later survey of his speeches (265b3). Although Socrates uses these different terms (i.e., κατοκωχή, ἐπίπνοια, and ἔνθεος/ἐνθουσιάζω) for the phenomenon of divine madness, ἔνθεος, ἐνθουσιάζω, and cognates of the latter are the most prominent in the dialogue, and Socrates implies that each type of divine madness is an example of enthusiasm (249e1).

Critics who emphasise the difference between philosophical enthusiasm and other types of enthusiasm point out that, although the vocabulary of enthusiasm is used consistently for the madness of philosophers, philosophical madness is at odds with the conventional model evoked by the earlier examples of enthusiasm (e.g., the ἔνθεος prophet, 244b) because it does not involve the expected seizure and displacement of reason by a god nor is it characterised by a loss of agency. It is true that Socrates sometimes presents the philosophical lover as seized or invaded by Erōs (e.g., ληφθείς, ἄλωσι, 252c), but his presentation of philosophical enthusiasm does not seem to imply literal invasion by a god. Instead, critics suggest that the philosopher has, through his own recollection of the Forms, become somehow godlike. In this way, the conventional model of divine invasion is apparently

⁸ Cf. *Ion* 534b-c. On inspiration in the *Ion* generally, see Murray 1996, 6–12. See Morgan 2010, 49 on enthusiasm as divine inhabitation *contra* Leinieks 1996, 95. On enthusiasm as possession (i.e., equivalent to poetic κατοκωχή, 245a2; cf. ἐπίπνοια, 265b3) see Scott 2011, 177 and Morgan 2010, 47–51, esp. 51: 'conventional notions of divine influence.' Cf. Nightingale 1995, 159: 'the inhabitation or seizure of a human soul by a god.'

replaced, in the light of the later metaphysics of the speech, by a new model in which enthusiasm (*viz.* philosophy) is derived from an internal force, and this is shown by its tight association with ἀνάμνησις.⁹ This is why Socrates' classification of philosophy as a kind of enthusiasm is taken to stretch or exaggerate the conventional meaning of enthusiasm beyond its established limits.¹⁰ This difference, between becoming godlike (philosophical enthusiasm) and being invaded by a god (conventional enthusiasm), is typically viewed as irreconcilable and therefore demonstrative of the incompatibility of these concepts and of Socrates' misleading rhetoric which equivocates between the two.¹¹

I think that this misses the subtlety of Socrates' argument. In his central discussion of philosophical madness (249b-253c), Socrates thematises precisely this distinction, that is, between popular or conventional views about enthusiasm and the special case of the enthused philosopher. Socrates explains that those souls whose vision of truth in the hyperuranian realm becomes obstructed lose their wings and fall to earth. The souls who had seen the most become philosophers (or lovers of beauty, or someone who is musical or erotic, 248d). Human beings have souls that have seen the Forms; this is shown by their ability to bring together a plurality of perceptions into one thing by reasoning (λογισμῶ, 249b-c). This amounts to a recollection of those things which the soul saw, but only the minds of philosophers can achieve sufficient closeness to these things through memory for their wings to regrow and so to regain their perfection (249c). It is worth considering the next part of the passage in some detail:

Hence it is with justice that only the mind (διάνοια) of the philosopher becomes winged: for so far as it can it is close, through memory, to those things his closeness to which gives a god his divinity (πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὢν θεϊὸς ἔστιν). Thus if a man uses such reminders rightly, being continually initiated in perfect mysteries, he alone through that initiation achieves real perfection; and standing aside from human concerns (ἐξιστάμενος δὲ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων σπουδασμάτων), and coming close to the divine (πρὸς τῷ θεῷ γιγνόμενος), he is admonished by the many for being eccentric, since they do not recognise that he is enthused (νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ὡς παρακινῶν, ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλοὺς).

9 See Scott 2011, 178; Morgan 2010, 53–6; Griswold 1996, 75. Nightingale 1995, 159–61 agrees with Griswold that the philosophical lover is not literally seized by the god Erōs, but shows how the philosophical lover is nevertheless shown to be susceptible to outside forces (e.g., the stream of beauty, 251b1-2; nourishment, 251b5; influx of particles, 251c; irrigation, 251e; the inspiration of Zeus, 253a; the stream of desire, 255c). Cf. the prosaic contrast in Socrates' first speech between the ἔμφυτος desire for pleasure and the ἐπίκτητος δόξα directed at the best (237d7–9).

10 Scott 2011, 177 (conceptual stretching); Morgan 2010, 50 (exaggeration).

11 See Scott 2011, 177–80 for the argument that philosophical madness as enthusiasm is illegitimate because it breaks with conventional notions of enthusiasm; for the opposite conclusion, but based on a similar premise of incompatibility (i.e., that we can make sense of philosophical enthusiasm, but at the expense of the conventional categories of enthusiasm which it supersedes), see Morgan 2010, 50.

Well then, this is the result of my whole account of the fourth kind of madness (ὁ πᾶς ἦκων λόγος περὶ τῆς τετάρτης μανίας) - the madness of the man who, on seeing beauty here on earth, and being reminded of true beauty, becomes winged, and fluttering with eagerness to fly upwards, but unable to leave the ground, looking upwards like a bird, and taking no heed of the things below (τῶν κάτω δὲ ἀμελῶν) is accused of being in a mad state (αἰτίαν ἔχει ὡς μανικῶς διακείμενος): my conclusion is that this then reveals itself as the best of all the kinds of enthusiasm and from the best of sources both for the man who has it and for the man who shares in it, and that it is when he partakes in this madness that the man who loves the beautiful is called a lover. (249c4-e4, translation modified from Rowe 1986a)

In this passage, the social consequences of recollection are emphasised: the philosopher who is reminded of the Forms is out of place, like a bird looking upwards and showing no concern for the things below (τῶν κάτω δὲ ἀμελῶν, 249d8), but which cannot leave the ground. In this image the philosopher is striving for remote things (which are impossible to satisfy during life) and neglects 'lower things' even though he is physically a part of the world of lower things and unable to leave. He is rebuked by the crowd (νουθετεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν) as eccentric (παρὰκινῶν), but this rebuke is mistaken because the crowd fails to realise that the philosopher is enthused (ἐνθουσιάζων, 249d2-3).

The passage shows that non-philosophers think that the eccentric behaviour has a psychological explanation: madness. However, the same passage appears to disparage the authority of the crowd who is unable to see that the philosopher is really enthused (ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ λέληθεν τοὺς πολλοὺς, 249d2-3). The philosopher's eccentric disregard of conventional priorities is visible to the crowd, but this seems to be contrasted to his internal state (which is one of enthusiasm). Some critics have suggested that this implies a strong contrast between the superficial symptoms of madness on the one hand, and genuine madness on the other, and that Plato is having Socrates trade on a confusion between appearance and reality or [equivocate] between an external, behavioural concept (like eccentricity) and an internal, psychological one (such as "genuine madness").¹² I am not convinced that Socrates makes this strong a contrast in the passage.

I suggest instead that Socrates shows the compatibility of popular and expert views of madness, while contrasting popular and expert moral and psychological insights. The philosopher is mad, yet his madness is not the blameworthy kind (of the sort anticipated in Lysias' speech)¹³ but rather the beneficial and divine kind. The division of madness into blameworthy and divine kinds is later set out in Socrates' retrospective synopsis of his speeches at 265a-b. First, Socrates explains that ἔρω

¹² Scott 2011, 180; cf. Werner 2011, 59–60.

¹³ There the lover's friends admonish him (νουθετοῦσιν, 234b3) because his actions are interpreted to have bad consequences.

was called a kind of madness (μανίαν γάρ τινα ἐφήσαμεν εἶναι τὸν ἔρωτα, 265a6-7); then, that two distinct forms of madness were isolated (μανίας δέ γε εἶδη δύο, 265a9): one produced by human disease (ὑπὸ νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, 265a9-10) and one produced by divine change of usual customs (ὑπὸ θείας ἐξαλλαγῆς τῶν εἰωθότων νομίμων, 265a10-11). Later, in his well-known exposition of division (265e1-266b1), Socrates reveals that madness (μανία, 266a6) is the *genus* which contains both blameworthy 'left-handed' ἔρωσ (σκαίων ... ἔρωτα, 266a5) and praiseworthy 'divine' ἔρωσ (θεῖον ... ἔρωτα, 266a7) as its *species*.

In 249c4-e4, the crowd is right that the philosopher behaves strangely (παρὰ κινῶν), but is wrong to rebuke him (νουθετεῖται).¹⁴ On the basis of his eccentricity, the crowd has wrongly assumed that the philosopher's madness falls into the blameworthy type, and this is why madness is characterised as an accusation (αἰτίαν ἔχει ὡς μανικῶς διακείμενος).¹⁵ In addition to eccentric behaviour, madness also implies an underlying psychology, and the crowd has mistakenly assumed that the philosopher's eccentricity reflects a psychological state which is blameworthy.¹⁶ What differentiates the two types of madness are their internal causes (and their moral outcomes), but I suggest that one aspect which unites them is their outward appearance: madness in general is clear from its outward appearance and is obvious to the non-specialist. Both of these aspects of madness, its internal psychological causes and its outward appearance in society, are important parts of Socrates' analysis.

One reason why Socrates might want to include the perspective of the crowd is because the reversal of customary ways of doing things is a key characteristic of madness. Socrates' focus on the mad person's eccentric behaviour anticipates his later characterisation of divine madness as a reversal of the νόμιμα (265a), and if customary values play an important role in what it is to be mad, this means that the crowd has something worthwhile to say. Unconventional behaviour will be clearest to the crowd, so Socrates needs to appeal to popular views in order to produce a stable typology of what is unconventional. This gives popular opinion a privileged position when it comes to circumscribing madness in terms of social difference.

¹⁴ The μὲν/δὲ construction emphasises this contrast: νουθετεῖται μὲν ... ἐνθουσιάζων δὲ. The contrast is not between παρὰ κινῶν and ἐνθουσιάζων, and this leaves open the possibility that παρὰ κινῶν can be an accurate description.

¹⁵ The phrase αἰτίαν ἔχει may mean something like 'gives grounds for suspecting,' but I take αἰτία to refer to an accusation to reflect νουθετεῖται.

¹⁶ The meaning of παρὰ κινῶν is likely different from μανικῶς διακείμενος and refers to the visible eccentricity of the philosopher; although cf. Pl. *Resp.* 9.573c: μαινόμενος καὶ ὑποκεκινηκῶς.

2 Philosophical Madness in Society

The philosopher's madness is not identical to recollection, and madness does not refer exclusively to an intellectual or epistemic state; rather, his madness is a consequence, in a social matrix, of a special motivational attitude which is caused by the recollection *on earth* of otherworldly things which are no longer present, and this attitude is characterised by frustration, intense desire, and neglect of those things which actually are present in the philosopher's social world. Socrates emphasises just how out of place the philosopher is; this is what the many recognise, and this suggests that they are correct to call him eccentric (παρακινῶν, 249d2). Plato exploits a familiar point: philosophers are often seen by the crowd to be mad because they neglect convention and society.¹⁷ Socrates develops his characterisation of the philosopher's eccentric appearance from a familiar caricature in which philosophers are often seen to be mad or ridiculous. Near the beginning of Plato's *Sophist* (216c2-d2), for example, Socrates explains to Theodorus that, to the common man, philosophers are as hard to recognise as gods (γένος ... τοῦ θεοῦ) and sometimes appear to be completely mad (ἐχοντες μανικῶς). This passage does not necessarily endorse the crowd's view (although the Eleatic stranger later worries that Theaetetus will think him mad),¹⁸ but it does assert the stereotype that philosophers sometimes seem mad to the many.

Occasionally, philosophers are ridiculed because they ignore social norms and neglect convention and society (and instil similar neglect in others). Examples of this stereotype are found elsewhere in Plato,¹⁹ and perhaps the example which most resembles the mad philosopher of the *Phaedrus* who recollects the Forms at the expense of worldly things comes from the digression of Plato's *Theaetetus*. In this part of the dialogue, Socrates draws a contrast between the philosopher's body (τὸ σῶμα) which lives and sleeps in the city, and his intellect (ἡ διάνοια) which flies (πέτεται) under the earth, measures the surface of the earth, and flies above the heavens (οὐρανοῦ θ' ὑπερ) while doing astronomy and finding out the nature of things (173e-174a). The philosopher's mind never lowers itself to the things which are nearby (εἰς τῶν ἐγγύς οὐδὲν αὐτὴν συγκαθειῖσα, 174a2), and this explains why philosophers are unfamiliar with city life such as law and politics (173d), and why they

¹⁷ For the broad stereotype of philosophers as mad or ridiculous, see e.g., Pl. *Soph.* 216c2-d2 and *Resp.* 10.607b (on which, see Most 2011, 8–11). On philosophy as a mad obsession, see e.g., Ar. *Nub.* 832, 846; cf. 1476–1509, and Pl. *Resp.* 7.539b-c.

¹⁸ This is because he shifts his argument back and forth arbitrarily (242a10-b1).

¹⁹ For examples in the Platonic corpus, see the list by Vogt 2013, 181 and Ferrari 1992, 275 n. 65 on the 'hopeless impracticality' of philosophers; cf. Scott 2011, 194 n. 35. Scott rejects most of these examples because on his view they show only that some people think that philosophers are mad, rather than that they are genuinely mad.

do not know their way to the agora or to the law-court (173c7-d2). Whether or not Plato is committed to the contents of the digression,²⁰ the parallels with the *Phaedrus* are difficult to ignore: the philosopher's winged *διάνοια*, the contrast between the *διάνοια* and the body, and the philosopher's eccentric neglect of his social world all correspond to the portrait of the mad philosopher in the *Phaedrus* (249d-250d).²¹

Socrates does not say explicitly in the digression of the *Theaetetus* that philosophers are mad but emphasises that popular ridicule is one of the pitfalls of doing philosophy. As a further illustration, Socrates relates the story that Thales the sage fell into a pit while doing astronomy because he failed to notice what was in front of him (174a). This seemingly exaggerates the philosopher's neglect of the world around him into a caricature, yet Socrates says that this is actually the case with philosophers and that this gibe applies to all who do philosophy (ταυτόν δὲ ἀρκεῖ σκῶμμα ἐπὶ πάντας ὅσοι ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ διάγουσι, 174b): they do not pay attention to their neighbours and they are even oblivious as to whether or not they themselves are human or some other creature (174b). The result of this is that philosophers look ridiculous and terribly awkward (ἡ ἀσχημοσύνη δεινή, 174c5-6) to the crowd (καὶ τῷ ἄλλῳ ὄχλῳ, 174c4) whenever they are required to talk about what is in front of them.²²

Socrates' portrait of the philosopher in the *Theaetetus* likely draws on a stock caricature of the philosopher who is interested in astronomy and geometry found in Aristophanes' *Clouds*.²³ Early in the play, Aristophanes includes various stories (e.g., 169–174, 188–195) in which Socrates and the students of the φροντιστήριον are made to look even more ridiculous than the proverbial Thales (180),²⁴ and these examples make it clear that the comic philosopher whose study of the heavens results in utter neglect of the world around him is a common stereotype.²⁵ In the *Theaetetus*, philosophers are first identified as astronomers and geometers, much like their Aristophanic counterparts. However, unlike the students of the φροντιστήριον, the

²⁰ See e.g., Hemmenway 1990, 323–46 for the view that the digression is a defence of the philosophical life (*contra* e.g., Ryle 1966, 158). Rue 1993, 71–100 offers a reading of the opposed views of philosophers and orators in terms of the preceding discussion of Protagorean relativism.

²¹ The similarity between these passages is noted by Cornford 1935, 169.

²² For the dangers of philosophy and the philosopher's ignorance of the world around him, compare Callicles' charge in the *Gorgias* (484c-d).

²³ For the suggestion, see e.g., Rue 1993, 87.

²⁴ This is a reference to popular caricatures involving Thales (of the sort found in the *Theaetetus*). See O'Regan 1992, 38 n. 14; Pucci 1960, 30; Schmid 1948, 216. On the proverbial Thales more generally, cf. Ar. Av. 1009, and see Dover 1968, xxxvi. Anaxagoras and Protagoras are targets of similar criticism, e.g., Protagoras in Eupolis' *Flatterers* (Eup. Col. fr. 157 PCG); on Socrates in the *Clouds* as a possible representative of Anaxagoras' views, see Turato 1973, 70 n. 137, 47–71. Anaxagoras receives a similar criticism in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (4.7.6–7).

²⁵ For a similar charge against Socrates, see e.g., Eup. Col. fr. 386 PCG and cf. Aristophanes fr. 691 PCG.

philosopher of the digression clearly has an interest which extends to ethical subjects such as kingship, justice, and human nature. His concern is not about particular cases (174d-e), but about generalities (175c). He is not interested, for example, in whether a king is happy (εἰ βασιλεὺς εὐδαίμων, 175c4), but in kingship and human happiness in general (βασιλείας περί καὶ ἀνθρωπίνης ὅλως εὐδαιμονίας, 175c5). The philosopher who is immersed in generalities at the expense of particulars is implicitly similar to the philosopher who studies astronomy and geography, and they are both subject to the same criticism and ridicule: the philosopher who thinks about justice is ridiculous if made to speak in a law court and fails to distinguish, for example, between kings and swineherds (174c-d).²⁶

I suggest that the philosopher who looks to the Forms in the *Phaedrus* similarly takes on the familiar caricature of the astronomer who is unaware of his immediate surroundings. As in the *Theaetetus*, the stereotype implies that philosophers neglect human customs and interests, and the Platonic philosopher who is immersed in generalities rather than particulars is seen to spend time on questions outside of routine human concerns. Although the eschatological and cosmic speculations of the palinode are prompted by Socrates' own human introspection (in response to the oracle at Delphi: γνῶθι σεαυτόν, 229e), in many respects the palinode brings in new information that extends beyond these demands (e.g., the positive account of recollection, Forms, and pre-bodily existence).²⁷ In the palinode, the philosopher examines moral terms, such as justice (one of the Forms), but also, and by virtue of this kind of study, his soul emulates the gods who move in the heavens: ethical concepts like justice and wisdom are metaphysical entities which have a cosmological basis in the context of the myth, and his concentration on moral concepts is framed as the recovery of a highly articulated cosmic state. Since the philosopher's preoccupation with these concepts is described by Socrates as the recollection of hyperuranian objects, the differences between study of the heavens and study of ethics are reduced.²⁸ Without a strong contrast between cosmological and ethical knowledge, the philosopher who contemplates the Forms runs the risk of seeming very like an astronomer who studies the heavens. Although a moral philosopher does

26 In reality, the philosopher's interest in such generalities would likely be hindered by this sort of ignorance of the particular; philosophers like Socrates do pay attention to particulars and are interested both in reality and in appearances. See Rue 1993, 87–8.

27 See Ferrari 1987, 12: 'for Socrates, myth is a tool to be used in the analysis of himself as person and philosopher.' Socrates' introspection is (at least partially) exclusive to himself as an individual, but appears simultaneously to make wider claims about humans in general; see Griswold 1996, 2–3 and Rowe 1986b, 228. See Long 2013, 10–25 on the differences between *inter* and *intra*-personal discovery in Plato.

28 Cf. Plato's *Timaeus*, where Plato has a kind of cosmological ethics, but now with a developed theory of the cosmos.

not literally need to look up in order to see justice or truth (indeed the *stimulus* for recollecting true beauty is beauty on earth), the comparison with the awkward upwards-looking bird (249d7-8) seems to incorporate the astronomical caricature. In this way, Socrates invokes a popular and formulaic satire to emphasise the ridiculous and eccentric appearance of the philosophical lover from the perspective of the crowd, and this is used in support of the madness charge.

3 Double-voiced Discourse

The philosopher seems eccentric to the non-philosopher and for this reason he is called mad, but when it comes to philosophical enthusiasm, the crowd's knowledge falls short; philosophy is not an obvious case of enthusiasm. I suggest, however, that the crowd is mistaken only in a narrow sense, and that this does not mean that the crowd is inaccurate in every respect (after all, the crowd rightly detects an outward sign of the philosopher's madness: eccentricity) or that the crowd is unable to identify other more obvious cases of enthusiasm.²⁹ In the opening of his speech, for example, Socrates points out that the example of the Sibyl who prophesies by means of enthusiasm (*ἐνθέω*) is 'obvious to everyone' (*δῆλα παντὶ*, 244b4-5).

This sort of contrast, between conventional and specialised views, is typical of the *Phaedrus* and need not imply that Plato is distorting or exaggerating the concept of enthusiasm. Sometimes Plato appears to give non-philosophical voices an active and authoritative role and at other times he emphasises the superiority of philosophical wisdom; this produces a 'double-voiced discourse' or results in a 'two-level reading' of the dialogue in which non-philosophical views co-exist alongside philosophical insights.³⁰ Conventional views about enthusiasm frame Socrates' discussion of philosophical enthusiasm and recollection, and although Socrates' own account clearly goes beyond conventional views, this does not mean that they are replaced.³¹ It is possible that Socrates has co-opted the conventional concept of enthusiasm only to empty the term of its established meaning and instead to transpose his own

²⁹ Even though Plato's theological views are not entirely traditional, I reject a deflationary reading of the traditional categories of enthusiasm. On such a reading, enthusiasm might point only to good outcomes, but not imply literal inhabitation by a god. My objections are similar to Vogt 2013, 183–4.

³⁰ See Nightingale 1995, 148–9 for the Bakhtinian 'active and passive double-voiced discourse.' Cf. Morgan 2010, 61 who describes 'a two-level reading of the dialogue'.

³¹ Both Nightingale 1995 and Morgan 2010 observe that Plato has included conventional ideas about enthusiasm only to reformulate them. For Morgan 2010, 60–1 conventional views about enthusiasm are at odds with Plato's own views. Nightingale 1995, 159–61 identifies the divine seizure of a human soul as an attitude expressed in the genre of lyric love poetry (following Carson 1986, 157) which Plato adapts into his own vision of philosophical enthusiasm.

meaning onto it (i.e., as a rhetorical placeholder for new theological content), but this does not really explain why the conventional types of enthusiasm are never dismissed as misleading.³²

Socrates sometimes yields to popular discourse on madness in important ways and, at other times, he emphasises the priority of his own views. Popular wisdom is a good guide to identifying who is mad, but it does not offer a reliable analysis of the underlying psychology and moral dimensions of madness. Specialised knowledge is needed in order to analyse madness in terms of its esoteric causes, since the nature of these causes (i.e., souls and gods) is hidden from all but the wise.³³

The crowd can recognise eccentric behaviour, but it is unreliable in matters that require specialised or esoteric knowledge. Socrates' second speech offers insights in exactly those fields, namely the nature of the soul and the gods, which are required in order to give an expert account of enthusiasm. That is, the insights of the second speech show, from a specialised point of view, exactly why philosophical madness really *is* a form of enthusiasm alongside the other more obvious examples. Knowledge of these fields is emphatically unavailable to the crowd, and this explains why philosophy does not look like enthusiasm to the many, even though they are able to recognise the more familiar forms of enthusiasm. The philosopher is enthused, not in some special sense, but in a sense which is not immediately obvious to the crowd.

My argument is that the specialised perspective offered by Socrates' account of souls and gods in the palinode shows that philosophy is legitimately included alongside the other divine types of madness. That is, his special account of gods and souls reveals that both philosophical enthusiasm and the more familiar types of enthusiasm are predicated on a shared model. An incompatibility between what the crowd thinks enthusiasm entails and what Socrates thinks about enthusiasm does not mean that the conventional examples of enthusiasm are ruled out or inaccurate. The crowd's recognition, for example, that the Sibyl is enthused (244b) does not conflict with Socrates' claim that the philosopher is enthused if his model of enthusiasm can account for both cases. Nor is the crowd's claim that the philosopher is eccentric contradicted by the stipulation that the philosopher is enthused (the philosopher, just like any enthused person, is bound to behave strangely). Socrates'

32 For transposition and replacement, see Morgan 2010, 61 and cf. e.g., Diès 1927, 400–51; Diès observes in Plato various successive transpositions from *la langue du public ou la langue de ses favoris to Platonisme* (400–1). For Diès, Plato sublimates popular language into original philosophical insights, and the popular views from which he draws should not themselves be taken too literally. Morgan reflects on the problem (60): 'the question arises as to why, if Plato's reader is meant to realise that previous categories of inspiration have been superseded in the palinode, Plato does not have Socrates simply dismiss them as inaccurate.'

33 See 245c1-2; the benefits of the fourth kind of madness are visible only to the wise.

model of philosophical enthusiasm does not come at the expense of the other categories of enthusiasm; it only requires that certain aspects of the conventional explanation be revised.

4 The Psychology of Philosophical Madness

At a behavioural level, madness is shown by reversal of convention (265a), and this aspect of madness is obvious to the crowd, but madness also indicates an underlying psychology. Socrates clearly shows (249d) that the crowd lacks expertise on the subject of enthusiasm, and I suggest that Socrates' own model discards any notion (conventional or otherwise) that invasion and loss of agency are essential features of enthusiasm yet retains the broader meaning of enthusiasm as inhabitation by a god. If the crowd insists that divine seizure is essential to enthusiasm, then this is a narrow view.³⁴ In what follows, I show that a model of divine inhabitation is satisfied by both conventional and philosophical enthusiasm if Socrates' account of souls and gods is fully appreciated.³⁵

Socrates explains that the mind (διάνοια) of the recollecting philosopher comes close to the Forms through memory (πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνοις αἰεὶ ἔστιν μνήμη κατὰ δύναμιν) and that it is the gods' closeness to the self-same Forms which makes them divine (πρὸς οἷσπερ θεὸς ὦν θεϊός ἐστιν, 249c5-6). It is easy to see why some critics have suggested that what makes the philosopher enthused is that he becomes similar to a god through mnemonic contact with the Forms *instead* of having a god inside him,³⁶ or why some say that the recollecting philosopher is 'enthused' by the Forms

³⁴ This is not to deny that some forms of enthusiasm do indeed involve divine seizure. Socrates is himself playfully characterised as inspired by outside sources (but not gods) in the interlude before his first speech (235b-237a); he claims that his breast is full and that he has been filled up through the ears by external streams as if he were a vessel (235c-d).

³⁵ I contrast the approach of Scott (2011) and Morgan (2010). Scott 2011, 177-80 dismisses philosophical enthusiasm as misleading, because it is too divergent from conventional views about what enthusiasm entails (i.e., displacement of reason by a god, loss of agency); this prompts Scott to question whether philosophers are mad in any sense and to suggest that the continuity of madness in the dialogue depends on misleading assimilation (185-194). For Morgan 2010, 60-1, philosophical enthusiasm comes at the expense of the accuracy of conventional views about enthusiasm (they co-exist rhetorically but not theologically, cf. *n.* 46), because it depends on a sufficiently different conceptual structure (i.e., becoming godlike, rather than displacement of reason by a god).

³⁶ E.g., Morgan 2010, 55: 'being inspired is a question of being next to the divine by means of your memory. Rather than having a god in you, you are in the divine (to the extent that you can be).' Cf. Scott 2011, 178: 'so Plato has tacitly put to one side the more established sense of *enthusiasm* as possession and replaced it with the notion of likening oneself to the divine.'

instead of by a god.³⁷ These differences are cited as evidence of Plato's manipulation of the concept of enthusiasm.

I think, however, that these explanations of the philosopher's enthusiasm are premised on a mistaken equivocation between the soul or mind of the philosopher and what I shall refer to as the 'whole philosopher' who is a human being with a social identity and who has both a body and a soul. If the whole philosopher (and not only his soul) becomes godlike through his proximity to the Forms during recollection, then this does indeed seem to rule out his being enthused in the conventional sense of divine inhabitation; moreover, if the whole philosopher is conflated with his soul (which used to travel in the company of the gods) then this might seem to imply that recollecting philosophers, like gods, have priorities which are determined by the Forms. But the philosopher is not the same thing as his soul or mind, and Socrates makes this clear by emphasising shortly after his description of recollection that human souls are trapped in bodies, as oysters are in shells (250c5-6).

It is the philosopher's διάνοια (ἡ τοῦ φιλοσόφου διάνοια, 249c4-5) which gets close to the Forms through recollection, not the whole philosopher. Human souls and divine souls both possess διάνοια, and both are nourished by the Forms (247d2-3). The similarity of human and divine souls is maintained throughout the speech, and Socrates' definition of all soul (ψυχὴ πᾶσα, 245c5) does not differentiate between them, implying that they share essential characteristics.³⁸ They are similar in composition and structure: both are likened to the chariot team (246a6-b3), and both are seemingly complex and immortal.³⁹ While there are some differences between them, such as the fact that divine souls have only good horses (and perhaps have an indefinite number of horses), it is sufficient for my argument that they are roughly isomorphic and that human souls are therefore capable of resembling divine souls.⁴⁰

When poets and prophets are enthused, their soul is displaced by a god (e.g., poets: λαβοῦσα ἀπαλήν καὶ ἄβατον ψυχὴν, 245a2). If Socrates' account of enthusiasm is consistent with what he says about human souls and gods elsewhere in the palinode, then a god represents a more or less compatible substitute for the displaced

37 E.g., Werner 2011, 61; cf. Scott 2011, 180 who suggests that '[the philosopher] is enthused in the same way as the gods themselves are. By contemplating the forms, the source of the gods' own divinity, his soul comes to be divine as well.' Cf. Griswold 1996, 75 and Seeskin 1976, 581.

38 See Burnyeat 2012, 243–4.

39 In the *Timaeus* (69c-d) only the rational part of the soul is immortal; for a reading of the *Phaedrus* in which the gods' horses are dispensable (i.e., the gods are simple) but are there so that gods can serve as paradigms for human souls, see Hoinski and Polansky 2014, 139–60.

40 On the differences between human and divine souls, see Price 1989, 68; cf. Burnyeat 2012, 246–7 on the order of exposition and the order of explanation. Burnyeat suggests (245) that the bad horses of human souls may once have been good; cf. Ferrari 1987, 130.

soul in terms of structure and composition. What makes gods especially different from human souls, however, is their proximity to the Forms: gods are parasitic on the Forms for their divinity (249c5–6) and have attitudes and priorities which are determined by their contact with the Forms.⁴¹ The enthused poet or prophet, then, is temporarily under the indirect influence of the Forms because their human soul is displaced by a god. This experience is presumably characterised by the same passivity and dissociation discussed in Plato's *Ion* (e.g., 533d–534e; cf. 532c5–7):⁴² the poet or prophet's personal identity is suspended and they are unable to account for their activity while they are enthused because their motivational psychology is entirely replaced by the god inside them.

By contrast, during recollection the philosopher's διάνοια is in contact with the Forms through memory (249c5–6). Socrates' use of the term διάνοια is not always consistent, but it is clear from his earlier (and clearly relevant) description of the soul's travel in the company of the gods (247c–248c) that διάνοια refers to that part of the soul which glimpses the Forms (i.e., it refers to the charioteer and not the horses) and it is through such vision that the best souls become like the gods (αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ψυχαί, ἢ μὲν ἄριστα θεῶν ἐπομένη καὶ εἰκασμένη, 248a1–2).⁴³ In this passage, it is not only the philosopher's διάνοια but his whole soul which becomes like a god by virtue of the activity of his διάνοια. The διάνοια of the philosopher who recollects this pre-bodily existence is similarly focussed on the Forms, and this means, I take it, that his soul becomes like a god.⁴⁴ Like a god, the recollecting philosopher's soul derives its priorities, motivations, and attitudes from its closeness to the Forms. For the philosopher, unlike a god, this closeness needs to be recovered by recollecting the soul's former closeness in the divine procession.

⁴¹ Cf. Burnyeat 2012, 245 who sees the difference between human and divine souls as a difference in knowledge.

⁴² See Gonzalez 2011, 95–7.

⁴³ In his account of the soul's journey with the gods through the heavens, διάνοια seems to refer exclusively to that part of the soul which is likened to the charioteer and which sees the Forms (at 247d1). Technically διάνοια here is a reference to the διάνοια of a god, but linked to the role of the charioteer in human souls through comparison: the soul's charioteer sees the Forms by means of νοῦς (ψυχῆς κυβερνήτη μόνω θεατῇ νῶ, 247c7–8); even the διάνοια of the gods is nourished by νοῦς and pure knowledge (ἄτ' οὖν θεοῦ διάνοια νῶ τε καὶ ἐπιστήμη ἀκηράτῳ τρεφόμενη, 247d1–2), and so is every soul (καὶ ἀπάσης ψυχῆς, 247d2). The contrast between what the charioteer sees and what the horses can see is emphasised again at 248a1–5. Towards the end of Socrates' speech, however, διάνοια appears to refer to the whole soul (διάνοια has parts which resemble the parts of the soul; e.g., τὰ βελτίω τῆς διανοίας ἀγαθόντα, 256a8); cf. Socrates' juxtaposition of the good and bad parts of the soul (δουλωσάμενοι μὲν ὧ κακία ψυχῆς ἐνεγίγνετο, ἐλευθερώσαντες δὲ ὧ ἀρετή, 256b2–3), and his later reference to 'the whole διάνοια' (πάση ... τῇ διανοίᾳ 256c6); see Griswold 1996, 107. For the relevance of 247c–248c to 249c5–6, see Burnyeat 2012, 245.

⁴⁴ Cf. Burnyeat 2012, 242 who calls the philosopher's mind a deity.

The similarity of the philosopher's soul to a god means that the states of the enthused poet (or prophet) and the recollecting philosopher are in some important respects indistinguishable. As human beings with social identities, poets and philosophers are composed of souls and bodies (becoming a poet or a philosopher depends on the soul's embodiment on earth, 248c-e). The enthused poet has a god inside; this god structurally resembles a human soul and occupies the place of the soul which it has displaced. The recollecting philosopher has something godlike inside; the godlike thing is his own soul which has come to be divine through his mind's recollection of the Forms. Both the enthused poet and the recollecting philosopher have a god (or at least something godlike in the case of the philosopher) occupying the place which would ordinarily house a human soul with human priorities.⁴⁵ Because of this, inspired poets and recollecting philosophers are both *ἔνθεος* in the established sense of the word: they are human and have something divine inside their bodies.⁴⁶

The divine characteristics which the philosopher's soul takes on refer to the reprioritisation of motivations within his own soul (like a god, his soul focusses on the Forms), and this explains why the philosopher retains agency despite having something divine in control: the divine thing in control is his *own* soul.⁴⁷ His soul is like a god, and gods are intellectual and ethical agents. The philosopher's soul is not displaced so he does not experience the loss of agency of poets or prophets (who are passive and whose actions are determined by the invading god).⁴⁸ The philosopher's madness rests on the fact that he is reasoning. In the passage already cited (249b-253c), recollection refers explicitly to human *λογισμός* (249c1), and there is no scope here for the role of so-called non-intellectual elements in philosophical madness (even in the early stages of recollection).⁴⁹ In this way, philosophical

45 Cf. Burnyeat 2012, 242–6; Burnyeat comes closest to my argument. He suggests that the philosopher is inspired and possessed by his own mind (*διάνοια*, not soul) which is a deity (see esp. 243–6: *The Deity Within*). However, Burnyeat does not emphasise the role of the body in enthusiasm, nor does he make a clear and explicit comparison between philosophical recollection and the other categories of enthusiasm. Sometimes Burnyeat equivocates between the philosopher's mind and the philosopher as a person (e.g., 245: 'divinity growing in the mind ... which makes one divine').

46 This notion of a godlike soul as the divine inhabitant of the body is found elsewhere in Plato; in his *Timaeus* (90a1-d7), Plato represents the rational soul as a *δαίμων* which inhabits a part of the body (τοῦτο ὁ δὴ φαμεν οἰκεῖν μὲν ἡμῶν ἐπ' ἄκρω τῷ σώματι, 90a4-5) and contrasts the priorities of the *δαίμων* with human affairs and interests (90b1-2).

47 See Burnyeat 2012, 245.

48 See Werner 2011, 56; for Werner the philosopher's relative control undermines his claim to madness: 'the mature philosopher of the palinode shows no indication of the type of *literal* possession and un-self-consciousness that characterize the poet, prophet, and Bacchic initiate.'

49 *Contra* e.g., Price 1989, 63–102 and Nussbaum 1986, 214–7 who view initial recollection (Price) and the force of the emotions and appetites (Nussbaum) as irrational factors which constitute the

madness is distinguished from the other kinds of divine madness; because the philosopher's soul becomes godlike instead of being displaced by a god, the philosopher is capable of explaining rationally his insights and so remains in control.

The philosopher who recognises the Forms might seem to be startled or to lose control (ἐκπλήττονται καὶ οὐκέθ' αὐτῶν γίγνονται, 250a6-7), but this vocabulary is an index of his alienation from his former self and from other people in his social world.⁵⁰ Since the philosopher's attitudes and priorities have radically shifted in response to his recollection of the Forms, it is as if he has become somebody else. His soul has indeed changed its character: it has become like a god because its motivational powers are directed at the Forms. A similar change in identity marked the unattractiveness of the mad lover in Socrates' first speech (ἄλλος γεγωνῶς, 241a), but where the lover's identity is unreliable and fickle,⁵¹ the philosopher's new identity will be stable (because his soul is *constantly* close to stable objects, at least to the best of his ability: πρὸς γὰρ ἐκείνους ἀεὶ ἔστιν μνήμη κατὰ δύναμιν, 249c5).

Socrates deliberately characterises his account of philosophical madness within the conventional parameters of enthusiasm as divine inhabitation: both poets and philosophers have gods inside their bodies. Appropriately, the same thing which legitimises philosophy as a form of enthusiasm (i.e., that the philosopher is a human being with a body) is also what makes him mad in the broader sense of eccentricity. The enthused philosopher may have a soul which has come to resemble a god, but, like any human being, he has a body and remains stuck in the social sphere, with its expectations for correct behaviour and a large number of unchosen social attachments (for example, to the city, to family, and to property). Gods are free of these attachments, and the enthused philosophical lover takes on the habits and customs of whichever god he had followed in the divine procession (καὶ ἐραπτώμενοι αὐτοῦ

philosopher's madness. Cf. Rowe 1990, 237 who suggests that madness is a feature of these early stages of philosophical love because the lover is initially confused and the intellect is not yet fully in control; see also Werner 2011, 55. Nussbaum is silent about this key passage in her discussion of madness in the *Phaedrus*. Price 1989, 66 admits that the equation of knowledge and inspiration is the natural reading of 249c4-e4, but rejects this because 'madness falls within the *genus* of the irrational (265e3-4).' Burnyeat 2012, 242 emphasises the connection between recollection and reason.

50 I.e., his former self no longer has any hold over him. The phrase οὐκέθ' αὐτῶν γίγνονται means primarily that he is no longer under his own control (see Yunis 2011, 149), but also implies that he is no longer himself.

51 After Socrates outlines the former lover's recovery of σωφροσύνη from μανία in his first speech, the beloved and lover are shown to exchange roles: the beloved has become the pursuer (διώκειν, 241b5) while the former lover takes flight (ἵεται φυγῆ μεταβαλῶν, 241b5). Lysias' speech had already drawn attention to the lover's change: the former lover regrets the things he has done for the beloved (μεταμέλει ὧν ἂν εὖ ποιήσωσιν), while the non-lover undergoes no such change (οὐκ ἔστι χρόνος ἐν ᾧ μεταγνῶναι προσήκει, 231a).

τῆ μνήμῃ ἐνθουσιῶντες ἐξ ἐκείνου λαμβάνουσι τὰ ἔθη καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα, καθ' ὅσον δυνατὸν θεοῦ ἀνθρώπῳ μετασχεῖν, 253a2-5). So there is a tension in living as a godlike human: enthused philosophers have priorities and motivations which match those of a god, and this produces patterns of thought and behaviour which are out of place in the human world. For this reason, the philosopher is an awkward fit in society.

The godlikeness of the philosopher's soul satisfies the psychological and theological criteria for the classification of philosophy as a kind of divine madness. These aspects of philosophical madness are hidden from the crowd (because the many do not understand how human souls relate to gods). However, the philosopher's attitudes and priorities do stand out as eccentric, and his outward disregard for human customs and conventions is recognised by the crowd as mad. This is why both eccentricity and enthusiasm are made prominent in Socrates' discussion and why having alternative ways of characterising madness is not an *embarras de richesses*, but part of the structure of Socrates' analysis.⁵² Anyone can see that philosophers are mad, but it requires the expert perspective of the philosopher (who considers the nature of souls and gods) to see that the philosopher is really mad in the positive and divine sense of enthusiasm and not in the negative sense of disorder.

5 Conclusions

Commenting on Plato's *Phaedrus*, E. R. Dodds suggests of madness: 'no doubt it startled the fourth century Athenian reader hardly less than it startles us.'⁵³ While aspects of Socrates' account are certainly less than conventional, such as his claim that philosophical madness is a blessing, I have argued that Socrates' classification of philosophy as a kind of divine madness (often seen as problematic) is not supposed to conflict with the conventional model of enthusiasm. Socrates shows that the crowd, who recognises the madness of the philosopher because of his eccentricity, is mistaken only in its analysis and evaluation of the philosopher's moral psychology. Socrates' explanation of the transformation of the philosopher's soul reveals that, in fact, philosophical activity qualifies as a praiseworthy form of god-given madness which belongs alongside the other less controversial divine types. This approach means that the crowd does not need to revise its view of madness, nor its view of philosophers as mad, in order to be persuaded that philosophy can be a good thing, and the benefits of philosophy are made to seem like a natural consequence of

⁵² *Contra* Scott 2011, 179.

⁵³ Dodds 1973, 64.

conventional views in combination with specialised psychological and moral insight. This makes Socrates' claims about the role of philosophy in the good life particularly compelling.

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