

PLATO
SYMPOSIUM

EDITED BY
SIR KENNETH DOVER
President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford



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- LSJ = Liddell, H. G., and Scott, R., *Greek-English Lexicon*, revised by Sir Henry Stuart Jones and R. McKenzie, with Supplement (Oxford 1968)
- MT = Goodwin, W. W., *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, revised edition (London 1910).

Collections of fragments

Fragments of Aeschylus, Euripides, Sophocles and minor tragic poets are cited from Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta*; of Alcaeus and Sappho, from Lobel and Page, *Poetarum Lesbiorum fragmenta*; of Alcman, from Page, *Poetae lyriici Graeci*; of Archilochus, Solon and Theognis, from West, *Iambi et elegi Graeci*; of Aristophanes, Alexis, Antiphanes, Eupolis, Pherecrates and Plato Comicus, from Kock's *Comicorum Atticorum fragmenta* and Demiańczuk's *Supplementum comicum*; of Critias, Democritus, Empedocles, Gorgias, Heraclitus, Parmenides and Prodicus, from DK and (where applicable) from KR also; of Hesiod, from Merkelbach and West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica*; and of Ion of Chios and Philochorus, from Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*.

INTRODUCTION

I EROS

Plato's *Symposium* depicts a gathering of guests in the house of the tragic poet Agathon. After dinner they decide that instead of hard drinking and singing they will take it in turns to make a speech in praise of ἔρως. This word, which can denote any very strong desire (e.g. for victory) and is used also by Homer (in the form ἔπος) to denote appetite for food and drink, usually means 'love' in the sense which that word bears in our expressions 'be in love (with...)' (ἐρᾶν, epic and poetic ἐρασθαί) and 'fall in love (with...)' (ἐρασθῆναι): that is, intense desire for a particular individual as a sexual partner. The word is not used, except rhetorically or humorously, of the relations between parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and servants or rulers and subjects.

Like rivers, mountains, abstractions (e.g. justice, piety) and forces (e.g. shame, terror) which are felt by the individual as acting upon him from outside, eros was constantly spoken of as a deity and was so portrayed in the visual arts. Since Greek script did not distinguish between capital and small letters, only the context can show whether a writer who uses the word 'eros' is saying something about a youthful winged deity or about an aspect of human feeling and behaviour. In translating, we must keep 'he' and 'it' both at our disposal and use whichever is appropriate to any given context. It would be mistaken to say that the deity Eros is 'only' the symbol of a natural force, since his characteristics (especially as described by Agathon in 195c6-196b3, in accordance with representation in the visual arts) are characteristics of the outward form of objects of eros, or of temperaments susceptible to eros, but not of the natural force itself.

'Love' in general is φιλία in Greek (verb φιλεῖν); it can denote non-belligerency between nations, the affection we may feel for a colleague and the great love which we commonly feel for a parent, child, close friend or (combined with sexual desire) for a spouse or lover. 'Do you love me?' is φιλεῖς ἐμέ; whether in a sexual (e.g. Xen.

Smp. 9.6) or familial (e.g. *Ar. Clouds* 82) context.¹ Sexual intercourse was regarded as the province of the goddess Aphrodite and was called τὰ ἀφροδίσια (verb ἀφροδισιάζειν); sexual desire was most commonly denoted by words for desire in general, ἐπιθυμία and ἐπιθυμῆν. Since it is common to desire relief of sexual tension without caring much about the identity of one's partner, while sexual intercourse may in turn generate a great love for a particular partner, Greek literature does not draw a consistent and precise distinction between the role of Aphrodite and the role of Eros (cf. 180c3f. n.).

The Greeks generally agreed, however, in treating the difference between eros and ordinary sexual desire as quantitative (Prodicus (B7) defined eros as 'desire doubled', adding that 'eros doubled' is 'madness') and in treating both as essentially a response to the stimulus afforded by the sight of a person who is καλός. This word, when applied to a person, means 'beautiful', 'pretty', 'handsome', 'attractive', and its antonym is αἰσχροός 'ugly'. The words are also applied to objects, sights and sounds and whatever can be heard about and thought about, such as an institution, an achievement or failure, or a virtuous or vicious action; καλός expresses a favourable reaction ('admirable', 'creditable', 'honourable') and αἰσχροός an unfavourable reaction ('disgraceful', 'repulsive', 'contemptible').²

Four speakers in *Smp.*, including Socrates, treat eros as a response to what is καλός. Aristophanes (as we shall see) holds a different view, and Eryximachus comprehends under eros all forms and degrees of harmonious relationship. Socrates, as might be expected (see §3 below), regards the eros excited by beautiful persons as simply the first step towards satisfaction of the soul's desire for transcendent beauty.

¹ There are several other words for love. In Christian Greek ἀγάπη and ἀγαπᾶν are favoured, but it should be noted that in classical Greek these words can denote love of which a sexual relationship is an ingredient (on an early Attic red-figure vase a woman lolling 'topless' on a bed and drinking wine is named Ἀγάπη).

² In later Greek καλός replaced ἀγαθός and χρηστός as the most general word for 'good'. The process began early with the synonymy of the adverbs καλῶς and εὖ: *GPM* 69-73.

2 HOMOSEXUALITY

In *Smp.* we hear a great deal more of homosexual than of heterosexual eros; and this is not an eccentricity of Plato's, but consonant with the behaviour of his time and place. It is clear from Greek literature, art and myth that at least by the early sixth century B.C. the Greeks had come to think it natural¹ that a good-looking boy or youth should excite in an older male the same desire for genital contact and orgasm as is excited by a pretty girl. They did not consider homosexual relations incompatible with concurrent heterosexual relations or with marriage; some men were no doubt predominantly homosexual, but the sustained relationship between Pausanias and Agathon which we encounter in *Smp.* (177d, 193bc) is something unusual.

The language of sex in serious Greek literature (as distinct from comedy and some minor genres) is always circumspect, and the reader should not be misled by the recurrent terms ὑποπυγῆν 'render a service', and χαρίζεσθαι 'grant a favour'. The ultimate 'service' or 'favour' desired by the older male is bodily contact leading to orgasm, though no doubt a smile or a friendly word would be treasured by the besotted lover as an interim favour. It is clear that a homosexual lover was thought capable of all the obsessive longing, despair, self-abasement and devoted self-sacrifice which our most romantic literature associates with heterosexual love.²

Wherever and whenever the homosexual ethos of the Greek world originated (cf. 182b1 n.), the simple answer to the question, 'Why were the Athenians of Plato's time so fond of homosexual relations?' is 'Because their fathers and grandfathers were'. The structure of Athenian society, and in particular the segregation of the sexes, reinforced and maintained this ethos. At least in families which owned enough slaves to exempt their womenfolk from running errands and working out-of-doors, it was difficult and dangerous for an Athenian youth to have a love-affair with the daughter of a neighbour of citizen status. It was easy for him, if he had some pocket-money, to pay for the use of the body of a woman of foreign or servile status; with more money, he could make a more permanent arrangement; but only by courting and seducing a younger male of freeborn status could

¹ *GH* 60-8.

² *GH* 50-2, 123f.

he achieve the satisfaction of being accepted for his own sake (and of being admired and envied by his fellows for his 'conquest') without incurring the risks attendant on adultery.¹

The Greeks did not think of a homosexual love-affair as involving mutual desire on the part of two males of the same age-group. The more mature male, motivated by eros, 'pursues', and the younger, if he 'yields', is motivated by affection, gratitude and admiration. The older male is the ἐραστής ('lover'), the younger is his ἐρώμενος (passive participle of ἐρᾶν) or his παιδικά (a neuter plural, 'things to do with boys', designating a person).² Society sympathised with the persistent ἐραστής and encouraged him, but did not tolerate forwardness or deliberate seductiveness on the part of the ἐρώμενος; we may compare heterosexual societies in which women are expected to say 'no' but men are expected to go on trying to make them say 'yes'.³

Plato's Socrates enters urbanely into the conventions of Athenian homosexuality.⁴ For example, in *Chrm.* 155c he professes to have been thrown into a confused and excited state by a glimpse inside Charmides' cloak, just as if he were speaking of glimpsing a girl's breasts; in *Lysis* 206a he advises Hippothales, who is madly in love with Lysis, that the more one praises a good-looking boy, the more conceited he becomes and 'the harder he is to get' (δυσάλωτότερος); and in *Smp.* 177d6-e3 he welcomes Phaedrus' proposal of speeches in praise of Eros with enthusiasm, saying, 'I don't claim to understand anything but τὰ ἐρωτικά!' What he means by τὰ ἐρωτικά, we learn by the time we have finished reading *Smp.*, and not least from Alcibiades' story of his own vain attempt to seduce Socrates. The description of Aristodemus as an ἐραστής of Socrates (173b3) is half a joke,⁵ half an acknowledgement that the Socratics used the language of eros more freely, and with less specialised connotations, than most people.

Any relationship between an older and a younger male in a Greek community had an educational dimension which was necessarily lacking in a relationship between a man and a woman, since the younger, destined to become an adult male, could take the older as a model to be imitated, and this stimulated the older to become, and

¹ *GH* 149-51, *GPM* 209-16.

² *GH* 16f.

³ *GH* 81-109.

⁴ *GH* 153-7.

⁵ Cf. *Prt.* 317c, where Socrates speaks of himself and Hippocrates as ἐρασταί (i.e. 'fans') of Protagoras.

remain, worth imitating. That is why the homosexual response of a man to the visual stimulus afforded by a handsome boy or youth seemed to Plato a good foundation upon which first a teacher-pupil relationship, and then a cooperative intellectual enterprise, could be built. He also considered that our response to visual beauty (*Phdr.* 250d) is the clearest glimpse of eternity that our senses afford us (modern metaphysicians are apt to think first of a Beethoven symphony, though some prefer a Highland sunrise); and there can be little doubt that homosexual response was the most powerful emotional experience known to most of the people for whom he was writing. Whether he himself was a stranger to heterosexual response cannot be decided on existing evidence. Equally, we do not know whether Socrates experienced homosexual temptation as strongly as others did, or less; Aristoxenus in the late fourth century reported (fr. 54a) a tradition (which Platonists have been inclined to treat contemptuously) that Socrates' heterosexual appetite was abnormally strong.

3 PHILOSOPHY

Plato was born in 428/7 and was therefore 28 when Socrates was executed. He has nowhere given us a comprehensive statement of his philosophy as it was at any one period of his life, declaring its axioms, explaining its methods systematically and offering proof of its conclusions. In each work he explores a problem or group of problems without indicating, any further than is necessary for the purpose of that work, its relation to other problems. If we knew the exact date of every one of his works, it would be easier to plot the course of his intellectual development and fill in the gaps. As it is, we know only the relative order of some works, and our ordering of the rest depends on reconciliation of observable changes in style with acceptable hypotheses about the development of his thought. Hence it is possible to ask, e.g., 'When he wrote *Smp.*, did Plato believe in the immortality of the soul?', and different scholars have given different answers to that question.

The philosophical portions¹ of *Smp.* can be followed by any reader

¹ What precedes Socrates' interrogation of Agathon (with the doubtful exception of Eryximachus' speech) and what follows the arrival of Alcibiades are not philosophical, though Plato no doubt wishes us to draw

who attends carefully to what is said, even if he has no previous acquaintance with Platonic or any other philosophy. He may, however, be surprised to find so much unjustified and implausible assertion and so little rigorous argument. He will be less surprised if he is aware of Plato's fundamental assumptions.

In life we encounter many things, people and events. Each of these 'particulars' is limited in time and space: it comes into being, it exists here or there, it changes, it ceases to be. Since we do not encounter anything which is wholly unlike everything else, we can form and use 'universal' concepts, generalising, exemplifying, defining, deducing and predicting. In the light of experience, and in accordance with our needs in trying to understand and affect our environment, we correct our generalisations, modify our definitions, replace our axioms. To many people this situation is wholly acceptable. Others, of whom Plato was one, believe that there is something more, something which 'really exists', unchanging, independent of our indefinitely adjustable generalisations and pragmatic definitions. Whether this belief happens to be right, happens to be wrong, or is insufficiently meaningful to be called either, it is at any rate not dictated by reasoned reflection on experience; it is engendered by a kind of craving, which may itself be an operation of divine grace, a psychopathological symptom, the product of an intellectual failure to disentangle words from things, or an element of good or bad luck in the temperament which heredity and experience combine to produce in the individual. Whatever it is, Plato yielded to it, but not to it alone; a second craving made him a philosopher (rather than the kind of visionary who claims portentously to understand the 'meaning of life'), for he believed that the human soul is able to attain firm and certain knowledge of real unchanging entities (εἶδη, ἰδέαι 'ideas' or 'forms') by systematic and communicable reasoning. This knowledge is ἐπιστήμη; propositions founded upon experience, and therefore ultimately on sensory perception, are δόξαι 'opinions'. The eye can perceive an object of the kind we call 'beautiful', but the idea of beauty – 'Beauty', 'the beautiful' (τὸ καλόν), 'the beautiful (by) itself' (αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν) – is perceived only by 'the eye of the soul' (cf. 211E–212A). Plato freely uses generalisations based

from both those portions some inferences which are relevant to his philosophical argument.

upon sensory experience (e.g. 207ab) in corroboration or refutation of hypotheses about the ideas, and *how* particulars, perceptible by our senses and having dimensions in time and space, reflect or 'participate in' the ideas is never explained; indeed, in *Phd.* 100d Plato makes his ignorance of the mechanism explicit. Equally, when the poets treated, e.g., Justice or Modesty as personal deities, or when a worshipper sacrificed at an altar dedicated to Good Order, the relationship between the goddess and the attributes or actions after which she was named was not subjected to intellectual scrutiny; and Plato's 'ideas' are, historically speaking, the progeny of the personified abstractions who thronged the suburbs of Olympus.

Plato's third and most distinctive craving is revealed in a passage of *Phd.* (97b–99b) where he portrays Socrates as dissatisfied with Anaxagoras' explanation of the working of the physical universe because Anaxagoras failed to show why it is *best* that things should work as they do – in other words, because Anaxagoras seemed to him to deal with causation and explanation at a trivial mechanistic level and not to answer the questions which really matter. Plato did not make the thoughtless error of assuming that what is infinite and eternal must for that sole reason be better (or worse) than what is finite and transient. He chose, rather, to believe, or welcomed his own compulsion to believe, that Good is at the very heart of the universe, the ultimate explanation of its structure and of the functioning of all that is in it, including the interrelation of the ideas. In *Rep.* 508d the idea of good (ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα) is the 'cause (αἰτία) of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and truth', and in 509b the relation of what is known (τὰ γινωσκόμενα) to the good is compared to the relation of what is seen (τὰ ὁρώμενα) to the sun which not only makes what is seen visible but also brings it to life and growth.

This belief explains why Plato so readily equates knowledge and virtue, between which our everyday experience leads us to draw a considerable distinction. There is nothing man can do about reality (that is, in Plato's terms, the ideas) except understand it rationally; but man's response to good, determined by the very nature of good (cf. 204d–206a), is desire and love. Hence (Plato thinks) desire and reason continuously reinforce each other, and if the good is the ultimate explanation of everything, desire and reason actually converge upon it and will fuse at the point where 'vision' of the good is attained.

But why does anyone embark on the road whose ultimate destination is the fusion of reason and desire in knowledge of the good? In *Smp.* Plato offers an account of an operative force, an ingredient in the structure of the universe, which propels us on that road. That force is eros. The manifestations to which we give the name of eros in ordinary life are in some cases first steps on the right road, in other cases errors or perversions, just as in any other thoughts, desires or actions we can be on the right lines or badly astray. To the extent to which we share Plato's assumptions, his account will seem attractive to us. If we do not share his assumptions, we may not find any part of his account even momentarily plausible. Do not expect him to 'prove' that his account is true; he made no serious attempt, at least in his extant works, to convert his assumptions into logically demonstrable propositions. Had he succeeded in doing so, more of his pupils and successors would have been Platonists. Perhaps their familiarity with the artfulness employed by forensic speakers in seeking to implant assumptions and attitudes in the minds of a jury put them on their guard when Plato employed the same artfulness (e.g. 210b, 205a (p. 145)) in the service of metaphysics.

4 HISTORICAL BASIS

Smp. begins with a short scene in dramatic form. Apollodorus has met Glaucon and some other friends, and they have asked him to tell them the story of Agathon's party. He agrees to tell it as he himself heard it from Aristodemus, who had actually been at the party. The story begins at 174a3 ἔφη γὰρ οἱ Σωκράτῃ ἐντυχεῖν 'Aristodemus said that Socrates met him', and right to the end the narrative framework is expressed as reported speech, while the actual words uttered by the characters in the story are mostly given in direct speech; see 174a n. for more details. We are reminded at fairly frequent intervals (e.g. 177e8–178a5) that Apollodorus is speaking not as an eye-witness but as a reporter of what he had heard from Aristodemus.

Plato uses a similar technique in *Parmenides*, where Cephalus tells how his half-brother Antiphon told the story told to him by Pythodorus about Socrates' meeting with Parmenides and Zeno (*Phd.* is a little different, in that Phaedo, who tells Echechrates the story of Socrates' death, had himself been present on that occasion). Plato's

reasons for adopting this technique in a minority of his works are not known; in some others, Socrates himself is the narrator, and the majority are cast in purely dramatic form throughout. Conceivably Plato wished to give authority to his portrayal of Socrates by implicitly inviting us to check it against an independent tradition. On the other hand, he may have intended an oblique suggestion that his portrayal should be judged – like myths or moralising anecdotes – more on its intrinsic merits and the lessons to be learned from it than on its truth to fact. Although Apollodorus says (173b4–6) that he checked 'some things' in Aristodemus' account with Socrates himself, he reminds us (172e3–6) that he has kept company with Socrates for only three years, whereas it is 'many years' since Agathon left Athens, and (178a1–3) that there are gaps both in his own memory and in Aristodemus'.

It would be wrong to imagine that a man like Plato, who pursues with intellectual acuity and with every evidence of passionate concern the philosophical study of virtue and justice, necessarily observes the standards of veracity which we demand of a historian or scientist. If he is accustomed, as a metaphysician, to using words like 'reality' and 'existence' in senses which sometimes approximate to the opposite of the senses which those words bear in ordinary discourse, we may find that his notions of truth also are idiosyncratic. We cannot take it as certain that the personages of *Smp.* were ever all present at the same party in Agathon's house or anywhere else. To acknowledge this is not to assert that they cannot have been present. The occasion of the party is Agathon's first victory as a tragic poet (173a5–6). Agathon won this victory at the Lenaea early in 416,¹ and we have no grounds (of the kind which gives trouble in the 'dramatic dating' of some other Platonic works) for saying that any of the identifiable personages of the story were dead or abroad at that time. Aristophanes, as author of *Clouds*, may possibly have been so hostile to Socrates that even the most self-confident of hosts would have thought twice about inviting them to the same party; but it would be going far beyond the evidence to say that Agathon did not invite them.

¹ The date is given us by Athenaeus 217b, and comes ultimately from the Athenian official record of the festivals. Thus at the party Socrates is in his early fifties. Alcibiades is in his thirties; his appointment as one of the generals of the Sicilian Expedition lies over a year ahead (a persistent

Socrates in *Smp.* claims to have learned about the nature of eros from a Mantinean woman named Diotima, and he reports what she said to him. She described, he says (210a1-212a8), a systematic rational progress from admiration of particular beautiful persons and things, which are perceived by the senses, to the spiritual contemplation and understanding of that universal beauty (τὸ καλόν) which is independent, unchanging and eternal, a universal in which all perishable beautiful particulars somehow share (211b2-5). The language used of τὸ καλόν by Diotima is the language used of it also in *Phd.* 100b-d and *Rep.* 474d-479e. Now, Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 987b1-10, 1078b17-1079a4, 1086a35-b5) states that Socrates interested himself in the definition of virtues but did not separate (χωρίζειν) universals from particulars; this separation, he says, was made by Plato, who postulated ἰδέαι in which particulars 'participate'. Unless Aristotle's sources of information on Socrates were very much less numerous and varied than one would naturally suppose, his statement implies that Socrates did not talk about beauty in the terms in which Plato's Socrates talks about it. *A fortiori*, Diotima (if there ever was such a person) did not instruct Socrates in those terms.

5 DATE OF COMPOSITION

Two passages (182b6f. and 193a2f.) make historical allusions which suit Plato's own time but not the time at which Agathon was writing tragedies. The former speaks of 'many parts of Ionia and elsewhere' as being 'under the barbarians', and the latter refers to the 'splitting up' of the Arcadians by Sparta. The King's Peace of 387/6 recognised the Persians' claim to 'the cities in Asia'; and in 385 the Spartans broke up the Arcadian city of Mantinea into four separate settlements. Another consideration is that in 178e-179b3 Phaedrus speaks of an army composed of ἑραστοί and their παιδικά in extravagant and entirely hypothetical terms; but there are reasons for thinking that the 'sacred band' of Thebes, composed in just such a way, was formed in or very soon after 378. A dating of *Smp.* to the period 384-379 is consistent with its style and its philosophical content.¹

arithmetical error in modern discussions of *Smp.* has obscured that interval).

¹ I have argued this in more detail in *Phronesis* 10 (1965) 1-20; for a different interpretation see H. B. Mattingly, *ibid.* 3 (1958) 31ff.

6 SYMPOSIA

A Greek at a party lay on a bed, turning the upper half of his body to the left, propping himself by his left elbow on cushions, and taking food and drink with his right hand from a table on the left of the bed. At Agathon's party (as we see often in vase-paintings) each bed is wide enough for two (175c6-8), who must therefore lie obliquely, one further down the bed than the other, so that each can get at his own food-table (it appears from 213a7-b7 that Agathon's bed could accommodate three). Lying on one elbow seems uncomfortable for eating and inconvenient for conversation, but it was advantageous at the kind of party which included sexual intercourse with hired women and ended with collapse into drunken sleep. At Agathon's party Phaedrus lies 'first' (177d4) and Agathon 'last' (175c7) until the arrival of Socrates, who then becomes the last. The guests are required to deliver their speeches ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ 'from left to right' (177d3), beginning with Phaedrus and ending with Socrates. Eryximachus, whose turn is meant to follow Aristophanes', lies 'on the bed below (κάτω) Aristophanes' (185d1). Evidently the beds are disposed in a circle or rectangle, and ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ probably denotes an anti-clockwise sequence from the door, each speaker being followed by the person whom he could more easily touch with his right hand than with his left.

Xen. *Anab.* 6.1.30 makes a passing reference to the election of a συμποσίαρχος at a symposium, and the implication of Alexis fr. 21 is that the man elected could prescribe endless toasts. Agathon and his guests do not elect anyone, but Eryximachus takes the lead in proposing how they should conduct themselves (176b5-177e6; cf. p. 85) and thereafter (189a7-c1; cf. 193d6-194a4) is inclined to behave as if he were in charge; he even manages to reassert his authority (214a6-c3) after the drunken Alcibiades has cried (213egf.) 'I elect ἄρχοντα τῆς πόσεως - myself!'

7 ENCOMIA

The speech which each guest delivers is described indifferently as ἐπαινος 'praise' (e.g. 177d2) or an 'encomium' (e.g. 177b1) of eros. The word ἐγκώμιον seems originally to have denoted a song of

welcome and felicitation addressed, e.g., to an athletic victor by a festive crowd (κῶμος), but by the early fourth century it was applied also to speeches composed in praise of any kind of person or thing. Later in the century the author of the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* (35) formulated rules for the genre. The speaker, he says, should praise (i) those blessings with which the subject is endowed ἐξω τῆς ἀρετῆς 'independently of (*sc.* his own) good quality', namely, his good family background, strength, beauty and wealth;¹ (ii) his ἀρετή, divided into σοφία ('skill', 'accomplishments'), δικαιοσύνη ('honesty', 'uprightness'), ἀνδρεία ('courage') and ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐνδοξα ('pursuits and activities which enhance his reputation'); (iii) his forebears; (iv) his achievements, including what he has caused to happen through the agency of others. Rhetorical rules of this kind were founded on existing practice, and an instructive example is Xenophon's *Agesilaus*, which he calls (1.1, 11.1) ἔπαινος. He begins with the king's εὐγένεια 'birth into a good family' (1.2), proceeds to narrate his notable ἔργα (δοξα... διεπράξατο, 1.6), and goes on to τὴν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἀρετήν (3.1), dealing in turn with his piety (3.2), honesty (4.1), self-control (5.1; the term σωφροσύνη is used in 5.7), courage (6.1), skill (6.4) and other specific virtues and graces (7.1). The 'cardinal virtues' (not always exactly the same ones, nor in the same order)² are of primary importance in encomia, and we shall encounter them in the speeches delivered by Phaedrus and Agathon. Piety towards the gods will be missing, since Eros is himself a god.

8 TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

Substantial portions of the second half of *Smp.* are preserved in a papyrus of the second century A.D. (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 843). The complete work exists in nearly forty medieval manuscripts, of which the oldest is the Clarkianus (in the Bodleian Library at Oxford), written in A.D. 895. There are few marginal scholia in the manuscripts. Many authors of late antiquity quote from Plato, and occasionally in a form which makes better sense than the direct textual tradition.

In the present edition variant readings and conjectures are given in

¹ The Greeks tended to regard wealth as a matter of luck rather than as the reward of intelligent industry: *GPM* 110, 172–5.

² *GPM* 66f.

the apparatus criticus only where it seems to me that there is real doubt about what Plato wrote and that it really matters. The following sigla are used:

- a** The only reading found in the papyrus text.
- a** One of two or more readings found in the papyrus text.
- m** The only reading found in those medieval manuscripts which have so far been collated.
- m** One of two or more readings found in those manuscripts.
- c** The only reading found in ancient quotations of the passage in question, so far as editors have reported the quotations.
- c** One of two or more readings found in ancient quotations.
- z** Conjectural emendation proposed at any time from the Renaissance to the present day.
- [a]** From 201a to 214a and from 217b to the end this siglum means that the papyrus text is not legible. Up to 200e and from 214b to 217a we have no papyrus text, and no inference must be drawn there from absence of mention of **a**.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

The only edition of *Smp.* with a commentary in English is that of R. G. Bury (second edition, Cambridge 1932). Robin's edition includes a French translation, an extensive introduction and some footnotes (sixth edition, Paris 1958).

The translation by Walter Hamilton (Harmondsworth 1951) is more perceptive and felicitous than those of Benjamin Jowett (in vol. i of Jowett's Plato translation, revised by D. J. Allan and H. E. Dale, Oxford 1953) and W. R. M. Lamb (in vol. v of the Loeb Plato, London 1925); it is also closer to the Greek than that of Michael Joyce, included in (ed.) John Warrington, *Plato: the Symposium and other dialogues* (London 1964).

For a concise and lucid exposition of the issues raised in the study of the *Symposium* see *HGP* iv 365–96, where there is also a good bibliography of books and articles published before the middle of 1973. F. M. Cornford, *The unwritten philosophy and other essays* (Cambridge 1950) 68–80 says much of importance in a dozen pages. Those readers of the *Symposium*, however, whose time for supplementary reading is very limited should give precedence to Plato's *Phaedrus*.

The following should be added to the bibliography given in *HGP*: H. Buchner, *Eros und Sein: Erörterungen zu Platons Symposion* (Bonn 1965); K. J. Dover, 'Eros and Nomos (Plato, *Symposium* 182a-185c)', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 11 (1964) 31-42; B. Ehlers, *Eine vorplatonische Deutung des sokratischen Eros: der Dialog Aspasia des Sokratikers Aischines* (Munich 1966); E. Hoffmann, *Über Platons Symposion* (Heidelberg 1947). J. C. B. Gosling, *Plato* (London 1973) is more recent than *HGP* iv; chapters 2-4, 8 and 15 are particularly relevant. L. Brandwood, *Word index to Plato* (Leeds 1976) has given the study of Plato a new dimension; E. des Places, *Lexique de la langue philosophique et religieuse de Platon* (Paris 1964) provides more detailed information about selected words.

Note: in references to works of Plato (e.g. '172a1', 'Phd. 117d') the first number and the letter represent the page and section of Stephanus' sixteenth-century edition, universally adopted as a system of reference. The line-number will be given only in references to *Smp*.

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