Submitting a Case for Plato's Rejection of Mimetic Poetry as a Rejection of the Mimetic Vocabulary.

In *Rep*. Book X, Plato rejects to admit mimetic poetry into The Kallipolis (his ideal state). His argument for doing so rests, *partly*, on what Jessica Moss so aptly have called "the Metaphysical Charge",[1] simplified and summarized as follows:

Metaphysical Charge: Mimetic poetry applies *mímēsis* as a primary rhetorical device; *mímēsis* expressively betrays truth by presenting appearances that are far removed from reality; thus, a side effect of applying *mímēsis* is that mimetic poetry promotes false beliefs about the things and subject matters that it aims to depict.

Hence, when Plato (595b.) reasons for the rejection of mimetic poetry on the basis that '[…] all such poetry is likely to distort the thought of anyone who hears it', we can infer, in light of Metaphysical Charge, a reading of Plato's case for rejecting mimetic poetry as follows: Because mimetic poetry promotes false beliefs about the things and subject matters that it aims to depict, it is, therefore, 'likely to distort the thought of anyone who hears it', and so, mimetic poetry must be rejected.

Moreover, in *Rep*. Books II and III, Plato grants poetry an important role within the educational program of The Kallipolis. I suggest that Plato can there be read as stating two necessary conditions for poetry to be accepted as a potent educational device. These conditions are: whenever the subject matter of the poetic statement regards "*what is*", i.e. the Forms, it is required of poetry that it, (a) promotes true belief; and (b) opposes ignorance. When these conditions are read in conjunction with Metaphysical Charge, a side effect of applying *mímēsis* is that, on Plato's standards, mimetic poetry is apparently rendered impotent as educational device.

I will in this paper argue as follows: Plato rejects the kind of poetic style that is mimetic because this style applies *mímēsis*. This same poetic style is rendered impotent, as educational device, because it relies on a poetic vocabulary within which *mímēsis* is *the primary* rhetorical component. This suggests that Metaphysical Charge can be read as a premise for two parallel arguments: (i) rejecting any *poetic statement* that is mimetic because *mímēsis* expressively betrays truth by presenting appearances that

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[1] See: Moss (2007).

[2] See, Moss (2007), Lear (2011) and Murray (2008).

[3] Plato then have Socrates saying that 'the same account is true of the just and the unjust, the

are far removed from reality; and (ii) rejecting the *poetic vocabulary* from which mimetic poetry is devised.

Furthermore, if we assume that, contemporary to Plato, the conventional style of poetry was the kind that is mimetic; then, Plato's argument (i) for rejecting *any* poetic statement *that is mimetic* can be read as an argument for rejecting most conventional poetry, contemporary to his time. Likewise, it follows from that same assumption, that if Plato's argument (ii) can be read as rejecting the poetic vocabulary from which mimetic poetry is devised; then, Plato can be read as rejecting the conventions of the poetic vocabulary, contemporary to his time.

What I propose is that since Plato does grant poetry an educational role in The Kallipolis; and, since Plato's argument for rejecting mimetic poetry in Book X can be read as an argument for rejecting the conventions of the poetic vocabulary, contemporary to his time; then, Plato can also be read as pressing for a reformation of his contemporary poetic vocabulary; marketing the need for a new kind of poetic style, highly able to promote true beliefs and to oppose ignorance.

I will, however, begin this paper by clarifying my reading of Plato's argument for rejecting mimetic poetry in Book X, and then proceed by accounting for the reasons why Plato grants poetry an educational role in The Kallipolis, as well as provide an analysis of what this role can be read as amounting to. I will then derive the necessary conditions that must be satisfied by poetry to be able to fulfill its educational role, and discuss this with respect to *different kinds* of poetic style and the psychological effects pertaining to these. I will, by appeal to my findings, return to conclude the argument I proposed earlier in this introduction.

§1.   *Plato's Argument for Rejecting Poetry in Book X*

At the onset of Book X, Socrates announces that he is pleased about not admitting any mimetic poetry into The Kallipolis. Also, that *all mimetic poetry* should be rejected is 'even clearer', he says, in light of having 'distinguished *the separate parts of the soul*' (Ibid. Italics added).

One of Plato's premises for distinguishing between the rational part and the non-rational part(s) of the soul derives from the axiomatic claim 'that it is impossible for *the same thing* to believe opposites about the same thing at the same time' (602e. Italics added). I understand this claim by appeal to the following example:

When Joe is fifteen feet away from Jill, she *looks smaller* to him than when he is five feet away from Jill. However, Joe knows "the true size" of Jill from accurate measurements, he even knows her *weight*, and so, Joe knows that although Jill *appears* to be of small size, and light weight, from a distance of fifteen feet, she *is* in fact not. Hence, since Joe is able to 'believe opposites about the same thing at the same time', there must, by appeal to the axiomatic premise above, be *two different things*, within Joe, with different opinions about the size and weight of Jill.

Now, since 'measuring and weighing are the work of the rational part of the soul' (602d.), then this is the part of Joe's soul that is responsible for his belief that Jill does not *change* size, and weight, relative to how Joe is positioned in relation to Jill. Likewise, the part(s) of Joe that gives him the impression that Jill changes in size as he moves farther away from her, or closer towards her, is the non-rational part(s) Joe's soul. For, 'when there are two opposite inclinations in a person in relation to the same thing at the same time, we say that he must also have two parts' (604b.).

The reason why Socrates claims that having distinguished between the rational and the non-rational parts of the soul makes it clearer that mimetic poetry should be rejected is that mimetic poetry makes use of rhetorical components that speaks to and encourages activation of the non-rational part(s) of the soul.

Recall the Metaphysical Charge from above, which states that the rhetorical component of *mímēsis* is accused of expressively betraying truth by presenting appearances that are *far removed from reality*. Moreover, this can be tied to what Plato has Socrates saying at 605b-c:

> '[The mimetic artist] produces work that is inferior with respect to the truth and that appeals to a part of the soul that is similarly inferior […] for [the mimetic artist] arouses, nourishes, and strengthens this part of the soul and so *destroys the rational one* […] Similarly we'll say that [the mimetic poet] puts a bad constitution in the soul of each individual by making images that are *far removed from the truth* and by gratifying the irrational part, which cannot distinguish the large and the small but believes that the same things are large at one time and small at another.' (605b-c. Italics added)

We see from Metaphysical Charge that Plato's accusations against mimetic poetry are fueled by its use of *mímēsis*, because a side effect of applying *mímēsis* is that mimetic poetry promotes false beliefs about the things and subject matters that it aims to depict. To better get a hold of the expressively deceitful mechanisms of *mímēsis*, it is beneficial to first consider what *mímēsis* really refers to.

In *Greek Philosophical Terms* (1967), F. E. Peters explains *mímēsis* as follows: '[some] type of productivity shared by both God and man that does not produce "originals" but *merely copies*' (1967: 118. Italics and brackets added). And so, I will adopt the following definition of *mímēsis*.

Mímēsis =$_{def.}$ the activity of causing an appearance Φ, such that, there is some other appearance X, and, $X \neq \Phi$, and Φ is modeled to mimic X.

The appearance that is caused by *mímēsis* is an *eikón*, translated by Peters as *image*, or *reflection* (1967: 51), which, when read in conjunction with the definition of *mímēsis* from above, implies that an *eikón* is, essentially, a placeholder for something other than itself. This means that when a poet applies *mímēsis,* as part of his/her poetic vocabulary, the poetic statement, which then is the output, is *imagistic* in the sense that what it conveys is an image *modeled to mimic* another image. Hence, by making *mímēsis* the primary rhetorical component of his/her poetic vocabulary, the poet thereby addresses his/her audience by presenting appearances that is far removed form the truth. And so, mimetic poetry speaks, by its heavy use of *mímēsis*, to the non-rational part(s) of the soul, within which the capacities for *imagistic recognition* are stationed.

To get a grasp of why the notion of *mímēsis* that Plato is so critical towards in Book X produces a kind of appearance that is farther removed from the truth than the kind of appearance substantiated by such things as *wardrobes* and *wheels*, I suggest we look to 596a-598b, where Socrates can be read as follows:

For each thing, to which we refer by using a label, there are three levels of metaphysical reference: The first level of reference is to *the Form* of the thing. The second level of reference is to the kind of image of the thing that reflects the Form of the thing. The third level of reference is to the kind of image of the thing that is a result of *mimicking* other images of the same thing.

Since images at the third level of metaphysical reference *do not reflect* the Form of a thing, e.g. the Form of Wheel, but are instead copies of other images, i.e. particular wheels, the result is a *kind of image* that, for those without knowledge about the Form of Wheel, is easily misinterpreted as an image that reflects the truth of the Wheel. One great example here would be to appeal to the surrealistic art by Salvador Dali. In the painting *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), Dali presents what *appear* to be semi-liquefied clocks. We easily recognize the clock-ish-ness, or clock-like

appearances in Dali's painting, but if we take a second to reflect we should come to understand that what we see does not reflect what is true of the Clock. For besides the fact that clocks are solid, and not semi-liquid, the clocks in Dali's painting obviously lacks the teleological aspect that is necessary for something to reflect the truth of the Clock, namely *the showing of time*. Dali is guilty of having mimicked the appearance of clocks, and thus created the kind of image that is third removed from the truth, since it is, by definition, not modeled to mimic the truth, but rather *some other image* instead.

This accusation is transferable to mimetic poetry as well. For just like the surrealism of Dali, mimetic poetry encourages cultivation of non-rational capacities by speaking to, and nourishing, the non-rational part(s) of the soul; nourishing the non-rational part of the soul weakens the rational part, and thus, a side effect of mimetic poetry is that it *corrupts the soul*. It corrupts the soul by making it harder for the rational part to spot when an appearance is far removed from reality, and thereby making it easier to promote false beliefs about the things and subject matters that it aims to depict.

§2.   Poetry as Educational Device

In *Rep*. Book II, we are told that, as part of the educational program of The Kallipolis, 'we start education in music and poetry *before* physical training' (376e. Italics added). If we assume that physical training should start before adolescence, this means that poetry will be served to children when they are still young and easily influenced.

Let us further assume that poetry can be both descriptive and prescriptive of human behavior, and that poetry sometimes can be influential to the point of encouraging the same kind of human behavior that it depicts. We can then say that poetry has the potential to promote and encourage human behavior, *as it appears in poetry*. And so, we can derive the following Assumption 1:

Assumption 1:   Poetry has the potential to promote and encourage behavior, *as it appears* in poetry.

But *why is it* that poetry holds this prescriptive potential? To imagine why I want to appeal to an interesting remark by Penelope Murray regarding poetry's potential for prescribing behavior, namely that '[…] a major part of the poet's function was to *provide role models* for the young by glorifying the great heroes of the past.' (2008: 16. Italics added). 'Providing role models' is a *descriptive* function of poetry. For these descriptions to also function *prescriptively*, there surely must be a rhetorical component ensuring that children, when they are exposed to "the right stories", adopt the behavior being presented by the poetic role models.

Commentators have suggested,[2] that if we turn to Book III, we can read Plato as proposing, during the discussion about the guardians' educational program, that the rhetorical device apt for prescribing behavior in a beneficial manner is *mímēsis*. How can this be, when Plato rejects mimetic poetry in Book X due to the deceitful nature of *mímēsis*? Some commentators, however, defend Plato from accusations of contradiction by arguing that the notion of *mímēsis* being discussed in Book III is different from the one he attacks in Book X. As Gabriel Richardson Lear remarks, 'In the former book, it is *impersonation* or *dramatic reenactment*, while in the latter it is *appearance-making* or *representation*.' (2011: 195. Italics added). I leave this be for now, but will return to the matter in §4.

Now, since education *starts with poetry*; and since, poetry can be assumed to promote and encourage behavior, as it appears in poetry; we should be careful about what kind of poetry we serve to children. However, if we 'supervise the storytellers', as Socrates further suggests (377b.), there is a case to be made for harvesting the prescriptive potential of poetry for educational purposes. As is demonstrated below, this is made apparent in the discussion about the guardians' educational program (377b – 381e); and, hence, supports the presumption that Plato *does* grant poetry an educational role in The Kallipolis. And so, Premise 1 follows:

Premise 1:   Poetry is granted an educational role in The Kallipolis.

Moreover, Socrates draws a line between 'two kinds of story, one *true* and the other *false'* (376e. Italics added). I suggest a reading of this distinction as follows: there is one kind of poetry that describes the world *correctly*, and there is one kind of

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[2] See, Moss (2007), Lear (2011) and Murray (2008).

poetry that describes the world *incorrectly*. We can see another distinction being drawn as well, between the stories that are *advantageous* and the stories that are *harmful* to tell. We are, however, only going to pay attention to the distinction between correct (true) and incorrect (false) stories. The reason for this can be explained by appeal to what Socrates says in 382b: 'to be false to one's soul *about the things that are*, to be ignorant […] is what everyone would *least of all accept*'.

I propose the following interpretation: Whenever the subject matter regards '*the things that are*', telling incorrect (false) stories to oneself, or not telling oneself any story at all (i.e. to be utterly ignorant), is least of all to be accepted of any citizen of The Kallipolis. This reading suggests two normative principles:

NP1: One must not tell incorrect (false) stories to oneself about '*the things that are*'; and,

NP2: One must tell stories, to oneself, about '*the things that are*'.

These normative principles, NP1 and NP2, will be further explained in §3. As for now, it is enough to think of them as the epistemic principles governing the educational program of The Kallipolis.

Hence, by appeal to Assumption 1, since poetry has the potential to promote and encourage behavior, the poetry to be granted an educational role in The Kallipolis should be such that it promotes conformity to both NP1 and NP2. I further suggest that we label the kind of behavior that conforms to both NP1 and NP2 as "*the best kind*" of epistemic behavior, and so, derive Premise 2 as follows:

Premise 2: To be granted an educational role in The Kallipolis, poetry must serve to prescribe "the best kind" of epistemic behavior.

To clarify: I will in this paper assume a simplified definition of epistemic behavior as follows: *Epistemic behavior* $=_{def.}$ for all behavior *B*, *B* is epistemic, if and only if, the "doing of *B*" is equivalent to either of the following: (i) believing that-*P*; (ii) disbelieving that-*P*; (iii) Suspending judgment on whether or not to believe, or disbelieve, that-*P*.

This notion will be revisited and more thoroughly explored in the following section. This section has mostly provided the premises on which the analyses in §3

will be based. However, this section has also presented a claim about *what* the educational role of poetry amounts to. Hence, §3 will explore how this role can be read, in light of passages from Book V and VI, so to provide a better explanation of what is meant by '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior'.

§3.   Plato's Conditions: What is required for Poetry to fulfill its Educational Role in The Kallipolis

In §1 I proposed that when Socrates distinguishes between 'two kinds of story, one true and one false' (376e.), he can be read as saying that there are two kinds of *poetic statement*, correct (true) and incorrect (false). By appeal to this reading, I further proposed that when he later says (382b. Italics added), 'to be false to one's soul about *the things that are*, to be ignorant […] is what everyone would least of all accept', this can be read as follows:

When the matter concerns '*the things that are*', it is the least acceptable for any citizen to: (i) believe that an incorrect statement is correct (i.e. to be *wrong*), or (ii) *not* be familiar with any statement regarding the matter (i.e. to be *ignorant*).

To elaborate, I presume that 'the things that are*'* can be translated in terms of 'the things that exist', and so, be read as a reference to *the Forms*. Hence we can infer, that for poetry to be granted an educational role by Plato, poetry should satisfy two conditions:

(a) The poetic statement must promote correct recognition of the Forms.
(b) The poetic statement must serve to oppose ignorance about the Forms.

And so, for poetry to prescribe '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior', as is stated by Premise 2, both of these conditions (*a* and *b*) must be satisfied. And so, Premise 3 can be stated as follows:

Premise 3:   Poetry prescribes '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior', if and only if, (a) the poetic statement must promote correct recognition of the Forms; and, (b) the poetic statement must serve to oppose ignorance about the Forms.

For a better grasp of what this entails for the "Plato-approved" poetic statement, we should consider what the Forms *are*. We currently have one premise to work from, if we are to derive a simple account of Plato's Forms, and that is the presumption that the phrase from Book II, '*the things that are'*, refer to the Forms. We can, nonetheless, move from this presumption to a passage from Book V, where Plato distinguishes between the *being* of a thing and the *appearance* of a thing (475e-476b.). I restate his argument for drawing this distinction as follows:

There is a thing called Beauty, and there is a thing called Ugliness. Hence, there are *two things*. Furthermore, *X is* beautiful, if and only if, *X is not* ugly. And so, since *X* cannot be both the thing called Beauty and the thing called Ugliness, then Beauty and Ugliness is not the same thing. Since Beauty and Ugliness are *two things*, and since they are *not the same*, then each of them *is its own thing*.[3] However, one and the same *object* (e.g. a wardrobe, a bicycle, a person) can appear to be beautiful, whilst also appearing to be ugly, without inconsistency. To take an example, Joe might find Jill to be beautiful, but then Jasper might find Jill to be ugly. Joe and Jasper may then argue over whether Jill *appears* more like the thing called Beauty or the thing called Ugliness, but according to Plato, Jill *is* neither.

The *being* and the *appearance* of a thing (e.g. Beauty) must then be separated as *different objects*. For a better grasp of this distinction I suggest we turn to Plato's ontological distinction from Book VI (509d.), where Plato portrays Socrates as saying: '[…] you have *two kinds* of thing, *visible* and *intelligible*'.

Plato's distinction between 'two *kinds* of thing' can be interpreted by appealing to the following Greek terms: '*aisthētón*' (the visible), explained by F. E. Peters (1967: 15) as 'capable of being perceived by the sense; the object of the senses, the sensible'; and, '*noētón*' (the intelligible), explained by Peters as 'capable of being grasped by the intellect; the object of the intellect, the intelligible' (1967: 128).

Adopting the terms of '*aisthētón*' and '*noētón*' provides a neat perspective for returning to Book V, where we now can read Plato as foreshadowing the distinction between *aisthētón* and *noētón*.

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[3] Plato then have Socrates saying that 'the same account is true of the just and the unjust, the good and the bad, and *all the Forms.'* (476a. Italics added). What he claims to be true about all the Forms is that each Form is its own thing, which supports our initial reading of '*the things that are'* as referring to the Forms.

That is, we can recognize these terms when Socrates says (476a.) that what is true of all the Forms, is that, all the while, they appear to be all around, 'in association with actions, bodies, and one another'; manifested in all that are like them, 'each of them *is* itself *one*', although, 'each of them *appears* to be *many*'. Hence, 'Beauty' can be recognized in 'two *kinds* of thing': *aisthētón* (as it *appears* in the many), and *noētón* (grasped as it *is* in itself).

Since, then, the Forms are, as initially suggested at the beginning of this section, '*the things that are*,' and so, *not* the kind of thing that is visible, but rather the kind of thing that is intelligible, it is thus the kind of object that must be reached by thought (i.e. dialectical reasoning).

Before concluding this third section we should have yet another look at Premise 3 from above. Let us suppose that, in light of the *aisthētón/noētón* distinction, '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior' can be understood as the beliefs we form from recognizing things in terms of *noētón.* That is, when we exercise the capacities with which are able to reach rational accounts, of the kind of thing that is *noētón*, we are then practicing '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior'. We can thus derive Premise 4 as follows:

Premise 4:   Exercising the capacities with which we are able to reach rational accounts of the kind of thing that is *noētón* ⇒ practicing '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior'.

We can then see, by appeal to Premise 3, that in order for poetry to promote and encourage the cultivation of such capacities, the poetic statement must satisfy conditions (a) and (b).

Now that we have established *what* it takes for poetry to serve its educational role in The Kallipolis, that is, made clear the requirements for Plato to consistently grant this role to poetry, let us turn to the problem this poses for the conventional poetic style, contemporary to Plato.

§4.   *The Poetic Syntax, and why Mimetic Poetry is Rendered Impotent as Educational Device on the Platonic Standards*

As Book III starts to investigate the *style* of poetry, Plato has Socrates explain why the discussion moves from content to style as follows, 'we'll then have fully investigated both *what* should be said and *how* it should be said' (392c. Italics added).

I read this *'how it should be said'*-clause as reference to the syntax and vocabulary of the poetic statement. With that in mind, consider what Socrates says next: 'isn't everything said by poets and storytellers *a narrative* about past, present and future events?' (392d.). In other words, is it not the case that everything said by the poets is necessarily bound by the limits of being expressed in terms of, and thus *by the rules of*, concrete spatio-temporal events?

Adeimantus then replies: 'What else *could* it be?' I suggest that we read the reply as follows: By means of *what other syntax*, Socrates, than a narrative of spatio-temporal events and concrete human behavior, can poetry be expressed?

Let us then adopt the following premise:

Adopted Premise: '[…] everything said by the poets and storytellers' is bound by the limits of being expressed in terms of, and thus, *by the rules of*, concrete spatio-temporal events.

We can further derive, that the conventions (*nómos*) of the poetic syntax, at the time when Plato designed The Kallipolis, "expressively caged" poetry within the frames of particular events e occurring at some particular place s, at some particular time t.[4]

It thus follows, that for anything to be expressed in terms of the conventions of the poetic syntax during Plato's time, it would have to be framed in terms of an ordered triple (e, s, t) – i.e. narrated as event, place and time. In other words, it would have to be translated into, '*a narrative* about past, present and future events' (392d.).

And so, Premise 5 is formulated as follows:

Premise 5: The conventions (*nómos*) of the poetic syntax, at the time when Plato designed The Kallipolis, expressively restricted poetry, so to be framed

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[4] Havelock (1963) examines the narrative-bound syntax as the cultural inheritance from non-literate Greek societies in which mimetic poetry, first and foremost, functioned as a mnemonic device so to more efficiently enable citizens of non-literate cultures to remember what he calls "the Tribal Encyclopedia". For a somewhat different approach, albeit more thoroughly outlined, investigation of these ideas than what is explored in this paper, see Havelock (1963: 237-241, 250-251).

in terms of an ordered triple (e, s, t) – i.e. narrated as event, place and time.

It is required by $_{\text{Premise 3}}$ that, (a) the poetic statement promote correct recognition of the Forms; and, (b) the poetic statement must serve to oppose ignorance about the Forms. Hence, we can see that, by $_{\text{Premise 5}}$, the *nómos* of the poetic syntax, contemporary to Plato, implies a prima facie problem for poetry to be accepted as an educational device on the Platonic standards. For how can such a poetic statement, which is expressively restricted by the confinement of the ordered triple (e, s, t), present the Forms such that they are recognized correctly? That is, how can a kind of thing (*noētón*) that is essentially imperceptible and abstract, without spatio-temporal extension, be adequately captured by a kind of thing (*aisthētón*) that is essentially perceptible and concrete, bound to be experienced spatio-temporally.

Consider, as an example to make this clear, that we want Joe to be familiar with, and hold correct beliefs about, the concept of *Justice*. Further suppose that what we have at our syntactical disposal is the art of storytelling in terms of the ordered triple (e, s, t). This means that we will have to present the concept of Justice within the frames of some particular event (e) occurring at some particular place (s), at some particular time (t). However, we would, *at best*, be able to provide *appearances*, in terms of examples, which are, *at best*, adequate for reflecting *aspects* of Justice, e.g. by telling Joe a story in which we depict the actions of *just characters*. We would also have to carefully tailor our story so to avoid that Joe *gets the wrong idea* about what Justice is.

To be clear, what Plato demands of the poetic statement is that it satisfies the conditions from $_{\text{Premise 3}}$, and so, promotes *nóēsis,* i.e. the rational capacities with which one is able to reach *rational accounts* of the kind of thing that is *noētón.* This is a big problem for the narrative-bound syntax, especially when the narrative-bound syntax is paired with an imagistic vocabulary, such as, for instance, a *mimetic* one.

The reason why a mimetic vocabulary makes this especially problematic is that *mímēsis*, which is the primary rhetorical component of a mimetic vocabulary, promotes and encourages *non-rational* capacities for recognition, which in turn is the *opposite* of what a "Plato-approved" poetic statement *should do*.

To see why this is so, we can appeal back to the ontological distinction from Book VI, and so, infer as follows, since *mímēsis* is essentially imagistic; and, since an *eikón* is the kind of thing that is visible (*aisthētón*); then, the kind of poetic statement that applies *mímēsis* speaks to, and encourages cultivation of, those *non-rational* capacities for recognition (*aísthēsis*), that recognizes experience in terms of the thing that is *aisthētón*.[5] I suggest the following sketch to better illustrate this argument:

Premise:	Mimetic poetry ⇒ *Mímēsis*.
Premise:	*Mímēsis* ⇒ Encourages activation of, and thus, cultivation of, *aísthēsis* (non-rational capacity for recognition).
Premise:	Cultivating *aísthēsis* ⇒ Promotes recognizing experience in terms of *aisthētón* (i.e. the perceptible and concrete).
Conclusion:	Mimetic poetry promotes recognition of experience in terms of *aisthētón*.

Moreover, since mimetic poetry promotes recognition in terms of *aisthētón*; and, since recognizing the Forms in terms of *aisthētón* implies *incorrect recognition* of the Forms; then, by appeal to Premise 3, mimetic poetry does not satisfy the conditions for prescribing '*the best kind* of epistemic behavior'. And so, I suggest we derive the following Premise 6:

Premise 6:	The conventions (*nómos*) of the poetic syntax, at the time when Plato designed The Kallipolis, paired with a mimetic vocabulary, renders the poetic statement impotent as a Plato-approved educational device.

To be clear, the expressively restrictive issues that are already inherent in the narrative-bound syntax make it *difficult* for poetry to satisfy the conditions stated by Premise 3. It is, however, *not an impossible task*. For, returning to our example with Joe, we could apply the same rhetorical component as Plato does himself. That is, we could formulate our poetic statement as an event *e*, located somewhere in space *s* and

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[5] I will refer to these capacities for imagistic recognition as '*aísthēsis*,' which Peters roughly translate as *perception* and *sensation*.

time *t*, in which *Socrates* encourages Joe to exercise *nóēsis* (his rational capacities for recognition), which enables Joe to recognize Justice in terms of *noētón*.

What we are doing, as we apply the rhetorical component of Socrates, is that we appeal to the rational capacities of the audience, and through the character of Socrates, teach the audience, and readers, to question and be skeptical of non-rational impressions. That is, we formulate dialogues in which we have Socrates talk about that which is essentially imperceptible and abstract. We have him demonstrate the completeness of the Forms versus the incompleteness of mere appearances, and we have him provide "crash-courses" in dialectical reasoning, so to teach his interlocutors how to define and reach rational accounts of the Forms in terms of abstract universals.

Plato's Socratic dialogue is rhetorically different from the conventional mimetic style, which he criticizes for being deceitful. It is rhetorically different in that its primary means of persuasion works by addressing a different part of the audiences' soul. Plato's Socratic dialogue taps into the rational part of the audience by applying a language of *nóēsis*, whereas the stylistic conventions of his contemporaries were to apply a poetic language of *aísthēsis*. However, In order to speak to the soul through a noetic language, the vocabulary has to be noetic as well. I illustrate my point by the following formalization:

Premise:	Noetic poetry $\Rightarrow$ Noetic vocabulary.
Premise:	Noetic vocabulary $\Rightarrow$ Encourages activation of, and thus, cultivation of, *nóēsis* (rational capacity for recognition).
Premise:	Encouraging *nóēsis* $\Rightarrow$ Promotes recognizing experience in terms of *noētón* (i.e. the imperceptible and abstract).
Conclusion:	Noetic poetry promotes recognition of experience in terms of *noētón*.

We can thus derive that, although Plato's contemporary poetic syntax can be said to be expressively restricted (that is, in contrast to modern prose) adopting a *noetic vocabulary* would ensure that the poetic statement satisfies the conditions of $_{Premise\ 3}$.

And so, $_{Premise\ 7}$ follows:

Premise 7:   The conventions (*nómos*) of the poetic syntax, at the time when Plato designed The Kallipolis, paired with a noetic vocabulary, renders the poetic statement potent as a Plato-approved educational device.

This, nonetheless, raises a question of contradiction. For although the style of the Socratic dialogue can be shown to satisfy the conditions of Premise 3, such that, it legitimately qualifies as a Plato-approved educational device, one simply cannot avoid noticing that even the Socratic dialogue applies *mímēsis.*

As mentioned in §2 there are those who argue that Plato, in Book III (392d-398b.), can be read as discussing a *different notion* of *mímēsis* than the notion we find at the heart of the Metaphysical Charge in Book X. In Book III *mímēsis* in poetry is discussed as part of the educational program, as something going on *at the audience.* It is discussed as a tool for "imprinting behavior" in terms of psychological identification, and so, eventually suggested by Plato (398b.), to be *beneficial* for educational purposes.

One way to get a grasp of these different kinds of mimetic poetry would be to return to Book III, where Plato distinguishes between *three categories* in analysis of the poetic style (392d.): (i) narrative *alone*; (ii) narrative *through mímēsis*; (iii) both narrative *and mímēsis*. Categories (ii) and (iii) both apply *mímēsis* as a rhetorical component. Between the two mimetic categories, it is only category (iii) that is admitted to hold an educational potential. For since this is the category that uses *both* narrative and *mímēsis,* it thus holds as a subcategory, the kind of poetic statement that applies, *only the slightest* amount of *mímēsis.*

There are, thus, 'two kinds of (mimetic) style', as remarked by Socrates (397b.). There is the style of the kind of mimetic poetry that belongs to category (ii), which relies heavily on *mímēsis.* And there is the style of the kind of mimetic poetry that belongs to category (iii), which *does not necessarily* have to rely heavily on *mímēsis.* Hence, category (iii) can be further separated into two subcategories: (iii^1), which contains poetry that is narrative, but *highly* mimetic, and (iii^2), which contains poetry that is narrative, but *slightly* mimetic. One could then ask, whether Plato, in his rejection of mimetic poetry in Book X, is targeting *only* the mimetic poetry of categories (ii) and (iii^1), and *not* the category of (iii^2), which is only *slightly mimetic.*

If, however, one finds this to be an appealing case, one could then follow by arguing that the Socratic dialogue belongs to category (iii^2), and thence, claim to resist

the contradiction. I will adopt this latter view that category (iii) can be further divided into two subcategories, within which we find the two different kinds of poetry: (iii^1), one that, I will claim, applies a *mimetic vocabulary*; and, (iii^2), one that, I will claim, applies a *noetic vocabulary*.

§5.   Conclusion

In §2 we saw that, by appeal to $_{Premise\ 1}$, since Plato *does* grants poetry an educational role in The Kallipolis, there must, therefore, be room for poetry in his ideal state.[6] Furthermore, as stated by $_{Premise\ 2}$ and $_{Premise\ 3}$, this role can only be granted to the kind of poetic statement that satisfies the following two conditions:

(a) The poetic statement must promote correct recognition of the Forms.

(b) The poetic statement must serve to oppose ignorance about the Forms.

In Book X, Plato rejects mimetic poetry on the basis of $_{Metaphysical\ Charge}$. That is, because mimetic poetry applies *mímēsis* as a primary rhetorical device, and because as a side effect of applying *mímēsis*, mimetic poetry promotes *false beliefs* about the things and subject matters that it aims to depict. The argument for rejecting mimetic poetry on the basis of $_{Metaphysical\ Charge}$ further implies that, in light of the conditions (a) and (b) from $_{Premise\ 3}$, mimetic poetry is unsuited as educational device.

This is why I believe, as stated in the introduction, that Plato's rejection of mimetic poetry, by appeal to $_{Metaphysical\ Charge}$, can be read as two parallel arguments:

(i)   That any poetic statement, which is mimetic, must be rejected.

(ii)   That the mimetic vocabulary, within which mimetic poetry is devised, must be rejected.

Considering so, in light of $_{Premise\ 4}$, $_{Premise\ 6}$, and $_{Premise\ 7}$, that if Plato's rejection of mimetic poetry can be read as a rejection of the mimetic vocabulary; and, observing, by appeal to $_{Premise\ 2}$ and $_{Premise\ 3}$, that Plato admits to poetry holding an important role within The Kallipolis, which, can only be filled by *noetic* poetry, and *not mimetic*

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[6] Note that this requires that we subscribe to a view by which there is no inconsistency in Plato's view on poetry throughout *Rep*.

poetry; then, by the assumption that, contemporary to Plato, conventional poetry was devised from a mimetic vocabulary, I conclude as follows:

Plato's rejection of mimetic poetry, in Book X, can be read as a parallel to rejecting the conventions of the poetic style, contemporary to his time. This rejection can, owing to the premises derived, and the analyses made, in this paper, further be read as to suggest that Plato presses for a reformation of the poetic vocabulary. That is, as to suggest that Plato proposes that the non-rational imagistic tradition, embodied in mimetic poetry, get replaced by a rational and noetic-aspiring rhetoric that opts for knowledge and truth.

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