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Ben Anthony Jamieson Campbell

Candidate Number: 1039971

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Poetry and Provisionality in *Republic* X

Abstract

This thesis investigates the attitude Socrates has towards his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X. The standard view is that Socrates is entirely confident in this banishment in the sense that he considers it to be well-justified. Stephen Halliwell (2011) has argued that Socrates thinks that his banishment is not well-justified and that a convincing rebuttal to it is a live possibility, such that he is anxious about his banishment. This thesis develops and defends the view that Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X. It argues that the standard view rightly detects confidence, but wrongly maintains that Socrates is entirely confident in his banishment. Likewise, it argues that Halliwell rightly detects anxiety, but wrongly maintains that Socrates is never confident in his banishment.

A Note on the Citations and Translations

Unless specified otherwise, all citations refer to the sections and, normally, lines of the edition of the *Republic* in Slings (ed.) (2019), the electronic version of Slings (ed.) (2003). All translations of this text are my own. They tend to be literal. I will sometimes selectively quote a passage in order to transform it from a question into a statement, even though Socrates does not explicitly agree with all of the questions which he asks. This is standard practice, although Peterson (2011) protests against it. I always quote the Greek text alongside my translation. When I import an element into a quotation from the context in which the quotation occurs, I place this element in square brackets, both within the translation and within the original. Finally, when I refer to *Republic* X, or book X, I am usually synecdochally referring to the part of it which concerns poetry; 595a1-608b3.

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Introduction

What attitude does Socrates, the character, have towards his banishment of imitative poetry from the well-functioning city – and, hence, from the just life – in *Republic* X?[1] There is a standard answer to this question, one which is common to scholars of Plato's works and those who take a wider interest in what we would call the arts.

> The great challenge for any interpreter of [Socrates's] views on poetry is to appreciate why he is so uncompromisingly hostile towards it.
>
> (Ferrari, G. R. F. 1990: 92)

> The very fact that he does return to the attack on the work of art in book 10, when the process of condemnation and execution seemed already to be over, suggests that he is worried that the corpse won't lie down.
>
> (Gould, J. 2001: 314)

> Taken together, [Socrates] sees a fundamental threat of corruption that literature poses to the soul of the poet as well as that of his readers and listeners, the obstacles it creates for their distinctively human attempts to achieve self-knowledge and live a good life through a lucid grasp of reality…against this background, merely banishing the poet might seem like an excessively charitable response.
>
> (Mulhall, S. 2009: 2)

[1] Thus, this thesis is a character study. I will not make claims about Plato on the basis of how he presents Socrates. I alter quotes which aim to inform us about Plato on the basis of his presentation of Socrates so that they only refer to Socrates. You are welcome to make this inference from Socrates, the character, to his author if you want. Landy (2012) offers interesting reasons for being cautious. This being said, nothing turns on the issue. Furthermore, this means that a discussion of Plato's attitude towards poetry, and the historically vexed question of why Plato writes so poetically if he distrusts imitative (a qualification not always noted) poetry, is, thankfully, beyond the scope of this thesis. For an overview, see Griswold (2020: §6), Halliwell (2006) and Halliwell (2011: 155 – 179).

Taking these authors as exemplary, the standard view is that Socrates, throughout the whole of *Republic* X, is uncompromisingly hostile towards imitative poetry, and thereby entirely confident in his banishment of it, such that he thinks it is well-justified and that a convincing response is a logical possibility, but not a live one.[2] If he were not entirely confident, his hostility would be, as it were, compromised.

The standard view is not, to my knowledge, defended or discussed in detail. This is no doubt a mark that it is the standard view. Nevertheless, it is not hard to see why the view has become standard. The very last thing Socrates says about poetry in book X is: 'the one listening to it [imitative poetry] and fearing for the constitution within him must be cautious and must believe the very things which we have said about poetry' (εὐλαβητέον αὐτὴν [imitative poetry] ὃν τῷ ἀκροωμένῳ, περὶ τῆς ἐν αὑτῷ πολιτείας δεδιότι, καὶ νομιστέα ἅπερ εἰρήκαμεν περὶ ποιήσεως) (608a7-b2). We must believe, Socrates declares, that imitative poetry ought to be banished. Taken at face value, this remark belies confidence.

However, there is also evidence which seems to complicate the standard view.

> And we would allow the champions [of Poetry]…who are not poetic, but lovers of poetry, to argue, on her behalf, without meter, that she is not only pleasing but also beneficial to civic and human life. And we will listen kindly. For it will benefit us if she appears to be not only pleasant but also beneficial.
>
> Δοῖμεν δέ γέ που ἂν καὶ τοῖς προστάταις [of Poetry's]…ὅσοι μὴ ποιητικοί, φιλοποιηταὶ δέ, ἄνευ μέτρου λόγον ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς εἰπεῖν, ὡς οὐ μόνον ἡδεῖα ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη πρὸς τὰς

[2] By a live possibility, I mean possibilities about which one can reasonably worry. The distinction is familiar from discussions of scepticism in J. L. Austin (1979), Travis (2008) and James (2011).

πολιτείας καὶ τὸν βίον τὸν ἀνθρώπινόν ἐστιν. καὶ εὐμενῶς ἀκουσόμεθα. κερδανοῦμεν γάρ που ἐὰν μὴ μόνον ἡδεῖα φανῇ ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη.

(607d7-10)

Socrates invites the champions of Poetry to make a successful reply after he calls for them to be banished. One might reasonably wonder why, if he thought this banishment was well-justified, he would solicit a successful response to it.[3] With thoughts such as these in mind, one might then conclude that Socrates is anxious about his call for banishment in the sense that he thinks it is not well-justified and that a successful reply to it is a live possibility.

Indeed, this is what Stephen Halliwell has recently concluded about this invitation, and the three others which occur in quick succession from 607c4 to 608a2. He uses them as one part of an argument for his view that Socrates's banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X is 'only provisionally and uncertainly upheld' (2011: 203).[4] As he elsewhere puts it, his view is that: 'the arguments in this section [i.e. 595a1-608b3] of the dialogue are not definitive statements of an irreversible condemnation, but incitements to recognize the need for a new and better justification of artistic mimesis' (2011: 182 – 183). I take these statements to indicate that Halliwell considers, *contra* the standard view, Socrates to be

[3] Bütter (2000: 208) and Vegetti (2007: 217, 230) take this remark, and the three similar ones which I will cite and discuss later, to reflect on-going debates about poetry within Plato's academy. Pohlenz (1965: 447-9) connects it with Gorgias and other 5th century Athenian sophists. However, since I am pursuing a character study of Socrates, I will set aside these explanations which connect book X to its author's history. Relatedly, Else (1972) controversially argues that book X is a reaction to a version of Aristotle's *Poetics* and was added to the *Republic* at a later date. I do not think that such a conclusion, if true, would undermine the arguments in this thesis. Nevertheless, it is probably not true (as Halliwell (1988: 185) succinctly argues).

[4] In earlier drafts, I too spoke of Socrates being provisional where I now speak of him as being anxious (hence, my title, which stringent examination requirements prevent me altering). However, I came to see the term "provisional" as being too vague. Socrates thinks everything he defends in the *Republic* is provisional, in the sense of being fallible (as I discuss in **Chapter 3**).

anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry throughout book X and never confident in it. [5]

In light of these two conflicting pieces of evidence, we can delineate three possible answers to the question animating this thesis, the question concerning Socrates attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X.

1. Socrates is entirely confident in this banishment (the standard view).
2. Socrates is entirely anxious about it and never confident in this banishment (Halliwell's view).
3. Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about this banishment.

The ultimate aim of this thesis is to defend the third answer.

Socrates banishes imitative poetry in book X on the basis of his claim that it, in a metaphorical sense, destroys the rational part of the soul. [6]

> And so we would finally be justified if we should refuse to admit [the imitative poet] into the well-ordered city because he…destroys the rational part [of the soul].
>
> Καὶ οὕτως ἥδη ἂν ἐν δίκῃ [the imitative poet] οὐ παραδεχοίμεθα εἰς μέλλουσαν εὐνομεῖσθαι πόλιν, ὅτι…ἀπόλλυσι τὸ λογιστικόν [of the soul].
>
> (605b1-3).

[5] Thoughts going against the standard view have also been articulated by Greene (1918: 3), Gilbert (1939) Collingwood (1938: 49) (1939), Asmis (1992: 338), Giuliano (2005: 340), and Scott (2016: 307). However, Halliwell has given the most detailed argument against it to date. Andrew Cooper (2017) has extended Halliwell's view but presupposes it is correct.

[6] The sense must be metaphorical because Socrates thinks the soul is immortal and cannot be destroyed, as he argues in 608b-612a.

Call this the *Claim of Destruction*. In order to explore Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry cogently and fruitfully, we need to understand his defence of the Claim of Destruction. So, the first two chapters of this thesis work towards making it clear.

In **Chapter 1**, I explore how Socrates understands the nature of poetry, on the basis of his understanding of imitation, which itself is based on his tripartite ontology of forms, particulars, and appearances. He thinks that poems *present us with* appearances which *display* the appearances *contained within* particulars which participate in forms. I also detail the kind of poetry which Socrates means to banish, exemplified by Homer and the tragedians, which he calls imitative poetry. Imitative poetry is poetry which presents us with appearances which display appearances contained within humans acting viciously.

With this background in place, in **Chapter 2**, I explore why Socrates banishes imitative poetry. As I have said, he banishes it because he thinks the Claim of Destruction is true. I will carefully articulate the reasoning behind this claim. However, before he argues for this claim, Socrates criticises the poets for failing both to know and to have 'right belief' (δὀξαν ὀρθὴν) (602a4). I will first give a perspicuous overview of the reasoning behind these epistemic criticisms before I discuss the Claim of Destruction. It is pertinent to the aim of this thesis to know whether or not this claim logically depends on these epistemic criticisms or not. If it does, then figuring out Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry will require us to assess his attitude towards his epistemic criticisms. If it does not, then we need not make this assessment. I argue that the Claim of Destruction does not logically depend on the epistemic criticisms. I suggest that they are only rhetorically related.

Commentators intensely debate the issues which I discuss in these first two chapters. However, the conclusions which I aim to draw in this thesis do not ultimately depend on anything particularly controversial. In order to make this clear, in these chapters, I present alternative interpretations and invite my readers to choose between them. As far as possible, I articulate myself in terms congenial to all plausible extant interpretations.

Likewise, in whatever way we understand them, the claims which Socrates makes about poetry are philosophically contentious. Showing this, and figuring out how Socrates might respond, is a worthwhile task.[7] However, I will approach the *Republic* in this manner only when doing so is pertinent to determining his attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry as it stands. A complete rational reconstruction of the arguments of book X would exhaust the space I have available in this thesis (as would defending any particular interpretation of these arguments).

To make a final qualification, I only pursue this character study based on what is inside the *Republic*. On the one hand, any claim I make about the Socrates of the *Republic* on the basis of evidence external to it will be unconvincing unless I can make my case internally. On the other hand, if I can make my case from within the *Republic*, I do not see the point in turning to external evidence.[8] Thus, I pursue Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry only from within the precincts of the *Republic*.

[7] Irwin (1997) is an exemplar of this way of studying Plato's dialogues. Janaway (1995) reads book X in this style.

[8] Plato frequently has his characters discuss poetry and it would be interesting to compare, in a longer work, Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry, and thereby imitative poetry, with his attitude towards poetry in the *Ion,* the *Phaedrus*, the *Laws,* the *Symposium*, and the *Cratylus*. The literature on these works is immense. See Belfiore (2011), Griswold (1996), Halliwell (2002) and (2011: 155 – 179, Nussbaum (1986) and (1990), Scott (2011), and Werner (2012) for particularly interesting comments on the discussions of poetry in these works.

In **Chapter 3**, I discuss Socrates's methodology in the *Republic*. Twice, Socrates makes a distinction between *shorter* and *longer routes* of philosophical inquiry. I demonstrate that Socrates is following the shorter route when he banishes imitative poetry. This is relevant to the question animating this thesis because Socrates thinks that when one follows the shorter route, one can only draw fallible conclusions. This might seem to obviously favour Halliwell's claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry throughout *Republic* X. However, it does not. I demonstrate that, for Socrates, one can be confident in the conclusions one reaches following the shorter route, even though they are fallible. So, we cannot infer from the fact that Socrates is following the shorter route to the conclusion that he is either confident in or anxious about his banishment. Nevertheless, the fact that Socrates would see this banishment as being fallible does introduce a complication. It means that if somebody argues that Socrates is anxious about it, they must demonstrate that the evidence, which they are giving in favour of this contention, cannot reasonably be interpreted as merely a symptom of the fact that Socrates would understand his banishment of imitative poetry as being fallible. I will exploit this complication when I object to Halliwell's defence of his view of Socrates's attitude.

This is the task of **Chapter 4**, wherein I question each of the five reasons Halliwell gives us for his claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry and never confident in it. These reasons concern: the elements of book X which Halliwell considers to be anomalous; Socrates's use of legal metaphors to describe his engagement with poetry; his invitations to Poetry and her champions to make a convincing rebuttal; the 'paradoxical' nature of Socrates's protective incantation; and the love he has for imitative poetry. After critically examining these five points, I argue that Halliwell's account is ultimately unconvincing.

In **Chapter 5**, the final chapter of this thesis, I start fresh on the question of Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry. I argue that the standard view is right to detect confidence because there are definite expressions of confidence in *Republic* X. I argue that Halliwell is right to detect anxiety in the fact that Socrates invites Poetry and her defenders to make a successful response, although he did not provide an adequate defence of this claim. Indeed, there are also three good explanations as to why Socrates would be anxious about his argument. Last, I embrace both of these sets of evidence and conclude that Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

Chapter 1 – Imitation and Imitative Poetry

In this chapter, I discuss Socrates's views about imitation, poetry, and imitative poetry. This will allow us to understand clearly why Socrates banishes imitative poetry and his attitude towards this banishment. For the most part, Socrates investigates the nature of poetry by analysing the nature of imitation. He thinks that poems are imitations and that poets are imitators. He develops this understanding against the background of a tripartite ontology. So, in order to make Socrates's views about poetry clear, I first analyse this ontology (**1.1**). I then address how Socrates understands what it is to be an imitator and how he understands the nature of imitation *qua* process and *qua* product (**1.2**). Next, I explore how we are to flesh out the idea that poems are imitations (**1.3**). Last, I explain that Socrates means to be banishing only imitative poetry in book X and I offer an account of imitative poetry (**1.4**).

As I said in the **Introduction**, many of the issues I discuss here are contested. Nevertheless, the conclusions I aim to reach in this thesis do not depend on any particular contentious interpretation being correct. As far as clarity allows, I will articulate all these interpretations, invite my reader to choose between them, and use terms which are neutral to them.

1.1 – Forms, Particulars, and Appearances

Socrates and Glaucon agree to investigate the nature of imitation by following their 'customary manner…of positing one form for each of the many things to which we give the same name' (εἰωθυίας μεθόδου…εἶδος γάρ πού τι ἓν ἕκαστον…τίθεσθαι περὶ ἕκαστα τὰ πολλά, οἷς ταὐτὸν ὄνομα ἐπιφέρομεν) (596a4-6). These 'many things' are the *particulars* we

can encounter in our everyday dealings with the world. They include tables, chairs, mountains, people, and so on. For every set of earthly particulars, Socrates posits a *form*. There is a range of particulars to which Socrates applies the general term couch. So, Socrates posits a form of the couch (596b1-2).

Socrates claims that it is only the forms which count as 'that which is' (ὃ ἔστιν) (597a4). Strictly speaking, they are the only truly real entities. The only thing which is truly a couch is the form of a couch. Particulars, by contrast, are 'like that which is, but are not that which is' (τοιοῦτον οἷον τὸ ὄν, ὃν δὲ οὔ) (597a4-5). According to Socrates, this makes particulars less real than the forms which they are like. It is only in a loose sense that particular couches are real couches.

This itself raises a few issues. First, in the central books of the *Republic*, Socrates also posits the existence of forms and claims that these are the most real entities which exist. However, in these books, Socrates only speaks of forms of properties, such as the famous form of the good. By contrast, in book X, Socrates speaks of forms of objects. This raises the question of how compatible the metaphysics of *Republic* X is with that of *Republic* VI-VII. I will assume that Socrates means his claim that there are forms of objects in book X as a heuristic.[9]

Second, in *Republic* III, Socrates claims that neither we nor the guardians will become 'educated' (μουσικοὶ):

[9] My reason is that Socrates articulates this ontology because he is primarily interested in understanding the nature of poems. As will become clear soon, he thinks poems display appearances of virtue, appearances of people who participate in the form of virtue (or of vice, depending on how we understand the forms of book X).

> Until we recognise the forms of temperance, courage, generosity, magnificence, their kindred, and their opposites too, which are being carried around everywhere, and [until] we see them in the things which they are in, both these things themselves and appearances of them.
>
> Πρὶν ἂν τὰ τῆς σωφροσύνης εἴδη καὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ ἐλευθεριότητος καὶ μεγαλοπρεπείας καὶ ὅσα τούτων ἀδελφὰ καὶ τὰ τούτων αὖ ἐναντία πανταχοῦ περιφερόμενα γνωρίζωμεν καὶ [until] ἐνόντα ἐν οἷς ἔνεστιν αἰσθανώμεθα καὶ αὐτὰ καὶ εἰκόνας αὐτῶν.[10]
>
> (402d9-c6)

We will not be educated until we recognise the forms of the virtues and their opposites. Presumably, the opposites of the forms of the virtues are the forms of the vices. All these forms are within, and can be seen within, particulars and the appearances of them. However, in books VI-VII, Socrates denies both of these points, claiming that there are no forms of vices and that forms transcend their particulars. This suggests that Socrates is using the same word to refer to: a) transcendent entities which receive detailed treatment in the central books; and b) "lower-level" types which are left largely untheorized.[11] This makes it unclear whether, in book X, Socrates is speaking about the forms *qua* transcendent entities or the forms *qua* types. Although I will raise the issue in my criticism of Halliwell in **Chapter 4**, the conclusions in this thesis do not hinge on which sort of form Socrates has in mind in *Republic* X. So, I do not resolve this issue and will articulate myself in a neutral way.

Third, Socrates's claim that the particulars are like the forms is quite opaque. If Socrates has the transcendent forms in mind, this likeness cannot be understood in terms of a

[10] See footnote 12 for an explanation as to why "εἰκόνας" is being (mis)translated as appearances.
[11] This distinction is not unfamiliar in Plato's dialogues. See, for example, the Ascent of Love passage in the *Symposium*. Scott (2015: 28 – 29) and Vasiliou (2008: 228) make this point.

perceptual similarity. Transcendent forms are intelligible entities. They are devoid of sensible properties. It is impossible for them to be perceptually similar to anything. Socrates speaks of particulars 'participating' (μετέχοντα) in indefinitely many forms *qua* transcendent entities (476c7-d2). This suggests that a particular is *metaphysically* like a transcendent form just in case it participates in it more so than any other form. However, just what Socrates means by participation is left entirely unclear in the *Republic*. Plato is, or became, well aware of this, as the opening of *Parmenides* indicates. However, I do not want, or need, for the purposes of this thesis, to solve this issue for the Socrates of the *Republic*.

These issues arise from puzzles with respect to the way in which Socrates's describes forms and particulars in book X. There is, though, a third kind of entity. Socrates calls entities of this kind *appearances*.[12] What we see in a mirror when it is held up to a particular exemplifies an appearance (596d8-e7). This implies that an appearance of a particular is that through which we can gain perceptual access to it.[13] This is unusual. We do not normally think that what affords us perceptual access to an entity is itself an entity. We certainly do not think that particulars themselves contain, as a constituent, an appearance. Nevertheless, Socrates insists on this, saying that an appearance is a 'part of each thing' (σμικρόν τι ἑκάστου) (598b8). Particulars literally contain appearances.[14] The appearances within a mirror would thus be perceptually akin to the appearances contained within the mirrored object.

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[12] This is a simplification. Throughout the *Republic,* Socrates refers to these entities as φαινόμενα, φαντάσματα, εἰκόντες, εἴδωλα. For the sake of consistency. I will always refer to the entities belonging to this third ontological kind as appearances. Most scholars of book X follow this practice of using one name for this class of entities. My translations reflect this point. I leave the original Greek unchanged so it will be obvious when this is happening.

[13] There has been debate whether Socrates thinks that appearances can give us perceptual access to particulars which occupy or have occupied our spatio-temporal world, or whether he also thinks they can give us perceptual access to particulars which might exist. Literary historians tend to hold the first view. Halliwell (2002) provides a strong case for the second. I presuppose Halliwell is correct. I cannot believe that Socrates would think that *every* poetic appearance of Homer and the tragedians gives us perceptual access to people who actually existed and events which actually happened.

[14] Commentators have pointed out that this is akin to Russell's sense-data theory, according to which 'we see material objects like beds only indirectly, for between us and them intervenes a layer of sense-data, immaterial entities that are the direct objects of perception' (Moss, 2007: 419). A representative claim of Russell's theory can be found in his (1959: 2–3). Paton (1921–22) defends the claim that Plato is a proto sense data theorist.

Furthermore, Socrates thinks that an appearance of a particular is not a genuinely real instance of that particular, just as he thinks that a particular which participates in a form of a certain kind is not a genuinely real instance of that kind. Nevertheless, Socrates believes that there is a sense in which an appearance of a certain kind of particular is a real instance of that kind, in virtue of the fact that appearances are perceptually akin to the appearances contained within the particulars which they display (597a-597d).[15]

In short, Socrates's customary manner involves positing a hierarchically tripartite ontology according to which there are objects of three distinct kinds: forms, particulars, and appearances. In the strictest sense, only the form of a particular kind is a real instance of that kind. In a looser sense, particulars are real instances of a certain kind in virtue of participating in the form of that kind. Last, appearances of particulars are, in the loosest sense, real instances of a certain kind, in virtue of being perceptually akin to the appearances contained within the particulars which they display. As one commentator puts it, appearances are the most 'ontologically deficient' sort of entity (Marušič, 2011: 231).

Some commentators claim that Socrates considers appearances to *also* be representations.[16] For them, an appearance represents an appearance contained within a particular which

[15] When articulated in such abstract way, this idea seems absurd. However, in Socrates's defence, this sense is intuitive. Imagine you are in the Musée de l'Orangerie with your family and you see some Cézannes. Your young child asks you "what are those?" One intelligible and true answer to your child's first question would be "they are like apples but made out of paint." Another, though, would be "they are apples." It is in the sense of the verb "to be" drawn on in this second answer that underlies the idea that an appearance of a couch is a real couch, although it is less real than the particulars which are couches, which are in turn less real than the form of a couch.

[16] Belfiore (1983, 1984), Burnyeat (1990), Moss (2007), and Marušič (2011) focus on this aspect of appearances.

participates in the forms.[17] They exploit this fact in developing particular interpretations of the first epistemic criticism in *Republic* X.

This has led to two different interpretations of what Socrates means when he, throughout book X, claims that appearances are, counting inclusively, 'three times removed from the truth' (τριττὰ ἀπέχοντα τοῦ ὄντος) (599a1-2). Ontological interpreters take him to mean that appearances are the most ontologically deficient sort of entity. Representational interpreters take him to mean that appearances are representations of the appearances contained in particulars which participate in the forms.

Nevertheless, the conclusions I aim to reach in this thesis do not depend on arguing whether or not Socrates allows for appearances to be representations.[18] They also do not depend on whether or not we accept the ontological or the representational understanding of the claim that appearances are thrice removed from the truth. I will speak neutrally between these interpretations by saying that Socrates thinks appearances are three times removed from the truth in the sense that they are of, or display, appearances contained within particulars which participate in the forms. I also propose that we eliminate a component of this accurate but clunky formulation and simply say that appearances are of, or display, particulars.

Finally, to make a point often missed, Socrates thinks that there is a fact of the matter about what any given appearance is displaying. We see this when he claims that once those

[17] Moss's account is stronger. She claims that appearances necessarily misrepresent reality (2007: 421). Numerous claims in the *Republic* contradict this. See, for example, 398a-b, 401b, and 607a. What Moss correctly notes though is that *imitative* poetry misrepresents ethical reality, in the sense of presenting us with appearances of vicious people as virtuous people (see **1.4**).

[18] Interestingly, Halliwell notes that, in the *Cratylus*, Socrates claims that 'using "likeness," [appearances] "show" and "signify" a sensorily perceptible world' (2002: 44). That is to say, in the *Cratylus*, Socrates seems to say that appearances represent particulars in virtue of being ontologically deficient perceptual likenesses.

who return to the Cave, from their journey to the Sun, will know 'what each appearance is and of what [it is an appearance]' (ἕκαστα τὰ εἴδωλα ἅττα ἐστὶ καὶ ὧν [it is an appearance]) (520c3-4). It is possible for people to make mistakes about the particular which any given appearance is displaying.

1.2 – Imitators and Imitations

After establishing that a painter creates appearances of what craftspeople make, Socrates gives Glaucon a compressed view of his understanding of imitation and of being an imitator.

> Socrates: But what will you say he [the painter of a couch] is in relation to a couch?
>
> Glaucon: This seems to me the most reasonable thing to call him, an imitator of the thing which those craftspeople make.
>
> S: Very good. Will you call the [maker] of the product third from nature an imitator?
>
> G: By all means.
>
> S: The maker of tragedies, then, will also be this, if indeed he is an imitator, and is by nature third from the king and the truth, like all other imitators.
>
> G: It seems likely.
>
> S: We agree, then, about the imitator. But tell me this about the painter. Do you think that he tries to imitate in each case the thing itself in nature or the works of craftspeople?
>
> G: The works of craftspeople.
>
> S: Such as they are or such as they appear? Determine this further point.
>
> G: What do you mean?
>
> S: This: does a couch, if you view it from the side, from the front, or from any other position, differ in any way from itself, or does it differ not at all, although it appears different?...

G:…It appears [to be different] but it is in no way different.

S: Consider this: towards what has a painting been made regarding each thing? Towards imitating the being [of a thing] as it is, or towards the appearance [of a thing] as it appears? Is it imitation of appearance or of truth?

G: Appearance.

S: Then the imitative skill (ἡ μιμητική) is far removed from the truth, and, it seems, this is why it can produce everything, because it lays hold of a small part of each thing, and this thing is an appearance.[19]

Ἀλλὰ τί αὐτὸν [the painter of a couch] κλίνης φήσεις εἶναι;

Τοῦτο, ἦ δ᾽ ὅς, ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ μετριώτατ᾽ ἂν προσαγορεύεσθαι, μιμητὴς οὗ ἐκεῖνοι δημιουργοί.

Εἶεν, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ· τὸν [maker] τοῦ τρίτου ἄρα γεννήματος ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως μιμητὴν καλεῖς;

Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη.

Τοῦτ᾽ ἄρα ἔσται καὶ ὁ τραγῳδοποιός, εἴπερ μιμητής ἐστιν, τρίτος τις ἀπὸ βασιλέως καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας πεφυκώς, καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄλλοι μιμηταί.

Κινδυνεύει.

Τὸν μὲν δὴ μιμητὴν ὡμολογήκαμεν. εἰπὲ δέ μοι περὶ τοῦ ζωγράφου τόδε· πότερα ἐκεῖνο αὐτὸ τὸ ἐν τῇ φύσει ἕκαστον δοκεῖ σοι ἐπιχειρεῖν μιμεῖσθαι ἢ τὰ τῶν δημιουργῶν ἔργα;

Τὰ τῶν δημιουργῶν, ἔφη.

Ἆρα οἷά ἐστιν ἢ οἷα φαίνεται; τοῦτο γὰρ ἔτι διόρισον.

Πῶς λέγεις; ἔφη.

Ὧδε· κλίνη, ἐάντε ἐκ πλαγίου αὐτὴν θεᾷ ἐάντε καταντικρὺ ἢ ὁπῃοῦν, μή τι διαφέρει αὐτὴ ἑαυτῆς, ἢ διαφέρει μὲν οὐδέν, φαίνεται δὲ ἀλλοία;…

…φαίνεται [to be different], διαφέρει δ᾽ οὐδέν.

[19] I am following Belfiore (1984) in thinking it worthwhile to distinguish between μίμησις and ἡ μιμητική.

Τοῦτο δὴ αὐτὸ σκόπει· πρὸς πότερον ἡ γραφικὴ πεποίηται περὶ ἕκαστον; πότερα πρὸς τὸ ὂν [of a thing], ὡς ἔχει, μιμήσασθαι, ἢ πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον [of a thing], ὡς φαίνεται, φαντάσματος ἢ ἀληθείας οὖσα μίμησις;

Φαντάσματος, ἔφη.

Πόρρω ἄρα που τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἡ μιμητικὴ ἐστιν καί, ὡς ἔοικεν, διὰ τοῦτο πάντα ἀπεργάζεται, ὅτι σμικρόν τι ἑκάστου ἐφάπτεται, καὶ τοῦτο εἴδωλον.

(597d13-598b8)

This explicitly tells us that painters, whom Socrates considers to be imitators, imitate particulars. It also explicitly tells us that imitators produce 'what the others make' in the sense that they create appearances displaying particulars. Taken together, these points suggest that imitators imitate in the sense that they create appearances of particulars. Nevertheless, these points are compatible with at least two different interpretations of what Socrates means by imitation both *qua* process and *qua* product.

First, they are compatible with thinking that Socrates considers an imitation to be a particular which contains an appearance which displays (the appearances contained within) particulars.[20] On this interpretation, imitating is a matter of creating a particular which contains an appearance of another particular. This interpretation looks plausible in light of the fact that a painting seems to meet the criteria of being a particular. The claim that imitators produce appearances, on this interpretation, must be understood to mean that, insofar as imitators create the kind of entity which craftspeople create, they create appearances of these entities.

[20] This is the standard view. It is what Nehamas has in mind when he says that 'the object [i.e. appearances, remembering that strictly speaking imitators create appearances of appearances contained within particulars] and the product of imitation are identical in kind, that is, totally similar; it is almost as if the imitator lifts the surface of the imitated object and transfers [it] into another medium' (1999b: 285). See also Richardson Lear (2011: 196) and Janaway (1995: 129). Moss holds a similar view but she thinks that imitation involves 'copying things as they appear' which means failing to copy things as they are (2007: 438).

Second, they are compatible with thinking that Socrates considers an imitation to be an entity which is like another entity. In the case of some imitations, this likeness is grounded in the fact that the imitation is ontologically akin to another entity. In the case of other imitations, this likeness is grounded in the fact that the imitation contains an appearance of a particular. Imitators, as Socrates clearly says, imitate in the sense that they create appearances. However, on this interpretation, Socrates does not mean that this is the only way of imitating. After all, he does not explicitly make this qualification.[21]

Thus, there are at least two different ways in which we can understand Socrates on imitation. One can accept either of them, or others, and still accept the conclusions I aim to make in this thesis.

1.3 – Poems as Imitations

Socrates is only interested in talking about imitation insofar as he thinks that poems are imitations. On the first interpretation, this means that poems contain appearances of other particulars. On the second, it means that poems are like another entity. Presumably, on this interpretation, like the first, poems are like particulars because they contain appearances displaying them. I can respect these interpretations by using formulations like "poems present us with appearances which are of, or display, particulars" and "poets create poetic appearances."

[21] This is the view of Marušič (2011: 222): 'we may attempt the following definition of [imitation]: doing or making something that is like, and is intended to be like (i.e. imitating), something else in one aspect or another.' One might be inclined towards this view as it coheres with Socrates's claim in 500b-c that philosophers imitate the forms.

Socrates thinks poems present us with appearances in virtue of various theatrical elements; actors speaking and mining actions, musicians and sound "technicians" producing sounds, and so on.[22] This reflects the fact that, for the ancient Greeks, poetry was theatrical. With these elements, poets present us with appearances which display:

> Human beings acting…under compulsion or voluntarily, and who, as a result of their acting, suppose they have fared well or badly, and in all these things grieving or rejoicing.
>
> Πράττοντας…ἀνθρώπους…βιαίους ἢ ἑκουσίας…καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πράττειν ἢ εὖ οἰομένους ἢ κακῶς πεπραγέναι, καὶ ἐν τούτοις δὴ πᾶσιν ἢ λυπουμένους ἢ χαίροντας.
>
> (603c5-8)

Poets create appearances of human beings acting in certain ways. Socrates thinks that the way in which a person acts expresses the moral character of their soul. Thus, when a poem presents us with appearances of human beings acting in certain ways, it is presenting us with appearances of moral character. A virtuous character would, presumably, participate in the transcendent form of virtue and/or the form *qua* type of virtue would be within and visible within this character. A vicious character would, presumably participate in the transcendent form of virtue to a very small degree and/or the form *qua* type of vice would be within and visible within this character. In this way, poets can be thought of as creating 'appearances of virtue' (εἰδώλων ἀρετῆς) (600e5).[23]

[22] Socrates puts this point somewhat derogatorily in 601a4-b4.

[23] I take Socrates to be referring to a spectrum which covers all modes of human morality. After all, vicious actions are assessable in terms of how virtuous they are. My reason is that Socrates thinks that imitative poets create appearances of vicious, not virtuous, characters. Another congenial possibility is that he is speaking ironically. What I am committed to denying, *contra* Moss, is that this claim means poets necessarily misrepresent virtue because appearances necessarily misrepresent that of which they are appearances, as discussed in an earlier footnote.

1.4 – Imitative Poetry

Socrates is only interested in talking about the ontology of poetry because he wants to explain to Glaucon why their foregoing discussion, especially the tripartition of the soul, makes it clear that he was right in 'refusing to admit as much of it [poetry] as is imitative' (τὸ μηδαμῇ παραδέχεσθαι αὐτῆς [poetry] ὅση μιμητική) (595a5). That is to say, Socrates means to banish only imitative poetry and the makers of it. What sort of poetry is this?

Imitative poetry is poetry which has been designed to give pleasure.[24] This is the sort of poetry which Socrates wants to banish in both books III and X.

> It seems that if a man, who, because of his cleverness, can become versatile and imitate everything, should arrive at our city, and wanted to show off his poems, we should revere him as divinely inspired, marvellous, and delightful. But we should say to him that there is no man of his kind in our city, and it would not be right for one to arise among us…we ourselves should employ a more austere and a less pleasing poet and storyteller for the sake of his usefulness, one who would imitate for us the diction of a morally reasonable man.
>
> Ἄνδρα δή, ὡς ἔοικε, δυνάμενον ὑπὸ σοφίας παντοδαπὸν γίγνεσθαι καὶ μιμεῖσθαι πάντα χρήματα, εἰ ἡμῖν ἀφίκοιτο εἰς τὴν πόλιν, αὐτός τε καὶ τὰ ποιήματα, βουλόμενος ἐπιδείξασθαι, προσκυνοῖμεν ἂν αὐτὸν ὡς ἱερὸν καὶ θαυμαστὸν καὶ ἡδύν, εἴποιμεν δ᾽ ἂν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν τοιοῦτος ἀνὴρ ἐν τῇ πόλει παρ᾽ ἡμῖν οὐδὲ θέμις ἐγγενέσθαι…αὐτοὶ δ᾽ ἂν τῷ αὐστηροτέρῳ

[24] This claim is and is not controversial. For example, Nehamas argues that imitativeness is the 'desire or ability to imitate anything independently of its moral quality and without the proper attitude of praise or blame toward it' (Nehamas, 1999b: 280). Similarly, Ferrari claims that imitative poetry is 'poetry which values imitation as such' (1990: 125). Belfiore argues that an imitative poet will create 'many different appearances of a single thing' (1984: 132). If I properly articulated all of these different interpretations, my thesis would lack clarity. However, my interpretation of imitativeness is also not controversial because despite these differences, commentators agree that imitative poetry presents us with appearances which display vicious characters doing vicious things (see also, Moss (2007). This fact is all that I need for the conclusions of this thesis.

καὶ ἀηδεστέρῳ ποιητῇ χρώμεθα καὶ μυθολόγῳ ὠφελίας ἕνεκα, ὃς ἡμῖν τὴν τοῦ ἐπιεικοῦς λέξιν μιμοῖτο.

(398a1-b2)

If you admit the Muse of pleasure in lyrics or epic verse, pleasure and pain will be lords in your city, instead of law and reason, the thing which seems always to be best for the common interest.

Εἰ δὲ τὴν ἡδυσμένην Μοῦσαν παραδέξῃ ἐν μέλεσιν ἢ ἔπεσιν, ἡδονή σοι καὶ λύπη ἐν τῇ πόλει βασιλεύσετον ἀντὶ νόμου τε καὶ τοῦ κοινῇ ἀεὶ δόξαντος εἶναι βελτίστου λόγου.

(607a5-7).

In 595a5, the beginning of book X, Socrates says that he banished imitative poetry in book III and that he will now reaffirm this banishment. Since in both books he says that he is banishing poetry which aims to give its audience pleasure, it is reasonable to think that he identifies such poetry with imitative poetry.

Imitative poets aim to give pleasure to their audiences. How do they go about doing this? Socrates says that they will imitate 'the thing which appears to be beautiful to the Many and the ones who know nothing' (οἷον φαίνεται καλὸν εἶναι τοῖς πολλοῖς τε καὶ μηδὲν εἰδόσιν) (602b2-3). This implies that imitative poets present us with appearances of humans acting in a way which the Many and the ignorant wrongly consider to be beautiful.

Likewise, he claims that 'the cleverness' (ἡ σοφία) of an imitative poet 'if he is going to be highly esteemed amongst the Many…is directed towards the irritable and multicoloured character because it is easy to imitate' (εἰ μέλλει εὐδοκιμήσειν ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς...πρὸς τὸ ἀγανακτητικόν τε καὶ ποικίλον ἦθος διὰ τὸ εὐμίμητον εἶναι) (605a3-5). Such characters are

vicious. In book IV, Socrates claims that the virtuous are those whose appetite and spirit have been harmoniously ordered by their reason. Such ordering will make them 'temperate' (σώφρονα) (442c9). In this way, virtuous people will have a 'wise and quiet character' (φρόνιμόν τε καὶ ἡσύχιον ἦθος) (604e2). Imitative poems do not present us with appearances of this kind of character (604e2). This itself implies that the excitable and multicoloured character is a vicious character. Moreover, the vicious characters Socrates describes in books VIII and IX are also said to be multicoloured and excitable. For instance, consider his description of the democratic man at 561e3-7.

> I certainly believe…that this man is manifold…beautiful, and multi-coloured, just like the [democratic] city, a man whom many men and women would admire because of his life, who has within himself the greatest number of models of constitutions and characters.
>
> Οἶμαι δέ γε…καὶ παντοδαπόν…καὶ τὸν καλόν τε καὶ ποικίλον, ὥσπερ ἐκείνην τὴν [democratic] πόλιν, τοῦτον τὸν ἄνδρα εἶναι· ὃν πολλοὶ ἂν καὶ πολλαὶ ζηλώσειαν τοῦ βίου, παραδείγματα πολιτειῶν τε καὶ τρόπων πλεῖστα ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχοντα.
>
> (561e3-7)

Thus, in order for imitative poets to win approval from the Many, they will have to create appearances of humans who are not virtuous but vicious. Read in light of 602b2-3, this implies that the Many enjoy watching poems with vicious characters, although they think these characters are virtuous. Hence, Socrates means to banish poetry which focuses on ugly and vicious characters in which the Many take pleasure. For Socrates, this means banishing Homer and the tragedians. Despite the opinions of the Many, these poets actually create appearances of vice. This fact, as I will explain in the next chapter, means that imitative poetry has disastrous consequences for those who enjoy it.

Chapter 2 – In Defence of Banishment

The aim of this thesis is to investigate Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry; whether he is confident or anxious about it; whether he thinks it is well-justified or not. Thus, we must understand why Socrates banishes imitative poetry. As I said in my **Introduction**, Socrates banishes such poetry because of the Claim of Destruction.

> [Imitative poetry] is certainly not to be admitted [into the city]…it seems to be a corruption of the thought of those who listen to it, unless they happen to possess, as a drug, knowledge of its real nature.
>
> [Imitative poetry] μᾶλλον οὐ παραδεκτέα [into the city]…λώβη ἔοικεν εἶναι...τῆς τῶν ἀκουόντων διανοίας, ὅσοι μὴ ἔχουσι φάρμακον τὸ εἰδέναι αὐτὰ οἷα τυγχάνει ὄντα.
>
> (595a6-b7)

> And so we would finally be justified if we should refuse to admit [the imitative poet] into the well-ordered city because…he destroys the rational part [of the soul].
>
> Καὶ οὕτως ἤδη ἂν ἐν δίκῃ [the imitative poet] οὐ παραδεχοίμεθα εἰς μέλλουσαν εὐνομεῖσθαι πόλιν, ὅτι…ἀπόλλυσι τὸ λογιστικόν [of the soul].
>
> (605b1-3)

However, before Socrates develops the Claim of Destruction, he argues that poets lack both knowledge and right belief about the subjects they imitate. This raises the question as to whether or not these epistemic criticisms develop material upon which the argument for the Claim of Destruction is logically dependent. The answer to this question is important to ascertaining Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry. If Socrates is anxious about his epistemic criticisms, and his Claim of Destruction depends

on these criticisms, then we might have a reason for seeing him as anxious about his banishment. So, in this chapter, I give a detailed overview of how Socrates argues for his epistemic criticisms and his Claim of Destruction. This will make it clear that the argument for the latter does not logically depend on any of the conclusions of the former. I propose that the Claim of Destruction is rhetorically "dependent" on the epistemic criticisms.

I first discuss Socrates's epistemic criticisms (**2.1**). I then detail the Claim of Destruction (**2.2**). Last, I conclude that Socrates justifies his banishment of imitative poetry on the basis of his Claim of Destruction and that the epistemic criticisms play a rhetorical role in this banishment (**2.3**)

As I said in the **Introduction**, the way in which some of the arguments within book X should be understood is contentious. Although resolving these disputes is beyond the scope of this thesis, I will lay out various interpretations of the more heavily contested arguments. I invite my readers to agree with any of them. The conclusions I draw in **Chapters 4** and **5** do not depend on anything particularly controversial.

2.1 – The Epistemic Criticisms

Socrates criticises the poets for not only failing to know about the subjects they imitate but also for failing to have any right beliefs about virtue.[25]

2.1.1 – Poets Lack Knowledge

The opening of Socrates's first epistemic criticism is constituted by two long passages.

[25] Although Socrates does not make this apparent until later in the text, at the conclusion of the first epistemic criticism, the proper subject of any imitative poem is virtue. Although it is important to see this parallel between the two critiques, I will not take it into account when I detail the first.

Whenever anyone reports to us that he happened upon a person who knows all the crafts and all the other things as well as any man who knows one of these, and that there is nothing which he does not know more precisely than anyone, we must assume that he is a simple-minded person, and, so it seems, has happened upon some sorcerer and imitator and was deceived into thinking that he is omniscient because he himself cannot distinguish between knowledge, ignorance, and imitation.

Ἐπειδάν τις ἡμῖν ἀπαγγέλλῃ περί του, ὡς ἐνέτυχεν ἀνθρώπῳ πάσας ἐπισταμένῳ τὰς δημιουργίας καὶ τἆλλα πάντα ὅσα εἷς ἕκαστος οἶδεν, οὐδὲν ὅτι οὐχὶ ἀκριβέστερον ὁτουοῦν ἐπισταμένῳ, ὑπολαμβάνειν δεῖ τῷ τοιούτῳ ὅτι εὐήθης τις ἄνθρωπος, καί, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐντυχὼν γόητί τινι καὶ μιμητῇ ἐξηπατήθη, ὥστε ἔδοξεν αὐτῷ πάσσοφος εἶναι, διὰ τὸ αὐτὸς μὴ οἷός τ' εἶναι ἐπιστήμην καὶ ἀνεπιστημοσύνην καὶ μίμησιν ἐξετάσαι.

(598c6-d6)

We must examine tragedy and its leader, Homer, since from some people we hear that these people know every art, and all human things pertaining to virtue, vice, and the things divine…[we hear that] it is necessary for the good poet, if he is going to poeticise about whatever he does poeticise about beautifully, to poeticise knowingly, or not be able to poeticise [beautifully]. So, we must investigate whether those [who say these things] have met with these imitators, have been thoroughly deceived, and, seeing their works, do not notice that they are three times removed from the truth and that it is easy for a person not knowing the truth to poeticise, for they are making appearances, not reality. Or is there something in what they are saying? Do the good poets know the things about which, to the Many, they seem to speak well?

Ἐπισκεπτέον τήν τε τραγῳδίαν καὶ τὸν ἡγεμόνα αὐτῆς Ὅμηρον, ἐπειδή τινων ἀκούομεν ὅτι οὗτοι πάσας μὲν τέχνας ἐπίστανται, πάντα δὲ τὰ ἀνθρώπεια τὰ πρὸς ἀρετὴν καὶ κακίαν, καὶ τά γε θεῖα…[we hear that] ἀνάγκη γὰρ τὸν ἀγαθὸν ποιητήν, εἰ μέλλει περὶ ὧν ἂν ποιῇ καλῶς ποιήσειν, εἰδότα ἄρα ποιεῖν, ἢ μὴ οἷόν τε εἶναι [beautifully] ποιεῖν. δεῖ δὴ ἐπισκέψασθαι

> πότερον [those who say these things] μιμηταῖς τοι οὐτοις οὗτοι ἐντυχόντες ἐξηπάτηνται καὶ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν ὁρῶντες οὐκ αἰσθάνονται τριττὰ ἀπέχοντα τοῦ ὄντος καὶ ῥᾴδια ποιεῖν μὴ εἰδότι τὴν ἀλήθειαν, φαντάσματα γὰρ ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ὄντα ποιοῦσιν, ἤ τι καὶ λέγουσιν καὶ τῷ ὄντι οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ποιηταὶ ἴσασιν περὶ ὧν δοκοῦσιν τοῖς πολλοῖς εὖ λέγειν.
>
> (598d8-599a5)

The significance of these two passages can be construed in three ways.

First, in 598c6-d6, Socrates could be saying that his prior discussion entitles us to assume that those who claim that poets, who are imitators, have knowledge have been deceived, because he thinks his discussion of imitation means that poets lack knowledge of what their poems display.[26] Whenever somebody claims that a poet has knowledge, they have been deceived into forming a false belief. Thus, on this reading, the epistemic criticism of the poets starts at 598c6-d6. In the next passage, 598d8-599a5, Socrates announces that he will now either a) demonstrate that poets are, in fact, imitators; or b) offer further grounds for his claim that poets lack knowledge.[27]

Second, in 598c6-d6, Socrates could be saying that his prior discussion entitles us to assume that those who claim that imitators have knowledge about what their poems display have been deceived, because he takes his claims about imitation to mean that imitators lack such knowledge.[28] Dominic Scott (2016: 294 - 296) proposes this reading. Unlike the first reading, Scott denies that Socrates, in 598c6-d6, infers from a general claim he makes about imitators to the case of poets. According to Scott, in 598d8-599a5, Socrates announces

[26] I will not discuss the soundness of this inference. See Janaway (1995: 125) for a critical discussion. This interpretation also seems to be the most popular.
[27] Janaway (1995: 124 - 125) proposes the former variant. Richardson Lear convincingly criticises him for it (2011: 202). Moss (2007: 423) proposes a variant of the latter.
[28] Janaway's critical remarks also apply to this claim (1995: 125).

that there will be an independent argument for the claim that poets lack knowledge, even though he probably thought he did not need to give one (2016: 296).

Third, in 598c6-d6, Socrates could be saying that his discussion of imitation, which precedes this remark, entitles us to assume that those who claim poets, who are imitators, have knowledge have been deceived, because they have been led to form an unjustified belief. This is my own reading of the text.[29] According to it, Socrates does not think that he has yet proved that poets lack knowledge. The argument for this comes after 598d8-599a5, as this passage announces. Rather, he thinks that by 598c6-d6, he has proven that a poet's poems – which are imitations – cannot justify the claim that poets have knowledge. It is precisely for this reason that we are entitled to assume that those who form the judgement that poets have knowledge about the appearances their poems present us with have been deceived. This way of reading 598c6-d6 amounts to an epistemic criticism of the audiences of poetry, not the poets themselves.[30]

What all three readings have in common, though, is that Socrates, after 599a5, goes on to give an argument for the claim that poets lack knowledge about the particulars which their poetic appearances display.[31] The argument is:

[29] I developed similar ideas in an essay submitted in October of 2020 in order to meet the examination requirements of the B.Phil. However, I did not explicitly discuss this interpretation.

[30] On this way of reading 598c6-d6, Socrates must think that even if a poet has knowledge, we can reasonably assume that those who believe that this poet is knowledgeable, because of their familiarity with this poet's imitations, are being deceived. This is a problem if it is impossible for us to have been deceived about something when we have formed a true belief about it. I would claim that when we have been misled in our belief formation process, we have been deceived. Imagine that Desdemona was having an affair with Cassio. Further imagine that Iago, not knowing this, still plants her handkerchief in order for Othello to believe, in this case, truthfully that Desdemona was having an affair with Cassio. Was Othello deceived into this true belief because he did not have good justification for it? Seemingly, yes; we can be deceived into forming true beliefs. This response, though, raises methodological issues. Is it plausible to think that Socrates, whose author did not study post-Gettier epistemology, would think that we can be deceived into forming beliefs which are true? Much more work is needed to show that it is.

[31] Even Janaway agrees with this, but he also takes this conclusion to mean that poets are imitators.

1. 'Do you think that…if someone should be able to make both the thing going to be imitated and its appearance, he would be eager to lose himself in the craft of producing appearances…I believe that if he should really know the truth of the things which he imitates, he would give more serious attention to actions than to imitations' (οἴει…εἴ τις ἀμφότερα δύναιτο ποιεῖν, τό τε μιμηθησόμενον καὶ τὸ εἴδωλον, ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν εἰδώλων δημιουργίᾳ ἑαυτὸν ἀφεῖναι ἂν σπουδάζειν…οἶμαι, ἐπιστήμων εἴη τῇ ἀληθείᾳ τούτων πέρι ἅπερ καὶ μιμεῖται, πολὺ πρότερον ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ἂν σπουδάσειεν ἢ ἐπὶ τοῖς μιμήμασι) (599a7-599b5).

2. Homer was serious about making appearances and was not more serious about actions than creating imitations of actions. No city claims he gave them good laws. He did not win wars. He did not invent any useful devices. He was not a leader in the education of certain people who took pleasure in associating with him. Indeed, some stories suggest otherwise. Last, he had no companions who honoured and loved him (599d2-600e3).

Therefore, 'all poets are imitators of appearances of virtue and all the other things about which they poeticise, and do not lay hold of the truth' (πάντας τοὺς ποιητικοὺς μιμητὰς εἰδώλων ἀρετῆς εἶναι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων περὶ ὧν ποιοῦσιν, τῆς δὲ ἀληθείας οὐχ ἅπτεσθαι) (600e4-6).

Commentators agree that this is a poor argument.[32]

[32] Janaway (1995: 136 - 139) is quite clear about the problems of this argument. Ferrari (1990: 130 – 131) offers a sympathetic discussion. Socrates is no doubt using Homer as a "best case scenario," arguing that if Homer, the best poet, lacks knowledge, then so do all other poets. He puts the claim that Homer is the best into the mouths of his imaged interlocutors.

2.1.2 – Poets Lack Right Belief

After having argued that poets lack knowledge about the particulars their poetic appearances display, Socrates then develops another epistemic criticism by arguing that they lack right belief about human virtue. His case rests on the idea that for each particular, there are three crafts 'one which uses it, one which makes it, and one which imitates it' (χρησομένην, ποιήσουσαν, μιμησομένην) (601d2).

According to Socrates, the 'virtue, beauty, and rightness' (ἀρετὴ καὶ κάλλος καὶ ὀρθότης) of a particular depends upon 'the use for which each is made or naturally adapted' (τὴν χρείαν ἐστίν, πρὸς ἣν ἂν ἕκαστον ᾖ πεποιημένον ἢ πεφυκός) (601d4-6). The one who uses a particular knows its virtue because they have the most experience with it (601d8-12). The idea is that a particular is virtuous just in case it performs its function well. The user of a particular, because of their experience using it, knows when it performs its function well. This means that they know the virtue of the particular they use. By contrast, the maker of a particular only has right beliefs about its virtue. While makers do not use the particulars they make, the users of them tell their makers how they must be made in order for them to perform their function virtuously (601e7-602a1). However, imitators neither have knowledge or right belief about the virtue of the particulars they make (602a3-6). They do not use the object. Nor do they have 'right belief…from compulsory association with the one who knows' (δόξαν ὀρθὴν…ἐξ ἀνάγκης συνεῖναι τῷ εἰδότι) (602a4-5). As outlined in **1.1-1.2**, there is a sense in which imitators make particulars of certain kinds insofar as they make appearances of such particulars. Socrates is denying that they have either knowledge or right belief about the virtue of such particulars.

This argument is flawed. Supposing Socrates's claims about the respective epistemic status of makers and users is correct, he has given us no reason to suppose that all imitators fail either to use the particulars which their poetic appearances display, or to consult with those who do use them.[33] However, there may be a deeper issue than philosophical viability.

In articulating this argument, Socrates focuses on imitators who are painters. He takes it for granted that this argument makes sense when we apply it to poets. This invites us to wonder whether and how the same structure *can* be applied to poets. In order to vindicate Socrates's inference from painters to imitators in general, then back down to poets, there must be some particular, or particulars, which the users use, the makers make, and of which poets create poetic appearances. Recalling **1.4**, this particular is presumably the moral character of the soul. Poets create appearances of humans acting in ways which express their moral character (**1.4**). Who, then, would be the makers and users of moral character?

Dominic Scott (2017) has proposed a compelling answer to this question.[34] The makers are those who perform actions which give expression to their moral character or who instil a moral character into another person (Scott, 2017: 171-174). The users are those who make use of morality. Scott identifies these people as the political leaders of either the ideal *Kallipolis* or of an actual city state. For example, they use citizens who are acting virtuously in order to 'bring about the overall good of the state, its *eudaimonia*' (Scott, 2017: 173).[35] These leaders would know virtue. Leaders of an actual city state might use people who are

[33] For more detailed critical see Janaway (1995: 140 - 142).
[34] Scott discusses this argument in terms of virtue, as opposed to vice. I am trying to be neutral between virtue and vice in my exposition of this argument so that it coheres with the idea that the particular in question is moral character. As I said in an earlier footnote in **1.3**, Socrates, in 600e4-6, can reasonably be taken to mean that all poets, through creating appearances of humans acting, create appearances of virtue, *qua* spectrum, which includes vice at one end of the spectrum.
[35] The idea of a political leader "using" people may sound odd to us post-Kantians. However, as Scott notes, Socrates is comfortable with this sort of language, saying that 'the law 'uses' the citizens to bind the city together (2017: 173, with reference to 520a3-4).

acting viciously for their own advantage. These leaders would know vice, if such a thing can be known. Thus, even though the argument that imitators as a whole do not even have right belief about human virtue is flawed, it at least makes sense when it is applied to poets.

Thus, in summary of **2.1** as a whole, Socrates poses two unsuccessful epistemic criticisms of the poets.

2.2 – The Claim of Destruction

After his challenge to the epistemic status of the poets, Socrates goes on to argue for the Claim of Destruction, the claim that imitative poetry can metaphorically destroy the rational part of the soul.

2.2.1 – Illusions and the Inferior Soul

Socrates initially tries to figure out upon which part of us imitative poetry exerts its power (602c4-5). He thinks considering what can happen when we experience optical illusions will illuminate this.

When we experience an optical illusion, we can form a belief based on how things appear to us. We can accept that the stick actually bent when it was put into the water. Alternatively, we can form a belief based on 'measuring, counting, and weighing' (τὸ μετρεῖν καὶ ἀριθμεῖν καὶ ἱστάναι) (602d6). These cognitive exercises are metaphors for reasoning in general.[36] By reasoning, we can transcend what our senses tell us and believe that the stick is still straight.

[36] See Moss (2008: 36 – 37) for details on this metaphor.

Further, Socrates believes that when we confront an optical illusion, we can simultaneously form both a belief based on appearances and a belief based on reason. In order to explain how this is possible, he says that we must be forming two beliefs in two different parts of our souls. This, he reminds Glaucon, is a consequence of the *Principle of Opposites* which they hypothesised in book IV (437a3-8). As Socrates expresses it in book X, this is the principle that 'it is impossible for the same thing at the same time to believe opposites about the same thing' (τῷ αὐτῷ ἅμα περὶ ταὐτὰ ἐναντία δοξάζειν ἀδύνατον εἶναι) (602e8-9). When we form a belief based on reasoning, we are forming it in the rational part of our souls. After all, reasoning is the function of the rational part of the soul (602e1-2). This is the 'best' (βέλτιστον) part of the soul (603a4-5). The part of the soul in which we form beliefs based on appearances is the 'inferior' (φαύλων) part of the soul (603a7). I will call this part of the soul the *irrational* part because it is not the rational part and because Socrates calls it 'far…from intelligence' (πόρρω…φρονήσεως) and 'senseless' (ἀνοήτῳ) (603b1, 605b9).

In book IV, Socrates uses the Principle of Opposites to divide the soul into three parts: reason, spirit, and appetite. The fact that in book X there seem to be only a rational and an irrational part has caused much dispute. Some think that, in book X, Socrates means to be drawing a distinction within reason itself.[37] This interpretation, however, is not very common in recent scholarship. Persuasive arguments support seeing the rational part of book X to reason, and the irrational part to be both appetite and spirit.[38] While I can make the same conclusions in **Chapters 4** and **5** regardless, I will explore Socrates's Claim of Destruction in line with these recent interpretations.

[37] See Murphy (1951: 239 – 243) and, most prominently, Alexander Nehamas (1999a: 265).
[38] See, for example, Rachel Singpurwalla (2011) and Jessica Moss (2008).

After making this delineation of the soul in light of optical illusions, Socrates then concludes that:

> This, then, was what I wished to agree upon when I said that painting, and the imitative skill as a whole, produce work which is far from the truth, and appeals to a part in us far from intelligence, and is a courtesan (ἑταίρα) and friend to nothing healthy or true.
>
> Τοῦτο τοίνυν διομολογήσασθαι βουλόμενος ἔλεγον ὅτι ἡ γραφικὴ καὶ ὅλως ἡ μιμητικὴ πόρρω μὲν τῆς ἀληθείας ὂν τὸ αὑτῆς ἔργον ἀπεργάζεται, πόρρω δ᾽ αὖ φρονήσεως ὄντι τῷ ἐν ἡμῖν προσομιλεῖ τε καὶ ἑταίρα καὶ φίλη ἐστὶν ἐπ᾽ οὐδενὶ ὑγιεῖ οὐδ᾽ ἀληθεῖ.
>
> (603a9-b3).

However, before going further into this claim, it is important to see that Socrates becomes hesitant about applying this argument to poetry. Even though he thinks poetry is a species of imitation, and so probably thinks his argument does apply, he does not want to rely solely on 'the analogy' (τῷ εἰκότι) between poetry and painting (603b10-603c1). As Scott explains, this is probably because Socrates knows that this claim is very contentious.

> It may be fine to claim that *trompe l'oeil* painters manipulate some non-rational element in us, but he surely needs more argument to apply the same to poetry. Defenders of Homer will doubtless respond that poetry engages with the intellect (as well as the emotions).
>
> (2016: 302)

Due to his hesitancy, Socrates turns away from illusions and paintings towards imitative poetry itself.

2.2.2 – Imitative Poems and the Irrational Soul

He begins by considering the sorts of situations which poetic appearances display and thereby present to us. These situations are:

> Human beings…acting under compulsion or voluntarily, and who, as a result of their acting, suppose they have fared well or badly, and in all these things grieving or rejoicing.
> Πράττοντας…ἀνθρώπους…βιαίους ἢ ἑκουσίας…καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πράττειν ἢ εὖ οἰομένους ἢ κακῶς πεπραγέναι, καὶ ἐν τούτοις δὴ πᾶσιν ἢ λυπουμένους ἢ χαίροντας.
>
> (603c5-8)

He then, referring back to his discussion of illusions, claims that:

> In all these circumstances a human being is [not] in a harmonious state of mind…just as in sight he was conflicted and had opposing beliefs within himself at the same time about the same things, so also in his activities is he conflicting with, and fighting against, himself.
> Ἐν ἅπασι τούτοις ὁμονοητικῶς ἄνθρωπος [not] διάκειται…ὥσπερ κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν ἐστασίαζεν καὶ ἐναντίας εἶχεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ δόξας ἅμα περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν, οὕτω καὶ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι στασιάζει τε καὶ μάχεται αὐτὸς αὑτῷ.
>
> (603c11-d3)

Life presents us with situations in which we will be conflicted about how to respond. From 603e4 to 604c4, Socrates discusses how, when a 'morally reasonable' (ἐπιεικὴς) man loses his son, he will have 'two opposing…impulses' (ἐναντίας…ἀγωγῆς) (603e4, 604b1). On the one hand, his reason will tell him that it is best to grieve as little as possible and be rational in his response to pain. His desire to follow reason belongs to the rational part of his soul. On the other hand, his very experience of grief will tell him to hold nothing back and to satisfy his urge to grieve. The desire to give into his grief belongs to the irrational part of his soul.

A poetic appearance can display people who act in accordance with their reason or who give into their emotions. The former kind of people have a 'wise and quiet character' (φρόνιμόν τε καὶ ἡσύχιον ἦθος) (604e2). The latter have an 'irritable character which contains many multicoloured imitations' (πολλὴν μίμησιν καὶ ποικίλην ἔχει, τὸ ἀγανακτητικόν) (604e1-2). A poet who wants to please their audience, an imitative poet, will imitate people with a multicoloured, excitable, and, hence, vicious character (**1.4**). After all, the wise and quiet character is 'neither easy to imitate nor to understand being imitated, especially for the generic person and for people of all sorts when they are gathered in a theatre' (οὔτε ῥᾴδιον μιμήσασθαι οὔτε μιμουμένου εὐπετὲς καταμαθεῖν, ἄλλως τε καὶ πανηγύρει καὶ παντοδαποῖς ἀνθρώποις εἰς θέατρα συλλεγομένοις) (604e3-5).

Having established this point, Socrates then concludes that the imitative poet, by making imitative poetry, poetry which displays vicious characters in order to please the Many:

> Arouses and fosters [the irrational part] of the soul and, strengthening it, destroys the rational part, just as in the city, when someone puts morally wretched men in power and turns the city over to them, he destroys the better ones. And in the same way we will say that the imitative poet creates a bad constitution within the soul of each individual, gratifying the senseless part of it…making appearances of appearances which are altogether quite removed from the truth.
>
> Ἐγείρει [the irrational part] τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τρέφει καὶ ἰσχυρὸν ποιῶν ἀπόλλυσι τὸ λογιστικόν, ὥσπερ ἐν πόλει ὅταν τις μοχθηροὺς ἐγκρατεῖς ποιῶν παραδιδῷ τὴν πόλιν, τοὺς δὲ χαριεστέρους φθείρῃ· ταὐτὸν καὶ τὸν μιμητικὸν ποιητὴν φήσομεν κακὴν πολιτείαν ἰδίᾳ ἑκάστου τῇ ψυχῇ ἐμποιεῖν τῷ ἀνοήτῳ αὐτῆς χαριζόμενον…εἴδωλα εἰδωλοποιοῦντα, τοῦ δὲ ἀληθοῦς πόρρω πάνυ ἀφεστῶτα.

(605b2-c3).

Watching imitative poetry destroys the rational part of our souls. Socrates means this metaphorically. He does not think that the soul can literally be destroyed. After all, he argues that it is immortal (608b-612a). Nevertheless, there are two textually viable ways of understanding what Socrates means by this and why he thinks it is true.

2.2.3 – Two Interpretations of the Claim of Destruction

On an *intellectual* interpretation, watching imitative poetry destroys the rational part of our souls in the sense that it makes us unable to form beliefs by reasoning.[39] Most importantly, it makes us unable to form beliefs about what is good and what is bad on the basis of reasoning. It makes us only able to form such beliefs on the basis of what appears to be good and bad. Such belief formation is the function of the irrational part of the soul.

Imitative poetry disables our reasoning by the following mechanism. When we watch an imitative poem, we implicitly acquire certain beliefs about virtue and the good. We come to hold these beliefs because, when we watch imitative poetry, we tend to empathise with the characters in the poem, experiencing their emotions as they do. Their emotions are based on their beliefs about moral value. In sharing the emotions of the characters, we thus implicitly accept their beliefs about moral value, on which their emotions are based. We accept their beliefs without reasoning about whether or not we ought to hold them.[40]

[39] I include Halliwell (1993: 12), Burnyeat (1999: 321 -3), Moss (2008), and Scott (2020: 72 - 77) as proponents of an intellectual interpretation.

[40] Scott, for instance, writes: 'the effect of enjoying such mimesis is not simply to stir up similar feelings in the audience, but to make them share the character's evaluations that underlie such feelings' (2021: 74). He then quotes Burnyeat's claim that: 'When we sympathize with a grieving hero, we not only allow ourselves to share feelings we would wish to restrain in real life. We also allow ourselves, as part of that emotional bonding, to share a while, at some level of our soul, the hero's belief that a great misfortune has happened' (1999: 321). Last, Moss claims that 'passionate emotions such as those provoked by imitative poetry are unreflective responses to vivid appearances of things as having positive or negative value, and thus they are non-rational in precisely the same sense as in the belief that the submerged stick is bent' (2008: 57).

We tend to empathise with the characters because the irrational part of our souls derives pleasure from doing so.[41] Last, imitative poetry displays what are in fact vicious and ugly characters (**1.4**). This means that the emotional responses which these characters undergo will themselves be vicious and ugly actions which reflect incorrect beliefs about what is good and what is bad. So, watching imitative poetry causes us to have wrong beliefs about moral value.

How, though, does this process lead to a general impairment in our capacity to form beliefs by reasoning, as opposed to an impairment of this capacity during the performance of the poem while we are empathising with its characters? Why not think that we revert to having the correct beliefs about human morality when we leave the theatre?[42]

The answer begins with the claim that the pleasure we get from empathising with the characters of imitative poetry belongs to the irrational part of our souls.[43] We have such pleasures when either an appetitive or a thymotic desire is satisfied. I presuppose that an appetitive desire is a desire 'for whatever seems appealing or attractive to us' (Rachel Singpurwalla 2011: 292).[44] Less controversially, I presuppose that a thymotic desire is a desire for either victory or honour (Singpurwalla, 2011: 284).[45]

According to Socrates, the more pleasure we feel in one of the parts of the soul, the harder it becomes to resist giving into the desires of this part. This claim is quite important. Call

[41] I explain why in **2.2.4**.
[42] Proponents of the intellectual interpretation do not make their answers to these questions sufficiently clear. Nor are they clear in posing or worrying about them.
[43] Again, I explain why in **2.2.4**.
[44] This is a view originally proposed by John Cooper, who writes that appetites 'have their ultimate origin simply in facts of experience, in the fact that the person in question happens to get a certain pleasure from doing these things' (1999: 199).
[45] Commentators usually ignore spirit and thymotic desires when they discuss the Claim of Destruction. Destrée, P. (2011: 267 – 283) offers some interesting reflections on the importance of spirit.

it the *Pleasure Amplification Principle*. Socrates does not explicitly discuss this principle. However, we can extract this principle from his claim that imitative poetry 'arouses and fosters [the irrational part] of the soul and, strengthening it, destroys the rational part' (ἐγείρει [the irrational part] τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τρέφει καὶ ἰσχυρὸν ποιῶν ἀπόλλυσι τὸ λογιστικόν) (606b2). I also think he has it in mind when he says 'whatever enjoyment we derive from the affairs of others inevitably goes back to our own affairs' (ὅτι ἀπολαύειν ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα) (606b6-7). By this, I take him to mean that, overtime, the kind of pleasure which we derive from engaging with actual or imagined people acting in certain ways in certain circumstances strengthens the intensity of pleasures of this kind. Such intensity makes satisfying our desires for such pleasures irresistible. As a result, we tend to act in the ways which will give us this kind of pleasure.

As 606b2 makes clear, the Pleasure Amplification Principle lies behind the Claim of Destruction. For an intellectual interpreter to explain the general impairment of reason by way of the Pleasure Amplification Principle, they must suppose that: 1) when we experience pleasure in empathising with the characters of imitative poetry, we experience a pleasure which belongs to the irrational soul, an *irrational* pleasure; 2) we desire to form beliefs based on appearances; and 3) that this desire belongs to the irrational soul. I will delay exploring the first point until **2.2.4**. I will accept that the second point is plausible. The last point is straightforward. The rational-soul-part desires to learn the nature of reality (581d10). This requires forming beliefs by reasoning. The desire to form beliefs based on appearances is not a desire to learn the nature of reality by reasoning. Therefore, it is not a rational desire. Nor is it a thymotic desire. A desire to form beliefs based on appearances does not seem to be a desire for victory or honour. Thus, it is an appetitive desire. It must simply strike us as appealing or attractive to form beliefs based on appearances when we are in a given scenario. In turn, this means that intellectual interpreters must think that

when we experience pleasure in sympathising with the characters of imitative poetry, we experience an appetitive pleasure. Only this will allow them to say that the more pleasure we give to our appetite when we sympathise with the characters of imitative poetry – thereby arousing, fostering, and strengthening it – the more difficult it becomes to resist giving into our desire to form beliefs based on appearances outside the theatre. Eventually, it will become virtually impossible, and this is when our reason will have been metaphorically destroyed, according to the intellectual interpretation.

The *practical* interpretation is very similar. However, it eschews the discussion of Socrates's theory of belief. It does not require us to accept that Socrates thinks there are appearances of value and that emotions are based on beliefs about value. According to it, watching imitative poetry destroys the rational part of our souls insofar as it makes us unable to resist giving into irrational desires.[46]

Such destruction occurs because the inferior soul feels pleasure when we take pleasure in: attending to a imitative poem *qua* appearance; watching the characters of imitative poetry acting viciously, giving into their own appetitive and thymotic desires; and empathising with them.[47] It will be useful to refer to these actions as *positive responses* to imitative poetry. When we take pleasure in positively responding to imitative poems, giving into our own irrational desires will become irresistible. This happens in accordance with the Pleasure Amplification Principle. The more enjoyment we gain from positively responding to

[46] I am basing this practical interpretation off of remarks by Nehamas and Richardson Lear. The former writes: 'Plato's view is that the pleasure we feel at the representation of an expression of sorrow in poetry is pleasure at that expression itself, and for that reason likely to dispose us to enjoy such behavior in life' (1999b: 284). The latter claims that for Socrates, 'repeatedly enjoying pleasures that reason does not approve will make it ever more difficult to enjoy doing in real life what reason judges we must do' (2013: 252). However, it is not obvious, whether or not these commentators actually propose a practical interpretation. They do not detail their interpretations sufficiently. I am putting forward the practical interpretation as a textually viable way of interpreting Socrates, which some commentators might hold.
[47] I explain why in **2.2.4**.

imitative poems, the more tempting it becomes to enjoy the pleasure of irrational desires, the more difficult it becomes to act in accordance with the demands of reason. This is how imitative poetry destroys our reason on the practical interpretation of the Claim of Destruction.

2.2.4 – Why Imitative Poetry Pleases the Inferior Soul

None of the claims I defend in this thesis concerning Socrates's attitude depend on which of the two available interpretations of the Claim of Destruction is correct. Indeed, they are quite similar. Instead of considering their relative merits, I will explain why, on the intellectual interpretation, Socrates thinks that empathising with a character in an imitative poem pleases the irrational soul. I will also explain why, on the practical interpretation, he thinks positively responding to imitative poems pleases the irrational soul. This is a matter which neither intellectual nor practical interpreters sufficiently detail.[48] Indeed, Janaway has even claimed that '[Socrates] assumes that dramatic portrayals of characters guided by emotion and/or appetite will be enjoyed only by a corresponding 'inferior' part of the spectator…'(1995: 149). I intend to argue that this is no mere assumption.

First, the rational-soul-part could not take pleasure in the appearances an imitative poem presents to it, appearances displaying vicious character, because it could not learn about reality from these appearances. Indeed, we cannot come to know the truth from appearances unless we already know the forms.[49] It is only once we know the transcendent forms that we will be able to know 'what each appearance is and of what [it is an

[48] Richardson Lear, albeit very briefly, touches on this issue (2013: 251).

[49] Socrates thinks knowing the forms is a condition for knowing anything. All scholars of Socrates's epistemology in the *Republic* agree with this claim. Where they differ is over what the objects of knowledge themselves are. Some argue that Socrates thinks that knowledge can only be of the forms. Recently, Schwab (2016) and Vogt (2012) defend this historically, but not currently, popular view. Others argue that he thinks knowers know true propositions. Fine (1978; 1990) first proposed this now orthodox view. Moss (2020: 2-6) offers a helpful overview of the literature. For the purposes of this thesis, I presuppose Fine's view.

appearance]' (ἕκαστα τὰ εἴδωλα ἅττα ἐστὶ καὶ ὧν [it is an appearance]) (520c3-4). Until we know the transcendent forms, we will not be able to know the particular which a poetic appearance is displaying and thereby making present to us. Therefore, most of us will not be able to know anything about the poetic appearance itself or about the particulars it is in fact displaying. Watching imitative poetry will not be an occasion on which most of us can please the rational part of our souls.

Second, in book X, Socrates also implies that there is another way in which the rational soul can experience pleasure, and hence another kind of rational desire. Specifically, he implies that the rational soul takes pleasure in that which is rational and desires to attend to what is rational. He does so when he claims that:

> The imitative poet…is not related by nature to this part of the soul [the rational part] and his cleverness is not designed to please this, but, if he is going to be highly esteemed by the Many, it is directed towards the irritable and multicoloured character because it is easy to imitate.
>
> Ὁ δὴ μιμητικὸς ποιητὴς…οὐ πρὸς τὸ τοιοῦτον τῆς ψυχῆς [the rational part] πέφυκέ τε καὶ ἡ σοφία αὐτοῦ τούτῳ ἀρέσκειν πέπηγεν, εἰ μέλλει εὐδοκιμήσειν ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ ἀγανακτητικόν τε καὶ ποικίλον ἦθος διὰ τὸ εὐμίμητον εἶναι.
>
> (605a2-5)

This passage does not say that it is impossible to create a poem which pleases our reason. Indeed, this passage implies that it is possible to use one's cleverness to make such poems. These poems would present us with appearances which display the wise and quiet character, the character of which the imitative poet avoided creating an appearance precisely in order to please the Many (604e1-2). Now, these poems would still be displaying

appearances. So, unless we already knew the forms, our rational souls would not have the opportunity to learn anything about that which is being displayed and thereby experience rational pleasure.

How else would these poems please reason? A plausible explanation would be that Socrates thinks that reason takes pleasure in attending to what is rational and these poems present us with characters which are rational. So, we can plausibly say that reason does not take pleasure in the appearances which an imitative poem presents because they display irrational characters. Thus, it must be the irrational part of our soul which experiences pleasure when we derive pleasure from watching the characters of imitative poems.

Moreover, the very fact that appearances are appearances means that when we attend to poetic appearances, we are not attending to what is rational. Appearances are that which gives us perceptual access to another entity. They can hardly be said, *qua* appearance, to be rational. Therefore, if we feel pleasure from merely attending to poetic appearances *qua* appearances, then this pleasure will not be a rational one. This might be why Socrates says that the imitative poet destroys the rational soul and gratifies the irrational soul by 'making appearances of appearances which are altogether quite removed from the truth' (εἴδωλα εἰδωλοποιοῦντα, τοῦ δὲ ἀληθοῦς πόρρω πάνυ ἀφεστῶτα) (605c2-3).

Thus, these two points explain why, on a practical interpretation, if we experience pleasure in watching the characters in imitative poetry or in merely attending to imitative poetic appearances *qua* appearances (two of the three actions I am calling positive responses to imitative poetry) then we are experiencing an irrational pleasure.

Indeed, these points also allow us to explain why, on both the practical and the intellectual interpretation, if we experience pleasure when we empathise with the characters of imitative poetry, we are experiencing an irrational pleasure. Socrates thinks that the emotions of a character in an imitative poem are irrational. A practical interpreter can exploit this fact and say that if we experience pleasure in empathising with these characters, we are not attending to what is rational. We also cannot learn the nature of reality because merely empathising is not sufficient to acquire knowledge. An intellectual interpreter can exploit this fact and say that the emotions of these characters are based on incorrect views about moral value. If we take pleasure in sharing these emotions, and thereby having these beliefs, we will not be taking pleasure in what is rational. We will also not be experiencing the pleasure of learning. The beliefs that we acquire through empathising with the characters of poetry are incorrect. They give us only false beliefs about moral reality.

Thus, *contra* Janaway, Socrates does have reasons for thinking 'dramatic portrayals of characters guided by emotion and/or appetite will be enjoyed only by a corresponding 'inferior' part of the spectator…'(1995: 149). Indeed, in light of the foregoing, Janaway is wrong to claim that Socrates has no reason for thinking that even if we can 'discriminate between a real course of events and a fictional medium' and can respond to 'the dramatic medium as such,' this would nevertheless still lead to the metaphorical destruction of our souls (Janaway, 1995: 149). In response, Socrates would say that experiencing pleasure from merely attending to imitative poems *qua* poetic appearances must be irrational pleasure, because we are not attending to what is rational.

This being said, Janaway is to be forgiven for his mistake. Even though Socrates explicitly says that imitative poems please the irrational part of our soul, why he thinks this is quite obscure. Detailed exegesis was required to bring this to the surface. This will be important

when I explain why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry (**5.4**).

2.2.5 – Even the Best of Us

Finally, Socrates announces that it is not only the Many who have to be worried about the state of the rational-soul-part within them. Rather, he thinks that imitative poetry is 'capable of corrupting even morally reasonable people, excepting some very few' (τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς ἱκανὴν εἶναι λωβᾶσθαι, ἐκτὸς πάνυ τινῶν ὀλίγων) (605c6-7). These morally reasonable people are the ones who, presumably, have some of the correct beliefs about virtue.[50] Thus, we can expect them to correctly believe that imitative poems are appearances of vice. These people, Socrates claims, would never behave like the characters of imitative poetry. Nevertheless, when they watch these poems, they let themselves enjoy them. On either the intellectual or the practical interpretation, this means giving gratification to the irrational part of their souls. What they have not been able to figure out, despite their reasonableness, is that 'whatever enjoyment we derive from the affairs of others inevitably goes back to our own affairs' (ὅτι ἀπολαύειν ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα) (606b6-7). That is to say, they have not grasped the Pleasure Amplification Principle. Thus, even most of those who have correct beliefs about virtue, because of their ignorance of human psychology, are vulnerable to the metaphorical destruction imitative poetry can do to the best part of their souls.

2.3 – Banishing Imitative Poetry

[50] This is the implication of 605c9-e6.

I have given an overview of different interpretations of Socrates's epistemic criticisms and different interpretations of his argument for the Claim of Destruction. In light of this, I can now state that Socrates's argument for the Claim of Destruction, on either the intellectual or the practical interpretation of it, does not logically depend on anything which he establishes in his epistemic criticisms. This is made clear by the fact that, at no point in my exposition of this claim, and the different interpretations of it, did I need to appeal to how Socrates understands the epistemic status of the poets. Indeed, this point should not be surprising. The epistemic status of the maker of a poem seems to be irrelevant to the impact it can have on our souls.

This raises a question as to why Socrates would have bothered with the epistemic criticisms in the first place. I suspect the reason concerns the fact that the Athenians saw the poets as an invaluable repository of wisdom. For the most part, poets and rhapsodes were responsible for the moral education the Athenians received. It is likely that in such a cultural climate, any argument which concluded that poetry destroys our rational souls would appear to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the very conclusion it is trying to establish. Thus, Socrates needs to reject the positive epistemic value his society attaches to the poets before his claim that their poetry metaphorically destroys our souls can look plausible. In this sense, his Claim of Destruction "rhetorically" depends on his epistemic criticisms.

Thus, Socrates banishes poetry from the well-functioning city, and hence the just life, on the basis of his charge that watching imitative poetry metaphorically destroys the rational part of our souls. What, though, is Socrates's attitude towards this radical verdict?

Chapter 3 – Methodology in the *Republic*

Socrates banishes imitative poetry because he thinks that it, in a metaphorical sense, destroys the rational part of the soul. Having explained two ways of understanding what this means in **Chapter 2**, we are now ready to examine Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry. In this chapter, I begin this examination by discussing Socrates's methodology in the *Republic*. I propose that, on account of his methodological self-consciousness Socrates would see his banishment as being fallible. This may seem to obviously favour Halliwell's claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment and never confident in it. However, it does not. Socrates, as I argue, thinks that one can be confident in fallible conclusions. Moreover, the fact that Socrates would see his banishment as being fallible introduces a complication into the attempt to determine whether or not he is confident in or anxious about his banishment. Specifically, it means that if somebody argues that Socrates is anxious about his banishment, they must demonstrate that the evidence which they give for this contention cannot reasonably be interpreted as being a symptom of the fact that Socrates would understand his banishment as being fallible. This is a complication which I exploit when I criticise Halliwell in **Chapter 4**.

I first discuss Socrates's methodology in the *Republic* (**3.1**). I explore the distinction he draws between the *shorter* and the *longer routes* of philosophical inquiry. I argue that Socrates thinks that following the shorter route can only lead to fallible conclusions. Next, I demonstrate that Socrates follows the shorter route in his banishment of imitative poetry (**3.2**). Thus, I conclude, he would see his banishment as being fallible. Last, I address why this does not support Halliwell's view and how it complicates the attempt to understand Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry (**3.3**)

3.1 – The Shorter Route and the Longer Route

Although methodology in the *Republic* is a topic with a long history, Dominic Scott has provided a recent and clear discussion of it (2015 and 2020). He draws our attention to two passages in which Socrates distinguishes two different ways in which we may pursue philosophical inquiry. The first occurs just before the tripartition of the soul.

> Socrates: Know well, Glaucon, that it is my opinion that we will never understand this precisely from the methods which we are currently using. For there is another longer and more extensive route leading to it. Of course, we may perhaps [understand it] in a way which is up to the standards of our previous statements and inquiries.
>
> Glaucon: Can't we be content with that? At least for the time being, to me, it would be adequate.
>
> S: Well, then, to me too it will be entirely satisfactory.
>
> Εὖ γ' ἴσθι, ὦ Γλαύκων, ὡς ἡ ἐμὴ δόξα, ἀκριβῶς μὲν τοῦτο ἐκ τοιούτων μεθόδων, οἵαις νῦν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις χρώμεθα, οὐ μή ποτε λάβωμεν· ἄλλη γὰρ μακροτέρα καὶ πλείων ὁδὸς ἡ ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἄγουσα· ἴσως [understand it] μέντοι τῶν γε προειρημένων τε καὶ προεσκεμμένων ἀξίως.
>
> Οὔκουν ἀγαπητόν; ἔφη· ἐμοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἔν γε τῷ παρόντι ἱκανῶς ἂν ἔχοι.
>
> Ἀλλὰ μέντοι, εἶπον, ἔμοιγε καὶ πάνυ ἐξαρκέσει.
>
> (435c9-d7)

The second is in book V, in which he refers back to 435c9-d5 and his account of the four cardinal virtues.

> Socrates: You [Glaucon] recall that we, having distinguished three kinds in the soul, drew conclusions about justice, temperance, courage, and wisdom…we were saying that, in

order to view these things in the best possible way, it would require another longer way round which…would make these things clear. However, [we were also saying] that it would be possible to give demonstrations in accordance with our previous statements. You also said that you were satisfied [in doing this], and so the things we said then lacked precision.

Μνημονεύεις [Glaucon] μέν που, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ὅτι τριττὰ εἴδη ψυχῆς διαστησάμενοι συνεβιβάζομεν δικαιοσύνης τε πέρι καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ σοφίας…ἐλέγομέν που ὅτι, ὡς μὲν δυνατὸν ἦν κάλλιστα αὐτὰ κατιδεῖν ἄλλη μακροτέρα εἴη περίοδος, ἣν…καταφανῆ γίγνοιτο, [we were also saying] τῶν μέντοι ἔμπροσθεν προειρημένων ἑπομένας ἀποδείξεις οἷόν τ᾽ εἴη προσάψαι. καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐξαρκεῖν [in doing this] ἔφατε, καὶ οὕτω δὴ ἐρρήθη τὰ τότε τῆς μὲν ἀκριβείας…ἐλλιπῆ.

(504a4-b7)

On the surface, these two passages may seem to refer to two different questions for which we can distinguish shorter and longer routes of inquiry: a) is the soul tripartite; and what are the cardinal virtues. This creates room for the idea that there are actually four different routes of inquiry.[51] However, we may reasonably take 'these things' (αὐτὰ) – which we can view as best as possible by going the longer way round – to refer to both the tripartition of the soul and the account of the virtues, which Socrates is inviting Glaucon to recall. Hence, it is reasonable to not worry about a discrepancy.[52]

As these passages indicate, the shorter and longer routes of inquiry differ in terms of 'precision' (ἀκριβείας) (504b7). In following the longer route, we can view matters precisely

[51] Krohn (1876: 128) discusses this possibility.
[52] Scott (2015: 44 – 48) offers several other reasons for ignoring the *prima facie* discrepancy. I mention this one as Scott does not.

which is the best way possible of viewing something. Following the shorter route, then, will, as it were, necessarily blur our vision. What does this mean?

The best way of answering this question is to detail how Socrates understands these two routes of inquiry. Socrates implies that the longer route involves coming to know the transcendent form of the good (this is worked out in 504c-505a). Socrates thinks that knowledge of the transcendent form of the good is a necessary condition for knowing the other transcendent forms, which is a necessary condition for knowing anything.[53] Therefore, in following the longer route, we can know our conclusions. Moreover, whatever Socrates means in calling knowledge a power, he says that it is an 'infallible' (ἀναμάρτητον) one (477c1-478a1). Taken together, this all suggests that when Socrates says that the longer route gives us precision, he means that it gives us infallible conclusions which we can know.

By contrast, the conclusions of the shorter route are less precise than those reached by the longer route. This suggests that these conclusions are, at best, fallible. Detailing the shorter route confirms this and explains why it is so.

As Socrates explicitly says in 435c9-d5, a range of methods constitute the shorter route. I will focus on two: hypothetical reasoning and empirical observation.[54] These two are especially pertinent to Socrates's banishment of imitative poetry in book X.

[53] Again, I am presupposing Fine's (1978, 1990) view that Socrates thinks knowers know true propositions.
[54] In addition to these, Scott claims the shorter route involves: the 'functional method' as described by Santas (2006), testing for compatibility with common sense, and the use of imagery and analogy. See Scott (2015: 11-28) for an overview of each of the different methods.

Socrates bases his tripartition of the soul on the Principle of Opposites. As it occurs in *Republic* IV, this is the principle that 'the same thing will not be willing to do or to suffer opposites in the same respect, in relation to the same thing, and at the same time' (ταὐτὸν τἀναντία ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν κατὰ ταὐτόν γε καὶ πρὸς ταὐτὸν οὐκ ἐθελήσει ἅμα) (436b9-c1). After responding to an objection to this principle, Socrates proposes that he and Glaucon move on.

> In order that we may not be compelled to examine in detail all such protests as these, and convince ourselves that they are not true, let us, hypothesising the truth of this, proceed, and agree that if this thing ever appears otherwise, all the things which, to us, follow from it will be undone.
>
> Ἵνα μὴ ἀναγκαζώμεθα πάσας τὰς τοιαύτας ἀμφισβητήσεις ἐπεξιόντες καὶ βεβαιούμενοι ὡς οὐκ ἀληθεῖς οὔσας μηκύνειν, ὑποθέμενοι ὡς τούτου οὕτως ἔχοντος εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν προΐωμεν, ὁμολογήσαντες, ἐάν ποτε ἄλλῃ φανῇ ταῦτα ἢ ταύτῃ, πάντα ἡμῖν τὰ ἀπὸ τούτου συμβαίνοντα λελυμένα ἔσεσθαι.
>
> (437a3-8).

Socrates wants to hypothesise the Principle of Opposites so that he may turn to discuss more interesting matters. He understands that this means accepting the principle, and all the conclusions which he derives from it, provisionally. He explicitly acknowledges that future considerations may require him to repudiate it. Thus, he is recognising that the Principle of Opposites, and hence the claims which he makes about the soul on the basis of it, are fallible.

Indeed, as both 435c9-d5 and 504a4-b7 make clear, Socrates is following the shorter route in his tripartition of the soul. So, one of the methods of the shorter route is hypothetical

reasoning; drawing fallible conclusions on the basis of propositions which we hypothesise as being true, while being mindful that future considerations may require us to overturn these conclusions.[55]

Second, Scott distinguishes empirical, especially psychological, observation as another one of the methods of the shorter route (2015: 26 - 28). The only objection to the Principle of Opposites to which Socrates responds is itself based on empirical considerations. His response to this objection also proceeds from empirical considerations. His arguments for dividing the soul into reason, spirit, and appetite – and his discussion of their respective functions – include further appeals to observation. For example, Socrates appeals to empirical evidence in order to convince Glaucon of the alliance between spirit and reason.

> We see in many other places that, whenever desire forces someone against his reason…the spirt of such a man becomes an ally to reason…but spirit making common cause with the passions to act against reason…I think that you would not say that you have seen such a thing as this happening within yourself or in anyone else.
>
> Ἄλλοθι…πολλαχοῦ αἰσθανόμεθα, ὅταν βιάζωνταί τινα παρὰ τὸν λογισμὸν ἐπιθυμίαι…σύμμαχον τῷ λόγῳ γιγνόμενον τὸν θυμὸν τοῦ τοιούτου…ταῖς δ᾽ ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτὸν κοινωνήσαντα αἱροῦντος λόγου…οἶμαί σε οὐκ ἂν φάναι γενομένου ποτὲ ἐν σαυτῷ τοῦ τοιούτου αἰσθέσθαι, οἶμαι δ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἐν ἄλλῳ.
>
> (440a9-b6)

Why, though, should we think that a reliance on empirical observation in a philosophical investigation means that its conclusions will necessarily lack precision, in the sense of being fallible? Presumably, it is because future observations can always require us to revise the

[55] Benson (2015) offers a far more detailed discussion of hypothetical reasoning in Plato's dialogues.

claims we are making on the basis of our present and past observations. In this way, another one of the methods of the shorter route leads to fallible conclusions.

If Socrates is following the shorter route when he defends his Claim of Destruction, on the basis of which banishes imitative poetry, then, given his methodological self-consciousness, he would understand this banishment as being fallible.[56]

3.2 – The Shorter Route in *Republic* X

The fact that Socrates is not following the longer route should be expected. He disclaims knowledge of the transcendent forms and refuses to talk to his interlocutors as though he or they understand them (506d-e). Nevertheless, this point still has to be demonstrated. In particular, it must be shown that Socrates does not presuppose knowledge of the transcendent forms in the course of banishing imitative poetry. I will make it clear that he hypothesises the existence of the forms and discuss how Socrates uses empirical observation in his defence of the Claim of Destruction.

[56] Dominic Scott argues that Socrates, in his defence of justice, is following neither the shorter nor the longer routes but is rather following what Scott calls the *middle route*. On the middle route, Scott tells us:

> We start out as if on the shorter route…but then supplement this by having recourse to claims made in the central books. But we do not ourselves derive these claims from the Form of the Good, and our grasp of them falls far short of philosophical knowledge as described in book VII. Indeed, many of the key metaphysical claims made in the central books take the form of announcements, often supported by images or analogies, rather than conclusions derived from extended argument. So the middle route is a hybrid because it follows the basic pattern of the shorter route while 'borrowing' a number of claims that only a philosopher who has followed the curriculum described in the central books would be able to master (2020: 15)

This seems to distinguish the shorter route from the middle one on the basis of what has been hypothesised. However, hypothetical reasoning is one of the key methods of the shorter route. For this reason, I do not understand why Scott thinks that the shorter route is different to the middle route.

As we know, Socrates repeatedly references the forms in book X (**1.1**). However, we do not know if he is referencing the transcendent forms or the forms *qua* types. Nevertheless, no matter which one he has in mind, it is clear that Socrates explicitly hypothesises their existence. Glaucon agree to discuss imitation by following their 'customary manner…of positing one form…for each of the many things to which we give the same name' (εἰωθυίας μεθόδου…εἶδος γάρ πού τι ἓν ἕκαστον…τίθεσθαι περὶ ἕκαστα τὰ πολλά, οἷς ταὐτὸν ὄνομα ἐπιφέρομεν) (596a5-8). As Richard Robinson has pointed out, to posit, in the sense of "τιθέναι," a proposition is to:

> Deliberately and consciously adopt [it] with the knowledge that after all it may be false…what is posited is provisional and always tentative. We are aware that we may have to withdraw it and posit something else or suspend judgement.
>
> (1953: 94)

Thus, we can understand Socrates's customary method to involve hypothesising the existence of the forms. Hence, Socrates is not presupposing that he knows the transcendent forms in book X.

It is clear that Socrates is following the shorter route when he banishes poetry. The Pleasure Amplification Principle depends on claims about the tripartite soul, which Socrates takes to follow from his hypothesised Principle of Opposites.[57] Furthermore, Socrates heavily relies on empirical observation when he argues for the Claim of Destruction. Most prominently, the Pleasure Amplification Principle is the principle that the more pleasure we feel in one of the parts of the soul, the harder it becomes to resist

[57] I will not discuss whether or not his Claim of Destruction depends on the hypothesised forms. This point and the next is enough to establish that he is following the shorter route.

giving into the desires of this part. This is a principle of human psychology. Socrates knows that empirical observation is one of the methods of the shorter route. We can thereby expect him to know that the Pleasure Amplification Principle is fallible and for the reason that it is always possible for future observations to reveal that some people's desire for a certain kind of pleasure does not become stronger the more they experience that kind of pleasure.[58] Thus, he can be expected to know that the Claim of Destruction, which heavily relies on the Pleasure Amplification Principle, is fallible. Hence, Socrates can be expected to know that his banishment of imitative poetry is fallible, because it is based on the Claim of Destruction.

3.3 – The Complication of a Fallible Conclusion

Halliwell, as I discuss in detail in **Chapter 4**, argues that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry throughout *Republic* X, such that he thinks that it is not well-justified and that a successful rebuttal is a live possibility. The fact that Socrates is following the shorter route, which he knows to lead only to fallible conclusions, when he argues for banishing imitative poetry in book X may seem to support this claim. It does not.

The fact that Socrates is, and knows what it means to be, following the shorter route when he argues that imitative poetry ought to be banished in book X means that he cannot be dogmatically confident in it. However, Socrates thinks that we can still have confidence in the fallible conclusions of the shorter route. Recall that when Socrates introduces the

[58] Many similar claims could be made about the explanations given in **2.2.4** as to why Socrates thinks, when we feel pleasure in attending to an imitative poem *qua* poetic appearance, watching the characters within an imitative poem acting viciously, and empathising with these characters, we are experiencing an irrational pleasure. These are all empirical claims.

shorter route, he and Glaucon agree that it can lead us to conclusions which are 'up to the standards of our previous statements and inquiries' (προειρημένων τε καὶ προεσκεμμένων ἀξίως) (435d4). Socrates does not explicitly say what these standards are. However, an aside he makes in the course of censoring Homer in book III is telling. Socrates claims that they must be persuaded by the argument they have given until 'somebody persuades us with a finer [argument]' (ἕως ἄν τις ἡμᾶς ἄλλῳ καλλίονι [argument] πείσῃ) (388e1-2). Socrates makes the case for poetic censorship using the methods of the shorter route. Plausibly, then, while Socrates thinks following the shorter route can only lead to fallible conclusions, he thinks it can nevertheless lead to conclusions which we can confidently hold until somebody proposes a finer argument.

Thus, the very fact that Socrates is following the shorter route when he banishes imitative poetry, and is self-conscious about what this means, does not tell us that Socrates is anxious about this banishment. Socrates may be entirely satisfied in his banishment, thinking that he must be persuaded that it is right until somebody proposes a finer argument. Socrates's methodological self-confidence only tells us that he sees his banishment as being fallible, that he is not dogmatically confident in it. Therefore, Halliwell (who does not) could not rely on Socrates's methodological self-consciousness in order to support his contention.

Moreover, as I will explore in the next chapter, this introduces a complication into the pursuit of Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry. If somebody argues that Socrates is anxious about this banishment, they must demonstrate that the evidence which they give for this claim cannot reasonably be interpreted as a symptom of the fact that Socrates would understand his banishment as being fallible. If it can be reasonably interpreted in this way, then this evidence would not give us a conclusive reason for thinking that Socrates is anxious as opposed to being confident. Socrates can be both

confident in and anxious about a fallible conclusion. I will leverage this fact in my criticism of Halliwell in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – Anxiety in (and about) Halliwell's *Republic* X

The aim of this thesis is to explore Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X. I articulated why Socrates banishes such poetry as if he was entirely confident in this banishment, as is standard. Most scholars would admit that Socrates would see his banishment as being fallible, on the basis of considerations put forward in **Chapter 3**. However, they would be unlikely to say that Socrates is anxious about it. In this respect, Stephen Halliwell is making an unorthodox proposal when he argues that:

> The arguments in this section [595a1-608b3] of the dialogue are not definitive statements of an irreversible condemnation, but incitements to recognize the need for a new and better justification of artistic mimesis.
>
> (2011: 182 – 183)

> [Socrates expresses] a need to continue the search for a better justification of poetry.
>
> (2011: 203)

> [Socrates] wishes to create a strong impression that the relationship between poetry and philosophy — more specifically, their relationship in the soul of the philosophical lover of poetry — remains an abiding problem.
>
> (2011: 202)

> In terms of the passage's intertwined strands of imagery, we can say that the 'trial' of poetry has reached a verdict which is only provisionally and uncertainly upheld.
>
> (2011: 203)

By making claims such as these, Halliwell creates the impression that he thinks Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry throughout the whole of book X, such that Socrates thinks that it is not well-justified and that a convincing reply to it is a live possibility.

In this chapter, I explore Halliwell's defence of this claim. He offers five reasons to accept it. They concern: the elements of book X which Halliwell considers to be anomalous; Socrates's use of legal metaphors to describe his engagement with poetry; his invitations to Poetry and her champions to make a convincing rebuttal; the 'paradoxical' nature of Socrates's protective incantation; and the love he has for imitative poetry. In **4.1** to **4.5**, I critically examine each of these reasons. I conclude in **4.6**.

4.1 – Halliwell's Four Anomalies

Halliwell claims that 'anyone who thinks that [Socrates's] critique [of poetry] sets out a doctrinally fixed position needs to explain a series of anomalies' within book X (2011: 181). He claims that there are four such anomalies.

1. Socrates claims that Homer did not have knowledge because he did not have followers, did not create laws, nor win wars, and so on (**2.2.1**). Halliwell labels such reasoning '*ad hominem* biographical rhetoric' (2011: 182).
2. 'Socrates's seeming disparagement of painting, *qua* paradigm of mimetic art in general, as inescapably parasitic on the empirical world of phenomena, cannot be the whole…of his…position. It clashes with assumptions made about painting in several earlier passages in the *Republic*, not least with…the

recognition of pictorial idealism at 5.472d and 6.500e–501c' (2011: 182).[59] What Halliwell means is that in book X, Socrates says that paintings can only (present us with appearances which) display particulars. However, according to Halliwell, Socrates elsewhere says that paintings can display forms *qua* transcendent entities.

3. 'At 596b, the lowly carpenter is given access to the [transcendent forms]' (2011: 181). According to Halliwell, this imputation of knowledge conflicts with Socrates's earlier claim that only the most advanced philosophers know the forms *qua* transcendent entities
4. In 596d7-e3, Socrates uses the idea of turning a mirror to a particular in order to explain to Glaucon the sense in which there is a craftsperson (an imitator) who can create not only all artefacts, 'but also all the things which grow from the earth, all living animals, and everything else, even himself, the earth, the sky, the Gods, all the things in the sky, and everything in Hades below the earth' (ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐκ τῆς γῆς φυόμενα ἅπαντα…καὶ ζῷα πάντα…τά τε ἄλλα καὶ ἑαυτόν, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις γῆν καὶ οὐρανὸν καὶ θεοὺς καὶ τὰ ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἅιδου ὑπὸ γῆς ἅπαντα) (596c5-9). This craftsperson is creating these things in the sense that they are creating appearances of them (**1.1**). However, Halliwell finds this figure 'incongruous with its context, since one cannot turn a mirror on the gods or on Hades as the strict logic of 596e (referring back to 596c) ought to require' (2011: 181 – 182). Halliwell's thought seems to be that in 596c, Socrates promises to explain how an imitator can create the heavens and the gods, but the mirror figure is unable to explain this.

[59] Murdoch (1993: 11) also thinks that Socrates recognise pictorial idealism in these passages.

Presumably, Halliwell calls the first an anomaly because he thinks Socrates usually gives better arguments for his views, while he calls the rest anomalies because they create tensions within his account.[60] All four, according to Halliwell, intimate that 'the arguments in this section of the dialogue [595a1-608b3] are not definitive statements of an irreversible condemnation' (2011: 182). Halliwell's reasoning seems to be this: Socrates can be expected to know that his discussion of poetry in book X contains problematic features; therefore, he can be expected to be anxious about the claims which he makes on the basis of this discussion, such as his claim that imitative poetry must be banished. However, book X does not seem to contain any anomalous elements which, if present, would support seeing Socrates as anxious about this banishment.

First, Socrates does aim to repudiate Homer's status as a knower on the grounds that his biography demonstrates that there is not good evidence for attributing this status to him (**2.1.1**). I agree with Halliwell that this rebuttal is mere rhetoric. I will also accept that this is out of character for Socrates, that he knows this, and thereby is anxious about his epistemic criticism of Homer, in the sense relevant to this thesis. Regardless, Halliwell means to be arguing that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. This banishment is based on the Claim of Destruction which is logically independent of the results of the epistemic criticisms (**2.3**). Thus, Socrates can be anxious about his epistemic criticisms while being confident in his Claim of Destruction, and, hence, his banishment. For this reason, *contra* Halliwell, we cannot use Socrates's poorly defended epistemic criticism to support the claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment.

[60] It is curious that Halliwell does not find another anomaly in the tension between the metaphysics of book X and the metaphysics of the central books. If he did, my response would be that he needs to show that metaphysics of book X is not meant as a heuristic designed to help Glaucon recall the earlier metaphysics (**1.1**).

Second, Halliwell believes that 472d4-7 justifies his claim that Socrates thinks that paintings can (present us with appearances which) display the forms *qua* transcendent entities. This passage reads:

> A painter is [not] in any way worse, who, having painted a model of the most beautiful person and having rendered sufficiently everything with respect to the painting, could not prove that it is possible for such a person to exist.
>
> Ἧττόν τι ἀγαθὸν ζωγράφον [not] εἶναι ὃς ἂν γράψας παράδειγμα οἷον ἂν εἴη ὁ κάλλιστος ἄνθρωπος, καὶ πάντα εἰς τὸ γράμμα ἱκανῶς ἀποδούς, μὴ ἔχῃ ἐπιδεῖξαι ὡς καὶ δυνατὸν γενέσθαι τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα.
>
> (472d4-7)

Halliwell's reading of this passage is problematic for several reasons. First, in order to say that Socrates's argument for banishing imitative poetry contains inconsistences which should make us suspect that he is anxious about it, Halliwell needs to discount the possibility that Socrates has changed his mind about painting between the central books and *Republic* X. If he has, this would be awkward. Nevertheless, it would not imply that he is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

Second, if this passage does say that paintings can display the forms *qua* transcendent entities, it is not obvious that we should place any weight on it. Socrates is using this passage in order to figuratively illustrate to Glaucon that their theory of justice is not made unreasonable by the fact that they have not proved that it is possible for a just man to come into being. Because of this passage's status as figure, we should hesitate before saying that Socrates is committed to what it entails about painting itself.

Third, even if we take this passage as more than a figure, and think Socrates is committed to what it entails about painting, Halliwell is wrong about what this passage says. Specifically, it does not say that paintings can display the forms *qua* transcendent entities. In the book from which this passage has been extracted, Socrates implies that there are only transcendent forms of properties (**1.1**). Indeed, just before this passage, Socrates and Glaucon agree that that 'the just man…necessarily differs from it [the transcendent form of justice]…[and] is as near to it as possible and participates in it far more than any other thing' (ἄνδρα τὸν δίκαιον…μηδὲν δεῖν αὐτῆς ἐκείνης [the transcendent form of justice] διαφέρειν…[and] ἐγγύτατα αὐτῆς ᾖ καὶ πλεῖστα τῶν ἄλλων ἐκείνης μετέχῃ) (472b8-472c2).[61] The just man is a particular, not a form. In saying, then, that there can be a painting which displays the most beautiful man, Socrates is not saying that there can be a painting which displays a transcendent form. The most beautiful man, like the most just man, participates most in the form of the beautiful. The painting which displays him is still a painting of a particular. It is not a painting of a transcendent form.

Halliwell also appeals to 500e1-3 to support his claim that Socrates believes that there are paintings which display the forms *qua* transcendent entities. In this passage, Socrates speaks of painters sketching the *Kallipolis* using 'the divine model' (τῷ θείῳ παραδείγματι) (500e2). Halliwell seems to take the idea of painters using a divine model to indicate that paintings can display forms. After all, Socrates calls the transcendent forms divine (see, for example, 500b-d). My first two objections to this idea are rearticulations of the first and second objections I gave to Halliwell's reading of 472d4-7. First, Socrates may have changed his mind. Second, we should hesitate before committing Socrates to views about painting based on his use of a painting as an illustrative figure. Third, Socrates thinks that these

[61] The notion of participation has been discussed **1.1**.

paintings, based on the divine model, display particulars. He says that the painters who use this model will produce the 'appearance of a man…which Homer called, when it emerged in humans, godlike and the appearance of the divine' (τὸ ἀνδρείκελον…ὃ δὴ καὶ Ὅμηρος ἐκάλεσεν ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐγγιγνόμενον θεοειδές τε καὶ θεοείκελον) (501b5-7). These painters, in using the divine model, create paintings which display a man who appears divine. Presumably, this means that this godlike man participates most in the divine forms. Thus, these painters are not creating appearances which displays the forms themselves.

Thus, Halliwell is wrong to think that there is a clash between the remarks about painting in book X and the remarks about painting elsewhere in the *Republic*. This removes the second anomaly Halliwell found in Socrates's discussion of poetry in book X.

Third, does Socrates's claim that craftspeople can have cognitive access to the forms introduce a problematic feature into his account, given his earlier claim that only the most advanced philosophers have access to the forms *qua* types? In order for the answer to this question to be yes, three things have to be demonstrated.

1. Socrates has not changed his mind between the central books and book X.
2. The forms in book X are the transcendent forms of the central books, not the forms *qua* types of *Republic* III (**1.1**). Indeed, Socrates says that in order to ensure the young guardians receive a proper education, one must supervise the works of all craftspeople, 'must compel them to make an appearance of a good character in their [works]…[and] must look for those craftspeople who are by nature able to track down the nature of the beautiful and the graceful' (προσαναγκαστέον τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ εἰκόνα ἤθους ἐμποιεῖν τοῖς [works]…[and] ἐκείνους ζητητέον τοὺς δημιουργοὺς τοὺς εὐφυῶς δυναμένους ἰχνεύειν τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ τε καὶ εὐσχήμονος

φύσιν) (401b1-c5). These references to the beautiful and the graceful are references to forms *qua* types, which he is about to introduce in 403c9-d6. This strongly implies that craftspeople – indeed, even poets – can have access to the forms *qua* types.[62] Thus, if Socrates has these forms in mind in book X, then the fact that he says craftspeople can cognise them does not introduce a problematic anomalous feature into his account.

3. Socrates's claim about the craftsman's cognition of the forms is not merely a heuristic designed to get Glaucon to understand the tripartite ontology discussed in **1.1**. What I mean is that Socrates may merely be using this claim in order to tell Glaucon that even *if* a craftsperson has the (transcendent) forms in mind, they will not be able to create a form but only particulars.

In light of these three points, Halliwell must do more work before we agree with him that Socrates's claim that craftspeople can cognise the forms introduces a problematic anomaly into his account, which, if it were present, should make us think that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

Last, in a similar vein to the previous point, it is not clear why Halliwell takes the mirror figure to be anything more than a tool designed to get Glaucon to understand the loose sense in which the creation of an appearance of a certain kind of particular is the creation of a particular of that kind (**1.1**). It seems pedantic to insist otherwise. Thus, it strikes me as being unreasonable to take this aspect of Socrates's discussion of poetry to be anomalous.

[62] Socrates only distinguishes between poets and imitators, on the one hand, and craftspeople who practice, for example, carpentry, on the other, in book X.

Thus, Halliwell has not convincingly found four anomalies in book X, which, if present, should make us think that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

4.2 – The Legal Metaphors

Halliwell thinks that the legalistic language Socrates uses to characterise his engagement with poetry in book X supports his contention. In 605c5, Socrates uses a standard legal term "κατηγορήκαμεν" when he announces that he is yet to bring his greatest accusation against the imitative poets. Here, Socrates is making himself out to be the accuser and poetry to be the accused. Then, in 607b1-2, Socrates flips the imagery. Using another standard legal term "ἀπολελογήσθω," he refers to his argument for banishing poetry as an apology, a speech for the defence. Similarly, he worries about Poetry 'accusing' (καταγνῷ) Glaucon and himself of having a certain 'harshness…and a rustic coarseness' (σκληρότητα…καὶ ἀγροικίαν) (607b5-6). In 607b, then, Socrates is figuring himself to be the defendant while Poetry is now the plaintiff. However, Socrates then reverses his figurations. Using the very same verb which he used of himself in 607b1-2, Socrates then twice tells Glaucon that Poetry can return only when she has defended herself (607d4-5, 608a2).[63] In doing so, he places himself back in the position of the accuser. What is to be made of the dizzying reversals of this legal drama?

Halliwell thinks that this oscillation 'express the idea of an unfinished series of trials and retrails, with accuser and accused changing places' (2011: 194). In turn, he understands this idea to be 'an elaborately layered metaphor for the inconclusiveness…of the *Republic's* second critique of poetry' (2011: 193). In constantly changing the identity of the defendant

[63] See the quotations in **4.3**.

and plaintiff, Socrates, Halliwell claims, is letting the attentive reader know that he expects his banishment to be met with another rebuttal, indicating that he expects a rebuttal.

However, there are other ways of reading this imagery. First, the reversals have a clear A – B – A structure. This can be taken as saying that A – the position in which Socrates is the accuser and poetry is the accused – is the final stance. This would undermine the claim that Socrates sees himself as a part of an *unfinished* series of trails and retrails. Second, the volatility of the identity of the accused and the accuser may only reflect what it is like to challenge orthodoxy. After all, Socrates is knowingly challenging one of the most important views in Athenian society and so would of course expect accusations to be made against him. Nevertheless, this would not mean that he is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

Why should we prefer Halliwell's interpretation to these alternatives? Halliwell's answer would be, I assume, that it coheres well with the other pieces of the text which he brings in favour of his claim that Socrates is anxious. However, I am in the process of critically examining Halliwell's interpretations of these pieces of text. If it should turn out that none of these interpretations themselves lend weight to the claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry in book X, then we will have no reason to prefer Halliwell's interpretation over the alternatives I have given. For now, I have only demonstrated that, independently of these other interpretations, Halliwell has not adequately defended his reading of the legal metaphors. With this being said, let us now continue to examine Halliwell's interpretation of *Republic* X.

4.3 – Socrates Solicits a Successful Defence

Socrates, four times in quick succession, solicits a successful rebuttal to his banishment of imitative poetry.

> But, nevertheless, let it be said that, if poetic imitation designed for pleasure should be able to propose any reason that she ought to exist in the well-governed city, we would gladly take her home again.
>
> Ὅμως δὲ εἰρήσθω ὅτι ἡμεῖς γε, εἴ τινα ἔχοι λόγον εἰπεῖν ἡ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιητικὴ καὶ ἡ μίμησις, ὡς χρὴ αὐτὴν εἶναι ἐν πόλει εὐνομουμένῃ, ἄσμενοι ἂν καταδεχοίμεθα.
>
> (607c4-6)

> Socrates: Indeed, my friend, are you not beguiled by her, and especially when through Homer you behold her?
>
> Glaucon: Very much so.
>
> S: Is it, then, right for her to return from exile once she has made a speech in her defence in lyric or some other meter?
>
> G: Absolutely.
>
> Ἦ γάρ, ὦ φίλε, οὐ κηλῇ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς καὶ σύ, καὶ μάλιστα ὅταν δι᾽ Ὁμήρου θεωρῇς αὐτήν;
>
> Πολύ γε.
>
> Οὐκοῦν δικαία ἐστὶν οὕτω κατιέναι, ἀπολογησαμένη ἐν μέλει ἤ τινι ἄλλῳ μέτρῳ;
>
> Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.
>
> (607c8-607d6)

> And we would allow the champions [of Poetry]…who are not poetic, but lovers of poetry, to argue, on her behalf, without meter, that she is not only pleasing but also beneficial to civic and human life. And we will listen kindly. For it will benefit us if she appears to be not only pleasant but also beneficial.

> Δοῖμεν δέ γέ που ἂν καὶ τοῖς προστάταις [of Poetry's]…ὅσοι μὴ ποιητικοί, φιλοποιηταὶ δέ, ἄνευ μέτρου λόγον ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς εἰπεῖν, ὡς οὐ μόνον ἡδεῖα ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη πρὸς τὰς πολιτείας καὶ τὸν βίον τὸν ἀνθρώπινόν ἐστιν. καὶ εὐμενῶς ἀκουσόμεθα. κερδανοῦμεν γάρ που ἐὰν μὴ μόνον ἡδεῖα φανῇ ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη.
>
> (607d7-10)
>
> And thus we, because of the love of this kind of poetry which has been nurtured in us by the education of our fine civic life, will be well disposed for her to appear as best and as true as possible.
>
> Καὶ ἡμεῖς οὕτως, διὰ τὸν ἐγγεγονότα μὲν ἔρωτα τῆς τοιαύτης ποιήσεως ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν καλῶν πολιτειῶν τροφῆς, εὖνοι μὲν ἐσόμεθα φανῆναι αὐτὴν ὡς βελτίστην καὶ ἀληθεστάτην.
>
> (607e6-608a2)

Halliwell thinks that these passages convey a 'deep ambivalence' and that this supports his view that Socrates thinks that the place of imitative poetry in the good and just life 'remains an abiding problem' (2011: 203, 202). As I understand him, Halliwell means that these remarks convey that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry, in the sense that he thinks it is not well-justified and that a successful rebuttal to it is a live possibility. Presumably, he was reasoning: Socrates would not have solicited a convincing response to his banishment unless he thought that it was not well-justified and that a successful response to it was a live possibility.

However, Halliwell needs to demonstrate that these expressions are not merely symptoms of the fact that Socrates, given his methodological self-consciousness, would see his banishment of imitative poetry as being fallible (**3.3**). If no such demonstration is forthcoming, given that Socrates can be both confident in and anxious about a fallible conclusion, we could reasonably explain why Socrates solicits a successful response by

saying that he is confident in his banishment but humble; that he thinks it is well-justified but fallible and extremely controversial. Inviting poetry and her champions to respond coheres well with thoughts such as these.

Thus, unless Halliwell can give us a reason for thinking that these solicitations are not mere symptoms of the fact that Socrates would understand his banishment of imitative poetry as being fallible, there are two putatively viable explanations of these solicitations.

1. Socrates is anxious about his banishment, such that he thinks that the other side would have a genuinely compelling response to make. This is why he solicits a response.
2. Socrates is confident in his banishment but understands that it is fallible and so, out of humility, is soliciting a response, even though he thinks a successful response is not likely.

Halliwell may not think this is fair. He may reply that we should prefer this second explanation, and deny that the solicitations can be seen as merely symptomatic of Socrates's methodological self-consciousness, because of the other pieces of evidence which he marshals in favour of his claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. However, this reply is only a good one if Halliwell has in fact found evidence in favour of seeing Socrates as anxious. Whether or not he has done this is exactly what I am examining in this chapter. So, before we reject Halliwell's alternative, we must consider the other pieces of evidence which he brings forward in favour of his contention. This being said, what I can conclude for the time being is that Halliwell's explanation of why Socrates solicits a successful response is not compelling on its own.

4.4 – The 'Paradoxical' Incantation

Socrates thinks that imitative poetry presents us with appearances which display people acting viciously (**1.4**). This is what I think he has in mind when he says that we must not treat imitative 'poetry as a serious thing which lays hold of the truth' (ποιήσει ὡς ἀληθείας τε ἁπτομένη καὶ σπουδαίᾳ) (608a6-7). He also thinks that 'the one listening to [imitative poetry] and fearing for the constitution within him, must be cautious and must believe the things which we have said about poetry' (εὐλαβητέον αὐτὴν [imitative poetry] ὂν τῷ ἀκροωμένῳ, περὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ πολιτείας δεδιότι, καὶ νομιστέα ἅπερ εἰρήκαμεν περὶ ποιήσεως) (608a7-b2). These two ideas constitute an 'incantation' (ἐπῳδήν) which Socrates will sing when he watches imitative poetry in order to prevent the damage it would otherwise do to his soul (608a4).

Halliwell takes these two ideas to be in tension with each other. He takes this tension to be a reason for thinking that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. He makes this explicit when he lists the contents of the incantation as a reason for thinking that his verdict of banishment is a 'most thought-provokingly equivocal conclusion' (Halliwell, 2011: 203). However, his reasoning behind this is a little unclear.

Halliwell is adamant that he is not following Julia Annas in claiming that these two ideas make Socrates's argument internally contradictory.[64] This is wise. *Contra* Annas, there is no tension in claiming that: a) imitative poetry cannot teach us the truth; and b) that one ought to be anxious about the impact such poetry can have on our souls. To illustrate this by

[64] In the work of his I am examining, Halliwell only speaks of 'critics of Plato' (2011: 202). However, here, he refers to a page in an earlier work whereat he denies that it is 'inconsistent of Socrates to disparage the worth of poets' representational skills while continuing to be anxious about the insidiously expressive powers of what they produce' and mentions Annas as affirming what he denies (Halliwell, 2004: 59, footnote 54). For Annas's view, see her (1981: 341 – 344).

analogy, there is no tension in: a) thinking that mainstream heteronormative pornography misrepresents women; and b) being anxious about the impact watching such pornography might have on how one understands and treats women.

However, after spelling out what he does mean, it is unclear how Halliwell derives a reason for his contention. He says that the 'conjunction of ideas' expressed in the incantation is 'inherent in the practices of 'art' itself where fabrication, pretence, and artifice are indeed at work, yet can become the vehicles of imaginatively compelling and emotionally irresistible experience' (2011: 201-202). That is to say, Halliwell thinks that Socrates has correctly understood something about art as a whole; that it can both be false but emotionally compelling. I cannot see how Halliwell can take this as a reason for thinking that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. Indeed, this fact, if it is one, seems more like a reason for thinking that Socrates is confident in his banishment. After all, Halliwell is essentially saying that Socrates is correct about the nature of poetry.

4.5 – Socrates's Love of Poetry

The last reason Halliwell gives for his view concerns Socrates's love of imitative poetry, especially his love of Homer.

> I must speak out…even though a certain love and reverence which I have had for Homer since my childhood makes me hesitate to speak.
>
> Ῥητέον...καίτοι φιλία γέ τίς με καὶ αἰδὼς ἐκ παιδὸς ἔχουσα περὶ Ὁμήρου ἀποκωλύει λέγειν.[65]
>
> (595b9-595c1)

[65] See also the foregoing quotes in **4.3**

Halliwell takes Socrates's many expressions of love for imitative poetry, in the course of his banishment of it, to reveal that he is speaking:

> In the voice of one who does not unambiguously disown the experience in question but who wishes, as he says at 607d-e, to find an ethical justification for continuing to have that experience. He speaks, that is, as someone who ideally wants to transform the value of his relationship to the object of his *erôs,* not to abandon the relationship altogether.
>
> (2011: 198)

His reason for inferring from Socrates's expressions of love to this conclusion is that these expressions 'dramatically undercut' the verdict of exile (2011: 180). Halliwell's thought seems to be that the very fact that Socrates intensely loves poetry should make us suspicious that he is confident in his Claim of Destruction, on the basis of which he calls for its banishment. There are three problems with this.

4.5.1 – A Critical Love

First, the fact that Socrates still has a love for imitative poetry gives us no reason to suspect that he is not confident in his Claim of Destruction and the banishment which is based on this claim. It is not true that if we still love something or someone, even after arguing that it is harmful, then we cannot believe that our criticism is well-justified. To appropriate an analogy Socrates uses in characterising his own relation to imitative poetry, we commonly feel like we ought to separate ourselves from our romantic partners despite our strong feelings of attachment towards them (see 607e4-6). At best, then, Socrates's expressions of love tell us that Socrates desires a successful response to his banishment of imitative poetry.

4.5.2 – A Complicated Love

Second, while Socrates loves imitative poetry, he does not want to love such poetry. In *Republic* III, Socrates and Adeimantus agree that 'the right love is by nature a self-controlled and harmonious love of the well-ordered and the beautiful' (ὁ δὲ ὀρθὸς ἔρως πέφυκε κοσμίου τε καὶ καλοῦ σωφρόνως τε καὶ μουσικῶς ἐρᾶν) (403a7-8). This kind of love has nothing 'mad' (μανικὸν) or 'licentious' (ἀκολασίας) about it (403a10-11). These remarks are made right after Socrates has articulated what Dominic Scott calls his 'moral account of beauty' according to which: 'what determines whether each of these features [of an artwork] is [beautiful], and whether the work as a whole [is beautiful], is the existence of a firm link with good character' (2021: 64 – 65). This would mean that imitative poetry, since it represents vicious characters, is not beautiful. Hence, Socrates would not consider his love of such poetry to be the right kind of love, one which he ought to have.

Moreover, Socrates associates imitative poetry with a lack of order. Imitative poetry displays people who have an irritable and multicoloured character, not people with a wise and quiet character (604e1-2) (**1.4**). Socrates associates the idea of being multicoloured with the idea of being multiple, and, hence, being disordered.

> I certainly believe…that this man is manifold…beautiful, and multi-coloured, just like the [democratic] city, a man whom many men and women would admire because of his life, who has in himself the greatest number of models of constitutions and characters.
>
> Οἶμαι δέ γε…καὶ παντοδαπόν…καὶ τὸν καλόν τε καὶ ποικίλον, ὥσπερ ἐκείνην τὴν [democratic] πόλιν, τοῦτον τὸν ἄνδρα εἶναι· ὃν πολλοὶ ἂν καὶ πολλαὶ ζηλώσειαν τοῦ βίου, παραδείγματα πολιτειῶν τε καὶ τρόπων πλεῖστα ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχοντα.
>
> (561e3-7)

Such a person has 'neither order nor necessity in his life' (οὔτε τις τάξις οὔτε ἀνάγκη ἔπεστιν αὐτοῦ τῷ βίῳ) (561d6-7). Thus, imitative poetry, in virtue of displaying a multicoloured character, is not displaying an ordered character. Hence, Socrates's love of such poetry cannot be thought of as a love of order. Again, this indicates that he would want to banish his love.

Socrates makes these same points more powerfully through imagery. He compares his love of imitative poetry with that of 'men, who having fallen in love with someone, if they think that their love is not beneficial, although with force, nevertheless abstain from it' (οἱ ποτὲ του ἐρασθέντες, ἐὰν ἡγήσωνται μὴ ὠφέλιμον εἶναι τὸν ἔρωτα, βίᾳ μέν, ὅμως δὲ ἀπέχονται) (607e4-6). Far more explicitly, Socrates calls imitative art in general a 'ἑταίρα,' a long-term sexual companion (603b2). This association between a ἑταίρα and imitative poetry would have been particularly strong to Plato's readers. Ἑταίρα were educated women and took part in symposiums, which frequently involved poetic displays. By associating his love for imitative poetry with a ἑταίρα, Socrates is unambiguously signalling that it is not of the right kind.

In light of all this, Socrates does not seem to be speaking as someone who 'ideally wants to transform the value of his relationship to the object of his *erôs*' (Halliwell, S. 2011: 198). Rather, *contra* Halliwell, he is speaking as someone who would want to abandon this love altogether.

4.5.3 – A Fearful Love

Last, Socrates figuratively associates tyranny with imitative poetry, especially tragedy.[66] Socrates claims, referring especially to Euripides, that tragic poets 'sing the praises of tyranny' (τυραννίδος ὑμνητάς) (568b8). He offers this as a reason for refusing to admit tragedians into the ideal city (568b). Furthermore, Socrates claims that the person whose soul is tyrannical will satisfy their lawless desires. He loosely defines these desires as ones which are awakened in our dreams (571c4). They include the desire: to have sex with one's mother; or anyone else, whether man, god, or beast; to commit any foul murder; and to eat any food (571d1-4). As Thomas Gould observes, these desires are desires to act like the characters of the most notable Athenian tragedies (1990: 29 - 30). To make a final point, Socrates claims that it is 'clever enchanters and tyrant makers' (οἱ δεινοὶ μάγοι τε καὶ τυραννοποιοὶ) who plant a powerful erotic love in the son of a democratic man in order to turn him into a tyrant (572e4). Socrates characterises imitators and imitative poets in terms pertaining to the magical. In 598d4, he calls an imitator a 'magician' (γόητι). He repeatedly speaks of poetry as capable of bewitchment (601b1, 607c7, and 607c8). In these three ways, Socrates establishes an imaginative connection between tyrant and imitative poetry.

The association between tyranny and imitative poetry intimates that Socrates fears imitative poetry just as much as he fears tyranny. This complicates his expressions of love for imitative poetry, insofar as it seems to suggest that Socrates's love of such poetry is mixed with an intense fear for it. This further reinforces my claim that, *contra* Halliwell, Socrates would want to abandon his love altogether, not to transform his relationship with the object of this love.

[66] Penelope Murray (2017) makes this point, and the next, in reply to Halliwell, although her concerns with his account are different to my own. See also Lear (1995: 71).

4.6 – Conclusion

Halliwell gave us five reasons for thinking that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry throughout *Republic* X. They concern:

1. The elements of book X which Halliwell considers to be anomalous.
2. Socrates's use of legal metaphors to describe his engagement with poetry.
3. The fact that Socrates four times solicits a successful rebuttal to his banishment.
4. The 'paradoxical' nature Socrates's protective incantation.
5. The love Socrates has for imitative poetry.

I have argued that Halliwell's interpretations of the legal metaphors and the solicitations are not convincing in their own right. These interpretations would look plausible if he could convince us of his readings of: the elements of book X which he considers to be anomalous; the protective incantation; and Socrates's love of poetry. However, I have also argued that the case Halliwell makes for each of these readings is unconvincing. This means that we can reasonably reject his interpretations of the legal metaphors and solicitations. Thus, Halliwell has not made a compelling case against the standard view that Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry throughout *Republic* X. Should we accept this view? What *is* Socrates's attitude towards his banishment? The final chapter of this thesis continues to explore this question.

Chapter 5 – Confidence and Anxiety in *Republic* X

This thesis has been investigating Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X. In this final chapter, I argue that Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment.

First, I explore two considerations which one might, but should not, put forward in favour of the view that Socrates is anxious about his banishment (**5.1**). I then argue that there are two occasions on which Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry (**5.2**). Then, I detail two reasons for thinking that Socrates invites Poetry and her champions to make a successful response to his banishment because, when he does so, he is anxious about this banishment (**5.3**). Next, I explain why Socrates would be anxious (**5.4**). I spend far more time discussing Socrates's anxiety because it is far more controversial to see him in this way. Last, I suggest we embrace both sets of evidence and conclude that Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X (**5.5**).

5.1 – False Friends

Somebody might try to defend the claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry by appealing to: 1) The remarks Socrates makes about the soul in 611b9-c9; and 2) Glaucon and Adeimantus, who appear to be counterexamples to the Claim of Destruction. However, these appeals would be unsuccessful.

5.1.1 – The Soul Beyond the Body

After banishing poetry in *Republic X*, Socrates argues that the soul is immortal.

> Our recent argument and others should compel [us to believe] that the soul is immortal. As to what it is in truth, we must contemplate it when it is not being mutilated by its association with the body and other evils, as we are now contemplating it. But we must examine it when it is purified, such as is befitting to reason. Then one will find that it is much more beautiful and will clearly see justice, injustice, and everything which we have discussed. But we have now spoken the truth about it, as it appears at the present time.
>
> Ὅτι μὲν τοίνυν ἀθάνατον ψυχή, καὶ ὁ ἄρτι λόγος καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι [us to believe] ἀναγκάσειαν ἄν· οἷον δ᾽ ἐστὶν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, οὐ λελωβημένον δεῖ αὐτὸ θεάσασθαι ὑπό τε τῆς τοῦ σώματος κοινωνίας καὶ ἄλλων κακῶν, ὥσπερ νῦν ἡμεῖς θεώμεθα, ἀλλ᾽ οἷόν ἐστιν καθαρὸν γιγνόμενον, τοιοῦτον ἱκανῶς λογισμῷ διαθεατέον, καὶ πολύ κάλλιον αὐτὸ εὑρήσει καὶ ἐναργέστερον δικαιοσύνας τε καὶ ἀδικίας διόψεται καὶ πάντα ἃ νῦν διήλθομεν. νῦν δὲ εἴπομεν μὲν ἀληθῆ περὶ αὐτοῦ, οἷον ἐν τῷ παρόντι φαίνεται.
>
> (611b9-c6)

On a cursory read of this passage, one might argue: Socrates is saying that he has not seen the soul as it is in truth; his Claim of Destruction depends on claims about the soul; therefore, it is reasonable to think that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry because he admits to not knowing the true nature of the soul. However, Socrates claims that what he has said about the soul is true of it as it appears at present. As he soon specifies, this means that his account of the soul is true of its 'experiences and forms within human life' (τὰ ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ βίῳ πάθη τε καὶ εἴδη) (612a4-5). His Claim of Destruction involves claims about the soul insofar as it appears in human life. Therefore, 611b9-c6 does not give us a good reason for thinking that Socrates is anxious about his banishment.

5.1.2 – The Sons of Ariston

Glaucon and Adeimantus have watched a lot of imitative poetry. They are, presumably, included in the referent of the first-person plural when Socrates claims that the education 'of our fine civic life' (τῶν καλῶν πολιτειῶν) is responsible for his love of poetry (607e7). Adeimantus often quotes lines of imitative poetry. Nevertheless, such poetry does not seem to have destroyed the rational part of the souls of the sons of Ariston. Glaucon has an impressive memory. He considers the geometry of solids to have an 'outstanding charm' (τό γε ἐπίχαρι καὶ διαφερόντως) (528d1). Last, he understands the Divided Line (511c3-d5). Adeimantus is able to anticipate where Socrates's own argument is going (371c5-d3, 372a1-2, 381b12-c1, 394d1-4, 497c5-6). These are all signs that imitative poetry has not metaphorically destroyed the rational part of Adeimantus's or Glaucon's souls.

In light of this, one might try to argue: Glaucon and Adeimantus are counterexamples to Socrates's Claim of Destruction; at some level, Socrates knows this; therefore, at some level, he must be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry; after all, the evidence that he is wrong is literally right there in front of him.

However, Socrates would not think that Glaucon and Adeimantus are counterexamples. After they both so eloquently play devil's advocate in book II, arguing that being unjust is more valuable than being just, Socrates non-ironically praises them for being 'altogether divine' (πάνυ γὰρ θεῖον) (368a5). Such praise indicates that, as Blondell puts it, Socrates sees them as having 'been "divinely" preserved from corruption by the damaging education that anyone raised in contemporary Athens must have received' (2002: 218). In light of this, Socrates would not consider them to be counterexamples. The fact that they are divine exempts them from the Pleasure Amplification Principle and the ordinary psychological laws which hold true of mere mortals.

5.2 – Confidence

I will now marshal evidence in favour of the standard view that Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry throughout *Republic* X. I do not wish to defend the standard view. I will only argue that, at the very beginning and at the very end of his engagement with poetry in book X, Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry.

5.2.1 – The Knowledge-Drug

Bringing the conversation back to poetry, having concluded the defence of justice, Socrates says to Glaucon:

> [Imitative poetry] seems to be a corruption of the thought of those who listen to it, unless they happen to possess, as a drug (φάρμακον), the knowledge of its real nature.
>
> [Imitative poetry] λώβη ἔοικεν εἶναι πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα τῆς τῶν ἀκουόντων διανοίας, ὅσοι μὴ ἔχουσι φάρμακον τὸ εἰδέναι αὐτὰ οἷα τυγχάνει ὄντα.
>
> (595b5-7)

Socrates then proceeds to give an account of the nature of poetry and of imitative poetry. This account involves the Claim of Destruction. This seems to suggest that, in 595b5-7, Socrates is purporting to be in possession of this knowledge-drug and is thereby claiming to know the nature of poetry and the Claim of Destruction. If this is correct, then we would have a reason for thinking that Socrates is confident in this claim, and thereby the banishment called for on the basis of it. Socrates would be the first to admit that he does not *know* the nature of poetry or that the Claim of Destruction is true. He is adamant that he does not know the transcendent forms which he considers to be necessary for knowing anything (**3.1**). Nevertheless, his willingness to describe his cognitive relationship to the

Claim of Destruction in terms of knowledge, which he thinks is infallible, belies confidence in it.

Interestingly, Halliwell denies that Socrates possesses the knowledge-drug. Hence, he would reject my claim that Socrates can be thought of as claiming to know the nature of poetry and the Claim of Destruction. Halliwell points to 608a2-5 in order to make his case.

> But so long as [Poetry] is unable to make a speech in her defence, we will listen to her while singing to ourselves our argument…as an incantation, being cautious about falling back into…the love [of imitative poetry] belonging to the Many.
>
> ἕως [Poetry] δ᾽ ἂν μὴ οἵα τ᾽ ᾖ ἀπολογήσασθαι, ἀκροασόμεθ᾽ αὐτῆς ἐπᾴδοντες ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς τοῦτον τὸν λόγον…ταύτην τὴν ἐπῳδήν, εὐλαβούμενοι πάλιν ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς…τὸν τῶν πολλῶν ἔρωτα [of imitative poetry].
>
> (608a2-5)

Nobody, Halliwell claims, who is in possession of a drug which 'conveys immunity to harm' would require 'self-protective incantations' (2011: 185). Therefore, he concludes, Socrates does not possess the knowledge-drug identified in 595b5-7.

Halliwell is understanding the knowledge-drug as being akin to a vaccine, such that those who 'possess the knowledge will never succumb to poetry's harmful effects' (Halliwell, 2011: 184, footnote 53). However, we might also understand the knowledge-drug in terms of an antibiotic. Taking a course of antibiotics will cure us of a disease from which we are presently suffering. Likewise, "taking" the knowledge-drug, on this alternative interpretation, will cure us from the harm an episode of imitative poetry is presently doing to the rational part of our souls. We would "take" the knowledge-drug by actively recalling

it, remembering what we know, and thereby becoming self-conscious of ourselves as knowing the nature of poetry and the Claim of Destruction.

On this way of understanding the knowledge-drug, Socrates can straightforwardly be understood as needing to do something in order to prevent the metaphorical destruction of imitative poetry, even though he possesses a protective drug. Antibiotics will cure us of a present illness but not all future illnesses of the kind from which we now suffer. Analogously, actively recalling what we know will only protect us from a present exposure, but not all future exposures. Thus, on this understanding, the fact that Socrates feels the need for an incantation to protect himself from the harms of poetry coheres with seeing him as claiming to possess a knowledge-drug, and so as expressing confidence, in 595b5-7.

Halliwell is aware of this alternative figuration (2011: 184, footnote 53). He does not offer any considerations in favour of his own. There is one point which favours the alternative figuration I have proposed. Every time Socrates speaks of a φάρμακον ("drug") in the *Republic,* he is speaking about something which cures a present disease, not something which prevents future diseases. First, Socrates claims that a falsehood in words can, like a 'drug,' be used to prevent our enemies and (those being called) friends from attempting to do something wrong 'when' (ὅταν) – *not* "if" – they are attempting to do wrong (382c9).[67] That is to say, some people are attempting to do wrong, Socrates will give them a falsehoods in words as a drug so that they stop trying to do this. Thus, the drug is being

[67] The passage, a rhetorical question, reads: 'But what [about] falsehood in words? When and to whom is it useful so as to not be worthy of hatred? Does it not, against enemies and the ones being called friends, when through madness or some folly they are attempting to do some evil, for the sake of averting [the evil deed] become useful as a drug?' (τί δὲ δὴ τὸ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ψεῦδος; πότε καὶ τῷ χρήσιμον, ὥστε μὴ ἄξιον εἶναι μίσους; ἆρ᾽ οὐ πρός τε τοὺς πολεμίους καὶ τῶν καλουμένων φίλων, ὅταν διὰ μανίαν ἤ τινα ἄνοιαν κακόν τι ἐπιχειρῶσιν πράττειν, τότε ἀποτροπῆς [the evil deed] ἕνεκα ὡς φάρμακον χρήσιμον γίγνεται) (382c7-d1).

given to them in the manner of an antibiotic. Second, Socrates claims that 'a carpenter…being sick expects from his physician a drug to vomit up his disease' (τέκτων μέν…κάμνων ἀξιοῖ παρὰ τοῦ ἰατροῦ φάρμακον πιὼν ἐξεμέσαι τὸ νόσημα) (406c10-d1). This drug is clearly more like an antibiotic than a vaccine. Last, in 407c8-408d7, Socrates talks about Asclepius and his sons. He claims that they healed men who were suffering from wounds and diseases 'by drugs and surgery' (φαρμάκοις τε καὶ τομαῖς) (407d2). These drugs did not prevent these wounds and diseases. They healed them from whatever they were currently suffering. Thus, this use of the word "drug" is also amenable to the alternative interpretation of the knowledge-drug which I am presently proposing.

Thus, the three times Socrates speaks of a drug in the *Republic*, he is using it the sense amenable to my alternative interpretation. I am not denying that Socrates could use the word differently. "Φάρμακον" is an extremely polysemous term. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to think that the burden of proof rests with the one who wishes to argue that he is using it differently. Thus, we have a reason to prefer my reading of the knowledge-drug to Halliwell's.

Another reason to prefer my interpretation is simply that it coheres with the compelling *prima facie* reading of 598b5-7. After all, it is unclear why Socrates would begin talking about this knowledge-drug if he did not mean to say that he possessed it.

This means that we can reasonably repudiate Halliwell's argument that Socrates cannot be claiming to possess the knowledge-drug – and thereby cannot be expressing confidence in his banishment of imitative poetry – because he claims to need an incantation to protect himself from such poetry.

Halliwell has a second reason for denying that Socrates can be thought of as claiming to possess the knowledge-drug. Socrates's greatest charge against imitative poetry is that the Claim of Destruction holds true for even 'morally reasonable people…excepting some very few' (τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς…ἐκτὸς πάνυ τινῶν ὀλίγων) (605c6-7). Throughout the rest of 605 until 606c, Socrates goes on to argue that imitative poetry, via the Pleasure Amplification Principle, can cause even 'the best of us' (οἱ…βέλτιστοι ἡμῶν) to have our rational souls metaphorically destroyed (605c9). Halliwell thinks that, by using the first-person plural, Socrates is saying that he too is one of those morally reasonable people who are vulnerable to the harms of imitative poetry. In light of this, Halliwell concludes that Socrates is not one of those few morally reasonable people whose souls are immune to imitative poetry. Therefore, Halliwell claims that: Socrates does not have the knowledge-drug which grants immunity to the destruction of imitative poetry; and, hence, we should not read him as claiming to be in possession of this knowledge-drug in 595b5-7, and thereby as expressing confidence in his banishment of imitative poetry.

However, Socrates does see himself as being one of those very few people. In 606a-b, Socrates explains that imitative poetry can metaphorically destroy the souls of even morally reasonable people, the best of us, except altogether some few (**2.2.5**). His reason is that only 'few take into account…that whatever enjoyment we derive from the affairs of others inevitably goes back to our own affairs' (λογίζεσθαι…ὀλίγοις τισὶν μέτεστιν ὅτι ἀπολαύειν ἀνάγκη ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα) (606b5-7). That is to say, only a few take the Pleasure Amplification Principle into account. The implication is that those few who are not susceptible to the metaphorical destruction of poetry are immune because they have taken this into account. Socrates has taken the Pleasure Amplification Principle into account. He himself articulates it, here and in 605b1-5. As such, Socrates is signalling that he is one of those few people, within the set of the morally reasonable, who will not suffer

from the metaphorical destruction of imitative poetry. In this way, *contra* Halliwell, what Socrates says in 605c-606c confirms the initial suggestion that Socrates is in possession of knowledge-drug which will prevent him from suffering the harms of imitative poetry.

Thus, we can take 595b3-7 at face value. This means we can see it as an occasion on which Socrates is claiming to know the nature of poetry and the Claim of Destruction. Thereby, we can take it as an occasion on which Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry, insofar as it is based on this claim.

5.2.2 – The Incantation Revisited

The second piece of evidence amenable to the standard view can be dealt with more quickly. The very last thing which Socrates says before moving on from poetry is that 'the one listening to it [imitative poetry] and fearing for the constitution within him, must be cautious and must believe the things which we have said about poetry' (εὐλαβητέον αὐτὴν [imitative poetry] ὃν τῷ ἀκροωμένῳ, περὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ πολιτείας δεδιότι, καὶ νομιστέα ἅπερ εἰρήκαμεν περὶ ποιήσεως) (608a7-b2). If Halliwell were right, and Socrates entirely lacked confidence in his banishment of imitative poetry throughout book X, then he surely would have said something like "those who care about their souls should probably believe what we have said about imitative poetry." Yet he does not. He unqualifiedly says that they must believe what he has said about imitative poetry; that it metaphorically destroys our rational souls. I take this to be a second instance in which Socrates is confident in his banishment.

In fact, 608a7-b2 articulates a part of the incantation which Socrates claims he will sing in order to prevent himself from suffering the harms of imitative poetry. As I just argued, the image of an incantation coheres with the image of a knowledge-drug, understood as being like an antibiotic. Since Socrates claims that both the incantation and the knowledge-drug

will prevent the harm which imitative poetry can cause, it would be reasonable to identify them. Thus, Socrates can be seen as renewing his claim to possess the knowledge-drug of 595b5-7 when he speaks of the incantation in 608a2-5. This deepens the degree of confidence Socrates displays when he goes on to specify the content of this incantation in 608a7-b2.

There are two instances in which Socrates is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry in book X. One is at the very beginning. Another is at the very end. The defence Halliwell gave for his claim that Socrates is consistently anxious about his banishment throughout *Republic X* is unconvincing. Should we, then, conclude that the standard view is right? Does the remainder of Socrates's engagement with poetry in book X cohere with it? No.

5.3 – Anxiety

Halliwell was right, but unjustified, to sense anxiety when Socrates invites Poetry and her champions to make a successful rebuttal to his banishment of imitative poetry.

> But, nevertheless, let it be said that, if poetic imitation designed for pleasure should be able to propose any reason that she ought to exist in the well-governed city, we would gladly take her home again.
>
> Ὅμως δὲ εἰρήσθω ὅτι ἡμεῖς γε, εἴ τινα ἔχοι λόγον εἰπεῖν ἡ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ποιητικὴ καὶ ἡ μίμησις, ὡς χρὴ αὐτὴν εἶναι ἐν πόλει εὐνομουμένῃ, ἄσμενοι ἂν καταδεχοίμεθα.
>
> (607c4-6)

Socrates: Indeed, my friend, are you not beguiled by her, and especially when through Homer you behold her?

Glaucon: Very much so.

S: Is it, then, right for her to return from exile once she has made a speech in her defence in lyric or some other meter?

G: Absolutely.

Ἦ γάρ, ὦ φίλε, οὐ κηλῇ ὑπ᾽ αὐτῆς καὶ σύ, καὶ μάλιστα ὅταν δι᾽ Ὁμήρου θεωρῇς αὐτήν;

Πολύ γε.

Οὐκοῦν δικαία ἐστὶν οὕτω κατιέναι, ἀπολογησαμένη ἐν μέλει ἤ τινι ἄλλῳ μέτρῳ;

Πάνυ μὲν οὖν.

(607c8-607d6)

And we would allow the champions [of Poetry]…who are not poetic, but lovers of poetry, to argue, on her behalf, without meter, that she is not only pleasing but also beneficial to civic and human life. And we will listen kindly. For it will benefit us if she appears to be not only pleasant but also beneficial.

Δοῖμεν δέ γέ που ἂν καὶ τοῖς προστάταις [of Poetry's]…ὅσοι μὴ ποιητικοί, φιλοποιηταὶ δέ, ἄνευ μέτρου λόγον ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς εἰπεῖν, ὡς οὐ μόνον ἡδεῖα ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη πρὸς τὰς πολιτείας καὶ τὸν βίον τὸν ἀνθρώπινόν ἐστιν. καὶ εὐμενῶς ἀκουσόμεθα. κερδανοῦμεν γάρ που ἐὰν μὴ μόνον ἡδεῖα φανῇ ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφελίμη.

(607d7-10)

And thus we, because of the love of this kind of poetry which has been nurtured in us by the education of our fine civic life, will be well disposed for her to appear as best and as true as possible.

Καὶ ἡμεῖς οὕτως, διὰ τὸν ἐγγεγονότα μὲν ἔρωτα τῆς τοιαύτης ποιήσεως ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν καλῶν πολιτειῶν τροφῆς, εὖνοι μὲν ἐσόμεθα φανῆναι αὐτὴν ὡς βελτίστην καὶ ἀληθεστάτην.

(607e6-608a2)

As I said in **4.3**, in light of **3.3**, unless we can demonstrate that these solicitations are not merely symptoms of the fact that Socrates would see his banishment of imitative poetry as being fallible, there are two putatively plausible explanations as to why Socrates would solicit a successful response to his banishment.

1. Socrates is anxious about his banishment, such that he thinks that the other side would have a genuinely compelling response to make. This is why he solicits a response.
2. Socrates is confident in his banishment but understands that it is fallible and so, out of humility, is soliciting a response, even though he thinks a successful response is not likely.

I argued that Halliwell gave us no compelling reason to prefer the first explanation to the second. I, however, can give two reasons. In doing so, I will be arguing that we cannot see the four solicitations as mere symptoms of the fact that Socrates sees his argument as being fallible. The solicitations reveal him to be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

5.3.1 – A Comparative Case

A comparison gives us the first reason for thinking that Socrates solicits a successful response because he is anxious about his banishment. Socrates follows the shorter route to his conclusion that being just is more valuable than being unjust (**3.1**).[68] This is arguably the most important conclusion of the *Republic* (334d4-e3). Socrates is quite confident when he concludes this defence.

[68] See also Scott (2015) and (2020) on this issue.

> In every way, the one who praises justice would be telling the truth, and the one praising injustice would be speaking falsely.
>
> Κατὰ πάντα τρόπον δὴ ὁ μὲν τὰ δίκαια ἐγκωμιάζων ἀληθῆ ἂν λέγοι, ὁ δὲ τὰ ἄδικα ψεύδοιτο. (589b4-c4)

Socrates is not entitled to this claim. He would be the first to admit this, given his methodological self-consciousness (**3.1**). He has not explored justice with knowledge of the transcendent forms. Nevertheless, and more importantly, expressions like this make it clear that Socrates is quite confident in his defence of justice, even though he has been following the shorter route. Indeed, instead of inviting the defender of injustice to respond to his argument, Socrates imagines persuading him 'gently' (ῥᾴως) (589c6). It is hard to think that this has not been said in a condescending tone. Presumably, then, Socrates thinks that in defending the value of justice, he has followed the shorter route to a conclusion which is 'up to the standards of our previous statements and inquiries' (τῶν γε προειρημένων τε καὶ προεσκεμμένων ἀξίως) (435d4); one in which he can be confident until somebody proposes a finer argument (388e1-2).

While he does not express himself as confidently, his conclusion to his defence of the claim that philosophers must be rulers still belies confidence: 'and truly we have already shown adequately that, if they are possible, these [arrangements] are the best' (καὶ μὴν ὅτι γε βέλτιστα, εἴπερ δυνατά, ἱκανῶς ἐν τοῖς [arrangements] ἔμπροσθεν…διήλθομεν) (502c1-3). We can see a similar level of confidence in his conclusion to both his defence of the abolition of the family and eugenics (461e) and his defence of having female guardians and auxiliaries (457b-c). Indeed, Socrates is also confident when he banishes imitative poetry from the curriculum of the guardians of the *Kallipolis*. He says that he will treat the imitative

poets who want to join this city like idols, 'pouring oil down over their heads and wreathing them with woollen fillets' (μύρον κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς καταχέαντες καὶ ἐρίῳ στέψαντες) (398a7-8). Nothing betrays confidence as much as an ironic praise of one's opponents.

The contrast between these conclusions and his banishment of imitative poetry in book X could not be clearer. When he makes these conclusions, Socrates does not invite the defenders of the positions he is criticising to make a reply to his arguments, all of which he reached by following the shorter route. He does not even consider that they might be able to overturn his fallible arguments. In some cases, he condescends them. In others, he ironically praises them. Things look quite different in *Republic* X. Socrates, four times in quick succession, invites Poetry and her champions to make a convincing response to his banishment of imitative poetry. What can explain this difference?

It cannot be the fact that his banishment of imitative poetry is somehow more controversial than his other conclusions. Socrates believes that the Many hold the view that being unjust is more valuable than being just (358a4). He also claims that the Many do not agree with his claim that philosophers ought to be rulers (499d8). Likewise, he claims that his views on the family, eugenics, and female guardians 'raises many doubts, still more than the things which we discussed before' (πολλὰς…ἀπιστίας ἔχει ἔτι μᾶλλον τῶν ἔμπροσθεν ὧν διήλθομεν) (450c6-7).

Furthermore, it cannot merely be, as Halliwell implies, that Socrates loves imitative poetry too much to commit to his banishment of it. Imagine a woman who, despite her discovery that her husband has a second family, has some residual feelings for him which she herself does not want to have. Would it make sense for her to invite not only her husband to defend himself but also his best friends to plead his case? I think this would only make

sense if she strongly suspected that she had gotten the facts wrong. I have argued that Socrates does not want to love imitative poetry (**4.5**). So, analogously, it would only make sense for him to be inviting Poetry and her champions to reply to his banishment if he seriously entertained the possibility that it was wrong; if he did not think it was merely fallible. He is inviting Poetry and her champions to make their case. So, I propose, we should prefer to explain why he solicits a successful response to his banishment of imitative poetry four times by saying that he is anxious about it.

5.3.2 – Morally Reasonable Champions

The second reason for thinking that Socrates is soliciting a successful response to his banishment of imitative poetry because he is anxious about it concerns his attitude towards the would-be champions of such poetry. Socrates's attitude towards those who would defend poetry is full of good-will. He considers (at least some of) the champions of poetry to be exceptionable people.

> Then, I said, Glaucon, when you meet admirers of Homer who say that this poet has educated Greece…you ought to treat them affectionately and welcome them kindly, because they are as best as they are able…but you should know that you must admit only such poetry as hymns to the gods and eulogies to good men.
>
> Ὦ Γλαύκων, ὅταν Ὁμήρου ἐπαινέταις ἐντύχῃς λέγουσιν ὡς τὴν Ἑλλάδα πεπαίδευκεν οὗτος ὁ ποιητὴς…φιλεῖν μὲν χρὴ καὶ ἀσπάζεσθαι ὡς ὄντας βελτίστους εἰς ὅσον δύνανται…εἰδέναι δὲ ὅτι ὅσον μόνον ὕμνους θεοῖς καὶ ἐγκώμια τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ποιήσεως παραδεκτέον εἰς πόλιν.
>
> (606e1-607a5)

The admirers of Homer, and so, presumably, his champions, are as best, in a moral sense, as they are able to be. How good is this? Some commentators are inclined to think that the

answer is: not good at all.[69] Connecting this remark with 605a suggests otherwise. As we have seen, Socrates's greatest charge against poetry is that it 'is able to corrupt even morally reasonable people, excepting some very few' (τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς ἱκανὴν εἶναι λωβᾶσθαι, ἐκτὸς πάνυ τινῶν ὀλίγων) (605c6-7). He refers to these same people as being, again in a moral sense, 'the best of us' (οἱ…βέλτιστοι ἡμῶν) (605c9). These compliments are not ironic. If they were, Socrates could not be speaking seriously when speaks of bringing the greatest charge against imitative poetry (605c5). Unfortunately, despite the fact that they are morally reasonable, Socrates thinks that:

> When the best of us hear Homer, or some other poet of tragedy…you know that we, abandoning ourselves, feel pleasure. We follow them, sympathising and being serious, and we praise as good the poet who affects us in this way as much as possible.
>
> Οἱ γάρ που βέλτιστοι ἡμῶν ἀκροώμενοι Ὁμήρου ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν τραγῳδοποιῶν…οἶσθ' ὅτι χαίρομέν τε καὶ ἐνδόντες ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς ἑπόμεθα συμπάσχοντες, καὶ σπουδάζοντες ἐπαινοῦμεν ὡς ἀγαθὸν ποιητήν, ὃς ἂν ἡμᾶς ὅτι μάλιστα οὕτω διαθῇ.
>
> (605c9-d5)

Even those who appear to Socrates to be morally reasonable praise poetry. Thus, those who praise Homer are morally reasonable. So, the answer to the initial question is that Socrates thinks the champions of poetry are morally reasonable. Hence, Socrates is inviting people he genuinely sees as morally reasonable to make a successful response to his banishment of imitative poetry

[69] For example, in a footnote to his translation of 606e1-607a5, Shorey (1937) claims that Socrates is speaking in a 'condescending tone.'

If Socrates was confident in his banishment, then he would surely have thought that those who defended imitative poetry are vicious people. After all, if Socrates is right, these people would be complicit in the metaphorical destruction which imitative poetry can inflict upon the rational soul. Regardless, Socrates does not think that the people who defend imitative poetry are vicious. He thinks that morally reasonable people, who are as best as they can be, defend imitative poetry. Thus, explaining why Socrates solicits a successful response by saying that he is confident but humble does not cohere well with his attitude towards the champions of poetry.

By contrast, saying that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry, in order to explain why he solicits a successful response to it four times, coheres well with his attitude towards the champions of poetry. This explanation in turn allows us to explain why Socrates has good-will towards these people – even though his (argument for) banishment suggests otherwise – by saying that he is anxious about this banishment and is not yet willing to commit to it.

Furthermore, a comparison with his attitude towards his other interlocutors, both actual and imagined, confirms that his good-will towards the champions of poetry is not merely a symptom of the fact that he understands his argument as being fallible. Socrates does not think that those who defend the value of injustice are morally reasonable, even though he is aware that his argument in defence of justice is fallible. Glaucon and Socrates agree that 'the Many' (τοῖς πολλοῖς) share Thrasymachus's view that being just is burdensome and that one should seem to be just while being unjust (358a4). Socrates, famously, says rude things about Thrasymachus and the Many.

And while we were conversing, Thrasymachus many times tried to take over the conversation, but he was being restrained by the ones who sat beside him who wanted to hear out the argument. But as we concluded…he no longer kept quiet but, gathering himself up just like a wild beast, came upon us as though he would tear us into pieces.

Καὶ ὁ Θρασύμαχος πολλάκις μὲν καὶ διαλεγομένων ἡμῶν μεταξὺ ὥρμα ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τοῦ λόγου, ἔπειτα ὑπὸ τῶν παρακαθημένων διεκωλύετο βουλομένων διακοῦσαι τὸν λόγον· ὡς δὲ διεπαυσάμεθα…οὐκέτι ἡσυχίαν ἦγεν, ἀλλὰ συστρέψας ἑαυτὸν ὥσπερ θηρίον ἦκεν ἐφ᾽ ἡμᾶς ὡς διαρπασόμενος.

(336b1-6)

Therefore, those who have no experience of intelligence or virtue, and are always taking part in feasts and the like, are carried downwards, so it seems, and then back to the middle, and stray about in this way throughout their life, neither surpassing this point upwards towards the truth, nor do they look towards it, nor are they ever brought there, nor filled with reality, nor have they tasted steadfast and pure pleasure, but, like cattle, they are always looking downwards and stooping towards the earth, and they feed at a table, fattening themselves and mounting [each other], and, for the sake of their greediness, they kick one another with their heels, butt each other with their iron horns, and kill each other with their hoofs on account of their insatiable desire.

Οἱ ἄρα φρονήσεως καὶ ἀρετῆς ἄπειροι, εὐωχίαις δὲ καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις ἀεὶ συνόντες, κάτω, ὡς ἔοικεν, καὶ μέχρι πάλιν πρὸς τὸ μεταξὺ φέρονταί τε καὶ ταύτῃ πλανῶνται διὰ βίου, ὑπερβάντες δὲ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ ἀληθῶς ἄνω οὔτε ἀνέβλεψαν πώποτε οὔτε ἠνέχθησαν, οὐδὲ τοῦ ὄντος τῷ ὄντι ἐπληρώθησαν, οὐδὲ βεβαίου τε καὶ καθαρᾶς ἡδονῆς ἐγεύσαντο, ἀλλὰ βοσκημάτων δίκην κάτω ἀεὶ βλέποντες καὶ κεκυφότες εἰς γῆν καὶ εἰς τραπέζας βόσκονται χορταζόμενοι καὶ ὀχεύοντες [each other], καὶ ἕνεκα τῆς τούτων πλεονεξίας λακτίζοντες καὶ κυρίττοντες ἀλλήλους σιδηροῖς κέρασί τε καὶ ὁπλαῖς ἀποκτεινύασι δι᾽ ἀπληστίαν.

(586a1-b3).

Given the connection Socrates forges between beasts and vice, most notably in 588e4-589a4, and the connection between irritable characters and vice (**1.4**), these passages make it clear that he does not see those who defend injustice as being morally reasonable. He treats them disrespectfully, even though he would be aware that his defence of justice is fallible, such that it is logically possible that he is wrong about Thrasymachus and the Many. Thus, we cannot satisfactorily explain why Socrates is still happy to regard the champions of poetry as morally reasonable by saying that he understands his argument is fallible.

Why, then, does he insult the defenders of injustice but not the champions of poetry? I propose it is because he is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry, and so is not yet ready to commit himself to seeing the champions in a way which accords with this banishment.

5.3.3 – Summarising Remarks

Let us now return to the two putatively possible explanations as to why Socrates four times solicits a successful response to his banishment of imitative poetry:

1. Socrates is anxious about his banishment, such that he thinks that the other side would have a genuinely compelling response to make. This is why he solicits a response.
2. Socrates is confident in his banishment but understands it is fallible and so out of humility is soliciting a response, even though he thinks a successful response is not likely.

The foregoing considerations of **5.3.1** and of **5.3.2** make the first explanation more preferable than the second. In doing so, they demonstrate that we cannot see Socrates's

solicitations as merely symptomatic of the fact that he sees his banishment as being fallible. Thus, I conclude that Socrates is, at some definite point in book X, anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

5.4 – Anxiety Explained

I have argued that Socrates is, at some definite point, anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. I would now like explain why he is anxious about it. After all, if I could not explain why Socrates is anxious about his banishment, then it would be reasonable to deny that he is anxious.[70] I have three explanations to offer.

5.4.1 – The First Explanation

Socrates acknowledges that there are morally reasonable people who would defend poetry (**5.3.1**). Presumably, they have listened to a lot of it. However, Socrates has been arguing that poetry metaphorically destroys reason. On both the intellectual and the practical interpretation, this stops us from being morally reasonable. So, by acknowledging that there are morally reasonable people who have listened to a lot of poetry, Socrates seems to be acknowledging many counterexamples to the Claim of Destruction.

We could explain why Socrates would not have considered Adeimantus and Glaucon to be counterexamples to the Claim of Destruction. It is harder, though, to find an explanation as to why the morally reasonable champions of poetry would not count as

[70] I do not think the same reasoning applies to my claim that Socrates, at some definite points within *Republic* X, is confident in his banishment of imitative poetry. It is standard to see Socrates as confident and so the burden of proof was not against me. This being said, in brief, I would return to the imaginative connection between tyranny and imitative poetry discussed in **4.5.3** in order to explain why Socrates is confident that poetry must go. Socrates fears tyranny and is quite confident that it is immoral. Socrates sees imitative poetry and tyranny as imaginatively linked. So, it is plausible that his fear of tyranny and confidence in its immorality carries over in the case of poetry.

counterexamples. It is difficult to believe that Socrates thinks so many people have been touched by something divine (**5.1.2**). Indeed, Socrates thinks that most of the morally reasonable people among us are vulnerable to having their rational souls metaphorically destroyed by imitative poetry. So, it would make no sense for him also to think that something divine prevents them from having their reason destroyed.

Socrates acknowledges that there are genuine counterexamples to his Claim of Destruction, on which his banishment of imitative poetry is based, even if he does not explicitly make this acknowledgment. Thus, a reason why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment is that he acknowledges there are counterexamples to it.

5.4.2 – The Second Explanation

At the beginning of book X, Socrates does not return to the issue of poetry because an interlocutor, or a possible interlocutor, has been making a serious defence of it. Rather, he himself raises the issue again with Glaucon, in order to further prosecute poetry.

> I have many other things in mind about the city which, more than anything, assure me that we correctly founded it, and I say this not least with poetry in mind.
>
> Καὶ μήν, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, πολλὰ μὲν καὶ ἄλλα περὶ αὐτῆς ἐννοῶ, ὡς παντὸς ἄρα μᾶλλον ὀρθῶς ᾠκίζομεν τὴν πόλιν, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ ἐνθυμηθεὶς περὶ ποιήσεως λέγω.
>
> (595a1-3)

Moreover, throughout book X, Socrates never details how the champions of poetry would seriously defend imitative poetry. He merely sketches why some people think that the poets are knowledgeable, which, I have argued, is logically irrelevant to his banishment of imitative poetry (**2.3**). There is no articulate defence of imitative poetry in the *Republic*.

This makes the banishment of book X contrast seriously with other conclusions Socrates makes in the *Republic*. In book I, Socrates is responding to Cephalus's claims about happiness and old age, which leads to a discussion about justice and its value with him, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus. Then, in book II, Glaucon and Adeimantus pretend to praise injustice, in order to solicit Socrates's response, a response which is finally concluded in book IX. In book V, Socrates is again responsive to Polemarchus, Adeimantus, and Thrasymachus who each want him to say more about his proposals regarding women. Indeed, he then figures himself as standing before three waves of criticism which are about to break over him and to which he must respond (472a). In each case, Socrates proposes confident conclusions only after he has heard what those defending the other side have to say for themselves. Especially in the case of Glaucon's and Adeimantus's defence of injustice, he genuinely deems their defence to be the best one could make. Reasonably, then, we can explain why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment by saying that he has not yet heard a strong defence of it, one which has been articulated in terms which are amenable to its champions.

5.4.3 – The Third Explanation

Comparing the way in which Socrates argues for banishment with the way in which he argues for other claims he makes in the course of his defence of justice is instructive. Consider, again, the Principle of Opposites. Socrates hypothesises this principle. However, he does not merely hypothesise it. He does so after he has considered some evidence in favour of it and has dismissed an objection against it (436c-e). Likewise, in the tripartition of the soul, Socrates proposes multiple examples in order to support his case. Indeed, in order to distinguish spirit from appetite and reason, he even offers the story of Leontius as a concrete example (439e6-440a4). It is a familiar story which Glaucon has heard

(440a5). It takes the whole of 437d- 441c for Socrates to delineate the different parts of the soul. Last, Socrates offers four distinct arguments in defence of the superiority of the just life in books VIII and IX. The first of these emerges out of Socrates's extensive account of the timocratic, oligarchic, democratic, and tyrannical cities and souls, which covers 543c to 580c. In comparison, Socrates spends far less time developing his Claim of Destruction, on the basis of which he banishes poetry. Specifically, it takes him only from 603c to 606b to defend this claim.

Furthermore, we cannot say that, in book X, Socrates is reaffirming a conclusion which he has already reached in book III. In this part of the *Republic*, Socrates is concerned with the education the guardians of the mythic and idealised *Kallipolis* will receive. There, he was selective in his banishment of imitative poetry. We could include the parts of Homer which convey moral truths. By contrast, in *Republic* X, Socrates means to be arguing that imitative poetry should not be given a place in actual cities and should not be used to educate actual citizens.[71] Moreover, he purports to ban the works of Homer, the tragedians, and all other imitative poets as a whole, including the morally beneficial parts. So, the conclusion Socrates aims for in *Republic* X is far more general than the one he aims for in *Republic* III. So, again, we cannot say that Socrates is reaffirming a conclusion for which he has already argued. The two conclusions are different. Thus, a plausible explanation as to why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry is that he knows it has not been defended in as much depth as his other conclusions.

Indeed, we see this particularly clearly when we look at Socrates's defence of the Pleasure Amplification Principle, a key component in his Claim of Destruction, on either the

[71] Halliwell (2011: 188 – 190) makes this case in more detail. It is not controversial.

intellectual or the practical interpretation of it (**2.2.3 – 2.2.4**). The Pleasure Amplification Principle is the idea that, overtime, the more pleasure we feel in one of the parts of the soul, the harder it becomes to resist giving into the desires of this part. This principle can explain how imitative poetry destroys our souls in the following way. On the intellectual interpretation, when we experience pleasure in empathising with the characters an imitative poem presents to us, we experience an irrational pleasure (**2.2.4**). On a practical interpretation, when we experience pleasure in attending to imitative poems *qua* appearances, watching the characters it makes present to us, or empathising with these characters, we are experiencing an irrational pleasure (**2.2.4**). This means, on both interpretations, via the Pleasure Amplification Principle, we will no longer be able to resist satisfying our irrational desires. (The intellectual interpreter will add that what is most concerning is that it becomes irresistible to satisfy our irrational desires for forming beliefs based on appearances.) Thereby, watching imitative poetry destroys our rational souls in either the sense that it becomes impossible for us to resist the desire to form beliefs based on appearances or in the sense that it becomes impossible for us to resist giving into irrational pleasure more generally (**2.2.3**).

Socrates does not argue that the Pleasure Amplification Principle is empirically accurate. Indeed, unlike other empirical claims, he does not tell a familiar story in order to derive a concrete example in support of it or consider possible objections to it. He seems to merely intuit that it is true. Socrates may seem to us to have remarkable psychological insight. The Pleasure Amplification Principle is quite important to contemporary debates about the formations of habits and social practices.[72] Nevertheless, his defence of this principle is

[72] Nehamas (1999b) connects the Pleasure Amplification Principle with debates about the impact of television. Burnyeat (1999: 248 – 249) connects this idea with discussions about how advertising affects us. Anne Eaton makes an interesting appeal to it in a discussion of pornography (2017: 50). She excusably thinks the idea originated with Aristotle (in book II of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, book VIII of his *Politics*, and in various

not well-justified. This reinforces the initial claim of **5.4.3**, the claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry because he understands that he has not argued for it in a way which is up to the standards of his previous statements and inquiries.

A possible way of objecting to this would be to argue that: Socrates is confident about the conclusion he draws in *Republic* III; one of these is that the guardians should not imitate vicious characters; this argument depends on the Pleasure Amplification Principle; thus, Socrates cannot be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry in book X because of this principle.

This objection looks plausible because Socrates does make a point in book III which seems to appeal to the Pleasure Amplification Principle.

> But if they [the guardians] do imitate, then they are to imitate, from childhood up, those things which it is appropriate for them to imitate: brave, temperate, pious, and free men, and all the things such as these. But they are not to be clever at doing or imitating slavish things, nor any other shameful thing, in order that they may derive no pleasure from the object of their imitation. Or have you not noticed that imitations, if they continue from childhood onwards, settle down into natural habits in body, sound, and mind.
>
> Ἐὰν [the guardians] δὲ μιμῶνται, μιμεῖσθαι τὰ τούτοις προσήκοντα εὐθὺς ἐκ παίδων, ἀνδρείους, σώφρονας, ὁσίους, ἐλευθέρους, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πάντα, τὰ δὲ ἀνελεύθερα μήτε ποιεῖν μήτε δεινοὺς εἶναι μιμήσασθαι, μηδὲ ἄλλο μηδὲν τῶν αἰσχρῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἐκ τῆς μιμήσεως τοῦ εἶναι ἀπολαύσωσιν. ἢ οὐκ ἤσθησαι ὅτι αἱ μιμήσεις, ἐὰν ἐκ νέων πόρρω διατελέσωσιν, εἰς ἔθη τε καὶ φύσιν καθίστανται καὶ κατὰ σῶμα καὶ φωνὰς καὶ κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν.

places in his *Poetics* and his *Rhetoric*. It also is familiar from recent discourse on the impact of social media and video games.

(395c3-d3)

Socrates does not explicitly explain why he thinks that when one imitates an action, by which he means pretending to perform that action, one will come to enjoy performing that kind of action.[73] Nevertheless, the ideas in play here clearly resemble the Pleasure Amplification Principle. Perhaps Socrates, although he does not explicitly say this, means that: the young guardians enjoy imitating shameful actions; this pleasure is an irrational pleasure; this causes their experience of irrational pleasures as a whole to become more intense, such that they find it difficult to resist the demands of their irrational soul; the irrational soul desires to perform shameful actions; and so the young guardians eventually come to enjoy performing shameful actions because of their imitations of them.

However, since Socrates does not explicitly say this, it is difficult to know if he has yet conceived of the Pleasure Amplification Principle in 395c3-d3. One consideration suggests that he has not. This principle presupposes that the soul is tripartite and that each of its three parts has a distinctive pleasure. Socrates only divides the soul into reason, spirit, and appetite in book IV. It is not until book IX that we have a clear understanding of rational, thymotic, and appetitive pleasures (although the matter is touched on in book IV). This means that we should be cautious about saying that Socrates has already conceived of the Pleasure Amplification Principle in book III.

Moreover, even if we can identify 395c3-d3 as an application of the Pleasure Amplification Principle, the scope of its application in book X is far more extensive. In book X, Socrates is saying that this principle is true, not only in cases where we have an "internal" relation

[73] The relation between Socrates's claims about imitation in book III and in book X is disputed. Richardson Lear (2011) argues that the two are coherent in an exemplary way. Halliwell (2002) argues that they are not reconcilable in an exemplary way.

to that which gives us pleasure, but also in cases where the relation is "external." In the case of the guardians of 395c3-d3, they themselves are the source from which their pleasure derives. They are the ones doing the imitating. This is why their relation to their pleasure is internal. By contrast, those who take pleasure in attending to imitative poems *qua* appearances, watching the characters of imitative poetry, or empathising with them, are not the source of that from which their pleasure derives. They did not create the poems to which they are attending. This is why their relation to their pleasure is external. Because of this difference – supposing that the Pleasure Amplification Principle is being applied in book III – there is room for Socrates to be confident in his use of it in 395c3-d3 but anxious about his use of it book X.

In light of these three considerations, we need not let 393c3-d3 undermine the claim that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry in book X because he thinks that it has not been sufficiently argued as exemplified by the way in which he defends the Pleasure Amplification Principle.

Finally, consider the claims which explain why imitative poetry gives pleasure to the irrational part of the soul, and thereby, in accordance with the Pleasure Amplification Principle, strengthens the intensity of irrational pleasures. I argued that Janaway was wrong to claim that Socrates unjustifiably *assumes* that the pleasure we get from watching imitative poetry is irrational pleasure (**2.2.4**). I argued that Socrates has reasons for thinking that when we take pleasure in empathising with the characters of imitative poetry, watching them, or even merely attending to a poetic appearance *qua* appearance, we experience this pleasure in the irrational part of our soul. However, in order to demonstrate this, I had to do some serious exegetical work. The fact that Socrates has reasons for thinking imitative poetry pleases our soul is quite far below the surface of the text. That is to say, while

Socrates has reasons for his claim that imitative poetry gives us irrational pleasure, these reasons are poorly articulated. This reinforces the initial claim of **5.4.3**, the claim that we can reasonably explain why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry by saying that he knows that it has not been defended in as much depth as his other conclusions.

5.5 – Conclusion

There are three explanations as to why Socrates would be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. They are:

1. He has acknowledged counterexamples to his Claim of Destruction.
2. He has not heard imitative poetry defended in its best light.
3. He has not argued for his banishment in much detail. The Pleasure Amplification Principle is not defended. He poorly explains why imitative poetry gives pleasure to the irrational soul.

We should think that Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry when he four times solicits a convincing response from Poetry and her champions for two reasons.

1. This way of concluding an argument contrasts with how he concludes arguments at other key points in the *Republic*. In particular, the very fact that he invites Poetry and her champions to make a convincing response contrasts starkly with, most prominently, the supremely confident way in which he concludes his defence of the value of injustice.

2. The fact that he sees the people who would defend poetry as being morally reasonable.

For these reasons, we should think that, at some definite point in *Republic X*, Socrates is anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. Nevertheless, there are also two occasions on which Socrates expresses confidence in his banishment of imitative poetry.

1. He implies that he possesses a knowledge-drug which concerns the real nature of poetry at the beginning of *Republic* X.
2. He claims, at the end of *Republic* X, that those who fear for the constitution within their souls must believe what he has said about poetry.

I want to embrace both of these sets of evidence. Specifically, I conclude that Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. The standard view is wrong to take Socrates to be entirely confident in his banishment. Nevertheless, proponents of the standard view rightly recognise that there is confidence in *Republic* X. The defence Halliwell gave of his claim that Socrates is entirely anxious and never confident is unconvincing (**4.1 – 4.5**). This claim is also wrong. Nevertheless, Halliwell rightly recognises that there is anxiety in *Republic* X. Socrates is both, but at different moments, confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry.

Conclusion

This thesis is a character study. It has aimed to investigate Socrates's attitude towards his banishment of imitative poetry in *Republic* X, which he proposes on the basis of the claim that it, in a metaphorical sense, destroys the rational part of the soul. The standard view, which is, as far as I know, unargued, is that Socrates is entirely confident in his banishment. Halliwell, against this view, argues that Socrates is entirely anxious about his banishment and is never confident in it. My view, which I have defended in this thesis, is that Socrates goes back and forth between being confident in and anxious about his banishment (**5.2 – 5.4**). Proponents of the standard view have correctly detected moments of confidence. Halliwell rightly detected anxiety in Socrates when he, four times in quick succession, invites Poetry and her champions to make a convincing response to his call for banishment, despite not satisfactorily defending his reading of these invitations, or his reading as a whole (**4.1 – 4.5**).

These conclusions do not depend on any particular way of resolving many of the present interpretative disputes concerning *Republic* X. Furthermore, in the course of defending my conclusions about Socrates's attitude, I contributed to our understanding of Socrates's argument for his Claim of Destruction, on either the intellectual or practical interpretation of it. In particular, I detailed why Socrates thinks imitative poetry gratifies the inferior part of our souls, a point which commentators have not adequately discussed (**2.2.4**). Understanding the argument Socrates gives for the Claim of Destruction is quite important to explaining why he would be anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry (**5.4**).

In *Republic* X, Socrates oscillates between being confident in and anxious about his banishment of imitative poetry. Such oscillation makes him quite unlike that wise and quiet

character which delights the rational soul. Ironically, in book X at least, Socrates seems to have that irritable and multicoloured character, the kind of character which delights the irrational part of us. Perhaps this is why we enjoy reading about his philosophical adventures.

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Declaration of Originality of Authorship of a thesis submitted for examination in the BPhil in Philosophy in the academic year 2020-2021

I, **Ben Anthony Jamieson Campbell**, affirm that my submitted thesis entitled **Poetry and Provisionality in *Republic* X** is my own original work, except where otherwise stated, and that I have only shown drafts of it to my supervisor, Prof **Dominic Scott**, in approximately eight hours of supervision, and that I have received help in its preparation from Prof **Karen Margrethe Nielsen**.

Signed:



Date: 15th of June 2021