Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Felsefe Dergisi
Bursa Uludağ University Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Philosophy

Araştırma Makalesi | Research Article
***Kaygı*, 24 (2), 537-562.**

Makale Geliş | Received: 01.04.2025
Makale Kabul | Accepted: 12.07.2025
Yayın Tarihi | Publication Date: 30.09.2025
DOI: 10.20981/kaygi.1668824

Güncel Oğulcan Ülgen
Araştırma Görevlisi | Research Assistant
Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Felsefe Bölümü, Ankara, TR
Hacettepe University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Philosophy, Ankara, TR
ORCID: 0000-0003-0934-6940
g.ogulcanulgen@gmail.com

Countering the Formidable Accuser: Plato's Response to Aristophanes and the Problem of Misology

Abstract: This paper examines the relationship between argumentation and misology. It argues that Plato's reclamation of argument constitutes a philosophical response to the problem of misology. I claim that Aristophanes' Clouds offers a devastating early critique of διαλέγεσθαι, to which Plato responds by reclaiming and reconfiguring it as διαλεκτική. The Clouds portrays the rise of sophistic teaching as a destabilizing force in Athenian society, fostering mistrust in argumentation while associating it with manipulation and distortion. This mistrust constitutes an early instance of misology, a concept that Plato later develops fully in the Phaedo. By analyzing the Euthydemus, I show how Plato responds to Aristophanes by distinguishing Socrates from the sophists and revealing the latter's role in generating misology. The focus on the Euthydemus is deliberate: there is an intertextual relationship (both formal and thematic) between the Euthydemus and the Clouds that brings them into direct confrontation. In the Phaedo, Plato further argues that misology arises from repeated disappointment with arguments when wielded by those who, by refuting every position, instill universal mistrust in their listeners. Plato's remedy is to rebuild trust in argumentation by emphasizing philosophy's commitment to inquiry, even in the face of uncertainty. Ultimately, this paper contends that while Aristophanes' response to the crisis of argumentation is to ridicule and reject it, Plato offers a systematic alternative: he redefines διαλεκτική as a means of countering misology rather than producing it. In doing so, he not only defends philosophy from the charge of misology but also presents philosophy as the only possible cure for misology.
Keywords: Misology, Dialectic, Eristic, Antilogic, Sophistry

Ülgen, G.E., (2025), Countering the Formidable Accuser: Plato's Response to Aristophanes and the Problem of Misology , Kaygı. Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Felsefe Dergisi, 24 (2), 537-562.
DOI: 10.20981/kaygi.1668824

Ülgen, G.E., (2025), Countering the Formidable Accuser: Plato's Response to Aristophanes and the Problem of Misology , Kaygı. 24 (2), 537-562.

Heybetli Suçlayıcıya Karşı: Platon'un Aristophanes'e ve Mizoloji Sorununa Yanıtı

Öz: Bu makale tartışma ile mizoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi ve Platon'un mizolojiye felsefi bir yanıt vermek adına tartışmayı nasıl yeniden sahiplendiğini incelemektedir. Aristophanes'in Bulutlar adlı eseri, Platon'un daha sonra διαλεκτική olarak yeniden tanımlayıp sahipleneceği διαλέγεσθαι pratiğine yönelik erken bir eleştiri sunar. Bulutlar, sofistlerin öğretisinin Atina toplumunda istikrarsızlaştırıcı bir güç olarak ortaya çıkışını tasvir eder; bu öğretinin argümanların çarpıtılması ve manipülasyonu ile ilişkilendirilmesi, tartışma pratiğine karşı bir güvensizlik doğurur. Bu güvensizlik, Platon'un Phaidon diyalogunda tam anlamıyla geliştirdiği mizolojinin erken bir örneğini teşkil eder. Euthydemos diyaloğu üzerinden, Platon'un Aristophanes'e nasıl yanıt verdiğini ve Sokrates ile sofistleri nasıl ayırdığını ortaya koyuyorum; bu ayrım, mizolojinin kaynağının sofistlerde olduğunu gösterir. Phaidon'da Platon, mizolojinin, her görüşün çürütülebileceğini göstermek suretiyle dinleyicilerde evrensel bir güvensizlik aşılayan kişiler eliyle yürütülen tartışmaların tekrar tekrar hayal kırıklığına uğratmasından doğduğunu savunur. Platon'un önerdiği çare, belirsizlikler karşısında bile sorgulamaya bağlı kalan felsefenin, tartışmaya olan güveni yeniden inşa etmesidir. Sonuç olarak Aristophanes'in tartışma krizine verdiği tepki alay etmek ve reddetmek yönündeyken, Platon bu krize yönelik yapısal bir çözüm sunar yani, diyalektiği, mizolojiyi üreten değil, onu bertaraf eden bir yöntem olarak yeniden tanımlamak. Bu yolla Platon, felsefeyi mizoloji suçlamasından korumakla kalmaz, onu mizolojinin mümkün yegâne tedavisi olarak da sunar.
Keywords: Mizoloji, Diyalektik, Eristik, Antilojik, Sofistik

Introduction[1]

The Greeks were long fascinated with speech and the numerous things that can be done with it. Their literature is rich with examples of masterful orators: Achilles in the *Iliad*; the orator Nestor, whose voice "flows sweeter than honey"; the cunning Odysseus, who improvises the pseudonym *οὔτις* (oútis) to escape trouble; and the ideal king, championed by Hesiod, who speaks confidently and quickly resolves any conflict with skill. This fascination with language was not confined to literature but permeated every aspect of Greek life. Marcel Detienne observes that in Archaic Greece, the poet, the seer, and the king each held a very privileged relationship with speech. Their words are aligned with different temporalities: the poet and the seer could "see what is invisible and declare 'what has been, what is, and what will be,'" while "the king's speech, relying on test by ordeal, possesses an oracular power. It brings justice into being and establishes the order of law without recourse to either proof or investigation" (Detienne, 1996: 16). Detienne

[1] I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Prof. Dr. Nazile Kalaycı, whose guidance, insight and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping the ideas presented in this paper.

characterizes this type of speech as magico-religious. His work, alongside Jean Pierre Vernant's works (*The Origins of Greek Thought* and *Myth and Thought Among the Greeks*), traces the transition from magico-religious speech to dialogue speech[2] and explores the effects of this transition on Greek society.

Although early examples of different speech usages can be found in the *Iliad*, *Theogony,* and *Works and Days*, the institutional developments of the *polis* fundamentally reshaped the nature of speech. Vernant argues that as political and legal institutions evolved, speech was formalized into a teachable technique (Vernant, 1984: 49ff). Texts such as Antiphon's *Tetralogies*,[3] Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* and *The Defense of Palamedes*, and Protagoras' *Overthrowing Arguments* functioned as manuals, instructing Athenians in the art of argumentation.

In a similar fashion, Detienne asserts that there has been a shift from oath-based jurisprudence to argument-based litigation: "The technicality of the swearing of oaths, which carried a definite religious force, gave way to discussion that allowed reason to put forward its arguments and thereby gave the judge a chance to form an opinion based on these arguments" (Detienne, 1996: 105). In the fifth century BCE, this growing emphasis on speech as argument was encapsulated by the term *διαλέγεσθαι*. Following this shift, Athenian citizens became increasingly captivated by the skillful debates in the courts, the *agora,* and the gymnasium. A new class of

[2] Detienne claims that the passage from myth to reason during the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. was a transition from magico-religious speech to dialogue speech. This transition was deep secularization, which made rhetoric, philosophy, law and history possible. Dialogue speech, which results from the secularization of speech, marks the emergence of the sophists and philosophers. They explicitly opposed the magico-religious speech, exemplified by the inspired poets, diviners and prophets (Pisano, 2019: 13).

[3] For instance, Gagarin suggests that Antiphon wrote the Tetralogies not as texts to be delivered in court "but for a more intellectual audience, perhaps the same audience as that of his more explicitly theoretical works" (Gagarin, 2002: 103), which means they were meant to be studied by aspiring orators, lawyers, and logographers.

professionals emerged to meet the demand for this linguistic expertise: the sophists.[4]

Detienne aptly calls the sophists "technical experts on *logos*" (1996: 117), while Mauro Bonazzi, in *The Sophists*, calls their milieu "the world of words." According to Bonazzi, the sophists instructed citizens in three key areas: grammar, poetry, and persuasion (2020: 43). These correspond to mastery of language, critical interpretation of traditional texts, and proficiency in argumentation. Their teachings were met with immense enthusiasm, as argumentative and rhetorical skills proved invaluable in Athenian political life.

However, an ambivalent stance was also emerging. While the teaching of the sophists had generated widespread interest, it also provoked suspicion among many people. Many perceived arguments –generally understood as refuting or contradicting claims, customs, and laws– as tools that granted undue advantages to those trained in them. This anxiety is most vividly dramatized in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, which satirizes "sophistic rhetoric" and its impact on Athenian society (O'Regan, 1992: 3–4).[5] By the time the *Clouds* was written, the sophists and their

[4] "Dialogue speech" is commonly termed "sophistic," however, Edward Schiappa notes that the mainstream distinction between technical, sophistical, and philosophical rhetoric does not hold historical accuracy for a monolithic and unified "sophistic" rhetoric taught by all the sophists is a pragmatic historical construct. For that reason, he argues against clumping all the figures under the header "Sophists" as they are too heterogeneous to be clumped in together (Schiappa, 1999: pp. 48-50). In another work, he co-authored with David Timmerman, they argue that *διαλέγεσθαι* has become a term of art and it "took on a more specialized sense within a specific community of language users. We can call this community "sophistic" without problem as long as we stipulate that it is our construct, used to interpret the texts of the time, that cannot be assumed to be a label used clearly and consistently in fifth-century Athens; indeed, the available historical evidence suggests it was not (Edmunds 2006). Nevertheless, the term "sophistic" can be used as convenient shorthand for a constellation of people and practices that made up the intellectual scene in Athens in the late fifth and early fourth centuries – a scene in which Socrates participates actively and that serves as the backdrop for many of Plato's dialogues. Specifically, we offer the hypothesis that there was a specialized use of the term *διαλέγεσθαι* that has historical connections to those we call Sophists, including Protagoras, Socrates, and Hippias" (Timmerman & Schiappa, 2010: pp. 19-20). My use of the "sophist/sophists" is informed by this caution.

[5] There are other texts at the time concerned with the sophistic art of argumentation. For instance, Euripides, influenced by Protagoras is also concerned with logos. Other comedies were also concerned with the sophistic *logoi*: "The ambiguously overly attractive *logoi* are those skillful and

teachings had already become both an object of fascination and a subject of controversy, reflecting the broad societal tension surrounding the art of argumentation. This tension reaches such a point that one of the leading figures of this "sophistic movement[6]," Socrates, is accused of being interested in things in the sky and things below the earth, not believing in the gods, and making the weak argument the stronger argument (*τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιῶν*) (*Apo*. 18a-b). Accordingly, Socrates' name is associated with three accusations in the *Clouds*. Socrates calls his accusers formidable (*δεινός*); yet they are more than one (*οἱ δεινοὶ κατήγοροι*), and we will see that Aristophanes is the most formidable of them all. Aristophanes' accusation is significant because it attacks the very condition of philosophy by not distinguishing it from its close others, such as sophistry.

This paper argues that Aristophanes' portrayal of the sophists and Socrates in the *Clouds* reflects the anxieties of Athenians about the new art of argumentation, *διαλέγεσθαι*. I contend that this anxiety is the first instance of misology, that is, the mistrust of argumentation. I will first analyze the *Clouds* as a critique of sophistic teaching, assessing whether Aristophanes proposes any solutions to the disorder he portrays. Next, I will examine Plato's *Euthydemus*, which I claim responds to the accusations found in the *Clouds* by distinguishing Socratic dialectic from sophistic contentious debates. Finally, I will turn to *Phaedo*, where Socrates explicitly links *ἀντιλογική* to the problem of misology and offers a remedy that is both philosophical and psychological. Ultimately, countering Aristophanes' formidable accusation against both Socrates and philosophy, I argue, Plato shows us that it was not

deceptive words which pander to the pleasure of the hearer (and the speaker); privately, and also publicly, they mean ruin. Comedy echoed this in its own key. This period saw many attacks direct and in passing on demagogues, sophists, and the new culture of technically skillful logos: *Banqueters* in 427 (see 205 PCG), *Acharnians* 425, *Knights* 424, *Konnos* 423, *Kolakes* 421, Marikas 421, *Hyperbolus* 420, to mention only a few" (O'Regan, 1992: 17)

[6] A term coined by George Kerferd, against the literature and *doxa* concerning Socrates, he counts Socrates among the sophists (1981: 55-57). See (Notomi 2022), for a more contemporary work on Socrates the sophists. Against what Notomi calls "the traditional view of the history" of philosophy, he argues that Socrates should be included to the sophistic movement, claiming the dissociation was mainly achieved by Plato and the contemporaries of Socrates saw no difference between him and the others, who are later deemed to be sophists.

Socrates and philosophy but the sophists and sophistry – through their (ab/mis)use of *διαλέγεσθαι* under the forms of *ἐριστική* and *ἀντιλογική* – who caused misology, and Plato sought to resolve this problem by bringing forth the ideal, pure version of *διαλέγεσθαι,* that is, *διαλεκτική.*

Must We Burn the Sophists?

According to an old anecdote, when Dionysios I of Syracuse sought to learn about Athenian politics, Plato sent him a copy of Aristophanes' plays (Robson, 2013). What does this anecdote tell us about Aristophanes' plays? It underscores how well Aristophanes' plays grasp and represents Athens' political and cultural developments. Not only do they represent the developments in Athens, but they also critique the socio-political climate and the new ideas of his time. Aristophanes' works thus provide invaluable insight into the fifth-century cultural landscape and the reaction against it. A close reading of the *Clouds* helps illuminate the general atmosphere in which it was written, while also revealing the cultural developments against which it was written. Aristophanes' particular response to the growing influence of sophistic teaching operates on two basic levels: (1) a nostalgic longing for a golden age, that is, a time before Pericles, the Peloponnesian War, and the arrival of the sophists and (2) a proto-misological tendency[7], cautioning against *διαλέγεσθαι* in all its forms, figuring it as the cause of disorder in Athens.

The *Clouds* dramatizes the disruptive effects of the new teachings associated with the sophists of the fifth century, especially the effects of their art of argumentation (*διαλέγεσθαι*). The play follows Strepsiades, a father burdened by debt due to his son Pheidippides' love of horses. Seeking relief from his creditors, Strepsiades decides to enroll his son in the Thinking Institute (*φροντιστήριον*), a school where clever souls (*ψυχῶν σοφῶν*) teach "how to argue and win, regardless

[7] I write "proto-" because Aristophanes does not explicitly coin the term. Instead, he displays misological tendencies *avant la lettre*. Plato will be the one to explicitly refer to these misological tendencies as misology.

of right and wrong" (*δίκαια κάδίκα*) (*Cl.* 93-99). From the play's outset, Aristophanes reveals his central critique: sophists equip students with argumentative skills that enable them to prevail in any debate, regardless of moral considerations. The reluctant son, Pheidippides, asks his father who these people are, to which Strepsiades answers he does not know what they are called, which indicates that they were not named the "sophists" yet; instead, he calls them 'deep-thought-cogitators' (*μεριμνοφροντιστής)*. Pheidippides, however, resists with an emphatical exclamation, 'Yuck!' (*αίβοῖ*), dismissing them as a load of swine, charlatans, pale-faced, shoeless crowd, then associates them with Socrates and Chairephon. Strepsiades, undeterred by his son's contempt, begs him to enroll, emphasizing the practical benefits of learning their techniques. "It's said they possess a pair of arguments" he tells his son: the stronger (*κρείττων*) and the weaker (*ἥττων*). The latter, Strepsiades claims, can always emerge victorious by making unjust claims just (*τὸν ἄδικον τοῦτον λόγον*). This skill could easily exempt them from repaying debts (*Cl.* 110-120). Aristophanes links this teaching with Socrates, while Aristotle, in *Rhetoric*, associates the dictum "making the weaker argument the stronger" *(τὸν ἥττω λόγον κρείττω ποιεῖν)* with Protagoras (*Rhe*. 1402a23–5). By attributing this teaching to Socrates, Aristophanes implies that Socrates' technique is not unrelated to the teachings of the sophists.

Unable to persuade his son, Strepsiades takes it upon himself to enroll. At the institute, he meets Socrates (more precisely a caricature of him), portrayed as absurdly detached from practical reality, literally air-walking and spinning his thoughts around the sun. Without any hesitation, Strepsiades asks Socrates to teach him to argue (*λέγειν*). It should be noted that *Λέγειν* here means two things: specifically, "to argue" and more generally "to speak.". Aristophanes suggests that in the new order of things, Strepsiades cannot even talk, for his old way of talking would no longer count as speech. That is why he needs Socrates to teach him how to argue/speak. Socrates agrees to teach him and then introduces him to the Clouds, the new goddesses. The first words they utter are worth our attention: "[To

Strepsiades] Greetings, old man of ancient stock (*πρέσβυτα παλαιογενές*), who seeks out cultured words (*λόγον φιλομούσον*)" (*Cl.* 357). They immediately acknowledge that Strepsiades belongs to the past and that he is an *old*-timer, yet they praise his enthusiasm for the *new* words. This tension between the old and the new keeps building up throughout the play, culminating in the eventual rejection of anything new. In this scene, Socrates is also portrayed as denying the existence of Zeus, a case of impiety (*ἀσέβεια*[8]). The new gods and goddesses Socrates believes are Chaos, the Clouds, and Tongue (*γλῶττα*), and he convinces Strepsiades not to worship the former Gods any longer. Agreeing to this, he is accepted to the teachings of Socrates and promised by the Chorus that he will become a skillful speaker/debater (*Cl.* 440-456; *Cl.* 467-475).

Yet, despite his efforts, Strepsiades fails the teachings. Following this failure, the Chorus leader, presumably Aristophanes, gives a speech about the current situation of Athens. The highlights of his speech are (1) his frustration about losing the contest the first time the *Clouds* was staged; he tells his wise (*σοφός*) spectators he always brings them new forms of humor, and he is upset that his efforts were not appreciated,[9] (2) his claim that his plays would lend the city the maximum help if the moral of his play were accepted, saying "there'll be a return to the good old days and you[Athenians]'ll find your [their] blunders have been reversed. The city's affairs will turn out fine; its future fortunes will be assured" (3) his grievance that the Athenians are no longer interested in the old deities and customs. To sum up,

[8] Not only Socrates but many thinkers in his time were charged with the same offense. The accusation was usually *asebeia*: "But the evidence is strong indeed that there were a whole series of prosecutions brought against philosophers and others at Athens in the second half of the fifth century B.C., usually on the charge of *Asebia* or Impiety. It is preserved not by one source but in many. The victims included most of the leaders of progressive thought at Athens, Anaxagoras, Diagoras, Socrates, Aspasia, Protagoras, and Euripides, though in his case it looks as if the prosecution was unsuccessful" (Kerferd, 1981 :21).

[9] The frequency of the usage of modifications of the word *σοφός* in this passage is high: *σοφός* (Cl. 520), *σοφώτατ* 522) *σοφοῖς* (526), *σοφοῖς* (535), *σώφρων* (537), *σοφίζομαι* (547). It is a rather strange coincidence – should it be deemed a coincidence at all– that in a play about the "sophists," Aristophanes' main speech contains many modifications of the word.

Aristophanes criticizes the crowd because, despite their so-called wisdom, they could not appreciate the main thrust of his plays, and he argues that once they do, everything will once again be as it was. To achieve this, one should renounce the new order and the new gods, and instead, embrace the old deities, beginning to reappreciate the old order.

Subsequently follows Socrates' scene, which is a compositionally brilliant idea, as Socrates immediately starts by invoking the new Gods, calling Strepsiades, the old-timer, a bumpkin (*ἀγροῖκος*) because he cannot comprehend his teachings. A back-and-forth ensues over the teaching, which cannot be thoroughly discussed here. Nonetheless, it highlights how Strepsiades is not fit for the teachings. For instance, Socrates attempts to teach him *ὀρθοέπεια* and *ὀρθῶς λέγειν* to enhance his success in speaking and arguing, yet Strepsiades does not understand why these teachings are essential at all; additionally, he is given some conundrums that he cannot solve. Consequently, Socrates gives up, and Strepsiades is advised to bring his son to Socrates. After a bit of dispute with his son, in which Strepsiades tries to embarrass his son with his new art, Pheidippides gives up and decides to go to the Institute, convinced that his father has lost his mind. He notes that his father will one day regret this decision (*Cl.* 866).

The play then introduces its first *agon*, a staged debate between two arguments personified: the strong and the weak (*Cl*. 890-1115). The stakes of the agon are clear: morality and tradition versus the expedient, unscrupulous techniques of the sophists. The weaker emerges victorious, to which "*ἠττήμεθ*" exclaims the moral argument, which literally means that he has become inferior, weaker, *ἥττων*. This is now the position of the stronger, moral argument in the eyes of the public: no longer is the moral argument stronger; it is the weak argument. Subsequently, the weaker argument, which proved to be the stronger argument, promises Strepsiades to give back his son as a sophist (*σοφιστήν*) (*Cl.* 1111).

When Pheidippides, transformed by the teaching, returns home, Strepsiades is initially filled with joy, for his son now exudes confidence; his expression is marked by his always denying (ἐξαιρετικός) stare, and he has the eagerness of a contradictor (*ἀντιλογικός*). His scowl jumps right out at someone asking, "what do you mean?" (*τί λέγεις σύ;*) (*Cl.* 1170-76). This is an amusing portrayal of a fifth-century sophist. He is described as someone who just looks like he might deny and contradict any claim. The phrase 'What do you mean?' refers to the teachings of the sophists at the time: *ὀρθῶς λέγειν, ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων/ὀρθοέπεια*, also hinted at and attributed to Socrates in the play. At first, by offering Strepsiades arguments that will relieve him from his creditors, Pheidippides helps him out. After all the creditors are swept out, the chorus sings:

> I think he's about to find the very thing
> He's long been seeking –
> A son resourceful enough
> To come up with ideas
> That contradict what's right *(ἐναντίας λέγειν τοῖς δικαίοις*)
> And can win every argument
> In which he's entangled
> No matter how wicked his words.
> But maybe just maybe he'll wish
> His son couldn't speak (*καφὸν εἶναι*) after all!

Here, the chorus conveys Strepsiades' contentment about his son's success. He can finally refute the right/just and counter any argument. Although it seems fine at first, this newfound skill very quickly turns against him when Strepsiades asks Pheidippides to recite some Aischylos, which the boy refuses, insisting on Euripides, whom he deems the "cleverest" (*σοφώτατος*) poet.[10] The disagreement escalates,

[10] This is also a significant contrast; it follows the earlier opposites: old/new, strong/weak, reputable/degenerate, value/debased, and now comes the Aischylos/Euripides opposite. One should compare this scene with one in the *Frogs,* where an agon between Aischylos and Euripides is displayed. It looks like the contest (this seems like a contest between the poet and the sophist) in *Frogs* is a projection of the second agon in the *Clouds*; here, Aristophanes once again compares the the poet's speech with the sophist's: we find Euripides nitpicking the lines written by Aischylos in a manner that is very similar to Protagoras' so-called analysis of poetry. Dionysus calls out Euripides "Come on then, speak. I really need to listen to the standards of diction your prologues exemplify" (*Fr.*1180-81). At the end of the play, when Dionysus, the judge of the agon, proclaims Aischylos as the winner, this goes to show that, according to Aristophanes, Aischylos, the representative of archaic order, would be more beneficial to Athens than Euripides, the decadent. For Aristophanes, Athens

culminating in Pheidippides physically assaulting his father. He justifies the act by arguing that if fathers beat their children for discipline, the sons should have the same rights when the fathers get older; that is to say, they can be beaten if they are not disciplined, a classic instance of sophistic reversal. Moreover, Pheidippides praises his new way of life, which shows contempt for traditional laws and customs and helps him justify beating his father (*Cl*. 1398-1400).[11] He agitates his father even more when he says, "What if despite my weaker position, I can still defeat you in argument and prove that my mother needs beating?" (*Cl*. 1446-1447). At this stage of the play, Strepsiades realizes the full consequences of the teaching he so eagerly sought for his son. He laments his folly, turning to the Clouds in frustration, only to receive a cold reply, "Whenever we see a person who's set his heart on nasty affairs. We lead him on till we land him in serious trouble, to make sure he learns to fear the gods in the future."

In despair, Strepsiades prays to Hermes for guidance (*Cl.* 1476ff). The god, however, offers a stark solution, not a lawsuit, where the sophists would surely triumph, but the absolute destruction of the institute. Strepsiades briskly follows the plan and burns down the institute; yet, as some scholars note, the ending remains ambiguous (Nussbaum, 1981, 78). Though the institute is burned, its influence might still persist, for Pheidippides and others like him are still around to spread the sophistic teachings. Aristophanes might have thought that the effects of the sophists would be eradicated to a certain extent through brute force. Yet, the sophists'

should return to the days of Aischylos if she ever wants to prosper again. "Now his intelligence can be seen, Aischylos is the one who'll go home bringing good to the citizens, bringing good, what's more, to his own kith and in and friends as well, all because he's astute in mind" (*Fr*. 1487-90) and "Depart then, Aischylos, farewell! Your task is now to preserve our city with good ideas. And educate the stupid folk - no shortage of them!" (*Fr.* 1500-3)

[11]After his teaching from Socrates and learning how to argue (regardless of right or wrong), he enjoys contradicting everything, up to such a point that he ends up beating his father to contradict the norm against father-beating. Barry S. Strauss claims that the representations of patricide, father-beating and son murdering in the ancient Greek literature was not really representations of actual instances. They functioned as cautionary tales about the intergenerational tensions caused by democracy, the sophists and the Peloponnesian War (Strauss, 1997). David Bahr phrases it simply and aptly, that according to Aristophanes, "philosophy [or *διαλέγεσθαι*] leads to father-beating" (2017).

presence lingers, perhaps awaiting a different kind of response. This time, the response is verbal rather than physical. How should we interpret the ending of this play? First, it is rather evident that Aristophanes is annoyed by the sophists and their teachings: the *Clouds* especially is an explicit example of misology being displayed, albeit *avant la lettre*. Aristophanes suggests that one way to resolve these misological tendencies is to "burn the sophists." Yet, this resolution is particularly dangerous for a philosophy to come, that is, Platonic philosophy. Since this is a pre-Platonic play, which basically means that the distinction between natural investigations, argumentation techniques and rhetoric has not been made yet, the burning of the sophists would imply the burning of the philosophers to come as well. This has already been the case with Socrates, as we well know. Thus, paradoxical as it may sound to our ears, philosophy, for Aristophanes, is sophistry. This is the case because simply there are no distinctions. That is why, if there are differences between Socrates and the sophists, between philosophy and sophistry these differences should be elaborated. This requires channeling the misological tendencies to sophistry. This way, Plato saves *διαλέγεσθαι* from confusion with its other pretenders by distinguishing philosophy from sophistry. The problem is clear, *διαλέγεσθαι* in the fifth century is understood as *ἐριστική*, so the sentiments of the people against *διαλέγεσθαι* as *ἐριστική* drive people away from the possibility of philosophy. This means that misology is an obstacle that philosophy must overcome in order to exist. Misology concerns the very conditions of philosophy. And *Euthydemus* is the first dialogue Plato explicitly shows that *διαλέγεσθαι* should not be reduced to *ἐριστική,* that there is an alternative way of arguing, debating, which could overcome misology.

Proposing an Alternative

In his appendix to *The Logic of Sense*, Gilles Deleuze suggests that Plato's theory of ideas should be understood as a will to select and to choose. According to Plato, the "thing" must be distinguished from its images, the original from the copy,

and the model from the simulacrum. Deleuze argues that Plato's method of division (*διαίρεσις*), which relies on this will to select and choose, does not merely divide a genus into species but instead functions as a screening to separate the pure from the impure, the authentic from the inauthentic (1990: 254). Thus, it is about selecting lineages and distinguishing pretenders. This interpretation casts Plato's dialectic as a rivalry of claimants (*ἀμφισβήτησις*). Recast for our concerns, dialectic is a means of discerning the true practitioner of *διαλέγεσθαι* from mere pretenders such as the contentious debaters (*ἐρισταί*) or the contradictors (*ἀντιλογικοί*).

This reading helps illuminate Plato's strategy in the *Euthydemus*. As Alexander Nehamas claims, Plato does not distinguish philosophy from sophistry merely through method but rather through their overall purpose. The sophists and philosophers may employ similar techniques, but their goals diverge fundamentally. The theory of Forms provides the philosophers with a particular goal; it allows the philosophers to claim that their opponents (particularly the sophists) are trapped in the world of appearance (Nehamas, 1990: 13). This is the way Plato distinguishes the pure from the impure, the authentic from the inauthentic. Again, he does not divide the genus *διαλέγεσθαι* to different species such as *ἐριστική*, *ἀντιλογική* and *διαλεκτική*. Instead, he picks out the ultimate form of *διαλέγεσθαι*, *διαλεκτική*. Put differently: *τὸ διαλέγεσθαι* is *διαλεκτική*. And what makes *διαλεκτική* pure is its purpose. The framework offered by Deleuze is helpful here; it helps us to situate *Euthydemus* as a dialogue that functions as Plato's response to Aristophanes' *Clouds*.[12] Both texts share a comedic structure, deriving humor from absurd arguments and verbal entanglements. Both are concerned with the teaching of the youth and the effects of *διαλέγεσθαι*. Yet, whereas Aristophanes does not distinguish Socrates from the sophists, Plato carefully constructs the distinction.

[12] The translator of the *Wasps* and the *Clouds* Benjamin Bickley Rogers claims that the *Euthydemus* is a revised version of the *Clouds* (Elliot, 1916: 256). Grewal, on the other hand, argues that *Euthydemus* is the reimagining of the *Clouds* (2002)

Some scholars compare the *Euthydemus* to the *Sophistical Refutations*, arguing that it is a systematic critique of fallacious arguments.[13] However, we find Socrates employing fallacious reasoning at some points, which makes this comparison questionable. Margaret McCabe rightly suggests that *Euthydemus* should instead be read as an exploration of the relationship between logic and the good life (McCabe, 1998: 166). Socrates, whose arguments are sincere and coherent, exemplifies the philosophical life. In contrast, the sophist brothers Euthydemus and Dionyosodorus – masters of contentious argumentation but not genuine wisdom – embody the enjoyment of contention; their arguments are neither sincere nor coherent; they just provide pleasure. Their arguments are the projection of a life of pleasure.

Aristophanes' *Clouds* portrays the degenerative effects of the newest teaching model, implicitly contrasting it with a purer, older form of teaching. While agreeing with the critique of the latest teaching model, Plato rejects this implicit nostalgia found in Aristophanes. *Euthydemus* critiques the new teaching, yet it does not argue for a return to the past. Instead, it presents a new teaching model distinct from both the old and the new. The misological tendencies of Aristophanes are manifested through the burning of the institute; Plato, on the other hand, replaces one intellectual framework with another. What is at stake for Plato is the equation of good argument with the good life.

Socratic Protreptic versus Sophistic Eristic

The dialogue opens with Crito saying he saw Socrates speaking with two strangers at the *Lyceum* but could not hear the discussion they were having due to the crowd. He asks Socrates to recount the story of the encounter. As it turns out, the discussion centered on the education of the youth, a theme central to the *Clouds* as well. Crito's son is of schooling age; coincidentally, Euthydemus and

[13] For instance, Rosamond Kent Spargue maintains Plato in numerous dialogues exposes fallacies, and the first dialogue he focuses on is the *Euthydemus* (1962).

Dionysodorus are a type of new sophists who offer teaching. Intrigued by what they teach, he asks what they specialize in, to which Socrates ironically responds that they know everything. He explains that their expertise is not limited to physical combat but extends to verbal combat, that is, the ability to "wrestle using words" and refute any argument, whether true or false (*Euthd*. 272a). However, the brothers claim that this is not their primary expertise anymore; they are now concerned with philosophy and virtue (*φιλοσοφίαν καὶ ἀρετήν*) (275a).

Cleinias, a young man present in the discussion, becomes the subject of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus' teaching. A series of eristic and protreptic scenes follow, each illustrating different modes of argumentation (Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, 2014: 9). The sophists demonstrate their ability to refute any claim, deploying paradoxes, linguistic ambiguities, and logical traps. However, we will not delve into the details of all the scenes, as it would require a space much larger than the one allowed for a paper.[14] Instead, we will confine ourselves to comparing the scenes with themes picked from the *Clouds*.

In the first eristic scene, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus ask Cleinias whether it is the wise or ignorant who learn. Whatever Cleinias answers, he will be refuted by one of the brothers, a situation which Plato depicts as follows: "Dionysodorus leaned over a little to me, with a broad smile on his face, and whispered in my ear: Let me tell you, Socrates, beforehand that, whichever way the lad answers, he will be refuted (*ἐξελεγχθήσεται*)" (*Euthd*. 275e). In this scene, for instance, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus will refute Cleinias, whatever he answers, because he is not trained to distinguish the two senses of the word *μανθάνω*, which may mean "to know" or "to understand" depending on the context. For instance, when he answers, "it is the wise who learn," Euthydemus takes the word to mean 'to learn,' so the conclusion is: it is the ignorant who learn. Yet, when he answers, "it is the ignorant

[14] See (Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, 2014), for a detailed analysis of each scene.

who learn," Dionysodorus takes the word to mean 'to understand' therefore, the correct answer becomes: it is the wise who learn. This is an instance of Socrates' earlier claim to Crito that the brothers "refute (*ἐξελέγχειν*) any argument as readily if it be true as if it be false (*ὅμοιον ἐάν τε ψεῦδος ἐάν τε ἀληθές ᾖ*)" (272b). Of course, this is a clear nod to the teaching Strepsiades attributes to Socrates. By reattributing this skill to the sophists, Plato acquits Socrates of the accusation.[15]

Then comes another response to the *Clouds*; after seeing Cleinias defeated and refuted, Socrates adopts a different pedagogical approach, saying that Euthydemus and Dionysodorus are trained in the correct use of words (*ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος*), which we have seen was attributed to Socrates in the play, that to escape their traps Cleinias has to realize "to learn" (*μανθάνειν*) may sometimes mean "to understand." This also refers to the *Clouds* (558-680), where Socrates teaches Strepsiades the intricacies of language, both *ὀρθοέπεια* and *ὀρθῶς λέγειν*. Rather than humiliating Cleinias, Socrates attempts to guide him gently toward wisdom. He warns him to be wary of linguistic tricks and highlights the difference between sophistry based on linguistic tricks and genuine philosophical inquiry. This is significant, as the *Clouds* had depicted Socrates as obsessed with precise linguistic distinctions. This is now a parody that Plato redirects toward the sophists.

In the second eristic, after Socrates asks them how Cleinias might become wise, the sophists begin to (ab)use the Parmenidean framework. Dionysodorus tells them that wanting Cleinias to be wise amounts to wanting to kill him, to which Ctesippus (Cleinias' alleged lover) objects by saying that Dionyosodorus is lying. Dionyosodorus, following the Parmenidean equation of 'being=thinking=saying,' argues that one cannot say that which is not since saying is always saying something that is. Therefore, lying – defined as saying something that is not – is impossible. As the discussion becomes heated, Socrates intervenes, saying that if they can destroy

[15] This reattribution makes it seem like the two brothers are concerned with turning philosophy into a science of argumentation (Scolnicov, 1982: 20).

someone in their wickedness and then set them up again in honesty, he will agree with their procedures (*Euthd*. 285b). Socrates, then, tells them he will not mind being destroyed if, in the end, it makes him good. Following Socrates, Ctesippus says he is ready for this as well, then states that he is not vexed with Dionysodorus for the earlier altercation, as he only meant to contradict (*ἀντιλέγειν*) him. The sophists object to this claim of contradiction by saying there is no contradiction (*οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντιλέγειν*). Dionysodorus argues that when something is said, it is always said of something. Therefore, even though the two statements seem to be opposed to each other, they are, in fact, not opposed to each other because every statement is of its particular thing. As a result, contradiction is just an illusion. Socrates associates this principle with the no falsehood principle, which he then attributes to the followers of Protagoras, claiming at the same time that this makes the sophists' teaching futile, for if there is no falsehood, from this follows that no one can be said to be ignorant.[16] This principle implies there are no mistakes or ignorance, which would make their teaching useless. Hence, if there is no falsehood, the teachings of the sophists would not be about anything, for everyone would be right in their unique way.

By the end of their discussion, Ctesippus becomes an *ἐριστικός*, yet, to Crito's amusement, at the end of the dialogue, Cleinias becomes wiser than he was when they first started. Surely, Cleinias has not become *διαλεκτικός*. Just that he appears closer to being one than Ctesippus. Thus, the dialogue implies, arguing with Euthydemus and Dionysodoros on their terms made Ctesippus more hostile and unwise. Cleinias, on the other hand, has become more patient and mature after his discussion with Socrates. What is distinctive about Socrates' method is that it does not solely rely on refuting Cleinias' claims; instead, Socrates wants to grow wiser together. Thus, the encounter between Socrates and his interlocutors is not an asymmetric encounter, which shows Socrates' intentions are unlike the intentions

[16] See (Denyer, 2018), for a book that focuses on the problem of falsehood in Ancient Greece. The second chapter focuses particularly on the *Euthydemus*.

attributed to him by Aristophanes: Socrates teaches how to argue correctly and proceed properly, making his interlocutors wiser and more honest. The lesson is clear: it is *the* sophists who cultivate misology – the very mistrust of argument that Plato later addresses in the *Phaedo*.

The Shady Misologue

At the end of the dialogue, Crito tells Socrates that someone approached him when the discussion Socrates and the sophists ended. Although it is sometimes claimed that this person is Isocrates, the shady description of this person merits a different interpretation. This shady person claims that he is disturbed by the discussion between Socrates and the sophists, that he finds it ridiculous, and it is a babble that gives vain labor to vain things. His views parallel those of Callicles in the *Gorgias*.[17] Both find philosophy worthless, especially when practiced by an older man, because they understand philosophy only as contentious debate (*ἐριστική*). The shady person in the *Euthydemus* thinks it is shameful to debate in front of people in such a way, and Crito agrees with this sentiment.

Socrates describes this person as a prohibitionist of philosophy (*μεμφόμενος τὴν φιλοσοφίαν*). These people, he argues, alienate people from philosophy. They reduce philosophy to mere contention, conflating philosophy with sophistry, precisely as we have seen in Aristophanes' plays. To an outsider, *διαλεκτική* and *ἐριστική* seem similar; what is more, even an insider might be – whether willingly or unwillingly – confused. Just like Euthydemus and Dionysodoros are confused, when they claim to be philosophizing, when they are actually merely contentiously

[17] "[Callicles:] To partake of as much philosophy as your education requires is an admirable thing, and it's not shameful to practice philosophy while you're a boy, but when you still do it after you've grown older and become a man, the things get to be ridiculous, Socrates! My own reaction to men who philosophize is very much like that to men who speak haltingly and play like children [...] Now, I react in the same way to men who engage in philosophy, too. When I see philosophy in a young boy, I approve of it; I think it's appropriate and consider such a person well-bred, whereas I consider who doesn't engage in philosophy ill-bred, one who'll never count himself deserving of any admirable or noble thing. But when I see an older man still engaging in philosophy and not giving up, I think such a man by this time needs a flogging" (*Gorg*. 485b-e).

debating. Put differently, many claim to philosophize, yet what they are doing instead is engaging in fallacious argumentation and refutation. That is why these pretenders should be screened, not always for their formal technique but also for their overall purposes. Consequently, it is the *ἐρισταί* who produce misologues such as the shady person, approaching Crito, while *ὁ διαλεκτικός* will find a way to overcome misology.[18] The hostility of the misologue stems from their ignorance about philosophy. This is the result of a failure to distinguish genuine philosophy from vain contentious debate.

Hence, according to Plato, ignorance about philosophy is the root of misology. And misology causes an enormous risk: those who confuse philosophy with sophistry – whether out of ignorance or malice – ultimately turn against both. This risk makes philosophy impossible, as doing philosophy involves facing death. In this reading, Aristophanes rejects philosophy altogether due to his inability to distinguish Socrates from the sophists. Plato's response throughout his *oeuvre* is to make the distinction explicit. That is why, in *Phaedo*, he will go further by arguing that misology is a disease that must be cured by philosophy.

Overcoming Misology

However, the *ἐριστικός* is not the only threat to philosophy. There is another, more fatal threat called the *ἀντιλογικός*, who is as much, perhaps even more, responsible for what Plato diagnoses as misology. While the *Euthydemus* exposes the dangers of *ἐριστική* in terms of people's ambivalence towards philosophy, *Phaedo* provides Plato's most direct engagement with misology. The term first appears – if one overlooks the usage found in *Laches* – in a passage where Socrates warns against falling into misology, describing it as a condition analogous to

[18] As Charles Kahn beautifully summarizes the dialogue "At the simplest level, the *Euthydemus* is a warning. Watch out! The method of question-and-answer can be abused. Don't confuse the Socratic elenchus, which in the *Meno* represents the preamble and prerequisite to constructive learning, with the unscrupulous art of refutation played as a game" (Kahn, 1999: 324)

misanthropy (*Phd*. 89d). This passage is particularly significant because it marks the first explicit articulation of misology in Plato's works, framing it not merely a philosophical problem which concerns the conditions of its possibility but also a psychological problem which concerns the conditions of trust (*πίστις*) as such.

Socrates introduces the term misology during a discussion about the immortality of the soul. After presenting an argument favoring the immortality of the soul, he is met with a strong counterargument from Simmias and Cebes (*Phd*, 84c-88b).[19] Their objections turn out to be persuasive for the audience of the discussion, i.e., Phaedo and the others. Phaedo recounts that they felt disturbed and uncomfortable by the objections, because they shifted from being very certain to uncertain, almost at one stroke. This abrupt shift in certainty unsettles them, making them feel incapable of serving as proper judges in this discussion (*Phd*, 88c). At this crucial moment, Socrates warns them about the dangers of misology:

> It is as when one who lacks skill in arguments puts his trust in an argument as being true, then shortly afterward believes it to be false - as sometimes it is and sometimes it is not - and so with another argument and then another. You know how *those* in particular *who spend their time studying contradiction* (*ἀντιλογικοὺς λόγους*) in the end believe themselves to have become *the wisest* (*σοφώτατοι*), and they alone have understood that there is no soundness or reliability in any object or in any argument, but that is all that exists simply fluctuates up and down as if it were in the Euripus and does not remain in the same place for any time at all (*Phd*, 90b-d, emphasis mine).

Here, Plato explicitly associates the *ἀντιλογικοί*[20] with the wise (using the phrase *σοφώτατοι*) in a manner very similar to Aristophanes, ironically. Through their relentless use of contradiction and refutation, the sophists create a state of

[19] Before the objections of Simmias and Cebes, Socrates offers three preliminary arguments for the immortality of the soul: (1) the cyclical argument (70c-72e) (2) the argument from recollection (72e-78b) and (3) the affinity argument (78b-84b). These arguments are challenged by Simmias who likens the soul to a harmony dependent on the body (85e-86d), and by Cebes, who concedes the soul's pre-existence but questions its capacity to survive all deaths, comparing it to a weaver who outlives many cloaks but eventually perishes (86e-88b).

[20] "Socrates' disparaging reference at 90b9-cl to those who deal in opposed arguments (the 'contradiction mongers,' *antilogikoi*) makes it clear that a principal source of the problem of misology is exposure (for one who is not properly prepared) to successive arguments for and against a given position. It is not implausible that over time this might engender skepticism about finding, or even about there being, determinate truth" (Woolf, 2008: 3).

mind where people begin to distrust argumentation itself. Those exposed to this method become trapped in a cycle of skepticism, mistaking intellectual instability for wisdom.

Several scholars have interpreted this passage as suggesting that misology is a pathology of the soul (Delcomminette, 2018; Ricciardone, 2019). Repeated disappointment in people causes a person to withdraw from human relationships (misanthropy). Misology functions similarly; that is, repeated disappointment in arguments can lead to withdrawal from philosophy. For this reason, Plato demonstrates how philosophy differs from the impure and faulty way of argumentation. To cure "the disease of misology, or the despair of truth caused by repeated exposure to opposing views" (Ricciardone, 2019: 1). As Delcomminette puts it, people hate philosophy and argumentation because they only ever encounter it in unworthy hands (Delcomminette, 2018: 31). Aristophanes, then, is a misologue because of a confusion. His rejection of philosophy is not a rejection of Socratic dialectic *per se* but of what he perceives as philosophy – this is due to his inability to distinguish philosophy from sophistry. He is among those who, having encountered only false pretenders to wisdom, assume that all claims to wisdom are fraudulent. Thus, Plato's challenge is not merely to refute sophistry but to differentiate it from philosophy so that philosophy itself does not fall into disrepute.

Plato proposes a dual strategy to overcome misology: (1) distinguishing dialectic from sophistry and (2) rebuilding trust in argumentation. For the first strategy, in the *Euthydemus,* he reclaims argumentation (*διαλέγεσθαι*) by showing how *διαλεκτική* fosters wisdom. In contrast, *ἐριστική* leads only to confusion (in the case of Cleinias) and aggression (in the case of Ctesippus). (2) In the *Phaedo*, he argues that philosophy must actively defend itself against misology by reinforcing trust in inquiry. Socrates urges his listeners to reconsider their approach to the arguments. We should not assume that arguments have nothing sound about them. Instead of considering that the arguments are not sound in themselves, we should

take courage and be eager to attain soundness in ourselves. The first step is building trust in the notion that arguments can be sound.

Trust is the ultimate condition of possibility of philosophy. As Miller notes, the sophists do not understand the soul's need for trust. He argues that Socrates' advice to trust (trust in the sense of *πίστις*) arguments is also a psychological move. Although Socrates cannot prove the immortality of the soul, he can still "offer an argument for the immortality of the soul that will supply trust" (Miller, 2015: 157). The depressing *aporiai* caused by the opposing arguments (*δισσοὶ λόγοι*) can only be solved by arguments that supply trust. Yet, ironically, the argumentative expertise of the sophists does the exact opposite of what their rhetorical expertise claims to do, which is to create trust. When the sophists use antilogical arguments, they "abuse them in order to sow universal mistrust" (Miller, 2015: 152). Thus, Miller accuses the sophists of overlooking the importance of trust for the human soul, and this is how Socrates cures the problem:

> This is the first thing we should guard against. We should not allow into our minds the conviction that argumentation has nothing sound about it; much rather, we should believe that it is we who are not yet sound and that we must take courage and be eager to attain soundness, you and the other for the sake of your whole life to come, and I for the sake of death itself (*Phd*. 91a).

Plato thus presents philosophy as the antidote to misology, rather than its cause. While Aristophanes responded to the sophist's teachings by burning the institute, Plato offers a more profound structural solution: distinguishing philosophy from sophistry, reinforcing argumentation's intellectual and psychological foundation by supplying trust in soundness.

The Apology of Philosophy

However, there is another side to arguments, a side that is rarely pointed out. At the end of the seventh book of *Politeia*, Socrates points his finger at young people who, once they "get their first taste of argument, they misuse it as if it were playing a game (*παιδιᾷ*), always using it for disputation (*ἀντιλογίαν*). They imitate those who have refuted them by refuting others themselves, and, like puppies, enjoy

dragging and tearing with argument anyone within reach" (Pol. 539b). The objection against reducing argumentation to a game here is crucial. Plato thinks that argumentation should be used for higher purposes. Following Plato's teleology found in the *Timaeus* (46e-47c), which defines the true purpose of a thing not in its basic daily use but in the highest good it can provide, David Sedley claims that according to Plato the true highest good of speech is philosophy (Sedley, 2003: 62). This is another way of saying that the *telos* of speech is philosophy. Accordingly, the philosopher should be careful about the (mis)usage of speech. Speech should be directed to its highest purpose by the intervention of the philosopher.

Considering this insight, it is not surprising that Socrates finds bad uses of speech problematic. And what is more worrying about argumentation is that when people win arguments and/or refute someone's position, it brings them a certain kind of enjoyment. For Plato, there is something somewhat worrisome about this enjoyment, as Socrates puts it, "when they have refuted many themselves and been refuted by many, they quickly fall into violently disbelieving everything they believed before. And as a result of this, they themselves and the whole of philosophy as well are discredited (*διαβέβληνται*, often translated as "slandered") in the eyes of others" (*Pol*. 539c). The use of "*διαβέβληνται"* merits our interest, especially considering its later usages. Diablo, diabolical, and devil are all derived from this word, particularly from the words *διαβάλλω*, *διάβολος*. To make use of this affinity rhetorically, one can say there is something diabolical with these people, for they turn philosophy itself into a *diabolical* enterprise, something to be slandered.

Consequently, Plato tells us philosophy is slandered because of the bastards (*νόθους*) that have taken it up. It is up to the legitimate (*γνήσιος*) to save the honor of philosophy (*Pol*. 535c), a view similar to Deleuze's: he argues that Plato's philosophy is an attempt to distinguish the pure from the impure. Therefore, arguments should not be pursued for enjoyment. Instead, their potential should be redirected to the truth. Contrary to young people who reduce arguments to a game,

who enjoy refuting for the sake of refuting, an older person would not do this, they would instead "look for the truth, rather than someone who plays at disputation (*ἀντιλέγοντα*) as a game. He will be more moderate himself and will bring honor, rather than discredit, to the practice" (*Pol*. 539c). As the Neoplatonist Proclus later notes, arguing on both sides or disputation is only one kind of dialectic activity, and it is, by no means, the only kind of dialectical activity. Two additional dialectical activities are more worthy: expounding truth and exposing error. Expounding truth is the highest form of dialectic, "that which reveals the truth in its purity" (Proclus, 1992: 654-655). In pursuit of this kind of dialectical activity, Plato attempts to preserve the honor of philosophy.

Accordingly, Plato's response to the *Clouds* is not merely a defense of Socrates but a redefinition of philosophy itself; he attempts to save the honor of philosophy. By saving Socrates, Plato saves philosophy. Whereas Aristophanes implies that *διαλέγεσθαι* is a technique that fosters misological tendencies, Plato argues that only corrupted aims of argumentation give rise to misology. *Διαλεκτική*, properly practiced, does not erode trust; on the contrary, it builds it.

Plato's treatment of misology, then, is twofold: (1) to expose and reject *ἐριστική* and *ἀντιλογική* by showing how they generate distress and discomfort in the soul and (2) to redefine philosophy, establishing it as a form of inquiry that fosters the will to continue inquiry. By the end of the *Phaedo*, misology has been diagnosed and treated. Although Socrates does not claim to have proved the immortality of the soul beyond all doubt, he nonetheless demonstrates how and why philosophical inquiry should continue despite uncertainty. This is Plato's answer to Aristophanes and all the misologues: philosophy does not lead to misology; if anything, it is our only way out of it.

KAYNAKÇA | REFERENCES

Aristophanes. (2016). "Clouds." In *Frogs and Other Plays*, translated by Stephen Halliwell. Oxford: Oxford.

Aristophanes. (2016). "Frogs." In *Frogs and Other Plays*, translated by Stephen Halliwell. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Aristotle. (1995). "Rhetoric". In *Complete Works of Aristotle Volume Two*, translated by W. Rhys Roberts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bahr, D. (2017). *Philosophy leads to father-beating, or why all parents should read Aristophanes' Clouds*. Forbes.

Bonazzi, M. (2020). *The Sophists*. New Surveys in the Classics, no. 45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Delcomminette, S. (2018). "Plato on Hatred of Philosophy." *The Review of Metaphysics* 72 (1): 29–51. doi:10.1353/rvm.2018.0003.

Deleuze, G. (1990). *The Logic of Sense*. Edited by Constantin V. Boundas. Translated by Mark Lester and Charles Stivale. New York: Columbia University Press.

Denyer, N. (1991). *Language, Thought and Falsehood in Ancient Greek Philosophy*. New York: Routledge.

Detienne, M. (1996). "The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece, Trans." *J. Lloyd. New York: Zone Books*.

Elliott, R. T. (1916). The Wasps and Clouds of Aristophanes [Review of *The Wasps of Aristophanes and The Clouds of Aristophanes*, by B. B. Rogers]. *The Classical Review*, *30*(8), 225–227. http://www.jstor.org/stable/697619

Gagarin, M. (2002). *Antiphon The Athenian*. Austin: University of Texas.

Grewal, G. (2022). A Note on Plato's Euthydemus 304b. *Poetic (Mis)quotations in Plato*. *Classics@*. 22.

Kahn, C. (1996). *Plato and The Socratic Dialogue: The Philosophical Use of a Literary Form*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kerferd, G. B. (1981). *The Sophistic Movement.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCabe, M. M. (1998). "Silencing The Sophists: The Drama of Euthydemus." *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium of Ancient Philosophy* 14 (1): 139–68.

Miller, T. (2015) "Socrates' Warning Against Misology (Plato, Phaedo 88c-91c)." *Phronesis* 60 (2): 145–79. doi:10.1163/15685284-12341282.

Nehamas, A. (1990). Eristic, Antilogic, Sophistic, Dialectic: Plato's Demarcation of Philosophy from Sophistry. *History of Philosophy Quarterly*. 7(1). 3-16.

Notomi, N. (2022). Socrates and the Sophists: Reconsidering the History of Criticisms of the Sophists. *Humanities*, 11(6), 153. https://doi.org/10.3390/h11060153

Nussbaum, M. (1981). "Aristophanes and Socrates on Learning Practical Wisdom." In *Aristophanes: Essays in Interpretation*, edited by Jeffrey Henderson, 43–98. Yale Classical Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511933752.003.

O'Regan, E. D. (1992). *Rhetoric, Comedy, and the Violence of Language in Aristophanes' Clouds*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pisano, L. (2019). The Disappearance of Presence: On Heidegger's Paths for a "Magical" Hermeneutics of Medium and Truth. *Sens public*.

Plato. (1997). "Euthydemus." In *Plato Complete Works*, translated by Rosamond Kent Sprague. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Plato. (1997). "Phaedo." In *Complete Works Plato*, translated by G.M.A Grube. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Plato. (1997). "Gorgias." In *Plato Complete Works*, translated by Donald J. Zeyl. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Plato. (2004). *Republic*, translated by C. D. C. Reeve, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

Proclus. (1992). *Proclus' Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*. Translated by Glenn R. Morrow and John M. Dillon. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Ricciardone, C. T. (2019). "What Is the Meaning of Socrates' Last Words?: A Multifaceted Approach." *Ancient Philosophy* 39 (2): 267–93. doi:10.5840/ancientphil201939218.

Robson, J. (2013). *Aristophanes: An Introduction*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Scolnicov, S. (1982). Plato's Euthydemus: A study on the relations between logic and education. *Scripta Classica Israelica*. (6).19–29.

Sedley, D. (2003). *Plato's Cratylus*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, G. (2014). *Playful Philosophy and Serious Sophistry: A Reading of Plato's* Euthydemus. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Spargue, R. K. (1962). *Plato's Use of Fallacy: A Study of the Euthydemus and Some Other Dialogues*. New York: Routledge.

Strauss, B. S. (1997). *Fathers and Sons in Athens: Ideology and Society in the Era of the Peloponnesian War*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Vernant, Jean-Pierre. (1984). *The Origins of Greek Thought*. Cornell University Press.

Timmerman, D. & Schiappa E. (2010). *Classical Greek Rhetorical Theory and the Disciplining of Discourse*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

Woolf, Raphael. (2008). "Misology and Truth." *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* 23 (1): 1–24. doi:10.1163/22134417-90000089.