

On the Prelude to the *Timaeus*, and the Atlantis-Story

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Resumen: Este ensayo considera la falta de éxito en el esfuerzo de presentar al diálogo *Timeo* como secuela de la *República* de Platón. Se examina la versión del cuento de Atlantis que se encuentra en el *Timeo*. El resumen "literalista" del estado descrito en el discurso de "ayer". La versión de la primera parte del cuento de Atlantis que se ofrece en el *Kritias*. Prosa inepta en el prelude del *Timeo*. La captación de Solón para propósitos oligarquistas. Examen del prelude antecosmogónico del *Timeo*. Las señas de que el *Kritias* es un cuento para instruir a los niños sobre la fundación de la ciudad. La ideología que inspira al *Kritias*.

Abstract: Does the *Timaeus* Identify Itself as a Sequel to the *Republic*? The *Timaeus* Version of the Atlantis Story. The Literalist Summary of "[Yesterday's"] State, & the Illusionism of 'Xithes'. The *Kritias* Version of the First Part of the Atlantis Story. Clumsy Prose in the Prelude to the *Timaeus*. Co-opting Solon for Oligarchy. Scrutinizing the Ante-Cosmogonic Part of the *Timaeus*. Signs that the *Kritias* is a Children's Foundation-Story. The ideology behind the *Kritias*. Appendix of Key Words.

(i) A Narrative Wreath to Celebrate the Festival of an Unnamed Goddess

In the dramatic fiction of the *Timaeus* Sokrates has, "on the day before," told his friends about a previous conversation he once held on the subject of the constitution. The clauses "My yesterday's discourse was mainly about the sort of constitution and the kind of men which seemed to me to make it the best (ἀρίστη 17c1-3); and "when you requested me yesterday to go over my views of the constitution (20b)," tell us that the Sokrates in this dialogue discussed the constitution in summary form *χθές* Timaios adds that what he said about it was approved by all.

But it is a big leap from here to the assumption, unbridged by any text—except for the iteration at 19a6-10—that this discourse was a summary of Sokrates' extended construction in the *Republic*, given that all that these lines affirm is: "Such indeed was said, Sokrates." For one thing, Timaios, from distant Lokri, was not present at Sokrates' conversation about the constitution with the Kephhalidai in Piraeus; so how can he be a witness to its accuracy as a summary of what it claimed to be a summary of? For another, if what is said between 17c6 and 19b is a rehearsal of that summary, it is neither to scale in *scope*, nor isomorphic in *content* with the discourse in Plato's *Republic*, even though Timaios 'confirms' that 17c-19b has left nothing out. Still less is the summary consonant with

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the *sardonic tone* in which Sokrates had developed his ironic portrait of the ideal state, the *μαλιστα εἴη κατ' εὐχὴν πολιτεία* (*Rep.* 450d2, 540d2; *Aris. Pol.* 1288b25).

The difference in scope and content are enough to make it impossible for the summary to be of Sokrates' extended fabulation in the *Republic* of the remedial constitution needed to turn the fevered (*φλεγμαινουσα* 372e10) city into the Ideal State: the "wished-for" ... "not altogether utopian *politeia* ." As P. Friedlander says, "nobody any longer ... believe[s] that Plato is here recapitulating an original version of the *Republic* ... the state sketched here would have preserved the machinery of the ideal state without its soul."¹ Incongruent as it is with the political content and entertaining intellectuality of Plato's *Republic* , the summary given here is nonetheless *designed to be taken* as a straight summary of Sokrates' discourse on the constitution in *that work*.

Its purpose would seem to have been two-fold. It provides a dogmatic, Academic or *platonizing* interpretation of Plato's implicitly skeptical work; this is the interpretation that captures *Republic* for doctrinal-systematic use by platonizing idealists such as Speusippos and his successors. Secondly, it announces and prepares for the addition of sequels to the *Timaeus* , sequels that would further reinforce the oligarchist-idealist components of the Ideal State taken literally as a utopia rather than a counter-utopia. The experiment that makes the *Kritias* a sequel to the *Timaeus* is more successful than that which tries to make the *Timaeus* a sequel to the *Republic* . The first succeeds as much as it does because the *Kritias* is composed from its beginning –as I will show– to be a continuation of the *Timaeus* . The problem is, it gives too much evidence of not having been composed by Plato.

The fiction in the *Kritias* is that Sokrates, on the day before today's meeting and Goddess-festival, has told his friends Timaios, Hermocrates and Kritias about a *previous* conversation he once held on the subject of the constitution. But even if we assume that the reference of these words is to the political discussion in *Republic* , this *previous* occasion –except for the detail that it was on the Bendidea– is itself undated and unlocatable in fictional biographic or dramatic time. The situation is worse if we take the reference to be, not to the discourse *within* the *Republic* , but to the complete *Republic* as the narrated dialogue which it is, and which is therefore already a report of what happened to Sokrates and the Kephallidai on the Bendidea "the day before"(!).

So, even if that previous conversation about the state was his discourse inside the *Republic* , then the *previous* occasion mentioned yesterday is *not this year's* Bendidea. Today's rehearsal of it in *Timaeus* , then, is of yesterday's summary of an undatable discourse that took place on a given unfixed Bendidea. "Today," then is not fixable either, by any reference to the festival-day on which the discussion in *Republic* occurred.

Kritias does note at 21a, as Sokrates also does at 24e3, that *today* is a festival of the Athenian Goddess. The meeting-day of Timaios, Hermocrates, and Kritias in the *Timaeus* is indeed one day after *this* festival. But this festival is not the Bendidea, as Proclus mistakenly suggested. Bury's note to his translation of the Zurich text of *Timaeus* says that the festival is "the Lesser Panathenaea, held early in June, just after (*sic*) the Bendidea." Archer-Hind also thinks the reference is to the Lesser Panathenaea; and they fell two months later, like the Greater Panathenaea, around the 26 to 28 of Hekatombaion. So Proclus is wrong in claiming that the *Timaeus* takes place on the day following the Bendidea. Festugière believes Proclus has confused the Lesser Panathenaea with the festival of Athena called Plynterion which was on the 25th of Thargelion.² But all this does is reduce the dis-

1 *Plato* 3 vols. Tr. H. Meyerhoff (Princeton U.P. 1969; v.3, p. 356f.

2 Respectively, Archer-Hind's *The Timaeus* , p. 66 ad.loc.; and Proclus, *Commentaire sur le Timée*, Tr. & Notes A. J. Festugière (Vrin 1966); p.55.

crepancy some four-to-nine days. So the claim that the conversation of 'the day before' was the one Sokrates conducted with the Kephalidai in Piraeus is not supported by the text after all.

To put it in another way: the discourse in *Republic* –if it is to be in reference– would have to be 'yesterday's' story potentiated, the yesterday of a 'yesterday,' since it is a narrated dialogue about what happened 'yesterday.' So 'yesterday's discussion' in dramatic real time could have been any discussion of the Ideal State. If it was yesterday's discussion of the state discussed on the *Republic's* main speaker's "yesterday," wouldn't the phrasing have been 'yesterday's discussion' of the state discussed by you on "a yesterday," namely, on the eve of the Bendidea. In other words, the text of the *Timaeus* does *not, of itself, connect* it dramatically to the *Republic* as a sequel to it. So much for the literalist summary of Yesterday's State.

We now take a closer look at the author's *illusionist* use of "xthes." Kritias promises that his descriptions will transport the city "fabled" (26c10) yesterday by Sokrates into the realm of truth (ἐπὶ τὰ ληθῆς) by imagining that those ancient Athenians of the elder Kritias are their ancestors and that the Best State will be, by deliberate selection (27b1), populated by them.

We notice at once that this promise rakes in Solon as a supporter of the Ideal Polis (27b2): He "makes them citizens of this state of ours ... according to the account and law of Solon" (κατὰ δὴ τὸν Σόλωνος λόγον τε καὶ νόμον) –Among adult auditors, those who were themselves oligarchs would refrain from objection; but any who, like Solon himself, were devotees of 'the ancestral constitution' (ἡ πατριος πολιτεία) would soon have objected.³ Kritias claims that the existence and Athenian citizenship of these forgotten mythical men is legitimated by "the declaration of the sacred writings" (27b5). Since citizenship was a jealously guarded status in classical Athens, adult readers could not have helped noticing that here it is granted on the basis of *Egyptian documents of impossible age*.

Not only has Solon been co-opted for oligarchism by Kritias who will, in his own dialogue, be offering a mythicized defense of that political orientation, but he will also be indirectly enforcing an oligarchist *interpretation* of the *Republic*, and a neoplatonist one of the *Timaeus*. Kritias naturally claims to have documents proving the Solonic nature of his version of the state, "these very writings" from my grandfather "are actually now mine" (ταῦτα γὰρ δὴ τὰ γράμματα, 113b1). –This claim, we note, avoids establishing that the discussants are meeting at Kritias's house; for, if they were, he would have had to show them to his guests.

We review the way the impression of connection arises among *Republic*, *Timaeus*, and *Kritias*. In the last, Kritias describes how the μάχιμον the purely military class, lived apart from the other classes in the ancient God-governed territory that became Athens –seemingly because of the presence of divine heres (ἀνθρώπων θείων, 110c) in that class.⁴ This class had only shared property, "and from the other citizens they claimed to receive nothing (οὐδὲν ἀξιούντες) but a sufficient sustenan-

3 Solon, of course was the father or grandfather of the Ancestral Constitution, and the legislator who "put an end to unlimited oligarchy (ὀλιγαρχίαν καταλύσαι ἢ ἀκρατον), emancipated the people, established the hereditary democracy (δημοκρατίαν ... τὴν πατριον) and harmonized the different elements of the state" (μὲλαντα ... καλῶς, *Aris. Polit.*ii.1273b35ff.).

4 *Máchimon*, we note, is used twice in *Timaeus* (24b1, 25d2), and twice in the *Kritias* (110c5, 112b3). In the *Republic* it is used just once (III.386c1, in the dat.plur.), and only *before* the specifics about the warriors' education have been introduced. But where the two standard words for the military class in *Republic* were *phúlakes* for 'guardians' and *epíkouroi* for 'auxiliaries,' the former occurs in the *Kritias* only at 110d5 and 112d4, the latter not at all. 'Guardians' is used at *Timaeus* 18a3, 17d3 and, with a different meaning, at 40c1.

ce. And they practiced all those practices mentioned yesterday (τὰ χθὲρ λεχθέντα) for the proposed (ὑποτεθέντων) guardians then described (ἐρρήθη).” So let us look, from another angle, to see whether yesterday’s summary model for Kritias’s proposed state can really be pinned down in dramatic real time as a summary of the one fabled forth in *Republic*.

Here at *Kritias* 110d3 ‘yesterday’ has to refer to Sokrates’ summary at the beginning of the *Timaeus*, from 17c6 to 19b—offered, he says at 20b3, “eagerly to gratify” (προθύμως ἐχαριζόμεν) Kritias the oligarch and Timaios the Pythagorean. To two such personages, naturally, only a pythagorizing oligarchy would be so gratifying; and this is what the summary gives them. “For,” Sokrates adds, “you alone among the living, after getting our city into a suitable war, are able to confer on her all befitting qualities”—war being, naturally, the rationale for militarization, and militarization the excuse for concentrating power in one person or a few.

—We pause to register that this one, at 110d3, is the only occurrence of *xthes* in the *Kritias*. It is important because it refers back to the uses of *xthes* at *Timaeus* 19a7 and 20b2 where Sokrates first refers to then rehearses his ‘speech of yesterday.’ The, 15 lines down, Hermocrates interposes that “also yesterday” at Kritias’s house (20c7) “right after our return from you,” Kritias had brought to their attention his story “from ancient tradition” (ἐκ παλαιὰς ἀκοῆς). So, with its *xthes* at 110d3, these are the places by reference to which the *Kritias* attaches itself to the *Timaeus*.

In the *Timaeus*, *xthes* is used three times in the first eighteen lines. Three of our entertainees (ἐοτιάτωρες) yesterday, Sokrates says, are our entertainers (δαιτυμῶνες) today. Timaios’s phrasing implies that the entertainer was *Sokrates* (ὑπὸ σοῦ ξενισθέντας). The three were *with* him, but were they *at* Sokrates’s? We are, in fact, never told where yesterday’s conversation took place.

To be in the role of host and guest-friend to notables, we note, is unusual for Plato’s Sokrates in the undoubted dialogues, the disputant who can barely put together 35 mnae for legal purposes, as in the *Apology*. In the phrase “as soon as I left from thence” (ἐνθένδε) for his own house, presumably, Kritias might be implying that it was at Sokrates’ place. But just *where* today’s *Timaeus*-conversation takes place we are not able to tell with certainty from the dialogue itself. At *Timaeus* 20c8 it is specified that Hermocrates and his companion Timaios are lodging in Kritias’s guest-suite, and Timaios is named as “the third of our trio” by Kritias (20d5). That the author is thinking of the place of today’s *Timaeus*-conversation as being at Kritias’s house, is implied by Hermocrates’ speaking of a *return* (ἀφικόμεθα ...καθ’ ὁδόν) to it at 20c8-9. However, if it *is* taking place at Kritias’s house, wouldn’t Kritias’s scrupulous-sounding reference to the writings in his possession have said something about having them at hand—unless, of course, they are as non-existent as the extra-dialogical auditors know. The location of the meeting has had to remain masked in order to protect the non-existent documents from examination.

The third *xthes* came when, in response to Timaios’s request, Sokrates is refreshing his auditors’ memories about what he said yesterday “[about the constitution, and the kind of principles and men οἷα τε καὶ ἐξ οἷων ἀνδρῶν) which, for me, will make it come out the best (17c1-3). But we note that the Sokrates who has introduced the dialogue is *unsocratically dogmatic* in the summary, and that he speaks of having proposed a discussion-topic for today, on top of his 300-page politeia-discourse as his (so to say) guestly recompense for it. And, he is too specific about what he wants from Kritias, namely, something which—in an insult to himself (there is no socratic modesty here)—will “bring to life” his own yesterday’s construction, *as if* the politeia-discourse in *Republic* was not both lively and pointed!

The other six occurrences of *xthes* all come between 25e2-26e8. The first at 25e2 (as already hypothesized), is part of Kritias’s attempt to get Solon’s blessing, so to say, for the citizens both of

Sokrates' summarized polity and his prehistoric proto-oligarchal Athenian archetypes. But this means that the author—and we are still in the *Timaeus*, not yet in the *Kritias*—is either skirting the issue of Kritias's tendentiousness as a mythologizer, or else he wants the reader to accept Kritias's mythopoeia. These alternatives would, of course, be unacceptable to any but an oligarchist audience. By "author" here I mean the (hypothesized) manipulator of the prelude to the *Timaeus*.

The second and third occurrences of *xthes*, at 26a5 and a8, are those which seem to locate the *Timaeus* in Kritias's house. The fourth, at 26b4, is that in which Kritias says it is easier to remember some things heard in childhood than something heard yesterday. Kritias then states, at 26c9-d4,

The citizens and the city which you described to us yesterday as in a fable (ὡς ἐν μύθῳ), we will transfer into the realm of truth here (δεῦρο), positing that one to be this one (θήσομεν ὡς ἐκείνην τήνδε οὕσαν), and that the citizens you imagined are in truth those forefathers of ours of whom the [Egyptian] priest spoke.

The sixth occurrence of *xthes* is in the context of Sokrates' saying that the story is especially *sui-ted to today's* festival of the Goddess, and that it is *not invented* but is a *true account*; and that, given his speech of yesterday, "it is his turn to keep silent" (26e9). Notice that it is Kritias's Atlantis-story that Sokrates has said is so appropriate, not the creation-story into which Timaios at last launches.

Now this, from the literary point of view, particularly from the point of view of dialogue-construction, creates an anomalous discontinuity. Given that most of the rest of the dialogue is going to consist of Timaios's cosmological discourse, it's puzzling that it is Kritias not Timaios that we find Sokrates addressing. So much so that when Sokrates goes right on to say "it is now necessary for you to discourse to us" (26e8-9), we notice (i) that Kritias has already said (a few lines up at 26c7-9) "I am ready to tell my tale *not just in outline* but as heard *in full detail*," and (ii) that he has already given us, instead, an *abbreviated* version of the Atlantis story.

So what are these words an announcement of? Not of what Kritias did do back at 20e-26e. It is, rather, an announcement appropriate to the longer story which he is going to tell in the *Kritias*. These words, we see, are the means by which Kritias has been inserted into the *Timaeus*-dialogue by being made Sokrates' addressee at this point. This also is where Sokrates has begun to be co-opted into the long-range scheme which attaches the *Kritias* to the *Timaeus* and celebrates Goddess in her non-democratic but undeclared aspect of Athēna *aristeutikē* rather than in her old Athenian aspect as *isonomikē*: the promoter of "valiant deeds" rather than of "equality under the law".

On the other hand, when Sokrates had finished his summary of 'yesterday's' description of the Ideal polis (at20b), and reminded both Hermocrates and Kritias that it is now their turn to comply with his request—which was for a description of what that state would look like when "engaged in a suitable war"—Hermocrates adduces that Kritias is ready with a story he has been working to recollect since yesterday. And Kritias proceeds to tell it as we have it, from 20e-26e. But there is no mention at this early stage, when it would have been proper, of it's being preceded by (or having to be repeated after) the telling of a creation-story by the honorable (τίμιος, 20a1,a4) Timaios. That announcement doesn't come till 27a with an excuse about how, once Timaios has covered the generation of the cosmos he, Kritias, will take over from Timaios the humans about to be created in his discourse, and from Sokrates' selectively trained men mentioned in his polity.—Is this "anticipative

5 We have been assuming what can only be an assumption: that there is only one author to the two *Kritias*, namely, that the oligarchist imitator who composed the *Kritias* is also the one who wove the Atlantis-story into the *Timaeus*.

hindsight" (as we could call it) on the hypothesized manipulator's part?

(ii) What Kind of Tale is the Atlantis-Story

The tale that Kritias tells more briefly at *Timaeus* 20e-26e, and at greater length in the *Kritias* (108e-121c), was told him (he says)⁵ by his eponymous grandfather on children's day (κουρεώτις) of the three-day feast of Apatouria (Απατουρίων). The relevant points are (i) that, as the festival was thought to commemorate a happy *deception*,⁶ it was a kind of April Fool's day, and (ii) that Kritias the elder's friend, who brought him the story from Solon, was named Drôpides.

The first, or supper, day of the festival was called *dorpeia*; but the root verb-form δρῶ ("make") in the first syllable surely determines the color or connotational halo of this name. "Makerson" is a suggestive English equivalent. Drôpô means 'see through', 'cut through'; and is related to *drepô* 'gather' or 'cull'; while *drôpazein* is synonymous with *emblêpein* 'gaze at' 'look in the face'; while *emblêma* means 'insertion.' All in all in this context, Drôpides would seem to suggest a "perceptive maker-up or bringer forward of stories."⁷ Given that the names of so many characters in the dialogues are chosen to signal something about their owners, it is not too much to assume that Drôpides has this kind of aptness to it, and that this is something a good imitator would enjoy doing. Because its effect is that of a self-focusing device, it also becomes a symptom of the author's detachment about the story he is putting in the mouth of his speakers.⁸ That it is a practice of great authors like Shakespeare and Dickens, as well as Plato, does not preclude it from being imitable.

The contradiction between the stately oral-aural nature (21a7) of the story transmitted to, and by, Solon in the Greek milieu, and the anomalous claim of the Egyptian priest to have 9000 year old documents (24a1) to support the claim, is muted by the explanation of it as a matter of Egyptian cultural practice which non-Nilotic peoples are unable to follow because of illiteracy (23c3f.) and cycles of destruction that leave them without a recorded past from which to go on.

Millennially-kept Egyptian records, however, allow the Egyptian priest to tell Solon of a prehis-

6 An Athenian-Ionian admission-to-citizenship or socialization festival, it was also a celebration of the victory of the Athenian champion Melanthus over the Boetian king Xanthius. At the start of combat, and contrary to the rules, a man in a goat-skin came into view behind Xanthius. When Xanthius, deceived (ἀπατάω), turned to check this out, Melanthus slew him; and, according to a scholium to Aristophanes' *Archanians* 146, the apparition was due to Dionysos. An alternative derivation supported by F. Welcker (*Griechische Götterlehre*, 1863) is that "apatouria" comes from α for ἄμα, and πατόρια, as suggested by Xenoph.'s *Hellenica* i.7.8, ἐν οἷς (ἀπατούριοις) οἱ τε πατέρες καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς ξύνεισι σφίσι αὐτοῖς. The first day of the festival was called dorpia or dôrpeia (Photius *Lexicon*, & Athenaeus iv.171)

7 See E. Boisacq, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque* (Heidelberg: Winter 1923), and P. Chantraine *Dictionnaire Étymologique ...* (Paris: Klincksieck 1968). Applying the literary convention that exploits the consonance of name with character to Kritias, his name, for historical reasons could only be a standing symbol of and sneedoché for, oligarchism and political terror. The phonetic overtones of the word itself become sinister because of the cruel and arbitrary judgments (κριτής= judge) of the tyranny of the Thirty, headed by Kritias.

8 It's an interesting question whether speakers other than the ironic Sokrates are *always* as detached from their stories as Plato's Sokrates is from his. How detached, for instance, is the Sophistic rhetorician from Elea, in the *Politicus-Sophistês*, from the myth he invents in the course of his defense of one-man rule? When Sokrates insists, before the telling of Kritias's story, that it is a reliable oral-aural report of Solon's (Σόλωνος ἀκοήν, 21a4-8) and at the end of it (26e5), that "it is not an invented fable (πλασθέντα μῦθον) but a true history (ἀληθινόν λόγον)", are we supposed to take him ironically, as we have to take the Egyptian priest ironically at 24a1 (even the literalist A.E. Taylor could not but take his words so (*Comm. on the Timaeus*, p.54). Taylor is also struck by the anomaly of the priest's claim to have in his possession manuscripts (αὐτὰ αἱ τὰ γράμματα) nine-thousand years old.

toric Golden Age of Athens among whose exploits was the defeat of a mighty host from the island empire of Atlantis in the west. This army was bent on extending its Afro-European conquests to both Athens and Egypt (25b). But Athenian valor and leadership defeated it, and liberated all who dwell on this side of the Pillars of Hercules. Unfortunately, however, cataclysmic quakes and floods then occurred which swallowed up not only the triumphant warriors of Athens but also the whole island territory of Atlantis, leaving the ocean impassable because of the mud shoals in which it came to rest.

The purpose of this telling is made clear in the next paragraphs, from 25d7 to 26e1, which also pile up more 'explanations' on the already 'explained' survival and transmission of the extraordinary story. –Kritias marvels that while he cannot remember all the details of Sokrates' yesterday's account, "not a single detail of [Kritias's account] has escaped [him] ... even though it's so very long since I heard the tale ... it is indelibly fixed in my mind like those encaustic designs which cannot be effaced Marvellous indeed is the way in which lessons of one's childhood 'grip the mind', as the saying goes" (26b-c). More importantly, Solon's Kritias-transmitted description of prehistoric Athens' Golden Age turns out *by convenient coincidence* to be the very equivalent of Sokrates' yesterday's description of the Best State.

It is clear that the purpose of Timaios's prefatory prayer, at the beginning of the *Kritias* is to link this dialogue up with the *Timaeus*. At the end of the prayer, Timaios, in accordance with Pythagorean style, calls knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) the completest and best medicine (Φαρμάκων), and turns the discourse over to Kritias. But note: Kritias who was first made to speak, at 20d4 of *Timaeus*, had there relegated Timaios, the central speaker of the *Timaeus*, to status of "our third partner."

Two or three things obtrude themselves about the indulgence he in turn asks for. First, when Sokrates grants it, he extends it to Hermocrates' future address: this move is calculated to bring Hermocrates into the loop of the *Timaeus*-Kritias-Hermocrates triad which was then in gestation. Secondly, lines 107b1-e1 are a digression about the problems of representation (μίμησις), in the course of which he insults his auditors by speaking –with unPlatonic clumsiness– of their inexperience (ἀπειρία) and ignorance (ἄγνοια) in the matter of representing the Gods. Thirdly, at the end of the digression 107e3, Kritias claims that his "account is given on the spur of the moment," and accordingly prays to Mnemosynê at 108d3. But this is false; whoever the author is has forgotten that, in the *Timaeus*, both Hermocrates and Kritias stated that he had given a lot of thought to the matter since the day-before-yesterday's meeting with Sokrates. This is one difference between the Kritias in *Timaeus* and the one in his own dialogue.

Let us look at some compositional differences between the stories as told in the *Timaeus* and in the *Kritias*. That "the [Atlantean] dwellers beyond the Pillars of Hercules" and "all (πάντων) that dwelt *within* them" are the peoples at war (108e4), contradicts the fact that in the *Timaeus* account the empire of Atlantis was said to have conquered Libya and parts of Europe *within* the Pillars of Hercules, as far as Etruria (Τυρρηνίας, 25β1-2).

While *Kritias* at 109a says he must give precedence (ἀνάγκη κατ' ἀρχάς) to the military and political situation of Athens, he only devotes three-and-a-half Stephanus pages to *it*. But to Atlantis he gives more than *twice as many* (113c-121c). He then narrates, at 109b, that the Gods piloted (οἴακι

9 The claim by Avery that Kritias was not always an oligarch does not hold up; examination of it by Adeleye reconfirms not only his extreme oligarchism, but also his cleverness. Cf. G. Adeleye "Critias Member of the Four Hundred?", *TAPA* 104 (1974); p.1-10. Xenophon's *Hellenica* (quoting Theramenes) says that he was "the sharpest hater of the commons (μισοδημότατος) during the democracy, and the most anti-bourgeois (μισοχρηστότατος) during the aristocracy" (II.iii.47).

... ἐκυβέροντων) the mortal herd with psychological rudders of persuasion instead of the rods and staffs of shepherds.—This language tries to color over, with non-violent imagery, Kritias's actual historical character as the bloody tyrant that he was.⁹ But it forgets to abandon the *standard sophistic-pythagorean* reference to the rulers as 'herders.'

Sophist that he is (as e.g. in Plato's *Charmides*), Kritias flatters the Athenians' love of knowledge and artfulness by putting them under the aegis of Athena and Hephaistos, the Gods of *philosophía* and *philotechnía*, and by making the Athenians autochthonous. He flatters Greek localism by twice insisting (109d3, 110a7) that the names of these first earth-born Athenians have been preserved, *even while* their works and writings were *destroyed* by intervening floods. He infers this because Solon stated that the Egyptian priests' narrative of the war mentioned most of the names of the heroes before Theseus, such as Kekrops, Erectheus, Erichthonius and Erysichthon.¹⁰ Kritias says he returns to this point about the names (at 113a) because Solon got them from the priests in Egyptian, and had to translate their meaning (τὴν διάνοιαν ὀνόματος) back into Greek when beginning to draft (*sic*) his poem about all this, and "these very writings are ... now in [his] possession, and [he] learnt them by heart when a child" (113b2-3). The other reason for this is to cover up the fact that Kritias's narrative is a purely Greek story. Note the assumption that proper nouns have meanings, not just denotation.

Note the clumsy writing at 110c1-3, where all species of herding animals of both sexes are said to be naturally able to attend (προσακούειν) to their own species-excellence (ἀρετήν). Could this be an imitator's echo of *Republic* 397e, where Sokrates ironically desiderates the principle that only if one man is allowed one job, only then will it be properly done...? Two pages down the farmers are real (ἀληθίνων) farmers who practice *only* farming; though they are also men of good taste and noble nature (φιλοκαλῶν και εὐφύων 11ε4), namely, men who—in after-thought—would make "good oligarchist material", like Xenophon perhaps, the archetypical militarist oligarch and gentleman-farmer.

The military class, however, gets very rapid mention within a more adagio account of an idyllic ecology. They live separately from, though supported by, the productive classes whom they protect. And they are mentioned, in just one reference at 110d4, as identical with the guardians 'posited' in what Sokrates said "yesterday" *xthes*. But shouldn't it be "the day before yesterday", given that just before it reference was made to Sokrates' speech of 'yesterday'? The military class lives atop the acropolis next to the temple of Athena and Hephaistos. While it is repeated that they are allowed no gold or silver, as in the *Republic*, they are now said to live side by side with (or, in community with) the priests.¹¹ Different from *Republic* also is the implication at 12c5-7 that their buildings, houses and profession were hereditary rather than occupied by selected, successfully trained warriors. And where in *Republic* there is only a general statement that births must be controlled, here it is specified that *their number* must be forever limited to 20,000. No such figure is given in the *Timaeus* version of the Best State either.

Kritias's lines from 112e1-e10 sound like a peroration to the part of his discourse that deals with the proto-Athenians. So we notice that *lines 113a1 to 113b7*, already cited as explaining why we have

10 The separable prefix in Greek, ἐπι-is, of course, an intensifier; so the word-play is with *theos* (= divine) and *chthôn* (= earth): "[very divine] "very earthy."]

11 The Zurich text (XV, p.113), has ἱερωῶν here, as does the Oxford text; but Bury, who is otherwise translating from the Zurich text, follows Hermann who prints (Vol.IV, p.428; Praef.xxx) ἱερωῶν "priests." The latter imports a difference with the *Timaeus* version of the Athenian part of the story in which it is said that "the priestly class is separated off from the rest" *Tim* .24a6.

the prehistoric names in Greek, *are misplaced where they are* –just before Kritias launches into his loving, much longer description of the Atlantis that wished to conquer ancient Athens and Egypt. An effect of this description is that it expands the reference of Hermocrates' expectation that Kritias will "exhibit and celebrate the goodness of these ancient citizens" to include the Atlanteans *more than* the proto-Athenians!

The Athenian part of the Kritias Atlantis-story, then, does not coincide enough with either the Athenian part of the *Timaeus* version of the story, or with the content and spirit of the original *Republic* for it to be believably by Plato himself. But this proves nothing about the authenticity of the *Timaeus*. It does suggest re-examining the *Timaeus* for more such signs of the tampering that permits attaching the Kritias to it.¹²

This is a good place to note that the Sokrates of the *Timaeus* -prelude as we have it, is discursive in an uncharacteristic way. He is neither interrogative, as in the undoubted elenctic dialogues, nor is he inventively and wittily discursive as in the undoubted longer dialogues; nor, again, is he the complete and attentive listener-to-others of the *Politicus* and *Sophistês* –until, that is– Timaios gets into his cosmologic paean. One valid criticism of the fussy introduction to this paean is that, where Sokrates ought to have little else to do than listen to Timaios's poetic creation-story, he is made to talk dogmatically in an *un-Socratic, assertive* way. Lastly, his interlocutors alternate with him and each other in a rather disjointed way.

The Sokrates of the ante-cosmological part of the *Timaeus* comes under suspicion because, on ending his summary of the ideal polis, he says he isn't up to praising the Best City and its people sufficiently. But this is contradicted by the fact that this *is* just what Sokrates *did* do, on a *literalist* reading of *Republic*, and what he *ironically did* on a dialogical reading of same. "But that is no marvel," he continues –in words that are rambling and unskilfully indirect (19d1-20a)– considering that neither the poets ("not that I disparage them") nor the Sophists ("although I believe them to be practiced in beautiful speech-making") are good at representing political men who are also men of knowledge and men of action (19e6-8).

Next, compare the wording on either side of the first telling of Kritias's tale, with the wording that agrees that telling the tale *again later* will be appropriate to, and "in entire harmony and accord with" (πάντως ἀρμόσουσι καὶ οὐκ ἀπασόμεθα), the equation between Kritias's mythical Athens and Sokrates' Best City. At 21a Sokrates wants to hear the story that Kritias wants to tell at 20e-21a. But notice that Kritias wants at the same time to praise the (unnamed) Goddess whose festival it is.

Adult auditors will perceive (i) that, as a story based on 9000-year old documents, it will be a myth, (ii) that, as derived from an Egyptian priest by Drîpides Makerson and transmitted to grandfather Kritias to be told on Apatouria Deception Day, it must be an invention, and (iii) that, because told on children's Citizenship-and-Joking-Day, it is right for it to be both edifyingly ideological and a bold fabulation.

While the anti-democratic, counter-Athenian biases of both the dialogue and the Atlantis-story

12 This does raise the question, if the beginning of *Timaeus* was touched up to allow for attachment of the *Kritias*, how come the beginning of *Republic* was not touched up by the inclusion of Kritias and Timaios among the other named auditors at *Rep.*328b? This would have made it indubitable that the 'yesterday's' discourse mentioned in the *Timaeus* -prelude was indeed the *Republic*. What was the situation in the Academy, on this hypothesis, that protected the *Republic* but not the *Timaeus* –if the latter, as we think, was touched up?

13 See *The Return of the King* The Intellectual Warfare over Democratic Athens (in press); Chapter III, for a fuller account of these anomalies

may be left for the reader to spot, it would take many more pages to document the lapses in the prose and the loose ends in the construction of both the *Kritias* and the ante-cosmological part of the *Timaeus*.¹³ Nor is there room to more than mention the mythical significance of Lokri in reinforcing the lesson that *valiant deeds* will overcome numerical disadvantage. Are not oligarchists by definition always a minority in relation to the rest of the polis-dwellers? Lokri's army of 10,000 defeated a Krotonian host of 100,000 "by the Sagra" river, a feat so incredible that the phrase became proverbial for good news that is hard to believe. But would not a friend of Athens have, rather, invoked the famous victory at Marathon of the 10,000 Athenians (and 600 Plataians) who there defeated a Persian host of over 60,000? The oligarchist imitator does not mention it, because what the victory at Marathon preserved was the Assembly-democracy of Athens.

We may not leave without remark the enormous contradiction in the ploy that makes *Kritias*, the blood-stained, certified extreme oligarch, the teller of an alternative foundation-story that co-opts Solon, the founder of Athenian democracy, into holding up as a new model for Athens a *romanticized* militarist oligarchy. Is it the frontal boldness of the ploy, or just the passage of time that has succeeded in obviating *Kritias*'s inappropriateness as the teller of an Athenian foundation-story?

It could only have been at a time when oligarchism was riding high in post-classical Athens, that anyone would have dared to put *Kritias* forward as having anything to do with the beginnings of Athens, the city he had terrorized, bloodied, and lost his life to. But if it is not the boldness of the oligarchist Plato-imitator that chose him, we have to hypothesize that enough time has gone by for people to have forgotten the horrors *Kritias* perpetrated. In this case, the words in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1416b26-28) would seem to apply: "people don't need a story when you praise someone like Achilles; but if it's *Kritias*, then you must [narrate], for they don't know [what he did] ..." In this case, and *a fortiori*, Plato could not have been the author of the *Kritias*.

That the story reflects in places an orientation toward children makes it apt for telling to the feudal corps of Royal Pages, consisting of the children of the nobles at the Macedonian court. As the celebratory discourse which Sokrates had said (21a3) he wants it to be, why, finally, does the Goddess in whose honor it is recited have to remain unnamed?

The answer has to be that the adult part of the audience to whom the story is addressed did not need to be told, since She is the embodiment of their self-image as a conquering *aristokratía*. *Démokratía*, the Goddess of classical Athens, has now been overcome not only in deeds but also in words by the platonist imitator(s) who composed the *Kritias* and connected it to the *Timaeus*. Avoiding explicit use of the terms δημοκρατία and ὀλιγαρχία, to both of which there were objections, the author's story has implicitly honored "temperate aristocracy" (ἀριστοκρατία σώφρων)¹⁴ as the oligarchs were pleased to call it. The festival of the Athenian Goddess that *Kritias* has been celebrating is not just that of Athênê *poliás*, protector of cities, but rather –under her equivocal aspect as *apatouria*– that of warlike Athênê *aristeutikê*, promoter of valiant deeds. *Kritias*'s creator has replaced the Athênê *isonomikê* of the classical polity –alien as she had to be to the Macedonian conquerors– with a Goddess more acceptable to himself and those who saw themselves as the ruling successors of Philip and Alexander.

14 The term found in Thucydides' *History*, Book III.82.

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Palabras clave

Key Words

ἡ πάτριος πολιτεία	= ancestral constitution
día de la decepción	= Apatouria
Ατένα, diosa de la valentía, 'Αθήνη ἀριστευτική	= Athena of valiant deeds
Atenienses y proto-Atenienses	= Athenians & proto-Athenians
Ατλάντιδες	= Atlanteans
constitución, πολιτεία	= constitution
distopía	= counter-utopia
cena festiva	= dorpeia
ficción dramática	= dramatic fiction
escrituras Egipcias	= Egyptian writing
ξένος	= guest-friend of notables
edad de oro	= Golden Age
estado ideal, μάλιστα εἶη κατ' εὐχὴν πολιτεία	= ideal state
Critias oligarca tiránico	= Kritias, tyrannical oligarch
ejército, clase militar	= <i>machimon</i>
interpretaciones oligarquistas	= oligarchist interpretations
oralidad cultural	= oral-aural culture
platonismo Académico	= Platonizing Academy
ironía socrática	= Sokrates' irony
Solón fundador de la democracia	= Solon, democratic founder
el Solón de Critias el oligarca	= Solon, co-opted by Kritias
Τιμαίος Πυθαγόρειος	= Timaios the Pythagorean
los diálogos indudablemente por Platón	= undoubted dialogues
utopía	= utopia
= ayer, χθές	= yesterday

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