A Companion to Socrates

Edited by

Sara Ahbel-Rappe
and Rachana Kamtekar

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This book is dedicated to the teachers all of us, contributors and editors alike, have shared, and to the memory of Gregory Vlastos.

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Preface

We are living in the midst of a Socratic revival, both academic and broadly cultural. On the one hand, teaching by the Socratic method, Socratic counseling, and the trademark "Socrates Café" proliferate throughout the elementary schools and law schools, therapy offices, and cafés of North America (Phillips 2001, Marionoff 1999). On the other hand, scholarly works seek to discover the doctrinal commitments of the historical Socrates, the role of Socrates in Hellenistic philosophy, and the ideal of Socrates in such later thinkers as Montaigne, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.

Who was Socrates that he should have spawned such diverse offspring? Rather than venture a single answer, the essays in *A Companion to Socrates* investigate and exemplify the various ways in which versions of this question can be answered. Thus the essays examine the contexts in which Socrates himself lived and talked, and also the contexts in which he was studied and reinvented throughout history. To orient the reader, this preface aims to provide an etiology of the current state of the question in Socratic studies.

It was above all the path-breaking work of Gregory Vlastos, along with his students and associates (Vlastos 1991, Kraut 1984, Brickhouse and Smith 1994 and 2000, McPherran 1996, Irwin 1977 and 1995), which articulated a powerful thesis identifying the historical Socrates with the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues. Vlastos put the tools of analytic philosophy to use in the study of the philosophical views and arguments of Plato's early dialogues, and found in them arresting theses – that virtue is knowledge, that virtue is necessary for happiness, that it is better to suffer than to do injustice, that it is impossible to act contrary to knowledge of what is good, that piety is doing god's work – coupled with a mode of argumentation that was somehow to establish these truths but succeeded only in revealing to interlocutors that they too, like Socrates, were ignorant in the crucial matter of leading a good life. This framework, as we shall see shortly, has proved extremely productive.

The Socratic question of how to extract the historical Socrates from the various and conflicting literary representations of him had been given an influential formulation in the nineteenth century by Schleiermacher: how could so banal or ironic a figure as Socrates be the founder of Western philosophy? By demonstrating the philosophical interest of the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues, Vlastos had answered Schleiermacher's version of the question, but the question reappears in another guise: given that Plato, like Xenophon and the other Socratics, were writing in a literary genre well described as "biographical experiments" that aim at "capturing the potentialities rather than the realities of individual lives" (Momigliano 1993: 46), what hope is there for

reconstructing the historical Socrates from these representations? The representations conflict at the most basic level: Socrates affirms and denies that the good is pleasure (Plato, *Gorgias* 495a–99b, but cf. *Protagoras* 351b–e, 354de); Socrates does and doesn't investigate questions of natural science (Aristophanes, *Clouds* 217–33; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A.6.987b1–3; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.1.11–16, 4.7.2–10; Plato, *Phaedo* 96d–99e, but cf. *Apology* 26de); Socrates disavows and avows having knowledge (Plato, *Apology* 21b–23b, *Theaetetus* 150cd, but cf. *Apology* 29b). So why suppose that the Socrates of Plato's early dialogues was the historical Socrates, rather than the Socrates of Xenophon's Socratic writings, or the Socrates of Aeschines, or Aristippus, or indeed of the hostile witness Aristophanes?

In one of the inspirations for this Companion, *The Socratic Movement*, Paul Vander Waerdt (1994: 3), having voiced his skepticism about the sources' ability to tell us much about the historical Socrates, suggests that these sources might be better used as guides to the thinking of their authors or for the recovery of philosophically brilliant portraits of Socrates. The portrait with which this volume opens is Plato's portrait of Socrates during the landmark events that ended his life: his defense when tried for impiety and corruption, his decision not to escape while awaiting the death sentence, and the serenity with which, facing death, he continued to philosophize. Debra Nails' "The Trial and Death of Socrates" uses the dramatically linked dialogues *Theaetetus–Euthyphro–Apology–Crito–Phaedo* to locate these events in their legal context and to reflect on Plato's contrasts between legalistic and true justice. One conclusion brought out by this contrast is that it was not malevolence but rather a failure to understand Socrates in the rushed atmosphere of the courtroom that was responsible for the Athenians' conviction of Socrates as guilty of "not recognizing the gods the city recognizes and . . . introducing into it new gods; and also corrupt[ing] the young" (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* 2.40). This may have the ring of tragedy to our ears, but Christian Wildberg's "Socrates and Euripides" argues that there is no room for tragedy in Socrates' world, where it is better to suffer than to do injustice, and where death is no evil. Wildberg uses fragmentary material from fourth-century comedy, tragedy, and Socratic *logoi*, as well as anecdotes from later biographers, to create a body of evidence showing that Euripides and Socrates must have been intellectually engaged with one another; he goes on to problematize accounts of the character of their relationship based on Socratic themes in Euripides.

Was Socrates a sophist, as critics as old as Aristophanes and as new as Anytus and Meletus (Plato, *Apology* 18a–19d) claimed, but Socrates himself denied (19d, 20c, 21b, 22d)? If he was a sophist, what kind of sophist was he? It is now widely accepted that prior to Plato, the term "sophist" could describe any intellectual, and that it was Plato who turned it into a term of abuse. After surveying the use of the term in a range of fourth-century sources, Paul Woodruff's "Socrates Among the Sophists" suggests that Socrates' differences with the sophists are an insider's differences. For example, the sophist Protagoras teaches an art of speaking on both sides of an issue to determine what it is reasonable to believe (*eikos*) in the absence of knowledge – and not, as Plato suggests, always to affirm appearances over reality. Richard Janko's "Socrates the Freethinker" uses the relatively recently discovered Derveni Papyrus (authored, Janko argues, by Diagoras of Melos) and the thought of Diogenes of Apollonia to place Socrates in a group of reformation-style intellectuals who were replacing, sometimes

by rejecting, sometimes by allegorizing, traditional stories about the gods with the idea of an exclusively good, and good-producing, god who was supreme. In the increasingly fundamentalist Athens of the fifth century, impiety trials against such intellectuals were not anomalous. Anthony Long, in "How Does Socrates' Divine Sign Communicate with Him?," turns to an essay by the Middle Platonist Plutarch (c. 50–120 CE), *On Socrates' Divine Sign*, to explore another dimension of Socrates' religious outlook: his experience of direct communication from his *daimonion*, which, Long argues, ought to be seen, along with Socrates' receptivity to its message, as at once divine and rational.

With the publication of Giannantoni's four-volume *Socratis et Socraticorum Reliquiae* (1990), which collects fragments attributable to members of the Socratic circle, came another great advance in Socratic scholarship. This collection makes possible the reconstruction of the philosophy of Socrates' associates such as the Cynic Antisthenes, the hedonist Aristippus, and others, as well as the comparative work on the writings of the self-styled Socratics of the fourth and third centuries advocated by Vander Waerdt (1994: 9–10). Susan Prince's "Socrates, Antisthenes, and the Cynics" and Louis-André Dorion's "Xenophon's Socrates" present us with two novel philosophical portraits. According to Prince, Antisthenes' Socrates took definition to be on the one hand central to language and knowledge, and on the other hand impossible, and Antisthenes concluded from this that contradiction is impossible. At the same time, Antisthenes' Socrates left ethics untheorized, as something embedded in a way of life, a community, and in the activity of interpretation. Dorion points out a number of differences between Plato's and Xenophon's Socrates, the most important of these being the importance Xenophon's Socrates accords to self-control with regard to bodily pleasures (*enkrateia*). Self-control is a precondition of virtue, for responsibility, freedom, justice, and the practice of dialectic all require the ability to resist the lure of pleasure, to overcome desires, to avoid the temptation to wrongdoing, and so on. Plato's Socrates, by contrast, gives this role to wisdom. What to make of this difference? A suggestive observation made by Dorion is that Xenophon's Socrates resembles other characters in Xenophon and Xenophon's ideal of himself more than he does Plato's Socrates.

The final essay in this section on sources, Ken Lapatin's richly illustrated "Picturing Socrates," traces the history of visual representations of Socrates, from antiquity's depiction of Socrates as a satyr or Silenus-figure, sometimes ennobled, to contemporary commercial images of Socrates.

The essays in the second section of Part I focus on Plato's Socrates, the Socrates brought to philosophy by Vlastos. A number of these essays explicitly or implicitly challenge Vlastos's account of Socrates' philosophy. Christopher Rowe's "Socrates in Plato's Dialogues" revisits the question of the difference between the Socrates of Plato's early and middle-late dialogues. Since Vlastos, this difference has been cast as a difference between a negative Socrates whose philosophical activity consists in refuting claims to knowledge or definitions, and a dogmatic Socrates who constructs elaborate theories, metaphysical and political. But Rowe argues that the only substantial difference is that the Socrates of the early dialogues holds that only the desire for the good and true or false beliefs about what is good can motivate action, whereas the Socrates of Plato's middle-late dialogues admits nonrational motivations as well (a difference which, Rowe acknowledges, ramifies enormously). The identification of distinctively Socratic philosophical positions and the attempt to render them, paradoxical as they

appear, philosophically attractive occupy the next several essays in this section. Heda Segvic's "No One Errs Willingly: The Meaning of Socratic Intellectualism" develops a Socratic (and proto-Stoic) account of willing, a state that is at once volitional (we want the good) and cognitive (we can be said to want something when we know that it is good). George Rudebusch's "Socratic Love" asks whether, in addition to the needy love of the good just described, Socrates recognizes giving love and equality love, which Vlastos's (1981) "The Individual as an Object of Love in Plato" had faulted Socrates for neglecting. Rudebusch finds, in the *Lysis*, an argument to the effect that the good itself requites needy love with giving love – but no equality love. Another reply to Vlastos can be found in John Bussanich's "Socrates and Religious Experience." In his (1991) essay "Socratic Piety," Vlastos had argued that Socrates rejected the traditional Greek conception of the gods as powerful but amoral beings to be sacrificed to in exchange for favors, and put in its place a conception of gods as good and human beings as properly their assistants in benefiting human beings by caring for their souls; Socrates' lived piety consisted in a care of the soul which involved rational inquiry that would aid in the interpretation of the god's communications. Against this, Bussanich maintains that the role of rational inquiry, or philosophy, or dialectic, is to purify the mind of false (perhaps rationalistically derived) beliefs and admit to ignorance, so that knowledge born of religious experience can shine through. Finally, Rachana Kamtekar's "The Politics of Plato's Socrates" argues that Socrates combines a political discourse about the best constitution, traditionally used to justify a ruler's claim to the privilege of ruling, with the apolitical discourse of contemporary sophists, which characterizes ruling as a professional expertise, to argue that the sole basis for the evaluation of a ruler or form of rule is whether or not it accomplishes the professional goal of ruling, namely, the good of the ruled.

The last three essays in this section take up issues of the methods and goals of Socratic ethical inquiry. It is Plato who gave the world Socrates' most-quoted slogan, "The unexamined life is not worth living" (*Apology* 38a), and Richard Kraut's "The Examined Life" explains why Socrates should have thought the examination of one's values so necessary: our lives are more likely to go tragically wrong because we are shallow rather than because we are wicked (as does Euthyphro's); our values and thus the direction of our lives can become genuinely our own only once we have engaged in the kind of ethical inquiry that came to be called ethical philosophy. Plato's Socrates inquires into the goodness of the virtuous life, and the results are theoretical as well as practical commitments, such as the view that the virtues are forms of wisdom. But while one might have taken it as given that Socratic ethical inquiry took, *inter alia*, the form of investigating such questions as "what is piety?" (*Euthyphro*), "what is courage?" (*Laches*), "what is friendship?" (*Lysis*), Roslyn Weiss's "Socrates: Seeker or Preacher?" claims that in Plato's *Apology* Socrates describes his philosophical activity not in terms of a search for wisdom (such as answers to the "what is F?" question), but in terms of refuting others to show them their ignorance, which is the human condition, and to motivate them to inquiry, which cannot, however, make them any wiser. The contrasting positions taken by these two essays point to two fundamentally different conceptions of a philosopher that can be adopted by students of Socrates, even of Plato's Socrates: on the one hand, to be a philosopher is to adopt a certain mode of living and engaging (or not) with others, to which questioning is central; on the other

hand, to be a philosopher is also to seek, evaluate, and even adopt certain determinate theoretical views – even if in a nondogmatic spirit, or for the sake of living well. Harold Tarrant's "Socratic Method and Socratic Truth" takes up the question, "what is the nature of the philosophical activity engaged in by Socrates?" Tarrant's project is to open up a question framed narrowly by Gregory Vlastos's (1983) "The Socratic Elenchus": how does Socrates' method (drawing out conflicts in a belief-set, according to Vlastos) achieve its goal (truth, according to Vlastos)? Tarrant conceives of Socrates' goal as not the discovery of true propositions, but rather "the refinement of belief *and* actions that spring from understanding one's role in the world." Because Protagoreanism, the ongoing availability of opposing arguments to any view, presented Socrates with an insurmountable obstacle to achieving the perspective-independent truth he would have liked, he contented himself with affirming as true statements the perspective-dependence of which does not invalidate them ("death is no evil for me"), disclaiming knowledge of universals. Tarrant proposes that the *Gorgias* introduces a new conception of truth and method according to which theories may be refuted, and may be true or false, independently of their advocates.

A second inspiration for this volume, pioneering work by Anthony Long (1988 and 2002), Julia Annas (1994), and Gisela Striker (1994), has shown that the figure of Socrates was central to the philosophical constructs of the Stoics and skeptics of the Hellenistic period. Significantly, it was less in virtue of their adopting philosophical precepts associated with Socrates than in virtue of their taking up Socrates' practices that these schools first claimed to be Socratic. Thus, when Plato's Academy took a skeptical turn in the third century BCE, its head, Arcesilaus (who led the Academy c. 273–242 BCE), seems to have invoked Socrates' practice of arguing *ad hominem* (using only the interlocutor's beliefs as premises) to negative conclusions, rather than his avowal of ignorance or his expressions of pessimism about our cognitive faculties (see Annas 1994, Cooper 2004). And Socrates' lifelong pursuit of wisdom and struggle against ignorance reappears in the skeptics' and Stoics' treatment of knowledge as immeasurably valuable and demanding, on the one hand, and rash assent as the greatest danger and source of all our troubles, on the other. The early Stoics relied more on Xenophon's Socrates than Plato's – arguably because Xenophon's Socrates lived on in the Cynics Antisthenes and Diogenes, whereas there was in sight no embodiment of Plato's Socrates (see Long 1988). Nevertheless, perhaps because Xenophon's Socrates was more unequivocally committed to doctrine – a teleological cosmology, self-mastery as the supreme virtue – than was Plato's, the Stoics could see their philosophical activity as consistently constructive and Socratic. But the Stoics also knew their Plato and seem to have developed new interpretations of Socratic precepts – such as that virtue is sufficient for happiness, that virtue is knowledge, and that other than virtue and vice, nothing is unconditionally good or bad – that survived Platonic criticisms (see Striker 1994 and Long 1988).

The essays in the last third of Part I take us to the Hellenistic period. Against the mainstream current according to which Stoicism is the most dogmatic of the Hellenistic schools, preserving or reformulating doctrines from Xenophon or Plato's early dialogues, Eric Brown's "Socrates in the Stoa" derives the Stoic paradoxes (e.g. virtue suffices for happiness; only the sage is free) from reflection on Socrates' way of life as a life spent in the search of knowledge, understood as a coherent set of psychological

attitudes (the Stoics' "smooth flow of life"). Even the Stoics' departures from Socrates reveal a thoughtful engagement with his life: while Socrates practiced philosophy as his profession, to the exclusion of any other, but argued with anyone, be it humble Simon the Shoemaker or corrupt Critias of the Thirty, the Stoics appreciated the dangers of dialectic (see where it got Socrates) and took philosophy to be combinable with any profession. Tad Brennan's "Socrates and Epictetus" provokes us to consider how deep the Hellenistic imitation of Socrates really ran: could Epictetus only imitate the outer but not the inner Socrates, as is suggested by the difference between their dialectical performances? Was it the genius of Plato, unmatched by Arrian and indeed Xenophon, that gave Socrates depth? And what could explain the particular intensity and spitefulness of Socrates' irony – especially when, contrasting Socratic and Epictetan dialectic, we find it quite detachable from philosophical method? Finally, Richard Bett's "Socrates and Skepticism" examines the Academy's appropriation of Socrates as a proto-skeptic, from the headship of Arcesilaus into the time of Cicero (first century CE), and contrasts this with the "standoffish" attitude towards Socrates of the Pyrrhonist Sextus Empiricus (end of second century CE). Bett contests the Academic skeptics' interpretation of Socrates on the grounds that Socrates cannot have believed knowledge impossible since he spent his life seeking it, and offers an alternative account of Socrates' dialectical practices.

Leaving antiquity, we turn next to the medieval and Renaissance periods. Ilai Alon's essay takes us from the world of Greco-Roman antiquity, to the height of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad. In the Arab world, Socrates comes into prominence with the translation movement of the ninth century; the philosopher al-Kindi wrote a number of treatises on Socrates, but the figure of Socrates had a widespread influence on medieval Arab culture as a whole, inspiring poets, and *hadith* scholars. Socrates captured the Muslim imagination as the sage *par excellence*, his martyrdom comparable to the philosophical martyrs of Islam, as for example the twelfth-century Platonist philosopher, Suhrawardi.

Although Socrates was familiar in the Latin West from Cicero and Apuleius, as well as Christian writers, it was (as in the parallel case of the Arabic Socrates) the translation work of Ficino in the Quattrocento that inspired a Socratic renaissance. Ficino made all of Plato available in Latin, and the Socratic writings of Xenophon were translated by Bessarion by mid-century. In James Hankins' essay, we meet another self-styled Socratic imitator in the person of none other than Marsilio Ficino, whose Socratic seminars in the city of Florence were designed to recapture the youth of Florence from those latter-day sophists who, according to Ficino, thrived in Italian universities. In the Humanist movement of the fourteenth century, Socrates became both moral preceptor in his Xenophontean guise, but also divine seer and holy man, a precursor to Christ.

Socrates' fortunes in the Renaissance continued to wax, and as French translations (see e.g. Le Roy's sixteenth-century translation of Plato's *Symposium*, which famously omitted the Alcibiades scene and was presented as a treatise on marriage) based on the work of the Italian Humanists brought the figure of Socrates into French culture, another Socratic revival was well on its way. Translations of Socratic lore exerted a powerful presence in the popular literature of early-modern France. Daniel McLean's essay discusses the theme of Socrates' private life as it appeared in the satiric works

of Rabelais and others, where Socrates becomes, among other things, a hen-pecked bigamist or lecherous buffoon. The Socrates who lived in the comedies and bawdy letters as well as in narrative painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was rather a relic of a Roman-period Socrates, forged in traditions already obsessed with the anecdotal and the biographical (Seneca, Aulus Gellius, and Diogenes Laertius). It is this tradition that gives us the apparent familiarity that we enjoy today with Socrates' marital problems, even as it rehearsed what were ago-old questions concerning the moral integrity of Socrates' associations with youth. Ken Lapatin's essay, as mentioned above, documents the tremendous impact that Socrates' death in prison had on seventeenth-century French painting, with this theme again resonating with Christian sensibilities, just as it earlier had with Islamic. Yet the most important thinker to treat the figure of the dying Socrates in early-modern France was of course not a painter, but the essayist Montaigne (Nehamas 1998: 101–27), who mentions Socrates' name almost 60 times in his *Essays*. Montaigne's Socrates, especially the Socrates of his *On Physiognomy*, is a mixture of Xenophon's teacher of self-control, Plato's Silenus, and Montaigne himself. In offering the life of Socrates as a model and in hinting that he himself is a Socratic figure, Montaigne has Socrates invent an entirely new tradition in the early-modern period, which Nehamas called the art of living. How far this art of living extends into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be seen in the treatments of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and others. But this tradition is paralleled, as we shall see, by the researches of nineteenth-century philology. Together, Socrates, master of life and death, and the Socrates that comes under philological scrutiny, bring us into the twentieth century. Let us briefly explore these developments.

Perhaps the most influential predecessor of today's Socrates question, the question of how a seemingly ironic or at least philosophically banal figure came to be identified as the founder of Western philosophy, was Schleiermacher's 1815 lecture entitled "The Value of Socrates as a Philosopher." While previous centuries saw in the figure of Socrates many things – sage, martyr, founding hero of skepticism, Stoicism, Cynicism, even prophet – Socrates' worth as a philosopher today is measured by an almost exclusive focus on the discovery of a Socratic doctrine worthy of the man. Prior to the nineteenth century, as we have seen, Socrates made his influence felt as a person, a philosophical ideal, even as an absence. All of this changes, not just with Schleiermacher's question, but also with the almost contemporaneous meditations of Hegel on the meaning of what he understood as the Socratic revolution in Greek thought.

As Nicholas White shows in his essay, Hegel's Socrates heralds the emergence of self-conscious *Geist* for the first time in the history of thought. This subjective principle demarcates the individual conscience as index of a new moral authority that supersedes the law of the state. The conflict between authority and individual, between state and self, repeats the emphasis on Socrates' death, on his struggle with convention; but at the same time, this Hegelian interpretation fueled the modern concern with Socrates' philosophy (as opposed to Socrates the person), as Socrates became, in the eyes of Hegel, the first philosopher to cultivate a self-conscious method. It remains to explain how these two different tendencies – one a subjectivity that becomes a new moral force, and the other a self-reflective method – are transmitted to the twentieth century and to its own version of Socratic philosophy.

In Hegel's emphasis on individual subjectivity as the essence of Socrates, there are distant echoes of Montaigne's notion of Socratic self-fashioning, and it was Kierkegaard who preserved this echo when he merged Hegel's subjectivity with his own interpretation of Socrates' negative irony. Kierkegaard's master's thesis, *On the Concept of Irony with Constant Reference to Socrates*, heralds a freedom-loving Socratic irony that functions to negate conventional values. Thus Kierkegaard claimed to discover in Socrates the radical freedom of his own existentialism. In this sense, one might be tempted to see Kierkegaard's appropriation of Socrates at a kind of crossroads between Socrates the thinker and Socrates the man. Muench's essay shows us that, on the one hand, Socrates' reputation as a dissembling social critic informed Kierkegaard's own role in Danish society. Indeed, Kierkegaard repeats the struggle between Socrates and the state religion through his ironic insistence that he, most devout of Christians, could not claim that he was a Christian.

James Porter's essay on Nietzsche's treatment of the Socrates question is richly suggestive of the enormous cultural complexity that Socrates had assumed by the time Nietzsche wrote. Nietzsche is aware of the power of the dying Socrates, before whom the youthful Plato prostrated himself, and notes the contradictions between the figure of a robust Socrates, full of life and passion, and the dreary rationalist, founder of all in Western culture that drains the vitality from life. Yet, according to Porter, Nietzsche's philological instincts lead him to posit the possibility that Socrates means so much that he cannot be separated from the fate of the Greek ideal as a whole.

Meanwhile, this ironic conception of Socrates emerges in new and hybrid ways in the twentieth century, in the work of Gregory Vlastos (*Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher*) and of Alexander Nehamas (*The Art of Living*), both of whom present us with a Socratic philosophy that is thoroughly rooted in irony. For Vlastos, Socratic irony is relatively benign, bereft as it must be of any hint of deceit: Socrates speaks the truth by saying the opposite of what he means. For Nehamas, on the contrary, Socratic irony is not transparent, but is a complex amalgam of openness and concealment, designed to avoid the detection of any who do not merit the discernment of the real meaning of one's words (Nehamas 1998: 62). Both contesting and exploring the meaning of Socratic irony is a theme that connects several of the essays in the second part of this Companion. The essays by James Porter, Jonathan Lear, Tad Brennan, and Paul Muench are centrally occupied with the multiple meanings of irony that surface in the modern reception of the Socratic dialogues. Whether the irony of Socrates is transparent (Vlastos), concealing (Nehamas), part of the very peculiar identity of Socrates himself, as source and object of the Socratic tradition that he both invents and is invented by (Porter), or indeed a tragic but inherent part of the human condition (Lear), these essays seek to advance a discourse of irony. It might also be said that several of the essays in the Companion use the theme of ironic dissonance, whether that be realized, as in Kamtekar's essay on Socratic politics, as the distance between one's profession and one's realization of that profession; or (in Brennan's essay on Socrates and Epictetus) as the irony inherent in Socrates' profession of ignorance and great spitefulness toward those who claim to know; or between the desires of the self and the self-alienation implied by desire (as in Buchan's essay), to uncover some of the complexities of the Socratic persona.

Yet one of the greatest ironies that haunt would-be disciples of Socrates is precisely this tendency to imitate Socrates, or even to forge a Socrates that is an imitation of the disciple. Of course, Socrates himself was particularly concerned with Socrates, as we see him constantly struggling for self-knowledge (*Phaedrus* 229e). This call to absolute authenticity, or at least to the quest for authenticity, gives rise to another strain of Socratic philosophy, the tradition of Socratic self-examination. Jonathan Lear and Mark Buchan develop the Socratic theme of self-knowledge over against what might be called, for lack of a better word, a public fiction (whether that fiction is a mass or individual construction – both contests are displayed in the Socratic dialogues) in essays that cast Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis in the light of Socratic psychology.

For both Lear and Buchan, it is a question of how to use the ironic distance between the aspiration to selfhood and the limited autonomy that such an aspiration admits, to open up a space of self-reflection. Buchan works with Lacan's own appropriations of Plato's Socratic texts, especially the seminar on transference, thus presenting a Lacanian interpretation of Socrates' disavowal of knowledge. Lear, on the other hand, investigates a question that can rightfully be asked both of Socrates and Freudian psychoanalysis: how does talking about the soul actually change it? Thus it is not Freud's historical reception of Socrates that is of concern; for Lear, psychoanalysis actually is, or is at its best, a Socratic activity. Both essays call into question other interpretations of Socratic psychology and method by challenging the intellectualist tradition that sees no room for emotion in the teaching environment of the elenchus (as in Rowe's essay on Socrates in Plato).

The methodological Socrates has been in competition with the ironic Socrates, as we have seen, ever since Plato and Xenophon penned their biographies of the man who roamed the streets of Athens. Yet the methodological Socrates has come into his own now (on the connections between the analytic Socrates and the Hegelian Socrates see White), bolstered by yet another resurgence of Socratism, in the neo-Hegelian Socrates of Heidegger and of his student, H. G. Gadamer (Gonzalez). Gonzalez shows that the Socrates of Hegel has spawned its own avatars. They include a negative incarnation of Socrates in Heidegger's rejection of Socratic philosophy as too buried in discourse and thus excluding the more Platonic aspect of philosopher as visionary, as well as Gadamer's more idealistic appropriation of Socrates as forever asking questions that themselves become the goal and the way of the true philosopher.

In his discussion of the Socratic legacy in education, Avi Mintz shows that Socratic method is perhaps the most popular notion of Socrates today, versions of which abound in classrooms ranging from grade school to law school. The assumption that Socratic teaching is entirely or nearly entirely comprised by a specific technique of questioning to elicit the learner's innate understanding, or by engaging the learner in reasoning about beliefs that she already holds, gave rise to a whole educational movement that revolutionized American classrooms. Whether or not Socratic teaching can be reduced to the question of method alone, this rather more popular assumption again shows the power and significance of our modernist version of Socrates as methodological philosopher. Ausland's essay, which ends the volume by giving us a detailed account of Socrates scholarship in the nineteenth century, returns us to the Socrates question that began this Companion. Ausland shows that Vlastos's Socrates is a powerful

combination of the Socratic ironist who on the one hand knows nothing, but on other hand is also an analytic philosopher, someone concerned above all with the question of method. At the same time, Ausland reminds us of another Socratic persona – that of the civic philosopher, bent on critical reformation of the body politic through the infusion of rationality into the life of power. This political tradition is exemplified by the work of Leo Strauss. Both of these traditions, Socrates the questioner and Socrates the reformer, have blossomed and borne fruit, as we have seen, not just in philosophical circles, but in political theory (Villa 2001), in law schools, and in everyday life.

If this preface were a map, we could now insert the phrase "YOU ARE HERE," in large red lettering. For we, in the twenty-first century, are in the midst of a Socratic revolution. Throughout its history, Socratic philosophy has interjected a dialogue between street philosophy and elite discourse, between individual autonomy and community norms, between scholars and zealots. Consequently, this Companion is offered to students of Socrates from all walks of life, to philosophers and to professional classicists, art historians and historians, and to just about everyone else who shares an interest in the questions that Socrates has provoked over the past two and a half millennia.

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Part One

Socrates in Antiquity

Section I

Biography and Sources