Searching

FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

for Wisdom

TO SUBLIME CONVERSATIONS

in Movies

Richard Gilmore

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For Lyman and Cinda

Preface

What then can help us on our way? One thing only: philosophy.

—*Marcus Aurelius,* The Meditations*, Book Two*

The work that follows is meant to be read as a sustained argument that develops from chapter to chapter for the uses of philosophy and film for ameliorating life's difficulties and for promoting life's boons. Each chapter in the first two sections deals with one particular movie, or, in case of the two chapters in section three, a particular set of movies, and so each chapter can also be read independently and each should stand on its own. Few people will have seen all of the movies I discuss, but most people will have seen some of them. My hope is that the discussions of the movies that people have seen will attract them to watching, and then reading about, the movies they have not seen.

My conviction is that philosophy is, and should be, useful. Having said that, however, just what that means is complicated. I do not think philosophy should aim at making people more money, or getting them a better job, or even making them more friends. So, what is the point of philosophy? What use is it? For me, the point of philosophy is about thinking. The best philosophy, to my way of thinking, will cause us to be surprised by our own thoughts, surprised that we could have such thoughts, surprised that such things can be thought. To become more thoughtful is the reason why we should study and do philosophy. Of course, more thoughtful people will be more competent than less thoughtful people, which may

get a person a better job, that may pay more, and, being an interesting, thoughtful person, will naturally attract other people to you, as friends, so, in a way, philosophy does promise more money and a better job and more and better friends, but that is not the point of philosophy. The point of philosophy is to become more thoughtful.

The best movies will do what the best philosophy does; they will surprise us with what we are able to think. They will lead us to think new things. They will provide new things for us to think about. To combine great philosophical thinking of the past and present with great movies from the past and the present is part of my quest to become more thoughtful, to think new things, and to find new things to think about. It is what I love to do, but anyone can do it. I have had a lot of training in philosophy, and I have seen a lot of movies, but I claim no particular authority in either philosophy or films. These are just some of the things that I have been led to think about in my reading of philosophy and in my watching of films.

The films selected for discussion in this work may at first glance seem to be arbitrary and idiosyncratic. It is apparently an odd farrago of different films that are discussed in the pages that follow: two films from the Coen brothers (*The Big Lebowski* [1998] and *A Serious Man* [2009]); three films from three different decades with no genre in common (*Little Big Man* [Arthur Penn, 1970], *Gladiator* [Ridley Scott, 2000], *My Dinner with André* [Louis Malle, 1981]); a series of films, first from Hollywood (*North by Northwest* [Alfred Hitchcock, 1959], *The Manchurian Candidate* [John Frankenheimer, 1962], *Pulp Fiction* [Quentin Tarantino, 1994], *Thelma & Louise* [Ridley Scott, 1991]), and then a series of foreign films (*Diary of a Country Priest* [Robert Bresson, 1951], *Tokyo Story* [Yasujiro Ozu, 1953], *Breathless* [Jean-Luc Godard, 1960], *Persona* [Ingmar Bergman, 1966]) to round out the selection. The selection, however, has been very intentional and I would like to give a brief account of the logic of why precisely I set these films in this particular order.

There is an overarching problem that this work is attempting to address. The problem is the problem of the relation of philosophy to what it means to be a human being. Today, especially in the USA, it is inappropriate for a professional philosopher to be asked, "What is your philosophy of life?" The question would appear to be, at once, naïve and presumptuous. It is naïve because this is not the kind of question with which professional philosophers concern themselves. It is presumptuous because to have a specific answer to such a question would presume to be an authority on what the purpose of life is, and in this postmodern, global, multi-cultural

world no one answer would seem to serve. Yet, there was a time in the history of philosophy when this was precisely the important question to ask and to try to answer.

In his essay "Philosophy as a Way of Life," Pierre Hadot argues that for the ancient Greeks, "philosophizing was a continuous act, permanent and identical with life itself, which had to be renewed at each instant."[1] For the ancient Greeks, as Hadot says, "philosophy *is* above all a way of life."[2] He claims that "there is an abyss between philosophical theory and philosophizing as living action."[3] We who live by philosophy today live by theory. Theory is wonderful, but the question is—is there something beyond theory that philosophy can supply, something even beyond explaining, something like wisdom about how to live, that would be worth the time of our life to discover? "Philosophy," as Hadot says elsewhere, "is merely a preparatory exercise for wisdom."[4] Continuing this idea, Hadot says that there is an activity of philosophy that is beyond words, a wisdom beyond saying, and that there are "situations in which philosophical discourse cannot express this activity."[5] It is just here that I think movies can do what philosophy can only approach. Movies can *show* what is beyond philosophy to express. What philosophy can do is to draw attention to what movies can show.

The movies I discuss in the chapters that follow all show something about what it means to be a human being that is at the very edge, or beyond the edge, of what can be said in words. There are, however, some philosophical tools that can prepare us and empower us to see and understand the wisdoms that these movies have to teach. These wisdoms have to do with ways of being human, options we all have for configuring our human being. Part of what I understand Hadot to be saying is that to be human is to have a philosophy of life. The question then is, which philosophy of life to adopt for one's own being? There are options. Movies can helps us to review the options. The movies that I discuss in the chapters that follow can be seen as a review of some of the options for human beings.

I start with two films by the Coen brothers because they are contemporary, accessible, popular, and very philosophical (Ethan Coen was actually a philosophy major at Princeton, so the philosophy in their movies is very intentional).[6] The intent is to introduce a way of watching movies for the philosophy they contain, starting with two movies that will be familiar and popular with many people. The next section introduces more explicitly the idea of philosophy as a way of life. Every human life is representative

of some philosophy, but some philosophies are better than others, which is the essential idea of ancient philosophy according to Hadot. The three dominant philosophical schools in the Hellenistic period of ancient philosophy were the Skeptics, the Stoics, and the Epicureans. Each school represented a philosophy of life, a philosophy of how to live the best life that we can, given the nature of our human being. The three movies selected for this section were because of how well each movie portrayed one of these schools of philosophy. Maximus in *Gladiator* is an exemplary depiction of the ideal life as it was understood by the Stoic philosophers. Jack Crabb, caught between the White world, into which he was born, and the tribal native world, into which he was adopted, is an exemplary portrayal of a person confronted with the inescapable ambiguities of the world that led the Skeptics to see the way of suspending all beliefs about what is "right" as the only rational response to such an ambiguous world. Finally, ironically, the conversation between Wally and André in *My Dinner with André* is a beautiful enactment of the philosophy of the Epicureans, who find the point of human being in pursuing pleasure, and find the simplest pleasures to be the best, and the best of those pleasures to be found in conversations with friends. The irony of the movie is in the fact that today people associate Epicureanism with lavish sensual indulgence, which is, in fact, the opposite of what the original Epicureans advocated. Wally and André are indeed having a lavish, expensive meal in a fancy restaurant, but, within the context of the movie, the meal is all but irrelevant, merely an excuse for the conversation the two friends have, which is very Epicurean.

In the final section of this book, continuing the trajectory established in *My Dinner with André* of the importance of conversation, I examine a series of movies, first a series of Hollywood-made movies, then a series of foreign films that represent, enact, and portray what is possible in the way of human conversation. Philosophy, as it was modeled by Socrates, and as it has unfolded in its history, is dialectical and conversational. It is, in some sense, the essence of philosophy to be in conversation. The question that I consider is, what kind of conversations are possible for us as human beings? The answer I find in the movies I discuss is that our potential for conversation is unlimited and amazing. In the first of the final chapters I discuss what I call "sublime conversations." What characterizes these conversations is a certain elliptical quality. They have a kind of forward momentum that is, at once, surprising and unaccountable. They literally make no sense, and yet sense is made and received. I argue that this is made possible by a kind of erotic cathexis between the speakers.

The movies selected for this chapter are quite intentionally chosen. *North by Northwest* and *The Manchurian Candidate* are chosen for their heterosexual eroticism as well as for the exemplary elliptical character of certain pivotal conversations within each movie. *Pulp Fiction* enacts the same kind of elliptical, erotic flow in a conversation between two men. Finally, *Thelma & Louise* follows two women in an ongoing conversation that is dynamic, elliptical, and beautiful.

In the next chapter, I explore what I take to be an even higher level of conversational potential. I call the conversations in these movies "transcendental." The films I consider in this chapter I take to be the highest expressions of the film art: *Diary of a Country Priest*, *Tokyo Story*, *Breathless*, and *Persona*. These films are existentially deep and they are difficult. They are difficult to watch. They are difficult to understand. They are difficult to follow. The conversations that I identify as central to each film strain the very definition of what a conversation is and instantiate what we are capable of in terms of mutual human understanding, compassion, and intellectual connection. They express narratively something that is beyond saying. They are doing the best of what philosophy can do, showing us the ultimate possibilities of what it means to be a human being.

Moorhead, MN, USA — Richard Gilmore

Notes

1. Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, edited by Arnold I. Davidson (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1995), 268.
2. Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy*, translated by Michael Chase (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 4.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 5.
6. Carolyn R. Russell, *The Films of Joel and Ethan Coen* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2001), 5.

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Search for Wisdom

> *"Therefore, we should study philosophy both in youth and in old age, so that we, though growing old, may be young in blessings through the pleasant memory of what has been; and young we may be old as well, because we harbor no fear over what lies ahead."*
>
> —*Epicurus,* Letter to Menoeceus

In the dialogue called *Theaetetus* Plato has Socrates say, "Philosophy begins in wonder."[1] It is a beautiful sentiment and, no doubt, true. In the *Symposium*, however, a rather different description of philosophy is given. The scene of the *Symposium* is a drinking party. The topic of discussion is the nature of *eros* or erotic love. When it is time for Socrates to give a speech, he defers to the wisdom of the priestess Diotima. Most of his speech is an account of a conversation that he had had with Diotima about the nature of *eros*. Diotima explains that Eros is the child of Resource and Poverty. There was a feast among the gods. Resource got drunk on nectar. Poverty, seeing and seizing an opportunity to improve her lot, "lay with him." The child of this union was Eros.

The description of Eros sounds a lot like the man Socrates, the paradigmatic philosopher:

> So Eros' attributes are what you would expect of a child of Resource and Poverty. For a start, he's always poor, and so far from being soft and beautiful (which is most people's view of him), he is hard, unkempt, barefoot, homeless. He sleeps on the ground, without a bed, lying in doorways or

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> in the open street. He has his mother's nature, and need is his constant companion. On the other hand, from his father he has inherited an eye for beauty and the good. He is brave, enterprising and determined—a marvelous huntsman, always intriguing. He is intellectual, resourceful, a lover of wisdom his whole life through, a subtle magician, sorcerer and thinker. (Sym. 203c–d)

Diotima describes Eros as "midway between wisdom and folly" because:

> None of the gods searches for wisdom, or tries to become wise—they are wise already. Nor does anyone else wise search for wisdom. On the other hand, the foolish do not search for wisdom or try to become wise either, since folly is precisely the failing which consists in not being fine and good, or intelligent—and yet being quite satisfied with the way one is. You cannot desire what you do not realize you lack. (Sym, 203d–204a)

Here philosophy, the love of wisdom, is not associated with wonder so much as deprivation, lack, or poverty. The lover of wisdom, the philosopher, is the one who has enough sense to realize that they do not have wisdom, and that they really want to get some of that stuff.

Gregory Vlastos sees in this idea of philosophy, philosophy as about an absence rather than a presence, a solution to the paradoxes presented by the figure of Socrates. For Vlastos, it is not that Socrates talks about paradoxes, it is that he is a paradox. As Vlastos says, "The paradox in Socrates is Socrates."[2] Some of the paradoxes that Vlastos attributes to Socrates are, for example, he insists that the improvement of the soul is the most important endeavor for human beings and that only knowledge improves the soul, and, at the same time insists that he has no knowledge. He claims to have no knowledge, but acts as though he is the only person who does have knowledge. He claims to engage in conversations with others because he cares for their souls, but then seems to treat people pretty harshly and unsympathetically. As Vlastos says, "His tactics seem unfriendly from the start."[3] He claims not to have wisdom and then tells the story of his friend Chaerephon's trip to Delphi where the oracle pronounced Socrates the wisest of human beings.

Vlastos finds all of these apparent paradoxes resolved in the idea of Socrates as "*searcher*" (Vlastos' emphasis).[4] Socrates' wisdom is his understanding of the value of the search, not some piece of wisdom about the gods or life or the essential elements of the universe. The greatest gift he can give to another person is not some piece of information, but only to get them to see for themselves their own need to search for wisdom.

If, after talking to a person, attempting to share his search with them, they do not pick up the search for themselves, then, there is no more that Socrates can do for them. That may seem harsh, but if it really is only the love and sense of need for the search that can be given, there is nothing more that Socrates can do to help them. As Vlastos says, "Socrates no longer seems a bundle of incompatible roles precariously tied together by irony. He seems one man, unified in his diverse activities by the fact that in all of them he remains the searcher, always pursuing his own search and seeking fellow-seekers."[5]

The work that follows represents my attempt to pick up Socrates' project of being a searcher. I do not claim to have knowledge or wisdom, but to feel my lack, and the desire for both. There is a slight swerve in my pursuit from that of Socrates', however. Where Socrates claims to pursue knowledge, I am pursuing ideas. Unlike Socrates, too, or maybe like Socrates, although he denies it, my search does generate some actual content, the content is the proliferation of ideas. Socrates seems to me to be a very happy person, in a kind of imperturbable, confident-that-he-is-on-the-right-path sort of way. I think he genuinely enjoys irony. But I do not see much joy, spontaneous, ecstatic joy in him. In my experience, there are moments of great joy in the pursuit of philosophy.

Philosophy is not mostly about joy. It is mostly about frustration, a sense of futility, a sense of one's own stupidity, a sense of oneself as incommensurate to the demands of the discipline. The joy comes in moments of breakthrough, when a new concept is finally got, a way of "seeing as" dawns, when a new idea is acquired after a long struggle to understand something. For this reason, I take the trajectory of philosophy to be the trajectory of the sublime. I do not discount Plato's claim that philosophy begins in wonder, but that is extremely initial, and, I would say, not yet philosophy. Wonder gets you into the place where the frustration will begin to bother you. Wonder is proto-philosophy. The genuine philosophy begins when you begin the work of trying to figure something out, and that is not wonderful so much as it is difficult and painful. The Kantian sublime has the trajectory of beginning in an experience of anxiety or fear that ends in joy. Kant describes the experience of the sublime as "a pleasure that arises only indirectly; viz. it is produced by the feeling of a momentary checking of the vital powers and a consequent stronger outflow of them."[6] He also says, "The feeling of the sublime may appear, as regards its form, to violate purpose in respect of the judgment, to be unsuited to presentative faculty, and as it were to do violence to the imagination; and yet it is judged to be only the more sublime."[7] These together well capture what

the experience of trying to do philosophy can feel like. One can feel like one's vital powers are checked, one's sense of purpose in the world is violated. There is a sense of some violence against one's powers of imagination committed by the recalcitrance of a philosophical problem. And yet, as one pursues the problem, as new ideas dawn, one can also experience a sense of a surge of vital powers, a return of the sense of purpose in one's own activity, a spontaneous sense of joy as one begins to see a way forward.

Interestingly, what characterizes the feeling of joy in the experience of the sublime is an absence. Kant describes the joy we experience in the experience of the sublime as a "cessation of uneasiness": "the pleasurableness arising from the cessation of an uneasiness is *a state of joy*" (Kant's emphasis).[8] This negative pleasure of the joy produced by the experience of the sublime, a negative pleasure because it is provoked by the removal of something rather than by the addition of something, fits well with Socrates' conception of the philosopher as living with not only a perpetual poverty, but also a perpetual resourcefulness. I am saying that the experience of joy occurs in doing philosophy when we finally get a new idea. No idea is terminal, so the search continues, but each idea is a new resource, a new tool for our philosophical toolbox to make us more resourceful in the future. A new tool can remove a difficulty. A jutting nail is an insuperable problem until you have a clawed hammer. Discovering the tool that can do the job feels like joy. A new idea is a source of philosophical joy.

The search for wisdom in movies is a search for new ideas. The search is motivated by the sense of an absence, the sense of a need, the sense of a desire for something that one lacks. The gap represented by the need is, ultimately, abyssal. There is no filling it. But there are plenty of opportunities for joy along the way. The model of philosophical happiness that this whole perspective assumes is that happiness is comprised of having the most joyful moments. Joy always comes only after a period of unease, after periods of despair, after periods of feeling one's vital powers checked, one's imagination done violence, of a sense of purposelessness in the world. If one does not experience these things, one is not searching.

How to Do Philosophy: *Ibid & Sic*

As different as the way philosophy is done today from the way it was done in ancient Greece, still there are some continuities. The basic pattern for the way philosophy has always been done I will characterize in terms of *ibid* and *sic*. *Ibid* is an abbreviation of the Latin *ibidem*, meaning "in the

same place." *Sic* is Latin for "so" to indicate in a text that a quoted passage that contains an error is being reproduced with the error intact. My use of *ibid* and *sic* is a textual version of the way evolution in nature works by reproduction and mutation/variation. Every text is a reproduction of an earlier text, *ibid*, and every reproduction contains errors, *sic*, differences, nuances differently emphasized, slight or great misreadings that constitute each new text's originality.

The history of philosophy is the history of people discovering an idea someone else has had and revisiting it (*ibid*), and, in the process of revisiting it, reflecting on it, inflecting it, to produce something original and new (*sic*). The first philosopher is considered to be Thales (circa 585 BCE). I say "considered to be" because I have no doubt that Thales himself was working with some ideas he had discovered from someone else.[9] The great idea that Thales is famous for, the first sentence of philosophy, as it were, is, "All is water." Hard on his heels came Anaximander with "All is *apeiron*" (the "unbounded").[10] Then came Anaximenes with "All is air." Each is the same (*ibid*) and each is a little different (*sic*). Whitehead, famously, summarized the history of Western philosophy as "a footnote to Plato."[11] This seems bad, as though the entire history of philosophy were just derivative of Plato, but Plato himself got his ideas from Heraclitus, Parmenides, and the Pythagoreans, among others. Such is the rest of human culture: history, religion, politics, and economics; it is all *ibid* and *sic*.

What characterizes the best philosophy, or, at least one thing that characterizes the best philosophy, is the eagerness with which subsequent thinkers want to *ibid* it. There is something in the version of an idea that a particular thinker has *sic*'d their way to which it fascinates those who discover it, and the desire is, in subsequent thinkers, to reproduce the idea (*ibid*), with, of course, their own inflection now upon it (*sic*). The greatest homage I can give to an idea that I have discovered and that I love is to reproduce it (*ibid*). My hope is always that in the reproduction of the idea some new element will enter in the process of my reproducing it that will make the idea even more enticing for others to discover (*sic*). This is the service I render to those ideas that I have come to love.

How to Read a Film: How the Non-Duped Err

At the end of his Introduction to *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Lacan* (*But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock*), Slavoj Žižek refers to the Lacanian phrase "les non-dupes errant,"[12] "the non-duped err." This

phrase invokes a three-tiered hierarchy of duped-dom. At the bottom level are the "duped." The duped do not recognize ideology. They do not understand the social symbolic network in which they are entangled. They are like the people in the matrix in *The Matrix* (1999) who do not know that they are in the matrix. Then there are the non-duped. The non-duped recognize ideology. They understand that there is a symbolic network. They know that they are in the matrix. The non-duped err when they think this knowledge provides them with some kind of special freedom or power or perspective. What the non-duped do not understand is that even being non-duped, you are still caught up in ideology, entangled in the social symbolic network, and escape from the matrix is impossible. What is one to do? How does one be both non-duped and yet not err?

Žižek is raising the issue in relation to the interpretation of Hitchcock's films. The level of those people who watch Hitchcock films simply to be entertained is not even considered. The level of the "duped" is occupied by those, as Žižek describes them, "Hitchcockian aficionados with the 'divinization' of their interpretive object—with the elevation of Hitchcock unto a God-like demiurge who masters even the smallest detail of his work."[13] The non-duped reproach the duped for this. Of course, Hitchcock is just a guy making films. The non-duped might say of Hitchcock, "Technically proficient, sure, but some of those interpretations, Freudian, Lacanian, feminist, come on!" The non-duped are free of the interpretive frenzy that seizes some people after watching a Hitchcock film. How do they err? To resist interpretation is to turn away from philosophy. It is to be insensitive to ideas. The non-duped look upon the duped as unfortunate. They feel empowered to distinguish, to separate, to disavow wonder in order to be the authority in charge of what is rational and reasonable. That way madness lies. It is the duped who, fully embracing their dupe-dom, reverential in the face of the awesome, see connections everywhere. As Žižek says, "The only way to produce something real in theory is to pursue the transferential fiction to the end."[14]

In my reading of films, I try "to pursue the transferential fiction to the end." I try to bring every theoretical idea I can think of to bear on the films toward which I feel reverence. In some sense, it is all *ibid*, stealing and repeating ideas from everything I have read. In the plenitude of it, I hope for some *sic*, something new, some angle that will fascinate and draw others to what I take to be important works of art. The very charge that the non-duped would level against the enthusiastically duped is, as far as I can tell, the very point of both philosophy and art. For the

non-duped, what the enthusiastically duped do looks "strange." Harold Bloom describes a mark of originality, the kind of *sic* that gets a work of art into the canon, as "strangeness."[15] To look for the strangeness in films is where doing philosophy of films begins.

Philosophy and Film: Semiotics

The contemporary philosopher Anthony Appiah, talking about his own personal philosophy, sums up his personal philosophy by saying, "Everything is much more complicated than you first thought."[16] Stanley Cavell, talking about why we keep creating new art and new philosophy, why there is this constant need for more, even though we already have so much, says, "because what is known is known to be insufficient."[17] In this work, I am combining philosophy and film to try to get at an understanding of what it means to be a human being and in order to try to make it easier and more interesting to be human. Plato would not have (would seem not to have) approved. In the final book of the *Republic*, Plato talks about the "ancient quarrel"[18] between philosophy and poetry, which really means, for Plato, between philosophy and art, in general.

Plato takes philosophy's side in the quarrel, and his objection to art is that it is a powerful influence on peoples' thinking and feeling, but its influence is asserted via an appeal to the emotions rather than to reason. For Plato, there are two problems with this appeal to emotion. First, it is very hard to distinguish appropriate emotions from inappropriate emotions. With ideas, there are ways of testing them to see which are true and which are false, but emotions are so close to us that we cannot even consider whether they might not be appropriate as we have them. So, first of all, there is the problem of veracity or legitimacy with emotional responses that can be better controlled by reason. The second problem with art for Plato is that because it does so forcefully arouse our emotions, it strengthens our emotional responses to the world, and that is a problem because of Plato's first objection to emotional responses. Art not only appeals to the emotions, but it also strengthens our responding to the world emotionally. Philosophy makes its appeal via the reason. Its only concern is what is true. The confusing contradictory signals of emotions are eliminated in favor of the clear signs of logic.

There is a distinction that I will be using throughout this work between the enunciated and the enunciation. This is a distinction that comes from Freud. For Freud, this distinction is important in relation to what he

called the *Verneinung*, the negation. The *Verneinung* (notice the "*nein*," the "no," at the center of *Verneinung*) was a kind of psychological slip whereby a patient would reveal the thing that he or she wanted to repress. The example that Freud gives is of a patient describing a dream and saying of a particular figure in the dream, without any prompting or for any obvious reason, "It is not my mother." This negation reveals, in fact, an affirmation. It is his mother. What Freud points out is the distinction between the enunciated: "It is not my mother," which is the content of the statement, and the enunciation: the weird, unprompted context in which this is enunciated, which is the form of the statement.[19]

I find this distinction very useful. I want to dispense with most of the Freudian baggage but retain the idea that important information is sometimes given not explicitly, but implicitly, in the form of the enunciation rather than in the content of the enunciated. That is, the form/content distinction is very useful for not only understanding art, especially, but also for understanding philosophy. Furthermore, the enunciation/enunciated distinction clarifies and emphasizes the human source of these two ways of expressing things. Plato's argument for philosophy is that it puts everything in the enunciated, it makes everything explicit, while with art, too much is put into the enunciation, the form in which the thing is being said, and so it is very difficult to determine just what it is that is being said. Art confuses and misleads, while philosophy clarifies and guides rightly. The history of philosophy has largely taken Plato at his word and missed his irony. The history of philosophy has largely been devoted to trying to say the truth as explicitly as possible, with the least amount of art. Art, to philosophy, looks like you have something to hide.

Of course, the great philosophers have always used art, the enunciation, as part of their message, starting with Plato. Plato wrote in dialogues, a very artful form. Furthermore, with multiple characters taking multiple positions, it is a seduction to think that any one character speaks entirely for Plato. The primary enunciatory trope of Plato is irony, and we should consider the possible irony in his insistence that all philosophy must be directed toward reason. All the great philosophers, I claim, used the enunciation to convey (un-)enunciated content. Some other examples of philosophers using the enunciation for conveying some enunciated content are Descartes' dream in the *Meditations*, Spinoza's geometrical method with axioms, propositions, and proofs in the *Ethics*, Kant's architectonic in the *Critiques* to the numbered propositions of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.