

Introduction

Overcoming Misology

The scene is one of the most famous in antiquity. Socrates, sentenced to death by a jury of his peers, sits on his bed in a cramped cell awaiting execution, his feet planted on the ground, his mood cheerful and equanimous. His prison lies in the agora, the civic centre of Athens where he has spent much of his life questioning his fellow citizens, and even now during the fading hours of the day he is engaged in vigorous debate among friends.

Plato relates his account of Socrates' last conversation in the *Phaedo*. The bulk of the dialogue consists of a series of arguments on the nature of the human soul, each of which focuses on the question of the soul's survival after death. My interest here, however, is in a well-known digression that occurs near the mid-point of the work. Socrates' primary discussion partners, Simmias and Cebes, have just raised two persuasive objections to one of his arguments for the immortality of the soul – so persuasive, in fact, that Plato interrupts the action of the dialogue to have Phaedo, who is narrating the events, describe the dejection and distress that seizes Socrates' companions when they believe he has been refuted:

When we heard what they said we were all depressed, as we told each other afterwards. We had been quite convinced by the previous argument (λόγου), and they seemed to confuse us again, and to drive us to doubt not only what had already been said but also what was going to be said, lest we be worthless as critics or the subject itself admitted of no certainty. (88c1–7)

Yet Socrates himself remains unperturbed. 'What I wondered at most in him', Phaedo remarks, 'was the pleasant, kind, and admiring way he received the young men's arguments, and how sharply he was aware of the effect the discussion had on us' (89a2–5). Socrates directs his attention at this point not to defending his argument, but to the well-being of his friends. His concern is that they are at risk of distrusting the practice of reasoning itself. Before he develops his final proof for the soul's immortality,

therefore, Socrates looks to revive his companions' spirits by urging them to avoid the dangers of what he calls 'misology' (μισολογία), or the hatred of argument. For 'there is no greater evil one can suffer', he affirms, 'than to hate reasonable discourse (λόγους)' (89d2–3).¹

What is wrong with hating argument? Socrates locates the problem with misology in a deflection of responsibility. Having lost confidence in arguments he once thought trustworthy, the misologue blames the practice of reasoning itself rather than his own shortcomings as a reasoner. But in doing so, Socrates claims, he is deprived of truth (ἀλήθεια) and knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) (90d6–7). The background idea here is that the aim of argument is, or should be, to arrive at truth and knowledge. Yet this is exactly what the misologue doubts. His scepticism about argument concerns its ability to provide him with such things. And Socrates is well aware of this: at 90b–c, he compares the misologue's attitude towards argument with the attitude of 'disputers' (ἀντιλογικοί) who present competing cases for either side of a contentious issue and, as a result, claim that everything is in flux. Merely appealing to the value of truth and knowledge does not, then, explain what a proper engagement in argument requires. Rather, it assumes a view about the purpose of argument that the misologue has come to question.

Indeed, despite his warnings against misology during this passage, Socrates says little about what a proper engagement in argument requires. He asserts repeatedly that the misologue pursues argument 'without art' (ἄνευ . . . τέχνης, 90b7; cf. 89d5, 89e5, 90d3). Such an art, we are led to believe, demands a different attitude towards argument. But what kind of attitude? Again, Socrates does not say, though he returns to this point in reflecting on his own motivations for engaging in argument at the end of the misology digression:

I am in danger at this moment of not having a philosophical attitude (φιλοσόφως) about this, but like those who are completely uneducated (ἄπαιδευτοι), I am seeking victory (φιλονίκως) in argument. For the uneducated, whenever they disagree about anything (περί του ἀμφισβητῶσιν), give no thought to how things are with respect to the subject an argument is about (περί ᾧ ἂν ὁ λόγος), but are only eager that those present will accept the position they have set forth. (91a1–6)

Socrates here does not appeal directly to the value of truth and knowledge in identifying what a proper engagement in argument requires. Instead,

¹ The Greek term *logos* is capacious. It can refer to the use of words generally in discourse and (as here) to 'reasonable discourse'. For reasons I explain further below, I shall typically be using 'argument' as a translation for the term in this book.

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he adds a further dimension to the question by drawing a connection between the way in which we approach argument and the way in which we approach others. Like the misologue, the ‘uneducated’ (ἀπαιδευτοί, 91a3) in argument should be classified among those who pursue the practice without art. But what distinguishes the conduct of this group is that their pursuit of argument is shaped in large part by their attitude towards others. Arguments arise as a means of resolving a point of contention or confusion concerning a subject on which individuals may disagree (ἀμφισβητῶσιν, 91a4): the Greek verb literally means ‘to stand apart’. The trouble with the uneducated is that in their desire simply to have their view prevail over others, which Socrates ascribes to their love of victory (φιλονικία), they show no concern for the subject an argument is about. Socrates contrasts this attitude towards argument with an attitude he associates with a love of wisdom (φιλοσοφία), which we can presume does show concern for the subject an argument is about. Yet the implication goes further than this: since the approach of the uneducated to argument is informed fundamentally by their attitude towards others, it follows that a philosophical approach to argument will involve a different attitude towards others.²

Now, none of this suggests that truth and knowledge drop out of the picture for Plato as the ends of argument. The point, rather, is that whether one stands in the right kind of relationship to these ends – whether one has a philosophical attitude towards argument – will be evidenced by how one stands in relation to others. A proper engagement in argument according to Plato requires a proper engagement with others. But to see what the nature of this engagement consists in, we need to look beyond the *Phaedo* to Plato’s reflections on the art of argument elsewhere in his dialogues. That is the project I undertake in the present study. This book focuses on Plato’s views on the role of human motivation in argument and the role of argument generally in civic life through a study of the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. The central claim is that the way in which we approach argument for Plato typically reveals something at a deeper level about our desires and motivations, particularly with respect to others, and so the key to engaging in argument correctly on this view is found in his understanding of the human soul.

² Notably, it is in this respect that Socrates goes on to distance himself from the uneducated at 91a6–c5. When he says that he is in danger of not approaching the subject under discussion with a philosophical frame of mind, the reason he gives is not that he wants to defeat his interlocutors in argument, but that he is at risk (given his situation) of all too easily convincing *himself* of the soul’s survival after death. As far as his relations with others are concerned, Socrates’ motives remain pure until the end according to the *Phaedo*.

My development of this claim will deal with a familiar theme in the Platonic corpus. The relation of philosophy to rhetoric occupies Plato throughout his works, but the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* form a natural pairing as the only two of his dialogues that examine this topic in detail. This will be a key topic for us as well, insofar as both works hold that conventional rhetoric falls short of the status of an art of argument. My book has two parts: in the first part, on the *Gorgias*, I show that a crucial problem with the conventional practice of rhetoric for Plato is that it assumes an impoverished account of human motivation; in the second part, on the *Phaedrus*, I show that he believes the practice of philosophy does not suffer from this limitation, since it operates on the basis of a rich account of human motivation. As far as I am aware, there has been no other reading of these two dialogues in the secondary literature that relates them in this manner.³ This book is the first to argue that what the traditional pursuit of rhetoric lacks for Plato is a comprehensive understanding of the human soul and its characteristic good. It is the only work to explain how the *Phaedrus* completes the critique of rhetoric that Plato begins in the *Gorgias* by providing an account of the human soul and its characteristic good. And it is a work that offers a new and original interpretation of why Plato believes that the practice of philosophy (rhetoric when it is practised well) requires a form of friendship: a form of care for the good of others. On this reading, Plato's account of the soul in the *Phaedrus* and the accompanying account of *erōs* he presents in that dialogue fill in essential details of his critique of rhetoric in the *Gorgias* and the prospects he holds out for that practice as a potential art of argument.

At this point, it is perhaps worth explaining my choice of 'argument' as a translation for the Greek term *logos* in this study. In both the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus*, Plato's focus is on the power of *logos* to achieve its persuasive effects.⁴ What interests him in particular are the wide variety of psychological forces that a *logos* can draw upon to produce persuasion in an audience. Our term 'argument' refers similarly to a form of speech able to engage a variety of psychological capacities for the sake of persuading an

³ The only other book-length treatment of the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* that explores the relationship between these two dialogues is Benardete 1991. While this work offers a useful study of both dialogues, it does not attend to the issues that I will discuss in what follows. Two recent books closer to mine in their argumentative focus are McCoy 2007 and Long 2014 (see nn. 6 and 10 below). As interpretive projects, however, both these studies deal with several dialogues. Neither book aims to offer as I do in this book a sustained discussion of the relationship between the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*.

⁴ Hence, when rhetoric comes to be defined famously in the *Gorgias* as a 'producer of persuasion', Socrates tells Gorgias: 'Now I think you've come closest to making clear what art you take rhetoric to be' (452e9–453a1). Plato's point is that it is not speech as such that the rhetorician claims to be an expert in, but *persuasive* speech.

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audience, and is thus the best translation of *logos* for my purposes in this study.⁵ Consider the difference here between the meaning of ‘argument’ in the sense of ‘reasoned account’ and in the sense of ‘verbal harangue’. Reasoned accounts are, or at least can be, forms of persuasive speech, yet the means by which they persuade an audience (if they do) differ from the persuasive techniques that are generally employed in a verbal harangue. How should we understand this difference? A large part of the answer for Plato, I shall be claiming, lies in the motivations of different participants in argument. But once we go this far, he believes, we can also investigate the *values* that motivate different kinds of participants in argument and, furthermore, the *character* of those kinds of participants.⁶

When read in this light, Plato’s views on rhetoric are significantly more nuanced than is commonly supposed. In the most general sense, rhetoric is the practice of persuasive speech aimed at the leading of an audience’s soul. That is a definition that covers all kinds of speechmaking: the kind that occurs in areas of civic life that Plato’s contemporaries would have been familiar with, such as the law courts and the assembly, as well as the kind that occurs in the practice of philosophy. To assert that Plato is against the practice of rhetoric as such, then, is far too crude a statement of his actual views. As all readers of the *Phaedrus* recognise, much of Socrates’ efforts in this work are devoted to explaining what an art of rhetoric must look like. But as scholars have also come to appreciate recently, even the *Gorgias*, which contains Plato’s most trenchant analysis of rhetoric, leaves open the possibility that an art of rhetoric may exist.⁷ On the reading of these two dialogues that I advance in this book, what Plato is interested in exploring in both works is the system of values and approach to human relations that is essential for the pursuit of rhetoric to be an art. What he turns out to be against is the *conventional* practice of rhetoric, as it was conceived of by his contemporaries. And what he turns out to be for, of course, is the practice of philosophy. Yet the practice of philosophy according to my reading just

⁵ This will be my usual translation, though I will sometimes transliterate the Greek or use the less loaded ‘discourse’ where that seems appropriate. Other translations listed under the heading for the term in Liddell and Scott 1940 include ‘word’, ‘account’, ‘speech’, ‘story’, ‘talk’, ‘discussion’, ‘definition’, ‘proportion’, and ‘reason’. A good analysis of the difficulties of translating *logos* in philosophical contexts that compares Plato’s and Aristotle’s uses of the term can be found in Moss 2014.

⁶ Cf. McCoy 2007, who distinguishes the sophist from the philosopher in Plato’s dialogues on the basis of differences in character rather than differences in method. This fits well with my own study of the different motivational attitudes of the conventional rhetorician and the philosopher, though McCoy does not argue for the claims that I will here in showing how the moral psychology of the *Phaedrus* provides Plato with a justification for his critique of rhetoric in the *Gorgias*.

⁷ See Carone 2005; Stauffer 2006, Ch. 4; McCoy 2007, pp. 108–9; Moss 2007; Long 2014, pp. 61–3.

is the art of rhetoric for Plato: a kind of soul-leading governed by the pursuit of wisdom. Thus, through a strategy of overturning common sense that we find throughout Plato's dialogues, only the philosopher is the true practitioner of rhetoric.⁸

That is why, in addition to the distinction he draws between conventional rhetoric and philosophy as *practices*, Plato develops a parallel distinction in the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus* between what he calls a 'rhetorical way of life' and a 'philosophical way of life'. His aim in distinguishing between these 'lives' is not to attack the character of historical sophists, orators, and politicians of his era, but to compare and contrast the ideal of what he takes to be a philosophical ethos, depicted by him in literary form in Socrates, with the ethos of anyone engaged in the traditional pursuit of rhetoric. If his portraits of these historical figures sometimes strike readers as unfair, this is because (as we shall see in the next two sections), when it came to the practice of argument in his day, the rhetorical ethos was from Plato's perspective the prevailing ethos.⁹ Once he has sketched the ideal of a philosophical ethos in Socrates, it becomes evident to him that there is an irresolvable difference between that ethos and what he considers a rhetorical ethos. The difference between these ways of life is a difference over the purpose of argument, but the root cause lies in the desires of the conventional rhetorician and the philosopher, and the way those desires inform their discursive practices. A major consequence of this point that I will develop here concerns the different interpersonal attitudes that Plato believes distinguish the rhetorical ethos from the philosophical ethos: whereas the former seeks to dominate or otherwise win over an audience, the latter seeks to benefit others. A philosophical attitude towards argument thus fundamentally requires a form of care according to Plato.¹⁰

⁸ Wolfsdorf 2008b provides a full-scale study of this strategy in several aporetic dialogues and its employment by Plato in the crafting of philosophy: for a good summary, see pp. 14–16.

⁹ And yet, despite this, it is quite conceivable that Plato believed various figures in public and private life during his day had a philosophical ethos, not only those who studied philosophy with him formally in the Academy. Perhaps he saw Dion of Syracuse as such a type: see the Seventh Letter, esp. 327a1–b6; Nails 2002, pp. 129–32. In fact, significantly, Plato goes so far as to say in the *Republic* that the majority of people classified as 'philosophers' do *not* have a philosophical ethos (see 489d1–496a9).

¹⁰ This is the basis on which we should interpret Socrates' claim to an art of politics in the *Gorgias* on my reading. Long 2014, Ch. 3 similarly interprets the political activity that Socrates believes he practises as a 'way of speaking oriented towards the best as opposed to the merely pleasant' (p. 43), yet he leaves unexplained how we should think of 'the best' that the art of politics is directed towards. On my reading, after defining the art of politics in the *Gorgias* as a form of care for the good of the soul, Plato must provide us next with an account of the soul to make clear what it is he considers distinctive of this form of care. The *Gorgias* does not supply us with that account, but we find it in the *Phaedrus*.

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While it has long been noted that Plato (perhaps following Socrates' historical example) saw the practice of philosophy as an activity accompanied by friendship towards others, there have been few attempts to provide a reading of his views that explains his position on this matter. In the present study, I put forward a new understanding of how and why Plato held that a commitment to the pursuit of wisdom entails a commitment to the good of others.¹¹

In claiming that our attitudes towards argument are grounded in our desires and motivations, this study will be devoted primarily to a reading of Plato's moral psychology in the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. At the same time, there is a clear political strand to his views here. Plato recognises that the use of persuasive speech is embedded in democratic civic institutions like the law courts and the assembly, on which a society such as fifth-/fourth-century Athens relied for its proper functioning. Hence he accepts the close connection that his contemporaries drew between the practice of argument and the practice of politics. What he denies in challenging the conventional rhetorician's claim to an art of argument is that his contemporaries practise politics well. To make this charge stick, he has to offer an alternative account of excellence in politics. In doing so, he enters into a debate stretching back to at least the fifth century in Greece concerning the role of argument in civic life. Plato's important contribution to this debate is to focus on the values that govern the rhetorician's use of discourse in engaging with others, and to claim that it is only the values of philosophy – the pursuit of wisdom – that can transform the pursuit of argument into an art. As he well knew, that is a controversial claim. On this view, while the question of how we should engage in argument begins initially with the political question of how we should engage with others, it leads ultimately to the question of what it is we should desire. We can put this idea provocatively: what is essential to the art of argument, according to Plato, is the art of love. That is a claim I will need to elaborate on during the course of this book. But to see why Plato was led to this provocative idea, it is worth considering first the historical background against which these issues arose for him.

¹¹ The connection between the practice of philosophy (particularly in its Socratic mode) and friendship has been noted and emphasised well recently by Nichols 2009. Cf. also Halliwell 1995; Gonzalez 2000; Ahbel-Rappe 2010; Belfiore 2012, esp. pp. 83–7. The fullest attempts to explain Plato's understanding of this connection can be found in Irwin 1995, Ch. 18 and Sheffield 2011. While both these interpretations, like mine, find in the *Phaedrus* a conception of love that involves a concern for others for their own sake, my approach to this issue will rely more heavily upon Plato's account of the soul in the dialogue, and the implications of that account for his views on the proper practice of argument.

Some Fifth-Century Background: Plato and his Predecessors

Suspensions about the practice of argument emerged in fifth-century Athens contemporaneously with the admiration and popularisation of rhetoric.¹² We see this ambivalence expressed comically in Plato's *Laches*, when after being introduced to Socrates and informed about his peculiar style of argument (λόγος, 188b7) Laches describes himself as constantly vacillating between being a hater of argument (μισόλογος) and a lover of argument (φιλόλογος) depending on the character of his interlocutor (188c5–6). The Athenians were renowned in the Hellenic world for their fondness of speechmaking. In the *Laws*, Plato has the Athenian Visitor state that 'every Greek takes it for granted that my city loves talk (φιλόλογος) and does a great deal of it (πολύλογος), whereas Sparta is a city of few words (βραχύλογον) and Crete practises cunning more than talk' (641e4–7).¹³ The term *philologia* in this passage is rendered 'love of talk' but may be translated alternatively as 'love of argument', 'love of speeches', or 'love of words', due again to the ambiguity of its root noun *logos*. Plato trades on this ambiguity in the dialogues. From his earliest portrayal in the *Parmenides* as an adolescent, Socrates is praised for his 'impulse' (ὄρμη, 135d3) towards *logos*, which in this context is most accurately understood as 'reasoned argument'. Parmenides calls Socrates' disposition 'noble and divine' (καλή . . . καὶ θεία, 135d2–3) but in need of cultivation, and Plato obviously intends here to draw an association between the love of argument and a philosophical temperament.

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to think that Plato means to conflate the pursuit of wisdom with the love of argument in such contexts. For while Socrates speaks often in the dialogues of his own *philologia* (see e.g. *Phaedrus* 228c1–2, 236e5; *Theaetetus* 146a6), and talks eloquently about the love (ἔρως) for argument that is 'constantly revealed under the guidance of the philosophic muse' (*Philebus* 67b6–7), he is also aware of the effects of engaging in argument with the wrong motivations. In a well-known passage from the *Republic*, he asserts that an overeagerness for refuting

¹² Even if rhetoric as a discipline had not yet been conceptualised in the fifth century, as some scholars have claimed (see Cole 1991 and Schiappa 1999, Ch. 1 on the origins of the technical term ῥητορικὴ), the practice of persuasive speaking was the lifeblood of democratic politics in Athens. Citizens engaged in public debate in the assembly, as well as pled and defended their cases in court, and speechwriters like Lysias thrived. By the latter half of the fifth century, as Yunis 1998 argues, Athenian democracy had made persuasive speaking 'a critical necessity for both leading figures and average citizens' (p. 231).

¹³ The sentiment seems to have been common enough to be expressed in a variety of sources. See e.g. Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 47–9, *Antidosis* 296; Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1398b11; Strabo, *Geography* 2.3.7.

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others can corrupt a person and compares those introduced to the practice prematurely with puppies who ‘enjoy dragging and tearing those around them with their arguments (λόγῳ)’ (539b5–7). Even those with no affinity for philosophy are sometimes identified as *philologoi* in the dialogues. Consider Theodorus in the *Theaetetus*, whom Socrates calls a lover of argument (φιλόλογος, 161a7) despite the fact that he shows little aptitude or interest in the give and take of discussion. Time and again in the work, whenever he is presented with the opportunity, he resists Socrates’ invitation to submit his views to questioning (see 146b2–7, 162a4–c2, 165a4–b1, 169a1–c3). What Theodorus enjoys instead is the spectacle of argument: the sight of Socrates in action challenging the views of Theaetetus. The point here for Plato is that the pursuit of wisdom requires more than simply exhibiting a love of argument. It requires, rather, the right kind of love of argument.

Perhaps the most important provoker of *philologia* in Athens was Gorgias of Leontini. According to several ancient sources, he captured the attention of the city along with many of its prominent public figures in 427 BCE as the head of an embassy seeking military aid for his people for protection from Syracuse. Diodorus Siculus, recounting the incident in the first century BCE, describes how the Athenians, ‘being clever by nature and lovers of argument (φιλολόγους)’, were ‘stunned’ (ἐξέπληξε) by the novelty of Gorgias’ language and his ability in speechmaking (*Library of History* 12.53.3).¹⁴ The mission was a success and later, after settling in Athens, Gorgias would amass a fortune training others in this ability during the course of his long life. The following epitaph on a statue dedicated to him upon his death provides us with testimony to his high standing in the ancient world: ‘no one of mortals before discovered a finer art (τέχνην) than Gorgias to exercise the soul (ψυχὴν) in contests of virtue (ἀρετῆς . . . ἀγῶνας)’.¹⁵

What was this art that had such an impact on the Athenian psyche? For Gorgias, it was the art of influencing others through persuasive speech. Plato quotes him in the *Philebus* as claiming that the art of persuasion differs from the other arts since ‘it enslaves the rest, with their own consent (δι’ ἐκόντων), not by force (οὐ διὰ βίας), and is therefore by far the best of all the arts (ἀρίστη . . . τῶν τεχνῶν)’ (58a8–b2). This statement

¹⁴ Greek in Diels and Kranz 1952 (DK A4). Plato refers to Gorgias’ visit in the *Greater Hippias* 282b4–c1. Cf. Pausanias, *Guide to Greece* 6.17.7.

¹⁵ The inscription is listed in Diels and Kranz 1952 and is from an early fourth-century statue base discovered at Olympia (DK A8; translated in Sprague 1972, slightly modified). The statue of Gorgias bearing this inscription was commissioned by his sister’s grandson, but there was also of course the renowned gold statue at Delphi, which Gorgias dedicated to himself, mentioned by Cicero (*De oratore*, 3.32) and many others in antiquity: see Sprague 1972, pp. 34–5.

may seem surprising at first, because in his most famous rhetorical work, the *Encomium of Helen*, Gorgias notoriously identifies persuasion with force.¹⁶ But there is no discrepancy: the claim in the *Philebus* passage is that persuasion accomplishes its aims without resorting to *physical* force. And the *Encomium* in fact makes clear for us the theoretical basis for this position. According to this view, all *logos* is a tool of psychological domination.¹⁷ Gorgias refers to the sort of speeches that take place in legal settings and the democratic assembly as obvious examples of the power he has in mind. Yet he also views scientific arguments (μετεωρολόγων λόγους) and philosophical arguments (φιλοσόφων λόγων) in the same terms, the latter being a merely subversive activity aimed at undermining people's settled convictions (§13).¹⁸

Gorgias' view that the practice of argument in all its forms is simply a means of domination is one of the central points on which Plato seeks to distinguish philosophy from conventional rhetoric. No doubt Socrates' characteristic method of questioning others could be regarded as a subversive activity. But as we shall see, Plato regards Socrates' engagement with others as an essentially therapeutic activity, a view that sits uneasily with the way in which Gorgias conceives of *logos*. For if all argument is a matter of dominating others, then excellence in this activity consists only in succeeding in dominating others. Extend that position further to excellence in politics and the significance of the epitaph on Gorgias' statue becomes obvious: the contests of virtue (ἀρετή) that occupy us in civic life are contests for power. And the greatness of Gorgias' art is that it enables those who wish to secure power over others to do so.¹⁹ Plato's principal concern is that it is far from clear in this case how the practice of argument

¹⁶ See esp. §8, where *logos* is described as a 'great lord (δυναστής μέγας) who with the smallest and most invisible body accomplishes most divine things'. Coupled with persuasion, it is capable of 'moulding the soul as it wishes' (§13). The Greek text here refers to Diels and Kranz 1952 (DK B11).

¹⁷ For one of the best discussions of this point, see Wardy 1996, pp. 42–4. The issue about whether such domination involves physical force is actually subtle, as Segal 1962 has shown, since Gorgias treats the processes of the psyche in the *Encomium* 'as having a quasi-physical reality' (p. 104). Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that domination is the principal aim of argument on this view: '*logos* is almost an independent external power which forces the hearer to do its will' (Segal 1962, p. 121).

¹⁸ Some scholars have argued that the final line of the *Encomium*, in which Gorgias refers to the piece as his 'plaything' (παίγνιον, §21), shows that he is not committed to its content: see MacDowell 1982, p. 43 and Porter 1993, p. 274. But all that Gorgias confesses to here is that he has derived some amusement from the work. It is hard to see why such a claim should lead us to dismiss the substantial theoretical views he develops earlier in the piece. Cf. Wardy 1996, pp. 50–1; Schiappa 1999, pp. 130–1.

¹⁹ Cf. *Meno* 73c6–9, where Gorgias is in fact quoted as defining virtue as 'to be able to rule over people' (ἄρχειν οἷόν τ' εἶναι τῶν ἀνθρώπων).